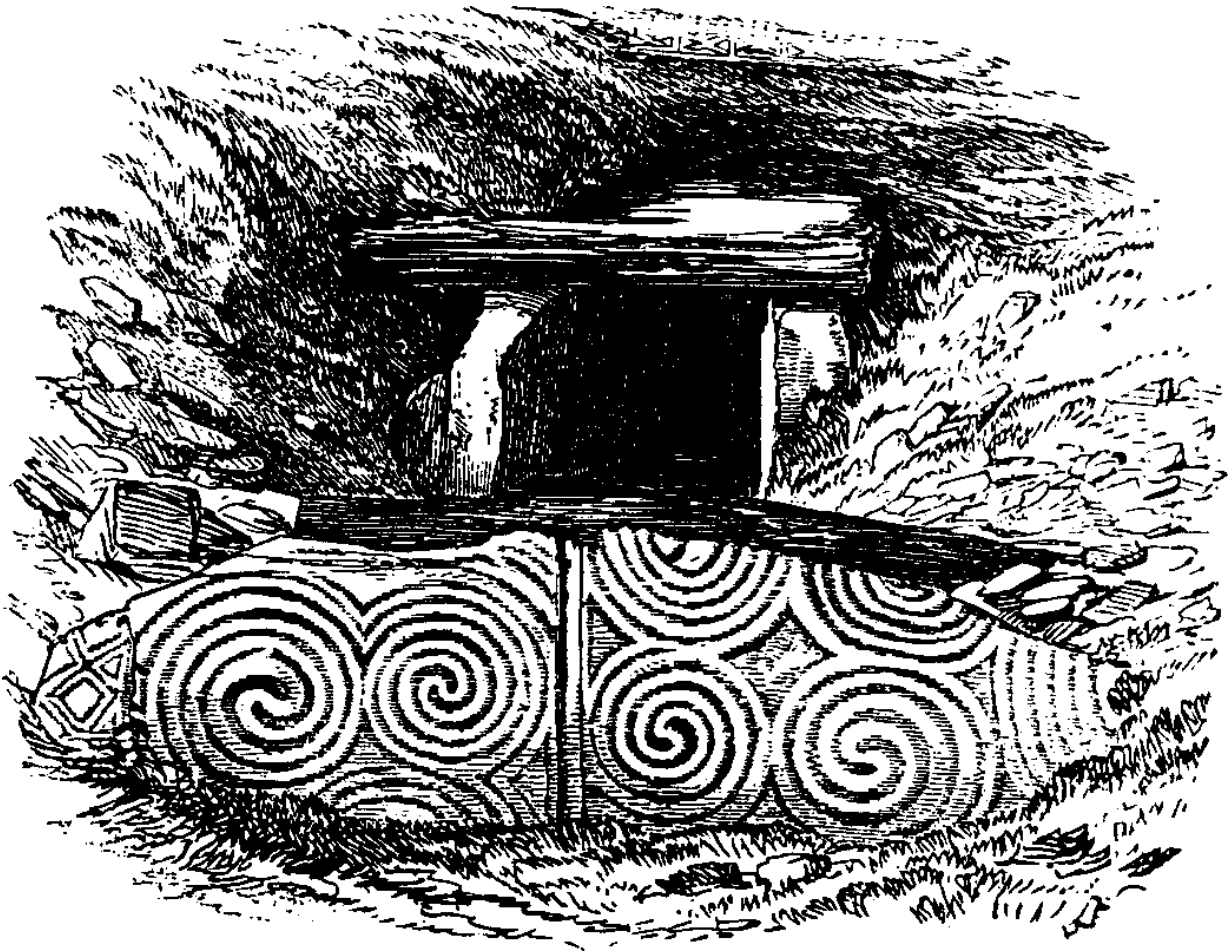


Changeling



The Celtic Cycle

Buck O'Hara

Deena McKinney

Wayne Peacock

Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Who Are You?

Audience, audience and audience — the three rules of good writing. Well, we wrote this for people who already have a good grasp of **Changeling: the Dreaming** specifically and the World of Darkness (WoD) in general. So there will *not* be a lot of explication in these volumes.

Why? The oldest reason in the world -- time. We are busy people and do not have the time to both explain the original game and introduce new players to our version of it. (Although, most gamers are bright enough to read between the lines anyway!)

Nonetheless, we hope you enjoy our version of Changeling.

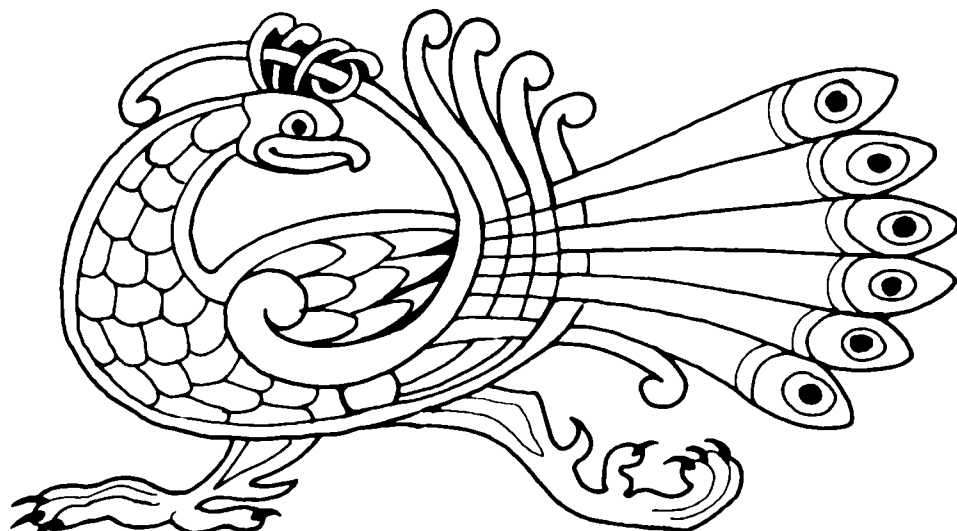
If you have not read through the first part of **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle**, you might want to grab Motive 58 and keep it handy, or download Part 1 if you are reading this online.

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* Except Where Noted

Layout by Wayne Peacock



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle

An Introduction

Welcome to the second part of **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle**. This portion contains information on character creation, magic and a nice tale to wet your appetite for the third and final installment of our series.

This section was supposed to be solely my doing, but as usually my gluttonous self bit off far more than I could possibly chew. Buck and Deena came to my rescue. (Sadly, as usual on that account too!)

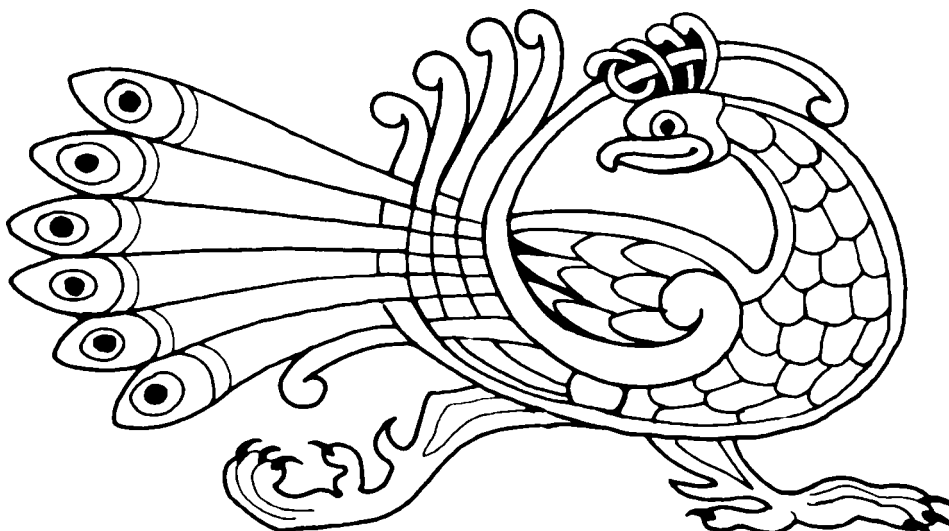
Thank you!

As I mentioned during the last introduction, this is a work in progress. We changed some of the lexicon which follows to reflect that, so it might be good to give it a look. This installment also has a lot of system-stuff, so if you see any glaring holes, please let me know.

. . .

Next issue will include details on running a CtCC game and a lot of odds and ends which did not make it for this issue. System-wise this will include a look at the Otherworld and Chimera and include some new Branches of Magic that specifically deal with them.

What are Branches of Magic? Well, they *are* in here...read on!



Short & Sweet

Changelings come from Faerie, not the Dreaming.

They are creatures of Faerie and our world. They belong to both, but are never really at home in either.

There are no forces akin to Banality or Dream.

Their Fae Mien is real.

They do not need bunks and Enchantments to cast their magics.

The fae are tied to their culture's traditions.

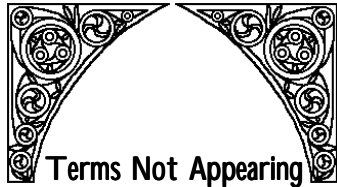
Did the Celtic fae create the Celtic culture?

No.

Was every Celtic hero (Mythic or otherwise) a fae?

Hell, no!

Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Terms Not Appearing in This Game

Arts
Bedlam
Banality
Bunk
Dauntain
Deep Dreaming
Dream
Dreaming
Dreamrealms
Seeming
(in reference to age)

Working Lexicon

Antipathy — In effect, Antipathy is “anti-fae.” It represents the forces of the universe that oppose the fae. Some loremasters of the changelings believe this force was created by the Formorians to eradicate them. Others seem to think of it like a disease, the fae equivalent of the Black Plague. The most concrete example of this force is cold iron, anathema to changelings. Another example is the Gauntlet itself.

Perhaps because of their affinity for the Otherworld, Antipathy seems to affect the sidhe more than other kith. Although any fae who fail to fulfill the roles defined by Kith, Legacy, Season and Court feel the bite of Antipathy, the antithesis of their fae natures.

Arcadia — (Tir Tairngir, the Land of the Blessed) Arcadia was one of the penumbric kingdoms of the Fae that was separated from Gaia in the times of old. Now it resides in the Faerie – out of reach of most fae.

Balefire — These fires of multicolored flame, kindled in Faerie, give off what Fae refer to as the Wyrding Light. These fires, when kept near Trods or other places where the wall between worlds is weak, need no fuel to burn. Things exposed to the Wyrding Light age more slowly.

Balefires were the symbols of the noble's rank before the Shattering seals of the Danu's favor and their right to rule. Some claim the Accordance War was largely provoked by the sidhe's attempts “to get back their property.”

Bans — The limitations that are placed upon changelings. To violate your ban is to go against your true nature, and to invite Antipathy.

Branch — Each of the Fae Gods (such as the Tuatha de Dannan) has a variety of Feats associated with it, called a Branch. The Branch of Llyr, for example, includes Feats affecting the sea and weather.

Bruideve — a fae homestead in Da Derga

Celtic — *Celt* is a catch-all term for the myth, customs and societies of ancient Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the western highlands of Scotland (the Goidelic); Wales and Cornwall (the Insular Brythonic); and Brittany (France – The Continental Brythonic).

The Celtic peoples bred with the Tuatha de Dannan and created the Changelings and Kinain. The Changelings and the Celts influenced each other's culture.

Changelings — (Fae, Kithain) Changelings are beings whose parentage lies with Faerie and Humanity. In the Mythic Age, fae spirits (the chimeric Danu) were profoundly humanized by their contact with the inhabitants of Earth. They acted as humanity's muse – influencing early human cultures.

Eventually they interbred with beings of Gaia

(humans and nature spirits). Inanimae formed from the mix of the Danu and nature spirits. Kinain were the offspring of these unions with humanity. Some kinain were born with strong fae souls, these creatures are known as Changelings.

Changelings are only reborn in bloodlines of human families that once interbred with the Danu of old (the Kinain), but there is little order in their genesis. So one family may produce a sidhe in one generation and a boggan two generations later. (In CtCC there are a lot more kinain.) These bloodlines are matrilineal — this is why most of the “families” are lost — i.e. your surname means nothing. (There are no powerful Giovanni-like fae families of kinain.)

Charm — A magical power possessed by a Chimera.

Chimera — (Somhlth, pl. chimerae) Spirits from Faerie. Some are servants of the fae; others are treated as equals or gods. Chimera can range from magical machines made by the knockers to the goddess Dana, mother of the True Fae, and “grandmother” to Changelings.

Lesser Chimera are different in character from most nature spirits for they include bygone beasts (i.e., griffins) and spirits which manifest as material objects (flying books or toys). They are not the spirits of the plants and animals of the “natural” world, but creatures and things touched with the wonder of faerie.

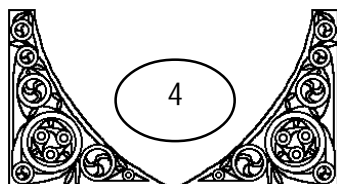
Greater Chimera include the Danu, and maybe even the old, pagan gods themselves.

Comhairle — The comhairle is a group of adult changelings who are chosen by lot to serve as the war council for a fae ruler. They have the right to approve or refuse another's challenge to the ruler. The comhairle can be made up of any kith of any station. Kinain may also serve if they are accepted as a fellow vassal.

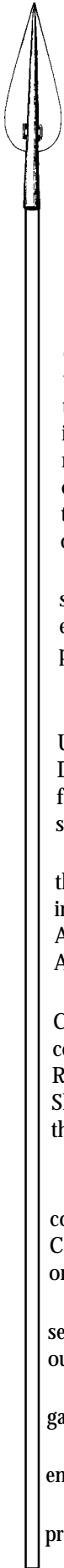
Danu — (True Fae) A Celtic term for the first Chimeric spirits to arrive from Faerie. They spawned the Changelings and the Inanimae. Fae of other cultures or Domains, have similar terms, but disagree on exactly who or what the gods were.

Day — the Fae measure their days from sunset to sunset, rather than using the sunrise. Rather than continually refer to this, or risk confusing the issue, please remember that when measuring time, a “day” is really a night.

Domains — A domain is an area under the influence of a certain group of fae. The Celtic Domain covers Britain, Canada, Brittany, Ireland, and much of the United States. These domains have no fixed borders in most cases. They represent areas where the kinain and their cultural descendants now live.



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Other Domains include the Nunnehi Domain, the Norse Domain, the Olympian Domain, and the Domain of the Middle Kingdom.

The United States would be a patchwork of Domains if they were drawn on a map. Chicago, like most major cities in the world, would have areas under the control of Nunnehi, Norse, Celtic, Olympian, and the Domain of the Middle Kingdom.

Dying Lands — This is the name that the fae and all other creatures of Faerie blood use for our world. It comes from the fact that this was the first place the Faerie met death and it is from this place that Antipathy, and its embodiment, cold iron, was born. The Dying Lands is the place of mortals, is the place where aging and dying are common and inevitable occurrences, as opposed to the faerie realms where immortality, or at least cyclical continuance, is nearly assured.

Enhancements — An Enhancement is a purely system-oriented term. When a fae *enhances* the base effect of a magic feat, she loses a die from her die pool, thus making the Feat more difficult.

Fae — A changeling.

Faerie — (Undying Lands) A place in the Deep Umbra from which the forefathers of the fae, the Danu, came. Sometimes used to refer to spirits from that realm. This place was the Dreaming, as such.

Faerie Realms — (Fae Realms) The sidhe and the Tuatha De Dannan created many Faerie Realms in the Otherworld. These other realms were called Annwn, Tir fo Thuinn, Mag Mell, Tir Nan Og and Avalon.

A fae realm would be one controlled by a Changeling, while a Faerie Realm would be under control of a chimeric being, usually a Danu. Fae Realms are usually found in or near the Shadowlands, while Faerie Realms are usually in the Deep Umbra.

Feat — a fae “spell.” Replaces cantrip.

Freehold — a place controlled by a commoner containing a Balefire. These now resemble Garou Caerns, or could even be holy sites (or hospitals), or faerie glades.

Gauntlet, The — (the Wall) The barrier separating the spirit worlds from the Dying Lands, our own world.

Geas — Inherent weaknesses of Chimera. (pl. geasa)

Glamour — Fae illusory magic practiced on enchanted mortals.

Ire — Ire is measure of a spirit’s capacity and propensity to harm others. It corresponds in all ways

to Rage, from other World of Darkness games.

Legacies — Legacies are far more important in this game. Legacies represent the faes’ true calling, their mission and go a long way to determining how they harvest Wyrd and how they gain Antipathy.

Lost Ones — Changelings that lived through the Interregnum, usually referring to powerful sidhe.

Mien — The “true” form of the Changelings. Changelings must expend Wyrd to assume their true forms.

Myths — Mortals exposed to the Fae Mien or Feat tend to reintegrate into their world view over time.

Otherworld — (Achren) the fae term for the Umbra. The plural usage, Otherworlds, refers to the multitudes of realities (worlds, realms, etc.) within the Tellurian.

Rath — A “noble” freehold.

Realm — A semi-permanent location created in the Otherworld. In ancient times it was called a sidh. This term later became associated with the masters of realm-making, the sidhe.

Season — One of the Changeling’s ties to this world is evidenced in the season of their birth. During this season the fae’s power grows and during that season’s Antipathy their power wanes.

Shadowlands — (Da Derga) This is spiritual reflection of the Dying Lands, and the first spirit world usually encountered when passing into Achren (the Otherworld) from our own reality. The penumbra.

Slumber — A trance-like state that many spirits fall into in the spirit worlds. It is more like hibernation than sleep.

Sympathy — Sympathies are items, plants, colors and other forms of “mojo” to draw connections to the powers of this world and Faerie. Sympathies are used to make magical Feats more reliable and effective. A particular sympathy may only be used once a day (see *day*, above) by a particular fae.

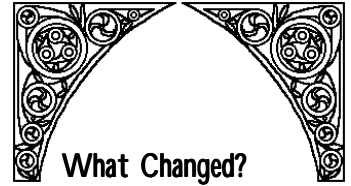
Trods — Pathways through the Otherworlds.

Underhill — the fae term for the spirit world or Umbra. Such as, “I’m going Underhill.”

Wyrd — (Power) Wyrd is the force used to create Magical Feats, Glammers and manifest a fae’s true form (Mien). It is actually more closely linked to the Mage idea of Quintessence, than spiritual Gnosis. Wyrd energies abound in the Shadowlands.

Wyrd can also be harvested from events or places that re-enforce the ideals, virtues society, and function of the fae: Some SCA-like events, glades, some pagan rituals, etc. Fae-inspired artworks also produce power.

The term “Wyrd” is also a measurement of a chimera’s connection to the ancient powers of Faerie. It is the same as the Power characteristic in other WoD games.



What Changed?

Take a look at these terms:

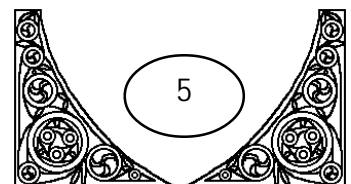
Bruidheve (new)

Feat (new)

Glamour

Shadowlands

Wyrd



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Where are My Seemings?

A quick glance will tell you that we did away with the Chidling/Wilder/Grump seemings*. Why? Well, it fit into the "Childhood is Glamorous" theme that was part of CtD, but we've abandoned that theme. That's why it's not here. We are not saying "Don't play youngsters!" Like other WoD games we assume that most people are going to begin playing youngish adults.

A really young fae should start with 50% (round up) fewer dots to distribute at each step and only 8 freebies.

Middle aged fae should be required to take points of Antipathy (due to experience, not merely age) but gain 8 feebie points per point of Antipathy.

Old fae should also be required to take points of Antipathy (due to experience, not age) but gain 10 feebie points per point of Antipathy. They should also lose three dots from Physical Attributes.

* *Seeming* only refers to the human form of a fae in CtCC.

Character Creation

Creating a Celtic Changeling

Upon reading this chapter, players of **Changeling: the Dreaming** will find similar territory with a few specific differences. For more detail, refer to the published rulebook and the supplementary material at the end of this chapter detailing the new aspects of character creation.

Step One: Character Concept

Formulate the basic character concept in one or two sentences. Find some aspect to build on, and go from there.

This bears repeating: the fae are hybrid creatures, not strictly of Faerie nor of the Dying Lands but able to exist in both. They don't throw on their "fae personae" on weekends like a medieval reenactor; they are fae creatures who, when they choose to, merge into mortal society.

Kith

The player chooses a type of changeling to play; this will have a great impact on the character's outlook and how the player runs the character. With a few small changes, the kith options are as published.

Legacies: Court, Season and Class

Legacies are the cornerstones of a character's persona in CtCC. They incorporate some of the ideas behind Court and Legacy form CtD, but are more closely tied to Celtic sensibilities.

Legacies play a huge part in fae magic. Storytellers should reward a player who finds an ingenious way to augment a Magical Feat in a way appropriate to their Legacies. (This reward is called a sympathy, and adds a die to the pool used for Magical Feat rolls.)

Court: Seelie or Unseelie

The primal essence of faerie is mercurial — the unending dance between the Seelie and Unseelie. This essential part of their nature defines what they are at the core. Court legacies set the stage for the deepest motivations of a changeling — his true nature.

Just as the fae are creatures of both the Dying Lands and Faerie, so are all fae creatures of *both* Courts. Breaking a Ban or Geas, often forces a change in a fae's Court. It is not necessarily looked upon as evil; almost all fae spend some period of their life in both courts.

Seelie — The Seelie time is from Beltaine in the Spring to Samhain in winter. Seelie associations: Light, positive, love of one's fellows, romance, forthrightness, duty, youth, trust, shallowness, friendship and action.

Unseelie — The Unseelie portion of the year is from Samhain to the fires of Beltaine. Unseelie associations: Darkness, angst, negativity, lust, dishonesty, depth, selfishness, avarice, intrigue, old age, and contemplation.

Season

Next, the player chooses the character's Season. Season determines how the cyclic forces of the Wyrd wax and wane for your character — fae are tied to the season of their birth in the Dying lands. While Court pays homage to the

duality of the Faerie ancestry, Season honors the Dying Lands and their patron, Mother Earth.

A fae's Seasonal Legacy influences her demeanor, the face she shows to the world. During the season that corresponds to their Seasonal Legacy, the fae seems more alive. Correspondingly, their Seasonal Antipathy is a time when the fae feels more vulnerable, and less connected to the world.

Spring — Fae born during spring seem to be split almost equally between Seelie and Unseelie in number. Spring changelings are mercurial and lusty. They live in the moment.

Summer — Summer fae are overwhelmingly Seelie. Summer sidhe are natural leaders — energetic and full of fire.

Fall — Autumnal fae are almost equally distributed between the Seelie and Unseelie Courts. They tend to be builders and planners.

Winter — Winter-born changelings are almost always Unseelie. They tend to be cold, aloof and studious.

Class

Unless you plan to play an outcast, whatever concept you choose should fit into one of the three classes of the Celtic Fae: Warrior (soldier, war leader, chieftain, etc), loremaster (bard, sorcerer, sage, etc), or crafter (farmer, hunter, fisher, etc). You needn't confine your character to a strict stereotype — a farmer may use magic, and a bard may be an able spearchucker, but in general the character should be recognizable as belonging to one of the three.

Class is not necessarily determined by birth. Those of ability are allowed into any class. Class is strongly related to the concept of nobility. Warriors are most likely nobles. But in this age nobility, and standing in a House is not conferred entirely upon Warriors; Loremasters and even crafters can and do hold noble office in the Dying Lands.

Class determines which circumstances allow the fae to regain lost Willpower, and influence their experience point cost for improving abilities.

Warrior — Warrior fae are the most powerful group. They are the leaders of Celtic society. In the current age they are not all sword-slinging soldiers, they are also businessmen, and tacticians of all sorts. Sidhe tend to dominate in this class, although Aithech are almost always warriors as well.

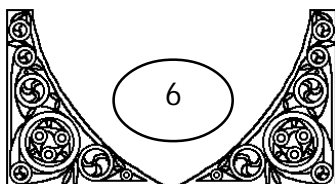
Warriors regain Willpower by displaying bravery, great skill in combat, or conquering a greater foe.

Loremaster — Masters of learning are made up of sorcerers, bards, tailspinners and historians. Loremasters are sometimes the powers behind the thrones. Sidhe also tend to dominate as sorcerers and bards, although Sluagh also have many in this class as well.

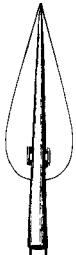
Loremaster regain Willpower when they uncover some hidden truth, or make an especially wise pronouncement that influences the story.

Crafter — Crafters are laborers, artisans and farmers. While seemingly the "lowest" class this varies greatly from person to person. Smiths are just as important as warriors and wise men.

Commoners tend to make up most of the kith in this



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class, and not without exception. House Dougal is the almost entirely made up of sidhe crafters — proof that crafters may also be noble.

Crafters regain Willpower by creating something new or repairing something broken.

Outcasts — Outcasts are made up of commoners who still resist the sidhe and the return to the old (Celtic) ways. They are shunned by most changelings, at least publicly. It is illegal to teach them Magical Feats or allow them to attend any Festivals. They are not hunted down as a matter of course, but should they cause trouble in a noble's lands no quarter will be given an outcast.

Outcasts can choose to rejoin fae society if they have some sponsor, agree to be Oathbound and complete some service to a powerful noble — excellent fodder for adventures.

Outcasts gain Willpower by thwarting a sidhe plot or undermining their authority.

Step Two: Traits

Choosing Attributes

This step is identical to the one listed in **Changeling: the Dreaming** — one point in each attribute, then divide seven points in the primary Attributes, five in secondary and three in tertiary.

Choosing Abilities

This step is identical to the one listed in **Changeling: the Dreaming** — assign 13, nine and five points in primary, secondary and tertiary Abilities, respectively. Starting characters should assign no more than three dots in a skill (Storyteller can allow exceptions, of course). Secondary Abilities are encouraged (see below).

Warriors gain an extra dot in Melee or Brawl. Likewise, Loremasters gain a dot in Lore (gasp!) and Crafters gain a dot in Crafts. This Ability may have four dots.

Outcasts get four extra dots to put where they will, but no Ability may have more than three dots.

Step Three: Advantages

Backgrounds

Five points may be allocated among Backgrounds. Most published Backgrounds are allowed. Dreamers makes no sense in the new scheme, but Kinain is allowable with some modifications (They still have a touch of fae, but Glamour doesn't enter into the equation). Holdings has been replaced by Demesne. Mysts and Fae Blood are new Backgrounds.

Magic

Allocate three points among Branches of Magic. You may choose to place all in one Branch, giving the character Rank 3 in one Branch, or any other combination. A fae gains a Feat for each Rank.

Outcasts gain no Magical Feats during character creation, including by spending Freebie points. (It's illegal to teach them; Loremasters that do wind up dead.)

It costs 5 freebie points to gain a new Rank in a Branch and you get your first Feat free. Additional Feats in a Rank cost 2.

Step Four: Tempers

Willpower

Characters begin with two Willpower. This can of course be bought up with Freebie Points, one for one.

Wyrd

Characters begin with four Wyrd. This can be raised with Freebie Points, three Freebies per dot.

Step Five: Freebie Points

You get 15 Freebie Points to boost Traits, at the stated costs. (See sidebar, page 6.)

Characters can choose to begin with up to three points of Antipathy. Each point will give them two extra freebie points. Starting at the rightmost circle of the Wyrd chart, mark an "X" through the circle for each point of Antipathy. Note: each "X" lowers the maximum Wyrd a character can have. (Take a look at the character sheet at the end of this.)

Do it, you know you need the points! (Heh, heh...)

Step Six: Merits and Flaws

Most published Merits and Flaws in **Fool's Luck** and the main rulebook are still applicable; those of individual kithbooks may be used at Storyteller discretion.

There is now a separate class of Merits and Flaws based on the Fae Blood Background. Known as Fae Gifts, these relate directly to the powers of the faerie heritage. A good chunk of Supernatural Merits and Flaws will be in this category; some, such as Echoes, have been broken up and no longer exist in original form. Obviously, those dealing with Banality are right out.

Step Seven: Specialties

The rules for specialties have not changed.

Step Eight: Spark of Life

As always, this is where the creation is transformed from a pile of stats to a living, breathing, *interesting* character. Appearance, history, motivations, quirks — all of these are vital to the character creation process.

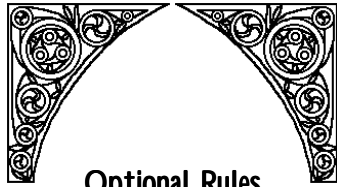
While not mandatory, it is likely your character will have an identity in mortal society. Were one or both of her parents mortal? Does she have a job? What is her position in changeling society? How does she feel about mortals?



Traits	Costs
Ranks in a Branch	5
New Feat	2
Attributes	5
Wyrd	3
Willpower	2
Abilities	2
Background	1



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Optional Rules

Languages

We recommend using the new rules of the Language Knowledge, since they better reflect how languages are really picked up. With these rules, each dot doubles the number of languages your character speaks: one dot gives one additional language, two for two dots, four for three, eight for four and sixteen for five.

Secondary Abilities

Secondary abilities are useful for rounding out a character. Having a literature degree or familiarity with registered dog breeds may not help out in a firefight, but can be extremely useful in non-combat investigations. Secondary Abilities cost two points for the first dot and current x 1 for each point thereafter.

On the Kith and their Powers

The Celtic kith are, for all intents and purposes, identical in physical features to their counterparts in other regions of the world. An aithech from Ireland and a troll from Denmark are both big, blue and brawny, for example. It's in matters of birthrights, frailties and certain behaviors that they may differ. The following paragraphs describe some of the chief differences in kith between **Changeling: The Celtic Cycle** and **Changeling: The Dreaming**.

Aithech

Like their troll counterparts, aithech are among the noblest of commoners. They are wise, highly honorable and trustworthy companions. They're the first into battle and the last in a retreat. Aithech are among the few commoners who hold positions at the highest level of Celtic changeling society, the warriors, though as a kith, they aren't overly ambitious.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Titan's Power and Stubbornness).

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming**, except an oathbreaking aithech loses *twice* the amount of Titan's Power (loss of two Bruised Health Levels and two dots of Strength). Honor is a *very* serious thing among the Celts.

Boggans

Perhaps unfairly, boggans are often underestimated in Celtic society. Yet, they're always present making life easier and better for everyone, even if they're unnoticed. And maybe the boggans like it that way, for even the Unseelie ones don't complain (they just take bitter revenge).

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Craftwork, Social Dynamics).

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Call of the Needy).

Clurichan

Don't call them leprechauns and don't go pilfering their personal hidey holes! The clurichan are closely related to the piskies, though they're a bit more humorous and capricious. Sometimes other kith underestimate their knowledge and loyalty, which can be a source of stability through thick and thin.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Twinkling of an Eye, Insight).

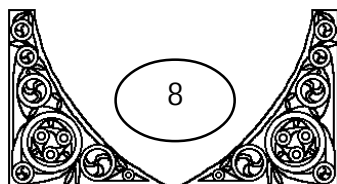
Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Tippling).

Ghille Dhu

Ghille dhu intrinsically reflect the Celtic mindset; they are the physical embodiment of changing seasons and the circle of life. As such, they hold a quite respected place in Celtic society. Since **Changeling: The Celtic Cycle** doesn't have Seemings or a Chrysalis, treat the seasons of the ghille dhu according to their age: Spring, up to age 15; Summer, ages 16 – 35; Autumn, 36 – 60; Winter (new) 61+ and older.

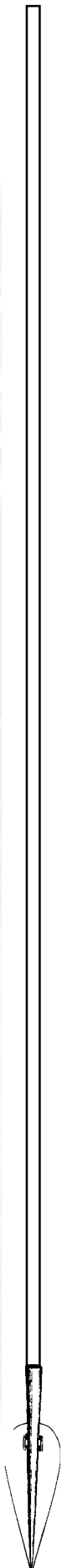
Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Spring: Spin the Wheel, Summer: Rose and Oak, Autumn: Wisdom of the Ages). Note that Nature's Bounty gains them temporary Wyrds.

Additionally, winter ghille dhu gain the following Birthright:



loreth

by Monical Walker



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



• **Winter's Tread** — Ghille Dhu who make it to this age *naturally* are rare due to the Kiss of Winter. They automatically gain the Demense Background at level 2, but this Demense travels with them as long as they are in a "natural setting." Additionally, they can age any plant they touch. Unseelie ghille dhu use this to blight crops with a touch, while the Seelie make new plants burst forth from a seed.

Frailties: Kiss of Winter is a bit different in **Changeling: The Celtic Cycle** since the fae no longer have Seemings or undergo a Chrysalis. Now, each time a ghille dhu botches a Feat of magic, he makes a Willpower roll, difficulty 5. Success or a simple failure indicates nothing happens; a botch, however, means that he ages the appropriate number of years (see above) and moves into his next season. Of course this effect bears on both his mortal and fae selves, and will no doubt require some creative explanations to mortal friends. If the ghille dhu is already in Winter, the botch means his death.

Nockers

Silent and steady, Celticnockers *are* grumpy, but their attitudes usually manifest in stern grunts or stony silence rather than screams and yells. Many are particularly attuned to the crafts of wherever they happen to live, so nockers in south Wales have some affinity for mining (and miners) while those in certain parts of Ireland may be adept potters or weavers. Nobles and warriors particularly prize the services of nockers who are blacksmiths, and they're usually held in higher esteem than most others of this kith.

Birthrights: Fixit is just as described in **Changeling: The Dreaming**. Forge Chimera is now Forge Treasure. With a successful and extended Intelligence + Craft roll, and knowledge of the particular Branch of magic desired, nockers can create marvelous magical treasures. Generally, the nocker needs three successes to make the item itself, devoid of magic; Storytellers can raise or lower the number needed for particularly complex or simple items. Then, he needs two successes for every Rank in the Branch of magic he is trying to instill in the item plus one success each for the number of times the power can be invoked. For example, if the nocker wants to create a magic pen that writes down basic known facts about any given subject three times (Branch of Math, Rank One, which he himself must know), he'll need three successes to make the pen, two more successes to put the magic into the pen plus three *more* successes for the "charges" the pen has. Then, the nocker can sell this handy item or use it himself. Nockers also have the ability to cast a form of extra potency on a weapon, such as adding an additional number of dice to a pool when a weapon is used (making a sword do Strength + 4, *plus* an additional two dice) per additional success on their extended Intelligence roll, still subject to the "charges" caveat. You can see why magical weapons with apparently infinite "charges" are so valuable; the crafter has had to work many, many months or even years to make the magic last so long. Consider defaulting to "infinite uses" if a nocker works on such a basic +2 damage dice weapon for a year and a day. However, if a nocker creates

something using a *very* high rank of power (Rank Four or Five), you'll probably want to set a definite limit on "charges" the weapon or device has — always a multiple of three. No Storyteller needs a warrior running around with a Sword of Dragon Slaying with infinite charges!

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Flaws). The flaws won't impair the function of objects or even their aesthetic qualities, but they are there for anyone who's looking.

Piskies

While this kith originated in Cornwall, they can be found roaming (and pilfering) all over the Celtic domains. They're generally honest, forthright and dependable. Often it's a pisky who nudges a sidhe ruler and reminds him not to forget the commoners when he's making big plans for the realm.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Nimble, Human Bonds).

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Kleptomania).

Pwca

Celtic pwca have peculiar senses of humor. To see one child bully another makes them angry, but they laugh uproariously at adults getting lost in the wilderness. They think people should have a good time, even at the expense of others. Unseelie pwca often carry this whim too far, though. Most Celtic courts have at least one pwca hanging around for good measure.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Shapechanging, Confidant).

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Lies).

Redcaps

Members of this kith are like cauldrons filled to the brim with a seething soup of wretchedness. If any are Seelie, they never make such a claim. Redcaps in Celtic society are bigger, nastier and more cruelly clever than those found anywhere else in the world. They are tolerated grudgingly at best and thrown out of the local castle at worst. If one proves herself serviceable, she may get a slightly warmer welcome. Unseelie nobles often employ redcaps in their armies.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Dark Appetite, Bully Browbeat). Note that redcaps spend a point of Wyrd rather than Glamour for eating in combat.

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Bad Attitude).

Sidhe

When the Celts think of inspiring fae, the sidhe are probably the first who spring to mind. They are exquisitely beautiful, and even the "ugliest" among them is more attractive than any mortal. Sidhe are the "natural" rulers of the fae, and most commoners acquiesce to this fact. Most sidhe are good at it too, and even if they're a bit thoughtless about personal touches with commoners, they will defend their lands and boon companions, even if they're redcaps, to the end.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Awe and Beauty, Noble Bearing).

Frailties: The Celtic sidhe still fall into fits of depression and heavy mood swings, as in **Changeling: The Dreaming**. However, instead of Banality's Curse, in **Changeling: The Celtic Cycle** they have a new Frailty called Apathy. This



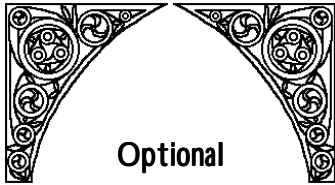
Celtic Pwcas

The animals most often associated with the Celts are:

Boar
Cow
Deer
Horse
Hound
Raven
Salmon
Serpent
Swan



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Optional Demesne Rules

So what's the big deal with living the closest thing to a bit 'o Faerie this side of the Gauntlet?

It's a big damn deal that's what. A Demesne, like a balefire, is a mark of prestige, it is taken as a sign that the True Fae find the person worthy. But like most Faerie gifts, it has a bite of its own.

The good news is that the Wall rating of a Demesne, regardless of size, or location, is 6. (That's the difficulty number for creating Magical Feats and Wyrd effects, by the way.) The demesne also automatically has a Mysts rating equal to its rating. So a three dot demesne has three dots in Mysts.

It gets even better — the lord may also call upon the power of her demesne. Each "dot" in the background can be turned into an automatic succession any roll made in the demesne! For each dot used in the manner, the player should draw a little line under it. When *all* the dots have been used, well, that's when it's time to pay the piper.

And that brings us to the bad news. When the player has used up all the dots, she can no longer call upon the demesne's power until it has had its way with the poor character. The Storrteller may remove one dot and reverse the effect of a successful roll, or have each dot capriciously cause a health level of damage to the fae.

The fae cannot use the power of her demesne until *all* of the points have been paid back in this manner!

reflects the fact that sidhe are often somewhat removed from the everyday problems and interests of commoners. The sidhe aren't deliberately cruel or neglectful (usually); it's just that their grand wars, lust affairs and secretive sorcery mean far more to them than the workings of everyday life. They simply don't *think* about what it's like to have to work hard for one's bread day in and day out, nor necessarily what impact their whims and desires will have on others (think about Queen Maeve in *The Tain*). Apathy does not mean the sidhe are bored or disinterested in their own lives, just that they may not pay much attention to the lives of their followers. Obviously, a good sidhe ruler won't ignore the pleas of his subjects to defend borders and the like, but he may need someone to wake him up to the fact that the commoner children at his court might like to hear a story or two before bed. Sidhe take a – 1 penalty in social situations where they are trying to fathom the lives and wants of commoners that are removed from their own needs and desires.

Selkies

Selkies are unique among the Celtic kith, for they only assume their seal forms when donning their one-of-a-kind sealskins. They guard these skins very closely and with a Wits + Kenning roll, they can sense the location of their skin and if any harm has come to it (as in **Changeling: The Dreaming**). The skins don't look like much to a casual observer, something like a thin, moth-eaten rabbit fur coat. Should any other kith get the stupid idea of gathering selkie sealskins, they'd face tremendous wrath from the entire kith. And no one wants to piss off kith under Llyr's protection...

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Seal's Beauty, Ocean's Grace).

Frailties: Seal Coat is identical to that described in **Changeling: The Dreaming**, and when one selkie feels that her death is near, she too will pass on her sealskin to a close relative with strong fae blood. However, instead of losing Glamour and gaining Banality for Longing of the Ocean Shore, the selkie becomes physically and emotionally ill each day she remains away from the sights and sounds of the sea. For each day apart from the sea, she loses one Health Level (nonlethal) until reaching the Incapacitated level. Then, she loses lethal Health Levels until death. Thus, the longest a selkie can stay away from the sea is about two weeks. It is a particularly horrible way to die.

Sluagh

Silent and secretive, the sluagh quietly revel in their position in Celtic changeling society. They are best known as keepers of lore and knowledge, and some fear what they might know (or pretend to know). Most sidhe rulers keep a sluagh or two in their confidence at all times.

Birthrights: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Squirm, Sharpened Senses).

Frailties: As in **Changeling: The Dreaming** (Curse of Silence).

New Backgrounds

Faerie Blood

Though all changelings are fae, Faerie's touch is more apparent in some than in others. When this happens, changelings say the Faerie Blood runs stronger in those individuals. This Background allows changelings to acquire Fae Gifts (see below). Note that the character must balance the point costs of the Boons and Banes.

- Pertnear mortal. No fae gifts.
- Two points of Boons.
- Four points of Boons
- Six points of Boons
- Eight points of Boons
- As close to the Tuatha de Danaan as is possible for a changeling – ten points of Boons.

Demesne

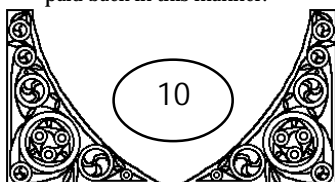
The presence of a fae affects her surroundings, weaving Wyrding magic into Reality's substance. The place is attuned to the changeling, subtly reflecting the temper of the fae. Such places become strongholds of power for the fae; though the use of supernatural powers is easier for fae (and a few other denizens of the WoD), use of the Wyrd is even more potent to the changeling to whom it belongs. Though "enchanted forests" or faerie greens are the most common, buildings and even city blocks may show the effect. Note that while the fae is attuned to the place, she has no particular control over it. The older a demesne grows, the more it seems to take on a life of its own.

- Minor strangeness manifests occasionally, usually during magic times. Area is a small room, or about a quarter-acre of woodland.
- A place of retreat with an eerie aura about it. Area is an attic, or about an acre of woodland.
- There's always something peculiar about the place, whether wonderful or frightening. Area is a house, or about five acres of forest.
- The strangeness is palpable to anyone more perceptive than an average rock. Area is a mansion, or about fifty acres of forest.
- The heart of this demesne could pass for Arcadia's Gateway; the changeling is truly a king in his realm. Area is a city block, or a square mile of deep woods.

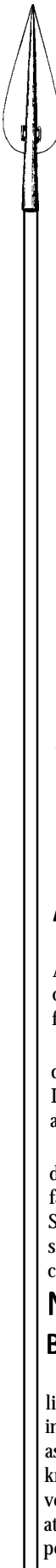
Mysts

The Mysts protect the fae from discovery. Whenever a fae is in his Mien, the Mysts affect all that view him. The effects are not immediate, but gradually the viewer's memories cloud and become confused – eventually they edit their memories, substituting rational occurrences to blot out overtly magical happenings. This confusion also covers any information that could identify the fae in question.

This does not effect mechanical devices or the Enchanted. (After the Enchantment ends, a mortal is effected by the Mysts as normal.) Likewise, Kinain are affected as if the Mysts were one level less – so a fae must have at least two dots to affect a Kinain. Even



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then, a Kinain will never quite be able to resolve exactly what happened.

All fae have some protection. Even if a PC has no dots in Mysts, memories will cloud and fade within a lunar month. Of course, a lot can happen in a month!

- Memory fades within a day
- Memory diminish within 12 hours
- Memory wilts in an hour
- Memory fades within minutes
- Memory fades away within seconds

New Tempers

Wyrd (0-10)

Wyrd measures the fae's connection to the ancient powers of Faerie. In the most banal terms, it is the amount of magical fuel available to the Changeling.

Other appellations: power, vigor

Points of Wyrd are temporality spent to cast Glamours, Enchanting Mortals and assuming a Kith's Mien. These points return naturally, over time, or by exposure to mystic places. Permanent points are gained by legendary encounters with fae forces and through roleplay (acting as a muse for human artistic endeavors, etc.).

Players automatically loose permanent point of Wyrd at their season's antipathy, but regain it at their seasons' festival. So, a fae with a winter Legacy loses a point of Wyrd at Beltaine and gains a point on Samhain.

Seasonal Antipathies (and Festivals)

Spring (Imbolc) – Fall (Lughnasadh)
Summer (Beltaine) – Winter (Samhain)
Fall (Lughnasadh) – Spring (Imbolc)
Winter (Samhain) – Summer (Beltaine)

Antipathy (0-10)

Antipathy "eats" Wyrd and the potential for Wyrd. Antipathy is gained whenever a Changeling commits one of her Bans. Whenever a player takes a level of damage from a cold Iron Weapon they gain Antipathy. (OUCH!)

Players mark Antipathy by placing an "X" over the dots for Wyrd, starting on the right and moving left. Dots marked with an "X" cannot be used for Wyrd, and any Wyrd points marked over are destroyed.

Antipathy can be bled off by fae during Festivals. Fae do this in two ways. *Catharsis* bleeds off points when a fae gives herself over to the opposite court for the festival. Seelie become Unseelie, etc. *Penance* allows the fae to fulfill some form of punishment or quest to right the wrong caused by violating his/her ban.

New Flaw

Blabbermouth (1-4 point Flaw)

Some folks can't keep their mouths shut to save their lives – literally. They give away information which invariably comes back to haunt them. It may be as simple as plans ("You think you know so much! What you didn't know is. . ."), or far more damaging, as in the case of voicing a death geasa ("It's lucky the warrior didn't come at you with an *ash* spear, huh, Madog?") or a name of power ("Rumplestiltskin is my name!"). Exposing one's

own vulnerabilities this way is bad enough, but gaining a reputation for giving away others' secrets will guarantee a lonely and unpleasant life. Villainous types often have this flaw. The fae has to make a Will roll to resist gloating when the opportunity presents itself (Target 6, higher if those listening appear to be incapable of using the information – prisoners or "disinterested" parties). For one point, the fae may gloat to enemies about their cunning. At two points, inconvenient personal information comes up in general conversation (geasa, your latest affair with the chieftain's daughter). Three points could get you killed rather easily (true name, your death geas). Being free with other people's secrets is worth another point.

Fae Gifts

The strength of the old blood varies capriciously between fae. Some are born with closer ties to the mythic past than others; this can be both blessing and curse.

Fae Gifts are a set of Merits (Boons) and Flaws (Banes) directly relating to the strength of Fae nature within a changeling (as shown by the Faerie Blood Background). Fae Gifts don't count towards regular Merits and Flaw point costs. However, the point cost of Faerie Boons should be balanced with an equal cost in Faerie Banes. If, for example, a changeling has three points worth of Boons, he must compensate with three points worth of Banes (these points can be totaled from multiple Boons or Banes). No one said being a Faerie is always a good thing.

Players are encouraged to pick complimentary Boons and Banes – for example, Faerie Eyes (Bane) and Faerie Sight (Boon) or Bard's Tongue (Bane) and Second Sight (Boon).

A character *must* have the Faerie Blood Background to use Boons and Banes.

Boons

Good Geasa (1-6 point Boon)

Seers have seen destiny's stamp on the newborn. A sage may bless (or curse) the changeling with knowledge of what will kill her. This doesn't mean the fae can't be beaten to within an inch of her life, merely that the deathstroke will only happen in a particular circumstance. The Storyteller should look carefully at the Good Geasa a player wants; he is the final arbiter of what is allowable and what it's worth. Some examples: "Can only be killed by a bullet" would cost 1 point. "Can only be killed by drowning," might be worth two. "Can only be killed by a woman wearing red" would be worth three, and so on. "Can only be killed while standing with one foot in a bathtub and one foot on a goat" might be worth six points if the Storyteller allowed it at all.

Branch Affinity (5 point Boon)

You are naturally more adept with one Branch of magic than other changelings. The Branch must be selected at character creation. Raising this Branch requires three-quarters the normal cost. Naturally, this Boon may only be bought once.

Hour of Birth (2 point Boon)

The faerie's power heightens at the time corresponding with her birth. During that hour, she gains +1 die on all magical workings.



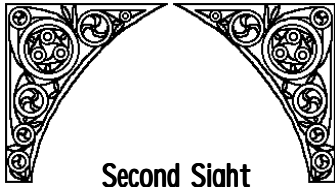
More on Good Geasa

Good Geasa (or Death Geasa) are useful to have, but a good Storyteller will use it to creative effect. The character may not think off the different possible interpretations of her geas – does "Will be killed by a door" mean that a door will fall on her, or that someone else will lop off her head in the vicinity of a door?

Also, a good Storyteller will make the character nervous with false alarms. For instance, if MacBrie knows he will be killed by a naked man with a spear in a thunderstorm, be sure to note the occasional bad weather during a session, or let him see a streaker toting a pole. . .

Finally, remember that this *will* be the death of the character, maybe not during the campaign, but at some point. The doom can't be avoided, as Oedipus' father Laius can tell you (if you can find his shade).

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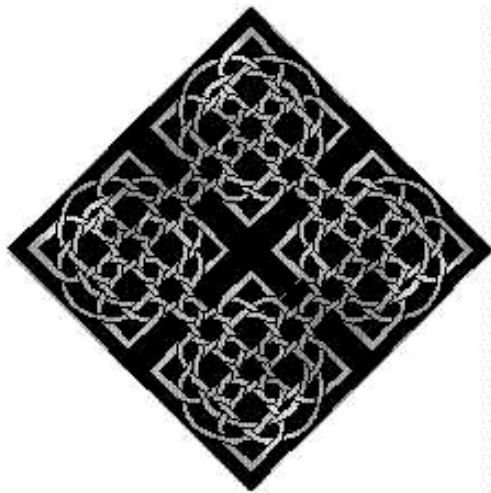
Second Sight

"Oh boy, now I can see the future!" cries the character. Don't be too cocky. While the Sight *can* be a great help, many who have it end up wishing they didn't. The visions are often too vague to mean anything to the character until after the event happens. Visions are almost never wrong, but they may be reinterpreted – for example, a vision of your sweetheart in tears doesn't tell whether the tears are of joy or sorrow. In the case of grim visions (a friend's death, the character's house burning down), actions taken to prevent the occurrence usually end up precipitating the unwelcome event. This is especially true when the character tries to force a vision. People with a very active Sight can be a grim, unhappy lot.

Examples of Second Sight

Conobhar's eyes were downcast as the battered war party limped into the fort. Belnar stopped before him. "Con, my friend –" he began.

"Conan's dead." Seeing the surprise in Belnar's face, Conobhar continued. "When you topped the hill, there were ten of you, and I saw my brother leading you, his helm as bright as when you rode away this morning, his horse as fresh and fine-maned as if she were newly-groomed. But as you crossed the field, he remained on the hill, and when I looked again he was gone."



Diel Aspect (1-4 point Boon)

The Fae is attuned to a time of the day; his power is stronger during this time, but his power is correspondingly weaker at the opposed period. For 1 point, a fae can be midnight aspected, gaining a die to Glamour rolls for an hour centering on 12:00 a.m., while losing a die for the same period around 12:00 p.m. For 2 points, dawn/dusk or midday/midnight aspected). Four points, day or night aspected.

Faerie Eternity (3 point Boon)

In their fae form, changelings don't age, but to take on the form of mortality is to taste Time's pull. The changeling with this Boon never ages, regardless of form. Immortal changelings attract attention if they stay among mortals for more than a decade or so; those so gifted tend to be wanderers.

Faerie Sight(1-3 point Boon)

The changeling has unnaturally acute vision. For 1 point, the changeling can see in dim light as well as most see in broad daylight. For 2 points, the fae sees much more "quickly" (she can see bullets flying or vampires with Celerity; unfortunately, films appear to be rapid slide shows). For 3 points, the fae can see to the horizon with unnatural clarity (negates distance modifiers to vision Perception rolls, although such factors as weather and concealment still apply). Each effect must be bought separately.

Trod Affinity (4 point Boon)

You are especially attuned to the Otherworld. You are at -1 difficulty to pass into the Otherworld, and -2 to all difficulties dealing with locating or traveling on trods.

Second Sight (2-5 point Boon)

This Boon allows clairvoyance and limited precognition, ranging from an intuitive nudge to a view to a scene from the future. For two points, you may know who's calling before you pick up the phone, or feel a visitor is coming. Flashes of insight and sudden visions of the future and other places are hallmarks of the Sight at higher levels. For five points, detailed visions are detailed and lengthy. Distance in space and time varies depending on point cost as well, but this is fluid – assuming two points may give hints of what it to come in an hour or a day, while for five points you may

sense your nemesis in China a decade hence. Visions may be of real events, but may also be metaphorical. The Sight is unpredictable and comes unbidden, in dream or waking, as a "gut feeling" or blinding flash of insight. You can occasionally try to force a vision by attempting to enter some meditative state and rolling Intelligence + Enigmas (target 9), but forcing the Sight can have serious consequences (see sidebar).

The Storyteller should use this for more good than ill, but players should by no means rely on the Sight to as a sure-fire early warning system.

Seldom Sleeps (2 point Boon)

While rest is still required after exertion, sleep is seldom necessary. One hour a night is fine, and even an hour every three days won't make the changeling more than a little red-eyed.

Unsleeping (5 point Boon)

While rest is still required after exertion, the fae cannot sleep. This can be a problem if sleep is desired (as an escape from boredom or pain), but the changeling is often very good at daydreaming. Of course, the changeling can still be knocked unconscious.

Banes

Geas (1-5 point Bane)

A geas is a mystical prohibition or imperative designed to make life difficult. A central tenet of Celtic life, a geas is a mark of distinction, a sign of destiny. In the old legends, geasa are very common among people of note, from heroes to kings to druids, and the greatest had multiple geasa. Despite their best efforts, the heroes often ended up breaking a geas, a circumstance which always spelled disaster – not necessarily immediately, but soon.

A minor geas (easily-avoided circumstances) such as "Never drink wine sitting at a table" is worth one point. A two point geas might be "Must not eat when others are present" or "Always speak to strangers." "Never back down from a fight" might be worth three points, while "Attack every stranger upon meeting" would be worth four. If breaking the geas is forgivable – the character merely loses possessions or all magic until a major quest or sacrifice – no extra points are awarded. If the geas cannot be repaired – death or worse is the inevitable consequence – it is worth an extra point (lucky you). You may take up to three geasa (up to Gift point limits).

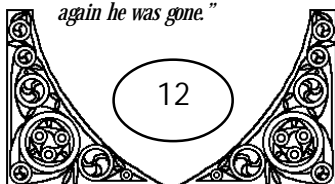
The Bard's Tongue (1 point Bane)

Truth can be an uncomfortable thing. Words with the power of prophecy regularly pass your lips with neither your prior knowledge nor consent. The evil intent of your host, the awkward affair of the king's champion, or the fact that a dark fate lies close at hand for the company. Once per story, you will speak an unfortunate truth about the current situation. Avoiding speaking the prophecy requires that you expend a Willpower point and take a Health Level from the strain of resisting.

This Bane may mimic Second Sight in some respects; if the character has the Second Sight Boon, the prophecies can get very interesting indeed.

Capriciousness (3point Bane)

This fae is completely unpredictable, as quick to help as to harm, to laugh as to weep. Others do not know



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how to react to the fae, causing some grievous misunderstandings. In a stressful or emotional situation, roll a die; an odd number indicates emotions must become completely different.

Faerie Eyes (1-3 point Bane)

The faerie's eyes don't look quite human. For one point, they seem brilliantly colored, or possibly an unusual color (emerald green or indigo), but could be explained by colored contact lenses. For two points, they look inhuman, although explainable with special-effects cosmetics (slit pupils, glitter in dim light). For three points, no amount explaining will work (pupiless, swirling colors, glowing).

Otherworldly Aspect (2 point Bane)

There is something strange, eerie or downright startling about you. Perhaps your hair is snow white and you otherwise appear as a teenager; perhaps you make Kate Moss look pudgy. This aspect may attract or repel, but people will take notice of you. This can be taken in conjunction with Faerie Eyes.

Season's Touch (1-4 point Bane)

It isn't difficult to guess the court of fae who has this flaw, for something about their season has marked them. For 1 point, others notice a chill in the air around a Winter Unseelie; for 4 points, the hiss of driven snow is in her voice, and frost fills her footprints. A Spring faerie may have birdsong around him, warm breezes run through the hair of the Summer sidhe, and even on pavement the rustle of dried leaves underfoot heralds the approach of the Autumn-born. Such effects are apparent in fae mien, but less noticeable in mortal form (treat as 2 levels less while in mortal form).

Dominion (1-5 point Bane)

The Christian church was largely responsible for turning the people against the fae folk. The church became a potent force against faerie powers, and in those with this Bane the power is still evident. Note: Effects at each level include all previous levels.

1pt: A Willpower (7) roll is required to remain on consecrated ground.

2pt: Lose 1 die from all dice pools while on consecrated ground. A Willpower (8) roll is required to remain on consecrated ground.

3pt: You are unable to use your glamours on a person who wears a cross, carries a Bible, or has been recently blessed. Christian symbols repel you as if they were endowed with True Faith; all True Faith affects you as if they were one level higher.

4pt: A prayer or Bible reading will drive you away. Will (9), three successes required to not flee. May not move closer regardless.

5pts: Peeling church bells inflict damage (1d6/peal, or / second for multiple bells, soak with Stamina only), and the shadow of a steeple can pin the fae to the spot.

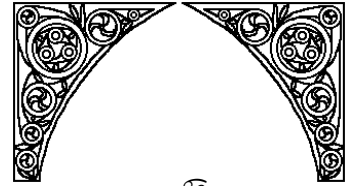
Steel Sensitivity (5 point Bane)

Any ferric material, including kitchen knives and house nails, makes you uncomfortable, negates your glamours and causes extra damage. Merely sitting in a house can be a trial, since nails, rebar, and fixtures are all ferric. Steel weapons harm like iron ones, and are apt to be much keener.

Yearning (1-3 point Bane)

This world is not your world, and home calls you always. The urge to return can be ignored for a time, but never fully goes away. For one point, you feel a subtle but constant tug towards the Fae Realms; when presented with a clear opportunity to go "underhill", you must make a Will (4) to not give in. For two points, you must pass a Will (6) test each day not to search for a way to the Other world; the difficulty increases by one each day. Should you find a gate to the Otherworld, you will go in regardless of circumstance if you fail a Will (7) roll. If a week passes without being in the Otherworld, lose one die from all rolls. If you take this Bane at three points – lucky you! In addition to all the nastiness at level 2, you have something else to worry about. If you are prevented from reaching the Otherworld, you must succeed a Will (4) roll to avoid madness (of an appropriate nature, whether berserk frenzy or ST-specified Derangement). This difficulty increases each week. If locked up for a few months, you *will* lose your mind.

Oh, one more thing. All of the above difficulties are increased by +1 while in fae form.



☞

Elspeth was spending her cold rainy afternoon the best way she could imagine – curled in front of the fire with a good book. On days like this, time lost all meaning, and night would be upon her before she stirred.

Suddenly, her reverie was disturbed by the rumble of a motorcycle pulling into her drive. That could only mean one thing – John was back in town. She went into the kitchen and looked out the window.

There was no one there, and the only sound was the steady dripping of drizzle. Her surprise lasted only a moment, for such things happened to her frequently. She busied herself in the kitchen so that when her friend really arrived he would have hot tea to drink.

☞

Iain laughed as his friends followed him down the trod. None were as fleet as he, so he stopped and allowed them to catch their breath. "To make it interesting, I'll take a handicap. All of you follow the trod home; I'll run around Brendon's Hill, and the first to Father's hold wins the –"

Behind him, young Lyta gasped, reaching out to steady herself. "No," she muttered in a deep voice that didn't quite seem hers, "on that path lies death with many iron teeth." The lady shook her head, then straightened to see shock and consternation in the faces of her companions. "It's okay, I'm fine. But we must tell our lord the exile has returned, and a swarm of redcaps follow him now."



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



The Wisdom of Trees

The fae hold trees sacred above all other living beings of this world because trees are work of the True Fae. They are the True Faes' birthday gift to this world from Faerie.

In the heart of Faerie resides a magic grove, *the* magic grove actually. And at the center of the grove is The Tree, a tree of immense size and age. The nuts and fruit of it fed the first creatures in Faerie and its branches were their playground in the early mists of creation.

As the Tellurian coalesced and the First grew older, they began to wonder about creation beyond Faerie. The blue globe of Gaia entranced them, and Luna and her servants told them of it beauty. At night, they saw the bold humans dancing about their fires and heard their laughter. Finally, Danu, the wisest of them, decided to explore. From The Tree's young they made Otherworld ships. From the corded spider web that lay in its branches they wove sails. Lastly, each broke off a branch from the great tree, to remember their time in its branches. A bit of the tree's wisdom remained in these branches.

The True Fae bore these branches to Gaia and planted them there. From these scions grew the oak, the willow, the ash, and others.

Fae Magic

The fae have a complex relationship with their magic. Simply put, to use magic they must be able to call to the powers of this world *and* of Faerie. It is little surprise that in this static age with the Gauntlet so strong, their magic is much less effective than it once was.

But the fae of old and even the changelings of today are much more than mere practitioners of the occult, hedge wizards or even the druids of old.

They *are* magic.

While their magic is not as bountiful as in the Mythic Age, when they set their minds to it the fae can wield magics that give the most potent supernaturals of this age reason to tread lightly in the demesne of a fell changeling lord.

This discussion of fae magic has three parts. First we discuss the nature of the Wyrd and Antipathy. These forces govern much of a fae's life in the dying lands.

Next, we look at the strange gifts of the Wyrd. The Wyrd allows fae to assume their true form, and allows them to enchant creatures and items. Enchantment allows them to weave fairy illusions, called Glamours. The Wyrd also gives the fae great power in battle, which they call this the Dragon's Ire. Lastly, but most importantly, the Wyrd protects the fae from the perceptions of mankind. This power is called the Wyrding Mysts, or simply the Mysts.

The third aspect of their power comes from the fae ancestors of old. These are the Feats of Magic, organized into Branches. These magical arts are individually more powerful than the gifts of the Wyrd. With them the fae can exert their considerable power upon the world. These are not mere illusions, but mighty spells and superhuman deeds like those of the fae heroes and villains of the mythic age.

The Otherworld, Chimera and the fae's power over them will be detailed in a following installment of **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle**.

The Tempers: Wyrd and Antipathy Wyrd

Wyrd is the lifeblood of the fae and as such is a product of interaction of the Dying Lands and Faerie. Wyrd energies pool in the Shadowlands where the wall is weak and spring forth in this land in faerie glades or wherever the old ways are practiced.

Other than in this section, any loss of Wyrd is assumed to be *temporary* Wyrd unless the text says the permanent Wyrd needs be expended. On the character sheet, the expenditure of temporary Wyrd is noted by placing an "x" in the boxes under the circles used for permanent Wyrd.

Gaining Permanent Wyrd

Fae gain a point of permanent Wyrd for accomplishing great Feats that bolster the ideals and holdings of the Celtic fae in the Dying Lands. These rewards are given out after the climax of a great adventure, such as the conclusion of a major story arc in your chronicle.

Changelings who enter into Oaths (C:tD, p. 211) gain a point of permanent Wyrd. Oaths are taken less frequently in CtCC than in the older game. Why? Well, all Celtic fae tend to live and die by their word, so an oath is seldom

necessary. A requirement of an Oath may even be looked upon as insulting: "My word should be good enough!"

Fae gain a point of Permanent Wyrd on the High Holiday associated with their Seasonal Nature. (See character creation.)

Permanent Wyrd is noted by filling in a circle on the character sheet. Start with the leftmost circle and move to your right. A dot of Wyrd cannot mark over Antipathy.

Losing Permanent Wyrd

All fae lose a point of permanent Wyrd on the High Holiday associated with their Seasonal Antithesis (Summer is the antithesis of Winter, etc.). A fae with a Permanent Wyrd of 1 does not lose a permanent point on their antithesis, instead she gains a point of Antipathy. If this brings the fae to zero, the fae falls into a coma and will soon die without extreme measures — along the lines of a return to Faerie, for example.

Losing Temporary Wyrd

The most common way for a fae to lose Wyrd is for one to sacrifice wyrd energies (temporary wyrd) to boost Magical Feats or Glamours. Fae can also spend a point of Wyrd to automatically change into their Fae Mien. These Wyrd costs are detailed later in this chapter.

Enchanted beings and objects lose one Wyrd per day.

Changelings struck with cold iron also lose a number of temporary Wyrd equal to the number of health levels suffered.

Fae who lose all their Temporary Wyrd must make a Willpower roll, Difficulty 6, or assume their Human Seeming.

Gaining Temporary Wyrd

A changeling cannot gain more temporary Wyrd than her dots in permanent Wyrd.

Most fae regain a point of temporary Wyrd per day. This is dependant upon the Gauntlet rating of the area (8 - Gauntlet Rating = points per day). So, a fae walking on a Trod could gain 5 points of Temp. Wyrd a day. On High Holidays, the fae gains these points per *hour*. (As you can see, screwing with the fae on a High Holiday is pretty darn stupid.)

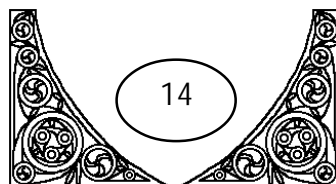
Watching a festival or artistic performance which is Celtic in nature can gain the fae 1-2 points of Wyrd. Participating or sponsoring such, gains the fae 1-3 points per day. (One or the other, *thank you*, not both!)

Fulfilling their Seasonal Natures or really doing a good job portraying their court may net the fae a point during a night's adventuring.

Antipathy

Antipathy eats Wyrd and the potential for Wyrd. In the Dying Lands it represents the closure of the fae's being to both the powers of Faerie and their Celtic heritage of the Dying Lands.

On the character sheet, this is noted by placing an "X" over a circle on the Wyrd chart. Start marking on the rightmost circle. If an "X" marks over an already filled in dot of Wyrd, the Wyrd point is lost. The "X" remains, however. Ouch.



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Gaining Antipathy

Breaking an Oath, Ban or Geasa immediately gains one “X” of Antipathy. Acting against your Legacies, Seasonal Natures or Court can also gain “X’s” of Antipathy.

In the most severe of cases, acting against the Celtic “way of things” also can gain the unfortunate fae an “X.” This should be something like running away at the *start* of a battle in front of your liege lord — i.e. fairly black and white breach of the code of honor (see last issue).

Losing Antipathy

A Character can lose a point of Antipathy anytime by sacrificing *three* points of Permanent Wyrd. Accepting new Geas may also rid a changeling of some Antipathy — this is left to the Storyteller.

Storytellers may opt to let a fae “trade in” a gain in permanent Wyrd to erase an “X” of Antipathy. The “X” is not replaced by a filled in circle! The player merely erases the “X” in this case.

Powers of the Wyrd

While the Feats of the fae are the most impressive form of magic, the most common use of magic derives from their ability to tap into their ancient source of power, the Wyrd. This power allows them to assume the Mien of the faerie of old, or hide in the guise of humanity, which they call their *seeming*. It also allows them to perform small tricks on humanity, called Glamours, and make mortals more vulnerable to fae magics by enchanting them.

Mien and Seeming

The fae folk can assume the guise of their faerie ancestors to summon the full might and majesty of the fae, or cloak themselves in the form of their Kinain forefathers. Each identity has its own advantages and disadvantages.

Fae Mien

The Fae Mien is the true form of a changeling. After the Shattering this form only became available by concentrating for a moment on their fae natures (Kenning + Perception, difficulty equal to the Gauntlet Rating of the area), or whenever the fae spends a point Wyrd to call her Mien. A fae can stay in this shape for one day, once called, but a fae may always re-assume her mortal seeming (below) without spending Wyrd — just by wishing it.

The Mien is *real*. Satyrs grow horns and cloven hooves; Trolls rocket upward, etc. This transformation is instantaneous. When in this form, fae depend on the powers of the Mysts and discretion to keep from being discovered.

The Fae Mien has these advantages:

- Use of Glamour without negatives (see below)
- Use of their Kith's Birthrights
- Ability to call the Dragon's Ire
- The power to Enchant a mortal and create Glamours
- The Mysts will conceal their passing, in time (see the Mysts Background)

The Fae Mien has these disadvantages:

- Vulnerability to cold iron: a fae loses a point of Wyrd for each Health Level of damage from cold iron and cold iron causes Aggravated wounds

- Discovery: Even though the powers of the Mysts will conceal their presence over time, in the “now” fae are fully visible for what they are (monsters, to many)

The Human Seeming

The Human, or Mortal Seeming is a changeling's day-to-day human face. Though entirely human, the changeling's Kith usually shows though in subtle ways: Trolls are stocky, Boggans run on the pudgy side, Sidhe are attractive, etc. Before the Shattering the Human Seeming was not the faes' default face. The changelings used their Seeming to spy on humans, or just live and interact with them freely. Since the Shattering it has become their default form.

The Mortal Seeming has these advantages:

- +1 to difficulty of others to discern the changeling's fae nature (*Minimum* difficulty of 7)

- Cold iron does not cause Aggravated wounds, nor does the fae lose Wyrd when damaged by it in this form.

The Mortal Seeming has these disadvantages:

- Aversion to cold iron: fae do not lose Wyrd from cold iron wounds when in their Human Seeming, but they do not like to be near it. Roll Willpower, difficulty 8, to act normal in its presence.

- -2 from the Wyrd dice pool when using a Magical Feat
- *Maynot* have the use of their Kith's Birthright. Most do not function all the time — see individual descriptions in CtD.

- No Dragon's Ire
- No Enchanting
- No Glamours

Dragon's Ire

The mechanics of a successful Dragon's Ire roll remain the same. As with all changeling magic, the base difficulty roll is equal to the Wall Rating. (As with CtD, this difficulty number is modified by the situation — see page 244) In **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle**, the dice pool is equal to the permanent Wyrd of the changeling.

Enchanting

By imbuing a mortal with Wyrd, the mortal becomes vulnerable to fae Glamours (and slightly more vulnerable to Feats of Magic as well). To enchant a mortal, a fae must imbue food, drink or even a scent with a point of Wyrd. (Mark off a point on the character sheet.) This enchanted cocktail must be consumed by the mortal.

A changeling may choose to imbue more than one point. Mortals, and even enchanted items, lose a point of Wyrd per day. When the Wyrd runs out, they are no longer Enchanted. (Kinain lose a point of Wyrd a month, not per day.)

If the person is unaware of the danger of enchantment, then there is no resistance roll for the enchantment. Once they have imbibed the Wyrd “mickey,” the being is enchanted. Items, of course, cannot resist this. (This is the way that most Kinain gain Wyrd, since they have no Permanent Wyrd.)

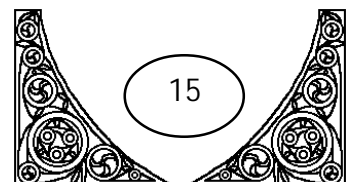
If the mortal suspects the enchantment, she may make a



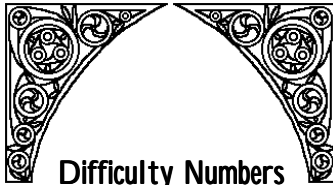
Once planted in the soil of Gaia, trees became their link to this world and its primal elements. The tree roots in earth, and reaches into the air; it sups on water and yet gives fire. Its branches record the passage of the seasons — bright flowered in spring, green in summer, gold in fall and bare in winter's winds. Trees became their storehouses of knowledge and the chief material used for both tool and shelter.

The Celts, the people of the Dying lands whose laughter first attracted the Faeries, took the names for these trees as the organizing principal for Ogham, their cryptic language, some even believe they were the foundation for their magic as well.

What is more, for the changelings the trees are like them, creatures of both worlds. The descendants of the fairy trees still aid the fae in casting magic — connecting this world to the Otherworld and Faerie.



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Difficulty Numbers for Fae Magic

The difficulty number for magical abilities is based on the Gauntlet rating of the area the fae is in. If there is any question, a difficulty of 7 is quite reasonable since it reflects the environment of suburbia, towns — in short, places where most people live and work in the West.

Standing just inside the Otherworld, a place called the Shadowlands by the fae, is one of the most auspicious location for changeling magic. In the Shadowlands a fae is free of the restraints of Dying Lands, but still close enough to them to easily summon their power.

Due to the dual nature of the fae, the further a changeling moves from this point into the Otherworlds, the more difficult their magic becomes. They fae do best when *between* worlds, or near where the Gauntlet is thin. Far into the spirit lands, he would have to strain to contact the Dying Lands!

Willpower roll Difficulty 8. If the number of successes equals or exceeds the points of Wyrd sacrificed, then the enchantment fails. Other supernaturals must make the same test, but their difficulty is 7.

Enchantment counts as a permanent Sympathy, adding one die to the fae's die pool when targeting an enchanted mortal. (A permanent Sympathy can be used again and again).

Glamours

All fae are capable of short-lived illusory magics called Glamours. Think of glamour as a fairy coating on reality. They can make a leaf look like a dollar bill, or a house look like a castle, or even a twig over a chasm look like a bridge, but they cannot really make something from nothing.

Any time a fae places a point of Wyrd in an object she can create a glamour upon it. (System-wise the character expends one point of Wyrd on the object, not two.)

Glamours are usually static. You can change the appearance of things. To make it seem to move, speak or act the fae must expend point of Wyrd. To make the glamour seem to be self-motivated, etc. requires yet another point. So one point to enchant the stone lion have it look like a real lion, another point for it to roar and strike. And three points to have it seem to chase someone. But remember, the object does not really not move. Nor can it directly cause harm to anyone directly. It can frighten, or provoke a dangerous action on the part of the mortal — like running off of a cliff. In the example above, it only seems to be a lion to enchanted beings. Enchantment is not mind control, it is more subtle than that. It is limited perception control.

Glamours are automatically successful on Enchanted mortals. Kinain and other fae can see through them if they wish, but often play along. It's considered rude not to. Poor fae often use Enchantment to give themselves appropriate clothes for court, etc. Not even the most haughty of sidhe would dare criticize this!

Example: Armagh the Sluagh has been spurned for the last time by that cute accountant, Frank. She enchants his coffee then waits until he passes by the store window where she in charge of the displays. She imbues a store dummy with a point of Wyrd and calls forth a Glamour upon it turning it into a likeness of herself. She pumps another Wyrd into it to have the Glamour berate him about his affair with the boss's wife.

Everyone else in the store wonders why Frank confessed his affair to mannequin...too much caffeine?

System: Difficulty equal to Wall Rating. Dice pool equal to Wyrd. PCs may use the Enhancements and Sympathies to modify their dice pool as if Glamours were Feats, at ST discretion. Glamours affect one person and last for one round. Glamours may not cause *direct* damage to a person. Glamours cost one Wyrd (this is the same point used to Enchant the item.) Glamour can only be seen by Enchanted beings, Kithain, or Kinain — who also must be enchanted (have one or more points of Wyrd).

ST Note: Glamours are prone to abuse. The Storyteller may choose to disallow this free-form use of Wyrd magic in place of a more static version of her devising. (But we think it's fun.)

Mysts

All fae have some protection provided by the Faerie Mysts,

even if a PC has no dots in the Mysts Background. In this trivial world, the memories surrounding witnessing a fae's Mien, or of a period of Enchantment, or even witnessing a Magical Feat will edit themselves out of existence. "I'm not so sure that he was a blue, eight-foot tall monster — I must have had a little too much to drink that night, Agent Scully."

The memories will cloud, re-arrange themselves into something more plausible or fade within a lunar month. Of course, a hell of a lot can happen in a month!



Magical Feats

The Tuatha de Dannan and the other fae gods made pacts with the spirits of this world and the Otherworld to gift their children with great powers. These Feats are organized into the Branches of fae magic, a name taken in honor of the trees given to Gaia by the fae.

Magical Enhancements

Enhancing a Feat can make it last longer, affect more people or even give the Feat a mystical trigger — like a booby trap. Enhancing a spell has drawbacks. It makes working the Feat much more difficult.

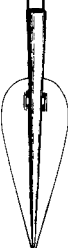
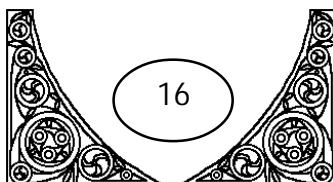
Enhancements must have the approval of the ST. Each enhancement subtracts a number of dice from the die pool for that Feat. If the die pool is reduced to zero the Feat is impossible — no Willpower can be expended, etc.

A fae can use multiple enhancements on a Feat, but some enhancements are mutually exclusive. As always the Storyteller has the final say on which Enhancements can be used together.

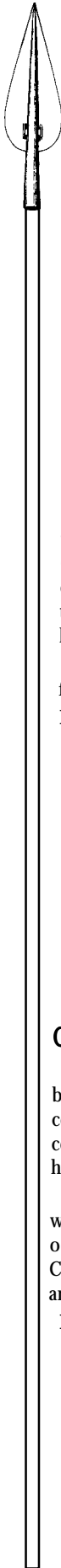
Number — How Many Beings are Affected

The number three is very important to the fae, therefore it is the multiplier for the number of beings which can be affected by a magical Feat.

Die Pool	Maximum number of Targets
0	1
-1	3
-2	9
-3	12
-4	36
-5	102
-6	306
-7, etc.	(x3)



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



Circumstance – When a Feat Happens

Circumstance is way of putting a conditional effect upon when a fae's Feat is triggered. In this way a changeling may create a Feat with a delayed effect, or be more selective of whom a Feat targets.

Dice Pool Circumstance

0	No circumstances
-1	Common – Affects a duality, or a basic division of reality or society: Day or night, men or women, next thing entering the room, etc.
-2	Uncommon — Affects smaller groups: all Bards
-4	Unique — Affects individuals: Bran

Continuance – How long a Feat is Active

Kithain must use Continuance to make their effects last longer than one turn.

Players can easily abuse Continuance. Storytellers are warned to watch for players attempting to use Continuance to duplicate other Enhancements. For example, a player could use it to try and affect more than one target (Abundance) by having the effect last longer than one turn.

Changelings cannot make their effects permanent — fae magick can always be got around.

Dice Pool Time Continued

0	Turn
-1	Scene
-2	Hour
-3	6 Hours
-4	Day
-5	Week
-6	Lunar Month
-7	Year
-8	3 Years
-9, etc.	(x 3)

Condition – What can end a Feat's Effects.

This is a very powerful Enhancement which cannot be used with Continuance. With it, a fae can place a condition upon ending a Feat. If the fae announces the condition upon the effect she can reduce the negative to her dice pool by half. Time cannot be used as a Condition.

Example: Ferdia's die pool is ten. He turns the man who has been cuckolding him into a pig. He decides that only his kiss will end the effect. This is a Unique Condition, reducing his die pool by eight dice. If Ferdia announces this, it only reduces his die pool by four.

Dice Pool Substance or Circumstance

-4	Common things will end the effect: water, darkness, light, etc.
-6	Uncommon things will end the effect: the kiss of a nun, holy water from the Vatican, etc.
-8	Unique: Knowing the True name of the fae who cast the spell, the touch of the High King of Concordia, etc.

Domain of the Dread Lord – Range

Domain allows the changeling to extend the range of their magic. Domain is based upon the lands owned by ancient changeling lords. Domain radiates outward from the caster, just as a Laird's hall is center of his demesne, and from which he can extend power over his realm. This modifier can be used to extend a Feat's effect over a great range.

Domain makes several assumptions. First, that the caster knows the location of the target. A Kithain cannot use Domain to target someone — one cannot pick "City" hoping to catch the target if they are in the same building as the caster. (He could use Circumstance to make the effect selective, though.) Secondly, to *directly* affect, more than one changeling, he must use Number, not Domain.

Dice Pool Domain/Area/Range

0	Room/10 yards, or walking distance
-1	Building/ Running distance to touch
-2	Village/Neighborhood/Park
-3	City
-4	State
-5	World

Magnitude of Change

Magnitude is measure of the degree of change. Making rain on a cloudy day is minor change, for instance.

The Storyteller may be tempted to use both Magnitude of Change and Magnitude of Scale for the same Feat. *Don't do this*. Pick one that is most appropriate and stick with that, otherwise many Feats will quickly become impossible.

Dice Pool Magnitude of Change

0	Minor change: frigid to cool; change mood
-1	Basic change: frigid to temperate; change emotions
-2	Significant change: frigid to warm; change passions
-3	Major change: frigid to hot; change perceptions
-4	Spectacular change: frigid to burning; change psyche
-5	Ungodly Change: frigid to inferno; alter soul

Magnitude of Scale

Feats that have to do with the entire condition of a being, its physical composition, mental state, use this Enhancement.

Dice Pool Size

0	The Hand: a hand-held object, a basket, bucket, a potted plant
-1	The Being: a man, boulder, a bath, bush
-2	Way: a street, hillock, stream, tree
-3	The Space: a field, hill, river, wood
-4	The Expanse: plain, mountain, lake, weald
-5	The Vista: plateau, mountain chain, great lake, forest
-15	The Horizon: region, ocean, biome



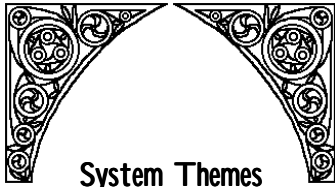
Gauntlet Difficulty Chart

Difficulty/Area

- 3 Trod (Node or Caern)
- 4 Balefire
- 5 Deep Wilderness, or within the Shadowlands
- 6 Rural Countryside, or within most fae Realms in the Otherworld
- 7 Most Urban Areas, or the Deep Otherworld (C:ICC default)
- 8 Downtown
- 9 Factory



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



System Themes

The systems in **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle** operate according to certain themes — learn them and the rest comes pretty easy.

Die Pools

The basic die pool for any Magical Feat is equal to the Rank the changeling has achieved in that Branch (not the rank of the particular Feat), plus an appropriate Attribute. Each branch has a suggested Attribute listed, but the Storyteller may decide another is more appropriate for a particular Feat.

Sympathies

Sympathies are usually items or actions which reinforce the connection between worlds, and therefore increases the chance of success. In system terms, this means that each Sympathy adds one die to the die pool for that Feat. The Storyteller is the final arbiter if a Sympathy is appropriate. A particular Sympathy, such as the color black, is only useful once per day. Once used, it will not add to the die pool, until the next day.

There are a few permanent Sympathies — sympathies that add to die pools *every* time they are used. They can be used over and over again in a day. Some magical items, called Items of Power act as permanent Sympathies for some fae. An enchanted mortal acts as a permanent

Sympathies

Sympathies add dice to a fae's magical Feat die pool. They help balance out the dice lost for using Enhancements to a Feat.

This listing of Sympathies is not exhaustive and a Storyteller should reward ingenious uses of circumstance and props which enhance the themes of **Changeling: the Celtic Cycle** by awarding Sympathy dice to a player.

BUT (you knew that was coming.) A single type of Sympathy can only be used **once** per day. For Example, Sluagh get a kith Sympathy for the Branch of Arawn. This means once per day a sluagh can call upon that Kith Sympathy to add one die to a single Feat roll. This sluagh would not get that Sympathy for every Feat of the Branch of Arawn. Got it?

Full Sorcerers (those with the Sorcerer Legacy who have attained Rank 5 in at least two branches) can create permanent sympathetic devices, but it is risky. These are wands and staves.

In most cases, the players will need to think of Sympathies well before they begin to act. They may even lead to hooks for adventures when the players attempt to appropriate items that could be useful sympathetic items. For example when the local master begins planting Oak seedlings around his house, Kithain will notice and wonder of its import.

Most of sympathies are considered in their relation to the caster, not the target. The use of the Color Sympathy, for instance, only concerns the color of clothes the caster is wearing. Enchantments are the glaring exception to this rule. If a being is enchanted, all Feats targeting the enchanted person gain a Sympathy — every time.

System: Each Sympathy the character takes advantage of adds one to his or her die pool for that Feat of magic. A particular Sympathy cannot be used more than once a day unless it is a permanent Sympathy.

Color

Colors come into play if the caster is wearing clothes of the appropriate color, or is surrounded by the same color. The article of clothing must be clean and at least the size of a shirt. It may not be covered up and must be the most distinguishing article of clothing the changeling is wearing. Carpets, and the colors of walls, floors, and ceilings make excellent Color Sympathies as well.

Each Branch lists any appropriate color sympathies.

Corp Creadha

Essentially, Corp Creadha are Scottish voodoo dolls. Like voodoo dolls, they are used by changelings as a sympathetic attachment to a victim, but each doll may only be used once. The doll must be hand-carved from oak, then clothed to look like the target of the changeling's magic.

Fae Mien

A changeling's mien is always a Sympathy. Remember, this can only be used once a day, though.

Festivals

The caster must be either participating in or at least observing a festival in person. See the section on festivals for more information on these events.

Samhain

November 1st (High Holiday)

Yule

December 21st (Winter Solstice)

Imbolc

February 1st (High Holiday)

Alban Eilir

March 20th (Spring Equinox)

Beltaine

May 1st (High Holiday)

Alban Hefin

June 21st (Summer Solstice)

Lughnasad

August 1st (High Holiday)

Alban Efed

September 23rd

Folk Superstitions

Appealing to folk superstitions is a way of preserving and revitalizing the mythic threads of reality left to the fae folk and their ilk. The fae may use any of these beliefs as sympathies. (These are reprinted from **Isle of the Mighty**.)

Bannock — the bannock is the traditional bread of Scotland. To prepare it in the classical way, it is kneaded sunwise into a disk, with a hole in the center. It is then baked on a stone heated on a fire. Bannocks, and the stones they are baked on are often regarded as charms against evil and it was generally regarded as profane to waste a bannock in the old days. Daughters passed the bannock stones on for generations as wedding presents.

Clach-an-Tiompan — Gaelic for "Stone of the Lyre." Clach-an-Tiompan are standing stones which produce musical notes when struck or when wind blows around them. Folklore states that ringing a Clach-an-Tiompan summons the faeries, so these can be used in any Magical Feat involving calling the fae, sprites or chimera.

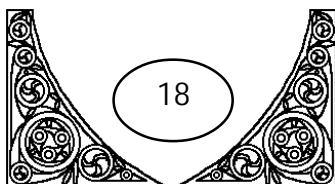
Colored Thread — witches use colored thread to imbue curses; while common folk use them as protection from black magic and the fae. Strands of colored thread can be used in wards for sympathies.

Cuach — a wooden bowl filled with water used to sink boats or drown swimmers. The witches of Lewis placed small effigies of boats in the bowls and agitated the water as they chanted their spells. When the effigy sank, the real boat capsized and everyone drowned. This can be used as a Sympathy for any Magical Feat involving water.

Eóas — these are charms against evil. Usually they consist of a chant, usually spoken by a healer, and some other anti-magical material. Some common things which prevent evil magic are: drawn swords, iron, juniper wood, stale urine, rowan wood, stallions, pins boiled in milk, and mothan (pearlwort). Burning brands carried sunwise around a home would ward it from evil influences.

Fairy Stock — the fairy stock is an image of a fairy victim, usually made of wood, moss or wax which the fairy leaves in place of the person they kidnap. If the person is successfully spirited away before the stock is destroyed, the fairy stock animates and becomes physically indistinguishable from the original person, a doppelganger. This "stock" person usually sickens and dies fairly quickly since people who know the original will begin to notice his quirks. When Fairy Stocks are used to cast glamour they animate for 1 week per point of Wyrd, not one day.

The Knife in the Door — if asked into a fairy's dwelling, sticking a knife into the door prevents the fairy from keeping the guest captive. Kith Sympathy



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Each Branch has some kith who gain a daily Sympathy die. This is listed with the description of the Branch.

Poetry

Although the epics of Ireland are really prose and not verse, any skill shown at wordsmithing is not wasted on the fae. Compose a couplet or two about the Feat to be attempted and it will act as a Sympathy.

Season

The season of the year the caster is experiencing can influence the use of a Feat. Some Branches of magic are more potent during the Winter, for example.

Skills

The use of some skills can also help the caster such as: Crafts, Performance, or Lore. The difficulty is always at least 8. Each success acts as a Sympathy (adding a die to the pool), up to a maximum of 3 successes. Botching subtracts a further three dice from the Magical Feat roll.

The skill must be performed immediately before the Feat is cast, or the character loses the Sympathies.

Wyrd

A changeling can sacrifice points of Wyrd as a sympathy.

Bans: The Price of Power

Nothing's perfect, and the fae would go even further. They believe the *restrictions* on a power are the "sparks of the Wyrd" that make magic possible. If a fae knowingly *or* unknowingly breaks a ban, he will lose *all* the Feats in that rank until the misdeed is set right. Living in such a condition often invites further disasters to visit the offending fae — including death and further dishonor.

There is no set system for repairing this damage. The fae in question must find someone of equal or higher ranking in the Branch of magic and agree to some penance. Sometimes a great quest is in the offing if the dishonor was intentional. Accidentally breaking a ban is still serious and the offender must agree to a new ban *and* agree to keep the old one as well. This kind of penance is usually taken on during the Branch's holiday (see below). Secondly, it means that the fae who adjudicates the penance will know both the old and new ban. Dangerous indeed.

As difficult as this is, this is also a part of fae lore, stories abound of fae who accidentally broke a ban and had to go through "hell and high water," quite literally, to get back into the good graces of the powers of the Otherworld.

There are many forms of Bans and the Storyteller should encourage the players to think of clever ones that reinforce the themes of the character's Legacies, their

Kith or the Branch's scope of power. Based upon their effect, we will use the term *gas* to represent bans that control a character's behavior. Exclusions are bans that limit whom these powers can target or when they can be used.

Bans are grouped into rankings, from one to five that correspond to the rankings in a Branch of Magic. A fae must take on ban when she gains a rank in a Branch of magic. A rank one ban at rank one in a Branch, a rank two ban when she advances to the next rank. If a character knows two branches of magic she must have bans to match each rank in each Branch. So if she had reached rank Three in the Branch of Arwan and Rank two the Branch of Cernunnos, then she would have five bans.

Ban Rankings

Rank One Bans

These bans affect the fae rarely or are minor limitations on their power. This ban comes into play usually once per year.

Examples:

Ban: The character must participate in a yearly festival to honor the Branch's Founder.

Limit: The character may not use the Feats of this Rank on her birthday.

Rank Two Bans

These bans are uncommon, coming into play every three or four game sessions, or once per season.

Examples:

Ban: The character must remain awake, on vigil, at the passing of each season.

Limit: The character cannot use this power on the equinox.

Rank Three Bans

These bans are pretty common, coming into play every other game session, or once per month in a character's life.

Examples:

Ban: This character must come to the aid of all crones.

Limit: The character cannot use this power during the new moon.

Rank Four Bans

These ban come into play every game session; nearly every day of a character's life — at least weekly.

Examples:

Ban: The character may not enter a house unless he walk around it, sunwise, three times.

Limit: This power will not function on Friday.

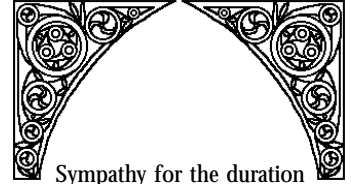
Rank Five Bans

This ban is always active and comes into play almost constantly, usually in every scene.

Examples:

Ban: The character must grant every *second* request.

Limit: The character may not use these powers on women.



Sympathy for the duration of his enchantment. Every Magical Feat directed at the poor mortal gains a Sympathy die!

Enhancements

Feats can also be enhanced by a fae, allowing them to last longer, affect more targets, etc. Each enhancement subtracts one die from the die pool. The use of enhancements can reduce a die pool to zero, meaning the Feat is no longer possible. Enhancements do not increase the chance of a Feat succeeding, rather they boost the overall effectiveness of a Feat of Magick.



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The Unenhanced Feat

An **unenhanced** Feat affects a single target within sight of fae, or the fae herself. The target must be identifiable (so hiding works), but the target does not have to be known. For example, your character could target a man down the block, but not a shape moving through the fog. Indistinguishable is not the same as unfamiliar. Just because a critter is unknown to the fae does not make it immune. A platypus is just a vulnerable as Stumpy the unlucky Boggan that lives in the next apartment — as long as your PC gets a good look at it.

Most Magical Feats are immediate and permanent. A Feat that enhances a sword blow lasts for one blow and the effects (the wound) does not disappear when the spell ends. Read the descriptions and use common sense. No effect lasts longer than one scene, unless it is Enhanced.

Branches of Fae Magic

Fae spells are broken into Branches and Feats. Branches are schools of knowledge handed down from the forefathers of the fae. Each Branch of fae magic has numerous magical Feats that changelings can master. These Feats are grouped into five rankings. Rank two Feats are more powerful than rank one Feats, and so forth.

As a fae gain a rank in a particular Branch, she is required to take on a new geas or ban, to honor the fae's commitment to her field of study and the true fae that inspired it.

System: Ranks in a Branch of magic are purchased either as Backgrounds in character creation or with experience points. A new Geas or Ban must be taken at that time as well. Individual Feats must also be purchased with experience points.

Branch Descriptions

Each description begins with a brief overview of its Branch's scope of power, description of its founder and history.

Sympathies

Here we list the common Sympathies: Holiday, Season, Legacies, Kith and Tree. Other Sympathies have their own category, but these follow no set theme. Some Branches may list colors, herbs, animals, patterns and lesser holy days that may act as Sympathies.

Holiday: Holiday Sympathies can be used only during the day of the holiday.

Legacies: Fae who have these legacies can each one as a Sympathy.

Kith: Fae of the appropriate Kith may use their race as a Sympathy each day.

Tree: Fae can use an object made of the appropriate tree as a Sympathy. As with all Sympathies, this may be done once per day.

Other: This is a catch-all for colors, animals and votive items sacred to the de Dannan. The fae must possess an item or be near the place mentioned to gain the Sympathy. Consult the Storyteller to determine just how to use these Sympathies.

Die Pool

This is the suggested die pool for all the Feats in a particular Branch.

Feats, by Rank

The theme of each rank is discussed in this section with at least one Feat listed for each rank. Sympathies peculiar to a particular Feat may be listed as well.

Suggested Enhancements: This is a list of Enhancements useful when casting this Feat.

Peculiar Sympathies: Some Feats have Sympathies not related to their Branch, but only to the Feat itself. These are listed with the Feat description.

Branch of Arawn

Arawn, Lord of the Dead, held court beneath an old willow in his realm, Arawn. The bravest warrior dead of the Celtic world spent time in his feast halls before passing into the Shadowlands. Arawn also oversaw the passing of changeling souls into new hosts. Although the lord of death, Arawn was generous and wise. He was also the lord of Secrets, accumulating the wisdom of the countless souls that passed through his hands.

Arawn taught others the power of heads as the seat of the soul in the Celtic myths.

Sympathies

Holiday: Samhain

Legacies: Warrior, winter, Unseelie

Kith: Sluagh

Tree: Willow, and Rowan

Other Sympathies: head effigies, forked twigs, dried flowers, cauldrons, red, white, and gray.

Die Pool: Rank + Stamina

Rank One Feats:

These Feats allow members of this Branch brief contact with the dead, concentrating on perceptions and memories.

• Final Impressions

By cradling the head of a dead person, the fae can experience the final moments of that person's life, reliving their last perceptions in the Dying Lands as a vision.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (more than one head), Magnitude of Scale (learn more information).

Rank Two Feats:

At this rank the head comes alive, but the true personality and memories of the once living person are not available. The head can perform limited tasks: watch, bite, etc.

• • Head Warder

The head of someone killed by the fae can become a guardian. This guardian is always alert and has the full use of the senses of the once living being. Some of the persona has returned and it can question interlopers and ward them off, or provide descriptions of the trespassers. The head has no extra supernatural powers and will only discuss events that relate to its job.

This Feat does not stop the process of putrefaction. Heads become useless as their sense organs rot or are destroyed by scavengers.

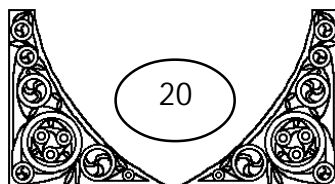
Suggested Enhancements: Number (of Warders), Circumstance (when they report) and Continuance.

Rank Three Feats

The spirits of the dead can be fully accessed for a limited time. Memory, personality and perception are available.

• • • Question

The fae may have the answer to questions to the best of the head's ability to answer. It will not knowingly lie, but it only speaks the truth as it knows it. This can only



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be attempted once per head.

Peculiar Sympathies: Silver coins placed in the mouth of the dead.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (...of questions).

Rank Four Feats

Death itself can be forestalled for a time at this Rank, but true life cannot be granted.

• • • • Live the Life

This unsettling gift allows the fae to bring a person's head back to life. It is not immortal and ages just as it would — finally dying. During this time it does not need to eat or drink, and easily falls into a spiritual Slumber (see Chimera) if not entertained.

The head, or person, is its own boss and exists in a kind of half-living experience. It can be brought out for parties and interrogations, but it no longer feels pain, so not much really can be done to “force it to reveal secrets, etc. The greatest burden for its new life is that its soul cannot be reborn while stuck in this existence.

Suggested Enhancements: Number, Circumstance (when the head awakens)

Rank Five Feats

The changeling has gained some control over the sprits of the dead and the forces of life. The severed strands of fae can be knotted together. For a time.

• • • • • Resurrection

This Feat is known to few and requires the expenditure of a permanent point of Wyrd per being resurrected. When successful, the person will live for the duration of the effect, or until slain again.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (resurrected), Circumstance, Continuance (how long life is granted), Condition (what will stop this second life.) and Magnitude of Scale (for huge animals).

Branch of Brigit

Brigit wore many hats and had several names among the Celts. She was known for having skills with healing and all manner of things pertaining to the home and hearth. Brigit sometimes manifested as a Goddess Reborn just before the first stirrings of Spring, when bonfires were extinguished then rekindled as a sign of faith for the end of winter. For that reason, Imbolc is her holiday and fires are lit in her honor on that day.



Sympathies

Holidays: Imbolc

Legacies: Healers, Seelie, Spring

Kith: Boggans

Tree: Willow (particularly the bark)

Other Sympathies: Red, bonfires, gold (the color and the metal)

Die Pool: Rank + Dexterity

Rank One Feats:

Fae learning this rank have the ability to ascertain the physical condition of something or someone, perhaps to tell if it is sick or well, pure or tainted.

• Blood Tales

Whether the patient is poisoned by something as mundane as arsenic or afflicted with a venom of magical origin, the fae using this Feat can sense what toxin ails the sickly victim. The fae may not know the *precise* origin, particularly if the substance is highly unusual, but this Feat will give her a strong clue what to look for. With each success rolled, the fae will gain another clue about the substance; one success may only tell her something is present, while five or more successes may clue her in as the nature, chemical composition and manufacturer of the poison. The Fianna have come to prize this Feat among their fae Kinfolk, as it often alerts them to Wyrms poisons left to fester in an unsuspecting werewolf....

Peculiar Sympathies: A drop of the target's blood (or sap, if using this Feat on a tree). Medicine (Combined with knowledge of medicine, herbs, or chemistry, this Feat can be quite useful.)

Suggested Enhancements: Number (of patients, if similarly infected), Circumstance, Magnitude of Change (knowledge of the origin of the poison)

Rank Two Feats:

Rank two of Brigit's Branch is similar to rank one, except that it will reveal a subject's true psychological condition, state of mind or underlying motivations.

• • Heart's Desire

Greed and carnal lust motivate the fae just as often as passion and desire. Those who use Heart's Desire can tell precisely what a subject wants, whether a genuine tryst or a puny one-night stand. For example, if a lovely princess offers a marriage proposal to a poor farmer, he might use this Feat to discover that her main desire is not his sturdy body nor his small farm but the magic cow he keeps in the stable. With one success, the fae can discover whether or not the target's intentions are benevolent or malicious, although the exact nature of the person's desires may remain hidden.

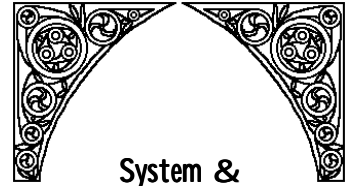
Suggested Enhancements: Number and Magnitude of Change (With more successes the fae will know even minute details about the target's motivations.)

Rank Three Feats:

Fae skilled to this level in Brigit's Branch gain the ability to actually cure grave ills or cause terrible harms to their enemies.

• • • Healing Flames

By caressing the wounded flesh, a fae healer can cure even perilous wounds with this Feat. Health levels healed



System & Game Reality

The average Magical Feat roll will have 6d and a difficulty of 7. Not bad odds, but as an adventure wears on, the number of dice will probably go down to about 4, so the odds begin to look worse and worse for the fae. Shift the struggle to an industrial complex and, ugh, the difficulty can skyrocket, making their magic weak and unreliable. A fae would have to blow a lot of Sympathies, Wyrd and Willpower to make *anything* work.

The average Wyrd roll for Enchantments, etc. will be about 5dice, again with a difficulty of 7. The # of dice will not change, but the amount of Wyrd spent here will detract from the amount spent on Magical Feats (for Sympathy dice).

This means that changelings begin fights like gangbusters, but aren't in it for the long haul — needing days to rebuild Wyrd, etc. With a bunch of Sympathies in their breeches, they will be a lot like a barbarian charge in the Gallic wars, fearsome at first, but without much staying power. For this reason, the fae prefer quick, decisive battles, or just a meeting of champions, to settle disputes.

This is yet another reason they have no desire to war with other supernaturals. And, if you have not picked up on this yet, Changelings do not really need nodes/caerns. Yes they can get some Wyrd from them, but they usually have to spend a day near it.

It's not worth the struggle to take them.



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Blood Tales

Siobhan looked at her sister with horror-filled eyes. "Who has done this?" she whispered, the pleasant lilt of her voice tinged with frost. Melian's lips were white as ash.

"I know not, lady," replied her friend Liam the boggan, "but I shall find out." Liam opened his pouch and removed a long needle. He stabbed Melian's finger and caught the drop of blood on his own gnarled hand. He wrapped a red cloth around the sidhe's wrist and brushed a powder of willowbark under her nose. "As I have honored Brigit when the fires die and are reborn, oh Lady of Flames, what has harmed my friend?"

Liam is using the Feat "Blood Tales" (Rank 1, Brigit). He's not using any Enhancements, but is using several sympathies for the branch: his own Kith, the color red, and the wood (willow bark). He gets one more bonus for the blood since it's peculiar to the Feat.

Liam has worked up to Rank 3 of Brigit's Branch and his Attribute (Dexterity) is 2. His base Die Pool is 3 + 2 = 5, plus 4 more for the Sympathies. His player rolls 9 dice to discover what has poisoned Melian.

He'll need them since Liam is standing in a foundry and the Storyteller says the Wall rating is 8!

While this is still a lot of dice, remember, Liam will not be able to use any of the sympathies he just used for the rest of the day!

The short speech is just for fun. (It's ROLEPLAYING!)

equal number of successes. The afflicted area glows with a strange light before the healing is complete. Aggravated damage can be healed if the fae spends a point of Wyrd for each level of Aggravated damage healed.

Peculiar Sympathies: Most fae use some type of unique focus for this Feat, such as willowbark tea, an herbal balm, even Band-Aids, wooden effigy of the part healed.

Suggested Enhancements: Circumstance (when the effect goes off).

• • • Seeds of Ash

This terrible Feat causes the target to lose his or her ability to create children. For a women, the womb shrivels like a tissue in flame and can bear no young. A man's seed burns itself out and is lifeless. The fae must touch her target, leaving behind a smear of ashes for the effect to succeed. This can be such a subtle thing that many victims won't realize what has happened until it's too late.

Suggested Enhancements: Condition (what will end the curse), Magnitude of Change (major change, -3 dice)

Rank Four Feats:

As powerful as a geas, the fae using this rank can actually determine certain fates to befall their friends or enemies.

• • • Flame of Destiny

This powerful Feat actually stops the flow of time and fate to save someone from a life-threatening blow. A fae calling on these powers essentially rewrites a moment of history. This Feat must be used immediately after the event occurs, within five minutes, or it will have no effect. Moreover, it cannot be used on the same person twice without canceling all the beneficial effects. For example, if Conchobar the selkie uses the Flame of Destiny to stop his lover Meilsoure the sidhe from dying of an arrow wound to the throat, he can't use the Feat two weeks later to save her from being trampled by her steed. If he does, she would fall over dead with an arrow through her windpipe.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (the Storyteller must judge how this will effect her story)

• • • Peril of Years

This nasty Feat lets the victim worry and stew for a number of years before taking effect. The use of the Feat pronounces a curse on his target and claims that a specific event on a specific day will take place. Anything the victim does to circumvent the curse will completely backfire. The event cannot be undone, although a more powerful Feat might be able to stave off the worst damage. A classic example is Sleeping Beauty (see 'All Through the Night' under Rank Five Feats). By using the Circumstance, the caster can set up a certain condition for the effect to occur. For each two years that are to pass before the effect takes place costs one success. For example, pricking your finger on a spindle and dying on your 16th birthday would require 10 successes! (One for the condition of pricking a finger, one for dying, and eight for the number of years that would pass, 16 divided by two). The Storyteller should arbitrate especially the number of successes needed for extremely complex effects.

Peculiar Sympathies: The caster must compose a truly creative verse to accompany his curse.

Suggested Enhancements: Circumstance (as above) Dread Lord, Magnitude of Change (effect of the curse).

Rank Five Feats:

Even Brigit cannot instantly bring the dead to life; that is Arawn's power. But Brigit's power *can* heal even mortal wounds or stave off death, provided that the target has not yet died. Needless to say, the time involved may be lengthy or the price for the prevention of death very dear.

• • • • Life Bone

This is a useful but rather dark bit of magic. A fae using Life Bone pours her life into one part of her body; this may be a toe, a little finger or her exterior ear, for example (something of some size, rather than a hair or a fingernail). She then *removes* that piece of flesh and secretes it away (unless she's really dumb, in which case she leaves it put). Thereafter, her body (save for the part that may or may not be attached) is invulnerable to any blow or magical offense. Period. The problem, of course, is if someone finds her Life Bone. Much like having someone's True Name, the holder of the Life Bone has power over the fae in question. Destroying the Life Bone instantly kills the fae, and it can be burned, broken or hacked to bits as any normal toe, finger or whatever. To pour life into a chosen body part, the practitioner must spend a year and a day forging a dagger. She must manufacture all pieces of it (i.e., hilt, blade) with her own hands. At midnight on the day the dagger is finished, she heats it in a fire kindled from an ember sparked at Imbolc and then, reciting her True Name, cuts off the chosen body part (or draws blood from it if she chooses not to remove it). The effect takes place immediately thereafter. Ick.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (this is an Ungodly Change, -5 to die pool)

• • • • All Through the Night

This Feat is a powerful healing sleep, the length of time sleeping depending on the severity of wounds. Much like 'Peril of Years,' the fae using the Feat has to specify a date and/or time and condition for the sleeping person to awaken. Storytellers should be judicious when this Feat comes into play, seriously considering effects on the game. Numerous heroes such as Arthur are apparently still asleep thanks to this Feat. Three successes are necessary to set this Feat into motion, and the period of sleep will be no less than a thousand years. For each success over five, one century can be taken off the sleeping period. Thus 10 successes would mean the target would awaken in 500 years, on a day specified by the caster, perfectly healed. Any fae under this spell will effectively be out of the game, unless a story develops about how to waken him from his magical sleep....

Suggested Enhancements: Condition (what awakes target).

• • • • Blood for Blood, Life for Life

If a fae upon whom this Feat falls is truly willing, with her whole heart, she may take a dying lover's place on the journey to Arawn. Fae sorcerers calling on this Feat do so very, very carefully, for once begun, it cannot be revoked. They often use 'Heart's Desire' to make sure that the target is certain that she wants to give her own life for someone else's. Even so, many fae have suffered pangs of guilt and remorse over using this Feat.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (Ungodly Change, -5 to die pool)

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Branch of Llyr

Llyr, or Lir as he was called in Ireland, was lord of the sea. He had many children who also possessed certain powers associated with the waves, including Manannan, Bran, Branwen, and Dylan. Llyr's seething temper was well known, but he could be a generous lord when appeased. He also possessed a reputation as a lover of many women and fine treasures, items that weren't always mutually exclusive. Many fisherfolk still call for his aid or seek to appease him in the spring and fall when sudden gales and squalls are at their worst.

Sympathies

Holidays: Vernal and Autumnal equinox

Legacies: Crafters, Seelie, Spring

Kith: Selkies

Tree: Only a tree that does not shrivel before water, the Black Oak (*dubhdara* in Gaelic)

Other Sympathies: Shells, pearls, boats, fish, green, blue

Die Pool: Rank + Strength

Rank One Feats:

Feats of this level allow the practitioner to garner small bits of information from the sea itself.

• Pearls of Wisdom

By sifting her hands through water, the fae might learn certain useful facts, such as who passed by in the past day or how many feet disturbed the shallows in recent times, and so on. This information usually comes to the practitioner in the form of a fleeting vision, however, and may or may not be beneficial at the Storyteller's discretion. Note that the fae doesn't have any control over what she sees; the feats at this level allow for random visions rather than answers to specific questions.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (quality of information).

Rank Two Feats:

At this level, the fae may communicate with and possibly claim minor favors from any of a variety of sea creatures.

Peculiar Sympathies: The creature appearing will always ask for a short story, song, poem, or piece of wisdom.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (of creatures) and Magnitude of Change (quality of information).

• • • Friend of Tethys

Tethys, Lady of the Deep in Cornish legend, often used sea creatures to escort visitors to her dark realm. A fae wishing to use this Feat wades hip deep into water and calls for Tethys to send aid. What type of creature

appears is up to the Storyteller, though salmon, carp, and dolphins would be common. The creature will then ferry the fae to a destination touching the water. Note that the creature *won't* carry the fae to the ends of the earth; Fae using this Feat should always ask the sea creature how far they are willing to journey before climbing aboard...and if they forget, the Storyteller should have some fun with them.

Peculiar Sympathies: Totem or effigy of the creature appearing

Suggested Enhancements: Number (of Creatures), Continuance (how long they are carried), Domain of the Dread Lord (how far they are transported — do not use with Continuance) and Magnitude of Scale (size of critter summoned).

Rank Three Feats:

The sea is occasionally willing to give forth its treasures in times of great need. Fae competent in this rank have been known to "discover" surprising aid in the midst of dire battles.

• • • Dylan's Gift

Dylan ap Llyr was known for his talents of fishing and his travels on the sea. On one such excursion, he befriended a spotted salmon who rewarded him with an unbreakable net. A fae using this Feat can ask the sea to surrender an item generally used by fisherfolk, such as a net, fishing wire, or even a harpoon. Depending on the Storyteller, the item may be magical or have added benefits for the user; perhaps a high number of successes will cause the sea to give up an interesting and valuable item while few successes would cause something beneficial but ordinary to appear. Fae using this Feat should recite a strand of poetry in asking the sea for bounty. For example, when the spotted fish gave Dylan the net, the son of Llyr sang

*Dylan, Dylan, son of the wave
Begg the spotted fish his life to save.
(Simple, but effective)*

Suggested Enhancements: Number, Circumstance, Continuance, Condition, Domain of the Dread Lord, Magnitude of Change, Magnitude of Scale.

Rank Four Feats:

At this rank, a fae can begin to understand and imitate the innate structures of sea creatures and their habitats. He can act as the sea creatures do and even gain certain abilities they possess.

• • • • Breath of Llyr

With this Feat, a fae can alter his body in order to breathe underwater. He might choose to develop gills or cause a bubble of air to form around his head; each fae's magic manifests in a different way, and the player should give the Storyteller a description of the effect.

Peculiar Sympathies: The fae may let three drops of his blood fall into the sea before invoking this Feat.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (persons effected), Circumstance (when it takes effect) and Continuance (how long it lasts).

Rank Five Feats:

The last of Llyr's blessings involves the calling of storms, waterspouts, fog, and other weather anomalies. Some can wreak damage, while others provide powerful distractions.



Don't look a Gift Salmon in the Mouth...

Dylan's gift has its drawbacks. What few but the selkies know, is that anything given by this Feat is either lost or *stolen*.

Llyr wouldn't steal, let's say he loaned it for you!

Or...

You can do a lot with this. Just imagine you are a powerful sidhe lord who wades across a river, when you get to the other side your sword...your great, great, grandfather's Treasure from Arcadia...is gone.

Where did it go?

Who was the lousy bastard who **stole** it?



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



The Wise Ones

Don't mess with them. For centuries the Sorcerers of Math have played games with their power. You see if they decided to dethrone a King, they could do it.

Of course someone would get even, and then the spiral of vengeance would spin out of control...

So the really smart ones play it close to the vest and they are a secret cult of Math, the Wise Ones. On the surface, they cultivate images of absent-minded, etherial scholars and purveyors of arcane lore.

Remember that secret we hinted at on page 8 of Part 1?

Those are the Wise Ones, and they have been playing the Seelie kings *and* the Shadow Court for suckers. Or, they have been the guardians of the fae and the architects of the Resurgence.

It depends on how you look at it.

*Is it getting darker in here,
or is it just
me?*

• • • • • Shadow Over Sea

When the fae wishes to use this Feat, she blows into a shell while facing the sea. If she is successful, waves of thick, peasoup fog will roll towards her, providing inscrutable cover and making persons in the vicinity unable to see even the hands in front of their faces. Legend suggests that Merlin himself knew this Feat and used it to cover King Uther Pendragon as he rode to seduce Queen Igraine. The fog will last until the dawning of a new day and perhaps a little longer, with a large number of successes rolled.

Suggested Enhancements: Domain of the Dread Lord (area affected).

• • • • • Llyr's Fury

Enemies of Llyr would do well never to underestimate the fierceness of a storm at sea. Depending on number of successes rolled, a fae invoking this Feat causes a small hurricane, anywhere from two to five miles in diameter, to sweep over a target area. Any creature not taking cover is subject to successes rolled + six dice of damage (bashing, not aggravated) from being tossed around by high winds and stinging rain. The fae using this Feat must be touching the sea when he calls the storm.

Suggested Enhancements: Domain of the Dread Lord (area affected).

Branch of Math

Math ap Mathonwy was the wisest sorcerer of the True Fae. His mind held the culmination of all knowledge of the Old Ways, and for that reason, he is associated with the autumn, reminiscent of a full and satisfied field ready for reaping. Those following his teachings can learn of many things, some common and some hidden.

Sympathies

Holidays: Lughnasadh



Legacies: Loremaster, Seelie, Autumn

Kith: Sidhe

Tree: Mistletoe

Other Sympathies: Books, paper, mead, salmon, autumn leaves

Die Pool: Rank + Intelligence

Rank One Feats:

The student of Math's Branch is first able to withdraw from a common store of fae knowledge; whether this is a direct link with the minds of the Tuatha de Danaan or something else entirely is unknown. At this level, the fae can only glean information that is generally known about a subject, something along the lines of an encyclopedia or general reference. (Or the blurbs on different kith or tribes one might find in a catalog for a gaming book, rather than

the book itself).

• Traveler's Tales

When the fae finds herself in a new locale, she probably wants to know the best bars, restaurants or places to find others like herself. While this Feat won't lead her straight to a freehold, she will innately know of hangouts fae would enjoy. And if there aren't any fae around, she can still have a great meal or a good cappuccino.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (of place located), Domain of the Dread Lord (area affected).

<3 Rank Two Feats:

At this rank, hidden knowledge of the present becomes known. The fae using this level can discover things he wasn't supposed to know, although the information is general rather than specific and doesn't show events of the past that might have influenced the present. Such gathering of information may be blocked by a Branch of Math at a greater rank (three or above).

• • Darkness Visible

Ever wonder whom that slick looking Fiona noble might *really* be? This Feat can't reveal a True Name, but it can show someone's true identity, court and kith. Like pulling back a heavy curtain, a fae using Darkness Visible sees what a person's nature might truly be. The intentions and motivations of the target aren't always clear, but the fae can probably figure out he should ask a few more pertinent questions of Lady Margaret ap Fiona of the Seelie Court who is actually Countess Maeve ap Ailill of the Unseelie Court. The Storyteller may wish to choose these pieces of knowledge at random or, with a particularly creative use of the Feat, allow the player to decide what he wishes to know. Other than identity, court and kith, useful knowledge might include home freehold, legacies or political leanings.

Peculiar Sympathies: Something belonging to the target, such as a strand of hair, a scarf or a shoe.

Suggested Enhancements: Number (of targets) and Magnitude of Change (depth of secret uncovered or number of minor secrets).

Rank Three Feats:

Hidden knowledge of the present is powerful, but when a fae learns about the past, her knowledge is doubled. Building on Rank Two, this level allows the fae to glean hidden knowledge of the present *and* past. Used in reverse, a fae might be able to prevent someone from knowing about her past or present.

• • • Mirror, Mirror

The fae using this Feat must gaze into a mirror or other reflective surface and concentrate on the target. When successful she can see any past or present moment desired in the life of the target, though there the clarity is a matter of question. Less scrupulous students of Math's Branch have used this Feat to steal new magic from their enemies.

Suggested Enhancements: Continuance (how long the effect lasts), Domain of the Dread Lord (range of target) and Magnitude of Change (clarity of picture)

• • • Shatter

Naughty fae well realize that others might be



Changeling: The Celtic Cycle



magically spying on them, and this Feat is useful for stopping such offenders. If a fae suspects someone is trying to discern his true nature or court with Rank Two of the Branch of Math, for example, he can use Shatter to break the scrying and give the user a nasty headache. First, he must discern that he is being spied upon. Roll Perception + Kenning roll, difficulty 5. He must roll a number of successes equal to the Rank of the “scrying” magic.

Then, he rolls his dice pool for Shatter (Rank in Branch of Math + Intelligence). As long as his successes equal or outnumber Rank of the “scrying” magic, no knowledge can be gathered. Moreover, for each success above the minimum needed, the offending target takes one level of damage (nonlethal) and gets a splitting headache. Where the user’s successes don’t outnumber those of the prying fae, nothing happens, though the offended party will still know who is sticking a nose into his business.

Peculiar Sympathies: Breaking a small piece of glass
Suggested Enhancements: Circumstance (when triggered).

Rank Four Feats:

If knowing the present and past is power, imagine knowing the future as well. Feats of this Rank will reveal hidden and common knowledge about all stages of a target’s life, or will block the acquisition of knowledge about one’s present or past. (See table following).

• • • • • List of Three

Using this Feat, a fae can discover three specific pieces of knowledge, common or hidden, about a target’s past, present *and* future. She takes a piece of parchment, writes down her three questions, then crumples the paper and throws it either into a fire or a pot of boiling water. The fae will hear a voice in her head answering the questions completely and truthfully, even if the “truth” is not a matter of common knowledge (such as where Lady Meredith stashed her Life Bone). The information might be particularly detailed or insightful. The magic will *not* work unless all three questions are asked. If the Storyteller doesn’t particularly wish something to be known (like the question about Lady Meredith’s Life Bone), he can still wiggle a bit, answering something like, “In the forest of the Severn under the third alder stump by the clearing,” knowing full well that there’s a new subdivision there now...and that no suburbanite is going to approve of strangers digging up his new basement rec room.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (Quality of answers)

Rank Five Feats:

Only the wisest or shrewdest fae ever master this Rank, and they are generally the most revered (or feared) sages and sorcerers. For these powers allow a practitioner to essentially know *whatever* they wish about a person, place or thing. Many fae skilled to this Rank take Bans pertaining to age or even penalties for sharing too much knowledge. Otherwise they’d never get any peace with everyone pestering them for information. Seelie fae generally have the wisdom to be scrupulous about what information they gather and share. Unseelie are a bit more capricious and

often don’t look ahead to what dangers their revelations might bring.

• • • • • Wisdom Beyond the Lot of Mortals

Many fae of legend have kept a book of knowledge close at hand. For this Feat, the fae must obtain a book of his own, initially with blank pages, bound with leather. In gold ink by candlelight, he writes a question about *anything* he wishes to know (scary, eh?). If successful, the complete and truthful answer then appears in the book and stays there until the fae dies, at which time all the questions and answers disappear. Fae usually guard these books with heavy protective magic and seldom routinely drag them around on adventures. While no one other than the owner can write questions, anyone who gets past the book’s defenses can read what has been written. This book is most often a Feat from his mentor or a close companion, and these tomes are considered works of art, often with tooled knotwork and perhaps handcrafted pages. Fae often make arrangements in their wills to leave their (now) blank books to favored pupils, so that many of these books, albeit empty of the predecessors’ questions, have been handed down for centuries. There is no limit to how many questions may be written; the book will always fit them in, somehow.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (depending upon the depth of the question)

• • • • • True Name

It is no wonder that many fae are terrified of practitioners adept with the highest Branch of Math, for those who are may even know the True Name of anyone they choose. Knowledge of a True Name is extremely powerful, and the benefits are numerous. First and foremost, if someone knows another’s True Name, he can automatically undo any magic the other attempts; the only roll required is Rank + Intelligence, with one success needed, and all he must do is speak the True Name. He may also use any other Feats of his own magic against the victim, which will all succeed with no countering allowed, with at least one success. For example, if Liam the sluagh knew Bran the boggan’s True Name, Liam could use any of his own Branches of magic freely against Bran as long as the player rolled at least one success on the die pool. And Bran couldn’t do a damn thing about it. The knowledge of a True Name is not without price, though. The fae who learns it must give up something dear, such as a part of his body, a tremendously valued possession or even some years of his life. To discover a True Name, he also has to petition the wind, the sea or some other powerful force of nature (i.e., he’ll be speaking to a powerful nature spirit). The player should do this creatively and convince the Storyteller of his character’s sacrifice and sincerity...or genuine malevolence. In other words, this is one of the ultimate powers of **Changeling: The Celtic Cycle** and should never be taken lightly or capriciously.

Suggested Enhancements: Magnitude of Change (always Ungodly).



Wisdom

“You got us into this, Uriens, now get us out!” Toghán’s voice was a panicked shriek. Uriens shrugged his black and silver cloak aside and pulled out a leather-bound book. He’d been loathe to bring it, but now.... Crumbling leaves he snatched from the forest floor, he scattered the remains onto the page and carefully wrote with the strange new pen he’d found (a felt-tip, they’d called it), his question: “Where is the nearest trod?” As he wrote, Uriens stretched out his hand, willing for the trod gate to glow silver in the darkening night until twice three hours had passed. That should give them time to escape those upstart commoners.

Uriens is a powerful sorcerer casting “Wisdom Beyond the Lot of Mortals” (Rank 5, Math). He’s also using the **Enhancements** Continuance (6 hours, -3) and Magnitude of Change (Major change, the trod gate will glow, -3). His book is a unique sympathy (no bonus), but he does get +1 dice for using the autumn leaves and +1 for his Kith. His dice pool is thus: 5 (Rank) + 4 (Intelligence) + 2 (leaves, Kith) = 11.

The Enhancements subtract 6, leaving his player 5 dice to roll.

The Storyteller rules that the Wall rating is 7 (standard), so that is the difficulty.



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Annotations:

Armband: Much like a ring, it is a symbol of wholeness and continuity.

Becan: Small; here meant to imply 'petty.' In folktales, millers have also come to be symbols of greed.

Borach Companach: Roughly translated as "Mister Bandylegs."

Brigit: Lady of fertility, home, good health.

Bru Na Boine: Valley of the Boyne, one of the most beautiful (and mystical) places in Ireland.

Conary: an ancient name.

Devin: Poet.

Erlina: Woman of Ireland.

Etain: Shining lady.

Firstborn son: One who likely will be king after his father. Note that Conary certainly intended no harm to the child, but rather would have enchanted him and brought him to live in a faerie realm. That the babe was a prince would've been in a feather in Conary's cap.

Flagons of ale: These were, of course, enchanted.

Foxes and hares: Probably pwca.

Gold: Representation of intelligence and superiority. Also sympathetic to the Branch of Brigit.

Gray mare: In many Celtic lands, a creature of some power who can find lost trods.



Rump's Revenge

Once upon a time, in the royal land of Meath, there lived a miller called Becan. In recent years, a dreadful drought had fallen on the Bru na Boine, so that Becan's once prosperous trade had dwindled even as the rains had ceased. All the man had to his name was his humble home and his beautiful daughter, Erlina, an accomplished spinner renowned for her soft skeins of wool. 'Twas Erlina who kept food in their mouths, as her father had grown lazy over the past few seasons.

Now one day, it came time for Becan to give his annual tithe to the Righ. The miller appeared before the Righ, and exclaimed how his wealth had declined due to the lack of grain to grind, so that he had nothing at all to give.

"That is a strange thing, since the other people of my lands have made some good effort to provide a tithe that is my due," replied the Righ dryly. "Surely you can provide something for the protection I give you, perhaps a good tool or mayhap a piece of crockery for my larder."

Seeing as how the Righ would surely take his last cracked bowl, the miller grew crafty. "Alas, my lord, I have no such wares fine enough for your hall. However, I do have my daughter, Erlina, and there's magic for sure in her hands. You have heard the wordfame of her wool, soft as butter. I say now for all to hear, the wool's the least of her talents! Aye, for my lass can spin even straw into gold!"

"Now that's a talent worth having," exclaimed the Righ. "We shall see if your daughter is as clever as you say. Bring her to my home tomorrow, and we'll put her to the test."

So the next dawning, Becan brought Erlina to the Righ's abode. The ruler led her into a small crannog where she found a large drop spindle and a pile of clean straw.

"There lies your life," said the Righ. "Spin all day and

into the night, and at tomorrow's dawning, if you haven't spun the straw into gold, you shall die by the noose and sleep in the bog." With that, he closed the door of the hut and left her alone inside. Erlina began to cry, for she had no idea how to spin straw into gold. Her tears fell in great torrents, and only when she finally wiped her eyes with her apron did she see that she was not alone.

Watching her closely was a spindly man, no taller than a young boy of a dozen seasons. His cheeks danced red and merry, and his hair hung in curly wisps of silver. The rough cloth he wore sported every color of the wood and forest. And when he spoke, his voice was gruff but kindly.

"Well met, child of the miller. I have heard your tears even on the old roads that cross this place. Why do you cry on such a fair day?"

"I must spin this pile of straw into gold," sniffled Erlina, "or the Righ will have my life to end."

The fae, for that is what the spindly man was, considered her plight but a moment. "What will you give me if I take your toil from you?" he asked.

Erlina reached to her throat, where she wore a pretty but worthless necklace of painted clay beads. "My necklace is yours," she answered, setting it over his head.

The fae immediately set to work, twisting the spindle faster than the girl's eyes could follow. From his hand to the spindle, straw flowed, turning into a shining river of metal. Before dawn came, the straw was gone, and in its place lay a fine pile of gold mesh, ready for crafting. The fae vanished without a word.

When the Righ entered the hut with the sun's rays, he immediately saw the gold, and his jaw fell in astonishment. But greater greed entered his heart, and he bade Erlina stay in the hut while his servants brought in more fresh straw, piled twice as high as before.

"There lies your life," repeated the Righ. "Spin all day and into the night, and at tomorrow's dawning, if you haven't spun the straw into gold, you shall die by the noose and sleep in the bog."

Erlina could not believe her bad luck, and she cried more bitterly for her life, for she expected no second miracle of magic. But to her happy surprise, the fae appeared just as he had before.

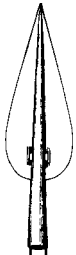
"What will you give me if I take your toil from you?" he asked.

Erlina reached to her finger, where she wore a ring woven from the tail hair of a gray mare. "My ring is yours," she answered, setting it in his hand.

And as before, the fae immediately set to work, twisting the spindle even faster than the previous night. Before dawn came, the straw was gone, and in its place lay an even larger pile of gold mesh. The fae again vanished without a word.

The Righ could scarce believe his eyes the next day when he beheld Erlina and the stack of gold. But her heart sank when he had his servants bring in thrice as much straw as had been spun before.

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"There lies your life," said the Righ, for the third time. "Spin all day and into the night, and at tomorrow's dawning, if you haven't spun the straw into gold, you shall die by the noose and sleep in the bog. But if I find you in the morn with the straw spun to gold, I will take you to my fine stone keep as my bride." With that, he left Erlina to ponder her fate.

The Righ had barely closed the door when the fae appeared.

"What will you give me if I take your toil from you?" he asked.

Erlina's eyes filled with fresh tears. "I have nothing left to give you," she whimpered.

The fae thought a moment. "Then swear to me by the oak tree that when you are Ban-Righ, you will give to me your firstborn child."

There's nothing to do for it but swear, thought Erlina, but who knows what may happen before then? Aloud, she said, "By the acorn, the oak, and the roots, I promise to give you my firstborn child."

Immediately, the fae set to work and before dawn, there lay an even greater pile of gold ere he vanished. Upon entering the hut, the Righ was delighted, and in the presence of his council that very day, plighted his troth to Erlina. Thus she became Ban-Righ of her people.

A year and a day passed, and Erlina was delivered of a fine son, beautiful of form and strong of heart. In her happiness, she'd thought little of the fae who had saved her life, until one morning, on the feast of Brigit, weather warm for the season, he appeared as she was swaddling the babe.

"Thrice I have kept my word to you," he said, "and now I am come to collect what's due. You promised by the acorn, the oak, and the roots to give me your firstborn."

Erlina sobbed harder than ever before, loathe to give her son to the fae folk. She promised him all the wealth of Meath, no mean thing, if he would leave her the child.

"An oath is an oath," the fae said sternly, "and no treasures are so valuable as the child of a king." But his otherworldly heart was moved by her hysterical tears, whether he showed it or not.

"Then one last chance do I give you," said the fae, grumpy and irritable, "that which no mortal has ever had before from me. If in three days, you can guess my true name, the babe shall stay with you." He vanished without a trace, leaving Erlina to ponder his riddle. With haste and fear she sent out one of her retainers to seek out any and all names of the little people, bading her return before evening of the third day hence.

When the fae came back at the next dawn, she spoke to him all the names of Eire she knew, but after each, the fae exclaimed, "Nay, that is not my name!"

On the second day when he appeared, having sought wisdom from a bard, she called out all of the

names of Cymru, Albion, Dalriada, and Gaul. Still, after each, the fae exclaimed, "Nay, that is not my name!"

Desperate, on the morning of the third day, Erlina watched and watched for her retainer. The sun was beginning to set ere the lady's footsteps crossed the threshold.

"My lady Ban-Righ," she panted, "I have found no true names of the fae, but I must tell you this extraordinary thing. As I was crossing the river not an hour ago, near where used to be an ancient road, I came upon a hidden glade, in a place where foxes and hares bid each other good night. There was a fire, and around the flames danced a little man, hopping from one leg to the next. And he sang this song so quiet, I could scarce hear him:

Today I forge, tomorrow I bake,

And then the child away I'll take;

For little deems Erlina the dame

That Borach Companach is my name!

The Ban-Righ kissed her retainer joyfully, and no sooner had the lady left than the fae appeared.

"Now, Erlina," he said, "what's my name?" Erlina knew it would not do to guess too quickly. "Is it perhaps Conner?"

"Nay, that is not my name!" he cried

"Is it mayhap Aidan?"

"Nay, that is not my name!" he cried.

Erlina's smile was coy. "Then, might it be Borach Companach?"

"The Fomor have told you, the Fomor have told you!" the fae screamed, and with a mighty crack of thunder, he drove his foot into the ground so hard that he split right in twain.

Erlina called her faithful retainer and bade her clean up the remains of the fae man. And she tucked her babe into a basket for a warm night's rest.

In the court of Ard Righ Uaine, Sidhe Lord of All the Fae of Meath, things were astir. From the forges of the crafters came such a hue and cry that the lordly ruler put aside his javelin on the practice field and went to see the trouble with his own eyes.

All therein, nocker and piskey, aithech and pwca, had thrown down their hammers and tongs, eyes blinded by weeping.

"What is amiss?" asked Uaine, puzzled, for his crafters loved nothing better than to ply muscle to metal.

"'Tis him we call Conary," explained one of thenockers, "a brethren of my forge! This very night, due to mortal treachery, he has been called by name and torn asunder!"

Now, it's a grave thing, a very grave thing indeed for a mortal to know a fae's true name. The fair folk seldom if ever even share such knowledge with a trusted friend of many years, much less a mortal. But Conary's tongue had gotten the best of him. He wasn't the only fae ever to suffer such a fate, and certainly won't be the last.

Uaine was a good ruler, respected by his warriors and



Kiernan: Dark skinned. In this case, dark blue skin.

Mantle: Medea also used a mantle to punish someone; in her case, it burned its wearer to death.

Math: God of wisdom.

Morrigu: Battle goddess.

Names: Knowing a fae's true name gives one power over that fae.

Necklace: The first and least of Erlina's possessions. Necklaces also represent protection and possibly fertility.

Oak, acorns: A tree of power, symbolizing ownership and one's own domain.

Old road: A trod.

Owl: Symbol of cleverness.

Righ, Ban Righ: King and Queen. Ard Righ means high king.

Ring: Symbol of continuity and eternity, more powerful than a necklace.

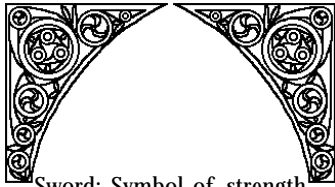
Seasons: Different fae powers are manifest in different seasons, and the equinox days are particularly powerful.

Straw: Something abundant but worthless.

Stupidity: That the humans made no connection between the gifts and their destructive powers should be evident; fae are supposed to be more intelligent, albeit perhaps more careless.



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Sword: Symbol of strength and virility. Used with irony here.

Three piles of straw, three nights: Three was a number of power among the Celts.

Uaine: an ancient name.

Ulster: In fae lore, ruled by Mebh and Ailill, protagonists of *Tain bo Cuailgne*.

Vengeance: A social obligation among all Celts.

honored by his people. But they were wise enough to hide when they saw his face flush to blood red then drain away as water on the shores of the sea. Picking up the discarded javelin, with a mighty roar he sent it flying into the heart of a stone wall. The shattering *crack* deafened many ears for the next few hours.

Later, in the company of his council, Uaine made his plans.

"Good Kiernan, my friend, you who have fought ten dozen battles by my side and lain in my own heart's blood, what say you to this mortal treachery?" asked the Ard Righ.

Kiernan, a doughty aithech warrior of many years, pondered the question. "Vengeance is our right, my lord, but there is this truth, that Conary's wagging tongue brought his doom. The mortal queen was a liar, but there's few among us who can't claim that blame."

Uaine nodded. "Your name I do count among those few, my friend. And what say you, Lady Etain, wise in the lore of Math and his ilk, you who have given me a thousand days and nights of clever counsel?"

Etain, a wise sorceress of the selkies, gave her answer slowly. "Ard Righ, the mortal queen might say something such as this: that Conary had her babe in mind all along, that his was the first treachery, a skilled hand not offered in kindness but in malice." Etain held up a hand at the murmurings of the warriors. "Aye, aye, we know such to be folly. Conary had not a conniv-, er, cruel bone in his body. Nor would he have any harm in mind for the babe, but rather would have brought it to this glorious land of enchantment. So I agree with Kiernan, that Conary was in his own way to blame. But the mortal must be punished for her breaking of an oath. That is beyond any mere lie."

Nodding again, the Ard Righ turned finally to Devin, a weaver and spinner of the pwca. Even now, his eyes gleamed the bright gold of the owl whose feathers he sometimes wore. "And finally, you, friend Devin, whose threads are finer than those of the clouds and sunbeams, and warmer than my own sheep, what is your opinion?" asked Uaine.

"Oh, I agree muchly with the words of yon Daughter of Math and Son of Morigu," the pwca purred. "So I think what remains is giving a name to our vengeance, no? As we pwca say, Ard Righ, feather for feather, and thread for thread. Death is too easy for this mortal queen and her child. What would *really* stick in her beak, I think, is to lose what she has gained. That should be do-able with ease, thanks to the talents of your smiths." He gave a long blink, and with the embers of Brigit's fires still kindling in his hearth, the Ard Righ saw what should be done.

It was with great joy that the Righ and Ban-Righ of

Meath received many lordly gifts from the northern lands of Ulster, where some said lay the finest veins of metal in all of Eire. First came many fine flagons of ale, followed the next day by a lovely mantle for the queen, a fine sword for the king, and a tiny armband of the most exquisite hammered gold for their firstborn son. Even the humble miller, father of the Ban Righ, was not forgotten; there was a new whetstone for his quern. The courtiers from the north spoke with gracious tongues and were much enjoyed by the court of Meath. They stayed three days ere they left for their homes again.

The beautiful bracelet was wrapped around the arm of the boy child the first day of summer by the hands of his mother and father. And to the horror and bewilderment of them both, the glistening band turned at once to straw, a terrible fiber that had a life of its own. For it constricted tighter and tighter until the left arm of the babe withered and fell off. The child was perfectly healthy otherwise, but no person not sound of body can be Righ.

The Righ, his father, a man so besotted by gold, drew his sword the first day of fall. And thereafter, he could never count on his strength in battle, nor amongst his pillows in the evening. For as might be suspected, he eventually put Erlina away, calling for a younger maiden to be his bride. When even two more wives failed to produce children, his council demanded he stand aside, as a man who is maimed in spirit or flesh cannot be Righ. He still had many of his riches, of course, but he was alone and friendless. Who's to say he wasn't all the poorer for it?

The Ban Righ, Erlina, wore her fine mantle the first day of winter. And thereafter, no matter what task of spinning, weaving, or needlework she set her hand to, it fell apart. Likewise, the womb that gave the Righ such a strong firstborn, it too fell into undoing so that thereafter, anything that grew there withered away and perished. But her beauty remained just the same.

And on the first day of spring, the miller plied his new whetstone in his quern, for there was again grain aplenty to grind, and he found himself missing his old trade. All day and night he ground, for the quern worked twice as fast and finely as before. Another dawn came, and another night, and still he ground. Days later, Erlina found him there, a shell of a man, grinding, grinding, grinding, as if he could never stop. He may still be there today, for all we know.

Thus comes the mercy of the fair folk, for as promised, they'd not killed any of those who brought down Conary's doom. But their vengeance for a friend may have been even more terrible to behold.

