



THE FACE SHIFTER

WHAT IS THIS?

This handout contains the profile of an NPC villain.

You can use this villain in your existing fantasy or urban fantasy game, or create a whole new adventure with this character.

Feel free to add, change, or adapt to make this villain your own!

A VILLAIN IN TWO SETTINGS

MANY HEADS ARE TATTOOED UPON MY BODY, THE ONE I CHOOSE BECOMES MY FACE.

Everyone in this world wears many faces. We pretend, we disguise, we change ourselves to get what we want. I, however, do it best. My identities are marked on my body in black ink, fluid but permanent. I am my many faces and my faces are me. Age and gender do not confine me.

NOBODY KNOWS WHICH FACE I FIRST WORE.

Though my body betrays my female sex, my identity is a mystery to all. It is lost to me like a childhood toy. One day I shall pick another face to define me. Until then I do what I must to get my way.

MANY FACES HAVE MANY EYES, AND MANY MOUTHS.

Each of my faces has a name, identity, relationships, power. In every house I am a friend and stranger, in every government an advisor and an ambassador, and to each of my lovers I am also destruction. Each my faces is a life, and I jealously guard its position, possessions and reputation.



FANTASY & URBAN FANTASY



FANTASY

MY POWER COMES FROM MY TRIBE, THE HATU

Once we were warriors, traders, healers and shaman. Our many faces gave us the power to talk the many spirits that taught us, helped us, and inspired us. Like all of us, I was given my many faces as I learned to speak with the spirits. They do not listen any more.

I SACRIFICED MY FIRST FACE FOR REVENGE

He wanted our land for its riches. Gems and gold littered beneath the earth. He knew he could not defeat us in war. So he took our power from us. One by one, his foul creatures hunted and destroyed the spirits we relied on, until none were left.

When I learned what he had done, I disguised myself to enter his presence. I showed him my first face that he would know the Hatu's wrath and the spirits sorrow. Then I slit his throat and ran. I have not seen my tribe since, but my servants tell me they are few.

YOU WILL FIND ME WHEREVER POWER LIES, AND CHANGE IS NEAR

I am the Duke's new advisor, the temple inquisitor, the court match maker and the Dragon's emissary. I seek out weakness and instability – to me, these are the markers of opportunity. I pull the strings and stop at nothing. My only cause is myself.

I DO NOT SPREAD LIES. I CREATE THE TRUTH

An old, wise and respected priest warns the King of an evil Lord that plagues the lands. A young knight wearing a honoured crest, dripping blood, tells him of the Lord's cruelty. A noble woman goes missing, and was last seen being escorted to his castle. With so much evidence against this Lord, his true nature surely cannot be doubted.

THE WEAK ARE PAWNS. THE STRONG MAKE BETTER ONES

Those who serve me believe in the truth of my face. They are driven by the promise and position of who I seem to be. They will never know who they are truly agents of, nor do they know the true reason for the actions they are tasked with. I always rely on the naiveté of strangers. After all, strangers are far easier to disavow or destroy.

URBAN FANTASY

I SACRIFICED MY FIRST FACE FOR REVENGE

He wanted my brother for his money. Syphoned straight from the seven digits of our trust fund. He took him places he shouldn't have been. Gave him things he should never have had. Things not meant for the weak of mind and free of spirit. My brother could not sleep. The dark crept in through the walls, seeped in through the cracks in the ceiling to strangle him. Until one day I found him dangling by a rope.

I found that man living in a fortress of my fortune. I disguised myself to enter his presence. I showed him my face. Inside it, etched in family resemblance, was my brother's. Then I slit his throat and ran. I have not been home since, but I've heard his men came looking for me in all the wrong places.

MY POWER COMES FROM THE BLOOD I HAVE STOLEN

I was never content to disappear. I wanted better. I wanted to start again.

There was a demon. He lived among us humans for centuries. Changing his form and face at will. Drifting between cultures and cults. There is power in blood. So I hunted him, and I took his for myself.

THE SKILL OF ANOTHER KEEPS ME STRONG - YET THEIR KNOWLEDGE IS MY ONLY WEAKNESS

There is a tattoo parlour under the train station. A forgotten nook. You wipe the grime off the red switch and buzz. Fitz will do almost anything if you have an appointment. He brews my ink from blood and pigment like an alchemist. I have paid him in money and secrets. He is the only one who knows who I was. Who knows that I decide who I am.

YOU WILL FIND ME WHEREVER POWER LIES, AND CHANGE IS NEAR

I am the government official, the kingpin's new advisor, the television executive and the company chairman. I am the one who arrives in the Maserati, whose presence oozes consequence, who already knows exactly who you are and what you want. I seek out weakness and instability – to me, these are the markers of opportunity. I pull the strings and stop at nothing.

I DO NOT SPREAD LIES. I CREATE THE TRUTH

Truth lives on computer screens, in databases, in the letter of the law, and within human minds. There is nothing on that list I cannot find a way to alter. I take the proper channels, and let changes be made by the proper people. My own hands will not be dirtied again.

