



Introductory Kit

CHANGELING: THE DREAMING™ INTRODUCTORY KIT

Table of Contents

Introduction - What Is Changeling: The Dreaming ?	3
Setting - Changeling History and Hierarchy	4
Character Creation - Making Your Own Changeling	11
Traits and Arts - Changeling Powers	18
Glamour - The Magic of the Fae	20
Rules - Playing the Game	22
Combat - Physical Confrontation	23
Story Ideas - Several story concepts to inspire you to create your own Changeling stories	24



735 PARK NORTH BLVD.
SUITE 128
CLARKSTON, GA 30021
USA

Based on the **Changeling: The Dreaming** game created by Sam Chupp, Ian Lemke and Mark Rein•Hagen, with Joshua Gabriel Timbrook

Second Edition design and development by Ian Lemke

Check out White Wolf online at <http://white-wolf.com>, alt.games.whitewolf.com and rec.games.frp.storyteller.com

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Welcome to Changeling: The Dreaming

Changeling: The Dreaming is a roleplaying game. It is a beautifully illustrated, full-color, hardcover book that explores the hidden world of the faerie folk trapped on Earth. It gives you rules for creating your own changeling character, and describes the setting and history of the fae. What happens next is up to you.

This booklet is a simplified version of **Changeling: The Dreaming**. It gives you the highlights of the **Changeling** setting and rules, the core information you need to play a game. Try it out. If you like it, the rulebook is available in most book, hobby and comic stores.

Storytelling

The rules pamphlet you hold is an introduction to **Changeling: The Dreaming**, a storytelling game from White Wolf Publishing. With the rules in this kit, you and your friends are able to assume the roles of changelings — beings who are part human, part fae — and tell stories about the characters' triumphs and tragedies.

Storytelling resembles games such as *How to Host a Murder* in a lot of ways. Players assume the roles of characters — in this case, changelings — and engage in a form of improvisational theater, saying what their changelings say and describing what their changelings do.

In a storytelling game, players take their characters through adventures, called, appropriately enough, stories. Stories are told through a combination of the wishes of the players and the directives of the Storyteller (see below).

Players and Storytellers

Most people who take part in a **Changeling** game are players. They create changeling characters — imaginary protagonists similar to those of novels, movies and comics. However, one person in the group must assume the role of the Storyteller. The Storyteller acts as a combination director, moderator, narrator and referee. The Storyteller creates the drama through which the players take their characters. The Storyteller also creates and assumes the roles of supporting cast — both allies with whom the characters interact, and antagonists against whom the characters fight. The Storyteller invents the salient details of the story setting — the bars, nightclubs, businesses and other institutions that the characters frequent. The players decide how their characters react to the situations in the game, but it is the Storyteller (with the help of the rules) who decides if the characters actually succeed in their endeavors and, if so, how well. Ultimately, the Storyteller is the final authority on the events that take place in the game.

What Is Changeling?

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

The mortal and the magical worlds exist in tenuous juxtaposition. The two realms have no effect on one another for the most part, but they do collide now and then. Boundaries slip and magical

Lexicon

The following terms are common to **Changeling** and are listed here to help you get started.

- **Arcadia** — The land of the fae; the home of all faeries within the Dreaming.
- **Banality** — Mortal disbelief. The presence of mortals with high Banality has an adverse effect on changelings.
- **Cantrip** — A spell created by a changeling and powered by Glamour.
- **Chimera** — A bit of dream made real. Chimera are part of the enchanted world and cannot be seen by mortals. Chimera may be objects or entities.
- **Dreaming, the** — The collective dreams of humanity, formed into realms. Changelings often travel in these realms to seek adventure.
- **Glamour** — The energy that changelings use to power their cantrips. Glamour is generated by mortal creativity and imagination.
- **Kith** — All of the changelings of a specific kind. One's kith determines the nature of one's faerie guise and soul.
- **Kithain** — Changelings' self-referential term.

elements find their way into mortal consciousness, or denizens of the "real" world suddenly witness or become a part of the strange and puzzling events of the Dreaming.

The fae strive constantly to bring back the Summerlands, the halcyon country that once embodied the perfect union between dreams and reality — it was the very realization of dreams. Some believe that restoring the Summerlands will rejoin the faerie realm of Arcadia to the human world, sparking a renaissance of magical possibilities that will preserve the mundane realm from stagnation and decay.

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

Role of Changelings

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

For most people, dreams are a luxury they cannot afford. The young have nothing to look forward to except unemployment or, if they're lucky, meaningless jobs that pay minimum wage. When a military career looks attractive, things are dull, indeed. The old must deal with unfulfilled lives and a society that turns its back on

them. Even those who have it made — CEOs, rock stars, drug lords, politicians — are surrounded by tawdriness and mundanity. The high aspirations that once fueled human achievement and creativity have degenerated into the lowest common expectations.

The Light in the Darkness

Changelings radiate hope in a drab world. The embodiments of creativity and the power to dream, these remnants of the fae protect and nurture those fading shreds of wonder and imagination that remain. Without changelings, reality would fall victim to Banality; anything that could not be seen or touched or experienced by the physical senses would no longer exist.

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

Changelings announce to the human world that dreams exist. As their name suggests, they represent the essence of mutability. Reality does not have to lie stagnant or conform to rules. The children of the Dreaming, by their very existence, break the rules and shatter the conventions of everyday life. They are testament to the fact that what is does not have to be.

Yet changelings must tread carefully, for danger looms in all directions. Powerful forces exist that oppose any change of the status quo. Dreams are subversive, for they contradict the world as we know it. Changelings, even the most traditional ones, are revolutionaries and rebels, undermining the stark determinism of modern life. They allow humans to indulge in rare moments in which it seems possible to cure the world's ills — to save the rain forests, to feed the hungry, to house the homeless — and to bring the light of imagination into the shadowy corners of the mundane realm.

Setting

The Enchanted World

Changelings are creatures of dream, trapped in mortal flesh. Born of two worlds, they live in the mundane, but truly exist in a world of fantasy and chimera.

This fantasy world is called chimerical because nonenchanted mortals cannot normally experience it. Although changelings occupy mortal flesh in order to stave off Banality, their true selves lie within their fragile, englamoured souls. Despite their mortal shells, the fae perceive the chimerical reality of the world. They do not shift viewpoints back and forth from banal to chimerical, seeing a street with broken pavement and sagging storefronts, and then a golden avenue lined with palaces. They normally see the true magic anima that exists within every object, place and person. Changelings recognize the inherent nature of people, places and things, weaving those perceptions into a greater whole.

Thus changelings do not see a tattered old book of fairy tales with a torn cover, but the warmth and pleasure that countless

children have derived from reading the book. Each child has left some impression on the book, some tiny spark of imagination or inspiration that the book evoked for her. Changelings revel in that aura, which may cause the book to appear new and crisp, with freshly painted colors. Likewise, changelings may smell luscious strawberries on an “empty” plate, or may dance to a symphony played on crickets' legs.

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

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

Interacting with the Real World

Changelings may live in a chimerical world, but they are aware of the banal world. Changelings respond to stimuli that mundane people cannot perceive, but this does not mean they are ignorant of real-world objects, people or dangers. Changelings don't ride their faerie steeds along airport runways, oblivious to the aircraft taking off and landing all around them. Nor can they ignore a mugger with a gun.

Changelings don't have some sort of double vision that lets them see the mundane and magical at the same time. Rather, magical aspects are paramount, superseding the mundane reality of the objects and people with whom changelings interact. Yet magic does not eradicate the presence of the mundane. It is almost as if changelings' bodies “remember” worldly details, while their minds reach beyond. A car is still a vehicle, even if it appears to changelings that the car glows orange and that its hood is fitted with antlers.

Solid objects exist in the mundane world and must be accounted for. This often causes problems for changelings whose faerie bodies are larger than their mortal selves. This is especially true for massive kith such as trolls. A changeling who is imbued with Glamour always defers to his faerie mien and makes every effort to compensate for its mass. Respecting mortal seeming instead causes a break from the Dreaming. It is therefore possible for a seven-foot-tall troll to climb into the back of a Volkswagen Bug, but in doing so he denies his faerie existence, giving in to mundane reality. Such acts can be dangerous for any changeling, for falling back on the mundane invites Banality.

Banalities

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

Banalities clouds the minds of mortals to the wonders of the world, and blinds them to the possibilities of making their dismal lives better. Banalities imposes the belief that everything is the result of cause and effect. Evolutionary processes and entropic decay follow fixed patterns, and all things will eventually come to a grinding halt with the death of the sun. Banalities is the wet blanket of the cosmos. In more immediate terms, Banalities prompts a jaded parent to destroy a child's belief in Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny. It forces a talented student to lay aside his dreams of becoming a great writer or musician in favor of joining the work force because his advisors counsel him to make "realistic" decisions about his future.

What Is a Chimera?

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

Some are formed intentionally. Some spring into being spontaneously. Others seem to come to life almost against their dreamers' wills. Chimera are seldom what their creators expect; they may be beautiful and friendly, or dark, twisted and inimical. Chimera may even be dangerous to changelings, especially chimera given form through unresolved fears or vivid nightmares.

Regardless of how they come into being, chimera created within the confines of reality must relate to the material world in some fashion. Inanimate chimera, such as rocks, forests or houses, have little choice as to their interactions. Animate dreams-come-true, such as animals, often take on lives of their own. They can even become real to humans on rare occasions.

History of the Fae

Mythic Age

In the oldest time, the Time of Legends, the world of dreams existed alongside the mortal realm. No barriers separated the two realities, and magical energies coursed freely throughout the mortal lands. Wherever these energies touched rock or tree or beast, strange and fabulous creatures sprang into existence. The fae — the children of the Dreaming — passed unhindered between both realms, mingling among the human tribes that wandered the face of the Earth, and teaching these short-lived, dynamic creatures the

art of dreaming. The children of the Dreaming showed themselves to mortals from time to time, often in different guises, for the forms of the fae were as fluid as the dreams from which they came. In some lands, the fae were as gods to the Sons of Adam and Daughters of Eve; their powers to beguile and enchant made them both loved and feared. Born of dreams, ancient fae drew strength from human imagination.

The Sundering

Some say that the Sundering occurred during the Iron Age, when humans learned the art of crafting durable weapons that could cause grievous harm to both mortal and immortal foes. Others claim that as soon as humans learned to dream, they also learned to disbelieve their dreams, denying by the light of day the phantasms that haunted their nights. As tribes settled and formed communities, it is said, reality itself settled into a single, changeless form. Dreams — and True Dreamers — became the exception rather than the rule. The mortal realm and the Dreaming drifted apart as humans erected barriers of disbelief and "walls of explanations" between themselves and the creatures born of their imaginations. However the Sundering occurred, the damage was done.

The Shattering

Eventually, the threads that connected the Dreaming to the mortal world stretched so thin that they snapped, one after the other. This final severing of bonds became known to the fae as the Shattering, for it not only broke the tenuous ties between Arcadia and the human realm, but it dashed all hopes that the Sundering could be reversed.

The term "Shattering" calls to mind one sudden, cataclysmic event — like an earthquake or the dropping of a nuclear bomb. In truth, the Shattering was a series of small catastrophes; the gateways that linked Arcadia to the mortal world crumbled one by one, denying access to the Dreaming at those touchpoints.

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

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

As gateway after gateway faded into nothing or splintered into thousands of slivers, the children of the Dreaming realized that inaction would destroy them. During the Shattering, all faeries made one of three choices that would change their destiny.

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

Most of the nobility, with only a handful of exceptions, fled to Arcadia through the remaining gates. In some cases, fierce battles took place at the thresholds of crumbling portals as frantic nobles, also called sidhe, fought for the right to cross into the Dreaming

before the gateways closed forever. Faerie legends claim that Silver's Gate, along with its freehold the Court of All Kings, was the last of these gates to fall, and that its closing signaled the death knell of the Age of Faeries.

Many of the commoner kith — such as the eshu, trolls, boggans and pooka — were trapped in the mortal world, left behind by a panicked nobility that cared less for the well-being of its subjects than for its own survival. These abandoned faeries sought to adapt themselves to the icy world of harsh reality. As Banality swept across the land, no longer hampered by the now-severed ties to the Dreaming, the fae who could not or would not retreat to Arcadia underwent a desperate transformation, covering their true natures with a veneer of Banality that allowed them to exist in a world that no longer believed in them. They became changelings, and they have struggled to keep the fragments of the Dreaming alive for the past six centuries.

The Interregnum

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

The Changeling Way

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

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

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



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

Resurgence

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

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

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

Unfortunately, the ground swell of Glamour caused by the Moon landing could not prevail for long against the centuries of accumulated disbelief that permeated the world. The doors to Arcadia slammed shut once more. The sidhe had to act quickly to prevent Banality from destroying them outright. They fell back on the tried-and-true method of switching bodies with mortals, sending a host of unwary mortals through the gateways that had sprung open briefly.

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

While some commoners rallied behind the nobility, others rebelled. An uneasy period of political maneuvering ensued, culminating in an event which forever stained the reputation of the nobility. America's commoner leaders were summoned to a meeting on Beltaine under the pretense of establishing an accord with

the sidhe. The commoners met death from cold iron, instead. The wholesale slaughter came to be known as the Night of Iron Knives. Any hopes for a peaceful settlement of the commoner-noble dispute died that night.

The Accordance War

Commoners responded to the massacre with the uprising known as the Accordance War. Pitched battles between commoners and nobles resulted in the destruction of many Kithain, and threatened to destroy the fabric of changeling society. Civil war raged across the chimerical landscape for three years, and resulted in riots and gang violence in the mortal world. Although the commoners fought bravely and had energy and spirit in abundance, military experience lay with the sidhe knights, who excelled in organized tactics.

The Accordance War finally ended with the rise of a young sidhe lord, David Ardry, who earned the trust of the commoners.

The Present

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

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

The Compact

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

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



The Seelie Code

- *Death before dishonor.*

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

- *Love conquers all.*

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

- *Beauty is life.*

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

- *Never forget a debt.*

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

The Courts

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

The Seelie Court

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

The Unseelie Court

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

The Kith

Changelings refer to themselves individually and in groups as “Kithain,” a word derived from “kith” which denotes a member of a faerie race. The nine kith that comprise the majority of Western changeling races are:

- **Boggans** — Known as practical and home-loving helpers of those in need, boggans are also inveterate meddlers in the affairs of those they help.
- **Eshu** — Their sharp wits and innate canniness make eshu shrewd bargainers, while their talent for being precisely where they need to be at the proper time sometimes leads their companions down unexpected paths.
- **Nockers** — Skilled crafters and smiths, nockers seek a perfection that they can never achieve, and often prefer the company of their creations to social interaction.
- **Pooka** — The pranksters of the changeling community, pooka share an affinity with animals and a love of tricks and practical jokes.
- **Redcaps** — Their bloodthirsty behavior, coupled with their amazing ability to ingest virtually anything that they can fit into their oversized mouths, wins redcaps few friends outside their own kith.
- **Satyrs** — Shameless hedonists, satyrs live for carnal pleasures and sensual gratification. Nevertheless, they are valued for their wise counsel and musical talent.
- **Sidhe** — Epitomizing the beauty and grace of the “classic” faerie, these aristocratic changelings exude an aura of authority and nobility regardless of their true status in Kithain society.
- **Sluagh** — Secretive and sly, these odd changelings seek out dark and hidden places. Able to speak only in whispers, sluagh collect information with a passion and disseminate it only for a price.
- **Trolls** — These giants of the fae possess incredible strength and determination. Once they offer their loyalty, nothing can sway them from those whom they have sworn to protect.

The Unseelie Code

- *Change is good.*

Security does not exist. The slightest of circumstances can transform a king into a peasant. Nothing is certain in a world where change is the only constant. Embrace change or be destroyed by it. Chaos and discord rule the universe. Adapt or die.

- *Glamour is free.*

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

- *Honor is a lie.*

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

- *Passion before duty.*

Passion is the truest state of the fae spirit. Follow your instincts and act on your impulses. Live life to the fullest without regard for the consequences — they will come about no matter what you do. Youth passes quickly, so have fun while you can. Death can come at any time, so live without regret.





The Houses

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

- **House Dougal** — Architects of sidhe society, these nobles seek to expand their domain through wise and prudent planning rather than through intrigue or manipulation.
- **House Eiluned** — Masters of intrigue and manipulation, these sidhe are valued for their arcane knowledge, but distrusted for their secretive behavior.
- **House Fiona** — These nobles are equally quick to love or anger, and give themselves utterly to whatever causes they espouse. Their hospitality for commoners and nobles alike is legendary.
- **House Gwydion** — Valuing honor above all and dedicated to the defense of the Dreaming, these sidhe also demonstrate a tendency for violent outbursts that often lead to tragic ends.
- **House Liam** — Although they are gentle and soft-spoken, nobles of this house make fierce warriors when called upon to defend the helpless or the innocent.

Changeling Society

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

Commoners and Nobles

Nobles consider commoners to be lowly and tainted by the trappings of mortality. Commoners believe nobles to be arrogant and

unfeeling, concerned only with power and status. Although some commoners and nobles may like and respect one another as individuals, the two classes of Kithain generally share a mutual distrust and dislike. The Treaty of Concord enforced the feudal system on commoners, but most of them still do not fully adhere to all of its strictures, privately rebelling against the more onerous duties relegated to them as “lower” Kithain. Most commoners pay lip service to local lords while reserving their own private opinions, considering themselves the equals of all nobles.

Liege and Vassal

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

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

Commoners fall outside the strict hierarchy of noble society. Traditionalists regard them as little better than peasants, and therefore consider all commoners to be their subjects. In the aftermath of the Accordance War, a few commoners have attained noble rank and have thus integrated themselves into the noble hierarchy. Despite this, nobles consider “titled” commoners to be upstarts, and rarely take them seriously.

The Escheat

The traditions that make up the Escheat form the basic laws of Kithain society. Believed to have originated among those wise faeries who lived closest to the Dreaming, the laws were recorded after the Sundering as a way to ensure fae survival in the face of inexorable change. Passed down and enforced by the nobility, the Escheat's

tenets are respected by both Seelie and Unseelie nobles (although the ways in which the Courts interpret each principle vary). Seelie nobles and their subjects generally follow the letter of the law, while Unseelie nobles and their minions tend to find loopholes and work through them.

The six basic rights of the Escheat are detailed below.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reality: Competition for the few freeholds that have survived

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

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

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

Character Creation

Now that you know a little bit about the world of the fae, it is time to create a character. Character creation consists of three basic steps: choice of kith, ranking of Traits, and choice of Arts. Additionally, every changeling starts with four points of Glamour and seven Health Levels. Glamour points and Health Levels can increase and decrease during the course of a story.

Character Creation Quick Chart

- **Choose Kith:** Write down your character's kith and any kith Aptitudes, Birthrights or Frailties.

- **Choose Traits:** You have a total of 13 points to spend on your character's Traits: Physical, Mental, Social and Willpower. The maximum Trait score is 5. (Note that Trait points can also be spent to increase your character's Glamour. Each Trait point spent increases Glamour by two points.)

- **Choose Arts:** Arts are the special powers that the fae possess — their magical spells. **You may choose one of three Art schemes.**

- Three Arts at Basic level.

- One Basic Art and one Advanced Art (player's choice, but both levels must be of the same Art).

- Two Basic Arts, plus an extra two points to spend on Traits. (If this option is chosen, one Trait may be raised to 6 — superhuman level of proficiency — but only if your character's kith normally has the ability to achieve this level. See the kith descriptions.)

- **Write down Health Levels and Glamour Points:** Beginning characters have seven Health Levels and four Glamour points, though Trait points can be spent to increase this. (Each Trait point spent increases your character's Glamour by two points.)

- Give your character a name, and make up some details about his appearance, personality, mannerisms and other features salient to roleplaying.

The Kith

Legends tell that the fae were born of ancient dreams. Fantasies have shaped the natures of the kith that we know today. A changeling's kith reflects his kinship and knowledge, and it has profound influence on his identity.

Each kith has certain abilities, affinities and weaknesses inherent to it. These are a part of fae heritage. After all, each kith has learned to adapt (or exploit) its nature as best as it can.

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

boggans

(BOG-guns)

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

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

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

Despite this weakness, boggans are deservedly proud of their reputation as hard workers. Some have been known to work themselves to death to do a job correctly. Questioning the quality of a boggan's work is a sure way to send one into a rage. Though no one has actually seen an angry boggan stamp herself to death, some boggans are said to have done it.



Aptitude: +1 to crafting. Whenever a boggan is involved in physical labor of any type, the player may add one die to the roll.

Birthright: Craftwork. If unobserved by any but others of her kith, a boggan can accomplish any task involving simple physical labor in one-third the normal time.

Frailty: Boggans cannot stand the sight of another person in need. When confronted by someone who genuinely needs help, a Willpower roll (difficulty 6) is required for the boggan to resist helping that person in some way.

Eshu

(EE-shoo)

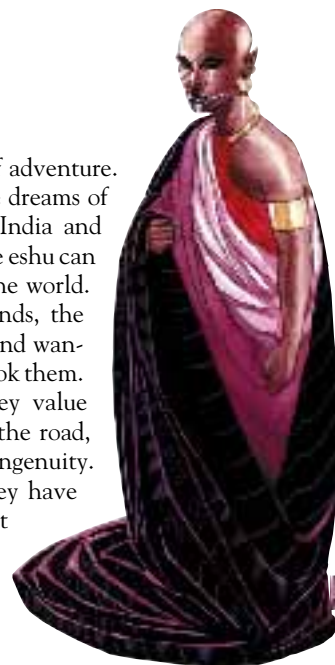
Eshu embody the spirit of adventure. Originally descended from the dreams of the ancient tribes of Africa, India and their homeland in Chaldea, the eshu can now be found in any part of the world. When they left their homelands, the eshu set forth into the world and wandered wherever their dreams took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

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

Aptitude: +1 to social interactions. Whenever an eshu is involved in a social setting, one die is added to all Social rolls.

Birthright: Spirit Pathways. Eshu have an amazing sense of direction, and exquisite timing; they always seem to arrive at their destinations at the most opportune moments. The path an eshu follows is always the most interesting route possible, and is filled with danger and challenge. No matter what she encounters along the way, an eshu always finds her way to her destination...eventually.

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



Nockers

(NOCK-ers)



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

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

Aptitude: +1 to mechanical rolls. Any time a nocker attempts to create or fix a mechanical creation, one die is added to Mental Trait rolls.

Birthright: Fix-It. Nockers are masters of machines, and everyone knows it. A few harsh words or well-timed threats can intimidate a malfunctioning machine to work properly. A nocker can fix nearly any mechanical device with a successful Mental roll. The difficulty can range from 5 (for simple, familiar problems) to as high as 10 (for a complex machine that’s really acting up).

Frailty: Flaws. Nockers are cynical because they’re such perfectionists. They can always see ways for things to work better, but they can never quite achieve their ideals. Some say this is a curse from the First Artisan. Others claim it is a karmic debt for their attitude problem. Regardless, anything a nocker creates has one trivial (but irreparable) flaw.



pooka

(POO-kuh)

Pooka are among the most charming and congenial of the Kithain. However, they’re also rapsallions, scoundrels and ne’er-do-wells known for their deceitful, devious, eccentric and mischievous ways. If eshu are reckless, pooka are demented. Their lives are a constant barrage of pranks, lies and wild stunts. They love to play and hate to work. Faerie lore claims that pooka are descended from innocent dreams of long ago, when mortals watched animals at play and wished they could be as free.

Truth is anathema to a pooka. Anything she says is peppered with lies to make it more interesting. After spreading foolishness and misinformation, she retreats to a safe vantage point from which to watch the fun. If the object of her pranks is angered, the pooka is confused. Maybe the focus of her attention needs a little help with his sense of humor. Maybe it’ll take a little more work to “cheer him up.” Or perhaps he’s afflicted with a deadly curse: he’s mundane. Mundanity is disturbing to pooka, and they have an overwhelming fear of becoming banal. Their eccentricity is their easiest escape.

Aptitude: +1 to subterfuge. Any time a pooka tries to deceive someone, one die is added to Social Trait rolls.

Birthright: Shapechanging. Each pooka has an affinity with an animal of the player’s choice. When the pooka is completely alone, she can shapechange into that animal (or back from it) in one turn. Shapechanging costs a point of Glamour, but reverting back is free. The pooka has all of the animal’s natural abilities (claws, speed, leaping), although it’s only possible to assume the form of a mundane beast. Large and scary forms, such as bears, tend to be far more playful than deadly, even when a fight breaks out.

Frailty: Lies. People may trust a pooka, but no one in their right mind believes one. Pooka are infamous for their elaborate lies. No matter how important an issue may be, a pooka must always mix in a lie. It’s her nature. A Willpower roll (difficulty 8) is required for a pooka to tell the whole truth.

REDCAPS

(RED-kaps)

Redcaps are the stuff of nightmares. These monstrous Kithain are feared for their vulgar and disgusting ways, and they revel in the terror of others. It is said that nightmares gave them form, and many Kithain believe it. Redcaps delight in taunting, insulting and just plain abusing mortals and fae alike.



Originally named for their blood-stained wool caps, redcaps have always been devoted servants of the Unseelie Court. These days, wool caps are considered quaint — there are better things to do with blood. In modern times, they take any opportunity to paint the town red...with one substance or another. The sight of a shocking red streak of hair or a bloodstained shirt under a leather jacket is enough to disturb the staunchest of fae.

Seelie redcaps are rare, but they do exist. They’re endangered, largely because Unseelie redcaps everywhere despise them and hunt them down. A Seelie redcap’s tiresome idealistic speeches about chivalry enrage his Unseelie brethren. Heroic and steadfast, Seelie redcaps live for the thrill of chivalrous battle, and to fight against impossible odds. This is the primary reason why many of them are killed by roving packs of Unseelie.

Aptitude: +1 to intimidation. Whenever a redcap tries to intimidate someone, one die is added to Social Trait rolls.

Birthright: Dark Appetite. Redcaps can eat anything, literally. They can chew through cars and eat their way through walls. Their bulldog teeth are flat, and hard as steel. Their digestive systems remain a mystery, thankfully. Most prefer human or animal meat, but anything will do when hunger strikes.

As long as a redcap can put his mouth around something, he can eat it. Large objects can be chewed into small pieces. Digesting something particularly vile or tough (such as wood, steel, romance novels or toxic waste) requires the expenditure of a point of Glamour.

Frailty: Bad Attitude. No one likes a redcap, not even other redcaps. Some noble freeholds try to ostracize or kill redcaps on general principle. As a result of this stigma, they suffer a +2 difficulty on any roll involving a social situation other than intimidation.

SATYRS

(SAY-ters)

Wild and passionate, satyrs satisfy their lusts and desires with abandon. These fae insist that wisdom is found in passion. If it's true, then satyrs are by far the wisest of the Kithain. While others may decry satyrs' earthy ways, they come around sooner or later for advice, a bit of support or a down-and-dirty good time.

Satyrs are well-known for their lack of restraint. A goat cheerfully tells a redcap where he can ram his axe, and then gallops away laughing. Satyrs' stamina is also legendary. Whether partying, drinking or charging into battle, satyrs have definite physical advantages over their kin. Though not as beautiful as the sidhe, they never lack for lovers. They claim this is because of their open minds and bold attitudes, but many changelings think the Gift of Pan has more to do with it.

Life for a satyr is not all lust, though. Most enjoy solitude and scholarship. Friendship and intellectual exercise also sustain them. Satyrs make good confidants and excellent philosophers; indeed, their mental contests rival their drinking ones. Poetry, debate, philosophy, music — these quiet pursuits fascinate them. Once the contemplation grows too extreme, however, they're eager to experience the other side of life again. More often than not, they bring their intellectual companions along for the ride in an effort to broaden their friends' horizons.

Aptitude: +1 to athletics. Any time a satyr is involved in any athletic action (not including combat), one die is added to Physical Trait rolls.

Birthright: Gift of Pan. Dionysian revelry is high-ritual to these fae. Singing, music and dance can be used to stir fae and mortals alike to the heights of carnal passion. Anyone who fails a Willpower roll (difficulty 7) is swept away by secret desires and the activities of the evening.



Frailty: Passion's Curse. Passion has its unpleasant moments, as well. Satyrs are prone to wild mood swings, especially when they're drunk. They may explode into torrents of fury or fits of weeping with the slightest provocation.

SIDHE

(SHEE)

The sidhe, as exiled nobility, remember a time when they ruled proudly in a living dream. Known and feared as the Good Folk, their whims enchanted and terrified mortals for millennia. Now that tale has ended. The gates to Arcadia have closed, the song has ended, and their new kingdom grows cold. For sidhe, the age of wonder has died, and they mourn its passing.

This mourning, however, has not ended their lives. Though they fear death like few faeries ever could, they face their fate with regal bearing. While others consider them distant and arrogant, the sidhe refuse to lie down and die. For them, the dream is still alive, and they strive to awaken the world from its slumber. The very presence of a sidhe inspires supernatural awe. The sight of a sidhe in her true form captures the hearts of mortals and the essence of the Dreaming.

Faerie passions run deep — love and hatred are never forgotten. The ideals of the sidhe are even more fierce. Such passion has its price, though. Seelie would rather destroy themselves in a blaze of glory than fade away. Their less energetic brethren lose hope and become self-indulgent, letting their freeholds fall into despair as easily as the listless nobles fall into melancholy. Others become Unseelie tyrants, ruling through cruelty and intrigue. Though exotic in their beauty and obsessed with their ideals, a few sidhe travel among commoners. No matter what paths they choose, sidhe are far from human and always stand out among those with whom they associate.

Aptitude: +1 to commands. The sidhe are by far the most charismatic of the fae; few can resist their commands. Any time a sidhe character issues a command, one die is added to Social Trait rolls.

Birthright: Awe and Beauty. Players of sidhe characters add one point to their Social Traits during character creation, even if this increases scores above 5. Whether they're heroes or villains, all sidhe are dignified. Any cantrip that would directly make them look foolish fails immediately.

Frailty: The mortal world weighs heavily upon the sidhe, making it difficult for them to enact their magic. The difficulty of any cantrip cast by a sidhe increases by one.



SLUAGH

(SLOO-ah)

Called the underfolk by many, the slough are considered pariah, even among other fae. Though rumors persist of underground slough lairs, most of these Kithain prefer crumbling Victorian mansions to dank sewers. Dark and forgotten places attract them. Those who intrude upon their inner sanctums leave with nightmares. Just as the slough value secrets and mysteries, they treasure privacy.

Despite this foul reputation, adventurous slough visit the surface courts, cultivate friendships, and enter oathbonds with outsiders. Strange as they are, slough often go out of their way to aid or protect others who are kind to them. These good deeds are frequently misinterpreted by suspicious changelings, so such relationships are usually brief. Even slough who find a clique that they can trust need to have secret places to which they can retreat.

The underfolk collect secrets and sometimes sell them to interested parties. To slough, revelation is joy; the more unsettling the revelation, the greater the joy. While Seelie use their knowledge for noble ends, Unseelie can make a crooked living through blackmail. Secrets are but one commodity to them. Broken toys, strange knickknacks and anything resonant with nostalgia makes for an excellent item of trade. Outsiders are mystified by the value slough place on these items, but then again, perversity is the slough's trademark.

Aptitude: +1 to stealth. Any time a slough attempts to move without being seen or attempts any other stealthy action, one die is added to Physical Trait rolls.

Birthright: Squirm. Dislocating body parts is a popular amusement for these creatures. Confining them is almost impossible. Although they cannot change their shapes or mass, underfolk can contort into disquieting shapes with unnatural ease. This requires a few minutes of concentration and a Physical roll; the difficulty ranges from 4 (escaping from ropes) to 8 (worming through the bars of a locked cell). The only substance that can imprison slough completely is cold iron.

Frailty: Curse of Silence. Slough cannot speak above a whisper, no matter how hard they strain to be heard. Since they dislike social situations and hold to very odd rules of etiquette, add one to the difficulties of all of their Social rolls.



TROLLS

(TROLS)

Duty, strength and honor are the hallmarks of a troll. Warriors without peer, they hold to the old ways of plain speaking and simple truths. Honor is a way of life for them, and once they have pledged their support to someone, they dedicate themselves fully. Many trolls expect the same sincerity from all fae, and are often disappointed as a result. In fact, many fae consider trolls naive for this very reason. Trolls are also seen as patient, reliable and chivalrous.

Trolls consider dedication to be the measure of their worth. If a troll breaks his word or betrays a trust, he weakens until he atones for the offense. In addition, trolls cannot use their great strength without just cause. Taking such unfair advantage over an adversary would be unchivalrous.

Legends tell that the trolls were actually the first noble kith; when the sidhe appeared, a great war began. The trolls lost and swore loyalty to the sidhe. They have served as guardians ever since.

This kith has an impressive reputation, largely because of its Seelie members. Bravery and stoicism define trolls' character. They typically use formal titles when addressing others, and dedicate their souls to those whom they respect. In romance, they are ardent suitors who uphold all the courtly manners. In loyalty, it is nearly impossible to sway a Seelie troll's beliefs once they are set. They prefer Spartan quarters and simple living; recognition of service is reward enough for them.

Aptitude: +1 to combat. Trolls are natural warriors. One die is added to any combat action taken in a turn.

Birthright: Titan's Power. Trolls gain an additional Health Level and an additional point of the Physical Trait during character creation, even if this raises the Trait above 5.

Frailty: Bond of Duty. Any troll who dares to break a sworn contract or oath becomes sickly and loses her Titan's Power. Only by atoning for her lapse of trust can she regain her Birthright. This usually involves fulfilling a new oath.





Houses

Politics and intrigue are meat and drink to the sidhe. Divorcing a highborn from his political affiliation is nigh-impossible. When a house suffers, all sidhe within that house suffer. In fact, most sidhe in the world today have been exiled from Arcadia because of their house affiliations.

Affiliation can define a sidhe's personality, his politics and his approach to rulership. Fealty to a house is a measure of honor and pride. Although commoners can swear allegiance to a house or even receive titles in one, their bonds are never as strong as those of the sidhe. A commoner character can have membership in a house, but only with the permission of the Storyteller.

House Dougal



The members of House Dougal are perfectionists known for their technical acumen. Lord Dougal, the founder of the house, was a great faerie smith who devised a way to weave Glamour into steel, making it safe for faeries to use. Some say that Lord Dougal himself stayed on Earth during the Interregnum because of his fascination with metalwork and machines.

Members of this house are very precise, both in word and deed. When a plan is made, they insist that it be carried out to the letter. Efficiency is considered the highest of virtues. Very few members rule, preferring to make sure everything runs like clockwork from behind the scenes. Dougal often work as clerks or barristers, and perform their tasks with an intellectual flair. The rare member of House Dougal who does rule usually governs his fief in a very matter-of-fact, practical manner, but tends to deal with problems better in theory than in practice.

House Eiluned



This house has always been tainted by the scandals of its founder, Lady Eiluned. As the creator of the so-called "House of Secrets," she conspired with dark and mysterious beings and powers to gather magical knowledge. Although many house members now work as counselors or advisors to the Seelie Court, some whisper that Eiluned

will eventually become an Unseelie house. Regardless, sidhe of this house seem to enjoy the best of both Courts.

Eiluned sidhe are valued for their extensive occult knowledge, their uncanny ability to gather secrets and their preternatural talent for intrigue. Fiefs ruled by House Eiluned are mysterious. There are accusations that House Eiluned voluntarily accepted exile on Earth as punishment for a horrible and forgotten crime. Members of the house counter that their Seelie affiliations prove they are innocent.

House Fiona



Sidhe are creatures of extremes, and the nobles of House Fiona are no exception. Lady Fiona and the sidhe of her house stayed on Earth during the Interregnum so that they could continue to explore its pleasures. Some even say that the house's founder rejected the call of

Arcadia because of the love of a mortal man. This would not be surprising in the least; Fiona immerse themselves thoroughly in Earthly delights.

Fiona sidhe are fond of food, drink, drugs and sex, and are often distracted from high pursuits by their base needs. These reckless nobles flirt with disaster constantly. They love to test the status quo, even going so far as to aid their enemies to bring about a little discord. Yet their passion is focused when they are called upon to fight; Fiona fae are fierce warriors who live for the fury of battle. Many are addicted to the tumult of the battlefield. Tempting fate by fighting recklessly, and the thought of dying in battle fuels this passion even further.



House Gwydion

House Gwydion is perhaps the most “noble” of all of the houses. While other houses retreated to Arcadia long ago, the Gwydion sidhe chose to face Banality head-on. These nobles believe that their lord and founder has been reborn again and again as a sidhe. He is said to have been resurrected as a paladin serving Charlemagne, and as a major-general serving Napoleon. Rivals swear that he must have aided Machiavelli, as well.

Members of House Gwydion are conservative, duty-bound Kithain who place the well-being of their kingdoms above their own. Unfortunately, they let everyone else know it. Their rule is

often marked by extreme arrogance, and they state categorically that only members of their house are fit to rule. There are even superiority rivalries within the house. The internecine feuds that result can only be halted by one thing: an outside threat. Members band together to prove the superiority of House Gwydion as a whole. When the threat ends, it's back to business as usual.

House Liam



The quietest (and some say the wisest) of all of the house founders, Lord Liam was exiled to Earth for his eloquent defense of mortal folk. Centuries ago, the Kithain held a great contempt for humans. Many believed them to be the cause of Banality, and some argued that revenge against them would remove this curse from the world. Liam stood alone for many years against those who argued for retribution against humans. The outrage against Lord Liam was so

great that all who supported him were condemned by the High Lords of Arcadia, and his followers were exiled to Earth.

Members of House Liam don't consider humans perfect — far from it. They do, however, believe that humanity has earned the right to exist undisturbed. These nobles fiercely despise Ravaging and Banality; their peaceful demeanors can turn wrathful when they encounter such.



Traits and Arts

The power and skill of a changeling are measured by her Traits. The four Traits are:

Physical: This Trait measures a changeling's physical prowess — her raw strength, agility and stamina. *This Trait is used to resolve all tasks involving fighting, lifting things and running.*

Mental: This Trait measures a changeling's intelligence, reasoning capacity, wits and cunning. *This Trait is used to resolve all tasks concerned with trying to notice something or to puzzle out a clue, or with thinking quickly.*

Social: This Trait measures a changeling's charm, attractiveness and presence. *Social is used to resolve all tasks concerned with trying to coerce, seduce, convince or con someone into doing something.*

Willpower: This Trait measures a changeling's inner strength — her discipline and self-mastery. *Willpower is used to resolve all tasks concerned with resisting intimidation, temptation and mind control.*

Traits are rated from 1 to 5; a rating of 1 indicates a low level of ability, while a rating of 5 indicates peak human ability (an Olympic athlete, a genius, a great statesman, or a near-Buddha). It is possible to have a zero in a Trait, reflecting a crippled or decrepit character. It is also possible for changelings to attain superhuman scores — 6 or even higher (again, most characters do not start with such might, but certain kith can exceed human maximums).

Most humans possess ratings of 1 or 2 in their Traits. Beginning changeling characters are considered the cream of the crop.

Trait Ratings

- 0 Abysmal
- 1 Mediocre
- 2 Pretty good
- 3 Really good
- 4 Exceptional
- 5 Human perfection
- 6+ Superhuman (changelings only)

Players who create new characters are given 13 points to assign to the four Traits. So, a player creating a stereotypical high-society sidhe might assign a 4 to Social (though this is raised to 5 because of the character's Birthright), a 3 to Mental, a 2 to Physical (those ballet lessons weren't a complete waste), and a 2 to Willpower. This leaves the player two points to use to raise her character's Glamour score (for a total of 8 Glamour since each Trait spent in this way provides two points of Glamour).

Cantrips

Arts, more simply known as "faerie magic," are how changelings manipulate Glamour to create magical effects, both in the Dreaming and in the mortal world. A changeling sparks her own internal Glamour and thereby creates a link with the Dreaming — a link strong enough that she can draw upon and form the raw stuff of the Dreaming to suit her desires. In a sense, Arts are physical manifestations of Glamour.

Arts have two levels: Basic and Advanced. Each level gives a changeling access to a number of cantrips, or specific magical effects. A Glamour point must be spent for each Basic cantrip cast. Two Glamour points must be spent to use an Advanced cantrip. An additional point of Glamour must be spent if a changeling uses a

cantrip to affect a mortal or is in the presence of mortals. Mastering an Art level provides access to all the cantrips listed under that Art. Thus, a changeling with Basic Chicanery knows the cantrips Fuddle and Veiled Eyes. A changeling cannot possess the Advanced level of an Art without possessing the Basic level.

Descriptions of the Arts follow, and define the actual powers and effects of changeling magic.

Chicanery

Chicanery is the Art of deception and is favored by those who use guile to lead the unwary astray.

Basic

• **Fuddle:** Fuddle allows the caster to alter a target's perceptions by creating minor illusions. These illusions must be based on something that already exists (you can't create something from nothing). For example, a person could be made to appear as another person or even as a dog, but your changeling cannot create an illusion of a person out of thin air.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty equal to the target's Willpower).

• **Veiled Eyes:** This cantrip allows the caster to cause any subject to become invisible. The cantrip lasts for as long as the character continues to concentrate on the person or object in question.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty 4). Those looking for the object can make a Mental roll (difficulty 7) to pierce the invisibility.

Advanced

• **Captive Heart:** This cantrip allows the caster to control and fan the emotions of his target. He can invoke any type of feeling he desires: fear, envy, love, gaiety, sadness. This cantrip can cause a target to feel anything that he is capable of feeling, even if he has never experienced the emotion before. This effect lasts for one turn for each success gained in the casting.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty 4).

Legerdemain

Legerdemain is the Art of sleight of hand and illusion. Legerdemain transcends parlor tricks, allowing a changeling to affect physical reality. Changelings who are the entertainers of Kithain society (jesters, clowns, pooka) tend to specialize in this Art.

Basic

• **Gimmix:** This cantrip permits a changeling to move objects telekinetically. She can move, twist, throw, lift and crush things. Fine motor coordination, such as typing or dialing a telephone, is impossible — anything a real person could do with her hands if her fingers and thumb were glued together is possible. Gimmix can be used in extremely confined places, allowing the changeling to "handle" objects that she can't normally see or reach.

The player rolls the character's Mental Trait (difficulty 4). The number of successes achieved determines how much weight may be lifted with the cantrip (20 pounds per success). Objects can be moved and manipulated up to 10 yards away for every point of the Mental Trait that the character has.



Advanced

- **Mooch:** The changeling can transmit things instantaneously from one place to another. Mooch is a favorite cantrip of pickpockets, and can be used to remove a trinket from a mark's pouch and place it in the caster's own. The cantrip works only if the caster can see the object, or if he has seen it within the past minute. A coin could be Mooched in plain sight, though anyone watching would recognize the effect.

The player rolls the character's Mental Trait (difficulty 4). The number of successes achieved determines how subtle the Mooch is.

Primal

Much of changelings' power arises from the elemental affinity between their faerie souls and the forces of nature. In ancient times, the spirits of rocks and trees whispered secrets to the fae.

Basic

- **Oakenshield:** This cantrip imbues an object or person with the solid, protective essence of oak bark. Targets of Oakenshield can resist a tremendous amount of punishment.

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 4). The number of successes achieved determines how many additional Health Levels the target of the cantrip gains. Extra Health Levels remain until they are lost due to injury. The cantrip must be cast again to regain lost levels. Only one use of Oakenshield can be in effect on a single subject at one time.

- **Willow Whisper:** This cantrip allows the changeling to talk to anything, even things that cannot normally talk or understand speech. Willow Whisper grants the ability to speak to books, furniture, rocks, plants, buildings, aliens...anything. There is one limitation to this cantrip: All statements and questions must be whispered. Using Willow Whisper in a place such as a football stadium in the middle of a game is a fruitless exercise.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty 5). The number of successes achieved determines how coherent the conversation is (Storyteller's discretion).

Advanced

- **Heather Balm (or Holly Strike):** This cantrip has two uses: it can mend that which is broken, or it can break something by stressing tiny imperfections in the object. The caster can repair or break, or heal or harm anything.

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 4). Each success heals or causes one Health Level of damage.

- **Elder-Form:** This cantrip allows the caster or another target to assume the shape of something else. The new form possesses all of the Traits and disadvantages of that form. If the changeling turns himself into a tree, he may be taller and tougher, but he isn't able to talk (unless he casts Willow Whisper — and just how does one perform that cantrip now, anyway?)

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 6). The cantrip lasts for one hour for each success gained.

Sovereign

In ancient times, the sidhe used Sovereign to enforce their noble dictates upon commoner kith. A few highly conservative (and unpopular) nobles still adhere to this custom. The Art of Sovereign forces commoners and nobles of equal or lesser rank to obey the caster's dictates. Thus, a knight could not use Sovereign on a baron.

Sovereign is available only to sidhe characters.

Basic

- **Dictum:** A target under the sway of Dictum attempts to carry out the caster's requests in spirit and to the letter, unless the request would somehow place him in immediate danger. A target can't be told to attack a werewolf, but he can be asked to guard a door against werewolves, as the command does not place the target in immediate harm.

This cantrip, more than any other Sovereign cantrip, is a major point of contention between commoners and nobles. Commoner kith seem to take less offense to a user of Grandeur (see below) than they do to a user of Dictum. After all, most Kithain already respect and feel a certain sense of awe for the nobility, but they do not appreciate being forced to bow and scrape at every noble whim.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty equal to the target's Willpower). The target of this cantrip can resist by making an opposed Willpower roll (difficulty 4). Each success in the opposed roll reduces the caster's successes by one.

This cantrip lasts for one hour for each success gained.

- **Grandeur:** Grandeur impresses upon others the majesty of Arcadia that every noble and sidhe carries. It is the component of noble poise and refinement that commoner rulers attempt, but ultimately fail, to achieve with their divine pageants and coronations. Anyone who views a caster of Grandeur is overcome with awe; he can take no action (violent or otherwise) in the presence of the noble, even if that noble attacks the target. Holding court is not possible for a caster of Grandeur, as most of the attendees would be unable to speak.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty 4). A Willpower roll (difficulty 4) is made for anyone who resists the effects of the cantrip. The defender must gain more successes than the caster does to resist successfully.

This cantrip lasts for one scene.

Advanced

- **Geas:** This cantrip allows the caster to force another character to swear an oath of limited duration. The character swearing the oath is bound to attempt to complete it through any means possible. Failure to do so causes the target to become weak and sick and possibly even die. The Storyteller determines any ill effects imposed for failing to fulfill a Geas.

The player rolls the character's Social Trait (difficulty 7). The number of successes achieved determines how compelling the Geas is. The cantrip lasts a number of days equal to the number of successes rolled.

Wayfare

Wayfare is the Art of efficient travel. Originally developed by scouts and messengers, this Art has found use in noble circles as a means to spy; at high levels, the power allows one to fly.

Basic

- **Hopscotch:** The changeling can make herself or others perform (seemingly) impossible leaps, either up or down.

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 4). Each success allows the character to leap 20 feet, and to land without injury.

- **Quicksilver:** This cantrip allows the changeling or a subject of her choice to move at lightning speeds for a limited duration.

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 5). Each success allows the target to take one extra action in the next turn.

Advanced

- **Wind Runner:** This cantrip bestows flight upon the target. The target has full control over where he flies, and for how long (subject to the limits of the cantrip).

The player rolls the character's Physical Trait (difficulty 4). The number of successes achieved determines the base number of turns that flight lasts. The Storyteller then rolls one 10-sided die (keeping the roll secret) and adds the result to the number of successes earned. The total is the actual number of turns that the cantrip lasts.

Glamour

The stuff of dreams, the magical clay, the energy of awe, the workings of wonder, the breeze that blows the cobwebs of disbelief from our eyes æ Glamour is all of these things and more. The ability to live your dreams, to perceive the true and fantastic essence of the world, abides in Glamour. Everyone can create it, even normal humans. However, only the fae have the ability to give it form, to use it, and to wield its creations as a weapon.

Raw Glamour can take physical form, and changelings can perceive its presence. Raw Glamour appears to changelings as multicolored flickers and tentacles of ever-changing energy. Unlike an aura, raw Glamour does not radiate, but seems to caress and wind through things and beings, never still, ever evolving. When imbued in a cantrip, Glamour sparks and flickers around both the caster and the target of the effect. It is therefore very difficult for a changeling to cast a cantrip without all other changelings present realizing exactly who is doing it. A changeling has to be extremely subtle to hide his use of Glamour from other creatures of the Dreaming.

Glamour has both a permanent and a temporary rating. As Glamour is used, a character's temporary rating lowers. A changeling's temporary Glamour rises by one point (up to a maximum of the character's permanent score) for each night that he dreams.

Glamour has a number of uses.

- Each use of a Basic Art costs one Glamour point.
- Each use of an Advanced Art costs two Glamour points.
- Affecting a mortal with an Art or using an Art in the presence of mortals costs an additional Glamour point.
- A changeling can use Glamour to create a token that enchants a mortal. To do so, the changeling invests a number of temporary points of Glamour into a small item, such as a ribbon or coin, equal to the number of days that he wants the enchantment to last. A mortal is considered to be enchanted upon receiving the token, and can see changelings in their true faerie forms.

A changeling with no more Glamour becomes a normal mortal, and forgets his faerie existence until he is given Glamour by another changeling.

Changelings regain Glamour by inspiring mortals and gathering the Glamour produced by mortal creativity. This is called having an Epiphany and is described below.

Glamour can also be gained at artistic gatherings and events such as gallery openings and concerts. The amount of Glamour gained in this fashion is always at the discretion of the Storyteller. As a guideline, whenever a changeling attends such an event, the player can roll the character's Social Trait (difficulty 4). Each success indicates that the character gains one point of Glamour.

Epiphanies

When a changeling spends time with a mortal artist, he can attempt to inspire her creativity, thus generating Glamour. This is not a simple task and can take several hours or even days of effort on the changeling's part. Whenever the Storyteller believes that the time is right, the player may roll his character's Social rating (difficulty 5). Each success generates a point of Glamour.

Health

Changelings have seven Health Levels, representing various stages of injury. These are: Light, Light, Medium, Medium, Serious, Serious and Critical. As wounds are accumulated, check off Health Levels on a piece of paper. When all Health Levels are gone, the character is dying (see below).

Healing

Injuries heal at a rate determined by the severity of damage sustained. Each Light Health Level lost heals overnight, assuming full rest. Each Medium Health Level lost heals over a week's time, assuming medical care is received. Each Serious Wound Level lost heals over a month's time, also assuming medical care. Healing times of lost levels are cumulative. Thus, a changeling who has lost both Light levels and a Medium one recovers in one week (the Medium level) and two days (the two Light levels).

However, lost Health Levels cannot be regained until a changeling rests sufficiently to recover from injuries (Light) or until a changeling receives proper medical care (Medium and Serious).

If a changeling spends time in a freehold, a glamour-infused haven of the fae, she recovers one Health Level per night, no matter how grievous her wounds are. Certain cantrips also speed the healing process.

A changeling who is reduced to the Critical Health Level heals at the Storyteller's discretion; she may recover or fall into a coma for the rest of her life (unless taken to a freehold for healing).

Pain

When a changeling is reduced to the Medium Health Level, her player loses one die on all rolls. When the changeling falls to the Serious Health Level, the player loses two dice on all rolls. When the changeling is reduced to the Critical Health Level, the player loses three dice on all rolls.

Death

When a changeling has lost all of her Health Levels, she falls unconscious and will die soon. Unless the character receives some sort of medical attention (or healing through the use of Arts), the character dies in one hour. A character who has been reduced to



zero Health Levels, and who takes additional damage, dies immediately.

Rules

Most of the action in **Changeling** is determined by the players and Storyteller, but we provide a few rules to help arbitrate complex situations.

Our system uses 10-sided dice, which you can find in most hobby stores and some book stores. When a player decides to have his character undertake an action for which the outcome is in doubt (shooting a gun at a distant foe, trying to fast-talk the local duke), the Storyteller looks at the character's Traits and decides which Trait (Physical, Mental, Social or Willpower) is most relevant. The player gathers a number of dice equal to his character's Trait, and the Storyteller assigns a difficulty number (a number between 2 and 10) to the feat. The player then rolls the dice. If at least one (or sometimes more) of the numbers on the dice equals or exceeds the difficulty number, the action succeeds. If not, the action fails.

Automatic Tasks vs. Dice Rolls

Most tasks are automatic. If Louis says, "My character Jeremy walks into the deserted alley," Louis does not need to make a roll for Jeremy to do this. It happens automatically. Likewise, for the purposes of drama, routine tasks such as driving to a nightclub or climbing a ladder can be assumed to succeed, even though there is always a chance of having a wreck or falling off the ladder. Rolls need to be made only for those events that are particularly dramatic and that have a good chance of failing.

Sometimes a routine event can become a dramatic, tension-filled one if performed in haste or under duress. For example, if the character driving to the nightclub is barreling down the road at 100 mph, against the flow of traffic, and while being chased by redcaps and the city police, Physical dice rolls to avoid wrecking the car are called for!

Difficulties

Difficulties range between 2 and 10. A difficulty of 2 represents the easiest of feats; a difficulty of 10 represents the most challenging (indeed, nearly impossible feats). When in doubt, the default difficulty is 4. Difficulties can never be higher than 10. If a difficulty is calculated to be greater than 10, reduce it to 10.

- 2 Very Easy
- 3 Fairly Easy
- 4 Standard
- 5 Straightforward
- 6 Involved
- 7 Challenging
- 8 Difficult
- 9 Extremely Difficult
- 10 Nearly Impossible

Number of Successes

Each die roll that equals or exceeds the difficulty number is called a "success." Most of the time, a single success allows the changeling to succeed in her attempted task — barely. Getting more successes indicates a higher level of performance. For example, let's say a sidhe (with a Social Trait of 4) gives a performance in a nightclub. Four dice are rolled. While a single success indicates

an acceptable performance (she doesn't get booed off the stage), three or four successes are needed to give a brilliant or virtuoso performance.

Successes	Quality
1	It'll do
2	Good
3	Great
4+	Masterful

Example of Play

Louis' character, Jeremy the redcap, has been sought out by Dresden Miles, one of the duke's knights. (Dresden is played by the Storyteller.) Dresden questions Jeremy concerning his whereabouts on last Wednesday night (the night a group of commoners set fire to the duke's mansion). Louis, speaking as Jeremy, indignantly denies any knowledge of the deed ("I was at a dance club on the other side of town!"), and the Storyteller tells Louis to make a Social roll to convince Dresden. Jeremy has a Social score of 2, and the Storyteller tells Louis that the difficulty is 4 (Dresden is loyal to the duke and knows that Jeremy doesn't really like nobles, but he likes Jeremy and is inclined to trust him). Louis rolls two dice and scores 1 and 8: one success. Dresden reluctantly accepts Jeremy's alibi (perhaps he is unwilling to question the story too deeply), but warns Jeremy that the duke's eyes are everywhere, and that he'd better toe the line for a while.

If, in the Storyteller's opinion, Dresden had particularly damning evidence against Jeremy, or disliked him, the Storyteller might have raised the difficulty of Louis' roll to 5 or even 6, or might have decreed that Louis needed two successes to convince Dresden of Jeremy's innocence.

Contests

Sometimes a character will be in direct conflict with another person or changeling, as opposed to attempting an isolated action. Competing with someone to accomplish an action is known as a contest. To resolve a contest, the player rolls against a difficulty number as normal, but the opponent also gets to roll his own Trait against the same difficulty number. The contestant who scores the most successes wins. Ties re-roll.

Almost all contests are considered difficulty 4.

Example #1: Sir Dresden (Social 4) and Lady Clarissa (also Social 4) strive to seduce the same beautiful model. The model prefers Dresden and Lady Clarissa about equally, so both changelings must roll versus difficulty 4. Dresden rolls four dice and scores 1, 3, 6 and 6 — two successes. Clarissa also rolls four dice and scores 2, 6, 6 and 7 — three successes. The model slinks away with the smirking Lady Clarissa, and Dresden must seek companionship elsewhere this night.

Example #2: Sir Dresden (Social 4) is attempting to order a recalcitrant commoner (Willpower 2) out of his way. Dresden rolls four dice and scores 1, 3, 7 and 9 — two successes. The commoner rolls two dice and scores 3 and 8 — one success. Dresden wins. The commoner grudgingly lets the knight pass.

Example #3: Jeremy the redcap (Physical 4) is arm-wrestling a young troll (also Physical 4). The Storyteller decides that the first one to score three successes wins. On Turn #1, Jeremy rolls two successes, and his opponent rolls one. Jeremy forces the troll's arm down ever so slightly. On Turn #2, the troll scores one success, and Jeremy scores none. The opponents are tied and their arms are

upright again. This battle will seesaw back and forth until one of the combatants is the first to arrive at three successes. If they win three at the same time, the contest continues until one participant simply gets *more* successes than the other.

Drama

The world of **Changeling** is a cauldron of adventure and danger. The following section presents some common quandaries faced by changelings, as well as rules to resolve them.

Time

Time, in **Changeling**, is fluid. It is measured in terms of turns, scenes and stories.

Turn: A turn usually lasts about three seconds. It is used when adjudicating dramatic situations involving split-second decisions and actions, such as combat. Each character can take one action in one turn.

Scene: A scene is a sequence of events that occurs in roughly the same time and place. A brutal back-alley brawl and a soiree at the duke's mansion both constitute a scene, even though the party lasts longer than the fight.

Story: A story is a sequence of scenes in which the characters take part. It has a plot, a climax and a resolution.

Example: In the movie *Star Wars*, each swing of Obi-wan's/Darth Vader's lightsabers takes a turn. The scene in the *Death Star* garbage compactor takes, appropriately enough, a scene. The entire movie is a story.

Initiative

Sometimes it's important to know who acts first. A changeling who gets the jump on her opponent is said to have the initiative.

To determine initiative, compare Traits in this order:

Highest Physical

Highest Mental

Ties: Roll one die; the highest roll wins. Keep rolling until the tie is resolved.

Example: Jeremy the redcap attacks a sidhe knight. The Storyteller compares Jeremy and the sidhe knight's Physical Traits. Both have Physical Traits of 4. Comparing Mental Traits, the Storyteller sees that Jeremy has a Mental Trait of 3, while the sidhe knight has a Mental Trait of 1. Jeremy attacks first. If the sidhe knight had a Mental Trait of 3, the Storyteller and Jeremy's player would have simply rolled a die, with the highest roll acting first.

Combat

Most changelings are masters of manipulation and subtlety, preferring to win battles through

indirect means rather than outright force. However, a changeling is forced into combat every now and then — to take down a rival or to prove oneself in trial by combat.

Combat is conducted in three-second turns. It uses the task system already established; initiative is determined normally, and most combat actions are considered Physical tasks. There are two basic types of combat: hand-to-hand and ranged.

Hand-to-Hand

Hand-to-hand combat is conducted with fists, natural weaponry (a redcap's bite), or melee weapons. Initiative is determined normally. Attacks are resolved in order of initiative. A combatant may choose to strike, grab or dodge in each turn.

- **Strike:** The attacker rolls Physical (difficulty 4). The combatant being attacked may dodge automatically (also Physical, difficulty 4) if that is her actions for the turn. If the



attacker scores a number of successes equal to or exceeding the defender's roll, he strikes the defender successfully.

- **Grab:** The attacker rolls Physical (difficulty 4). The combatant being attacked may dodge automatically (also Physical, difficulty 4) if that is his action for the turn. If the attacker's Physical roll results in more successes than the defender's Physical roll does, the defender is grabbed. The attacker may inflict damage automatically in each turn thereafter, and the defender is trapped until he strikes successfully and inflicts damage on the attacker.

- **Dodge:** Actively dodging takes an action — the dodging party may not counterattack that turn. However, the dodging combatant gains +2 to her Physical roll to avoid the attacker's blow. If the dodging defender beats the attacker's successes, she gains the initiative next turn!

Damage: If the attacker hits, he inflicts a number of Health Levels of damage equal to his Physical Trait, or (if using a weapon) equal to his Physical Trait +1. Weapons made of cold iron inflict damage equal to the character's Physical Trait +2.

Soak: An injured changeling may make a Physical roll (difficulty 4). If it succeeds, she takes only half normal damage, rounded up (minimum of one Health Level). Damage inflicted by cold-iron weapons cannot be soaked.

Ranged Combat

To conduct ranged combat, the changeling must have a thrown object or a gun. The changeling may throw an object or fire one shot in each turn, provided she has objects to throw or bullets to fire.

- **Strikes:** Strikes take place at long, medium or point-blank range. Strikes made at long range are difficulty 5; at medium range, difficulty 4; and at point-blank range, difficulty 3. (However, at point-blank range, the defender has the option to enter hand-to-hand combat with the attacker!)

- **Dodge:** A defender may dodge normally, though this does not automatically give the defender the initiative in the next turn, if successful. A defender may also execute a running dodge. A running dodge takes an entire action, and the defender does not gain any bonuses to her Physical Trait. However, she automatically closes the gap between herself and the attacker by one range level (i.e., if she was at long range, she is now at medium range).

- **Straight Run:** A defender may decide to simply charge at the attacker. This takes an entire action, and the defender may not defend against the attacker's shot. However, the defender is in hand-to-hand range automatically at the end of the turn.

Damage: Damage from thrown objects and gunshots is determined a little differently than it is for hand-to-hand damage. A thrown object inflicts a number of Health Levels equal to the attacker's successes on the strike roll +1. A bullet inflicts a number of Health Levels equal to the attacker's successes on the strike roll +3.

Soak: Bullets and thrown objects can be soaked normally.

Pursuit and Chases

Sometimes characters will want to chase other characters. Chases are resolved as is initiative, based on the following chart:

Highest Physical

Highest Mental

Example: Jeremy the redcap is chasing a sidhe knight. Looking

at the chart, the Storyteller sees that Jeremy's Physical Trait is 4. The sidhe knight's is 3. Jeremy catches the knight.

Social Interaction

- **Intimidation:** The changeling may try to intimidate her target through physical threats (use the Physical Trait), social coercion (use the Social Trait) or verbal bullying (use the Mental Trait). The victim may resist with her Willpower Trait. The highest roll wins.

- **Leadership:** The changeling may issue commands, but the player must make a Social roll to convince a hesitant target. If the target is inclined to disobey, he may make a Mental roll to resist. The highest roll wins.

- **Seduction:** The changeling's player rolls Social. The party being seduced uses Willpower to resist. The highest roll wins.

Story Ideas

These are a few ideas for stories. Not all of them will suit every group, but feel free to experiment with them to achieve the ends you desire.

- **In the Shadow of the King**

Every noble has a "tail": a retinue of courtiers, knights, servants and sycophants. This retinue is a hotbed of intrigue. In this story concept, your characters become immersed in the backstabbing and social machinations of the court. Is murder in the offing? Noble characters have an obvious edge, but commoners (because of their social invisibility) have a different sort of advantage.

- **The Lost Ones**

A community of changelings has not been heard from in some time, and your lord requests that you stop by to see what's up. It may be nothing — they may just be busy — but when has that ever been so? The Escheat demands that changelings be saved if they are threatened by Banality. What will your characters do to rescue the community?

- **A Pooka's Request**

A "respected" pooka shows up at the characters' freehold and offers great treasure and glory to any who throw in with him. What follows is a far-ranging quest for a chimera that the pooka swears holds the answer to a riddle that he's been trying to answer for years. Do you dare trust such an untrustworthy patron?

- **The Search for Inspiration:** The characters, on the lookout for new sources of Glamour, find an artist or performer to inspire. Nurturing talent isn't always as easy as it sounds. Several problems could arise, from drug dependency to money shortages to marital strife to falling prey to Ravagers. The characters must somehow preserve and inspire their artist, either directly or indirectly.

- **Righting Wrongs, Battling Beasties:** The quintessential fairy tale or hero's quest may be offered unabashedly for an evening's entertainment. Whether it's rescuing a damsel in distress (imagine combining **Changeling** with elements from the film *Speed*) or rounding up stray chimera that have broken loose from the characters' dreams (oops!), this one is for action fans.

- **Summoned to Court:** The characters are summoned to a festival at the Seelie (or Unseelie) Court. Appropriate behavior and dress are expected, though the characters are allowed to bring their Harleys for chimerical jousting. Naturally, none of them knew until this morning that the festival is a birthday celebration for the duke. What do you get for a guy who can create whatever he wants out of thin air?