

Fairyland

Confidential

A single player roleplaying game

by Nick Wedig





“It was a fairyland case. I hate fairyland cases. Once magic gets involved in a case, you never know what is real and what is illusion. Who is acting on their own free will? Who’s been enchanted? It’s always a mess to sort out. But no matter how much I swear off the faerie cases, I always get drawn back in to another one.”

In the early 20th century, magical portals opened between the human world and the land of faeries. On one side was the human world, a place of crime and corruption, hardboiled detectives and shady dealings. On the other side was the supernatural realm told of in stories and legends, where immortal beings wield strange magic and mythical beasts roam.

No one is sure why this happened, but everyone has theories. The portals have remained open and stable, though. Since the opening the two worlds have begun to interact and intermingle. Humans travel across into the fae realm to seek magic and wonder. Fairies travel into human realms to seek gainful employment or vices unknown to fairykind.

The portal appeared in a major human city. Like any border town, the gateway to the faerie kingdoms quickly attracted a variety of criminal enterprises. Some people wanted to cross without official clearance. Some wanted to smuggle illicit goods across. Some oppose the border crossings, some seek to benefit. Some want to offer services to visitors from the other side.

These small crimes inevitably lead to organized crime, corruption, and, eventually, murder. That’s when you get involved. You’re a private investigator, trying to solve the murder and sort out the complex web of betrayal and magic surrounding it. Someone has died, and if you don’t act fast, their murderer will get away with the crime.

Fairyland Confidential is a game that mashes up the genre conventions of film noir with the legends and stories of fairy folklore. It’s a roleplaying game for one player. You’ll need a deck of regular playing cards (with jokers), two dice of different colors, a set of these rules, a victim sheet, a crime sheet, and some way to take notes. It should take you 30 minutes to an hour to play.

Overview

You will be both the author and the protagonist of a story that combines faerie legends with the film noir genre. You will imagine the story through the perspective of your detective protagonist, but you will also be creating the story as you play.

You will be taking on the fictional persona of a detective, hired to investigate a murder. There are six potential suspects. If you can narrow the list of potential culprits down to one name, then you'll have identified the killer.

A tableau of playing cards represents potential questions that you might learn the answer to as you play. Each playing card has a question tied to it, based on rank and suit. The face cards (Jack, Queen and King) are tied to the crime and victim you chose. The other cards are the same for all scenarios. If you answer a King or Queen ranked question about a suspect, then that suspect is proven innocent. If you draw an Ace from the deck, you can save that card for later, rather than putting it in the tableau. You can discard that Ace to reroll one or both your tone dice, by answering a question tied to the Ace.

Jokers are a surprise twist to the story, that cause you to lower Danger or Tribulation by 1 and to reshuffle the tableau cards into the draw deck.

Each scene you will roll two tone dice, which are tied to two tones: Faerie and Noir. If you roll a matched pair, then the suspect tied to that number is proven innocent. If not, you will choose one die to determine which suspect you have learned about, and which die tells you what you have learned. On the tableau of playing cards, you count up from the lowest ranked card to the highest rank, equal to the number on the question die to select a question. You then imagine a scene where you character learns the answer to that question, where the answer must match the tone of the die used to select the question.

If the die you chose for a question shows a value too high, though, your detective may be in trouble. You have two ratings: Danger and Tribulation. If you use the Noir die to answer a question and it shows a number higher than your current Danger score, then your answer must include an act of betrayal or violence, and your Danger score increases by 1. If Danger ever reaches 6, then your character is gunned down and the criminal escapes.

Similarly, if you use the Faerie die to answer a question and it shows a number higher than your current Tribulation score, then you suffer a magic or fairy related trouble, and your Tribulation score increases by 1. If your Tribulation score reaches 6, then you are permanently lost in the fey realm, or permanently transformed, or otherwise out of commission, and once again the criminal escapes.

If you roll your tone dice and one die shows is a suspect that has been proven innocent, then you must use the other die to investigate the other suspect. If both dice results are suspects already cleared, then you suffer a very serious problem, discard both cards and increase either Danger or Tribulation, your choice.

At the end of the scene, you discard any cards used in the scene, then draw new cards to refill the tableau as needed. If you haven't won or lost the game yet, you begin a new scene by rolling your tone dice once again.

If you can prove 5 of the suspects are innocent, then the last suspect must be guilty. Then you create an epilogue to explain the remaining loose ends of the story and to imagine the criminal facing justice.

Tones

Choose two six-sided dice to represent the two opposing worlds influencing you: the bright and magical world of the fairy realm, and the dirty, mean streets of the earthly realm. Your brightest, most sparkly, most ethereal die will be your **Faerie** die. Your darkest, moodiest, least trustworthy die will be your **Noir** die.

Faerie

“Faerie is a perilous land, and in it are pitfalls for the unwary and dungeons for the overbold... The realm of fairy-story is wide and deep and high and filled with many things: all manner of beasts and birds are found there; shoreless seas and stars uncounted; beauty that is an enchantment, and an ever-present peril; both joy and sorrow as sharp as swords. In that realm a man may, perhaps, count himself fortunate to have wandered, but its very richness and strangeness tie the tongue of a traveller who would report them. And while he is there it is dangerous for him to ask too many questions, lest the gates should be shut and the keys be lost.”

— J. R. R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories"

When you choose the Faerie die to answer a question, your answer must reflect the themes, style and tone of ancient myths,

folktales and epic poems about fairies and their kingdoms under the hollow hills. The Faerie tone covers topics like magic, enchantment, beauty, brightness, oaths, ancient wonders, honor, love without lust, strange promises, transformation, illusion, elegance, swiftness, beauty, cruelty, spells, rituals, ancient pacts, curses, enchanted objects, potions, inhuman creatures, strong and honest emotions, tragedy, folklore, the magical power of names, noble ideals, and risking one's life for your ideals.

Noir

“The realist in murder writes of a world in which gangsters can rule nations and almost rule cities, in which 12 hotels and apartment houses and celebrated restaurants are owned by men who made their money out of brothels, in which a screen star can be the fingerman for a mob, and the nice man down the hall is a boss of the numbers racket; a world where a judge with a cellar full of bootleg liquor can send a man to jail for having a pint in his pocket, where the mayor of your town may have condoned murder as an instrument of moneymaking, where no man can walk down a dark street in safety because law and order are things we talk about but refrain from practising; [...] It is not a very fragrant world, but it is the world you live in...”

— Raymond Chandler, “The Simple Art of Murder”

When you choose the Noir die to answer a question, your answer must reflect the themes, style and tone of hardboiled detective fiction. The Noir tone deals with things such as corruption, crime, hypocrisy, petty motivations, the failure of societal systems, ambiguity, moral dilemmas, good people doing bad things for good reasons, bad people doing good things for bad reasons, secrets, lies, betrayal, violence that is messy and brutal, plans that go wrong, dirty money, corruption pervading all levels of society, stool pigeons, crooked cops, financial malfeasance, drugs, vice and depravity, lust without love, the rain-slick streets at night, echoing footsteps, paranoia, suspicion, pettiness, revenge, spite, pure simple greed, hiding your feelings, ambiguous emotions, grime, noble ideals revealed to be empty charades, promises easily broken, everyone is working an angle, and danger lurking around every corner.

Ratings

You have two ratings, tied to your two tones. Your **Danger** rating is tied to the *Noir* tone, and your **Tribulation** rating is tied to the *Faerie* tone. At the start of the game, Danger and Tribulation are both set to 1. Over the course of the game, each will rise. If either reaches 6, then the criminal escapes and your detective protagonist suffers a terrible fate.

When narrating a Noir answer and your Danger rating is low, you might only narrate uncertainty, distrust and threats. When the Danger level is 3 or 4, though, NPCs might have guns drawn and be accusing you of crimes, working to have you arrested or killed. At Danger 5, then someone definitely is firing weapons at you. At Danger 5, you might clear a suspect of suspicion by finding them dead, or by killing them yourself.

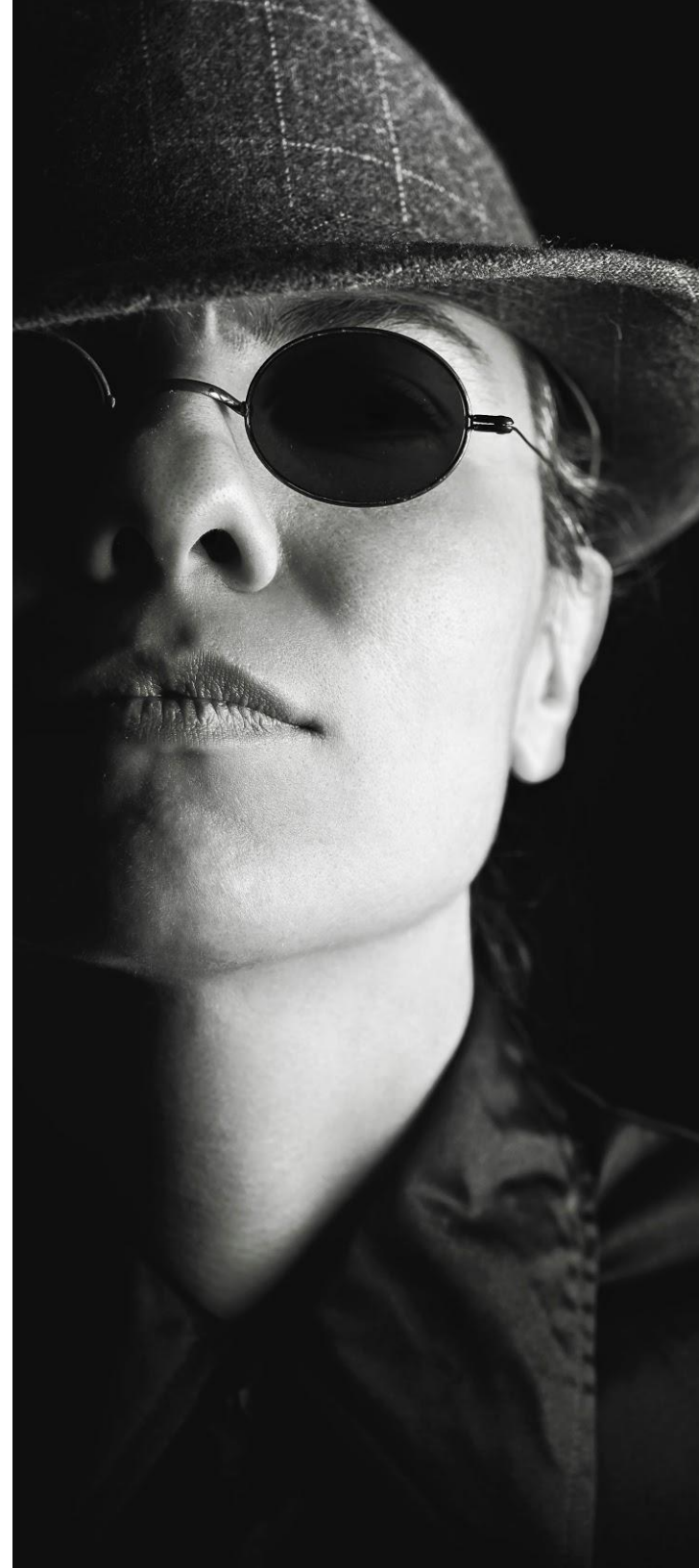
When narrating a Faerie answer with a low Tribulation value, then the faerie world seems wondrous and beautiful. As the Tribulation rating reaches 3 or 4, then the magic of the Faerie tone should become more threatening. The costs and consequences of interacting with the magical realm begin to be seen. By Tribulation 5, then powerful magic is being used, the sort that could doom

your very soul, or that could throw the world into chaos and madness.

When you choose a die to answer a question, if the die shows a number higher than your associated rating, then you suffer a misfortune and you increase your rating by 1.

So if you use the Noir die to answer a question, and the Noir die is showing a number higher than your current Danger rating, then your detective gets into some Noir themed trouble: betrayals, gunshots, falsely accused of a crime, beaten and left for dead by a biker gang, etc.

If you use the Faerie die to answer a question, and the die's value is higher than your current Tribulation score, then you have some Faerie themed trouble: curses, omens of doom, leprechaun pranks, ancient spells, haunted by spirits, etc.



The Tableau

The playing cards represent different questions you could learn the answer to in the course of your investigations. Each playing card has a question tied to it, based on rank and suit. The face cards (Jack, Queen and King) are based off the crime and victim you chose. The other cards are the same for all scenarios. **Clubs** card relate to the Means to commit the crime. **Diamonds** cards are about the Motive a suspect might have. **Spades** question deal with the Opportunity to commit the crime. And **Hearts** cards are about the relationships between the suspect, the victim and your detective.

When you answer a question from one of the cards in the tableau, you discard the card. When you're done imagining a scene to answer that question, you draw a new card to replace it in the tableau. There should always be 6 cards face up in the tableau.

Cards in the tableau are always arranged by rank and suit. The lowest ranked card is placed furthest from the draw deck, in the first space. If the tone die you use to answer a

If there is a tie for rank of card, then you sort

the cards by suit. For this game, **Clubs** is lower rank than **Hearts**, which is lower than **Spades**, and **Diamonds** is the highest ranked of the 4 suits. You can remember this by remembering the word "**CHaSeD**", the same mnemonic device used by stage magicians and small time con men. Each capitalized letter in CHaSeD is the initial letter of one of the suits of cards.

Specific cards

If you answer a **King** or **Queen** ranked question about a suspect, then that suspect is proven innocent.

If you draw an **Ace** from the deck, you can save that card for later, rather than putting it in the tableau. Place the card to the side and draw a new card from the deck to replace it. Later on, you can discard that Ace after you roll to reroll one or both your tone dice. Answer the question tied to the Ace when you do so.

Jokers are a lucky break. When they are drawn, you immediately deal with their surprise break. If you drew the **Red Joker**, then the lucky break is based off the Faerie tone. Maybe an animal turns out to be a

helpful ally who has been transformed. Maybe you discover a magical ability inherent to one of your possessions. Maybe an enemy is driven away by the sudden appearance of a supernatural creature. Describe how something from Fairyland helps you progress in the case. Lower your Tribulation value by 1.

If you draw the **Black Joker**, then you describe a lucky break that happens to you, based on the Noir tone. Maybe a crooked bookie slips you some valuable information. Maybe the macguffin everyone wants falls into your hands. Maybe the local crime boss owes you a favor for some reason. Describe how something from the criminal underworld helps you progress in the case. Lower your Danger value by 1.

Whichever Joker you drew is immediately discarded. Then reshuffle the tableau into the draw deck. Draw a new 6 cards for a new tableau.

Setup

To play, get an ordinary deck of playing cards (with red and black jokers). Also get two dice of different colors to be your tone dice. The brighter, sparklier die should be the *Faerie* die, while the darker, murkier die should be the *Noir* die.

Shuffle the cards together and deal out 6 cards face up. Remove any Aces, Jokers or face cards and draw again until you have 6 cards. Arrange those cards into order, with the highest ranked cards closest to the draw deck, and the lowest further away. For this game, the suits go in **CHaSeD** order: Clubs are lower than Hearts, which are lower than Spades which are lower than Diamonds.

So if you have the 7 of Hearts and the 7 of Spades, Spades ranks higher than Hearts, so you place it closer to the deck. Then reshuffle into the draw deck any Aces, Jokers or face cards you drew during setup.

Choose two scenarios: one **Victim** and one **Crime**. Read the introductory text for each, and try to imagine how they fit together. At the end of the introduction is a question. For each question, roll your tone dice. Answer the question using the tone of the die that rolled higher. (If your dice both roll the same number, then use either or both tones as you please.)

Your Detective

Describe your detective. Who are they? Explain one way your detective is entangled in the world of Noir. Are they morally compromised? Do they have a history with the local crime syndicate? Are they hiding some past misdeed they committed? At least one detail of their lives reflects the Noir tone.

Also explain one detail that ties your detective to the Faerie tone. How are they tied to the world of Faerie? Are they touched by magic, or the still subject to some ancient pact? Are they partially or completely faerie in nature? Some detail about the detective reflects the Faerie tone. Have some place to keep track of your Danger and Tribulation scores. Both start at 1.

Determine which suspect that got you involved in the case. Roll both tone dice and take the lower die. That is the number of the suspect that hired you to find the killer. If the dice match, then that suspect is cleared of suspicion from the start. Decide how they were able to convince you to take the case, using the tone of the die that rolled their number.



Rolling

Each scene, you roll your tone dice. One of the dice will determine which suspect you are investigating. The other die will determine which question from the tableau you answer, and the tone in which you answer it. After you roll the dice, look at your results and choose one for each role. So if you rolled a 2 on the Faerie die and a 5 on the Noir die, you could answer the second question on the tableau about suspect number 5, using a Faerie tone. Or you could answer the fifth question using a Noir tone, about suspect number 2.

Whenever you select a die to answer a question, you count from the card furthest from the deck. So a 1 is the card absolute farthest from the deck, while 6 is the card nearest to the deck.

When you choose a die to answer a question, you should also compare that die's value to the rating associated with its tone.

If you select the Noir die and the Noir die rolled higher than your current Danger, then the Danger level increases. Describe someone

attempting to do harm to your detective, or to doublecross them, betray, murder, blackmail or frame them for the crime. Increase your Danger rating by 1. If your Danger rating is now 6, then you have died and the criminal has escaped.

If you select the Faerie die and it shows a number higher than your current Tribulation score, then the Tribulation level increases. Describe a magical problem arising for your detective, as some force tries to enchant them, curse them, sway them from the path, force them into a magical bargain, transform them into a different form, or magically sway their mind. Increase your Tribulation score by 1. If it is now 6, then your detective disappears into the Faerie realm forever, and the criminal escapes any punishment.

Matches

If you roll a match and the suspect is still potentially guilty, then the suspect for that number proves their innocence. Do not answer any questions from the tableau. Instead, just think about the current fictional position and what would convince your detective that the suspect was innocent. You can use either tone, or both tones together, to determine this answer.

Rolling an Innocent

If you roll a result with one innocent suspect and one still potentially guilty suspect, then you must answer the question about the potentially guilty one. You have no choice, even if you don't want it to be so (e.g. because it would require you to increase a rating you don't want to increase).

If both dice roll innocents, then a new twist arises in the case. The answer to the last question you answered is revealed to be false. In addition, you increase the rating of either Danger or Tribulation, your choice. Describe how you get into trouble as the rating increases, and how that reveals the deception of the suspects involved in the situation. Discard both cards from the tableau that match the number(s) you rolled and draw new card(s) to replace them until the tableau has 6 cards again.

If the last fact you learned cleared a suspect of suspicion, then that suspect is no longer cleared of suspicion. Their alibi falls apart, and you may still discover they are the murderer.

Suspects

Each Crime file has three suspects on it, and each Victim has three suspects as well. One of these six people committed the crime. Your job as detective is to figure out which one did it, by proving the other 5 innocent.

Each suspect has a name, a brief description and a number. When you roll your tone dice, one die will determine which suspect you are investigating, and one die will determine which question you answer (and in what tone). Whatever number the suspect die rolled, you will be investigating that suspect.

Clearing a Suspect

If you answer a King or Queen card for that suspect, then you have proven that suspect innocent. Answer the question in a way that guarantees the suspect did not commit the crime.

In addition, if you roll doubles of a suspect's number, the suspect is innocent. Narrate for yourself a revelation that proves the suspect is innocent, using either tone (or both) as you please.

Endings

There are two ways the game can end. Either you find the criminal, or you fail.

Finding the Criminal

If you ever have cleared five of the six suspects, then the last remaining suspect is your culprit. Roll your tone dice one last time. Use the tone of whichever die rolls higher to resolve the mystery. If you have some confusion how or why the criminal committed the deed, or any other lingering questions, then you can roll the tone dice and invent an answer in accordance with the die that rolled higher. The criminal reveals how and why they did the deed, and you describe the justice they receive, in accordance with the tone you rolled. Describe whatever epilogues you wish for your detective or the other characters. Congratulations. Justice has been served.

Failure

If you reach 6 in either Tribulation or Danger, then your character has failed. Describe a final catastrophe that befalls your detective. If your Danger rating reaches 6, then someone probably betrays you, shoots you and dumps your body in a reservoir or something. If Tribulation reaches 6, then you are permanently lost in Fairyland, turned into a statue, turned permanently into a toad, or otherwise no longer able to act as a detective.

Either way, the criminal escapes without being punished for their crime. Imagine an epilogue for your character, and for the victims of the crime. You will never know who it was that did the crime.

The Untidy Plot

There is a well known story about when Howard Hawks was filming an adaptation of *The Big Sleep* by Raymond Chandler. The plot was so complex and confusing that Hawks and the screenwriters could not figure out what had happened. No one knew who had murdered the chauffeur. According to Chandler, they contacted him to clarify the issue: "They sent me a wire... asking me, and dammit I didn't know either!"

Your game's plot will likely be even messier than that of *The Big Sleep*. You will have unresolved questions and confusing contradictions in the story. There's no way around that. Just find ways to make things make sense, and accept that, like Chandler's chauffeur, there are some questions you will never be answered. The world of *Fairyland Confidential* is larger and stranger than this

little corner you get to peek into. Perhaps you could play again some time, and learn something more of it?

While playing the game, you will sometimes have questions that don't seem to make sense, given the fiction provided already. Do your best to make the questions and answers make sense. Keep in mind this is a game about lies and deception on one hand and illusion and magic on the other. What you knew to be true may turn out to be misdirection or the operation of magic in reality. Don't be afraid to abandon previous known facts if it makes sense for them to just be a cover story.

If necessary, you can tweak the question slightly, rewording it to get a similar idea across, but that fits the established fiction better. You can easily change a scene's location, or the verb tenses, pronouns, etc. Just find a way to make it work.

Difficulty Changes

For an easier or faster game: before you roll the dice each time, take the lowest ranked card in the tableau and remove it from the game. Then draw a new card to replace it, and place that card in proper order on the tableau. This will push you faster toward the final, conclusive cards. If you're interested in creating an interesting narrative, but not in a significant chance of failure, then this is the way to play.

For a more difficult game: before each die roll, take the highest ranked card in the tableau and place it on the bottom of the deck. Then draw a new card to replace it, and place that card in proper order on the tableau. This will keep the final, conclusive cards from being easily accessible. The game will much more likely end in failure, which is already pretty likely to begin with. Making this change might make the game unwinnable. If you want messy, unresolved plots where justice is never served, then this is the way for you to play.

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Inspiration: *Touch of Evil*, *The Maltese Falcon*, Most things written by Raymond Chandler and the movies based off of them, *The King of Elfland's Daughter* by Lord Dunsany, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* and *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman, *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell* by Susanna Clarke, many traditional stories, folktales and legends of fairies in various different forms, *Cthulhu Dark* by Graham Walmsley, *For the Queen* by Alex Roberts, *Power Grid* by Friedemann Friese, *Swords Without Master* by Epidiah Ravachol

Hearts

- 1 – *Who unexpectedly comes to your aid?*
- 2 – *Where have you dealt with this suspect before?*
- 3 – *Why does this suspect feel fierce loyalty to you, even if it isn't reciprocated?*
- 4 – *How does this suspect convince you, against your better judgment, to trust them?*
- 5 – *What warning about this suspect did the victim fail to heed?*
- 6 – *What secret relationship did they have with the victim? What evidence do you discover of it?*
- 7 – *Why was the victim afraid of this suspect?*
- 8 – *How does this suspect suddenly betray you?*
- 9 – *What secret was the victim keeping from this suspect, and why do they tell you about it?*
- 10 – *What secret have they been trying to hide?*

Diamonds

- 1 – *What do you have in that the suspect wants? What will they give you to get it?*
- 2 – *How might this suspect benefit from the crime being committed?*
- 3 – *Why would they want to harm the victim?*
- 4 – *What debt did the victim owe this suspect?*
- 5 – *What previous harm did they blame on the victim?*
- 6 – *How were the victim and this suspect rivals or enemies?*
- 7 – *How did this suspect previously sacrifice their own happiness to harm the victim?*
- 8 – *Why do they claim they would never want to commit the crime?*
- 9 – *What makes you most suspicious about their story?*
- 10 – *What other crime or nefarious deed are they involved in?*

Clubs

- 1 – *What magical talent have you been hiding that saves your bacon?*
- 2 – *What clue suggests this suspect might be the culprit?*
- 3 – *Where could this suspect have gotten the means to commit the crime?*
- 4 – *What uncommon skills or abilities does the suspect possess that might aid them in committing the crime?*
- 5 – *What did the suspect once possess that would have been crucial in committing the crime, that they now claim to have lost or given away?*
- 6 – *What criminal associates do they have that could have helped commit the crime?*
- 7 – *How do you trick the suspect into revealing criminal capabilities they kept hidden?*
- 8 – *What suspicious item did a witness see this suspect disposing of?*
- 9 – *How does new evidence make you reconsider what you know about this suspect?*
- 10 – *What tiny mistake did the criminal make when committing the crime, and why does it point you toward this suspect?*

Spades

- 1 – *How do your detective skills help you in a time of need?*
- 2 – *Where do they claim they were at the time of the crime?*
- 3 – *How could this suspect have gotten access to the scene of the crime?*
- 4 – *What criminal enterprise or nefarious plot is this suspect involved in?*
- 5 – *When and where did this suspect last see the victim alive?*
- 6 – *What clue was left that suggests this suspect was at the scene of the crime?*
- 7 – *What similar crime did the suspect commit before?*
- 8 – *Where do you tail the suspect that suggests they are hiding something?*
- 9 – *Who does this suspect claim they saw fleeing the crime scene?*
- 10 – *Which part of their alibi is revealed to be a lie? How do you prove that?*

The **Poison Rose**

The Victim

The victim was one **Janet Burd**. 17 years old, and dead in the Halloween night. She had been in my office two weeks ago, asking for assistance obtaining a poison rose. Poison roses are fairy herbs, typically used as an abortifacient. Illegal to bring into human land, because of their reputation.

Janet said that she had fallen for a man, but that he couldn't be with her. He had sworn an oath to Catalexis, a fairy queen, centuries ago. An affair with a mortal girl could doom him. Catalexis had a pact with Hell. Every 7 years on Halloween, she'd send a servant to die to maintain her immortality and magical power. This year, she selected Tamburlaine. Janet managed to rescue him and get him into mortal lands where Catalexis can't touch him. Janet, though, didn't make it out as safely.

What did Janet fear would happen if she gave birth to Tamburlaine's baby?

Hearts ♥

J How do you discover that this suspect provided Janet with the poison rose she sought?

Q How did this suspect help Janet free Tamburlaine from his oath?

K How was this suspect working to help Janet?

Diamonds ♦

J How did this suspect find out about Janet's pregnancy?

Q Why was this suspect willing to be the tithe to Hell to protect Janet?

K What does this suspect hope to get from a pact with Hell? How does this murder ruin their plan?

The Suspects

Catalexis

The only rightful Faerie queen, if you ask her. If she can't find a sacrifice by All Souls Day (November 2nd, two days from now), she will lose her magical power.

5

Olivia Burd

Janet's mother, and leader of an anti-faerie political movement. Olivia doesn't believe any humans should interact with the faerie realm. She's not going to like what her daughter was up to.

3

Tamburlaine

A mortal knight, who had been unwillingly in Catalexis's service for centuries. When he was selected to be the sacrifice Catalexis paid to Hell once every 7 years, Janet helped him escape to mortal lands.

1

Too Greedily And Too Deep

The Victim

Monte Calder, human mining magnate. He built up his mining company through shady business dealings and lucrative government contracts and a lot of underpaid faerie labor.

Kobolds are mine spirits. They lived underground, and were notorious for scaring away miners and causing mine collapses. Calder had the bright idea to hire the kobolds as miners instead of humans. The mine spirits could sniff out veins of precious metal, and were immune to mine collapse. And they didn't ask for much, just some cobalt ore. Eventually, the kobolds realized they were being duped, though. Now the mine is shut down by a strike. The kobolds won't work until they're paid human level wages. Anger and recrimination on both sides of the picket line. Maybe enough to lead to murder.

Besides the kobold labor, how else was Calder's mining company cutting corners to increase his personal profit?

Hearts ♥

J When the suspect and Calder last met, what did they have a big argument about?

Q What secret of Calder's has this suspect been trying to keep hidden, even after he is dead? Why?

K What secret was this suspect hiding, in the mines, that has been causing them to act suspiciously?

Diamonds ♦

J How did Calder swindle this suspect out of something that was rightfully theirs? What was it?

Q What would this suspect have accomplished or gained if Calder had lived, that now is lost to them?

K What illegal activity were Calder and this suspect up to, using the mines as cover? How is that scheme now imperiled by his death?

The Suspects

Fribble

Kobold labor union organizer and true believer in his cause. Through hard work, he's gotten all the mine spirits to stop all work until they get the same pay and respect that human workers would get.

Millie Hoback

Human, former overseer of the mines, now unemployed and angry drunk. She's pissed off that kobolds are taking jobs from her human crew. Is she angry enough to do something about it?

Vivian Calder

Victim's estranged wife, a member of a notorious crime family who was trying to build herself a life in legitimate business. But when she found Calder was stepping out on her, she went right back to the mob.

5

3

1

Hollow Hills & Hollow Hearts

The Victim

“Cleveland” Sykes was a small-time burglar and a big-time drug addict. Cleveland was part of a pair, in crime and love, with a hill-trow named Bannafeet. Two weeks ago, the pair robbed the Kwan family mansion. They were discovered by a security guard, and Bannafeet died. I guess their plans didn’t include the security detail having cold iron weapons on them. Since then, the police have been scouring the city looking for Cleveland. Cleveland managed to escape the mansion with a priceless artifact in hand. Police assumed that they were hiding out under the hollow hills with Bannafeet’s family of hill-trows. Trows are goblin-like tricksters that live in warrens of lavishly decorated tunnels. They’re always causing problems for the police, but there isn’t much human authorities can do to them. Now Cleveland turns up dead, and the artifact has vanished. But somebody must know where it went.

What was the artifact that Cleveland stole? What makes it so valuable?

Hearts ♡

- J** Why did Cleveland owe this suspect a massive debt?
- Q** Why did this suspect help Cleveland hide with the hill-trows after the robbery went south?
- K** Why is this suspect’s life in danger after Cleveland’s death?

Diamonds ◇

- J** What makes you think this suspect knows where the artifact is now?
- Q** The suspect gives you the artifact for safe keeping. Why were they hiding it?
- K** Why did this suspect pay Cleveland and Bannafeet to steal the artifact?

The Suspects

Big Mama Morgan

She runs the Morgan crime family. Cleveland reportedly owed her a lot of money. The Kwan heist was supposed to pay off the debt. But maybe Mama Morgan got too impatient.

5

Truncherface

Bannafeet’s cousin, the hill-trow that was supposed to be hiding Cleveland. Like all trows, he enjoys playing pranks, has had a few run-ins with the law, and never answers a question straight.

3

Leonora Kwan

A very rich, very famous art collector. Some say she made her fortune smuggling art into and out of Faerie. Did she locate the thief and take her artifact back personally?

1

The Vengeance of Flowers

The Crime

The day before they died, the victim received a potted jasmine plant as an anonymous gift. No one knew who sent it, but the flowers were pleasant enough to keep. During the night, the jasmine plant's tendrils grew out from the pot. Vines crept across the building, filling the entire the room where the victim slept. By morning, the vines had enveloped the victim and strangled them to death.

When the plant grew so unnaturally quickly, it burst the pot. Inside the potting soil is the skull of a human or humanlike being. No one knows who the skull belongs to—or at least, if they do know then they aren't saying.

What previous case does this remind you of? Which suspect was involved in that, though you never could prove anything?

Clubs



J How was this suspect previously tied to a different crime involving plant magic?

Q What proves that this suspect was magically forced into a deep sleep at the time the crime was committed?

K Why do the spirits of the flowers hate this suspect and refuse to do anything to help them?

Spades



J Who does the suspect tell you the skull belonged to? Why did they hide this knowledge from you?

Q The suspect believes they were being targeted by the killer as well. What makes you think that is true?

K You discover the flower magic spell used to kill the victim. What specific requirement does it have that this suspect could never fulfill?

The Suspects

Eglantine

A rose elf, a spirit of flowers, only two inches tall but can magically control plant life. Lived in the victim's flower garden until the victim kicked them out last month.

6

Moe Darlington

The victim's illicit lover, asleep in the bed beside them. Untouched by the vines. Was Moe spared for some reason, or did he engineer this himself? Also a gambling addict deep in debt.

4

Della Graves

The victim's half-sister. Recently returned to live with the victim after her husband fled town, leaving her with nothing. She does not approve of the victim and Moe's affair.

2

Vitrified

The Crime

The victim was arguing with their sister, the famous movie star Edith Montague, when they tripped and fell down a flight of stairs. And when they hit the landing, they shattered into a thousand pieces.

Somehow, the victim had been replaced with a porcelain doll. An exact duplicate, animated by faerie magic and made to look identical to the victim.

The real victim had disappeared. Maybe they ran away voluntarily. Maybe somebody had them taken out. The crockery doppelganger meant that no one suspected a thing for some time. Lets everyone clean up their stories, hide the evidence, establish alibis. That will make ferreting out the truth all he more difficult. The victim might really have been gone for hours, days, weeks. Hard to tell now.

What were Montague and the victim arguing about when the fall occurred?

Clubs

J How do you discover that the suspect you're investigating is themselves a hollow porcelain statue?

Q How did this suspect try to kill the victim, but fail because it was the victim was a porcelain duplicate?

K Where and when did the murder actually happen, according to what this suspect shows you?

Spades

J What task did this suspect use a porcelain duplicate to be seen doing, to create an alibi, when they were secretly somewhere else?

Q Where do you find the body of this suspect? How long had they been dead when the victim went missing?

K Why was this suspect also searching for the victim?

The Suspects

Hollyhock

A brownie, known for crafting impossibly perfect porcelain dolls that look like anyone the client asks for. The dolls could come to life and sing and dance... maybe do more than that.

Minnie Hargrave

A human smuggler, who had previously used similar magic to smuggle drugs across the Faerie border. Hide some adder's fork inside your mule's hollow interior, and the authorities will never find it.

Edith Montague

The famous movie star, also the victim's sister. Recently returned from Hollywood, she refuses to say why. According to the tabloids, she's rumored to be embroiled in a scandal of an unclear, but juicy, nature.

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2

With the Fishes

The Crime

When Faruk Al-Ghamdi opened his fishmonger's shop, he found the victim's dead body, floating in a large tank that he used to store live lobsters and crabs. The victim had drowned in the tank, which was locked from the outside.

An ogre named Fish Eye had recently set up an illegal gambling joint in Faruk's storage room. Faruk never agreed to this. He tried to protest, but Fish Eye threatened to break his every limb. Faruk hopes that if he doesn't anger the ogre, he won't get beaten into a pulp. So he keeps his mouth shut and lets Fish Eye use the back room.

Faruk isn't the only one who's unhappy with Fish Eye. The local crime syndicate had granted that neighborhood to a murderous water spirit named Jenny Haniver. And she doesn't like anyone earning a profit in the area without her getting a cut of it. She's threatened Fish Eye before, but not acted yet.

What form did Jenny's threats to Fish Eye take?

What does she demand from him?

Clubs

J What had this suspect gambled and lost to the victim?

Q Where is this victim's drowned body found, in a similar death to the original victim's?

K What prevented this suspect from doing any harm to the victim, even if they had wanted to?

Spades

J Why was no one at Fish Eye's backroom casino that night, who might have witnessed the murder?

Q Where had this suspect been at the time of the murder? Why did they keep their whereabouts a secret?

K How did this suspect try to help the victim escape their murder? Why did they fail?

The Suspects

Jenny Haniver

A undine (a water spirit) who works for the local criminal syndicate and claims the territory surrounding Faruk's shop. Haniver was implicated, but never convicted, of drowning several men in the river nearby.

Fish Eye

An ogre, exiled from the faerie kingdoms. Ogres are violent and stupid and kill on a whim. But even an ogre is smart enough to dispose of a body far from their home, aren't they?

Faruk Al-Ghamdi

A human seafood merchant, caught up in a world of crime beyond his control. He's nervous that he'll be arrested for the casino in his back room. But he's more afraid of angering the ogre that runs it. So he keeps his mouth shut.

6

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