

Autumn Nightmares™



World of Darkness

CHANGELING
THE LOST™

TARGET
©2007

Autumn Nightmares™

By Jess Hartley, Matthew McFarland, Travis Stout and Chuck Wendig

Prologue: As the Days Grow Shorter

"Nice legs!"

Peter wasn't sure which of the girls had spoken, and in truth it didn't much matter. They were near enough alike to be twins, a common occurrence here on the Miami campus. He returned their compliment with a wide grin.

"You, too, my dears, you, too..."

The girls looked up as their paths crossed with his. He caught and held first one vivid blue gaze and then the other, exerting the slightest push of desire in the girls' direction, and then whispered something that made them first gasp and then blush as he passed by.

When he looked back over his shoulder, the girls had paused and were whispering conspiratorially together, their faces so close he imagined that their sweet, moist sophomoreic breath was mingling in an almost-kiss. They looked in his direction and smiled. For a second he considered going back, but Nim was waiting and no matter how much fun the blonde bimbos would have been, Nim was... well, Nim.

Nim of the pale skin, even under Miami's sun. Nim of the delicate hands and tiny feet....

Peter's hooves echoed against the campus sidewalk as he made his way down San Amaro towards the Arboretum. He loved the sound they made, hoof on stone, and Halloween was one of the only times he could get away with burning away the Mask and walking openly in public for a while. After all, amidst wolf-men and cowgirls, pirates and zombies, nobody would look too closely at his legs or ears or even eyes; they did wonderful things with contact lenses these days. He'd already been called Tumnus twice on the way across campus. He'd resisted the temptation to buy a red scarf, however. Not in this heat.

His smile faded slightly as a trickle of sweat rolled from his hairline down his bare back, joining the sticky-dampness that had already gathered at the base of his spine. His pelt was sodden with it, the heavy moisture that made even the most delightful outdoor exertions a chore. It was like breathing underwater. In a Jacuzzi. Full of lukewarm beer. Halloween wasn't supposed to be like this. Autumn wasn't supposed to be like this. Autumn was for fall leaves and crisp air, apple cider and long nights by a fire anticipating the first snowfall. He remembered autumn. But here in Miami, there was nothing but summer. No spring, no fall and certainly no winter.

It hadn't always been like this, they said. Hot, yes, and humid, but not like this. But what did you expect from a city where summer never died?

The rotary came into sight, pulling him from his morbid thoughts. It always cheered him a bit, seeing the circular round-a-bout where San Amaro, Certosa and Campo Sano met. It was like a little piece of home, or at least he thought it

was. They had rotaries in New England. Rotaries and seasons. All manner of things that turned as they were supposed to.

It was easy to tell something was up at the Arboretum. The whole place had been cordoned off with security gates to keep stragglers from sneaking into the party. Rather than cutting through the plot of Jamaican caper trees, as he normally did, Peter worked his way around to the driveway, past the "Private Gathering - Invitation Only" signs that blocked traffic from entering, and then paused a moment to take in the changes since last time he'd shown up here.

Namaah's Courts were always held in the Arboretum, but most times they were fairly small and nearly silent, requiring little in the way of security to keep them from the public's eye. The Autumn Queen seemed at home there, flanked by jacarandas and tulipwood trees, holding her eerie court among the shadows. Theoretically, the Autumn Court gatherings were open to members of all of the other Courts, but few outside of the Leaden Mirror attended. He wouldn't have, except for Nim. She was Autumn, although she asserted most of the rest of them bored her to tears. She'd begged him to come, and he'd finally relented and quickly found most of what she'd said to be true. Autumn Court gatherings were quiet affairs held by moonlight, solemn gatherings where whispers and shivers were the tone of the day. Not a hell of a lot of fun for a philosopher of Spring, but when you were smitten, you did what you had to do.

This, on the other hand... this was something altogether different.

The normally open garden of the Arboretum had been walled off completely, a security gate running right up to a pair of two-story towers that had been erected across the main walkway into the Arboretum. The towers were wood, but painted to look like castle stone, complete with arrow slits and torch-holders where flickering gas-torches cast their glow out into the parking area. Between the towers, an iron portcullis blocked the walkway, flanked on either side by guards with shoulders that would put a linebacker to shame. Despite the "Private Event" signs, an obviously drunk letterman was arguing with one of the guards as Peter approached.

"Do you know who I am?" The dark-haired drunk was built like a brick wall himself, but still managed to look puny beside the door guard. His slurred speech reeked of Jägermeister and cheap beer. "My father *owns* this school!" Beside him, a cute brunette with an asymmetrical bob cringed, obviously having heard this rant more than once.

The guard ignored the drunk, but stepped forward when he caught sight of Peter. "G'wan in," the Garqantuan grumbled, "Mizz Nim's waitin' on you." The Ogre shoved the gate, which screamed its protest, and Peter slipped through.

It clanged shut behind him and the satyr trotted down the main walkway, the crunch of his hooves on the gravel drowning out the drunk athlete's protests in his wake.

Lanterns lit with blue-green ghostfire marked the path-way to the center of the garden, although Peter had walked it, alone or accompanied, enough times not to need their aid. Voices reached him through the wet-hot night, more voices than he'd expected. Although Namaah held court every month, there were rarely more than a dozen folks present. The Autumn Court had been whittled down to almost nothing between the death of their former leader and the infighting that had followed. They were anxious for allies, which was, for the most part, how he'd ended up attending. Ahead, however, the throng was easily twice that, and as he entered the clearing, the conversation around him seemed surprisingly light.

More lanterns lit the area, and among their light walked the Lost. Some wore mundane costumes in keeping with the holiday, either oddly complementing or grotesquely contrasting with the far more outlandish appearance of their fae miens. In front of him, a Pierrot with the face of an unearthed corpse smiled over his champagne at a black-scaled woman wearing a Hedespun gown seemingly made of tattered twilight sky. A teenage girl with skin of cracked, yellowed porcelain enhanced her doll-like appearance with the complicated ruffles of a Southern belle's ball gown; her fanning had to be an affectation, as she didn't seem to sweat. And at the far end of the glade, the unnaturally young Queen Namaah sat on an ornate throne, the arms and back of which were capped with authentic-looking human skulls. At her feet, a familiar figure lounged, her pale skin almost glowing against the black velvet of her Queen's costume. Her hair was tied with a blood-red kerchief, holding the silver flood back from her face. As if feeling his gaze, Nim quickly stood and turned toward him.

"Peter, darling!" The petite young thing took three steps away from the throne and extended a hand in invitation, one he gladly accepted. He was across the clearing and holding her almost before she could blink, thrilling at the taut, almost frightened tension in her form before she softened, caught his *Ovis canadensis* horns and pulled him down for a kiss. He crushed her to his bare chest, their mouths meshing until she pushed away, gulping for breath.

"It's nice to see you, too," he quipped, setting the tiny minxette down onto her feet.

"I was beginning to wonder if you were coming," she teased, smoothing out the skirt of her costume with both palms. "This place is a bore without you."

"You know I'd never stand you up, Nim. I just had some things to do, first." Peter squirmed under her assessing gaze. He didn't like keeping secrets from her, but some things were better not spoken of, and his meetings with the exiled queen of Spring were definitely in that category. While Nim and the rest of the Autumn Court had no love for the Summer King's empirical rule, there was a world of difference between quietly grousing about Grandfather Thunder's tyranny and actually doing something about it. Peter was proud of his part, fulfilling an important role by pretending to be part of the vapid Vichy Spring Court that had bargained for a place in Miami after the old Spring Queen's Court had been

run out into the Everglades. All he had to do was play up the shallow horn-dog persona, and no one, even the Duchess of Spring, looked any deeper, giving him the perfect opportunity to feed information back to the rightful Queen's ears. Eventually he'd tell Nim, when they were ready to make their move. He knew she didn't like the Summer Court's choke-hold on the city any more than he did, and when the real Spring Court was ready to make its play, he had no doubt she'd be beside him.

"Where'd you go, love?" A full head shorter than he, even in her high-heeled boots, Nim stared up into his eyes curiously, as if searching it for a clue to his thoughts.

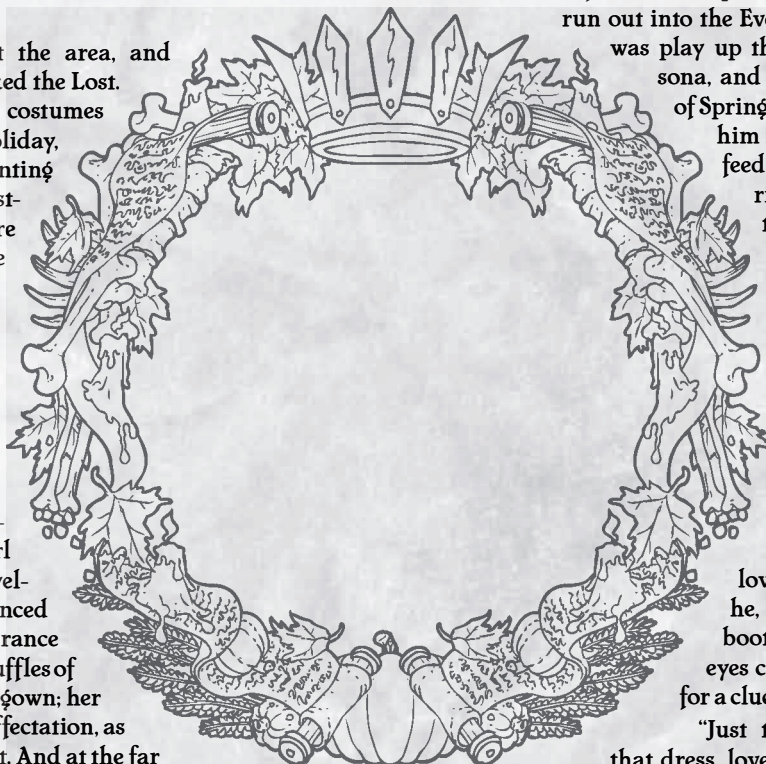
"Just thinking about you and that dress, love. My gods, you look good enough to eat!"

"Oh, good," she said, smiling mischievously. "You remember that, I'll be calling you on it later." She blushed at her own audacity before slipping a hand into his.

Peter chuckled and allowed his lovely gypsy imp to pull him off into the shadows.



He knew right away when they'd entered the Hedg. Although the entryway had been cleared enough that the Thorns hadn't physically touched him, he still felt it as he pushed out of the mortal world and into the Bramble, the sharp spines tearing away what he imagined were bits of his soul. Nim didn't seem bothered, pulling him along the narrow and winding path. His hooves bit into the sandy turf as they walked, careful not to stray into the boggy fen on each side of the trail.





"Where are we going again?" Peter looked nervously over his shoulders, down at the water and then up at the inky night sky. He felt unsafe just being here. He knew they weren't safe just being here. He could almost feel the cool, wet breath of something on his neck. There were too many things that crept along these trails...

"It's a secret, silly. If I told, it wouldn't be a secret, now would it?" Nim leaned into him a little and then hurried down the path, tugging at his hand to pull him along behind her.

At first, Peter tried to keep track of their direction as they made their way through the marshy bog. But after a while, everything looked just as familiar or unfamiliar as everything else, with no notable landmarks by which to plot his course. At times he was certain they'd lost the trail and were wandering blindly, but Nim continued onward without hesitation until he gave up trying to keep track of the direction himself and simply followed her deeper into the moonlit night.

At last, Nim paused. "Here we are!" She spread her arms wide, her broomstick skirt flaring around her ankles as she spun, showing him what they'd traveled so far to find.

Peter frowned in confusion. "Nim, there's nothing here."

"Of course there is..." She gestured to the flat round stone she was standing upon. It was flush with the ground, but a good 10 yards wide. Around the outside edge, shadows

marked what appeared to be holes every few feet. Most were empty, but two held wooden posts, set across from each other bisecting the circle. She smiled wickedly, reaching around to remove the bandana from her hair. "Come here..."

"Nim, what exactly do you..."

Standing on her tiptoes, she pulled him down to silence him with a kiss and then wrapped the bandana across his eyes like a blindfold. "It's a surprise."

Peter felt her hand in his again, urging him forward.

"Here, lie down here." She gently pushed him down and pressed hard against him until he was prone on his back against the bedrock. He wound his arms around her, pulling her close, but after a moment she squirmed out of his grasp, and he felt her weight against his chest, a bare thigh on each side of him. Her warmth almost irresistibly close, he reached for her again, but she quickly snatched his hands up and bound them together with what felt like a leather strap.

"Wha—" he began to protest, but she smothered his question with her mouth. Then far too quickly, she was gone, flying off his chest with the lithe dexterity he'd come to treasure.

"Wait, where are you going?"

"Just here..." she answered, from above his head, and he felt the hem of her skirt brush his cheek as she passed. There was a tug at his wrists and the sound of leather gently groaning as the straps tightened, pulling his arms over his head.

"Nim?" While she'd proven a willing partner to his attentions, Nim had never shown this type of initiative. Peter didn't know whether to be nervous or thankful. There was the whisper of leather boot soles on stone, and her hand trailed down his skin from fingers to shoulder and down across his bare chest.

"What's wrong, love? You're not... scared... are you?" Her hand trailed further down, as if seeking proof that fright was not the emotion ruling him at the moment. He did not disappoint her.

She moved again, stroking down the half-furred pelt of his thigh and further down, past knee and attenuated ankle to the slim curve just above his hooves. There, the leather straps tightened again, pulling until he was stretched out prone across the stone circle. He breathed deeply, anticipating what was to come next.

Nim knelt close. He could feel her breath against his face, even more warm and moist than the Florida night air. He strained to reach up to kiss her, but the bonds at his wrists and ankles held him fast. She lowered herself against him, her mouth on his as her fingers unknotted his blindfold.

He opened his eyes, finding himself enrobed in the silver fall of her hair. Loose from the scarf, her hair tumbled around them like a tent, walling out the rest of the world. She smiled down at him, and for a moment there was nothing in the world for him but her eyes.

"You've been a bad boy, Peter." She leaned back, knotting her hair behind her once more.

"Yes... yes I have... very bad. I must be punished."

"You've made some very important people very cross with you."

"I..." Peter paused, confused at her words. "I... what?"

Nim reached into the pouch at her waist, and took out a small obsidian knife that glittered like starlight. "You've been out visiting Rose in the boğs." All the playfulness had fallen out of her voice.

"I... Nim. Let me explain." Peter's mind whirled. She knew about his spying for the Spring Queen, but surely that wasn't a problem. Autumn and Spring, while not allies per se, were surely working towards the same goals. "Surely you don't like Thunder any more than we do... I mean, after all he's done?"

"Of course not. We loathe him. He's destroying the city."

"We hate him, too! Not just the new Spring, but the rightful Court and the rightful Queen. We've got a plan!"

"Everyone knows your plan, Peter. Thunder, Namaah, Maria... everyone. They know you've been playing double agent for Rose, and they're not pleased."

"But..." This made no sense. How could they know? And why... "But you're Autumn Court! Surely Namaah understands that..."

"Namaah understands that if you've been clumsy enough to tip Thunder off to your plan, you're of no use to her. Thunder would have killed you himself and Spring be damned, but he was afraid it would cause too many ripples. So he asked Namaah for a favor."

"A favor?"

Nim nodded, running the stone blade against the pad of her thumb. It sliced deeply, leaving a trail of red in its wake. "Autumn sees to your silence. Publicly, two of us went into the Hedçe and one came out. I play the part of the frightened, bereaved lover who ran in fear instead of staying to defend you when they came. It's not noble, but who could blame me? We all know what's out there. And it's mostly true, really. I really am afraid of what's coming."

She shrugged softly. "It won't convince everyone, but it's the gesture that matters. Namaah will offer some small compensation to Spring Court for the loss of one of their most loyal members. Privately, on the other hand, Maria is pleased to be rid of the rat in her midst, and both she and Thunder will owe Namaah favors for taking out the çarbaçe."

Peter struggled against his bonds, trying to summon some plan, some words to free him. But as Nimue gazed down upon him, blade in hand, fear filled his mind. No room for logic. His words spilled out in a tumultuous panic. "Nim, you love me! You can't do this! Not after everything we've shared!"

"After everything..." For the first time, he saw her eyes turn truly hard. Her voice was a whisper. "You remind me of my Keeper, Peter. You always have. From the moment you first touched me." She leaned in, her breath a warm caress against his skin. "You weren't afraid to touch me. Neither was he. You should have been afraid, Peter. You could have given me that much."

Her voice was a whispering caress in his ears, and her razor-sharp blade echoed the sound as it gently slit a long red stripe from his side down his thigh. Strangely, there was no pain, just the warmth of his blood as it pooled on the limestone bedrock beneath him. He felt the cool fall wind on his flesh, and realized that she was gone, noiselessly fleeing back down the paths before whatever it was that she'd baited with his blood came out of the Hedçe for him.

A faint sound drifted across the clearing. He couldn't turn his head far enough to see what had made it—a rustling, or maybe the sound of something testing the air, sniffing at the scent of his blood. It wasn't deep; it could be a small hobgoblin, or maybe something closer to a human nose. It could even have been his imagination. He would have liked, at least, to be able to believe it was just his imagination.

He shut his eyes, and waited.

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INTRODUCTION

*"I see a wolflike thing coming over a dark river — at the shallows —
just above a waterfall, the starlight shining up his pelt.
I see a brown oak leaf blowing far up in the sky.
I see a small bat flying. I see many other things,
running through the forest trees and slipping through the highest branches,
and they're all coming this way!"*

— RAY BRADBURY, "HOMECOMING"

Autumn is the time of fear. So say the Lost, and they aren't the only ones. As the year slouches on toward winter, summer fades and gives one last burst of heat before it's time for the harvest. Not that autumn itself scares us — but it's a good time for fear, a poetic time for fear. Twilight comes earlier and earlier, and with it comes cool air and the slow death of the green. These things add up to us. Autumn is the dusk of the year, the promise of night. And what do we do, with our Devil's Night fires and Halloween stories and horror movies? We revel in it.

As well we should.

Autumn Nightmares is a supplement that details the dangerous antagonists of the **Changeling: The Lost** setting, whether they come from the ranks of the Lost themselves, from the thorny borderland of the Hedge or remote, dread Arcadia.

AUTUMN STORIES

The topic of **Autumn Nightmares** is not exclusively autumnal, and the things found herein are usable year-round, of course. Confronting a fetch on a sweltering summer night has its own mystique, when the temperature's so high the murder rate soars. The Others may walk the earth on a still winter night, with no insects or animals abroad to mark its passing. But the inspiration of autumn is a potential strength. It's not just Halloween, though admittedly the holiday casts a long and delightful shadow over our forebrains. Autumn is the mark of transition between summer and winter, more journey than destination. Autumn matches quite nicely with stories that get darker as they go along (quite appropriate for the World of Darkness). If you want to tell a story with a particularly autumnal bent, try adding in a few extra touches for thematic purpose.

Visually, autumn is easy to get a handle on. We think of reds and golds and oranges, the colors of autumn leaves and the harvest. But as the season creeps on toward win-

ter, the colors fade to brown, and the skies turn gray more often. It implies a more limited color palette, which might be useful in describing a scene. Consider an urban street, all bleak concrete and faded asphalt, lit only by the sullen orange of streetlights and splashes of red and gold neon. The Hedge may shift into autumnal colors as well, all bits of gray rock and burnt-brown thorns with only the occasional muted red or orange flower, fruit or leaf.

Going into Chinese sources, autumn is sometimes associated with the element of metal, the color of white or silver, the direction of west, the quality of "sharp and pointing" and the organs of the lungs and large intestine. All of these things roughly accord with the same sort of *chi*, which matches potential themes. Dry winds coming out of the west might be a harbinger of a dangerous threat, and of course, the idea of sharp metal has its place in antagonistic stories. Is a knife the traditional killing implement of autumn? It would be interesting if there's more to these slasher movies than one would originally assume.

And, of course, read Ray Bradbury. *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and the stories of *The October Country* are nothing short of a passionate series of love-letters written to the season of autumn and all the thrills and dread to be found within. If you can't find some inspiration there to provide a neat twist for your chronicle, you're not looking.

FEAR AS A THEME

The World of Darkness is a horror setting, but **Changeling: The Lost** is not solely a horror game. It has a strong core of horror, yes, but fear and terror and revulsion don't govern every waking moment of a changeling's life. There needs to be contrast and respite for fear to work. A story built around fear benefits greatly from the traditional pacing of a narrative story — specifically, the slow build toward a climax. As the story approaches the climax, of course, there's room to throw in a number of potential shocks that blindsides the players

with a sudden burst of gore or danger. These shocks are best used with some restraint, however. Too many, and the players begin to anticipate the next one instead of focusing on the surroundings and enjoying the slow build of suspense. It's also true that movies have a slight edge over roleplaying in this regard; a horrific image can cause a more sudden shock if the eye can take it in all at once, whereas a Storyteller has to spend a little more time describing it.

Most fears are somewhat external by nature, and that comes with the most basic element of a fear: the loss of control. If we have perfect control over a situation, then there's nothing to worry about, right? So fear begins with something that we cannot control, and therefore poses the threat of doing us harm that we can't prevent. This can begin internally, of course: something within us provides the possibility of doing harm to ourselves without meaning to. For the *Lost*, their eroding Clarity is a strong way to address this theme. If your senses lie to you, telling you that a harmless person is a monster or that a vicious threat is an innocuous person or thing, you are unable to fairly judge what actions might keep you safe.

And then there are the external threats — which, notably, are the focus of **Autumn Nightmares**. It's possible to be afraid of an environmental shift, of course; apocalyptic horror stories play heavily on the fear of a world that cannot provide you with security or even consistency. The Hedge represents the dread of a de-powering and dangerous environment to a lesser degree, while Arcadia as it appears in the fragmented memories of the *Lost* is the more extreme interpretation. But the Hedge and Arcadia are dangerous not just because of the environmental hazards they pose and the isolation from safety and support but because of their denizens.

Which is where antagonists come in. Again, one can't control a killer's desire to kill, one can only attempt to survive an encounter with him, perhaps even by removing his ability to kill by trapping or killing him. A key element of dread is the thought of another living being actively wishing us harm, be it from vicious animal instinct, reasoned logic or mad sadism. This is one of the reasons why we so gladly indulge in an entire book devoted to the antagonists of **Changeling**, to be frank. The mercurial nature of fae folklore is a perfect fit for a wide variety of antagonists. They are almost impossible to control, save for discovering whatever rules they abide by — never really our own — and then using their rules against them. And so it is here. Certainly, some antagonists can be disposed of with brute Ogrish strength and Beast savagery, but there's always the opportunity for an antagonist that challenges a protagonist to think outside the box, to trick Rumpelstiltskin into revealing his name. Sometimes it takes logic. Sometimes it takes illogic or luck. It's always tricky.

But then again, if you could successfully defeat an enemy every time, there'd be nothing to worry about.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Autumn Nightmares is an antagonist book, and like all proper such books, devotes itself to the discussion of how to use the antagonists within to best effect. This may not be the only word on the dangerous enemies to be found within the world of **Changeling: The Lost**, but it should provide a solid foundation.

Chapter One: Rivals starts off on what some would consider the safer side (though they'd likely be wrong), detailing antagonist changelings and mortals. On the changeling side, there's discussion of how to use the more extremist form of antagonists, from the solitary menaces of the Mad to the organized cells of militia and bridge-burners. Then the chapter moves on to talk about human antagonists, be they unwitting mortals endangering a fae society they know nothing about or the ensorcelled with an axe to grind. A number of sample characters provide instant antagonists to drop into any chronicle, from the lunatic King of Cats to the ensorcelled vampire Rolf Reiter.

Chapter Two: Gentle Lords and Fair Ladies delves into the ways, whys and wherefores of the True Fae themselves. Here we discuss how they appear to others, both the changelings they take and the mortals they pursue, and some potential explanations for where the True Fae came from and why they are the way they are. Rules governing their interaction with the mortal world are also discussed, allowing for more detail in running conflicts between the *Lost* and their terrifying Keepers. Here also we discuss the Charlatans, those Others who have been banished or marooned outside Arcadia, often disguised as something far less dangerous than what they are. A selection of sample antagonists, both Gentry and Charlatans, is also provided.

Chapter Three: Horrors Within, Horrors Without moves into discussion of fae menaces not fully of Arcadia or born of mortal flesh. The first part of the chapter examines the fetch in greater detail, offering a variety of new rules and story ideas to further flesh out these warped mirror-images of the *Lost*. The second part offers more information on those hobgoblins that populate the Hedge, and a number of new "breeds" of hobgoblin with which to menace a troupe, from the sometimes helpful Hedge Beasts to the gruesome formlessness of the enticers.

Here and there throughout the book, we reference the setting of the Trident freehold of Miami, as described in Appendix Two of **Changeling: The Lost**. When we do so, it's with a twofold intent: first, to flesh out the Miami setting a bit farther and second, to provide clear examples of how a Storyteller could use the material in this book to add to an existing chronicle. So when Maria Thorne's fetch is detailed using the ideas present in this book, look at this also as potential inspiration for how to flesh out fetches in interesting ways based on pre-existing characters in your own chronicle. This approach will continue in **Winter Masques**, and on throughout the other supplements of the **Changeling** line. We hope you find it useful and evocative.

And that's enough said. Please, by all means, read on.





e had me up against the Hedge wall, the thorns biting through my jacket and into my back. Blood dribbled down, and I could feel how the barbs were drinking from me.

They called him Todd the Lion, because, well, shit, he looked more than a little like a lion. I'd heard the stories about him, but never thought I'd meet him. But when I got in close with the King, Todd found me.

He paced in front of me as I hung there on the thorns, his wormy little Glamour-slut trailing him (stupid girl looked 10 kinds of broken the way she was twitching and gnawing her lower lip bloody).

The Hedge shifted and twitched with every step. His anger was palpable. Leaves curled and darkened away from him. I could smell his musk.

"We've got a little group, as I'm sure you know," he said. As if to explain, he held up his wrist. His tawny fur was shaved, there, and on the bare skin I could see the tattoo of a hand holding a pistol. "The Summer Court isn't protecting anybody anymore. So we're going to take

up the job. But, to do so, we're going to have to clean house."

And then he turned and shot me in the kneecap with a pistol I didn't even know he had. I screamed. So did the Hedge. Something bird-like screeched off in the distance. His little human freak giggled, and chewed her fingernails.

He ripped me down off the wall.

"Crawl back. Doorway's about a hundred yards down, and should still be there if you crawl fast enough. When you get back, tell your King we're coming for him."

CHAPTER I

Rivals

No rose without a thorn, or love without a rival.

— TURKISH PROVERB

THROUGH A MIRROR DARKLY: OTHER CHANGELINGS

For all the potential foes a newly returned changeling may face upon her exodus, few are at once as familiar and frightening as her fellow escapees. While beasts from the Hedge might threaten her body and the Others threaten her soul, a rival changeling can threaten her very Clarity. Whether the rival is a lone madman driven to murder by the shattered remnants of his psyche or an organized and regimented cadre of bridge-burners, when a changeling is put up against one of her own, it throws her own plight into sharp relief. There but for the grace of God (or Fate, if you prefer) goes she — what choices brought these two damaged individuals to their present circumstances, and how slight were the differences between those choices?

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ROGUE CHANGELING

What makes a changeling turn against her own kind? In a world with so many threats lurking in the shadows — the Others, vengeful fetches, hungry Hedge-beasts — why would a changeling throw away even the minor security of greater changeling society? The answer, unfortunately, is not a simple one, and it varies widely from changeling to changeling. Fear is perhaps the most common motivation, followed closely by madness. Other changelings are motivated by greed, or a kind of misguided veneration of the Gentry. Still others are driven by some all-consuming goal or obsession — in itself a form of madness, but a more focused and directed madness than the general fractured sanity that so often plagues the Lost.

Of course, motive alone is hardly the be-all and end-all of a changeling's journey down the broken path. Motiva-

tions push different individuals down different paths — an Ogre driven by fear might become a staunch militiaman, ready to sacrifice body and soul (and the lives of a few expendable troops) to keep the Others at bay. That same fear might drive a shadow Darkling with mystical inclinations to become the leader of a bridge-burner cell. Oftentimes, understanding the role a rogue changeling chooses for himself can aid in understanding his motives.

Changelings are nothing if not mercurial, and it isn't uncommon to see one of the rogue Lost drift from one category to another. Perhaps the changeling goes toe to toe with one of the Gentry and comes out victorious, shifting her perception of the True Fae from figures of sheer terror to something that can be exploited for gain. Maybe a privateer's Fae "patron" abandons him, forcing him to seek some other protection from vengeful members of the local freehold. Some even manage to rehabilitate themselves enough to rejoin changeling society, though this is admittedly a rare occurrence.

THE MAD

The events of a changeling's captivity and escape are often so traumatic as to inflict irreparable harm to the escapee's psyche. While many at least partially come to grips with their new lives and find solace in the society of the local freehold, others are so shattered by the experience that they never truly recover and cannot even interact functionally with their own kind. These sad, solitary souls eke out a living wherever they can, often on the outskirts of the freehold's territory. Many are Courtless; a few join Courts by swearing their own, personal oaths to one of the seasons

Rogue Changelings and the Courts

In most freeholds, the Courts as mystical pledges between an individual changeling and a season and the Courts as social and political entities made up of changelings all sworn to the same season are synonymous. When a changeling joins the Summer Court, for example, she swears her fealty to Summer by proxy when she makes her pledge to the Autumn King. Thereafter, she is a member of the Summer Court in both the mystic and the political sense.

This isn't always the case, however. While certainly a more difficult prospect, it isn't entirely unreasonable that a changeling might enter his or her own pledge directly with the season, in much the same way that the Court founders did when they first created the Great Courts. Such an ordeal likely involves an arduous quest through the Hedge or some similarly significant trial, but it can be done — and changelings who are, for whatever reason, not welcome in polite freehold society have all the more reason to try.

Bear this in mind when looking at the statistics for the sample antagonists throughout this section. Just because a ravaging privateer is listed as belonging to a Court doesn't mean he'll be showing up at the society ball any time soon.

without ever joining the established organization of the local Courts.

MOTIVES

As the name suggests, insanity is the most common "motive" among those changelings collectively referred to as "the Mad." Changeling society is, as a rule, remarkably tolerant of the quirks and foibles of its members, so those who are rejected by the freehold are by definition extreme in their madness. Occasionally, the Mad might congregate into lunatic motleys, each reinforcing the others' derangements, but most are far too lost inside themselves to even associate with others of their ilk. Those with severe, obvious and truly dangerous afflictions, such as homicidal mania or sociopathic tendencies, are usually dealt with by the Courts in one way or another (how harshly depends entirely on the Court in question), but those whose derangements are more subtle often slip through the cracks. Isolated and broken, these unfortunate wretches dwell on the fringe of changeling society, going through the motions of whatever passes for normalcy in their shattered minds.

Second only to madness, fear is perhaps the chief motivator of the Mad. Fear is a natural reaction to the long enslavement every changeling suffers through in Arcadia,

and most of the Lost experience a healthy dose, particularly immediately following their escape. For most, that fear is, if never entirely erased, then at least brought under control and channeled into caution or a healthy survival instincts, but when the barriers of the mind are not as strong as they should be that fear can creep in and taint every aspect of a changeling's life. She fears the Others, for they might return at any moment to take her back. She fears the Courts, for the ever-changing dance of politics might push her from her position of safety. And, ultimately, she fears even her own Lost brethren, for who can say that any smiling face might not hide a traitor, that any hand extended in friendship might not conceal cruel manacles of iron? Thus withdrawn into themselves, the fearful Mad become intensely paranoid and self-reliant. They may not appear to be gibbering madmen to outward appearances, but woe betide any changeling who has the ill fortune to leave a shadow of suspicion in the mind of one of the Mad.

Greed is a comparative rarity in the motivations of the Mad, although it is not absent by any means. Not all of these poor wretches are gibbering lunatics incapable of functioning in the real world — just as mortal sociopaths, some of the Mad are erudite, clever and charming, with a pleasant façade concealing a cold, utterly selfish core. Such changelings are often loners, preying on their own kind for money, power or even the simple thrill of the hunt. Greed-driven Mad may be privateers, selling their Lost kin to hobgoblins or the Fae, or their goals might be more mundane: murder, theft or the acquisition of some intangible they perceive as being blocked by another changeling. Perhaps the broken Lost covets another's lover, or the adulation given to a renowned poet. What separates the Mad from any other changeling with the Vice of Greed is the lengths to which the insane changeling will go to acquire the object of his desire. Most changelings would be content to draw the line at rumor-mongering or petty theft; the Mad thinks nothing of going so far as assault, murder or even abduction.

Worship of the True Fae is less common among isolated Mad than among small groups or cults, but it is not unheard of. Most often, a Mad changeling's primary motivator is fear of the Others, which, much as ancient humans venerated the destructive power of nature, can lead to worship of the Gentry in a misguided hope of placating them. Other times, the worship of the Fae came first — the Others are, after all, creatures of madness and inscrutability, and prolonged contemplation may shatter the bonds of sanity. A lone worshipper of the Gentry is often indistinguishable from a privateer, especially when all one has to examine is the aftereffects of his handiwork. But where a privateer is motivated by some sort of personal gain, the Mad perform their terrible, Clarity-shattering deeds for no other reason than because it's what the Gentry want.

Compulsions drive the actions of many of these unfortunates, but in most cases they aren't a primary motivation toward becoming an antagonist. A fearful paranoiac might

be driven to stack empty bottles in intricate, almost-impossible patterns as a way to ward off the Others, but that is far less a motive for using the character as an antagonist than the fact that his all-consuming fear of being betrayed by the Winter Court leads him to set off crude, homemade explosives in their primary gathering spots. The sort of compulsion that makes a compelling primary motivation for a **Changeling** chronicle is the sort that directly intersects — and contradicts — with the goals of the characters. A madman who believes that every changeling in the city draws the Others closer and is compelled to murder to push them away or one compelled to destroy all traces of his former life — including friends, family and loved ones — is the type of compelled that makes a chilling antagonist.

SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

Most often, the Mad “evolve” into a different classification of antagonist simply by falling in with a group that can accept their unique handicap. Depending on the nature of this new group, it might be beneficial to the Lost, perhaps even serving as the first stepping stone toward rehabilitation, or it might send him spiraling further into the depths of insanity.

The chief block to most of the Mad coming into the fold is simply overcoming the ingrained fear and isolation. Even those not primarily motivated by fear tend to have a healthy dose of it, and overcoming that is a huge stumbling block, both for the Mad herself and the members of her new family. Obviously, this process is made much easier if the goals and motives of the group are compatible with the changeling’s own madness. A greedy sociopath out for monetary enrichment and the thrill of the hunt isn’t likely to join a self-sacrificing militia, but might well find a privateer band to his liking.

One of the Mad might fall in with a militia, especially if his primary motivation is fear. Not just any fearful lunatic will do, however; those who gravitate toward the militias tend to be those whose fear makes them lash out at those around them. Ogres, Elementals and Wized are particularly likely to react to their fear in this way, and thus many of the Mad who join up are drawn from these seemings. Greedy changelings might be drawn to the militia if the promise of a soldier’s pay (whether in money, favors or Hedge bounty) catches their eye, but as many militias are strictly volunteer organizations, this is less common. The truly insane and compelled are rarely a good match for the militia as such changelings are frequently unreliable in battle. Unsurprisingly, Fae-worshippers are far from welcome in the militias, and are dealt with brutally whenever they’re found, whether they’re within the ranks or outside them.

Bridge-burner cells are more common places for the Mad to end up, and some individual lunatics adopt the ethos without prompting or patronage. Bridge-burners, after all, are generally less rational than even the fanatics among the militias. At least the militias have a concrete, rational

goal (however far-fetched it might seem); the bridge-burners’ effort seems Herculean in its scope. Still, that makes it a fine place for the Mad, the compelled and the fearful. The Mad are just deranged enough to think the idea might work, while the compelled are obviously well suited to the obsessive, nigh-endless task of closing off access to the Hedge, and the fearful — well, frightened people will try just about anything to escape the object of their fear. The greedy and the Fae-struck are seldom drawn to the bridge-burners; there’s precious little reward for it, and much as a Mad Fae-worshiper might hate and fear the godlings he venerates, he’s certainly not likely to risk incurring their wrath by trying to shut them out of this world.

The Lost find their way into privateering and loyalism more frequently than organized changelings, but still less often than the Lost themselves fall into other organized groups. Obviously, those twisted by worship of the Others are the most likely to take up privateering, but other motivating factors can have the same result. Self-preservation can make an individual do things he would never consider otherwise — a fearful changeling, faced with a choice between a return to his own durance or the betrayal of a fellow Lost, is very likely indeed to sell out his compatriot. A greed-driven serial killer might quite happily trade off the thrill of the kill for the thrill of seeing his victim’s terror when the Gentry come a-calling; the killer’s greed isn’t for monetary compensation but for the sadistic joy that comes with the honing of his craft. The insane follow their own strange whims, and a passing fancy or deep dementia might send one careening into the cruel embrace of the Gentry.

STORYTELLING THE MAD

The Mad are among the most tragic antagonists a motley might face. While some of the Mad can be called truly wicked, many are simply confused and broken, unable to comprehend what they’re doing or why it’s wrong. Some might be salvageable with time and extensive care; many are so far gone that the only merciful thing to do, for both the Mad and the rest of changeling society, is to put them down as quickly as possible.

Mad antagonists are seldom the stuff long-term chronicle villains are made of. The more irrational an antagonist, the less ability to enact long-term schemes he possesses, and some cannot even manage to keep a low profile. For a long-term chronicle, a better option for incorporating the Mad might be the *search* for a lone madman. The characters are confronted with evidence of his deeds after the fact — whether murder or abduction or some other act inimical to the well-being of the freehold. The chronicle then takes on elements of a police procedural story, although with changelings’ ability to gather clues through dreams and extract binding oaths of truthfulness from suspects, it becomes rather more interesting than the average clue-fest on prime-time TV.

There are exceptions to every rule, of course, and the Mad are, by their very nature, suited to exceptions. When one of the broken and Lost possesses the full command of his faculties *and* the unhinged psyche of a lunatic, the result can be an absolutely effective and terrifying long-term foe. Think of Hannibal Lector (the version from *Silence of the Lambs* only, please) or Mr. Croup and Mr. Vandemar from *Neverwhere*. All three are undeniably insane and would fit under the umbrella of “the Mad” in **Changeling: The Lost**, and all would be ideally suited as long-term chronicle antagonists, capable of menacing the characters in the physical, social or mental arenas.

Above all, when constructing a story around one of the Mad, remember that with the possible exception of an individual changeling’s fetch, a deranged changeling is possibly the closest thing you’ll find to a “dark reflection” of one of your troupe’s characters. Other rogue changelings may be involved in causes the players or their characters might find unconscionable or utterly incomprehensible, but every changeling carries a kernel of madness within her, and along with that comes the recognition that the Mad are only a few short steps down that road. Remind the players subtly of this: maybe the Mad hums a snatch of his favorite song, or mumbles semi-coherently about his mortal life — a life that sounds distressingly similar to the character’s own.

BEAUTY AND HER BEAST

Their names are known in nearly every freehold in the tri-state area, and not in a pleasant way. Beholden to no Court, sworn to no freehold, the Fairest called Damiana and her grotesque companion Bert have carved a bloody swath through nearly a half dozen cities, taking their amusement where they find it. Sometimes that amusement entails pushing the laws of hospitality to the breaking point, upsetting the delicate social balance of the local Lost and then blowing town, leaving chaos in their wake. Other times, it involves using an unsuspecting “townie” as bait to lure one of the Gentry into a brutal ambush in the hopes of killing it. Other, darker rumors paint a more disturbing picture, linking a rash of mysterious deaths and disappearances in various freeholds to the duo’s presence.

The origins of this particular odd couple is a mystery — they often tell wildly diverging and contradictory stories of how they met, when they talk about their past at all. In one version, Bert was the hunter sent by Damiana’s Keeper to drag her back to Faerie, only to turn traitor himself when he first laid eyes on her. According to another, Damiana murdered Bert’s Keeper while they were still in Arcadia, and they escaped together. In yet another, they met in a bar in Cincinnati and found each other’s company to their liking. The sheer variety of the stories, and the detail with which they are constructed, indicates a pathological dishonesty that would stun the mortal psychiatric community.

Despite the duo’s mercurial habits and flexible approach to the truth, one constant noted by those “lucky”

enough to have interacted with these two is the startlingly intense loyalty and devotion Bert shows toward his partner. In one notable instance, verified by the local gossips of the Spring Court, Damiana ran afoul of a cabal of mortal sorcerers who contrived some spell to bind her and cart her off to their laboratory for study. Bert’s subsequent rescue effort resulted in the incineration of four city blocks, 12 deaths (including all five mages) and at least a half million dollars in property damage. For her part, Damiana seems to play to the Ogre’s obvious romantic intentions toward her to ensure that that bond remains firmly cemented. Changelings who have interacted with both, especially those of the Lost with a knack for reading people, have insisted that Bert remains utterly clueless about her manipulation; such knowledge could prove valuable leverage to a changeling looking to drive a wedge between the two.

DAMIANA

Quote: “I’m bored. You’re boring. Bert? This person is boring me.”

Background: The woman who would become the changeling Damiana was born into a conservative, very religious family in New York in 1937. The first 20 years of her life were spent as a good, Christian girl “should” behave — she learned how to cook and keep house from her mother, never smoked or drank or associated with boys unchaperoned and looked forward to nothing more than being a good wife to one of the local boys around her age and producing lots of fat babies.

All that changed in the autumn of ’57. On a family vacation in England (her big brother had been stationed there during World War II and fallen in love with the countryside), she met a gentleman of the finest features and peculiar violet eyes who turned her world with his devilishly enticing smile. His words were honey in her ears, and her lifelong morals vanished like the English morning fog, and with a smile and a song, the Greve of Stolen Lovers bore her away across the Hedge to serve as his concubine. Her name was stripped from her along with her dignity and her virtue, and for two score years and five, she was only Damiana.

Damiana escaped at last when her Keeper, growing bored with the limited experiences he could have with a partner of human configuration, began to ignore her in favor of more bizarre experiments in fleshcrafting the “perfect” lover. She found her way back through the Hedge to the last place she remembered from the mortal realm: the English countryside where she had vacationed in her last days with her family. Shortly thereafter, she ran afoul of a band of privateers who took her in chains and would have sold her at the Goblin Market, if not for the timely intervention of an Ogre named Bert. With the privateers dead and nowhere else to go, Damiana latched onto Bert as lifeline and protector. The pair swears no oath to Court or freehold, holding only to their own pledge to each other as they travel the world, just looking for a good time.

Description: Tall and full-figured, Damiana resembles a composite of some of the greatest film goddesses of Hollywood's golden age: legs like Betty Grable, a figure like Marilyn Monroe, Rita Hayworth's red hair and Marlene Dietrich's eyes. Already pretty before her abduction, her time in Faerie sculpted her features into something nearly unearthly. To those who can see through the Mask, she truly is unearthly, shining from within with a cold, clear light. She dresses provocatively, but in archaic styles from the time before her abduction — an anachronism that complements her physical looks.

Although she can exhibit poise and grace when she feels so inclined, in her natural state Damiana is restless and often fidgety. Whether it's bouncing one foot while she sits or twirling the long knives she often carries, Damiana is almost always in *some* kind of motion. Her moods, likewise, are seldom a constant thing — though she tends to avoid overt displays of anger, Damiana can slide from flirtatiously amused to dangerously bored in the space of a heartbeat. Those who have seen Damiana bored wisely get the hell out of her way; a jaded, bored debutante can be a *hell* of a lot scarier than a raging Ogre.

Storytelling Hints: Twenty years of repression by her religious upbringing followed by 45 years of the most debased carnality has done a number on Damiana's psyche. Any concept of propriety or social mores has been scoured from her — if it amuses her, she will do it, if it doesn't, it's not worth her time. And yet, beneath the jaded libertine lurks the heart of a girl terrified that, one day, all this glorious freedom will be taken away from her again. Her Keeper did it once; the privateers who took her nearly did it again. Virtually the only stimulus that can provoke true rage in Damiana is the threat of being confined or locked up in some way. Often, her companion is the only one who can talk her out of one of these fits.

Damiana is fully aware of the romantic feelings Bert has for her, and while she cannot bring herself to reciprocate, she is not above leading him on just enough to keep him with her and keep him loyal to her. Her attitude may seem callous, but in truth she needs Bert as much as he needs her, perhaps more. Along with her pathological terror at being imprisoned again, Damiana has subconsciously latched onto Bert as the only one who can truly keep her safe. This, of course, makes her feel bound to the Ogre, which feeds into her fear of entrapment, which causes her to toy with Bert's feelings for her like a cat playing with a mouse — the key difference being that the typical mouse doesn't outweigh the cat by a factor of three to one.

Seeming: Fairest

Kith: Bright One

Court: Courtless

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Occult (Fae) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Contortionist, Dance) 4, Brawl 1, Weaponry (Knives) 3

Social Skills: Empathy 3, Expression 4, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 5, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Barfly 1, Fleet of Foot 3, Striking Looks 4

Willpower: 4

Clarity: 5

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Health: 3

Wyrd: 3

Contracts: Dream ••, Hearth •, Vainglory ••••

Pledges: Motley Pledge

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	Chance	—
Knife	1(L)	—	5	—

BERT

Quote: *"Is this guy bovverin' you then, Dams?"*

Background: Bert's life in Hackney was a hard one from the get go. Not just because he had the misfortune of being saddled with a stupid, tag-along little brother named Ernie, though God knew that got him beat up more than once in school. Not just because his mum was a smackhead who couldn't hold a job, though God knew that left him hungry more nights than not. Not even just because he was a little slow in the head and his teachers said he'd never amount to much, though God knew that sent him to bed crying more times than not. No, Bert's life was just plain hard, and there wasn't one easy sign you could point to. It was just life, and the only way to beat a hard life like that was to be harder. The boys who picked on him for being one half of "Bert and Ernie" started going home with bloody noses, and soon the teasing stopped. Bert got a job after school, working the docks down by the River Lea, and he stopped going to bed hungry. And as soon as he was old enough, he quit school, and if the teachers didn't stop saying he'd never make it, at least he didn't have to hear it.

Bert's memory of his abduction and durance are hazy. He has vague recollections of looking down at the river on the way to work one morning, and seeing reflected in the surface a fleet of strange ships. He remembers hands shoving him and falling toward the river, and then nothing but an interminable period of brutal, backbreaking labor, possibly on one of those strange ships. Then he remembers slip-

ping over the rail, swimming and swimming till he thought his lungs would burst, seaweed and coral tearing at his flesh until at last he surfaced in the icy water of the Thames.

He came ashore aching and shivering, only to run across a gang of toughs harassing the prettiest woman he'd ever laid eyes on. Well, that just wouldn't sit with old Bert, even if the toughs *were* a weird-looking bunch. He was bigger and stronger than all of them. The Ogre managed to scare off the privateers, and when that pretty lady thanked him and said her name was Damiana, Bert fell in love. Damiana was a Yank, and Bert had had his fill of London, so as soon as they could they hopped a plane to America to raise a little Hell.

Description: While not especially large as Ogres go, Bert is still an impressive physical specimen, with the build of a longshoreman and the face of a monster. His skin is a deep orange, covered with coarse, black body hair. Sallow red eyes peer from beneath beetled brows, and his broad, flat nose and prominent tusks give his face a warthog cast. His partner dresses in the high-society style of the 1940s, but Bert tends to wear whatever is sturdy enough to hold up and keep him warm — denim work shirts, thick trousers and steel-toed boots are his usual garb of choice. He speaks with a thick, decidedly lower-class London accent, and sometimes when it suits his fancy, he enjoys confusing the Americans by making up nonsensical expressions of “Cockney slang.”

Storytelling Hints: Where Damiana is the wild, mercurial one of the pair, Bert is a steady, plodding monstrosity. Having lived through two lifetimes of abuse (once as a child and again as a galley slave in Faerie), the bully mentality is firmly ensconced in him. He takes a certain pleasure in showing just how tough he is (especially to those weaker than he), but his real motivation is Damiana's happiness. The Ogre has been utterly smitten with the Bright One since he laid eyes on her, and follows her lead in all things. He occasionally reins her in when she looks to be getting herself into trouble he can't get her out of, but usually he's content to let her run the show.

Although he sometimes plays the fool, Bert is entirely aware that Damiana could never feel for him the way he feels for her. To some extent, he's made his peace with that, loving and protecting her in his own way, but any handsome young rake who catches Damiana's eye would do well to keep an eye on her hulking, quiet companion.



Seeming: Ogre
Kith: Water-Dweller
Court: Courtless
Entitlements: None
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve 4
Physical Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2
Mental Skills: Investigation 2, Medicine (First Aid) 3
Physical Skills: Athletics (Swimming) 2, Brawl (Dirty Tricks) 4, Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Weaponry (Improvised) 2
Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Intimidation 3, Streetwise (Docks) 3
Merits: Giant 4, Fighting Style: Brute Force 3
Willpower: 6
Clarity: 5
Virtue: Charity
Vice: Wrath
Initiative: 4
Defense: 2
Speed: 12
Health: 10
Wyrd: 2
Contracts: Elements (Water) ••, Fang and Talon (Fish) ••, Stone •••
Pledges: Motley Pledge
Glamour/per Turn: 11/2
Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	9	—
Crowbar	2(B)	—	8	—

THE KING OF CATS

Quote: “Hello, little mouse.”

Background: Every city has them: feral cats roam the streets and back alleys, their presence a ubiquitous part of the background tapestry of city life. In the United States alone, between 20 and 40 million “domestic” cats eke out what existence they can, distant memories of divinity lurking in their feline hearts. Few people even notice their presence, and fewer still remember them after their paths cross. But the cats are there, and they have their king.

He goes by many names: Tybalt or Old Tim or Tom Tildrum as the fancy strikes him. The Lost of the Great Courts avoid him, even his so-called brethren in the Autumn Court. Whatever bargain he struck with the season was struck on his own terms, one the Leaden Mirror had no part in. He prowls the back alleys and slums of the city, sometimes in the form of a feral tabby the size of a large dog, other times in the form of a ragged, wild-eyed homeless man, but always with his train of faithful feline retainers.

Fighting Style: Brute Force

This Fighting Style Merit was originally presented in the *Strange Alchemies* sourcebook for *Promethean: The Created*. See p. 57 of that book for a full accounting, but in brief, Bert’s three dots in the Fighting Style allow him to perform the following maneuvers:

- **Falling Pillar:** By spending a Willpower point, Bert may gain 9 again on a Brawl attack. This expenditure does not add the usual three dice to his dice pool, and he must have both hands free to use the maneuver.

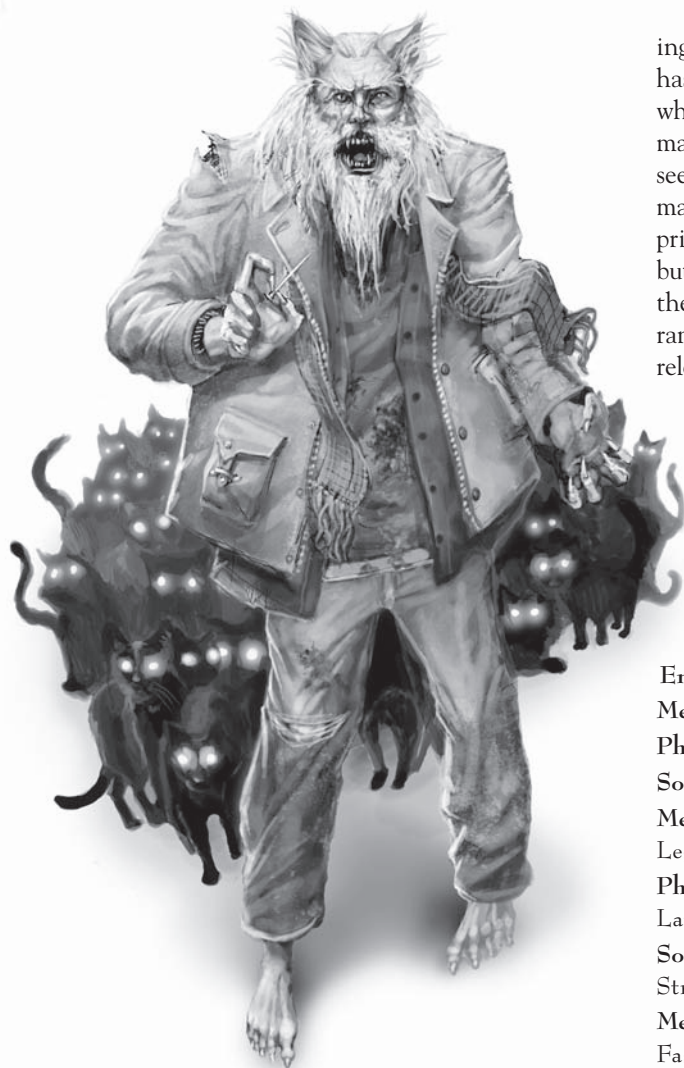
- **Crush and Bite:** When Bert makes a Strength + Brawl roll to damage a grappled opponent, the damage is lethal instead of bashing.

- **Juggernaut:** When making an unarmed all-out attack, Bert gains a +4 bonus to his dice pool instead of the usual +2. All of the standard restrictions and drawbacks of the all-out attack apply. If the attack fails, he loses a single point of Willpower.

Children in the neighborhood tell tales of the monster cat that will eat you up if he finds you; your only hope of survival to run to the nearest church and scratch your initials on the wall with an old nail. The wisest of the local kids carry a nail in their pockets as a good luck charm, but a few still go missing every month. Of course, children go missing in places like this for many different reasons — parental abductions, runaways and indiscriminate gang violence are rampant. The high incidence of missing children probably isn’t *all* the work of the King of Cats. Probably.

Description: The King of Cats most often appears in animal form through the use of the Fang and Talon ••••• Contract, Cloak of the Bear’s Massive Form. In this guise, the King is a huge feral cat, easily the size of a bobcat or similar wildcat. His tabby coat is ratty and mangy, showing signs of poor nutrition and disease, and he bears the scars of countless back-alley fights. One ear is tattered and half-torn, gaps in the fur on his flanks show shiny, puckered scars and at least one open wound bears testament to recent battle (this suppurating wound is actually a part of his mien, not an actual injury). His bright green eyes gleam with a cruel intelligence, and have a tendency to glow even in absolute darkness.

In his natural form, the King is a bedraggled, wild-bearded man who dresses in the torn and filthy layers common among the homeless. His eyes, though, are the same bright and feral green as his feline form. To those with eyes to see, his mien is much the same, save for the vertically



slitted pupils and constantly swiveling, triangular ears. His garments, in the eyes of the fae, resemble threadbare finery in a mockery of the garb of royalty: robes of stained satin and velvet, with a fur stole of dubious, probably feline, origin. The Mantle of Autumn hangs about him, creating an air of dread stillness that heralds his coming.

In either form, the good King is always accompanied by a group of stray cats, anywhere from a dozen to upwards of 30, depending on the occasion.

Storytelling Hints: The King of Cats makes an excellent antagonist early on in a chronicle, when the characters are still finding their place in the society of the Lost. Although no slouch in a fight, the King's solitary nature and feline proclivities make him better suited for a game of (pardon the expression) cat and mouse through the back alleys and bad neighborhoods of the city. Perhaps the motley learns of the strange disappearances of children in the King's territory, or perhaps one of the victims is a loved one, prompting the motley to do something about this Mad changeling.

The King of Cats surely has a motivation for hunting children who cross his path, but what that motive is has been left deliberately vague to allow you to use him in whatever capacity you prefer. Perhaps the King is simply a mad cannibal, so lost in his own delusions that he literally sees children (and anything smaller than himself, for that matter) as mice to be preyed upon. Maybe he's actually a privateer, and the children he takes end up not in his belly, but in the clutches of the Gentry. Or maybe he is following the dictates of a prophetic dream, crafting some strange, ramshackle artifact out of bones and hair and skin that will release some terrible sorcery on the world.

Of course, madness aside, the King's loyal "subjects" see much that goes on in the city with no one the wiser. If the motley can get past his madness and paranoia, the King of Cats might prove a useful source of intelligence if the price is right.

Seeming: Beast

Kith: Hunterheart

Court: Courtless

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 1

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Investigation (Tracking) 5, Occult (Local Legends) 1

Physical Skills: Athletics (Climbing) 2, Brawl (Claws) 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 4, Survival (Urban) 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Cats) 4, Intimidation 1, Streetwise 4

Merits: Common Sense 4, Direction Sense 1, Danger Sense 2, Fast Reflexes 1, Iron Stamina 1

Willpower: 3

Clarity: 4

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4

Speed: 11

Health: 9

Wyrd: 6 (Minor taboo: Cannot harm children who scratch their initials onto a wall or fence on sanctified ground)

Contracts: Fang and Talon (Felines) ••••, Hearth ••, Smoke ••

Pledges: None

Glamour/per Turn: 15/6

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Claws	0(L)	—	5	—

THE GLUTTON

Quote: “And don’t you look tasty today.”

Background: Somewhere in the Hedge on the outskirts of Miami, there is a Hollow. Gnawed out of the briars and the saw grass, this clearing is mostly empty, save for the shelves upon shelves of strange, alien foodstuffs: vile goblin fruits most changelings would deem inedible, cuts of meat from creatures best left unidentified and bizarre spices and flavorings rumored to come from Faerie itself. The local Courts warn their newer members to avoid this “Pantry” like the Gentry themselves, for its owner is an unpredictable, potentially dangerous Gristlegrinder known only as “the Glutton.” The great brute swears no oath to Court, motley or freehold, and indeed seems to live in the Hedge. Certainly he has never been seen beyond its borders by any reliable witnesses.

The Glutton spent his durance as the kitchen slave of an especially vile member of the Gentry, and during his enslavement, the Glutton picked up his Keeper’s epicurean peculiarities — including a taste for human and changeling flesh. When the Glutton escaped back to the mortal realm, the Ogre found that earthly food had become bland and tasteless for him. His hunting trips into the Hedge grew more and more frequent, until eventually he simply withdrew from changeling society altogether and began living entirely within the Hedge. The isolation has since driven him quite mad (although it’s debatable how sane he was to begin with), and today, the changelings of Miami know that they cross into the Hedge west of the Miami River and north of 19th Street at their peril. Many trods in the area lead into the Pantry, but only one leads out again, and one can never be sure when the Glutton will be home.

Description: The Glutton is a hideous, immensely fat brute of an Ogre, with greenish-brown skin like fouled swamp water. Cracked yellow teeth like old, weathered stones jut at all angles from a mouth far too big for his face, and beady, sunken orange eyes glimmer beneath heavy brows, especially when he talks about (or looks at a visitor as) food. His clothes are filthy and well-worn, and often several sizes too small for him. If a hapless changeling has not wandered into the Glutton’s Hollow for some time, his clothes may be disintegrated to the point of being little more than rags and thread. No changeling alive knows what the Glutton’s mortal guise might look like, as he never leaves the Hedge.

When encountered in his Hollow, the Glutton is very likely in the midst of preparing some vile dish, most typically a stew made from the strange meats and fruits from the Hedge’s native flora and fauna. He makes frequent expeditions into the Hedge to forage for food, however, and is just as likely to be found on one of the old, overgrown trods that crisscross the Hedge near his home. His reaction to travelers can vary widely, from a cordial dinner invitation and conversation to a wordless attempt to kill, clean and cook the interloper. Of small comfort to those unlucky enough to



meet him is that his reaction seldom changes mid-encounter; what you get when you first meet him is usually what you’re stuck with.

Storytelling Hints: The Glutton is an immensely powerful changeling as far as brute strength goes. For a group of advanced characters with a penchant for brawling, he can make for an epic battle, but he is perhaps more interesting when used as a social or mental challenge. The Glutton is a truly lonely being, and if he’s encountered in a talkative mood, the troupe has a chance to avoid ending up in the stew pot by providing companionship for a time. As the story of the Glutton’s encounter with Jack Tallow in **Changeling: The Lost** illustrates, the Glutton’s revolting personal habits and culinary stylings can make even the most silver-tongued of changelings feel queasy and off-balance. Add to that the constant, looming threat of being eaten, and you have the makings of a scene that will have the players squirming in their seats — *especially* if the Glutton is fully capable of devouring them all without breaking a sweat and the players are fully aware of that fact.

The Glutton works best as a hazard encountered in the Hedge. He lacks the ambition or connections to changeling society to be a primary antagonist, and he is too stubborn and independent-minded to willingly serve as another’s lackey. Still, with a few small tweaks, he can be woven into a larger plot easily enough. Perhaps his taste cannot be entirely satisfied by the bounty of the Hedge, and he has made a bargain with a minor lord of the Others to provide es-

caped changelings (or even abducted mortals) in return for exotic ingredients harvested from Faerie, or maybe a push by Rose Thorne to establish a toehold in Miami runs afoul of territory the Glutton sees as “his.”

Seeming: Ogre

Kith: Gristlegrinder

Court: Courtless

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 1, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 1, Stamina 5

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Craft (Cooking) 3, Medicine 2, Occult (Hedge) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl (Biting) 4, Stealth 1, Survival (Hedge) 3, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Intimidation 4, Socialize 1

Merits: Hollow (Size 2, Amenities 3, Doors 4) 9, Iron Stomach 2, Natural Immunity 1

Willpower: 6

Clarity: 2

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 4

Defense: 1

Speed: 10

Health: 10

Wyrd: 3

Contracts: Dream •••, Stone ••••

Pledges: None

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	8	—
Bite	1(L)	—	10	—

THE HAG OF HENSLOWE PARK

Quote: “Tell me your troubles, I’ll whisk them away/And then you’ll be mine, love, a year and a day.”

Background: The legend goes that, once upon a time, an old woman lived alone in a cottage on the edge of town, in what is now Henslowe Park. She was a very cruel old woman, and she kept a small, black cat that she abused most horribly. The whole town lived in fear of the old hag: mothers would lock their children indoors when she made her monthly trip into town to buy groceries, and fathers would cross the street just to avoid walking in her shadow. Teenagers dared each other to sneak into the woods and skulk as close to the cottage as they dared without being seen, and many brought back stories of bright, sad eyes, watching them from the window.

At length, the old woman fell ill, and she knew she was not long for the world. As she lay on her deathbed, her poor,

long-suffering cat leapt up onto her chest and spoke to her. “You are a sad, wicked old woman,” it said, “and your heart is as cold as the river in winter. All your life, I have kept you company when no other would, and you have repaid me only in cruelty. As I always repay in kind, now you shall come to live in my palace as my pet, and you shall know what cruelty is. And as you have kept me here for four and twenty years, so shall I keep you for four and twenty.” And then the cat sucked out her breath and the old woman died, but she did not go on to her final reward; the cat brought her to his palace in a faraway land, and for four and 20 years he kept her as cruelly as she kept him, but the old woman was a tough and heartless old thing, and she ate every sorrow and every abuse the cat heaped on her.

True to his word, when her allotted time was up, the cat turned her out, and the old woman — now an ancient, withered crone — crawled back through the thorny forests to her little cottage. If you believe the legend, she still haunts the ramshackle old cabin out there in Henslowe Park, and if you go there on a night when the air is cold and the moon is bright, and if you leave a needle wrapped in black silk thread in the ashes of the hearth and whisper the source of your worries three times, the hag will eat your sorrows, too, and for a year and a day, they will trouble you no more. But the legend also warns that when the year and a day is up, the Hag comes for you and takes you away to her hidden home in the thorny forest, where you must serve *her* for a year and a day. If you were kind and generous to others in life, the Hag treats you well enough, but if you were cruel or heartless, your durance is far less pleasant.

Description: The story above is true enough, as such things go. There *was* a cruel old woman in a cottage, and there *was* a talking cat who took her away for four and 20 years, but the old woman did not die; she was taken by one of the Gentry in the form of a cat, and her time in Faerie twisted her into something else. She spends most of her time in her Hollow now, just off the trod that connects to the front door of her cottage, emerging only to collect those poor souls who make a pledge on her Promise Stone (see the sidebar on p. 22). She appears as a thin, desiccated woman made of loose bundles of sticks, with twigs for fingers and rotted autumn leaves for hair. Her mortal Mask epitomizes the stereotype of the “wicked old witch”: sallow, pinched cheeks, sharp features and watery green eyes that seem locked in a perpetual glare.

The Hag keeps a spacious Hollow, large enough to comfortably house herself and up to five banded mortals (typically anywhere from one to three hapless souls are trapped there; the popularity of the legend has faded in recent years); these unfortunates, subject to the debilitating effects of the Hedge on Morality (see **Changeling: The Lost**, p. 220) and fed on a diet of strange goblin fruits, quickly become degenerate wretches barely recognizable as human. Those treated “well” by the Hag may look marginally better-kept, but within a few months even the best-treated of them are too far gone to save.

Storytelling Hints: The Hag of Henslowe Park makes an excellent mystery antagonist. A motley might be drawn in by a rash of disappearances among young people, or the characters might trace a series of brutal killings back to a luckless mortal released at the conclusion of his year and a day. The Lost may well assume that a rash of disappearances is symptomatic of the Others operating in the area; that's fine, it will make it all the more shocking and horrific when they realize the abductor is one of their own. The motley might try to defeat the Hag of Henslowe Park in a physical confrontation (which might be more difficult than it appears; the Hag is quite adept at Hedge Dueling and oneiromachy), or the characters might try to find the catch in the pledge that will allow a bound loved one to escape a hellish year in the Hag's Hollow.

Extensive time in the Hedge, coupled with the repeated abduction and abuse of mortals, has left the Hag of Henslowe Park quite mad. Her extremely low Clarity leaves her prone to hallucinations, and much as the Others, she is incapable

of understanding anything outside the context of her pledges. Appeals to mercy or love or familial bonds mean nothing to her now (granted, it's unlikely they would have meant much to the old witch when she was still mortal), and no act of persuasion will stay her from collecting her due.

The pledge bound into the Hag's Promise Stone is as follows:

Type: Vow

Tasks: Dreaming (–2, the Hag removes the mortal's stated worry from his dreams); Endeavor, Lesser (–1, the mortal must, at the end of the year and a day, return to thank the Hag); Forbiddance, Greater (–3, the Hag may not leave her Hollow save to fetch away an oathbreaker); Ensorcelment (–2)

Boons: Blessing, Medial (+2, the mortal gains a three- or four-dot Merit that alleviates his worry; e.g., Resources for money woes, Allies for loneliness, Encyclopedic Knowledge for academic fears); Ensorcelment (+2); Glamour (+2)

New Token: Promise Stone (••••)

This small, worn stone, etched with Fae runes of binding and sincerity, allows a changeling to invest a single pledge into the stone itself; thereafter, another party may "swear herself in" by performing a specified ritual (determined when the owner of the stone sets the pledge) over the stone. The stone's owner specifies all conditions of the pledge when he invests it into the Promise Stone, but is not bound by the pledge unless and until another swears himself in. Once the vow is active, it functions exactly as though the two individuals had entered into the pledge directly with each other.

All pledges sworn into the Promise Stone are considered vows. Multiple individuals may swear themselves into the same Promise Stone, exactly as though the stone's owner had entered into a pledge with each individual; the owner's limit on vows (Wyrd + 3) still applies.

Action: Instant

Mien: The stone appears worn smooth as though by inconceivable age. The carvings on it may occasionally shift or ooze blood.

Drawback: Setting a pledge into the Promise Stone requires the expenditure of a *dot* of Willpower, which may be bought back for eight experience points. This expenditure anchors the pledge as well as tying it to the ritual that activates the pledge. The good news is that the owner of the stone does not have to pay a Willpower point when someone invokes the pledge (the party swearing in, however, must). The owner regains this Willpower dot (or the eight experience points) if another changeling activates the Promise Stone and sets another pledge into it. The owner does not regain his lost Willpower or experience points if he himself places a new pledge in the stone (and indeed must spend *another* Willpower dot). If any pledges sworn on the stone are still active when the owner places a new pledge in the stone, he suffers all sanctions and penalties as an oathbreaker. Likewise, if the second party involved sets a new pledge, *he* is the oathbreaker. If another acquires the stone and replaces the pledge, the old pledge is voided; it is no longer in effect, but neither party is an oathbreaker.

The owner of the Promise Stone cannot refuse a pledge invoked by the Promise Stone. Anyone who performs the ritual is bound into the pledge automatically, whether the owner likes it or not. Conversely, the person swearing in need not be apprised of all the provisions of the pledge, or even that his action will bind him into a mystical pledge at all.

Catch: Any character, even one without a Wyrd rating, may bind a pledge into a Promise Stone by paying a dread cost. Once the parameters of the pledge have been spoken aloud and spent, the character must tear out his own tongue by the root and cast it into a fire (inflicting two points of lethal damage). A character with no Wyrd may have up to three pledges active at a time through the Promise Stone.



Sanctions: Abduction (+3, as Banishment, but the Hag carries off the mortal to her Hollow); Poisoning of the Boon (+2, Glamour)

Duration: Year and a Day (–3)

Note that the lesser endeavor required by the mortal is not spread as part of the legend of the Hag of Henslowe Park; the breaking of that task is what actually allows the Hag to carry off a bound mortal at the end of the year and a day.

Seeming: Wized

Kith: Oracle

Court: Autumn

Entitlements: Scarecrow Ministry

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 3, Craft 2, Occult (Pledge-lore) 4

Physical Skills: Brawl 1, Larceny 1, Stealth (Lurking) 3, Survival (Hedge) 3, Weaponry (Club) 1

Social Skills: Empathy 4, Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Hollow (Size 1, Amenities 2, Doors 1, Security 3) 7, Mantle 4, Retainer 3, Token 4

Willpower: 5

Clarity: 3

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 9

Health: 6

Wyrd: 5

Contracts: Artifice •••, Dream •••••, Eternal Autumn •••••, Fleeting Autumn ••

Pledges: At any time, the Hag typically has from one to three active pledges from her Promise Stone, as described above.

Glamour/per Turn: 14/5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	2	—
Cane	2(B)	—	3	—

THE ROARING CANCS' BRAVADO

Not all rogue changelings that might come into conflict with a motley are isolated madmen. Organized militias stand on the fringe of the freehold, willing to make any sacrifice and pay any price to beat the Others back. Bridge-burners infiltrate the Courts, seeking knowledge of the places where the Hedge runs especially close to the mortal realm and eagerly seeking any opportunity to sever those connections. And, of course, privateer bands and loyalist Gathers lurk in the Hedge, ready to snap up wayward changelings and deliver them in chains to the merchants of the Goblin Markets, or worse, to the Gentry themselves. Where a lone antagonist can be overwhelmed by a motley of characters working together and complementing each others' weaknesses, an organized group of foes might match or even outnumber the characters. Bound to one another by strong pledges, deep loyalty and conviction (however misguided it may be), these changelings can be foes every bit as dangerous as the Others.

MILITIAS AND BRIDGE-BURNERS

Humans are social, communal creatures at their core, and the Lost share that nature. Coming together for mutual defense is very much a human reaction to danger, and this sets them above the Others, or so say the Lost called militia-men and bridge-burners. The Gentry may war against each other, and their Courts may be seething hotbeds of shifting alliances and betrayals, but that's all it is: the True Fae understand alliance and treachery, but not the simple act of standing shoulder to shoulder with your neighbor in defense against a common foe. That, these groups argue, is the true source of their strength, not weapons or Contracts. Surely there must be some merit to that theory — after all, isn't the

Summer Court almost entirely founded on that principle? And yet the Iron Spear is accepted as an established part of changeling society, while militia groups and bridge-burners are marginalized and regarded as dangerous fringe elements.

The groups themselves often decry this as blatant cynicism and an example of the hegemony of the Courts. But in most cases, the truth is that the militias are rejected by the majority of changelings not out of some Court-based elitism, but because most militias give new meaning to the word “extremist.” Just as a mortal freedom fighter crosses the line into “terrorist” when he decides that innocent civilians are valid targets in the pursuit of his agenda, a warrior against the Others crosses into fanatic territory when she decides that using other changelings as expendable pawns, willing or otherwise, is an acceptable tactic in her war against the Others. Likewise, when one actively seeks to destroy a vital (albeit admittedly dangerous) resource such as the Hedge with no regard for the lives or property of one’s fellow Lost, one has left the territory of the rational and entered the realm of extremism.

The fanaticism of militiamen can have many roots, but the most common thread is a desire to assert the control they never had during their durance. Changelings drawn to the militias are often those who were fiercely independent in their mortal lives: activists, survivalists and revolutionaries. Faced with the gripping fear of a forcible return to that slavery and lack of control, it’s small wonder that more than a few Lost are willing to murder, maim and destroy anything they perceive as a threat to their newly regained liberty.

MOTIVATION

Though they may not like to admit it, most militiamen and bridge-burners are motivated by fear. Fear is the emotion that prompts extreme reactions, perhaps more than any other — love may have launched a thousand ships, but fear has launched a thousand crusades and a thousand inquisitions. Fear has brought the mortal world to the very brink of destruction, so it is perhaps understandable that fear can drive a changeling to take the fight to the Gentry by any means necessary, or to take on the seemingly impossible task of sealing off the Hedge. While fear of the Others might be the force that drives most changelings to fanaticism, many lesser fears hold them there. Whether it’s fear of being alone (particularly common amongst the solitary Mad who find a place for themselves in the militia), fear of reprisals from other members or simply fear of the loss of a group identity, the subtle chains of terror conspire to hold many changelings fast to their fanatical brethren.

The madness that motivates a changeling to join a militia or bridge-burner cell is of a different sort than that which drives the solitary killers and lunatics among the Lost. The madness of these groups is the madness of the zealot, of the one so sure of the rightness of his cause that morality (or Clarity, in the case of the Lost) ceases to be an issue. Militias sometimes harbor the truly depraved, often as

a last-resort tool kept in reserve for especially dirty jobs, but zealotry drives the concept of the militia. This madness can take many forms, from the radical rabbleroxing of the most ardent protest groups to the cold, grim determination of the soldier who never questions his orders, no matter how heinous. Mad fanatics are particularly dangerous in that they are more likely to employ terror tactics not just directly in opposition to the Others or in the pursuit of destroying Hedge gates but to achieve ancillary goals as well. If the seasonal monarch speaks out against the group’s activities, the true zealot sees no sin in engineering an assassination. If a particularly volatile gate into the Hedge lies in a particular club, it’s worth the sacrifice of a few hundred innocent lives to take them all out with a single bomb blast. If the freehold as a whole seems to be growing complacent toward the threat of the Others, an extremist might even commit attacks or abductions deliberately designed to implicate the True Fae.

As much as the leadership of these groups might not like to admit it, their members are far from universally dedicated to the destruction of the Others or the Hedge for its own sake. Political agitators, mercenaries and others driven by the less-scrupulous motive of greed are drawn to militias for the simple reason that violence has always been the one sure way to take things you want away from the people that have them. No institution is safe from those who would subvert it to their own gain; larger, more established militias tend to draw this sort of changeling more than the smaller groups, and yet at the same time, the larger militias have less pressing need for manpower and tend to be better at weeding out the false believers. The net result is that the greed-driven are more or less evenly spread across militias of all sizes and make-ups. Among bridge-burner cells, greed is even more common: after all, it’s easy to just discreetly pocket valuable tokens, rare goblin fruits or even the keys to certain gateways and claim they were “destroyed for the cause.” When these Lost rise to positions of authority within their groups, these changelings might be the most likely to draw the characters into conflict with a militia. Other militia leaders are likely to become antagonists if the motley directly stands athwart their goals, but a greedy changeling might falsely portray the characters as Fae collaborators for no other reason than covetousness.

For obvious reasons, few if any true militia members are motivated by worship of the Others. That’s not to say, though, that the Others don’t have their agents within such groups. Whether because it amuses them or because they find the militias and bridge-burners a genuine cause for concern, the Gentry sometimes direct one of their servants to infiltrate the more radical groups. Such agents must tread with *extreme* caution; if there’s one thing militiamen hate more than the True Fae, it’s changelings who knowingly and willingly collaborate with them. Stories abound of the grisly ends to which militias put collaborators: crushing the limbs off with a dull-edged iron axe, drawing and quartering behind muscle cars and slow, painful death by exposure to

banes are all popular methods of execution. Bridge-burner cells often favor burning alive — preferably accompanied by some form of magic to ensure that the traitor is not rendered unconscious by smoke inhalation. Most Fae-worshippers who infiltrate an extremist group try to spend as little time there as possible. Better to get in, get some valuable intelligence on the cell's activities and get the hell out again than try to remain a long-term sleeper agent and end up a severed head on an iron spike as a warning to others.

Changelings motivated by compulsions seldom find their way into fanatical groups as proper members — commanders look for soldiers who are reliable in battle and calculating in their schemes, not thundering loonies who might start fighting foes that aren't there or stop in the middle of a pitched battle to eat a fallen foe. Occasionally, though, a commander finds it useful to have access to individuals with a peculiar quirk. Sometimes these compulsives are used as bait to draw the Others into an ambush; other times they may be manipulated into resolving certain situations without directly implicating the militia. Bridge-burners occasionally employ these single-minded Lost for suicide missions. Such wretches are rarely actual members; most are counted among the Mad and are prodded or bribed in some fashion to serve the militias interests.

MUSTERING OUT

A militiaman might abandon his calling and become one of the Mad as the Clarity-punishing acts he is required to perform erode his ability to think rationally. Those veterans who give not only their lives, but their very sanity, are often honored and respected by remaining members of their group; even when such veterans reach states of extreme degeneration, there is often a loose, informal network of members who take it upon themselves to look after their infirm brethren. Any motley unfortunate enough to bring harm to a veteran is likely to draw the wrath of the veteran's former comrades-in-arms. Militiamen and bridge-burners who survive battles in which their entire motley is entirely wiped out — or worse, their entire militia — are likely to suffer an erosion of sanity and may drift into madness.

Likewise, militiamen who suffer grievous defeats or major setbacks may decide that their cause is, ultimately, futile. The Gentry are too strong to fight directly, no matter how many soldiers you throw at them. Such changelings may leave their group in favor of the bridge-burners, rationalizing that if the Others cannot be defeated, the next best thing is to lock them out of the world.

It is a very rare thing for a militiaman to give himself over to the True Fae and become a loyalist, although the same situations that might inspire one changeling to join the bridge-burners might inspire one of lesser moral character to join what he perceives as the winning side. Former militiamen becoming privateers is slightly more likely, especially among changelings motivated more by personal gain than by true belief in the war against the Others.

STORYTELLING FANATICS

At times, it can be hard to draw the line between a fanatic group and the Summer Court. Both are, after all, dedicated to taking the fight to the Others in one way or another, and many militia members belong, formally or informally, to the Iron Spear. While this book draws an artificial distinction at the point of “willingness to employ extremist or terrorist tactics” in order to define militias and bridge-burners as antagonists, it's not always so easy to see the delineation for a **Changeling** character looking at things from ground level. After all, some militiamen are (or at least seem to be on the surface) rational, sane individuals with a deep commitment to a goal, and some members of the Summer Court aren't above drumming up a “crusade against the Others” as a way to thin the herd of political rivals.

The truth of the matter is that, in some freeholds at least, there may be no difference between “the warriors of the Summer Court” and “those crazy extremist bastards.” For every motley of fanatical survivalists living on a fortified compound, somewhere there's an urbane, sophisticated group of radicals thoroughly integrated into the Great Courts. For every fringe organization denounced (and possibly even hunted) by the Iron Spear, there's a freehold where the lunatics have taken over the proverbial asylum. The bottom line is this: don't feel forced into portraying the Summer Court as the “good guy” warriors against the Others and the militias as the “bad guys.” If it suits your chronicle to have the Summer Court in your freehold made up of extremists and terrorists, go for it (just be aware of the impact it might have on your players' characters and their choice of Court).

THE RED BADGE

In most freeholds, the Great Courts are far and away the largest and most influential organizations among the Lost. Certainly, some smaller groups may exist — gangs of Courtless who band together for protection, cults that gather to venerate some power that may keep the Others at bay, and the like — but by and large the seasonal Court is the only game in town.

Every once in a while, though, an organization similar to the Red Badge comes along and throws the whole thing out of joint. Founded five years ago by the Ogre Billy Blood, the Badge quickly became one of the largest and most powerful militia groups in the state, with something close to 50 members drawn from all four Courts. Unlike many militia groups, which operate covertly in small cells of three to a dozen members, the Red Badge makes a point of showing off its full strength. Members are expected to wear the band's symbol (a Hedgespun accessory worn on the head — a hat, scarf, pair of glasses, etc.—that seeps fresh blood) at all times, especially when interacting with other changelings. “Badgers,” as they refer to themselves, tend to stay out of freehold politics save in matters of defense or justice, but when they do get involved, they almost always throw their weight around in a bloc, even if it means going against their Court.

That the Red Badge's policies tend toward the extremist would be understating things; even the merest hint of the Others' presence will see the Badge calling for a mass sweep-and-clear operation, throwing as many able-bodied warriors at the enemy as possible, no matter the cost. Likewise, allegations of collaboration with the Gentry provokes immediate and extreme action from the Badge's hardliners. More than one innocent changeling has been lynched by overzealous Badgers for no more than being seen talking to the wrong merchant at a Goblin Market or a rumor spread by a rival.

The Red Badge in the City

As written here, the Red Badge fits best into a chronicle set somewhere with large, open areas of sparse habitation where a large paramilitary compound could exist; the American Midwest, for example, or a Colombian city bordering on the rainforest. With a little bit of reworking, though, the Badge can just as easily fit into a heavily urbanized area. Replace the rural compound with a heavily fortified block of inner-city apartment buildings, downplay the survivalist motif in favor of a structure akin to a street gang, and you can easily drop the Red Badge into the most urban settings.

The militia is headquartered on a 75-acre compound about an hour's drive from the nearest city, securely bordered and constantly guarded. Only one road grants access to the compound, and the gate is monitored 24/7 by mundane and magical security. Rumor persists that there is a single trod that leads into the compound, and that the area around that egress is a literal deathtrap. Stories vary, from sentries armed with cold iron to land mines and machine gun turrets ready to obliterate anyone coming out of the Hedge, Other or not. Exactly what the Badgers are up to out there on their compound is the subject of much speculation, but what is known is that Billy and his people have been stockpiling weapons for years, everything from guns and ammo to powerful tokens to battle-ready blades of cold iron. Recruitment drives are on the rise as well. Scarcely a gathering of the Lost occurs these days without one of the Red Badge in full martial regalia extolling the virtues of bringing the fight to the Gentry to any who would listen. Whatever the Badgers are planning, it seems to be ramping up in a hurry.

RED BADGE RECRUITER

Quote: "Now, son, you and I both know the Others ain't forgot about us. Wouldn't you rather be prepared when they come back?"

Background: The Red Badge recruiter is cut from different cloth than the typical militiaman. While no less

Story Hook: The Red Badge

- A motley of changelings traveling from another freehold in the area has disappeared, and their route took them very close to the Red Badge's compound. The Courts of the missing changelings' home freehold are certain the Badge killed them, but the Summer King of the local freehold is allied with the Red Badge and is stalling any investigation. Was it the Red Badge that killed the lost motley, or was it something else on the road? Did the victims see something they weren't supposed to see in the compound?

- One of the motley's allies (preferably a lover or close friend of one of the characters) has been accused of "consorting with the enemy" by the Red Badge. Some of the more enthusiastic Badgers have already attacked the suspect and beaten her badly enough to put her in the hospital. The characters must now split their efforts between finding out who accused their friend and why, proving the accusations false and preventing the Badge from coming back to finish the job. But what happens when the evidence starts to suggest that maybe the accusations aren't false after all?

- A Courtless renegade appears at court and claims to be a refugee from the Red Badge. According to her story, the Badgers are doing far more than simply stockpiling for a war; they are actually trying to create new foot soldiers. Red Badge sorcerers have been abducting mortals from isolated, outlying areas, then abandoning them in the Hedge in an attempt to warp them into something akin to changelings. The renegade says she has proof of this atrocity, but will only hand it over if she is guaranteed protection from her erstwhile comrades.

a capable warrior, the recruiter recognizes that his greatest talent lies in his passion for the cause and his ability to stoke that same passion in others. The recruiter spends most of his time moving amongst the greater society of the freehold; he knows all the safe havens and hangouts where the Lost gather in numbers, and he's always there, never preaching or press-ganging, just passionately extolling the virtues of the warrior's way of life and the honor and fraternity of the Red Badge.

Description: Before he was taken, the recruiter filled the same duty for the United States Marine Corps, and the patriotic zeal he took from his tours of duty in Vietnam remains even after 40 years spent as a pit fighter in the bloody arenas of Faerie. He still dresses in Marine surplus clothes



most of the time, and when occasion calls for formal wear, he pulls his old dress blues out of storage and wears them with pride.

Already a big man before his abduction, the recruiter's durance made him into a true giant: he stands nearly seven and a half feet tall and weighs as much as some small European automobiles. Mortals see him as a huge, bald black man with a face that would do a bare-knuckle boxer proud. Those who see beyond the Mask see a brute with skin of polished ebony, jutting tusks and eyes all but hidden beneath thick, bony brows. The red bandana tied over his head oozes warm, red blood that runs down his cheeks to drip from his jaw.

Storytelling Hints: The recruiter absolutely, sincerely believes in the rightness of the Red Badge's cause. At first blush, he seems like one of the more rational members — he doesn't scream and bellow, he doesn't try to force changelings into signing up and he answers questions with frankness and honesty. But call his beliefs into question or insult his fraternity, and you'll have a world of pain waiting for you.

Contrary to the popular stereotype of Ogres, the recruiter is a savvy judge of character, and quickly picks up the best way to approach potential recruits. Those with family or loved ones in the mortal world he sways with stories of how they might suffer under the Others' attentions unless someone is there to protect them. Already martially

inclined characters are tempted with advanced training in Brawl, Firearms or Weaponry, and the weak and adrift are offered a home and a cause they can be proud of.

Seeming: Ogre

Kith: Gargantuan

Court: Summer

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics (Military Theory) 2, Computer 1, Crafts 3, Politics 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Endurance) 3, Brawl 2, Firearms (Rifles) 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Weaponry (Swords) 2

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression (Patriotic Zeal) 3, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Brawling Dodge 1, Fighting Style: Boxing 2, Iron Stamina 2, Mantle 2,

Willpower: 6

Clarity: 6

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 4

Defense: 2

Speed: 11

Health: 8

Wyrd: 3

Contracts: Hearth ••, Eternal Summer ••, Fleeting Summer ••, Stone •••, Vainglory •

Pledges: Motley Pledge, Reaper's Pledge, Commendation

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	6	—
Assault Rifle	4(L)	150/300/600	10	Autofire
Sword	3(L)	—	10	—

THE DOVES

Not all militia groups are saber-rattling extremists spoiling for a fight with any servant of the Others that might cross their path. There are those who recognize that the Lost's greatest strength is often their talent for subtlety and misdirection, and that even the Gentry, as mighty and inscrutable as they are, are not omniscient. If a carefully orchestrated ambush and assassination can bring low one of the Lords of Faerie, then why charge headlong into battle in a futile search for glory? Far better to remain secret and strike from the shadows, leaving only mystery in your wake. This is the creed of the Doves, an intensely secretive, loosely knit cabal of changeling assassins and stalkers devoted to the destruction of the Others and their pawns. The Doves

named themselves after the bird in the tale of Noah, for they see themselves as heralding the safety of humans and changelings from the depredations of the Others. The small irony of the organization's "dove-like gentleness" is not lost on all of them.

Composed mostly of Darklings and Wizedened of the Winter Court, the Doves maintain a loose network of cells in freeholds around the country. Each cell is typically composed of two to four changelings, one of whom is designated as the cell's leader and is aware of two or three other cells in neighboring cities. Rumors amongst the organization's members hint at a higher command structure — regional or even national leaders who issue clandestine orders in pursuit of a grand vision of the destruction of the Fae. Cell leaders remain tight-lipped on the subject, unsurprising given the secrecy of the organization.

While the Doves will move against any target they can identify and believe they have a chance at destroying, they prefer to focus their energies on the Banished and on mortal and changeling thralls of the Others. These beings, who are most consistently active in the mortal realm, are the greatest danger to their kind, or so the Doves reason. The fact that such earthbound foes are, on the whole, significantly less powerful than the lordly denizens of Arcadia is doubtless also a factor.

At first glance, the Doves might not seem especially antagonistic to the typical motley. Sure, the Doves' methods might be somewhat questionable, but at least they're targeting genuine threats, right? Well, yes and no — as with most militia groups, what makes the Doves a threat isn't their goals or ideology but their methods and willingness to pay any price, no matter how horrendous, to achieve their ends. In the case of the Doves, what pushes them over into antagonist territory is their secrecy and institutional paranoia. The Doves have seen so many traitors and sleeper agents sell out their own kin that the organization as a whole is paralyzed by the belief that discovery means certain betrayal and recapture. Maybe not right away, but if the existence of the Doves becomes common knowledge, then it's only a matter of time before they are betrayed and rooted out. No, the only way to survive is to maintain absolute secrecy, so that the traitors never know *whom* to betray.

Upon joining the Doves, every member swears a particularly grim pledge to never reveal the secrets — or even the *existence* — of the Doves to any outside the group. Breaking the pledge means death; there is no lesser penalty. Further, every member is obligated to permanently silence anyone who learns of the existence of the group through any other means. Failure, once again, is punished with death. In return for these harsh laws, though, the Doves gain potent supernatural acumen and access to the finest training in the assassin's arts.

The Dove's Promise

By blood and breath and olive branch, I swear myself to silence. By heart and soul and promise of safety, I swear to protect the secrets of my brotherhood. No word of us shall pass my lips on pain of death; no whisper of our presence shall escape my vigilance. This I swear upon my heart's blood and life's breath. May death come on swift white wings if I prove false.

Type: Vow

Tasks: Alliance, Greater (−3, applies to the member's cell-mates and the Doves as a whole); Endeavor, Greater (−3, kill any who learns of the existence of the Doves); Forbiddance, Medial (−2, never reveal the existence of the Doves)

Boons: Adroitness (+3, Athletics, Stealth, Melee); Blessing, Greater (+3, any one Fighting Style Merit); Blessing, Medial (+2, Fleet of Foot)

Sanction: Death (+3)

Duration: Lifelong (−3)

Invocation: 1 Willpower

This pledge is sworn by all members of the Doves upon their membership. Refusing the oath is not an option; to refuse the Dove's Promise is to be slain (the Doves observe prospective members closely, and seldom make the offer of membership to those who might refuse). Typically, the cell leader swears this pledge with all of the members of his cell. If you decide that the Doves actually do have a higher organizational structure, you may wish to modify this pledge to include the fealty task.

DOVE KNIFE-DANCER

Quote: "I'm sorry. It's really nothing personal. But you've heard too much."

Background: The Knife-Dancer is a typical example of the sort of assassin employed by the Doves. Graceful and acrobatic, she uses her natural physicality and her preternatural gifts of deception and agility to accomplish the most difficult hits with total surprise and no witnesses. In her mortal days, she was an acrobat in one of those traveling avant-garde circuses that claim to reinvent the experience of the circus. Her grace, beauty and mystique caught the eye of a dark and grim Knight of Ghosts and Shadows, who took her for his own at the climax of her greatest performance. As she spun and twirled between the parallel bars, she vanished in plain view



of the entire audience. They thought it was a trick; after all, the same girl was there dancing the next night, wasn't she? Even her co-performers never suspected that what finished out the show that night was a dim reflection of her, a thing of cracked mirrors and bits of shadow.

Snatched from her life at her proudest moment, the Dancer was forced to serve as entertainer and courtesan to her fickle Lord Knight. Her Keeper grew easily bored, and each night, to keep her "fresh," he would pull her apart and remake her in a new guise, sometimes human, sometimes not. When she finally slipped away in the dark of night and made her perilous way back through the Hedge, she swore she would never be taken again. Using her newfound gift for deception, she began to hunt mercilessly those who consorted with the Gentry. Shortly after she killed her third collaborator, she was approached by a man with eyes like hoarfrost with a very interesting offer.

Description: In her natural form, the Knife-Dancer is a short, lithe woman with a gymnast's build and the chalk-white face of a Harlequin. Patterns of small whorls and diamonds accentuate the fine bones of her face, extending up over her hairless scalp and disappearing down her back. Her Hedgespun raiment appears to ensorcelled eyes as a form-fitting jumpsuit of woven shadow beneath a loose, flowing cloak of dark gray smoke that conceals her movements without restricting them. The Knife-Dancer only wears

this form when she is preparing to strike; most often, she is encountered (whether her quarry realizes it or not) wearing any of dozens of different faces. She uses her Contracts of Smoke and Mirror to ensure that she never appears the same way twice when stalking her prey.

Storytelling Hints: The Knife-Dancer is the kind of foe you never see coming until it's too late. She is subtle and resourceful, and more than willing to just walk away if she sees an ambush turning against her. Despite her willingness to go to extreme lengths to keep the Doves' secrets, she doesn't hold a personal grudge against those she has to kill to silence. Agents of the Others, however, are another story, and they can expect nothing so much as vaguely resembling mercy.

The Knife-Dancer could come into conflict with a motley in any of several ways. If the characters have become aware of the Doves, she might be the agent dispatched to silence the characters. Depending upon how well the characters deal with her assault, and how merciful they are, she might be in a position to extend an offer of membership. Alternately, one or more of the characters might fall under suspicion of collaboration with the Gentry, in which case they will see a very different side of the Knife-Dancer. The Dancer might even be the catalyst that pushes the characters into discovering the existence of the Doves. Perhaps a prophetic dream hints at a hidden threat lurking within the freehold, or perhaps the murder of a prominent courtier leads the characters on an investigation.

Seeming: Darkling

Kith: Mirrorskin

Court: Winter

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 5, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Investigation 4, Occult 3, Politics 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Dance) 5, Brawl 3, Firearms 2, Larceny 4, Stealth (Shadowing) 3, Weaponry (Knives) 4

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Intimidation (The Silent Treatment) 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge (Disguises) 3

Merits: Ambidextrous 3, Disarm 2, Danger Sense 2, Fast Reflexes 2, Fighting Finesse 2, Fighting Style: Two Weapons 2, Fleet of Foot 2, Mantle 2, Weaponry Dodge 1

Willpower: 5

Clarity: 4

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 10

Defense: 4

Speed: 15

Health: 7

Wyrd: 2

Contracts: Darkness ••••, Mirror ••••

Pledges: Dove's Promise, Pledge of Horn and Bone

Glamour/per Turn: 11/2

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	6	—
Knives	1(L)	—	11	—

THE SAFE HARBOR SOCIETY

On the surface, the Safe Harbor Society looks like the kind of organization every freehold should be lucky to have. A cross-Court group of philanthropists, the Safe Harbor Society keeps an eye out for newly escaped changelings and helps to bring them into the Courts. The group's members chart the prominent trods in the area and volunteer themselves to stand guard over the ones most likely to lead back to Arcadia. They even volunteer alongside mortal charities, particularly groups involved in land reclamation to build low-income housing. By all appearances, the Safe Harbor Society is just a caring, hard-working group of people, doing their best to make the world a little better for mortal and fae alike.

And every single one of them is truly, fanatically devoted to obliterating any and all connections between Earth and Faerie.

Beneath the smiling, Stepfordian façade, the Safe Harbor Society is a bevy of madmen, fanatics united in their goal to drive the Fae from the world forever by burning down every link between this realm and the Hedge. The members' assistance to foundlings and charitable mapping and guarding of trods is just a cover; once they've mapped out every access point to the Hedge in the freehold, they'll start systematically destroying them, one by one. They don't care that they might be dooming prisoners still trapped in Arcadia to endless torment, or that local motleys might be stranded in their Hollows; those are acceptable prices to pay.

Even the Society's mortal charity work is bent to this end; through their Hedge-mapping activities, their prognosticators identify locations they believe will eventually become the ends of trods leading back to Faerie. Armed with this knowledge, the "charitable" members of the Society convince the mortals to bulldoze and landscape and build, an act they hope will alter the character of the land enough to prevent the trod from forming.

The primary flaw in this plan, of course, is that it simply doesn't work, at least not most of the time. Instead, all the Society is accomplishing is giving the Gentry a road into this world that ends in a densely populated housing development instead of an empty marsh or a fallow field. The Safe Harbor membership at large remains ignorant of this fact, but the upper echelons of its leadership know something is amiss. In their pride, they haven't yet figured out that the flaw lies with their plan — they blame the local Courts for creating new gateways, and the leaders begin to

suspect that something will have to be done about it, possibly sooner than later.

SISTER ABIGAIL

Quote: "You poor dear. I know you must be very frightened, but trust me, it's for the best."

Background: Sister Abigail has always been an organizer and a leader. The socialite wife of a wealthy Manhattan investment banker, she was always the member of the "wives' club" who organized the soirées and get-togethers, the cotillions and the charity balls. Her events were the events of the season; and if you were unfortunate enough to miss one of Abigail's parties to which you'd been invited, you could look forward to being the social pariah for at least a year — maybe more, if it was an especially significant event. Rumor has it one congressman's wife missed the debutante ball for Abigail's daughter; the poor woman actually moved upstate, she was so utterly ostracized.

Abigail's time in Arcadia only sharpened her alpha-female tendencies and finely honed, subtle cruel streak. After five years overseeing the mad household of the Queen of Broken Spades, Abigail managed to carefully organize a grand Faerie Ball that subtly but unmistakably insulted every one of her mistress's guests in some way. Abigail escaped as the challenges and proclamations of doom began coming down, and upon returning to the mortal realm and finding her footing within the local freehold, immediately set out to rebuild her circles of influence.

At first, the Safe Harbor Society really *was* about helping the newly returned Lost and mapping the dangers of the Hedge, but as members began to meet unpleasant fates (hardly surprising given the inherent dangers of mapping unknown trods and standing watch over paths to Faerie), Abigail slowly came to realize that the only sensible thing to do was to close the whole thing down. She's already brought her Society-mates around to her way of thinking, and they've actually managed to destroy one gateway by burning down an abandoned factory. Since then, Abigail has been moving cautiously. She knows the Courts probably wouldn't approve of her goals, so she maintains the cover of a harmless society matron who bustles about organizing parties and charity to feel useful.

Description: Just as many Wizeden, Abigail is a small, slight woman, with bottle-blond hair worn in one of a variety of conservative hairstyles. She favors slightly old-fashioned clothes in New York fashions; more than one changeling has compared her to Jackie Kennedy. Her face has a subtly aged look to it, and her eyes have darkened to almost solid black. Her fae mien remains startlingly similar to her Mask — many changelings simply don't notice she is one of the Lost on first seeing her.

Abigail is an extremely proper woman, always meticulous in her manners and scrupulously polite — but for all that, she can craft a subtly barbed insult and wield it with

deadly precision when she is offended or irritated. She insists on the same level of politeness from her Society-mates, and indeed few actions can push a member to the fringes of the circle faster than a social faux pas at court.

Storytelling Hints: Abigail and her Safe Harbor Society are excellent antagonists for a chronicle that focuses on the paranoia inherent in the changeling condition. The Safe Harbor Society should be downright creepy — *no one* is that helpful and kind and generous. Play up how eerily perfect this little group's members seem to be, and how there's just something a little off about their polite cheerfulness. Depending on whether you want to use the group as a major chronicle antagonist or just an irritating background element, you might introduce plot elements such as mysterious tenement fires or strange disappearances in recently developed areas around the freehold before linking them to the Safe Harbor Society.

Abigail herself prefers to keep her battles squarely in the social arena. She is by no means a physical combatant, and truth be told, she isn't all that bright, but she's almost universally well-liked in the freehold, and even has some influential contacts in the mortal arena. Politicians *love* charity, after all. If a motley tries to expose her plan, she is more than willing to call in every favor and boon she can to marginalize and discredit the members.

Seeming: Wizenod

Kith: Châtelaine

Court: Spring

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics (Finance) 3, Crafts 2,

Investigation 1, Occult 2, Politics (High Society) 3

Physical Skills: Drive 1, Firearms (Pistols) 2, Stealth (Going Unnoticed) 1

Social Skills: Empathy 3, Intimidation (Veiled Barbs) 2, Persuasion 4, Socialize 3, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Allies (Local Politics) 4, Allies (High Society) 3, Court Goodwill (Summer) 2, Court Goodwill (Autumn) 3, Court Goodwill (Winter) 1, Mantle 2, Resources 3, Retainer 2, Status (Charity Organizations) 2

Willpower: 4

Clarity: 6

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Health: 7

Wyrd: 2

Contracts: Artifice •••, Dream •••, Eternal Spring ••••,



Fleeting Spring ••

Pledges: Commendation, Motley Oath, Ancient Pact, Reaper's Pledge

Glamour/per Turn: 11/2

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	Chance	—
Light Revolver	2(L)	20/40/80	6	—

THE BLOODY NAIL

Some bridge-burner groups are mostly harmless eccentrics — the changeling equivalent of people who believe the Earth is flat or that the power of the pyramid can give them a longer life and a bigger penis. Others are dangerous but ultimately not a tremendous threat to most motleys. These are the types who engage in property damage, arson and the like in their attempt to destroy passages into the Hedge. Every once in a while, though, a bridge-burner cell comes along that represents a clear and present danger to the entire changeling community. The Bloody Nail is one such group.

Other bridge-burners think the key to cutting off the Fae's access to Earth is the destruction of trods and gateways. Not so the Bloody Nail — these vile Lost know, or claim to know, that the only way to close the gates to Faerie forever is to eradicate every trace of Arcadia on this side of the Hedge. That means every changeling, every token, every Banished and ensorcelled mortal and escaped hobgoblin must be destroyed. Some members even extend their

mandate to include certain mortal wizards who claim their souls have a connection to Arcadia. Only then will the Others finally lose their purchase on this reality.

The Bloody Nail operates on the fringes of freehold society. The group's members swear allegiance to no Court, for they believe that every Wyrd-bound pledge only pulls Arcadia closer to the mortal realm. Members of the Bloody Nail often congregate around lesser-known trods, waiting to ambush newly escaped changelings and dispatch them with cold iron blades. The Bloody prefers to focus on weaker changelings for now; the group's own numbers are not great, and not only are the young and inexperienced easier targets, their disappearances are less likely to draw the attention of the powerful elite. In time, as the cell's strength grows, the Bloody Nail will begin to pick off more ambitious targets. And when all traces of Faerie have been scoured from this world, the Bloody Nail's task will be done and the Bloody Nail will die, and the world will be safe at last.

TOMMY RED HAT

Quote: *"No excuses. No pleas. You have to die so the world can be safe. So shut up and hold still."*

Background: Similar to many Ogres, Tommy Red Hat's durance was one of savagery and brutality. Kenneled like an animal, he was turned out only to serve as his Keeper's practice dummy. After spending years having every bone in his body snapped on a daily basis, he finally escaped and returned to Earth, scarred and broken and consumed with hatred for the Fae. He swore himself to the Summer Court, and fought in many skirmishes against Arcadian encroachers. Each battle only reinforced the cruelty and caprice of the Others, and Tommy soon became obsessed with the idea of locking them away in the Hedge forever. All his comrades assured him that such a thing was impossible — after all, doors into the Hedge were *everywhere*, and creating new ones was a simple matter for any creature of Wyrd.

Real inspiration didn't come to Tommy for a few more years. Visiting a former comrade-in-arms, Tommy arrived in time to witness the tail end of an assassination staged by a rival Court. The assailants retreated into the Hedge, using the gateway that led into the victim's Hollow. Tommy tried to follow, only to find that the gateway didn't respond to any of the established keys. When he tried to force the gateway to open, only to find himself gazing out onto an unfamiliar section of the Hedge, he had an epiphany. His comrade had died just moments before he tried to enter the Hedge — it must have been his death that closed the gateway. Tommy's limited intellect immediately reached the "rational" conclusion: the deaths of changelings closed gateways into the Hedge.

Tommy has tried to repeat his experiences on several occasions, but met with only occasional success. His "failures" he rationalizes away; obviously there's no way to know *which* gateway was closed by a particular changeling's death. The only thing to do is keep at it.



Description: Tommy is a brutish, coarse little man with chalk-white skin and a disturbingly distended jaw full of steel teeth. He wears a red ski cap over his lank, greasy hair — in the right light, the hat glistens wetly and appears to be made of bloody muscle tissue. To mortals, he is a lumpen, repulsive little troll of a man, with wretched dentition and skin that looks to have never seen the sun (or soap, for that matter). He dresses in the ratty sweats of a blue-collar boxing coach, often splattered with mysterious, dark stains. He long ago forswore the Summer Court, but some tinge of it still clings to his mien — the occasional ripple of heat or flicker of flame dances across his features. He often carries an old, rusty butcher's knife somewhere on his person, but when going out specifically to murder the fae, he bears a long, sharp spear of bright, cold iron.

Storytelling Hints: Never a great thinker, Tommy prefers to charge headlong into any problem, trusting his Ogrish strength and toughness to carry him through any conflict. Against multiple opponents, he prefers to wade in bare-handed, using his Contracts of Stone to increase his damage potential. One on one, he favors his trusty knife or spear. Should he find himself outmatched, he has no qualms about retreating to fight another day. Every changeling must

die to close the gates of Arcadia, true, but if Tommy dies before all the others, who will carry on his work?

Given the Bloody Nail's leader and founder's intellect (or lack thereof) and favored tactics, it is highly unlikely that the group will remain secret for long. The Bloody Nail works best as a short-term antagonist, good for perhaps a single story as the main antagonist or maybe a few stories if they are placed in the background. A chronicle featuring the Bloody Nail as antagonists will probably have a heavy emphasis on physical challenges, and likely climaxes with a brutal, knock-down fight with Tommy and his gang.

Seeming: Ogre

Kith: Gristlegrinder

Court: Courtless

Entitlements: None

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 1, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Computer 1, Crafts 2, Investigation 1, Medicine 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Grappling, Biting) 4, Firearms 3, Larceny 1, Stealth 3, Weaponry (Chains) 4

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Intimidation 4, Streetwise 3, Socialize (Lower Class) 3, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Brawling Dodge 1, Fighting Style: Boxing 4, Fighting Style: Chain Weapons 2, Iron Stamina 3, Iron Stomach 2, Toxin Resistance 2

Willpower: 7

Clarity: 5

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 5

Defense: 1

Speed: 10

Health: 10

Wyrd: 1

Contracts: Smoke ••, Stone •••

Pledges: Motley Oath

Glamour/per Turn: 10/1

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	7	—
Bite	1(L)	—	9	—
Chain	1(B)	—	9	—

PRIVATEERS AND LOYALISTS

Few changelings are as universally labeled “villains” as those who willingly serve the Others, either directly or by proxy. The Mad are insane and cannot be held responsible for their actions. Militias and bridge-burners have their

Fighting Style: Chain Weapons

This Fighting Style Merit was first presented in *World of Darkness: Armory*. For a full accounting, see p. 209 of that book. In brief, Tommy Red Hat's two dots in this Fighting Style give him access to the following maneuvers:

- **Impenetrable Defense:** By forgoing his attack, Tommy gains a +2 bonus to his Defense. In addition, he does not suffer the cumulative -1 penalty to Defense from facing multiple attackers until the *third* attack aimed at him in a turn.

- **Hand Bind:** If an opponent attacks Tommy with a Brawl- or Weaponry-based attack, he may roll Strength + Weaponry — the attacker's successes on the attack roll. If Tommy rolls more successes than his opponent, the attack fails, and the attacker's hand is bound by Tommy's chain (the attacker may roll Strength + Brawl to escape as an instant action). If Tommy still succeeds but rolls fewer successes than his opponent, subtract Tommy's successes from the damage he suffers. Tommy can use this action once per turn, and using it counts as his next action in the initiative roster.

hearts in the right place if nothing else. But actively working to return other changelings to the servitude of the Gentry is truly unforgivable. Even in freeholds with relatively liberal codes of justice, privateering and serving the Fae are almost always punishable by death.

While the motives of these villains might not matter to the changelings the villains prey upon, it's worth spending a moment, for Storytelling purposes, to distinguish between “privateer” and “loyalist.” A privateer is a mercenary, one who sells his fellow changelings to the Gentry, or sometimes to slave-traders at the Goblin Markets, for his own profit. Some privateers might work on retainer for a particular Fae or goblin trader, but the paycheck is what that motivates them, in whatever form that may take. By contrast, loyalists serve the Others directly, with profit being less of a factor. Loyalists' motives are more varied, but for loyalists, whatever their reasons, serving the Gentry is the goal in itself.

MOTIVATIONS

For privateers, greed is unquestionably the primary motivation. Some are after crass material rewards, others the more ephemeral promise of rare Faerie artifacts or ancient magics. Still others make the proverbial devil's deal — temporal power in exchange for their soul. This latter motive is somewhat more common among greed-driven loyalists, but some privateers take their payment in the form of whatever favors their customers can grant. Depending on the priva-



teer in question, a captured changeling might be able to escape by offering a greater bounty than the price on her head. Other privateers are more careful to honor any deal made for a changeling's capture, whether out of a twisted sense of honor or a healthy dose of fear at the consequences of breaking one's word to a Lord of Faerie. Likewise, a privateer might let his quarry go if the Other who requested the changeling's capture is killed or banished. Obviously, this latter technique only works if the privateer is acting as a bounty hunter — entrepreneurs just out to score a payment will simply take their "wares" to another prospective buyer if one is available.

If greed is the predominant motive among privateers, then worship of the Gentry must be the most prevalent motivating factor for a loyalist. This motivation is correspondingly rare among privateers, as those who worship the Others would never dream of asking their gods for payment. One might argue that this is, essentially, what religious offerings and prayers are, and as such some Fae-worshippers could be called "privateers," but the key difference lies in expectation vs. hope: a privateer *expects* reward for her service, while a true worshipper *hopes* for it.

Not all servants of the Others serve willingly. Many loyalists serve out of fear, usually motivated by the threat of being returned to Faerie to serve their Keeper directly once more. Privateers may be the same; their "letters of marque"

are a badge of security to them, giving the True Fae reason to let the privateers run free. These changelings are the most likely to refuse to give any mercy or quarter to their enemies, and yet, paradoxically, if they can be reached, they are the most likely to turn traitor against their masters. After all, when one's master is a fickle, inscrutable Prince of Arcadia, one's personal safety and continued liberty are far from guaranteed. Nevertheless, many changelings seize on the slim hope that their usefulness will ensure their continued freedom — so long as they provide other servants for their masters instead. Many fear-motivated loyalists are wracked with intense guilt and shame; many go mad, and not a few end up taking their own lives.

Madness is seldom a motivation to *begin* privateering or serving one of the Gentry, but it is certainly a common consequence of those lifestyles. The madness of a loyalist is often tainted in some way by the strange compulsions and taboos of the True Fae the loyalist serves — a servant of the Prince of Ten Thousand Midnights goes into a hysterical panic if caught outside at dawn, while a slave of the Chatelaine of Crimson mumbles incessantly about the allure of blood. Madness-driven loyalists are quite common, but are not encountered often in the mortal realm — the Gentry seem to find these loyalists' derangements soothing, or at least amusing, and often call them back to longer and longer service within Faerie.

TURNING COAT

The burden of privateering weighs heavy on the soul, and those not made of stern stuff are often dragged down into the cold embrace of insanity, joining the ranks of the Mad. Loyalists, for reasons already mentioned, seldom end up traveling this road. The Gentry see no reason a trivial thing like madness should excuse a servant from his duties. A loyalist whose master is destroyed or banished, however, might become one of the Mad, and there are occasions when, for his own inscrutable motives, one of the True Fae simply abandons a servant no longer useful or entertaining to his own devices.

Militias are the least common faction to which a privateer might transition. It isn't unheard of for a privateer to eventually feel remorse for her actions, but it's a rare militia indeed that would accept such a vile traitor into its ranks. Very infrequently, a turncoat loyalist *might* be accepted by a militia, but only if she can offer compelling evidence that her servitude was forced on her against some dread consequence. Self-preservation is rarely adequate cause, but truly extenuating circumstances such as being forced to choose between serving the Fae and seeing one's entire mortal family carried away to Arcadia might be accepted.

Most changelings who abandon the service of the Fae gravitate toward the bridge-burners, primarily for reasons of self-preservation. Loyalists are rightly terrified of what their former masters might do to them, and even privateers know that their buyers are unlikely to accept "I've retired" as an excuse. Faced with the alternatives, the idea of banishing the Gentry from the mortal realm forever sounds very appealing indeed.

STORYTELLING PRIVATEERS AND LOYALISTS

Privateers make excellent antagonists because, just as Nazis in World War II films or the slavers of the *Amistad*, they are so morally reprehensible you don't care how unpleasant is the fate that befalls them. This isn't to say privateers are cardboard cutouts, or that they can't be nuanced and interesting characters — they aren't, and they should be. Think of Belloq in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* — he is wholly unsympathetic and unquestionably the villain, but he nevertheless has an intriguing character and understandable motivations (namely, profit).

Privateers are excellent short-term antagonists or personal rivals, but if you're looking for a more epic villain to last an entire chronicle, you may want to look elsewhere. Privateers tend to be rather base in their motives, which makes them less compelling long-term enemies. On the other hand, a privateer who has discovered some arcane secret that threatens to enable him to turn the entire freehold over to the Gentry might make for a very interesting chronicle villain. Perhaps he has unearthed a ritual that will open an enormous gateway that leads directly to Faerie

in the middle of the freehold's territory, or perhaps he has acquired a token in the form of manacles that render those bound in them mystically powerless.

Loyalists can fill the same role of "unrepentant villain" just as well as privateers. The fact that they are mere servants and not the masterminds of their own schemes might make them seem less threatening, but consider a Fairest in the vein of the evil Rochefort in *The Three Musketeers* or a Hunterheart investigator patterned after Maugrim, the White Witch's lupine secret police chief in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Both serve another master, but are nevertheless fearsome and dangerous enemies. As an added bonus, once the troupe has defeated the lieutenant, you have a ready-made antagonist for the next chapter of your story. Loyalists can also be effective if you reveal a twist that casts them in a more sympathetic light. A vicious and unrepentant villain who abducted a character's lover and sent her back to her Keeper might become a more tragic figure when the motley learns that she only serves her cruel master because he has vowed to release her brother who still labors in their Keeper's fields. If the players don't go for it, don't push this angle too hard, or you risk making it seem like the villain they've build up a healthy dose of hatred for is actually the misunderstood hero of the tale. *Do* consider turning the tables at some point, by introducing a character who refuses to forgive the troupe for some morally questionable act the characters believe was justified or necessary.

SHUCK'S CREW

The motivations of most privateers are at least easy to understand, albeit repellent. Greed, fear and a warped sense of loyalty are common enough reasons for a changeling to sell out his brethren. Changelings such as the motley known as Shuck's Crew, on the other hand, are motivated by an even less savory drive: quite simply, they believe that the Others are not as rightly feared in this day and age as they should be. Oh, to be sure, the changelings fear a return to their slavery in Arcadia, but that isn't the same thing as truly fearing the Gentry for all their awesome and terrible power. As for the mortals, well, most of them don't even *believe* in the Others, let alone fear them. Shuck and his gang of degenerate monsters believe it's their duty to change that. Only when humans and changelings worship the terrifying beauty of the True Fae will the world be as it should, and the Glamour of fear and heartache will flow like wine, and Shuck and his compatriots will sit at the left hands of the Lords of Faerie not as slaves, but as seneschals and trusted lieutenants.

They are quite mad, of course. Each and every one of them has multiple derangements, Shuck himself not the least of them. Some say Shuck was never stable to begin with, or that he came back from Faerie just plain mad as a hatter. Others say it was a chance meeting with a Darksome Princess deep within the Hedge that twisted his mind. Whatever the cause, Shuck gathered a motley of the most

ruthless monsters ever to slip out of Arcadia, and through a combination of his own fervent rhetoric and systematic abuse and deprivation, molded them into a fanatically devoted cult. One part Manson family, one part terrorist cell, Shuck's Crew is frighteningly unhinged and frighteningly devoted to its ideals.

Similar to most privateers, Shuck's Crew focuses on abducting and returning the Lost to Arcadia, but they certainly aren't above procuring mortals for the Gentry. Occasionally, the Crew works directly for a goblin merchant, or more rarely a Banished or lesser Fae, but just as often they simply take their victim on a whim and leave her, bound and gagged, on a trod known to lead back to Faerie in the hopes that one of the Others will come riding by and take her.

Shuck's Crew haunts a mostly empty stretch of state road between the local freehold and a nearby neighbor. Changelings would be wise to avoid that road whenever possible, but since the interstate adds another two hours to the trip, sometimes there is no choice when speed is of the essence. The motley makes its lair in a creepy farmhouse in a fallow field; according to local lore, the place is haunted by the ghost of the farmer, who went crazy one night and murdered his wife and four children with a wood ax. Several of the doorways inside the house lead into the motley's Hollow, a nauseating mix of abattoir, fairy tale witch's hut and cult worship area. At least one of the doors opens onto a large trod that connects after an hour's walk to one of the main concourses known to be used by the Gentry.

In addition to Shuck himself, the motley is composed of four other members: the Scissor-Man (an Autumn Court Ogre), John Capp (Winter Court Beast), Razor Molly (Courtless Darkling) and Pretty Bill (Autumn Court Fairest). Statistics for the rest of Shuck's Crew are left up to you, so consider tailoring them to complement the troupe's strengths. If the motley has a civilized and lordly Draconic knight with a penchant for duels of honor as its main combatant, make the Scissor-Man a brutish Stonebones who relentlessly plows through his enemies. If the motley's main combatant is instead a knock-down, drag-out Beast, you might make the Scissor-Man a stealthy Farwalker who favors hit-and-run attacks.

SHUCK

Quote: "Oh, you ain't afraid yet, sonny-boy. But you will be when you see who's waiting for you."

Background: Jimmy Lawrence was a mean, tough old sumbitch, one of the last of the real Texas shit-kickers. He was so tough and ornery, in fact, that when the Baron of the Black Gate needed a dog to patrol his lands and keep out trespassers, he passed right over ex-Marines, gang-bangers and prize-fighters and went straight for old Jimmy Lawrence. If you believe the man himself, he fought tooth and nail the whole way back to Faerie and killed three of the Baron's goblin retainers before they threw him out into



the yard. Jimmy spent a dozen years patrolling those dark and grim lands that butted up against a place where the restless dead seeped out of a hole in the world. He learned to hunt with teeth and talon, to move without sound and to drive the dead before him like a herd of sheep.

When he came back from Faerie, Jimmy Lawrence was no more. His name was Old Shuck, now — he took it himself after a story his ma told him as a boy. The first thing he did was run down his fetch, and the locals will tell you that before he died, "Jimmy Lawrence" swore he saw a huge black dog stalking him. They say it was the fear that killed the old man — but then, they never found the body, so who can be sure? Shuck could, but the black dog that killed Jimmy Lawrence was never seen in that town again.

Somewhere between there and here, Shuck joined the Autumn Court. He knew fear was power from his years patrolling the Baron of the Black Gate's haunted lands. It wasn't until later, after a harrowing trip through the Hedge with his first motley of which he was the sole survivor, that he stumbled upon the "revelation" that led to his new philosophy. The old hound gathered a new motley to him and "persuaded" them to come around to his way of thinking, and now they haunt the back roads and forgotten highways, reminding folk of what it is to fear the Others.

Description: A grizzled, leathery old man in his mid-50s, Shuck looks like the typical weather-beaten old farmer,

all denim work shirts and John Deere ball caps. His fae mien is inky black, with eyes like saucers that catch any light and throw it back in a grim, green glow. His features have a distinctly canine cast to them, and he casts the shadow of a large dog, possibly a mastiff or Doberman. This has led more than one changeling to mistake him for a Beast.

Shuck's madness is plain to see almost immediately upon meeting him. He is twitchy and irritable, with the manic intensity of a street preacher hopped up on smack. He often forgets basic things like bathing and eating, so he frequently looks malnourished and filthy, which does little to reinforce his claims of sanity. He talks with a thick, Texas twang, and is fond of quoting pseudo-Biblical prophecies and judgments that admonish listeners to fear and worship the mighty Others.

Storytelling Hints: Shuck is completely crackers, and he's the only one who doesn't seem to notice. There's no reasoning or bargaining with him; any questioning of his words leads to a sound thrashing and a frenzied litany of "prophecy." The only way Shuck's Crew is going to be shut down is by taking them all apart, piece by piece. Shuck himself will fight to the end, and while he might not be a match for an entire motley on his own, he's quite adept at sowing fear and dissent and striking at their heels while his motley harries his opponents.

Shuck and his crew are excellent "bogyman" antagonists. Consider setting up rumors or news reports of people going missing along a stretch of rural road outside the freehold a few sessions before debuting Shuck as the villain. Use the dilapidated farmhouse and its weird air to instill a sense of dread, and then ambush the players with a brutal assault by Shuck and his motley.

Seeming: Darkling

Kith: Gravewight

Court: Autumn

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Investigation (Tracking) 3, Occult (True Fae) 4

Physical Skills: Athletics (Running) 3, Brawl 4, Drive 1, Stealth (Stalking) 2, Survival 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Canines) 3, Intimidation 5, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Gentry) 2, Direction Sense 1, Hollow (Size 5, Amenities 2, Doors 5, Security 3) 15, Fast Reflexes 1, Fleet of Foot 3, Mantle 3, Toxin Resistance 2

Willpower: 5

Clarity: 2

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 15

Health: 7

Wyrd: 4

Contracts: Darkness ••••, Eternal Autumn •••, Fang and Talon (Canines) •••, Fleeting Autumn •, Mirror •••, Smoke ••

Glamour/per Turn: 13/4

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Brawl	0(B)	8

MORTAL ANTAGONISTS

Humans are just sheep, aren't they? Poor, addled souls with only one eye on the real world, the other closed to the truth of Glamour and Wyrd.

At least, that's what some changelings like to think. The Lost can easily be convinced of their own excellence by dint of their altered physiology and mastery over various elements, and it's easy to assume that humans are sad fools who remain ignorant of what's really going on around them.

In many cases, yes, that's true. Humans have their eyes closed to what's really going on, as it's easier to willfully disregard those strange little moments ("Did I just see someone leap between buildings? I could've sworn he had wings. I really just need to get a full night's sleep...") than it is to give into them, thus opening a door that perhaps cannot be closed.

But if changelings think that humans aren't dangerous, then changelings are the real fools. Humans are oft armed with just enough knowledge to get them into trouble, and to bring that trouble down upon the whole freehold. Some humans aren't willfully ignorant at all, but become addicted to even the smallest glimpse of Glamour at work in the world. Even a spark of magic can draw the human into the world of the fae, like a moth to a flame. (Except, of course, this moth might be carrying a .38 snubnose that he fully intends to use before immolating himself in the mad magic.)

Humans are dangerous, even deadly. Humanity exists in a numberless flock, far outstripping the power of a handful of changelings. Humans are also connected to the larger society, and have access to all kinds of things that the Lost may not — be it guns, money or health care. That's not to say the Lost don't have access to these things, but the further they move from the human world, the more unlikely it is that they are connected to the larger body of humankind, and the less grasp the Lost have on mundane resources. Humans, on the other hand, are intimately connected to the social network of their own world, and can use it against the changelings either on purpose or inadvertently.

The danger of a given human is in many ways multiplied when the Lost bring him into their world through ensorcellment. Yes, it's useful to have a mortal aide who is at least somewhat "in-the-know," and has a taste of the magic for himself. But in some ways it's also like giving a child a gun. Accidents happen.

The Lost think they're in danger from the Fair Folk? From one another? From gibbering beasts clawing their way from the tangled Hedge? All that may be true, but it often doesn't compare to just how dangerous humanity can be. If a motley makes one misstep in that mortal world, the entire wave of humankind might come crashing down on the characters, a tidal force with a cruel undertow.

THE MANY DANGERS OF HUMANKIND

In presenting humans as a danger to the Lost, you have several options. (In this case, we're talking about humans who remain largely ignorant of magic — in other words, not ensorcelled.) The easiest and most straightforward manner is to present a single human antagonist. One human is dangerous. He might have a gun. He might have a grudge to bear. He might have family members who will hide him and keep him safe even as he's on the run from the cops for putting two bullets in a changeling's head.

The single human antagonist can serve a number of purposes. While a motley can likely deal with him in somewhat short order, how characters deal with them is likely going to be a point of conflict in the game — and, remember, conflict is what these games are all about. Whatever they do to handle him reflects back upon them. If they do *anything* that can be construed as negative — hurt him, hurt his family, shape his mind, enslave him, just plain kill him — they will be faced with the cold reality that they are, perhaps, the monsters the sad fucker imagined them to be. If they take it easy on him, offering him something, the deal might come back to bite them later. Maybe he'll be spurned and inadvertently summon the True Fae. Maybe his fragile mind can't really handle ensorcellment. It's a tightrope walk, to be sure.

Alternately, it's possible that the single human antagonist is stronger than the characters suspect, better connected, and has greater access to potent resources. Thus, this human antagonist might serve as a dogged enemy that continues to resurface over the course of a story or chronicle. Sure, sometimes they think they've done away with him, but he always shows back up, some new trick up his sleeve (be it a straight razor or a warrant for their arrest).

Another option is a group of humans who work as a nest of antagonists. This isn't about some global conspiracy to eradicate changelings — these humans aren't some well-funded arm of the Mormon Temple or a black-ops splinter cell with rifle scopes that can detect Glamour. While such groups may or may not exist, we're talking about groups of humans acting on the local scale. Imagine a kind of support group for humans who, together, witnessed the intrusion of a True Fae into this world. The group might start out as just a weekly meeting where they get together to talk about their nightmares and to try to justify just what it was they all saw, but as the months go on they might start honing

A Theme of Madness

Consider that the theme of most human antagonists is going to be madness. Be it a little touch of madness or a whole big bag of it, even the barest glimpse of the magical world is enough to plant the seed of insanity in any human. Just as changelings must struggle to retain their clarity of mind, so, too, do humans have difficulty processing the irrationalities of the fae world. The thing to remember is that this is not a funny madness, it's not some crazy guy flinging his shit around, babbling about UFOs. It's a keenly honed, cold madness that exhibits itself in many ways. On the small end, it's the madness of a phobia or an obsession. A man who can't sleep because he dreams of things he doesn't understand, or who finds himself idly drawing strange symbols (that sometimes look like doorways lined with thorns). On the large end, it's the madness of a serial killer, who does what he does because he knows no other way. It's the insanity of someone whose life has gone so far off the rails (though this may not be obvious to the casual neighbor) that he can barely identify himself anymore in all the voices he hears inside his head. Madness is creepy. Big or small, it's what makes these humans dangerous.

their anger and confusion. They might buy some shotguns from Wal-Mart. They might decide they need to protect their neighborhood from those "things." Alternately, feel free to consider a *local* conspiracy. A local real estate agent who catches a glimpse of Glamour or is somehow manipulated by a motley of changelings (thus causing him to lose his family or his wealth) might orchestrate a narrow conspiracy against that motley. The people he manipulates into working against the changelings don't necessarily know what they're doing — the building inspector who moves to condemn a building in the freehold and the cop who's been convinced to keep an eye on the area from his black-and-white don't *know* anything about changelings, but these humans are antagonists just the same.

That's an important element to the non-ensorcelled antagonist. These humans are only barely in the know as to what's going on. They likely don't know a thing about magic, Glamour, Wyrd or any of that stuff. They just know they were somehow taken advantage of, or that the targets of their ire are somehow "weird" or "deviant." Remember that changelings often take advantage of humans, often without thought to what it means for the human. The Lost always have the potential for the callousness of their Keepers — it lies, perhaps unrealized, perhaps harnessed, deep in

their hearts and it sometimes comes out without them even realizing what they've truly done. Some changelings leave in their wake a line of spurned humans: a jilted lover here, a conned rube there, a bullied family member somewhere else. Any and all of these mortals might one day be thorns in a changeling's side.

TUPELO ROSIE

Quote: "C'mon. Just let me in. I want to talk to him. I'll give you anything."

Background: Rose Gonzalez, from Tupelo, Mississippi — hence the name, Tupelo Rosie — is a self-made woman. A sculptress with a keen eye and hand for bringing the unlikely images from within inert materials, she came to Miami to make her way among a burgeoning artists' community. For a time, she lived out of her car and on the streets. But, over time, she made something of herself, and was for a while the toast of the town, a true artist with a love for the art and a disdain for the money it could bring in.

Her downfall came when she met the changeling. He was handsome. Too handsome, really, impossibly beautiful. And the way he made her feel! So many emotions drawn to the surface, fanned like flames. She was hooked. She was in love. She let her work fall by the wayside, and he let her do so (because her attentions were now upon him and this sated his deep-seated vanity). But then came the day when he was done with her, finding that the vital spark that she possessed was diminishing and, therefore, no longer attractive.

It didn't end there. Rosie knows where he goes, knows who he hangs with. She's developed an eating disorder (bulimia) and has become quite the alcoholic. She hasn't touched her studio in months, instead choosing to spend her time going to the area within and around the freehold, banging on doors, trying to see her ex-lover so that she may confront him. She's making a lot of noise. She's drawing a lot of attention. The changelings are getting worried, and grow concerned that her ex-lover isn't properly *handling* the problem. If he doesn't deal with her soon, they'll have to do it. The question therefore becomes, how?

Description: A real firecracker, Rosie was once the portrait of a vibrant artist garbed in many colors, but lately she seems bedraggled. Her hair is in a mess, her makeup smeared, her breath reeking of whatever gut-rotting brew she could find. Her once-cherubic cheeks are now gaunt. Her eyes sit deeper in her head than what's normal. She looks the part of a ghost, a shadow of her former self wracked with disease, grief or both.

Storytelling Hints: Rosie's drunk most hours of the day. She's turned her charming boisterousness into a loud screech, her attitude shifting wildly between soulful beseeching and angry ranting. Rosie's been jilted, big-time, and it consumes her. She'll do anything for anybody to get just five minutes of fave-time with her ex-lover. Rosie is dangerous not because



she's good with a gun or violent, but because she's out of control and a magnet for unwanted attention.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Crafts (Sculpture) 4, Investigation 1

Physical Skills: Larceny 2, Stealth 2, Survival (Streets) 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy 4, Expression (Jokes) 3, Socialize 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Allies (Artists) 2, Allies (Barflies) 2, Barfly, Fame 1, Language (Spanish) 3, Meditative Mind, Resources 1

Willpower: 3

Morality: 6

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Lust

Initiative: 4

Defense: 3

Speed: 9

Health: 7

RODDY VAN BASTELAAR

Quote: "I'm taking it all back, you scum-fucks. What's mine is mine."

Background: Roddy's always been on the cusp of something, he believed. He was a good-looking guy. Not too stupid. He kept himself in good shape. All around him were the beautiful people, the rich people, the terminally happy. One day, he decided, that would be him. Working as a bouncer at one of the hottest clubs in Miami, he shook a lot of important hands, and one day he believed that would pay off.

And then came those goddamn con artists. How they smelled out his desperation, he didn't know. But they were good-looking. Funny. They seemed to like him so much that they offered to help him out — they had access to the world he so dearly wanted to be a part of, and it became clear that they were his doorway in. Sure, they seemed a little strange, but didn't all the wealthy elite? "Eccentric," isn't that what they called it? He just had to buy his way into their world — like they had, or so they said — and soon he'd be the one dancing in the club, not standing outside by the ropes.

They took him for everything he had. Over the years, Roddy had built up a pretty nice little bank account for just such a moment, but they bent him over the rails and that was that. He tried to get his money back, tried to beg with them, plead with them, but they just found it funny. Somehow, they fucked him even more — next thing he knew, he didn't have his job anymore, his car was in impound and

his long-time girlfriend found pictures (fakes) of him with two other girls. Worst of all were the nightmares! The faces of those who screwed him, mocking him, playing with him.

It's been a hard road to revenge. He's taken a pound of flesh from them, crippling one of those dirty Eurotrash bastards, but for every eye he takes of theirs, they take some-

thing from him. It's been a near-constant game of one-uppance over the last year, and Roddy's got the scars and obsessions to prove it. But now he knows of others like them, and he knows where they live, where they do their sordid little business. And he'll come for them all, as soon as he's ready.

Description: Roddy's a fireplug. Not too tall, but build like a brick outhouse. Once, he was tan, well-groomed, good-looking. Despite the muscles, though, he's no longer the well-kept bouncer. He's got a patchy beard. A nose twisted from a bad break. His skin is pale, marked with too-dark tattoos. Weird thing about Roddy? He hasn't blinked in a long time. Just one long, eerily determined gaze.

Storytelling Hints: You're on a crusade for vengeance driven by envy. He doesn't know that the people who screwed him over were changelings, and isn't even aware of the term. He just knows that they're too rich, too beautiful, and they don't deserve what they have. They've built their little kingdom atop those they've conned, and Roddy wants to end that cycle of abuse for him, for everybody. He's keenly focused, and it's really starting to scare people. The one thing Roddy has in this world that's his touchstone is his family. When he's with them, he softens... at least for a time.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 5

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Computer 1, Investigation 3, Medicine 1, Occult 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive (Big Cars) 4, Firearms (Close Range) 3, Larceny 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Empathy (Family) 1, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Bouncers) 3, Common Sense, Contacts (Private Eyes) 2, Gunslinger, Quick Draw, Stunt Driver

Willpower: 8

Morality: 5

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Health: 9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
.357 Magnum	3	35/70/140	9	(10 dice pool at close range)

BURKE STOLHANSKE

Quote: "Remember what I said. Stay quiet. Stick to the shadows. Eyes peeled."

Background: Holy shit, there are people in the sewers.



Burke's seen them. He works down there, too, with all his buddies performing maintenance for the city. They keep to the shadows, but damn, they're there. His friends didn't believe him at first, thought he was crazy, but that just pushed him to prove it — his pride was on the line, after all, and if a working class man doesn't have his pride, he doesn't have dick.

Burke's a good man. A family man, two kids, a distant wife. He's also a good worker, steadily rising through the ranks of the city's public works department. He knows there's not a lot of glory or glamour down in the sewers, but he makes great effort to do his job very well, and he's been rewarded for it time and time again.

Now, he's starting to get weirded out. His buddies have seen them, finally, but the cops haven't found anything, and Burke's own bosses either look at him like he's gone off the reservation or just dismiss it as a bunch of homeless nobodies finding some sewer tunnel shelter for the night. But Burke's seen how these people go into a doorway, and just disappear. He's seen how their eyes glow sometimes down there in the dark. How they can conjure a light out of nothing.

So, he and his buddies have made a pact. They're going to get to the bottom of this. They aren't moving in hard and fast; this isn't some military operation. They're biding their time. Watching, waiting, collecting evidence (like those twisty little thorns they sometimes find on the ground — newsflash, there aren't any plants like that down in the sewers). When the time is right, they'll strike. It's not about violence. It's about solving the riddle, about unraveling this mystery. If it's just a bunch of homeless dudes, fine. But Burke knows that it's something else. Something... stranger.

Description: Burke's a big boy — tall and wide. He likes to eat, so he carries a lot of meat on his prodigious bones. He's got a boyish face even though he's in his 40s, and hands like manhole covers. But despite his size, he doesn't carry himself poorly. He's not clumsy, and can make his way through the relatively tight tunnels with greater ease than everybody expects.

Storytelling Hints: Burke's not an obsessive guy, but this whole "people in the sewer" thing has really gotten under his skin. He can't let it go. It's starting to affect his home life, too. Normally he makes plenty of time for his kids and even does his best to please his often displeased wife. But lately, it's been about the secret meetings with his guys in his garage. Wife thinks they're playing poker, but that's not the case. They're planning. Plotting. They're getting impatient, but Burke's a real patient guy, and he's good at persuading them to hold off just a little bit longer.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3



Mental Skills: Computer 1, Crafts (Plumbing) 3, Investigation (Darkness) 3, Medicine 1

Physical Skills: Brawl 1, Drive 1, Stealth 2, Weaponry (Blunt) 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 1, Socialize 2

Merits: Direction Sense, Giant, Iron Stamina, Resources 2, Strong Back

Willpower: 6

Morality: 7

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 11

Size: 6

Health: 9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Louisville Slugger	2(B)	—	9	—

ALDOUS BLACKWELL

Quote: "You saw her? Tell me where. Don't worry — I pay well for information."

Background: The Fair Folk took Aldous Blackwell's daughter nearly 40 years ago. He himself was 40 at the time, and she had just turned 16. She was the heir to his fortune, what with his wife dead from a car accident and no son to speak of. Bethany, the daughter, was Blackwell's pride and joy. But when he went into her room one day to find the windows open and the curtains blowing, he was shocked at what he witnessed outside. Three stories below, a dark horseman in a flowing red cloak carried her away, draped over the hindquarters of the husky beast.

The police, of course, were no help — they found no sign of her abductor, not even the hoof-prints of the horse (which should've shown on the damp, dewy front lawn of Aldous's estate. Over time, Blackwell grew to accept what he believed was the reality: some human monster with an eye toward theatrics had kidnapped his daughter, raped her and killed her. He grew richer. He grew colder. He withdrew from the world, becoming more and more the eccentric über-class hermit.

And then, there she was. One night on the news, interviewing some witnesses to a gang-related crime in the city, and in

the background, he saw her. She looked bedraggled, worn-down, but she was the same age. An impossibility, to be sure, but Aldous knew his own daughter's face. She was alive. And, by proxy, so was he.

That single sighting of his daughter has consumed him utterly. He doesn't know she's a changeling, of course, and only returned to the world a few years ago (time being what it is between this world and Faerie). But he's got the resources to find out. In the last two years, Aldous has been like Alice tumbling down the rabbit hole, sending out agent after agent (mostly private detectives, but he also pays various vagrants, criminals and gang members to do his work) to collect information and report back. He's established a rather dense dossier on a number of the freehold's changelings and their strange activities. It all brings him closer to Bethany, or so he hopes. He has a great deal of money and a fierce passion for finding his daughter. Woe to any changeling who stands in Aldous's way.

Description: He's a tall old man, nearly skeletal, mostly bald, a well-trimmed Vandyke beard framing his normally stern mouth. He rarely steps out of his long, flowing silk robe. For a long time, before seeing Bethany again, he was dead-eyed, hollow-gazed, staring off at nothing. But now, there's a fire in the dark of his eye. He smiles, something his mouth hasn't done in nearly 30 years.

Storytelling Hints: Aldous is alive again. That's how he feels. His hands tremble with excitement. He stammers over his words — odd for him, normally a slow and measured speaker. His daughter is alive, and it is a kind of mad miracle, one that he clings to as dearly as a baby holds its blanket. Those who help him in his quest will be paid handsomely. Those who obstruct his journey will pay dearly.

Aldous's daughter could well be one of the players' characters, if both Storyteller and player are so inclined. If this isn't appropriate, Bethany is now a Winter Court Mirrorskin known as Mooncalf, grown somewhat paranoid. She fears reunion with her family would draw the attention of her Keeper, and thus her reticence is likely to bring Aldous into a more aggressive role in the chronicle.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 5

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 4, Computer 2, Investigation (Microfiche) 3, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 3, Science 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 1, Firearms 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression 1, Intimidation (Money) 3, Persuasion (Money) 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Allies (Upper Crust) 3, Contacts (Criminal Elements) 2, Contacts (Police) 1, Contacts (Private Eyes) 3, Encyclopedic Knowledge, Resources 5, Status (Corporate) 5

Willpower: 8

Morality: 6

Virtue: Hope



Vice: Wrath
Initiative: 5
Defense: 2
Speed: 9
Health: 6

Where's the Fetch?

While the fetch is, of course, a common replacement for those mortals abducted into Faerie, not *every* Fair Folk replaces what it takes. In this case, however, the Fae *did* leave a fetch behind in the woods not far from Blackwell's estate — and the fetch wandered, lost, eventually dying from exposure and turning into its constituent parts (twigs, leaves, hissing cockroaches, swatches of painted burlap). Bethany's fetch simply didn't make it home.

THE ENSORCELLED

Ensorcelled mortals provide a whole other avenue of concern for the Lost. Yes, the ensorcelled can be tools — a human who is allowed to be in on “the secret” and realize that the characters aren't raving lunatics but are instead truly magical beings? Well, that's a resource to be carefully cultivated. The concern is, not every changeling so carefully maintains that relationship. Alternately, some cultivate it just fine, but an ensorcelled mortal isn't automatically an ally to the whole freehold.

What's mentioned above about mortal antagonists is, a little knowledge can be a big danger. Ensorcellment, in some cases, takes that to the next step. Now a human knows who the changelings are. He knows of what they're capable. Sure, he's likely to be getting something out of the bargain, but humans the world around have thrown away perfectly good careers and relationships because of out-of-control emotions. Being tied to Glamour to intimately can... tweak the ensorcelled mortal's brain a bit. Glamour doesn't set the world spinning off its axis most of the time, but does introduce a certain unreality into the mind, tempting imbalance. The ensorcelled might go nuts. He might go rogue. He might want more out of the deal than what he's getting. Yes, the changelings have ways of dealing with this element, but just as all things, it can be imperfect. Slip up, let him go and one might have a very deadly — and ultimately knowledgeable — foe stalking you from within the mortal herd.

MAGIC AND MORTALS

Below are a number of problems potentially presented by the ensorcelled. These problems are not universal,

but represent reasons why an ensorcelled mortal could present a problem for the Lost either as a rogue ally or a full-blown antagonist.

MADNESS

As an optional rule, you might consider making it easier for ensorcelled mortals to gain derangements from degeneration. One's eyes being opened to Glamour — with the very stuff infusing that human's body — is certainly wondrous and strange, but it might well be *too* wondrous, *too* strange. The very existence of this magic is at odds with the reasonable centers of most human beings' brains. Therefore, it might become easier for a human to develop tics, foibles, little insanities.

When making the Morality roll (post-degeneration roll) to check for a derangement, that roll is made at a -1 penalty.

Alternately, you might consider not making derangements easier to gain, but easier for them to surface once they *are* gained. Any Resolve + Composure roll made to resist manifesting a derangement could be made at a -1 penalty.

Frailties

One option, too, is that instead of manifesting derangements, a human ensorcelled may develop frailties (banes and taboos) much in the way that changelings do. Think of a human who can't cross a line of spilled salt, or one who gains physical discomfort from hearing the chiming of an open music box.

FRIEND OF ENEMIES

The ensorcelled can very well be pledgebound to an unsavory or antagonistic motley, thus making that ensorcelled mortal an enemy instead of an ally. The motley to which the mortal “belongs” needn't be outright evil, which means the ensorcelled isn't evil, either. But if the motley is in any way hostile to the players' characters, then the ensorcelled will act in similar opposition. This, by proxy, makes an otherwise normal (if there is such a thing) ensorcelled a very real antagonist.

FRIEND OF THE FAIR FOLK

The Fair Folk have mortal agents in this world, plain and simple. These mortals, ensorcelled by the potent Glamour of the True Fae, needn't be bound by any pledge, but simply have their eyes ripped open to the reality of Wyrds' presence in the world. And, just because that agent isn't actually pledgebound doesn't mean he won't do every damn thing that the True Fae demands of him — the conse-

quences of failing the Fair Folk are both many and endless. Denying a Fae master might cause one to lose his family, friends, job, money, his whole damn *life*... because the fiend will take it from him inch by inch, like plucking bits of wing from a fragile butterfly. (Though, it's worth noting that some Fae *do* bind their ensorcelled mortals by pledges instead of just infusing them with Glamour.)

Ensorcelled mortals working for the Fae are dangerous indeed. Such mortals operate as spies. They function as soldiers. One Fae agent might perform intense weeks-long surveillance on a given changeling's activities to report back to his mistress. Another might strap a bomb to his chest or carry an arsenal of guns into the freehold and just start taking changelings out left and right (as the mad Fae squeals with delight from somewhere far away).

Remember, too, that the Fae are in themselves wondrous. They can appear like brave gods, tempting demons, otherworldly beauties or punishing angels. A human being can easily be seduced by this. Some humans even work for the Fair Folk under the promise that one day they, too, will be taken away to "beautiful Arcadia" to become changelings. Of course, such a reward is no reward at all, but when a Fae appears garbed in the very ideal of raw majesty, it's hard to believe that such a being could be lying.

ETERNAL ENSORCELLED

Some humans can become ensorcelled simply by being exposed to Glamour at work in this world. This doesn't require the deliberate efforts of a Fae or changeling, but if a mortal is in some way affected by or a witness to a situation involving Glamour or Wyrð, he may have the scales ripped from his eyes forever.

In what situations can this happen? A human manipulated too many times by Contracts. Or perhaps a human who witnesses something that his mind finds impossible to parse: a changeling calling up a tidal wave of water, a grotesque Other entering into this world, a vicious attack by a howling hobgoblin. Maybe the human wanders into the Hedge, or just catches a glimpse through the doorway and sees what lies among the Thorns. It's even possible that the human hasn't really been affected by Glamour at all, but suffered some manner of trauma that allows him to retreat into a very real fantasy world (think head trauma or some kind of abuse as a child).

The thing about such characters is that they can't shut it off. They can't close their eyes and stop seeing the truth about things. For some, this is liberating — they feel special, powerful, sanctified. Others feel cursed. Many go mad.

Eternally ensorcelled humans can be great allies or persistent antagonists — some humans can even be both, helping the changelings in one motion while hurting them the next. Alternately, consider that having one's perspective shift dramatically can be traumatic (often on *top* of whatever trauma was initially suffered). It isn't unthinkable

that an eternally ensorcelled individual might not see true Glamour in action, but instead would perceive a world poisoned by it (much as the "poisoning ensorcellment" sanction in the system of pledges). He would see only monstrosity. Beautiful things would all be ugly. The splendor of Wyrð would be vile and frightening. This is likely to cause derangements and, at least initially, a complete withdrawal from the world. Some manage to build their will against such a thing, though, and venture out to destroy the awful things they see hiding in the shadows.

Assume that, not only are such characters ensorcelled, but they gain the Unseen Sense Merit, as well.

Ensorcelled as Characters

Want to play the ensorcelled? While this is a book predominantly about antagonists, an ensorcelled would make an entertaining and challenging character. You'll find that you need no special rules to play them that aren't present in either this book or *Changeling: The Lost* — they can see changelings, Glamour, the Hedge, the world's mien in all its glory and horror. Apart from that, the ensorcelled are simple mortal World of Darkness characters. If you feel that changelings are perhaps too powerful or too strange for the mood you seek to present, and you're looking for characters who are a little more vulnerable and "in the dark," then ensorcelled might be a good way to go.

CROSSOVER POTENTIAL

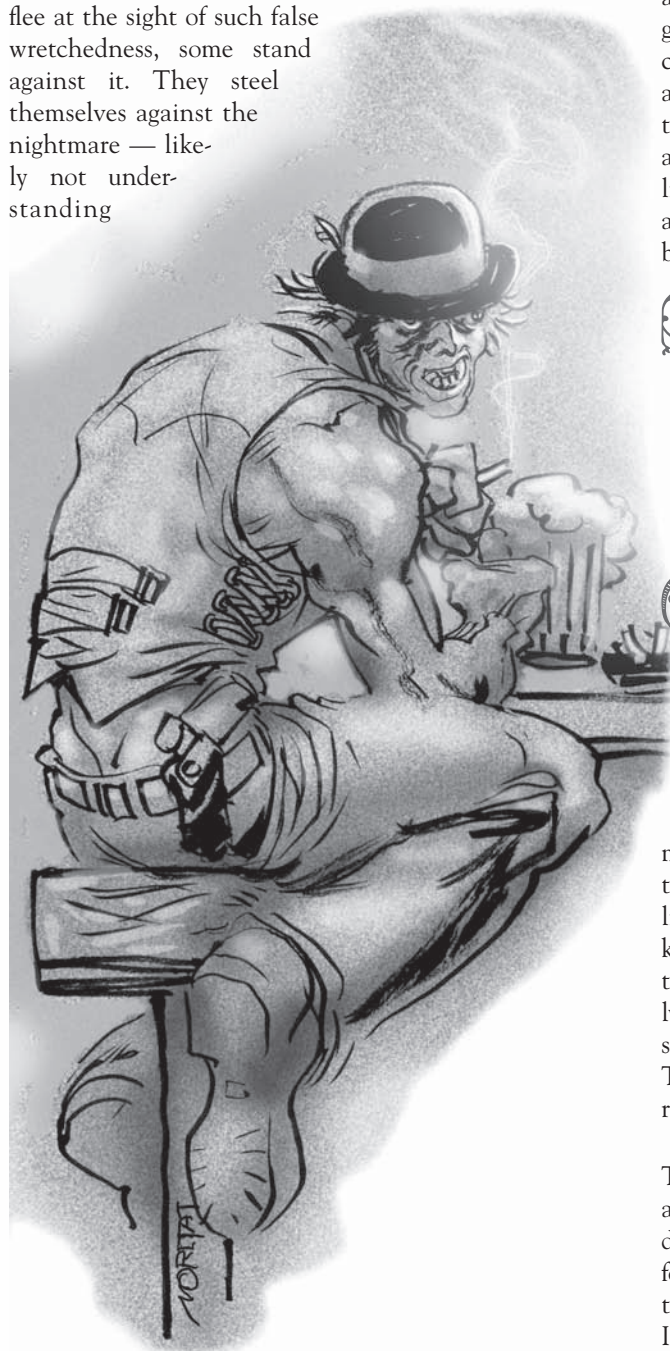
Ensorcellment needn't be limited to humans. With Storyteller approval, any of the other "monster" character types (vampires, werewolves, mages, changelings, psychics, ghouls, wolf-blooded, etc.) could attain ensorcellment. (Note that such characters cannot gain Contracts in any way, but they can possess some changeling Merits such as Court Goodwill.)

For purposes of this book, that means you have a whole other bevy of antagonists from which to choose. Obviously, the other denizens of the World of Darkness make for interesting antagonists all on their own, but once they become ensorcelled, they gain an even greater connection to the Lost and can always see the magic of the Fae without any effort on their parts. While such characters can be highly useful, they can also be dangerously unpredictable. Many possess urges to give in to their monstrous sides, and such urges can become hard to deny (especially when their minds are addled with magic). Others, such as mages, are intensely curious — some so curious that it must be labeled an obsession. They all present great value and great risk to the Lost. Which makes them damn fine antagonists, indeed.

BROKEN PLEDGE

A broken pledge can lead to a vengeful mortal — one who may no longer be ensorcelled, or one whose eyes still can see the effects of Wyrd on the world.

One possibility is that a mortal's ensorcellment grows poisoned as the result of his breaking a pledge. Perhaps he didn't mean to break it. Maybe it was on purpose. But a mortal experiencing a poisoned ensorcellment is in for a rough ride, indeed. All that he sees of Glamour is distorted, cast in the hues of nightmare, twisted and misshapen into something grotesque. While many mortals can't handle this, and either go catatonic or flee at the sight of such false wretchedness, some stand against it. They steel themselves against the nightmare — likely not understanding



what's really happening — and fight it. Some might even think that they now see the *true* reality, that all the fairy gold was just dross, that all the beautiful dreams were truly just nightmares.

Another option is that a mortal feels wrathful over any kind of curse that resulted as a broken pledge. Maybe his ire is up because his blessing is gone. Or maybe the curse has cause him accidents (crashing a car, chopping off a thumb, accidentally falling off a ladder) that hurt him or a loved one. Sometimes, a human breaks a pledge and doesn't really realize that he's done it. He might mistake what he did for something that was perfectly acceptable — but, in reality, he brought danger to the changeling or accidentally gave away too much information. (Consider, too, that other changelings can be quite manipulative, and might lead him astray without him even realizing it.) Upon experiencing the results of the broken pledge, a mortal may feel spurned and sour, and seek revenge as if it's somehow the changeling's fault. The mortal may even turn this anger against all the changelings, because if one apple is bad, the whole bushel must be, too.

Changeling Merits

Worth noting: ensorcelled mortals can possess dots in the Court Goodwill Merit, though it's incredibly rare that this Merit goes above two dots. Unless the Storyteller declares otherwise, a human cannot maintain a Hollow or gain Glamour from possessing the Harvest Merit. New Identity works, and needn't be Lost-centric.

HANDSOME JOHNNY

Quote: "You gimme my goddamn face back, you sonofabitch."

Background: Johnny was three years old when his mother fell asleep on the couch with a lit cigarette. The fire that burned up their trailer and their two cats *also* burned up little Johnny. Unlike with his mother, though, the fire didn't kill him — it just left him with a cratered burn-victim face for the rest of his life, a callused mask of variegated skin. Socially, this stunted Johnny, and most of his formative years were spent as some kind of bully, miscreant or outright criminal. This continued into his early 20s, which saw him running rackets and cons for various black market outlets.

All that changed when he met the motley of Darklings. They saw that he was a talented man despite his face, good at getting things done and not worrying so much about dirtying his hands. They bonded with him as a motley, performing the Household Rite variant of the Ancient Pact, thus ensorcelling him and opening his eyes to the world. In return for his service, they allowed him to reshape his

face. Not only did his face no longer bear the burn scars, but he was outright *good-looking*, giving some credence to his once-ironic nickname, Handsome Johnny. (In system terms, the pledge afforded him the four-dot version of the Striking Looks Merit.)

All *that* changed when the changelings of the motley were killed. Johnny still doesn't know how it happened — but he damn sure knew *when*. They all died together, torn into gory gobbets in their shared Hollow. Handsome Johnny, enjoying a nice *schvitz* in the steam room, felt his face start to shift. The bones slid beneath the skin. The flesh puckered and sizzled as if being burned all over again. His good looks were gone. His awful crater-face had returned.

That broke something inside Johnny. Whatever dam was holding back his anger fell to scree beneath the surging tide of rage. He wants his face back. He knows all those who associated with his motley, and he knows what they are. He's no longer reasonable, and nobody wants to involve him in another Ancient Pact, and that hasn't made him any calmer. He's determined one way or another to get his face back, no matter who he has to manipulate, hurt or kill to make it so.

Description: As noted, Johnny's face is the mask of a burn victim — one eye is exposed, the socket pulled wide and the skin taut, the other eye buried in a puckered pocket of scarified flesh. His upper lip is in a permanent sneer, and his nose is little more than a piggish knob squat against his face. He dresses in denims and leathers, never forgetting his trademark black bowler cap.

Storytelling Hints: Here's Johnny's basic attitude in a nutshell: fuck the world. Fuck anybody who looks at him wrong, and fuck those fairy fucks who don't want to help him get his pretty face back. Johnny believes the world owes him a great deal, and anybody who's a part of it better pay up or find his hand in their purse or foot on their throat. What Johnny wants, Johnny takes. He wasn't always this way, of course — his selfishness used to be contained, kept only for truly weak moments. Now, though, he's little more than an arrogant, angry guy who believes himself entitled to just about everything.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Computer (Running Scams) 3, Crafts 1, Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Occult (Fairy Tales) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Larceny (Lockpicking) 4, Stealth 3, Weaponry 1

Social Skills: Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Danger Sense, Fresh Start, Quick Draw, Quick Healer, Iron Stamina 3

Willpower: 5

Morality: 4

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Health: 9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brass Knuckles	1(B)	—	6	Uses Brawl
Sawed-Off Shotgun	4(L)	20/40/80	9	9 Again

PICBABY

Quote: “Please, baby, don't be mad at me. I'll do better next time. Please?”

Background: Pigbaby — born Dixie Walnut — just wanted to be loved. Love wasn't something she grew up with, though, not really. Her father was a couch-bound drunk, her mother a wicked abuser (and a whore amid the trailer park cast-offs). Any and every boyfriend Dixie had was a user, abuser or outright loser. Even her dogs ran away from her, every last one of the fool hounds. Her future wasn't too bright — she got her GED, worked down at the local Wal-Mart, still lived at home in the trailer park. But that's when she met the Stripling Prince (p. 81).

She was out back one day, the summer heat beating down on her, and she was hosing down the kiddie pool so she could cool off a bit before her shift. And, there he was. Sitting atop the half-dead shrubbery that ringed the trailer's so-called yard. He was a beautiful soul, and her heart twisted and shuddered in her chest and like *that*, she was in love. At that point, she was still Dixie Walnut, but she'd be Pigbaby soon enough.

The handsomest fellow disappeared again, receding from the trailer park, and Dixie was left wanting. But soon she started to dream of him sweeping her off her feet, taking her away from this miserable life and into the arms of love. The dreams felt real. And, of course, they *were* real. Because the Stripling Prince was in her dreams, slowly feeding her Glamour until one day she was unwittingly ensorcelled.

The Prince owns Dixie — whom he called Pigbaby because she's pretty though she has what he calls “a piggish little nose” — heart and soul. For now, she's still in the trailer park, but he gives her gifts and does little favors for her. Other, stranger things have happened, too, for which he claims credit: her father is up off the couch and looking for a new job, her mother's got lung cancer and her dog Jumper has come back to her. All good things, way she sees it, thanks to the Prince.

Of course, he loves her. And sometimes love is a little bit about abuse, too, but Pigbaby is comfortable with that. No matter what he does to her, he treats her better than anyone ever has (and ever will, if his word is to be believed), and he's given her a magic eye where she can see the most



wonderful things. Yes, she has to do whatever he says, and sure she sometimes thinks that the collar he sometimes clasps around her neck is just a little too tight (and the leash a little too short), but she's happy. For the first time ever, she's genuinely happy.

Description: Pigbaby looks older than her 19 years, with lines around her eyes and mouth. She's certainly cute what with those sprouting pigtails and pink-painted lips, making her look a little bit like a doll — but look deep enough, one can see that this doll is more than a little bit broken. True to the Prince's nickname for her, she does have a slightly upturned nose.

Storytelling Hints: Pigbaby is addicted to the Strippling Prince. She's profoundly dependent upon him, gladly giving herself to him the way an addict does to his pills or drink. He's sometimes cruel to her, but he's sometimes really nice, too, and that's never happened to her before. She'll do anything to gain his approval. If that means hurting someone, so be it — once upon a time, she was just too sweet to do something mean to somebody else, but for her darling Prince, anything is possible.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 1

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Computer 1, Crafts 1, Investigation (Little Details) 3, Medicine 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Drive 2, Larceny (Shoplifting) 3, Stealth 1, Survival 1

Social Skills: Empathy (Boyfriends) 4, Expression 2, Socialize 2, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Contacts (Trailer Park) 2, Natural Immunity, Quick Healer, Striking Looks 2, Toxin Resistance

Willpower: 3

Morality: 6

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Lust

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 9

Health: 7

REESIE THOMPSON

Quote: "I see all kinds of things, man. Grams said I had the Evil Eye. Shoot, maybe she's right."

Background: A stray bullet from a gangland shooting ended Reesie Thompson's chances at a normal life. He was eight years old when it happened, just playing in the living room near the front window, rolling a pair of Hot Wheels around on the sill. Before he knew it, he was on the ground, bleeding, glass all around him. Next thing he remembered was being wheeled out into the street on a gurney, and high up above him, he saw a couple of things — big as people, with legs and arms like them, too — flying in front of the moon. Something else, too — a crow-faced man with a bloody string of something hanging from his beak — watched from a rusted fire escape.

The bullet nearly killed Reesie. He spent some time in a coma, walking in a place both beautiful and frightening, a fairy tale maze of brambles and towers, of muddy roads and the prettiest flowers he could ever imagine.

Upon waking, Reesie's eyes wouldn't close to all the magic in the world. He could see Glamour in action. He could see what the Lost really looked like, congregating on the corner just outside the crack house on 9th Avenue. He could see the doorways — real, they were *real* — into the magic land of thorns. Reesie was ensorcelled eternally.

These days, Reesie's considered an odd bird around the neighborhood. In his mid-30s, he doesn't have many friends except the homeless guys, the owner of the corner barber shop and a handful of changelings. He works for the changelings when he can, because he knows what they are and what they're capable of, and whatever work this entails, he'll do. Sometimes the work is friendly. Sometimes it isn't. Most of the Lost in the freehold don't know who Reesie is and what he can see, but those who do use him frequently, because he's on their "side," at least in spirit.



(Worth noting is that his dingy tenement apartment is actually home to a pretty massive library spanning various topics. Assume that he knows a lot about the occult, and his library reflects this. It might earn him or anybody who uses it a +1 to Occult-based

Research rolls.)

Description: Reesie's tall, haunted, skin as dark as midnight. He wears T-shirts most of the time, even in the coldest winter, and he's fond of showing off his bullet wound (which itches whenever he's around spent Glamour) to people just to freak them out. Reesie doesn't move fast. Everything he does is measured, evenly paced, as if too swift or too rash a movement might get him shot again.

Storytelling Hints: Reesie is a slow talker, almost spooky the way he enunciates certain words and drags out the others. He's also intense, often disturbingly so. The

thing about Reesie is, he doesn't really know whose side he's on other than his own. His family's long gone. Most people don't like to talk to him. He still lives in the same place he always did, smack dab in the middle of gang territory in a pretty poor part of town. He's got money, but he doesn't much know what to do with it. And, while he appears comfortable enough with the kinds of things he sees due to his ensorcellment, the reality is, he's not the tiniest bit comfortable. It freaks him out still, to this very day; his heart races, his blood turns to chilled piss. Someday, Reesie wonders what will happen if he snaps. He isn't there yet, but he can believe that day is coming.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Computer 2, Crafts 1, Investigation (Research) 4, Occult (Local Folktales) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Empathy (Body Language) 4, Expression 1, Intimidation 1, Streetwise 2

Merits: Allies (Booksellers) 1, Allies (Homeless) 3, Contacts (Librarians) 3, Holistic Awareness, Fleet of Foot 2, Meditative Mind

Willpower: 8

Morality: 7

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 11 (Fleet of Foot)

Health: 7

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Pocket Knife	0(L)	—	4	—

MISTER CHAMBERLAIN

Quote: "Two of our own are dead. It is time to kill the killers."

Background: Chamberlain was, perhaps, destined to serve the Winter Court. He has led a life of sorrow. He witnessed it on the passage from Haiti. He saw it on the streets with the other children. Once taken off the streets, he saw how completely grief destroyed the children in the orphanage. To survive, he learned how to stir grief, how to cause it, how to glean pleasure from sorrow — his own, and of others.

It was perhaps expected that he would one day work the streets. Drugs were his trade, and he was good at it. Drugs helped stave off grief in the short term, and bring it in the long term. While he wasn't so consciously aware of how dearly this pleased him, others *were* aware. Change-lings of Miami's Silent Arrow — shepherded by Jeremiah Sleet — watched Chamberlain vigilantly, and soon came the day that they were offering him employment for rewards

of money and magic. Sleet's people took Chamberlain in like family. A dysfunctional family, to be sure, but they worked together as crew and kin. Over time, the Court's ensorcelled began working together exclusively, operating as a cell of powerful humans working behind the scenes of the Winter Court.

Then came the day that the first of them was killed. Dumped at the base of the General Toussaint L'Ouverture statue was Proud Mary, one of their own. Weeks later, another of their group ended up at the feet of the statue, this time the young dealer, Yellowfin. Just a boy! This could not be. *Would* not be.

And so, with Sleet's approval, Chamberlain and the other ensorcelled act as a cell, sniffing out the identity of those who killed their own. They suspect the Summer Court, and so far their information hasn't disproved this. When the time comes that the ensorcelled discover the murderers — and just how high up the treachery goes — they will bring justice down upon the heads of those betrayers with great hell and fury.



Description: Chamberlain is a *zaftig* Haitian, big and round and stuffed in a breezy white suit. He walks with great purpose and, despite any apparent seriousness, is always found smiling (with his lips, if not his eyes). Despite his big body, he has alarmingly small hands with delicate, spidery fingers.

Storytelling Hints: He speaks clearly, loudly, his booming voice making proclamations left and right. He tells jokes to ease the tension, then brings home tales of horror, sadness and revenge. He's a man of many plans and big ideas, and right now the thing that consumes him is his urge for revenge against those who would dare to steal his family from him. When it comes to changelings of the Winter Court, Chamberlain trusts them utterly. Any other Lost from any other Court, he mistrusts without fail and is willing to put any of them to the fire to find out the truth. Given that he has Sleet's permission to do that very thing, that makes Chamberlain a very dangerous man.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Occult (Voodoo) 3, Politics 1

Physical Skills: Brawl 1, Drive 2, Firearms 1, Larceny 2, Survival (Streets) 3, Weaponry (Found Objects) 3

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 2, Socialize 2, Streetwise 4

Merits: Allies (Drug Dealers) 3, Contacts (Gang Bosses) 3, Eidetic Memory, Resources 3, Strong Back

Willpower: 7

Morality: 5

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Health: 9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Tire Iron	2(B)	N/A	6	-1, Improvised Weapon

ROLF REITER

Quote: "Aber es tut mir leid — sorry! Had to step out for a drink. Am I late?"

Background: Rolf is one of the undead, a blood-sucking fiend with a crummy little haven out in Lemon City, not far from Miami. He didn't grow up there; born in Germany, Rolf was brought over to Florida when he was very young to stay with his uncle, who had just purchased a lemon grove (a piece of property that would never actually yield a single edible





citrus fruit, sadly). That's where Rolf grew up. He didn't grow up well. A teen plagued with ADHD, he was forever in trouble with somebody (school, uncle, police), and while nothing he did was so drastic as to earn him more than a night in jail, he always maintained a persistent low level of bad habits.

Whoever it was who gave him the Embrace and made him a vampire obviously didn't give two shits about him, and may not even have meant to do it. One night, Rolf was attacked, probably for his blood. Maybe the vampire had a change of heart at the last minute, or perhaps instead decided to toy with this head-shorn upstart who by now was playing at being a neo-Nazi skinhead (he wasn't, but he liked the look). Whatever the case, Rolf was suddenly dragged into his Requiem, kicking and screaming.

Vampire society didn't care much for him, figuring him to be someone who wasn't going to last a year as one of the undead. They dismissed him at every turn, shutting him out from finding a true place among the Kindred.

But he found a new lease on life with a motley of Autumn Court changelings who moved into Lemon City to guard a sudden (and very prominent) opening into the Hedge. They needed help. Rolf was available. Before even knowing just what Rolf was (they figured him for just some wide-eyed night owl punk, which was right up their alley), they offered him the Ancient Pact, and it was done. Rolf was ensorcelled.

They learned what Rolf was, though it took them longer to discover this than one might have expected — several months had passed when one night, Rolf, edgy with hunger, attacked a woman on the street. She lived, but the Lost saw just what he was with his chin all smeared up with red, his pupils gone to pinholes as he drank from the meat around her collarbone. Certainly, the changelings had seen plenty of awfulness amongst their own (cannibalism isn't entirely unheard of among some Ogres, for instance), so they kept Rolf on. They even let him sip from their blood when desperation required it.

That was a mistake. Rolf's got the taste, now. The blood doesn't do anything for him above what a human's blood does, but it damn sure *tastes* fantastic. It gives him a rush of sweetness, and each drink is different — sometimes he tastes flowers, other times melting caramels. Being largely dead, he hadn't tasted anything like that in years.

And now, Rolf is growing addicted to the blood of the fae. He's gone out a few times and attacked changelings of other motleys, all in Miami, and it was just recently that he accidentally drank one of them dry. This will, of course, come back to haunt him.

Worse, though, is that Rolf is now seeing a way to finally get into the good graces of the other vampires. He's got something they might all want — a taste of true heaven. If he could somehow show them the way, revealing to them the reality of the Lost, maybe they'd finally let him in the door and give them the respect he feels he deserves.

Description: Rolf is a moon-eyed punk, excitable and tense, the tendons in his neck always standing out, his hands usually balled into fists, a crazy shit-eating grin spread across his face. He's ropy, lean, his head shorn. His skin is decorated with various neo-Nazi tats and brands (he doesn't really buy into all that garbage, but he digs the look). He's usually gussied up in black T-shirts, slashed-up jeans, a dog collar, a silver septum piercing. He's also pale white — a fact that makes him stand out in the sunny clime of Dade County. Because of his neo-Nazi look and his pallid skin, he earns a lot of undue attention from people who want to mock him or kick the crap out of him.

Storytelling Hints: Rolf is, as noted, excitable. He loves the thrill of a moment, and is often unpredictable — he might suddenly blurt out some kind of yammering outburst, kick over a trashcan, throw a rock through a window. He loves the chaos of the moment, though all of this conceals a pretty scared and confused dude who feels like

trash most hours of the day. He feigns mad delight, seeming to get off on every crazy thrill he can find, but the reality is, he's just terrified. He desperately wants to get over his fear, and he hopes that getting in with the other vampires might help him do that. If that means he has to somehow sell out his buddies (he's not to clear on what it means to be oathbound, but nobody said Rolf was all that smart), he'll do it. He'll hesitate. But he'll do it.

Clan: Daeva

Covenant: Unbound

Embrace: 2005

Apparent Age: 19

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Computer 1, Crafts 2, Investigation 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Dirty Fighting) 3, Drive 2, Firearms 1, Larceny (Pickpocket) 3, Stealth 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 3, Intimidation (Crazy) 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2, Fighting Style: Boxing 1, Haven (Garage Apartment) 1, Language (German) 3, Resources 1, Retainer (Pit Bull) 2

Willpower: 4

Humanity: 6

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Lust

Initiative: 8 (10 with Celerity)

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Health: 7

Blood Potency: 1

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Vigor 1

Vitae/per Turn: 10/1

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
.38 Special	2	20/40/80	6	—

Vampire Disciplines

Celerity allows the vampire to move fast. Spend one Vitae (blood point) and all incoming attacks against Rolf are made at -2 dice for that turn, and his Initiative score goes up by two. It's active for one turn.

Vigor allows Rolf to increase his Strength by +1 for a single turn, and this also requires the expenditure of a single Vitae. This can't be used more than once per scene.

If you want to put this in the terms of systems found in **Changeling: The Lost**, you might consider Rolf to have the Ogre blessing, as well as the Runnerswift and Skitterskulk blessings. He can't spend Glamour, though, and requires fresh blood in his system to use these abilities.







can barely breathe. My hands are shaking. Tears are frozen to my face, and I pray she doesn't notice.

The walls crawl with praying mantises, green and brown. I can hear the click of their feet on the brick. Their wings shudder. Outside, a car honks and I hear some kids playing. If they only knew what was going on inside this old schoolhouse.

I don't know how long I've been kneeling here. Hours, probably, but she has a way to make it feel like days.

She opens her mouth, finally, to speak. Flies, plump and green, fly from her open maw.

"Hand it to me," she says. The words come out of her open mouth even though her lips don't really move.

My arms, burning from holding them in place for so long, lift up the silver tray. I gently pull the silk cloth from atop revealing what she desires.

It's a Hank Aaron baseball card, a one-of-a-kind misprint. The 'H' in his name isn't an 'H' at all, but some funky symbol that looks like the number 8 on its side.

The top corner is bent and the thing smells like yeast or mold, but she doesn't seem to care.

She picks it up between a needle-tipped thumb and forefinger, and gazes upon it with delight, like she's looking at herself in a mirror.

This is the fifth object I've given her. One a year. That's the deal.

"Have I fulfilled our bargain, I ask? Can I stay for another year?"

She smiles, considering this, then says what she always says:

"Until I change my mind, little girl. Until I change my mind."

CHAPTER 2

Gentle Lords and Fair Ladies

*Thus a whole year passed, and when it was over the troll called him home,
for he was now in the troll's power like all the other animals.
The troll then said some words to him which he did not understand,
and the hare immediately became a human being again.
'Well, how do you like to serve me?' asked the troll,
'and how do you like being a hare?'*

— "THE TROLL'S DAUGHTER" (ANDREW LANG TRANSLATION)

THE TRUE FAE

Memories of the True Fae are tantamount to nightmares. Like a nightmare, such remembrance is imperfect, spotty, a cruel amalgam of bad feelings and unnerving visions. A changeling sleeps and sees her Fae Keeper stalking the paths of the Hedge, the sky darkening behind the figure as it approaches, a swirl of yellow fog dogging the monster's feet. Her dreams make her feel as she felt when she was under the so-called tutelage of her fiendish custodian: sick, afraid, hunted, dizzy with three parts pain to one part pleasure. She doesn't remember everything, of course — just the ceaseless cut of a rusty knife, a vulpine grin of cracked teeth and heady breath like overturned dirt.

The memories of the Fae aren't the worst part, though. It's the questions that can drive a changeling mad. What are the True Fae? Are they even real, in the strictest sense of the word, or are they something born of the collective nightmares of humankind? What is it the True Fae want, and *why* do they want it? The worst question of all, of course, plagues a changeling during her every moment, awake and asleep:

"When will my Keeper come for me once more?"

LORDS AND LADIES

This section details those theories surrounding the True Fae. Here we examine where they come from, what they are, what they want and how far they're willing to go to get it. The Others are mysterious, given over to a number of so-called facts that change depending on the teller and his memory. The goal here is to help you use the mystery and monstrosity of these nightmare beings as you see fit. You can use the following chapter as canon, or as something that applies to only a handful — or even none — of the True Fae in your game.

Remember, though, that the Fae aren't scary because they look strange or have horrible powers. Similar to nightmares, the True Fae are scary because they are both incomprehensible and unpredictable. They are horrific because they profoundly inhuman, willing to go to unforeseen depths to achieve their lunatic goals. Keeping that in mind will help you tell the scary stories and urban legends involving these bogeymen who seem as ceaseless as a bad dream.

ORIGINS

It is, in a way, comforting for a changeling to consider the origins of the Fae. By pondering their origins, a changeling lends a veneer of logic to these entities; it's a way of explaining them, of understanding their motivations. By being understood, the Others can therefore be denied or defeated — or so a changeling likes to think. Of course, no changeling truly knows where the Fae come from, or how long they've been absconding with humans back to their tangled realm. What's more concerning is that all evidence suggests that the True Fae themselves don't know — or don't care — from where or whence they came. Those Fae who have bothered to ruminate on the subject with their kept changelings don't seem to give it much thought at all: the Fae are what they are, they exist, and that is all they seem to understand. Rumors exist of changelings who have convinced their Keepers to pursue these questions and uncover whatever diabolical genesis spawned them, but that's all there are: rumors.

A HISTORY OF BAD DREAMS

It is easy to speculate those moments in which the True Fae have left their mark across cultures both alive and dead. When primitive

Many Names, Many Faces

The Lost have a plethora of nicknames for the True Fae: the Keepers, the Cousins, the Fair Folk, the Good Folk, the Gentry, the Lords and Ladies, the Furies, etc. One changeling might refer to them as the "Others," while another calls them the "Strangers." (And yet, use of either casts little doubt as to whom the changeling refers.) Certain regions might offer their own cultural or local variants on the name — an Irish changeling might call them the Daoine Sidhe (*thee-na shee*), a Scotsman might call them the Host or "Sluagh," whereas a changeling of India might call them the *Rakshasas* and a Catholic Lost might think of them purely as "the Demons." The names for the True Fae are as myriad as their horrid and beautiful faces.

man painted a godlike figure with broad triangle chest and antlered head, was he leaving behind the first known image of a wretched Fae huntsman? In Greek myth, the god Hades abducts Persephone to the Underworld; there she eats of the realm's fruit (a pomegranate) and remains forever changed, unable to truly exist as she once did. Is this the story of an early abduction by the True Fae writ large through the lens of myth? What of young Anne Jeffries, a Cornwall girl of the 17th century who claims to have been taken away to "Fairyländ" by a passel of impish men with red feathers in their caps? What of the claims that she returned different, with powers of clairvoyance and healing?

History and legend contains the remnants of times when the True Fae violated this world to take captive unsuspecting mortals and steal away with them to their mad realm. Some of this stories and theories may be true. Others are perhaps the products of deranged or hallucinating minds. Though, some might wonder if there's really any difference at all.

What follows are a few examinations of where the True Fae came from. Note that no consensus exists among changelings — one freehold's changelings may believe the True Fae to be gods, other changelings may think the True Fae are demons. Moreover, the following theories are by no means exhaustive. Some combine these theories (accepting, for instance, that an angel is an alien and vice versa), while others have their own bizarre notions they purport. Each examination is given a concrete example of this theory in action, an example that can be researched by changeling characters to help them understand or at least label the flagging memories that haunt their worst dreams.

GODS

The simplest explanation for the True Fae is that they are gods. Certainly the forms they take and the powers they possess could be described as divine. Moreover, they obviously believe themselves high and mighty, as any godly being might. Could a Fae with stag's antlers or crooked caprine legs actually be Cernunnos from the Celtic pantheon, or Pan from the Greek? Could a terrible hag whose face is beautiful but whose body is that of a maggot-chewed corpse be Hel, the Norse goddess of death and decay? After all, she had two servants, Ganglot and Ganglati — perhaps both poor mortals taken away and made to become part fae.

Of course, therein lies a "chicken-and-egg" problem. Did the presence of the True Fae in this world inspire the myths of humans who

longed to give a name to the powerful entities that lurked outside the world's physical borders? Or did the myths and legends have enough real power — viral ideas so potent they infected whole cultures — that from such narrative intensity the True Fae were born? Stranger still, could the True Fae have consciously borrowed their forms and habits from the capricious whims of the world's gods and goddesses?

Another potential difficulty is that drawing too closely from existing myths gives players a level of familiarity with the True Fae that might run against mood. If you name one of the Gentry "Zeus," for instance, then players are going to bring a lot of preconceptions to the table every time you mention said thunderer's name. While there's some fun to be had in presenting familiar names and then unexpected twists to such figures, it can mess with a player's mythic reflexes.

Alternately, consider, too, the possibility that the True Fae are gods, but are divine in a way that isn't connected to mythology. They can be gods, after all, without mortals truly knowing their name. Similar to Lovecraft's elder gods from outside space and time, perhaps the True Fae are so eldritch that they are wholly unknowable. The gods of humans have nothing, then, on the alien horror that these distant beings could theoretically represent.

She That Formed All Things

It may seem odd, that humans would protect her, but they don't know what she really is, do they? They believe her a goddess — Tiamat, from the old Sumerian legends — and why wouldn't they? She comes to their small bayside town on a black boat whenever the moon is orange. She has a serpent's tail and a human's face, a mouth filled with dragon's teeth and a chest of plump teats that drip salty tears. Whenever she comes, she takes one of the people from the small village of Baytown, a person whom the townsfolk offer to the goddess as a kind of appeasing gesture. They know that when they do not let her take one of their own, she curses them with luck so foul that the tales of misfortune have become legendary. Those few changelings kept by Tiamat (for she will answer to that now) have tried to return to Baytown to tell their once-brethren the truth. But they won't hear it. The mortals have shovels and shotguns and a crazed look in their eyes. They believe themselves god-touched, and maybe in some way they are.

ANGELS AND DEMONS

Consider in mythology how strange an angel appears. Animal parts and human faces. Pulsing light and deep shadow. Both profoundly beautiful and clearly inhuman. Consider, too, encounters with these supposed messengers of God and how unsettling or unpredictable they can be. They might demand odd tasks (as they do of Ezekiel) or levy lunatic prophecies against whole villages. Certainly the True Fae cannot be *real* angels of God, can they? Some changelings speculate that maybe the True Fae are. Maybe they abduct and punish those who deserve it. Or maybe in a kind of Deist perspective, God has truly left the world to its own devices, but the angels who remained behind went mad without His light to guide them? It's easy to view the abduction experience through the filter of organized, monotheistic religion (though one's changeling condition is a little harder to reconcile in that worldview), and angels seem perhaps the most straightforward answer to the identity of the Fae.

That is, except for demons. The Fae might very well be demons and devils, as well. What of the succubus or incubus, who violates mortal beings while they sleep (and perhaps goes on to use the fluids collected from such an experience for its own diabolical ends)? What of

the beautiful demon Azazel, who tempts women into sin, and teaches them to “paint their faces fair” with makeup? Or of demons who abduct humans and give them a glimpse of Hell (which could be just an infernal part of Arcadia)? In fact, some changelings view Arcadia as Hell, or a kind of purgatory. After all, isn’t it a place of both punishment and pleasure for the changeling? Of wretched tortures and unholy desires? It may not look like the medieval idea of Hell with pits of molten metal and geysers of fire, but metaphorically, the shoe fits.

Minister Thorn

This is what several of the Lost within San Francisco freehold remember. They recall being part of a “congregation” led by a figure in a dark suit with a priest’s collar. Sometimes he called himself Minister Thorn, other times, Sammael the Thorn. He shackled the changelings to pews made of dark wood, and then vines grew from his eyes and bleeding roses bloomed from their tips. He spoke of love and punishment, and of the eventual fall of humans. He spoke of beautiful Adam and beautiful Eve and how he coveted that beauty so deeply. Sometimes he would allow the changelings to confess, and in confessing, join him in his bed. He had many Bibles in many languages — some languages that were definitely not human. The thing is, he shows up in human dreams, too. He appears there chastising sinners and lamenting the loss of innocence. He finds weakness in those who believe themselves base and vile, and he worms his way between the cracks in one’s esteem. Poets have written of him. Usually before ending their lives.

NEITHER HEAVEN NOR HELL

According to some traditions of folklore, the fae are creatures that are part of Creation, yet “undecided” in the war between good and evil. Some note that they’re angels who refused to side with either God or Lucifer, and for their refusal were condemned to an immortal existence without the knowledge of Heaven or Hell. Others might trace their roots to celestial envoys that dallied too long on the mortal plane and lost their state of grace, such as the book of Enoch’s Grigori (or their children, the nephilim). From this tradition come other beliefs, such as the idea that the True Fae must pay a regular teind of souls to Hell — to which end they kidnap mortals, of course.

This explanation endures today, and many Lost find it as plausible as anything else. The Others give no impression of ever having been mortal, and yet they have a great fascination, even obsession with mortals. Arcadia could well be a realm the Others created in a pastiche attempt to emulate Heaven. Or Hell. Or both.

The Gentle Boatman

He is the kindest and gentlest of ferrymen; he says so himself. He appears beneath bridges, always called by some elaborate rule embedded in the local folklore: perhaps when a mother casts her unwanted newborn into the river, or when a virgin boy bathes in the creek by moonlight. The boat (or raft; accounts vary) that he poles is battered and seems as though it should have sunk long ago, but still he is able, with the sweetest and friendliest of speech, to coax so many of those who call him to go for a little ride. He tells the most marvelous stories of a bright kingdom that was once his and a dread cousin who tricked him into exile, but his mood turns quite sour if he dwells on the prospect for too long. The stories of the Gentle Boatman pose one interesting conundrum:

Crossing Over

It’s possible that you might want to use the Fair Folk in another game, or involve other character types in your *Changeling: The Lost* game. So, what does everybody else think about Arcadia and the True Fae?

Most mages believe that it’s impossible to travel to Arcadia bodily, and would be quite interested to learn otherwise. Of course, it’s difficult for the Lost to recommend the method they took. Those mages who have managed to enter the Hedge quickly find that it’s a poor road to Faerie for them — the soul-rending Thorns leave a mage’s ability to work magic in tatters along with their sense of self. The farther they get to Arcadia, the less power they have to defend themselves against the Gentry’s outriders who would find them. To many mages, it’s less a “real” place and more some otherworldly representation of dreams and nightmares. The Fae are just . . . avatars of those dreams, symbols of one’s fears made manifest. In a way, the mages might be right about this, but those who know of the Gentry mistakenly assume that they can be banished far more easily than remains true.

Werewolves are largely unaware of Arcadia or the Fae, though once in a blue moon a Uratha will wander into the Hedge and forever hunt its labyrinthine brambles, changing into something else, something more monstrous year by year. Those werewolves who have had the misfortune of encountering the Gentry in this world often assume they’re some kind of Maeljin spirit (a belief nurtured by the fact some True Fae leave Wounds behind in their wake).

Vampires are perhaps the most contently ignorant of all, and stranger still is that the Kindred fail to register to a Fae’s perceptions (at least until the vampire does something to draw attention to himself). Is it because they’re dead? Already soulless and therefore useless and without “nutrition” for the Fae? One vampire reportedly got a taste of the blood of such a creature, though. Some say he went mad right there; others say he fell through the ground as if it wasn’t real, leaving behind nothing more than a handful of thorns and rose petals upon the hardwood floor.

Prometheans . . . well, don’t Prometheans have it hard enough without having to worry about the Fair Folk? A faint rumor tells, though, that the Fae watch the Created from a distance, waiting until they finally grab hold of sweet Humanity — and then snatching them away to Arcadia as very, very special captives.

though he can talk anyone into anything with his silver tongue, or ask some of his other passengers to go and collect a person for him, he cannot set foot on one bank or the other. He rejected that choice long ago, and has suffered from it ever since.



ALIENS

The abduction phenomenon is part of modern folk-myth, and is generally ascribed to being the result of an alien (be it extraterrestrial or hyperdimensional) abduction. Elements of this abduction are easily shared with the abduction experience that a changeling undergoes when taken to Arcadia. Abductees experience a loss of time or some kind of time shift. They may be experimented upon surgically or psychically. They are handled by clearly inhuman beings in oddly sterile environments (creative and biological sterility being an earmark between both alien beings and the Fair Folk). The aftermath or return is often marked by strange powers, bad dreams, incomplete memories and new phobias. Some changelings don't hesitate to make the assumptive leap that, sure enough, they've been abducted by aliens and not by mythic dream beings. Given, too, the fact that a changeling's memory of her duration is often incomplete (and just as any dream can shift and morph when recalled), it becomes easy for her to believe that she has been taken by alien beings and she escaped (or was let free).

Is it possible that the True Fae are actually aliens? Whether or not they are from another world, they're certainly *alien* in nearly every sense of the word. They're not human, though they seem to mimic humanoid behavior (as do aliens from various abduction myths). They seem fascinated by humans (perhaps that's why the True Fae abduct mortal beings). They come from another dimension, a place not physically anchored to Earth. Is there any cognitive or important difference between a hovering craft of lights and sound and a shadowy carriage bounding down a pitted Hedge road? When put side to side, does it matter if one called the Fair Folk faeries or aliens?

Children of the Three Androgynes

Mortals have mentioned them, and so, too, have changelings. The Three Androgynes are hairless humanoid beings with flesh the color of bile and eyes like bright beryl. Some mortals claim to have seen flashing lights and experienced dizziness before meeting these three strangers. The human, always alone, encounters this triumvirate of "aliens" and experiences one of two situations. In the first situation, the aliens take something from him. He feels unable to resist as they hold him down and steal an item from him — a watch, a shoelace, wallet pictures of his family. Then they mark him with a small burn hole on his ear or neck. Then they're gone. In the second situation, they take him away. They drag him through a hole between worlds, and he finds himself in a glowing craft over an expanse of thorny briar. When he awakens, he finds himself returned to this world one year and one day later, except now he is different. Now he is a changeling — Wizen, Darkling or Fairest — and like the others, he is marked by a burn scar somewhere upon his body. Stories of the Three Androgynes have been common for the last 40 years, marked in various Fortean journals and books.

NIGHTMARE FACTORY

What is perhaps the most common and most confusing theory espoused by changelings is one often known as

the 'Nightmare Factory' theory. In it, we return once more to a chicken-and-egg dilemma.

Man has always had nightmares. Bad dreams are a psychological reality. Everybody has them. The assumption made by some changelings is that from these nightmares — so potent in their somnolent reality — the True Fae are born. Not every bad dream results in a nightmare, of course, but some are so wholly vicious and real-seeming that they literally create the Fair Folk out of nothing. It makes sense when recalling the Fae or when dealing with them. They are clearly creatures straight out of the worst dreams: shifting faces, exploiting fears, imprisoning the dreamer.

Of course, it's then also possible that nightmares do not spawn the True Fae, but that the True Fae spawn the nightmares. One's nighttime horrors are therefore the direct result of some cruel Keeper somewhere in Arcadia, tugging on phantasmal puppet strings or painting horrid dream-vistas out of blood and black tar.

A third corollary theory exists, and that is the one that speculates that humans did not dream the nightmare Fae, but that the Fae dreamed up humans so they could have a place in this world as well as their own. It seems strange to consider, but nightmares needn't be sensible.

The Dream Journals of Jacob Tull

In the late 1950s, psychologist Jacob Tull used LSD to attempt to affect his depression. Some doctors were finding some success with the hallucinogen to treat mental disorders (this was, of course, before the drug was made illegal years later), and so Tull decided to test it upon himself. It seemed to lessen his feelings of depression, but it heightened his dreams and turned them to vile nightmares. He kept a dream journal — later published in the mid-1970s but kept to a small print run of a few hundred hard-to-find copies — and wrote extensively about a black-robed figure in a red plague mask who stalked him during his nightmares (and who was sometimes viewed in his room as a hypnagogic hallucination). One year after Tull began his journals, he was found dead in his bedroom, a swatch of black fabric stuffed down his throat. Changelings since then have memories of being taken away by a Fae who matches the description of Tull's nightly visitor — robe and mask are prevalent in these memories — leaving them to wonder if Tull somehow conjured the Fae with his nightmares, or if his nightmares were instead simply prescient enough to picture this monster that already existed. Whatever the case, some

Another Theory

Changelings have no shortage of theories as to what the Fae could be — Sumerian demons? Hallucinations given flesh? The inventions of a cruel god to punish poor humankind?

One theory has gained some traction as of late, and that is the possibility that, somehow, some way, the Fae are the embodiments of sin. In game terms, this makes them incarnations of Vice. While it doesn't always have a direct correlation, many Fair Folk do seem to embody one particular Vice over another: a fat pig-faced beast exemplifies Gluttony, a long-tongued succubus symbolizes Lust, a bronze Hercules with mirrors for eyes easily personifies Pride and so on.

have claimed that some pages of Tull's journal are missing, and if found, detail the weaknesses of this Fair Folk stalker.

THE INAMORATA

Physical evidence of the Fair Folk does exist, though not in any way that would necessarily prove their existence. The Inamorata are idols or statues of the True Fae left behind in this world, imbuing an area with certain power. Few changelings are certain exactly *how* these things enter the world, for none have ever seen one carving or forging such creations. They simply seem to *appear*.

Moreover, while the Inamorata are sometimes crafted from expected materials — marble, bronze, glass — other times they appear as part of a canyon wall or are actually a tree that has grown to include a humanoid female figure in its wooden body.

Stranger still is that the Fae themselves are not known to be precisely creative, and are potentially unable to craft anything themselves of lasting value. But some Inamorata have been around for decades or even centuries (one statue of a horned archer has reportedly been in the center of a small Portuguese town for nearly 500 years). The Fae could not have carved them, by that logic. Did some clandestine cabal of mortal cultists cobble these idols together when no one was looking? Were they dreamed into existence? Were secret Lost servants of the Fae? Some changelings believe that when a True Fae dies, *really truly dies*, an Inamorata of that particular monster appears in the world.

Learning of the locations of most Inamorata requires a Research roll (with Occult replacing Academics). Ten total successes are required, and each roll requires a day's worth of research. Researching the existence of these statues — whether to try to milk them for power or to destroy them and their unholy effects — should be an exciting affair. Old books and treacherous tomes are not in the local library (or, if they are, they're hidden away from the shelves in closed-off rooms). Some changelings and humans don't want such information discovered, as well.

All Inamorata have a few common effects. First is that within one mile of the statue, the 10 again rule does not apply to any roll, and moreover, any 1s rolled subtract from successes gained. Second is that, while at the Inamorata, a changeling merely needs to touch the statue and roll his Wyrd score (and this is the only roll where the 10 again rule once again applies, and 1s fail to take away successes). Successes gained on this Wyrd roll translate to Glamour points gained. A changeling can only gain Glamour in this way once per day. Doing so also has a cost: one temporary mild derangement. This derangement is suffered for a full week after touching the statue. While the derangement has no system effect, the changeling also experiences nightmares for that week.

Individual Inamorata also often have other effects, which usually affect only humans.

Below are some examples of Inamorata in the World of Darkness. Each has its own unique benefits and detriments listed. These Inamorata can be dropped directly into any story, or modified to suit your purposes.

THE NYMPH OF RED SPRINGS

The locals of the town of Red Springs, a small eclectic tourist burg, like to tell the story about how one morning they simply found that the town square had been populated with a bronze statue and fountain. The statue — a lascivious nude woman flanked by two strange-looking hounds — has water that pours

from her eyes and open mouth. They call her the Nymph. Various urban legends swirl around where she came from, or more specifically who put her there overnight (most stories center around some reclusive billionaire who cares to remain anonymous for some heartbreaking or damning reason). The local changelings don't know that she was one of the Others, but many see her face in their memories, having once been in her service, a fact marred by the fog of memory. Those in town with Lust as a Vice gain a +1 bonus to all Social rolls (excluding Intimidation). Those with Temperance as a Virtue suffer a -1 to all Social rolls (excluding Intimidation). This potentially speaks to the Fae's once-lusty, perhaps even perverse, habits.

THE OAK MAN

The far end of the city park is a place that nobody's supposed to go. Some say it's because of the criminal element — gangs, dealers and other deviants are said to ply their illicit trades at the overgrown periphery of the park. Others believe in random and more mythic reasons, sometimes featuring the ghosts of serial killers or slaves, or perhaps the Devil offering a sweet deal to those who can beat him in a midnight footrace. But everybody knows about the Oak Man. A tree lurks at the extremity of the park, and the twisted oak tree, twined with dead ivy and other creeper vines, seems to form the distinct face and body of a screaming man. Two knotholes form his eyes. A hollow depth marks the wide mouth. This wild once-Fae marks the boundary of an entrance into the Hedge, and the real reason that people don't like to come to this end of the park is that people often go missing beneath the dark moon. (Some go searching for drugs to buy or sell, others seek to tempt fate and see the Oak Man. They don't all go missing. But enough of them do.) Those mortals who go near the Oak Man — within 100 yards — begin to suffer a giddy drunkenness as if they had consumed several strong drinks. From this, they gain a +3 bonus to Social rolls, but also suffer a -3 penalty to any Dexterity-, Intelligence- and Wits-based dice pools. Those who escape the Oak Man without wandering into the Hedge or getting abducted recall the pleasant feeling, and often go back for more.

THE DRAGON MOUND

It's nearly 50 miles from any town, 100 from any city. Nearly a quarter-mile long, this serpentine mound rises from the ground of a grassy meadow. One end appears to taper off to a tail, another culminates in what appears to be a draconic maw (replete with teeth and tongue). Local historians are baffled by it, once believing it to be some kind of burial mound or ceremonial sanctuary for the local Indians. Indian legend, however, purports that the mound has been there since before they settled the region. Stranger still, the belly of the beast opens up into a small mossy barrow. Within the barrow sits an earthen shelf featuring 22 mud-dolls, fired and hardened. (Some changelings have suffered nightmares in which these dolls awaken as hobgoblins on some unknown date and time, spilling out of the dragon's belly to march against the freehold with rusted nails and shards of glass as weapons.) Those mortals who visit the barrow mound often suffer a week's worth of harrowing nightmares. In these nightmares, the human feels the dragon's presence always behind them and over their shoulder. Often, the bad dream culminates in some kind of surgical examination on the mossy floor of the barrow. During this time, the human must succeed on an extended reflexive

Stamina + Resolve roll. Five successes are needed, and each roll is equal to one hour's worth of sleep. The human will sleep no more than six hours. If this roll fails, the human gains a kind of "dream-sickness" acting as if he has been injected with some kind of snake venom (toxicity rating of 6; see pp.180–181 of **World of Darkness Rulebook** for more information on poisons and toxins).

AMONG THE GENTRY

The following section details the strange habits and nightmarish foibles of the True Fae. Though the Lost can remember only blurred fragments of the society of Arcadia, here are a number of potential starting points for fleshing out the True Fae, including their strange rituals and celebrations.

WAYS OF NIGHTMARE

The ways of the Fair Folk are strange, indeed. For as different as a changeling is when he escapes from his Keeper, a changeling's still nowhere near as alien as the Gentry. What can be said to be consistent about these mad immortals?

A THOUSAND HORRID FACES

Although a True Fae's appearance is never the worst thing about the creature, it is the visual hook upon which the rest of the horrid memories hang, and thus often ends up being the first thing a changeling recalls about her Keeper.

The Fair Folk are creatures whose appearances are not so easily defined. While changelings, too, have a wide array of fae façades, it's easy to look upon them and note at least a few common elements that connect them (the horns of various Beasts, the eerie perfections of the Fairest, the unnerving imperfections of the Wizeden). The Fae share no such easy categorization. Some appear entirely or mostly human. Others may resemble more grandiose (or monstrous) versions of the changeling seemings. Some, though,

Against the True Fae: Hidefruit

This goblin fruit is small, comparable in size to a pomegranate seed, with an equal blush of crimson as its color. The inside of a hidefruit, however, provides a piquant punch of brown ooze, similar in consistency (though not in taste) to molasses. Because the fruit is small and grows not in clusters but alone on rare vines mixed in with the rest of the Hedge, they can be difficult to find and procure. Assume a Wits + Survival roll is necessary, with the number of dice subtracted from the roll determined by the thickness of the briar at that point (thicker Hedge equals larger penalty).

Consuming the fruit helps a changeling hide from any True Fae nearby. The changeling doesn't appear merely mortal — no, to most Fair Folk, he does not appear at all, as if the fruit imbues him with an essence demanded that he be consciously ignored. The Fae must succeed on a Wits + Composure roll to track the changeling, but suffers -5 dice to this roll until the effects of the hidefruit expire. The effects last for a number of minutes equal to the changeling's own Wits + Resolve score.

feature faces and bodies that go well beyond the limits of what is known or demonstrated by the Lost: a Fae who appears like a crashing wave with a watery maw, a Keeper who is a slowly turning red and black mandala or a fiend who has the face of a woman atop the body of a stone tiger with a tail like a barbed leather flail. Abstraction and deformity come together to make fiends who represent both unearthly beauty and unholy foulness.

What determines a True Fae's exact physical appearance? Nobody knows. Some assume that, when the True Fae crawl from whatever nightmare spawns them, they take on the countenance of the dream itself. The elements of the nightmare come to them, merge with the consciousness and bloat the invisible body with the nighttime images of horror.

Some evidence gives credence to this theory of being built from images and impressions they steal from the psyche of mortals. One changeling is said to have been taken by a True Fae who appeared almost exactly like the changeling's own wife (whom he accidentally had killed years before in a drunk-driving accident). The Fae didn't seem initially cognizant of this fact, and her other kept changelings saw her the same way (in other words, they did not each see her as some reflection of their own pasts, but instead each saw her the same way, indicating that her countenance was not a ruse or illusion). The ex-wife had figured prominently in the changeling's own dreams, a phantom from beyond the grave chiding him with words that became whips that flayed his skin. No surprise, then, when the True Fae who looked like her could do similarly, turning her words into literal barbs and thorns to score the flesh.

Of course, evidence exists, too, that points to the contrary of this — no known Fae has ever replicated a known monster or pop culture figure. While children and adults are capable of dreaming nightmares that feature Michael Myers or the Creature from the Black Lagoon haunting them, no changelings as yet have ever seen Gentry who appear as such. Some speculate this is answered easily: the Fae steal their faces from only nightmares born of the dreamer. The shared horror of, say, Frankenstein or Freddy Krueger simply don't have the horrific impact necessary to bear consciousness like terrible fruit (whereas nightmares of elfin abductors or gray aliens have true cultural resonance). More argue that it's because the Fae aren't born from nightmares at all, but are simply predators that treat nightmare as a hunting ground. The reason they themselves appear like things out of nightmare is because they can create only what they know, which is their own twisted beauty and grotesqueness.

How many faces does a Fae truly have? In Arcadia, their appearances seem limitless, though still somehow seem bound by theme. A dark shadow that stalks the woods outside the manor can become all kinds of predatory creatures both real and imagined: wolf, tiger, hawk or something with parts from all such beasts. It could also become part tree, part snake or even show up as the barest slivers of light that dapple down from the pleach of branches above. And yet, that Fae could not become a terrible machine with gnashing teeth. Why? Hard to say. If the Fae belongs to the forest and is a dream born of the terror of the dark woods or the wild heart, then the Fae must cling to such a living theme as due to some kind of dark logic. A river hag might appear as anything that one can associate with the river, be it a fat-bel-



lied toad-woman or a massive serpent made of tangled bulrush and chokeweed, but she could not be a creature made of fire or an idol formed of gold. The logic of Arcadia, such as it is, fails to allow such transformation.

In this world, however, a Fae is limited. The verisimilitude formed by this so-called reality doesn't allow the True Fae to fulfill the spectrum of forms available to a given Fae, and thus, she can only become two forms. One form is ostensibly human. It appears in most ways humanoid. This humanoid form might feature a few oddities (forked tongue, talons topping long fingers, irises colored red or white or some other unnatural color), but does not feature abnormalities that would distinguish the Fae as inhuman from afar (wings, horns, multiple limbs). The Fae's second form is kind of a "pure form" of its theme. No telling if the Fae chooses this form upon whatever gross birth stirs it into existence, or whether this form is simply part of the fiend's fabric of existence from the start. The pure form could be anything: draconic entity, a pulsing dark light, a many-limbed goddess with a mouth of blood and a head of worms.

Often, the two forms — humanoid and unalloyed — make a kind of strange sense together. One Fae, for instance, has the pure form of a Ford T-Bucket roadster from the early 1950s, with tires rimmed with liquid shadow, a front grill that looks like clenched teeth and fire that belches out the exhaust. The humanoid form is complementary — a tall greaser with a mean eye, a meaner knife and a slick duck's ass cut tapering his oily black hair. (And were a changeling able to soften his fear long enough to gaze upon this Keeper in both forms, the changeling would notice that the two share that same clenched grin, or that the headlights to the Model T sometimes squint and wink like the greaser is wont to do.)

More information — including the systems of designing a Fae's forms and those governing his transformation — can be found later in this chapter.

Having Stolen Fire

The Greek myth of Prometheus has the titan stealing fire from the gods to give to humankind. A few changelings have speculated that the True Fae are the gods from which Prometheus stole the flame, but in doing so, robbed them entirely of its warmth and strength. Flame is dynamic, a creative and searing power. Without it, the Others are empty, cold and sterile.

SCRUTINY AND STERILITY

What is it the Fae want from changelings? Why do the Fae abduct changelings at all?

Some suggest that the Fae just plain need servants. They're obviously too self-important and insane to help one another, and so humans can be snatched into Faerie and bound to service. One Fae might desire a paramour, another might need his hell-mare brushed and curried. Countless human cultures around the world have done similarly, taking slaves because conquered peoples are seen as initially inferior. This stands to follow with the Fae, as they clearly consider human beings to be far, far beneath them.

Others, however, theorize that the Gentry exist without whatever dynamic spark that infuses humanity and human na-

ture. The precise definition of this spark isn't clear — is it a human soul? The capacity to create? The ability to dream? Or something altogether more abstract that perhaps the Fae can't even identify? Abducting humans perhaps allows them to study this spark, perhaps even leeching it or feeding from it like the way a vampire sips blood. It explains a lot, to be sure.

For example, the intense scrutiny. The Fae seem morbidly fascinated by their changeling charges in much the same way that a scientist wonders over a newfound species or a weaker artist gapes at the creations of a far better craftsman. Many of the Lost recall stories of such scrutiny. Sometimes it's infused with no emotion whatsoever as the fiend tests the limits of his new toy — cutting a swatch of flesh, provoking a series of divergent emotions (like a child plugging away at a piano, resulting in something that *seems* like a song) or seeing how long the changeling can go without food or water or contact. Other times the Fae seem overwhelmed by feeling, lashing out at their wards with sudden hate and then moments later drawing the changelings close while cooing and kissing the still-bleeding wounds. All of it seems designed — sometimes on purpose, sometimes unprompted — to elicit a response, to test limits, to simply *see what happens*. It's often as if the Keepers are incapable of truly comprehending whatever essential piece of humanity they so clearly lack, and so they strive to draw it out through trials and tribulations.

Some do believe, as noted, that whatever lurks within the human heart is a resource able to be milked or leached from the Lost, which then provides the impetus for abduction. Perhaps by existing in close proximity to the stolen mortals or through imposing their will upon the humans, the Fae can then somehow *extract* a little of that quintessential spark. Some evidence of this exists. Consider how, over long periods of time, a Lost who lingers in Arcadia grows weary or seems to suffer a soul-death — or worse, becomes more and more like her wretched Fae Keeper. Consider, too, that, in the presence of the Fae, a stolen mortal finds that bits of himself are replaced with the fey shifts in physiology (be it a wolf's tail or skin like smooth glass), while in tandem the Fair Folk may appear (for a brief time) to become more human. Of course, this begs the question of what do the Others *do* with whatever it is they steal? Is it something upon which they subsist? Would they perish in its absence, withering like a tree given over to root-rot? Or are they able to manifest this stolen spark as some kind of substance, drinking it for power or trading it like money? Perhaps all of the above?

The scrutiny of the Fae extends to seemingly mundane objects, as well. Often while raiding this world for human charges, a Keeper might pilfer a physical item along the way. The fiend often takes whatever object seems to catch her attention at a given moment: a teen boy's well-worn baseball, a wedding photo in a gilded frame or the collar off a beloved family pet (which likely ends up with its throat slit from one of the Fae's long fingernails). The Fae also seem to enjoy examining whatever objects that might accompany an abducted changeling. A Fae might pore over the contents of a Lost character's wallet, or stare into the depth of a pair of Converse sneakers as if hoping to find some secret treasure buried within. Is there something to be gained by this? Staring at a changeling's old wedding band is one thing, but what happens when the Fae tastes it with a flickering tongue, or hammers it flat and uses it to cut whorls and spiraling sigils into the character's flesh? Does this give the Fae Glamour? Mere pleasure? Or something far stranger?

Language

What language do the Fae speak? Do they have their own bizarre tongue? A sibilant chattering understood only by other nightmares? The truth is, no, they don't have their own speech. Just as many other things, the Fae borrow language, pilfering it like a pair of shoes. It seems as if they're capable of speaking nearly any human tongue, as well as many inhuman utterances as well (such as Atlantean or the First Tongue of spirits and werewolves).

(Be aware that many of these items the True Fae abscond with sometimes end up as tokens. These once-normal objects lose a bit of themselves to the Hedge or Faerie in much the same way that changelings do. Those missing pieces are then infused with the magic of this otherland, which cast them in their own mien and gives them odd powers and drawbacks.)

A lot of this lends a kind of hollowness to the Fae, as if they're sterile beings. Is *that* why they take humans? As surrogate children? Some Lost speculate that this is how new Fair Folk come into being — if the Lost stay overlong within Arcadia, they change. Stay long enough, and they change into a hobgoblin pet or even what they hate the most, a Keeper. This is, to many, the worst horror imaginable.

The Fair Folk certainly seem incapable of creating anything on their own — most of the things they craft or build, unless fortified by dark magic, seem to break down and fall into decay or disrepair. Emotions feel acted out and therefore somehow fake, as if they're pretending to have a certain emotion or are conjuring the broken remnants of a once-held feeling instead of the real thing. Even names might be recycled. One Fae calls himself Loki, another thinks of himself as Hephaestus. Are these their true names? Or are they somehow culled from the global consciousness, drawn up out of the agglomerated nightmares of many cultures and stolen just like changelings? Some Keepers take names that make little-to-no sense, as if they borrowed the terms and titles without considering any kind of context. (One Fae calls himself Mister Door, but embodies nothing to do with doors, gateways or portals of any kind.)

KEEPERS

Below are some of the generic roles a Fae may fulfill as a changeling's Keeper during that character's durance. These roles are somewhat archetypal and purposefully simplistic; the Fae, despite their many faces and forms, seem often unable to break out of their character. A cruel paramour among the Others will always be a cruel paramour. They don't grow or change; or if they're capable of it, they do so at such an immortal's pace that only other Fae could notice as the centuries roll on. These archetypes, while far from exhaustive, explain some of the actions and motivations behind individual Fae, from which you can derive how a changeling's durance might go within the Fae's grip and under his gaze. Certainly, too, such archetypes can be easily combined. They needn't stand independent of one another, and a Fae can feature elements from several role types (but once such a type is set, it's very difficult for the fiend to deviate from his role).

It's fair to mention that not every changeling's time in Faerie needs to be torturous, but it's never exactly *good*, either. A

Fae Keeper may fake some kind of love, but it rings false to the changeling (and is usually punctuated with all manner of emotional head-games or passive-aggressive posturing). A changeling may remember some pleasant memories of Faerie — the way the wind stirred the barley or how she found some measure of satisfaction in performing the work that was given to her — but any fond remembrance is always marked with flashes of terror and periods of sorrow. There are almost certainly changelings who accept the bad with the good and, perhaps affected by Stockholm syndrome or simple fear of disobedience, would rather stay in Arcadia than return to the mortal world. But such changelings never find their way home through the Thorns. Their desire to return home is not strong enough to show them the way.

What's sad for some changelings is that from time to time it seems that their Keepers seem to *want* to do something nice for the changeling or to summon some kind of small pleasure, but it goes awry or is book-ended by awfulness. A Fae who gives unto her ward a small kitten to keep the changeling company may return days later, displeased with the work performed by her charge, only to break the kitten's neck with a snap of her powerful fingers. The Fae seem incapable of maintaining kindness, leaving changelings to feel that such kindness is, like most of the other things the Others represent, utterly counterfeit.

The Child

While certainly the Fae may appear as a child, this archetype is more about acting childish than physically appearing young. Certainly some among the Fair Folk do look like children (often strange children with inhuman parts or exaggerated features), but many more act insolent, impetuous and immature. They suffer mood swings that carry them swiftly from giddy bliss to angry tantrums and back again. Changelings under the sway of such Fae often end up as "toys" or "imaginary friends." Child Fae are often bullies, though sometimes express their torments through extreme passive-aggressive behavior (such as blaming the changeling for something and calling down the wrath of other Fair Folk, making themselves the victim or "accidentally" locking the changeling in the toybox). One changeling reports having undergone years of humiliating dress-up and being made to eat disgusting things to please the fickle whims of his Keeper.

The Doctor

The Doctor — who could just as easily contain the Torturer or the Scientist within his archetype — is a cold, methodical operator. He finds everything dictated by logic, even if this so-called logic makes little sense to the changeling. It's all about *stimulus* and *response*. How well can the changeling hear without an ear? How does the abductee respond to a parasitic infection? What kinds of children, both monstrous and wondrous, could possibly grow in a changeling's womb? Some Fae literally appear as doctors or scientists: the traditional lab-coat might feature, as could antiquated surgeon's tools. Others are far more alien, wearing clean naked bodies of plasticine skin or simply having a form composed of shiny speculums, scalpels and bone saws. Changelings under the Doctor's "care" often experience harrowing imprisonment, ending up as the subject who is operated upon, healed and then operated upon once more. Some are given what is both a reprieve and a curse, however, in that they're allowed to serve as "nurses" to their Keepers. As nurses, these changelings often exempt from more extreme experimentation, but then must aid in the experimentation on others.

The Hag

The Hag — likely female in appearance, though not necessarily — is a wizened old thing, a wretched naked creature tied to nature in some hideous way (seaweed for hair, river stones as teeth, hands like Daddy-Long-Legs). She is nature's mad and unjust wrath. She is superstition given form. She is the witch in all the children's stories, scaring them so that they don't stray far off the forest path. Some Hags use their fear constantly against their kept charges, teaching them through fear and intimidation. Others mold the changelings into likenesses of themselves, hoping to create maidens that will one day become crones like they (it never happens, of course, for the poor Lost often expire or fade away under such "tutelage"). Some Hags shapeshift — scaly river snakes, perhaps, or scabby crows — while others are content to linger at the bottom of watery kingdoms, shackling their changelings down in the deep, deep dark. The Hag archetype contains more Fae with a taste for human flesh, no less. They might even take a nip from their charges from time to time, just a bite here, a bite there....

The Hunter

Sometimes a beast, other times a huntsman, the Hunter is locked into a perpetual pattern of predator-and-prey — and he never allows himself to be the prey. Some are feral, uttering grunts and howls if anything at all, while others are "refined" huntsmen like the fox-harriers of England or the rich quail-hunters of modern America. The duration of a changeling kept by a Hunter puts her in the role of constant prey. One Beast, held captive by a pair of fox-headed Fae, found herself dragged into a new room of the manor every day. Within each room was a new biome of terror: wet jungle, dark forest, hoary tundra, searing desert. In each she was hunted (and while there she learned how to run, how to hide, how to build traps and survive, though all of these skills only forestalled the inevitable). Some Hunters are also beast-keepers, maintaining vast stables of horses or ferine dream-creatures or tending to packs of red-eyed hounds or cats.

The Knight

A Fae Knight may believe himself to truly be a knight, claiming his armor, steed, sword and crest to be the symbols of his feudal authority... or he may merely *act* as a knight might, in that he ascribes to himself a strict (though often warped) sense of honor and possesses a potent martial prowess. Brutal, vain, capable and proud, the Knight claims that he is good for the realm of Faerie and is even good for his kept changeling. Those that name themselves actual knights often call their charges



“squires” and promise that — with the right amount of training and grooming — the squire will someday become a knight. It never happens, of course. Meanwhile, the changeling waits upon his Knight hand-and-foot, bringing him his spit-polished sword or blood-crusted lance, fitting him for armor, acting as a woefully unprepared sparring partner. Note that not all Fae Knights are steeped in such antiquity. Modernity has crept into Arcadia as has flavor from all time periods. The Fae Knight is just as likely to appear in the garb of a Roman centurion as he is chain armor or the raiment of an urban gang member (replete with tats and gats). They always adhere to some bizarre code of honor, however, featuring a labyrinthine tangle of oaths and clauses that no changeling could ever figure out (and when she does learn the weave and weft of this code, it suddenly changes).

The Lord

A Fae Lord, be he king of the castle or master of the field, is a dominant and distant figure. The Lord demands things of his changelings by dint of his deserving them, and his demands are rarely reasonable or sane. Changelings under the iron fist of a Fae Lord fill multifarious positions, often forced to act as if under his employ or within his feudal chain of command. The Lost may find themselves acting as stable hands, jesters, lady's attendants, scullery maids or carriage drivers. More modern Lords might use changelings as assistants (shining shoes, keeping “appointments”), tailors (for the finest suits), chefs (“prepare me an *amuse bouche*”) or whores (for the obvious). The Lord is rarely a *personal* tormentor. Any suffering he brings upon his charges is done under the guise of necessity or justice, as if he's levying punishment from on high. Lords themselves appear somehow regal and dignified. This could mean a gilded scepter and a crown of Hedge thorns, or a power suit with a crisp tie and hair so perfect that not a strand lies out-of-place (and woe to the changeling who ends up responsible for *moving* one of those hairs out of place).

The Paramour

The Paramour pretends to care. She pretends to be a changeling's lover, and maybe she even pretends to *love* the changeling. But it's never exactly true, is it? The Paramour uses the changeling's body, making him more a slave than a truly consensual member of the relationship. Of course, while toying with the flesh is fun, that's really just the appetizer to the Paramour's main course: the heart. Rending the heart and soul asunder — raising passions and dashing them to the ground, getting the changeling to fall in love only to crush his heart like a cigarette beneath a heel — is the uttermost delight to the Paramours (though many pretend that it hurts them, too). Many Paramours keep several Lost lovers in their stables, and why not? All the easier to enflame jealousy. Many changelings recall tales of having been pitted against one another, tugged into such conflict by the puppeteer's finesse of a Fae Paramour (and many such jealous rivalries exist in the freehold, even if the changelings can't *precisely* recall why). A Paramour's appearance is, by and large, a beautiful one. They're often preening narcissists (one changeling even reports that her Paramour Keeper called himself, you guessed it, Narcissus), never far from a mirror or a stolen camera. Some, though, are not beautiful at all, but tremendously ugly to behold. They're still vain, of course, believing themselves to be the pinnacle of physical splendor. And it's all the more repulsive being forced to dote on a living grotesquerie.

The Parent

Be it the Abusive Father or Terrible Mother role, the Parent archetype is a twisted one. Changelings kept by such a Fae often

feel like children, as they are made to act as such (one Lost claims that his Keeper, a mother hag, kept him in foul swaddling clothes and was made to drink from one of her rime-encrusted teats). Parents punish, they act disappointed, they force their “children” to perform egregious chores and they even make them learn lessons as if they were at school. The appearance of Fae Parents deviates wildly from specimen to specimen, though some changelings recall that their Keepers appeared like stereotypical white parents out of the 1950s: aprons and sundress for the mother, cardigan and pipe for the father. (Though something is always wrong or out of place with such visuals: bile running out over the pipe's edge, for instance or a child's bloody handprint smeared across an otherwise immaculate apron.)

The Shadow

Insidious, instinctive and irrational, the Shadow does not torture the changeling, but lets the changeling torture himself. Some Fae Shadows are never even seen; if one is seen, the changeling only glimpses it as a dark shape moving at the periphery or a wreath of serpentine mist at his feet. Others prefer to be fully in sight, looking like whatever frightens the changeling the most (a beast made of snakes, a hungry lake reminding the changeling of that one time she almost drowned, a claustrophobic closet with eyes and a mouth). The modus operandi is usually to get inside the changeling's head and flail him with guilt or drive him to sin in whatever way breaks down his resistance and sanity. A changeling may be put through the paces over the death of his father (for which he may feel irrationally responsible) or be urged toward some kind of debauchery or deviancy that, while pleasurable, only serves to heighten and hone pre-existing guilt (consider a drug addict made to become addicted to a whole new substance that grows in the Hedge, or a closeted homosexual made to embrace the feelings he hates so dearly about himself). Some look upon those Lost who remained in the sway of a Fae Shadow and wonder where their scars are. But those Shadow-kept changelings know: all the scars live inside.

The Syzygy

Some Fae work in pairs. Why this is, nobody knows, but from time to time a Keeper has a partner with whom he shares dominion over one or several Lost. Sometimes, this Syzygy features a pairing of total opposites: a moon-faced woman and a man whose eyes are small suns, or a pristine aristocrat paired with a filth-eating troglodyte. Other times, the Syzygy expresses itself in a pair of twins with minimal difference between them, working together as if they share a single directive and voice. Changelings kept by the dual Syzygy suffer one of two experiences. The first is that the two work together in a way that doubles the torment suffered by the character (two cruel words or cutting razors are worse than one, after all). The other experience is that the changeling is pulled in two directions. One Fae rewards him for a specific behavior, while the other punishes him for it. One demands tea service this way, the other asks for it that way. The changeling often can't properly reconcile the “right” way to do things, and finds his sanity breaks down at attempting to predict what this unpredictable pair truly desires. One of the Fae in a Syzygy pair might even act as an advocate for the changeling, getting her gifts or stroking her hair. The other, often “jealous” (though whether the Fae is truly jealous or just gladly filling a role isn't clear), then acts out against the changeling. Pain and pleasure mingle into an indistinguishable blur for those held hostage by a Fae pair.

The Trickster

The Trickster is a cunning, amoral tormentor. He thrives on misdirecting his kept changelings, teasing them with simple needs (food, water, shelter) and making every reward gained come with a requisite set of torments that turn the advantage into displeasure. The Trickster's most delightful game (well, delightful for him) is to lead a changeling in a given direction using something like a hot meal as bait. Ultimately, the bait just leads the poor captive into the domain of *another* Keeper (thus showing that the Trickster Fae likes to ply his torments upon his fellow Gentry, using his changelings to do so). Many of the Tricksters appear as anthropomorphic animals, as they do in mortal myth. It's not uncommon to see a mean fox or a coyote who walks on two legs (and whose muzzle is frosted in a red spray of dried blood). Others may look human, but have features that give the distinct *impression* of an animal's countenance (a vulpine grin, a caprine gambol, a leonine mane, a porcine belly).

Fields Lay Fallow

The True Fae are sterile physically, as well. Sex with a human female doesn't result in a pregnancy because the Others simply aren't capable of producing anything.

Well, usually.

Once in a blue moon — the chances of this are blessedly slim, but extant nevertheless — carnal relations between one of the Fae and a mortal woman results in a pregnancy. The strange, hollow matter of Arcadia lacks the potency and similarity to cause pregnancy, but sometimes these strange entities have just enough spark to seed the womb. What is born is never human, usually some kind of hobgoblin whose life expectancy is a number of days equal to the True Fae's own Wyrd score. The thing inside appears human until its birth, which is usually a harrowing, bloody affair.

And what if a mortal man sleeps with a True Fae female? Nothing. The wombs of the Gentry are desiccated, bleak things as barren as a subterranean cavern (though some wombs are, like caverns, filled with strange life that has made a home there; insects, glowing growths, small mammals that lurk and linger). Some Fae, like the succubi of old, sleep with human men to collect their seed. The fluid, containing the spark of life, can be said to double the life of their botched creations (see below, "Stunted Creation") when included in the crafting.

The last thing worth noting is what happens when a True Fae sleeps with an already-pregnant woman. Nobody knows what happens for sure, but somewhat unexpectedly the child after that always carries easily and safely to term. Such children, though, aren't quite right. They always possess the Unseen Sense Merit, and many end up twisted and confused: serial killers, madmen, wandering homeless, addicts.

A FIENDISH SOCIETY

It's hard to say if the Fae keep any kind of true society. Certainly they gather at times, even showing the occasional capacity for collaboration (a frightening thing for any changeling to encounter). But do they keep a society in Arcadia? Do they come together in raving councils of lunatic nightmares, voting to determine the fate of their captives? Is there a fixed economy, a market driven by a particular currency? For most of what the Lost can recall about Faerie and their captors, the answer seems to be "no." The society that the True Fae maintain seems to be stitched together, bound more by vague promises of social obligations than any real kinship. In fact, most Gentry seem to prefer the company of hobgoblins and abducted mortals to their own kind. It seems all too likely that the True Fae favor association with those who aren't strong enough to challenge the Fae's authority, question their whims or even resist changing when the True Fae feels like a change. Below are a few concrete examples of what changelings may remember about their durance, and what they witnessed from the Fae in regard to any kind of uniform "culture."

INFERNAL BARCAINS

What economy exists between the Fae seems to be based purely on a fickle system of barter with few if any preset rules establishing "value." Changelings have witnessed fairly unusual and uneven trades between fiends. One Fae, a vicious madam who appeared utterly human but for her squirming leech tongue, traded one of her favorite changeling "courtesans" for a plain plastic snow globe whose surface was scratched and dirty. (Stranger still was what the courtesan witnessed as she was being dragged away by the two-headed Red Ettin who "bought" her — the madam cracked open the snow globe like an egg and drank its contents greedily.) Another changeling found that his "service" commanded a particularly steep price: a prom dress with a torn hem, three baskets of stinking fruit from the Hedge and a ledger inked with 100 favors from one fiend to the other. Inexplicably, once the changeling was given over to his new master (a thing that could only be described as half-vulture, half-man), the changeling was summarily locked away in an attic and left for what he remembers to be *years*.

MONSTER'S BALL

The Fair Folk seem beholden to some tradition of parties and festivals, offering them with some kind of regularity. Such events often taint the nightmares of changelings to this day, even assailing them with waking visions of the madness put on display during such occasions. One might recall scenes from a dinner party with monsters around an oaken table, remembering how they barely spoke to one another but hissed, cackled and sang discordant music, or how they hungrily sucked down fruits and bloody meats with ecstatic sighs, susurrations and belches. Another's nightmare might be marked by visions of a whirling dance that could've been beautiful (all the colors and sounds so dizzying) had the changeling not been in a cage above the whole affair, both her feet hobbled. It's hard to say if anything gets *done* at these lunatic affairs, or if they are simply driven together by some kind of ancient and unspoken oath. Perhaps the company of other beautiful monsters keeps them going? One thing changelings do know is that they are often made to serve in some capacity at such functions. And such service is never easy, with even the simplest of tasks marred by peril. (One Fairest recalls having

to bring a simple glass bowl of red punch to the table, but the aroma drifting off the drink was heady and sweet, so sweet that she felt intoxicated merely by being in its presence. When she staggered drunkenly into the room and accidentally dropped the bowl upon a porcelain-faced Keeper, her punishment seemed infinite.) Others are made to serve by being the center of attention: humiliated and abused upon the leavings of dinner, or made to dance again and again around a maypole or forced into reciting made-up poetry to please the congregated Gentry.

NIGHTMARE IN CONCERT

Most Fae seem to operate alone. It may have to do with their jealousy and need for dominance. Some have speculated that it has to do with their general lack of dynamism — that sterility and hollowness leaves them without any kind of true bonds between one another, thus forcing them to work alone or in unique pairs.

And yet, some Lost recall being abducted by or serving beneath not one Fae, but several acting in concert. Below are a few Fae groups that can be used in a game as antagonists, or can be made to serve as a part of a changeling character's durance.

The Buskers of the 9th Street Door

It's odd that most humans don't pay them much attention, as they're certainly deserving of a second or even third look. This group of Fae stands near to the Hedge door that lies deep in the alley off 9th Street, and there they play broken instruments — a corroded harmonica, a bent set of pipes, a rickety upright bass. Worse, in their human guises they sport clownish faces with bulging red noses and pasty cheeks. They play their jarring music, which from time to time seems to *catch* one human's ear, drawing that person near. As if in a trance, the human follows the Buskers as they draw away from this world and into the Hedge.

The Demon Merchants

They wear the finest suits and the shiniest leather shoes, and have pens clipped to their lapels inlaid with a bloody red wood. But their faces are not human, and are only barely animal — one might have the face of an iguana with eyes like pearlescent marbles, while another has a polar bear's face joined with a pair of insectile mandibles. Their number seems infinite, too, with new Merchants always coming around to join in the "business." During the day, they gather around a clockwork ticker that spits tape marked with data comprehensible only to them. At night, they chatter and bicker and drink brandies and enjoy the company of select changelings. The Merchants maintain a surprisingly large stable of Lost (many of whom escape by dint of their being so many), and use them as trade. It seems that the Merchants have made some kind of small industry out of the exchange of changelings (and many Lost recall being tagged or marked with various "stats" indicating their strengths and weaknesses — obviously to enlighten hesitant "buyers").

The Brothel

Some Fae seem fascinated by sex. It's hard to tell if they enjoy it, exactly, but it does seem to enliven them with a kind of passionate curiosity — more of that experimental scrutiny coming to the fore. They sometimes have sex with one another (giving an unfortunate layer of reality to the term "beast with two backs"), the union of which spawns little but the occasional hobgoblin. But they also seem to expect sex with changelings as well. The Brothel facilitates this. Atop an impossible crag in Faerie sits this many-storied Vic-

torian home whose parlors are limitless and labyrinthine. The Fae do not comprise just the staff of madams, but also make up some of the whores, as well — lascivious trollops offering a mix of human and inhuman majesty. Changelings, too, are kept as harlots. Some are made to serve by those painted Fae who stole the mortals from this world; other changelings ask to serve with the Brothel, finding it at least less horrid than serving under more wretched Gentry. At least this way, the changelings are paid... often not enough and in strange currency, but it's better than nothing.

CREATING THE FAE

Below are rules to help you create True Fae antagonists for use in your **Changeling: The Lost** story.

TRAITS OF THE FAIR FOLK

For the most part, the True Fae possess Traits similar to the Lost, with a few key differences. These differences are noted below, and apply to True Fae in the mortal world. (In Arcadia, the Fae have power levels that far exceed their limitations in the human realm.)

- **Attribute / Skill Max:** In the mortal world, the True Fae can have a maximum of six dots in Attributes and Skills, though some of their supernatural abilities and Contracts may allow them to surpass this limit temporarily (up to 10 dots regardless of Wyrd score).

- **Merits:** The True Fae have a hard time developing human Merits — assume that, for the most part, they possess more fae-based Merits than those that might belong to the human world. The True Fae can possess human-esque Merits, but while you're not actually collecting or spending experience points upon them, assume that the cost for them is higher what a fae-based Merit (i.e., Token, Hollow, etc.) might be. Note, too, that it's profoundly unlikely for a Fae to possess Merits related to the Courts. It's rare that a Fae will make himself a friend of the Courts. It can happen, of course, through measures of deception or via tenuous alliances, but few Courts would consider offering honest goodwill toward one of the Gentry. Mantle is unavailable as a Merit to the Fae. Giant is unnecessary, given that the Fae can be of variant Sizes.

- **Clarity/Morality:** The True Fae do not possess a Clarity or Morality gauge. While some may seem sympathetic or are able to play at being human, they're not. They do not understand humanity, they cannot grasp the intricacies of mortal behavior or the mundane world. They are fiends, creatures of unmitigated Vice.

- **Virtue/Vice:** The Fair Folk possess both Virtue and Vice. However, they tend to embody whatever Vice they possess. A Fae with Gluttony as his Vice might be porcine, with a wide mouth of many teeth, a rubber apron slick with grease and rotting sweetbreads. Therefore, a True Fae regains Willpower differently from a changeling — the mechanics for regaining Willpower through Virtue and Vice are flipped for the Fae. They can gain all their Willpower from acts made in accordance with their Vice over the course of a session or story, whereas indulging a Virtue is only done briefly for the short-term gain. It's never long-term, never an "honest" display of virtuous behavior. This only feeds the power of their tremendous wills, a survival trait likely necessary for survival in the fate-shaping realm of Arcadia.

- **Defense:** Highest of Dexterity or Wits.

- **Size:** The True Fae run a range of Sizes. A diminutive Fae might appear at Size 3, while a bloody-toothed two-headed giantess might swell to a massive Size 7.

• **Seemings/Kiths:** The Fae do not fall into seeming axes. They are too strange, too alien to be so easily categorized. Even a single True Fae might embody several seemings: crushing Ogre's teeth in a beautiful Fairest maiden's face sitting atop a body sculpted from sliding sand and scree.

HARVESTING GLAMOUR

The True Fae harvest Glamour in all the same ways that the Lost do, with two exceptions.

The first is a twist on harvesting Glamour through emotion. The True Fae gain no real sustenance from emotion that is not in some way tinged with a selfish desire. A deep and abiding love can produce fuel, but only if it is tinged with honest desire for the delights of one's partner. A soul-crushing sympathetic sorrow for another's loss is no good if the person thinks only of her friend's loss and not her own. The Others require emotion to have some flavor that they recognize, and selflessness is unknown to a race that places self above all else.

The second exception is that, once per "stay" in the human world (as limited by the Fae's Wyrd score, see below), a Fae can break an object or a living thing down to "feed" on its essence (and thus, get Glamour). The Fae must destroy a thing utterly — smashing a clock to tiny splinters and gears, or ripping a human asunder — to gain Glamour in this way. The Fae gains three Glamour for such an act. The Glamour does not come purely from the act of destruction, but remember that the Fae are not creators. They are mimics, orchestrators and puppeteers, but not creators. By breaking something down into its base parts, a Fae endeavors to understand a thing or a being. The little bit of Glamour gained thusly feeds the Fae for a time.

FRAILTIES

Assume that all True Fae possess frailties. They gain one minor frailty (taboo or bane) from the very beginning, and at Wyrd 5 they gain one major frailty (taboo or bane). Obviously, the Fae keep these weaknesses hidden (though, curiously, some don't seem aware that they even possess them in the first place). Some Lost may recall their Keepers having been confronted by a taboo of some sort while trapped in Arcadia, such as a Fae who accidentally spills salt on the floor while eating dinner and finds himself unable to cross that line until the changeling cleans the salt up.

MASK AND MIEN

The Fae can hide their mad forms from the mortal world, appearing human for a time. Unlike with changelings, changing to the Mask is a conscious choice for the True Fae — they choose to either garb themselves in the illusory flesh of a mortal being or appear as a physical manifestation of their miens.

Changelings don't have a conscious choice regarding their Mask because, at least in part, they still maintain some of their human side. Onlookers therefore see that human side (or at least the "memory" of it). The Fae, on the other hand, don't have a human side. The Mask is pure illusion, a literal costume one of the Gentry chooses to wear for a time so as not to spook the herd.

The Fae don't *like* the Mask (it's an uncomfortable fit), but they find it a necessity when traveling this world. With their miens so beautiful or horrible, they cannot afford to draw undue attention to themselves if hoping to make off with a particular target. Moreover, although individual changelings are rarely a match for one of the Fae, *several* Lost can bring the Other down in some cases.

Against the True Fae: Dream Charm

Sometimes, a changeling may want to protect a mortal's dreams from incursions by the Gentry. Doing so is simple, but requires some sacrifice on the part of the changeling.

First, the changeling must put a part of herself into a pouch or phial. The "part" must require some sacrifice on the part of the changeling, requiring her to damage her own body to do so. A full fingernail or toenail is acceptable, as is a tooth or a bundle of hair (which must be thicker than the changeling's own thumb, and must also not be cut from the head but uprooted from the follicles). The changeling must then pour iron filings over this, and spend a point of Glamour.

Putting the pouch under the bed (or if that's impossible, the pillow) of a mortal sleeper helps protect that mortal from the manipulations of the cruel Others within the dreamscape. Any rolls a True Fae makes within that mortal's dream suffer a penalty equal to the Wits score of the changeling who created this dream charm. The changeling can only have one dream charm functioning at any point in time; she cannot, for instance, protect two mortals from the dream attacks of the Fae.

THE MASK

When a Fae affects the Mask, doing so costs him one point of Glamour to turn it on, and one point of Glamour to turn it off. The Mask's duration is limited only by how long the Fae can remain in the mortal realm — once this time period is up, the Fae may no longer maintain the Mask.

As noted, the Mask is imperfect. Even if the Fae is nominally beautiful, something seems off, askew, decidedly strange. Sometimes, this thing isn't quantifiable, and the fiend only gives off an aura of "wrongness." Other times, it's manifested physically — index fingers eerily longer than all other fingers, pointed teeth, oddly colored eyes, a persistent nosebleed. The Mask holds up to casual scrutiny, but if a human or changeling stares at the Mask (assume a Wits + Investigation roll), she can see that something is wrong. Note that this doesn't confer an easy answer of: "I've discovered one of the Others!" People look strange all the time. The deformed, the disfigured, the unkempt, the just plain "odd." This doesn't necessitate them being True Fae, but it *should* make a changeling worry when she comes across such a person.

The Mask is hard for a changeling to pierce. The changeling is allowed to make a Wits + Occult + Wyrd roll versus the Fae's Presence + Wyrd score. When suspecting that a Fae is wearing a mortal Mask, the changeling can also spend one Glamour point to try to peer through the illusion. In spending the Glamour, the changeling avoids having to make the roll, and automatically sees through the Fae's Mask for a single turn.

The Fae may not access any of the supernatural abilities directly associated with their miens (as determined below) while wearing the Mask. While wearing the Mask, the Fae can access Contracts and other powers such as associated blessings, but her

mien carries with it several physical manifestations that she cannot access when wearing the face and flesh of a mortal being.

Unlike the mien, a True Fae can change her mortal Mask once per visit to the human world. Upon leaving the Hedge or a mortal's dreams, the Fae can spend two Glamour and roll her Presence + Subterfuge. Success indicates that she can appear as a mortal she has met in the past. If she tries to change into a human that she has never met, or attempts to concoct a human Mask out of her imagination, the roll suffers a -3 dice penalty. No matter how she decides to appear, her Mask is always a little off. Moreover, elements of her mien always seem to come through as it does with changelings (cat-shaped eyes, perhaps, or too-pale skin).

THE MIEN

A changeling's mien is strange, but not a drastic body shift. The Fair Folk, on the other hand, often possess truly frightening and alien miens. Many might be humanoid, but with odd animal parts (such as a massive rack of antlers that is draped in ivy, moss or even the dried entrails of their enemies), flesh of various elements (watery eyes, steel teeth, hair like a rippling conflagration of flame), body parts incorporating odd artifacts or machinery (a clockwork gear visible through tattered robes, a dusty buzzing bulb as one eye, a nose like a revolver's cylinder) or other bizarre accoutrements. Humanoid, however, still implies arms, legs, a head and so forth — sure, there might be three arms, or a tail made of dragging chain, but the thing is still *human-shaped*. Other Fae, though, don't even appear human. It might be a blinking pulse of light like some kind of mad wisp, or be shaped more like a bull-sized cockroach. A Fae has one mien in the mortal world that never changes, but that one mien can be anything out of myth or nightmare. One Fae might appear as a giant butterfly with a human woman's face, while another might be a man made of writhing serpents.

When encountering a Fae whose Mask is dropped in favor of its mien, a mortal sees it and reacts accordingly. Most run. Some attack. Others collapse into gibbering piles. (Assume that the higher one's Willpower score, the more staunchly defiant the human may be. Low Willpower scores are indicative of the sobbing or fleeing.) However, the mortal forgets what he saw as soon as the Fae is out of sight. His brain rewrites memory — was it a large bird? A man in a costume? A loose wolf, serial killer or car accident? His mind compensates, explaining away any aberrant details (“Oh, this cut on my head is from when I tripped on that piece of broken curb, right?”). The exception to this is the mortal's dreams — he will, for the next several weeks, likely experience nightmares featuring the Fae in all its un-Masked horror. He'll recall the dream only barely come morning, with occasional flashes of the Fae's mien. (This may, at the Storyteller's behest, contribute to the poisoning of that human's dreams. Resistance against dream-poisoning may be weakened, suffering a -2 dice penalty to the roll to resist the Fae's efforts.)

Supernatural beings, or mortals who are supernaturally touched (i.e., the ensorcelled) do not suffer from this. They can see the Fae in all its glory and horror, and their minds don't overwrite such memories (which is both a blessing and a curse).

Assume that a Fae's mien allows her to possess a number of supernatural benefits (which are not available to the Fae while wearing the Mask). Each Fae has up to three of such mien blessings that accommodate the Fae's form and grant her additional power. You can choose these three from the kith blessings found in **Changeling: The Lost** (pp. 98–123), or you can also choose from some of the blessings

located immediately below. (Note that, in some cases, the Storyteller may allow new kith types and powers to come from these.)

- **Binding Skin:** The Fae's flesh regenerates. Wounds expunge blood, then start to heal. Bones shift and pop while knitting back together. Bashing damage heals at one point per turn. Lethal damage disappears at a rate of one point per 15 minutes. Aggravated damage, however, is not affected by this ability, and remains to plague the fiend.

- **Blurflesh:** The Fae's body seems to radiate an odd blur or mirage-like effect. It could be like looking at the fiend through water, smoke, fog or heat vapor. The Fae seems somewhat in control of how the blur occurs, and it's distracting to those making ranged attacks against the fiend. The Fae can apply its full Defense against incoming ranged attacks.

- **Flicker:** The Fae gives off a distracting, even hypnotic aura. Whether it's a shifting interplay of light and shadow or a effervescent parade of dizzying colors, the aura serves to distract and weaken one's ability to attack. The Fae spends one point of Glamour to activate this ability. For the rest of the scene, all who see the Fae suffer a -5 dice penalty to their Initiative scores.

- **Lyrical Voice:** The Fae's voice possesses magical qualities. Perhaps it is lilting and lovely, or it could be that it carries with it an unmistakable authority. Her words might sound as poetry, or remind one of a babbling brook or a keening violin. Any rolls involving Expression, Persuasion or Subterfuge gain the 9 again benefit.

- **Many-Eyes:** A Fae with this “blessing” might have multifaceted fly-eyes, eight eyes like a spider or a head riddled with blinking human eyes. The eyes grant two bonuses. The first requires no cost or activation, and allows the Fae to add her Wyrd to any Perception rolls. The second requires two points of Glamour, and allows the Fae to double her Defense for a turn because her eyes can see incoming attacks with far greater clarity.

- **Nightmare Aura:** In a nightmare, someone may find himself hampered — he cannot run, he cannot flee, as if his feet were mired in concrete or he were running on some kind of invisible treadmill (and meanwhile, one's nightmarish adversary approaches with eerie confidence). This ability grants the Fae a similar effect, except one that occurs in the real world, not in dreams. All within 50 yards of the Fae find their Speed cut in half (round down). They feel sluggish, as if caught in the aforementioned nightmare... often while the Fae strides up behind them, knives unsheathed, lips twisted in a sneering smile. The Fae's physical manifestation can be diverse, ranging from ghostly tentacles that seem to lash out and coil around ankles to a radiant effect in which the ground literally seems to turn to mush or mud (concrete may even appear to turn to its unsettled form).

- **Quillbarbs:** The flesh of the True Fae is riddled with quills, barbs, hooks, spikes or the cartilaginous skin of a shark (rubbed the wrong way, a shark's skin causes abraded burns). A successful Brawl attack made against the Fae incurs one lethal point of damage upon the attacker. A successful Weaponry attack sees the weapon take damage — one point of Structure per successful attack.

- **Sicktouch:** The Fae's touch is rife with disease. Perhaps her fingers fester with sores, or maybe little biting fleas leap off her skin. The Fae spends one point of Glamour to activate this ability for a single scene, and conferring the disease requires a successful touch attack. The sickness conferred is like a bad flu: it

causes one bashing damage per day that cannot be avoided, and confers a -3 dice penalty to all rolls. To rid oneself of the disease, the character must succeed on an extended Stamina + Resolve roll. Five successes are necessary, and each roll is equal to one day. Note, however, that the illness does not begin immediately: just as all good virulence, Sicktouch takes some time to get going. The sickness does not take hold until eight hours have passed (and the character cannot start attempting to rid herself of the illness until it actually takes hold).

- **Shocking Caress:** The Fae, like an electric eel, can deliver a jolting shock of electricity through his skin. This can be used once per scene, and first requires that the Fae achieve a successful grapple. In the turn after a successfully held grapple, the Fae then spends a Glamour point. The sudden burst of electricity courses through the target's veins, doing a number of bashing damage equal to the Fae's Wyrdscore. The victim must succeed on a Stamina roll (reflexive) in order to act in the resulting turn. If this Stamina roll fails, the target is still capable of moving around, albeit with minimal coordination. During that turn, then, the target's Defense is halved (round up).

- **Somnolent Perfume:** The Fae gives off a fragrance similar to the scent associated with the Flowering kith, but this perfume's effect is slightly different. The scent radiates off the Keeper in sometimes-visible vapors (it may look like a heat haze or a faint violet fog). The fragrance might be sweet, or it might be pungent, but its effect is the same: it can put others to sleep, en masse. By spending a Glamour point and rolling Wyrdscore against the highest Composure + Wyrdscore, those affected fall asleep for a number of turns equal to the Fae's Wyrdscore or until damage is done against them (bashing, lethal or aggravated). The fragrance has a radius in yards equal to the Fae's Presence + Persuasion dice pool.

- **Sovereign Limb:** The Fae has an appendage that acts independently of the Fae. It might be a lashing tail, a whipping tongue, a third arm, even a barbed and braided length of ivy. The limb can be also something ethereal and unreal — a tentacle formed of shadow, perhaps, or an orbiting metal sphere. The limb has an Initiative modifier equal to the Fae's Presence score and has the Fae's Defense and Speed score. The limb's attack pool is equal to the Fae's Wyrdscore, and does bashing damage. Attacking the limb is a targeted attack (and thus a -2 dice penalty), but damage done to the limb is transferred directly to the Fae. The only advantage to attacking the limb is that bashing damage done to it does transfer to the Fae, thus bypassing the Fair Folk's "Immortal Flesh" advantage (see below).

- **Swarmcloud:** The Fae is surrounded by a persistent swarm of some ilk. This generally means something alive: biting flies, bees, locusts, gnats, moths, butterflies. The swarm can alternately manifest as non-living things — whorls of paper, a dusty sirocco of sand, even sparks of static electricity whipping and snapping in the air. It all adds up to one thing: the True Fae is harder to hit in combat. Whether because of biting flies or because the swarm obscures one's sight, this blessing grants the Fae a +2 dice bonus to his Defense (though a -2 dice penalty to any Social rolls made on his behalf).

CROSS IMPERFECTIONS: WEAKNESSES

The Fair Folk do not belong to this world. It is as alien to them as Arcadia is to the poor souls dragged there as slaves. The Fae suffer here, finding their powers and actions imperfect. They're able

to only achieve a fraction of the power accessible to them in the Hedge and in Faerie. Moreover, they're hobbled by several deleterious limitations that affect them when they are in this world.

TRANSIENT NIGHTMARES

The Fae have a time limit in this world. They cannot exist easily here — it's as if the very fabric of the human realm eventually turns its eyes toward them, and upon recognizing something so aberrant and unnatural, it begins to nip and bite at them. Think of how white blood cells react to infection, eventually massing to remove it from the body. The Fair Folk are like an infection or a tumor that this world seeks to excise.

Assume that the Fae have a time limit equal to their Wyrdscore in hours. Once this time has passed, the intruder suffers one aggravated wound per hour after, and this damage will not heal in this realm (as if the Other had been touched by the cruel chill of cold-forged iron). The damage manifests in a number of ways, all of them indicating a breakdown of some kind: the Fae's skin might turn jaundiced, or her flesh might start to bubble up in pustules and black buboes. Perhaps her body starts to fray, like a worn tablecloth or ratty carpet. Some Fae simply grow desiccated, shriveling up into arthritic, skeletal wretches.

Of course, some Fae manage to stay. But how? Rumor tells of several ways a True Fae might linger in this place. First is that some Fae are banished to this world, and in being banished they forego the curse of transient time. (Some among the Gentry apparently try to get banished, hoping to find power for themselves in the human world.) The second way is that, if a Fae "dies" in this place from the damage caused merely from existing here, it's said that the Fae's wounds heal and she simply... forgets who she is. Her mortal Mask remains dominant, and she is now a Sleeper. The third way is about mortal connections. Some say that if a Fae can genuinely connect with one mortal, forging a real bond that isn't purely negative or manipulative, then that bond holds the Fae here, keeps him here. But that isn't necessarily a good thing, for it seems a curse unto itself. Because that bond infects the Keeper with human ways and human thought, and soon he forgets who he really is and where he comes from. In time, he believes himself a mortal (and, again, is now a Sleeper).

SKILL LIMITATIONS

The Fair Folk aren't human. They cannot create human objects. They cannot easily grasp the mortal mind. They are stunted in this place.

The following Skills are limited to only one dot: Computer, Empathy and Expression. In the human world, a Fae cannot surpass this limitation. And, while in other worlds (the Hedge, Arcadia), the fiend cannot go beyond three dots.

Moreover, the Fae have a profoundly difficult time creating using these Skills. Whether composing a poem or building an engine, the Fair Folk fumble in creation, barely understanding the concept much less what's physically or mentally required. Assume that any roll to create something new using the aforementioned Skills automatically becomes a chance die. For the most part, the Fae won't even attempt such a thing (it rarely even occurs to them to create something new, as they are creatures that would rather steal something — or outright destroy it). A few Lost have seen Others who tried to create things, though, hoping to craft their own baubles of delight and nightmare. It rarely works. One Lost reports that his Keeper became so enraged at her inability to compose a simple rhyming couplet that



Curse of Iron

Why does hand-forged iron hurt the Fae so dramatically? Nobody knows, but of course, stories abound:

- Some have suggested that hand-forged iron makes a hard and unforgiving metal, clearly grounded in the mundane mortal world. Fae, being unreal creatures from a land of nightmares, cannot stand this material that supernaturally represents this world of matter and mud.
- Others have claimed that the Fae are staid, unchanging creatures, and hand-forged iron is similarly non-dynamic and rigid. Sometimes to harm a thing, you must bring against it that which is most like that thing (a loose approximation of “fight fire with fire”). A dynamic opposite to this theory notes that the Gentry are mercurial, ever-shifting, practically formless without a mortal point of reference. Iron’s nature acts as anathema to their protean nature.
- It has been suggested that pure iron acts as a lightning rod, drawing out the power of Glamour and discharging it harmlessly. Hand-forged iron, without the touch of a machine, has an additional spiritual purity that makes it an even more effective conduit. Some say that meteoric iron would be the most lethal form of all, and that it would kill the Others with but a touch.
- Many call upon the legend of the broken Contract with iron. One powerful Fae from long ago promised that, if iron worked solely for the will of the Gentry, the Fae would keep heat from ever tainting it. Somehow, though, mortal man *did* bring heat to iron to forge it, and how this happened remains an unanswered part of the legend. Some tie this into the legend of Prometheus, he who stole fire from the “gods,” but the most common answer (at least among the Lost) is that a changeling — perhaps one of the first stolen from the mortal world — escaped Faerie and returned home having stolen the secrets of the iron Contract. Upon arriving, the changeling told others how to properly forge iron with heat, and so the Contract was broken. Now, as it is with all broken Contracts, the coldest iron holds its deepest wrath over the Fae. Some changelings believe there is a greater lesson in this tale: find a way to break the Contracts the Fae hold dear, and you’ve found a way to break the Fae themselves.

she buried the fountain pen in the changeling's forearm, then supped on the blood that ran up through it.

HAND-FORGED IRON

Hand-forged iron is anathema to the True Fae. Its very presence unnerves them; if a Fae finds hand-forged iron touching his body (even through clothes or armor), the creature suffers a -2 dice penalty to all Resolve or Composure rolls. Worse, if a weapon (formal or improvised) crafted of hand-forged iron does damage to the Fae, all resulting damage is aggravated. (Changelings have reported various strange effects after injuring one of the Gentry with such a weapon: one time, steam may rise from the wound, while another time a blade might withdraw with crystals of ice upon it. One of the Lost even claims that a wound opened by a hand-forged blade began vomiting fat, green horseflies.)

Note the differences between "cold iron" and "hand-forged iron," which can be found on p. 174 of *Changeling: The Lost*.

AN IMPERFECT MASK

The Fae can mimic humanity, and this Mask is good enough to pass unnoticed among the human herd. No roll is necessary to assume this Mask; the Fae simply wishes it so, and the false visage takes over. (Moreover, they seem to intuitively know the vast range of human tongues, able to speak in whatever language the listener himself speaks.)

However, the Mask is not perfect. A Fae's faux-human countenance suffers from many small weaknesses, like cracks in an otherwise perfect mirror. Such flaws are broad-ranging: one eye larger than the other, a slightly forked tongue, lips that appear painted on, oddly long and spidery fingers, too-pale skin that shows a labyrinth of veins beneath, a strange configuration of moles and warts. Even when ostensibly beautiful, the Fae still has something about her that seems "off" in this human form — as eyes of two wildly different colors, or a perfect body and face marred by a set of cracked and yellow teeth.

In drawing attention to themselves, the Fae earn the unease of those humans around them. Social rolls made in a True Fae's favor while wearing the mortal Mask are made at a -1 die penalty, and they do not gain the 10 again benefit from such a roll. Other story-based consequences may result, as well. Some humans may flee, become belligerent or even attack. Of course, the Fae will find other ways to get what he wants from foolish humans....

FIEND'S FINESSE: ADVANTAGES

Yes, the Fair Folk have their weaknesses in this world. But they are not without their strengths. Consider that the advantages described below represent only a fraction of what's available to them in the lands of Faerie, and you'll see just how dangerous they can be.

IMMORTAL FLESH

When within the mortal world, the True Fae are immune to bashing damage. Far too many changelings have discovered this the hard way. Cracking a True Fae in its grinning head with a Louisville Slugger, kicking it in the gut or blasting it in the knee with a sledgehammer all produce eerily similar — and worthless — results. Bashing damage may give the intruder pause, but little else.

Bashing damage fails to register at all against one of the Fae. It doesn't get marked as damage and therefore never contributes to dice penalties or turns to lethal injury. The only exception to this rule is damage caused by iron or hand-forged iron (see above). Largely pure (or "cold") iron items still cause bashing or lethal, piercing any of the Fae's defenses. Hand-forged iron, as noted, is far worse.

Lethal damage occurs normally, but unlike the Lost, a True Fae can heal one point of lethal damage with one point of Glamour.

LORDS OF THE KEPT

The Fae has powers over his once-kept changelings. If a changeling spent a year and a day (or longer) in the grip of a Fae, that particular Fae gains a number of benefits over the changeling. These benefits, while minor, still give the True Fae a distinct edge.

The benefits are +2 dice in any Social roll made against the changeling, and a +1 bonus to any Contract rolls used against the changeling.

Within the Hedge, Within Dreams

While a mortal's dream and the Hedge are not necessarily places of Earth and go beyond the purely human domain, they still touch this world. Therefore, mortal power bleeds into the dream and the Hedge and still limits the True Fae's interactions.

The Fae still suffer limitations when in these places, unable to grasp the full depth and breadth of their power. However, two differences exist. The first is that, in the Hedge, a Fae does not suffer any kind of time limit. She can dwell among the Thorns for as long as she cares to without suffering any kind of "overexposure." Second, when in dreams, the Fae is not limited to his two forms, and can become nearly anything while dream-shaping. (However, in the Hedge, the Fae is still given over to the dual form dichotomy, appearing either as a mostly human Mask or her "pure" mien.)

For further reference, the True Fae's dream-shaping "talents" are described on p. 199 of *Changeling: The Lost*.

FAIR FOLK MERITS

The following Merits are applicable only to the True Fae, unless the Storyteller declares otherwise.

FAE PET (•• OR ••••)

Effect: This Fae possesses a real-world animal pet (two-dot version) or an unearthly Hedge-dwelling hobgoblin (four-dot version).

The animal pet can be any beast local to the area. (In other words, the Fae could have a wolf in Alaska, but not in Miami. The Fae could have a pelican or alligator in Miami, however, which he could not possess in Alaska.)

The hobgoblin pet can be any moderately powered monster from the Hedge. Briarwolves are a popular choice, as are Hedge Beasts.

The pet does whatever the Fae demands, even putting itself at risk for the fiend. Curiously, this Merit is less about having a trained animal and more about the Fae's preternatural sway over beasts and creatures. If the Fae's current pet is killed, she can summon a new one after 24 hours have passed (and summoning either type of pet must be done within 500 yards of an existing Hedge gateway).

Hobgoblin pets can leave the Hedge, traveling with the Fae into the human world. However, hobgoblin pets suffer one point of lethal damage per turn when seen by any human. The damage stops building once the hobgoblin can hide itself somehow. (This damage manifests in various ways: sizzling skin, popping blisters, fur falling out in bloody clumps.)

Animal pets can also enter the Hedge, but once within the Hedge, they're subject to the strange psychoactive effects. An animal pet in such a realm may perish from the brunt of such madness, may turn into a rabid beast or could instead become something stranger — such as a hobgoblin.

FAIR HAVEN (•••)

Effect: The Fae has a place in the human world where she can exist without giving into the Fae's temporary time limit in this realm (see "Transient Nightmares," above). This place is always away from human intervention, be it a tract of hidden forest or a long-abandoned auto-body factory. The Fae can stay in this place for as long as she wishes, but once she steps foot outside the area, the time limit begins ticking away. Once the limit is up, her Fair Haven no longer protects her until her next return to this world. (Note that Fair Haven is limited somewhat by size. Assume that the protected area cannot be more than 500 yards square.)

NIGHTMARES MADE MANIFEST

The Fae enter our world sometimes, and when they do, the moon darkens as they pry their way through the Hedge-thorns, a wind kicks up and carries on it the scent of roses and roadkill. The section below will help you in telling stories where the Fae breach this world, bringing their misery, beauty, glory and madness to an unsuspecting realm.

PEERING ACROSS WORLDS

The Lost often speculate that the Fae can see across the worlds, catching sight of their escaped charges wherever they are. This is partly true — certain circumstances allow for the Fae to gain awareness of where their once-kept changelings lurk. Below are a number of potential circumstances, and more can be easily devised. Note that performing such an action does not necessarily send the Fae tearing through the Hedge to reclaim their changelings, but it gives them a good idea as to where their once-held slaves are at that given moment. (And, in making such a mistake, a changeling should feel a sudden surge of fear at what may come knocking in short order. It's why many changelings end up very superstitious — keeping horseshoes above their bedroom doors, rapping on wood or throwing salt over their shoulders.)

- **Break a Mirror:** If a changeling breaks a mirror, it's said to draw the eye of her Keeper. In the cracked and tumbling glass, some changelings have reported seeing the eyes of their True Fae masters blinking for but a moment. That moment is enough.

- **Dramatic Failures:** Sometimes, a terrible mistake draws an accident or a swell of negative emotion so fierce, it cannot help but pierce the heart of the changeling's Keeper. The Others delight in misery and accident, and it may draw one like a moth to flame. A changeling cuts a gash in her palm trying to peel an apple, and her Keeper can feel it. A changeling embarrasses herself at Court, saying the worst possible thing to a vindictive Queen, and the Keeper might sup from such humiliation and hunger for more.

- **Dropping a Knife:** The saying goes, "Knife falls, gentleman calls." Except in this case, the gentleman is one of the Gentry — not a good thing. If a changeling drops a knife and it sticks in the floor, the rumor goes that his Keeper can hear that sound, perhaps even seeing the knife through the ceiling of his own Arcadian domicile. Removing the knife may help, but some say it doesn't matter. The Fae can find exactly where the knife fell — and from there, perhaps find the changeling who dropped it.

- **Thrice-spoken, Your Name:** If a changeling speaks her own true name three times in a given period (some say an hour, others say within a full day), her Keeper suddenly hears it, an echo bouncing from this world into Arcadia. Some say that the Keeper can keep that sound in her ears, using it to hone in on her once-kept changeling's location.

- **To Kill a Raven:** Killing a raven or a crow brings terrible luck, indeed. Some say that such birds are psychopomps, emissaries of the soul between worlds — and possible servitors of the Fair Folk. One's Keeper knows when and where a crow or raven dies, and can hear its last *caw* from within Faerie. Unsettled by the death, many Keepers then go out to hunt those who would dare dispatch of their favored pets.

TELLTALE SIGNS

It's no hard or fast rule, but folklore notes that presence of the Fae affects the world. It's worth consideration. Think of superstitions, and how they might foretell the coming of the Gentry. If a character finds that his path is crossed by a black cat thrice in a night, should that worry him? Does the crack in a mirror occasionally whisper a faint breeze through it, the glass fogging up when a Fae approaches?

Also, when the Fae enter into this world, what kinds of environmental effects (minor, but notable) occur to tip the Lost off to the approaching darkness? Do the tides seem unreasonably high? Are animals skittish, with a chain of howling dogs carrying their anxiety throughout the city? Perhaps a character sees a shooting star the color of blood, or catches sight of a shadow flitting across the moon or even sees how plants and flowers gently twist away from whatever direction finds the True Fae.

AN OBSESSIVE ACENDA

The simplest and most straightforward reason that the True Fae breach the boundary between worlds — driving their carriages or their hot rods through the mud-rutted roads of the Hedge — is to kidnap fresh humans or to reclaim their Lost "children." That is your easiest route for including the True Fae in a game, and it's certainly rife with story potential. In that single agenda waits several possible story hooks. Just how far is the Other willing to go? How does his attempt to reclaim a changeling reflect his persona or archetype? A Hunter might look at the reclamation of a Lost as a great challenge worthy of a protracted hunt, putting the freehold on alert as the monster enters this world and sounds his horn made of bone and thorn.

A Seductress might enter the world several times over the period of several months, doing more than just finding and snatching up her escaped slave, but actually manipulating the world against the character. She seduces other changelings with treats and baubles so that they backstab him. She forges grim pledges with humans so that they make life very difficult for the poor Lost. She even whispers sweet nothings to the physical world, causing it to rise up against him. In the end, the changeling is a broken figure, a weeping fool given over to half-madness — and then, only then, she swoops in to pick up the pieces. The Shadow, on the other hand, is never seen. He strikes from darkness, tenebrous hands moving swiftly, forcing the freehold to move fast once the changelings realize just what's happening (and by then, it's often too late).

That being said, is that the only reason the Fae come here? Not at all. Consider the following possibilities (framed as story hooks, but you can switch them up and personalize them for your story).

The Inspection

Ever see *The Nightmare Before Christmas*? Think of the scene when Jack Skellington, king of the monstrous Halloween Town, discovers and tries to dissect Christmas. He experiments upon it because he does not understand it — the very notion is so alien to him that his dead hands see only to tear the bits asunder to understand them. Mister Gray is like Jack Skellington, a gaunt thing, a faceless Other whose skull is stretched taut with bleak and puckered skin. He comes to this world not to abduct, but to experiment. Oh, he'll abduct one day, when he feels he is ready, but for now? He only seeks to *understand* his subjects within the context of their own place. He is a pitiless and asympathetic Jane Goodall, visiting these “monkeys” and trying desperately to understand how this mad tribe works. One might see him in an old toy shoppe, plucking handmade toys and trinkets into pieces with his metal-tipped fingers. Or you might find him peeling the skin from a homeless man's face, staring through the blood-rimmed eyeholes of the flesh-mask, trying to see the world in a “different way.” The Lost do not know he's here, not yet — but there have been signs. Like the way the gateways into the Hedge have started to grow gray, the thorns looking more like bone spurs than rose barbs.

The Rightful Ruler

The Queenfisher's jaw tightens with envy when she thinks of how good the Lost have it. Yes, her own children have escaped her and fled back to their land, and that certainly burns her. But what burns her worse is what she found when she went back to that place — all the refugees from Arcadia had built themselves a quaint little kingdom in the middle of the city's sprawl. It would've made her laugh if it didn't disgust her so much. Such insects do not deserve the authority to rule. Trifling creatures are not kings, and can never be kings. Only the Fae, the *True Fae*, are capable of genuine sovereignty. And so, the Queenfisher comes here to build an empire of her own. She knows that her flesh will not allow her to stay here for long, but she seeks to change that. To her mind, the Fae cannot linger here because they don't have the power over or the loyalty from their subjects in this place. And so, she builds a network of traitors to the freehold, Lost she has managed to turn toward her side (in return for being allowed to remain in this world, of course, eventually serving her upon her throne of bronze draped in blood-spattered green silks). The freehold is corrupted from the inside out as she plucks changelings and turns them, one by one. Soon, having proved her dominance, the Queenfisher believes she will be allowed to stay in this place, and she will begin to carve out a niche for the Fae that will remain eternally.

Chrometooth's Last Days

The Fae don't age or die, necessarily, but sometimes their power wanes, sapped from them as they linger in the strangest parts of Arcadia. Chrometooth believes that his days as a champion among the Gentry are fleeting. And so he enters this world to seek a replacement. Chrometooth comes to this world as an infernal chopper with a gleaming headlight eye and bubbling rubber tires, the exhaust pipe coughing up gravel and teeth and fingernails, and he seeks a new champion. When he becomes something humanoid (but never human, Chrometooth refuses to wear the Mask), he is a many-limbed man of gears and dripping oil and sunlight caught on chrome shoulders. In his time here, he seeks out those changelings (usually those possessing great knowledge of the Contracts of Artifice) of much power and challenges them. If one can defeat him — and he knows he's not in his prime anymore — than perhaps that person deserves to be taken back to Arcadia and made a champion among monsters. Of course, lately he's been having a few regrets, for it seems that each potent Lost he defeats, he regains some of his flagging power. Perhaps such lowly creatures cannot replace him? Perhaps he can again become as powerful as he once was?

Scraping Bottom

It's easy to fall on the skids in the freehold. Changelings have taken a bit of that fickle cruelty away with them from their durance in Faerie, and thus, freehold politics can be deadly. It's not uncommon for a changeling to find himself in the gutter, his power within the Courts gone, his tokens taken from him. And it's when a changeling is vulnerable like this that the Fae may rear their heads. Todd the Lion found this out the hard way. He'd said the wrong thing to Lord Byron's paramour, Florcita, and that did it. Next thing Todd knew, he was waking up face down in a puddle, blood crusting on his head from where a baseball had crowned him. And standing over him was the most beautiful creature he'd ever seen. Eyes like silver pools. Skin like polished brass. Lips of painted copper. She called herself Precious, and she told him that she wanted his help getting her wayward “livestock” back in its pen. Did it help that this errant changeling just so happened to be Florcita? Was the bargain made easier by the promises of power that Precious promised to Todd? Would he have done anything to pull himself out of that oil-slick puddle?

ILL SYMPATHIES

Can the Fae be sympathetic? By and large, they're inhuman monsters. Attempts at humanity seem to be little more than play-acting, with them wearing the skins of people (metaphorically or literally) so to *appear* more human — but it does it really make them sympathetic?

First, just because the Fae aren't generally sympathetic doesn't mean they can't be allies of a sort. The Fair Folk needn't be overtly antagonistic. Alliances are often built on mutual need or mutual enemies. Consider a True Fae who wishes to unseat or usurp the power of a Fae Queen. Could he enlist (or demand) the aid of those changelings who were once her captives? Not all the Fae care about changelings. While many do as a kind of ingrained envy or hatred of humans and Lost, other Fae just plain dismiss the Lost. Consider a troupe of changelings wandering lost in the Hedge. Could a Fae give them the guidance to get home in return for a pledgebound favor? On the other end of the spectrum, could brave (or foolish) changelings approach a powerful Fae in the

Hedge to help them achieve some goal in the real world — depose a dictatorial Duke or grant them access to a powerful token that will give them the glory they seek among their peers at Court?

If you care to have it, a Fae *could* be somewhat sympathetic. What of an Other trapped in this world, bound to a mortal because he finds that — gasp, horror of horrors — he thinks he *loves* her? He doesn't want to feel that way. He hates her and the world for feeling that way. And yet, it's there. It doesn't even do him any good, as he cannot draw Glamour from this strange and paltry "love." And yet, it's there! Surely one can feel a little sympathy for such a creature, brought low from the throne of power by the heart of a pretty woman? The Fae who so desperately want to understand humanity (or even become human) are monsters trying to make sense of what they are, trying to go beyond their hollow lives as living nightmares.

Ah, but there's a catch. The character's sympathy for the Fae will not be returned. The Fae are serial solipsists, thinking only of themselves and the world in relation to them. A True Fae only is aware of the things that affect him, not what affects the character. A character who loves or forges some kind of strong bond with one of the Fae is likely to learn a hard lesson when that creature does something injurious to him. It's not because the Fae are openly malicious, but because they simply seem unable to consider the feelings of anybody but themselves. A Fae doesn't do harm because he wants to "do harm," because he's enamored of the philosophy of causing harm to others. He does harm because he doesn't have the capacity for sympathy; the Fae are without the ability to think that there's anything outside their own existence. A Fae does harm because he's curious, or because he needs something or because he knows no other way. Again, it's not about evil. It's also not about being devoid of emotion. The Fae have passion. They just don't have *compassion*. A character should feel free to fall in love with a Fae. But the Storyteller should feel free to have that love destroy her.

Consider, for instance, a Fae who believes that he has fallen in love with a changeling, and she loves him in turn. One day, though, that will all fall apart, a house of cards whirling away in a callous wind. The Fae might grow to hate the changeling's pandering attentions. Or maybe the Fae will one day as a simple favor — "Please, my dear, pass me the salt" — and in the changeling's hesitation the Fae sees gross disobedience. And so he snaps her neck, wondering at the sounds that gurgle up from her collapsed trachea. Soon thereafter, he remembers the burbling of the honeyed brooks outside his Arcadian home, and he returns to his world, managing to never think twice about how easily he killed his "love." He simply could not grasp it, even though he — and his changeling paramour — thought that maybe he could. The tiger could not change his stripes.

This creates a kind of opportunity, though, to give your game the kind of persistent antagonist that the characters love, hate and love to hate. (Think of the Ciga-



rette Smoking Man from *X-Files*. He's a bad man who does bad things, but sometimes he does good things, too, even if they're self-serving.) Such antagonists make good recurring enemies, bringing both good and evil to bear in this world, confounding the characters with their actions. Can the characters trust such a creature? Probably not for long. But it might be worth it to try. One day they'll have to dispatch him, or he them, but for now? Perhaps a tenuous alliance can exist between them.

ROLEPLAYING THE WYRD

The Fae are Wyrd incarnate. They have no humanity. They are only possessed of that unreality, and it is why they cannot be so easily categorized. In Arcadia, they can be formless when necessary, given over to the madness of flux. In the mortal world, they are limited to their two primary forms and any that are allowed by Contracts or other supernatural powers.

How to handle that? Well, Wyrd also comes across as weird. The Fae are strange, and perhaps aptly, are also strangers. They don't belong here. They are bound by rules that have no basis in natural law, and they ignore rules that we recognize as necessary for survival. They are chaotic entities in a world of order (at least relative to Faerie). They are timeless in a place bound inextricably to the flow of time. Profoundly solipsistic, they only look beyond themselves when confronted by what's truly alien to them: humanity.

Humanity and all its trappings puzzle them. Something crafted by human hands is confounding, like a math puzzle whose answer is frustratingly elusive.

And so, always remember that while changelings may feel like strangers in a strange land, it's really the Fae who are the ultimate strangers. This is not their place, and they know it. Oh, they might be able to put on a good show, but it's a carefully crafted façade, and one with cracks visible to those who scrutinize with intent. They move slightly out of sync, or stare at things that seem otherwise unexceptional. Some speak in oddly lilting tones, while others might laugh inappropriately or feign other poorly timed emotions. A changeling might find her Keeper staring deep into a mirrored glass, or holding up a comb to his eye as if it's an artifact from an ancient world.

The Fae play at being human, but they're not human. Always remember that when roleplaying the Fae. They go beyond human motives. They are nightmares clothed in flesh and silk.

MEMBERS OF THE GENTRY

Below, you'll find a number of True Fae antagonists for use in your **Changeling: The Lost** stories. Note that these statistics may not represent their full Arcadian strength; the Others are far more dangerous within their home realm, and it's possible their abilities would be adjusted upward there. Actual discussion of Arcadia itself, as the Lost might interact with it, will come to light in the forthcoming **The Equinox Road**.

CRUMBCOAT AND GANACHE

Quote: (in unison) *"This porridge tastes of piss. For every sigh of disgust we make, slave, you shall lose a pint of blood."*

Background: Changelings can rarely summon the specific memories to support this, but many possess a strong sensory memory of the many tastes and flavors found in Arcadia: sweets so sweet they

Against the True Fae: Arslight (•••)

This cheap plastic flashlight needs no batteries to operate it; inside the battery casing lies a lump of shiny anthracite coal. When a changeling shines this token's pale beam in the eyes of one of the wicked Fae, the light partially blinds the creature temporarily. For the next turn after this "attack," the True Fae suffers a halved Defense (round down), -2 dice penalty to all Perception rolls and attack rolls. This token does not work against the Lost.

Note that to successfully hit the monster's eyes with the beam, the Storyteller may require success on an instant Dexterity + Firearms roll. Although the flashlight is obviously not a gun, pointing and aiming the beam is a similar enough action to merit that dice pool.

Action: Instant

Mien: The flashlight appears to be the same cheap junk drawer flashlight as it did before, but its beam seems to smolder and burn. From the light, wisps of hot ash drift. (These embers cannot set anything aflame.)

Drawback: The flashlight causes very minor burns to the hand, as the flashlight grows suddenly warm to the touch. Not only does the changeling take a single bashing damage upon use, but she also must roll Stamina + Resolve (minus three dice, equal to the token's rating) to maintain her grip on the item.

Catch: The user suffers from an imperceptible glow, almost as if wreathed in an aura outside the natural spectrum of light. It is *unconsciously* perceptible, however, especially to those trying to find the character. Attempts on Perception rolls to discover the character (such as a Wits + Investigation to find a character using Stealth to stick to the shadows) gain three bonus dice to do so.

pit one's molars from a single taste, and fruits so bitter they burn ulcers into the throat and stomach. Crumbcoat and Ganache — two True Fae who, for all intents and purposes are exact twins except for the names and eye color — consider themselves master chefs harnessing the culinary wonders and blasphemies found all over the land of Faerie. No one has ever seen them cook, of course, leading some of their thralls to wonder if these two are capable of creating anything original. But they do run their manor-bound kitchen like a combination of a concentration camp and mental asylum, forcing their kept pets to concoct dish after dish (tasting every brew and meal regardless of its effects on the mind or body). From time to time, the two of them take a single prodigal thrall as a lover (though "love" rarely enters into the equation). Of course, that prodigal slave rarely returns, which is a lesson to the others about overachieving. Impressing the Fae twins may seem like a good idea at the time, but who knows if such achievement leads to escape... or another level of punishment?

Description: Crumbcoat and Ganache are twins, both small and shriveled men with greasy lips and long, lascivious tongues that sometimes flick the air like a serpent's might. Both wear long



white chef's coats, each stained with various smears — blood, shit, buttercream icing. Most of their changeling servitors have at least glimpsed what lies on the insides of those coats: bandoliers of surgical tools and kitchenware, silver and gleaming. The only difference between the two of them is the color of their eyes. Crumbcoat's eyes are a bile yellow, whereas Ganache's are a deep chocolate brown.

Storytelling Hints: The twins long to be impressed. They push their thralls to new levels of desperation in pleasing the Fae. Pleasing them engenders small rewards, while disappointing them (the far likelier option) brings pain of all colors and stripes. Overimpressing them leads to the changeling being swept away, used as a paramour. Disgusting these two utterly can often leave them depressed for days.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 6, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 5

Mental Skills: Crafts 3, Investigation (Taste) 4, Medicine 2, Politics 4

Physical Skills: Larceny 1, Stealth (Spying) 3, Survival 3, Weaponry (Cooking Implements) 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy 1, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 2, Socialize 2, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Ambidextrous, Fast Reflexes 2, Harvest (Emotions) 3, Token (Hedg spun Raiment: Chef's Coats) 3

Willpower: 7

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 12

Defense: 6

Size: 4

Speed: 12

Health: 7

Wyrd: 5

Contracts: Artifice •••••, Dream ••, Hearth •••, Darkness •••

Glamour/per Turn: 14/5

Frailties: Aversion to black pepper (minor bane); painful aversion to their own personal cutlery (major bane)

Mien Blessings: Binding Skin, Inebriating Elixir (Artist), Smell the Blood (Cyclopean)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Meat Cleaver	1(L)	—	6

Crumbcoat and Ganache's Changelings

These mad epicures are the Keepers of the Glutton (p. 20). Both Gristlegrinders and Cyclopeans are common changelings held in the captive of this lunatic Syzygy, though both of these fiends look down on Ogrish brutes regardless of how refined a palate they possess.

Physically, these two Fae are closer to Wizenéd than anything else, and so it's not uncommon for Artists, Brewers, Chatelaines and Chirurgeons to come away from such durance. Should these two use a changeling for talent and beauty, she might become one of the Fairest: a Bright One or Muse, perhaps, wearing smudges of cocoa and blood on her otherwise perfect face.

THE GREVE OF STOLEN LOVERS

Quote: "You astound me with your beauty. It is captivating to see a girl so unique in her splendor, that I must plead with you — come away with me? If only for a time?"

Background: The Greve of Stolen Lovers, known by some as only "The Gentleman," has been absconding with pretty young girls and boys for hundreds of years. He enters this world and dazzles them with gifts, kind words, kisses and violet eyes that mesmerize. Then he begs them to come with him, offering them promises of whatever it is that would please them most. Perhaps a girl of lower social standing might appreciate a dance in a fine ballroom, or a meal of fatted calf with foie gras and spun sugar atop it? A wealthy boy might like a chance to walk among the loftiest of aristocrats, or to see a cache of untold treasure. The Greve takes only those he can convince (and most fall to his spell). Those who fail to come, he leaves them behind... though, when possible, he wrecks their lives in some profound manner before going back to the Hedge. He may cut the throat of the girl's mother, or disembowel a teen boy's beloved mutt. At the Greve's county estate in Faerie, he keeps one concubine in at-

tendance at a time. He never possesses more than one lover, and he uses them as completely as possible. Some last for years, even decades (not that time means so much in such a place) as he explores all that their mortal — and over time, changeling — physiology and emotions can offer. Others, he grows bored with over a period of weeks. Those who grow tiresome so quickly are given little quarter, and often end up either getting their throats slit by his polished saber, or are instead bartered away to another (often meaner) Fae. This ennuï allows many of his kept changelings to escape, however. Those he favors over long periods of time eventually find that he just stops paying attention to them. During this time, he begins the process of considering another lover, and before putting his old conquests “out to pasture” as members of his servant staff, the changelings find that he begins to dismiss them too easily. In failing to check in, they find the chance to escape (as did Damiana, the Mad changeling found on p. 15). Lately, he’s stopped taking new changelings, and has begun to fleshcraft faerie creatures and other Lost into what he perceives as his “perfect lover.” Some parts taken here, a silken gown there, and soon he believes he’ll have perfected this creation.

Description: The Greve’s Mask allows him to appear as the most handsome English gentleman. His demeanor suggests a prince of the finest breeding, a kind and worldly sort fresh from the pages of an Edwardian romance. Even when approaching modern women, he has the appearance of an old soul. And yet, his intensely violet eyes suggest a kind of puckish nature, a rogue’s spark of gamboling lust. His mien is all the more elfish and otherworldly: his skin shows ice blue, his eyes cast an iridescent glow and he gains nearly a foot in height.

Storytelling Hints: The Greve is occasionally kind to his concubines. Yes, he can exact his wrath upon them, but he finds that doing so breaks them down too quickly (though he finds a rare few that seem to feed off pain). Make no mistake, his kindness isn’t genuine. It’s just a tool to get what he wants (flies with honey rather than vinegar). By giving them what they want, he gets what he desires. Is there anything wrong with that? Could there be any bargain more practical? Only when they begin to rebuff his benevolence does he grow mean (though such rejection often keeps him interested, as well — it’s only when they’re too pliable that they become humdrum).

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 6, Manipulation 6, Composure 5

Mental Skills: Academics 3, Investigation 3, Occult 1, Politics 5

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Stealth 3, Weaponry (Saber) 6

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression (Poetic Compliments) 6, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 5, Socialize 4, Subterfuge (Promises) 6

Merits: Barfly, Disarm, Eidetic Memory, Striking Looks 4, Token (Silver Saber, does aggravated when activated for one turn) 5

Willpower: 8

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Lust

Initiative: 10

Defense: 5

Size: 5

Speed: 13

Health: 7

Wyrd: 8

Contracts: Dream ••••, Mirror ••••, Smoke •••, Darkness •, Vainglory ••••

Glamour/per Turn: 30/8

Frailties: Sound of church bells (minor taboo); saying “no” to him three times (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Lyrical Voice, The Mercurial Visage (Mirrorskin), Tyranny of Ideas (Muse)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Saber (Token)	3(L)	—	13

The Greve’s Changelings

Damiana (p. 15) was one of the Gentleman’s mistresses, and she’s certainly par for the course. Many end up as Fairest (and, like her, they often end up mad, as well). Bright Ones, Dancers and Flowering Fairest are quite common under his watchful eye and wandering hands.

Those who grow dark and twisted in his grip might end up Mirrorskins, though (and their ability to change faces pleases him mightily). Those who learn to predict what he wants, before he wants it, might end up as Oracles.



LADY BOLEVILE, MISTRESS OF THE MANOR AND THE MANOR HERSELF

Quote: "Find the key, and you may leave."

Background: Atop a swaying crag overlooking the Hedge sits a vast manor house. This house is a monstrosity, its architecture both multifarious and nefarious. Pennons flutter from a castle parapet, which sits across from a Victorian tower. Diner neon glows in a window framed by German *fachwerk*.

Brick meets stone, stone meets wood, wood meets iron. The strangest thing about this house is that it is alive. It is one of the Fae, a lady of the Manor who appears *within* the Manor as a kind of ghost, and here she hosts dizzying affairs of vice and inequity for much of the Gentry. She is the uttermost hostess, a social butterfly offering pinpoint organization and planning to her myriad guests. Those she steals from the human realm serve her as livery, but she also allows other Fae to house their own captives here. Her rooms are many, her hallways catacomb. She might allow a pair of fox-headed Fae to chase their Runnerswift through rooms overgrown with brush and thorn. Perhaps she opens her cellars to wights and shadows who play headgames with their Darklings in the gloom. She knows what happens within her manor house body at all times — except, she is unaware of the games played by the Claviger. The Claviger, or Keykeeper, is a strange little man who some say is just another part of Lady Boleville's own persona. The Claviger plays with the keys, and offers the keys to changelings if they'll partake in his odd little games — curious races around the maze-like manor or bizarre wordplays and riddles. Those changelings who beat him at his games find themselves with the keys to escape the manor: an odd thing, a strange happenstance, but one that most Lost (wisely) fail to question.

Description: In her Mask, she is a beautiful woman of precise angles, her features the rich wood tones of cherry, oak and mahogany. In Arcadia, she is both the manor house and the Lady's ghost within it, and the house is truly astounding in its variety and complexity. One room is all snowglobes, another is a five-minute-long hallway featuring thousands of animal heads adorning the walls. Turn the corner, find a Route 66 sign, turn another corner, find a pack of wild dogs tearing apart a maid on the plush carpeting. When the Lady is in the mortal world, her mien is far more subdued, but still bizarre: her flesh incorporates architectural features. An eye might be a keyhole. Her one foot

the clawfoot of an old tub. Her fingers tipped with keys, her hair like brocaded curtains, her skin an odd mix of scented leather and hard wood. She's still beautiful in this form, but it's too unsettling for most but the Gentry to appreciate.

Storytelling Hints: To her servants, Lady Boleville is all business. Cold, icy. She's not cruel, not exactly, only bringing punishment to bear against those who would muck up her home or her social affairs. To her guests, however, she is tittering laughs like breaking glass, she is broad smiles, she is sweeping gestures.

One thing is worth noting about the Lady, however: her fascination with mundane objects. It's part of why she goes to the mortal world time and time again — to collect things and make them a part of her. She'll steal anything: an alarm clock, a stuffed pheasant, a tablecloth, even a digital camera. She may not know how to work them, but many of these objects become tokens in her manor (i.e., within her). Changelings who escape her grip may abscond with such an item.

Mental Attributes:

Intelligence 6, Wits 3, Resolve 6

Physical Attributes:

Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6

Social Attributes:

Presence 5, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Academics (Architecture) 5, Crafts (Simple Machines) 4, Investigation 6

Physical Skills: Brawl 1, Larceny (Plain Sight) 4, Stealth 4

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Persuasion 2, Socialize 4

Merits: Direction Sense, Eidetic Memory, Fair Haven (Abandoned Victorian Asylum), Meditative Mind, Retainer (Servant Staff) 5

Willpower: 10

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Size: 5

Speed: 10

Health: 11

Wyrd: 7

Contracts: Artifice ••••, Hearth •••••, Goblin (Fair Entrance) ••, Stone ••, Vainglory ••

Glamour/per Turn: 20/7

Frailties: Cannot cross a line of ants (minor taboo); fire (major bane)

Mien Blessings: Nightmare Aura, Perfect Protocol (Chatelaine), Impeccable Craftsmanship (Artist)



Lady Bolevil's Changelings

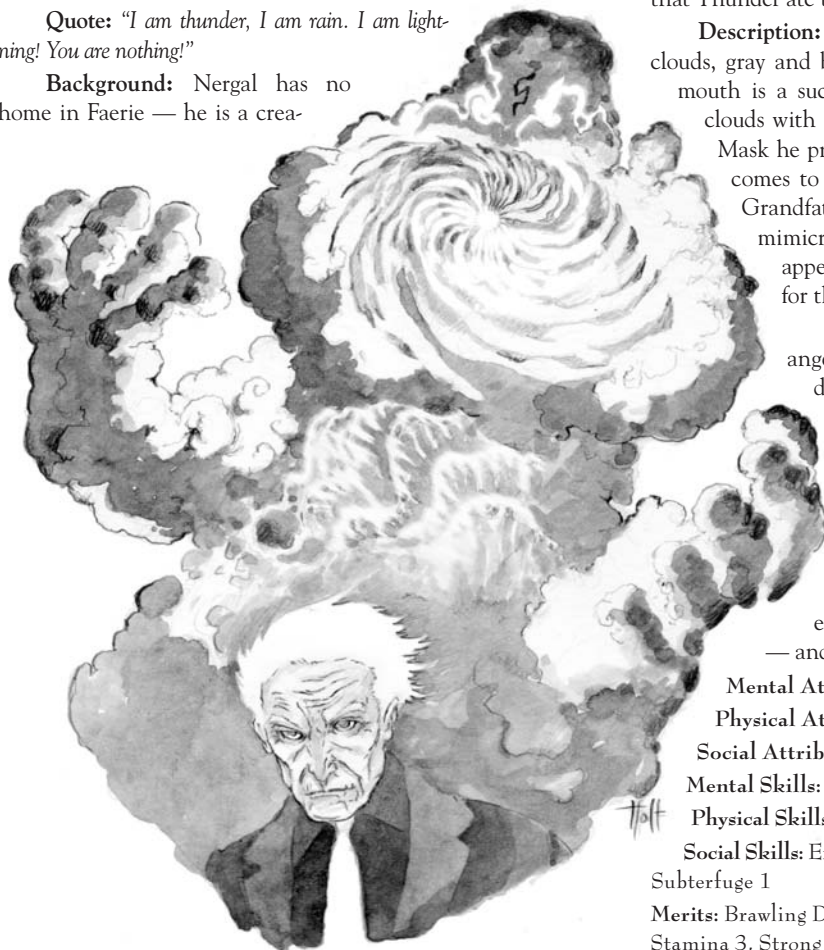
The majority of her captives end up as Chateaines. They are her servants. They are butlers, maids, carriage drivers. As she is a creature of many parts and fascinations, though, nearly any Wizen might result from such a durance: a Soldier who functions as a bouncer or a Smith who works with the many metals she might bring back from nightmares, the Hedge or the human world.

Perhaps, though, the Lady demands that her servant dance to entertain her monstrous guests. A Dancer could result. If the Lady allows a changeling some authority over the other Lost livery, maybe that changeling becomes a manipulative Muse using whatever means to "inspire" her staff to work. A changeling who dusts the infinite objects within the Lady perhaps becomes a Manikin, while a Lost who only polishes floors finds that the wooden boards start to speak to her... and over time, she becomes a Woodblood. The Lady's librarian? An Antiquarian. A stable boy tending to the stubborn horses? A Broadback.

NERGAL, THE RACING ONE

Quote: "I am thunder, I am rain. I am lightning! You are nothing!"

Background: Nergal has no home in Faerie — he is a crea-



ture made of storms, wandering itinerant across the skies above the Arcadian lands and lakes. He likes to brag that he is the only storm in Arcadia, and that all other storms are his children or his prisoners. To a point, he's right — he shackles his kept changelings with chains woven from seemingly unbreakable threads of his own hair, and he lets his kept slaves drift out away from him, knowing that they'll never be able to free themselves from such chains. Sometimes, to punish them, he sends fire and lightning coursing along the leash — when it strikes the prisoner on the other end, the sky lights up, the clouds rumble and the fiery might of this Fae shoots to the ground below. Of course, by sending lightning to course through the bodies of his prisoners time and time again, some of them learn how to use it, their own flesh infused with Nergal's mighty magic. Few ever are capable of escaping — but one did. Miami's Grandfather Thunder (see p. 338, **Changeling: The Lost**) managed to escape in a way that Nergal's still-held changelings dream about. Somehow, Thunder managed to send the lightning back to Nergal. When the raging Fae was dizzy by his own raging power, Grandfather Thunder was able to pull himself back via his leash — which he then wrapped it around the tumescent throat of his Keeper. Nergal, choking, severed the woven leash to free himself from Thunder's grip... and Thunder fell to the Hedge below. Nergal now loathes Thunder, and desperately wants him back. The Fae sent another Fae after Thunder, but that Fae never returned. Rumor whispered through the Hedge says that Grandfather Thunder beat that Keeper into black and bloody pulp with a cold iron hammer. Some even say that Thunder ate that mad fucker's heart.

Description: Nergal's body is composed of several clotted clouds, gray and black, with eyes of coruscating lightning. His mouth is a sucking cyclone, his heart beating through the clouds with the shifting colors of the aurora borealis. The Mask he prefers to wear on those few occasions when he comes to this world looks somewhat like the image of Grandfather Thunder. It is, of course, an imperfect mimicry — the eyes are pale, not brown, and the hair appears bone-white, not gray — but it's good enough for those who give Nergal a casual glance.

Storytelling Hints: All that Nergal has is his anger. It makes him a frightening master, like a drunk and abusive father who gladly takes out his rage on his children. He is blustery, violent and ceaseless in his fury. While it is what makes him frightening, it is also what compromises him. His anger darkens everything. At times, he is unable to think rationally because of how completely his rage overwhelms him. This is how changelings escape him, by exploiting him when he is at his most furious — and his most foolish.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Investigation (Surveillance) 3, Occult 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Lashing Out) 5, Survival 4

Social Skills: Expression 1, Intimidation (Loud) 6, Persuasion 1, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Brawling Dodge, Fast Reflexes 2, Harvest (Dreams) 2, Iron Stamina 3, Strong Back

Willpower: 5

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 8

Defense: 5

Size: 7

Speed: 16

Health: 11

Wyrd: 4

Contracts: Darkness •••, Dream ••, Smoke ••, Elements (Electricity) ••••, Elements (Water) •••

Glamour/per Turn: 13/4

Frailties: Riddles (minor bane); cannot come out when sun is in the sky (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Flicker, Shocking Caress, Velocity of the Zephyr (Airtouched)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Grapple	1(B)	—	11

Nergal's Changelings

Obviously, one of Nergal's changelings is Grandfather Thunder — a Fireheart of the Elemental seeming. As Nergal is a creature of the elements, many of his prisoners grow infused with Elemental magic. His rain aspect might incur a Waterborn changeling, while his windy and blustery aspect might create an Airtouched.

Of course, a changeling kept by Nergal needn't be an Elemental. Nergal's brutality could imbue the changeling with Ogrish powers. The constant arcs of luminous lightning could see a Bright One emerge. Consider how a changeling, held so high up in the sky, might grow feathers, even wings, and end up as a Windwing.

REDTOOTH, REDTOOTH

Quote: "Redtooth, Redtooth, has two red teeth. Redtooth, Redtooth, wants to eat."

Background: Redtooth, Redtooth is not a creature of much wisdom. He does not see the past, and he cares little for the future other than what gets him his next meal. Other Fae find him disgusting and distressing, and consider him the epitome of stupid — little more than a mindless Hedge creature. They're wrong. When it comes to feeding his gore-rimmed maw, this Fae is incredibly cunning. He constructs elaborate traps, luring humans into them with the perfect bait every time (a beloved teddy bear, a crying child, the keys to one's Jaguar). Because he is so often consumed with filling his gut, he rarely takes mortals as prisoners for long. Yes, they might sit in a cage made of wood and bone for a time, but only until they can be forced down his throat or braised in a pot until the meat *slides* off the bone. The only time he keeps

the humans is when they show their own hungers. If his prisoner, driven mad from hunger, perhaps chokes his cage-mate in the middle of the night so he can have a taste of the poor fool, this impresses Redtooth, Redtooth. A human who shows his hunger will soon be a changeling, with this Fae's gluttonous aura bleeding into the human like a septic infection. His changelings are forced to become cannibals, make no mistake of that. This grim hunger often stays with them even if they escape back to this world, even though they may not recognize it for what it is.

Description: He calls himself Redtooth, Redtooth, because as his rhyme goes, he only has two teeth in his awful head, and both of those teeth are long-stained red from so much gluttonous feasting (on the hearts of humans). He is a squat, unpleasant thing — the way he sits intimates a monstrous toad more than anything else. Though do not assume that his corpulent body cannot move fast when it sees prey. He leaps with startling speed, pouncing his fatness upon those he wishes to eat.

Storytelling Hints: Redtooth, Redtooth speaks often in rhyming couplets. (While it seems childish and quaint, coming from his gore-smeared lips it is a lesson in the truth of fairy tales.) In a way, though, this Keeper is childish. He's certainly simple. When it comes to eating and catching prey, he's very smart, but for everything else? Not so much. He sees the world in stark shades of black-and-white (and the occasional splash of red). It's either food or something to help him get food (and thus, is important), or it's something else, which means it might as well be ignored.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 6

Physical Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Investigation 2, Medicine (Goblin Fruits) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 5, Brawl (Crush) 6, Larceny 2, Stealth 4, Survival (Cooking) 6

Social Skills: Animal Ken 3, Intimidation 4, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Danger Sense, Harvest (Goblin Fruits) 1, Iron Stomach, Natural Immunity, Token 1 (Tin Cookpot, allows him to cook anything into an edible paste, uses it to feed his changelings)

Willpower: 9

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 6

Defense: 4

Size: 6

Speed: 13

Health: 12

Wyrd: 5

Contracts: Darkness •, Elements (Earth) •••, Fang and Talon (Scavengers) ••, Mirror •, Smoke ••, Stone •••••

Glamour/per Turn: 14/5

Frailties: Sound of a growling stomach (minor taboo); must rhyme (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Spurious Stature (Gargantuan), Terrestrial Might (Earthbones), Terrible Teeth (Gristlegrinder)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Terrible Teeth	1(L)	—	12



Redtooth, Redtooth's Changelings

A Gristlegrinder is the most common result from a durance under this Fae's meaty hamhock hands and beady puckered eyes. Other Ogres are possible, too: he lives in a cave, so Stonebones is appropriate (as is Earthbones). He's also big and fat, so perhaps Gargantuan. The Cyclopeans are both hunters and cooks, which is only apropos here.

The changeling needn't become an Ogre, though. As a hungry hunter, a consummate predator, Redtooth, Redtooth's energies might stir a captive's bestial heart, resulting in a frothing Hunterheart. This Fae's somewhat reptilian nature, too, could lead to a plethora of kith: a skink-like Skitterskulk, a Venom-bite like a colorful-but-poisonous toad or a snake-eyed Tunnelgrub. Because the changeling might be forced to butcher meat and make heady broth from the bones, consider a Chirurgéon.

THE STRIPLING PRINCE

Quote: "We can help each other, you and I. Let's approach this problem... together."

Background: This Prince among Fae has been cast out of Faerie and into the Hedge, exiled for the many insults delivered against his betters. A consummate narcissist, the Prince felt entitled. His monstrous mates, on the other hand, felt that as a relatively "young" nightmare (whatever that means in a place where

time makes little sense), he had yet to earn the accolades and rewards upon which he so ardently insisted. And so to punish him they cast him into the Hedge, the fiends and brutes chattering and clapping as the doors of iron and thorn closed behind him. Many years in the Hedge have given the Prince some perspective. He's still vain. He's still wicked. But he's tempered all of that, at

least for now, in the hopes that he'll be able to manipulate his way back into Arcadia. He's just not so sure how he's going to manage it, as yet. Trick some powerful Lost into his good graces, then kidnap her and bring her back to Faerie for a reward equivalent to his reacceptance? Help some militant changelings take down the haughty Fae who exiled him? Or carve out his own kingdom in the middle of the Hedge, a many-mile maze so grandiose that it draws the attention of his supposed betters?

At this point, he's gotten himself a small brick house deep within the Hedge, hidden behind a twisty path lined with saw grass.

In this house, the Prince keeps a number of oddly modern accoutrements (since his exile, he's grown fascinated by human things). Two of his most favored items are now tokens: the first

is a gleaming nickel-plated pistol that seems to fire flowering seeds instead of bullets (they still strike as lethal damage, but flowers grow swiftly from the bullet holes). The second is an old Wurlitzer jukebox that plays nothing but Elvis Presley songs. Its scratchy music can be heard for miles within the Hedge, and the jukebox preternaturally lures changelings to it, summoning them with its sound.

Description: He appears young in both the Mask and mien, seeming no older than 17. His Mask offers a roguish lad, all sharp angles and vulpine grins. The mien sees that vulpine grin and raises it to total verisimilitude: his head becomes that of a red fox — though with eyes ostensibly human in appearance. The Hedge has had its effect on his mien. Out of his sleeves and skin sometimes grow twisty vines or stems dangling fat berries that sometimes shudder or grow discolored with his variant moods. In both Mask and mien, the Prince wears the tattered remnants of his royal silks. Once elegant, his clothes are now moth-eaten and stained with splashes of mud and smears of greenery.

Storytelling Hints: The Stripling Prince desperately tries to control himself around others. He's always biting back a bitter word or pitiless invective. He wants to be liked, strange as that is for a Fae (though his desire to be liked is tied inexorably to his "need" to return to the halls of Arcadia, thus ensuring that it's a truly self-serving desire). He's rarely nice, of course, but he can muster some semblance of civility around the Lost. He wants to use them for his gain, and if that means rewarding them temporarily, forging tenuous alliances with a motley or three, so be it. He does what he must. If he must later sell them out for his gain to either another motley or to the True Fae, he'll do that, too. At this point though, they needn't be none the wiser about it.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 6, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 3, Computer 1, Crafts 1, Investigation 2, Occult 1, Politics (Changeling Courts) 4



Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Firearms (Small Revolvers) 2, Larceny 2, Stealth 2, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 5, Socialize (Ingratiating) 6, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Court Goodwill (Autumn) 1, Harvest (Emotions) 4, Hollow Amenities 3, Hollow Doors 1, Hollow Size 2, Hollow Wards 3, Quick Draw, Token 1 (light revolver does +1 lethal when activated, flowers bloom from bullet holes)

Willpower: 4

Virtue: Faith

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 6

Defense: 6

Size: 5

Speed: 12

Health: 7

Wyrd: 3

Contracts: Dream •••, Elements (Wood) ••, Goblin (Shooters Bargain) •, Smoke •, Vainglory ••••

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Frailties: Yellow wolfsbane, also known as fox bane (minor bane); cannot abide the presence of dogs (major bane)

Mien Blessings: Seductive Fragrance (Flowering), Somnolent Perfume, Tooth and Claw (Hunterheart)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Token Revolver	2(L)	20/40/80	9 (10 when activated)

The Prince's Changelings

Because the Prince has Beast-like qualities (fox head, a thirst for the metaphorical blood of his social inferiors), it's not uncommon that a changeling held in his sway before his exile might end up as a Hunterheart, a Runnerswift or another within the Beast seeming.

However, the Stripling Prince is also as fickle as flame: a Fireheart would not be strange coming out of such imprisonment. Truly though, despite the Prince's bedraggled condition, he styles himself royalty, and likely the most common changeling emerging from his grip would be the Fairest. Any apply: a Muse or Dancer might appease him, a Bright One might be meant to hang on his arm at all functions (shown off like a beautiful horse), while a Draconic fae might have served as one of his soldiers.

VELLUM

Quote: "Turn the page, worm. My fingertips itch."

Background: His library is a vast tower, the shelves twisting high up against the tower's black mortar walls. Animals and birds stalk the shelves. Ghosts, too, according to some of the Lost who have come from there (though what ghosts are doing lost in Faerie is a matter of some debate and disturbance). And Vellum clambers up and down the 100-story tower like a monkey, his long arms pulling him up to some book or another. It's books, you see, that drive this Other. He seems bent on procuring information from the human world, and he absorbs it quickly and completely. His kept changelings are both thieves and librarians. Some go into the human world, pledgebound to steal new books for him to read and include in his collection. Others are kept in the tower, acting as custodians for the countless books (many of which eventually gain life as hobgoblins, which then must be wrangled and locked into cabinets).

Description: He's a gnomish, awful little thing. Arms twice as long as his legs, a fat gray belly pushing out past his ratty cobweb robe. He stares out with black eyes magnified by a pair of bent-rim golden glasses (stolen from someone, no doubt). Vellum often has a number of books hanging at his side (bound by a ragged leather strap). He's physically awkward in appearance,

but one shouldn't mistake him for being completely without his defenses: he has claws like thorns and tiny teeth like little spurs of sharpened bone.

Storytelling Hints: Vellum is obsessed with human knowledge, and acts as if this gives him some kind of insight into the human condition. It doesn't. When pressed or tested, he can't really understand human motivations despite his bluster and bravado. In regard to his kept changelings, Vellum isn't cruel, exactly, but he's certainly cold. The only time he gets excited or emotional is when he finds a particularly delectable new book to consume (with his eyes, usually, though he has been known to eat those books that were particularly engaging).

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 6, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 6, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Random Facts) 5, Computer 1, Investigation (Research) 6, Medicine 2, Occult 5, Science 4

Physical Skills: Athletics (Climbing) 3, Brawl 1, Stealth 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken 6, Intimidation 3

Merits: Eidetic Memory, Encyclopedic Knowledge, Fleet of Foot 1, Harvest (Dreams) 1, Token 3 (Eyeglasses that, when activated, give him +2 to Perception rolls and cut Research time in half)

Willpower: 7



Virtue: Temperance

Vice: Greed

Initiative: 7

Defense: 4

Size: 3

Speed: 10

Health: 5

Wyrd: 6

Contracts: Artifice ••••, Darkness •••••, Dream •••, Goblin (Diviner's Madness) ••, Goblin (Lost and Found) •••••, Smoke •••••

Glamour/per Turn: 20/7

Frailties: Loud music drives him away (minor taboo); Bibles (major bane)

Mien Blessings: Gifted Climber (Steepscrambler), Keys to Knowledge (Antiquarian), Slither and Squirrel (Tunnelgrub)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Claw/Teeth	1(L)	—	3

Vellum's Changelings

The most common changelings to emerge from imprisonment within Vellum's tower are Wizen and Darklings — Vellum himself is kind of an odd mix of both archetypes, so it wouldn't be unexpected to see an Antiquarian or Oracle result from such durance. That said, the tower and shelves are dark and maze-like, and might make a nice home to a Skitterskulk. Vellum's also fond of odd contrivances and little machines, so perhaps a Manikin might develop in the dark tower.

THE ZOOKEEPER

Quote: (*mad chattering, cawing, hissing*)

Background: Somewhere, on the periphery of Arcadia and just past the Hedge, lies an overgrown menagerie with cages made of twisted wood and tough bamboo. Here, the Zookeeper keeps his collections — he is the embodiment of the hoarder, the collector, the taker. He steals animals from the real world and brings them here. So, too, does he track and capture strange beasts from the Hedge, anything from human-eyed insects to snakes with tiny poems penned upon their scales. His most prized possessions are, of course, his changelings, taken from Earth and held captive in the many corners of his bestiary. He makes his 'human' pets work to keep his bestiary clean and the creatures all fed (or, when necessary, to remove the dead ones from the zoo grounds). Rarely does he leave this place, except when going out to procure more specimens for his living collection. His habit of collecting drives him ineluctably forward.

Description: The Zookeeper is tall, but his true height is difficult to discern, as he normally appears hunched over. His thin form appears stout due to a thick, ragged coat sewn of rats (which sometimes come alive all at once, screeching and squealing in fear). His face rarely appears human; when it does, he is fat-faced and dirty-cheeked with pupil-less eyes. Mostly, though, his head

shifts between the countenances of various birds: a wide-eyed kingfisher, an oily-headed crow, a blood-red cardinal. Some believe he becomes a bird, at times, so he can spy on his charges.

Storytelling Hints: He treats everything and everyone like a precious animal, but an animal nevertheless. He doesn't want to break his darlings, of course, but he also recognizes that a little pain and torment may force his specimens to heel. The Zookeeper is wide-eyed, curious, even paranoid. He is obsessive over little details — a fact that a changeling might use to open the door for escape.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 5, Resolve 6

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 5

Mental Skills: Crafts 1, Investigation (Searching) 5, Science 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 5, Survival (Hunting) 6, Weaponry (Whip) 4

Social Skills: Animal Ken 6, Intimidation 3

Merits: Fleet of Foot 3, Quick Healer, Retainer (Several Animals) 5

Willpower: 11

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 9

Defense: 5

Size: 6

Speed: 12

Health: 11

Wyrd: 7

Contracts: Artifice •, Fang and Talon (Birds of Prey) •••••, Fang and Talon (Predatory Mammals) •••••, Fang and Talon (Reptiles) •••••, Hearth 2, Smoke 4

Glamour/per Turn: 15/6

Frailties: Cannot abide howling wind (minor taboo); cooked meat acts as a poison (major bane)

Mien Blessings: Impossible Counterpoise (Skitterskulk), Many-Eyes, Swarmcloud

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Braided Whip	3(B)	—	11
Crooked Talons	1(L)	—	7

Zookeeper's Changelings

The Zookeeper's kept pets most often develop traits from the Beast seeming — after all, they are considered animals in a zoo, so animals they become. Some changelings become Darklings, however, kept in dark pits or forced to be nocturnal. Others, too, end up as Ogres, seeing as how the Zookeeper might force them into harsh physical acts (lifting thorny bales of tangled grass, wrestling dream-beasts to the ground, carving meat) at the hands of brutal torment.

CHARLATANS

The Lost sometimes mourn what was stolen from them when the True Fae dragged the mortals through the stinging thorns to



Arcadia, but changelings take one small point of consolation in this belief: the Others cannot survive long in the human world. Changelings who articulate this point of comfort are often ridiculed or shushed, perhaps because of the old belief that to mention a devil's name is to summon him. While this fear might well be legitimate where the Others are concerned, the truth of the matter is that some Fae *can* survive among humans indefinitely. Doing so weakens them, true, and many such exiled Fae don't even know what they are — but it happens, and that means that any changeling might bump into one of the Gentry, even his old Keeper, one dark night.

Not all changelings know that Charlatans exist, and most Lost know only what they've heard in whispered rumor. Some changelings are aware that the True Fae don't truly die if they perish from exposure to the mortal world (see p. 69), but most changelings think that such Fae become fetch-like creatures, not human, but unable to access even the memories of their previous lives. A changeling might be aware or suspect that the Gentry can be banished to the mortal world, but this idea rings false to many Lost. After all, Faerie doesn't seem to have anything in the way of central authority, so who precisely does the banishing?

Changelings who are aware of these strange beings call them by many names. The most common (and the one used here) is "Charlatan," for these Fae are not human, but pretend to be so con-

Rumors — Charlatans

Below are a few tales and rumors that changelings might hear about the Charlatans. Players might assume that their characters have heard one or two, or Storytellers might use them as foreshadowing or red herrings.

- “Follow, follow, back to the Hollow, the Veil of Woe, the Lady of Shame. Tout, tout, misery, doubt, she’s lost, she’s forgotten her name. Follow, follow, back to the Hollow, the Lady wants only her home. Shame, shame, the Lady’s to blame, and banished, forever to roam.”

- “Ever see one of us whose mien is so strong you can barely see the Mask? Children of banished Fae. Yeah. But don’t think for a minute that means they didn’t suffer. They had to grow up with one of the Others as a parent.”

- “If they can be banished, it means that there’s some higher authority back there. I don’t think there’s any hope for appealing to it — that’d be like ants trying to appeal to a kid’s mother to get the kid to put away the magnifying glass. But just think what it’d be like to be captured by something like that. Or don’t. I know I try not to think about it.”

- “Sometimes you’ll see somebody with a really nasty skin disorder. Maybe looks like eczema, I don’t know. But if you look carefully, you’ll see nightmares leaking out where the skin is cracking. People like that aren’t people. They’re Gentry spies. The weakest of them, yeah, but still Gentry. They stay until their skin wears out, then they go home with what they’ve learned. I should know. I served under one.”

vincingly that even they believe it. Some changelings call them “Earthbound,” making reference to the fact that these Gentry are stuck here in the mortal realms (which is a dangerous oversimplification, because not all of them are). More erudite changelings call these Fae “Red Kings” in reference to *Through the Looking Glass*, in which Alice is informed the she is but a character in the sleeping Red King’s dream. And finally, some changelings call such Fae “Sleepers,” implying that such a Fae might remember and reclaim his true nature at any moment, in the manner of a “sleeper” espionage agent or a person waking suddenly from a dream.

Since comparatively few changelings know about Charlatans, at least as fact (though many have heard stories), most Lost don’t develop opinions or beliefs about these Fae until the changelings have actually encountered such creatures. The Courts treat Charlatans much as they would any kind of Gentry — the Summer Court is likely to respond martially, while the Autumn Court is more likely curious as to what kind of magic this displaced Fae has retained. But whatever the approach, the Charlatans frighten changelings terribly. When a Charlatan stands revealed, a piece of Arcadia has come to the mortal world. The jailor has pursued the prisoner. Although a Charlatan seldom remembers who or what it truly is, a changeling in the presence of an unmasked Red King feels whatever the changeling felt in Faerie, under the duress — humiliated, angered, broken down, beaten. The feeling

is familiar and profoundly disheartening, for any changeling who escapes Arcadia tells himself, I will never feel that way again.

CAST OUT

As explained on p. 69, True Fae who visit the mortal world suffer one aggravated wound per hour past their “time limit” (one hour per dot of Wyrð). But obviously, Charlatans manage to dodge this restriction somehow. Potential methods by which a True Fae might enter and remain in the mortal world are discussed below. Of course, as with all things fae, there are endless possibilities. If the Storyteller (or the players, for that matter) comes up with a good reason for one of the Gentry to enter and remain in the mortal realm that isn’t covered in these three occurrences, use it.

BANISHED

Charlatans aren’t common by any means, but those who arrive in the mortal world as a result of banishment are probably the rarest. After all, who has the authority or power to banish one of the Gentry? The most likely answer is that a number of True Fae who are in some way connected to the banished one (perhaps in a kind of motley, perhaps simply following similar motifs or archetypes) gather to enact the banishment. A changeling who manages to speak with a banished Charlatan might hear references to “the Pentad” or “the Council” exiling him, but these terms might refer to an impromptu body of Fae rather than an established hierarchy.

A banished Charlatan isn’t necessarily weak. He is just weaker than the being that banished him. Charlatans can be cast out of Arcadia in political coups, as punishment for crimes that human sensibilities cannot even fathom or even as part of some arcane, almost scripted procedure. Indeed, some banished Charlatans don’t bear their banishers any ill will. Banishment, these Charlatans seem to feel, *had* to happen the way it did in order for the current state of affairs to come about. This puzzles changelings until they remember that the Gentry have a relationship with time that isn’t entirely linear. A banished Charlatan might not be angry about his banishment because he is anticipating the revenge he *knows* is coming to him — events just haven’t caught up with his perception yet. Likewise, a Keeper who knows that she is destined to be banished but is powerless to stop that progression of happenings might take out her anger on her changelings, which in turn leads them to rebel and escape, which in turn leads to her banishment for letting them get away.

Not all banished Fae were literally exiled from Faerie, however. Another possibility is that a Fae gives another of the Others power over him. A Fae Knight who swears fealty to a Lord or loyalty to a paramour might be bound to accept his judgment, even if that judgment involves leaving Faerie for the stifling human world. Likewise, a Fae who violates some oath or otherwise trips over his own vows might end up banishing himself. Some Fae even make promises or bargains with the mortals the Fae kidnap, weaving in pledges to the humans’ servitude. It’s unlikely, but possible, for a mortal to exploit a loophole in a Gentry’s casual promise that allows the mortal to escape and the Fae to become exiled from Arcadia. The Fae are as much bound by their word as changelings are, although the situations under which the Fae’s word becomes binding are a bit different. A True Fae might lie with abandon, but if he begins a sentence with “I swear” or “Upon my truth” or even something more innocuous like “As my mother told me,” he finds himself locked into whatever promises he makes. Other Fae or even changelings may be able to take

advantage of this, and one possible outcome (not the most desirable, from a changelings' point of view) is banishment.

Banished Fae remember their true identities, and unless forgetfulness is part of the curse that banishes them, they remember everything about Faerie and the circumstances that led them to the mortal world. This makes them dangerous and bitter. They have been stripped of much of their power and are, for all intents and purposes, at the mercy of the human world (and that includes changelings, whom the Charlatans have reason to fear). But banished Gentry are also more likely than Fae who die in or connect to the human world to have supporters. A Fae Lord forced to flee Arcadia in a coup probably takes members of his household with him. While these Fae might not become Charlatans, they may lurk in the Hedge, never far from their exiled master, ready to remind him of his glory should he forget. Over time, of course, they might decide to use him rather than serve him, but either possibility holds dire potential for any changelings in the area.

Examples

- She's called the Ringed Woman. In far-off Arcadia, she swore that if her favorite ring ever left her finger, she'd go to the ends of the Earth to retrieve it. When her mortal servant-girl (now an Antiquarian changeling) stole the ring from the Ringed Woman and fled back through the Hedge to the mortal world, the Ringed Woman was bound to follow. She's still looking for that ring, but the Antiquarian has hidden it so cunningly that the Ringed Woman has all but forgotten what it looks like. So she collects rings. She wears at least three on each finger, a few in each ear, some on her toes and more on a chain around her neck. If she gets *all* of the rings, one of them has to let her back into Arcadia.

- Lostra and Mawla are sisters, and they share everything, even their own fates. But they never agree on anything, and if one resolves herself to a course of action, the other must of course dispute it. When they were caught seducing a Fae Prince's consort, the Prince agreed to stay his wrath if they would both apologize... but they couldn't, of course. They don't remember now if it was tall, dark-skinned Lostra or the petite, pale Mawla who refused to offer up her contrition, but they were both banished

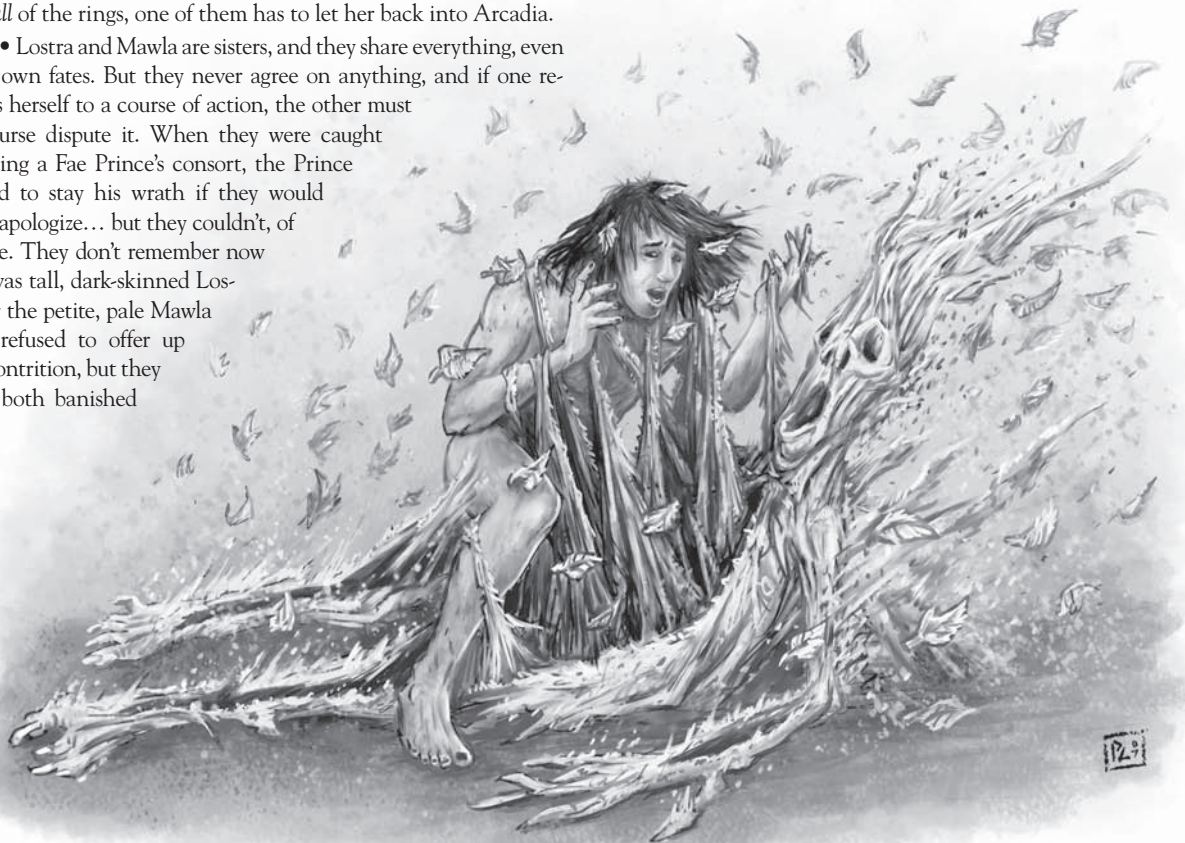
from Arcadia because of it. Now they roam the mortal world, steadily losing their Fae natures year by year. Some days they can't even remember if they are sisters, lovers, mortal enemies, best friends, servant and mistress, or have some other relationship entirely. All they know is that they must agree to disagree.

- He's been around for long that he's worked himself into the mortal legendary. They sing a rhyme about the "tall, blue man" and how he steals away people if they tell him a story he's already heard. The truth is, he's a Fae bard who brashly swore to deliver a truly original story to his peevish (and unfortunately erudite) master. Having exhausted all of the stories in Arcadia, he had no choice but to go to the mortal world and search for his prize. He asks people — mortal, fae and supernatural alike — for a story. If they provide something that he's already heard (and he's heard all of them so far), he kills the storyteller and takes the body out to his special graveyard in the desert. There, in the Tale-Barrow, he inscribes the story on a stone and uses it as a marker, and goes in search of a truly original tale once more.

DEATH IN THE MORTAL WORLD

As much as the Gentry might hate to admit it, the mortal world is dangerous to them. Stripped of much (but not all) of their power, they are vulnerable to the perils of what, to them, is a land as alien as Faerie is to humans. While here, they have only hours before their bodies start to crumble away, and then only a few more scant hours before they die.

But "death" from exposure to the mortal world isn't really death to the Fae. Instead, this death curses them to remain, for-



ever tainted by this exposure. They have built up a kind of immunity to whatever it is about the mortal world that kills the True Fae, but in so doing they have barred themselves from easy return to their homelands.

Fae who have died from exposure remember little of their true lives in Arcadia. What precisely they do remember varies from Charlatan to Charlatan. Some remember that they were not born human, but “became” so after dying. Some remember one obscure piece of information, often a taboo or frailty that, while it doesn’t carry the same weight that it used to, the Fae clings to out of an instinct she can’t explain. Some of these “reborn” Charlatans even remember their true names, though they forget the context; they might think of their titles as childhood nicknames or literary characters with whom they identify.

A Fae who dies from exposure to the mortal world doesn’t *automatically* become a Charlatan. In fact, the act is voluntary. When the Fae’s last health box is filled with aggravated damage from exposure to the mortal world (damage from any other source merely kills the Gentry), the Storyteller rolls Presence + Wyrd. If this roll succeeds, the Fae’s body dies, but at the next sunrise, the Fae breaks forth from the now-desiccated corpse like a butterfly breaking free from a chrysalis. This occurs only if the Fae wishes to become a Charlatan, if she feels that life on Earth is better than death. Not all of the Gentry feel this way; some choose to die instead. Some reborn Charlatans speak of the moment they made their decision, and curse the choice they made. Others feel certain that the way back to Arcadia isn’t barred. The Wyrd *always* allows for loopholes.

Examples

- He’s forgotten exactly why he came out of the Hedge, but he knows it had something to do with chasing a bird. All he knows is that when emerged from that alleyway into the dense, concrete jungle, he looked up and saw nightmares in the sky. They clung to the sides of buildings, leering down at him and refusing to look away. He wandered for hours with his neck craned up, watching the gargoyles, trying to meet their gazes and ask them what they watched for. And finally he collapsed, dead, his body flaking away like the stone creatures that so enraptured him... and continue to do so. Now, though, he talks to them up close. He lives on the rooftops, searching for the elusive bird that led him here. He asks the gargoyles, and they answer him in riddles. He’s getting closer, though. He knows it.

- Nothing made the Black Tamanous, which takes its name from (or perhaps gave it to?) the cannibal spirit of the Pacific Northwest, so happy as to watch friends scheme, plot and finally eat each other. The Black Tamanous especially loved driving motleys of changelings to this end, but one such motley got the drop on it. They imprisoned it in the cellar of an ancient house, in a perfectly rectangular room with no doors or archways, and thus no egress to the Hedge. There the Black Tamanous sat until it died of exposure. Now, it continues its work, but as a cult leader — it infiltrates old boys’ clubs and other tight-knit circles and introduces them to the joys of eating human flesh. It truly believes itself to be the Black Tamanous of Native American legend. And maybe it always was.

- It might be just a story, but Ol’ White Guy (that’s what the kids on the block call him) swears to it. He says the Devil came for him one dark night, and threatened to take him back to Hell (Ol’ Whitey never says how he got out in the first place, and the kids figure it’s rude to ask). But Whitey says he talked the Devil into walking with him, the night being so cool and all, before they

both went back to the flames. Ol’ Whitey kept Mr. Devil walking all night, and at the first ray of sunlight, the Devil fell down and his skin started peeling off, and Ol’ Whitey lit out for him. Whitey says that the Devil didn’t go back to Hell, though. Maybe most of him did, but some part of him is still on Earth, looking for Ol’ Whitey. So when they kids on the block see another white man, they all yell, “Devil’s here for Ol’ Whitey! Devil’s here for Ol’ Whitey!” so loudly the whole neighborhood can hear it.

MORTAL CONNECTIONS

It happens, sometimes, that one of the Gentry makes a particularly close connection with a human being. The nature of the connection isn’t as important as its strength. That is, one of the Fae might come to love a human being, and this connection would be just as binding as if the Fae learn to hate the same person. The catch is, though, that while Fae sometimes become enamored of details about individual humans, or loathe them because they become nuisances, that’s not the same thing as loving or hating the person herself. A True Fae might watch a person skate and admire her grace, and this might serve as the basis for abducting her, but that Fae still doesn’t know the person’s name (or even realize that people *have* names, for that matter). All he knows is, *That pretty creature over there moves well. I would like to be able to watch her all the time.* He swoops in like a great raptor across the ice, smashes through into the frigid water and is back in Arcadia with his new prize before the sunset.

But if the same Fae watches the skater on the ice for a little longer, he might see her teaching a group of human children how to skate. He might see her watching her students carefully, making sure that none of them get too close to the thin section of ice, and realize that she *cares* for them in a way that he cannot fathom. If the Fae then decides to try to understand that compassion, if he obsesses with mimicking it perfectly, he may gradually take his mimicry to such a level that he convinces even himself.

Becoming a Charlatan by connecting with a human being is a much less unpleasant process than doing so by death or banishment. It’s also much slower. The process of coming to understand and emulate a mortal can take days or months, but the very attempt to understand humanity provides a bulwark against exposure — provided that the Fae doesn’t call upon his true nature or fae powers. In any *day* that one of the Gentry spends time trying to understand humanity, he suffers no damage from exposure. If, however, the character enters the Hedge, uses a Contract or blessing or calls upon his fae nature in any way, the “clock” resets itself. That is, the character’s true nature clashes with the human world once again, and he has a number of hours equal to his Wyrd rating before he starts suffering damage. The character can mitigate this effect by spending at least an hour attempting a human connection again, at which point the time limit subsides (and the proscription against fae magic again is in place).

The moment in which the Fae forges the connection is not a bolt from above. It is a gradual awakening, as the Fae comes to feel that this strange new world is the world that has always existed. The Fae’s former existence in Arcadia becomes the dream, that strange and faraway realm that the Fae feels he might have imagined all along. The Fae gains the ability to dream and even to create art, but in the process loses most of his memories of Arcadia. Likewise, any magic that he retains is subtle and instinctive, usually blessings rather than Contracts. Tokens work only if the Charlatan calls upon the item’s catch, similar to a non-fae being trying to activate it.

All of this does *not* mean that the Fae has become human or even a changeling, however. The Others cannot be other than they are, and though a “humanist” Charlatan has suppressed most of his memories of life in Faerie, the memories are still there and can be reawakened. How this happens varies, but it normally involves a significant occurrence involving another fae being. A changeling might recognize the Fae for what it is and attack. Another of the Gentry might appear from a gateway and try to steal the Charlatan, mistaking him for a mortal. A tragedy befalling the human that the Charlatan is attempting to emulate may also trigger the revelation. Being confronted with an inescapable demonstration of human mortality may make the immortal heart of the Fae rebel out of self-preservation. In any event, if this happens, the character’s memories come crashing back, and the Charlatan’s Mask falls, revealing him as one of the Others. Of course, he is still a Charlatan, barred from entering the Hedge by the “taint” of mortal contact. It might be possible to reverse this condition (see p. 90), but the Charlatan might not want to do so. The Others are unpredictable, and what a humanist Charlatan does upon regaining his memory is hard to guess. He might hunt down the mortal who inspired the connection and rend her limb from limb or drive her mad. He might rebel against his newfound clarity and attempt to retreat into his adopted life. As with so many other facets of the Gentry, there is no one answer.

Examples

- Earnest Marker is a serial kidnapper. He steals children, toys with them for a while and then abandons them in the wilderness, miles from help. Most don’t make it back to their families, but those who do haven’t been able to tell the police anything useful. No one knows who Marker really is... except another kidnapper. In Arcadia, she is known as the Shrike. She steals humans and brings them to her larder, there to squirm, impaled on spikes, until she lets them die. Interested in this person who took children but did not eat them, she watched him and eventually came to understand him. Earnest has an intricate set of delusions and disorders that govern his behavior, and the Shrike has come to understand humanity through its madness. She recently approached him, and the two of them are preparing to combine their chosen proclivities in a series of kidnappings that will surely horrify the nation.

- When Indira came up out of the sea, exiting the Hedge through an underwater gateway, Lira thought that she was seeing a mermaid or a siren. Lira, who lived on the beach in the house that her parents left her, was something of a siren herself. She took lovers in an attempt to find what was missing in her life, but mostly she just stared out over the ocean, marveling at its beauty, wishing she could name her longing. Indira, one of the Gentry, had meant to steal Lira away, but instead took to sitting with her on the beach, watching the waves and eventually came to understand Lira’s love of the ocean (which Indira herself had always taken for granted). In so doing, though, Indira forgot that she once *commanded* the ocean, and even as she and Lira became lovers and passed their time on the beach, expressing their mutual love for the sea, Indira felt that she was forgetting to do something. A changeling in the ocean might remind her, and then Indira will show Lira what the ocean *really* looks like through the eyes of the fae.

- Pure luck allowed Mike to kill one of the Gentry. The iron dagger was a family heirloom, something his grandfather had fashioned for reasons he didn’t quite comprehend. But when one of the Others emerged from Mike’s closet on All Hallow’s Eve, Mike grabbed the dagger and plunged it into the monster’s heart. He

hadn’t realized, though, that this monster was one half of a Syzygy, and that his “brother” was lurking just inside the Hedge. Mad with grief, the other Fae watched Mike for months, learning about the young man and coming to hate not just what he had done, but the man himself. The Fae stole Mike’s dagger and stalked him, ready to murder the young man... but stopped, because the Fae couldn’t remember *why* he hated Mike so. The Fae has forgotten his name, his title and even his brother, but he has not forgotten that Mike did him a terrible wrong. The Fae just can’t remember what it is, and so he follows Mike, clutching an iron dagger, ready to strike at a moment’s notice if the Fae remembers the reason for his hate.

NIGHTMARES AMONG US

Charlatans are True Fae, despite their mingling with the human world. But in becoming what they are, many of the accepted truths about the Gentry change, both in terms of game traits and mindset.

First, Charlatans don’t recall everything about their identities and their lives in Arcadia. How much they recall is inversely related to how “human” they have become. Put simply, banished Charlatans remember the most about their fae lives, reborn Charlatans remember considerably less and humanist Charlatans remember almost nothing.

This memory loss doesn’t just translate to facts about Arcadia and recollection of experiences and other fae beings. A Charlatan might well forget how to invoke Contracts or even blessings. In general, the more complex a Contract is, the more likely the Charlatan is to forget it, but the circumstances of how the Charlatan came to the mortal world should certainly make a difference. For instance, the Shrike (p. 92) became a Charlatan by emulating the madness of a human predator. She remembers nothing of her life in Arcadia, but she does remember that she loves to hunt and hurt living things. She remembers (or rather, never forgot) that she is fae, though her true nature probably eludes her. She can use her powers because although she has forgotten that she is Gentry, she has never mistaken herself for a human being. On the other hand, a Charlatan who connects to a human being out of love might mistake himself for a real person, and since human beings don’t invoke magical Contracts, he’d have no mental foothold to recall them.

Even if a Charlatan forgets that a Contract exists, he isn’t released from that Contract. A Charlatan might accidentally perform the catch for a Contract and wind up invoking it. A reborn Charlatan who runs afoul of a group of changelings and must fend them off with his bare hands invokes the catch of the Might of the Terrible Brute clause. If he knows that Contract, he might find his strength increasing as he fights (to the changeling’s confusion and misery). Whether the Charlatan acknowledges what happened and can use the experience to reclaim his memory is ultimately up to the Storyteller.

GAME TRAITS

The game Trait restrictions and guidelines presented for True Fae in the mortal world (found on pp. 66–72 of this book) remain true for Charlatans, with the following additions and exceptions:

- The Skill Limitations on Computer, Empathy and Expression are raised to three dots in the human world for Charlatans, but the inability to create remains. A fae bard, such as the Tall Blue Man, might be able to retell a story exactly as he heard it, and do so with such skill that the audience is moved to tears — but he can-

not create his own story. Charlatans, just as all True Fae, have any attempts to create something new reduced to a chance die, regardless which Skill is being used. Note that re-creating something isn't quite the same thing; many Fae are superb at making replicas of existing objects (as their skill in crafting fetches shows).

- Obviously, Charlatans do not suffer damage from exposure to the mortal world.

- A Charlatan's mien is much more subtle than that of a normal True Fae. The mien of such a being is only slightly different from the Mask. Minor details look alien and inhuman, but Charlatans are actually harder for changelings to detect than fetches without careful scrutiny. A changeling looking at a Charlatan does not see the obvious disconnect between Mask and mien present with a changeling or one of the Gentry, and noticing the fae details requires a Wits + Intelligence roll.

- Charlatans retain Contracts and mien blessings. Whether Charlatans remember how to invoke them is up to the Storyteller. In addition, Charlatans can learn and use Echoes, subject to the same prerequisites as fetches (Echoes that usually work only on a given fetch's changeling "base" can be applied to any changeling).

- Likewise, Charlatans can spend Glamour in all of the ways that True Fae can, if they remember how to do so. They regain Glamour normally, except that they cannot regain Glamour by breaking or ripping apart an object (see p. 67).

- Charlatans cannot enter the Hedge, by any method. If a changeling or another fae being tries to drag a Charlatan into the Hedge, the gateway simply deactivates. Charlatans can see into the Hedge through an open gateway (if a changeling is visible through it, for instance), but that is as close as they can get to home.

Over time, some of those traits might change in subtle ways. For instance, a humanist or reborn Charlatan might make greater use of his Virtue and eventually even come to regain Willpower from Virtue and Vice the way that humans do. A Charlatan will *never* gain a Morality or Clarity trait, however. By the same token, though, Charlatans do not develop derangements, even if they sometimes behave as though they possess such infirmities. The True Fae cannot become human. The best the Fae can do is act exactly like humans.

STORYTELLING THE CHARLATANS

Charlatans can make interesting additions to a *Changeling* chronicle. A Storyteller wishing to add one to a story might consider the following points:

THE CHARLATANS ARE TRUE FAE

Regardless of a Charlatan's reason for sinking to her current state, she is still one of the Gentry. Such beings can never be human, no matter what they believe or what they want. A Charlatan, just as all of the Others, lacks any kind of regard for humanity. While the Charlatan can learn to mimic this basic human understanding, sooner or later the mimicry falls flat. A Charlatan might stomp on a kitten the same way a human being might crush a spider, simply because the Fae does not recognize the difference — all he sees is a pest. Another might slap a person across the face if she feels the person is talking too loudly. These social misunderstandings don't have to be so blatant. A Charlatan might laugh or cry at inappropriate times, ask for a simple joke or idiom

to be explained in detail or demonstrate a savant-like retelling of the morning's events when asked, "What have you been up to?" Where exactly the Charlatan's social "mask" becomes obvious depends on why the Charlatan is Earthbound. A banished Fae is probably more obviously inhuman than one who became barred from Arcadia from connecting with a human being.

Remember, too, that being True Fae often carries a sense of entitlement, even solipsism. Charlatans often remember, if unconsciously, their halcyon days in Faerie, when everything revolved around them and their whims. They feel that life in this world should be the same, and so they can come off as haughty, egotistical and self-centered. These traits, of course, don't necessarily equate to "inhuman," as many normal human beings exhibit them. Indeed, in the right circles, a Charlatan can fit right in.

VARIED MOTIVES

Consider what the Charlatan wants. The Tall Blue Man wants to fulfill his vow and go home. The Shrike wants to feed her perverse hungers. The Lord of the Gargoyles wants to find his own special questing beast, and so on. The desires of a Charlatan should always relate back to what is keeping them from the Hedge. That doesn't mean, of course, that the Charlatan wants to return to Arcadia — banished Fae probably do, but humanist and reborn Charlatans might not have considered the possibility (assuming they even remember where "home" is).

Once you know what a Charlatan wants, consider how that goal will bring him into contact (and perhaps conflict) with the characters in your troupe's motley. Perhaps a banished Charlatan has learned, or at least been told, that if she collects the hearts of one changeling from each Court, she can be allowed home again. Such a character could obviously be a direct, physical threat, but what if this heart-hunter decides to pit a motley of Courtless changelings against some of the weaker courtiers in the area, the better to swoop in when the damage has been done and take their still-beating hearts? A reborn Fae might have known a particular fact that the characters require, and now they have the delicate task of returning the Charlatan's memory without letting on that they were ones responsible for getting her stuck in the mortal world to begin with. A human-mimicking Fae might have forged a connection with a changeling's wife or child while that changeling was serving under his Keeper in Arcadia. That Charlatan

Story Hook — Best Served Cold

One of the characters discovers that her Keeper has become a Charlatan. This being is now stuck on Earth and has lost much of his power, but still remembers his true nature. The changeling is in an excellent position to exact revenge for a particularly brutal durance.

The problem is that the Charlatan has friends. Specifically, the Charlatan has cultivated the goodwill of one of the local Courts (the same as the character's or not, whichever would provoke more interest from the player). Can the character let years of torture go unanswered, or will she defy the Courts to extract her vengeance?

represents a good chance for the changeling to re-enter his life... if he can convince the Charlatan to help, and if the changeling can stomach this turn of events.

SLEEPERS

One of the titles given for Earthbound Fae — “Sleepers” — opens up an interesting possibility for including them in a chronicle. A player might take the role of such a character.

Charlatan Fae don't have to be more powerful than changelings. If a Fae got stranded in the human world when he was quite young, or, conversely, has been stranded long enough to forget most of his magic, he might be indistinguishable from one of the Lost. Fae use the same Contracts as changelings, and their mien blessings aren't too dissimilar, and so a Charlatan might masquerade as a changeling for years without being unmasked. This doesn't necessarily mean that the Charlatan himself knows the truth — since few such Fae have a good idea of what they truly are, a Charlatan might emerge from the Hedge with memories of fear, pain, injustice and torture. Other changelings might immediately decide that this strange person is one of the Lost, perhaps one who underwent such a traumatic duration that he was stripped of *all* of his human memories. Over the course of the chronicle, the truth gradually comes to the fore, until the Charlatan's identity is finally revealed.

If you plan on using this option, of paramount importance is *why* the Fae is masquerading as a changeling (quite apart from why the Fae is stuck in the human world in the first place). It's possible that the Fae simply forgot his real nature, but that explanation doesn't lead to as much of a dramatic revelation. What if the Gentry sent the Charlatan to Earth as a spy or a recruiter? Perhaps the character has been secretly seducing mortals (or other changelings) and luring them into the Hedge so that the Others can take the mortals away. Perhaps the Charlatan is a kind of Fisher King, recovering from some terrible war in Arcadia, and supporters and assassins both are looking for him. Maybe a changeling's Keeper became obsessed with her (“falling in love” is another possibility, but the Others aren't generally capable of true love) and followed her back to the human world, only to die of exposure as he pined away for her. The revelation that the member of the motley is actually one of the Others should be a highly dramatic moment, and some explanation should probably follow. Therefore, it's important for the character to have a strong reason for leaving — and remaining outside — the Hedge.

Be warned: This option should not be an excuse for one player to grasp at greater power than the others, or a greater share of the spotlight. Playing a Charlatan is likely to work better in limited-run chronicles, or in instances in which a player is interested in changing characters. Instead of retiring an old character via a dramatic death scene or simple departure, it might be far more interesting to have her suddenly manifest the truth of her nature and become a new antagonist for the chronicle.

GOING BACK

Is it possible for a Charlatan to reclaim her rightful place, regaining the power to enter the Hedge? As with everything fae, the rules of banishment have catches. It's just a matter of figuring them out and enacting them.

Anything that banishes a Fae to the mortal realm, any spell or punishment that the other Gentry can levy, must have a loophole that the Charlatan can exploit. Of course, these loopholes

are generally so subtle that the Charlatan never discovers them (even if she remembers what she is enough to search), and so difficult that she is more likely to kill herself in the process of trying to exploit the loophole than succeed. Such loopholes usually involve atoning for some wrong in Arcadia in some symbolic way on Earth. A Herculean labor (or a Sisyphean task) is the level of effort reversing a banishment would require. Of course, if the Fae wasn't so much “banished” to Earth as sent there to fulfill a task (see the “Ringmaster,” p. 93), then the Fae can return to Arcadia when the task is complete or when the Fae's master allows it.

As difficult as it might be to discover and enact a loophole for a banished Charlatan, reborn and human-emulating Fae have an even harder time of it. Stuck in the mortal world by their own decisions (or, perhaps, by the intervention of changelings), any methods of returning to Arcadia open to them must be discovered through action. A Charlatan who comes to the human world in pursuit of a goal *might* be able to escape if he fulfills that goal. For instance, if the Lord of the Gargoyles (see p. 92) manages to find the Windwing that he was chasing when he got stuck on Earth, finally purging his obsession, he might be able to fly away back to Arcadia. But then, he might find that Windwing and have no idea what to do with him — if the Lord of the Gargoyles gets it wrong, he locks himself in the human world forever.

A humanist Fae might escape the chains of Earth by murdering the human with whom she originally connected, but a simple gunshot or knife stroke isn't enough. The connection must be undone, and so the murder must take place with the callousness of the True Fae. In the moment of the human's death, if the Charlatan feels nothing except perhaps a bit of idle curiosity, her memory is likely to return and allow her to make an escape into the Hedge.

Whether or not a given Charlatan can return to her life as one of the Others is up to the Storyteller, as are the circumstances of this reversal of fortunes. A Charlatan searching for the last remaining component of an elixir that she believes can get her home is a powerful and driven supporting character, but so is a Charlatan who has given up all hope and wishes only to make the world in which she lives as much like her Arcadian kingdom as possible.

THE BANISHED, THE FALSE AND THE FORGOTTEN

Following are four Charlatans for use in your chronicles. These characters can serve as adversaries, foils or even former Keepers of changeling characters.

THE TALL BLUE MAN

Quote: “Tell me a story.”

Background: In Arcadia, the Tall Blue Man could make the trees applaud and the rivers weep with his renditions of the classic stories. Of course, he never made up his own tales — the True Fae lack that capacity. But he could retell them with such skill that the Gentry from all over the land would ask for their favorite tales, over and over, and the Tall Blue Man was happy to oblige.

Pride was his undoing. He visited the manse of a Fae lord with a perfect memory, a lord who was so old that the stones didn't remember his childhood. He remembered every story he'd ever heard, and after seven days of listening to the Tall Blue Man rattle off his repertoire, the Fae lord scoffed that he'd heard all of



these tales before, and that truly the Tall Blue Man could show him nothing new. And the Tall Blue Man responded with tales that he had heard from changelings, stories that originated from the world of mortals, and the lord answered that he had heard these, too. There *were* no new tales, he said bitterly. Everything “new” was just an old story with some new dressing. The bard told the lord that he would travel as far as was necessary to find a new tale, and would not return until he did.

In his travels, the Tall Blue Man left the Hedge for the mortal world, and he found that his vow protected him from the ravages of that realm, but also that it prevented him from entering the Hedge again. He travels the world in an old, blue van that he doesn’t remember acquiring, asking those he meets for “a story.” If they fail to provide one, he leaves them alone, shaking his head in disappointment. If they tell him a story, he invariably judges it unworthy, a mere reimagining of something that he’s been telling for centuries. He buries those victims in a special graveyard in the desert that he calls the Tale-Barrow. Headstones carved with their stories mark the resting places of 100 unfortunate storytellers.

Description: The Tall Blue Man is immense, standing over seven feet in height. He is thin, but still carries an unmistakable air of menace. He doesn’t smile and he doesn’t laugh, and while in Arcadia maybe his skin was azure-colored, on Earth the “blue” in his name refers only to his demeanor. He dresses in beat-up jeans and a snakeskin jacket, and he carries a harmonica but no one’s ever seen him put it to his lips.

His mien is similar, but much more handsome. In his mien, his eyes are electric blue, and the wind kicks up around him, hot and sticky, as if a summer storm is about to break. The Tall Blue Man’s teeth are sharp and bone-white in his mien, and his fingers are just slightly too long for his hands.

Storytelling Hints: The Tall Blue Man wants nothing but to go back home and tell his stories again. The people in the world wouldn’t appreciate his craft, and so he has nothing but contempt for them. He has killed changelings, mortals, vampires, mages and even werewolves in his time, but he has yet to find his elusive original tale. It might not even exist, but the Tall Blue Man refuses to face that possibility, because it means he’s stuck here forever.

The Tall Blue Man might approach a character looking for a story, but that rather shortchanges him as it makes him into a combat monster. Instead, consider having the characters overhear him ask someone for a story, or have them investigate the disappearance of one of the bard’s latest victims. They might also become lost in the desert and find the Tale-Barrow. Maybe the answer to a problem they have is on one of those markers?

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 5

Mental Skills: Academics (Folklore) 4, Crafts (Car Repair) 2, Investigation 2, Occult (Traditional Fables) 4

Physical Skills: Drive (Van) 3, Firearms 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Weaponry 4

Social Skills: Empathy 1, Expression (Storytelling) 4, Intimidation 4, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Iron Stamina 3, Giant, Striking Looks 2

Willpower: 9

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Pride

Initiative: 9

Defense: 3

Size: 6

Speed: 13

Health: 10

Wyrd: 5

Contracts: Artifice •••, Darkness ••, Elements (Air) •••, Hearth •••, Stone •••

Glamour/per Turn: 14/5

Frailties: Must wear something blue at all times (minor taboo); cannot harm someone who does not tell him a story (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Binding Skin, Lyrical Voice

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Shotgun	4L	20/40/80	10	9-again
Fire Ax	2L	—	10	—

LORD OF THE GARGOYLES

Quote: “They see you, even when I don’t. And they tell me everything.”

Background: A young Fae Duke, the Lord of the Gargoyles loved bird, bats, insects and all manner of flying things. When he took mortals, which he only did sparingly, he’d fashion devices that would allow them to fly, hoping to perfect one that he himself could use. Of course, just as all Fae, he could never successfully create something himself, and most of his captives perished at the bottom of gorges on their initial test flights.

But one soared. One took the wings into his own flesh and took to the skies as one of the Windwing kith. And the Lord followed this rare bird, first with joy, then with desperation and finally with seething envy.

When the Lord emerged into the human world, he was taken aback by the gargoyles clinging to the city’s edifices. He forgot about his chase for just long enough to die from exposure to the mortal world, and when he woke up, he’d forgotten his way home. He remembers chasing a “bird,” but that is all. He finds, though, that he can live on the rooftops, never descending any closer to the earth than he must, and that the gargoyles talk to him. They

tell him cryptic riddles that he believes lead him ever closer to his strange bird. What he would do if he found his wayward changeling is anyone’s guess. It might remind him of his life in Arcadia and provide a way home. He might fall in love with this bird and seek to make it his consort on top of a skyscraper somewhere. Or he might kill the bird, cut out its wings and finally try to soar on his own.

Description: The Lord of the Gargoyles is so thin that his ribs are easily visible, at least when he removes his dingy clothes (often to “shower” in thunderstorms). He has a large, beak-like nose and quick-moving light brown eyes. His hair is muddy brown and reaches his shoulders. He appears to be in his late teens, but his voice has the timber of a child’s.

The Lord’s mien reveals his deft, spider-like fingers and elongated toes. His eyes are larger and appear yellow, and stone seems to bend slightly under his touch.

Storytelling Hints: The Lord of the Gargoyles might actually be able to communicate with these stone grotesques, or he might be mad. In either case, his one goal in life is to find his “bird,” and he believes he’s reaching the end of that quest. Of course, since he doesn’t really know what he’s looking for, any Windwing (or indeed, any bird-like changeling) might meld with his delusions and become “his” bird. The Storyteller could also decide that the Lord was the Keeper of one of the players’ characters, if the motley includes an appropriate candidate.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Crafts 2, Investigation 3, Occult 3, Science (Birds) 4

Physical Skills: Athletics (Jumping, Climbing) 4, Brawl 3, Stealth 4, Survival (City Rooftops) 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Birds) 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 4

Merits: Direction Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fighting Style: Kung Fu 5*, Fresh Start

Willpower: 5

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 10 (with Fast Reflexes)

Defense: 3

Size: 5

Speed: 13

Health: 8

Wyrd: 4

Contracts: Artifice •, Darkness ••••, Fang and Talon (Birds) ••••, Smoke •••••

Glamour/per Turn: 13/4

Frailties: Can only sleep under open sky (minor taboo)

Mien Blessings: Blurflesh, Keys to Knowledge (as the Antiquarian blessing; see p. 106 of *Changeling: The Lost*)

THE SHRIKE

Quote: “She’s not ripe yet. Let’s wait a while.”

Background: The Shrike loved to steal mortals away, but very few ever became changelings. Most died in horrible agony, impaled on gigantic thorns in the Shrike’s larder in the Hedge. One night she entered the mortal world intent on stealing away another meal, and instead found serial kidnaper

per Earnest Marker. She followed the depraved man, intrigued by someone who would take prey but not eat it, and eventually came to understand the madman.

Understanding him, though, requires the Shrike to descend into his insanity. She came to see people — children especially — the way he did. He didn't see them as people; he saw them as grotesque abstractions of people, small representations of humanity. In that attitude, the Shrike found a point of reference that allowed her to connect with him. After all, she saw *all* of humanity that way, until Earnest showed her otherwise.

Earnest and the Shrike are not lovers. They do not possess feelings of lust or desire that can be expressed in the usual ways. Their lusts are expressed through causing misery and terror, and thus, the Shrike hasn't changed too much. Her sadistic personality has simply shifted from the alien outlook of the True Fae to the pathetic and warped outlook of a human serial killer. Regardless of her motives, however, her victims will suffer just the same.

Description: The Shrike appears to be in her late 20s. She cuts her hawk-brown hair short and usually wears a leather bandana, as she feels uncomfortable with her head uncovered.

Under her Mask, the Shrike's hands are perpetually bloody, as are her teeth. Her laugh is a piercing, bird-like cry, and her cloak made of feathers and tiny bones is barely visible around her shoulders.

Storytelling Hints: This Charlatan became what she is through curiosity, allowing her desire to understand another predator's predilections to mesh with her own. Therefore, if her true nature were revealed to her (perhaps by an encounter with vileshrike hobgoblins), she might well decide to make Earnest Marker the newest addition to her larder. Or, she might simply flee into the Hedge and return only to capture Marker's victims when he is through with them. All of that assumes, of course, that she *could* reenter the Hedge (see p. 90). If she is forced to remain on the mortal side of the Briars, she might simply find a suitable place and start a larder here.

The Shrike seems, at first blush, to be a simply "evil" character, and she could certainly make for a good antagonist for characters who wish to battle the worst of the Gentry. But she also makes an interesting statement about humanity. After all, she became a Charlatan because she connected with a human being, and the point of connection just happened to synch up with her own sadism and hunger. Everything necessary for such a beast was already present in Earnest Marker, a completely mundane human being.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 6, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Investigation 3, Medicine 2, Occult 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Drive 1, Larceny 2, Stealth (Hunting) 3, Survival 2, Weaponry (Knife) 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Intimidation (Madness) 3, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Fighting Finesse (Claws), Iron Stamina 3, Iron Stomach, Retainer (Earnest Marker) 5

Willpower: 5

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Lust

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4

Size: 5

Speed: 13

Health: 9

Wyrd: 6

Contracts: Darkness ••, Fang and Talon (Birds of Prey) ••, Mirror ••••, Smoke ••

Glamour/per Turn: 15/6

Frailties: Can only eat meat (bane); must laugh out loud when witnessing someone in pain (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Nightmare Aura, Gift of the Sky (as the Windwing blessing; see p. 103 of

Changeling: The Lost), Tooth and Claw (as the Hunterheart blessing; see p. 102 of **Changeling: The Lost**)

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Claws	1L	—	10	From Oddbody Contract

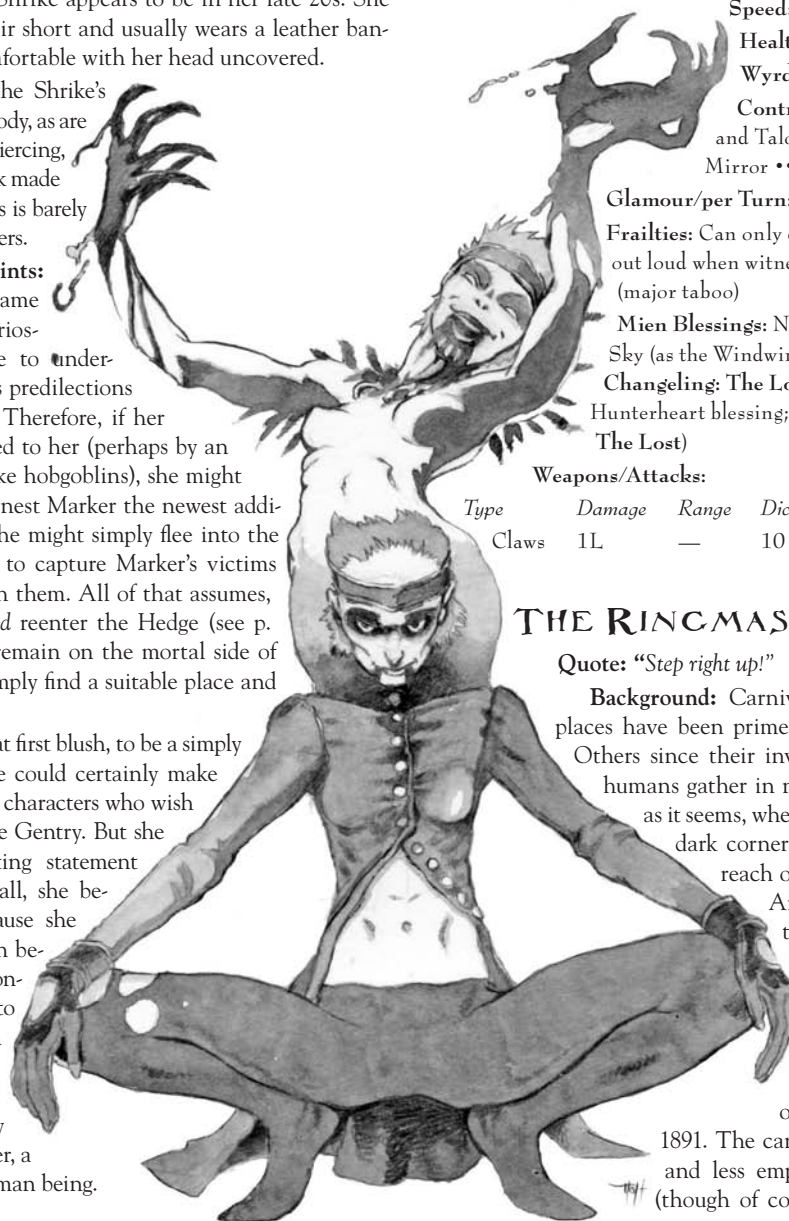
THE RINGMASTER

Quote: "Step right up!"

Background: Carnivals, fairs and other such places have been prime thieving grounds for the Others since their invention. In a place where humans gather in numbers, where nothing is as it seems, where masks are abundant and dark corners easy to find, the Gentry reach out and snatch their slaves.

And it's in just such a place that a Keeper placed an agent to keep him supplied with fresh victims.

The Embry Brothers Carnival has been traveling the country in one form or another since 1891. The carnival has more rides now, and less emphasis on the freak show (though of course it's still present), but



one thing that hasn't changed is the Ringmaster. He's taken on various guises through the years — he's not always actually the Ringmaster, though he's always in a position of authority. And once every few years, someone arrives to give him a simple message: "He needs more."

And the Ringmaster arranges for five people to go missing from the carnival. Employees or guests, it doesn't much matter, though he prefers employees because carnies aren't often missed as quickly. He tricks them into the Hedge through games, lies and beguilement, and the Keeper's hulking hobgoblin servants take them away to be twisted into amusement. The Ringmaster doesn't remember the Keeper's name, motivation or even what he looks like. The Ringmaster has no concept of what life is like outside the carnival. He only knows how to do his job, to send people into the Hedge and to direct the changelings who occasionally come looking away from the carnival.

Description: The Ringmaster is tall and thin, with pinched features and a too-wide smile. He wears a razor-thin moustache and goatee, and keeps his black hair cut short and slick with oil. Although he must change out of his red topcoat, white pants and shiny leather boots *some-time*, no one at the carnival can seem to describe him on a "day off." Everyone calls him "Ringmaster" or "Boss," and none of the employees know his name. In the past, he's held different jobs at the carnival, and he dresses appropriately for them, but he also comes back to his role as the Ringmaster.

Under the Mask, the Ringmaster's smile glitters with silver and diamonds. His silver tongue clicks against his perfect teeth. His hands are delicate, but his fingertips are sharp as knives. He can't keep still, especially if he has to talk to changelings, and is always juggling or pulling something (dead flowers, rabbits' heads, one-winged birds) out of his top hat.

Storytelling Hints: The Ringmaster might appear foppish and silly, but he's dangerous because he is so devoted to his purpose. He knows nothing besides the carnival, and he doesn't want to know anything else. He keeps the carnival going year-round, moving to warm climates in winter and back north in summer, taking on new employees as old ones drop out to pursue other careers, get married, die or go off to entertain the Keeper. The Ringmaster is a perpetual showman, but it isn't because he wants to entertain. It's because he's unaware that another option exists.

Characters might encounter the Ringmaster if they decide to go to the carnival on a lark, in which case he'll probably try to get them out of the area without discovering what's really happening (but his natural showmanship might betray him). The characters might also be former victims of the Keeper who emerge from the Hedge, bloodied and broken, in the carnival that was once their home... meaning that their fetches are already present, doing their old jobs, and probably ready for them.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 5, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 6, Manipulation 5, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Crafts (Fetches) 4, Occult (Carny Tales) 3, Politics 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Juggling) 4, Firearms 2, Weaponry (Sword) 4

Social Skills: Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Persuasion (Temptation) 4, Socialize 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3

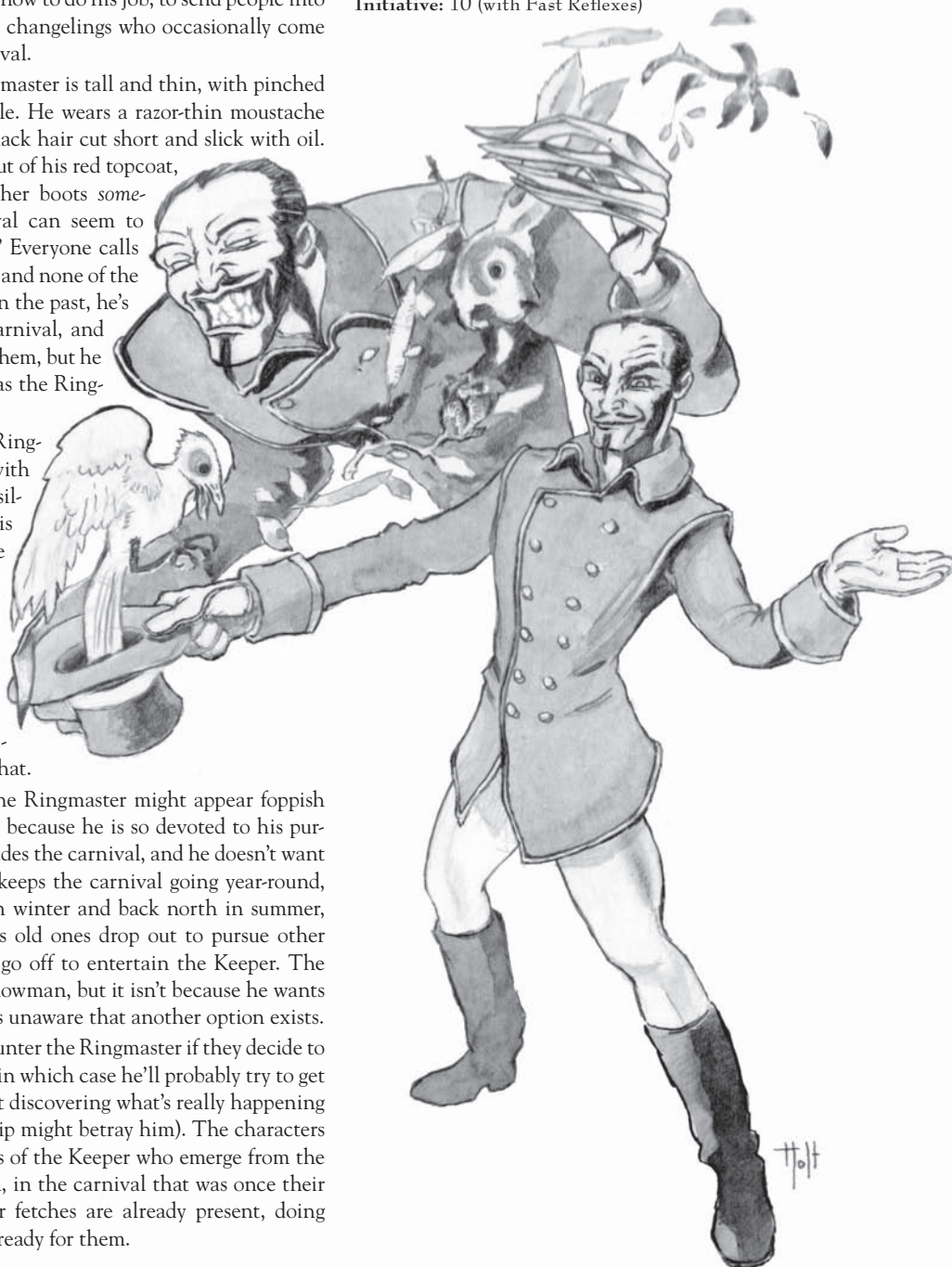
Merits: Allies 5 (Carnies), Fast Reflexes 2, Inspiring, Resources 3

Willpower: 7

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 10 (with Fast Reflexes)



Defense: 5

Size: 5

Speed: 13

Health: 8

Wyrd: 5

Contracts: Elements (Mist) •••••, Hearth •••••, Mirror •••,
Vainglory ••••

Glamour/per Turn: 14/5

Frailties: Cannot harm “outsiders,” i.e., those who do not work or have not purchased a ticket for the carnival (minor taboo); must always be performing (major taboo)

Mien Blessings: Flicker, Mirror Trap (as the Echo; see p. 102), Myriad (as the Echo; see p. 102)

Weapons/Attacks:

<i>Type</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Dice Pool</i>	<i>Special</i>
Sword-cane	2L	—	11	—







looked through the file again, trying to find some way to get through to this kid. He sat across from me, staring straight at the file. He didn't blink, cough, shift, nothing. He just stared.

Finally I decided to try a direct approach. "They're going to try you as an adult, you know."

"I don't give a fuck." He didn't smirk or sneer. No bravado. This kid really *didn't* give a fuck, and that was scary as hell.

"If they find those kids alive, I'm pretty sure I can get them to cut you some slack." *Not likely. The little girl's father was mad enough to chew nails, and I didn't blame him.* "But you've got to tell me where they are."

"OK. Let me go." He leaned back in his chair and looked at the ceiling. Not bored. Measuring it? Trying for an escape? What the hell was it about this kid that made him so... creepy?

"You know I can't do that."

"Then fuck 'em." He stood up and walked over to the corner. He touched the mirror and, for the first time, I saw a flicker of emotion. But it was nothing to do with me, it was his reflection that did it. Fear? Hate? I couldn't tell, it was gone too fast. "Let 'em rot." He pounded on the glass. "Hey, can you hear me?" He smiled, a little too wide, and I figured out why this kid scared me so much.

He had never seen any of this before. The walls, the jail, the legal process — that was new to most of the people experiencing it. But he'd never seen the laws before. He wasn't scared because he had no context for it all. He was an alien, not even aware why what he'd done was so horrible.

"They aren't dead yet," he said, as if reading my thoughts. "But if I'm not walking out of here free inside ten minutes, they sure will be." He sniffed. "But I don't care one way or the other, man. I really don't."

My blood had gone cold. "I know," I whispered.

"So what's it gonna be?"

I got up and left, and tried to reason with the DA. What else could I do? In some sick way, I don't think our laws apply to him.

CHAPTER 3

Horrors Within, Horror Without

*"For although nepenthe has calmed me, I know always that I am an outsider;
a stranger in this century and among those who are still men.
Thus I have known ever since I stretched out my fingers
to the abomination within the great gilded frame;
stretched my fingers
and touched a cold and unyielding surface of polished glass."*

— H. P. LOVECRAFT, "THE OUTSIDER"

Changelings aren't safe anywhere. The world that they leave behind, the world of the Fae, was never safe to them. The world that they were born to, the world of humankind, has moved on in the changelings' absence — indeed, it probably never noticed that the changeling was gone. And the space between, the Hedge, is home to creatures and hazards that drive the hapless Lost back into slavery or back to their birth-lands as quickly as possible.

The first part of this chapter discusses the fetch in detail, presenting different ways to use this being, advice for the Storyteller and the player on deciding the fetch's progress during the changeling's exile, new Echoes and further options for merger with the fetch.

The second part of the chapter takes the reader back into the Hedge, presenting a myriad of creatures and hazards that await changelings courageous enough to venture into the thorns.

TARNISHED MIRRORS — THE FETCH

The Fae are cunning, and superlative at deception and trickery. While they could simply steal people, they find it much more conducive to their longstanding tradition of taking slaves from the human race to craft duplicates of their victims. The Fae leave the duplicate behind, often with no idea what it truly is, and go on about their business. But when a changeling's servitude is up, or when she escapes, the fetch is waiting for her, a near-perfect reflection of her human self... without the humanity.

Nearly every changeling has or, at one time, had a fetch living her life on Earth. What happened to the fetch is a consideration that every **Changeling** player should spend at least a little time on during the prelude. If the fetch died in a car accident a month before the character escaped from Arcadia, that creates just as much story potential as having the fetch be alive and well

and living the character's life. The important thing is that the player considers what happened to the fetch during the time that the character was enslaved.

ROLES FOR THE FETCH

Changeling: The **Lost** already asks some initial questions about the fetch (pp. 251–253). Along with those points, consider where the character was, both in terms of literal place and station in life, when she was kidnapped. This is an important question because it dictates what experiences the fetch will have during the character's imprisonment. Consider: Two sisters are taken by the Fae on the same day, perhaps as part of some ancient pact with the family. The older sister is a newlywed and was just leaving on honeymoon when the Others came for her. The younger sister is estranged from her family and was working in Las Vegas as a cocktail waitress, surrounded by people who didn't even know her real name. The sisters might be kept in the same place in Arcadia, have the same master, perhaps even the same durance, and this in turn may lead to similar kiths and changeling magic. But their fetches are going to be night and day — they might not even be aware of each other. This might present the sisters with an advantage, but it may also make the younger sister's fetch very difficult to find.

One of the questions presented in **Changeling** is, how human is the fetch? Or more accurately, how human does the fetch *act*? The fetch might well be a serial killer (already active, or just waiting for the right trigger — see Bobby Slim on p. 118) or it might simply gossip, lie and manipulate to get what it wants. A fetch's desires might be largely understandable. It seeks to fulfill its wants, lusts, fantasies and needs, but unlike human beings, the fetch doesn't necessarily have the bulwark of human morality to temper those desires. Like a true sociopath, the fetch might not have any need to play by society's rules, either because that

instinct is not present in its artificial heart or because it knows, on some level, that it is artificial, and that this charade must end someday. And from a certain perspective, this attitude is valid — can a being created from string, a few drops of blood and some discarded candy wrappers truly be held to human standards of behavior?

Another important consideration for the fetch, from the player's perspective, is what role the fetch is to play in the character's personal story. What aspects of the character does the fetch represent? How would one have to "twist" the changeling to become the fetch? In the example in **Changeling: The Lost**, Jack Tallow's fetch is described as "Jack when the candle is blown out." When helping the Storyteller to design your character's fetch, it may help to think in those terms. Complete this sentence: "The fetch is like my character, only _____." The words in the blank can be metaphorical, as with Jack, or more literal ("he has a better understanding of the human mind"). The fetch and the changeling must have some similarities, and understanding them highlights the differences and makes the relationship between the two characters fall into place.

Below are four possible roles that fetches can fulfill in your chronicles, as well as some thoughts on how they might fulfill those roles and how Lost society treats fetches in them. However, one thing to keep in mind when choosing a role for each player's fetch (or for your own, if the Storyteller encourages such) is that everyone will have his own ideas for what makes a good fetch story. If one player is interested in the idea of the sympathetic fetch, that doesn't mean all the players should be pressured to sympathize with their fetches. If one player wants a fetch that acts like a terrible killer from a moody horror movie, that doesn't mean all players should be stalked by similarly monstrous doppelgängers if they'd rather explore some other variation on the theme. No more personalized enemy exists in the World of Darkness. Take full advantage of that.

FETCH AS TARGET

Some freeholds ask new members, "Did you kill yourself yet?" A changeling who knows how to answer that question clearly knows more about her condition than one who does not. In these freeholds, the fetch is a target, to be stalked and slain at earliest opportunity. The stated reasons for this vary; one freehold might claim that fetches can summon the Gentry (sometimes true), while another says that fetches can accidentally open gateways into the Hedge and thus lure mortals into servitude. In any case, the freeholds treat fetches as game. Freeholds might have rules about who can kill a fetch (only the changeling that it mimics, only members of that changeling's motley, etc.) or the rulers might declare fetch-hunting season open, but the important point is that the Lost don't waste time considering whether a fetch can feel pain, fear or remorse.

Some changelings hunt other changelings' fetches. What benefit can they derive from this act? After all, a changeling only receives the Broken Mirror Merit (p. 259, **Changeling: The Lost**) for destroying his own fetch. Obviously, a changeling can demand any kind of payment — money, favors, etc. — for killing a fetch, but is there any intrinsic benefit?

Mechanically, no. An optional system is presented later in this chapter that allows for a supernatural benefit. Barring that, though, the rewards for slaying a fetch are largely internal and

social. A changeling who kills a fetch, even one other than her own, knows that she has destroyed some of the handiwork of the Gentry. She has, perhaps, made it easier for another changeling to slide back into his life when the time comes, and she has prevented the fetch from duping the mortals around it. And this all assumes that the fetch was just trying to be a normal human. If the fetch were harming or killing people, the changeling might well be justified in killing it on general principle.

But a changeling who kills the fetch of another is denying that changeling the chance to slay her doppelgänger, and that's an important part of returning to the human world. Some Lost rulers institute laws that state that if a changeling kills a fetch of another living changeling without permission, she must perform three tasks for the offended changeling. These tasks must be within the changeling's power (not that of her motley, if any) and cannot be life-threatening. The penalty for refusal is generally banishment from the freehold, but often the changeling holding the marker, as it were, is required to use the tasks within a year and a day of the murder.

FETCH AS ADVERSARY

Fetches aren't always, or even usually, ignorant of what they are. The Others might well explain to the fetch exactly what it is and what role it plays. The fetch might simply be fashioned with some instinctual knowledge of its nature, which pushes the fetch toward resentment of those who are born rather than crafted. Likewise, a changeling who wishes to harm a rival might find that rival's fetch and empower it somehow, even if only with knowledge. And some fetches, as mentioned, are violent and ruthless on their own. Such fetches can make superb adversaries for changelings or entire motleys.

Fetches are uniquely suited to battle changelings just by nature of their magic. Echoes are designed to be reflections of fae magic, purely internal rather than Contracts with the world. A group composed of fetches that are aware of their own natures might lure their respective changelings into traps, killing them and cementing their places in mortal society.

FETCH AS FOIL

The fetch is a perfect foil for its changeling counterpart; that's part of the point of such creatures, in fact. As mentioned above, a good way to design a fetch is to consider what about the character is different in the fetch. Another way to ask that question is: What was so noticeable about the character to the Fae who stole her that it carried over to the fetch? What facets of the character remain solely her own? In knowing how the fetch and the character are alike, the player and the Storyteller can truly delineate the conflict between them.

The fact is, too, that the changeling is not the person that she once was. Both fetch and changeling are reflections of a person that no longer exists. The fetch is simply a created version, artificial and sculpted, while the changeling has been warped by her time in Faerie. They both approach the world of humanity with some degree of alienation, and their decisions and actions differentiate them more than their origins.

In literary terms, a "foil" is a character on equal social footing with the protagonist who makes different choices and often winds up in an antagonistic role. In a roleplaying game, the foil can be a rival, a contact or even an ally (as well as an antago-

nist, obviously). The important thing is the similarity between the character and the foil, the feeling of “there but for the grace of God go I.”

In **Changeling**, where so much of the theme rests on the possibility that this might all be just a dream or a delusion, the notion that the foil is not just a similar character but is a virtually identical copy is highly appropriate. The fetch-as-foil doesn't have to be sympathetic (that's discussed in the following section), but it should be understandable.

That means that if the fetch is to play the role of foil, the fetch's behavior shouldn't be too far away from that of the character. If the character isn't a mindless killer, then the fetch shouldn't be, either. That might make it harder to kill the fetch, of course, but part of the reason for using the fetch as a foil rather than as a straight-up adversary is to make the character (and the player) question whether or not she really *needs* to kill the fetch. Again, though, in a game in which confirming identity is so important, ridding the world of a doppelgänger can be an important step toward Clarity.

SYMPATHY FOR THE FETCH

Can fetches be sympathetic characters? It's wholly possible. Yes, fetches are not human, and they carry with them an often overpowering streak of fae caprice, which can result in them being utter sociopaths. Yes, they are artificial beings that rely on fae-created memories to mimic human behavior. But they are intelligent and self-aware, and that means they can learn and develop as time goes on. A fetch doesn't *have* to be the villain, or even an antagonist.

Could a changeling develop a positive relationship with his fetch? It's possible, but it's more likely that he'd develop a positive

relationship with someone else's. Most changelings find being around their fetches highly disturbing, and it's not hard to see why. The fetch is a perfect (or near-perfect) duplicate of the changeling as he was before he was taken to Arcadia. The fetch does not have a mien, and so a changeling looking at his fetch is effectively staring at his Mask. Consider for a moment what that means to a changeling. Imagine looking into a mirror and seeing a living incarnation of a Halloween costume you once wore — *without you in it*.

The fetch, too, instinctually feels some level of discomfort or revulsion where its “original” is concerned. The instincts built into it by the True Fae say *beware, beware, this thing comes to take you away from the life we gave you*. To the fetch, a changeling is like a rival lion come to take over its pride, or a vulture circling above. Knowledge of the fetch's own inhumanity doesn't make the presence of a changeling any easier to bear; in some ways, that can make it worse. Instinctually, the fetch senses the changeling is a threat. Intellectually, the fetch *knows* the changeling has reason to want the fetch destroyed and claim its “life.”

These factors make any sort of positive relationship between a changeling and his fetch quite unlikely. That's not to say it isn't possible, but odds are if a motley of changelings develops good rapport with a fetch, the fetch belongs to a changeling now dead or not yet returned. What form might such a relationship take?



Not all fetches are ignorant of what they are, and over time they might come to realize the horror of being stolen away from the mortal world and forced into work as a servant to the Gentry. Therefore, a sympathetic fetch might serve as a mentor to newly arrived changelings. Likewise, a fetch might barely survive an attack by the changeling he was made to replace and vow to prevent this kind of violence, working to ensure that fetches and changelings *can* interact without resorting to slaughter (a perhaps unrealistic goal in the face of those fetches that are themselves too solipsistic and amoral to interact positively with anyone at all).

Playing a Fetch

Taking on a fetch as a character would be an interesting challenge for a player. Yes, fetches are not human, but they are created to think that they are and to behave as if they were, so they can function in the human world. Their magic isn't nearly as impressive as that of the Lost, but that in itself shouldn't be a deterrent to letting a player take the role of a fetch. A player-controlled fetch would probably need to be less than completely callous and fey if the player would like it to survive in changeling company, but again, that's down to the player's portrayal rather than something endemic to fetches.

The player and the Storyteller need to consider what happened to the fetch's changeling "base," what kind of instruction (if any) the Gentry gave the character and how much the character knows about his own condition, but all of this just means answering the questions presented on p. 251 of *Changeling: The Lost* from the perspective of a player-controlled character. If the player has a strong concept, if the Storyteller is amenable and if a fetch would fit into the chronicle, it can work. (However, the Shadow's Warning Echo is off-limits to a player-controlled fetch. This power is specifically designed for an antagonist that could fight multiple characters at once, not for a character with a troupe backing him up.)

CHEAP MAGIC

Below are 18 new Echoes for use when creating fetches. Most of these Echoes are for fetches with Wyrd 1 or 2, but some have been included for the higher levels as well. No Echoes have been provided for fetches with Wyrd ratings higher than 5, however. Fetches almost never live long enough to reach that level of power; any changeling with Wyrd 6 could probably destroy his fetch without too much trouble, and a fetch's Wyrd rating cannot increase if the fetch's changeling "base" dies.

- **Amplify Curse (Wyrd 3):** The fetch can amplify the problems that changelings have coping with the human world. This requires the fetch to touch the changeling, or, in the case of the character that the fetch was built to replace, that it simply lays eyes on its original. The player must spend one point of Glamour. Any numerical penalties associated with that changeling's curse are doubled for the remainder of the scene.

- **Cracks in the Mirror (Wyrd 3):** A fetch with this Echo is dangerous not because of what it can do to the changeling, but because of what the changeling can do to himself. The fetch spends one point of Willpower and one point of Glamour to activate the power. For the rest of the scene, any damage inflicted upon the fetch from any source is also visited upon the character. The fetch and the changeling have to be within line of sight of each other when the power is activated, but they may separate thereafter without dissolving the bond. Regardless of the type of damage inflicted on the fetch, it heals from the changeling like bashing damage. The damage is still counted normally for purposes of killing the changeling, though. That is, if a fetch with Health 7 suffers seven levels of lethal damage, both characters start to bleed to death. If the changeling is saved, though, the damage heals at one point per 15 minutes.

- **Craft Fetch-Beast (Wyrd 4):** Powerful and skilled fetches can create creatures much like themselves, but cannot instill them with the capacity for human-like thought. The fetches can, however, make fetches that act like animals, and so a changeling might find his fetch waiting for him with a menagerie of feral dogs and hissing cats, perhaps even astride a fae-steed. To craft a fetch-beast, the fetch needs some raw material (dirt, refuse, dead flesh — nearly anything will do) and must sacrifice an animal of the type the fetch wishes to create. This requires a degeneration check for fetches at Morality 4 or higher. The player rolls Dexterity + Crafts as an extended action. Each roll requires one day of work, and the target number is the Health rating of the fetch-beast. Once the target number of successes is reached, the fetch spends Glamour equal to the fetch-beast's Health, and the creature comes to life. From there on out, the creature behaves like a member of its species, save that the fetch-beast sometimes displays a disturbingly acute intelligence and shows almost no interest in other members of its species. The fetch-beast obeys its creator without question, and is not subject to communication or control by any supernatural powers that normally work on animals.

- **Craft Second Fetch (Wyrd 5):** The fetch can create a duplicate of itself, a hollow shell that becomes activated should the fetch die. The system for this is the same as for Craft Fetch-Beast, except that the sacrifice required is a chunk of flesh from the fetch's own body (inflicting three points of lethal damage). If a fetch with a prepared duplicate dies, the duplicate awakens within 12 hours of the death, fully healed and refreshed. A fetch can only have one duplicate at a time, though upon activation the duplicate (or rather, the fetch) can create another.

- **False Seeming (Wyrd 2):** The fetch can grant itself a seeming for a brief time. This allows the Glamour that animated the fetch to bubble to the surface, creating a kind of Mask. This seeming looks similar, but not identical, to the changeling that the fetch was made to impersonate — an observer might think that they suffered under the same Keeper or had some other similar point of reference. Using the False Seeming drains the fetch of five points of Glamour, however, and the fetch cannot regain Glamour while this Echo is active. In addition, when the False Seeming fades (a number of hours equal to the fetch's Wyrd), the fetch suffers a point of lethal damage. The fetch can reactivate the False Seeming at that point, if the fetch has enough Glamour to do so.

- **Hall of Mirrors (Wyrd 2):** The fetch sends its changeling into a confusing nightmare world, in which *everyone* bears his own (Masked) face. This requires the fetch to touch the change-

ling, and for the player to spend one point of Glamour and one point of Willpower. For the remainder of the scene, the changeling sees his own face (minus the mien) on every non-changeling the changeling sees. Clothing does not change, and so a man looking at a woman and her child sees them both as they are... with his face. This power is useful as an escape tactic, but also to drive a changeling mad.

- **Heart of Wax (Wyrd 1):** Made of Glamour and inanimate matter, the fetch feels no pain. By spending a point of Glamour, the fetch can ignore wound penalties for the rest of the scene.

- **Mirror Trap (Wyrd 5):** The fetch can turn any mirror into a prison for a changeling. The fetch must touch the mirror's surface and spend some time in deep meditation, opening the portal. The player spends a point of Glamour and rolls Manipulation + Wyrd; this is an extended action. Each roll requires 10 minutes of meditation, and the target number is equal to the fetch's Wyrd rating. If the fetch wishes to open the portal more quickly, the fetch can do so with a supreme exertion (the player spends one *dot* of Willpower and the roll becomes an instant action instead). If the changeling enters the mirror, she finds herself trapped in a perfect replica of whatever the mirror currently reflects. Observers on the other side cannot see her, and the glass is indestructible (from her side). She can see out, however, and can use Contracts that do not require touch or acknowledgment to be effective. She can enter the dreams of others as usual (see p. 193 of **Changeling: The Lost**), and this might provide a way out, if she can convince someone to break the mirror. If the mirror is broken, the changeling falls to the ground, bleeding from gashes in her face and hands but alive (she suffers three points of lethal damage from the glass). While in the mirror-prison, the changeling has no need of food, water or sleep, but she is trapped. If someone covers the mirror from the other side, she is lost in darkness, silence and numbness — complete sensory deprivation. Such treatment is likely to drive her mad in short order (Resolve + Composure rolls to avoid derangements are appropriate, at whatever intervals the Storyteller wishes).

- **Myriad (Wyrd 4):** The fetch can call its reflection out of a mirror or any other reflective surfaces. This requires that the fetch touch the mirror (and the expenditure of one point of Glamour). The fetch-duplicate is then able to animate *other* reflections, meaning that a fetch with this Echo in a house of mirrors is a deadly foe indeed. The duplicates are not as powerful as the original. They possess the same Echoes, but if they suffer bashing damage equal to the original's Stamina or a single point of lethal or aggravated damage, they disintegrate. They are capable of any action that the original is, but they halve all dice pools (rounding down). They can spend Willpower or Glamour, but they only have the original's pool to work with (meaning that a fetch with a Glamour pool of 10 who creates four duplicates now only has six points remaining, and all five of them have to share it). If the original fetch is killed, but one or more duplicates still exist, the fetch can spend a *dot* of Willpower to save itself — one of the duplicates becomes the fetch.

- **Oathbreaker by Proxy (Wyrd 4):** The fetch can see the pledges that the changeling has sworn, and can fool the Wyrd into thinking that the changeling has broken them. This power is terrible, because it (temporarily) makes the changeling into an oathbreaker, but the consequences for the fetch are dire as well. To use this power, the fetch must first understand the pledge; this re-

quires that the player rolls Intelligence + Wyrd while looking at the changeling. The fetch then takes an action that breaks the pledge, as defined by the pledge's tasks (see Chapter Three of **Changeling: The Lost**). The changeling immediately suffers the sanction of the pledge, but whatever that sanction, no matter how dire, it only lasts for one day. Even if the sanction is blindness, deformity or loss of Wyrd, the changeling returns, hale and healthy, once the Wyrd has time to correct itself. The fetch, then, suffers the sanction itself — permanently. The only way for the fetch to avoid this fate is if the changeling dies before the sanction is lifted.

- **Obscured Dreams (Wyrd 2):** Normally, a changeling can enter his fetch's dreams easily (see p. 193 of **Changeling: The Lost**). A fetch with this Echo, however, has some additional protection. The changeling must spend an additional point of Willpower to enter the fetch's dreams. Also, the fetch with this Echo often realizes what is happening much sooner. Roll Wits + Composure for the fetch. If this roll succeeds, the fetch realizes the oneiric connection between itself and the changeling right away (and can therefore enter the changeling's dreams later).

- **Revoke Catch (Wyrd 1):** The fetch can muddle a changeling relationship with his Contracts, if only briefly. The fetch touches its target, and the player spends one point of Glamour. The catch on all of the changeling's Contracts is revoked for one scene; no matter what the application of the Contract or the circumstances in which he uses it, he must pay the cost.

- **Secondhand Blessing (Wyrd 1):** Fetches are not changelings, but they are created of fae magic. By spending a point of Glamour, the fetch can enjoy the same blessing as the changeling the fetch was built to impersonate. It has this blessing for only one turn per dot of Wyrd the fetch possesses, however, and can use this power only once per scene.

- **Shadow Attack (Wyrd 3):** This deadly power allows a fetch in battle with its changeling to outnumber its doppelgänger. The fetch's shadow (or reflection, if the two are fighting near a mirrored surface) comes to life for a second and attacks the changeling. This requires the expenditure of two points of Glamour by the fetch. The attack must be close combat, and inflicts bashing damage unless the fetch has a way to inflict lethal damage with its bare hands. The changeling's player rolls Wits + Composure (Danger Sense applies) as a reflexive action; if this roll fails, the changeling does not receive his Defense against the attack. A fetch can make only one Shadow Attack per scene.

- **Shadow Boxing (Wyrd 2):** Fighting one's fetch is like fighting one's shadow — you can't surprise it. The fetch can predict its changeling's next move with disturbing precision. Spend one point of Glamour for the fetch. For the remainder of the scene, the changeling receives no Defense against the fetch (though Armor is unaffected).

- **Shadow's Warning (Wyrd 2):** Shadows and tricks of the light aid the fetch in avoiding harm. The fetch always seems to know how to dodge and when to parry in a fight. Add the fetch's Wyrd to its Defense rating. This Defense is subject to normal rules; i.e., it doesn't protect the fetch from guns (except at point-blank range), it drops due to multiple attackers, etc.

- **Strengthen Mask (Wyrd 1):** A fetch's greatest weapon is confusion. With a glance (and the expenditure of one point of Glamour), the fetch strengthens its changeling's Mask to the point that not even other fae can see through it. This effect only lasts a number of turns equal to the fetch's Wyrd, but that's often

enough for the fetch to do some damage. This power only works on the changeling that the fetch was made to impersonate.

• **Summon Shard (Wyrd 1):** In the modern world, the fetch is always armed. By touching a pane of glass, the fetch can summon a mirror-like blade. This requires the expenditure of one point of Glamour. The blade inflicts one lethal damage, or two lethal damage if the fetch pulled the blade from a mirror. The blade fades at the end of the scene.

NEW MILESTONE MERITS

Killing a fetch is difficult because fetches are crafted by the Others to fool the senses. Changelings see fetches are human beings, but the changelings' natural sense of Glamour tells them otherwise. This conflict of sensation makes striking the killing blow a matter of sheer willpower, and dealing with the aftermath is difficult (which is why killing a fetch is a breaking point for changelings of Clarity 5).

But there are advantages for killing fetches. Killing someone else's fetch doesn't normally bestow any intrinsic benefit (but see p. 99). Killing one's own fetch, of course, bestows the milestone Broken Mirror Merit... ordinarily. But stories filter in from far-away freeholds about different effects of destroying the fetch.

Below are five alternate milestone Merits for destroying one's own fetch. Three require specific circumstances for the death, while one requires that the changeling's motley participates in the killing, and the fifth, similar to Broken Mirror, simply requires that the changeling kill his own fetch. Note that these are alternate options, not additions: a changeling who kills his own fetch without witnesses could gain Cuckoo's Egg instead of Broken Mirror if the Storyteller is amenable, but would not receive both.

BLOODIED GROUND (MILESTONE)

Circumstance: The changeling must kill his fetch on the "human" side of an open gateway to the Hedge. Both the Hedge and the mortal world must be visible to the changeling when the fetch dies.

Effect: The site where the fetch died becomes a special, even sacred, place for the changeling. Whenever the changeling is in the Hedge and trying to find his way out, he can picture that spot and instinctively find his way to it. The player receives a +3 to Hedge navigation rolls to find the place where the fetch died (see p. 219 of *Changeling: The Lost*).

CUCKOO'S EGG (MILESTONE)

Circumstance: The changeling kills his own fetch with absolutely no witnesses, including animals. The character must then carry a piece of the fetch with him at all times to retain this Merit.

Effect: The character can step into the fetch's life more easily with this Merit. Any rolls made to recall details about the fetch's life, recognize people close to the fetch or otherwise behave as the fetch would receive a +3 modifier. Over time, of course, the character can gradually integrate the fetch's life with his own goals, desires and mannerisms, but the Cuckoo's Egg (as the piece of fetch-matter is called, regardless of what form it actually takes) makes this transition much easier.

Drawback: Other changelings, Mirrorskins especially, prize Cuckoo's Eggs because any changeling possessing the Egg enjoys the benefit. A rival might steal the Egg and try to take over the changeling's identity, even for a short while.

FALSE HEART (MILESTONE)

Circumstance: No specific circumstance; the changeling kills his own fetch.

Effect: Among the detritus left behind when the fetch dies is an object about half the size of a fist — a stone, a wooden box, a ball of string, etc. This object holds a tiny portion of the Glamour used to create the fetch, and the changeling can use this Glamour to supplement his own Glamour. The False Heart holds three points of Glamour. The changeling must replenish these points by sleeping with the False Heart under his pillow (or otherwise on his person) for at least six hours. The Glamour for the False Heart must come from the changeling's own pool, meaning that it can only be replenished if the changeling has at least three points of Glamour. The changeling can spend the Glamour from the False Heart normally, and only that changeling can retrieve the Glamour.

FETCH-BANE (MILESTONE)

Circumstance: The changeling kills his fetch with a weapon. He might stab his fetch to death with a sword, throttle it with a rope, beat it with a club or even shoot it with a bow or a gun. The changeling must kill the fetch that weapon alone, though; he can't shoot the fetch and then slit its throat as it lies bleeding. Cold iron weapons cannot become fetch-banes.

Effect: The weapon used to kill the fetch becomes a token called a fetch-bane. When activated, the weapon's damage either becomes lethal (if it is normally bashing) or increases by two (if it is normally lethal).

Action: Reflexive

Mien: The weapon shows evidence of the killing committed with it. A knife or cudgel drips with blood, a rope smells of chafed flesh and a gun smokes.

Drawback: A fetch-bane cannot be used in self-defense. If a character attempts to use a fetch-bane in a fight in which he is not the aggressor in a fight, the fetch-bane turns in his hands, imposing a -3 penalty on all attempts to use it.

Catch: The character must start a fight with someone that he knows personally within the next 24 hours. The fight must be physical, unprovoked and without warning (i.e., the character cannot say to a member of his motley, "I have to punch you now, please punch me back once and we'll call it a day"). If the character does not do so within 24 hours of using the fetch-bane, the weapon leaps into the character's hand and attacks the nearest person (the character makes a normal attack roll against the victim, and must deal with the consequences).

SHARED GUILT (MILESTONE)

Circumstance: The changeling's motley must assist him in killing the fetch. Each character must inflict at least one point of damage on the fetch before it dies.

Effect: Because of the changeling's motley's help, he knows that the "version" of him that died was the fetch, and that the fetch was false. Each member of the motley must check for degeneration as usual, but as long as one member of troupe succeeds on the roll, none of the changelings loses Clarity. If all of the rolls fail, the breaking point is handled normally (roll Clarity to determine if a derangement surfaces, etc.).

Thereafter, once per story, the motley can invoke the Shared Guilt Merit. This requires that all members of the motley who

participated in the slaughter of the fetch have undergone or witnessed the same breaking point. The degeneration roll is handled in the same way — all of the players make the roll, and as long as someone succeeds, everyone succeeds.

Example: Jack Tallow and his motley track down and confront his embittered fetch, Randall Vey (see p. 254 of **Changeling: The Lost**). They surround the fetch and stab it to death, each member inflicting one wound. All of the players roll three dice for the breaking point of killing a fetch, but as long as one player succeeds, the others do as well. Later in the chronicle, the motley enters the dream of a human rival, and one of Jack's compatriots goes a little wild, poisoning his dreams and bringing him to harm. Since the entire motley was present, they can choose to invoke the Shared Guilt Merit — all of the players roll two dice, and as long as one succeeds, no one loses Clarity or has to check for a derangement.

Invoking Shared Guilt requires unanimous consent from the motley (and the troupe). If the motley feels that the changeling who reached the breaking point acted on his own and that they could not have stopped him, they are quite justified in refusing to take the risk of losing their own Clarity for his sake.

OPTIONAL/VARIANT RULES

All of the game systems that you need to run the fetch are presented in **Changeling: The Lost**, including the Broken Mirror Merit, which acts as a reward for changelings who destroy their own fetches. If, however, you wish to add more depth, more detail and more all-around supernatural strangeness to the fetch, read on. Presented here are several new systems and ideas for the creation, development and destruction of the fetch.

INGREDIENTS

The Gentry construct fetches from whatever disused materials they have at hand — string, wood, dead leaves, ash, pieces of discarded meat and so on. The construction materials don't make a difference in the final product, because the Fae's magic is what animates the fetch, gives it the semblance of life and allows the fetch to mimic nearly any human behavior. The skill that the Fae employs when crafting the fetch is what makes the difference. The fetch behaves only as human-like as it was crafted to behave.

The system presented here allows the player and the Storyteller to decide exactly what a given fetch is made from, and allows for changes to game mechanics based upon those materials. Fetches can be made from almost anything, and so for purposes of this system, the materials fall into four categories: Fae-Stuff, Flesh, Man-Made and Natural.

Fae-Stuff includes any material that the Fae brought with them from Arcadia while hunting for humans to enslave. A scrap of a True Fae's cloak, torn during the hunt, falls into this category, as do arrows used to hunt humans or burned-out candles used to light the way through the Briars. Fetches made predominantly from Fae-Stuff always know their true roles and origins, and are likely to develop Echoes that deal with direct manipulation of Glamour or other fae-related issues (such as Enter the Hedge, Call the Fae or Secondhand Blessing). Such fetches receive a free Occult Specialty, which must be related to the Fae (examples include Changelings, True Fae, the Hedge, etc.), and receive the 9 again bonus on any roll to detect or recognize fae magic or activity.

Flesh consists of any material that was once part of an animal

(or a human) and has not been worked or crafted. For instance, an antler from a buck that the Fae huntsman killed during the chase would be Flesh, but pieces of a broken dagger made of antler would be Fae-Stuff or Man-Made. Living things from either side of the Hedge count as Flesh. The "freshness" of the Flesh doesn't normally make a difference. A Fae might carry around a pocketful of dried bones to use in a fetch, or might slaughter something just for the occasion. Dead material might result in a morbid temperament, while live material might result in the fetch being impulsive and vital, but these are just suggestions. In game terms, fetches created chiefly of Flesh are hale and hearty. Flesh-created fetches are the slowest to revert their component parts after being killed. The fetch receives one free Specialty in Athletics, and one free Merit dot. The Merit dot must be spent on (or toward) one of the following Merits: Fast Reflexes, Fleet of Foot, Iron Stamina, Iron Stomach, Natural Immunity, Quick Healer, Strong Back, Strong Lungs or Toxin Resistance. The character must still meet any prerequisites for the Merit.

Man-Made materials are, predictably, anything that comes from the human side of the Hedge and has been worked, manufactured, crafted or created by human beings. The clothing of a captured human is a popular choice of building materials, as is any old junk lying near the gateway through which the Others snatched the unfortunate person. Man-Made fetches have good understandings of the human world, but depending on what they are made from, can be among the most egocentric and sociopathic of the fetches. This kind of behavior is more common from Man-Made fetches crafted from garbage or mass-produced objects. Objects that someone owned or cared about tend to produce fetches that believe themselves to be human, or at least see the value in following human rules as a survival mechanism. In either case, the Normalcy Echo is common for such fetches. Fetches made mostly of Man-Made materials receive two free Specialties. They must be placed in Empathy, Persuasion, Socialize or Subterfuge, and they must deal with humanity rather than supernatural beings (that is, a Persuasion Specialty of "Fae" would not be an appropriate choice).

Natural materials are non-living and un-worked components such as rock, wood, dirt and water. Some of the Others are skilled enough to pull shadows, smoke and wind from their surroundings to create fetches, and such esoteric components also count as Natural. Most fetches contain at least some Natural components, as such materials are always at hand when a Fae creates a fetch. Natural fetches hold memories well and are obedient and level-headed (at least at first). They make for good duplicates of their human "base," provided that the Gentry created them has enough skill to make a good likeness. If the Fae isn't so skilled, Natural fetches are gruff, moody and hard to read. Natural fetches usually revert to their component parts almost immediately upon being killed. Fetches composed mostly of Natural materials receive a free Specialty in Survival. Also, once such a fetch is aware of its nature (that is, it knows it is supernatural, not necessarily that it is a fae-crafted duplicate of a kidnapped person), the fetch can heal one point of lethal damage per day by consuming a fistful of the fetch's primary component. This healing also requires the expenditure of one point of Glamour.

CHILDREN OF FETCHES

As mentioned in **Changeling: The Lost**, fetches cannot procreate (even changelings cannot normally have children, in fact). Fetches are not sufficiently human. Their biology is a convincing

façade — convincing enough to allow the fetch to eat, breathe and even die like a human being — but they have no genetic material to pass along, no way to conceive children.

But sometimes, the façade is so convincing that it fools the fetch's partner into conceiving anyway. The fae tell stories of the children of fetches, and these stories paint them in one of two ways.

Fetch-children

In some versions of the story, fetch-conception is possible only when the fetch truly loves the person with whom he or she is trying to conceive a child. The fetch must also think of itself as human — if it realizes what it truly is, it has no chance of siring or conceiving. The pregnancy will be difficult, and legends say that the mother never survives the delivery (though modern medicine might allow it through procedures such as Caesarean section). The child born is human, but fae-touched in some ways.

The child's eyes always glimmer with an air of mischief or curiosity. Often, fetch-children learn to speak quite early, but don't pick up on social language (manners, appropriateness, turn-taking, play skills) at the proper ages. This, combined with their fascination with seemingly mundane objects (mirrors, doorways and lights especially), sometimes leads to them being diagnosed with autism or Asperberger's syndrome. As they age, though, they pick up on social language, and by the time puberty sets in, fetch-children are among the most adept social manipulators in the world. They seem to have an intuitive sense of social hierarchy, of where a given person stands in relation to everyone else. They often stand apart from that hierarchy, however, sometimes guiding it with rumors and stories, sometimes merely observing.

These fetch-children would seem fairly unremarkable, except for one thing: their blood is deadly poison to the True Fae. The changelings who trade stories of these fetch-children speak of darts dipped in the blood of such a child felling the mightiest hunter of the Gentry, blades coated in this blood cutting down the strongest warrior from Arcadia with a single blow. Why would this be the case? Old tales, half-remembered from overheard conversations while in servitude, hint at an ancient pledge between the Fae and the world, the pledge that allows them to create fetches. "By your own work can you be undone," part of the pledge states. And so some changelings look carefully at children who seem just a little fae in nature, wondering if one of their parents was a fetch. Of course, *testing* this "blood as poison" notion would be difficult (and painful for the fetch-child).

In game terms, fetch-children:

- Cannot learn Echoes.
- Do not have Wyrd ratings or Glamour pools.
- Can enter the Hedge; their very presence is a key, meaning that they can take others into the Hedge with them.
- Are considered to have the Unseen Sense Merit, specialized toward the fae.
- *Might* be poisonous to the True Fae, or this might be just rumor. If it's true, the Storyteller needs to decide on the Toxicity rating of the poison, whether it works on changelings, fetches or other fae beings besides the Others and how much blood is necessary.

Fetch-spawn

But other stories circulate of the offspring of fetches, and those other tales are not of harmless, fey children. Some change-

Story Hook — *Flesh of My Flesh, Soul of My Soul*

A character learns that his fetch has sired a son, somehow. The child is a fetch-spawn, but carries with it the piece of the changeling's soul used to make the fetch (the fetch passed it along in a perversion of the conception process, and the fetch was born holding it). The changeling might reap great benefit from reclaiming this fragment, but first he has to *find* the fetch-spawn.

This creature knows exactly what it is and what's at stake. It's nearing 21 years old, and on the stroke of midnight on its 21st birthday, the fetch-spawn will enter the Hedge and deliver the soul-fragment (worn around the neck like a trophy) to the Others. When that happens, the changeling can probably kiss his newfound freedom goodbye, but he has precious little time to find a creature whose very nature hides it from the Wyrd.

lings lower their voices to whispers when discussing the fetch-spawn. These children, they say, are born with no soul, no compunction about killing and no place within the Wyrd. They are outside of the world, both human and faerie, for the Wyrd is what determines relationships between people, between objects and concepts. These children have no connection to the Wyrd, and so on a conceptual and moral scale, they are invisible. And this makes them deadly, especially to the fae.

Fetch-spawn do not have any understanding of morality, because they cannot relate to other living beings in anything other than purely practical terms. Comparative statements are completely lost on them, and they cannot comprehend relationships between thought and action. They have extremely poor social skills (because they cannot, by nature, understand why thinking something but not saying is inappropriate), and most of them wind up in some kind of institution as the natural impulsiveness of youth with nothing to temper it leads them to violence.

Unfortunately, prisons don't hold the fetch-spawn. Perhaps by a Contract that no one remembers, or perhaps because of their unique non-status in the world, fetch-spawn cannot be bound. No door is ever locked to them, no bonds prevent their movements. Crowds part for them as if on cue, and even if a security guard or another sentry sees a fetch-child entering an area that it shouldn't, the guard must summon up an extreme reserve of will to stop the fetch-spawn.

But the most dangerous thing about the fetch-spawn is that they annihilate Glamour. No Contracts function on them, and tokens lose their magic if the fetch-spawn touches them (the token's mien disappears completely; such tokens can be restored by taking them into the Hedge for a few minutes). Touching a fetch-spawn can have terrible effects on a changeling. Some stories say that the fetch-spawn can destroy a changeling's mien with a kiss or drain him of all Glamour with a simple handshake. Fetch-spawn look like normal human beings... when changelings can focus on fetch-spawn at all. The Wyrd ignores the fetch-spawn, and therefore changelings are inclined to do so as well.

Fetch-spawn have no moral center. They do not degenerate, and are therefore dangerous because they can commit horrible acts of depravity and remain relatively functional (as functional as they ever were, anyway). They don't live very long, however. Whispered tales about the fetch-spawn say that on their 21st birthday, they enter the Hedge and never return. What happens to them there is a matter of debate. Some changelings say that the True Fae claim fetch-spawn as enforcers, breeding partners or favored children — or perhaps they undergo some chrysalis-like transformation and *become* Gentry themselves. Others say that the True Fae slaughter fetch-spawn and use their bones and blood to craft new fetches.

In game terms, fetch-spawn:

- Do not have Morality ratings.
- Cannot learn the Empathy Skill. Empathy rolls are always reduced to chance dice.
- Do not have Wyrd ratings or Glamour pools.
- Cannot learn Echoes, Contracts or other forms of fae magic.
- Cannot wield tokens.
- Add three *successes* to any Stealth roll.
- Cannot be handcuffed, tied up or otherwise restrained. Locked doors open for them with the slightest pressure.
- Cannot be targeted by Contracts or tokens.
- Do not dream (and so cannot be dream-riden).
- Cannot enter into pledges.
- Have deleterious effects on anything touched by the Wyrd. If a fetch-spawn touches a token, it ceases to function until taken into the Hedge. If a fetch-spawn touches a changeling, the changeling's player rolls Wyrd. If the roll fails, the changeling loses all current Glamour. At the Storyteller's discretion, this effect might be worsened by prolonged contact.

MERCER WITH THE FETCH

The True Fae create fetches out of sticks, dirt, litter, bone, flesh or whatever else is handy, but none of those base materials truly matters. What matters, what enables the fetch to so flawlessly impersonate a living person, is the chunk of that person's soul ripped away from the victim by the thorns

of the Hedge. That soul of a changeling is typically regarded as lost — the character left her soul behind in bloody tatters on the Briars. But what if the changeling were somehow able to reclaim the piece of the soul used to create her fetch?

Killing the fetch isn't sufficient for such an undertaking. Killing is simple, and has its own benefit (the Broken Mirror Merit is one possibility, and some more are provided above). But merger with the fetch — taking the lingering piece of the soul back into the character — is complex. It requires fortitude, understanding and, hardest of all, *forgiveness*. Very, very few changelings ever even consider approaching their fetches on a compassionate level. Changelings see fetches as complicit in their torment, which sometimes is true and sometimes isn't. But for a changeling willing to take the risks inherent in sparing a fetch rather than destroying it, a greater reward may well be possible.

In order to merge with her fetch, the character needs to understand it. She needs to see what the fetch has been doing during her abduction, see what it has made of her life. This can be heart-wrenching, particularly if the changeling has a fetch that has been cruelly solipsistic from the moment of its creation, but it is absolutely necessary if they are to merge. The fetch still holds part of the changeling, and is still reflective of the person that the changeling was before the Fae took her, precisely because of that lingering piece. And that, of course, is the hardest lesson to face.

For instance, consider a changeling abducted during her second year of graduate school. Before her abduction, she was honest and ethical, if overly ambitious and somewhat ruthless. She would never have cheated or lied to get what she wanted, though she wasn't above intimidation. In Arcadia, she served as the courtly representative for a lazy Fae Knight, and over time grew into the kind of courtier that he should have been. Eventually, she left Arcadia, and though she doesn't know, she suspects that the other members of court would prevent her Keeper from tracking her down, out of respect. Pushing through the Hedge, she arrives on her college campus, now a changeling of the Chatelaine kith.



But she discovers, to her horror, that she never really left, and the woman who is living her life is a conniving little bitch. She — it — cheats on exams and assists other students in doing so (for a price), seduced and blackmailed a professor to get a plum internship, and is coasting through with a perfect GPA without doing a lick of work.

If the changeling wishes to merge with her fetch, she must accept that some part of the fetch's nature derives from her own. The fetch's manipulative behavior was present in the changeling herself; it was merely expressed differently. They are achieving the same goals, but with drastically different means. The means, of course, *do* matter. But what's relevant here is that the Chatelaine learns that the creature living her life and making a mockery of her ideals has a very small fragment of her own nature, somewhere amid the wood and glass and bone and Glamour.

Once the character sees herself in the “mirror” of the fetch, she can try to merge. Unfortunately, this requires the cooperation of the fetch, and this alone forces many changelings to give up the quest of reconciliation. But fetches were created to serve a purpose, and when they realize that this purpose is no longer necessary, they just might willingly go along with the changeling's plans. At this point, the fetch needs to understand exactly what happened to the changeling in Arcadia, and that means that the changeling needs to relive it. She must explain to the fetch what was done to her, she must try and understand the alien minds of the Fae and she must consider at what point she stopped being the person that she was and became the changeling that she is. This self-analysis is painful, and often requires the fetch and the changeling to venture into dreams where memories can be relived and considered from a third-person perspective. The changeling must know herself so that the fetch can know her.

After this is complete, the changeling and the fetch must become one. How exactly this happens depends on the character in question. One changeling might meet her fetch in a dream and merge the two vistas. Another might cut her wrist and that of her fetch, bleeding together into the same vessel. The changeling and the fetch might even decide to “become one” in a more carnal sense, which might seem bizarre at first blush, but no more so than their relationship was to begin with. Whatever form this joining takes, when it is over, the fetch has crumbled into its component parts. The changeling retains her personality, morals and perspective — she is the original, after all. But she now has access to all of the memories that her fetch accrued during her abduction, which gives her an incredible advantage in reclaiming her old life. The character also immediately gains a dot of Clarity.

Systems: Understanding the fetch requires a long period of time watching and researching the fetch. This activity is greatly aided if the character can talk with the fetch and gain its cooperation, but if not, Research, Investigation and probably Tailing rolls might be required (see the relevant sections of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*). Actually understanding the fetch enough to progress is an extended action requiring Intelligence + Empathy rolls. Each roll requires one day of study (at least four hours spent studying the fetch or in conversation), and the target number is equal to the number of weeks that the fetch was living the character's life, to a maximum of 50 successes.

The next step, helping the fetch to understand the changeling, is a bit easier, once the changeling understands what it needs to explain (and of course, given a willing fetch). The player must first roll

Clarity in an extended action. Each roll requires four hours of self-exploration, and the target number of successes is $([10 - \text{Clarity}] \times 5)$. Once this action is complete, the character has reached the level of self-awareness necessary to help the fetch understand her time in Arcadia. This requires another extended action. The roll is Manipulation + Expression. Each roll requires one hour of conversation, or one evening of dreams (but rolls made during dreams add the changeling's Wyrd rating, as she is able to reshape her environs to better explain herself). The target number is 10 – the fetch's Intelligence.

Finally, the changeling and the fetch must join somehow. There are no game systems associated with this. The player simply decides how the joining is to take place (and hopefully describes it in an interesting and tasteful fashion). When it is over, the fetch is gone and the character gains a dot of Clarity, as well as the more-valuable memories from her time in exile.

During the first two stages, the Storyteller can (and should) grant bonuses to the extended rolls based on good roleplaying and in-depth exploration of the changeling's psyche, her time in Arcadia, insight into how the fetch's decisions reflect her own personality and clever tactics to find information. The Storyteller might even forego the roll and grant a given number of successes for a good scene, or perhaps set a minimum number of successes (for instance, the Storyteller says that the scene is worth four *or more* successes; if the player rolls more, she takes the higher amount, but even if she fails, she still gets to count the four successes).

Merger with the fetch shouldn't be an easy undertaking. It doesn't have the moral solace of being the “right” thing to do; the fetch might be of such makeup that attempting to sympathize with the fetch is all but abhorrent, and attempting a merger may endanger the character and her loved ones more far more than permanently removing the fetch would. The character can't know that she's doing the right thing on principle. But if the player wants the in-depth exploration of the character that the merger will provide, consider allowing her to attempt it. She can always change her mind and shoot the fetch later, of course — provided she still has the stomach.

WYRD CONSUMPTION

One point of consolation for changelings when dealing with fetches is that their powers are limited. A fetch's Wyrd is never stronger than the changeling that it was created to impersonate, and so a given changeling at least has some idea how powerful her fetch is. The Wyrd of a fetch exists in balance with that of the changeling; one cannot rise higher than the other any more than a one-gallon jug can be made to hold three gallons of liquid.

But the Wyrd doesn't always conform to rules of balance and measure. Sometimes, a fetch is possessed of a survival instinct that is truly frightening to behold, a desire to stay alive that dwarfs the fetch's sense of self. Most fetches are self-centered to some degree, but this solipsism leads them merely to a lack of empathy; they cannot see humans as their peers because the fetches themselves aren't human. Even so, the fetch recognizes itself as a thinking being and doesn't wish to change that. But to some fetches, the terror of becoming inert matter again is so horrifying that they are willing to sacrifice intelligence to avoid losing awareness. Such a fetch might learn the secret of Wyrd Consumption, the practice of consuming the Wyrd in any form in which it exists. These fetches are ultimately doomed to live as monsters, aberrations of magic — but they *do live*, and that is all that's important.

Wyrd Consumption is born of desperation. In a fistfight with a changeling, the fetch bites into the changeling's flesh. Behind the blood, behind the flesh, the fetch tastes something that can save it, something that can keep its mind active and aware rather than forcing its sentience to diffuse back into Glamour. The fetch bites again, bites harder, trying to find that taste again, and tears the changeling's throat out. Heedless of the fact that the fetch is now eating the flesh of someone that looks exactly like it, the fetch tears into the changeling's body, pulls out heart, liver, kidneys and other organs, trying to find the seat of the Wyrd. But of course, the seat of the Wyrd isn't in any particular chunk of meat. If the fetch is going to devour the Wyrd, the fetch must want to truly consume the changeling and take his power. A desperate enough fetch can do exactly that. In a few hours, only bones and sinew remain. The fetch is bloated almost beyond recognition, but still hungry. Within another hour, the fetch returns to its normal size, but it has changed. It is no longer precisely a fetch. Now it is a creature of hunger and desperation.

Changelings have names for these creatures. Some simply call them Devourers. The Summer Court calls them Charybdisans, and regards them as worthy challenges for aspiring warriors (the reasons for sending younger champions after them rather than seasoned veterans is somewhat mercenary; see below). The Spring Court calls them the Ravenous, and sees them as warnings against letting a fetch live for too long or not taking it seriously. The Autumn Court wonders at the naked fear that it takes to induce a fetch to eat "itself" in order to survive, and names these awful creatures Ouroborans, after the mythical self-devouring serpents. The Winter Court refuses to name these creatures, but in freeholds where the Crown of Sorrow holds sway, such beasts are destroyed swiftly and brutally.

The first changeling that a Devourer eats is usually, but not necessarily, the one it was created to mimic. Once this happens, the fetch becomes a Devourer, a true monster. It retains its self-awareness (barely), but loses much of its ability to function in a complex society. If it had family, friends, a job or any other ties to the human world, any importance these fetters had to the fetch evaporates. A raw, animalistic survival instinct replaces those feelings. The Devourer goes to ground, skulks in the slums, the back alleys or the hills of the areas in which it once lived, hunting the fae. Anything that holds Glamour in any way is fair game for its depredations, including other fetches.

The Devourer prizes other changelings above other prey, because consuming the flesh of a changeling increases its overall power and makes it a more cunning hunter. The Devourer can consume fetches, goblin fruits, and even tokens to slake its hunger. The Devourer looks human when on the hunt, and grows noticeably thinner the longer it goes without food. After the Devourer feeds on Glamour, it fills out, becoming sleek and muscular for a few hours, but then begins losing weight quickly once again. When the Devourer consumes a changeling, however, it becomes obese for a short while, falling into a stupor and awakening whip-thin once again.

Devourers can be killed by any normal means, but they feel no pain. Also, the magic holding their non-flesh bodies together is constantly unraveling, which means that bullets and blades don't harm them the way that they should.

In game terms, Devourers:

- Do not suffer wound penalties.

- Suffer bashing damage from bullets and bladed weapons.
- Use the higher of their Wits or Dexterity for determining Defense (as a result of animal-like cunning).

- Lose one point of Glamour per hour. When their Glamour pool is exhausted, they lose one point of Willpower per hour, and finally suffer one point of bashing damage. Devourers starve to death quickly; once a Devourer's Health track is full of lethal damage from hunger, it is too weak to move and suffers one point of aggravated damage per hour (rather than per minute, per the usual rules for dying found on p. 174 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*) until the Devourer dies from starvation.

- Can consume fetches, tokens or goblin fruits for Glamour. Devourers cannot regain Glamour any other way. If a Devourer consumes a fetch, the Devourer receives one point of Glamour per dot of Health + Wyrd the fetch possessed. Goblin fruits bestow one point each. Tokens bestow one point per dot, and the Devourer is immune to any damage that might come from consuming, for instance, a knife or another such non-edible object.

- If a Devourer consumes a changeling, the Devourer adds that changeling's Wyrd rating to its own. Doing so does *not* refill the Devourer's Glamour pool, though, and after eating a changeling, the Devourer falls into a coma-like state for a number of hours equal to its (new) Wyrd rating. The Devourer awakens ravenous, and with a larger appetite, as it can now hold more Glamour.

- Cannot have Intelligence ratings higher than 2, and Social rolls suffer a -5 dice penalty (except Intimidation).

Story Hook — *The Slaughter*

The characters go to the Goblin Market, perhaps to trade some goblin fruits, perhaps to meet a contact. When they arrive, though, they find the Market in tatters. Corpses lie scattered around the remains of destroyed carts and stands, and most of the corpses are half-eaten. The area around the Market is marked by something's Wyrd, but the marks are more potent than any the characters have seen since their escape.

The creature that attacked the Market is a Devourer, one powerful enough to destroy a Market. The Wyrd and Glamour that the Devourer consumed there has allowed it to live comfortably in the Hedge, at least for a while, but it intends to keep hunting and eating. The Devourer obviously poses a danger to any changeling in the area (especially if it's savvy enough to shape the Hedge), but if it grows any more powerful, it might even be able to take on the True Fae. Is that something the characters want to encourage? How much could this creature eat, after all? What would happen if it found its way to Arcadia?

CATCHES FOR THE FETCH

Everything has a catch. The Fae are notorious for building in loopholes and exceptions to everything they do, and the Contracts and pledges that changelings enter into bear witness to that. Even tokens have catches, ways in which anyone — even mortals — can make use of them. Is it some quality of the Wyrd

that stipulates that everything must have a price, that nothing is truly forbidden? Or is this quality simply endemic to the Others? In either case, it's not unreasonable to think that fetches might have "catches" of their own.

The magic that creates and animates a fetch has to do with mimicking human behavior and fooling human onlookers. In a way, it is a much-amplified Mask. The catches are there, though, for those who know how to look. If a fetch's catch is revealed, the fetch might lose its powers. It might immediately understand what it is and why it was created. It might immediately flee to the Hedge, unable to stand the touch of the human world any longer. Or, it might immediately fall to the ground in its component parts.

Below are a few sample catches for fetches, rated from one to five dots. Catches provide some benefit to the fetch, but the higher the dot rating, the more severe the effect of the catch when it is invoked. These catches are only examples, of course — a fetch's catch should be appropriate to both the fetch and the Fae that created it.

Blood of My Blood (•): If the fetch should ever touch the blood of the changeling that the fetch was made to impersonate, its otherworldly heritage is immediately revealed for the space of one scene. The fetch's skin might become waxy and flaking, its eyes change to glass or flame, its tongue to silver or its hair to flax. In any case, the fetch is revealed for what it is. The changeling regains all spent Willpower when invoking this catch, as though fulfilling a Virtue. **Advantage:** The fetch's tenuous hold on its disguise makes it ready for desperate violence. When using an All-Out Attack (see p. 157 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*), the fetch gains +4 rather than +2.

Mumblety-Peg (••): The fetch's shadow is the fetch's weakness. If the shadow is pinned to the ground, the fetch is immobilized. It cannot touch the object that pins it to the ground, though it can try to alter the orientation of its shadow (by changing the light source, if possible) to free itself. Targeting the shadow with a thrown knife imposes a –1 die penalty (see thrown weapons on p. 152 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*). **Advantage:** The fetch has a great deal of magic bound up in its shadow. The fetch receives an extra Echo, chosen from the following list: Feast of Shadows, Shadow Attack, Shadow Boxing, Shadow Step, Shadow's Warning. The fetch must still meet the Wyrd requirement for the Echo.

Snowmelt (•••): The powers of the fetch are nothing but ice, melting away when scrutinized too closely. The fetch has a true name, etched into its flesh during its creation. The fetch doesn't necessarily know this name, but if the name is ever spoken to it aloud, the fetch loses all of its powers — Wyrd, Echoes and Glamour simply vanish, forever. The fetch keeps any Skills or Merits, but is doomed to remain a hollow shell of a being (unless the changeling goes on to kill it, of course). **Advantage:** The fetch knows how to use the power of names, itself. Once it knows the born name of a changeling that it has met, the distance at which the Attuned to the Wyrd Echo functions increases to *one mile* in radius.

Banishment (••••): The fetch lives on borrowed time in the human world, and this is represented by a trinket worn around its neck at all time. This trinket is made of glass, plastic or some other brittle material. If it breaks, the fetch must flee to the Hedge immediately, and can never return to the human world. If it does so (or is dragged back), it suffers one point of aggravated damage per *turn*, as the human world blisters its false flesh away.

Advantage: The fetch knows the Hedge well. It receives the Enter the Hedge Echo in addition to its other Echoes, and enjoys a +2 bonus to *all* rolls in the Hedge.

Fragile Creation (•••••): The right word, the right scent, the right weapon destroys the fetch, sending it crashing to the ground in its component parts. The "key" to destroying the fetch is always difficult to discover, but might be a magical phrase that only the True Fae know, a powder distilled from exotic goblin fruit or a thorn from a rose grown on the grave of someone the fetch killed. Once this key is properly administered, the fetch immediately dies, and the changeling who killed it gains whatever benefit is appropriate. **Advantage:** The fetch is otherwise immortal. Normal weapons do not harm it, poisons do not sicken it and it shrugs off baleful magic. Only the catch, the key that unlocks its magic, can bring it low.

SHATTERING THE MIRRORS OF OTHERS

The relationship between fetch and changeling is quite personal, and so the rewards for killing the fetch belong only to the changeling whose face the fetch wears — normally. But the fetch has magic of its own, and theft of magic isn't beyond the capability or the desire of many changelings. The new milestone Merits described earlier in this chapter present some possibilities; it is possible to steal a Cuckoo's Egg from another changeling, after all. And yet, even those Merits require the appropriate changeling to strike the killing blow. Many changelings, though, wonder if they couldn't steal the glory and power of killing a fetch from another changeling (or perhaps spare a friend the trauma of doing so). And besides, the components of a dead fetch often command a high price at the Goblin Market. If they're just useless refuse, why would this be the case?

Below are several good reasons to kill fetches, quite beyond the satisfaction of destroying something that the Others created. Again, game systems in this section are optional — use them if they seem appropriate to your chronicle, ignore them if not. And remember that the magic of Glamour isn't always consistent. What works once might not work again. The advantages below that depend on harvesting body parts put a time restriction on the affair: the changeling must obtain the body part before the fetch disintegrates back to its component parts. Since there is no way to know how long this will take, changelings who hunt fetches for their body parts prefer to harvest them while the fetch is still "alive."

• **Favors:** An obvious reason to kill another changeling's fetch is to get power over that changeling. As the story of Alec Bourbon illustrates, this can be done in exchange for money, power or the promise of a favor. A changeling might enter into a pledge with another in exchange for proof of the dead fetch. This means that the changeling taking the risk and doing the deed is the one who risks Clarity loss, and for some changelings, that's enough. Of course, if a changeling lets someone else kill his fetch, he'll never gain the Broken Mirror (or any of the other milestone Merits), and he'll never gain the kind of closure that comes from tearing the Gentry's toy apart.

• **Materials:** The components used to make a fetch are prone to becoming tokens. A changeling who worked such a component into an object and then leaves the object in the Hedge for a week often returns to find the object has become a token. In game terms, this is a simple way to allow a player to spend experience on a token; you might even consider reducing the experience

cost a bit, depending on how much work went into obtaining the components and creating the object.

- **Glamour:** Swallowing the eye of a fetch completely refills the changeling's Glamour pool. An eye can be kept in whiskey to preserve it; in this way, the eye will keep for up to one year, even if the eye would normally have reverted to a glass bead or polished rock.

- **Dreams:** Taking a fetch's tongue allows the changeling to enter the dreams of a mortal with *half* the usual number of successes required.

- **Echoes:** Cutting off and keeping a fetch's toes allows the changeling to use its Echoes. Each time the changeling does so, one of the toes crumbles away. The toe must be held in the palm of the changeling's hand. Using the Echoes of a fetch is a breaking point for changelings of Clarity 6 or higher.

- **Secrets:** Removing a fetch's ear and boiling it creates a strong and bitter tea that, when drunk, reveals the direst secret the fetch ever heard. This secret is more interesting from some fetches than others, of course. Making the tea again from the other ear reveals the same secret, but some hunters prefer to sell one ear and keep the other, or brew the second pot of tea after they have some context for the secret.

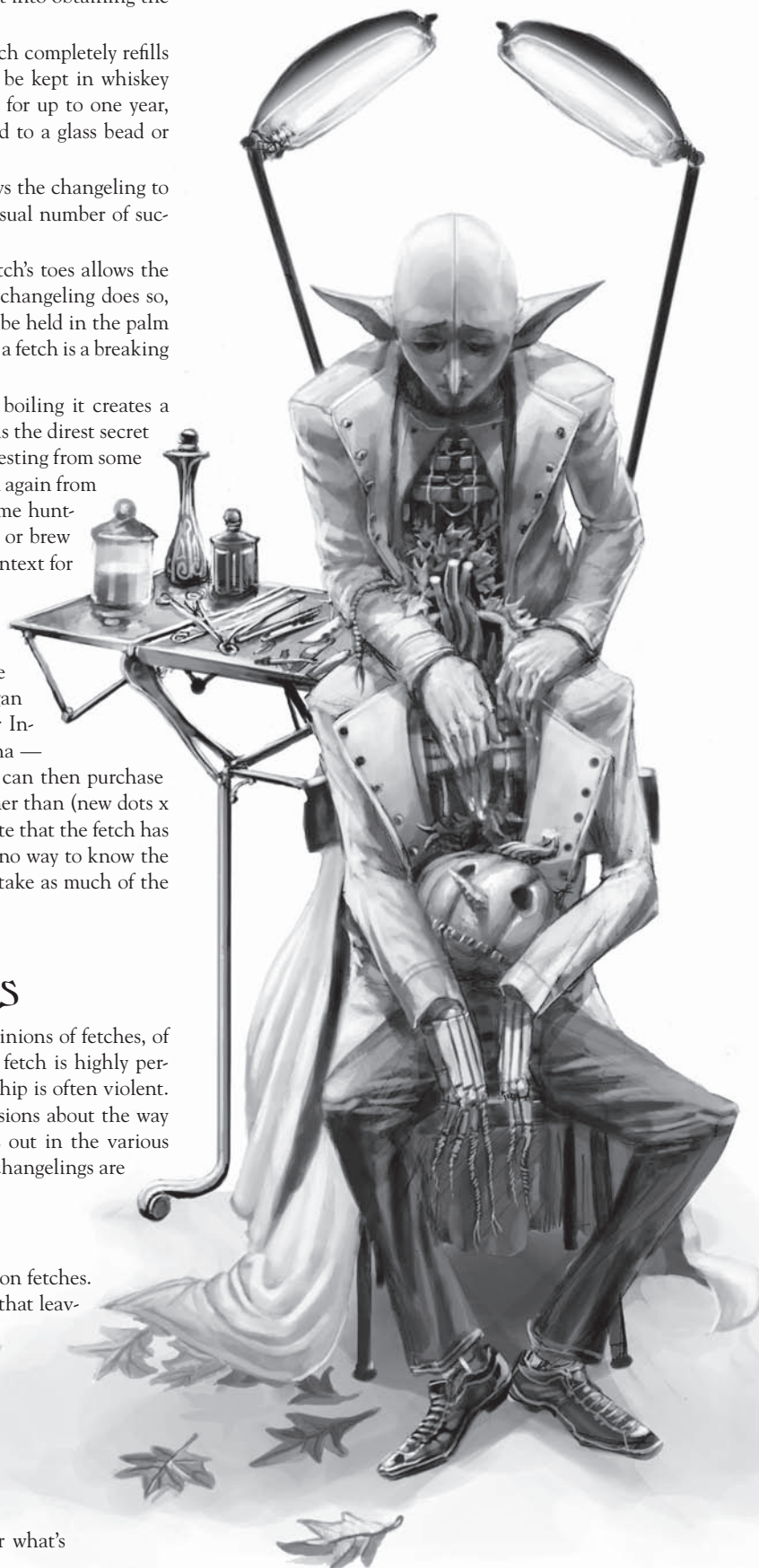
- **Attributes:** This option exists only if the fetch was exceptional in some way (that is, had an Attribute at 4 or higher). The changeling can harvest an appropriate organ — hands for Dexterity, part of the brain for Intelligence, lips for Presence, heart for Stamina — grind it up and consume it. The changeling can then purchase a dot of that Attribute for (new dots x 3) rather than (new dots x 5). Organs can be harvested for every Attribute that the fetch has at 4 or more, but of course the harvester has no way to know the fetch's Traits, so many such changelings just take as much of the body as time allows.

THE FETCH AND THE COURTS

The Great Courts don't have unified opinions of fetches, of course. A changeling's relationship with his fetch is highly personal, even if the expression of that relationship is often violent. That said, it is possible to draw some conclusions about the way in which the fetch/changeling conflict plays out in the various Courts, simply by considering what kinds of changelings are drawn to them.

SPRING COURT

The Court of Desire has mixed feelings on fetches. On the one hand, some Spring courtiers feel that leaving old lives and their consequences behind means ignoring the fetch entirely, letting bygones be bygones and abandoning the existence that doesn't really belong to the changeling anymore. "Going stealth," killing the fetch and slipping back into one's life, is just too much work and doesn't leave enough time or energy for what's



really important. And besides, fetches are often living their lives as mundane humans. Where's the fun in that, compared to life as a changeling?

But on the other hand, the notion of reclamation pounds hard in the hearts of the Spring courtiers. After winter follows spring, after slavery follows freedom, after the indignity of a stolen life follows the sweet and bloody rush of justice. The fetch must die so that the changeling *can*, should she so choose, reclaim her life.

Which avenue a Spring courtier chooses depends partly on the specific attitudes of the Court in the freehold, but mostly on a given changeling's situation. If a changeling can best fulfill the ideals of the Court by leaving the fetch alone, no Spring courtier will fault her for it.

SUMMER COURT

It's not hard to surmise how the Summer Court feels about fetches: they are enemies. Any given fetch might call down the Gentry. Kill them, break their false bodies and burn them to ash. And then, if possible, scatter those ashes in the Hedge to remind the Fae: this is what becomes of your handiwork. The Court of Wrath finds much to be angry about with the impostors and cuckoos nestled into the changelings' former lives.

In some freeholds, killing the fetch is a rite of passage into the Summer Court. It doesn't matter if the changeling actually strikes the killing blow, or if he manipulates someone else into doing it or just pushes the fetch into traffic. The important thing is that the fetch is gone, the changeling's position is strengthened and if the Summer Court can anger a few people in the process, so much the better.

AUTUMN COURT

The Ashen Court is all for destroying fetches, but unlike their brethren in the Court of Wrath, changelings of the Autumn Court don't strike the killing blow quickly. The fetch is too great a resource. It can answer too many questions about the Gentry — how was a fetch created? Why did the Gentry choose a particular material out of which to fashion a given fetch? What Contracts allow a fetch to walk, talk, breathe and bleed like a human being until the moment of death? Why do some fetches revert to their components immediately, while others take days? How do Echoes work, and could the Lost potentially mimic them?

Autumn courtiers may resort to vivisection, behavioral experiments carried out by proxies, and of course magic to learn all they can about their doppelgängers. When these changelings feel they have learned enough, or when the risk grows too great, they dispose of the fetches. The Court of Fear very seldom takes any notice of whom a given fetch belongs to, though, and so in some Autumn-controlled freeholds, the knowledge of a fetch's location (any fetch) is a valuable commodity.

WINTER COURT

The Court of Sorrow feels that the best way to avoid the Gentry is to blend in with humanity. Where fetches are concerned, this presents a bit of a problem. Murderers have a hard time blending in (though admittedly, the lack of a corpse does make getting away with it a bit simpler), but people with completely identical duplicates are a dead giveaway for the Fae.

While the Winter Court isn't as hard-line about fetch extermination as the Summer Court, changelings of the Winter Court

Story Hook — Fetch Town

There's a little town out in the country. The population is only about 300 or so. Of those, just under half are fetches. A particular Keeper with a penchant for keeping large numbers of slaves has been preying on this town for years, and has discovered that it's easier to keep things under control when the fetches cover for each other. He makes sure to leave enough members of each family as human beings so that they keep breeding, of course — wouldn't do to exhaust the supply.

The characters might be lifelong residents who escape from this Keeper's clutches together, arriving home only to find his reach is long indeed. They might be changelings (or even other types of characters) who arrive in a small town where a select group of people — who don't seem to have anything in common in the way of age, race or occupation — appear to communicate without words, and stare at the characters unnervingly.

fully agree that the fetches need to die sooner rather than later. Of course, going out of one's way to destroy someone else's fetch is a needless risk, and so the Winter changelings focus on killing their own fetches, quickly and quietly. Usually, Winter courtiers are taught to treat the murder as though they are killing a normal human being. Yes, the body probably *will* disintegrate into string and twigs, but better to plan as though it won't. Although the Court of Sorrow doesn't want to admit it, mistakes happen — sometimes a confused changeling kills the wrong target, and this kind of planning makes the consequences of such mistakes easier to deal with on a practical level.

FETCHES IN THE WORLD OF DARKNESS

The fae aren't alone in the corners of humanity's eyes. Other creatures exist alongside them, and since fetches spend time among the humans, fetches spend time among the beings that walk in their shadows. Of course, most of the creatures have no inkling that fetches (or, indeed, changelings) exist, but it's a small world, as they say, and so it's worth considering what relationship the other supernatural beings of the World of Darkness might develop with fetches.

FETCHES AND MORTALS

Fetches live and work among mortals, but few mortals know it. As mentioned in *Changeling*, sometimes a member of the fetch's family figures it out, and what the fetch does if the family member confronts it depends on the fetch. Some fetches deny it, either because they really believe in the Gentry's lie or because they are afraid to admit the truth, for fear it might bring their double back from Arcadia. Some fetches confess, either explicitly or subtly, but revel in the pain and fear this causes in their double's relative — “cross me, and you'll never see him again.” Some don't confess, but leave the area, severing ties with anyone that the changeling knew. And a very rare few tell the changeling's

family the truth. This almost always ends badly. Perhaps because of a curse from the Others, family members of changelings with honest fetches tend to meet with horrible accidents, or tend to get pulled into the Hedge themselves.

FETCHES AND VAMPIRES

Vampires prey on the blood of human beings, and sooner or later that means a vampire might try to feast on a fetch. But fetches aren't precisely alive: they were never born, and they don't have souls. Therefore, although fetches bleed like mortals, their blood isn't nourishing to vampires, and the undead feel a profound sense of unease after feeding on them. This unease usually leads to terrifying dreams the next day — the vampire can't shake the feeling that he has transgressed against something more powerful than he, something that had a prior claim to this "mortal."

Vampires see many strange things as they go about their nightly dance, and a mortal whose blood tasted foul followed by a day of nightmares isn't necessarily something that induces a vampire to follow up. Thus, vampires generally have no idea that fetches even exist, and have no way to detect them.

Game systems: Fetches are subject to vampiric Disciplines just as mortals are, but their blood provides no Vitae to vampires. Fetches do not become ghouls from drinking vampire blood, and they don't fall under the Vinculum (they are bound to other masters), although they can suffer blood addiction. Obviously, fetches cannot be Embraced.

FETCHES AND WEREWOLVES

Werewolves, the savage hunters of moonlit nights, have their own legends of the fae. Gateways open for werewolves just as they do for humans, and since these shapechangers began their lives as human beings, the notion of being "taken by the faeries" isn't necessarily foreign. Within the werewolves' own culture, though, they hear stories of werewolves being forced to served as attack dogs to alien beings.

It is possible, if unlikely, that a True Fae would kidnap a werewolf and leave a fetch behind, but obviously the fetch has no shape-shifting powers and none of the spiritual abilities that werewolves do. That fetch could look forward to an exceedingly brief life — as soon as the fetch's pack finds it and tells by its scent that it is not who it seems, the fetch will probably be tortured into revealing its true nature (if it knows) and then eviscerated. Fortunately, few Keepers try to steal away a werewolf. Uratha aren't nearly as... pliable as ordinary humans, and therefore far less amusing.

Game systems: Werewolf Gifts function on fetches as they do on humans. Fetches are *not* subject to Lunacy, however. A werewolf eating the flesh of a fetch is likely in for a bit of a surprise when the fetch changes back to wire and dry bones, and the werewolf gains no Essence in any event. Fetches are immune to spiritual possession, and of course cannot undergo the Change and become werewolves.

FETCHES AND MAGES

Mages are naturally curious, and what's worse, they often have the power to uncover any mystery they wish. The notion of artificially created doppelgängers of kidnap victims is precisely the sort of thing that would set at least some mages to action. It would only be worse if they knew how many people the Fae had truly replaced.

But the advantage that fetches have is that they don't typically go looking for trouble of the supernatural variety, and mages often look down on "Sleepers" (the somewhat derogatory term for normal people). A fetch can pass a mage on the street and unless the mage is paying attention (magically) or the fetch uses an Echo *right then*, the mage isn't likely to notice.

The Fae might try to abduct a mage and replace him with a fetch, but the results are quite unlikely to be worth all the trouble. The Others are not capable of reconstructing the memories of magic, and so a fetch-mage would probably be completely insane, unable to reconcile the visions and memories with the capability of its artificial mind. That doesn't necessarily mean the fetch isn't functional, however, and though the mage's compatriots would quickly see through the ruse, that doesn't give them any real advantage in finding their friend.

Game systems: Fetches are not capable of Awakening, and not subject to Disbelief. They are not considered Sleepers for purposes of witnessing vulgar magic (lacking a true Sleeper's connection to the Abyss). The illusion woven to make them, though, also makes them subject to magic as though they were Sleepers (though they add their Wyrd ratings where a mage would use Gnosis for purposes of resistance). Fetches do not have souls, but they have something in place of souls, some bastardization created by Fae magic. A mage who scrutinizes a fetch needs to accrue 15 successes to see the ruse, and since a cursory glance sees a "soul," even if there is something strange about it, many mages don't look any deeper.

FETCHES AND PROMETHEANS

Prometheans are rarer than changelings, perhaps one in a million humans, and Prometheans never stay in one place for too long. The Created are the products of the Divine Fire, but the result is similar to what the Fae have wrought with the fetches, with one important distinction. Prometheans can become human. Fetches cannot.

Drawing conclusions about how a Promethean might respond to a fetch is difficult due to the scarcity of the Created, but it's not inconceivable that the Promethean might feel, initially, that he has found a kindred spirit in this odd being. But when the Promethean learns *why* the fetch exists, the truth might just outrage and panic him. What if he was only created to cover up some horrible crime? Is he a fetch gone wrong? Were the original Prometheans just sick experiments on the part of the Fae? If so, what does that make the Divine Fire?

Prometheans are pilgrims. Fetches are placeholders. Their similarities cannot overcome that difference, in the long run.

Game systems: Fetches are not subject to Disquiet. They lack the humanity necessary to respond to the intensity of the Divine Fire. Since their bodies become inert matter quickly after death, fetch-corpses cannot be used to make Prometheans.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Included below are seven sample fetches. Two of them are based on characters presented in Appendix Two of **Changeling: The Lost**, two are based on characters found in this book (the Glutton, p. 20, and Damiana, p. 15), two are the fetches for unspecified characters (potentially adaptable to characters in your chronicle) and the seventh is the fetch of a now-dead changeling.

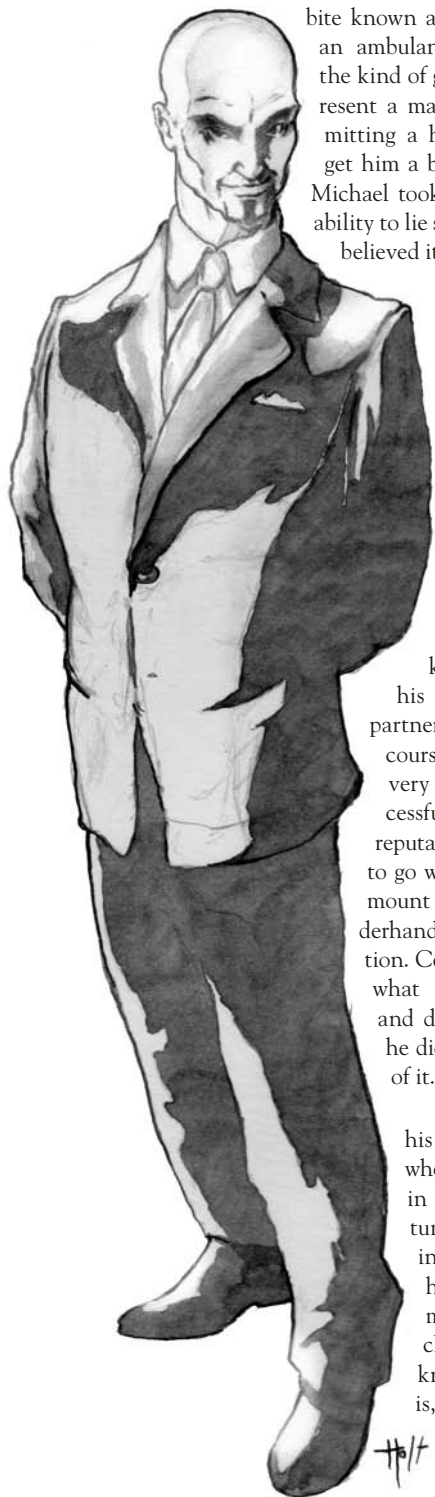
Bobby Slim and Luke Argent are fetches to unspecified changelings. Thus, their Wyrd ratings are listed as "1" given the

lack of information about their Lost bases. If you use these characters, you can of course increase their Wyrd ratings based on the power level of the changelings to whom they are attached.

MICHAEL BARTOK

Quote: "Settle? You had your chance to settle, I'm afraid. Now you're in for the long haul."

Background: Michael Bartok had a few serpentine traits long before he became the Venom-bite known as Cerastes. He was an ambulance-chasing lawyer, the kind of guy who would represent a man shot while committing a home invasion and get him a big cash settlement. Michael took great pride in his ability to lie so well that even he believed it.



After his time in Faerie, Michael (now Cerastes, or Leon Fame, as he sometimes calls himself) returned to Earth and found that he'd apparently never left. His double — or "fetch," as he soon learned it was called — had kept right on living his life and was now partner of the firm. Of course, the firm wasn't very big, but it was successful and enjoyed a reputation as the place to go when you wanted to mount a profitable but underhanded piece of litigation. Cerastes looked upon what "he" had wrought and despaired... because he didn't remember a bit of it.

Cerastes watches his fetch sometimes, when he's not engaged in duties for the Autumn Court, wondering if this is all part of his Keeper's amusement. The fetch-Michael is flawless. If it knows what it really is, it never lets on. How could something Fae-made

be so successful at impersonating a man, down to knowing the names of his mistresses?

The fetch, for its part, has moments in which it realizes the truth. But like the real Michael, the fetch is so practiced a liar that even it believes the ruse most of the time. If any confrontation between Michael and fetch is to occur, they have to admit the truth — Michael is here, in Miami, not back in Faerie. The fetch is a creature made of shed snake-skin and shiny baubles, not a real man. But that admission would require more courage than either being has.

Description: The fetch is tall and lean. "He" shaves his head and wears a thin goatee, stays tan and fit, and wears a diamond pinky ring. It is by turns aggressive and conciliatory, and has cultivated a reputation in Miami as the last lawyer in the world you'd ever want to be sued by. The fetch wears expensive suits and drives a sports car, and usually carries its wedding ring in his breast pocket (only wearing it in court and at home).

Storytelling Hints: This fetch is a good lesson in why killing the fetch is a breaking point, because the fetch so perfectly mirrors its double. Cerastes is unsure that the fetch really is a fetch — it might really be Michael, and this "changeling" stuff might all be a dream, a mental illness. Or, as he truly fears, he might be back in Arcadia and just waiting for the curtain to fall. If Cerastes ever does go after Bartok, it's likely to be in a fit of rage, and Bartok has enough friends in high places to bring retribution down upon the Courts if threatened.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Law) 4, Computer 2, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Politics (Miami) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 1, Larceny 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Empathy (Lies) 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 3, Socialize 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Contacts (Police, City Hall, Medical, Business) 4, Fame 1, Resources 3, Status (City Hall) 2

Willpower: 5

Morality: 5

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Greed

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Health: 7

Wyrd: 2

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, Inviolable Dreams, Revoke Catch

Glamour/per Turn: 11/2

SISTER MARY ACATHA

Quote: "I'm too old for that sort of thing."

Background: It was 1957 when the real Ella Stevens was stolen away to Arcadia, taken by the Greve of Stolen Lovers (see p. 76). In her place, he left a woman carelessly thrown together from English sod and leftover honey, a woman who retained Ella's physical beauty but did not have her inner spark. The fetch returned to Ella's quiet, conservative life, and while the real Ella was off becoming Damiana (see p. 15), the fetch grew up into the semblance

of a strong young woman. It was married off to the scion of a new-moneyed family and expected to produce a passel of children... and of course, the fetch could not.

"Ella's" husband, never too enthused about his distant, cold wife anyway, divorced her, claiming (falsely) that the marriage had never been consummated. Ella's family disowned the fetch, and it turned to the Church, becoming a nun. It took the name "Mary Agatha," after the Virgin Mary and St. Agatha, the patron saint of barren women. The fetch entered a convent in 1963, and there the fetch remains to this day.

Over time, however, the fetch has become quite familiar with the convent grounds, and has learned, through chance contact with the fae, what it truly is. She (the fetch does not like to be referred to as "it") doesn't leave the convent ground much, but she is happy to barter sanctuary to changelings and fetches in exchange for donations to the Church (she takes a bit off the top, of course). Mary Agatha is bitter over the life she missed while waiting to discover her true nature — had she known that she was not human, she wouldn't have wasted so much time trying to be one. As her body grows old and frail, she wonders whether her changeling double still lives. Mary Agatha has a lot of favors built up, and she is considering calling them in to find Ella Stevens (now the Bright One Damiana).

Description: Nearing 70 years old, Sister Mary Agatha walks carefully and speaks slowly. She hasn't worn anything but her nun's habit for decades, and she spends her time at the convent reading and working with the local homeless and destitute (and occasionally the changelings and fetches that hide among them, needing a place to stay). A tiny glimmer of her youthful beauty remains in her eyes, but most of the magic that duplicated Ella Stevens is gone, washed away by time.

Storytelling Hints: Sister Mary Agatha is by turns bitter, resigned, greedy, kind and cold-hearted. She has never quite settled on a human personality — Ella was a naïve young girl when she was taken, and the Greve of Stolen Lovers didn't waste too much time getting the fetch just right. Therefore, Sister Mary Agatha mimics generalized human behavior well but has very little personality herself. This, in part, is why she wants to meet Damiana — Sister Mary Agatha wants to know who she *really* grew up to be.

Characters might owe the good Sister a favor, and be asked



to bring Damiana to the convent. Of course, that will put them in conflict with Bert, but that's not Mary Agatha's problem.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 5

Mental Skills: Academics (Catholicism) 3, Crafts 2, Occult 3, Politics 3

Physical Skills: Drive 1, Stealth 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy (Faking Emotions) 2, Expression 2, Persuasion (Kindly Old Lady) 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Contacts (Church, Changelings, Fetches) 3, Meditative Mind, Resources 2

Willpower: 9

Morality: 3

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 7

Defense: 2

Speed: 8

Health: 7

Wyrd: 3

Echoes: Amplify Curse, Attuned to the Wyrd, Mimic Contract, Normalcy

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

CARLOS GARCÁL

Quote: "Make sure those knives are sharp before you leave. Please."

Background: Carlos Garcál was an up-and-coming chef in South Beach. His mentor turned over the reins of a four-star restaurant when he retired, and Carlos took to his new job with gusto. And then one night, he just disappeared. He was discovered in a bar in Little Havana four days later, so drunk he couldn't remember his name. His memory returned over the course of the next day, but the restaurant decided he was unstable and fired him.

The man that they fired wasn't Carlos Garcál at all, though. It was a fetch. Carlos had been stolen by Crumbcoat and Ganache (see p. 75), two True Fae who had heard of his culinary skill and wished to put it to use. While the real Carlos toiled in Arcadia, his fetch tried to make a go of being Carlos. It lacked Carlos' natural skill and imagination, though, and had to make up for that lack with practice and training. Over time, the fetch became a proficient chef, but its dishes were never as original as those of the real Carlos. It managed to eke out a living, though, and kept to itself, wondering what exactly had happened to it. And then that question was answered in one horrible night.

He returned to the bar that he'd been discovered in that night, as he did every week. This time, there was a monster waiting for him. The monster burst into the bar with blades and bludgeons and killed everyone present — except the fetch, which managed to escape. The monster, a Gristlegrinder known to the changelings of Miami only as the Glutton (see p. 20), had failed to kill his fetch, but in so doing realized something. No matter what he did, he could never go back to being Carlos Garcál. He was the Glutton, and there was no place in the human world for him. He retreated to the Hedge and remained there.

The fetch, though, has finally found a purpose. The Glutton is the fetch's questing beast, the monster that the fetch must slay to give its life meaning. To that end, the fetch is trying to find the Glutton. And when the fetch does, it will drive the cooking knives that once belonged to Carlos Garcá into the monster's heart, one by one, until the monster is dead and the fetch is all that remains.

Description: Carlos looks almost nothing like its changeling counterpart. The fetch is plump, but not fat. It has black, thinning hair and a handlebar moustache. Its hands are often stained with food and it always carries a well-sharpened carving knife on its person.

Storytelling Hints: Carlos can be used as the answer to an enigma (who is the Glutton?). Because the fetch is so different from the changeling that it was created to impersonate, it might even approach a group of changelings and ask for help in finding the creature that tried to kill it. If the fetch can somehow convince them that its intentions are pure, they might lead it straight to the Glutton — and then either join in or bear witness to a battle royal.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Crafts (Cooking) 3, Occult 2, Politics 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Stealth 2, Weaponry (Knife) 3

Social Skills: Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Socialize (Dinner Parties) 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Fame 1, Fast Reflexes 2, Iron Stomach, Resources 2

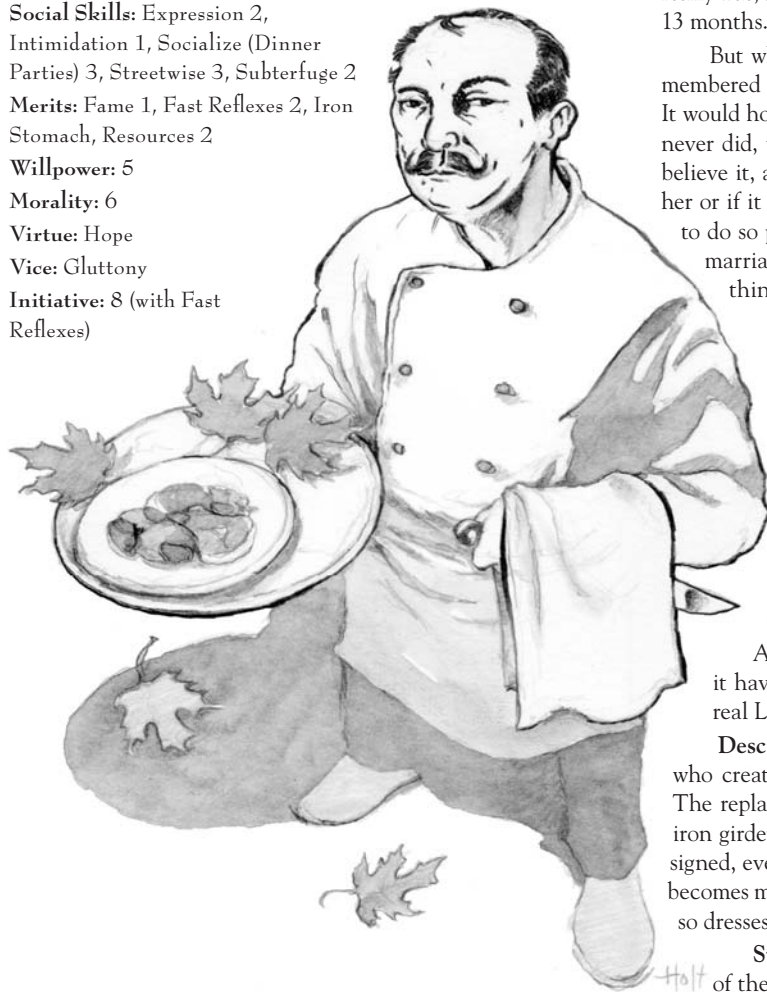
Willpower: 5

Morality: 6

Virtue: Hope

Vice: Gluttony

Initiative: 8 (with Fast Reflexes)



Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Health: 7

Wyrd: 3

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, Feast of Shadows, Mimic Contract, Shadow Attack

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Knife	1L	—	7	—

LUKE ARGENT

Quote: "What am I supposed to do?"

Background: It was November 1st when Luke Argent realized he wasn't human. He isn't sure exactly what the final straw was, but the weeks of horrible dreams were all leading up to the realization, he felt sure. But when the blinds fell away, they fell completely. He remembered being crafted slowly, by a very careful and patient Fae, looking down and seeing his creator still fashioning his legs out of hewn wood and epoxy. He remembered being sent out of the Hedge to replace the real Luke Argent, and he remembered the odd feeling of anticipation of stepping into this life changing to anticipation of getting home to see his wife. By the time he actually did arrive home, he had forgotten what he really was, and he remained in that state of ignorance for the next 13 months.

But when the last October night ended, the fetch-Luke remembered what it was, and settled into an odd kind of fatalism. It would hold its double's life for him until he returned, and if he never did, well, his wife never needed to know. How would she believe it, anyway? It wondered, at times, whether it really loved her or if it just believed it did because the Keeper had created it to do so plausibly. In the end, it bore her no ill will, and their marriage was already in a comfortable routine — why disturb things?

And then they discovered she was pregnant.

The fetch felt a few brief moments of exhilaration, and then fear and then anger. It couldn't sire children — that much was clear. How could unliving matter make a human child? But what did that mean? Was it (rather, Luke's) wife having an affair? If so, wasn't that her decision, since her husband hadn't actually been her husband for months? And why should the fetch care, anyway?

But some dark part of the fetch's mind wonders if it is possible for it to have impregnated Luke's wife. And if so, is it possible for it to love her? And if so, does it have the strength and the desire to step aside when the real Luke does return?

Description: Luke Argent was a large man, and the Fae who created the fetch had to saw down trees to do his work. The replacement Luke is well over six feet tall, with arms like iron girders and immense, callused hands. It normally has a resigned, even gentle look, but when thinking about his lot in life becomes moody, pensive and short. It is a professional mover, and so dresses to work rather than to impress.

Storytelling Hints: The fetch of Luke Argent (or of one of the characters, if used in that role) would be a good man

if it truly *were* a man. As it is, it is keenly aware of its nature. All it is unsure of is what it all means. Should it be a monster? Should it look to kill his double when and if he returns from Faerie? The fetch was quite content to let Luke have his life back, but if the child is truly its, it feels perhaps that it has a claim to this life and this world. How Luke responds to changelings will depend entirely on how it's approached. If they approach with hostility, the fetch fights like a man defending his family. If the fetch is approached with reason, the fetch responds rationally. If actually confronted with its original model, it's hard to say what would happen. This fetch is designed for a genuine moral dilemma; destroying it is by no means clearly the right thing to do, but it shouldn't be clear that letting it live is the right thing to do, either.

The other issue with Luke, of course, is his wife. Depending on the needs of the chronicle, she might be pregnant with a fetch-spawn, a fetch-child or from an extra-marital affair. Again, how the fetch responds depends on how (and if) it learns the truth.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Crafts (Car Repair) 2, Occult 1, Science 1

Physical Skills: Athletics (Lifting) 4, Brawl 3, Drive (Box Truck) 2, Firearms 1, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Co-Workers) 2, Giant, Resources 2, Strong Back

Willpower: 6

Morality: 6

Virtue: Temperance

Vice: Envy

Initiative: 4

Defense: 2

Speed: 11

Health: 10

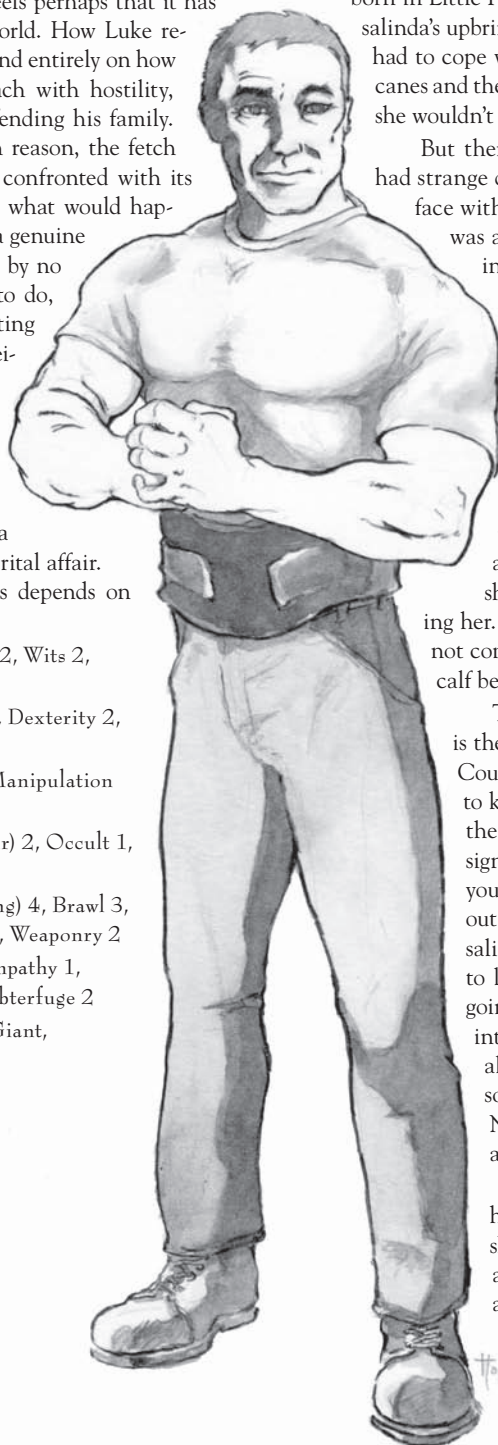
Wyrd: 1

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, Secondhand Blessing

Glamour/per Turn: 10/1

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Shotgun	4L	20/40/80	7	9-again
Tire Iron	2B	—	8	—



ROSALINDA FORASTERO

Quote: "I had that dream again last night."

Background: Rosalinda Forastero, as far as she knows, was born in Little Havana in 1985 to Cuban immigrant parents. Rosalinda's upbringing was nothing out of the ordinary — yes, she had to cope with the rising drug traffic in her area, the hurricanes and the other issues of living in Miami, but until recently, she wouldn't have considered herself to be too remarkable.

But then, in the late 1990s, she began to wonder. She had strange dreams, dreams in which she would come face to face with herself... except the "self" she saw wasn't her. It was a woman who looked like her, but who had roses in her hair and thorns in her smile. And what's worse, she couldn't shake the feeling that the rose-woman was the *real* Rosalinda, and she was just a sculpture.

But as strange as these dreams were, the scholarship was stranger still. Rosalinda received a full ride to the University of Miami, a prize for some "Cuban-American Fellowship" that she no memory of applying for. She is currently in her sophomore year at the university, and the dreams have only worsened. What's more, she can't shake the feeling that someone is following her. The feeling isn't precisely one of menace, but it's not comforting either. At times, Rosalinda feels like the calf being fattened for the slaughter.

The reason for this, of course, is because Rosalinda is the fetch of Maria Thorne. Naamah of the Autumn Court arranged for the fetch's scholarship, and works to keep it hidden from other changelings (Maria and the Spring Court especially). Naamah routinely assigns motleys of Autumn courtiers to watch over the young "woman" for a few days at a time, but changes out these "handlers" frequently, both to avoid Rosalinda noticing them and to allow the changelings to live their own lives. At some point, Rosalinda is going to be a *superb* bargaining chip, and Naamah intends to use the fetch in exactly that manner. This also means making sure that Maria Thorne retains some amount of power and influence, though, and Naamah spares some effort to that end occasionally as well.

Description: Rosalinda is a Latina woman in her early 20s. She isn't as beautiful as the woman she was designed to mimic, but she is attractive in a subtle way. She is curvaceous, with soft features and short, black hair. She dresses like a college student and is completely unaware of her supernatural heritage, never having been within a mile of the real Rosalinda.

Storytelling Hints: Rosalinda might seem like a sympathetic character, but the truth is that the fetch is too ignorant at the moment to tell which way it will go. What it will do when it learns its true nature is anyone's guess, and Naamah has made sure to keep the fetch in the dark for precisely that reason. If it could be persuaded to work *with* the Autumn Court, a motley might find itself in charge of training the



fetch for the inevitable confrontation — perhaps to win, perhaps to lose in precisely the right way.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Computer 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Graceful) 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 2, Weaponry 1

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression (Dance) 4, Socialize 2, Streetwise (Little Havana) 2, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Autumn Court) 5, Barfly, Iron Stamina 1, Resources 1, Striking Looks 2

Willpower: 5

Clarity: 7

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Sloth

Initiative: 6

Defense: 6 (with Shadow's Warning)

Speed: 10

Health: 8

Wyrd: 3

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, False Seeming, Match, Shadow's Warning

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

DON SARNO

Quote: "You're not taking my family from me."

Background: Don Sarno was a good man. He worked hard at his job, supported his wife and children, paid his taxes, attended church at St.

Matthew's every Sunday and he was happy about it. He felt that he had a good bead on things, and the night before the Gentry took him, he was sitting on his deck playing poker with his friends, basking in the summer night. By the next sunrise, Don was gone, but the thing that replaced him didn't know the difference.

Don Sarno — the real Don Sarno — returned 366 days later as a Mirrorskin. He showed up at the house while the fetch and his friends were playing poker. The fetch felt Don from down the block, and when Don arrived, the fetch was prepared. His buddies grabbed the changeling and beat him within an inch of his life, drove him out to the deep pine forest and dug him a hole. The fetch put a bullet in his head, and they left him there.

But now the fetch couldn't go back to sleep, as it were. It knew that it was different. It knew that there were other beings out there, just like the one that had come to it wearing its own

face and trying to take its family away. It could sense them when it went to work, smell their stink at church, even feel their eyes on it when it mowed its lawn. It couldn't just let them run around free, and so the fetch told its friends as much as it knew. Its friends believed it — they had seen the creature pretending to be Don, after all. They obtained weapons, and using "Don" as their watchdog, they went hunting. No changeling in the area is safe now.

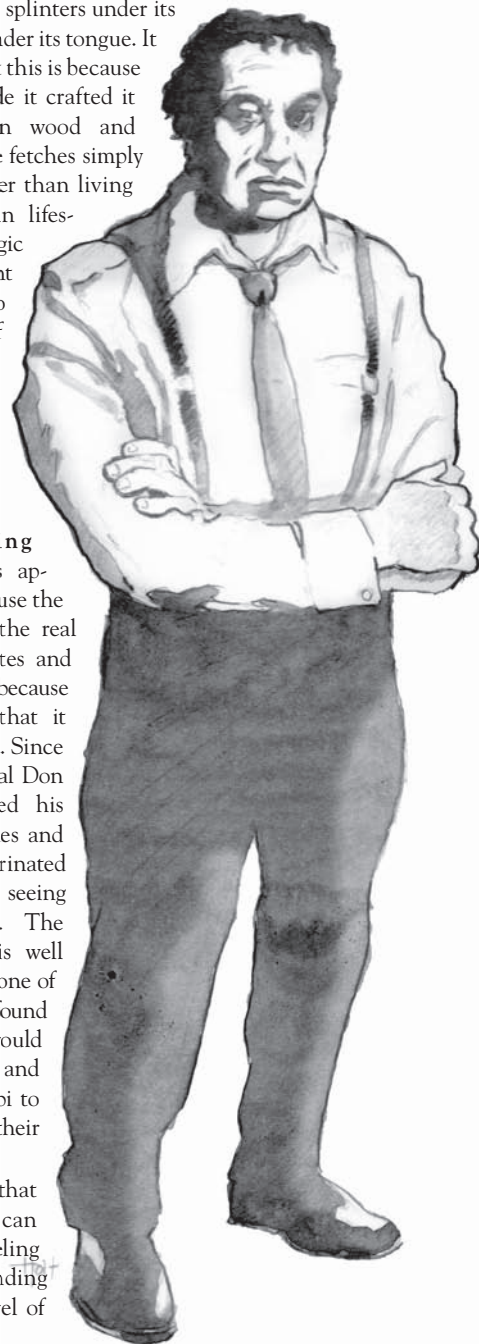
Description: Don is a burly man in his early 40s. He has curly, black hair and deep-set blue eyes, a thick build and deep, friendly voice. When he gets angry, though, the warmth in his voice vanishes, and it takes on a rough grumble (Don's friends refer to it as his "Daddy voice," since he most often uses it when the kids misbehave).

Since killing the changeling that it was built to replace, "Don" often finds splinters under its fingernails and under its tongue. It doesn't know that this is because the Fae that made it crafted it from rough-hewn wood and dried moss. Some fetches simply wither away rather than living out a full human lifespan as their magic fades; this might be beginning to happen to Don. If so, the vague instinctual understanding of its own mortality might increase its desperation.

Storytelling

Hints: Don (it's appropriate for it to use the name now that the real Don is dead) hates and fears changelings because they remind it that it isn't really human. Since killing the original Don Sarno, it's refined his hunting techniques and has slowly indoctrinated its friends into seeing things his way. The group of them is well aware that if any one of them were to be found out, the rest would be in jeopardy, and so they act as alibi to one another on their "hunting nights."

This means that Don and its crew can be superb changeling hunters. Depending on the power level of



your troupe's motley, they might know nothing about changelings, or they might fashion hand-wrought iron knives and steer clear of doorways that could potentially lead to the Hedge.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Computer 1, Crafts (Car Repair) 2, Occult 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 1, Stealth 2, Weaponry (Club) 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation (Threatening Voice) 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Allies (Buddies) 4, Fighting Style: Boxing 2, Resources 2, Strong Back

Willpower: 5

Morality: 5

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Initiative: 4

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

Health: 8

Wyrd: 3

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, Cracks in the Mirror, Mimic Contract, Normalcy

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Cudgel	3B	—	6	—

BOBBY SLIM

Quote: "Dem bones, dem bones, dem... dry bones. Come on, sing along."

Background: Bobby Wainwright disappeared when he was six years old, but the Others were good enough to leave a fetch in his place. The problem was that Bobby's parents knew that the boy-thing that greeted them the morning after the freakish dust storm just *wasn't* Bobby. It knew his favorite songs, but it sang them all without Bobby's charming tendency of being a touch too loud and off-key. It knew his favorite toys, but instead of handling them with love and care, it talked to them as though it truly expected them to move. But with no way to explain what was happening, even to each other, his parents simply grew distant. That might be why "Bobby" grew up like he did, but who can say?

Had anybody been paying attention, they might have marked Bobby as a kid to watch. He tortured animals and even other children, but he never seemed to really enjoy it or even have a good understanding of pain. He just liked their reactions. He got in trouble once or twice, but he had the Devil's tongue for lies, and he always talked his way clear. When he turned 18, his parents unceremoniously kicked him out, and he went to work as a garbage man. All along his morning routes, he thought about ways that he could use his job to dispose of bodies, ways that he might mutilate those bodies, ways he might elicit screams. But he never cared enough to do anything about it.

And then came his 20th birthday, and something changed. He started waking up at night in a cold sweat, certain that some-

thing was watching him. That was the event that pushed him over the edge. He killed his first family the next night, using an assortment of sharp objects to bone and joint them. He's not stupid — he knows he has to pace himself. But sometimes the feeling of paranoia is just too great, and he packs his bag, finds a likely household and takes out the trash after he's done.

Description: His coworkers call him "Bobby Slim" for a good reason. Bobby's so skinny he looks like he could fly away in a stiff breeze. He's wiry and fast, though, and his vegetarian's diet keeps him from putting on unnecessary body fat. Bobby usually dresses in jeans and white T-shirts. He's smart enough not to carry knives around for no reason, but he does have a permit to carry a concealed firearm.

Storytelling Hints: Bobby is pathetic, in a way; he's killing because he's got no reason not to, not because it fulfills any real need for him. Yes, killing distracts him from the knowledge that something's coming for him, but not for very long. Bobby knows he's on his way out, but doesn't know why (since the changeling that was once Bobby Wainwright hasn't found his fetch yet). If Bobby learns the truth of what he is, he's likely to become very dangerous to the Lost in general.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Serial Killers) 1, Computer 1, Crafts (Skinning and Boning) 3, Investigation 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive (Trucks) 2, Firearms 2, Larceny 3, Stealth 3, Weaponry (Knife) 3

Social Skills: Intimidation 2, Persuasion 1, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2, Fighting Finesse (Knife), Iron Stamina 3, Resources 2

Willpower: 5

Morality: 1 (Irrationality, Suspicion, Paranoia)

Virtue: Temperance

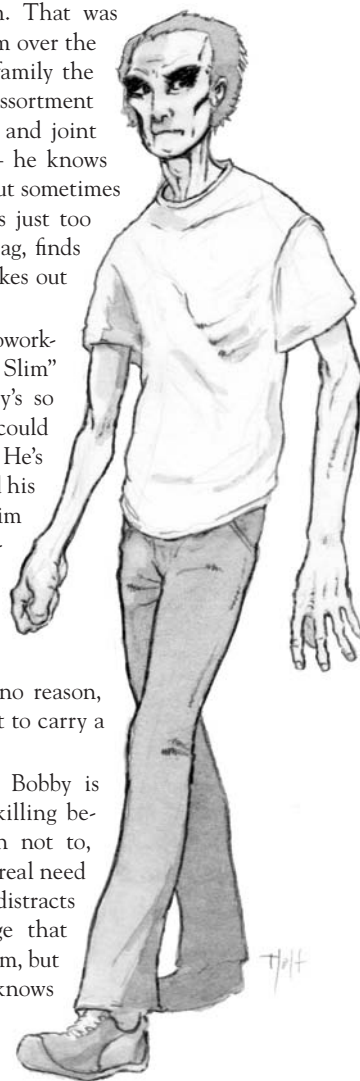
Vice: Lust

Initiative: 9 (with Fast Reflexes)

Defense: 3

Speed: 11

Health: 8



Wyrd: 1

Echoes: Attuned to the Wyrd, Normalcy

Glamour/per Turn: 10/1

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Knife	1L	—	8	—
.38 Revolver	2L	20/40/80	8	—

HOBGOBLINS

Within the labyrinthine expanses of the zone known as the Hedge, an unlikely plethora of creatures make their home. Some, just as the changelings themselves, began as something “normal” and were warped by the touch of Faerie into something quite different. Others, lesser cousins of the True Fae, were never anything but the Wyrd-spawn they now are, alien and unknowable, without the slightest pretext of humanity or what humans would consider morality. Some may well be nigh-immortal, individually or as a whole responsible for launching folklore of ancient monstrosities, medieval demons and devils, and bogeymen from the earliest annals of history. Others are quite modern, almost futuristic, seemingly having stepped right out of the pages of a disreputable tabloid.

The term “hobgoblin” is a loose and general label for any creature, being or entity that makes its home within the Hedge. While some (such as hobs or Fae Swarms) seem to be races, groups or species, others are unique individuals which fit no particular mold, criteria or model. Even amongst those hobgoblins that seem to be part of a larger group, the similarities are sometimes cosmetic. One briarwolf might be the escaped changeling hound of a Hunter True Fae who had been kept in captivity too long to ever find its way back to the mortal world, and thus have access to Contracts and pledges and better-than-human intellect. Another, while looking very similar, might be a witch’s familiar which remained in the Hedge when its master was ambushed on a trod, staying alive only through the use of its canine cunning and instinct. Appearances can be deceiving, and with no creature is that as true as with the Hedge-born.

ORIGINS

The Hedge divides the mortal world (where humans like to believe they rule), from the homelands of the legendary Fair Folk. Although the adventurous Fae and the unfortunate mortal may both venture into its thorny maze, neither are native there, nor are the Lost. The Hedge is populated by things that do not fall neatly into the mundane classifications of “animal,” “vegetable” or “mineral.” Most cannot even be labeled as “mundane” or “magical,” “being” or “creation,” “real” or “imaginary.” Their nature, like the Hedge they dwell within, is elusive and mutable.

If the tangled masses of occult learning are to be believed, some hobgoblins are born to the Hedge, whelped there through mundane means to creatures that, perhaps generations ago, once made their home elsewhere, but now live within the Thorns. Other Hedge-dwellers are rumored to be the spawn of more mystical heritages, supernatural creatures caught within (and warped by) the Hedge’s winding ways, or spirits, spells or ideas captured forever inside its thorny prison. Some denizens of the Hedge even claim to be gods, fled from the natural world when they found themselves weakened and no longer immortal due to disbelief and lack of followers.

Some entities such as the Fae Swarms and the vileshrikes seem likely to have been artificially made. It’s quite feasible that they were created by the Fair Folk through some arcane and likely ugly fashion, then loosed on the Hedge either to protect and police its pathways, or to spy in secret on those who travel within. Or else, perhaps, the Fae only made use of existing resources, tailoring and tinkering with existing creatures to suit their whims.

In truth, it’s entirely possible that each of these origins is represented somewhere within the Hedge. “Nature” there is as mutable as the whims of the Gentry themselves, and in a place that is by some accounts both eternal and infinitely large, almost anything may well have come about. This means that one Harvestman might well have been the focus of a Fae experiment (perhaps bearing the mechanical marks of his maker’s tinkering in his hinged joints and razor-sharp mandibles) while another might be the Wyrd-tainted offspring of a mundane tarantula, lost when a child and his pet spider ventured through the wrong doorway generations ago. A third might well be the manifested embodiment of the dying screams of an unfortunate woman who stumbled into a spider nest and expired from a heart attack, or the phobic night-terrors of a child for whom “fear” walks on eight spindly legs.

Within the Hedge, anything can happen, and hobgoblins are living proof of the extreme forms that “anything” can take when given enough time and supernatural influence.

NIGHTMARES AND HOBGOBLINS

There’s no sure answer to the question whether hobgoblins are created from humanity’s nightmares, or whether their presence merely spawns an innate fear response deep in humanity’s subconscious. The Hedge is not an ecology, and gives birth to things some would deem too strange and bizarre for any sane creative force or evolutionary design.

It’s not unbelievable that, where humankind cannot credit the reassuring logic of nature and science with creating a creature, they then blame its presence upon the depravity and iniquity of their fellow humans. This view is only reinforced when a changeling or human stumbles into the Hedge and comes face to face with a creature that has been stalking his nightmares since he was a child. The true culmination of terror, in encountering a horror that should not exist, is the fear and suspicion that you yourself may have brought the creature into being.

Even for the vast majority of humanity who believe that the supernatural world is purely bunk, something hidden deep within their subconscious recognizes the presence of the Hedge’s denizens. This buried recognition may manifest as unconsciously avoiding a place where the Goblin Market manifests, or a location that has appeared in their half-remembered dreams. It may cause paranoid phobias about certain things or individuals they never remember encountering, or unhealthy fascinations with surreal subjects too bizarre for society to accept. But, when the mind’s conscious filters are lulled into slumber and humankind’s defenses are at their lowest, this recognition most often manifests as nightmares. From the insidious, ongoing, ever-elusive shadows just out of the corner of the eye to the heart-pounding, sweat-drenching night terrors, Hedge-dwellers haunt humanity’s dreams, whether by active intention or merely by virtue of existing.

In truth, whether hobgoblins are nightmares manifested, or whether they merely manifest nightmares, is largely a moot point. They exist. They have existed for centuries, millennia... likely



since the dawn of time. Whatever forces gave them birth, that birth cannot be undone.

HOBGOBLINS AND THE HEDGE

Hobgoblins of any sort are creatures of the Hedge, and rarely encountered outside of their home demesne. Even those who have the most interaction with non-Hedge-dwellers, those who maintain and staff the Goblin Markets, rarely step outside of the Hedge; most Goblin Markets are set up as doorways into the Hedge, allowing their merchants the advantage of home territory for all transactions.

On occasion, however a hobgoblin will venture outside the Hedge's thorny barrier. Some become lost or are taken out of the Hedge against their will. Others go intentionally, to transact business with the Fae or mortal world, to follow a prey who has managed to elude his grasp in the Hedge, or simply to seek their destinies, much in the same way adventurers in fairy tales set out for mythic lands despite the danger. Some may succeed, carving a niche for themselves in a Lost Court or even within the mortal world, if gifted with the ability to pass as "normal" for a time. Others fail miserably, falling prey to the dangers that, while no more deadly than those found within the Hedge, are unfamiliar and alien to those who know nothing but the Thorns.

STORYTELLING HOBGOBLINS

Similar to every other aspect of the Hedge, the range of power and strength that Hedge-dwellers cover is a wildly diverse scale. Hobgoblins range from the mostly mundane to wildly fantastic. Some act only on instinct, much in the way a Venus flytrap "hunts" by reacting to certain stimuli. Some hobgoblins may have barely animal intellect and provide little threat to the wary traveler. Others are cunning and crafty, with an array of abilities and supernatural powers that may challenge those who encounter the hobgoblins to escape with their lives, let alone the upper hand.

Within the Hedge, the only true rule is that there is an exception to every rule. Those who make their home within the Hedge are no different. Hobgoblins come in virtually every shape and size, temperament and personality, form and function. No other location in the World of Darkness gives Storytellers the opportunity to use such a free hand to customize the denizens of the realm to suit their own chronicle's needs. Combining the abilities of one Hedge-dweller with the form of another and the personality of a third requires no more justification than "they're hobgoblins."

There are, however, some guidelines and recommendations that Storytellers may wish to keep in mind. The Hedge is a hostile place, a borderland between two worlds, and those who make their home there are unlikely to have survived by being easily duped, lightly intimidated or quickly killed. While the Lost normally only have to deal with hobgoblins on those occasions the changelings enter the Hedge, hobgoblins deal with each other (and the Fae) on a much more frequent basis, honing their offensive and defensive capabilities to an exponential degree.

If, however, every encounter with Hedge-dwellers ends in character death, players will (understandably) avoid hobgoblins altogether, which will essentially excise a rich and interesting

world of possibilities from the **Changeling** game. One rule of thumb to use when modifying hobgoblins for use as antagonists is that, while the Hedge is not the true home of the Fair Folk, they frequent it, and few things that would prove to be severely challenging or dangerous for the Fae will be allowed to continue existing. This guideline provides a double benefit to a **Changeling** game. Firstly, this prevents hobgoblins from being so powerful and lethal that the only logical option is for changelings to avoid interacting with any of them, ever. While those who dwell within the Hedge are frequently creepy, disturbing, dangerous and even terrifying, they are also interesting, fantastic, awesome (in the literal sense of the word) beings. The players should enjoy encounters with hobgoblins, even if the players' characters are terrified or agonized by the prospect.

Finally, there's great dramatic value to be had from keeping hobgoblins as a clear tier below the True Fae when it comes to threat levels. While the Hedge is a terrifying and dangerous place, it serves not only to divide Faerie from the mortal lands, but also provides a buffer between the escaped Lost and their one-time Keepers. As terrifying as the Thorns and their denizens are, they are but a pale reflection of the alien horror that lies beyond them in the land of the Fae. Similar to a predator's shadow that warns of the true danger, the presence of hobgoblins is a constant and real reminder of the Fae who lie beyond their borders.

SAMPLE HOBGOBLINS

The sample hobgoblins that complete this chapter vary in motivation, power level and aggressiveness. They can serve a wide variety of roles within the chronicle: the remorseless predator, the strange contagion, the harbinger of ill omen, the dark bargainer. Some, such as the hobs who organize and run the Goblin Markets, may provide a benefit to the changelings, however only if (at least to the hobgoblin's perception), the deal benefits themselves more. Storytellers are encouraged to use these samples not only as ready-made antagonists for their Hedge-bound encounters, but also as a springboard to create their own unique individual or species of hobgoblin as well.

BLOODSUCKLE

Quote: <<rustle of leaves>>

Background: Hobgoblins can be engendered in a dizzying myriad of forms, a vast number that is in no way limited to emulating animals or humanoids. Some would argue that the simple plants that produce goblin fruits are themselves "hobgoblins," while others say that the mark of a hobgoblin is its independent mobility and sentience. As one of the more notorious carnivorous hobgoblins that appears in vegetative form, bloodsuckle meets both criteria. It is driven, as many base organisms are, by the simple drives to feed, grow and reproduce.

Unlike a number of other hobgoblin plants, bloodsuckle is not content to merely rake travelers with its thorny branches or drop deadfalls upon their heads as they pass. To its victim's surprise and terror, bloodsuckle actively hunts down its prey, quickly immobilizing, killing and consuming its victims — not necessarily in that order.

Description: Bloodsuckle appears to be a leafless woody vining plant with a root structure that splays out across the surface of the ground rather than beneath the soil. Bloodsuckle's fibrous roots and vines alike are covered in a jagged gray bark that splinters and cracks across the surface, revealing a viscous red-brown gum be-

tween the bark and core of each tendril. Bloodsuckle's ropey vines can splay out over a wide area, covering the ground with a net-like weave, or can twine up and around horizontal surfaces, winding their way around trees, stones, cliffs or buildings. While a tree ensnared in bloodsuckle may resemble one that has been parasitically attacked by kudzu or morning glory, unlike these parasitic vines, bloodsuckle has no interest in tapping the sap from plants. Instead, bloodsuckle uses its strong vines as both rope and garrote, to take living prey upon which to feed itself. Bloodsuckle thrives in urban environments as well as the wilderness, and can be found spreading across patches of Hedge just on the other side of a city doorway.

Although bloodsuckle can consume organic nutrients from the soil in the same way a traditional plant does, bloodsuckles vastly prefer the nutrient-rich bounty of blood and other bodily fluids. Rather than starve, a bloodsuckle plant can temporarily thrust its roots into the ground and glean enough sustenance to survive. However, as they predominantly rely on blood and other bodily fluids for both nutritious and hydration, bloodsuckle plants have no established underground root system and can mobilize themselves from one place to another. Most often, they do so slowly, relying upon stealth and surprise to edge in close to their victims. Once within range, however, bloodsuckle plants are capable of moving very quickly, springing upon their prey with a lightning quick attack.

Storytelling Hints: Being magically mobile plants, bloodsuckle has little in the way of intellect or personality. The plant's actions are fueled by instinct rather than intellect. Using physical and emotional sensors in the form of small curling tendrils that branch off of their major vine-limbs, a bloodsuckle plant produces simple predatory reactions to the presence of warmth and carbon dioxide that would



indicate potential food sources and site for depositing its seeds, and knee-jerk retreat from dangerous levels of fire, cold or injury.

While bloodsuckle prefers to take sleeping, resting or otherwise inactive prey, which increases the likelihood of a successful kill, bloodsuckle plants are not averse to attempting to bring down active travelers or moving targets. Their attacks consist of gripping their target with a multitude of vines at one time, attempting to wind around and immobilize any moving limbs and then choke the life out of their victim once the grapple has been established. Each bloodsuckle's vines are more numerous than, but weaker than, human limbs, so the normal rules for grappling may be used with the increased quantity of incoming attacks balancing out the slightly reduced quality thereof. Treat all of the bloodsuckle's vines as a single unified attack, rather than coordinating each of them separately, much in the way a human's grapple involves both hands but is handled as a single attack.

If a bloodsuckle succeeds in killing its prey, it will remain wound around the victim, using its tendrils, roots and vines to absorb the dead victim's nutrient rich fluids. This process often involves the hobgoblin winding its sinuous way into the victim through any openings (wounds or natural orifices) in order to take advantage of the moist tissues that make the process of absorption easier.

Bloodsuckle is a known threat to Hedge-dwellers of all kinds, and any intelligent hobgoblin will avoid or destroy the hostile when it is discovered. It is, however, notoriously hard to kill outright. Hacking it apart will "kill" it, temporarily, but if not destroyed outright, each individual piece will essentially lie dormant, waiting until it can absorb enough organic nutrients (through the soil, being thrown on a compost heap or the like) to grow into a full and healthy bloodsuckle itself. Chopping one into pieces that are not properly disposed of can result in the creation of an entire forest of bloodsuckle.

Adding to the complication is the fact that a healthy and well-fed bloodsuckle will not burn well on its own. The outer layer of bark will smolder, but just beneath it, the inner layer is moist and sappy (but unlike pine pitch, bloodsuckle sap is not flammable.)

In order to completely destroy a bloodsuckle, it must be killed or immobilized and then burned in a fire hot enough to ensure the entire plant dries out and is then consumed by flame. Any pieces of the hobgoblin plant that escape being thrown into the fire or are not wholly turned to ash will lie dormant until exposed to sufficient organic nutrients of one variety or another to allow them to begin regrowing.

One of the most horrific ways this ability manifests itself is if a piece of the bloodsuckle is somehow lodged inside a living being. Even a splinter of the hobgoblin is enough, considering the rich organic material surrounding it, to allow a bloodsuckle to begin growing within the body.

If this is a surface splinter, the growth is obvious almost immediately, and the bloodsuckle can be cut out and destroyed without too much harm to its unwilling host. However, if the plant is somehow consumed or lodged deep within a body, the

results can be quite disastrous.

Similar to mundane animals, bloodsuckle plants use the highest of their Wits or Dexterity for their Defense, rather than the lowest.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 0, Composure 4

Mental Skills: none

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Grapple) 5, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Empathy 1, Subterfuge (Camouflage) 3

Merits: Fast Reflexes

Willpower: 7

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 8 (Species factor 3)

Health: 6

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl (Grapple)	0(B)	—	9	—

BORDER REAVERS

Quote: "This is our land."

Background: The stories are hauntingly familiar throughout the world. Tales are told of mysterious and ferocious invaders in both North and South America, Europe, Asia, Australia and some areas of Africa. Gorgeous warriors, their beauty matched only by their ferocity, raided, looted and sometimes slaughtered, villages across the globe. Although the concentrated attacks seemed to have stopped more than 1,000 years ago, for several hundred years the human world was beset by these stunning and ferocious invaders from a land much further, and yet nearer, than humans could have ever imagined.

While many of the tribes who had early encounters with the twilight invaders pat themselves on the back for having defeated these mighty warriors, in truth their fate was sealed by a foe far smaller, and yet more powerful, than any sword-wielding soldier or determined defender. The Border Tribe was cursed with an illness that killed a vast number of the hobgoblin tribe and mutated those who remained from their once beautiful forms to the epitome of repugnance.

The Border Tribe — or as they've also become known, the Border Reavers — were once so beautiful that their appearance (and arrogance) rivaled that of the True Fae. This was the Border Reavers' downfall. Not content to raid into the human world, the Border Tribe began to make plans to turn their attentions to Faerie itself, hoping to usurp their True Fae cousins. Unwilling to tolerate the presence of such rivals, the Fair Folk not only pushed

the reavers back into the Hedge, but then to ensure that they would never consider such an act again, cursed the tribe with an illness that progressively warps their once-striking looks into horrible and broken forms any time they step outside of the Hedge. Each progressive generation of Border Reavers is born with the disfigurements of their ancestors. Any time they venture outside of the Hedge (either to Faerie or the mortal world), however, their curse escalates, inflicting greater and greater mutations upon the Reavers until they are no longer able to survive the horrific changes and fall down dead. It is, perhaps, a telling mark of the cruelty of the True Fae that they did not see fit to exterminate their rivals outright. They instead struck in a way that would both incapacitate their enemies' ability to mount an effective attack on Arcadia, and humble the once-proud warrior tribe, defacing that which once caused the Reavers the most pride.

Unfortunately, this curse had a side effect. Human beings (and by virtue of their human side, changelings as well) are susceptible to this fae-plague as well. While the curse's ravages are too great for a purely human system to withstand, and simply kill those infected with it before their bodies can warp like the Border Tribe, rumors exist of changelings who have both contracted and been changed by the plague.

For centuries now, the Border Reavers have had to content themselves with lesser battles with each other and the other denizens of the Hedge, and the world outside has been, for the most part, thankfully free of the



Border Tribe's presence. Since leaving their homeland exacerbates the effects of their malady, most content themselves with terrorizing their Thorny realm, exacting revenge upon both their now-out-of-reach human prey and the Fae who cursed the Reavers in the first place if they happen to pass through. Those who do venture out of the Hedge live only a short while before their curse brings them low, but are likely responsible for many of the stories of horrific monsters attacking humans in past centuries across the world.

Description: The Border Reavers are fierce and feral warriors who are, for the most part, horrific to behold. Most are bipedal, walking mostly upright and wielding crude weaponry. Some appear to blend human and animal (natural or fantastic) body parts. This can be as subtle as a human-looking reaver with the eyes, teeth and claws of a tiger or as complex as a lizardman with crab claws and the feet and legs of a lion. Unlike many hobgoblins, the Borders Reavers are known to sexually reproduce, though they cannot interbreed with any other race, fae or mortal.

Each Border Reaver, as it is born, inherits traits that are similar to those of its parents. Over generations, the traits reduce slightly in severity, allowing the tribe to continue. Those who never venture outside of the Hedge seem "rewarded" by not developing further mutations than they were born with; however, stepping into Faerie or the mortal world triggers the mutations, and within hours, the invader is likely to be overwhelmed with his curse-plague. Returning to the Hedge slows, but does not stop, the illness's progress. There is no forgiveness, once the curse's prohibition to remain within the Hedge has been broken. As the disease progresses, the mutations become more and more horrific, and less functional, eventually resulting in Border Reavers who are no longer able to take care of themselves and become a burden on their tribe (and are subsequently killed for it), or who simply die outright from their illness (gills replacing lungs, skeletal structures unable to support organs or the like.)

Storytelling Hints: The Border Tribe culture has been predominantly destroyed through the centuries-long ravages of the fae-plague. The once-populous tribe has been whittled down to scattered family units living in secluded pockets of the Hedge. Some teach of the taboos of leaving the Hedge, and see those who violate them as having earned their own punishment for their profane violation of their people's rules. Others have developed a *jihad*-like system in which each adult, after having sired or borne sufficient offspring to ensure the tribe's continuance, throws himself or herself against Faerie in a desperate attempt to kill even one of their people's enemies. Those Border Reavers who are able to slay even a servant of the True Fae are considered to have earned a place in the afterlife and their names are added to the oral traditions. Those few who have actually brought down one of the Fair Folk before expiring themselves are venerated as bloody Reaver gods.

According to Border Tribe legend, only after every last member of the True Fae have been destroyed will their curse be lifted. Because of this, the Border Reavers' raids upon the human world have greatly slackened. Those who feel the need to commit suicide are more likely to do so by attacking Faerie's denizens than humanity. But this waning race, in desperation, may well strike out at whatever targets they can find in a fit of mad, indiscriminate vengeance. On those occasions when a Border Reaver has

ventured out of the Hedge into the human world, chaos and destruction has followed in its path. The curse manifests in a variety of ways in humanity. It rarely produces as fantastic mutations as it causes in the Border Tribe, but the curse's ravages are nonetheless deadly. It is possible that many of the great outbreaks of plague in humankind's history, especially those that wiped out isolated villages or areas after having seemingly sprung up from nowhere, were caused by invading Border Reavers.

The Border Tribe is deliberately designed to provide a setting truth behind a wide variety of legends from around the world. Storytellers may wish to localize an incursion by presenting them as one of the tribes of legend — the Fomorians of Celtic myth, the asuras or rakshasas of India, the army of Loki or whatever would tug most at the troupe's imagination. The statistics below represent one of the more far-gone tribesmen; a full raiding party might use weapons and wear armor, perhaps even stolen firearms.

The Border Plague

The illness-curse that was visited upon the Border Tribe can affect humans and the Lost, but only to a lessened extent. Only those who come into direct contact with the Border Tribe can become carriers. Infected humans or changelings do not pass the curse on, regardless of how badly they may become infected. To those not of the Border Tribe, the plague causes cancer-like symptoms as it seeks to infect the host on a cellular level. Fighting off the fae-plague can be handled using the rules for battling disease (p. 176 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*). In order to avoid becoming infected, a human or changeling character must make a successful Stamina + Resolve roll for every turn spent within five feet of a living Border Reaver. Once infection sets in, the fae-plague does one level of lethal damage per day until the plague is fought off or the victim dies. Conquering the plague requires an extended Stamina + Resolve roll accumulating 30 successes, with one roll made per day. Entering (and remaining within) the Hedge halts the progress of the plague, allowing the infected individual to attempt to fight it off without taking further damage, but, of course, presents its own dangers. The plague does not affect the undead, other hobgoblins or the True Fae. It can infect mages or werewolves, though the latter may add their Primal Urge to rolls made to resist the disease, thanks to their supernatural resistance to disease.

Most Border Reavers who venture out of the Hedge do their utmost to return to their homeland to die, hoping to seek reward or forgiveness. But some are too far decayed of mind to think of such things, and these mad horrors display little sign of the Border Tribe's past glory. On those occasions when the Reavers die outside of the Hedge, the curse continues to mutate and degenerate their bodies, even after death. They leave behind nothing but seemingly impossible memories and nightmares for those who have witnessed their brief and bloody excursion.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3
Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3
Mental Skills: Crafts (Weaponry) 3, Investigation 2, Occult (True Fae) 2
Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl (Claws) 5, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Weaponry (Spears) 4
Social Skills: Animal Ken (Hedge Beasts) 3, Expression (Oral Tradition) 3, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 2
Merits: Brawling Dodge, Direction Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stamina 3,
Willpower: 6
Initiative: 8
Defense: 3
Speed: 16 (Species factor 6)
Health: 8
Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	(0)B	—	9	—
Claws	(1)L	—	11	—

DRUDGEMEN

Quote: “Don’t worry. I’ll take care of that...”

Background: Most cultures have legends of benevolent house spirits that watch over a family or individual, protecting them against those who would do the people harm. These tales are, for the most part, a watered down and wishful-thinking version of the truth, diluted by generations of the same sort of compliments that result in humans speaking of the Fae as Fair Folk or Good Cousins. Those who have been chosen by the domovoi or tomte, the Lares, brownies or Aitavaras, dare not risk insulting these short-sighted but powerful hobgoblins by recounting the tales of woe they brought upon those they protect, lest the havoc the drudgemen wreak on fall on their former “wards” as well.

In Eastern Europe, domovoi are commonly thought of as house spirits, benevolent but temperamental entities that, having chosen a family to protect, dwell under the front door step and ensure no harm comes to those who live there. Traditionally, housewives left a bowl of milk or cream for the domovoi, to court its favor and ensure it remained placated. In truth, however, drudgemen rarely fixate on an entire family. Their obsessions are normally for a single individual, which could be seen as a blessing or a curse.

Drudgemen are inquisitive but shy hobgoblins who use their ability to become invisible to spy on changelings, humans or other hobgoblins as they go about their business. Most times, those whom the drudgemen watch are not aware they are being monitored, save perhaps for a vague and disturbing sense of being watched. Occasionally, however, the drudgeman will be caught in its surveillance. For reasons known only to the drudgeman, a drudgeman that does not currently have a

bond forms one with the individual or group who catches sight of it. This bond, although casually formed, is the core defining relationship for a drudgeman. Once the drudgeman has imprinted on a particular individual, that person becomes the center of the hobgoblin’s existence, although the bond is more like that of a Djinn to its master than of a child to a parent or one loved one to another. From that moment, until the object of the bond is dead, the drudgeman will go anywhere and do anything for the human, even though the hobgoblin may not have exchanged more than a single glance with the person, and the ward may not even know that the drudgeman exists.

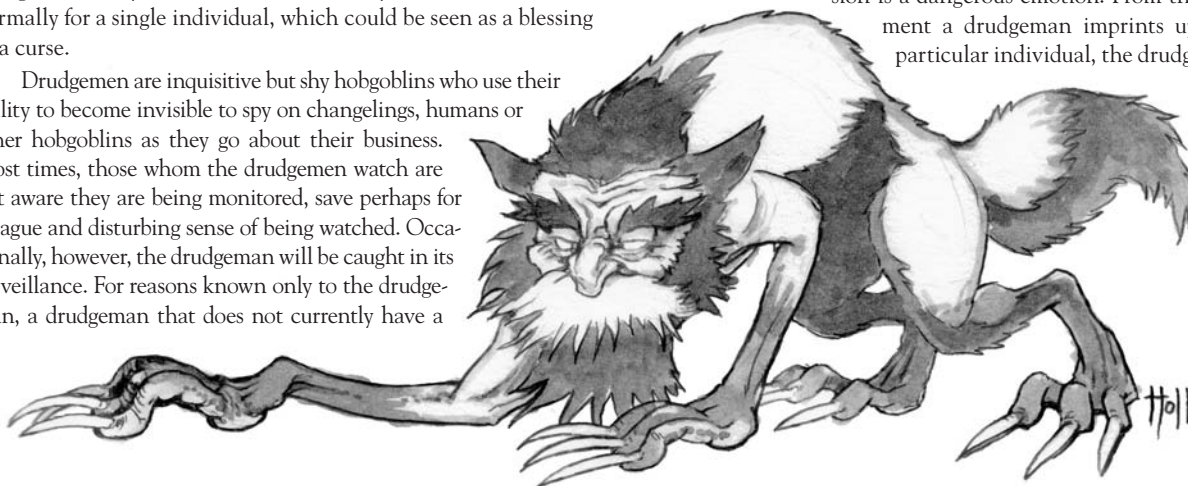
The bond, however, does not change the drudgeman’s retiring nature. The drudgeman will go out of its way to not reveal itself to anyone, including the individual it has imprinted upon. It will continue to remain as much in the shadows (or invisible) as possible as it follows the target of its bond and attempts to aid it in whatever way possible.

Although many legends exist of the drudgemen, either as house-spirits or (when angered) as poltergeists or demons, these hobgoblins are Hedge-dwellers that do not leave their home realm unless they are following individuals with whom they have formed bonds.

Description: Drudgemen are small, hairy creatures with long beards, thick tails and bushy eyebrows. Their faces bear an unsettling resemblance to those of old men, but the drudgemen walk on all fours with a hunched back that gives them a strange, rolling gait and their “paws” have prehensile fingers tipped with long sharp claws. Although vaguely humanoid looking, they are sometimes mistaken for cats, dogs or raccoons by those who chance to catch a glimpse of them out of the corner of their eyes. It is rare that anyone, including their wards, actually fully sees a drudgeman, however. Drudgemen never intentionally reveal themselves to others.

Perhaps as a magical reflection of their shy natures, drudgemen are capable of making themselves invisible and prefer to use this method for spying on others or going about protecting their wards as much as possible. This invisibility is, however, notoriously imperfect. The nearer an individual is to the hobgoblin, the more likely the human is to see through the drudgeman’s invisibility, meaning that many times the hobgoblin’s ward will witness a glimpse of the creature out of the corner of its eye when it gets too close, as may those who the drudgeman feels it necessary to take action against to “help” its chosen charge.

Storytelling Hints: Much like mortal relationships, obsession is a dangerous emotion. From the moment a drudgeman imprints upon a particular individual, the drudgeman



focuses entirely upon that person, doing everything it can to covertly aid him in all his endeavors and help him accomplish all his goals and desires. Drudgemen, however, have no real understanding of humanity; they are entirely amoral by human standards. For a drudgeman, there is no right and wrong. There is only aiding their chosen "ward" in whatever way possible. Unfortunately, both for their ward and those around the wards, the drudgeman has no sense of empathy for things such as human values and absolutely no compunction about taking the ward's expressed or evidenced emotions and desires completely at face value.

Drudgemen use any means within their considerable grasp to aid their wards. Drudgemen have access to some innate abilities that they use on their charge's behalf. Unfortunately, much as the drudgemen themselves, these abilities often result in mixed blessings. They also are more than willing to take direct physical action to do what they believe is aiding their chosen target. If his spouse turns off the game the drudgeman's charge was happily watching, the hobgoblin is there at the head of the stairs when his wife coming down with an armful of laundry, making certain she trips and injures herself so she doesn't bother her husband again. If his dog wakes him in the middle of the night, the drudgeman may encourage the canine to chase it out in front of traffic, so that the dog cannot disturb the drudgeman's ward's precious sleep. A competitive co-worker may find her brake lines chewed through on the day after she claims the glory for the ward's hard work on a project. Or the confused charge may discover jewelry, money, purses or wallets in his home, coincidentally at the same time they are reported stolen from local stores and neighbors.

There is an upside to the drudgeman's obsession. The ward may win the lottery, get a promotion and win an inheritance from a long-forgotten relative, all influenced by the hobgoblin's knack for goblin luck. But for the most part, the losses far outweigh any gains as the drudgeman acts as a powerful and conscienceless guardian angel over its new charge.

Contrary to some folktales, drudgemen cannot be driven off by thanking them. If anything, thanking a drudgeman only makes it more intent upon "helping" its ward, which may well be the reason that the legends warn against it.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Craft (Traps) 2, Investigation 4, Occult (The Hedge) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Ambush) 2, Larceny 4, Stealth (Invisibility) 5, Survival 3

Social Skills: Empathy 4, Persuasion (Actions) 4, Subterfuge (Red Herrings) 3

Merits: Direction Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3

Willpower: 6

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 16

Health: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	(0)B	—	4	—
Claws	(2)L	—	6	—
Bite	(1)L	—	5	—

• **Protector's Knack:** As an innate ability costing no Glamour, the drudgeman has access to the following Contracts. However, the target is limited to the hobgoblin's ward or items and objects that will directly affect the human. If the drudgeman is not bonded, it cannot access this ability.

Hearth: Favored Fate, Beneficient Fate, Fortuna's Cornucopia, Triumphal Fate; **Artifice:** Blessing of Perfection; **Vainglory:** Mask of Superiority, Songs of Distant Arcadia, Splendor of the Envoy's Protection, Words of Memories Never Lived; **Goblin:** Trading Luck for Fate, Diviner's Madness, Fair Entrance, Delayed Harm, Good and Bad Luck, Lost and Found

• **Clear the Path:** As an innate ability costing no Glamour, the drudgeman has access to the following Contracts. However, the target is limited to someone the drudgeman feels is harming, interfering with or otherwise bothering its ward or items and objects that will directly affect those who are doing so. If the drudgeman is not bonded, it cannot access this ability.

Hearth: Fickle Fate; **Smoke:** Murkblur; **Artifice:** Touch of the Workman's Wrath, Unmaker's Destructive Gaze; **Darkness:** Creeping Dread, Touch of Paralyzing Shudder

ENTICERS

Quote: <<muffled sobs>>

Background: At the base of a massive oak, a huddled form shivers, its diminutive frame racked with ceaseless sobs. Inquiry from passersby draws no reaction; the distraught form does not uncurl from its fetal pose or stop crying. Those who draw near quickly notice the sobbing creature's skin is pale and abraded, oozing red from countless wounds. The figure pays no mind to their approach, its face hidden in the protective curl of its arms as if expecting yet another attack. Nothing witnesses do or say as they draw near comforts the miserable soul, or in fact, draws a reaction. It continues its muffled sobs, body shuddering in pain or sorrow. The scene changes immediately, however, should the huddled form be touched, or an inquisitive individual draw too near.

Enticers are strange predators that, lacking great speed or dexterity, lure their prey into range by creating a strange pseudopod shaped into a form that roughly mimics that of a huddled humanoid. While the lure lacks detail (it is a shaped mass, and does not possess articulated extremities or facial details), the enticer can palpate it to produce a sobbing sound, and the flesh of the pseudopod oozes a crimson fluid that smells and looks like freshly shed blood. This tends to attract a wide variety of prey for the enticer. Compassionate individuals are lured by concern for the apparently injured "victim" that draws them in close enough for the enticer to attack. On the other hand, other predators (whether literal or metaphorical) see the lure as vulnerable. When they attempt to exploit the lure's weakness, however, they quickly find the tables turned on them.

Description: Enticers are invertebrate, with no internal skeletal structure or external shell. They have no true sensory organs other than their skin, but this organ allows them a range of senses comparable to human sight, hearing, smell and taste through some obscured means.

Their bodies are almost infinitely pliable; while at rest, they are globular, with their musculature and organs encased in a thick rubbery skin that is a neutral gray in color. While alert, however, they can modify their shape, color and texture to an almost limitless variety. They use this ability to lure prey in close enough to



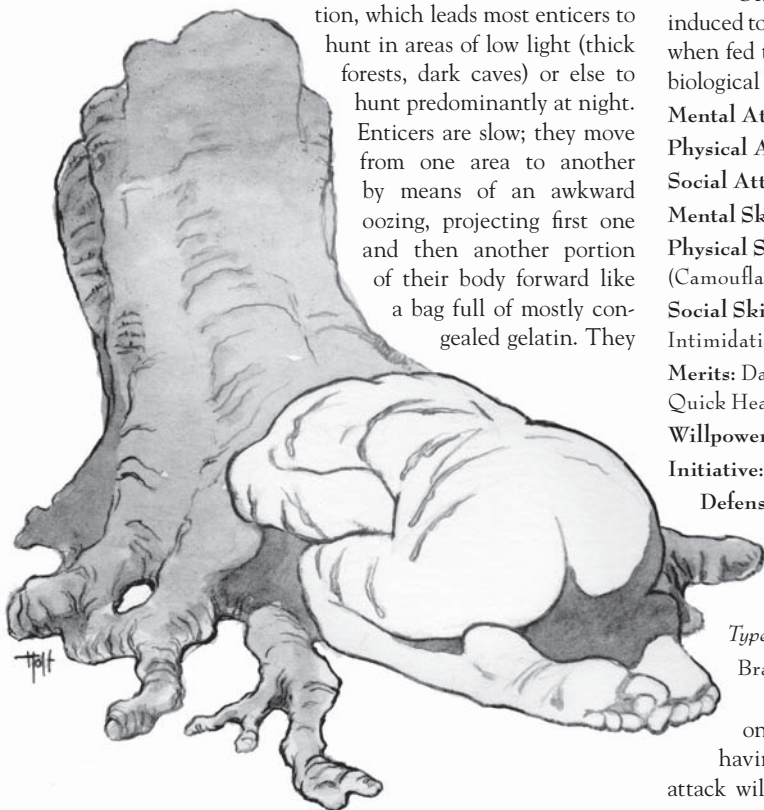
envelop it and thus gain the upper hand against creatures that might otherwise easily elude the enticer's relatively slow attack.

A full-grown enticer may weigh as much as 1,000 pounds and, at rest, be roughly the size of a grizzly bear. When thinly spread (as when hunting), enticers can cover an area more than 10 feet square and several inches thick, not counting their pseudopod lure.

Enticers lack tooth or claw with which to attack their prey. They rely almost entirely on their strength and weight, using a combination of smothering, encasing and crushing to kill their victims, which they then devour by stretching their maw over their meal and slowly swallowing it whole. Enticers that have successfully hunted will return to their Hollow lair to digest their meal in relative safety. Victims who are not entirely dead when swallowed continue to take damage after being consumed as the enticer's potent internal acids begin breaking down muscle, skin and flesh in order to absorb its nutrients. Enticers cannot digest metal, stone or other non-organic material, although they can consume (but receive little nutrition from) bone, leather or wood. Because of the hobgoblins' inability to process inorganic substances, those who are brave (or foolish) enough to seek out enticer dens are sometimes rewarded with the discovery of disgorged metallic or stone items. More often, however, they fall prey themselves; enticers most often share their Hollows in groups of up to a dozen, with several out "hunting" at any given time while the rest are in the Hollow in various stages of gorge or digestion. In these numbers, even the enticer's slow attacks are often enough to overcome unwary would-be pillagers.

Storytelling Hints: Enticers have little in the way of personality or intellect. They are animalistic predators that merely have the means of mimicking sentient beings. Their "lures" will

not pass more than a cursory inspection, which leads most enticers to hunt in areas of low light (thick forests, dark caves) or else to hunt predominantly at night. Enticers are slow; they move from one area to another by means of an awkward oozing, projecting first one and then another portion of their body forward like a bag full of mostly congealed gelatin. They



can project themselves into minute cracks and cling to small projections, allowing them to climb up horizontal surfaces. Most hunt by spreading their mass thinly over a horizontal surface (a cliff face, tree trunk or rough wall) and extending their "lure" pseudopod. When a victim comes near to investigate the lure, the enticer releases its hold on the surface and allows gravity (along with its half-ton of weight) to deliver what is often a killing blow to its intended meal. If the initial attack does not kill its prey, the enticer will slowly wind itself around the victim, attempting to smother or crush it.

Enticers are not overly clever. They will continue to attack until their victim has either escaped or been subdued. Only if they are in danger of death themselves (i.e., have less than 25% of their normal health levels), will they retreat back to their Hollow lair without having obtained a meal.

From a narrative sense, the enticer is a color encounter: an example of how the Hedge can generate hobgoblins that are considerably alien in form, farther removed from the twists on "familiar" folklore that players may expect. To add a further sense of dramatic impact, consider one of the following options to make an enticer the heart of a story:

- Enticers are born from the blood of those who die in the Hedge. Each one forms a "lure" that is a remarkable semblance of the dying changeling or human whose lifeblood engendered the hobgoblin. Could some remnant of the deceased's intellect still remain in the enticer? If so, how could it be extracted?
- The enticers are formed from the waste and effluvia of the True Fae's workshops: offal from their operating tables, fluids from their alchemical vats, chemicals from their tanning and curing shacks. The digestive fluids of an enticer can thus be distilled into a poison strong enough to affect even one of the Gentry.
- Once an enticer has ingested a corpse, the enticer can be induced to create a living (yet soulless) doppelgänger of that corpse when fed the proper goblin fruits. With the proper training, this biological fetch could be a potent tool in the right hands.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

Mental Skills: Investigation (Ambush Locations) 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Grapple) 5, Stealth (Camouflage) 5, Survival 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 2, Expression (Lure) 4, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge (Lure) 5

Merits: Danger Sense, Brawling Dodge, Giant, Iron Stomach, Quick Healer

Willpower: 8

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 7 (Species factor 1)

Health: 12

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	0(B)	—	10	*Drop

- **Drop:** Lacking tooth or claw, enticers rely heavily on the element of surprise for successful hunting. After having had the opportunity to ready itself, an enticer's first attack will consist of dropping on its victim from a horizontal

surface, relying upon its weight to both injure and pin its prey. Unless the target has identified the enticer and is anticipating the attack, the drop attack comes as a surprise, and the enticer's target receives no defense against the drop attack. If the drop attack is successful, the target takes damage as with a normal brawl attack, but is also rendered both grappled and prone (see pp. 157–159 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** for details on grapple maneuvers, and p. 164 for rules on “Going Prone.”)

Because of the large, flat nature of the enticer's form when attacking with a Drop, victims are at a –2 dice penalty to break loose from this grapple once achieved. However, once a victim has broken free, the enticer is at a –2 dice penalty to all attacks, including attempts to renew the grapple, for the rest of the combat.

- **Squeeze:** Any turn when the enticer has a hold of its victim in a grapple, the enticer may apply damage by squeezing as it wraps its flattened form tighter around its prey. Successes on this turn's Strength + Brawl roll are applied as points of bashing damage to the victim, as well as placing a cumulative one-point penalty on the victim to break free, as the enticer slowly encases its prey with the mass of its body.

FAE SWARMS (SOMNUS)

Quote: <<low droning buzz>>

Background: Just as in the human world, throughout the tangled expanse of the Hedge, an entire world of small creatures go about their business, often beneath the notice of all but the most observant traveler. One of the most notable manifestations of Hedge-dwelling insect life is the Fae Swarm. While a handful of bugs may be easily overlooked, swarms numbering in the thousands are more difficult to ignore; those with overt supernatural attributes and abilities are even less likely to escape notice.

The whims of the True Fae are many and diverse, and much of the Hedge is tainted by proximity to the fickle lands of Faerie. Fae Swarms emulate that variety; some are industrious, going about their work with a single-minded obsession. Others are violent, aggressively protecting a particular grove or thicket against those who would harvest its bounty. One swarm may seem almost mundane, little more than a similar horde of animals might be outside of the Hedge, while the next is nightmarishly fantastic. No one is certain whether the first Fae Swarms were developed as an intentional effort in Fae animal husbandry or were an experimental tool designed to modify the fruits of the Hedge. Perhaps the Fae Swarms were simply a passing fancy of the Fair Folk or an unintentional mutation or manifestation spawned by the proximity of Fae magic. In modern times, they take all these forms and more.

The Somnus is a general label applied to one “species” of Swarm, categorized by their abilities, rather than their most similar animal counterpart. Their sting or bite, while not particularly powerful, carries the added defense of drugging its target. This makes them particularly useful for Gentry who wish to “reclaim” changeling wards who have escaped from Faerie, or to snag random travelers in the Hedge with little effort. As well, goblin fruits pollinated by a swarm of Somnus share their sleep “attack,” in addition to whatever other effects they normally give to those who eat them. While an amaranthine will still heal the individual who consumes it, for example, one that has

been pollinated by a Somnus also has a strong chance of putting an individual to sleep.

Somnus-pollinated Goblin Fruit

Goblin fruit that has been pollinated by a Somnus-swarm is undetectable from that which has not been. It looks, smells, feels and tastes like any other goblin fruit of its kind. However, after eating a Somnus-pollinated goblin fruit, the consumer must make tests exactly as if he has been stung or bitten by a Somnus.

Those who have had the ill fortune of consuming more than one Somnus-pollinated fruit must make additional tests for each additional fruit consumed, every 10 minutes.

Description: Fae Swarms can take many forms. Just as goblin fruits are not all fruits, not all the creatures who pollinate them are faerie versions of bees, flies, moths or other mundane pollinating insects — in fact, not all are animals at all. A Fae Swarm might appear as a wind-tossed scattering of leaves, blown through an area by a gale that affects nothing but the swarm, or as a particularly persistent flurry of snow falling in a wintery zone. A



Fae Swarm might take the form of a sandstorm or hail or a flying mass of tiny bits of night sky.

Even when Fae Swarms do take the rudimentary forms of a recognizable group of animals, there are usually significant differences between a hobgoblin swarm and a mundane one. The touch of the fae is sometimes overt, sometimes insidious, but it never leaves its targets the same. A colony of insects that has been fae-touched and transformed into a Fae Swarm might grow to immense size, bearing dagger-sized stingers and yard-wide wingspans. Or they might remain insect-sized, but develop human-like cunning and intellect, including the ability to emulate verbal communication through regulating their hyper-fast wing-beats. Others might take to living underground, growing deathly pale and relying on sonar and echolocation like a colony of insectoid bats, or underwater like a school of stinging fish.

Somnus-swarms can appear as any of these varieties, but most often appear as a large and relatively thick swarm of bees. Each individual member of the swarm is a nuisance at best; no individual member will sting or actively attack on their own. Even if the swarm member is swatted or attacked first, an individual will not muster its own offensive attacks, and those who attack a single member of a Somnus-swarm are only stung (and thus must make rolls against the Somnus's Sleep ability), if their attack results in a dramatic failure. As a swarm, however, Somnus can be quite effective.

Storytelling Hints: Fae Swarms should be treated as a single creature with a single attack.

Should a Fae Swarm be dispersed, its remaining members will retreat back to the swarm's lair (most often in a hive either constructed by the Fae to house them, or if the Swarm is predominantly wild, in a cave, hollow tree or underground colony.) After retreating, a Fae Swarm will not voluntarily attack again for a minimum of 24 hours, but may return again after a day in full strength, and will defend themselves if actively pursued. At any given time, the active portion of a Fae Swarm away from the lair in any given area is less than ¼ of the entirety of the colony, allowing successful regrouping a number of times before the reappearing swarm force is diminished in strength at all. All statistics given are for the active swarm as a whole. Each individual member of the swarm's abilities is negligible. Should a swarm be tracked to its lair and fought there, Storytellers should feel free to treat the colony as a whole as an appropriate number (three to five) of individual Fae Swarms attacking and defending at once.

The statistics for the Somnus below represent only one possible variety of Fae Swarm. In general, their purpose is to pollinate (and in doing so, corrupt) as wide a variety and territory of fruit as possible, although they can also be used to waylay travelers or to defend a particular area by guile (putting intruders to sleep) rather than overt physical harm.

Should it better serve the chronicle, Storytellers are encouraged to tinker with the Somnus's ability and the swarm's Attributes as seems appropriate. Other possible roles for Fae Swarms (with corresponding changes) might include guardians (trading the Sleep Ability for exponentially high Physical Attributes and Skills) or spies (exchanging the Sleep ability for high Mental Attributes, Investigation-related Skills and either verbal or psychic communication.)

Somnus swarms' Sleep Abilities are not the only type of supernatural power a Fae Swarm might develop. Hybrid termite/locust-esque swarms might have the ability to eat everything in an area (organic or not), reducing a zone to barren ruin in a matter of hours.

Swarms

Fae Swarms are measured by their size in yards radius. A Fae Swarm can inflict one die of bashing damage to anyone within the swarm's radius. In addition, any successful attack by a Fae Swarm can allow the swarm to use its special ability if it has one (Sleep, in the case of the Somnus swarm.)

A swarm can inflict more damage by condensing. Every time the swarm condenses to cover half of its full area, the swarm inflicts one additional die of damage per turn, but cannot use its special ability.

Therefore, a swarm of eight yards in radius inflicts two bashing damage per turn if the swarm constricts down to a four-yard radius, three bashing if the swarm halves that again to a two-yard radius and four bashing damage per turn if the swarm condenses itself down to a one-yard radius. Though condensing doesn't usually happen all that often in nature (save in the case of creatures such as killer bees), it is an effective tactic and well within the capabilities of supernatural swarms.

Armor is effective against a swarm only if the armor covers one's full body, but even then armor provides only half its rating. In addition, targets are distracted by the swarm, suffering a -2 dice penalty on Perception and Concentration rolls while they are within the radius, even if they're not specifically attacked.

Fae Swarms cannot be attacked with fists, clubs, swords or guns. Only area-affect attacks such as a torch affect a swarm. Each point of damage inflicted by a flame or other applicable attack halves the swarm's size. Once the swarm is reduced below a one-yard radius, either all insects are dead or the few remaining disperse.

Other swarms might conjure lightning or flame, cause hallucinations or illusions or give off potent odors or toxins when angered.

Similar to mundane animals, Fae Swarms use the highest of their Wits or Dexterity for their Defense, rather than the lowest.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 0, Wits 1, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Mental Skills: None

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Weaponry (Sting) 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken 1, Intimidation 2

Merits: Fighting Finesse (Sting)

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 14 (flight only; species factor 10)

Health: 4

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Sting	1(L)	—	7	Sleep*

• **Sleep:** Somnus swarms produce a substance that, when injected via a sting or bite, or mixed with a plant's pollen during pollination, sedates those who come into contact with the swarm. Any individual affected by the Sleep Ability begins immediately to feel drowsy and sedated. Ten minutes after being stung, bitten or consuming Somnus-pollinated goblin fruit (and every 10 minutes for the next hour, until the effect has dissipated), the individual must roll Stamina + Wyrd – (swarm's Stamina). Failure results in falling into deep, drugged coma for 12 hours.

HARVESTMEN

Quote: <<chittering>>

Background: Just off the path, a glint of metal catches the traveler's eye. Is that a sword? In the brush? He knows he shouldn't leave the track, especially not here where the shadows are thick, but a rustling in the undergrowth a bit further ahead reminds him of his relative defenselessness, and the temptation of a handy weapon to deal with whatever awaits him further down the path proves too great to resist. He cautiously approaches, finding to his disappointment that the weapon is broken. Tracks in the earth

catch his eye, however and another glint, this one smaller and golden. A coin lies, half-hidden in the thick grass, and beyond it, another. Step by step, the traveler is drawn away from the path, lured by a trail of apparently abandoned valuables: a broken weapon, a handful of treasure, a single gauntlet. Each new find is a bit more valuable than the one before, and the trail back to the main path remains deceptively clear. By the time the traveler reaches for the final piece, however, his fate is sealed.

As he reaches for his prize, the ground breaks away beneath him, dumping him, treasure and all, into a deep pit filled with sticky web coated with narcotic contact poison. His last waking memories are of struggling to free himself from the viscous bonds, as the sound of chittering comes up from underneath the web he is stuck upon.

The Harvestmen lay trails of treasure to lure travelers away from the perceived safety of the Hedge's path. Some liken this particular bit of behavior to the instinct of an animal to attract mates, such as the efforts of a bowerbird. Most, though, suspect the hobgoblin-spiders are far more intelligent than they would first seem. They may not wear clothing, fashion their own tools or even speak the mortal languages like a Hedge Beast, but those rare souls who have fallen prey to a Harvestman's cunningly laid trap and somehow escaped claim they have seen a malign intelligence in those unblinking eyes. The Harvestmen are easily the equal of a man in intellect, cunning and (unfortunately for their victims) ruthlessness.

Harvestmen hunt for food. This is adamantly clear to anyone who has discovered one of their Hollow lairs, knee-deep in discarded bits of detritus deemed unworthy to use for bait, as well as bones and sometimes yet-undevoured flesh. However, this is far from the most disturbing aspect of their predatory nature. More than one unfortunate individual has fallen prey to a Harvestman's trap and woken in the throes of the Fae who would become the mortal's Keeper. If the spiders knowingly trade with the True Fae, it certainly shows a frightening level of sentience in the arachnid hobgoblins.

Even if the Harvestmen's traps are only being raided by the Fae as a source of potential vassals, the threat is still great enough to earn the Harvestmen a frightening reputation among those who travel the Hedge.

Description: Harvestmen are hobgoblin-spiders. They have proportionately small oval bodies, supported by eight long and slender, but deceptively strong, legs. Harvestmen (also called reapers) come in a variety of sizes; one with a body the size of a large house cat will sport legs six to 10 feet long, but because of its arched build, would look a human roughly eye to eye. Larger reapers, with a torso roughly the size of a human, might easily stand as tall as single story building without problem, while the largest may have horse-sized torsos and tower over trees. Stats given below are presumed to be for an average sized Harvestman, with a human-sized torso and 12 to 15 foot legs (giv-



ing it an eight- to 10-foot “height”). To represent larger Harvestmen, Storytellers are encouraged to increase Size from 7 to 9 and raise the Strength, Dexterity and Stamina by a point or two (along with the resulting Health, Initiative and Speed).

Unlike mundane spiders, Harvestmen have only two eyes, located roughly at their temples, allowing them excellent peripheral vision while maintaining their ability to perceive depth and perspective. Below, set where humans would have cheekbones, are a pair of pedipalps, vicious pincers designed to grasp, tear and stuff flesh into its maw. These pedipalps also can be (and frequently are) used for fighting, contributing to the Harvestman’s highly dangerous biting attack. Harvestmen have no venom-injecting fangs (their spinnerets create both the silk of their web and the contact sedative that coats it), but their mandibles are well suited to bite attacks. Although their heads and bodies seem small compared to their long legs, their eyes and mouths are proportionately very large. A Harvestman with a human-sized torso will sport globular eyes the size of dinner plates, and a mouth wide enough to bite a man’s head off in a single snap.

Storytelling Hints: Harvestmen tend to be territorial, rarely straying far from their chosen area, although a large hobgoblin-spider’s range might incorporate a dozen square miles. Their Hollow-homes are subterranean, with as many as a dozen entrances all leading into a central lair. All but one of the routes is capped with a double layer of webbing: the ground-surface layer is strong enough to support a fine layer of vegetation and detritus, but will give way beneath the weight of even a child-sized human. Further down the vertical tunnel, a thicker layer of webbing awaits those who fall through the first layer. This heavier web is coated with Harvestman’s poison, a thick syrupy glue that not only binds anything (other than the Harvestman itself) to the webbing, but that also contains a contact narcotic to subdue the trapped victim. The spider uses the uncapped entrance, building other openings near frequently traveled paths within the Hedge. The capped tunnels may be as much as a mile away from the main lair, and larger Harvestmen may dig similar pit-traps along the tunnels to stop those who somehow manage to escape the original pitfalls.

Harvestmen prefer not to risk taking their prey by force, relying instead on their web-traps for hunting. Once their webs have snared a victim and the sedating coating has taken effect, they will approach from within the lair (so as not to expose themselves unnecessarily to the predations of those who might have been attracted by the victim’s fall) and begin to cut the web around their sleeping prey from the supporting wall, using the web itself as a shroud or straitjacket to keep the prey immobilized even if he awakens. Before moving their enrobed and incapacitated victim to the main room of their lair, the hobgoblins will repair the lower (heavier) net, both to re-set it for its next target and to ensure that no one follows the tunnel into the main Lair. Later, when the prey has been dealt with, the Harvestmen will return topside and repair or replace the lighter ground-level webbing and, if necessary, re-bait the trap with a craftily laid trail of treasure (including that taken from their new prey).

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Crafts (Webs and Traps) 3, Investigation 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Bite) 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Social Skills: Animal Ken 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 3,

Harvestman’s Net

The silken web of the Harvestman is designed to hold even the strange and sometimes powerful prey it comes across in the Hedge. The silk itself varies in diameter from as thin as a hair with the smaller hobgoblin-spiders to as thick as yarn with the larger ones. Regardless of the diameter, Harvestman silk is supernaturally strong, with a Durability of 3. The contact sedative that the web silk is coated with is quite sticky. All individuals and items coming into contact with it are treated as though under an immobilizing grapple (see pp. 157–158 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*) and must make a successful Strength + Brawl roll to break free. This roll is penalized by the web’s Durability. The roll to break free may be made once per turn, before the web’s toxin test is made. If an individual falls under the sway of the web’s sedation, he falls asleep and cannot make another test to break free for an hour, until he wakes. After that point, the sedation properties of the web are assumed to have worn off, and the trapped individual may attempt to break free each turn without testing for the web’s toxin.

The web’s sedation properties require a Stamina + Resolve roll – 4 (to represent the toxin’s strength) at the end of each turn the target is immobilized in the web. On a failure, the target falls into a drugged sleep for an hour. Success allows him to continue to attempt to break free the next turn, but he must test against the toxin again at the end of each turn.

Merits: Ambidextrous, Brawling Dodge, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 2

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4 (+1 die for armor)

Speed: 21 (Species Factor 12)

Health: 9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	3(B)	—	6	Knockdown (see the <i>World of Darkness Rulebook</i> , p. 168)
Bite	3(L)	—	10	—

HEDGE BEASTS

Quote: “Quit staring. What, you’ve never seen a talking bird before?”

Background: Similar to many “species” of hobgoblin, the term Hedge Beast is more a descriptor than a race or breed. Within its far-reaching descriptor are included the vast majority of those hobgoblins who appear largely as mundane animals but have human (or greater) intellect and the ability to speak. They are sometimes helpful, in their own way, to the Lost. But it can also be risky to trust a Hedge Beast too far. Their appearance is

deceiving; they are neither ordinary animals given intelligence nor creatures of pure symbolic personality. The hobgoblin formed like an intelligent lion is not guaranteed to react with a pure lion's instinct, or to be nearly as noble as mythical lions are said to be. Hedge Beasts are what they are, and just as all hobgoblins, what Hedge Beasts are is often quite capricious.

Description: Most Hedge Beasts are difficult to distinguish from their mundane kin until they open their mouths. Their physical statistics vary wildly from species to species — Storytellers should feel free to use any of the animal statistics for species already printed in **World of Darkness** books, or to modify existing statistics to represent animals for which no stats have yet been given. Unlike their non-fae kin, however, Hedge Beasts have the ability to speak in human tongues and most are gifted with human (at least) intelligence.

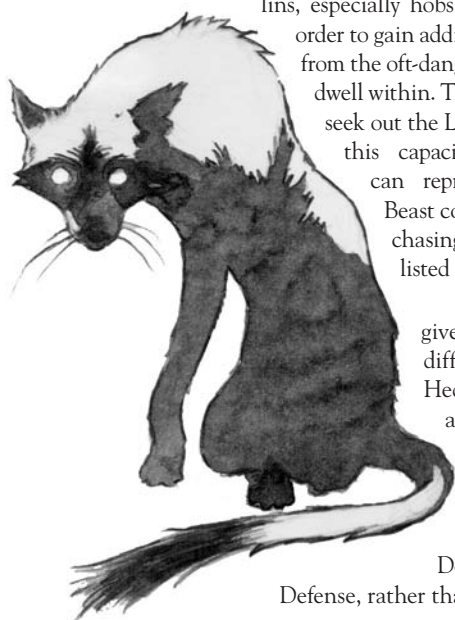
Hedge Beasts come in an almost infinite variety of "species": birds of the air, fish of the sea and rivers, beasts of the land. There are predator and prey Hedge Beasts, and everything in between. Even small crawling vermin might have intelligent reflections in the Hedge. There is only one limit to their size, shape or species: by definition, Hedge Beasts are intelligent hobgoblin analogues of mortal animals. A briarwolf is not a Hedge Beast, for there are no canids like a briarwolf in the mortal world.

Storytelling Hints: Similar to humans or changelings, Hedge Beasts run the gamut in personality, intellect and ability. Some are wickedly cunning and delight in mischief, while others are more charitable in nature, and might be given to assist changelings freely if some measure of fair recompense is offered. Unlike many hobgoblins, Hedge Beasts have little problem traveling outside of the Hedge, because they are protected by their physical resemblance to mundane animals. While an ursine Hedge Beast might have trouble passing easily in a downtown urban area, a feline or canine one will not, especially if it has the wit to avoid the mundane animal collectors.

Other than their human (or better) intellect, Hedge Beasts usually have only very weak supernatural abilities, putting them at a disadvantage to many other hobgoblins in fae realms. Because of this, many either befriend or at least cooperate with other hobgoblins, especially hobs and sprights, in

order to gain additional protection from the oft-dangerous world they dwell within. They may similarly seek out the Lost or humans in this capacity. Changelings can represent a Hedge Beast companion by purchasing the new Merit listed below.

Statistics are given below for two different "breeds" of Hedge Beasts. Just as mundane animals, Hedge Beasts use the highest of their Wits or Dexterity for their Defense, rather than the lowest.



Feline Aide-de-Camp (Companion ●●●)

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Academics 1, Investigation 3, Politics 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1

Social Skills: Empathy 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 4, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Common Sense, Fast Reflexes 1, Inspiring

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 10 (Species Factor 6)

Health: 3

Wyrd: 3

Contracts: Hearth ●●, Vainglory ●●

Glamour/per Turn: 12/3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	(0)B	—	3	—
Claws/Bite	(1)L	—	4	—

Insect Advisor (Companion ●)

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 0, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 2, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Academics 2, Investigation 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Social Skills: Empathy 4, Expression 2, Persuasion 3

Merits: Encyclopedic Knowledge

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 3

Defense: 2

Speed: 5 (Species factor: 3)

Health: 1

Wyrd: 1

Contracts: Dream ●; Eternal Autumn ●

Glamour/per Turn: 10/1

HOBBS

Quote: "Sure, I've got an *Aspersorium*. Got it off a Bishop who wasn't using it any more. It'll cost you a week of dreams, a pound of pitt moss and that Red Sox cap."

Background: Many of the denizens of the Hedge are animalistic, predatory, cunning and deadly. Hobs embody all of these characteristics in a vaguely humanoid package that lures many unknowing travelers to believe that hobs are, at least, more human than the rest of the Hedge's citizens. This impression could not be more wrong.

The term "hob" is used quite generally, to refer to a wide variety of intelligent hobgoblins that take a more humanoid form. They are, almost to an individual, selfish, manipulative and ruthless; as many fae things, hobs are lacking in a proper concept of sympathy or compassion. Many Goblin Markets are run or manned at least in part by hobs, as their mercenary attitudes often motivate them to organize such establishments. However, they're notoriously poor in

New Merit: Hedge Beast Companion (• to •••)

This Merit represents a positive relationship between the changeling and the hobgoblin in question. The Hedge Beast is not a servant or slave, although it is likely to aid the character in whatever reasonable ways the Hedge Beast can in exchange for the changeling's aid, support and protection. The hobgoblin is not likely to put itself into overly hazardous positions; safety and support are a large part of why Hedge Beasts take companions in the first place. Especially in the human world, however, people tend to ignore animals, allowing the Hedge Beast opportunity to witness or overhear many things that might otherwise be hidden from the hobgoblin's Lost companion.

Unlike humans, Hedge Beasts do not begin with an assumption of one point in each Attribute. An insect companion may well have a Strength of 0, while a skitterish ferret may have no composure whatsoever. A companion is built according to the following guidelines; Hedge Beasts more powerful than these assuredly exist, but are not in need of changeling protectors, and therefore do not seek out such relationships.

- Attributes 15 points total, Skills 18 points total, Merits up to five points, two dots of Contracts, Wyrd 1
- Attributes 18 points total, Skills 21 points total, Merits up to seven points, four points of Contracts, Wyrd 2
- Attributes 21 points total, Skills 24 points total, Merits up to nine points, six points of Contracts, Wyrd 3

It should be remembered that unique and exotic Hedge Beasts may be more difficult to explain to the mundane world. Cats and dogs are seen as common companions, and can even be registered as service animals to facilitate their presence in public places. Rats and other rodentia, birds, lizards or snakes may elicit a bit more attention, but are still likely to pass without too much problem. Insects, fish and horses may be a bit more difficult to explain, while animals seen as dangerous (wolves, big cats or bears) or endangered (Tasmanian devils, lemurs or many birds of prey) may not only draw huge amounts of attention but the wrath of the human authorities as well. Likewise, horses and other "beasts of burden" as well as large animals of other sorts may be difficult for an urban changeling to house. Since the Hedge Beast is entering into the companion relationship predominantly for protection and sanctuary, boarding the creature away from the changeling, or having it remain within the Hedge for the majority of the time is dissatisfactory treatment. Changeling characters who lose their companions through neglect, abuse or disrespect, or those whose companions are killed receive no refund of their Merit points. Depending on the circumstances and whether the situation was their fault or simply bad fortune, characters may or may not have earned enough respect amongst other Hedge Beasts to encourage another to seek out their companionship. If so, the characters do not need to pay again for their new companions, but this circumstance is at the judgment of the Storyteller.

Changelings and companions can enter into pledge bonds that will strengthen and define their relationship. This is not implied by the Merit; any pledge bonds can be formed in the usual fashion.

social skills, a fact that may contribute strongly to the raggle-taggle nature of many Hedge markets with hob proprietors.

Hobs are the closest thing the Hedge has to an indigenous people, occasionally being found in grumbling pairs who seem to be bonded predominantly because they take great delight in tormenting each other, or in small family units, consisting of a pair or single parent with one or more young. (Changelings remain unsure whether or not this means that hobs are capable of breeding, if their young spontaneously generate from the Hedge or even if they have subjected human children to ugly changes. The hobs don't talk about it.) Most often, however, hobs are encountered singly, although whether this is because the majority prefer solitude (or cannot stand each other's company) or whether those who are more social are less likely to deal with outsiders is uncertain. Folklore speaks of individuals wandering into the Hedge or "underhill" and encountering entire villages or tribes of goblin-like creatures, but it's maddeningly difficult to find any evidence of hobs gathering in such numbers as to match these legends.

Description: Even among those who frequent the Goblin Markets or have had the (mis)fortune to encounter hobs on a variety of occasions, there seems to be little consensus about whether the term "hob" refers to a particular race, or whether it is a general term used to label any vaguely human-like creatures who

make their home within the Hedge. Some general characteristics, however, can be drawn about the individuals that the term "hob" is generally used to describe.

Hobs are bipedal, and roughly humanoid. To a human, hobs are diminutive in stature, and range from withered to robust in girth. Their skin tends to be earthy in color, ranging from sickly cream to rich brown-black, and is generally heavily wrinkled (regardless of their purported age). Many hobs are short-limbed with stubby extremities; others are well-proportioned. Their noses run to the disproportionately large (but may be missing entirely), and their eyes are usually small and entirely black in color. Many hobs have overly large mouths and strange arrangements of teeth, and it's not unknown for their faces to distend into half-snouts. Some have overt tusks like a warthog or large flat-topped molars across their entire jaws, while others have rows and rows of sharp incisors that move forward and replace themselves periodically. Hob ears tend to extremes, either so small as to be almost absent or large enough to rival their mouths for notability. Some even have feral ears, long like a donkey or hound's, or short and perched atop their heads like a feline or fox. Hob hair runs the gamut from white to black, with many shades in between (though various earthen browns and blacks are by far the most common). Unlike humans, however, some hobs produce naturally green, blue, violet or scarlet locks.

A hob's clothing seems to be an extension of his personality. Some wear simple homespun tunics, trousers and boots made of particularly odd and unpleasant materials. A nettle-shirt or rat-skin breeches are quite in keeping with hob couture. Other hobs, especially those who participate in the Goblin Markets, affect modern fashion, often incorporating a coveted item of clothing or jewelry into the asking price of a piece of merchandise.

Storytelling Hints: Hobs are, almost without exception, ruthless, self-serving and foul-spirited. Their interactions with others are typically predatory in nature, although hobs' chosen weapons are barter, negotiation and swindling rather than overt physical attacks. Many hobs are peddlers, merchants or traders, either associated with a particular Goblin Market or nomadic vendors who journey the width and breadth of the Hedge in search of a good bargain. They are notorious for appearing when the Lost are at their most vulnerable and offering the apparent solution to a problem — at an almost (but not quite) impossible price. Hobs prefer negotiations when their victims are over a barrel and have little choice but to pay the exorbitant price. The most dangerous hob is one who appears to be cutting his client a good deal.

Some hobs traffic in a particular type of merchandise, where others are opportunists, buying and selling whatever will turn the biggest profit. Profit is a relative term in the Hedge, however. For some, profit is tangible; one hob might deal only in gold or powerful magical items, while another may insist on being paid in iron scrap, police gear, early medieval manuscripts, blood or chocolate. Others deal only in intangibles: dreams, memories, emotions or favors. Whatever the currency, a hob trader will inevitably wring every possible ounce of value out of any particular transaction, while protesting all the while about the horrible loss he's taking on the deal.

Hobs are rumored to be able to manifest abilities that mimic Contracts of all sorts — even those normally reserved for a certain Court, although most will deny it vehemently if questioned. Each hob has a single gift, called a "Turn," which mimics a particular Contract series, including the Abilities from one to five points in power. These Turns are not fueled with Wyrd or other supernatural strength, but are inherent abilities that can each be used one time per day. The turns are often suited to the hob's personality; a sneaky individual might have a Smoke Turn, while an arrogant one might manifest a Vainglory one. Hobs themselves tend to picture whatever Turn they possess as being more useful and of higher merit than those of others. This leads to a great deal of inter-hob insults and social snobbery, but in general, hobs are so obnoxious to one another (and everyone else) that it's difficult to differentiate between their Turn-focused prejudices and their general surliness.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 5, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 1, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Investigation (Appraisal) 4, Medicine (Goblin Fruits) 2, Occult (The Hedge) 4

Physical Skills: Brawl 1, Larceny 4, Stealth 3 (Fair Escape), Survival 3, Weaponry (Knife) 2

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Hedge Beasts), Empathy 4, Intimidation 2, Persuasion (Negotiations) 5, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Eidetic Memory, Allies (Goblin Markets) 3, Contacts (Goblin Markets) 3

Willpower: 6

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

Health: 8 (Size 4)

Turn: Choose from any one Contract as suits the hob's personality and goals

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Brawl	(0)B	—	4
Knife	(1)L	—	6

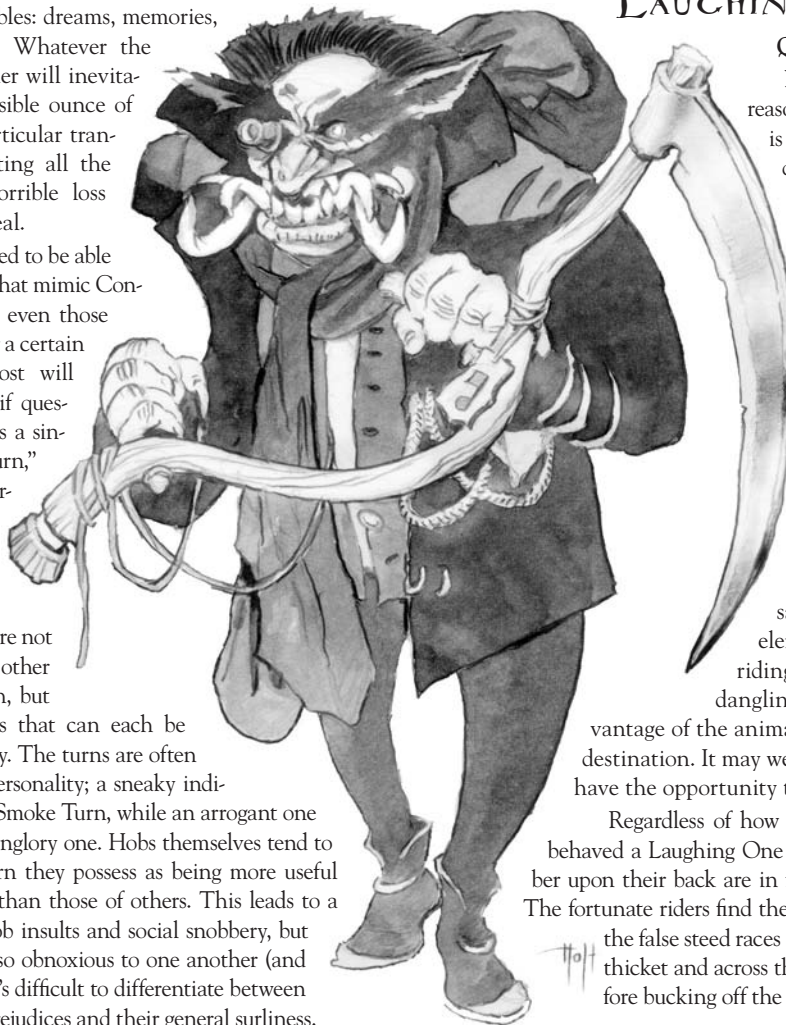
LAUGHING ONES

Quote: "Need a lift?"

Background: One of the main reasons changelings enter the Hedge is to take advantage of its unique qualities of transportation. If one knows the right paths, an adventurous soul can enter the Hedge through a trod in Miami and exit in Seattle after only a few miles' journey. Few routes, however, are that quick or direct. It is all too easy to become lost in the Hedge's labyrinthine realm, or simply to be on a track that may take hours or days to walk on foot.

There are no cars in the Hedge, no buses, trains or airplanes with which to book safe passage. When weary travelers encounter a seemingly gentle riding horse, saddle askew and reins dangling, they may think to take advantage of the animal and make good time to their destination. It may well be the last mistake they ever have the opportunity to make.

Regardless of how broken-down and lame or well behaved a Laughing One appears to be, those who clamber upon their back are in for a ride they will never forget. The fortunate riders find themselves clinging for dear life, as the false steed races like the wind through thorn and thicket and across the roughest terrain available, before bucking off the rider like a gunnysack full of rot-



ten potatoes in a tangle of thorns far from their original destination. Those less fortunate may find their ride ends at the bottom of a lake, the top of an arctic peak or the heart of a fiery volcano.

Description: The Laughing Ones are adept shapechangers, able take on many forms. When they appear as humans, they are often beautiful to behold, strong of limb and fair of face. They can take on male or female forms, and often appear dressed in seductive clothing when wearing human shapes. When in animal forms, Laughing Ones can appear either quite docile and mundane, the better to tempt potential riders onto their backs, or spirited and striking, the *crème de la crème* of their species, in hopes of raising the greed of those who might want to own (or sell) such an amazing animal.

While the Laughing Ones can take any sort of form, historically they are fond of those types of animals that might most easily lure humans into putting themselves at the phooka's mercy — hence Laughing Ones' love of appearing as a beautiful human or riding beast.

Storytelling Hints: The Laughing Ones tend to have a mean and capricious streak. Their brand of mischief shows up often in tales from around the world: they might emulate the Japanese *tanuki*, the British phooka, the American Indian Coyote or any of the hundreds of other shapechanging menaces from world folklore. And as many of these stories, crossing a Laughing One's path is often fatal. It seems absurdly comical to the shapeshifting hobgoblin, of course, but few others would find it funny.

The Laughing Ones hide a deep resentment under their laughter. The nature of their ban vexes them greatly, reminding them that their power over themselves is limited. Thus, they love to take advantage of others, proving the Laughing Ones' power over those who cross these hobgoblins. And, since the ultimate power is that over life and death, many of their "tricks" are lethal. There will always be more targets for another romp.

Laughing Ones can take on the form of any animal, plant or inanimate object, natural or fantastic, and gain the natural abilities of that creature as long as they remain in that form. However, they rarely leave the Hedge, where they are more familiar with the local roads and trails. When they do venture outside,

they rarely take fantastic forms outside of the Hedge, especially in locations where the shapes can be witnessed by more than one person or recorded in any fashion. The Laughing Ones' particular bent of mischief relies not only upon trickery but in proving the stupidity, gullibility and witlessness of their targets. The greatest goal is to convince a person to do something particularly foolish, such as clamber on the back of a strange horse or cross a treacherous suspended bridge to reach an inviting half-naked temptress.

Despite their obvious physical prowess, they rarely engage in combat, however. It does not suit a Laughing One's sensibilities to be reduced to throwing blows or using weapons. Their chosen battles are those of wit and subterfuge, offering pain while risking little in return.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 5, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Investigation 1, Medicine 2

Physical Skills: Athletics (Running) 5, Brawl (Defense) 2, Stealth 3, Survival (Navigation) 4

Social Skills: Animal Ken 3, Empathy (Seeing Weaknesses) 4, Expression (Singing) 3, Intimidation 3, Persuasion (Temptation) 5, Socialize 3, Subterfuge 5

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stamina 3, Striking Looks 4

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 9

Defense: 4

Speed: 20 (species Factor 8 in all forms)

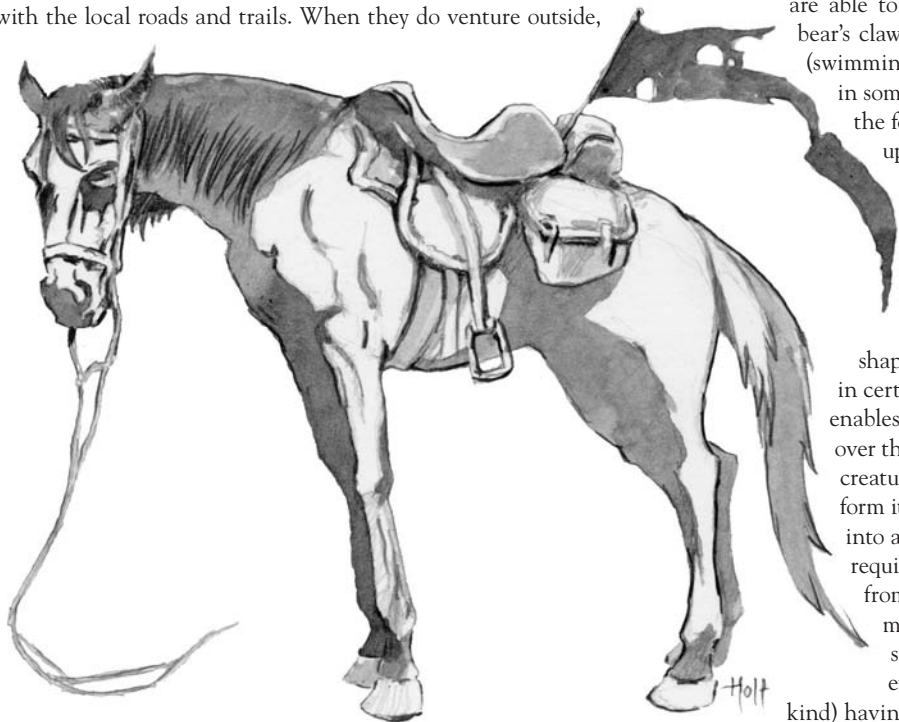
Health: 9 (static despite form size changes)

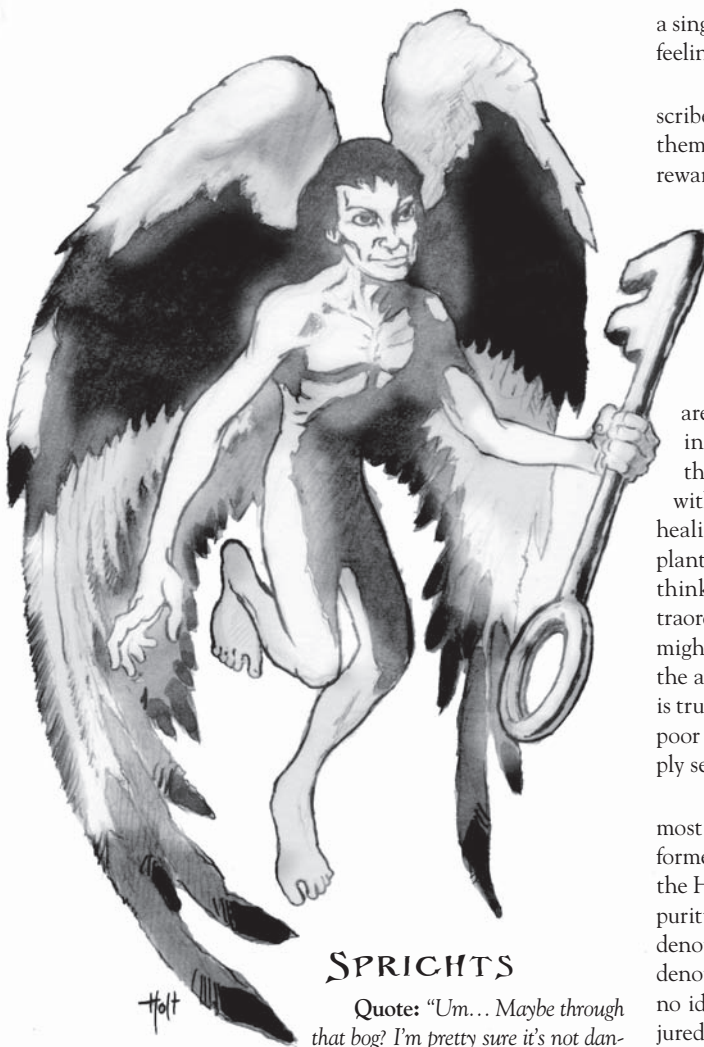
Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool
Brawl	(0)B	5	—

Special Ability — Shapeshifting: Laughing Ones are consummate shapeshifters able to take on new forms at will. They are able to emulate natural weapons (such as a bear's claws or a wolf's teeth), movement modes (swimming like a mermaid, flying as a crow) and in some cases may even gain armor (if taking the form of, say, a boulder). They may swell up to Size 10, but not beyond that.

Each Laughing One has a particular ban that limits its shifting in some way. For some, it may be as simple as "cannot take the form of any birds," while others may have to show certain coloration patterns in each shape, or may only be able to change shapes in certain situations. Knowing this ban often enables someone to hold a great deal of power over the Laughing One, whether it means the creature is easier to identify regardless of the form it takes, or the creature can be "locked" into a form by preventing the circumstances required for the Laughing One to change from coming about. Because of this, the metamorphosing hobgoblins are very secretive about their bans, and few will even admit to they (or others of their kind) having such limitations.





SPRIGHTS

Quote: "Um... Maybe through that bog? I'm pretty sure it's not dangerous... oh, look, vilesrikes!"

Background: While hobgoblins are commonly capricious, not all are utterly malicious. The diminutive sprights as often attempt to help those lost in the Hedge as the sprights try to harm the travelers. Sprights' help can be of dubious use, but their intentions may be good all the same.

As near as scholars of the Hedge can deduce, sprights occupy one of the lower rungs on the hobgoblin food chain. Though more humanlike in appearance than most hobgoblins, and certainly sentient, they seem to have little ability to impose changes on their environment. Sprights nestle into forgotten burrows, but do not dig their own. They salvage forgotten nests, but do not build. If they were able to form true societies, they could be a force to be reckoned with. As it is, they are the victims of predation from their fellow hobgoblins, defending themselves haphazardly with potent magic but failing to protect themselves against anything more immediate than a few heartbeats into the future.

Description: Sprights are rarely more than a few inches tall, slight of build and more or less humanoid in appearance. Their most notable feature is a pair of wings, as likely to be bat or bird or insect. Sprights, similar to humans, range in personality from benevolent to selfish and from shy to extroverted. Often, several sprights of very similar appearance are found in the same area, close enough in looks to be twins or triplets. These "siblings" refer to themselves as

a single being, using "I" to describe not only their own actions and feelings but those of the other sprights who resemble them.

Sprights are not quite stupid; they're more accurately described as simple. They're more than capable of taking care of themselves and their "siblings," reacting to immediate threats (or rewards) and handling the challenges of daily life in the hostile environment of the Hedge. Sprights are not, however, well suited for long-term planning, tactics or ongoing efforts. They bore easily, and once distracted, rarely return to their former duties, unless something happens that allows them to recapture the spark of interest that encouraged them to take up a given task in the first place.

The things that sprights know, they simply know. They are not as a result of classes or book learning, but more on an inherent empathy with how the world works. Of course eating that small red fruit makes you feel better, they would put forth, without any idea of the amaranthine's name or the nature of its healing. This same empathic ability allows them to understand plants, animals and people on an innate basis, without pausing to think about how they do so. This same quality makes sprights extraordinarily poor liars; it simply never occurs to them that things might be perceived by others as something than they are not, so the attempt to use subterfuge to convince others that a falsehood is true is beyond sprights' kenning. It also makes them particularly poor teachers, as it never occurs to them that others cannot simply sense the way of things in the same way they do.

Because sprights so closely resemble humans, one of the most common theory as to the origin of sprights is that they are formed from the tiny bits of human souls that are torn away by the Hedge's thorny brambles. Their wings, legend says, denote the purity of their former soul-owner's spirit, with light, pristine wings denoting a "good" person, and dark, tattered bat or insect wings denoting someone "evil." The sprights themselves seem to have no idea of these theories, and one is as likely to be aided (or injured) by a bat-winged minx as an angel-winged waif. Those who are advocates of the "good spright, bad spright" theory claim this is the Hedge's chaotic influence causing flux in the soul-shreds' inherent nature.

A few changelings have claimed to actually witnessed the birth or creation of a spright, but the stories are contradictory, and usually from... unreliable observers. Sprights do not seem to sexually reproduce. Lore speaks of eggs, soul-cysts and even goblin fruits that might spontaneously generate a spright when the conditions are right, but even the most dedicated Autumn Court scholars have yet to successfully document such a phenomenon.

Storytelling Hints: Sprights are the embodiment of fae capriciousness and whimsy, in a form that's easily interacted with. They tend to be shallow and one-dimensional creatures with flighty and reactionary personalities. They are not incapable of learning new things or cooperating with others, but they are not pre-disposed to it. Efforts to keep sprights "on track" or focused on a specific goal are rarely successful, especially if doing so involves continued effort or attention.

On the good side, this means that those who run afoul of a bevy of sprights do not have to worry overmuch about the diminutive hobgoblins holding a grudge against them (or at least planning action against them). On the bad side, it makes negotiating with them difficult, especially for any information or activity that is not wholly centered on the here and now.

Sprights seem to have an inherent connection to the Wyrd, which makes them far more dangerous than might otherwise be the case. They display a natural talent for magic, and seem to be able to call on the power of Contracts without having any real recollection of being bound by those Contracts in the usual way. Some changelings argue that this potent Wyrd connection undercuts the theory of sprights being fashioned from bits of human souls: why would a tattered scrap of humanity display a far greater facility for Wyrd-shaping than the human himself?

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 1

Mental Skills: Crafts 1, Medicine 3, Occult (The Hedge) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics (Flight) 4, Brawl 1, Larceny 2, Survival 3, Weaponry 1

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Hedge Beasts) 4, Empathy 5, Expression 3, Persuasion 2, Socialize 3

Merits: Danger Sense, Fighting Finesse (Improvised), Fast Reflexes 2, Harvest 5

Willpower: 3

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10/15 (Species factor 5, 10 in flight)

Health: 4

Wyrd: 6

Contracts: Choose five to 20 dots' worth. Especially appropriate Contracts include Dream — Pathfinder; Hearth — Any; Fleeting Spring — Any but Wyrd-Faced Stranger; Eternal Spring — Any; Fleeting Summer — Any; Eternal Summer — Any; Fleeting Autumn — Any but Mein of the Baba Yaga; Eternal Autumn — Any; Fleeting Winter — Any; Eternal Winter — Any

Normally, inappropriate Contracts would include all Mirror, Smoke or Artifice Contracts, the Goblin Contract Fool's Gold, or any others dealing with making things falsely seem to be other than they are.

Glamour/per Turn: 15/6

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Brawl	(0)B	—	2	—
Melee	(0)L	—	4	Tiny Weapons

Special Limitation — Tiny Weapons: Because of their size, sprights are limited to weapons that are too small to inflict serious damage. These may include sharpened sticks, thorny twigs, shards of glass, sharp stones or even (should sprights have access to them) miniature blades. While sprights instinctively know how to use their tiny slashing attacks to their best advantage, their weapons themselves are capped at a four-dice pool.

VILESHRIKES

Quote: "A bit stringy, but you'll do."

Background: For the most part, humanity has, over the centuries, become accustomed to the idea that what threats come at us do so on our own plane. In the mortal world, a person rarely needs to look up in fear for his safety. In the depths of the fae borderlands, threats can strike from any direction.

The hobgoblins known as vileshrikes make their homes in the tallest, thickest briars of the Hedge. While it is almost impos-



sible to approach a vileshrike nest without suspecting the area is dangerous, more than a few changelings have not heeded the warning until it was too late, and felt the horrid wrath of these grotesque hobgoblins descending upon them from the skies. The fortunate changelings are merely raided, as the creatures snatch away whatever bit of shiny treasure catches their eye and fly away, leaving nothing but a trail of stinking feathers, filth and foul language behind them. Other changelings happen across a vileshrike that has its eyes on more than a bauble, and may find themselves fighting for their lives with the demonic harpy-hobgoblin who is intent upon adding them to her foul thorny larder.

Description: Vileshrikes are foul, unkempt hobgoblins that combine the worst of human and avian attributes. The exact such combination varies from one to the other; one might have a humanlike torso springing from the neck of a huge bird, while another appears like a winged, taloned human with vulture-like heads upon his shoulders and at the end of each arm. Neither human nor bird aspects seem at all healthy; their flesh is flabby or gaunt, their feathers mangy and clumped. They are so fouled with dried blood, excrement and other detritus that it would seem surprising they could fly at all. A vileshrike's taloned feet are not well suited for ground mobility. They are slow and awkward if forced to walk more than a few steps, and prefer to take to the air whenever possible.

Vileshrike lairs only add to their repugnant reputation. Similar to the mundane shrikes that gave vileshrikes their name, vileshrikes make their homes deep inside thorny thickets and hang their prey on the razor-sharp spikes around their nest. They prefer their meat half-rotted, and eviscerate their prey with their sharp talons (living or not) and leave it draped around their lairs to "cure." It's uncertain whether this is a matter of culinary prefer-

ence or aesthetics; vileshrikes may simply like being surrounded by the macabre carnage. Although they have no real sense of value in terms of trade or beauty, vileshrikes are attracted to shiny objects and will often snatch and sequester away pieces of jewelry, weapons or other bits of sparkling loot from those they attack. Once such items are returned to the shrike's nest, they do not stay shiny for long. Anything found in the hobgoblin's lair will be fouled with refuse, blood and bodily wastes to a near-intolerable degree.

Storytelling Hints: Predators in every sense of the word, vileshrikes take advantage of every opportunity to steal everything they find of interest (normally either meat or things which shine) and to befoul everything in which they have no interest. They have no concept of cooperation, even among others of their kind, seeing other vileshrikes only as competition to be hamstrung, sabotaged and driven away from their territory.

Vileshrikes are, just as most hobgoblins, without morals or shame. However, their aggressive nature makes this failing all the more obvious. They never use weapons, but they fight dirty, slashing at bellies and eyes, shrieking, spitting and shitting wherever and whenever it will most distract their opponent and allow them a potentially fatal attack. They can use their wings for flight, and prefer to attack from above where they can bomb their opponents with rocks, effluvia and vomit as they approach. They also use them in close combat, to allow them to dart in for a blow and back out, hopefully before their foe can counter-attack, or using their foul molting feathers as a distraction.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Crafts (Nestmaking) 2, Investigation 1

Physical Skills: Athletics (Flight) 4, Brawl (Claws) 5, Larceny (Flyby) 4

Social Skills: Intimidation (Shrieks) 4

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10 ground, 15 in flight

Health: 7

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Claws	2(L)	—	12	—
Bite	3(L)	—	12	—

• **Poisonous Filth:** After any successful bite or claw attack, a vileshrike's victim must succeed on a Stamina + Resolve roll to resist the wound becoming poisoned due to the shrike's foul hygiene (see p. 49 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** for rules on resisting poison). Poisoned wounds deliver an extra point of lethal damage per hour until they are cleaned out with alcohol or clean water. Healing the wound is not enough to stop the poison damage from continuing to occur; the filth must be cleaned out of the wound, or it will continue to harm the victim and can eventually kill him.

WILL O' WISPS

Quote: "This way... Just a bit further..."

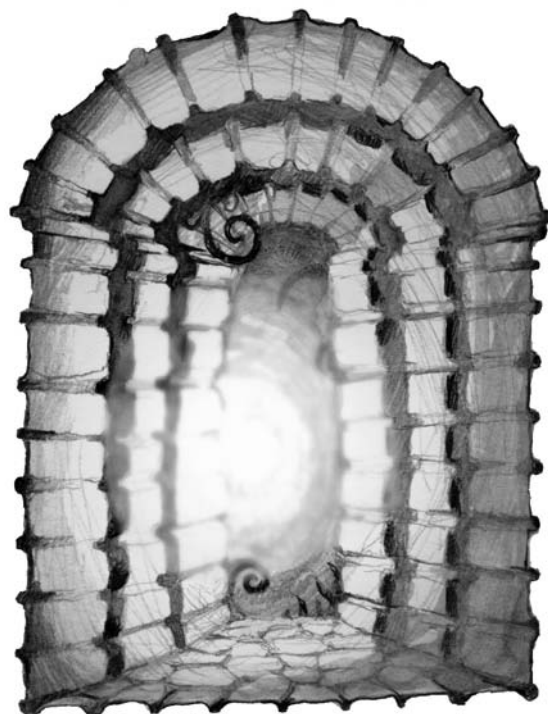
Background: Folklore and legend are filled with tales of glowing balls of light that lure wayward travelers to their doom.

From Japanese *kitsune-bi* to Norman *faeu boulanger* to the sailor's "Saint Elmo's Fire" to the Dutch *Dwaallicht*, almost every culture in history has warned its members against the dangers of following these flickering fires. They persist in the Hedge, where they are potentially dangerous even to those wanderers clever enough not to follow a strange light through the twisting thorns.

Will O' Wisps are nocturnal and are most often found haunting the trails and pathways of the Hedge, where they lurk just at the edge of perception and move erratically through the darkness. They avoid close interaction, and rarely come within 10 yards of sentient beings. On the other hand, Wisps do seem to be attracted to travelers. While Will O' Wisps never get too close, they will actively seek out those who journey in the Hedge, attempting to lure them from established paths and known areas, into the depths of the Thorny realm. There does not seem to be inherent ill-will involved, but the path the Wisps choose pays no mind to dangers to those who follow them. While the Wisps do not seem to intentionally choose hazardous routes, neither do they avoid them, which often results in harm befalling those who follow the Wisps' ethereal lead.

Unlike many other hobgoblins, Wisps do not feed upon those who fall prey to their temptations. They seem to have no need to eat, drink or breathe at all, and seem to be motivated purely by a desire to be followed. Once they have tempted an individual or group into following their lead, they will continue to bob just at the edge of perception until the group ceases to follow (whether because they have fallen prey to other factors or just given up). They can be dangerous even to those who don't follow them: some Wisps will draw other hobgoblins to cross paths with a group of travelers.

Description: Will O' Wisps are luminescent globes of light that range in size from fire-fly-sized sparks to balls the size of a man's head. They are often white, light blue or eerie green in color, although yellow, red or orange Wisps are not unheard of. Some appear to be made of flame; others shine with the cool glow



of the full moon. They tend to hover at roughly shoulder height, although some witnesses report Wisps playing in the tree tops of a thick forest, or even rolling about beneath the water's surface in a swamp or sea.

Wisps are nocturnal, appearing only during dusk or darker conditions, whether that is produced by nightfall, storms, thick forest canopy or supernatural means. They also sometimes appear in dark internal structures: subterranean caves, windowless rooms and hallways or the like.

Will O' Wisps have no tangible form. They are ethereal entities without shape or physiology, appearing only as a shimmering, luminescent globe of light. They sometimes are credited with producing soft whispering voices, mournful sobs or mischievous, seductive giggles that encourage others to follow after them, but are apparently incapable of real verbal or psychic communication. Scholars have conjectured that both the form and sounds attributed to Wisps may actually be a manifestation of the desires of those who witness them. A traveler who has recently lost a loved one may hear what she believes to be his voice coming from the glowing light, and may even imagine that she sees his profile reflected in the unearthly glow. Similarly, a witness who has sworn to protect children or women may imagine he hears a baby's whimper or a woman's sobs. This theory is supported by reports of different individuals within the same group hearing or seeing different qualities while following the same Will O' Wisp.

As Wisps are incorporeal, they cannot do (or take) physical damage; blows pass through them, magic does not affect them, and they seem immune to fire, cold or other environmental influences. If they are imprisoned, they will simply disincorporate and reappear in another location. Being not truly "alive," they cannot be killed or injured by physical means, and don't have a sentence that can be negotiated with or forced into Contract.

Storytelling Hints: Will O' Wisps do not seem to possess the self-awareness required to enter into negotiations with other creatures, or at least their intellect is alien enough to make negotiation impossible. Their ability to lure travelers into compromising positions, however, is sometimes used by the True Fae or other predators who hunt around areas Wisps are known to frequent. If a swampy area is home to Wisps, a hob may well make her home there as well, offering "succor" (for a price, of course) to those who are foolish enough to follow the Wisps into the marshlands and become lost. Similarly, an enticer or bloodsuckle may lurk in an area where Wisps frequently lead people, counting on the glowing balls to conduct prey directly into their waiting maws.

While Wisps have an empathetic ability to project tempting stimuli out to those who witness them, Wisps have no overt methods of attack or hostile magics. Their abilities do not force others to follow against their will or dominate their self-interest, Wisps merely prey upon others' fears, weaknesses or morals to encourage them to do so. Storytellers are encouraged to think of Wisps as carrots, tempting characters, rather than leashes that force others to follow. Wisps' Attributes and Abilities are given only for the purposes of attempting to lure others to follow them, and do not represent an equivalent personality in a humanoid-creature.

Wisps are, at most, a minor annoyance for those who are wary and do not follow their enticing. However, there is no end to the mischief or harm that can fall upon someone who is foolish enough to follow their lead.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 5, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 0, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

Mental Skills: None

Physical Skills: Athletics 5, Stealth 3

Social Skills: Empathy 4, Expression 4, Persuasion 4, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Fresh Start

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 9

Defense: 5

Speed: 18 (flight only — species factor 10)

Health: N/A (see "Intangible," below)

- **Mirroring:** Will O' Wisps have an empathic mirroring ability that allows them to "reflect back" the appearance or sound of that which will be most likely to tempt an individual into following. The effect affects only the perceptions of those who see the Wisp, not the Wisp itself. The Wisp does not actually take on the image or sounds thereof, and another person witnessing the same Wisp will perceive it differently, projecting their own personal temptations onto the Wisp.

- **Intangible:** Will O' Wisps have no physical form, existing solely as a manifestation of Hedge weirdness. They cannot be affected by physical or mental attacks, and aren't susceptible to Contracts or other supernatural powers. Wisps are, essentially, Hedge window dressing, having no impact on the world around them, unless individuals are foolish enough to follow them.

WYRD-MITES

Quote: "I don't know what it is... It just *itches!*"

Background: Although there are hobgoblins (for example, the bloodsuckle) that rely upon blood for their sustenance, in the Hedge, another substance is just as vital: Glamour. In many ways, to fae creatures, Glamour is the stuff of life, and those who cannot produce it themselves must find other ways to acquire it. Similar to their mundane cousins, Wyrd-mites seek out their preferred "meal" and parasitically prevail upon others to provide them with what Wyrd-mites must have to survive and prosper. They are notable as some of the smallest hobgoblins to infest the Hedge — which, not being an ecosystem proper, doesn't require on the same masses of insects to prosper — but particularly notable for the threat they cause.

Description: Wyrd-mites appear to be nothing more than small ticks or chiggers, arachnids with bodies not much larger than the head of a pin and short, scuttling legs. Their mouths consist of a pair of oversized pincers and a sharp, serrated arrow-like plunger that serves as both anchor and straw for the hungry parasite. After clambering onto their victim, they find a patch of bare flesh and spread their saliva on it, allowing the numbing agents in it to mask their bite. They then plunge their barbed mouth-tube through the skin and, like their mundane kin, siphon off as much of their chosen meal as possible until they are bloated and can consume no more. In mortal ticks, this process ends here, with the parasite dropping away from the host until it is time to gorge again. Wyrd-mites, however, are a bit more tricky.

Wyrd-mites cannot exist long without a host. Their hunger for Glamour is such that being separated from a host for more than a few days is a death sentence for an adult mite. Because of this, they have developed a life cycle that is very short. In an ideal climate, a Wyrd-mite egg hatches into larvae within a

week, and the larval stage is almost as fast. Within a few weeks, properly fed larvae have developed into adults, able to reproduce and lay eggs themselves. Since mites may lay dozens of eggs at a time, the sheer numbers of potentially hatching mites ensures the continuation of the species, even though adult mites rarely live longer than a few months.

In order for their eggs and larvae to develop successfully, however, they must have a constant source of Glamour to feed upon. Without it, the eggs will never hatch and the life cycle of the Wyrd-mite will be interrupted. Fortunately, the same individuals who have sufficient Glamour to act as a food source for the adult mite also are prime candidates to act as fodder for their developing eggs. Therefore, these opportunistic parasites take advantage of the puncture caused by an adult Wyrd-mite's feeding, and deposit their tiny eggs into conveniently open wound each time they feed, before dropping off of the host, sated and drained.

Adult Wyrd-mites can suck a point of Glamour from their host per turn, but will never drain their unwitting benefactor completely dry. This is a defense mechanism to propagate their species; a Glamourless host makes a poor depository for their eggs.

Once deposited, Wyrd-mite eggs lie beneath their host's skin surface in a tiny pocket created by their parent's feeding. For a week, they incubate there in the warm, wet pseudo-womb, until the zygotes develop into larvae that, in order to increase their likelihood of developing to maturity without being removed from their host, wriggle their grubbish forms to spread out away from their egg-nest, moving through the sublayer of fat between muscle and skin to diverse parts of the host's body. There they will remain, vying with their siblings for whatever scraps of Glamour they can drain from their host, in hopes of gleaning enough to develop fully into adult mites. Once sufficiently developed, a larvae breaks out of its maggot-like larval coating as a fully mature adult Wyrm-mite and uses its sharp feeding tube to bore an exit from its host and its new limbs to venture out into the world in search of its own host upon which to feed and lay the next generation of mite eggs.

Storytelling Hints: Any individual or creature that possesses Wyrd (and has at least one dot of unspent Glamour) may fall prey to Wyrd-mites when traveling through the Hedge. Adult Wyrm-mites are almost imperceptible to those who are not actively looking for them. Unless bloated from having recently fed (in which case they pose no threat to travelers), they are the size of a pin-head. Because of this and the numbing qualities of their saliva, few hosts notice they are being preyed upon until the mite has sucked at least one point of Glamour from them.

Mites typically take no more than a few turns on their hosts to find a promising location to feed and preparing the target area with an application of numbing saliva. After that, they will bite (Strength + Brawl, but the target's defenses do not come into play) until they make a successful attack on their target. These attacks do no damage, however any successful attack results in

one point of Glamour being drained from the host. In the turn after any successful bite attack, the Wyrd-mite will deposit a half-dozen eggs in the wound and seal it shut with another application of saliva before moving to another location to repeat the process.

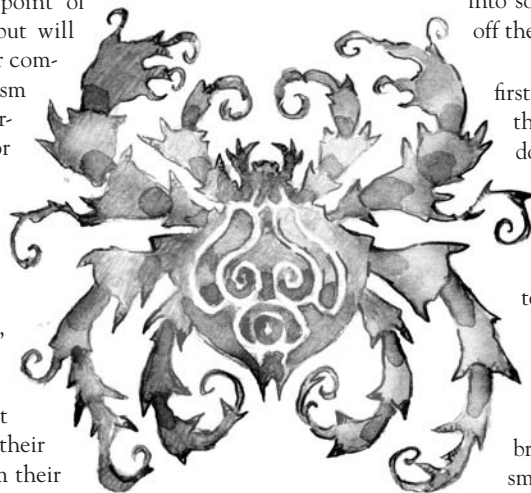
The test to find a Wyrd-mite on a host is a standard (Perception + Investigation), with penalties depending on how much the mite has bloated. An unfed mite levels a -3 dice penalty, which is reduced by one point for each point of Glamour the mite has drained from its target, as the tick doubles in size with each point. A hungry mite is about 1/16 of an inch. A point of Glamour doubles its size to 1/8th, two points doubles it again to 1/4, and three doubles it again to 1/2 inch, at which point there is no penalty involved in the active search.

Adult mites can consume no more than three points of Glamour in one feeding (and have no more than three "sets" of eggs to deposit at any given time). At that point, having increased their mass by 800%, they drop off their host, satiated, and scuttle into some secluded crack or crevice to sleep off their feast.

If interrupted after having made their first bite, but before voluntarily removing themselves from a host, Wyrd-mites will do one point of lethal damage to the host as their barbed mouth-units tear away at its flesh as it is removed. This process is inevitably lethal to the mite, who will die soon thereafter from injuries to its feeding tube.

After being deposited, eggs do not move for approximately one week. During this time, the wound-area will grow red and sore, like a deep bruise with a small bite in the center or small puncture wound. Cutting the sealed wound open at this point during this week will do a point of lethal damage to the host for each wound, and reveal a half dozen small gelatinous eggs clustered together in a group at the center of the wound. The eggs are about the size of a grain of sand, making the group no larger than the head of a pin. Eggs that are excised at this point have no further effect on their host and die soon after being removed. Before hatching, Wyrm-mite eggs do not consume Glamour.

If the wound is not found and emptied within a week, the eggs hatch, birthing forth a half dozen tiny grubs. These larvae leave the wound area, burrowing beneath the host's skin in different locations throughout the body. Each one then sets up house-keeping in a small abscess and begins feeding on the host. Each larva can siphon a full point of Glamour from its host every 24 hours. Much of this energy is used to morph the creature into an adult form, so its growth is less dynamic than that of its parasitic parent. After having fed, however, each larva does swell slightly, causing the location the larva is burrowed in to form a raised, itchy lump akin to a small boil or pimple. These sores will become more painful after the larva has just fed, and lessen between feedings, but are continually bothersome, as if coated in poison ivy. Cutting the lump open will deal a point of lethal damage to the host, and reveal a pustule of gore within which rests a tiny but grotesque creature at some stage of development between pasty maggot and fully developed mite. Any additional damage easily



kills the larva, which has no defense or means of location or attack until it is fully developed. If removed from the wound without further damage, the larva will enter a state of hibernation from which the larva will awaken when placed once more within a Glamour-filled host body.

Wyrd-Mites as Tools of Treachery

Assassin's blades and sniper scopes are not the only tools of sabotage used by amoral changelings with a goal to accomplish. More than once, a tiresome target has been incapacitated not through the use of garotte or poison, but by having his Glamour siphoned, leaving his defenses weakened. By introducing torpid Wurm-mite larvae into their targets' bodies (through injection, implantation or even consumption), ill-intentioned schemers can virtually assure that their opponents are not at their best to face any given challenge.

While it is understood to be verboten to intentionally take such actions, especially in formal challenges such as Hedge Duels, oneiromancy or other formalized combat, it is not unheard of for an individual to develop an inexplicable (until the larval welts are discovered) weakness immediately preceding such an event.

As a single Wurm-mite can deposit up to 18 eggs (six each in three different locations) in a single three-point feeding session, the Glamour drain on an affected changeling can be quite significant. Larvae that have emptied their hosts of Glamour will go into a hibernation state, waiting for their benefactor to gain more, which they will then consume immediately. Larvae need to consume a total of 10 points of Glamour each in order to pupate into their adult form. If there is insufficient Glamour in the host for all larvae to siphon a point on any given day, the strongest

(i.e., those that are the furthest along in their metamorphosis) will feed first, followed by the rest of the non-hibernating larvae and then finally the hibernating grubs.

At the point at which any larva has consumed 10 points of Glamour, the larva has completed the metamorphosis to adult stage and will use its newly developed feeding apparatus to puncture a hole in its host's skin from the inside outward and attempt to escape. This exit wound does a point of lethal damage to the host, but after the mite escapes, it will not return to its "birth host" to feed, instead seeking out other targets.

Similar to mundane animals, Wyrd-mites use the highest of their Wits or Dexterity for their Defense, rather than the lowest.

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Mental Skills: None

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Bite) 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Social Skills: None

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 7

Health: 2

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Dice Pool	Special
Bite	1(L)	—	4	*Glamour Drain

• **Glamour Drain:** Adult mites can, after a successful bite attack, spend the next turn draining one point of Glamour from their target. Each Glamour Drain attack must follow a successful bite attack, and a new bite attack must be made for each Glamour Drain. There is no test to use the Glamour Drain attack. Glamour Drain may not be used by adult Wyrd-mites more than three times in any given 24-hour period. Each Glamour Drain doubles the mite's size, from 1/16 of an inch to 1/8, from 1/8 to 1/4 and from 1/4 to 1/2.





*All the leaves are yellow,
All the grass is brown.
All the nights are longer,
Sun goes down.

Crows are in the branches,
Wolves are in the wild.
Others in the shadows,
Goodbye, child.
— Anonymous*

This book includes:

- Motivations, methods and examples from the antagonist changeling factions
- In-depth treatment of the True Fae, complete with new potential Keepers
- Expanded information on fetches, hobgoblins and human antagonists
- Dozens of antagonists ready to drop into a chronicle

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