

# ***Changeling Cross-Genre Guideline Document***

v1.0

"But you and I must fight, and not surrender  
All the dreams of yesterday we knew;  
The grown-ups better listen and remember  
Storybooks and treasure maps are true."  
-- "Storybooks and Treasure Maps," Steve Eng

## **Introduction**

This document exists to help guide StoryTelling staff of One World by Night (OWbN) member chronicles in using *Changeling: The Dreaming* material in mixed-genre games, or in games which desire to use Changelings as antagonists, uneasy allies, or background flavor. It is non-binding, serving as a suggested guide to such interactions. There are certain canonical "crossover spots" where fae and Changelings interact with other supernaturals, particularly among the Changing Breeds; we'll try to cover all of these, to offer some insight into how to adjudicate such situations.

It's useful for storytellers to have a basic understanding of the Changeling genre before they consider introducing it into their game. That said, many of the relevant books are difficult to acquire, so we'll talk briefly here about the essentials of the genre. We do highly recommend that you take the time to track down as many of the published genre resources as you can to give yourself a solid grounding.

## **Background**

Changeling genre is fundamentally about dreams, wonder, and glamour. The World of Darkness being what it is, those dreams are frequently dark and malevolent, but they can just as easily be uplifting and hopeful. The basic idea behind the Fae is that "Faerie," as it were, is a numinous manifestation of the creative hopes and fears, aspirations and planned depredations, and overall emotive force behind the human race. The Fae themselves, as entities, are anthropomorphic combinations of those impulses. The problem is that this modern, "Autumn," world is one where such creatures can't really exist for very long; the grinding mundanity and "sameness" of large swaths of the World of Darkness tends to disperse the creative force that empowers such creatures, effectively killing them. They still exist in the Autumn World in isolated cases, and where they have managed to latch on to mortal hosts, but by and large, such magical creatures now exist in "the Dreaming," which mortals can visit in their sleep.

That's a lot to unpack, so let's take this in somewhat more manageable bites.

## **The Dreaming**

Faeries inhabit a realm called the Dreaming that is very similar to other "planes of existence," except that it is characterized by the creative and the possible, rather than the spiritual (as with the "middle" Umbra), the abstract and intellectual (as with the Astral, or "High Umbra"), or the afterlife (as with the Shadowlands, or "Low Umbra"). Part of the Dreaming mirrors the Autumn World, and as a result, it is called the Near Dreaming. In the Near Dreaming, places of great creativity, such as artistic communes, active playgrounds, and performance halls are grander and more spectacular than their Autumn World counterparts, generally in ways that reflect the creative acts that take place there. Likewise, naturalistic settings are "closer" to the Dreaming than much of the modern world, along the lines of stories of Faerie Forests. Consequently, in the Near Dreaming, such places are even more stunningly beautiful, accentuated in their natural glory.

Of course, the reverse is true; a crushingly mundane city clerk's office is even more bleak and desolate in the Near Dreaming, void of color and life.

Beyond the Near Dreaming, you find the myriad realms of the Far Dreaming, which are disconnected from the mortal, Autumn World in a geographical sense, yet have their own internal, "Dream-logic." Sleeping mortals often visit this world in their dreams, giving the Dreaming its name, spawning creatures and objects from their dreams. For the most part, such creatures and objects are short-lived, but particularly passionate or recurring dreams can have a lasting impression throughout the Dreaming. The more these things pervade the collective (sub)consciousness of the world, the more "real" they become; here you will find Santa and his elf-staffed workshops, Herne the Hunter leading the Wild Hunt on its midnight ride through the sky, and the mythical Baba Yaga and her chicken-legged hut. Here these things transcend an individual's dreams and become More; they become Mythic.

Beyond the Far Dreaming, you find the Deep Dreaming, which defies mortal logic. You can think of this as the realm of Jung's archetypes, crossed with some amazingly crazy LSD trip. It is in the Deep Dreaming that Arcadia -- the true home of the Fae -- lies. Faerie scholars hypothesize that the Dreaming also connects with the other Umbral realms somewhere there, on the outer edges of the Deep Dreaming.

For more information on the Dreaming, please read *Dreams and Nightmares*, which goes over each of these sub-realms in great detail.

## **Chimera**

In a certain sense, everything that exists in the Dreaming is a chimera, or an entity composed of pure dreamstuff. Dragons, faerie gold, the benches in Santa's workshop, the endless bucolic fields of grain a faerie farmer might tend, and even the Fae themselves are all chimera, brought into existence by the collective dreams of thousands of mortals over the centuries. Some supernaturals -- Willworkers, vampires with Chimerstry, many Fae -- can create and shape chimerical reality, but few creatures can perceive it unless they have some active connection to the Dreaming. That connection can either be inherent, with Changelings and some individuals with faerie blood, or it can be bestowed upon them by a creature of the Dreaming, through what is called Enchantment.

## **Enchantment and the Mists**

If a creature of the Autumn World is imbued with some measure of the raw power of the Dreaming, called Glamour by the fae, then they are able to perceive the Near Dreaming and the chimerical reality that overlays everything in the Autumn World. Some individuals, notably children and the truly insane, are not as tied to their preconceptions, and they can catch snatches of chimerical reality without being Enchanted. Most, however, must be imbued with Glamour to have their eyes opened to these new vistas. An Enchanted mortal could even be taken by a faerie bodily deeper into the Dreaming, where he might become lost and return to earth hundreds of years later, like Rip Van Winkle. Most, however, simply see the overlay of the Near Dreaming on the world, until such time as the dreary drabness of the Autumn World erodes the Glamour they were imbued with.

At this point, the formerly Enchanted creature begins to forget what they saw and experienced, as if they were waking from a Dream. They rationalize the actions they took and hand-wave things they cannot explain until it all becomes a bit fuzzy. The true degree to which they forget their experiences varies based upon how connected they remain to the Dreaming; to a child or a schizophrenic, a dream is nearly as "real" as everything else, but to an aged actuary, such things are merely a fancy that is dismissed. This process of forgetting, as well as the forgetfulness that occurs when a sleeping mortal awakens, is thought by faerie scholars to be an act of the Dreaming itself, designed to protect both the Dreaming and the dreamers. It is referred to as the Mists of

Forgetfulness, or simply The Mists. It is an exceptional creature indeed that is not affected by the Mists, as generally only creatures of the Dreaming can understand and recollect the Dreaming.

## **Banality**

The idea of Banality is loosely defined as that which is inimical to the Dreaming. It is a difficult concept to actually define, as the definition shifted somewhat between White Wolf books, which is a topic we will discuss later. In general, however, you can think of Banality as the mundane, the repetitive, the static, the inelastic, and that which does not aspire for something *more*. Within canon, the gradual rise of Banality in the world is what caused the split between the Autumn World and the Dreaming in the first place, called "the Sundering," as they were once one realm with no real divide between the chimerical and the non-chimerical. As the two worlds drifted further apart, the self-aware chimerical creatures (that is, the Fae) either retreated deep into the Dreaming to Arcadia or found new ways to survive in a world that increasingly didn't have room for Dreams. The paths to Arcadia eventually closed off during the Black Death: a time the Fae called "the Shattering," during which most of the ruling Sidhe fled this world completely. The Fae who didn't retreat to Arcadia created what is known as the Changeling Way in order to survive.

## **Changelings**

In the Mythic World, before the Sundering, mortals and Fae interbred, and those bloodlines persisted, even after the worlds diverged. In order to survive in the longer term without retreating into the deepest recesses of the Dreaming, some Fae began to merge with mortals with strong faerie blood, creating hybrid entities called Changelings. These Changelings were effectively a single entity with a permanent connection to the Dreaming, whose mortal roots provided a shield against the ravages of Banality that would otherwise shred the Fae who inhabited them. As these individuals aged, they would generally become world-weary, and the Fae "soul" would become dormant, such that the mortal half which remained would Forget what they truly were. When they ultimately died, the "fae soul" would find another host to merge with, repeating the cycle over and over again, though as time progressed and the world became more and more Banal, fewer Changelings awoke to their true nature (or, in fae parlance, "Chrysalized"), remaining merely mortal.

## **Kinain**

There are those whose faerie blood is strong enough that they are imbued with the power of the Dreaming without ever actually merging with a faerie soul in the Changeling Way. Such men and women are called "kinain," and they are treasured by Changelings for their ability to walk both worlds naturally, without suffering the ravages of Banality in the same way, yet still maintaining their connection with the Dreaming and with their Changeling brethren.

## **The Seelie and Unseelie Courts**

Most people have heard of the two great Courts of the Fae, though many believe that "Seelie" equates to "good" and "Unseelie" equates to "evil." This is a misconception; if anything, the better analogy would be to the other axis of *Dungeons and Dragons* morality, where the Seelie are "lawful" and the Unseelie are "chaotic." It is just as reasonable for a Seelie knight to be a tyrant with no compassion as it is for an Unseelie lady to lead a ragtag band of freedom fighters. Moreover, all Fae (and Changelings) have both Seelie and Unseelie sides, which they call Legacies - poles between which they alternate depending upon how their story develops. As a consequence, today's stern but fair baron could be tomorrow's devil-may-care agent provocateur.

When the Sidhe returned from Arcadia in 1969, the Seelie Court acquired an overwhelming hold over the Courts of Changeling-kind and have held it in the decades since. Because control of the

Courts of the Fae had traditionally cycled with the seasons, this political stranglehold antagonized the already passionate and revolutionary Unseelie, polarizing a number of them to form the so-called Shadow Court, which seeks to violently overthrow the Seelie lock on the Courts of Faerie. Over the past several decades, the vicious actions of the Shadow Court and the propaganda of the Seelie have firmly cast them in the role of "bogey men" throughout most of Changeling society.

Some say that the unending control of the Seelie has, in fact, hastened the coming of Fimbulwinter....

### **Fimbulwinter**

With the continuing rise of Banality, the Near Dreaming has eroded, and the truly fantastic creatures of myth have retreated deeper and deeper into the Dreaming. Most faeries experience this growing Banality as a chill, deep in their bones. Nearly every fae -- apart from those most solidly in the grips of their Unseelie Legacy -- dreads the coming of the Endless Winter (or Fimbulwinter), which heralds their personal version of the Apocalypse, where the Dreaming might finally sever from the Autumn World completely and all the mortals of the world are finally bereft of the ability to Dream. Thus, nearly every Changeling fosters dreams and creativity in some way or another, to stave off the coming of Fimbulwinter. The Apollo moon landing and the Summer of Love provided a temporary respite, called the Resurgence, when the Sidhe, who had ruled the fae before the Shattering, returned in force, but the years since have seen a long, slow slide back toward a desolate wasteland of Winter.

### **Conclusions**

The preceding sections gives a glimpse into some of the salient details of Changeling genre, though, frankly, the published books cover the material far more comprehensively. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for a StoryTeller to understand this material in as much detail as possible before introducing Changelings into their game.

## **Canonical Changeling Genre Overlap Discussion**

The following sections presume that you have read the cross-genre discussions in *Laws of the Night, Revised* (pp. 265-6) and *Dark Epics* (p. 96). We highly recommend you read over these existing discussions before walking through the rest of this document.

### **The Baba Yaga Problem**

Before we dive into specific areas of overlap between different genres, it is worthwhile to touch upon the problem of Baba Yaga. As most fans of White Wolf know, Baba Yaga was actually an elder Nosferatu who held most of Russia in her clutches for a decade behind the so-called Shadow Curtain before she was slain in 2000 by a Nictuku. As a result of this, when most Storytellers think about Baba Yaga, they think about a Russian Nosferatu with elder thaumaturgy who met her end in the run-up to Gehenna.

...but when dealing with Changeling, this "reality" may not be so clear-cut.

You see, Fae are dreams who draw their power from the stories and beliefs of humanity. Humanity as a whole is ignorant that Baba Yaga was a Nosferatu elder who was asleep for centuries before awakening in 1990. To most people, Baba Yaga is an ancient, powerful, capricious Slavic witch who speeds through the night skies on her mortar, stealing children and living in a hut that stalks through the forest on chicken legs. ...and in the Dreaming, that kind of shared belief has a tangible effect, manifesting as a powerful chimera.

As a result, as far as Changelings are concerned, Baba Yaga *is* the wise, often-evil crone of Slavic myth, and they're right. When traveling through the Dreaming, PCs might very well encounter this being, and in the Dreaming, her power is just as vast as the methuselah Nosferatu's. The difference is that she is likely to be far more akin to the stories of Baba Yaga than her "actual" manifestation in the World of Darkness.

This same logic extends to everything else in the World of Darkness. The Dreaming has vampires, though they are of the type which will be repelled by church bells, crosses, and running water, unable to enter a house uninvited and unable to pass by a spill of mustard seeds without counting each seed. The Dreaming also has werewolves, but those werewolves are probably mostly ravening, bestial half-men who change only during the full moon. These chimerical creatures can also vary wildly within their sub-type; for example, Chimerical ghosts also exist in the Dreaming, ranging in tone and powers from the creepy girl in *The Ring* to Caspar the Friendly Ghost.

Fundamentally, the Dreaming is all about infinite possibility and unlimited story. Just because some famous supernatural entity was "actually" a hedge mage who died in 1784 doesn't mean that they aren't *also* running around in the Dreaming today, dueling French nobility.

### **Banality and Changeling Thematics**

As we mentioned earlier, Banality as a concept was somewhat ill-defined by White Wolf across the various Changeling books. It is portrayed in roughly five broad categories: (1) disbelief in faeries and magical effects or, more generally, possibility; (2) the mundane and boring; (3) that which is static and unchanging; (4) the antithesis of a faerie's individual dream; (5) certain physical manifestations, such as cold iron and the Fomorians of legend. Breaking this down into component parts in an effort to understand what Banality actually *means* would be complex enough to require its own packet. Instead, it is perhaps more useful to give StoryTellers a few guidelines for if a given situation would be considered Banal by a Changeling. Whenever you are running a scene which involves a Changeling, ask yourself the following questions:

- 1) From a purely out-of-character perspective, is this scene part of a good story? Narrative is tremendously important to the Fae, as they are closely tied to folkloric origins. (Aside: This is one of the major reasons why *Changeling: the Dreaming* has such ardent fans, because the genre focuses so solidly on developing good story.)
- 2) Does the story that you have constructed match how the characters are interacting? That is, do the Changelings *perceive* this as being part of a good story? (Aside: This raises some fairly odd questions concerning a Changeling's ability to break the Fourth Wall, but that, too, is a topic for an essay in and of itself.)
- 3) Is the story that is being told congruent with the stories of the *individual Fae* involved in the scene? That is to say, a dour, honor-bound Troll would likely not mesh well with a group of Munchausen who had gathered to tell outrageous lies to each other, though a free-wheeling Eshu storyteller most certainly would.
- 4) Is it difficult for the non-Changeling characters in the scene to easily classify and categorize their interactions with the Fae? Do they have to break old modes of thought in order to understand the Changelings? The only time when this question can be safely ignored is when the non-Changelings are thinking in a particularly folkloric fashion, understanding the Changelings in terms of stories and narrative, rather than mechanics, Kiths, and rules.
- 5) Are the non-Changeling characters in the scene the sort of people to seek dynamic, creative solutions to obstacles that are thrown in their path, as opposed to preexisting plans which are proven to work? In answering this question, think about the differences between young

children playing games of make-believe on the playground and actuaries attempting to determine insurance premiums using standard formulae. This goes to the heart of the question of if the other characters are themselves Banal, though individual examples of those characters expressing disbelief ("Whoa! I can't believe that just happened, Fred!") might cause localized spikes in the Banality of an area.

The more "No..." or "Maybe not..." answers you get, the more Banal the scene, and the more likely a Changeling is going to just try to leave as soon as possible. The more "Yes!" or "Totally!" answers you get, the more Glamour-filled the scene is, and the more likely a Changeling is to hang around and want to continue to engage with the plot. If this sounds more and more like you should be treating the Changeling(s) as a player character that you need to constantly please with fun plot, you have the right idea!

### **Prodigals as Dreamers**

One of the primary ways in which Changelings can harvest Glamour is by Musing others -- fostering the creativity of individuals with whom they have made personal connections. This is left fairly nebulous in the books, but for the most part, it is a function of injecting wonder and a creative spark into the life of that person, allowing them to shake off the Banal and engage in more significant creative or emotionally-charged actions. For obvious reasons, these Dreamers are generally non-supernatural mortals, but it's theoretically possible for supernatural creatures to be filled with Glamour which a Changeling could use. It is, however, difficult.

Faerie scholars refer to other supernaturals as Prodigals, because they believe that every other supernatural is in actuality a Fae who has forgotten that they are, in fact, a manifest Dream. With the various beliefs in reincarnation throughout the World of Darkness, there are many who would agree with them. It does, however, leave StoryTellers in an interesting bind. Changelings, you see, are incapable of using other Changelings as Dreamers; such Glamour generally is used by the Faerie soul to refill its own reserves. Prodigals, however, do not use Glamour in the same way, and it can be reasonably argued that such creative power is simply dispersed into the world almost identically to normal mortals. It can also be argued, however, that that magical power finds its way into other forms of power -- Blood, Gnosis, Quintessence -- rather than Glamour. This isn't answered definitively in the books, however.

Thus, if you have a plot where you want to foster some sort of interaction with Changelings, it can be to your advantage to use one of your more creative and passionate PCs as a Dreamer. If, however, you want to discourage such interaction, it's also perfectly acceptable to say that the Fae are not able to use other supernaturals as Dreamers in your game. Regardless, the more Banal the PC (see above), the less likely they would be to become a Dreamer.

### **The Mists in Play**

One of the major questions STs need to address in Changeling genre is what Enchanted PCs recall upon losing their Enchantment. In general, *The Shining Host* has a good set of guidelines, based on the character's Banality, and it should be noted that only Changelings themselves are completely immune to the effects of the Mists (save, at ST discretion, Malkavians, for which see the discussion below, under "Vampire Crossovers"); even mortals with faerie blood are affected by the Mists.

...but what about unenchanted characters that an Enchanted character talks to? Is it the information that they speak about covered by the Mists, or is it merely the *experience* while Enchanted that fades into a dreamlike memory? What about Changelings who speak about Chimerical matters to someone of the Autumn World?

The short form is that the ST's answers to these questions should depend on the story. Two of the major reasons that Faerie Lore exists in the world are the ramblings of the Enchanted and ill-advised talk by Changelings, and these are the primary vectors whereby information about the Dreaming and the Fae is learned by those who would hunt them down and destroy them. ...but as with many other things in Changeling genre, the answer for any given instance should depend almost entirely upon what is dramatically appropriate. There are secrets of the Fae which we believe are jealously guarded with the full power of the Dreaming (i.e., the structure of the Shadow Court, the nature of the Denizens of the Dreaming), and it is probable that we will eventually be proposing such Lore as off-limits for non-Changelings as a result. In the meanwhile, the overarching answer should be the same as the answer to the question, "What makes the story better?"

Two things deserve special mention, however. The first is that the unenchanted will likely perceive the Enchanted character's ramblings and actions in a very similar light as heavy hallucinogen use or the behavior of a severe schizophrenic. The Enchanted talk to and about things that clearly aren't there, swing wildly at shadows and dreams, and speak in seemingly disconnected ways about things that make no sense; even if the Mists don't actually cover the information that they convey, anyone listening to them should be extraordinarily skeptical. Secondly, as someone's personal Banality increases, so do their memories of the Dreaming fade into disbelief. Think of Susan's dismissal of Narnia as "childhood games," and realize that, in many ways, the subjective experience of losing Enchantment is essentially identical to the way in which dreams fade into nothingness upon waking.

### **Prodigals and Oaths**

Even the least-informed scholars of the Fae understand the importance of Oaths. While Changelings are technically able to break Oaths -- many faerie tales center around the ramifications of a broken Oath, after all -- they tend to avoid swearing Oaths whenever they can. The real question that STs need to answer is how fully-bound a non-Changeling is when they swear an oath to the Fae. Canonically, the answer is generally, "Such oaths are not mystically binding," though the ST should always use the rule of thumb, "What would make this story better?"

The social implications of a broken oath are dire, of course. The Fae consider oathbreakers to be the lowest of the low, and this perception is common throughout all strata of Fae society: Seelie and Unseelie, commoner and noble, chimera and Changeling. Mystical implications, however, are entirely at the discretion of the ST in question, erring on the side of having no ramifications at all. Enchanted violators might be slightly more likely to be affected, but in general, the Autumn World's ambient Banality protects non-Fae from any magical consequences of ill-advised oath-taking.

### **Vampire Crossovers**

Vampire-Changeling crossover is the most common genre-boundary jump by dint of the overall popularity of Vampire genre. Paradoxically, Vampires are perhaps the least hospitable to Changelings. They are old, static, and set in their ways; as a consequence, they are the most Banal of the other supernaturals by far, barring only certain members of the Technocracy; as a result, Changelings are liable to give licks a particularly wide berth. That said, there are several points that deserve particular commentary.

#### *Malkavians and Madness*

Per p. 96 of *Dark Epics*, the Clan of the Moon is not affected by the Mists, though this is an interpretation that STs should use with great caution. The Mists are the foremost defense that the Fae have against those that would do them harm, meaning that the Right of Ignorance -- the part of their codified laws which most directly parallels the Masquerade -- largely enforces itself.

If, however, Fae-kind discovered that there was an entire clan of vampires capable of ignoring the Mists, they would band together to fight these banal creatures more rapidly and thoroughly than nearly any other foe. It is quite probable that this particular snippet of cross-genre lore had its roots in the first edition Malkavians, who were much more explicitly allied with the Fae (who had yet to be fully fleshed-out at that time), going so far as to have a discipline which ostensibly allowed them to travel to Arcadia. Needless to say, we strongly discourage this as well; if Changelings are incapable of going to Arcadia, Malkavians should *definitely* be unable to travel there. Given that Changelings do frequent sanitariums and other haunts of the insane (e.g. Nikos of the North and his Tragos, as described in *Kithbook: Satyr*), cross-genre plotlines can certainly be justified with Malkavians, however.

### *Tremere and Thaumaturgy*

Despite the Code of Tremere ("...nor will I disturb the faeries in any way that should cause them to take their vengeance on the House and Clan," p. 38, *Clanbook: Tremere, Revised*), blood sorcerers are frequently called upon for their expertise on other supernaturals, including the Fae. It is highly recommended that Faerie Wards effectively radiate great Banality, driving away nearly all chimera and most Changelings. Should a Tremere somehow ward an area or item of significant Glamour (such as a Freehold or Treasure), it is probably best for both the ward and the ambient Glamour mutually drain each others' powers away, leaving a Freehold greatly drained or a Treasure barely more than a mundane object. Such Glamour can, of course, be brought back, but it should be a mighty task for the interested Changelings. Fae and Tremere often both circulate in occult circles, so interactions, though avoided by Changelings, are certainly not unknown.

### *Ravnos and Chimerstry*

There are frequent confusions about how Chimerstry works on Changelings, so it is worth discussing here, although Ravnos themselves are not particularly likely to deal with the Fae. It is useful to think of Chimerstry in terms of the Hindu concept of *Maya*, which White Wolf used in constructing the Path of Paradox (see *Clanbook: Ravnos, Revised*, p. 57); more explicitly, the application of Chimerstry is the kindred impressing her will upon the *Maya* (or illusion) of the world, and this particular perspective has a very deep resonance with the Dreaming. Consequently, constructs of Chimerstry always have a distinct and parallel chimerical manifestation in the Dreaming; these constructs are not chimera in the strictest sense of the word, since the collective dreams of the world are ephemeral and can be willfully ignored by Changelings (although the Changelings then suffer from temporary Banality), whereas the chimerical analogs of Chimerstry constructs *cannot* be ignored at all if the victim fails to see their tricks as the illusions that they are (LotNR, p. 266). From a functional perspective, "believed" constructs of Chimerstry will always do chimerical damage to Changelings, potentially causing them to fall to chimerical death and temporarily Forget themselves, generally falling into something like a coma for a while before awakening as a mere Mist-befuddled mortal host. That is to say, if a Changeling takes sufficient damage from an application of Chimerstry (a trivial endeavor for an intelligent user of the discipline), they will lose all their supernatural powers until such time as they can be reawoken to the Glamour of the world by great creativity or with the help of their fellows. Thankfully for the Fae, this isn't really well-understood by any vampire except perhaps some of the wisest elder Ravnos, who mostly died in the Week of Nightmares. We highly recommend that anyone who learns this knowledge gradually lose it again as the Mists work their magic.

### *Toreador and Creativity*

Players often argue that the Toreador, as great artists, are far more in-tune, creatively, than vast majority of kindred; as such, the logic goes, Toreador should be a great deal less Banal than the general mass of kindred society. We suggest those individuals re-read pp. 45-46 of *Clanbook: Toreador, Revised*, which discusses an elder Toreador's perspective on creativity, and pp. 51-



52, which discusses Toreador "burnout." Consequently, while there are certainly truly creative Toreador, particularly among the *Artistes*, the Banal nature of the vampiric condition is simply not conducive to the dynamism that the Fae crave. We suggest STs refer to the five questions we posed above regarding Banality for further inspiration.

### *Gangrel and Second Sight*

The OWbN Gangrel packet includes the Dark Ages Merit "Second Sight," which is originally from *Wolves of the Sea* (p. 75). If StoryTellers allow this Merit, we recommend that it be treated for all intents and purposes like the Fae Gift "An-da-shealladh" (*The Shining Host Players Guide*, pp. 154-155), at least as far as the Dreaming is concerned. Likewise, we do not recommend that this make one immune to the Mists or Arts such as Chicanery or Legerdemain, for the same reasons outlined in the Malkavian section, above. Rather, experiences with the Fae should tend to be very like hypnopompic hallucinations: vivid and quick to blur into hazy memories. The Mists were weaker and significantly different in tone during the Dark Ages, after all. Many things changed with the Shattering.

### *Sluagh, Nosferatu, and Sewers*

As *Kithbook: Sluagh* details, the Sluagh as a whole are quite interested in natural decay, discarded things, and dark places. Many STs make the mistake of thinking that this is one and the same with the areas that Nosferatu frequent, though there are distinct differences. Sluagh are likely to gravitate to old Victorian houses, abandoned factories, and cobwebbed attics and basements. Nosferatu, however, prefer places that never see the light of day and are, almost universally, filled with filth. There is certainly overlap between the two zones of interest, but it is nowhere nearly as extensive as most people think at first blush. That said, Nosferatu and Sluagh are both obsessed with hidden knowledge and secrets, and as such, their somewhat similar geographical distribution and very similar areas of interest sometimes bring them into contact with one another; please see p. 40 of *Kithbook: Sluagh* for an excellent discussion of this topic.

### *Kiasyd and Mytherceria*

The Weirdlings, by and large, should be studious loremasters only interested in vampiric politics in as much as it gives them sufficient privacy to continue their researches. However, due to their rarity, each individual Kiasyd is a unique story unto themselves, though they are far more likely than any other kindred to have a truthful understanding of the Dreaming and the Fae. Much of this understanding is due to Mytherceria, which has sufficient explicit overlap with Changeling genre and is worth going over in some detail.

*Fae Sight* (second Basic) should give the Kiasyd the ability to perceive the Near Dreaming and chimerical reality as if they are Enchanted, though it does not give the Weirdlings the ability to otherwise interact with chimerical reality; it does, however, grant them the ability to use Awareness (or Faerie Lore) in the same fashion that Changelings can use the Kenning ability, to perceive Glamour and the lingering auras of fae magic, enchantment, and cantrips. We further recommend that Changelings and the Enchanted be immune to the effects of *Changelin Ward* (second Intermediate) and *Riddle Phantastique* (Advanced), or at least have an additional defensive retest; the Fae, after all, are already aware of the alternate realities the Kiasyd perceive through this Discipline. Lastly, we recommend that *The Grandest Trick* (Ascendant) be run as if the Kiasyd were fully and properly Enchanted for the duration of the power's use.

## **Changing Breeds Crossovers**

Changelings and the Changing Breeds are perhaps the most likely to get along with each other of the various supernaturals in the World of Darkness. Changelings are creatures of essential,

unfettered creativity, and, as such, they are very much of the Wyld - the only member of the Triat that is not insane. This being the World of Darkness, of course, everyone has become insular, fighting their particular nemeses, and this has bred distrust. Thus, Changelings generally see Shifters as remarkably easy to enrage and terrible in their violence, while the Changing Breeds see the Fae as flighty and capricious.

### *The Nature of Fomori and Fomorians*

It is useful to make a distinction here between the "fomori" of Werewolf and the "Fomorians" of Changeling. The former are half-breed creatures of the Wyrms formed through the possession of a mortal host by a Bane spirit. The latter are the legendary nemeses of the Tuatha de Dannan, supposedly defeated in the Time of Legend during the The War of Trees, or "Tessarakonta". Supposedly, there is some sort of connection between the two, though it is patently unclear what that may be, given that fomori are tangible creatures that garou fight on a regular basis, and the Fomorians are very much the "boogie men" of the Changeling world, supposedly imprisoned deep within the Dreaming. The three courts of the Fomorians certainly seem to resonate with aspects of the Wyrms, however. The Red Court are peerless warriors with an insatiable need for conflict; the White Court are masters of lies and deception; the Green Court are insane Cthuloid beings who alone volunteered for their ultimate imprisonment. Regardless, the confusion is only accentuated because Changelings sometimes refer to their ancient foes as "fomori." For more information, we recommend reading *Dreams and Nightmares*.

### *The Fianna*

It is impossible to entirely separate the Fianna and the Fae, tied so closely as they both are to Irish myth and legend, though as the *Tribebook: Fianna* discusses, many Fianna have never knowingly laid eyes upon a Changeling, with the notable exception of the smallest of their camps, the Tuatha de Fionn. To a degree, however, much of what the *Tribebook* discusses leads to some confusing conclusions. For example, the Hill of Tara supposedly is the Autumn World analog of both "Silver Tara," the Fianna Caern and seat of the Fianna High King, and "High Tara," the Dreaming Freehold and seat of power of the Daoine Sidhe (p. 57), yet the only fae of particular note who resides at Silver Tara is a troll bodyguard to Bron, the Fianna Ard Righ, named Niall of the Hundred. Likewise, the Sidhe of House Fiona, who claim blood kinship with the Fianna, are supposedly quite inclined to spend holidays -- particularly Imbolc -- with the Fianna, sometimes enchanting them for the duration (see *Noblesse Oblige: The Book of Houses* and the *Werewolf Storyteller's Handbook*).

### *The Black Spiral Dancers*

Just as the Fianna claim blood ties with Irish fae, the Black Spiral Dancers claim blood ties with Scottish fae, and with their gradual degeneracy, their associations have gravitated more and more toward the Unseelie, even going so far as to have tentative affiliations with the Shadow Court. Canonically, High Lord Li-Tili of House Balor has Black Spiral Dancer bodyguards, and some of the darker thallain are known to have regular contact with those who dance the spiral. Remember, however, that the Shadow Court is primarily a modern, extremist political faction within the Unseelie, and the affiliations between the two groups are tentative, born of both groups' ready adaptability and darker impulses. It would also be very unusual for a Black Spiral Dancer to be associating with one of the more Seelie fae, which cannot be said quite as readily for the Fianna and the Unseelie.

### *Garou Gifts and the Fae*

There are two Gifts that deserve some discussion: Faerie Kin, a Fianna Gift that summons nearby fae to assist them, and Unseelie Kin, a Black Spiral Dancer Gift that summons nearby Unseelie fae to assist them. These gifts call upon ancient pacts established between the spirits and the Tuatha

de Dannan themselves, such that the Dreaming itself is obliged to answer in some fashion. Also, given that these Gifts would be relatively useless if they could only call the relatively rare fae that practice the Changeling Way, invoking such a Gift often may call to a purely chimerical entity in the associated Near or Far Dreaming, which is given physical form by the garou's Gnosis in much the same way that a Changeling might call upon the Wyrd to break down the boundaries between the Autumn World and the Dreaming. The actions of such entities would be covered by the Mists, so once the chimera is dispatched or retreats back to the Dreaming, those left behind in the Autumn World are likely to be confused. When such a Gift is activated, if an appropriate Changeling is nearby, it is recommended that they feel Oathbound in some fashion to respond to the call, and if they do, they should be able to call upon the Wyrd for free for the scene. The nature of the summoned chimera will vary with the nature of the area where it is summoned, and StoryTellers should try to describe a type of faerie creature most appropriate to the surroundings.

### *Fera and the Fae*

Now nearly extinct, the Ceilican yet survive by having gone underground, hiding within other Tribes or under the protection of the fae. Their ancestors suffered at the hands of both the witch-hunters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the various capricious faerie lords they served leading up to the Shattering. Many have still kept their ties to the fae, even during the Interregnum, largely due to their drive to inspire humanity to embrace their passions which is so congruent with the Changeling drive to Muse Dreamers. Of all the fera, the Ceilican have the most reason to have significant contact with the Fae, but they also have every reason to be wary of their former lords and allies, eschewing their company and keeping their secrets in favor of their own personal pursuits.

Munchmausen, meanwhile, are both crazed and deeply enamored of tall tales. Consequently, while any given Munchmausen may not have ever actually been in the company of a Changeling, there are doubtless several who have been fast companions with the fae. To outward appearances, however, few could tell the difference, especially since Munchmausen love to travel the Umbra and are quite likely to have spent time in the Arcadian Gateway (see below). Pooka and Eshu in particular are likely to gravitate to these Ratkin.

### **Wraith Crossovers**

In general, the dead do not have much interaction with the fae, apart from the Sluagh, who may perceive them at will. Typically, the interactions that Sluagh have with wraiths are very similar to those that mortal mediums have with the dead, offering assistance in the Skinlands for otherwise occluded knowledge. As with all things, however, the Sluagh are very tight-lipped about their interactions with the deceased, and what alliances they have with various wraithly organizations are on an individual basis, rather than shared with their entire kith.

### **Mage Crossovers**

While Mages are just as likely to have knowledge of the Fae as other supernaturals, the Ascension War rarely leaves time for deep researches into the Dreaming, or "Maya" as many refer to it. Those mages who do delve deeply sometimes find themselves drawn bodily into the Dreaming like Rip Van Winkle or Thomas the Rhymer, only to emerge decades or centuries later. There is no known way to completely inure yourself to the Mists, though ample applications of Mind, Spirit, and Prime can stave off the effects for a while, often at the cost of your sanity.

There are several groups that do still research the Fae with some frequency, including an active subset of the Dreamspeakers -- the only Tradition to have any real collective success at traveling into the Dreaming itself -- some Verbenas and Cultists of Ecstasy, and the now largely defunct Order of Hermes House Merinita, which was adopted into House Ex Miscellanea in the 1300s. In

general, however, mages warn their apprentices away from the Fair Folk with good reason.

## **Infernal Crossovers**

This is a topic better addressed by the Infernalism Packet, but the Fae are no stranger to the war between Heaven and Hell. The ballad of Tam Lin speaks of how the faeries would tithe one of their own to Hell every seven years, though the specifics of how this might play out aren't that likely to come up in a non-Changeling game. Functionally, however, this serves to accentuate how the Fae are on a completely different axis of morality from the Good vs. Evil dichotomy of Heaven and Hell, as likely to associate with either, depending on their individual predispositions. Changelings should be glorious, passionate, beautiful, and terrible; they should never be boring, and whatever one might say about Hell, it's not boring.

## **Deals With the Fae**

With infernalism explicitly involving coordinator approval, many players turn to other genres to see what edges those supernaturals might offer over their rivals. This has resulted, somewhat understandably, in some characters trying to make bargains with Faerie. After all, this is a staple theme of many faerie tales! Why would it not make sense in game?

## **What Changelings Want**

Changelings have fundamentally very diverse desires; they are, after all, mortals who have been fused with supernatural creatures of passion, drama, and story. As a result, what a Changeling might ask for in exchange for their services varies wildly from individual to individual, just as with mortals. That said, there are a few key points you should remember in these events:

- 1) Changelings will rarely, if ever, willingly deal with Banal creatures, such as vampires. If they are pursued by such, they are as often as not likely to ask exorbitant prices for their services.
- 2) Most Changelings will want to foster creativity and dreams in exchange for their services, either on the small scale (e.g., by filling a small child with wonder) or on a larger scale (e.g., by funding and popularizing a new theater district). In this Autumn World, even the most selfish of Changelings will be tempted to foster Glamour, though darker Glamour inspired by widespread terror and dark fear is often acceptable as well.
- 3) Politics often enter the equation, with the Seelie nobility encouraging the oppression of the Unseelie and the Unseelie and oppressed commoners frequently pushing against the policies and powers of the Seelie. For this reason, you should try to determine your local court structure before entering the scene.
- 4) Objects which are the focus of Glamour will sometimes become batteries of power akin to Mage's *tass*; such objects are called, in Fae parlance, *dross*. Examples might include a childhood doll, a picture of a loved one, a mass-murder's chosen knife, a tortured artist's sketch, or a suicide note. While Changelings will frequently notice such things due to their ambient power, very few others will. Regardless, such things are fairly highly valued.
- 5) Objects of non-Banal magical power, such as an enchanted wand which trails stardust or the reliquary of a demon, are also be attractive, particularly if such objects can be later used to pursue one of the other goals detailed here. Note that most truly magical items are not Banal, apart from objects warded against the fae and technomantic foci.
- 6) Lastly, Changelings rarely have the same sway within the mortal world that other supernaturals -- particularly vampires -- do. Thus, sums of money, grants of land (particularly to bucolic

pastureland or wild forest), and simple luxuries can also be attractive, especially to otherwise destitute fae, such as commoners.

### **What Changelings Can Offer**

Traditionally, in folklore, the Fair Folk offered an impressive range of magics, generally only limited by the imagination of the tale-teller. In reality, however, Changelings don't have quite the same boundless level of power that they used to. Their magics dissipate as ambient Banality eats away at their structure, and their sacred places are few, far between, and jealously guarded. Consequently, in practice, their sides of various bargains tend to either melt away with time or are intangible. In the latter case, it's worth mentioning that there are few creatures in the world better able to offer inspiration for creative tasks than the Fae; they are, after all, anthropomorphic manifestations of the creative impulse. Think of them, in this fashion, as modern-world Muses, able to awaken dormant passions and inventive thought patterns in even the most staid and static of creatures. While this should rarely have a mechanical impact on the characters involved, it should have a marked impact in their personality and passions.

Of course, you are welcome to make Faerie Oaths binding on others, even if those who swear them have no inherent Glamour (see above), but most faerie magics will not last long in this autumn world without the careful tending of a Changeling, and item cards and enchantments crafted by the fae may be rarely honored by StoryTelling staff outside of the originating chronicle.

All that having been said, there are few supernaturals as skilled in illusion and dreams as the Fae, and Changelings can use these skills to great effect in various types of service, ranging from assassination to subtle influence over another.

### **The Complication of Oaths**

Despite what the faerie tales say, it is possible for a Changeling to break a sworn oath, but it is a very difficult for them, and it has many ramifications: social, political, supernatural, and physical. As a result, some Changelings will be able to break sworn oaths, but they will do so only under the most dire of circumstances: if they are in mortal peril, if they must break an oath to rescue their true love, or if they are acting in great rage or hubris. For this reason, fae will not swear an oath without very careful consideration, and even then, demanding an oath on their part indicates a deep distrust which they generally don't take kindly to. Also, despite tales to the contrary, oaths are typically binding to the spirit of what is sworn, rather than the precise wording, unless a Changeling is particularly stupid. For some sample oaths, please refer to the *Shining Host* and the *Shining Host Player's Guide*, which details quite a few of the more common oaths.

## **Cosmological Discussions**

### **Inanimae vs. Spirits**

One of the first things that people ask about when they start reading about the Inanimae is, "What is the difference between the Inanimae and Spirits from the Changing Breeds perspective?" The answer is, however, fairly simple: Inanimae are entities self-awakened into the Dreaming, whereas Spirits are generally awakened by an outside force into the Umbra. As a result, while the Spirits of the Changing Breeds are affected by the Pact and all the various laws of the Incarnae, Inanimae are not. Moreover, Inanimae are, fundamentally dreams, albeit originally dreams of objects, rather than people. That is to say, while a stone can have a spirit within it which can be awakened, certain stones, particularly the more impressive ones, have already dreamed an avatar for themselves and projected that avatar into the Dreaming.

What this means, in logistical terms, is that if someone attempts to awaken the spirit of an object

which is already an Anchor for an Inanimae, the attempt will fail, and the Inanimae will become pretty much immediately aware of what is happening with its Anchor. How the Inanimae reacts is highly dependent upon how people are treating its Anchor and the Inanimae's personality, though it is likely to be somewhat hostile.

This does tend to prompt the question, "What *is* the difference between the Dreaming and the Umbra?" The answer, however, is exceedingly complex and could be the focus of multiple chronicles in its own right. We recommend reading the revised *Book of Madness* and the two *Umbra* sourcebooks for inspiration on this topic.

### **Boundaries Between the Dreaming and Other Realms**

Two Umbral regions exist which are clearly associated with the Dreaming, both described in the *Umbra* sourcebooks. Neither, however, is technically *part* of the Dreaming.

The first of these is the so-called Arcadian Gateway, which was, at one time, theoretically, one of the gateways to the legendary home of the Fae. The various Seelie and Unseelie "faeries" in this Realm have been locked in conflict for so long that they do not realize that any actual gateway that might have once existed to either Arcadia or to the Dreaming at large has long since ceased to function, likely with the onset of the Shattering. There are enough parallels with Changeling and Dreaming "truths" that PCs might learn Faerie Lore from their trips here, but it would be difficult to generalize their experiences to reality outside the Umbra.

The second region, the so-called Dream Zone, would at first blush seem to be part of the Dreaming, as garou can use the Dream Zone as a path into the Umbra while they sleep. The very act of projecting their consciousness into the Umbra, however, removes them from the Dreaming (where *all* dreamers visit while they sleep) to the Dream Zone, which is analogous but not identical to the home of the Fae, and from there, they may travel elsewhere in the Umbra. A rumored connection to the Dreaming exists beyond a range of impassable mountains deep in the Dream Zone, but no one has ever successfully navigated this path and returned to tell the tale.

The Dreaming itself is seemingly unique in that it is the only alternate plane to which only the "native" supernaturals have reliable, easy access. Certain Dreamspeakers who have specialized in the Mind and Spirit Spheres can navigate their way into and through the "Maya," but the journey is very perilous, even for them. Only Changelings, through the use of Trods, may make this journey without significant difficulty, and even then, only those who specialize in the Art of Dreamcraft may do so with any expectation of safety.

If paths exist between the Dreaming and other parts of the Umbra, they connect only in the Deep Dreaming, far beyond the reach of the casual traveler. Various sourcebooks (*Dreams and Nightmares*, *Kithbook: Nocker*, etc.) hint at connections with the Astral, the Deadlands, and, of course, Arcadia. As with all such rumored or theorized paths, none have followed them to their ultimate destinations and successfully returned to tell the tale in its fullness. Those that have found their way back, in the case of the Sidhe and Arcadian commoners who returned with the Resurgence from Arcadia, have hazy memories at best of the journey.

### **Other Supernaturals in the Dreaming**

As mentioned above, no supernaturals other than Changelings have any significant facility to visit the Dreaming, which means that journeys into the Dreaming are almost invariably led by a Changeling guide. By and large, supernatural powers and frailties operate as expected, so long as their user is Enchanted in some fashion, which is a prerequisite to entering the Dreaming. As with any planar travel, however, the "rules of the game," as it were, shift radically based on the locale and the individual, operating on "dream logic."

Woe to anyone who is abandoned by their guide to the endless chaos of the Dreaming, however. They are likely to wander for centuries, and if they emerge again into the Autumn World, it will be as a completely dreamstruck nutcase, at a completely different time in the far-flung future (or, perhaps, past), or in some similarly indelibly marked fashion. Any way you slice it, it is likely the end of the character's story in the chronicle.

Telling the story of a trip into the Dreaming is not something to be embarked on lightly, particularly outside of a Changeling chronicle. At the least, one should carefully read *Dreams and Nightmares* and be very familiar with traditional faerie tales and how dreams "work." Even Changeling chronicles should only occasionally veer into the Far or Deep Dreaming, focusing on the interaction of the Near Dreaming and the Autumn World. Thus, we strongly discourage these sorts of trips for non-fae.

### **Fae in Other Planes**

Changelings rarely should have access to other planes of existence, with the exception of the Sluagh's ability to perceive wraiths. Because of this, it should be a shockingly rare event to find a Changeling in the Astral, the Shadowlands, or the Middle Umbra, and we recommend you avoid these situations entirely. All such excursions would require the intervention of a more "native" supernatural entity, in any event. Even the "Fae" in the Arcadian Gateway are more Umbral Spirits than actually Faeries at this point.

### **The Question of Prodigals**

Faerie philosophers and cosmologists strongly claim that all supernaturals are fae of some sort or another who have forgotten what they truly are, which is why they refer to shifters, vampires, mages, and the like as "Prodigals." There is a good argument that, before the Triat became imbalanced, during the Age of Legends, there was no real distinction between any supernaturals whatsoever, which corresponds to the time when the Dreaming and the Autumn World were one in the same. Consequently, these faerie philosophers may be entirely right, though the continuing fracturing of the world means this grand unified theory of supernatural origin has no practical application anywhere other than the deepest depths of the Deep Dreaming or Umbra. In such rarefied environments, all parts of reality begin to merge, and barriers between all things cease to have meaning.

In practice, particularly knowledgeable Changelings view everyone as some sort of kin. Of course, some kin are closer than others, and even one's brother can quickly become one's sworn enemy in the passionate, mercurial world of Faerie.

## **Geographic-specific Concerns**

*Changeling: The Dreaming* assumes a North American setting, which is a problem when attempting to address an organization that stretches to four continents as of the writing of this document. We will touch on some of these issues by region. For any game, however, it's worthwhile consulting local history and folklore, either through a local historical society or nearby academic libraries; many local myths and legends have Glamour and relevance, even if they are fairly obscure childrens' tales about the significance of a particular large stone in the woods or a long-repeated, oft-refuted story about some famous person's actions in your area. ("George Washington slept here!" "That swampy patch in the woods was where three women drowned when that area was a pond; it's haunted....")

### **North and Central America**

The default setting for *Changeling: The Dreaming* is worthy of some discussion primarily because White Wolf drew heavily from Irish and Western European faerie lore and somewhat inelegantly from Native American folk tradition. Those looking to explore non-European fae should thoroughly read Chapter Three of the tabletop *Players Guide* and Chapter One of *The Shining Host Players Guide* for the Five Nations of the Nunnehi and *Inanimae: The Secret Way* and Chapter Two of *The Shining Host Players Guide* for a detailed discussion of the Inanimae. Native American myths and legends are complex and unevenly documented, and the Changeling developers attempted to summarize them all in under a hundred pages, which is a herculean task. Consequently, we recommend you use the White Wolf source material as a template for more local legends.

If you are serious about trying to learn more about the myths which would be historically local to you, start by finding out what tribes are local to your area and what larger cultural group (e.g., "Great Basin," "Plains," etc.) those peoples belonged to. Then, use that cultural group and those tribe names as search terms at the nearest research library you have access to with a good folklore and anthropology section; use both the Western and native names for the tribes (e.g., both "Navajo" and "Dineh," or "Dine"). Locate what sources you can and start reading. Yes, this is a lot of work; no, we don't figure most StoryTelling staffs will have the free time to do this, but those who do will have a much better understanding of the Native American folklore of their area.

When considering local legends, also take into account that the Seelie / Unseelie divide White Wolf used for their Legacies are based on the temperate Western European seasonal duality of the "Bright and Warm" season versus the "Dark and Cold" season. Many local legends will be based around significantly different overarching paradigms; for instance, equatorial cultures are far more likely to have a "Wet" season versus "Dry" season duality, and Inuit legends are likely to have more thematic parallels with Norse tales than with Seminole legends from the Florida peninsula.

Central America itself -- the Kingdom of the Feathered Serpent, nominally ruled by Duke Topaz -- is described broadly as being populated by Nunnehi, despite the fact that the two canonical Southwest Families -- Kachinas and Surems -- aren't drawn from Mayan or Aztec myth and legend. In attempting to more fully flesh out this area, consider Mexican legends of La Llorona, the beliefs of the Nahua and Maya peoples, the importance of the Day of the Dead and the recent veneration of the "Holy Death."

Ultimately, however, White Wolf assumed that Western colonialism translated into Western Faerie dominance over local faeries. Consequently, if you adopt the standard setting for *Changeling: The Dreaming*, realize that the story you're telling is one where the Western Fae effectively wiped out the locals, as well.

## **South America**

Many of the same colonial problems of North America are present in South American Changeling venues, with the exception that the native myths and legends are particularly ill-suited to the existing Nunnehi framework, particularly closer to the equator, due to the wet / dry dichotomy alluded to before. In this case, we suggest turning to Incan and Amazonian tribal myths and legends where appropriate, with the understanding that primarily using standard Western European Kiths perpetuates the same message as in North America -- one of colonial dominance.

## **Europe**

Probably the easiest geographic port of Changeling genre is to Western Europe, given that the majority of the legends White Wolf drew upon originated there. The basic mythological paradigm changes more the further East and South you travel from Ireland. Some of the staple myths of Germany and Greece are decently represented (*loreli* and *sirens* fall under the aegis of merfolk,



*fauns* are clearly satyrs, etc.), but many of the important Asiatic and Middle Eastern myths are poorly modeled (the Russian *domoviye* and the *djinn*, for instance). In many ways, European Changeling genre is very much the standard setting of North America *without* the cultural appropriation and colonial overtones made manifest by the Nunnehi.

## Africa

With the sole exception of the Eshu, which are an odd amalgam of Arabian Nights-style thief-adventurer with noble Yoruba spirit and gypsy, there are no real nods to African myth and legend, *including* sphinxes, Abyssinian and Solomonic royalty, or the like. Thus, in canon, Africa is largely a blank canvas, though not for lack of source material to draw upon. Of course, the Baba Yaga problem often rears its head with Egypt in the form of the Follows of Set, the Amenti, the Followers of Osiris, the Laibon legacies of *Kindred of the Ebony Kingdom*, and so forth, but just as much can be made from the myths and legends of Africa as can be made from any region. The Dreaming is quite ecumenical.

Consequently, those who wish to immerse themselves in the sparse Changeling material White Wolf put out on Africa should read *Kithbook: Eshu* closely, paying particular attention to the relatively sedentary Sidhe-analog Oba sub-kith in the ill-defined "Eshu homelands."

## The Middle East

One of the most glaring omissions from Changeling genre is, of course, the djinn. Or rather, the djinn are largely implied to be Umbral spirits, rather than fae, and are detailed most extensively in the Taftâni section (Chapter Two) of *Lost Paths*, particularly pp. 83-85. Despite this, the various forms of djinn are the most directly analagous creatures in Middle Eastern mythology to the Western European fae, and as a consequence, it's hardly a stretch to say that the term "djinn" encompasses the Umbral spirits, the endemic faerie folk of the Middle East, and certain subsets of the Inanimae, particularly solimonds.

Beyond the Islamic djinn, of course, are the Persian *peri* and *deevs*, the Jewish *shedeem* and *dybbuks*, the Pakistani *kafir*, and any number of other local legends. Canonically, only the Eshu and the Umbral djinn were particularly detailed, however.

## Asia

Cosmological concerns in the World of Darkness vary significantly with locale, and nowhere is that more evident than in East Asia. India, like Africa and Central America, is very simplified in that most local supernatural concerns can be boiled down to "Ravnos" and "Kuei Jin following heretical Dharmas." Likewise, the Shen of China, Korea, and Japan are remarkably unified cosmologically in their veneration of the August Personage of Jade and their the opposition of the Yama Kings, with the exception of the Hengeyokai who join the Beast Courts.

The Shinma themselves are Changeling genre more due to thematics than due to underlying cosmological similarities. Shinma are effectively minor godlings, and due to their largely constant role as servitors to the Divine Will, they are often approached to be mediators in disputes between Shen. For the most part, Shinma should generally never leave the Far East, just as it should be a very rare occurrence for a Western Faerie to visit China or Japanese Shinma Courts.

It is highly recommended that anyone interested in East Asian Fae carefully read *Land of Eight Million Dreams*, which details the Shinma, their culture, their magics, and their associations with other supernaturals. In particular, look at the discussion on pp. 36-37 about Xi Wang Chi and the Po Jen, which should give STs a starting point for Hsien-Changeling interactions.

## Australia

No discussion of Australia can avoid the War of Shame, primarily because White Wolf didn't discuss this area outside of Changing Breeds genre. That said, the Dreamtime of Australia is primarily the Penumbra of the Australian continent, even though it shares many qualities with the Dreaming. Of course, only the thylacine marsupial spirits ever taught the gift that allows entrance into the Dreamtime, and since the extermination of the Bunyip, they are too enraged to agree to part with such knowledge. Consequently, any distinctions between the two realms are largely academic at this point.

Aboriginal myth is much more readily available for interpretation than the folklore of many other regions, though the animist bent of Aboriginal religion lends itself far more easily to Changing Breeds than to Changeling.

## Inspirational Media

### Movies

*Midsummer Night's Dream*

Most anything by Terry Gilliam, but particularly *The Imaginarium of Doctor Parnassus* and *Baron Munchausen*

*Pan's Labyrinth*

*Hellboy II* (specifically the "otherworld" sequences)

*The Spiderwick Chronicles* (originally books by Holly Black and Tony DiTerlizzi)

*Inkheart*

*Inception* (as a way of viewing chimerical reality in the Near Dreaming)

### Books

Most novels by Charles De Lint

The *Promethean Age* books, by Elizabeth Bear

*The King of Elfland's Daughter*, by Lord Dunsany

*Stardust*, by Neil Gaiman

*Silverlock*, by John Myers Myers

The Onyx Court series, by Marie Brennan

Bordertown anthologies, edited by Ellen Kushner and Terri Windling

*War for the Oaks*, by Emma Bull

*Thomas the Rhymer*, by Ellen Kushner (inspired by the ballads)

*Tam Lin*, by Pamela Dean (a modern retelling of the ballad of Tam Lin)

*Sixty-One Nails*, by Mike Shevdon

### Other Media

Grimm's Faerie Tales

The *Fables* comic book series

The works of Carl Jung

"The Goblin Market," by Christina Rossetti

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci," by John Keats

## Genre-Specific Abilities and Lores

There is some confusion about what Abilities are appropriate when interacting with Changeling genre, particularly with respect to Lores. For the most part, the following are the appropriate Abilities for cross-genre interactions are:

Occult: For a very basic understanding of other supernaturals and their powers,

Awareness: To sense when strange powers are used upon you,

Faerie Lore: For specific knowledge of the Fae, Changelings, and their powers (see below),  
Lucid Dreaming: For an intuitive understanding of the Dreaming and for defending against certain powers (See *Halls of the Arcanum*, p. 55), and  
Cosmology: In the rare situation where you must understand the boundaries between the various realms and the Dreaming.

Many abilities and lores require induction into specific changeling societies, first hand experience in casting a cantrip, or extended practical knowledge with the subject in question. In addition, much of the knowledge that could be conceivably conveyed with these abilities are forgotten due to the effects of the Mists. For that reason, we recommend that several abilities should *only* be available to Changelings or kinain. These include:

Gremayre: Practical and theoretical understanding of changeling magics and the cosmological underpinnings of Glamour and the Dreaming.

Kenning: The inherent ability to perceive the Fae and the Dreaming; effectively, Awareness and Alertness combined, but specific to chimerical reality.

Shadow Court Lore: Understanding of the structure, practices, and membership of the Shadow Court.

Dreaming Lore: Understanding of the geography and "logic" of the Dreaming, including basic survival skills in traversing it.

Trod Lore: Knowledge of specific paths from the Autumn World into the Dreaming and how such paths operate.

Denizen Lore: Knowledge of the Denizens of the Dreaming (See the book of the same name).

Player characters who are full-fledged supernaturals of other genres or merely mortal should not be able to obtain these skills at all, and the Mists should erase them from the minds of kinain who become full-fledged supernaturals of other genres. StoryTellers may consider refunding experience points spent on these Abilities by non-Changeling, non-kinain player characters.

We recommend that the more general Changeling Lore be renamed Kithain Lore, as the Changeling Way and most canon material is specific to the faerie kiths which originated in Northern Europe and spread to North America. This should be explained in greater detail in the Changeling Genre Packet once it is finished. Regardless of what you call it, this knowledge and the following Abilities require a degree of understanding that is exceedingly rare outside of Fae society, partly because the Mists blur recollection of the relevant experiences. We recommend no non-Changeling, non-kinain be allowed to purchase the following:

House-specific Lore: Detailed knowledge of the various Sidhe houses, including membership, secrets, treasures, and structure.

Kith-specific Lore: Detailed knowledge of the various "standard" kiths of fae, including prominent examples of each kith, their structure (if any), and legends of their origin.

Hsien Lore: Detailed knowledge of the East Asian "fae," including notable Hsien, their powers, and their society.

Inanimae Lore: Detailed knowledge of the naturalistic fae spirits, including their powers, societies, and history.

Nunnehi Lore: Detailed knowledge of Native American fae, including the Nations and Families, powers, and oral history.

Kithain Lore or Changeling Lore above level 1.

## **Faerie Lore**

Most non-Changeling genre characters will have the outsider-specific ability Faerie Lore if they have any significant knowledge of the Fae. A description of what the various levels of that Lore should mean follow:

Faerie Lore 1: *What avid readers of Charles De Lint and fans of Celtic mythology might know*

- \* You might have had one or two first-hand experiences with the Fae, though you probably don't remember many specifics of those interactions.
- \* You are familiar with a handful of second-hand modern-day accounts of dealing with them.
- \* You believe that the Fae exist, though you don't know if they can take physical form, if they're generally invisible, or if they're something completely otherworldly.
- \* You are fairly certain that dreams have actual magical power, and they're not just random neurons firing while you sleep.
- \* You know a decent selection of faerie tales and myths from Celtic, Norse, and local sources, though you don't really know which of them hold truth and what those truths might be.
- \* Faerie magic is also probably real, though you don't know any real details.

Faerie Lore 2: *What a studied new-age practitioner or wise old grandmother might know*

- \* You have a very good knowledge of Celtic and Nordic faerie stories, and you're familiar with a some of faerie-like stories from other cultures, including Native America, Greece, and the Middle East.
- \* You know that the Fae are fond of children, artists, lunatics, and untamed, wild areas, just as they are in the tales.
- \* You know that the Fae gather in places imbued with faerie magical power, and you know that they have kings and queens.
- \* You know that belief and disbelief affect the Fae somehow, as there are fewer faeries nowadays because fewer people believe in them. Likewise, strong faith and religious symbols (crosses, church bells) can repel or harm them.
- \* You are certain that dreams (or nightmares) and faeries are connected on some deep level. You believe faeries are able to discern a mortal's dreams and will help or possibly hinder them somehow.
- \* You know something about a handful of actual powers that the Fae actually possess, perhaps the effects of a few levels of Arts, some Bunks, or the obvious effects of a Treasure. The knowledge is not particularly detailed.
- \* You know that there are many types of faeries, and you know some characteristics about a few of the types, though you don't know much.
- \* You're fairly certain that the Fae can take physical form somehow, though you don't know how.

Faerie Lore 3: *What a successful faerie hunter or dedicated researcher might know*

- \* You have a compendious knowledge of Northern European faerie tales, have a good working knowledge of Mediterranean, North American, and Middle Eastern tales, and know a number of African, Asian, Mesoamerican, and South American tales.
- \* You know that the Fae hide themselves from most mortals, and, as with waking from a dream, their magic can - and will - cloud someone's memories.
- \* You are well-versed in the traditional methods of warding against faeries and faerie magic (rowan berries, church bells, iron, scattering pins before you), though you don't believe that they all work as well as they are purported to. You do know that convincing yourself that a faerie has no power over you can conceivably foil their magics, however.
- \* You have probably met and talked with several different faeries, though you may or may not believe that they were really faeries, depending on your Banality.
- \* You know a few faerie-specific terms, though not what they mean, and you think that faerie society might roughly mirror Medieval, feudal lord-vassal relationships.
- \* You know that faerie magic is very good at affecting the minds of mortals, enchanting them to dance (sometimes literally) to their every desire. You have a broader knowledge of specific types of faerie magic - ideas of what the more common Arts are capable of, that they often involve seemingly idiosyncratic actions (bunks) - but you don't know anything of its limits, per se.
- \* You know that faeries are passionate creatures, and their magic and mentality is often wild

and capricious, even alien.

Faerie Lore 4: *What an Arcanum scholar might know*

- \* You know nearly every European, Middle Eastern, and North American faerie tale, have a very solid knowledge of African, Asian, Mesoamerican and South American tales, and know a number of aboriginal Australian and Polynesian faerie tales.
- \* You know that faerie magic is fundamentally rooted in the magic of dreams, and faeries somehow exist in a Jungian-style collective unconscious of the mortals of this world.
- \* You have basic, fairly accurate understanding of the major types of faerie magic (the more common Arts), including some specific information, though you know your knowledge is very incomplete. You also know that objects can hold faerie magical power.
- \* You know that most faeries have human form, and they call themselves "kithain." You know that those with strong faerie blood can manifest faerie magic and are often called "kinain," and there are other broad groups within faerie society, though you don't necessarily know what they are called.
- \* You know that faeries each belong to one of a number of different "kiths", and you know something about these kiths (basic familiarity with 2-4 of the more common kiths, along with basic information about some of the weaknesses and strengths, but with some inaccurate knowledge).
- \* You know that faerie society is led by a noble caste that mirrors the feudal courts of old, though you have heard that there may be rebellious Fae who do not accept their rule.
- \* You have heard a fair number of faerie-specific terms (see pp 32-33 of *The Shining Host*), but you only know the general meanings of a small handful of these terms.
- \* You know that faeries are somehow drawn to people with great creativity like artists and children, probably because of their associations with the magic of dreams.

Faerie Lore 5: *What someone with an extensive family and personal history of faerie-association or a dedicated life-long scholar of the fae might know; note that Faerie Lore 5 is roughly equivalent to Kithain or Changeling Lore 1, with the addition of a compendious knowledge of faerie tales*

- \* You have a detailed knowledge of nearly every faerie tale, no matter the culture, no matter how obscure.
- \* You know a decent amount about the common kiths and can describe them reasonably well. (This is roughly equal to the descriptions in *The Shining Host*.) You are also aware of the existence of other, less common groupings (such as inanimae, djinn, nunnehi, and various thallain), though you only have a vague idea of their attributes.
- \* You are aware of the rough, actual meaning of some of the more common faerie-specific terms, though you aren't certain of those definitions, and more obscure terms are still unclear.
- \* You are aware of the Dreaming, and you understand that it is some sort of spirit world (akin to the Astral, the Umbra, or the Shadowlands, if you are aware of those) where mortals somehow visit when they dream. You also know that physically-manifested faeries can enter the Dreaming somehow and interact with sleeping mortals.
- \* You have evidence (or at least have heard tell) that faerie spirits actually inhabit the bodies of human hosts in a sort of symbiotic or parasitic relationship, being reborn into a new body once their old host dies.
- \* You know the very basics of kithain culture, including the importance of Oaths, justice by Fior (though you don't know what that entails), and the rough structure of governance on a local, regional, and broader level.
- \* You know that "cold iron" is somehow anathema to faeries, and while you know this isn't the same as wrought iron or steel, you may or may not understand how to obtain or make such a substance, depending on your other Abilities.
- \* You have a solid understanding of the common Arts, along with reasonably accurate, practical details about certain cantrips. You have also heard rumor of some of the more obscure Arts (kith-specific Arts, Chronos, Inanimae slivers, though *not* Contempt or Delusion) to the level of brief, one-sentence descriptions.
- \* You probably know the identity of a small handful of faeries, at least one in your general

vicinity, and you know how to contact them if you have to. You probably have also heard the (faerie) names of some (5-10) of the more well-known faeries in the world today (e.g., the monarchs of Concordia, the Wire Man, Alexsei of the Thirteen Toes, Nikos of the North, General Lyros).

\* You are aware that the Fae fear something called the "Endless Winter," when humanity no longer believes in them and all hopes and dreams come to an end.

## **Acknowledgements**

This packet was primarily authored by Kyle Niedzwiecki, though there are many people who deserve credit for assistance and advice.

Emerald City Chronicles gave me permission to adapt their excellent guidelines for Faerie Lore, and I likewise adopted their idea of replacing "Changeling Lore" with "Kithain Lore." Kevin Schmidt and Bryn Neuenschwander both offered wonderful sounding boards for my disconnected ramblings, with particular thanks to Bryn for her advice on colonialism, research directions, and copyedits. David Higgins and Alyc Helms both have a deep and abiding love of Changeling and a wealth of knowledge borne of running a phenomenal Changeling game that spanned over six years; they were particularly helpful in helping me to distill the idea of Banality down into something useable. Brian Gouldie and Jason Robinson offered extensive references for Changing Breeds crossover, while Kevin Wilhite helped keep me honest on the cosmological discussions. Ben Ellis and Jason Dawson also deserve special praise for their thoughts on various topics, notably Shinma, the Malkavian "immunity" to the Mists, and the garou. Jason Place likewise gave valuable feedback on the Hsien and overall cosmology.