

# THE SHINING HOST PLAYERS GUIDE™



A Sourcebook for Mind's Eye Theatre™

Mind's Eye Theatre



THE  
SHINING  
HOST  
PLAYERS GUIDE™

Changeling: The Dreaming  
for Mind's Eye Theatre

THE SHINING HOST:  
Players Guide

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# Faerie Tale: All Souls' Night

Call this my last confession, if you want. It's the events of the night, as I remember them — I've already had enough hooba-joo on my head to last me through three lives, and the story ain't changing. Gimme that Basilisk Stone and let me get to work.

Lissa wanted to go somewhere more exciting for Halloween. Don't get a stick in your eye about it, but this place does get too much "trick-or-treat." So we look for bigger fish and come up with Franklin Street up in Chapel Hill. New Orleans was my choice, but too damn much wrought iron, you know. So we're drivin' up late on the 29th — figure we'll get there, take a day to mess around and then get into things for real on the 31st.

I remember I had a buncha mix tapes, and Lissa was singing along in that blackbird voice of hers. She got to the one about Tam Lin, when Steeleye Span did it, and she stops when they talk about the tithe to Hell. "We didn't really do that, did we?" she asks. I tell her I dunno — probably the Unseelie did back in the Auld Country. Some poor yutz walked out at the wrong time to take a leak on Samhain and you know the rest.

So we get to Chapel Hill, crash at a mom-n-pop motel for some sleep, and get up to prow. It's a college town, so it's not too banal — it's got its spots, but you can avoid them if you look. We were getting a bit of crap from the jocks, 'cause they're jocks and that's the nature of the beast, but I knew they'd be at Lissa's feet if they could see what I see — Lady Melissande ap Fiona, with shining hair that she asks me to braid for her and eyes as green as rose leaves, all in the crimson and silver colors of her house. She may not be jocks' taste, but I remember Duke Isidore ap Gwydion staring at her all through Pennons like he couldn't get enough of her. Why she liked being with a piss-n-vinegar cranky ol' nocker like



me I'll never know, but you don't question the Dreaming if it's got a present for you.

Anyhow, so there we are in the old bookstore, and this guy makes a play for her. He calls her "lady" and that perks me up, so I give the guy a once-over. He's good-looking, I guess, if oversexed goat-leggers turn you on. He's making small talk and all the while he's staring at Lissa, and it's not the usual damn-baby-you-look-hot stare that every furkin' satyr seems to radiate. There's hunger in his eyes, like he's the Big Bad Wolf and Lissa's an unlucky lambie. Lissa and I weren't oathsworn as lovers, but all the same I put my hand on her back, he and I catch eyes, and that unspoken little cha-cha of "Yours?" "Mine!" happens like it does, and he tones down the act. That should be that, but I get the feeling the fire's only banked, not out. He called himself Phillippe.

He told us how great it was that we came up to visit Chapel Hill at Samhain, and the usual playa bullshit. Lissa's giving him the time of day, which I wish she wouldn't, but if I try to drag her out, I look jealous, so I suck it up. Then he invites us out to his freehold for the afternoon. I manage to talk first to decline, saying we're just in town for the party, but no, he just comes right back and says we're welcome to come to the freehold's Samhain party tomorrow. Lissa accepts the second invite, and again me, trying not to look jealous, sucks it up.

That night, after pub-crawling a couple of the local haunts, we get ready for bed, and I see Lissa standing by the open window in her nightgown. Something about the way the moonlight hits her all over — the way the wind is moving — the smell of the air crisp with fall leaves and smoke and night — gets me in all the wrong places. She looks beautiful, but I'm afraid of that beauty suddenly. She turns to look at me, and for a brief second, something shines in her eyes that shouldn't be there, and just as quick, it's gone, and she's the same old Lissa, wondering why I'm staring at her. All I can do is suggest she shut the window and come to bed.

I've already told you about Halloween day. I know, I know, you wanna hear about the night. I'll tell you what I remember, and if you make me eat another friggin' rosemary sprig, you'll get it through your hemmingemurgytroid heart, understand?

So we get dressed in our gear and masks — Lissa had on this long blue dress with a tail so she looked like a peacock — and we hit Franklin Street. That's one of the big highlights of this place, the street fair and parading up and down Franklin. In the late afternoon, it's just families with kids, but as the sun starts heading west, the crowds get thicker, the people wilder. The Glamour's so thick you could almost swim in it. We're out there with the rest, but the night's starting to work its magic early. Lissa moves past yet another Wizard of Oz quartet, and I see the people gazing at her as if she's a queen. When they start staring like that, the Glamour's getting wild, enough that even the mortals who aren't enchanted can see



FÆRIC TALE:  
All Souls Night



something of us, and what they see is Lady Melissande ap Fiona, all silken hair and green eyes and pure dream. I remember how I'd joshed her about going as a peacock, 'cause she's anything but stuck up, but she seems to be getting into the role all right. She looks beautiful, but there's something in her eyes like Phil's — dangerous, proud — and it reflects a little of how I feel. The mortal men are gaping at her like slack-jawed apes, their hands like crude paws desperate to touch this starlike woman, and if you'd asked me then what I thought about mortals, I would have spit on them for even daring to look at her.

Phil's there on the curb, wearing only a heavily embroidered loincloth and sweat with his goat-legs. He looks struck by the change in Lissa, and the hunger is back in full force. "Hail, Queen of summer," he says and kisses the hand Lissa extends to him. I feel the flash of jealousy again, and I slip my hand into her free one, but it feels different, looser and chill.

We took our offerings of candy and booze, and headed out for the freehold — they called it Ash Hall, but damned if I could show you where it is. I'm sure that's why Phil offered to drive us.

We get there, and there's more changelings there than I can remember seeing in one place — I see boggans out with the picnic tables, trolls with huge armloads of firewood, satyrs messing around with music, and pooka driving everyone crazy. There's nockers discussing how best to put a bonfire together, and the redcaps are swappin' the old "No, shit, there I was..." lines. Childlings, grumps, wilders and everyone in drop-dead costumes. It was the makings of a real, honest-to-Dreaming Samhain party.

The party — I'd tell you more if I could remember it. I suspect it's one of those things that, deep down, I'm better off not remembering. I remember food, and the booze flowing like a river. I remember fire everywhere — candles, jack-o-lanterns, bonfires — but it seemed to be for making shadows instead of lighting up the place. I remember dancing around the fires, and sounds of passion in the shadows. At some point, I think Lissa went to dance with another sidhe — I must've been okay with that, 'cause I went to hang with a coupla other nockers. I remember talking with a group of folks, and everyone getting friendly, and then there was fire-dancing, and after that, it all turns into mush.

I woke up cold and wadded up like an old newspaper under a park bench. I had a hangover, but nothing worse than I've had before, beyond a head gone fuzzy with Samhain Mists and some damn fine homebrew. I unrolled myself and headed back to the hotel, thinking all the way. Anytime I tried to put my finger on last night, it skittered away like a roach in the light — just mixed-up pictures of a woman in white, of people dancing around bonfires, masks, calling the dead, and the fevered dreams of... of... I don't know.



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I let myself in quietly, thinking that Lissa would be asleep, but the beds were empty. I checked all over the room, and then downstairs, and there was no sign of her. Her stuff was still there, and my heart accelerated like a race car. She went out with me last night, that much I can remember, and we were down on the street, and the rest is a huge blur.

I showered as fast as I could and charged out into the street. I went every place we went before, I went a bunch of places we didn't, and I even went to the furkin' police, and all the bastiches said was, "Guess she found her own fun last night." I settled for sugaring their gas tanks, much as I would have liked to blind them for that insult.

I grab some lunch in a bistro-type — a chicken sandwich, roasted with rosemary. I'm chowing down, and suddenly, I started to think about things, and for a few moments, the Samhain Mists cleared.

Lissa was standing at the biggest bonfire, wearing a white gown I'd never seen before, and that gorgeous hair bound only with a wreath of greenery. The Kithain were chanting something around her, almost singing, reaching out to touch the hem of her dress and her hair, like she was something holy or wonderful. She was smiling, but it was the smile of someone who's trippin' or not quite with us, y'know. Phil's stood behind her, with a masked sidhe wearing green armor and two sluagh in black. "Hail, daughter of Summer!" Phil calls. "Behold the Bright Path, the way of all things! Walk it now — return to us the long summer of our birthright, and be forever a shining beacon to guide us home!"

Lissa's smile turned radiant, damn near holy. A door opened into the Dreaming, but it wasn't a trod I've ever seen — the place beyond was dark, and the path might have been a Silver Path, but there's a coldness to the light, flat and pale. She stepped forward, but something made her pause, and in that pause, her face lost the radiance. I don't know if we saw each other, but suddenly, she was out of her trance, and awake, and scared. She managed only to lean back before Phil, the sidhe and the sluagh surged forward and pushed her into the dark portal. Her scream was cut off by the portal closing and the crowd going crazy, and the Mists slammed the door just as quick.

The Dreaming must've meant for me to find the joint again, or the Willow-wisp wouldn't've worked. In the daylight, the bonfires were just blackened ground, the freehold a tumbledown shack. No one said boo to me all the time I was there. Was this ever really the Ash Hall Freehold? Something in me said no, not with the gravestones scattered under the dead leaves. The place felt cold, but not banal cold. There was something in the air that wasn't there last night — a feeling like hunger sated, even gorged.





FACRÍE TALE:  
All Souls Night

I kicked through leaves, looking for something, anything, of Lissa, and I saw green. A wreath of holly with blood-red berries. Caught in the leaves — strands of hair the same shade as Lissa's.

Did I say no one said boo to me there? I lied — the wind in the trees overhead, it had the sound of a thousand voices, whispers and moans, and through them all was the sound of a woman's scream being dragged high across the sky.

I don't know where Lissa's gone. I'm sure I had something to do with it, but Samhain won't let me remember it. All I know is that my darling is gone. And I hope that tonight I'll be able to follow her.



# Chapter One: The Nunnehi

## *Spirits Between Earth and Sky*

### *Nunnehi Character Creation*

#### Step One: Character Concept

- Choose concept, Camp, Legacies, tribe, seeming and Family (kith)

#### Step Two: Select Attributes

- Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (7/5/3)
- Choose Physical Traits
- Choose Social Traits
- Choose Mental Traits

#### Step Three: Select Advantages

- Choose Abilities (5), Backgrounds (5), levels of Arts (3) and Realms (5)

#### Step Four: Finishing Touches

- Record beginning Glamour, Willpower and Banality, as determined by seeming
- Record kith Birthrights and Frailties
- Record Ravaging/Musing Threshold, if any
- Choose Negative Traits, if any
- Purchase Merits/Flaws, if any

#### Step Five: Spark of Life

*Nunnehi Legacies***Summer (Dogwood) Legacies**

- Chief — A born leader, your ideas give shape to the lives of others.
- Grower — All things come in cycles, and you are patient enough to nurture them.
- Healer — Pain distresses you, and you live to ease the suffering of others.
- Hunter — Hunting is both your trade and your way of viewing the world.
- Maker — Building and creating give the world meaning, and you joy.
- Scout — Explorer and pathfinder, you constantly seek out new horizons.
- Spirit Guide — Spirits are always speaking, but it seems that only you are listening.
- Storyteller — Life is a series of tales, and you burst with eagerness to tell them.
- Warrior — Soldier, protector and avenger in one, you live for the test of battle.
- Wise One — A teacher and mentor to the Family, you love sharing your wisdom.

**Winter (Rock) Legacies**

- Cannibal — Anything that opposes you must be destroyed and consumed.
- Fool — Life has a point? Life is fair? Where are these things written?
- Forked-Tongue — For you, lying is both a habit and a passion.
- Hoarder — Let Winter take the world, as long as you have enough for yourself.
- Outcast — A true lone wolf, you neither want nor need others to survive.
- Raider — Those who can, take; that is the only law in life, as you well know.
- Scalp-Taker — Wreak vengeance and take trophies; all other justice is weakness.
- Spoiler — It's easier to pull others down than to climb up yourself.
- Troublemaker — Why leave things be, when causing havoc is much more fun?
- Witch — Powerful and aloof, you barter with dark spirits to get what you want.

**Midseason (Laurel) Legacy**

- Trickster — A coyote at heart, you use laughter to find your way in the world.

## *Nunnehi Seemings*

**Youngling:** Sheltered by the arms of your tribe, you are full of dreams and fascinated by the world around you.

Tempers: Glamour 6, Willpower 1, Banality 1

**Brave:** Courageous and full of life, you are the leading force of the Nation and the wellspring of energy that keeps the tribe vital.

Tempers: Glamour 5, Willpower 2, Banality 3

**Elder:** A treasure of wisdom and stories, you may have lost some of the fire of youth, but in its wake you have learned much to pass on to the next generation.

Tempers: Glamour 4, Willpower 3, Banality 5

## *Nunnehi Backgrounds*

Nunnehi characters may take all of the regular Kithain Backgrounds described in *The Shining Host*, with the following exceptions: *Patron*, *Political Connections*, *Remembrance* and *Title*. Save for *Remembrance*, these are not banned outright, but simply very rare for the Nunnehi; these Backgrounds require Storyteller permission to purchase. In addition, the following new Backgrounds are available exclusively to Nunnehi characters:

**Household** — Mortal relatives who know your secret and will stand by you.

**Influence: Tribal** — Control over the affairs of an actual native tribe.

**Spirit Companion** — A friendly minor spirit who offers you aid and advice.

**Totem** — A greater spirit that grants special powers in return for loyalty.

**Vision** — Powerful insights regarding the chimerical world.

## *A History of Sorrow and Triumph*

The Nunnehi (a term meaning “people who live anywhere”) are the faerie folk indigenous to Concordia, having lived here long before the first Europeans or their Kithain cousins ever set foot on it. Like the Kithain, the Nunnehi are torn between two worlds, the Earthly realm and the Higher Hunting Grounds (the Nunnehi equivalent of the Dreaming) and struggle daily to preserve the old ways in a world that pushes them ever closer to the brink. To keep faerie





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spirits alive in older days, wise native people acted as hosts for Nunnehi spirits, allowing them to use their bodies until they were passed on naturally to children. Thus they began a similar cycle of death and rebirth as the commoner Kithain did with their Changeling Way ritual, allowing the sacred spirits to remain among the tribes they loved and served, if in a somewhat limited form.

The Nunnehi continued this way for many centuries, living and dying alongside the tribes they loved, offering guidance when they could and battling the many evil things that stalked the weak and unwary in the night. Some of them became nightmares and taught the mortals lessons in fear and caution until great heroes came to put an end to their wickedness. Together with the elders and shamans of the tribes, the Nunnehi helped keep the old ways alive and harvested rich Medicine from the beauty of their surroundings. While never quite one with the tribe, they were accepted as a natural part of the world and revered for their great power and wisdom.

Then the Europeans came.

At first, most encounters were moments of curiosity, even friendship, as the Nunnehi went with their tribes to meet the newcomers. Though the Kithain were strange to their eyes, the Nunnehi could see the spark of the Dreaming that burned in their hearts, and most welcomed them as they would long-lost relatives. The earliest groups were small and primarily concerned with escaping the Banality of the Old World, so this worked for a time as the Nunnehi and their mortal cousins showed the newcomers how to survive in their new land and shared their Medicine. These were days of wonder as the two cultures made their first inroads toward learning from each other.

Unfortunately, the Europeans came in increasing numbers, and the war for survival began as the Old World imperative to claim more lands and “civilize” the territory within them collided with the ancient traditions and homelands of the Nunnehi. Unable to harvest Medicine from the sacred sites, the Kithain chopped down groves and built mills and wells to tap the magical waters they encountered, turning them into the freeholds they were more familiar with. Armed with the same smug superiority of their mortal relatives, the Kithain believed it was their duty to “tame” the wilderness they encountered and bring culture and enlightenment to the “savages” who lived there. Those Nunnehi who fought these efforts were branded as troublemakers and bloodthirsty cannibals. War began in earnest when the Nunnehi fought to protect their sacred lands and mortal tribes while the Kithain moved to expand their territory and start fresh lives in the New World.

Sadly, the history of the enchanted world mirrors that of the mortal one. Though they fought bravely, often against terrible odds, the Nunnehi were gradually pushed off nearly all of their ancestral lands. Many followed their tribes into forced relocation. Those who resisted were killed or subdued, their faerie selves suppressed by Banality, their memories shattered. The war did not end with relocation — Nunnehi faced a different type of extinction as diseases

ravaged their tribes, and then mainstream society tried to force assimilation and acceptance on their tribes, teaching them to cast aside the old ways in favor of new faiths and practices. This robbed the Nunnehi of their power even as it robbed their mortal kin of their heritage and identity. Many believed that Winter was upon them, and despair claimed as many as guns or plague ever did. Those were the darkest of days for the Nunnehi, and to this day the elders weep bitterly to think of them.

## *A Twin Resurgence*

Though many tribes succumbed to extinction, and even those that did not suffered grievous losses of population and tradition alike, a recent resurgence in Native American pride over the past decades greatly invigorated the Nunnehi, reawakening many of the Families thought lost forever and breathing new life into their quest to preserve the old ways. Scholars of Native American descent and others are compiling histories and collections of tribal folklore, while artists explore traditional styles with new perspectives. Even those with only a little of the blood explore aspects of their lineage long ignored. While this resurgence is by no means a total recovery from the devastation wreaked during the wars and displacements, this trend sparked a substantial increase in the activity of the Nunnehi as well as their mortal relatives. The more spiritual or optimistic of the tribe see it as a chance for a new Spring after a hard Winter.

This revitalization came at a perilous time, however. When the sidhe returned in 1969, they sparked new wars for territory and control all across Concordia, forcing the Nunnehi to ally with the commoner Kithain in some places to defend their lands from yet another threat. Other Nunnehi fought commoners and nobles alike, seeking to use the divide between the two groups to gain back some of their lands where their enemies were distracted. Still other Nunnehi, tired of the fighting, stood apart from it all or tried to act as a third party in the peace negotiations. Many Nunnehi now find themselves in a position where they must ally with the newcomers against greater threats like Banality and the coming Winter of the world. While friendships remain tricky at best, they have become more and more common as Nunnehi and Kithain alike realize their problems are too great to face apart.

It remains to be seen whether these first few steps toward understanding can be sustained in light of the recent unrest, but regardless of the political climate, the Nunnehi understand one thing very well: They are stronger and more numerous than they have been in centuries, and they will not bow to any threat — be it Kithain or mortal or even Banality itself — without a fight. The cycle spins on, the ancient ways return, and the time for a rebirth has come.

## *Tribes*

Though it should probably go without saying, the mortal tribe a Nunnehi hails from is more than simply a network of relatives — it is the breathing representation of everything the Nunnehi is drawn from. Most Nunnehi treat

their mortal cousins with respect for just that reason. They were birthed from the very legends of these people, and while it is traditionally the mortals who turn to the Nunnehi for aid and guidance, wise fae remember where they came from and offer their help with grace and humility. Quite often, what are seen as a tribe's myths are the actual history of their Nunnehi counterparts. In modern times, most Nunnehi can be found at the center of efforts to keep tribal lore alive. Even those Nunnehi who have been separated from their tribe (or in rare cases turned their back on it) are just as shaped by the absence of it in their lives as their brethren are by its presence.

Players are *highly* encouraged to not stop simply at choosing a tribe from one of the following lists, but also to do at least a little bit of research on the tribe they have chosen — not only does this enable them to add detail and flavor when roleplaying characters, but research also helps avoid stereotyping and ensures that other characters remember them as individuals and not simply as nondescript “native faerie.” That said, these lists are far from completely representative and tend to focus on the larger tribes of an area; hundreds if not thousands of smaller tribes exist, any of which would make a good starting point for a character. Finally, while most Nunnehi are drawn from the tribes and regions where their Family originally hails from, this is not an absolute rule; the intermarriages and forced migrations of different tribes have made it possible for Nunnehi of all kiths to emerge most anywhere in Concordia.

**Northeast:** Primarily trappers, hunters and fishers, these tribes formed some of the greatest alliances of native peoples and were among the first to suffer at the hands of the Europeans because of it. Prominent tribes of the region include: *Iroquois, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, Tuscarora, Abnaki, Mailseet, Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Micmac, Pequod, Susquehanna, Powhatan, Lenape, Shawnee, Rancocas, Delaware.*

**Southeast:** Hunter-gatherers and mound-dwellers who developed an elaborate civilization of their own, these tribes were massively displaced by the early expansion efforts, and few remain to tend their ancestral lands. Prominent tribes of the region include: *Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, Natchez, Catawba, Yuchi, Clusa, Caddo, Tunica-Biloxi.*

**Midwest:** Largely nomadic tribes who followed the buffalo herds, these tribes are what most people think of when they picture “Indians,” thanks to Hollywood. Prominent tribes of the region include: *Cree, Ojibwa, Winnebago, Blackfoot, Siksikas, Bloods, Piegans, Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Cheyenne, Crow, Kiowa, Comanche, Osage, Oto, Pawnee, Fox, Illinois.*

**Southwest:** Farmers, pueblo-dwellers and creators of the rain dance, these tribes adapted to the harsh desert environment. Most have remained on their lands, if only because the territory seemed inhospitable to settlers. Prominent tribes of the region include: *Apache, Hopi, Navajo, Zuni, Papago, Pima, Mojave, Tewa, Tiwa, Yuma.*

**Far West:** Traders, fishers and excellent hunters, many of these tribes fought fiercely against the tide of settlers, headed by such legendary leaders as

Chief Joseph. Prominent tribes include: *Flatheads*, *Miwok*, *Modoc*, *Utes*, *Nez Percés*.

**Far North and Pacific Northwest:** Long since used to surviving the biting cold and ceaseless rains of the region, most of these tribes subsisted by fishing and hunting, and are perhaps best recognized by the totem poles many of these tribes considered sacred. Prominent tribes include: *Chinook*, *Haida*, *Kwakiutl*, *Lummi*, *Aleuts*, *Inuit*, *Tlingit*, *Tsimshian*.

## Camps

Nunnehi do not recognize the Seelie/Unseelie distinction, instead using the Camps Summer (or Dogwood), Winter (or Rock) and Midseason (or Laurel). Summer Nunnehi tend to be outgoing, warm and friendly. Winter Nunnehi are usually withdrawn, cold and unforgiving. Midseason fae are tricksters one and all, balancing the two camps as they see fit. Many Nunnehi follow Camps on a seasonal basis, although this is by no means a requirement. For example, many Nunnehi adopt their Winter aspect when wronged or insulted, while some assume their Summer mien when falling in love or taking on quests. A few uncommon Nunnehi adhere to the same Camp nearly or completely year-round, but Nunnehi may change their Camp freely as Kithain do, although most prefer a private ritual of transition before showing off their new allegiance.

Unlike their Kithain counterparts, most Nunnehi make no secret of their Camp affiliation. Indeed, those who know them well can often tell what Camp they are currently following by what they're wearing or how they're carrying themselves, even before they hear them speak.

Another important aspect of Camps and their involvement in Nunnehi life is their impact on various secret societies a character might be a part of. Most Nunnehi belong to at least one or two such groups, and their current Camp allegiance can often be discerned from how active they are in a particular secret society at any given moment. Those enjoying the jesting Midseason between Camps frequently spend more time hanging out with the Coyote's Howl or Raven Feather society, for example, while those on the warpath of Winter may increase the time they spend in the company of their brothers and sisters in the Thunder Wolf lodge. This is seen as a perfectly natural transition — after all, it's probably better for everyone that a Nunnehi in the depths of her brooding Winter Legacy stay away from the community outreach programs of her fellow Soothing River healers. Nunnehi don't tend to hold such changing allegiances against each other, preferring to let their fellows return when they're ready rather than forcing them to remain involved in activities they aren't currently suited for. Besides, such changing ways ensure that different changelings are always applying themselves to where they're strongest. And younglings and braves can experience all the Nations have to offer before they settle into the ways they will follow as elders.

Finally, it is important to note that Nunnehi are not openly divided between Summer and Winter factions, like the Kithain are with the Seelie/Unseelie dichotomy. Nunnehi of different Camps may sometimes have trouble seeing eye-to-eye on certain issues, but all recognize the role each has to play in the greater cycle.

## *Glamour and Banality*

Nunnehi refer to Glamour as “Medicine” and see it as an expression of spiritual power drawn from the innate connection to the Higher Hunting Grounds possessed by all natural things, rather than as an expression of the creative energy behind artwork (though they may gather it from that as well, if they desire). When one takes time to coax out this divine energy, be it through artwork and performance or the fostering and nurturing of the natural world, that is the essence of Medicine. Even the most savage Winter Nunnehi regards the accumulation and use of Medicine with no small reverence.

Speaking in general terms, the Nunnehi may gather Medicine from artistic performances much the same way as Kithain do, although they are two Traits down on all tests to do so unless the artist is Native American and performing a traditional piece. On the downside, the difficulty to enchant mortals increases by one in the confines of a city since the unnatural state of the land interferes with the Nunnehi’s spiritual essence and makes sharing their gifts with others harder than usual.

The deep connection Nunnehi have to the natural world makes them generally more vulnerable to Banality. Regardless of how sensitive they are in game terms, most Nunnehi shun it like few other fae save the sidhe. Most go to great lengths to divest themselves of temporary Banality whenever possible, considering it to be sign of spiritual taint — fasting, sweat lodges, drum rituals and other traditional rites are all common means Nunnehi use to lower their Banality, though whether they are actually successful in game terms depends on the standard rules regarding reducing such Traits. All changelings feel the cold grip of Banality encroaching on them, but for the Nunnehi this fear goes even deeper, for it threatens to unseat their very spirits and divorce them from the natural harvest of Medicine that is the gift of all living things.

## *Songs of Power*

Nunnehi cantrips are no different from those of their Kithain counterparts — they require an Art to decide what is happening, a Realm to determine who it is happening to, and a Bunk to gather the Medicine for the cantrip to function. However, while the Kithain draw on all manner of different sources, theories and justifications to explain their magical abilities, the Nunnehi as a whole agree on the origin of their powers. They believe their magic stems from the spirits of the Higher Hunting Grounds who teach the Nunnehi as the need for them arises. Most Nunnehi treat cantrips as a serious trust, not to be wasted on frivolous pursuits.



This has one very solid impact on the game mechanics of Nunnehi cantrips — all Nunnehi must sing, chant, hum or even just whisper some nonsense syllables in order to enact their magic, *in addition* to any Bunks they perform for the cantrip. Note that it is the intent to sing the song of power that matters, not necessarily that they need to be heard — a gagged or otherwise silenced Nunnehi can still use her powers as long as she is trying her best to sing, provided of course that she can still carry out the Bunk required in addition to her singing. Most Nunnehi also carry some kind of medicine bag — a pouch filled with items and elements important to them — and will not work their cantrips without it, though it is not actually required in game terms. Some Nunnehi also prefer to activate their magic through dance or playing an instrument rather than singing, and these are acceptable substitutes, provided they are appropriately traditional — no modern tunes or club dancing! This doesn't mean that all Bunks must take a long time to perform — the Nunnehi recognize that there are times when you need some magic and need it *now* — but simply that they carry a traditional flavor regardless of length or content.

Many Nunnehi restrict their cantrip use to tribal ceremonies and rituals, working their songs of power into the chants and dances already included in the rite. This not only allows them to perform valuable magic for their tribe, but it also renews the faith in the ancient ways that sustain them, making it a benefit for all involved. Of course, there are those Nunnehi who abuse their power, particularly in these dark times, and seek only personal power and gain from them. These unfortunates frequently make terrible bargains with dark spirits to get what they desire, and tribes do their best to ferret them out and get them to change their ways whenever possible. As a whole, though, the Nunnehi regard their powers as a sacred trust and do not use either Medicine or cantrips lightly.

Players should bear all of this in mind when designing Bunks for their characters — while they shouldn't descend into stereotype, they should do their best to make their cantrips in general and Bunks in particular different from the Bunks used by the Kithain. Not only does this reflect the unique traditions and practices of Nunnehi lineage, but it also helps them get a feel for the different perspective that the Nunnehi have on their world and their magic. Of course, as with most things Nunnehi, it cannot be stressed how valuable even just a little bit of research can be in turning up ideas for possible chants and ceremonies to use as Bunks, but even those without the time or resources for such work can still emulate them with a little thought and an eye toward making the experience as spiritual as possible.

### *Harvesting, Raiding and Blessing*

Most Nunnehi prefer to gather Medicine from natural sources: beautiful vistas, quiet glens, etc. They have three ways of doing so: Harvesting, Raiding, and Blessing. Harvesting is the Nunnehi equivalent of Reverie, and is handled with the same system, except a Mental Challenge is employed and the Nunnehi

must spend at least one hour in contact with the natural scene being enjoyed — lying in a field of flowers, dipping her toes in a stream, etc. Otherwise, the risks and benefits are entirely the same.

Raiding, on the other hand, is the Nunnehi equivalent to Ravaging and involves the ripping of Glamour from a particular place instead of from a person, effectively tapping the power of the land to serve the Nunnehi's needs. As it can damage the land for weeks or even years, this is considered at least as great a crime, if not a greater one, than stealing Glamour from a mortal, but even the most noble Nunnehi sometimes risk it when faced with truly dire need. However, those caught using this method to drain a sacred site's Medicine face immediate banishment from the Nation, and if that's all that happens to them, they've gotten off lightly — many Nunnehi have no qualms about executing one of their own who doesn't have sense enough to respect the few freeholds and sacred places they have left. Raiding uses the same systems as Ravaging, but the Nunnehi also runs the additional risk of attracting the ire of angry spirits if she fails the Raiding Challenge. Such wrath comes entirely at the Narrator's discretion, but any spirits so irked are typically distracting and highly unpleasant, and do not leave until the Nunnehi makes an sincere effort to appease them.

Finally, Blessing uses the same game mechanics as Rapture but can be achieved only after a direct audience with the Nunnehi's totem spirit. These audiences can only be granted in the totem's realm in the Upper World, meaning that the Nunnehi must undergo a spirit quest to even reach the appropriate site, and even then totems only grant one such audience per season. Fortunately for the Nunnehi, most totems always honor such requests for an audience from their followers, assuming the character has been a faithful follower of the totem's ways. Provided the character can reach the appropriate Realm, the Nunnehi must then make an impressive sacrifice and offer a performance or piece of artwork dedicated to her patron spirit. If the totem judges both to be worthy, the character receives a Blessing of Glamour; if not, she likely receives a long lecture on humility and the foolishness of petitioning a mighty spirit before one is truly ready. Remember that these august spirits expect no less than the absolute best in exchange for their time!

## *The House of the Spirits*

Nunnehi believe there are three worlds: the Upper World of totems, visions and spirits; the Middle World of humanity, or what is conventionally known as Earth; and the Lower World of death and decay. Great trods connect all of these places in the spirit world, and visiting these Realms is an important part of a Nunnehi's life.

The Upper World is largely a reflection of the Middle World, but is much more vivid and profound, full of mysteries and ideas that offer a glimpse at the "true nature" of things — an untrustworthy man has weasel-like features, a

polluted lake appears sickeningly brackish and foul, etc. The highest reaches of the Upper World are simply beyond imagination, where the lodges of the totem spirits can be found and the greatest gods and heroes dwell. Journeys to such places of power are extremely dangerous but offer courageous Nunnehi much wisdom if they complete their quest.

By contrast, the Lower World is also a reflection of Earth, but one that is ashen, dull and decaying, a place of immense sadness and despair where the shades of the dead lament their state and watch the deeds of the living with hungry eyes. It is all too easy to enter the Lower World through the proper portals, should a character find one. The true difficulty lies in leaving it, for the dead thirst for the essence of life and will do their best to see that the Glamour-rich Nunnehi cannot escape. More detail on the Upper World can be found in **Laws of the Wild**; for the Lower World, consult **Oblivion**.

As they realize that all things living and dead are part of the great cycle, Nunnehi who possess at least Basic *Wayfare* and one level of the Nature Realm may cross into the Upper World by stepping into a quantity of their chosen totem (as determined by the Background of the same name): a flowering bush, rock face, etc. The quantity of the totem required need not actually be the Nunnehi's size, but must be in a natural form, and should be fairly substantial — a floral arrangement or small statue is not enough to cross over, while a small but well-tended garden of flowers or boulder is acceptable. In addition, all Nunnehi who meet the basic Art and Realm requirements may cross over using a body of pure water, regardless of their personal totem. Nunnehi cannot cross into the Lower World on their own unless they find a site specifically dedicated to this purpose, although they may still use the *Spirit Link* Art to speak to its ghosts.

**System:** In order to cross over to the Upper World, the Nunnehi must touch a quantity of her totem material, perform a Bunk and win a Mental Challenge against a difficulty of the Banality level of the area (retest with *Gremayre*). If the Nunnehi also possesses the *Portal Passage* Art and the *Verdant Forest* Nature Realm, all such difficulties are lowered by two. The Nunnehi may bring others along if they hold hands and the Nunnehi spends one Medicine Trait for each "passenger." Guests had best mind their manners, as those who cannot cross over on their own are stuck if the Nunnehi abandons them on the other side, in which case they must seek out a special trod to get home — not an easy task! With or without passengers, crossing over is considered to take about 30 seconds (six combat turns), though this process may be made instant with the expenditure of two Medicine Traits.

**Note:** While the Nunnehi exist in and interact with the Near Dreaming, as all changelings do, and can enter freeholds and walk local trods normally, the break between the Higher Hunting Grounds and the mortal world normally makes it *impossible* for them to enter the Far or Deep Dreaming at all. Those attempting to do so simply fail and quickly fall back to the Banality of the mortal world if they persist in trying. This is the result of a deep spiritual sundering on

the part of their very faerie souls, not some idle ban by the spirits, and cannot be circumvented through any known means. Like it or not, the Nunnehi are confined to the part of the Dreaming closest to Earth, and to wherever they choose to travel in the Umbra. Naturally, there are rumors of special gateways hidden deep in the Umbra that allow access to the lost parts of the Higher Hunting Ground as well as certain legendary treasures or trods that may allow Nunnehi to cross over to their lost homelands, but for the time being at least they remain just that — rumors.

## *Legacies*

Nunnehi have two Legacies, one Summer and one Winter, and choose which Legacy they will follow depending on their current Camp — Summer Nunnehi follow their Summer Legacy while Winter Nunnehi follow their Winter Legacy. While it is possible for them to switch abruptly from one Legacy to another, most often those Nunnehi who are in transition between Legacies spend some time in their Midseason Legacy before fully assuming their new aspect.

Listed with each Legacy is a Vision and a Taboo; by acting to fulfill the Vision, the Nunnehi may refresh her Willpower since she is acting in accordance with her true nature and place in the world. By contrast, her Taboo is a prohibition she must respect, or she will feel increasingly adrift and listless. Like the Quests and Bans of Kithain Legacies, these are not intended to be straitjackets, but simply guides for how characters with those Legacies commonly act.

### *Summer (Dogwood) Legacies*

**Chief** — A follower of Wolf and Eagle, you have both the wisdom to seek the best way to live and the disposition to lead others toward it. You step to the fore because that is what you are meant to do, not for any notions of power or popularity. Your Vision is best served when you convince others to follow a course of action you have decided upon, or otherwise display leadership skills in a convincing manner, but you have a Taboo against blindly following another's lead.

**Grower** — A student of natural rhythms and cycles, you realize all things come in their own time. You are patient in everything from planting crops to personal relationships. Like the corn in the field, you are part of the cycle of birth, growth, death and decay; your Vision rewards you for seeing something through from beginning to end, or when you encourage the growth of someone or something. However, you have a Taboo against starting anything you cannot finish.

**Healer** — You cannot abide suffering and will go to great lengths to heal others, even your enemies; you are not above using extreme measures to treat a wound, for like the she-bear with her cubs you know that nurturing occasionally requires as much strength as mercy. Your Vision is advanced when you

### *Some Words of Warning About the Umbra*

While the Umbra offers great possibilities for developing the spiritual side of a Nunnehi and a way of detailing their incredible bond with the natural world, Storytellers should take care to remember that having the Umbra as part of their game requires some serious planning and preparation to pull off correctly. Not only is it a separate world from the Dreaming, with its own unique denizens and challenges to face, but care must be taken to stress how alien it seems, even compared to the fantastic worlds of the Dreaming. If the players come to visit it casually or look at it as just another realm of the Dreaming, something is very wrong with how Umbral journeys are being handled.

The Higher Hunting Grounds are formed from dreams, legends, myths and nightmares — an interpretation of reality, as it were, true or not; by contrast, the Lower and Upper Worlds are a reflection of the world as it actually is at heart. The Lower World views it from the perspective of despair and decay, and the Upper World from the realm of idea and aspiration, but in the end they are a representation of the truth of things as they are, not as they are interpreted. Or perhaps to put it best of all — the Higher Hunting Grounds are a reflection of the way people wish (or fear) that things should be, while the Umbra is a reflection of how it truly is but which people cannot face.

Fortunately, those looking for information on the Umbra have a wealth of resources they can turn to. As mentioned before, *Laws of the Wild and Oblivion* are specifically designed for *Mind's Eye Theatre*, but players may also find that several table-top sourcebooks such as *Axis Mundi*, *Rage Across the Heavens* and *Umbra for Werewolf* and *The Spirit Ways for Mage* are helpful as well. Even without those books, however, the Storyteller is not without resources — simply remember what each area of the Umbra embodies and design stories that serve as ways to plumb the enigmas it offers while still retaining its exotic look and flavor for the players. Umbral journeys should be times of great mystery and excitement for all involved, as even the Nunnehi are not truly at home in the Umbra like Garou and other creatures are, so even those veterans of its trails should encounter something new and unexpected every time they cross over.

A final cautionary note for the Umbra in mixed games — if the group consists of Nunnehi and other creatures such as Garou who can access the Umbra without difficulty, there's nothing to worry about. However, if the Nunnehi are in a game full of regular Kithain and others who have little or no access to the Umbra, it can quickly become frustrating for these other characters if the Nunnehi are constantly using the Umbra as a means to spy undetected, escape combat or otherwise exploit their connection as a means of dominating other characters. While the Umbra should not be removed from the Nunnehi, as it is a unique and powerful part of their culture, Storytellers confronted with this problem should also stress to the Kithain that entering the spirit world is part of the ancient heritage of the Nunnehi, as integral as their own use of toads. On the other hand, the Nunnehi consider the Umbra a sacred place, not a spirit subway — if they fail to get the point, simply have an even more experienced Umbral threat wander along some time and show them that they're not the big fish in this particular sea after all....



successfully treat a wound or disease of the mind, body or spirit, but you observe a strict Taboo to never ignore the pain of others.

**Hunter** — All of life is a hunt of some kind — for food, for learning, even for meaning. You see yourself as a predator in the great predator/prey dichotomy of the universe. Like the mountain lion and the hawk, you choose only the most worthy targets and do your best to provide for your tribe with the spoils. Your Vision is advanced each time you complete a successful “hunt,” for food or some less tangible goal, but you hold a Taboo against ever willingly putting yourself in the position of being the one who is hunted.

**Maker** — A student of Ant and Beaver, you love creation in and of itself, and delight in seeing your work bring tangible change to the world around you. Your Vision rewards you whenever you use your skills to make something useful or lasting for those around you, but you have a Taboo against acting as if the situation cannot be improved through the application of hands and will.

**Scout** — There is so much still to explore in the world, and you are always eager to confront the unknown and bring back knowledge of it to your tribe. As Snake and Fox have taught you, sometimes it is best to observe, and sometimes it is best to act swiftly and silently. You enjoy the fruits of your Vision when you successfully explore new territory (physically, mentally, emotionally) or bring back important new information to your companions. However, you have a Taboo against passing up any opportunity to be the first to discover something new.

**Spirit Guide** — A born shaman and student of the wind, which flows freely between the many worlds, you are deeply tied to the movements of the spirits around you and tend to view things from their perspective. You delight in offering guidance to others about the great journey of life. Your Vision becomes clearer every time you complete a personal vision quest or serve as the impetus for another’s spiritual growth, and observe always a strict Taboo against ignoring messages from the spirit world or knowingly offending a spirit.

**Storyteller** — Life is a series of tales and parables, and you take pride in telling these tales so that others can see the lessons to be learned from them. Like the stones of the earth, which contain the stories of the world, you strive to gather as much knowledge as you can and pass it on to others. Your Vision advances every time you learn a new story or use a tale that you know to significantly aid your companions, but your Taboo forbids you from hoarding your knowledge — you must share what you know.

**Warrior** — You see life as a battle, either literally or metaphorically, and apply yourself to its challenges with a badger’s courage and tenacity. You know that defense is sometimes just as important as offense. You will bleed the last of your blood before allowing one under your protection to be harmed. Your Vision takes form when you emerge victorious from single combat or when your prowess significantly turns the tide of battle. Your Taboo is to never retreat from a fair battle, nor to ever give in to fear.

**Wise One** — A student of Spider's patient ways, you see the wisdom in watching and listening as much as acting, and over time others in your tribe have learned to come to you for counsel, for your words are measured and fair. Your Vision rewards you whenever someone follows your advice and benefits from it, but your Taboo demands that you never turn down a request for help or counsel.

### *Midseason (Laurel) Legacy*

**Trickster** — A follower of Raven and Coyote, you realize that most people take life far too seriously. You do your best to show others that as much wisdom lies in laughter and trickery as any of their vaunted notions of serious philosophy. Your Vision laughs with you when you keep others from taking themselves too seriously, or when you can turn a solemn occasion into a farce; even your Taboo is fun — to never fail to find the humor in a situation!

### *Winter (Rock) Legacies*

**Cannibal** — All else falls to the wayside when it comes to satisfying your hunger — whether it is for food, sex, material goods or anything else does not matter, so long as you do not let anyone block you from sating yourself. By consuming things, you hope to gain their power and pattern yourself after the fish that consume their own young when times are hard. Your Vision affirms your way whenever you get the lion's share of the spoils or benefits at the expense of others, while your Taboo forbids you from ever restricting yourself.

**Fool** — This existence is nothing but folly, a meaningless and painful journey ending in utter futility. Like the mayfly, whose life is frantic, short and pointless, you seek to show others the emptiness behind all things; your Vision offers support when you make someone see the pointlessness of an action or goal, while your Taboo requires that you never take anyone or anything seriously.

**Forked-Tongue** — Why tell the truth when lies are so much more fun? You delight in using false sincerity, twisted words and facile logic to tell others what they want to hear. While you are good at making promises, you positively excel at breaking them. Like water, you change your shape to fit whatever place you find yourself in, and your Vision moves forward whenever you lie convincingly to someone and get away with it. Likewise, your Taboo bars you from telling the truth when a lie or half-truth serves you better.

**Hoarder** — Long ago, you learned that no one provides for you save yourself, and you amass great quantities of anything you feel you need — food, money, Medicine, whatever. Like the squirrel, who spends his days gathering food against hard times, you care nothing for sharing or helping others. Your Vision recognizes your dedication whenever your hoarding instinct pays off, especially if others are in need. Your Taboo forbids you from willingly surrendering anything you have gained for yourself.

**Outcast** — One who walks apart from the tribe, you are fiercely independent, owing nothing to anyone and seeking no one's counsel but your own. For

whatever reason, you stand on your own and pattern yourself after the lone wolf, who makes his way in the world without a pack. Your Vision offers solace whenever you prove that you do not need anyone or anything to survive, but your Taboo bans you from permanently associating with any group or individual.

**Raider** — A student of Magpie, who takes whatever she finds pleasing, you let others do the hard work then swoop in and help yourself to the benefits. A good fight isn't out of the question, so long as you win, and the weak are nothing but sources of sustenance and entertainment to you. Your Vision goads you on whenever you get something without earning it, or pull off a successful "raid." Your Taboo requires that you never waste your time in "honest" effort.

**Scalp-Taker** — You measure your success in the world as tangibly as possible, and delight in taking trophies of your past victories, whether proverbial or otherwise. If wronged, your vengeance requires not only retribution, but such action that the target is forever marked by your wrath. You emulate the lynx, who toys with her prey before killing it. Your Vision rewards you when you bring back proof of your accomplishments. Your Taboo declares that you must never fail to boast about your accomplishments.

**Spoiler** — You cannot swallow the success of others, and humiliate and ridicule them in order to feel better about your own deeds. Like fire, which destroys that which cannot stand up to it, you seek to ensure that no deeds but your own meet approval in the eyes of others. Your Vision encourages this whenever you make yourself look good at someone else's expense, and your Taboo forbids you from ever acknowledging the achievements of others.

**Troublemaker** — A student of the blue jay, a pest among birds, you simply cannot leave well enough alone and do not feel fulfilled unless you've caused some dissent or helped a long-running feud at last boil over. A relationship in trouble is a relationship ended if you're nearby. Your Vision takes another step whenever you turn a peaceful situation into chaos or cause dissension between formerly solid allies; your Taboo is equally amusing to uphold — never turn your back on an opportunity to meddle.

**Witch** — There is power in the spirit world, and you want it for yourself, no matter what the cost to body or soul might be. Forbidden lore is your passion, and you do not hesitate to use the power you have to advance yourself and your interests, no matter what it might do to others. Even the evil spirits of the Lower World are not off-limits to you. Your Vision moves forward when you use your skills or Arts to enhance your personal power. Your Taboo is to never do anything for anyone without exacting a price.

## *Nunnehi Families*

Nunnehi do not recognize kiths, but Families. A whole Family is called a Nation; thus the origin of the title "Nunnehi Nations." These sketches are rough outlines at best, and players should feel free to supplement the information provided here with their own research.

As with the Kithain, any Birthrights or Frailties marked as “Wyrd” apply only when dealing with the enchanted world unless the Nunnehi calls upon the Wyrd to make his fae self visible for a time in the mundane world.

### *Canotili (Tree Dwellers)*

Reclusive spirits of the grasslands and forests of the Midwest, canotili (also known as canotina) shun cities and other developed areas even more than most Nunnehi, preferring to keep to themselves in camouflaged lairs out in the wilderness they love. Among their fellow Nunnehi, they are known as peerless hunters and woodsmen, whose skill at bringing down even the most elusive game is well known across the Nations. They are traditionalists at heart and use only those tools and techniques that their ancestors did, spurning modern technology in favor of time-honored methods.

Legend holds that to see a canotili presaged a death in the person’s family — this is an exaggeration, but based in the fact that canotili are normally so in tune with their surroundings that, when surprised, they exude the very essence of fear, often causing mortals to panic or even suffer heart attacks. Canotili also loved to test the courage and skill of hunters who came into their lands by scaring off game, playing tricks on them and making strange noises in the undergrowth; if the hunter was brave and pressed on despite these setbacks, or investigated the noises he heard, the canotili would reward him with small gifts of food. Would-be wanderers beware, however — the canotili value their privacy, and those who trespass on their lands without good cause can expect first a volley of annoyances and frights, then escalating acts of violence until the invaders are finally “persuaded” to leave... or worse.

Though they dwell largely apart from even their fellow Nunnehi, canotili remain a proud folk, and their garb and equipment is always immaculately cared for. They prefer the traditional dress of the tribes they hail from to the dubious comfort of modern clothing, but no matter what they are wearing they have a gift for blending in with their surroundings, save for their eyes, which gleam like an animal’s unless they take pains to prevent it. Self-sufficient in the woods, they seldom take mortal jobs if they can avoid it, but can occasionally be found as forest rangers, hunting guides and other professions that allow them to spend as much time exploring and defending their lands as possible.

**Affinity:** *Prop*

**Birthrights**

**Earth Blend:** By remaining perfectly still, the canotili may change color to match her surroundings like a chameleon. There is no cost, but the player must cross her arms as if she were using *Hidden Form* to signify this Birthright’s use. Voluntary movement of any kind cancels this power immediately. *Earth Blend* functions only in areas of natural wilderness. This is a Wyrd Birthright, but only if the Nunnehi attempts to hide in view of mortals; canotili already hidden remain so even if mortals enter the area.

**Physical Enhancement:** All canotili gain the additional Physical Traits *Wiry* and *Rugged*, which can never be permanently lost.

#### Frailties

**Terror:** When surprised, canotili exude a pheromone that causes powerful fear in nearby non-canotili; all such creatures must win a Simple Test (or spend a Willpower Trait) or flee in terror. Supernatural creatures do not flee, but instead strike out instinctively at the canotili, receiving a free retest on the first combat challenge resulting from the surprise. Canotili cannot control this fear response in any way (which is why this is a Frailty rather than a Birthright).

### *Inuas (Spirit Helpers)*

Long reputed to be the wisest in the ways of the spirit world, inuas originally served as both guides and assistants to their native tribes of the Far North. They acted as go-betweens for spirits and humans alike, ensuring that both sides did the other no deliberate harm and repairing what damage was done as best they could. Inuas are fairly solitary, but more out of the knowledge that it is often difficult for others to understand their friendships with the spirits than any real desire to be alone. Indeed, they figure that those who truly need their guidance will seek them out regardless, and leave it at that. Many inuas form long-term friendships with one or two such mortals during their lives — shamans or otherwise — and take great care to protect them from dangers both physical and spiritual.

Inuas are also natural shapechangers and may master a number of forms by the time they reach their elder years — they originally adopted these guises both as homage to the spirits that have taught them so much and as a way of appearing to the shamans they guide without revealing their identity to the community. The shapes they take are always of animals of some importance to the tribe, and the inuas appear as perfectly normal animals of that species, save for the fact that they are always small enough to fit in a shaman's lodge or place of power (in the case of larger animals such as polar bears). Like the pooka Kithain, inuas treasure this ability to change shape, and most develop more stable friendships with their fellow animals than they do with mortals; regardless, they all come to absorb some of the unique perspective animals have on life, at once innocent and brutal, as is nature herself. It is rare for an inua to not know at least the basics of the *Spirit Link Art*, and most master it as they grow older, becoming more and more distant from this world in favor of the spiritual and animal worlds.

Given their high susceptibility to pollutants and contaminants, inuas can generally be found only in the most remote reaches of Concordia — the need must be truly dire or the tale entirely tragic for them to linger near cities of any kind, and even then they can think only of being home with their animal companions. When it comes to professions, inuas prefer those that allow them to give sage advice — doctors, professors, clergy and the like are all popular, provided of course the inua can find schooling someplace tolerable. Inua appear



much like their native tribes, even in fae form, save for the fact that most wear at least one prominent amulet, if not more, and many also sport a traditional labret (a plug of ivory, bone or metal that pierces through the lower lip to form a chin decoration). Some also have an animalistic feature or two, carried over from the time they spend among their animal cousins.

**Affinity:** *Fae*

**Birthrights**

**Imbue Amulet:** Inua may invest an amulet for their chosen shaman with a single Art, chosen from *Chicanery*, *Legerdemain*, *Primal*, *Soothsay*, *Sovereign*, *Spirit Link* or *Wayfare*. The power must also have a specific Realm attached (such as the *Familiar Face* level of the Actor Realm), and is only good for that particular Realm; furthermore, each amulet can only be used once. Amulets may be used by the unenchanted, though they must first make a test of their Banality versus the Glamour the inua had when investing it; if they succeed, the amulet fails as their natural disbelief robs it of its power. Investing an amulet is considered a sacred trust by the inua, not a means for greedy players to create a magic amulet factory.

**Change Form:** Inua may freely change shape into one animal of a local type, chosen at character creation. A second shape may be learned during character creation as a five-Trait Merit. Finally, an additional shape may be learned when a character becomes a brave or an elder, at a cost of four Experience Traits. Though they do not need to isolate themselves like pooka, most inua prefer not to show off; regardless, the shift takes 10 seconds. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

**Frailties**

**Susceptibility:** Inua within a few yards of a pollutant (urban air pollution counts!) have a one-Trait penalty to all tests; those actually in direct contact with a pollutant are at a two-Trait penalty.

### **Kachinas**

Keepers of ritual and tradition, the kachinas spend most of their days planning rituals and ceremonies, trying to keep the ancient ways alive. Natives of the Southwest still tell tales about how the kachinas first came down from the sky many centuries ago, teaching their ancestors the ways of honoring the spirits and preserving their ties to the natural world. The kachinas remain a force for tradition in the Nunnehi Nations. For their part, the kachinas commonly hold that each ritual performed, each prayer spoken, forms another link to the Higher Hunting Grounds, and that when enough links are made, the old paths will reopen. While most of their fellow Nunnehi believe this is somewhat deluded, none fault them for their devotion. The kachinas serve as some of the wisest advisors on matters of ritual and the spirit realm.

The kachinas have earned the respect of the other Families for other reasons besides their wisdom. When the paths to the Higher Hunting Grounds were closing, the kachinas had a chance to flee back to the spirit realm, but

nearly all of them stayed behind to guide their mortal families. They have remained close with their tribal communities ever since, living alongside or among their human relatives for generations, acting as mediators and teachers and helping bring harmony and plenty to their kin. The kachinas are not all seriousness and ceremony, however — clown kachinas form an important part of their faith, teaching others lessons about behavior through jest and satire, and many braves take on this role with great zeal, pouring their youthful exuberance into pranks that help their communities.

Kachinas shy away from mortal professions as a rule, preferring to be where their tribes need them and earn their keep directly from their tribe members, though a few of them have found they enjoy positions as guides or museum staff, where they have a chance to teach natives and non-natives alike. As childlings and braves, they appear much the same as their mortal kin, though chimerically they are seldom dressed in anything but the finest ceremonial garb — those familiar with the dolls that bear their name can easily recognize them for what they are. Elders undergo a bizarre transformation, with their fae mien gradually shrinking in size until they look like living dolls. Due to this strange adjustment, most leave mortal society entirely, coming back only to offer aid and wisdom to their kin.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

Birthrights

**Prayer of Plenty:** With a Static Mental Challenge against a difficulty of seven Traits (retest with *Occult*), a kachina may cause a boom in plant growth and rainfall in an area, ensuring good crops. They do this only if their tribe performs the proper dances and ceremonies first.

**Cloud Form:** With a Medicine Trait, the Nunnehi may transform into a cloud or wisp of smoke. They are immune to physical attacks and may float into the air in this shape, but they are at the mercy of the prevailing winds and must return to a safe height before changing back or else suffer falling damage. Changing back costs nothing but takes at least three turns to perform. An instantaneous change requires the expenditure of a Mental Trait. This is a Wyrld Birthright.

Frailties

**Single Mind:** Kachinas must choose one craft- or performance-related Ability on which they are especially focused. They must purchase at least one level of this Ability (most take more), and are considered one Trait up on all tests with it. However, they are two Traits down on all other craft- or performance-related tests due to their singular focus.

***May-may-gway-shi (Rock Fishers)***

These slippery and clever Nunnehi of the Northeast are the subject of many legends of daring raids and cunning traps, especially when it comes to getting their hands on seafood, which they adore and go to great lengths to consume. They are likewise renowned for helping out those tribes they raid

during times when fish are scarce, filling their nets in gratitude for the fish taken during more abundant times. Perhaps most remarkable of all is their talent for disappearing through solid rock walls, canoe and all, when pursued by particularly dedicated foes — a talent they have also been known to exploit to their advantage when staging ambushes of their own.

Despite their reputation as raiders, the may-may-gway-shi are not innately wicked, but rather simply love to test their wits against others, and are equally gracious whether they win or lose, provided the competition was good. Those who are particularly clever, or who find some way to enter the well-hidden caverns in which the may-may-gway-shi hide, are rewarded well for their trouble, often with stones imbued with Medicine or even minor treasures for truly outstanding tricksters. They are an easygoing folk, and while they still carry resentment over their mortal tribes being relocated (largely to Maine), they do not hold it against most Kithain they meet, though such outsiders can expect to be the butt of many jokes before they're fully accepted. In particular, this Family has taken a shine to the selkie kith, as well as those few aquatic pooka they know, and they can often be found playing together in remote coves or seaside towns. Those who push their good nature too far, however, discover just how fierce they are, and may awaken one morning to find themselves miles out at sea, with none but the sharks to keep them company....

May-may-gway-shi are typically short and lithe, with long, wild hair that they let grow down over their faces (thus earning them the epithet "hairy-faced" in many legends). They also sport a layer of fine, downy, waterproof fur — much like that of an otter — along their arms and legs. Most prefer occupations that allow them to sail and fish as much as possible, though they dislike going to sea for long, and prefer activities close to the coast. May-may-gway-shi dress very casually, in both mortal and faerie aspects, and have wide grins that are quite infectious to friends and strangers alike.

**Affinity:** *Scene*

**Birthrights**

**Door in the Rock:** The Nunnehi may spend a Physical Trait to pass through a rock wall to the other side (or into a cave, if such is the case); she may also extend a single limb through the wall and withdraw it. By spending two Physical Traits, the Nunnehi may ride a vehicle (and anyone on or in it) safely through the wall as well. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

**Call the Swimmers:** By spending a Social Trait, the Nunnehi may summon a netful of fish to him while fishing in an appropriate body of water.

**Frailties**

**Weakness of Will:** When confronted by a seafood feast or an unguarded fish supply (including a restaurant buffet, where applicable), the Nunnehi must spend a Willpower Trait to avoid immediately indulging themselves, and thus possibly leaving themselves open to any manner of ambushes or other tricks.

## Nanehi

Perhaps the most sociable of all the Nunnehi, the nanehi (whose name also means “people who live anywhere,” and who loaned a form of their name to the Nunnehi Nations as a unification gift) are great performers and lovers of beauty who capture the essence of art both old and new with breathtaking talent. Great wanderers, they can most often be found following craft shows and powwow circuits, picking up new songs and crafts while supporting themselves with their own talents. They love stories as well and form a vital link in the oral histories of many of their tribes. While they prefer traditional tales, much the same as their taste in performance material, they do not limit themselves that way, and relish the telling as much or more as the tale itself.

Though primarily a peaceful Family, the nanehi do their utmost to help those in need, relatives or not, and will go out of their way to aid the sick or injured, especially those lost in the wilderness. According to legend, the nanehi wait with the injured person or lost child, tending their wounds and keeping them calm until just before help arrives, whereupon they disappear into the wilds without a trace. While they cannot actually turn invisible, nanehi have a knack for modifying their looks and can disguise themselves with little trouble; unfortunately, this also makes them very proud of their appearance, and those who flatter a nanehi can quickly take advantage of his narcissism. Outside of this weakness, however, they are a very genial Family to be around and help hold the volatile coalition that is the Nunnehi Nations together.

Nanehi love occupations that allow them to show off their good looks or their performing talent, not to mention keep them on the road as often as possible. They naturally gravitate toward careers as musicians, poets, dancers or traditional craftsmen. They have become somewhat close with the eshu kith over the years, finding they share an outsider’s perspective on the Kithain of Concordia, and can increasingly be found in their company. All nanehi are very concerned with their physical appearance, and become quite upset if anything happens to mar their perfect visages — they seldom dress in anything but the finest clothing and appear as idealized versions of their mortal tribes, with gorgeous dark hair and flashing eyes.

**Affinity:** *Fae*

Birthrights

**Shape the Body:** By spending a Medicine Trait, the nanehi may alter her body anywhere between two feet in height to normal human size, make herself look older or younger, or temporarily add (or subtract) a *Gorgeous Social Trait*. Those hunting for the nanehi must win a Mental Challenge (retest with *Kenning* or *Investigation*) to recognize her if her form has been significantly altered; by the same token, the changed nanehi should wear a description card or otherwise clearly indicate her altered state to other players. This is a Wyrd Birthright, though nanehi who change their shape outside the sight of mortals can then enter their presence without difficulty. This change takes about a turn/six seconds to enact, though it may take longer if the nanehi desires.

**Voice of Beauty:** Nunehi are one Trait up on all *Performance Challenges* involving their voice and receive a free retest on all related tests if their performance involves traditional songs, tales or dances.

Frailties

**Face in the Water:** Nunehi are vain creatures, and are at a one-Trait penalty to resist any *Social Challenges* involving flattery, even if they know the person flattering them probably has evil intentions. They also have a one-Trait penalty to all challenges while their appearance is adversely affected (they are covered with mud, sweaty from fighting, etc.).

### *Numuzo'ho (Crushers of People)*

These giants of the West embody the power of nature to destroy as well as create, and have no trouble demonstrating this to those who defile their sacred lands. Their strength is such that the stoutest troll is barely a match for them, and their hard skin makes it difficult to injure them even with modern weaponry. Even the most fearsome rock giants tend to keep their insults to themselves when it comes to irritating one of these temperamental titans. Though not evil, as some of the legends about them attest, many nümüzo'ho are locked in their Winter Legacy due to the anger and disgust they feel over the state of the modern world, and even those who aren't still tend to have short fuses.

Sadly, their role as frontline warriors has put the nümüzo'ho in dire straits as time goes by and the enemies of the Nunehi accumulate, causing them to battle everything from mortal developers to imperialist sidhe lords and even occasional Prodigal foes. This continual fight has taken its toll on the Family, and there are precious few of them left, though to their credit that has not stayed their ire in the least, only forced them to fight a bit more cautiously than they have in the past. What's more, all the elders of this tribe suffer from some deformity or another, which only gives the younger ones even greater cause to fight as hard as they can before their elder years overtake them and they lose the ability to join the fray as they once did.

Nümüzo'ho are tall and muscular, in both their fae mien and mortal form, and carry themselves with towering, almost military efficiency. Their eyes glow with unearthly radiance in their fae mien, often flashing or growing brighter as their temper rises. They take only the most antisocial mortal jobs they can find, and frequently choose to live in cabins they build in the wilderness, supporting themselves with their own skills and wreaking vengeance on those who dare to trespass or pollute their territory.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

Birthrights

**Extraordinary Size:** All nümüzo'ho are extremely powerful and gain the Physical Traits *Brawny*, *Muscular*, *Tough* and *Tireless*. Furthermore, their tough skin allows them to ignore the first health level of damage dealt to them in any



combat scene, provided it wasn't caused by cold iron or other sources of aggravated damage. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

**Rouse the Elements:** By spending a Willpower Trait and a Medicine Trait, the nūmūzo'ho may cause some powerful elemental disturbance: a storm, an earthquake, etc. What occurs is at the Storyteller's discretion, but this power may only be used once per phase of the moon, and using it for selfish or inappropriate goals angers the local spirits, who may refuse the power until the character atones and shows them the proper respect.

#### Frailties

**Weight of Years:** Upon becoming an elder, the nūmūzo'ho loses an arm, leg or eye to age and decrepitude, though by this time many of them have suffered quite a few other wounds in the course of their defense of the wilderness. However, this particular loss cannot be healed or averted in any way, and should be represented by using the appropriate Flaw (*Lame, One Eye*, etc.), but the character gains no Traits for it. Storytellers should take care that the full extent of this Flaw be felt — it is the price the nūmūzo'ho pay for their great strength, and they can too easily become a “super-kith” if it's ignored.

#### *Pu'gwis*

Few other stories in the Nunnehi Nation are as sad as that of the pu'gwis — once the most beautiful of all the Nunnehi, their boasting eventually attracted the ire of powerful spirits who decided to teach them a lesson about humility and cursed them with the visages of corpses. Though some legends claim they possessed their vocal talents all along, popular contention holds that the pu'gwis were further cursed with beautiful voices, so that they lured mortals to them only to scare them away when their true faces became evident. Now the pu'gwis live lonely lives in the deep wilderness, surrounded by animal friends and doing their best to keep their homes from being destroyed by logging companies. Occasionally, they venture back to their mortal tribes, offering aid and small gifts to the less fortunate of the community, but most of the time they avoid contact altogether, not wanting to accidentally frighten their kin.

If any good can be said to have come of their condition, however, it's that the pu'gwis have learned their lesson well, and truly do look out for their forest homes, as well as those folk they encounter who have less than others. Most pu'gwis try to fight their curse, searching for a lover who can see past their hideous looks, and no few actually wind up becoming involved with a blind person, defending their relationships with such fierceness that none doubt the truth of their passion. Though they remain aloof from others to avoid exposing them to their curse, pu'gwis care deeply about the problems of others and will listen for hours to a person in need of solace or comfort. Even those who are drawn by their beautiful songs but then reject the pu'gwis on account of their monstrous looks are seldom subjected to any form of revenge — they are simply sung into forgetfulness of the encounter and left somewhere safe.

Even in mortal form, pu'gwis are always unattractive, with sunken eyes, pale or sallow complexions and thin, almost nonexistent lips — to faerie sight, however, they are truly hideous, with emaciated, corpselike bodies and faces out of a horror movie. Their skin is stretched tight and seems almost transparent, offering nauseating visuals of muscles and fluids at work underneath, while their lips pull back to reveal rotting teeth in an intimidating skeletal grin. Their noses are nonexistent, as if rotted away, and their eyes are yellowish, almost as if they will flow from their sockets at any moment. Pu'gwis seldom hold down any jobs in the mortal world, but out of fear rather than the normal simple self-sufficiency of most Nunnehi who walk the same path; they'd like to join society, but their curse forbids any close ties. They walk alone.

**Affinity:** *Actor*

Birthrights

**Song of Beckoning:** Pu'gwis may call others to them with a hypnotic song; targets are called with a successful Social Challenge against their Willpower. This may be retested with the *Performance Ability*. Supernatural creatures may cancel this power by spending a Willpower Trait, though those easily fascinated by beauty (such as many changelings and some Prodigals) must make a Willpower Challenge if they wish to do so.

**Song of Dismissal:** The pu'gwis may use another song to remove all memories of him from those around him with a successful Social Challenge, which can be retested with the *Performance Ability*. Use the normal mob scene rules if testing against multiple targets and remember that all within hearing range must make the test, allies or otherwise. Those who were summoned by the *Song of Beckoning* use only half their Traits to resist. Only the target's memories of the pu'gwis from the current scene are affected by this power, though those who only met them in the current scene forget the character entirely.

Frailties

**Decay:** No pu'gwis may have more than three Strength-related Physical Traits (such as *Brawny* or *Wiry*), and to any other fae or enchanted beings they automatically gain the Negative Social Traits: *Repugnant* x 3, which can never be bought off. They should also describe or use makeup to alert others to their corpselike visage. This is a Wyrd Frailty, although even in human form pu'gwis have a permanent *Repugnant* Trait, and they may never take any beneficial Appearance-related Social Traits. Their true visages automatically become apparent any time they attempt to woo or otherwise become intimate with another, likely causing the mortal to either flee in terror or pass out in shock — no known magic can prevent or disguise this transformation.

### Rock Giants

Those unfortunates who still subscribe to the Hollywood-driven notion that all Native Americans (and, by extension, the Nunnehi) are noble, caring and wise in the ways of the spirit world — rather than being real people with real attitudes, likes and dislikes — are often taken aback when they meet the

boisterous and unabashedly gluttonous rock giants. Native to the Northeast, and especially fond of the Mohawk and Seneca tribes, these fae are featured in many legends as fearsome cannibals and terrible foes; a number of tales also speak of rock giants befriending those who can best them in some test of strength and subsequently staying by their side even against terrible odds. Indeed, it is this undying loyalty that is one of the Family's redeeming features, though none doubt their prowess when it comes time to call a war party together, and those who underestimate their cunning suffer for it.

For their part, the rock giants see life through a very simple lens: strength and toughness are the most important virtues, eating well and fighting often the most common hobbies. Simplistic, maybe, but more than enough for them. For this reason, they are often likened to Kithain redcaps, and the two groups have a strange relationship indeed. If they meet in a situation where they can bond through the same activities, they become fast friends and to hell with what anyone else thinks. If the meeting is on less agreeable circumstances, however, they become unswerving enemies, too much alike to do anything but fight. Regardless of such ties, all rock giants take life as it comes and meet it with courage and directness; in this fashion the nicer ones among them have a habit of bringing their less-grounded cousins back down to earth. Their less-social members, however, are little better than sharks on two legs, fighting and eating anything in their path. Some rock giants do indeed practice cannibalism, though only the most depraved of their Winter kin do so in anything other than a symbolic manner not that even their Summer kin will admit as much, as they know how much it intimidates their opponents to worry about what will happen if a rock giant gets his hands on them....

In their fae mien, the natural size and power of the rock giants becomes literal stone, so that they appear to be rough-cut sculptures given life. They have stalactite hair and obsidian pools for eyes, and most can be mistaken for boulders if they curl up and hold still. Rock giants like rough and tumble professions: steelworkers, bouncers, bodyguards and the like. Their society is strictly run by the females, who have the final say on what their cousins (and especially their male cousins) may do, and even those males who do lead know that they do so only at the sufferance of the females.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

Birthrights

**Flint Coat:** Rock giants gain an additional Healthy health level, and any attacks by stone weapons — magical or otherwise — do no damage whatsoever. This is a Wyrd Birthright.

**Prowess:** All braves gain the Physical Trait *Brawny*, which may never be permanently lost; elders gain an additional *Brawny* Trait. Rock giants also gain a free level of the *Brawl* Ability, which may never be permanently lost.

Frailties

**Hothead:** If their bravery or prowess is questioned, rock giants automatically assume their Winter aspect and focus on nothing else but proving their might to the offender. No apologies or explanations will suffice — at least one blow must be struck against the offender or a champion the offender chooses before the rock giant can put her temper to rest.

### *Surems (Yaqui Little People)*

The Dreaming is fond of teaching that appearances are often deceiving, and the surems are living proof: Though small of stature, they nonetheless possess great physical strength and even greater strength of conviction. Legend tells that the surems once were fierce warriors, and some claim they even battled the earliest settlers, but the high cost of warfare taught this tribe the ways of peace at last. Now they are tirelessly committed to bringing harmony wherever they go. As such, they are the Nunnehi most commonly encountered by the Kithain since the more sensible and cool-headed Families employ them as negotiators and arbitrators. For their part, the surems view the Kithain with a more open mind than most Nunnehi — while they have seen the Kithain at their worst, they are too understanding to hold a grudge for long and think it better to work out differences than try to settle old blood feuds.

Aside from the nanehi, whose company they are fond of, the surems also form close ties with the mortal communities they hail from, and even those who leave the Southwest usually carry some reminder with them at all times. Unlike most of their Nunnehi cousins, they do not remove themselves from their mortal relatives but live and work alongside them, trying to bring about the betterment of all. They have a great love of quiet, however, and will do much to preserve it, feeling that a quiet atmosphere is essential to cultivate a harmonious existence with other people and the natural world. They are sometimes accused by other Nunnehi of being traitors for preferring negotiation and diplomacy to outright confrontation with the Europeans, an accusation that wounds them deeply. In response, they say only that while they will not allow themselves or their loved ones to come to harm, the way of violence nearly destroyed them in the past, and they will not travel down that road again. Those who push them too far often find that the surems still remember much of their warrior days, and those who do battle expecting them to give in have an unpleasant surprise waiting. While they seldom kill their foes if it can be avoided, surems are more than willing to ensure that they do not pose a threat for some time.

Surems are among the most human-seeming of the Nunnehi; even in their fae mien, they remain very much the image of their Yaqui relatives, though slightly smaller. Many wear a medicine bag prominently or carry a peace pipe or similar item with them at all times. They are quick to step between two feuding parties, regardless of who those parties might be. In their mortal lives, surems prefer sedate, quiet occupations where they can study old lore or bring understanding between those in crisis: librarian, family therapist, religious

counselor and so on. They are very pragmatic, however, and take any job they need in their efforts to spread harmony to others, so long as it allows them the quiet they treasure.

**Affinity:** Actor

Birthrights

**Serenity:** By spending a Social Trait and succeeding on a Social Challenge against those in range, the surem may exude an air of serenity for five paces around herself. Anyone already within that range (or who enters later) must spend a Willpower Trait to remain or become agitated, though those affected may still defend themselves if the need arises. The effect is broken for all concerned if the surem takes any aggressive action. The effects of this aura include any allies, as well as the surem herself, and lasts for one scene. Surems may perform an appropriate Bunk (typically a peace pipe ritual or similar ceremony) to receive additional Traits when invoking this Birthright; each additional Bunk Trait adds one pace to the radius of the aura.

**Congeniality:** Surems receive one free retest on all Social Challenges related to promoting peace, trust or friendship. This includes any applicable cantrips, but only if they are sincerely intended to further those goals. This Birthright cannot be applied if the surem is simply using her song of power to manipulate another. All surems receive a free *Diplomatic* Social Trait, which can never be permanently lost.

Frailties

**Plowshares:** Surems must win a Simple Test to resort to violence (including speaking harshly), and are one Trait down on all tests while acting in a violent manner. Note that surems may always defend themselves and those in their care normally, but unless they win the Simple Test, they cannot injure their opponent in return, only prevent them from causing harm.

### *Thought Crafters (Algonquin & Uzzle Folk)*

Previously believed extinct, these clever Nunnehi returned with new life during the recent efforts to revitalize the scattered Algonquin tribe, and have been busy setting up new relations with their mortal cousins and the descendants of the settlers who displaced them (not to mention their Kithain counterparts). Ever an adaptable people, they have accepted that their previous way of life must change if they hope to survive, and they approach such problems with their characteristic good cheer and knack for problem solving. The one thing they do not accept, however, is the same harsh treatment that they received the last time they tried to forge ties with the newcomers. They have adjusted their negotiation strategies accordingly — this time it is either equal footing or nothing at all, and they're more than willing to back it up by any means necessary.

According to old tales, thought-crafters are descended from the great hero Manabus, who brought mortals the secret of fire and many other survival skills. None can deny the ingenuity these Nunnehi display, and their ability to come



up with a means or method of solving problems has earned them the respect (not to mention favor) of many other Families. For example, they solved the problem of diminishing land space for freeholds by creating “living history” villages on their ancestral lands, where they can “re-enact” the old ways in full view of the public, harvesting Medicine from the site even as they inform mortals on the beliefs and practices of their tribes. They are acknowledged experts at trickery and have a deep love of puzzles, pranks and other enigmas, both as learning exercises for themselves and teaching tools for others. Most are constantly toying with some kind of puzzle, if only to keep their agile and energetic minds occupied. They have a gift for inspiration as well and have brought more than one exhausted Dreamer or banal faerie back to their true self with a clever puzzle or cunning trick; their fruitful quests for Medicine are legendary.

In their mortal lives, thought-crafters eagerly pursue those professions that allow them to exploit both their ready wits and agile hands: inventor, toymaker and architect are a few favorites, but by no means the only ones, as thought-crafters tend to follow their passion wherever it takes them. They prefer to live in secluded villages or retreats, cunningly crafted to blend into their surroundings, though they also live among their tribe if they are feeling sociable. In their fae mien, they appear as idealized members of their tribe, with long fingers, gleaming eyes and ready smiles.

**Affinity:** *Prop*

Birthrights

**Nimble Fingers, Clever Minds:** Thought-crafters receive free *Clever* and *Dexterous* Traits, which cannot be permanently lost. In addition, they are considered one Trait up in all tests involved with solving enigmas or delicate physical manipulation (not combat).

**Inspiration:** Thought-crafters have a powerful bond with the Higher Hunting Grounds; all successful attempts to harvest Medicine gain the Nunnehi an extra *Glamour* Trait, though this cannot take her over her normal maximum. In addition, they may likewise inspire other Nunnehi who join them in their quest to gather Medicine, provided they are nearby when the harvesting occurs. Finally, they may restore some measure of creativity to Ravaged mortals and deeply banal changelings. Provided they are in close contact with the target for a scene or hour (whichever is longer), the thought-crafter may give mortals back their creative knack and restore a *Glamour* Trait to a fellow changeling. This form of inspiration may only be used on a given target once per day and cannot be used on the thought-crafter herself. Whether an Undone changeling can be brought back by this means is up to the Storyteller, but such an event should be rare and wonderful indeed.

Frailties

**Call of the New:** Thought-crafters are highly curious. Whenever one is confronted with the opportunity to do something he’s never done before, he

must make a Willpower Test against four Traits to resist at least giving it a try. This does not apply to obviously suicidal actions — these Nunnehi are experimental, not crazy — but anything shy of that is certainly fair game.

### *Tunghat (Green Dwarves, Owners)*

Once, the bond between animals and hunters was a sacred trust, with hunters offering prayers and sacrifices to ensure a good hunt and honor the animals they had slain, while the weakest and oldest animals accepted the honor of sacrificing themselves so their fitter cousins could live. In modern times, however, this cycle is all but ignored, as weekend warriors come out during hunting season armed with high-powered weaponry, blasting at anything that moves, killing for the joy of destruction. It is a sad time for the animal kingdom, but perhaps saddest of all for the tunghat, whose duty it was to ensure harmony between hunters and animals, who have been cast aside even by many of their own tribes in the rush of “progress.” Their ties to their animal brothers have not diminished, however, and the tunghat still feel their pain and confusion as they are taken from life without warning; this causes the formerly playful tunghat to be among the most depressed and withdrawn of the Nunnehi, as they are only too keenly aware of their lost role.

In times past, the tunghat held a place of great honor in most tribes, acting as a liaison between the tribe and the animal world; those who hunted after participating in their ceremonies always came back with a choice kill, as a measure of the tunghat’s thanks, while the tunghat did their best to scatter animals, sabotage equipment and otherwise punish those who hunted without the sacred rites. This occasionally brought them in conflict with the canotili, who shared many of their lands and liked to hunt as they pleased, and the two Families have a tenuous alliance at best, riddled with many old grudges. In the present day, this serves only to further the tunghat impression that they are without friends or recourse when it comes to dealing with hunters and other despoilers of their land. Some tunghat have started leading their animal friends in raids against cities and towns that cause them grief, though this has a tendency to backfire and cause even more suffering in the long term. Many braves have succumbed to Banality and despair in the modern era, feeling powerless to save their friends. Battling this trend is a topic of growing importance to the Family, if they hope to see another generation.

Those tunghat who take mortal professions typically only do so when on the verge of giving in to Banality, but even those that do always find work with animals: veterinarians, animal trainers, even (saddest of all) pet store owners. Most prefer to live in the traditional grass tipis of their ancestors, out among their animal friends, but an increasing number are moving to the city or living in trailers. Tunghat are small and stocky in their mortal seeming, and shrink further in their fae mien, gaining dark green skin with darker green hair, teeth and nails. They favor woven grass ponchos that help them blend in with their beloved grasslands, and most have an animal companion or two near them constantly.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

**Birthrights**

**Animal Illusion:** All tunghat have a chosen animal type that they are especially close to, like the pooka Kithain, and by spending a Medicine Trait, the tunghat makes others (including animals) see him as an animal of that type. This illusion is always slightly flawed, and those with *Heightened Senses* and similar powers may see through it with a Mental Challenge. This animal affinity is acquired during the naming ceremony and is based on the first animal seen after the ceremony is over. Typical animals include deer, rabbits, antelopes, coyotes, birds, foxes and bears. This affinity does not change during a tunghat's life and must always be an animal species native to Concordia; animals from exotic lands do not bond with the tunghat.

**Summon the Herd:** By spending a Social Trait, the tunghat may bond with a type of animal. By winning a Social Challenge, the tunghat may summon animals of that type who are within a half day's travel, determine their general health and appeal to them to give up their lives for the good of others if necessary.

**Fraillties**

**Animal Mind:** A tunghat who maintains an animal illusion for more than half an hour must win a Mental Challenge against six Traits or forget he is not actually an animal of that type. This test must be made every half hour, until the tunghat either reverts back or fails the test. If the latter occurs, he begins acting in an animal manner and even wanders toward nearby hunters. He can only be brought out of this with the expenditure of a Willpower Trait or the intervention of other characters to convince him that he is not an animal.

### *Water Babies*

Dark tales surround this enigmatic Family — that they steal children, pull people under the water to drown them, and that they have long polluted their bloodlines by mixing with non-native people. Few of the other Nunnehi seek them out for any reason, and those who do report a baffling mixture of innocence and cruelty, spirituality and practicality, and most decide they were better off avoiding these reclusive spirits. For their part, the water babies are guilty of all the “crimes” they are accused of, but only after a fashion. Sadly, most Nunnehi and non-Nunnehi never stop to discern the difference, so the water babies go about their work alone.

It is true that water babies have stolen children away, but only those children who are abused and neglected; they treasure children, and most would no sooner harm one than they would rub glass into their gills. They keep these children in their lairs, underwater grottoes or remote caves, and raise them as best they can, doing everything possible to provide for them. It is also true that they pull people underwater and drown them, but they do this only to those who harm children or who pollute their sacred waters. Water babies have their own supernatural means of determining a target's guilt or innocence in the matter.

Finally, to answer the question of their mixed heritage, the water babies have long had a custom of arranging marriages when the children in their care come of age, and no few children have chosen to remain with the water babies, meaning that their blood has indeed mingled more freely than the other Nunnehi. They fail to see how this is a problem, but apparently it bothers the other Families. Water babies are also acutely aware that they cannot save all the abused children in need and have long practiced their Medicine to help the spirits of the unfortunates they failed to save find rest in the next world, since this one was so harsh to them.

Water babies appear as curiously androgynous beings, which in the past led many of the Far West tribes of their native lands to believe that they were entirely female. In their fae mien they all have long, flowing hair and webbed hands and feet, as well as small gills that allow them to breathe underwater. What clothing they wear is designed to be easily removed, and their hair is typically their only adornment underwater. In their mortal seeming, they appear as normal humans, with their gills closing up to appear as little more than tiny, almost invisible scars. While they shun most mortal professions because of their water dependency, they can sometimes be found as swimming teachers, lifeguards or park rangers around a particular lake, a lake that happens to see a number of curious “accidents” and disappearances as the water baby does her job.

**Note:** While this should be obvious to those players with the barest shred of common sense, the no-touching rule still applies when roleplaying a water baby’s unique talent for vengeance. If your game is near a lake/pool/Jacuzzi/etc. and your Storyteller graciously permits you to hang out in said body of water as part of “being in character,” you still must not touch or grab other players in any way, especially if your intent is to pull them in (even if only as a “joke”). Not only is this a big safety hazard, but you may also ruin someone else’s costume and/or makeup, not to mention cause some serious bad feelings out of game. Don’t do it.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

Birthrights

**Synthesize Air:** Water babies and those they are touching may breathe freely underwater. They use this to bring children to their hidden freeholds and sometimes to rescue those who have fallen into their river or lake, though most of the time they are indifferent to the fates of adults.

**Strength of the Wave:** Water babies are two Traits up on all Physical Challenges to drag someone underwater to drown him. They may only use this additional strength when pursuing revenge for a crime. If the target isn’t guilty, the bonus does not manifest, a sure sign the target is innocent. They may ask the target if they are guilty of the crime out-of-character, and if the target responds in the negative the strength fails to materialize.

Fraillties

**Water Dependency:** Water babies kept from immersion in water for more than two hours begin to weaken, losing one Physical Trait every hour. Once all those Traits are gone, they are unable to move and die in another 24 hours if not returned to water. It does not matter if they immerse themselves in a natural lake, a swimming pool or even a bathtub (though natural sources are preferred).

### *Yunwi Amai'yine'hi (Water People)*

Playful and mischievous, this Family has long held watch over the waters of the Southeast, pulling pranks and teaching lessons to those who use the rivers and lakes that they love. Like the water babies, they are known for zealously patrolling their territory and taking revenge on those who abuse it; however, unlike the water babies, the yunwi amai'yine'hi seldom use such direct methods. Instead, most prefer using tricks to push targets right up to the edge of disaster, then (depending on their Camp or mood) either rescue them to ponder their lesson learned or leave them free to live or die on their own merits. They are not especially cruel, but times have been hard on them.

The brutal relocation of many of their mortal tribes to Oklahoma — a land noted for its abundance of rivers and lakes — forced the yunwi amai'yine'hi to make a terrible decision over a century ago: stay with their mortal relatives, and likely die a quick death from the loss of their beloved waters, or remain behind without their mortal kin, and die slowly from the loss of the culture that supported them. In the end, most chose to remain behind, though the damming of many of their rivers for hydroelectric power in the past century has led their kind to question the ultimate wisdom of either choice. As a means of survival, some of the yunwi amai'yine'hi are even discussing bringing non-native members into the tribe to keep from vanishing entirely. While most of the Family awaits the decisions of its learned elders on the matter, some of the younger ones have already begun grooming particular mortals for membership in their new “tribe.” Other Nunnehi are largely aghast at using such drastic measures to preserve the tribe, though if pressed most admit that if the Family sees no other option, it is better than dying out entirely.

While they are still pondering the question of new blood, and a few non-native members have sneaked in here and there, most yunwi amai'yine'hi still come from Southeastern tribes and reflect this in their outlook and choice of attire. Like pooka, in their fae mien they carry some traits of their chosen animal — a light coat of scales, fur or feathers (depending on their animal affinity) is common, as are webbed hands and feet. Their eyes are also striking shades of blue. Even in mortal form, most bear a couple of traits or habits of their chosen animal, making it possible to spot their animal type even before peeking at their fae mien. Like the may-may-gway-shi, they can often be found as sailors and fishermen in mortal life, though they tend to live apart from mortal communities unless it happens to be one composed of their kinsmen.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

**Birthrights**



**Shape of the Swimmer:** These Nunnehi may assume the shape of one particular aquatic creature by spending a Medicine Trait, provided no witnesses other than animals or other *yunwi amai'yine'hi* are watching. All natural benefits (wings, gills, etc.) of the form are gained, and the Nunnehi retains his normal intelligence, Abilities and cantrip use. The *yunwi amai'yine'hi* are even able to speak in this form, though like *pooka* they may do so only to other enchanted beings unless their form can normally approximate human speech. Changing back costs nothing.

**Stir the Waters:** As the *nümüzo'ho* *Birthright Rouse the Elements*, except the effect created may only be water-based and no Willpower Trait is required.

Frailties

**Snare of the Hunter:** If the Nunnehi becomes the prey of a hunter while in animal form, she must make a Willpower Challenge to avoid succumbing to a panic state in which she thinks only as an animal. In this state, she cannot use her Arts or other talents, only her animal form's natural advantages. Once at least temporarily safe, the Nunnehi may retry this test or spend a Willpower Trait to regain her senses.

### *Yunwi Tsundsi (Little People)*

These industrious Nunnehi have long been a part of Cherokee lore as allies and unseen helpers. To this day, they remain a blessing on those households they favor. Any family that honors the old ways has a chance of earning their attention, and once gained they find all number of things great and small going right, as the *yunwi tsundsi* does their best to aid them. They also have a great fondness for children and seek to guide and protect them, especially those with the potential to become Dreamers. Such chosen children are often thought to have "imaginary playmates" by their parents, though the parents seldom mind, as the *yunwi tsundsi* teach manners and respect as well as crafts and legends.

This is not to say that this Family is all smiles and sunshine, however — when driven to anger, or when their hard work is spurned by others, they have a legendary mean streak among the Nunnehi that belies their small size and generally mirthful demeanor. Those who earn the displeasure of a *yunwi tsundsi* are beset by minor acts of vandalism and sabotage; while even Winter members of this Family do not seek to kill their targets, they try to make their lives as miserable as possible, to the point where many targets may *wish* they were dead! Likewise, those who abuse children suffer their full wrath, and may experience it for years or even decades if the *yunwi tsundsi* has her way. Fortunately for all concerned, a sincere apology (not to mention a peace offering of some kind) is sufficient to sate their need for revenge, and generally only those who are supremely rude or contemptuous earn it to begin with, as the *yunwi tsundsi* acknowledge (however sadly) that the modern world simply doesn't teach much in the way of etiquette.

In their mortal seeming, these Nunnehi a typically on the short side and wear at least a few pieces of handcrafted jewelry. In their true forms, their

features are universally pleasant to behold, and in either form they are typically always working on some project or puzzle at hand. They prefer jobs where they can put their hands to good use, especially highly specialized skills: carpenter, mason and inventor are popular with them.

**Affinity:** *Prop*

Birthrights

**Out of Sight:** By spending a Willpower Trait, the Nunnehi may become effectively invisible to mortals, gaining the benefits of *Veiled Eyes* for the remainder of the scene. Note that changelings and Prodigals are not affected by this Birthright — only regular mortals, though they may choose to include Kinain and enchanted mortals if they so desire.

**Clever Hands:** All yunwi tsundsi receive a free level of *Crafts* that may never be permanently lost, and they are one Trait up on all *Crafts* Challenges. What's more, all yunwi tsundsi receive a free *Genial* Trait that can never be lost.

Frailties

**Flames of Anger:** If slighted by those he seeks to help, the Nunnehi must succeed in a Willpower Challenge or inflict a series of "accidents" on the target; these acts are never fatal, but are designed to teach the offender the value of proper manners. This lasts for one entire cycle of the moon, or until the offender makes a formal offering of apology.

## Spirit Link

This Art allows the Nunnehi to interact with their ancestors and the spirit world in general, and it is an important part of the upbringing rites of most of the Nations. Only Nunnehi may learn this Art, unless the given changeling has been adopted by a Nunnehi Nation, and even then many of its powers lose some effectiveness since the Kithain know little about the different worlds and can never enter them as the Nunnehi do.

**Type of Challenge:** Mental

Basic

**World Sight:** With this power, the Nunnehi may see into the Upper, Lower or Middle Worlds and discern the true nature of subjects or objects she is looking at. The rough amount of Medicine or spirit power inherent in a place may also be sensed. When used on an individual, this Art may detect spirit possession, curses or even if the target is a supernatural being (and what type, if she is familiar with other creatures of its ilk), provided the Nunnehi defeats her target with a Mental Challenge — Bunk Traits count for such tests. The Nunnehi must be physically present to sense objects or people in the Middle World, but need not do so for the Upper or Lower Worlds.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Ancestor Speech:** By completing a Bunk and spending a Medicine Trait, the Nunnehi may summon tribal ancestors and consult their wisdom regarding a specific matter. These ancestor spirits may answer only questions pertaining

to, or provide visions of, the past up to this moment — in answering, they are limited to their own perspectives and experiences, and do not have any special “inside knowledge” of things. They also cannot see the future or even the present moment; however, the wisdom of the past is quite valuable in itself. Nunnehi spirits may be contacted only if the faerie soul was destroyed, in which case their mortal spirit is available to this Art. Obviously, the Storyteller or a Narrator should roleplay the conversation, and the Nunnehi may ask no more questions than she has permanent Mental Traits.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Intermediate**

**Vision Quest:** See the *Soothsaying Art Augury*. Storytellers are encouraged to make vision quests as vivid and intense as possible. Additionally, the Bunk for this Art is always a traditional vision quest of some kind — fasting, sweat lodge, rituals and so on, determined by the Narrator according to the tribe of the Nunnehi in question. All the rules of live-action conduct still apply to *Vision Quest* — do not actually starve yourself, take peyote or anything else!

**Type:** Chimerical

**Placate:** This Art allows this Nunnehi to appease angry spirits and hungry ghosts, acting as a liaison to the spirit world in order to determine what is necessary to placate them. A Bunk and a Mental Trait are required to establish contact with the spirit(s) in question, at which time most gladly tell the Nunnehi what needs to be done in order to satiate them. Even the angriest spirits do not usually attack a Nunnehi using this Art out of respect for his intentions, but woe indeed to the faerie who uses this power and then ignores what the spirits have asked for! Likewise, if the Nunnehi and his tribe abide by what the spirits request, the spirits are honor-bound to leave them in peace, a bargain only the most vile spirits would dare to break. This Art is seen as a sacred trust by most tribes. While it gives the faerie no direct power over the spirits, it is an important step toward establishing a settlement between the two worlds when they are at odds.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Ghost Dance:** This powerful ability allows the Nunnehi to assert control over the spirit world, banish supernatural creatures from the area and otherwise demonstrate mastery of the ethereal plane. This Art costs two Medicine Traits to use and requires a Mental Challenge (Bunk Traits included) against the target — spirits and wraiths may be ordered to cease troubling the human world with this Art, and those spirits who have possessed bodies or otherwise sneaked onto the mortal coil may be banished back to the Lower World. Supernatural creatures may be forced to leave the area for the rest of the session, though they may resist this with a Willpower Trait. Should the Nunnehi fail to banish an especially powerful ghost (Narrator’s discretion), however, she must win or tie a Simple Test — failure means she is drawn into the Lower World herself and must fight her way

back. Should she die in the Lower World, her faerie self is forever destroyed. At the Storyteller's discretion, this Art may be used to summon ghosts to aid the Nunnehi or her tribe, but the costs and details of such workings are strictly up to the Storyteller to determine.

**Type:** Chimerical (could become Wyrd in some cases)

### *Nunnehi Backgrounds*

Nunnehi have several unique Backgrounds they may choose during creation. They may not take the *Remembrance* Background and should secure Storyteller permission before taking *Title*, *Political Connections* or a non-Nunnehi *Patron*.

#### **Household**

This Background denotes a number of human relations who are close to the character; they may or may not know the truth about her faerie nature, but they are friendly and loyal nonetheless. Of course, they expect the same from the character in return, and if treated poorly they may turn against her. Players should work with the Storyteller to determine who these people are, where they live, etc. The Storyteller may modify these numbers or even forbid certain levels of this Background if they prove too problematic for the chronicle. The number of Traits spent determines the number of people in the *Household*.

One Trait — Two members

Two Traits — Four members

Three Traits — Eight members

Four Traits — 16 members

Five Traits — 32 members

#### **Spirit Companion**

See the *Companion* Background, except the companion is not a chimera but a natural spirit of some kind: a fire elemental, wolf spirit, etc. In addition to the powers of that Background, the spirit may also store additional *Medicine* or *Willpower* Traits for the character, effectively acting as a "reserve battery" for the Nunnehi (though characters are cautioned to remember that spirits do not like being viewed solely as ammo clips and can do all kinds of nasty things to the character if treated as such). A character need only spend a moment of quiet prayer and meditation in the presence of his companion to invest them with a measure of his *Medicine* or *Willpower*, which he can then access at any time later on, simply by concentrating. Unless the Storyteller rules otherwise, the character can store both types of energy in his *Spirit Companion*, up to the maximum number of Traits dictated by the levels spent on this Background.

One Trait — Store up to two Traits of *Medicine/Willpower*

Two Traits — Store up to four Traits of *Medicine/Willpower*

Three Traits — Store up to six Traits of *Medicine/Willpower*

Four Traits — Store up to eight Traits of *Medicine/Willpower*

Five Traits — Store up to ten Traits of *Medicine/Willpower*

### Vision

This replaces the *Remembrance* Background for Nunnehi, except that any knowledge gained obviously pertains to the Higher Hunting Grounds, Nunnehi families, etc.

### Totem

Nunnehi with this Background have a spiritual link to a higher entity, typically a tribal totem or spirit guide of some kind. The number of Traits spent represents the power of the entity involved and the strength of the bond itself. A Nunnehi without a totem cannot enter the spirit worlds, and most Families consider one of their own who does not eventually feel a calling to one spirit or another a little bit strange, though they will respect their wishes in any event. Most Nunnehi take on a totem bond during a ceremony as they advance from youngling to brave, though in some rare instances they do not take on a totem until their elder years are upon them, or acquire one as a youngling.

Although it is not quite common, Nunnehi do occasionally change their totem allegiance; such changes are never undertaken lightly, for risk of angering one's previous totem, and typically involve a quest or task to be performed before the new totem will accept such a transitional follower. Provided the ceremonies are properly performed, however, there is no stigma attached to Nunnehi who change totems, though those who do so more than once or twice are certain to have a bit of whispering following them as their fellow Nunnehi ponder their erratic ways.

Systems for crossing into the spirit world via a totem are listed under "The House of the Spirits" (see page 20). Likewise, a list of some common Nunnehi totems, along with their costs, benefits and Bans, can be found at the end of this chapter. Players and Storytellers should also feel free to research and write up other totems to suit individual tribes and characters, so long as they remember game balance and even more importantly the value such totems add to the story. If a totem is a valuable addition to the spiritual tone and personal development of a character, that's wonderful, but if a player simply wants an excuse to purchase a bag of goodies for his character, kindly show them the sweat-lodge door.

### Influence: Tribal

This new Influence covers your control over the affairs of one Native American tribe. As indicated before, there are literally thousands of tribes across Concordia, which means you must specify an individual tribe when this Influence is taken. Typically this means you were born a member of this tribe, making this Influence almost entirely limited to the Nunnehi, but characters from other kiths may take this Influence with an *excellent* story and Storyteller approval. Characters may take this Influence several different times for several different tribes to reflect a wide degree of Influence among native populations, or the Storyteller may allow them to count a handful of small, closely related and allied tribes as one tribe for the purposes of this Trait, if this does not disturb



game balance. Non-Nunnehi should be warned that possessing this level of familiarity with native folk is not only rare but can also get you in a great deal of trouble if there are still lingering tensions between Kithain and Nunnehi in the area, as such loyalty will be considered akin to treason by suspicious members of some other kiths (not to mention many ordinary humans) and also marks you as a sympathizer to any other tribes that might be hostile to your allies. Obviously, the people within the domain of this Influence are all members of the tribe in question, from chiefs, matriarchs, warriors, women and children on down, even to mixed-blood relatives still loyal to their tribe.

*Cost*                      *Desired Effect*

- 1            Know the layout and boundaries of tribal lands\*; Learn rumors and recent events around the fire; Identify members of the tribe, even those of mixed blood\*
- 2            Learn the true reason behind recent tribal decisions; Gather wisdom from some of the older members of the tribe on a particular topic; Hide out on tribal territory, even with nontribal companions
- 3            Inspire a small group of kin to follow you for a specific, worthy cause; Get the ear of the chief or matriarch; Learn minor ancestral secrets (herbal remedies, minor spirit names); Cross through the territory of a friendly or neutral Family unmolested\*
- 4            Have a loud voice in tribal policy discussions; Borrow minor items of power (small chimera and other such items created by tribal shamans); Access moderate tribal secrets; Borrow funds from tribal accounts (around \$500, and don't do it too often)
- 5            Call a council of the tribe; Access major tribal secrets (the location of a powerful, hidden freehold); Gain the honor of carrying a minor mystical item for the tribe for a time (chimera of medium power or weak treasure)
- 6            Call up a full-fledged traditional war party for a cause related to the tribe's welfare; Replace the current chief or matriarch with one of your choosing; Control all the details of a single mundane event on a regular basis (marriages, hunting, planting)
- 7            Start a tribal migration; Arrange a council of tribes in the region and have a voice at that council yourself; Learn the greatest tribal secrets; Arrange an alliance with your tribe and a Family to which they are bitterly opposed
- 8            Introduce new elements into tribal mythology; Carry the tribe's most prized heirloom for a time (mid-range to powerful treasure, at the Storyteller's discretion)

## Totems

The bond that a Nunnehi has with her totem spirit is hard to define in simple terms — it is at once a deep friendship, a child-parent bond and an initiate-master relationship all at once. Even the meekest, least powerful totems are far greater than their followers, and those Nunnehi who attempt to

overstep their bounds are quickly reminded of this fact. And yet, all totems recognize the importance of their Nunnehi followers and treat them well, knowing that to alienate them is to doom themselves to oblivion. Fortunately for all concerned, the traditions and ancient ways of the Nunnehi Nations ensure that such disagreements are rare indeed, and for the most part the Nunnehi and their totems exist in harmony, working together to preserve the places of Medicine in the world and protect the totem's mortal aspects from harm at the hands of the ignorant and malicious.

For a multitude of animal totems, as well as additional ideas for handling totem spirits in general, see **Laws of the Wild** and **The Changing Breeds**. Should the Storyteller permit a Nunnehi to choose an animal totem, this changes the method of crossing into the Umbra slightly: The Realm *Feral Animal* is required rather than *Verdant Forest* if the character wishes to lower the difficulty of crossing over, and rather than touching the animal, he must perform a ritual involving relics from the animal — a ceremonial dance while wearing a wolf skin for followers of Wolf, for example, or perhaps a ritual hunt while wearing a bear skull headdress for followers of Bear. These rituals must last *at least one minute/10 combat turns*, though that time can be cut in half by spending two Glamour Traits. Furthermore, while the character may carry the appropriate relics with them (such as a pelt or headdress), after each use they must be purified and re-dedicated to the totem before they can be of use in crossing over again, a process that requires at least 15 minutes of prayer and ritual, during which time the Nunnehi cannot be disturbed.

#### Birch

##### Background Cost: 2

Found in cooler climates where the sunshine is abundant, Birch calls Canada and the northern areas of the United States her home. She takes great pride in her appearance and lends some of her grace to others through the various medicines that can be made from her oil, which help ease the pain of rheumatism and other joint pains. She is also used in the building of several types of canoes.

**Traits:** Those chosen by Birch receive a free *Dignified Social Trait*, as well as a level of the *Medicine (Herbs) Ability*.

**Taboo:** Birch asks her children to protect her forests from overuse.

#### Cherry

##### Background Cost: 2

An impulsive and exuberant spirit, Cherry becomes quiet and withdrawn during the winter months, only to explode with brilliant color and life during the spring and summer. Cherry is also associated with many fertility rites and is considered a sacred tree in many parts of the United States as well as Japan, where a weeklong festival is held in her honor. Though somewhat vain, she is good at heart and enjoys showing others the beauty of life.

**Traits:** All followers of Cherry gain a free *Energetic* Physical Trait and a free *Gorgeous* Social Trait.

**Taboo:** Cherry asks her children to never hide their true feelings, and to wear one of her blossoms on them at all times, especially in winter.

#### Cottonwood

**Background Cost:** 5

A fast-growing staple of the American prairie, Cottonwood is one of the most sacred plants known to the Nunnehi, used not only for building tipis but also as the centerpiece for the sun dance ritual. Even the American settlers revered her as the source of wood for their homes, and Cottonwood sees herself as a guardian and caretaker of those around her, always watchful for the well-being of others.

**Traits:** Cottonwood blesses her children with free levels of the *Gremayre* and *Crafts* Abilities; in addition, Nunnehi who participate in the taxing sun dance ritual gain a free *Stalwart* Physical Trait when the ceremony is finished. This last benefit is permanent, but can only be acquired once—that is, multiple sun dance rituals certainly offer honor to Cottonwood, but do not confer additional Traits.

**Taboo:** Those who follow Cottonwood must use her wood wisely, replacing cut trees with new seedlings and using deadfalls whenever possible; in addition, she demands that her children never fail to honor the spirits.

#### Dogwood

**Background Cost:** 3

A widespread and highly useful tree, Dogwood is found from the northern reaches of Maine down to the Gulf Coast region, and her hard wood makes her a valuable source of tools and building materials to many tribes. Her bark also produces several potent medicines, including ones valuable in breaking fevers. Dogwood is also a natural calendar whose spring blossoms tell tribes it is time to begin planting corn and other crops. She is helpful and full of life, though a little vain on account of her beautiful blossoms.

**Traits:** Dogwood's children receive a free *Friendly* Social Trait, as well as free levels of *Medicine (Herbs)* and *Science: Botany*.

**Taboo:** Dogwood's children must never deface themselves and must carry a small dogwood trinket with them at all times.

#### Fir

**Background Cost:** 2

Though she goes by many names — Balsam, Fraser and Spruce, among others — in all forms Fir is a survivor who endures the rigors of cold climate and thrives in places other trees cannot. She does not lose her leaves to the winter frost as others do, and her cones provide food for many animals. She is quiet but proud, and shelters those who seek comfort in hard times.

**Traits:** Fir grants her children a free level of the *Survival* Ability, as well as a free *Enduring* Trait.

**Taboo:** Fir requires her followers to protect her diminishing forests, and those she blesses must never cut down a fir tree or use anything but dead wood for building fires or crafting things.

#### Fireweed

**Background Cost:** 2

Often considered the phoenix of the native tribes, Fireweed thrives in lands ravaged by fire or excavation, and embodies the ideal of life renewing itself even in the face of great hardship. Though her blossoms are striking, Fireweed is more valued as a source of food, as well as a means of making a number of medicines for everything from asthma to whooping cough. Tenacious and resourceful, Fireweed respects those who share such traits and does not favor those who give up easily or flee at the approach of change.

**Traits:** Fireweed teaches her children a free level of the *Medicine (Herbs)* Ability and grants them a free *Tenacious* Physical Trait.

**Taboo:** Followers of Fireweed must assist in local land-reclamation projects whenever possible.

#### Granite

**Background Cost:** 3

Sometimes called the backbone of the continent, Granite changes only slowly as the eons flow by, and serves as a model for stoicism and stability. To his enemies, however, Granite is equally tough and unyielding, and those who manage to rouse his ire earn themselves a grudge of legendary proportions.

**Traits:** Granite blesses his children with free *Tough* and *Brawny* Physical Traits, as well as a free level of the *Intimidation* Ability.

**Taboo:** Those chosen by Granite must never back down from a test of strength or endurance.

#### Ice

**Background Cost:** 1

Although found almost exclusively in the Far North, where he makes his home year-round, Ice has taught the tribes of that region much—how to travel across his surface, build shelter from his body and even how to catch fish through holes cut on frozen lakes or waterways. Ice is a spirit of great contradiction, able to support great weight in some places but fragile enough to snap under a child in others, and teaches his children lessons of uncertainty. Though he reminds many Nunnehi of the coming Winter, Ice is not an evil spirit, simply himself.

**Traits:** Ice grants those he favors a free *Resilient* Physical Trait, as well as a free level of the *Survival* Ability.

**Taboo:** Ice requires that his children live in places where he is prevalent, and to care as best they can for those people and creatures who call his lands home.

#### Magnolia

**Background Cost: 2**

Originally from China, Magnolia flourishes in parts of the American Southeast, especially in areas of abundant moisture. Her lush blossoms and heady perfume delight the senses, while her leaves provide welcome shade from the hot sun. Although somewhat narcissistic, Magnolia is secure in the knowledge that beauty is its own reason for existence, and teaches others the same.

**Traits:** Magnolia blesses her children with free *Alluring* and *Seductive* Social Traits, and many claim that a faint scent of her perfume follows them always.

**Taboo:** Magnolia forbids her followers from picking her delicate blossoms and requires them to plant a tree in her honor at least once every year.

**Maize (Corn)**

**Background Cost: 3**

A staple crop of countless tribes, Maize is also a powerful spirit of fertility and protection who serves to keep curses and evil spirits away even as she nourishes her people. Aside from being the foundation for corn pone (cornbread), hominy (grits) and corn tortillas, maize was also sprinkled on items as food for the spirits, and ears of corn were often used as receptacles for good spirits or items of power during ceremonies. Maize herself is a noble spirit, deeply concerned with ritual and tradition, but she is also keenly interested in protecting those who honor her.

**Traits:** Maize grants her followers a free *Empathetic* Social Trait, as well as a free level of *Crafts: Cooking* and a free *Shrewd* Mental Trait.

**Taboo:** Followers of Maize must hang an ear of corn somewhere in their permanent dwelling, as well as carry a few kernels of corn or corn pollen on their person at all times.

**Pine**

**Background Cost: 4**

Although related to Fir, with whom she shares close ties, Pine's endurance is a symbol of the persistence of mystery even in the most inhospitable environments while Fir is concerned with matters of the physical world. Pine takes pride teaching others of the wonders hiding in the shadows of even the most Banal parts of the world. Pine has many dark forests where she keeps her secrets, though perhaps her most treasured ground is the Pine Barrens of New Jersey, a rare ecosystem that — thanks largely to her follower's efforts — has also become one of the best protected preserves in the country, despite being located in the most densely populated state in the nation. Pine is a shy spirit, but full of lore to teach those who brave the darkness of the woods to find it.

**Traits:** Pine grants her followers free levels of the *Enigmas* and *Gremayre* Abilities, as well as a free *Wise* Mental Trait. By offering a quick prayer to Pine, her followers may also act at half the normal penalty in darkness.



**Taboo:** Pine's children must never betray a secret told to them in confidence, and at least once a year must travel to her woods and whisper their greatest secrets for her to hear.

### Saguaro Cactus

**Background Cost:** 2

A proud and hearty spirit, Saguaro enjoys showing that even the harsh desert can be survived by those wise in its ways. His towering form has become a symbol for the Southwest. Less visible is the fact that his bright red fruit can be brewed into a syrupy liquor, which is used in the rain dance rituals by several tribes of the region. Saguaro is generous to those who follow him, but insists that they first learn how to survive on their own and never forget the lesson of deprivation that the desert teaches.

**Traits:** Children of Saguaro gain free levels of the *Survival* and *Crafts: Brewing Abilities*, as well as a free *Robust Physical Trait*.

**Taboo:** Saguaro demands that his children conserve water and oppose those who pollute water sources.

### Sandstone

**Background Cost:** 2

An adaptable spirit well versed in the ways of both the physical and the spiritual worlds, Sandstone makes her home in arid regions, as well as by large bodies of fresh or salt water. Sandstone is used in the construction of homes by many of the pueblo tribes, and it is ground into dust for use in the making of beautiful sand paintings and other sacred ceremonies of the tribes she shelters. Patient and in tune with the changing attitudes of the world, Sandstone is more approachable than most spirits, and willing to help her children with nearly any problem.

**Traits:** Followers of Sandstone gain free levels of the *Crafts: Sandpainting* and *Occult Abilities*.

**Taboo:** Though adaptable, Sandstone requires her followers to be well versed in the ancient ways. All her children must study the rituals of their mortal tribes.

### Tobacco

**Background Cost:** 4

Although its use was corrupted and commercialized by settlers, who ignored its spiritual powers and opened themselves to the dangers of overindulging in its negative properties, Tobacco was considered one of the most sacred plants by nearly all native tribes, who used it in countless ceremonies. Its dried leaves were scattered to honor the spirits or burned to open communication with the Upper World through its powerful smoke. Tobacco shuns the plants of the cigarette industry, and most of his children do likewise.

**Traits:** Children of Tobacco gain two free levels of the *Occult (Spirits) Ability*, as well as free *Observant* and *Wise Mental Traits*.

**Taboo:** Tobacco requires his children to restrict their tobacco use to ceremonial occasions, honoring its original purpose. Those who use fields of commercial tobacco to cross into the Upper World must purify themselves afterward.

#### Whitewater

##### Background Cost: 1

A spirit of personal challenge and competition, Whitewater is constantly changing, yet always the same, forever daring others to test their limits. She is also a free spirit whose laughter is the very embodiment of wilderness, and she enjoys the company of those who appreciate change and love taking risks. Whitewater is a fair sportsman, but pulls no punches and expects those who lose to do so gracefully.

**Traits:** Whitewater's children are excellent swimmers and are considered two Traits up on all tests involving swimming; furthermore, they can pilot any type of canoe or sailing vessel, though powered craft such as motorboats, cruise ships or submarines are beyond their ken. Her children also gain a free *Lithe Physical Trait*.

**Taboo:** Whitewater requires her children to make their homes near her banks, asking that her followers never pollute her waters and oppose others who do.

#### Willow

##### Background Cost: 3

Willow loves water and is never found far from it. A healing tree, his bark can be made into a potent curative tea, and even his simple presence is often quite soothing for those who seek shelter in his shade. Willow is fond of crafts as well, and all manner of objects both beautiful and useful can be made from his bark and his branches, from woven jewelry to sturdy baskets. Although gentle, the ability of Willow to withstand strong winds and great storms has achieved the status of folk legend and serves as a lesson in both strength and adaptability.

**Traits:** Willow's children receive free *Resilient* and *Graceful Physical Traits*, as well as a free level of the *Crafts Ability*.

**Taboo:** Willow asks that his followers actively protect willow trees from wanton destruction and development.





## Chapter Two: The Inanimae

### *A History of the Slow Empires*

In the dawn of the world, Kithain and humanity alike celebrated the natural world and offered honor to the spirits of the stones, trees, waters and skies that surrounded them. As the dreams and prayers of mortals caressed the natural world, the Inanimae were born in response, spirits descended from the elements and possessing incredible powers over them. Some Inanimae claim it was the other way around, that the manifestations of their power were what prompted the mortals and Kithain — or meat races, as they're known — to offer worship to them. Regardless of the truth, they were considered gods and great spirits by those who knew of them, and their slightest word or deed could cause speculation among the meat for decades to come. It was a glorious existence, and the Inanimae look back on those days with fond reverence. In their long memories, these times seem painfully close, even though centuries have passed for their short-lived Kithain allies.

With the coming of the Sundering, however, the Inanimae were forced to hide from the world with increasing frequency — not tied to living beings as the Kithain were, they could not undergo the Changeling Way, and most refused to part with their beloved elements. On what few occasions they had to travel among the meat, they learned the craft of forging Husks, or human shells that could resist Banality, but unlike the mortal seemings of the fae these shells were temporary at best, and discarded as soon as the Inanimae returned to her Anchor. Over time, the faerie courts and mortal cults saw less and less of their Inanimae patrons, and most fae believed that the onset of Banality at the hands of their human cousins had driven the Inanimae into hiding. While there is some validity to this theory, there was a deeper conflict going on among the Inanimae: the terrible slaughter known as the Making War.

### *The Heart Riddle*

Although ondines and mannikins are most concerned with it, all phyla of Inanimae are bound to ponder the mysteries collectively known as the Heart Riddle. They have been known to keep Inanimae fascinated for hours, days or even years as they try to understand the intricacies of emotion and feeling that the meat races seem to possess. Though the wiser ones suspect there are no real answers to such questions, most are still curious enough to ask them. Indeed, while they are at home among their own kind, these are the questions and puzzles the Inanimae form when they try to confront the strange and often contradictory ways of the meat races around them. Some common aspects of the Heart Riddle include, but are by no means limited to the following: *What does it mean to be mortal? Why are some mortals warm and caring, and others not? What is love? Why do some become friends, and others not? What is happiness? What is pleasure? Is there a difference?*

### *The Making War*

As the Shattering loomed on the horizon, a war began brewing between two emerging factions of the Inanimae: the court of the Glade, whose followers are called gladelings and are composed of Inanimae whose Anchors remain in their pristine natural state; and the court of the Kroft, whose so-called Krofted followers inhabit Anchors that have been shaped by mortal hands. Inanimae of the Glade are primarily traditionalists and look down on their Krofted cousins as inferior for having been “tamed” by mortals, but they have become fewer as time goes by. Inanimae of the Kroft, on the other hand, are much more in tune with the meat world, and see their Glade siblings as hopelessly outdated and anachronistic — needless to say, the spread of humanity has now shifted the balance solidly in their favor. Those few Kithain who learned of the conflict saw it as not too dissimilar to their own Seelie and Unseelie differences but failed to realize that for the previously harmonious Inanimae, these differences were terrifying and alien, and the rapid spread of the Kroft forced the Glade court to make the first and most harmful hasty decision in the history of the Slow Empires.

The other Inanimae blamed the solimonds, the fire spirits, for teaching humanity to embrace the possibilities of taming the natural world to suit their whims, instead of existing in harmony with it. For their part, the solimonds were unrepentant for their actions and swore that in time their wisdom would be borne out. The Slow Empires declared war on the Empire of Flames, although it was the stone folk known as glomes who did most of the actual fighting. Though they fought bravely, the solimonds were ultimately defeated and scattered over the world, their empire’s homeland in the Dreaming



occupied and dismantled by glome forces. It was a hollow victory, however—the meat had already begun the process of shaping the world to suit their ideas. As the Shattering descended, many Inanimae were forced into Slumber in order to avoid the rising Banality. Most would remain in their dormant state for several centuries, until even many Kithain believed them to be little more than a myth.

### *The Codex Primeval*

These ancient laws are equivalent to the Kithain Escheat and are enforced by the courts of all the Slow Empires, though the slow, deliberate justice of the glome armies is quite different from the spirited trials of the parosemes or blistering ordeals of the solimonds.

- *The Anchor is life. Never destroy an Anchor, or allow an Anchor to come to harm through inaction.*

This is the ultimate law. To do otherwise is to risk becoming the equivalent of a Dauntain and seeing one's own Anchor wither. No matter what conflict arises, one Inanimae may never harm another's Anchor.

- *Leave the Land of Unfulfilled Dreams to those who live within it. You are eternal.*

This law has been interpreted differently over the years. Glade Inanimae believe that they should not interfere with mortals and Kithain, while Krofted ones believe that they can act within the other world, so long as those who dwell there may still make their own choices.

- *Do no harm, unless you are harmed. Let justice be your goal, never vengeance.*

Another precept that has seen wide interpretation, as the justice of a solimond is seen as vengeance by a kubera. The Dreaming itself seems to tolerate a wide variety of actions, including many that would be called excessive by others.

- *To your empire you are subject; honor it and serve it to the best of your ability.*

This precept seems open to individual interpretation. Some believe it means keeping to a strict hierarchy, while others believe it simply means living in the bounds of their empire's philosophy.

### *The Modern Era*

It took the great surge of Glamour sparked by the Resurgence of the sidhe to rouse the Inanimae from their long Slumber. When they finally did awaken, many were horrified to find that their Anchors had been Krofted during their Slumber, essentially making a pathetic joke out of their great struggle to

preserve their natural state. Others found longtime friends and allies had been destroyed outright — trees chopped down, rivers dammed, mountains blasted — as their faerie forms shattered under the assault of workmen and their accompanying Banality. Perhaps hardest of all to accept, especially for those who had been proud members of the Glade all along, was that the solimonds had been right, and indeed were now the most commonly encountered of all the Inanimae in the modern world. Those few Inanimae who have cared to comment on the shock of their awakening liken it to falling asleep in your own house, only to wake up the next morning to find the house completely changed, a family of strangers pressing in around you and the friends or family that used to dwell there with you either missing or being used as pieces of furniture.

Although most Inanimae had little part in the Accordance War — still trying to make sense of the world they had awakened to — those few that were involved fought largely on the side of the commoners, although the sidhe were able to recall several ancient pacts between their kind and the Slow Empires that allowed them the service of some Inanimae during the war. Some Inanimae fought to avenge lost comrades, as many Kithain had sworn to protect the Inanimae during their Slumber, then abandoned them to Banality as the mortal world became too much to bear. In general, however, the Inanimae tried to prevent Kithain bloodshed and aggression whenever possible, to protect those who might explain this world to them if nothing else. And thus they remain to this day, gradually emerging from their seclusion to become involved with the frantic, short-lived meat races of mortal and fae once more.

In the courts where they have revealed themselves, the Inanimae have occupied a curious place in the hierarchy. Like the Nunnehi, they are angered by the destruction of the natural world and many of the Anchors of their fellows. However, their anger goes deeper, to the very roots of the world itself.

## *Inanimae Character Creation*

Inanimae have several unique features when compared to their Kithain cousins. This section covers the special features of playing one of these faeries of the natural world.

### *Glamour Systems*

Inanimae use the same systems as Nunnehi do when it comes to gathering Glamour — their connection with the natural world makes it possible from them to gain Glamour from the very essence of the world itself. They cannot achieve Rapture — they are already at one with their element, after all — and instead may use Reverie as Kithain do, but only if the artist they are inspiring is near or actually touching the character's Anchor. Otherwise, the tests and benefits are the same as for regular Kithain Reverie.

## CHAPTER TWO: The Inanimae

### Inanimae Character Creation

#### Step One: Character Concept

- Choose concept, court, Legacies, Jeu (seeming) and phyla (kith)

#### Step Two: Attributes

- Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (7/5/3)
- Choose Physical Traits
- Choose Social Traits
- Choose Mental Traits

#### Step Three: Select Advantages

- Choose Abilities (5), Backgrounds (5)
- Choose levels of Slivers (determined by Jeu) and Inanimae Realms (5)

#### Step Four: Finishing Touches

- Record beginning Glamour, Willpower and Banality, as determined by Jeu
- Record phyla Birthrights and Frailties
- Record Ravaging/Musing Threshold, if any
- Choose Negative Traits, if any
- Purchase Merits/Flaws, if any

#### Step Five: Spark of Life

### *Court*

Although they follow a roughly similar philosophy to the Seelie/Unseelie dichotomy, the Inanimae divide their Courts by a different means, depending on the state of their Anchor.

**Glade** — Inanimae of the Glade Court are increasingly rare in the modern world, since their Anchor is unshaped by mortal hands — an unmarked rock face, a tree in a virgin forest, etc. They are highly traditional, and the rough equivalent to Seelie.

**Kroft** — Inanimae of the Kroft Court are those whose Anchors have been reshaped, captured or corrupted by mortal means — a stone in a castle wall, a carved walking stick, a wind instrument, etc. They are much more at home in the mortal world. While not wicked, they are the Inanimae equivalent of the Unseelie due to their knowledge and acceptance of change.

*Jeu (Seeming)*

Tied as they are to Anchors that are sometimes centuries or even millennia old, Inanimae do not determine age like most fae do, since their physical appearance is unaffected by how old they are chronologically. Rather, Inanimae have adopted the Kithain terms *childling*, *wilder* and *grump* to describe how long one of their kind has been awake in the modern world, and thus how familiar a given Inanimae is likely to be with its customs and technology. A *grump* Inanimae might look like a child to mortal eyes, or a *childling* Inanimae appear as an old man. The only measure is how long they have been active in the world. Hence the French term *jeu*, which means "playing" or "acting," since this is measure of how long the Inanimae has been an actor on the modern stage.

**Childling:** You have awakened to the world only recently, and find it a bizarre and fascinating place. Though many things are strange to your sight, there is a simple wisdom in your innocence.

Temper Scores: Glamour 5, Willpower 1, Banality 3, levels of Slivers: 3

**Wilder:** You have been awake in this modern world for at least a few years, and know your way around its customs and technologies fairly well.

Temper Scores: Glamour 6, Willpower 2, Banality 4, levels of Slivers: 3

**Grump:** This title is reserved for Inanimae who have been active since the Resurgence, or possibly even longer.

Temper Scores: Glamour 6, Willpower 3, Banality 6, levels of Slivers: 4

*Banality*

Inanimae are very sensitive to Banality — without their Husks, they are quickly Undone if they venture out into the mortal world. If an Inanimae's permanent Banality ever rises above her permanent Glamour, she must immediately make a test of her Glamour against her Banality for each new permanent point of Banality gained; if she fails, she immediately flees back into her Anchor and fall into an inactive state known as Somnolence for one year per point of Banality over her Glamour rating. A Willpower Trait may be spent for a retest on this challenge. At the end of this time, her permanent Banality drops to two points beneath her permanent Glamour, all temporary Banality is erased and she can become active once more.

*Backgrounds*

Inanimae characters may take all of the regular Kithain Backgrounds described in *The Shining Host*, with the following exceptions: *Holdings*, *Political Connections*, *Title* and *Influence*. They are not banned outright, but they are *extremely* rare among the Inanimae, who have their own system of titles and tend to have very little sway in the mortal world. These Backgrounds require Storyteller permission and an excellent story to purchase. In addition, the following new Backgrounds are available exclusively to Inanimae characters:

**Husk** — How good the Inanimae is at crafting a lifelike Husk or mortal Facade; crucial for blending in with the mortal world and avoiding the gaze of Banality.

**Regard** — Those who have earned this degree of respect from their peers are accorded much status in the Slow Empires; the Inanimae equivalent of *Title*.

*Slumber Checks*

Permanent Banality isn't all that can force an Inanimae to retreat from the mortal world — certain other shocks can force the Inanimae to snap back into her Anchor and enter Slumber, a shorter but no less traumatic form of Somnolence. A Slumber check is a test of the character's permanent Glamour versus permanent Banality, and may only be retested with Willpower. At the Storyteller's discretion, characters who fail the check may not immediately enter Slumber, but might enter it (or even a full-fledged Somnolence) later on — their dedication to the task at hand keeps them going for a time, but it costs them in the end. This minimizes the possible disruption to the storyline of a character suddenly going inactive in the middle of a session and allows the player to accomplish some goals, plan her next character and have some moments of high drama as she says good-bye. If the end of the storyline is a long way off, the Storyteller may require a Willpower Trait be spent each session in order to stave off Slumber or Somnolence. In the end, it is up to the Storyteller to decide when Slumber checks are required, but both Slumber and Somnolence should be threats with teeth if the tenuous existence of the Inanimae in the modern world is to be portrayed accurately.

Please note that there is a difference between Slumber and Somnolence — Slumber is a short-term condition, similar to a Kithain who falls prey to the Mists, and lasts the same amount of time (see the Mists chart in *The Shining Host*, page 178). Somnolence is a much longer period of inactivity, and lasts for the amount of time described in the previous passage on Banality and the



Inanimae. Only the most dire events should force a Somnolence check, since it will likely remove a character from the game for a long while.

The events listed below all immediately provoke a Slumber check:

- Destruction of a Husk (Slumber is immediate; no check necessary).
- Temporary Banality is higher than Glamour rating.
- Gaining a permanent Banality Trait.
- Temporary Glamour reaches zero.
- Husk revealed as false in front of a number of witnesses.
- Husk injured with cold iron.
- Husk ages to the next seeming.

In addition, the following factors may force a full-fledged Somnolence check at the Storyteller's discretion:

- Dreamform touched with cold iron.
- Destruction of an Anchor.
- Dreamform killed (Somnolence is immediate; no check necessary).
- Permanent Glamour reaches zero.
- Anchor is Krofted (if not already).

### *The Husk*

The Dreamform of most Inanimae — their equivalent of the Kithain fae seeming — looks like their Anchor in humanoid form, or like a being cut straight out of the Inanimae's Anchor if it is particularly large. While all Inanimae can assume their Dreamforms within freeholds, Anchors or the Dreaming itself, and Kithain can see their true selves behind their mortal masks the same as a regular Kithain's fae mien, Inanimae do not possess mortal bodies as the Kithain do, and thus must craft false ones — known as Husks — if they wish to venture among mortals for long without being destroyed by Banality. Most Inanimae learn at least the basics of crafting Husks, although their base material is still evident no matter how skilled they get at crafting. At first a kubera Husk might look like a plant-person, with leaves for hair, branches for limbs and other floral features; with some practice, the kubera can learn to pass for human, although some little touches such as bright green eyes, dark brown hair and the like will always persist.

*System:* Husks age quickly when exposed to the Banality of the mortal world — they start out resembling humans between the ages of 10 and 12, and age one year per week they are active. This aging can only be suspended within a freehold or the Inanimae's Anchor. For every point of temporary Banality gained, the Husk ages five years. Every time this aging causes a change in seeming, such as childling to wilder or wilder to grump, the Inanimae must make a Slumber check. A Husk that becomes too old begins to decay, and the Inanimae must return to her Anchor and let the Husk slip away before a new one can be crafted. Inanimae may choose to craft a new Husk before then — either way, crafting a new Husk requires the Inanimae to be in contact with her

Anchor for three days per level of the *Husk* Background she possesses. Then she must spend a Glamour Trait. Inanimae usually do not do undertake such a process unless there is a pressing need. (For convenience, this can be assumed to happen between games with Storyteller permission.)

### *Anchors*

To the mundane eye, Anchors are nothing more than a quantity of the Inanimae's native element — in pristine state for a gladeling, or some sort of natural element in crafted or shaped form for a Krofted fae. Unless mortals are truly heavy with Banality, they unconsciously avoid harming or disturbing Anchors if they can (keeping them safe from most anything but willful desecration), and some Dreamers are attracted to them as sources of beauty or inspiration. To the eyes of other enchanted beings, however, the Anchor truly comes into its own, appearing as a personal dwelling made out of the appropriate materials, and rightly so, since it is the Inanimae's true home. A kubera's tree might become a sturdy tree house, a solimond's incense brazier a structure of solidified smoke and flame, a glome's boulder a curious spherical stone house, and so on. The inside of an Anchor is a dwelling place, furnished according to the Inanimae's particular desires — most gladelings have little in the way of goods, and their "furniture" tends to be shaped out of the same material as the Anchor itself, while Krofted tend to have more modern comforts scattered about their living spaces. Anchors are not necessarily freeholds (though they might be with the right Backgrounds), but they do give the Inanimae certain benefits whenever they are at home.

*System:* Inanimae can abandon their Husks and re-enter their Anchors at any time; this does not count as a Husk being destroyed for the purposes of Slumber checks, and a new Husk doesn't have to be crafted unless the Inanimae desires to do so — the Husk simply picks up where it left off when he next exits his Anchor. If done in the presence of the unenchanted, this earns the Inanimae a Banality Trait and might even provoke a Slumber check in times of extreme stress. Normally, only Inanimae may enter an Anchor (though powerful cantrips may be used to barge in); they may bring others in with a Glamour Trait spent for each "guest," though this cannot be done in the presence of the unenchanted. Alternately, those who travel to the Anchor's location in the Near Dreaming can simply knock and have the Inanimae let them in.

This does not make Anchors wonderful fortresses, however, as those who damage the Anchor's mundane aspect may harm or even destroy the Anchor, causing great pain to the Inanimae and possibly even destroying him. If an Anchor is Krofted by mortal or faerie hands, the Inanimae must immediately make a Slumber check; if he stays active, he may immediately attempt to take Husk form by his Anchor and try to stop the process normally. If the Anchor is already Krofted, the Inanimae must make a Somnolence check, and the

Storyteller may even rule that the Inanimae is destroyed if the damage to the Anchor is severe enough!

If an Anchor is attacked or damaged, the Inanimae can immediately sense it and attempt to return to defend it as outlined previously. Those whose Anchors are destroyed while they are inside, active or not, are immediately Undone by Banality. Those who are in Husk form still suffer terribly, but have a short time to find a replacement Anchor before Banality Undoes them. One permanent Glamour Trait is lost per hour in the Husk, and the Inanimae must seek out an object or site as close to his former Anchor as possible — if one can be found, he must make a Glamour Challenge against nine Traits, retest with Willpower. Success means the Inanimae has bonded to the new Anchor, though not without cost: A permanent Trait of both Glamour and Willpower must be spent to complete the process, and the Inanimae must immediately enter Slumber as he gets acquainted with his new home. Note that Anchors have no special protection, aside from any laid on them by the Inanimae — a kubera's tree burns as easily as any other, for example, and for this reason most Inanimae keep their Anchors secret when possible, for fear of others attempting to harm them.

## *Inanimae Phyla*

Once, the Inanimae contend, there were countless different phyla that comprised the various elemental courts. But as time passed, as Anchors were lost and Inanimae retreated, different phyla merged or became extinct, until now all that remains is a handful of survivors representing each of the elements of the empires. Rumor has it that other Inanimae races exist, but if this is the case, they are even more rare than their regular cousins and unheard of by the Kithain.

### *Glomes (GLOAMS)*

Although the Kithain and other Inanimae think of them as massive stone giants, the glomes are in fact the smallest and most active of their kind. Serving the ancient, tradition-centered Empire of Stones on behalf of their glacially minded brethren, the glomes keep the mountains and other greater stone lords apprised of the world around them. Even the most active of glomes still has the patience of stone, and most refrain from drawing a conclusion or forming an opinion until they've had at least a couple of months to observe the object or person in question, and they can be downright shy because of it. Once they've made up their minds, they make some of the most steadfast friends — or resolute enemies — in all of the Dreaming. Many glomes are still fiercely loyal to allies who fled the meat world before the Shattering.

Glomes form the stable foundation of the Slow Empires, though it was their war with the solimonds (and their continuing unwillingness to reconsider that course of action) that led to the worst battles of the Making War. Other Inanimae frequently defer to glomes on matters of their kind, feeling that the

stone folk have the best memories and organization, and glomes do their best to live up to this trust. They enjoy interacting with the meat world but tend to epitomize the worst problems with doing so — due to their incredibly long memories, their methodical way of approaching others and their inability to maintain a life in the hectic world of the meat, a changeling has typically passed well into grumpdom just around the time that the glome considers her interesting enough to be a close friend.

Glomes typically have some trouble with a human form, as they care little for crafting a convincing Husk, though those who have been active for a while typically pick up the skill out of respect for their allies. Glomes are almost always tall and massively built, and they often have chiseled physiques (literally!); when they do imitate human features, those features are typically cold but perfect, though their unblinking eyes can unnerve those who don't know them. They have no hair as such, though some sculpt a texture into their Husk or use wigs. They enjoy the company of others, if only in their own strange way, and will typically reward their friends with gems or valuable relics in return for friendship and gossip. They organize their empire along military lines, with a complex hierarchy of leaders and soldiers. Every glome knows his rank and duties.

**Affinity:** *Petros*

Birthrights

**Strength of the Stone:** Composed as they are of living stone, all glomes receive two additional Bruised health levels, as well as free *Brawny* and *Enduring* Physical Traits, which can never be permanently lost.

**Immunity:** Glomes are totally immune to all disease and poison (including alcohol), even those inflicted by supernatural powers.

Frailties

**Weight of the Stone:** No matter what their Husk may seem to be, all glomes retain the natural heaviness of stone, making it hard for them to interact with some of the more fragile parts of the physical world without causing damage. Glome Husks often weigh in excess of 1000 pounds; while most modern construction, chimerical and otherwise, can withstand this stress, Narrators should take care to enforce this around areas of less sturdy construction. Glomes also receive a permanent *Lethargic* Negative Trait to simulate their ponderous weight, which can never be bought off. They receive a free retest on all attempts to throw or trip them, unless their opponent is capable of dealing with their weight (grump trolls, ogres, sufficiently empowered cantrip-users, etc.).

### ***Kubera (KOO-beh-rah)***

Also known as nymphs or dryads, kuberas are Inanimae of life and plenty, and as such come closer than many of their kind to truly understanding and participating in the meat world. They are Inanimae full and true, yet at the same time they are creatures of life as well, and enjoy the trappings of life and material

comfort with uncommon zeal. This has led some other Inanimae to accuse the kuberas of decadence or gluttony, and while this is no doubt the truth in some instances, most of these Inanimae simply laugh off the dour looks of their brethren. After all, they have tasted life, and are in no hurry to scurry back to the cold politics of the Slow Empires.

While they dislike solimonds, and will never be found in their company long, kuberas enjoy the company of just about every other phyla and kith imaginable. Sociable by nature, they are inveterate party-crashers and love nothing better than to spend a night out with friends (old friends or ones they've just met, it makes little difference to them). Since their talent for inducing fertility in all manner of enterprises follows them wherever they go, kuberas tend to be darlings of the *nouveau riche*. More than one mortal has found his fortune while enjoying the attention of a kubera. While these exploits make them very knowledgeable about the meat world, it also gives them a certain arrogance, especially concerning their fellow Inanimae.

Kubera are typically among the most human-looking of the Inanimae and can craft Husks with any human shape and skin tone they desire. Their one telltale feature is their ears, which are prominent in their Husks and especially long and pointed in their Dreamform. Most kubera have expensive clothing, jewelry and other ornaments, though more out of a love of decoration than any real ostentation. Revelers and social butterflies, they can be found just about anywhere mortals are, and tales of new wealth and sensuality follow in their wake. Kubera follow a monarch, much like the fae, and this leader steps down every 10 years (a blink of the eye to the Inanimae), making their social order a constant flux of those rising and falling in status.

**Affinity:** *Verdage*

Birthrights

**Fertile Minds:** Possessed of the quintessential green thumb, kuberas have a remarkable ability to boost the productivity or fertility of any undertaking, from raising crops to playing the stock market to childbearing. The only ban is that the kubera cannot be the primary beneficiary of the enterprise or it will fail immediately. Exactly what happens is up to the Storyteller, though some suggestions follow: doubling the amount of money gained from an Influence, raising a character's *Resources* Background, increasing the output of a workshop by one and a half times the normal production rate and so on. The exact benefits and how long they last are up to the Storyteller, who is free to exact a Glamour cost for especially drastic effects and is also encouraged to reward those who adhere to the creative spirit of this Birthright rather than simply try to amass huge stockpiles of toys for their fellow characters.

**The Glow:** Kubera exude an air of pleasure, fulfillment and sensuality that eases the inhibitions of others, making onlookers more friendly and open to seduction. All kubera are two Traits up on Social Challenges to befriend or seduce. This is not without cost, however — this mysterious aura also tends to draw people to the kubera at inopportune times, as they try to remember where



they've seen her before. Treat this downside the same as the Flaw *Surreal Quality* in *The Shining Host*.

#### Frailties

**Counting:** These Inanimae have an obsession with numbers and counting, and if they don't have any pressing business to attend to, they happily spend hours tallying practically anything countable they come across: fish in a barrel, books on a shelf, jellybeans in a jar, leaves on a tree, etc. If pulled away from a count, they are distracted and one Trait down on all Mental and Social Challenges until they can return and finish counting the set. They must roleplay this diverting fascination as often as possible; it does not interfere with truly serious business or the ability of kuberias to defend themselves but should be a constant factor in their lives nonetheless.

### *Ondines (Ohn-DEENS)*

These sad water-folk have tried for millennia to understand the Heart Riddle and are perhaps the most vexed by it. Still, the Empire of Tears takes it in stride as they do most things, and in the course of their investigation they have developed a talent for conversation with the meat that makes them the envy of their fellow Inanimae. To those outside the Slow Empires, they are a paradoxical race, talkative and forthright while at the same time seldom revealing much about themselves. While not devious by nature, they are great philosophers and conversationalists, and have a talent for taking different yet convincing positions on the same issue, or presenting complex arguments that lead a listener to conclude something completely different than what they believed they were agreeing with. Those who can keep up with ondines in such games earn their deep respect, and though they may remain as hard to decipher as ever, ondines enjoy matching wits with trusted friends in this fashion and can do so for hours on end.

As much as they enjoy the company of landwalkers, ondines are out of place away from the sea, and even the most casual observer knows it — all ondines suffer from some handicap, the price the depthless pay for walking on the land. This gives them a sad, haunted quality even at the best of times and imbues most of their conversation with an slightly awkward yet still touching “fish out of water” quality that gives their arguments that much more appeal to their listeners. Some even say that those ondines in the world have been banished by their fellow depthless, punished for one crime or another, though the ondines simply wave such accusations away.

Despite their handicap, ondines have pleasing Husks to look upon, though their bright blue or blue-green eyes and the slight bluish tinge to their skin and hair is a dead giveaway to those who know their phyla. Behind their Husks, the Dreamform of an ondine is truly a thing of beauty — they are composed of delicately tinted water and thus have a habit of blurring like a watercolor painting. They may be any color in this form, but most prefer cool colors and pastels to more agitated tones. Ondines are organized in an Athenian-style

democracy, with a speaker who is elected every three years to guide policy. Each ondine receives a single vote.

**Affinity:** *Aquis*

Birthrights

**Watery Form:** Ondines can revert to liquid form for short periods of time, allowing them to slip through small cracks or otherwise escape confinement. This costs no Glamour to use but cannot be performed in front of unenchanted mortals and only lasts as long as it takes to bypass the barrier in question — they cannot remain in this form indefinitely. Furthermore, they are still vulnerable to physical attacks in this form; bullets and other ranged weapons do half damage, rounded down, but brawling and melee weapons still do full damage, as do most cantrips.

**Song of the Siren:** Ondines have beautiful voices and can charm others around them by singing or telling stories. Those lulled by the ondine's voice become vulnerable to suggestions, as long as these suggestions are not suicidal and do not contradict the target's Legacy, sworn oaths, *True love* or similar deep-seated beliefs. Using this Birthright requires a Social Challenge and the expenditure of a Glamour Trait — use standard mob scene rules if the Inanimae attempts to use this Birthright on multiple targets simultaneously. Kithain and Prodigals can shake off the effects of the voice with a Willpower Trait. Otherwise, its effects last for a maximum of one scene or until the suggestion is completed, whichever comes first.

Frailties

**Wounds:** No matter how much they may like it on land, ondines were never meant to walk on solid ground — every day out of water is agonizing for them, and each member of this phyla bears some terrible wound as punishment for leaving the embrace of the waves. The exact nature of this disability is up to the player and the Storyteller to determine, though it must have a significant detrimental impact on the ondine's daily life. This Frailty can be simulated by existing Flaws such as *One Eye* or *Lame*, although the ondine receives no bonus Traits for such wounds. Negative Traits, which can never be bought off, can also represent this condition. For example, an ondine with chronic asthma might have *Sickly* or *Decrepit*, while one with hideous scars might receive a *Repugnant* Trait, and one with a milky eyeball might have the *Oblivious* Trait. Players should also do their best to roleplay the constant low-level pain of being on land.

### *Parosemes (Pair-o-SEEMS)*

Once completely carefree spirits who cared for little more than the pleasures of argument, debate and dissembling, recent times have seen the parosemes become more and more drawn into a great battle for Sky that they see as their only hope to turn back the madness that has infected their kind. Parosemes are still great chatterboxes and happily natter on for hours about the least little things, but this new duty has at last shown them the burden of

responsibility. While they still chafe at being confined to any particular role or place for too long, the experience has matured many of this phyla in ways the other Inanimae are only too happy to note.

When not involved in trying to reassert the influence of the Empire of Skies over the unruly air of the modern world, parosemes are still the great wayfarers, riddlemasters and avengers of past wrongs they once were — they change their Husks almost as often as they change their minds. They consider their short attention span a curse of the modern world's pollution, but the other Inanimae whisper that this is only an excuse for behavior that has long infuriated their fellow phyla, though parosemes hotly deny this. They are peerless spies and couriers, and most parosemes do not consider themselves whole until they have traveled around the world at least two or three times, preferably more.

Paroseme Husks are typically fairly human in appearance, but all appear somewhat pale and fragile as though ready to dissipate at any moment. In their Dreamform, parosemes are nearly invisible, though most choose to present themselves as humanoid “sculptures” of clouds or similar phenomena to put their friends at ease. They refuse to tie themselves down to any mortal occupation as a matter of course, and the longest that most parosemes stay in one locale is a year and a day before they feel an insatiable need to fly once more. Parosemes are ruled by a strange mix of anarchy and tribalism, with a council of their eldest meeting every year to decide policies that are then summarily ignored by all the parosemes, often these elders included.

**Affinity:** *Stratus*

**Birthrights**

**Vaporous Husks:** Air spirits are difficult to get a grip on; parosemes may voluntarily dissolve their Husks into vapor, allowing them to escape grasping hands, slip through cracks and otherwise evade capture. This Birthright costs a Glamour Trait per turn of use and cannot be used in the presence of the unenchanted; however, while it is active, the paroseme is immune to physical attacks and often may attempt a Fair Escape as well (Narrator's discretion, based on the situation). Note that this does not count as destruction of a Husk for the purposes of determining if the Inanimae enters Slumber.

**Flight:** Parosemes can fly at will. They can attain speeds up to five times their normal speed on land, making flight an excellent means of Fair Escape. Parosemes may not bring along anyone else with this flight, however, as it depends on their ability to merge with the wind and thus cannot support anything but themselves and the items they are wearing or carrying. This Birthright costs one Glamour Trait per scene (or hour) and is subject to the usual risks of flying in front of Banal observers: The paroseme may quickly gain Banality or even be shunted into a random point in the Dreaming by the force of disbelief if she attempts to fly in front of too many unenchanted mortals.

**Frailties**

**Chatterbox:** Parosemes are restless spirits and simply cannot sit quietly for any length of time. Even if gagged or otherwise physically prevented from talking, the paroseme is still compelled to fidget, tap her fingers or toes, hum and so on. Fortunately for those around them, most parosemes use this endless stream of words to debate matters of importance to the Sky and other substantial topics rather than simply to spread gossip or otherwise waste their breath. Still, this ceaseless chatter can get on anyone's nerves after too long. All parosemes receive an *Obnoxious Negative Trait*, which can never be bought off, and must roleplay this constant noise and chatter as much as possible without causing anyone to wish them dead *out of character*.

### *Solimonds (SO-lih-moands)*

Although the other Inanimae of the Glade are at last recognizing their value to the cause of the Slow Empires, the solimonds have never swerved from their original course — the protection of their meat allies and their dedication to teaching them the proper ways to use the resources of the inanimate world. Like Prometheus, solimonds long ago fell in love with humanity and sought to teach them the secrets of Flame to help their difficult lives. Sadly, this brought down the wrath of their fellow Inanimae as members of other phyla were lost to the humans abusing their new gift, and thus the Empire of Flames was disbanded, its territory conquered by the glomes and the solimonds scattered across the world. Now only a few solimonds remain true to the Glade; the vast majority are Krofted, the only way they could hide from their Glade oppressors.

Even in the face of such extreme adversity, however, the solimonds never wavered from their original desire to teach humanity and purge it of the needless flotsam it was rapidly burying itself in. As the ages passed, they did their best to teach humans the power of flame to both create and destroy, and while mortals remained difficult students, the solimonds made the lessons stick and did not shy from harsher ones if necessary. No matter what else they might say, the other Inanimae never denied that this phyla is universally courageous, outspoken and determined. The only problem they have with most of them is that solimonds' own inability to lie makes them painfully naïve at times, and that innocence has led to many of the mistakes that both this phyla and the humans who seek to master it have made. For their part, however, the solimonds see themselves as knights-errant for a fallen empire, seeking to restore the honor of their lost kingdom by the only way they know how — questing to make things right.

In their mortal Husks, solimonds typically have bright red hair, deeply tanned skin and incredibly bright eyes. They are usually thin but muscular, and in all forms they radiate a high level of heat, leading mortals to believe they are feverish. In their Dreamform, solimonds are impressive creatures of living flame, with eyes like molten pools. They have trouble fitting in for long with most mortal communities, as their unflinching honesty eventually wears on even their closest friends, but they make steadfast and brave companions to

those who can put up with their relentless drive. Though their empire has fallen, solimonds used to have a complex feudal system not unlike the Kithain, but now they are poorly organized and operate more like a knightly order or resistance movement than a true government.

**Affinity:** *Pyros*

Birthrights

**Clarity of Vision:** Like trolls, solimonds with a purpose become nearly impossible to sway from their appointed course; they are two Traits up on all tests to resist manipulation (supernatural or otherwise) that would divert them from reaching one of their goals, and once per story may call on a free retest on one such challenge.

**Gout of Flame:** By spending a Glamour Trait, the solimond may let loose a gout of flame; this flame is normally chimerical but may be Wyrd if the solimond has called upon the Wyrd to bring his fae form into the mundane world. This flame requires the standard Physical Challenge to hit a resisting target and causes two levels of aggravated damage to those it hits. It may also ignite flammable materials at the Narrator's discretion. They have no friends among vampires, for obvious reasons.

Frailties

**Ring of Truth:** Solimonds are incapable of lying or even understanding the concept of altering the truth. While this can be refreshing in courts where gossip, politics and double-dealing are common, it can also get the solimond in a great deal of trouble, much like True Thomas. Solimonds may never take the *Subterfuge* Ability, and any time they wish to consciously alter the truth when speaking, they must win (not tie) a Simple Test or else gain two temporary Banality Traits. This does not mean that solimonds must answer every question put to them — many are masters of pleading the Fifth — but simply that when they do answer, they must answer as honestly and completely as the question required. Needless to say, players of solimond characters are expected to be honest about enforcing this — it's part of the package of playing a solimond character, and players who cannot or will not accept this level of responsibility should choose a different phyla.

### *Mannikins*

Little is truly known about this mysterious phyla, save that they appear to be a mixture of Kithain and Inanimae, neither fully one or the other, and that they can often be found at the edges of both communities, studying them intently but seldom saying much. Needless to say, while they are generally ignored by their fellow Inanimae, this habit is quite unnerving to most meat beings, and no few Kithain whisper dark tales of how the plastic people now outnumber the living beings on the planet, pointing to the explosion of toys and department store displays that have cropped up in the past century. Most dismiss these as wild tales, but others aren't so sure and think about just how



much the toys and models of the world have seen. Regardless of their beliefs, after meeting a mannikin for the first time, few Kithain can help but feel the weight of their impassive, alien gazes following them as they walk through local shopping centers....

Mannikins remain relentlessly secretive about their goals, if they have any as a whole, but it is known they are acutely fascinated with the Heart Riddle, and most devote countless hours trying to determine exactly what separates them from the meat around them. Although their very nature tends to make them among the most human-seeming of the Inanimae, they never get the illusion of humanity right, and this can drive them to great fits of rage or despair as yet another mortal clique rejects them for reasons they cannot understand. They are also impassioned advocates of Krofting and try to convert other Inanimae to their way of thinking. This alone is enough to cause other phyla to distrust them, though it remains to be seen whether they have sinister motives behind this evangelism.

Mannikins are the Inanimae most likely to hold occupations in the mortal world, and most do so as often as Banality permits in order to better understand the meat they seek to emulate. While the majority are still Anchored to department store mannequins or similar human-size models, and thus have a natural (if eerily perfect) beauty to them, a significant minority have Anchors in toys with humanlike form, such as dolls or action figures, and thus appear much like the toys they come from, though most discard outlandish outfits and the like when dealing with human society.

**Affinity:** *Actor*

Birthrights

**Human Touch:** Forged as they are from various ideals of human beauty and perfection, all mannikins are adept at passing for human; to reflect this intimate knowledge of human appearance, mannikin characters receive the Background *Husk* x 3 for free. Additionally, mannikins whose Anchors are actual life-size human models receive a free *Gorgeous Social Trait*, while those whose Anchors are toys or other “unrealistic” forms receive a free *Friendly Social Trait*; neither of these Traits can be permanently lost.

**Bridge Between Flesh:** Neither totally Inanimae nor truly Kithain, mannikins are considered something of outcasts and oddities by both groups, which tends to make them work even harder to fit in. Having roots in both groups does have its advantages as well. All mannikins can learn Kithain Arts and Realms freely, regardless of Jeu, as well as the regular Slivers and Realms that Inanimae can learn; what’s more, mannikins active in Kithain society may freely take Backgrounds that are normally restricted for other Inanimae, as they are more familiar with the ways of changelings. Mannikins may begin play with Kithain Arts and Realms rather than their normal starting Slivers, provided they would have had a Kithain to teach them. The Storyteller has final say over such choices, and will certainly want a good story to explain them.

Frailties

**Spark of Life:** While they are very adept at creating lifelike Husks and Facades, there is always *something* wrong with a mannikin's imitation of life — no matter how hard they try, these Inanimae can never completely capture the essence of life, which causes no end of frustration for this phyla. To reflect this slightly alien and/or artificial cast to their appearance, all mannikins have a permanent *Repugnant Negative Trait*, which can only be called by those who know their true nature. Most mannikins are very sensitive about this defect; bringing it up to one's face is considered a serious insult and may well earn the taunting character a lasting enemy.

**Velveteen Dreams:** All Inanimae are interested in the Heart Riddle, or what qualities separate creatures of flesh from the elemental world, but mannikins are positively obsessed with it. Many of this phyla long to be living beings like the humans and Kithain that created them and actively hunt for treasures or cantrips that will allow them to finally become "real" beings of flesh and blood; sadly, if such a means has ever been discovered, none know of it, but that doesn't mean the mannikins have stopped looking. Others become embittered by the constant reminders of their differences with the meat world, but even these mannikins are still obsessed with the Heart Riddle in their own way. Mannikins must win a Willpower Challenge against six Traits to resist any proposition that promises some chance at becoming "real" and most have a hard time resisting even just simple conversation about mortal emotions, memories and other aspects of the Heart Riddle.

## New Backgrounds

Being the animate embodiment of elemental forces tends to give one a slightly different perspective on things. Thus, Inanimae have some correspondingly unique Backgrounds to represent their singular role in the Dreaming, and even conventional Backgrounds an Inanimae might select are often quite different from a Kithain's — for example, a glome might harvest a gold mine by his Anchor to bring him *Resources*.

### Husk

This Background determines how skilled an Inanimae is at crafting her Husk. While many Inanimae scoff at this skill initially, it quickly becomes obvious how critical this talent is for blending in with mortals and avoiding the heavy touch of Banality. The level of this Background indicates how closely the Inanimae's Husk resembles a regular human being:

None — No changes at all. The character's Husk is identical to her Dreamform, meaning that she is clearly inhuman to any who observe her. Interaction with Banal observers earns the Inanimae a Banality Trait for every minute of exposure, as the weight of their disbelief eats away at her Husk, and most mortals react with fear or aggression. The Inanimae is considered three Traits down on all non-intimidation Social Challenges with mortals or Prodigals.

One Trait — Very minor changes. The character has a roughly human shape and perhaps a reasonably human skin tone. Casual scrutiny still exposes the character to Banality as outlined above, but the character may prevent this by standing in shadows, wearing very bulky clothing, etc. The Inanimae is considered two Traits down on all non-intimidation Social Challenges with mortals and Prodigals.

Two Trait — Minor changes. The character has basic human features and a regular human shape, and some of the little details (hair, fingernails, teeth, etc.) are finished as well. Banal observers can still inflict Banality on the character, but most features are fine enough to be hidden with a good costume and some acting skills. The Inanimae is considered one Trait down on all non-intimidation Social Challenges with non-fae.

Three Trait — Human appearance. The character can now pass for a normal human without difficulty in most circumstances and need not fear Banality unless put under direct observation.

Four Trait — Nearly perfect. Not only does the character pass casual inspection, but even close examination (such as a physical) has trouble discovering the Inanimae's true nature. Indeed, the disguise is so convincing that the Inanimae is one Trait up on all Social Challenges to persuade others of her "normal" nature, provided she doesn't make it obvious by some accident.

Five Trait — Undetectable. Only advanced diagnostic procedures can tell that the character is anything other than human, and the Inanimae is now two Traits up to convince others of her mundane nature. The disguise is so good that even most banal observers actively reject the suggestion that the Inanimae is anything other than human, actually strengthening the character's claim.

### *Regard*

This Background determines how well known and well regarded a character is within her empire. In game mechanics, it functions the same as the Kithain *Title* Background. In Inanimae society, however, it reflects a more general sense of respect than the narrow and often hereditary powers that back up a Kithain title, and thus Inanimae are much less likely to overlook the *Regard* of one of their own unless given good reason to do so.

One Trait— Minor regard (medicine man, scout)

Two Trait— Small regard (scholar, rabble-rouser)

Three Trait— Established regard (low-ranking military, emissary)

Four Trait— High regard (high-ranking military, legislative member)

Five Trait— Extreme regard (ruling body, truth-sayer)

## *New Merits and Flaws*

### *Merits*

Natural Husk (3 Trait Merit)

Your Husk is very lifelike, enough to pass for human, even if you have only one level of the *Husk* Background. Any phyla may take this Merit.

**Famous Anchor (3-5 Trait Merit)**

Your Anchor is a cherished monument, place or artifact, whether Glade or Krofted, and there are plenty of meat folks who actively protect your Anchor. A three-Trait example would be something like Babe Ruth's baseball bat, a famous musician's instrument or a stand of trees in Golden Gate Park. A four-Trait example would be a national forest, a Chippendale chair or a marble statue, while a five-Trait example might be the Washington Monument, Redwood National Forest or Michelangelo's *David*. Any phyla may take this Merit.

**Flaws**

**Polluted/Defaced (1-3 Trait Flaw)**

Your Anchor has been damaged by pollution (acid rain, smog, etc.) or deliberately defaced by the action of others (graffiti, vandalism, etc.). This makes you sickly and weak. In addition to roleplaying the damage, you suffer one or two Negative Traits relating to ill health (*Flabby, Lame, Sickly*) if you take the one- or two-Trait version of this Flaw. If you take the three-Trait version, you permanently lose one health level. Any phyla may take this Flaw.

**Pig-Pen (2 Trait Flaw)**

You leave a noticeable trail of dust and dirt in your wake wherever you go. The grit looks like the same material as your Anchor. Only glomes may take this Flaw.

**Hibernation (5 Trait Flaw)**

You are active only during the spring, summer and autumn. You grow listless and quiet with autumn and fall into Slumber with the arrival of winter, awakening normally with spring. To be active during the winter, you must spend one Glamour per week. Only kubera may take this Flaw.

**Pyromania (5 Trait Flaw)**

You have an irresistible urge to set fires and get an indescribable high from watching flames spread and devour. At the beginning of each session, make a Willpower Challenge — if you fail, you must set at least one fire that day to satisfy your urge. This dangerous compulsion may well get you in trouble with the law, both mortal and Kithain. Only solimonds may take this Flaw.

## Slivers

In these days, only Inanimae can draw on the power of the natural world to create magical effects. Most Inanimae learn the Sliver that corresponds to their own affinity first and foremost, and those of their kind who learn multiple Slivers are accorded a great deal of respect. An Inanimae may never have more levels of another Sliver than she has of the one relating to her own natural affinity, except for mannikins, who may learn any Sliver they like.

Each Sliver also has a minor benefit attached to it, which users come to instinctively grasp — those wise in the ways of air and its *Stratus* Sliver become able weathermen, for example, while those who study *Aquis* may travel freely underwater.

## Materiel

Inanimae require a means to awaken their power, much like Kithain — they call this activator Materiel, and it acts much like a Bunk. Materiel can be carried as pieces of the natural world, or it can be performed as a natural process. The rarer the Materiel, the greater the power invoked. The only time when Materiel is not needed is if the Inanimae is using her phyla's Sliver while she is in contact with her Anchor. Each Sliver has a particular Materiel attached to it, which must be used to invoke that Sliver. The Inanimae may attempt to use another Materiel to invoke her Sliver but must spend an additional Glamour Trait on the casting.

Like Bunks, Materiel is made more valuable by rarity and complexity. Each Sliver has its own requirements about rarity, although the Storyteller is the final arbiter on value. The Storyteller may also wish to set a limit on the number of times a particular Materiel can be used; an Inanimae who continually uses a single source of Materiel may find that she literally strip-mines the magic right out of it.

**Aquis** — Water that is changed or in a form other than plain liquid is this Sliver's Materiel, such as snow, ice, rain, fog, dew, steam or even heavy water. Purified or polluted water may also qualify.

**Petros** — Minerals and metals are the Materiel for *Petros*. The rareness of the mineral or material in question, as well as how extensively it's altered, increases Materiel Traits. Lodestones, rock from asteroids, or stones with holes due to erosion, as well as precious and semiprecious stones, are said to have particular magical properties. Iron may *never* be used as Materiel.

**Pyros** — Burned offerings! Burning a variety of items in a variety of ways is the Materiel for *Pyros*. The more rare the burned item, or the more involved its burning, the greater the Materiel Traits — so a Celtic wicker man burned in ritual would produce a grand effect, while a minor torching of a notebook would be far less spectacular.

**Stratus** — Music inspires the power of air, but not just any music. Only tunes that are whistled or blown into instruments that require wind (brass or woodwinds of all types) produce Materiel. Complexity often gives more Traits ("Flight of the Bumblebee" is quite popular with parosemes needing help), but sometimes, a simple tune of unwavering purity works just as well.

**Verdage** — Plants of all varieties make up the Materiel for this Sliver. Rare plants (rarity may be based on what is native to the area) or elaborate preparation (potpourri, attar, perfume) increase the Materiel's value. Many woods and plants have magical properties ascribed by myth and legend, which



may make them more valuable — roses and lilies; oak, ash, yew or elder trees; and St. John's Wort, feverfew and moss are just a few ideas.

### *Elements: Favorable, Neutral and Opposed*

Each Inanimae has an Elemental Affinity, determined by phyla. It is easy for an Inanimae to learn the Slivers and Realms that are considered favorable or neutral to this element, but harder to learn those that are considered opposed to it. For example, an ondine has a natural affinity for water and wind magic, and is neutral toward the powers of earth and spirit, but has difficulty grasping those cantrips in any way related to fire.

To reflect this, Inanimae may learn Slivers and Realms that are considered favorable or neutral to their phyla at normal cost, but those they are opposed to cost an additional Experience Trait (and typically require a mentor of some kind). The list of these natural affinities is as follows:

Phyla	Opposed	Favorable	Neutral
<i>Earth</i> (glomes, kubera)	Air	Water	Fire, Spirit
<i>Air</i> (parosemes)	Earth	Fire	Water, Spirit
<i>Fire</i> (solimonds)	Water	Earth	Air, Spirit
<i>Water</i> (ondines)	Fire	Air	Earth, Spirit
<i>Spirit</i> (mannikins)	Neutral to all other elements		

Remember that this applies to both Slivers and Realms — an ondine not only has difficulty with the *Pyros* Sliver, but also the *Fire* Realm.

## Realms

Like the Kithain, Inanimae divide their knowledge of Slivers into various *Realms*, which they can use to affect different targets with their magic. Unlike the Kithain, the Inanimae divide their *Realms* along the lines of the elemental world: Air, Water, Fire, Earth and Spirit. These *Realms* roughly correspond to various Kithain *Realms* but also reflect a deeper understanding and awareness of the Realm than is normally represented by *Realms*. For example, an Inanimae skilled in the *Earth Realm* has basically the same powers as a Kithain with the *Prop Realm*, but what's more, he may sense a coming earthquake, be able to feel a fault line running underneath, and so on; likewise, an Inanimae with the *Water Realm* has the equivalent of the *Actor Realm* for Kithain, but also has an innate knowledge of tides, currents and the like. To reflect this, Inanimae are up a number of Traits equal to the levels they have in a particular Realm on all tests regarding that element that *don't* relate to combat or cantrips. The Storyteller should feel free to use this heightened awareness of the elements for foreshadowing, dropping clues and so forth.

All Inanimae automatically begin play with one free level in the Realm corresponding to their native element. Additionally, it should be noted that Inanimae need only one level of the *Spirit Realm* to affect themselves (they are not Gallain to themselves, after all!).

### *Inanimae Realms and Kithain Realms*

While it is technically possible for older Inanimae to learn *Kithain Realms*, most prefer the deeper bond offered by their native *Inanimae Realms*. Remember, however, that no Kithain can ever learn *Inanimae Realms* — they require too deep a connection to the natural world for most Kithain to fathom. *Inanimae Realms* correspond to *Kithain Realms* in the following manner:

- Air equates to Scene
- Fire equates to Nature
- Water equates to Time
- Earth equates to Prop
- Spirit equates to Fae

As they are essentially identical to regular *Kithain Realms* in terms of what they allow a character to affect with their magic, for ease of reference it is recommended that they be written on the character sheet with the name of the *Inanimae Realm*, followed by the name of the corresponding *Kithain Realm* in parentheses. For example, a character with three levels of the *Earth Realm* would write it this way: *Earth (Prop) x 3*; a character with two levels of the *Water Realm* would put down *Water (Time) x 2*, etc. This should preserve the unique nature of the *Inanimae Realms* while allowing those with regular *Kithain* characters a quick way of understanding what the Inanimae is capable of.

*Inanimae Realms* are not entirely superior to their *Kithain* counterparts, however, and it should be noted that the Inanimae have no Realm that corresponds to the *Actor Realm* of the *Kithain*. Dealing with such transient and ephemeral creatures doesn't come naturally to the Inanimae, who are more at home among the eternal dance of nature and the reincarnation of the fae. Those Inanimae who wish to learn the *Actor Realm* must either study with a *Kithain* tutor or spend long hours observing and experimenting with the denizens of the flesh kingdoms.

### *Aquis*

Those proficient in this Sliver learn the great patience and tranquility of the sea, as well as a measure of its ancient wisdom; all things came from the sea, so it is said, and one day the ondines believe all things will return there. This is a Sliver of time, motion and peace, allowing the ondines to keep things calm

around themselves. All who learn this Sliver can breathe and travel to any depth underwater with the same ease that they exist on land.

**Basic**

**Aura Perception:** Many ondines believe that souls are a kind of divine fluid stirred into constant motion; with this Sliver, the Inanimae can glimpse these perpetually shifting auras, allowing him to learn a wealth of information about his target. To use this Sliver, the Inanimae must observe his target and make a Mental Test against a difficulty equal to the target's Mental Traits. For each challenge the Inanimae wins, he may learn one of the following pieces of information about his target: kith; Court; active Legacy; relative Glamour and Banality levels; if the target is enchanted; if the target is currently affected by a cantrip (a separate test is required to reveal what sort of magic is at work); whether the last statement the target made was a lie; what manner of creature the target is (mortal, wizard, vampire, shapeshifter, etc.); even the subject's current emotional state (as described in a sentence or two, which the subject must relate honestly).

Unlike normal cantrip tests, these questions may be retested with the *Kenning Ability*; however, no more tests may be made than the number of *Materiel Traits* gained in casting, and if the Inanimae fails to cast this cantrip successfully, he may not attempt to read that target's aura for another hour. Unless the target has some way to detect scrying powers or the Sliver is advertised with flashy *Materiel*, the target is normally unaware of this Sliver's usage.

**Test:** Mental

**Type:** Chimerical

**Friction:** By studying the various shapes water takes with different levels of heat, the Inanimae learns how to freeze things solid or bring them to their boiling point in mere seconds. This power does not function directly on living or undead targets, though any clothing or equipment they may be carrying is fair game. Frozen items lose one Bonus Trait (when applicable), gain the Negative Trait *Delicate* and shatter if the user places too much strain on them or if a challenger wins an additional Simple Test after any successful test involving the item. Boiling or melting items lose one Bonus Trait, have the Negative Trait *Painful* and cause one level of lethal heat damage each turn that their user is in unprotected contact with them. (Note: Gloves and other conventional clothing offer no protection for all but the smallest items.) Combustible objects such as clothing catch fire if targeted by this power, and more complicated items such as firearms or electronics may be rendered useless if exposed to prolonged heat or cold, at the Narrator's discretion. This power lasts for a number of turns equal to the *Materiel Traits* gained in casting, though any damage done to the item during this time remains after the cantrip ends, and repeated uses of this power may eventually weaken even sturdy items beyond repair.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical (if used on chimerical items) or Wyrð

**Intermediate**

**Hold:** By robbing an object of kinetic energy, the Inanimæ can essentially slow a target to a crawl or even stop it in mid-motion: Bullets drop to the ground, mighty punches become gentle taps and so on. Alternately, the Inanimæ can suspend energy temporarily; for example, the caster might freeze an arrow in mid-flight, walk out of its path, and then restore its energy so it continues as it was originally fired. Items can be suspended for up to a number of turns equal to the Materiel Traits gained in casting, plus an additional turn for every Glamour Trait the Inanimæ is willing to spend. Living or undead beings held in place by this Sliver are stopped for one turn; each additional turn requires a Glamour Trait, and those with supernatural strength (including ogres and trolls) may attempt to break free by winning a Physical Test. If used defensively, this power allows the Inanimæ to create a field of "slow force" around the cantrip's target, effectively allowing one so protected to ignore a number of levels of damage equal to the Materiel Traits gained in casting. A target may only be under the effects of one such cantrip at a time, however, and it must be completely used up before another can be cast. Obviously, only attacks that rely on "directed" kinetic force are affected by this shield: Bullets and brawling attacks are blocked, but lightning bolts, flame strikes, mental attacks and even most *Holly Strike* cantrips bypass the shield entirely.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Wyrð (occasionally Chimerical)

**Healing Waters:** This Sliver is identical to the Primal Art *Heather Balm*. (See *The Shining Host*, page 139.)

**Advanced**

**Tempus Fugit:** This Sliver is essentially a combination of the Kithain Arts *Dream Time* and *Quicksilver*. (See *The Shining Host*, pages 131 and 148.)

**Test:** Mental

**Type:** Wyrð

### *Petros*

Glomes are acutely sensitive to the songs of the shifting earth, and like the stones themselves, the simple nature of most *Petros* cantrips belies their incredible power and versatility. This is a straightforward Sliver, like its wielders, but no less mighty because of it. Those who learn this Sliver gain a free retest on all rock-climbing efforts and have the difficulty of such actions reduced by four Traits (minimum one Trait).

**Basic**

**Living Rock:** With this subtle but potent Sliver, the Inanimæ may shape nearby earth and stone into whatever form she desires, as well as transmute a present mineral or ore into another. To sculpt the earth, the Inanimæ must grasp it with her bare hands, literally molding it into the desired form; needless

to say, this can make the creation of larger forms such as castles or doorways a time-consuming process. The amount of stone that can be changed and/or the extent to which it can be altered depends on the Materiel Traits gained in casting: 1-2 Materiel Traits allow for minor alterations of stone no larger than a human fist; 3-4 Traits allows for full transformation of a rock up to the size of the average troll; 5+ Traits can shape boulder-size rocks and perhaps (with sufficient levels of *Gremayre* and Narrator permission) even conjure elements of legend such as the Philosopher's Stone, though such fantastic mineral creations quickly fade to ordinary stone when exposed to Banality.

**Note:** This Sliver can *never* be used to create or sculpt cold iron.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrld

**Stoneskin:** As per the Kithain Art *Oakenshield* (see *The Shining Host*, page 139), except that the target need not expend Stamina-related Physical Traits and gains one additional bonus — since the protection is drawn from the nearby stone, the target takes on the rough appearance of that stone as well, putting him two Traits up on all tests to hide among stone of that type. This latter advantage is nullified by foes with supernatural senses, such as *Heightened Senses*.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrld

**Intermediate**

**Ironarm:** An Inanimae with this Sliver can tap into the power of the earth itself, allowing him or the target of his choice to perform great feats of strength. For each Materiel Trait gained in casting, the target gains one Strength-related Physical Trait. These extra Traits last for one scene or combat, though never more than an hour in either case. In addition, due to his great strength, the user gains the ability to call a free “*Might*” retest on all Strength-related challenges; once “*Might*” is invoked, it is the last retest that can be used in that particular challenge, for better or worse, unless the opponent has *Ironarm* as well. A target may only have one *Ironarm* cantrip in place at a time.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrld

**Stasis:** With this potent Sliver, the Inanimae can slow opponents to a crawl by forcing them into “geological time” — essentially, while this cantrip is in effect, even minor actions seem like major undertakings to the target, and her combat prowess is severely hampered as well. Each Materiel Trait gained in casting slows the target down by a factor of one: With one Trait, the Inanimae forces his foe to act once every other turn (combat time) and take twice as long to perform actions (standard time); with two Traits, his foe acts every third turn in combat and takes three times as long to complete actions outside of combat and so on. Extra actions gained from supernatural powers such as *Quicksilver* or *Celerity* are still available, though they can only be



activated on those turns that the target receives an action. Note that targets can still defend themselves normally, although they cannot use most forms of Fair Escape and are considered down a number of Traits equal to the caster's Materiel Traits due to their slowed reaction times. This Sliver costs a Glamour Trait and a Willpower Trait to use, and lasts for one scene or combat, whichever comes first. During that time, the target must stay within the Inanimae's line of sight or the cantrip is broken immediately.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Wyrð

**Advanced**

**Quake:** With this mighty Sliver, the Inanimae can shake the foundations of the world itself, causing a highly localized but intense earthquake centered on the target(s) of his choice. Each Materiel Trait gained in casting adds three paces to the quake's range, which is determined by counting outward from "ground zero" (whatever the Inanimae chooses as his primary target). Allies, enemies, bystanders — all those in the area of effect except the caster must immediately make a Physical Challenge against a difficulty of the caster's Physical Traits — Materiel Traits count — or fall to the ground and take one level of bashing damage. In addition, the target of the quake takes two levels of bashing damage from the seismic forces, jutting rocks and twisting fissures created by the Sliver. Naturally, as this power can cause substantial alterations to the landscape of the game, the Storyteller should be on hand to describe the results of the tremors as well as determine what damage (if any) is caused to buildings and other structures in the quake's radius. Care should be taken to note whether the quake is chimerical or physical, as this has a great deal of impact on how mortals in the area react to this power!

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrð

### *Pyros*

Although their most visible power is their awesome command over flames of all kinds, the passionate solimonds can also control the proverbial fires of the heart, allowing them to play with the emotions of others. It is rumored that the *Pyretics* Art of the Kithain is a watered-down version of this Sliver. Those who learn this Sliver need never carry matches again — they can light small, initially harmless fires anywhere.

**Art Note:** Do not use real fires at any point for any reason in any situation! This is a game about the power of the imagination, and White Wolf neither encourages nor assumes any responsibility for any mishaps from players foolish enough to bring real fires into their game.

**Type of Challenge:** Physical or Social

**Basic**

**Flame:** This Sliver allows the Inanimae mastery over most regular fires; he can control all aspects of the fire — size, light, heat — as well as cause other substances to burst into flame. The amount of fire controlled and the extent of the changes that can be made are determined by how many Materiel Traits are used in the casting: 1-2 Traits indicates small campfire/hot/firelight/one health level; 3-4 Traits equals fire mastery up to a normal bonfire/boiling/halogen bulb/two health levels; 5+ Traits is a large bonfire/searing/arc light/three health levels. Each aspect the character wishes to alter requires a Simple Test; on a win or a tie, the change can be made at no cost. If the test is lost, the change may still be made, but it costs a Physical Trait as well. Causing a substance or individual to burst into flame requires a Physical Challenge (Materiel Traits count), and generally requires at least three Materiel Traits, unless the substance is especially flammable such as paper or dry brush. Objects securely in the character's possession require no test to ignite, only Materiel of sufficient strength to start the fire. All fires under the character's control may be returned to their regular state (if controlled) or even extinguished entirely (if created) at the character's desire; this does not count as an action.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrđ

**Tortured Heart:** Emotions are the fires of the heart, so they say, and with this Sliver the Inanimae may alternately bank or douse the emotions of her target, turning quiet dislike into seething hatred or passionate love into mild attachment. Any emotion may be affected by this power; however, each emotion the caster wishes to alter costs one Social Trait and requires a separate cantrip casting. In addition, while emotions may be amplified or muted by this power, they cannot be created from nothing, nor reversed outright — love can be changed to apathy, for example, but not hate, and loyalty cannot be spontaneously invoked toward a total stranger. Within those guidelines, however, the Inanimae can play with the target's emotions to her heart's content, making this a very dangerous Sliver indeed. Characters with truly deep bonds — those with Merits or Flaws like *True Love*, *Hatred*, etc. — receive a free retest to resist any attempts to manipulate those specific emotions, and even if successfully manipulated, they cost the Inanimae an extra Glamour Trait to complete the cantrip. This Sliver lasts for one scene and cannot be used against the same target regarding the same emotion more than once a night.

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical

**Intermediate**

**Ares' Fist:** Solimonds are at home among the fires of war, and this Sliver represents something of what they have learned in their ages on the battlefield. When activated, this Sliver suffuses the caster's form with the fires of Mars, the warrior's planet, transforming him into a truly formidable fighting machine. Each Materiel Trait gained in casting grants the caster an additional level of the

*Brawl* and *Melee* Abilities; these extra levels can take a character over the normal maximum of five levels in an Ability, and if they do, the character gains the *Brawl: Unarmed* and *Melee: Melee Weapons* specializations for the duration of the cantrip. These bonus Ability levels are otherwise treated exactly like normal Ability levels for the purposes of combat and fade away if unused at the end of the current combat or scene, whichever comes first. Multiple castings of this Sliver are not cumulative. In addition, while this Sliver can be used on others, only solimonds are able to withstand the fires of Mars without injury. Glomes and parosemes using this Art automatically suffer a level of bashing damage; ondines, kubera and mannikins take an automatic level of lethal damage; Kithain, Prodigals and all others who have this Art used on them take two levels of aggravated damage. This is not a Sliver to invoke lightly, but when used properly it can turn the tide of battle.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrđ

**Strings of the Soul:** An advanced version of *Tortured Heart*, this Sliver allows the Inanimae to do all the things listed under that Sliver's description, as well as a few additional effects. Emotions may now be created from nothing, switched for each other or even doused entirely, at a cost of one Glamour Trait per emotion so controlled. For a Social Trait, a passion may be flipped to its inverse. Best of all, the caster is no longer limited to manipulating one emotion per cantrip casting — each extra emotion controlled costs an additional Social Trait, but that is all. The need for an extra Glamour Trait to control especially strong passions such as *True Love* still applies, but the target no longer receives a free retest regarding those emotions. This Sliver lasts for one scene and can be used on a target as many times per session or day as the caster is able.

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Inferno:** Inanimae with this Sliver have learned how to completely master flame: They may control normal fires at whim, create blazes from little more than a thought, even create creatures or objects out of living flame. Treat the creation or control of normal flame as if the Inanimae had received five Materiel Traits on the *Flame* Sliver (above) and scale upward for additional Materiel Traits the Inanimae uses during the casting — Narrator's discretion for what is possible at the upper limits of this power, but it should be impressive. In no instance should a use of this power cause more than four levels of lethal damage or three levels of aggravated, however. Treat objects or creatures created/transformed into "living" flame as though they were under the effects of the Pyretics Art *Star Body*.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrđ

**Stratus**

This Sliver allows great powers of illusion, trickery and deception, which suits the parosemes just fine — it allows them to leave their heavier, earthbound foes far behind. It also cuts down on travel times, making the already swift parosemes able to travel great distances in little more than the blink of an eye. Those with this Sliver may also make a Mental Challenge to predict the weather for the next few hours.

**Basic**

**Marathon:** When it comes to traveling in a hurry, Inanimae with this Sliver put even eshu messengers to shame. Most scholars claim that this Sliver opens tiny trods in the Near Dreaming that the caster then uses as shortcuts through the waking world. Regardless of the means, for each Materiel Trait gained in casting, the Inanimae may reduce travel times. Thus, a paroseme who gains one Materiel Trait has travel time reduced by a third, while one who gains two Materiel Traits cuts her travel time by half, etc. This effect lasts for the duration of a single one-way trip between two points — each journey requires a separate cantrip. Note that this Sliver does not provide extra actions or otherwise actually speed up the target, it simply decreases travel times.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Wyrð

**Conceal/Confuse:** As the Kithain Arts *Fuddle* and *Veiled Eyes*. (See *The Shining Host*, pages 128-9.)

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical

**Intermediate**

**Flight:** As the Kithain Art *Wind Runner*. (See *The Shining Host*, page 149.) Parosemes receive a bonus Materiel Trait when using this Sliver due to their natural affinity for flight.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Wyrð

**Illusion:** With this Sliver, the Inanimae may create illusions that appeal to all five senses. The only limit is the caster's imagination and the Realms she has mastered. These illusions are actually very temporary chimera, and as such disappear immediately if the caster attempts to harm someone with them (either physically or chimerically). They may only perform simple tasks, which they repeat until the caster mentally commands them to stop. More complex actions require the caster's full concentration (two-Trait penalty to all other tests while so engaged). Usually, only those with supernatural senses can attempt to pierce such complex illusions, although especially alert or suspicious characters may also detect something amiss with a successful *Kenning Test* (Narrator's discretion). Each illusion created requires the expenditure of one Social Trait, as does each task the caster wishes the illusion to perform, in addition to any other costs required by casting the cantrip.

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Phantasm:** As the Kithain Art *Phantom Shadows*. (See **The Shining Host**, page 135.)

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical (all *Phantasms* made real by calling on the Wyrds cost a Social Trait per five minutes to maintain.)

### **Verdage**

Though many Kithain feel a close bond to the natural world and the cycle of life it sustains, few can hope to match the depth to which kubera perceive the environment around them. This Sliver allows them to promote the growth of new life, shape the life around them and otherwise touch the life energy they are immersed in all of their lives. Those with this Sliver may make a Mental Challenge to identify any plant or animal they encounter, provided it is a natural specimen.

**Basic**

**Solarium:** Similar to the *Living Rock Sliver*, this power allows the caster to control the growth and animation of plant life: Flowers bloom in minutes, weeds die with but a glance, grasses shoot up and entangle travelers, etc. Plants cannot be given sentience with this power, nor can they uproot themselves and walk or perform similarly unnatural feats, but they can be made to do things like restrain opponents and the like. (Treat such uses as identical to the *Legerdemain* Art *Entangle* in **The Shining Host**.) Players are encouraged to work with Narrators to adjudicate other uses of this Sliver if they intend them to have any game effect. Note that regardless of the effect description, this cantrip normally cannot cause actual damage to an opponent, only restrain him. One Physical Trait is required to animate each tree or a small patch of flowers/grasses, subject to the limitations of the Materiel involved.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrds

**Babel:** This Sliver is essentially identical to the *Primal Art Willow Whisper*, but with one major exception — whereas the Kithain must communicate with the objects of such cantrips at their target's level of intelligence (making most objects stilted conversationalists at best), the Inanimae are much closer to the natural world than their flesh cousins and thus can speak to the spirit of their target rather than simply its shell, letting them converse at their *own* level of comprehension. Inanimae are able to learn much more from their Sessile brethren than most Kithain, giving them a subtle but powerful information edge in many situations.

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical



**Intermediate**

**Coalesce:** Inanimae with this Sliver are adept at creating all manner of tools from the organic matter all around them, and given sufficient time and Materiel can create just about anything provided it uses no metal or mineral parts, and no electricity or chemical reactions to function. Items created with this Sliver can be made as hard as steel, if the caster so desires, and are otherwise treated as perfectly normal items of their type, with normal Bonus Traits, Negative Traits, etc. In addition to the normal Materiel required for this Sliver, the Inanimae must also take the pieces she is using and shape them into a rough facsimile of the item, then invest them with Glamour by touching them with her hands. Each Glamour Trait allows the item to be used for one scene; at the end of the scene, the item reverts to its previous state.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrd

**Web of Life:** By carefully observing the minute interactions of living things in the area, the Inanimae may gain insight into the patterns developing around her own existence, effectively allowing her to predict the future. Alternately, the character may learn general information regarding the present, though such knowledge is limited to events and individuals relatively nearby (no more than a mile away). In game terms, this Sliver is effectively identical to the *Soothsaying Art of Augury*, except that all information gained from it should be couched in terms of the biosphere — “a wolf howls a warning to the sky as storm clouds gather,” etc.

**Test:** Social

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Mold:** At this level of power, the Inanimae may transmute any organic substance into another: Flesh becomes bark, leaves become bone, blood turns to sap and vice versa. *Mold* may also be used to completely change a target's shape (such as turning a human into a tree), though even so the new form reflects traces of its original identity: A dog transformed into a person would be hairy and retain some canine mannerisms, while a tree shaped from a fae would have a vaguely humanoid form. This Sliver has a variable Glamour cost, depending on the extent of alterations made:

- 1 Glamour Trait Minor changes (hair to leaves, fur to flesh, nails to bone)
- 2 Glamour Traits Significant changes (skin to bark, blood to chlorophyll)
- 3 Glamour Traits Total transformation

These alterations are technically permanent, though the caster may reverse them at any time, and another Inanimae with this Sliver or Kithain with comparable Arts (*Elder-Form*, *Mythic Transformation*) may attempt to undo such magic by defeating the original caster in a cantrip challenge.

**Test:** Physical

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrd



## Chapter Three: The Shadow Court

### *The History of Nightmares*

*Listen closely as Simon Victor, slough seer, whispers tales of how the Shadow Court came to be.*

Welcome. Do sit down. Would you like some tea? No? Your loss — I ground the spiders myself. Oh, come now, don't tell me *that* made you squeamish! If a little trifle like that can upset you, perhaps I'd best not tell you what else I know.... You are prepared? Excellent.

#### *Olden Days*

Once, there was no need for us. Don't let it sting your pride — we all hope for the day we become unnecessary again, mask it though some might. No, what I meant was that in times long past, before the Shattering, the Seelie and the Unseelie alternated rule as was their ancient custom — the Seelie ruled from Beltaine to Samhain, and the Unseelie from Samhain to Beltaine. It was all part of the cycle, you see: We Unseelie would rule as the winter nights lengthened and the world died around us, while the Seelie would command the lands as spring blossomed into summer and life was abundant. Makes sense, doesn't it? Indeed it did, and for centuries the balance was maintained, as faeries of both courts realized what benefit there was to letting those best suited to rule take control, rather than having one court trying to encompass both light and darkness.

It all hinged on one glorious night for us — Samhain, the night that the veil between worlds thinned and the order of faerie society turned upside down. The earliest "Shadow Courts" were like the ones you still see every Samhain, mock courts of commoners made noble for a night, while the nobles of the land go as commoners. Except in those days, there was one other great custom:

walking the Bright Road, a special trod between this world and the land of the dead. With this ritual, the fae could renew themselves and experience rebirth, for time meant little to them in those days, and so questing along the Bright Road was necessary to come to terms with their immortality and be reincarnated once more. It was a difficult test, especially for the sidhe, and only got harder as the years passed and the mortal world grew colder and more distant to the supernatural, but we Unseelie never neglected the tradition, though most of the Seelie found it distasteful and preferred not to speak of it. Still, the courts changed hands with the seasons, the fae walked among the living and the dead, and the world maintained its balance.

When the Shattering came, the sidhe fled, and along with them the tradition of switching courts. Though a few commoner lands maintained it, by and large the feeling of the time was that the world was fast sliding to chaos and disorder. The Seelie felt it was their duty to take control, in an effort to "maintain order and tradition." Pah! We were not the ones to pretend the Bright Road did not exist! We were not the ones who pursued isolation and superiority to mortals! We were not the ones to cling to archaic order as the world changed! Unseelie fae have always been deemed the masters of chance, change and chaos, and yet when the need for fae who understood such forces arose as the world warped, what did the Seelie do? Slander us! At best, we were layabouts and buffoons who did not understand the "seriousness" of things. At worst, we were criminals and monsters, unfit for their society.

Not all Unseelie accepted these new labels, nor did all the fae forget the ancient traditions, and as their discontent with societies both faerie and mortal grew, the *true* Shadow Court was born. Masking their activities behind the mock court of Samhain that shared the name, where they weeded out the poseurs and pretenders from the true believers, these crafty Unseelie began preparing for the disaster they knew could only come of the imbalance the Seelie were creating. Even in the face of growing signs of the harm their stubbornness was causing the fae (and thus the mortals who depended on them for inspiration and wisdom), the Seelie still refused to relinquish their thrones, and their libel of the Unseelie only grew more foul as they sought to discredit us and keep us from assuming our rightful place in faerie society. Sadly, a great number of commoners believed the lore and came to distrust us as well, forcing us to retreat further from the light of the world to continue our activities.

We were far from idle. Embracing chill Samhain winds and peering into the shadows of the Underworld, we learned the truth about the future the Seelie were so proud of: the long-prophesied Endless Winter, where all would be pitched into blackness forever and the wicked things long denied the world would reign supreme. The knowledge broke some of us, but the rest began preparing for Endless Winter, and some even started taking steps to help bring it about, undermining the Seelie at every chance. What? How could we support such a "heinous" cause? *Tsk tsk*, you've been listening to too much Seelie propaganda. The answer is really very simple — it has been prophesied, and not

one event since those prophecies has given us any cause to see things differently. If anything, they have strengthened our resolve. I cannot deny that many start their journey into shadow for more petty reasons such as power or revenge, but in time all who remain with the Court come to see the truth of the deeper meaning behind our actions and accept it. That is simply how things are.

So it continued for the centuries following the Shattering, with the true Shadow Court hiding behind the actions of its more visible counterpart, advancing its plans to survive the coming Endless Winter while the Seelie slowly guided the fae toward ever-greater disaster.

### Modern Times

The past several centuries have been kind to us, the 20th century especially. Why is that? Because as the mortals grew dissatisfied with their world and the order that ruled it, their dreams gave power to our own efforts to cast off the Seelie rule; as mortals discovered democracy, anarchy and antimonarchical politics, we thrilled in our shadows and grew ever stronger. As technology delivered mortals the power to run their own lives, apart from their governments and each other, we embraced it and took it in our own directions. Unlike the Seelie, who like to pretend that the world is still the place of fantasy and honor that it once was, we accept the fact that the world has changed. While they cling to their swords and horses, we learned the ways of pistols and engines. Who made the better choice? I'll let you decide, after the trusty firearm you wear drops Sir High-and-Mighty long before he gets a chance to unsheathe his mighty sword.

Six hundred years of Seelie rule, and what is there to show for it? Take a long look at the world around you before you answer. Next time you hear a wise sidhe or noble troll expounding on how the Seelie are the only ones fit enough to rule, let your bitter laughter ring loud in their ears. The omens of Endless Winter are all around us, so obvious that even those outside the Shadow Court cannot help but notice them. The return of the Fallen Ones — the sidhe — only proved that Arcadia was in trouble; why else would they cast away their beautiful children? Certainly, they say it was “to save us all from Winter,” but think about it — how many of them stayed behind to save us when the Shattering struck? After that, do you really think they'd give up their beautiful paradise to save us now? Neither do I. Likewise, the return of our Thallain cousins can only tell those with the courage to face the truth that the monsters of old are returning, and that the time for the Unseelie comes at last.

All the prophecies have come to pass — the loss of a king, the birth of a star, the return of creatures foul, the stirrings of war between noble and commoner... and those are only *our* prophecies. The vampires who speak of their elders rising, the werewolves who talk of the great spirit of evil descending on the world, the spirits of the dead and their storm to end all storms — all of these have already begun, or so our spies tell us. It cannot be denied — Endless Winter comes, and those who cling to their Seelie ways will be destroyed as the



world plunges into darkness, while those who embrace their Unseelie nature and the rites the Shadow Court has kept safe will survive, even grow strong in the new world. It is neither good nor evil that this is so — simply a destiny that can no longer be denied. If we are the ones to recognize and profit by it, so be it. Embrace the way of change and grow strong from it.

Welcome to the revolution at the end of the world.

## The Manifesto

Long ago, the founders of the Shadow Court created a set of guiding principles to keep their followers unified in purpose and remind them of the goals that all the denizens of shadow should seek to fulfill. While expressed in various forms throughout the years, the essence has remained the same, and all Shadow Court fae respect the wisdom it contains. Bear in mind that while it is far from dogma, those who do not at least pay lip service to these tenets are frequently summoned before the higher echelons of the Shadow Court to explain themselves, as these philosophies express the core of the court, and those who disagree with them too strongly are likely to prove disloyal in the future.

### The First Tenet

*Understand the mortal world, and shelter those who cannot live within it.*

To be Unseelie is to understand that change is inevitable, and that means keeping up with current events and technologies in the mortal world; if you don't, you can be sure your enemy will. As the Seelie traditionally either overlook or patronize mortals, understanding them and how to use them can often give you no end of disgruntled spies and informants within a Seelie court. What's more, as you are part human, it is only logical to understand mortals as best you can; if this leads to hatred or contempt for them, fine, but first at least see things from their perspective. Finally, shelter the Thallain and other recent arrivals from the Dreaming, at least until they understand what they have come to destroy, and keep them safe from mortals and non-court Kithain alike.

### The Second Tenet

*Understand the supernatural world, and make and break alliances as necessary.*

We are not alone in the night — other things stalk the darkness, but while the Seelie fear and revile them, we understand they have their own place in things and make pacts with them. Few manipulators are better suited to subtle power plays than a vampire, few advisors are wiser than a wizard, few spies are more undetectable than a ghost, few warriors are more fearsome than a werewolf pack on the rampage. With the right words and understanding they can all be yours for the using. Beware their unique wants and hungers, not to mention the Banality that hangs about them, and you can have a number of allies and informants that the Seelie will never expect. Best of all, we are hard

for many of them to detect unless we announce ourselves, making it easy to slip away if things become too dangerous.

### **The Third Tenet**

*Harvest Glamour and prepare for the approaching of Endless Winter.*

This is simple. Endless Winter means that Glamour will become scarce, and thus any means of acquiring and hoarding it is not only expected but demanded. Those within the court differ in their views on Ravaging, as some believe it a renewable resource even in the light of Endless Winter, while others disagree and claim it wastes fast-disappearing Dreamers, but none argue that the overall goal of gaining as much Glamour as possible is a bad thing.

### **The Fourth Tenet**

*Overthrow the Seelie Court and the nobility.*

Though this goes without saying to most recruits, the overthrow of the Seelie is a sacred quest as well as a practical goal for the Shadow Court — after usurping and slandering the court's rightful position for over 600 years, the eve of Endless Winter makes this the perfect time for vengeance. With the Seelie out of the way and the quarrelsome noble system cast aside, true change can emerge. Even the sidhe of the Shadow Court believe this dismantling of the nobility is necessary, though most of them see themselves at the head of the new order to come.

### **The Fifth Tenet**

*Fulfill the ritual obligations of the year, culminating in the rituals of Samhain.*

This tenet is perhaps what separates the true Shadow Court fae from their pretender cousins — the essence of the court remains with the rituals it was founded to protect and preserve. Perversely enough, the Unseelie of the Shadow Court make up the largest number of fae who still observe the original traditions of the many faerie holidays, especially on Samhain. By honoring the rituals, the Shadow Court renews its ties to the other worlds as well as to each other and tracks the esteem particular court members might have.

### **The Sixth Tenet**

*Spread chaos, revolution and anarchy.*

Though often synonymous with the Fourth Tenet, the two are not identical — the mortal world needs to be awakened to the truth of things as well, and nothing grabs a person's attention better than fear. Chaos and anarchy keep the enemies of the court off-balance and obscure the more delicate maneuverings going on behind the scenes. Leave every location changed for your passing, and let no complacent soul — mortal or fae — rest easily in delusions of comfort and safety.

### *The Seventh Tenet*

*There is no tenet number seven. All hail Discordia!*

We are the Unseelie, harbingers of change, breakers of tradition, fomenters of revolution and the nightmares that refuse to be tamed by this world or any other. Never forget this! If you feel yourself settling into the same routine — whether it's as a mortal holding down a job or a faerie spreading anarchy — do yourself a favor and take a wild night (or week, or year) to change it all. We expect nothing less.

### *The Shadow Escheat*

*Hear the words of Lady Grear, Shadow Court warrior and sidhe of House Scathach, as she speaks on the subject of the Seelie code of honor.*

Though it burns us badly to do so, we often must pay at least nominal homage to the Seelie code known as the Escheat. I must admit, the wiser ones among us recognize some pretty common sense stuff in some of it, even if it has acquired too many cutesy Seelie flourishes over time. Here's how the court sees it.

#### **The Right of Demesne**

Straight up crap. There's no power or nobility higher than whoever holds the blade to your back at any particular moment. Those who're strong enough and smart enough to take land and hold it — noble or not — deserve it. Anyone else is window dressing.

#### **The Right to Dream**

Let me make this very simple — mortals dream. We live on dreams. Did you have a personal relationship with the tree that grew the apple you're eating? We know better than to cut the whole orchard down, but that doesn't mean we get friendly with the produce, or mind pruning it when it gets out of line.

#### **The Right of Ignorance**

Mortals are ignorant, oblivious and predictable, and most Prodigals are so full of themselves they don't even realize we exist. So who cares if we flash our power when we have to?

#### **The Right of Rescue**

Get this one down — Shadow Court *always* help other Shadow Court, so long as it doesn't blow your cover to do it. Sometimes we'll help other fae too, especially since they owe us big time for the favor. Sometimes, though, it's better to just let those institutionalized Seelie nobles slide. Boo hoo, too bad for them.

#### **The Right of Safe Haven**

It's hard enough to hang on to things in this world as it is, without the added pressure of moochers and whiners knocking on your door, demanding something they couldn't earn on their own. Sure, take 'em in if you want, but first make sure they can pay the price for your hospitality.

### The Right of Life

This isn't Sunday school — sometimes you have to break things, people included, to get what you want. Too much death and you'll be lost to Banality, so be careful you don't get addicted to it. We're not above getting rid of those who refuse their part in the Pageant, but nothing attracts attention to us like murder, and if you expose us because you're careless, guess who's next?

## Shadow Courtly Affairs

*Blackberry Jack, pooka Modernist and adventurer, expounds on daily life as a member of the Shadow Court.*

### Political Impulses

Although many Seelie believe that we're all the same, that all we want is to murder the Seelie nobles and vandalize the local freeholds, it's simply not so. There are as many different reasons for joining the court as there are members (if not more). What's more, once you've signed up, you eventually find yourself drifting toward others who share your outlook on what the court is doing and where you think it should be headed. Now, don't get me wrong, it's not generally something that's put on a banner — walk into one of our meetings and ask "So, who's a Repudiator here?" and I guarantee that you'll get nothing but puzzled looks — but there are definitely different groups with different visions, and you should know about the bigger ones, just in case you do happen to find someone who takes them seriously.

### Purist

A lot of folks call these guys Traditionalists, but that's not really doing them justice — after all, if it really was tradition, they wouldn't have to organize to try to bring it about, would they? See, all these Shadow Court types want is to return to the old system of Seelie/Unseelie transition, since they figure it's kissing off that little tradition that led to the whole mess in the first place. This means they're a little softer toward the Seelie than most of us; not too much, or they wouldn't be here, but a little bit, not that they don't catch hell for it from the rest of us. They're not too happy about the idea of Endless Winter, but they're getting ready for it anyway, and to this end they've got some of the deepest influence in the mortal world (not to mention biggest stocks of stashed Glamour) of all the Shadow Court. They tend to come down hard on Ravagers, because they see it as wasting a diminished resource. You should see the looks on some of the new kids' faces when they think being Shadow Court means they can just suck the Glamour out of anyone they feel like, and then a Purist whacks them upside the head for it! Purists are mostly Unseelie sidhe, but it doesn't take pointy ears and a flawless face to think that restoring the old transition is the way to go; lots of commoners think this sounds pretty swell too.

### Repudiator

Go one step farther down the same road as the Purists, and you find the Repudiators. These guys have no tolerance for the Seelie whatsoever and think that the only hope for the fae is to let the Unseelie take the wheel for, oh, say, about 600 years or so, just like the Seelie did. Like the Purists, they're hoarding all the power they can get — mortal, magical or otherwise — because they think it's the only way to survive the coming darkness. Unlike the Purists, though, the Repudiators actively work to bring on Endless Winter, thinking it'll provide the tests necessary to weed out the weak from the strong, the fit from the unfit, etc. They don't like Ravaging, but don't much care either; so long as you aren't too blatant or don't dry out their favorite resource, you should be cool with them. A few of them think Winter is here already and are totally paranoid about giving up anything to outsiders, even other Shadow Court who don't ask nicely, so watch your step.

Oh, and while it's not something they put on their business cards, this is pretty much a sidhe-only party, unless you don't mind being their errand boy (or you just have a big brass set of your own). They generally restrict the upper-level stuff to the Elves Anonymous crowd, figuring they're the only ones smart enough for that kind of political stuff. I say let 'em have it, if that's what they want.

### Anarchist

Our most visible face, and always the most fun to hang out with at parties, these talented boys and girls are responsible for most of the nasty stuff associated with the Shadow Court: mischief, mayhem and misinformation, with the occasional murder or maiming thrown in. Yep, they'd be a regular faerie *Fight Club*, if only you could get them to sit still long enough to read them a set of rules. As it is, though, this is pretty much the grab bag of the Shadow Court as far as motivations go, and they generally agree on only one thing: the world as it stands in the present has got to go, *right now!*

Actually, that's not quite true — if you really put your mind to it, you can generally break them into two groups, the Rebuilders and the Destructionists. Rebuilders want to tear down the Seelie power structure and replace it with something better (though I've noticed most have no idea what that is), while the Destructionists are the worst nightmares of the Seelie fae — they simply destroy for love of destruction itself. Most of them are pretty amateur, but the ones that get organized get scary. As a whole, Anarchists don't give a damn about Endless Winter — one group's too concerned with the problems of here and now, the other's too busy saying *heh heh heh* as they put dynamite under the duke's car — and tend to take Glamour however they can get it, Ravaging or otherwise. As you might expect, there are a lot of commoners in the Anarchist movement, though the occasional disgruntled sidhe shows up as well.



### *Ritualist*

All the way at the spooky end of the spectrum you'll come across the Ritualists, likely while they're communing with a spirit of the dead, taking tea with a vampire or something else that'll turn your fur white. Don't get me wrong — a lot of Shadow Court, this pooka included, feel a deep connection to the rituals that these fae endorse, and take part in the Pageantry of the Ritualists with no little reverence. It's just that beyond the ritual calendar and the spiritual guidance they offer, you always get the impression that they're learning some Very Bad Things, you know what I mean? I guess if it hasn't done them too much harm by now, it never will, but it still unnerves me. Believe me, I've seen some pretty creepy things in this life so far. As for politics, well, the Ritualists play with the best of them, but they ultimately think politics should take a backseat to the spirituality of the court, although they're not above using rituals to further what politics they do play if necessary. Anybody can be part of the Ritualists at the same time as they take part in any other group, except maybe the Anarchists, though there are certainly those who spend their time exclusively with the Ritualists.

When it comes to Endless Winter, the Ritualists were the first to predict it, and thus have guided the Shadow Court regarding it from the beginning — to them, it's part of the cycle, a time of purging before a new Spring (though whether the fae or the world will be around for this Spring depends on the opinion of the Ritualist in question), and the Shadow Court is destined to play a large part of it, so they take pride in their rituals and do what they can to learn of Winter as it approaches. They also handle most of the court's supernatural alliances, and endorse all methods of gathering Glamour, so long as the proper rituals are observed. I know a lot of commoners who take part in the Ritualist ceremonies, but once again the sidhe are the foundation of the group, despite having skipped town on the rest of us for a few centuries' worth of rituals; quick learners, I guess.

### *Modernist*

Noble, common — who cares? Bullets don't. Computers don't. And that's the world we live in now, like it or not, so why not try to match up to it instead of hiding from it? These Shadow Court fae are the ones most in tune with the times, and in a heartbeat they can go from hardcases who advocate revolution and Seelie assassination to negotiators willing to work with the Seelie to make changes, making them some of the most adaptable court members out there — and I'm not just saying this because I'm one of them. We don't even mind being mistaken for the Seelie group of the same name, because a lot of our goals are the same — we both agree that a 14th-century system of government just isn't going to cut it anymore, not even with a bunch of whiz kids like the sidhe at the helm, and that it's time to come up with something better if we're going to survive in the modern world. The main difference is that the Seelie Modernists are pretty complacent about these changes and just sit around talking about

them all day long while we're more interested in getting them put into action and working out the problems as they come along. I mean, there's no way to predict or prevent every possible complication, so if you're gonna take a chance, just take it and see where the chips land afterward. We believe in Endless Winter, sure, but more as a reminder to the fae to get their act together and get with the times than some big metaphysical Armageddon mumbo-jumbo. If we play our cards right and adapt, we may even sail through it with little or no damage!

Oh, and keep your hands to yourselves with the mortals — Ravaging to save your neck is one thing, but make a habit of it and we'll slap you back in line. Understanding them is our best route to adapting to the world, and that means no treating them like snack food.

### *Others in Shadow: The Prodigals*

*Quiet, everyone, as Princess Milbred, this season's leader of goblinkind, holds forth on the many Prodigal allies of the Shadow Court.*

**Vampires** — I met a vampire once, when I was being crowned. She was tall and pale and had real big fangs, and made everyone laugh with her funny jokes. I think that the grumps said she was crazy, but she seemed real nice to me. They don't like sunlight either, so that makes us friends, but be careful — my teacher told me they were really sneaky too, and like to break promises to everybody.

**Ghosts** — Oooh, we like ghosties! They're so much more fun than live people, and they can do lots more neat stuff too. Plus, we got all kinda deals with them, so all you gotta do is ask if you want their help, and they'll do it. They can really scare the Seelie — I once had a ghostie friend of mine pop right out from under my skin, and the Duke was sooo scared! It was great!

**Wizards** — These guys are really neat, but they have *problems*. Like us, they have trouble doing magic around boring old normal people, but instead of just not working, their magic can blow them up. Some of them are really mean and boring, like Autumn People, and we run away when they come near. Others are a lot like us, though, and we can team up to do some really cool stuff.

**Shapeshifters** — Grr. My teacher met a guy who could turn into a wolf, but he was really nasty looking and had ratty-looking fur and everything. They're supposed to be kinda like us, 'cause they don't like the big banal world either, but I didn't like him. He reminded me of the Big Bad Wolf, right about to eat me up, and Teacher said that he probably would if he could, but if I was nice to him he'd eat someone else instead, like one of those boring Seelie people. Neat!

## *Leadership in the Shadows*

Though it would positively astound the Seelie, there is some rhyme and reason to the way the Shadow Court acts, though it may not seem so on the surface. Hey, if you've already got political impulses and groups, it's only logical that eventually some of them will start hanging out often enough that they start printing up their own logos, you know? So the Shadow Court's no different than most groups in that respect, except that since most of us already lead double lives among the Seelie, it can quickly become wheels within wheels within wheels within... you get the idea. Just be careful you don't get so dizzy that you fall down and lose track of who you are, or worse yet, who your enemies are, because believe me, you'll acquire some before long, whether you know it or not. To paraphrase a great man, even if you choose not to decide between these groups, you've still made a choice.

In order to ensure that no one group can take down the entire system if they decide to turn Seelie evidence on the rest of us, the court is generally composed like a resistance movement (or terrorist movement, depending on your point of view): small cells operating in conjunction with maybe one or two others, but never seeing any other cells unless absolutely necessary. The fewer court members one of our kind can betray if captured, the happier we all are. Leadership and direction comes mostly through secret messages and wandering Masterminds and Instigators, who generally stick around just long enough to give you a new assignment or two before moving on. A few of them are permanently rooted in one place or another, but those are rare, and they typically operate only in places where the court was already taking over. How will you know when these figures show up? Trust me, you'll know. It just happens that way — like night falling over the world, they always reach you eventually, even if you've never seen another bunch of Shadow Court outside of your little gang. How do we know they're on the up and up? I admire your suspicious nature, but you'll see when you're in the court longer, these things are just natural. We can smell it when it's one of our own, and when it's just an Unseelie poseur or some kind of Seelie trap. How do you think we've survived this long?

### *Oathbreaking for Fun and Profit*

It may seem that the Seelie-endorsed system of oaths backed by the Dreaming would put a major dent in the activities of the Shadow Court, and indeed it forces them to be quite careful with what they agree to in the course of their missions, but in truth it's seldom the threat that the Seelie would like it to be. First of all, most oaths and promises are not backed by Glamour — and believe me, you can tell when the Dreaming is listening and when it isn't — and are thus always free to be broken, and we often do just that. Serves the sucker right for putting so little force behind his words. Second, the *Contempt Art* can get us out of a lot of the magical loyalty tricks others try to use against us, and in these lazy days many rulers prefer to simply let their Glamour enforce the law rather than try to hold us to some words said in the empty air. Hey, their fault for slacking off, not ours.

Finally, constantly asking others for oaths on the Dreaming is just rude, and you can get out of a lot of oaths by pretending to act all indignant about it — “What, you don't trust me?” — and otherwise pulling a hissy fit. Sure, they'll try the old “If you have nothing to hide, you won't mind” bit on you, but just fire right back with this line: Forcing other people to swear oaths about lots of different things is comparable to someone forcing you to take a lie-detector test every time they ask you a question, and who would really tolerate that, even from their closest friends? Even if you have nothing to hide, you still wouldn't appreciate supposed friends and allies using some magical means of verifying your words every time they talked to you, and constantly suggesting oaths on the Dreaming is exactly that. This works better if you have a cover as a fellow Seelie, or a less-shady Unseelie, but you'd be surprised how far even the wild ones among us can take it.

Of course, sooner or later you'll probably wind up in a situation where you've got no choice. In that case, remember what you swore to and more importantly what the penalties for breaking it would be; if they're not too bad, you still have some wiggle room, and you can resist a lot of the ones with harsher penalties by using the tactics outlined above. Just remember that the Dreaming honors the spirit, not the letter, of the oath, so trying to get cute about upholding it is seldom a good idea. Fortunately, there's no dishonor in being Forsworn among us — hell, that's how a lot of us got here — unless you break an oath to a fellow court member, in which case you're worth about as much as your weight in hamburger meat, 'cause that's all you'll be good for when we're through with you. In any event, watch out who and what you promise to, and you should be OK.

### *Shadow Court Justice*

Another common fib is that there's no such thing as a wrong act for the depraved minions of the Shadow Court. Well, I can't say that we aren't a *very* liberal bunch when it comes to what we consider "right" and "wrong," but there are some definite lines even we can cross, and the concept of a fair trial has proven difficult to teach to ogres — so those accused had better make a convincing case (and fast) if they wish to avoid punishment. What are the punishments? Well, depends, but banishment, magical amnesia, periods of humiliating servitude and the like are all popular, as is the occasional savage beating, scarring or maiming. Just pray you never need to find out.

As crimes go, betraying secrets, members or any other aspect of the court to outsiders is supreme mistake number one — do a terminally stupid thing like this, and I guarantee you'll wish you'd never even heard of the term "Unseelie." If it's something *really* minor that you did by mistake, you can expect to come through with most of your limbs... anything larger or more deliberate is up for grabs, and you can always bet that part of your punishment is doing away with whoever you spilled your guts to, no matter how young or innocent they might be. Sorry, but them's the breaks in this game — we can't afford to let *anything* slip. We've come too far to let one pair of loose lips ruin it now.

Actively fighting or working against other cliques is another mistake, although in reality the rest of the court tends to turn a blind eye to those kinds of battles unless they start draining too much time and energy from the real goals of the court, in which case all concerned can expect to spend the next few months sent to their banal rooms without a Glamour supper, if you know what I mean. Failing to honor the yearly rites, even if only in your own Anarchist fashion, is also grounds for some punishment — they're what keeps the court tight with each other and reminds us what we're really fighting for. If you can't be bothered to take some time out for a thing like that, then to hell with you! Oh, and of course the last big mistake — failing an assignment, or even worse, refusing one altogether. What happens to you then depends on how important the task was and how badly you failed, but it's generally nasty and will send your status in the court straight down the drain. And if you ever refuse an assignment, you'd better have a damn good reason with *IMPORTANT* written all over it in foot-high flaming letters, or you don't want to know what the Instigators will come up with to make an example out of you. One reason the court works is that we trust each other. Start messing that up and you give everyone problems, and nobody's so vital to us that we'll let that slide. Got it?

### *Midnight Court*

Most of the time court justice is served locally, by the Masterminds or Instigators closest to those involved, but in the case of truly heinous or widespread crimes, a special proceeding is called for: the dreaded Midnight Court. Named for its customary meeting time, this infamous body convenes where needed, using a combination of potent magic and physical force to ensure



both the appearance and attention of all interested parties during the proceedings. The justices are always masked with powerful cantrips and hand down rulings with the crashing finality of a thunderbolt. The Midnight Court is more elaborate than the rough "trials" that determine most Shadow Court justice, making a sincere effort to review evidence and consult witnesses, and thus it is a little more fair, but the accused has no rights except those granted by the court, and the court has no problem handing out sentences of death or even death by cold iron if it deems such measures appropriate. After all, it only appears to handle the most grievous crimes and feels justified in the verdicts it reaches. Those found not guilty are freed from all suspicion, and most wake up in the morning with their memories fogged and the feeling of having narrowly avoided some terrible tragedy.

No one knows who is part of the Midnight Court or how they are chosen, nor how the Midnight Court always seems to appear when needed. For all the whispers of dark magics and darker pacts surrounding it, little is known even within the Shadow Court, and so it is greatly feared by even the vilest redcaps. The Midnight Court will also occasionally convene to pass judgment on an outsider, especially a troublesome Seelie or Prodigal foe, and uses all the power of Glamour to enforce its verdicts in those instances. It is said that those who throw themselves on the mercy of the Midnight Court can occasionally avoid sentence by serving it instead, but the truth of this remains unknown. The idea that anyone in the court might secretly be part of this mysterious body also does wonders to ensure loyalty, if only through paranoia, since one never knows if an agent of the Midnight Court might be listening in....

## Organization

Actual organization of our kind comes in two basic flavors: cliques and secret societies. They're not mutually exclusive — a clique can be part of a secret society, and most secret societies started as cliques — but be careful about getting too mixed up in either, or you'll start missing meetings or finding yourself at cross-purposes with groups you're loyal to, and that gets ugly fast.

### *Cliques*

Cliques are our equivalent to motleys or households, the fae you hang out with, travel with, and generally stick by through thick and thin. You'll get assignments from the court together, and hopefully get to share the glory with them too. They're the best friends most of us will ever get, especially with our risky lives, so be good to them, especially since most cliques change every Samhain, so the nicer (or at least more loyal) you are, the better the chance that if you need to call for help outside your clique, it'll be an ally who answers.

Friendly word of advice — if you find yourself running with a clique, and most of us do sooner or later — do everyone a favor and make sure you know what you're looking to accomplish. Otherwise, you might wind up with a group where one-third wants to do politics and be all secret-secret with the Seelie,

another third feels like Ravaging up and down the town all night, and the last bunch just wants to strap the duke to a chair and see if they can gnaw his ears off. While certainly fun, such groups tend not to last very long, and have a nasty habit of shooting each other in the foot.

One more thing — not everyone in a clique has to be full-fledged Shadow Court. Possible recruits aside, sometimes it's fun or useful to have a wannabe around, maybe even one who *thinks* they're full Shadow Court, in order to distract the local nobles or take a fall for you later on. Of course, if you can get some poor Seelie saps to run with you, that can also occasionally be fun too, not to mention a great alibi for some of your worse misdeeds. Just make sure that nobody outside the court knows anything about what it is or what it's asking you to do, and anything else you choose to do is fine.

**Graybeard Cliques** — A lot of Kithain disregard grumps as too over-the-hill to do much of anything, but we know better. Those wily Unseelie who are strong and clever enough to stick around this long have more than earned our respect, and putting them together allows them to do all sorts of political chess games, power plays and other things wilders seldom have the patience or planning to do. Even better, most Seelie never suspect graybeards of being up to anything; so long as they're subtle, they can get away with a lot.

Because of the balancing act required to maintain a mortal and faerie life at this age, most graybeard cliques excel at the First Tenet of the Shadow Court and are employed in just this capacity by the court's agents.

**Ravaging Cliques** — Typically at least semi-nomadic, these cliques avoid politics as a matter of course, preferring instead to wage anonymous guerrilla war on the enemies of the Shadow Court and find new ways to secure Glamour supplies for the coming Endless Winter. Highly versatile by nature, all manner of kiths and seemings can be found in these cliques, depending on the needs of the mission at hand. They are also the most likely to encounter Prodigals on behalf of the court, either as ambassadors or (most rarely) assassins, and as such have a wider perspective on the world than even their fellow Shadow Court brethren.

Ravaging cliques are the ones most likely to mind the Second and Third Tenets of the Shadow Court, and take justifiable pride in their accomplishments.

**Pretender Cliques** — It takes stones to run around throwing rocks and paint on the big white walls of Seelie society, but it also takes stones to put on your sheep's clothing and see how far into their good graces you can get, all the while reporting back and spreading a little Shadow Court chaos, of course. These cliques do their best to undermine and ultimately take over a freehold, though whether they do it by stirring up commoner unrest, starting scandals or by actually pretending to be Seelie courtiers of some kind depends on the clique in question.

Pretender cliques are naturals at the Fourth Tenet of the Shadow Court, and most can tell you a number of heartwarming stories about the right ways to go about doing it.

**Obeisance Cliques** — Primarily headed by Unseelie sidhe, these cliques believe in the inherent superiority or necessity of Unseelie rule, and offer followers great power and rewards in return for helping to depose the local ruler in favor of the head of the clique. This typically works best in areas that already have a high level of dissatisfaction with the current power structure, but with the right planning and propaganda this approach can be implemented almost anywhere. However, they can run into trouble with other Shadow Court cliques who disagree with the notion of replacing one ruler with another, and in the past have been known to fight fiercely with pretender cliques over the proper way of overthrowing Seelie rule.

Obeisance cliques like to style themselves as following the Fourth Tenet of the Shadow Court to perfection, no matter what their comrades may say about it.

**Ritualist Cliques** — By far the most rare, Ritualist cliques seek to probe the spiritual and magical depths of the shadows and place great importance on learning new Arts, ensuring the sanctity of the Shadow Court rituals and making alliances with Prodigals to further their forbidden knowledge. They can also be found offering guidance to other cliques, and most areas with a higher court presence have one of these cliques on retainer to perform ceremonies and lead rituals for the area. Their membership is typically diverse but among the most devoted to the court, and close-knit due to their constant ritual observances and the like.

Ritualist cliques uphold the Second Tenet of the Shadow Court, while at the same time furthering the Fifth Tenet, leading the yearly revelry as Samhain comes around.

**Jamming Cliques** — These cliques exist solely to make the lives of any and all Seelie around them hell. They first spy on their foes, learning their weaknesses, and then set about to create as much havoc as they can before they're forced to move on (one way or another). By running interference and trying to counter the moves of the Seelie, they draw fire away from the other cliques, not to mention furthering the goals of the court. They also inject some much-needed chaos into the complacent Seelie mainstream, and most have no problem extending their troublemaking to mortal society as well, becoming infamous revolutionary figures in the process.

Rebellion and anarchy are part of the Sixth Tenet of the Shadow Court, and jamming cliques are at home creating them.

**Chaos Cliques** — While sometimes confused with jamming cliques, these cliques represent a more primal force than the often cleverly planned and executed actions of their Jammer colleagues. Chaos cliques find even anarchy too political a concept and simply exist to raise as much hell as possible. Whether they do so by wine and revelry, tricks and pranks, or fists and knives depends on the clique in question, but regardless the results are the same — areas where the local Seelie held sway are never the same again.

It could be said that chaos cliques foster the Seventh Tenet of the Shadow Court, but whether they're aware of it is a matter of some debate.

**Operational Cliques** — Only a rumor at present, talk persists of small cells of highly trained warriors and assassins forming across Concordia, sometimes with members of other cliques, sometimes entirely on their own. These cliques are supposedly extremely close-knit and fanatical in their devotion to the ideals of the court, and, if there's truth to the tales, have already made strikes against several powerful Seelie nobles, in efforts to fan the flames of civil war. These "ops" cliques would be upholding any number of court goals, but for the time being remain little more than a myth, even to their shadow siblings, and so the majority of the Shadow Court simply waits to see if there's truth to the tales.

## ***Secret Societies***

Secret societies are just that, groups of Shadow Court fae who have some extra goal or secret purpose and usually enforce all sorts of secret initiations, symbols, oaths and code phrases to ensure that you don't spill your guts about what they're up to. Some are more secret than others — even some Seelie have heard of the Knights of the Cold Watch, for example, while only the cleverest pooka like me have any idea the Glowing Eye exists, but regardless of how well known they are, only those members sworn into the society ever get to find out what's really going on. Whatever you do, don't get caught spying on them — the rumors about what even the nicest of these groups do to those they catch snitching will keep you up for *weeks*.

Shadow Court members can also be found in the Ranters, the Cat's Cradle and the Monkey's Paw, all of which are described in the section on secret societies on page 222.

### ***Knights of the Cold Watch***

These creepy guys are absolutely convinced that some even nastier things than the Thallain returned with the sidhe during the Resurgence, and despite the fact that they never seem to be able to turn up any solid proof of it, they continue searching high and low for evidence of these "abominations." I must admit, though, that they might be on to something, if for no other reason than from time to time some of their bodies have turned up with some very weird-looking bite marks. There are regular Unseelie among the Watchers, even some Seelie who share their memory of the monsters they're on the lookout for. While the court isn't too keen on the Seelie involvement, as long as our Watchers keep their fellows away from the Thallain and don't betray court secrets, the group actually has its uses as chimera-hunters and the like. I've even heard that there a few Anarchists among them who are planning to join up with the critters, assuming they find some, and *really* go nuts, but that's a big assumption there. They're pretty widely known among both Seelie and Unseelie Courts, although most people think they're a bunch of doomsayers jumping at shadows. Most are sidhe, although a number of commoners have joined them as well.

**Symbol:** A crossed sword (sidhe) and ax (commoners), frosted with ice.

**Dress:** Most Watchers make little secret of their allegiance, unless it would make them the object of ridicule. When the situation demands discretion, Watchers wear a scarf or sash of either white or ice blue when they wish to show their membership.

### *The Glowing Eye*

OK, I'll tell you what I've heard about the Eye, but you didn't hear it from me. Because if they find out and come after me, I'll make sure to pay *you* a visit before they catch me, and you don't want that. The reason I'm a little jumpy is that the Eye is a bunch of sidhe who style themselves the *real* powers behind it all, the puppeteers pulling the strings of folks like you and me even as we have the poseur court at Samhain acting as a front for the rest of us real Shadow Court types. Supposedly it's headed up by a threesome of the nastiest sidhe of House Balor, and they've decided they're the only ones who are fit enough to rule during the coming Endless Winter, weed the weak from the strong, you get the idea. If my sources are telling me straight, they've got a bunch of freaky Prodigals lined up to support them, from angry ghosts to twisted werewolves to shadow-worshipping vampires and even weirder things. Worst of all, word has it they have spies everywhere, and their agents are so good at masquerading as loyal Seelie types (or at least less sinister Unseelie) that they've managed to put some in very high places across Concordia, where they're just a word away from revolution, as soon as the Eye decides to speak it. Oh, and unless you enjoy being a flunky, don't bother joining up without nice sidhe features, preferably of Balor ancestry.

**Symbol:** A baleful red eye, set in a black pyramid.

**Dress:** Though they prefer both their symbol and their dress to remain hidden, on ceremonial occasions they wear necklaces with the society's symbol, and favor black and red clothing.

### *Pilgrims of the Bright Road*

I'm sure somebody's mentioned by now that we're all tied up in the Samhain rites of the dead and all that cheerful stuff. Well, if you thought the Ritualists were pretty strict with their stuff, you've never seen a Pilgrim at work. Chances are you never will, either; they keep their stuff top secret even from the other Ritualists around them and have no problem offing anyone they find spying, since they consider death their personal playground. From what I know, they're working on a way to establish lasting means of communicating with the dead, fae or otherwise, because they believe this will teach them the secrets they need to survive the coming Endless Winter. Some have even reinstated the *teign* (pronounced "ten"), or traditional sacrifice to the Underworld. Long ago, the *teign* was believed necessary to ensure the immortality of the fae; though versions of it vary, it involves at least one fae every seven years accepting permanent death as a means of ensuring the reincarnation of others, though from what I've heard of the Pilgrims their definition of someone "accepting"



this honor is pretty liberal, if you know what I mean. Best to steer clear, unless you don't mind playing with death in all its forms. Needless to say, few sidhe hang out with these guys, though the sluagh love them.

**Symbol:** Black cemetery gates, slightly ajar.

**Dress:** Pilgrims often disguise their allegiance among all of their other ritual garb and materials, working an ornate black key into their outfits. The most fanatical of them inscribe their symbol on the soles of their shoes.

### *Children's Crusade*

Not much to say about these darling brats, save that they're either the best thing that every happened to the court, or its worst nightmare, depending on who you ask. Most of 'em are redcaps, though that's a fact, not a requirement — all it takes is a childling or young wilder who doesn't mind killing Seelie fae, especially Seelie nobles. You'd be surprised how easily this comes to most kids, more so when the killing they do is largely chimerical — they think the guy they whack is just going to pop back up in a little bit, like a cartoon character, and that makes it OK to do what they do. Hey, don't get me wrong, I have just as much of a dislike of the nobility as the next Modernist, but these kids are pretty damn eerie regardless, and you gotta know that eventually most of them probably wouldn't mind graduating to killing their targets "for real," and that's just dangerous for all concerned. Worse still, even when they're caught nobody'll punish them, because they're "only childlings."

**Symbol:** A baby's rattle with a knife point on one end, dripping with blood.

**Dress:** Crusaders don't tend to a particular dress affectation. Instead, every year (sometimes more often) they pick a particular cartoon, movie or other pop culture item and wear clothing with those characters on them, verifying their true identities with a secret handshake or code phrase.

### *Revelry and Holiday*

One thing that most folks outside the court don't understand is our love of ceremony. They see us as raging egomaniacs or slavering antimonarchists, and forget that our roots go all the way down to the ancient rites of Samhain. As any Ritualist can tell you, the Shadow Court may have so much on its hands in the temporal realm that sometimes it's hard to remember its true purpose, but it's the beating black heart of the matter. I think that's what burns us the most, when it all comes down to it — that for all the Seelie talk about upholding tradition, they've ignored the old ways that they didn't like, and they've been doing it ever since they took over. Which means that we, the Shadow Court — the greatest force for change in Kithain society whether anyone likes it or wants it or not, *we're* the ones who have preserved what it really means to be fae. Against the law and under the nose of "upstanding" fae society, no less.

I won't go through the whole calendar with you — it'd take too long, for one thing, and besides, what kind of fun would the parties be if you knew all the themes in advance, right? (I have just one word of advice, though: Be *real* nice

to me in the month or so leading up to July 17th. Why? No reason, no reason... heh heh heh.) Suffice it to say that while the Seelie have long sponsored a holiday calendar, carefully sanitized and clarified to their particular standards, the Shadow Court still remembers all the celebrations in their original forms. We do our best to hit as many of them among our own kind as we can. For one thing, it gives us a chance to cut loose in ways we normally can't, not even around our fellow Unseelie, especially those of us who're working on double lives; for another, it helps us all keep in touch, bring us all back together and remind us why we do the things we do. How does it do that? It's hard to explain, but trust me, your first court festival, you'll just feel it, deep in your bones, and you'll know that this is what we're supposed to be all about. Not saying all the rites are pretty — hey, if most people really remembered what that Maypole stands for, they wouldn't let their little kiddies dance around it — but we respect that too; after all, fae are equal parts dream and nightmare, right? So why not act like it?

For a complete list of Kithain holidays, see page 228.

### *Samhain*

Anyway, as you've no doubt guessed, Samhain is our big event of the year, and if you skip every other holiday (not that I recommend it, but hey, if you do...), *don't miss Samhain*. No excuse for it. There's always a court gathering, and it decides a lot of what's going on the next year, including the new positions everyone holds in the court. Failure to appear is as good as saying "I don't care, make me the redcaps' latrine cleaner for next year." Besides, this is *our* night, and you can just feel the raw energy of it rising under your skin for days in advance. It's an experience you simply don't have being Seelie, and even most Unseelie are pretty dead to it.

Samhain actually begins the night before, on what's traditionally known as Hell's Night (or Devil's Night or Mischief Night, depending on where you're from). Sheer madness and vandalism is the best way to put it, and the local cliques often put on a contest to see who can come up with the most creative acts of destruction. It's also an excuse to Ravage up as much Glamour as possible for the festivities to follow, so don't be shy — even the mortals expect things to get crazy that night, so why disappoint them?

Once Samhain night finally starts up, it usually begins with a masquerade party, followed by a huge feast. Great costumes are de rigueur, whether magical or otherwise, and needless to say they're also an excuse for starting all kinds of trouble. Many nobles disguise themselves as commoners on this night, and if you pierce their disguise they're supposed to grant you a boon, though what that boon may be depends on the noble in question. Even the feast isn't always what it seems — there's an equally ancient tradition called the Satyr's Feast, for example, and I'll just let you imagine what that must entail. Whatever it takes to get everyone, including the most Seelie of boggans and trolls, to start cutting loose, that's what kicks off Samhain.

Next comes the Descent, and just like the name implies, it's time things start getting really serious. Any Seelie in the area have to try seriously hard to hang on to their little Seelie selves, and most don't bother, which means it's time for some good ol' fashioned sensual abandon! You'd be surprised what those guys are capable of after repressing their natural instincts for so long. Let me just say that some of them give us a run for our money. A mock court is elected, typically of the most obnoxious commoners in the land, and their word is law for the night, though they're usually too inebriated from one source of pleasure or another to do much with their "sacred trust," which is just fine with us. Cliques do their own special ceremonies to let go of the old year, bid farewell to lost friends and await the coming of a new year, and if anyone's caught spying on private stuff like that, well, I hope they've commended themselves to their deity of choice, because we'll be more than happy to facilitate the introduction. Finally, Shadow Court and non-Shadow Court alike gather around bonfires (or the closest thing suburbia can manage to one), confess their sins of the past year and make resolutions for the year to follow — typically ones of atonement, but not always. Most Seelie indulge in this rite because they figure the Samhain Mists will protect their little secrets from coming to light the next day, and they're generally right... generally.

Around the time everyone else is going home, the court finishes its most sacred rites: the Instigators gather to name new members of the court, current members watch their *Prestige* rise or fall as the deeds of the past year are discussed, new cliques and assignments are handed out, and the veil between life and death is parted to learn any final secrets that the worlds beyond have to offer. It should go without saying that we've cast off all poseurs and hangers-on at this point, and any who spy on this part of the ceremony are tucked into a shallow dirt bed for a nap. Some particular highlights of the rituals at this time are the sluagh Ritual of the Dead, where they trade tales and make deals with their friendly local stiffs for the coming year; the Ritual of the Eidolon, a big hit with the sidhe, where the spirits of lost fae are contacted through mysterious black birdlike chimera, who wing messages back and forth between worlds until dawn; and finally the Ritual of Doom Impending, which despite its sinister name is really just the formal term for the attempts ritemasters make at this time to receive prophecies, from the realms of dream and spirit alike. Different kiths do these prophecy rituals differently — a troll's runecasting is very different from an eshu's dervish dance or a satyr's, umm, *ecstatic* rites — but the result is hopefully the same, a new vision for the approaching new year. Altogether, these final rituals serve to bind the court together, help us put aside differences and otherwise renew our resolve to stand by each other as well as uphold the goals of the court.

As soon as dawn arrives, so do the Samhain Mists, concealing everything that happened the night before, even for most of us, although we remember our new cliques and assignments, and high-ranking court members hardly seem

touched by them at all. At best, the fae who awaken the next morning remember the events following the Descent in hazy, often allegorical images, but most don't even try, preferring to believe that everyone else's minds are as clouded as their own and letting the darkness lie. That suits everyone just fine, as far as we're concerned, and so it goes until another year passes and another Samhain looms on the horizon....

*System:* Samhain is a highly magical and mysterious time of year, and even those who have never heard of the Shadow Court still feel the dark Glamour of the night calling to them. All Seelie fae must win a Willpower Test against seven Traits (yes, Samhain will attempt to overbid if possible) every hour that they wish to retain their Seelie Legacy, and even those that do are still subject to the Samhain Mists. Most Seelie give in to their dark side on this one night, and indulge in forbidden trysts, childish pranks, political ranting and other activities normally prohibited by their court, reasoning that no one will remember much the next morning. Furthermore, all efforts to Ravage, adopt a disguise of any kind (magical or otherwise), receive a prophecy or contact the spirits of the dead receive a free retest on Samhain, due to dark and enigmatic energies running amok that night.

For those not protected by the appropriate rituals (which is essentially everyone except Shadow Court Instigators and a few master Ritualists), the Samhain Mists erase the memories of the night of debauchery. Recalling anything following the Descent with any useful clarity requires a Mental Challenge against 10 Traits (retest with *Gremayre*), and even then most recollections are shrouded in cryptic imagery. At the Storyteller's option, particularly significant events may be recalled more easily or even automatically — since it can be frustrating in the extreme to introduce a major plot development and then watch all the characters forget about it the next morning — but these should be rare and restricted to events crucial to the ongoing story, lest the mystery of Samhain be lost. Since this amnesia affects all but a handful of characters at most, and those who are immune dare not use their knowledge too openly or risk exposing themselves for what they are, the Samhain Mists should be quite balanced in play, protecting the acts and confessions of Seelie and Unseelie alike.

Note also that Banality is still gained for acts such as killing another changeling or stealing a balefire, even if memories become hazy, so those criminals who try to hide behind the Samhain Mists may be harder to catch, but still suffer the same penalties from the Dreaming for doing so.

## Shadow Court Character Creation

### *Thallain or Shadow Court Character Creation*

#### Step One: Character Concept

— Choose concept, Court (Unseelie), Legacies (two Unseelie for Thallain), house (where applicable), seeming, kith and political impulse

#### Step Two: Attributes

— Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (7/5/3)

— Choose Physical Traits

— Choose Social Traits

— Choose Mental Traits

#### Step Three: Select Advantages

— Choose Abilities (5), Backgrounds (5), levels of Arts (3) and Realms (5)

— Those who wish to be full members of the Shadow Court must take at least one level of the *Prestige* Background.

#### Step Four: Finishing Touches

— Record beginning Glamour, Willpower and Banality, as determined by seeming

— Choose Negative Traits, if any

— Purchase Merits/Flaws, if any

#### Step Five: Spark of Life

### *Dark Arts*

Characters who are full members of the Shadow Court (those who have at least one level of *Prestige*) may choose to learn some of the secret powers of the Shadow Court, the so-called Dark Arts; they are tightly guarded secrets, however, and those entrusted with them are granted the privilege with the understanding that they will be most discreet with them. Woe to those discovered teaching these Arts to outsiders, or even using them too openly!

*Contempt* — An Art of rebellion and disobedience, and used to counter *Sovereign*.

*Delusion* — Controlling the Mists to cloud memories and hide things from others.



*Political Impulses*

As with any other group, different members of the Shadow Court have different ideas about where it's from, where it is and where it's going. While not typically card-carrying organizations, there are several more-or-less recognized movements within the court. For the most part, they work in concert with each other, though conflicts do happen, and carrying the label of one may earn a character new friends (or enemies) when he least expects it.

**Purist** — A return to the old tradition of Seelie and Unseelie alternating rule is the only hope for restoring balance to the Dreaming and surviving Endless Winter.

**Repudiator** — Seelie fae ruled for 600 years, and look what happened! Only instituting absolute Unseelie rule can turn back the tide of stagnation and Banality.

**Anarchist** — To hell with politics! Take the system and smash it down!

**Ritualist** — Spirituality and honoring the ancient, bloody rites are the only ways to continue the cycle that will carry the fae through Endless Winter into Spring.

**Modernist** — The very concept of nobility is an absurd anachronism, and if the fae wish to survive in the modern world, it's time to found a whole new society.

*New Background: Prestige*

The Shadow Court doesn't recognize "official" titles, but it is possible to gain *Prestige* within the court. Trying to hold on to power and responsibility is seen as asking for trouble, but stepping down occasionally is seen as a gesture of humility. A courtier will probably not know who is more than one or two levels above her station, but she'd be foolish to exploit anyone below her. *Prestige* will not last longer than one year; if a changeling doesn't get promoted at Samhain, he'll lose at least one level of *Prestige* for the next year, though not to the point where he is considered outside the court. In fact, the Shadow Court is always changing as the Pageant moves on, and there's no guarantee that this status will last beyond the first few sessions, but it is a good indicator of the level of respect the character gravitates toward. Consider it your reputation, for better or for worse. Anyone without at least one level of this Background is merely running with a clique, and not privy to court secrets even if she's being groomed as a possible recruit. *Prestige* is never granted except on Samhain, and seldom removed before then either unless dire circumstances warrant it.

Many Shadow Court agents hold titles in the regular Concordian system, the better to spy on them and disrupt their proceedings. Thus, it is very possible

to possess a high *Title* in the regular court and a low *Prestige* in the Shadow Court, or vice versa. The dangers of leading such a double life are obvious if the character is caught, but the rewards can be beyond imagining.

One Trait — *Condemned*. You are firmly entrenched in the court and are permitted to learn secrets like the Dark Arts. You have forsaken your former life, even when given a chance or pressing reason to return. If you do not have this level of the Background when play begins, you must be given it by an Instigator during a Samhain ritual to be a member of the court, and until then you are merely running with a clique, no matter how loyal you may be.

Two Traits — *Guardian*. Within your territory, you watch over an important location, anything from a freehold or glen to a gun store or chemical lab. You keep local cliques supplied with various needs, and in turn they respect your turf and protect your goods as best they can. This is also the term of choice for most Shadow Court “muscle,” and typically the highest that bruisers or vandals will ever rise in the court, at least until they show some facility for long-term planning.

Three Traits — *Pretender*. You hold a title within the Seelie or Unseelie Court, at least that of knight or squire. This gives you at least one dot of *Title*, but also a possible double life and the risk of being harshly dealt with if you’re caught. However, since you’re such a valuable informant, even anarchist cliques tend to leave you be, giving you time to gather dirt on those above you as you rise to power in both courts.

Four Traits — *Mastermind*. Certainly not everyone who plots and schemes has this level of *Prestige*, but those who have achieved it have literally made an art out of intrigue and tend to be visited by Instigators in need of information. You are involved in a secret society of at least five members, and trade favors freely. This gives you three free levels of the Influence Background that you can call upon (primarily *Legal* or *Financial*, but the Storyteller may modify this based on the type and power of the society). You also receive regular rumor updates, and the Storyteller may have a few choice bits of dirt for you in the form of gossip and other scurrilous sources you know well. (Note: These levels of Influence can be lost if you drop in *Prestige*, unless you take steps to acquire them more permanently.)

Five Traits — *Instigator*. You recruit others into the Shadow Court, although you cannot actually *Condemn* them without learning the Advanced *Contempt* Art of *Condemnation* (see below). You’re slowly learning more about the hidden secrets of the court, and at least two cliques regularly brief you on their activities. When you gather at least five Kithain for rituals, the difficulty to observe and discern the nature of the gathering for outsiders is raised by two; this can improve with time and the complexity of the ritual as well. If captured, you are expected to die rather than divulge secrets, and if unwilling you will either quickly be rescued or killed by your fellows. There are always Instigators more powerful than you, as well, who can overrule your “authority,” and if you begin to act as if you rule the cliques who come to you, the backlash can become very nasty. As a function of station, you have at least two Masterminds working

for and beneath you, although they are not your retainers and will not tolerate being treated as such. You must work with the Storyteller to determine their identities and powers, although the Storyteller will create these characters.

## Unseelie Houses

Although Unseelie are certainly not limited to choosing from these three houses, they are the true Unseelie bloodlines and the only noble houses known to lie squarely in the Unseelie camp. Being part of the Shadow Court is not necessary for being a member of one of these houses, but it is both strongly possible and recommended, particularly for those of House Ailil and House Balor. Of course, commoners who are affiliated with the house do not receive either the Boon or the Flaw of the house, just as with the Seelie houses.

In no case will a character who is primarily Seelie be from one of these “families,” although it is not inconceivable that an Unseelie of one of these houses might become Seelie later in life. Of course, earning the trust of one’s fellow Seelie is often next to impossible, given the reputation that Ailil and Balor have among the Kithain, though Leanhaun can typically pull it off as long as they keep their Rhapsodizing very discreet. What’s more, members of these houses who do make the change are best advised to check behind them often for irate relatives looking to put a knife in their backs, and remember that even those who were outside of the Shadow Court are often considered a potential liability to the family if they become too public in their new court....

### House Ailil (Ay-LEEL)

The house of honeyed words and serpents’ tongues, the sidhe of House Ailil are renowned for their Machiavellian plotting and firm belief in their own inherent superiority. They see the time of the Seelie as past and believe that only bold, decisive (read: *their*) leadership can save the Kithain now. They often promise commoner equality but have no intention of pursuing it if their goals are met. Members of this house are known for their compelling gazes, and for their choice of attire being as black as the midnight lords they serve. In no case will a member of this house ever be found as a happy underling of someone else — they’re always plotting, and frighteningly well at that. Turned against the enemies of the court or even the fae in general, this talent can create tactics that destroy most foes before they know what hit them; with no external threat to deal with, however, it can quickly riddle a court with enough intrigue to paralyze those not clever or strong enough to play the Ailil’s game.

If a member of this house isn’t actually part of the local Shadow Court, she knows who is. There are a number of fairly prominent Ailil who claim to be Seelie, or at least are Unseelie who seem to have no Shadow Court ties, but whether they represent a true faction within their family or whether they are just another ploy on the part of this devious house, no one can say for sure. Proud of its heritage, Ailil is becoming more open, but on those occasions when it deems it necessary to hide its presence, most of them find it easy to masquerade

as Eiluned sidhe (for their love of intrigue), though some savor the delicious irony of masking themselves as Gwydion sidhe, and their natural arrogance makes this latter disguise a bit easier for them. Freeholds run by this house tend to be hotbeds of intrigue and politics that would make House Eiluned jealous.

**Boon:** Ailil sidhe are expert manipulators. They receive a free *Beguiling* Social Trait, which can never be bought off, as well as one free retest per session on *Subterfuge* and *Leadership* tests (the second result must stand).

**Flaw:** Those of House Ailil tend to believe too well in their fitness to rule, and take on tasks based on the belief that simply the virtue of their bloodline will allow them to succeed. They must make a Social Challenge to ever admit to doing wrong (difficulty depends on how serious the wrong is), even when it is obvious to all. If they ever back down from a situation where they have spent Influence, tested, cast cantrips or otherwise become actively involved, they suffer a one-Trait penalty to all Social Challenges until they gain some victory that restores face. They also must take a permanent *Condescending* Negative Social Trait, which can never be bought off.

### *House Balor (BAL-lor)*

Though others have forgotten, those of House Balor remember the time when sidhe mixed blood with Fomorian back in the Old Country — they are the descendants of such matings. As such, those of House Balor bear some kind of deformity, be it physical, mental, emotional or spiritual, and bitter hatred toward their “perfect” cousins of the other houses. House Balor believes the Endless Winter is almost here, and that if they can bring it on themselves they will be the ones chosen to lead during the dark times. This fatalism leads to many Balor becoming anarchists, but those who see beyond such limited actions become dangerous fanatics with almost animal cunning. For their part, Balor know of their savage reputation and use it to their full advantage whenever they can, whether to scare a foe into backing down or to lure an overconfident foe into committing a fatal error based on expectations of the Balor’s substandard intelligence.

True Seelie members of House Balor can be counted on one hand, and those few who try to resist their Unseelie side or refuse to join the Shadow Court are typically pushed to it by the hatred and revulsion their family name conjures in the “upstanding” Seelie around them. Since other fae expect them to be monsters, most Balor are only too happy to comply. They have even been known to flirt with alliances to such foul Prodigals as Black Spiral Dancer Garou and the modern-day fomori, and delight in playing with iron and other things repulsive to changelings in general. Balor dislike masquerading as other houses, but their foul reputation frequently makes it necessary; they most often try to pass themselves off as Dougal (due to their deformity) or Scathach (due to their love of battle). Freeholds ruled by those of House Balor tend to be brutal domains where everyone is out for their own. They keep their freeholds safe from the encroachments of others, much like wild animals guarding their territory.

**Boon:** Thanks to their Fomorian blood, those of House Balor do not suffer from cold iron as other fae do; in fact, they can handle cold iron without suffering any penalties and lose no Glamour from being struck by iron. This allows them to carry and utilize iron weapons without penalties. If slain by iron, however, their soul is just as destroyed as any other changeling's.

**Flaw:** All of this house must take some kind of serious deformity or handicap, which cannot be rectified through prosthetics or psychological help (no cantrips or treasures, either). Players are encouraged to work with the Storyteller to come up with strange and bizarre deformities, and to think beyond mere physical grossness to the possibilities of having more "poetic" deformities like being born utterly without a conscience. Unlike the namesake of the house and his evil eye, however, this deformity gives them no special powers. Balor fae must also take either two permanent Negative Traits (receiving no Traits for them) or a derangement of some type related to their deformity, which can never be bought off. If their deformity is represented by an existing Flaw, they may take it but receive no compensation for it and can never buy it off. Additionally, no member of House Balor can have a Willpower higher than four, for any reason, due to their savage Fomorian blood.

### *House Leanhaun (lee-ANN-an)*

Members of this house have always been noted artists and often hold positions such as court bard in unsuspecting lands. Likewise, their skill at inspiring mortals to create masterpieces is well known, and if any other Kithain notice that such mortals always seem to meet tragic ends, the Leanhaun do their best to quiet such wagging tongues (sometimes forever). House Leanhaun harbors a dark secret, one that would make them pariahs from regular Kithain society if it were ever discovered. While the regular society of Concordia has noted their Glamour-hungry ways, which sometimes conflict with their powerful need for mortal inspiration, few suspect the real cause behind their ceaseless hunger. Due to an ancient curse, members of House Leanhaun age rapidly, growing one year older per week they spend without Rhapsodizing someone (see the Epiphany section of *The Shining Host* for details on Rhapsody), and thus also going from childling to wilder to grump in a painfully short period of time. This aging affects only their faerie mien, not their mortal seeming, but that makes it no less terrible, as those sidhe whose faerie miens expire from extreme age are considered Undone, just as fae who acquire 10 permanent Banality Traits are.

Members of Leanhaun feel justified in the damage they do, as it comes from a need to survive. There are quite a few Seelie among their number, and these are generally left alone by their Unseelie kin, as they are considered tragically misled at best and hopelessly blind at worst. In the greatest tragedy of all, many Leanhaun of both courts eventually come to care for some of the mortals they doom with their touch. Though the secret nature of their Flaw means that Leanhaun can live openly among their fellow fae, they prefer to hide their true



lineage for a time, especially when hiding from others who have learned their secret. They find it quite easy to persuade others they are actually Fiona, though some of them pass themselves off as Liam sidhe in order to avoid questions and be close to mortals. Freeholds ruled by this house tend to be places of great art and greater tragedy, and the mortals tend to be “recycled” quite often as the house’s infamous Glamour hunger strikes.

**Boon:** All members of House Leanhaun receive a free *Seductive Social Trait*, which can never be permanently lost, and they are two Traits up on any test during which they use an Appearance- or seduction-related Trait as their bid.

**Flaw:** Leanhaun age at a rate of one year per week unless they engage in Rhapsody at least once during each week. This aging can be reversed and make the sidhe young again, but only with increasing infusions of Glamour, which do more harm to the mortal being Rhapsodized. They do not age gracefully, and must take a Negative Physical Trait each time they change seemings (childling, wilder, grump), which can only be bought off by changing back to a younger state.

## Thallain

The following kiths, collectively known as Thallain, represent degenerate types of some of the standard kiths and are believed to have appeared only after the return of the sidhe in 1969, riding the same wave from Arcadia. They are, for the most part, physically indistinguishable from normal — if somewhat slovenly — members of their “parent” kiths, but display very different Birthrights and Frailties. The Shadow Court uses them as secret weapons and closet allies, assigned to cliques for specific and important reasons (Thallain will not be found simply “wandering around”). They are one of the Shadow Court’s greatest secret weapons, and the court intends to keep it that way for as long as possible.

Due to the taint of the Nightmare Realms they bear, Thallain have no Seelie Legacies and can never have one; rather, they have two Unseelie Legacies and alternate between them. (The difficulty is deciding what kind of bastard to be.)

### Beasties

All Unseelie pooka have a feral side that is highly disturbing to those around them, but beasties go far beyond this discomfort into the realms of true horror — instead of animal forms, these foul kith transform into hideous monsters from the worst imaginings of a child lying awake in the dead of night. Those who see a beastie in its true form typically succumb to terror and flee, while the beastie revels in the dark Glamour harvested from such heady fear. Those who have survived close contact with a beastie and lived to tell about it typically block out the experience, rationalizing it as nothing more than a wild animal, though this mercy is far from complete, and the victim typically suffers from nightmares about the encounter for months. Naturally, beasties love this “attention” from mortals

and Kithain alike, and some will go to great pains to track down their targets and ensure their nightmares (and their tainted Glamour) will continue for months or even years, fading away long enough to let the targets feel safe before returning from the shadows to terrorize them once more.

Most beasties have a powerful pack instinct and will meet with others of their kind at least once per month to begin their own version of the Wild Rumpus, running amuck throughout the countryside and Ravaging anyone they come across. Kithain and mortal authorities alike often have little clue about the true cause behind these mysterious “animal attacks” and “teenage crime sprees,” and those who do face the unpleasant prospect of battling a number of these monsters at once. As cunning as they are terrifying, beasties use this and the curious amnesia that follows their activity to their full advantage, taking care to never leave too much evidence of their presence behind. Like their pooka cousins, they have a love of pranks of all kinds, though their pranks are decidedly deadly, typically designed to allow the beastie to see the fear and confusion on a target’s face right before he perishes. Unseelie pooka have tried to teach them of the value of leaving some targets alive, but the beasties don’t see much point to it.

As appearances go, beasties typically hide themselves as Unseelie pooka, though their inhuman nature shows through even such casual disguises before long, forcing them to move on before their secret is discovered. They carry over traits of their true form, just as pooka do, though typically such features are the most harmless or normal-seeming ones, making it harder to discern their true nature and making their eventual transformation even more terrifying. The most clever beasties even master *Primal* or *Metamorphosis* to take regular animal forms, in order to further the deception that they are merely ordinary pooka. Most cannot hold down a mortal job for very long and are essentially drifters employed by the Shadow Court for acts of vandalism, terror and assassination.

**Affinity:** *Nature*

**Birthrights:**

**Beastie Form:** Like pooka, beasties can change into their monster forms with 10 seconds and a point of Glamour while no one is looking. The beastie form, however, does not need to be a real animal; in fact, it’s better if it isn’t. Players are encouraged to come up with frightening and bizarre beastie forms, but remember that the Storyteller has final say on what is allowed. Also note that even if a beastie can become a six-headed, snake-fanged cow o’ war, this doesn’t mean that all the heads can think or attack — the main use for such nightmare features of the creature is to scare the bejeezus out of opponents, not necessarily to be fully functional. Beasties in their animal form receive a free *Intimidating Trait* and two other Traits of the Storyteller’s choosing, but must automatically take *Bestial* x 2 and two other Negative Traits of the Storyteller’s choosing.

**Gaia’s Mercy:** Those who witness a beastie’s true form typically panic and flee, and by the time an hour has passed they forget what they have seen, remembering only distorted stories of wild animals. (Think of the Garou Delirium, as described

in *Laws of the Wild*.) Fae, Prodigals and enchanted mortals need not panic, though most are frightened by the beastie's appearance anyway.

Frailties:

**The Hunt:** All Seelie have an innate, ancestral hatred of beasties, and upon seeing one in its true form or learning convincing proof of a beastie's true nature, Seelie fae *must* immediately make a Willpower Test to avoid attacking it. A Willpower Trait can be spent to avoid attacking if this test fails; the effects of this Trait last for the rest of the scene, at the end of which time the Seelie must make another test if the beastie is still present. Of course, the Seelie may also choose to attack later if they wish, or if the beastie provokes them. This anger fades one hour after of the beastie's departure, and the Seelie will not remember what provoked it, as per *Gaia's Mercy*. All beasties receive a permanent *Bestial* Trait, which can never be bought off and which they receive no benefit from.

### *Boggarts (bog-ARTS)*

Boggarts have a curious shadow relationship with their regular boggan kin — they typically work alongside Unseelie boggans on different projects and can even shame their Seelie cousins into keeping silent about their existence. No small source of the shame is the similarity that boggarts have to their boggan relatives — both work well in teams and can accomplish amazing feats in just a fraction of the time it would take mortals to do the same job. However, while boggans do so to help others and foster community, boggarts do so for one simple reason: profit. It doesn't even matter what that profit consists of — money, power, prestige, new souls for the Shadow Court — as long as there's a lot of it to be had, and the worst corporate sharks of the '80s have nothing on these ruthless Thallain when it comes to worshipping the bottom line. Even the Shadow Court regards them with some suspicion, for boggarts tend to take care of themselves and their own more than anything else, and so do not usually enjoy the full support of the court until they have proven their loyalty on several occasions.

This distrust is well placed — boggarts love the company of their own kind, not to mention Unseelie boggans, and regard Seelie boggans as a resource just waiting to be tapped and corrupted. They respect leadership only as long as their demands are met and they're compensated for their efforts. Given their talent for gathering and organizing, this often means that an unsuspecting freehold can quickly be overrun by the demands of the boggart "union rep" as the number of these Thallain swell and their hierarchy gets more complex. They love keeping track of such power structures and spend a great deal of time tracking their place in the hierarchy.

They have absolutely no concern for human life and see making the lives of mortals miserable (economically or otherwise) to be fitting punishment for being trapped in a world full of the dirty bastards. Combined with their talent for organization and bureaucracy, this makes them capable of the most depraved grotesqueness imaginable — so long as they get paid on time, they

think nothing of skinning pooka alive, making parchment from human skin or other revolting activities. Those who don't pay find Mafia debt collectors to be far more merciful....

In their mortal mien, boggarts appear as humans of normal size and stature, typically dressed in smart business attire, though they have hungry eyes that unnerve business partners and rivals alike. To faerie sight, they appear as wicked dwarves largely identical to their boggan kin, though with ruddier skin and a hard glint in their eye. The longer they go without acquiring some form of wealth, the more foul and animalistic they look. Ears get pointier, noses get longer, and the worst even have tails. As mortals, they can be found in all levels of the business world, forever seeking to bring more of their kin onboard; in their faerie guise, the Shadow Court uses them as "fixers," troubleshooters and damage control teams. For their part, boggarts don't mind either way, so long as they get paid.

**Affinity:** Actor

**Birthrights:**

**Industrious Comrades:** Boggarts can perform physical labor in one-third the time it would normally take, as long as they remain unseen by any witnesses save boggans and other boggarts. Furthermore, boggarts need only sleep two hours per day to remain rested, and as such often take two jobs in the mortal world — they receive a free level of the *Resources* Background as well as a free level of the *Finance* Influence to reflect this, neither of which ever be permanently lost or traded away. All boggarts have a particular business specialty and are two Traits up on all tests involving this field. (Pick the *Finance* skill and take a specific field, such as *Accounting*, *Hostile Takeover*, etc.)

**Pack Mentality:** Boggarts have a knack for sensing others of their kind and often try to recruit normal boggans away from their courts to serve them. They can sense an Unseelie boggan with a successful Mental Challenge. Once per story, a boggart can call on a band of his fellows to alter or destroy a given location or situation by spending a Willpower Trait and "making some calls." It's up to the Storyteller to decide if and how the other boggarts can help, but the results should be devious and destructive, with an eye to the short term. It is assumed that in downtime the boggart is helping his fellows in a similar manner, though the Storyteller can certainly use such reciprocal favors as a basis for story hooks if they desire.

**Frailties:**

**Greed!:** When presented with an unguarded item of wealth, boggarts must make a Willpower Test to avoid stealing it. If they fail this check, their fingers become sticky, putting them one Trait up on the test to steal but also leaving telltale signs to those who know of boggarts.

**Callousness:** Boggarts cannot purchase the *Empathetic* Trait and begin play with the Negative Trait *Callous*, which can never be bought off. They do

not understand any social dynamics outside of the corporate setting — though they understand that one *very* well — and should act this out as well as possible.

### *Bogies (bo-GEEZ)*

Though many regular Kithain would be hard-pressed to think of creatures more suited to vile locales and dwelling in darkness than the sluagh, those few who have learned of bogies know that these Thallain have the sluagh beat. These odious monsters give even their parent kith a bad name, delighting in acts of cruelty and perversity that would make a redcap heave. All bogies have a craving for a particular type of fluid or organ in the human (or nonhuman) body, and while they do not die if this taste is unsatisfied, their hunger increases over time until they finally snap and do whatever it takes to slake their thirst. Whether this thirst is for blood, mucus, bone marrow or other, more disgusting substances, bogies simply cannot hide their appetite for it, and truth be told most make little effort to do so unless they're actively impersonating a sluagh, as they delight in the revulsion their appetites inspire in others.

Bogies express their worst tendencies in their love of killing, and they typically have several rituals they follow that mark them as serial killers in the mortal world and legendary fiends in Kithain society. While they understand that killing a fellow changeling's mortal form typically draws a great deal of unwanted attention to them, they have no qualms about killing a changeling's fae form. Likewise, regarding humanity as little better than a virus with legs, they feel no remorse for the worst acts they commit against mortals, and the Shadow Court typically uses photos of the horrors bogie assassins perpetrate as a means of convincing recalcitrant agents or informants to cooperate. Make no mistake, though — bogies need no reason for killing other than the sheer joy of it, and while they're happy to do so on behalf of the court, they're just as happy to do it freelance. Rumors of sluagh hiring them for such tasks remain nothing more than rumors... for now.

A bogie in mortal form typically appears as the most disgusting kind of loser one can think of, an expression of their contempt for the changeling practice of taking mortal bodies. In their fae guise, they are pale and thin enough to be mistaken for sluagh, though they display a few characteristic differences upon closer inspection: Their eyes and pupils dilate up to twice normal size in darkness, and rugose gills flap as they exhale. In addition, they lack the quiet grace of the sluagh, breathing through their mouths, slurping or snuffling constantly, even chattering their teeth like vermin. They take only the lowliest, least dignified jobs in mortal society, reveling in the disgust this inspires in their fellows.

**Note:** While players should enjoy roleplaying the disgusting feeding habits of the bogies as much as they want, please remember that *this is only a game* — do not *actually* consume anything that vile, and even realistic representations should be avoided if it makes the other players queasy or uncomfortable out of character.



**Affinity:** Scene

**Birthrights:**

**Spawned in Darkness:** Bogies can vomit up a cloud of foul, inky blackness once per session/day, which puts them two Traits up on tests related to stealth and silence and disorients foes trapped within it as if they were blind. The cloud moves at the bogies' mental command, up to as fast as a human can walk, and is clearly an unnatural darkness to those who see it, much less those who are trapped within its suffocating depths. Supernatural means of seeing in darkness suffer a two-Trait penalty. Outside light sources, even supernatural ones, do not pierce this darkness.

**Hatred of the Weaver:** Bogies can spend a point of Glamour and become invisible to technological devices for one hour of game time. Mundane equipment malfunctions or picks up static, and bright lights flicker on and off. Magically empowered treasures, fetishes or sentient devices may resist this with a Mental Challenge against the bogie. Bogies can and often do combine this invisibility with Arts or other powers in order to pass truly unnoticed, making them frightening assassins. Those captured by the authorities often like to make confessions on tape, which just so happen to be useless later on.

**Frailties:**

**Curse of the Weaver:** There is an easy way to tell bogies from slough — bind them. They cannot contort the way slough can and lose one health level for each hour they are so tied, followed by a loss of a Physical Trait every hour until death occurs when the last Trait is gone. Bogies cannot stand the thought of being confined in any way, and if imprisoned (such as in a cell) they will screech and cry and lose a health level for each day they are locked up. In addition, while bogies do not need to whisper, they can and often do in order to impersonate slough.

### *Goblins (GOB-linz)*

When it comes to unleashing the destructive power of technology, no other kith comes close to the sheer havoc made possible when the Thallain known as goblins become involved. While frequently found in the company of Unseelie nockers, who try to pass them off as incompetent assistants, goblins are equally capable of crafting devices for massive carnage on their own, and the idea of teams of goblins working on weapons of mass destruction is second only to the fear of Endless Winter on most changelings' list of scary thoughts. For their part, goblins simply think that their ruinous habits are a perfectly natural means of innovation, and if humans and other fae are so uncomfortable with the idea of technology, then what are they doing using it in the first place?

Although Thallain are thought to have been lost until only recently, there is some evidence to suggest that a number of goblins hid among the deepest labs of Unseelie nockers for centuries. This would certainly explain their talent with the tools of the modern world, and possibly how they earned their other appellation — gremlins. Regardless of the truth, the two groups have a powerful

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connection, although most goblins become quite annoyed when Seelie Kithain mistake them for their Unseelie counterparts, considering themselves *artistes* on a level that Unseelie nockers can only aspire to. Indeed, while they care little for the hurt feelings or bodies of others, goblins are highly competitive among their own kind, and compete each season to see who can come up with the device most ingenious at causing mayhem, as determined by the fashion of device currently in season. These competitions are frequently impossible for outsiders to decipher, appearing as little more than a flurry of explosions, weaponry and flying limbs, but they sure do keep the goblins happy!

Goblins are among the most valued infiltrators of the Thallain, considering how easily they pass for Unseelie nockers and how few Kithain are likely to bother inquiring about the life history of someone they consider another member of that taciturn kith. They can even call themselves by their true name in front of others, because over time it has become synonymous with Unseelie nockers, and thus most Kithain think nothing of it. Best of all, if their identity is discovered, goblins have no end of ways to make such witnesses disappear....

In their mortal seeming, goblins typically appear as the worst sort of science nerds or geeky collegiate types, and they find employment in areas where they can turn their destructive talents to good use: Hacking, product testing and weapon design are favorites, though they can be found in nearly any field of science or technology. They also function as the demolitions and heavy artillery of Shadow Court forces on the rare occasions when such units are necessary, though given their talent for self-destruction they are kept far away from the other troops.

**Affinity:** *Prop*

**Birthrights:**

**Mayhem:** At the beginning of each story, a goblin can create a device capable of unleashing mayhem. This requires a Mental Challenge (retest with the *Crafts* or *Repair* Ability), against a difficulty based on the complexity of the device created, the extent/power of the mayhem to be caused, whether it will inflict damage, and if so, how much, and the amount of time/tools put into creating it. It should be noted that goblin devices can have only destructive results, *never* constructive ones. The Storyteller should always be present at the creation of such a device, not only to determine difficulty of the test but also the nature of the creation and its specific powers and requirements. The Dreaming often hides such nasty devices in the guise of bizarre contraptions no one can figure out until the time is right ("What the hell is that thing?"). Multiple goblins can combine their skills on the Mental Challenge; each additional goblin adds one Trait to the total, plus one extra Trait for each level of the appropriate Ability being used that the extra goblin has. Additional mayhem-causing devices can be crafted later on in the story, but at a cost of one Glamour each, and require the same Storyteller supervision to design.

**Gremlin Urge:** With the expenditure of a point of Glamour, a goblin can touch any mechanical device and cause it to malfunction, typically in the most

dangerous way possible. Self-aware or likewise empowered machines require a Social Challenge in addition to the Glamour Trait. If someone is holding the item in question and trying to defend it, a Physical Challenge must be won to use this power. Note that the goblin has no actual control over how the device will malfunction, only that it will — he can make suggestions, but ultimately it is the Narrator's decision.

Frailties:

**Destructive Urge:** Just like nockers, goblins always create flawed items; however, their flaws tend to be much more violent and destructive, and sometimes even the goblin gets caught up in their unexpected results. Storytellers should feel free to assign all manner of Negative Traits to goblin devices and are encouraged to make full use of any failed tests when goblins try to create devices, perhaps even convincing the goblin player that the machine was successfully created after all...

### Ogres (*Oh-GRRS*)

Though often mistaken for Unseelie trolls, these giants couldn't be farther from their brethren — they have no concept of honor, don't hesitate to use their strength to bully the weak, and use violence and intimidation to solve their problems, whether they happen to be the best options or not. They are infamous bullies, even in the Shadow Court, and require constant supervision to keep from smashing things out of boredom, though if properly channeled they make passable infiltrators (who questions the word of most trolls?) and nightmarish warriors. Their talent for sniffing out Unseelie in general and Thallain in particular makes them invaluable to the Shadow Court in their efforts to find and recruit new members, and so those few ogres that are known are closely monitored and guarded by the court.

While ogres will never be accused of overthinking a situation, and most Seelie Kithain fall for their disguise because they assume them to be nothing more than slow-witted trolls, those who underestimate the cunning of these brutes suffer for it. They are capable of adopting enough of a deviant attitude (for them, anyway) that they can impersonate the normal troll code of honor with surprising consistency, and when it comes time for battle they have a true talent for destroying things that get in their path — traps, barriers, opponents or even inconveniently placed landmarks. Ogres despise politics, however, since it represents power that can't simply be bludgeoned with a club, though they delight in doing so to its chosen representatives as often as possible, and the term "bully pulpit" takes on a whole new meaning when ogres are involved. Beings of great appetite, both regular and otherwise, ogres have no sense of social graces; around beautiful fae such as the sidhe they make no effort to hide their lusty tastes.

Ogres in mortal guise take the most simple, menial jobs they can find and delight in showing off their strength to those around them. They appear as unwashed, unshaven brutes with little regard for personal hygiene, and even

their childlings have an oafish cast to their features. Their penchant for crude humor and entertainment likewise sets them apart from most of their mortal contacts. In fae form, they are towering giants, with features like evolutionary throwbacks of the troll line, and most sport various trophies from defeated foes as part of their voile.

**Affinity:** *Fae*

**Birthrights:**

**Smells Like Chicken!:** Ogres automatically sense the presence of other Thallain (the Storyteller should alert the player ahead of time as to who will be playing Thallain, and inform the player immediately if another enters later), and with a successful Simple Test they can tell a Seelie from an Unseelie. If they can defeat a person in three consecutive Simple Tests, they can ask for a very rough overview of that character's emotional state, putting them one Trait up on the first Social Challenge they enter against that target.

**Strong as Oaks:** Ogres receive two free *Brawny* Physical Traits that can never be lost and receive a free automatic retest on any Strength-related test (the second result must stand).

**Frailties:**

**Dumb as Rocks:** Ogres are not the brightest chaps and face severe restrictions on brainpower. They cannot choose Mental as their primary Attribute category, may not possess more than one Mental Trait pertaining to intelligence and book-learning at the time of character creation, and buy any such Traits at twice the regular cost once play begins. Additionally, they must choose two permanent Negative Mental Traits from the following list, which can never be bought off: *Gullible*, *Ignorant*, *Oblivious*, *Predictable*, *Shortsighted*, *Violent* or *Witless*.

### *Spriggan (SPRIG-un)*

Thallain are not noted for their personal hygiene or their generous natures, but even among their dark brethren, spriggans stand out as models of wicked behavior. Greedy and callous, these malicious Thallain love to play tricks on mortals who are already down on their luck, pushing them to further extremes of despair or degenerate behavior while the spriggan revels from afar. They cannot stand to be mocked themselves, however, and their great rage makes them easy targets in both a literal and figurative sense for those clever enough to exploit this weakness. Spriggans go to great lengths to avenge a humiliation visited upon them, and while not the most inventive of foes, they tend to strike where a target is weakest, including mortal friends or relatives.

One of the only reasons the Shadow Court bothers to keep spriggans around is their absolute intractability when it comes to guarding anything entrusted to their care. Greedy as they are, spriggans are fanatically protective of what they consider theirs, and for a suitable fee they're willing to extend this ferocity to the possessions of others as well. Even these normally cowardly Thallain can become raging lions if they think their stash is being threatened,

and those who are used to their cowardice in other situations are frequently struck by the courage of a spriggan defending its loot. Spriggans have one other bad habit, which has earned them a good deal of their reputation over the years — kidnapping, especially children and childling fae. Though they seldom harm the child, save for a little teasing, spriggans enjoy the panic that ensues as a community searches for a child. Though they have tamed their ways in this direction somewhat, given the zeal with which most Kithain and mortal authorities pursue those who commit such crimes, spriggans still enjoy a good kidnapping when they can, keeping it secret even from their Shadow Court allies.

In their mortal forms, spriggans are the polar opposites of their piskey cousins; they are unkempt in the extreme, with stringy hair and worn-out clothing that looks as unwashed as they are. Their fae mien is little better, with small predatory points on their teeth and dull gray hair as opposed to the normal silver shine of piskey hair; their eyes are small and beady, constantly flicking from one side to another as if watching out for someone intent on stealing their stuff. Like most Thallain, they typically make little pretense at holding down a mortal life or job, but some find work as shady security guards or fences for small-time crooks.

**Affinity:** *Prop*

**Birthrights:**

**Stalwart Guardians:** Whenever a spriggan promises to guard something, she receives two extra Willpower Traits, as well as a free retest on all attempts (magical or otherwise) to influence her into betraying her responsibilities. A spriggan may only receive this benefit for one duty at a time, and once the extra Willpower Traits are spent, they cannot be regained for the rest of the story; these Traits also disappear if a job is finished, although the spriggan may then assume another guardianship. Spriggans are also considered to have twice as many Willpower Traits as they actually possess when it comes to resolving ties regarding defending their treasure.

**Sturm und Drang:** Bad weather seems to follow this kith; with the expenditure of a Willpower Trait and a successful Social Challenge, the spriggan may call up a small but concentrated storm. While it cannot actually damage buildings or other characters, the storm generally makes anyone in the area miserable: Thick gray clouds, scattered bursts of hail, sheets of rain and unpredictable winds rake the area for one scene. All characters save the spriggan himself who are caught in the storm are one Trait down on all Physical Challenges, and any ranged attacks are at an additional one-Trait penalty due to poor visibility. This is a Wyrd Birthright and can only be invoked outdoors.

**Frailties:**

**Height of Folly:** All spriggans have unpleasant tempers, and when insulted they tend to have a surprising reaction — these Thallain actually grow larger as their fury rises, up to twice their normal size. Unfortunately for them, this change is neither graceful nor powerful, and even naïve opponents can see



“bumbling giant” written all over an irate spriggan. If provoked by an appropriate Social Challenge, made the target of a serious personal jibe or otherwise directly and gravely insulted, the spriggan must immediately win (not tie) a Simple Test or begin to grow at a rate of two feet per turn until she calms down or reaches twice normal size. What’s more, while in her enlarged and enraged state, she receives the Negative Traits *Clumsy* x 2 and *Violent*, opponents are one Trait up on all tests to hit her in combat, and the spriggan should adopt a posture that signifies her increased size. This rage lasts until the spriggan has beaten her foe, left the area or spent a Willpower Trait to contain her anger. On the positive side, spriggans receive an extra Bunk Trait on all uses of the *Go Ask Alice* power of the *Metamorphosis* Art, provided they are using the cantrip to grow larger than normal. They must earn at least one Bunk Trait normally before the extra Trait applies, and in no case may a single Bunk be worth more than five Traits.

This is a Wyrd Frailty — spriggans do not actually grow to the sight of the unenchanted, but still gain the Negative Traits involved due to their lumbering form, and mortal witnesses typically ascribe their impairment to extreme rage or intoxication.

### *Optional Glamour System: Reaping*

The most brutal Unseelie and their Thallain brethren have long held a secret way of drawing Glamour from their victims — Reaping, or gaining Glamour from the fear of a dying Dreamer. Make no mistake — mere murder is not enough to gain Glamour with Reaping. Rather, to gain the full benefits, the user must literally scare the Dreamer to death; anything else may certainly be sport to such vile fae but does not net the Unseelie any Glamour. Reaping typically requires a great deal of planning and preparation to pull off, as it is harder than it might seem for even the most horrifying Thallain to actually scare someone to death, unless the victim has a heart condition or — better still — a particular phobia that can be exploited by the would-be Reaper. Indeed, all too often the target flees, passes out cold or is rude enough to die of related injuries rather than the fear itself, wasting the efforts of all concerned. Storytellers are thus encouraged to be demanding when it comes to meeting the requirements for Reaping, lest it become a quick fix for those unconcerned with a body count.

Should the Unseelie be clever and frightening enough to terrify a true Dreamer (not just any mortal) to death, she may immediately make a number of Glamour tests equal to their permanent Glamour rating against a difficulty of five Traits; for each successful test, the Unseelie gains one Glamour Trait, up to her normal maximum. If she should fail all of these tests, she gains two temporary Banality Traits, and must immediately make an additional Simple Test — if she fails this test, she suffers a psychic backlash as well, giving her a permanent point of Banality as well as the *Nightmares* Flaw (or doubling the penalties of that Flaw if she already has it). Additionally, the intimidation or murder of Dreamers is considered a reprehensible crime by most Kithain, even

many Shadow Court, and so those who practice Reaping must keep it well hidden from mortal and Kithain authorities alike, though it remains a delightful way to pass a sinister Samhain eve for those twisted fae who do enjoy it.

At the Storyteller's option, some Unseelie may gain Glamour from simply frightening Dreamers in this fashion, rather than actually needing to kill them, though if this is permitted the Unseelie must still inspire true terror in her victims (not merely shock or momentary fright) and gets only half the number of tests normally allowed for Reaping, rounding up; penalties for failing remain the same.

Reaping can add a delightfully dark edge to games with heavy Unseelie or Shadow Court presence (not to mention inspire a number of Samhain contests), driving home their traditional role as bringers of fear and change. However, it should be noted that Reaping may be a little *too* dark for some groups or players, and Storytellers should refrain from allowing it unless they are sure it won't be too disturbing to players out of character, and that those players who do use it understand the seriousness of the experience, as well as the penalties for it if their characters are caught. When used correctly, though, it can show even the most callous Prodigals exactly why the Unseelie are called the Lords of Nightmare....

## Dark Arts

The following powers are Arts that are known solely by members of the Shadow Court; although some have toyed with the idea of allowing outsiders to learn *Contempt* as a way of undermining the sidhe nobility, no one is allowed to take this debate past the realm of theory yet. After all, these Arts are the result of 600 years of secrecy and practice, and the Shadow Court is in no hurry to lose its edge now with a hasty gamble.

### Contempt

While Unseelie nobles have been known to use the *Sovereign* Art, some have chosen instead to counter it using their knowledge of the Art of *Contempt*. Commoners have also found it very useful when avoiding the dictates of Seelie sidhe, and it is true this Art counters effects of *Sovereign* almost on a one-for-one basis (with the exception of *Weaver Ward*, which is countered by *Wayfare* instead), causing rulers no end of frustration. Of course, most of these Arts can be used aside from countering *Sovereign* as well — such uses frequently permit the caster to invoke Unseelie law over those affected, submitting them to the rules and tenets of the Winter Manifesto in a perverse parody of the normal rules of *Sovereign*.

**Type of Challenge:** Mental

**Art Note:** While many uses of this Art invoke feelings of bitter resentment and even violence against traditional authority, players must still respect the rules of live-action and not actually harm anyone or anything — the “no touch”

rule applies to one and all, even (especially) municipal buildings or classrooms that may be the targets of *Contempt*. In addition, unless the game is taking place in private where everyone knows what's going on, remember to keep your voices low and language clean enough to avoid being given a ticket or the boot from your locale.

#### Basic

**Mockery:** This Art allows a changeling to escape the stifling effects of the cantrip *Protocol*, either in herself or others as the Realms used dictate. Once the *Protocol* is about to finish its casting, the *Mockery* caster must engage in a Mental Challenge with the *Protocol* caster in addition to performing a Bunk — success indicates immunity to the effects for the duration of the proceedings. Both casters are considered a number of Traits up equal to the level of the Bunks they are using. (Note that the *Protocol* caster will not necessarily know who is attempting *Mockery* unless the Bunk performed is so obvious that he can put it together right away.) This allows for a wide range of normally unacceptable behavior on the part of the changeling, from calling immediate duels to grandstanding and interrupting the monarch, but most fae will not see anything terribly odd in this as the caster is almost always publicly Unseelie anyway. If *Mockery* is cast without intent to counter *Protocol*, it becomes instead a twisted version of said magic, allowing for a barbarian court of Unseelie law — essentially the ruler is allowed martial law over those present, including Seelie and other bystanders.

**Disobedience:** An individual affected by this cantrip shows flagrant disregard for authority for the remainder of the scene. It does not cause those affected to physically assault authority figures, but it may result in acts of violence if the individual feels he's being "put down by the Man" (so to speak). Arguments that once seemed logical suddenly seem hollow, and warnings or dictums against certain behavior seem offensive. If a noble is nearby, this cantrip may be used to counteract the *Sovereign* power of *Dictum* — the character must take aside the person to be hardened against *Dictum* and give her a few choice words of encouragement about her "rights" (roleplay this out to the fullest), then cast the cantrip. The Bunk Traits so gained in casting are added to the target's Traits for the purposes of resisting *Dictum*, and the target is allowed to spend Willpower to ignore the effects of *Dictum* even if she would not normally be allowed to do so. At the Storyteller's discretion, this may be used to counter powers of Prodigals (*Presence Discipline*, certain Garou Gifts, etc.) in a similar fashion.

#### Intermediate

**Insolence:** Insolence can be used to inspire large groups of people to riot. This is especially useful at occasions where emotions are already running high — raves, rock concerts, lynchings, etc. — but can be used just about anywhere with sufficient magic. For each Bunk Trait gained, five mortals or one supernatural entity can be herded into attacking someone or something else; unfortunately, while the caster is free to use any means at his disposal to direct the anger of the mob, ultimately he provides only the initial spark — the

Narrator is the final arbiter of exactly upon what and how the crowd chooses to vent its rage, though the results are seldom anything less than spectacular.

This cantrip can also be used to negate the *Sovereign* power of *Grandeur*. Only one Shadow Court fae can attempt this per scene, however, and if one fails, all are screwed. If used to counteract *Grandeur*, the caster must make some remark or take some action that would detract from the seriousness of the noble's power, then cast the cantrip — each Bunk Trait gained allows one person present to make a Simple Test against the user of *Grandeur*, with success meaning the target is immune to all uses of *Grandeur* for the rest of the session.

**Devil's Advocate:** A fae using this magic can convince a crowd of just about anything. The only catch is that the persuasive power of this glib tongue only lasts for the duration of one scene, after which those affected may snap back to their senses and realize that they've been duped (though only supernatural beings suspect that anything paranormal has occurred). In lieu of the normal Bunk, however, the character must actually make a speech explaining the position he wants the crowd to take; the number of Bunk Traits gained depends on the length of the speech and how convincingly it is presented. An especially short or poorly phrased speech is worth only a Bunk Trait or two, while a long and well-versed oration can net the caster four or five Traits. After the speech is concluded, the fae must spend a Willpower Trait and make a Mental Challenge against a difficulty equal to one for every two people they wish to affect, rounding up (with the expenditure of an additional Willpower Trait, the difficulty equals one for every *four* people). If successful, the crowd can be convinced of almost anything the character desires and remains absolutely convinced for one hour of game time. Of course, they may remain convinced for longer than that, depending on what the caster led them to believe; those who are persuaded that they are actually space aliens from the planet Zorg return to their senses immediately when the cantrip ends, but those who are told to avoid an out-of-the-way location or something more subtle may stay persuaded until something directly conflicts with this new belief. The Storyteller has the final say on how long such persuasion lasts.

This Art may also be used to counter a *Geas* cantrip cast by a noble — if the Unseelie is present at such a casting, he may use this Art (once again, with a speech) to make the noble reconsider the *Geas*. This doesn't absolutely cancel a *Geas*, but it does at least buy time and possibly a full reprieve, depending on the noble in question.

#### Advanced

**Condemnation:** This is the unholy ritual of the Shadow Court and is always used in an elaborate ceremony, as it defines an individual's prestige in the court. It is used during Samhain by only a few worthy individuals, called Instigators. This ritual is used to declare new titles within the court, and who will be Instigators for the upcoming year. This can also be used at other times of the year to recognize a clique, cast someone from the court or recognize someone as worthy of learning the Dark Arts. The "high priest" using the

cantrip in this fashion always wears some sort of mystical disguise. Many participants of such ceremonies are protected by the Mists, but even some of them will forget much of what occurred, remembering only in the subconscious what they are and what they have to do.

Those who are receiving their first *Condemnation* must renounce all former ties of allegiance and give themselves to their Unseelie side. An Instigator usually learns what the fae must renounce and presents her with pictures of rivals, authority figures and loved ones to insult, disfigure or burn. Some Instigators may even demand that the recruit must renounce her oaths and suffer any penalties such oath-breaking entails.

An Instigator present at any other ceremony or secret meeting can shield all *Condemned* participants from scrutiny by this cantrip. This is not true invisibility, but more a form of misdirection, as the *Condemned's* activities look no more suspicious than a group of people talking at a cocktail party. Those members of the group who have not been initiated may still stay with the group, but they are oblivious to what is going on and unable to describe events later; some describe the effect as attempting to listen to a dozen conversations at once. Someone wishing to break into a shielded group must make a Mental Challenge against a difficulty of nine Traits, and even then, he is entering the conversation late. If this is used during a ritual, the details of the ritual translate into metaphoric images for un-*Condemned* witnesses, leading most to believe that they are drugged or insane.

### *Delusion*

The Mists have been one of the most useful allies the Shadow Court has. Unseelie changelings hide in a fog of doubts and uncertainties, of half-truths and insecurities. Perhaps the world recognizes that there must be equilibrium to all things, and the great evil of the Shadow Court would tip the already suffering world completely out of balance.

**Type of Challenge:** Social

**Basic**

**Innocence:** Hiding secrets and faces is a valuable ability, and this Art allows the Shadow Court to plant agents among their Seelie brethren. The simplest way to keep a secret, of course, is to act like you have no knowledge of it whatsoever. This Dark Art masks any outward signs of recognition regarding one particular topic or secret. On all tests related to keeping the secret, the caster is up a number of Traits equal to the number of Bunk Traits gained in the cantrip casting. (Thus, if someone is using a Mental Challenge to break your character with interrogation, and you cast a three-Bunk Trait *Innocence* cantrip, you are up three Traits on the Social Challenge required for the interrogation.) This effect lasts for one day or night, and must be renewed each interval to be effective. The aura of a character using this Art appears innocent to those using *Aura Perception* and similar powers.



Obviously, this requires good sportsmanship from the target and from those attempting to unearth the knowledge. Learning out of play that a character has a secret, and then immediately making that character the target of this Art is frankly cheating.

**Facade:** This Dark Art allows the changeling to adopt a very effective disguise for a period of time, although his actual body doesn't change — only others' perception of it, so those seeing the character might be certain he had red hair when it was actually brown, and the like. The caster must perform a Bunk related to changing his appearance (wearing a mask, etc.), then spend a Glamour Trait — the result is a disguise that lasts for one hour. This time may be extended by expending an additional Glamour per hour, but no more Glamour Traits may be spent this way than the number of Bunk Traits gained in the cantrip's casting. If the disguise isn't exceptionally hard to maintain or doesn't encounter much strenuous activity, this time can be lengthened to one day per Glamour Trait, but only at the Storyteller's discretion. Since it fools the minds of witnesses and not their physical perceptions, this disguise cannot be broken by physical sensory powers like *Heightened Senses*. Only someone who is actively suspicious of the caster for some reason ("What kind of nocker can't identify a Phillips-head screwdriver?") may attempt to pierce the disguise, and they must defeat him in a test of their Mental Traits against his Social Traits. This is not a completely flawless power of disguise, as the caster may *never* adopt the same *Facade* twice.

Other Realms may be used in connection to this cantrip as the caster sees fit — using the *Prop* Realm might mean the disguise lasts as long as the character holds a particular item, while *Scene* would dictate where the disguise can be adopted.

### Intermediate

**Mists of Memory:** The Mists are not always as objective as the Seelie would like them to be. A disreputable fae may manipulate the Mists to cloud the minds of others and banish specific memories, but this Dark Art can never overcome certain things: the loyalty of a troll, the chivalry of a sidhe, an oath, a geas or true love. The caster engages the target in a Social Challenge. If successful, this allows the caster to remove a broad area of memory determined by the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting: 1 Trait — all memory of one thing that was said, done or witnessed in the last 15 minutes; 2 Traits — all memory of what happened in the last 15 minutes; 3 Traits — any memory of what happened in the last hour; 4 Traits — any memory of what happened in the last session/day; 5+ Traits — any one memory, completely. Lost memories may be restored at will by the caster, or by the successful use of this Art by another fae who is aware of the original tampering and seeks to correct it. Note that this Art does not allow the caster to alter, steal or replace memories in any way, only delete them, and targets may become suspicious if this gap in their memory is somehow brought to their attention. Unless the caster advertises this cantrip with an obvious Bunk, however, targets are normally unaware of its use.

**The Depths of Will:** Although difficult to enact, fae with this Dark Art can convince one willing listener to undertake an enterprise that is not directly harmful to him, and then forget about undertaking that activity afterward. ("You must take this to the duke — he needs this right away.") In addition to any other Bunk used, the cantrip must include an explanation of why the activity is important — this does not need to be true, but it must be at least somewhat believable — which takes at least a minute of game time. Once the activity is performed, the Mists erase all memory of it from the target's mind, including that the cantrip caster originally asked him to do it, making such targets perfect fall guys for all manner of wicked schemes since they don't even remember who bid them to do as they did. Again, this activity cannot be directly harmful to the listener, and sending him to someone or something that *really* doesn't like visitors (such as a dragon, a river hag, a Lost One or Prodigal), someplace where ignorance could be very dangerous (such as the Nightmare Realms or a war zone) or to an activity that could be fatal ("Take this sword and cut off the duke's head in the middle of court.") does count.

#### Advanced

**The Darkest Heart:** This is as serious as *Geas*, and not undertaken lightly. Some undertake it of their own free will, while others (like weak Seelie) are *Condemned* and forced into it. When a changeling performs an act, willingly or otherwise, that she later regrets, she may come to terms with it by hiding it in the darkest depths of her heart and performing a quest to atone for the sin. She cannot speak of it until the quest is over, and the memory is hidden, and this effect cannot be lifted until the next Samhain comes around. The fae gives herself totally to her Unseelie nature but retains the hidden memories of the incident that drives the quest, which cannot be taken away by any means. If she repeats the sin for which she was questing, wittingly or not, she gains a permanent Banality Trait and the quest is over. As long as she doesn't violate that, she may confess to an Instigator at the end of the year — until that time, she is under a Ban on a particular Realm (see below). If she succeeds at going the year without breaking her Ban or repeating her sin, and then confesses to an Instigator, she will lose a permanent point of Banality as the guilt rises from her heart and she is forgiven.

This is an epic journey, even if it is one into darkness, and should be treated accordingly. The Ban a character suffers must be related to a particular Realm that has some relation to her quest and should be fairly difficult to uphold. For example, a lecherous fae seeking to undo the damage done by a heartless tryst might be under an *Actor* Ban not to associate with members of the opposite sex.



# Chapter Four: Kinain and the Enchanted

## *Kinain Character Creation*

### Step One: Character Concept

— Choose concept, court, Legacies, house (if applicable), seeming and heritage

### Step Two: Attributes

— Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (6/4/3)

— Choose Physical Traits

— Choose Social Traits

— Choose Mental Traits

### Step Three: Select Advantages

— Choose Abilities (5), Backgrounds (5), Mortal Backgrounds (3), Fae Gifts (5)

— All kinain receive one free level of the Background *Faerie Blood*

### Step Four: Finishing Touches

— Record beginning Glamour, Willpower and Banality, as determined by seeming

— Spend Free Traits (5) — Abilities, Attribute Traits and Backgrounds cost one Free Trait apiece; Realms cost two Free Traits each; Glamour and Willpower cost three Free Traits; Arts cost four Free Traits; any Merits or Fae Gifts cost their listed amount in Free Traits.

— Select Faerie Marks, if any

— Choose Negative Traits, if any

— Purchase Merits/Flaws, if any

### Step Five: Spark of Life

## *Living in the Shadows of Dreams*

Not every inhabitant of the Dreaming falls neatly into the categories of changelings or chimera. Perhaps the greatest class of unsung heroes and forgotten servants are the enchanted, mortals brought into the chimerical world through the power of Glamour. Playing one of these characters offers the chance to experience changeling society from the ground up, through the eyes of those often overlooked by the Kithain to whom they are so valuable. Striving to make one's mark in such circumstances can be difficult, but those who do are truly the stuff of legends.

There are actually two different categories that mortals fall under when it comes to interacting with the Dreaming: Some of them, called kinain, have actual faerie blood running through their veins, and with time and training can even master some Glamour tricks of their own. Others are simply regular mortals who have been pulled into a world beyond their wildest dreams and struggle daily to come to grips with a world that's often as terrifying as it is wonderful. This section focuses primarily on kinain, since their unique condition requires special rules and powers, but this should not be mistaken for indicating that they are in the majority when it comes to the enchanted. As particularly astute Kithain scholars have noted, were it not for the everyday efforts of countless perfectly ordinary mortals employed in freeholds and townships across the country, faerie society might quickly grind to a halt, if not collapse altogether.

### *Enchanted Mortals*


As far back as history stretches, one can find accounts of faeries taking delight in playing tricks on mortals, drawing them into their hidden world with gifts of food and baubles, then laughing as the poor mortals tried to find their way back to the "real" world they'd left behind, sometimes returning years or even decades later. On the other hand, some Kithain would take those mortals who had impressed them or earned their trust in some way and bring them into the chimerical world as a reward, showering them with gifts and parties for what seemed like years to the awestruck human, then dropping them back into the world to reveal that they had missed a few hours at most. Still other Kithain would bring friends or lovers into their world to try to help them understand the faerie's true nature, often with tragic results. Yet other faeries, sidhe in particular, took mortals into their freeholds as servants, whether of their own free will or as slaves enthralled by their Glamour, the foundation of the now ancient practice of using enchanted mortals as guards, housekeepers and even valets for changeling freeholds.

Following the Shattering, the process of enchanting mortals took on a whole different flavor. Forced to coexist with humans as never before and free of the influence of sidhe lords who viewed





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mortals as mere servants, many commoners softened the practice significantly, using enchantment as a way of bringing those they trusted closer to them and helping hold together the fragile communities of changelings struggling to survive in the face of harsh Banality. No longer were they mere guards or cupbearers — enchanted mortals stood alongside their faerie allies against some of the greatest threats the Dreaming has ever known, and while few ever rose to the higher echelons of Kithain culture, it was in no small part thanks to their tireless efforts at the lowest levels of society that changelings survived, adapted and even began rebuilding their empires of dreams.

Mortals are not the only beings brought into the enchanted world; some changelings, childlings especially, are quite fond of enchanting animals to help them. More than one family dog has become a hero in the enchanted world for fending off some dreadful chimerical monster seeking to devour its young owner! The enchantment of animals works exactly the same way as it does for mortals, with a few notable exceptions. First of all, the changeling must have at least a small degree of the animal's trust; this makes tokens of food the most common way of enchanting animals, for even the most suspicious beast is likely to accept an offering of food in time. Other common tokens include collars or leashes, though as usual the form is less important than having the animal accept the gift itself. Second, animals gain all the normal benefits of being enchanted — they can see the fae mien of changelings, interact with chimera and so on — but since their minds are not rational and not subject to Banality, they are immune to Bedlam or becoming Dream-struck and thus typically take to the experience much more easily than humans do. Finally, while use of the Primal Art of *Willow Whisper* is still needed to truly communicate with them, it's also widely held that animals that are enchanted often enough can develop intelligence and even the power of speech while in the chimerical world, becoming loyal companions to those who "awakened" them. Such a transformation and any Trait adjustment it involves is solely at the discretion of the Storyteller.

*Joining the Family: Becoming Full Kithain*

Though exceedingly rare, it is sometimes possible for a kinain or even an ordinary mortal to effectively become a full-fledged Kithain. The most obvious instance of this is the selkie kith, who do not reincarnate as most Kithain do, but must willingly pass on their seal coats to a worthy successor when they feel themselves becoming too weighed down with Banality. (See the selkie kith description in *The Shining Host* for more details on this process.)

The only other known way is the somewhat similar *Bound Essence* Flaw, which represents a faerie spirit that has become trapped in a particular item; however, unlike the seal coats of the selkies, such items cannot always pass their power on to a successor, whether the owner desires it or not. Indeed, like the legendary sword in the stone, these items seem to be very particular about those they “adopt” as Kithain and may even remain dormant for centuries before choosing to become active again. (In other words, it is entirely up to the Storyteller whether a character attempting to use such an item to become Kithain is successful — mere possession of it is not enough.) If other means exist, they remain unknown at present, though it is whispered that certain dragons and powerful wizards know of ways, if one is brave (or foolish) enough to ask them.

Always remember that no matter what the method, this process is not simply a question of learning some Arts and putting on pointy ears, but the adoption of a faerie *soul*; it should change everything about a character and the way she thinks and acts, not just be a set of new Traits to put on a character sheet. Not only is she no longer human (which has its own set of important questions and consequences for the character), but she has become part of the Dreaming in a way that even kinain with strong blood cannot begin to imagine, and that’s a goal easily worth several chronicles of questing and testing to bring to fruition. In most games it will likely be impossible, or at least so difficult as to seem so to all but the strongest and most dedicated. If your Storyteller is kind and creative enough to even allow your character to have a chance at attaining this goal, make sure you’re nice to them.

And be ready for the adventure of a lifetime.

*System:* In the unlikely event that such a transformation becomes possible during the course of a chronicle, use the following guidelines to convert existing characters to Kithain.

- New Kithain must choose the standard concept requirements, if they do not possess them already: court, kith (always determined by their former heritage), Legacies and seeming.

- Starting Temper scores — Glamour, Willpower and Banality — are determined by seeming, though those characters who possessed them before (such as kinain) do not increase or decrease these scores if a change would normally be warranted. For instance, a kinain grump who becomes a full changeling does not lower his permanent Banality rating, even though a regular grump Kithain's would be lower; nor does a wilder kinain who gets "promoted" raise his permanent Glamour rating.

- Except where otherwise noted, such new Kithain receive the standard starting Arts and Realms for free, though the Storyteller may require them to spend time training with a mentor before they can use these new powers in play.

- Any Numina, hedge magic or other supernatural powers are automatically lost, though the Storyteller may allow them to be exchanged for levels of Arts and Realms on a two-for-one basis. It is also entirely appropriate to take similar Arts and Realms to simulate the new Kithain's natural aptitudes. Such exchanged Traits count against the initial levels of Arts and Realms the character would otherwise receive for becoming Kithain, however. Remember, this is a new *soul* they've acquired. That means some changes are in store for the character, and despite appearances, they gain a lot more than they lose in this exchange.

- All Arts and Realms a character may have learned remain, though these count against the initial levels of those Advantages that the character gains upon becoming a full changeling.

- Kinain-specific Backgrounds such as *Faerie Blood* may be exchanged for an equal amount of Kithain Backgrounds, with the Storyteller's supervision.

- Most Fae Gifts and Fae Marks are likewise inappropriate for full Kithain and should be replaced with an equivalent amount of Kithain Merits and Flaws from **The Shining Host**; the Storyteller has final say on what may remain and what must be exchanged.

**Note:** No matter if they have a *Faerie Affinity* or even *Kinain Merit*, Prodigals can never become Kithain by any means. Their spirits are already too bound up in things other than the Dreaming. They may share some close ties and even some ancestry, but they will never be Kithain.

## Kinain

Faeries and humans have mingled bloodlines since ancient times, but it was not until the Shattering and the subsequent adoption of the Changeling Way ritual that most fae came close enough to their human cousins to fully integrate and identify with them. Rumors and folktales quickly arose surrounding those families believed to be "fey-touched"; some were shunned for consorting

with the infernal, while others were respected and sought after for their wisdom and power. Many Kithain further speculate that many of the great minds of the Renaissance and other important periods of history were actually kinain or human thinkers spurred on by faerie mentors, given the amazing insights and bursts of inspiration that characterize such careers. Of course, those with a taste for darker histories point to tales of redcap cannibal families and other nasty legends, and are quick to remind their fellows that faerie blood can cut both ways.

In the times since the Accordance War, most kinain slipped through the cracks of faerie society, neither powerful or numerous enough to have a voice for themselves. This trend has been reversing somewhat of late, however, as unrest rises in the wake of High King David's disappearance and the signs of Endless Winter mount; suddenly there's a need for every being of Glamour that can be found, and a deeper wisdom in the ways of the mortal world has become invaluable to those seeking to combat the spread of Banality. Kinain are being sought by their faerie cousins as never before — now the test is to see whether they can put aside the resentment and jealousy of their Kithain relatives that too many of them have endured through their lives.

## Heritage

Perhaps the biggest single influence in a kinain's life is her heritage, or faerie ancestry — it can mean the difference between a stubborn and bulldog-faced redcap kin and a graceful and dignified sidhe kin, or for that matter a tough and courageous redcap kin and a willowy and arrogant sidhe kin. About 15-20% of kinain are born from one changeling parent, while 40-50% of the children of two changelings are changelings themselves. Faerie blood is notoriously fickle, however, and has been known to skip an entire generation only to manifest stronger than ever in the one following it, so there's no guarantee that any particular child will manifest faerie blood until they're actually exposed to Glamour for the first time.

The vast majority of kinain draw their ancestry from one kith, though it is not unheard of for some to be the product of two or more kiths interbreeding, and some of the rarest kinain display traits and features of kiths thought to be extinct or even ones never before seen by the Kithain. The details of these last and most exquisitely rare kinain should be worked out with the Storyteller (especially if the player wishes to take the *Honored Birthrights*, *Mark of the Blood* or *Inherited Frailty* Traits for their character). As some substantial physical features and, more importantly, mental quirks are often inherited from a kinain's heritage, it is important to have a sense of her ancestry early on. What's more, different kiths have different views on those who share their blood, and the prejudices they have often carry over to how the kinain comes to view the Dreaming as a whole.

The following is a brief list of some common physical and mental features shared by kinain of similar heritage. It should not be considered a straitjacket

list of requirements, but rather a guide to how many kinain are brought up by their full-blooded relatives, and how their faerie blood most frequently manifests.


**Boggan** — Most boggan kinain share their cousins' small stature and disposition to help others in need, though some develop their Unseelie cousins' spiteful streak, especially when their help is spurned or the aided party proves ungrateful. Most have nimble fingers and good hands, and find employment that caters to this talent. Boggans love working with their kinain relatives and are typically very nurturing and supportive of them; many actually take them on as apprentices alongside their regular changeling charges. What's more, since many boggans are the de facto "den mothers" of Kithain society, they typically wind up looking after kinain of other heritages as well. Thus, many kinain grow to feel as close (or closer) to these boggans as they do to their own kind.

**Eshu** — It is perhaps all too common for eshu kinain to grow up never knowing one or both of their true parents; correspondingly, most eshu kinain are highly independent from a very early age, and in their teens and college years come to regard the words "road trip" with enthusiasm and no little reverence. Runaways are also common, though more from curiosity than any ill will or abuse. Fortunately, their eshu heritage often blesses these kinain with a good sense of style and an even better voice, so most manage to make their way as actors or performers after a few wild years, though even then many can never give up the road completely. Most striking of all, however, are their eyes — the stronger the blood, the darker they are, with small flecks of silver or gold appearing in those of the purest blood. For their part, eshu tend to judge their kin as they meet them, but even the most kindly Seelie eshu truly respects only those kinain who can keep up with their wandering ways without complaint.

**Clurichaun** — Most clurichaun kinain are of solidly Irish descent, and their features typically bear testament to that fact. Many have a love of music rivaled only by the satyr kinain, and their powerful, resonant voices seem especially suited for ballads, making them sought-after performers of traditional pieces. A love of the color green runs strong in this line as well, and few kinain leave home without at least one green item or article of clothing on their person as a good luck charm. Often raised alongside each other in close-knit families and neighborhoods, clurichauns and their kinain typically recognize few distinctions between themselves, and in their fondness for each other both sides go out of their way to make sure their "siblings" are included in their singing and carousing.

**Ghille dhu** — Nearly as rare as their full-blooded relatives, most ghille dhu kinain are raised in secluded wilderness communities, often on farms or homesteads far away from their neighbors where they can be at peace with the nature they love. They dislike cities, rarely visit them and seldom live anywhere more populated than the farthest outskirts of the suburbs. Physically, most of these kinain have unkempt dark hair that actively defies efforts to comb or brush it, and their skin tends to keep a deep tan year round no matter where they





live. Many act as go-betweens to human society for their faerie cousins in exchange for aid in their hunting and farming efforts, since the acute sensitivity ghillie dhu have to Banality makes them phobic of interacting with humans too often. Even with their own kin, however, the ghillie dhu are notoriously reclusive, and so such arrangements are more of a mutual assistance pact than a truly close relationship.

**Nocker** — Pity the poor nocker kinain, for not only do many of them inherit the pale skin, flushed cheeks and cherry noses of their fae relatives, but no few find themselves on the same quest for perfection (and are about as close as their cousins to attaining it), with tempers and profanity to match. Given their sour dispositions, most nockers also tend to see humans as overgrown helper monkeys at best, useless fodder at worst, forcing their kinain to develop a thick skin, quick fingers and a quicker wit from an early age. However, those who match quips with their relatives and display some proficiency at crafting and tinkering can eventually become a valued and even respected part of a nocker community, though defending themselves and their work had better become second nature if they wish to survive the daily grind of nocker relationships.

**Piskey** — Like the eshu, piskey wanderlust often keeps them absent from the early lives of their kinain; unlike the eshu, however, most piskies actively search out possible kinain children when they come of a certain age to see if they have manifested their *Faerie Blood*. Those who do are introduced to the piskey community in a joyous ceremony that draws members of this kith from far and wide, and they are thereafter treated as full members of the Kithain family. Piskey kinain tend to be small and thin, with bright eyes and nimble hands; those with a high degree of the blood may also manifest the slender pointed ears of their cousins. They are good with children and tend toward jobs that allow them to work with them whenever possible: nanny, teacher, camp counselor and so on.

**Pooka** — As diverse as their Kithain relatives, pooka kinain all tend to have a slightly animalistic cast to their features, which usually gives them a peculiar cute quality to the mortals around them. Of course, those with strong Unseelie blood or who have an affinity for a less attractive animal such as a bat or a pig may find that these features have exactly the opposite effect. Regardless of their animal affinity, pooka kinain love words and wordplay, and prefer jobs that allow them to play with language; their personal speaking habits are often described as “colorful” at best, and many are considered harmless-but-compulsive liars by those who know them. These kinain are regarded with a mix of playfulness and sadness by their faerie cousins, for the two understand each other as few outsiders do and love pulling pranks and goofing off together, but ultimately the pooka pity them for their inability to take animal form, while those kinain who are aware of this talent often harbor a deep envy for their fae cousins.



## CHAPTER FOUR: Kinain and the Enchanted

**Redcap** — Descended from a kith that doesn't have a large fan base to begin with, redcap kinain get the short end of the stick from both worlds, and most of them know it. Physically these kinain tend toward short, stocky builds, with large mouths full of prominent teeth and pale, nearly gray complexions. Their talent, no, love for profanity and abuse is likewise legendary, and so most tend to take jobs where they can vent their displeasure on others without fear of consequence — bouncer, boxer, drill instructor, etc. Most noticeable of all, of course, is what redcaps themselves call the true “mark of the blood” — red hair. All redcap kinain have it, no matter how distant they may be from their fae cousins; it simply grows brighter as the blood gets stronger. And while they cannot digest truly inedible objects like their full-blooded relatives, these kinain have proverbial cast-iron stomachs and the palates of billy goats. Perhaps most frightening for society at large, however, is the fact that redcaps and their kinain get along famously; once a kinain has proven their strength and ability to run with the gang, both sides party together often and come to the other's aid without hesitation should the need arise.

**Satyr** — “95% of what satyr kinain inherit is hair,” or so the kith joke goes, and it certainly does seem true on the surface: female kinain have long, beautiful, flowing hair, while males tend to be quite hirsute, with full beards and shaggy, tangled locks. Many also receive the booming laugh and beautiful singing voice of their faerie relatives, however, not to mention some of their social appetites — satyr kinain are incorrigible party animals from an early age, always out looking for a good time. Given a spotlight, they gladly ham it up. They tend to have quick tempers, though not as bad as their full-blooded cousins, but are quick to forgive an offense as well. Since they also tend to shower their friends (new and old) with affection most people find it hard to carry a grudge against them for very long. Careers in music are common for these kinain, as are stints in professional athletics, but whatever they do, they are noted for their passion. Satyrs love fraternizing with their kin, feeling that they are among the select few who can withstand a good goat party; deeper relationships are a bit harder to come by, but those kinain who prove themselves able to cast aside their inhibitions and have a good time may eventually be invited to join a trago (satyr motley), at which point they truly become family for life.

**Selkie** — Given that they must pass on their seal coats to worthy heirs in order to continue the kith, selkies are typically quite close to their kinain, since these relatives are often considered natural candidates to receive a particular selkie's coat. A selkie kinain who is given the gift of another selkie's seal coat is treated as a regular, full-blooded selkie from that day forth; see the previous “Joining the Family” section about the effects of this transformation. Even those who do not eventually join the kith share the same love of the ocean and the shoreline as their fae relatives do, however, and it is unheard of for them to live more than an hour or two away from the sea. They may not waste away as directly as their cousins do when away from the water, but the loss of the ocean

is felt just as keenly in their hearts. This prompts most selkie kinain to work alongside their Kithain relatives as sailors, divers and marine biologists in order to ensure that they need never give up the sea for long. Most share the slightly weathered but still attractive looks of their cousins, with sandy hair, deep tans and bright, playful eyes. On land, they tend to favor clothes as casual as their outlook, yet they still have a certain grace that allows them to pull off this style.

**Sidhe** — Sidhe kinain find themselves in a curious place; their great beauty and innate nobility easily puts them in the top 1% of most mortal societies, yet their faerie kin often look down on them as lessers and assign them the most menial or inconsequential titles and duties within a household (for sidhe, anyway — these kinain are still usually a step or two up from commoners, though most don't realize it). The exact treatment varies from house to house — Liam and Fiona are notably more egalitarian with their kinain than Eiluned and Gwydion nobles, for example — but as a rule, no matter how beautiful or successful they are, most sidhe kinain never feel like they quite measure up to their relatives, a frustrating fact to face for these proud kinain. Still, it is sidhe blood in their veins, however diluted it may be, and anyone who dares call one “mongrel” or “half-elf” to his face is bound to see just how much of the terrifying wrath of his ancestors he's inherited. Indeed, what makes the matter even more inscrutable to most kinain and even many changelings is that sidhe kinain are still incredibly attractive by the standards of both worlds: perfect bodies, gorgeous hair, fine features, and (in those with stronger blood) slightly pointed ears or eyes of a striking color, especially blue-violet or green-gold. The less ethereal nature of their features is even more attractive to some fae, compared to the almost alien beauty of their relatives, which of course only spurs haughty sidhe to further snub their kinain cousins.

**Sluagh** — It is often debated (no less among the sluagh than anyone else) whether sluagh kinain are better or worse off than their faerie cousins. On one hand, they are spared some of the worst gloominess and extremes their relatives must endure, which most consider a blessing. On the other hand, they often receive a good dose of their looks and outlook from their Kithain relations, without receiving the sensory or cultural benefits the sluagh have developed to compensate for them. While not as cadaverous as true sluagh, most of these kinain are still quite thin and pale, with delicate features, soft voices, slightly sunken eyes and a strong distaste for bright lights or loud noises. Many have a deep love of poetry, history and antiquity, and prefer occupations that give them plenty of time alone to contemplate their solitary passions. Some, however, gravitate toward the more morbid aspects of their ancestry and become obsessed with death and the occult, often joining the club scene or Goth subculture simply to revel in the dark ambiance they find there. For their part, sluagh respect the fact that most of their kinain simply desire be left alone, though from time to time particularly intelligent or interesting kinain receive invitations to High Tea with their relatives; those who attend learn much and invariably find themselves feeling curiously at home, if only for a time.

**Troll** — It's easy to spot troll kinain — just look up. Most of them share at least some of the great size and strength of their faerie cousins, and quite a few of them possess the *Huge Size Merit*. Also like their relatives, they can typically be found in jobs where they can put this advantage to use: police officer, construction worker and athlete are some of the most popular professions, but by no means the only ones. Few become bullies or otherwise abuse their size, however. The traditions of fairness and justice that the Kithain readily identify with their cousins seem to be genetically passed on to these kinain as well, and most are the very essence of the proverbial "gentle giant." When innocents are threatened or their trust is violated, however, even those troll kinain of Seelie descent become forces to be reckoned with, and those who know them well learn to stay out of their way when they see a wrong that needs righting. Nordic blood still runs strong among these kinain, meaning many have the fair hair and strong physiques of their ancestors, but as a rule the only real qualities they all have in common are their great size and sense of honor.

### *Kinain Seemings*

**Childling:** Kinain at this age are nearly as close to the Dreaming as their Kithain counterparts, and indeed the two are often found playing together without a care in the world for their differences.

Temper Scores: Glamour 4, Willpower 1, Banality 2

**Wilder:** Like their faerie cousins, most kinain realize their true nature at this age; their volatile natures and fantastic imaginations make them ideal musing candidates for Kithain, and it is in this relationship that most make their first contact with the secret world of the Kithain.

Temper Scores: Glamour 3, Willpower 2, Banality 4

**Grump:** Very few kinain emerge as grumps; if they haven't grasped their faerie nature by now, most are so overcome by Banality that they never will. Still, those who do often become powerful allies to the enchanted community, able to deal with and stave off the adult world on behalf of their younger charges. Many strike up deep friendships with childlings of both kinds, and quite a few spend evenings with the local graybeards as well, talking of the future and what Glamour they had.

Temper Scores: Glamour 2, Willpower 3, Banality 6

### *Backgrounds*

Existing as they do in a shadow world between faerie society and the mundane world, it is not surprising that kinain have developed a number of unusual advantages to help them cope with the task of balancing the two. Some of these Backgrounds (like *Feth Fiada* or *Faerie Blood*) are innate, reflecting the power that faerie ancestry has bestowed on those fortunate enough to have it;

### Kinain Backgrounds

With some restrictions (noted in the appropriate section), kinain may take the Backgrounds offered in *The Shining Host*; additionally, a number of new Backgrounds are available to them as well.

*Allies* — Close friends who can offer special assistance when you're in need.

*Contacts* — Sneaks, snitches and other sources of important information.

*Dross* — Access to a fairly reliable supply of Glamour in physical form.

*Faerie Blood* — The strength of your fae ancestry and your connection to the Dreaming.

*Faerie Mentor* — A friendly Kithain who can offer you valuable aid and advice.

*Feth Fiada* — The natural ability to go unnoticed among mortals.

*Kenning* — Same as the Ability, this is more of an innate talent for kinain.

*Resources* — Money and the things that come with it; raw financial power.

others, like *Dross* or *Faerie Mentor*, reflect something that the kinain has to work at if they wish to retain their edge. Needless to say, most of these Backgrounds are unique to kinain — their full-blooded cousins have enough advantages already! With the Storyteller's permission, *Dross* and *Feth Fiada* may be taken by Kithain characters, but the others are solely kinain territory.

All Kithain Backgrounds (including those new ones in this book) are also available to kinain during character creation, with the following exceptions: *Dreamers* is essentially replaced by *Dross*, *Mentor* by *Faerie Mentor*, and *Remembrance* is solely the domain of full changelings. *Holdings*, *Patron* and *Political Connections* are forbidden without express permission of the Storyteller, as they require the kind of intimate knowledge of fae society that few kinain have or are entrusted with by their fae cousins. Likewise, while some exceptional kinain are awarded the *Title* of squire, they must prove themselves truly extraordinary assets to the Kithain first, and no kinain has been awarded a *Title* higher than knight for centuries — such an honor would require deeds of legendary prowess.

#### Dross

By hard work, inheritance or simple happenstance, you have managed to come by a fairly regular supply of dross, or Glamour in physical form. This can be almost anything you can imagine — a faerie glade with magic mushrooms, a comic book store full of wacky old memorabilia, an abandoned house with an eccentric library, etc. Every level of this Background allows you to “harvest” one Glamour Trait worth of dross in the same fashion as the *Dreamers* Background, should you need a quick Glamour fix during a session or desire to



come “armed” with dross for cantrips or even just to trade with the Kithain present. This may not be used more times per week than you have levels in the Background, however, or you risk overtaxing your source and possibly even depleting it permanently. Since it is often very difficult for kinain to refresh their own limited Glamour supply, this reserve of Glamour can be invaluable if you wish to use cantrips regularly, and having a dross supply can give you some “coin of the realm” to trade with Kithain, but you must be careful to guard the source of your dross supply, lest greedy fae or even other kinain try to steal it for themselves.

### Faerie Blood

This Background measures how strong a faerie ancestry a particular kinain has, which in turn determines how close she is to the Dreaming and generally how powerful her personal Glamour is. In times past, there were a small number of families with strong fae ancestry, who were often very close to the Kithain around them. But as populations moved and mingled, this has become the exception rather than the rule. Those with one or two levels of *Faerie Blood* have a mere glimmer of fae ancestry, perhaps inherited from kinain grandparents or a full fae ancestor several generations back; those with three or four levels of this Background are noticeably kinain, perhaps with a changeling grandparent or a family with a long history of breeding true — most kinain who stay active in Kithain society have at least this degree of ancestry. Those rare and treasured kinain with five levels of *Faerie Blood* are very nearly fae themselves, and are usually born of at least one changeling parent; many are brought up around Kithain society to some degree and can develop great gifts of their own given time and training. It should be noted, however, that faerie blood is also highly capricious by nature, almost as if to openly flout the notion of pedigrees and Banal genetic science — it may show up strongly for three generations, be entirely absent the next, appear moderately after that and so on. Even two full changeling parents don't necessarily guarantee a true kinain child. Kithain scholars believe that the inheritance of fae blood has more to do with destiny and the will of the Dreaming, but these are educated guesses at best.

In game terms, this Background has several concrete effects: First, a kinain may never learn more levels of any Art than they have levels of this Background; thus, a kinain with three levels of *Faerie Blood* may learn up to both Basic levels and one Intermediate level of an Art, while a kinain with five levels of *Faerie Blood* may potentially master just about any Art (provided a teacher can be found, of course). Realms are unaffected by this Background, however, as they come naturally to any who study cantrip use. Second, the number of different Fae Gifts a kinain may possess is directly determined by the levels of this Background; a kinain with only one level of *Faerie Blood* may only have one Fae Gift, while one with four levels of *Faerie Blood* can have up to four Fae Gifts.

Note that this doesn't mean those kinain with only one or two Fae Gifts have to choose weak ones — indeed, they may manifest “strong” traits like *Honored Birthright* or *Parted Mists* — but those will be the only Gifts they have,

while those with more blood have the potential to develop a wider array of Fae Gifts both weak and strong.

### Faerie Mentor

Identical to the regular *Mentor* Background, with the following exceptions: First, kinain *must* have a mentor of some kind to learn any Arts, making this Background all the more valuable. Mentors are assumed to be able to teach a kinain up to as many levels of a particular Art as levels invested in this Background, subject of course to the regular limit on Arts imposed by the kinain's *Faerie Blood* Background. This means that to master most Arts (learn all five levels) a kinain must have both five levels of *Faerie Blood* as well as five levels of *Faerie Mentor*, not to mention find a changeling who has mastered the Art herself. Second, besides offering valuable advice and lore about Kithain society, most mentors are also the ones to sponsor the kinain in the local court. Without someone vouching for and looking after them, many kinain have little recourse in the eyes of Kithain justice and even less of a voice at court. Finally, while most mentors are sincerely interested in helping their charges, there are a villainous few who seek to use kinain as pawns in their own particular schemes, and have few qualms about sacrificing such "half-breeds" to achieve their own ends. As few kinain are knowledgeable enough of Kithain society to realize these bad apples for what they really are, many kinain quickly become very cautious about whom they appeal to for teaching, just in case....

### Feth Fiada

Walking two worlds has some advantages, especially when one of those worlds belongs to the fae; kinain with this Background have a natural talent for going unnoticed. Records are lost, photographs come out blurry and all but the kinain's close friends (or dire enemies) seem to have trouble recalling exactly what they look like when pressed for details. The character is considered up a number of Traits equal to the level of this Background on all tests related to stealth, secrecy and failing to leave tracks of any kind, including tests against any relevant supernatural powers. Needless to say, this can come in very handy when dealing with mortal authorities or even Prodigal foes. However, as this Background stems from the kinain's connection to the chimerical world, this Background offers *no* benefits when dealing with changelings, enchanted mortals or chimera, all of whom can detect you just fine. This Background also requires a bit of discretion to function and cannot be consciously invoked; characters who make an effort to be inconspicuous or unobtrusive have nothing to worry about, but those who make a point of calling attention to themselves through words or deeds and then try to hide behind *Feth Fiada* quickly find it fails them (Narrator's decision). In other words, you can't barge into a crowded room, shoot someone in plain view and then expect *Feth Fiada* to cover you as you leave. On the other hand, quietly moving up to the bar, slipping poison into a person's drink and then excusing yourself is right up this Background's alley.

### Kenning

Identical to the Ability as presented in *The Shining Host*, except that for kinain it is seldom something that can be actively studied or taught; it is simply a natural affinity they are either born with or not. Those who come from families with strong fae blood are often taught from a young age to watch out for mysterious things and develop this Background naturally, often to fairly high levels. Others aren't so fortunate and have to "coax it out" by spending time (and Experience Traits) around the Kithain. The Storyteller has final say over how much of this Background represents a natural talent and how much it can be developed, if they allow it to be developed at all.

### Mortal Backgrounds

One of the paradoxical strengths of being kinain is that since they are not so deeply rooted in Kithain society, they develop deeper ties to the mundane world than their chimerically inclined changeling cousins typically do. While this raises their Banality somewhat, it also allows them to manage things that their less practical fae relatives often forget, such as finances or influential mortal friendships. Many kinain actively seek out such positions of influence in the mortal world for just this reason. Since they cannot help in many areas of chimerical importance, they reason, they might as well tend to those mundane concerns that their fae cousins are unwilling or unable to handle. These Backgrounds are otherwise purchased and treated exactly as regular Backgrounds.

Kithain characters may purchase these Backgrounds during character creation as well. Such fae are simply more attuned to the mundane world than most of their peers.

### Allies

A few close friends help you out in your endeavors. You can make a few calls and cut a few deals to get assistance in a wide range of activities. Your Storyteller will probably require you to define how you maintain relationships with your allies. Each *Ally Trait* possessed represents one person that you can call on for aid. Unlike *Influence*, your *Allies* have special talents that make them better than the average person on the street. Though an *Ally* may not necessarily be aware of your faerie nature, he or she can still be quite useful if properly directed. In general, your *Allies* do not show up directly in play. Instead, you can use an *Ally* for certain services between play sessions, by notifying your Storyteller:

- An *Ally* can be directed to follow up on research or activities that you have started. If you previously undertook a specific task, like tailing someone, researching a project or building a device, your *Ally* can continue the work. The *Ally* does so with one Ability Trait's worth of expertise. As long as the *Ally* works on the project, your *Ally Trait* for the individual is tied up.

• If you need a particularly competent *Ally*, you can expend multiple Traits to gain access to a mortal with multiple levels of an Ability or Influence. Each *Ally* Trait that you spend after the first adds an extra level of expertise to your *Ally*. The *Ally* may use this expertise on your behalf only as long as you tie up your *Ally* Background Traits in this manner.

Be wary of calling on your *Allies* too often. An *Ally* may call on you for mutual aid or refuse to help if pressed into dangerous or illegal activities.

### Contacts

With the right *Contacts* in all walks of life, you can get a line on all sorts of useful information. Although having an “ear to the wall” doesn’t necessarily provide you with good help or loyal servants, it does mean that you know who to ask when looking for the movers and shakers behind the scenes. In game terms, your rating in *Contacts* allows you to discern rumors and information. When you call on your *Contacts*, you make a few phone calls, check with likely snitches and grease a few palms. In return, you get rumors and information as if possessed of a certain amount of Influence. This lets you find out exactly what’s going on in the city within a particular area. You can get information of a level equal to however many *Contacts* you use; if you use *Contacts* x 3 on *Industry*, for instance, you get information as if digging up dirt with *Industry* x 3 Influence. The advantage of *Contacts* is that they can be switched from place to place each game, getting information in different areas at your demand.

Using *Contacts* for especially dangerous or secret information may require you to spend some money or perform a few favors, at the discretion of a Storyteller. On occasion, accidents can cause *Contacts* in one area to dry up, such as a strike that affects your *Industry* *Contacts*, or a particularly unlucky astronomical conjunction sends your *Occult* *Contacts* running for the hills. Your *Contacts* generally do not function as aides or Glamour sources; that is the purview of the *Allies* and *Dreamers* Backgrounds.

Example: *Sean, sluagh gossip maven, has Contacts x 5. This month, his player Keith decides that Sean is going to begin a little political sabotage. Keith allocates Contacts x 3 to Politics, learning about local party leaders and the laws they've got in the works; he leaves two levels of Contacts in reserve, for life's little emergencies. Next month, he plans to use his Contacts once more to find someone in the University community who's willing to stage a few timely protests....*

### Fame

Connected as they are to the realms of art and creativity, it’s no surprise that many with faerie blood have at least some exposure to the intoxicating world of stardom. While many shun the limelight in order to keep their natures secret, quite a few fae and their kin live alongside the beautiful people, assuming the risk of exposure and the faerie hunters it brings in order to bask in the Glamour that fame generates. Damn, but it’s cool to be you!

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In game terms, *Fame* allows you to exercise your connections over a longer distance than usual. Sure, if you've got the right *Influence*, you can push things around on a statewide or even nationwide scale, but with *Fame*, you can just make a few calls and get your *Contacts*, *Influence* or *Resources* exerted over a greater range without any impediment. Your total *Fame* determines your maximum range for unimpeded use of your *Contacts*, *Influence* and *Resources*. When you make an effort to exert your *Backgrounds* over a long range, you lean on your popularity and image, thus expending your *Fame* Traits until the next game session. Usually, *Fame* is used in the downtime between sessions to facilitate long-range plans.

### Fame Ranges

Traits	Maximum Range for Backgrounds
1	Local scene
2	City
3	State
4	Adjoining states
5	Entire country

In a less-mechanical fashion, your *Fame* also dictates how recognizable you are to mortals, for one reason or another. You could be a movie star or a notorious criminal. Either way, the Storyteller certainly makes the effects of your *Fame* apparent, and mortals may take notice of you at bothersome times. You should wear a tag indicating your level of *Fame* so that others know of your distinction. *Fame* does have its limitations as well — Banality can come crashing down on those who fall from grace as the public considers them “washed up,” and *Fame* will do little to help you in some more serious matters unless you have a truly legendary reputation. Also, *Fame* does not always indicate a widespread knowledge of you; you may only be known to a subset of a particular group, such as a lesser-known performer, or a recognized expert who's unknown to those outside his particular field.

### Resources

You have access to liquid capital and spending money. You also have some solid resources that you can use when times are tight. Unlike the use of *Finance*, these *Resources* are always readily available and come to you automatically due to your investments, jobs and holdings. Your number of *Resources* Traits determines the amount of money and capital that you can secure. By expending temporary *Resources* Traits (which return at the next game session), you can draw on your regular income, as shown in the accompanying table. If you expend permanent *Resources*, you can divest yourself of holdings, allowing access to ten times the amount shown on the table. However, the limits of what you can buy are always adjudicated by the Storyteller. Truly powerful uses of *Resources* are best left to downtimes and moderation between game sessions.



## Resource Allocation

No Traits: Poverty; income \$200. Get roommates. Bus pass.

One Trait: Small savings and holdings; income \$500. Have apartment, cheap means of transportation.

Two Traits: Modest savings and holdings; income \$1,000. Have condo and motorcycle or modest car.

Three Traits: Significant savings and holdings; income \$3,000. Own house, car.

Four Traits: Large savings and holdings. Income \$10,000. Own large house or some small properties, two vehicles, some luxuries and unusual items.

Five Traits: Rich. Income \$30,000. Own estate and grounds, multiple small properties, several vehicles, arts and treasures, luxury items.

## Fae Gifts

Being kinain carries certain benefits alongside the obvious ones of being able to take part in the enchanted world — many, though not all, kinain manifest certain beneficial quirks and talents based on their faerie heritage. These are known as Fae Gifts. While some of them (particularly the more powerful ones) are more common among those with strong faerie blood, there is no real rhyme or reason to how they appear. A kinain of two changeling parents may manifest no Gifts at all, while a kinain with a distant Kithain grandparent might display a powerful Gift or two.

Though these Gifts are typically found among the kinain, and some of them would be useless or redundant to the Kithain, Storytellers may choose to let regular changelings take these Gifts as Merits of the same cost, though it is recommended this be restricted to those with an excellent story lest the uniqueness of the kinain quickly be lost. After all, full changelings have a number of more powerful advantages already — this list is a small compensation for their less-privileged relatives, and Storytellers make it a general list at their own peril.

### An-da-shealladh (2 Trait Fae Gift)

A handy Gift indeed, this “spirit sight” allows you to see and hear chimera and the fae mien of changelings all the time, regardless of whether you are currently enchanted or not. (Changelings that are temporarily overcome by Banality or actively trying to hide themselves through the use of cantrips like *Veiled Eyes* still require the normal tests to perceive.) However, unless you are enchanted, these chimera are still nothing more than solid-looking phantoms to you, which means that while chimerical weapons and beasts cannot harm you, neither can you affect them, as quickly becomes clear when you can't cross

a chimerical bridge or ride a chimerical mount. You also can't always tell if something is a chimera or not, so kinain with this Gift are advised to check carefully when they encounter anything particularly odd. Narrators should take care that characters with this Gift are always mindful of the fact that they cannot interact with chimera at all unless enchanted; this ranges from minor annoyances like not being able to close doors or pick up wine glasses to major problems like not being able to pick up a chimerical sword to help a comrade in danger.

#### **Bardic Gift (1-5 Trait Fae Gift)**

Most artists aspire to touch their audiences in even the smallest way, but your performances can reach deeper than most mortals ever dream of, stirring chords in the very souls of your subjects. You have a deep connection to the artistic tradition of the fae running through your veins and can tap it to produce amazing results when the need arises. Traditionally, this Gift is employed through singing or playing an instrument, but those are not the only mediums it can be employed through: Poetry, dancing, oration, writing and acting are all possibilities as well. The only limitation is that it must be a live performance for this Gift to take effect. Videotapes, audio recordings or even live broadcasts of your work may still be artistically powerful, but do not carry the magical effects of this Gift. Likewise, if your *Bardic Gift* is expressed in written or illustrated form (such as painting or sketching), only copies done by your hand can carry the power of the Gift; even photocopies or faithful recreations fail to convey the magic, and the Narrator is within her rights to limit the number of copies of a particular work you can make or the number of times it can be read before this Gift no longer applies. In the case of paintings or other "static" art, you are also required to be actively showing off the artwork to activate the power of this Gift — you cannot simply leave a painting with the *Strain of Slumber* magic on the wall as a knockout trap, for example. Use common sense to determine when this Gift applies or what artistic mediums may be used for a particular strain, and always favor art and game ambiance over the wishes of those who would abuse their *Bardic Gift* to dominate those around them.

For each level of this Gift, you may select one of the powers below to use with your *Bardic Gift* — each use of these powers requires a performance of your chosen artistic talent, plus a Social Test against those you wish to affect. You may retest with the appropriate *Performance* or *Expression* Abilities. Furthermore, you are considered a number of Traits up on this test equal to the levels spent on *Bardic Gift*. Against most mortal audiences, a single test against the person with the highest Social Traits is usually sufficient, but with audiences of supernatural beings or players' characters, the normal mob scene rules for multiple targets should be used. In the case of written or illustrated work, you may affix a card to the work detailing the power used and the number of Traits the target must defeat in a test to avoid suffering its effects; the target must conduct this test with a Narrator after reading or viewing the work. Needless to say, those unable to experience the performance (blind, deaf, solidly

plugging their ears, etc.) are immune to all uses of this Gift. At the Narrator's discretion, Kithain and Prodigals may spend a Willpower Trait to ignore the effects of *Bardic Gift*, but mortals are generally helpless in the performer's power.

*Strain of Soothing* — This power allows you to lull your audience into a state of pleasant contentment, cooling hot tempers and making everyone feel at home with those around them. It does not bury old feuds completely but makes everyone more likely to work things out instead of fighting. All attempts at friendly Social tests are one Trait up for the rest of the scene. Targets must win or tie a Simple Test to resort to violence or even harsh language, though they may defend themselves normally.

*Strain of Laughter* — People start rolling in the aisles when this power is invoked; targets are all but paralyzed with fits of laughter at your performance, and will not respond to anything but a direct threat for a number of turns equal to your permanent Glamour rating. This is especially useful for making someone or something the target of ridicule — or for providing a quick escape from those with a taste for kinain flesh.

*Strain of Consciousness* — Your performances are quite literally thought-provoking and leave your audiences actively pondering the topics or emotions raised by your performance. Your audience also feels mentally refreshed and clear-headed, their intellect focused and their thoughts clear. Audience members are one Trait up on all Mental Tests for the next hour and give serious consideration to the issues raised in your performance, often to the point of debating them with others they come across for the rest of the scene.

*Strain of Ire* — A consummate rabble-rouser, you can spark righteous fury in your audiences. Noble kinain use this talent to stir up dissent against tyrants or social injustices, although there are also rumors of malicious kinain using this to incite violence. Targets voice anger and distrust against the subject of your performance and resist violently if attempts are made to suppress their fury. This power lasts for one scene, at which point the audience's anger dissipates unless events again fan the flames. Take note, however, that unless the targets are already somehow predisposed to violence, they generally limit their actions to words and some petty vandalism unless further provoked — this power does not generate an instant riot, though a riled crowd may certainly head in that direction if they encounter appropriate opposition. Note also that this power, while potent, also quickly gets the kinain in *serious* trouble with local nobles or mortal authorities, so discretion is advised if the performer intends to avoid a long jail sentence (or worse).

*Strain of Love* — A master of flirtation and seduction, you can use your art to put targets “in the mood” and otherwise spread the joys of love. Those schooled in the *Strain of Love* can often find employment in noble courts as minstrels and go-betweens for all kinds of lovers. While not nearly as strong as the satyr *Gift of Pan Birthright*, a successful use of this Gift can still soften even a hard-hearted target to the delights of romance, and those already predisposed to love become positively giddy at the slightest hint of romantic activity.

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Targets are two Traits down to resist attempts at seduction. While they retain free will and can still act normally in response to threats, they generally pursue the softer pleasures whenever possible and are quite receptive to romantic suggestions. This power's effects last for one scene.

*Strain of Sorrow* — Tugging on the heartstrings is second nature to you. With a successful use of this power, targets of your performance are overcome by hysterical weeping and are essentially incapacitated in the same way and for the same duration as those under the effects of the *Strain of Laughter* (above). What's more, even after the crying passes they become very sympathetic to the subject of the performance and/or you for the remainder of the scene, and more than one kinain has thus used this power to win a reprieve for a condemned friend or escape a harsh sentence themselves.

*Strain of Slumber* — You must possess at least two levels of the *Bardic Gift* before this power can be chosen (that is, the earliest you can select it is as your third level of this Gift). Targets fall into a deep, enchanted sleep for a number of minutes equal to your permanent Glamour Traits. During this time, nothing short of violence — including forcefully shaking a target — awakens them, though they awaken immediately if outright attacked (and thus can defend themselves normally).

*Strain of Truth* — This can only be the fifth (final) level of the *Bardic Gift* a character possesses; this strain is too powerful to be learned without first mastering a number of lesser uses of this Gift. Targets are absolutely convinced that whatever you are telling them is true and remain so for the rest of the scene, or perhaps longer, depending on what you tell them and how gullible they are. What's more, if the most discriminating of audiences (i.e., the Narrator) deems your performance particularly exceptional, you can even achieve a limited form of Rapture. You must make a Glamour Test against seven Traits — if successful, you gain a temporary Glamour Trait for every level of *Performance* or *Expression* you currently possess.

#### **Empowered (3 or 5 Trait Fae Gift)**

Most kinain are incapable of enchanting themselves and thus rely on their changeling associates to draw them into their hidden world. For whatever reason, however, you are an exception and may enchant yourself by creating tokens infused with your own Glamour. The enchantment carried by these tokens lasts for the normal amount of time a regular token would enchant you, but you may create tokens only for yourself. Other kinain and mortals must fend for themselves. This gives you something of an edge when dealing with the enchanted world, since you do not need to rely entirely on the Kithain to bring you over, but you may well be greeted with suspicion by certain fae, especially nobles, who keep close track of those who can enter the chimerical realm. Naturally, you must retain enough memory of the chimerical world to remember what creating a token would mean if you want to create a working token, so beware the Mists, since you cannot enchant yourself if you don't remember the chimerical world at all! In addition, given the difficulty kinain have in

regaining Glamour, this talent is best left unused except in cases of absolute emergency, lest you exhaust your Glamour supply too quickly.

If you purchase the five-Trait version of this Gift, your tokens may be used enchant others as well. Remember, you are considered responsible for the actions of those you enchant during their time in the chimerical world, accidental or otherwise, and Kithain justice can be swift for those whose guests bring harm to the local Dreaming. Be very careful whom you grant the "gift" of enchantment....

#### **Fith-Fath (1-5 Trait Fae Gift)**

With this minor invocation of the Mists, kinain can disappear from sight for short periods of time. This invisibility is considered identical to a *Veiled Eyes* cantrip. *Fith-Fath* requires one or more Glamour Traits and a test of the kinain's permanent Glamour rating against the highest Banality present (which may well be her own); she is considered to be up a number of Traits equal to the amount of Glamour Traits spent on this Gift for the purposes of this test. A test must still be performed even if the kinain is the only character present. This invisibility lasts for one minute per permanent Glamour Trait outside of combat or other stressful situations, but fails immediately if the kinain enters combat or otherwise interacts with her environment. Most mortals are completely oblivious to the character's presence, although many Prodigals and faerie hunters guard against this type of deception.


#### **Honored Birthrights (5 Trait Fae Gift)**

One of the rarest and most powerful Fae Gifts of all, a kinain with this Gift has inherited the full Birthrights of his faerie heritage, including all bonus Traits and other benefits they might offer. (If your heritage stems from more than one kith, choose one each time this Gift is purchased.) Thus, a pooka kinain can shapechange and win his way into the hearts of others, eshu kinain weave exceptional tales and are always in the right place at the right time, and so on. If a Birthright requires interaction with chimera or other elements of the Dreaming, such as the chimera creation abilities of the nockers, a kinain can only employ that Birthright when enchanted. This should be viewed as a way of representing a strong faerie heritage, not a way to mix and match the best possible collection of Birthrights, and Storyteller permission as well as an *excellent* character concept is always required before this Gift can be taken more than once. Note: You do *not* suffer from the Frailties of your heritage unless you take the Fae Mark *Inherited Frailty*.

#### **Nine Lives (4 Trait Fae Gift)**

Maybe you're descended from legendary heroes, or perhaps you refuse to believe that chimera can deal you lasting damage; regardless of the reasoning behind it, chimerical death doesn't faze you much. When killed in chimerical combat, you are considered to have a Banality of 1 for determining how long you remain unconscious and how much you remember upon waking, regardless of your actual Banality rating. This means that you are out cold for only an hour,





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and wake up remembering everything that happened to you up to the moment of your "death." The only catch is that you can do this up to a total of nine times during the *chronicle* (not story or session), at which point this Gift is exhausted and you suffer the effects of chimerical death normally. This Gift is also canceled if your permanent Banality ever reaches 10. Each time your character suffers chimerical death, you must report it to the Storyteller, who then scratches one from your nine; failure to do so is cheating, plain and simple.

**Parted Mists (5 Trait Fae Gift)**

Another rare and incredibly useful Gift, you have somehow inherited a complete immunity to the memory-fogging effects of the Mists, allowing you to remember with perfect clarity everything you experienced while enchanted. You may still be killed in chimerical combat, and if so you remain unconscious for the normal time dictated by your permanent Banality Traits, but once you awaken your memory of the fae is as good as ever. This allows you to move in and out of changeling society very easily since you don't suffer from amnesia every time you cross back into the mundane world, but this limited immunity to the Mists also makes you potentially a very dangerous enemy of the fae as well. You can be sure that the fae will be quick to silence you if you prove disloyal, as you are too great a risk to be allowed to turn Dauntain.

**Riastradh (5 Trait Fae Gift)**

Most common to redcap and troll kinain, you have developed the legendary battle frenzy of ancient warriors past, making you a frightening foe in chimerical combat. To invoke the *Riastradh*, you must spend a Glamour Trait and a full turn mentally preparing yourself for combat. Once those requirements are met, you are considered two Traits up on all combat tests, both attacking and defending, provided you attack with a chimerical weapon or attack of some kind. Other forms of physical combat put you up only one Trait. This battle lust has a powerful disadvantage as well: Once the frenzy is entered, you cannot withdraw from battle until either you or your opponent are dead and a clear victor can be determined. Despite the rage involved, friends and bystanders are safe from you while you're in this frenzy state, but the *Riastradh* cannot be broken short of meeting the aforementioned conditions or spending a Willpower Trait. Upon leaving the battle frenzy you are weakened and suffer a one-Trait penalty on all actions until you have rested for at least a solid half-hour.

**Second Sight (1-5 Trait Fae Gift)**

You are touched by the future and catch glimpses of it in dreams and visions. While never as certain or specific as other people wish you would be, you have learned how to read your visions (for the most part) and can often glean valuable information from them. Generally, you have little control over the visions — indeed, they seem to visit you when you least expect or desire them — but in times of need you can try to coax these instincts to the surface. Any time you wish to try this, you may expend a level of this Gift and ask the Storyteller for a Simple Test; if you win, you receive a brief vision that imparts some insight on your current situation or the near future surrounding it. This

is not a guarantee or a get-out-of-jail free card, but it can offer help when you're stumped on what courses of action might be the best to pursue. You may only do this a number of times per story (not per session) equal to the number of Traits spent on this Gift. After that, it's considered used up until the next story. Most of the time, however, this Gift is not used this directly but comes into play through the Storyteller granting you dreams and visions about events to come. Needless to say, clever Storytellers will use this opportunity to pass on all manner of hints, clues and foreshadowing. The farthest you can see into the future is generally limited to one year per level of this Background, though this is far from a concrete restriction and may be waived at the Storyteller's discretion.

#### **Spearman's Shield (1-5 Trait Fae Gift)**

You've lived the majority of your life without any danger from chimerical sources. Why should they bother you now? Due to your great bravery and deep-seated belief in chimera as "lesser" threats to your health and welfare, you are highly resistant to chimerical damage — for each level of this Gift you possess, you may ignore one level of chimerical damage done to you, regardless of the source. It simply doesn't touch you at all. Once you have used a level of this Gift this way, however, it's gone for the rest of the story (not session). The only way to refresh the *Shield* before then is to spend a Willpower Trait; this quickly exhausts your spiritual reserves and can be performed only once per session, and then only when the threat of harm is looming overhead. Furthermore, since the *Shield* is an expression of your bravery and determination, it ceases to function immediately if you ever run out of Willpower Traits. Likewise, if you fall victim to a cantrip or similar power that causes fear or uncertainty, you lose the *Shield* for the duration of that power. It should also be noted that *Spearman's Shield* doesn't protect against physical damage of any kind, but it *does* protect against cantrips and other Glamour uses that cause real physical damage such as the *Pyretics Art*.

#### **Taghairm (2 Trait Fae Gift)**

Be it a blessing or a curse, you have the ability to call to the spirits of the dead and speak to them. While they are under no particular obligation to do what you ask or even heed your call in the first place, most spirits are at least curious to meet with someone who can hear them, and many are more than willing to spy on others or give advice in exchange for a few favors in the lands of the living. Some can even use their ghostly powers to assist you, though great care is advised when bargaining with such powerful spirits, as they can just as easily turn those powers against you if they desire, and ghosts have nothing but time to plot revenge on those who wrong them. Naturally, a Narrator or perhaps even other players with wraith characters need to be contacted for this Gift to be used, and regardless of how friendly or helpful the local wraiths are, you must remember that the Restless Dead never do anything for free — there's *always* a price.

#### **Taibhsear (1 Trait Fae Gift)**

You see dead people — to your eyes, wraithly comings and goings are just as plain as those of the living, though you cannot hear or speak to ghosts unless you also possess the *Taghairm* Gift. Needless to say, this can be a terrifying Gift indeed, especially for childling kinain, as many wraiths are at least mildly disturbing in appearance and most of the time the kinain are the only ones in the area who can see them at all. This Gift also confers no ability to perceive chimera; that is the domain of the *An-da-shealladh* Gift. If a wraith is riding a living body — commonly known as possession — or attempting to hide itself with supernatural powers, the kinain can only perceive it by first winning a Mental Test (no Traits risked for either side). Still, as frightening as it may be sometimes, the ability to perceive the Restless Dead can have a number of uses, not the least of which being knowing which rundown houses to avoid after dark!

#### **Weakened Mists (1-3 Trait Fae Gift)**

For one reason or another, the Mists do not cloud your mind as strongly as they do for most kinain. For each level of this Gift, subtract one from your effective Banality rating (to a minimum Banality of 1) when determining the length of time spent recovering from chimerical “death” and how much the Mists cloud your memory of chimerical encounters. Thus, you tend to bounce back faster from chimerical damage than most kinain, and remember more of what you have seen while enchanted. Note that this doesn’t lower your actual Banality in any other way, nor does it prevent you from gaining Banality during the course of play, but it does make life easier when dealing with (or recovering from) the nastier side of chimerical encounters.

## **Fae Marks**

Of course, every gift comes with some price attached, and the numerous quirks and legendary weaknesses of the fae often manifest in those with their blood as well. While they tend to show up in those kinain with a higher degree of fae blood, especially those with the more powerful Fae Gifts, unfortunately that’s not always the case, and some hapless kinain even wind up with the drawbacks of their heritage without any real Gifts to show for it. Characters with Fae Marks have manifested some of the worst qualities or luck associated with their faerie ancestors, and like it or not it’s unlikely to ever change much.

Unlike the Fae Gifts, which can sometimes be chosen as Flaws by full Kithain, these traits tend to be very specific to the unique status of the kinain and thus off-limits to regular changelings unless the Storyteller specifically permits them.

#### **Enchanted Blood (1 Trait Fae Mark)**

All kinain technically have fae blood in their veins, but for some reason yours carries a level of Glamour normally found solely in Kithain; this doesn’t generally mean much except that any vampires who feed from you suffer the normal side effects as if they had imbibed the blood of a full changeling. (See *Laws of the Night*, page 262, for full details on the deleterious effects of Kindred

consuming fae blood.) Additionally, some wizards and even stranger types may seek your blood for all manner of twisted experiments, should word of your unusual vintage become known in the supernatural community. Needless to say, such groups can easily pose a threat to you and those around you, and most have little problem with the idea of stealing it from a “mere” mortal such as yourself. The Storyteller may disallow this Mark in games that have little or no interaction with Kindred or others with an unhealthy interest in fae blood.

#### **Inherited Frailty (5 Trait Fae Mark)**

Call it a star-crossed birth, wry twist of fate or simply rotten luck, but whatever the reason might be, you have inherited the worst aspects of your fae relatives — their Frailties. Thus, redcap kinain have horrible social skills, eshu kinain are extremely reckless, and satyr kinain are prone to wild mood swings. You have all the Frailties of your faerie heritage, including any Negative Traits or other game mechanics they might entail; if your heritage stems from more than one kith, you must select which kith's Frailties you have inherited when this Mark is chosen. If a Frailty deals *exclusively* with the enchanted world, then it only applies when you are enchanted, but that certainly makes for a nasty surprise every time you cross into chimerical reality! The Narrator should make sure the full effects of these Frailties are enforced during play, and players should remember that many Frailties may make a kinain's mortal life quite difficult. For example, a pooka kinain who lies compulsively will have trouble holding down an honest job, though a career in politics isn't a bad idea.


You do *not* gain the Birthrights of your heritage unless you take the Fae Gift *Honored Birthrights*. This also does not mean that you physically resemble your fae heritage — that's the province of the *Mark of the Blood* Mark, below, though combining the two is certainly highly appropriate.

#### **Iron's Curse (2 Trait Fae Mark)**

Most kinain aren't nearly as sensitive to cold iron as full Kithain are, but you have no such luck — the mere sight of iron makes you uncomfortable, and you are at a one-Trait penalty from pain and distraction while in direct contact with the hated metal. What's more, you cannot gain Glamour (through Rapture or enchantment) while in contact with iron, and you generally won't stand for it being used or stored anywhere near you, even if you happen to be one of the Dauntain.

#### **Mark of the Blood (1-5 Trait Fae Mark)**

The bane of kinain who seek to hide their natures, this Mark represents an obvious physical characteristic (or characteristics) that clearly announces your faerie heritage to the world at large. This can be represented by several existing Flaws from **The Shining Host** — *Huge Size*, *Short* and *Changeling's Eyes* are a few examples, but by no means the only ones — or some entirely new deformity. The value of this Mark depends on how obvious the characteristic is: pointed ears, excessive body hair, a slight tint to your hair or skin or similar “minor” features would be worth one or two Traits, since they are relatively easy to explain away to curious mortals. Those wise in the ways of the Kithain or old



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folktales will be suspicious of your nature, but generally most mortals accept a “reasonable” explanation and give it no more than a few odd stares afterward. By contrast, four- or five-Trait Marks are blatantly fantastic: cloven hooves instead of feet, pronounced animal features, large horns or other indisputably faerie features. You generally have a hard time passing unnoticed in mortal society, anyone who knows anything about the fae immediately knows you for what you are, and even the smallest interactions with mortals require very creative explanations of your deformity, and many are still fraught with suspicion, superstition and sometimes outright hostility against the “freak.”

### **Ravaged (2 Trait Fae Mark)**

Whether due to a wicked mentor, a ill-fated tryst or just bad timing, you have been Ravaged by one of the fae, which has robbed you of the Glamour that is your natural right. Given the difficulty kinain have gaining Glamour, this is a serious handicap and could very easily have stayed with you for months or even years after the attack occurred. You begin the game with no temporary Glamour Traits and thus probably also know very little about any Fae Gifts or Arts you might have, unless they require no Glamour to activate. What's more, the psychic wounds from this traumatic event are still fresh in your mind, no matter how long ago the incident(s) actually occurred; you are two Traits down on all attempts at friendly Social Tests with the fae, due to the deep-seated distrust you harbor for them in your heart. You may one day be able to finally come to terms with what happened to you (i.e., buy off this Flaw), but it will take a great deal of effort and trust; until then, no matter how nice local Kithain may be or how hard you try to put it behind you, the memories of your creativity being ripped away are too painful to really open up to these untrustworthy creatures.

### **Selective Enchantment (1-3 Trait Fae Mark)**

Perhaps it's a family curse, or maybe it's simply the will of the Dreaming, but whatever the reason may be, you can only be enchanted in one particular fashion. All other efforts to enchant you are simply a waste of Glamour, although you may not know this until the attempt actually fails. While occasionally useful for fending off unwanted attempts at enchantment, this condition is typically far more of a hassle than a help, and rest assured the Storyteller will take every chance to exploit the aggravating side of this Mark. Needless to say, this handicap also makes it even more difficult for you to stay involved in Kithain society than most kinain, especially if your favored means of enchantment is one especially exacting or distasteful to the fae. They might even eventually consider you more trouble than you're worth to keep around! The exact value of this Mark depends on how specific and difficult the circumstances happen to be that you require in order to be enchanted; a fairly easy or common requirement, such as food or line of sight, would be worth one Trait, while a more exacting one such as a very specific type of food or your express verbal permission (which might be difficult to secure if you have fallen to the Mists, for example) would be worth three Traits. Add two Traits to the value of this Mark if you are further limited to one of the general method of



enchantment — tokens, forcible enchantment or even the Enchanted Stroke technique. Storytellers may lessen its value or even ban this Mark outright if they do not feel it will be a substantial factor in the chronicle.

## On Being Enchanted

No matter how often it may happen in a given kinain or mortal character's life, the experience of enchantment is never the same twice, and roleplaying this constant level of wonder and novelty is one of the main challenges (and pleasures) of playing these unique characters. This section deals with the mechanics of enchantment — how it is done, what effects it has, and the greatest dangers of being enchanted.

### *Methods of Enchantment*

There are several ways to enchant mortals and Prodigals. Each has its own unique flavor, and most changelings develop an affinity for one or two over time. Remember, time spent in a freehold or in the Far or Deep Dreaming doesn't count toward the time limit on an enchantment, hence the reason that many nobles prefer to keep enchanted mortals in their freeholds, as it decreases the amount of Glamour that needs to be spent.

#### **Tokens**

Folklore holds that one must be wary of accepting gifts of food or trinkets from the fae, lest one be drawn into their world forever. While largely exaggerations, these legends do have some basis in fact. The process of creating tokens is the most common and usually most gentle means of enchanting others, and so is considered the preferred method by most fae. What's more, all manner of trickery is permissible when it comes to convincing a target to accept a token, including tossing it to a target and hoping she reflexively catches it, but the token cannot be "planted" on a target (not even with magic), nor can it be forced on her with outright violence or it is immediately nullified. Tokens remain "charged" for an amount of time determined by their nature; food tokens expire when the food spoils, for example, but a token necklace might retain its Glamour for some time. Prior to activation, tokens can be sensed with an appropriate *Kenning Test* and even used as dross by particularly greedy or desperate fae. Contrary to popular opinion, the target need not carry the item on their person once the enchantment has begun, and removing it from their presence does nothing to shorten the duration of the enchantment.

*System:* To use this method of enchantment, the Kithain must simply infuse some small token with a number of Glamour Traits and then get the target to accept it. The token itself is often crafted by the fae — handmade jewelry, homemade muffins, an original poem, etc. — but it may also be something found, such as a flower plucked from the side of the road or even a lucky penny. No matter what pretext she might have been duped with, however, upon accepting the token the target becomes enchanted for a number of days equal to the number of Glamour Traits invested in the token. Kinain

are even easier to enchant — whether they want to be or not! — and remain enchanted for a number of days equal to their own permanent Glamour plus the number of Traits spent on the token. Likewise, those with Merits like *Faerie Affinity* may also remain enchanted for a longer period of time, at the Storyteller's discretion.

#### Forcible Enchantment

While often very traumatic for the target, sometimes a fae has no choice but to pull a target into their world by sheer force of Glamour. This is most often done to draw a mortal or Prodigal foe into the chimerical world so that a fae might more easily use their cantrips against them, though it is rumored that some unsavory Unseelie use this method of enchantment to terrify mortal prey before Ravaging them. Those who have experienced this process describe it as nothing less than jarring. Token enchantment is a slowly blooming flower of the spirit, while forcible enchantment is a sudden flash fire that burns away the regular world. Still, sometimes there is no other choice, and on occasion the shock of the transition is just what a clever fae needs to disorient an opponent long enough to land a telling blow. Just be careful how much you reveal to the enemy by enchanting them...

*System:* Forcible enchantment is brutally simple — the changeling simply makes a test of their permanent Glamour versus the target's permanent Banality; if successful, the target becomes enchanted for one scene/hour (whichever comes first) per Glamour Trait the fae is willing to spend. If unsuccessful, however, the fae immediately gains two temporary Banality Traits and cannot attempt to forcibly enchant that target again for at least an hour. What's more, if the target is carrying any cold iron, they are considered one Trait up on the test. This is one reason most fae shy away from forcible enchantment if at all possible. Not only does it have a much shorter payoff for the Glamour spent, but it carries a nasty risk of Banality as well.

If the target fails to resist, however, they are down a number of Traits equal to their permanent Banality on all tests save those to defend themselves for the next minute due to the disorientation of the crossover, minus one Trait for each time they have been previously enchanted (minimum one Trait). Since their perspectives are already radically different from the norm, most Prodigals are immune to this penalty, although they must still roleplay the shock of their new state to the best of their ability; the Narrator's discretion is final on whether the penalty applies.

#### Enchanted Stroke

This flashy technique requires a bit of *Melee* and *Gremayre* to pull off, but it can be absolutely devastating when performed properly. A very specific form of forcible enchantment, the Enchanted Stroke allows the Kithain to imbue a swing of their weapon with Glamour so that the next foe they strike becomes temporarily enchanted. While this initial strike does no damage to the target (since the weapon is not technically real to them until right after they are struck), the target is likely to suffer the same kind of disorientation as a normal

opponent, often allowing wily Kithain fighters to overwhelm their stunned opponents. At the very least, it levels the playing field a bit by allowing the changeling to use all the chimerical resources at their disposal, and so it is commonly employed against particularly fearsome mortal or Prodigal opponents.

*System:* The Enchanted Stroke costs one Glamour Trait per use, enchants a target for one day, and requires that the Kithain have at least one permanent level each of *Melee* and *Gremayre* before it can be mastered. Of course, a successful Physical Test is also required to hit the target with this technique in the first place. Note that this technique usually must be taught by a mentor of some kind — it is not instinctive upon learning those Ability levels, although some untrained Kithain have manifested this talent in times of truly dire need (high drama and Narrator's discretion required for such uses). Furthermore, this technique can be employed only by Kithain using melee weapons, as ranged weapons of any kind — including thrown daggers or axes — sever the link between Kithain and weapon that is vital to the success of the attack, while raw fists or feet simply don't have the necessary panache to carry off this technique.

## Effects of Enchantment

Regardless of whether the target is a mortal or a Prodigal, once enchanted, the base result is very simple: The target can now perceive and interact with the chimerical world exactly as Kithain do, and what's more, the chimerical world can interact with *them* as well. Chimerical weapons injure, chimerical obstacles block and chimerical creatures react to their presence, for better or worse. The target may automatically see the faerie mien of any changeling they come across and may even dream up some voile, or chimerical clothing, for themselves to wear. (More complicated and/or useful items like functioning weapons or armor typically must be borrowed or purchased with the appropriate Backgrounds, however.) They may also enter hidden freeholds, walk trods, ride faerie mounts or perform other tasks normally impossible to the unenchanted. It becomes easier to cast cantrips on them, as they are now immersed in the world of Glamour and cannot employ their Banality to deflect any magics cast their way. In essence, for all intents and purposes the enchanted target is a denizen of the faerie realm, if only for a time.

To this end, Narrators and Kithain players alike should make a special effort to describe the chimerical world and its inhabitants to the newly enchanted character, allowing them to feel the full majesty of the Dreaming unfolding around them. They have entered a totally new *world*, after all, and it's the duty of all Kithain to make sure that these "new arrivals" feel the grandeur, humor and terror of the chimerical world as fully as possible. For their part, enchanted characters need not walk around slack-jawed the entire night, gaping at every faerie character they see, but no matter how long they remain should always retain some appreciation of the fact that they have entered a new world, which even at its most familiar is still the embodiment of every dream and nightmare they've ever had. Indeed, even those characters who have been

enchanted before should still feel a little staggered each time; no matter what kind of preparation a person might have, it's still a pale shadow of the actual experience.

While the primary features of enchantment should be handled through roleplaying and description, some quick rules and game mechanics dealing with the enchanted character's new state are as follows, to clear up some common misconceptions about enchantment:

- Enchanted characters can automatically perceive the fae mien of any changeling they come across (unless the fae is actively hiding it via cantrips or some other means), as well as any prominent chimerical items or landscape features.
- Enchanted characters cannot use their Banality to defend against cantrips; they are simply too saturated with Glamour to call upon their disbelief like they normally can.
- Enchanted characters count as chimerical targets for the purposes of determining cantrip costs, unless the caster specifically wishes to create a Wyrð effect, in which case the cantrip costs the normal amount for such magic.
- Enchanted characters suffer and heal damage from chimerical sources normally; this doesn't pose a problem unless the character falls below Incapacitated from such damage. (See "Chimerical Death," below, for what happens to those slain by chimerical means.) Any unhealed chimerical damage fades away harmlessly when the enchantment ends, though "phantom aches" may trouble the character for days.
- Enchanted Prodigals or other paranormal characters can use their supernatural powers against chimera and the chimerical world normally — thus the hesitation of most fae to enchant particularly powerful foes, lest they lay waste to whole areas of the Dreaming before they're subdued. As a further rule of thumb, those powers that affect spirits (not wraiths) function on chimera as well, but only as long as the character using the power remains enchanted. When in doubt, consult a Narrator and employ common sense on how a particular power functions in the Dreaming.

## *Dangers of Enchantment*

As most enchanted beings quickly learn, the Dreaming can be as frightening and dangerous as it is wondrous and beautiful, a fact that even seasoned kinain and others used to being enchanted are well aware of. Besides goblin inventions, forbidding terrain and cunning beasts, enchanted characters face two serious threats to life and limb: chimerical death and the enchanted version of Bedlam, or what the Kithain call being Dream-struck.

### *Chimerical Death*

Enchanted characters who are slain by chimerical damage do not actually die, but their enchantment ends and they immediately fall into a comatose state, which lasts for a length of time determined by their permanent Banality

(see the Mists chart in *The Shining Host*, pg. XXX). As most enchanted beings have fairly high Banality, this can take a character out for quite some time, so newcomers to the chimerical world are cautioned to take the "imaginary" weapons they encounter seriously!

It is rumored that certain powerful *Treasures* or cantrips (or their Prodigal equivalents), not to mention more prosaic means such as the kiss of a true love, can rouse a comatose character before the requisite amount of time, but if such means exist, no one yet knows what they might be. Upon waking, the recovering character's memories of the chimerical world and any changelings they met are typically very hazy and indistinct, as if little more than distant dreams. Again, the amount the target remembers is determined by their permanent Banality rating and can be found on the aforementioned Mists chart.

Chimerical death is a two-way street: While it's only fair to allow changelings to use their natural means and magics to battle their enemies, enchantment is seldom if ever considered as the first option when battling Prodigals or especially determined mortals, due to the risk that these foes might somehow remember enough about their experience to do lasting damage to the chimerical world. Changelings have been largely invisible to the mortal world and even the watchful eyes of the Prodigals for centuries, if not millennia, and they're in no hurry to squander this advantage by carelessly enchanting anyone who crosses them. After all, the *player* might know that most targets are too Banal to remember much of the Dreaming, but is their *character* really willing to hazard the uncertainty of how much a Dauntain hunter or vampire assassin might remember? That's not a chance most Kithain take lightly, if they dare to take it at all. Likewise, Storytellers should watch out for players who try to exploit enchantment solely as a means of putting targets (especially other players' characters) in long-term comas and rein them in quickly and firmly, else the magic of enchantment is lost in a sea of bitter feelings.

### *Vegetable Gardens, or A Note on Handling Comatose Characters*

At first glimpse, it may seem that the rules for the Mists and the amount of time characters slain by chimerical damage must remain comatose are excessive, perhaps even cruel. After all, players ask, is it really fair to effectively remove a character from the game for upwards of six months or more just because they lost a chimerical duel, or fell during some grand battle? However, before you consider relaxing the rules on recovering from chimerical death, please consider the following factors:

- Chimerical death is unique in that in most cases it is harmful enough to give players good reason to avoid it if at all possible, especially grumps and other Banality-heavy fae. At the same time, it is not usually the ultimate end for a character, which gives Kithain players cause for great courage and the



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ability to take incredible risks without needing to worry about losing a beloved character permanently over a few bad rock-paper-scissor tosses. However, decreasing or eliminating the time spent comatose upsets this balance in favor of never worrying about any consequences associated with the Dreaming, which not only fosters inaccurate roleplaying of the Kithain experience but also eventually damages the respect players have for the chimerical world itself.

- Never forget — the character has *died*. Something terrible happened to them, and now rightly or wrongly they're suffering for it. While players may not be inclined to take it seriously, since they know chimerical death is temporary, that doesn't mean their characters should feel so flippant. A character's chimerical self represents the outward expression of their soul, for Kithain and kinain, or some of their deepest dreams and nightmares, in the case of enchanted mortals and Prodigals. Having that destroyed, even temporarily, is a serious psychological blow to any character, and hence their comatose state — it allows time for the character's "dream self" to slowly recover and re-establish the fundamental connection to the Dreaming that all beings share. Jump-starting that process is risky, to say the least, and even if successful it might bring back a very different person indeed...

- Remember, just because her *character* must be comatose need not mean that the *player's* time must be wasted! Encourage players whose characters have suffered chimerical death to dig up a character concept they never had a chance to play before, help out as an NPC (maybe even a villain!) and otherwise take the chance to view the game through a different lens. That way they can stay involved in the events of the chronicle, enjoy themselves and finally come back to the game invigorated and with a new perspective when their characters at last return from their slumber. Just make sure they don't bring over knowledge from these other roles to their original character, and things should move along smoothly.

- Last but not least, from a design standpoint, taking the risk out of any kind of death encourages complacency, robs challenges of excitement and makes the story seem more like a video game than an epic fairy tale. If characters can always bounce back from chimerical death, it quickly loses all meaning, and suddenly those chimerical monsters and dastardly Kithain villains you have planned won't seem half as scary as they should. What's worse, it might even encourage some players to use mundane weapons instead of chimerical ones when fighting their battles, since they know chimerical death has little impact on their foes. Once again, not only is this an inaccurate portrayal of the Kithain mindset, but it also cultivates a lot of out-of-game resentment as characters are permanently killed off.

Finally, if players *still* persist in complaining, remind them that it's only a game, and what's more that they're still very fortunate in one respect: If the damage had been mundane as opposed to merely chimerical, their character wouldn't be coming back at all — they'd be dead for good. Viewed from that perspective, even the most unhappy player must admit that time spent recovering from chimerical death seems much less unfair than the alternative!

## Glamour Madness: *Becoming Dream-Struck*

Perhaps even more insidious than chimerical death is the threat to a mortal's sanity that long-term enchantment poses. Not truly a part of the chimerical world, enchanted beings can never accept it the same way the Kithain do. Over time, they may gradually find themselves becoming lost in the endless wonders of the Dreaming until they have trouble discerning what is real from what is not and have trouble functioning in either world. The Kithain refer to this process as becoming Dream-struck, and kindly fae watch their mortal retinues for signs that it is taking hold, returning those so afflicted to the Banal world before their minds suffer permanent damage. It is a sad truth for many fae to face, but a truth nonetheless, and those who ignore it risk losing their friend or lover for good. All but the most despicable Unseelie guard carefully against letting those they enchant fall victim to this wasting condition. Even kinain can be affected, for while they may have changeling blood, they are still not native to the Dreaming as their full-blooded relatives are. While it is slightly less common among the kinain, this madness remains a threat to them as well.

Becoming Dream-struck is very similar to Bedlam in many ways; the victim passes through three distinct stages, or thresholds, losing more and more of herself each time until little more than a smiling, vacant shell remains. As time passes, the power of the Dreaming simply overwhelms the minds of mortals or kinain. At the outset, this manifests as little more than an air of distracted daydreaming, but it eventually becomes a state of endless catatonia that leaves victims utterly helpless. Ironically enough, it seems to occur less often (or at least take longer to manifest) in those mortals who have a higher level of Banality; Kithain scholars speculate that their higher level of mundaneness actually "insulates" them from the Dreaming to a certain degree. However, as with most things of the Dreaming, this is not an absolute rule — some mortals with high natural Glamour levels get along in freeholds for months or even years without a problem, while some with lower Glamour and/or higher Banality levels can become Dream-struck very quickly. It should be noted that characters who have fallen into being Dream-struck in the past generally succumb to it more easily each time, so caution is advised when dealing with those who have been touched by this madness before.

*System:* Just as with Bedlam, the threat of becoming Dream-struck should always be more of a question of roleplaying than of game mechanics, and the Storyteller has final say on when it strikes. For those seeking a rule of thumb, however, or for the purposes of keeping track of enchanted mortals and the like, a mortal or kinain must make a test of their Banality against eight Traits for every month that they spend largely or entirely enchanted (time spent in freeholds counts). Failure means they have slipped into the first threshold of being Dream-struck and must roleplay accordingly. Other factors can come into play as well, at the Storyteller's discretion. For example, mortals who are



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constantly exposed to outlandish chimera and powerful cantrips may require more frequent tests, while those who are somehow shielded from the more bizarre aspects of the Dreaming may not need to test nearly as often. Players of kinain and enchanted mortal characters are encouraged to be honest about the amount of time they spend enchanted. Such is the price for those who have the luxury of constant enchantment.

**Note:** A successful Ravaging always snaps a mortal out of being Dream-struck, since it robs them of the Glamour needed to maintain the condition, but obviously this is hardly the most optimal solution for most fae. Indeed, even the most callous Unseelie attempting to “treat” an afflicted charge this way risks gaining Banality for the effort, so it is used sparingly at best.

### First Threshold

Early signs of a character becoming Dream-struck are often hard to determine, as it usually manifests as little more than a high level of daydreaming and a subtle yet constant air of distraction. Things of beauty (and there are many in the enchanted world) can leave them transfixed and staring for moments on end, watching in mute fascination. Even little wonders like a blooming flower or a finely polished weapon can capture their attention, such that they become unaware of the world around them in their concentration. Many Kithain think their friend or servant is simply admiring the beauty of their new perspective, and in a sense they are correct, but while nearly all mortals exhibit some fascination with the chimerical, those in the first threshold of becoming Dream-struck are actually momentarily powerless with awe. A mere word or touch will bring them back to reality, but even so they are prone to flights of fancy; when the needs of the moment lapse away they eventually slip back into their reverie.

There are no game mechanics for this level of madness, but it should be roleplayed. Characters in the first threshold are typically treated by being dropped in the mundane world for a few days so that the Mists can wash away the accumulated Glamour surrounding their minds. Most recover quickly if treated in this manner.

### Second Threshold

Glamour is now weighing heavily on enchanted characters; they sleep a great deal and become difficult to awaken, as their private dream life is now starting to bleed over into their everyday reality. Afflicted characters gradually lose the ability to distinguish between dreaming and waking, which not only gives them a more seriously distracted air than before but also tends to encourage a kind of reckless courage in them, since they find it hard to consider anything real anymore. Minor hallucinations are common at this stage, and they begin seeing elements of their fantasy life staking the edges of their vision or in mirrors and other reflective surfaces. These images do not typically spawn chimera or anything nearly that serious but can still pose a problem for the characters and those around them, since they tend

to react to what isn't there as often as not. Again, this is primarily a roleplaying mechanic and should be treated accordingly.

A surprising number of mortals make it as far as this threshold before they're noticed, especially if their master cares little for their well-being. A significant number of others die at this threshold, since their common sense no longer holds them in check when it comes to taking risks. Treatment for second-threshold Dream-struck is much the same as that for first threshold, except it's done for a longer time; the unfortunate mortal is left in the mundane world for weeks or even months until the Kithain are sure the last vestiges of Glamour have been concealed by the Mists. This time is often roughly equivalent to the time dictated by a target's Banality rating on the Mists chart in **The Shining Host**, though this is not an absolute indication of how long healing may take. One thing is known, however — enchanting such mortals again before they're ready is almost certain to immediately drop them back into at least the first threshold of being Dream-struck.

### Third Threshold

At this point, mortals completely withdraw from the world, retreating into their own vivid dream life. To observers, they appear catatonic, with a slight smile on their face and an utterly vacant look to their eyes. They can be forced into action, but only by the most direct and forceful means, and even then their movements are extremely lethargic and their speech nearly incomprehensible, since they perceive everything as part of their dream. As with those suffering from the later stages of Bedlam, these Dream-struck often spawn chimera of their own, who seek to defend their creator from the "intrusions" of others. These typically disappear if the mortal can be roused from their slumber, but in the meantime these chimera do their utmost to keep their creators safe from what they perceive as the aggression of others, even use violence if they feel it's appropriate.

The good news is, there is more hope for saving a third-threshold Dream-struck mortal than a changeling in third-threshold Bedlam, at least as far as sanity is concerned — the Banality of the mortal world eventually heals the character's mind in all but the most extreme cases, although psychiatric care and possibly some hospital time is usually required for most mortals to fully recover from their ordeal. Here again the mortal's inherent Banality actually helps "ground" them in a way that changelings are incapable of in respect to Bedlam, though few of either race think of this as much of a blessing. The bad news is that enchanting the unfortunate mortal at any point in the future is *certain* to trigger a return to their Dream-struck state, no matter how much time has passed since they were last enchanted. It may only begin as first-threshold symptoms but quickly degenerates to a full-



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blown third-threshold Dream-struck state. The mortal's soul has been scarred, and they can never again be part of the Dreaming for very long without those wounds being reopened. Additionally, while mortals with high Banality are more likely to recover physically, they are more likely to have some form of temporary or even permanent insanity since their banal mind cannot handle the memories of enchantment, even when consciously suppressed by the Mists.







# Chapter Five:

## New Arts

One of the most delightful things about Kithain magic is that it is constantly in motion. If there's one element the Dreaming thrives on, it's change. Dusty tomes containing lost Arts of old are occasionally unearthed by adventuring motleys, while scholars noble and common work in mysterious laboratories to discover new applications for old cantrips. Rarest and most wonderful of all, sometimes a particularly brilliant and dedicated changeling develops a new Art entirely on their own, creating a lasting legacy of magic as well as a gift for all her fellow Kithain. There have been few such events in recent memory, but they serve as models for future heroes and visionaries. Fae courageous enough to brave the trials of mastering a new Art or unearthing one thought lost earn a place of legend among their fellows.

Except where otherwise noted, these Arts are considered fairly common knowledge and may be selected normally during character creation. Storytellers may even allow players of existing characters to trade levels of previous Arts for one of these new Arts if it is more appropriate to their character concept (the "I should've had this all along" notion), though this should be done only for those characters who would honestly warrant such a change, not as a way of min-maxing the Arts a character knows. For example, with Storyteller permission a love-struck bard with *Chicanery* might swap it for *Aphrodesia*, since it's closer to his concept than the Art he currently possesses.

### *Aphrodesia*

The quintessentially fae Art of love and desire, this magic has experienced something of a resurgence lately, brought up from the depths by the mer in their contacts with landwalkers, though some rare Kithain (satyrs and eshu especially) never lost the knack for it. At its lower levels, this Art allows the fae to discern emotions and create brief infatuations; at higher levels, it can generate desires that border on outright mania... and beyond. It is recommended that a special

Narrator, dubbed the Cupid, be ready to handle some of the long-term effects of this Art, as the romantic interludes, betrayals and obsessions it prompts can quickly become confusing otherwise.

**Note:** All desires created by this Art are not necessarily sexual, but it must be stressed that they do seem *perfectly natural* to the target (if sometimes a little sudden) unless the target has a way of detecting supernatural manipulation.

**Type of Challenge:** Social

**Basic**

**Lover's Eyes:** Although the character cannot actually manipulate emotions directly, this Art allows a clever changeling to do just about as much damage — a fae with this power can detect strong currents of emotions between others. Love, friendship, loyalty, lust, respect and hate are all readily apparent to this power. However, only these specific emotions can be detected — this is not a general aura reading power. The caster also must first observe the target(s) in some form of close contact with each other — talking face to face, holding hands, lying together, etc. — before the Art may be cast. If successful, the changeling may approach her target and ask him (out of character) to describe his character's true feelings for the other character, and the target must answer honestly. Each fae must choose one sense when this power is taken, and all information from this Art comes through that route from there on: Some changelings can see love as rose light and hate as black radiance, while others smell lilac in the presence of healthy desire and fresh jasmine when lust is present, etc. A successful use of this Art also detects any supernatural emotional manipulation in the target, from other uses of this Art itself, certain *Chicanery* cantrips, vampiric Presence, wraithly Keening, etc.; it does not reveal the source of such magic, however.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Fancy:** At this level, the character may begin to start affecting emotions directly by inserting a momentary flash of interest for a particular person or thing — the faerie guarantee of a good impression! This is not an assurance of love for life, of course, but it can ably serve as the proverbial “foot in the door” in romantic situations. A successful use allows the caster to plant one desire “flash” per Bunk Trait gained in casting. To use a flash, the character employs the Cupid to seek out the intended target and inform them that a sudden desire for an object or person of the caster's choice has crossed their mind. A flash can be used at any time during the session, but the caster had best choose such uses wisely — for example, using one while the target is alone may cause them to make a phone call to the desired party, “just happen” to stop by while out driving, or to make an impulse purchase while shopping, but overdoing them can make a target annoyed or even suspicious, and doing so while the character is in a firefight likely causes the flash to be ignored entirely in favor of the more pressing concerns at hand. (No, the flashes are not distracting enough to bring on a Trait penalty.) This Art can be used on a particular target only once per session. Alternately, the character may forego the flash system and simply put

the subject of the cantrip up a number of Social Traits equal to the cantrip's Bunk Traits on their first Social test with the target, making it that much more likely they make a good impression; this lacks style, but can be invaluable if time is an issue.

**Type:** Chimerical

Intermediate

**Number One Crush:** This Art steps up the level of the target's desire to a sincere craving; if enough magic is invested, the character may even abandon most of her good sense in pursuit of the object of the caster's choosing. In essence, this Art engenders a solid "crush" in the target — if the object of their attention is an animal or material possession, they desire to own the object and ruminate happily on its different positive qualities to those around them. They do all they can to have it in their possession/be around it at all times as well as keep others from taking it, and may well become violent if they think someone else is trying to take it away from them. If is a person is the center of their affection, the targets do everything they can to become as close to them as possible and do almost anything their crush asks, within limits — suicide (or actions that are obviously such), betraying oaths/deeply held beliefs and secrets, or fighting one's allies are automatically out of the question, but minor tasks are certainly permissible, and even more complicated or shady requests may be made if the target of the crush phrases them correctly. For example, a troll with a crush on your character wouldn't fight his oathmates for you outright, but if you asked him to make sure no one entered the room you were in for a while, he'd certainly do his best to keep everyone out, oathmates or not, to the point of physically restraining them if necessary. The effects of this Art last for a number of hours per Glamour Trait spent during the cantrip casting, up a maximum number of hours equal to the Bunk Traits gained during casting. This cantrip is also broken automatically if the "crush" attacks or otherwise blatantly abuses the smitten character.

For those still wondering about the true extent of this power, simply remember the first absolutely *hopeless* head-over-heels crush you had back in junior high school, and what you did/believed you would've done for your crush if they asked you to — that should give you the general idea of how deeply enthralled the target of this cantrip becomes.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Passion's Mirror:** The classic Midsummer Night switcheroo spell, this Art allows the fae to reverse a target's passions for a single night — a character happily in love now finds his beloved repellent, while a suitor he has long spurned becomes the very apple of his eye. Cold fish feel the stirrings of romance, passionate poets abandon their quills, blissful newlyweds quarrel and old enemies find themselves embracing beneath the moonlight when this mischievous Art is employed. This Art costs one Glamour Trait per use, plus one Social Trait for each of the target's relationships to be affected (causing a lover to spurn his beloved costs one Social Trait, while shifting that same

attention to his old flame costs another Social Trait). In no event does this Art last more than a full night (or day, if that is when it is cast) — longer results require a new cantrip casting after the old one fades. Once the time has passed, the cantrip gently lifts and characters resume their previous emotional state, likely quite confused about their own behavior — faeries tend to suspect what might have happened, but mortals and Prodigals are often clueless as to why they felt so different for the duration of the cantrip. Of course, there's no guarantee that their behavior hasn't done damage on its own — a spurned lover is often hard to reason with, and a heated... *interlude* can be very awkward to deal with the next morning! While real relationships can sometimes develop from this Art, and old enmities may fade after being seen from a different perspective, on average keeping the fires lit after the supernatural passion of the night has passed proves too difficult for most.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Yearning of the Soul:** This is the Art responsible for the legends of sirens who caused sailors to leap overboard and drown in the effort to be with them, and should be treated with an according amount of caution. The changeling may instill in a target an absolutely overpowering desire for something or someone — all sense of sanity, sociability or self-preservation goes right out the window when it comes to pursuing the object of the target's affections, and even allies or loved ones find themselves flatly rebuffed (harshly, if needs be) if they stand between the target and his obsession. It must be stressed that the target does anything, *anything*, to be with the object of his desire, and once he manages to meet/possess the object, he defends it from the attentions of others and obeys it with the same amount of zeal. Note that the target need not always take the most obvious or dangerous course of action to reach his desire — you can't serve your obsession when you're dead, after all — but he must attempt to get to the object of his desire (or carry out its commands, if applicable) as quickly as possible. Likewise, he need not behave like a slaving fanatic the entire duration of the cantrip, but will respond to those who offer any praise of their obsession with boundless friendship and enthusiasm; on the other hand, anyone who speaks ill of it will be placed under immediate suspicion, if not outright shunned or attacked. As for the object of his desire, well, naturally no whim is too slight to be heeded, nor any type of care too demanding to perform. This Art costs a Glamour Trait per hour of effect desired, up to a number of hours equal to the number of Bunk Traits gained during the casting. This power may be used on a particular subject only once per session, and if the cantrip fails, it may not be used again on the target for the remainder of the story.

**Note:** At the Narrator's discretion, blatantly suicidal commands or acts that would directly result in the breaking of a deep personal oath (*Guardianship, Truehearts, Clasped Hands, Adoption*) may allow the character to resist the magic temporarily — if such a circumstance arises, they may attempt a Static Willpower Test against a difficulty of the caster's Glamour Traits. Success



means they can avoid taking the action, although this doesn't break the cantrip itself; likewise, a Willpower Trait may also be spent to automatically avoid taking the action, although the cantrip still remains in place otherwise. Fair warning — this cantrip can also be dangerous for the object of the target's obsession as well, since the obsessed party usually obeys even minor commands given to them quite literally and are prone to insane jealousy toward anyone they perceive as a rival for their obsession's affection. He may even try to take action to prevent his obsession from coming to harm (whether his "beloved" wants such protection or not!). He can be ordered to ignore such things, of course, but one never knows what seemingly minor things the obsessed mind may latch on to....

### Skycraft

In olden times, one of the reasons mortals feared crossing the Fair Folk was their legendary affinity with the weather. A farmer who slighted the fae might suffer a withering drought while his neighbors prospered, or even receive a lightning bolt from on high for his impudence. Likewise, sailors took zealous care to avoid angering the merfolk during their travels, lest they become becalmed for days or fall victim to terrible storms summoned by an angry denizen of the deep. Some fae still remember when the weather was theirs to command and treasure this Art as the legacy of those days. *Skycraft* is most common among the merfolk, where the open sea allows them free reign to explore its powers, but it also comes naturally to the nature-oriented kiths as well — ghille dhu, pooka, satyrs and trolls can all learn *Skycraft* with a minimum of training. Many Nunnehi are also proficient in its secrets as well (especially the nümūzo'ho). Other kiths may learn this Art but are considered one Trait down when using it.

This Art functions without a hitch outdoors; indoors, all *Skycraft* cantrips must spring from some existing source, however unlikely (for ideas, see the description for the Primal Art *Eldritch Prime*). For example, a changeling can call *Compass Winds* from a ceiling fan or a window but cannot generate them in a prison cell deep underground. Likewise, while sufficient levels of this Art can conjure thunderheads in a previously blue sky (or vice versa), patently unnatural weather is out of the question — rain clouds will not form indoors, nor will fog simply spring from a changeling's fingertips. Characters can be as creative as the Storyteller permits when using circumstances to justify this Art's use indoors, but generally it functions much better outdoors.

**Type of Challenge:** Physical

**Basic**

**Thunderclap:** In truth, this Art confers only a token control of the elements, but what it lacks in power it more than makes up for in style. The ultimate mood accessory, this Art allows the changeling to create small but suitably impressive bursts of weather phenomena at dramatically appropriate moments — a flash of thunder and lightning when swearing an oath of

vengeance, a chill breeze before an intimidation attempt, a lone ray of sunshine from a cloudy sky while professing true love, etc. For one related Social Test, these displays put the caster up a number of Traits equal to the Bunk Traits gained in casting. These displays cannot create anything lasting, nor can they harm or otherwise impair other characters (though those with *Heightened Senses* must win or tie a Simple Test or be temporarily blinded or deafened if caught at “ground zero” of an appropriate phenomena). They also cannot create blatantly impossible weather conditions — thunder or lightning from a blue sky is technically possible, for example, but not a ray of sunshine at midnight.

**Type:** Wyrd or Chimerical

**Compass Winds:** At this level, the character’s weather mastery has increased to the point where she can stir the breezes themselves, calling up winds capable of filling a sail, shaping a cloud formation or (at highest strength) slowing or even knocking down unwary opponents. Each Bunk Trait gained in casting allows for up to 20 mph of winds to be created, up to an overall maximum of 100 mph; knocking down an opponent requires at least 60 mph of wind force. These winds cost a Physical Trait to create and last for as long as the caster concentrates on them (putting her at a one-Trait penalty to all other actions), although each time she wishes to direct them against a different target in combat she must spend an additional Physical Trait to change the course of the winds appropriately. Those knocked down suffer a health level of damage and must spend a turn getting to their feet. At the Storyteller’s discretion, particularly strong, heavy, or well-rooted targets may be immune to this Art’s effects; the Storyteller should also be consulted on what damage, if any, is done to buildings, vehicles, items, etc., by this Art.

**Type:** Wyrd or Chimerical

**Intermediate**

**Willard’s World:** Fae with this power have the essential elements of weather under their control, and with effort can call up any sort of weather phenomena they like, barring all outright destructive manifestations such as thunderstorms, drought, hail, tornadoes, etc. For game purposes, though, only nasty weather generally has any real effect — by combining low-lying cloud cover with dense fog or driving rain, the caster can effectively cloak a target or area from sight. Of course, this blindness works both ways: Those within a dense fog have no more of an idea what lies beyond than those outside have of what’s in it, nor does the caster have any special immunity to the weather she creates. All targets within the affected area are treated as blind for combat purposes (three-Trait penalty to all relevant challenges), as are any characters attempting to fire into the area from outside. This is just the tip of the iceberg; creative players may create other types of weather that also generate game effects, subject to Storyteller adjudication and approval. Use the Scene Realm to determine the maximum size of the area that can be affected for any cantrips that incur game modifiers; by contrast, weather that has no direct effect on the game may extend for up to two miles per Bunk Trait, at the Storyteller’s

discretion — creating a simple sunny day for a small town is no problem, but focusing a fog thick enough to invoke Trait penalties is limited to the normal area maximum for most cantrips. This Art costs two Glamour Traits to use and lasts for one scene (harmful) or one day (benign).

**Type:** Wyrd

**Stormcraft:** This mighty Art allows the caster to call up a damaging storm or similar destructive weather phenomena, which then directs its fury at the targets/Realms designated in the cantrip casting. The storm is terrifying in both appearance and intensity, lasting as long as the caster continues to concentrate (putting her at a one-Trait penalty to all other actions). Those targeted by the storm suffer penalties as outlined under *Willard's World* above; in addition, the caster may concentrate the fury of the storm even further, possibly causing serious injury to those unlucky enough to be caught in its path. By winning a Physical Test (Bunk Traits count), she may inflict a level of bashing damage on those within the area of the storm's effects. Only one such test may be made per round, and the caster must test all within the storm's area of effect — she cannot pick and choose her targets. Targets must seek some kind of shelter to avoid facing such punishment; use common sense on what constitutes sufficient cover from the storm. The caster may also whip up the storm winds to suit her desires, generating gusts of wind exactly as if she had used the *Compass Winds* Art, though the maximum speed of the winds generated in this fashion is still limited by the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting, and the winds cost one Glamour Trait per turn in addition to normal costs. Truly daring fae may even attempt to fly on the tempest winds they have summoned; by spending a Glamour Trait, the caster (and only the caster) may take flight as if she had used the *Wind Rider* Art, carried aloft by the gale. Each turn she wishes to use this flight, however, she must win or tie a Simple Test — failure means that she takes a level of bashing damage from the buffeting winds, though she can still fly if she desires.

There is a serious downside to this Art: Storms are unruly things at best, and the caster faces the very real possibility that the storm may slip from her control and continue to rampage on without her. When this Art is used, the caster and a Narrator should perform a Static Willpower Test against a difficulty of the Bunk Traits gained in casting; failure means that the storm rages on even if the caster ceases concentrating or falls unconscious, at which time the storm continues under the Storyteller's control. The Storyteller then controls the storm's movements and who or what it targets (use the original caster's current Physical + Bunk Traits to determine the storm's Traits for the purposes of challenges). It then lasts until the Storyteller decides it abates, or a character with at least this many levels of the *Skycraft* Art casts a cantrip with an equal or greater number of Bunk Traits as the original storm to cancel it out.

**Type:** Wyrd or Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Call Lightning:** This terrifying Art allows the caster to call down a bolt of lightning on his enemies, even from an otherwise blue and cloudless sky. Only one target may be struck at a time, regardless of the Realms used in casting, but if the cantrip is successful, that unfortunate soul takes three levels of aggravated damage as the caster channels raw electricity through his body and into the target. Furthermore, armor does not block this damage — indeed, those in full metal armor such as plate mail take an additional level of damage due to their high conductivity. As indicated before, no clouds are needed to call the lightning strike, although such attempts are one Trait down; on the other hand, all uses of this cantrip during a storm of any kind, even one created by this Art, are one Trait up. At the caster's desire (and Narrator's discretion), this damage may manifest in some other weather-related form — a slicing sheet of ice, choking dust storm, highly localized tornado, etc. — but most fae prefer to stick with the classics when it comes to smiting their foes.

**Type:** Chimerical or Wyrd

### *Metamorphosis*

Legends abound of fae shifting shape, disguising themselves, growing to giant size or otherwise altering their form. This Art is the basis for many such tales. A treasured bit of commoner lore, this Art has suffered greatly with the spread of Banality as outlandish shapes and sizes are slowly written out of conventional reality, but it nonetheless remains a potent tool (or weapon) in the hands of clever fae. Note that *Metamorphosis* remains primarily a commoner Art; while there are seldom any formal restrictions on teaching it to the nobility, most commoners see it as one of the few weapons they have that the sidhe don't, and are in no hurry to bring them up to speed on it just yet. For their part, many sidhe are actually quite uneasy about changing their beautiful shapes with such a "low Art" and prefer to hold off on shape-changing until they master the more "respectable" *Primal Art*.

**Art Note:** As *Metamorphosis* often involves drastic changes in a character's appearance, players should be prepared to write description cards that detail their character's new form; these cards should be brightly colored and prominently attached to their costume so other *players* are immediately aware of a change, even if the other *characters* aren't.

**Type of Challenge:** Physical

Basic

**Hidden Form:** This devious Art allows a changeling to blend into her surroundings, effectively disappearing from sight. Characters employing this Art use the standard hand signal for invisibility; however, *Hidden Form* differs from *Veiled Eyes* in several important ways. First of all, it is an actual physical change, so it fools cameras as well as people. This also means that characters with *Hidden Form* may interact with their environment in ways that characters with *Veiled Eyes* cannot — run, open doors, pick up objects, and so on — although such actions allow anyone watching an immediate Mental Test, no

traits risked, to detect the invisible character (this can be retested with the *Stealth* or *Alertness* Abilities). If an observer “picks out” the outline of the invisible character, they can track or fight them without difficulty until such time as the invisible character either completely stops moving or goes entirely out of their line of sight — turns a corner, jumps a wall, etc. — at which point the observer must make another Mental Test to detect the invisible character once more. Characters who pierce the cantrip successfully are two Traits up on subsequent detection tests for the rest of the scene, however, since they know better what to look for. Second, since those under this cantrip are still prone to making noise, giving off a scent and so on, characters with any form of *Heightened Senses* receive a free retest to detect changelings in *Hidden Form*. Finally, while it is possible to fight in this form (and opponents are at a two-Trait penalty against such a well-disguised foe), the rapid movements and intense concentration battle requires tend to break down the cantrip very quickly — the changeling must spend a Glamour Trait every round of combat to maintain their disguised state or the cantrip immediately ends.

**Type:** Wyrđ.

**Impersonate:** While not a true shapeshifter yet, the changeling has learned to alter his features in a number of ways, making him a veritable master of disguise and capable of copying the voice and visage of another with uncanny accuracy. Note that this change does not convey “scientific” details such as fingerprints, DNA or retina patterns, nor does it bestow any of the memories, Abilities or supernatural powers of the target of *Impersonate*; thus, the would-be double may also need to make *Performance (Acting)* or *Subterfuge* Tests to keep up the act under scrutiny. Also, the size of the character under *Impersonate*'s effects must be roughly similar to the target's, unless the caster is also willing to use *Go Ask Alice* (below). The number of Bunk Traits gained in the casting determines how good a resemblance the character actually creates: One or two Bunk Traits is a poor likeness indeed, only capable of passing inspection in near-darkness or at a distance; anyone trying to see through the shoddy disguise receives a free retest on such tests, and those with *Heightened Senses* pierce it automatically. Three to four Bunk Traits is enough for a good copy, and the character is two Traits up on all tests to hide his identity unless the opponent is an intimate friend or lover or has some form of *Heightened Senses*, in which case the test is performed normally. Five or more Bunk Traits equates to a perfect likeness, which can only be pierced by close friends or lovers, and even then the character is two Traits up to maintain his disguise. This Art costs one Social Trait and lasts a maximum of one hour/scene per Bunk Trait, whichever is longer.

**Type:** Chimerical if used for fae mien, Wyrđ if used for mortal seeming.

**Intermediate**

**Go Ask Alice:** Faeries have always been known as “Little People,” and this Art is one reason why — skilled users can shrink to the size of a thimble or grow taller than trees, both of which can prove very useful in the right situations.



Small characters may call Fair Escape by slipping under doors or through cracks in walls, for example, while enlarged fae can frighten foes and reach the top shelf unaided. Despite some common misconceptions, though, this Art does not make a changeling any stronger or tougher if enlarged, nor does it make one any faster or more delicate simply by virtue of decreasing their size. As with *Impersonate*, this Art can be used on either the fae mien or the mortal seeming, though exceptionally large or tiny fae are bound to attract a great deal of Banality if exposed to skeptical onlookers. The maximum amount of size alteration possible is determined by the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting — each Bunk Trait allows a changeling grow as much as 1/2 again larger than normal, or shrink by 1/4 their normal size, cumulatively. *Go Ask Alice* can be cast multiple times on a target during a scene to allow for truly impressive feats of size manipulation, and lasts for one scene or until the caster wills it undone, whichever comes first.

Example: *Denny the pooka uses Go Ask Alice to cause some mischief; if he gets one Bunk Trait, he may shrink to 3/4 his normal size, or grow to 1 1/2 his regular size; if he gets two, he may shrink down to 1/2 normal size, or swell to twice his regular size; and so on. Of course, he has control over exactly how big or small he gets — if he performs a three Trait Bunk and decides he only wants to shrink to 3/4 size after all, he can.*

**Merlin's Lessons:** Animal transformations — frogs into princes, peasants into newts and so on — are common in fairy tales, and this Art is one of the main reasons why this is so. A changeling using this cantrip can transform his target into a nonmythical creature for one hour per Bunk Trait; for an additional Glamour Trait, the natural powers and advantages of an animal form are conferred as well, such as the burrowing instincts of a mole or the graceful flight of a bird. The Narrator has the final word on what powers can be gained and how they are adjudicated in play. Note that the target retains his normal Mental and Social Traits, health levels, memories and intellect during this time, as well as any Birthrights or other supernatural powers that can still be used in his current form. However, his Physical Traits rely on his new shape, and his powers of speech remain limited by the animal shape (which may also prohibit many Social Tests), not to mention that many Abilities and Backgrounds are pretty useless without opposable thumbs. Characters with *natural* shapeshifting powers such as pookas, selkies or Garou may spend a Trait of Blood/Glamour/Gnosis/Pathos/etc. to retest this Art, but may do so only once during the duration of the cantrip.

**Type:** Wyrð

**Advanced**

**Mythic Transformation:** This Art is identical to the Primal Art *Elder-Form*, including Glamour cost, with two important changes. First, if using the Art only on himself, the caster does not need the Realm of what he wishes to become, only the proper Realm needed to affect himself. Second, while *Elder-Form* does not confer any supernatural powers if the caster chooses a mythic

shape such as a dragon or unicorn, a changeling employing *Mythic Transformation* may choose to spend a *permanent* Glamour Trait to truly assume that shape — this confers all the legendary powers of the new form, as well as any mythic frailties it might have. For example, a changeling who uses *Mythic Transformation* to truly take the shape of a Gorgon would be able to petrify targets who meet her gaze but would also be vulnerable to her own reflection. A Storyteller must be consulted as to what powers and frailties are conferred by the new form, as well as how they are adjudicated during play. In addition to such high cost, a full *Transformation* has other risks — Banality eats away at mythic beasts, causing the changeling to lose one Glamour Trait per hour the form is maintained. Once all Glamour Traits are lost, health levels are lost at the same rate and cannot be healed until the caster takes his original shape again. In addition, if confronted by a skeptical observer — Kinain, Prodigals and mortals who are currently enchanted don't count — the changeling must immediately make a test of his permanent Glamour rating versus the target's Banality. If the changeling loses, he is immediately dropped into a random spot in the Dreaming as the Banal world utterly rejects his presence and must make his way home however he can.

### *Kryos*

Although many fae distrust this Art, fearing that its resurgence is another omen of an approaching Winter, legends of faeries who could control the very chill in the air are as old as time, and those fae daring enough to study the force of cold itself can find endless uses for it. Although it originated with the merfolk, who use it to lethal effect underwater, many trolls and redcaps display a natural aptitude for this Art, and it is rumored that the fae of the Shadow Court encourage its teaching as well. Due to their increased ease of use there, all *Kryos* cantrips are one Trait up underwater.

**Type of Challenge:** Physical

**Basic**

**Cold Shock:** This Art offers the target a brush with true cold, inside and out — targets find themselves victims of a sudden drop in temperature, as if they'd been standing outside in cold weather for a long time combined with the worst ice cream “brain freeze” headache one can imagine. Those affected are numbed and chapped, putting them two Traits down on all Physical Tests for one scene; exposure to a considerable heat source such as a bonfire or steam bath (not simply a lighter or extra clothing) for at least ten minutes cuts this penalty and duration in half. Due to their inherent susceptibility to this magic, cold-blooded creatures suffer twice the normal penalty, as well as a level of lethal damage — these effects are not cumulative for multiple castings, however. Used on nonliving targets, this Art makes things noticeably but not painfully cool to the touch. It cannot create ice spontaneously but can freeze a small quantity of existing water (no more than a full glass or so), as well as frost windows, keep drinks cool, etc.

**Type:** Wyrð

**Gelid Rime:** With this Art, the changeling can coat a target in a thin layer of ice; while it cannot completely encase a living target, it can most certainly slow them down, and inanimate targets are fair game for a complete coating. Targets affected can only move half their normal rate, round down, and are at a two-Trait penalty to all Physical Tests for a number of turns equal to the Bunk Traits gained in casting. Outside of combat, *Gelid Rime* lasts for up to one hour or scene, whichever is longer, although existing heat conditions may increase or decrease this time as well. This Art is also commonly used with the Scene Realm to create a slippery patch of ice to discourage pursuers; characters employing the Art in this fashion may call for a Fair Escape if they first defeat their pursuers in a Physical Test (Bunk Traits count). Of course, clever changelings can think of other uses for this Art as well, from ruining door locks to making a skating rink just about anywhere; such creative uses of this Art are strongly encouraged, subject to Narrator approval and adjudication.

**Type:** Wyrð

**Intermediate**

**Frost Facsimile:** Fae with this Art are never at a loss for tools — or weapons. By spending a Physical Trait and performing a successful cantrip casting, the changeling can create all manner of items out of solid ice; with the expenditure of a Glamour Trait, she can even make them as hard as steel, a necessity when creating things like working swords or crowbars. Items created by this Art are considered to have a number of health levels equal to the caster's Bunk Traits for the purposes of taking damage, as well as the *Delicate* Negative Trait. Furthermore, any weapons created by this Art have a number of Bonus Traits equal to the Bunk Traits, up to the normal maximum for that weapon. (An ice dagger cannot have more than one Bonus Trait, for example.) Unless the caster spends a Glamour Trait to harden them, however, all weapons and armor lose a health level each time they are used in combat, shattering harmlessly when all of their health levels are lost. Obviously, any items that require electricity or chemical reactions, such as cameras or handguns, do not function when created from ice, and the Storyteller may require an appropriate Ability test for truly complicated or beautiful creations (*Crafts* to create a working ice trebuchet, etc.).

**Type:** Wyrð

**Crystal Prison:** This debilitating Art completely encases the target in a thick block of ice, snapping tree branches, stopping cars, and immobilizing and possibly even suffocating living targets if the caster chooses to engulf their heads as well. This ice is roughly two inches thick for every Bunk Trait the caster earns; those caught within it can perform no other physical actions save to free themselves, which requires a Static Physical Test against a difficulty equal to the number of Physical Traits the caster had when the cantrip was cast + the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting; each successful test does one level of damage to the ice. Supernatural strength and damage enhancement

powers such as vampiric *Potence* are of full use in these challenges, and other characters on the outside may help chip away at the ice as well. A *Crystal Prison* has a number of health levels equal to the Bunk Traits gained in the cantrip casting, plus an additional health level for each Glamour Trait the caster spends when the cantrip is cast. Characters who are completely encased begin taking suffocation damage on the third round of imprisonment — one automatic level of lethal damage every turn until the target's head is somehow freed. An imprisoned character's head is considered free after one half of the prison's health levels (round down) are gone, though they still must break away the rest of the ice before full movement is possible. Left on its own, a *Crystal Prison* lasts until the ice melts or the caster wills it to end. At the caster's discretion, she may choose to single out an area of a target — a gun hand, the target's feet, etc. — but all such specific challenges are at a one-Trait penalty due to the exact concentration required.

**Type:** Wyrd

**Advanced**

**Coldheart:** Like *Crystal Prison*, this Art effectively freezes a target in place; where the former works on an external basis, though, *Coldheart* goes much deeper, placing the target in a form of suspended animation by freezing them from the inside out. Those frozen by this Art are thus immune to poisons, gases and other toxins, have no need to eat or breathe, and effectively do not age during the time they remain in suspended animation. However, due to the frost that pervades their body, they become brittle and take twice the normal amount of damage from all physical attacks, as well as an extra level of damage (added before any doubling occurs) from all fire-based attacks. Against unwilling targets, this Art lasts for one scene per Bunk Trait gained in casting and costs two Glamour Traits to activate. Used on willing targets, including the caster herself if applicable, this power has the same cost but lasts up to one month per Bunk Trait gained in casting; in addition, the caster may also invoke additional Realms to stipulate "reawakening" conditions that will break the cantrip before that time. For example, by adding the *Actor* Realm to her cantrip, the caster can stipulate that she be awakened whenever a certain person approaches. Finally, the caster may also attempt to make the cantrip permanent by spending a permanent Glamour Trait; if successful, the only things that can break the spell are the caster's desire, any Realm stipulations she adds during casting or the kiss of a true love, none of which are very easy to come by in most such dire instances.

**Type:** Wyrd

### **Oneiromancy**

The return of the Art of dream-weaving has had a mixed response among the fae. While a small network of changelings kept it alive on Earth after the Shattering, those knowledgeable of such things can directly trace its newfound popular resurgence to the return of the Thallain, which causes them no end of

worry over what possible connection there might be between the two. And while there are indeed many changelings who use this Art for benign purposes, none dispute its power or its potential to cause serious harm in the wrong hands. Known practitioners are watched closely for signs that they might be abusing their power. Fortunately, this Art is very subtle and requires a great deal of preparation, but clever users can be absolutely devastating when they get their Arts working to full effect.

**Art Note:** Except where noted, *all* uses of the *Oneiromancy* Art require that the caster first have an item of personal significance to the target, although a bit of hair or similar voodoo-type piece of sympathetic material works as well. This item must first be “primed” with a Glamour Trait, followed by a number of Simple Tests equal to the caster’s permanent Glamour rating; the number of tests won or tied equals the number of cantrips that can be cast using that item, with a minimum of one use per item. After that many cantrips have been cast through it, the item fades into the Dreaming for good, and another item must be found before *Oneiromancy* can be used on that target again. In addition, the caster must have observed the target at some point during the preceding day (supernatural scrying counts).

**Type of Challenge:** Mental

**Basic**

**Oneirodynia:** At the most basic level, the caster can send his target dreams; how the target’s mind interprets the specifics of the dream is largely uncontrollable, though the caster may dictate the general type of dream, as well as a single “image” that he wishes the target to remember upon waking (a sight, smell, name, melody, etc.). The caster’s control over the dream’s direction is limited to anything generally definable in two to three words or less — “fear of falling,” “sexual fantasy,” “naked at school” and so on. These dreams last for one night per Bunk Trait the caster earns minus the target’s Willpower (minimum of one night). Use the chart for the End of Enchantment (see *The Shining Host*, page 178) to determine how much of the dream the target remembers in addition to the image chosen by the caster. If the target is awake, this Art can be used as a kind of crude one-way telepathy by sending dream images containing the message the caster desires, though they must still be fairly simple concepts, and the caster cannot state their intended message outright, only describe the image sent and hope their target understands its meaning. These waking dreams are not distracting enough to incur a Trait penalty to the target, nor can the target answer without appropriate Arts.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Embrace of Morpheus:** Those who learn this Art begin to loose the delicate bonds tethering minds to the waking world, placing their target into a deep, dream-filled sleep. This power thus serves a double function for most *Oneiromancers*: helping to ensure that a particular target has a night of dreams their Art can exploit, as well as providing a means of escape when trouble looms. Would-be assassins and other n’er-do-wells take note, however — the



Dreaming takes care of those so forcefully thrust into its arms, and any attempt to directly harm or otherwise abuse those put to sleep by this Art breaks the cantrip immediately and allows the target full reaction time. Even those casters who simply try to transport the sleeper sometimes find that the Dreaming spirits their target away to a safer place, if their reasons for moving the target are less than honorable. This Art costs one Glamour Trait to use and lasts for one full sleep cycle against mortals or one hour/scene (whichever is longer) against Kithain or Prodigal targets. Targets may also be awakened by other characters before the cantrip time expires, but it requires a number of turns equal to twice the Bunk Traits gained in casting.

This Art does *not* require a link to the target.

**Type:** Wyrd

**Intermediate**

**Oneirocritia:** Having mastered the Art of “dream reading,” the changeling can see the contents of a target’s dream as they occur, providing a clever caster with no end to the amount of blackmail material and other juicy information. Cloaked as it is in the bizarre and highly symbolic language of dreams, however, the Storyteller is strongly encouraged to reveal the information in bits and fragments, perhaps even requiring an additional *Enigmas* or *Gremayne* Test to decipher the secrets being presented. Each Bunk Trait gained in casting allows the caster to read the target’s dreams for one hour; generally, no more than one interpretation test may be made per hour, and no more than one secret or piece of information may be earned for each test. Of course, the Storyteller is also within her rights to state that a target may only have a certain number of secrets revealed that night, or even none at all. When used against other players, this Art allows the caster to have the Storyteller ask the target one question per successful interpretation test about a topic observed in the target’s dream. The target must answer honestly.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Oneirataxia:** This terrifying Art allows the changeling to blur the line between dream and waking for the target, causing the target’s innermost fantasies and nightmares to intrude on their daily lives. This Art costs two Glamour Traits to use and essentially creates self-perpetuating chimera visible only to the target (although anyone who makes a successful *Kenning* Test can catch a glimpse of these phantoms), which then hound the unfortunate soul relentlessly for the duration of the cantrip. Changelings and kinain suffer the effects for one scene or hour, whichever comes first. Mortals and Prodigals are haunted until the next sunrise, however, though Prodigals can cut this to an hour with the expenditure of Willpower Trait. These chimera are entirely insubstantial, even to changelings, and cannot cause any actual harm, but they are exceedingly distracting, to say the least. Due to the constant irritation and distraction these chimera cause, targets are at a one-Trait penalty on all actions for the duration of the cantrip and should roleplay the interaction with the phantom chimera as best they can. The exact nature and appearance of these

chimera is up to the Narrator to determine, though players are encouraged to provide suggestions that are appropriate to their character — after all, only they will usually see them anyway.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Advanced**

**Syncope:** At this level, the changeling can enter the dreams of a target and interact with the dreamer, even creating temporary chimera or shaping the appearance of the dream as he desires (though not controlling the dreamer's reaction to it). Benevolent casters use this Art to walk in the dreams of friends and allies, offering advice and strength to those in need; darker legends, however, whisper of succubi, incubi and other night hags who would use this Art to steal the breath of dreaming victims. To begin either use, the caster must spend a Glamour Trait and cast the cantrip; success means that the character may enter the target's dreams and converse with that target if he desires. The caster may also spend Mental Traits to alter, remove or create different features of the dream (change the setting from the target's house to a local mall, make the target's worst enemy appear, take away the weapon in their hand, etc.); one such change may be made per Mental Trait. Sleeping fae may make a Mental Test with the *Kenning* Ability to detect an intruding character in their own dreams or those of someone they are observing; if successful, they may then make a Willpower Test against the caster, with success ending the cantrip immediately. Only one such detection challenge may be made per use of this cantrip.

The real power of this cantrip, however, is the ability to transfer Glamour or life energy between the caster and the target. By spending an additional Glamour Trait, the caster may take a number of Glamour or Physical Traits from his target, up to a maximum number equal to the Bunk Traits gained in casting; targets cannot provide more Traits than they actually have, nor can they be reduced below one Physical Trait in this manner, but the caster may be boosted above his regular Trait maximums with these stolen energies. Such stolen energies last until spent or until a number of days equal the original Bunk Traits have passed; during this time, the target cannot restore lost Physical Traits, even with Willpower, though Glamour can be regained normally. The process for the caster giving energy to the target works exactly the same way in reverse, including all the same restrictions, and lasts for the same duration.

**Type:** Wyrd

**Expiation:** This Art is truly the stuff that dreams — and nightmares — are made of. With this demanding power, the caster can actually transform a target into a chimera. In the case of truly powerful castings, this process can even be made permanent, trapping the target in the world of dreams forever. While benevolent changelings use this power to preserve items that might otherwise be destroyed, it is whispered that dark fae use this Art as the ultimate punishment for those who offend them, banishing them into the nightmare lands of the Dreaming. Two Glamour Traits and a Mental Test are required to

begin the process; for this challenge, the caster adds his Bunk Traits to his total, while the target adds her Banality to her defense, and changelings are an additional two Traits up to defend against this Art. If the cantrip is successful, the duration of the transformation depends on the number of Bunk Traits gained in casting: one Trait equals one hour, two Traits gets one day, three Traits is a full week, four Traits is a month, five Traits is a year. Six or more Traits — possible only by spending a Glamour Trait for an additional Bunk during casting — enables the caster to make the cantrip permanent, though against a sentient target this use costs the caster a permanent Glamour Trait as well. Chimera created in this fashion do not normally have any special abilities, though any fae or Prodigals transformed by this Art automatically develop powers that mimic their previous supernatural powers.

This Art cannot be reversed to bring a chimera into reality, however.

**Type:** Wyrd

**Prerequisite Art:** Syncope

### *Infusion*

The Art of advanced construction and modification, *Infusion* allows the caster to craft truly impressive chimerical inventions, including those normally forbidden to the nocker Birthright and similar powers (such as devices requiring electricity or chemical reactions). Although *Infusion* is still practiced primarily by nockers, others have also managed to learn the basics of this Art, such as boggans, eshu and sidhe of House Dougal, though the nockers jealously guard the higher levels and few of the other kith make any progress at all without a nocker watching over their shoulder. Unfortunately for everyone concerned, the Thallain goblins also have an knack with this Art, and like nockers need no teacher to grasp its principles until they reach the very highest levels (*Animantis* and *Gilgul*).

It is important to note that this Art recognizes four types of chimera: Incidental, Dreamed, crafted, and forged. Incidental chimera are things like a passing daydream or a changelings voile, flimsy and normally incapable of being used for any real purpose; Dreamed chimera are somewhat hardier, being formed of persistent dreams and fears, but still unable to withstand much abuse. Crafted chimera are commonly created through use of the nocker Birthright and Abilities like *Crafts* and *Repair*, and require a minimum of one Glamour Trait to manipulate. Forged chimera are the most resilient of all, born of pure, molten dreams, and only nockers and sidhe of House Dougal with this Art are capable of creating them. Note that this Art does not replace the nocker Birthright, but rather enhances it, going beyond its normal limitations and bolstering its strengths. Crafting most common tools, armor and weapons does not require *Infusion*, but truly complex, powered or intelligent creations are the province of this Art.

**Type of Challenge:** Mental

**Basic**

**Harden:** By spending a Glamour Trait and casting a successful cantrip, the caster can “harden” inanimate, Incidental chimera, making them able to be forged or crafted like regular Dreamed chimera. This Art lasts a number of days equal to the Bunk Traits gained during casting, although it can be recast for particularly lengthy projects — each successive cantrip is one Trait up, cumulatively. Once properly forged or crafted, chimera modified by this Art retain such status until the item is destroyed or another user of this Art unweaves the cantrip.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Toughen:** This Art is identical to the *Primal Art Oakenshield*, except that when used on inanimate objects (such as materials a nocker is working on), the extra health levels are considered permanent until lost through some form of damage. Multiple castings of this Art are not cumulative, and recasting this Art on inanimate objects requires that they be “reforged” or otherwise taken apart and put back together. This Art is frequently employed to create armor of surpassing toughness or virtually unbreakable weapons, though those are far from its only applications.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Intermediate**

**FUBAR Generation:** FUBARs are small, spherical, semi-intelligent energy fields made of Glamour that nockers use to power inventions that would normally require electricity or active chemical reactions to function, since Banality normally prevents such operations from working in the Dreaming. Once this cantrip is successfully cast, the user of this Art typically must also win a Static Mental Test using the *Gremayre* or *Science* Abilities to bend the FUBAR to his will and integrate it into the invention properly. The number of Bunk Traits gained in casting equals the number of Glamour Traits the FUBAR has, which often determines how many charges a weapon has, how long an item can function, etc. It is uncertain whether this Art creates FUBARs or merely summons them, and nockers have been known to debate the matter for hours.

Casters who attempt to abuse this Art to conjure up FUBARs for the express purpose of slaying them and taking their Glamour quickly find that this Art becomes extremely difficult, if not outright impossible to use; or, in especially nasty cases, that the devices they invent have a nasty way of turning against them, even years down the road....

**Type:** Chimerical

**Required Realm:** *Fae* x 5 (*Dweomer of Glamour*)

**Animantis:** This bizarre and powerful Art allows the caster to imbue a device with a form of limited sentience, allowing it to carry out a small number of simple tasks. Quality is highly important — successful *Crafts* and *Gremayre* Tests, both against a difficulty of 11 Traits, are required to fashion an item of

suitable quality and form for this cantrip to empower. (Not just any old item can be gifted with some measure of intelligence!) In addition, the device must be physically capable of the tasks it is intended for or this cantrip is essentially useless; a bookcase cannot walk or carry things, for example, though a humanoid-shaped golem or "Glamdroid" might. Naturally, good ol' nocker ingenuity can solve most such problems with a little sweat, a ton of hidden features and some basic robotics work, but that's another story.... Objects respond to the caster's simple commands, within their capabilities: "Fetch this," "Carry that," "Guard this door" or even "Attack!" are all acceptable. Conditional or conjunctive commands such as "If those people start shouting, then attack them" or "Protect me and destroy the intruders" are too complex, however. Additionally, for each Bunk Trait gained in casting, the caster gets seven Traits that can be assigned to the following categories: Physical, Social, Abilities, health levels and Redes. Additionally, without at least one Physical Trait, the object cannot move or attack. Without a Social Trait, it cannot communicate. Without health levels, it is automatically destroyed by the first damage it takes.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Required Realm:** *Fae x 5 (Dweomer of Glamour)*

**Advanced**

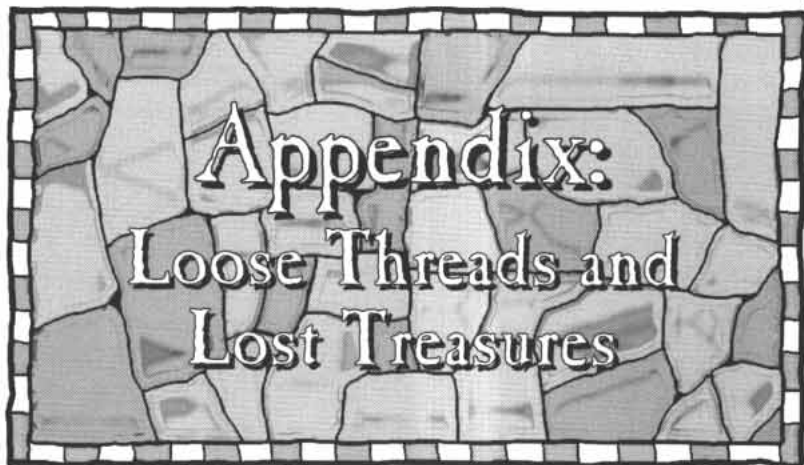
**Gilgul:** The most sacred of creation rites, this Art imbues a target chimera or golem with life and true intelligence. While the results can be truly spectacular, the price of failure is high indeed, and in either case the caster is advised that life created is life that needs caring for. The process is twofold: first, the cantrip must be cast successfully, to open the channels between the caster and his target and allow for the necessary transference of mental energy. Second, the caster must succeed at a Static Test of the *Gremayre* Ability against 10 Traits. If the second challenge fails, the player must immediately make a Simple Test — failure means that the target not only becomes sentient (and gains the normal number of Mental Traits that it would for a successful casting, as outlined below), but antisocial and dangerous, though the caster doesn't necessarily know this until it's too late. If both the cantrip and challenge are successful, however, the caster may give his creation a number of Mental Traits equal to the Bunk Traits gained in casting, plus an additional Mental Trait for each Glamour Trait the caster is willing to spend. Targets given life with this cantrip are loyal and friendly to their creator, and may learn any number of tasks in time. Humiliation and abuse may change these attitudes, however, and while they're willing to defend their creator, all creations constantly sent ahead to check for traps or used as guinea pigs for dangerous experiments eventually rebel against their masters, often at the worst possible time.

**Type:** Chimerical

**Required Realm:** *Fae x 5 (Dweomer of Glamour)*







# Appendix: Loose Threads and Lost Treasures

## *New Abilities*

The following are new Abilities. They are considered common knowledge and may be selected by beginning characters as well as existing ones. At the Storyteller's option, existing characters may trade levels of old Abilities for new ones where appropriate — trading *Brawl* for *Dodge* if a character just wants to get out of the way of things, for example.

### **Academics**

You possess a level of education and general knowledge beyond rudimentary schooling. With *Academics*, you can express artistic criticism, debate the classics, consider philosophy and indulge in studies of culture. This broad Ability covers all sorts of humanities in learning. *Academics* allows you to recognize historical, art and cultural references. You can use *Academics* when working in such fields, when developing a critique or researching. Calling upon your *Academics* Ability may require a Mental or Social Challenge to determine your exact level of competence.

You may further direct your studies by choosing a specific field, such as *Art Criticism*, *Classical Studies*, *History*, *Journalism*, *Theology* or anything else that could be studied with higher education.

### **Athletics**

A favorite of childlings everywhere, and still valuable to wilders and grumps as well, you are skilled in all manner of athletic endeavors, whether due to a background in sports or just personal talent. You can throw a ball, sprint, climb, jump and swim with proficiency. Your *Athletics* Ability is used for retests on most forms of raw physical activity: acrobatics, swimming, jumping, throwing, climbing and running. It does *not* cover evading attacks — that is the domain of the *Dodge* Ability (below). You may choose to focus on something you do especially well.

### *Optional Rule: Ability Specializations*

Within a given area of expertise, some practitioners further hone their knowledge to a razor's edge. By choosing a specialization in an Ability, you hone your skills with a particular facet of that talent. Taking a specialization requires that you spend one Experience Trait on an Ability that you already have. Then you can declare a particular specialization. Whenever you perform a task with that specialization — even if you do not expend the Ability — you gain a one-Trait bonus on resolution of challenges, as long as you have at least one level of the Ability left. You may only have one specialization in any given Ability; you cannot take *Firearms: Pistols* and *Firearms: Rifles* together, for instance. You also can never gain more than one Bonus Trait at a time from specializations, even if more than one would be appropriate to a given challenge. That is, even if you have *Medicine: Physiology* and *Science: Biology Research*, you only get a one-Trait bonus on a test of biochemistry, despite your multiple specializations.

By definition, a specialization is a fairly narrow area of research or practice. You cannot, for instance, take a *Melee* specialization in “one-handed weapons” nor could you have a *Medicine* specialization of “illness.” An appropriate specialization refers to one small class of items or to one type of practice within the Ability, such as *Melee: Broadswords* or *Dodge: Gunfire*. You may take a specialization in an Ability with a focused area of study. In such a case, you concentrate your research in one particular facet of that sub-Ability, or in one application of it. Thus, you could have *Craft: Woodworking* with a specialization in *Hidden Panels*, or *Science: Botany* with a specialization in *Exotic Flora*.

Note that the Bonus Trait from a specialization does not have an adjective and is not bid or used like other Traits. You simply are “one Trait up” on challenges within the specialization.

**Example:** Lord Tyrael ap Eiluned is a fearsome sidhe warrior, but he is especially good with a bastard sword. He has the Ability *Melee* x 3 with the specialization *Bastard Sword*. When Tyrael engages a foe in combat, he normally uses his 12 Physical Traits. With a bastard sword, however, he has 13 Physical Traits because of his intense training. Of course, if he gets tired out or wounded (loses several challenges), he may not have as many Traits, but as long as he has at least one level of his *Melee* Ability left, he gets to add the one Bonus Trait to his remaining Physical Trait total.

**Dodge**

When trouble rears its ugly head, you know how to get out of the way. Unhesitating reactions let you evade blows and shots, getting out of the way of injury. You can *Dodge* against any attack that you're aware of: diving for cover as someone fires a gun or twisting away from a sword, for instance. *Dodge* may be used as a retest when defending against an attack that you can see or otherwise sense coming, including cantrips with direct physical manifestations (*Holly Strike* or *Pyretics* cantrips that loose a ball of flame or bolt of lightning, for example), though subtler uses of those powers do not allow this benefit, nor do mental or emotional attacks of any kind.

**Empathy**

You are sensitive to the moods and emotions of people around you. When you listen to someone, you understand her feelings. You can identify with others and tell when people are lying or holding back while talking to you. With a Social Test and the expenditure of an *Empathy* Ability, you can determine if the last thing that someone said was a lie (although *Subterfuge* can defend against this). Alternately, you can attempt to determine the subject's current Demeanor.

**Etiquette**

Even though many points of etiquette have been lost on the mortal world, they remain alive and well in the halls of Kithain society, and you know the proper way to greet someone, when to rise and how to make introductions. You can hold a toast with the best of them and keep your cool in any social scenario, from slough high tea to a redcap bar crawl. This is especially important when dealing with *sidhe* or other nobility, either as a peer or as a supplicant. The *Etiquette* Ability can be used with Social Tests to impress or blend in at parties. If you make a social *faux pas*, you may immediately expend an *Etiquette* Ability to negate the gaffe — your character knew better than to make the mistake.

**Expression**

Words and feelings flow freely from you. When the muse strikes, you put pen to paper (or fingers to instrument) and pour out a torrent of emotion and stirring imagery. You can convey message and meaning in your art, from symphonies to poetry, and whatever you write is both clear and moving. Works created with *Expression* x 3 or more have the potential to entrance particularly sensitive souls, such as certain fae or Prodigals.

**Note:** *Expression* replaces *Performance* for all applicable artistic forms: writing, poetry, musical composition, etc., and characters who took that Ability for those art forms may automatically trade their current levels in it for an equal amount of this Ability.

**Intimidation**

*Intimidation* represents any of a broad variety of techniques for terrifying people into compliance. This could be anything from physical size, to a particularly frightening grin, to knowing which emotional buttons to push.

You can use *Intimidation* when trying to scare someone with a Social Challenge, or with certain Arts, or even just by being a really good redcap.

### Stealth

By blending into cover, blurring your lines and moving carefully and quietly, you can evade notice or sneak past people. You know how best to take advantage of surrounding cover and how to use light and shadow. Opportunities for unnoticed movement are not lost on you, as you understand the uses of timing and diversion. With an appropriate Physical Challenge, you can sometimes sneak past the notice of guards and searchers (who contest your Ability with their Mental Traits and *Investigation Ability*). You also use *Stealth* to augment the cantrips related to hiding and sneaking.

## New Kith

### *Piskies* (P)Z-keys, singular: *piskey*)

Although they do not have quite the same wanderlust as the eshu, nor the earthy wisdom of the satyrs, piskies are always welcome among their fellow commoners for their big smiles and bigger hearts — even the worst Unselie piskey is more careless than actively malevolent, and there are very few nasty ones. Semi-nomadic, piskies enjoy setting up shop in a location for a year or two, sharing tales of past adventures and exploring their new surroundings, and then moving on to a new place when they feel they've soaked up enough of the local sights. Nimble and hard-working, they work any number of odd jobs to get by on the road, considering it just one more chapter in the great adventure story of their lives. Indeed, the more exotic the job, the better they like it, and those piskies who bother with such things as résumés typically have the most eclectic ones imaginable.

Piskies are quite sensitive to human emotions and can often be found working as intermediaries between a local court and the mortal world, braving the Banality of the job to keep mortals and changelings alike as happy as possible. They are especially close to children of all kinds and keep a close eye on childlings wherever they travel. Among their fellow Kithain, piskies are messengers and couriers, though their generally trusting (almost naïve) nature keeps all but a few of them from taking up related occupations like spies or scouts. Unfortunately, piskies also have tendency to walk off with things that aren't theirs, a habit that ranges from annoying to downright hazardous; what saves them from more severe punishment is that most piskies don't mean any harm, and most think so little of it that they quickly forget what they've done, reacting with honest surprise when their thievery is brought to light.

In their mortal seeming, piskies tend to be slightly shorter than most mortals, with thin frames, bright eyes and light blonde, almost white hair. In their fae mien, piskies have glorious silver hair, which both sexes tend to wear long, and their eyes become even larger and more luminous. Their skin is often a weathered tan, and their clothing — both mundane and chimerical — is as



well loved as it is well worn, with multiple layers of earth tones and forest colors predominating. Piskies like any job that lets them travel and exploit their curiosity, such as reporter or carnival performer, although jobs that let them work with children are equally prized, and many piskies make memorable nannies or camp counselors for lucky mortals and childlings alike.

**Affinity:** Actor

**Birthrights:**

**Nimble:** Fleet of foot and quick of hand, piskies receive a free *Nimble* Physical Trait, which cannot be permanently lost.

**Human Bonds:** Piskies relate well to mortals, especially children — they are considered two Traits up on all non-intimidation Social Challenges with mortals, and in addition to that bonus they receive a free retest on all such tests with mortal children. Piskies receive a free level of the *Empathy* Ability, which cannot be permanently lost.

**Frailties:**

**Kleptomania:** As nice as they are, if an item catches a piskey's eye, he can't help but try to walk off with it. Most have a particular type or group of things they find interesting, although some piskies develop no such habits. Whatever it may be, when confronted with an opportunity to steal something they consider interesting, a piskey must make a Willpower Challenge against five Traits to avoid taking it. Most Seelie piskies return things gracefully if they're caught, since they seldom intend any harm by this habit, although Unseelie members of this kith are often a lot more possessive about what they "acquire." Note that the definition of "interesting" doesn't always equate to human notions of value — to a piskey, a pretty plastic bracelet might look more interesting than a diamond ring.

## New Glamour Systems

### *The Dragon's Ire*

While not an especially warlike race as a whole, the Kithain number in their histories countless legends of brave heroes triumphing over terrible odds, sometimes seemingly by force of will alone. Likewise, the lore of every kith contains instances where individuals seemed to fight with almost divine grace, even if only moments ago they'd been green recruits or wracked with fear at the sight of their foes — eshu on the road, trolls defending a charge, wounded redcaps and pooka fleeing combat are just a few of the common themes of such tales, though any kith can manifest it in the right circumstances. Those experiencing the Dragon's Ire are momentarily transformed, surrounded by a nimbus of crackling chimerical energy, their clothes stirred by a chimerical wind, their gaze at once poised and infinitely deadly to those who meet it. Their skill with their weapon is increased fantastically, though sometimes they have little need of it, for many foes simply turn tail and run at the sight. Even the humblest boggan becomes a force to be reckoned with in this state.

**Note:** Invoking the Dragon's Ire is intended to be a way of rewarding players who are truly immersing themselves in the game and contributing an intense and dramatic edge to the combat they're involved in — in short, while it offers definite game benefits, it's intended to be something more concerned with drama than number-crunching. If a character is even seriously thinking about using it, it should be a point of high drama and excellent roleplaying. Those who try to abuse it for a quick power fix or to constantly bulldoze their opposition should be brought back in line quickly, lest the mystique of the power be lost for everyone.

**System:** A character generally must have at least three levels of the *Remembrance* Background in order to invoke the Dragon's Ire and can never gain more Ire Traits than the number of levels she has of that Background. Storytellers may also require some knowledge of *Gremayre* before the secret of this technique becomes available to a character. If those conditions are met, and the character is near death, protecting one he loves, or locked in intense combat with a personal nemesis and/or an obviously superior foe, the character may try to invoke the Dragon's Ire. He then spends a Glamour Trait and makes a number of tests equal to his permanent Glamour rating; in the event of ties or possible overbids, compare his permanent Glamour versus his permanent Banality rating to determine success.

For each successful test, the character gains one Ire Trait, which is then added to his Traits for all attack-, defense-, command- or intimidation-related tests for the remainder of the combat, and the player must describe his character's fearsome appearance to all around him. Mortals and Prodigals must immediately win a Willpower Challenge against five Traits to stand their ground, and even those that succeed are still one Trait down on all tests against him due to the character's intimidating presence. Kithain test against half this difficulty, round down, and suffer no penalty if they succeed, though they are still in awe of their foe. These Ire Traits last for the rest of the combat, though the fae may expend an Ire Trait at any time for a retest on an appropriate challenge; whether successful or not, this retest is considered the final retest of a particular challenge — no further retests or overbids are possible. Alternately, he may spend an Ire Trait to deal an additional level of damage with an unarmed or melee strike, though only one Trait can be spent in this fashion per successful attack. Ire Traits spent in this fashion are lost, however, and no longer count toward a character's Traits for the purposes of resolving ties.

Attempting to invoke the Ire is not without risk, however — if the character does not succeed on any of the Glamour tests to invoke it, he immediately gains two Banality Traits; furthermore, on any one test during the combat the Narrator may choose to put the character down a number of Traits equal to his permanent Glamour or Banality rating, whichever is higher, making it much more likely the character will fail that test. At the Storyteller's discretion, a character may attempt to raise the Ire more than once per scene,

but its benefits are not cumulative and must be exhausted before a new invocation can be made.

**Example:** *Baron September is in a dire situation; the haughty sidhe is facing off against two vampires, and he and his comrades are already sorely wounded. Nevertheless, he displays uncommon courage and stands his ground, calling out his noble lineage as he enters the fray, and the Narrator rules that his heroic stand qualifies for an automatic test to invoke the Dragon's Ire. The baron has five permanent Glamour and four permanent Banality, and so his player makes five tests with the Narrator. Since his Glamour is higher than his Banality, he wins on ties as well. Luckily for him, he wins four of the five tests, and the baron now has four Ire Traits — for the rest of the combat, he is considered four Traits up on all tests he makes to attack the Prodigals, defend against their attacks, command his comrades or intimidate the foul creatures. He may also spend his Ire Traits for a retest on any of those challenges, or to add an additional wound level to a successful strike, although any Ire Traits spent these ways are lost for the remainder of the combat. The Narrator describes how the Unseelie lord is surrounded by an eerie aura of blue flame and bone-chilling cold winds, and the cuts his blade delivers begin to frost around the edges. Suddenly, the odds of the baron surviving the encounter — or at least dealing grievous wounds to his foes before he dies — are looking much better indeed.*

## New Oaths

### Oath of Silence

*I do pledge this day, with heart, mind and soul, that I will never betray this confidence. Until the stones have crumbled unto dust, and the sea fallen a hundred thousand thousand times from the thundering heavens, this long will I remain silent. When the last star flares and fades in the night sky, leaving naught but blackness and this world is but a dream once more, this long will I keep my word.*

If something absolutely has to be kept secret, most Kithain use this oath or a variation on it — the dire consequences of its breaking are typically more than enough to deter others from spilling their guts. A Kithain must spend a permanent Willpower Trait to voluntarily break the confidence they are entrusted with; this penalty does not apply if the secret is somehow wrenched from the target by torture, telepathy or other situations of duress. Those who voluntarily break the oath also gain a permanent Banality as a mark of their indiscretion.

### Oath of Truth

*Although it may bring tears or sorrow, burning rage or silent hatred, let the veil be lifted now. Let all see clearly and know in their hearts, that this I do speak without deceit or duplicity, but plainly and honestly as best I know how. This I do pledge: I shall speak the truth.*

On the opposite end of the *Oath of Silence*, this oath is used when it is necessary to convince another fae of one's complete and total honesty on a particular matter; it is most often employed in Kithain courts as their equivalent

of swearing on the Bible, though it occasionally sees use in more personal matters. While it is understood when used in an official context, most fae dislike being asked to swear it any more than absolutely necessary, and some even consider it an insult to their personal honor to be asked for this oath by someone they are close to, as in many instances it is tantamount to accusing them of duplicity. Those under this oath must tell the complete and objective truth as they know it about the subject in question — no omissions, biased statements, twisted words or other forms of deception are possible. Those who still wish to lie gain a permanent *Banality Trait* for each lie told, and are drained of Glamour until next sunrise or sunset (whichever comes first).

### *Mystical Self-Defense: Counterweaving Cantrips*

It is possible for characters with the *Gremayre* Ability to actually try to counterweave cantrips that have been cast, effectively canceling them. This costs a Glamour Trait, and the counterweaving lie must have the Realm(s) used in the cantrip. The Realm is typically obvious, but if it's not, the character may take a turn and make a Mental Challenge with the *Kenning* Ability to determine the Realms used. If pressed for time, she can try to guess the Realm(s), but even if she is wrong her turn is still used up, though the Glamour is not spent. Assuming those criteria are met, the counterweaver may make a Mental Challenge against a difficulty of the caster's permanent Glamour Traits plus the Bunk Traits that were gained in casting (retest with *Gremayre*). Success means the cantrip is unwoven. Failure means that it remains in place, and the counterweaver has wasted her Glamour and her turn trying to undo it.

Counterweaving can also be done on instantaneous cantrips, such as *Holly Strike* — the counterweaver cannot have already acted that turn, as this defense counts as her action for the turn. Otherwise, the costs, tests and risks are the same as for regular counterweaving; a cantrip countered this way fizzles right as it is cast, though its caster must still spend all the regular Traits to use it.

### *Optional Bunking System: Jester's Rules*

While the Bunk system presented in *The Shining Host* was certainly a valid way of running cantrip casting, it is far from the only way. The following system, called "Jester's Rules" for its emphasis on the entertainment aspect of Bunking, is not intended as a replacement for the old Bunk rules; rather, it is simply a more active and spontaneous way of looking at doing Bunks for those troupes seeking something a little different. Indeed, the system is specifically designed to encourage players to create Bunks that can actually be acted out or otherwise depicted in character, thus making the act of Bunking more real for everyone involved; as such, it relies heavily on player talents, creativity and

well-chosen props to bring the experience to life. It allows for Bunks to be easily made up and adjudicated on the spot, but it also tends to demand a bit more active roleplaying and prop use than is commonly required for *Mind's Eye Theatre*. Nevertheless, if used properly it can really showcase player talents and ingenuity while simultaneously enriching the game environment.

It should be noted that despite its various advantages, *Jester's Rules* is not for every troupe, nor even every player. It's a fact that all players like portraying characters who can do things they themselves cannot, to one degree or another; it wouldn't be called roleplaying otherwise. After all, if a player is embarrassed to join his family around the piano but wants to play a character with an angelic voice, he shouldn't feel discouraged from doing so by something as relatively minor as a Bunk system. Troupes are thereby encouraged to experiment with both systems to find what works best for them.

#### Assigning Value

The way Bunks are assigned Trait value in this system is very simple, and with some practice become second nature. One Bunk Trait is gained for each of the following conditions that are met, up to a maximum of five Bunk Traits for a single bunk:

#### *Jester's Rules Bunk Checklist*

Don't be fooled — *Jester's Rules* is a very simple system. Here's a summary for quick reference to cut through the confusion. For each question you answer "yes" to, you receive one Bunk Trait, up to a maximum of five Traits for a single Bunk:

- Did you perform a Bunk?
- Did you use a prop?
- Did your Bunk have some special connection to the target?
- Did you act out the Bunk in character?
- Did your Bunk take longer than a minute?
- Did it take longer than an hour? How many?
- Was your Bunk especially unique to your kith or character?

• *One Trait automatically, simply for performing a Bunk.*

You're making the effort. Go you!

• *One Trait for using an actual prop or other physical representation as an essential component of your Bunk.*

These props need not be utterly precise, but should be an honest effort on the player's part — it's one thing to have plastic flowers instead of real ones, quite another to claim a single dandelion is supposed to be two dozen roses. Prop cards are acceptable only for those props that would otherwise be illegal to have in play (such as a sword). This encourages players to employ real props for their



cantrips, which in turn adds more to the collective roleplaying experience than watching a lot of pantomime and card-flashing.

- *One Trait if the Bunk has a special connection to the target.*

Also known as the “voodoo clause,” this condition is met only if the Bunk prominently employs the old magical laws of sympathy and/or contagion. Sympathy is the law that like gives power over like — whether as literal as using a lighter to spark a *Pyretics* cantrip, or as metaphorical as putting on rose-tinted glasses for an innocent *Aphrodesia* Bunk. Contagion says that having a piece of the target gives you power over them — cutting a lock of hair to burn as part of a *Holly Strike*, or using a valued possession to *Soothsay* their future. This can and often is combined with the prop condition.

- *One Trait if you act out the Bunk in character.*

In other words, if you actually sing a ballad in-game instead of simply announcing “my character is singing,” your Bunk is adding more to the atmosphere of the game, and this Trait rewards you for it. **Note:** Dangerous and/or illegal actions such as stunts or violating the no-touching rule are still strictly prohibited.

- *One Trait if the Bunk takes longer than a minute to perform.*

Note that this is not cumulative per minute, but is cumulative with the Trait bonus if the Bunk winds up taking longer than an hour to perform. You must be actively narrating or performing the actions of the Bunk for the entire minute to meet this condition. (Remember, the average combat round is considered to last roughly six seconds, so to get this condition in combat you must Bunk for 10 rounds.)

- *One Trait per hour, if the Bunk takes longer than an hour to perform.*

If you invest this much time in calling up Glamour, you're going to have some serious results, and this Trait represents exactly that consideration. Again, you must be actively narrating or performing the actions of the Bunk for the entire time, or this benefit is lost.

- *One Trait if the Bunk is especially appropriate to your kith and/or character.*

Also known as the “calling card” or “points for style” category, this Trait should only be awarded if the Bunk is truly distinctive to a particular kith or character, such that other characters (not their players) would look at the Bunk and immediately say “that is so like a troll” or “only <name of caster> would do something like that.” The rarest condition of all, this should only be awarded for truly unique and memorable Bunks that capture the essence of a particular kith or character.

**Example:** *Steve is playing Cullen the satyr, love magician extraordinaire. Feeling mischievous, he decides to charm the regal sidhe Lady Tyrael into falling for Robyn the rebellious commoner. For his Bunk, he swipes the lady's coat and sprinkles rose petals over it while singing his favorite Barry White tune. Steve has some time to spare, so he acts out the entire procedure in character, right down to the singing. What's more, foreseeing a possible need for some good love magic this session, he*

actually brought along some real rose petals to use, so he digs those out and puts them to use. His Bunk is worth the following amount of Traits: he gets one Trait automatically for performing a Bunk, plus another Trait for using props (the coat and the rose petals). He gets another Trait for actually acting it out in character instead of merely narrating it, bringing him up to three Bunk Traits so far. What's more, however, he receives an additional Trait for a special connection to the target, since the lady considers her coat a treasured possession; and finally, since singing his song takes longer than a minute, he receives an additional Trait for meeting that condition, bringing him up to his maximum of five Bunk Traits. Lady Tyrael is going to have to deal with a powerful cantrip when she next puts her coat on, and all because Steve had some simple props and a few minutes to put them to good use.

Remember, the usual restrictions about repeating a particular Bunk still apply — a character who tries to use the Bunks repeatedly find them giving less and less of a return until they no longer grant Bunk Traits at all. Players and Storytellers alike should take care to watch out for players trying to exploit the flexibility of this system or abuse the same props and actions, as this goes against the spirit of Jester's Rules and is just plain bad roleplaying besides.

### *Cantrips in Combat*

It is a fact of life that changelings eventually find themselves in combat or other stressful situations, where the time they have to perform Bunks is severely limited. On one end, there are players who feel that rules requiring Bunks to take a round or more are unfair because then they get skewered any time they try even the shortest Bunk in combat. Yet on the other end, one is also bound to encounter players who insist that during the average combat round their character can not only light a sword on fire and swallow it while dancing a merry jig as a Bunk for their *Quicksilver* cantrip, but still have time to attack that round as well. How does a reasonable Narrator split the difference between allowing changeling characters to use their magic in combat without also opening the door for those who wish to perform ridiculous Bunks in the middle of battle? The following are two quick and easy methods for resolving such disputes.

**Method #1: Fast-Casting.** The Fast-Casting system allows players to use all manner of flashy Bunks in the middle of combat, but at the cost of overall power: under this system, no Bunk performed for a cantrip cast that same round can be worth more than two Bunk Traits, no matter what it might normally be worth under either the regular rules or the new Jester's Rules system. Thus, this system allows the players to be as dramatic as they like but balances it out by ruling that their rushed manipulation of Glamour limits how powerful their cantrips can actually be. Of course, if the character is willing to spend longer than a round on a Bunk, he can receive a higher amount of Traits for it, but if he wishes to Bunk and cast a cantrip in the same round, he can never have more than two Bunk Traits. Remember too that unless a character has extra actions, his Bunk/cantrip casting counts as his action for the turn.

**Method #2: Reality Check.** Combat rounds are considered to last roughly six seconds of game time in *Mind's Eye Theatre*, which gives rise to a very simple litmus test for Bunks; namely, if the player can actually act out the Bunk in the time it takes to calmly count to six, then the Bunk can be cast in one round and is worth whatever amount of Bunk Traits it would normally be under either set of bunking rules. If the Bunk cannot be performed in those six seconds, she may still go ahead with it but will have to devote at least one round to it, during which time she cannot do anything else. This system is thus quite risky but potentially very rewarding if the players are quick or clever enough to devise Bunks they can use in that limited time, yet it can also backfire badly if they're not careful.

Between these two systems, most Narrators should find a method that works for their game and their players without sacrificing game balance or playability.

**New Cantrip Rule: Pour It On!**

Spending Glamour Traits is an effective, if costly, method of adding extra power to one's cantrips — for each Glamour Trait spent, the Kithain is one Trait up on all cantrip-related tests. Up to five Glamour Traits can be spent on any given cantrip in this fashion.

## *The Endless Dance: Politics in Concordia*

Kithain politics are a complicated dance of boons granted, favors owed, oaths sworn and deals cut in backrooms as well as the open pronouncements made in court. Complicating this mix are any number of romances, grudges, alliances, Shadow Court maneuvering, secret societies and other intangible factors lying just below the surface of a court, always just waiting to boil over. It is a common misconception of many Prodigals who learn of the fae to think of them as somehow harmless or inconsequential, at least when it comes to intrigue. Such misguided souls need only read of the histories of fae who waged war over a lover's kerchief, boiled in oil mortals who displeased them or the ancient tradition of ritually sacrificing the mortals who stumble across their secret courts to realize that even the Seelie can be quite vicious when it comes to getting what they want at court. A fae court can be as bad as a room full of vampires or wizards when it comes to politics and intrigue — after all, when you've got countless lifetimes and nothing to do but play the game, why not play it for all it's worth?

Players seeking inspiration for the intrigue setting of a faerie court in *Shining Host* games should reference the actual historical courts of the 13th to 16th centuries, such fine films as *Elizabeth* (for the serious) or *A Midsummer*

*Night's Dream* (for the more whimsical) and other works to get a feel for the kind of cutthroat playfulness and whimsical seriousness that makes for the blend of a Kithain community. For those interested in the more romantic side of a faerie court in full swing, check out Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing* (for a court in peacetime) or Kurosawa's *Ran* (for a court at war), as well as the tabletop book **Nobles: The Shining Host** for **Changeling: The Dreaming**.

Ultimately, it is up to the players and the Storytellers involved to determine how much politics and intrigue they want in their game — it's not for all games, nor all players, but when used properly even just a little dose of it can bring home the realities of Kithain society, the feudal structure it labors under and the results it has on the nobles and commoners entwined within it.

### *The Full Measure of a Fae: Status*

Status is the game term used to quantify the force of respect and authority that accompanies a particular character's name, either from her inherent social status (as is the case with nobility) or the accolades given to great heroes or leaders, noble or common. The most common source of Status is from a character inheriting or likewise receiving a title in Kithain society, whether it's a humble knighthood or the great responsibilities of an entire duchy — hence the benefits associated with the *Title Background*. However, some changelings manage to make a such a name for themselves outside of any title that they gain Status, and an increasing number of nobles are recognizing commoner positions in their households, which carry with them a certain amount of prestige and thus Status as well (even if the local Unseelie commoners mock those who “sell out” in this fashion). Thus, commoners may also gain Status for heroic deeds or acts of great wisdom and character; this is treated essentially the same as the *Title Background* for the purposes of running Status, though the character is not a noble — she has simply earned the respect of her fellow fae to the point where her name carries great weight.

Commoners who gain Status in this fashion should mark it on their character sheets as *Title (Commoner Status) x1* or something similar, in order to show that it is not a “true” noble title but “merely” popular acclaim. (For more on Status, see the *Title Background* description on page 90 of **The Shining Host**.) Common Status Traits are listed with the description of each rank in **The Shining Host**, but troupes should feel free to invent new Status Traits to suit their own stories and the reputations of the characters receiving the honor. A clever pooka commoner who saved her friends from Dauntain might be cheered as very *Resourceful* by her fellow commoners, while a powerful redcap warrior might have earned the Status of *Feared* with the other Kithain of the area.

### *Gaining and Losing Status*

Characters may gain or lose Status during the course of a story. With small troupes, this process falls entirely within the purview of the Storyteller.

However, the real strength of the Status system comes when a large enough troupe exists to have Kithain in the game control gains and losses, with the Storyteller only monitoring (and occasionally arbitrating) them.

## Using Status

Regardless of whether it comes from a hereditary name, a bestowed title, or even just the acclaim from one deed, Status comes into play in one of two ways: permanent and temporary Traits. Permanent Status is recorded on the character sheet as either the *Title* Background or its commoner equivalent (described above), and is a measure of a character's actual, formal standing in Kithain society. Permanent Status losses or gains are added or removed from your character sheet and are typically rooted in major shifts of both plot and character. By contrast, the loss or gain of Temporary Status has no true effect on Status, as it reflects just how good your name happens to be at the moment — just because people don't like you doesn't mean you're any less a count, although it might have a more direct impact if the commoners revolt and start putting nobles they don't like up against a wall. Both types of Status can fluctuate over the course of a story — a baron might be granted a duchy, for example, or a traitorous knight driven from his order. Temporary Status Traits can be represented with Status Cards (since they tend to change hands often). Even a commoner hero might lose his Status if he is discovered to have aided a notorious criminal, for example, or be raised to even greater glory by helping stop some great menace.

You may bid a Status Trait instead of a regular Trait in any applicable Social Challenge. You may also choose to add them to your Social Traits during any appropriate Social Challenge if Traits are compared. These uses reflect you throwing the weight of your reputation behind your effort and typically must be accompanied by a suitable remark or declaration in character. For example, a *sidhe* knight trying to scare off a foe might announce he was adding his warrior's reputation by saying, "I am Sir Graystone, knight of House Scathach, the most *Valiant* warrior of the Duchy of the Delaware — begone, cur, or suffer the sting of my blade!" Be dramatic! This is your character's reputation you're putting on the line, and that's never a halfway thing: You either succeed and reinforce it once more, showing your true colors for all to see, or you fail, and suffer the indignity of seeing even your finest measure fail to impress your enemy. Either way, adding your Status to your efforts should be an occasion for dramatic roleplaying, not simply Trait-stacking for fun and profit.

It should be noted, however, that even if you do not advertise your reputation that directly, you must tell your opponent out of character when you wish for your character to use your Status Traits in these ways, since they may choose to ignore them if they like. They may be playing commoner anarchists who pay no heed to nobility, or another noble out to deliberately snub you, but whatever their reason may be, they do not have to give your reputation weight if they don't want to, although mere ignorance of your reputation is no excuse



— Status is considered backed by the Dreaming, one reason it is different than simple boasting and has a game effect. Of course, such a disrespectful act is considered a serious insult in Kithain society, especially to one of the acknowledged nobility, and even if the character manages to win the test, they may well find themselves with a lasting and bitter enemy, as few forgive those who slight their good name in such a direct and obvious fashion. Quite often, such a snub is the direct precursor to a duel of some kind, and even if it wasn't intended as such, it often ends up that way before long!

**Note:** Keeping tabs on Status can become quite a chore for one Storyteller to handle. It is therefore recommended that troupes assign a special Narrator, called the Gossip, to keep a *written* record of all important uses of Status: loans, snubs, etc., to prevent future arguments. Players should report Status changes to the Gossip as soon as the game permits.

### Examples of Status

The following are some examples of the uses and benefits of Status:

- Temporary Status may be used to add to your Social Traits during an applicable Social Challenge. This does *not* include Art use, except for the *Sovereign Art*, unless the Storyteller specifically approves of such usage.

- Status is a measure of a character's creditability. In any situation where it is only one changeling's word against another, Status can be the determining factor. The same is true in the case of accusing another of a crime in which there is no concrete evidence. In all such formal cases, the character with the most Status is the one whose word is accepted by the court, though either party in a dispute may demand a duel or even a Fior to determine the truth or innocence of the matter.

- You may give temporary Status Traits to another character to show your favor, though the individual to which you give the Status must return it immediately upon the asking. In the meantime, the bearer may spend or lose this Trait as they would any other temporary Status Trait, and if this occurs it is gone for the duration of the story, so be careful who you support, lest they foolishly squander your good name or even wrap it up in some kind of scandal. You can use loaned Status Traits exactly as you would use your own, but can only give one Trait of Status to any one person in this fashion. This simulates a noble empowering someone to act on her behalf—“Stay thy weapons, I travel in the name of the *Noble Lady Tyrael!*”—or a commoner hero granting another character their protection: “Away with thee, villain, for I am friend to Vice, the most *Feared* redcap in the county!” Such loans are typically referred to as “favors” (as in “*Lady Tyrael's favor*”), and are quite common in Kithain society.

- Permanent Status Traits cannot be removed or bestowed by mere game mechanics, only by the most momentous events of a plot and/or a character's personal storyline — a *Title* is raised in recognition of exemplary service to the king, for example, or one's *Title (Commoner Status)* as a commoner hero is destroyed in light of some shameful crime committed during the Accordance

War. Thus, only the Storyteller can truly determine when permanent Status gains or losses are deserved, although the players may certainly contribute their in-character opinions on the matter, especially regarding the more flexible Status Background — if the commoner community in the game decides to stick by the aforementioned shamed hero, for example, the Storyteller may certainly factor that into her decision on how much Status will be lost.

- On the other hand, it is frightfully easy to take away temporary Status Traits from a target, as they are a manifestation of a character's current reputation, and not truly tied to their ultimate station. By spending one temporary Status Trait of your own and spreading the appropriate rumors around the court, you may remove another character's temporary Status Trait in the same fashion. Costly, perhaps, but such rumor-mongering allows the mighty to be brought low, if only for a time, though don't expect such respected figures to sit still while such slander is said about them!

#### The Seelie Code

- *Death before dishonor.*
- *Love conquers all.*
  - *Beauty is life.*
- *Never forget a debt.*

## Ranks and Privileges

What follows below is a list of the most common titles in Kithain society, as well as their holders' most common duties and privileges; while these responsibilities may vary somewhat as one moves from kingdom to kingdom, the ones listed have remained essentially the same regardless of location.

Also included are the terms used to address nobles of this rank. Please note that these terms are used only by those *below* the noble in station, unless a higher-ranking noble is feeling particularly generous (or patronizing). Thus, a count refers to a fellow count as "Count <insert name here>," not as "Your Excellency," though he would still refer to a duke as "Your Grace." Finally, the typical treasures or symbols of office held by a noble are listed — these are not always treasures in the magical sense of the word, though they can be, but simply the symbols of office given to a particular noble when they assume control over a freehold or territory. These treasures also denote who controls a particular land, if more than one noble of the same rank occupies the land at the same time.

### King or Queen

There are eight kingdoms in Concordia, and the supreme authority in each one rests with a king or queen, often with a prince or princess as heir apparent. The personality and mood of the monarch have an impact on the chimerical reality of a kingdom; a queen in love might cause her kingdom to bloom with

wildflowers, for example, while a king sliding into despair would lend a gloomy pall to the skies of his lands. This usually has no real game effect, but should be evoked descriptively. Within her domain, a monarch's word is the supreme law, and only the High King or Queen may reverse his ruling or supersede his authority. In times of conflict, the monarch is the warlord of all armies in her kingdom.

Players' characters may not normally attain this level of *Title*, but it is included for the sake of clarity. However, with the appropriate expenditures and Storyteller's permission, a player may play a prince or princess, so long as they understand the great responsibilities and limitations this places on them as well as the corresponding rise in status it confers.

- **Formal Address:** "Your Majesty" or "Your Royal Highness," though this latter term is typically reserved for a prince or princess.

- **Royal Treasures:** Crowns, which allow them to know the location of all pennons (territory markers) in the kingdom; scepters, which allow them to draw Glamour from any hearths of balefire in the kingdom; seals that can countermand any ducal imprints; and a weapon, which is considered an extension of royal will.

#### Duke or Duchess

Often considered the rough equivalent of a mortal governor, at least when they lay claim over territories, these are the highest nobles under a king or queen, and usually the highest any commoner will encounter outside of great festivals or other events. Dukes usually rule over entire cities or large rural areas, and can count up to five counts and barons as vassals, who then rule individual freeholds in their name. Some dukes serve their monarchs as diplomats, moving about on various missions of state, typically those that require great subtlety and tact. In wartime, dukes and duchesses serve as generals and marshals for their monarch, commanding specific armies. They are typically considered fair, if distant, and accorded much respect for their station and power.

- **Formal Address:** "Your Grace."

- **Royal Treasures:** Signets, which allow them to sign treaties, assign lands, make proclamations and issue writs; these contracts are legally binding only within ducal fiefs. Pennons, or standards emblazoned with their coat of arms, which allow them to establish freeholds as their personal fiefs, and which supersede any count's claim. Hearthstones, which allow them to draw Glamour from any hearth in their fief. Lastly, a weapon which symbolizes their right to command royal armies.

#### Count or Countess

Though ranked below dukes and duchesses, these nobles are nonetheless considered powerful in their own right, and thus have a reputation as schemers and social climbers, whether deservedly or otherwise. They typically control a significant area of a city, or a respectable tract of outlying land, and can hold the fealty of one or two barons and perhaps a few powerful knights. The rest of

### The Many Kingdoms of Concordia

- **Kingdom of Apples** (Northeast) — Ruled by Queen Mab ap Fiona, this territory is known for its excellent noble and commoner relations, as well as its verdant orchards and glittering cities.
- **Kingdom of Willows** (Southeast) — Led by King Meilge ap Eiluned, this mysterious and enticing land boasts a combination of old-fashioned Southern charm with a mix of vibrant new ideas.
- **Kingdom of White Sands** (Florida) — Overseen by beloved Queen Morganna ap Gwydion, this bright and playful land has wonderful relations between commoners and nobles, though it suffers from pirate and Nunnehi attacks.
- **Kingdom of the Burning Sun** (Southwest) — Ruled by the noble Chief Greyhawk ap Gwydion, this region enjoys the only good relations with Nunnehi in Concordia, and offers many natural beauties as well.
- **Kingdom of the Feathered Snake** (Mexico) — Commanded by Duke Topaz ap Gwydion, most of this embattled kingdom is held by the Kithain in name only, and only Topaz's brilliant tactics keep it from falling to the Nunnehi completely.
- **Kingdom of Pacifica** (West Coast) — Headed by Queen Aeron ap Fiona, this lush and incredibly diverse land boasts a free spirit unlike anywhere else in Concordia, and styles itself the youngest and most idealistic kingdom of all.
- **Kingdom of Grass** (Midwest) — Queen Mary Elizabeth ap Dougal is as solid, stoic and dependable as the largely commoner population of her lands, and what this land lacks in flash it provides as a solid foundation for the rest of Concordia.
- **Kingdom of Northern Ice** (Alaska and Canada) — Led by Queen Laurel ap Fiona, this beautiful and pristine land has forged excellent ties with the native Nunnehi of the region and has one of the most serene populations in Concordia.
- **Fiefs of Bright Paradise** (Caribbean) — Territories of stormy romance and high adventure, these islands are ruled by a motley mix of Nunnehi chiefs, pirate kings and queens, and other exotic types.

the nobility keeps a close eye on nobles of this rank, especially those that do not claim lands for themselves, as such roving counts and countesses can easily be up to mischief. Nonetheless, their status in the middle of the nobility also makes "unattached" nobles of this rank desirable as agents of both commoners and nobles alike, since they are fairly powerful yet still fairly close to the common kith as well, and so they may undertake a wide variety of missions. In wartime, they serve as subcommanders, regimental organizers and rear-support

coordinators, though they seldom take the field unless personally renowned as warriors.

- **Formal Address:** “Your Excellency.” Counts are occasionally called earls, although women holding this title are still called countesses.

- **County Treasures:** Pennons, which can be used to identify their counties and supersede those of baronial rank or lower; hearths, which they can demand tithes of dross from their vassals to help feed; and a weapon, used in service to their superiors.

#### Baron or Baroness

Closest to the commoners of all the “land-holding” nobles, most barons enjoy a good reputation with their subjects but resent the nobles above them as distant or uncaring for the plight of everyday kith. Some covet the powers of other nobles and seek to climb the ladder, but many are content with their fiefdoms, which usually consist of a single freehold in a city or a small town outside of one. Nobles of this rank without claim to land typically serve as commoner liaisons and perform other less-glamorous (but still vital) functions for their fellow nobles. Baronies typically include three or four knights as vassals, and perhaps a few other knights-errant with no other loyalties.

- **Formal Address:** “Lord” or “Lady” is appropriate. Some baronesses prefer to be called baronets, though this is far from common.

- **Baronial Treasures:** Barons and baronesses have only their own hearths and their weapons. They do have a right to gather Glamour in their fiefdoms and may demand small tithes of dross from their knights.

#### Knight or Lady

At once a title and a state of honor, this is the lowest “official” rank of the nobility, and knights form the backbone of faerie society, acting as warriors, champions and couriers for their lords. A knight may occasionally hold a freehold in the name of her lord, though this is rare and can be reversed at any time at the whim of her lord.

- **Formal Address:** “Sir” or “Lady,” though some female knights prefer the title “Dame,” especially warrior knights.

- **Knightly Treasures:** A knight’s chosen weapon is the symbol of her honor, an extension of her personal will and protection; legend holds that so long as she remains true to her lord, her weapon will never break.

#### Squire

Not truly nobility, squires act as personal servants to nobles (often knights). While they may earn great honor fighting alongside their masters, in general they perform support duty — retrieving weapons, chasing down wayward mounts and the like. Off the field, they run errands, help maintain a noble’s gear and perform other menial tasks for their masters. This is considered the rank of nobles-in-training among the sidhe, though it is the highest rank that many commoners ever receive, and most sidhe are raised in station after a suitable training period has passed.



- **Formal Address:** None, although “Squire <insert name here>” is acceptable. “Hey, you” is far more popular.
- **Treasures:** None, though they may receive a small allowance of dross from their patron and are expected to keep their dress and equipment well tended and in good working order at all times.

#### The Unseelie Code

- *Change is good.*
- *Glamour is free.*
- *Honor is a lie.*
- *Passion before duty.*

### Retainers

Not all the Kithain interested in the interplay of the noble courts are sidhe, or even members of the true nobility at all — many nobles employ a host of other servants, known as retainers, to carry out all manner of tasks vital to their fiefdoms. Many of these responsibilities are fairly mundane, but wily commoners can parlay even the most trivial-seeming duties into sources of great power and influence if they are clever enough about it. Thus the traditional balance of power between nobles and their retainers — while the positions of the retainers exist only at the sufferance of the nobles, at the same time few nobles have the patience or skills necessary to fulfill all the tasks retainers are employed for, and thus do their best to keep these servants happy while still keeping their power in check.

In theory, retainers are paid with allowances of dross — the going monthly rate is roughly one piece of dross per minimum number of Status Traits needed to truly fill the position. Thus a chancellor would receive three pieces of dross per month, while a herald would receive one. Looking at this math, it's easy to see how few nobles can afford to pay a full-time staff, at least with dross, and thus the beginning of courtly intrigue as retainers receive favors, Influence, information and other boons in lieu of regular payment, which in turn leads retainers to compete for the best favors from their master, and so on. As only the largest courts typically employ a full spread of retainers, and even then only when they feel a need for the type of retainer in question, competition for those few positions available can get quite fierce, and those with such appointments tend to guard them jealously.

Remember, however, that the nobles of the game have the ultimate authority over which retainer positions are available — if the local count doesn't feel the need for a seer, it doesn't matter how wise or magically proficient a character may be, they're still not going to get the position. Of course, if they can convince the count to see the wisdom in their words, that's another story, but in no instance should a player be forced to create a position simply to satisfy a power-hungry gamer. Retainers should add flavor and

intrigue to the game, not be present simply to give absolutely everyone a title of some kind, and so should be used sparingly, preferably when a need is present and worthy candidates make themselves known.

Storytellers, note: As mentioned before, just because these positions exist does not mean they *must* be filled, or that all those who do must meet the minimum Status required for full investment. Indeed, the vast majority of retainers are not invested and still perform their duties quite capably. The benefits for full investment are designed to reward and encourage players who work for these positions of respect, not to allow players to min-max their characters into unstoppable courtiers, or for that matter to allow players with sidhe characters to give their commoner friends plum jobs at the expense of others.

*System:* Any character can occupy any position. All it takes is the blessing of the appropriate noble, and they may begin carrying out their duties normally, so long as they understand that nobles may dissolve the position or countermand any retainer's orders at will. A character may occupy only one position at a time, regardless of their Status. However, if a character has as many or more Status Traits as the minimum number listed along with the position, they receive a special benefit or two, called an *Investment*. Consider it a gift for having a solid-enough reputation to truly assume the mantle of the position. For example, any fae can be named chancellor, but only one considered quite worthy by their peers (at least three permanent Status Traits) really seems to wear the mantle with complete authority, and those that do earn a little extra benefit when dealing with others because of it. At the Storyteller's discretion, sidhe characters may fill some of these positions, though most would find them hideously undignified.

**Note:** Retainers are *not* nobility, no matter how much Status they might have, and so are still covered by the first level of the *Fae Realm (Hearty Commoner)* for all cantrips.

### Heralds

Messengers and diplomats, heralds enjoy a certain amount of diplomatic freedom as long as they remember to mind their betters, and many have treasures or cantrips that allow them to travel quickly. Their wandering ways also allow many of them to serve as spies for their lord, since they frequently mix with all manner of crowds without suspicion. In times of danger, they are responsible for helping raise commoner armies.

#### Investment Minimum: 1

- *Investment:* Formally recognized heralds may add or subtract one temporary Status Trait to another character per session at no cost to themselves, simply by spreading word (true or not) of that person's deeds or misdeeds.

### Seers

Recognized for their mastery of the faerie Arts, seers act as magical advisors to their lords and keep watch over the chimera of the land. They also perform

divinations and are on the frontlines against any magical threats to the land. Their mastery of magic makes it difficult for many to trust them, though in their defense most are aware of this reputation and are scrupulously honest because of it.

**Investment Minimum: 2**

- *Investment:* By offering their magically ordained blessing to an individual, the seer may put that person one Trait up on all tests against a particular mystical threat. This blessing is not cumulative, nor is it actual magical protection, simply a reflection of the person's increased confidence in her ability to deal with the threat. Only one person or oathcircle may receive this blessing at a time.

**Chancellors**

Though some nobles scoff at letting "mere commoners" hold the reins of power as a chancellor does, wiser rulers realize the advantages of employing one who knows the local freeholds and more importantly the common kith in this capacity. Chancellors rule in their lords' absence, help defend the fiefdom from attack, and seldom abuse the confidence granted to them. In return, they are nearly as respected as their lords. Chancellors are called "seneschals" in some areas.

**Investment Minimum: 3**

- *Investment:* Chancellors acting in the name of their lord are considered to have one more Status Trait than normal to add to their bid for any appropriate Social Challenge, as a reflection of their great respect. In their lord's absence, chancellors may invoke their lord's name and spend a Status Trait to gain a retest on a Social Challenge related to maintaining order or enforcing one of their lord's edicts.

**Bards**

The storytellers and lorekeepers of the court, bards are long believed to be natural prophets and are considered the living history of the local Kithain. Most refrain from speaking during court unless performing or specifically invited to do so, out of the ancient belief that they might accidentally speak a dire prophecy.

**Investment Minimum: 3**

- *Investment:* It is considered bad luck to strike a bard, at least when the bard is unwilling to fight. Those who attack a bard without provocation lose all temporary Status Traits for the rest of the session. Those without any Status are two Traits down on all noncantrip Social Challenges, due to the stigma this taboo carries.

**Jesters**

Although there are many wags and jokers in most courts, a true jester reminds others of proper behavior by breaking all rules of etiquette, and uses satire and pranks to point wayward nobles back in the right direction, giving them a graceful way of mending their ways rather than openly humiliating

them. It is a fine line, but most jesters walk it nimbly. They are also entrusted with sniffing out all things mundane and banal, and using all means at their disposal to destroy these things before they threaten the court as a whole.

**Investment Minimum: 1**

- *Investment:* True jesters may remove any number of temporary Status Traits from a noble, provided he announces (out of character) his intention to do so during a formal court function and then makes an in-character joke — if the crowd deems it amusing in-character, the noble is chastised and loses the Status Traits. If not, the jester may not make another attempt on that particular noble the rest of the night. Care must be taken that the humor remains in-character — pointing out another character's foibles is fine, but going for another player out of character is not!

**Troubadours**

Musicians, dancers and actors for the court's amusement, troubadours (who are often, but not always, a motley themselves) serve to amuse the court as well as lead the rites of courtly love. Troubadours often serve as go-betweens for courting couples, passing notes, serenading lovers and otherwise encouraging love in all its forms. They may perform standards, their own pieces or even special works commissioned by their noble patrons.

**Investment Minimum: 1**

- *Investment:* Troubadours with full court sanction may spend a temporary Status Trait to retest any *Performance*-related challenge made before the court, and may loan all of their own temporary Status Traits to a courting lover for a single night if they desire (to reflect their artistic patronage and subtle encouragement).

**Scribes**

Often underestimated, these vital retainers transcribe all courtly proceedings as well as take down any memories of past lives, time in Arcadia or other important lore that court members come across. As such, they are fonts of knowledge for those patient and wise enough to seek them out.

**Investment Minimum: 1**

- *Investment:* With their patient manners and old-fashioned quill-and-vellum style of transcription, scribes actually make it easier for others to coax out the kind of vital lore they seek. Provided they are explicitly acting on behalf of the court, a scribe may spend a temporary Status Trait to allow another fae to retest any *Gremayre*, *Enigmas*, *Occult* or *Remembrance* Test to recall or demonstrate any information that falls under the scribe's domain.

**Stewards**

Although some nobles look on them as little better than pantry tenders and accountants, capable stewards are invaluable at helping to manage a fiefdom's resources, chimerical and otherwise; if some of them are tad possessive regarding their domains, it is due to an excess of zeal in pursuit of their duties,

not an absence of it. They also train other retainers and such have more influence than their humble responsibilities might indicate.

**Investment Minimum: 2**

- *Investment:* Stewards who have managed a freehold's resources for a month or more can coax an additional (temporary) level of *Finance* Influence out of it by spending a Status Trait, provided that they are using the fiefdom's resources in pursuit of their lord's orders. They may also spend a Status Trait to scrounge up a Glamour Trait worth of dross. They may spend any number of Status Traits this way at one time, but no more per month than their permanent Status Traits. Influence levels gained in this fashion fade at the end of the month.

**Reeves**

Liasons between nobles and commoners, reeves are invaluable in fiefdoms with large or hostile commoner populations and speak on behalf of commoners to nobles at court. Likewise, nobles give reeves proclamations to present to the common folk, so they'd best be friendly with them unless they want to experience the worst of the "kill the messenger" syndrome. There is typically one reeve per freehold, and a good reeve goes a long way to keeping noble and common kith in harmony; a wicked or negligent one can be a one-changing civil war in the making.

**Investment Minimum: 2**

- *Investment:* If addressing the court on an official matter on behalf of a fellow commoner, the reeve may spend a temporary Status Trait for a retest on any Social Tests related to arguing their case and is considered one Trait up on all such tests regardless.

**Thanes**

Commoner warriors, thanes have sworn loyalty to their lord, and together with the knights of the fiefdom are empowered to search for Glamour, battle chimerical beasts and otherwise defend the land. They are also the heart of any commoner forces in the area, and thane captains are renowned for their bravery and leadership in the face of terrible odds. Many thanes are veterans of the Accordance War, who swore loyalty in return for noble promises of better treatment for their fellow commoners. A good indicator of how well a noble is regarded by her subjects is how many thanes are sworn to her service.

**Investment Minimum: 1 (Thane captain: 2)**

- *Investment:* A thane may spend a temporary Status Trait for a retest against any mental or emotional power that would cause him to abandon his duty, so long as he is directly engaged in loyal service to his lord at the time. Thane captains may also spend a temporary Status Trait to retest any *Leadership* or *Intimidation* Tests they make, so long as they are made in pursuit of an official assignment.



## *Kithain Justice*

Although it has changed somewhat from the more draconian methods of the past, Kithain justice is still fairly brief and to the point, especially when compared to that of their mortal cousins. After all, with binding oaths and magical means to aid in the discovery of truth, the outcome is seldom as uncertain as human justice, though it is far from as certain as most mortals think it would be, given those two factors.

### *Commoner Court*

These courts deal with the “trivial” matters that the nobility doesn’t want to get involved in: petty disputes, minor theft, childling vandalism, drunken brawls, etc. They are typically based out of commoner freeholds and run by commoners as well, often a reeve or chancellor, with thanes or the odd knight to ensure order and enforce judgment. Tradition demands that a noble cannot be tried in Commoner’s Court, though it has happened from time to time. An accused may also choose to undergo a Fior rather than receive regular judgment, though this is rare at this level.

### *Nasal Court*

Overseen by the local nobility (preferably seven judges, though fewer suffice if not enough nobles can be found), these courts hear crimes related to fellow nobles, as well as more serious crimes than the civil matters or minor complaints of the lower court. Thanks to recent reforms, the process has become fairer than in times past, with the accused being granted a right to counsel (often the local reeve) and the ability to present a case. Once the court has rendered a decision, however, it is considered final. Those accused may also choose to undergo a Fior instead of receiving a summary judgment.

### *Fior*

An ancient tradition of the nobility, the Fior, or trial by challenge, remains a fairly popular method of determining guilt or innocence, and Commoner Courts or even individual motleys sometimes rely on it as well. In a legal setting, a Fior is always dictated at least in part by the supposed infraction of the accused, so that the test he must endure requires him to confront his sin — the more serious the crime, the more serious the test needed for exoneration. The actual nature and requirements of the Fior are as different as the circumstances of the crimes they are designed to test, and the Storyteller should work with the presiding nobles to help come up with an appropriate Fior for any character undergoing one. It is believed that the Dreaming is behind the outcome of the Fior, and thus those that succeed are considered cleared of all suspicion.

This is not to say the Fior has a perfect record, nor that it is used in every case — some innocent changelings have died while proving their innocence for particularly heinous crimes, and unless there is enough Glamour invested in it by the judges and witnesses present, the presence of the Dreaming may not be strong enough to prevent particularly devious or dedicated souls from succeeding,

though such instances are so rare that they are discounted in common opinion. Most witnesses gladly contribute Glamour to ensure the success of a Fior, which is another reason particularly heinous crimes are tried before large crowds, as it helps ensure true justice is done.

Like most Kithain justice, Fiors are a time for high drama and powerful roleplaying. While considered barbaric and archaic by many modern Kithain, they still have an unsettling appeal all their own, and large crowds turn out for particularly famous (or infamous) trials. Whether her character is guilty or innocent, a player undergoing a Fior should understand the dangers involved, even if the Dreaming is on her side, and do her best to roleplay the ordeal as best she can without squabbling over rules. Her character chose this fate, after all, and it might easily be her finest (or simply final) hour, so better to undergo it as memorably as possible!

*System:* First, the terms of the Fior must be declared publicly for all to hear, as well as the accused's consent to participate. Second, all judges and any willing spectators to the Fior may spend Glamour Traits to help ensure its accuracy; judges may spend as many Traits as they like, while spectators may contribute one Trait apiece. If the character is innocent (this should be revealed privately and out of character to a Storyteller or Narrator), they are one Trait up on any tests involved in the Fior for every Glamour Trait spent by the witnesses. If the Fior doesn't involve any direct tests, the Narrator (in the guise of the Dreaming) may substitute giving hints, suggestions or other helpful nudges on a one-per-Trait basis instead. This simulates the Dreaming steering the innocent character to success in the Fior. While it should not hand the character a victory unaided, it should definitely make her task easier.

If the character is guilty, however, she is considered down a number of Traits equal to the Glamour Traits spent on all tests in the Fior; if this would reduce her below one Trait, she remains at one Trait but loses all ties and must immediately make a number of additional retests on any successful test she makes, equal to the excess Glamour Traits she has against them. If the character fails even one of these retests, the entire test is considered failed. If the Fior doesn't require direct tests, the Narrator may again intervene in the guise of the Dreaming, but this time by creating setbacks, false clues and other problems on a one-per-Trait basis. These should not make it absolutely impossible, but it should definitely make the character's Fior more difficult than it would normally be.

### *The Dragon's Dance: Dueling*

While popular for centuries, formal dueling was on the wane among Kithain and mortals alike until the Resurgence and the return of the sidhe, who treasure it as a means of settling disputes of all kinds. While informal duels occur all the time, and can be anything from a reasonable contest to a back-alley brawl, true formal duels are governed by a system of rules and backed by the Dreaming, giving them a certain appeal as a means of settling disputes

reasonably and fairly, especially among the battle-headed wilders. When employed in **The Shining Host**, duels should be viewed as the dramatic and exciting events they are, not just some ordinary battle, and participants are encouraged to roleplay them to the hilt, as it were. From the recitation of the oath (typically read by a witness and repeated by the duelists) to drawing of weapons to the final blow struck, it should be a moment of high tension and drama for all concerned — after all, it may well be a character's last scene!

First and foremost, duel challenges are generally issued only to those of equal rank — those above a changeling in rank may refuse such challenges without loss of honor (such quarrels are considered beneath them), though of course they may fight them if they choose. Challenges may be issued to one of lower rank to “teach the offender a lesson,” though those who do this too often are seen as bullying and uncouth. Nobles may appoint a champion to fight on their behalf, though this champion must be willing; technically, commoners have no such right, although in reality a particularly frail commoner is usually allowed to have a “stand-in,” and most nobles allow this for fear of being labeled as cruel or tyrannical. Both sides may also appoint seconds, typically oathmates who agree to witness the fight on a character's behalf, as well as carry the dueling character's weapons (and if necessary, his body). If possible, at least one impartial witness is also recruited, though the secret nature of some duels occasionally makes this impossible. The challenger names the place of the duel, while the challenged gets the choice of weapons. Any other rules — armor permitted, cantrip use, etc. — must be agreed upon by both parties concerned.

*System:* Informal duels that involve no oaths are no more binding than their participants make them; however, all the duels listed below are considered oaths, and their conditions backed by the Dreaming — those swearing them who attempt to break any agreed-upon conditions of the duel (armor use, poison, cantrips, etc.) or voluntarily pressing the duel farther than its wording allows (trying to kill someone during a duel to first blood) are immediately struck unconscious by the Dreaming and lose a permanent Willpower Trait. Most also receive a mark on their foreheads that means “oathbreaker.”

**The Scarlet Trip:** A duel to first blood, typically fought with light weapons and little or no armor, which is used to settle relatively minor points of dispute — as duels go, anyway.

*Tonight we trip for honor and right.*

*Guide our hands, Mother Dream, as we fight.*

*Fae are quick to anger, but quicker to mend.*

*We swear, tomorrow our anger will end.*

**The Dragon's Dance:** The most common and most honorable form of dueling, this duel is fought until one side yields; death can occur if one side refuses to yield (provided that is covered in the duel agreement), but the Dreaming protects those who attempt to yield. It can be fought with any weapons or armor agreed upon.

*We dance the Dragon's Dance beneath the waning moon,  
And set loose the Dan, the Chariot of Dream and doom.  
The reigns of reason slip as the star-hoofed horses race,  
And we hear the cackle of misrule beneath their frantic pace.  
Wide-eyed, the mares of terror to us draw you near —  
Come, sweet Mother Dream: our love, our lot, our fear.*

**Danse Macabre:** A duel to the death, which can only be officially sanctioned by a king or queen. It may be fought with any weapons or armor agreed upon; typically only chimerical death is sought, though in truly dire instances it may be fought to the death of the mortal form as well.

*We call for honor in deeds  
Let us rise above this petty seeming.  
Death to s/he who flees  
Before the power of the Dreaming.*

**The Dance of Iron:** Outlawed in Concordia and most foreign kingdoms, this duel is fought with cold iron weapons and no armor, and lasts until the death of the faerie soul as well as the mortal body. There is no special oath, though a shouted "Die and to Oblivion with your soul, bastard!" or a variation on it is quite popular.

## Secret Societies

This section lists some secret societies that can be made part of any **Shining Host** game. Most are open to players whose characters meet their standards, although others are best suited to Storyteller villains or other Narrator-controlled characters. Regardless, they offer a wealth of possibilities when it comes to promoting intrigue and other subtler plotlines, and they should be used to help explore the different layers of Kithain society, not just to offer a select group of players ultra-neat benefits at the expense of everyone else. When used properly, however, secret societies can be a great deal of fun, adding spice to existing games and helping new ones establish webs of allies and intrigue.

The symbols and dress provided with each society are listed as a way of helping players who wish to take part in these societies do so in ways that are at once distinctive to those characters who should recognize them, yet still subtle enough that they do not immediately hang a "I'M IN A SECRET SOCIETY!" sign around the player's neck. Unless otherwise noted in the description or by the Storyteller, information about a society's dress and symbol is restricted to members of that society *alone*; other players may know what a particular symbol or accessory may indicate out of game, but unless it's common knowledge or they find some other way of discovering it, they cannot act on it in-game.

## Noble Societies

Though commoners can be found in most of these societies (even if only as spies and underlings), the majority of the members are sidhe nobility, and the sidhe are the primary force behind the society as well.

### *Cat's Cradle*

This all-female society of nobles works across the lines of kith and Court to preserve the existence of the fae as a whole. While they realize that some conflict is inevitable, especially with such a proud race as the Kithain, they work to keep bloodshed to a minimum and try to confine any loss of life to those responsible for the violence in the first place. One of the most secret of secret societies, their existence is not even whispered of beyond the small circle that they travel in, and because of the numerous laws they've had to break over time they prefer to keep it that way; while most of the members are powerful enough to remain free of the worst punishment for their "crimes," the Cradle is smart enough to realize that were their existence made known, the resulting backlash of noble (and especially masculine) pride would set back the efforts of the Cradle by dozens of years, if not dismantle it altogether. So for now the Cradle works its ways in secret, settling disputes, recruiting allies (even among the Gallain and the Prodigals) and otherwise laying the groundwork to preserve the faerie race in the event of some disaster, great or small.

**Symbol:** A plain wooden loom.

**Dress:** Most members of the Cat's Cradle take great pains to avoid any detection; occasionally, however, they wear a small white ribbon in their hair, especially if meeting a fellow member.

### *Red Branch Knights*

Though a few courageous commoners have found their way into the ranks of this legendary order (and indeed a small number of them kept it alive when the sidhe retreated during the Shattering), for the most part it is solidly sidhe, as it was when it was founded millennia ago during the Age of Legends. Even the lowliest commoner anarchist professes a grudging respect for the bravery, integrity and combat prowess of these noble warriors, and if one of their order has broken his word, no one knows of it. They are all bound by oaths to each other and seldom seem to even disagree in public, presenting a united front to all threats. While a number of them are found as personal guards of the High King, their ultimate loyalty lies with the demanding moral code of the order, and though they do not expect quite the same high standards of those around them, they will not tolerate oathbreaking or other crimes and quickly abandon those who practice them. Red Branch fighters are acknowledged masters of unarmed fighting and archaic weaponry, though they understand the need to adapt to the modern world and now train with firearms as well. Politically, they are primarily Traditionalists, though the only real qualifications for membership are bravery and honor. Needless to say, the Red Branch is far from a secret



society, and indeed their mere arrival can often turn the tide of a battle or political debate with equal ease. The only secret reserved for members alone are the oaths and assignments of the order, but except in situations that call for discretion, they take pains to be public and forthright in all things.

**Symbol:** A red oak tree under a stylized sun and moon.

**Dress:** Though they have no set uniform, red is always the predominant color of whatever outfit a Red Branch knight is wearing.

### *Beltaine Blade*

Villainy, thy name is sidhe. While many commoners would certainly agree with this, the actions and attitudes of these ultra-conservative sidhe in this very secret society would put even the worst imaginings of most commoners to shame. Living proof that the most extreme Seelie fae can be as bad, if not worse, than their Unseelie counterparts, the sole goal of these unrelenting bastards is to ensure the power of the sidhe nobility (read: themselves), even if it means undermining or "removing" other sidhe who are showing signs of weakness toward the common kiths. The Blade has a network of spies and assassins throughout the kingdoms and doesn't hesitate to use them at the slightest provocation; they are even rumored to have been the force behind the infamous Beltaine Night of Iron Knives massacre, where a number of commoner leaders were betrayed and murdered with cold iron during the Accordance War. Their current leader is a Seelie mastermind, Duke Dray. Thanks to his ruthless leadership, the Blade has yet to taste of any major defeat, though not for the lack of brave motleys trying....

**Note:** Given their heinous outlook and power-hungry nature, it is recommended that membership in this society be restricted to Storyteller villains.

**Symbol:** A scythe crossed over a wheat field.

**Dress:** All members of the Blade wear gray prominently in their outfit, or at least some gray item such as a sash, boots or belt.

### *Crystal Circle*

Many ballads feature the magicians of this society showing up at the last minute to save the day or helping a hero out with some mighty spell. While these tales are a bit exaggerated, it is known that only the most powerful and talented cantrip casters in Concordia are considered for membership in this august Seelie order. Like the Red Branch knights, who they are often allied with, this society has a very public face, though none outside of its ranks know anything about its goals or rituals. Likewise, while they aid those in danger and generally adhere to a code of chivalry and good cheer, they do not suffer fools long or lightly. What is known is that all members have mastered at least one fae Art (learned every level of it) and become quite adept at least one other (learned all of its Intermediate levels), making them some of the most potent

sorcerers of the fae. They frequently travel farther into the Dreaming than other fae will dare, though to what end no one knows.

**Note:** Beginning characters cannot belong to the Crystal Circle.

**Symbol:** A flawless diamond surrounded by a rainbow ring of smaller gems.

**Dress:** Like their Red Branch allies, there is no particular uniform for this society, but they wear predominantly white regardless of outfit.

### *Golden Sickle*

This organization has but one goal for its members — the acquisition of earthly wealth and power. To this end, its member nobles (both sidhe and commoner) can and do use all means at their disposal: Arts, Influence, technology, mortal retainers, Prodigal allies, anything it takes to expand their power base. Because of their extensive contact with the modern world, most of these fae have a correspondingly higher Banality, but consider it a small price for the power their wealth offers them. The Sickle is a very informal, if still secretive, organization, and does not speak with one voice, though its members frequently make pacts and share tips with each other for mutual benefit. There are no membership requirements, other than that the individual be a noble of some kind and show a flair for the goals of the society — they take all kiths, Courts, seemings or political views. Though individual members may stray from even their loose system of ethics, the Sickle as a whole is not particularly malevolent, just dedicated to wealth, and often will use their great resources to aid their fellow fae whenever possible.

**Symbol:** A golden sickle.

**Dress:** Most members of the Sickle wear stylish, expensive clothes in both their mortal and faerie aspects, and some have taken to shocking their fellow nobles by wearing mortal formal wear to court proceedings. Most also wear a small golden sickles as a pin, cufflinks or earrings, as appropriate.

### *Commoner Societies*

Unlike their upper-class counterparts, very few commoner secret societies have any nobles in them, except for the occasional ennobled commoner or sidhe from one of the outcast houses (such as Scathach or Liam); even were they to consider one for membership, most sidhe would not wish to consort with such “common” organizations.

### *Ranters*

These malcontents hate nobility of all kinds. While they originally grew in opposition to the commoner nobles present around the time of the French Revolution, the return of the sidhe during the Resurgence gave them their ultimate enemy, and they have worked to undermine the nobles ever since. Organized like a resistance movement, the Ranters are composed of small cells of oathbound Kithain who have little contact with each other, the better in case one cell is captured. While there is certainly an Unseelie presence in the

Ranters, it does not take an Unseelie to see the despotic excesses many nobles have indulged in, and so the majority of members are Seelie, if very dissatisfied ones. They are officially outlawed in Concordia but enjoy a good deal of popular support with the commoners thanks to raids they have made on various tyrannical nobles in the past. Needless to say, they refuse all nobles into their ranks.

**Symbol:** A golden crown, broken in half.

**Battle Cry:** "Down with Concordia! All Hail Discordia!"

### *Monkey's Paw*

When looking for top-quality spies and assassins, one need look no further than the vicious Kithain of the Monkey's Paw, who have performed such work for hire since the time immediately following the Shattering. While predominantly commoner Unseelie in membership, the Paw is known to hire out to any group willing to pay its price, though rumors persist that the organization is also pursuing its own agenda, though if this is true only its most dedicated members know for sure. To qualify for this society, a prospective member must carry out no less than three assignments for the Monkey's Paw, each more terrible than the last, and not only go uncaptured but completely unsuspected the entire time.

**Symbol:** A severed monkey's paw, with three fingers extended.

**Dress:** Nothing specific while "on duty," but occasionally they wear a small button or similar item with a stylized monkey on it, though never if they feel it will raise suspicion.

### *Order of Bianca*

Like the Ranters, the Order of Bianca has officially been outlawed, but most Kithain turn a blind eye to their activities, for the Order's business is rescuing fae held in the clutches of Banality, no matter how terrible the odds may be. The problem most nobility have with the Order is not their goal, but that it has been known to stretch the truth a bit to be allowed into freeholds for the Glamour they need for their raids, and that direct confrontation with Dauntain and other Autumn People is generally prohibited barring some tremendous need, for fear of alerting such enemies to the greater Kithain community. However, all fae secretly cheer them on when they hear of another success, and admire the courage it takes to stare such great Banality in the face and fight on regardless.

**Symbol:** A silver chain on a green field.

**Dress:** Members of the Order always wear a small silver chain somewhere on their person, to show others their strength and solidarity.

### *Minutemen*

Many commoner societies evolved from a need for self-defense; the Minutemen are one such group, a small circle of fae who investigate tales of

nobles, sidhe or commoners who have gone bad. If they find these rumors to be true, the Minutemen help spirit away members of the affected freeholds or motleys to safety, especially childlings and grumps, who often have few options when it comes to relocating. They then do their best to call attention to the unstable nobles and try to get them ousted in favor of a better leader. For the most part, the Minutemen work as subtly as they can, but if push comes to shove they're more than willing to go toe-to-toe (or cantrip-to-cantrip) with the renegade nobles they're battling, and so typically come prepared for all sorts of problems.

**Symbol:** A stylized lantern.

**Dress:** Some Minutemen carry lanterns with them, but those that don't still try to work the symbol into something they wear.

### *The Low Road*

A kind of Unseelie cousin to the Minutemen, the Low Road also specializes in helping commoners — *outlaw* commoners, that is. While they have no time for true monsters such as murderers or Rhapsodizers, they delight in letting out the kind of louts that generally make life merry for those around them: brawlers, thieves, adulterers or even petty Ravagers. As soon as they hear of such a soul in need, the Low Road stages an elaborate jailbreak and helps the offender either clear his name (it happens they help innocent fae from time to time) or run for a new territory, as is more common. Thus far, these raids have been conducted with more humor and swashbuckling spirit than rebellious zeal, and no one has gotten hurt save for some cosmetic cuts and bruises; this is one reason the nobility, while outraged, has not pursued the Low Road too strenuously so far. Should their methods or outlook change for the darker, however, the Low Road could quickly become a favorite target of sidhe nobles across Concordia.

**Symbol:** A black mask, or sometimes a silver cutlass.

**Dress:** A black mask, either of the traditional domino style or a more practical one, is expected of all Low Road members while in the field.

### *Veterans of the Accordance War (VAW)*

Membership in this open society is quite simple — a commoner must either have fought in the Accordance War or been kin (real or adopted) to one who did. For the most part, this society acts much like its mortal counterparts, serving as a social backdrop for veterans to share stories, offer aid and otherwise cherish the bonds forged with each other during the war. For the most part, it's a pretty cheerful society, full of good food, good drink and better stories, although on the anniversary of particularly nasty battles the mood can turn decidedly more melancholy. While it has no great goals, on an informal level its members will go to great lengths to aid each other however they can.

**Symbol:** A double-bladed ax, surrounded by a ring listing the dates of the war.

**Dress:** None, though many veterans wear the uniform or at least the insignia of their unit to gatherings, in addition to the society symbol.

### *Seekers of Lyonesse*

This mystical society follows a charismatic eshu, Badr al Din, whose prophecies of a gateway leading to a paradise realm called Lyonesse (thought to be part of Arcadia) have inspired many Kithain to take up the search for the paths he has spoken of. While other Kithain frequently dismiss the Seekers as nice if deluded souls, they truly believe in their cause, and along the way to locating their gateways many of them travel the world, talking to whoever will answer their many questions and otherwise growing in wisdom. All the lore they uncover is compiled, some say in a secret database, and members frequently work together to uncover some mystical secrets or unravel enigmas they encounter along the way. All kiths are welcome, even sidhe, as part of Badr's prophecy claims the portal will ultimately be found be a pair of fae, highborn and lowborn. Whether or not there is any truth to their beliefs, the Seekers are a benevolent and energetic presence wherever they are found.

**Symbol:** A green Celtic knot, which to them symbolizes eternal Arcadia.

**Dress:** An enameled green brooch, worn on the left breast.

## *'Tis the Season—Kithain Holidays*

The Kithain are still essentially a race born of celebrations and traditions, and no matter what changes may have occurred in the centuries, a good festival still sets even the most dour grump's heart afire with fresh Glamour. The following is a list of the most ancient and popular Kithain festivals, as well as some of the most common contests and festivities held on these dates. Troupes are encouraged to come up with celebrations and ceremonies of their own as well. Don't feel tied down, though — if a particular holiday wouldn't fit the mood of the game you're playing, feel free to "adjust" the calendar a bit. (For example, it might be hard to maintain the tone of a serious plot about the assassination of a duke during Pranksgiving.)

Naturally, any and all of these holidays provide an ideal basis for **Shining Host** sessions, and given the busy holiday calendar of the fae, just about any month has at least one or two holidays a game could be organized around. This not only provides an excellent backdrop to stage regular plotlines and the like, but also serves to showcase the close-knit nature of Kithain society compared to some of their Prodigal cousins — fae may have all sorts of differences with each other, but that still hasn't kept them from realizing the value of celebration and life.

In addition to these dates, there are several other common causes for celebration among the fae that can happen at any time: a Saining rite, where a new changeling receives their faerie name and is welcomed to the Kithain community; the Togail an Ainm, where a childling or wilder "advances" to



APPENDIX:  
Lost Threads and Lost Treasures

their next seeming; a Royal Lottery, where nobles vie for a position left vacant; an investment or coronation, when a noble takes a title; weddings of the fae, which typically last a year and a day; a wake, wild parties where a fae who has died or succumbed to Banality is celebrated with stories, laughter and tears; and oathtakings, typically small ceremonies that celebrate those swearing oaths of fealty, questing or true love.

**Midwinter (January 13th)** — A time when communities would assess their provisions to see if they'd last through the winter, the fae celebrate their Glamour in the face of Banality; if Glamour is plentiful, it is cause for great merriment, but if not it is a time for somber reflection.

*Traditions:* Telling stories of times past. Renewing commitments.

**Imbolc (February 2nd)** — A bard's festival, Imbolc celebrates the rekindling of the light of Glamour after the chill of winter. Amid the many competitions of music, poetry and dance, riders from the High King's court bring brands lit from the hearth of the royal palace to re-ignite the local balefires.

*Traditions:* Rekindling the balefire. Talent shows for various art forms.

**Carnival (February 28th)** — One of the wildest parties of the Kithain year, this frenzied celebration celebrates a new year, as well as unity between noble and commoner. Traditional roles are reversed, and everyone gets a little bit crazy. The next morning all returns to normal, hopefully with everyone a little wiser for it.

*Traditions:* A mortal is elected King or Queen of Carnival, while the current ruler becomes a jester, lowest of the low. For one night, the mortal (typically one heady with drink and/or Glamour) is absolute ruler, while the jester is heaped with abuse and ridicule. Carnival has three laws: There can be no revenge for any word spoken or deed done, including by or to the jester; all are welcome and safe, with punishment for violation of this rule decided by the King or Queen; and let merriment reign!

**Vernal Equinox (March 21st)** — As another date balanced between light and shadow, the Vernal Equinox is the first of three spring celebrations of the Kithain, and most favored by grumps for its quiet contemplation of the possibilities of new life in the coming seasons, so close to the winter just passed.

*Traditions:* Lighting ceremonial candles (if you do so for real, please be safe!).

**The Greening (April 4th)** — An informal yet merry festival, this is the second of the three spring ceremonies of the fae, and the one childlings most enjoy. It is a time of innocence and creativity, where the purity of new life is recalled.

*Traditions:* Weaving garlands from grasses and flowers. Morris dancing.

**Beltaine (May 2nd)** — The third spring rite and one of the two greatest Kithain ceremonies of the year, Beltaine is a nighttime fertility festival and belongs almost entirely to the wilders. In old times, the Seelie court would take

over from the Unseelie at this time, and it is still a time of warmth and vitality. Violence is prohibited at Beltaine by sacred law, and love rules the night.

*Traditions:* Singing, dancing, jesting, wooing and other *amorous* arts. Many freeholds even hold kissing or wooing contests, to crown a "Greatest Lover." Faerie weddings.

**Midsummer (June 23rd)** — Aside from taking in (or staging) a production of the delightful play that borrowed its name from this holiday, whenever possible, this is a time for the Seelie to celebrate their power, and grant favors to those in need.

*Traditions:* Granting boons. Taking on quests. Recognizing new Seelie fae.

**Highsummer Night (July 17th)** — Timed to take place at the hottest part of the season, this holiday is a time of great merriment and spontaneity, feeding off the "heat dreams" of mortals; it is especially sacred to the pooka, who refer to it as "Pranksgiving" and who compete to craft the greatest practical joke or jest.

*Traditions:* Pranking contests (pooka and non-pooka alike). Musing contests.

**Lughnasa (August 1st)** — A festival of tasting the first fruits of the harvest, this marks the last great Seelie celebration of the year, where the sweet fruits of the spring and summer are savored for their contrast to the coming cold months.

*Traditions:* Baking and cooking contests. Feasts. Completing quests.

**Autumnal Equinox (September 21st)** — The second day of balance, this time the shift is away from light into shadow, and as such is a favorite rite of Unseelie grumps, who use this day to plan the coming winter months.

*Traditions:* Lighting ceremonial candles (if you do so for real, please be safe!).

**Pennons (October 4th)** — A celebration of the military might and history of the Kithain, the Warrior's Holiday is a chance for brave fae to prove their worth and vie for prizes in all manner of competitions. It is also a favorite with many craftsmen, who bring their wares to sell at these huge festivals.

*Traditions:* Martial tournaments. Mock combats. Duels. Bardic contests. Displays of craftsmanship. Warrior memorials. Oaths of fealty, particularly for knights.

**Samhain (October 31st)** — A night of dark revelry and the other highest festival of the year, Samhain honors the spirits of the dead and teaches all to embrace their Unseelie side, if only for a night. Forbidden passions are expressed, hidden lore brought to light and prophecies of the coming year are made. For more on this holiday, see the section on it in the Shadow Court chapter, page 110.

*Traditions:* Masquerade balls. Scary story contests. Prophecy rituals. Séances.

**Guy Fawkes Day (November 5th)** — Treasured by the Unseelie, this commoner festival mostly mocks the failed revolutionary yet also serves to remind the nobles that the commoners remember what royal injustices lit his proverbial fuse.

*Traditions:* Costume dramas. Light shows and fireworks. (As with the candles, do *not* do anything dangerous, and especially nothing illegal — this is a game about make-believe people, and that includes make-believe fireworks if needs be.)

**Yule (December 23rd)** — Also celebrated as the Winter Solstice, this longest night of the year is a night for the Unseelie to revel in their power and grant “gifts” to those they favor. Many Kithain have adopted similar rituals to the Christian Christmas ceremony and will exchange gifts both Glamourous and mundane in defiance of the darkness and chill in the air around them.

*Traditions:* Gift exchanges. Reflections on the year gone past. Recognizing new Unseelie fae.

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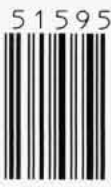


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