

# rites of spring™

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CHANGELING  
THE LOST

TARGET  
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# rites of spring™



*By Jeff Hartley, John Sneed, Travis Stout and Charles Wendig*

# Sticks and Stones

## 1.

*This time, it's a baby. You hate making babies.  
Head of a gourd with black checker piece eyes.  
You stuff its fraying mouth with brittle hay  
and rat tails.*

*He's out there, right now. Hands of see-through  
skin reaching into that crib.*

*The Nightjar.*

*You paint the baby's toenails red with drops of  
pig's blood.*

*Why would any parent paint her baby's toe-  
nails?*

*Never you mind. You affix the ears (swatches  
of Heddespun burlap tacked to the gourd), which  
means you're done, which means it's almost time,  
isn't it?*

*You wait.*

*And then it happens. A wisp of mist. A shud-  
dering shadow.*

*That wretched mouth opens. The dead baby —  
not even a baby, but you know that, don't you, Mis-  
ter Hands? — lurches to life, its squalls only part  
human (for contained therein are pig squeals and  
rat squeaks).*

*You hand the baby through the darkness, into  
the pale translucent grip of —*

## 2.

The clock radio dropped to the ground and shattered. Joey Hands lurched upward out of bed, face slick with sweat despite the cool March morning air creeping in through the window. His arm — dead-ending in an unintended fist — lay across the rickety bedside table, where the clock radio once sat.

He looked down at his palms. Criss-crossed with puffy scars. The fingers fat with calluses, the nails brittle and yellow. For a moment, he could

see an image of the fetch baby there in his grip, but then, as in all his dreams, the image took wing. Like a herky-jerky moth, the fetch baby ducked and dodged every attempt to grab it; soon, it was gone.

Joey rubbed his eyes. Outside, a bird toodle-ooed. "Springtime," he mumbled.

It earned a smile. Small. But a smile, nevertheless.

## 3.

April.

A plump bumblebee orbited a tangle of lush irises, and Joey watched the buzzing bug with rapt fascination. Somewhere, a bus honked. Voices murmured. Over head, sharp-winged swallows did a lunatic dance of near-misses, chattering with delight. The tangle of life, born of the season, held him fixed. And he hadn't even eaten the acid, yet.

"Is it true?"

Joey nearly pissed himself. Lucky for the lad, he hadn't.

"I know you," Joey said to the pale slip of man now sitting next to him on the bench. Whispering wheat hair so yellow it was almost white. Fingers thin. Lips, too. When the fellow exhaled, Joey felt the wind on his face. With it, the gentle briny swell of an ocean breeze. "You're Lady Miss Pity's boy."

"Eurus."

Joey snorted. "If you say so."

"So is it true?"

"Is what true?"

"That you helped Them make fetches. The Keepers."

Joey felt his guts tighten. The fellow didn't seem to be fucking with him; his eyes were distant and sad, his stare barely his own (a characteristic shared by all the Winter people, it seemed, those wayward fools). Still.



"I'm out here, enjoyin' my day," Joey said. For emphasis, he reached across and took a fist full of the airy prick's Polo shirt. "And you dare to bother me with things I can't rightly remember or muster a care about? I'm smellin' the flowers. Watchin' the bees. Listenin' to the sounds of a city crawlin' its way out of a foddamn thaw. And you throw this fardabbe in my face?"

"It's just —"

"Just what?"

"It's my fetch."

"What about your fetch?"

Eurus paused. Seemed to reconsider. Those distant eyes, searchin'.

Then he blurted it out:

"My fetch has cancer. And I want to cure him."

#### 4.

*Atop the blustery bluff, the Nightjar hands you the spy-glass.*

*You peer between worlds as he demands. You do not see the wide stretch of Hedde maze. You instead see a city street at noon.*

*Hustlin'. Bustlin'.*

*Summer heat risin' like a fghost off the blacktop.*

*With those awful see-through hands, Nightjar points her out to you.*

*There she is. The runaway in the red skirt. The brash blue-dyed pigtails.*

*Give me your gift, that's what the Nightjar says. That's what he always says.*

*You don't want to. You feel like such a traitor. A — what's the term? A Benedict Arnold? But you employ your eye through the spy-glass, and you give him your gift.*

*In the girl, you see things. They don't really make sense, but do they have to?*

*Cherry pits. Is she sweet, sour? A handful of holly leaves and 23 teeth (the canines, which means you're goin' to have to knock them out of your fel-*

*low captives, a cruel necessity for which you know you'll one day pay a price), which maybe says she's sharp. But smart sharp? Mean sharp?*

*Doesn't matter in the end product, of course. You're no chef. You don't know what the ingredients mean when it comes to taste.*

*You put the spy-glass down.*

*You feel the Nightjar's whisper hands on your shoulder.*

*Fetchmaker, fetchmaker, make me a —*

#### 5.

May.

It got hot out, unseasonably so (which made the Summer boys antsy, stirrin' for a fight), but the air amongst the Thorns was still cool. It wasn't a temperature thing. It was an in-your-bones thing, an in-your-soul thing. The way gooseflesh rose upon an arm or neck when one steps foot in a haunted house. The chill in the air went to the marrow.

Joey reached in between the creepin' threads of rose-thorn and gently wrapped his ungentle hands around a succulent blood plum. Pullin' these things out of the briar always reminded him of that game, *Operation*. Touch a thorn? Bzzt! Too bad, thanks for playin'. You don't mind if the thorn has a drink of your soul, do you?

He withdrew the fruit without scratchin' himself or the plum's tender skin.

Joey stretched his right leg out, wincin', then hiked up his pant leg. The fash was red, fresh, ready to bleed once more if he dared move the wrong way (hell, if he dared sneeze). A small price to pay for rididin' his Hedde cotta'ge of those foddamn human-eyed cormorants, with those long black beaks ready to crush a rock or a fool changelin' skull. Dirty Hedde birds, those.





His heavy hand crushed the plum over the wound. Sweet-smelling red sap oozed downward with the sluggish drip of slow honey.

When it touched the gash, it burned like a lit cigarette.

But anywhere the juice ran, the wound tightened, puckered like a nervous asshole, and the infection seized up and soon disappeared. It hurt. But it helped.

The pain radiated off him, and the bramble wall shifted, shuddered, curled in on itself, if only a little. Joey sucked in a deep breath and slid to the dusty potholes of this backwater trod.

He thought about what Eurus had told him.

Cancer. The fetch had cancer. And, as if that wasn't enough of a corker, the crazy wisp of a man wanted to save the life — the *stolen* life — of the cancerous fiend. He didn't know fetches could *get* cancer. Or that any changeling would want to save his wretched Other Half.

"Proving yet again," Joey said to himself, "that I don't know shit about shit about shit." He snorted, then went to stand —

And found Eurus standing only 10 feet away.

With a camping machete.

"Eurus?" Joey asked, but even as the question left his chapped lips, he knew that it wasn't true. This wasn't Eurus. Same lithesome boy's body with a man's eyes. Same wispy hair. But the eyes were off, a little. Not nearly as pale. Maybe a bit younger-looking.

And no sea breeze to accompany him.

The fetch. This was Eurus's fetch. Joey had heard of some that could come into the Thorns, desperately drawn to it the way a fat fly is to a bright blue bug zapper.

"You made me," the fetch said. Fidgeting with the machete.

"Nonsense and bullshit," Joey answered.

"You made fetches."

"Bullshit again. I didn't make anything. *They* made them. I just . . . supplied the ingredients. Put them together. I barely remember anything about it, anyhow."

"Eurus says you hate us."

"Eurus ought to learn not to get chummy with hollow men."

The fetch's hands were trembling, now. Rage? Sadness? Something altogether more complex? "Why shouldn't two halves of the same soul come together? Why not make nice? We feel complete when we work together. Sometimes, we say the same thing at the same time. Isn't that a sign?"

"No sign I'd care to read," Joey said, and spat on the ground. "You ask me? I'd rather not be reunited with my Other Half, especially if that half was made of brittle twigs and cat eyes. You keep asking me, and I'll tell you that I don't really buy this Other Half garbage anyhow. You're no half of anything. Just a pale imitation of life. We're the alive ones. You're just dead things made to dance."

"You'd have me die, then," the fetch said.

"I would."

"And what of your own Other Half? He's dead, then?"

"Dead as dead can be," Joey lied. "Killed him myself. Not that he was ever really alive in the first place. Not much different than gutting a scarecrow of his straw."

The fetch narrowed its eyes, cocked its head just slightly. Did he know that Joey was lying? Or was he already aware how Joey let his fetch live a happy life in a city a couple of thousand miles away? Joey's fetch was better at living Joey's old life than he was: kept the wife happy, the kids safe. Joey had been an itinerant philanderer, a notorious drunk, a loutish roustabout. The Joey-fetch wasn't any of those things, not anymore.

"So, you won't help me." A statement, not a question. The fetch's hands tightened around the machete, its grip a swaddle of black electrical tape.

"That machete for me? Going to chop off my precious head for not curing what ills your flesh is heir to?"

Eurus's fetch frowned. He relaxed his grip on the blade.

"No. Just for hacking brush. For protecting myself." He paused, looked sad for a moment. *A ruse*, Joey thought. "I'm a good man."

"You're not a man. You're a thing. A *collection* of things."

Joey could see the fetch relinquish its hope — it left him in a small exhalation, and his already sallow chest sank further. The fetch simply turned heel-to-toe and walked back the way he came, his feet falling silently on the flat stones of the old trod.



6.

*You're starting to remember. Aren't you, Joey?  
Young boy, not yet a teen.*

*Amidst the blooming poppies, red petals with  
black hearts, you prop the boy's burlap flesh (given  
a skeleton of broomsticks and wolf bones, as many  
were) up against the lone tree out here in the meadow.*

*Hair of sand sedge and fawn's fur.*

*Skin of slivered reeds.*

*Two hermit crabs crawl up the papery cheeks  
and rest in the sockets.*

*One final detail: you uncork the blue-glass  
bottle, let the sea breeze rush out in a briny sigh,  
and once it fills the body you close the jaw tight,  
sealing it inside.*

*This isn't how all fetches are made, of course.  
But this is how yours are made, how Nightjar uses  
your gift. Not just for himself. But for others. (Other  
Others.)*

*The sun beats down on you. It never sets here,  
always overhead, always noon-time in this mead-  
ow. But that's Faerie, isn't it? Time beholden to place.  
Fixed there, like a nail in dark wood.*

*The shadow of the soul drifts into your hand.  
Nightjar's friend must have his target, and the eye-  
crabs twitch as you feed the soul into the heart, and  
there's the sound of wind over waves and a rush of  
air through flaming nostrils and you recognize —*

7.

June. Almost summer.

"C'mon," Joey growled, pounding on the door  
a third time. To himself, he mumbled, "Open up,  
open up."

The fetch answered the door.

With hands slick with blood.

Joey backed up, put up his dukes. He'd made a  
mistake. A terrible mistake. What was he thinking?  
His maudlin sensibilities clearly had to go.

"You dirty, soulless sonofa —" Joey reared back  
an imperfect fist (the cruel topography of calluses  
forced his fists to look more like arthritic claws, but  
they could still beat a bastard into gelatin if given  
half-a-chance), and the fetch held up surrendering  
palms.

"It's not me, it's not me!" the fetch said, and then  
Joey could see: the fetch had been crying. Snotty  
nose. Red eyes. Cheeks still wet.

Inside, Eurus lay across the couch, his face look-  
ing like a bloodied pumpkin. His pale wispy hair  
was matted to his forehead. His nose, once long and  
proud with that elegant and delicate bridge, now  
lay cocked a half-inch off-center.

"Who killed him?" Joey asked, his heart  
kicking in his chest like a horse.

But then a crimson spit-bubble formed on Eu-  
rus's lip, fleeing when he finally managed to speak.

"They found out," Eurus croaked. He blinked:  
a feeble effort, odd that even blinking could be so  
difficult. "They weren't —" He coughed, hacked.  
"They weren't happy. Are you here to get in your  
kicks, too? Go ahead. I'm ready."

"Who? Who did this?"

Eurus sniffed. "Everybody. Hiram Black of Au-  
tumn. Mary O'Brine, too. Enkidu and Tom-of-the-  
Grotto for the Summer. Even my own people... Miss  
Pity didn't hit me, but she stood there. Watching.  
Crying. But she's complicit. I'm done here. Done."

"What about —" Joey was going to ask about  
Spring, but did it matter? He'd be surprised if they  
bothered. Haphazard bunch of fucks, given not  
over to maliciousness but only selfishness (in its  
purest, most undiluted form). Probably too busy  
getting high, getting fucked or getting paid.

The fetch eased up to its counterpart, and  
dabbed at his face with a wet washcloth. It was  
sweet. So sweet, it damn near made Joey sick. This  
wasn't natural. This wasn't right. Then again, what  
was? Wasn't a soul in the freehold who had a good  
benchmark of normal versus abnormal anymore.  
All at sixes and sevens, as Chaucer once wrote. This  
might be totally unbelievable and far outside the  
expected order of operations, but... Jesus, the fetch  
really cared, didn't he?

"The cancer has spread," Eurus said of his fetch.  
"Prostate cancer in his lungs."

"That's kind of funny," the fetch said, suffering  
a small smile.

"It's not funny," Eurus said. "Shush."

Joey said nothing. He stood, shifting idly from  
foot to foot.

"So what is it you want, anyway?" Eurus final-  
ly asked.

Here it was, the moment. Joey licked his lips,  
couldn't believe he was doing this.

"I..."







The words almost didn't come out. He could picture the hermit crabs, skittering across a dry, false cheek. Or sand sedge, stuck to a burlap skull with tree sap. He shook the image from his mind.

"I have an idea," he said, and that was all it took.

8.

It was beautiful, here.

The Thorns did not have seasons, at least not in the way the world understands. One tract of trod may lie encased in eternal winter. A canyon of stone lined with moaning cactuses remained forever baked by a blistering summer sun.

This orchard, though, basked in ceaseless spring.

Ahead of them, the tree stood golden and strong, its red roots pushing up out of the soft grass as far as 30 feet away. From the tree's branches dangled the fattest pears, each the color of well-polished bronze. Wasps with serpents' tongues flitted from branch to branch. In the distance, something keened.

"We know the pear is always protected," Joey said, his finger coiled around the outside of the revolver's trigger guard. Eurus nodded, withdrawing the knife from its leather sheath at his hip. "It's been a long trek. We good?"

"Ready as I can be," Eurus said, drawing a deep and steady breath.

"You stay back," Joey warned Eugene — the fetch, now hardly thought of as such a thing (*sometimes, though, crab-eyes, blue-bottle sea breath, hair of beach grasses*). Eugene coughed quietly, wiping his mouth with the back of his arm. Bloody sputum lay smeared across his lips, and it showed on his teeth when he smiled.

"I know," he said.

Somewhere, in the boughs of that golden tree, something shifted. A shadow coiled tighter. A serpentine shape. A few bright green leaves drifted to the ground.

"I think we have our guardian," Joey said.

"You don't have to do this," Eugene said.

"I can do it alone," Eurus said.

"Nah," Joey shook his head. "I came all this way." *Burned your bridges with your own Court. Made enemies even considering helping some fool and his fetch. All for some mythical pear in the middle of the goddamn Hedge to cure some fetch cancer.*

But it was beautiful here, wasn't it?

The wind, soft. The air sweet.

*If I die here,* Joey thought...

"Let's move," he said, and crept toward the golden tree with Eurus at his back.





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# INTRODUCTION

*O, Wind,*

*If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?*

—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, "ODE TO THE WEST WIND"

When spring comes, the land awakens. The world stretches and stirs and begins to heat itself with the riot of life beginning anew. It's both sacred and profane, the pristine forces of renewal and resurrection and the carnality of conception and desire. It's a time of flowers and insects — both motifs that conjure images of faeries.

So, then, this book: **Rites of Spring**. This is a book about the magic of the Lost, the various conjurations and bindings they use to warm and animate the world around them like sun and spring rains. Just as benevolent faeries, the Lost learn to grant wishes — and just as malevolent faeries, the Lost's gifts come with a catch.

## THE MAGIC OF FAERIE

Throughout the folklore of the world, there's a common strain to stories about magic, particularly the magic of the things we think of as "faeries" — there's always a twist. The most commonly remembered fairy tales aren't pure wish-fulfillment. They rely on a character's virtue, wisdom, bravery or cunning to make the best of a magical gift or situation. Sometimes it takes a particular virtue to catch the faeries' attention in the first place; sometimes it takes the wisdom to see when one should follow rules and when one shouldn't.

Rules are a particular motif. Yes, the usual commonly accepted rules of magic do tend to apply — the lock of a person's hair allows you to affect the person via the Law of Contagion, while the paw of a rabbit might grant the blessing of speed via the Law of Sympathy. However, faerie magic often has more rules, ones that are often unclear. One faerie cannot revoke the curse her sister has laid on a child, but the faerie can modify the curse so that it brings sleep instead of death. A prophecy comes true precisely because a person works to negate it. Simple rules of hospitality are magically binding to the faeries, and, if broken, anger them almost more than a violent offense might. The rules aren't even consistent. Lie to one faerie, and it may punish you brutally for your dishonesty — but lie to another, and it might be pleased with your courteous humility, and furious if your sister tells it the unpleasant, unvarnished truth.

In **Changeling**, these rules see a common expression in the idea of catches, as well as the dual nature of a Goblin Contract. It's fair to say that faerie magic never provides a pure benefit without any strings attached. When devising new tokens, pledges or even Contracts for your chronicle, keep this in mind. In fact, it's a powerful motif that can affect stories as a whole — there's always a hidden cost, and the changeling who's clever enough to follow the right rules and disobey the wrong ones may just have some sort of edge. Storytellers are recommended to invoke this rule of rules, albeit with one caveat — the twists, catches and hooks should be used responsibly. If you're going to torture your players, make sure it's that good kind of torture, the kind that makes them enjoy making tricky choices instead of dreading the next decision to confront them.

## SPRING AND DESIRE

The transformative power of faerie magic neatly dovetails with the transformative power of the seasons. In the case of spring, that power has a fairly positive aspect. The world turns from gray to green, and then erupts in color as the flowers bloom. **Changeling** stories with an emphasis on vernal motifs should embrace this positive aspect — there's room for it in the World of Darkness. However, similar to faerie magic, spring isn't universally positive, and it possesses motifs that work well for representing the darker side of **Changeling**. Consider the violent winds and cold rains of early spring, the poisonous insects and centipedes that stir and writhe in the garden, the colorful spiders that cast their nets for prey.

Desire is another powerful seasonal motif in **Changeling**, and desire can be the key element in some truly gripping modern faerie tales. It can be the more heartwarming form of desire — romantic love, the desire to provide for others, the hope for a better tomorrow. But, at the same time, it can be the naked lust that poisons relationships. It can be the dream of possessing other people rather than sharing with them. Fairy tales are full of desires both granted and thwarted. Desire for a better life brought Cinderella to her happy ending, but desire also brought her stepmother



and stepsisters to a terrible end (even if that part's left out of the story more often than not these days). Desire brought Romeo and Juliet together, and laid Macbeth and his lady low. Desire starts rivalries, feuds and wars, and it inspires people to achieve better things for themselves and their loved ones. So many memorable characters in history and fiction are remembered for what they wanted, and what they were willing to do to get it. Are the characters in your chronicle any different?

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

**Rites of Spring** is a manual of new possibilities for fae magic. Therefore, this book is intended for Storytellers and players alike. Some of the options found herein are very straightforward, and can be chosen for a character straight-away. Others range a little farther afield mechanically or conceptually; they may even change the underlying assumptions about how magic works in the chronicle. With any luck, every group will find a number of things here to their tastes, even if not every option seems as though it would work at once. As always, participating in a Storytelling game is a lot like cooking — select the ingredients that seem most appealing, and you should be able to devise a meal everyone enjoys.

The **Prologue: Sticks and Stones** hints at the power that changelings have to create, for better and for worse. It's also a Spring story, about renewal — even if uncertain, and perhaps with a powerful cost.

**Chapter One: Rhyme and Unreason** is a collection of fae lore. This chapter focuses on what the Lost have pieced together or theorized about the nature of Arcadia, the origins of the True Fae and other mysteries of the mad world surrounding them. And as a nod to the other supernatural creatures prowling the World of Darkness, here you'll find some interesting rumors and story hooks to fuel the changelings' fears of their neighbors — and answer a few nagging questions along the way. The second part of this chapter entails discussion of alternate magical mechanics that go even further than the other supplementary rules that are the norm. To twist Orwell's words, "All rules are optional, but some are more optional than others"; these variations alter a chronicle's dynamic more than simple elaboration on

existing mechanics. Among these variant systems are rules for true names, making fae magic more predatory for fae creatures, a system for making the seasons matter more in a game and peculiar twists for how to handle the Hedge.

**Chapter Two: Bound in Dreams** deals with the changelings' innate abilities to manipulate the Wyrd into pledges and oneiromancy. On the pledges front, you'll find ideas for new twists on mechanics, roleplaying rituals to add more in-character color and of course a few new sample pledges to add more examples of what's possible. The dreams section adds more depth to the oneiromancy experience, with advice on how to start an impromptu dream-session and ideas for how to interpret the symbology found there. There's even a sample story outline involving entering dreams to find the heart of an unnatural sleep-sickness.

**Chapter Three: The Wyrd** concerns itself with many of the day-to-day magics that the Lost rely on. Glamour, the Mask, Clarity and the effects of iron are all discussed here, with further exploration of the effects they have on changelings for good and for ill. The chapter also presents a copious amount of new Merits, some clearly supernatural in effect, to further expand upon the possibilities available to the **Changeling** character. Finally, a goodly helping of Contracts adds a great deal more fae magic to a chronicle, ranging from general Contracts of Omen and the Moon to more Goblin Contracts, including the perilous Contracts of Sacrifice.

And **Chapter Four: From the Thorns** concerns the practicalities of entering and dealing with the Hedge just outside one's door. You'll find suggestions for shaping the Hedge and cultivating goblin fruits (as well as some more goblin fruits and oddments). There's details on claiming, modeling or creating Hollows, and a more extensive look at what can be done with Hedgespun. Finally, the **Changeling** player's arsenal of tokens is greatly expanded, with new categories of promise tokens and Hedgespun tokens introduced, with, of course, a smattering of new tokens to discover.

The snows have melted, the insects are buzzing and the soporific smell of Hedge-flowers is thick in the air. Spring is here. Celebrate it.











en... eleven... twelve...

Ivory Sophia ran her fingertip along the spines of the books almost as if she were caressing the spine of a lover. The look on her face was all business, though.

... fourteen... fifteen... sixteen... seventeen. I thought so.

She looked over her shoulder with a quick, birdlike twitch. Nobody else was in the library, of course. She'd invested no small amount of blood, sweat and Glamour into the wards that sealed off her Hollow from the rest of the tangled labyrinth outside its walls. Her collection was worth it all. Not the grandest collection that lore ever spoke of, of course, but it was prodigious, and it was eclectic and it was her.

And it was *breeding*.

Well, that was just a theory, of course. Nobody was coming in or out... well, it was possible (though she didn't like to think about it), but why would they leave new books or add a

few teeth to the large jar on the third shelf of Bookcase Gimel? It could be a trap, of course... but there were too many additions, enough at least for her to notice, and that somewhat spoiled the surprise. Could books write themselves? She thought crazily of a hothouse where books grew on shelves until ripe and ready to harvest. *Is my library more garden than warehouse?* The thought was weirdly thrilling.

She finally settled on the 12th book on the shelf; its spine was supple and gleaming gray leather that made her think of corkindrills. That had to be the new addition; the rest of Bookcase Kher's sixth shelf was accounted for. She pulled the book free, tucked it under one arm and stepped down the ladder as quickly as she dared.

The title, done in an oddly reddish-gilt script, read *The Under-Journey of the Bedlam Three, and the Cautionary Findings that Came of It*.

She folded her legs under her, settling on the piled rugs like a sated spider, and opened the book.



# CHAPTER I

## *Rhyme and Unreason*

*A little Madness in the Spring  
Is wholesome even for the King,  
But God be with the Clown...*  
— EMILY DICKINSON, No. 1333

## LOST LORE

Changelings return to Earth limited in their knowledge of the supernatural. Their memories of Arcadia are fragmentary, their understanding of the Gentry consists of a mixture of these garbled memories and folktales and few have any reliable way to learn more about the other strange and terrible inhabitants of the World of Darkness. However, none of these limitations prevents changelings from attempting to understand these many questions, and thus, many changelings formulate and discuss such questions. Most such discussions are nothing more than idle speculations, but occasionally these theories can form the basis of a freehold's policies.

## THE NATURE OF ARCADIA

One of the key features of Arcadia is its extreme diversity. One portion of Arcadia may be a forest where trees walk and all of the Gentry living there partake of the nature of plants, while another area consists of vast citadels that the mysterious grays construct from magical crystal and animate fungi. Meanwhile, a third realm may be an abstract and strange realm of air and mirrors floating in a seemingly endless expanse of open sky. Each realm has its own consistent rules and physical laws, but some of these laws may be mutually incompatible, and True Fae rarely visit realms other than the one they live in.

Although changelings know few consistently verifiable facts about the nature of Arcadia, they have many theories. Most start with the idea that Arcadia is ulti-

mately a single realm where reality is exceptionally flexible and is ultimately controlled by the wishes and desires of the Gentry. As a result, each of the many realms within Arcadia is either deliberately created by one or more Gentry who wish to exist in such an environment or spontaneously generated around these Gentry as an environment that matches their essential nature. Some changelings believe that there is no real distinction between Gentry and the realm they inhabit and that each realm is in some way an extension or part of the Gentry who inhabit it.

Other changelings take a radically different viewpoint and maintain that the different regions are effectively different worlds, each of which may be almost as different from all of the other portions of Arcadia as they all are from the mortal world. In this theory, Arcadia is not a single place but a cluster of worlds that are in some way linked together but are ultimately separate and are inhabited by beings that are essentially similar and profoundly different from each other. The most popular way of talking about this theory is to say that Arcadia is a series of linked parallel universes, each of which contains beautifully predatory beings who are related by the fact that they are alternate universe versions of one another and who loosely cooperate in their efforts to exploit the mortal world. One of this theory's major limitations is that no one has been able to explain why Arcadia is composed of a multitude of vastly different parallel worlds,



while all changelings seem to come from the same version of the mortal world.

### *Supernal Arcadia?*

There's another theory about Arcadia, though it's not widely known; this theory comes from the mages, and changelings have a tendency to avoid mages whenever possible. According to this theory, Arcadia is either — depending on the mage — a Supernal Realm that's separated from the rest of the Fallen World or a Fallen reflection of the original Supernal Arcadia. According to mage lore, bodily travel between the Fallen and Supernal should be impossible... or at least not nearly as possible as the True Fae seem to treat it.

The idea of the Supernal is explained in more detail in *Mage: The Awakening*. This perspective doesn't have much practical influence on changelings, and so isn't detailed greatly here. However, more exploration of how the two game lines might be blended will be presented in *The Equinox Road*.

## THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE TRUE FAE

Questions of the nature of Arcadia are closely related to the question about the origin of Arcadia and the nature of the Gentry. A common changeling joke is that if you ask four changelings about the origin of Arcadia you'll get five different answers. Because there is no way to obtain more information without actually returning there and no changeling remembers his time in Arcadia as anything more than a particularly vivid and terrible dream, questions about Arcadia quickly run into questions about the ability of any human or once-human mind to comprehend an environment that is truly alien. However, none of these limitations have stopped many changelings from attempting to uncover the truth about the terribly beautiful realm where they were all held captive.

### DEMONS AND FALLEN ANGELS

Christianity is the most populous religion on the planet, and by virtue of sheer numbers, many changelings come from at least superficially Christian backgrounds, whether that means having been raised in church-going families

or simply having grown up in cultures (such as the United States and most of Europe) where Christian mores and mythology are inextricably entwined in the fabric of the nation, for believer and non-believer alike. As Christianity (as well as Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrianism and many other belief systems) contains references to otherworldly beings of inhuman nature in the form of fallen angels and demons, it should come as no surprise that when changelings attempt to find explanations for the True Fae (themselves otherworldly beings of inhuman nature), the labels of demon and fallen angel quickly spring to mind.

Similar to tales of the devil, the Fair Folk are masters of temptation and bargains, and it is not a far jump to equate Fae Contracts with the same sort of pacts that Satan and his minions forged to trick unwary mortals out of their immortal souls. Ogrish or bestial Keepers, or those associated with Fire or Darkness might easily conform to legendary stories of demons, as might the Fairest of the Fair Folk, whose unholy beauty might be compared to succubi, incubi or other seductive devils.

Similarly, True Fae and fallen angels such as Lucifer himself share many personality attributes that could easily lead the Lost to believe that the True Fae and fallen angels are one and the same. The True Fae possess free will and are moved by their own will and whim. As well, they covet humankind while at the same time considering themselves far above mortal man.

One folk tradition holds that fairies are those angels who refused to side with either God or Lucifer during Lucifer's revolt. Denied the grace of Heaven but not having earned the fires of Hell, they had to find a third home. Many Lost find the story plausible. Arcadia is a place where souls do not go, so the True Fae have learned to concern themselves with bodies. They interfere with humans more than angels or demons do, for the True Fae have no place in the Great Plan. For whatever reason, God allows them to do what they may... and it alarms changelings to think they and their tormentors are simply not in God's sight.

Because of this rationalization, many folktales admonish their listeners to use religious piety to keep the Fair Folk at bay. Repeating the Lord's Prayer, scattering communion wafer crumbs or holy water, hiding in a church and waiting for the peal of church bells are all legendary means of avoiding abduction by the Fae. Unfortunately for the Lost, few if any of the Fair Folk are affected by these efforts, although whether it is because they are not truly demons and fallen angels or because the faith of those who attempt these methods is simply not strong enough is a matter of conjecture. This hasn't stopped some desperate changelings hoping to avert the attentions of the True Fae from donning religious trappings or surrounding those mortals the changelings wish to protect with the same.



## ALIEN INVADERS

One of the more common theories about the True Fae focuses on the alien nature of Arcadia and the fact that some changelings come from realms where the Gentry closely resemble UFO aliens. Although very few changelings seriously claim that the True Fae come from another planet, many believe that the Fair Folk are alien beings who ultimately come from some completely alien parallel universe or unimaginable dimension beyond the rim of space. The nature of this alien dimension remains unknown and likely unknowable, since most changelings agree that humans almost certainly cannot exist there and are likely to go insane if exposed to it.

However, changelings all agree that this alien realm is different from Arcadia. Arcadia contains many twisted reflections of the mortal world, and there are frighteningly simple paths between Arcadia and the mortal world. According to this theory, Arcadia is some sort of boundary zone between the Gentry's alien homeland and the mortal world, which partakes of features of both realms. The Gentry are therefore alien predators who cannot comfortably exist in the mortal world, but who wish to feed off humanity.

Therefore, the Gentry either created Arcadia as a place where they could bring humans to feed off them or spontaneously created Arcadia as a buffer zone between their alien homeland and the mortal world. Some of these changelings are attempting to uncover the truth about the Gentry's actual homeland and hope to eventually drive the Gentry out of Arcadia and back to their alien homeland and seal the fabric of reality with powerful wards so that they can never return.

## THE TERRIBLE DREAMS OF LOST CHILDREN

The relationship between the fae and dreams is perceptible and profoundly unclear. Many changelings believe that Arcadia is in some fashion a land of dreams, but it is equally clearly not the land of ordinary mortal dreams. Instead, some changelings theorize that the Hedge is some form of physical manifestation of mortal dreams and fears that can, to some degree, be shaped by the dreams and desires of those inside. These changelings also believe that the limitations on someone's ability to affect the Hedge are a combination of their raw power and their expectations. According to this theory, changelings who manage





to return to the mortal world lived in the mortal world until they were at least young adolescents. As a result, their minds were already bounded by expectations about the laws and limitations of the mortal world before they entered the Hedge or traveled to Arcadia; thus, their ability to affect the nature of reality in these places was seriously limited.

However, infants and young children have far fewer expectations about the nature of the world. Some changelings theorize that, long ago, very young children wandered into the Hedge and became lost. Unable to make their way out, they learned to shape a portion of it to their desires, creating realms that are twisted reflections of their memories of the mortal world. These realms of half-formed infantile dreams became Arcadia. According to this theory, the Gentry replenish their numbers (on the rare occasions that they actually die) by stealing infants from the mortal world. The Gentry steal older mortals because these once-human beings have half-forgotten memories and desires to interact with them. However, since these infants have become inhuman beings who can command the reality of Arcadia with a whim, beings who lack these capabilities, such as mortals or changelings, become nothing more than their playthings. Some changelings believe a variant of this theory, which claims that anyone who remains in Arcadia sufficiently long loses all touch with humanity and eventually becomes one of the Gentry. Only a few changelings believe this theory. Few wish to believe that the comrades they were forced to leave behind and often still mourn or hope to rescue will one day become the same as their tormentors.

## EXPLAINING THE STRANGERS

The World of Darkness contains a wide variety of supernatural beings, many of which have no direct or obvious connection with either changelings or Arcadia. Changelings may hear about these supernatural beings during the course of their lives, particularly those children of the Autumn Court who hoard whatever occult lore they can find. But because the Lost have notable issues with trusting strangers, particularly supernatural once-humans or wizards with a dangerous interest in Faerie, it's rare that changelings show themselves to these entities to request any explanation from the horse's mouth.

In the absence of other information, changelings are left to come up with explanations for the strange beings they see or meet on their own. As with their ideas about Arcadia, changelings have a multitude of theories about the strange various beings that skulk around other portions of the World of Darkness. Some of these theories are almost certainly wrong; others, depending on the chronicle, might be gruesomely true.

## VAMPIRES

Changelings often congregate in cities, much as vampires. While these two groups rarely interact, especially observant changelings occasionally notice evidence of the vampires' presence.

### ANCIENT AND DEADLY FETCHES

Some changelings have decided that the closest analogs they know to vampires are those rare and terrible fetches that become Devourers. These changelings believe that the original vampires were a bizarre strain of fetch that the Gentry made out of fresh human corpses instead of oddments like bits of bones and buttons. Some of these fetches slew their changelings and grew in power. With their changeling counterparts dead, the fetches then supposedly turned to feeding on mortals and found that they could make more of their kind in a twisted imitation of how the Gentry first made the fetches. It's said that the ritual of their creation may still be out there, written in blood somewhere in the Thorns. One variant of this theory is that the first vampires were mortals who either died in the Hedge or were killed by the Gentry and then reanimated as a previous sort of Darkling that has now fallen out of favor.

### BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

Other Lost believe that the mortal world lies at a balance point between the forces of life and death, which are also the forces of chaos and stasis. According to this theory, Arcadia is a realm that contains the pure essence of life, with its chaotic reality and eternal change, while ghosts and the Twilight World that Gravewights glimpse represent the eternal stasis of death. In between these two extremes lies the mortal world.

This theory posits that just as the Hedge is the boundary between the mortal world and Arcadia, the Twilight World is the boundary between the mortal world and the Underworld, a strange and terrible realm of death and ghosts that a very few changelings have learned how to visit. Just as changelings are mortals who have been permanently touched by the forces of life and chaos, vampires are mortals who have been touched by the forces of death and stasis. A few changelings believe that mortals are regularly abducted into the Underworld and that vampires are either mortals who managed to escape from the Underworld or some sort of half-alive fetch-like beings left in the abductees' place. Regardless of changelings' views on the precise origins of vampires, changelings who support this theory believe that vampires have some sort of innate connection to the Underworld, and many changelings wonder and worry what the Underworld's equivalent of the Gentry might be.



## SELLER'S REMORSE

Anything can be bought or sold at a Goblin Market. From a newborn's first smile to mummy dust, tangibles and intangibles are bartered, swapped and traded, the transactions overseen by savvy hobgoblins whose very nature makes them more than a match for the most adroit non-hob negotiator. While all bargains in the Market must be agreed upon by the involved parties, no requirements exist as to the need for complete disclosure, and there is no such thing as "take-backs" where hobs are concerned. Many Lost have walked away from the bargaining table believing they have gotten the best of a deal, only to discover loopholes and complications that they'd never dreamed of have once again given the non-hobgoblin half of the deal the short end of the stick. Jeb Two-Toes, a stoic Broadback, traded his nightmares to a hob in exchange for the name of the woman he was fated to marry. Two years later, those same nightmares, now made tangible, killed his destined love on their wedding night. Jeb never did find out whom the hob traded them to, but he has avoided dealing with Goblin Markets ever since. Worse, however, is the tale of the agnostic Fairest who, not truly believing in souls, traded hers to a hob for an eternity of beauty. She received it, dying a few weeks later in a manner that did not disturb her inhuman comeliness, and the next night, rose from her grave as a beautiful undead. Not everyone believes this is the origin of all vampires, of course, but it is used a cautionary tale against foolhardy bargains, all the same. And who's to say it's wrong?

## WEREWOLVES

Similar to other supernatural beings, changelings are not affected by Lunacy. They are far more likely to notice and remember the activities of werewolves than ordinary mortals. The Lost gather rumors of humans transforming into strange and terrible beastmen, and some of those who relate these tales swear that these are not simply stories of particularly deadly and powerful Hunterhearts.

## CONTAGION CARRIERS

While the bite of any fierce beast is a cause for concern, for the Lost who believe werewolves to be the result of infectious disease transmitted through a bite, a bite wound holds a special level of fear. Many legends of lycanthropes claim that the "disease" is transmitted from werewolf to victim via a contagious bite, but since most humans don't believe in werewolves (or the rest of the supernatural world), humans' biggest fear upon being bitten by a strange-acting canine would be rabies.

Changelings, on the other hand, realize that not only is the supernatural world real (they themselves being prime examples) but also that physical transformations are possible. Most have seen (or at least heard of) the effects of Contracts of Mirror or Fang and Talon that

do the same. The idea of such a change being forced upon them unwillingly, however, harkens far too closely to their half-remembered dreams of their transformation from human to changeling, and few are able to consider such a fate with a level head. More than one of the Lost has committed suicide after being bitten by an identified werewolf, before anyone had the chance (or the knowledge) to inform him he hadn't been infected with lycanthropy himself. Perhaps even more unfortunate are those who were hunted by their peers and put "out of their mercy" before a dreaded lycanthropic virus could take hold.

## HEDGE BEASTS

To some eyes, werewolves seem to be clearly akin to the Hedge Beasts. Also, many changelings consider the Shadow to be some strange offshoot of the Hedge. The fact that werewolves are at least as much at home in the Shadow as the mortal world serves to strengthen the belief that werewolves are in some way associated with Hedge Beasts. A few changelings believe that being a werewolf runs in families and have decided that they must be the result some sort of vile cross-breeding between mortals and Hedge Beasts or some other unknown denizen of the Hedge. Other Lost believe werewolves are the supernaturally tainted offspring of mortals and the bestial Gentry who capture many of the changelings who become Beasts.

## HOUNDS OF THE WILD HUNT

Arcadia is vast, unknown and to an extent unknowable. Some changelings believe that there are portions of Arcadia that are substantially different from those that the changelings escape from. These changelings believe that all captured mortals are swiftly slain in some realms; these changelings also believe that, in other realms, mortals are transformed into beings that are far less connected to humanity than other changelings.

Changelings who hold to this belief think that the Shadow is a particularly alien and distant region of Arcadia. To them, werewolves are nothing more or less than the bestial hunters of the legendary Wild Hunt, which roams the mortal world and other realms, tracking down and rending all manner of prey. For these changelings, the tales of werewolves vanishing into thin air are proof that werewolves regularly venture into alien and unknown portions of the Hedge, and stories of how most werewolves serve various magical totems is proof that these terrifying beings are still in service to the Gentry. Because of werewolves' possible connection to the Gentry and the possibility that they may still be in service to their Keepers, most of these changelings fear contact with werewolves. But some wish to free werewolves from the totems that enslave them — a dangerous ordeal, but a worthy one. Slavery cannot be condoned in any form.



## MACES

Because changelings all count as Sleepwalkers, they are far more likely to observe willworkers performing vulgar magic than ordinary mortals. Most changelings make no distinction between willworking mages, mortal thaumaturges or psychics. All of these beings seem to be ordinary mortals who have strange magical powers that can affect reality in profound ways. Some beings are clearly more powerful than others, but that's no different from the fact that some changelings are more powerful than the others.

## HEREDITARY BLESSINGS

The reality-warping powers of mages, and to a lesser extent the powers of thaumaturges and psychics, remind many changelings of some of the powers of the Gentry. As a result, some Lost assume that mages and other mortal magic users have either Gentry or perhaps those few rare fertile changelings in their ancestry. This fae ancestry provides some mortals with the ability to learn to use strange powers. However, most mortals who possess these capabilities never learn of them. To changelings who believe this theory, mages are mortals who possess the correct ancestry

and have taken the time and effort to study the supernatural sufficiently that they can harness its power.

## FLEXIBLE REALITY

Most Lost hold that Arcadia is an almost infinitely flexible realm, where the desires of the Gentry can override any and all natural laws, while the Hedge is clearly far less flexible, and the mortal world is largely governed by fixed natural laws and has very little flexibility. However, some changelings believe that Arcadia is merely easier to affect than the mortal world, but that even the mortal world is actually far more flexible than most people believe. According to this theory, what makes the mortal world most different from Arcadia is that the mortal world does its best to appear to be inflexible, so that in the mortal world many supernatural changes manifest as lucky coincidences rather than obvious violations of physical laws. This idea partially arose because of observations that many suspected magicians are unnaturally lucky. A few Lost who subscribe to this idea believe that the use of magic causes the fabric of the mortal world to become increasingly flexible and worry that using magic may cause Arcadia to expand and the mortal world to become in-





creasingly accessible to the Gentry. As a result, some of these changelings have begun considering if they should attempt to stop magicians from using magic.

## WITCHES, WIZARDS AND WARLOCKS

For those who have been faced with the reality that faeries exist, belief in other “mythical” beings is not an implausible jump. When rumors of humans doing magic reach these people’s ears, it is only natural that certain assumptions and stereotypes leap to mind. Potion-brewing crones (perhaps with a taste for the flesh of human children) or wand-waving sorcerers whose magic power comes from enchanted books of spells are two of the archetypal media representations of mages. As modern humans altered by a secret world, changelings could easily imagine that mages might also keep a more modern demeanor. Popular changeling lore holds that witchcraft is an ancient tradition, however, and certain trappings are unchanged even now. Occult scholars among the Lost debate the potential “tells” that might mark a warlock — a particular design of pentagram that appears in a sharp-eyed thug’s sleeve tattoos, a third nipple for a familiar to suckle or a faint smell of brimstone. Similarly, believing that burning a spell book or breaking a wand is all it takes to defeat a mage may very well leave one of the Lost in a precarious position should he put his theories into action.

## PROMETHEANS

Unlike vampires, werewolves and mages, Prometheans are relatively solitary and nomadic. Their numbers are far fewer than that of the previously mentioned supernatural creatures (or than changelings themselves, for that matter) making it far less likely, by simple virtue of numbers, for the Lost to encounter these beings. However, Prometheans are also less organized as a group, with far fewer overarching structures to teach and police the secrecy of their kind, meaning that should a changeling cross paths with a Promethean, there is a greater chance that the changeling may learn the truth of the Promethean nature — at least as far as that Promethean understands it. Unfortunately, this disorganization and lack of overarching social organization also mean that any individual Promethean is as likely to truly believe partly or wholly inaccurate information about his own kind as not.

## THE CREATED FETCH

Fetches are inhuman constructs created by uncaring makers to further their own unknowable purposes which are then left in an unfamiliar world to learn (or not) about their nature through trial and error. Prometheans are... inhuman constructs... created by uncaring makers... hmm! Changelings who are familiar with fetches may feel a sense of eerie familiarity when discovering the existence

of Prometheans. Many changelings assume that Prometheans’ creators are likely True Fae who are just playing some variation on the fetch theme, and will avoid the Created (or take hostile action against them). Even more hostility awaits the individual who might have the ill fortune to be identified as the creator of a Promethean. Accustomed to the wily tricks of the Fair Folk, Lost who think they have the element of surprise on a being they believe to be True Fae hiding in a human form are unlikely to wait around to ask questions before dealing with the threat in an expedient, and likely permanent, manner.

## ALCHEMICAL ELEMENTALS

Each of the Created is tied to a particular alchemical humour, a metaphysical element that tempers the Promethean’s nature and, to some extent, controls his reactions and personality. Lost who can sense the influence of such humours, or who are told of them, may believe the Created to be some variation of Elemental fae creature, and may equate the Created’s Divine Fire (a mystic force that animates Prometheans and takes the place of a mortal soul in the living construct) with the Wyrd. As many Changelings have little memory of their time in Arcadia, they may not even believe a Promethean who denies his elemental nature, believing him to be fully in the throes of Hedge-induced amnesia.

## THE TWISTING OF THE WYRD

No one is entirely certain exactly how Fae magic works outside of Faerie, perhaps not even the True Fae themselves. It is safe to assume that the roots of fae power are tied somehow to Arcadia, at least for the Fair Folk. Within their own domain, the True Fae are seemingly capable of literally anything, warping the fabric of reality around them at whim. But their abilities outside of Faerie (and perhaps the Hedge) seem to, at the very least, have some limits. Therefore, changelings may assume that the True Fae’s powers are weaker or less certain outside of their homeland, although the lowering of power from practically omnipotent to merely inhumanly powerful brings little peace of mind. Certainly, if the True Fae were completely confident in the reliability and reach of their powers outside of Arcadia, they’d have extended their reign out into the mundane world long ago, rather than contenting themselves with occasionally snatching a human or two. But even outside of the Hedge, fae magic does work, for the True Fae and for the changelings, leading some Lost scholars to hypothesize exactly how fae magics, especially that of the Lost themselves, survive and even thrive outside of Arcadia.

The effectiveness of changeling Contracts in the mundane world has led certain Lost philosophers to conjecture



## *What's for Dinner?*

Because of changelings' well-justified paranoia, they don't often make contact with other supernaturals. While other supernatural creatures may not be on the prowl for changeling slaves the way the Others are, supernaturals may prove predators of a different sort...

- The real question concerning changelings as far as vampires are concerned is, "what do they taste like?" It's easy for a vampire to mistake a changeling for an ordinary human and feed on her by accident. Changeling blood isn't directly harmful to vampires, but it has a hallucinatory effect on the drinker. A vampire suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to perception rolls for every Vitae worth of changeling blood he consumes, as he is wracked by the same misleading visions that plague those Lost of low Clarity. Faces sprout in the environment and babble nonsense rhymes, colors shift and bleed, the outlines of objects warp and shudder. The effects last until the vampire is able to sleep the meal off, though his sleep may be wracked with particularly vivid nightmares.

- For the purposes of human-eating werewolves, changelings count as human and provide Essence; they aren't that far gone. A certain portion of any changeling's body may be technically inedible, but even a Manikin is still mostly made of flesh. The Essence gained by eating changeling flesh has strongly tainted Resonance, specifically tinted by madness (particularly if the changeling's Clarity was low).

- The True Fae are not even close to human. Attempting to drink their blood or eat their flesh could have any number of detrimental side effects (assuming the predator managed to get a taste in the first place), without refreshing any Vitae or Essence.

- Mages aren't out to specifically feed on changelings (well, theoretically), but mages do have a strong interest in what they can learn from the Lost. While it's all but impossible to say with any certainty whether the Faerie that changelings escaped is the same as Supernal Arcadia, dealing with changelings may be sufficient to gain a point or two of Arcane Experience.

- Note that as always, the changeling template overrides lesser templates. A changeling cannot be a ghoul, or take the Wolf-Blooded Merit, or otherwise be a rules blend of two supernatural entities. It is unknown whether a werewolf or mage taken to Arcadia by the True Fae might lose his template and become a changeling in turn; the Others have displayed no interest in kidnapping victims who already have a strong supernatural nature to them. And, of course, a walking corpse cannot become a living changeling. A fevered imagination can speculate what the Gentry might make of one, but thankfully it seems the True Fae have no interest in trying — or if they have, whatever was left cannot survive in the mortal world.

that changeling magic is a more evolved form of that the True Fae give them (or perhaps even a mutation of what the Fae themselves possess). While True Fae abilities within their own domains are nigh unto limitless (or so the half-remembered fears and dreams of generations of escaped captives would suggest), the powers given unto (or absorbed by) their captives are significantly less. It would be a foolhardy Keeper who granted his slaves power equal to himself, even if it were within his grasp to do so. And yet, once through the Hedge, although few changelings would venture to stand toe-to-toe with one of their former Keepers, as a group the Lost certainly possess significant supernatural resources, and the potential to grow far beyond what most remember their abilities in Arcadia to have been.

Is it possible then that the human aspect that all changelings possess somehow thrives upon returning to the lands of their birth, catapulting their nascent fae potential into something vital and of almost limitless potential? That, when returned to their homeland, the conquered human spirit and the former Lost slave somehow fully merge into a being that can then grow to its whole potential, like a pot-bound plant given fertile soil? Or is the change less environmental and more a factor of the difference between slavery and freedom? Is the human soul (or what remains thereof in Lost spirits) reined in by captivity, even the luxurious servitude afforded those who are kept as indentured lovers or pampered pets by the Fair Folk? Is it the symbolic or literal throwing off of the shack-



les of their Keepers that allows changelings to find their full potential upon escaping Arcadia? Or, is there truly no difference between the power and potential of the Lost in Arcadia compared to that in the human world, and the seeming shift is merely a difference in perspective, a tearing away of the mask of weakness that the Fae keep over the eyes of their slaves while in Faerie?

Unfortunately, due in no small part to the nebulous nature of fae magics, it is likely that the whys and wherefores will never be completely known. What is known, however, is that changeling magic does thrive in the mortal world, and that, despite the chaotic and oft mutable characteristics, certain elements of changeling magic seem to run true.

## TRADITIONAL THEMES

Some fae magics are the stuff of legends. Humans, having generations upon generations to build myth and mystery around what few true accounts exist of humans meeting the True Fae and walking away, have muddled the waters a great deal, but certain themes crop up frequently enough to consider them “traditional” fae magic.

- **Time** — Whether related to longevity or the manipulation of time for themselves and their companions, the fae have long been associated with being outside of time. Certainly, any changeling who spent a year in Arcadia only to return to find his family aged by a decade would stand as proof positive of the Fair Folk’s inherent link to time magic. The Lost also feel these ties. They may share in their Keeper’s nigh-immortal lifespan by virtue of the Long of Days Merit (see p. 94) or the ability to move more quickly than humanly possible in certain circumstances (see the Brownie’s Boon Merit on p. 88, or various Contracts or blessings that increase a changeling’s Speed or reaction time).

- **Fate** — Many of the traditional fae powers can be attributed to the adroit manipulation, or at least understanding, of the intricacies of fate. From fortuitous meetings to granting fae “luck” or bestowing “curses,” the Fae are notoriously adept at making the most of situations, no matter how unlikely the odds. As well, the very core of fae magic (the Contract) is a binding of certain circumstances into a cemented destiny. This tie, between Faerie and Destiny, is so tight that even the words “Fae” and “Fate” come from the same roots. Changelings recognize this bond by their word for the Wyr. Whether literally, linguistically, metaphysically or magically, fae and fate are inextricably intertwined.

- **Nature** — Many fairy tales began as cautionary fables about the wilder world outside civilized boundaries. Fae magic has long been associated with nature, especially certain trees and plants; in the World of Darkness, perhaps because many doorways into the Hedge were located in remote or isolated locations. It is not difficult to imagine that an individual who narrowly escaped the Wild

Hunt in a dark and remote wood might believe (whether it is true or not) that the Fae controlled the branches of the trees that snagged at his clothing as he ran, or the roots that seemed to leap up to trip his feet. As well, the base elements (fire, water, earth, air) are omnipresent and primal, making them a natural candidate for association with the Fae.

- **Emotion** — It is an interesting paradox that one of the areas that the Fae are most often credited with being able to manipulate is human emotion. This may have its roots in the Fair Folks’ alien nature; their inability to comprehend truly human emotions may have given them the upper hand when dealing with mortals who are so often ruled by their feelings and desires. The Courts system is based upon these connections, and many fae abilities, from Contracts of Darkness to Fairest blessings focus on manipulating the emotions and reactions of those around the fae.

## ALTERING MAGIC

The existing rules for Contracts and pledges represent a balance between various ideas about the nature of Arcadia, the Gentry and the various supernatural powers found in traditional faerie tales. However, Storytellers who wish to emphasize particular aspects of the setting can alter these rules in a variety of ways to change this balance. For example, under the alternate rules about true names, the true name of a changeling or one of the Gentry becomes one of his most important and closely guarded possessions, and learning an opponent’s true name gives a character great power over this opponent.

The following alternate rules are all presented as ways that a Storyteller can alter the way that Contracts, pledges and other supernatural powers associated with Arcadia work to better fit with her vision of Arcadia and the Fae. All of these rules are completely optional; Storytellers should consider carefully if they wish to include any of the options below in their games. Including more than one of these options in a game is a challenge for the true experimenter, since doing so will make using Contracts and pledges considerably more complex.

## THE MAGIC OF TRUE NAMES

In many faerie stories, true names hold great power. Although this is true to a limited extent in the standard rules for ordinary Contracts and pledges, a campaign in which true names were a major source of power requires a significant number of additional rules. In such a campaign, every changeling is expected to keep her true name a closely guarded secret, and those who fail to do so risk being easy targets to all manner of attacks. The only beings who guard their true names more closely than changelings are



the Gentry, who become exceptionally vulnerable if anyone learns their true names.

## ALTERNATE RULES

The following rules can be implemented together or separately. Using all of them will result in a chronicle in which changelings and the Gentry keep their true names as their most precious secrets and changelings who learn someone's true name gain vast power over that person. Using fewer of these alternate rules allows the Storyteller to increase the importance of true names without making their possession quite so overwhelmingly powerful for the bearer.

- The first and most basic optional rule is that using the target of a Contract's true name always works as the catch for any Contract that is designed to be used on a single target. True names cannot be used as the catch of any Contract designed to affect multiple characters at once. In addition, because the character is always assumed to know her own true name, Contracts that the character uses on herself cannot use this catch. Normally, Contracts that can use a true name as a catch also have their ordinary catch, but if the Storyteller worries that allowing some Contracts to have two catches will make these Contracts too powerful or easy to use, she can rule that any Contract that can use the target's true name as the catch has no other catch.

- An alternative to this rule is that using the target's true name in a Contract renders the target unable to resist this Contract, so that any resisted rolls become ordinary non-resisted rolls. Unless the Storyteller wishes true names to provide an overwhelming advantage, true names should either act as a catch for a Contract or remove resistance, not both at once. One somewhat complex option is that how the changeling uses the target's name when performing a Contract determines if the true name will act as a catch or remove the target's ability to resist the Contract.

- Another possible rule is that saying a character's true name aloud helps protects the person saying it from any Contract performed by the named person for the next three turns. Saying the true name of a changeling or Gentry acts as a penalty equal to that character's Wyrd on all Contracts directed against the person who said the true name. If a character is the target of Contracts performed by an enemy with a Wyrd of 3, saying this attacker's true name when the first Contract is performed subtracts 3 from all Contracts cast by the attacker during this turn and the following two turns. Using a character's true name in this fashion is always a reflexive action. This ability affects only changelings and their Contracts, not other supernatural entities.

- Pledges made using a character's true name are more powerful and more binding. Changelings who swear pledges by their true names add +1 to any Adroitness, blessing or favor boons that are part of the pledge, gain an extra point

of Glamour in any pledges to give or acquire Glamour and can substitute the use of their true names for the investment of one point of Glamour in any ensorcellment pledge. However, in addition to any other penalties associated with breaking the pledge, breaking a pledge made with his true name costs a changeling one dot of permanent Willpower. The character may later pay eight experience points to purchase this lost dot back, but it is otherwise gone forever. Pledges made using a character's true name must always be said loudly and clearly enough that the entire pledge can be heard by the person it is being made to. As a result, making a pledge on his true name allows the person the changeling is making a pledge to learn his true name, which is often a price that is worth more than the pledge itself. Making such a pledge is an act of great trust or utter desperation for a changeling. Changelings who have on-going pledges sworn on their true names also cannot change their true names without either including the individuals these pledges are made to in any name-changing ritual or informing all of these people of the changeling's new true name before the

### *The Feel of Faerie*

Fae magic has a feel to it, a unique and indescribable nature all its own. Whether the magic is used for pleasure or for pain, to harm or to heal, the magic has an essence that is unlike any other force on Earth. Those who are the target of a changeling's efforts may describe their experiences in a wide variety of manners. A Fireheart's Glamour may carry with it the crackle and warmth of her blazing spirit, whether she bestows it with a fiery kiss on the brow to grant an ally Favored Fate or uses her Glamour to fuel an enemy's temper beyond control with her Friendless Tongue. A Darkling's magics may feel like a spider web brushing across his target's skin, leaving behind goose bumps and a sense of Creeping Dread, or a ghostly whisper just behind them or an almost imperceptible dimming of the lights accompanied by the tiniest wisp of an icy breeze, even if his foe is indoors.

Regardless of the particular form fae magic takes, however, there is a commonality to the "feel" of fae magics, a certain something that, while mortals may brush it aside as paranoia or flights of fancy, is distinctly otherworldly.



sun next sets. Failing to do this automatically causes the changeling to have broken her pledge.

- One crucial aspect of increasing the power and importance of true names is to prohibit any and all Contracts or others supernatural abilities that allow someone to magically learn another character's true name. The ability to do this allows powerful villains to easily learn the characters' true names and also makes it far too easy for characters to learn their enemies' true names. If true names provide great power, learning a powerful or important character's true name should be an important and relatively difficult portion of any scenario. Efforts to learn a character's true name can and should involve everything from careful spying to bribery to learning a minor villain's true name and using this knowledge to force him to help the characters learn a more powerful opponent's true name. Trickery, disguise, eavesdropping, bugs, blackmail and many similar activities should all be possible paths to learning someone's true name. However, if knowing someone's true name gives a character a great deal of power over that person, then learning her true name should never be as simply as simply using one Contract.

- Changelings never use their actual names when dealing with anyone they do not implicitly trust, and many changelings implicitly trust no one. In addition, to prevent a look at the character's birth certificate from making the process of learning a changeling's name trivially easy, a changeling's true name consists of his legal name at the time he was abducted and the nickname or "pet name" that his Keeper called him. Such nicknames can be anything, but are usually either insulting or ironic. Naturally, because of the nickname's power and because being reminded of their Keeper is never pleasant, changelings rarely tell anyone these nicknames. Also, because a changeling's true name in part consists of the legal name he had when he was abducted, changelings cannot change their true names by legally changing their names or by acquiring fake IDs. Changelings may be able to change their true names (see below), but doing so requires a magical ritual and not simply a trip down to the local courthouse.

- The effects of true names also extend to the Gentry, mortals and other supernatural beings. Learning the true name of one of the Gentry should be an exceptionally difficult task, but also gives a character great power over this being. In addition, the Gentry are inherently creatures of myth and story and not merely a blending of myth and humanity, as changelings are. Even if the Storyteller allows changelings to change their true names (see below), she should make doing so impossible for one of the Gentry, since changing its name would effectively transform it into another being entirely.

- Learning a mortal's true name is a relatively simple matter. A mortal's true name is his birth name. A mortal

can change his true name with great ease, which can confuse changelings on his trail.

- Learning the true names of vampires, werewolves, mages and similar supernatural beings requires learning their birth names and also the names they use in their supernatural community, such as a mage's shadow name. Only by learning both names can a changeling use this being's true name. The true name of a ghost is whatever name was placed on its tombstone, which could easily be different from its name in life. John Doe and Jane Doe are moderately common true names for ghosts. If a ghost was not formally buried, then that ghost has no true name.

- An alternate (and perhaps far more thematic) definition of a true name may not technically be a person's birth name. A true name might be the name his mother whispered to him while still carrying him, a name she favored over the name she eventually agreed on. A true name might be the first word spoken to a child, perhaps sung to him by a bird. These more abstract and mystical true names are obviously harder to uncover. However, every person remembers his or her true name on a subconscious level, making the discovery of a true name the work of an oneiromancer.

## CHANGING A CHANGELING'S NAME

One of the limitations of using true names in this fashion is that once a character's true name is known to an enemy, this character becomes exceptionally vulnerable to attack. While this sort of vulnerability can be interesting in the short term, having a single mischance effectively cripple either a character or an important long-term opponent can make a chronicle a bit more predictable in the long term. One solution to this problem is to allow characters to change their true names. To avoid making the power of true names useless, strict limits must be placed on characters' ability to do so. These limits should make doing so costly to the character and something that is impossible to do frequently. Depending upon exactly how difficult the Storyteller wishes this process to be, here are two possible options.

The first option is for name changing to cost one dot of permanent Willpower and to only be possible at midnight on the night of the new moon. If the Storyteller uses this option, someone wishing to learn the character's new name knows what day and time the character must change her name. In addition, a character's name can be changed no more often than once a year.

The second option is for name changing to cost one dot of permanent Willpower and to only be possible on the two most symbolically powerful nights of the year, Halloween (October 31) and Beltane (April 30). Using the second option means that characters may end up having to deal



with the consequences of having their true names known for as long as five or six months. Regardless of which option is used, changelings can regain this lost dot of Willpower by spending eight experience points. Also, changelings should not be able to change their names again until they have regained this lost dot of Willpower. In addition to the cost and the timing, changing a true name should also require a ritual that lasts an hour or two and that can be disrupted by intruders. The necessity for such a ritual allows characters to be able to foil an attempt by an enemy to change his true name and thus escape their power.

## THE TOUCH OF ARCADIA

This rather simple addition to the rules emphasizes that contact with Arcadia and all things associated with the Fae does not simply make characters more prone to madness; such contact also makes them more vulnerable to the True Fae and to all supernatural abilities associated with them. In contrast, characters who manage to retain a strong connection to the mortal world can more effectively resist the powers of the Gentry. Similarly, ordinary mortals can also more easily resist the powers of changelings and the True Fae.

## ALTERNATE RULES

The following two rules can be implemented together or separately. However, because this is a fairly simple and limited change in rules, Storytellers using this option should probably use all of these rules.

- In addition to representing a changeling's sanity and connection to the mortal world, Clarity also represents a changeling's vulnerability or ability to resist the effects of Contracts and similar powers. Changelings with a Clarity of 7 have no bonuses or penalties. For every two points (round up) that the changeling is above or below this Clarity, she gains or loses one die on all rolls to resist Contracts. The penalty also applies to any resistance that is expressed by subtracting one or more of a changeling's Traits from a Contract, such as for the one-dot Darkness Contract, Creeping Dread, which applies the target's Resolve as a penalty to the Contract's dice pool. A changeling with a Clarity of 9 would gain a one-die bonus to all resistance rolls or totals, while a changeling with a Clarity of 4 would suffer a -2 penalty to all resistance rolls and totals. These penalties or bonuses apply only to Contracts that provide the target with some resistance roll or dice pool penalty.

- Just as changelings, mortals are naturally resistant to Contracts and other supernatural powers of the Gentry. Thus, the Storyteller can either choose to give all unensorcelled mortals a one-die bonus to resist all Contracts used against them, or the Storyteller can rule that any Contract used against a single unensorcelled mortal costs one additional point of Glamour. Because ensorcelled mortals have at least temporarily become

part of the world of the fae, ensorcelled mortals do not gain either bonus. Naturally, using a Contract's catch also removes the need to spend this additional point of Glamour. Storytellers should choose one of these two rules; using both would make mortals too resistant to the effects of Contracts.

## THE WHEEL OF THE YEAR

The concept of the power of seasons is deeply woven into the tapestry of Fae society. By embracing the ever-changing-and-yet-constant cycle of the seasons, changelings in the distant past forged a Contract that is incomprehensible to the True Fae, and thus afforded the Lost at least a small amount of protection against them. The Great Courts are based on these ancient Contracts, with each claiming the quarter of the year that most closely echoes their own motivations, but few modern changelings truly understand the initial reason that the Courts were arranged thusly. In a campaign in which this theme is strengthened, however, the seasons can become more than a banner around which various political parties rally — the unceasing ebb and flow of the year can be used as the base contract upon which all others are founded, the eternal agreement between nature and reality without which no other magic can exist.

## DEFINING SEASONS

At the Storyteller's discretion, the seasons, for the purposes of these rule variations, may be static, regardless of their location or outside influences. In this case, Spring would be defined as the time period from March 21<sup>st</sup> to June 21<sup>st</sup>, Summer from June 21<sup>st</sup> to September 21<sup>st</sup>, Autumn from September 21<sup>st</sup> to December 21<sup>st</sup> and Winter from December 21<sup>st</sup> to March 21<sup>st</sup>. If it suits the Storyteller's needs, these time periods can be immutable, used as the defining perimeters for the season set in any game location. In this case, each Court's period of power is finite, and would not change from place to place, even when summer found Australia freeholds to be snow-covered or winter in the tropics was as balmy as any other season. Changelings around the world would recognize and anticipate the regular and immutable shifts of power on a global basis.

Alternately, the time periods associated with seasons can be localized and varied to represent the seasonal transitions of a given location. For games set in the Southern Hemisphere, the seasons would be reversed, with Winter holding sway during June to September, and so on. In places where the transition of seasons is all but nonexistent (tropical and polar zones, for example, but also some mountain peaks might be constantly Winter, as might the depths of the ocean, while a massive indoor greenhouse such as the Eden Project might remain ever Spring-domi-





nated), the Storyteller may determine that a single season reigns at all times (with that Court receiving benefits to the exclusion of all others), while other areas transition from season to season as their weather changes.

As well, should the Storyteller wish to allow it, outside influences (natural or otherwise) might further influence the perimeters of which season is dominant at any given time. Storms or other weather patterns, or strong and long-lasting magical influences might pull an area into Autumn despite the date, or chase away Winter long before it was scheduled to lose power.

## TRANSITIONS

Regardless of the specific dates used, seasonal changes are likely to be a time of conflict and transition among the Lost. The seasonal (and corresponding power) changes might be succinct, with the change of seasons happening at dawn, noon, sunset or midnight on the day of transition. Alternately, the season might overlap, either short term, with the incoming and outgoing seasons being in power for the 24-hour period around the change, or more long-lasting, with a period of gradual change as the outgoing seasonal Court feeling its power slowly slipping away over a few weeks while the incoming rival slowly gains strength.

Particularly cruel Storytellers may determine that no season rules on the days of transition (and may also throw in other days of non-seasonal influence, such as the cross-quarter days (February 5<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup>, August 5<sup>th</sup> and November 5<sup>th</sup>) just to keep the Courts on their toes. These days may simply not provide any Court with a seasonal benefit, or they may put all Courts at a detriment, as if their adverse Court was in power.

## ALTERNATE RULES

Any of the following rules can be used alone to slightly increase the focus on the seasons for a **Changeling** chronicle. Alternatively, several or all may be used in conjunction with one another. Where all are used, the turning of the seasons, and the changes that come with them, will become an integral part of the game, with the Lost planning actions and defenses based on the cycle of the year. Courts will become the integral aspect of identification for changelings, strongly overshadowing kith, seeming and order as the Lost struggle to bond with those who are currently in power, or alternatively, to bolster their motleys with a variety of Court members so as to not leave themselves vulnerable at any point during the year. And, as Courts become more heavily focused, any rifts or rivalries between rival Courts (especially adverse Courts) may well escalate into whole-scale war between the Lost.

- Winter and Summer are adverse seasons to each other, as are Spring and Autumn. The two seasons that are not adverse to a season adjoin it. The current season is the

active season. In some regions, Summer and Spring form an alliance called the Seelie Courts, while Autumn and Winter pledge support to one another as the Unseelie Courts.

- At the core of a seasonally enhanced game is the idea that the Court's correspondence with the associated season is a deep and binding relationship. Each member of a Court gains a number of benefits when that season is active. First, they receive the 8 again rule for all dice pools (including supernatural challenges) during the time period that corresponds to their Courtly season. This benefit is only available to those who have at least one dot of Mantle in their particular Court. Courtless (or those who have chosen a Court but do not have at least one dot of Mantle for that Court) do not gain this benefit, even on the days of transition or other non-seasonal time periods.

- During seasons that adjoin a Court's season, the Lost of that Court do not receive any additional benefit, but during their adverse season, they are at a -1 penalty to all actions (including supernatural ones).

- When the change of seasons causes the inherent powers associated with Courts to wax and wane, changing Courts becomes a severe taboo. Those who do are seen as untrustworthy or power-hungry and held in suspicion for at least a year (a full turn of the seasons) until they have "proved" their change of allegiance is sincere. Thus, a changeling may not gain a point of Mantle until a year after she has formally announced her allegiance with a given Court, and any wavering (claiming to be Courtless or of another Court) during that year will reset the time period.

- Due to the increase in rivalry between Courts, the Court Goodwill Merit is more expensive (and more useful). Characters must round down, not up in determining their bonus, meaning that it requires two points of Court Goodwill to gain +1 bonus and four points to gain +2. In addition, lower levels of this Merit do not allow characters access to the Court's Contracts. Only with five dots of Court Goodwill is access to the target Court's Contracts, and even then only one- and two-dot Contracts can be learned. Court Goodwill is still applicable only to Courts other than the changeling's own.

- While good relations with other courts is tolerated, using it as a transition to changing Courts is frowned on heavily. Those who leave a Court for another do not gain any of their old Court Goodwill as a new Mantle, but must wait for a year before gaining their first dot of Mantle, just as all Lost do.

- Every member of a given Court has access to the same benefits listed on p. 97 of **Changeling: The Lost** as being reserved only for the Court leader. These benefits are available to those with Mantle of 3 or higher during any part of the year, and for those with one or two points of Mantle, only during their corresponding season.



- In games in which Storytellers edict that the “normal” flow of seasons is not in effect (such as a tropical clime where Summer holds reign year-round, or during a freak Spring snowstorm when Winter has usurped the Antler Court’s power), the ancient Contract that helps keep the True Fae at bay is violated, leaving the Lost more vulnerable to the predations of the Fair Folk. This is more effectively implemented through plotlines and story twists than game mechanics.

- As an extreme variation, a changeling’s seasonal affiliation may be determined by the season in which he escaped Faerie. This may determine many of the individual’s personality traits and much of his outlook on life (much in the same way some believe the time of birth does through astrology.)

## HEDCEBOUND

The Hedge plays a double-edged role in the lives of the Lost. For most, their post-escape lives began with little more than a few muddled dream-memories of time spent in Arcadia and the still-bleeding wounds inflicted by the Thorns. Although the changelings’ physical wounds soon heal, the scars often remain — the Hedge is their Keepers’ last word, the parting shot of pain that adds insult to injury. Those who return to its thorny labyrinth find that the Briars are full of dangers, physical and spiritual, that muddle perspective and threaten Clarity as well as hiding all manners of deadly beings.

The Hedge is not entirely negative, however. It represents a



Thus, Mantle is not just a mark of one’s political affiliation but one’s inherent tie to the cycle of the seasons and a mark of one’s freedom from the Fae. Abandoning one’s Mantle (or deviating in one’s expected personality or outlook) is seen as a form of mental illness. Courtless, in this game variation, would be only those who turned their back on their “natural” Court, and would be seen as untrustable deviants at best, or, at worst, potentially still tied to their Keepers.

transition from the changelings’ former lives to their new ones, a physical symbol of their freedom and a barrier between their new/old world and the lands of the True Fae. Also, within the Hedge tokens, trifles and goblin fruit are found — wondrous items that can provide healing, strength and other supernatural aid to the Lost. And, for the brave of heart and strong of will, Hollows can provide otherworldly sanctuaries.



## ALTERNATIVE RULES

For Storytellers who want to play up the role of the Hedge in changelings' lives, some or all of these alternate rules can be implemented to tie the Lost more closely to the Briars. Be aware, however, that many of these changes shift the theme of a chronicle from the Lost's interaction with humanity to a very fae-centric focus. While this is likely to up the fantasy aspect of the game (and potentially the horror factor as well), it may result in several other interesting themes being downplayed, and there is the danger of the mortal world becoming little more than a chore to the Lost, a place where they go to hide from the dangers of the Briars and prevent themselves from overdosing on Glamour, but which holds few real connections for them. Note that these rules are strictly optional; for more conventional elaboration on the Hedge, see Chapter Four.

- Changelings actively sense the presence of Glamour, in themselves and around them. When near a fae object or creature, the Lost can innately sense that Glamour is nearby and (with a successful Intelligence + Wyrd roll) the relative power level or quantity thereof. The same challenge can be used to pinpoint one Glamour-filled object among similar but mundane items or to pick the most Glamour-laden person out of a crowd.

- Any creature with a Glamour pool feels buoyed by adding to that pool and weakened when it wanes. Just as humans can feel it when they start to become hungry or thirsty, a low Glamour level is an uncomfortable sensation.

- Humans cannot be harvested for Glamour, neither through emotions nor dreams nor pledges. Having no inherent tie to Faerie, mortals (and non-fae supernaturals) cannot generate Glamour themselves, and thus cannot be the source of it for the Lost. Humans are the base materials from which changelings are formed, but their time in Faerie (and the influence of their Fae Keepers) is what "charges" the Lost and makes them something other than human.

- Life outside of fae lands is draining. Changelings lose one point of Glamour upon exiting the Hedge (even if it is simply stepping into the human world and returning immediately to the Hedge) and an additional point for every 24-hour period spent outside the Hedge.

- Being within the Hedge inherently recharges a changeling's Glamour. For every 24 hours spent within the Hedge, a changeling gains one point of Glamour.

- Being within a Hollow enhances the Glamour-recharging effects of the Hedge. For every four hours spent within a Hollow, changelings gain one point of Glamour.

- Any goblin fruit or trifle can be reaped rather than consumed for its normal purpose, to gain a point of Glamour.

- Any token may be reaped for a number of dots of Glamour equal to the token level. A successful reaping automatically takes all the Glamour in a token; a single point of Glamour cannot be reaped from a five-dot token, for example. Reaping a token requires only one challenge regardless of how many dots of Glamour are reaped, and a successful reaping destroys the token.

- Changelings, hobgoblins or other Hedge creatures with a Glamour rating, and (for the truly adventurous or hopelessly insane) the True Fae can be harvested for Glamour. Unlike the standard harvesting of human emotions or dreams, this is truly a draining of one entity's supernatural energy for the benefit of another. In order to reap Glamour in this manner, the attacking changeling or True Fae must first touch her target, and then concentrate for one turn to reap the Glamour (Wyrd + Wits versus the target's Resolve + Wyrd if the reaping is not voluntary). Success removes a point of Glamour from the target, who feels the loss as a tangible lethargy or drain.

- The Hedge itself can be reaped for Glamour beyond the one point per 24 hours the Hedge gives to the Lost. Treat the Hedge as having five dice for the purposes of resisting this action. Reaping the Hedge has no real debilitating effect on the Briars — the boundary lands are simply too vast and Glamour-infused to be adversely affected, although small cosmetic changes may appear in the area of the reaping (withering vegetation, fading colors, cooling temperatures, etc.). Reaping the Hedge, however, does create ripples in the Briars that are likely to attract other things (hobgoblins, Hedge denizens or the Fair Folk), which are happy to prey upon those who are low on Glamour (and thus potentially weak.) Every point of Glamour reaped in this manner increases the chance of something hungry arriving, looking for a meal.

- Failure on a reaping attempt (upon the Hedge or a Glamour-possessing creature) results in the attacking changeling losing a point of Glamour. (Storytellers should be cautioned that implementing this rule, especially in conjunction with the Glamour-hunger rule below, is likely to lead characters into a cycle of hunger/predation that may be very challenging to control.)

- Any time a creature (including the Lost) has less than half (rounded down) of his potential Glamour pool, he begins to feel a strong Glamour-hunger that is increasingly difficult to deny. When below one third of his potential Glamour pool, any changeling presented with a source of Glamour must succeed on a Wits + Resolve roll to avoid reaping the Glamour immediately. This roll is modified by -1 for every point of Wyrd the changeling possesses. Thus, if an Ogre has a Wyrd of 6, and a maxi-



mum Glamour of 15, any time his Glamour falls below 5, he must roll his Wits + Resolve –6 to resist reaping available Glamour sources.

- For particularly dastardly Storytellers, the current Glamour rating of the creature or the token dot level of the item can be added as an additional modifier against the hungry changeling's ability to resist reaping. Thus, the abovementioned Ogre would be at an additional –3 penalty to resist reaping his treasured Hoarfrost Spine, or at an additional –5 to resist reaping his motley-mate with a Wyrd 5 rating. (Goblin fruit and trifles are con-

sidered to have one point of Glamour if their levels are not otherwise specified.)

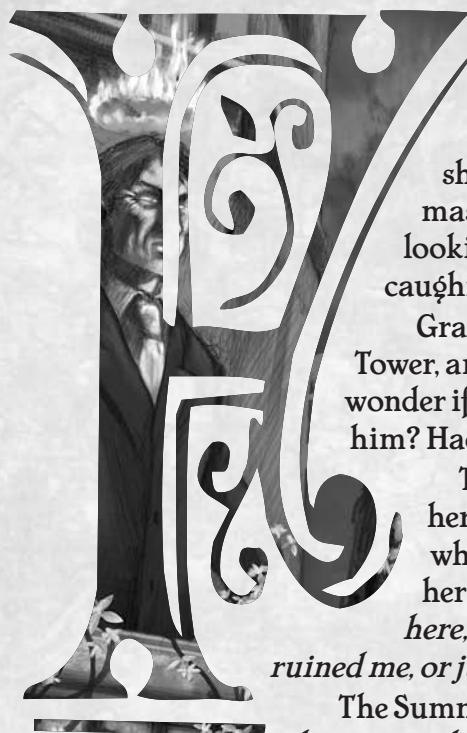
- Lost who are trapped away from the Hedge and other fae sources of Glamour can starve to death due to lack of Glamour. When a changeling's Glamour drops to zero, she begins to lose health levels at each point when a Glamour would normally be lost. (One point of blunt damage with the loss of each point of Glamour below zero.) This damage can only be "healed" with Glamour, not through normal healing methods, and the passage of time (outside of the Hedge) only exacerbates the issue.











lowering vines coated the lower portions of the Freedom Tower and wound their way upward. From her detached, bodiless position, Rose Thorne saw them from a distance, but their scent enfolded her as if she were lying among them. It was a powerful scent, massaging old memories so strongly that she had to avoid looking at the city below her. She knew if she did, she'd be caught in its millionfold windows into her past.

Grandfather Thunder was standing on a balcony on the Tower, and the way he stared into the sky made Rose Thorne wonder if he knew he was in her dream. And could it really be him? Had he forced her way into her dream somehow?

The shock of the question was almost enough to wake her. She wrestled with her paranoia for a few moments while the city jangled and shifted below her, then exerted her will over the dreamscape once again. *Why are you here, Thunder? What do you stand for — everything that's ruined me, or just yourself?*

The Summer King held his hand up and examined it, turning it this way and that, as if looking for smudges of dirt. He didn't seem to notice the long coils of vine that wrapped around his wrist, snaking into his sleeve and trailing out down the tower as they left his clothing. The vine had no leaves, only tendrils of something that could have been Spanish moss or, more likely, the faintly vampiric spidermoss that grew in the Hedge. Thin, but strong, and it lost itself quickly. . . .

*That's it, thought Rose. He's bound. By a promise. He has a pledge. If I can find it . . . if I can find what he's promised, and to whom . . .*

She rose quickly toward wakefulness, laughing erratically to herself.



# CHAPTER 2

## *Bound in Dreams*

*Whispering lunar incantations  
Dissolve the floors of memory  
And all its clear relations  
Its divisions and precisions. . .*

— T.S. ELIOT, "RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT"

### THE BOUND WORD: PLEDGES

The bound word is at the heart of fae magic. Whether taking advantage of the age-old promises between the Others and various elements of reality, or crafting their own on-the-spot oath, changelings access much of their magical potential through what are essentially agreements between two or more parties that things should be a certain way. These agreements and the give-and-take of power tied into them lie at the roots of Contracts, whether the fae actually recognize that their ability to withstand a blow is because of an ancient pact between the Fair Folk and Stone, or not. Promises between the True Fae and the rest of reality are steeped so strongly in the very fabric of Arcadia that they merge with all who spend time there, granting changelings their own fae power (and, some say, their seemings and kiths as well). It is rumored that Faerie itself was created as a result of the eldest of the timeless Ancient Ones' promise (perhaps to reality itself) not to overly torment the Earth if given a land within which their whim held supreme reign. Whether this is historic truth or not is likely unknowable, lost in the mutable nature of Faerie and the fickle memories of those who dwell there, but there is a form of fae magic that is undoubtedly tied directly to the prac-

tice of supernaturally-supported promises, and rather than being blurred with centuries of ancient history, is being made, manifest and modified every single day — the pledge.

### THE BROKEN WORD

Legends are filled with stories of warning about the ramifications of breaking one's word. In legend, men married to fae women who break the promises made to them inevitably lose their wives, their children and often their lives. In other stories, those who break their word suffer all manner of ill fates. Transformation into an animal or tree, blindness or financial ruin await those who are untrue to their word in the world's mythologies.

While many mortals no longer believe that violating a promise threatens more than the potential for a bad reputation, a broken vow can have the power to bring bad luck, physical harm — even death. So why then would the Lost, knowing the truth about the power of pledges, ever venture into one? Why give your word, when the penalty for betraying it can be so great? Because the power pledges hold is equal to — or greater than — the risk.



## BENEFITS OF BINDING

Unlike Contracts, pledges are not limited to established agreements between the fae and Stone or Smoke or Darkness. Pledges are not static, although they can be traditional; instead, they are living agreements, created as needed and tailored to the needs of those who create the pledges. They are forged, as needed, between two or more parties, and thus can be customized to any given situation. Pledges offer the Lost a way of gaining allies, harvesting Glamour, protecting their freeholds and Courts, bolstering their abilities and shoring their defenses with more flexibility than Contracts allow. A well-crafted pledge can virtually ensure peace, power and prosperity, while a sneaky one can bind a powerful enemy's hands or tip the scales to turn a casual acquaintance into a (sometimes unwitting) accomplice. As (at least in theory) an informed agreement between those involved, the magic that binds pledges is not subject to the possibility of failure that a more offensive supernatural binding might be, and in some situations (such as ensorcellment), pledges may be the only way for a changeling to accomplish a given goal. In short, the reasons for using pledges are clear — they are simply too useful, too powerful, too beneficial not to use — regardless of the risk.

## WORDING

When each word holds the potential for great power or punishment, a wise man chooses his words carefully. Pledges are words made manifest, promises that can heal or kill, and few instances exist where words have as much potential as they do when the Lost use words to make pledges. Thus, the Lost (at least those who recognize the danger inherent in a poorly worded pledge) are very careful when they make pledges — a loophole or pitfall in wording can bring about disaster for one who swears his troth without careful consideration.

## TRADITIONAL VERSUS MODERN

Because of the potential for danger involved with pledge wording, many of the Lost rely upon traditional pledges where such exist. Using the same (or very similar) wording as an oath that has been sworn by various parties over decades or centuries gives those involved more assurance that they have not unintentionally crafted a flaw into their pledge — or that the other party has not intentionally done so to take advantage. (Changelings with a preference for formality or certain pretensions may also cling to the traditional wordings

of vows simply for the aesthetics thereof.) In some cases, this leads to a bit of societal pressure when Lost with little emotional connection to the quirks of archaic speech find themselves encouraged by those who are “in the know” to use flowery and ornate pledges whenever possible. Some agree, willing to wrap their tongues and minds around the unfamiliar wordings due to social or political pressure, or for the sake of the additional safety they are believed to contain. Others find it difficult to place any weight in words that they wouldn't otherwise use. Similar to a bride and groom who care less for traditional vows and more for vows they write themselves, these changelings forge modern promises that they hope will not inadvertently contain a loophole or unseen complication that will prove to be to their disadvantage.

Modern wordings are also considered far more practical when swearing to a pledge with a mortal or other non-fae party. This is particularly the case if the changeling doesn't want to immediately rouse the other party's suspicions. It's easier to get a modern art student to agree to the Reaper's Pledge if it isn't couched in peculiar language. Contemporary phrasing is therefore considered far superior when a pledge is used in subterfuge. Interestingly, this practice often leads many Lost to prefer more archaic forms when swearing pledges to one another — it's a sign of trust, of announcing to all participants that they are agreeing to an openly supernatural promise.

## VARIATIONS ON A THEME

Some pledges — the Oath of Rose and Thorn, the motley pledge and the like — are such an integral part of changeling society that many traditional versions exist, and a large portion of those who enter into the pledges may choose to use the more formal, tried-and-true wordings as a default. Other pledges, however, are less common, or may deal with situations unique to modern changelings. There is no traditional pledge, for example, to promise to drive a getaway car for someone in exchange for being more adept behind the wheel. (Though there may be an archaic form that could be adapted from the days of highwaymen and coaches...) There is no historic wording to cover the use of one's talents with a computer to cover another's hacking attempts, or to promise to help out in a messy child custody battle.

Other situations blend traditional and modern issues — fealty over one's mortal street gang, for example, or forbidding the use of cell phones or modern record-





ing devices within a freehold leader's presence. In these, even the most traditional pledge-maker may be challenged to tinker a bit with the wording of his oaths in order to cover all of the potential qualifications.

Still other pledges are simply variations of traditional situations in which the wording doesn't quite suit the needs of those involved: A Reaper's Pledge might be altered to allow an exchange of goods and services rather than the traditional service for a token of appreciation paradigm. An Oath of Rose and Thorn might be shortened to a single day's duration, rather than an entire month's with a commensurate reduction in sanction.

In these cases, the Lost have little choice but to "wing it" with pledge creation. They may craft traditional-sounding pledges that cater specifically to the situation or come up with wholly modern ones that better suit their own particular tastes. Any changeling may craft a pledge, but when faced with the challenge of doing so (and the potential risk of a mistake in wording), changelings may consult the services of someone who is known to be very adept with crafting pledges (see the Pledgesmith Merit on p. 94) either to create a vow for them whole cloth or to double-check their wording to ensure there are no unintentional complications. Some pledgesmiths actually make a living by creating pledge wordings for others, or are in the full-time employ of changeling leaders to double-check the wording of every pledge they enter into. Others simply use their ability for their own protection — or benefit, in the case of unethical pledgesmiths who may use their knack with words to intentionally create pledges that put others at unwitting disadvantage while protecting the crafty pledgesmith's best interests.

## ORGANIC CHANGES AND REGIONAL SLANTS

Just as songs and stories tend to change and grow from place to place as they are told over and over, so do traditional pledges (themselves a predominantly oral tradition) vary over time. A mentor offers his student an oath of fosterage. The boy cherishes that pledge and commits it to memory, and when the time comes for him to foster his own student, he wishes to use the same oath. But the words that come out may be slightly different from those his mentor spoke to him, due to nervousness or mistakes in memory, and when his own student takes her first fosterling, the pledge may vary even further.

As well, regional influences affect pledge traditions. Changelings in a freehold in a backwater corner

of the South might tend toward pledges that reflect their slow-paced lifestyle, whereas a pledge in Manhattan might evolve to include a plethora of extremely detailed clarifications, quantifications and exceptions, as suits the litigious culture that surrounds it. Rural Lost communities may foster pledge traditions that are very different from the pledge traditions of urban or metropolitan ones. Environmental influences can change pledges as well. A freehold centered on a particularly dangerous part of the Hedge may add boons or tasks that involve protecting the freehold's participants from their locale, or a harsh environment might motivate the Lost to include hospitality tasks in all of their pledges.

Not all variations in traditional pledges are due to variations from common roots, however. Some pledges have unique origins, even though they fulfill the same purpose. Although the situations that give birth to a desire for a treaty pledge or vengeance oath are nigh-universal, not all changelings are from locations where Western European historic influences are prevalent. The Others are as likely to take a human from the Middle East, Polynesia, Mongolia or Peru as from Iowa or Paris, and fae captives from non-European societies are just as likely to escape their Keepers and become Lost as any others. There are freeholds, some of them longstanding, in Asia, Eastern Europe, South America, Australia and Africa, and the diverse cultures of the individuals who created these changeling societies are just as influential on their traditions as Western European traditions are on the cultures that have roots there.

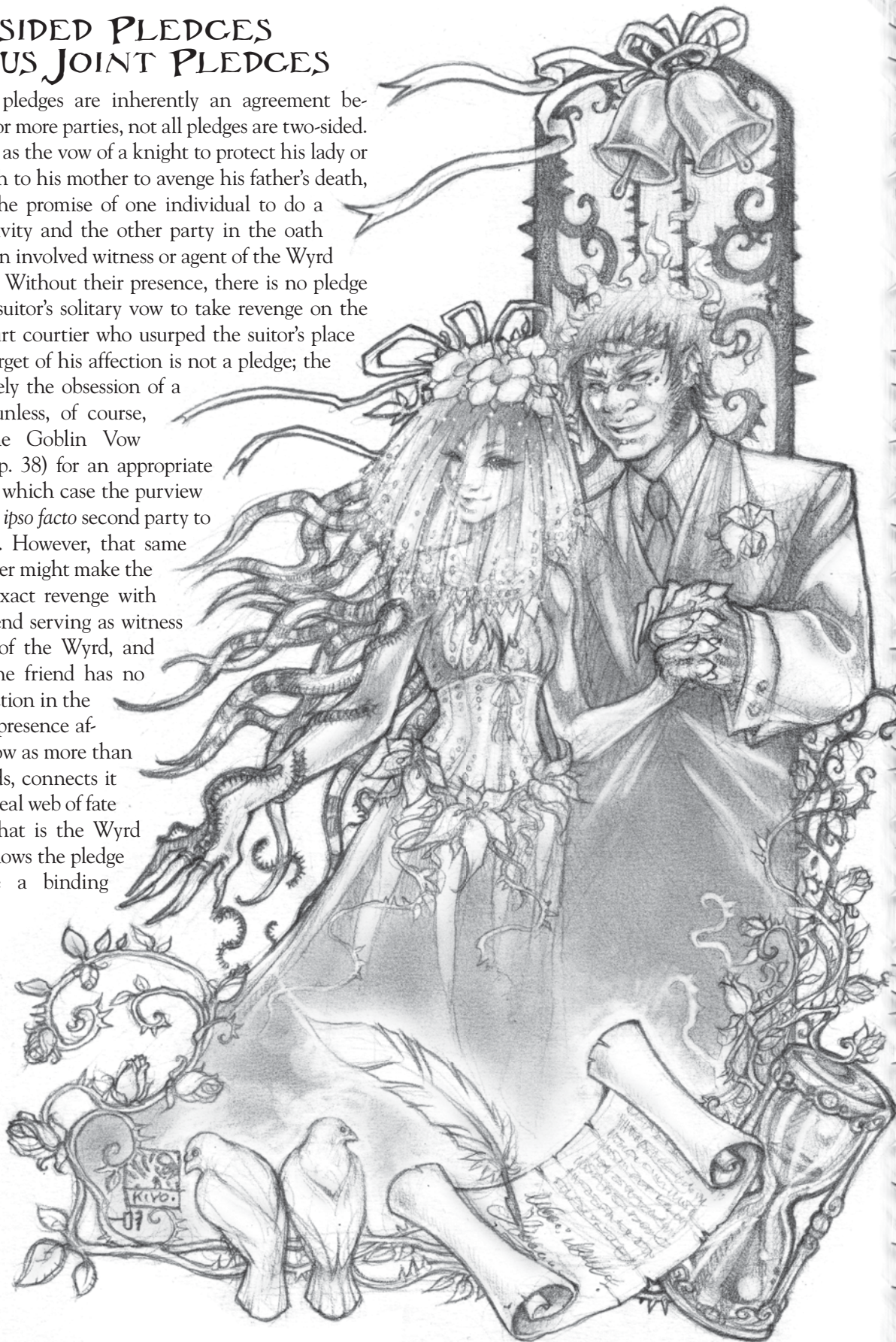
Thus, traditional Japanese pledges (either used in freeholds in the island nation itself, or those where Japanese culture is a strong influence or even by individual changelings who feel a tie to that culture) may be couched in terms akin to those used by the great Japanese poets and storytellers, or those similar to the ceremonies used by early Japanese emperors. Similarly, Arab, African or South American traditional styles may still strongly influence the wording of Lost pledges in those areas, or in areas where those cultures are prevalent.

American changeling freeholds may cling to "medieval" wordings for traditional pledges or may incorporate verbal stylings from other cultures that have had influence on the freeholds' members. Since the United States is a melting pot of cultures, it is not unusual to find the Lost in an American freehold using pledges that trace their histories back to cultures across the globe.



## ONE-SIDED PLEDGES VERSUS JOINT PLEDGES

While pledges are inherently an agreement between two or more parties, not all pledges are two-sided. Some, such as the vow of a knight to protect his lady or a man's oath to his mother to avenge his father's death, are really the promise of one individual to do a certain activity and the other party in the oath serving as an involved witness or agent of the Wyrd to the vow. Without their presence, there is no pledge — a jilted suitor's solitary vow to take revenge on the Spring Court courtier who usurped the suitor's place with the target of his affection is not a pledge; the vow is merely the obsession of a madman (unless, of course, he has the Goblin Vow Merit (see p. 38) for an appropriate purview, in which case the purview serves as an *ipso facto* second party to the pledge). However, that same spurned lover might make the pledge to exact revenge with his best friend serving as witness and agent of the Wyrd, and although the friend has no task or sanction in the pledge, his presence affirms the vow as more than simple words, connects it to the ethereal web of fate and time that is the Wyrd and thus allows the pledge to become a binding pledge.





It is rumored that the Others, by virtue of possessing an innate connection to and competence with the Wyrd that changelings are simply incapable of duplicating, are able to create Goblin Vows at will with no sanction. Some changelings believe the most commonly used of these pledges eventually became worn into the pattern of reality so deeply that they were available for other fae creatures to use as well, in the form of Contracts.

## ONE-SIDED PLEDGES

One-sided pledges are simple to create. One party (usually the one actually taking on the tasks) states her task (most commonly a duty, endeavor or forbiddance), the benefit she will receive for keeping true to her word (boon), the penalty if she fails (sanction) and the time length of the pledge (duration), and her words are witnessed by the party acting as the agent of the Wyrd. Most often, this individual is involved in the vow somehow, perhaps as the target of protection or a friend or motley member of the pledging changeling (sometimes even a religious representative, see “Religious Pledges,” below for information on religiously maintained pledges). The pledging changeling then spends the necessary activation cost, and the pledge is sealed. In a one-sided pledge, there is no risk to the individual who is acting as witness; he is not the subject of the tasks or the sanctions. The witness is, however, bound to the pledge just as tightly as if it were an alliance or another joint pledge.

From a game mechanic perspective, one-sided pledges are the simplest to create. The values of the combined task and sanction must balance out with the values of the combined boon and duration, leaving the pledge with a value of exactly zero. This can be done by using any combination of values, but in the end, the negative values of the task and sanction combined must equal the positive values of the boon and duration combined.

A one-sided pledge must belong to either the oath or corporal categories. One-sided pledges cannot be simple vows; the subject of the oath or corporal acts as the “second party.”

## RELIGIOUS PLEDGES

While the trials and tribulations (not to mention the change in worldview) of being abducted by the Fae is enough to test any person’s faith, being a changeling does not preclude a person from continuing in the religious or spiritual beliefs she held before her abduction (or from developing or converting to a

new one, for that matter.) For some, the return from the Thorns only strengthens their spiritual conviction, honing their devotion in an attempt to provide themselves with an additional layer of protection. Their religious beliefs may have been somewhat altered to account for the new supernatural realities that have been proved to them, but the core tenets of their faith can still hold strong.

Because vows and oaths are often an integral part of religious ceremonies and practices, certain pledges often take on religious significance, and the wordings thereof are maintained pristinely as a further proof of their participants’ devotion. Religious pledges are, therefore, almost always formally worded. They may include traditional spiritual oaths, such as marriage vows akin to the Heart’s Oath, or pilgrims’ pledges to travel to a particularly holy location. Other religion-based pledges may benefit the community, such as a pledge to tithe Glamour to a spiritual leader (for the good of the community) or perform certain actions (protecting the weak, feeding the hungry, providing shelter for the homeless). Those who doubt their own strength or faith may make penitents’ pledges wherein the pledgers deny themselves certain luxuries in order to bolster their strength. (See “Sample Pledges,” on p. 43, for an example of a penitent’s pledge.)

Most religious pledges are one-sided, with the other party being a member of the clergy or fellow “believer,” or are two-sided between members of the congregation, as in a vow of marriage or mentoring. Sometimes, however, unethical spiritual leaders will take advantage of their “flocks” devotion, and bind them in pledges that require inappropriate numbers of tasks on the part of the pledger, predominantly for the benefit of the wily leader.

## JOINT PLEDGES

Joint pledges are slightly more complicated, as both parties in the pledge (and sometimes more than two individuals) are directly involved in the pledge aspects, including tasks, sanctions and boons. In theory, joint pledges, at the minimum, are simply “you will do this for me, I will do this for you, and if either of us breaks our word, this bad stuff will happen.” However, there is an almost infinite variety of ways that the combinations of these aspects can come together, which can be daunting.

Although joint pledges may seem complicated to craft properly from the point of view of game mechanics, in truth joint pledges created just as two individual one-sided pledges. The only required overlap is that



both sides must have the same duration, as they are woven into a single pledge. Once both sides of the pledge are created and balanced (each must have a zero sum balance on its own) just as if they were one-sided pledges, they are merged via the wording of the pledge into a single inter-related pledge.

## TRICKSY TACTICS

Although the idea of an alliance treaty or marriage vow may seem very simple and straightforward, just as in human bargains, there is often more to a pledge than meets the eye. Pledges can unintentionally contain loopholes and complications that their creators never intended. Pledges can also be built to deceive. Perhaps more disturbingly (at least to the changelings involved), pledges can sometimes be altered, bent, broken or infringed upon by those outside of the pledge, often with messy results.

## PITFALLS AND PROMISES

As mentioned previously, one of the reasons for the continued use of traditional wordings for pledges is the hope that, by using wordings that have already been used dozens, if not hundreds, of times before, parties hope to avoid adding (or missing) anything in their pledge that may inadvertently alter or complicate the pledge. For the most part, this practice works. Even small changes to traditional pledges are usually fairly safe, although it's common to run significant changes, or any alterations to long-term pledges (decade, life-long or generational durations in particular) by advisors or those known to be experienced in the crafting and terminology of pledges.

For the most part, two individuals who enter into a pledge in good faith, each seeking to aid the other, rarely experience unfortunate complications thereof. It is as if the Wyrd itself is bolstered by the added sincerity.

Not all who enter pledges, however, do so in with the best interests of all involved in mind. Treaties are often drafted between former enemies, tentative bonds built across a chasm of past betrayals and violence. It is not surprising, when drafting a pledge with one's former (and potentially future) enemy that a changeling would seek to give himself whatever edge he could, and to bind his oath-partner/adversary into as restrictive a position as possible. Likewise, business arrangements, when bound by pledge, are often between two individuals who are each seeking to turn the greater profit from the situation, and pure business acumen

(not to mention greed) inspires pledge-crafters to seek whatever loopholes and advantages they can within the deal.

Such jockeying for advantage is understandable in treaties or business deals. Even further in the danger zone are pledges made where one party does not expect the other to be seeking advantage, or where one is blatantly misled as to the other's intention. Although it is impossible to blatantly lie within a pledge's wording, subtlety and artistic license are often rampant in fae promises. Barring the 17-page small-print pledges entered into by some particularly bureaucratic Lost with a penchant for legalese, many of the details are arguable, at best, even in traditional pledges. The Others are masters of half-truths, lies and illusions, and their "apprentices" learned quickly the advantages of such a talent.

More than one unwary changeling has found himself bound in fealty to another who seeks services from him far beyond what he thought he was agreeing to, or found that his oath-partner's clever wording left him all but free from obligation while his own words bind him tightly in duty. Even worse is an oath-partner who appeared to be a friend, but is not, and will later go out of his way to thrust situations upon an oath-partner that all but guarantee he will break the oath, just to see to his downfall.

## PLEDGES AND OTHER SUPERNATURALS

Pledges are, in a way, the birthright of changelings. The ability to access the Wyrd and thus bind their word and will with its power is an heirloom passed down (more than likely unintentionally) from the Keepers who bound the Lost themselves to the Wyrd through their time in Faerie. But, as evidenced by ensorcellment tasks and other pledges that bind mortals with the Lost, pledges do not solely work on the fae. The power of pledges exists, the potential rich and ripe just below the surface of reality, waiting for those who have the ability and education to harvest it.

Any being can be bound into a pledge with a changeling (and apparently with one of the Others). The being must possess sufficient sapience to understand that an agreement of some sort is being made, and the being must agree to the pact, although often (as with the Oath of Rose and Thorn) the entity may have no real idea of what it is she is agreeing to. Mortals are often the target of such oaths, although the





Lost have been known to bind pledges with mages when the situation warrants such a connection (see “Magic-wielders,” below).

Less commonly, a changeling may find a situation in which a pledge bond with a werecreature, construct, ghost, spirit or vampire is tempting. As long as the creature has sufficient intelligence, this is possible (although in many cases, far from advisable). Vampires, especially, sometimes have centuries’ worth of experience in manipulating bargains to their advantage without technically violating them, and a changeling who binds his fate with that of one of the undead may be unpleasantly reminded of his time spent bound with his Fae Keeper’s heartless machinations.

Mages have an affinity for Fate themselves that closely resembles the changelings’ ties with the Wyrd. However, it’s not quite the same, something that proves maddening for magi who are trying to discover if the Faerie that the Earthbound fae hail from is the same as the Supernal Realm of Arcadia.

For pledges between the Lost and another supernatural creature, use the same rules and limitations as with a human. The fates of other supernaturals are sufficiently divergent from that of the Wyrd as to allow the Wyrd to treat them as “non-fae,” just as humans.

## TINKERING WITH PLEDGES

Pledges involve a connection to the Wyrd that is inherently fae. Therefore, most supernatural abilities of other origins cannot affect the nature of the pledge, although they can certainly be used to influence, coerce or even force a pledge-sworn individual to violate his oath. Whether taking an action while being mind-controlled by a vampire or possessed by a spirit is truly a violation of the pledge is a matter of conjecture. In some cases, it may be. If, for example, a supernatural influence is merely heightening existing desires in a pledge-sworn changeling, but his reactions to that influence are his own, the pledge would most likely be broken. If the changeling’s mind has been taken from him, and another being is manipulating his body like a puppeteer, the matter is more questionable, and legends tell of those who have triggered their pledge sanctions in similar situations and those who have not, despite near-identical circumstances. In the end, the decision is at the whims of the Wyrd (and the Storyteller representing it).

Mages with the Fate Arcanum are able to perceive the bonds of a pledge, and sometimes break them. The spell “Interconnections” is able to detect the trap-

pings of a pledge with five successes; a pledge is considered an Intimate connection. By means of various spells such as “Alter Oath” or “Sever Oath,” a mage can affect a changeling’s pledge. However, the Wyrd seems to resist such meddling with the same strength the Wyrd punishes oathbreakers. For mechanical purposes, the “Potency” of a pledge is equal to the largest modifier of any pledge component (counting negative numbers as positive) + 2. Thus, the Oath of the Rose and Thorn would be treated as Potency 4 (as none of its components exceed +2 or -2), and the Ancient Pact would be treated as Potency 5 (as it has a +3 modifier to sanction and duration). This power greatly disturbs those changelings who’ve heard rumors of its use. The ability to be freed from an inconvenient pledge might be handy, but the ability to alter the terms and conditions of a promise is a terrifying prospect to the Lost. A pledge is often the best way to overcome their understandable issues with trust. Being able and willing to alter those pledges... the thought’s unsettling.

## GOBLIN PLEDGES

Goblin Pledges are an optional form of pledges that Storytellers may choose to incorporate into their games. By virtue of taking the Goblin Vow Merit, characters gain the ability to craft pledges not with other people but with certain purviews of the Wyrd with which the characters have an affinity. Although these purviews are not seeming- or Court-specific, many do resonate with themes that certain seemings, kiths, entitlements or Courts find attractive.

### NEW MERIT: GOBLIN VOW (• TO .....)

**Effect:** Your character has an innate connection to some very specific purview of Wyrd reality that emulates, to a lesser degree, the Others’ connections thereto. This allows her to craft pledges with that purview off the cuff, without the need for another individual to serve as a witness or agent of the Wyrd.

For each dot your characters has in this Merit, she has a connection with one purview of the Wyrd. These purviews are very specific. “Animals” is too general a purview, as is “canines,” but “dogs,” “wolves,” “coyotes” or “jackals” are all appropriate purviews. Similarly, “nighttime” is too broad a purview, but “dusk,” “dawn,” “midnight” or “moonless nights” are all acceptable.

A changeling with the Goblin Vow Merit can craft a pledge just as she would a one-sided pledge, choosing the task, boon and duration, which must equal out



to a zero sum. (Note the missing sanction, which requires that the tasks are strong enough to equal out to both boon and duration. Thus, most Goblin Vows are very short in duration.) Elements of the pledge are all based on one of the particular purviews the character possesses, with the task serving that purview in some manner and the boon being some aspect of that purview the character can benefit from.

**Purview Favors:** Similar to a traditional favor boon, the changeling in a Goblin Pledge asks a favor from the other entity in the pledge. However, unlike a traditional boon, the other party is not a mortal or changeling but a purview of the Wyrd itself. This allows a great deal of flexibility in the nature of the favor, but it must be in keeping with the purview itself. Purviews of fire, such as candles, fireplaces or bonfires, for example, might grant warmth, summon a small flame, illuminate an area or give protection from burning. Darkness purviews, such as various aspects of night, might hide one from attackers, grant restful sleep or even lull a bored enemy into dozing off. Midnight, however, could not grant one sharp claws or protection from hunters who are using scent, rather than sight.

**Disadvantage:** Unlike normal pledges, Goblin Pledges contain their own innate sanctions, which are separate from the balancing equation of task, boon and duration. Goblin Pledge sanctions are activated by the Wyrd, should the pledger fail to follow through on her tasks after making the pledge, and are equal in severity to the task total + 1.

**Example:** Annie Lida, a young Skitterskulk who has the Goblin Vow Merit ●●●● (Black Velvet, Cemeteries, Earthworms and Moonless Nights) finds herself being chased down a dead-end multi-story alley by an ill-intentioned gang of thugs. Exhausted and injured, her options are few. She can't climb over the walls; they're too tall. It's too late to double-back out of the alley, and every Contract that she has that might help her requires the use of Glamour, which she is out of. She looks up and realizes that the night sky is clear and dark — the moon is new and invisible. Desperate, she crafts a Goblin Pledge: "Dark night, dark night, hide your daughter from their sight. If I live through the day, I will break every lit streetlight I see for the next month." She expends a point of Willpower to invoke the pledge, and finds herself shrouded in night-darkness. The thugs look for her, but can't pick her out of the shadows and eventually leave the alley in search of easier prey.

In this case, Annie's pledge task (breaking every lit streetlight she sees for a month) is a medial endeavor (-2), the pledge's duration is a day (+1) and the boon was fairly minor (+1). (Had she asked for the ability to harm the thugs, it might have been a medial task, or to kill them, a greater one.)

Annie has no control over the sanction of the Goblin Vow. She leaves the alley, still shrouded in darkness, and for the next three weeks, is fastidious about shooting out every lit streetlight she sees with her pellet gun. However, just before the task is completed, she finds herself in the street as night is falling, and as the lights come on, she chooses to go out with some friends rather than spend the evening destroying streetlights. The Wyrd is evoked with the breaking of the pledge, and the Storyteller chooses a greater curse sanction (see p. 182 of **Changeling: The Lost**) for the next day (the duration of the pledge).

### Sample Wyrd Purviews

Below are some of the potential Wyrd purviews that a Storyteller might allow a character with the Goblin Vow Merit to take. Note that the bolded categories are too broad to be taken as purviews, and are offered merely for ease of organization. If a Storyteller feels a particular purview is too restrictive or too broad, she is welcomed to create her own guidelines for what a purview can and cannot cover. Ideally, purviews should be narrow enough to not be useful in every situation but not so restrictive as to never be useful.

**Animals:** Stray Cats, Tigers, Birds of Prey, Ravens, Songbirds, Insects, Whales

**Buildings and Structures:** Schools, Garages (Mechanical), Working Farms, Morgues, Hospitals

**Emotions:** Righteous Indignation, Unrequited Love, Phobic Fear

**Items:** Sports Cars, Trucks, Telephones, Books, Knives, Cash

**Plants:** Algae, Ivy, Kudzu, Moss and Lichen, Oak Trees, Roses

**Time/Seasons:** Midnight, Noon, Dusk, Dawn, Solstice, February 29<sup>th</sup>

**Weather:** Hurricanes, Moonless Nights, Monsoons, Blizzards

## ALTERNATE PLEDGE-CRAFTING

Some Storytellers may find that the multi-layered process of pledge-crafting offered in **Change-**





**ling:** **The Lost** proves daunting to their players. One way of simplifying the pledge process is by removing the outside Wyrd influence in terms of boons and allowing characters to only craft pledges that cover benefits and bargaining chips the characters directly control. By removing the supernatural benefits of Adroitness and blessings, a Storyteller can allow characters to craft whatever equitable (or slanted) pledges that the characters (and the characters on the other end of the pledge) are willing to agree to, while minimizing mathematical balancing and still retain the essence of pledges as powerful (and dangerous) aspects of fae magic.

The simplified (and, of course, wholly optional) process is more limited than the one given in Chapter Three of **Changeling: The Lost**. Characters cannot use the process to gain “power ups” by way of making pledges to one another (unless the characters possess Contracts or other abilities that can bestow these as tasks), but it also avoids much of the number-balancing that the full pledge system does, which may be appealing to some players and Storytellers. This simplified process also puts a higher emphasis on the power of Contracts, tokens and goblin fruit, as these things become the predominant way for the Lost to strengthen themselves in the absence of supernaturally beneficial pledges. However, although the pledges of this simplified system do stop being a way to gain extra powers on a supernatural basis, the pledges focus the power of the pledge from the Wyrd to the Lost themselves. The reason to enter into pledges becomes the relationship between the two parties and how that relationship affects their lives, rather than special powers gained by making the pledge. This is reflected in a higher Glamour cost, as the Lost are literally infusing their words with the power from within to give them weight. (Storytellers who wish to reduce this cost may choose to “charge” Glamour only for the duration of the pledge, or for the task or the sanction, rather than all three.)

In this simplified system, two (or more) individuals make their promises to each other, stating the things they agree to do, the penalties they wish on themselves and each other if they fail, and invest an amount of Glamour commiserate with the weight of the pledge into the oath. This Glamour binds their agreement to the Wyrd, and, should either party break the oath, will power the punishment. Because there is no additional supernatural boon from creating these forms of pledges, there is no need to limit their number, allowing changelings to make as many pledges as they like (and are capable of maintaining).

## PLEDGE-CRAFTING LIGHT

This simplified version of pledge-crafting involves adding up the “weight” of the pledge (how significant it is in effort, penalties and duration) and using that “weight” as the Glamour cost to activate the pledge.

**Step One:** Determine the tasks involved for each party of the pledge. These are what each is promising to do (or avoid doing). The task levels listed on pp. 178–180 of **Changeling: The Lost** can be used. Lesser tasks cost one Glamour, medial cost two and greater tasks require the investment of three points of Glamour to activate the pledge. Note that both parties’ tasks are used, and they can be disparate with one another.

**Step Two:** Determine the penalties involved should the vow be broken. These can be as strong or minimal as the parties are willing to take upon themselves. As many pledges will be crafted more artistically than literally, the final word on interpretation of these sanctions falls to the Wyrd (as portrayed by the Storyteller). Again, the levels on pp. 182–184 of **Changeling: The Lost** can be used, with lesser sanctions costing one point to activate, medial costing two and greater sanctions costing three points of Glamour to activate.

**Step Three:** Determine the duration involved. A pledge of a day costs no additional Glamour. A week costs a single point, a moon costs two, a season three and a year and a day costs four Glamour to activate. Decade-long vows cost six Glamour while lifelong vows require six Glamour and a point of Willpower. Generational pledges require six Glamour and a point of Willpower from each person in the pledge.

**Step Four:** Add the total Glamour costs (task costs for each task + sanction costs for each sanction + duration cost) to determine the amount of Glamour that must be spent to activate the vow. Each party must contribute at least one point of Glamour (for mortals, or changelings who have run out of Glamour, Willpower may be used in place of Glamour, but changelings must use Glamour first if they have it), but the remaining may be divided however the parties involved see fit, as long as the total Glamour cost is paid. This Glamour cost is the activation price of the pledge, and when the vow is spoken aloud and the activation price paid, the pledge is tied to the Wyrd and made manifest.

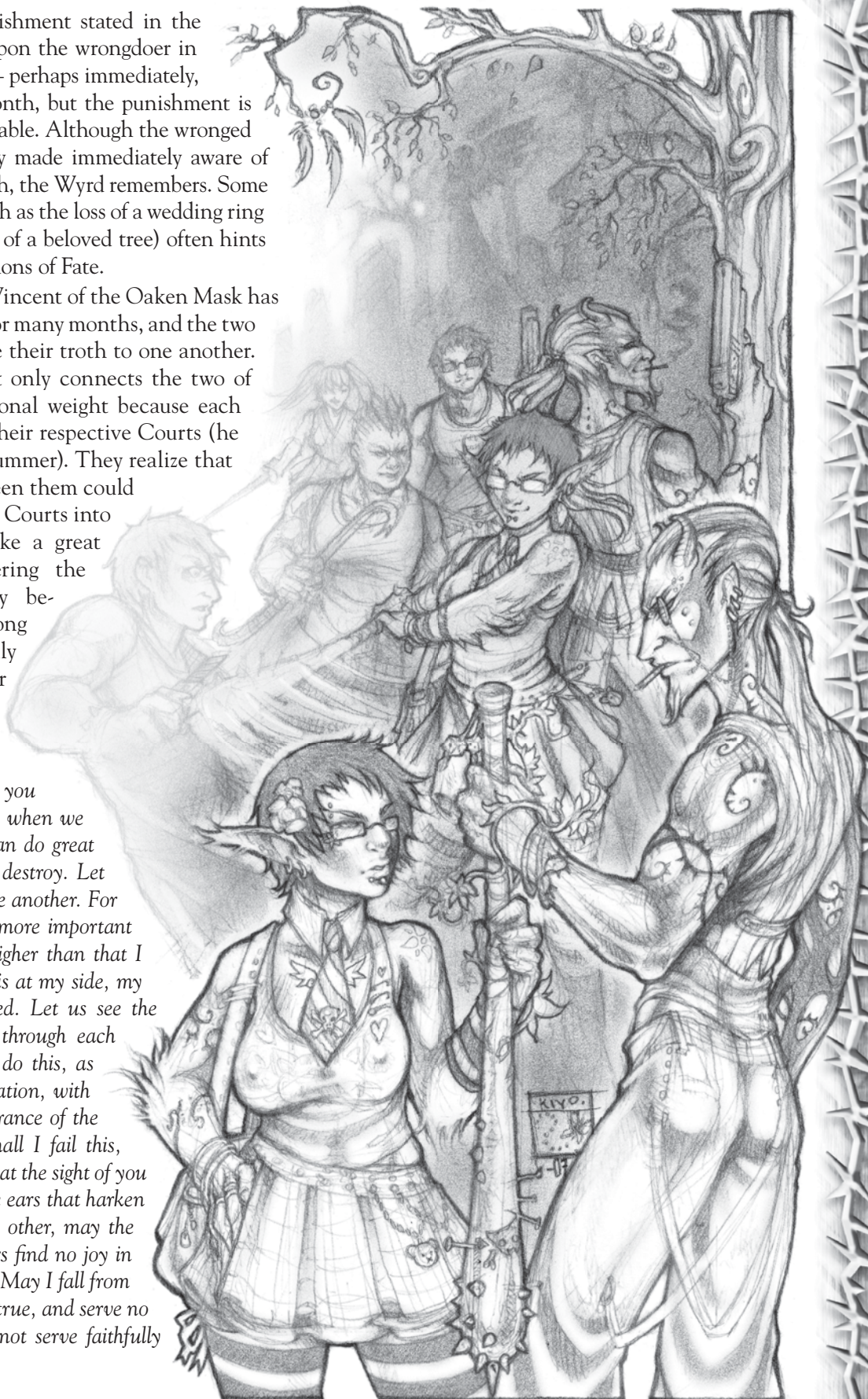
Should either party break his agreed-upon tasks (either by not fulfilling them or by doing something that was forbidden), the Wyrd reacts to the violation



immediately. The punishment stated in the oath will be exacted upon the wrongdoer in a very quick manner — perhaps immediately, perhaps within the month, but the punishment is inevitable and unavoidable. Although the wronged party is not necessarily made immediately aware of the breaking of the oath, the Wyrd remembers. Some coincidental omen (such as the loss of a wedding ring or the sudden toppling of a beloved tree) often hints at the severed connections of Fate.

**Example:** Count Vincent of the Oaken Mask has courted Lady Aurora for many months, and the two have decided to pledge their troth to one another. Their relationship not only connects the two of them but bears additional weight because each acts as the leader for their respective Courts (he for Autumn, she for Summer). They realize that a messy breakup between them could well send their volatile Courts into war, and so they make a great commitment, considering the ramifications carefully before agreeing to a lifelong oath that ties not only their hearts but their roles as Court leaders into the pledge.

*“My love for you blazes brightly when you are near and warms me when we are apart. Such a fire can do great good, or ill-tended, can destroy. Let us pledge our faith to one another. For all my days, no desires more important than yours, no honor higher than that I give to you. Your place is at my side, my heart, my home, my bed. Let us see the passing of the seasons through each other’s eyes, and let us do this, as all things, with consideration, with reverence, with remembrance of the joy we feel this day. Shall I fail this, may the eyes that rejoice at the sight of you see nothing else, may the ears that harken to your voice hear none other, may the lips that hunger for yours find no joy in that which crosses them. May I fall from power should I prove untrue, and serve no man nor Court, can I not serve faithfully this oath.”*





The pair craft their pledge, realizing this is a greater alliance akin to the Heart's Oath (three points of Glamour per person) with a greater sanction (three more points of Glamour). The lifelong duration means each must invest not only six points of Glamour but also a permanent Willpower point into the pledge, for a total of 12 points of Glamour and a permanent Willpower point.

Vincent, having Wyrd 7, has plenty of Glamour to spare and spends it freely to power his side of the oath. Aurora, however, has only Wyrd 2, meaning she must spend all her available Glamour (in this case, 11 points) and then spend a point of Willpower along with her permanent Willpower dot to power her side of the oath.

When, some years later, Vincent falls hard for another woman and begins to slight his lady, the pledge begins to unravel. The Storyteller decides that his initial interest in the new girl threatens but does not break the pledge. The Count begins to suffer some blurriness of the eyes, his hearing begins to fail him and his appetite is lost. Undaunted, he decides to take the usurper home to bed her in Aurora's chambers, and the pledge is shattered. The Wyrd snaps and begins manipulating the threads of fate to bring about Vincent's doom. His paramour splashes molten wax in his face, blinding him, deafening him and scalding his lips and tongue. His screams alert one of Aurora's oathbound servants, who had been in her own chambers sleeping. The outraged woman snaps a picture of the Count and his paramour in *flagrante delecto* in Aurora's chambers with her cell phone and posts it to the Lady, who hurries home from her Court meeting but not before blackmailing the Count's advisors into denouncing him as leader, to avoid total war between the Courts.

## MULTIPLE PERSON PLEDGES

This system works very well to expedite pledges between two parties where each is offering action (or forbearance) and accepting punishment should he violate his offer. These types of pledges might include alliances (between individuals or rulers of freeholds, Courts or entitlements), fealties, dreamwalking, ensorcellments and oaths of friendship, love or marriage. For larger pledge groups (such as motleys or entitlements), a standardized pledge can be created, with the original group all vowing at the same time and each paying an equal portion of the activation cost (rounded down). Additional members pay the same cost if they join the

group (and thus the pledge) at a later date, and are considered to be pledged to the entirety of the existing group as if they had made the vow with each of them.

**Example:** The players of Jacob Razorback, Hoarfrost Hannah and Little Willie decide their characters are going to form a motley, but they are going to use the simplified pledge-crafting process. They use the standard motley pledge (see p. 188 of **Changeling: The Lost**), and determine that this is a greater alliance (three points of Glamour per character) with a greater sanction (another three points per character). They use the year and a day duration (four Glamour per person). This makes their total invocation cost for the pledge 30 Glamour, split evenly among the three of them, for a cost of 10 Glamour each. Jacob has Wyrd 3 and currently has 11 of his potentially 13 Glamour, so he easily spends 10 to activate his portion of the pledge. Hannah and Willie each only have Wyrd 1, however. Hannah's full up on Glamour, so she spends all 10 of hers to activate the pledge, but Willie only has seven Glamour of his potential 10, so he spends those seven and three points of Willpower to activate his portion of the pledge. Jacob, as the likely motley leader, speaks the pledge, and all three agree upon it; once their energies are invested into it, they are a motley.

Unlike a traditional motley pledge, the members do not gain supernatural benefits, merely the assurance of each other's friendship, alliance and aid.

A few months later, however, Willie's greed gets the best of him, and he sells out the location of Hannah's Hollow (and the key to getting past her wards) to one of her enemies. The Wyrd, recognizing this as a violation of his motley pledge, takes action. By the end of the day, Willie is the victim of identity theft, and his carefully built new identity has been confiscated by the police. Later, near the freehold, Hannah rounds the corner just in time to see Willie begging her enemy for an advance on the payments he is owed for his betrayal, as his car has been towed and an eviction notice served on his apartment. Hearing her motley member's claims to have aided her enemy, Hannah becomes aware of his betrayal, and the pledge sanction is complete. Willie's punishment has just begun, however. With a greater sanction activated, his prosperity and talents are all but entirely wiped out as the Wyrd plays the role of bad fortune in seemingly coincidental manners, leaving him in debt, unemployed and alone before the month is out.



When Iris wants to join the motley in the wake of Willie's exit (because, by violating the pledge he automatically is ousted from the connection) she gains the agreement of the current motley members and pledges as they did, paying the same 10 Glamour that each of the original members did to connect her to the group.

## SAMPLE PLEDGES

Pledges can take many different forms. This variety is, in no small part, their strength. Two or more individuals can craft a pledge to suit almost any situation. There are, however, traditional pledges, which are sometimes used "as-is," and others used as a base for pledges that will be further customized to suit the people and situation. Here are a few additional traditional pledges that can be used as written or altered to better suit the needs of those involved. Each pledge involves one example of formal wording that might be used for the pledge, as well as a more casual or modern version, and lists the vital statistics for the pledge as written.

### FOSTERING OATH

— *Newly torn by the Thorns, you are vulnerable. I offer you my protection. Newly come to the freehold, you are confused. I offer you my experience. Until the season changes, give to me your attention, your effort, your energy, and your promise to hold safe the things I show you, and I vow, on my good name, to do my utmost to aid you in learning what you will need to survive and prosper. Should you betray my efforts, however, may you find the same offer from no man. Choose carefully.*

— *Listen, I know you're scared, I've been there. I tell you what. You come with me. I'll put you up for a couple of months, just until you get your feet under you. I can show you around, introduce you to folks, tell you what's what. You pay attention, give me a bit of a boost when I need it and I'll do a good job, because if I don't, folks won't trust me. You just gotta behave, cuz I'm putting my name on the line for ya. If you don't put some effort into it, no one else will want to take a chance on ya. What do you say?*

A fostering pledge is normally transacted between a newly escaped changeling and one who has established a place for himself in Lost society. By binding the new fae to one who has proven himself to understand the workings of the Courts and freehold, the Lost protect not only their newest member but also themselves — a fostered changeling is less likely to make mistakes that will draw dangerous attention to

the freehold, and an educated member is more likely to be a productive member than one allowed to learn by virtue of the school of hard knocks.

**Type:** Oath, True Name Unsullied

**Tasks:** Endeavor, medial (–2, fosterer will share knowledge and nominal protection) endeavor, lesser (–1, fosteree will study diligently and honor the fosterer's efforts)

**Boons:** Glamour (+2, fosterer gains one Glamour per week from the fosteree), Adroitness (+1, fosterer gains +1 bonus on Persuasion), favor (+1, fosteree owes fosterer respect and attentive learning)

**Sanction:** Poisoning of the Boon (–1, no one will trust or foster the fosteree), Poisoning of the Boon (–2, fosterer gains –1 penalty to all Persuasion rolls and one point of Glamour per week)

**Duration:** Season (+2)

**Invocation:** 1 Willpower

### BROTHERHOOD IN ARMS

— *By my side, shield by sword, sword by shield. Though our mettle be tested, no foe shall break our honor, no fear shall thwart our goal. For so long as your shield is by my side, our brotherhood protects us both, bolstering our bravery until the end of battle. True brothers in arms are we, until the battle be through, or death or cowardice separates us forever.*

— *I got your back if you've got mine. No turning, no running, we win together, or we die together, right? Only cowards dump their family.*

While it is common for a soldier to swear the Knight's Oath to his liege, there is another sort of bond between warriors, one of equality rather than vassalage. When fighting against the Fae or defending the freehold (and one another) against foes both supernatural and mortal, it is reassuring to know that your comrades are oathbound to remain at your side and fight boldly and without cowardice throughout the battle.

**Type:** Vow

**Tasks:** Forbiddance (–3, no yielding on the battlefield)

**Boons:** Adroitness (+1; +1 to Weaponry rolls), blessing (+2; Fighting Finesse)

**Sanction:** Flaw (–2; Coward; see p. 219 of *World of Darkness Rulebook*)

**Duration:** Season (+2; these pledges are often made before a series of battles, or before going on campaign)

**Invocation:** 1 Willpower



## PENITENT'S PLEDGE

— All that is good in me is a blessing from you, and I will keep myself pure in honor of that gift. Shine your glory down upon me, and I will share it with those who have not yet seen the way, or be struck dumb for my disobedience. So I pledge, from this day forward, until I am once again welcomed into your holy bosom. Amen.

This is an extreme vow of faith that could be used for any religion that values proselytizing and chastity, but this pledge could easily be altered to take on other tasks (tithing, aiding those in need, etc.) and avoid other activities (keeping kosher, not using technology, etc.) as suits the particular religious beliefs of the community involved. This vow is pledged with a member of the clergy who serves as witness and agent of the Wyrd, and violating this pledge not only activates the sanctions but separates the oathbreaker from the human community around his religion as well.

**Type:** Corporal (Mortal Emblem: symbol of religious community)

**Tasks:** Endeavors, medial (–2, must proselytize to all non-believers); forbiddance greater (–3, must keep chaste)

**Boons:** Adroitness (+1; changeling gains +1 to Persuasion rolls), blessing (+3; changeling gains Holistic Awareness)

**Sanction:** Flaw (–2; Mute, see p. 219 of the *World of Darkness Rulebook*)

**Duration:** Lifelong (+3)

**Invocation:** 1 Willpower

## DREAMS

*I had a dream last night. I dreamed that I was in the Hedge, maybe inside a Hollow. It was all carved out and shaped into a grand theater. Most of the seats were empty, but in the dark I could see little clusters here and there, some changeling, some mortal. It might have looked like a theater, but make no mistake: it was a prison. The guards wore black and silver, and they had long wooden poles twined with vicious briars plucked straight from the Hedge.*

*They sat me down with two others like us, and told me to watch the show. I... I can't remember what happened on that stage, but I remember feeling as if my soul was being slowly but surely torn out of me. The others must have felt it, too; I could see the terror on their faces and the way their blood drained away from their faces. We tried to fight it — we huddled together against the chill that seized us, we told stories and sang songs of our child-*

*hoods, struggling against the nameless horror that danced and twirled on that damned stage.*

*For a while, it seemed as if we were winning. Then the guards came and took her. She had been the one who had fought hardest of all of us, had refused to let whatever it was take her. As they dragged her away, she called out to me. She begged me to remember her name. As long as I remembered her true name, they would never really get her. I could barely hear her when she called it out to me: Lydette Paula... something.*

*I never heard her tell me her last name. Why can't I shake the feeling that that's important?*

The ability to enter the dreams of slumbering mortals — and even other supernaturals — is a potent tool in the arsenal of the Lost. This ability gives them an avenue of investigation open to few others, and allows changelings to subtly influence and steer events in the directions the Lost desire. They can keep watch for the encroachment of the Others, whose very presence infests the dreams of mortals like a plague. This ability can even allow changelings to heal the traumas they have suffered by soothing away nightmares.

Dreams also provide a means to introduce elements of grander fantasy into your chronicle. Although **Changeling: The Lost** has many elements of modern, “urban” fantasy, dream sequences can allow you to really cut loose with epic displays of sorcery and grandeur. When your chronicle enters the world of dreams, the only limits on what can occur are imposed by your own imagination.

## USING DREAMS IN YOUR CHRONICLE

At first glance, bringing the world of dreams into your chronicle — especially on top of the Hedge, Hollows, Goblin Markets and all the other otherworldly elements that go hand in hand with **Changeling: The Lost** — can seem like a daunting task. Coming up with compelling dream scenes with symbolism that ties into the overall story and themes of your chronicle can require either extensive planning or particularly adroit improvisation. Often, it's easier to work in reverse: think about what information, if any, you want to convey to your troupe, and then decide what sort of dream would best convey that information. From there you can backfill the details of the dream, based on what you know of the dreamer in question and the direction the story is heading. Ideas and suggestions for dream symbology are discussed later in this section.



## RECURRING DREAMS

Recurring dreams are good for providing insight into a Storyteller character's psyche and motivation. Knowing what images crop up in a person's dreams on a regular basis can prove invaluable to understanding her motivation, and subtle dreamweaving can even make them more tractable to the changeling's suggestions. Usually, the character isn't even aware that she's being manipulated this way, unless she herself is a lucid dreamer or has some extraordinary ability to influence or control her own dreams. Mages, for example, have the ability to focus their minds inward and enter what they term the "Astral," which changelings would recognize as their own dreamscape.

While recurring dreams can be quite useful from a player's perspective, don't underestimate their efficacy from a Storyteller's point of view, either. Sometimes you need to show the troupe a character's "true colors," as it were. Maybe the players have decided, in a fit of paranoia, that the mentor you devised to be their trusted source of wisdom and advice over the course of the chronicle is secretly the arch-villain of the story and you need to convince them otherwise. Maybe it's time for a dramatic reveal of the *real* villain via his recurring dreams of selling the freehold out to the Gentry in return for wealth and power.

Because recurring dreams' Intensity rolls benefit from the 9 again rule, recurring dreams are among the most potent, and thus difficult to dreamweave. Putting the troupe in a high-Intensity recurring dream, especially a nightmare, can make for a gripping "race against the clock" scenario, especially if all of the characters are relatively inexperienced oneiromancers.

An oneiromancer who has successfully analyzed a recurring dream (see **Changeling: The Lost**, p. 194) may make an extended Wits + Empathy roll (successes equal to the dream's Intensity required, each roll represents a half-hour of analysis) to receive a +2 bonus on all Social rolls made to determine the dreamer's mood or true intentions. This bonus lasts for a week.

## MEMORY DREAMS

Similar to recurring dreams, memory dreams are an excellent avenue for investigative gameplay, especially of traumatic events a character might have blocked from her conscious memory. The victim of a werewolf attack might have a blank spot in her memory over the entire evening leading up to the attack, or she might have rationalized the werewolf away as a large, vicious dog or a wild bear, but it's a pretty good bet she'll relive

that event in her dreams, and that might provide the troupe with some clues as to the werewolf's identity.

Dreams, of course, are notoriously subjective and unreliable, and thus also provide you with an excellent opportunity to throw a red herring in the players' path. Continuing the example of the werewolf attack victim, suppose the unfortunate girl lived with an abusive parent for much of her childhood. That sort of trauma can leave its own scar, which the subconscious mind might well link to the more recent trauma of the attack. Thus, the oneiromancers might well find themselves face-to-face with a dream version of the monster with her father's face, sending them off on wild goose chase.

Wise oneiromancers take great care to study memory dreams closely, and often over the course of several nights, before deciding that a particular element of a memory dream is true enough to warrant investigation. Determining the veracity of a particular element of a memory dream (the identity of a killer or the combination to a safe, for example) requires an extended Wits + Occult + Wyrd roll, with each roll representing a whole night's worth of analysis. The number of successes required is equal to 10 – the dream's Intensity; more vivid, intense memories are easier to separate from the subconscious dross than weak, insignificant memories.

## WISH FULFILLMENT DREAMS

If recurring dreams give an insight into the dreamer's psyche and memory dreams give insight into his past, wish fulfillment dreams give a glimpse into the dreamer's soul. Deep beyond the font of reason, where even the dreamer's conscious mind may fear to go, wish fulfillment dreams lay bare the deepest desires and innermost wants of the character's soul. In many ways, a wish fulfillment dream can tell the oneiromancer far more about his subject than even ordinary recurring dreams or memory dreams. After all, the wish fulfillment dream of a happily married family man who lusts after his own daughter provides a more telling insight into his twisted little mind, and may even cast recurring dreams or memory dreams about his daughter in an entirely new light.

Wish fulfillment dreams tend to be the most intensely personal dreams, often heavily featuring symbolism from the dreamer's own nature. Vices, and more rarely Virtues, play a huge role in the shaping of a wish fulfillment dream, as do the dreamer's derangements. Even Morality (or the equivalent Trait) can color a wish fulfillment dream.



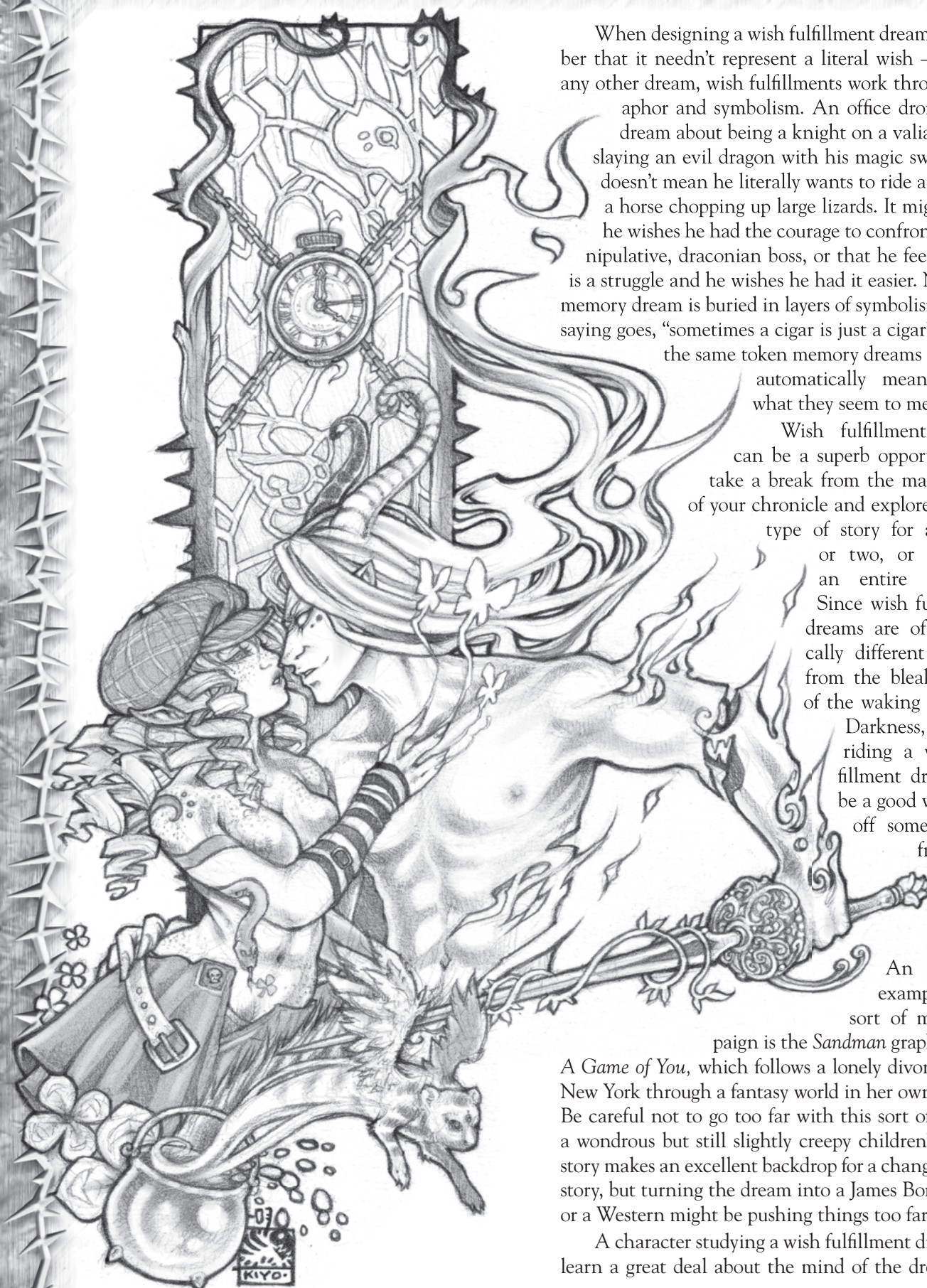


When designing a wish fulfillment dream, remember that it needn't represent a literal wish — just as any other dream, wish fulfillments work through metaphor and symbolism. An office drone might dream about being a knight on a valiant steed, slaying an evil dragon with his magic sword; that doesn't mean he literally wants to ride around on a horse chopping up large lizards. It might mean he wishes he had the courage to confront his manipulative, draconian boss, or that he feels his life is a struggle and he wishes he had it easier. Not every memory dream is buried in layers of symbolism (as the saying goes, "sometimes a cigar is just a cigar"), but by the same token memory dreams shouldn't automatically mean exactly what they seem to mean.

Wish fulfillment dreams can be a superb opportunity to take a break from the main thrust of your chronicle and explore another type of story for a session or two, or even for an entire mini-arc. Since wish fulfillment dreams are often radically different in tone from the bleak despair of the waking World of Darkness, dream riding a wish fulfillment dream can be a good way to let off some tension from the main story.

An excellent example of this sort of mini-campaign is the *Sandman* graphic novel *A Game of You*, which follows a lonely divorcee from New York through a fantasy world in her own dreams. Be careful not to go too far with this sort of change: a wondrous but still slightly creepy children's fantasy story makes an excellent backdrop for a change of pace story, but turning the dream into a James Bond movie or a Western might be pushing things too far.

A character studying a wish fulfillment dream can learn a great deal about the mind of the dreamer by





making an extended Wits + Occult + Wyrd roll. Each roll represents an hour of work, and every three successes allow the oneiromancer to glean one of the following facts: the dreamer's Virtue, the dreamer's Vice or one of the dreamer's derangements (if the dreamer has no derangements, the oneiromancer learns that, too). Six successes divine the dreamer's Morality (or equivalent Trait).

## PROPHETIC DREAMS

Prophetic dreams can be a Storyteller's best friend. They can be used to kick-start the plot of a chronicle, steer players back in the direction of the story if they've gotten off-track and even ratchet up the tension by providing hints of the dire consequences should the players fail to succeed in their tasks. Be careful not to overuse prophetic dreams, though, or your players may start to feel railroaded.

Not every prophetic dream needs to be a grand foretelling of doom and gloom to be useful, either. A changeling might have a prophetic dream in which she sees her freehold wracked by thunderstorms three nights hence, which changes the tactics her motley employs when the changelings fight a band of privaters on the docks. Another might have a dream in which he sees a mortal hit by a car and hospitalized; when the changeling saves that mortal, she turns out to be the sister of the Chatelaine of Winter, who now owes the character a favor.

Prophetic dreams can be among the most difficult to devise, simply because you need to strike a balance between providing information that is useful without handing the players the plot on a silver platter. Consider a dream that prophesies the treachery of a prominent Autumn Court changeling who plans to sell out his Spring rival to one of the Others. On the one hand, "next month, Stephen the Blackhart will betray Duke Andrew to the Oak Man" clearly gives the players too much information right from the start, while "The Green Turns to Ash" is simply too vague — it might suggest that the Autumn and Spring Courts are involved, but not to what extent or in what manner.

One of the best ways to improve your own ability to write prophecies for your changeling game is to read actual prophecies and, more importantly, the interpretations that have been assigned to them over the years. Nostradamus, to pick the most popular example, has had volumes written about all the different meanings people have assigned to his quatrains. Edgar Cayce's prophecies have been given similar

treatments, as have the prophecies of the Bible and countless other holy books.

The key factor in most good prophecies is a level of vagueness, coupled with (sometimes extremely obtuse) metaphor and double meaning. Remember that prophetic dreams don't have to be purely textual — visual metaphors can apply as well, as can symbolism drawn from any of the senses. Going back to our example of the Autumn courtier selling out his rival from the Spring Court, you might start with a visual image of a warm spring meadow, with a flower or animal associated with the Spring Court changeling featured prominently. As the oneiromancer watches, the landscape around the symbol grows cold and barren as an autumnal night, and an ominous, shadowy figure appears to pluck the flower or capture the beast and take it away. Now you've established the key facts (although the players might have to do some research to unearth the meaning of the symbol specific to the Spring courtier), but done so in a colorful and not-immediately-obvious way.

## NIGHTMARES

If wish fulfillment dreams can provide a tension-relieving break from the action of the main story, nightmares are the perfect place to explore the tropes of horror movies. The obvious example, of course, is *Nightmare on Elm Street*. The role of Freddy Krueger could easily be played by a powerful Autumn Court oneiromancer, or even one of the Others. Nightmares, especially potent ones, can be difficult or even impossible to escape, trapping an unwary oneiromancer in the dream.

When designing a nightmare, remember that the worst dreams we have often aren't about anything particularly scary at all. A dream about an idyllic house in the suburbs, with a wife and kids waiting for you inside might seem like a wish fulfillment dream at first, but when you glance over at the door into the tool shed in the back yard and feel that unreasoning bolt of terror that *something* horrible lies behind that door, the dream becomes obvious as the nightmare it really is. Likewise, the Theater in the Hedge described in the opening vignette of this section might not seem inherently horrific, but the end result is every bit as terrible as being chased through the dark by a slaving monster.

Facing a nightmare, whether your own or another's, can be a powerfully cathartic experience. If the troupe faces and works through a nightmare, rather than merely scouring it out of existence at the first op-





portunity, the Storyteller is entirely within his rights to award the characters an experience point or two, even if the nightmare wasn't directly relevant to the plot of the story.

If a changeling wishes to leave the dreamscape of another while in the midst of a nightmare, the changeling must succeed on an Instant Wits + Wyrd roll, with a penalty equal to the dream's Intensity. On a success, he returns to his own dreamscape (or wakes up, as appropriate); on a failure he is unable to tear himself free of the dream, and on a dramatic failure, he becomes trapped as a participant in the dream. He temporarily forgets that he is in the dreamscape of another and that he has control of it through dream-shaping, and can only attempt to survive until the sleeper wakes.

## SHADOW DREAMS

The rules presented in **Changeling: The Lost** cover the entering and manipulation of the dreams of humans and the Lost, but these are not the only creatures who can enter into a pledge with a dreaming clause. Vampires, werewolves, mages and Prometheans all have special rules associated with their dreams.

### Vampires

When a vampire sleeps during the day, his dreams and nightmares reflect the thing he has become. Memories can interweave with lies, particularly when the vampire has fallen not into daysleep but the restless slumber called torpor. If a vampire spends too long in torpor, his waking memories may even be poisoned by the untruths of his dreams. Other dreams come rarely and with much less intensity than their maddening nightmares. Some vampires who have learned of the existence of

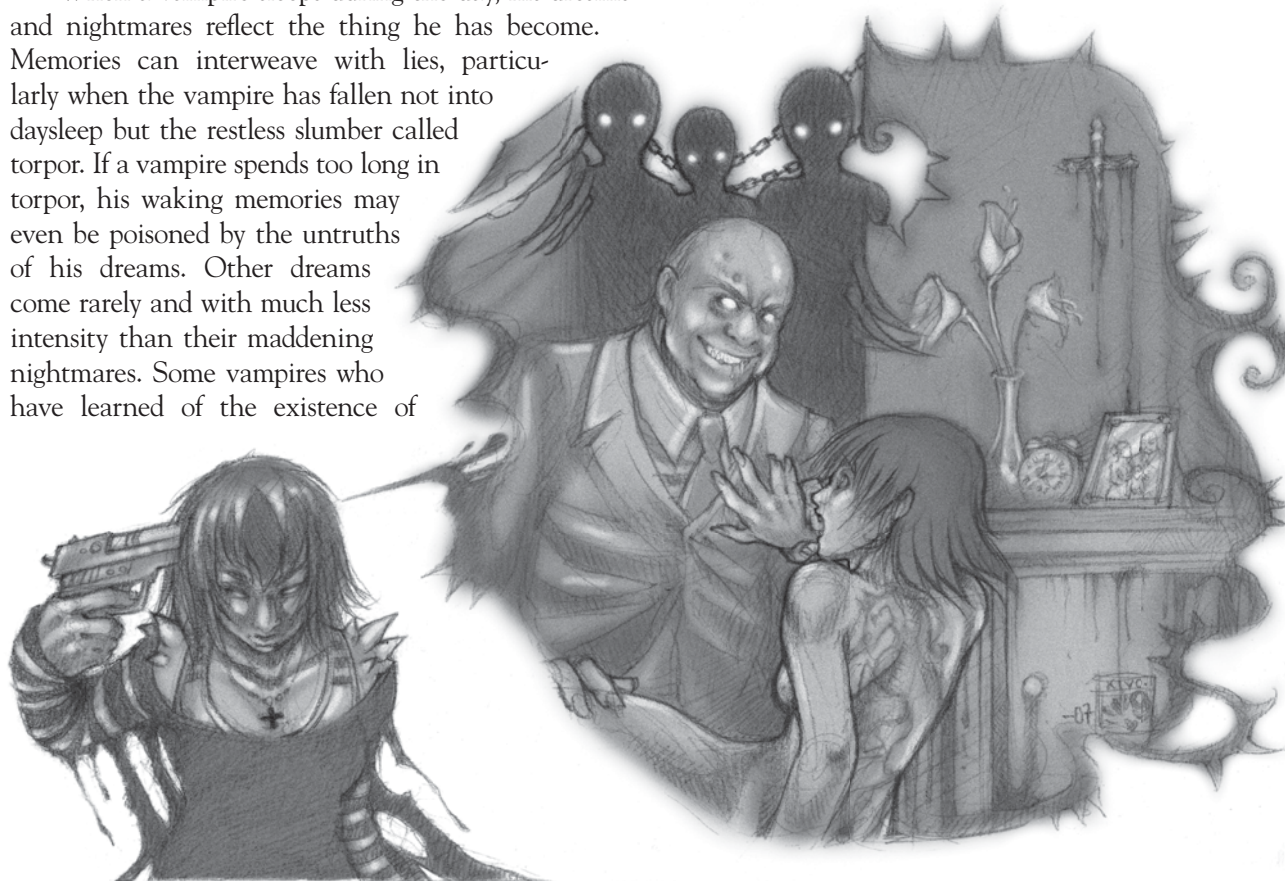
changelings actively hunt changeling prey, hoping that perhaps the blood of the Lost will assuage the vampires' nightmares and add color to their other dreams.

With the sole exception of nightmares, vampire's dreams do not gain the benefit of the 10 again rule when rolling to determine Intensity. In addition, any 1's rolled subtract from the total number of successes. If this results in a dream with an Intensity of 0 or less, the dream collapses into a nightmare.

A vampire's recurring dreams and memory dreams gain the benefit of the 10 again rule, and a recurring memory dream gains 9 again and does not subtract 1's from its successes.

Whenever a vampire has a memory dream, roll the vampire's Resolve + Composure, with a penalty equal to 10 - Humanity (representing the Beast's strength). If the roll fails, the dream becomes a twisted, altered version of the true memory. On a dramatic failure, the false, dream version of the event is remembered as the truth when the vampire wakes.

Nightmares add the dreaming vampire's Blood Potency to their Intensity automatically. In addition, if the vampire is torpid, add one to the Intensity for every three months the vampire has been in torpor.





## Werewolves

Werewolves dream much as humans and changelings do, albeit often with much greater intensity. A werewolf's dreams are often more primal and less tinged with metaphor and hidden meaning: hunts, sex and violence show up frequently in the dreams of Luna's children. In addition, some werewolves are particularly adept at receiving prophetic dreams.

A werewolf adds her Primal Urge rating to her Wits + Resolve to determine the Intensity of all her dreams.

A werewolf of the Gibbous Moon auspice has the ability to induce a prophetic dream in herself. When she does so, she adds her dots of Renown to the Intensity of the dream.

A werewolf with a Harmony of 5 or less must roll to resist Death Rage upon waking from a nightmare whose Intensity exceeds her Willpower.

## Mages

Mages are ordinary humans in almost all respects, and thus dream exactly as mortals do. The only difference is that many mages are equally adept at controlling their own dreams as changelings, and are quite capable of defending their slumber against unwanted intruders. For changelings with mage allies, on the other hand, a meeting in dreams is an excellent way to carry messages and hold council without being overheard.

A mage may, if he chooses, add or subtract his own Gnosis rating from the dice pool to determine the Intensity of his own dreams.

## Prometheans

The dreams of the Created gutter and flare unpredictably like the Azoth that animates them. At times, they dream almost as potently as the mortals the Created seek to emulate; at other times, their dreams are little more than a pale, flickering shadow. Their dreams often feel curiously artificial and secondhand, as though they were cobbled together from the detritus left over from the dreams of others. As Prometheans' Humanity Trait rises, their dreams become more cohesive and more "theirs"; likewise, a low-Humanity Promethean's dreams feel more disjointed and hand-me-down. Depending on the Promethean in question, understanding his own dreams might be an important milestone on his road to Mortality, which might make interesting fodder for a crossover game. Likewise, a changeling could use a Promethean's memory dreams

as a means of learning about the person (or persons) who once owned his body.

A Promethean sleeping in the presence of his Linage's associated element (as described in **Promethean: The Created**) adds his Azoth rating to the Intensity of all of his dreams. A Promethean not sleeping in the presence of his associated element instead subtracts his Azoth from the Intensity of all dreams.

Changelings in a Promethean's dream suffer Disquiet as though they were in the Promethean's physical presence, even if they are not in the presence of his dream self.

Because Prometheans' dreams are so peculiarly stitched together from the memory echoes of the Promethean's former self, it is difficult to identify a Promethean's dream by analyzing it. Any attempt to analyze the Promethean's dream suffers a penalty equal to 10 – the Promethean's Humanity.

Elpis dreams are slightly different. Given that they are influenced by the Divine Fire itself, they are easier to analyze (the above penalty does not apply) and considerably harder for a changeling to alter, influence or guide. A changeling suffers a –5 penalty to any attempts to manipulate an Elpis dream. These dreams are not born from the same source as others, and changelings find themselves even more unsettled when touching one.

## DREAM IMAGERY

So you've spent hours preparing for this week's session. You've poured through the writings of Carl Jung for inspiration, and you've written the most bone-chillingly layered and nuanced dream of your Storytelling career, the kind that will be talked about in the troupe for years to come. All the players have to do is follow the clues that point to the burned-out novelist and his dreams of a glorious comeback.

And then the players show up and say, "So, last week it seemed like the doctor knew more than he was telling us. I managed to trick him into a Pledge of Horn and Bone, so let's go see if we can find any clues in his dream." *Now* what do you do?

Coming up with a good dream sequence on the fly is a daunting task. Dream-logic and scenery don't exactly come naturally to the waking mind, and accurately reflecting a character's subconscious desires and fears isn't something easily done off the top of your head. This section aims to help alleviate the problem of the unexpected dream ride by providing a toolkit of





symbolism and imagery that can be quickly assembled into an interesting and potentially disturbing dream.

## PREPARATION

Your local bookstore or library abounds with books on dream interpretation and meaning, ranging from serious psychological endeavors to New Age mysticism. While the usefulness of a universal collection of dream symbols in the actual interpretation of dreams is debatable, these books can be invaluable research material for a Storyteller. The works of Carl Jung in particular, while somewhat dense reading, are a veritable gold mine of ideas. New Age “dream interpretation” manuals are often presented in easy-to-read lists of symbols and their proposed meanings, which can be handy for a quick pick-up.

Even more than your local bookstore, the Internet abounds with websites devoted to dream analysis and interpretation. Dream journals and dream blogs are also quite popular, wherein people can post summaries or even detailed overviews of their own dreams for others to try their hands at analyzing. You might have to do some digging to find dreams appropriate for a **Changeling: The Lost** chronicle, but it’s worth it; there’s no substitute for the weird images that just crawl out of people’s subconsciouses.

Along with researching other people’s dreams, consider keeping a journal of your own dreams if you’re one of those people who can remember their dreams when they wake up. Particularly if your chronicle focuses heavily on the dream world, you’ll often find that your own dreams fit surprisingly well with minimal adjustment and additions — both “The Lordly Lofts of Bedlam” and “The Theater in the Hedge” sample dreams described below were inspired by actual dreams.

Once you’ve got a good pool of dream-based research to draw on, you’ll probably want to give your Storyteller characters a look over to make sure you have a firm grasp on their characters and what’s going on in their heads. Having a good handle on the motivations and backstory of your characters makes it much easier to figure out what sort of things might crop up in their dreams. It can also help, especially for major characters the troupe will interact with regularly, to come up with a few specific dream elements to serve as those characters’ signatures. One character might have purple flower motifs show up in many dreams, for example, while another puts a strange emphasis on teeth.

## SYMBOLISM

The meaning and significance of symbols that appear in dreams are hotly debated topics in the real world. Often, two different sources will provide two different explanations for a given element, and many psychiatrists believe that most dreams are far too personal for a universal list of metaphors to apply. Therefore, take this list with a grain of salt and for what it is: a collection of ideas for telling good **Changeling** stories, not a primer on the science of dream analysis.

### Animal Symbols

Animals often represent the dreamer herself, either in some aspect of her personality or her primitive nature. For example, an alligator or crocodile represents treachery and deception, while a badger represents persistence and stubbornness. Bulls might represent strength and power or sexual desire, with a tame bull representing repressed desires and a rampaging wild bull representing out of control lust. Cats can represent the feminine side of one’s nature, while a dog represents loyalty and trust. Foxes represent cunning, while a hare represents a rash or reckless attitude. Lizards or other reptiles represent the most primitive parts of the brain and the base, primal reactions to stimuli that come from the lizard brain. Rats represent doubts or fears, while a shark represents greed and ruthlessness.

The appearance of an animal often depends on its context within the dream. Being attacked by an animal might represent the dreamer’s inner struggle with a particular aspect of herself, while conversely an animal that is friendly or that protects her means that the dreamer is in touch with and accepts those aspects of his personality. Talking animals are usually a sign that the dreamer should listen to that part of herself.

### Bodily Symbols

When a part of the dreamer’s dream-body looks different from his real body, this can be a prophetic dream warning against coming trouble with that body part. It can also represent an emotion or idea associated with that body part. For example, a distended or upset stomach might mean the character is worried about a decision he doesn’t like but has to abide by, while open arms represent nurturing or a desire to care for others and crossed or defensive arms represent a desire to fight against something. Shoulders and backs might represent worries or burdens (“the weight of the world on his shoulders”), while feet can represent travel and mobility or the character’s support network. Blood, es-



pecially in the act of bleeding, often means exhaustion or spreading oneself too thin. Bones represent buried secrets and hidden truths, while eyes represent the uncovering of knowledge. Faces, whether the dreamer's or another's, represent the masks people wear over their true selves; in the case of the Lost, a face might literally represent the Mask. Sexual organs, unsurprisingly, represent desire and lust, but can also represent sexual power or dominance depending on the context.

### Color Symbols

Prominent, dramatic colors are often symbols for emotions and moods. They can sometimes be difficult to distinguish from ordinary background scenery. A tree with green leaves is probably just a tree (which may have its own symbolism), but the dreamer's mother dressed all in green is probably significant. Black usually represents sorrow or mourning, or excessive formality. Contrasted with white, black often represents absolutism or an inflexible point of view, especially morally. Dreaming in black-and-white (in the sense of a black-and-white movie) can represent a feeling of lifelessness or boredom. Blue can represent anything from royalty or prominence ("blue ribbon") to loyalty and sincerity, depending on the context it appears in. Brown and green both represent earth and life, with green usually emphasizing new life or a fresh start and brown representing strong, deep roots. Green, of course, can also mean jealousy. Purple represents entitlement and wealth, whether literal and monetary or metaphorical ("a wealth of kindness"); purple can also represent a strong sense of self and refusal to conform. Red represents strong, hot emotions: anger, lust, excitement and so on. Yellow, depending on context, can mean happiness and a god outlook or cowardice.

### Event Symbols

Easily confused for memory dreams, events in dreams often symbolize desires, hopes, and fears. Most of the time this isn't necessarily a prophetic dream — a woman who dreams of winning an Oscar probably isn't going to be the Academy's surprise write-in vote next year, but it could mean she wants more recognition for her work or a degree of fame. The classic childhood nightmare of showing up naked in a public place such as school can represent social anxiety or a fear of exposure. A dream about a car accident might indicate that the dreamer feels things are out of her control and headed for disaster. Abduction or kidnapping has a special significance to changelings, representing the fear of being returned to Arcadia. A

birth can represent a new stage of the dreamer's life or a major life change, while death represents the ending of older things. Searching for something can mean the dreamer feels life she's lost a part of her life and wants it back, while finding a lost object can mean that a missing part of her life (maybe a relationship or a fulfilling job) has finally come into the picture. Falling or jumping from a great height can mean that the dreamer feels abandoned, especially by a caretaker or authority figure.

### People as Symbols

People in dreams usually either represent their literal selves (i.e., if you dream about your mother, you might just be dreaming about your mother) or an archetypal figure (to continue the mother example, she might represent a nurturing figure, or Mother Nature or any feminine, care-giving role). The dreamer's father often stands for hierarchy and order, for responsibilities and societal obligation. A soldier or a policeman might represent adherence to society's laws and customs, or these figures might indicate that the dreamer feels secure and protected (or alternately that he feels powerless and *needs* protection). White-collar types or faceless "suits" can mean conformity or drudgery, someone or something that stifles creativity and pushes for rote obedience. Children can represent the dreamer's inner child or a need for nurturing and care, especially from the dreamer herself. Dreaming about a lover, especially a fantasy lover, often means the dreamer has unfulfilled desires she wishes to explore.

Fantastic creatures fall into this category of dream symbolism as well. A unicorn might represent purity or naïveté, while a dragon represents avarice, power or lust. Dreaming about the Fae, of course, is fraught with peril — one can never be too sure if it's just a dream about the Others, or whether they're watching you *right now*.

### Place Symbols

Similar to what happens in a dream, *where* it happens often represents hopes or anxieties about life. An airport might mean a desire for travel or freedom, while a carnival represents duplicity or falsehood. A castle can mean that the dreamer feels a need for protection or security, even to the point of walling himself off from others. Graveyards commonly imply sadness or grief, particularly regarding a loss. A church might represent faith and values to a religious dreamer, while a jaded atheist might see a church as a symbol of corruption and greed. A church of a religion other than the





dreamer's might represent a spiritual conflict. Schools and classrooms can represent a lesson the dreamer needs to learn, or they can represent the insecurity and pressures that often plague students. A crossroads implies that an important decision is approaching, and as the setting of a dream might mean the decision needs to be made soon. Heaven (or an equivalent concept) represents a desire to find lasting happiness or peace, while Hell (and, especially for changelings, Arcadia) represents being trapped and unable to let go of guilt over past transgressions. A mine, cave or other deep shaft can mean some forgotten thing buried in the dreamer's subconscious is trying to get out. Similarly, a subway or underground roadway might mean that the dreamer should trust his subconscious to get him where he wants to go. Deep woods, forest or jungle represent the unknown — whether as a pleasant mystery to be explored or a foreboding terror.

### *Researching Dream Symbols*

Having a dream rich with symbolism and metaphor makes for a great scene, but what if your players haven't done as much research on the topic as you have? When the characters need to unearth dream symbols, it's a Research task (see the *World of Darkness Rulebook*, p. 55). Characters may choose to swap out their Academics rating for their Occult rating when interpreting prophetic dreams. Characters who have already analyzed the dream get a +1 bonus on the roll.

## VIRTUE SYMBOLS

A character's Virtue commonly colors his wish fulfillment or recurring dreams. Virtues represent the better parts of an individual's nature, and thus tend to be reflected in positive or uplifting dreams. Characters experiencing self-doubt or feeling as though their generosity is taken advantage of sometimes have nightmares reflecting their Virtues, as well.

Charity often manifests in the form of a dream about helping others. The dreamer might dream that he is a doctor (or the dream itself might take place in a hospital), or the dream might involve the unfortunate or underprivileged people in the dreamer's life. Wish-fulfillment charity dreams might involve having the magic power to provide for everyone in the world, or they might be more simple and down to earth: maybe

the dreamer dreams that he took some time out of his day to buy soup for the homeless man who lived near his building instead of walking past and pretending not to see. A person's charity might manifest in a nightmare in the form of a dream about being asked to give up everything the dreamer owns, one by one, until nothing is left to give but flesh and bone — and then that is given away as well (consider the parallels to the myth of the Sumerian goddess Inanna and her descent into the underworld).

Faith, predictably, manifests most often in the form of divine revelation or intervention by the god of the dreamer's religion. Faith might come in the form of angelic visitation or a vision of the Buddha, or might be a literal *deus ex machina*, complete with Apollo descending from Olympus to resolve all the dreamer's problems. Faith can also manifest in the setting of the dream: churches, temples and other holy sites might appear, or the character might dream of a location significant to his faith (Golgotha, for example, or the Bodhi Tree where Gautama Buddha reached enlightenment). Events that would otherwise seem random or bizarre may take on the trappings of the miraculous, and a faith-reflecting dream whose Intensity exceeds the dreamer's Resolve + Composure might be taken, upon waking, as an actual divine encounter. Faith can manifest in a character's nightmares, as well, especially if the dreamer feels he has violated the tenets of his faith and deserves to be punished. Excoriating whips of divine fire, wrathful angels with flaming swords or demons sent to torment the wicked and unrighteous often feature in nightmares about faith, as do more subtle rebukes such as a dream of enlightenment slipping through the character's fingers or God turning His face from the dreamer.

The Virtue of Fortitude is reflected most often by a testing of the dreamer's conviction. This might take the form of Jesus in the desert, tempted by the Devil, or it might simply be the dreamer sticking to his guns on an issue when the other players in the dream try to dismiss him. Given the non-logic that often rules dreams, this might be a legitimate issue or it might be something seemingly absurd (the dreamer refuses to give up his mission to convince his friends and family that the sky should not, in fact, be green). Wish fulfillment dreams might once again be an altered version of a memory dream — perhaps at some point in his past, the character caved in on an important issue, and in dreams he is capable of remaining strong and sticking with his principles. Another wish fulfillment



dream might find the dreamer somehow immune to whatever temptation might try to push him off his course (he might dream his enemies are torturing him for information, but that he feels no pain, or that embarrassing information about him is made public but the people love him anyways). Fortitude can appear in nightmares as well, showing the character the horrific cost of refusing to compromise his ideals. He might see his family and friends tortured or killed in an attempt to break him, or he might dream that the values for which he fought so fiercely were, in the end, flawed and unworthy of his sacrifices.

Hope is a common element in almost every wish fulfillment dream, but in a character who possesses Hope as his defining Virtue, the sense of optimism is almost palpable. Hopeful dreams often seem lighter and airier than others, where everything just seems to work out right no matter how bad it seems. The character dreams he's in a car crash, but meets the girl of his dreams at the hospital. A troublesome election goes off smoothly in the character's favor, or money problems are taken care of by a mysterious benefactor. Hopeful characters tend to have more wish fulfillment dreams and less nightmares, but when they *do* have a nightmare, it can end up being the bleakest thing imaginable: the whole dream seems gray and lifeless, and everything the character might have ever wished for crumbles to ash. Such a nightmare can shake even the most optimistic person to the very core of his being.

Justice manifests in dreams as a recognition of the fundamental rightness of the order of things. A wish fulfillment dream of justice often shows the system working smoothly and without fail, with the innocent freed and the guilty punished. It might take a more personal form, as well, with the dreamer tracking down and punishing someone who wronged him. The dreamer might see himself as an avenging angel or as a police officer, or he might simply be himself, empowered by the rightness of his cause. Justice in the dream may be for a real crime, or the wrong that must be righted might be part and parcel of the dream. A nightmare based on Justice might take the form of the dreamer himself being judged and punished for his sins (real or imagined), or it might force the character to take a long, hard look at his own personal code of justice and recognize the flaws inherent in it. The character might dream that he has been jailed for something he didn't do, or that he is being unjustly hunted by someone who wants him dead simply for who he is (e.g., a fanatical monster hunter might

dream that he is a vampire or a mage being stalked by his fellow hunters).

Prudence and Temperance, while strong Virtues in their own right, are more moderate than the other Virtues and thus don't show up as often in dreams, or at least not as strongly as the other Virtues. Prudent and Temperate characters often have balanced dreams that befit their natures. Sometimes, they find wisdom in these dreams; a Prudent dreamer might see the simple solution to her problem that's been evading her in her waking life, while a Temperate character might find the strength to resist temptation in a prophetic dream. When these Virtues appear in nightmares, it is most often in a negative form, showing the dreamer the extremes of what their values might lead to. A Prudent character might dream that he is a leader who condemns thousands to death because "it's the prudent thing to do" to save the lives of millions, while a Temperate character might dream of the end of his own life and all the experiences he denied himself.

## VICE SYMBOLS

As the "dark side" of a character's psyche, representing his forbidden lusts and desires, it's not surprising that Vices are reflected most strongly in wish fulfillment dreams, but they also show up quite often as motifs in nightmares. In fact, where a character's Vice is concerned, a given dream might be both a wish fulfillment *and* a nightmare.

Envy shows up in wish fulfillment dreams in which the character crushes and humiliates his rivals, or takes from them what he wants. A teenager might dream about out-passing his high school's star quarterback and winning the adoration of his peers — maybe stealing the quarterback's girlfriend in the process. The dreams of envious people are often set in lavish environments that bespeak opulence and decadence. In wish fulfillment dreams, the elegance belongs to the dreamer; in nightmares, it is always tantalizingly out of reach. The nightmares of the envious often revolve around losing that which they covet or, worse yet, being surrounded by all the things they want but being forced to watch while it goes to "less deserving" individuals.

Gluttonous dreams would make Nero blush with the sheer amount of overblown excess on display. Whether it's food or alcohol or drugs, a Glutton's wish fulfillment dream is an endless orgy of bingeing. Whereas in waking life many Gluttons make do with quantity over quality, in dreams one can have both in limitless supply. Some-





times the dream might not even feature consumables that exist in the real world. Changelings and those touched by the fae might dream about a grand feast of Faerie foods, of rivers of honeyed wine sweeter than a stolen kiss or of the milk of unearthly poppies that induce maddeningly beautiful fever-visions. Ironically, the nightmare of such a character is often very difficult to distinguish from a wish fulfillment dream, illustrating the principle that there is, in fact, such a thing as too much of a good thing.

Greed manifests in many ways similar to Envy and Gluttony, but where Envy focuses on wanting what *others* have and Gluttony involves a desire for consumption, the dreams of the Greedy are concerned with *possession*, without regard to others. The classic, if somewhat comical, example of the giant vault full of gold and jewels wouldn't be out of place in dreams driven by Greed. The character might dream that he has won the lottery and can finally afford all the things he's always wanted, or he might dream that he is a powerful business mogul who controls an entire company. Often, the bitter disappointment that comes with waking from a dream like that is worse than any nightmare, and yet the nightmares of Greedy souls are haunted by the fear of losing what they *do* have.

Lustful dreams creep into the subconscious of most people from time to time, but those for whom Lust is a defining Vice put the average sex dream to shame with their verisimilitude and sheer inventiveness. Warm colors and soft, rich textures are common in Lust dreams, and everyone in the dream tends to appear as an idealized, sexually appealing version of themselves. Sometimes the characters in the dream aren't even human. Lustful nightmares might involve a character, particularly one who indulges his Vice regularly, finding that his preferred sexual partners find him utterly repulsive, or they might take a darker edge. Among changelings, this is especially common; many Keepers used their thralls as sexual playthings, and that trauma often haunts the dreams of the Lost. Of course, changelings don't have a monopoly on traumatic pasts, and such dreams torment a tragically large selection of mortals as well.

Pride dreams often appear much as Justice dreams as described previously. The Prideful person knows that his way is the right way, and if everyone would just listen to him everything would be so much better. A Prideful wish fulfillment dream might end up looking uncomfortably close to the Nuremberg rallies to an outside observer, or it might be a cloying mess of

sycophantic yes men who fawn all over the dreamer. Nightmares seldom take the form of extremes of Prideful behavior, since most of the time the dreamer's own Pride keeps him from recognizing such extremes.

Slothful dreams are, at first glance, easily mistaken for greed or envy-based dreams. Servants wait on the dreamer hand and foot, and he scarcely has to lift a finger for himself. Nightmares might involve unending drudgery, Sisyphean labors or a horrific extension of a wish fulfillment dream, in which the servants become the master and refuse to let the dreamer do *anything* for himself, leaving him a swollen, bedridden invalid.

Everyone has dreams of hurting those who anger them, whether it's a relatively harmless, cathartic fantasy such as burning your office down or the chilling dreams of mass murder that "comfort" the likes of serial killers, radical supremacists and terrorists. Even a Wrathful wish fulfillment is sometimes hard to tell from a nightmare to a dream-riding observer, what with the buckets of gore and piles of severed limbs. Not all Wrathful dreams are so extreme; sometimes it's a dream of fighting back against the bullies who tormented the dreamer in school or having a screaming fight with a loved one for no reason. Nightmares often come in the form of powerless Wrath: in the waking world, when the character cuts loose with his vitriol, people react with fear or submission; in his nightmares they just laugh at him and discount him as harmless. Even extreme reactions of violence produce little more than a chuckle and an "oh, isn't that silly?"

## A DREAM-BASED STORY: THE LORDLY LOFTS OF BEDLAM

*You stand in a field of grain — wheat or rye, maybe barley, you can't be sure. In the distance up ahead, the field fades into a thick tangle of thorny briars as high as a castle wall. You repress a shudder — the Hedge. No — not exactly. There is a gate set in that wall, so wrapped in brambles and vines you nearly miss it. A man stands before those gates, with the air of someone expecting something. You can't see his face, but he is dapperly dressed in a black suit and bowler hat, holding a bright red umbrella like a walking stick.*

*As you stand, transfixed by the towering gates of Faerie, you feel a touch on your arm. The man who has drawn your attention is dressed in a fine, expensive suit, but it's rumpled and torn, and there is a gleam of mad-*



ness in his eyes. Burned into his forehead is a livid red scar in the shape of an ornate letter “T.” He points wordlessly, compelling your gaze to follow. A line of people, men and women, young and old, walk out of the field and into a looming Victorian building set incongruously amid the crops. As each one walks into the building, they vanish — swallowed up as if they had never been. And with every vanished person, those terrible, thorny gates creak open a little wider. You try to muster a cry of protest, but all that came out was a sputtering hiss, like wet leaves thrown onto a campfire. The dark man in the dapper suit turns to regard you —

*And you sit bolt upright in bed, screaming, drenched with sweat despite the chill that makes your bones ache. Chest heaving for breath, you climb out of bed and stumble to the bathroom. You won’t be sleeping again any time soon.*

This brief sample chronicle provides the Storyteller with a story ideally suited to running a story focused on the world of dreams. This chronicle begins with one or more of the players’ characters having a prophetic dream and leads them through dream-based investigation, discovery and ultimately even combat.

## BACKSTORY

The Man with the Ergot Smile is mad even by the Gentry’s standards. Ergot, from which he takes his name, is a fungus that infests grain crops (such as the barley field in the dream) and leads to madness, convulsions, gangrene and ultimately death. It has been theorized that outbreaks of ergotism may have been at least partly responsible for the mass hysteria of the Salem Witch Trials and even the Terror that followed the French Revolution. What generally isn’t reported by historians is the curious commonality of a peculiar man in a slightly antiquated black suit appearing shortly before many of the most severe outbreaks of the disease.

The Man with the Ergot Smile was banished from Faerie 300 years ago, when his noble cousins grew bored with his quaint madness. Per Faerie custom, the banishment could not be forever, but the condition of his return was “until a thousand madmen dream as one.” Even one as adept at dreamweaving as one of the True Fae would find such a task nigh impossible, so the Ergot Smile drifted through the mortal world, bringing madness and ruin wherever he passed, until he met the musicians of Sin Is Grace.

A quartet of mages who express their sorcery through music, the Sin Is Grace cabal had traced disparate threads of history and lore to learn of the existence

of the banished Fae. Convinced that the Arcadia from whence he was banished was the same realm from which their members drew their occult power, they offered to help construct a spell that would shape the dreams of the insane and allow the True Fae to return home in exchange for secret knowledge of Faerie. Using their own knowledge of Mind magic, the magicians crafted a spell that altered the nature of the Man with the Ergot Smile’s dream-poison. The spell constructed a shared dreamspace into which the poison could draw the mind of an infected sleeper. Not only that, the poison can be spread like a virus if an infected mortal sleeps next to an uninfected one. Once a thousand mortals are thus infected, the gates of Faerie will open to permit the Man with the Ergot Smile’s return home.

### *Sin Is Grace*

If you don’t have access to *Mage: The Awakening* or don’t want to run a crossover game, the story works equally well if Sin Is Grace is a motley of changelings instead of a cabal of mages. The changelings might be mad loyalists working for the Man with the Ergot Smile or, for a twist, they might be a group of bridge-burners who just want to see one more True Fae safely back behind the Hedge, no matter what consequences that might bring.

## ACT 1: RESEARCHING THE DREAM

A little bit of research can help shed light on the symbolism of the dream. As players accumulate successes, reveal the following information:

- The T-shaped symbol on the insane man’s forehead is the tau cross, also known as the Cross of St. Anthony (one success).
- St. Anthony’s monks were known as healers in the Middle Ages, especially known for treating those with *ignis sacer*, or St. Anthony’s Fire, an archaic name for ergotism (two successes).
- The building in the dream appears to be Bethlehem Royal Hospital, the world’s first insane asylum (three successes).
- Occultists have connected several alleged outbreaks of ergotism during the past three centuries to the appearance of an odd man in a black suit who seems to arrive shortly before the outbreak and then disappear (five successes).



If the players express interest in learning if the man in the dream was a real person, three successes on a Research roll uncovers a newspaper article about a recent charity event in the freehold. His name is Horace Caruthers, and he's a high-powered defense attorney with a prominent local law firm. Five successes reveals a small blurb buried on the back page of the Business section announcing that he's recently checked into a local psychiatric clinic for "stress-related issues." (The poor man spent the night with his mistress, who had been infected by the dream-poison, and since has had a complete mental breakdown; his family is trying to keep it quiet).

## ACT 2: THE HOSPITAL

Whether the players find out about the hospital directly during their research of Caruthers or track him there by talking to his family and co-workers, investigating the hospital is likely their next step. When they arrive, the hospital is badly understaffed. One of the orderlies makes a joke about the full moon bringing out the crazies, but things here are an absolute zoo. On the up side, the barely contained chaos means the motley should have a relatively easy time slipping in. Once inside, it's like stepping back in time for the changelings. Hallways that looked like clean, modern hospital corridors from outside reveal themselves to be dingy, gas-lit nightmares out of the worst Victorian Gothic horror. The staff never seems to notice, even when the lunatics in their padded cells begin to wail and gibber. If the motley looks in on these patients, the characters recognize many of the faces from the prophetic dream: whether through some deliberate design or the fickle nature of the Wyrd, all those infected with the dream-poison are ending up in this hospital.

Finding Caruthers isn't difficult, as patients' names are written on tags outside all the doors. He is deep in a dissociative state, and cannot provide any coherent answers. Asking him directly about the wheat field, the man in the bowler hat, or the tau cross provokes an immediate, violent reaction. He throws himself as far away as his restraints allow and begins thrashing about, screaming "Grace is sin! Sin is grace!" over and over until he either goes completely hoarse or the motley leaves.

Securing a dreaming pledge with him is difficult, but a very patient or persuasive changeling can get Caruthers to agree, even if he doesn't understand what he's saying. Entering his dreams reveals that he is experiencing the same prophetic dream the motley had; treat the dream as a recurring, prophetic night-

mare for purposes of determining Intensity. Should the characters scour the dream to nothing, it simply re-forms unless they successfully search for signs of the dream-poison and root it out. Since the dream-poison creates a shared dream, it is possible to follow the dream-poison's trails into the dreams of other infected individuals. Rooting out every instance of the dream-poison's infection is far too impractical, as the poison spreads far too easily and scouring the dream-poison is very difficult.

## ACT 3: SIN IS GRACE

Any changeling who hears Caruthers's exclamation of "Grace is sin! Sin is grace!" can roll a Wits + Streetwise check to recognize that "Sin Is Grace" is a local indie band, a semi-regular feature on the club circuit but not quite good enough to have hit the big time yet. Characters with the Barfly Merit don't need to roll to recognize the name, and Spring Court changelings, or those with Court Goodwill (Spring) • or more, get a +2 bonus on the roll because the band often plays at Spring Court-controlled clubs. Checking the band's website or any of the local event calendars shows that the band has an engagement at a club personally owned by the Spring Monarch the next night.

Confronting the band is a tricky proposition. Most of the freehold doesn't know that the band members are all mages (or, if you've made the members changelings, that they are loyalists or bridge-burners), and the Spring Court won't take kindly to any displays of violence or aggression, especially if the motley includes no Spring courtiers. A more subtle approach is required, but the band members will become hostile and may even instigate violence of their own should the characters suggest that they aim to stop the Man with the Ergot Smile.

If the changelings can convince the band members to talk, whether by smooth-talking them, bluffing them into thinking the group could be allies or just plain beating it out of them, they can fill in the general details of the plan, including how they helped construct the dream-poison. They remain, however, thoroughly unconvinced that opening the gates of Arcadia is in fact a *bad thing*, and in fact seem to view the notion with an almost messianic fervor.

## FINALE: SHOWDOWN IN DREAMS

Once the motley has assembled all the pieces of the puzzle, the characters must decide how to go about stopping the Man with the Ergot Smile. If they learned the details of the plan from Grace Is Sin, the



characters might be able to discover a more efficient way to scour away the dream-poison that is creating the shared dream, or they might be able to force the mages to concoct a counterspell. If the characters are truly desperate, they might even try blowing up the asylum or killing all of the infected dreamers.

All of these options are just temporary stopgaps though. In the best-case scenario, if the motley killed the magicians of Grace Is Sin or convinced them not to help the exiled True Fae, the Man with the Ergot Smile is temporarily without the means to craft more of the unique shared dreamscape dream-poison, but he remains active in the mortal world and very likely to make his focus for the foreseeable future vengeance on the changelings who thwarted him. If the mages remain allied to him, the motley has only delayed them as long as it takes to brew up a new batch.

The only real, lasting way to stop the Man with the Ergot Smile for good is to enter the dreamscape of the shared dream and confront him. The True Fae is a frighteningly powerful oneiromancer, whose favored tactics include lashes of fire (*"ignis sacer"*) and striking his foes with madness and palsy. He will also command the dream-selves of his victims to attack the characters, distracting them until the dream-poison takes hold in the last few victims and the gates of Arcadia swing wide. Should that happen, he immediately abandons combat and makes his way to the gate, and an entire chronicle could be spun off what else might have come through while the gate was open. Should the troupe best him, the collective dream dissipates and returns the dreamers to their normal, personal dreamspaces. The madness caused by the dream-poison fades within a week, and most of its victims write it off as a stress-induced breakdown.











he Muse's perfect hand was curled into a loose fist before her mouth, to catch the single elegantly articulated cough. Jack Tallow had to admit he was impressed. Weren't many people who could even *cough* like it was poetry.

She flattened her hand and waved it in the direction of the fire. "Is that *really* necessary, lovely Jack?" she asked. Her voice carried subtle notes of challenge and hawk-sharp attention under its languid surface. "It's stifling in here. And smoky."

"The window's open, Elizalde," he replied.

"Yes, to let Spring in. It has to be a witness. But I think you'd impress it more if you set out more roses and doused the fire. You act like you're getting ready to pact with Winter, and Spring might not be flattered."

"The fire's not to keep us warm. It's... well, call it another witness. Or even my executor, if you like."

He reached into the bouquet of spring roses and clutched a handful of stems. He half-smirked as he winced, drawing back a bloody hand.

"Practically getting used to being bled by thorns now," he chuckled.

"Not funny, Jack." Her tone of voice seconded the argument.

"Course not." He held his hand over the fire and let a few drops of blood fall into it.

*Eternal Spring*, he thought, closing his eyes. *I'm ready. Take what you need from me, and give me access to the power to heal in return, in accordance with the pacts of the Spring Court.*

The fire leapt a little, singeing his knuckles, but his skin felt cool as the breeze poured through the window and began rummaging through the room. The smell of smoke faded, and the smell of wet flowers after a rain tickled his nose.

So far, so good.



# CHAPTER 3

## *The Wyrd*

*Gold is for the mistress — silver for the maid —  
Copper for the craftsman cunning at his trade.  
"Good!" cried the Baron, sitting in his hall,  
"But iron, cold iron, is master of them all."  
— RUDYARD KIPLING, "COLD IRON"*

## GLAMOUR

**Glamour.** The word conjures up a multitude of images: dazzling beauty, deceptive illusion, the subtle but wondrous powers of the Others. Glamour is the lifeblood of the fae, fueling their marvelous abilities even as it draws them deeper into the abyss of addiction. Glamour is the ultimate drug, sweeter than heroin, cocaine or opium, and all the more dangerous for the fact that it is so readily available. The presence of Glamour colors every aspect of a changeling's life, even when he isn't actually gathering Glamour or expending it. It influences his interactions with mortals and other changelings alike, and it might even affect how the changeling deals with the other supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness.

For all that Glamour can be dangerous to the unwary, it is also capable of truly miraculous wonders. It's like fire in many ways: if you don't treat it with respect, it will burn you to a cinder, but when properly harnessed and applied, it can shield you from the chill and ward off predators that would seek to harm you.

## THE NATURE OF GLAMOUR

I walk in a world no one else can see. The Mask is pulled back from my eyes, and I see the infusion of Glamour that courses through the world. It's like being back-

stage at a magic show. I see all the tricks, and I know how to cheat the system. I've out-tricked the magicians, and damned if that isn't the greatest feeling in the world.

On 17th Street, I saw a man yelling at his wife for spending too much money on clothes. The anger rolled off him in rich, red waves like a heady wine, and I stole a taste as I walked by. On Bower, there's an old boarded-up storefront that hasn't been used in about 30 years. If you go up and peek through the boards, all you'll see is a dusty old store, long since emptied of everything but the detritus of the homeless who sleep there sometimes. When I look in there, I see a door on the south wall, one that leads to a place you really don't want to go.

Last week, I met a rat that lived in my apartment. I named him Templeton, and now he comes to me sometimes with useful information. He's not very bright, but he sees a lot more than you'd think. It's getting dark now; the streetlights are coming on with an electric sodium buzz. I can see the little lights inside beating themselves against their plastic prisons. Sometimes they escape, and the light goes dark until the city sends a man around to put a new one in, and the whole cycle starts over again.

That's the world I live in. I know what you're thinking: This guy's crazy. And hey, maybe I am. But you know what?

Hell if I care.



Glamour is drawn from distilled human emotion. It's born in every smile and every frown, in every heartbeat that races with desire and in every scream of sheer terror. Glamour surges and seethes like a tide, collecting and welling forth when emotions crest, only to disperse harmlessly back into the world as tempers cool — unless a changeling is there to harvest it.

And yet, at the same time, this emotional energy is the life's blood of Faerie itself. The Others draw on this power to survive and to work their greatest sorceries; without it their realms would crumble and disintegrate into nothingness. But what is the connection? Why, out of all the mystically potent energies of reality, is the very essence of human emotion the thing that fuels such utterly alien and *inhuman* things as the Others? The lore of the Lost suggests an answer — several, actually.

### THE ANCIENT PACT

Long ago, or so this particular story goes, the True Fae were formless, chthonic beings of pure whim. They had no definition, and only the vaguest concept of where one ended and the next began. In a sense, there were no Fae, there was only Faerie, the Great Throng of All and Nothing. It was not until the first men appeared that all this changed.

When mortals encountered Faerie, a curious thing happened: the power of the humans' emotions actually calcified the Gentry into discrete, individual forms. A mortal's gluttonous greed might birth a grossly fat, iron-toothed troll, eager to feast on raw flesh, while the lust of young lovers gave form to a beautiful and cruel otherworldly seductress. The Fae were enamored of these forms, but as the emotions that birthed them faded over time, their bodies dissolved once more into nothing at all.

Seeking to experience the thrill of sensation once again, the Great Throng called on the power of the Wyrd and made a pact with every human emotion that would have them. In return for provoking strong feelings in mortal men and women, the Fae would be granted the power to wear those emotions as a mantle, clothing themselves in the false flesh of men's dreams. According to the oldest stories of this ancient pact, every emotion agreed save one: contentment. This is why the Gentry can inspire to such great passions, and even bring bliss beyond the wildest imagining, and yet they can never truly be happy, nor can true, lasting happiness ever come from a Fae pact.

### STOLEN WILL

In the dark days before dawn came to the world, the Fae existed in the timeless realm of Arcadia. The Realm of Wyrd was charged with regulating all the events of the world, setting each in its proper time and ensuring that the destinies of all things ran their appointed course. Whether it was as tiny as a single pebble rolling down a hill or as grand as the sweep of an empire, the Fae oversaw all. They were called the Gentry, for they were propriety embodied, as stiff and lifeless as clockwork automata, and neither love nor pity moved them.

All proceeded apace for an interminable era, for time in those days was measured only by the Gentry as a kind of curiosity. Then one day, a mortal man's love died of a fever, and the man went on a great journey to the realms that governed the world's workings. But in the Realm of the Dead the shades would not give his love back to him, and in the Realm of New Life the angels would not breathe the spark back into her. At last he came to the Realm of Wyrd, and begged the Lords of the Gentry to turn back their great machines and undo the fate that struck her.

The Gentry, of course, refused, but a curious thing happened: as the young man's grief welled and turned to anger at the cold stewards of destiny, a vibrancy came to the realm that had never been seen before. Colors brightened, smells sharpened and for the first time the True Fae felt desire, and something yet more potent: will. They *hungered* for the sensation, yearned to throw off the yoke of Wyrd and make their own fates. The Gentry fell on the young man and seized him up, binding him with gossamer chains so that his passions might infuse and invigorate Faerie. But over time, the fires of youth grew dim, and the young man's heart could no longer brighten the Realm of Wyrd, and the Gentry once more felt the gray inevitability of destiny weighing them down.

That is why the Others come to this day and snatch away wayward mortals to the Fae's distant realm. Without our hearts to sustain them, the Others would once more grow gray and cold and lifeless, reduced to the unthinking machinery of the cosmos once more. *This* is the great victory of our escape: not our own emancipation, but the fact that every time one of us slips the net, we come that much closer to ensuring that no one will ever be taken again.





## TREACHEROUS SEEDS

You want to know the real story behind Glamour? Yeah, I'll bet you've heard some crazy stories about how it makes the Others more real or gives them free will or some other crap. Don't believe a word of it. See, the Others don't rely on Glamour. They *are* Glamour. Yeah, that's right, it's not the 'raw distilled essence of human emotions' or whatever the crap they're telling you these days. No, it comes from *them*, like webs from a spider.

You're confused. Let me explain. See, those other stories are right, kinda: they need Glamour to function. It's their food, their air, whatever you want to call it. Where there's no Glamour, they can't go. Maybe they can't even see those places, like how the dinosaurs in that movie couldn't see you if you held still.

So, since our esteemed bastards are anything but dumb, way back in the old days they start seeding the world with this stuff. Picture it, all our Keepers sitting around, shitting out these strands of Glamour across the world until it's almost as full of the stuff as Arcadia is. Now they've got themselves a nice little playground to run around and fuck with people on. Sure, they're not as strong here because Glamour's not laid on quite so thick, but they're still pretty damn scary.

Now here's the really twisted part: This Glamour stuff, it's psychoactive, right? Strong emotion pulls it in, sort of like pinching a handkerchief. If you've got the knack, you can grab on and hold some of it when it collects like that; more importantly, though, *they* can feel it. It's like when a fly lands on a spider web and starts struggling: the vibrations through the web lead the spider right to the poor bastard.

You just think about that the next time you decide to steal some juice from one of your little mortal friends. You just think about it real hard.

## HARVESTING GLAMOUR

*"Hey... hey mister, spare some change?"*

*The beggar was a thin, sad-eyed little waif, maybe 15 years old. She was grimy, looked like she'd been wearing the same clothes for a month, and had a smell coming off her that defied all description. Aaron despised her on sight. "Why don't you get a job, become a useful member of society, huh?" he snapped.*

*The girl recoiled, hurt and shock playing on her face. "Please, I just need a little. I haven't eaten in almost a week." As she spoke, she reached out with one smudged, dirty hand and grasped the lapel of Aaron's suit — a suit that probably cost more than the girl had ever seen in her*

*life. Her fingers left perfectly formed little stains on the expensive wool.*

*"Aw, goddammit, I just had this dry-cleaned!" Aaron snapped, trying to pull away. She was stronger than she looked, though, and he heard a ripping noise as the lapel stitching ripped loose.*

*"You crazy bitch!" The backhand caught her across the jaw, knocking her loose and hurling her to the ground. She laid there, stunned and weeping softly, until Aaron stalked off toward his next appointment, still muttering angrily.*

*When he was gone, Red Peg sat up again, wiped blood from the corner of her mouth, and smiled a crocodile smile. "Didn't want your money anyways, jackass," she muttered as she savored the hot, bitter tang of his anger.*

*"Hey... hey mister, spare some change?"*

When a changeling harvests Glamour, it's never a matter of simply rolling some dice and ticking off some boxes on a character sheet. Glamour is a drug, and a potent one at that: for many changelings, it's the ultimate rush, and should be savored like any deeply pleasant experience. Changelings often describe this as the taste of the Glamour, although it can manifest in any number of sensations: the feel of a warm breeze, a smell remembered from childhood or a faintly heard note of music, for example.

Spending a few moments describing the sensations of the harvesting and how it affects the changeling's mood and even perceptions can add a new layer to your chronicle. Don't overdo it, though: if every time a character regains Glamour the scene turns into a five-minute soliloquy on the Byronic beauty of it all, chances are you'll end up boring your players to tears after a few times.

## THE RUSH

The sensation of harvesting Glamour from emotions varies greatly depending on the amount harvested and the feeling that generated it. Consuming a single point of anger creates a vastly different sensation than gorging on lust or fear does. To a lesser extent, the age and personality of the mortal from whom the Glamour was drawn also create different sensations. A child's Glamour, for example, often seems to taste sweeter or cleaner than an adult's, while Glamour drawn from a person with derangements may have a slightly "spoiled" taste.

Harvesting a small amount of Glamour (one or two points) has a fairly mild effect. The tastes are subtle and easily drowned out by other factors (a brisk



wind might mask the sensation of a soft caress, and a stick of gum might overpower the taste of cherries). Emotions such as sorrow, depression and other “down” emotions might have an effect similar to a mild alcohol or marijuana buzz, while more manic emotions might hit the changeling like a strong cup of coffee. Other than these lingering effects, the changeling is back to normal quickly after consuming a small amount of Glamour.

Larger “doses” (three to five points of Glamour) carry with them correspondingly stronger tastes and aftereffects. Changelings often perceive more than one taste at this level of harvesting: whereas a small dose of jealousy might simply have a bitter taste to it, as the changeling draws more Glamour he can feel it running down his throat like the pulp of a bitter, citrus fruit. For up to an hour afterwards, the changeling might feel as though he’s taken a hit of a more potent drug, such as morphine (for sorrowful or downbeat emotions), Ecstasy (lust or desire), or amphetamines (“up” emotions such as anger or excitement). If a changeling happens to be addicted to a similar drug, the Glamour may become a surrogate to his addiction. (This is in addition to the supernatural Glamour addiction that all changelings face when they reach a Wyrd rating of 6.)

**Optional Rule:** A changeling who harvests more points of Glamour than she has dots of Composure is treated as though she had consumed a dose of one of the drugs described on p. 177 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. Try to match the effects of the drug with the type





of emotion harvested: alcohol or marijuana for mellow, downer emotions, cocaine, crack or speed for edgy emotions such as anger, frustration or paranoia, or heroin for dreamy, consuming emotions, from pure bliss to utter despair. At this level of harvesting, the Glamour should not mimic a hallucinogen.

Truly epic harvests (six or more Glamour) are a feast for the changeling's senses. "Taste" becomes almost a misnomer, as the sensation of harvesting becomes more like an acid trip than a mere sensation. Kinesthesia (perceiving stimuli with the "wrong" senses, such as hearing a number or seeing music) is a common effect of harvesting large amounts of Glamour, as are hallucinations and feelings of tremendous interconnectedness. Changelings who harvest a large amount of Glamour often claim to be able to share emotions with all mortals within a several-block radius, or sometimes even larger.

**Optional Rule:** A changeling who harvests more than 10 Glamour in one harvest must make a Resolve + Composure roll or be treated as though he has consumed a hallucinogen (see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 177). Treat the effect as a hallucinogen with a strength of 1 (meaning it incurs a -1 penalty), with an additional point of strength for each additional amount of Glamour equal to his composure, to a maximum strength of 3. This effect counts as taking a hallucinogenic drug for Clarity purposes.

**Example:** *Wintry Tom has a Composure of 3. Thanks to a phenomenally lucky roll on his Presence + Persuasion harvesting dice pool, he harvests 15 points of Glamour from a homeless man as the changeling coaxes the old fellow into talking about the family he lost in an accident. Since this is in excess of 10, Wintry Tom's player must roll Resolve + Composure to avoid the hallucinogenic effect. He scores no successes, so the character is treated as having consumed a hallucinogen with a strength of 2: 1 base, +1 for the first three points of Glamour above 10. The remaining two points of Glamour don't equal his Composure, so the strength remains at 2.*

Harvesting Glamour can be a dangerous process for a changeling. You cannot choose to ignore or reduce the successes you roll on a harvesting roll; you always harvest the full amount of Glamour. If you have an appropriate Vice, such as Gluttony, harvesting a large amount of Glamour can count as acting on your Vice if the situation warrants.

Note that the optional rules above apply only to Glamour harvested from a single roll. A changeling may harvest as much Glamour as he can hold in one

scene without ill effect, so long as he harvests small amounts from many people.

## THE REWARDS OF LOYALTY

Harvesting Glamour from a pledge has a markedly different feel to it than harvesting from someone's emotions directly. Where the emotional harvest is a raging torrent of sensation, Glamour from a pledge is a more measured, deliberate flow. It's akin to the difference between upending a bottle of wine into your mouth and delicately sipping a fine cognac from a glass.

Glamour harvested from a pledge has a uniform taste that varies from pledge to pledge (and even from pledge-crafter to pledge-crafter). A motley oath might taste like a favorite beer or other beverage the group enjoys together, while a Reaper's Pledge may have a taste like grains or honey. The taste of the Glamour remains consistent each time the pledge gives a Glamour boon, so that the changeling can recognize which pledge has been fulfilled. Even if the changeling maintains two identical pledges with two different individuals, the taste of the Glamour will be subtly different to distinguish between the two.

Since pledges grant only a single point of Glamour at a time, they cannot impose the drug-like effects harvesting from raw emotions can, and thus they are considered much safer. The downside, of course, is that a changeling must either maintain many pledges (which may make large demands on his time) or husband his Glamour very carefully. Reckless younger changelings often disdain the effort required to create and maintain pledges — after all, why go to so much effort to obtain that which is so free for the taking? It usually only takes one bad "Glamour trip" to convince them of the wisdom of moderation.

## IN DREAMS

For the changeling willing to put in the time and effort to prepare, harvesting Glamour from dreams is easily one of the most potent methods available. A simplified version is presented on p. 90 of **Changeling: The Lost**, a slightly more in-depth version is given here. Using this mechanic, harvesting Glamour through a dream is more time-consuming and potentially dangerous, but carries the greatest possibility of reward.

**Dice Pool:** Usually Wits + Composure + Wyrd. The Storyteller may choose to substitute a different pairing of Traits (either Attribute + Attribute or Attribute + Skill) if he deems it appropriate to the dream.



**Action:** Extended (variable successes needed; each roll represents 30 minutes of harvesting)

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The dream turns against you, and you lose one point of Willpower. If you are reduced to 0 Willpower, you awaken and lose any successes accumulated.

**Failure:** You make no progress toward harvesting Glamour from the sleeper's dreams.

**Successes:** You make progress toward harvesting Glamour from the sleeper's dreams.

**Exceptional Success:** Not only do you make extraordinary progress in harvesting Glamour, you gain a +1 bonus on any attempt to harvest Glamour from the subject (not just from his dreams) for the next month. This bonus does not stack if you get multiple exceptional successes from the same dreamer in the same month.

At the beginning of your attempted harvest, declare the number of points of Glamour you wish to harvest from his dreams. This number is the number of successes you must roll. If you exceed the target number, you harvest all the points of Glamour you declared, but if you don't meet that target number before the sleeper wakes, you harvest no Glamour at all. Remember that each roll represents a half an hour of real time; within the dream, it may seem as though many hours or only a few seconds have passed.

Ordinarily, the dice pool for this action is Wits + Composure + Wyrd, unless the Storyteller chooses a different pairing of Traits. You may, however, initiate a dreamscaping (see **Changeling: The Lost**, p. 195) before you begin your harvesting attempt in order to create a dream you can harvest with your choice of Trait pairings. You cannot change Trait pairings midway through your attempt at harvesting; if you do, you lose all accumulated successes. Likewise, if another oneiromancer scours the dream to 0 Intensity, you lose all accumulated successes.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-5	Reducing the amount of time per roll to 5 minutes
-3	Reducing the amount of time per roll to 10 minutes
-1	Reducing the amount of time per roll to 15 minutes
+1	You have analyzed the dream from which you harvest Glamour.
+2	You have a Glamour-producing pledge with the sleeper.

## THE BOUNTY OF THE HEDGE

Easier to acquire but more dangerous than a pledge, goblin fruit can provide a bounty of Glamour in emergencies or when a changeling simply doesn't want to go to the trouble of pledging or harvesting. Goblin fruit is bountiful and relatively easy to acquire, if one is willing to risk the dangers of the Hedge. Many changelings prefer to avoid the Hedge whenever possible, and buy their fruits at Goblin Markets. Other changelings take pride in thumbing their noses at the Keepers' gardens, and routinely launch expeditions into the Hedge for purposes of acquiring the morsels. Such adventurers are often commissioned by the Courts to provide the feasts for major festivals.

Goblin fruits have the most literal "taste" of any of the methods of Glamour harvesting discussed here — unsurprising, since goblin fruits are literally eaten. Goblin fruits sometimes taste like impossibly succulent versions of earthly fruits: apples, oranges and pears are especially common, but just as often, goblin fruits taste like no fruit found in the mortal realm: what looks like a star fruit might taste like raw, bloody meat of some strange beast, while a hard, wrinkly little nut dissolves in the mouth with the sweetness of spun sugar. The Glamour harvested from goblin fruits is often experienced as a warmth in the belly, similar to that associated with a good brandy or cognac.

## GLAMOUR AND THE WIDER WORLD

The other supernatural denizens, on their own, have no ability to perceive or experience Glamour. Through supernatural powers of their own, or by entering into pledges with changelings, such entities might well gain the ability to interact with Glamour. The particulars of what that might feel like depend greatly on the supernatural:

Vampires experience Glamour as a sudden, heady rush of the human emotions they stopped feeling when they died. Ordinarily, a vampire feels only echoes, memories of the passions she felt in her breathing days. The touch of Glamour hits the Kindred like a sudden, unexpected wave: for the first time since her Embrace, mortal feeling seethes in her breast. Vampires can quickly develop an addiction to this sensation, since for just a brief moment it makes them feel human again. Should a vampire be exposed to Glamour, she gains a +3 bonus on rolls to resist frenzy for the rest of the scene as her emotions drown out the Beast.





The scene following, however, she suffers a -3 penalty on rolls to resist frenzy. Withdrawal from Glamour is a cruel mistress.

Werewolves recognize in Glamour a close cousin to the Essence they collect and use for their own purposes. Both are forms of energy created by abstract concepts such as emotions, but the difference is that Essence can come from many sources apart from emotions: death, a mighty river, animals and just about any other concept can create Essence. A werewolf who experiences the full force of Glamour often feels the emotions even more intensely than changelings, as part of the werewolves' animal/spirit nature. In game terms, if a werewolf who can perceive Glamour is in the vicinity of a changeling's harvest, treat the werewolf as though he had harvested *double* the amount of Glamour for purposes of the optional rules described previously. In addition, a werewolf exposed to Glamour from a source of rage, anger or passion suffers a -2 penalty to resist Death Rage for the rest of the scene.

Mages see Glamour as a curious sort of blend of the Essence that fuels the Shadow and the Mana that trickles down into the Fallen World from the Supernal. Glamour is clearly of the Fallen World, and yet Glamour seems to have properties curiously akin to Mana drawn down from the Supernal Realm of Arcadia. Many mages posit that their Arcadia is the same realm as the Faerie from whence the Lost escaped, and wonder if there might not be analogs to Glamour corresponding with the other realms. Mages can sense and manipulate Glamour through their magic: use the rules for the Spirit 4 "Medicine Bag" and "Sacramental Chain" spells, except that to affect Glamour the mage uses Fate instead of Spirit. In addition, a mage can spend Glamour points to power Fate or Time spells that have a Mana cost at a two for one ratio (two Glamour for one Mana).

Prometheans, much as vampires, experience Glamour as a sudden surge of vibrant, fully human emotions. Unprepared for the intensity of the sensation, the Created may well find his humours unbalanced, forcing him to roll for Torment. Any time a Promethean who can perceive Glamour witnesses a harvest of more than three points of Glamour, he must roll to resist Torment as the alchemical humours that animate him struggle to balance the surge of emotion. Prometheans receive no mechanical benefits from experiencing Glamour, but it would be entirely appropriate for some Prometheans to treat the event as a milestone on their road to Mortality.

## THE EFFECTS OF GLAMOUR

Glamour is more than just a "magic fuel" that makes changelings go. In the same way that a person feels different if he's stuffed full of good food or hasn't eaten in a while, a changeling's mood can be affected by the amount of Glamour he has in his system.

A changeling who is full of Glamour (anywhere from his maximum Glamour pool to three quarters maximum) feels heavy in the limbs and has a certain sense of being stabilized. The Glamour coursing through him strengthens the ties between Wyrd and human flesh, making him feel connected to himself. (Optional rule: A changeling full on Glamour gains a +1 bonus on Composure-based dice pools thanks to this connectedness, but the fact that he is suffused with fae energy makes him a magnet to the True Fae: the Others get a +3 bonus on rolls to detect the changeling.)

A changeling whose Glamour pool is between three quarters and one quarter his maximum feels no particular effects. Similar to a human who ate a good meal a few hours ago, the changeling is content but not gorged. Most changelings try to maintain this level of Glamour.

A changeling with less than one quarter of his maximum Glamour pool feels lethargic and listless. Perhaps he is experiencing the same return to the mindless automaton state the Gentry are rumored to undergo without Glamour, or maybe what remains of his human soul is no longer held quite as tightly and it struggles to escape. (Optional rule: A changeling starved of Glamour suffers a -1 penalty on all active dice pools — that is, rolls not made as a reflexive action. On the upside, he is nearly undetectable to the True Fae. The Others suffer a -5 penalty to detect him, and must roll Wits + Composure to notice his presence even in plain sight. Many members of the Winter Court keep their Glamour pool low for this reason, despite the negative side effects that come with it.)

The more Glamour a changeling has in his system, the more likely his perceptions are to skew toward anthropomorphizing the world. A changeling rich with Glamour doesn't just see a flame when he flicks his lighter to light up a cigarette; he sees a tiny fire-sprite dancing in the flame for just a moment. As he looks at himself in the mirror to check his disguise, his reflection momentarily chastises him for the falsehood. As a changeling's Glamour pool dwindles, these minor hallucinations become less



and less frequent. Clarity plays a role in this as well: a high-Clarity changeling sees them, but recognizes them for the bizarre side effects of Glamour that they are. A low-Clarity changeling, on the other hand, becomes more and more convinced of the reality of this “hidden world” that only he can see.

## THE MASK

It is a web of lies and Glamour separates changelings from their mortal past. It is a shield of illusion that prevents the Lost from being discovered for what they are. It is compelling evidence for and against a changeling’s madness. It is the Mask, and it is an inescapable reminder that the very existence of the Lost is predicated on falsehood. And yet, for all that the Mask is inextricably bound to each and every changeling in the world, many fail to fully understand the Mask’s nuances, and the implications those nuances carry.

- **The Mask Is Illusion:** Although the Mask is a powerful deception nearly impenetrable to mortal eyes, it is still just that: a deception. The changeling’s mien is her true, physical appearance, despite all evidence to the contrary. At least, most of the time. In the maddening world of all things fae, one can never be entirely sure *which* perceptions are real. This dual perception is discussed in more detail on p. 66.

- **The Mask Lies to All Senses:** The Mask is more than just a trick of the eyes; it affects every single one of a mortal’s perceptions. A human who rests his head against a Mannikin’s chest hears a normal heartbeat, not the clockwork ticking of her cogs and springs. A Hunterheart’s daughter feels only the rough whiskers on her father’s cheek, not the distended muzzle his Keeper gifted him with. The illusion is so complete to those who cannot see beyond the veil of Glamour that many changelings begin to doubt that the Mask is the illusion.

- **The Mask Conforms to the Changeling:** If an Ogre’s mien is that of a seven-foot-tall, 350-pound troll, the Ogre’s Mask makes him appear to be a seven-foot-tall, 350-pound brute of a man. Think of the Mask as a second skin that covers the changeling’s true appearance: the Mask can make allowances for minor variances in form, for example, hiding horns or claws or a fiery aura, but the Mask does not drastically change a changeling’s apparent physical form.

- **The Mask Is Recognizable:** With certain very rare exceptions, a changeling’s Mask still looks as that changeling did before she was taken away to Arcadia, or as the person she would have aged to become. This

means, among other things, that a changeling’s mortal friends and relations are likely to recognize her when they see her again. Once again, though, since the Mask conforms to the changeling, recognition is less likely if the Lost underwent physiological changes apart from acquiring a seeming in Faerie. For example, the Mask of a Dancer taken when she was 10 and returned when she was 18 looks like an 18-year-old version of her pre-abduction self, while a Gristlegrinder who gained 50 pounds looks like his former self after going on an all-cheeseburger diet.

- **The Mask Endures Beyond Death:** When a changeling dies, the Mask does not “revert.” His corpse is still a fae thing, disguised to mortal senses just as an inanimate token or goblin fruit would be. The postmortem performed on an Earthbones would reveal little to the examiners; his heart may have become well and truly crystalline, but they would not notice it as anything other than particularly fibrous and tough.

- **The Mask Is Complete... Mostly:** By and large, the Mask provides a complete illusion of ordinary mortality. In some cases, especially as a changeling’s Wyrd increases, small elements of her mien might leak through, but never enough to point at her obvious inhumanity. Likewise, the Mask is usually impenetrable to mortal eyes, but there are occasional instances in which an otherwise ordinary human can see through the Mask for a brief moment. Whether these occurrences are the result of long-forgotten pacts made by the Others or evidence of mystical aptitude in the mortal in question has never been conclusively determined.

## THE BIRTH OF A LIE

*Once upon a time, there was a boy named William. William was a shy, quiet child, awkward and unsociable, and his mother dressed him in the most ridiculous fashion. The other boys were very cruel to poor William; they called him “Willie” and beat him mercilessly every chance they got. He learned to cover his bruises with his mother’s makeup, for his father would never stomach a son who could not stand up for himself. Night after night, William concealed his hurts from his father, and wept salty, bitter tears.*

*One night after an especially cruel pummeling, William saw a flickering blue star peeping through the gap in his windowshade. “Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight,” he whispered, though he was much too old for such things. “I wish I may I wish I might, have this wish I wish tonight: take me away from here.”*

*And the star whispered back: “Done.”*



And so William was carried away through the Hedge, to the court of the Emir of the Ten Thousand Blades. It amused the Fae lordling to set captive mortals against each other in his grand arena, armed with sword or spear or killing magic. Most of the Emir's captives lasted less than a week, but William, by dint of luck or brains or fate, survived eight long months on the bloody sands. Day by day, he learned the tricks of a swordsman: footwork, leverage, position. His scrawny frame filled out with lean, hard muscle, and the clumsiness of youth gave way to the catlike grace of a master of the blade. His skin grew a coat of fine, red scales, and his teeth gradually sharpened to dagger points.

Each time he fought, he earned fewer and fewer scars. The Emir's servants and guests began to call him William the Warrior, and he bested every foe he was pitted against, man and beast alike. At last, he bested even his Keeper, and, in the ensuing chaos, made good his escape.

When he finally clawed his way back through the Hedge and entered the mortal realm, the first thing William did was to seek out the children who had tormented him. He wanted them to see the fine warrior he had become, to be awed and frightened by his majestic countenance.

But when he found them at last, they only pointed and laughed and called him all the old, familiar names. They did not see William the Warrior, dragon-skinned master of the killing art, they saw only the boy they remembered: awkward, unpleasant little Willie.

Crushed, William could not even muster the will to fight back when they fell on him with fists and feet. And when they finally grew bored with their sport and left him bruised and bleeding on the sidewalk, William the Warrior wept salty, bitter tears.

It's difficult to say exactly when a changeling develops a Mask, or even *what* the Mask actually is. Changelings themselves seem to have as many explanations for the existence of the Mask as they do for the motivations of the Others, and even more explanations can be found among the other supernatural denizens of the World of Darkness.

## BORN IN DISTANT ARCADIA

Many changelings believe the Mask to be a construct of Glamour that develops around them as their bodies are warped into the form of their seeming in Arcadia. Much as a scab growing over a wound to give it time to heal, the Mask covers the Lost's mien and gives her soul the opportunity to come to grips with the changes being wrought upon her. It's similar to a security blanket: even as her body is warped and twisted by the vagaries of Glamour, the changeling can see

a part of her that still remembers who and what she was, and she knows that no matter what her Keeper might do to her, there remains a piece of her that is and ever shall be *her*.

Corollary to this idea is the idea that the Mask is, directly or indirectly, responsible for a changeling finding her way home once again. Over time spent in Arcadia, a changeling's memory of her home and her life can warp and twist and fade into dream-like unreality. Her Mask remains, though, and provides an anchor for her recollections and a beacon that can guide her back through the perilous ways of the Hedge to find her way home again. For this reason, many changelings, especially of the Spring Court, hold their Masks not as burdens that hide their true natures from the mortals they love, but as part and parcel of, if not the very key to, their salvation.

Others, particularly the scholars of the Autumn Court, hold that a more sinister motive lies behind the creation of the Mask. It is, as suggested, a means by which the immortal soul copes with the changes forced on it by the power of Glamour, but it isn't the way the soul is *supposed* to cope. The human soul is a powerful thing, and to force it to change is all but impossible even for the Lords of Faerie. But the Others are nothing if not clever, and they invented a spell that could trick the soul into accepting the change.

By spinning a web of Glamour and falsehood, the Keeper "draws out" the part of the soul that would fight against the mutating effects of Arcadia. Similar to Nimue trapping Merlin in the cave, the True Fae traps part of the soul in this web, where the soul's attempts to repair the bizarre changes captivity in Faerie causes lead only to the creation of a Mask of illusion. Changelings who hold to this theory believe that if they could somehow be rid of their Masks forever, then in time their souls might well be able to reassert themselves naturally and reverse the effects of their captivity. In time, the changelings may even be able to purge the Wyrd from their essence and become fully human once more.

## LOST AND FOUND

Some changelings dispute the idea that the Mask is a natural product of their transformation (if indeed any part of the process of becoming a changeling could be deemed "natural"). Particularly common among the Winter Court, this theory holds with the idea that, as part of the process of being taken through the Hedge for the first time, the captive's soul is snatched and torn on the thorns of those unearthly briars. That



part of their soul that makes them human is wrenched out, left behind to wither in the thorns. The void left behind is filled with unearthly Glamour, which suffuses the captive's essence and transmutes her into a changeling over the course of her durance.

When a changeling escapes Arcadia and fights her way through the Hedge to return to the mortal world, she follows the path not only of her own memory of home but of the fragments of her soul left behind in the Hedge. Like a trail of bread crumbs, the torn fragments of her soul guide her home again. Because they have been so long apart from her, though, and have grown withered over the course of her durance, the pieces of her soul are not strong enough to oust the Glamour-infused stuff of Arcadia that infests the changeling's body, and can only form a hollow sort of shell around her that echoes her "true" self. It is this shell of her soul that mortals see and interact with, because mortals are conditioned to perceive that which is familiar and not that which is alien and unnatural. When a changeling enters the Hedge once again, she sets aside her Mask once more, revealing her true appearance to all who see her.

Changelings who hold to this philosophy almost never burn away the Mask by expending all of their Glamour (see **Changeling: The Lost**, p. 172). To do so, they believe, is to further damage their already torn and battered human souls, and even a soul can only take so much punishment. Likewise, they avoid spending any more time in the Hedge than absolutely necessary, even more so than other changelings. The Lost might one day shed their Masks once too often and be left unable to draw them back once again, forever bared to the world for what they are. As to the longer-term hazards of burning away their mortal souls, the Lost need look only to the unfortunate fates of mortals who inadvertently wander into the Hedge, and shudder.

## OTHER SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT

Taken by themselves, any of the previously described theories are perfectly plausible. Changelings who have had an opportunity to interact with other denizens of the World of Darkness, though, note a curious repeating pattern that seems to suggest a larger implication behind the Mask.

Vampires have what they term the Masquerade, which is a law of their kind and a supernatural cloak that hides their existence. Whereas a changeling's Mask completely shields her true appearance, the Masquerade simply causes a vampire's reflection or recorded

image to appear blurry and indistinct. Some changelings have suggested the theory that this Masquerade is, in fact, what the Mask would look like without the infusion of Glamour that creates the illusion of the changeling's mortal self. Some vampires, particularly of the sect called the Ordo Dracul, are very interested in this theory, and have engaged changelings' aid, willing or otherwise, into their experiments on the nature of the process. Thus far, no vampire has been able to replicate the effects of the Mask, and no changeling has invoked the image-blurring effect of the Masquerade without the use of Contracts.

Werewolves are protected by a peculiar form of mystical insanity that affects mortals unfortunate enough to see the werewolves in their inhuman forms or to witness their use of spirit magic. Few make a link in form between Lunacy and the Mask, although there is certainly a functional one. Some changelings posit a similar origin for the Lunacy and the bedlam a high-Wyrd changeling can incite, though. Some werewolves suggest that the Others are a form of extremely powerful spirit kin to their moon goddess, and that the Others merely provide a different means of avoiding discovery than their own Luna.

Mages are similarly shielded by what they believe to be a curse laid on all humankind that prevents them from perceiving the mystical world all around them. Mages contend that the Mask is merely another manifestation of this Quiescence Curse, which changelings refute on the logic that they can perceive their own Masks, as well as the Masks of others. If the Masks were a product of humankind's shared delusion, why do changelings see them?

Prometheans, those rare, artificial beings, have perhaps the most striking similarities. The Pyros that animates the Created also cloaks them in an illusion similar to the Mask, which makes them appear to be human. Whereas the Mask is generally stable, though, and must be burned away by a changeling's conscious effort and expenditure of Glamour, a Promethean's illusion has a tendency to flicker or fail briefly at occasional intervals. Changelings suspect that the lack of a true human soul is what causes this instability, and indeed the fact that high-Wyrd changelings tend to push more of their true selves through the Mask may bear that out.

It is a rare changeling (or any supernatural being, for that matter) who has interacted with multiple different kinds of supernatural entities on a friendly enough basis to compare notes. Those who have,





though, can't help but notice that there seems to be a common thread running through the World of Darkness: someone or something doesn't want the humans to know what lurks in the shadows around them. Theories range from God Himself to ancient, primordial spirits to the very nature of reality itself. Perhaps there is more going on in the shadows than even the wisest of the Lost suspects.

## INTERACTING WITH THE MASK

"Ah! Jesus, honey, your hands are freezing!"

Wintry Tom smiled apologetically, the hoarfrost cracking and flaking away into nothingness. Cecilia didn't see that, or she'd understand why his hands were so cold. "Sorry, honey. The heat's busted in the car." He pulled the blankets up tighter around them both, even though it never made any difference. He was always cold, since he had come back. Cecilia was the first girl he'd been with since. She didn't know.

"Again?" she asked. "You need to start using a different garage." He found his hand under the covers, squeezed softly. "You've got the smoothest skin of any guy I've ever met, you know that? It's nice..." She smiled at him, a flirtatious little promise

of a smile that died when she saw the stricken look on Tom's face.

"Honey? What's wrong? Your palms are sweating."

Wintry Tom looked down at his own hands. They were smooth, all right: smooth, cold, perfect chunks of flawlessly sculpted ice. His fingers were melting, just a little bit, under the heat of her hand.

One of the most difficult aspects of using the Mask as an element of your **Changeling: The Lost** story is





understanding just how mortals perceive and interact with it. It's all well and good to say that the Mask simply makes a changeling look as she did in her mortal days, and for many changelings, that's enough. But what about the cases when that doesn't quite synch up? What of the Runnerswift with tall, proud hare's ears rising from her head, or the rocky Stonebones with curving horns like a great stone ram's? What about poor Wintry Tom, whose skin flakes hoar and whose hands of ice have an unfortunate propensity for melting? What of the many ways in which a high-Wyrd changeling's mien might actually push through the Mask somewhat? There are many questions raised by the illusion of the Mask; here you will find answers and options for many of them.

### LIES OF THE EYES

The visual illusion of the Mask is the easiest to understand: a mortal looking at a changeling sees the Lost as an ordinary mortal, with nothing supernatural about her. Sometimes the Mask holds hints as to the changeling's true nature: Wintry Tom appears as a pale, skinny young man with lips tinged just slightly blue. Mortals put it off to bad circulation or lipstick. Jack Tallow has a waxy complexion. Willow Wisp, a Woodblood, is tall and long-limbed and slender as the tree that is her namesake. Jake Silenus, the satyric Broadback, is a hairy Mediterranean man. Maria Thorne's curls suggest the patterns of a bouquet of roses.

As mentioned earlier, the Mask's visual component conforms as closely as possible to the actual physiognomy of the Lost. A short, squat Wizenad artist never has the Mask of a tall, slender model. This applies even if the changeling *was* such an individual before being taken. Consider the example of a Fairest abducted in a sort of "ugly duckling" story. Before she was taken, she was short and dumpy, with mousy hair and no figure to speak of. Her Keeper took her, stretched her on the rack, starved her to slenderness and treated her hair with enchanted salves and gels to make it rich and lustrous. When the girl escapes and returns to the mortal world, her Mask looks like the girl she was — if that girl gained five inches and lost 30 pounds. She's still recognizable as herself, but even in her Mask she displays a startling transformation.

This sort of dramatic change can raise awkward questions, especially if the weird time-flow of Faerie deposits an escapee only a few hours after she was taken or if the changes that were wrought on her body would be impossible naturally (such as a tall man taken by a Wizenad returning as a dwarf).

### Breaking Through

When a changeling's Wyrd grows higher than 4 or 5, elements of her mien start to push through the Mask. Visually, this might be reflected by a momentary glimpse of her true appearance in her shadow or an odd double-vision when a mortal sees her from the corner of his eye. Perhaps a single feature exhibits otherworldly qualities just for a moment: a Beast's eyes reflect light like an animal's, a Fireheart is faintly but distinctly visible even in a pitch-black room and so on. These sorts of breakthrough might be startling, but are always something that can be written off as a trick of the eyes.

### LIES OF THE EARS

The Mask rarely influences the sounds of a changeling's mien, save to muffle or mute certain noises. The Mask of a Windwing with feather-lined arms renders the ruffling of feathers inaudible, and mortals don't hear the crackle and snap of Wintry Tom's hoarfrost limbs. If a changeling presses her ear to a Waterborn's chest, she hears the ocean; a mortal hears only a heartbeat.

Sometimes a changeling's voice is altered by her mien: a Fairest speaks with a deep, rolling voice that compels attention and obedience. A Hunterheart's voice is the feral growl of a beast on the hunt; when he's surprised, he's known to let out a yowl like a startled cat. The Mask smoothes over the obviously supernatural elements of a character's voice, but does not otherwise change the tone or timbre. The Fairest still has a deep, melodious voice, and the Hunterheart still speaks in a coarse, low rasp.

### Breaking Through

As a changeling's Wyrd creeps higher, the supernatural elements creep back into her voice. Other sounds may appear momentarily, either alone or mingled with the sounds of the Mask. A Mannikin's heartbeat might briefly sound as perfectly sharp and regular as a clock, or it might actually *become* the ticking of a clock for a moment. Grandfather Thunder's voice rolls like a storm when he's angry.

### LIES OF THE NOSE

Smell is the most powerful trigger of memories and emotions that human beings possess, and yet is also the sense we often pay the least attention to. Given that paradox, it's not surprising that the Mask typically does nothing to conceal the scents a changeling's





seeming might possess. A Beast might have a strong, earthy smell to him, while a Wizenod smells like oil and wood smoke and a Fairest gives off the delicate scents of lavender. All the Mask does at most is to mute the scent somewhat, so that it seems more like an omnipresent perfume than the natural scent of the character's body. Even that only occurs in extreme cases, though, leaving an odd perfume as one of the most telling signs of a changeling's presence.

### Breaking Through

A changeling's scent might grow stronger or sharper as his Wyrd rises, or smells totally unlike any in nature might mingle into it. The Fairest who smells of lavender might take on the perfume of the Purple Bloodflower, a blossom that blooms only on the moonlit shores of a particular lake in Faerie.

### LIES OF THE HAND

It is in the arena of touch where many of the difficulties in understanding the Mask arise. It's easy enough to understand the most simple interactions, such as a mortal not feeling the fur when he shakes a Beast's hand or feeling skin instead of stony carapace when he claps a hand on a Stonebone's shoulder. Things become a bit more complicated when one takes into account the more minute details, such as horns and fangs and ears and facial features that don't quite line up.

When a mortal touches a changeling, the Mask wrights a subtle but thoroughly convincing illusion. Not only does the human feel ordinary human flesh or hair, he actually sees the movement of his hand conform to the contours of the Mask. When he runs his hand over the horned brow of his Runnerswift lover, he does not see his hand encounter an invisible (to him) barrier where her horn sprouts. As far as he (and any other mortals watching) can tell, his hand slides across smooth, unbroken skin. Changelings, ensorcelled humans, and others who can pierce the Mask see the truth: his hand caresses her horns and the skin around or between them.

This tactile deception extends even beyond direct, physical contact as well. Imagine a Hunterheart with a majestic rack of antlers sprouting from his head, a "Herne the Hunter" sort of motif. What happens when a mugger takes a shot at him, and the bullet whizzes through the space occupied by those antlers? Well, for one thing, remember that it's not as easy to tell exactly where a gun in your hand is pointed when you pull the trigger as you might think.

### Clarity and External Events

Unlike humans and even most other supernatural beings, changelings can lose Clarity due to events totally beyond her control. A house fire might destroy everything she owns, or a terminal disease might claim a loved one. From a thematic standpoint, it's very appropriate for these sorts of events to erode a changeling's Clarity, but as a Storyteller, you need to be careful not to be seen to be unfairly picking on your players.

Consider: whenever a human loses Morality, it is as a result of something he chose to do. He *chose* to kill that reporter who was blackmailing him; he *chose* to steal a car. Thus, the blame lies squarely on that character. Even if the alternative is unpleasant or even potentially fatal, the choice was always there. A changeling can't choose for a drunk driver to not hit her best friend or choose to not get pregnant (she can avoid sexual contact as best she can, of course, but that's beside the point). When introducing an "unexpected life event" into your chronicle, consider the following questions carefully.

Was there any realistic way the character could have prevented this? If so, you're probably okay. A player can't choose for a freak electrical fire to burn his house down, but he *can* choose to get a job and pay his mortgage; if he doesn't, he has no one to blame but himself when the bank repossesses the house.

Does the event serve the story? If the theme of your chronicle is "innocence lost," it's probably appropriate to have a character's childhood best friend killed, even if there was no way the character could prevent it. Talk to your players beforehand and make sure they're okay with surprises of this nature; sometimes players get annoyed at what they perceive as the Storyteller arbitrarily taking away dots from their character sheet.

Are the outside events fairly balanced in terms of who experiences them? Fate certainly does enjoy kicking a man while he's down, but if the motley's tragic Fairest hero has lost her job, been evicted from her apartment, been the victim of a violent assault *and* found out her mother has cancer all in the past three weeks, you might want to consider spreading the tragedy around a bit. Encourage all your players to come up with backgrounds for their characters so you'll have something to work with for each of them. With luck, your players might even come to *you* with life changes they want to put their characters through.



The Mask smoothes this over as well: As far as the gunman and any mortal witnesses know, the gunman pointed at the changeling's head and fired a shot that creased his brow, maybe stunning him and drawing a bit of blood. Other changelings see a chunk of antler blasted off. Either way, the game-mechanic effect is identical: the gunman rolled *Dexterity + Firearms* + the gun's damage bonus and probably only rolled one or two successes.

If, as in the example above, a piece of the changeling's mien is ever removed from her body, it typically dissolves without Glamour to sustain it. This applies to injuries (such as the antler being shot off) and to normal byproducts of a changeling's mien (such as the thick slime that oozes from the skin of a Tunnelgrub or Wintry Tom's flaking hoarfrost skin). Large, actual body parts may remain intact, however; a changeling still sheds blood, and a severed finger doesn't evaporate. However, the Mask still protects any piece of a changeling large enough to endure. If a tuft of Todd the Lion's mane is caught in a doorway, it will appear to be human hair (or perhaps the hair of a domestic cat) rather than raising any questions about escaped zoo cats.

### Breaking Through

As a changeling's Wyrld rises, the Mask is less able to disguise the textures of her unnatural flesh. The Stonebones feels, just for a moment, like a man made of granite, not just a man with rough, calloused skin. Shaking hands with a Beast, the mortal feels fur and claw and pads, as though the Lost were wearing a strange glove. At very high Wyrld, even the spatial compensation weakens. The Runnerswift's boyfriend could swear he feels a bump on his lover's forehead, but when he runs his hand over it again, the bump isn't there.

### LIES OF THE TONGUE

As with scent, the Mask typically does little or nothing to hide a changeling's taste. Few changelings exhibit such an alteration as part of their mien anyway, and taste rarely becomes an issue except in intimate circumstances. Smell and taste are closely linked in humans, to the point that they are almost the same sense anyway, and so the suggestions given above for Lies of the Nose apply equally well here.

### Breaking Through

As with scents, a high-Wyrld changeling's skin may develop a sharper or more plainly evident taste,

or even a suggestion of some exotic flavor found only in Faerie.

### LIES OF SORCERY

Changelings have quite a few mystical means at their disposal to alter their appearance. The Mirror-skin kith can change appearance at will, and the Contracts of Mirror provide several ways to change one's appearance. Unless otherwise noted, these abilities alter the changeling's Mask and mien. For example, using the Skinmask Contract, a changeling may change the appearance of one body part to the eyes of mortals and changelings. For example, if a Fireheart used the contract to put on the face of Brad Pitt, mortals would see a man with Brad Pitt's face (but not necessarily his physique), while a changeling would see what looks for all intents and purposes as though Brad Pitt were a Fireheart with the same mien as the character.

### Breaking Through

A changeling never breaks through a mask created by supernatural means, regardless of his Wyrld.

### PIERCING THE MASK

*Jack Tallow strolled down the street of Miami Beach, whistling to himself. His Keeper hated whistling, so now Jack did it all the time. He wove among the throngs of club-goers, none of whom paid him any mind, or noticed the candle flame that crowned his head instead of hair. They saw only a skinny, pale redheaded kid dressed in clothes not even half trendy enough to get him into the least popular club.*

*A group of college girls exploded out the door of Satyricon, all drunk and probably tripping on Ecstasy. One of them careened into Jack, and the Fireheart caught her so she didn't hit the pavement.*

*"Steady there. Wouldn't want to see you take a tumble."*

*She giggled and looked up at him with eyes as big as saucers. "Wow... you're, like, really hot. You're on fire."*

*Jack smiled and passed her off to her friends. You got that two, sometimes three times a night around here. Luckily, they were usually too wasted to remember.*

There are two guaranteed ways a mortal can pierce the Mask: ensorcellment and a changeling burning away the Mask. For the most part, that makes changelings pretty secure in the knowledge that they won't be recognized for what they are. And yet, sometimes, for no real reason the Lost can discern, a mortal gets a glimpse through the Mask. Sometimes it's just a fleeting glimpse; sometimes it seems as though the mortal





isn't affected by the Mask at all. Changelings believe these to be relics of old, long-forgotten pacts made by the Others. Any of the following might be able to see through the Mask, either briefly or permanently, at the Storyteller's discretion.

- Children
- The insane (one or more major derangements)
- The seventh son of a seventh son
- Those born with eyes of two different colors
- Drunkards on the night of the full moon (applies to those under the influence of drugs as well)
- Anyone who spends a night in a cemetery, sleeping on a grave (applies for one month)
- A mortal who eats a goblin fruit (applies for one day)

Folklore abounds with stories of those who can perceive the supernatural for some reason. Consider working them into your chronicle from time to time to keep players on their toes.

## SUPERNATURAL POWERS

Most supernatural beings are affected by the Mask as much as mortals, but unlike mortals, supernatural entities have their own ways of seeing through the illusion. It's tricky for the viewer concerned, though. In all cases, other supernaturals suffer a flat -3 penalty to dice rolls made to penetrate the Mask; the magical deception the Mask provides is quite potent. Note that the reflexive Resolve + Wyrd roll made on the changeling's part is not optional — this roll represents the constant strength of the Mask regardless of the changeling's wishes.

Vampires using the Auspex Discipline can pierce the Mask by succeeding on an opposed roll of Wits + Auspex versus the changeling's Resolve + Wyrd. The vampire must be actively using Heightened Senses or Aura Perception to make this roll, which is reflexive for both parties.

A werewolf in any of the forms that grant him a Perception bonus may attempt to use his preternatural senses to pierce the Mask with an opposed Wits + Composure versus Resolve + Wyrd roll. This is a reflexive action for both parties. This typically allows the werewolf to scent the changeling for what she is, but not to penetrate the visual illusion. The Insight Gift, Scent of Taint, can detect a changeling's supernatural nature but cannot pierce the Mask.

A mage may pierce the Mask with any Mage Sight spell by making an opposed spellcasting roll (Gnosis +

Arcanum or the rote dice pool, as appropriate) versus Resolve + Wyrd as a reflexive action.

A Promethean using the Aura Sight Transmutation may pierce the Mask by rolling Intelligence + Empathy versus Resolve + Wyrd as a standard action.

## CLARITY

The Lost are irrevocably changed by their time in Faerie, in more ways than the merely physical. No changeling knows the exact state of her soul: what it is, how it bridges the gulf between her old life and her new one, or even if she still has one. What she does know is that, similar to many survivors of traumatic events, certain stimuli can trigger painful, repressed memories of her ordeal. For a mortal, this sort of recall is natural, the mind's way of processing and accepting what happens. It is unpleasant and can lead to major psychological trauma, but eventually the mind can heal. For a changeling's Glamour-infused mind, there can be no true healing: the echoes of Arcadia linger forever, subtly wearing away at her sanity and ability to distinguish the realm of mundane reality from the Wyrd that lies beneath the surface.

This is the nature of Clarity. While ordinary humans concern themselves with being moral beings, vampires struggle to retain the vestiges of their lost Humanity and werewolves seek the Harmony of balance between their human and spirit sides, changelings must remain ever vigilant against the trauma of their time in Faerie, lest the madness of that realm draw them back down into the abyss of hallucinogenic unreality.

## THE NATURE OF CLARITY

It is important to remember that, while Clarity replaces the Morality Advantage humans possess, Clarity is not in and of itself a moral compass. Many acts that can cause a loss of Clarity *are* immoral (kidnapping, murder, theft), but there are just as many that are not. There's a reason actions that cause Clarity loss are called "breaking points" rather than "sins." Unlike Morality, changelings can even lose Clarity for actions entirely outside their control (losing a loved one in a car crash is an "extreme unexpected life change," after all). See the sidebar on p. 72 for some Storytelling tips on incorporating these sorts of breaking points.

There's one important corollary here that may not be immediately obvious: if Clarity is not a system of morals, it then follows that changelings don't necessar-



ily follow the precepts of normal Morality at all. That's really up to the individual. Certainly many do: most changelings consider the murder of their own kind or casual abuse of mortals to be reprehensible, but a changeling's durance can change her perceptions of right and wrong dramatically. A Gristlegrinder witch might not see anything inherently *wrong* with baking naughty children in an oven and eating them up whole, even if it does force her to remember her durance as scullery maid to a Baba Yaga-like hag queen. Likewise, many changelings consider killing a fetch (especially your own) to be entirely morally justified.

Remember that a changeling doesn't have access to her own character sheet and has no concept of a Clarity rating. She may know that certain actions or events trigger strong memories of her captivity and may even erode her ability to distinguish what is real and what is a mere hallucination, but she doesn't necessarily correlate those events to a moral framework the way a human does. A human loses Morality when he steals because stealing is wrong and represents a disregard for the well-being of his fellow man. A changeling loses Clarity when he steals because stealing forces his mind back to when he was forced to slip through windows in the night and steal the dreams of infants for his shadowy Keeper.

## A MIND AS SHARP AS SWORDS

High-Clarity changelings are often described as "eagle-eyed" or "sharp as a tack." They are extremely perceptive and tend to notice the small details others miss. Some seem to be able to see right through illusions as though they weren't there. Other changelings find high-Clarity changelings a bastion of stability and often look to them for guidance in the changelings' own lives.

Even humans tend to notice a high-Clarity changeling's acuity of mind. They might not understand the full significance of it the way a changeling would, but they certainly notice that the changeling is particularly adept at noticing discrepancies and minor details. Humans might see the changeling as obsessive or anal-retentive, or they might use more value-neutral terms such as "detail oriented" or "meticulous." Some high-Clarity changelings can be rather obnoxious about their perceived superiority over their more confused brethren. They argue that it's absurd and dangerous to put the madmen in charge of things, and that

freehold politics and important offices to those in full command of their faculties.

### Optional Rule: High-Clarity Benefits

As described on p. 92 of **Changeling: The Lost**, a changeling with a Clarity of 8 or higher receives a +2 bonus on rolls related to sensory perception. As an optional rule, allow the player to choose one of the following benefits of having Clarity 8 or higher. If the changeling's Clarity dips below 8 and later rises again, he may choose a different bonus.

- The changeling receives a +2 bonus on all rolls related to sensory perception.
- Whenever the changeling encounters an illusion (such as a vampire's Obfuscate Discipline or constructs created by a mage skilled in Prime magic) or similar effect that would alter his perceptions, he may roll Composure + Wyrd as a reflexive action versus the dice pool rolled to activate the power. If the changeling rolls more successes, he sees through the illusion automatically.
- The changeling gains a +3 bonus on Social Skill checks made to oppose another's Subterfuge check.
- Once per story, the changeling automatically succeeds on a single degeneration check to avoid losing Clarity. Use of this ability must be declared before making the roll.

## A MIND AS BRITTLE AS GLASS

Low-Clarity changelings are dreamy and disconnected from the world. They aren't obviously insane (at least, most aren't) until they reach the extreme lower levels of Clarity, around 1 to 3, but they tend to be the kinds of people described as "living in their own little world." Low-Clarity changelings might zone out in the middle of a conversation, seemingly distracted by some invisible stimulus, or they might respond with something that appears completely unrelated to the question save by some peculiar riddling dream logic.

At low Clarity, Glamour and the Wyrd color the changeling's perception to a greater degree. The changeling might see phantasmal echoes of Faerie in the world around him, such as a tiny, goblin face peeping through a window for a moment or the creeping briars of the Hedge. Conversely, within the Hedge the changeling perceives brief flashes of mundane reality: a section of path appears to be an ordinary asphalt road, or the detritus floating in a stagnant pond might appear to be beer cans and used needles. Low-Clarity



changelings have a perilous time navigating the Hedge, since they can easily mistake their hallucinations for the actual signs that a Hedge gateway is nearby.

Scholars still debate whether this is a mere function of delusion or whether the changeling's perceptions are literally shifting between the two worlds at random. Some argue that Faerie is actually in a realm far removed from mortal demesnes, and that the Hedge

is literally a barrier between them. The hallucinations a low-Clarity changeling experiences are just that: hallucinations. At worst, they may be a form of clairvoyance, a momentary glimpse through the Hedge and into the riotous existence of Arcadia.

Others hold to a more disturbing theory: Faerie is not a literal "other realm," but rather one that exists overlaid on top of the mortal realm. Ordinarily, the Hedge holds these realms apart, but as a changeling's Clarity erodes, the Glamour in her soul calls out across the barrier and causes the changeling's perceptions to fluctuate. Changelings who have had contact with werewolves or mages and had occasion to learn about the Shadow often ascribe to this theory, but many changelings reject it out of pure, simple fear. After all, if Faerie exists right here, just beyond your perceptions, that means the Gentry aren't off in some distant far removed other world, they're *right here*. Your Keeper might be on the other side of the globe, but he might also be right around the corner, watching you, *right now*.

#### Optional Rule: Low-Clarity Drawbacks

The peculiar madness of low Clarity affects every changeling differently. As described on p. 93 of **Changeling: The Lost**, for every two points of Clarity below 7, a changeling suffers a -1 penalty on perception rolls. As an optional rule, you may instead choose one of the following drawbacks for every two points your Clarity drops (choose one at Clarity 6, a second at Clarity 4 and so on). You may choose the same drawback more than once, if you wish. As with the optional Clarity benefits presented above, if your Clarity rises to the point that you no longer suffer a drawback, and then falls back below that level, you may choose a different drawback.

- The changeling suffers a -1 penalty on perception rolls.
- The changeling suffers a -1 penalty on opposed Social rolls made to oppose Subterfuge rolls.
- If the changeling is subject to a power or ability that affects her perceptions (such





as some uses of a mage's Mind magic or the Mask of Superiority clause of the Contracts of Vainglory), he suffers a -2 penalty on the opposed roll or reduces the relevant Resistance Attribute by 1 for purposes of resisting the effect.

## LOSING CLARITY

When a changeling commits an act that triggers a breaking point, she is momentarily overwhelmed by a flood of memories of her time in Arcadia. These memories might be relatively complete ("The time my Keeper made me scrub floors made of broken glass because I dropped a crystal platter"), or they might be mere flashes with no larger context. ("The sting of sweat running into a cut on my brow, not daring to breathe for fear that *something* would catch me.") They might be memories of something the changeling did or was forced to do, or something that was done to her, either by her Keeper or another changeling captive. It may be a new memory the changeling had repressed, or it might be something she vividly recalled from the moment of her escape.

Whatever the nature of this memory, it comes back with frightening intensity. Much in the way victims of traumatic events often talk about reliving the event, this is a far more potent recollection than merely "memory." The changeling recalls every detail with perfect precision, and for all intents and purposes actually experiences it again. In fact, the memory is so vivid that many changelings (i.e., those who fail their degeneration checks) begin to doubt whether they ever escaped at all. At higher Clarity levels, this is a small and obviously illogical concern — the kind that comes up late on a sleepless night but is easily banished by the more rational thought that comes with the dawn. As a changeling's Clarity drops lower and lower, though, the doubts begin to pile up more, until at Clarity 0 the changeling is utterly convinced that she remains a captive in Faerie. At this point, she may become dangerous, sometimes believing that her friends and allies, rather than just delusions in her own mind, are actually loyal servants of her Keeper sent to keep her from ever escaping in truth. More than one motley of changelings have died in their sleep in a seriously ill member's bid for "escape."

## BREAKING POINTS

Breaking points are summarized on p. 91 of **Changeling: The Lost**. They are presented in more detail here.

## Clarity 10 Breaking Points

At Clarity 10, any use of fae powers triggers a degeneration roll. The character is so firmly ensconced in his own view of reality that even the smallest exposure allows a small crack to worm its way into his perceptions. Stepping into the Hedge brings flooding memories of the weird logic of fae reality, where one can never entirely trust one's senses and time and space can flow like a river in a spring thaw.

Maintaining a Clarity rating this high requires a character establish a routine to his life that gives structure and order to contrast the chaos of Faerie. Upsets in this careful regimen can shake the changeling's perception of a patterned, ordered reality. Being fired from a part-time job, breaking up with a short-term girlfriend or moving to another neighborhood in the same town are all examples of these minor unexpected life changes. Changes need not be negative, either: a promotion at work or making contact with an old friend after several years also count.

## Clarity 9 Breaking Points

At Clarity 9, a changeling has not yet reached the point when using her own innate powers can alter her perceptions (not that this is necessarily a *good* thing, since it means the changeling is still somewhat mired in the dual perception of the fae and the mundane). Should she attempt to call on a token, though, her mind rushes back to the bizarre and wondrous treasures her Keeper possessed and may have forced her to use (or used on her). Invoking the power of a token comes too close to the memory of her Keeper's web of pledges, promises and vows.

Humans are social creatures, and we crave contact with our own kind. Changelings may not be human any more, but they still must spend time with mortal men and women occasionally, if only to have contact with someone who can confirm that the changelings' perceptions of reality are, in fact, correct.

The True Fae embody whim, caprice and total self-absorption. Selfish acts, even minor ones such as refusing to help a friend move because you'd rather catch the game or not stopping to help a stranded (but not endangered) motorist, remind changelings uncomfortably of the way their Keepers acted.

## Clarity 8 Breaking Points

Changelings are creatures of Wyrd, perhaps not to the same extent as the Others, but changelings are nonetheless bound by its power. At Clarity 8, a changeling knows that she cannot deny the fae side





of her nature and just try to pass herself off as human. Even breaking a promise *not* enforced by the power of the Wyrd is a breaking point, usually accompanied by a memory of a particularly harsh lesson from her Keeper on the importance of honoring her word. For mundane promises, Storytellers should be fairly lenient: “I’ll see you for dinner on Thursday” isn’t a promise strong enough to trigger a breaking point, but “I promise I’ll be there this time” is. In matters of changeling society, be stricter: promises carry more weight among the Courts, and a lightly made promise to another of the Lost carries more weight than a promise to a mortal.

A changeling’s Court is more than just a group of like-minded fellow Lost she spends time with. Choosing a Court is a serious commitment, one the changeling is expected to honor. Just as breaking a promise, changing Courts clashes against a changeling’s Wyrd-infused nature.

Inflicting injury on another is a hallmark of the Gentry. Whether they are truly sadistic or simply uncaring, they cause pain and sorrow without a second thought. When a changeling commits such an act herself, she feels a moment of chilling kinship with her Keeper that shakes her to the core. In some ways, accidental violence is even worse than deliberate cruelty, as it echoes the Others’ lack of care for anyone or anything other than themselves.

### Clarity 7 Breaking Points

A changeling clings to his perception of reality by the narrowest of threads, constantly balancing between truth and hallucination. Taking a psychotropic drug, such as LSD, psilocybin or peyote, snaps this thread and throws the changeling’s mind into complete disarray. The changeling plunges into a nightmare realm of hallucinations, memories of her durance made horribly real by the drugs’ influence.

Although changelings at Clarity 7 don’t require the same rigid structure to their lives that Clarity 10 changelings must live by, changelings at Clarity 7 can still be adversely affected by unexpected changes in their lives. Moving to a new city, losing a long-term relationship or career, or even an unexpected monetary windfall all count as a major life change.

Petty theft (stealing someone’s wallet or an item worth less than \$100) also brings a risk for degeneration at Clarity 7. The Others attach no significance to ownership unless it is their own, and many changelings find the idea of theft uncomfortably close to their own abduction.

### Clarity 6 Breaking Points

Changelings rely on interaction with mortals to frame their perception of reality. When a mortal is exposed to the hidden reality of the fae, either by a changeling revealing his mien to her or by witnessing the use of blatantly obvious sorcery, the changeling is violently reminded of the first time the veil was ripped away from his own eyes and he beheld the wonder and terror of Faerie.

As with Clarity 9, a changeling needs regular interactions with ordinary human beings to maintain this level of Clarity. A week of isolation, or of knowing no company other than his fellow Lost, is sufficient to make a changeling more susceptible to the creeping duality of his perceptions.

More severe theft falls at this level as well, for the same reasons as described under Clarity 7. The flashbacks that come from grand larceny are usually more severe and harder for the changeling to ignore.

### Clarity 5 Breaking Points

To the Others, changelings are nothing more than playthings with which to amuse themselves for a while. The Gentry care nothing for the comfort of their servants, or even for their lives; thus, to kill another changeling is to take the power of the Others into your own hands. That sort of monumental callousness can crack a changeling’s resolve like a mirror, driving him deeper into his delusions.

Few changelings consider killing a fetch to be an inherently bad thing, but it nevertheless has a powerful impact on the Lost’s psyche. A fetch is, at least in some measure, a part of the changeling the fetch was sent to replace. Fashioned of shadow and Glamour and assorted detritus, the Fetch nevertheless takes on the human life of its double, living as a normal woman while the changeling suffers her durance in Arcadia. It doesn’t take a poet to see the metaphor inherent in killing your mundane, mortal life.

### Clarity 4 Breaking Points

If breaking a mundane promise creates dissonance within the changeling’s Wyrd, breaking a formal oath or vow is like a shrieking note of discord in the middle of the symphony. For a changeling to deny his Wyrd is every bit as detrimental as it is for him to deny his humanity. Breaking a pledge counts as a level 4 breaking point, meaning the changeling must roll a degeneration check with three dice in addition to any detrimental sanctions built into the pledge itself *and* the



effects of breaking an oath, if applicable. Changelings do not give their word lightly, and with good reason.

Extreme unexpected life changes can shake a changeling to the very core of his being. Unlike minor and serious unexpected changes, extreme life changes are seldom, if ever, beneficial. Losing your home and everything you own to a fire or flood, the death of one or more motley members or relocating to another country are all examples of extreme life changes. Pregnancy typically falls under this level as well — and it should be noted that women aren't the only ones for whom pregnancy is an extreme life change. Unless the changeling father skips out and abandons his family, he must roll as well. Sadly, more often than not, this means that changelings are absentee fathers at best and deadbeat dads at worst.

### Clarity 3 Breaking Points

In the nightmare realm of Faerie, changelings suffer at the whims of their Keepers, who shape the reality of that world as easily as a changeling shapes the dreams of a mortal. It's not hard to see, then, why a changeling who ravages a mortal's dreams encounters a breaking point when she sees how her actions mirror those of the Gentry. Moreover, since most changelings must enter into a pledge to ride a mortal's dreams, on top of the capricious inflicting of harm on a human being, there is the added sting of betrayal.

Prolonged periods of solitude with no human interaction can drive even a perfectly sane person a little batty, so it's no surprise that changelings suffer a more severe breaking point when they go for a month or longer without human contact. Such a long time without any contact other than the fae can make a changeling begin to wonder whether she's even left Faerie at all. She may begin to forget basic nuances of human behavior or display inappropriate emotional reactions.

Kidnapping, obviously, is the formative event of nearly every changeling's existence. Even those who were not technically abducted but who wandered into the Hedge by accident or caprice recall that pivotal moment when they first encountered their Keepers and were snatched away. Kidnapping a mortal, no matter how altruistic the intentions, brings those memories crashing back and can leave even the most stalwart of changelings a quivering, sobbing wreck. It should be noted that the *legal* definition of kidnapping does not apply here; the key factor in whether the act is a breaking point is the subject's willingness to go with the changeling. Taking a teenaged motley member out of the foster home he was placed in is legally kidnap-

ping, since the child's guardians didn't consent, but it wouldn't be a breaking point.

A changeling's mind is a surprisingly fragile thing. Already prone to madness by virtue of the Glamour that courses through changelings, a changeling has little to guide her beyond her own perceptions of reality. If those perceptions are skewed by the acquisition of a derangement (from a source *other than* a Clarity degeneration), she suffers a further break from reality. She may remember a time in her duration when the pain or humiliation drove her mad, or she might experience grueling flashes of the sheer random illogic that are the Others' bread and butter.

### Clarity 2 Breaking Points

When a changeling kills a human, it is more than an act of simple manslaughter. The killing of a human being is the ultimate act of True-Fae-like hubris: the assertion that the changeling has total dominion over the life of a human being, one ignorant of the hidden world that lurks just behind her perception. That by itself is not enough to justify the sheer intensity of this breaking point; much of the same argument could be applied to the killing of another changeling, a Clarity 5 breaking point. What separates the killing of a human is what it represents: in a sense, by killing a human being, the changeling divorces his identity from humanity for a moment. Killing a human being is tantamount to denying that he ever *was* human, which drives his mind toward the inhuman madness of his Keeper.

Casual or callous crimes fall under the same justification: by committing depraved acts, the changeling makes himself more like his Keeper than the changeling would likely care to admit. It is somewhat easier to justify these acts against other supernatural beings, since they occupy the same "unreal" niche that other changelings do. Clarity is maintained because the changeling can identify other supernatural beings as part of his deluded perception of reality. Even if he knows, intellectually, that a werewolf or vampire is every bit as real as the changeling is, the madness that haunts him always leaves that niggling doubt in the back of his mind: just how real is *he*, anyways?

### Clarity 1 Breaking Points

Clarity 1 breaking points are the sort of events that can destroy a changeling's sanity in a heartbeat. Mercifully, the triggering events for most are extremely rare in most chronicles. Spending time in Arcadia usually means the chronicle is over for that character, but in the rare in-





stance that a chronicle journeys to the Realm of the Fae and returns, time spent in Arcadia is a constant reminder of the horrors the changeling endured. Every glance is heavy with memories, and in the unlikely event that a changeling is able to sleep his dreams are wracked by vivid, specific nightmares as though the veil of forgetfulness has been ripped away. Should it become necessary to roll, assume that a changeling must make a degeneration roll using two dice each time a number of days equal to his Wyrd passes in Arcadia (that's days of perceived, Arcadian time, which may not be the same thing as Earthly time at all). High-Wyrd changelings are more adapted to the riot of Arcadia and can keep their wits about them longer.

Prolonged contact with the True Fae is likewise a frequent chronicle-ender, but less often than journeying to Arcadia. Banished Fae lurk in the mortal world, and they still count as members of the Gentry, and the true Lords of Faerie sometimes manifest in this realm for their own ends. Prolonged contact (or intimate contact of any duration) calls up the strongest and bitterest memories of captivity, making the changeling relive her greatest hurts and humiliations. The very *presence* of one of the Others warps the changeling's perceptions and cracks her will like delicate china.

For purposes of degeneration, "prolonged contact" requires at least an hour of interaction. Doing battle with one of the Gentry typically doesn't count unless it is a truly epic combat. The exception is if the changeling encounters the True Fae in Arcadia, the Hedge or a dreamscape. In those realms where the Fae reign supreme, even a short scene's worth of contact counts. Note also that this breaking point is cumulative with spending time in Arcadia. A changeling who visits Faerie and encounters one of the Gentry there must make *two* degeneration rolls.

## REGAINING CLARITY

Regaining lost Clarity is never as easy as losing it in the first place. It isn't enough to just try to live by the tenets of a higher level, as it is with Morality. A changeling must take active steps toward affirming his perception of what is real and what is not. This might mean spending time around mundane humans and observing their reactions to the world around them as a baseline for what is real and what is the Glamour-fed illusion of Faerie. It might mean rigorously testing everything the changeling sees, in an attempt to catalog whether it reacts as something "real" should. The fact that this behavior tends to make humans think they are *more* unstable rather than less is an irony not lost on changelings.

## Recovering from Clarity 0

Changelings who have reached Clarity 0 are lunatics in the purest sense of that word. They cannot interact in any meaningful way with human or changeling society, and may exhibit extreme catatonia or bizarre manias. A lunatic cannot raise his own Clarity from 0 to 1 by any means: experience points, the optional "Clarity of perception" rule presented below or any other ability that would allow him to increase his Clarity.

Bringing a changeling who is completely lost to madness is a difficult process, but not completely impossible. To begin with, the lunatic must be kept in one place, confined to an area no larger than a medium-sized room. This allows the changeling to grow acclimated to the locale, helping his mind to begin to sort the real from the fantastic. While truly gifted changelings can guide their fellows back from the abyss with only their words, the tragic reality is that extreme, even barbarous methods are often needed to shock a changeling back from the depths of madness.

The following system may, at the Storyteller's discretion, be used to help mad changelings regain some foundation. Some might be too far gone to reach in this fashion.

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Empathy – subject's Wyrd

**Action:** Extended (25 – subject's Resolve + Composure successes required; each roll represents one day of counseling)

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Not only do you lose any accumulated successes, the subject becomes agitated and attacks you. If he cannot get to you, he "attacks" himself rolling Strength + Brawl as a rote action every turn until unconscious or restrained.

**Failure:** You fail to make progress in reaching the subject.

**Success:** You make progress toward reaching the subject.

**Exceptional Success:** The subject experiences a brief lucid period if you roll five or more successes on a single roll. Assuming you did not reach the target number with this roll, do not subtract the subject's Wyrd from your next roll.

Once the target number of successes is reached, the subject is automatically raised to Clarity 1 and may begin recovering Clarity normally.



## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-3	Your Clarity is 3 or less.
-1	Your Clarity is 4 to 6.
+0	Your Clarity is 7.
+1	Your Clarity is 8 to 9.
+1	The subject is taking antipsychotic drugs.
+3	Your Clarity is 10.

## Optional Rule: Counseling

In this day and age, many changelings turn to psychiatric counseling to help them adjust and regain Clarity. Although ordinary mortal psychiatrists are of dubious helpfulness, those who are aware of the supernatural can provide some measure of assistance. Changelings with a background in psychiatric medicine are highly valued in many freeholds, and freeholds that lack such members occasionally ensorcel a human doctor to help treat their wayward members.

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Medicine – subject's Wyrd

**Action:** Extended (10 successes required; each roll represents one hour of counseling)

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** You succeed only in deepening the subject's delusions. The next time the subject attempts to raise his Clarity with experience points, it costs new dots x 4 instead of new dots x 3.

**Failure:** The session is unproductive.

**Success:** You make progress toward improving the subject's Clarity.

**Exceptional Success:** The benefits of the counseling apply to *all* purchases of Clarity within the next month.

If you succeed on the check, the next time the subject buys a dot of Clarity within one month of his last counseling session, the cost is new dots x 2 instead of new dots x 3. This benefit applies only if the subject is raising his Clarity up to 6; beyond that, he must rely on himself.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-5	The counselor is a mundane human with no knowledge of the supernatural.
-2	The counselor is also a changeling.
+0	The counselor is aware of the supernatural but not the particulars pertaining to the Lost.
+1	The subject is taking regular doses of antipsychotic drugs.
+2	The counselor is ensorcelled.

# IRON

Of all the defenses changelings possess against the powers of the True Fae — Glamour, the seasonal Courts, their own attachments to the mortal world — perhaps the most potent in a changeling's arsenal is iron. Not only is it common throughout the world, used in everything from tools to architecture to machine parts, but iron has the added advantage of being the one weapon changelings may use against the True Fae that the Others cannot turn against their wayward servants. Glamour the Gentry possess in abundance, and they craft Contracts the way changelings form pledges. The Gentry are the true lords of dream, and no changeling can hope to match them in that arena.

Iron, though, is a bane to the True Fae; cold iron shatters their defenses the way a dropped rock shatters the placid surface of a lake. Ordinary iron disgusts the Others, who find its presence uncomfortable and frightening. Hand-forged iron, beaten into shape by raw, brute force, actively repels them. Its very presence is painful to them, and its touch sears their flesh as though the metal were straight from the forge's heat. Changelings are vulnerable to iron weaponry inasmuch as their mystical defenses, coming as they do from the same source as the Others', are of no use against it, but they do not suffer from the deep-seated loathing of the substance that binds the Gentry.

## THE TALE OF IRON

Among the Lost, no one truly knows *why* iron is anathema to the power of Faerie. Many theories abound, from an ancient Contract broken by the Gentry to a spell wrought by mortal magicians at the dawn of time, but no one really knows for sure. Some of the more common stories are presented here, along with optional rules that may be brought into the chronicle if the stories are, in fact, true. Storytellers are encouraged to mix and match elements as befits their chronicles: there's no reason you can't decide that "The Hope of Man" is the true story of why iron harms the fae but use the mechanics presented for "The Foe of All Unreason" if they strike you as more interesting. Likewise, you might decide that all of the stories are partially true, or that none are, and simply go with the rules presented in **Changeling: The Lost**. Do whatever you feel is right for the stories you want to tell.

## A CONTRACT TORN ASUNDER

Long ago, before there were cities or the Internet or roads that linked the world together, there was a lord of the True Fae and his changeling servant. The





lord was called the Red Prince of Dreams, and his servant was a cunning little Darkling girl he didn't deign to name. She called herself Flit, though, and so that is what we shall call her.

The Red Prince was a cruel and terrible lord, a master of nightmares and shadows who could turn the bravest men to quivering jelly with the slightest smile. Flit hated him even more than she hated Arcadia itself, and though she was his servant for many, many years without reprieve, each night without fail she prayed that she would be delivered from her bondage. But each night the Red Prince clapped an iron shackle 'round her neck, and locked it with an iron key that he kept on his person all hours of the day and night, and there was no liberation for poor Flit.

One day, while riding the borders of his lands, the Red Prince happened to come upon Iron in the fields. Now you may ask how it is that Iron, which is a thing but not a singular, unique thing, if you take my meaning, could be chanced upon in the fields, and the truth is I don't rightly know. It's enough to know that, when this story took place, you *could*, and the Red Prince *did*. And he happened to overhear Iron saying to the workers in the field that men feared him more than any other thing under the sun.

"What is this I hear, Iron?" the Red Prince cried. "You say that you are feared more than anything under the sun, when you stand within sight of *my* castle?"

And Iron said, "Certainly you are powerful, my Prince, and justly feared, but your terrors are the fleeting shadows of nightmare, easily banished by the morning light. Mine hang upon men even through their waking hours and make of their lives a misery."

To which the Prince replied: "We shall see, Iron, who is the greater terror. Let us put ourselves to this test: you and I shall go to the Village Beyond the Thorns and see who fills the children of Adam and Eve with more dread. But if I win, you must swear to serve me and only me until the stars pass away." For in those days the Gentry were quite fond of iron and used it to ornament their palaces and carriages and their weapons of war.

And Iron replied, "So be it. But if I am the most terrible, you must give up your crown to me, for I wish to be a Prince as well." And the Red Prince agreed, and unnoticed by both, Flit watched this exchange with great interest. She was a clever one, was Flit, and she thought she might see her way clear to an escape in this bargain.

And so Iron and the Red Prince rode on, through the Hedge, and came to the Village Beyond the Thorns

just as night was falling. And like a shadow, the Red Prince of Dreams slipped through the window of one of the cottages, and he smiled upon the family that slept there, and they began to whimper and moan in their sleep, caught in the grip of night terror. And the Prince retreated, satisfied. But as he left, he did not notice Flit, who crept up to the window with a lamp and a mirror that she used to shine light in on the family. And thinking that it was dawn and time for the day's chores, they woke, and cast off the nightmare.

Then it was Iron's turn, and he made himself into a plow to signify the backbreaking labor the farmers endured to provide for their families. And when they tilled their fields, no crop would sprout, until they all feared that they would work themselves to the bone and their families would starve nonetheless. And Iron won the first contest.

The next dusk, the Red Prince went to a larger house and crept inside like a scuttling spider, whispering honeyed terrors into the ears of sleeping children until they twitched and cried out in the grip of their dreams. But again Flit slipped in, quiet as a shadow and invisible as a whisper, and frightened the poor house cat so that it leaped up with a great yowl and knocked over the pots in the kitchen, waking the family. The cat got a scolding, but only a small one, because in truth they were happy to be woken.

The next day, when the men went out to the field, Iron made himself into a vision of a great sword hanging in the sky. And the men of the village cried, "It is a sign from the gods! Invaders will come and put our little village to the sword!" And they abandoned their plows and their fields, and set to building an earthen wall around their village while their crops went untended and their stores grew lower. And Iron won the second contest.

On the third and final night, for these things always happen in threes, the Prince went to the house of the village headman, and the Prince entered like a cloud of smoke and laid with the man's wife and daughter, and they were taken with such fits of nightmare that even the village physicker wondered if his medicines would cure them. But cunning, silent Flit crept in and replaced his earthly elixirs with the milk of a poppy that blooms only in Arcadia and that brings peaceful sleep.

And on the last day, Iron made himself into a pair of heavy manacles linked with chain, and laid himself out where the men of the village would find him. And when they did, they cried out "See here! These are the chains of a slaver! One of our neighbors has turned against us, and plots to sell our wives and children to the invaders!"



And the villagers turned on each other, and simmering resentments became open hatred, and the Village Beyond the Thorns destroyed itself with no invaders necessary. And though he bitterly wished to deny it, the Red Prince had to admit that Iron had won.

They returned to the Prince's castle, and Flit was chained up once more, and Iron said to the Red Prince, "So, my lord, we had a pledge. Your crown is now mine, and I shall be the Iron Prince of Red Dreams."

But the Prince replied, "I will not give up my crown. It was not you that the people feared, but starvation, invasion and slavery. You have no right to my Princesdom, and you shall leave my lands and not return if you are wise, for I have no tolerance for cheats."

To which Iron roared in response: "And I have no tolerance for oathbreakers! You and all your kin are liars and honor-less curs! Henceforth you shall not decorate your palaces or your carriages or your weapons of war with me, for my touch will burn you like the heat of the forge!" And as he spoke those words, the iron key around the Prince's neck grew white-hot, and it seared into his heart, and he fell dead to the floor. All the iron filigree that decorated the palace began to melt as well, taking great chunks of stone with it.

As Iron was just about to leave, he heard a tiny voice calling to him, in great pain. Curious, he followed the voice to find Flit, writhing on the ground as her collar burned her neck. She pleaded with Iron to have mercy, and told how she had secretly aided him against the Prince.

And Iron took pity on the changeling, and he said, "So be it. My curse is lifted from all those whose flesh is of Faerie and of mortal both." And the pain subsided, and Flit easily slipped out of her bonds, and she ran away. Eventually, after many adventures, she found her way back to the mortal world, where she was hailed as a hero by all the changelings who had escaped thanks to Iron's curse. And she had many, many more adventures, but those are stories for another time.

### Optional Rules

This story is one sample version of the explanation presented in **Changeling: The Lost** for why iron is a bane to the fae. Therefore, the rules presented there — cold iron ignores all fae magic defenses, and hand-forged iron deals aggravated damage to the fae — apply normally.

### THE HOPE OF MAN

Now see, here's how *I* heard it. Way, way back, in the early days, it pretty much sucked to be a human.

We're talking before the dawn of history here, when the planet was basically ruled by wizards and demons and monsters and God knows what else. I met a wizard once, you know. In Boston. He said they made some kind of big super-magic paradise to protect folks from that crap. Whatever, right? Anyways, it sucked to be a human. On a good day, you were *lucky* if you just got eaten.

So one day, some miner digging for, I don't know, gold or whatever, finds this black metal in the ground. He's never seen it before, so he takes it back to his village and gives it to the blacksmith. Up till now, this guy's only ever worked with bronze and shit, you know? He's got no idea what to do with this. But he messes around with it, gets the forge hotter, and eventually he makes it into a knife. And it's a *good* knife, way better than anything anybody else has. So he takes it to the witch doctor, who I guess was one of the guys that didn't make it into wizard paradise, and he says, "What the hell is this?"

And the witch doctor, he immediately sees what it is. It's something new. Nobody's got a claim on this stuff yet. And so he says, "This? This right here, Smitty, is our ticket off the bottom of the food chain." So they go, and they talk to the miner and find out where he got it, and they tell him and his miner buddies to go dig up as much more of it as they can. A few months later, and a few more villagers eaten by horrible monsters, and they've replaced all their weapons and armor with iron ones. And so the witch doctor, he does this big spell, and he calls up the Spirit of Iron, and he says that his people will use iron to conquer the world if Iron promises to protect them from the shit that goes bump in the night. And Iron thinks that sounds like a sweet gig, and since he's new enough on the scene that he doesn't owe anything to anybody else, he says sure.

And so the next time the monsters come, the villagers drive them off with iron spears. When the Others come to take the villagers away, they beat 'em back with iron clubs. When the hungry dead try to claw their way out of their graves, the villagers build an iron fence around the graveyard to trap the dead in. And slowly but surely, the villagers conquer the world with iron.

Of course, that was a long time ago. These days, people conquer the world with plastic and silicon, and they build stuff with steel and titanium, not iron. That promise they made to iron, back in the day — it's starting to fade. But sometimes it still works, even against the Others. Have I *tried* it? Well, no, not exactly. Hey, if you've got a choice between calling down fire with a Contract to burn some wizard to cinders or waving





a horseshoe at him and hoping he goes away, what are you gonna do?

### Optional Rules

If this story (or one similar to it) is true, iron can provide the user with added protection against most *any* sort of supernatural, not just the True Fae. This added protection comes at a price in the modern era, though, as humanity has forgotten its ancient promise to the Spirit of Iron. In the last century, as more advanced materials have replaced iron in construction and warfare, the power of that pledge has waned. Iron still has its usual effects against fae magic, and hand-forged iron deals aggravated damage to the True Fae as normal (perhaps the Wyrd holds them more accountable than others, or perhaps part of the story of the broken Contract is also true). In addition, the following effects may be invoked by spending a Willpower point.

- An iron fence or similar, enclosed barrier, placed around a ghost's anchor keeps that ghost from leaving the enclosed area if it manifests there. This effect lasts for one day.

- An iron knife buried under a threshold, or an iron horseshoe nailed to a door, keeps *any* supernatural being from entering through that door unless the being wins an opposed roll of its own Resolve + Supernatural Advantage (Blood Potency, Primal Urge, Wisdom, Azoth or Wyrd) versus the Resolve + Composure of the person who spent the Willpower point. Only that particular entryway is thus warded; to completely protect an entire house, every door and window must be warded. The ward lasts for one day or until it is breached.

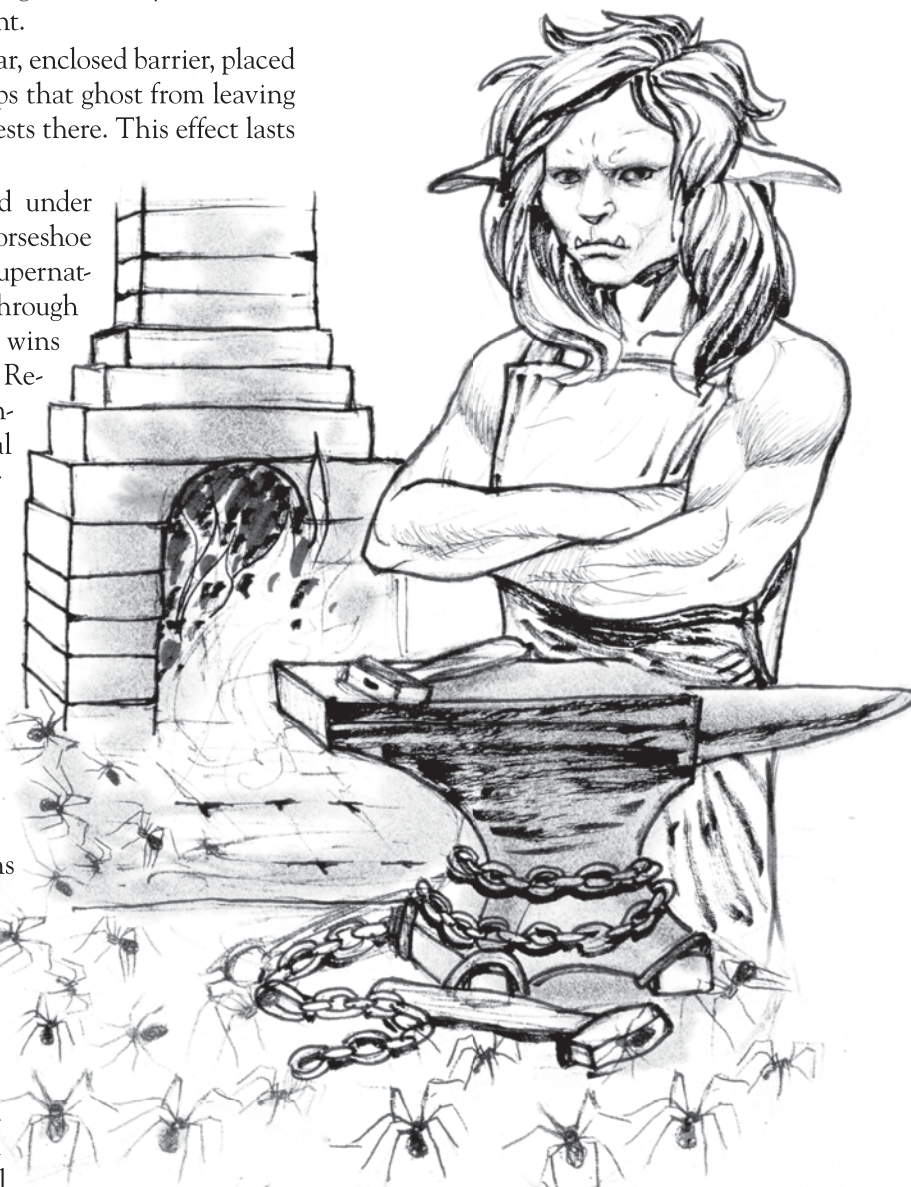
- An iron spike functions identically to a wooden stake when used against a vampire. One Willpower point empowers the spike with the function of a wooden stake for a scene.

- A hand-forged iron weapon inflicts aggravated damage on any supernatural

being. One Willpower point must be spent per attack. Even changelings may suffer aggravated damage from hand-forged iron weapons using this rule, but you don't need to spend Willpower to inflict aggravated damage on the True Fae.

### THE FOE OF ALL UNREASON

No doubt you've heard all the stories about iron's miraculous properties. How it cuts through our magic like a hot knife through butter, how it lays low even the mightiest of the True Fae. Maybe you've even heard the more outlandish stories, like how you can ward off evil with an iron nail pried from a coffin or counter a magic spell with an iron coin. Well I'm here to tell you: There's nothing special about iron at all.





Yeah. That's right. There's nothing special about iron. *At all.* Okay, maybe you've been on the receiving end of an iron beating, and you think I'm crazy. You're right, iron cuts through our magic like it wasn't even there. It does that because there's nothing *special* about it — by which I mean it isn't magic or the result of an ancient curse or anything like that. Iron is literally the most non-magical substance on earth.

I don't know why. Really, I don't. I've heard some people say it's because iron symbolically represents the way mankind traded wonder for reason, it being the metal that made so much of modern science and technology possible. Me, I don't believe that. I think it just is, it's one of those things you can't really explain. Why does silver hurt werewolves, why are vampires burned by the sun? Who knows?

As for hand-forged iron, well, just think about it. What's more magical in the purest sense than fire? It transforms, it destroys, it heals. You don't think the myth about Prometheus was *literally* about him teaching people to bang rocks together, do you? When you put iron to a fire, you're putting just a little magic into it, like when you rub a magnet over a piece of metal and it gets a little magnetic itself. That's why hand-forged iron is so deadly to the Others. They're beings of pure magic, pure Glamour and Wyrd, being hit by pure, concentrated un-magic. It's like matter and anti-matter. Or like a lightning rod drawing a thunderbolt into the ground harmlessly.

I'll tell you another thing, too. I think it's possible for iron to *become* magical, if we let it. If we keep spinning these yarns about magic spells and spirits and whatever else you've heard, if we keep mystifying it and treating it like our big secret weapon, and just maybe that'll rub off. *Then* where will we be? And if you don't think that could happen, consider that the cross was just a perfectly ordinary torture device until some guy from Nazareth got nailed to one. Now you can repel vampires and exorcise demons with it.

### Optional Rules

If the rules implied by this story are true, they have potentially far-reaching effects on your World of Darkness chronicle. If your game is purely a game of **Changeling: The Lost** with no or minimal interaction with other creatures that haunt the night, the effects will be mitigated somewhat, but if you run a crossover-heavy game, you'll want to think carefully about the implications on the world as a whole.

- Cold iron has the same effect on any sort of magical defenses that it does on fae magic. Vampiric

Disciplines, werewolf Gifts, the Arcana of mages and the alchemical Transmutations of Prometheans are powerless to resist the sundering power of cold iron.

- Most supernaturals, just as changelings, do not take aggravated damage from hand-forged iron. However, beings of a "pure" magical nature akin to the Gentry (such as spirits, ghosts, Abyssal entities and *qashmallim*) may suffer aggravated damage from hand-forged iron.

- Hand-forged iron that is improved or forged in any way with magic (such as Contracts of Artifice or the Smith's kith blessing) becomes immediately and permanently treated as cold iron. Cold iron improved or forged with magic loses all its beneficial effects against the supernatural.

## THE NATURE OF IRON

As stated in **Changeling: The Lost**, "cold iron" is defined as iron that is "relatively pure." That's a fine definition, but leaves a lot of room for interpretation. After all, most steel is between 98% and 99% pure iron. So where does one draw the line of demarcation? It's difficult to draw an arbitrary line and say "anything less than X% pure iron doesn't count," simply because metallurgy isn't perfectly precise and some substances that are considered iron (for example, cast iron cookware) have significantly higher carbon content than metals that are considered steel.

Besides which, cold iron is a mythic vulnerability of the fae, and just as the fae themselves, myths are largely unconcerned with science. The folklore and the magic matter, not the hard numbers. Consequently, the rule of thumb is simple: if it's usually called iron, it counts as cold iron at least, if not hand-forged iron. If it's called steel or oxides or anything else, it doesn't. Intentionally forged alloys aren't iron any more, but a hunk of iron ore pulled out of the ground is, as its impurities are naturally occurring.

It's also worth pointing out that the term "cold iron" is just a bit of poetry. Iron doesn't literally need to be cold to have its effects on the fae. You could pick up a wrought-iron fencepost that's been sitting out in an Arizona summer sun all day and it will still break through fae enchantments.

## TYPES OF IRON

It's all well and good to say "anything called iron counts as iron," but it's not always readily obvious what sorts of things are made out of iron these days. While far from a comprehensive list, the following should prove





helpful when a player says, “I pick up the frying pan and swing it like a club! Does it ignore his magical defenses?”

- **Iron Ore:** Iron ore is iron as it is mined out of the ground. Iron ore resembles a rock more than a metal, and is loaded with impurities, but still considered iron. Iron ore is never worked into any finished product without several more refining steps, but a fist-sized chunk makes a serviceable improvised weapon. Since iron ore hasn’t been treated by a forge, it inflicts aggravated damage against the True Fae. *Sample Weapons:* Fist-sized chunk of ore (+0B), two-handed chunk of ore (+1B).

- **Pig Iron:** Pig iron is raw iron immediately after it has been smelted in a blast furnace. Pig iron’s high carbon content makes it far too brittle for use in construction, but pig iron can be found in limited applications such as weights and anchors. Because it has been heated, pig iron does not inflict aggravated damage against the Others. *Sample Weapons:* Theater curtain “pig weight” (+1B), boat anchor (+2B).

- **Cast Iron:** Once pig iron has been further purified, it becomes cast iron. Cast iron is used in a wide variety of fields, most notably cookware, but also in the construction of pipes, car parts and heavy machinery. *Sample Weapons:* Cast iron skillet (+0B), crankshaft (+1B), length of iron pipe (+1B).

- **Wrought Iron:** Wrought iron was once the most common form of iron in the Western world, used for everything from chains to rivets to building materials. Today, most instances of wrought iron are decorative, and in fact most are actually a soft form of steel. More than one changeling has wrenched a piece of wrought iron fence free to serve as a weapon, only to learn too late that the “wrought iron” was a cheap steel imitation. However, the World of Darkness is a deliberately Gothic-influenced setting, and Storytellers shouldn’t feel bad about including a bit more genuine wrought iron in the setting, any more than they should feel like they’re “cheating” for adding extra cathedrals or having a neighborhood be worse in the chronicle than it is in real life. It’s appropriate. *Sample Weapons:* Fence post (+1L), antique lamppost (+2B, requires Strength ●●●).

## HAND-FORGED IRON

Hand-forged iron deserves special mention as the bane of the True Fae. A hand-forged iron tool has been beaten into shape with nothing but muscle power; a hand-forged tool is never heated by the hand of man. Technically speaking, there is almost no such thing as true hand-forged iron, since iron ore must be smelted

## Recognizing Iron

Sometimes knowing whether that fence is real antique wrought iron or cheap steel is the difference between life and death. Recognizing iron is a Wits + Crafts roll as an instant action. If the material in question is not iron, but made to look like iron, the roll suffers a –1 penalty.

to produce a metal pure enough to work with. Changeling smiths have found ways around this, albeit costly ones, that allow the smiths to begin with an unworked ingot of cast iron or wrought iron, but the most highly sought-after material for weapons against the True Fae is meteoric iron. Meteoric iron, as the name suggests, came to earth in the form of meteorites, where the heat of atmospheric entry smelts the iron naturally. Since the metal was never heated by the hands of man, it can be cold-worked into true hand-forged iron.

Crafting hand-forged iron items is a grueling task; most freeholds will have at most one artisan who works in the stuff, and even then it’s usually an occasional thing, unless the Gentry are a very real and active threat to the freehold. To forge iron by hand requires a full set of blacksmithing tools and at least a Strength of 4.

**Dice Pool:** Strength + Crafts

**Action:** Extended (variable successes required; each roll represents a day of forging)

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Your character fails to make any repairs on the item and actively worsens its condition. Each dramatic failure increases the number of successes required to complete repairs by one or more.

**Failure:** Your character fails to make any headway in forging the item.

**Success:** Your character makes progress in completing the crafting.

**Exceptional Success:** Your character makes dramatic progress in forging the item, likely well ahead of schedule.

You must roll a number of successes equal to double the Structure of the intended item. Only count the actual iron portion of the object’s Size when determining its Structure; for example, a spear has a Size of 4, but most of that is the wooden haft. The iron head is no bigger than a dagger, so the spear has a Size of 1.



To maintain effectiveness as a weapon, hand-forged iron cannot be subject to the heat of the forge. This means if the weapon breaks or must be re-forged, the best that can be done is to remake it into two or more smaller weapons. Wized of the Smith kith have discovered a partial way around this requirement, albeit at great cost. By spending a *dot* of Willpower, a Smith can apply just enough heat to forge the pieces of a hand-forged iron blade back together. This same expenditure allows the Smith to begin the process of hand-forging with an ingot of cast or wrought iron; anyone else must start with meteoric iron. This ability is considered part of the kith's blessing.

## MERITS

### ARCADIAN BODY (....)

**Prerequisite:** Three or more dots on the affected Attribute

**Effect:** Your character's body was significantly changed by her time in Arcadia. Some combination of the transformations inflicted upon her by her Keeper and your character's life in Arcadia altered one of her Attributes so that it can now be increased to an inhuman degree. The fifth dot in this Attribute costs only one of the dots you have at character creation, and your character can raise this Attribute to a maximum of six dots by spending experience points. Changelings can only purchase this Merit once. *Available at character creation only.* The basic form of a changeling's body is set once the changeling comes back from Arcadia.

### ARCADIAN METABOLISM (..)

**Effect:** Your character adapted to Arcadia better than most changelings. Perhaps he was in Arcadia an especially long time, or possibly the faerie fruit in his portion of Arcadia was especially potent. Regardless of the reason, your character gains additional benefit from eating goblin fruit. He regains one point of aggravated damage, two points of lethal damage or four points of bashing damage for every goblin fruit he consumes. The worst damage always heals first. However, your character can heal aggravated damage in this fashion only once a day. Characters who possess this Merit also often possess the Long of Days Merit.

**Drawback:** Your character's unusual metabolism is not an unqualified blessing. His body chemistry is subtly different from that of an ordinary mortal. Medicine rolls to help him all receive a -1 penalty. In addition, he can no longer survive without infusions of food touched by Arcadia. If your character does not eat

at least one piece of goblin fruit every week, he suffers one point of bashing damage that cannot be healed except by eating goblin fruit. Your character suffers an addition point of bashing damage for every three additional days that he does not eat a piece of goblin fruit. However, eating a single goblin fruit cures this damage and has its normal affect upon the character. Characters with this Merit who are kept from goblin fruit for too long eventually sicken and die.

### ARCHIVE (• TO ••••; SPECIAL)

**Prerequisite:** Hollow

**Effect:** Your character maintains, within his Hollow, a personal collection of useful information that can help with natural and supernatural research. Whether it's in the form of a musty collection of occult tomes, a talking skull with several lifetimes of information at hand or a Glamour-powered computer network, the archive includes reference materials that can help the changeling learn about the world around him. The archive also offers insight into supernatural and occult topics that mortals cannot comprehend. In both fields of knowledge — mundane research and occult lore — this collection relates to one or more fields of specialization.

Each dot in this Merit represents one field of study or area of knowledge in which your character has a wealth of tomes or computer files (or perhaps a supernatural resource) and from which he may draw information. If he has Archive •••, his dots might be assigned to computer operating systems, medieval history and goblin fruits, respectively. Topics can include arcane lore that most people don't know about or that has been forgotten since antiquity, as well as fae lore that humanity has never known.

Gaining information from an archive is a research task, as described on pp. 55–56 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, except that a changeling spends only 15 minutes per roll when researching in his archive. (This time cannot be further reduced by the Brownie's Boon Merit, below.) Success doesn't guarantee exactly the information for which he looks. Archives aren't all-knowing, and they don't always provide one definitive answer to a question, since multiple authors may have different points of view on the same subject. The Storyteller is perfectly justified in saying that a particular archive simply doesn't reveal something.

A changeling may allow another changeling the privilege of consulting his archives, but unless this consultant puts points toward the Archive Merit, the standard 30 minutes per roll are spent researching his topic.





Archive areas of study include but are not limited to Fairy Tales and Folklore, Herbalism, Trods, Tokens, Goblin Fruit, Hedgebeasts, Goblin Markets, Court History (with each Court being a separate topic), Local Changeling History, Orders and, of course, almost any mundane topic from Archaeology to Zoology.

An archive is located in a Hollow and is protected by the Hollow's wards. See the Hollow Merit on p. 94 of **Changeling: The Lost**.

**Special:** Characters who share a Hollow can also share Archive dots, with each contributing to its area of knowledge. These characters each receive the full benefits of the Archives. It may happen that changelings suffer a falling-out, in which case one or more might be asked to forfeit their research privileges by the others. Those who are banned lose whatever dots they contributed, unless an agreement is worked out to split the Archives, allowing outcasts to take their areas of knowledge with them. Shared Archives should be marked with an asterisk (\*) on your character sheet. See the description of the Hollow Merit for details on how to allocate dots.

### BROWNIE'S BOON (•)

Similar to the legendary brownies or shoemaker's elves, you possess the ability to complete mundane tasks in record time. For any long-term work project of mundane (not supernatural) nature, you may halve the required time to complete a task as long as you are not being watched by anyone. Thus, a character with this Merit could repair a car in half the time but could not shape the Hedge more quickly. In addition, you may spend a point of Glamour to halve the time again, to a maximum of three points of Glamour and 1/16<sup>th</sup> of the normal time for any particular task.

### CHARMED LIFE (••)

**Effect:** While in Arcadia, your character gained some minor measure of the enchantments that many of the True Fae use to protect themselves from harm. Once per scene, if your character suffers damage from an attack that would kill him or even just inflict one or more points of aggravated damage, your character has the option of spending one point of Willpower to cause the attacker to have to reroll this attack. The second roll is the one that affects the character. This Merit may function even if the character is unconscious, but does not function if the character has no more points of Willpower to spend. Also, this ability can only function once for any single attack roll.

### DUAL KITH (•• OR •••)

**Effect:** Your character's kith is in some fashion a blending of two existing kiths. For two dots, your character is a blending of two kiths associated with her seeming. A Beast associated with an especially agile flying insect such as a dragonfly, who combines features of a Skitterskulk and a Windwing, is but one of many possible examples. Other possibilities include an Elemental associated with human-created electricity, who combines features of a Fireheart and a Manikin, or a Fairest who is an especially graceful and elegant dragon, who combines features of the Dancer and the Draconic. The changeling gains the blessing of both of the kiths she is associated with and can use both equally easily and well.

For three dots, your character is one of the rare changelings who blends together traits from two kiths associated with different seemings. Your character might be an Airtouched who is so attuned to the winds that she can float and glide like a Windwing Elemental, a Flowering whose association with plants is so strong that she has some of the traits of a Wood-blood Elemental. Alternately, your character might be an especially bestial Farwalker who appears as a hairy, humanoid predator with traits of a Hunterheart Beast. Your character can belong to only a single seeming, but she also possesses the kith blessings of both kiths. No other benefit of the other seeming is transferred; your character is still a member of one seeming, with all that entails. This Merit can be taken only once. *Available at character creation only.* A character's kith may be unusual, but it never changes. You cannot blend your character's kith at a later time.

[**Note:** An alternate approach to blending or evolving kiths appears in **Winter Masques**.]

### ENCHANTING PERFORMANCE (••••)

**Prerequisite:** Expression •••

**Effect:** Your character's fae nature causes her to be an especially magnetic and compelling performer. She reduces all situational penalties to any Expression or Persuasion rolls used as part of a performance by a number of points equal to her Wyrd, to a minimum of zero. In addition, by spending a point of Glamour, your character can cause her performance to be particularly moving. Spending this Glamour causes her performance roll to gain the rote quality; if the performance roll is successful, it stirs a single emotion appropriate to the subject matter in the audience. This emotion



can be as simple as joy and as complex as the anger of being betrayed by someone especially close. This emotion is not overpowering and does not compel anyone to perform any action, but everyone who pays attention to the performance feels it.

### FAE MOUNT (•, ••, ••• OR ••••)

You have earned the favor of a supernatural steed that can be called upon to act as a riding mount for you at any time you are in the Hedge. The Fae Mount comes to you anywhere in the Hedge when called (perhaps via a particular whistle or summoning rhyme). While the steed has no particular knowledge of trods and must be directed by its rider, the steed can travel up to twice the normal speed for a mundane horse while in the Hedge.

The one-dot version of Fae Mount provides the Hedge equivalent of a simple steed. Use the statistics for Horse on p. 203 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, although the actual description may vary as suits the fantastic nature of the Hedge. Possibilities include, but are certainly not limited to, a motorcycle made of brass and obsidian, a steel-boned skeletal mare, a small hut that walks on chicken legs or a slithering shadow-serpent). The steed has no supernatural powers other than the ability to manifest when summoned.

The two-dot version adds a minor supernatural ability. Choose from the following, or create your own, subject to Storyteller approval: the ability to run across water as if it were solid land, the ability to fly (Speed 12 and can bear a rider or burden up to 300 pounds), fire-breathing (treat as a Torch attack per the Fire rules on p. 180 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), the ability to carry up to three additional passengers of Size 6 or smaller, or a poisonous bite (Toxicity 4, see rules on Poisons and Toxins on p. 181, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**).

The three-dot version gives the mount two of the aforementioned traits, or any four abilities of similar level, subject to Storyteller approval, or some combination thereof.

The five-dot version gives the steed three of the aforementioned four traits as well as the ability to leave the Hedge and travel in the mortal world. While manifested, the Fae Mount is visible to human eyes (albeit as a mundane mount closest to its nature; a walking hut may look like a pickup truck with a large sleeper add-on, for instance). The Fae Mount may remain in the physical world for a scene before the Fae Mount must find its way back into the Hedge, there to rest for a day and a night before the steed may leave the Hedge again. The steed may open a portal to the Hedge if its rider feeds the steed a Glamour, but the steed has no control over where the portal may lead.





## FAERIE FAVOR (•••)

**Effect:** One of the Gentry owes your character a single favor, for reasons that may seem to make little sense to her. It may be a dark secret such as turning over another child or changeling to the Other, or as innocuous-seeming as offering a piece of bread to a withered old woman at a crossroads. The Fae in question has given his word to provide one and only one service for your character — a promise made out of a sense of obligation, not out of kindness or respect. This service can include transport to anyplace in the Hedge or the mortal world (through the Hedge) in less than an hour, one use of the Fae's powers on any mortal or changeling or temporarily working to stymie a rival Other in its hunt. This favor does not extend to Arcadia or those who reside there, though the Fae may agree to rescue a certain individual from Faerie in exchange for an additional task from your character (which is unlikely to be pleasant).

Your character has a small token that he has been instructed to break when he wishes to call this Fae and ask for the favor. Once broken, this token cannot be re-used, and even if your character asks for no favor, the Fae cannot be called again.

**Drawback:** Most changelings who find out about this favor assume (sometimes correctly) that your character is a loyalist or a privateer.

## FAERIE HEALING (••)

**Effect:** Your character can heal others with goblin fruit as effectively as she can heal herself, including mortals and normal animals. The exact manner in which this healing occurs depends upon the particular character. Some characters must feed the fruit to their patient, others eat or touch the fruit and then must touch their patient and some characters must extract the juice from the fruit and combine the juice with some commonly available ingredients such as ginger or honey. You may select the particular method, but once it is selected, you cannot change this method. All characters with Faerie Healing have one specific method in which they use goblin fruit to heal others, and various methods have distinct advantages and disadvantages. For example, making a specially blended juice out of the goblin fruit allows your character to carry an innocuous thermos of fruit juice wherever she goes, while laying hands on the patient's bare skin does not require the person to consent to some unusual action such as eating a strange-looking fruit. Regardless of the method used, the patient regains a single point

of lethal damage or two points of bashing damage per fruit consumed, as if the patient were a changeling eating goblin fruit. Your character cannot use goblin fruit to heal the dead, including humans who have died of their wounds, ghosts or vampires.

## FIGHTING STYLE: DREAM COMBAT (• TO •••••)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd •••, Empathy •••

**Effect:** Your character has honed her oneiromachy skills to a high degree, allowing her to push the envelope of dream-battle and take the dream-bound combat beyond the reach of less experienced or dedicated oneiromancers.

Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers that are only applicable for oneiromachy (dream-battles). Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. So, your character can't have Double Team until he has Stunning Blow. The maneuvers and their effects are described below.

**Stunning Blow (•):** Your character's dream-onslaught is overwhelming, literally stunning your opponent to the point of inaction. If successes inflicted in a single attack equal or exceed a target's Wyrd, the victim loses his next action. Attacks of this strength are often accompanied by appropriate special effects in a dream, from shockwaves to tendrils of grasping fog that seem to stall the stunned opponent for a moment.

**Double Team (••):** Not content with a single avenue of attack, your character is adept enough with oneiromancy that he can coordinate an environmental and a personal attack against his target at the same time. The second attack suffers a -1 penalty. **Drawback:** Your character cannot use his Defense against any attack in the same turn in which he intends to use this maneuver. If he uses Defense against attacks that occur earlier in the Initiative roster, before he can perform this maneuver, he cannot perform the maneuver in the same turn, his attention is too focused on protecting himself.

**Blind Spot (•••):** Your character's control of the dream environment is so great that it allows him to attack from the vantage point most detrimental to his opponent. He must use the lowest, rather than the highest, of her Finesse Traits (Wits, Dexterity or Manipulation) as her Defense and the lowest, rather than the highest, of her Resistance traits as her armor.

**Wyrd Armor (••••):** Your character's mastery of the dream-realm protects him in battle. He may add his



Wyrd to the highest of his Finesse Traits to serve as his Defense and to the highest of his Resistance traits to serve as his armor.

**Coup de Grace (•••••):** Even as your character's opponent fades from the dream-arena, he is capable of delivering a final blow. At any time that an opponent in a dream-combat is beginning to waken (i.e., has dropped to or below 0 Willpower), he may deliver one final dream-attack (environmental or personal) against her as she wakes. She may not use her Defenses or armor against this attack.

## FIGHTING STYLE: HEDGE DUELIST (• TO •••••)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd •••

**Effect:** While any changeling can step into the Hedge to duke it up with an opponent, for some, Hedge battles have become an art form. Characters with the Fighting Style: Hedge Duelist Merit have dedicated time and effort into perfecting combat within the Hedge's unique environment, turning the Hedge Duel into an (often lethal) art form.

Dots purchased in this Merit allow access to special combat maneuvers that are applicable only to combat within the Hedge (not Arcadia), and only in formal duels. See p. 225 of **Changeling: The Lost** for criteria on how a Hedge Duel is begun.

Each maneuver is a prerequisite for the next. A character can't purchase Briar Bite until he has mastered Quick Count and Cruel Blow. The maneuvers and their effects are described below.

**Quick Count (•):** In a traditional pistol duel, opponents walk in opposite directions, counting to 10 before turning and firing at each other. This often means that whoever has the quicker reflexes gets the benefit of the first shot. Experienced Hedge Duelists seem to be able to get the "drop" on their opponents more often than not, perhaps simply by quick reaction times, or perhaps through some subtle manipulation of the Hedge's time flow. With Quick Count, your opponent gets a +2 bonus to her Initiative when beginning a Hedge Duel. If Storytellers are using the alternate Initiative rules on p. 151 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, the bonus applies to each Initiative roll.

**Cruel Blow (••):** Demoralizing an opponent is an effective, if unscrupulous, tactic for Hedge duels, and your character has perfected it. When targeting an opponent's mind (see p. 226 of **Changeling: The Lost**), she has an uncanny ability to choose whatever words will do the most damage. Add either your character's

Empathy or the victim's (whichever is *higher*) to your character's Manipulation + Subterfuge rolls against the victim's Clarity or Resolve + Composure.

**Briar Bite (•••):** For an expert Hedge Duelist, the Hedge itself becomes its own, oft lethal, weapon. By spending a Glamour, a Hedge Duelist is able to use the Hedge against his opponent without regard for the opponent's own powers. When your character uses the Hedge to strike at a rival, your opponent's Wyrd is treated as two less for purposes of defense (to a minimum of 0).

**No Mercy (••••):** Normally, a character suffers no more than a -2 penalty for losing all of her Willpower to a Hedge Duel opponent's mind-attacks. Characters with the No Mercy maneuver, however, give no quarter to their opponents' weakened state, pursuing the mental abuse to the point where it can totally incapacitate their foes. Once an opponent has been reduced to 0 Willpower, each successive strike at his mind with the No Mercy maneuver increases his dice penalty by 1. Using this tactic calls for a Clarity roll if the attacker's Clarity is 7 or higher (roll three dice).

In addition, opponents who end a Hedge Duel with more than a -2 penalty thanks to this punishment suffer from a mild derangement (or an upgrade of an existing derangement from mild to severe) for the next 24 hours. Those who end a Hedge Duel with a -5 or greater penalty or less Willpower suffer the derangement or upgrade for an entire week. When an opponent reaches a -10 penalty, he is no longer able to function and falls to the ground in a quivering, fetal ball. It is considered exceptionally poor form to kill an opponent who has been so incapacitated, even if the duel was announced as being to the death, so adroit Hedge Duelists will often attempt to pause their mind attacks just short of this threshold if they intend on killing their victim. (Killing a victim who is incapacitated in this manner calls for a degeneration roll if the attacker's Clarity is 2 or higher. Roll two dice.)

**Hedge Wrath (•••••):** The Hedge is not a nice place. The fact that it seems to cooperate more freely with changelings who come into its fickle environ for the purposes of harming each other is just one example of its cruel nature. For those who are able to harness this cruelty, however, the Thorns are an incredible weapon. With Hedge Wrath, your character is able to sacrifice her own Willpower to fan the Hedge's lethal potential even higher. She may spend a Willpower point to enhance any Hedge Duel attack in which she is reshaping the Hedge to strike at her enemy; the





usual benefits apply. In addition, if that attack is an exceptional success, all damage the attack does is aggravated, rather than lethal.

## GENTRIFIED BEARING (....)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd •••

**Effect:** Your character's bearing and aura carry some of the stamp of the True Fae. As a result, hobgoblins and the True Fae are capable of mistaking your character for one of the Gentry. Hobgoblins that interact with your character for a scene or more may make a Wits + Composure roll, with a penalty equal to the changeling's Wyrd to realize that your character is not Gentry. Sapient hobgoblins may avoid your character or act significantly deferential, if not necessarily obedient. However, they are likely to become quite vindictive if they realize they've been tricked.

The True Fae have a chance to be fooled only if they see your character at a distance or only find evidence of her previous presence in a location. Closer contact, such as touching her, hearing your character speak or being able to smell her scent will dispel the illusion. Still, it may buy a few moments' precious respite if the Other would rather avoid any entanglements with rivals at the time.

## HEDGE GATE SENSE (•)

While the Lost can enter the Hedge by creating a gateway almost anywhere, there are times when it's safer to find an established way into the Hedge. Even more so, however, there are times when it's important to be able to find an established way out of the Hedge. This Merit represents an increased sensitivity to the presence of gateways into and out of the Hedge. When attempting to find one's way out of the Hedge, a character with this Merit can cut the time required to find an active gateway in half. As well, changelings with this Merit may make a reflexive Wits + Wyrd roll to notice an active gateway into the Hedge — a doorway that has been used as a gateway will glimmer with an ethereal light, or the stones that form an active gateway arch might seem to pulse slightly when the changeling nears.

## HIDDEN LIFE (• TO ...)

**Prerequisite:** No dots in Fame, Wyrd equal to Hidden Life

**Effect:** The True Fae are occasionally known as the hidden folk because they are only seen when they wish to be, and your character shares some of this ability. Anyone attempting to gather or obtain any infor-

mation about your character, by either supernatural or mundane means, must subtract a number of dice equal to your character's dots in this Merit from all rolls to perform such activities. Mortals must also subtract an equal number of dice from all rolls to remember any information about her or her actions, including what your character looked like.

Changelings with the Hidden Life Merit often live on the fringes of mortal society, since their records can easily become lost. While police officers forgetting to write up reports of minor crimes your character committed can be extremely helpful, having the company your character works for lose her paycheck is far more problematic.

**Drawback:** If your character is ever noticed by the media or otherwise gains any significant degree of fame, she temporarily loses the Hidden Life Merit until her fame or notoriety fades. Fortunately, given the nature of this Merit, this occurs more swiftly than normal. However, changelings who are public figures, such as TV personalities, actors or politicians, cannot have this Merit, since they make themselves far too obvious for people to forget them.

## HOB KIN (••)

**Prerequisite:** Hollow •+

**Effect:** The roughly humanoid hobgoblins known as hobs are relatively ubiquitous in the Hedge. While almost none have anything mortals or changelings would regard as friends, hobs treat their own kind somewhat less ruthlessly than they treat others. For some reason, hobs react to your character as they react to their own kind. The reason for this reaction could include everything from your character having performed a service that aided several important hobs to your character having something in her nature that makes hobs react to her as one of their own. Your character may have no idea why hobs react as they do.

This reaction does not alleviate the need for your character to do favors for hobs. Hobs never do anything for free; doing so would violate every precept of their nature. However, among their own kind, hobs have a quid pro quo arrangement, where a service is paid for by a favor of roughly equal magnitude. Instead of having to pay vast amounts for a simple but vital service, your character generally only needs to pay a hob what the service is worth. As a result, your character is free to have one or more hobs guard her Hollow in return for allowing them to live in it when they desire or to give her warning about the approach of the Gentry and oth-



er dangerous residents of the Hedge, if your character is willing to aid these same hobs against similar dangers.

## HOBGOBLIN TRAINER (••)

The character is capable of training hobgoblins to serve her temporarily.

Training requires an extended, contested roll. As most hobgoblins have intelligence greater than that of an ordinary animal, the changelings must use Persuasion. However, the often animalistic urges that drive a hobgoblin can be a potential asset to changelings used to dealing with animals.

The changeling's player rolls her Presence + Persuasion or Intimidation. If the changeling has Animal Ken •• or •••, she receives an additional +1 to the roll; if she has Animal Ken ••••+, she receives +2 to the roll.

The hobgoblin must succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll.

Each is competing to secure a number of successes equal to the hobgoblin's Wits + Intelligence roll. Each roll is equal to an hour of training and interaction between the two. This interaction is not simple and requires different measures for different creatures. For the sake of a good story, we recommend playing out each hour as a kind of give-and-take between beast and changeling

— the creature paces, nips at the changeling's hand, but maybe the changeling discovers that a swift backhand to the nose curtails the creature's will for a time. If the hobgoblin gets the success first, the creature's will cannot be broken. The hobgoblin may attack or skulk off into the Hedge, done with such foolishness. If the changeling wins, she breaks the hobgoblin's spirit and can give it some limited instruction.

Instruction can never be overtly complex, but it can be more than what a normal animal would understand. "Guard the Hollow" works, or even "locate a specific token." Note that it's no guarantee the creature will be successful in a task, but it will try. Also note that few hobgoblins will totally sacrifice themselves for a given purpose unless that's in the hobgoblin's dream-forged demeanor.

Such training holds for only one day per a character's Wyrd score. The exception to this is if the player spends the changeling's experience points on the Retainer Merit, with the hobgoblin now representing a changeling's Retainer. (This Retainer is only in the Hedge, and still necessitates a regular relationship between changeling and creature — she can't just "program" the beast to do as it's told forever. It must be rewarded or punished, and dealt with like any animal or slave.)





## LETHAL MIEN (••)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd 3

Even while protected by the Mask, some aspect of the Fae's mien has evolved to become offensively oriented and can be used as a weapon. This might be long nails, claws, teeth, hooves, spines or some other "natural weapon" or something wholly supernatural, such as icy or fiery skin, an "iron hand" or a secretion that acts as a low-level contact poison. The changeling inflicts lethal damage when brawling instead of bashing. If the changeling already has an innate lethal attack thanks to his kith (such as a Hunterheart's claws or a Gristlegrinder's bite), the damage rating of that attack is increased by 1. Thus, a Hunterheart would inflict one lethal damage, and a Gristlegrinder would have a three lethal damage bite, though it would still require a grapple.

The changeling is able to handle objects without harming them; claws are perhaps retractable, or perhaps precise enough that the changeling is able to still manipulate items.

## LONG OF DAYS (••)

**Effect:** Your character shares some of the ageless nature of the True Fae. Your character gains the longevity and infirmity bonuses of a changeling with a Wyrd four points higher than hers actually is. If your changeling had a Wyrd of 2, she has the longevity and infirmity bonuses of a changeling with a Wyrd of 6. The only limit on this Merit is that the maximum bonus remains that associated with Wyrd 10, +130 years with a +4 infirmity bonus. Characters who possess this Merit and a Wyrd of 6 or more all have the same maximum longevity and infirmity bonus.

## MARKET SENSE (•)

The Goblin Markets are notorious for trading in anything, and while keeping track of currency exchange rates in the mundane world can be difficult enough, trying to translate how many enamored sighs a knife that glows in the presence of child molesters is worth is a Herculean task. While value is a relative term, those with the Market Sense Merit can generally tell whether a certain transaction is roughly equal or not. It doesn't force a fair deal, and a changeling who dares to tell a hob that he's being cheated on the basis of a "hunch" may well have social ramifications to deal with. Characters with this Merit receive a +3 bonus to any rolls made to see through cheating in a trade or to resist any pow-

ers that would occlude the character's perception of a deal's fairness.

## PERFECT STILLNESS (•)

**Prerequisite:** Stealth •

**Effect:** Your character has learned how to avoid the notice of her Keeper by remaining utterly motionless for hours at a time. Whenever she wishes, she can remain perfectly still for an entire scene. Except for breathing softly and silently, your character can stand without moving a muscle for an entire scene, even if the position she is in would be exceedingly uncomfortable for others. In addition to various other uses of this Merit, if your character remains stationary while hiding, all rolls to notice or locate her are made at a -2 penalty. This Merit is common among Fairest Muses, some of whom spent much of their time in Arcadia as living statues.

## PLEDGESMITH (• TO •••)

Pledges are a vital part of changeling society, and those who craft them well can gain significant prestige among their fellows. Your character is noted for having an adept way with words, a skill that affords her a small measure of respect from other Lost, and others may seek her out for advice on crafting pledges. This Merit adds one die per level of the Merit to all social interactions involving pledges, either on topics related to them or in the actual crafting thereof (including manipulating a hesitant party into a pledge or creating a pledge that contains loopholes or hidden meanings.)

## PROPHET CIRCLE (• TO ••••)

**Benefit:** Prophecy dreams come to changelings relatively infrequently. Some changelings possessed of particularly strong connection to the Wyrd (i.e., those with the Visionary Dreams Merit on p. 96) can call upon this gift more frequently, but other changelings are not so lucky, and must come up with alternative divinatory methods.

This Merit represents your character's ensorcellment of one or more mortals with a high level of psychic sensitivity. They have no special powers of their own (unless you also choose to buy the Retainer Merit for them), but they have clairvoyant dreams fairly frequently and, thanks to your Pledge of Horn and Bone, you can ride their dreams and witness these visions yourself. Once per story per dot you possess in the Prophet Circle Merit, you may dream ride one of your oathbound psychics and receive a vision that grants supernatural insight about a question or topic. This question may be about the future ("What will happen



on the solstice night if the Spring Queen succeeds in her plans?”) or the present (“Where is Jack Tallow hiding?”) or even the past (“How did Jenny Tulips die?”). The prophets you have oathbound are assumed to be pledged to a token, so they don’t count toward your maximum number of vows. As with the Contacts Merit, the Storyteller is encouraged to flesh out these prophets as characters and use them as story hooks.

You must spend a point of Glamour to “jump-start” the psychic vision, and roll Wits + Occult to interpret it. The results are as follows:

**Dramatic Failure:** A nightmare. You can interpret it any way you want, but it probably leads to more trouble than solutions.

**Failure:** Meaningless images.

**Success:** One or more clues (one per Prophet Circle dot), although they must be interpreted.

**Exceptional Success:** One or more clues (one per Prophet Circle dot), and a suggestion about their interpretation provided by the Storyteller.

The information conveyed is hidden behind allegory, symbols and archetypes. The dreams rarely answer questions directly, typically relying on symbolism and imagery to convey information. A changeling seeking a specific person’s location wouldn’t see his address, but landmarks nearby could lead the way: a river, a tower or even the face of a man walking by at dusk. The answer has the potential to resolve the problem. It’s a tool for the Storyteller to help drive events of the story.

## RICID MASK (••)

**Prerequisite:** Subterfuge ••

**Effect:** Your character is not merely a good liar; he has learned to completely hide his emotions from others. While he may have learned this skill from dealing with a particularly horrific Keeper, your character can use it equally well back in the mortal world. While this ability does not increase his skill at lying, anyone attempting to see through his lies or figure out what your character’s real emotions are suffers a –2 to all rolls to do so. In addition, all attempts to use devices such as lie detectors or voice-stress analyzers on your character are made at a –4 penalty, because your character can mimic emotions with great skill and has learned to suppress almost all of the physiological cues that would normally reveal his emotions.

## RITUAL DOORWAY (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Hollow Doors (•••••)

**Effect:** In addition to its normal doors, a Hollow bearing this Merit can be entered anywhere in the

mortal world, as long as a certain ritual is performed. Examples of such rituals include your character lighting three red candles in front of a mirror and saying a particular poem by Yeats or fully immersing herself in a bathtub, pond or other still body of water after anointing herself with special oils and cutting her finger and bleeding a drop of blood into the water. This ritual allows your character to enter her Hollow from any possible entrance to the Hedge where this ritual can be performed, no matter where in the mortal world this entrance is located.

Each ritual is unique to one specific Hollow, and any changeling or True Fae who performs this ritual in the correct manner can gain entrance to this Hollow from anyplace in the mortal world. As a result, changelings whose Hollows possess this Merit are advised to keep their Hollows a closely guarded secret. Characters with this Merit are free to bring others with them when they use this ritual, but doing so risks the people learning the ritual. This ritual is part of the Hollow Merit, and if several changelings purchase a Hollow together, they need to purchase this ritual only once.

Although character can use this ritual to enter her Hollow from a distant city or even a distant continent, this Merit does not provide a method of instant teleportation. Every ritual requires proper tools and ingredients, and every ritual should have at least one unusual ingredient, such as a series of seven pennies all minted in the same year, three candles of a particular color or special oils for anointing. In all cases, these ingredients are either used up in performing the ritual or left behind when the character enters the Hollow. Also, the ritual to enter a Hollow requires between five and 10 minutes to perform and cannot be performed while the character is on the run or in combat. The character must have at least five minutes to remain in one place and concentrate on performing the ritual. Also, the character must spend one additional point of Glamour to open a doorway into the Hedge using this ritual. If the ritual is interrupted, the changeling must begin again, and the additional point of Glamour is lost. However, the ritual is sufficiently simple that no roll is needed to perform it.

If the ritual is successful, your character immediately enters the Hollow as though she had used one of the Hollow’s normal doorways. However, all entrances created by this ritual are one-way. Characters cannot pass back through entrances created by this ritual. Your character can enter her Hollow from any appropriate location in the mortal world, but can only leave





her Hollow via one of its normal doors. In addition, this ritual does not work in the Hedge. While in the Hedge, your character must find one of the normal entrances to her Hollow.

**Special:** Each Hollow with this Merit has only a single ritual that can be used to enter it. However, this ritual can be changed, which is typically done if strangers or enemies learn of the ritual. Changing the ritual requires one or more of the Hollow's owners to spend a day in the Hollow crafting the new ritual. At the end of this time, the changeling leading this ritual must make a Wits + Occult roll and spend a sufficient number of experience point to purchase this Merit a second time. If several of the Hollow's owners are present, they can share this expense among them. At this point, the old ritual that previously allowed entrance into this Hollow ceases to work, and only the new ritual can be used. Characters who previously knew the old ritual do not automatically know the new ritual, including the owners of the Hollow who were not present when this ritual was performed.

### SIREN SONG (···)

Your character's voice has an attractive quality, in the literal sense. Whenever she speaks, those within earshot are drawn to her, distracted from whatever they were previously doing. Everyone within earshot suffers a -2 penalty on all actions performed while the changeling with the Merit is actually speaking. This penalty goes away as soon as she stops.

While listeners may not actually move closer, their attention is pulled to her in an obvious manner. This Merit does not influence them to obey her or even to like her, but they will be hard-pressed to ignore her when she speaks. This can be useful for attracting a waiter's attention, distracting an enemy shooter or having one's side of an argument heard. It can, however, prove unfortunate when speaking to a cab driver en route, trying to carry on a private conversation in a crowded room or speaking within earshot of allies while in a fight. This Merit is always on and affects everyone (friend and foe alike) within earshot. The Siren Song does not carry through radio, electronic or recorded media, however — it must be heard live and unamplified.

### SOUL SENSE (··)

**Prerequisite:** A living fetch

**Effect:** Some Lost conjecture that a portion of each changeling's soul is imbedded in her fetch. Whether this is true or not, your character feels some

extra level of connection to the simulacrum crafted to replace her. Your character always knows the direction and approximate distance to her fetch. In addition, your character has a very general sense of her fetch's moods and emotions. As a result, your character gains a +2 bonus to all Social rolls when interacting with her fetch.

**Drawback:** Your character also feels when her fetch is in pain and suffers an injury penalty equal to half of the fetch's (round up). If her fetch is incapacitated due to injuries, your character suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls. If your character's fetch is killed, your character takes a number of points of bashing damage equal to her Wyrd and must make a Stamina + Composure roll to not fall unconscious for several minutes.

### VISIONARY DREAMS (··)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd ...

**Effect:** Your character's dreams can now range forward and backwards in time, providing hints of distant events and possible futures. Sometimes these dreams are of distant or long ago events that have no connection to your character, but often your character's unconscious seeks out information about people and events that would be of interest to her.

All knowledge contained in these dreams contains a mixture of metaphor and whimsy and requires careful thought and interpretation to fully understand. However, your character is always aware when she had had a visionary dream, since such dreams are always unusually vivid and easy to remember. Most of the time, the Storyteller chooses whether your character has a visionary dream and what the content will be. This Merit provides the Storyteller with a way to give your character information that may be unattainable by any other means.

Your character can also choose to attempt to have a dream about a specific person or place. Doing so risks the character having confusing visionary and ordinary dreams, and your character has no conscious control about what her dream will reveal. However, if she succeeds, the dream contains some bit of useful information about the subject. To actively call upon this power, a character must spend a Willpower point and roll Intelligence + Wits. She must also have at least five hours of uninterrupted sleep. Characters may not use this Merit more than once per day.

**Dramatic Failure:** Your character has a normal dream about the character that your character mistakes for a visionary dream. The information in this



dream is false and misleading, and represents your character's hopes and fears and not any truth.

**Failure:** Your character either fails to have a visionary dream or her dream contains no information that is immediately useful, such as a dream about an enemy's fifth birthday party, when the character was hoping for information about the enemy's marriage.

**Success:** Your character has a dream that provides some clues about the subject your character desires. One image or clue is provided per success. However, these clues come in the symbolism and imagery of dreams and almost always require some interpretation to be deciphered correctly.

**Exceptional Success:** Per normal success, except the clues are significantly clearer and more obvious.

### Suggested Modifiers

Dreams are independent of time and distance. However, it is far easier to have a dream about a subject your character knows well than about a subject your character is barely familiar with.

Modifier	Situation
+1	Your character has a very close connection with the location or individuals involved.
-1	Your character has only a casual connection with the location or individuals involved.
-2	Your character has no real connection to the location or individuals in question.

Modifier	Situation
+1	Your character has a very close connection with the location or individuals involved.
-1	Your character has only a casual connection with the location or individuals involved.
-2	Your character has no real connection to the location or individuals in question.

### WISDOM OF DREAMS (•••)

**Prerequisite:** Wyrd ••+

**Effect:** Your character has especially close ties to humanity's collective unconscious. When your character sleeps, his dreams can gather any knowledge known to a living human and allow him to make use of it when he awakes. This Merit allows your character to temporarily gain one dot in any Ability Specialty or one dot in any Language that is known to at least one living mortal. Knowledge of this Ability Specialty or Language persists until your character next sleeps and can be used just as any other Specialty or Language. If your character learns a Specialty such as Heavy Weapons or Pilot, where characters without the Specialty suffer special penalties when trying to perform certain actions, this Specialty acts as a normal Specialty and negates these penalties and also provides one additional dot for appropriate rolls.

Having a dream to learn such a Specialty requires your character to make a meditation (Composure + Wits) roll immediately before he goes to sleep. Your

character must then sleep for at least five hours to gain a Specialty or Language in this fashion. Characters may not use this Merit more than once per day.

**Dramatic Failure:** Your character's dreams bring him false and useless information, and for the next day, he suffers an additional -1 to any rolls with the chosen Ability.

**Failure:** Your character fails to learn the desired knowledge.

**Success:** Your character gains the desired Specialty or one dot in the desired Language.

**Exceptional Success:** Your character's dreams are exceptionally vivid and useful. If a Language is selected, he gains two dots in the Language until he sleeps again.

### WORKSHOP (• TO •••• SPECIAL)

**Prerequisite:** Hollow, Hollow Size equal to points in Workshop

**Effect:** Your character maintains, within her Hollow, a variety of equipment and tools that can help with the creation of natural and supernatural items. Whether in the form of a forge with metallurgy tools, an artist's loft, a laboratory filled with beakers and crucibles or an orchard outfitted with the best gardening tools, your character's Hollow has been outfitted with precisely the right things she needs to have on hand to create.

Each dot in this Merit represents a level of equipment for one particular Craft Specialty. Thus, a Hollow with a three-dot Workshop Merit might include a single level of equipment for Blacksmithing, Weaving and Goblin Fruit Farming, or two levels of any one of those and one level of another or three levels in any one Specialty. For each level of Workshop focused on a particular Craft Specialty, changelings using the Workshop to produce items in that Specialty area gain +3 to their Crafts rolls.

Possible Workshop Specialties include (but are not limited to) Calligraphy, Woodcrafting, Blacksmithing, Mechanics, Painting, Goblin Fruit Farming and the like. Token Making is not an acceptable Specialty. Because of the diverse nature of tokens, each falls under the Craft Specialty of the particular item, so a Biting Grotesque would be under Sculpting, while a Blood Pennon would be under Sewing.

**Special:** Characters who share a Hollow can also share Workshop dots, with each contributing to a particular equipment area. These characters each receive the full





benefits of the Workshops. It may happen that the crafters suffer a falling-out, in which case one or more might be asked to forfeit their Workshop privileges by the others. Those who are banned lose whatever dots they contributed, unless an agreement is worked out to split the equipment, allowing outcasts to take their tools and materials with them. Shared Workshops should be marked with an asterisk (\*) on your character sheet. See the description of the Hollow Merit for details on how to allocate dots.

## CHANGELING FLAWS

One of the optional game mechanics offered in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** is character Flaws. These are negative attributes that hinder a character in some way. Characters who take a Flaw, with the Storyteller's permission, may earn an extra experience point per game session for successfully roleplaying the challenges the Flaw inflicts upon them.

Several of the Flaws offered in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** are especially appropriate for **Changeling** characters. Dwarf, for example, suits many Lost concepts, and Aloof and Behavior Blind are very appropriate for characters who have spent long times in Faerie away from human society. Changelings may not take the Amnesia Flaw to represent their muddled memories of their time in Arcadia; that is a normal state for the Lost. Nor may they take Embarrassing Secret: "I am a changeling." However, other Secrets — "I'm still in love with my former Keeper," "I like the taste of children's flesh," or "I rat out the location of changelings I don't like to the True Fae" — would certainly qualify.

Storytellers are free to devise new Flaws that are particularly appropriate to changelings, or to allow the use of any or all of those listed below.

### MENTAL FLAWS

**Glamour Addict:** Per the Addiction Flaw on p. 218 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, but the changeling's substance of choice is Glamour. Alternately, he could be addicted to the act of harvesting itself.

**Illiterate:** Your character was either abducted before learning to read and write well, or lost her ability to do so somewhere during her time in Faerie. She may be able to recognize simple words and symbols (stop signs and the logos for some famous brands) or to sign her name, but anything beyond that is challenging and arduous.

### PHYSICAL FLAWS

**Manifest Mien:** Your character's Mask is imperfect in some small way, leaving humans who witness

his Flaw uncomfortable. A Skitterskulk's hair (including that on his face and body) might be bristly and stand out from his skin as a fly's does, or he might always move with a scuttling walk. An Airtouched might seem always out of breath, or an Earthbone's skin always covered in a faint layer of dust or smudges of dirt. Even for the Fairest, a Manifest Mien is no boon — a Bright One might be easily mistaken for a human on some sensory enhancing drug that gives his skin an almost palpable glow, or a Muse come across as "too beautiful," making those around her spin conjecture about which plastic surgeon she sees to achieve such inhuman features. **Note:** In no way should the Manifest Mien Flaw be used to benefit the character. While a Hunterheart's prominent fangs might be intimidating, with this Flaw he leaves those who see them thinking he's a poser who files his teeth to look "tough" rather than a frightening predator. As always, a character gains no extra experience points if a Flaw comes into play but does not in fact hinder him in some undesirable way.

**Cannibal:** Your character has developed a taste for human flesh somewhere along the line. While not quite an addiction, it is a strong preference and one your character finds hard to resist. It is possible that the taboo against giving into this "treat" only makes it more tantalizing for her.

**Cumbersome:** Unlike the Giant Flaw, the extra mass your character carries around is not entirely beneficial to his health. He weighs three to four times what an average human of his size does and must shop for clothing in specialty stores. He has difficulty sitting in chairs with arms, fitting through narrow doorways or crossing weak bridges or floors. He can never raise his Stamina above 3. This Flaw may be taken in conjunction with the Giant Merit, exacerbating the Giant's difficulties to "fit in" in a world designed for average-sized humans.

### SOCIAL FLAWS

**Anachronism:** Your character suffered longer in Arcadia than most, and now much of the human world he returned to is unfamiliar. He may be flatly unable to complete certain tasks that modern changelings take for granted until he learns the ins and outs of recent technology. In addition, the local freehold likely sees him as a breach of secrecy waiting to happen, and is unwilling to let him wander freely through the area. **Note:** It is all but unheard of for changelings who have spent more than 100 years in Arcadia to return. Most Anachronistic Lost will have come from no later than the early 1900s, but even a century provides plenty



of challenges for a returning fae. In 1900, there were no functional airplanes, no radio programs (let alone television), very few automobiles (all handmade) or electric lights (most homes were still lit with gas or oil lamps and candles). Gas stoves had just begun to be commercially available, along with portable cameras, and most clothing was still made for the family by the women of the house, who wore floor-length skirts even when gardening or bicycling.

**True Tongue:** Your character is a horrible liar. While he is physically capable of telling a fib, when he does so it's obvious. Maybe he stutters when he tries to tell a lie, or perhaps he can't keep his stories straight from one moment to the next and contradicts himself. Whatever the reason, those who he lies to can just tell he's not coming clean with them. Even lies of omission are difficult for him — those around him just have a feeling there's more to the story than he's letting on.

**Untrustworthy:** Something about your character just engenders suspicion in others. Maybe it's her shifty eyes. Maybe she talks just a bit too fast, or someone has spread rumors about her breaking pledges in the past. Regardless, others are hesitant to put their faith in her, and she is at a -2 penalty for all Persuasion and Socialize rolls, or any challenge using Manipulation.

## CONTRACTS

All changelings have the potential to use almost all Contracts, because almost all Contracts were forged by the True Fae to benefit themselves and anyone who bore their explicit "favor." The exceptions are Court Contracts, which were forged by the founders of the Great Courts to add an explicit supernatural strength to the bonds of a Court.

When a character pays experience for a new dot in a Contract, what she's essentially doing is tying some portion of herself to the pact. Think of it as initialing a clause on an agreement in blood — only in this case, the blood is more metaphysical (usually). The actual process, as the changeling understands it, is a mix of internal focus and an external "signature." The most common way of formalizing a new level of bond in a Contract is to meditate on the nature of the Contract in the presence of some physical representation of the forces represented. A Beast attempts to increase his mastery of Fang and Talon in the presence of some animal, preferably a "relative," while a changeling seeking to formalize the Contract of Hearth favors doing so in a home of some sort. A courtier seeking to advance his standing in a Court Contract likely has some sort of physical repre-

sentation of the season nearby — perfume distilled from spring blossoms, a dried autumn leaf, icicles kept in the freezer since last winter and so on.

The changeling meditates on the Contract's nature until some form of "breakthrough" is achieved. This breakthrough often takes the form of some kind of hallucination, much like those visions that haunt the Lost of low Clarity. The changeling knows that Smoke has accepted his desire to advance their ties when the billowing smoke around him begins to form faces that look down on him in benediction. Some prefer to actually shed blood when they sense the moment of full acceptance upon them, as a token of good faith — the Beast lets an animal bite his arm, so that Fang and Talon are appeased.

Because the sensations of mastering a new clause are totally personal, there's room for some changelings to doubt whether or not Contracts are what lore says they are. Is it true that there are undercurrents of sentience in mirrors and darkness and stone? Or are the powers innate, awoken in the presence of visions that are more psychosomatic than anything? It's difficult to tell for certain — a common theme in the half-mad lives of the Lost.

## CONTRACTS OF THE FORCE

The Gentry can reshape Arcadia with a whim and impose significant changes on the mortal world. Changelings lack this level of power, but can learn to alter and shape the reality of the mortal world in small ways, and to shape the Hedge in a more profound fashion.

Contracts of the Forge are considered affinity Contracts for the Wizeden.

### REWRITING THE IMAGE (•)

The changeling can alter the details of any two-dimensional image, including paintings, photographs and video clips. The basic form of the image cannot be changed but all of the details can be, allowing the changeling to transform an image of one person into the image of someone else. This clause cannot alter writing — the changeling could twist the face in a driver's license or political ad, but not alter the birth date or campaign slogan.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Expression

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is changing an image of someone else into the changeling's own image.





## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The image is changed in some manner that is detrimental to the changeling or her immediate goals.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the image remains unchanged.

**Success:** The image that is the target of this clause shifts and alters, but retains its basic form. An ID photo remains a close-up image of someone's face, but the changeling can determine whose picture is on this ID. Similarly, a grainy and dimly lit video of a robbery remains a grainy video of a robbery, but the changeling could replace blurry faces with clearly visible ones of her choice, or if the individuals shown were already clearly visible, it could show a different robber, a different victim or both.

This clause works equally well on still and video images, and can be performed upon any single image or video regardless of size. However, affecting the image in a TV program changes only the image shown on one particular TV set; the images shown on other TV sets are unaffected. All changes last for the duration of the scene.

This clause can affect everything from an ID photo to a large billboard, and the image appears to be authentic even under magnification or careful observation. However, this clause affects only photographs or videos; it has no effect on drawing, paintings or printed words and explicitly cannot be used to change the denomination of paper money.

**Exceptional Success:** The change to the image is permanent.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The image is larger than the changeling.
-1	The changeling is affecting a broadcast image.
-1 to -5	-1 per six seconds of moving footage being altered.
+1	The changeling touches the photograph, poster, DVD or videotape.

## TRIVIAL REWORKING (••)

The changeling can temporarily reshape a small object in relatively minor ways.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Crafts

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is reshaping an item that she stole from someone so that the changeling can use it against this person.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The object breaks in the process of reshaping itself and can no longer be used for any purpose.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the object is unharmed.

**Success:** The changeling can take any object of Size 1 that she can easily hold in one hand, and reshape it to into a similar object. The changeling could transform a house key to be the key to another house, including the one she is standing in front of. She could instead reshape a stolen driver's license so that it has her picture on it and contains whatever name and other information she wishes, and she could even transform this license into a corporate ID card or the official ID of an FBI agent. In addition, she could reshape a .45 bullet so that it becomes a 9mm pistol bullet that can be fired from a 9mm pistol. However, this clause cannot change objects in more extensive ways. A key to a piece of luggage could not be transformed into a house key, and a driver's license could not be made into a credit card. A house key must remain a house key; an ID card must remain some sort of ID card. In addition, these changes cannot be used to alter any electronic data stored in the item.

These changes last for only one scene. Also, carefully examining the object reveals that it is a clever fake. Money, ID cards or similar items will not pass either an examination by an expert used to finding fakes or any sort of instrument designed to indicate authenticity. Also, this clause cannot be used on any object that was created using a Contract; this clause can only be used on real objects.

**Exceptional Success:** The object remains in its new form until the sun next rises.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling does not have a chance to spend at least a minute examining the object before using this Contract upon it.
+1	The changes are especially minor, such as changing the name and address on an ID card.

## DISCREET CONJURATION (•••)

The character can remove a small object from a pocket, desk drawer or other location where the object could be — even though, before this Contract's use, the object wasn't there at all.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 Willpower



**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Wyrð

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is paying an enemy for some information or service with a valuable object of some sort.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character pulls out an item that is useless and exceedingly awkward, such as drawing a fake but exceedingly realistic pistol in an airport or a piece of broken drug paraphernalia when talking to a police officer.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character finds nothing new in the pocket, drawer or other location.

**Success:** The character reaches into some relatively small location she cannot see into, such as a pocket, handbag or desk drawer, and pulls out an item that fits comfortably in one hand and that has a maximum Size of 1. This item can be anything the character has handled before, and cannot be larger than a cell phone, a pistol or some similarly sized object. The item is fully functional — a pistol shoots bullets, a cell phone can make and receive calls and a digital camera can take pictures. The item is ready to use, full of ammunition, film or battery charge, though it's the simplest version available. A pistol might have a full complement of bullets, but it wouldn't be conjured with Teflon or hollow point rounds, much less silver or other unusual forms of ammunition.

However, although the item can look very much as if it were made of precious materials such as gold or diamonds, in reality the item is made from clever fakes, a fact that becomes obvious after close observation. The item is also a relatively generic item of its kind and lacks small details such as serial numbers. The character can pull out a passport or credit card, but cannot determine whose face and name are on it. He could conjure a vial of acid, but would have no control over its strength. Certain properties are unavailable; this power cannot create radioactive materials or holy water, for instance. Also, whether the character pulls out cash, a credit card or an object that can be sold, the maximum value that can be obtained by using this clause is \$100. Finally, this clause cannot produce objects made of iron.

The object vanishes after one scene or as soon as it is either out of the character's hands or the character ceases paying attention to it, whichever comes first.

**Exceptional Success:** The character can determine the exact features of the object, such as the name

and picture on the passport, the particular model of cell phone or pistol or what sort of ammunition the pistol carries. However, the object still lacks small details such as serial numbers and is no more valuable.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling is removing the object from a drawer, bag or other object that she has never opened before.
+1	The changeling is removing the object from either her clothing or from a piece of furniture in her home.

### HIDDEN REALITY (....)

The changeling can create or change some minor feature of her surroundings that was not previously obvious.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour +1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrð

**Action:** Reflexive

**Catch:** The character is creating a way out of a place where she has been confined against her will.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Reality resists the changeling's efforts, causing her to lose an additional point of Willpower and preventing her from using any Contracts of the Forge for the rest of the scene.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the changeling fails to change her environment.

**Success:** The changeling creates some feature of her surroundings that was not previously obvious and so might have been present naturally. For example, she causes a pair of bars in a cell to be loose enough to be removed if she tugs on them hard enough. Similarly, she can create a hidden catch that opens a door, cause a normal door to be left unlocked or an electrical outlet that was hidden behind a table. In all cases, the change must be small and relatively reasonable. This change cannot create anything larger than Size 1, and cannot create unlikely features such as pit traps or land mines underneath someone's doormat. Similarly, if leaving a door unlocked would trip sensors that would register this fact, then causing the door to be left open is impossible. All changes vanish or simply cease to work after one scene or as soon as the character ceases paying attention to it, whichever comes first.

**Exceptional Success:** The change remains for one full scene.





## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1 to -3	The change is either large enough that a careful observer might have noticed it before, or unlikely enough that its presence is surprising.
+1	The change is minor and completely expected, such as a room having an additional electrical outlet.

## PATHS OF DESIRE (.....)

The character can open a gateway that leads to anyplace in the Hedge that the character has ever visited before.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 2 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Academics

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character has buried a vial of his own blood in the soil of the desired location.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Although the doorway seems to lead to the desired locations, in actuality the character ends up completely lost in an unknown portion of the Hedge.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character fails to open a doorway into the Hedge.

**Success:** The character touches a doorway or other possible entrance into the Hedge and uses this clause to open a doorway that leads to any location in the Hedge that the character has visited before. This doorway remains open only for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled for this clause; after that, the doorway shuts and cannot be reopened. This clause cannot be used while the character is inside the Hedge, and so the character must find another way out. In addition to being a swift way to reach a source of goblin fruit or a Hollow, the character can travel to a portion of the Hedge a few feet from any entrance into the Hedge that the character has ever used, allowing exceedingly rapid transport though the Hedge. Characters cannot use this clause to travel to any location in the Hedge that they have not previously visited. Attempts to do so automatically fail, but do not cause dramatic failures.

**Exceptional Success:** The gateway into the Hedge remains open for half an hour, allowing the characters to come and go as they please during this time. At the end of this time, the entrance vanishes and cannot be reopened except by using this clause again in the mortal world.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The character visited this location in the Hedge only once and hurried through it so rapidly that she was unable to gain a clear impression of it.
+1	The character has visited the location in question several times and knows it well.

## CONTRACTS OF HOURS

The paths to and from Arcadia twist through time and space. Changelings may return after a decade in Arcadia to find only four days have passed, and the reverse is also common. These Contracts represent bargains struck to gain some control over the fickle nature of Faerie time. Actually walking into and out of past and future is impossible for changelings (and probably even the Gentry), but changelings can draw on these Contracts to achieve notable results all the same.

The Contracts of Hours are considered affinity Contracts for all changelings.

## RESTORATION OF DAWN BEAUTY ☺

This Contract allows the user to transform an old, dingy or corroded object into a younger object in better condition. Wilted flowers suddenly appear newly picked, yellowed, cracking paper becomes crisp, white and new and corroded metal becomes shiny and smooth.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Craft

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling or some member of her family owned this object before the changeling was abducted.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The object ages rapidly and crumbles to dust.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the device is unaffected.

**Success:** With a touch, the changeling causes any object up to Size 3 to become as if the object were newly made. A careful examination by either experts or scientific instruments confirms that the object is of very recent manufacture. A pair of old shoes with worn-out soles and brittle shoe leather appear newly made with unworn soles and freshly tanned leather. This clause has no effect on living creatures. However, it can make the decaying remains of plants and



animals appear freshly dead. However, this clause does not repair any damage that is not caused by age and does not replace any missing parts other than small pieces that have been worn away or tiny bits that have flaked off from age or corrosion. An old book that was torn and charred by a fire appears to be a new book that was torn and charred by a fire. The changeling must touch an object to affect it.

**Exceptional Success:** The object is also cleaned of all dirt and stains, and becomes more resistant to age, lasting three times as long as normal under normal use.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling stole the object.
+1	The object was a gift to the changeling.

### FROZEN MOMENT (••)

The changeling can freeze an object in time for a few minutes. The object cannot be moved or harmed for the duration of the clause.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling performs this clause at sunrise or sunset.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The object flies violently across the room, possibly shattering or harming someone or something else.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the object is unaffected.

**Success:** The changeling touches an object and freezes it in time and space for up to one scene. The changeling can determine precisely how long he wishes for an object to remain frozen in time. While the clause's effects last, the object is completely outside of time — the object cannot move or be moved and is immune to all damage. A water glass that the object dropped when this clause is used upon it remains hanging immovably in mid-air with the water unspilled until the duration expires. Also, no time passes for an object, so if an alarm clock was ringing when it was frozen, it remains silently frozen in time for the duration and then finishes ringing as soon as the Contract expires. The changeling can use this clause on any object up to Size 3, and much touch the object to use it. This clause cannot be used on living or undead creatures.

**Exceptional Success:** The object can remain frozen in time until the sun next rises or sets.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The object has not been moved in the last scene.
+1	The object is in motion when the changeling uses this clause.

### THIEF OF DAYS (•••)

This Contract causes an inanimate object to rapidly age by the character staring at the object. In a few moments, the changeling causes the object to age and decay as if years or decades have passed.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Investigation

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling knows the name of a former owner of the object, who's now dead.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Some object the changeling carries or wears suffers the effects of this clause.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the object is unharmed.

**Success:** By staring intently at an object no more than a number of yards equal to the character's Wyrd away, the changeling can cause the object to corrode and decay. Each success rolled on this clause causes one level of damage to the object, ignoring the object's Durability. If the object is examined by experts or specialized instruments, all damage caused by this clause appears to have been perfectly natural and to have been caused by the ravages of time. The changeling can affect any object up to Size 10 with this power, but this clause cannot be used to affect living creatures. Tokens and other fae objects cannot be affected by this clause, as they are partially outside time.

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling can either not see the object clearly or can see only a portion of the object, such as a gun in a holster.
+1	The changeling touches the object.

### FLICKERING HOURS (••••)

The changeling learns to alter the rate time passes for her while she is in the Hedge. She can cause time to pass either faster or slower for her and her companions while they are in the Hedge.





**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character smashes a clock, watch or other timekeeping instrument as she activates the clause.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses control over the dilating time; she may find upon her return that far more or far less time has passed than she had hoped.

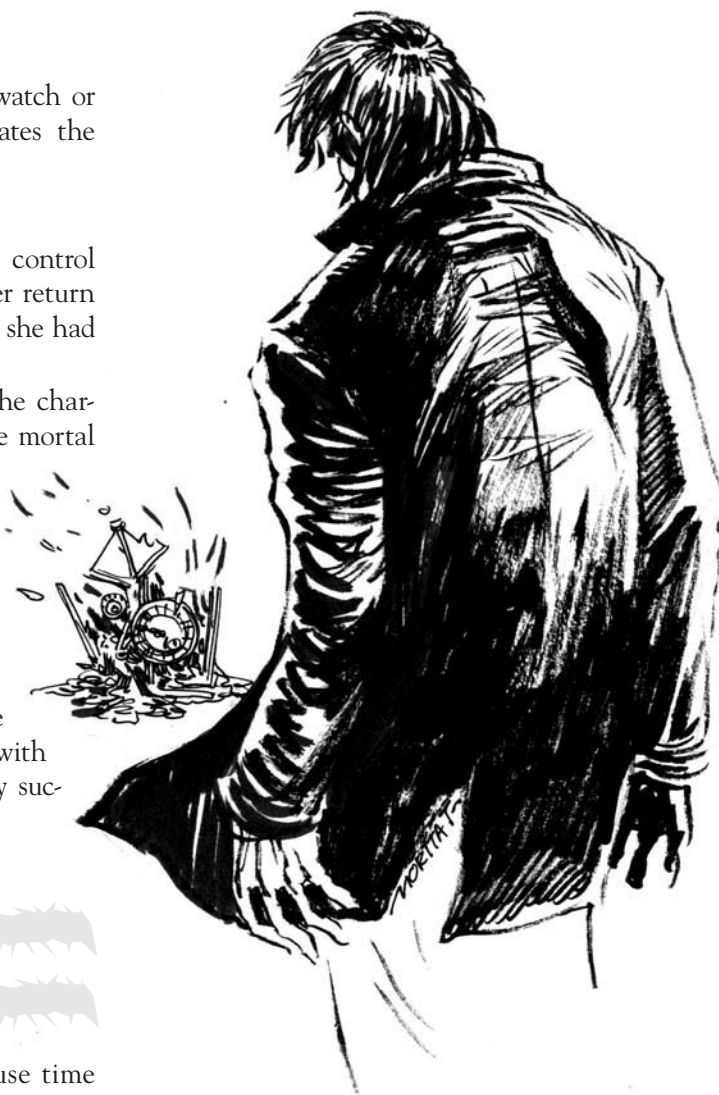
**Failure:** The clause fails, and time for the character passes the same in the Hedge as in the mortal world.

**Success:** The character can change the rate that time passes for her and her companions while they are in the Hedge. She must use this clause when she enters the Hedge, and the altered time rate affects her and any companions who enter the Hedge with her. She can cause time to pass either faster or slower in the Hedge, with the degree of difference based on how many successes she rolls.

Successes	Time Differential
1 success	x2
2 successes	x3
3 successes	x4
4 successes	x5
5 successes	x6

If she rolls three successes, she can cause time to pass either four times faster or four times slower for her and her companions while they are in the Hedge. She could spend eight hours in the Hedge, and when she returned to the mortal world, either 32 hours or two hours will have passed. This Contract is an excellent way to pass time quickly or to retreat to the Hedge to sleep, heal or find time to finish an important project in an unnaturally short amount of time. The one limit on this Contract is that this differential time rate affects everyone who accompanies the changeling on that particular trip into the Hedge; this differential time rate ends for all of these characters as soon as any of these individuals leaves the Hedge.

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.



### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-3	The changeling has a working timepiece on her person.
-1	Any of the changeling's companions has a working timepiece on his person.
-1	The changeling cannot see any portion of the sky (looking through a window counts) when using this Contract.
+1	The changeling enters the Hedge at sunrise or sunset.

### LEAPING TOWARD NIGHTFALL (....)

The changeling causes a person or object to jump forward in time. The target instantly vanishes and



reappears at the predetermined time. No time at all passes for a person or object sent forward in time.

**Cost:** 4 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Investigation + Wyrð or Investigation + Wyrð vs. Composure + Wyrð

**Action:** Instant or instant and contested

**Catch:** The changeling uses this ability when the object or person is touching or moving through a gateway into the Hedge.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling accidentally slows herself in time for one scene. She reduces her Speed and Initiative rolls by half (round down) and gains a -2 penalty to all Dexterity and Wits rolls for the scene.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the target does not move forward in time.

**Success:** The changeling sends the target forward in time. She can use this Contract on any object of Size 10 or less or on any person or supernatural being. Sending living beings ahead in time requires a contested roll. The changeling must touch the target when using this Contract.

The number of successes determines how far into the future the changeling can send the person or object. The changeling can determine down to the second precisely how far in the future she wishes to send the target, as long as this time is less than the maximum allowed by the number of successes she rolls.

Successes	Future Time
1 success	One turn
2 successes	One minute
3 successes	One hour
4 successes	One day
5 successes*	1 week

\* Add one week per additional success.

The target appears at the future time in the exact same space the target occupies in the present. If some object occupies this location in the future, the target appears as close to its original location as the target possibly can.

One serious drawback to this clause is that the changeling cannot retrieve the target earlier. Once the target has been moved forward in time, nothing and no one can gain access to the target before the clause's duration is up.

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The object is less than a year old.
+1	The target would be considered "old" or "antique" by the average person.

## CONTRACTS OF THE MOON

The memory of Faerie as a place of madness is more than just poetic metaphor. Some changelings have uncovered ancient Contracts pledged between the fae and powers of moonlight and madness. Many Lost are reticent to call on this particular pact, but others grimly note that any weapon may prove useful in their struggle.

All changelings count this Contract list as affinity Contracts.

### LUNATIC'S KNOWING GLANCE ☾

The changeling can instantly tell if anyone she is looking at suffers from a derangement. She also gains some insight into the precise nature of any derangements she sees.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrð

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is dressed as a medical professional and behaves as such a person.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** For the next full scene, the character receives utterly random and false information about who does or does not possess which derangements.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and character gains no information about the mental health of people she observes.

**Success:** By spending one point of Glamour, the character instantly knows the nature of any and all derangements suffered by anyone she can see clearly. She can tell a paranoid from a schizophrenic at a glance and can also easily see if someone is completely sane. She can also tell details about the particular type of madness the person has, such as what someone with a phobia is afraid of, what behavior an obsessive compulsive is driven to perform and what a multiple personality's different personalities are roughly like. This ability lasts for the next full scene. Each success on this roll also provides the character with one die for any attempt to help someone she observes to overcome





his derangement. Alternatively, the character can use these dice as a bonus to any attempt to trigger a particularly severe episode of the target's madness.

**Exceptional Success:** The character is also able to have some sense of what event triggered the person's derangement.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The changeling is observing people through a window or live video link.
+1	The changeling talks to the people she is observing.

### MADDENING EYE (••)

By staring intently at someone who already possesses one or more derangements, the changeling can cause those derangements to grow temporarily worse.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Wyrd – Composure

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is currently suffering from at least one derangement.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character suffers a random minor derangement for one scene.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the character cannot cause the target's derangements to worsen.

**Success:** If the roll succeeds and the target already possesses at least one derangement, then the target is affected by this clause. Targets with mild derangements always gain the severe version of this derangement. For example, a character who suffers from Fixation temporarily has Obsessive Compulsion, just as a target who suffers from Vocalization temporarily suffers from Schizophrenia. Targets who already suffer from severe derangements gain one additional severe derangement, chosen by the Storyteller. Worsened and new derangements affect the target only for the next full scene; after this time, they swiftly fade, and the target returns to normal. This contact automatically fails if it is used upon a character without any derangements. The changeling must stare intently at a target to use this clause. In addition to reacting strongly to having a new severe derangement, many targets react to the changeling's stare, and some of the most outspokenly disturbed may claim the changeling did something to them.

One of the most powerful features of this clause is that after the changeling has successfully used it on one target, for the remainder of the scene, she can use

this clause on other targets without needing to spend additional Glamour. The changeling pays the Glamour cost of this clause when the clause is first used. Then, for the remainder of the scene, the character can use this ability on additional targets merely by staring intently at the target and making another roll. If the character fails at any of these rolls, she cannot attempt to use this clause on that target without spending more Glamour, but she can attempt to use the clause on other targets without spending additional points of Glamour.

**Exceptional Success:** The increased or additional derangement that the target suffers lasts until the sun next rises or sets, whichever comes first. Also, if the target already suffers from a severe derangement, the character can choose which new severe derangement the target gains.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The target actively attempts to avoid the changeling's gaze.
+1	The changeling touches the target while gazing at him.

### TOUCH OF BEDLAM (•••)

With even the lightest of touches, the changeling can cause a target to temporarily suffer from a single severe derangement of the changeling's choice.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Wyrd vs. Composure + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant and contested

**Catch:** The subject has broken an oath to the changeling.

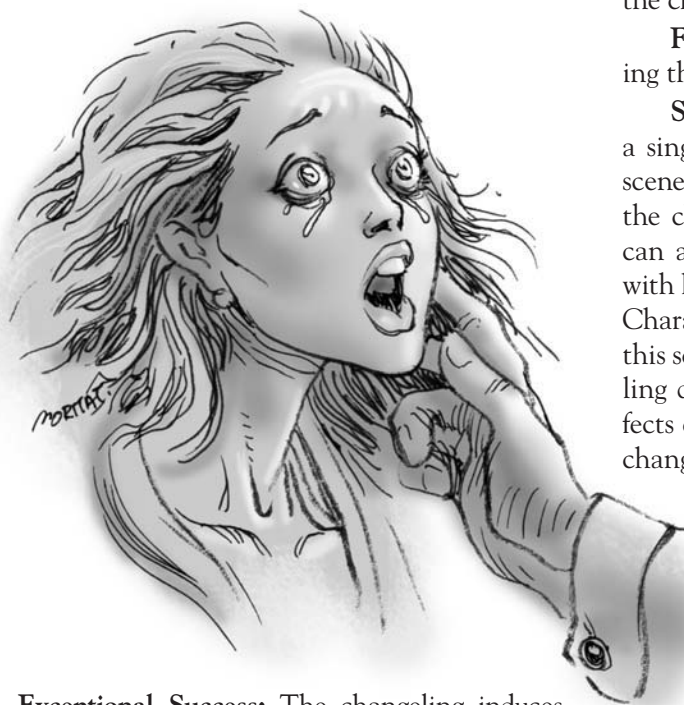
### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling accidentally suffers the effects of the clause herself.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the target is unaffected.

**Success:** The changeling can induce a severe derangement of her choice into a single target. The changeling cannot determine the details of the derangement, such as the trigger for hysteria, only the general type of derangement. Also, the changeling cannot induce extreme derangements such as Schizophrenia, Multiple personality or Fugue. In addition, the changeling must touch the target to use this clause. This derangement lasts for only one full scene, after which the target immediately returns to normal.





**Exceptional Success:** The changeling induces an extreme derangement such as Schizophrenia, Multiple Personality or Fugue in the target. The changeling can also precisely determine the nature of the target's derangement, such as the particular triggers for Hysteria or the nature of the other personality or personalities for Multiple Personality.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling only casually brushes against the target when using this clause.
+1	The changeling addresses the target by his full name.

## THE MADNESS OF CROWDS (....)

The changeling can induce temporary mass Hysteria, causing everyone around her to temporarily suffer from the same mild derangement.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Expression

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is playing music, reciting poetry, telling stories or otherwise performing for an audience that consists of most of the people around her.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The clause fails, and the people in the crowd all develop a sense that there is some-

thing suspicious and possibly even dangerous about the changeling.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the people surrounding the changeling are unaffected.

**Success:** Everyone else within range suffers from a single mild derangement for the remainder of the scene. This clause affects everyone within 50 yards of the changeling. The changeling is not affected, and can also choose to keep anyone in physical contact with her when she uses the clause from being affected. Characters who move away from the changeling during this scene or who come within 50 yards of the changeling during the scene are not affected; the clause affects only characters who were within 50 yards of the changeling when she first used this clause.

The changeling selects which derangement she wishes to inflict upon people. For derangements such as Phobias, she can also choose what triggers the targets are afraid of or fixated on. For example, the changeling doesn't just inflict everyone within range with a Phobia, she inflicts everyone with a fear of blood. If anyone affected by this clause already suffers from this derangement, that person instead gains the related severe derangement. For example, if the changeling affected everyone with a Phobia of snakes and there was someone present who already had a Phobia of snakes, that target temporarily gains the Hysteria derangement triggered by snakes. At the end, all derangements produced by this clause fade away, leaving the affected individuals to attempt to rationalize the reason for their actions.

**Exceptional Success:** If the character wishes, she can inflict the related severe derangement upon the crowd.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The crowd is passive and well controlled (for example, the audience at a lecture).
+1	The crowd is already loud and emotional (for example, the audience at a rock concert).

## LURKING INSANITY (.....)

The character can look intently at a target and cause him to develop a latent form of insanity that manifests only when a specific even or type of event occurs.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Subterfuge





**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The target has betrayed a close blood relative such as a child, parent, aunt or first cousin.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling suffers from a derangement that is triggered at some particularly inopportune time and that lasts for one scene.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the target remains sane.

**Success:** The changeling can cause the target to develop a single form of insanity of her choice, including either a mild or a severe derangement. This derangement is triggered by a specific pre-determined event, such as the target seeing a certain person or being in fear of her life. The changeling can even induce extreme derangements such as Schizophrenia, Multiple Personality or Fugue. Also, until this event occurs, the target remains as sane as always. The insanity begins as soon as the triggering event occurs and lasts for the next full scene, after which the target returns to normal.

The trigger can be anything from a general event, such as riding in a car to more specific triggers such as seeing a particular person or hearing a certain phrase, or the trigger can even be triggered at a specific time and date. In addition to being able to determine the type and severity of the derangement, the changeling can also determine the precise nature of the insanity, including the exact nature of the fear involved in the Phobia or Hysteria and the precise nature of the character's additional personalities in Multiple Personality. If not triggered within 28 days (one lunar month), the clause ends without affecting the target. Also, the changeling must be looking into the target's eyes to use this clause.

**Exceptional Success:** The insanity manifests a number of times equal to the changeling's Wyrd. In each of these cases, the trigger remains the same, but instead of merely occurring once and vanishing forever, the insanity recurs the next several times the target is exposed to the same trigger. The target appears perfectly sane in between these episodes, and this Contract ceases to affect the target after 28 days.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The target does not know the changeling's name.
+1	The target is highly emotional when the changeling uses this Contract.

## CONTRACTS OF OMEN

Changelings are often people slightly out of time, and time sometimes restricts them less than it does ordinary mortals. The Contracts of Omen can allow changelings to see into the past and the future to a limited degree.

Contracts of Omen are considered affinity Contracts for all changelings.

### VISION OF STRIFE (◉)

The changeling looks at someone and gains a vision of the most traumatic and emotionally charged event that the target has experienced.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd+ Empathy

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The target is currently speaking about her past.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character has a vision of an event that never happened to the target.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the character has no vision.

**Success:** The character has a brief vision of the most traumatic and intense negative or harmful event that happened to the target. In all cases, this event is something that filled the target with fear and is likely to be one of the most memorable events in his life. When looking at most changelings, the character usually sees their abduction by the True Fae, and for mortals, typical events include perpetrating or being the victim of violent crime or experiencing some event such as a severe car accident or natural disaster.

This vision lasts for only a few seconds, but provides the changeling with a general understanding of the nature of the event the target experienced, as well as a few vivid sensory images of this event. The changeling must look at the target to use this clause.

**Exceptional Success:** The changeling also gains a general understanding of all of the other major traumatic events that occurred to the target.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling cannot see the target clearly or only catches a brief glimpse of the target.
+1	The changeling touches the target.



## GLIMPSE OF FORTUNE'S FAVOR (••)

The changeling examines the outcome of an action she is about to perform. She glimpses her own future and determines the outcome of the action she is about to perform. She can then use this knowledge to improve her chances of success.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour, 2 Glamour if cast reflexively

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is playing a game of skill.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character's glimpse of the future is incorrect, and she suffers a penalty of -2 to the action this clause is being used to assist.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and the character learns nothing about the future.

**Success:** Succeeding at this clause allows the player to roll twice for a single instant action that the changeling performs in the following turn, taking the better of the two results. If the changeling spends two points of Glamour, she can use this clause reflexively, applying it to any instant action taken during the same turn that this clause is performed.

**Exceptional Success:** The character's knowledge of the future is exceptionally clear and she can apply the 8 again quality to both rolls.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling has already used this clause at least once during the last scene.
+1	The changeling can glimpse herself in a mirror or other reflective surface when using the Contract.

## READING THE PORTENTS (••)

The changeling looks at a target and sees the most significant upcoming event in his near future.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The target is a child under the age of 18.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling gains a false impression of the target's future.

**Failure:** The changeling learns nothing of the target's future.

**Success:** The changeling gains a general impression of the most significant or emotionally charged

event that the target is going to experience within the next few months. Such events include committing or being the victim of a serious crime, getting into a car accident, making or receiving a serious marriage proposal, winning a large sum of money, contracting a serious illness or being fired from a long-term career. By glancing at the target and using this clause, the changeling learns the nature of this event, roughly when it occurs and the general nature of the events surrounding it. If the target's life is very likely to be relatively uneventful for the next six months, this clause also reveals that fact. The changeling can use this clause on himself by looking in a mirror when using the clause.

Just as all possible futures, the knowledge gained through the use of this clause is not immutable. The knowledge merely reflects what is most likely to occur if the changeling does nothing to change this future. Some events may be easy for the changeling to prevent, while others may be exceptionally difficult to alter. More than once, a changeling has found to his horror that the very attempt to forestall a fate set in motion the events that brought that fate to pass. Using this clause after making a series of changes may reveal if a previously viewed event is no longer likely to occur, or if the changeling's actions have instead precipitated some other looming problem.

**Exceptional Success:** The character gains more details about the upcoming problem. If the character has no upcoming dramatic events coming up, an exceptional success reveals any events that the target hopes for or fears, and how these possible events might be made to occur if changes were made in the target's future.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The changeling is viewing his own future.
-1	The target is a sworn enemy of the changeling.
+1	The target is a relative of the changeling.

## VISION OF DISASTER (•••)

The changeling has a brief vision of the immediate future. This vision allows the changeling to be able to replay one turn of play with the knowledge of what happened the first time this turn occurred.

**Cost:** 4 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Reflexive

**Catch:** A trusted friend or ally suddenly betrays the changeling.



## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Contract fails, and the changeling suffers a -2 penalty to all Wits rolls for the remainder of the scene due to disorientation.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and events play out as they would without any interference or previous knowledge.

**Success:** The changeling has a clear and vivid vision of the next turn. In play, this means that the player can use this clause at the end of any turn, before anyone else acts. Using this clause resets play back to the end of the previous turn, but with the difference that the changeling now knows what will happen in the next turn if she does nothing.

None of the events of the turn when the clause was used have any effect on any character and no one except the character who used this clause remembers any of the events of that turn. In effect, the turn when this clause was used is treated as a vision of an impending but not inevitable future. This clause is most useful in situations in which the changeling walks into an ambush, unknowingly sets off a trap or alarm or otherwise makes some critical mistake that could be avoided by adequate foreknowledge. A changeling can use this clause only once during a single scene. Repeated use during the same turn is impossible.

**Exceptional Success:** In addition to generally knowing what will occur in the next turn, the changeling noticed a host of small details that allow her to act more effectively during this turn. During the turn being replayed, the changeling gains the rote quality to any action she performs.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling was blindfolded or otherwise had trouble seeing the events that occurred during the turn that will be replayed.
+1	The changeling was injured during the turn that will be replayed.

## TYING THE KNOTS OF FATE (••••)

The changeling performs a ritual to forge another person's fate, causing the target to be very likely to have a single experience within the next month.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 2 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Wyrd

**Action:** Extended. The target number is the target's Clarity or Morality (or the equivalent Trait for other supernatural beings). The character can make one roll every 10 minutes.

**Catch:** The character is using this clause to bless a mortal child less than 18 years old with some form of good fortune.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character dooms himself so that the next important roll he makes will be a chance roll.

**Failure:** The target is unaffected.

**Success:** The changeling alters fate so that the target is far more likely to have a single experience named by the changeling. For the next month, all rolls by all characters that would result in this fate coming true for the target gain a bonus equal to the number of successes rolled on this clause. Regardless of whether this experience occurs or not, the effects of the clause end after 30 days have passed. The effects of this clause also immediately end if the target has the stated experience.

The experience named by the changeling cannot be either wildly improbable or demand significant changes in the world. Going to the moon, becoming ruler of the world, making out with aliens from another planet or living through a nuclear war are all far too improbable or too large-scale events and so cannot be produced. Instead, the fate must be something relatively mundane and not too closely specified — meeting a particular celebrity, losing an unspecified amount of money while gambling, getting into a car crash and being arrested are all possible fates that this clause can encourage.

The changeling can determine what the experience is, but never its outcome. A car crash might be relatively minor and might not even happen while the target is in her own car; the target might be arrested and then released a few minutes later, because the police made a mistake. Similarly, a character may be fated to be shot, but the shot might simply pierce the target's hat or coat, leaving her entirely unharmed. Often, the results of this clause are relatively minor, but they can be lethal or otherwise quite powerful, especially if the changeling, or anyone else, attempts to cause this fate to happen. In the case of relatively minor or reasonably likely events, the target is almost certainly going to experience the event even if the changeling and his comrades do nothing to help this occur. However, less likely or more extreme events, such as the target being shot, usually require the changeling and her comrades to help this fate occur.



A character may invoke a number of impending fates at any given time equal to his Wyrd. Thus, if a changeling with Wyrd 3 has used this clause three times on various friends and enemies, he must wait for one of the fates to occur or for the duration to expire on one of the decreed fates before he may use this clause again.

**Exceptional Success:** No additional effect occurs.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The fate named is particularly extreme or unlikely.
+1	The fate is especially likely or minor.

## CONTRACTS OF THE WILD

According to many legends and folktales, the Gentry are either spirits of the natural world or at least hold considerable sway over all manner of natural forces. Changelings who learn these Contracts embrace that power and learn to control the raw and wild powers of the natural world.

These are considered affinity Contracts for Beasts and Elementals.

### WILDWALKER (•)

The changeling places herself in harmony with the natural world, so that it does not impede her efforts. Rain and winds avoid her, and thin branches move out of her way. Thus, she can operate normally even in environmental conditions that would hinder others.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Persuasion

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character spent the last night sleeping outdoors.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling angers the local forces of nature, gaining a penalty to all rolls equal to her Wyrd for the next scene.

**Failure:** The clause fails, and natural forces affect the character normally.

**Success:** For each success she rolls, the character negates a -1 penalty caused by environmental conditions or the natural world. Such conditions include penalties to perception due to fog, smoke or wind as well as penalties to movement due to thick branches, ice, rain or high winds. The effects of this clause last for once scene. This changeling can use this clause on either herself or others, but each use of this clause protects only one individual. Also, this clause affects only the target, not any vehicle he may be operating. This clause allows

a character to run through a thicket without hindrance or harm, but would not allow him to drive a car unhindered through a swamp. Multiple successes on this clause negate larger penalties, but may not completely remove them. If a thick fog imposes a -3 penalty to Wits + Composure rolls to see and the character rolls two successes, then these two successes negate two points of this penalty, leaving a -1 penalty to the character's Wits + Composure rolls to see through the fog.

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The character is wearing delicate clothing that can be easily ruined by dirt or water.
+1	The character is dressed in clothing designed for use in the wilderness.

### NATURE'S CURSE (••)

The character can persuade the local forces of nature to impede and harass a specific individual. Thus, rains strikes this individual with more force, fog and smoke collects around her more densely and twigs and brush resist her passage with more force.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Intimidation

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The target is carrying a gun.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Natural forces aid the target, providing him with a +1 bonus to all rolls for the next scene.

**Failure:** Natural forces affect the target normally.

**Success:** Each success increases all penalties due to adverse natural conditions that the target suffers by 1. Thick brush and high wind both reduce her Speed by one additional point per success, and fog or smoke reduces her rolls to see clearly by an additional point. However, this clause cannot cause any environmental penalties to increase by more than a factor of two. If the target is already experiencing a -2 penalty to vision rolls due to thick fog, then even rolling three successes will not increase this penalty by more than an additional two points, to a total of -4. If there are no environmental penalties, then the maximum total penalty provided by this clause is -1.

**Exceptional Success:** Increase the maximum penalty suffered by the target by an additional -1. If the





target currently previously had no negative modifiers due to hostile environmental conditions, this clause imposes a total penalty of -2.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The target spent the last night sleeping outdoors or in a tent.
+1	The target complained about some natural phenomena, such as mosquitoes or the weather, a minute or less before the changeling used this Contract.

### VIRIDIAN EMBRACE (··)

The changeling can cause natural forces to actively aid her efforts. Winds help speed her running or aid her balance, and plants shield her from observation.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Expression

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is attempting to come to the aid of a mortal.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The forces of nature actively hinder the character, providing a -2 penalty to all rolls involving perception, movement or stealth for the next scene.

**Failure:** The clause fails.

**Success:** For each success rolled, natural forces provide a +1 bonus to all rolls involving perception, movement or stealth the character makes during the next full scene. This clause also increases the character's Speed by +1 per success. Characters can benefit from this clause only if they are either outdoors or in the presence of a large number of plants. Vines and tree branches attempt to shield the character from observation, just as ivy on a wall provides convenient footholds and winds help direct the character's movements and carry sounds to her.

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The character is indoors but in a large space with many plants.
-1	The weather is calm and clear.
+1	The character is in a park, a dirty street or some other environment that is not carefully managed or regularly cleaned.
+2	The character is in a forest, construction site or some other complex outdoor environment.

## CALLING WIND AND WEATHER (····)

The changeling can call or calm storms and otherwise control the local weather. This control is fairly general and is limited to conditions that would be reasonable given the season and location, and the character cannot create violent or seriously damaging weather conditions such as tornadoes, blizzards or hurricanes. However, within these limits, the weather is in the hands of the character.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** A dozen or more mortals all ask the changeling to provide the desired weather or are at least hoping the changeling will do so.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The weather changes in a manner opposite to the character's wishes. If the character attempts to calm a windstorm, it becomes worse, and if he tries to call rain, the day becomes hotter and drier.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the weather remains unchanged.

**Success:** The character can change the weather to suit her desires. She cannot create snow in the tropics or blazing heat during a Minnesota winter, but she can create any weather condition that is possible for the area and season, regardless of the current weather. She can call a thunderstorm or a blizzard during a sunny day or calm high winds. Although she can slightly reduce the impact of severe weather such as a hurricane or tornado, she cannot create such extreme weather conditions, and she can't entirely dispel them. The effects of this clause are local and depend upon how different the weather the character calls is from current conditions; it covers anything from one square mile to an entire large town or small city (not counting the suburbs).

As long as the character succeeds, the weather arrives, but the number of successes affects how rapidly the weather arrives and how long it lasts.

Successes	Time to Arrive	Duration
1	Three Hours	One Hour
2	One Hours	Three Hours
3	30 Minutes	Eight Hours
4	10 Minutes	One Day
5	3 Minutes	Three Days

**Exceptional Success:** Beyond the advantages gained by rolling multiple successes, no special bonus is gained.



## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1 to -3	The current weather is significantly different from the desired weather. Calling heavy rain on a sunny, cloudless day would have a -3 penalty.
+1 to +3	The current weather is similar to the desired weather. Changing a drizzle to light rain would gain a +3 bonus.

## CALLING NATURE'S WRATH (.....)

The character unleashes the fury of the natural world over a large area. Branches whip with dangerous force, heavy winds blow debris, hail falls with damaging force and ice or water makes the ground slick.



**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Survival

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is on land owned by her family.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** Nature's fury is directed solely at the character. For the remainder of the scene, the character suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls due to adverse environmental conditions.

**Failure:** The character fails to stir the fury of the natural world.

**Success:** The natural world attacks everyone within 50 yards of the changeling. Violent winds, hail, branches, debris lying on the ground and similar objects and weather conditions all attack everyone around the changeling in a manner that seems unnatural, but not entirely impossible. As a result, everyone within range suffers a penalty equal to the number of successes the changeling rolled to all rolls involving perception, agility, movement or combat for one full scene. The Speed of everyone within range is also reduced by the same amount. In addition, everyone within range suffers minor damage. Everyone within range takes the number of successes rolled as bashing damage. Armor protects against this damage, but Defense and Dodging do not. This damage consists of a mixture of exposure to adverse temperatures, slipping on ice and the impact of branches, rocks, hail or debris.

The changeling is unaffected by these penalties and damage, and she can protect up to six other people who remain within a number of yards of her equal to her Wyrd. This clause works equally well in wilderness and urban areas, but works only in places exposed to the open air.

**Exceptional Success:** The affected area extends 100 yards around the character.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The area around the changeling is partially enclosed.
-1	The area around the changeling is particularly clean or otherwise devoid of debris.
+1	The clause is used in brush, woods, a construction site or anywhere else that is filled with debris and intrinsically difficult or dangerous to move through.
+2	The clause is used during a storm or other extreme environmental conditions.





## GOBLIN CONTRACTS

### SIGHT OF TRUTH AND LIES (◐)

The changeling can automatically tell truth from lies, but while doing so, he must tell the truth. If he lies while using this Contract, he becomes temporarily incapable of telling truth from lies.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Subterfuge

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling uses this Contract at an official occasion, such as a trial or a formal gathering of the leaders of the local freehold.

#### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** For the remainder of the scene, the changeling automatically believes all lies that are not immediately and obviously false.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the changeling is left with his natural ability to tell truth from falsehood.

**Success:** The character can automatically tell any lie spoken in his presence. He doesn't know what the truth is, merely that any lie he hears is not true. The character can use this ability for one full scene. However, while doing so, the character must speak the truth at times during this scene. The character can remain silent, but any statement he makes must be true to the best of the character's knowledge; he also cannot knowingly exaggerate. If the character lies for any reason, even a minor lie such as telling someone that her hideously garish shirt actually looks nice on her, then he becomes completely unable to tell truth from falsehood for the remainder of the scene. As long as a statement is not obviously false, such as someone claiming that it is nighttime when the character is standing under a hot noonday sun, the character is certain that the person is telling the truth and also that the statement itself is true, even if the statement is an obvious exaggeration to everyone else present. The character's ability to tell truth from falsehood applies only in person or in two-way verbal conversations such as phone calls.

When hearing and telling lies, statements that the person honestly believes to be true are never considered lies, even if the statement is actually false. For this Contract, the ultimate definition of truth or falsehood is whether or not the person saying the statement believes it is true or not.

**Exceptional Success:** The character can also tell truth from falsehood in recorded media such as television shows or in print.

#### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The character has told a lie within the last scene.
+1	The character is acting as a judge or is otherwise charged with determining the truth of statements or events.

### CALLING THE GUARDIAN (◐◐)

The character calls up a semi-animate force to protect him. It will protect the character from the next attempt to attack him in hand-to-hand combat. However, the guardian summoned by this Contract cannot differentiate between a dangerous attack and an accidental but forceful shove or any other equally harmless gesture.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour

**Dice Pool:** Dexterity + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character is currently suffering from at least one point of lethal or aggravated damage due to some form of hand-to-hand attack.

#### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Contract works normally, except that instead of protecting the character from attack, the force strikes the character immediately after the attack that triggers it.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character remains unprotected.

**Success:** The character is protected from the next attempt to attack him in either armed or unarmed hand-to-hand combat. As the attacker is moving in to attack the character, just before the attacker's blow strikes the character, the force summoned by this Contract violently shoves the attacker. This counter-attack is invisible and unexpected and so cannot be dodged and ignores the attacker's defense score. Each success rolled on this Contract does one point of bashing damage to the attacker and moves the attacker one yard away from the character.

Although changelings and other supernatural beings will see the attacker being shoved out of the way by a form that becomes faintly visible as it shoves the attacker out of the way, this being is completely invisible to ordinary mortals. Mortals who observe this, including the attacker, if she is mortal, instead see the changeling swing around at the last minute before the attack and violently shove the attacker away from her.

Unfortunately, the force called up by this Contract cannot distinguish between real attacks and other



similar behaviors. As a result, the force treats someone friendly punching the character in the arm or touching him on the back or shoulder as an attack. This force deals with an angry lover attempting to slap the character in the face in exactly the same way the force would deal with a large bouncer forcefully throwing the character out of a bar or a psychotic mugger's attempt to beat the character to death with a lead pipe. In ideal circumstances, this Contract can save a character's life; in other circumstances, this Contract can get the character arrested on assault charges. Once the character uses this Contract, she has no control over whom it affects. The guardian vanishes after it protects the changeling from one hand-to-hand attack, or after 24 hours, if the character has not been attacked before this time elapses. A character cannot be protected by more than one guardian at a time. Using this Contract on a character who already has a guardian waiting to protect him dispels the first guardian.

This Contract cannot be invoked during combat.

**Exceptional Success:** Instead of merely acting once, the Contract remains active for a number of attacks equal to the character's Wyrd.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The character has already used this Contract once within the last day.
+2	The character offers the guardian a goblin fruit as payment.

## THE BLESSING OF FORGETFULNESS (•••)

The character can cause the target to forget any single event that lasted no longer than three hours. In return, the character automatically suffers a dramatic failure when attempting to tell one lie that she sincerely hopes that the person she is telling it to will believe.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Wyrd – Composure

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is attempting to cause the target to forget about an event in which the changeling betrayed the target.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The Contract fails, but the character pays the price and suffers a dramatic failure when telling an important lie.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character does not have to pay the price.

**Success:** The character causes the target to forget a single incident, such as a conversation, gunfight or some other event that lasted no more than three hours. All of events the target forgets must be from a single continuous time-period. If a single conversation about a topic took place in several parts, over the course of several days, the changeling could only cause the target to forget one of the various parts of this conversation. Instead of remembering the deleted events, the target constructs a series of memories consisting of the events that occurred immediately before and after the deleted memories and events that the target would have likely done during the time in question.

Memories affected by this Contract are gone forever, and no amount of reminding the target about them will cause the target to remember them. However, if shown evidence that these events actually occurred, the target can convince himself that he, for some reason, forgot the event. Upon learning what actually occurred, most targets unconsciously construct memories that resemble the stories about the events that he has been told. However, these are constructed memories that the target may believe, but which contain no actual memories.

The payment for the Contract's success is called at a time not of the character's choosing. Until the character has dramatically failed at an important lie, he cannot use this Contract again.

**Exceptional Success:** The character can cause the target to forget the incident and any conversations or other events that caused the target to think or talk about this incident.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The character is attempting to cause the target to forget events that were of deep personal importance to the target.
+1	Forgetting the events in question will make the target happier.

## GOBLIN OATH (••••)

The changeling can bind another character to an oath. The party taking the oath has difficulty breaking this oath, and if she does, disaster will surely strike her down. The changeling must also swear an oath to the subject and suffers similar penalties if he breaks his oath — but the nature of the Goblin Oath is such that both parties may suffer if only one is unfaithful.



**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Intimidation

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling and the other party are making a treaty of alliance or non-aggression.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling is bound by his oath, but the target is not.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and neither party is bound by the oath.

**Success:** The changeling and the target must each swear an oath to one another. Since most changelings have heard of this Contract, they attempt to get the character using this Contract to swear an oath at least as potent as the one they are swearing. Often, both parties swear the same oath, but this is not required. Although this oath can be a pledge, it needn't be.

This Contract represents a method in which changelings can attempt to effectively increase the number of pledges they can swear. It can even be used to oathbind one of the Gentry, assuming that a changeling can force one of them to swear an oath bound by this Contract. Using this Contract is obvious to any changeling or Gentry present, but mortals will just think that the changeling is using unusually formal and elaborate language when making a promise.

Once the oath is sworn, the changeling and the target must make a Resolve + Composure roll to actually break the oath they have sworn. Each success rolled for when performing this Contract acts as a -1 penalty to this roll. Failure means that the character cannot attempt to break the oath during until the sun next rises, and a dramatic failure means that the character cannot attempt to break the oath for one full week. An exceptional success allows the character to break the oath and avoid any further penalties. However, breaking this oath under any other circumstances results in disaster striking the oathbreaker. A number of times equal to the changeling's Wyrd, one of the oathbreaker's rolls becomes a chance die. In all cases, these rolls are ones that are important to the character who broke the oath, meaning that the disaster strikes at the worst possible times. However, once the character has suffered that number of disasters, the effects of this Contract cease to plague him.

The other party in the Goblin Oath also suffers from the oathbreaker's infidelity, though to a lesser degree. The wronged party is subject to rolling only

a chance die at the worst possible time, although he must endure this only once before the oath's effects on him have passed.

**Exceptional Success:** Both people swearing the oath must make an exceptional success on the Resolve + Composure roll needed to break the oath in order to do so; an ordinary success does not allow either party to break the oath. Also, even if the character does roll an exceptional success, he still suffers a number of disasters equal to the changeling's Wyrd, where an important roll becomes a change roll.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The other party is swearing the oath under duress.
+1	The changeling and the other party swear the same oath.

### BLOOD-BINDING (.....)

The changeling can strip an opponent of all protections, dispelling all magics, including all protective Contracts and negating all other supernatural protections for the entire scene. The target also loses all Glamour points. However, to use this Contract, the changeling must throw a drop of her blood at the target and also sacrifice all of her Glamour.

**Cost:** All remaining Glamour + 1 Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Presence + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling uses this Contract against someone who has murdered a blood relative. Using this catch negates the Willpower expenditure, but the changeling must still sacrifice all her Glamour points.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling loses all her Glamour, while the target is unaffected.

**Failure:** The Contract fails.

**Success:** By spending all of her remaining Glamour points, the changeling strips the target of all supernatural protections. All Contracts protecting the target are dispelled and all tokens or other supernatural protections of a more enduring nature are negated for one full scene. This Contract even temporarily negates any consciously activated supernatural powers of ghosts, vampires and other supernatural beings (in other words, a werewolf could not shift forms, but would not lose its regenerative capabilities). In addition, a fae target is stripped of all his remaining Glamour points. The target can regain Glamour normally, but for a short time, he is utterly helpless.



To use this Contract, the changeling must face the target, look him in the eyes, cut herself sufficiently to draw blood and throw a drop of blood in the direction of the target. The changeling must also be no more than Wyrd yards from the target.

**Exceptional Success:** For the next scene, the target cannot be affected by any supernatural protections, even those placed on him by other characters.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling cannot clearly see the target's face.
+2	The changeling knows the target's true name and shouts it when performing this Contract.

## CONTRACTS OF SACRIFICE

These Contracts are a subset of Goblin Contracts that are specifically focused on paying a permanent cost for a substantial permanent benefit. Knowledge of these Contracts' price is inherent in learning them. Each changeling must decide what goals are worth permanently giving up part of themselves. Although each of these Contracts has a catch, using this catch only removes the Glamour cost that must be paid to use the Contract. The loss of Willpower dots or other permanent Traits cannot be removed by using the Contract's catch and is an inherent and unchangeable part of the Contract.

Though they are grouped into general paths, these are still Goblin Contracts, and are not considered chained for purposes of purchasing them with experience points.

## CONTRACTS OF GOBLIN FORTUNE

These Contracts impart some significant blessing or curse upon the target and can either protect the target from some doom or cause a significant calamity. Succeeding in any of these Contracts automatically causes the changeling to permanently lose one dot of Willpower. By spending eight experience points, the changeling can regain this lost dot of Willpower.

### FORTUNE'S FAVOR (•)

The changeling can extend or withdraw Fortune's Favor to any single dice roll. This Contract can be cast reflexively as the roll is made, but before the dice have been rolled, or the character can use it ahead of time, whenever the character knows the roll will be made. The character can use this Contract to affect any single roll, and can either specify general conditions such

as having this Contract affect the next attack upon the character or more specific conditions such as the next attack the character makes on one of the Gentry or the next attack on the character by someone wielding a weapon that does aggravated damage. Using this Contract costs the changeling a permanent dot of Willpower.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character is using this Contract to protect a close friend from harm.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses one dot of Willpower and gains nothing in return.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the desired roll is unaffected.

**Success:** The character can cause a single desired roll to either gain the rote quality (reroll any failed dice once) or to become a chance roll. The character could pick a lock or drive in a high-speed care chase through heavy traffic with consummate skill, or cause the driver of the car pursuing him in the high-speed chase to drive exceptionally poorly.

**Exceptional Success:** Any roll the character gives the rote quality to also gains the 8 again quality. In any chance roll, the target must roll the chance die twice and take the worse of the two rolls.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The character is using the roll to cause someone else to come to harm.
+1	The character is using this Contract in advance of the roll being made.

### FORTUNE'S SWIFT BLESSING (••)

The character can avert disaster and guarantee exceptional success, if she's willing to pay the cost.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wits + Wyrd

**Action:** Reflexive

**Catch:** The character is using this Contract when she strikes a blow against a sworn enemy.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses one dot of Willpower and gains nothing in return.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the desired roll is unaffected.



**Success:** The character can reflexively transform a single chance roll into a normal roll where he rolls his normal dice pool. If used upon a roll that is not a chance roll, this Contract automatically transforms that roll into an exceptional success, where the character obtains five successes. If used upon an extended action, this roll provides five successes toward the target number. The character can use this Contract to affect her own rolls and the rolls of any character who she can see clearly.

**Exceptional Success:** A chance roll becomes a normal roll at the character's full dice pool, with an added bonus equal to the character's Wyrd. A normal, non-chance roll gains a total of 10 successes for normal and extended actions.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling cannot clearly see the character making the roll.
+1	The changeling is fighting a duel or other pre-arranged battle.

### FORTUNE'S BANE (••)

If the changeling is willing to make the sacrifice, she can curse a target with vast ill luck until the sun next sets or rises.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Subterfuge vs. Resolve + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant and contested

**Catch:** The target has publicly lied about the changeling in an effort to turn public or official opinion against her.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses one dot of Willpower and gains nothing in return.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the target's luck is unaffected.

**Success:** Until the sun next rises or sets, the target is cursed with horrible luck. Every roll that the target makes is automatically a failure. The only exceptions are rolls on which the target makes an exceptional success. Under the influence of this curse, an exceptional success is treated as a single normal success, while every other roll becomes a failure. This curse subtracts no dice from the target's dice pool, and so a roll made under this curse is no more likely to be a chance roll. However, if the target does have to make a chance roll, this roll is a normal failure if the target rolls an 8 or higher and a

dramatic failure of the target rolls any lesser number. All of these failures seem perfectly ordinary and explainable, but the target does appear to be suffering from a combination of exceptionally bad luck and a temporary lack of either skill or attention. To use this Contract on a target, the changeling must either touch the target or look at him clearly from no more than Wyrd feet away.

**Exceptional Success:** The curse continues to affect the target for three full days.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The changeling does not know the target's name.
+2	The changeling is touching the target.

### DISTRACTING THE HOUNDS (•••)

The character creates a "coincidental" distraction that allows her and her companions to escape any pursuit or even to break off combat and escape without fear of attack.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Stealth (- pursuer's Wyrd)

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is being pursued by hobgoblins.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses one dot of Willpower but does not succeed in escaping from her attackers or pursuers.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character fails to escape but also does not lose any Willpower or Glamour.

**Success:** Your character and a number of companions equal to twice her Wyrd can escape from any pursuit or confrontation. The characters' pursuers or opponents are all completely distracted for five minutes per success rolled. If the character and her companions are out of their sight once this distraction ends, then the pursuers are unable to locate the characters or find any traces of their passage. These pursuers may continue to search for the characters, but the pursuers lack any information about the characters' current whereabouts.

In addition to making the characters able to flee pursuit, this Contract works equally well if the characters are surrounded by a group of pursuers who are closing in for attack or even in the midst of a combat. However, this Contract automatically fails if any of the characters protected by this Contract attacks one of their pursuers or attackers while they are distracted. This Contract works on any number of pursuers and on anyone from the police to the Gentry. However, if any





of the pursuers or attackers are changelings or True Fae, subtract the highest Wyrd of the pursuers from the roll.

The nature of the distraction produced by this Contract is up to the Storyteller. It could be anything from the pursuers being called to a more urgent matter to a mistaken report that the characters are either decoys or unimportant or even simply all of the pursuers becoming frightened, distracted or mistaking the situation so that they briefly pause and look around them.

**Exceptional Success:** The pursuers or attackers are distracted for one hour, and after this time, the pursuers lose all interest in pursuing the characters. If the pursuers either have an excellent reason to continue to pursuit or are compelled to do so, perhaps because the

characters are wanted fugitives, the pursuit continues but becomes desultory and is regarded as a relatively low priority. However, if the characters attack their pursuers or otherwise call negative attention to themselves, the effects of this Contract instantly end and pursuing the characters again becomes an important priority.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The changeling or one of her companions has already caused at least one of the pursuers or attacks to suffer at least one point of aggravated damage.
+2	The changeling and one of her companions have done no damage to any of the attackers or pursuers during the pursuit or attack.



## RECALLING THE LOST (.....)

When needed, freedom from torment can be the greatest of blessings. The character can call back someone recently abducted by the Fae. The changeling can call back only someone who has been abducted within the last week. The longer the person has been gone, the more difficult he is to recover. This Contract can be performed only if the changeling can see and touch the victim's fetch.

**Cost:** 4 Glamour + 2 dots of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Occult

**Action:** Extended. The number of successes necessary to activate this Contract is equal to twice the number of days the abducted person has been gone. Each roll requires one turn, and the Contract is activated on the turn in which the target number of successes is reached or exceeded. The Glamour cost for the Contract must be paid the turn the first roll is made. Performing any other action cancels the Contract. However, any Glamour expenditures are not recovered. However, the dots of Willpower are paid only if the Contract is successful. If the changeling abandons the attempt before it succeeds, she does not lose any Willpower.

**Catch:** The changeling is using the Contract to rescue a child younger than seven years old.

## ROLL RESULTS

**Dramatic Failure:** The victim remains in Arcadia, but the fetch dies in a manner that looks as if the changeling beat the fetch to death.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, the victim remains in Faerie and the fetch is unharmed.

**Success:** The changeling speaks loudly to the fetch and, at the climax of the ritual, grabs the fetch, who is rendered unable to move by the power of the ritual. The changeling shakes the fetch and throws her through a portal into Arcadia that opens at the culmination of this Contract. An instant later, the abducted person falls through the portal, alive, unharmed and still mortal, but almost certainly very confused. In some cases, the fetch either pleads with the changeling not to send her to Faerie or cries for help, but once the changeling has begun using this Contract, the fetch can do nothing other than speak. The instant the changeling succeeds in opening the portal into Arcadia and throwing the fetch through, he permanently gives up two dots of Willpower.

**Exceptional Success:** The power of the ritual is sufficient that it prevents anyone outside of the immediate vicinity of the changeling and the fetch from hearing or seeing anything out of the ordinary, includ-

ing any sounds of struggle or cries for help. Also, the rescued victim may or may not remember what happened, but is not traumatized by the event.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling is being paid to save the target.
+1	The target is a blood relative of the changeling.

## CONTRACTS OF GOBLIN TRANSFORMATION

These Contracts of Sacrifice transform the target in a significant and often permanent manner.

## HEALING SACRIFICE (•)

The changeling can cause a target to instantly heal any wound or illness, but must pay a dot of permanent Willpower to accomplish this healing. The changeling can use this Contract on any human, changeling, hobgoblin or other living supernatural being, including the changeling herself.

**Cost:** 1 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Medicine

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is using this Contract to heal or cure a blood relative.

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses the dot of Willpower, but the target is not healed.

**Failure:** The Contract fails; the target is not healed, and the changeling does not lose a dot of Willpower.

**Success:** This Contract heals all of the target's wounds and cures any diseases she is suffering from. Immediately after this Contract is used, the target falls briefly unconscious and cannot be awakened. The character remains unconscious for five minutes, minus one minute per success rolled on this Contract. At the end of this time, the target wakes up in perfect health and feeling well rested. Succeeding in this Contract causes the changeling to permanently lose one dot of Willpower. By spending eight experience points, the changeling can regain this lost dot of Willpower. Using this Contract does not remove scars or other existing damage from already healed injuries or illnesses and does nothing to alleviate congenital conditions such as poor eyesight or a missing limb.

**Exceptional Success:** The target does not fall unconscious and also heals all wounds twice as fast as normal for the next week.



## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling is using this Contract on himself.
+1	The target was injured within the last five minutes or has just noticed symptoms of her illness.

## SEVEN-YEAR GIFT (••)

By permanently reducing her Willpower, the character can give a target seven extra years of life.

**Cost:** 2 Glamour + 1 dot of Willpower

**Dice Pool:** Stamina + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The target is a blood relative of the changeling within three generations.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling loses a dot of Willpower, but does not succeed in granting the target a longer life.

**Failure:** The Contract fails; the changeling loses no Willpower, and the target's lifespan remains unchanged.

**Success:** The changeling loses a dot of Willpower, and the target will not age for the next seven years (though she is not protected from disease or other potential ills). By spending eight experience points, the changeling can regain this lost dot of Willpower. To use this Contract, the changeling must touch the target. However, the target does not need not know what is being done.

**Exceptional Success:** The changeling loses a dot of Willpower, and the target becomes seven years younger. The target cannot become more than physically younger than 20 years old and ages normally.

## Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The changeling is being paid for the use of this Contract.
+1	The Contract is being used without the target's knowledge.

## TRADING BEAUTY FOR LOVE (•••)

The character can trade the color of her eyes and the beauty of her face for a close relationship with someone. Both changes are permanent, although the relationship can sour or fade if the character ignores or mistreats the person.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + reduction in appearance

**Dice Pool:** Manipulation + Wyrd – Composure

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The character must feed the target some item of food that the character prepared. This can be anything from a piece of popcorn that the character microwaved to a hand-dipped truffle that the character slaved for hours to make.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character permanently reduces her appearance but does not change her relationship with the target.

**Failure:** The Contract fails and has no effect upon the character's appearance or her relationship with the target.

**Success:** The character can form a strong and lasting relationship with someone. With anyone at all positively inclined toward the character or someone who has no particular positive or negative opinion about the character, this new relationship is relatively close. The person becomes a friend or possibly even a romantic interest. Depending upon circumstances, the character may gain up to two dots of the Ally or Retainer Merit. However, even this powerful Contract cannot make the character the most important person in the target's life, and the target will not ignore or abuse his responsibilities or other close personal connections for the character without a very good reason. Clever and dedicated characters can build upon this relationship and may eventually be able to cause the target to regard the character as the most important person in his life. However, doing this is a matter of roleplaying and not Contracts. Characters cannot successfully use this Contract more than once on a single target.

If the target dislikes, fears or is otherwise negatively inclined toward the character, using this Contract causes the target to be mildly positively inclined toward the character. In general, the target is willing to work with the character if the action is to their mutual benefit and will do small favors for the character, while expecting favors to be done in return. If it makes sense, the character may gain another dots of the Contacts Merit.

However, this Contract can be used only on ordinary humans who do not hate the character and who have already met the character and know her at least slightly. The Contract automatically fails (causing a normal failure) if used upon True Fae, changelings or other supernatural beings. This Contract also fails if used on anyone who either does not know or feels extreme hatred for the changeling. To use this Contract, the character must briefly touch the target's bare skin with at least a fingertip. Also, the feelings produced by this Contract take up to an hour to fully manifest, they do not instantly appear.



This Contract also carries a very heavy price. If the character has the Striking Looks Merit, she reduces the value of this Merit by two dots, so a character with only two dots in this Merit loses it entirely, and a character with four dots in this Merit reduces the value to two dots. Characters with no dots in the Striking Looks Merit change so that they appear especially bland and colorless and suffer a -1 penalty to all Presence and Manipulation rolls involving their appearance. In all cases, this loss of appearance renders the character more bland, colorless and forgettable. The character never becomes ugly, merely utterly lacking in attractive features.

Characters who already suffer penalties to their appearance cannot use this Contract until they have removed these penalties. Removing a character's negative appearance requires roleplaying and spending eight experience points.

**Exceptional Success:** The relationship formed with the target is especially close and lasting. A target who disliked the character becomes the character's friend or ally, and a target who already liked the character, then the relationship is no closer, but it is considerably more durable, and the character would need to ignore or mistreat the target for several weeks to cause the target's affection for them to begin to fade.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The changeling secretly hates the target and is using this Contract as a way to harm her.
+1	The changeling honestly likes the target.

### CHANGING MINDS (....)

The character can permanently change a single opinion one person holds about any person or group. To use this Contract, the character must state this opinion to the target when using the Contract. The price for using this Contract is that the character loses a point of Resolve. This point can be regained normally with experience points.

**Cost:** 4 Glamour, 2 Willpower + 1 dot of Resolve

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Persuasion - opponent's Resolve + Wyrd

**Action:** Instant

**Catch:** The changeling is causing someone to believe in an abstract ideal.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The character loses a point of Resolve and gains nothing to compensate for this loss.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the character does not lose a point of Resolve.

**Success:** The character causes the target to hold a specific opinion of another person or group. This can be as specific as believing that the target's wife is a drunk who is having an affair with her secretary and as general as believing that all Darklings are liars who cannot be trusted. However, the changeling can affect only opinions, not behavior. The character can convince someone that a colleague is planning to kill him, but cannot determine if the target will attempt to kill that person first, contact the police or try to talk the colleague out of committing murder.

Also, this Contract cannot be to cause someone to believe something she would find inherently ludicrous and unbelievable. A changeling cannot convince someone that a person is a Martian unless the target already believes that Martians walk the Earth. Also, while the target sincerely believes this new opinion, a sufficient amount of reasoned arguments and evidence can convince her of the falsity of this belief. In general, persuading the target to give up this belief is no harder than persuading the target to give up any other belief. To use this Contract, the changeling must mention the belief to the target, at least in passing.

The price of this Contract is especially harsh. The changeling instantly loses one point of Resolve. This point can be regained by spending experience points, but is otherwise lost forever. Also, characters cannot use this Contract if they have only one dot in Resolve, since a character cannot lose his last dot in any Attribute. Changelings can use this Contract on anyone who is or once was human, including ghosts and other changelings as well as ordinary mortals, but specifically excluding the True Fae. Storytellers should try to convince players not to use this Contract on another character without that player's permission.

**Exceptional Success:** The target's belief in the opinion she has been given is especially strong and tenacious, and so the level of proof necessary to dissuade the target of it is especially high. In effect, this belief becomes one of the target's core beliefs and is very difficult to change.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-2	The character is able to talk to the target about this opinion for less than 30 seconds.
+1	The character is able to talk to the target about this opinion for more than five minutes.



## THE FATAL TRANSFORMATION (.....)

The changeling can slay a target at the cost of some of her own health. Using this Contract causes the changeling to permanently lose one point of Stamina.

**Cost:** 3 Glamour + 1 Willpower + 1 dot of Stamina.

**Dice Pool:** Wyrd + Intimidation vs. Stamina + Wyrd

**Action:** Resisted

**Catch:** The target has slain one of the changeling's blood relatives.

### Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** The changeling loses one point of Stamina, but the target is unharmed.

**Failure:** The Contract fails, and the target is unharmed.

**Success:** The target dies of some seemingly natural cause such as a heart attack. The changeling can use this Contract on a target only if she touches him or if she can clearly see the target and stares directly at him from no more than Wyrd feet away. Prompt medical treatment for a heart attack may save the

target, but all such attempts suffer a penalty equal to the number of successes rolled for this Contract. Also, without treatment, the target is permanently dead in five minutes, minus one minute for every success rolled on this Contract.

The price of this Contract is especially harsh. The changeling instantly loses one point of Stamina. This point can be regained by spending experience points, but is otherwise lost forever. Also, characters cannot use this Contract if they have only one dot in Stamina, since a character cannot lose his last dot in any Attribute. Changelings can use this target on any being that can die. This Contract cannot be used on spirits, ghosts or the True Fae, since none of these beings are mortal.

**Exceptional Success:** The target dies instantly, and only powerful magic can save his life. No amount of mundane medical treatment will save the character.

### Suggested Modifiers

Modifier	Situation
-1	The target is a supernatural being.
-1	The changeling cannot clearly see the target's face.
+1	The changeling is touching the target.











nkidu held the little flashlight between her teeth and braced herself in the cramped cave tunnel. The ground was slick with a kind of snot; the walls, too. Here, the tunnel had dipped suddenly, a sharp decline upon which she could not stand — and she started sliding downward, a grim ride into darkness here within the Heḏe. She stopped herself, just barely. But she lost her backpack along the way, and that was unacceptable.

Her heel held firm against a stalagmite (“Stalactites hang tight against the ceiling,” she whispered to herself, a reminder of childhood mnemonics, “and stalagmites might one day grow to reach them”) and she strained to reach the backpack that had gotten caught on a rock just a few feet behind her.

All this, to find a Hollow that would suit her and her motley. Somewhere safe, that’s what Nyx had said. Somewhere with unseen and secret fruits, Ornithine had asked. Where were they? Traipsing about the Heḏe, la-la-la? Fuckers.

Her arm burned as she overextended it, the muscles on fire. But her index finger curled around the backpack’s strap, and she pulled.

It came free —

— just in time to reveal what was coming down the tunnel behind it. The wavering beam of the Maglite offered yet another awful thing that Enkidu never expected to see:

A ventriloquist’s dummy skittering toward her. One human eye behind a monocle. Cut strings trailing behind. In its hand — a human hand, like a little boy’s hand — was a camping hatchet.

The dummy’s jaw creaked open, and the dummy leapt. Enkidu sucked in a breath, dreamed a small prayer and let go. She slid down the snot-slick tunnel just as the camping hatchet sliced through the air where her head once was.



# CHAPTER 4

## *From the Thorns*

*During the days he carried it like a ripening peach in his head.  
During the nights he let it take flesh and sustenance, hung out on the silent air,  
colored by country moon and country stars.*

— RAY BRADBURY, "THE TIME OF GOING AWAY"

Grim and glorious wonder awaits those who dare enter the Hedge. Caught within the tangled bramble are the dreams and nightmares of many. Some humans assume that dreams aren't real: the product of a mind taking out its mental garbage for the night. Oh, but here dreams are as real as a rose cupped in the palm and just as beautiful. Though, for as dizzying sweet as a rose looks and smells, it also stings the skin with hidden thorns. Below beauty and wonder lies the bite of those barbs.

And so goes the lesson of the Hedge and its treasures: before reaching to grasp for such beauty, one must be prepared to feel the pinch of the thorn. With every marvelous dream comes a gasping, hitching nightmare following close behind.

### INTO THE TANGLE

Verdant green. Thistle brown. The red of dead leaves. The pale blue of ice-rimed vines.

This section delves deeper into the Hedge, forging into its forbidden heart to learn secrets that have not yet been put to print. This material is for Storytellers and players alike. Storytellers will find a wealth of setting material with which to color their stories. Players will find those yet-unwritten secrets about the Hedge that their characters may already possess or uncover during play. The Hedge's magic and danger are many: goblin fruits whose fleshy chambers bulge with honey and blood, twisting vines whose alacrity increases the faster a changeling's heart beats, old tokens captured in the boughs of giant nettles and the ephemeral fabric of dreams caught like goose-down on the prickly spines of hungry flora.

### EVOCATIONS OF BRIAR AND BRAMBLE

You might hear something of an urban legend regarding houseplants: they respond to the human voice, to the touch of a finger or a hand, to whatever emotion is poured upon them by their respective cultivators. Is this true? In the real world, who knows? Certainly plants are capable of some sense of alien intelligence (think how a pitcher plant develops a relationship with certain diving ants that are allowed to plumb the depths of the trap to feed on not-so-lucky bugs, or how a whip of ivy slowly lassos its way to new trees in slow, slow motion). But in the Hedge, this is no legend. It's all too true.

The Hedge has a reverse psychoactive effect. A psychoactive drug has a distorting effect on the mind, but here? The *mind* has a distorting effect on the *Hedge*. A changeling whose heart beats like the thumping legs of a scared rabbit might see this reflected eerily in the Briars around him: vines coil upon themselves like an orgy of snakes, flowers hiss, milky thistles weep. One of the Lost who enters the Hedge drunk and giddy may find the Hedge meeting his mood step-for-sodden-step: once-rigid poles of bamboo suddenly soften and sway with muzzy languor while straight-and-narrow paths widen but warp into a looping knot. Of course, such emotion only begets more of the same. A frightened changeling who finds the Thorns growing dark with fear becomes only *more* frightened, not less. The drunkard doesn't become sane and sober as the world shifts and shudders around him; it only confirms his dizziness, heightening it. (Which in turn may amplify the reactive nature of the Hedge!) The higher one's Wyrld



score, the more dramatic this effect becomes (see p. 213 of **Changeling: The Lost** for more information).

However, this is not the only means by which the Hedge may shift and shudder — a changeling *can* impose his will upon the Hedge in various small ways regardless of the potency of his Wyrd score.

## HEDGE-SCULPTING

The Hedge thirsts for Glamour in the way that normal plants desire sun and water. When a changeling scrapes his flesh on one of the barbs, he may lose some of his own Glamour, which feeds not only the plants, but the entire phantasmagoric realm.

However, a changeling can use this to his advantage: Glamour infuses the Hedge with a faint touch of additional life, and by willfully providing the Hedge with what it desires, it may become... amenable for a time to the hands of the giving Lost. This allows for the changeling to “sculpt” the Hedge somewhat.

Any Hedge-Sculpted effort requires the changeling’s player to spend a point of Glamour *and* succeed on a Wyrd roll. Simple sculpts no real effort besides this, and include such actions as shifting vines to form a basket or other vessel, twisting branches into words or even shifting the flora into a chair or bed. Such sculpts are not permanent, however, and cannot contribute long-term to, say, a Hollow’s amenities (more information on building a Hollow — which requires a more protracted effort — is below). A simple Hedge-Sculpt lasts for one hour per the Wyrd dots possessed by the changeling creator.

More advanced Hedge-Sculpting follows, many with their own unique systems.

### *Hedge Handiwork*

What does it look like when a changeling Hedge-Sculpts? The changeling must put his hands on the Hedge he wishes to shape, smoothing out knots and gnarls or wrestling stubborn branches into shape. (Despite the Thorns’ implied resistance, the character’s Strength Attribute is not necessary — the changeling’s own Wyrd is what provides the might necessary to shape unyielding Hedge.) A changeling is in no danger of damage (and thus, lost Glamour) from barbs and thorns, as investing the Glamour makes the Hedge more acquiescent to the changeling’s presence — any barbs beneath the changeling’s grip shrink away from her hands, or simply fall away like petals from a dying rose.

## ENSNARE

A changeling may ensnare an object or other living creature in the tangled flora. Doing so requires one point of Glamour and a successful instant Wyrd roll, as above, and the ensnaring vines or branches (or even earth; all within the realm is malleable, provided it is a part of the fundamental landscape and not, say, a token or part of a Hollow) last for one hour per Wyrd dot possessed.

Removing an ensnared object requires a Strength + Athletics roll penalized by a number of dice equal to the Wyrd score of the changeling who performed the Hedge-Sculpting.

Ensnaring a living thing (be it a hobgoblin or other character) requires the target to remain still long enough to perform the sculpt. Thus, a successful grapple may be necessary, unless the victim is a willing one. Escaping the Hedge-Sculpted fetter again requires a successful Strength + Athletics roll, which is penalized by a number of dice equal to the sculptor’s Wyrd dots. However, for every fetter forged past the first, the victim suffers an additional –1 die to that roll, to a maximum of three additional ensnaring bonds (imagine a character who ensnares the wrist of a target, and then secures the target’s other hand and two ankles, thus ensuring an additional –3 dice to the roll to escape). Of course, each additional fetter demands another turn each, and during those turns the target may very well be struggling to escape.

## HEDGE-HIDING

A changeling may, with a swift movement, pull the local Hedge foliage — whether it be broad, wet fern leaves pocked with dots of odd fungus or brittle, bone-like branches of some osseous tree — all around herself to hide. This action costs one Glamour point and requires success on the Wyrd roll. During this time, the character remains unseen by anybody not actively looking for her. If someone is looking for her, he must succeed on a Wits + Investigation roll penalized by the concealed character’s Wyrd score.

Unfortunately, such a brash and sudden Hedge-Sculpt does not last for long as the foliage tries to return to its shape. The concealment lasts for only one minute per success, but can be continued by spending one Glamour point. Each point spent in this way earns an additional minute to the hiding. When Hedge-Hiding ends, the foliage returns (sometimes with a whip-like motion) to its shape from only minutes before. The character is once again vulnerable to scratches from the briars, as well.

## SHAPING LADDERS

Perhaps a changeling sees a precious token lodged between two gnarled vines some 20 feet up. Or maybe he



just wants to climb to the top of the Hedge and stare out over the vast tangle (hoping, of course, that he doesn't draw the attention of whatever those strange carrion birds that circle in the distance). In doing so, it seems wise to find a way that doesn't involve grabbing hold of vines or tree limbs that remain studded with thorns thick and thin, yes? The answer to this conundrum is for the changeling to sculpt himself a ladder.

Sculpting a ladder takes some time and effort — urging the brambles into a rung, then clambering up that rung to shape the next. Hedge-Sculpting a ladder requires the one Glamour point, as usual, but the Wyrd roll becomes extended, not instant. The number of successes required is equal to one success per five feet of ladder. (A 30-foot ladder would require six total successes to build.) Every roll made is equivalent to two turns of time.

Once the ladder is completed to the character's satisfaction, it only takes a single success on a Climbing roll to ascend to any point up or down the ladder. Ah, but while the Hedge may not be a sentient entity (or is it? Some changelings certainly wonder), the Hedge does seem to prefer to keep most of its inhabitants down inside the walls of its maze rather than up above it. The ladder therefore doesn't last as long as some sculpts do: only one minute per Wyrd dot possessed. When this time has passed, the rungs disappear from the bottom up, at a rate of one per turn.

## WEAPONS OF VINE AND THORN

The flora of the Hedge are beautiful and dangerous: leaves like an arrow's fletching that cut, thorns like a wasp's stinger, tree bark that's smooth if you rub it one way but abrading like shark-skin if you dare rub it the other way. When the Lost are in the Hedge, they're wise to bring weapons with them given that even the widest trods are sometimes hunted by desperate Others or gibbering hobgoblins. For those who do not have weapon in hand, however, they may reach over and instantly Hedge-Sculpt a weapon, breaking it off the local foliage. This costs one Glamour and necessitates success on a Wyrd roll.

The weapon, if from a part of the Hedge that could do lethal damage (razor-honed leaves, thorn-studded branch, flesh-parting vine that acts like a whip) will last for a number of successful hits equal to the character's own Wyrd score. If the Hedge-Sculpted weapon would instead cause bashing damage (a heavy hunk of wood, an uprooted stump, a stout bamboo staff), then the weapon will last for a number of successful attacks equal to *twice* the character's Wyrd score. Once the weapon has reached its maximum number of successful attacks (meaning the weapon connected successfully with a tar-

get living or not), the weapon's usefulness ends immediately: the weapon shrivels in hand, turning brown and brittle in a matter of seconds.

For the most part, any weapon Hedge-Sculpted in this way requires the Weaponry score to use. However, a character may instead choose to shape a weapon that wraps around the knuckles or the hand, thus necessitating use of the Brawl score, instead.

All weapons shaped in this way are +1, but a character can at the time of Hedge-Sculpting spend additional Glamour. Each point spent increases the equipment bonus by +1, to a maximum of +4 (or +5 if counting the original equipment bonus).

## GOBLIN FRUITS AND ODDMENTS

Fleshy plums that pulse with a heartbeat. Dark pods whose desiccated chambers are home to narcotic pollens. Whisper-thin grasses that keep secrets trapped in their cellulose vesicles.

The Thorns are home to some very strange plants, indeed. Yes, you have what appears to be a “normal” array of foliage cast in a faintly mythic veneer: massive oak trees, skeletal shrubs, carved mazes of pale bamboo. The further one gets from a doorway in or out of the Hedge, however, the more alien and incomprehensible the labyrinthine garden becomes. Colors become brighter. Flowers may seem to take on the hint of life never-seen in our world (petals gently fluttering like a butterfly's wings, closing upon a plump red fly so that the puffy anthers can drain the bug of its juices). Trees creak and groan as if they are turning to watch those who pass by them. And the thorns themselves? Fatter. Sharper. Some drip. Others twitch.

In such wild areas of the Hedge, one may find various goblin fruits and oddments (many of which can be found on pp. 223–224 of **Changeling: The Lost**). The question remains, though, can one cultivate goblin fruits? Perhaps planting amaranthine along the edge of one's Hollow cottage? Or protecting a hidden token behind a draped curtain of gallowsroot grown for just such a purpose? Absolutely.

That said, cultivating goblin fruits is not precisely like tending to plants in the mundane world. Such odd foliage, like the Hedge itself, is psychoactive... born of dreams and hungry for more than just food, water, sun.

## BLOOD MAKES THE GRASS GROW

In overly simplistic terms, cultivating a plant in the human world is easy: plant a seed or a whole fruit (or plant a shoot or scion of the original) and you've cultivated new growth. It works that way in the Hedge, too,



## Insane Ecology

Do not assume that the Hedge follows standard scientific laws. A bee needn't pollinate a flower, a tree may not require water to grow, a spread of damp ground cover doesn't need to send out shoots to spread itself. Certainly some may be part of a strange ecology (some believe, for instance, that stabapple trees will grow only in places where the many-stingered Cull Wasps build their nests made of leaf and skin). The rules here are not so easily discerned, most of the time. If such rules even exist in the first place.

except every new planting require more than just a little water and some sun. Plants require fertilizer.

Of course, in the Hedge, fertilizer isn't conventional. "Plant food" is altogether different from the expected nutrients provided by phosphorous, nitrogen and potassium compounds. The plants here hunger for unnatural nutrients. And, to grow, these nutrients must be provided once, if not often.

Whenever a character hopes to cultivate a new goblin fruit or oddment, she must first take seeds or shoots or a whole fruit from the original subject and then plant it in whatever new location she chooses. Traditional concerns of ground quality and sun or water exposure generally don't matter — though, if the plant is obviously not suited for this area (trying to plant a swamp flower in the middle of a bone-dry desert, for instance), then it becomes difficult, though not impossible, for the transplant to gain life.

The transplant must be fed the food that the transplant hungers for most. Some goblin fruits and oddments do not have the same "nutrient requirement" from planting to planting, and a character may need to try several foods for the plant to take root. "Taking root" becomes very obvious, indeed: the plant always shows some sign of success. The roots may stiffen and sink into the earth. Leaves may instantly unfurl, or a tiny sprout may peek up through the heady soil. Below are a number of the potential nutrients one may find that plants desire, though Storytellers are welcome to get creative and come up with their own. Each adds dice to the roll to officially "cultivate" the plant, as noted below.

**Blood (+3):** A plant may hunger for fresh blood. Enough blood must be spilled (close to a pint) to soak the ground around the plant. One concern with this is that spilling blood may attract more voracious hobgob-

lins. Spilling blood causes one lethal point of damage to whatever creature is giving up the red stuff.

**Carcass (+1):** Curling a dead body — be it from a squirrel, cormorant, hobgoblin or human — around the plant gives it the essential life it needs. The body decays very quickly, turning to a unrecognizable pile of moldering waste by the end of a 12-hour period. Again, may attract carrion-feeding hobgoblins.

**Dreams (+1):** The character merely needs to whisper to the plant one of his dreams from the last three nights. In giving up a dream, however, the character can never again recall that dream (it literally leaves his mind the moment he whispers it "into" the plant). The character will also suffer a -2 penalty to all Expression rolls for the remainder of the day. Some believe that giving up one's dreams, even nightmares, is unhealthy, a way of "giving up one's thunder."

**Gift of Attribute (+5):** The plant literally draws out one of the character's Attribute dots into itself. The character doesn't usually have the choice of which Attribute; in deciding to give the plant any dot, the plant decides what it wants (though sometimes this may make a bit of thematic sense: choking gallowsroot, for instance, desires Strength while the stimulating leaves of the jarmyn plant demand Stamina). The character regains that Attribute dot after a number of days equal to 10 minus the character's Wyrd score.

**Gift of Skill (+3):** The plant consumes a dot of the character's Skill. As above, the character retains no choice in which Skill; the transplant decides. (Again, theme *sometimes* applies: gallowsroot might leech a dot of Brawl or Melee while the magic-empowering promise leaves demand Academics or Occult dots.) The character regains that Skill dot after a number of days equal to 10 minus the character's Wyrd score.

**Memory (+2):** In whispering a memory to the plant, the character forgets that memory forever but helps the plant grow. The memory must be something more than just a name or phone number; it must be a memory that has a story however small attached to it. (For example: "I remember swinging on the old tire over the trout stream, and one day I fell in and almost drowned.")

**Sanity (+4):** The character lends the plant some of her own sanity (which helps to stabilize the dreaming nature of the foliage, giving it the constancy necessary to grow to fruition). In doing so, the missing sanity fills in with a temporary derangement (mild) of the plant's choosing. Once more, theme *sometimes* applies: fear gortach may cause Obsessive Compulsiveness. The derangement lasts for a number of days equal to 10 minus the character's Wyrd score.



## CULTIVATION

Once a plant has received its nutrient, the player must roll her character's Wits + Crafts score. She gains a number of bonus dice appropriate to whatever food the plant required (see above). The roll may suffer penalties such as if the character is distracted (–1) or if the fruit or oddment is transplanted to a wildly inappropriate locale (–3). This roll, which involves physically packing the soil around the seed or shoot, can be made only once per day. If the character fails the roll on the first attempt, successive attempts can be made 24 hours later, and at a cumulative –1 penalty to the Wits + Crafts score. The sacrifice of specific nutrients needs to be paid only once, up front. (In other words, if the plant thirsts for blood, the character doesn't need to spill new blood every day — one time at the beginning does the trick. Repeating a sacrifice will eliminate a number of penalty dice equal to the initial bonus, however.)

It usually takes several days for a plant to grow into a mature version, and twice that time to actually provide usable fruit or oddment. To figure the exact number of days, assume that the time is equal to 7 minus the successes gained on the Wits + Crafts roll, down to a minimum of one 24-hour day. Double this to determine how

long it takes for the plants to start fruiting or to provide functional oddments.

Hedge fruits or oddment plants cannot grow outside of the Hedge. The results of these plants — the fruits or oddments themselves — can leave the Hedge with a changeling. The plants will not grow outside the Thorns, however.

## PSYCHOACTIVITY

Similar to the Hedge at large but to a lesser extent, cultivating goblin fruits and oddments is subject to the emotions of the character doing the planting. If the character is anxious or paranoid, the plant may grow up with an erratic, asymmetrical appearance. If the character is happy or passionate, flowers might bloom bigger and brighter while the fruit is juicier and sweeter. Some changelings use this to their advantage, purposefully imbuing their cultivations with whatever suits them. For instance, a character who daily screams foul invective at a growing Jennystone bush may find that the resultant seeds (the Jennystones themselves) are far more pungent than one might usually expect. Alternately, the character who whispers soothing encouragement and platitudes to a coupnettle plant may find that the tea brewed from its leaves is less bitter and, thus, more palatable.

## HYBRIDIZATION

A character could create a hybrid of two Hedge plants, though it must always be a goblin fruit with a goblin fruit, or an oddment with an oddment (recall that goblin fruits are largely consumables, while oddments provide some functionality as non-consumable tools).

Doing so requires that the character place two seeds, sprouts, scions or fruits in the same spot of Hedge earth. The process is generally the same by which one cultivates one plant: some manner of nutrient must be provided to the hybrid so it takes root, and a Wits + Crafts roll must successfully be made. This roll is made at a –2 penalty because of the difficulty of the hybridization process.

However, it also requires a single point of Glamour spent on the part of the grower. Once the Glamour is spent at the tail end of the process, the hybrid plant grows.

And there's no telling what will arise from the ground. Usually, it's some kind of hybrid that features elements recognizable from both plants. Other times, it's something entirely new, something utterly unpredicted and unprecedented. (Some even say that this is how new goblin fruits and oddments are made, but others say they are seeded first in the lush earth of mankind's dreams.) Below are a few hybrid fruits of note:

**Jennyapples:** These misshapen, black-spotted apples hang on the low branches of a tall shrub. The apples,

### *Ornithine's Hedge Pomology*

Ornithine, once a Hedge-obsessed Wizen witch for the Autumn Court, hand-wrote several volumes of a book on Hedge Pomology (the study of fruiting plants and trees). This book was a profound resource for the local Autumn courtiers, who found that the journals detailed the locations, necessary nutrients and effects of limitless goblin fruits and oddments.

However, Ornithine, given over to her obsession with providing knowledge to *everybody*, made copies of her own work and distributed it to all within the freehold. Needless to say, the Autumn Court was not happy, and not only expelled her from the Court but is now attempting to hunt down every last copy of the Pomology for the purpose of destroying them. Ornithine hasn't been seen since. Is she dead? Or on the run?

Some say the original book is actually a token that literally allows its reader to hone in on certain goblin fruits just by thinking about them....



if eaten, cause a roiling, acidic stomach that confers -3 to all rolls made for the rest of the day... but trust me, everybody knows not to eat a Jennyapple. As soon as the skin is pierced (easy to do, it peels away like skin sloughing off a sore), it gives off the wretched odor of the Jennystone: the nauseating scent spreads in a five-yard diameter, potent enough to inflict a -1 dice pool penalty to anyone with a sense of smell unfortunate enough to be in that area. (Requires a dream to grow.)

**Nevernip:** This cross-breed of blushberries and fear gortach provides the healing benefits of blushberries, but at a steep price. Those who eat the lush purple berries that dangle from the stalks of the tall grass find that the taste is just too good to give up. Yes, it heals, but that doesn't stop the character from wanting more. The character who has eaten nevernip must succeed at a Wits + Composure roll if he encounters the plant in the next scene or he must consume it again. Characters who have the Gluttony Vice suffer a three-dice penalty to this roll. Nevernip, unlike fear gortach, doesn't affect mortals or other non-fae. (Requires blood to grow.)

**Trenchmint:** Should a changeling hybridize the Willpower-giving couponette with the Willpower-taking pit moss, a fragile plant emerges from the cross-breeding. With airy stems topped with curling clusters of violet leaves, trenchmint is oddly invasive, spreading wherever it can — whole fields of the stuff spring up within a week, growing up and around the looming walls of Thorns. When one walks through it, trenchmint erupts with an acid, minty odor. Consuming trenchmint raw causes the changeling to lose one point of Willpower: but, this Willpower then grants him a +3 bonus to a Mental Skill of the changeling's choice, provided that the changeling concentrates on that Skill upon eating the trenchmint leaves. (If he doesn't concentrate, then the +3 bonus is granted to a random Mental Skill of the Storyteller's choosing.) This lasts for the remainder of the scene. After that scene is over, however, the changeling feels tired, slothful. The character suffers a -1 to all Physical rolls for the remainder of the day, unless the character's Vice is Sloth, which then doubles the penalty to -2 dice. (Requires no specific nutrients to spread; no roll required to transplant this hybridized weed.)

## NEW GOBLIN FRUITS

Below are some rare goblin fruits one may find in the Hedge. These goblin fruits lie deep in the Thorns, away from the gateways in and out of the realm. This makes these fruits more difficult and dangerous to find. Some believe the reward is worth it.

**Brumebulb:** Brumebulb is effectively a small, almost sour-tasting onion. It grows beneath the ground, and

gives only a minute curl of pale foliage to announce its presence. One must first succeed on a Wits + Investigation roll to even find brumebulb, and may suffer penalties to that roll because it so often grows beneath heavy grasses or tangles of briar (assume a -3 penalty in such an instance). The onion, however, provides a powerful benefit to those who find and consume such a thing: an instant exit from the Hedge. Eating the bulb is unpleasant, to say the least (it may require a Resolve + Composure roll to choke down the acidic, chewy sourness), but upon doing so a character's very flesh begins turning to a drifting vapor. The body becomes all vapor and then, with a brief wind, is gone from the Hedge. The character reappears within a few miles of wherever the character entered the Thorns in the first place. Upon returning, the character vomits, suffering two bashing points of damage in the process (it's a heaving, painful regurgitation). Transplanting brumebulb requires an expenditure of one's sanity (see above for nutrient costs).

**Hera Pear:** It would seem there's hardly anything exotic or strange about this pear tree: its leaves may be a little greener, the yellow fruits a bit more succulent and polished. But what these pears can do is unparalleled: completely heal one of a disease, be that person a mortal or changeling. Consuming a single pear will rid the person of one disease of that person's choice, anything from ringworm to bone cancer. (Derangements do not count.) As always, though, the pear extracts a cost upfront: every Hera Pear tree is guarded by a powerful hobgoblin. This hobgoblin may take any form, whether a pack of briarwolves or some monstrous serpent coiled around the base of the tree. One must defeat the hobgoblin to pluck a pear — or, at least, somehow get past it long enough to snatch one from the branches. Hera Pear trees *cannot* be transplanted. Some say they only grow near the "center" of the Hedge, if such a thing even exists. (Further legend suggests that to find a Hera Pear tree means that you're at the point of no return — keep going past it, and you're now on the *wrong* side of the Hedge, the one closest to the kingdom of the Keepers.)

**Wyrthumb:** This fleshy fig, black and filled with dizzily sweet tar-sap, is found on the dinner tables of many Others. They seem drawn to its honeyed goo, their fingers sticky with it. Oddly, though, the True Fae always discard the very center of these figs, which is a cluster of milky grubs with black mandibles. Some changelings, however, recognize that these grubs are the true reward: eating the squirming cluster alive provides the character with impossible flexibility. For one scene, the changeling gains +5 dice to any rolls made to escape any kinds of bonds, whether from handcuffs, rope, a grapple attempt or even from beneath a fallen tree. In addition, eating the



worms replenishes one lost Glamour point. Replanting a Wyrnthumb tree isn't easy. First, it requires an Attribute dot to take root (Gift of Attribute). Second, the Wits + Crafts roll to replant is penalized by -4 dice.

## NEW ODDMENTS

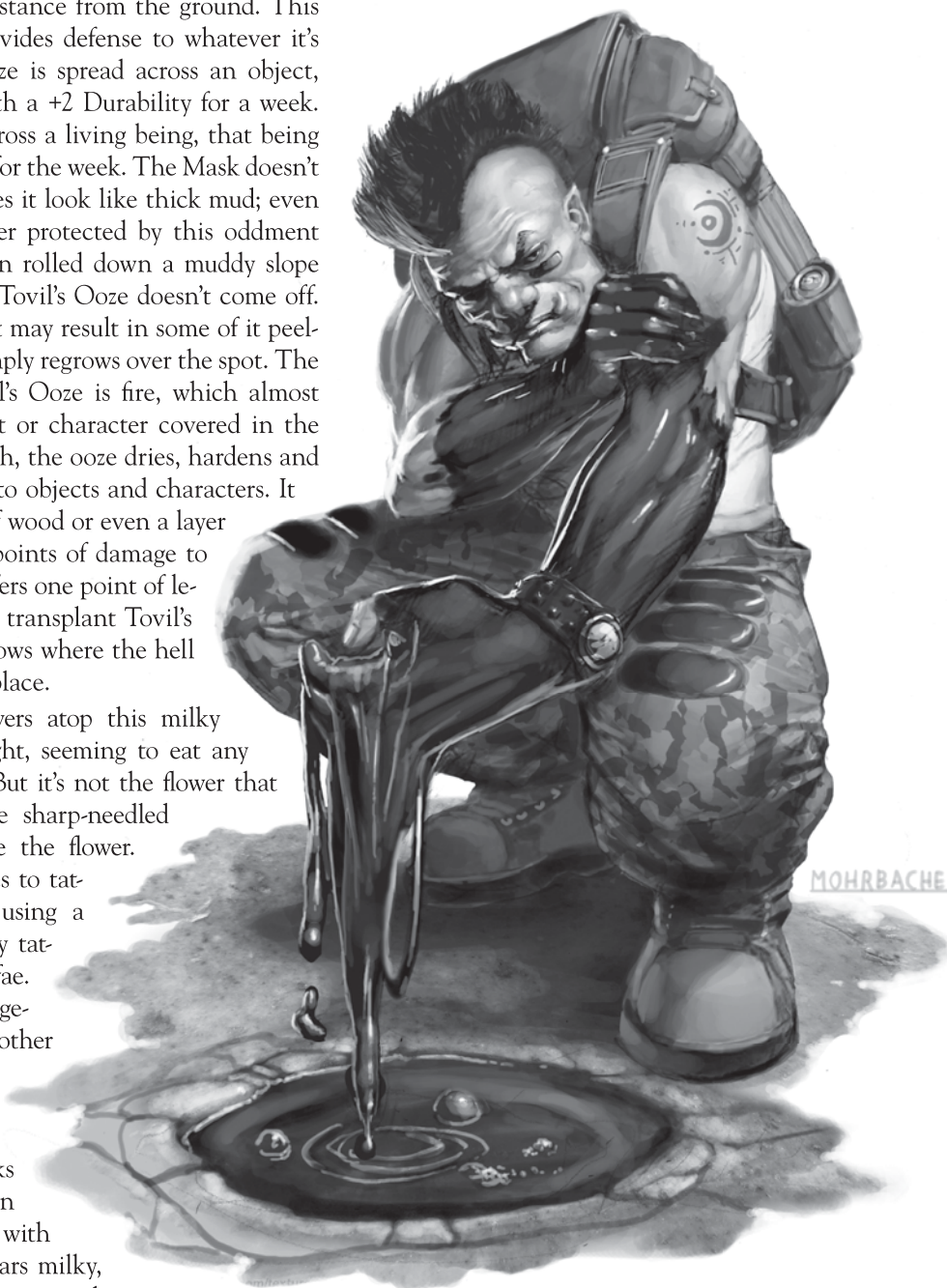
These oddments are found in the most dangerous and distant parts of the Hedge. Changelings may seek these oddments out, but should be wary of the perils waiting down such troubled trods.

**Tovil's Ooze:** In cold parts of the distant Hedge, sinkholes about a foot wide sometimes open up and suppurate a molasses-like substance from the ground. This ooze, cold and gooey, provides defense to whatever it's slathered upon: if the ooze is spread across an object, it provides that object with a +2 Durability for a week. If the ooze is slathered across a living being, that being gains two points of armor for the week. The Mask doesn't hide the ooze, it just makes it look like thick mud; even to mortal eyes, a character protected by this oddment looks as though she's been rolled down a muddy slope and left to dry. However, Tovil's Ooze doesn't come off. At all. Efforts to remove it may result in some of it peeling away — but then it simply regrows over the spot. The only way to remove Tovil's Ooze is fire, which almost certainly burns the object or character covered in the gunk. After a week, though, the ooze dries, hardens and flakes off. This is painful to objects and characters. It pulls away paint, a layer of wood or even a layer of skin. Items suffer two points of damage to structure. A character suffers one point of lethal damage. One cannot transplant Tovil's Ooze, because nobody knows where the hell it comes from in the first place.

**Scarthistle:** The flowers atop this milky thistle are as black as night, seeming to eat any light that comes near it. But it's not the flower that changelings want, it's the sharp-needed barbs that circumnavigate the flower. The Lost use these needles to tattoo themselves. A Lost using a scarthistle needle can only tattoo herself, not another fae. Moreover, only other changelings (and, some speculate, other supernatural beings such as vampires or mages) can see this tattoo, which bleeds through and marks the character's mien. When a changeling marks herself with such a tattoo, it first appears milky, but then fills in with whatever color

she desires over the next day. At the moment the tattoo is completed, the changeling's player must choose one Social Skill for the changeling. This tattoo is linked to that Skill from here on out. As long as the tattoo remains on the changeling's body (which is approximately a month before it fades), the player can spend one Glamour point and gain a +1 bonus to that chosen Social Skill for the remainder of the scene. Scarthistle transplants require a Skill point (Gift of Skill) to take root. A character can have up one such tattoo per point of Wyrd at any time.

**Walking Gertrude:** It's a strange thing to come across Walking Gertrude for the first time: these tall





stalks, thrust together by fibrous tissue and made to look like a spider made of sugarcane, tower over most changelings by 10 or more feet. And they walk. They literally move, uprooting and replanting themselves up to 20 feet away. They don't walk quickly (Speed 2), and they aren't sentient enough to avoid attacks. What's strange is that the slowness of this lumbering stalk-legged "plant" is that it can be transferred to an unwitting victim. One must first break a stalk off the Walking Gertude, and then contained within the stalk is a gritty, odorless residue. When the residue is rubbed on the inside of one's shoes, that target suffers from a halved Speed while using those shoes. The shoes must be removed for this effect to end. The shoes themselves must be discarded or never again worn: every time the character wears them, the effect continues. Scraping out the residue doesn't seem to end the curse. This oddment can be replanted, but at a very high cost. While it only requires a single stalk to reproduce, and must only be fed some manner of carcass, the Wits + Crafts roll to transplant suffers a -5 dice pool.

## HOBGOBLINS

The Thorns are home to a number of creatures beautiful and nightmarish: trumpeting swans with many heads, rainbow serpents that always seem to know a changeling's deepest secret, ventriloquist dummies that crawl around in the low mists and cut at feet with tiny scalpels. Some hobgoblins are small (shimmering damselflies that will help a changeling find a gateway out for the right price) while others are huge (brutal shadows with yellow eyes whose massive frames are half-as-high as the highest Hedge wall). This isn't new information. Hobgoblins exist. What can changelings do about it except... run from them, learn from them or kill them for their meat or treasures?

### TRAINING

Some motleys have trained hobgoblins to serve them: a bloody-beaked Pharaoh Falcon that guards an aerie Hollow or a tentacled mule who bumbles behind the motley carrying the changelings' goods on its prodigious back. It's not a particularly easy task to train hobgoblins. It takes a certain level of skill, or perhaps innate talent.

Training a hobgoblin first necessitates that it be somewhat trainable. It's the Storyteller's discretion which hobgoblins will be amenable to some kind of training. In the real world, some animals are too stubborn, wild or hostile to be trained (a dog, sure, but a wolverine?). It's the same in the Hedge, except here an additional factor makes some creatures resistant to training: keen intelligence.

Provided the Storyteller agrees that a hobgoblin is pliable enough of mind to accept some form of training, it becomes a contest of will and wits between changeling

### *But First, Let's Talk Fright Factor*

Hobgoblins may seem frightening for their appearances: odd hitching gaits, fur of thorn, slaverling maws, whatever. And that *can* be what makes them weird or scary, at least on the outset. But what's *really* terrifying about hobgoblins is what they're willing to do. These creatures abide only by the mad ecology of the Hedge. Hobgoblins have human intelligence, but they use it in alien ways. Even the most beneficent hobgoblin is a strange being willing to do very odd things to achieve its goals. A hobgoblin that looks like a normal cat crawling up around the branches might not seem all that scary. But when the motley realizes that the cat serves the Keepers and will only help the changelings escape Fae notice for a pledged favor... well, is it scary now?

and creature. The system for training hobgoblins is found under the Hobgoblin Trainer Merit on p. 93.

### IT'S ALIVE!

A changeling can't really create hobgoblins out of nothing (though with Storyteller's approval it might be possible to Hedgespin a hobgoblin into being by over-infusing a Hedgespun automaton with life, see p. 141). What she can do, however, is bring a normal real-world animal into the Hedge and... well, leave it there.

Much as the Hedge infuses normal objects with its magic (thus forming them into tokens) Thorn sorcery bleeds into an animal's heart and soul, as well. This infusion of dreams and nightmares may turn a mundane animal into a hobgoblin. Some suggest that this is how the Keepers actually create their jaw-dropping beastly companions, given the theory that they themselves are incapable of creating a damn thing for themselves.

Every day an animal wanders the Hedge, lost and confused, the animal suffers one more small change: a tooth falls out of a dog's mouth and is replaced by a wormy root, a rat's tail slowly becomes a plump earthworm, an eagle's feathers change one-by-one into thin copper scales. This change takes total hold of the animal after a number of days have passed equal to the beast's Resolve + Stamina score. At that point, the animal either becomes a hobgoblin or the beast expires in a bloody exhalation (i.e., the body simply could not sustain the changes). Roll the creature's Stamina + Athletics to determine if the beast survives as a hobgoblin or perishes.



If the animal is taken from the Hedge *before* this transformation is complete, all changes immediately revert upon exiting the realm. Once back in the real world, the animal is once again healthy and normal in appearance, though many such animals suffer a shift in demeanor — a once loyal dog becomes rangy and deeply curious, a wildly independent feline becomes attached to her owner's hip and so forth.

Note that if an animal becomes a hobgoblin, a changeling has no way to predict what its ultimate demeanor or intelligence will become. Upon becoming a beast-of-the-Hedge, the animal gains a +1 to either its Intelligence, Composure, Wits or Resolve (Storyteller's choice). If the animal was once a pet to a particular changeling, that changeling does get a +1 to any Animal Ken or Persuasion rolls made to communicate with the hobgoblin, but even then there's no telling if the animal will become hostile or eerily docile. The Hedge works on the mind in inexplicable ways.

Carrying a mortal animal into the Hedge and leaving the animal there counts as a breaking point for

changelings of Clarity 3 and higher (rolling two dice to avoid degeneration) — the changeling is deliberately attempting to alter a living being for her own purposes, in what is certainly a cruel fashion. The similarities to the Others' practice of kidnapping and altering "lower forms of life" are impossible to ignore, even if she tries to rationalize them away.

## HOLLOWS

A changeling's Hollow, if not a safe and sane haven within the Hedge, at least marks a safer and saner refuge. A Hollow might lie beneath a tumbling tangle of rose thorn that parts when the changeling comes close, or might lurk beneath the earth under a spider's web-sewn trapdoor. Within the refuge, the Lost might have an old Wurlitzer jukebox that plays her favorite tunes, or a luxurious bed of leafy goblin fruits. Maybe the Hollow has one secret door that leads to a place in the real world that only the changeling knows — or maybe she has a whole wall of doors, each marked with a map and a pushpin to show just where it goes in the city.

But it's worth reiterating that a Hollow isn't safe. Think of it like a boat on the ocean. Sailing in a boat is significantly safer than, say, floating around the ocean on a rotting plank of wood. That doesn't mean the boat is safe without fail. It's built to be, of course, but the ocean is tempestuous, deep, dark — in other words, terribly unpredictable. The Hedge is the same way. The Hollow is safe, mostly. But the Hedge should never be considered totally secure, and any changeling who fails to recognize that fact may feel all the more violated when a hobgoblin comes sniffing around or when a particularly troublesome Keeper leaves a "gift" in the Hollow bed of her once-kept changeling.

## PROCURING A HOLLOW

How does a changeling actually acquire a Hollow, anyway? One way is to find an already safe or unique location and settle there. The Hedge is home to many spots along the trods and paths that a changeling could claim as her own: the ruins of old Hollows, grottoes carved out by rushing streams whose waters gleam with their own light, peaceful groves of soft grass encircled by trees like tall sentinels.

Alternately, a changeling may choose to hack her own haven out of the Thorns — in places where the briar or other foliage is particularly stubborn, the Lost might have to take a machete to the vines and branches just to make a sanctuary that isn't overrun with whispering prickly bushes.

Ah, but the Hedge is diligent. It grows back. Even places that seem devoid of overrunning foliage such as the aforementioned ruins or caves could suddenly become

### *The Rendering Cottage*

A motley of privateer changelings own and operate a Hollow in the Hedge that sits up on a knoll above a moonsilver stream. In this cottage, the Lost render hobgoblins into what they call "essential components." Fats rendered into lard or candle tallow. Meat from exotic beasts butchered (the hocks of a sedgeboar, *boudin*-style sausage filled with ground-up murk-possum). Pelts cut, skin separated. Other... unique parts kept aside and sold to enterprising Hedge-spinners or chefs. Most of what they render ends up in a Goblin Market somewhere.

These privateers aren't pleasant men. Their aprons spattered in blood-and-bile is a clue, but they still try to put on a pleasant face: that is, until they try to render the use out of a changeling, too. Not by processing the meat (not usually), but by breaking down a changeling into his bare components of intangible value: maybe he can work some magic at Court or knows where to find a nest of rare Thorn thrushes. Then the motley leans on the character, doing whatever they must do to get him to comply with their demands. Anything is better than ending up in the fat-vats and having one's life boiled out so that it can drift as yellow "foam" atop the moonsilver stream....



strangled by a gaggle of creeper vines or overwhelmed by a sinking canopy of thorny mesh. The Thorns are stubborn. Determined. The realm reclaims.

The changelings, however, have an advantage of sorts. The Hedge is psychoactive and it reacts most easily to that which sustains it: Glamour. One of the Lost can therefore perform what some call “fingerprinting” and what others less politely refer to as “razing.” Both mean the same thing: the changeling imprints an area with the faint resonance of her own conscious mind. That part of the Hedge becomes hers, for a time. The Thorns will not attempt to reclaim or grow anew over this area, which is initially as big as a 50-yard radius around the changeling (if she needs more area than that, she can now or later spend more Glamour to widen that radius by 50 yards per point spent). This imprinting lasts for one month, during which time the changeling can start the process of building a Hollow. If during this month she does nothing physical to this area that marks it as her own — meaning she hasn’t put so much as a single chair down — then the Hedge might resume growth over this once-marked spot.

## MATERIALS

It’s easiest to build a Hollow out of materials available in the local Hedge. Certainly small things may come through from the mundane world — a beloved writing desk, a box of rare books, a small safe filled with a couple of guns and a bag of the changeling’s only money. The heavier or bigger the object is, though, the harder it will be to get it through the door and into the Hollow. While certainly some Lost have managed to bring, say, a load of bricks into the Hedge, it certainly wasn’t an easy task. Far easier to build with what’s nearby: a wall can be built of local stones, beams can be cut from dark trees, one might even be able to cobble together a kind of stained glass from airy shells or delicate baubles that the changeling finds within a moderate walk of the eventual Hollow. Some Lost, particularly talented horticulturists, actually manage to tease the Hedge into growing up into a shelter around them: like the art of bonsai, the changeling might groom a rolling bramble into a dense wall or even use firm rope to guide trees to grow together over the Hollow like a pair of hands with the fingers enmeshed. Other changelings either use what the Hedge already offers (the aforementioned cave) or instead build haphazard Hollows (a lean-to formed of a few pieces of corrugated tin, or a tent sewn from the hides of various hobgoblins).

## AMENITIES

In **Changeling: The Lost**, the Hollow Merit mentions under Amenities that a character might have in her Hollow a handful of magical touches in addition to the homey stuff (such as couches, sconces, stained glass windows and

other decorations or features). But how many dots are necessary to purchase certain magical elements?

Use the list below to get some ideas not only of potential magical touches within a character’s Hollow, but also to help determine just how many dots one should possess in the Hollow Amenities Merit to allow for such flourishes. Treat these dot “costs” as the cost associated with some equipment with Resource dots. You don’t “spend” Resource dots on items (meaning that the dots don’t go away once one purchases, say, a scope for a rifle), and you don’t need to spend Amenities dots, either. These are just guidelines.

**Dream Chaise (••):** This chaise (which can actually be a couch, bed, or recliner) is stuffed with soft downy feathers of various Hedge birds. A changeling who sleeps a full eight hours upon the chaise does not regain a Willpower point upon waking, but instead gains a point of Glamour. One is guaranteed potent dreams from sleeping here — never nightmares, even if one possesses the flaw or the derangement. Such potent dreams sometimes incur oracular visions, but one cannot control the content or the frequency of such dreams.

**Feasting Table (••••):** The Feasting Table is a dining room table, usually of dark cherry wood and with elegant, ornate claw feet. One places a tablecloth over it and, upon whipping the cloth away, finds that the table has been filled with enough food to feed a squad of soldiers. The food is rich, luxuriant, a wide spread of strange gourmet meals. Some are earthly (duck confit and gnocchi, for instance), and some... aren’t (drained and rinsed venom glands braised in a syrupy dream-a-drupe brandy). One side amenity is that in the middle of the smorgasbord there always lingers a bowl of five goblin fruits of one type. The changeling cannot demand what fruit will appear, just as he cannot decide what the Feasting Table will serve as its spread.

**Gruel Pot (•):** It’s better than it sounds, but not by much. The changeling can place this pot on any surface, and throw into it any materials organic or not-so-organic. After a half-hour, the materials break down into a hot, glutinous stew of overcooked meat and potatoes.

**Horticulturist’s Box (•••):** This planter box is filled with a heady, stinky soil that needn’t be replaced. If the character replants any plant in this, including a goblin fruit plant, the flora is likely to take root far more easily. Assume that if a Wits + Crafts roll is necessary for replanting Hedge foliage (see p. 130), that roll gains a +1 if the plant can be relocated to this planting box. Mundane plants in the box need no roll, and truly flourish as if given a heft dose of ultra-strength fertilizer.

**Looking Glass (•• or •••••):** A two-dot Looking Glass is a mirror linked to a mirror in the character’s own





home in the human world. She may gaze into the Hollow mirror and concentrate for one turn and see through the mirror in her own home. The five-dot version allows the character to concentrate for a turn and see through *any* mirror into which she has previously gazed: the mirror in a doctors' office bathroom, a police two-way mirror, even a small hand-mirror she saw lying on the side of the highway.

**Mood Lighting (••):** The lighting in the Hollow — which may come from torches bracketed to the wall or from strange glowing pill-bugs that gather in the corners of the room — responds to the changeling's wishes. She can demand that it's bright (obviating any perception penalties due to dim light) or that the shadows grow long and dark (incurring up to -2 to penalties in the half-dark).

**Twin's Chest (••):** The character has a chest or set of drawers whose clothing contents mirror the sets of clothes that the changeling possesses in the real world. The chest magically reproduces them, though each reproduction features a minor flaw or offset item: a label in the wrong space, differently-colored buttons, one sleeve slightly longer than the other.

**Unknown Amphora (•••):** This little amphora (which may not be a Greek-style neck amphora at all but

could be a glass decanter or some other booze-holding bottle) fills with some manner of Hedge beverage once per day. The amphora holds two glasses of said random beverage — it might be a bitter chartreuse or a nectar-sweet mead. The effects of the Thorn liquor usually mimic those associated with alcohol, but may also mimic those of any other drug (see "Drugs," pp. 176–177, *World of Darkness Rulebook*). The effects are gained upon finishing the one glass. Once the amphora is empty of its contents, it does not refill until the next evening.

## WARDS

Hollow wards is a straightforward concept, but it's worth examining exactly how they might manifest. What is it that prevents discovery? How does the character gain Initiative over those who don't belong in the Hollow? How does the refuge resist forced entry?

**Hedge Foliage:** The strange flora of the Thorns can be groomed or cultivated to protect the Hollow. A thorny mesh may grow up over the pathway, opening only for the character and her motley. Creeper vines may linger at the edges of the Hollow's many rooms, snaking out and coiling around the feet of those who don't belong. Beautiful flowers may exude a sickly-sweet fragrance that dizzies those adversaries who haven't built up a tolerance to it (as the motley clearly has).

**Hobgoblins:** Perhaps the area is naturally home to certain hobgoblins such as a choking cloud of bright butterflies or a forest full of screaming — and thus, distracting — birds. While hobgoblins contributing toward Wards do not count as direct antagonists (meaning one needn't put them into Initiative and have them make actual attacks), they can obscure the location of a Hollow: consider a pack of mangy Hedge dog-things that patrol the trod outside. They're tolerant of the characters because the characters throw the animals scraps, but they're not-so-cheery toward anybody else. Or maybe the hobgoblins lurk within the Hollow itself: if the floor is home to a number of skittering rodents or spiders, it might be just enough to warrant an interloper's limited Initiative.

**Machines:** While newer machines don't tend to survive long in the Hedge, the Artifice Contract or a simple DIY spirit might help a character rig up wards. Think of an old CCTV camera from the late '80s that watches the doorway or a clockwork trap that whips heavy vines around an interloper's foot (thus slowing him down enough to warrant that dip in Initiative). Maybe the character's hidden the Hollow behind a façade of bramble (which can be opened with a hidden hand crank in a nearby rock) or has created a literal alarm of shrieking wooden hobgoblins bolted to the wall with rusted nails.

### *Phones in the Hedge*

It is possible for a changeling to have a phone in her Hollow. Note, however, that having a phone requires at least three dots in Hollow Amenities, and moreover, the phone won't really work all that well. It must be a landline plugged into... well, does it matter? Vines may wrap around the cord or maybe the changeling buries the plug into the ground and surrounds it with glittering stones. The phone manages only spotty reception at best — about a third of every conversation is buried beneath static. The phone works only once a day, too, for one conversation. The rest are dead or lost in static.

What about cell phones? Cell phones are all the more troubling. A changeling who tries to get a signal on a cell phone might very well get it — but not in the way she wants. Once in a blue moon, she'll make a faint connection and hear snippets of the conversation. Most times, though, she'll hear other things, awful things: a child's nursery rhyme spoken in Slavic, someone sobbing, someone screaming or her Keeper's own voice whispering, "*Ah, there you are!*"



**Obstructions:** Sometimes, the design of the Hollow or the landscape around it are enough to add a dot or three to wards. A Hollow that sits up on a bluff and is concealed by strange sea fog thwarts attempts to find it. A cave Hollow hidden behind rocks might count toward wards, especially considering that maybe the internal topography is uneven enough to trip invaders (though characters would be aware of the various bumps and dips).

**Weather:** Time doesn't really pass in the Hedge. The weather in an area of the Hedge tends to remain indefinitely unless changed through some external or psychoactive force. Whatever season the Hedge presents remains, also, unless changed. This can be useful for characters: think of how winter snows constantly might blow over the trapdoor into the Hollow (but the motley knows to look for that crooked stick, which tells the changelings how to find the way in), or how lightning might strike the ground in front of any trying to gain improper entry. Even inside, the way the wind rattles the windows causing distractions or the way the Hollow air is soggy with humidity could drag down an enemy's Initiative.

## DOORS

A Hollow likely features two ways into it: through the Hedge and through the real world, each necessitating a door or gateway.

Doorways into the Hollow through the Hedge are somewhat simple to craft: a changeling might carve a serpentine tunnel through a bramble wall, pick-axe an opening through a boulder pile or even build a series of cascading doors (each with a different lock requiring a different key, thus adding to wards). Some motleys bush-whack whole mini-mazes surrounding prominent Hollows, the dead ends of these labyrinths chockablock with traps and perils.

The trickier part for a changeling is securing doors that lead in and out from the real world. Finding an inert door and bringing it into the Hollow is one way of doing it. Imagine, if you will, a motley hacking at the brambles binding a gateway to the Hedge wall. Upon removing it, the changelings bring the gateway to their Hollow, knock and ask for the Hedge for exit, then spend the Glamour. Voila, a doorway out. Problem is, that doorway does not provide an egress to a chosen location. The Hedge — or Fate — chooses the location, and for all the fickleness of Fate, that door might lead into an enemy's leather-walled dungeon or near the spot where the changeling was once abducted as a human by the True Fae. The door, once "attached" to a gateway in the real world, doesn't change. So if this door opens into manhole below a busy city street, it'll *always* open there.

What if the changelings want to create a series of doors that exit into all their real-world houses and apartments? Possible, but a bit trickier to do, and it necessitates some additional cost.

One must first compare the real-world distance between where the new door will open and where the Hollow's *first* door already opens. For example, the Hollow's first door into the real world opens in the basement of Chong's Dumpling House, a known Autumn Court safe house. One of the motley's Lost now wants to create a second door and have it open into her apartment (through the bedroom closet). Her apartment is about 15 miles from the Dumpling House. This determines how difficult it will be to "attune" the door to that apartment closet.

The changeling must give the inert door — perhaps cut from the Hedge as previously mentioned or pulled in from the real world — a point of Glamour and a point of Willpower. (This is non-negotiable, and if the roll fails, she still loses the points.)

She then must concentrate over the door, whispering entreaties to it, praying to the Hedge and touching the door the whole while (perhaps running her hands over it in delicate circles).

The changeling's player must roll Resolve + Wyrd. This is an extended roll. A number of successes are required equal to every five miles of distance separating the Hollow's first door into the real world and *this* door into the real world. In the above example, the distance was 15 miles, so three successes are necessary. If the distance was 100 miles, a full 20 successes would be required. Each roll is equivalent to 10 minutes' worth of whispering to the door and touching it.

Here's a catch: if at any point the extended roll fails twice in a row, the Hedge resists on that second failure. The character can either choose to give the Hedge another Glamour point as a bit of a "bribe," or she can instead accept a -1 penalty on the Resolve + Wyrd roll in successive turns. This is cumulative, so if she continues to fail twice in a row over and over again, that penalty may build. At each failed juncture, she can choose to give the Glamour or accept the penalty, but once she accepts the penalty, it cannot be obviated unless she chooses to start the process all over again. The roll itself has no limit; she can continue to attune the door for hours upon hours provided she doesn't stop to take a break. (Of course, things such as hunger and thirst might stand in her way if this process goes on too long.)

Once the changeling keys the door to the proper location, it remains as such. It cannot be revoked, either, unless the door is destroyed.





## Keys

Ways into and out of the Hedge might be marked by keyed gateways (see p. 216, *Changeling: The Lost*). A changeling can assign keys to any door within her Hollow, as well; this includes doors leading into the real world or into the Hedge. A changeling marks a gateway with any kind of key that requires some kind of specific action: anything as simple as untying a shoe or as complex as painting one's hands in menstrual blood and then writing someone's name on the door in those menses.

A key can even be something that requires some time to do: maybe the door will open to anybody who caused a point of bashing damage to another person within the last 24 hours. Assigning the first key costs the changeling nothing, but removing or changing the key ("changing the locks," as some call it) costs one point of Glamour.

However, a key can never be prohibitive by identity. Meaning, the key must be something *anybody* can accomplish if they know the key (on purpose or accidentally). The key cannot be, "Only open for changelings" or even, "Only open for me." It must be something that human, changeling and even a Keeper can accomplish — rolling dice, breaking a chicken bone, singing a particular Greek folk song, etc.

## HEDGESPINNING

A brooch made from an owl's eye and wound in golden silk. A gown formed of the fog that rolls in over the gray and empty sea. An axe whose blade is edged with the teeth of three briarwolves, the handle swaddled in sticky spider's silk.

Hedgespun items remain a mark of one's status in the freeholds of the Lost. Other changelings will surely come to gape at a robe formed of a million feathers or an Impressionist painting on the wall whose broad brushstrokes shift and melt into new images every hour. The most simple and common form of Hedgespun is clothing and other adornments, popular with any changeling who wishes to emphasize her fae grandeur to other Lost. But there's more.

What is a Hedgespun item, anyhow? Hedgespun objects are tokens of a sort, but not token as most changelings know them. These are not mundane items infused

with Wyrd magic over time, changed by the old sorceries that cling to the tangled Thorns or drift lazily on the winds of Faerie. Hedgespun items require effort. One literally crafts such wondrous objects within the Hedge, binding together tangible items (insect legs, hobgoblin pelts, trod pebbles) with intangible things (the essence of winter, a lightning strike, a whispered secret). Yes, it's possible to just find a Hedgespun item, but doing so is uncommon: the bearer of such baubles recognize the struggle necessary to cobble such things together, and do not relinquish them lightly. (If a changeling *does* find Hedgespun, it's often on the corpse of another changeling, or stolen from the hands of the Others.)

## RECIPES AND BLUEPRINTS

A Hedgespinner knows that every item requires a recipe, of sorts. Some changelings experiment to build a recipe to meet expectations: hoping to forge gauntlets out of bleached bird skulls is fine, but not so simple as reaching into the empty skull and making a fist. How does he strap it to his arm? Perhaps some kind of swampy bindweed, or maybe a goblin skin tanned and cut into strips. Is there a way to give the fingers of the gauntlet

### *Fumbling Hands*

The True Fae cannot make Hedgespun. It seems that, for the most part, the Others can't really *make* anything at all. They try, of course. One Keeper may follow a recipe to the very letter, and it may seem to be going along just fine. The very end of the project, though, results in a disaster: the Keeper's fingers glued up with tree sap, small cuts upon the skin and a pile of disparate objects in front of her. Frustration mounts, and often the Fae will take out such crushing disappointment upon her kept changelings.

So how do the True Fae get Hedgespun items? First, they just take them from changelings in the Hedge. A Keeper may descend upon a motley not to send the changelings back to Arcadia, but simply to pilfer their tokens. (And if torturing the Lost or killing them is the best way to do that... well, such is the so-called life of a Keeper.) Alternately, many Others steal humans from earth to do just this very thing. Many Lost have hazy, nightmarish recollections of the tasks they were to perform for their True Fae masters, and cobbling together Hedgespun items is one such grueling chore.



articulation? Bone spurs as hinges? Guttled jig-worms fitted to the fingers? When all is said and done and the character has crafted himself the gauntlets he so desires, he has created a recipe — sure, he reverse-engineered it, but he could, if he so chose, speak of this recipe to others so that they may make similar items.

That said, old recipes still exist. Changelings can learn these old ways, perhaps even pilfering from others. One Lost may pore over old books hidden in the attic of an abandoned library, hoping to find some mention of forgotten Hedgespun recipes. Another may take a more active approach, going into the Thorns with his motley and sneaking into the black carriage of a True Fae to look for books of old blueprints (the Hedgespun designs inked into the pages with the blue blood of mad beings).

## FOR EVERY ITEM, A STORY

It sounds simple, like procuring the ingredients for a recipe or accumulating the wood, screws and tools necessary for a carpentry project. But Hedgespun — whether creating it or simply finding it — is never so straightforward (and this may be another reason why possessing such items is at times a boon to a changeling's social standing). Is it the force of Fate, mounting against the changeling who would dare to try to literally craft the stuff of dreams? Is it Time, looping back upon itself to give meaning to such strange objects? Do the two elements conspire together against the pride or vanity of the Lost when they seek to shape the Hedge in ways never-before-seen?

What happens is, for every Hedgespun item there lurks a story. A story that draws the character into it whether that changeling likes it or not. This is true for Hedgespun items that one crafts raw and for those Hedgespun tokens that a character finds already crafted. A changeling who seeks to make a mask of soot and worms, a mask that will shift and squirm into a new grotesque face, may go about collecting the items she needs: the soot, the leaves that she will harden into the mask itself and of course the writhing worms. But what should seem a simple scavenger hunt soon becomes something else. Maybe she finds that the field of worms is being vigilantly watched by a pack of slaving hobgoblins, and in turn a Huntsman Fae is stalking those aforesaid hobgoblins. The more important that mask is, the deeper Fate conspires against the changeling and the more intricate the story becomes: perhaps that True Fae is one that the character has dealt with before, or is hunting all manner of strange creatures for some kind of mad Arcadian circus — and the character finds that the Huntsman has captured the Queen of the Autumn Court. Saving her could be a big deal.

Even just finding a Hedgespun token invokes a story. Okay, the changeling sees a corpse dangling from a thorny black locust tree in the Hedge, and upon that corpse's neck lurks a gleaming torc braided with spun gold and lost dreams. When the character reaches up to take the bracelet, the corpse reaches out and — obviously not actually dead, oops — drags the character up into the tree. Perhaps the not-quite-a-corpse will tell his story. Maybe the whole thing was a trap, and now the changeling is dizzied, knocked out, being dragged up over the Hedge walls by this half-dead lunatic.

A good rule of thumb is this: for every two dots a Hedgespun item possesses, finding it or crafting it then demands one game session in which the story diverts toward the procuring of said object. A one-dot Hedgespun token won't take more than a game session to resolve, while a five-dot Hedgespun item might take two or three sessions of story. This isn't a hard-and-fast rule, of course, just a guideline to represent Fate's capricious demands.

This sudden diversion of story doesn't just encompass the changeling making the Hedgespun, either. It very likely draws in her motley: the threads of Fate bind her to these changelings (and perhaps to others, for example, some within a Court or noble order), and thus it moves to lure them into the tale as well in whatever way it can.

Hedgespinning isn't just about the weaving of reagents into a token. It's about the literal spinning of a tale, threading the strands of a story — or a "yarn" — together. Few changelings ever recognize the depth of this; most realize only that Hedgespun items tend to be hard to procure, tangled in the vagaries of Fate.

## THE ACT OF SPINNING

Hedgespun tokens are not like real world objects in that they need to be precisely put together. Every thread in a floor-length gown does not need to be sewn and stitched by hand. The links in a piece of chain mail (formed perhaps of golden wedding rings stolen from a Keeper's strange collection) do not need to be hand-linked together, one by one, over the course of many nights.

The process is instead magically facilitated — but that's not to say that a changeling needn't put her hands on the items. They don't mysteriously float together and form the desired object. The character still has to fit the pieces together, massaging them so that they find whatever Wyrd sympathy can link the elements of the design. Threads must be pushed together, bone must be forced through stone, the backs of dark jewels must be moistened perhaps with saliva and fitted to a locket (a locket whose intricate scrollwork was maybe carved by a sharp-





ened pinky nail or even a wetted toothpick). Think of it like clay: while in the process of Hedgespinning, the materials become pliable with a little effort, they slowly shift and slide in the changeling's grip.

Ah, but before this process can even begin, the changeling must first ensure two things: that whatever story must be told surrounding the Hedgespun has received some manner of closure, and that the changeling possesses all the physical ingredients necessary. Without these two factors in place, the reagents refuse to yield to the character's touch. They do not become malleable. They will not ease together in a forceful hand. (And it is in this way that crafting a Hedgespun item, whether from an old recipe or an improvised design, lets the character know that it isn't quite ready... perhaps something is missing, something intangible like a prayer spoken backward or a sigh of ecstasy uttered nearby.)

### *It's My Specialty*

Don't hesitate to take Specialties geared toward the act and art of Hedgespinning. A Hedgespinning Specialty in Crafts is the most obvious one. But maybe the character possess a Locating Ingredients Specialty for Investigation, Occult, even Survival.

## CREATING HEDGESPUN

The act and art of Hedgespinning is an intuitive thing for many, the pushing and pulling of elements together, weaving and warping items so that they come together in a new and unusual way.

Note that a character must be in the Hedge while creating a Hedgespun item. The items will stubbornly refuse to yield if manipulated outside the Thorns. However, once crafted successfully, the Hedgespun token can be taken and used outside the Hedge (though just as all tokens, Hedgespun's genuine mien is concealed beneath the Mask).

Intangible reagents are made a part of a Hedgespun item by existing in the proximity to the crafting process. If the recipe demands a cry of pain, then that anguished cry must be within earshot of the changeling Hedgespinning the item *while* she crafts it. If she herself must give something to the item, such as a whispered promise or a lusty gust of breath, she can do so while her hands work to ease the materials together.

**Cost:** See below, under Action.

**Dice Pool:** Wits or Strength + Crafts + equipment

**Action:** Extended (successes necessary are equal to three times the token dots desired; each roll is equal

to one hour's worth of crafting and each roll requires that one Glamour point be spent or the process must be temporarily halted until more Glamour can be put into the object).

## Roll Results

**Dramatic Failure:** While Hedgespinning does not require the same levels of intricate work as real-world objects, one must still be cautious with the elements that will go into the token. On a dramatic failure, the character destroys one of the ingredients necessary for the recipe: her thumb crushes a delicate crystal, a still-living Luna moth takes flight and ducks into the Thorns, a dried tongue from a many-mouthed Hedge beast is overhanded and turns quickly to greasy dust.

**Failure:** The items just don't come together. They refuse to yield to the character's ministrations.

**Success:** The elements are sewn, bolted, eased or forced together, and the desired Hedgespun item now sits in the character's hands. While many Hedgespun items contain their own beauty (dew clinging to worm silk, with the sun caught in each drop), a changeling may want to add her own decorative flairs to a piece. Perhaps she paints it with dye made from crushed beetles (or made from the blood of her many enemies). Maybe she polishes it or dirties it up (a piece of armor may look more authentic if given a layer of grime and stain). It is hers to do with as she pleases, whether that means use it, display it or make it a part of a pledge.

**Exceptional Success:** The magic of Hedgespinning touches her hands and clings to it — other changelings or Wyrd possessors can see this as perhaps a faint dusting of glittering rust or a golden, almost liquid sheen. (The Mask protects it, however, and mortals cannot see such a thing.) The character's next Crafts roll is made at a +2 bonus, after which this clinging magic effect disappears. (The character cannot choose when to expend the bonus; it happens on her next Crafts roll regardless of what it's meant to accomplish.)

**Suggested Modifiers:** Recipe demands an intricate design (–3), distractions (–2), character has Clarity 8 to 10 (–1), each ephemeral or intangible ingredient included in the recipe (–1), character has Wyrd 6+ (+1), any kind of tool such as a hammer or awl (+1), character features Contracts of Artifice at any dots (+1), character has Clarity 5 or below (+2)

## SUBLIME DESIGNS

The design of a Hedgespun item can be focused, or it can be random. Some Lost cobble strange items together and see what grows out of their handiwork — in this way, the practice becomes as much art as it does craft. Oth-



ers begin with a strong design in mind, collecting a gaggle of ingredients that would go appropriately toward the final result, either in a physical way (needing armor, the character might include several skull-tops segmented together) or through an intangible and thematic contribution (in making armor, the character knows that a whispered promise of protection from a dying father could be trapped in a bottle and released into the Hedgespun raiment when crafting it).

Below are some guidelines to consider when creating Hedgespun items of a particular type. Certainly tokens are capable of containing far more versatile magic than what's listed here, but this should represent a good jumping-off point, as well as a watermark for any particular sorceries one wishes to invent and include in the token's abilities.

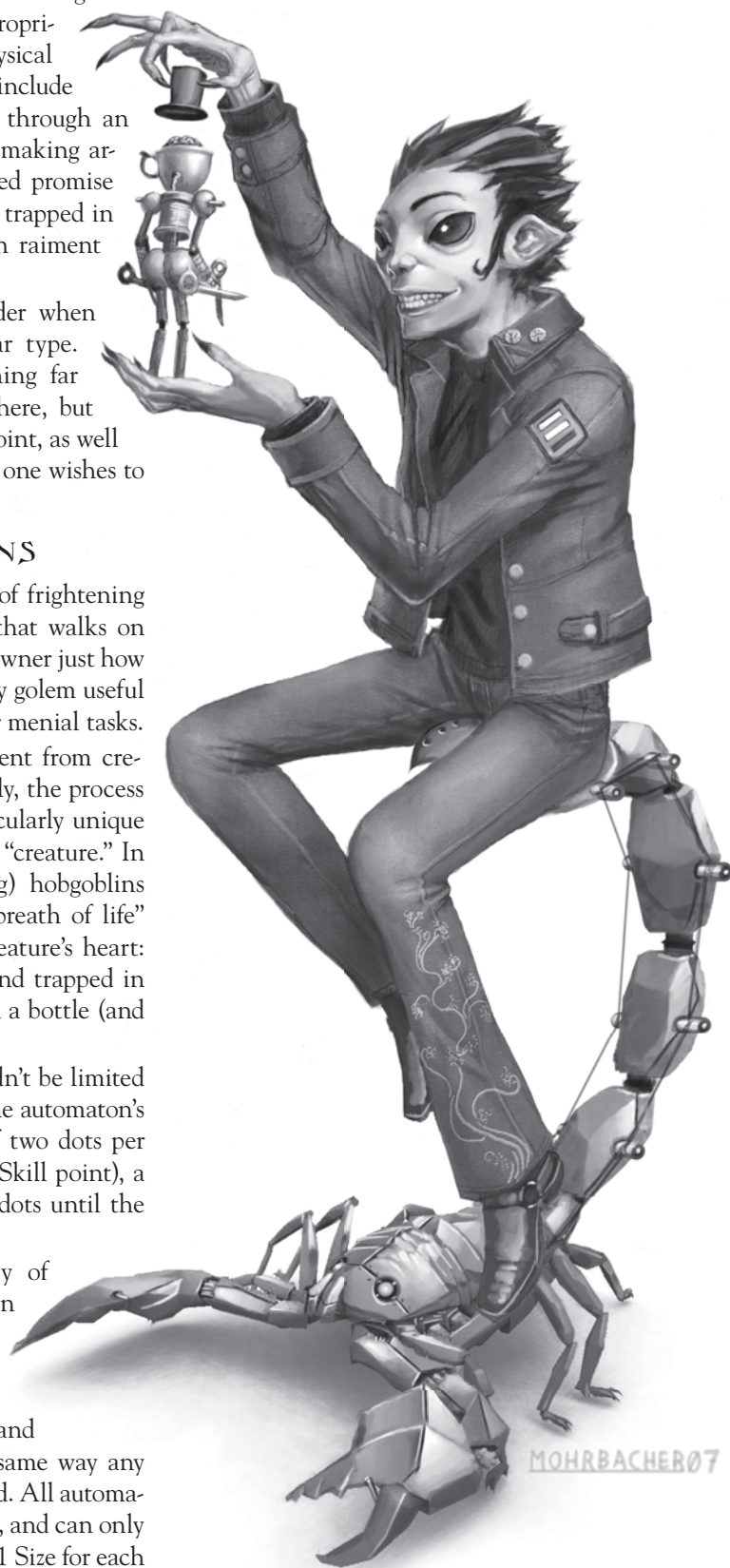
## HEDGESPUN AUTOMATONS

A spider with a human-face capable of frightening away unwanted visitors. A hand mirror that walks on jointed pewter legs and is happy to tell its owner just how beautiful she really is. A fat-bellied red-clay golem useful for bringing drinks, cleaning up, and other menial tasks.

Creating automatons is a little different from creating other Hedgespun items. Mechanically, the process is still the same, though often some particularly unique ingredients go into the crafting of such a "creature." In many cases, parts of dead (or still-living) hobgoblins are necessary. Generally, some kind of "breath of life" is necessary, and this functions as the creature's heart: an everlasting flame, a powerful storm wind trapped in a teacup, a Hedge mouse forever locked in a bottle (and stung constantly by a pair of wasps).

Also, dots spent for such a token needn't be limited at five. Because dots spent contribute to the automaton's overall Attributes and Skills (at a rate of two dots per one Attribute point and one dot per one Skill point), a character could conceivably keep adding dots until the automaton has a wide variety of abilities.

Every automaton begins its mockery of life with the following Attributes already in place: Intelligence 1, Wits 1, Dexterity 1, Stamina 1 and Strength 1. The automaton's creator builds upon these base stats. The automaton's Health, Initiative, Speed and other such Traits are determined in the same way any character's equivalent Traits are determined. All automatons can begin life between Size 1 to Size 3, and can only be given greater Size through Merit dots (+1 Size for each dot spent accordingly). Unless points are purchased in Resolve or Composure, an automaton has no Willpower





(though if the automaton does possess Willpower, the automaton can spend it at the behest of its creator). Automatons do not possess Wyrd, Glamour or Clarity.

An automaton does have limitations, though. It must be fed one point of Glamour per week, or the automaton becomes inert (though it again awakens when fed Glamour by the creator). No Mental or Social dice pool can ever exceed four dice; automatons aren't capable of advanced thought or potent social graces. Rumors do exist, however, of changelings who infused their automatons with more intelligence and social graces than such an empty-souled thing could or should possess. In such an instance, it's said that the automaton becomes a literal hobgoblin and gains a kind of sentience... which also unfetters the creature from having to follow the changeling's will.

An automaton, similar to a Hollow, needn't be created by a single changeling. An entire motley can contribute token dots toward the creation of a Hedgespun creature. (However, should there ever be a question of loyalty where the automaton must choose between opposing instructions, the creature will default to whichever changeling spent the most on those Merit dots.)

**Example:** *Matt has his character, Ezmerelda, create an automaton. The automaton is for defensive purposes — a vicious little scarecrow with sharpened corn teeth and claws cut from rose-thorns. The automaton's Attributes are Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 2 and Stamina 1. Its Skills are limited to Brawl 2. Its other stats are Size 2, Health 3, Defense 2, Initiative 2, Speed 9. The total Merit points necessary to create such a creature would be eight. Perhaps Ezmerelda will look to her motley-mates to see if they care to aid in the creation of such a being, since it will help protect the Hollow.*

## HEDGESPIN ART

A portrait capable of speaking to those who gaze upon it. A sculpture that shifts and changes given the mood in the room. A burbling fountain whose musty-tasting waters are capable of sharpening the mind.

Art spun from the dreams and nightmares of the Thorns is often quite strange. Even when inactive, such art carries a veneer of the bizarre such as how the eyes in a painting seem to follow you across the room or how the shape of a sculpture is impossible in the same manner of an Escher design. Such art rarely affects a single witness, instead spreading its effect to all who gaze upon it, or even everyone within a certain radius (base radius is 50 yards).

For the most part, Hedgespun art is much like clothing; it's a way to drop a Merit dot on something memorable and cosmetic for the simple purpose of showing off.

If the Storyteller is willing, further dots spent on a piece of Hedgespun art could go toward:

- Increasing the radius of effect (each dot could add an additional 50 yards of effect)
- Adding to or subtracting from the dice pools of all nearby (Mental and Social Skills are more common than Physical). Simply by being near, the piece of art may have a kind of caffeinate effect, or even a soporific effect. Those around the art may feel energized in conversation or sluggish of mind. One dot is equivalent to +1 or -1 to a given dice pool, and this could even be mixed (if one wanted to invoke a kind of drunken aura, the art might incur bonuses to Social rolls but minuses to Mental pools).
- Leeching from those who look upon the splendor and strangeness. One dot allows for the piece of art to leech a point of Willpower from those who look at the art. An additional dot might allow the art to store these points so that the changeling owner of the art could draw upon this reserve of Will at a later date. Glamour can be leeched, as well, but that would require two dots (two to leech, another two to harvest said Glamour).

## HEDGESPIN MACHINES

A clock whose ticks and tocks are whispers pulled from the unconscious minds of those around it, speaking them aloud for all to hear. A toy monkey whose clapping cymbals release thunderclaps. A gleaming gramophone that doesn't record sound... it records souls.

Spinning machines from within the Hedge is no easy task. For the most part, simple machines are generally doable. A doorknob is just a wheel and axle, and maybe when such a knob is placed on a hard surface, the doorknob opens a door into a character's Hollow. A handheld trebuchet is just a lever, and maybe that token flings Hedge pebbles that never miss.

More complex machines are possible — rumors exist of a changeling who has an internal combustion engine in his '76 Corvette that uses Autumn leaves as fuel and belches fire that smells like a burning leaf pile. The creation of complex machines is far more difficult, however, incurring a -3 to the Wits + Crafts roll made to build such a token. (Note that something like a car is not just one complex machine, but a series of them. Making a Hedgespun vehicle actually requires the integration of several tokens.)

It is very difficult to create Hedgespun items that are electronic in nature: computers, phones, televisions, etc. Again, it's not impossible: a Lost known as Lucky Queen made an old 1950s-looking television that tunes into various parts of the Hedge and shows those areas on the screen (albeit behind occasional static and in black-and-white).



Any attempt to make such complicated electronics causes a -5 penalty to the Wits + Crafts roll necessary.

Again, a single dot in a Hedgespun machine represents a basic functionality similar to an ordinary machine that could be attained through mundane means, but with a distinctly fae appearance or quirk. With the Storyteller's approval, below are a couple of ways that dots can be spent when one is creating a Hedgespun machine:

- The item provides an appropriate equipment bonus at a rate of +1 dice for each dot spent. This can apply only to a single Skill. A little clockwork caterpillar that plunges into a lock and tries to open it with twitching mandibles would add to a lock-picking (Larceny) attempt. A series of optical lenses (taken perhaps from the actual eyes of cat-faced goblins from the Goblin Market) worn around the head might automatically determine what would best clarify or magnify what is in the character's view, adding as such to Investigation rolls.

- One dot can be used to increase the machine's Durability rating by one. (Alternately, dots could be spent to provide the item with the ability to *pierce* Durability the way a mortar bit on a drill might do — for each one dot spent, the item can ignore a point of an item's Durability. Think of a turnscrew drill made from a basilisk's head — the creature's spiraling tongue might be the point that could pierce, say, the heavy steel of a reinforced safe.)

## HEDGESPUN RAIMENT

Pauldrons hammered from broken dreams and the fingernails of giants. A delicate and diaphanous mask sculpted from the steam that rises from hailstones. Thigh-high boots of stitched together red ivy, the catgut laces dyed with the blood of a Keeper.

Hedgespun raiment — any kind of clothing or armor spun from elements found amongst the Thorns — can be found on p. 203 of **Changeling: The Lost**. Below, however, are a few additional ways the Storyteller might allow one to spend dots purchased in the Merit:

- A piece of clothing or armor could contribute to a character's Initiative or Speed at +2 per dot spent. Sandals made to contain a strong gust of wind may add to Speed, while a mail-shirt whose links are living spiders who "urge" a character's limbs to action through tiny pressing bites might grant a character added Initiative while active.

- Some raiment might add to a character's Disguise attempts (see p. 87, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). Given that Hedge materials are often psychoactive, it's possible that upon willing it to do so the threads or skin shift to suit the wearer's wishes (though rarely is such a Disguise perfect). It's also pos-

sible that the raiment simply reflects what others wish or expect to see. Adds +1 to Subterfuge-based Disguise attempts for each dot purchased.

- The Hedgespun raiment might add to other particular Social rolls at a rate of +1 per dot spent. A piece of blood-spattered ivory armor might add to Intimidation by dint of its menacing appearance. A long pelt that gives off a potent and pungent musk might grant the user dice in Animal Ken. A coat sewn from narcotic flowers might give off a dizzying fragrance, enough to warrant bonuses to one's Persuasion.

## HEDGESPUN WEAPONS

A garrote made from creeper vine and goblin-gut. A knife that steals its victim's will every time it draws blood. A clockwork revolver whose bullets turn to biting grubs inside the target's body.

A Hedgespun weapon starts off with a +1 equipment bonus, and its lethality is determined by the type of weapon (a maul made of an Ogre's skull does bashing, a rapier whose blade is a lacquered dragon's tongue is clearly lethal).

Dots purchased in a Hedgespun token weapon could go toward the following:

- Adding to the equipment bonus. Each dot spent can increase the equipment bonus by +1 (two dots would give a weapon a +3 bonus, then, since each Hedgespun weapon starts its existence with the +1 bonus already in place). If the weapon's only benefit is this equipment bonus, the weapon likely doesn't require activation (see sidebar, below).

- A dot can be spent to increase the weapon user's Defense — perhaps a blade with moonlight trapped in its metal is dizzying to those who make incoming attacks, or a grotesque rifle made of moldering bones attracts so many fat flies that the swarm of it occludes the shooter in a haze of insects (thus making him harder to hit). Defense cannot be more than doubled with a Hedgespun weapon's dots in most cases.

- Dots can add to the weapon's Durability or be used to reduce the Durability of objects that end up the target of the weapon. A frail blade made of delicate crystal may see its Durability increased supernaturally (+1 Durability per dot spent), or an object may suffer -1 Durability per dot spent if the crystalline blade has the keen sharpness to cut through even the toughest of materials.

- The weapon delivers poison or another toxin (an axe edged with biting spiders, a bow whose envenomed arrow tips ooze with a basilisk's ichor). Each dot spent toward this adds to the Toxicity of the weapon by +3 (three dots therefore means that poison delivered has a Toxicity rating of 9).





## WONDROUS ALLURE

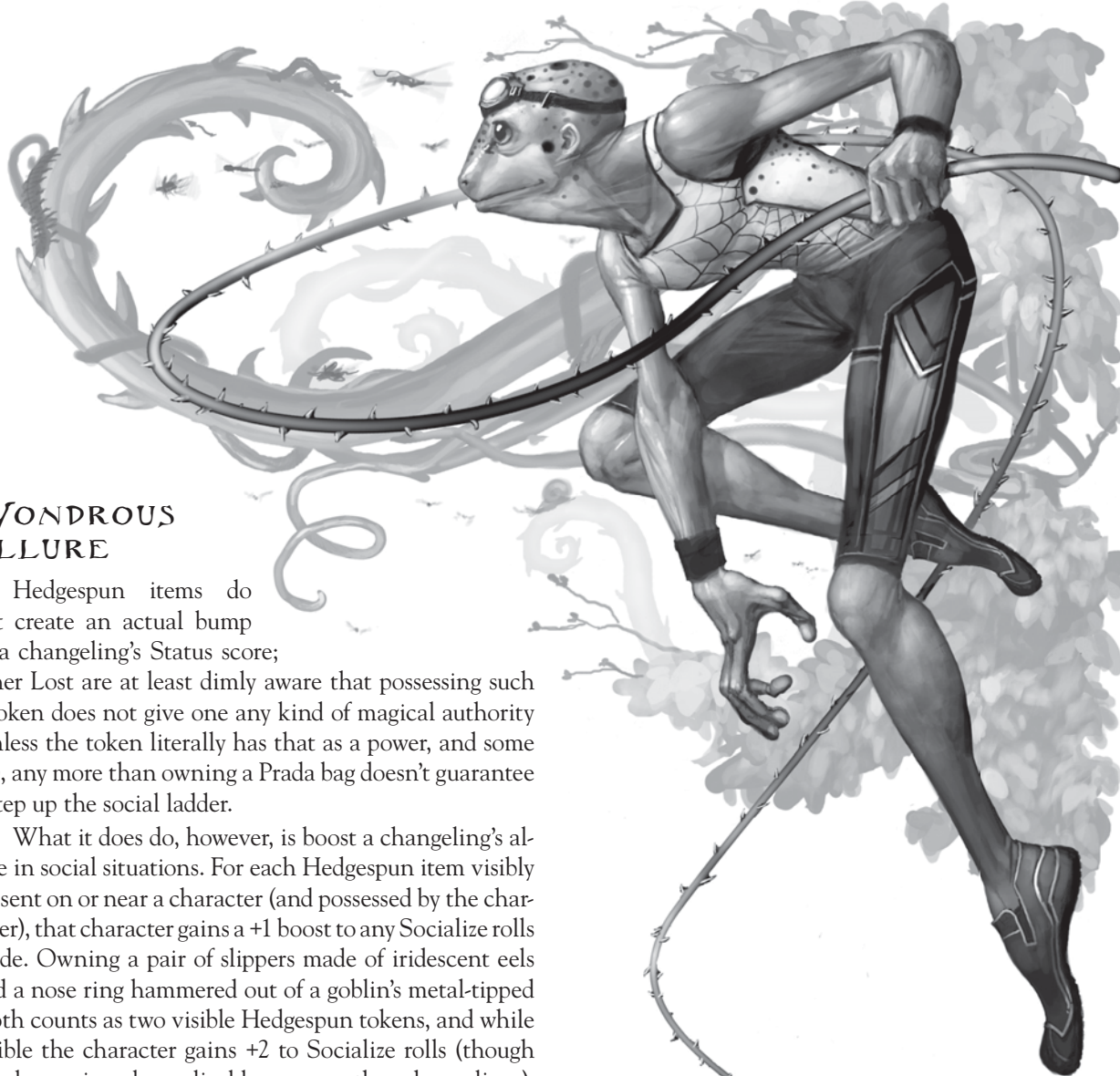
Hedgespun items do not create an actual bump to a changeling's Status score; other Lost are at least dimly aware that possessing such a token does not give one any kind of magical authority (unless the token literally has that as a power, and some do), any more than owning a Prada bag doesn't guarantee a step up the social ladder.

What it does do, however, is boost a changeling's allure in social situations. For each Hedgespun item visibly present on or near a character (and possessed by the character), that character gains a +1 boost to any Socialize rolls made. Owning a pair of slippers made of iridescent eels and a nose ring hammered out of a goblin's metal-tipped tooth counts as two visible Hedgespun tokens, and while visible the character gains +2 to Socialize rolls (though this bonus is only applicable among other changelings). If she's hosting a party in her condo and she features a prominent sculpture carved of spiraling Fae bones, that earns her an additional +1 bonus (because who doesn't want to talk about such a find, and who isn't impressed that she possesses such a special piece of art?).

A Storyteller may decide over time that these bonuses fade; a character who shows off the same pocket watch made of moonglass and moth bits time and time again certainly loses the effect over time. Smart changelings know that such social potency wears down, and squandering such wondrous allure is a true waste, indeed.

## TOKENS

The tokens to be found in the Hedge are of practically infinite diversity — the list of tokens presented in



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### Changeling:

The Lost really can't be anything more than a sampling. In the interest of furthering that diversity, below are a number of new tokens able to be used by changeling characters. Alternately, players might use these tokens as examples to create their own.

## STANDARD TOKENS

The title is a bit of a misnomer: no token is precisely standard. That said, the tokens below are different from Hedgespun or promise tokens, both of which are found elsewhere in the chapter.



### Activation?

Does Hedgespun always need to be activated, like other tokens? If it provides any clearly supernatural effect that can alter its environment, yes. Hedgespun objects contain magic that must be drawn out and made present for their sorcery to take place. This isn't always the case, though. A lot of Hedgespun raiment is considered "always on," requiring no activation to use. Other objects, such as weapons, may not have any particular effect other than being bizarre and beautiful to behold (and, of course, causing some manner of harm as weapons do).

A good rule of thumb is, if the object requires a unique effect, it necessitates activation with one's Wyrd (or Glamour). If the object's only effect is a mundane one, such as art whose "effect" is nothing more than hanging on the wall and offering a dizzying souvenir of the Hedge, it does not require a character's activation.

Also, consider that the Token Merit isn't always necessary to purchase Hedgespun items that don't require activation. Dots in Hollow Amenities could go toward purchasing art, automaton, or other such items.

### GRAVENAILS (TRIFLE)

This trifle comes from fingernails pulled from a dead man or changeling found in the Hedge. Sometimes, a gray mossy film will grow over a corpse's finger or toenail, and removing that nail from the carcass might earn the character a Gravenail. The character places this trifle under the pillow of a target. When the target sleeps on the bed where that pillow lays, he wakes up in the morning choking; he has nothing in his throat, but the act of violently hacking earns the target a point of bashing damage. In addition, the target does not regain a Willpower point in the morning as usual, and may not regain any Willpower points until eight hours passes.

### HOARCOTTON (TRIFLE)

Ice in the Hedge sometimes forms into a delicate crystalline coating that can be curled together by a knife or fingernail into a substance that looks a little like a puff of cotton (or even cotton candy). A changeling can consume this icy puff, and for a number of turns equal to her Wyrd score she becomes immune to fire. Her clothing may catch fire, but her flesh will not burn. She'll assume no damage from fire until the trifle's duration has ended.

### SPINNERTHORN (TRIFLE)

This trifle is a Hedge thorn that has remained in a hobgoblin's paw (or really, any part of the flesh) for a full day. When removed, the Spinnerthorn helps a changeling complete the delicate work sometimes associated with Hedgespinning. The Spinnerthorn grants the changeling an extra two dice on the Wits + Crafts roll necessary during Hedgespinning.

### TORCHFLY (TRIFLE)

It's actually a hobgoblin, the torchfly: a plump-bellied, human-faced fly whose thorax glows like fire. When the Torchfly is dead and has been dried for seven days, a character may take the Torchfly and pop open its insectile body: even dry, the goo inside is still moist. The character can spread this goo on himself or an object, and it illuminates that object for a 10-yard radius for one full scene. Any perception penalties due to darkness are obviated while in this radius, and even outside of it the darkness is lessened (and so perception-based penalties are reduced by two outside the Torchfly glow). It does make a character easier to see, however, and so perception rolls made to see the character gain +2 dice.

### BOOK OF TALES (• to •••••)

Fate's a tricky thing. Is it something that's set in stone? Is it a capricious thing, as unpredictable as the dipping and diving of a butterfly's flight? Or is it just another name for the callous force that plays havoc with life and love?

This token might form out of any book left in the Hedge for a long period of time (at least one year and one day). Over time, the book's original words and images crawl away as ants or fly away as wasps. Then the words are slowly replaced with a shifting tale whose exact text isn't determined until a changeling pricks her finger with a thorn and touches the book with a dot of blood. Upon activation of the book, she opens the book and reads a tale that *might* be about her. It's an allegorical tale, to be sure, wreathed in turgid loops of purple prose and lofty metaphor, but the character who peers deeply enough sees signs of her own fate in the coming story.

For the remainder of the story, the changeling receives one "clue" toward future events that will happen to her directly — by reading between the lines she might come to believe that she'll be attacked by a draconic hobgoblin or be betrayed by one of her many lovers. Her interpretations needn't be true (and in fact such misinterpretations are common when one attempts to scrutinize Fate's cruel whimsy), but she also gains an additional benefit. For each dot in this token, she may reroll one failed (but not dramatically failed) roll during this story.



Her faint insight into the future from the Book of Tales allows her to predict recursively when she might fail and it may grant her the opportunity to duck predicted error. (In rerolling, the “failed” roll never even occurs — Fate and Time conspire to erase that attempt on the character’s behalf.)

The changeling activates the Book of Tales at any point in the story, and she gains the benefits only during that particular story. If she uses all her rerolls during this time, she may not reactivate the Book of Tales until the next story in the chronicle begins.

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** When activated, the mundane book suddenly shifts and shudders. Once the book is opened and the pages turned, strange things emerge from the pages before turning to puffs of smoke, flashes of light or wind-caught dust. These things might be spiders, doves, spools of thread, rivulets of blood or other bizarre creatures and objects. Faint music, like that from a nursery rhyme, can be heard as the book is first opened.

**Drawback:** The more powerful the Book of Tales is, the heavier the book is with sodden Fate. Even if the book itself appears wan and without content, the Fate contained within might be dense and powerful. To open the book and activate it, a character must possess one dot of Strength per dot in this token. (Some changelings can spend Glamour to gain Strength, and that works to open and activate the book.)

**Catch:** After choosing to activate the Book of Tales without a Wyrd roll or Glamour expenditure, the character commits to tempting Fate. Any time the player rolls anything on behalf of the character, the Storyteller should roll a single die. The first time that single die comes up as a 1, the player’s roll automatically becomes a dramatic failure regardless of what she rolled. As with other dramatic failures, this cannot be rerolled using the book’s power. After this dramatic failure occurs, the Storyteller can stop rolling that single die.... Fate has taken its payment.

## THE CURSING BOX (• to •••••)

Any type of box left in the Hedge or in Faerie for too could become a Cursing Box. It’s even likelier if the box — be it a jewelry box, a ribbon-wrapped gift box, even a withering shoe box — lingers in a particularly nightmarish part of the Hedge (a swamp where fiends stalk the watery channels or within the manse of a notoriously brutal Keeper). How one uses a Cursing Box is easy: activate it, whisper a series of curses into the box, then close it and bury it three feet or more in the ground.

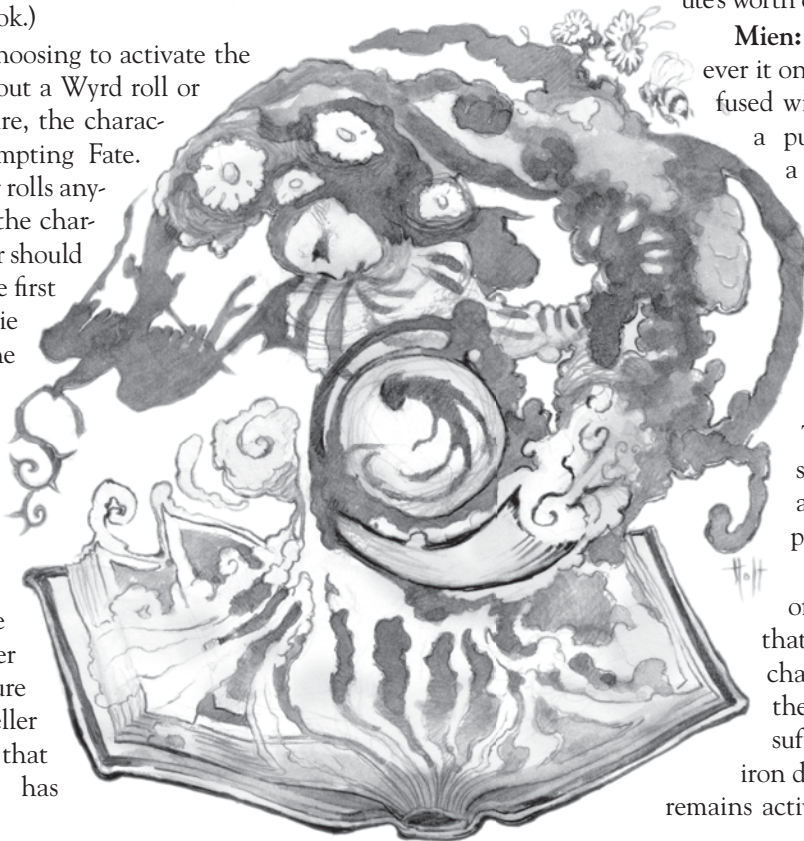
A Cursing Box literally poisons an area (the radius equal to 100 yards per token dot). Within this area, food spoils abnormally fast (usually within a few hours). Plants either die or cling pathetically to life. Paint peels. Mold and rot seem impossible to rout. Animals grow ill — not ill enough to die, unless they’re old, but sick enough to bear odd skin lesions or suffer from pervasive malaise. Humans, too, are plagued by unpleasant illnesses: constant colds, fatigue, nightmares. Assume that any human who sleeps within this area suffers a –1 dice penalty to all dice pools during the following day. Sleeping outside the radius of effect is the only way to obviate the penalty.

The effects of the Cursing Box remain until the box is once again dug up and exposed to the world above.

**Action:** Extended (a number of successes are necessary equal to the token’s dot rating; each roll represents a minute’s worth of whispered cursing)

**Mien:** The box appears however it once did before it was infused with grim Hedge magic: a puzzle box, a lockbox, a mailbox, anything. When filled with curses and activated, the box grows dark and shows signs of decay — pockmarks of rust, rotting wood, flaking lead paint. The lid sometimes shudders, and it exudes a dreary fog when exposed to the air.

**Drawback:** Curses often go both ways, and that’s true here, too. The changeling who performs the curse with the token suffers a vulnerability to iron during the time the box remains active in the ground. Iron





causes the changeling an additional level of damage any time it strikes her.

**Catch:** The character must sever the tip of her index finger (from the top knuckle up) and put it in the box before burying it. This causes two lethal levels of damage. However, if the character is the one who digs the box back up... she'll find the tip in pristine condition, and it can be re-attached through the expenditure of a Willpower point. (Some say that curses are a means of pointing cruel Fate in a person's direction; leaving behind the finger simply ensures that the character successfully and continually points the way.)

## THE BONE COMB ☹

This token might be a comb left in the pocket of a dead Hedge wanderer or a brush left on the dresser of a narcissistic Keeper. When a changeling runs the comb through her own hair for 100 strokes, she can change the color of her hair for a single scene. In addition, for that scene she gains the Striking Looks Merit at four dots (see p. 117, **World of Darkness Rulebook**). The gains the benefits and the drawback of that Merit during this time. The token may only be used once every week.

**Action:** Extended (four successes necessary, each roll is one minute's worth of hair brushing; spending the Glamour activates the token after one minute's worth of hair brushing without need for any roll).

**Mien:** Looks like a normal comb or brush to most. When active, though, it becomes a crooked comb of bone that looks in-part like the jawbone of some unknown hobgoblin.

**Drawback:** After the scene (in which the character gains the benefit of the token) is over, the character actually loses some of her natural luster. For the remainder of the day, the character's hair and skin appear sallow, washed-out. Social rolls made during this time suffer a -1 penalty.

**Catch:** The character gains the Narcissism derangement (see p. 97, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) for the next 12 hours. If the character already has the Narcissism derangement, then she loses three dice from any Resolve + Composure roll made in an effort to resist the derangement.

## AMBER DEMIJOHN ☹☹

The demijohn is an amber-glass bottle, fat-bottomed with a thin neck, coming in at about five gallons. A changeling may whisper into the empty bottle and beg of its protection, and it grants it — the changeling's body takes two turns and becomes a ropy wisp of fog that snakes into the mouth of the demijohn. Once inside, the fog takes another two turns to once again become the changeling's corporeal body... though much smaller, of course (Size 1, with a reduced Health score to boot).

While the changeling is not immune to harm while within the bottle, the bottle itself supernaturally withstands damage. The bottle itself is Size 2 and, when active, gains a Durability of 5 and a total Structure of 7 — damage actually done to the bottle at this point only cracks the glass but does not break the bottle until all seven Structure is done. In addition, the bottle "heals" one point of Structure per minute. The bottle also obviates any "piercing" specialties that a weapon might possess to bypass Durability. Nothing, not even heavy explosives, bypasses the Durability.

The changeling is hard to see inside the bottle unless prominently placed in an obvious place or under bright light. Assume that Wits + Composure or Wits + Investigation rolls made in an attempt to find the changeling suffer -3 dice.

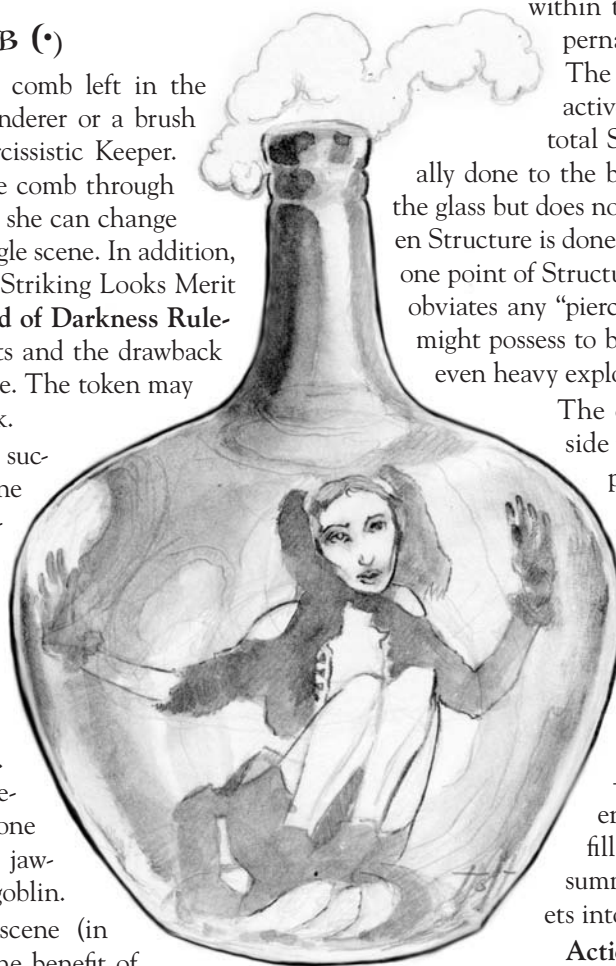
The protection of the demijohn token isn't perfect — imagine, if you will, a clever enemy who recognizes the token filling up the bottle with water or summoning a swarm of yellow jackets into the opening.

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** The bottle's Mask reveals it to be a dusty, cobwebby-old bottle. When active, the amber glass glows with a kind of hearty warmth, and cool water vapor rises from the mouth.

**Drawback:** The changeling may not leave the bottle at her will. Once inside the bottle, it only expels her after an hour has passed: not before, not after.

**Catch:** Choosing to use this bottle without Wyrd or Glamour still works, but the target doesn't get to leave after an hour as the above drawback suggests. The target





remains inside the bottle indefinitely; the token must be destroyed for her to be allowed egress.

## THE HUNGRY ARROW (•• or ••••)

The Hedge has seen many wars, and buried in its soil are the remnants of those old wars between changeling and Keeper: broken spear-tips, limb bones still encased in rusted armor, siege weapons blown into meaningless splinters. Some of these items become tokens, soaked through with the magic of the Thorns. An example of this is the arrowhead token known as the Hungry Arrow.

When a changeling holds this dinged-up arrowhead in her palm, she can upgrade the damage done during a single attack to a more severe version. The two-dot version of this token allows bashing damage to be upgraded to lethal. The character holds the arrowhead in her palm while she punches an enemy or bashes his head in with a heavy maul. The four-dot version allows for lethal to be upgraded to aggravated damage; the cut from a sword smolders, the stab of a knife screams into the wound.

The Hungry Arrow token's effects last for only one turn, but a changeling can continue to re-activate the token throughout the battle.

**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** One cannot see the arrow when it is active, for it remains concealed in the palm. But its effects *are* clear: the hand in which the arrowhead is held drips spectral blood. Where that blood falls, strange flowers grow, bloom and die within a matter of turns.

**Drawback:** The arrowhead upgrades only damage done by the hand in which the character holds it. Punching with that hand? Okay. Using that hand to stab forth with a dagger or fire a revolver? No problem. But kicking, headbutting or using a weapon in the opposing hand cannot receive the upgrade to damage. In addition, the arrowhead bites into the palm whenever it is used. Any time the token is activated, the arrowhead incurs one point of bashing damage to the user.

**Catch:** The sting of the arrowhead held in the hand is overpowering to those who refuse to pay the token properly. Upon activating the Hungry Arrow, even for a single turn, the character sacrifices half of her Initiative score (round down) for the remainder of the scene.

## THE GLIMPING MIRROR (•••)

Those who look into a Glimping Mirror don't likely realize that the mirror is looking into them as well. The reflection takes a snapshot of one's soul, in a manner of speaking, and the changeling who

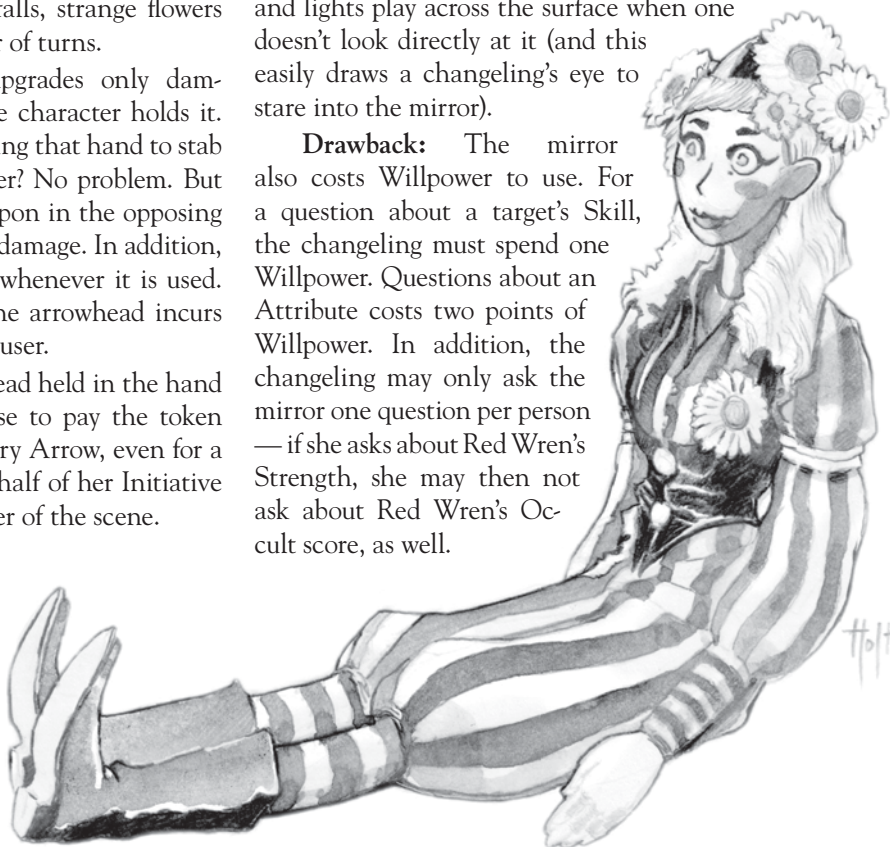
activated this token may return to the mirror and ask it one question about a person's Attributes or Skills. The person in question must have glanced into the mirror within the last 24 hours, even if the look was only fleeting, and the changeling *must* know that person's first name. The changeling asks the mirror a question regarding one of the Attributes or Skills (this question is framed not as, "How many dots does Red Wren have in her Strength Attribute?" but more as, "Tell me mirror, how strong of body is Red Wren?"). The mirror speaks into the changeling's mind, telling the character of the target's aptitudes in the given Attribute or Skill (the changeling learns that, say, "Red Wren is no stronger than most mortal men," which the changeling's player can probably interpret to mean "Red Wren has two dots in Strength"). Some say the Keepers used to use such mirrors to learn about their imprisoned charges while they blindly wandered the halls of the Others' dark manors.

The mirror is activated *before* the time in which a target stares into it — once activated, it remains active for one hour.

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** The mirror is somewhat ornate, gilded around the edges in whorls of ornamental scrollwork. The glass itself is dark, with a faint burnished stain to the glass. The item's mien, though, features a glass that is bright and clean and never dirty. Reflections of strange shadows and lights play across the surface when one doesn't look directly at it (and this easily draws a changeling's eye to stare into the mirror).

**Drawback:** The mirror also costs Willpower to use. For a question about a target's Skill, the changeling must spend one Willpower. Questions about an Attribute costs two points of Willpower. In addition, the changeling may only ask the mirror one question per person — if she asks about Red Wren's Strength, she may then not ask about Red Wren's Occult score, as well.





**Catch:** The character must stare into the mirror and tell the mirror one of her deepest, darkest secrets. The next person who looks into the mirror learns that secret (and knows to whom the secret belongs).

### BLOOD POPPET (....)

It's not uncommon to find dolls and toys in the Hedge, sometimes bound by coils of thorn or simply laying in a dusty pothole in the middle of a lonely trod. From time to time, these dolls pick up a measure of the Hedge's magic — the Wyrd hollows them of their initial purpose of bringing pleasure and delight to a child, and instead forges the possibility of a sympathetic connection. With one of these Blood Poppets, a changeling may form a sympathetic connection with her fetch by winding three of the fetch's own hairs around the doll's head. When activated, the Blood Poppet becomes a kind of "voodoo doll" that allows the changeling to cause injury to his false counterpart. With a twist of the doll's form (be it a limb, the head, what-have-you), and one Willpower point, the changeling causes two bashing points of damage to the fetch and a -1 penalty to the fetch's Physical rolls. The token remains active for the entire scene, and the changeling can incur as many wounds as she has Willpower points (though she can never go past the fetch's own capacity for damage; bashing does not turn into lethal), though the penalties caused max out at -3 dice. Injuries done to the fetch roughly correspond to injuries done to the doll (break its hand, and the fetch sprains a wrist, for instance). When the fetch heals a point of damage, the doll heals damage in turn. This token has no limit on the distance between changeling and fetch.

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** This token looks like a battered and bruised doll. It's often bedraggled — hair chopped off, maybe a burn mark on its back, perhaps it's missing an eye. Dirty, too, as if it's been lying in the Hedge for decades (and maybe it has). When active, the doll becomes a plastic or fabric facsimile of the changeling's own fetch — clean, shiny, smiling.

**Drawback:** The sympathetic connection formed between the changeling and her fetch goes both ways, to a point. After a scene torturing her fetch proxy, a changeling often feels listless and empty. She cannot regain Willpower points for the next 48 hours. Another drawback is rumored: if the fetch gets a hold of the poppet, the fetch can torture the changeling in the exact same way.

**Catch:** In addition to the three hairs necessary to activate the Blood Poppet, a changeling can also wet the doll's head with a drop of the fetch's blood (must be fresh).

### THE JERUSALEM MILE (....)

The name sounds fancy, but it's just a rug. A large area rug, actually, about nine feet by 12 feet. Frayed, dusty, fading. The rug itself features a blocky maze upon its surface, a labyrinth of sorts stitched into the rug's design. Few think much of such a thing, but to those who walk the maze (the "paths" of this maze are usually wide enough for a single foot, meaning it must be walked almost like one walks a balance beam... though admittedly without the worry of falling) learn that the rug is a doorway.

Walking to the end of the maze transports one to the Hedge — but not just to anywhere within the Thorns. The rug actually allows a character to travel to a spot in the Hedge that she's been to before. That could mean a Hollow, a favorite river bank, on the far side of a deadly desert canyon... anywhere, as long as the character's been there previously. Others may join the changeling, even if they haven't been to that location; but to do so, they must hold the changeling's hand during the entire walk down the Jerusalem Mile maze.

(And why the name, exactly? It's said that some monasteries had mazes painted upon their floors, and monks would silently walk over these mazes — a time to contemplate their penitence and faith. Some said that such a walk could provide a kind of religious ecstasy. One wonders, did any accidentally wander into the Hedge this way?)

Rumors persist that the Keepers use these token rugs not to access the Hedge, but to travel from Faerie to this world. All the easier to steal little children...

**Action:** Instant and extended; the roll to actually activate the token is an instant roll, but that is only made once the character has successfully walked the maze. Not a hard task, exactly, but that requires an extended Wits + Athletics roll. Ten successes are required, and each roll assumes one minute's worth of goose-stepping across the carpet's maze-sewn surface.

**Mien:** The dusty, ratty rug slowly rises up around a changeling as she walks upon it. As she progresses down the maze, shadowy and ephemeral Hedge walls grow around her, towering over her by the time she reaches the end of the maze (and enters the Hedge). Even as she walks she hears the howling of a distant beast, the cries of a fickle Thorn bird, the hiss of wind in razor-sharp grass.

**Drawback:** The rug is one-way. A character cannot come back through the rug.

**Catch:** Any character can eschew the costs (though the Wits + Athletics roll remains necessary) by choosing no destination when entering the Hedge. Of course, the





rug then puts the character into the Thorns far from the world, often in a very dangerous location.

## CREATING STANDARD TOKENS

Tokens are by definition things outside a changeling's abilities to create. The closest a changeling can get is taking a mundane object and leaving it in the Hedge for a period of time. Assume that for each dot of the token expected, the item must be left in the Hedge for one month of time (though the Storyteller may add or subtract time depending on the needs of the story and power of the token).

Note, however, that this produces a token whose power is outside the changeling's choosing. A changeling may be able to *steer* the "flavor" of the item's power by leaving it in appropriate places: putting a knife below the rushing waters of a streambed may earn that knife some modicum of elemental water-based power. A *player*, on the other hand, may work with a Storyteller to help develop a token's exact power. The character is not always privy to the knowledge that the player has. If she was, where's the fun in that?

If the Storyteller and troupe want to place more power in the changelings' hands, the following optional Merit might work as a way to allow Lost characters to craft tokens with more reliability.

### OPTIONAL MERIT: TOKEN MAKER (•••)

Most tokens are crafted by the Fae or found in the Hedge and put to use by those clever enough to recognize their potential. Some changelings, however, learn the ability to create tokens themselves, a useful skill that often puts them in great demand by their peers (and by the True Fae who would prefer such craftsmen remained in their own "employment").

Creating a token is a long and arduous project that requires not only great skill but a commitment of personal energies as well. First, the character must be able to accurately create some sort of plans, recipe or blueprint for the creation. Creating a recipe from scratch is an extended Intelligence + Occult roll, with one day required per roll and total successes required of five per dot in the token. This research cannot be interrupted until complete, or all successes are lost. In some cases, the crafter may be able to discover a plan that some other changeling has created, and work directly from that. Such a discovery may be the focus of a story — and may result in an object with unforeseen quirks reflecting the unknown author.

Tokens are created as an extended action (Wyrd + Crafts) with each roll representing two weeks of work

and a target number of 25 per dot of Token. Thus a two-dot token such as a Lantern of Ill Omen would require 50 successes to create. Token Makers must expend at least one point of Glamour per two weeks into their work, and may expend up to five per month. Each point of Glamour above the first counts as an automatic success toward the total. The character must work for at least eight hours each day; working 16 or more hours a day adds an additional two dice to the roll per week that the character can maintain this schedule. If the crafter leaves off in the middle of her project, accumulated successes remain — but if she fails to pick up her tools again and resume work within two weeks, the successes are lost as the Glamour flees and her inspiration leaves her.

Changelings possessing the Workshop Merit below may additionally halve the time per roll (if working on a token made of a material which falls within one of their Workshop's Specialty areas) should any points in Workshop focus on that specialty.

*Example: Annie Bumble wants to create a Curious Paw Token (p. 207 of **Changeling: The Lost**). She's a passable taxidermist and has a nicely appointed taxidermy table set up in her Hollow (one dot in Workshop: Taxidermy). She sequesters herself in her Hollow to work on it. Because she has a dot in Taxidermy allocated to her Workshop Hollow, she halves two weeks, making her time per roll one week. At the end of the first week of work, she spends one Glamour for the required investment and five more toward automatic successes. Her player rolls Annie's Wyrd (3) + Crafts (4) + Crafts Specialty: Taxidermy (1) + Workshop (Taxidermy) (3) and gets 4 successes on the 11 dice. Adding in her automatic successes, Annie has now accumulated nine successes toward the 100 required to complete the Curious Paw. At the end of the next week of work, she spends another Glamour (with the option of spending up to five more) and makes another roll, accumulating the successes until she has reached 100 and the Curious Paw is complete.*

**Drawbacks:** Token drawbacks are not within the control of their creator. They are a result of the cagey nature of Glamour, and cannot be guided by the token's maker's hand or will. As tokens are forged in part out of the maker's own Glamour, however, the drawback often reflects a connection to the maker in some way. One Darkling craftsman's token might cause temporary blindness after being used, while another item by the same artisan might attract spiders to the user's home. For already published tokens, such as those found on pp. 202–209 of **Changeling: The Lost** or in Chapter Four of this book, Storytellers have the option of using the listed drawback or creating one that more closely ties the token to its creator's nature.



## PROMISE TOKENS

A promise token is different from the average token in that a promise token is a mystical representation of a changeling's promise (or, in some cases, the oath of a True Fae). In a way, each promise token represents a truncated pledge in physical form: it provides gift and debt. One enacts the token's power and then must pay some manner of price (usually to the changeling or Keeper who offered the token to begin with).

Promise tokens are normal items sworn upon by both present parties. Both parties must be made aware of the stipulations of a promise token — though, a changeling may certainly veil her language in imperfect terms, thus cementing the sometimes untrustworthy reputation that many Lost possess. When swearing upon a token, the changeling must spend a point of Glamour, and the other party (whether changeling, mortal, vampire, whatever) must offer either a Glamour or a Willpower point.

At that point, the promise token binds both characters and may be enacted by the target at any point. Enacting a promise token's power requires no roll and no expenditure of Glamour or Willpower unless otherwise noted.

The key, though, is that a promise token's "catch" is always active. It occurs in every instance (it's really what makes a promise token a two-way street: when one is given a vial of blood that a changeling swears could save a human from death, the human is wise to ask, "What's the catch?").

Characters are encouraged to come up with their own promise tokens. The parameters to keep in mind is that the target gains something, as in a pledge, but then must pay some debt (usually instantaneously) upon accepting the gift (i.e., activating the token). Some targets never activate a promise token: a Black Nickel may sit at the bottom of a mortal's coin cup forever without triggering the debt.

Promise tokens needn't be purchased with Merit dots. Promise tokens simply exist to the benefit and detriment of both parties; because each promise token is gift and payment in one, the "cost" is built into the object and thus demands no experience points spent. A promise token *does* count toward a changeling's limitation on pledges, however.

### AMPOULE OF LIFE

A changeling gives another this glass phial of her own blood. This blood, a measure of life, represents a true gift: the one gifted with this phial may save herself from death. Upon receiving wounds (lethal or aggravated)

that would otherwise be fatal, the user may drink the blood and pull back from the brink of death. This drains the changeling of all his Willpower points (regardless of how many points are in his pool at the time). The user sees all her damage turn from lethal or aggravated to bashing. This does not work on people dying from diseases or other infirmities, only those about to perish from some kind of wound (injuries from poison or venom count).

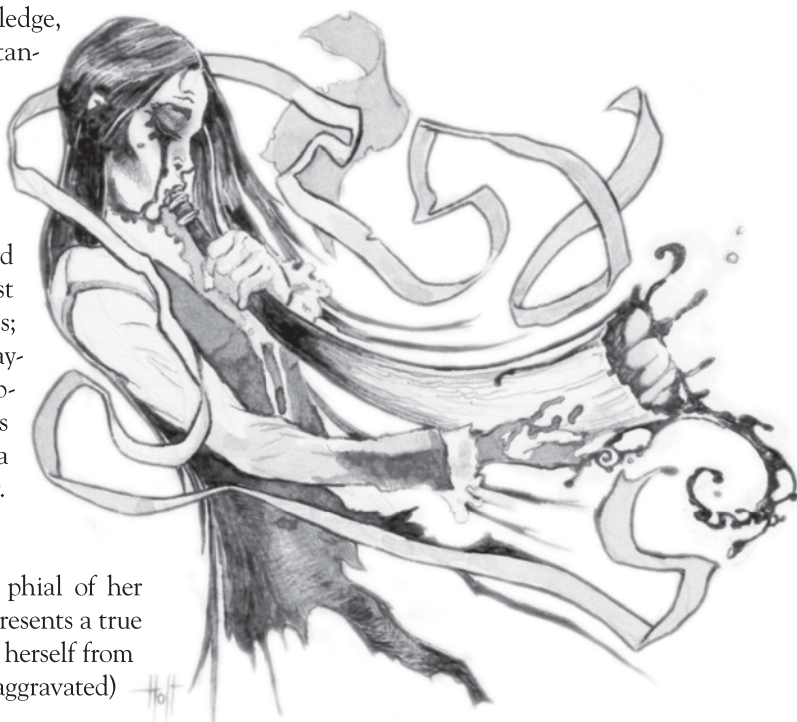
**Mien:** It appears to be just a small glass vial of blood. When consumed, however, the glass itself turns to sand and the blood turns hot in the throat. (As an added and unusual side effect, the drinker's breath smells strongly of honeysuckle for one week thereafter.)

**Catch:** When the user drinks the blood to save herself from death, she then loses two of her permanent Health dots.

### THE AUROCH'S HORN

This blood-spattered bone-white auroch's horn arrived on the Summer King's doorstep bound in silver ribbon. With it, a note that explained the nature of this "gift:" any within the freehold could pick up and sound the horn. In sounding the horn, the blower summons his own Keeper to fight on his side in a single battle. The Keeper will come flanked by two briarwolves and the two shall fight tooth-and-nail on the side of the changeling.

With it, though, comes a curse (or as the note referred to it, "recompense"). The Keeper called gains a number of benefits: he gains +3 Physical against the changeling who blows the horn, and the Keeper can enter this world freely





and always know where any changeling belonging to the freehold currently exists. The Keeper suffers from no time limit and may stay in the mundane world indefinitely.

In addition, seven children will be drawn into the Hedge on that night, abducted to the realm of Faerie. Their beds will be torn asunder by Hedge vines and branches.

The note was signed, "From Faerie."

**Mien:** It features the rusty spatters of old blood on the bony bull's horn, and these spatters cannot be washed away. When the horn is sounded, the blood grows fresh once more and the horn begins oozing fresh, clumpy blood from within. The horn oozes this blood for seven hours, one hour per child that will soon be taken.

**Catch:** All the catches are noted above except: the horn cannot be destroyed, nor can it be given to another freehold. Remove it, and it always returns the same way: wrapped in ribbon with another note, freshly scribed. Obviously, the horn is a promise token given *only* by Keepers. Changeling cannot invoke such a promise.

## BLACK NICKEL

Could be a regular nickel. Might be an old arcade token, a poker chip, even a paper voucher such as a coupon or gambling chit. The purpose of the item is simple and straightforward: one changeling (or Keeper) can give this to a character, and that character can "call in" the Black Nickel for a favor. That favor is something that puts the character in debt to the changeling, however.

While Black Nickels exist that allow for various flavors of favor, this particular one described allows for the target to "borrow" some of the changeling's Skill dots for one week. The target can borrow up to five Skill dots in any combination, but the changeling from which they are borrowed must have those Skill dots in the first place. In other words, if the changeling doesn't have any dots in Athletics, it is fruitless for the target to borrow those nonexistent dots. Alternately, if the changeling has one dot in Occult, the target can only *borrow* one dot.

The dots borrowed actually disappear from the changeling's character sheet for that week — she forgets learned information, maybe finds herself suddenly clumsy in sports, or perhaps loses social graces she once possesses. The target, of course, gains those aptitudes.

The transfer of Skill is immediate and not limited by any physical boundary — the changeling could be deep in the Hedge and the target could draw Skill dots from her.

The target can only draw up to five Skill dots in this way — she may draw one dot one day and two dots months later, but once she has reached five total dots borrowed, the promise token becomes inert.

**Mien:** The coin, coupon, chip, whatever it is looks mundane for the most part except that it has an 'X' etched into one side of it (thus separating it from other such items). When made active during the time in which Skills are being borrowed, however, the item grows black and seems pulse with shadow.

**Catch:** The catch is, upon borrowing Skills, the target grants the changeling or True Fae an alarming benefit: bonuses to any Contract used *against* the target. The bonus dice are equal to the total Skill dots borrowed. These bonus dice last for one full year.

## BLANK CHECK

A changeling gives this blank check to another character. That target may, at any time, use the Blank Check to make a single purchase, adding the changeling's Resources Merit dots to her own Resource score for that single transaction. Doing so doesn't actually remove any money from the changeling's account, exactly, but for one week after, the changeling cannot access her own money due to various technical troubles: the bank cannot find her account, her PIN changes, she loses the shoebox full of cash. After one week, all accounts are restored, and she may once again access her money.

**Mien:** The Blank Check is literally just that: a blank bank check with a single bloody thumbprint upon it. When the target fills out the check and gives it away, the check burns up in the register drawer and leaves behind nothing more than a pile of ash and a sulfurous stink.

**Catch:** Upon spending the Blank Check, the target becomes pliable to the changeling's advances. The changeling gains +2 on any Social roll made to affect that character forever. A changeling can offer another blank check after the first is spent, and she can continue to do so — however, the Social bonus never exceeds +5 dice.

## FINGER LOCKET

The changeling must sever one of her own fingers for this promise token, and the finger will never grow back (regardless of how many rare goblin fruits she eats to heal the wound). The Health points itself heal, but the finger never grows back. It's for this reason that most finger lockets are pinky fingers.

The finger must be dried in the sun and hung on a cord or chain. The changeling must remove the fingernail and in its place put a cutting from a photo of herself.

This gift of the changeling's own life translates into a gift of longer life for another non-changeling target. In accepting the promise token, the target immediately assumes a longer lifespan. She gains five years per dot of



Wyrd possessed by the changeling at the time the promise token is given. Once the promise token is accepted, it doesn't matter if the person actually wears it or even keeps it nearby. The only thing that can end the promise token's effects is if it's destroyed.

**Mien:** It looks like a dried finger on a string. Every midnight, though, the finger wriggles and twitches.

**Catch:** The target does not regain Willpower normally. Upon waking, the target doesn't regain Willpower, instead tithing it to the changeling. The changeling gains her own Willpower as well as the Willpower of the token's target.

## INK-IN-IRONS

This tattoo of any design signifies one thing: mutually-assured destruction. A changeling and another target (often also a changeling) both share the tattoo on opposite spots of the body — for instance, one on the changeling's left bicep means one on the target's right bicep.

The tattoo provides both characters with a benefit of protection: neither can physically wound the other without wounding himself. If the changeling does any kind of damage to the target, he takes that same damage himself. The target, as well, finds any damage done to the changeling mirrored back upon his own body.

Similarly, if one of the two dies or is destroyed by the hand of the other, the survivor will automatically lose a dot of Clarity (or whatever Morality equivalent that individual possesses).

If one of the two takes damage or is killed by an external source, it does not cause any kind of reflection of damage.

Some changelings share this promise token with one another or with mortals as a true evocation of friendship or trust (however tenuous). Others find that such a token is thrust upon them by a King or Queen fed up with their behavior. Two changelings within the freehold of the Tower in San Francisco — Mary O'Brine and Billy Belltower — had such a legendary and chaotic rivalry that the Summer Court King levied the Ink-in-Irons token upon them as a punishment. The alternative was exile, so they took it. Now, they must find non-violent (though no less disturbing) means to attack one another.

This token may not be promised by a Keeper, only by a changeling.

**Mien:** The tattoo is of a design decided upon by both changelings, but it can be of anything: a ring of thorns around a bicep, a massive Phoenix across the shoulder blades, a tiny bleeding heart above the crack of the ass. The tattoos glow or sometimes even shudder with hitch-

ing animation when the two characters are within 100 yards of one another.

**Catch:** Two characters can escape this promise token, but to do so is difficult. First, both must agree to do so. Second, both must expend a Willpower dot, not just a point. Third, upon doing so the tattoo sears off in a wisp of hot smoke, leaving a burn mark behind — and one point of aggravated damage, to boot.

## SCOBURY-CLOVILL BOX CAMERA

This large antique box camera, requiring two hands to hold it, doesn't work. Weirder still, its brass fixtures are all marked with the label from the Scobury-Clovill Optical Company — a company that never existed in this world. The camera's design dates back to the oaken cameras of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and in all ways seems to function as a camera of that era would... but, no matter how hard one tries, it'll never snap a single picture.

What the camera *does* do, however, is target an individual for the True Fae. The camera's user merely needs to hold up the device, pointing it at a victim, and speak the words 'trick-click, quick-trick.' This simple action curses the target by pointing the gaze of the Others at him. The True Fae will abduct the victim at some point in the subsequent seven days. The only way this can be undone is if the user of the camera destroys one of the Others before the target can be abducted. Otherwise, the abduction occurs when anyone least expects it, and the victim — be he human or changeling — is dragged through the Thorns and to Arcadia and will remain there for one year and one day.

This token is given to a changeling or human by one of the True Fae and cannot be given by a changeling.

**Mien:** The antique camera features red oak and bright brass fixtures. When the camera is activated, the only change to the device is that the glass of the front lens becomes a bloodshot eye, and this eye fixes its unblinking gaze upon the target of the token's catch.

**Catch:** The token's power is the catch. Cursing someone with a Faerie abduction is no small thing and is a sin against Clarity at any level.

## HEDGESpun TOKENS

Below are a number of Hedgespun items a character may make or find. Each of the tokens listed below feature a "recipe" of ingredients necessary to complete the token's creation (though a changeling is free to substitute such items if its appropriate to the story and the Storyteller agrees). Each item is subject to activation unless otherwise noted.





### *The Optional Extra Mile*

The stories Fate weaves around crafting Hedgespun items might be worth a little extra to a player and his character. As Storyteller, you may want to reduce the cost of the Merit points necessary for given tokens above a single dot by dint of the effort one puts into procuring the reagents and dealing with the resulting threads of maddening Fate. Throw in a free Merit dot (Token). If the item would've required the player to spend experience points on three dots, only make them spend it for two. A reward for a well-told story — remember, players tell the stories, too.

### **CLAYFACE (TRIFLE)**

The changeling molds a crude human face out of clay or mud. She puts corn as the teeth and dark seeds as the eyes, then lets it dry and harden (takes at least one day). When worn somewhere on the body (around a neck, as a brooch, even in a pocket), this “proxy” Hedgespun trifle takes damage for the character. The Clayface can take one point of lethal damage or three points of bashing. Even if the character is punched in the face, the changeling feels no pain and receives no wounds. Damage goes to the Clayface only, unless the damage done is more than the three bashing or one lethal (at which point the rest is transferred to the character). Upon taking that damage, the Clayface shatters.

### **GIVERTAKER (TRIFLE)**

A givertaker is a bracelet or anklet formed of beads carved from faery bones and threaded together with a string clipped from an old balance scale. When a character dons the jewelry, she commits to the Hedgespun trifle's bitch goddess gift and theft: her next instant or reflexive roll gains an exceptional success automatically, and her next instant or reflexive roll after *that* suffers from a dramatic failure. When she receives the success, the bone-white bracelet turns black, as if charred by fire. When she suffers the failure, the bracelet breaks into black soot and ash, which stains her wrist or ankle.

### **TWISTRING (TRIFLE)**

The changeling weaves this pinky ring out of Hedge grass found in a thick fog. Upon braiding the grass into a ring, the changeling must promise the ring that she will help her friends however she can. The next time the changeling acts as a secondary actor in a teamwork scenario involving her motley-mates, she

can twist the ring on her finger and gain +3 dice to her roll as secondary actor. Once this is done, the ring turns to fog and dissipates. (See “Teamwork,” p. 134, *World of Darkness Rulebook*.)

### **WASPSHOT (TRIFLE)**

To make Waspshot, a character needs an empty shell casing, eight wasp wings (from the Hedge), and a dab of wax. She puts the wings in the casing, then seals it with the wax. This bullet allows for a character to completely ignore penalties caused by a target under concealment or cover (see pp. 162–163, the *World of Darkness Rulebook*). The Waspshot bullet goes clean through any cover regardless of the cover's Durability, and “finds” its target like a wasp. Use of Waspshot in a gun damages the gun somewhat; successive shots made with that weapon suffer a –1 penalty until the gun can be tended to by a gunsmith.

### **HEAVENLY STEM (• TO •••••)**

The recipe for this Hedgespun thorn-branch blade was said to be stolen from a mighty general of a distant freehold who helped close seven terrible gateways through which Fae armies poured. This rapier-style weapon appears wholly organic: a pommel and guard formed from smooth wood, a blade of a thin whip-like branch studded with a variety of thorns, and a coil of pink-flowered digitalis (foxglove) binding the whole thing together. More is contained within the weapon than what one sees, however.

The general was famed for adapting his tactics to the adversaries he fought, and this blade is emblematic of his versatility. Upon activating the weapon in a scene, the changeling may take the dots purchased in this Hedgespun token and “spend” them on various benefits. Each dot can offer the changeling various benefits at a rate of one dot per +1 bonus to Defense, Equipment Bonus, Initiative or Speed. Each benefit is bound to one of the four classic elements: Air (Speed), Earth (Defense), Fire (Equipment Bonus), Water (Initiative). The bonus lasts for the rest of the scene and cannot be changed during that scene once its benefits are “set.” (For example, a three-dot Heavenly Stem would allow a changeling at the beginning of combat to grant herself +3 Speed, or she could instead split those dots and gain an additional +1 bonus to attack, +1 to Initiative, and +1 to her Speed. Any combination is fine.)

The blade before activation begins as a 1(L) rapier (without armor piercing, however).

**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** When inert, it appears as a musty, rusty mold-covered rapier. When active, the Hedgespun blade manifests its verdant shape. In addition, the blade manifests the



elements appropriate to the bonuses chosen. Purchasing Defense causes a cloud of earthen dust to trail the swish of the blade. Purchasing additional equipment bonus dice causes the blade to ripple with whispering blue fire. Additional Initiative causes a whip of water to snake around the blade with each strike. Finally, additional Speed stirs a small cyclone of wind around the rapier itself.

**Drawback:** First, the Hedgespun weapon must be activated before it has tasted battle in a given scene. If the changeling attacks with the blade before activating it, she may not activate it until the scene (and thus, the battle) is over. In addition, this sword may only be activated as a token once per game session.

**Catch:** By choosing not to spend Glamour or roll Wyrd, the user pledges his life to the token. Every turn during the scene where the blade is held in the character's hand, the token drinks his life at a rate of one point of lethal damage.

## JEWELLED HOOKAH (• TO •••••)

Worms and snakes writhe around in the bottom of this fat-bellied hookah. Up to eight individuals may im-

bibe from the leathery hoses, drawing in the deep velvet smoke stirred by the burning coals beneath the device. Any who take even a single hit from the hookah find that all pain subsides (no penalties due to lost Health) and all derangement effects fade (it numbs the mind as well as the body). Each of the eight participants also may regain a point of Willpower.

That's where the benefits end: the hookah also incurs a number of penalty dice equivalent to the dots purchased in this Hedgespun token. The negative modifier is applicable against all dice pools. This narcotic haze persists for one scene; all participants are giddily enmeshed in this opiate miasma.

**Action:** Extended (one must stoke the hookah's coals with her Wyrd score, assume that eight successes are necessary, with each success equal to one minute of coal-stoking)

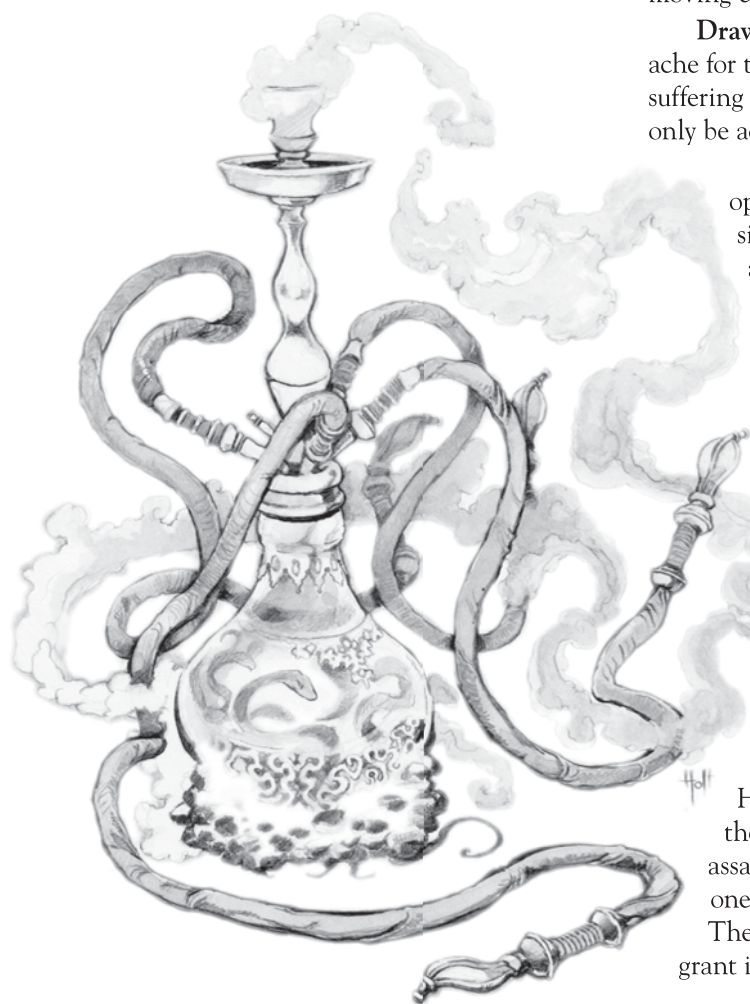
**Mien:** It's an ornate hookah even when not activated, a piece of art with a Middle Eastern appearance. Once active, though, the snakes and worms inside the belly of the token become apparent, and the smoke the drifts up from the device seems to have a mind of its own, moving easily against any breeze.

**Drawback:** Those who partake suffer a biting headache for the next hour after the token's effects fade, thus suffering -1 dice on any Mental rolls. The token may only be activated once a week.

**Catch:** A character can activate this token by opening the hookah and putting her hand inside the hookah's water jar — even if the snakes are not apparent, the changeling still suffers a bite from one. This bite has a Toxicity rating of 3: it does three points of bashing damage initially. These points do not heal until 12 hours have passed.

## VISAGE OF GLORY (•)

Also known as *Kirtimukhas*, these masks are spun to feature an exaggerated, monstrous aesthetic — curled tusks, many eyes, awful teeth, forked tongues, etc. When activated, it grants the user protection from hobgoblins: no hobgoblin can attack the character physically unless the character first assaults the creature. (Of course, the most frightening nightmares in the Hedge do not attack a changeling physically, and the Visages of Glory do not protect against such assaults.) A Visage of Glory protects the user for one day's worth of travel in the Hedge when active. The Visage of Glory must be worn on the face to grant its protection.





**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** The mask appears to be a relic from a past civilization, but nothing too out of the ordinary. When activated, though, the monstrous mask literally comes alive: a serpent's tongue flicks the air, bloodshot eyes roll around in their sockets, steam or even fire puff from the mouth.

**Drawback:** Wearing the mask is disconcerting even to the most stalwart of changelings. Moreover, the mask restricts one's lip movements somewhat. All Social rolls suffer a -2 penalty while the mask is upon the character's face.

**Catch:** Through two small holes, the character can affix the *Kirtimukha* to his face with two broken-off thorns from the Brambles. Doing so, however, earns him two bashing points of damage.

**Recipe:** River mud; the eye of any hobgoblin, its juices squeezed over the hardening mud; dyes made from various crushed Thorn insects (usually beetles); a belovéd threat.

## THE JACKDAW TRINKET (•)

This talisman, hung around the neck on a dew-beaded golden cord, is actually the head of a hobgoblin carrion-bird (with the golden cord threaded through the empty eye sockets, of which there is sometimes more than two). When active, the Jackdaw Trinket allows the character to make a Sleight-of-Hand Larceny roll (see p. 75, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) and all who could act as observers are distracted at the moment the character makes her unscrupulous attempt. Onlookers hear a bird's call usually somewhere very close-by but away from the darting hand of the changeling; the natural reaction is for one to look at whatever bird is dangerously close to one's head, thus diverting attention and securing a solid distraction. The Wits + Composure or Wits + Larceny roll necessary for observers suffers a -3 penalty.

**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** To most, it looks not like a crow's head but instead like a pewter locked engraved with a raven's head. When active, the bird's head is revealed — its beak opens, soundlessly, at the moment that all are distracted by loud bird sounds.

**Drawback:** The Jackdaw Trinket does not tolerate failure. If the character fails her Sleight of Hand attempt, treat it as a dramatic failure, instead.

**Catch:** Crows and ravens are chatty birds, cawing and complaining. After using the Jackdaw Trinket, a character becomes chatty, too — she suffers from the Vocalization derangement (see pp. 98–99, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). If she already possesses the mild version, she instead suffers from the more severe Schizo-

phrenia. This lasts until she is able to get eight hours of uninterrupted sleep.

**Recipe:** A golden thread or cord; 23 drops of dew collected from Hedge flowers; the severed head of a Hedge carrion bird.

## PERIWIC OF ORATORS (••)

This shoulder-length powdered wig grants the changeling who wears it a measure of authority and confidence when she speaks. After the character makes a successful Oratory roll (see p. 83, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) and activating the periwig, all who are within earshot of the character's speech regain one lost Willpower point. The changeling may not use this token more than once a day.

**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** Its Mask reveals a dusty old powdered-wig like those worn by wealthy European courtiers in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. When active, however, the wig grows bright white (it's almost hard to look at), and it exudes an overwhelming lavender fragrance — as an ancillary effect, those who listen to the character's speech actually see powdery purple stalks of lavender in their peripheral vision.

**Drawback:** The base of the wig is home to Hedge nits, a kind of head-lice. They bite the scalp and cause a troubling itch. Non-Social rolls made while wearing the wig suffer a -1 penalty.

**Catch:** The lavender scent, so close to the character's own nose, is almost narcotic. The overpowering fragrance incurs effects similar to those brought on by smoking marijuana (see p. 177, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). This drug-like effect is felt only by the character wearing the periwig; those around her smell the lavender, but suffer no ill effects from the otherwise pleasant aroma.

**Recipe:** Three handfuls of hair pulled from three different changelings; seven stalks of dried, crushed Briar Lavender (a type of Hedge-grown lavender that whispers the character's true name when one rubs up against it); powder made from pulverized bones.

## MINISTER VIBURNUM'S CLEPSYDRA (•••)

This clepsydra (literally “water thief”) is an old water clock. It's a relatively straightforward contraption: it's a fat-bellied clay vessel with a few paddled gears regulated by a broad dial. The dial is marked in one-minute increments — one simply sets the minute increments desired (upwards of 60), then the user pours water to fill the vessel to its current level. Uncorking the wax at the bottom allows water to flow out of it, and when the water is all gone, the established time is up.



It's a rather rudimentary way of marking time, of course, but for the Lost it comes with magical purpose. Upon activation, the clepsydra (as designed by an old Autumn King, Minister Viburnum) silences all voices in the room except for those who actually have a hand resting upon the very top of the token. Used at Court, Minister Viburnum's Clepsydra can ensure that a single voice is heard over what may have been an impenetrable din had it not been for the token. The effect lasts for a single scene, and in addition to silencing the other voices in the room (up to a radius of 200 yards around the token), the water clock also boosts the voice of any speaker who touches the top of the token, granting him a +1 to any Expression rolls. Any who try to speak in this radius and are not touching the token find that their mouths move, but no sound emerges. One can spend a Willpower point to break past this for three turns (approximately 10 seconds) of speech. The clock does not muffle other noise, only voice or other humanoid noises.

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** The clock appears as an odd device, admittedly, but not one that's magical in any way — until, of course, it's activated. The water that flows from the clock shimmers with silvery ribbons, and the hiss itself of the pouring liquid provides an almost synesthesiac experience (characters can perceive the sound in strange ways: as a shifting haze in the air or as odd silver-glow fireflies whirling about the air). When the clock is active, Hedge vines also grow up around the antiquated machine.

**Drawback:** The changeling who actually activates the token becomes over-sensitive to sound for the next hour, suffering -2 to perception rolls during this time.

**Catch:** The token can be filled with several pints of blood instead of water.

**Recipe:** Two prodigious handfuls of fresh mud from a rain-slick trod; three crushed fireflies; one gallon of water from a Hedge stream where the moonlight reflects off its surface; a watch or other timepiece pulverized into bits; a gasp.

## BLEAKMOOR BLACK PONY (....)

Some say that this animated steed (a broad-shouldered pony) is similar in form and creation to the fetches made by the Others. This of course leads some to speculate that Hedgespinning is just harnessing the magic used in the creation of fetches, but then that begs the question: if the Others cannot spin the Hedge or create anything of lasting value, how is it that they can create fetches?

Regardless of the theories bounced back and forth, the truth of the Bleakmoor Black Pony is that it isn't a living animal, but a crooked sculpture of a broad-shouldered pony cobbled together out of various Hedge bits.

When the pony is activated, however, life stirs in the equine automaton. The animal animates for one hour, and the character may continue the pony's "life" by spending Glamour (one Glamour given to the beast provides an additional hour of animation). The pony can carry weight whether from a character riding the animal or as a pack mule. For every 100 pounds over 200, however, the animal's Speed suffers a -3 penalty (were the automaton carrying two 250-pound Ogres, for instance, the pony would have 500 pounds on its back, and it would therefore suffer -9 Speed).

The animal cannot carry more than two adult characters at one time. Riding the animal requires no roll until the automaton moves particularly swiftly or performs some task that requires the character to hold on tight — jumping a fallen tree or darting beneath a low-hanging curtain of brambles.

The stats for the Black Pony are equivalent to the horse stats found on p. 203 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** with a few exceptions: Strength 3, Stamina 4, Presence 2, (these then modify other stats: Speed 18, Health 11, and the attacks suffer one less dice pool). In non-animated token form, the pony's Structure equals its Health (11), and its Durability equals Defense (3).

**Action:** Instant

**Mien:** Generally, it appears like a crooked horse sculpture when inactive, simply standing motionless wherever the automaton last lost its animated spark. When active, humans see the beast's Mask: a ragged coal black pony. The creature's mien, however, shows a pony where bits of its flesh are missing, revealing the inner workings of the animal's Hedge components — whipping swamp thistle turning on a wooden gyre, puffs of bog gas ignited in momentary belches of flame, a "heart" of pulsing fireflies and fog in a glass jar tucked between ribs of curved cypress branches.

**Drawback:** The pony is ill-disposed and often grumpy. While it listens to commands and goes where urged (no Animal Ken roll required), the damn thing bites. If a character gets too close to the animal's mouth, he may suffer a mild bite. The animal makes an attack, but assume that any damage done is limited to two bashing points. The beast *can* attack others with a full pool, though, if it feels genuinely threatened.

**Catch:** The character must first curry the pony (currying involves brushing the mane, cleaning the inanimate beast, even picking things from its teeth) for one hour. During the process, the character must tell the pony in depth a terrible nightmare she once had. It cannot be a dream she has told the pony before.

**Recipe:** Blanket of woven reeds and thistle to serve as the skin; sharp white stones to serve as the teeth;





a Mason jar filled with fog and dead fireflies to serve as its heart; a hundred pounds of sticks and branches from the Hedge to serve as its bones; two pieces of coal to serve as its eyes; four human skulls to serve as its hooves; a three-foot length of a woman's long raven-colored hair to serve as its swishing tail.

## THE KEEPER'S QUIRT (.....)

This two-ended riding crop strikes the flesh and instantly summons a wave of repressed negative memories that strike the target's mind in a steady but erratic stream. For humans, this could mean anything: sexual or other abuse as a child, a drunken night of forgotten horror, a period of shame once-concealed by heavy drug use. For changelings, this universally conjures images from their durance.

When this crop is in combat, this can be debilitating to victims. While they're still able to make reasonably able attacks, they suffer a number of other detriments from the sting of the crop: they can no longer apply their Defense against incoming attacks (armor still applies), and they lose -3 to Speed and Initiative scores (all effects last for the remainder of the scene). The images that assail the targets wash over them, mixing with reality and causing fierce confusion. In addition, it often stirs dark and conflicting emotions brought up by images of the past: anger, grief, guilt, even arousal.

Some changelings use the Keeper's Quirt not in

combat but as a way to remember their time in Faerie, as awful as their durance may have been.

The whip does +1 bashing damage, and requires a Strength + Weaponry roll to wield. Nobody knows what this does if used on one of the Keepers themselves. It can only be used on another character once. Further attempts fail automatically (though damage still applies when appropriate).

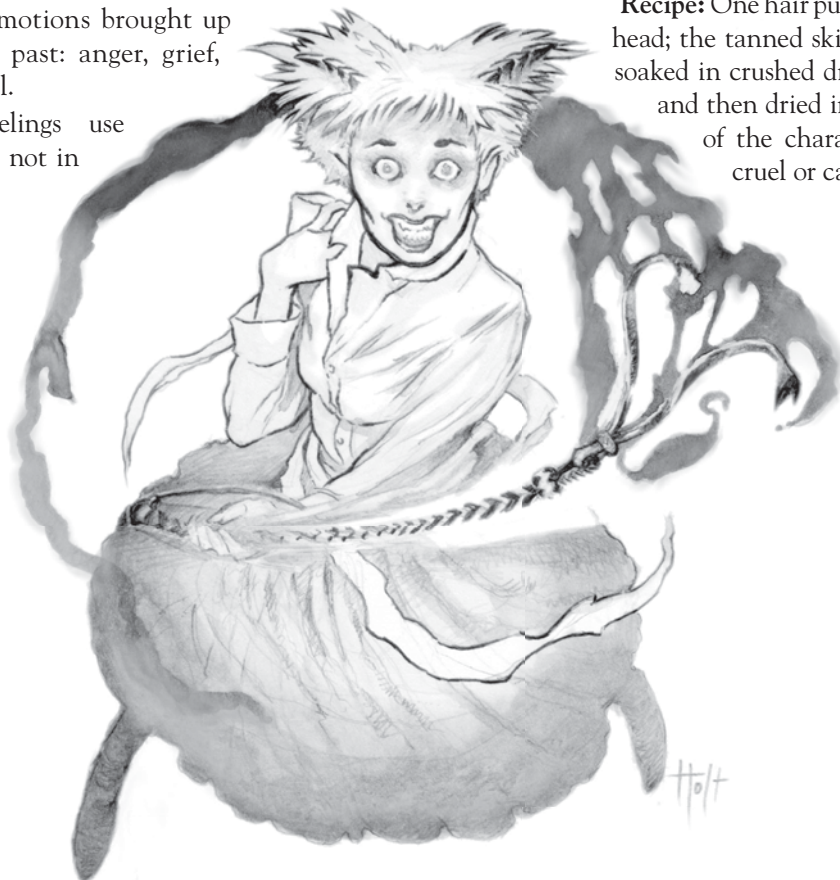
**Action:** Reflexive

**Mien:** It looks like a dingy, black and tan leather braided quirt — a long wrapped handle with two short crop extensions dangling from the top. When activated, the Keeper's Quirt oozes shadow, and the two crop ends writhe like serpents.

**Drawback:** It may not seem like a drawback initially, but use of the Keeper's Quirt transmits small jolts of swift pleasure to the user of this Hedgespun weapon. Hurting others with the token becomes addictive after its third use. After which point, a character must succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll *not* to use the Quirt during combat if that option is open.

**Catch:** The character may use the Quirt without cost or roll if she uses it on a family member or motley mate within an eight-hour period before attempting to activate it.

**Recipe:** One hair pulled from a True Fae's head; the tanned skin of a briarwolf first soaked in crushed dream-a-drupe berries and then dried in the sun; two drops of the character's own blood; a cruel or callous wish.





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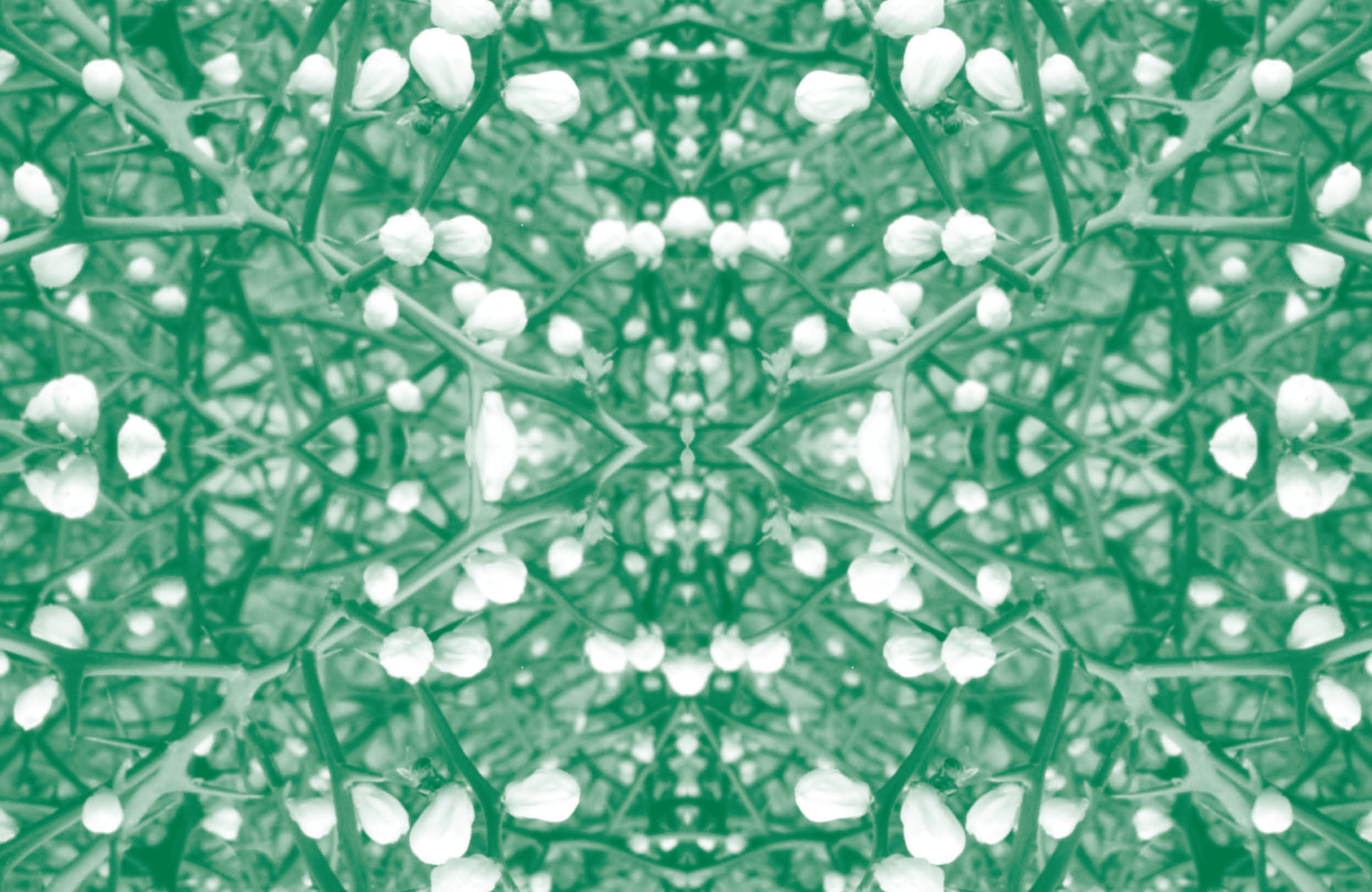
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*he King of Spring has been enspelled  
And wanders in the green.  
The Queen of Spring put on her Mask  
And walks a path unseen.  
The Knight of Spring is dressed in gold  
And guards the maiden's dream.  
The Knave of Spring, she stole the moon...  
Or so it all would seem.*

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