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# SLUG

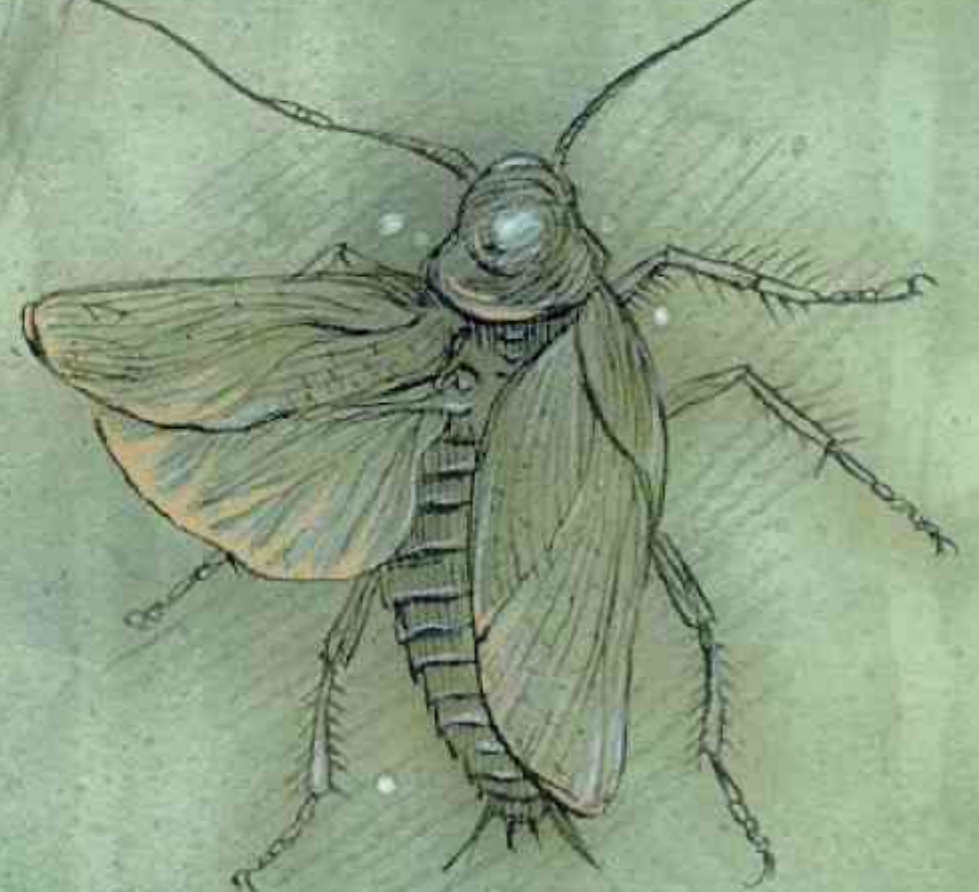
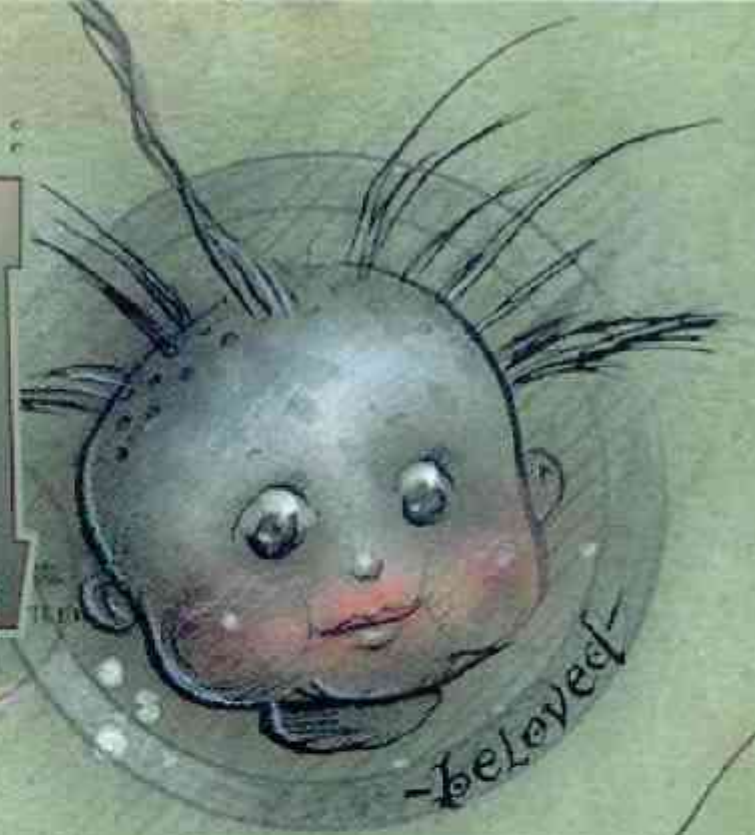


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k i t h o o k :

# SLURGAN<sup>TM</sup>

By Richard Oansky



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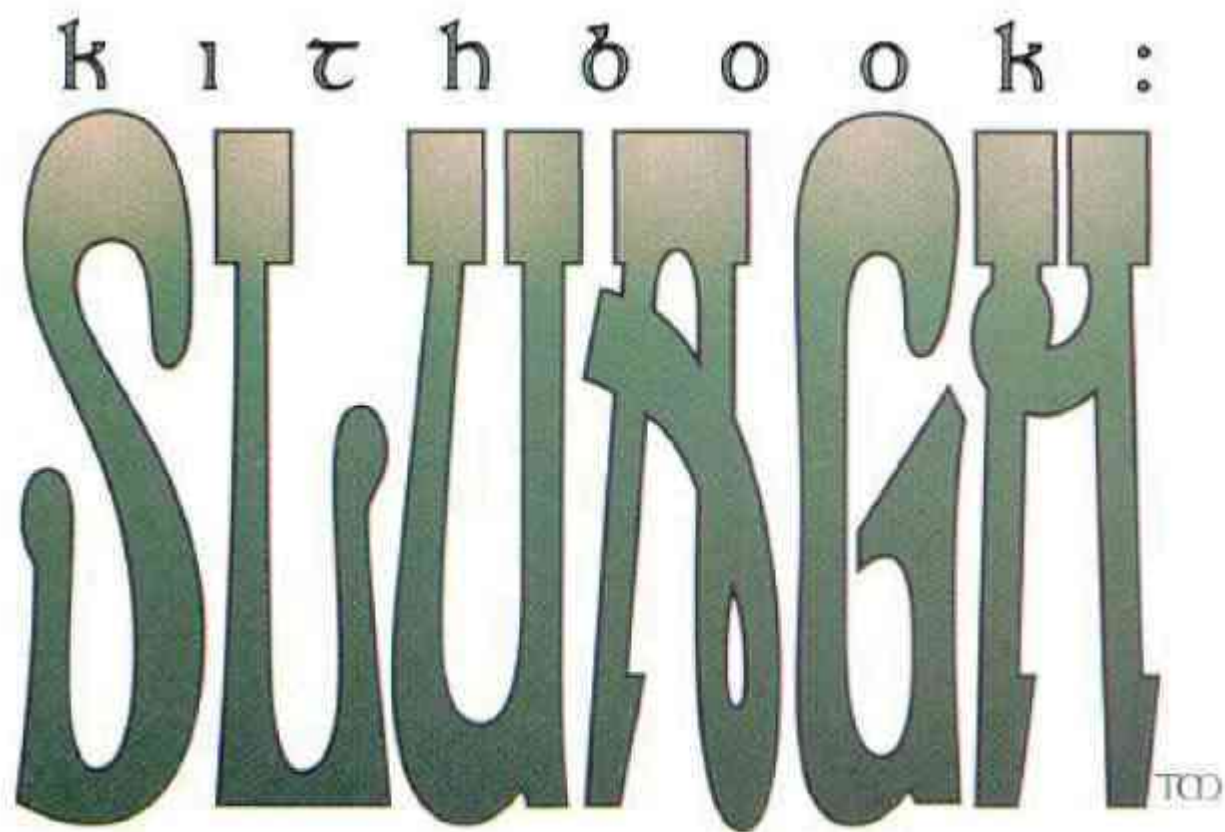
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Contents

Faerie Tale: The Wickedest Boy in the World, or HowTheSluaghCametoWhisper	4
Chapter One: A Night's Worth of History	12
Chapter Two: And Who Are We?	26
Chapter Three: The Sluagh Everyone Knows...	42
Chapter Four: Faces in the Shadows (Character Templates)	48
Chapter Five: Secrets Told After Midnight	62













Everybody knows about sluagh. They're the skulkers in the dark, the whisperers in the night, the clammy hands reaching out to shock your fevered, nightmarish brow. They're the ones who, once upon a time, would creep out of the shadows, into the houses of the fibbers and falsifiers, the candy-sealers and the cookie-snatchers, the hair-pullers and the tantrum-throwers. They'd slide in through the open windows, creep along floors under half-opened doors, and slither down chimneys when unwatchful parents had let protective fires cool. Then, on feet colder and softer than melting snow, they'd tiptoe into the rooms where the bad children lay, sleeping uneasy sleeps. Quicker than a spilled secret, the sluagh would ever so gently toll hack the covers and lift the sleeping children. On spidery tiptoes they'd carry the sleeping liars and cheaters, nags and scolds, whiners and bullies out into the cold, cold night, and when they were far, far from home and any grownups who might hear, the frightenings would commence.

Oh, the frightenings. You see, the sluagh weren't interested in just punishing had little boys and girls, not in those days. No, what they were after was something else. They wanted to frighten the naughty children – frighten them into being good. They wanted to give the children shocks of white hair that stayed with them for life. They'd bind children to branches with ropes of human hair and let spiders spin webs over their eyes, encourage nasty creepy crawlies to wander into ears and noses and tender fibbing mouths, and make the shadows dance and stretch until even the wickedest children were sobbing for their poor, maltreated mothers. But most of all the sluagh would shout and scream and gibber, and it was the sheer terror of their voices that frightened many a recalcitrant little boy into obeying his mother. There wasn't a child from the Black Sea to the Isle of Skye whom the sluagh couldn't creep, cajole or frighten into being good.

And so it went, for many, many years. There was even a sort of agreement between parents and the sluagh, one that no one talked about but everyone knew. Oh, yes, mothers and fathers would swear up and down that the sluagh would never come for *their* children, that their sons and daughters didn't need the frightenings to shock them into behaving. But late at night, after one too many broken dishes or shirked chores, a decision would sometimes be made. After the candles had burned low, a father would put out a loaf of bread (baked with insects and rocks and moldy wheat) and a **bowl** of sour milk as a signal to the sluagh that they were welcome under that roof, at least for that night.



One day, though, there came into the world the wickedest boy who ever lived. When he was born, even the ravens scattered from the eaves of his town, and the king of the rats bade his people hide far from where their tails could be pulled. Even the worst fears that were imagined, though, could not match the truth of the little boy named Michael.

As a child, he refused to eat what was given him, and then screamed like a bean sidhe from hunger. He pulled the fur of the cat and poked the eye of the dog, and knocked over candles with glee when he thought no one was looking. When he got older, he caught butterflies and pulled off their wings, then put the shreds of beauty on his mother's pillow in hopes of making her cry. When the faithful cat, who had moused loyally for a decade, had his paws forced into the fire, it was Michael who laughed at the scent of singed fur. It was Michael who smashed the pots, spoiled the food, and terrorized the servants, until one day his father could take no more.

"I'm calling the sluagh tonight," he told his wife that night, mere minutes after Michael had crawled into bed to dream wicked dreams.

"But dear, he's just a boy," Michael's mother said. "Give him some time, and he'll grow out of it."

And sighing Michael's father agreed.

The next day, Michael put out the fire in the hearth, dunked the dog in the kettle, and tossed all the nails down the well.

"I'm calling the sluagh tonight," Michael's father said, later that evening. "It's hopeless to go on like this."

And Michael's mother just nodded, and baked the bread for the sluagh herself.

Now all of the sluagh far and wide had heard of Michael. In the same way that knights spoke of famed dragons and discussed ways in which the beasts might be slain, so did the sluagh of the day sip their High Tea solemnly and trade tales of the worst children in the world.

"He needs spiders in his eyes and icicles in his ears," was the opinion of Aleksei of the 13 Toes, one of the greatest of the sluagh scarers of children.

"No, no, no, Aleksei — the boy is simply screaming for an attack of the vicious creepy crawlies, and quicksand oozies scuttling up his legs," said Owain ap Gwyn, who was accounted by some the fiercest child-frightener of them all.

"I disagree," said a third voice. "Michael is simply the worst child who has ever lived, and as such no tawdry tricks that we have used before will cow him. I fear," and Agnes of the Grayteeth shook her head







sorrowfully, "that ere we break Michael, something of us will be broken as well." There was the stink of prophecy in her words, and the power of Soothsaying wound itself through the room like a fog or a cat. The sluagh drank their tea and shivered.

Now the moon peeked itself out from behind the roofs of the village, and the smoke of the cottages strayed like prayers into the night sky. Michael's mother placed the loaf she had baked with her own hands — hurriedly doused with water to make it soft for sluagh mouths — on the ground. Michael's father lowered a bowl — cracked, of course, like everything Michael touched — full of curdled milk beside the loaf. Together they uttered a prayer for mercy on their souls, and fled back to the safety of their cottage.

I do not know if anyone else heard that prayer, but the sluagh did. By the 10s and 20s they came, to sup on the bread and sip of the milk. Only then, when the last crumb had been devoured and the last drop flicked by greedy tongues did the sluagh clamber down the chimney and through the window that Michael had broken a fortnight ago.

Michael heard the rustling as the sluagh came for him. He saw the tide of shadows pouring through the windows, heard the spiders spinning the webs that would be woven into ropes to bind him, And at the last moment, just before the sluagh fell upon him to bear him away into the wild wood and the hands of the scarers of children, he did something that no other child seized by the sluagh had ever done.

He laughed.

Troubled, they bore him away. When the rainfall sound of pattering sluagh feet had faded, Michael's mother and father gazed upon each other, then blew out their last candle and smiled.

When Michael awoke, he was bound hand and foot on the floorboards of an old mill. Ropes of spiders' silk and human hair bound him, snaking through knotholes in the rotting floor to hold him fast. All around him the shadows rustled and jostled. The sluagh had come to see their greatest prey brought to heel.

And so, under a **full** moon that shone fat and round through the rotted beams of the mill, the sluagh's greatest terrorizers and child-scarers went to work on the boy named **Michael**. They drew forth their cloaks of living centipedes and their gloves made from living tarantulas, the slow-rasping slugs and scuttling handfuls of cottons, and set their tricks on Michael.

The boy just laughed.

Frustrated, Aleksei took Michael's shadow and bent it to his will like a horrible marionette. A praying



mantis of shadow, it loomed over Michael with razored claws of blackness.

Michael just smiled.

In a rage, Owain cast caution to the winds, and summoned a storm, commanding the lightning to dance all around the boy. The bolts licked at Michael's ears and burned his hair, and Saint Elmo's fire in the shape of long-dead ghosts danced before his eyes.

Michael spat in his scorn.

Slowly, the roar of the crowd started to get louder. The howlings and moanings, the roarings and shoutings of the gathered sluagh grew louder and louder until the sound solidified and poured across the moon as a cloud of bats. Down upon the town where Michael's parents lived swooped the bats, beating at windows with thundering wings and shrill cries.

All the while, the greatest among the sluagh cast about them for the tricks that had put streaks of white into the hair of the wickedest children they'd seen. They conjured giant footsteps to make the very earth shake and beasts to lick serpent tongues across Michael's feet. But the boy just shouted and raved his disdain.

For he knew the sluagh's secret: They could never hurt any of the children they had taken away. This was a solemn compact, made (or so Michael had heard) with the angels of the air, and that should the sluagh ever break it, the angels would smite them. So he laughed and shouted, for he knew that the sluagh's show was but a sham, a Punch and Judy with himself as the audience.

Meanwhile, the sluagh's voices rose even higher and wilder. Michael's mother, huddled under her blankets as the sounds overwhelmed the village, swore that it was God's vengeance for what she'd done to her sweet Michael. Michael's father went forth from the door with a torch to drive the bats off, but they seized him in their claws and carried him off, never to be seen again.

The sluagh had sworn not to harm *children*, you see.

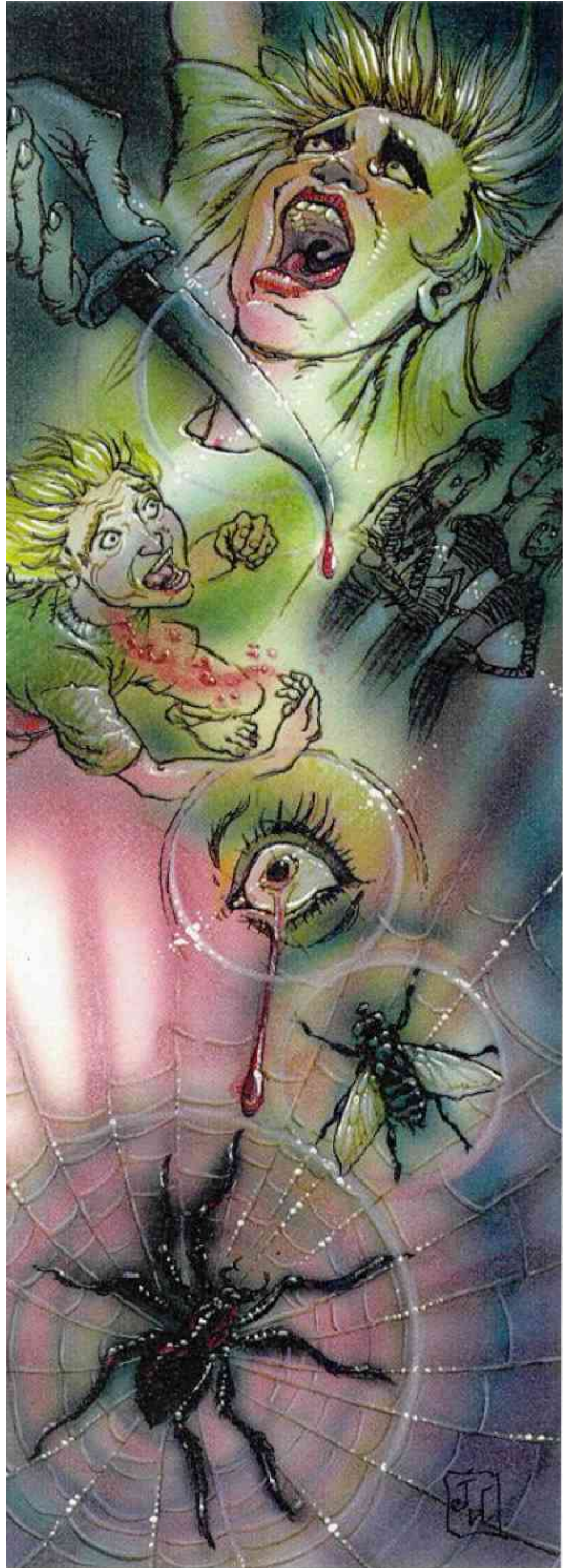
But even as the cloud of shouts and winged things swirled higher, Michael judged the strength of his bonds and the will of his captors. Soon, he knew, their sport would end. It was then, he decided, that his would begin.

At least, that is what he thought until Agnes strode forward, a stone dagger in her hand. There was no pity in her eyes, nor was there mercy in the cruel set of her mouth. Her black weeds dragged around her like the funeral shroud of a drowned woman still tangled in the reeds of her watery grave.

Michael, for the first time, was afraid.

Agnes raised high the dagger.

"The oath!" shouted Aleksei.







"Worthless now, for this boy will spread our secret, and we shall be ruined," replied Agnes.

"The words we swore to the others!" cried Owain.

"Do you see any of the others here?" demanded Agnes.

Terrible and swift, the knife came down.

Michael screamed..

And the knife stopped, its point a tickle in the hollow of a screaming boy's throat. But Agnes had honed her knife too well, and it drew forth a single drop of blood from Michael's vein.

There was a great tolling, as of a bell sunken beneath the sea for centuries. And elsewhere, the knights of the Tuatha de Danaan knew that an oath sworn to them had been broken. They saddled and mounted, and rose to punish the offenders. Like angels they rode in the upper air, or so would the townsfolk have said had any been blessed with enough of a dreaming spirit to see them. Rising like the moon over the roofs of the town, the knights of the Tuatha de Danaan on their winged steeds came across the swarming voices of the sluagh, and slew them. As each bat fell to the ground, cleft by a silvery blade, a sluagh grew silent. Shouts crashed to whispers, even as the sidhe took their prey.

At last, not a single sluagh's voice was left aloft. The last, old Agnes' itself, had tried to flee but had been pierced by a black arrow with a silver head. Then would the Tuatha have ridden against the host of sluagh, but the one who led them held up a single argent gauntlet. "The oath has been avenged!" he cried. "I declare the price of betrayal to have been paid." His voice carried like a trumpet to where the sluagh massed in terror and rage, their thin swords and terrible shadowy servants held ready for battle. Then, as the knights turned to ride for home, the sluagh raised their voices in a cry of rage and hate...

...that was but a whisper. Horrified, they tried again.

Again, there was but a hint of sound in the silence.

There was stillness for a second, then the gathered host of the sluagh turned their eyes to Michael. It was for him that they had lost their voices, for his pride and venom. The oath lay shattered, and none now would gainsay their right for vengeance on this boy. A single drop of blood yet glistened at this throat, and fear was in his eyes. And his hair?

White as snow.

Again, Agnes raised the knife. Again, she brought it down, but only to cut the ropes that bound Michael. "Run home, little boy," she hissed. "Run as if all the



devils ever born were at your heels, and never, ever make us come for you again." Her voice was like the wind through dried weeds, like the clacking of the bones of weeping willow branches.

Michael stumbled to his feet and ran. Behind him, the sluagh raised the wreckage of their voices in a dirge like a wind carrying sand through ancient stone ruins. Down by the millpond, the washer at the ford heard the song and raised her voice in it, and so it spread,

until every commoner and beast of the woods joined in the dirge for what the sluagh had lost. All of the others had to sing it, though, for the sluagh could not.

As for Michael, well, at daybreak he found himself on his mother's doorstep. Bruised and bloody, his hair shocked white, he stumbled into her arms the second she opened the door. And from that day forward, he was the perfect child.

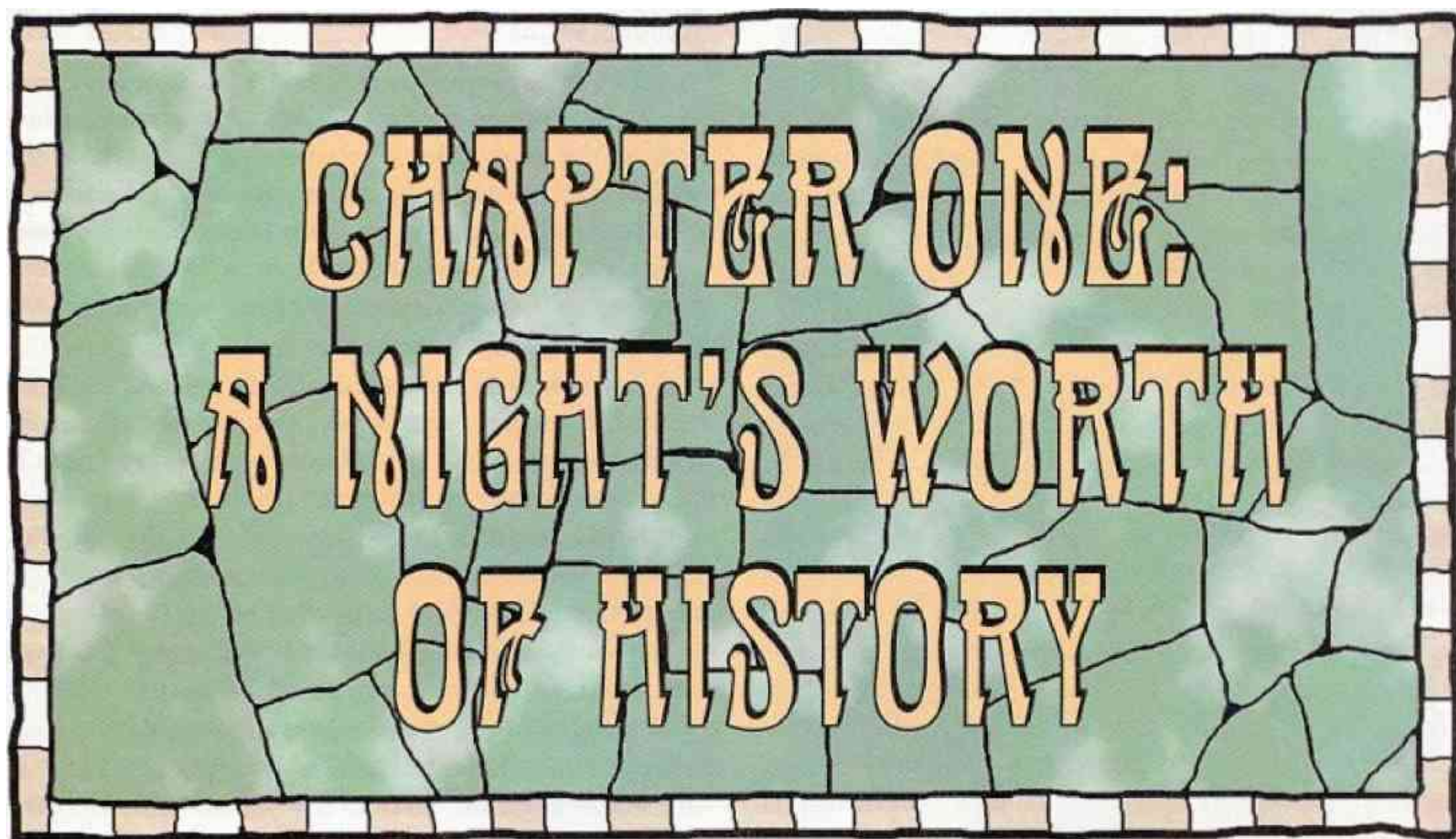
He had to be. The sluagh were watching.











# CHAPTER ONE: A NIGHT'S WORTH OF HISTORY

*All the things that you've learned thus far  
Could not prepare you for where you are  
So take your compass and face the East  
To the ruins of the Temple and the wrath of the Beast*  
— Peter Himmelman, "Crushed"

As long as sluagh have known enough to name themselves, they have walked with the dead and in the shadows. This is as much a part of what they are as it is of who they are. Sluagh and death, sluagh and fear, sluagh and pain — they are all bound up in a knot of years and darkness.

Thus, it is impossible to tell the history of this kith without delivering, in some sense, an obituary.

No other kith is so obsessed with the truth of its origins as the sluagh. While the sidhe search their bloodlines for proof of ever more rarefied breeding, and the trolls content themselves with the knowledge that

once they were kings, the sluagh relentlessly probe their collective past. They search, some say, for the moment and the place where the first sluagh raised up her head to the star-filled Russian night and said, "I am." For, you see, the sluagh do not lie to themselves about what they are, or where they came from. There are no comforting myths about glories gone among the crawling folk, nor are there sunny prophecies of future triumphs. Instead, the sluagh have a fascination for discovering exactly what was, and what that history means for the future. While they may use illusions to frighten others, sluagh have precious few of their own.



# Primal Days

The sluagh were born from fear, and on this they all agree. Every time a crone of a grandmother gave a name to the creaking of a floorboard or the groaning of a contracting stone, a sluagh was born. In the primal forests of Eastern Europe, the shadows and the noises came alive when they were given names, and they knew their purposes.

They were the terrors in the night, and that was all they knew. Born from the sounds and images that distilled fear from disquiet, they intrinsically knew that they were to continue with more of the same. Tappers on windows continued their furtive scuttlings; creatures born from night noises made more of the same. In this way the numbers of sluagh grew rapidly, for the more noises the crawlers made, the more names were assigned to them, and the more awoke from shadows and whispers. In some ways it was a golden time to be a sluagh; as the stories about them grew more complex, they themselves grew more complicated. Their minds grew clearer, their purposes sharper, their cunning deeper. Tales ascribed servants to them, and creatures like the *vodyanoi* emerged to fill these roles.

But the one thing the sluagh did not know was why, and this gnawed at them. Why must they inspire fear night after night? Why did they receive more pleasure from a scream than from a smile? Why was slithering beneath a floorboard more enjoyable than crafting a delicate work of art, or plying a less disreputable trade?

## Servants of the Sluagh

Old wives' tales have always held a host of creatures designed to frighten children into being good. Most of these beasties have been overly horrific in an almost cartoonish way; the fearsome giant caterpillar called Awd Goggie who lived in pantry cabinets is a perfect example of this sort of over-the-top outlandishness.

However, an awful lot of fear and imagination was put into these behavioral modifiers, so it was no surprise to the sluagh when chimerical versions of Awd Goggie and his ilk began to skulk around sluagh haunts. Most of this species of chimera are surprisingly pliable to sluagh wishes, and many will actively work with sluagh to fulfill their original function. Indeed, all but forgotten by the children of the world, a great many chimera of this type cling desperately to the companionship of the crawlers in hopes of fueling their existences a while longer.

## Recognizance

The instant of self-realization, when it finally came, was the decisive moment for the sluagh, even more so than their initial awakening. The second when the kith as a whole somehow decided that they were to put fear to good use created the sluagh as we know them today. No more were they a collection of ragtag spirits, each haunting a specific area or house. Instead they had purpose. Fear was now their tool, not their master.

For countless centuries sluagh researchers have worked feverishly to pin down the moment when this revelation was reached simultaneously by every sluagh in existence. None have succeeded yet.

In essence, what happened was that in one crystallizing moment, every sluagh became aware of what fear could be used for, and suddenly knew that he was not alone. At that instant, each sluagh chose to use fear, not as an end unto itself, but as a means to an end.

And so they came, slithering and gibbering, to a great stone ring that they all somehow knew how to find. Deep in the Russian forest, far from any human habitation, the far-flung children of nightmare met their brothers and sisters for the first time. All night they danced around the twisted gray pillars that had called to them, indulging for the first and last time in the sort of bacchanalia the other kith regularly subscribe to them.

At the height of the festivities, the gathered sluagh received a visitor. Nameless and crowned with an antlered casque, he rode forth from the blackest part of the wood on a white stallion. The horse's eyes and ears were the red of blood, and its hooves seemed to touch the earth but lightly. All around him, the sluagh fell silent, sensing the import of this intruder's visit.

He spoke to the assembled crawlers briefly, bestowing a blessing upon them and extracting a promise. The blessing none among the sluagh will relate; the promise was that no child ever be truly harmed in their frightenings. The sluagh, one and all, agreed to this compact. The knight, in turn, agreed that the promise should be kept secret for a number of years equal to 13 times 13 generations. Then, his business concluded, the knight of the Tuatha de Danaan rode back into the primal forest. Behind him, the festivities rose again under the silvery-light of the moon. At sunrise, the sluagh dispersed almost magically to their homes across the face of Eastern Europe.

No one has ever succeeded in finding that stone ring again, which is not surprising. It was not a part of the world, and was given to the sluagh for that night only. Many among them still do not realize this, and search for that ring fruitlessly. Others, wiser in the lore of their kind, merely treasure the legends.



## The Golden Age

With [he discovery of their purpose, the sluagh became a much more formal kith. They arrogated the role of the last guardians of virtue, choosing to punish evildoers (especially children) with fear. Sluagh justice was ruled to be better than no justice at all, and so a clandestine alliance between parents and sluagh was struck.

Simply put, the sluagh became secret allies of parents all over Eastern Europe in the never-ending war to make children behave. Whenever a child grew too unruly or disrespectful or vicious, the parents might well summon the sluagh to enforce the lesson that they could not. By signs and portents the crawlers let it be known what offerings pleased them as means of attracting their attention, and before long the cracked bowl of sour milk and the loaf of bread (burned, moldy or baked with inedibles like insects) became staples for harried parents across the breadth of a continent.

The sluagh were more than happy to enter into this arrangement, and receiving parental sanctions for their actions motivated the kith to new heights of creativity. Soon sluagh became artistes of fear, with legendary fright-spinners striving to outdo each other in achieving epic terrors. At this time the sluagh also began moving westward, scuttling down Finland and along the shores of the Baltic into the lands of the trolls, who at first did not know what to make of these creatures. Initial meetings were cool, to put it mildly, and rela-

### The Slaying of the Voices

There is little known about the night when the sluagh suddenly lost their voices. Persistent rumor blames the influence of the Tuatha de Danaan who, displeased with the way in which the sluagh were conducting business, took the matter of discipline into their own hands.

This rumor, twisted and distorted, has made its way into the ears of the other kith, who regard the whole affair with a sort of self-satisfied smirk. After all, *they've* never been punished that way by the Tuatha — it just proves that the sluagh are as degenerate as everyone always said they were.

The old sluagh legend about a frightening that went horribly wrong is discounted by the majority of serious scholars. To quote the noted sidhe historian, Lord Enoch of Brandywine, "Sounds too damned much like a fairy tale for me to believe a word of it."







tions never improved that much. However, it was the trolls, who, regardless of their disdain for sluagh techniques, inducted the new arrivals into the Seelie Court.

However, back in the forests of the East, disaster brewed. One glorious Highsummer Night, the worst happened. For unaccountable reasons, the sluagh lost their voices. There are legends among the sluagh as to what happened that night, but such tales are always kept away from outsiders. Some secrets are for the sluagh alone.

The sudden inability of the sluagh to speak above a whisper unfortunately confirmed certain scurrilous rumors about the kith in the minds of many trolls and otherfae. One by one, the other Seelie kith turned their backs on the crawlers. Still, the sluagh kept to their original purpose. Fear had been their friend for long years before the first meetings with other fae; it would still be their friend now.

And so the sluagh continued to spread, boldly ignoring the contempt of trolls and others. From Scandinavia they journeyed to England, tucked in the hidden dark places of longboats and knorts. Through German forests and mountains, up the Danube and across Northern Europe they slithered. Soon the children of the entire continent slept a good deal less soundly — those who had something to fear, anyway.

## Abbey Lubbers and Buttery Spirits

During the Middle Ages, certain of the sluagh in northern Europe, and especially the British Isles, took it upon themselves to punish a particular subset of wrongdoers. Specifically, these changelings looked upon the corrupt innkeepers and monks of the world as fair game. Human histories from the time are full of tales of monks growing fat on worldly pleasures (and wines purchased with tax-free tithe money), not to mention asides about innkeepers who put sand in horses' feedbags and water in their best wines. Fae historians speculate, therefore, that because these two species of humans were explicitly breaking promises by this sort of behavior, they held a special attraction for vengeful sluagh. The fact that these falsifiers were adults, and thus could not claim the protection of the sluagh's secret oath, may also have helped to make them easy targets.

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## Slaying of Voices

At least one scholar, Aedielred of Selkrest, has attempted to correlate the date of the legendary Slaying of the Voices with the first legends of Abbey Lubbers, but sluagh authorities have been remarkably unhelpful on this point,

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Thus was created the order of sluagh alternately called by mortals Abbey Lubbers, Buttery Spirits and other, less complimentary things. While no different from other sluagh in any real way, Abbey Lubbers found themselves irresistibly drawn toward performing their tricks on particular subsections of the mortal population. Furthermore, these sluagh also discovered a hitherto unknown urge to show off, and became rather noisy in their efforts to correct mortal behavior. After some initial reservations, other sluagh had no problem with this; the extreme antics of the Buttery Spirits provided a distraction for the activities of sluagh who preferred a lower profile.

Regardless of motivation, Abbey Lubbers and Buttery Spirits functioned according to similar methods. They infested debauched monasteries (though never convents, for some reason) and inns where travelers were cheated, and set to work. All tainted foodstuffs, whether it was the overly rich fare of supposedly poor monks or the substandard victuals offered by cheap innkeepers, were alternately destroyed or devoured by the insatiable sluagh. Furthermore, the sluagh responsible for the outrages made certain to have reputable witnesses to their actions, the better to spread the word. Thus began a self-perpetuating cycle: Sluagh assaulted the holdings of the corrupt and sought out reliable witnesses, while these witnesses in turn attributed the sluagh's actions to the corruption of their targets. Soon, even the rumor of an Abbey Lubber was enough to tar the reputation of an entire monastery, while the crash of a plate a Buttery Spirit had licked clean could ruin an inn's name from Calais to Whitby.

These sluagh also paid special attention to those individual humans responsible for drawing the sluagh's notice to tainted pantries. Monks who overindulged in victuals were forced to swallow mouthful after mouthful of their ill-gotten goodies; others had sand or animal food stuffed down their throats. A rare few incorrigibles were drowned in tuns of wine; the murderous sluagh made certain to spoil the best in the cellar this way. Innkeepers who shortchanged their customers could frequently be found in the stables come morning, feedbags full of dirt strapped to their faces.

There were two major repercussions of the days of the Buttery Spirits. First of all, it became popular belief that the sluagh actually devoured the cheap victuals provided by dishonest tavern hosts; soon enough this perception became the reality. While the bowl of sour milk and loaf of inedible bread had always been a token offering to sluagh before, prior to the advent of the Buttery Spirits, sluagh could take or leave that sort of fare. However, now the choice was disappearing. Even

those sluagh who had feasted on the best food the monasteries could offer found themselves increasingly drawn to watered wine, stale bread and sour milk. Eventually this foul fare was all that sluagh could subsist on.

The second change this period in sluagh history wrought was perhaps more devastating. For the first time, sluagh began defecting in large numbers to the Unseelie Court. The apparent ineffectiveness of the kith's campaign to frighten others into proper behavior wore down the patience of many sluagh, particularly when corruption was so evident from the top to the bottom of society. It may have been the greed and sensuality of the monasteries that finally pushed many sluagh over the edge. Efforts to frighten wrongdoers into reform transformed into punitive expeditions against the worst culprits. The reputation of sluagh among humans began, correspondingly, to darken at this time, and matters have continued apace ever since.

## Killmoulis

Nobody is quite sure if the killmoulis were a rare kith, a clutch of sluagh whose bodies were reshaped to fit their new functions or something else entirely. What is known is that these creatures first appeared at the same time the sluagh began infesting inns and abbeys, aiding the crawlers in their tasks by devouring all the food around them — after a fashion

Technically speaking, these creatures did not really devour the food they came across; killmoulis had no mouths. Rather, they had huge, gaping nostrils into which they shoved any and all edibles within arms' reach. While killmoulis never grew much above three feet in height, and were so thin their ribs could be counted from an arrowshot away, they nevertheless managed to pack away appalling amounts of food. Left unchecked, a single killmoulis could empty a pantry by herself in a matter of a few days.

In older days, these beings were often seen in the company of sluagh. Nothing has been heard of them for over a century, however, and it is believed that they are extinct. Some mourn for this loss, but the vast majority of changelings never knew they existed. Certain sluagh hold out the hope that the killmoulis survived to this day and are simply keeping quiet; as the creatures have no mouths, it would seem that they have no other option.



## Dwelling Among the Dead

Sluagh have had a long association with ghosts; their very name links them to the Restless Dead. Alone among the kith, the sluagh are able to see and converse with the spirit of the dead. Nor is this a recent development, as the crawlers have been talking to the dead for as long as they can remember.

The first recorded conversations between sluagh and ghosts date back to the days before the sluagh had encountered even the trolls, and still restricted their mutterings and slitherings to the forests of Eastern Europe. Supposedly Aleksei of the 13 Toes was the first sluagh to actually speak to a ghost; previously sluagh had ignored the hovering wraiths as harbingers of bad luck. Aleksei, however, recognized in these ghosts tremendous potential for bringing fear to new heights, and chose a respectable-looking ghost with whom to open lines of communication.

As the empire of Stygia had not yet reached out its iron claws to "organize" this region of the Shadowlands, the wraiths of the Slavic lands were at that point disorganized, chaotic and more or less friendless. Happy to cling to any structure at all, the native ghosts were glad to converse and work with these strange, pale creatures who seemed half-dead themselves. The rough organisation the alliance with the sluagh generated also enabled these wraiths to meet the advancing Stygian armies on reasonably equal terms; no wars of conquest among the dead were fought here. Furthermore, while the ghosts whom the sluagh had originally dealt with kept their mouths more or less shut regarding their relationship with these fae (having such reliable Skinlands allies gave them a solid advantage) word that certain among the fae could actually see and speak to wraiths spread from ghost to ghost. While communication with the sluagh was never officially sanctioned by Stygia, the fact that certain wraiths were speaking with the crawlers remained an open secret.

Henceforth, wherever the sluagh spread, they found garrulous ghosts waiting for them. The problem was particularly bad in the British Isles, especially in Ireland and Scotland. In many cases sluagh were actually driven out of freeholds in these countries by the sheer numbers of wraiths looking to speak with them.

However, some of the sluagh did manage to reap benefits from this omnipresence of friendly ghosts. As the lines between wraiths and faeries were already somewhat blurred in Celtic Europe, sluagh looking for camouflage deliberately obscured them even further. Before long the line between sluagh and ghosts was essentially nonexistent in the minds of the mortal

populace, and ghosts of the recent dead were thought to dwell in local *sids*. As mortals liked interfering with the dead even less than they liked bothering the fae, this kept mortal distractions of the sluagh to a minimum. Faeries might be cozened into bestowing favors or treasure, but only fools sought boons from the dead. So, hiding behind a graveyard mask, the sluagh separated themselves from human culture while remaining close enough to continue to affect it. It was not coincidence that most fairy mounds thought to hold the newly dead were located close to towns; it was these *sids* that the sluagh took for their own so that they might yet continue to confound those who needed a good scare.

As the years passed, however, and as the Shroud and the laws of the dead forbade commerce between wraith and sluagh, the alliance between the two groups of lost souls grew strained. What had been almost formalized all those centuries ago grew informal and sporadic; the odd ghost would talk to the odder sluagh, but discourse was limited.

## Dealing with Devourers

The other kith with a strong connection to the northern part of England is the redcaps, and there has never been any love lost between the crawlers and the devourers. As the redcaps kept mainly to their ruined peel towers and the sluagh to their *sids*, friction between the two groups was at a minimal. Conflicts between sluagh and redcaps did erupt, however, usually when the nighttime frighteners were blamed for some redcap atrocity or other. Having their subtle work confused with redcap crudity insulted the sluagh to no end, while for their part redcaps found sluagh techniques incomprehensible and the sluagh themselves disturbingly devious.

Adjudications of quarrels between sluagh and redcaps were unsurprisingly spotty in their nature and quality, and often developed into free-for-alls. Many legends of "war beneath the mound" that mortals told on hearing sounds of fighting coming from *sids* were really the evidence of sluagh and redcaps settling their differences the old-fashioned way. Unsurprisingly, redcaps preferred this sort of approach, while sluagh generally liked less direct conflict.



## Interregnum Days

The closing of the gates to Arcadia was both good and bad for the sluagh. While they had as difficult a time as everyone else adjusting to changeling, rather than fae, existence, the crawlers had a few additional complications to deal with. The sidhe's absenting themselves from Earth meant that the courts' institutionalized discrimination against sluagh was a thing of the past, but the new era ushered in a more chaotic brand of discrimination from other kith. Without the sidhe present to control the worst impulses of some of the other fae, sluagh became convenient targets for the resentment, fear and panic that set in following the Shattering.

And so, the inevitable happened. Other changeling, looking for scapegoats, settled on the crawlers. And as few sluagh were foolish enough to expose themselves to the scorn of the other fae, those rare sluagh who did received more than their fair share of abuse. They suffered the insults (not to mention the slings, arrows, bottles, stones and rotten vegetables) hurled at them by their so-called kin — not to mention all of the Glamour-spawned malice they could stand. Occasionally, the violence would get out of hand and as a result, an unfortunate sluagh could find herself the recipient of a physical assault — or worse.

Eventually, an equilibrium was reached. The angry mobs didn't notice any real improvement in their status even after hanging every sluagh they could get their hands on (admittedly, a difficult proposition) and found other amusements and arguments. Suddenly, there was a power vacuum at the top of fae society, and the scramble to fill it became more pressing than assigning blame for past catastrophes.

### ReasonsandLies

Rumors that the sluagh had in fact been responsible for the Shattering have persisted for centuries. Modern fae apologists for their predecessors have pooh-poohed these claims as invented justification for the abuse heaped on the sluagh during those early days of Interregnum. In the depths of their cups, however, drunken trolls still occasionally mutter about how it's all the damned sluagh's fault.

Once started, such a story never goes away. The sluagh have learned this lesson better than anyone.





The sluagh wisely stayed out of the other kith's maneuverings, at least publicly. As changeling society settled into a sort of bizarre cross between feudalism and socialism, former petty nobles and commoners adopted into noble houses struggled to keep their places atop a much-reduced pile. Some freeholds carried on as pale imitations of the glory days of the fae, complete with bedraggled courts overseen by knights and baronets instead kings and dukes. In other places, rule by strength was all that mattered, as commoner motleys vigorously seeded fonts of Glamour and evolved their, own forms of local government.

And the crawlers? They got the hell out of the way, preferring to funnel clandestine support to those few leaders whom they felt deserved assistance. It wasn't until long after the new political paradigm had settled in comfortably (and the memories of the pogroms had grown cold) that the sluagh felt comfortable re-emerging into fae society.

## Agrarian Reform

Country sluagh became fewer and fewer as the mills sprang up and the railway brought every sleepy rural town days closer to the cities. Rural crawlers were in general virulently anti-technology; not a few could be found among the followers of the mythical Ned Ludd. Their fear, one which would soon be realized, was that industrialization would turn laborers from artisans to automatons, thus draining the world of even more Glamour.

While the possible benefits of technology — notably improved medical treatments — were lauded by sluagh, most refused to trust that these advances would be used for the good, rather than for the sake of profit. Time, unfortunately, proved them right.

## Two Tales of Cities: The 19th Century

For the sluagh, it was the best of times and it was the worst of times. It was a time of the first great migration into the cities and across the Atlantic, but it was the time of the sweatshops and the huddled masses in the tenements. The era of the Industrial Revolution, Dickens and the explosion of the cities had a profound effect on the fae as a whole. The sluagh, however, bore the brunt of the changes.

Cities are havens for secrets of all sorts, filled with hiding places and unexpected treasures. It is hardly surprising, then, that as soon as sluagh woke up and started skulking about, they flowed into the cities in

(relative) droves. Of course, the cities of even the late Middle Ages and colonial periods were relatively puny things, with rigid population ceilings enforced by the harsh laws of economics and sanitation. Rome and Paris, while massive when compared to the hamlets around them, really didn't house that many people — or that many places to hide.

Once industrialisation kicked in, however, the equation of the great cities changed. Suddenly there was work for millions in the factories and mills, and those millions needed somewhere to live. More to the point, they needed somewhere to live close to work. As the factories tended to grow near shipping centers (i.e., major cities), those cities grew exponentially. Land, people, money — the cities swallowed them all.

At the same time that the cities were in the process of metamorphosing, railway men were pinning down the land with wooden ties and iron rails. Ley lines were irreparably damaged by this cavalier treatments and slowly but surely the living countryside found itself vivisected by time-tables and steel.

Nor did the new metropolises take care of what they had devoured. The new factories belched smoke and spewed filth day and night. The new tenements and company "villages" were overcrowded, filthy and rat-infested. And the new inhabitants of these cities? They were underpaid, overworked, desperate and poor.

In such horrid conditions as these, dreams died. Many things killed them — choking fumes from smokestacks, the slow cancer of poverty that reduced visions of glory to hopes of having enough for another meal, foul water and insufficient food, and most of all, despair at a dead-end existence that seemed to stretch out for the generations of the future.

For the cities had devoured the children as well.

## Mines and Sweatshops

The garment and mining industries were the particular culprits in this instance. Small hands meant delicate stitchery on fancy ladies' garments, for which factory owners could charge more. Small bodies could squeeze into smaller tunnels, saving mine owners the expense of blasting out full-sized shafts. Most of all, small hands took home small paychecks, and small voices raised in protest could easily be drowned out. And if a child's hand were mangled into a mess of bones and flesh by a piece of machinery, or a few small boys coughed their lungs into bloody scraps from overwork in the mines, well, there were always more children eager for any work, so as to help put food on their families' tables.



Under conditions like this, is it any surprise that generations of children found themselves brutally stripped of their senses of wonder? Is it any shock that many of these sweatshop children, hollow-eyed orphans of the industrial age, slept dreamlessly when finally allowed to totter home from the factories? A great many dreams went out of the world during those years, because those who should have been dreaming them were otherwise engaged.

Many sluagh, particularly in England, the United States and the more industrialised German states, simply gave up the ghost at this point, surrendering sadly to Banality. As these sluagh saw it, their role as punishers of bad children had been usurped, permanently, by the factories and coal mines. What punishment could the sluagh threaten, what terror could they present that could be any worse than what so many children had to face every day of their lives?

Other, less defeatist sluagh changed tactics. These crawlers focused on the children of the rich, their logic being that if these youngsters benefitted from the torment of so many other children, they deserved some torment as well. However, this approach got out of hand (as any good idea is wont to do) and somewhere along the line, the intent of the punishing sluagh changed. Where originally these crawlers had intended to use the children of the rich as object lessons, to impress upon their wealthy targets the horror of what the factories were doing to other children, the lessons devolved into simply missions of punishment, guilt or innocence be damned.

Little wonder, then, that so many scions of the robber barons and manufacturing tycoons were mad. Even centuries removed from their halcyon days, the sluagh had forgotten none of their tricks.

## Good Things

Even as changelings everywhere reeled from the loss of Glamour, some benefits did accrue from the changes of the age. While the cities might have become rats' warrens of filth and poverty, the number of places to hide and secrets to learn grew exponentially. With the rapid expansion of the cities, there came rapid construction, which afforded enterprising sluagh the opportunity to create their own mazes and hidey-holes.

More importantly, there came an explosion of literacy. Magazines and penny dreadfuls were everywhere, and novels came into vogue as an acceptable literary form. With everyone reading, the demand for reading material (mostly in the form of periodicals)

grew by leaps, bounds and slithers, and the sluagh made themselves impressive players in the publishing industry. Newspaper reporters, magazine editors, publishers — from the lowest print setter to the mightiest publishing tycoon, the industry was rotten with sluagh (figuratively speaking, of course). After all, the more magazines and newspapers, books and dime novels were out there, the more sources of information there were, and to the sluagh, that was always a good thing.

## Five Secrets of 19th Century Sluagh

1 — Poe was not a sluagh. Mind you, he should have been, but that's neither here nor there.

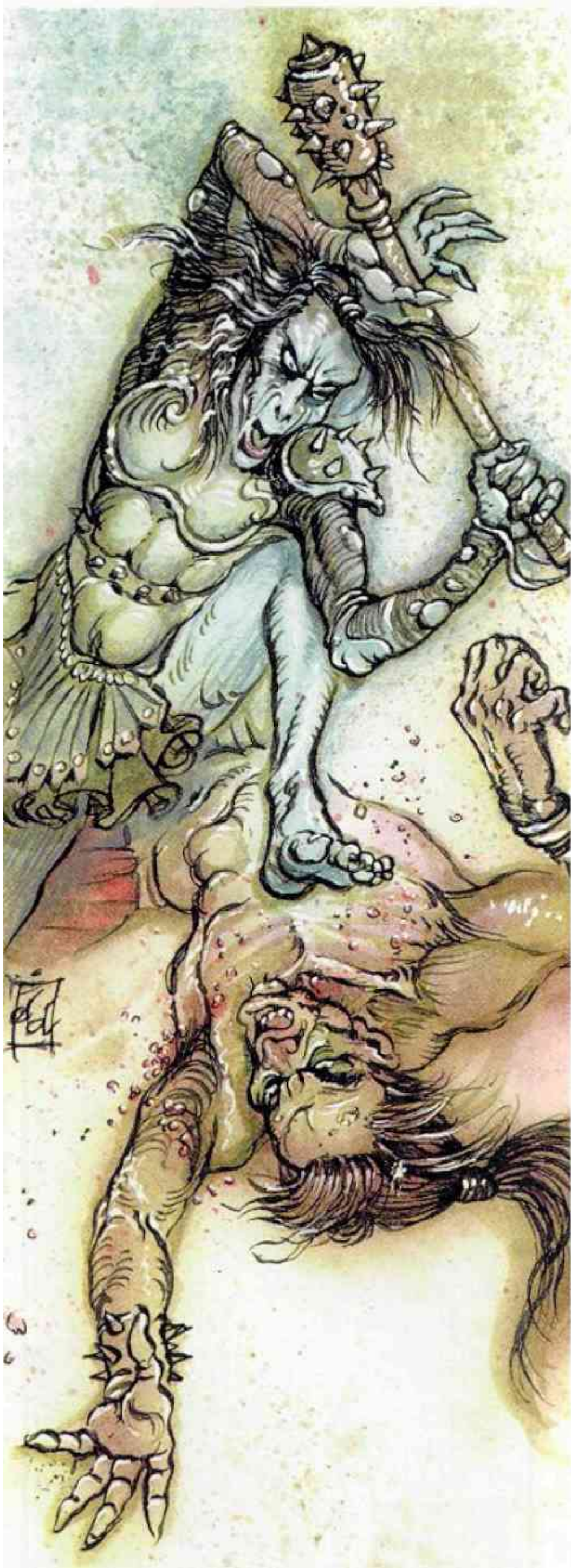
2 — Charles Dickens wasn't a sluagh, either, though he knew several Dickens did have the rare privilege of sitting in on High Tea, though he monopolized the conversation so thoroughly that he was never invited back again.

3 — Contrary to the propaganda perpetrated by other kith, many sluagh were instrumental in the movement to enact child labor laws. A great deal of the money poured anonymously into the coffers of the movement came from sluagh purses.

4 — One of the great conundrums of sluagh existence is that while they adore water, they hate sea travel. Apparently, it's something about not having a bolt-hole when you're in the middle of the ocean, but in any case, the result of this sort of thing is simple. While any major city's dockside district positively drips with sluagh (and other, less identifiable things), the number of sluagh who actually go to sea can generally be numbered on the fingers of one's foot. Despite the wellsprings of Glamour to be had from the sea-dreams of sailors, a sluagh on shipboard was an oddity ranking up with a quiet pooka.

5 — Despite rumors to the contrary, sluagh despise pollution, and found the stinking Thames and killing fogs of Old London Town to be abhorrent. There's a fine line between rot and petrochemical disaster, and the sluagh stand firmly on one side of it.





Sluagh also played fast and loose with their own rules by cultivating the careers of some of their favorite authors. Dickens, Scott, Le Fanu and Maturin all received boosts from crawler publishers at one time or another. A few sluagh were also active in the theater, though never onstage. Rather, they patronized playwrights, brought worthy scripts to the attention of theater managers and, most importantly, thronged to the backs of theaters, well out of range of the footlights' illumination. For example, while it may have been Lord Byron who agreed to produce Maturin's excessively Gothic *Bertram* for the Drury Lane Theater, it was sluagh word of mouth (and influence at major newspapers) that made *Bertram* a hit.

Spiritualism was also a boon to the sluagh. The sluagh's innate ability to see the wraiths of the dead made the rigmarole of seances unnecessary (and sometimes embarrassing), but the spirit of inquiry that serious spiritualists possessed impressed some of the more socially minded sluagh. One of the most comfortable livings that a sluagh could make in a city like London was that of spiritual advisor. Reading cards, palms and tea leaves, gazing into crystal balls and occasionally facilitating a real contact with the dead, sluagh fortune tellers lived well off of the belief in the spirit world.

Furthermore, the manners of the era struck a chord with the sluagh. The stiff formality of the Victorian era, the emphasis placed on dignity and reserve, the strict rules of courtship and social interaction, and most of all, the importance placed on embarrassing secrets — all of these resonated deeply with the highly formal sluagh, particularly those of the Seelie Court. And if these rules of conduct were honored as often in the breach as in the observance it didn't really matter — the perception was more important to the sluagh than the reality.

And so the crawlers threw themselves into the spirit of the age, socially at least. They even ventured into social circles where they'd never before ventured. Certain daring souls even went so far as to learn how to dance, and threw balls that attracted the *creme de la creme* of both mortal and fae society. The Gothic sensibility of the early 19th century in particular also lent a sort of chic to sluagh-ish affairs; readers who shuddered their way through *Udolpho* or *The Monk* had wonderfully vivid imaginations, and produced flavors of Glamour that sluagh found delightful.

As avid observers of the human and fae conditions, however, the sluagh knew that this glorious period of manners would soon pass. Certain more enterprising members of the kith, however, set about to do something about that inevitability. While rumors of sluagh involvement in Victoria's abnormally long reign can be dismissed as pure fantasy, there is no denying the effectiveness of the concerted sluagh effort to codify and immortalize the glories of the Victorian period.



## Fogs

Think of London during the Victorian era, and one thinks of fog. Deep, pea-soup blankets of yellow and white, the legendary fogs of London were initially a godsend to the city's sluagh. Augmenting the crawlers' already legendary powers of concealment, the nightly fogs enabled sluagh to vanish with ease, confounding foes and policemen alike. On a more sinister note, sluagh assassins functioned virtually unhindered by the thick clouds billowing along city streets; a cantrip (now supposedly lost) made the fog clear as day. Indeed, Unseelie sluagh frequently indulged in sadistic games of cat-and-mouse with targets or even innocent bystanders. A favorite pastime involved harrying travelers through foggy mazes into inhospitable neighborhoods, then watching the victims attempt to find a way home with life and purse intact. A variation involved silently descending on unsuspecting coachmen, removing them, and hijacking the carriages into the foggy depths of night.

Other kith said that the sluagh owned the fogs, even going so far as to claim the crawlers could conjure them. While this latter was an exaggeration (in truth, the fogs were an increasingly unbalanced combination of precipitation and toxic industrial byproduct), sluagh certainly did take full advantage of the opportunities the fog offered. Nightmare chimera born of people's fear of the fog quickly became the sluagh's servants, prowling the dark streets to deliver messages of more or less sinister stripe. Other sluagh supposedly did learn to modify the fogs to some extent, thickening them or slowing their progress as it suited the sluagh's needs.

It wasn't until the industrial fogs grew to absurd levels of toxicity that the sluagh realized that their plaything had turned on them. Sluagh constitutions, rarely robust, suffered from all the respiratory ailments the choking fogs brought with them. The chimera of the fog grew twisted and feral, and many broke free from sluagh reins. As the fogs grew to legendary status, the sluagh's mastery of them faded into the realm of legend.

In the end, the sluagh were as glad as anyone else to see the air cleaned up and the worst of the fogs scrubbed away.

## Immigration

Despite the bone-deep hatred of sea travel all sluagh possess, a hardy few did manage to emigrate to the brave new world of the Americas. Most of those who did come across were independently wealthy from their human endeavors and could afford private cabins; the rest came as stowaways. The sluagh who could stand the

psychological horrors (specifically, the crowding) of traveling steerage has not yet been born.

Initially, the sluagh were at something of a disadvantage in the New World. While other kith were migrating (sometimes literally) by the boatload to the boundless treasures of America as well as being born there, the sluagh mostly huddled in the Old Country, unwilling to dare the trans-Atlantic voyage. True, sluagh were born in the New World as in the old, but precious few crawlers emigrated. As such, members of other kith drastically outnumbered the sluagh in the Americas. This state of affairs continued until well after the turn of the 20th century, by which time seagoing accommodations had improved to the point where more sluagh actually felt comfortable on board.

Slightly more curious is the fact that from the middle of the 19th century until the 1930s, a disproportionate number of sluagh underwent the Chrysalis. Essentially, the American "birth" rate for sluagh for that period of 80 years was higher than for any other kith. That imbalance ended roughly about the time the sluagh population became equivalent to that of the other kith. This coincidence had certain more religious fae making dire commentaries about how the Tuatha de Danaan must be interfering somehow with the cycle of Changeling souls, holding some up in their souls' great journey to "even things out" in the mortal world.

Oddly enough, five years after the Accordance War ended, the numbers of new sluagh started rising again, and no one has an explanation for that.

Yet.

## The Return

Unlike the other kith, the sluagh were prepared for the consequences of the lunar landing in 1969. The space program and print media were both riddled with sluagh; they knew what was ahead and what the results might be. Emerging from centuries of minimal contact with the other commoner kith, the sluagh attempted to warn the others of the imminent changes. To no sluagh's surprise, they were ignored or dismissed. Others deemed it more likely the progress of science to the moon would usher in a new era of Banality, and rudely told the sluagh to crawl back into their holes and die.

This slight was not forgotten. Sluagh projections and prophecies were kept among the kith. Sluagh efforts to minimise the coming disaster were restricted to helping other sluagh. Texts that might have prepared other changelings for the return of the sidhe were kept locked away in moldering cabinets.



And when the gates of Arcadia reopened, and the sidhe came pouring out, the sluagh watched from behind locked doors, cantrips readied and needle-thin swords in hand. The tyrants had come home, and the crawlers knew better than anyone what was coming.

## The War and What Came After

Some few token sluagh, mostly Seelie, responded to the sidhe's impudent call for vassalage. The rest remained hidden, waiting for events to develop. Develop they did, sadly along the lines many sluagh had predicted. Sidhe arrogance clashed with commoner independence. The growing independent streak of the earthly Unseelie Court added to the friction, and relations between nobles and commoners steadily deteriorated. However, the Night of the Iron Knives was a shock even to the sluagh. No one had expected anything this sudden, this bloody, this foul. The murder of rivals was one thing, but the use of iron? When several influential sluagh were immediately contacted by the wraiths of those Kithain slaughtered by the sidhe, demanding justice and vengeance from beyond the grave, sluagh attempts to resist the tide of history seemed as futile as Canute's.

For once the Unseelie sluagh took the lead in dictating kith policy. As loathsome as the actions of the nobles had been, the insult that the other Kithain had levied against the sluagh had not been forgotten. The sluagh would put no battalions of troops in the field; to the sluagh it mattered not a whit if the trolls were cut down in ranks. Instead, the crawlers would do as they always had: They would bring fear to the enemy. This time, though, the enemy was not a gaggle of misbehaving children. This time the enemy was fair game. In other words, it was time for the sidhe to know fear.

Whisper-thin swords were blooded in the night. Slings and blowguns claimed victim after victim. Todd the Gray, greatest of the sluagh assassins to emerge from the conflict, made Lord Dafyll's general staff his personal project, and being assigned to Dafyll's camp became a death warrant. To this day, there are still questions as to who actually did take Dafyll at the last. Not one sluagh would be surprised if it were Todd the Gray.

Some sluagh did join the more conventional struggle. Eleanor Dell and her fellow couriers granted the commoner armies what information from sluagh sources she could, and carried their messages across enemy lines. Other sluagh actually fought in ranks, although pitifully ill-prepared for the sort of stand-up fight the troll generals insisted upon. A few clandestinely supported the movements of regular troops, springing traps on pursuing sidhe forces.

It was not enough. Perhaps if the sluagh had pooled their efforts from the beginning.... But no, the insult had bitten too deeply, and the trolls could never bend enough to ask the sluagh for help. And so pride and vanity doomed the commoner alliance.

## Rex Revenit

The emergence of the Lion of Tara did not catch the sluagh entirely by surprise. By the time Dafyll forced the 4th Troll Commons back to Manhattan, the sluagh knew the war was lost and had begun looking around for contingencies. It was at this point that certain wild prophecies among the sidhe about the coming of a new king filtered back to the elders of the kith. Evidence was weighed, the truth sifted out, and long before Queen Mab recognised David Ardry, the sluagh knew his name and his temper.

As soon as Ardry was positively identified as the new king the prophecies spoke of, the sluagh set to work learning as much of him as they could. The results were moderately promising, and so when the redcaps mutter that their sluagh-carried request for reinforcements to take True Thomas in Times Square was "mysteriously" lost, they speak with perhaps more truth than they know.

The ascent of David Ardry to the throne was anticlimactic, at least from a sluagh perspective. With the immediate crisis of the war gone, many fae chose to let any ties they had with the sluagh lapse. Trolls placed themselves at the forefront of commoner negotiation teams; Unseelie sluagh muttered that they could hardly lose as badly at the table as they had in the field. Some wise nobles and commoners, particularly those with some grasp of tactics or strategy, cultivated sluagh allies. But generally the political process ground on without sluagh input, save when the trollish negotiators needed the odd fact verified. When peace was finally achieved, the event was less momentous for the sluagh than it was for some. After all, it was the peace of the commoner army — and many members of that army were ashamed to admit that they'd needed sluagh aid.

## Modern Days

Curiously enough, despite their gloomy demeanors (and exceedingly glum reputations) most sluagh are secretly of the faction that holds that a new Spring will supersede the coming Winter. This explains their frantic quest for knowledge; by capturing and weaving secrets, they are ensuring that the old stories and tales survive the coming storm. When the new Spring comes, the grimoires and diaries of the sluagh will hold



the secrets that the fae of this new age will need, and in some way the memories of the sluagh will live on.

The flip side of this desperate rush toward posterity is, however, the ingrained sluagh belief that few, if any, of their kind will survive this approaching Winter. The days ahead promise to be ruled by brute

strength, not subtlety, and as such most sluagh discount their chances of surviving to see the new Spring. It is regarded as the absolute worst manners possible to discuss the promise of the new Winter with sluagh, and even among themselves members of the kith mention it only in passing, or through euphemisms.







Smelly

Slimy

Creepy

Daisy

Forbidden

Ancient Lore



# CHAPTER TWO: AND WHO ARE WE?

*I'll hang with the guilty  
I know where to stand  
You've really done nothing  
And I lie when I can*

-Peter Kingsberry, "Real Blood Anger"

## Sluagh, Themselves and Others

Everyone knows who the sluagh are. They're the nasty, smelly, slimy, creepyweirdoswhoknoweverything about everyone. They spy on all the other kith, hold forbidden revels in cavernous mazes deep beneath the earth, and occasionally sacrifice childlings to whatever dark things they worship. They also eat spiders and toads, hate sunlight and all the other kith, and can't be trusted as far as a boggan can throw an overweight troll.

Of course, no one has ever seen one of these orgiastic rites (or, for that matter, a labyrinth of tunnels with a sign reading "sluagh made this"). No one has ever seen sluagh perform any sacrifice, human or fae. Most sluagh, even their detractors admit, are impeccably, if somewhat morbidly, groomed. While their taste in wine and tea is abominable, sluagh treasure spiders far too much ever to devour them, save as part of a cantrip's workings, and as for the toads, well, frogs' legs supposedly taste like chicken.

So what does that leave? Not much. In fact, if one carefully examines the multitude of charges laid at the sluagh's feet over the years, one finds almost no evidence to support any of them.

What is left? That they're weird. They're strange. Standoffish. Secretive.

The other kith fear that, and perhaps with good reason. But, lacking a skeleton upon which to build their fears, they constructed one from phantasms and half-remembered nightmares. Before too long, the image of sluagh as foulness incarnate had stuck, at least in the minds of the other kith. (The essence of sluagh-hood had long since been formed in the minds of humanity, and no slander from the mouths of gossipy sidhe would ever change that.)

So there it is. The iconic sluagh is untrustworthy, predatory, foul and terrifying. That's the lie they all believe.

And you know something?

The sluagh don't care.



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## SluaghFashion

Very, very few sluagh ever dress in bondage gear or other such apparel. Those who do are almost all Unseelie, and do so for the shock value more than anything else. What's the point of a sluagh wearing a bondage outfit if she can just slither out of it, anyway?

Instead, most sluagh go for conservative and even formal dress, with a tendency toward the Victorian. Top hats, lace, embroidery, clawhammer coats and the like are more often seen among sluagh, who found the stilted formality of that era much to their liking.

## Among the Kith

As a whole, the sluagh occupy a well-defined place on the fringes of Kithain society. At least, the place that they are supposed to occupy has been well-defined. They are the equivalent of the witch-woman in the wood, or the unkempt Kabbalist emerging from his basement, to receive the surreptitious petitioner. Everyone goes to the sluagh when they need help, but no one admits it.

Of course, one does not simply drop in on the local sluagh. While you may know where the local Cold Fish (a nickname lovingly bestowed by the pooka) dwells, it is a bad idea to simply barge in and demand attention. Even the crassest redcap, the lustiest satyr knows better than that. Those who do intrude so rudely often live to regret it.

The rest don't.

In truth, an elaborate series of social rituals, almost a courtship, has grown up between the sluagh and those who would seek their assistance. The petitioner must make the proper inquiries, and make them politely. It is not necessary to express one's interest to a sluagh directly, however — simply drop enough hints and the local sluagh will become aware of the potential transaction to be made. Indeed, the more artful the indirection associated with the inquiry, the more amenable the sluagh is likely to be to her incipient visitor.

Of course, not all requests are heard. It's a seller's market for good information among the fae, and this means that the sluagh can afford to be selective in their customers. If the object of a potential client's interest is something that the sluagh cannot help her with, or if the information requested is not something the sluagh wishes to share, or if the prospective client simply rubs the sluagh the wrong way, then there is no sale, and that's the end of it.

Once a sluagh has decided to take a client, however, things proceed rapidly. The client, once accepted, receives an invitation — written, verbal or chimerical — to meet with the sluagh, usually during twilight hours. Sluagh value punctuality in their clients, and should one be late without a very pressing reason, it is likely the entire arrangement will be canceled.

## WheelingsandDealings

Business is never conducted over High Tea. Instead, the matter is usually discussed in a lounge or drawing room (in the case of wealthy sluagh). Business is business, but High Tea is for sluagh eyes only, and even the most trusted clients are not privy to some secrets.

When setting the terms of a deal, sluagh are first and foremost after information of their own. The latest political maneuverings at court, the rumblings among the Unseelie gangs, whether Lady Gossamer has ended her dalliance with Lord Bluster — all of these are of tremendous interest to sluagh. While any given piece of information may seem trivial, in context even the lightest piece of apparent fluff can carry great weight.

Take, for example, the news of the end of Lord Bluster's romance. While that in and of itself may not signify much, other factors can come into play. If one sluagh had heard that Lady Gossamer was suspected of having gone Unseelie (with rumors of even darker ties), and if another knew that Lord Bluster himself had been making distinct noises about switching his allegiances, things get interesting. If a third sluagh adds the tidbit that it was only about the time that Lord Bluster's politics had started getting unsavory that Lady Gossamer had expressed an interest in him, when previously she had referred to him as "Lord Blunderbuss," suddenly what had been news of a standard bit of sidhe flirtation takes on a whole new meaning. With the addition of the datum that Lady Gossamer had abandoned Lord Bluster, a clever sluagh can put the pieces together, scratching the surface of a romance and uncovering a failed recruitment on the part of the Shadow Court.

No information is worthless to the sluagh. It's simply a matter of putting the news in its proper context.

Other trade goods that sluagh find acceptable are books (particularly hand-set ones), woodcut prints, particularly clever treasures (though nockers had best be careful not to tell sluagh just how clever their creations are), and of course Glamour in any way, shape or form. Coin is not something most sluagh are interested in, above and beyond what is required for them to maintain a reasonably ascetic existence.

What any given sluagh is willing to trade, however, is a different story. Usually a Kithain comes to a sluagh for a very specific reason, wanting a very specific bit of information, and odds are that's exactly what she'll get. No more, no less.



That doesn't mean that sluagh don't like to wheel and deal, however, and even the youngest sluagh manages to acquire a fascinating collection of junk that might prove irresistible to a visitor. Old books whose secrets have been plumbed, pointless treasures, bottles of wine too good to drink — all of these are things that an enterprising sluagh will attempt to unload on an unwary visitor. Mind you, it's not that these things are worthless; it's that they're worthless to any given sluagh.

Of course, there's a matter of what all of these things get traded for. After all, most visitors come prepared only to pay for the specific things they're after.

The answer inevitably, is information. Gossip. Stories. Not by skulking and chimera alone do the crawlers gather their knowledge. In exchange for a rare book here, one sluagh acquires a promise to be updated on the developments surrounding the unusual circumstances in Count Elias' court. For a chimerical dagger there, another earns the trust of a member of the local pooka fagin's band, and suddenly gains an information conduit on the street.

And so the merry dance goes, and suddenly one looks around to find that there's barely anyone who isn't talking to, listening to, in debt to or on the enemy list of the local sluagh.

Frightening, isn't it?

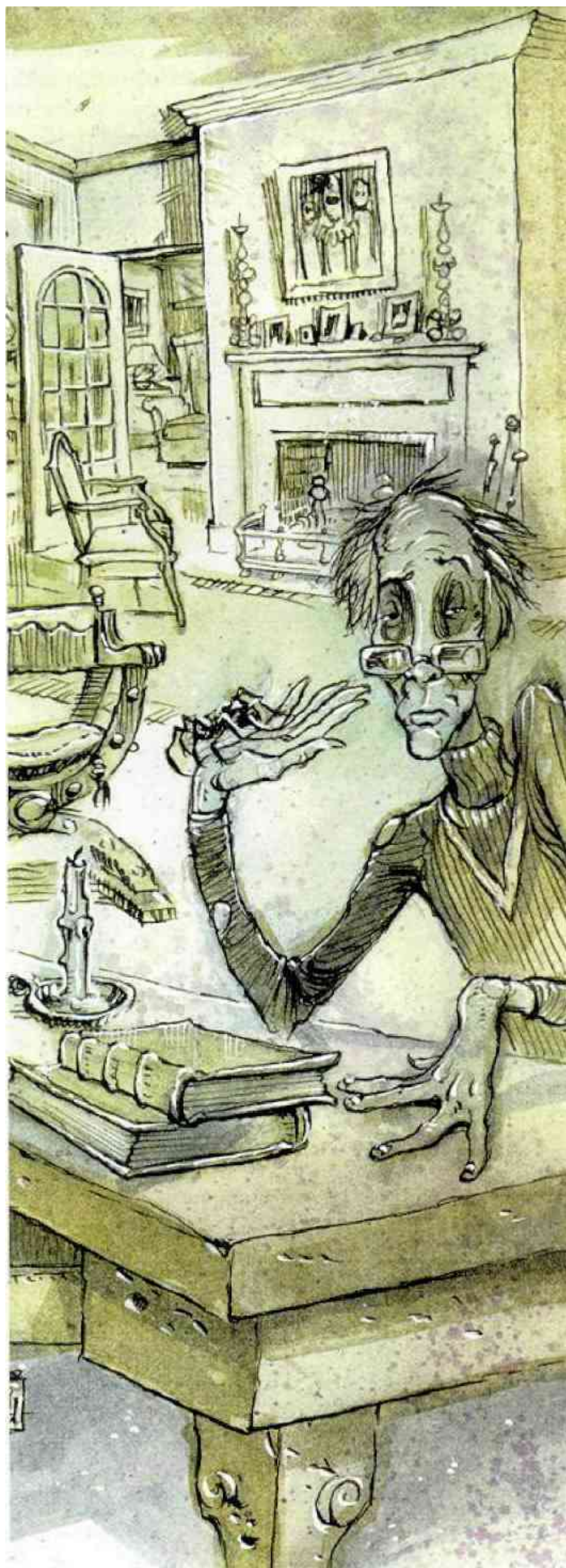
## SluaghHoards

### **What you will find in a sluagh's home:**

Books, scrolls, maps, blueprints, suspiciously sharp letter openers, candles, wax drippings, animal skulls, stuffed creatures of all shapes and sizes, pets that make no sounds, spiderwebs, candelabras, brass and silver furnishings, overstuffed furniture that's gotten frayed, vinyl LPs and 8-track tapes, expensive rug hidden under layers of paper, rolltop desks, crystal wine glasses, brandy snifters that have been turned into ant farms and flags from countries long gone.

### **What you will not find in a sluagh's home:**

Shiny electronics; two-handed edged weapons (chimerical or otherwise); suits of armor (ditto); friendly puppies; Persian cats; gleaming hardwood floors; skylights; books about self-actualization, winning friends or influencing people; trendy magazines; cute stuffed animals; mugs that say "Kiss Me, I'm a Changeling;" mint-condition comic books; much of anything with a licensed character on it; bottled water and welcome mats.







## Other Professions

Sluagh do have other vital niches in Kithain society besides just serving as information brokers. Some sluagh get the urge to act, the itch to do, and many even act on it. Truth be told, it isn't hand—the very nature of the sluagh seeming makes a crawler ideal for all sorts of missions shunned by more savory changelings (who somehow don't seem to feel that they've been quite so sullied by paying for the dirty deeds that the sluagh perform in their names).

### Assassins

It's a dirty job, and one for which many sluagh (especially Unseelie) are particularly well-suited. Most sluagh assassins are male, though a few of the most (dis)reputable are women, with the occasional childling thrown in to make things interesting.

Most assassination contracts are for chimerical hits only, which are usually performed with blowguns, stilettos, poignards or poison. Very few sluagh will take cold iron contracts; who do are unsavory even by sluagh standards.

### Terrorizers

Once, the sluagh's purpose was to instill fear, and that calling has not been entirely lost. There are still many sluagh who make it either their profession or their hobby to cause fear in mortal and changeling alike. An elite few are professionals (King David supposedly keeps one on staff); the rest are talented and enthusiastic amateurs.

It is believed that terrorizers are responsible for the hallucinogenic drug known as Enchanter, which brings mortals into the Dreaming. While sluagh are adept at causing fear without the help of chimera, no true artist works without her best tools.

### Couriers

While the shortest distance between points A and B may be a straight line, that doesn't help much if there are a bunch of redcaps sitting on that straight line with dining utensils and growling stomachs. On the other hand, a sluagh may go by way of points C, D, E, Q, % and Z, but he'll get the message there in good time and perfect confidence. Being able to slither through pipes and down sewer gratings does have its advantages in the messenger business.

### Spies

Sluagh make superb spies. They're hard to spot, excel at creating chimera for the purposes of information gathering, and have a natural flair for sneakiness. A sluagh informant also has the advantage of being plugged into the sluagh gossip network, which is a formidable clearinghouse of information.

On the other hand, sluagh make terrible infiltrators. No one trusts sluagh to begin with, so attempting to win the confidence of the enemy is a battle that is lost before it is begun. Crawler spies generally restrict themselves to surveillance and the changeling equivalent: of wiretapping; it's what they're best suited for anyway.



## High Tea

Sluagh don't go in for secret societies and hidden conspiracies, *per se*. In a manner of speaking, the entire kith is one giant secret society, and as for conspiracies, well, the sluagh have more than they have spiders. Instead, there is only one social ritual that all sluagh, even the most rebellious Unseelie wilder, take part in.

High Tea.

The procedure is simple. A sluagh decides that she's hosting High Tea. She sends invitations to up to a dozen other sluagh, who respond. On the appointed day, the guests arrive, each bearing a story and something to add to the feast. Now, bearing in mind that in fae mien sluagh subsist on weak tea, sour wine, stale cakes and the like, it's just as well that members of other kith aren't usually invited to attend.

Once the gathering officially commences, the refreshments are served in cracked cups and chipped plates. It's not that the sluagh are cheap; indeed, the glasses and settings used for High Tea were usually quite expensive at one time. Rather, High Tea makes a statement about decay, and what the sluagh themselves once were. For that reason, the crystal goblets have spiderweb cracks, and the hand-fired pottery plates all have cracked edges and flaking glaze.

Prematurely aging one's dishes is *declassée*.

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## Gross Munchies

The subsistence of sluagh on things generally considered inedible by normal humans is a relatively recent development. Sluagh have always been capable of obtaining nourishment from unpleasant foodstuffs — the food for the ritual summoning of the crawlers was not entirely symbolic — but in the past their palates accepted a wider range of tastes. It wasn't until the late Middle Ages and the rise of the Abbey Lubbers that public perception drastically altered sluagh diet. By the time Buttery Spirits and such had become well-established, sluagh in their fae seeming could eat nothing but the rotten victuals that they'd only picked at previously. To date, the change has shown, no sign of reversing, and there's no evidence that such a development is imminent.

Don't feel too bad for the sluagh, though. Part and parcel with the notion that they eat revolting things is the idea that they enjoy doing so. To a sluagh, a bottle of vinegary burgundy is as delicious as Dom Perignon might be to you or me — and much, much less expensive.

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Tale-telling, or more accurately, swapping information, is the primary activity at a High Tea. The secondary purpose of the gathering is to reaffirm the local sluagh pecking order — it's a way to check up on who's talking too much, who doesn't know how to set a High Tea table, and so on. Finally, High Tea enables sluagh to perform a sort of census of their own kind. Antisocial at the best of times, sluagh often go months without seeing another of their kind. A High Tea invitation, even if it is refused, is a way to inquire of another sluagh's well-being without intruding.

## From the Notes of Dr. Guillaume Harkins, Child Psychologist

...I swear, Dr. Harkins, Mary was sitting at her table in the basement with her toy tea set playing pretend, and I looked over to see how she was doing, and suddenly there were these... these *things* sitting at the table with her. The creatures with her were all pale with dead eyes, and smelled like fish or garbage, I swear they did. I blinked and they were gone, but then Mary turned to me and gave me such a *look*, doctor — it frightened me. I've taken her tea set away, but now she just sits up in her room with the door closed, and sometimes I swear I hear her talking up there, I just don't hear anyone answer

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## Love and the Single Sluagh

Sluagh are solitary creatures for the most part. They accrue their own libraries, furnish their own lairs, groom their own chimera, and live their own lives. Only High Tea or a rare group terrorizing will serve to draw sluagh together in large groups. Even when the kith as a whole is seeking vengeance on some offender, it is a community of individuals that is mobilized, not a mob.

That being said, occasionally love thaws even a sluagh's clammy heart. Most wilder sluagh do have a strong romantic streak, though it is tinged with nihilism, desperation and a good strong dose of Gothic self-deprecation. ("He'll never look at me, so I shall be content to pine away and write poetry that he will read upon my death. Only then will he realize that it was I who should have been his soul's partner...." is typical, though even sluagh get fed up with the more melodramatic of their kind eventually.) However, such sluagh are likely to shy away from any real connection to another. They find that the angst-ridden loneliness they are used to is infinitely preferable to the messiness of real relationships.



There is a small subgrouping of sluagh who can best be described as detached sensualists. These crawlers also shy away from relationships, but do seek out decadence for its own sake. Such sluagh are commonly involved in things like the music industry, comic-book publishing and the world of fine art, all of which provide maximum exposure to creativity with a minimal expectation of long-term attachment.

Sometime, though, Cupid fires off multiple rounds, and a sluagh manages to find himself in a relationship. When sluagh wed, they remain completely monogamous, and tend to have whirlwind courtships followed by appallingly sentimental weddings. Hamal of Goldengate once remarked at a sluagh wedding that he preferred the crawlers morose; it was when they got happy that they really scared him. In any case, a mated pair of sluagh (gender preference notwithstanding) usually settles into one or the other's warren, blissfully increasing the clutter.

## Truth

When you consider that they are a kith with a reputation as slanderers and liars, the sluagh are almost obsessively concerned with the notion of truth. Much of this concern relates, predictably, not to the notion of sluagh themselves as pathologically truthful, but rather to the nature of truth and the sluagh's ability to game accurate information.

An informant or trading partner who brings information that is verifiably true will win respect and favors from the sluagh with which she deals, and is likely to be gifted with pertinent information that sluagh themselves cannot make use of (such as the location of certain interesting chimera, a rumor from court that just might be relevant, and so on). On the other hand, should someone knowingly attempt to pass false information off on a crawler, the repercussions will be swift. The most common response is to make absolutely everything that is known about the offender publicly known, and the more embarrassing details that are spilled this way, the better.

Should, incidentally, a non-sluagh infer that a sluagh is a liar, nothing will happen. However, should that same inference be made about a sluagh who has given his word that he is being truthful, then the pillars of Heaven will shake with the severity of the sluagh response.

While most sluagh have little or nothing to do with the antiquated ideas of honor that hamstring the trolls, all regard their word as sacrosanct — if given properly. Sluagh have no problem with lying, shading the truth, making painful crypticisms or flat-out refusing to answer even the most pointed questions, but if a sluagh states something is a fact — and gives her word that this is so — then that's that.

On one level this is an economic proposition: If sluagh information were regarded as untrustworthy, then no one would seek it out. On a more metaphysical level, however, what a sluagh does is what a sluagh is, and should a sluagh sully his work, he sullies himself.

Even Unseelie sluagh hold fast to this notion of sworn truth as inviolate. Should a sluagh ever give his word and then promulgate a falsehood, he will be reprimanded, ostracised, and — in rare cases — silenced by having his tongue cut out. Usually this is done with a chimerical blade. Extreme cases, however, call for extreme measures.

...And so I was there, Your Grace, when Sir Coll formally stated that he believed the sluagh, hight Lucas, to be a liar. As the sluagh, making a rare enough appearance in court, had just offered Sir Coll his word that the information concerning the location of the stockpile of cold iron weapons was accurate, this pronouncement on Sir Coll's part was met with equal parts shock and amusement by those experienced courtiers in attendance. Shock, obviously, because even the lowliest of them knew how closely the sluagh hold their truths, and amusement in anticipation of seeing the arrogant wilder receive a well-deserved comeuppance.

Lucas merely turned and left the hall, leaving Sir Coll's callow companions to congratulate him on his "triumph."

The next day, at dawn, a notice appeared on the gates of the keep. In simple block lettering was written Sir Coll's human name, as well as his address, telephone number and other pertinent details. This letter was, of course, torn down immediately.

The day after, the first notice reappeared, with an additional sheet attached. Said sheet was a series of juvenile love poems Sir Coll had apparently been attempting to write to Lady Eilown. Most were, as you might expect, awful. This notice was also torn down, but it was not hours before surreptitious copies began circulating around court.

A guard was posted by the keep gate the next morning, but somehow a notice was still posted. It contained the previous days' missive, as well as the unsavory detail of how Sir Coll had been less than chivalrous with a lady last Highsummer's, and had in fact used several rather slanderous names for her in front of her champion.

The postings continued for 13 days. The details that came to light were increasingly unpleasant, yet no one doubted their veracity. The louder Coll complained of his persecution, the less anyone believed him. His friends deserted him on the 11th day, when certain comments he'd made about them were made public.

On the 13th day, as you know, irrefutable proof as to Coll's involvement in the matter of the cold iron blades was posted. Beneath it, in a spidery hand, was written the phrase, "Or I could be lying."

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# The Courts

Unfortunately (from a sluagh perspective), the fact is that there is no such thing as neutrality between the Courts. One is either Seelie or Unseelie; there is no middle ground. However, the sluagh try to distance themselves from the formal incarnations of the Courts. Rather, each sluagh's allegiance is a personal thing, reflected in action and thought.

## The Unseelie Court

Unseelie sluagh are, at the very least, more sociable than their Seelie cousins. Making the occasional appearance at court and on the club scene, Unseelie sluagh have oozed into the social life of the Kithain, but they do so for their own ends, not out of any allegiance to the Court's so called higher ideals. Seelie sluagh have the undying contempt of their Unseelie kith, who refer to them as "shut-ins," "moles and trolls" and the like. Occasionally Unseelie sluagh will indulge in a game of "Whack-a-mole," in which they take turns trying to chivvy a Seelie sluagh out of his den, then harrying him back inside. Pretty much anything goes in these games: chimera, prank calls, breaking windows, etc. Setting the target's domicile on fire is considered to be cheating. The only caveat as regards this sort of behavior is a simple one: Not in front of the other kith. As brutal as the game can get, it's a sluagh thing. When confronted with the presence of an outsider of any stripe, the sluagh instinctively close ranks, regardless of Court affiliation.

Some things belong in the family.

Unseelie wilders are the only sluagh who actively move in groups. Even among the relatively extroverted crawlers of the Unseelie Court, childlings and grumps rarely seek company other than their own kith.

As for the tenets of the Unseelie code, most pass right by the sluagh. Changedoesn'tmatterto themone way or another, as long as they're kept informed as to what those changes are. Glamour may be free, hut Unseelie sluagh prefer to slither into someone else's stash of dross and liberate it. Passion may come before duty, but when your passion and your duty — causing fear — are one and the same, this pronouncement doesn't carry much weight.

It is only the last point in the Unseelie code — "**Honor is a lie**" — that matters to these sluagh. With this they wholeheartedly agree. For honor's sake sluagh take abuse from drunken trolls and arrogant sidhe, and say nothing. For honor's sake the sluagh lost their voices even while honoring their promises. For honor's sake sluagh are spat upon by the fine and upright dwellers of Seelie courts, all of whom then sneak off to beg the local sluagh for blackmail on a rival or news of a paramour's nocturnal whereabouts.

The hell with that, the Unseelie say. Honor's gotten the sluagh kicked in the place where their teeth used to be, and they've had it. So now let the mad dance of terror begin. Let the shadows crawl from the walls and remind the fat little kiddies







that they should be afraid of the dark, even with a million dolls to protect them. Let the sidhe lords tremble at what the slugh know about them, and the trolls be undone by their antiquated ethics. It's time for slugh to stand up for slugh, to drag the kith out of the Middle Ages and into a place of respect.

And even if the other kith don't respect them in the end, the Unseelie say that the others will at least fear them. That, in their opinion, is just as good.

## The Seelie Court

Seelie slugh are of the Court, but not with it. They do hold to the Seelie code as tightly as the most honourbound troll; it's just that they don't advertise that they're doing so. Slugh tend places of Glamour quietly and unobtrusively, trusting that only the people who deserve to find such wellsprings will do so. While the slugh appreciation for beauty is not to all tastes, who is to say a dew-spangled spiderweb is less a thing of beauty than a Monet? While slugh may not engage in public romances, they certainly do have their moments. As for never forgetting a debt, well, the slugh never do — one way or the other.

Seelie slugh try very hard to avoid their Unseelie cousins, well-aware of the damage these miscreants cause the reputation of the kith as a whole. However, Seelie slugh just take the high road, ignoring the antics of their Unseelie counterparts and continuing to exist as they always have.

A certain number of Seelie slugh do ply the Unseelie professions: spy, terrorizer, assassin. These few are wrapped in a fierce shadow war with the Unseelie slugh engaged in the same fields. The bones of contention are many: pride, prestige, treasures and so on, and the fighting is vicious. The battles are brief and hidden, taking place in sewer tunnels, libraries, computer rooms, ventilation ducts and any other places where two slugh at cross-purposes might find themselves.

## The Hidden War

There are only two rules in this unspoken war:

If you use cold iron, it can be used on you. — This is self-explanatory. Only rarely does the shadow war yield real victims; most of the victories are more along the lines of counting coup for opponents dispatched chimerically.

No one outside of the: slugh can know of it. — It's a family matter, and slugh family matters are never put on display for anyone else. Period. Anyone who speaks of the hidden war to a non-slugh, whether lover, friend, priest or psychiatrist, is silenced in the traditional slugh manner, and with cold iron. Often the one to whom the secret was spilled is made part of the punishment as well.



# TheShadowCourt

The third player in the game, the Shaodw Court, holds perverse fascination for the sluagh. On one hand, the Shadow Court's aims and intentions run counter to the vast majority of sluagh's own — such apocalyptic politicizing is something that most crawlers want nothing to do with. On the other hand, the fact that the Shadow Court deals in such an astounding amount of unrepentant sneakery holds a strong appeal for sluagh. Some, recruited by the Shadow Court for other reasons, get involved while telling themselves tha they're nor really interested in the politics, just the secrets. Slowly but surely this apolitical stance changes, however, and long-time sluagh agents are among the Shadow Court's most fanatical followers.

The sluagh of the Shadow Court themselves can best be described as like Unseelie sluagh, only more so. A disproportionate number of assassins and spies are numbered among the Court's sluagh adherents — stay-at-home types need not apply. Among the projects that Shadow sluagh are currently rumored to be working on are an increase in the potency of Enchanter,

## Bogies

There's a certain irony in the name of the sluagh's Thallain cousins. Sluagh by and large tend to be fans of *film noir* and dedicated Bogart fanatics, yet the namesakes of the inimitable Bogey are something that sluagh prefer never to discuss. While bogies may resemble sluagh superficially, the Thallain's actions are something even Unseelie sluagh would never stoop to.

Rumors of sluagh communication with and sheltering of bogies are greatly exaggerated; while a sluagh may shelter a Thallain briefly, she'll extract a heavy price in information for doing so. Besides, bogies have an unpleasant habit of spreading bodily fluids and ooze around, and no self-respecting sluagh wants that sort of gunk on her stuff.

On very rare occasions, a sluagh and a bogie will reach an accommodation on a deal, usually an assassirution. Such instances are never spoken of, even at High Tea; sluagh grumps rarely even mention the kith's existence to their younger brethren.

It's actually not that hard to tell a bogie from a sluagh. For one thing sluagh don't have teeth. On the other hand, enough scurrilous rumors about sluagh have been spread over the years chat more than a few Kithain have no idea how to tell a bogie from a crawler, and attribute the former's deeds to the latter.

a doppelganger program targeting sluagh advisors to Seelie nobles, and the creation of working pacts with the twisted wraiths called Spectres. Of course, this all could be hearsay, or it could be true, or it could be a series of rumors spread by the Shadow Court to see how the other Courts react...

Nonaffiliated sluagh who interact with the Shadow Court often find themselves falling into its orbit. As the sluagh and the Court both deal in secrets, sometimes contact is inevitable. However, it's not always the sluagh who initiate meetings. More than one Shadow Court member has actively pursued sluagh contacts, and the odd crawler has a profitable sideline in the form of an information pipeline to the Shadow Court.

Then again, those who deal with the Shadow Court are often blackmailed with that fact. Subsequently, they find themselves forced to deal with the Court again, and again, and again. Such sluagh usually end up in the Shadow Court's employ full-time - - after a few months of blackmail-inspired cooperation, it's hard to tell the difference, anyway.

# Seeing the Others

Sluagh have a distinct disadvantage when it comes to forming the communal opinion on the other kith, namely, that they know too much. Ignorance breeds charity, but when you know not only what your neighbor has done, but where he's hidden the bodies and why he did it, suddenly acceptance can be a great deal harder to come by.

This is not to say that the sluagh are disdainful of the other kith. Rather, the crawlers have no illusions about their fellow exiles from Arcadia, seeing their peccadillos and shortcoming in a light both harsh and unblinking. It is the fact that, from time to time, some sluagh share these observations, unmodified by romance or wishful thinking, that has done more than anything else to blacken the kith's name..

Pooka and sidhe, boggans and nockers, redcaps, satyrs, eshu and trolls — they don't want to hear the truth, you see. Why? Because they recognize it instinctively, and that means they can't hide from it any more. So, instead they blame the messenger.

## Boggans

As far as the sluagh are concerned, boggans put on a remarkable facade of industrious altruism. Need something to get done in a hurry? Call a boggan — she'll do the job in nothing fiat and tell you she was happy enough just to be of service.

Of course, that's the facade. Sluagh know better. Just because the boggans don't ask for praise and rewards doesn't mean that they don't expect to be drowned in them after every good deed. Indeed, behind closed doors there's an awful lot of bitching that goes on as to how boggans feel they're mistreated, taken for granted, and so on. Sluagh, through very little fault of their own, become privy to these conversations rather often, and as such have less regard for boggan "services freely rendered" than some might.



Recognizing in boggans a valuable source of information (though the signal-to-noise ratio is appalling), Seelie sluagh tend to be more patient with boggans wriggling for praise than they might be otherwise. They do recognise that most boggans are... insecure, rather than egotistical, and as such are not worth contempt, per se. Few boggan crafts are of much use to a sluagh — most sluagh weapons are assassins' tools, and armor on a sluagh is a fantasy — but the odd bit of heartfelt craftsmanship offered can win a boggan quite a few points in the eyes of her sluagh acquaintance.

Unseelie sluagh, on the other hand, see boggans as the equivalent of wells: pump them until they're dry, then toss garbage down the hole you've made. A boggan who gets drawn into the web of an Unseelie crawler will be Ravaged of any useful information, patted on the head, given some useless gossip to repeat that in all probability will make him look like a fool, and then sent on his way with a Wayfare cantrip to make sure he never, ever finds his way back again. A favorite Unseelie sport is called Tobogganing. In the game, each sluagh picks a local boggan and feeds her a bit of false information that's too juicy to keep a secret. A fortnight or so later, the sluagh gather over tea to see how far each of their rumors has gotten; the one who spawned the rumor that the most other sluagh have heard is declared the winner.

## Eshu

There is a difference between a liar (like a pooka) and a teller of tale, like an eshu. Sluagh have nothing but respect for these nomads, tinged perhaps by a bit of envy. The ultimate stay-at-homes, sluagh wonder every so often what it would be like to travel the world, to sleep beneath the open sky, and to be free. Then, inevitably, they retreat to their books and studies, dismissing the idle fantasies as counterproductive. Eshu bring those longings scurrying to the surface, even if it is only for a moment.

Eshu stories are something that sluagh enjoy. In their own way, eshu have as much dignity and regard for propriety as the sluagh do, and this endears the eshu to their night-walking cousins. In addition the eshu method of tale-telling — painting a rich verbal tapestry, replete with the smallest details — plays directly to what the sluagh want to hear. Far more information can be gleaned from an eshu's five-minute anecdote than can be taken from an hour's pooka-spawned ramblings.

Thus, there exists a cautious respect between the eshu and sluagh. Most sluagh suspect that the eshu have no idea why the Cold Fish like them, but simply dislike having enemies for no good reason. So the eshu take the proffered goodwill, politely refuse invitations to High Tea, and make their dealings with sluagh as pleasant as possible (though they prefer not to visit crawlers on their home territory. Something about claustrophobia....).

Unseelie sluagh do like playing upon the eshu's rather obvious pride in their tale-telling abilities. While a single eshu story is a good source of information, two are better.

If a sluagh can get an eshu talking all night, he's hit the jackpot. The way the sluagh encourages this is through a subtle program of flattery and other plays on an eshu's ego. ("Funny, I heard a story just like that, from a nocker of all people, last week. Mind you, you tell it much better than she did, but you don't have anything original, do you?")

Seelie sluagh take a somewhat more respectful tack. They'll milk a conversation for all it's worth, even going so far as to offer hospitality to the odd eshu whose tales are particularly enthralling. On the other hand, too much time in the company of an eshu starts those faint stirrings of wanderlust, and nothing makes a sluagh more uncomfortable.

## Nockers

The sluagh term for nockers is "busybodies." The implication, of course, is that it's the nockers' bodies that are busy, not their minds. While the incredible creative energy that oozes from nockers is impressive, sluagh regard the inevitably flawed products of grandiose nocker high concepts as wasteful, unpleasant vanity pieces. If a sluagh does something, she does it carefully and does it right. In contrast, the nocker predilection for diving right in just to see what the end result looks like can hit all the wrong buttons on a sluagh.

Furthermore, the nocker tendency to spout profanity like longshoremen on amphetamines — frequently, loudly and with little regard for bystanders — is anathema to sluagh sensibilities. Even the most vicious Unseelie sluagh assassin has some measure of couth, which is something that seems lost on the rack and run of nockers.

Seelie sluagh do often have grudging appreciation for what nockers create, even if they have no appreciation for the process itself. If a sluagh needs something from a nocker, the request is generally transmitted by courier, phone or fax; sluagh find the nocker insistence on face-to-face dealing unpleasant. It is often possible to find some wheat amidst the chaff of nocker conversation, but few Seelie sluagh are willing to invest the time and energy necessary to cultivate nocker contacts.

Unseelie sluagh have a much closer relationship with nockers, particularly with their Unseelie counterparts. Flawed as nocker work can be, the kith can frequently cook up the most fascinating devices for jimmying locks, cracking safes, and causing pain in new and interesting ways. Such unholy smiths will have a steady stream of sluagh clients, and even the odd Seelie crawler will wander by — just to be prepared, of course.

## Pooka

As one might expect, the kith that raises falsehood to an art form does not enjoy the warm regard of the sluagh. The random dispersal of truth and fiction, fact and lie throughout any given pooka's narrative sends weak-willed sluagh into hysterics. Tougher crawlers would simply grind their teeth, if they had any.



What bothers the sluagh so much is that pooka have no idea of the value of words. To a pooka telling a story, one word is as good as another, provided it makes for a good story. As they are incapable of understanding how important the precise choice of words is ("Did the duke make obeisance, or did he just nod?") in conveying to the listener exactly what happened, pooka drive sluagh batty trying to extricate pertinent details from hyperextended jokes. (Picture the response a comedian specialising in sexual humor and redneck jokes is likely to get performing at a convention of Chasidic rabbis, and you'll begin to get the idea.)

The fact that no pooka ever bom knows the meaning of the term "linear narrative" doesn't help matters, either. So, at the end of telling a long, rambling story filled with inaccuracies and outright falsehoods, all of which lead to a punchline that isn't particularly amusing, a pooka with an audience of sluagh can expect some rough treatment.

Unseelie sluagh most often deal with pooka when they need a lie spread. In instances like this, the sluagh will tell the pooka the exact truth of the situation. Then, he'll sit back to watch the fun as the pooka runs off to spread distortions all over town. The fact that there inevitably will be some truth in the stories being spread is the icing on the cake; a little bit of veracity simply lends credence to whatever inanities the pooka dreams up as addenda.

On the Seelie side of things, there's precious little patience for pooka eccentricity. A sluagh knows that whatever a pooka tells her will be untrustworthy. Still, the pooka's way of relating unadulterated bullshit that sounds juicy, or likewise tossing off a pertinent detail like so much trash, is enough to send the sluagh scurrying for her contacts to see if any of it makes sense.

Of course, none of it does, and the sluagh ends up feeling both put-out and rather vengeful. This is why pooka are afraid of sluagh; they have good reason to be. If feeling generous, a cranked-off sluagh merely interrupts a pooka's tale and matter-of-factly dissects it for fertilizer content; at worst, things get ugly.

## Redcaps

It is a truism among sluagh that the only secrets redcaps have relate to who's on the menu that night. While a sizeable minority of sluagh are quite aware of the supremacist myths the redcaps spin one another of the good old days of Winter, they doubt the beasts have the talent or strength left to them to regain that right, should Winter even come again.

What sluagh dislike most about redcaps is their utter lack of subtlety. While recaps can be cunning or sneaky, they almost always act in the most direct manner possible. This cuts through the decorum and ritual so near and dear to a sluagh's heart, leaving tattered shreds in its wake. Furthermore, the redcap approach is almost inevitably wasteful and noisy, and both concepts are anathema to the crawlers. The fact that redcaps seem to enjoy making as much noise as possible (and will use a depth charge to catch a minnow) makes their company exceedingly unpleasant.







Only the redcaps earn more hatred from Seelie sluagh than from Unseelie. While redcaps enjoy instilling sheer visceral terror, sluagh take unholy pleasure in showing redcaps who offend them the meaning of fear. Redcaps are creatures of the tangible world, and as the sluagh are masters of the intangible — the noise in the corner, the shadow on the wall, the sudden chill in the air — they have the rare ability to render redcaps helpless and quivering.

The odd Seelie redcap is most likely respected by the local sluagh, particularly for his disregard for appearances. However, such beings are filed under *rara avis*; there really aren't enough to consider.

Unseelie sluagh and redcaps have an uneasy sort of truce. Each side is quite aware of what the other can do, and neither wants to risk losing a squabble. Even the winner of such a conflict would probably spend a long time licking his metaphysical wounds, and so the two parties do a slow dance around each other. Unseelie sluagh certainly respect redcaps' sheer power, but do their best to make certain that they're never in a situation where raw power is all that matters.

## Satyrs

Satyrs are all about sensuality. Sluagh have evolved to a point where they represent a certain sort of icy intellectual detachment. With that in mind, the interplay between satyrs and sluagh is generally anything but dull.

Younger satyrs, particularly wilders drowning in their hormonal torrents, regard sluagh as the "unattainable score." In other words, they're worth pursuing simply because no one ever catches one without employing a hefty dose of Glamour, and maybe the Gift of Pan. There are even certain sexual predators among the furry-legged folk who claim that once a sluagh warms up, Cold Fish is the best thing on the menu. After all, there's all sorts of things you can do with a body that bends its such interesting ways (and that's before the issue of prehensile tongues comes up...).

So much for pruriency. In truth, sluagh and satyrs have a great deal to talk about, and the comparison between ascetic and Epicurean often yields remarkable insights. Older and more restrained satyrs are among the few outsiders ever welcomed at High Teas, and their knowledge of the stronger passions can lend new perspective on hits of information that have been evading sluagh understanding. Besides, pillow talk can produce some fascinating secrets, and wise satyrs know who are their best customers for that sort of thing.

When it comes to satyrs, Unseelie sluagh often regard them as tools for loosening lips that are tightly sealed. "I'll bet you can't get Lady Hermione into bed," is the sort of challenge that few satyrs can resist, and once the poor lady has been tumbled, all sorts of interesting revelations are likely to



follow. Perhaps she'll whisper secrets into her lover's ear, or maybe the scandal of sleeping with a satyr will be enough to weaken her in court for months. Whatever the result, an Unseelie sluagh will be quick to pounce on the advantage.

Seelie sluagh, on the other hand, tend to avoid satyrs if possible, unless there's a certain maturity level that's been reached on both sides. Sluagh don't want the hassle of fending off a satyr's advances, and a constant stream of innuendo makes for unpleasant conversation. Once conversation moves above waist level, discourse between sluagh and satyrs becomes both more common and more pleasant.

## Sidhe

Sluagh don't like most sidhe. There are a variety of reasons for this sort of blanket statement, but the upshot is that sluagh know too much about the sidhe to be able to like them. A sluagh can measure, to the last decimal point, the precise amount of disdain any given sidhe has for the "lesser kith" — why else do they struggle so hard not to be reincarnated as anything but sidhe?

Accordingly, most sluagh take a perverse pleasure in making sidhe uncomfortable. Around the self-proclaimed aristocracy, crawlers will deliberately play to stereotype, drawing out their sibilantssssssss and distorting their bodies in unpleasant ways. The idea behind the game is to make the sidhe audience for this performance squirm as much as possible without driving him off. As it's enough of a reach for most sidhe to even consider talking to a sluagh, the game also serves as an accurate measure of how desperately any given sidhe needs sluagh help.

Still, the game is juvenile, and is most often practiced by childling and wilders. More learned sluagh have other, more serious reasons for despising sidhe, which they are loath to reveal. The current theory among younger crawlers is that the great secret of the sidhe has something to do with precisely how the sidhe gained ascendancy over the other kith, and more than one reference has been made by a cryptic grump to the now-vanished kith, the fathan.

Seelie sluagh do have some appreciation for order, and thus do have an understanding of the post-Accordance War system implemented by the sidhe. While it is rare for sluagh to actually become part of noble courts some sluagh have been granted posts in absentia. Very lucky nobles have sluagh advisors, though this invariably generates backlash from more snobbish sidhe in attendance. More often, the local sluagh will decide which of a noble's courtiers are trustworthy, and then select one to serve as a contact. Such sidhe are often richly rewarded in information and treasures by both sides, but for the most part the sidhe whom the sluagh pick as trustworthy are not necessarily the most popular at court.

Unseelie sluagh, however, are far more interested in taking an active role in the political life of the Kithain. Such sluagh frequently hire themselves out to Unseelie courts — some say

the infamous Shadow Court is teeming with Unseelie sluagh — and as an integral part of the functioning of such organizations. It is well-known that Unseelie sluagh take great delight in tormenting the more pompous Seelie sidhe, but even Unseelie nobles are not safe from their sluagh employees' dislike.

The stereotype of the toadying sluagh, doing his best Peter Lorre impression at an Unseelie lord's booted feet, is exactly that: a stereotype. No sluagh worth his salt would waste the time necessary to wait in attendance on a lord, not when there are secrets to find and mischief to make. Even those sluagh who are part of a court are rarely at court. More often they're off doing the will of the local lord, or freelancing.

## Trolls

Trolls have it on good authority that sluagh are honorless, blackmailing creatures who dwell in labyrinthine caves beneath the Earth's surface. No troll who has ever ventured into one of these cavern complexes; troll elders tell their childlings with wagging beards, has ever returned.

Sluagh, on the other hand, wonder how troll knights could have vanished in these massive mazes, because they simply don't exist. The sewage and public transportation warrens beneath major cities, home to all sorts of unpleasant Prodigal, rather preclude the notion of hidden broods of sluagh tunneling busily away beneath the surface. Besides, underneath it all, sluagh *like* trolls. They've just given up on getting the trolls themselves to recognize that.

The sluagh and trolls have known each other from time immemorial. When the sluagh first emerged from the Slavic fonests into the cold light of Scandinavia, the trolls were there. Indeed, it was the trolls who initially aligned the sluagh with the Seelie Court..

That was a long time ago, however, and much has changed since. Betrayed many times, trolls have come to look upon sluagh as their betrayers. Differing conceptions of honor and truth have taken their toll, and now trollish hatred has become nigh-implacable.

Sluagh who know the truth of the trolls' history (and there are many) find themselves in an interesting quandary. Just as the trolls chafe in silence as regards the elevation of the sidhe, so, too, do the sluagh put up with trollish calumny. However, with an understanding of the indignities the trolls have suffered, most sluagh accept this slander without making an effort to correct it. The trolls have endured enough; let them cling to their illusions. Besides, should the giants ever direct their anger properly (say, at the sidhe) instead of at the elusive sluagh, it would shake Kithain society to its foundations. It is far better that the sluagh endure drunken insults, most of them not terribly cutting.

Unseelie sluagh take a lesson from the djinni, and are often experts at manipulating honorbound trolls to their own benefit. After all, if a sluagh can trick a troll into swearing an



oath that rebounds to the sluagh's benefit, well, it's always good to have the eighe-foot-tall blue killing machine on your side, isn't it? Sadly, the accusations of blackmail are often true, as the combination of touchy honor and access to the great and mighty makes trolls irresistible targets of particularly curious sluagh. Trolls wear their Frailty on their sleeve; Unseelie sluagh are quick to take advantage of it.

Seelie sluagh tend to give trolls distance, and that is the extent of their interaction. Even during the darkest hours of the Accordance War, many troll generals balked at using information from sluagh sources, and now that the crisis has ended, it makes the trolls much happier to be left alone. Accordingly, Seelie sluagh generally respect their wishes.

## Gallain

### Nunnehi

Few nunnehi dwell in the cities; fewer sluagh take to the country. While an individual sluagh may have a wealth of information on the behaviors and powers of a given nunnehi kith out of an abiding personal interest, by and large the nunnehi are ignored by the sluagh. In truth, they really have little to talk about with one another, and what other reason does a sluagh have for spending time with anyone?

### Inanimae

Sluagh have more dealings with the Inanimae than perhaps the rest of the kith put together. The stone faces of the golems see much, and are always willing to speak to those who can hear them. Foobars are less welcomed, as more and more sluagh turn to the computer as a method of communication, but even so, the sluagh know how to contact them in need.

## Prodigals

### Vampires

On rare occasions (rarer than the trolls would suppose), sluagh and Nosferatu vampires come in contact. Nosferatu are far less banal than one might suppose; their weird underground wonderlands can sometimes be as inspiring as terrifying. On rare occasions a sluagh has been taken to see the fungus gardens and other Nosferatu treasures, but generally the two races have a professional respect for each other, and nothing else. As sluagh are sometimes in positions of importance when it comes to the gathering and storage of information, from time to time they are pulled willy-nilly into vampiric politics by some Ventrue or Tremere looking to ghoul a convenient librarian. Otherwise, sluagh tend to travel beneath vampiric radar, and are just as happy to do so. After all, they know what the vampires are up to.

## Beneath the Roots

Sluagh do make extensive use of subterranean tunnels. They just don't hang out there all of the time. After all, tunnels are the best way to maneuver unseen these days. Furthermore, there are all sorts of interesting cables — phone lines, fiber optics and the like — sitting down there just waiting to be tapped.

For most, that's the extent of sluagh involvement in the underground world (though some have extensive mushroom farms). Cold Fish don't spend their nights wandering sewers looking for spawning pools, Black Spiral Dancer caems or the spot where the local Euthanatos buries his bodies. That sort of information isn't terribly useful to sluagh or other Kithain, and it's prohibitively dangerous to obtain. On the other hand, just because a crawler doesn't actively go out searching for such places doesn't mean that she doesn't find them....

Aleksei of the 13 Toes (in his latest incarnation) has mentioned in passing extensive hours spent in the company of Boston's Nosferatu, and has even made reference to some sort of bargain for mutual defense that he's struck with them. Then again, what goes for Aleksei doesn't necessarily go for the rest of the kith.

## Werewolves

More sluagh meet Garou (primarily Glass Walkers) online than in the flesh. Sluagh tend to see werewolves as variations on the troll theme (big, strong, honorbound and bad to annoy), and as such steer clear. It is only the rare Silent Strider or Stargazer who attempts to talk to a sluagh in person, and the crawlers like it this way.

## Mages

Only the Restless Dead have more contact with sluagh than do the workers of magick. As gatherers of esoteric knowledge of all sorts, sluagh have libraries and shops that are veritable beacons to hermetic mages and others interested in learning the secrets of the old powers. While the mages who come shopping at a sluagh's used bookstore may be unaware of the true nature of the proprietor rest assured that the sluagh knows exactly who — and what — she's selling to. On the other hand, sluagh find the Hollow Ones rather amusing; the reactions of many so-called "children of the night" to the most innocuous window-tapping leave sluagh snickering all the way home. The rare Hollower who earns a sluagh's respect is welcome to drop by for a visit and perhaps to share a cup of tea — assuming fair warning has been given.



## Wraiths

Blessed, or cursed, with the ability to see wraiths, sluagh spend a great deal of time in conversation with them. Indeed, a favorite sluagh trick for getting rid of unwanted company involves striking up a conversation with the wraith hovering just over the interloper's left shoulder. Practical jokes aside, however, wraiths and sluagh have a thriving commerce in information and favors. As ghosts can walk through walls and go places even sluagh have a hard time slithering into, they have access to secrets that normally would evade crawler ears. On the other

hand, wraiths have difficulty in dealing with the real world, and often ask sluagh for favors relating to physical reality. These favors usually involve helping to protect a given wraith's Fetters, those objects and people that bind him to the lands of the living, and any sluagh who doesn't want to lose a good informant will hurry to comply with this sort of request.

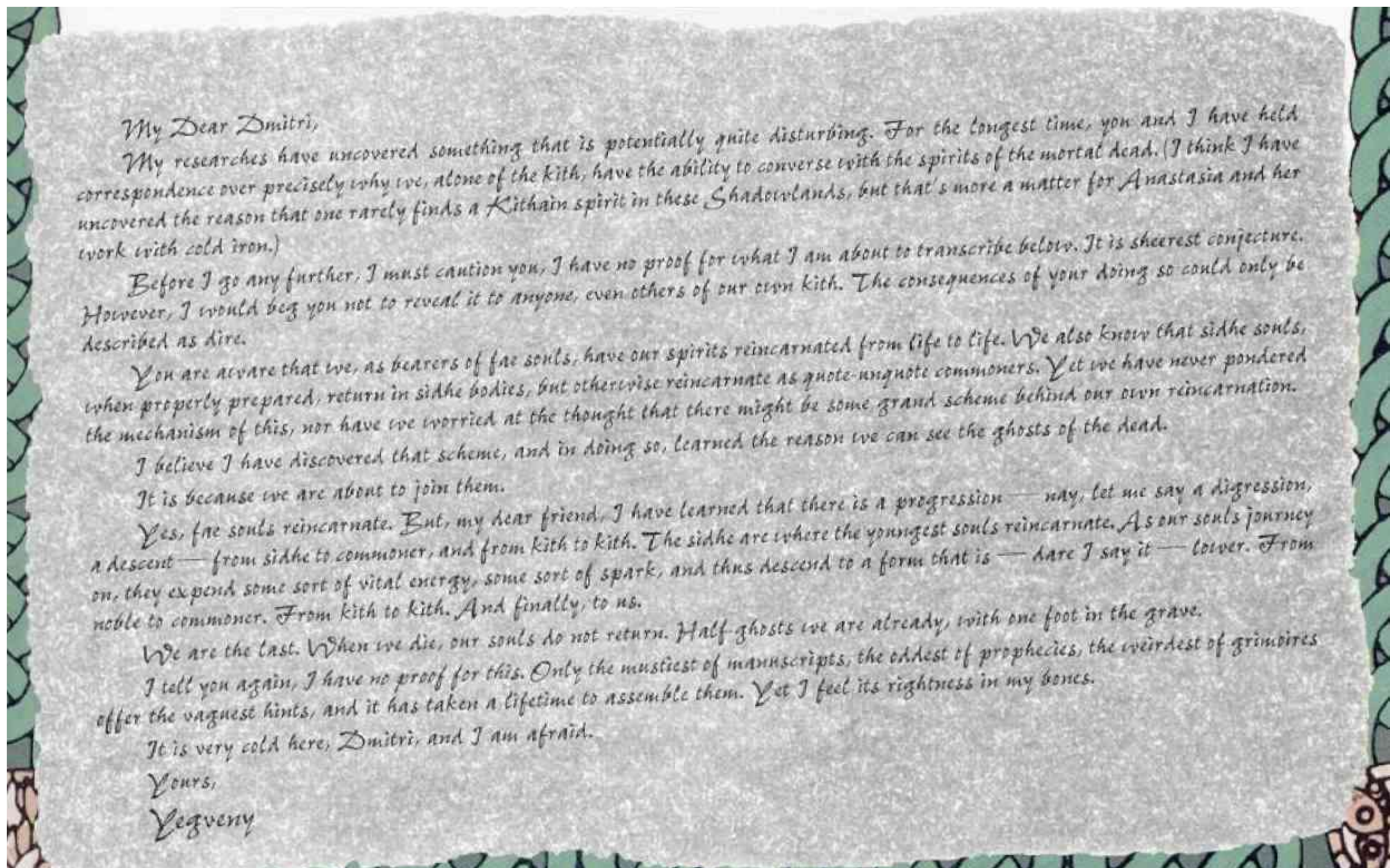
Occasionally, a sluagh will ask for ghostly help in perpetrating a good scare. The combination of Arts and Arcano can be a potent one, particularly when the target is a particularly recalcitrant redcap or stiff-necked sidhe.

## The Sluagh Ritual of the Dead

The actual name for this rite is unpronounceable to any but sluagh, but the Shadow Court insists on tagging it with a banal moniker. On Samhain, the Shroud between the worlds drops precipitously, and communication with the Restless Dead becomes even easier for sluagh. At this time, many bargains are struck between living and dead, all of which have a duration of precisely a year and a day. These deals involve secrets for ghosts to ferret out, arrangements to haunt specific sites and the like for ghosts, and Skinlands errands to be performed by the sluagh. More than one wraith has agreed to help a sluagh in exchange for having his Fetters carefully gathered and protected by the crawler in question.

The dealmaking is exquisitely formal, as befits any bargain involving the sluagh. Terms are discussed with painstaking precision, the witnessing of deals is a solemn responsibility, and all pacts are sealed with oaths of stunning potency.

Many sluagh and wraiths renew their working agreements year after year. In these cases, the Ritual of the Dead is a reaffirmation and formalization of what the two parties already know. It's just that the respect implied in the formal dealmaking is important to both sides.









# CHAPTER THREE: THE SLUAGH EVERYONE KNOWS

*On candystripe legs the spiderman comes  
Soft through the shadow of the evening sun  
Stealing past the windows of the blissfully dead  
— The Cure, "Lullaby"*







The current Aleksei dwells in Boston, where in his mortal guise he attends MIT. He is tall and unusually slender, even for a sluagh, and can usually be found (when in fae seeming) wearing formal black clothing of a Victorian cut, complete with top hat and cane. Once a month, he holds a formal court of fear for the sluagh of Boston and the surrounding environs in the darkness of an abandoned chemistry lab at MIT, dispensing rewards and punishments for frights achieved or blunders made.

## Amie Randall

A trusted advisor to King David, Amie is one of the few sluagh who moves openly in fae society. A fixture in the court at Tara-Nar since David's ascension to the throne, she somehow manages to maintain her connections with the rest of the kith. This provides David with vital, and oft-times needed information. There are rumblings among assorted nobles, particularly younger sidhe and the odd troll knight, about what "that damned skulking sluagh" is doing so near the seat of power, but thus far Amie has fended off the assaults of her political rivals with grace and panache.

Amie's skin is dark gray, almost black. Her eyes are exceptionally large, and she commonly dresses in simple black gowns. David has attempted to give her a title several times, but each time she has gracefully refused, claiming a *geas* prevents her from accepting such.

## 13 Toes

For centuries, the sluagh's very existence was bound up in the notion of fear. Those who could extract the deepest frights and most lasting terrors, particularly in the service of... convincing... recalcitrants to reform their behavior, won tremendous acclaim (or at least murmured approval) at High Teas for and wide.

Among the greatest of the terrorizers was Aleksei of the 13 Toes, who lived in legendary times, and was supposedly wound up in the events that led to the sluagh losing their voices. While the original Aleksei is long dead, every generation spawns a new terrorizer, a new mastermind of fear so like unto his famous forebear that he is instantly given the name Aleksei. Both a blessing and a curse, the famous name reinvents the young sluagh's identity; in some sense he *becomes* Aleksei, even as he just takes the name to cover his own exploits. However, none can deny that once the name is bestowed, the sluagh who takes it suddenly knows things he should not, at least not at his tender age.... And there are those who whisper that the master of shivers has become Sionchain.





## Todd the Gray

There are spies, and there are assassins, and then there is Todd the Gray. When the sidhe sought to instill terror on the Night of the Iron Knives, Todd was the commoners' response. Personally responsible for the deaths of at least two dozen nobles, the Gray (as he's called) hasn't been heard from in well over a decade. Perhaps this is because of the huge price put on his head by nobles in practically every kingdom in Concordia; perhaps it's because he hasn't found a target worthy of his skills recently.

When last seen, Todd dressed (unsurprisingly) entirely in gray. His favored weapon was a wickedly curved chimerical dagger supposedly named Gwynyfara, after a lover of his slain on that infamous night. The morning before the coronation of King David, Todd left Gwynyfara in the breast of his last victim. Lord Gwystyl ap Eiluned, the sidhe commonly credited with being the author of the massacre.

The longer Todd stays in retirement, the more his legend grows. At this point, an entire cottage industry has grown up around Todd stories, as sluagh compete in describing Todd's exploits on one expedition or another. A well-told Todd story will win a young sluagh a great deal of respect in the eyes of her elders.



## Eleanor Dell

If a message absolutely, positively has to get delivered, it gets delivered by Eleanor Dell. "Faster Than Hell" is her nickname, and to date no one has ever been able to stop her from delivering a missive in her charge. She cut through noble lines like they were sieves during the Accordance War, she got out of Caer Dhomnial when everyone else inside was slaughtered by the assault of a feral chimera, and she was fast enough to cut through Duke Dray's chambers once and get away with it.

Today Eleanor bounces from court to court (and Court to Court) seeking commissions and excitement. She's willing to run anything anywhere in Concordia if the price is right. Eleanor always takes her entire fee up front; any noble arrogant enough to argue her terms abruptly loses her services. Intelligent fae simply pay what she asks without blinking, because if Eleanor Dell can't get a message through, no one can.







## Old Boris

Most of the stories told around campfires and in darkened basements are false. Then there are the ones about Old Boris. Dwelling in a tiny freehold out in the North Carolina wilderness, Old Boris likes his privacy. He likes it so much, as a matter of fact, that he'll deal summarily with anyone who intrudes upon it. This includes nobles and commoners, Seelie and Unseelie, fae and mortals; Old Boris doesn't care. With a sawed-off shotgun in one hand and a particularly nasty bunk prepped in the other, he'll come shambling out of the Blue Ridge night if anyone dares disturb his privacy. Sometimes he gives his victims a chance to flee, but only when he's feeling particularly magnanimous. Otherwise, they never have a chance.

A particularly cadaverous example of the kith, Old Boris looks like nothing so much as a desiccated corpse. Incongruously, he wears wire-rimmed granny glasses, but the innocence these project is quickly shattered by the stained shirt and trousers, rotting boots and cracked gloves he wears. Uniformly, the stains are dark brown.

Supposedly, the ghosts of all of Boris' victims are still lurking within the woods near his home. However, Boris has managed to bind the wraiths to his service and now they watch the borders of his lands.

## Nix

Nix got his nickname back in the early 70s, primarily through his claims that he'd been the information source behind the notorious "Deep Throat" in the Watergate scandal. Since then, he's also claimed to have helped uncover the Iran-Contra affair, the CIA's involvement in running drugs, the Aldrich Ames affair and just about every other high-security mess the United States has gotten into in the past 25 years. Even in his own mind, however, Nix isn't an altruist; he claims he's doing his best to bring down the system by exposing all its dirty little secrets.

While Nix, now a rather withered grump with a long ponytail, makes claims that are clearly unbelievable, enough odd things keep happening around him to make other fae wonder. Why does he have a pad of FBI stationery on his desk, where did that government-issue silencer come from, and how does Nix seemingly stay one step ahead of even other sluagh when it comes to Washington gossip? No one knows, but quite a few people are interested in finding answers to those questions.

Nix is known to hang out rather frequently with Nosferatu vampires, swapping both information and lies about life inside the Beltway. According to Nix, he supplies the information and the vampires provide the lies, but then again, it is Nix talking....

## Anna the Monster Maker

Chimera are a funny thing. Most come to life of their own accord, born from memories of monsters and nightmares. Deliberately created ones are far, far rarer, and ones that conform to the wishes of their creators are rarer still. Then there are the creations of Anna the Monster Maker.

An itinerant theatrical designer in her human guise, Anna hovers around college campuses and independent theater collectives. Small and fine-boned, she favors black turtlenecks, jeans and work boots — the uniform of the theater tech. Her regular work, doing set design and construction, is astounding enough, but when the last nail has been hammered in, she switches to her true calling; the creation of chimera. No one knows how she manages to work such wonders, but work them she does — for a price.

Perhaps alone among the sluagh, Anna can will monstrous "living" chimera into existence. Her creations range from the tiny to the gargantuan, from stinging flies with human faces to lumbering behemoths



that dwarf the tallest troll. While Anna's chimera can be fearsome, none will ever attack her or the one that she designates as that chimera's master.

When traveling, Anna is always surrounded by a pack of chimerical hounds that she has created; these almost never

leave her side. Chimera that she creates for clients are generally both expensive and extremely reliable, but Anna's name is synonymous with quality among connoisseurs of chimera.









# CHAPTER FOUR: FACES IN THE SHADOWS (CHARACTER TEMPLATES)

*When Frank Sinatra sings "Stormy Weather"*  
*The flies and spiders get along together*  
*Cobwebs fall on an old skipping record*  
—Cake, "Frank Sinatra"





# Antiquarian

**Quote:** *A 1935 Poe? Excellent condition? Couldn't possibly take it; I have three others just like it. But I know who might be interested...*

**Background:** Growing up, you always liked old things, fragile things, dusty things. While the other children your age — you really didn't have any friends — always wanted the newest and the shiniest toys, you were drawn to the antiques Dad had saved in the attic. Secretly, your parents were relieved; not having to keep up with the Joneses in terms of toy purchases was a load off their finances. They were more than content to let you play with the old toys, and later the old books and clothes and magazines. After all, it's so unusual for a child to have an appreciation for the way things used to be.

Of course, you were happiest playing by yourself, especially up in the attic, away from the noise and the light. Maybe that's why one night your father absent-mindedly shut off the attic lights and locked the door while you were still up there. Alone in the darkness, with only the ghosts and memories of the attic around you, you didn't call out for your mommy or daddy. You didn't cry.

Instead, you changed, and the shadows came alive.

It's 20 years later. Mother and Father are long dead, but with the treasures they'd stored in their attic you were able to open your own antique and used bookstore. Now the spiders and

ghosts come and whisper their secrets to you, helping you find the best wares for your cobwebby shelves. Mind you, you never put the best finds out for sale; the treasures in your back room put the items you have for sale to shame. But some secrets, you think, are well worth keeping that way....

**Concept:** You love everything that's old, mainly for the decades worth of secrets you just know every antique has mutely witnessed. Through your web of fellow antiquarians you've developed quite a set of information resources; you can track down practically any item or book you want within days. Of course, you also deal in Treasures and chimera for your fellow changelings, as those transactions are at least as lucrative as the ones you make with the mundanes. In the meantime, you sit in the center of the decaying splendor of your shop, carefully tending the cobwebs to add ambiance.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You don't much like the company of others, but you realise that it's a necessary evil. Your shop opens and closes late, and has become something of the focal point for the loners and twilight dwellers of your neighborhood. While you're unfailingly polite, you have no problem removing unruly — defined as disrespectful, or just loud — customers from your shop. You like making connections for others, but not for yourself. It's enough that both ends of any transaction owe you a favor; there's no reason for you to get your own hands dirty.





# K i t h b o o k : SLUAGH

Name:  
Concept: Antiquarian  
Chronicle:

Court: Seelie  
Legacies: Hermit/Riddler  
Title:

Seeming: Grump  
Kith: Sluagh  
Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●●○○○  
Dexterity ●●●○○  
Stamina ●●○○○

### Social

Charisma ●○○○○  
Manipulation ●●●○○  
Appearance ●●○○○

### Mental

Perception ●●●●○  
Intelligence ●●●●○  
Wits ●●●○○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ●●○○○  
Athletics ○○○○○  
Brawl ○○○○○  
Dodge ●●○○○  
Empathy ●○○○○  
Expression ○○○○○  
Intimidation ○○○○○  
Kenning ●●○○○  
Streetwise ●○○○○  
Subterfuge ●○○○○

### Skills

Crafts ○○○○○  
Drive ○○○○○  
Etiquette ●○○○○  
Firearms ○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○  
Melee ●○○○○  
Performance ○○○○○  
Security ●○○○○  
Stealth ●●○○○  
Survival ●○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ●○○○○  
Enigmas ●●●○○  
Investigation ●●●○○  
Law ○○○○○  
Linguistics ●○○○○  
Medicine ○○○○○  
Mythlore ●●○○○  
Occult ●●○○○  
Politics ○○○○○  
Science ●○○○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Contacts ●●●○○  
Treasures ●●●○○  
Chimera ●○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Arts

Chicanery ●●○○○  
Soothsay ●●○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Realms

Prop ●●○○○  
Scene ●●○○○  
Fae ●○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

## Other Traits

## Glamour

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Banality

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Health

Bruised ☐  
Hurt -1 ☐  
Injured -1 ☐  
Wounded -2 ☐  
Mauled -2 ☐  
Crippled -5 ☐  
Incapacitated ☐

## Birchright/Frailty

Squirm: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.



## Virtual

## Romantic

Quote: Wait until you see the code I've worked up for the mausoleum setting — the scanned textures are perfect.

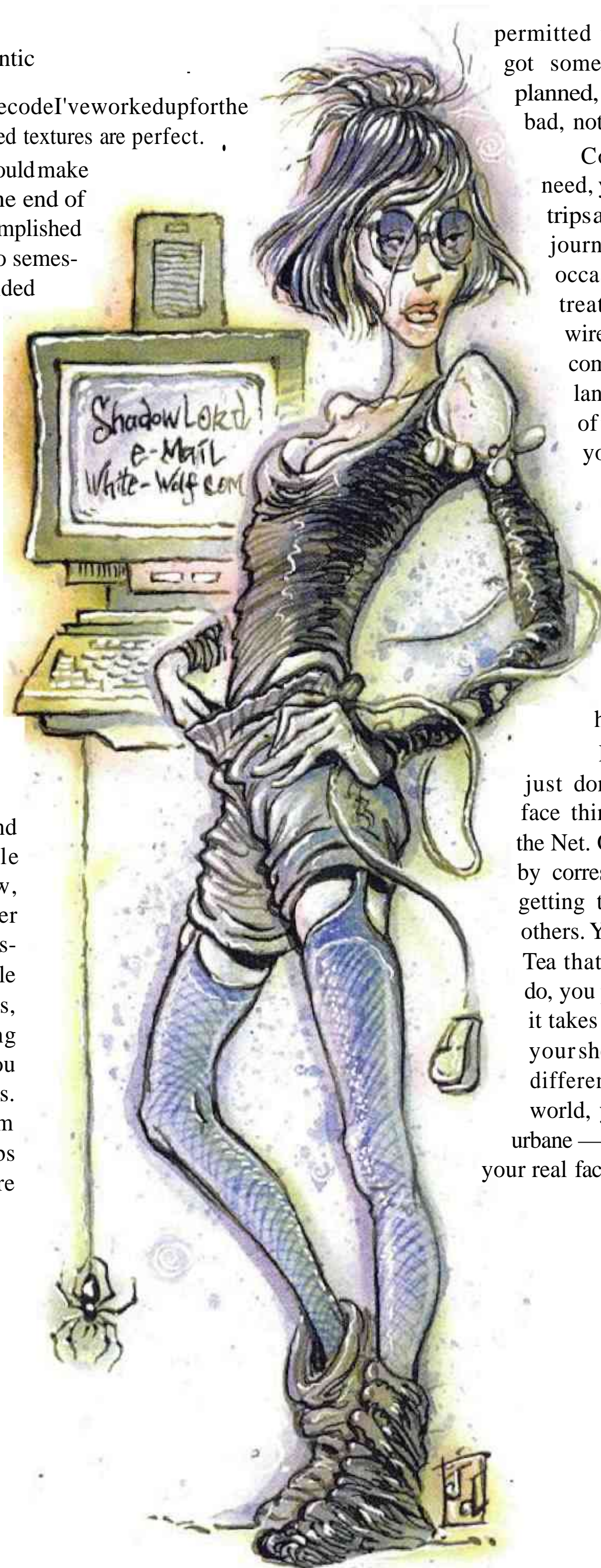
Background: You always could make the code dance for you. By the end of high school you were an accomplished coder and software pirate. Two semesters of CompSci later, you decided that you knew more than your professors. So you dropped out and started to freelance — from the privacy of your own apartment, of course. With the money from your first few jobs, you bought a monster system and loaded it up, then turned your apartment into a high-tech womb. Now when the suits need code that's fast, clean and documented right, they come to you, and they meet your price.

All work and no play makes for a banal slugh, though, and you're anything but that. While you never could paint or draw, you can do much, much better with the new tools at your disposal. Now you can create whole worlds to your specifications, where you control everything from the weather to whom you permit to see your masterworks. You're proudest of a mausoleum and attached series of catacombs you've built; only a select few are

permitted to wander its halls. You've got something bigger and better planned, of course, but so far it's not bad, not bad at all.

Concept: Everything you need, you have at home. Grocery trips are about the extent of your journeys outside; that and the occasional midnight walk you treat yourself to. The rest is all wired into your home. It all comes over the computer or lands on your doorstep. Most of the other slugh you know you meet online, and though they invite you to court, you always find something else that's more pressing. There's always a deadline for a coding project that somehow keeps you home.

Roleplaying Hints: You just don't do this whole face-to-face thing. It's much easier over the Net. Or even over the phone or by correspondence, than actually getting together and talking with others. You don't even attend High Tea that regularly, and when you do, you prefer to listen. In person it takes a lot to bring you out of your shell Online, it's an entirely different story. In the virtual world, you're voluble, witty and urbane — as long as no one can see your real face.





Name:  
 Concept: Virtual Romantic  
 Chronicle:

Court: Seelie  
 Legacies: Orchid/Fatalist  
 Title:

Seeming: Wilder  
 Kith: Sluagh  
 Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●○○○○  
 Dexterity ●●○○○  
 Stamina ●●○○○

### Social

Charisma ●●○○○  
 Manipulation ●●●○○  
 Appearance ●●○○○

### Mental

Perception ●●○○○  
 Intelligence ●●●●●  
 Wits ●●●○○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ●●○○○  
 Athletics ○○○○○  
 Brawl ○○○○○  
 Dodge ●○○○○  
 Empathy ○○○○○  
 Expression ●○○○○  
 Intimidation ○○○○○  
 Kenning ○○○○○  
 Streetwise ●○○○○  
 Subterfuge ●●○○○

### Skills

Crafts ○○○○○  
 Drive ●○○○○  
 Etiquette *Net* ●●●○○  
 Firearms ●○○○○  
 Leadership ○○○○○  
 Melee ○○○○○  
 Performance ○○○○○  
 Security ●●○○○  
 Stealth ●○○○○  
 Survival ○○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ●●●●●  
 Enigmas ●○○○○  
 Investigation ●●○○○  
 Law ●○○○○  
 Linguistics ●○○○○  
 Medicine ○○○○○  
 Mythlore ○○○○○  
 Occult ●○○○○  
 Politics ●○○○○  
 Science ●●●○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Resources ●●○○○  
 Dreamers ●●○○○  
 Contacts ●○○○○  
 ○○○○○  
 ○○○○○

### Arts

*Chicanery* ●●●○○  
 ○○○○○  
 ○○○○○  
 ○○○○○  
 ○○○○○

### Realms

*Actor* ●●○○○  
*Scene* ●●○○○  
*Prop* ●○○○○  
 ○○○○○  
 ○○○○○

## Other Traits

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## Glamour

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## Willpower

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 □□□□□□□□□

## Banality

●●●○○○○○○○○○  
 □□□□□□□□□

## Health

Bruised ☐  
 Hurt -1 ☐  
 Injured -1 ☐  
 Wounded -2 ☐  
 Mauled -2 ☐  
 Crippled -5 ☐  
 Incapacitated ☐

## Birthright/Frailty

*Squirm:* Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
*Sharpened Senses:* Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
*Whisper:* Cannot speak above a whisper.



# Professional Snitch

**Quote:** *Now, I don't know if this is true or not; that's why I'm not charging you full price for it. But three separate sources — all very, very reliable — told me that the ducal party would be staying there tonight. Throw in the dagger, and I'll have His Nibs' sleeping arrangements within the hour.*

**Background:** You were the littlest: kid in the class, and, to make matters worse, the smartest. This unfortunate combination resulted in a lot of beatings at the hands of your peers — on the playground, in the classroom when the teacher wasn't looking, on the street. Every day you'd drag yourself home from school with new bruises and skinned knees, and every day your mother would shake her head and do nothing. Dad would tell you to stand up for yourself and be a man, but you knew that didn't do any good when it was six on one. Guts and stubbornness only went so far against fists.

As you got older, the fights got less frequent, but you never forgot their sting. Playground incidents long since vanished from the minds of your classmates still burned in your memory, and you knew that you had to get revenge somehow. It was in high school that you finally figured out the secret: Information was power. You still couldn't beat up the other kids, but you could learn their dirty little secrets and use those to extract your revenge for you.

So you became a snitch. You learned who was smoking dope in the locker room, and found a way to get the principal to wander down at just the wrong moment. You discovered who was stealing supplies from the chemistry closet to make homemade explosives, ratted on them, and got a science teacher fired. Now that was power — and the best part was, nobody knew it was you.

College introduced you to new sources of information, like the Internet and departmental secretaries' wastepaper baskets. You were in heaven, oozing your way to a degree based on blackmail until the party at the Alpha Delt house

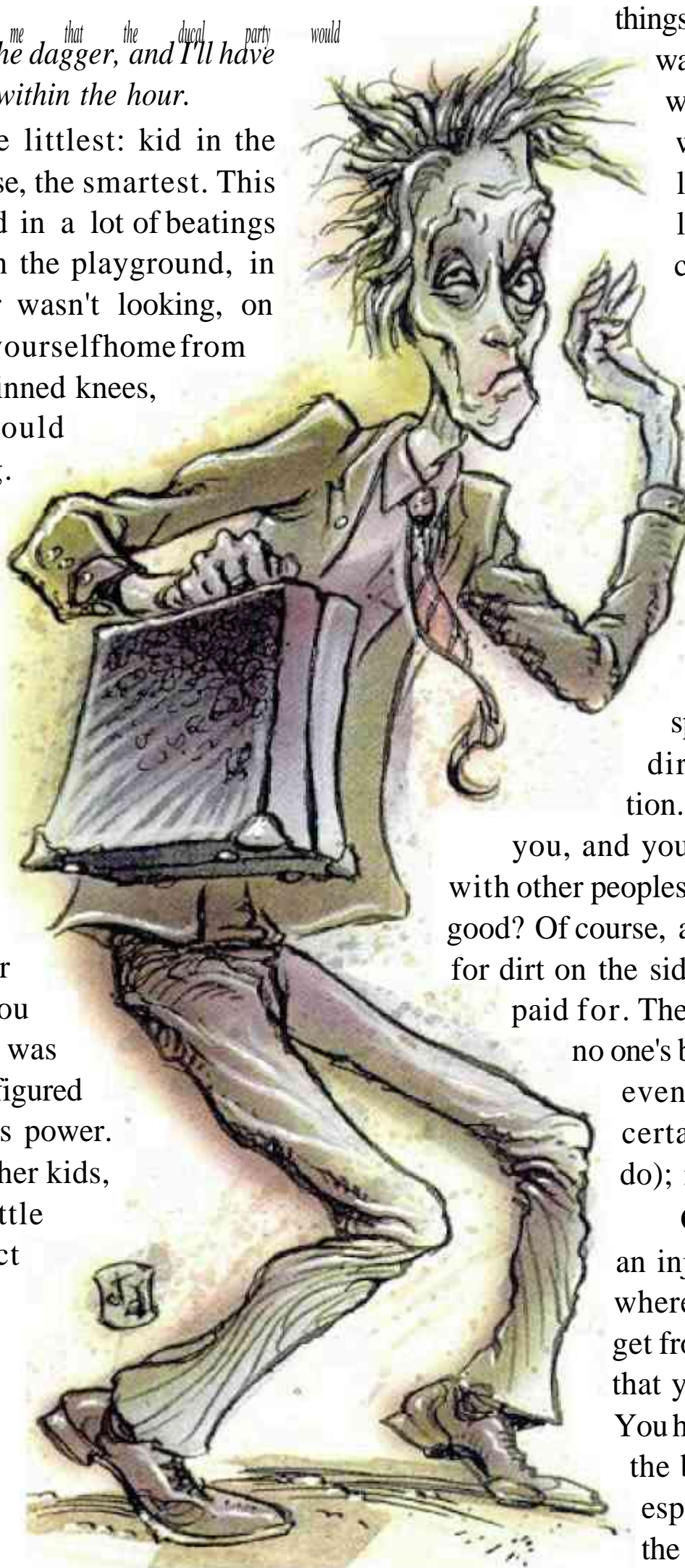
your junior year. You went, just like you always did, to stand at the back and mentally take notes on what was going on, but things didn't quite work out as planned. Someone must have spiked your Jagermeister with something special, because suddenly in the midst of the crowd, you started seeing...

things. Faces with horns. A bouncer who was eight feet tall and blue. A kegmeister with furry legs. Cursing, you decided it was time to go home, but then you looked down at your hands. They were long, thin and the color of waterlogged chalk; surely not the hands you knew were yours. You looked up, and there was a woman, her face the same drawn, pale mask you now knew your own to be. With great formality she offered you a glass of wine. You accepted and took her hand, and she led you into the world of the Unseelie Court.

Now you're theoretically a corporate research specialist; you spend most of your time digging up dirt on companies for their competition. The work is a dream come true for you, and you revel in it. Being paid to come up with other peoples' dirty secrets — how did life get this good? Of course, after quitting time, you start digging for dirt on the sidhe, the trolls and anyone else you're paid for. There's plenty of scandal to uncover, and no one's better at it than you. Hell, they don't even have to pay you to do this (but you're certainly not going to say no when they do); it's just so much fun.

**Concept:** Calling you a weasel is doing an injustice to predatory mammals everywhere. Nothing compares to the rush you get from uncovering a piece of information that you know someone tried hard to hide. You have a small consulting agency that pays the bills — even this aspect of industrial espionage is surprisingly lucrative — but the real thrill comes from cajoling something nasty and fatal from another Kithain.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You can smell a secret from a mile away, and you're particularly good at picking up on dirty ones. Before you take a client, make sure you've got some dirt on him as well; preparation discourages nonpayment. Otherwise, follow your nose to the nearest juicy bit of information. Play whatever role you have to in order to achieve your goal; it's all in the service of something greater. Lying, cheating, stealing — they're all part of the business.





# KITH BOOK: SLUAGH

Name:  
Concept: Professional Snitch  
Chronicle:

Court: Unseelie  
Legacies: Rogue/Sage  
Title:

Seeming: Grump  
Kith: Sluagh  
Motley:

## Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●○○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●●●
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●○○○○	Wits	●●○○○

## Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledges	
Alertness	●●●○○	Crafts	○○○○○	Computer	●●●○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Drive	○○○○○	Enigmas	●○○○○
Brawl	●○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Investigation	●●●●○
Dodge	●●○○○	Firearms	●○○○○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy	●○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	●○○○○	Melee	●●○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	●●○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Mythlore	○○○○○
Kenning	●○○○○	Security	●●●○○	Occult	○○○○○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	●○○○○	Politics	●○○○○
Subterfuge	●●○○○	Survival	●○○○○	Science	○○○○○

## Advantages

Backgrounds		Arts		Realms	
Contacts	●●●○○	Soothsay	●●○○○	Actor	●●○○○
Retinue	●○○○○	Sovereign	●○○○○	Fae	●●○○○
Resources	●○○○○		○○○○○	Scene	●○○○○
Holdings	●○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		○○○○○

## Other Traits

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## Glamour

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## Willpower

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## Banality

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Health

Bruised		□
Hurt	-1	□
Injured	-1	□
Wounded	-2	□
Mauled	-2	□
Crippled	-5	□
Incapacitated		□

## Birthright/Traalty

Squirm: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.



## Depressed Poet

**Quote:** *This one is dedicated to my last lover. She killed herself, you know, so this poem is very special to me. It's a haiku.*

**Background:** No one ever understood you. Not your inescapably petit-bourgeois parents — they were too much a part of the system to ever see how it was crushing your artistic spirit. Not your schoolmates, caught up in the miniature rat race for grades and empty scholastic honors. Not your teachers, intent on filling your mind with bland, regurgitated facts that would squeeze out your creativity like toothpaste from a tube that an elephant had stepped on. No, there was only one person who understood: Trent.

Trent, who was two years older than you. Trent, who wrote poetry that went straight to your soul and burned there like a prophet's words. Trent, who introduced you to Bauhaus and Siouxsie. Trent, who told you at your 12th birthday party that you were too immature for him. "Little girl," he called you.

You ran upstairs, crying, and wrote your first poem. Then you tried to slit your wrists, like one of the characters in a story you'd read, but your letter opener was too dull. So you turned to your pen, and let all your anguish spill out upon the page.

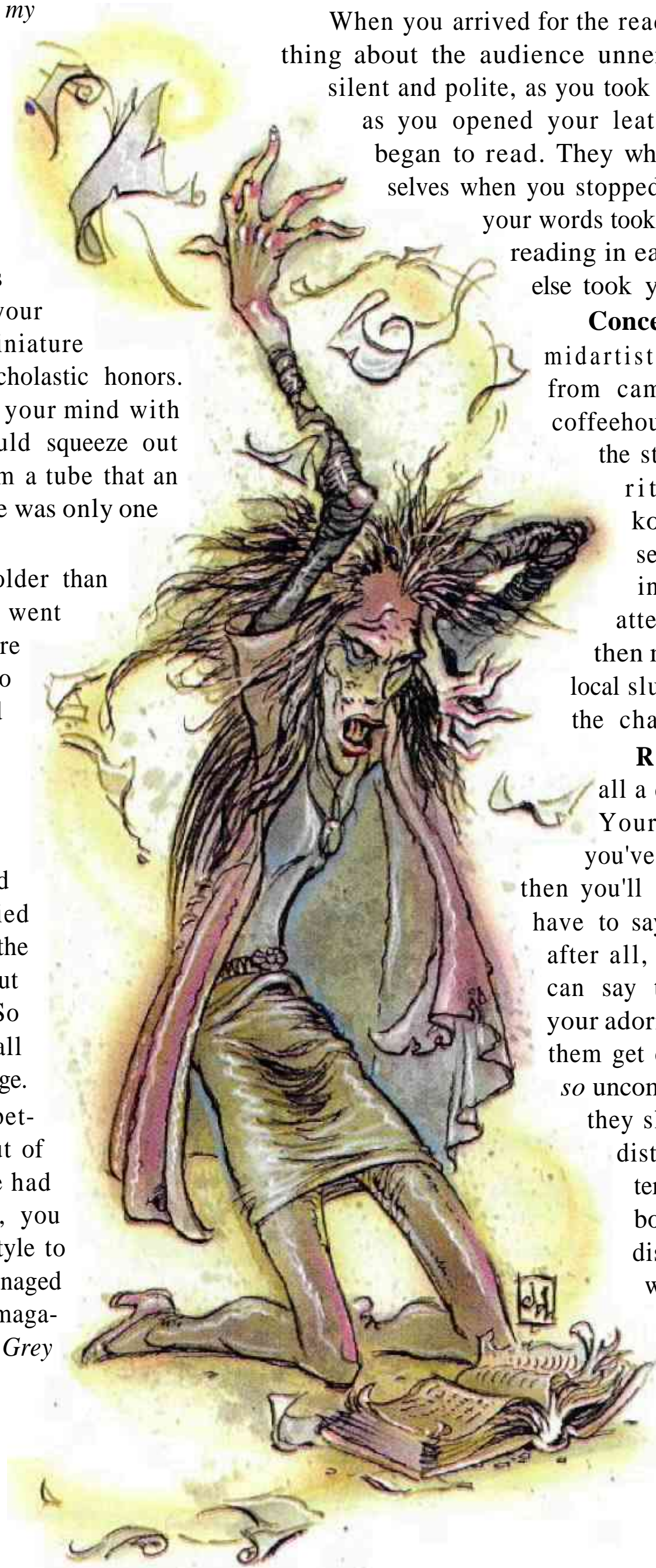
By the time you worked the better part of your adolescent angst out of your system, your poetic technique had become pretty good. Admittedly, you still owed the better part of your style to Sylvia Plath, but you actually managed to scrounge some publications in magazines with names like *Veil of Grey Shadows* and *Nightchildren*. So it

wasn't entirely unexpected when you were contacted and asked to give a reading at a local coffee shop. After all, you were a rising star in the world of the trochee and spondee.

When you arrived for the reading, however, something about the audience unnerved you. They sat, silent and polite, as you took the stage. They stared as you opened your leather-bound book and began to read. They whispered among themselves when you stopped. Then, the magic of your words took you as you began the reading in earnest, and something else took you as well...

**Concept:** An itinerant poet midartistic persona, you drift from campus to campus and coffeehouse to coffeehouse on the strength of your celebrity status with the kohl-and-Neil Gaiman set. You set up readings, do autographs, attend receptions and then make contact with the local slugh for High Tea and the chance to gossip.

**Roleplaying Hints:** It's all a question of priorities. Your poetry and what you've learned comes first, then you'll listen to what others have to say. You're a celebrity, after all, and not many slugh can say that. Be gracious to your adoring fans, but don't let them get close — it makes you *so* uncomfortable. Better that they should worship from a distance, after all. Matters of court and politics bore you to tears. Why discuss who did what to whom when you could be discussing your poetry instead?





# K i t h b o o k : SLUAGH™

Name:

Concept: *Depressed Poet*

Chronicle:

Court: *Unseelie*

Legacies: *Fatalist/Troubadour*

Title:

Seeming: *Wilder*

Kith: *Sluagh*

Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●○○○○○  
Dexterity ●●●○○○  
Stamina ●●○○○○

### Social

Charisma ●●○○○○  
Manipulation ●●●○○○  
Appearance ●●○○○○

### Mental

Perception ●●●●○○  
Intelligence ●●●●○○  
Wits ●●○○○○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ○○○○○○  
Athletics ○○○○○○  
Brawl ○○○○○○  
Dodge ○○○○○○  
Empathy ●●○○○○  
Expression ●●●○○○  
Intimidation ○○○○○○  
Kenning ●●○○○○  
Streetwise ○○○○○○  
Subterfuge ●●○○○○

### Skills

Crafts ○○○○○○  
Drive ○○○○○○  
Etiquette ●○○○○○  
Firearms ○○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○○  
Melee ○○○○○○  
Performance ●●○○○○  
Security ○○○○○○  
Stealth ●●○○○○  
Survival ○○○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ●○○○○○  
Enigmas ●●●○○○  
Investigation ●○○○○○  
Law ○○○○○○  
Linguistics ●●○○○○  
Medicine ○○○○○○  
Mythlore ●●○○○○  
Occult ●●●○○○  
Politics ●○○○○○  
Science ○○○○○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Contacts ●○○○○○  
Dreamers ●○○○○○  
Gremayre ●●○○○○  
Resources ●○○○○○  
○○○○○○

### Arts

Chicanery ●●○○○○  
Soothsay ●○○○○○  
○○○○○○  
○○○○○○  
○○○○○○

### Realms

Actor ●●●○○○  
Fae ●●○○○○  
Scene ●●○○○○  
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## Other Traits

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## Glamour

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## Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Banality

● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

## Health

Bruised ☐  
Hurt -1 ☐  
Injured -1 ☐  
Wounded -2 ☐  
Mauled -2 ☐  
Crippled -5 ☐  
Incapacitated ☐

## Birchright/Frailty

Square: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.



# Playground Runner

**Quote:** *I'll have the message to Baron Felix by six o'clock, Sire. Why? Well, I have to — if I'm not home by then, Mom says I don't get dessert.*

**Background:** Always the brightest in your class, you paid for this every day on the playground. Whenever the teacher on duty at recess looked the other way, the older, larger and stupider children closed in. As a result, you got very good at dodging, avoidance techniques and just plain running away. You had to in order to survive your "playtime" and after a while it really did become a game. You enjoyed ducking out from under the other children's intended indignities, and the fact that you were obviously having fun doing so just made them madder.

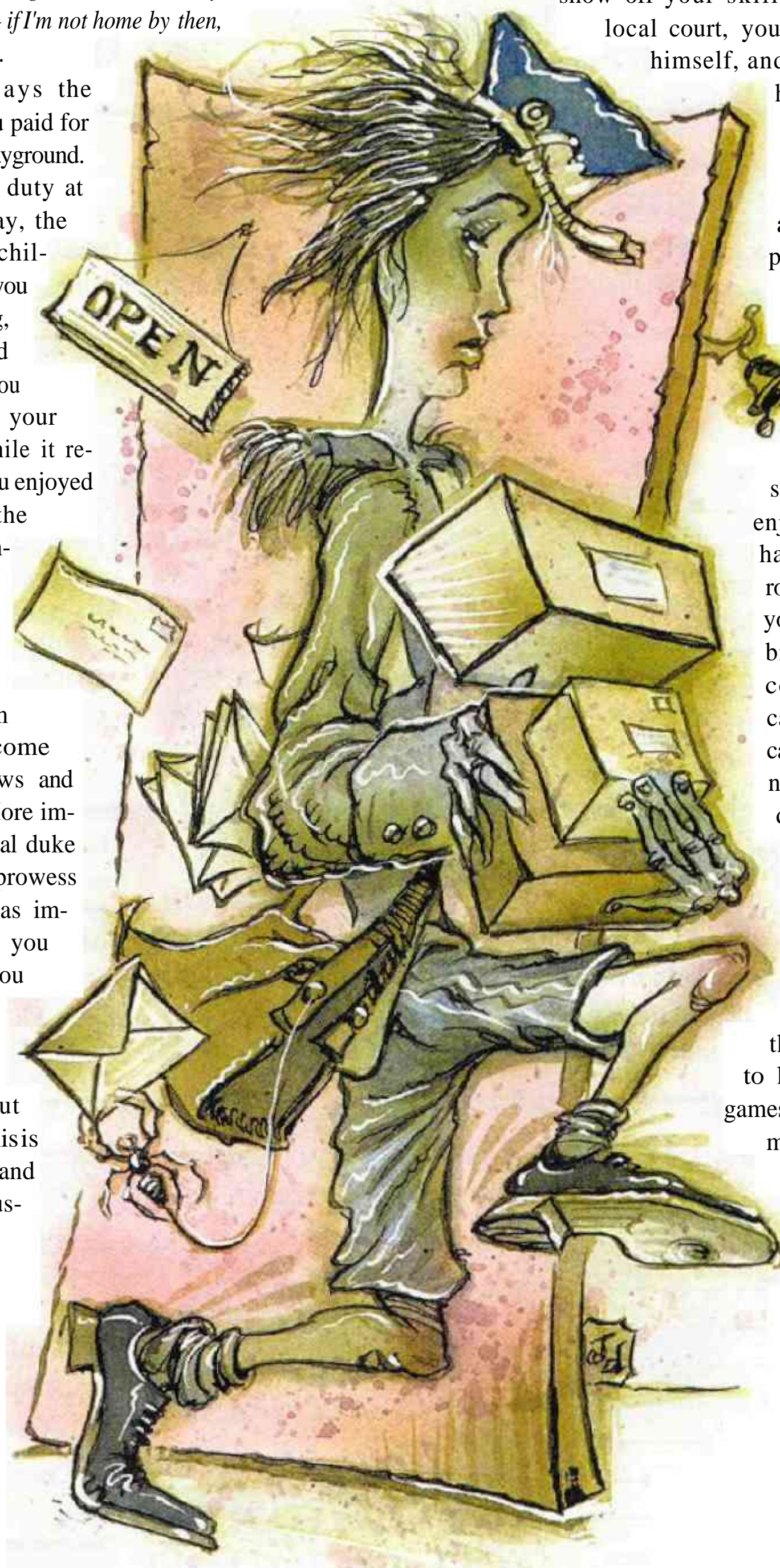
Your parents seem pleased that you don't come home with skinned elbows and bloody noses any more. More importantly, though, the local duke saw you showing off your prowess one Highsummer, and was impressed. He approached you with the proposition that you enter his service as a runner, and you accepted. Older slugh took you aside and urged caution, but you shrugged them off. This is fun, and dodging redcaps and chimera is much more amusing than avoiding the fat kid from the fourth grade who keeps trying to beat you up. After all, everyone needs a challenge....

**Concept:** You're a kid with a healthy attitude and the talent to back it up. You have a genuine knack for what you're doing, and take every chance you can to show off your skills. Attached to the local court, you work for the duke himself, and consider it quite an honor.

While you're not popular with other slugh, you're not bothered about that at this point. As far as you're concerned, the rest are just jealous.

## Roleplaying

**Hints:** You're the rarest of the rare: a chipper slugh. You actively enjoy what you do, and have the extreme arrogance of the very young in your capabilities. As far as you're concerned, no one can stop you, no one can outrun you, and no one can make you do what you don't want to. After all, if anyone wants to force you to do something, they're going to have to catch you first, and that's just not going to happen. So let the games begin! You've got a message to get cross-town, and there's half a dozen redcaps waiting for you. You'll bet anyone that the redcaps don't lay a finger on you. Any takers?





# k i t h b o o k : SLUAGH

Name:  
Concept: *Playground Runner*  
Chronicle:

Court: *Seelie*  
Legacies: *Paladin/Peacock*  
Title:

Seeming: *Childing*  
Kith: *Sluagh*  
Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●○○○○○  
Dexterity ●●●●○  
Stamina ●●●●○

### Social

Charisma ●●●●○  
Manipulation ●●●●○  
Appearance ●○○○○○

### Mental

Perception ●●●●○  
Intelligence ●●●●○  
Wits ●●●●○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ●●●●○  
Athletics ●●○○○  
Brawl ○○○○○  
Dodge ●●●●○  
Empathy ○○○○○  
Expression ○○○○○  
Intimidation ○○○○○  
Kenning ●●○○○  
Streetwise ●○○○○  
Subterfuge ●●○○○

### Skills

Crafts ○○○○○  
Drive ○○○○○  
Etiquette ●●○○○  
Firearms ○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○  
Melee ●○○○○  
Performance ●○○○○  
Security ●○○○○  
Stealth ●●●○○  
Survival ●○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ●●○○○  
Enigmas ●○○○○  
Investigation ○○○○○  
Law ○○○○○  
Linguistics ○○○○○  
Medicine ○○○○○  
Mythlore ●●○○○  
Occult ○○○○○  
Politics ○○○○○  
Science ○○○○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Mentor ●●●●○  
Resources ●○○○○  
Title ●○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Arts

Soothsay ●○○○○  
Wayfare ●●○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Realms

Fae ●●●●○  
Prop ●●○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

## Other Traits

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## Glamour

●●●●●○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

## Willpower

●●○○○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

## Banality

●○○○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

## Health

Bruised ☐  
Hurt -1 ☐  
Injured -1 ☐  
Wounded -2 ☐  
Mauled -2 ☐  
Crippled -5 ☐  
Incapacitated ☐

## Birthright/Frailty

Squirm: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.



# Mistress of Spiders

**Quote:** *Crawl, my little friends, and be free! Oh, wait, I'm starting to sound like Margaret Hamilton here...*

**Background:** None of the boys at school thought you were any fun at all. When they put worms on your notebooks or bugs in your juice, you didn't scream or shriek or run away like the other girls did. Instead, you were fascinated — and then you turned around and used the creepy crawlies the boys had given you to gross them out. Pretty soon, you got a reputation as being, well, sort of weird, and not long after that people started to go out of their way to avoid you.

It was a shame, really, because by that time you'd discovered your true love: spiders. With the other kids ostracizing you, though, you had no one to show off to. There was no one to see how you could convince the spiders to spin webs between your fingers, no one who'd be properly amazed by what you'd convinced your eight-legged friends to do. Really, the spiders were the only ones who were there for you to talk to — so talk to them you did. You told them your secrets and your stories, and confided in them how lonely you were. You shared everything with them...



...and one day, they started sharing right back. Suddenly, you could somehow understand what they were saying to you (though most of what they were discussing was shop talk about web tensile strength and the comparative flavor of assorted subspecies of *Drosophila*). Slowly but surely, though, lines of meaningful communication were established.

You learned what the spiders wanted from you. They learned what you wanted from them. And, as you moved on to college and began your studies in entomology, everything and everyone else faded in importance. You don't care much, though — what you're learning from your spidery friends is *fascinating*.

**Concept:** The spiders are everything to you. They bring you more information than you could sort in a lifetime, carry your messages, and listen to your stories. Admittedly, even other slugh sometimes regard you as a bit eccentric, but for the most part you're happy. In the meantime, your professors tell you that your insights into insect society are brilliant and your future is bright. If they only knew the truth...

**Roleplaying Hints:** Conversation with your spiders comes before anything else, even High Tea. If necessary you'll interrupt anyone, from another slugh to a duke, if one of your arthropod buddies wants your attention. In your opinion, odds are that the spider's conversation will be more interesting, anyway.

You still get a tiny evil thrill from grossing people out, but you don't indulge yourself all that often. When you do cut loose, however, you make it good. There's no sense in doing things halfway now, is there?



# k i t h b o o k : SLUAGH

Name:  
Concept: Mistress of Spiders  
Chronicle:

Court: Seelie  
Legacies: Sage/Grotesque  
Title:

Seeming: Wilder  
Kith: Sluagh  
Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●○○○○  
Dexterity ●○○○○  
Stamina ●○○○○

### Social

Charisma ●●○○○  
Manipulation ●●●○○  
Appearance ●●○○○

### Mental

Perception ●●●●○  
Intelligence ●●●○○  
Wits ●●●○○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ●●●○○  
Athletics ●●○○○  
Brawl ○○○○○  
Dodge ○○○○○  
Empathy ●●○○○  
Expression ○○○○○  
Intimidation ○○○○○  
Kenning ●●○○○  
Streetwise ○○○○○  
Subterfuge ●●○○○

### Skills

Crafts ●○○○○  
Drive ●○○○○  
Etiquette ●●●○○  
Firearms ○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○  
Melee ○○○○○  
Performance ○○○○○  
Security ○○○○○  
Stealth ●●●○○  
Survival ○○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ○○○○○  
Enigmas ●●○○○  
Investigation ●●●○○  
Law ●○○○○  
Linguistics ●●○○○  
Medicine ○○○○○  
Mythlore ●●○○○  
Occult ●●●○○  
Politics ○○○○○  
Science ○○○○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

Chimera ●○○○○  
Contacts ●●○○○  
Gremayre ●○○○○  
Resources ●●●○○  
○○○○○

### Arts

Soothsay ●●●○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

### Realms

Nature ●●●○○  
Scene ●●○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○  
○○○○○

## Other Traits

Friend to Spiders Apt. merit

## Glamour

●●●●●○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

## Willpower

●●●○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

## Banality

●●●○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

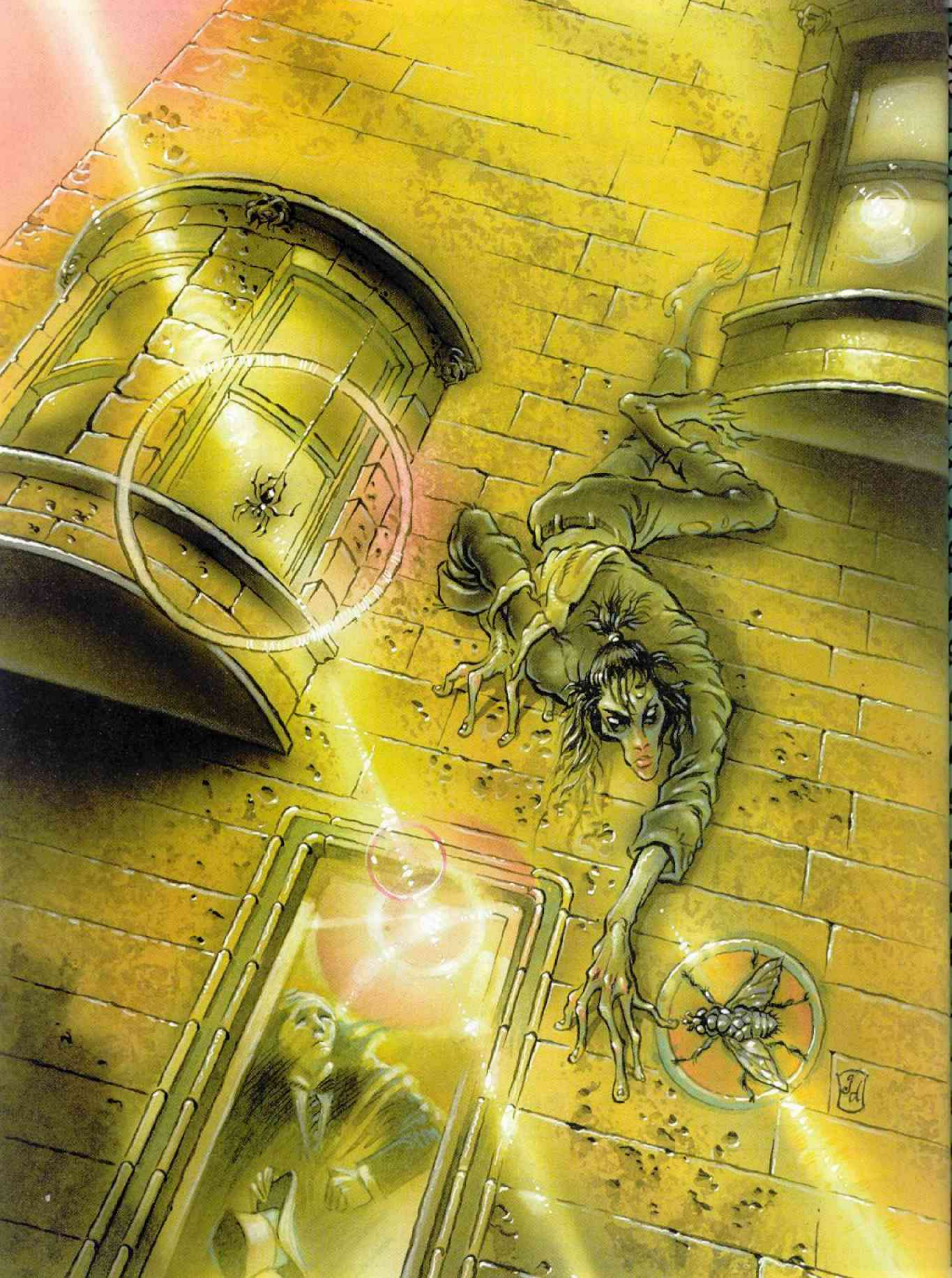
## Health

Bruised ☐  
Hurt -1 ☐  
Injured -1 ☐  
Wounded -2 ☐  
Mauled -2 ☐  
Crippled -5 ☐  
Incapacitated ☐

## Birthright/Frailty

Squirm: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.









*The yard, too, beneath him, was now alive with the creeping movements of dark forms all stealthily drawing towards the perch with the glass doors. They kept so closely to the wall that he could not determine their actual shape...*

-Algernon Blackwood, "Ancient Sorceries"

## Merits and Flaws

Sluagh can go places no other kith can, see things that evade other fae, and hear things too subtle for other ears. Some of this is temperament, the rest is talent. Regardless of the breakdown, however, there remain to the sluagh certain strengths and weaknesses unknown to the others of the changeling world; below are a sample of some of the more commonly manifested ones.

### Dexterous Toes:(1pointMerit)

Hands tied? Too many things to hold? Not to worry — with Dexterous Toes you can work equally well with hands or feet. A sluagh with this Merit can

do anything she can do with her hands (fire a gun, draw, play a musical instrument, etc.) just as well with her feet. Of course a sluagh carting items with her toes will be unable to walk.

### Nightsight:(3pointMerit)

Night blinds many eyes, but not yours. Regardless of the lighting conditions, your eyes adjust automatically, so that you can see equally well at high noon or midnight. The adjustment is instantaneous, so that, if you are standing in a dark room and someone lights a candle, you are not blinded.





### Prehensile Tongue: (3 point Merit)

One of the things that has earned the sluagh a far worse reputation than perhaps they deserve, the Prehensile Tongue is something that comes in handy when one has no free hands. Essentially, your tongue is another limb, able to reach up to two feet from your mouth in order to grasp and wield objects.

While a Prehensile Tongue doesn't make for the best of weapons, it still can be used for a poke in the eye or a revolting slap. (Players must make a Stamina roll, difficulty 6, if their characters are touched with a Prehensile Tongue; failure leaves the characters overcome with sheer disgust for a turn.)

Note: In order for a sluagh to use a Prehensile Tongue to pick something up or something else along those lines, the player must roll Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 7). A success indicates that the sluagh is in full control of his extra limb and need not check again this scene to see if he can use it. A failure indicates that the specific attempt fails; a botch leaves the protruding tongue banging disgustingly limp down the character's front.

### Friend to Spiders (4 point Merit)

This Merit might more properly be called "Friend to Arthropods," but it was with spiders that the sluagh first spoke, and hence the name remains. Nor is the relationship implied in the Merit's name as much a friendship as it is a business transaction, but even the sluagh have their sacrosanct traditions.

If you are a Friend to Spiders, you can speak to all manner of creeping, crawling creatures (when the player makes a Perception + Enigmas roll, difficulty 7). While the conversation isn't as much an exchange of pleasantries as it is a swap of images and impressions, a tremendous amount of information

can be gained by speaking with spiders in this fashion. Recent passersby can be noted, changes in the wind (and what they bear) can be uncovered, and other bits of vital information that might otherwise have passed you by can be gleaned from taking the time to speak with eight-legged informants. The number of successes earned indicates the clarity of information learned.

### Fly Fingers (4 point Merit)

In your fae seeming, your fingers end in suction cups akin to those of a fly. You are capable of climbing sheer walls, hanging upside down from ceilings, and otherwise defying gravity as long as you have something to hold onto. (The player must make a Dexterity + Athletics roll).

Note: The fingers in question cannot be gloved in order for Fly Fingers to work. The toes of a sluagh with this Merit are similarly affected, though the fingers alone are enough to support a changelings weight.

### Dead Friends: (4 point Merit)

Sluagh have always been able to see, and sometimes talk to, wraiths. However, you've gone beyond that sort of casual contact to the point where you've made friends with a few of those who've passed on. They bring you information, spy on your enemies, and generally keep you up to date on things that no living informant could ever possibly uncover. Having contacts who walk through walls can be extremely useful sometimes.

On the other hand, these friends will expect you to do them favors as well, and some of those requests can get pretty bizarre. Plus, you never know when your nice wraith friend is suddenly going to get nasty for no apparent reason, and he knows where you live....

### Puddle: (5 point Merit)

As the centuries slithered past, the sluagh slowly lost their ability to assume any form they desired. Gradually they became more and more restricted in the shapes they could assume, eventually being locked in a more-or-less human guise.

But not you. With the Puddle Merit, you can reduce your form to a flattened pool of goo on the ground, ooze through the smallest cracks and crannies, and pour yourself into containers that shouldn't be able to hold you — and then assume your proper form, none the worse for wear. This trick is particularly useful for spies, couriers and assassins.

In order for a sluagh to Puddle, the player must make a Stamina + Athletics roll (difficulty 6). Moving while in Puddle form requires Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 7). While reconstituting takes Stamina + Athletics (difficulty 7). A botch on either of the last two rolls renders the sluagh an inert quivering mass, easily caught and poured into a container for safekeeping. Failure simply means that the sluagh must try again.



## Gregarious:(1pointFlaw)

Among the worst breaches of etiquette a sluagh can commit is spending too much time in the company of others. A Gregarious sluagh may win friends and influence other Kithain, but is likely to acquire a bad odor among others of her kind. If you are Gregarious, you will be ostracised by other sluagh, not invited to High Teas, and left unapprised of information that might otherwise be of use.

Player, your Gregarious sluagh is at -2 on all Social rolls involving other sluagh.

And, no, you can't keep it a secret.

## Short Attention Span: (2 point Flaw)

Much of a sluagh's time can be spent poring over complex problems, separating informational wheat from chaff. This requires time, effort and most of all, patience.

Unfortunately, with a Short Attention Span, patience is something you have in short supply. You bounce from idea to idea and project to project, never finishing one before starting the next. Even if you've promised to complete work for someone else, you never quite seem to be able to get around to it, particularly when there are so many more exciting things to which you could devote yourself. (Alas, each of these eventually pales, and you're left with a string of unfinished pieces, which depresses you so much that you want to wipe the slate clean and start on something completely new....)

For a sluagh with a Short Attention Span to finish a piece of work that cannot be done at a single sitting, the player must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6); otherwise the necessary work will be left undone. This roll must be made every time the project in question is returned to. A sluagh with this Flaw will be treated like a child by others of her kith. A sluagh without the patience to watch is no real sluagh at all.

## Loudmouth:(3pointFlaw)

Secrets ? What secrets? If you've got a piece of information, you can't resist telling the world. As information is the kith's stock in trade, you're literally giving away the store every time you open your mouth. It's not that you mean to mouth off, it's just that you can't help yourself- (Player, make a Willpower roll, difficulty 8, to keep your sluagh from blurting out any secrets she knows.)

Of course, once word gets around that there's a blabbermouth sluagh in town, you can expect plenty of visitors — other changelings looking for the latest dirt and whatnot. Then again, folks may try to use you to spread false information, and you're certainly not going to be in the good graces of other sluagh.



## Recluse:(3pointFlaw)

Above and beyond the usual sluagh aversion to companionship, you have a phobia when it comes to others. It takes a real effort (Willpower roll, difficulty 6) for you even to come out of your lair, and another one every day to keep you from scuttling back in. You're most comfortable at home, and generally don't even let others see you, preferring to remain behind curtains or one-way glass.

Whenever the sluagh is in the company of more than one person, you are at -1 on all rolls unless you make a Willpower roll (difficulty 5)

## Hag-Ridden:(4pointFlaw)

Somewhere along the line, someone whom you wronged died. This wouldn't be so bad, except now she's a wraith and she's out to make your life a (brief) living hell. No matter where you go or what you do, your ghost will follow you and do her best to interfere. As you grow in power, so will she, and she won't rest until you're destroyed. The worst part of it, however, is that you can see her and everything she's up to, but most of the time, you're powerless to do anything about it.

## Knows Too Much:(5pointFlaw)

You have learned what many consider to be the great secret of the sluagh: that sluagh fae are in their last incarnation, and that beyond this life yawns nothingness. This revelation has twisted your perspective irreparably. No longer do you see any good in the world or in others. Nothing means anything to you anymore, and life is simply something to be endured before the darkness that waits for you inevitably swallows your spirit.

This also means that others will have an extremely difficult time convincing you of the urgency of any quests or requests, and you may well abruptly lose interest in whatever you're doing simply because it's too much effort.



# Treasures and Tools of the Trade

There are certain items that are peculiar to sluagh in their usage. Whether this is because the other kith don't know how best to use them, or simply wouldn't touch them with a 10-foot pole is irrelevant. While some or all of these could quite easily be used by non-sluagh, they remain signature pieces for sluagh work.

## Blowguns

Among the quietest of projectile weapons, blowguns hold a particular fascination for Unseelie sluagh. Easily concealable (most will fit in a pocket, along with their ammunition) and nearly impossible to trace, blowguns are the weapons of choice of the most feared sluagh assassins.

Most sluagh blowguns are made from either bone or driftwood, though a few appear to be carved from the carapace of some monstrous insect. However, it is not the blowgun itself that is deadly; it is whatever poison the sluagh has anointed his darts with that is the real cause for fear. Straight lethal poison (usually harvested from serpents or black widow spiders) is bad enough, but other options have been witnessed. Slow poisons, analgesics that induce feelings like arthritis (the origin of the elf-shot myth), diseases and hallucinogens have all been used as the payload on a missile launched by a sluagh's whispered breath.

Difficulty: 7

Damage: 1 (plus whatever is on the dart)

Concealability: Just about anywhere. Don't you feel better knowing that?



## Enchanter

Expensive beyond belief but increasingly common, Enchanter is the street name for a hallucinogenic drug that brings mortals into the Dreaming for an hour or two. The transition is neither gradual nor pleasant; one minute the victim is looking at a sunny park exploding with flowers, the next bloodshot chimerical eyes are staring at him from every crevice.

Enchanter is used by sluagh of both Courts primarily as an instrument of revenge, particularly on the aggressively and rudely banal. The arrogant professor who demeans a sluagh student's favorite *fantasiste* might find himself beset by chimera in the faculty lounge; or the rent-a-cop telling a sluagh graffiti artist to move along could very well see those paintings come viciously alive during his next round.

The easiest vector for the application of Enchanter is oral, but skin contact works as well.

None but the sluagh have the secret of manufacturing Enchanter, though certain satyrs have made exorbitant offers for the "recipe."

## Treasures

### Inner Spinners (Level 1 Treasure)

Creepy, crawly, dark and dank, the Inner Spinners are instruments of revenge and torture. For all intents and purposes, the Inner Spinners are tiny chimerical arachnids, done up in black lacquer and clockwork. When placed in the house or sleeping quarters of their intended victim, the Spinners go to work. Once the target is safely dozing, the Spinners scuttle over to him and proceed to crawl into his ears, nose and mouth. There they spin chimerical webs so





thick and sticky that he may suffocate, choke or go temporarily deaf. More than one changeling has gone mad after awakening to discover that he had a mouthful of spiders.

All that is required to activate a set of these miniature monstrosities is a single hair belonging to the intended target, which must be tied around the leg of the largest of the Spinners.

### Gray Vines(Level2Treasure)

Appearing as a vest the color of fog, the Gray Vines look to be woven in a clever pattern mimicking the growth of wild plants. Only close examination reveals that the waistcoat is actually made from twining thorny vines, which, thankfully, remain still.

While this is interesting enough for its own sake, the vines do have another function. Normally worn under a jacket or cloak, the vest of vines can, upon command and the expenditure of a point of Glamour, send its vines slithering down the sleeves of its wearer and beyond to grapple a single target. The vines have an effective Strength and Dexterity of 5, and cause three Health Levels of chimerical damage from their thorns every round they hold a prisoner **fast**.

Note: The thorns of the Gray Vines, while not poisonous, are extremely sharp. Anyone grappling or even hugging a sluagh wearing this Treasure will take two Health Levels of chimerical damage.

### The Listener(Level2Treasure)

Foul but useful, the Listener is a useful tool in the never-ending sluagh quest to garner more and more information. Probably a creation of some forgotten Unseelie genius, the Listener appears to be a human ear, raggedly severed from the head that once held it. However, the

tattered flesh on the end of the ear is more than just a sort of protoplasmic leftover; it serves as anchor, foot and suction cup all at once for the ear itself

That's right, the Listener moves by itself. Ensconcing itself wherever it can hear the most, the Treasure shuffles along like a particularly disgusting snail when the need for it to move arises. Walls, ceilings and vents pose no real obstacle to its locomotion, though it cannot achieve more than a walking pace.

The possessor of the Listener must spend a point of Willpower to attune to it, but after that she can simply concentrate (Perception + Kenning, difficulty 7) and hear with perfect clarity whatever is going on in the room currently housing the Treasure.

To break a previous attunement (for the Listener goes through owners the way redcaps go through cheeseburgers — some even say there's a curse involved), a sluagh must spend a Willpower point and make a contested Willpower roll against the item's current owner. If the attempt succeeds, the previous owner will know instantly that her control is gone, and will act accordingly.

### Gloves of Night(Level3Treasure)

While sluagh can transmogrify themselves to fit into nearly any crevice or opening, there are times when even the most flexible sluagh will find herself stymied by a locked door. For those moments, the Gloves of Night come in handy.

Appearing to be simple black leather gloves, the Gloves have one unique property that plays upon the sluagh Birthright. After a point of Glamour has been spent, the flesh of a hand within a Glove of Night can be





liquefied or solidified at the whim of the wearer. This allows the sluagh wearing the gloves to remodel his digits into claws, suction cups or (most importantly) lockpicks. The Gloves also allow their wearer to choose the consistency of his newly mutated fingers — this provides enough rigidity for a fleshy lockpick to turn tumblers without lacerations.

The effects of this crafting fade in under an hour once the Gloves are removed, but as the Gloves themselves reshape themselves to be skintight with the flesh within, there's really no utilitarian reason to ever remove them.

There are 13 sets of Gloves of Night in existence, with each Court known to possess of six. The whereabouts of the last pair are a mystery to even the eldest and best-connected of the kith...

## Wordspider(Level 5 Treasure)

Long before hackers proclaimed that information wants to be free, the sluagh had decided that there should be no secrets kept from them. Hence they created the Wordspider, a chimerical mechanical methodical breaker of codes and discoverer of secrets. Small enough to fit into the average sluagh's palm, a Wordspider looks as if it were spun from green and gold glass. Its mandibles, however, are unusually long, and careful observation notes wiry protrusions from each "foot."

When set upon a page containing any sort of code, hidden text or chimerical confusion of the true words contained within, a Wordspider (fueled by a point of Glamour) instantly goes to work. To observers, it will appear to be cutting, manipulating and otherwise reordering the very letters and ink of the page, devouring the text in bite-sized morsels only to regurgitate it in some new order. What is really happening, however, is that the



Wordspider is spitting out the actual words of the missive. No code, no spell, no Art, no hidden ink can protect a written secret from the all-seeing eye of a Wordspider.

In recent years, enterprising sluagh have experimented with creating online versions of Wordspiders. There is no word yet on their success, though the NSA has been getting some very interesting E-mail lately....

## Cold Light(Legendary Treasure)

Crafted in the days before the sluagh crawled from the Slavic forests, Cold Light is justly feared and hated by the other kith. While its current whereabouts are unknown, everyone from sidhe nobles to boggan gossips is sure that the sluagh are hiding it, waiting for the right moment to unleash its power.

Looking like nothing so much as a dagger carved from a single, titan icicle, Cold Light shines an eerie blue at all times. It radiates intense cold, causing a bitter chill to strike down all in the vicinity, save its wielder and her allies (who feel a pleasant briskness in the air). Upon command, Cold Light can also increase the intensity of its blaze, blinding all who stand before it.

However, the blade's name refers to the cold light of truth which is supposedly sealed within it. It is this power that the other kith fear, for the wielder of Cold Light can command the absolute truth from any who stand before her. No secret is safe, no falsehood possible in the blue radiance of Cold Light. Even the Tuatha de Danaan are helpless before this power, and some of the more optimistic sidhe claim that the Tuatha must have taken the dagger in order to guard their own secrets.



# K i t h b o o k : SLURGH™

Name:  
Concept:  
Chronicle:

Court:  
Legacies:  
Title:

Seeming:  
Kith:  
Motley:

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength ●○○○○  
Dexterity ●○○○○  
Stamina ●○○○○

### Social

Charisma ●○○○○  
Manipulation ●○○○○  
Appearance ●○○○○

### Mental

Perception ●○○○○  
Intelligence ●○○○○  
Wits ●○○○○

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness ○○○○○  
Athletics ○○○○○  
Brawl ○○○○○  
Dodge ○○○○○  
Empathy ○○○○○  
Expression ○○○○○  
Intimidation ○○○○○  
Kenning ○○○○○  
Streetwise ○○○○○  
Subterfuge ○○○○○

### Skills

Crafts ○○○○○  
Drive ○○○○○  
Etiquette ○○○○○  
Firearms ○○○○○  
Leadership ○○○○○  
Melee ○○○○○  
Performance ○○○○○  
Security ○○○○○  
Stealth ○○○○○  
Survival ○○○○○

### Knowledges

Computer ○○○○○  
Enigmas ○○○○○  
Investigation ○○○○○  
Law ○○○○○  
Linguistics ○○○○○  
Medicine ○○○○○  
Mythlore ○○○○○  
Occult ○○○○○  
Politics ○○○○○  
Science ○○○○○

## Advantages

### Backgrounds

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○○○○○  
○○○○○  
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### Arts

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### Realms

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### Other Traits

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Glamour

○○○○○○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

### Willpower

○○○○○○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

### Banalities

○○○○○○○○○○○○  
□□□□□□□□

### Health

Bruised ☐  
Hurt -1 ☐  
Injured -1 ☐  
Wounded -2 ☐  
Mauled -2 ☐  
Crippled -5 ☐  
Incapacitated ☐

### Birthright/Frailty

Squirm: Escape bonds with Dex + Athletics roll.  
Sharpened Senses: Lower all Perception difficulties by two.  
Whisper: Cannot speak above a whisper.



# kickbook: SLURGH™

Household: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Leige Lord: \_\_\_\_\_

Political Impulse: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sam Day: \_\_\_\_\_

## Merits & Flaws

Merit	Type	Cost	Flaw	Type	Bonus

## Experience

Total: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gained From: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Spent: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spent On: \_\_\_\_\_

## Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Conceal	Range	Rate	Clip

### Brawling Chart

Maneuver	Roll/Difficulty	Damage	Actions
Body Slam	Dex+Brawl/7	Special	1
Grapple	Dex+ Brawl/6	Strength	1
Kick	Dex+Brawl/7	Strength+1	1
Punch	Dex+Brawl/6	Strength	1

## Armor

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Rating: \_\_\_\_\_ Penalty: \_\_\_\_\_ Description: \_\_\_\_\_



k i t h b o o k :

# SLUNGH

Contacts

Mentor

Holdings

Oaths Sworn

Dreamers

Blackmail

Secrets Known

Favors Owed

Possessions

Gear (Carried)

Chimerical Items

Treasures

Chimerical Companions

Freeholds

Location

Description



# SLURGH™

## History

### Prelude

Date Enobled: \_\_\_\_\_

Secret Societies: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appearance

Chronological Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Mortal: \_\_\_\_\_

Apparent Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Hair: \_\_\_\_\_

Eyes: \_\_\_\_\_

Fae: \_\_\_\_\_

Race: \_\_\_\_\_

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

## Visuals

Oath Bonds Chart

Character Sketch



# k i t h b o o k : SLUAGH™

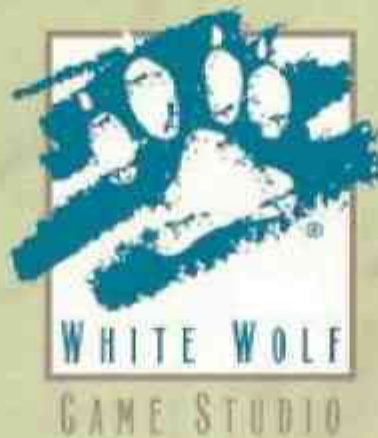
## SECRETS IN THE DARKNESS

Everyone knows who the sluagh are. They're the nasty, smelly, slimy creepy, weirdos who know everything about everyone. They spy on all the other kith, hold forbidden revels in cavernous mazes deep beneath the earth, and occasionally sacrifice childlings to whatever dark things they worship. They also eat spiders and toads, hate sunlight and all other kith, and can't be trusted as far as a boggan can throw an overweight troll. At least that's what we've been told....



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- ☺ The dark secrets of the sluagh, from their origins to modern day;
- ☺ An inside look at sluagh culture and behavior;
- ☺ New Merits and Flaws available only to sluagh characters.



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