Sword & Sorcery

# Ravenloft

# Van Richten's™ Guide to

# The Shadow Fey

# Van Richten's Guide to the Shadow Fey


**Authors:**
Brett King, Rucht Lilavivat, Tadd McDivitt and Penny Williams

**Developers:**
Jackie Cassada and Nicky Rea

**Editor:**
Mike Johnstone

**Sword & Sorcery Managing Editor:**
Andrew Bates

**Art Director:**
Richard Thomas

**Layout and Typesetting:**
Ron Thompson

**Interior Artists:**
Talon Dunning, Jeremy McHugh, Claudio Pozas, Beth Trott and Jason Walker

**Front and Back Cover Designer:**
Ron Thompson


**From the Developers:**
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## Table of Contents


Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Chapter One: Origins of the Endless 9

Chapter Two: Common Powers 17

Chapter Three: Extraordinary Powers 25

Chapter Four: Vulnerabilities 45

Chapter Five: The Breeds 56

Chapter Six: The Immortal Mind 65

Chapter Seven: Interactions with Mortals 76

Chapter Eight: Confronting the Shadow Fey 86

DM's Appendix 96

# Introduction

*"Yea but," quoth she, "the perill of this place*
*I better wot then you, though now too late*
*To wish you backe returne with foule disgrace,*
*Yet wisedome warnes, whilest foot is in the gate,*
*To stay the stepe, ere forcèd to retrate.*
*This is the wandring wood, the Errours den,*
*A monster vile, whom God and man does hate:*
*Therefore I read beware." "Fly fly," quoth then*
*The fearful Dwarfe: "this is no place for living men."*
— Sir Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queen*

Greetings, gentle reader, I am Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove.

My introduction to the realm of the spectral and bizarre was on a midsummer's night, during a raging storm.

I suppose one might project my person into a variety of scenarios regarding my introduction into the realm of shadows: within a lonely graveyard, or perhaps atop a high parapet, battling evil alongside my dear Uncle George and the good Doctor Van Richten.

But no, my introduction into that which is most peculiar was rather mundane, I must say.

## The Danger that Sleeps

I remember that the incident took place upon our birthday. My sister and I had come into the age of majority, and a grand ball was called for in our honor.

I'm sure that you can imagine it. A ball for a young woman who reaches the age of eligibility is no small matter in Mordent. Suitors, whether young and pimply or old and lecherous, turn out for the occasion.

Now, imagine the splendor held for twins! Such a rarified event made for the social pinnacle of the year.

As you might suspect, we hated the entire occasion. Being sixteen years of age created within us that certain set of circumstances that found us taking a strong dislike to everything and everyone. Years of sitting upon the knees of such renowned men as George Weathermay, Rudolph Van Ritchen, and Alanik Ray also proved a deterrent to an acceptance of our patrician inheritance.

During the party, Laurie discretely hid herself away as I knew she would. I, on the other hand, retreated to the one place I always went for solace: the library. Indeed, I knew that no one would ever find me there. For at a gala event such as this, what soul would linger in the library?

I remember that night so sharply, like a fresh painting still drying on my mind. Outside, a storm seethed with malediction. Winds threw gusts that whistled over the house. Strange and plaintive sounds resonated from outdoors, as if the night's spirits danced upon our rooftops. The sky flashed back and forth with stark lightning. With each flash, the library lit up white and spectral, a scene from a deep and hidden dream. Then, the lightning passed, plunging all into darkness.

My eyes began to adjust to the gloom. A single, slim candle provided the only steady light to the room. Beside that candle lay a solitary book, open. A slight draft animated the tome. The pages of the book wafted softly, up and down. Parchment whispered against parchment, creating the rustle of quiet voices in the yawning darkness.

The flame of the candle bent and twisted in the draft, causing the shadows of the room to lurch and bend. Looking over my shoulder, I saw my own shadow, cast high and long upon the ancient shelves. My silhouette cavorted over and over in the flickering light, as if trying to free itself from my body.

When I saw the book, I knew it was one of the good Doctor's tomes. I could always spot one of his texts, for they always bore the appearance of a book long-traveled, and yet well preserved.

As I peered down onto the open page, I saw a woodcut drawing that depicted a group of men and women dancing naked. I noted the primitive style of the picture; the figures were stiff, almost child-like.

The gathered people cavorted about a fire. Dancing with them were strange... things. The things linked hands with the people as they danced. Some of the figures had strange wings. Others had the heads of beasts and birds. Still others seemed to have no joints, their bodies simply bending like straw — but all had large, watchful eyes both luminous and terrible.

As I studied the picture, I saw that the creatures were all looking at something outside the borders of the page. Indeed, their posture indicated anticipation and expectation. Whatever it was they saw, the men and women dancing around the fire were oblivious to it.

When one is alone, the mind can play the oddest tricks. You might be standing by yourself and suddenly feel the presence of something behind you. You well know that nothing is there, yet you find yourself looking anyway, simply to appease your wandering consciousness.

In that moment I received this very sensation, that curious prickling, the conscious knowledge that something was watching me — just over my shoulder. I followed the gaze of the dancing creatures off the page and into the corner of the room.

Everyone is familiar with the feeling of being watched, but we all expect to turn and see nothing. Imagine now that single, terrible moment, when instead of seeing nothing, you see... *something*.

There, in the darkness, I saw my *something*. It groped along the floor. It arched its back and glared with iridescent, watchful eyes. I could not be entirely sure what I was seeing, for I only perceived it from the corner of my eye. Yet I dared not turn to face it, for I was frozen in fear.

While I watched it from the edge of my rational sight, I saw the creature *walk* up the corner of the wall. It dangled its hands back and forth in a manlike stride. As it spanned the distance of the wall, it vanished into the shadows of the ceiling.

I looked down at the book for a moment and rubbed my eyes. At that time I noticed a detail of the woodcut that I had missed before: each of the dancing creatures was smiling, and there was something all too knowing about those smiles.

This moment of both revelation and uncertainty was interrupted. The door to the library opened and in walked my patron, my teacher, and my savior: Rudolph Van Ritchen.

"They are missing you out there, my dear," he laughed. "Your father will blame me if you do not join the party." The good Doctor looked at me, and in an instant he read the fear upon my face. It was then that he did something that made me love him for all time.

Van Ritchen could have done many things in that moment. He could have laughed off my fear as the product of an overactive imagination. He could have scolded me for looking into affairs, *dangerous* affairs, that were not mine to meddle in.

Instead, Dr. Van Ritchen looked me in the eye. "Did you see something?" he asked quietly. His voice was only a whisper.

I could only nod my response.

He bowed his head and took my hand in his. "I see that you have been gazing into my book, hmm? And you have seen *it*, too. Well, it is gone, now. Tonight is your birthday. Let us celebrate that."

I protested. "But…I saw. It's… it's—"

"I'm sure it is. But it will not bother us tonight. If it were going to bother us, it would have already done so."

"But, Uncle… shouldn't you go after it? It is what you do—"

"What I do, my dear, is try to bring the slightest bit of light into the world, and as I stand here I see two ways of going about that. The first would be to rip apart this entire house, sprinkle everything with holy water, and set the place on fire just to make sure—"

I laughed, touching my fingers to my lips. It felt good to laugh. I hadn't laughed all day.

"Or, we could simply remember it's your birthday and enjoy."

"But we just can't forget—"

"We're not forgetting anything," said the good Doctor, finally. For just a moment, I saw a steely complexion come over him. I saw the cold fire burn within his eye, and I understood. I understood that I had nothing to fear whatsoever from that thing in the corner of the room; for now, Van Richten knew of it, and even in that moment, he had turned his keen senses toward it. There would be no forgetting. There would be no escape.

And just like that, the good Doctor's expression softened. "Least of all, it's your birthday, Gennifer. What kind of Uncle would I be if I forgot your birthday?"

He took my hand and brought me back into the light.

## A Danger Awakened

I'm sure that many of you are curious as to the "end" of the little tale that I have spun. Many will question whether I saw anything at all in the dark. Who can say that what I saw was real? Perhaps it was just the product of an excited imagination.

As for the tome that I gazed upon, I forgot all about it until years later. Yet whenever I chanced to ask the good Doctor about the curious text, he seemed to feign ignorance or would suddenly change the subject.

Not until recent months did the book resurface.

Greetings, gentle reader. My name is Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove, and it falls to me to continue this tale.

The next incident involving this peculiar text occurred while I was reorganizing the library at our estate. I found the tome packed behind a number of other texts. As I was pulling a few references out, the book fell out from where it had been concealed and thudded to the floor. I lifted up the aged manual and gazed at it for a long while.

I was well aware of the text mentioned in the anecdote above. Gennifer told me about the incident in years past, but neither of us paid much attention to it. Thus, I had no reason to suspect that this was the same book.

I opened the book to the first page. And there I saw the apparent title of this manual: *The Malleus Umbricum*, the supposed "Hammer of Shades."

Indeed, I was surprised to see that what I held in my hand was an incomplete version of that most famous text. Turning back the first page, I saw that a note was inserted within:

To whom it may concern,

You hold before you the incomplete and collected notes for the *Malleus Umbricum*. This text, penned by Wyan of Viktal, was intended as a manual for battling the "Arak" as they are called in Tepest — or as they are more widely known, the shadow fey.

This text is flawed. These writings bear just enough truth to lure its readers into real danger, while the misinformation within shall spell the ultimate doom for those who would follow the erroneous procedures.

Furthermore, anyone who follows the guidelines for finding the shadow fey set down by the *Malleus* will most certainly end up burning their own neighbors, friends and loved ones at the stake.

It was my intention to write a counter to Wyan's text. I regret, however, that I cannot now perform this deed. For in this late hour, I find my own time waning. A long and empty road lies before me. All around me, the shadows grow long and deep; the Mists now whisper to me in voices all too familiar.

I cannot ask you, the bearer of this letter, to do what I could not. Therefore, I ask you to do what you will with the knowledge that I give unto you. I have bound here my own notes on this elusive threat.

I fear that I must leave for a while. I shall not be returning from my journey for quite some time.

With the greatest hope for your wisdom and good sense, I remain,

Rudolph Van Richten

P.S. Whoever you are, I wish you good luck and an even better Fate.

I need not impress upon the reader the heavy meaning of this final letter from Dr. Van Richten. It appears that the good doctor knew his own fate yet did not wish to disclose the nature of his exodus to anyone.

My hands trembled as I turned the pages of the book. Here was one of the last things Dr. Rudolph Van Richten ever held. Even as my heart filled with tides of sadness, I became full of dread as well.

For before me, I saw a manual so malign and arcane that it appeared the author intended to mislead the reader.

Here were methods for ferreting out the shadow fey among the common folk that were as backward as they were extreme, proffering suggestions of tortures to procure confessions, as well as a list of signs to look for that were both arbitrary and false.

And then, my fingers reached it — that particular page that Gennifer had found in the book so long ago. I beheld the same woodcut drawing she had discovered. In an instant, I was transported back to my youth. Yet now, I was standing alone in the darkness, facing that yellowed page. I beheld the dancing creatures. Everything was all just as Gennifer had said. The woodcut had preserved those terrible creatures, and they were still looking off the edge of the page—

I looked up from the drawing and saw them. Multitudes of them. Their tiny, strange faces pressed up against the window, their eyes huge and roaming. Hideous mouths revealed gaping holes as splayed fingers grasped at the glass. Behind them, sprouting from their hunched backs, were the brown and vicious wings of cockroaches. There was suddenly a terrible humming in the air as if the place had become full of hornets. The window rattled violently as their tiny hands pressed against the glass, causing the entire pane to shudder. With a loud crack, the glass shattered. The things were gone.

I submit to you that the *Malleus Umbricum* is nothing more than a trap, a snare and a deception. Like the dreaded *Raiment of Clarity*, this accursed book spells doom to those who open it.

No doubt, Wyan believes his book serves as a manual for finding and dispatching the shadow fey. Yet I have my suspicions as to where he might have gleaned his information, as well as of the text's true author.

Thus, we come to the writing of the book you now hold in your hands. It serves two purposes. First, this volume dispels the fallacious and dangerous information found in the *Malleus Umbricum*. Second, it carries out the last wishes of a man who knew he was making a long, unknowable exodus.

Finally, Gennifer and I found ourselves compelled to finish this volume. From the moment we rediscovered this text, the elusive shadow fey haunted our every step. They became frequent visitors. Gnarled claws scraped at our doors at night. Creatures with fluttering wings battered about our wardrobe at odd hours of the day. Occasionally, we would see peculiar pictures drawn in the ash of the fireplace.

At the time of this writing, I see now that penning this text is all too imperative. While most individuals do not see the shadow fey as an imminent threat, the danger they pose is all too real. Theirs is the hidden danger, the subtle trap that snares us when we least expect it.

## Chapter Overview

Our introduction makes plain enough our desires and reason for completing this text.

**Chapter One: Origins of the Endless** investigates the ancient history of the dreaded Arak and from whence they came. Also in this chapter, we explain the distinction between the shadow fey and the sylvan fey.

**Chapter Two: Common Powers** ponders the extraordinary qualities that all shadow fey share in common, such as their immortality, their flexibility of form and their ability to rob mortals of their essence under the guise of giving them a wondrous gift.

**Chapter Three: Extraordinary Powers** looks at the myriad of exceptional and salient powers that the Twilight Folk possess and with which they oftentimes surprise a would-be hunter.

**Chapter Four: Vulnerabilities** offers a wide variety of possible weaknesses for the ellefolk and how these banes might be put to use by those who would hunt the shadow fey or protect themselves and their loved ones against these creatures.

**Chapter Five: The Breeds** examines the whole spectrum of the shadow fey, looking at each of their various forms in turn. Here, not only do we study their physiology, but also their behaviors and tendencies.

**Chapter Six: The Immortal Mind** turns to the study of the psychology of these unfathomable creatures. Explored herein is the complex court system of the shadow fey. Finally, we present our

findings on the famed Marcusen Script, a document stolen from the Shadow Rift itself.

**Chapter Seven: Interactions with Mortals** studies how these immortal beings deal with mortal ones. Their motives and thoughts are considered thoroughly. We also observe the gift and curse of a fey-blooded heritage.

**Chapter Eight: Confronting the Shadow Fey,** relates our own tales of encounters with the Arak, so that our experiences might better inform you.

## How to Use this Book

Game applications and special information on the topics discussed in **Van Richten's Guide to the Shadow Fey** are presented throughout this book in the form of sidebars such as this one. The **Appendix** that concludes this book presents monster entries for the various breeds of shadow fey, guidelines for creating original breeds of shadow fey and advice on using the shadow fey in **Ravenloft** adventures.

# Chapter One: Origins of the Endless

*Now it is the time of night*
*That the graves, all gaping wide,*
*Every one lets forth his sprite,*
*In the church-way paths to glide.*
*And we faeries, that do run*
*By the triple Hecat's team*
*From the presence of the sun,*
*Following the darkness like a dream,*
*Now are frolic....*

—William Shakespeare,
*A Midsummer's Night Dream*

# Chapter One

Our journey into the strange and curious world of the shadow fey begins with my own journey, in perpetual search of the good Doctor Rudolph Van Richten.

From our Uncle's assembled notes for his incomplete text, my sister Laurie and I were able to piece together a map of his journey. Our excitement mounted as we made this discovery, for we knew we were retracing some of the last steps Dr. Van Richten ever took upon this land.

We were able to glean the locations of several persons he had interviewed. The first locale that he visited was a clockworks shop in Martria Bay, Darkon. I traveled there first, while Laurie went abroad elsewhere, covering other leads. My journey was harrowing, for not only did I risk the dangers of the road, but I ran the risk of suffering Darkon's infamous "residential" curse. Thus, I applied all the haste I could muster.

The clockwork shop lay tucked away on a small back street, darkened and enshrouded by the nearby buildings. I looked into the large picture window of the store and found myself transfixed, for every wall within that place moved in some way. Each shelf glittered with the constant swing of a pendulum and every cupboard crawled with the whirling of gears.

I entered the shop and noted the grand noise of the place. Clicks, whirs and ringing filled the air.

"Do come in," said a voice that, despite sounding old and filled with dust, had the strength to speak over the noise.

I turned around to find the speaker. Slowly, my senses became accustomed to the dimness, and I perceived a large, rumpled figure in the corner of the room. The figure sat upon a rocking chair as one might sit upon a throne. She bore a withered shape like that of a gnarled old tree. Yet instead of weakness, I sensed a latent danger within that form, like a hive full of sleeping bees. I could not make out her face in the dim light, but I noted some form of movement there, like the flexing of a moth's wings.

"How can I help you today?" the voice asked.

"I suppose I'm just looking," I replied. "Do you recommend anything to buy?"

"Buy?" scoffed the figure in the rocking chair. "Everyone always tries to buy from this place. But they can never meet the price. The only thing you may do here is borrow. Always borrowed, never bought, they always say."

As my eyes adjusted further to the gloom, I could see her smiling at me. I could see as well that she had no sight. Instead, infant hands sprouted where eyes should be. My lips went dry. I licked them slowly and tried to summon a charm or protective spell to the forefront of my mind. In the meantime, I spoke.

"Fir" I said, guessing.

"They always use that name for me," she crooned. "But I never understand it. They use that name for us whether we are old or young, mischievous or kind. How so many of us could be the same, while we are not, I'll never know."

"Your form," I noted, "is not what it should be." I had often read how small these creatures were reported to be.

"But I wear it nonetheless," she replied, enigmatic as ever.

"Do you know why I have come?" I dared, for I now supposed that the being with which I spoke had senses beyond my own ken.

"I do not care why you have come," she said. "I care only to give you the gift that was bestowed upon you."

"Gift?"

"It once belonged to a man you claim is your uncle, but is not." She extended her arm and I saw the hand at the end of her arm. It was unnaturally long, with spindle-like fingers that tapered off into needle points. From one of her prickling fingers dangled a silver watch.

Gingerly, I took the watch. "It is rare to see a pocket watch in these parts," I said, as I examined it.

"Of course, it was not made here," she said. "But then, many things in this place were not made here, either."

I held in my hand a delicate device, inlayed with gold filigree. However, the craftsmanship of the watch did not interest me. Rather, the words upon the watch caught me as surely as a cat catches a wriggling insect upon the floor: "*Borrowed Time*."

"Your 'uncle' borrowed that piece from us long ago," she said with a sigh of satisfaction, "but he has since returned it to us. Now, it comes to you. An inheritance, you might say."

I looked up at her. The infant hands at her face linked fingers and twiddled their thumbs. Her teeth gleamed predatory in the room's faint half-light. The rocking of the chair kept perfect time with the myriad ticking all around us.

"When will you... want it back?" I asked, turning over the watch in my hand. So many conjectures ran through my mind.

She laughed, her great girth leaning far back into the chair. "So eager to return it, are you? Well, we will not be the ones collecting it."

"Who will?" My hands clasped over the watch.

"You and the collector have met before," was her reply.

Neither of us spoke for a long while. The noises of the room rushed in, filling the emptiness between us. "You should sit down," she offered. "You have come for information, yes? Perhaps I could tell you a story."

"What story would this be?" I realized that my palms were sweating furiously. As I held the watch, I noticed that the tick from the tiny device matched my beating heart.

"The story of our kind," said the sightless creature. She spread one of her elongated hands, gesturing to the room. As she did, one of the infant hands at her face gestured along with her.

## A Definition of the Fey

*Below is a transcription as best I can manage of the Clockmaker's words. The reader should take it for what it is worth — words spun by a creature of questionable motives. Some of the information herein may be true, but other parts may be sheer lies. I will direct as best as I can and allow the reader to be the final judge.*

— Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove

What are the fey? The answer to that question still plagues the minds of scholars and priests.

If you listen to the tales of peasants, many things fall under the category of "fey." They will tell you that any goblin, kobold, troll, ogre, sprite, pixie or satyr is a member of the fey.

In their own way, I suppose these tales are correct. There has always been a division in this realm between those beings that live as part of the wild and those that have chosen to live apart from it.

Peasants call those beings that have chosen to live within the hills and the forest the "fey." They then put themselves into a flock of their own, calling themselves "humans." Finally, there are a few who can live in both worlds, in the wild and apart from it. These are the demi-peoples of the land: elves, dwarves, gnomes and halflings.

Contrary to popular belief, elves are not part of the fey. They abandoned the world of the wild long ago, though they can visit it from time to time.

Scholars have an altogether different definition of the fey. Darkonian sages claim that the fey are a specific class of beings. They label the beasts in the wild with such names as "mammal" or "reptile." For them, the "fey" are beings identified by a weaker constitution and an affinity for the forest and a supernatural tie to nature.

But I see that you have not come to listen to the words of peasants or scholars. You can hear those words at any time.

So how do we define ourselves? The fey call themselves living spirits, beings who live beyond the scope of the cycle of nature and the mortal failings of life and death. The scholar might make the mistake of claiming that the undead live beyond the scope of nature. However, consider that the undead were once living. They are a perversion of the cycle of nature, but they do not live *above* it as the fey do.

The fey are not born. We do not age and die as other beings do. The undead were once living, so they at least have a beginning. But the fey? The fey are eternal.

So if our kind is not born, how do we come about? A fine question. Many stories are told around the fire. The prevailing belief is that we emerge from the Mists. There, as disembodied spirits, we unfold our bodies from the curling vapor.

Think on the rare soul who witnesses such an event. Picture a lone traveler, upon some distant moor, happening by a bank of mists as it ebbs and flows. Suddenly, before her eyes, a form takes shape. Something pulls on white sheets of vapor, donning its skin like a sheaf of clothing. Then, from the White Curtain, it emerges, walking forth in a form of its own creation, both beautiful and terrible.

***Editor's Note:*** *That the Clockmaker would claim the shadow fey are never born is strange, for it is well documented that fey, both shadow and sylvan, do mate and bear offspring. Numerous accounts speak of fey trysts with mortals that resulted in offspring, and many fey we interviewed often spoke of their lineage. Both ideas are potentially correct. Some fey may take their form from the Mists, while others are born like any other mortal creature. Note also the Clockmaker's words: "The prevailing belief is...." Why would she refer to a belief? Could it be that she herself did not know the answer?*

## Distant Origins

The matter of fey creation brings about the question of our origins. When did we *first* step from the Mists? When did we first pull on those curious skins of shadows and fog?

Many whisper that the fey have always been. According to these tales, the spirits of the fey have been part of the land for as long as it has existed — and that when the land was first formed, the fey were part of it, one and the same.

Some say the fey were the ancient servants of elder gods. When the old gods first created the land, the fey were its shepherds, sworn to tend it for all time. The old gods fell away, forgotten by mortals, leaving their servants to continue caring for their wild, overgrown garden.

Other ancient tales speak of the fey as a people, once belonging to a single tribe. These tales describe the fey's arrival in the land, stepping across the Misty Border. The elder fey of these old tales warred, sang and danced much like any other people.

As time beat its steady drum, this fey tribe faded from the land. The places where they dwelled filled with more and more of the Mist, until one day the shifting fog enshrouded all their dwellings. Some say that one can still visit these long forgotten places.

Wanderers in the mist will often see the vanished villages and castles of the fey. The vaporous eddies part, revealing ancient houses or magnificent palisades that appear on no map. Those few who have managed to visit these forgotten fey-homes have reached one of the Dismal Oubliettes. Be warned, if you be courageous or brave, for languishing memories, half-realized desires and creatures beyond all understanding haunt these places.

A few fey did not vanish with their dwellings, but clung to the land, hiding in forgotten places such as old hollows, secluded valleys, dark forests and silent caves.

Living for so long in those hidden places, they became one with them. Thus, the dryads came to live within trees, and drownlings came to dwell in the lake. These are beings of antiquity, living for ages within a single space, sleeping through centuries and dreaming through the millennia.

***Editor's Note:*** *This condition would account for a unifying thread among the various sorts of fey creatures noted by scholars and colleagues of our*

*illustrious uncle. In a world in which supernatural creatures bear such an array of forms, finding some commonalities among certain types stands as proof that some order does, in fact, govern the existence of the unnatural.*

## The Tie With Nature

Fey creatures, whether shadow or sylvan, have a special tie with nature and to the places where they dwell. Because of a fey creature's bond to its home, it can sense the presence of any creature within its lair and to a distance of 30 feet from its lair. The definition of the creature's lair may vary. A dryad might make its home within a tree, while a powerful shee might claim an entire lake or mountain. Where a fey makes its home depends on its type and the needs of the DM.

If the fey has 6 or more Hit Dice, it may attempt to *scry* an intruder in its home. This ability functions as the spell cast by a sorcerer of a level equal to the fey's Hit Dice. Fey who do not have the spell may attempt a DC 15 Intelligence check to spy upon the intruder.

If any damage should happen to the fey's lair, it weakens the fey. For every 25% of the fey's home that is significantly damaged, it suffers 1 point of damage per Hit Die, to a maximum of 4 points of damage per Hit Die for 100% damage.

The DM must adjudicate what constitutes damage to the fey's home. For example, the leaves falling from a tree in the autumn probably does not constitute damage to a fey home. However, if a group of adventurers strips all the leaves from a tree in the spring, their actions would probably constitute damage. The DM has the final say as to how much damage a fey lair sustains. In the case of large areas, such as a mountain, a substantial amount of change might be required to affect the fey. Again, how much and what constitutes damage is up to DM's discretion.

## Enter the Shadow Fey

What then, of the shadow fey? From whence do they come? And how are they different from the fey that we spoke of earlier?

In their long existence, the fey see many things. They see the death and birth of many families, the rise and fall of clans, even the changing of languages as the centuries wear on. During their long existence, all fey see the temptation of the Twilight.

The Twilight is a force that exerts power over all sylvan kind. It offers many gifts, such as power, servants, love or even safety. Whatever the offer, should the fey fall to its temptation, they are lured off into a domain of darkness. There, bizarre forces pull and twist at their form until they are re-made into creatures of the shadowy darkness. These fey are forever more known as the "Twilight Folk," "Gloaming People," "ellefolk," "Arak," or as you call them, "Shadow Fey."

Not all fey are tempted by the Twilight. Some are pressed into service, stolen from their sylvan homes in the night and made to fit the mold of darkness and shadow. These are the most bitter of Arak, for their lot has been forced upon them.

Imagine the outrage these beings must possess. Envision existing in a form of your own choosing, your physical shell exactly as you dreamed it, and then having some unknowable force twist your shape and your very essence to fit its arcane designs.

### Sylvan Fey vs. Shadow Fey

Often there is confusion about the difference between sylvan fey and the shadow fey. What is the difference?

The primary distinction between the two fey types lies in their origin. The breeds that make up the shadow fey originate in the Shadow Rift. Other types of fey do not come from the Shadow Rift, but instead have their origins in the domain where they dwell. For example, a satyr born in Borca is a regular fey creature, otherwise known as a *sylvan fey*.

Does that mean that a teg or sith born outside of the Shadow Rift is not a shadow fey? *Yes*. Normal arak that are born outside the confines of the Shadow Rift become sylvan fey creatures and do not have the sunlight vulnerability. However, no one in Ravenloft is aware of this fact as yet.

## from the Rift

Several beliefs abide concerning the origins of the Twilight and its accursed spawn, the shadow fey.

The first belief, held by many in the Tepest Inquisition, is that the shadow fey come from a place of fiends, demons and the souls of the dammed. These creatures, then, are motivated to collect souls for themselves, since all fiends delight in hoarding their twisted currency of mortal essence.

Those who hold on to this idea of the ellefolk believe that long ago a rift opened beneath the land of Arak.

This portal led straight into the original realm of fiends and began to spew forth hordes of nightmares and aberrations. The portal also continually attempts to devour the land around it, thus explaining the existence of the Shadow Rift. In recent years, the portal has devoured the entire land of Arak. Many who speculate on the nature of such things believe that if the portal is not stopped, it will one day devour the rest of the land as well.

The second belief is that the Gloaming People are spawned from the nightmares of the common folk of the realm. As a person dreams, his dreams assume an independent life through the intervention of the mystical powers of the realm. Once a dream turns into a nightmare, it walks about as an Arak.

The third belief is the most obscure of them all. A few knowledgeable souls maintain that the shadow fey come from a different realm entirely.

Like the legendary lost tribe of myth, the ellefolk stepped across the Mists from a place of unrivaled darkness, a world entirely without light. There, the force known as the Twilight ruled, but the languishing subjects of the Twilight schemed against its oppressive domination. In a bid for freedom, the subjects of the Twilight crafted a pinhole within the eternal darkness of their realm. And through this pinhole, they sought escape.

Yet in their attempt for freedom, the Twilight pursued them. A single member of their enshrouded race, Arak the Erlking, fought back against their oppressor, hoping to give his brethren the time they needed to escape. Arak dealt grievous blows to the Twilight, but he knew he could not hold out against it for long. With a final effort, he threw down his great adversary, and turned to run after his people.

The effort proved to be too great a risk for the Erlking, for as soon as he turned to flee, the Twilight arose again behind him. Arak was cut down like a stalk of wheat in the wind. The Twilight attempted to push its way into this realm, but as it did, Arak's son and daughter sewed the pinhole shut, trapping the Twilight in its transition between worlds. It was now forever caught between this world and its home of impenetrable darkness.

For a long time the Twilight remained trapped in this fashion. After many years of struggle, it managed to exert its influence over the land. Slowly, it spread its power by insinuating itself into the minds of those who rule the shades, the Prince of Shadows and the Queen of Light. Now, many of its agents are constantly sent throughout the land. Even today, these agents try to tempt the fey; those they cannot tempt, they press into their service.

And so the battle goes on, between the fey of the realm and the arak. That is the way of things.

***Editor's Note:*** *With this, the Clockmaker grew silent, leaving me alone with my thoughts and the constant whirring, ticking and chiming of the mechanisms in her shop. Reluctantly and inescapably aware of the inexorable passage of time, I hastily made my apologies to my host and informant.*

*The fir fluttered its eye-hands and whispered, "No thanks, no excuses. You have a gift, and all gifts return in the course of time to the giver. All gifts are borrowed, yours more than most, but not so much as some. Your uncle knew this as well."*

*Though I wanted to know more, particularly as her words concerned both me and Uncle Rudolph, my nervousness at overstaying my welcome in Darkon moved me to take my leave.*

*Once outside the borders, I sought an inn to await the expected arrival of my sister and compile this transcript along with my own observations.*

## Template: Folkloric Fey

The creature type "fey" normally only applies to a certain range of creatures. However, the realm of Ravenloft is plastic and mimetic. After ages of peasant beliefs, certain creatures who are not normally fey creatures have *become* fey creatures. For instance, in certain areas kobolds, goblins and ogres have become fey after years of folklore.

In cases such as these, the creature's type changes to "fey," adopting the following template:

### Folkloric Fey

"Folkloric fey" is an acquired template that may be added to any corporeal aberration, animal, dragon, fey giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid or outsider (hereafter referred to as the "base creature").

A folkloric fey uses all of the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here. Do not recalculate the creature's Hit Dice, base attack bonus, saves, or skill points if this type changes.

**Size and Type:** Size and type do not change.

**Special Qualities:** A folkloric fey retains all of the special qualities of the base creature and also gains the following:

— Low-light vision.

— Damage Reduction: If the base creature already has damage reduction, use the better value. If the folkloric fey gains damage reduction (see Table 1–1), its natural weapons are treated as magic weapons for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

### Table 1–1: Damage Reduction by Hit Die

| Hit Dice | Damage Reduction |
|---|---|
| 1–3 | — |
| 4–7 | 5/cold iron |
| 8–11 | 10/cold iron |
| 12 or more | 15/cold iron |

— Spell-Like Abilities: The folkloric fey may also take up to two additional spell-like abilities from the following list:

- *Alter self* 1/day
- *Charm person* 1/day
- *Dancing lights* 1/day
- *Invisibility* (self only) 1/day
- *Silent image* 1/day

All spell-like abilities function as if cast by a sorcerer of the same level as the creature has Hit Dice.

**Abilities:** Same as the base creature, but Intelligence is at least 3.

**Environment:** Any

**Challenge Rating:** Same as base creature +1

**Level Adjustment:** Same as base creature +1

# Chapter Two: Common Powers

Our discussion of the abilities possessed by the Arak begins, as indeed it must, with their immortality. As my sister Gennifer so ably points out in Chapter Six, immortality forms the basis for the unusual mindset of these creatures. Those gifted from birth with endless lifespans are prone to ennui, and their responses to it take many forms. Let us leave that concept for a later time, however, as we have many topics to cover relating to the abilities that the ellefolk have in common.

## Immortality

All of the Arak possess life unending. One might ask why such a gift was given to creatures that neither asked for it nor, in many cases, seem to appreciate it. After all, humans often covet more than their share of years, and in many cases, their prayers for extended lifespans are seemingly not without merit. The artist who begs uncaring eternity for a few more years to finish his masterpiece; the wizard who might finish an item of power that could ease the lot of millions of people if he only had more time for research; the hero who defends his people more ably than any other before or since: all these petitioners appear to have meritorious claims on immortality. And yet it is the fey — creatures both malign and benign, but rarely industrious or useful to others — who are granted this benefit. There is no answer to this question, though thoughtful consideration of it naturally gives rise to a theory.

Perhaps not possessing immortality underlies what makes humans and other mortals industrious and mindful of others, and having life eternal influences why the fey are uncaring and generally lacking in ambition. After all, we humans know that our days are numbered, and so we spend them endeavoring to complete whatever goals we deem important. If we knew that we had all eternity in which to do as we pleased, would we be so frantic, so industrious, so dedicated? I think not. Procrastination is likely to become much easier if one knows that there is always tomorrow. Thus, one should not be surprised that the fey seem only rarely to accomplish anything of importance.

Likewise, the human capacity to love may also stem from the limited number of years we possess. Mortality tends to force a sense of perspective: if one has only limited time on this earth, one naturally wants to spend as much time as possible with loved ones. The frantic need of young people to find love may be not only the inbred need of mortal species to reproduce before death, as some progressive philosophers have speculated, but also the result of a sense of limited time and the need to share one's years with another.

Many view even benign fey as cold and unfeeling — particularly those who have the misfortune to become enamored of them. In light of this theory, however, our assessment may not be entirely fair. A being who knows it will live forever has little need to rush into relationships and no pressure to maximize the amount of time spent with any particular companion. Though such a being may understandably wish to maximize its joys and minimize its pain, it need not prioritize its pleasures to the extent that mortals must.

Like nearly anything else, immortality may be a blessing or a curse, depending upon the recipient's viewpoint. For the most part, the fey view it as neither; it is simply a part of their being.

Some say that the fey are soulless creatures, and that is why they seem to be immune to death. Whether that assessment is true depends on how one defines a soul. Certainly, an Arak has an animating force, but it is quite unlike that of humans, being more akin to a shard of nature's own vitality than an individual spirit capable of growth and development. Whether an Arak's life force develops at all as it moves through its various forms and the occasional rebirth is a question to which only another immortal could provide the answer, since the human lifespan is not long enough to detect any change.

### Eternal Life vs. Eternal Youth

On now to the question of fey immortality. In its most specific sense, immortality is simply the absence of death. An immortal creature is one in which the natural processes that lead to death are absent or inactive. In most cases, this means that an immortal creature also does not age, since — at least in the absence of any deadly disease or injury — aging breaks down a creature's internal systems and tissues until they can no longer function. A few tales, however, speak of immortal creatures that do age, though such beings deserve pity much more than they do envy. In most cases, these stories concern mortals who were gifted with eternal life but not eternal youth.

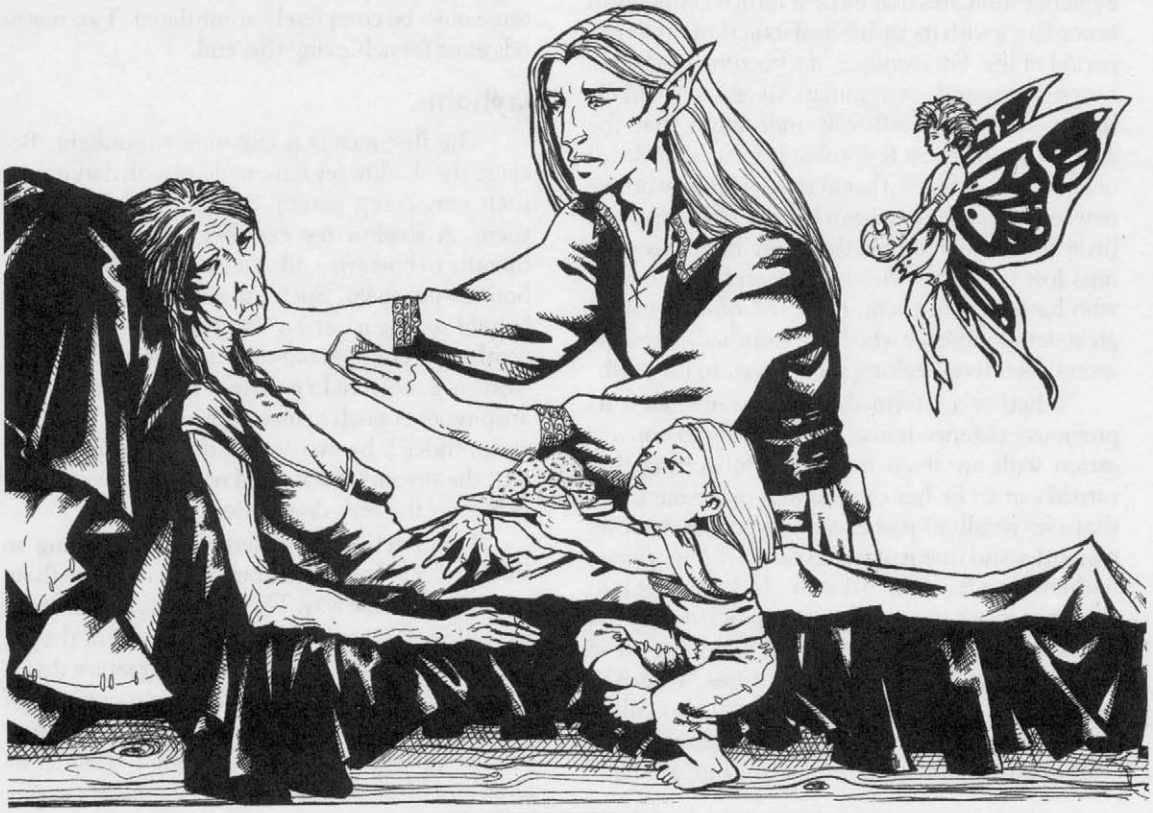
The most famous such case is the Widow of Wykmaren, an ancient crone said to resemble an undead creature more than a living immortal be-

ing. According to a woman named Lavinia, who claims to be the widow's great-great-great-great-great-granddaughter, the widow was gifted with immortality at the request of her lover, a fir named Virental. The queen granted his request, but since he had not asked for eternal youth, the woman soon began to age. The fir stayed with her as long as he could, but the time eventually came when he could no longer tolerate the sight of the toothless, sunken-cheeked hag his lover had become, and he left her in her cottage. Lavinia assured me that the fey still provide for the widow, but that no one in the village goes near the cottage or even admits that the widow is still alive. A tombstone with her name upon it stands in the cemetery, and many say that she visits it regularly, as though pining for the release of death.

The fey "body" is not like a human one: it is merely a cloak of flesh that the Arak's life force draws around itself so as to function in the physical world. Thus, it should come as no surprise that it is not subject to the same natural degenerative processes as a mortal's form.

## The Fey Version of Immortality

But I digress. The fey version of immortality does include eternal youth, probably because the fleshy cloak that a fey draws upon itself when it is created is a physical form, but not a body like that of mortal creatures. This form can bleed and can even be slain, but its existence depends entirely on the presence of the animating force inside it. Once a fey's body is damaged to the point that it can no longer function, the fey's life force departs — perhaps returning whence it came — and the "body" that once cloaked it ceases to exist, dissolving back into the natural substance from which it was formed. This phenomenon frightens many who do battle with fey creatures: imagine a warrior's consternation when his bleeding opponent simply vanishes, leaving nothing behind except a pile of leaves or a pool of water! No corpse, no grisly trophy to take, no proof that the foe even existed. Needless to say, many devout fighters have thought fey to be demons or worse because of this phenomenon. Yet to the fey, death is merely a transition, not an end — and often a welcome transition at that. It might prove inconvenient at times, par-



ticularly if the fey wishes to accomplish something (a somewhat rare circumstance), but it is nothing more than an interruption in an otherwise endless existence. Like the phoenix of Pharazian legend, it rises from its own ashes after death, refreshed and renewed. For the most part, then, death is a cleansing process no more fearsome than a good nap.

Exactly what happens to the fey's spirit (if it can be called such) in the event of physical death has long been a matter of debate. My own opinion, based on what my sister and I have gleaned in our studies, is that it dissolves into nature and then reforms, taking on a new physical cloak when it is ready to return. Such a reincorporated fey may manifest a similar appearance to the one it had previously, but often it does not. It may even return as a different breed or gender. Its mindset and outlook might also change in its next incarnation, but its essential continuity of existence is retained.

The process seems to be that when a fey is slain, its lifeforce dissolves into the great animating energy known as nature, often resulting in a brief period of unusual or violent weather as nature reabsorbs the energy, then reforms elsewhere in a new "body." Whether a slain fey can actually choose its next form or not remains unclear, but the evidence indicates that its next form is generally in accordance with its wishes and its actions in its last period of life. For example, if a portune has begun to appreciate and even emulate alvens, it will likely return as one. All ellefolk understand that the appearance of a new fey probably means the death of another, but few bother even to wonder who the newcomer might have been before. Time means so little to these creatures that they rarely seem to miss lost comrades who have been lost. Humans who have known them, however, often recall in great detail those fey who have vanished, and some spend their lives seeking such a one, to no avail.

Whether a reformed fey even remembers its previous existence is also unclear. A brief conversation with an alven in a beautiful setting that turned out to be her own garden made me think that a fey recalls its past existences only as shadowy memories and that it attaches no more importance to them than it would to dreams. Indeed, were it to dwell too much upon them, its appreciation of the present would be dimmed, and the present is the only meaningful time to these creatures. "I thought I saw a great battlefield," the alven, who called herself Luna, said in a voice like crackling leaves. "It seemed that I was watching many humans fight one another; indeed, I seemed to be cheering for one side, as though they were mine to control. Perhaps they were. But as to the reason for the battle? I cannot recall. It must not have been important."

Many people have sought the secret of how to destroy a fey permanently. Some are so eager to snuff out the lifeforce of a particularly loathsome or evil shadow fey that they spend most of their lives seeking the means to do so. Such means do exist, but employing them in order to get rid of the offending fey is seldom necessary. The ordinary process of death and reformation is usually sufficient to stop whatever difficulty the ellefolk in question has wrought, for the reformed creature rarely returns to its old area... at least not within any mortal's lifetime. Still, the human need for closure, and indeed for vengeance — though I like not admitting such a weakness in our race — often drives even those of good heart to seek a fey's complete and total destruction.

## Permanent Annihilation of Shadow Fey

For those that wish to know, then, on to the means. To destroy a fey truly and utterly, its life force must be completely annihilated. Two methods exist for achieving this end.

### Daylight

The first means is exposure to sunlight. Because the shadow fey have melded with darkness at their very cores, natural daylight is anathema to them. A shadow fey exposed to sunlight seems literally to boil away, like morning mist in the first hours after dawn. Such an event is terrifying to behold and tears at an observer's heart like the death of a child. According to a grizzled warrior who once subjected a powrie to such a fate, its cries are piteous enough to make the surrounding stones weep. Indeed, he avows that the rocks did so and that the streams of water did not stop flowing until days after the fey's destruction.

True daylight is as lethal and terrifying to shadow fey as it is to vampires, and it affects them in much the same way. This similarity has often led to confusion regarding the exact nature of the foe destroyed. One account speaks of a creature that is almost certainly a portune wrongly accused of slaying a village's children. Yet when the creature was caught and exposed to the sun, "it bared its fangs and howled in agony." The details are vague,

but I surmise from the description of the creature's decaying visage that the fangs in question were nothing more than ordinary canine teeth exposed by rapidly liquefying flesh.

A shadow fey takes lethal damage as long as it is exposed to sunlight, and if the exposure continues long enough to slay it, nothing remains — not a scrap of flesh nor a shard of bone. In its place, however, often lies some natural formation such as a pool of water that seeps away into the ground or a pile of ash-dry leaves that swirl and scatter in the wind. Several accounts, however, do mention a nauseating stench that remains for several days afterward. Curiously, various accounts also mention a brief darkening of the sky at the moment of a shadow fey's demise, as though clouds had obscured the sun. Yet no clouds were present, and no object obscured the sun, as might happen during the odd moments when the moon passes before the sun. I have no answer to this particular mystery, except to surmise that the loss of a small bit of nature's essence causes a localized weakening of nature's vitality.

The magical equivalent of daylight is insufficient to destroy a shadow fey. Though it undeniably makes them uncomfortable, it does not damage them as true sunlight does. This difference is undoubtedly attributable to the shadow fey's connection with nature as well as with darkness.

### Damage from Sunlight

Each round of exposure to direct sunlight deals 1d6 points of damage to a shadow fey. While in sunlight, the creature is in so much pain that it is disoriented and can take only a single move or standard action each round. If reduced to –10 hit points by damage from daylight, a shadow fey is destroyed utterly.

## Necromantic Magic

The second means of destroying a shadow fey is through necromantic magic. Fey are just as vulnerable to spells that drain life force through negative energy as mortals are. The difference is that when a fey's life force is snuffed out by negative energy, its body returns to nature, just as it does any time a fey dies.

This method does not ensure permanent destruction of the shadow fey, however. Just as a mortal may rise again as a corrupted version of itself, the life force of a fey who is destroyed in this manner may also reincorporate. As with mortals, this process invariably corrupts the life force of the fey, twisting it into something even darker than it was before.

Since the fey's body is no more, its corrupted spirit has no vessel in which to return. Therefore, it can reappear only as an incorporeal undead creature. The conventional types of incorporeal undead are possible for fey as well as humans — fey wraiths, spectres, ghosts and even creatures akin to banshees have been recorded. Some forms, however, are specific to the shadow fey, such as the oulette and the prisim. All are rare and quite terrifying.

Undead fey can be destroyed by the power of true faith, just as normal undead can, and an undead fey destroyed in this manner is gone forever.

## The Aftermath of Undeath

Never is an Arak that returns after the draining of its life force the same as it once was. This process breaks the cycle of death and rebirth that cleanses and refreshes the fey, leaving its very essence warped and twisted. Darkness forever claims this bit of nature's vitality, and all the shadow fey who remain feel its loss. Thus, anyone who slays a shadow fey in this manner can expect to be hunted for the rest of his life.

Is this single-minded quest for the perpetrator's destruction mere vengeance? I suspect it is not. Anyone who would deliberately seek the destruction of a fey in this manner, placing its life force forever beyond recovery and in the power of darkness, is a danger to all other shadow fey. Indeed, one could be argue that such a person is a danger to his own race as well. Recognizing that danger, the Arak pursue the destruction of such a person with a passion quite unusual for them.

Like humans, most fey view the undead as violations of everything that is natural. A few (most notably the sith,) however, seem to consider them a sort of kindred spirit. They are, after all, still immortal in their own way, barring destruction by positive energy. Furthermore, they are not subject to alterations of form or outlook, as the shadow fey themselves are when they die. Thus, they make unusually stable and oftentimes loyal companions.

Undead fey are occasionally seen in the company of sith, but it is not clear whether the sith control them in the manner of evil human clergy controlling undead, or whether they are merely boon companions. Judging from a few accounts of sith hunting by night in the company of fey spectres, some of these creatures apparently find the undead better companions than either mortals or other shadow fey.

I shall conclude my discussion of the means of destroying shadow fey here. Further discussion of the vulnerabilities of these creatures is reserved for a later chapter in this manuscript, where it can be addressed in greater depth.

## The Effects of Destruction

Since Arak have no afterlives, the concept of permanent destruction terrifies them. To face nothingness after eons of life is certainly no less terrifying a notion than death is to mortals, and in fact much more so, since a fey knows it has literally nothing to look forward to.

## Recovery after Annihilation

As with all things, annihilation can be reversed, but only through the most powerful of dweomers. As with creatures not of this world, an annihilated fey can be returned to life by means of the most powerful spells that an arcane or divine spellcaster can wield: a *wish* or a *miracle*. Such recovery is, of course, an alteration of reality that happens only rarely.

## Mutability

Shadow fey exist in countless varieties. The various types, or "breeds," share certain characteristics, but an Arak is not tied to a physical form in the same way that a human is. Members of our poor race have but one body, whose appearance we can change only in limited ways — we may be fat or thin, old or young, scarred or plain, but our features remain the same unless we bring powerful magic to bear.

This is not true of the shadow fey. The physical manifestation of a creature of this sort is a mirror of its inner being, beliefs and behavior. Thus, appearance can change dramatically over time as the creature's spirit grows and develops.

Such alterations are not usually perceived by humans, since our life spans are simply too short. As noted above, shadow fey are notoriously slow to develop, and some seem never to do so at all. Thus, a psychic change sufficient to warrant a physical alteration could take hundreds or even thousands of years. This is why fey of all sorts seem so eternal. Indeed, however, some are not. In theory, it is even possible for a shadow fey to change to a different breed merely by coming to admire and emulate that breed over time. Most such changes are not so dramatic, but histories hint at the possibility.

We can gain evidence of this mutability in two ways: from stories and from direct observations. One stems from a curious account in which the great-granddaughter of a woman who took a fir lover was approached by a brag who gave the same name that the older woman had recorded in her diary before her death. When the girl, who had some knowledge of the shadow fey from her ancestor's diary, questioned the creature about why it had come, it indicated that it sought Fiona, the girl's great-grandmother. Though it would not explain its business with the older woman, the girl noted a sweet sort of sadness in its demeanor when she explained that Fiona had been dead for some thirty years. Evidently, however, the creature saw something of his former lover in the girl, for he continued to visit her for years thereafter. Exactly what sort of experience had instigated such a dramatic change of breed was not clear from the girl's notes, but the fir had apparently been captured and put to work as a slave by evil creatures from which he could not escape. Decades of enslavement instilled in him an appreciation for order and hard work, but also dulled the goodness of his soul and made him more self-serving.

Incidents have also been recorded of physical changes that occurred quickly, in response to some event. I found a most interesting case in the journals of my uncle, who was present at the destruction of a dancing man by sunlight. As the rays of the sun melted the fey's visage, his mate, who was untouched by the sun, cried out and stretched her arms toward him. On the spot, she too acquired huge blistered patches on her arms and face, and her exposed cheekbones gave bloody testimony to her grief. And so she remained, according to my uncle's account, for years thereafter, until he saw her no more. What happened to her is anyone's guess, but her name surfaced later in his notes, stating she was now consort to a gremlin. Such mutation of form may explain why certain names are so common among the shadow fey. Presumably, some do change the names they give publicly when they discover themselves with entirely new forms, but others may not bother to do so. It also explains the existence of apparently unique shadow fey, who bear only a faint resemblance to one breed or another, but have their own particular features — such as the alven hero with the wings of a bird and hair the color of silver flame.

Legendary Arak seem to arise every thousand years or so, unique creatures that seem like breeds of their own. Some unaccountably share powers with their forebears, and some even bear some resemblance to the vanished heroes of yesteryear.

Whether such alterations are deliberate on the part of the shadow fey or occur spontaneously is worth asking. Logic seems to indicate the latter, since the whimsical nature of some fey would have them altering their natural forms all the time. Some can, of course, do so, but usually such effects are temporary rather than lasting. No, a reasoned study argues for an automatic transition to make the physical body more closely match the spirit inside it. Though most fey can easily take other shapes to hoodwink mortals, their true forms do not lie. In some manner that we mortals do not entirely understand, a fey's physical form presents a true picture of its spirit. A fey whose true form resembles a powrie is a powrie in action, thought, and deed, even if it was "born" a portune.

This assertion then begs the question of whether all shadow fey are, in fact, the same kind of creature. Indeed, it would seem so, since one breed can physically transform into another over time merely by adopting its attitudes and mannerisms. The fact that a fey appears to take on a physical body as we would put on a new frock at birth perhaps bears out this assertion. How far this metaphor can be carried, I do not know. Does a fey actually take off its "body" and put on a new one at any time other than when it dies and is reborn? Supposedly not, since such changes appear to be gradual in most cases. Yet its "clothing" is certainly subject to extensive tailoring while it is worn.

This hypothesis might also help to explain why there seem to be so many breeds. Countless

varieties exist, and many are similar to one another in some way. Perhaps the similarities stem from incomplete transitions and are not separate breeds at all, which might also explain why some shadow fey spend the majority of their time shapeshifted. Perhaps they are undergoing a transition that they do not want others to see. At the Seelie or Unseelie court, such means of hiding their true natures are probably ineffective, but outside the presence of such high magic, other fey (and mortals in the know) could well be taken in.

This transmutation may also explain why fey are generally unconcerned with the fate of others of their kind who have disappeared. Unless they know of a fey's destruction (and Arak always seem to know of such events), they appear not to care when they lose track of boon companions. Possibly this is because they know their friends are still present. Either they have died and will soon be back with new bodies, or they have altered their viewpoints and bodies in some way. Either way, the friend has changed and may not be the same sort of being it once was. Thus, the Arak tend not to seek out their lost friends. Those who are still inclined to befriend a particular fey are likely to do so again in their new forms. Those who have changed too much carry on with new companions, and their old ones are likely better off without them anyway.

Can a fey's powers change along with its form? Very likely so, since powers too are something of a mirror of a creature's true nature. Such a transmutation into a wholly different sort of creature is difficult for mortals to understand. Can I become a bird merely by trying to fly? Not very likely. A fey might, however. Or better still, it might become a birdlike creature of human shape with a voice more beautiful than a nightingale.

Thus, a fey's very mutability suggests the ultimate stability — the same creature beneath it all. The vulnerability of all shadow fey to the same kinds of destruction, regardless of breed or power, also supports this theory. All fey also share a few other qualities. All of them can see better than humans in moonlight, starlight and other dim illumination, and all shadow fey can see in total darkness. Perhaps that minor difference is an effect of the darkness that infuses the soul of a shadow fey, for it is not a great difference.

If all fey are the same, however, what is it that generates a certain power in one and not in another? At this point, I shall turn the discussion over to my sister, who will explore certain of the extraordinary powers and abilities of the fey.

# Chapter Three: Extraordinary Powers

I suppose the title of this chapter is somewhat less than ingenious, considering that all fey powers are extraordinary to those who don't have them, such as we mortals. Yet in this sense, I use the term to differentiate powers that are common to all Arak, such as immortality, from those that are possessed by only certain breeds and individuals. My sister Laurie has detailed the significant common powers of these creatures in the previous chapter, and it now falls to me to enumerate the other powers that have been attributed to fey in general and, in particular, to the shadow fey.

Not all of the powers I shall discuss here are verified fey powers, as such matters can be very difficult to substantiate. Some are merely theories put forward to explain certain results, and others are postulated as necessary foundations for verified powers. As always, however, Laurie and I have made every effort to verify our material, and where it has not been possible to do so, we include the sources and our reasoning. Any reader who can produce evidence that either supports or refutes our theories is gratefully invited to do so, for as scholars, we value nothing more than a chance to broaden our horizons and sharpen our reasoning power. As mortals, we have such a short time to hone our minds that we must cooperate with as many others of our kind and other kinds as possible in pursuit of the truth. Though I am often chastised for the dangers that my insatiable curiosity brings to others and me, the pursuit of knowledge is a worthy goal and is worth a modicum of risk. For without knowledge, how may we gain enough understanding of other species to protect ourselves from malign influences or add our support to the force of good in the world?

Yet enough of my prattling — let us move on to the powers and speculate upon them as the opportunity presents itself. The first few powers presented in this chapter are in fact common to most if not all fey. However, their manifestation does change with the breed, so they cannot be discussed in such broad and sweeping terms as truly common powers such as immortality.

## Changelings

All fey, regardless of breed, can create changelings, and all do so with disturbing frequency — even those who are generally benevolent creatures. Mortals usually consider turning a vibrantly alive human into a mere automaton that lacks feeling and independent thought a crime, but the fey do not see it that way. As far as the Arak are concerned, the creation of a changeling (or the "bestowing of transcendence," as they call it) is a gift and one that should be appreciated by the mortal in question. Most fey are confused if confronted by the anger or grief of other mortals over this act, but they tend to shrug off such reactions as the shortsightedness of lesser species. After all, the recipient of the gift has not complained. Of course, the recipient no longer possesses the will to lodge a complaint or even to become angry, but such details are unimportant to the Arak.

Indeed, we mortals may well lack the perspective on the subject that eons of existence would grant. Yet to some extent, at least, we must live within the limitations of our perception and thus the general abhorrence for the practice of creating changelings with which our race generally greets the process.

### Why Are Changelings Made?

The Arak create changelings for many reasons, but whatever they stand to gain from the process, they always believe they are doing the mortal a favor by protecting its best skills from the ravages of time, disease and death. Some wish to control the resulting creatures directly and use them for their own purposes; others are happy to share them with others in the fey community. A case in point is the harpsichord virtuoso, whose story is detailed in a subsequent chapter. In many cases, however, the desired use is military. Whole forces of changeling soldiers are often created to fight battles that the Arak themselves dare not fight for fear of breaking the Law of Arak, which states that no shadow fey may kill another shadow fey.

Sometimes the shadow fey turn mortals into changelings as an act of mercy — at least in their minds. The intensity of emotion that humans can display often frightens fey, and when a mortal appears to be overcome by grief or rage, some fey — most notably the shee — consider it a kindness to stanch the wellspring of that person's grief. Some Arak also form a bond of sorts with mortals. By melding the shadows of such beloved creatures with the essence of shadow, they create creatures not so different from themselves, at least in theory. Indeed, changelings are often called "kin" of the shadow fey who create them. The creator of a changeling always considers that the mortal se-

lected to become a changeling has received the greatest honor that can be bestowed upon such a base creature: not just immortality, but also kinship with the fey!

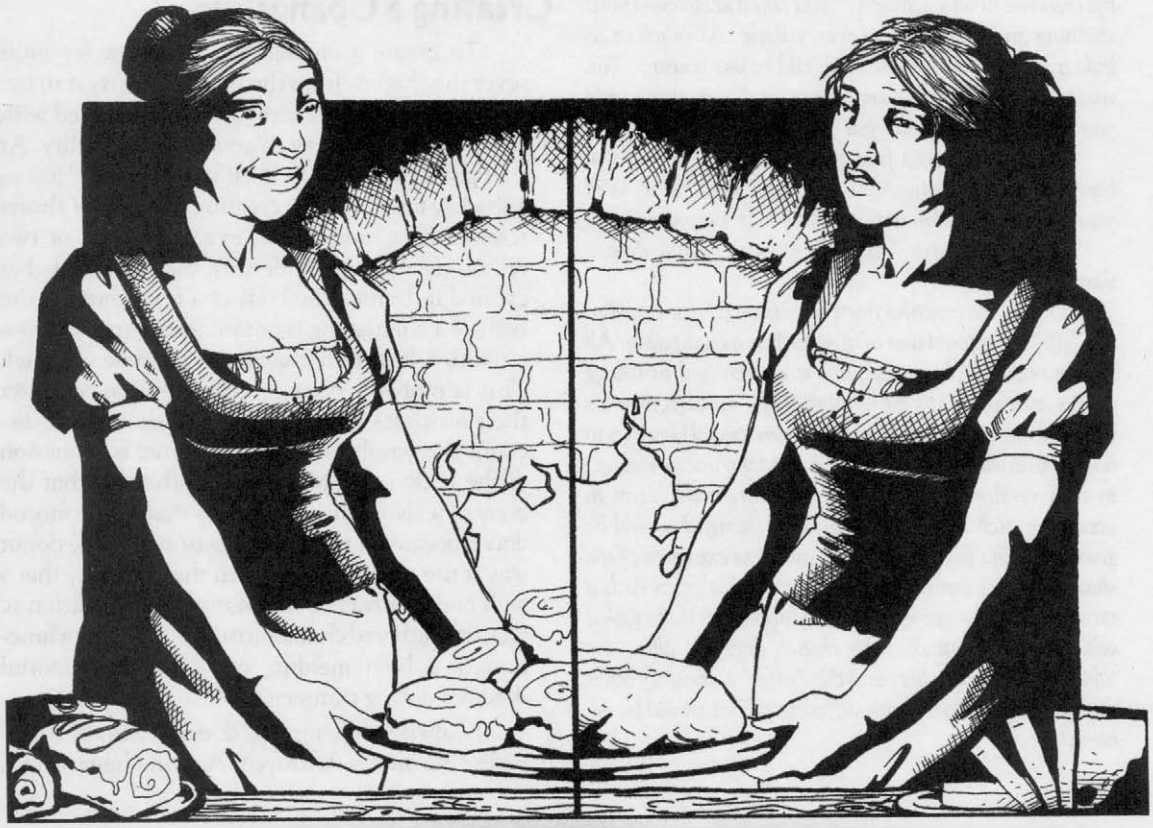
The fey do not see the loss of the victim's emotions and personality as much of a loss at all. In fact, the victim should be grateful to the fey for ridding it of those pesky emotions that burden its mortal existence. As a changeling, one experiences no sorrow, no anger, no aging, no death and almost no pain. One also experiences no love and no happiness, but whether the shadow fey are even capable of more than the briefest recognition of such emotions is a matter of some debate. Clearly, they do not experience the heights of ecstasy or the depths of despair that humans do. We humans tend to place much value on our emotions, but robbing a person of something that might be of value to him is an act that mortals of good heart rarely consider beneficial, even if they think the other being's value system distorted.

Yet what if a person's grief is too heavy to bear? Might not such a person welcome the "gift"? Or what of the person who covets immortality at any price? The evidence shows that in some cases mortals actively seek the gift, or at least do not refuse it when given a choice. Consider the following case.

## Excerpt from the Diary of Melvina Joran

*On the afternoon of the day that I buried the last of my children, I went home with no purpose in mind beyond seeking oblivion in a bottle of strong drink. My husband had been slain in the war, and my parents had long ago passed from this world. The first of my little ones died of the plague as a child. The second grew to adulthood but drowned in the millpond four years ago. The third, the apple of my eye, grew beautiful and strong—seeming almost to take into herself the vitality of those who had died. She had the warmth of the sun in her hair and the blue of the sky in her eyes, and all in our village loved her. One, though, loved her too much.*

*Harth Dantain, the son of the miller, wanted her to wife, but she would not have him. Though she was kind in her refusals, she was firm, and he grew angry at her rejections. He said that if he could not have her, then no one could. One night, my beautiful child went outside during a storm to bring in the horses from the field, and she did not return. He had waited for her and strangled her, leaving her body in the field.*



*There is nothing left for me now. I can continue to spin and sew and bake my bread, but for what reason? I have no life. I would end my life myself if I had the will to do so, but even that, it seems, is denied me by this weariness and ennui that I feel.*

**[the following day]**

*I had a dream last night; at least, I think it was a dream. A pretty little winged creature looked down at me from my bedpost with an expression of great curiosity. "Why are you sad?" it said.*

*"Because all that I love is gone," I told it, my mind still fogged by sleep. "I have nothing left to live for."*

*"Do you feel pain?" said the creature.*

*"Pain — yes. Pain so deep in my soul that I think it has torn a great hole there. But mostly, I feel empty."*

*"Would you like the sadness to go away?" said the creature with a smile. "I can give you that gift, if you wish it."*

*"You can make it so that I will no longer feel the terrible loneliness, the emptiness, the sorrow?" I asked.*

*"I can," it said. "And it is not death I offer, but eternal life without suffering. Without aging. Without the pain of sorrow."*

*"It sounds too good to be true," I marveled. "What would you want in exchange?"*

*"Nothing that you would be unwilling to give," said the creature in all solemnity. "You could keep doing your spinning and weaving and even baking. As much or as little as you pleased. And we would be like cousins. You would not be able to feel love anymore, but neither would you feel sorrow. Would you like such a gift?"*

*"It sounds like a fine gift," I replied, "and I am honored that you offer it. But I must think on it. Will you come again tomorrow night for my answer?"*

*"I shall be here," said the creature, and then it vanished.*

*I know the creature must have been a fairie and that the "gift" she offered was to turn me into a changeling. All I have ever heard or read, in the church and in village stories, warns against the rending of one's soul from one's body. Indeed, the priest has often given special blessings to houses to ensure that the fey will not take undue interest in their residents. But what, I wonder, is the harm in accepting such an offer? It is not as though I would be giving up a life full of joy for the mindless existence of the shadow-reft. I am nearly indistinguishable from such a creature now — going mindlessly about my daily tasks, without joy or humor. The church does not allow the taking of one's own life, and this "offer" is the only other means I can see to end my suffering. What would be the harm?*

The woman was found the next day, her eyes vacant and staring.

"Shadow-reft," said the priest. "Perhaps, in this case, it truly was a kindness."

## The Nature of Changelings

Changelings vary in both form and function according to the breed that created them, and individual variations may be noted as well by discerning observers. I shall go into more detail on the kinds of changelings in Chapter Seven. For the time being, however, I shall concentrate on the creation of changelings and possible means of restoring them to normal, though information on the latter subject is both rare and incomplete.

In the broadest sense, a changeling is a mortal whose soul — or shadow, as the fey call it — has been stolen by a fey and taken to the Shadow Rift, where it gains immortality but loses its individuality, its drive, and all the other aspects that make up a human's personality. The creature left behind is still animate and technically alive, but it lacks a will of its own and appears listless and uninterested in its surroundings. Such creatures are often called "elfshot" or "shadow-reft."

## Creating a Changeling

To create a changeling, a shadow fey must sever the shadow from the body and carry it to the Shadow Rift. Once there, it must be infused with the essence of shadow to grant it immortality. At that point, it can cloak itself with a "body," just as a shadow fey does at its creation. This body always resembles its mortal one, except for one or two telltale features that identify the fey breed that created it. Unlike the body of a fey, however, the body of a changeling is not subject to spontaneous alteration based on changes in attitude or belief. This is probably because changelings never alter their attitudes or beliefs, but we should not discount the possibility that this feature is a function of the body itself. My own hypothesis is that the body of a changeling resembles that of the mortal donor because it mirrors the person who the donor was at the time of severing, in the same way that a fey's body mirrors its true nature. The addition of identifying breed characteristics is probably a function of a brief melding of the fey and mortal shadows during transcendence.

Likewise, a changeling does not acquire a new body if its own is destroyed. A slain changeling is

forever destroyed. Its shadow is so much a part of its form that nothing remains when the form dies.

What happens to the mortal's drive, passion and personality? These traits reside neither in the changeling nor in the shell left behind. The mortal's skills are preserved in the changeling and can even be improved with training and practice, but the emotions, the dreams and the drive of the original person are gone. My own theory is that they are carried to the Rift with the shadow, but are then somehow absorbed to power the transcendence process. If true, this theory bodes ill for the fate of a mortal whose shadow is reunited with its body after transcendence.

Another question to consider is whether a changeling remembers its former life. Evidence indicates that it does, but also that it does not care about it. This makes considerable sense in that skills are part memory and part instinct, so to retain the skills, a changeling would need to retain its memories. Yet since it lacks emotions, the memories carry no more meaning for it than the technique for kneading bread.

The tools for creating a changeling include a silver sickle, a substance called ebondust, a shadow candle, a bit of faerie food and a shadow sack. Each of these items is described in more detail in Chapter Seven.

To create a changeling, a fey must cover the target mortal with the ebondust and then sever its shadow with the silver sickle. The mortal must be asleep for this process to occur. Exactly why this is necessary is not clear, but I hypothesize that it must involve a kind of psychic attack on the mortal's spirit possible only when the spirit is free to wander in the dream state. The use of the sickle bears out the concept of an attack.

## Restoring a Changeling

Whether or not it is possible to restore a changeling to normal after the transcendence process is complete is a matter of some debate. Perusal of literally thousands of accounts of changelings has yielded records of many attempts, but few clear enumerations of the methods and precious little evidence of success. Nevertheless, people will continue to try, so we present what means we have found. We make no guarantees as to their efficacy, however.

### High Magic

As with other conditions that are incurable by any other means, magic of the most potent sort may be used to restore a changeling to its former self. Access to such magic for ordinary folk is, of course, drastically limited. An account does exist, though, of a prince prevailing upon a senior wizard at court to wish his beloved back to normal. Success in this case appears to have been complete, though of course the process was costly to the wizard.

### Magic and Restoring a Changeling

A changeling may be restored to normal with a *wish* or a *miracle* spell. *Limited wish* can rejoin the shadow to the shell, but it does not restore the victim's personality.

### Creating a Changeling

To create a changeling, a shadow fey must attack the target both ethereally and physically. The silver sickle is a ghost touch weapon with at least a +1 enhancement bonus, so it is capable of attacking on both the Ethereal and the Material Planes. The target's AC against this attack is 10 + its Dexterity modifier + a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma modifier. Armor worn does not count unless it is *ghost touch armor*.

Each successful attack drains 1d4 points of Charisma +1 per point of the sickle's enhancement bonus. The shadow fey takes a hit point damage equal to one-half this amount, rounded down. This effect manifests as drops of blood on the silver sickle's blade. When the victim's Charisma reaches 0, the shadow is severed.

The shadow fey must then use a move action to place the severed shadow into the shadow sack. For each round that a severed shadow remains outside the sack, it loses 1 rank of a randomly determined skill.

When the shadow is reincorporated in the Shadow Rift, the shadow fey takes 1 point of Charisma damage. This lost Charisma is transferred to the shadow as 1 point of permanent Charisma gain. With it comes the signature trait of the fey breed that donated the Charisma: long, delicate fingers for a firkin, a horselike visage for a bragkin and so forth. The Charisma damage to the shadow fey can be restored by any of the normal means.

## Bargaining with the Fey

This method has been by far the most popular with the loved ones of changelings. The logic is simple: an Arak has, for whatever purpose, taken a loved one's shadow away; thus, reversing the process must be possible for that fey. Whether an individual fey can in fact reverse the process completely is highly debatable, but we shall stipulate for the sake of argument that the possibility exists.

The first task is finding a fey to bargain with. Logic indicates that one should bargain with the selfsame fey who took the shadow, but there are two problems with this concept. The first is that loved ones may not know the identity of the perpetrator. The second is that having achieved his goal in taking the shadow, that particular fey may never again visit the area from which he acquired the shadow — at least, not within a mortal lifetime. Thus, locating the specific Arak with whom one wishes to bargain is a daunting task indeed.

One tale tells of a young man who wished to restore his wife. Not knowing where else to start, he waited near the site of a supposed fairy circle at night for months on end until he finally spotted a group of alven planting a moon garden. Approaching them carefully and with gifts of honey and flowers, he inquired after the Arak who had taken his wife's shadow. The creatures recognized his description of his wife and apparently knew who possessed her. However, they appeared greatly distressed that he might wish to deprive his wife of the gift of immortality, but apparently figuring that he too might make a fair changeling, they directed him to a particular hollow tree and told him to come at midnight. His flayed, gnawed bones were found there the following morning, stacked loosely beneath the tree. Atop them lay a bloody, furred rag that turned out to be his scalp.

One can only assume from this that the alven had directed the young man to a teg living within the tree. Either this was the creature that had taken his wife's shadow, or it had taken up residence there after that creature's departure. Obviously, the creature he found there was uninterested in bargaining with him.

An occasional account tells of attempts to bargain with fey other than the one who created the changeling. No accounts mention success in such an endeavor, but evidently the bargainers have some reason to feel hopeful for at least part of the process.

All accounts indicate that a changeling belongs to the fey who created it, unless it is freely given to another Arak. Some fey share their changelings with the community, but even so, each changeling has only one actual owner. Thus, the only possibility for restoring an elfshot loved one by bargaining with another fey would seem to be convincing that fey to gain "legal" possession of the changeling first — that is, a change of ownership sanctioned by Queen Maeve herself. Such a tactic would be unlikely to work unless the fey already desired that changeling (in which case it would be difficult to bargain it away), or unless the fey were unusually well disposed toward the mortal making the request.

One account details an attempt by a paladin named Montcrese to convince a portune that a fir had illegally taken a changeling. The portune claimed that the only possible "illegality" in taking any mortal as a changeling was the possibility that it had already been promised to another fey. Though asking the mortal first was a courtesy, it was never required, since mortals are by nature inferior beings incapable of knowing what might be best for them. The discussion attracted the attention of a brag, however, who then claimed that the changeling in question should have been his and that in fact the fir had deliberately imprisoned it that night in order to take its intended changeling itself. Watching the argument in fascination, the paladin absently picked up an apple lying on the ground nearby and began to eat it. The following day, the paladin was found lying on the ground with a vacant stare — elfshot himself. Evidently, the two fey had decided to resolve the brag's complaint by ensuring that he got a suitable changeling in lieu of the one he had wanted.

The fact that mortals are inferior beings without rights in the eyes of most fey limits the ability of a human to bargain with them. A more important limiting factor, however, is the abhorrence the fey bear for making promises of any sort. By its very nature, a bargain involves a promise, and most fey cannot abide being bound by their word. Striking a bargain with one is not impossible, but doing so almost always requires careful wording of the agreement and an offer that is highly desirable to the fey.

Money is not usually much of an incentive for giving up a changeling, since the fey have very little use for it and can make all the fairy gold they wish, which usually serves their purposes quite well. An offer to trade oneself for the changeling

may be sufficient, if the person making the offer is obviously superior in some way to the existing changeling. Such an agreement, however, must be meticulously worded or the shadow fey will simply end up with two changelings instead of one. On occasion, a shadow fey has proven willing to strike a bargain with someone who promises an item that the fey cannot get or make herself, such as a particular magic device or a unique item — perhaps the flower on which its enemy swore an oath. Often, fulfilling such a bargain requires the mortal to go on a quest that lasts for years.

If the fey is particularly capricious, it may ask something it thinks is impossible in return for the restoration of the loved one. For example, it might require the mortal to reroute a river, stanch a waterfall, or paint a mural using a brush with a single hair. Almost always in such a circumstance, the fey first gets the mortal to agree that forfeiture means the fey may take him as a changeling as well.

Yet what happens if a mortal succeeds in finding the fey responsible, striking a bargain with it for the changeling's return, and fulfilling his side of the agreement? In such a case, assuming that the wording of the agreement allows the fey no way to weasel out, the fey must fulfill its end of the bargain. This is the point at which the wording of the agreement becomes particularly important. If it specified only the changeling's return, the fey is likely to deposit the still-functioning changeling with the mortal and consider the agreement fulfilled. The mortal then ends up with nearly identical copies of the loved one — one a changeling and the other a shell some years older — and no way to reunite them.

If the agreement specified the recombination of the shadow and the shell, the fey must detach the shadow from its changeling body, place it back in the shadow sack, and return with it to the shell. It must then laboriously reattach the shadow with a special silver needle. The result, according to the single text we have found describing it, is often less than desirable.

## Excerpt from the Diary of Calinda Jenkins

*I was elated! Against all odds, I had fulfilled my portion of the bargain with the strange-looking fairy, baking five hundred sweet cakes in a single day, each sprinkled with seeds from poppies that grew in a single field more than one thousand miles away. I should never have been able to accomplish it without the help of the townsfolk and the magic of our resident priest. But now the deed was done, and my beloved daughter was to be restored to me.*

*The priest knocked at the door, and there stood my Livinia, haggard and aged beyond her thirty years by the neglect she suffered in the infirmary where she had lived. I took her to a chair and bade her sit, which she did without remark. "Soon," I told her, "your soul will be back within you, and we shall laugh again."*

*I set to laying out the things that the fairy had specified: a needle of purest silver, a sleeping draught for Livinia and a spool of thrice-spun silk. I congratulated myself again for wording the bargain with him so carefully that he would have to recombine Livinia's soul with her body.*

*Presently the creature appeared in the hearth — an orange-haired little fairy with olive skin and a pair of small antennae. "Give her the sleeping draught and lay her down on the bed," it said, and when I had done so, it set to work without another word. Singing an oddly sad-sounding song to itself, it sprinkled her body with an shining powder. Then it brought forth a tiny candle from its vest, lit it, and placed it beside her head. Next, it pulled a roll of what looked like black linen from a sack and spread it over Livinia, the material seeming to mold itself perfectly to her body as it took on a kind of dark glow. Taking up the needle and the thread, the creature began to sew the linen to Livinia's foot. Drops of blood appeared where his needle pierced, but just as quickly dried up again. All through the night he worked, stitching the linen to Livinia's still form. Just before dawn, he broke the thread, extinguished the candle, and nodded to me. "She is mortal again," he said, "and more's the pity." With that, the creature vanished.*

*Presently, Livinia began to stir. "Wh... where am I?" she said, opening her eyes and glancing about. "Mother?"*

*"Yes my dear, I am your mother and you are home at last," I said, unable to contain my joy. At last, recognition in her eyes!*

*"I seem to have had a dream, Mother. I was sitting in a beautiful glade and spinning... always spinning. There were odd little creatures and animals around me, and my wool was replaced constantly."*

*"The fairies took you, my dear Livinia. They made you a changeling and took you away to spin your fine thread for their garments. But I got you back, and you are home now."*

*Livinia frowned and rose to look at herself in the mirror. "Mother, how long have I been gone?"*

*"Twenty years, my dear," I said sadly. It took me some time to find the creature who did this to you and strike a bargain for your return."*

*She touched her gray hair. "I was immortal there," she whispered. "I felt no pain. It's true that I don't recall feeling any joy, but I didn't seem to mind. There I spun every day, working because I was told to do so. Now I must work every day to live, but I will age and die anyway. No one will have me to wife now; I am too old. Mother, what have you done to me?"*

*Her anguished wail cut at my heart like a knife. I did my best to comfort her, telling her the two of us needed no one else. Eventually, she quieted down, went to her wheel, and began to spin.*

*The days passed, and she spun and spun. Her thread brought in much coin, for she was the most talented spinner for miles around, and everyone was glad to see her back. But though she remembered everyone and still possessed her talents, there was something not right about her. She seemed to have no passion for her work, doing it mechanically rather than with the enjoyment she once showed. Her eyes revealed no spark, and though she spoke politely with others, none of her old bantering spirit remained in her. What had once made her Livinia was gone.*

*One night, I went out to search for the fairy and demand of him what he had done with that portion of her soul that made her unique. All through the night I searched, but I found nothing. When I returned in the morning, Livinia was dead — run through with her own spindle, which still lay in her hand. Those thrice-damned fairies! Discontented with their bargain, they had slain my Livinia!*

Despite this mother's assertion that the fairies had murdered her daughter, she herself likely bears the brunt of the blame for the outcome. The difficulty of adjusting to transcendence is blunted by the victim's lack of her former passion for life, but what must it be like to return from such an existence and find oneself old and mortal? Livinia obviously could not cope with the transition and took her own life.

Is it even possible for the fey to restore the individuality that once set one mortal apart from another? I suspect it is not. Indeed, if the theory I espoused above is correct, that portion of the soul is forever lost to shadow, used to power the transcendence. If a fey could restore that essence, it would probably require a bit of its own essence — a price that any fey would be loath to pay.

Of course, Queen Maeve might have the power to restore that portion of a changeling's former self, but it seems highly unlikely that she would see fit to do so.

In conclusion, restoring a changeling is apparently both difficult and dangerous, and the results are often unfortunate. Therefore, we must recommend that outside the use of high magic, changelings be left to their fate, heartless as it may seem, for they are never quite the same again.

### Full Restoration

To restore fully the spirit of a former changeling, a shadow fey must donate part of its own spirit in the form of 1 point of Charisma drain. This process reawakens the former changeling's spark of individuality, which is imprinted in its shadow. It also gives the mortal some physical characteristic of the breed from which the donation came, as noted for a changeling body. This loss of Charisma can never be recovered while the mortal lives.

## Shapeshifting

This power is also common to nearly all fey, but again, it tends to take different forms for different breeds. Shadow fey rarely appear in their true forms, just as they never reveal their true names. Of course, allowing a mortal to see their true forms is probably not nearly as dangerous as trusting one with a true name. Still, it is usually more convenient for fey who wish to deal with mortals to do so in other forms, so as to avoid suspicion and inconvenience.

Many fey prefer to take animal forms, though most are quite capable of assuming nearly any form that is commensurate with their size, including the shapes of objects. An Arak's preferred animal form depends on its breed, as follows.

Alven usually change into flying insects, particularly those associated with gardens. Bumblebees, butterflies and moths are common choices, though some alven are even known to choose flies or wasps as their alternate forms.

Brags almost always assume the forms of equine creatures, be they horses, ponies, mules, or donkeys. Such creatures are bred to work, and that is what evidently brings the most joy to a brag.

Fir generally prefer rodent forms, with the seelie version opting for the shapes of mice and hedgehogs, and the unseelie ones favoring rat forms.

This preference hearkens well to their talents for delicate mechanical work involving small pieces.

Muryans tend to assume the forms of forest hunters such as ferrets, weasels, martins, badgers and wolverines. Given their joy in melee combat and the quickness of their movements, this preference comes as no surprise.

Portunes prefer the forms of reptiles, particularly snakes and lizards, though some are particularly fond of turtle and tortoise forms. Whether this preference stems from a reptile's nearly unmatched ability to stay hidden or from the fact that most humans find the creatures repugnant and avoid them is unclear.

Powries prefer the forms of flying insects, much as alven do, but their choices are generally stinging insects such as wasps or bees.

Teg prefer the forms of predatory animals such as wolves or foxes. The joy they take in tearing flesh from bone makes such forms quite logical choices.

Typically, each individual shadow fey has one animal form that it can take at any time and seemingly without effort. Normally, this form is an animal chosen from among those common for its breed, but the specific creature tends to reflect the personality of the individual.

Shapeshifting does have its limitations, however, even for preferred forms. According to Uncle Rudolph's notes, no fey may stay in its animal form for more than 12 hours out of each 24, though it may freely shift back and forth between that form and its natural one, so long as its limit is not exceeded. Thus, we might assume that if one could capture a shadow fey in animal form and hold it captive for more than 12 hours, it would be forced to return to its true form.

Laurie and I decided to test this hypothesis. We discussed at some length what sort of trap would be best, since letting a shadow fey know that it was deliberately being trapped for study would not do. Such a presumptuous action would almost certainly bring retribution of unimaginable kinds — and not just from the fey who was trapped. No, the trap would need to be such that the fey would think it had gotten trapped accidentally.

The trap would have to be made of cold iron, since that is a substance to which nearly all fey are vulnerable. A trap constructed of that material, therefore, might prove resistant to any magic the

fey might otherwise use to escape. A small iron flask seemed like a promising idea, but it would be too difficult for us to see inside, especially if we were to keep our distance. Then we hit on an idea: an iron cauldron with a small hole worn through it and a skillet on which it would stand squarely.

The setting was the next most important consideration. A young man of our acquaintance named Roland had considerable talent with clocks and other mechanical devices. We were certain that, knowingly or not, he received the aid of one or more fir at night to finish his projects, since he had the reputation of being able to take on any amount of work without missing a delivery date. He was also more than a little absent-minded and quite untidy in his domestic habits.

Laurie and I made a journey to Roland's home with our prepared cookpot and skillet and contrived to spend the night in a room off his workroom. We asked him if he might be able to fix our pot, and when he agreed, Laurie carefully positioned it at an angle atop a loose pile of clock parts and half-finished work and set the skillet on the floor below. I contrived to place a sleeping draught in his nightly tea, and soon he was yawning mightily. We all retired for the night, but Laurie and I kept watch on the workroom from just behind our door, which we had left ajar. Presently, a large rat entered the room and, sniffing here and there, made its way toward the pile of unfinished work. When it reached the pile on which the cookpot sat and moved onto the skillet to nose the bottom of it, I toppled the pot over, guiding it with a *mage hand* spell. It landed squarely over the rat, though I had to yank a part or two from beneath it quickly to ensure that it sat correctly. Thumpings and poundings can from within the pot, but to no avail. Shortly, a rat nose poked through the tiny hole, but the creature's form was far too large for it to get through. The pot rattled a bit as the creature inside heaved upward,

## Alternate Form

All shadow fey possess the alternate form special quality, though each is limited to a specific second form chosen from among those characteristic for its breed.

**Alternate Form (Su)**: A shadow fey can assume one specific alternate form. This ability works much like the *polymorph* spell, except that the creature is limited to the forms specified and does not regain any hit points for changing its form. Assuming an alternate form results in the following changes to the creature:

- The shadow fey retains the type and subtype (if any) of its original form. It gains the size of its new form.
- The shadow fey loses the natural weapons, natural armor, movement modes and extraordinary special attacks of its original form.
- The shadow fey gains the natural weapons, natural armor and extraordinary special attacks of its new form.
- The shadow fey retains the special qualities of its original form and does not gain any special qualities of its new form.
- The shadow fey retains the spell-like abilities and supernatural attacks of its old form (except for breath weapons and gaze attacks), but does not gain the spell-like abilities or supernatural attacks of its new form.
- The shadow fey gains the physical ability scores (Str, Dex, Con) of its new form and retains the mental ability scores (Int, Wis, Cha) of its original form.
- The shadow fey retains its hit points and save bonuses, although modifiers may change due to different ability scores.
- The shadow fey retains any spellcasting ability it had in its original form, although it must be able to speak intelligibly to cast spells with verbal components, and it must have humanlike hands to cast spells with somatic components.
- The shadow fey is effectively camouflaged as a creature of its new form, and it gains a +10 bonus on Disguise checks if it uses this ability to create a disguise.
- A shadow fey may spend up to 12 hours a day in its animal form and may shapeshift freely back and fourth during the day as long as it doesn't exceed 12 hours total during one day.

yet the cauldron had locked tightly into the channel we had fashioned in the skillet. Indeed, the artfully roughened and pitted edges fit together so closely that they could be separated only by first shifting them into a certain position.

Luck was with us, for although the creature soon set up a noisy chattering, no other fir came to rescue it. We waited in our room, not daring to move. Four times during the night, I sent forth an *arcane eye* to peer into the pot. The first three times, I saw only a rat. The last time, which was just short of 12 hours since the rat's arrival, a creature like a baby with an oversized head curled inside, looking quite desperate.

Realizing that the fir was now trapped there by more than just the pot, since day had dawned about an hour earlier, we woke Roland and asked him to take us into town for the day. Primping and preening like empty-headed ladies of fashion, we kept him moving from one shop to another with us the whole day through. By the time we returned to his house, night had fallen again, and the pot lay overturned on the carpet.

Sadly, Roland's reputation declined thereafter, for he was no longer able to finish huge quantities of work in amazingly short times. We can only guess that the fir considered his house too dangerous to return to. Perhaps, however, we did him a favor after all, for he would surely have ended up as a firkin in time.

## Other Kinds of Shapeshifting

Though all fey have the ability to assume one particular form of their choice, usually subject to the restrictions of their breeds, some have extended shapeshifting powers. Such abilities, however, are not necessarily a function of breed.

Some shadow fey can take the forms of plants and remain in those forms for varying periods of time. A few tales tell of trees, particularly silver pines, that were there one day and gone the next. Close study of these legends raises doubts that these trees are treants of any sort. Rather, they are likely shapechanged creatures, and indications are that they may be high-ranking members of the Seelie court sent to spy on either particular enclaves of fey or on human settlements. Small groves of such trees have appeared near villages in which a citizen had developed an unhealthy interest in watching for fairy circles or otherwise stealthily tracking the fey. Later, these groves disappeared as suddenly as they appeared. Often, the fey-questing individuals have disappeared at about the same time as the groves vanished. Certain fey can also take the shapes of other plants. In particular, any plant that is unusual in size or color for the region should be treated with respect in case it might be a shapechanged Arak.

An select few accounts also speak of fey taking the forms of objects. Nearly everyone has heard the tale of the shrewish wife who was chased around her hut by a flying frying pan after a rather vicious tirade against her husband. The man was certianly not a spellcaster in that case, and it is unlikely that one was lurking in the closet controlling the pan. No, it is far more likely that the pan was a shapechanged Arak taking the husband's part in the argument.

Likewise, Uncle Rudolph's notes contain an account of a spinning wheel that picked up carded wool on its own and spun it into fine thread for a bedridden woman to sell. The wheel could have been a unique magic item, but Uncle Rudolph hypothesized that it might also be a shapechanged fey, since it disappeared every morning and reappeared at night, when fey prefer to work if they work at all.

Finally, fey are also known to take the forms of humans, elves, or other humanoids. They do not usually duplicate a specific person, but occasionally they do. Always, however, some distinguishing feature marks the individual as not quite human — an unusual birthmark on the face or hand, a hair color not normally found in the race, or a silvery glint to the eyes. Occasionally, such a creature exudes an odor, either a sweet one like blossoms of spring or a foul one reminiscent of carrion, depending on the fey involved. The purpose of appearing in such forms is often not clear, although in at least one instance, the form was that of a woman's husband.

She had begun to worry when he failed to come home one night. The next evening, he came back, but she mentioned to friends that there was something odd about him. His sense of humor had changed, and she saw a strange silver mark on his cheek — which he claimed had always been there. He was also missing the ring that had been in his family for generations. Yet he was considerably more helpful and attentive than before, and the woman decided not to question the fate that had brought her such a changed man. Five years later, a neighbor mucking about in the nearby bog came upon a corpse partially preserved by the mud. Its

face bore a striking resemblance to that of the woman's husband, and it wore his family's ring upon its hand. The villagers came in force to the couple's house intending to slay the devil that had taken his form, but he was gone. The silver-marked imposter never returned, and the woman grew old in loneliness, though the child she bore the year after his disappearance became a joy to the whole village. It is said that the child also bore a silver birthmark, though only her family ever knew it.

Whether these unusual shapechanging abilities are in fact native to certain breeds, or whether they are gifts provided by Queen Maeve or Prince Loht to deserving courtiers, or whether they are the results of actual spellcasting is uncertain. We, are certain, however, that no human can be certain that any animal, plant, object, or even humanoid is not a fey without careful testing and examination.

## Glamors

Many Arak have access to some powers of illusion. Indeed, the ability to hide the truth under veils of lies, illusions and obfuscations seems part of a shadow fey's very nature. The old adage "Nothing is as it seems" is nowhere more true than in dealings with ellefolk.

In addition to their shapechanging abilities, shadow fey with powers of illusion often use glamors to disguise themselves as they choose. Many reported cases tell of shadow fey appearing as the friend or loved one of a mortal they have targeted for the purpose of luring their quarry into dangerous or compromising situations, depending on the breed involved.

Furthermore, shadow fey seem particularly fond of altering the appearance of objects. Sometimes they use this technique to hide objects of interest to them and sometimes to hide objects of interest to humans, for watching a human search for something that literally lies in plain sight seems to amuse them. They also frequently use this technique to confound humans, disguising objects as others and switching them. Evidently, watching the results of such a night's work pleases the creatures greatly. Shadow fey even occasionally use glamored objects to construct deadly traps.

The illusion powers of shadow fey fall into three categories: spellcasting, innate ability and the use of magic items. Though nearly all fey can access some kind of illusion magic, some breeds use it more extensively than others do. In addition, fey illusions are generally stronger and more difficult to disbelieve than those created by human spellcasters. This difference is probably attributable as much to the fact that the fey have enjoyed untold millennia of practice with illusions as it is to their innate affinity for deception.

### Fey Illusions

Regardless of the means used to create them, illusions generated by shadow fey are difficult to penetrate. The save DC for all such illusions increases by +2, and this increase stacks with bonuses provided by the Spell Focus (illusion) and Greater Spell Focus (illusion) feats.

## Methods of Creating Glamors

All shadow fey can cast spells in the same manner as humans trained in the art, though the breed of an Arak tends to affect its choices of dweomers and, in some cases, limit those choices. Some fey, after all, can cast only divine spells, while others can cast arcane spells of various sorts. In addition, certain breeds favor certain types of spells. For example, teg tend to prefer magic that wounds, while alven prefer magic that improves the growth and beauty of their gardens. All, however, have access to some illusion spells, though some breeds make more use of them than others. Teg and powries often have little patience for maintaining illusions, but either will happily use them to draw prey closer. Fir are known to create and utilize detailed and long-lasting illusions, appearing to take almost as much pleasure in the creation of an effect as in its ultimate result.

All shadow fey have at least one illusion power that functions like a spell, except that they need not cast it as mortal spellcasters do. They require no materials, and they need only will the desired effect to happen. In all other ways, such powers function the same as spells do.

## Spell-Like Abilities

Each breed of shadow fey has at least one illusionary spell-like ability that is usable three times per day (caster level 5th). An alven has *hallucinatory terrain*. Fir, portunes, powries, and shee have *alter self*, and all other breeds have *disguise self*. Fir also have *object glamor* (see New Spells in the DM's Appendix).

The third way in which shadow fey can create illusions is through the use of a special magic substance that, for want of a better word, I shall call witching powder. Mortals often refer to it as "fairy dust," and it is sometimes confused with ebondust, the powder that Arak sprinkle on mortals during the process of creating changelings. Yet evidence indicates that this particular substance is a different material altogether.

In the interests of accurate research, Laurie and I visited the home of an old man who claimed to be plagued by ellefolk who confounded him by masking his possessions with illusions. We hoped to gather a bit of the dust and analyze it. We did not, of course, know whether the fey in question would actually use the powder to produce the effects, since fir are known to possess the innate ability to disguise objects, but we hoped that the extent of the chaos reported in this instance exceeded the feys' natural abilities.

When we arrived just before dusk, the old man, whose name was Dorban, greeted us nervously and ushered us into his house. Gingerly touching two chairs, evidently to satisfy himself that they were real, he offered them to us, then took one for himself and sat down. "I absolutely refuse to leave this place," he began. "This was the home of my father, and my father's father before him. This house has been in my family for eight generations. But for some reason, these cursed creatures are trying to drive me out of it."

"Are you certain that they have any motive beyond mere entertainment?" I asked.

"Oh they do," he affirmed. "I find messages written on my possessions every morning: 'Get out and stay out, this house is cursed,' and the like. I'm not sure what these creatures want with the place and why they've chosen now to try to take it, but they are determined. Of course, so am I."

I remained unconvinced that Dorban's problems were anything other than a prank, but I decided to reserve judgement. Laurie drew forth from her satchel several small boxes carved from wood. She had prepared these receptacles so that they could stay open, but would snap closed the moment anything heavier than a breath of air touched the inner bottom. Placing these boxes here and there about the house, she returned to her chair and picked up the conversation where I had left off. "You realize, sir, that we are here only to collect material for our research, not to rid your house of these creatures."

"Indeed dear lady, I know this," he said sadly. "But who can say what might cause these creatures to leave? I don't know what brought them, after all."

"That is so, and the creatures are known to be capricious," she returned. "Let us see what occurs."

With that, the three of us retired for the night, the old man to his accustomed bedchamber and Laurie and I to his spare room. Not wishing to frighten the creatures away, Laurie and I remained in our beds and feigned sleep, even when we heard the unmistakable sounds of objects being moved about and the lilting sound of fey giggles in the next room. We could only imagine what might await us in the morning. Eventually, we drifted off to sleep, though we had never experienced trouble staying awake for a night before in our research.

When we awoke the next morning, we felt a bit groggy. Laurie reached sleepily into her satchel, for what I am not sure. Yet she let forth a yelp of pain and withdrew her hand, revealing one of her own boxes clinging to her fingertip. It had caught her like a mousetrap would catch a rodent! Intending to go and help her, I swung my legs out of bed and planted my feet on the soft rug that lay beside my bed. Then it was my turn to yelp, for I planted my feet in a bucket of cold, sudsy washwater! "Oh, these creatures are sly!" I cried. "Touch nothing until we have determined its nature, Laurie!"

Laurie, removing the box from her finger, nodded. With the help of a borrowed pair of magic glasses that provided *true sight*, Laurie and I spotted all the glamored objects in our room and restored them to their normal positions. Then we went carefully into the main room and gave it the same painstaking treatment. Laurie found two of her boxes in their original positions, hidden but unglamored. Both had

been triggered, and upon opening one, Laurie drew in a breath of excitement. "Look!" she whispered. "It glitters like stardust!"

Peering into the box, I saw that indeed a light coating of shimmery powder coated the bottom. "Put them away quickly, Laurie," I told her. "We must wake Dorban and thank him for his hospitality, then be on our way."

Knocking on the old man's bedroom door produced no results, so I turned the knob and pushed it open carefully. Gasping in horror at the sight that greeted my eyes, I slammed shut the door and leaned against it for a moment.

"Gennifer? What's the matter?" asked my sister, placing a hand on my arm. I shook my head and opened the door again. "Put your glasses on," I whispered.

Once the magic lenses were in place, we entered the room. There on the bed lay Dorban, his dead eyes staring up at the ceiling. From the middle of his forehead protruded the point of an awl. Around it, bits of bone swam in a pool of half-congealed blood. "It must have been braced point-up, waiting for him to lay down his head," Laurie whispered. "Look, there's no pillow. The creatures must have glamered it to resemble his pillow."

"But why did they turn so violent last night?" I wondered aloud.

Laurie shrugged. "Perhaps they always have been so and he was careful enough to avoid their traps before. Or perhaps our presence here made the creatures think he had called in aid against them. We'll probably never know for sure. But one thing is certain — the house is theirs now."

We carefully restored everything else in the house to its normal position, then cleaned and wrapped Dorban's body. Alerting the priest at the local temple to what had happened, we took our leave as soon as he started preparing the corpse for burial. "Thank you, Dorban," we whispered, and sadly took our leave.

Taking our treasure home, we subjected it to every means of alchemical and magical analysis we knew. We discovered that the dust contained bits of spidersilk, particles of ash, and the pollen of a rare green lotus flower. It also contained another powdered substance that appeared able to move of its own volition, clumping and unclumping seemingly at random. The substance had some of the characteristics of blood, but of course, normal blood is not nearly so mobile. After recording our observations, we closed that avenue of investigation.

### Witching Powder

This substance is a mixture of spiderweb, doppelganger blood, and powdered mandrake root, blended with the pollen of the green lotus flower gathered under the full moon. This mixture must be exposed to moonlight for seven consecutive nights before it is ready for use.

By sprinkling *witching powder* over a creature or object, the user can alter its appearance as though using the *alter self* or *object glamer* spell (caster level 5th), except that the transformation lasts for 24 hours.

Moderate illusion; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *alter self, greater object glamer, object glamer;* Price 5,600 gp per application.

## Seeing through Illusions

Perhaps because they are so steeped in illusion themselves, the Arak have a deep understanding of the way such magic works. Indeed, it is said that they can see the structure of an illusion in great detail.

Whether or not this particular assertion is true, tricking a shadow fey with an illusion of any sort is very difficult. Apparent success in such an endeavor usually means the shadow fey has decided to play along with the deception for some reason of its own. Based on the accounts I have read, I must recommend against attempting such illusions, since the Arak often interpret them as challenges to do better. More than one hapless mortal spellcaster found himself wandering in a world of his own after inadvertently challenging a fey to a match of illusion.

### Shadow Fey and Illusions

Regardless of breed, every shadow fey has an increased ability to see through illusions. A shadow fey may attempt a saving throw to disbelieve an illusion it sees even if it has not interacted with the effect, in the same manner as an elf may attempt to find secret doors merely by passing one. Furthermore, the shadow fey gains a bonus on such saving throws equal to 2 + its Hit Dice and/or character level.

## Other Shadow Fey Abilities

The Arak are a highly magical folk, and thus far I have touched only briefly on their powers. In addition to the talents common to all ellefolk, each individual shadow fey has one or more other abilities that it can use without actually casting a spell, as noted above. Most of these abilities are designed to aid the creature's survival or to beguile mortals in some way.

### Spell Resistance

One means of protection that almost all Arak share is an innate resistance to spells and magical effects targeted against them. Shadow fey are known to shrug off even the mightiest magical effects as though they had never occurred. Not every one of the ellefolk has this ability in equal measure, though its effectiveness is not wholly dependent on breed. Rather, a shadow fey's resistance to magic varies by individual within a breed. Typically, an Arak who has a high degree of resistance to magic is somewhat limited in the spells that he himself can use, as though he has "traded" some spellcasting ability for this extra defense.

### Advanced Glamers

As mentioned above, every shadow fey has at least one illusion ability, with the exact ability dependent on the breed. Many others, however, perhaps because of some deep personal interest in illusion, have gained illusion abilities of a much greater level of power. Such Arak can change the appearance of objects as large as a person, or magically disguise themselves as particular individuals, with very little chance of detection.

### Attacks

The Arak own a well-deserved reputation for attacking humans in one way or another. Such attacks rarely involve direct force of arms except with muryan or teg, but magical attacks of all sorts are possible. Hostilities visited on mortals can include drawing out life force with a chilling touch, mental attacks that cause everything from confusion to feeblemindedness to insanity, and blindness, deafness or fatigue. Almost any magical effect that can harm a mortal lies within the purview of some shadow fey, except possibly attacks that cause outright death. The royalty of the Seelie and Unseelie courts may have such options at their fingertips, but no evidence confirms this possibility. Spells that create or control undead creatures appear to be entirely outside the purview of the shadow fey.

### Beguilement

One of the best-known types of Arak powers is that of beguilement. Such dweomers fall into several categories, differing largely by the mechanic used to rob another of his wits, but all accomplish essentially the same purpose. Charms, hypnosis and other such effects cause mortals to stand fascinated or to see the shadow fey as a friend even when it has a deadly purpose in mind. Needless to say, these types of powers are quite popular among the Arak, who seem to enjoy making sport of mortals as much as they enjoy more deadly games.

### Changing the Shapes of Others

Many of the ellefolk can change not only their own shapes, but also those of other creatures. One of the most feared outcomes of meeting a shadow fey is having to spend one's life as a rabbit, a horse, a mole or worse. Exactly why a shadow fey might invoke this power varies with the individual — some doubtless turn mortals into animals on a whim, while others may do so only after long observation. In the latter case, a shadow fey who has taken an interest in some mortal affair may place himself in the role of judge, deciding that a given mortal who is causing trouble for others deserves to be a crow or a sheep or even a rat. We believe that many such cases go unreported because those who know of the change are quite satisfied with it. Take, for example, the case of the farm wife whose husband drank too much and frequently beat her. When she called him a pig and he changed into one before her eyes, she was momentarily stunned, but then simply placed him out in the pigsty with the other swine and treated him as one of them from that day forward. Putting out the word in her village that her husband had died, she soon found another husband much more to her liking. It is said that she never failed to put out tidbits of food for the fairies in thanks for their aid.

Occasionally, a fey who takes an interest in mortal affairs may use this power to shield a human from harm on a temporary basis. For instance, a human who chanced upon a bandit camp and was pursued by the robbers tells a strange tale of suddenly finding himself in the body of a hare, leaping across the fields. Once he had made good his escape from the bandits, who were not interested in a hare, he fell deeply asleep and had his own form back

when he awoke. (His wife reports, however, that he now has a disturbing tendency to twitch his nose ever since.)

Shadow fey who have the ability to turn others into animals do not necessarily limit their use of this ability to mortals. Though accounts of events within the Seelie and Unseelie courts are understandably rare, legends do abound of high-ranking fey who turned others of their kind into animals for reasons of petty vengeance or as part of a bid for power. In at least a few such cases, legend has it that the offenders, when discovered, were themselves changed into animals or objects by Queen Maeve or Prince Loht as punishment for their crimes. For example, one tale of a muryan details how his second wife grew jealous of his children by his first wife and changed them into swans. When her perfidy was discovered, Queen Maeve drew forth from the offender the creature she most feared — a raven that fed on the refuse of battlefields — and sentenced her to spend eternity in that form. The evil fey flew off in raven form, with blood dripping from her beak, never to be seen again.

This ability to customize an animal form is also characteristic of shadow fey who change the shapes of others. Some accounts insist that a person was changed only partially into animal form — acquiring an ass's head or a pig's tail, for example. In such cases, the victim or her loved ones have occasionally met with success in bargaining with the fey for her return to normal, but a few were made to spend their lives in that sad state, neither wholly human nor wholly animal. As always, bargaining with a fey has very limited success, and one should not count on being able to achieve the desired results in that way.

A few tales also exist of people turned into objects by shadow fey. We have been unable to verify any such stories, but if true, they could explain the existence of certain animated teapots and talking furniture when no wizardry seems to have been involved. Laurie decided to investigate such a rumor and was unable to verify that a certain teapot that poured tea on its own had ever been a human, but she did discern that the teapot reeked of transmutation magic.

## Curing

Some ellefolk have the power to heal their own wounds and those of others. Hodge-podgers are known as healers, and all of them possess such abilities. Such curative powers are not necessarily the sole province of the more benevolent Arak, though these breeds are more likely to possess them than powries or tegs are. Shadow fey rarely bother to cure mortals, seeing it as something of a waste to prolong the temporary existence of a lesser being. Yet exceptions do exist, particularly if the wounded mortal's plight touches a soft spot in the fey's being, which may occur when a fey has grown especially fond of a mortal. Such situations, though, are more likely to result in the mortal becoming a changeling than in it being aided with curing of any great degree. However, if a fey wants a mortal as a changeling and something happens to injure it, the fey may very well want to cure the mortal first, so as to avoid having a faulty changeling. (My sister and I have yet to locate any reliable accounts of fey making changelings of physically compromised mortals, so it is a logical assumption that such a state causes problems with the process.) Most shadow fey reserve their curative powers for themselves and sometimes for other shadow fey or for animals they favor.

## Curses

Not all Arak have the ability to bestow curses, but apparently many do. Curses can take many forms, from whole or partial transformation into an animal (see above) to crippling that results in a reduction to the target's strength, agility or overall health. A few shadow fey also seem able to remove curses, though few are willing to do so for mortals unless the curses were placed by particular enemies of theirs. Removal of a fey curse almost always involves a lengthy process, and the victim is rarely ever restored to quite the same person as he once was. As with the restoration of a changeling, something is often missing as a result, or some other equally unfortunate condition is acquired in the process of removing the affliction.

## Defense

Many shadow fey have magical defenses against certain kinds of attacks. Some can toughen their hides so as to turn aside blows; others can set traps by magically greasing floors or causing plants to entangle any who approach. Some also have the ability to blend in with the surrounding terrain so as to escape notice. Shapechanging and invisibility also fall into the defensive category when used in this manner.

## Invisibility

A great many Arak have the power to become invisible, and those who do spend much of their time that way. Though they can disguise themselves adequately as animals, the ability simply to disappear when the need presents itself is invaluable. This power greatly enhances a shadow fey's ability to spy on mortals and to gain entry to areas that mortals think are secure.

In like manner, most Arak have the power to see invisible creatures and objects. Thus, sneaking up on Arak or even observing them unnoticed is nearly impossible for mortals, even those powerful in magic. Ironically, the best way to achieve such a goal seems to be observing them from hiding, but not to attempt to hide from view by magical means. An Arak sufficiently distracted by something else might not notice (or care about) a human observer in hiding, but it would almost certainly see and punish someone who deliberately took the trouble to become invisible, because such premeditated hiding bespeaks an intention to spy. Premeditated spying seems to irk the Arak the most; a human who chances to be near an Arak and slips behind a tree to observe it is not nearly so irritating. In fact, such a human may provide endless hours of entertainment.

## Misdirection

Misdirection is the Arak's stock-in-trade. Illusions are one category of misdirection, but almost any magical effect that diverts a mortal's notice or masks the truth lies within the purview of at least some shadow fey. Such effects include masking the nature of magic and the inner nature of beings.

## Slumber

Some shadow fey can cause mortals to fall asleep. Exactly what the fascination for certain Arak with this tactic is, we can only speculate. Of course, a sleeping subject is necessary for the process of creating a changeling, but accounts do exist of humans put to sleep whose shadows were not harvested. In some cases, the mortal awakens to find his chores done, but many instances are not so harmless.

The ancient legend of a man who slept for a hundred years on a mountaintop, aging normally in the process, presents one example of a baneful use of the ability. Numerous other accounts tell of humans put to sleep for only short periods and waking in some unusual circumstance, such as this story from an old woman in the town of Wode:

"It happened when I were a young thing," she said as I settled myself into a chair in her front room and picked up the cup of tea she had offered. "I was a beauty then — course, I still am, to them who knows how to look for real beauty," she said, patting her stone-gray hair. "Every young swain within 40 miles wanted me, and I had a lot of fun playing them off against each other. Asking them to fetch me things… you know?"

I nodded, urging her to continue.

"Well anyway, a young fellow I didn't know came to my door one day and offered me a bunch of wildflowers. Never saw him before, but oh my, he was handsome! 'Come with me and be my love,' he says with a little smile. Well, I was maybe a little too vain and fond of making men jump to my tune back then. So I says, 'For wildflowers I could as well go and pick myself? Go out back and sleep with the pigs till you find me something better.' Well, his eyes get kinda dark, like a stormcloud, and he says, 'Vain mortal, you will live to regret those words.' And then he turns on his heel and walks off. Well, I was a little scared by that let me tell you. So I made myself a cup of tea and sat down to drink it. Pretty soon, I heard a song like I'd never heard before — so pretty and sweet, like a songbird that found a mortal voice. I couldn't rightly understand the words, but they pulled at me, and I walked outside, looking for the singer. Pretty soon I felt tired… so very tired, and I thought I'd take a little nap. So I curled up under a tree. Next thing I knew, I was in the pigsty, naked but covered with mud, with pigs grunting and snuffling at me. And the townsfolk were all gathered around, pointing and laughing! Well, I wasn't so mean to the boyos after that, and I ended up with a pretty good one when all was said and done. Guess I deserved what I got, but if I'd gone with the fellow, I might never have come home. So all in all, I'm happy."

I stopped drinking the tea when she mentioned it in her story, and bid the woman a hasty goodbye when she'd finished her tale.

## Table 3–1: Shadow Fey Spell-Like Abilities

| Spell-Like Ability | Spell Point Cost |
|---|---|
| Alter person | 3 |
| Alter self | 2 |
| Baleful polymorph | 5 |
| Bane | 1 |
| Barkskin | 2 |
| Bestow curse | 3 |
| Blight | 5 |
| Blindness/deafness | 2 |
| Blur | 2 |
| Cause fear | 1 |
| Charm monster | 4 |
| Charm person | 1 |
| Chill touch | 1 |
| Command plants | 4 |
| Confusion | 4 |
| Contagion | 4 |
| Control plants | 8 |
| Control water | 6 |
| Crushing despair | 4 |
| Cure critical wounds | 4 |
| Cure light wounds | 1 |
| Cure minor wounds | 1/2 |
| Cure moderate wounds | 2 |
| Cure serious wounds | 3 |
| Dancing lights | 1/2 |
| Darkness | 2 |
| Darkvision | 2 |
| Daylight | 3 |
| Daze | 1/2 |
| Deep slumber | 3 |
| Deeper darkness | 3 |
| Detect scrying | 4 |
| Dispel magic | 3 |
| Displacement | 3 |
| Entangle | 1 |
| Enthrall | 2 |
| Expeditious retreat | 1 |
| Fabricate | 4 |
| Fear | 4 |
| Feeblemind | 5 |
| Find the path | 6 |
| Fly | 2 |
| Gaseous form | 3 |
| Ghost sound | 1/2 |
| Glitterdust | 2 |
| Grease | 1 |
| Greater alter person | 5 |
| Greater invisibility | 4 |
| Greater object glamor | 5 |
| Hallucinatory terrain | 4 |
| Haste | 3 |
| Hypnotic pattern | 2 |
| Hypnotism | 1 |
| Illusory wall | 4 |
| Insanity | 7 |
| Invisibility | 2 |
| Invisibility sphere | 3 |
| Knock | 2 |
| Light | 1/2 |
| Major image | 3 |
| Mind fog | 5 |
| Minor creation | 4 |
| Minor image | 2 |
| Mirage arcana | 5 |
| Misdirection | 2 |
| Mislead | 6 |
| Modify memory | 4 |
| Nondetection | 3 |
| Object glamor | 3 |
| Obscuring mist | 1 |
| Pass without trace | 1 |
| Passwall | 5 |
| Permanent image | 6 |
| Plant growth | 3 |
| Polymorph | 4 |
| Polymorph any object | 8 |
| Power word blind | 7 |
| Produce flame | 1 |
| Programmed image | 6 |
| Project image | 7 |
| Pyrotechnics | 2 |
| Rainbow pattern | 4 |
| Ray of exhaustion | 3 |
| Reduce person | 1 |
| Remove curse | 4 |
| Remove disease | 3 |
| Resist energy (select type) | 2 |
| See invisibility | 2 |
| Seeming | 5 |
| Sequester | 7 |
| Shadow walk | 6 |
| Silent image | 1 |
| Sleep | 1 |
| Slow | 3 |
| Solid fog | 4 |
| Stone shape | 5 |
| Suggestion | 3 |
| Summon swarm | 2 |
| Symbol of fear | 6 |
| Symbol of persuasion | 6 |
| Symbol of sleep | 5 |
| Telekinesis | 5 |
| Tongues | 3 |
| Touch of idiocy | 2 |
| True seeing | 6 |
| Unseen servant | 1 |
| Veil | 6 |
| Ventriloquism | 1 |
| Waves of exhaustion | 7 |
| Waves of fatigue | 5 |

## Customized Spell-Like Abilities

Each shadow fey has one or more spell-like abilities of its own choice in addition to all breed powers. The most common choices are given below, though DMs may freely add other spells to the list that seem particularly appropriate for the fey in question.

Upon creation, each shadow fey chooses its specific spell-like abilities. It may spend a number of "spell points" equal to 5 + its Hit Dice. Each ability on the list costs a certain number of spell points, as given on the following table. Once a power is chosen, the shadow fey may not thereafter change that choice until it dies and is reborn.

Each spell-like ability functions once per day and has a caster level equal to the total number of spell points the shadow fey originally had available to spend. Any spell-like ability may be taken more than once, with each duplication adding one additional use per day of that ability.

If desired, a shadow fey can take spell resistance in lieu of some of its spell-like abilities. For each spell point it spends on spell resistance instead of spell-like abilities, the shadow fey gains spell resistance 2 or increases its existing spell resistance by 2.

A shadow fey can also spend spell points to gain a bonus on Bluff or Sleight of Hand checks. Each spell point it spends on one of these skills grants it a +2 bonus on checks made with that skill. These bonuses are cumulative and stack with all other bonuses.

Finally, the shadow fey may spend 2 spell points to gain the evasion or uncanny dodge special quality. If it already has evasion, it can spend 3 points to gain improved evasion; if it already has uncanny dodge, it may spend 3 points to gain improved uncanny dodge.

## Millefleur: Sample Customized Shadow Fey

Millefleur is an alven with a particular affinity for flowers, especially roses. She flits from one of her rose gardens to the next, tending each with great care. Most of her gardens appear completely wild to the uninitiated, with masses of blooms tumbling over one another in rainbow-colored glory. Yet a druid or other character with a specialty in gardening can tell that the blooms were tended by a supernatural hand, since one or two bushes in each garden has roses of a color not found in nature.

Millefleur is known to aid gardeners of good heart in growing flowers of all sorts, though she has a soft spot for those who attempt to grow roses. Woe to anyone who picks a rose from her garden, however, or who grows them in order to harvest many blooms, for she is adamant that roses belong to nature, not to individuals.

**Millefleur:** Female alven; CR 3; Diminutive fey; HD 3d6; hp 10; Init +3; Spd 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp −11; Atk +5 melee (1/19–20, thorn short sword); Full Atk +5 melee (1/19–20, thorn short sword); Space/Reach 2-1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, *wing dance;* SQ alternate form, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to electricity and stone weapons, low-light vision, *natural affinities*, damage reduction 10/cold iron or magic; AL CG; SV Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Concentration +6, Handle Animal +9, Hide +15, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +6, Profession (agriculture) +9, Ride +5, Spellcraft +7, Spot +6, Survival +9; Flyby Attack, Martial Weapon Proficiency (short sword).

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day — *barkskin, entangle;* 1/day — *plant growth*. Caster level 5th. In addition, Millefleur has 8 spell points' worth of special abilities, which she has used to gain the following: 1/day — *command plants, invisibility, sleep, unseen servant*. Caster level 8th.

***Wing Dance* (Sp):** Millefleur's first tactic in defending herself is to flit about in seemingly random patterns, rising and falling, swooping and diving. Anyone who looks upon this "wing dance"

must make two DC 14 Will saves. Failure on the first save stymies the creature with the effect identical to that of the *enthrall* spell. Failure on the second save produces an effect identical to that of the *blindness/deafness* spell. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Millefleur can change herself into a butterfly. She may spend up to 12 hours a day in her insect form and may shapeshift freely back and fourth during that period as long as she doesn't exceed 12 hours total during any 24-hour period.

***Natural Affinities* (Sp):** Millefleur can peer through glamors that render someone invisible. She makes a Survival check opposed by the caster level check of the caster. Success means that the invisibility doesn't work on her senses. In addition, Millefleur can travel freely and easily from place to place, actually being guided by the flora around her, in an effect identical to that of the spell *find the path*. These abilities function only while Millefleur is in a natural setting.

# Chapter Four: Vulnerabilities

Dearest Gennifer,

As per your instructions, I traveled to that most forsaken place — the Wytchwood of Tepest. I well know that it is named for the White Lady who occupies that forsaken forest, but nonetheless I dared to penetrate it. For rumors claim that there, in the untamed wilds of the Wytchwood, lies the Telling Tree, a living pine that reputedly knows much about the Arak and the fey.

I stopped at Briggdarrow, a place now famous for once being under the spell of the ellefolk. The locals looked at me in despair when I told them where I was going. "Nothing good can come of it," they said to me.

Apparently, when Briggdarrow's fey-curse had been broken, some of their populace took it as a sign from the gods that the fey had lost their power in Tepest. Thus, a few dozen souls moved off and formed a hamlet in the Wytchwood. Sadly, none of them have ever returned.

As you know, I brought Nikolas with me, for I knew that to venture to that place without a companion would be sheer folly. Nikolas was of good temper, as he always is, despite the wound that he will forever bear from that dreadful encounter with the Glutton.

Entering the woods, the first sight we noticed was the barricade of mist that permeated the forest. A constant, boiling fog continually immerses that place, hiding everything from sight. Indeed, the only way we could keep track of our bearings was to mark certain trees with string as we slowly made our way. Carving symbols into the bark would have no doubt offended the spirits there, so we tried to use as impermanent a marking method as possible.

As we ventured deeper, we heard a solitary, lonely sound — a clapping of metal against metal, sounding in erratic beats, like a heart pulsing its last rhythms.

After hours of near-aimless wandering, I managed to discern large, looming forms. Houses appeared in the fog, gray and hunched. The locals had told us of a hamlet built deep within the Wytchwood. Now we had found it.

There was movement ahead. A dark shape loped silently along the ground. It crouched low, walking with an irregular gait. The figure resolved into that of a strange, emaciated dog, crossing my path. It turned its head and looked upon me, its long red tongue hanging low to the ground.

Nikolas touched my shoulder with his wooden hand. "Do you see that?"

"The dog?" I asked.

"It is… smiling."

The animal wandered away, fading back into the fog.

Nikolas and I continued onwards. We walked past clothes lines filled with ragged, torn cloth. We stepped past an open door, and I dared to look inside the cottage. I saw a simple woman with her back to me, stirring a pot from which the stew had long since evaporated, leaving only ash. The woman seemed not to care, continually stirring. Her wooden ladle softly touched the side of the pot from time to time.

I started to say something, but stopped myself. The woman turned toward me, and instantly I averted my eyes. Her brown, crisping face was so swollen that I could not see her eyes. Her mouth was a mere slit in a giant, shiny mass of tumor-flesh. Years of constantly standing over the fire had cooked her face.

Sudden nausea filled my stomach and limbs. My head spun and my vision blurred. I whirled about and ran from that place. I did not know where I was running to, only that I needed to get *away*. Yet Nikolas grabbed me.

"Do not run into the fog!" he warned. His eyes glistened with near panic. "I was afraid I was about to lose you. Remember, we must stay together."

"You are right," I breathed. "Forgive me. I forgot myself for a moment."

"What… was in there?" he asked, daring to peer over his shoulder at the open door.

I shook my head. "Nothing," I whispered, to myself as much as to him. "Let us go on."

We progressed onwards, our thoughts focused upon the Telling Tree. As we walked, the clanging of metal resonated continuously, bellowing painfully in our ears.

"What is that, do you suppose?" asked Nikolas, referring to the metallic noise that tolled like a bell over everything.

Realization struck me as soon as the question was asked. "It is the blacksmith," I said with quiet certainty, "pounding at a work that he is doomed never to finish."

Nikolas could say nothing to this. He merely nodded and turned away, as did I.

The soil beneath our feet turned dark and moist, causing our feet to sink into the hungry

earth. Soon, the hamlet vanished in the fog behind us. The only hint that it had ever existed was the lonely clanging that soon became muffled in the thick forest around us.

Nikolas knelt down and scanned the ground. He held up a hand and silently motioned me to observe the forest floor. There were tiny footprints in the soil all around, where very small and quick things scrambled through the underbrush.

In that moment I turned and saw it, the object of our search. Before me was a mighty tree, its boughs black and jagged against the white curtain of vapors that constantly sought to entrap us.

I peered closely at the gnarled oak. Slowly, I perceived what we had been warned about. All up and down the length of the trunk, I could see faces — long, anguished faces growing out of the wood, their elongated mouths twisted in frozen moans. These were the faces of all those who had come to this place before me. Immediately after seeing it, I grew aware of a presence.

Shapes were coalescing from the mists. Long columns of cold, white clouds began to twirl and churn. Forming from those boiling banks of fog were long-limbed people. Their bodies were willowy and beautiful, their skin as white as bone, and their lips the color of blood. I turned to Nikolas to warn him. Yet before I could even speak a word, I found my head was locked in an unyielding grasp. It was Nikolas.

I saw that he now held his dagger in his good hand. His other arm wound tightly around my neck in a vise lock.

He spoke low and quiet into my ear, his breath hot upon my face. "You have... snakes," he said softy. "You have snakes growing out of your eyes."

I struggled, feeling the blood in my neck straining to get to my panicking brain. I hissed to Nikolas intently. "Nikolas, listen to me. You cannot believe—"

Yet he was not listening. "I need to cut them out, Laurie. I need to cut the snakes from your eyes."

There was no time. I could not spare even a moment to thought. Within the span of a heartbeat, movement and reaction became one. I pulled forth from my tunic the branch of *somnos* that I had prepared. While still in the death lock of my dear friend, I called to the creatures in the Mist: "Behold! Look upon this doom and despair, for I am not afraid!"

All about me rose a scream, a bellow. The clamorous sound rang from the heavens, and I knew without knowing how I knew that the screaming was coming from the faces upon the tree.

# Weaknesses

Only through careful thought and research was I able to win that conflict. Those reading this account need not worry about the fate of dear Nikolas. He recovered from the enchantment placed upon him.

Do not assume, however, that every conflict with the Arak is so straightforwardly won. You may think that the encounter with the sith described above was won with a simple branch. That is not the case. What I do not describe above is the countless hours of research I did on the Wytchwood and the numerous people I interviewed about what they had encountered there. And finally, there was my own, perilous journey into Darkon to get a simple branch from a waterborne plant.

Indeed, the foregoing anecdote was included to impress upon the reader how important it is to know the weakness of your enemy. For, had I not known, I am quite sure that my own countenance would have joined the legion of cancerous faces that grew upon the changeling tree.

When facing the shadow fey, it is important to note that all of these mysterious creatures have specific vulnerabilities that may be exploited. These vulnerabilities are called "banes." The way a bane may affect one of the Twilight Folk varies.

Banes generally fall into two categories: physical and metaphysical.

Physical vulnerabilities are those material things that cause pain and suffering to the creature in question. For example, it is well known that sunlight burns the Arak and that cold iron harms many sylvan fey.

Metaphysical vulnerabilities are those things that are *not* material, but still harm the Arak or cause them anguish. For example, the utterance of an Arak's true name gives the speaker a degree of power over the creature.

## Common Physical Banes

The following physical banes are phenomena that seem to affect all shadow fey.

### Base Metals

We have noted in our travels and interviews that a number of the Arak seem to possess a "supernatural resilience" often found in other mystical beings. This bodily resilience allows them to take on arrows, musket balls, and blades without even slowing. Indeed, the Weeping Widow of Skald allegedly suffered blows from over fifty arrows before the town's meistersinger, Harkon Lucas, brought her down.

All supernatural resistances can be overcome, either by massive damage or by the use of weapons made from the right substance. Since Van Richten always espoused the use of research and intellect over brute force, we highly suggest finding the right materials to battle your opponents.

Here, we may dispel the myth of cold iron and its uses against the Arak and their ilk.

Cold iron is indeed an effective tool against the ellefolk and many sylvan fey, but it tends to have a debilitating effect upon some of them rather than harming them outright. Thus, shackling such creatures with wrought iron might be wise, but attacking one with a dagger made from same substance would only weaken, not harm, the offending fey.

Cold iron is, nevertheless, often the most effective material to use against many Arak. However, we have also found that lead, copper and sometimes silver can be effective against them as well. Scholars believe that these materials harm supernatural beings such as the Arak because they are pure substances from the earth, tied strongly to mundane reality.

### Sunlight

It is well known that sunlight causes the Arak great harm and distress. This is probably the origin of the myth that the ellefolk are actually spirits of the dead, molded into another form by mysterious powers.

Direct sunlight actually causes the flesh of the Twilight Folk to bubble, crack and smolder, burning them in every sense of the word. To see one of these creatures caught in the rays of the sun is a truly pitiful sight. Their anguished cries are powerful enough to wrench even the most stonehearted of souls.

## Uncommon Physical Banes

Along with the tried-and-true vulnerabilities of the shadow fey, we have noted a number of other physical weaknesses. Notice that many of these banes come from local folklore and legends, but often prove useful all the same. These uncommon banes are not, however, an assured arsenal against the Twilight Folk; the fey encountered may be susceptible to these or they may not. The careful hunter will have to test each allergen cautiously to be sure.

### Animal Antipathy

It is a well-known belief that animals have the ability to see into the next world. Many of our fellow colleagues keep a hound or cat on hand, so that their companion might alert them to the presence of something unnatural.

Certain animals can indeed sense the presence of fey creatures. If you are investigating the presence of the fey, it may be good advice to keep an animal on hand. Some animals even act as wards against these creatures. For instance, certain ellefolk are repulsed by the sounds of hounds howling, while others cannot be in the same place as ravens.

### Fire

Symbolically, fire is a universal cleanser. In many myths and legends, fire symbolizes nature's method of purging impurities from the land. Perhaps this is why fire so often proves to be a bane against the fey.

The use of fire may seem obvious to some. After all, does not fire burn anything in its path? Against the Arak, however, fire can be used in numerous ways other than burning. Some Arak cannot remain in the proximity of flame, for instance; thus, a warm fire might serve as both a ward and a weapon.

### Mirrors

Some ellefolk cannot bear the sight of mirrors. Many believe that mirrors have mystical powers, for the reflection of a person bears a glimmer of that individual's soul. Perhaps mirrors have an even more powerful effect on the fey. Whatever the cause, we have seen mirrors repulse both sylvan fey and shadow fey alike. Note that this effect is similar to that of mirrors upon vampires.

### Pictures and Effigies

People in many communities follow the tradition of erecting scarecrows or dolls in areas that are haunted by the fey. Folk in other lands place frightening pictures up near their homes or outside their towns to frighten away the fey. In these cases, the pictures or figures do not actually scare the fey. Rather, the *belief* in these icons of power actually wards against Arak incursion.

### Plants

A number of special plants can sometimes be used to repel or hinder the shadow fey. These plants always have a special significance in the realm of herbalism or alchemy. For instance, the mandrake root, a known component in a number of powerful potions and salves, is supposedly an excellent repellant against the teg, while the *somnos* branch from Darkon helps hold the deadly muryan at bay. No plant useful in dealing with the fey, however, is an easy find. All are extremely rare and usually grow only in a particular domain or area.

### Water

In Tepest, old legends tell of fey hunters riding on ghostly steeds that cannot cross running water. And indeed, we have found this to be true, for when Nikolas and I left Briggdarrow and the isolated community in the Wytchwood, we found ourselves fleeing from ellefolk hunters. When we crossed over a simple stream, we looked back to see that a host of frosty maidens on steeds were behind us, trapped behind the gurgling flow.

Water, like base metals, is a substance tied strongly to the earth. Thus, water often proves repellant to certain types of fey. Some ellefolk are burned by its touch, while others simply cannot be around water at all.

## Common Metaphysical Banes

These metaphysical banes are tried-and-true methods of dealing with the fey. We should mention, however, that using them is difficult at best. Finding a fey's true name is no small matter, and getting a fey to swear a true oath is never something that one should take for granted.

### True Names

Each member of the Twilight Folk possesses a true name. This true name is given to them at the time of their creation or birth and is perhaps the best defense one can have against the ellefolk. For

## Physical Banes

Listed below are the various physical banes for both the sylvan and shadow fey. This list is by no means exhaustive, and DMs may wish to make up their own fey banes. Libraries and bookstores have numerous books on faeries and folklore to inspire ideas and provide inspiration. See the Bane Effects section in this chapter for details on the exact game mechanics of banes.

**Animal Antipathy:** Animal antipathy can take two forms. In the first form, animals cannot stand the presence of the fey in question. They will bark, hiss, or otherwise warn against approaching fey, *even if the fey are invisible or otherwise hidden*. If given a chance, animals will attack the fey, choosing them over other targets. Finally, a fey with this form of bane receives a –5 penalty to skill checks or Charisma-based checks against animals. There is never a CR adjustment for this form of bane.

In the second form, certain animals are actual fey banes, warding against or harming fey. These animals can manifest their effect by touching the fey or by being in proximity with them (see below)

**Base Metals:** Certain metals are able to by-pass the damage reduction of the shadow fey. Such metals include cold iron, copper, gold, lead, mithral, platinum, silver or tin. At the DM's option, cold iron can serve as the "universal" metal that damages all fey.

**Fire:** Like water, fire is also seen as a cleansing or purging force in folklore. Beyond its normal damage, fire may have an additional effect as a bane. If fire has a harmful effect on the fey, add the damage indicated in the Bane Effects sidebar on top of normal fire damage. If fire has a repulsion, debilitating, protection or compelling effect on the fey in question, it adds no extra damage.

The effect of a fire bane lasts only as long as the fire lasts. If the fire is put out, then the bane effect is gone as well. Thus, instantaneous fire effects do not create an effective bane. For example, a *fireball* spell would not create an effective debilitating effect.

**Mirrors:** Mirrors are very special banes in that they only function when gazed upon by a fey. If a mirror is held by a person during combat, the mirror may be considered to have an area effect, since that person is always turning and shifting during combat, exposing the mirror to all around him.

**Pictures and Effigies:** Banes that come in the form of a picture or effigy either produce an area effect or produce their effect for the possessor of the item. At the DM's option, these banes may produce their effect when gazed upon by the fey.

**Plants**: Plant banes are specimens usually found only in a specific domain. Examples of such plant banes include Vistani's Tears from Barovia, or Meelkulbern in Kartakass. In order to use a plant bane, it must be presented strongly or displayed openly. The plant bane will not function if hidden from view or placed in storage.

**Sunlight:** Sunlight damages any fey directly exposed to it. If they can stay in an area that is completely covered in shadow (such as the inside of a closed barn), fey are safe from the effects of the sun and do not incur sunlight damage.

Fey can lessen the amount of damage they take by staying in a shaded area. Such areas include the shade of a large tree, the shadow of a house or the cloud cover provided by an overcast day. These areas still receive direct sunlight, though it may be filtered or weakened by the shading. A fey in a shaded area lessens the damage taken by –1 to a minimum of 1 per round (see Table 4–1 below). Shading does not stack. Therefore, a fey standing under the shade of a tree on an overcast day does not lessen the amount of damage taken by the amount of protection afforded by both types of cover. Instead, the fey uses the greater amount of protection afforded by the available cover.

See Bane Effects, "Harmful," for more information.

**Water**: Seen in myth and folklore as a symbol of purity, cleansing or renewal, water often acts as a bane to certain fey through its attributed power to affect the malignant forces of the world. Some fey may only be affected by special forms of water. For example, a shee knight may only be harmed by rain, or a sith hunter may only be repulsed if he encounters running water.

possessing the true name of an Arak gives one a great deal of power over that specific creature.

Using a true name in a spell makes that spell more effective against that specific shadow fey. A true name can also be used to compel the Arak to obey the speaker of the name. Be warned. It is possible to resist this compulsion. Many hedge wizards have met dark fates by commanding an Arak for years, only to have the creature one day break free from its enslavement.

## True Oaths

The shadow fey *always* keep their word, though only in the strictest, most literal sense. Many try to twist the wording of their promise to benefit themselves or to turn the oath back upon those who demanded it. Therefore, be warned. If you find yourself in a position to demand an oath from one of the Twilight Folk, make sure that your oath is worded carefully.

Wise fey are as reluctant to make a promise as a mortal to risk his life, but some smug and prideful fey may include promises in the riddles and challenges they present to mortals.

The act of entering into a promise with a fey creates some kind of spiritual bond — the fey always instantly knows when a mortal breaks his part of the bargain. A mortal who breaks a promise to a shadow fey, even among the Seelie, may face dire retribution. At the very least, the fey will revoke every gift, favor and service it has ever bestowed upon the mortal.

## Uncommon Metaphysical Banes

These metaphysical banes, while not common to all fey, appeared quite frequently in the Arak that we encountered. Almost every time we used innocence as a guard against Arak incursion, it was effective. Only in two cases did we hear of innocence being useless against the shadow fey. Faith, too, seems to be a common way to battle the fey in any realm.

### Innocence

The presence of innocence has been known to be a bane to the shadow fey on a number of occasions. Many fey cannot stand the sight of an innocent being; others cannot even be in their presence.

Many times, an artifact from an innocent being can serve as a bane to the fey. For example, a lock of hair taken from an innocent and tied to the pommel of a sword may make the weapon more useful against the fey. Against the Roving Whisperer of Mordent, Dr. Van Richten used a bottle of tears collected from an innocent girl to drive the sinister creature away.

The problem with this sort of bane is locating it. Finding an innocent is a difficult task indeed, especially when the term is so subjective. We have found no true or steadfast way of locating such individuals. We can only attest that some individuals are true innocents and some are not.

### Protective Chants or Rhymes

Almost everyone can name a popular rhyme from childhood. Many of these playtime chants were supposed to ward away evil spirits. Thought it may sound incredulous, this youthful superstition may actually work.

We point out that not all nursery tunes are protective chants. A number of these poems are nonsensical and will gain from the Arak nothing more than a demented laugh.

## Metaphysical Banes

Here is a list of fey banes that do not manifest themselves physically. Again, the exact effect of these banes is described in the Bane Effects section of this chapter.

**Innocence:** Innocence can often drive the forces of evil away. An innocence bane can take one of two forms: either a particular fey cannot stand the presence of innocent beings, or it cannot bear the touch of an artifact connected to an innocent creature. In the former case, the innocent person herself acts as the bane, thus protecting herself and those around her. If the bane takes the form of an artifact, then all that is needed is some token from an innocent being. For instance, tears or a lock of hair from an innocent may be enough to produce the effect.

**Protective Chants or Rhymes:** A protective chant or rhyme must be continually spoken to take effect (see Bane Effects). This type of bane always produces an area effect centered on those who chant or speak the rhyme. Chanting is always a free action for the speaker, though it may prevent the speaker from taking other actions such as conversing with comrades or casting spells with a verbal component.

**True Faith:** A fey with the true faith bane may be turned as if it were an undead with equivalent Hit Die. This kind of vulnerability never manifests itself as a touch or area effect like other banes.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/2.

**True Names:** A fey's true name may be used to command it to do something the speaker desires. All fey are considered to have a true name vulnerability with a compelling effect (see Sample Bane Creation in this chapter). Any spell that uses a verbal component with the fey's true name spoken in it also gives that fey a –3 penalty to its saving throw. This penalty applies only to spells that require a Will or Fortitude save.

**True Oaths:** A fey who makes a solemn promise must follow that promise to the letter or suffer the effects of a *geas*, as if cast by a cleric of the same level as the fey has Hit Dice. Note that the caster level of the *geas* is determined by fey's Hit Dice, not the Hit Dice of the individual to whom the fey has sworn an oath. A fey is always aware that it is making a solemn vow. It cannot be tricked into giving its word.

Also, there are a number of folkloric chants in nearly every domain of the land. These litanies are not childhood verses, but serious mantras that are handed down over many generations. Such chants are more likely to serve as protection, though they may appear at first to be the refuge of the superstitious.

## True Faith

In numerous accounts, members of the Twilight Folk have trembled in fear at the display of true faith. It is well known that the ellefolk around the city of Levkarest cannot bear to hear the tolling of the church bell. In the lands of Valachan, a pale rider is said to have hunted the people there. A victim's only recourse was to drop to the ground in prayer. In one account, a church acolyte fell to his knees after a long chase and began to pray. The pale rider galloped right up to the young acolyte. The horse sniffed at his clerical robes for a moment and the rider whispered, "The boy prays...." Soon after, the rider left, vanishing into the night.

Those who wish to hold back the Arak through their faith must be devout in their belief. In most cases, only those who have the power to channel divine energies have proven able to hold the fey back.

## A General Word on Banes

By looking at this long list of possible banes, it would seem that numerous things might prove effective against the fey, so much so that facing the Twilight Folk would be an easy task. We cannot stress enough that this is not the case. Many of these banes may prove to be effective, but many of them may not.

# Bane Effects

While the banes listed above do constitute ways to hold the shadow and sylvan fey in check, they all have different effects. The only correlation we can draw is that the fey in a specific area often have similar anathemas and their banes seem to have the same effect upon all of them. So, while effigies might repulse the Barovian fey, water might ward against the ellefolk in neighboring Kartakass. Listed below are the various effects that banes can have on the fey.

## Compelling

Anyone possessing a compelling bane can command the particular fey vulnerable to it. Obviously, this sort of bane is quite rare, but most powerful if wielded correctly. For example, I was able to use such a substance to interrogate a group of Arak near the once beleaguered town of Briggdarrow.

I would warn anyone trying to bend the fey to their will — the fey love their freedom above all else. One might be able to command a fey for a little while, but their wild nature makes it impossible for someone to control them forever. It is only a matter of time before the resentful servant breaks free. Worse, anyone who commands fey for any length of time is liable to attract the attention of other fey seeking to free their fellow Arak from slavery.

## Debilitating

A debilitating bane actually takes away the powers and capabilities of the fey and usually works through simple proximity. The mere presence of innocence can negate fey powers, while a physical object — such as a mirror — that serves as a bane must be presented in order for the debilitation to take place.

## Harmful

A harmful bane actually causes the creature great pain. In some cases, it may severely wound the fey, even to the point of causing stigmata. In other cases, it acts like a poison to the fey, slowly debilitating them over time.

If the bane is an object, it must be touched to the fey's exposed skin, though some fey are so sensitive that if a bane object touches them at all, even through their clothing, it harms them. If the bane is a metaphysical one like a word or name, simply speaking the word causes the fey harm.

## Protective

A protective bane shields the wielder from the powers of the Arak or fey in question. It may help the owner resist certain fey powers or protect him completely. If the bane used is a physical one, it must be carried in order to have a protective effect. In the case of water, one must douse oneself in water for protection. For true names, simply speaking the true name of a fey may render one immune to that fey's powers.

## Repulsion

A repulsion bane causes the fey in question to recoil and back away. Many plants have this effect on both sylvan and shadow fey. If the repulsion bane is an object it must be presented strongly, or it must be placed out in the open in plain sight of everyone. If the bane is a word, then it must be spoken strongly and with great conviction.

## Bane Effects

The exact effect a bane has on a fey varies from creature to creature. This list of bane effects below allows DMs to create a wide variety of fey weaknesses, all with varying results. By combining the effects described here with the list of various banes in this chapter, a DM might create dozens of different weaknesses for his individual antagonists and NPCs.

**Compelling:** The possessor of this kind of bane may order or direct a fey, as if the fey was under the effect of a *suggestion* spell cast by a sorcerer of the same level as the possessor of the bane. The fey receives a Will save against the bane effect (DC 10 + half the possessor's character level and/or Hit Dice + the possessor's Charisma bonus).

This sort of bane never has an area of effect. It simply works for whoever possesses the bane.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/2.

**Debilitating:** Some fey may be debilitated by special banes. These banes actually negate the spell-like and supernatural abilities of a particular fey. If the bane takes effect through touch, then touching the bane to the fey negates all of its supernatural and spell-like abilities for 1d4 minutes + the wielder's character level and/or Hit Dice. There is no saving throw for this effect. Cold iron most often has this effect on the shadow fey. If the bane affects only the wielder, then the wielder becomes immune to the aforementioned fey powers. Finally, some debilitating banes produce an area of effect. While in the area of the bane's debilitating power, none of the target fey's spell-like or supernatural abilities function. Once a fey steps outside of the bane's effect, its powers function again. Fey may use their powers against creatures within the bane's effect, so long as they remain outside of it.

Keep in mind that debilitating banes do not protect anyone from actual spells *cast* by fey. Divine or arcane spells that are cast are different from spell-like abilities.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/2.

**Harmful:** A harmful bane actually damages the fey. The bane in question may deal damage by touching the target or simply by being in proximity to the target.

If the bane does its damage through touch, then it may be used to deal damage through touch attacks. The amount of damage is described on Table 4–1, below. If the bane can be placed on a weapon, it does not allow that weapon to bypass damage reduction. If the weapon in question does normal damage to the fey, then bane damage is added to the weapon damage. Should a character ever attack a fey with a bane-covered weapon and miss, the weapon may still do damage if the attack roll was high enough for a touch attack to succeed. (*"Your weapon glances off the shee knight's armor, but you see a mote of steam rising upward from where the water has touched his shoulder."*)

If the fey take damage from the bane by being in proximity with it, then they take the listed damage each round they are in the area of effect, no saving throw.

Sunlight, water and plants are the most common form of harmful banes.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4

### Table 4–1: Harmful Bane Damage

| Alignment | Damage Dealt by Bane |
|---|---|
| Good | 1d2 |
| Neutral | 1d4 |
| Evil | 2d4 |

**Protective:** Protective banes make the possessor either immune or resistant to a certain fey's supernatural or spell-like abilities. If the protective bane makes the possessor immune, then all a particular fey's supernatural and spell-like abilities have no effect on him. If the protective bane makes the possessor resistant, then the possessor receives a +3 divine bonus to all saving throws against the fey's supernatural and spell-like abilities. The DM decides the exact effect of the bane.

Protective banes may have an area of effect. In this case, the protective power of the bane extends to all those within the area.

Keep in mind that protective banes do not protect anyone from actual spells *cast* by fey. Divine or arcane spells that are cast are different from spell-like abilities.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4 (for both types).

**Repulsion:** The effect of this bane is to create an area that certain fey cannot enter. These banes *always* produce an area of effect. The fey's actions are not otherwise restricted. For instance, they can still cast spells at targets in proximity to the bane or make ranged attacks.

All fey receive a Will saving throw against the repulsion effect (DC 13 + Cha modifier of the person who placed the bane). Those who make their saving throw may pass through the bane's area of effect normally.

Mirrors, plants, pictures and effigies, protective rhymes and fire are all common forms of repulsion banes.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4.

## Sample Bane Creation

Rucht wants to create a new fey with some very specific vulnerabilities for a game that he's GMing. He has an idea of a fey creature called Glimmer Bones, who gains power through scaring children in the middle of the night. Glimmer Bones is a being who can actually scare children to death, causing them to have heart attacks in their beds.

Rucht decides it would be neat if Glimmer Bones can't actually touch the children that he scares. The creature can try to scare its victims, but he cannot physically attack children. Then, he also decides that Glimmer Bones cannot stand the presence of children's dolls. Thus, children who take their favorite doll to bed have a good reason for doing so. Finally, Rucht decides to make his creature vulnerable to certain nursery rhymes and chants. He thinks some rhymes should create a ward against Glimmer Bones.

### Step One: Choose a Bane

First, Rucht decides on what banes to give Glimmer Bones. He feels that Glimmer Bones definitely has an innocence bane, since it can't physically attack children. Rucht likes the fact that the bane is keyed to innocence. If something spoils the innocence of a child, then it becomes vulnerable to the creature's attacks.

Next, Rucht decides to give Glimmer Bones an effigy bane, to represent the idea that children's dolls protect them. Last, Rucht gives the creature a protective chant bane.

### Step Two: Decide How the Bane is Used

Now, Rucht decides how each bane is used. He decides that the innocence bane is a touch effect; any innocent being touching Glimmer Bones activates the bane. He decides that the doll bane wards anyone possessing a doll. Finally, he decides that certain rhymes create an area of effect barring the creature's approach.

### Step Three: Decide the Bane Effect

Finally, Rucht establishes the exact effect each bane has on Glimmer Bones. He decides that the touch of innocence actually burns him, causing a *harmful* effect. The doll bane wards its possessor, creating a *protective* effect, while special nursery rhymes create an area of effect that causes *repulsion*. Thus, Rucht now has these banes for his shadow fey:

*Innocence bane*: The touch of an innocent harms Glimmer Bones, burning his skin like fire. An innocent being simply touching Glimmer Bones causes 2d4 points of damage per round, as he is chaotic evil. Because of this, the creature avoids physical combat with innocents. However, if pressed he can and will attack them. Because only innocent children can burn Glimmer Bones, he will often try to tempt children or manipulate them into committing evil acts that ruin their innocence.

*Doll bane*: Glimmer Bones cannot affect creatures in possession of a beloved doll or toy. The doll or toy in question must be truly loved by the possessor. An adventurer can't simply pick up a baby-doll and use it as a ward. So long as a person is in possession of her doll or toy, she is immune to Glimmer Bones's spell-like and supernatural abilities.

*Protective rhyme bane*: Whenever someone chants a special rhyme, it creates an area that Glimmer Bones cannot enter. Glimmer Bones's actions are not otherwise restricted. For instance, he can still cast spells at targets in proximity to the bane or make ranged attacks.

Glimmer Bones receives a Will save against the repulsion effect (DC 13 + Cha modifier of the person who placed the bane). If he makes his saving throw, he may pass through the bane's area of effect normally.

# Chapter Five: The Breeds

While we may study the various characteristics that make up individual shadow fey and the tell-tale signs that indicate the different breeds, we can also learn much from viewing the major shadow fey breeds within the context of their society — at least so far as we can determine without actually witnessing their society first-hand.

During the ever so brief encounter with the fir that gave me Uncle Rudolph's watch, I managed to conduct a short interview, which supplied us with the following information on the inner workings of Arak society. I don't know if the fir that told the story colored my impression of them, but the metaphor of clockwork mechanisms kept recurring as I listened to the creature speak. It was if the shadow fey were one giant expanding clockwork machine. Each breed serves as a gear continuing to do what it was made to do, even though the clock's creator — Gwydion — is long gone. The Clockmaker made clear to me that the shadow fey live in a caste-based society in which each breed carries out its assigned duty to the greater Arak society. As determined by Gwydion, each breed has a propensity to a certain job in the community. Their powers and their very natures compel them to perform their function.

# The Breeds of the Shadow Fey

The following essay puts forth my observations as well as some of my personal opinions and insights concerning the various breeds of the shadow fey and their place in their society. I certainly do not claim that all my conclusions are correct; in fact, there is always the risk of deliberate misinformation in deriving details from interviews with the subject of one's study. Just as their home is cloaked in fog and shadows, information about the shadow fey is shadowy in its elusiveness and its resistance to clarity of perception.

## The Shee: The Grace of the Arak

The shee are the Arak's diplomats and aristocrats. They possess the poise and demeanor of the most refined human noble, though intensified to an exaggerated degree. Of all the shadow fey, the shee are perhaps the most approachable, but approaching one isn't always wise.

The Clockmaker told me that the shee do not seek to kill except out of self-defense. These aristocratic fey, however, casually manipulate mortal minds as easily as a farmer picks an apple from a tree.

The shee are without a doubt the most beautiful of the Arak. They use their comeliness as a tactic, to distract the hearts and soften the wills of those they seek to influence. Indeed, the least powerful of the shee can charm an individual into betraying his loved ones, while the more powerful of them can ensnare a person's soul with complex binding geases and oaths after what seems like merely a polite flirtation.

Like ethereal diplomats, the shee act as mouthpieces for the shadow fey, using their charm and manners to affect outside society when necessary. Shee are not servants of evil, though their actions might fall within the parameters of what we can call intentional malevolence. Instead, they are, according to the Clockmaker, "irrationally afraid of not being in control in any given situation." They see the free will of mortals as a dangerous variable that could conceivably harm them. Hence, like anyone with strong survival instincts, they remove what they perceive as threatening. They manage, however, to curtail the freewill of those they fear through seduction and ensorcelment, rather than through the harsher means used by mortal tyrants and despots.

Shee may occasionally pass themselves off as elves. To the eyes of most mortals, the differences between shee and elves are too subtle to distinguish upon casual interaction. I sometimes wonder if this confusion indirectly gave rise to the not infrequent practice of referring to those with elven blood in their ancestry as "fey-born."

For the trained eye or the student of the shadow fey, there are several physiological differences between elves and shee. Most obviously, elves may wander around in the daylight with impunity, while shee avoid sunlight and seek out the shadows of evening. Further, shee tend to exceed elves in height by as much as a foot, making them exceptionally tall for a race often referred to as "the little people." Shee have a preternatural calmness and lack of obvious emotion that elves do not possess. My own observation of elves I have met supports my statement that they feel the same passions as humans and often react visibly to them, unlike their shadow fey cousins (if cousins they are). Shee seem detached and usually speak in

calm, measured tones. They do not weep, they do not rage and, presumably, they do not love. While elves enjoy a wide range of dietary preferences, shee — at least according to what I have been told — sustain themselves on the petals of flowers and other delicacies native to the Shadow Rift.

The shee appreciate many aspects of mortal creativity and for that reason strive to prevent their unseelie brothers from declaring war on mortals. Shee respect and enjoy the genius of a painter or storyteller and are often attracted to mortals of exceptional beauty. While their attentions to and interest in mortals and their affairs helps keep the wrath of the fey at bay, the individuals who catch the eye of the shee often suffer the fateful "gift" of transcendence and are made into changelings.

## The Sith: The Intellect of the Arak

Some scholars of the fey oversimplify the place of the sith in Arak society, referring to them as the evil opposites of the shee. While the sith provide the backbone of the Unseelie court and participate in practices that mortal societies regard as abhorrent, the fey have a different outlook on the actions of the sith. According to the Clockmaker, who provided me with a rare insight into the motivations of the sith (as well as the other breeds of shadow fey), their actions must be viewed against the backdrop of their immortality. The world of mortals, the cycle of life and death, the vibrancy of light and color are all outside the direct experience of these creatures.

The sith, in particular, have a fascination with death. Since the Arak are immortal, the process of growth and change, culminating in death as a natural end of life, is an oddity. They view death as many humans view arcane magic — as something to study and use.

If, as legends indicate, the shee were charged with discovering the usefulness of life and creativity, the sith received an opposite charge: to study the usefulness of death and its aftermath. The sith believe that death is more reliable than life, and they have made great use of necromantic magics as a result of this philosophy.

Where mortals consider killing another mortal an evil act, the sith regard killing as a transition from one state of being to another. Thus, reanimating a body after killing it puts all the resources that were once hostile to better use.

Like shee, sith are taller than elves. They have an innate understanding of formal swordsmanship and dueling. The Clockmaker spoke of sith who seem to materialize from the shadows, stab a mortal enemy through the heart and animate the corpse for use as an undead servant or laborer. While the shee — and, through them, the Seelie Court — concern themselves with relations among the various fey breeds, disputes among the Arak, and relations with the outside world, the Unseelie Court places a higher priority on the protection of the Arak. The sith, therefore, provide both magical support and undead defenders for the fey of the Shadow Rift.

## The Teg: The Awareness of the Arak

Of all the breeds of shadow fey, the teg are among the least interested in courts and the politics of the Arak. Frequently loners, they serve as scouts and hunters. In these roles, their solitary predilections are an asset. They tend to move from barrow (settlement) to barrow, carrying information and news. Each barrow relies on its visiting teg to bring news of what mortals are doing in the world "outside," what concerns are occupying the minds of the fey in other barrows, and subjects both trivial and serious (if such a word can apply to the fey). For the most part, however, the teg spend little time in the company of other fey. They are the cartographers and explorers of the Arak; the Clockmaker claims that the teg have mapped out the interior of their realm. They also act as spies for the Arak in the mortal world. According to my informant, a teg in fox form (or perhaps several individual tegs) had watched both my sister and me for some time before the Clockmaker decided to consider speaking with one or the other of us.

The Clockmaker claims that the restlessness of the teg is caused by the breed's innate curiosity and their short attention span. "Teg make for irritating companions," the fir expounded, explaining that teg tend to speak very fast and with great garrulousness. They possess a wealth of information but do not discriminate between matters of import and trivia. A teg making a report may spend several hours describing a particular valley without remembering the presence of a mortal army in the valley and the direction of its march.

In all their forms, the eyes and head of a teg move rapidly, much as a wild animal's will in order to take in everything about its surroundings.

Apparently, to the chagrin of many other Arak, teg have adopted some social rituals of the animals they study and with which they mingle. Teg tend to "mark" their territory in the same fashion as territorial animals and often sniff those they meet, just as animals scent one another.

Teg generally exist on a diet of small rodents and other vermin. Just as the shee study life and the sith examine death, the teg explore nature — no other breed knows more about the various types of woodland creatures. Teg speak sylvan as well as the "tongues" of many animals. They know the migration habits of animals and can even interpret messages from the smells of mammals and the chirps of birds.

## Alven: The Dedication of the Arak

I didn't realize until the Clockmaker told me that alven despise the nickname "carrot-tops." Called this because of their bright red hair in fey form, the alven are the farmers and agricultural experts of the shadow fey. Everything the teg know about animals, the alven know about plants. They cultivate and harvest food for the Arak, growing the choicest flowers for the shee's diet, among other things. Their penchant for horticulture borders on the obsessive, rivaling — and perhaps even exceeding — the dedication druids have for the natural world. The Clockmaker noted that if the alven had their way, they would obliterate the various cultures and civilizations of the mortal world, returning the world to a state of primal wilderness. Though they are nowhere near to realizing this goal (if, indeed, it *is* a goal), this statement illustrates the sheer dedication of the alven to all things verdant and blooming.

Alven turn into butterflies, moths and bees. As bees, they help pollinate flowers just as true bees do. Many alven develop strong emotions toward individual plants, tending their select flowers or plants with the devotion of a lover or a parent for its family. For the alven, this care is an immensely satisfying and often sensual experience. "Beware of trampling on flowers," the fir said in a manner that seemed almost serious. "You might be murdering the loved one of an alven."

Of all the shadow fey, the alven may be the easiest to discover in their animal form. Most bees and butterflies don't visit their plants in the middle of the night. Those that do, therefore, may very well be alven tending their charges. Since they do their work in the evening, many alven communi-

cate with plants while they are closed and dormant, collecting from them the seeds, roots, petals and other parts necessary to feed those shadow fey that subsist on these items. I asked the fir if the alven felt distress at knowing that other shadow fey used their plant-friends as food. The Clockmaker's response was dry and disinterested: "Who really cares what they feel?"

This statement again made me aware that empathy is a decidedly mortal trait.

## Powrie: The Contempt of the Arak

Of all the shadow fey, the powrie embody traits that most people would label as evil. Powrie enjoy pain and suffering, reveling in it much as humans relish an evening of high comedy at the playhouse. The cries of mortal pain fill these creatures with elation. Redcaps often serve as assistants to the sith. The Clockmaker mentioned that many sith nobles have a bond not unlike that between a wizard and his familiar with the powrie that sits on his shoulder. They are like a servitor race, given to the sith as assistants and as yes-men. It is very common for a sith unseelie noble to have a "familiar like" bond to the powrie sitting on his shoulder. The sith and the powrie tend to enjoy a complementary relationship; the sith need dead bodies for their necromantic activities, and the powries enjoy killing. When not bound to higher ranking members of the unseelie court, the powrie move in hunting packs, delivering pain and torture to as many living creatures as they can. Other shadow fey, however, are completely safe from a redcap's maliciousness.

Mortals, however, are fair game, whether they are adults or children, animals or humans or any other sentient race.

Powries cause not only physical pain but emotional and psychological pain as well. "It's just how they are," explained the Clockmaker, who went on to say that powries seem as obsessed at collecting screams and tears as the alven are obsessed with collecting seeds and pollen.

The redcaps are the killers and assassins of the Arak. Aside from being very adept at killing, powrie are also built for stealth and secrecy. Their agility and small size make them cunning spies and deadly killers. Many powrie learn bits and pieces of alchemy in order to recognize various toxins, which they use to make interesting (to them) poisons for their weapons.

Though I've never seen a redcap, I think that doing so is one experience I should not regret passing up.

## Portune: The Wisdom of the Arak

Of all the shadow fey, I think I'd most like to meet a portune. According to the Clockmaker, these Arak are the least threatening to humans and the most accessible. The portune are the scholars and lore keepers of the shadow fey. They have dedicated their immortality to the same ideals that my sister and I have dedicated our lives to: the pursuit and compilation of knowledge. Like the powrie, the portune are a "servitor" race. They most often serve the Seelie Court and are usually bound to noble shee in the same fashion as powrie are bound to the sith. If it did not involve the risk of becoming a changeling, I might be tempted to seek out a portune to converse with and share information. When I admitted as much to the Clockmaker, the creature assured me that I had probably seen one before without recognizing it.

The natural form of a portune resembles a tiny, dark-skinned elf with white hair and large eyes. These creatures possess magical healing abilities not unlike those of priests. They are generally quiet, mild-mannered beings with gentle personalities and whispery voices.

Portune tend to flee rather than fight. They know that they are not physically overpowering individuals and survive because they can heal their larger, more capable defenders. Apparently, portune's healing gifts do not restore wounds taken from sunlight damage.

The Clockmaker let slip the fact that the portune are also the keepers of the secrets of the Shadow Rift. They are, in fact, lore keepers for a race that has dwelled in two different dimensions. This function quite possibly provides them with acute insights into the nature of the fabric of the world. Upon considering this information again, I now wonder if the Clockmaker didn't tell me this intentionally as a temptation to seek out a portune for conversation — despite the risk of losing both my soul and my shadow.

## Muryan: The Prowess of the Arak

Simply put, the dancing men are not to be treated lightly in battle. Aside from being highly competent fighters, they cheat. The fey are noted for their ability to influence the minds of their victims. While the shee may use this power to

enforce civility within the court or to control the mind of a mortal lover, the muryan use mind magic in battle.

A blade in the hands of a muryan takes on a peculiar magical quality. If a dancing man cuts a foe in battle, the victim must use all his will to resist the compulsion to dance rather than defend himself. The more a muryan strikes, the more the victim's will is attacked. This dance often ends in death for the muryan's dance partner. Just a handful of dancing men can destroy sizeable groups of mortals.

In fact, the implications of a concerted effort of shadow fey give me cause for great concern. Armies of dancing men supported by ranks of portune healers backed by the bardic efforts of the shee present a formidable attack force. Add to that the ability of the sith to animate the bodies of their fallen enemies and the possibilities are frightful to contemplate.

According to our informant, muryan laugh a lot but rarely speak. They act as observers in social situations, expressing approval or disapproval with facial expressions and body language. In battle, however, muryan can be quite vocal. A fighting pack of dancing men often chatter to one another, voicing their opinions and observations. While fighting, muryan converse about everything from the tactics of their opponent to their current situation. They tell humorous tales while carving their enemies into small pieces. This tactic tends to keep their opponents distracted. Often, they insult their opponents, pointing out their weaknesses, striking their enemies' pride as hard as their bodies.

No other breed is quite as vocal in combat, unless one takes into account the battle songs and inspirational poetry of the shee.

The muryan serve as the tactical generals on the battlefield. Both shee and sith defer to the orders of a muryan during combat. Muryan also employ many types of psychological warfare. They are known to paint themselves blue, wear the dresses of the villages' young maidens, don the skins of animals and even attack completely naked.

## Brag: The Crafters of the Arak

The whitemen are the artisans, builders and laborers of the shadow fey. They are responsible for creating Arak barrows and are particularly gifted in stonework. They coordinate with the teg to find potential sites for new Arak barrows. According to our fir informant, brag and teg spend hours talking about nothing but land formations. Brag carve the interiors of hills and mountains to create elaborate, often massive underground havens that offer protection from the sun. Brag take great pride in their work. Although no mortal has ever seen a brag-constructed edifice and returned to describe it, anyone at all knowledgeable about the shadow fey would agree that the brag's craftsmanship rivals that of both dwarves and gnomes.

The brag are also master carpenters who combine wood and stone in ways that mortal artisans might not ever master due to their short mortal lifespans.

The Clockmaker maintained that the brag are also the most ardent of the Arak when it comes to carousing. "They play as hard as they work," our fir informant stated. This is the first reference I have heard of the shadow fey participating in activities for sheer entertainment. When I queried the Clockmaker further, I learned that the brag, like most working folk, enjoy both malted and fermented beverages as well as music and other entertainment arts. Apparently, brag are also prone to fits of temper brought on by fermented beverages, just as some mortals.

## Fir: The Ingenuity of the Arak

The Clockmaker saved her own breed for last in our conversation, noting that the fir are the inventors of the Arak. Where the portune are the wisest, the fir are the most creative, inventing new devices for the enjoyment and convenience of the shadow fey. From the mechanical defenses of a barrow to flower sorters for the nobles, the fir work at items for all the breeds. The brag use fir-made tools while the shee play instruments crafted by the fir. When the Clockmaker asked if I would care to hear about some of the implements used by the powrie, however, I declined, saying that my host's previous explanations had been sufficient to give me an idea of the fir's virtuosity and breadth of talent.

I observed during the course of our conversation that humility is not necessarily a trait of the fir. The Clockmaker carved upon a piece of wood while we conversed. When we had finished, the fir handed the piece of wood to me as a parting gift. The object was a doll that presented an eerily lifelike simulacrum of me (or my sister, for that matter). I still keep the wooden doll, fearful of letting it out of my sight for long. To this day, whenever I wake from a nightmare, I turn and look at the doll — and it smiles at me.

## Passing Thoughts

A few lesser breeds, rare and rather specialized, exist beyond the most numerous ones described above. The Clockmaker mentioned a specially bred assassin breed known as a waff, but insisted that since I would never see one, there was no need to describe it. I must admit, such a curt dismissal intrigued me, but I failed to elicit any more specific information.

The Clockmaker also elaborated somewhat on some things that had changed in his life since entering the world of light, shape and color. One of the topics covered was the notion that religion was beginning to gain some popularity among the Arak.

Though I had no idea that the shadow fey held any belief system as organized as a religion, my host informed me that exposure to the outside world has caused even such insular races as the shadow fey to consider new experiences.

While they dwelled in their previous home, the shadow fey knew little other than their masters' will. Now each one stands on the precipice of self-discovery. The possibility of free will and moral choices lies before them and perhaps, little by little, the knowledge of good and evil will finally alter the behavior of the shadow fey.

I voiced my opinion that the best solution would be for mortals to find some way of befriending the shadow fey rather than fear the day when we must face them in direct or indirect battle. The idea of fighting an enemy that is both immortal and amoral not one that brings ease of contemplation.

## The Origin of Fey Priests

*— From a comprehensive essay by Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*

Divine magic, while not unknown to the Arak, is rare and valuable. As a race that was once enslaved, the shadow fey seek traditions of their own. A sense of purpose beyond that of mere servitors is incredibly important to them. In many ways, they still search for their place in this harsh, unforgiving sunlit world.

Eventually, the first of the shee received divine power, apparently originating from ancestral spirits of the fey. Sources relate that one of Maeve's best archivers had been collecting information and lore about the ancestors of the fey in this mysterious realm. The Seelie queen contemplated trying

to contact these beings, and bade her archivist, a female shee name Ailiah, research ways of doing so. Coached by a nymph priestess, Ailiah prayed to the spirits of the fey ancestors. Her prayers were heard and she became the first Arak priestess.

The wonders of divine power took hold quickly and strongly. A cult of "true fey" worship quickly formed around Ailiah. Queen Maeve was thrilled, endorsing the fledgling church. Her Unseelie counterpart took an immediate dislike to the cult, seeing them as a threat to the Arak's hard won freedom, and publicly criticized the movement. The movement has grown slowly, however, and more priests and priestesses have received divine powers from these mysterious ancestors.

*—Notes toward an account of divine faith among the shadow fey, recorded by Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove and researched by Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove.*

## Black Mithral

Though not specifically concerned with breeds, this item seems worth note as some of our readers may encounter the fey in such garb. Tales of the exotic metal known as mithral are known mostly through contact with various elves. According to Uncle Rudolph's notes, this metal originated in another world. Mithral is both incredibly light and extremely durable. The elves trained in working with it remain remarkably quiet on matters of its creation and composition.

The Clockmaker mentioned that the shadow fey know how to create a variant of this mythic metal, known as black mithral. They guard the secret of how to make and work this substance from everyone, including sylvan elves. Sharing mithral's qualities of lightness and durability, black mithral also has the added advantage of possessing no

## Fey Priests

Fey priests resemble clerics in most significant ways, and cleric levels can be added like character levels to any shadow fey NPC (or PC). They have the same Hit Dice, skill points, feats, attack bonuses, saves and spells that standard clerics have. Fey priests get the spontaneous casting ability with healing spells only, regardless of their alignment.

The spell list for a fey priest is the same as that of any cleric of the appropriate alignment. Weapon and armor proficiencies are the same as for clerics, and the favored weapons (of the spirits) can vary. Fey priests have no power to turn or rebuke undead. Instead, a fey priest can command fey creatures, and the same rules apply: a fey priest (or priestess) may attempt to command fey a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma bonus. Use Table 8–9 in the *Player's Handbook* to determine the results of the Charisma check.

Fey priests choose two domains from the following list: Glamour, Luck and Trickery. The Glamour domain is unique to fey priests.

### Glamour Domain

**Deity:** Ancestral fey.

**Granted Power:** You receive a +3 bonus to all Will saves versus mind-affecting enchantments or enchantments that alter the perceptions.

Glamour Domain Spells

1 **Charm Person.** You make one person your friend.

2 **Glitterdust.** You can blind creatures and outline invisible creatures.

3 **Charm Monster.** You make one monster believe it's your ally.

4 **Modify Memory.** You can change 5 minutes of the subject's memories.

5 **Dream.** You can send a message to anyone sleeping.

6 **Veil.** You can change the appearance of a group of creatures.

7 **Nightmare.** You can send a vision that deals 1d10 damage, fatigue.

8 **Charm Monster, Mass.** As *charm monster* but affects all within 30 ft.

9 **Weird.** As *phantasmal killer*, but affects all within 30 ft.

reflection. It seems to absorb light in such a way as to make hiding simple while wearing black mithral armor. Like most armor, however, even black mithral does not help attempts to move quietly. Some clever individuals have managed to enchant black mithral armor with magical *silence*, however, thus making it possible to hide in plain sight while wearing full armor.

One of the reasons for black mithral's rarity is that it can only be made in the atmosphere of the Shadow Rift, according to the Clockmaker, or else in the Plane of Shadow. The rulers of the courts of the shadow fey maintain forges manned by brag and fir to produce black mithral.

Weapons are also made of black mithral. The flat black metal creates blades that appear intimidating and boast a remarkable hardiness. Although black mithral weapons have no innate magical qualities, they are well suited for enchantments. The Clockmaker mentioned that shadow fey lore contains several tales of enchanted blades of black mithral that bear names and are carried by heroes of the shadow fey. The most notable set of black mithral artifacts known to the shadow fey is the legendary regalia of their patron and hero, Arak.

### Black Mithral Armor

Armor made of black mithral is considered to be one weight category lighter than normal armor of its type. Thus, a black mithral breastplate would be considered medium instead of heavy armor, while a black mithral chain shirt would be considered light instead of medium armor. Additionally, black mithral armor gives its wearer a +5 competence bonus to Hide checks, effective only if the wearer is motionless. Otherwise, normal armor penalties apply.

# Chapter Six: The Immortal Mind

The Immortal Mind — a rather presumptuous title, for how could a pair of mere mortals, relatively "new" ones at that, presume to offer any insight into the mindset of an immortal race? Nevertheless, we shall take a well intentioned, if not terribly well informed, shot into the darkness, perhaps grazing our target in the process. We feel that this attempt is necessary, for the consequences of grappling with the mind of a shadow fey without a reference point could be disastrous indeed. Please consider this chapter mandatory background reading for Chapter Eight: Confronting the Shadow Fey.

In this chapter, we examine the immortal mind from two approaches. First, we discuss the psychology of the shadow fey. As with all sentient beings, every shadow fey is a unique individual with a unique personality. However, certain patterns can be discerned in fey behavior. Still, one must be careful to think of "patterns of behavior" rather than "rules of behavior," for it seems unlikely that even the fey themselves understand the rules that govern their acts. Second, we examine fey sociology. To the casual observer (as if there could be a casual observer of the faerie folk), fey sociology is defined by breed. Perhaps there is truth to this theory, though we suspect that a commonality of outlook and purpose are influences as well.

## The Weight of Immortality

Let us begin our discussion with immortality, as it is the lens through which all Arak view the world. Clearly, it must be the overriding influence on their psyche. Immortality has always been something greatly sought by humankind. Unfortunately, all known roads in this direction ultimately lead to an undying life and a corrupted soul, if the soul survives the journey at all. Lichdom is perhaps the most infamous of these paths. So, one might suppose that immortality would equate to power, corruption and evil. However, the fey did not seek immortality; it was given to them at creation. Immortality is thus a characteristic of the fey, not a realized goal. If it is a blessing or a curse, we are surely not wise enough to say. Perhaps each faerie must decide this for him or her self.

Humans and others of our ilk who seek immortality often do so because they believe that they have much left to accomplish in this world. Such is not necessarily the case for the immortal-born. While some fey might think to take advantage of their lifespan for personal gain, others simply seek to entertain themselves in the moment.

The fey have developed many diversions to occupy their minds and bodies while eternity passes. Ennui is a way of life for the fey, and they must constantly battle it in new and creative ways. Their more mundane diversions mimic human life — art, architecture and the like. In every case, though, these "diversions" are taken to limits often unattainable by mortals. Laurie once met a master human sculptor who had been carving a likeness of his wife for over nine years. The man lamented that his masterpiece would never be finished, for his hands had grown weak with age, and his subject changed faster than his chisel could cut. Laurie wisely warned him not to lament too loudly, lest the fey offer him a solution to his problems. Changeling sculptors have little trouble working a piece for a century, and changeling models make for very patient subjects indeed.

## Pastimes for All Time

Nothing is more interesting to the fey than interaction with mortals. By most accounts, we fascinate the fey, or at least provoke mild curiosity. Gentle reader, please do not mistake this fascination for respect or goodwill. Think instead of the way a child might interact with a butterfly: a cruel child might pull off the insect's antennae, just to see if it flies aimlessly about; a caring child might catch it in a jar, intending to love it always, but mourning when it dies of suffocation; an admiring child might pierce its back with a pin, in order to preserve its beauty in a picture frame for eternity.

Practical jokes and other forms of mischief are well-known practices of the fey. Fey pranks are common in folklore, and more than a few misplaced items have been blamed on the faeries. Our father once told us that a servant at Heather House could never remember the proper placement of silver around the plates and would blame the faeries for mixing up the forks and spoons just before dinner. She would even leave a window ajar in the dining hall to add to the ruse!

While our servant's story was undoubtedly a fabrication, other tales are harder to dismiss. In Viktal, an alchemist's home and shop caught fire one night, with unknown cause. The multi-hued flames danced about the home for close to an hour, with the colors and sounds of the fire mutating as different components were set alight. The entire village came out to watch the spectacle, albeit at a

safe distance. Some villagers reported seeing strange shadows flicking in and out among the flames. One woman fled in fear, shouting that the souls of the alchemist and his family were dancing in the blaze.

When the fire died down, the townsfolk went into the smoldering ruins to recover the bodies. Rather than remains, they found three beautiful alabaster jars resting in the store's firebucket, untouched by the flames. One brave soul opened a jar, revealing the partially cremated remains of the alchemist's wife, with only the braid of her red hair unburned. The townsfolk were convinced that faeries were to blame. Gennifer and I doubt that faeries ignited the fire, but we have concluded that the blaze probably did attract a group of sith. The sith are known to travel in shadow, are immune to flame, and have a moribund sense of humor, possibly manifested in this case by the placement of the burnt remains within the firebucket. As with many fey pranks, the "joke" is often lost on the victim, as immortality can have a strange effect on one's sense of humor.

A more sinister case involved a Nova Vaasan horse rancher near Kantora who tells of his attempt to expand his business by raising herding dogs. The night after he purchased the dogs, they barked for hours at a nearby rock formation. At some point, the dogs abruptly went silent. The next morning, the rancher found his dogs lying dead and one of his horses out of the barn. The dogs had suffered many broken bones, and the horse's spine was broken. As best could be determined by the wounds inflicted and the placement of the bodies, the dogs were dropped from a great height on to the back of the mare as it bolted about the pasture. Some of the dogs were dropped more than once. The cruelty shown in this game is a signature of the powrie. The powrie are also masters of illusion, which may explain why the cries of the animals went unheard.

Shadow fey are even known to wage war for entertainment. Of course, no fey may slay another fey, according to the Law of Arak. The use of changelings as combatants addresses this problem quite conveniently. The fey also utilize undead and various constructs when changelings are in short supply or if a more diverse fighting force is required. The brag and their kin sometimes create fortresses and siege equipment for these macabre games. The use of such "disposable" soldiers must surely lead to the trivialization of war. One tale claims that a pair of muryan once held a battle to settle a dispute over whether the natives of Tepest or the natives of

Nova Vassa made better changeling warriors. Unfortunately for the mortals still living in Nova Vassa, their lost kin were victorious.

It occurs to me that we have perhaps dwelt too long on the dark side of the fey personality, for benevolent fey certainly exist. Fey are known to do many unseen favors for mortals, and some even fall in love with our kind. We shall discuss this topic in depth in the next chapter.

Religion does not play a large role in Arak life. They worship no gods as we know them, though some Unseelie once dabbled in a cult of the Spider Queen. While they may not worship, all shadow fey do pay *homage* to their savior, Arak the Erlking. They often make pilgrimages to his empty tomb to pay their respects. We have no reports of particular rituals around these pilgrimages, but we imagine that they are as foreign to mortals as all things fey.

In addition to common pursuits, each breed of Arak has found a different way to pass the time during its immortality. The alven, brag, fir, portune and shee spend much of their time at artistic pursuits. The alven choose to work their gardens, always seeking the perfect bloom; the brag serve as the designers and builders of the large structures in the faerie world; while the fir tend to the smaller, more complex devices. The portune seek out new plants for their healing salves and alchemical brews, and the shee compose song and verse, and paint and sculpt.

The other breeds — the muryan, powrie, sith and teg — have more sinister pastimes. The muryan breed fire-breathing hounds to serve them in battle. The powrie love to spy, eavesdrop and indulge in torture. Death fascinates the sith; they seek out graveyards and the sites of great battles to dwell among the corpses. Terribly primitive, the animalistic teg seem not to have any other interests beyond stalking and hunting anything that can be hunted.

Let us discuss the matter of fey art a bit more deeply by looking at the alven. The alven love to seek out new plants to grow and have been encountered searching as far from the Shadow Rift as Nevuchar Springs. Perhaps the alven are attracted to flowers and other vegetation for their fragile and temporary beauty, much as other Arak are attracted to humankind for similar reasons.

The alven are masters of interbreeding plant species; experimentation must stimulate their minds. The alven would certainly be of great benefit to alchemists or herbalists, if only they allowed their products to be harvested! Tempting as it may be, we must caution those seeking an alven garden in order to stock their apothecary labs. The alven will vigorously defend their gardens and farms from anyone attempting to damage them. The same can be said of any Arak defending his art.

A trapper from Darkon tells of discovering a well-tended flower garden in the middle of the wild. Every spring he would return, only to find the flowers had grown more beautiful and more fragrant. On his seventh trip to the hidden garden, he found the smell so intoxicating that he was unable to leave until the flowers had wilted, some three weeks later. He claimed that he would lie on a bed of clover at night, and the "night bees" would sing him to sleep. Fortunately, he so admired the flowers in the garden that he never thought to pick one. He was rewarded at the end of his stay with a drop of honey, placed on his lips while he slept. When he licked the honey from his lips, his aching stomach filled as if he had just eaten a feast.

## Physiology

One very important, very unique thing that must be understood about the fey is that fey psychology influences fey physiology. In fact, "influences" is much too weak a term. A shadow fey's psyche *transforms* its physique. The mind creates a body to suit it, or perhaps to serve it. As with most things fey, this characteristic runs counter to the mortal understanding of the world, where one's physical characteristics often affect one's outlook. A very strong correlation exists between the moral compass of a fey and its breed. So, the old adage about not judging by appearances does not necessarily apply to the fey.

As near as we can determine, a fey's lineage plays no role (or a limited one) in determining its eventual breed. That is, the fey child of two portune parents could as easily become a sith as a portune, if environmental influences were set aside. Of course, good "breeding" (please pardon the pun, but it was irresistible) could affect a fey's moral compass, and therefore its eventual breed. Evidence even exists that the fey can change themselves into different breeds through prolonged shifts in personality.

## Environmental Influences

While it is true that the fey might be found in nearly any land, the Shadow Rift is their home. Our uncle once told us not to judge someone unless

we had spent a night in *their* home. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), we have not been able to spend a night in that dark place to offer you a first-hand account. However, we have some relatively reliable third-hand information from Rudolph Van Richten's notes to give a bit of insight in this regard.

Van Richten's notes include a letter from a Tepestian hunter who tracked some shadow fey back into the Shadow Rift. We shall refer to him as "Derek." The man was more than a bit foolhardy, but revenge was on his mind. The shadow fey had taken his young son, for reasons unknown.

We will not discuss the path the huntsman took, for our reader's protection. Should you find yourself with the need to journey into the twilight realm, locating the way in will be the least of the challenges you face. We will say that the journey itself is sufficiently dangerous that one would need a substantial motivation to make the trip worth the risk. Imagine the draw that the mortal world must have that the shadow fey would cross this dangerous border with such frequency! Here is an excerpt from our uncle's notes:

*The first thing I noticed was that it was so overcast it looked like night, and also it was a fair bit warmer down below than it were up above. Viktal were white with snow, which made the trackin' easier. Yet there was no snow down in the Rift, which makes me wonder if I wasn't just underground somehow. That might explain the unnatural looks of the trees and the plants, too. I don't think it were a cave, though, primarily 'cause it were also rainin'. The rain sure didn't smell right, though, and it kind of seemed to stick to your skin. The place was awful big for a cave, too, so I'm pretty sure I was in the Rift.*

*Anyways, I weren't there long 'fore I spotted an old blind hermit. He didn't look like one of the demons that took my son, so I thought he might be able to help me out. The hermit said the kidnapers passed through a few days ago (not sure how he knew it were them). I said he got it wrong, 'cause I was just three hours behind their trail. So, the hermit says that time passes differently down below than up above. A "temporal fugue," he called it. Said a day down below were only an hour up above. So, I knew he was mad, and I got up to leave. Then he showed his true unnatural self and summoned the shades to steal my soul 'fore I could escape. The shadows chased me back the way I come and I never went again. I wept mightily for my boy. Temporal fugue or no, that experience stole a good ten years from my body and my mind.*

— From the private correspondence of Derek of Tepest to Dr. Rudolph Van Richten

The first thing that the huntsman noticed about the Rift was its state of perpetual twilight. There are no stunning vistas to please the eye; the darkness hides the landscape until it is upon you. The colors of the world are necessarily muted — the joys of vibrant red, sky blue and glittering gold are not for those who live in the shadows. "But wait!" our clever reader might exclaim. "How can one miss what one has never known?" While it is true that the shadow fey are one with the night, this was not always so. If the stories are correct, once, long ago, the fey walked in sunlight. We suspect that when the ellefolk were merged with shadow that some drew more from the darkness than others did. Perhaps those that are oldest, those that best resisted the taint, perhaps they remember and long for the light.

Another interesting, though far less significant, fact the huntsman noticed about the Shadow Rift is that it never snows there. The huntsman went in the dead of winter, but he did not see a flake of the snow. We consulted Nicholas Burnwick, a well-known expert on weather from Mordent. Since the bottom of the Rift gets rain, Mr. Burnwick theorized that snow falling into the Rift from up above must melt before it reaches the bottom. He further speculated that the mists enveloping the mouth of the Rift might trap heat below them, leading to higher temperatures in the Rift.

We apologize for this short diversion into the winter ecology of the Shadow Rift in a chapter on the mind of the fey. Our point, albeit a minor one, is that some fey appear to be fascinated by snow. The increased reports of fey activity in winter are largely due to the discovery of strange footprints in the night-fallen snow. The shee appear to be especially intrigued by the stuff, as the life-like "Snowmen of Mt. Bramble" in Tepest demonstrate.

The "temporal fugue" does appear to exist, as impossible as it may seem. We have other reports that can only be explained by the existence of such a phenomenon. If time indeed passes differently in the Rift, it is well worth considering when dealing with a faerie. If one were to best a faerie in our world, that faerie might return to the Rift to plot its revenge. While the faerie would have a year to plan and scheme, the poor offender would have but a fortnight to enjoy the fruits of his success!

## Sociology

When we began writing this book, we felt that we must include a section on the sociology of the fey. We know from experience how profound an effect society can have on one's outlook. However, we were confronted with a glaring lack of information about the subject. Then, a gift fell into our hands: the Marcusen Manuscript, as we have come to call it. Following a lead from Doctor Van Richten's notes, we journeyed to a small hamlet in Tepest where we spoke at length with an Inquisitor by the name of Jocelyn about the strange events that occurred there.

## The Marcusen Manuscript

The story begins in the recent past, in the home of Aldren and Adrina Marcusen. Aldren was an opportunistic dreamer, whose eye was always on the next scheme that would lead him to instant wealth. As his poor investments sent his house further into poverty, his schemes became more brazen. Aldren acquired a "leprechaun's treasure map" from what he viewed as a reputable source. The destination on the map lay within the Shadow Rift itself. Now, one could easily (and perhaps wisely) dismiss this map as a swindler's farce. However, the map apparently did lead Aldren into the heart of the Rift, which makes one wonder whether Aldren was the seeker of the prize or the unwitting prize himself.

What befell Aldren during his journey may never be known, but I dare say that Laurie and I have enjoyed great, guilty fun speculating about it since. Such speculation is naturally improper for well-brought up ladies, but perhaps this is another example of the lure of the mysterious Twilight Folk. Aldren expected to be gone a month. After a year, his wife had given up hope. Then, late one afternoon, Adrina saw an old man rushing across the field toward her home. The man ran faster as the sun dipped beneath the horizon, as if he was trying to outrun the sunset. As Adrina grabbed a spade to defend herself, the man called out. Adrina dropped the spade in shock as she heard the voice of her husband emerge from a body that was easily twice his age.

Aldren apparently had suffered more than unnatural aging. Adrina noticed that Aldren's legs were replaced from the thighs down with wooden, mechanical substitutes. The things were such a marvel of engineering that Aldren walked (and ran!) as if they were his own. According to the

Inquisitor, Adrina was greatly concerned that there might be faeries inside, pulling wires to make them move. My speculation, after meeting the Clockmaker in Martria Bay, is that the legs were the clever construction of a fir, given as a gift to Aldren.

Aldren would not speak to his wife of what had happened, saying only that he needed to prepare and then to rest. Adrina noted that Aldren clutched a finely engraved copper tube in his hand, and he had bent the metal from gripping it so tightly. Aldren went out to the shed, returning with iron implements. Justifiably afraid, Adrina spent the night at her sister's house.

The next morning, Adrina returned to her home with her sister and Inquisitor Jocelyn. The home was ransacked, and Aldren's lifeless corpse was discovered propped up in a chair. His wooden legs were missing, as was his original head. In its stead, a well-sculpted wooden likeness bearing a sadistic grin was staked into his neck. Unfortunately for Aldren, his wooden head functioned far less efficiently than his wooden legs.

Inquisitor Jocelyn burned the house to the ground with Aldren's body inside it. The grieving Adrina was kept under close watch by Inquisitor Jocelyn, but to no avail. Two days later, Jocelyn awoke to find Adrina listless and unaware — elfshot. The church was not rummaged, so we are inclined to think that Adrina's suffering was eased by a sith who sympathized with the distraught widow by making her kin. Inquisitor Jocelyn took pity on Adrina by placing her in an asylum rather than in the press, the typical destination for the shadow-reft.

After our meeting with Inquisitor Jocelyn, Laurie and I toured the Marcusen home site. To our surprise, the shed remained standing. Searching inside, Laurie discovered the engraved copper tube! Or, perhaps more correctly, it discovered her. She swears she picked up a nicely balanced hammer and tucked it into her belt, but when she emerged into the light, Aldren's copper tube was held under the leather of her belt.

Taking all available precautions, I carefully examined the contents of the tube. It held what we now refer to as the *Marcusen Manuscript*. At the time, I had little understanding of what I held. As I unrolled the bright white scroll, I recognized the Gloaming script of the shadow fey described in Van Richten's notes. After casting a quick spell to enable me to read the words, I was startled by what appeared. I blinked and adjusted my spectacles, but to no avail. After perusing a handful of words, the text had blurred and shifted about, becoming indecipherable again.

After many months of research, I was able to determine the proper procedure for deciphering the fey script. Apparently, the fey sometimes use an enchanted ink to protect valued information. In order to view the ink, you must do so in the light of a candle created from the same component as the ink. In the case of the *Marcusen Manuscript*, the ink was wrung from a rare night blossom. After constructing the candle appropriately, I was able to read the wealth of information contained within the scroll.

The manuscript is a court record, scribed by a shee acting as a secretary for the Seelie court. I do not know when it was scribed, for the calendar system used by the fey eludes me. Nevertheless, the record provides a great deal of insight into fey society, as it describes disputes brought before the court for resolution. The material makes for quite interesting reading, but I fear we have learned too much. The document appears to include the *true names* of a number of the fey involved in the disputes, as a matter of record. Laurie and I feel certain this is what led to Aldren's assassination, likely at the hands of the powrie. We have therefore hidden the manuscript far away, and we have taken extra precautions since its discovery. What we present here is information that we believe is safe for our gentle readers to know. True names are omitted to protect the innocent, namely you.

## The Courts

The kingdom of the fey is divided into two courts, the Seelie court and the Unseelie court. Each court is a loose alliance of certain like-minded breeds of Arak. Some breeds, such as the brag, align with neither court, but serve both, while some aspects of fey society are independent of court. Nevertheless, the courts are the predominant influences of faerie society, and an adventurer would be well served to know where a fey's loyalties lie.

Maeve, known also as the Faerie Queen, the Queen of Light, the "Lord" of the Seelie, and the Shee-"Lord", rules the Seelie court. Her twin brother Loht rules the Unseelie court. Loht is known variously as the Prince of Shadows, the Lord of the Unseelie, and the Sith-Lord. We are not positive why Loht is a prince and Maeve a queen, but we suspect that they preserve the honorary title of king

for their father, Arak the Erlking. Though they tend to matters in their own court, Maeve and Loht rule the Gloaming People together. If a matter affects all the fey, Maeve and Loht decide jointly how to proceed. History shows that they do not always agree and often have very different goals for their people. We have no evidence that anyone has ever ruled the courts except for Maeve and Loht, so we must assume that they have held control since escaping the Twilight. By all accounts, their rule has lasted thousands of years.

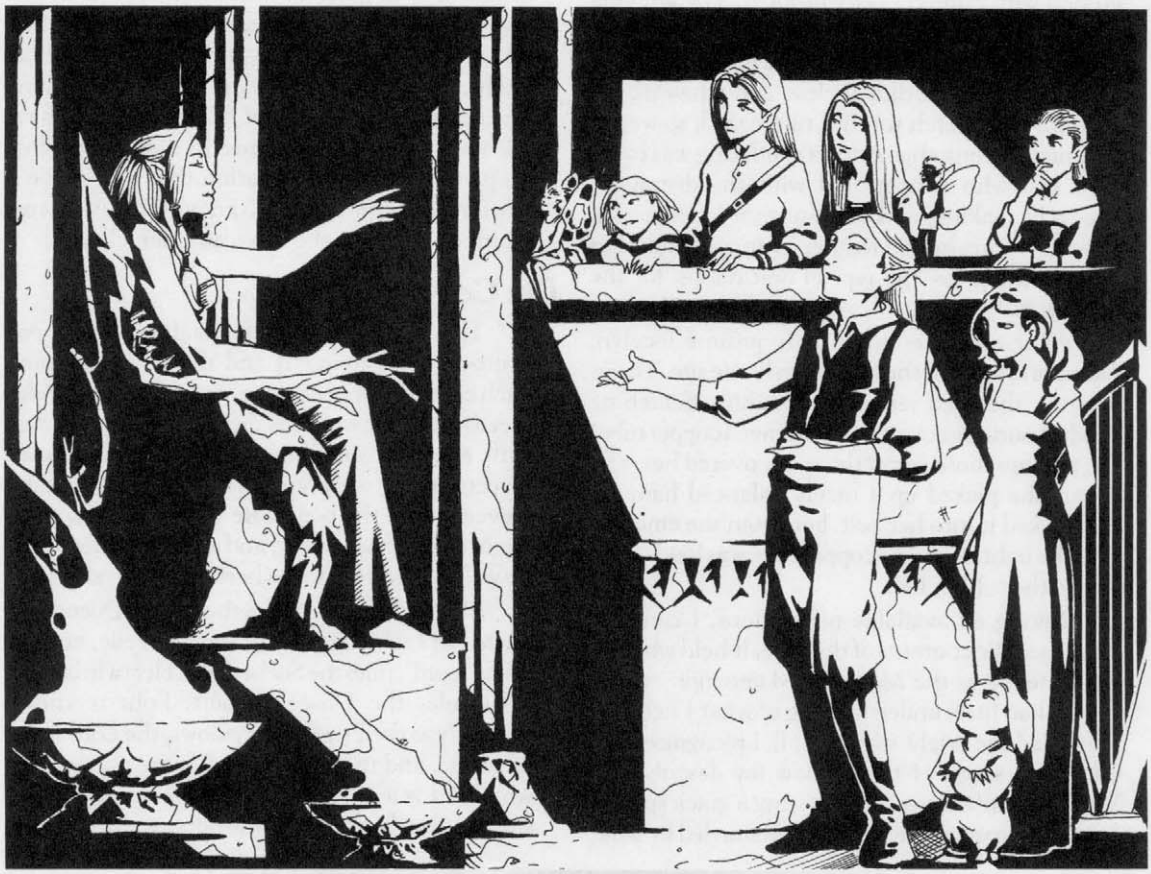
**The Seelie Court**

The Seelie court consists primarily of the alven, the fir, the portune and the shee, though other fey align with Maeve as well. The individual lords of the alven, the fir, and the portune advise Maeve on court matters. Maeve, being the Shee-Lord, represents shee interests. Naturally, the shee are the predominant influencers of court opinion.

The title of lord is reserved for the leader of each of the breeds. The lords appear to have been selected from the ranks of princes and princesses, though we are unsure what selection process was used — the lords quite possibly have never changed since the courts were established. The lords of the Seelie breeds at the time of the writing of the *Marcusen Manuscript* were Lord Plathena of the alven, Lord Ochwach of the fir, and Lord Falrond of the portune. Since we have not been able to date the manuscript, we cannot say with certainty if these lords are still in power.

While the Seelie are generally more benevolent than the Unseelie, one should not assume that the Seelie are good counterparts to the evil Unseelie. The Seelie court still has the interests of the Seelie in mind, and these interests may not have a thing to do with mortal concerns.

The fey of the Seelie court are generally non-aggressive, even pacifistic in nature; they prefer instead to dwell within the spheres of their arts. The Seelie nature seems to have put them at a disadvantage relative to their Unseelie brethren, who are more prone to the use of force to achieve their goals. For this reason, and perhaps because fate often seems to reward violence, the Seelie are in decline in population and influence. The wonderful creations of the Seelie are even less likely to be encountered now than in the generation of our grandparents.



## From the Marcusen Manuscripts, Entry Number 14:

The Dispute of XXXXX, the fir, commonly known as Laso, with YYYYY, the shee, commonly known as Prena, as presented to her majesty, Queen Maeve, on Flowers of the Nine and Twelve Candles, half burnt: In this telling, Laso the fir brought his friend Prena the shee forth to the mortal lands to engage a performance by a mortal woman, exceptional in her ability of harpsichord construction, which she played herself. Both Laso and Prena agreed the performance was impressive, as much so as any that had been heard among mortals, but disagreed thereafter on the contributing factor. Prena argued that the woman was an exceptional performer, while Laso argued that her true talent was in the construction of superior harpsichords. Both desired the woman for a changeling.

Her majesty wisely ruled that Laso had first claim, for he discovered the mortal. Nevertheless, Prena's concerns for the rarity of harpsichordists of exception was well-noted, so the Queen proposed a compromise. The shee would be entitled to take the woman as his lover, so that together they could raise a child. Together they could teach the child to play the harpsichord until it reached maturity. Then, Laso the fir could take the mother, now as a changeling, and Prena the shee could take the child, also as a changeling. Both the fir and the shee were pleased with this agreement and left proclaiming Maeve's wisdom and compassion.

### The Unseelie Court

The Unseelie court is composed of the muryan, the powrie, the sith and the teg. Loht and his sith-brethren establish the agenda of the court. Without the influence of the orderly sith, Unseelie court would likely crumble through infighting and disorganization. According to our faithful manuscript, at the time of its writing the lords of the Unseelie court were Mohrg of the Muryan, Malinda of the Powrie, and Garo Gara of the Teg. These lords appear to serve more as commanders than councilors, as the sith consider themselves mentally superior to other Unseelie.

Our information on the Unseelie court is somewhat limited, as the Marcusen Manuscript deals primarily with the Seelie court. However, several entries involve Unseelie, and input from Loht is generally required in these matters. From these entries, we are able to gain some useful information.

About seven years ago (in our world), Loht led the Unseelie court in a plot to open up a gate of some sort in the Shadow Rift. Regrettably, we know little of his motivations. We can assume they were not well intentioned; for while the Seelie are generally content with peaceful pursuits, the Unseelie have a lust for power, violence and other wicked pleasures. Fortunately, a brave group of adventurers defeated Loht's plans. We have concluded that Loht was seriously wounded, as the manuscript mentions a sith prince, "Graeme, former regent of the Crippled Prince." We believe that the Unseelie court went into a period of decline in power while Loht was crippled. However, nearly two centuries have passed in the Shadow Rift since Loht's failed plan, and we suspect that he was able to regain much of his former power during that time. Therefore, we caution future adventurers not to underestimate Loht's capabilities or those of the Unseelie court.

### The Unaligned

Some Arak do not align with either Maeve or Loht. Most of these Arak serve both courts equally. The brag are an example of such a group, pleased to construct buildings and devices for anyone in need. Other, more obscure breeds are either independently minded or unwelcome by either court. We have recently heard rumors that some shunned fey have grouped together to form a new court. These fey must have committed some serious transgressions to cause them to be shunned. Perhaps they even broke the Law of Arak, which states that no shadow fey may kill another shadow fey. We cannot say what outlook this group might have toward mortals, but perhaps under the right circumstances, these fey might be persuaded to join with mortals to battle a common enemy.

## The Nine Alignments

It is perhaps no coincidence that there are nine major breeds of Arak, each representing one of the nine alignments. However, there are more breeds than the nine, and not all Arak follow their usual breed alignment. Here are the nine alignments, reexamined from the immortal perspective.

**Lawful Good:** Lawful good creatures are generally considered the "safest" of all creatures to encounter, though immortality and fey law can still put a devious twist on the safest of alignments. Lawful good fey are extremely compassionate and often dedicated to protecting innocent creatures. They do their best to ease suffering when they encounter it. In most cases, they view themselves as protectors of lesser creatures, over which they hold full dominion. It is only by their grace that the lesser creatures survive, be they humans, animals, or other creatures of lower sentience. A lawful good fey might "save" a human from injustice by converting them to a changeling. Another fey might save a mortally wounded human through a merciful killing. Lawful good fey obey the Law of Arak and of their own court, generally the Seelie. They tell the truth, but they will not divulge information that might endanger other Arak or the order of Arak society. Lawful good Arak keep their promises, though their timeframe for "making good" might be much longer than a mortal can tolerate. The portune are the most well-known of the lawful good Arak.

**Neutral Good:** The "true good" Arak are benevolent without adhering strictly to the law of the fey courts. Still, most neutral good fey align themselves with the Seelie court due to its generally "good" perspective. Neutral good Arak will go out of their way to help someone in need, frequently leaving helpful items for mortals in distress during the night. Of course, the same fey might see fit to take a possession from a mortal if the fey felt that it could put the item to better use helping others or if the human didn't deserve to own such a thing. Neutral good fey, like all others, view the creation of changelings as a gift, and they might even make personal sacrifices in order to bestow this gift on a needy or deserving recipient. "It's for your own good" is a common phrase of these Arak. The fir are dominant among neutral good Arak.

**Chaotic Good:** Chaotic good Arak are generally helpful to mortals and immortals alike. They are independently minded, and thus perhaps more open to negotiation and discussion than other Arak. Negotiation with a chaotic good Arak is often fruitless, however, as they frequently demand a renegotiation if circumstances change the outcome they expected. Individual freedom is important to chaotic good Arak, though they may or may not extend that privilege to mortals. A chaotic good Arak might ask before creating a changeling from a mortal, or it might assume that it is liberating the creature. Chaotic good Arak are usually considered to be part of the Seelie court, but they are notoriously absent from official proceedings. Alven are representative of chaotic good Arak.

**Lawful Neutral:** A lawful neutral Arak is interested in order. The order of faerie society is the courts, so the courts are treated with great respect. Lawful neutral Arak do not generally side with one court but rather serve both. Rules, no matter how nonsensical they may seem to mortals, must be followed. The traditions of the fey folk must be preserved across the centuries, so societal change is frowned upon. Note that human laws are inconsequential to lawful neutral Arak. A lawful neutral Arak has no compunctions about stealing from a mortal, for immortals are higher in the natural order and therefore have natural rights to mortals' possessions. Lawful neutral fey expect respect for their status and accomplishments, and they give respect in return. This respect applies to mortals as well as other fey. The brag are the most common of lawful neutral fey.

**Neutral:** Neutral Arak follow the path that suits them. Generally, they will follow the will of the courts, tell the truth to those who deserve to hear it, and treat others with a moderate degree of respect. However, they are seldom interested in getting involved in the affairs of others or of organized society. To mortals, they often appear apathetic or aloof. Neutral Arak are not emotionless, however. The neutral shee are some of the most passionate lovers of humans among the Arak. Their passions are of a personal nature, not based on benevolence or hatred, order or independence.

**Chaotic Neutral:** To a mortal's eye, all Arak might be considered chaotic neutral. Chaotic neutral Arak believe that each individual Arak must decide for himself how to spend eternity. They may align with a court if it furthers their goals, but personal relationships are most important. Over the centuries, chaotic neutral Arak may change allegiances several times. To an immortal, several changes in a century might seem highly chaotic. Chaotic neutral Arak are unlikely to honor the spirit of an agreement unless it is to their advantage to do so. Rather, they will bend and twist the rules of the agreement as far as possible in order to gain advantage. The only laws they are likely to obey without question are direct orders from Maeve or Loht. The muryan are typical chaotic neutral Arak.

**Lawful Evil:** Lawful evil shadow fey are incredibly dangerous to mortal society. They often develop evil schemes that span centuries. Mortals are pawns at best; they are more likely to be victims of the aggressive power maneuvers of the lawful evil Arak. Respect for tradition, allegiances and status is important; those who lack such respect are dealt with harshly. Random acts are distasteful and potentially disruptive to the careful plans of lawful evil Arak. Agreements with lawful evil shadow fey are more likely to be based upon dire consequence rather than mutual benefit. The Unseelie court is the preferred court of lawful evil Arak, but the Seelie court is recognized as a necessary partner. The Law of Arak is to be obeyed by leaders and followers alike. The sith are the most powerful of the lawful evil Arak.

**Neutral Evil:** Neutral evil fey take pleasure in cruel and horrid acts. They seek to gain personal power, not necessarily to advance the cause of their group. Most neutral evil fey are ambivalent about the courts and their role in fey society. They are often seen as nature corrupted. Bargaining with a neutral evil fey is like bargaining with a storm at sea. You must play by the storm's rules, and in the end, the storm will do as it pleases. The teg represent the neutral evil alignment among the Arak.

**Chaotic Evil:** Chaotic evil fey are interested in their own needs alone. Alliances are relevant only as long as they are useful. Lesser beings (all non-fey, and even weak fey) exist to be exploited for personal benefit, be it pleasure or profit. Chaotic evil fey are considered to be part of the Unseelie court, due more to a common amoral outlook rather than any sense of allegiance. The word of a chaotic evil Arak is worthless; the Arak will entirely misrepresent or misquote any arrangement as needed. However, even chaotic evil fey are loathe to disobey the Law of Arak. No pleasure can be gained from being shunned. The only fortunate thing about chaotic evil fey is that they are poor at planning or organizing any concentrated attacks on mortals. The powrie are the most common of the chaotic evil Arak.

# Chapter Seven: Interactions with Mortals

In this chapter, we discuss some of the many reasons why immortals might desire to spend some of eternity among the rest of us.

## Curiosity

Who is more interesting — good fisherman Wallace, who daily tends his lines, with no time for frivolity or culture, or Asmonea, the immortal garden sprite from the shadow world, who sings her flowers to sleep? If you had already spent 300 years with Asmonea, you might find fisherman Wallace an intriguing diversion. A shadow fey apparently did feel that way, for there was a true fisherman Wallace, whose boat was plagued by unexplained phenomena. Every day something new and strange would happen, with no apparent purpose other than to provoke a reaction. His nets would fly to the treetops, or his fish would cry when he took them to market. After one year, Wallace was shunned as an eccentric and forced from his village. After five years, he was known to be mad. After ten years he was gone, never to be seen again!

As alien as the fey are to us, so must we be to them. We age and die; they do not. We fear death; they do not. We rush to complete our lives before our time runs out; they lazily dabble about this and that for centuries. For these reasons, the fey may be more curious about the lives of mortals than any other species. Fey, whose forms are far more malleable than our own, often transform into human shape to walk among us. Perhaps they hope to gain some understanding of us through adopting our appearance. It must be hard for some of them to fathom the restrictive world we live in — we don't even have wings! They must also wonder what happens in daylight in our cities and villages, just as we wonder what goes on at night in the darkest reaches of the forest. Even our food is different. Truly, our species are as divergent as sentient species can be. Since the fey do not respect us enough to fear our differences, curiosity seems the most natural emotion for them to exhibit.

## To Aid Mortals

Fey often feel compelled to help mortals, but usually for patronizing reasons. We are lesser beings, and fey are kind to us as a parent is to a child. Surely everyone's father has let them win at chess or a similar game of skill. Keep this in mind if you think you have gotten the best of a fey.

Fey aid may come in nearly any form. A craftsman might awaken to find all of his projects completed (but a tool or two missing). A weary traveler might find a cave where none existed before. A destitute woman might find a valuable bauble placed under her pillow each night. If a fey is pleased with the results of the aid, it may continue indefinitely. These faeries are considered lucky, since they may bring fortune to a household for generations.

## Etiquette

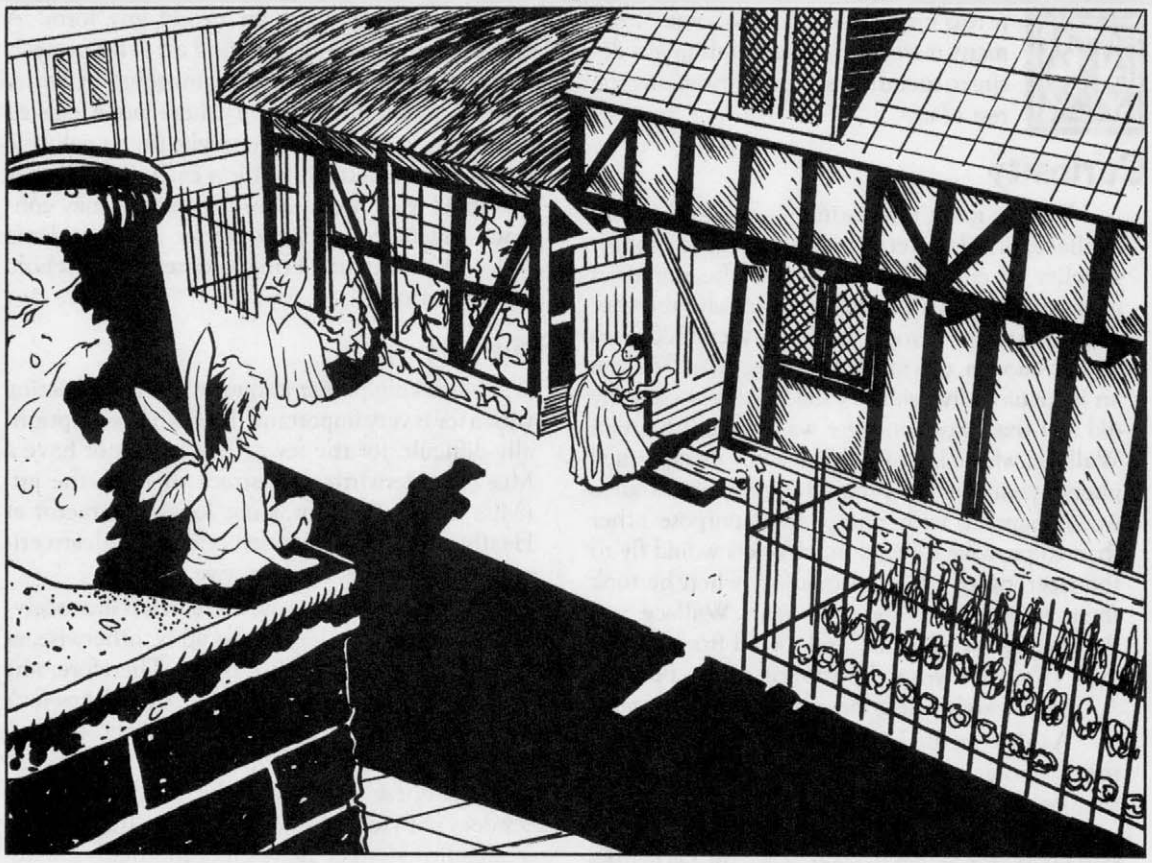
Observing proper etiquette when interacting with a fey is very important. This can be exceptionally difficult, for the fey certainly did not have a Miss Wunderwirth to instruct them in the art. (Miss Wunderwirth was our lovely instructor at Heather House). Therefore, one must relearn etiquette, from the fey perspective.

First, faeries are always correct. It is inconceivable to them that the case could be otherwise, at least when dealing with mortals. Therefore, any discussion about the correctness of a shadow fey's viewpoint is clearly destined for disaster. Instead, one should compliment the fey on its wisdom and castigate oneself for lacking the same. Note that a fey does not view a compliment as such, but rather as an affirmation of fact. A mortal would be hard-pressed to make a fey blush in modesty.

Faeries expect their aid to be appreciated. A small, thoughtful gift in return is generally a good sign of appreciation. If a faerie clears the snow from a roof, a bowl of hot stew set out that night might be a proportionate gesture. If one gives too great a gift in return, the faerie will assume that the gift is payment, which the faeries abhor. They do not want to feel bound to any sort of agreement. Either something is given, or it is received. The transaction must always be unequal so that it is clear who is the giver and who is the receiver.

One form of appreciation that is not acceptable to faeries is a verbal "thank you." We cannot honestly say we know why, but we have collected several reports in which thanked fey appeared highly agitated by the offer. Again, perhaps the words imply some sort of contract that the fey would prefer to avoid. A curtsey or bow might be a less contentious response.

If a fey feels slighted, it is likely to lash out at the offender. The repercussions depend on the degree of the slight. At the very least, the faerie might undo whatever good was done; more likely,



the shadow fey will retaliate with twice the vengeance one might expect. In the example above, where the faerie clears snow from a roof, the same faerie might pile snow on the roof until it collapses if he were to feel unappreciated. Unfortunately, an offender is usually completely unaware of his transgression, so the chances of mending the rift are slim. Note that "righteous" vengeance is a trait applicable to all fey, even the Seelie.

These are general guidelines. In practice, fey are far more fickle than one might expect. Offending a fey is easy, even when one follows the "rules."

## To Torment Mortals

Some shadow fey are just plain mean. The powrie, in particular, are terribly despicable. These sadistic Arak interact with people just because they like to watch them suffer. It is entertainment for them. These creatures are evil at heart, and no amount of diplomacy or rational discourse is likely to get them to change their behavior. We have already described some of the cruel acts the powrie are known for, and they thrive on inflicting mental anguish as well. Powrie delight in driving men to madness and self-destruction and laugh as their victims lash out in futility at their unseen tormentors.

If caught in a surprise encounter with powrie or like-minded Arak, we recommend that you make yourself as uninteresting as possible. If attacked, a bit of melodramatic acting might be appropriate. Defiance will surely tempt them to greater acts of sadism. If you can prepare, the best way to interact with a powrie is through repeated bludgeoning with a platinum hammer.

We should mention that even Seelie fey can inadvertently torment mortals. Remember, these creatures live forever and do not fear death. They may not truly comprehend that mortals can suffer, much the way we think of insects and other mindless creatures. If a fish cannot feel pain when caught on a hook, then why would a human? Perhaps a hook and chain is a perfectly reasonable way to keep a mortal from running off and getting itself hurt — from a fey point-of-view.

## Because Mortals Matter

Mortal lives matter. Of this, there can be no question. Each of us touches others, for better or

worse. Our lives affect the world around us; even our deaths affect those around us. Surely death evokes some of the greatest emotions that can be felt by any creature. These emotions are not known to the shadow fey, and we would like to think that perhaps they envy us a bit for our sense of purpose in the face of finality. Perhaps they deign to seek us out to grasp at a bit of purpose for their own lives.

## Preservation of the Dead

One unusual manifestation of faerie interest in our mortality is the preservation of our dead by the sith. The sith are particularly fascinated with death; it is such a foreign concept to them. Likewise, they do not truly understand the finality of a corpse. It is a state that the sith will never reach. Perhaps for these reasons the sith collect the dead. At the end of a battle, the sith tend to the corpses, using their magic and their herbs to preserve the bodies. Sometimes the bodies will be taken. Sith reportedly even rob graves to add to their macabre collections in the shadow world. Sith art is said to reflect of their fascination with the moribund.

## Romance

*As I lay in bed, I pulled my blankets tight into my fists, as if squeezing them would somehow better keep out the chill. No mental trickery could patch the holes in those moth-eaten rags, though. How I missed the warm embrace of my husband, gone four years this winter. I also missed his handiness; that clattering shutter would not have survived a night in his house! I knew that sleep (and freedom from the cold) would come much quicker if I could only stop that incessant clatter. Thwack. Thwack. Thwack. I struggled with my desire to stay in bed under my meager covers for several minutes before the threat to my sanity became too great. Muttering a few words only a young widow is entitled to, I threw my rags around me and grabbed a ball of twine as I made my way to the door. Naturally, the shutter was unreachable from inside the room due to a gaping hole in the floor by the window.*

*The old river watchtower that I now called home was in a ghastly state of repair. My husband left me little when he died, and work was scarce in this village since the trade caravans stopped coming. How I wish he had stayed at home rather than sought out the creatures that terrorized our roads, but that was not in his nature.*

*Perhaps I acquired a bit of his courage, though, as I now found myself clutching the cold, stone wall of the tower, with only a few wooden planks from the old parapet supporting me from below. The wind was*

*biting like the teeth of a pixie, so I moved a bit more quickly than was wise. As I approached the shutter, the wind grabbed my blanket and cast it into the air, daring me to reach for it. I do not know if one can actually resist such a situation, for the interest of self-preservation would surely override such an impulse if possible. Naturally and unavoidably, my hand lunged for that pitiful cloth, casting me off my tiny ledge.*

*My descent was slow and disorienting. My body twisted in the night air as my damnable, uncontrollable hand kept reaching out for that blanket, even as the rest of me fell to certain doom. I do not remember hitting the water; I suspect the shocking cold drove that memory from my mind. My next memory is of my other, more sensible hand, grasping what I thought at the time was a rope or a vine. In truth, it was the neck of a swan.*

*Now, I suspect that an ordinary bird would take great offense to being grabbed about the neck, but this bird had offered it. I pulled myself on him as best I could, as his powerful feet swam us ashore. While I have often been described as comely, I must have been a hideous sight that night, clothed in rags and drenched in filthy water, my limbs shivering and contorting in unnatural ways from the cold.*

*I have seen swans move in unusual ways when wooing a mate, but this swan now moved in ways that were more human than not. It called out, as if speaking a language, and I felt warm. The icy water fled from my body, and I was dry. As I propped myself up, gasping in disbelief, the swan transformed. He grew into a man, the most beautiful man I had ever seen. His skin was fair as the snow, his ears long and fragile. The moonlight reflected in his amber eyes and on his long golden hair. As he bent over me and placed a hand to my cheek, he said, "Now let us see what can be done about those clothes."*

–The Diary of Emma MacCullough, charmed and kidnapped by a faerie, 752 BC.

Whether Emma was magically charmed or went willingly may never be known. Either option is a possibility. Mortals can find faeries irresistibly intriguing. The shee are certainly some of the most charismatic creatures in existence, easily in the same class as the vampire. Nevertheless, the shee and other Arak are not above using a little magic to ensure an attraction, if desired.

## Marriage

The shadow fey do sometimes fall in love with our kind, at least as best they understand it. Eternal commitment, such as marriage, is a concept almost unknown to the fey, particularly where mortals are concerned. Instead, they form relationships for a period that suits them and then move on. Some folktales claim that shadow fey have occasionally given up their immortality to grow old and die with the mortal they love. However, we have no evidence that this has happened or is even possible. It may even be a story spread by the fey themselves to give false hope to their suitors.

Since marriage is a contractual obligation, the fey naturally abhor it. Nevertheless, there are stories about fey being tricked into matrimony. Sometimes this trickery is achieved by stealing a trinket that binds the fey through blackmail; other times it is trickery of words. Gennifer and I cannot imagine what the benefit of this would be, for the faerie would surely find a way out of the commitment eventually, likely with dire results for their former spouse. The most common mechanism is for the fey to include an escape clause that is almost certain to be fulfilled or within the power of the fey to fulfill. One story tells of a fey bride who said, "I shall stay married to you until our first-born has grown old and gray." After the child's birth, she rushed him off to the Shadow Rift. She returned four years later, with her hundred-year old child in tow. Free of her obligation, she left her former husband with an elderly half-teg to care for.

Fey that do have long-term relationships with mortals generally spirit their lover off to the Shadow Rift or some other remote destination. Some fey permit their mates to live among other mortals, so long as they agree to live in nocturnal matrimony.

## Children of the Fey

Children formed by the union of mortals and the fey are not uncommon. Sometimes these children are born of love, other times whimsy. Each fey makes its own decision whether it will help raise the child or not. If the fey raises the child, the child is generally taken to fey lands where it will be more accepted. If the child is abandoned by the fey, its mortal mother or father must raise the child in secret. Inquisitors and ignorant townsfolk quickly dispatch a wicked faerie spawn if discovered. For this reason, fey sometimes switch their baby with someone else's normal baby, as a gift to their mortal lover.

### First Generation

First generation fey children are the sons and daughters of a fey and a mortal creature. Note that the fey's oneness with nature allows them to breed with nearly any mortal being. These fey children

are obvious abominations to the judgmental and must typically live with the fey or in secret. Assuming they survive that long, they can live for twice as long as their mortal parent.

**Second Generation**

Second generation fey children are the offspring of a first generation child and a humanoid or a giant, the grandchildren of a fey. These children are still very extraordinary in appearance and ability, and they typically live half again as long as a normal person. It is possible for them to lead somewhat normal lives among our kind, albeit with some persecution.

**Third Generation**

Third generation fey are the offspring of a second generation fey child and a humanoid or giant. These children still have enough fey blood in their veins to give them an unusual trait or two, and perhaps even a minor power and a bit of extra longevity.

**Fourth Generation and Later**

The great great grandchildren of the fey bear only the slightest resemblance to their fey ancestors. Red hair, slightly pointed ears, or unusual magical aptitude are a few of the signs of fey blood. For example, elves are possibly descendants of the fey from long ago, perhaps even before the fey became one with the Shadow.

## Generations

Descendants of the fey can be encountered anywhere, but societal pressures alter their lifestyles appreciably. The further removed from fey blood, the easier it is for the descendant to blend with mortal society. Third and fourth generation fey can easily function as player characters. Second generation fey PCs and NPCs need to spend considerable effort to avoid detection and persecution. First generation descendants would be very hard-pressed to fit in a human-oriented campaign.

### First Generation

First generation fey use the half-fey template. They live twice as long as their mortal parent. They may take fey-descended feats.

### Second Generation

Second generation fey use the fey-touched template. They live for half again as long as their base creature. They may take fey-descended feats.

### Third Generation

Third generation fey live 20% longer than normal creatures and may take fey-descended feats.

### Fourth Generation

Fourth generation fey have just a touch of their heritage. They may take fey-descended feats.

## Preservation

My dear sister Gennifer has what I consider a rather odd habit. When she discovers a flower that she finds particularly beautiful, particularly unusual, or of particular sentimental value, she presses it in a book. I find it disturbing to open up one of dear Uncle Rudolph's guides only to find a crushed rose, smearing red across the final account of some poor soul who suffered a death no mortal deserves. Nevertheless, Gennifer continues her preservation attempts, as if she'll never again see a beautiful rose.

As Gennifer appreciates a flower, the shadow fey truly appreciate a remarkable mortal. Artistry, skills, beauty, courage – nearly any mortal trait can be appreciated when exhibited to perfection, or, rather, near perfection. There is always capacity for improvement when one has an eternity to focus. Nevertheless, the shadow fey recognize when someone has reached the pinnacle of mortal capabilities. The immortals realize that they must act, or this individual will fall from her peak as time eats away her mortal flesh. Without action, this thing of wonder will lose the opportunity to become a thing even more wondrous — the changeling.

The Arak craft changelings from the solitary part of a mortal that they deem worth saving. Those things that are unnecessary — the loving soul, the independent mind and the laughing heart — are lost, leaving an empty shell behind. These shells, known as the "elf-shot" or the "shadow-reft," aimlessly follow the routines of their previous selves, unaware of their actions or of those about them. Their masterful skills, too, are gone, gone to the Shadow Rift to serve the "Shadow Reapers."

While this wretched practice may rightly seem abhorrent to us, the shadow fey see it very differently. While mortals call the process shadow reaping or soul harvesting, the fey call it "the transcendence." As they see it, transcendence is a gift. In fact, it is perhaps the greatest gift that a shadow fey can bestow upon a mortal. After all, the fey is adopting the mortal as "kin" and offering immortality! Please, remember and understand this. Each Arak, no matter how kind and just it may appear, believes this process is beneficial. Woe to the mortal who is offered this very special gift. Acceptance means destruction; refusal earns the wrath and eternal enmity of the rebuffed. Even the kindest of fey will take great offense if such a generous offer is declined. Thus, it is in every mortal's best interest *not* to impress the fey. Perhaps this is the reason we have found the artisans of Tepest to be so modest about their abilities.

Of course, while the fey may view the transcendence as a gift, they can make no pretenses about the benefits they gain from the process. Clearly they recognize that with a quick slip of the blade, they can create a servant devoted like no other. There is evidence that some fey, the Unseelie in particular, are far less discriminating in their selection process when they have more sinister intents for their new changelings. After all, if a changeling is destined for fodder on the battlefield, what matter is the quality of the subject?

## Becoming Worthy

Not every mortal is worthy of becoming a changeling. In order to impress a muryan, a mortal must display great fighting skill in combat with the muryan. The muryan might offer quarter in order to obtain a changeling. A sith only offers transcendence to someone who is greatly grieving a lost loved one. For most other breeds, the mortal must impress the fey with exceptional talents in a skill corresponding to their breed. This generally means having 10 or more ranks in one of the appropriate skills. Fey can tell when a person is well-trained (many ranks in a skill) as opposed to having natural talents (a high ability score). They are less interested in the naturally talented, because only a mortal's training survives the process of creating a changeling.

## The Preservation Process

Now that we have provided sufficient discourse on *why* changelings are created, let us discuss *how* they are created. We readily admit to some speculation here, for no known manual exists on the subject. So, we examine the evidence. In every case, three pieces of evidence were found at the scene of the conversion. First, the victims appeared to have recently eaten something, generally cake. Yes, cake. Crumbs were found on the floor, and occasionally a morsel remained on the subject's lips. We believe the cake is actually a kind of faerie food that prepares the victim for the transcendence process, perhaps inducing sleep or stupor. The cake radiates enchantment magic, but appears otherwise indistinguishable from ordinary food. It would be wise to refuse any food or drink from a faerie, regardless of magical emanations. Of course, the creator may not give the privilege of refusal. Further, even the crumbs seem to compel one to eat them, as I had to restrain Gennifer from sampling some we had discovered on the floor!

***Editor's Note:*** *My dear sister's interpretation of events is clearly at fault. I was merely feigning to eat a morsel as a joke. Father raised us far too well to eat from the floor!* —GWF

A burnt candle is the second piece of evidence one may find at the site of a transcendence. The candle, which we will call the *shading candle* for need of a term, is always oily black in color. I managed to coax a small purple flame from a leftover bit of wick from one of them, and it cast an unusually harsh light with crisp shadows. According to Gennifer, the candle radiates an aura of shadow illusion magic. By reports, we believe the candles burn between four and eight hours. If one can extinguish the candle quickly enough, an elf-shot victim can be saved.

The final piece of evidence is an ebony dust coating the floor and the victim. The dust has an aura similar to the *shading candle*. We are unable to determine the exact purpose of the *ebondust*, but we believe sprinkling it on the victim is an essential step.

Two other components are used in the process, but they are never left behind. The first is a silver sickle, used by the fey to sever the victim's shadow. We received one of these that was recovered from a slain fey. It appears to be an enchanted weapon, but we suspect that mortal hands could not duplicate one. The second item is a magical bag, likewise received by us, that is used to steal

## Tools of Transcendence

The following tools are required by the shadow fey in order to complete the ritual to convert a human to a changeling. The shadow fey guard the secrets of creating these items closely. While no mortal can successfully complete the changeling ritual, even with the proper tools, it may be possible to develop protections against the ritual if the components are well understood.

**Faerie Food:** Any food or drink created by a fey is faerie food, which is enchanted with mind-affecting magic and which mortals find irresistible. When a mortal is within 5 feet of faerie food, the mortal must make a DC 12 Will save to resist the temptation to consume it. A new save must be made each round, with the DC increasing by 1 every round. By consuming the faerie food, the mortal has given his necessary consent to the transcendence process. After consumption, the victim falls into a magical sleep (no saving throw) that lasts for 8 hours. The sleep can be dispelled (caster level 6th), but the shading candle (see below) must still be extinguished to return the victim's shadow.

**Shading Candle:** The shading candle is made from tallow and shadow essence. It radiates illusion (shadow) magic. Shading candles burn for 5 hours and act as a timer for the transcendence process. When the donor's shadow reaches the Shadow Rift, the candle automatically extinguishes. The candle must be within 5 feet of the victim and burning at all times to be effective. If the candle is moved or extinguished before the creator reaches the Rift with the victim's shadow, the shadow instantly returns and restores the victim to full health.

**Ebondust:** This magic dust is a ground potpourri of supernatural ingredients from the Shadow Rift; it radiates necromantic magic. It must be spread over the body before the shadow can be severed.

**Silver Sickle:** The silver sickle is a *ghost touch* weapon of at least +1. The true magic of the reaping process is not in the sickle, but in the supernatural power of the Shadow Fey. A mortal who attempts to recreate the harvesting process ends up with mutilated changeling tissue at best.

**Shadow Sack:** These black velvet sacks sparkle like the night sky. They radiate illusion (shadow) magic. *Shadow sacks* have the capacity for one, two or three shadows, based on their size. The sacks are not extradimensional, and nothing special happens to objects placed within them. Shadows placed within them are inert; they bear no relation to undead shadows.

away the victim's shadow. The bag is apparently specifically designed for this purpose, for it has no other discernable special powers. We do not know if one could free a captured shadow by simply opening the bag. If the victim was truly willing, one might unwittingly release an irate incorporeal undead!

At the end of the process, the creator must make haste back to its shadowy homeworld (the Shadow Rift) before the shading candle burns down. Interruption of the process will likely earn you a friend in the saved and an eternal enemy in the creator. One thing is worth mentioning about the burning time for this candle: shadow-reft victims have been reported as far from the Shadow Rift as Valachan. How the shadow fey can reach the Rift in less than eight hours is unknown to me. Perhaps they use magical means, or perhaps they have mastered the Mistways to speed their journey. In any case, one should not make assumptions about how long it will take a fey to make her escape back to the shadow realm. In addition, it is both possible and likely that some kidnapped mortals are taken directly to the Shadow Rift for conversion.

Once a victim's shadow has reached the Rift, it takes form as a changeling, or a "transcendent," as the Arak call them. The changeling looks just like its donor, albeit with a vacuous expression. Changelings, like their elf-shot donors, lack shadows. This fact can be a telltale indicator, but we should caution the reader that other creatures lack shadows as well. Changelings can speak their former languages and, perhaps, the language of their creator.

## The Life of the Transcended

After transcendence, the creator provides the changeling with the tools of its trade and sets it to tasks. One incredibly useful attribute of change-

## Fey – Descended Feats

These feats may be taken by fey-descended characters, at the discretion of the DM. Player characters must take these feats at character creation.

### Blossom Breath [General]

Your sweet-smelling breath can cause flowers to bloom and people to like you.

**Prerequisite:** Alven ancestry.

**Benefit:** Your flowery breath can cause buds and wilted flowers alike to bloom. Similarly, rotten fruits and vegetables can be made fresh, and green ones can be made ripe. You gain a +3 circumstance bonus to diplomacy checks made within 5 feet of your target. This is a supernatural ability.

### Horse Whisperer [General]

You have the ability to speak with horses.

**Prerequisite:** Brag ancestry.

**Benefit:** You can speak the language of any normal horse, pony, donkey or mule. This ability gives you a +2 competence bonus on Handle Animal checks when dealing with equines. This is a supernatural ability.

### Fir Fingers [General]

Your fingers are twice as long and thin as those of a normal person, enabling you to perform delicate work better.

**Prerequisite:** Dex 12+.

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 competence bonus to all Craft checks that require delicate mechanical work, such as clockmaking, gunsmithing, locksmithing and trapmaking. You also gain a +1 competence bonus to Disable Device, Open Lock and Sleight of Hand checks. Due to your strange appearance, you have a +1 Outcast bonus.

### Dancing Strike [General]

You can intertwine dance with your combat maneuvers to deadly effect.

**Prerequisite:** Muryan ancestry.

**Benefit:** Once per round on your turn, you may make a Perform (dance) check as a free action before you make an attack. The DC is the armor class of your target. If your check is successful, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your attack roll. This is a supernatural ability.

### Fortunate Healer [General]

You are an exceptional healer, and you almost never make a mistake.

**Prerequisite:** Portune ancestry.

**Benefit:** When casting a *cure* spell, you may reroll any 1's. You may reroll only once per casting. This is a supernatural ability.

### Fearsome Stalker [General]

You can strike fear in your prey when you hunt. The fear of an unknown enemy lurking in the darkness can overcome your opponent.

**Prerequisite:** Teg ancestry.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you may choose a single opponent who is unaware of your presence, due to invisibility, total concealment or a successful Hide check. As a standard action, you may make your presence felt by your target, affecting it as if a 1st-level sorcerer cast *cause fear*. No verbal or somatic components are required, so the victim remains unaware of your location. This is a supernatural ability.

### Kiss for Luck [General]

Your kiss brings the luck of the fey to the recipient.

**Prerequisite:** Shee ancestry.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you can deliver a lip-tingling kiss to a willing recipient. The recipient receives a +2 luck bonus to AC, saves and skill checks for the next minute. This is a supernatural ability.

### Shadow Mask [General]

You can cast yourself in shadow, even where none exists.

**Prerequisite:** Sith ancestry.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you can cause a shadow to fall over you as a standard action, granting you concealment (20% miss chance). The concealment does not affect those with low-light or darkvision. This supernatural effect lasts for 1 minute.

### Red Tongue [General]

You have the wicked tongue of your powrie ancestor.

**Prerequisite:** Powrie ancestry.

**Benefit:** Three times per day, you can deliver a stinging, humiliating insult as part of an Intimidate check. You gain a +4 competence bonus to the check. This is a supernatural ability.

lings is that they lack their creator's vulnerability to sunlight. Therefore, the Arak can use changelings for tasks when and where they cannot go themselves. The transcended show great inspiration, even passion, in their chosen task, but are mere automatons in other respects. The Seeliekin are generally so passive that they lack any sense of self-preservation beyond eating and drinking.

Changelings certainly obey their creators without question. We suspect that they will obey any other Arak as well, as long as their creator's orders are not contradicted. Changelings need direction on large projects; they apparently cannot coordinate strategically. While some changelings appear to be nothing more than personal slaves of their creators, the *Marcusen Manuscript* indicates that most changelings are viewed as communal property. The courts frequently assign these loyal resources, particularly the bragkin, to tasks that will benefit all Arak. The Unseelie seem to have a more proprietary notion of kin, but that could be due to a biased interpretation of reports.

Now, what should you do if you encounter a changeling? Unless you are attacked, we recommend doing nothing. As mentioned previously, it is theoretically possible to restore a victim, but most likely you will have to negotiate with the creator or one of the lords of the Courts. The changeling itself has no particular desire to be rescued. Killing one of these simulacrums will weigh heavily on the heart of the virtuous hero, for it certainly lessens the chance of ever restoring the elf-shot donor in the mortal world. Perhaps some comfort can be taken in knowing that wicked fey generally seek out like-minded mortals for their changelings.

## The Forgotten Ones

Let us not forget the fate of the mortal left behind. While the donor body carries on its daily tasks, it has lost its essence. If the person is fortunate enough to have friends or relatives with strong resolve, they should do their best to keep the hapless creature in good health. Perhaps fate will one day somehow intervene to restore the soul of the elf-shot individual. Some believe that gifts left for the fey might bring their mercy. However, the fey may never return after stealing away their prize. Further, a gift left for the fey might be interpreted as a "thank you" for bestowing their relative with the gift of transcendence. For those with exceptional means, capture of the faerie creator seems the most likely path to success. We should note that there is no indication that the death of the donor will have any effect on its changeling, so mutual destruction is not a viable means of attaining closure.

# Chapter Eight: Confronting the Shadow Fey

We have entitled this chapter "Confronting the Shadow Fey," rather than "Hunting" or "Defeating" the same. I hope that our readers will understand the reasons by the time they have reached these words. Encountering any fey is a hazardous endeavour, even if the goal is not to "defeat" the fey. Further, the "hunt" may not be of your making. Most fey encounters are unplanned. Yet, with proper training and preparedness, one can confront the fey with some hope of success, whatever success may be.

We have found that it is useful to divide a hunt into four sections: *discovery, reconnaissance and research, assessment,* and *the kill.* To illustrate how a fey encounter might follow these steps, we include accounts from our pursuit of the Hunter of Grashen Falls.

# The Hunter of Grashen Falls

## Day One – Stangengrad

We have learned a great deal about the shadow fey through our journeys, though we feel at times that we have just scratched the surface. While we have experienced numerous minor encounters with the fey, we have yet to be given the opportunity for a proper hunt with which to conclude our book. Perhaps we will have more luck at our next destination — Falkovnia.

Among Uncle Rudolph's notes on the fey, we found a reference to his notes regarding fiends. Uncle Rudolph visited the small village of Grashen Falls in Falkovnia for additional information on the fiend Elsepeth. While his trip was largely in vain, he did hear numerous stories of fey activity. Uncle Rudolph's notes were sparse here, presumably because he was investigating fiends at the time. In any case, we have decided to follow up on these stories and see where they lead us. We are hopeful, due to the close proximity of the Shadow Rift.

Yesterday we traveled the King's Highway on our way out of Darkon to the border city of Stangengrad in Falkovnia. We were in Falkovnia not so long ago, pursuing the Glutton of G'Henna. I am not pleased to be back. Stangengrad can best be described as a fortress of filth. The people here speak Falkovnian, of which we only know a smattering. Fortunately, Stangengrad is close to the border of Darkon, so many people here speak Darkonese as well. We are able to get by, but Gennifer suspects more than a few uncouth comments are being passed in our direction in Falkovnian. Gennifer and I are very fortunate to have been born in Mordent; I believe the lives of women are substantially inhibited in this place. I take comfort in knowing that we need to spend only one night here before heading east in the morning.

— *From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Day Two – Morning – Grashen Falls

Traveling east along the river, we have made our way to the remote town of Grashen Falls. It feels strange to be continually visiting the former haunts of Uncle Rudolph, as if we are somehow compelled. The fiend that Dr. van Richten sought here is long gone, but we suspect the town looks much the same now as it did then. The wooden palisades protect the town from an outside threat that will likely never come. Perhaps the walls at least serve the purpose of keeping out the bears and wildcats.

We have found the only inn in Grashen Falls, with a lovely view of the cataract. The smell of the pine is refreshing, and I am certain the forest holds many secrets. We are perhaps only a half-day's ride from the Shadow Rift itself.

At lunch, we talked with the innkeeper. He remembered meeting Uncle Rudolph, and he said that Van Richten's book was quite the item for discussion in town. The innkeeper goaded me into revealing that we were continuing the tradition of Van Richten. I cut the conversation short at that. We have decided to observe and listen in town for a little while before revealing our purpose for being here. There is nothing like the promise of minor celebrity to bring out the charlatans and the prevaricators — or worse.

— *From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Day Two – Afternoon

Unfortunately, the innkeeper made our presence known to the officer in charge of the town, Stadtfurhrer Georg von Ausaat. He arrived at the inn with several of his junior officers.

"Hello! I understand we have some esteemed authors, perhaps great fiend hunters, in our little village?" beamed von Ausaat in heavily accented

Darkonese. He was a well-built man in his mid-thirties, with a bit too much strut in his step. "Innkeep, you must be mistaken! All I see are these two lovely ladies. Perhaps their husbands are nearby?"

Gennifer and I both went rigid as steel. Clearly first impressions were not this man's gift, though his attitude was not atypical of the soldiers we had met in Falkovnia. "Neyn," I replied. "I am Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove, and this is my sister Gennifer. It is true we are authors, though the title of 'great fiend hunters' is best reserved for the likes of our uncle, George Weathermay, and his friend Rudolph van Richten. We are mere students of the hunt."

"Ah, yes. My mistake," he replied, with a condescending wink to his friends. "Those who cannot do, teach, so they say. Surely it makes more sense for lovely ladies to write about monster hunting than to practice it. Say, perhaps you would like to study a hunt tomorrow! My men and I will be going on a foxhunt in the morning. I see one of you is already dressed for the occasion!"

Gennifer spoke up with a bit more control, as I clenched my teeth with all the etiquette I could muster. "A most generous offer, but I'm afraid we have a full schedule planned for tomorrow. We are investigating reports of a number of wicked and powerful beasts of the night. I'm afraid that our readers will not find the wily fox a compelling topic in comparison."

Clearly offended to an appropriate level, von Ausaat straightened his uniform. "May I see your papers?" he asked. I glanced at Gennifer. We knew where this was going. "I am afraid these travel papers have errors. They are inconsistent with your story for being here. As Stadtfurhrer, I must monitor your movements. Tomorrow, I am going hunting. If I must monitor you, you must come along." With that, he and his men turned and left the room, while I shook my head and sighed.

Our hunting party consisted of Stadtfurhrer von Ausaat, three of his soldiers (Roedhardt, Gotthold, and Stefhelm), Gennifer and myself, all on horseback. The Stadtfurhrer also brought along his one hunting dog. He said he used to have a dozen, but he kept losing them in the woods. Gennifer and I exchanged an incredulous glance at the man's ignorance.

"I have to admit," von Ausaat began. "I do not know how to address you two ladies. To use your first names would be inappropriate, I think, and I am a gentleman. Besides, I cannot remember who is who. So, I think I shall call the one dressed to hunt fox Miss Foxgrove and the other Miss Weathermay. This makes good sense, I think." At this point, I did not particularly care what he called us, so I just nodded and smiled.

"Miss Foxgrove, I see you are carrying a musket. We use bows here in Falkovnia; we find them more civilized than powder weapons. I am interested in seeing what your genteel disposition lends to such a crude weapon. I shall let you have first shot. Miss Weathermay, you plan merely to study the hunt, yes? Try to keep up, but we will come back for you if we get too far ahead."

"You're quite kind," Gennifer smirked.

— *From the private journal of Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Day Three

The hunt did not go well for von Ausaat and his men. "Curses, woman! That is the second time your exploding powder has ruined my aim!" he growled, as his men looked toward Laurie with a combination of disgust and admiration.

"By the time you heard my shot, the fox was already dead," Laurie replied, as she walked over to pick up her second kill. It was now late in the afternoon, and I expected the hunt was over. I had a relatively interesting afternoon examining local flora, even picking up a few new specimens.

"We should head back soon, Georg," Stefhelm cautioned. "The sun is setting." I found Stefhelm to be a rather interesting person. He was less abrasive than the others, and he pointed out local plant species to me as he tracked.

"We are not done yet. Two foxes is not a hunt!" Georg barked. He knitted his brow as he thought for a moment. "Perhaps you are right. It is not safe for the women. Why don't you and Gotthold take the women back to town, while Roedhardt and I finish looking for that den over the rise? Once we clear it out, we will join you back in town for drinks and food."

Stefhelm started to protest, but then nodded reluctantly. I pulled out my new pocketwatch from the fir in Martria Bay. It was very late. "Stadtfurhrer von Ausaat, I would feel much safer if you led us back into town," I said, feigning as much sincerity as I could muster. I did not like the man, but there was no point in confronting the darkness to avoid being bettered in a hunt.

"My dear lady, if Stefhelm and Gotthold cannot protect you, I'm sure your sister's luck will do so." With that, he urged his horse on down the path. Roedhardt followed.

— *From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Discovery

Discovery is the initial report of the encounter. As fey are credited for nearly any malady or benefit, one must take great care in sorting the factual from the fabricated. Usually this involves knowing more about the reporter than the fey. In our case, we were the discoverers, so no determination of veracity was required.

## Day Three – Night

We returned to the Stadtfurhrer estate (instead of to the inn, a departure from customary procedures in Falkovnia, but undoubtedly one within the purview of the military elite) within the town walls to await his return. His wife prepared a lovely meal for us, which grew cold as we waited for the Stadtfurhrer's return. I admit to being surprised that the Stadtfurhrer was married, especially to such a kind woman. Eventually, we succumbed to her pleadings and ate without the man of the house. When her husband did not return, she insisted we stay for our protection. In truth, we were happy to stay for hers. Stefhelm and Gotthold returned to their homes for the evening.

That night, I was awakened by the howls of an animal in the distance. I went to the window and opened it a crack, to see if I could identify the beast. The cool, misty air from the falls gently drifted into my breath. Still, my mouth felt dry as I heard the creature hoot and howl again. I have heard the call of many varieties of wolf, even the unnatural ones, and none sounded like this. The calls had a near-human quality, yet they were cloaked in savagery. As the creature cried out again, I became aware: this howl had *feeling*. I cannot explain why, but it was a feeling I knew. The blood rushed through my veins, as I remembered the exhilaration of my first kill. My first victory, that is — victory over a cruel and unnatural creature that deserved the violent end it received. Somehow, this was the feeling in those howls. I shook off the dark thoughts, a bit bothered that they could dwell within me. Focusing back on the issue at hand, I looked out over the silhouette of the village. It was then I came to a

horrible realization — the creature was within the walls of the town!

I grabbed my night pack (a small bag of my most essential weaponry) and rushed to the room next door where Laurie slept. "Laurie, get your things! The cry of a killer is in the air!"

As Laurie and I made our way to the front door, the Stadtfurhrer's wife met us in the hall. "What is that animal?" she asked, her pale face illuminated by the trembling candle in her hand.

"I don't know — yet," replied Laurie. We cracked open the window by the door, and listened intently. "I think it is leaving," Laurie said. "I can barely hear it over the roar of the falls."

While Laurie took aim at the door with her Parthian rapier, I cautiously opened the door so that we might have a look outside. I saw Laurie look to the ground with puzzlement, and then horrid recognition appeared on her face. She immediately turned to the Stadtfurhrer's wife and ushered her into the parlor, motioning for me to look out the door. Carefully peering through the opening, I saw a pile of bloody flesh, skin and leather sitting on the stoop. Atop the pile was something familiar; I squinted in the poor light to make it out. It had holes there and there, a bit of hair — dear Ezra, it was a face! The face of the Stadtfurhrer, skinned from his skull! I slammed the door shut and took a long breath. "Focus, Gennifer," I said to myself. "You must turn your horror into resolve."

*– From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Confirmation and Commitment

Generally, you must confirm the account you have been relayed. You must see the creature with your own eyes, if possible, or at least powerful evidence of its existence. Weighing the evidence, you must decide if you are willing to commit to the resolution of this issue. There is no shame in admitting a task is beyond your means, or that the risks are too great. Hunting the fey is fraught with danger, and the reward must be worth the cost. In our case, there was no question of our commitment to send this foul beast back to the shadows.

## Reconnaissance and Research

The next task is the most important. You must know your opponent. You must collect enough information to allow you to classify your foe. Once this is done, you must understand your enemy. We hope this book will help in that regard. Understanding and preparation will help you even when you are not in control of the particulars of the encounter.

### Day Four

Laurie and I spent this morning preparing. There was precious little time for comforting the widow. We knew we had to complete our first phases of the hunt before nightfall, for we did not know what the coming night would bring.

Our initial investigation revealed a few facts about our foe. Certainly, it acted with intent — sadistic, barbaric intent. The Stadtfurher's flesh was completely removed, though not with the care one might see from a skin thief, a dread creature that masquerades in the skin of its victims. The weapons were claws, I think, though there were some especially fine cuts. The howls and calls were somewhat wolf-like in nature. Stefhelm determined that no tracks were left, which indicates supernatural ability, spell-casting or flight.

We conducted interviews with the soldiers and others about town. As the ranking officer, Stefhelm was now in charge of the town. He was most gracious in his help with the investigation, confiding that he respected our expertise in these sorts of matters. There were numerous tales of fierce beasts roaming the woods, as well as reports of faerie activity. Our hypothesis at this point was that Stadtfurhrer von Ausaat was captured by a fox-faerie, also known as a teg. The facts fit the habits and characteristics of the animalistic teg, who are reported to be quite brutal to their victims at the end of their hunt.

Our next step was to prepare for an initial stalking and encounter. Fey are notoriously hard to damage with mortal weapons, so we had to find a suitable weakness. I set to work on creating some alchemist's fire using my alchemical field kit while Laurie put together some vulnerability arrows. The vulnerability arrow was a rather ingenious creation of Laurie's. She collected needles or pins of different materials – copper, silver, gold, platinum, steel, lead, and the like. She then attached the pins around a specially constructed arrowhead. The theory was that if the arrow struck a target, needles with blood on them would indicate a vulnerability, while broken needles would indicate an immunity. I was anxious to see how it worked in practice.

Stefhelm agreed to lead us back to the location where we last saw von Ausaat. Gotthold was needed in the village, so the three of us rode back into the

wilderness. We wondered a bit about the fate of Roedhardt, who had not returned in any form. We suspected we knew the fate of von Ausaat's last hunting dog.

We reached our destination a bit later in the afternoon than I would have preferred, but we still had sufficient time for some searching. If it was a shadow fey that we were hunting, we certainly preferred to catch it during the daytime when it was most vulnerable. Stefhelm quickly picked up the horse tracks, and we followed them for almost an hour until we reached a split in the trail.

"There are some unusual tracks here," Stefhelm said as he circled the ground. "It has a strange gait and long claws. It is definitely not human, bear, wolf, or even wildcat. I don't know. Whatever the beast, it attacked the men and their horses here. One horse fled down each path. The dog appears to have stayed put."

We followed the left path first, as was our custom. It continued on for several hundred yards, apparently carved through the brush largely by the fleeing horse and its rider. Suddenly, the brush cleared. Before us was crumbling, black rock, leading down into a mist-filled chasm — the Shadow Rift! We paused for a moment to take in the sight, wide as the eye could see. Stefhelm looked at the ground. "He kept going — right into the rift. He never even tried to stop." We thought perhaps we had learned the fate of the missing Roedhardt.

The afternoon was passing quickly, and we felt we must have an initial encounter or at least locate the beast's lair. We decided to track the animal back to its lair rather than follow the other horsetracks. Leaving our horses tied at the junction, we made our way under the pine boughs. Though we felt relatively confident that we wouldn't be attacked during the daylight, we readied our weapons as a cautionary measure.

After a short distance, Stefhelm lost the trail. When he stood and looked for a new lead, he noticed torn bark on some of the trees. "The beast seems to have taken to the trees around here. Keep your eyes on the treetops."

Eyeing the limbs above, we cautiously moved forward, or so we thought. The ground disappeared beneath my feet, and I came to an abrupt and painful halt when my arms caught the edge of the earthen pit. I tried to adjust my arms for leverage, just as something grabbed my legs from below and pulled.

My face hit the dirt floor of the pit when I fell. I inhaled blood and black dirt as I tried to regain enough breath to call out. I felt a stinging pain in my legs as the creature's clawed hands raked me deeper into its burrow. I tried to twist my body to see my attacker when the light from above was blocked by Laurie as she dove into the pit on top of me. "Stay down!" she commanded as she pushed me down with one hand and thrust her Parthian rapier at my attacker with the other. As she thrust, she fired the embedded pistol, temporarily blinding and deafening me. I heard the creature cry out as it released its grip and fled deeper into the burrow. "I don't think I hurt it, but the noise scared it. Let's go," Laurie said, as she pulled me to my feet. Stefhelm appeared above and extended his powerful arms to us, pulling us out of the hole as quickly as we had gone in.

We soon regained our composure and took tactical positioning around the hole to see if the creature would emerge. I quaffed a potion to heal my wounds while Laurie readied a flask of alchemist's fire. "I only caught a glimpse of it in the shadow, but it was definitely a teg," Laurie said. The creature did not emerge after a few tense minutes of waiting, so we slowly made our way back to our horses. "I was hoping you would get a shot with one of my arrows, Stefhelm. I'm afraid we didn't learn much about its vulnerabilities."

When we reached the fork, our horses were nowhere to be seen. "It must have come out another entrance and cut the reins!" Stefhelm said in disgust, as he ran the shortened leather strips through his fingers. "Well, let me see if I can tell which way they went." He did a quick pass around the clearing, while Laurie and I kept watch. "That's some piece of luck, I suppose. The horses fled back toward town. Perhaps if we hurry we can catch up to them not far from here and make it back before nightfall."

We did find the horses quickly enough, but there was something wrong with two of them. A bit of experimentation indicated that they were blind. "What foul magic this faerie practices!" Stefhelm said. "We have no choice but to lead them."

"Indeed," I said. Something struck me as odd about the blinded horses, though it took me another hour to assemble the problem in my mind. As we made haste back to town, I said at last, "Aha! I have it, though pardon my assumptions. My studies of the arcane have told me that only druids can cast the spell that lets one pass without a trace, which

I believe the teg did in town. However, druids cannot cast the blindness spell. So, I think we are either dealing with two entities with complementary powers or with one entity with extraordinary powers."

"An interesting theory, Gen," Laurie replied. "I will need to trust you on that information; though, I am not sure what good it does us at the moment." I did not have an answer to that question.

We did not make it back to town before dark. We lit some torches from our saddlebags and tried to make the best time we could. As we walked, my ears queried the darkness, providing my mind with an overabundance of information to filter. Each noise was something, but most meant nothing. Which leaves were rustled by the wind, and which were brushed aside by a stalking creature of the night? What could say, other than experience or intuition? Magic! I admonished myself for not thinking of my resources sooner.

Drinking a potion of *darkvision*, I gazed out into the newly illuminated forest. The foreign sight provided by the potion was not of great comfort, for the monochromatic world was perhaps more disturbing than the darkness. Then, I saw it. A wiry man-beast, shadowing our moves just beyond our torch-light. I warned Laurie in Mordentish, in hopes that our pursuer might not know the tongue. When Laurie was ready, I spoke in Darkonese to Stefhelm.

"Stefhelm, follow my missile with your arrow." I quickly pointed my finger and sent a pair of bright fiery bolts into creature. Laurie hurled a jar of alchemist's fire, which burst on the teg's sinewy leg, scorching its flesh. Stefhelm let the specially constructed arrow fly, and it appeared to bite.

The burning teg threw its elongated arms to the ground and howled like the wind through a cave. A wave of supernatural energy assaulted our ears, and I did my best to steel my mind against it. Once the wave had passed, I advanced on the evil fey and sent a cascade of fire from my outspread hands. Laurie rushed up to take a strike with her magic rapier, but it glanced off the immortal's hide.

In hindsight, I know that the howl of the teg cast a wave of confusion over our party. At the time, though, I could not understand why Stefhelm shot an arrow at his horse as it fled, or why Laurie's

horse charged me. Fortunately, I was able to slip out of the way, and Stefhelm's top-heavy vulnerability arrow missed its mark. I am fairly certain that the horse's hide was vulnerable to everything but a poor shot.

The teg was obviously badly hurt by the flame, and it fled into the woods with the whimpering sounds of a wounded animal. We might have pursued, if it were not for our concerns about Stefhelm and the horses. Stefhelm was wandering away, and the horses continued to behave erratically. Laurie and I spent a short amount of time avoiding the horses and Stefhelm until the effects of the fey magic had passed.

"Well, we now know a bit more," Laurie said happily, as she picked up the vulnerability arrow that had struck the teg. A solitary gold needle glistened with pitch-black blood in the moonlight.

*– From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Assessment

Once your research and probing encounters are complete, you must reassess your situation. Are you still qualified? Are you still committed? Do you have the tools to do this thing at this time? If the answer to any of these is no, save this fight for another day.

## The Kill

Formulate a plan that maximizes your advantages and exploits your opponent's weaknesses. Your goal is to define all of the terms of the encounter: the time, the place, the people and the circumstances. Form a team to complement your talents. Communicate with your team. Rehearse your plan if at all possible. When ready, act with decisiveness and speed.

### Day Five

The next morning, we hastily prepared for the killing hunt. We certainly did not want to be caught in the darkness this time, and we would need to go on foot. I took a cask of oil from the barracks, while Laurie fashioned some crude arrow heads and musket balls from gold coins donated by the Stadtfurhrer's wife.

Reaching the teg pit at noon, we searched around the area, but we did not locate a second entrance. We decided to pour the oil down into the pit and set it alight, hoping to drive out the teg in the process. The oil burned and smoked as desired, but we saw no sign of the teg. Laurie lowered in a lantern and confirmed that the pit was empty. Furthermore, it had no other obvious means of egress.

We decided to look around a bit more, and Stefhelm came across a large tree with a foxhole at the base. Scanning the treetops, we saw what looked to be a hunter's blind made of branches and bushes. I suppose we should have learned from our first experience to keep one eye on the ground, but we were momentarily distracted. In any case, it came quickly, and it struck hard.

Stefhelm made a feeble attempt to block the skeleton's charge with his bow, but it overcame him. Wet blood and remnants of tissue coated its bones, a harbinger of the fate that awaited its victim. The creature mauled Stefhelm with its claws, and bit horribly into his scalp. I let loose my *magic missiles*, and Laurie hurled a vial of holy water against its flayed ribcage. Stefhelm managed to pull his mace from his belt and land a mighty smack against the spine. The blow splattered Stefhelm in crimson droplets as the skeleton crashed to the ground. The undead's intact human eyes slowly closed.

We rushed to Stefhelm's side. "I believe such a creature is referred to as crimson bones," Laurie said. Then she gestured toward the unconscious Stefhelm. "His blood is likely poisoned," she warned. Stefhelm slipped into unconsciousness as the poisoned blood seeped into his veins.

I sighed as I pulled out another bottle. This hunt was dwindling my potion supply. I slowly dripped the *neutralize poison* potion into Stefhelm's lips to stabilize him. Another healing potion, and Stefhelm was nearly as good as new. "You're a bloody mess," I said, smiling. "We still need to see about that bite later. It could be diseased."

Though no one said it, we all knew we had just put an end to what remained of Stadtfurhrer von Ausaat. Laurie and I helped Stefhelm to his feet, and his face showed fond appreciation.

We needed to get the teg out of its nest, if it was in there at all. We plugged the hole at the base of the tree with a rock, in case the teg might have somehow gotten in there. I pulled a rope out of my pack and formed a crude grapple with a stick. I asked Stefhelm to hurl it over the branch supporting the nest for me, while I cast a spell that caused the rope to move as if it were alive. After commanding the rope to tie around the branch, I

instructed Stefhelm to try to break the branch while Laurie and I took aim.

Stefhelm took a running start and jerked on the rope with all his might. The branch snapped, sending the nest crashing down through the tree limbs. We saw the dark form of the teg careening off limbs as he fell. As soon as I saw him, I let another volley of *magic missiles* fly. He spun as he hit the ground, landing on his feet like a cat. The fey looked up, laughing maniacally as the sun burned its amber eyes. It took a few steps and then leaped into the air at Laurie, its clawed hands and feet extended. A single golden shot from Laurie's musket brought the beast crashing to the ground, where it burst into a puddle of black mud.

We cautiously approached to confirm the kill. As we leaned forward, a loud buzzing noise erupted in front of us, revealing a tiny red-capped faerie with rapidly beating wings. His skin was gray and sickly, and he had a wide, wicked mouth that bit into your heart and let all of your secrets escape. I heard Stefhelm gasp and saw Laurie stumble backwards before they both fled in terror. The powrie charged at my face and spit burning bile into my eyes, blinding me.

"Nasty weak slaughterers! Kills and kills but never right, pleasure is lost on thy blade! Kills me Frek Frak whiles he sleeps, and brings me eyes into the burning! Prissy pretty eyes burn too, and no friends left has she!" The redcap buzzed around my head, further disorienting me.

I do not know if it was his words, the pain in my eyes or overwhelming fear, but the emotion that overtook me was anger. "Cowardly roach! You slink about and hide beneath your illusions, and then taunt like a school child!"

"Arrggg! Me taunts is masterful, big hairy brains! Cuts off thy cap, jig round in thy skull, I will! Sing, sing puppet head!" The powrie zipped around my head, cutting a paper-thin mark across my brow with his tiny knife.

"That was good, but I heard the teg do better!" I challenged. I was trying to buy myself some time; I could hear his skin sizzling in the sun.

"Frek Frak knows not nothing! Chase, chase. Catch it and has no sense! What now? Xyster shows all! Cut, cut, tear. Vile hair licker has no problems now, caught it he did! Rights in the throat! Oh! Foul flightless sunkisser tricks me not! I's not burned up yet. Screams you deaf before I go, then finish you up right tonight!"

"Foul flightless sunkisser! Your words sting me to the bone! Truly if I die tonight, I will never have yearned for a better barb. Surely such wit deserves reward. I offer this borrowed pocket watch, that you might know when the sun is coming." I held out the pocket watch from the fir in Martria Bay.

"Reward me not! Thinks thy fit for it? Best ones take it when please, you gives all if not wretched thick. Hmmmm. How to run it? Stenchless fir, always confounding! Making me burn, even now. Must solve it, must know." I felt him pick the watch from my hand. With a muttering breath, he flew off into the distance.

I sat down and thought about how to defeat a redcap. This one was wounded, and I knew how to find him. The time was ripe. Laurie and Stefhelm made their way back to me eventually, apologizing profusely for their lack of steadfastness. Of course, no apology was necessary. If it were within a mortal's power to control her emotions, surely we all would. After determining that Laurie and Stefhelm were ready and assuaging their concerns, I invoked a spell that would draw me toward a known object and followed the magical pull to my watch. Of course, Laurie led me so I would not fall into any more pits or bump into any trees.

"It is up there," I said, gesturing toward the sky. Laurie remarked that I was pointing at a large wasp nest, about ten feet up in a tree. It must be the redcap's home.

"Stefhelm, could you please do me the favor of filling up our oil cask with water from that stream we crossed?" I asked.

"Of course. A small price for the woman who saved my life this day," he said.

When he returned, I sent Stefhelm and Laurie up the tree with the water cask. Stefhelm held the cask while Laurie cut the nest and dropped it into the water. Stefhelm quickly covered it with the lid and held it tight. The cask shook and thrashed as Stefhelm tried to maintain his balance. Alas, he came crashing down to the ground. Somehow, though, through the resolve that only dire circumstances can bring, he managed to hold on and keep the water inside.

After a few minutes, the cask stopped shaking. Stefhelm sat on the cask for an hour after just to make sure. Finally, we opened it up and extracted the nest from the acrid black water. Cutting open the nest, we found black ooze and some trinkets and baubles, including some military pins from Stadtfurhrer von Ausaat. Laurie wiped off the pocket watch and put it back in my hand. "It still ticks," she said incredulously.

"Borrowed time borrowed back," I murmured. We packed up our things and made for town, racing to beat the sunset.

*— From the private journal of Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*

## Conclusion

Victory over the faerie folk is fleeting. They are reborn as they die. If they do not die, they will outlive you. Still, you may delay them for a time — perhaps long enough that a mortal might live. As long as we mortals do survive, we are immortal, too. We congratulate you whatever your successes, grieve with you your losses, and offer our best wishes for the future.

*Gennifer Weathermay-Foxgrove*
*Laurie Weathermay-Foxgrove*
*Mordent, Mordentshire*
*758 BC*

# DM's Appendix

This appendix is designed to help DMs in creating and using their own fey adversaries. The bulk of the information needed to create brand new monsters can now be found in the revised *Monster Manual*. However, the charts, rules and adjustments below are meant to help facilitate the creation of fey monsters in particular.

# Techniques of Terror: Using the Shadow Fey in a Campaign

The following section provides some ideas for using the shadow fey in your Ravenloft campaign or in a gothic fantasy campaign set in any other campaign setting. Unlike some monstrous opponents, the fey exercise a fascination for many people. Their seductive natures and their eerie similarity to humans, coupled with their complete "otherness," make them challenging and thought-provoking opponents that must be fought with wits as much as with weapons.

## The Fairy Tale vs. The Faerie Tale

If you are reading this book, you likely know the difference between fairies and faeries. Fairies are cartoonish characters with wings, who sprinkle dust on people and make wishes come true. *Faeries*, on the other hand, are volatile spirits of the natural world. They are beings of mystery who live in the dark corners of the universe. In appearance, they are both beautiful and terrible. In demeanor, they are both sinister and obscure.

## What Makes a Faerie Tale So Scary?

Almost every culture has legends and myths involving its version of the fey or faeries. In the most basic terms, a faerie is a nature spirit that inhabits the various aspects of the wilderness. Faeries live in trees, rocks, rivers and hills.

So, why are they scary?

Most ancient cultures held the natural world in awe. By by proxy, they had a great deal of apprehension for the spirits that they believed controlled those forces. They conveyed this sense of fear in their stories and folklore.

If you, as the DM, want your own faeries to be scary, you will need to instill in your players the same sense of awe, apprehension and fear that nature often instills in us. Some easy tips follow:

### A Sense of Wrongness

Most horror tales rely on a sense of "wrongness" in order to instill tension in the audience. Imagine a scene in which the main character places a book upon a reading table. Suddenly, the book flings itself in front of the fireplace, and the pages begin violently flipping themselves.

This scene sets us on edge, because it challenges our basic assumptions about the universe. Books aren't supposed to open themselves. Pages aren't supposed to be able to turn themselves. Yet here these things are — right before our eyes. We experience the *wrongness* of these events, yet we cannot deny them.

Faeries, by their very nature, convey a sense of wrongness because they live outside the bounds of nature. They are immortal, have astonishing powers and possess peculiar weaknesses.

When portraying faeries, try to play up this aspect of their existence. Perhaps the footprints they leave in the dirt are backwards for unknown reasons. Maybe when fey lurk nearby, any open flame flickers blue. Or perhaps one can only see your particular brand of fey with closed eyes.

### A Sense of the Unknowable

What is unknown frightens us. As beings that exist outside our realm of experience, the fey are strangers, even to themselves. Thus, they evoke the worst fears of our imaginations. They live beyond the cycle of mortality and death, not subject to the rules of nature. If you keep some part of your fey unknown, even to yourself, they will seem all the more enigmatic when you portray them. This technique will also help keep PCs in the dark and constantly on edge.

For example, you may have the PCs gain information from a solitary sith prophet. They can always find the sith at the bottom of a well around midnight. To summon his advice, the PCs must offer gifts to the darkness of the well, hoping the sith's voice will echo from the depths. Exploration of the well, however, reveals nothing. Thus, the DM need not ever put a face to her sith!

Another example might be a troupe of mysterious powrie who invade a village. During the night, they quietly begin to steal objects from the

villagers. Later, the objects mysteriously reappear, lodged high up in trees. The harmless thefts begin to grow bolder. Babies are abducted and placed in ravens' nests. Finally, people's heads are severed during their sleep and stuck upon branches. Why are the powrie doing this? Why do the offenses start small and get worse? The fact that we don't know makes the entire scenario perverse, bizarre and disturbing — and very indicative of the fey.

### A Sense of Age

Old things scare us. The scary house is always weighted down with age and dilapidation. The scary tomb is always filled with dust and cobwebs. Places that have been around for a long time fill us with a sense of awe, because anything that is old has experienced many things, seen many things. When experiencing something that is ancient, our imaginations begin to stir and we are left to wonder.

Faeries have this same sense of antiquity. As beings of nature, they are old as nature itself. When portraying faeries, try to communicate this sense of age. Imagine talking to a mournful fey princess, who has all her mortal suitors stuffed and preserved in her castle so that they can live on with her forever.

Picture, as well, a great troupe of teg hunters trapped in a cave, bound for centuries by a sorcerer's spell... but now that spell is weakening. And soon, centuries' worth of wrath will be free.

## Using Faeries in your Campaign

Faeries are particular creatures best used in a specific way. If you want a random monster to throw at your party in the dungeon, the shadow fey (or any fey) will probably not suit your purposes. However, if you want an intriguing adversary as the object of a mystery or the culprit in a vast, horrific scheme, then look no further.

### Brains, Not Brawn

Fey are not physically tough opponents. Their base attack bonuses and hit points are some of the lowest in the game when compared to other monsters. What make fey threatening are the variety of powers they have, not their up-front combat capabilities. Besides the occasional muryan, it would be a mistake to use them as common combat creatures.

Instead, use the fey as story motivators. Perhaps a small court of fey and shadow fey have kidnapped all the children of the village. Maybe a sith knight has taken three handsome men and wishes to eat one every night for his elegant evening repast. Now, the focus of the adventure is shifted away from combat and turned toward one of investigation and deduction.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with combat in your game. When it comes to combat, the most effective thing the shadow fey have going for them is their damage reduction. Only very specific materials can harm them. For example, evil shadow fey are immune to damage from steel weapons. In order to fight many types of shadow fey, a party will need to use research and deduction to discover the creatures' weakness. Make sure that these research opportunities are available or else your party will be carting around a wagon full of weapons made from every material imaginable.

### Mystery Leads to Mystery

The fey are an eternal mystery. When running games that stress investigation and discovery, there should always be some aspect of the fey that remains unknown and obscure. As the DM, keep certain things unanswered, even for yourself. If you don't even know the ultimate answer to some of the questions in your campaign, your players will remain intrigued long after your campaign is finished.

Envision a game in which a party of adventurers is searching for a number of lost villagers and their livestock. The party uncovers the location of a few of the villagers. Horrifically, the villagers are now magically merged with their animals, making them bizarre beasts. Eventually, the adventurers lift the curse and question the powrie who took them. The party learns that the "Crying Widow" took the rest of the villagers. Who is the Crying Widow? Where did she go? Why were the villagers transformed? Not even the powrie know.

These dangling questions keep your players speculating. In game and out of game, they constantly conjecture and debate. Now picture the end of the campaign. The Crying Widow is confronted and her minions defeated. All of the villagers have been recovered but three. The PCs discover that these villagers have been "given to the Mists," to summon the rest of the Quivering Flock. They are destined to return during the Time of Unparalleled Darkness, when all people shall be turned to beasts, and all beasts will be turned to people. What is the Quivering Flock? Why were these villagers chosen? What does all this have to do with the

Time of Unparalleled Darkness? As the DM, you need not answer these questions right away, and it is perhaps better if you never answer them.

## Immortal Tenants of the Land

When using the fey in your campaign, never forget that they exist in communities and have a society all their own. A PC should never meet a random group of fey in the forest. That group of fey comes from a particular enclave. If the group is mistreated or harmed, the enclave will notice. The local fey will also notice if the group is treated with respect and reverence.

Consider also how the local fey interact with the domain lord. Are they in cahoots with the darklord? Are they opposed to her? Or do they leave each other alone for the most part? Is their relationship amicable? Do the fey despise the darklord? Or are the fey still exploring their relationship with the lord of the domain?

Think about how the fey interact with the local populace in your campaign. Are the fey mysterious benefactors who favor those few brave enough to stand against the darkness? Are they reclusive sages that give advice to those who offer them homage? Or are they capricious meddlers, who toy with mortals the way children play with dolls?

Finally, think about how the fey interact with the other evils of the land. Does your coven of shadow fey have an alliance with the pack of werewolves that also lives in the forest? Does your local faerie court despise the small circle of vampire clerics that operates from the forgotten tower? Are the fey the reason that a distant village is empty and devoid of life? Was a fey attack the reason the old mansion on the hill is haunted?

## Magnificent Terror

You need to keep two words in mind when using fey in your Ravenloft campaign: beautiful and terrible. How can something be beautiful and terrible at the same time? Think of a massive lion loping toward you. While the lion is magnificent to behold, you realize that it is extremely dangerous. Its claws are as thick as knives. Its teeth could easily rip your muscles from your bones. You freeze for a moment, hoping that the lion will simply pass you by. If the lion chooses to leave you alone, you are free to enjoy its beauty. If the animal attacks you, however, then you will be gripped in a struggle for your life.

That combination of magnificence and terror exemplifies the awesome and frightening power of the fey. They follow their own moral compass, above the petty judgments of mortals. Grand, mighty and ancient, they are as capricious as the predatory jungle cat and even more dangerous. They encourage a state of constant watchfulness in the PCs. After all, they may never know if they are fortunate enough to say that the fey have chosen to pass them by.

# Creature Creation Laboratory

DMs may use the chart below to adjust the appropriate statistics of fey creatures or create entirely new adversaries of their own. When advancing a monster, the other statistics remain unchanged. For example, a 7 HD powrie retains its 17 AC, and the damage of its bite attack remains 1d4–2.

The information on Table 9–1 corresponds to the information in the revised *Monster Manual*. The data has merely been tabulated for ease of use. Included in the table are suggested Base Challenge Ratings, which are addressed later in this chapter.

## Starting from Stratch

For the creation of your own unique fey creatures, we offer an alternate method here.

### Step One: Generate Base Ability Scores

First generate the *base* ability scores for your creature. The ability scores indicated on Table 9–2 are the suggested range of values for fey of various sizes. The mental scores for your creature (Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma) are determined solely by DM discretion.

Please note that these ability score ranges may be used in place of those found on Table 5–1 in the revised *Monster Manual*. The scores can be boosted later, with an according adjustment to their Challenge Rating.

## Table 9–1: Fey Advancement

| HD | hp | Atk | F/R/W | Feats | Base CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1/3 | 1 | +0 | +0/+1/+1 | 1 | 1/4 |
| 1/2 | 1 | +0 | +0/+1/+1 | 1 | 1/4 |
| 1d6 | 3 | +0 | +0/+2/+2 | 1 | 1/2 |
| 2d6 | 7 | +1 | +0/+3/+3 | 1 | 1/2 |
| 3d6 | 10 | +1 | +1/+3/+3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4d6 | 14 | +2 | +1/+4/+4 | 2 | 1 |
| 5d6 | 17 | +2 | +1/+4/+4 | 2 | 2 |
| 6d6 | 21 | +3 | +2/+5/+5 | 3 | 2 |
| 7d6 | 24 | +3 | +2/+5/+5 | 3 | 3 |
| 8d6 | 28 | +4 | +2/+6/+6 | 3 | 3 |
| 9d6 | 31 | +4 | +3/+6/+6 | 4 | 3 |
| 10d6 | 35 | +5 | +3/+7/+7 | 4 | 4 |
| 11d6 | 38 | +5 | +3/+7/+7 | 4 | 4 |
| 12d6 | 42 | +6/+1 | +4/+8/+8 | 5 | 4 |
| 13d6 | 45 | +6/+1 | +4/+8/+8 | 5 | 5 |
| 14d6 | 49 | +7/+2 | +4/+9/+9 | 5 | 5 |
| 15d6 | 52 | +7/+2 | +5/+9/+9 | 6 | 5 |
| 16d6 | 56 | +8/+3 | +5/+10/+10 | 6 | 6 |
| 17d6 | 59 | +8/+3 | +5/+10/+10 | 6 | 6 |
| 18d6 | 63 | +9/+4 | +6/+11/+11 | 7 | 6 |
| 19d6 | 66 | +9/+4 | +6/+11/+11 | 7 | 7 |
| 20d6 | 70 | +10/+5 | +6/+12/+12 | 7 | 7 |

## Table 9–2: Fey Base Ability Scores and Attacks

| Size | Str | Dex | Con | Min HD | Max HD | Slam | Bite | Claw | Gore |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fine | 1 | 22–23 | 10–11 | — | 2 | — | 1 | — | — |
| Diminutive | 1 | 20–21 | 10–11 | — | 4 | 1 | 1d2 | 1 | 1 |
| Tiny | 2–3 | 18–19 | 10–11 | — | 6 | 1 | 1d3 | 1d2 | 1d2 |
| Small | 6–7 | 16–17 | 10–11 | 1/2 | 6 | 1d3 | 1d4 | 1d3 | 1d4 |
| Medium | 10–11 | 12–13 | 10–11 | 1 | — | 1d4 | 1d6 | 1d4 | 1d6 |
| Large | 14–15 | 12–13 | 12–13 | 2 | — | 1d6 | 1d8 | 1d6 | 1d8 |
| Huge | 18–19 | 12–13 | 14–15 | 4 | — | 1d8 | 2d6 | 1d8 | 2d6 |
| Gargantuan | 22–23 | 10–11 | 16–17 | 12 | — | 2d6 | 2d8 | 2d6 | 2d8 |
| Colossal | 26–27 | 10–11 | 18–19 | 24 | — | 2d8 | 4d6 | 2d8 | 4d6 |

## Step Two: Select Base HD

Next, select the HD of the creature that you want to create. Then, use Table 9–1 to see what some of the other stats for your monster should be.

## Step Three: Determine Base CR

On Table 9–1, find the base CR for the HD of your fey creature. Keep this number in mind, because as you continue your creation process, you will be adjusting this value upwards.

## Add in the Fun Stuff

Now, it's time to add in all the goodies for your creature and raise it to an appropriate Challenge Rating. Please note that the rules below are a modification of the system found in the revised *Monster Manual* and are used here to present an alternate method for customizing fey creatures.

**Ability Scores:** For every +3 ability points you add to your fey, the CR is increased by +1/4. No statistic should exceed 10 points beyond the original score.

**Armor Class:** DMs may increase the Armor Class for the fey they are creating. The Armor Class increase may come in the form of a natural armor or a deflection bonus. Follow the chart below to reflect the additional challenge rating of the creature created:

| Alteration to Natural Armor | Change to CR |
|---|---|
| +3 to natural armor | +1/4 to CR |
| +6 to natural armor | +1/2 to CR |
| +9 to natural armor | +3/4 to CR |
| +3 deflection bonus to AC | +1/2 to CR |
| +6 deflection bonus to AC | +3/4 to CR |
| +9 deflection bonus to AC | +1 to CR |

**Attacks:** Creatures may have additional attacks above and beyond their normal attack routines.

For each additional attack the creature gains, add +1/2 to the CR. If the creature only had one additional attack to begin with, it gets its base attack bonus for both attacks. If the creature has two or more attacks already, then all added bonus attacks suffer a –2 penalty. Creatures that gain multiple attacks also receive Multiattack as a bonus feat.

**Damage:** The DM may increase the die type of damage that his monster uses in combat. For each die type shifted, add +1/2 to the creature's CR. For example, increasing the damage from 1d4 to 1d8 adds a total of +1 to the CR. We recommend that the die type not be shifted more than 5 places upwards.

### Table 9–3: Damage Die Progression

1d2
1d3
1d4
1d6
1d8
1d10
1d12
2d4
2d6
2d8
2d10
2d12

**Skills and Feats:** Additional skill points and feats may be added for an adjustment to CR. See the revised *Monster Manual* for more details.

**Salient Powers:** Salient abilities appropriate for both the fey and the shadow fey are listed throughout this book. DMs should reference these, decide which fit the fey they wish to use, and add the CR value to their fey creatures.

**Salient Weaknesses:** Salient weaknesses allow a DM to lower a creature's CR. Salient weaknesses are best used when they make sense within the context of the campaign. They should not be used to bring down the CRs of challenging monsters to unleash against unsuspecting PCs.

**Final CR:** When calculating the final CR for a creature, the DM should always round fractions *down*. Be sure that the creature is not too weak for the party or so overloaded with odd powers that the characters cannot hope to defeat it.

## Sample Creation

Rucht decides that he wants to create his own monster, the Glimmer Bones (mentioned in Chapter Four: Vulnerabilities).

**Base Ability Scores**

Rucht decides that Glimmer Bones will be a Medium creature. Looking at Table 9–2, he sees the suggested range for the ability scores and gives Glimmer Bones the following base abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9. He also decides that his creature will have a bite and two

claw attacks; the bite does 1d4 damage, and the claws do 1d6 damage each.

Rucht assigns the stats in this way because they best describe his creature. Glimmer Bones is a fast, dexterous creature, but isn't the strongest of monsters. While fairly intelligent, the true danger behind Glimmer Bones is its sheer cunning. Thus, it receives above average Intelligence and high Wisdom. Charisma is set low, since Rucht sees that Glimmer Bones is a skulker in the darkness.

**Determine Hit Dice**

Rucht establishes that his monster will start out with 9 HD, giving it base hit points of 31. Looking at the advancement chart, Rucht sees that Glimmer Bones also has a +4 base attack bonus. His creature's base saving throws are +3 Fortitude, +6 Reflex, and +6 Will. These saving throws will change due to his creature's stats.

Because Rucht's creation is 9 HD, it gains two extra ability points, with no change to CR. Rucht uses the extra ability points to raise the monster's Dexterity to 15.

Now, Rucht's monster looks something like this:

HD 9d6, hp 31; Init +2; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 12; Base Atk+4; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4, bite) and –1 melee (1d6, 2 claws); SA [undecided]; SQ [undecided]; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9; *Skills*: 84 pts. *Feats*: 4 feats; CR: 3.

**Ability Scores**

Now, Rucht begins to add in the fun elements to his creature. First, he buys 12 points in abilities for +1 CR. He raises Glimmer Bone's Strength to 14, its Dexterity to 21, and its Constitution to 12.

*Total CR Increase*: +1.

**Armor Class**

Rucht next raises Glimmer Bones' Armor Class with +6 points of natural armor, for +1/2 CR.

*Total CR Increase*: +1/2.

**Attacks and Damage**

Rucht now gives Glimmer Bones an additional claw attack, for +1/2 CR. As for Glimmer Bone's damage, Rucht determines that 1d4 is fairly weak for a 9 Hit Die creature. He raises the bite damage to 1d8 for +1 CR and the claw damage all the way to 1d12 for + 1 1/2 CR.

*Total CR Increase:* +3.

**Feats**

Looking at the chart, Glimmer Bones gets four feats, just like a 9th level character would. Rucht assigns the following feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Stealthy and Weapon Finesse.

**Salient Powers**

Rucht decides that Glimmer Bones has the following special attacks and special qualities:

**Spell-Like Abilities:** Using the spell point system described in Chapter Three, Glimmer Bones has 14 spell points (5 + 9 HD) he can use to purchase spell resistance or spells. Rucht spends his points for the following spells: *cause fear* (1); *dancing lights* (1/2); *fear* (4); *ghost sound* (1/2); *knock* (2); *ray of exhaustion* (3); *suggestion* (3). Each spell is usable 1/day.

*CR Adjustment:* +2 total.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Glimmer Bones can change himself into a spider. He may spend up to 12 hours a day in his insect form and may shapeshift freely back and forth during that period as long as he doesn't exceed 12 hours total during any 24-hour period.

*CR Adjustment:* +1/4.

**Immunities (Su):** Like many fey, only cold-wrought iron weapons or magic weapons may harm Glimmer Bones. He is absolutely immune to damage from steel weapons regardless of the magical enchantment on the weapon. Finally, she is absolutely immune to electricity based attacks.

*CR Adjustment:* +1/2.

**Natural Affinities (Sp):** Glimmer Bones can detect whether or not someone is an innocent. He makes a Spot check (DC 10 + the target's HD + the target's Charisma bonus). Success means that Glimmer Bones can tell the degree of innocence possessed by the target. In addition, Glimmer Bones can hide in shadowy places as if he were casting *invisibility* (caster level 9th). This form of the spell only works when Glimmer Bones is in shadows; daylight or firelight (either from a torch, a candle or a fireplace) automatically dispels the *invisibility* if it dispels the shadow in which Glimmer Bones is hiding.

*CR Adjustment:* + 1/4 x 2 (Total CR Adjustment = + 1/2).

**Salient Weaknesses**

As stated in the Vulnerabilities section, Glimmer Bones has the following vulnerabilities:

**Innocence Bane:** The touch of an innocent harms the Glimmer Bones, burning his skin like fire. An innocent being simply touching Glimmer Bones causes 2 points of damage per round. Because of this, he avoids physical combat with

innocents. However, if pressed, he can and will attack them. Because only innocent children can burn Glimmer Bones, he will often try to tempt children or manipulate them into committing evil acts that ruin their innocence.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4.

**Doll Bane:** Glimmer Bones cannot affect creatures in possession of a beloved doll or toy. The doll or toy in question must truly be loved by the possessor. An adventurer can't simply pick up a baby doll and use it as a ward. So long as a person is in possession of his doll or toy, he is immune to Glimmer Bones's spell-like and supernatural abilities.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4.

**Protective Rhyme Bane:** Whenever someone chants a special rhyme, it creates an area of effect that Glimmer Bones cannot enter. His actions are not otherwise restricted. For instance, he can still cast spells at targets in proximity of the bane or make ranged attacks.

Glimmer Bones receives a saving throw against the repulsion effect (DC 13 + Cha modifier of the person who placed the bane). If he makes his saving throw, he may pass through the bane's area of effect normally.

*CR Adjustment:* –1/4.

Now Glimmer Bones final form looks like this:

## Glimmer Bones

**Medium Fey**
**Hit Dice:** 9d6 (40 hp)
**Initiative:** +9
**Speed:** 30 ft. (6 squares)
**Armor Class:** 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16
**Base Attack/Grapple:** +4/+6
**Attack:** Bite +6 melee (1d4+2)
**Full Attack:** Bite +6 melee (1d8+2) and 2 claws +9 melee (1d12+1) [claw: +4 bab, +2 str, -2 second atk, +5 dex = 11-2=9]
**Space/Reach:** 5 ft./5 ft.
**Special Attacks:** Alternate form, detect innocence, spell-like abilities
**Special Qualities:** Damage reduction 10/cold iron or magic, doll bane, innocence bane, immunity to electricity, immunity to steel weapons, invisible in shadows, protective rhyme bane
**Saves:** Fort +5, Ref +11, Will +8
**Abilities:** Str 14, Dex 21, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 9
**Skills:** Bluff +8, Climb +11, Disable Device +14, Hide +18, Intimidate +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +14, Sleight of Hand +10
**Feats:** Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse
**Environment:** Any
**Organization:** Solitary
**Challenge Rating:** 9
**Treasure:** Standard
**Alignment:** Always chaotic evil
**Advancement:** 10–13 HD (Medium)
**Level Adjustment:** —

Rucht fills in the details of Glimmer Bones' special attacks and special qualities based on the above information, adds some notes on the creature's history and appearance, and he's done. Glimmer Bones is ready for use in Rucht's next game.

## Shadow Fey Subtype

This subtype is used for Arak creatures that have come from the Shadow Rift or for creatures who have absorbed the malignant energies from that place. Some creatures are actually transformed by the magics of the Arak and gain the shadow fey subtype in this way. The shadow fey subtype is not appropriate for player characters, however. Any PC who becomes part of the shadow fey should become an NPC.

Though fey are the most common creature with the shadow fey subtype, it may be adopted by any of the following creature types: aberration, animal, dragon, fey, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, outsider, and vermin. A creature that adopts the shadow fey subtype gains a +2 to its CR.

*Traits*: All shadow fey possess the following traits unless otherwise noted.

— Darkvision out to 120 feet.

— Low-light vision.

— *Alternate Form (Su):* The creature may assume the shape of up to four different kinds of animals. These animal forms usually are connected by a similar theme. For instance, a particular shadow fey might be able to assume the form of a vulture, jackal, or rat, which are all carrion creatures. The creature may assume this form or leave it as a standard action. It may spend up to 12 hours a day in its alternate form, and may shift freely back and forth as long as it doesn't exceed 12 hours total during one day. No matter the form, it cannot turn into a creature smaller than Diminutive, or larger than Medium. It does not heal damage when it changes forms. In all other respects, this ability functions like the druid's *wild shape* ability.

— *Daylight Vulnerability:* The creature gains a vulnerability to daylight. Each round it is exposed

to sunlight, it takes the damage listed below. Look also at the entry on sunlight bane in Chapter Four: Vulnerabilities.

| Alignment | Damage from Sunlight |
|---|---|
| Good | 1d2 |
| Neutral | 1d4 |
| Evil | 2d4 |

— *Cold Iron Vulnerability:* Iron is anathema to the Arak. As long as a shadow fey is in prolonged contact with cold iron, the creature loses all of its supernatural and spell-like abilities. The shadow fey receives no saving throw against this effect, but the effect is lifted once the creature is no longer in contact with cold iron.

— *Material Immunity:* All shadow fey have damage reduction. Each Arak's damage reduction can be overcome through particular materials. What materials are needed to overcome a shadow fey's damage reduction are left to the DM's discretion. Examples of such materials include: any precious metal, onyx, jade, diamond, ruby, sapphire, glass, or amber.

In addition to damage reduction, shadow fey possess an immunity from damage from a particular material and energy source. The immunities a shadow fey possesses is a function of their alignment. For example, Lawful ellefolk are immune to fire and Evil shadow fey are immune to damage from steel. Thus, a Lawful Evil Arak is immune to damage from both fire and steel.

| Lawful-Chaotic Axis | Immunity |
|---|---|
| Lawful | Fire |
| Neutral | Cold |
| Chaotic | Electricity |
| **Good-Evil Axis** | **Immunity** |
| Good | Stone |
| Neutral | Wood |
| Evil | Steel |

— *Spellcasting:* The shadow fey are capable magicians, able to cast a number of inherent spells. While their caster level is equal to their Hit Die, their spell repertoire is limited. Their spell selection is always equal to that of a sorcerer of one-half their HD + 1.

Like a sorcerer, Arak never need to prepare these inherent spells. They regain the ability to cast them after rest, just as a sorcerer would. Unlike a sorcerer, however, their spells come from the sorcerer, cleric, and druid lists. This wide selection makes the ellefolk truly potent creatures in the realm of magic. All spells the shadow fey cast inherently are Charisma-based; all shadow fey gain these inherent spells in addition to those gained through levels in a spellcasting class.

## New Spells

The following spells are available to the shadow fey, though some are restricted to certain breeds. DMs may, of course, lift these restrictions as needed for the creation of unique shadow fey individuals.

### Alter Person

Transmutation
**Level:** Sor/Wiz 3
**Components:** V, S
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
**Target:** One giant, humanoid, monstrous humanoid or fey creature
**Duration:** 1 hour/level
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell functions like *polymorph*, except that the change is only partial. You select a normal animal and designate a single body part of the target or animal. That part of the target turns into the corresponding body part of the selected animal upon completion of the spell. If the subject lacks

### Table 9-4: Shadow Fey Immunities

| Fey Type | Damage Reduction | Material Immunity | Energy Immunity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Alven | 10/cold iron | Stone | Electricity |
| Fir | 10/tin | Stone | Cold |
| Portune | 10/copper | Stone | Fire |
| Brag | 10/leather | Wood | Fire |
| Muryan | 10/mithral | Wood | Electricity |
| Shee | 10/lead | Wood | Cold |
| Powrie | 10/platinum | Steel | Electricity |
| Sith | 10/silver | Steel | Fire |
| Teg | 10/gold | Steel | Cold |

the corresponding part (such as a tail), it simply gains the animal part on the appropriate section of its anatomy. For example, you can change the subject's head into the head of an ass or give it a horse's tail.

The subject loses any natural abilities pertaining to the body part affected and gains the appropriate natural abilities (including attack forms) of the animal instead. For example, a human whose head was turned into that of an ass could no longer speak, but could bray like an ass and use a bite attack. The subject retains all its extraordinary, supernatural and spell-like abilities, though any that are dependent upon a lost characteristic (such as human speech) are not usable. Thus, a human with the head of an ass could no longer cast spells requiring a verbal component. The subject retains its own ability scores, alignment, and special abilities except as noted above. It retains its class and level (or HD), as well as all benefits deriving therefrom (such as base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and hit points); it retains any class features (other than spellcasting, if the new form makes that impossible); and it gains the breathing and locomotion of the animal form, either in addition to its own or in place of its own, as appropriate. For example, a human whose arms were turned into wings would gain a fly speed equal to that of the bird whose wings it acquired in addition to its land speed (since it still has human legs). A human whose head was turned into that of a fish would be able to breathe water but not air. If the new feature would prove fatal to the subject (such as the aforementioned fish head), the subject gains a +4 bonus on the Fortitude save to negate the effect.

Incorporeal or gaseous creatures are immune to this spell, and a creature with the shapechanger subtype (such as a lycanthrope or a doppelganger) can revert to its natural form as a standard action.

## Alter Person, Greater

Transmutation
**Level:** Sor/Wiz 5
**Components:** V, S
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action
**Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
**Target:** One giant, humanoid, monstrous humanoid, or fey creature
**Duration:** Permanent
**Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates
**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This spell functions like *alter person*, except that the change is permanent, and you can designate one or more humanlike abilities that the subject may keep that would otherwise become those of the animal. Thus, you could turn a human's head into the head of an ass but designate that he may still speak normally as a human. Such a caveat means that the subject can speak intelligibly and cast spells requiring a verbal component, though his voice may sound more like a bray than a human voice.

## Object Glamor

Illusion (Glamer)
**Level:** Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
**Components:** V,S
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action
**Range:** Touch
**Target:** Object Touched
**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)
**Saving Throw:** Negates (object)
**Spell Resistance:** Yes (object)

You make a Tiny or smaller object look like an entirely different object. For example, you can make a book look like a teacup, a plate resemble a spoon, or a stone look like a pillow. You cannot make the object appear to be of a different size category, but all other physical details are under your control. If you wish, you can use the spell only to effect minor changes in an object's appearance, changing its color, adding or subtracting a distinguishing feature, or the like.

The spell does not make the object function any differently, nor does it alter the perceived (tactile) or audible (sound) properties of the target object. A dagger made to look like a feather still functions as a dagger. A creature that interacts with a glamered object gets a Will save to recognize it as an illusion. For example, a creature that touched a stone made to look like a mound of cotton and realized that the tactile sensation did not match the visual one would be entitled to such a save.

A nonmagical, unattended object is not entitled to a saving throw against this effect. A magic item or an object in the possession of a creature is entitled to a saving throw to negate the effect.

## Object Glamor, Greater

Illusion (Glamer)
**Level:** Brd 5, Sor/Wiz 5
**Components:** V,S
**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** Touch
**Target:** Object Touched
**Duration:** 10 min./level (D)

This spell functions like *object glamor*, except that the affected object may be Medium or smaller.

## Half-Fey

Half-Fey are the first-generation offspring of a shadow fey and another mortal creature. Generally, sentient humanoids are the preferred mates of the fey, but they can mate with just about any mortal being.

Half-fey children do not always look unusual at birth, partly because they have not yet chosen a form. As they age, they choose a breed, generally within the first year of life. Often, this breed is the same as their fey parent, but not always. The fey parent also indicates base alignment. Of course, their alignment may change, but their breed does not after this point. They have lost the mutability of their parents.

Half-fey's appearances can vary widely, but they generally pick up a few qualities from their chosen breed. Note that fey blood mixes strangely with the blood of other creatures, and the outcome is unpredictable. While fey descendants may have abilities resembling those of the fey breeds, these abilities often manifest in unique ways.

A half-fey might have one or more attributes from Table 9–5, based on breed:

## Half-Fey Template

"Half-Fey" is an inherited template that can be added to any corporeal living creature (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "fey." It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Hit Dice:** Change to a d6.

**Speed:** Same as base creature. Some half-fey have wings (see below).

**Armor Class:** Half-fey gain a +1 luck bonus to AC.

**Special Attacks:** Half-fey are inherently magical and draw power from the natural world. They can gain spells as indicated below.

*Spells (Sp)*: A half-fey with a Charisma of 10 or higher (after the ability score adjustment noted below) gains spell-like abilities. It cast spells as a sorcerer of a level equal to its Hit Dice. Table 9–6 lists the abilities available. These abilities are cumulative. A half-fey with 3 HD can use the abilities on the 1rst through 3rd breed ability table.

*Breed Abilities* (sp): Half-fey also gain additional spell-like abilities from a clerical domain corresponding to their breed, as indicated below. These spells are cast using the half-fey's Charisma modifier. The level of spell is shown in parentheses in Table 9–6. For example, "breed ability (4th)" means a 4th-level spell from the appropriate domain.

### Table 9–5: Breed Attributes

| Breed | Attributes |
|---|---|
| Alven | Bright orange hair, olive skin, antennae, high-pitched voice |
| Brag | Black eyes and nails, albino skin, horse tail, horse mane, hooves for feet |
| Fir | Long fingers and nails, silver hair, fine brown fur covering body |
| Muryan | Extremely long, unkempt hair |
| Portune | Pitch-black skin, reptile skin, white hair, white eyes (no pupils) |
| Powrie | Needle-like teeth, snake eyes, insect eyes, gray skin, wiry hair and beard, wicked smile |
| Shee | Pale hair and skin, amber eyes, feathered brows |
| Sith | Pale skin, long white hair, whispering voice |
| Teg | Cat eyes, fox ears, clawed fingers, pointed teeth, fox tail |
| Other | Warty skin, multi-hued skin, ichor coating, bulbous eyes, glowing eyes, feathers for hair, long nose, claws, antennae |

## Table 9–6: Breed Spells

| HD | Abilities |
|---|---|
| 1–2 | 1/day — *daze, dancing lights, ghost sound*; 1/day — Choose 1 1st-level illusion or enchantment spell; At will — *charm person*; 1/day — breed ability (1st) |
| 3–4 | 1/day — Choose 1 2nd–level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day – breed ability (2nd) |
| 5–6 | 1/day — Choose 1 3rd-level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day – breed ability (3rd) |
| 7–8 | 1/day — Choose 1 4th-level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day — breed ability (4th) |
| 9–10 | 1/day — Choose 1 5th-level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day — breed ability (5th) |
| 11–12 | 1/day — Choose 1 6th-level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day — breed ability (6th) |
| 13–14 | 1/day — Choose 2 7th-level illusion or enchantment spells; 1/day — breed ability (7th) |
| 15–16 | 1/day — Choose 2 8th-level illusion or enchantment spells; 1/day — breed ability (8th) |
| 17+ | 1/day — Choose 1 9th-level illusion or enchantment spell; 1/day — breed ability (9th) |

## Table 9–7: Breed Abilities

| Breed | Cleric Domain |
|---|---|
| Alven | Plant |
| Brag | Animal |
| Fir | Knowledge |
| Muryan | War |
| Portune | Healing |
| Powrie | Trickery |
| Shee | Luck |
| Sith | Evil |
| Teg | Chaos |
| Other | Trickery |

**Special Qualities:** Half-fey have low-light vision, as well as the qualities listed below.

*Sunlight Vulnerability (Su):* Half-fey lose all of their special attacks in natural sunlight.

*Luck (Su):* Half-fey gain a +2 luck bonus to AC.

*Breed Qualities (Su):* Each breed has different qualities, as shown in Table 9–8. If multiple abilities are listed, the half-fey can choose one from the list.

**Saves:** Same as the base creature.

**Abilities:** Modify from the base creature as follows: Dex +2, Con –2, Wis +2, Cha +4.

**Skills:** A half-fey has skill points equal to (6 + Int modifier) x (Hit Dice + 3). Treat skills possessed by the base creature as class skills and other skills as cross-class. If the creature has a class, it gains skill points for class levels normally.

**Feats:** Same as the base creature. Half-fey can take feats for fey descendants.

**Environment:** Same as the base creature or the Shadow Rift.

**Organization:** Same as the base creature.

## Table 9–8: Breed Qualities

| Breed | Special Quality |
|---|---|
| Alven | Resistance to electricity 5, or insect wings (fly at base movement rate, good maneuverability) |
| Brag | Resistance to cold 5, or Endurance feat |
| Fir | Resistance to cold 5 |
| Muryan | Resistance to electricity 5 |
| Portune | Resistance to fire 5, or moth wings (fly at base movement rate, good maneuverability) |
| Powrie | Resistance to electricity 5, or insect wings (fly at base movement rate, good maneuverability) |
| Shee | Resistance to fire 5 |
| Sith | Resistance to fire 5 |
| Teg | Resistance to cold 5 |
| Other | Resistance to energy 5 (choose one), or insect wings (fly at base movement rate, good maneuverability) |

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Treasure:** Same as the base creature.

**Alignment:** Varies.

**Advancement:** Same as the base creature. Half-fey that gain levels in a character class do not gain additional half-fey special attacks as they advance.

**Level Adjustment:** Same as the base creature +2.

## Half-Fey Characters

Half-fey characters often have a character class, generally following the favored class of their breed. They do not gain additional special attacks as they advance in character level. Half-fey characters have a +5 Outcast Rating bonus.

## Feytouched Template

"Feytouched" is an acquired template that can be added to any humanoid or giant (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). The creature's type changes to "fey." It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

**Hit Dice:** Change to a d6.

**Speed:** Same as base creature.

**Armor Class:** Feytouched gain a +1 luck bonus to AC.

**Special Attacks:** A feytouched with a Charisma of 10 or higher (after the ability score adjustment noted below) gains spell-like abilities. It casts spells as a sorcerer of a level equal to its Hit Dice.

*Spell-Like Ability:* 1/day — *dancing lights, daze, ghost sound, charm person.*

**Special Qualities:** Feytouched have low-light vision, as well as the special qualities listed below.

*Sunlight Vulnerability (Su):* Feytouched lose all of their special attacks in natural sunlight.

*Luck (Su):* Feytouched gain a +1 luck bonus to AC.

**Saves:** Same as the base creature

**Abilities:** Modify from the base creature as follows: Dex +2, Con –2, Cha +2

**Skills:** Feytouched have skill points equal to (6 + Int modifier) x (Hit Dice + 3). Treat skills possessed by the base creature as class skills and other skills as cross-class. If the creature has a class, it gains skill points for class levels normally.

**Feats:** Same as the base creature. Feytouched can take feats for fey descendants.

**Environment:** Same as the base creature, or the Shadow Rift.

**Organization:** Same as the base creature.

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature +1.

**Treasure:** Same as the base creature.

**Alignment:** Varies.

**Advancement:** Same as the base creature.

**Level Adjustment:** Same as the base creature +1.

### Feytouched Characters

Feytouched characters often have a character class, generally following the favored class of their breed. Feytouched characters have a +2 Outcast Rating bonus.

## Changeling Creation

When a changeling is created, it keeps an element of its former self. Generally, this means that the changeling has the same number of ranks in the changeling racial skills as its original self. Changelings gain a racial bonus on top of these ranks.

Changelings can practice other skills, but they are only considered trained in their racial skills. These are the only skills that survive the creation process.

### Changeling Advancement

Most changelings advance in the expert NPC class. When they advance, their maximum skill rank is determined by their previous character level plus any new levels. When gaining the first level after becoming a changeling, the changeling does not get the usual x4 multiplier in skill points. For example, a changeling that takes 1 level of the expert NPC class would gain 6 skill points rather than 24. Further, a changeling's racial skills must be among their 10 expert class skills. Any unspent skill points are lost.

### Alvenkin

These changelings perform the roles of gardeners, farmers, and herbalists for the alven. Alvenkin are passive creatures that focus intently on the care of their plants.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Alvenkin gain a +20 racial bonus to any Profession (farmer), Profession (gardener) or Profession (herbalist) check. The changeling has the same number of ranks in these skills as the originator. Note that a changeling is still considered untrained if the originator had 0 ranks in any of these skills.

### Bragkin

Changelings created by the brag become architects, builders, stoneworkers and manual laborers. They are stronger than other changelings, with a Strength score of 14, but will not defend themselves even if attacked.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Bragkin gain a +20 racial bonus to any Knowledge (architecture), Knowledge (engineering), Craft (stoneworking) or Craft (carpentry) skill check. The changeling has the same number of ranks in these skills as the originator. Note that a changeling is still considered untrained if the originator had 0 ranks in any of these skills.

### Firkin

The firkin are master artisans who create and maintain all of the mechanical devices for the shadow elves.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Firkin gain a +20 racial bonus to any Craft (clockmaking, gunsmithing, locksmithing or trapmaking) or Knowledge (engineering) check. The changeling has the same number of ranks in these skills as the originator. Note that a changeling is still considered untrained if the originator had 0 ranks in any of these skills.

### Muryankin

The muryankin are the defenders and guardians of the Shadow Rift. These violent berserkers are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, favoring the longsword and the spear. The muryankin have no racial skills; they_generally advance as fighters or barbarians.

**Barbarian Rage (Ex):** Muryankin can as a 3rd-level barbarian once per day. This rage temporarily gives them +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, a +2 morale bonus to Will saves and a –2 penalty to AC.

### Portunekin

The portune create these rare changelings to serve as physicians. The portunekin do not fight.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Heal. The portunekin gain a +20 racial bonus to Heal checks in addition to the ranks held by their originator.

## Powriekin

Changelings created by the powrie perform missions of stealth for the Arak. The cunning and sadistic nature of the powriekin serves them well in their roles as spies, thieves and assassins. They are proficient with all simple weapons, preferring poisoned daggers and darts.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** Powriekin can perform sneak attacks as a 3rd-level rogue (+2d6 damage).

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Powriekin gain a +10 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks.

## Sheekin

Sheekin are skilled entertainers created to please the Arak. They do not fight. When not performing, they are quiet and inattentive.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** As performers, sheekin are incredibly charismatic, gaining a +20 racial bonus to Perform skill checks.

## Sithkin

Sithkin are pale, undead-like creatures sent to the world of mortals to retrieve items of importance from graveyards, mortuaries, and other places of death. Sithkin fight if necessary, using simple weapons such as the sickle, though they are not exceptional fighters.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Sithkin never speak, though they move very quietly, gaining a +10 racial bonus to Move Silently checks. Sithkin can rebuke undead as a 7th-level evil cleric, and no undead (except for domain lords) will ever attack a sithkin unless the sithkin attacks it first.

## Tegkin

Tegkin are hunters for the Arak. These wild changelings are proficient with simple weapons, the shortbow, and the longbow. They will fight if accosted while hunting. Tegkin generally advance as druids or rangers.

**Racial Skills (Ex):** Tegkin gain a +10 racial bonus on Survival checks and a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Move Silently and Spot checks.

# The Breeds

The following descriptions provide statistics and characteristics for the nine major breeds of the shadow fey as well as one minor breed. DMs may use the guidelines given in the first part of this appendix to create other fey breeds for use in their Ravenloft (or other setting) campaigns.

Some of these entries have appeared in **Denizens of Dread**. Where there are differences, the information here supersedes the information in that volume.

## Alven (Carrot Tops or Fire Flits)

**Diminutive Fey**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hit Dice:** | 3d6 (10 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +3 |
| **Speed:** | 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 60 ft. (good) |
| **Armor Class:** | 17 (+4 size, +3 Dex), touch 14, flat-footed 14 |
| **Base Attack/ Grapple:** | +1/–11 |
| **Attack:** | Tiny rapier +6 melee (1d3/18–20) |
| **Full Attack:** | Tiny rapier +6 melee (1d3/18–20) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 2 ft./2 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Wing dance, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, darkvision, low-light vision, piercing sight, spell resistance 13, damage reduction 10/cold iron, whispers to the leaves, and immunities |
| **Saves:** | Fort +0, Ref +6, Will +6 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 10, Dex 16, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 17 |
| **Skills:** | Handle Animal +9, Hide +15, Knowledge (nature) +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Profession (agriculture) +7, Spellcraft +7, Spot +9, Survival +9 |
| **Feats:** | Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse (rapier) |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Units (2–4) or warren (50–400) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 3 |
| **Treasure:** | None |
| **Alignment:** | Usually chaotic good |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +1 |

*The tiny creature hovers, held aloft by its butterfly wings, touching first one flower and then another as if greeting old friends.*

If the Arak have a worker caste, then certainly the alven are the farmers of the shadow elves. Their affinity and appreciation for all things green and flowering are perhaps their most defining characteristics. All alven have a green thumb and possess great skills in working crops and gardens. They make their nests and homes in underground warrens beneath gardens or fields of wildflowers. Although usually friendly, they swiftly attack any who dare pick their lovely flowers without the warren's permission. The best way to impress an alven or open diplomatic relations to a warren is to compliment the plants and flowers. Gifts of seeds are appreciated, whereas a gesture of cut flowers is

an atrocity to them and will likely incur the warren's wrath.

An adult alven stands about a foot tall on average. Alven sport a large set of butterfly wings on their backs. Their skin is leafy green, and they have bright orange hair. Their clothes are made from dyed spider's silk. They have soft, singsong voices, and carry themselves in a pleasant and generally helpful manner.

## Combat

Alven prefer using magic rather than spilling blood with martial combat. Although they are ill suited for warfare, fire flits attack like a swarm of bees if their warren is threatened, dealing 1 hit point per creature with each attack using their custom-made "thorn" swords (small rapiers) and daggers if a whole warren is threatened.

***Wing Dance* (Sp):** The first tactic when an alven is defending itself is to flit about in seemingly random patterns, rising and falling, swooping and diving. Anyone who looks upon this "wing dance" must make two DC 14 Will saves. If the first save fails, the target is affected as if by an *enthrall* spell (caster level 8th). If the second save fails, the target is also affected by both *blindness* and *deafness*.

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day — *barkskin, disguise self, entangle, hallucinatory terrain*; 1/day — *plant growth*. Caster level 5th.

**Alternate Form (Su)**: Alven have the ability to change themselves into bees, wasps, dragonflies, butterflies or moths.

**Piercing Sight (Su):** The alven can often peer through glamers that render someone invisible. The alven makes a Survival check against the spell DC of the caster. A successful skill check means that the invisibility doesn't work on the alven's senses.

**Whispers to the Leaves (Su):** Carrot tops can travel freely and easily from place to place, guided by the flora around them, as if under the influence of *find the path* (caster level 8th). This ability works only so long as the alven is within 100 feet of some manner of plant life. For example, a fire flit in the middle of a dungeon devoid of flora could not use this ability.

**Immunities:** Alven are immune to stone weapons and to electricity.

**Special Weaknesses (Ex)**: Regardless of the form the fire flit is in, an alven takes 1d2 points of damage each round it is exposed to sunlight. If the light is filtered, the sky is overcast, or the alven is wearing a thick coating of mud, the damage is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1).

## Alven Characters

The favored class for a fire flit is druid. These alven take butterfly as their alternate form. Other alven act as defenders, becoming rangers; they tend to change to bumblebee rather than butterfly form.

## Brag (Whitemen or Whitewomen)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Small Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 6d6+24 (45 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +6 |
| **Speed:** | 30 ft. (6 squares) |
| **Armor Class:** | 14 (+3 Dex, +1 size), touch 11, flat-footed 11 |
| **Base Attack/ Grapple:** | +3/+2 |
| **Attack:** | Slam +7 melee (1d3+3) |
| **Full Attack:** | 2 slams +7 melee (1d3+3) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Delusion, *sleep*, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, darkvision, low-light vision, immunities, evasion, spell resistance 16, damage reduction 10/ leather |
| **Saves:** | Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +6 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 16, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10 |
| **Skills:** | Handle Animal +11, Jump +8, Swim +8, Survival +9, Knowledge (nature) +5, Craft (any one) +9, Climb +11, Use Rope +4 |
| **Feats:** | Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 6 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Usually lawful neutral |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +2 |

*The black-haired, pale skinned man shook his long, mane-like hair and lashed out at his tormentor with his foot, snorting as if he were an enraged horse.*

Brag are an exceptionally hard working breed of Arak. Diligent builders and architects, the brag are responsible for many of the carved out hollow hills and spiraling faerie towers that are home to many of the other shadow elves. When they are not working (which is only a few hours of the day), they enjoy hearty ale and amusing tales. It's been said that the brag built the castle of Queen Maeve for the price of one very intriguing story.

When a whiteman is at work, he uses a handkerchief to tie back his hair and covers it with a cap. At play, however, brag let their hair fall in wild, untamed locks that match their wild eyes. Both genders have the same attitude toward labor and pastimes.

A mature brag is around 30 inches tall, with hair, eyes and fingernails as black as the Shadow Rift itself. The skin of brag is pale white, in deep contrast to their other features. Brag tend to dress in contrasting shades of black and white, with the occasional gray highlight. Only the brag themselves know if this tendency to avoid color is a fashion or if it has a symbolic meaning. Brag shapeshift into horses (work and war), ponies (large and small), or mules (particularly crotchety ones). The hair and eyes of a brag are the same texture and shape in both forms. The hooves of their horse form are the same black as their fingernails. The ears of a brag in its natural form are long and pointy and are just smaller versions of its ears in equine form.

Whitemen and whitewomen commonly make trips into areas populated by normal folk to steal supplies and tools. They are such dedicated workers that they will do anything to accomplish a stonework or carpentry task they have started. When a brag is feeling particularly trickish, she might either aid a worksite whose construction she respects or sabotage a worksite she feels is particularly shoddy.

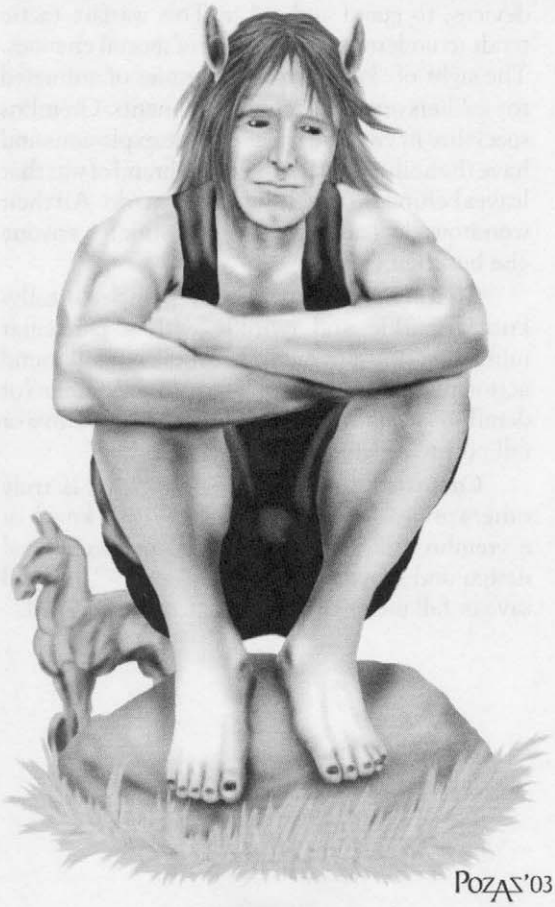
### Combat

When brag get agitated, they hit and kick things or people, whatever the source of annoyance. The society of the shadow elves seem either to have some sort of protocol that keeps the passions of these skilled workers from revolting against them or perhaps the other breeds merely know how to keep from setting them off. Normal folk who don't really understand the ways and desires of a brag should probably give these fey a wide berth or else receive a hoof to the head or a swift kick to the nether-regions. In addition to their propensity to lash out at someone, brag can also "knock the sense out of someone," leaving their victim with the delusion that he or she is a horse.

**Delusion (Su):** A whiteman can use this ability immediately after rolling damage on a successful melee attack. The recipient of the damage must make a DC 15 Will save or believe himself to be a horse. The target's Intelligence score immediately drops to 2, and he loses all spellcasting and spell-like abilities. Targets whose Intelligence is 2 or below do not change their Intelligence scores.

The target still retains free will and may continue to attack the brag. If it does so, however, it must run around on all fours. All attacks made by the target must be "back kicks" or "stomps" with the hands and feet (as if the target were a horse and not a person). Attacking on all fours incurs a –2 circumstance penalty to hit and evokes an attack of opportunity.

***Sleep* (Sp):** The black eyes of a brag can overwhelm the will of a mortal and force a state of slumber. This ability requires the brag to focus (a full attack action) and




maintain eye contact with a single target. Any human or demihuman targeted must make a DC 15 Will save or suffer the effects of a *sleep* spell (caster level 6th). There is no limit to the number of Hit Dice that may be affected, but the brag can only affect one creature at a time.

The effect of the delusion lasts 1 full day.

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** Brag cast spells as a 4th-level sorcerer.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known* (6/6/3; base save DC 10 + spell level): 0 — *cure minor wounds, ghost sound, know direction, mage hand, mending, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *charm animal, entangle, pass without trace*; 2nd — *heat metal.*

**Alternate Form (Su):** Brag can shapeshift into horses, ponies, mules or rams.

**Immunities (Su):** Brag are immune to wood weapons and to fire.

**Evasion (Ex):** A whiteman or whitewoman is capable of avoiding magical and unusual attacks with impressive agility. A Reflex save that would prevent half damage results instead in the brag taking no damage.

**Special Weaknesses (Ex):** Each round a brag is exposed to direct sunlight, he suffers 1d2 points of damage, as his white skin crackles and burns under the sun's rays. If the light is filtered or the day is overcast, the damage is lessened by 1 (to a minimum of 1).

## Brag Characters

The favored class for brag is monk, as they constantly focuses on improvement in mind, body, spirit and skill. Loner brag are most common outside the Rift and tend to shapechange shift into horses. The more domestic brag found closer to the Shadow Rift shapechange into ponies. Their favored class is expert. A brag who is a part of a court entourage accompanying a shee or sith would likely have levels in commoner.

## Fir (Tolly-Knocks or Gremlins)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Small Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 6d6 (21 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +2 |
| **Speed:** | 20 ft. (4 squares) |
| **Armor Class:** | 13 (+1 size, +2 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 11 |
| **Base Attack/ Grapple:** | +3/–1 |
| **Attack:** | Claw +5 melee (1d3) |
| **Full Attack:** | 2 claws +5 melee (1d3) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 2 1/2 ft./2 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | *Charm person*, *confusion* or *cause fear*, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, darkvision, low-light vision, immunities, spell resistance 14, damage reduction 10/tin |
| **Saves:** | Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +6 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 10, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 12, Cha 13 |
| **Skills:** | Concentration +8, Craft (clockworking) +15, Craft (metallurgy) +11, , Hide +14, Listen +9, Profession (engineering) +11, Spellcraft +11, Search +11, Sleight of Hand +10, Use Magic Device +12 |
| **Feats:** | Brew Potion[B], Skill Focus (Craft [clockworking]), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device) |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary (tolly-knocks) or pack (gremlins) (3–6) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 6 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Always neutral, usually good (Seelie tolly-knock) or usually evil (Unseelie gremlin) |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +2 |

*The speaker stepped out of the shadows, revealing its short body, oversized head and glistening silver hair. Thick, pointed claws tipped slender fingers.*

Arak of the fir breed come in two kinds, depending on which of the two courts they serve. Tolly-Knocks adhere to the Seelie Court and demonstrate some diplomacy in their behavior toward others. Gremlins follow the Unseelie Court and are usually mean-spirited and deliberately cruel. Both kinds project an alien "otherness" that often causes nightmares in those who have met with them and truly observed their strange visage and eccentric mannerisms.

Fir are disturbing to most mortal folk. Their body shape and size resemble human babies of several months old, while they have oversized heads somewhat like those of human infants. Instead of baby fingernails, however, fir have long, thick pointed claws. Seelie fir are slender, with pale skin, long shocks of glistening hair; they tend to clothe themselves in shades of purple, indigo or violet. Unseelie fir are stouter, with gray skin the texture of ash and hairless heads. A few hairs sprout from warts and moles on their unclad bodies.

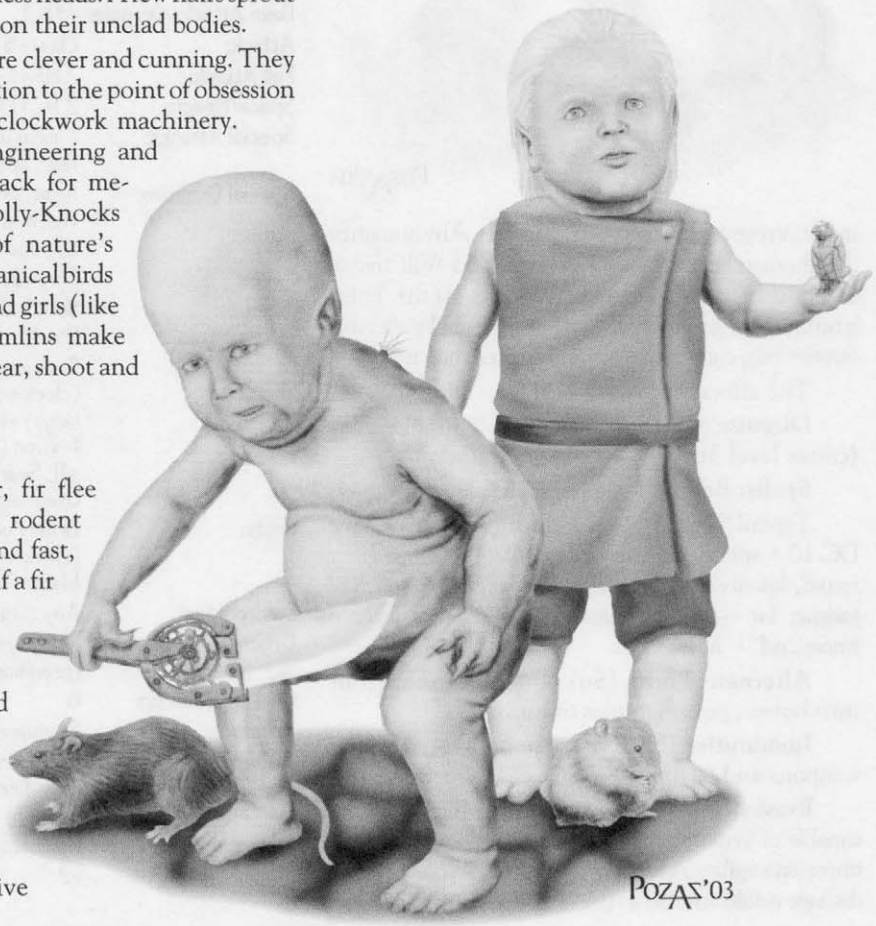
Both types of fir are clever and cunning. They demonstrate a fascination to the point of obsession with the nuances of clockwork machinery. Fir are masters of engineering and have an uncanny knack for mechanical precision. Tolly-Knocks make simulacrums of nature's creatures such as mechanical birds and clockwork boys and girls (like animated dolls). Gremlins make weapons that shred, tear, shoot and explode.

## Combat

When in danger, fir flee rather than fight. In rodent form, they are agile and fast, well suited to hiding. If a fir must fight, it tends to utilize strategies that revolve around automated traps and contraptions. A fir's home possesses many defense measures, including clockwork creations, mechanical traps and explosive devices, to guard and aid it. This warfare tactic tends to undermine the morale of mortal enemies. The sight of "babies" leading armies of animated toy soldiers often confounds opponents. Gremlins specialize in creative ways to cause explosions and have the ability to wage their own brand of war that leaves behind shrapnel and scorch marks. All their wondrous devices don't seem to work for anyone else but their creator.

***Charm Person* (Sp):** The eyes of a Seelie tolly-knock sparkle and twinkle with a particular mind-affecting glimmer. The fir takes a full round action to focus on a target. The targeted human (or demihuman) must succeed at a DC 14 Will save or fall prey to a *charm person* spell.

***Confusion* (Sp):** The logic of a fir is truly otherworldly. Anyone listening to a tolly-knock or a gremlin talk about its theories of mechanical design and schematics must make a DC 14 Will save or fall under the effects of a *confusion* spell.



*Cause Fear* (Sp): The eyes of an Unseelie Gremlin are yellow and bloodshot, peering into the soul with their own mind-affecting gaze. The fir takes a full round action to focus on its target. The targeted individual must make a DC 14 Will save or suffer the effects of *cause fear*, regardless of their level or Hit Die.

***Alter Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** Fir cast spells as a 4th-level sorcerer.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known by Tolly-Knocks* (6/6/3; base save DC 11 + spell level): 0 — *detect magic, detect poison, light, mending, purify food and drink, read magic*; 1st — *color spray, comprehend languages, entropic shield*; 2nd — *glitterdust*.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known by Gremlins* (6/6/3; base save DC 11 + spell level): 0 — *detect magic, guidance, inflict minor wounds, light, resistance, virtue*; 1st — *command, doom, summon monster I*; 2nd — *sound burst*.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Fir can take the form of rodents. Tolly-knocks prefer to become mice or hedgehogs, while gremlins assume the forms of large rats.

**Immunities (Su):** Fir are immune to stone weapons and to cold.

**Special Weaknesses (Ex):** Each round a Seelie fir is exposed to direct sunlight, it suffers 1d2 points of damage. All Unseelie fir suffer 2d4 damage per round of sunlight exposure. If the light is filtered or the day is overcast, the damage is lessened by 1.

Fir execute their spells through "wind-up" creations that manifest the actual spell effects. Thus, a tolly-knock might raise up a mechanical listening horn for its *comprehend languages* spell, while a gremlin might create a skittering, exploding spider for its *sound burst* spell. All fir spells have a material component, though they do not take any longer to cast than the casting time provided in the spell description.

## Fir Characters

The favored class for fir is sorcerer, often with a focus on feats of item creation.

## Muryan (Dancing Men)

**Medium Fey**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hit Dice:** | 7d6+14 (38 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +5 |
| **Speed:** | 30 ft. (6 squares) |
| **AC:** | 21 (+5 Dex, +6 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 16 |
| **Base Attack/ Grapple:** | +3/+7 |
| **Attack:** | Scimitar +7 melee (1d6+4/18–20) |
| **Full Attack:** | Scimitar +7 melee (1d6+4/18–20) or long bow +8 ranged (1d8/x3) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Dance of despair, sapping aura, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, darkvision, immunities, low-light vision, spell resistance 17, damage reduction 10/mithral |
| **Saves:** | Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +6 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 18, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 15 |
| **Skills:** | Concentration +10, Hide +13, Jump +12, Move Silently +13, Perform (dance) +7, Spot +9, Tumble +13 |
| **Feats:** | Dodge[B], Mobility, Spring Attack |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary or pair |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 7 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Usually chaotic neutral |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +2 |

*The pale-skinned, autumn-haired warrior's blade flashes as he trades blows with his opponent, as if dancing with his foe. The swordsman's pointed ears seem intent on every sound that surrounds him.*

The warriors of the Arak, muryan are obviously the most comfortable with a blade and the dance of melee combat. Muryan move with a natural athleticism and seem preternaturally skilled at combat in motion. They possess natural magic, both offensive and defensive, that complements their whirling dervish combat techniques.

Muryan resemble pale-skinned elves with hair that spans the spectrum of autumn colors and eyes that range in color from piercing blue to dark brown. The ears of a dancing man are about an inch taller than that of an elf. They prefer flowing clothing that doesn't restrict movement, such as cloaks, kilts and loose tunics.

The dancing men have several unnerving things they tend to do while fighting. They whistle little tunes or hum to themselves, as if the life and death battle they are engaged in is nothing more

than a routine chore. Whether the muryan are as blasé as they seem or whether they are employing psychological techniques to undermine their opponent's morale is unknown.

## Combat

Muryan are deadly in combat, using a combination of movement-related feats to fight with an unusually feral grace, relying on their quickness to wear an opponent down. Dancing men move past their opponents in battle, slicing at them as they go by, slowly causing them to succumb to their dance of despair. Groups of muryan combine their abilities to maximize their attacks. Eventually, their prey bleeds to death and collapses, sapped of strength and disheartened by the powers of the dancing men.

**Dance of Despair (Su):** When a dancing man damages an opponent with a slashing or piercing weapon, the target must make a DC 15 Will save or start dancing. The affected target suffers a –2 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks and Armor Class, but is not considered helpless. This effect continues until either the muryan or its opponent is beaten.

As the dance of the muryan progresses, so does the hapless victim's despair. On the round after making the Will save (success or failure) the character must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of a *blindness* spell for 5 rounds.

**Sapping Aura (Su)**: Those who attempt to attack a dancing man find their strength and prowess sapped from them. Attackers must make a DC 15 Will save or suffer the effects of a *slow* spell for 5 rounds. On the next round, whether the character has succeeded in or failed his Will save against the *slow* effect, the target must make a DC 15 Fortitude save against *deafness* (5 round duration). A target who has successfully saved against the sapping aura is immune to that particular muryan's aura for 24 hours.

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

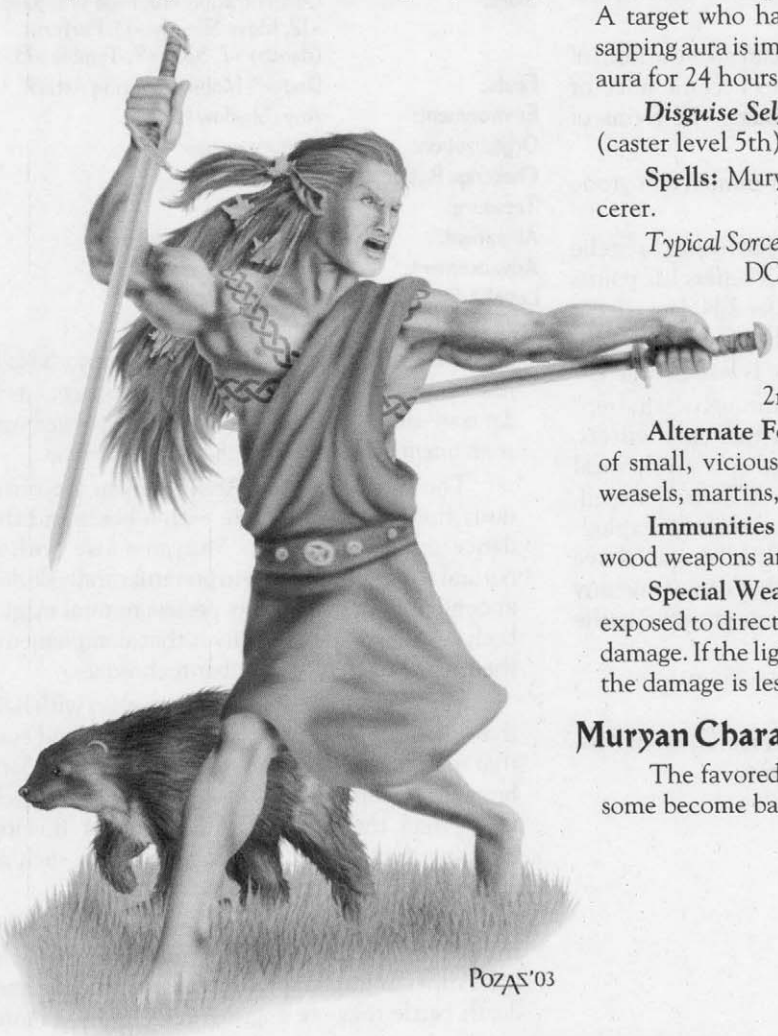
**Spells:** Muryan cast spells as a 4th-level sorcerer.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known* (6/6/3; base save DC 12 + spell level): 0 — *daze, dancing lights, flare, ghost sound, touch of fatigue, mage hand*; 1st — *color spray, jump, true strike*; 2nd — *flaming sphere*.

**Alternate Form (Su)**: Muryan take the form of small, vicious forest predators such as ferrets, weasels, martins, badgers and wolverines.

**Immunities (Su):** Muryan are immune to wood weapons and electricity.

**Special Weaknesses**: Each round a muryan is exposed to direct sunlight, she suffers 2d4 points of damage. If the light is filtered or the day is overcast, the damage is lessened by 1.




## Muryan Characters

The favored class for a muryan is fighter, but some become barbarians or rangers.

# Portune (Hodge-Podgers)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tiny Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 2d6–2 (5 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +0 |
| **Speed:** | 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 60 ft. (good) |
| **Armor Class:** | 12 (+2 size), touch 12, flat-footed 12 |
| **Base Attack/ Grapple:** | +1/–9 |
| **Attack:** | Bite +1 melee (1d3–2) |
| **Full Attack:** | Bite +1 melee (1d3–2) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 2 1/2 ft./0 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Permanent wounds, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, darkvision, immunities, low-light vision, spell resistance 18, damage reduction 10/copper |
| **Saves:** | Fort –1, Ref +3, Will +5 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 6, Dex 10, Con 8, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 17 |
| **Skills:** | Craft (alchemy) +9, Craft (bookbinding) +9, Hide +13, Knowledge (Arak lore) +9, Knowledge (monster lore) +9, Knowledge (Ravenloft) +9, Listen +9, Move Silently +5, Spot+9 |
| **Feats:** | Alertness |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary or in library communities (5–10) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 2 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Usually lawful good |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +1 |

*A tiny humanoid creature with black skin, a shock of white hair and big dark eyes hovers in the air, kept aloft by a delicate pair of moth-like wings.*

Portune are the most genial and shy of the Arak breeds and the least able to defend themselves. Thus, they tend to be the most careful, quiet and soft-spoken of the shadow fey. Of all the Arak, a portune is the least likely to attack someone without reason, possessing neither the ability nor the aggressiveness to attack effectively. Around mortals they are almost always in reptile form: the snake in the grass, the lizard on the tree or the turtle in the marsh. If a portune's real form is exposed, it tries to flee. In shadow fey form, portune appear to be black-skinned pixies with white hair, overly large black eyes and white moth-like wings.

Created as a race of clerks and information keepers, the portune make up for in analytical thought and creativity what they lack in size and temperament. Hodge-podgers are by far the wisest and most knowledgeable of the arak. Their erudition serves the Arak well, so all the shadow fey breeds take care of their cousins. Not even the sadistic powrie abuse their portune brethren.

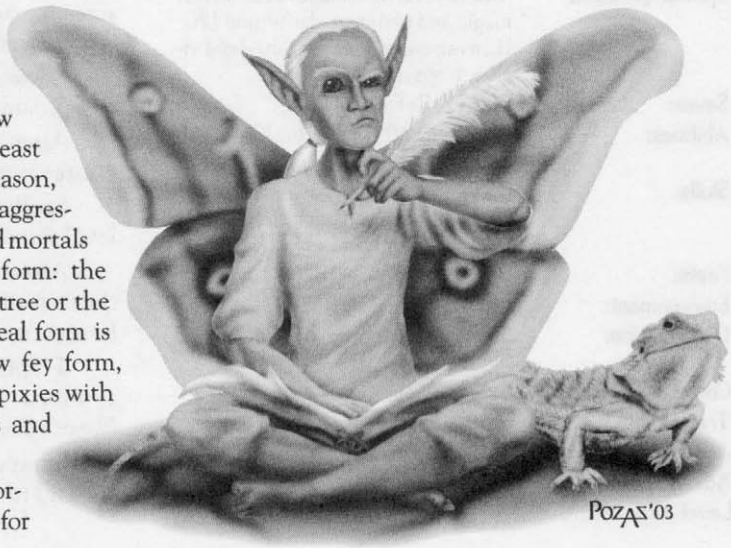
Opening a dialogue with a portune is not impossible, but it is tricky. First, the mortal wishing to communicate with the portune must recognize it. If a person calls out to a portune in reptile form, addressing it as an arak, the creature might be curious enough to remain and question the one addressing it. Hodge-podgers don't stay to speak unless they feel completely safe. They have such soft voices that in order to hear them well, they must perch on the shoulder of the person with whom they are speaking. Portune enjoy poetry and wordplay. A diplomat shee will commonly have a portune on her shoulder, bound to her in the same way powries are sometimes bound to sith.

## Combat

Portune prefer not to fight. If forced to enter into melee, portune use their bite attack to cause permanent wounds.

**Permanent Wound (Su):** When a hodge-podger succeeds in biting an opponent, the victim must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or suffer a wound that never heals. The target permanently loses hit points equal to the amount of damage from the bite. Only a *limited wish* or healing from the portune that bit the target will heal the wound and restore the lost hit points.

***Alter Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).



**Spells:** Hodge-podgers cast spells as a 2nd-level sorcerer.

*Typical Sorcerer Spells Known* (6/4; base save DC 13 + spell level): 0 — *cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, read magic, resistance*; 1st — *bless, cure light wounds*.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Portune take the form of small reptiles such as snakes, asps, lizards, chameleons, turtles and tortoises.

**Immunities (Su):** Portune are immune to stone weapons and to fire.

**Special Weaknesses (Ex):** Each round a portune is exposed to direct sunlight, she suffers 1d4 points of damage a round. If the light is filtered or the day is overcast, the damage is lessened by 1.

## Portune Characters

Most portune characters are experts, but some become bards or sorcerers.

# Powrie (Redcap)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tiny Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 5d6 (17 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +5 |
| **Speed:** | 20 ft. (4 squares), fly 60 ft. (good) |
| **Armor Class:** | 17 (+2 size, +5 Dex), touch 17, flat-footed 12 |
| **Base Attack/Grapple:** | +2/–8 |
| **Attack:** | Bite +0 melee (1d4–2 and poison) |
| **Full Attack:** | Bite +0 melee (1d4–2 and poison) or powrie dagger +5 ranged (1d3–2) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 2 1/2/0 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Evil grin, poison, shriek, sneak attack, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, damage reduction 10/ magic and platinum, darkvision 120 ft., evasion, immunities, low-light vision, traps, uncanny dodge |
| **Saves:** | Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 7, Dex 20, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 13 |
| **Skills:** | Disable Device +8, Hide +13, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +13, Search +8, Sleight of Hand +13 |
| **Feats:** | Dodge, Skill Focus (Hide) |
| **Environment:** | Any land (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Single, unit (46), or hive community (up to 400) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 4 |
| **Treasure:** | No coins; 50% goods; 50% items |
| **Alignment:** | Always chaotic evil |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +2 |

*The tiny creature's face bears a perpetual grimace and snakelike eyes glimmer with feral intensity as it attacks, its large wings buzzing furiously.*

Of all the Arak that dwell in the Shadow Rift, the powrie (or redcaps) are the most skilled in the arts of assassination and espionage. Evil creatures that delight in all forms of sadism, powrie have a strong place in the Unseelie Court.

The most menacing in appearance of the fey, powrie have small, warped bodies with large, wasp-like wings that buzz when they are in flight. Their features are grotesque and angry. Wiry beards, feral teeth and snakelike eyes adorn their gnarled heads. Many wear caps dyed red with fresh blood, accounting for their nickname.

Powrie speak Sylvan. They are foul-mouthed pests, prone to insult even allies (–10 racial penalty on all Diplomacy checks).

## Combat

Powrie use stealth, illusion, trickery and sneak attacks. They employ frontal assaults only in large numbers. Although they enjoy using their natural attacks, powrie typically also carry several tiny, needlelike daggers.

**Evil Grin (Su):** In battle, powrie contort their features into a frightening grin before opening their mouth impossibly wide. Anyone looking at a grinning powrie must make a DC 16 Will save or suffer the effect of a *fear* spell.

**Poison (Ex):** Injury, Fortitude DC 15, initial damage *blindness* as the spell, secondary damage none. The save is Constitution-based.

***Shriek* (Sp):** Powrie can emit a high-pitched scream, causing all creatures within a 30-foot radius to make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened.

**Sneak Attack (Ex):** A powrie deals sneak attack damage as a rogue of its Hit Dice (i.e., +3d6).

***Alter Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** Powrie can cast Illusion spells as a 5th-level sorcerer.

**Alternate Form (Su):** A powrie may assume the form of any stinging insect, such as a bee, wasp, hornet or mosquito.

**Trapfinding (Ex):** Powrie can search for traps as a rogue. See Chapter 3: Classes in the revised *Player's Handbook*.

**Immunities:** Powrie are immune to steel weapons and to electricity.

**Special Weakness (Ex):** Exposure to direct sunlight deals 1d4 points of damage per round (no saving throw) to powrie. If the light is filtered or if the day is overcast, the damage is lessened by 1.

## Powrie Characters

A powrie's favored class is rogue, and many prefer the assassin and shadowdancer prestige classes.

## Shee (Faeries)

**Medium Fey**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Hit Dice:** | 7d6–7 (17 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +7 |
| **Speed:** | 30 ft. (6 squares) |
| **Armor Class:** | 16 (+3 Dex, +3 luck), touch 16, flat-footed 13 |
| **Base Attack/Grapple:** | +3/+3 |
| **Attack:** | Shortbow +8 ranged (1d6/x3) or light crossbow +8 ranged (1d8/19–20) |
| **Full Attack:** | Shortbow +8 ranged (1d6/x3) or light crossbow +8 ranged (1d8/19–20) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Cursed arrows, enchanted weaponry, charming kiss, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, damage reduction 10/lead, darkvision 120 ft., , immunities, low-light vision, luck |
| **Saves:** | Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 11, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 17 |
| **Skills:** | Knowledge (fey) +14, Knowledge (Shadow Rift) +14, Perform (wind instruments) +17, Ride +9, Spellcraft +8, Spot +12, Use Magic Device +9 |
| **Feats:** | Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Knowledge [fey]), Skill Focus (Knowledge [Shadow Rift]) |
| **Environment:** | Any land (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Single or clique (3–5) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 5 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Usually neutral |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +2 |

*The slender figure slips into the clearing silently, his pale blond hair gleaming in the moonlight as he places the exquisite statuette of a nightingale in the hollow of a tree.*

The shee are the most artistic of all the shadow fey, patronizing art of any kind. They stand just a few inches taller than the average human and possess a slender, graceful build. They tend to have pale hair, amber eyes and milky white skin.

Shee speak Sylvan and usually at least three additional domain languages. Their voices are soft and soothing. They never seem to lose their tempers, maintaining a calm appearance and speaking in measured tones.

## Combat

Shee avoid direct fights if possible, preferring evasion, placation or negotiation. When forced to fight, they employ shortbows or crossbows using cursed bolts and arrows.

**Cursed Arrows (Su):** Any arrow fired by a shee causes *doom* (as the spell) to the target that it strikes. A DC 15 Will save negates the effect.

**Enchanted Weaponry (Su):** Any sword that a shee picks up gains a +1 enhancement bonus and is considered a magical weapon. The same applies for any bow it picks up. The enchantment does not stack with any enchantment that the weapon might have. This supernatural effect leaves the weapon the moment it leaves the shee's hands.

***Charming Kiss* (Sp):** The kiss of a shee causes a *charm person* effect (as the spell). A DC 15 Will save negates the effect.

***Alter Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** A performing shee casts spells as a 5th-level bard.

*Typical Bard Spells Known* (6/7/4; base save DC 13 + spell level): 0 — *cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, read magic, resistance*; 1st — *charm person, silent image*

**Alternate Form (Su):** A shee may assume the form of any bird. They typically choose the form of a swan, nightingale or other graceful bird.

**Luck (Su):** Fate protects the shee. All shee enjoy +3 luck bonus to their AC and may re-roll a failed saving throw once per day.

**Immunities (Su):** Shee are immune to wood weapons and to cold.

**Special Weakness (Ex):** Exposure to direct sunlight deals 3 hit points of damage per round to sith (no saving throw). Shaded cover reduces this to 1hit points per round.

## Shee Characters

The favored class for the shee is bard. They also make excellent shadow dancers.

## Sith (Shades)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Medium Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 7d6–7 (17 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +2 |
| **Speed:** | 30 ft. (6 squares) |
| **Armor Class:** | 15 (+2 Dex, +3 luck), touch 15, flat-footed 13 |
| **Base Attack/Grapple:** | +3/+3 |
| **Attack:** | Rapier +6 melee (1d6/18–20) |
| **Full Attack:** | Rapier +6 melee (1d6/18–20) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Blinding speed, fear aura, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Damage reduction 10/silver, darkvision 120 ft., immunities, low-light vision, luck, shadow form |
| **Saves:** | Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 11, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 12 |
| **Skills:** | Craft (alchemy) +10, Decipher Script +10, Gather Information +10, Hide +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +15, Move Silently +9, Ride +8, Spellcraft +10, Spot +10, Use Magic Device +10 |
| **Feats:** | Scribe Scroll[B], Silent Spell, Still Spell |
| **Environment:** | Any land (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Single or bevy (3–5) |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 5 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Always lawful evil |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Adjustment Level:** | +2 |

*The tall, dark-clad female stands in the shadows. A hint of white tresses escapes her hood as she fingers a charm around her neck.*

The sith have prospered under the rule of the Unseelie, rising to power and prominence. The darkest of the Arak, sith are methodically cruel and have a fascination with death. They are also the tallest of the shadow fey, standing over 6 feet, and they are extremely gaunt and pale. Their hair is always white, and they wear somber clothing, preferring black.

Sith speak Sylvan and at least four domain languages. They never shout, always speaking in soft whispers.

## Combat

When forced into battle, sith use their preternatural speed to gain multiple attacks. They prefer the rapier due to its quickness and maneuverability.

**Blinding Speed (Su):** When making a full attack with a light melee weapon, a sith may perform three attacks at its full attack bonus. It cannot use this ability again for another 1d4 rounds.

**Fear Aura (Su):** At will, a sith projects an aura of fear. Opponents within a 30-foot radius must make a DC 14 Will save or be stunned for 1 round. A target who makes a successful save is immune to that sith's aura for one day.

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** Sith cast necromancy spells as a 6th-level wizard.

*Typical Wizard Spells Prepared* (4/3/3/2; base save DC 13 + spell level): 0 — *detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *cause fear, chill touch, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd — *command undead, scare, spectral hand*; 3rd — *halt undead, vampiric touch*.

**Luck (Su):** Graced by some otherworldly power, sith enjoy a +3 luck bonus to Armor Class and can reroll a failed saving throw once per day.

**Shadow Form (Su):** Sith can assume the form of a nonmagical shadow as a standard action. They can move and sense their surroundings in this form, but cannot make attacks. This is their preferred form, and they leave it only when required.

**Immunities (Su):** Sith are immune to steel weapons and to fire.

**Special Weakness (Ex):** Exposure to direct sunlight deals 3 points of damage per round to sith (no saving throw). Shaded cover reduces this damage to 1 point per round.

## Sith Characters

The favored class for sith is rogue. Sith often multiclass as wizards, specializing in necromancy.

## Teg (Bogies)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Medium Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 3d6+6 (16 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | +6 |
| **Speed:** | 30 ft. (6 squares) |
| **Armor Class:** | 15 (+2 Dex, +3 luck), touch 15, flat-footed 12 |
| **Base Attack/Grapple:** | +1/+3 |
| **Attack:** | Claw +3 melee (1d4+2) |
| **Full Attack:** | 2 claws +3 melee (1d4+2) and bite – 2 melee (1d4+1) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Howl of confusion, spells |
| **Special Qualities:** | Alternate form, damage reduction 10/gold, darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, luck, immunities, spell resistance 13 |
| **Saves:** | Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 11 |
| **Skills:** | Handle Animal +9, Hide +8, Move Silently +8, Sense Motive +9, Spot +9, Survival +9 |
| **Feats:** | Skill Focus (Survival) |
| **Environment:** | Temperate forest, hill or plains (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 3 |
| **Treasure:** | Standard |
| **Alignment:** | Usually neutral evil |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +1 |

*The creature's face resembles a fox, with long pointed ears and bright, inquisitive eyes. Wearing clothes that match his surroundings, he seems to disappear into the forest undergrowth while you watch.*

The teg are a feral race of shadow fey, enjoying an affinity with the beasts of the wild. Though cunning and wise, teg tend to interact socially with animals more than with people. They even prefer the company of animals to their shadow fey cousins.

Teg are the shortest, stoutest and most muscular race of the Arak. They have long, pointed ears and a wide face with foxlike features. A teg's hands are very large, showing claw-tipped fingers. Their trickster's grin reveals sharp pointed teeth, while the eyes of a teg contain a predatory gleam. They dress in earth tones of brown or green, which affords them ample camouflage in the wilds while stalking or waiting in ambush.

Teg are fluent in Sylvan but seldom practice it. They can speak to any animals normally found in temperate forests or grasslands.

## Combat

Teg enjoy the chase more than the kill, preferring to set traps, then stalk and pester their quarry into walking into a deadly snare. They are creatures of guile and ferocity; a cornered teg lashes out with tooth and claw.

**Howl of Confusion (Su):** The howl of a teg causes *confusion* as the spell (caster level 8th) for all within a 50-foot radius. A DC 12 Will save negates the effect.

***Disguise Self* (Sp):** As the spell, usable 3/day (caster level 5th).

**Spells:** Teg can cast Animal domain spells as a 2nd-level druid.

*Typical Druid Spells Prepared* (4/2; base save DC 13 + spell level): 0 — *create water, detect poison, purify food and drink, resistance*; 1st — *calm animals, speak with animals*.

**Alternate Form (Su):** Teg can assume the form of a fox as a standard action. They can spend up to 8 hours a day in this form and can shift back and forth at will.

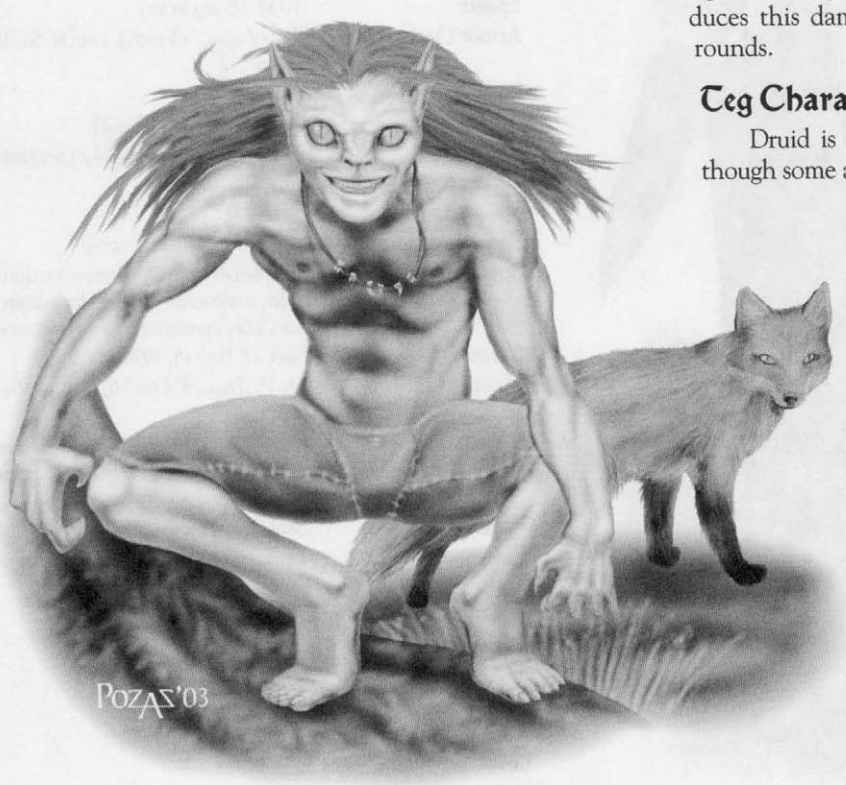
**Luck (Su):** Because teg play the trickster's role, they possess the luck of fools. They enjoy a +3 luck bonus to AC and can reroll a failed saving throw once per day.

**Immunities (Su):** Teg are immune to steel weapons and to cold.

**Special Weakness (Ex):** Exposure to direct sunlight causes 2 points of damage per round to teg (no saving throw). Shaded cover reduces this damage to 1 point every 2 rounds.

## Teg Characters

Druid is the favored class for teg, though some are also rangers.



## Waff (Shadow Dryad)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Medium Fey** | |
| **Hit Dice:** | 2d6+3 (10 hp) |
| **Initiative:** | –5 |
| **Speed:** | Fly 10 ft. (poor) |
| **Armor Class:** | 5 (–5 Dex), touch 5, flat-footed 10 |
| **Base Attack/Grapple:** | +1/–4 |
| **Attack:** | *Chill touch* +3 melee (1d6 + special) |
| **Full Attack:** | *Chill touch* +3 melee (1d6 + special) |
| **Space/Reach:** | 5 ft./5 ft. |
| **Special Attacks:** | Chill touch, engulf |
| **Special Qualities:** | Camouflage, gaseous form, symbiosis |
| **Saves:** | Fort +0, Ref –4, Will +4 |
| **Abilities:** | Str 1, Dex 1, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 1 |
| **Skills:** | Escape Artist +20, Hide +20*, Intuit Direction +11, Listen +9, Move Silently +20* |
| **Feats:** | Toughness |
| **Environment:** | Any (Shadow Rift) |
| **Organization:** | Solitary |
| **Challenge Rating:** | 3 |
| **Treasure:** | None |
| **Alignment:** | Chaotic evil |
| **Advancement:** | By character class |
| **Level Adjustment:** | +1 |

*Wafting over the sleeping figure, the shapeless, shadowy cloud appears ready to cover the sleeper like a shroud.*

One of the lesser-known but deadlier breeds of the shadow fey, the vampiric seeming waff is a cold, hungry shadow-creature that embodies the will to consume light and life. Called shadow dryads because of their symbiotic relationship with a host tree, they have little else in common with those sylvan fey.

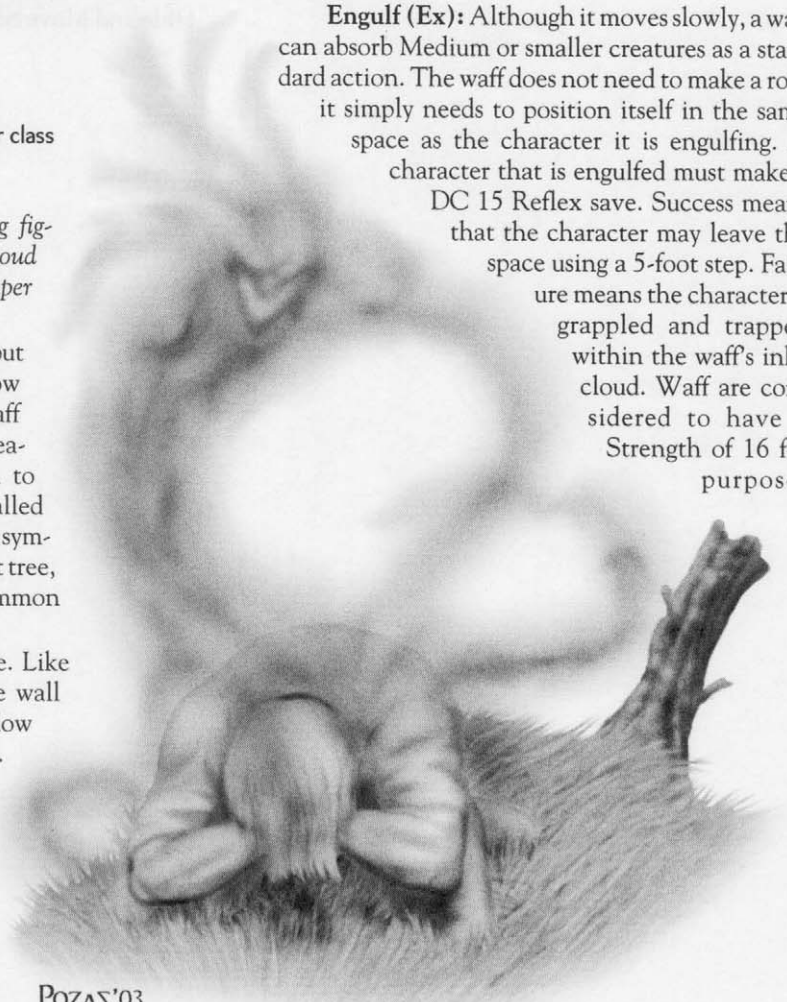
Waff have no real shape. Like the forms that dance on the wall after the lights go down, shadow dryads are difficult to perceive. Waff tend to hunt and prey upon those sleeping in complete darkness, leaving their victims dead and cold in the morning. They are experts at slipping silently through cracks or under doors. Their gaseous nature makes them difficult to affect with physical blows; only those attacks that affect non-corporeal creatures can damage a waff.

### Combat

Waffs fight like oozes. They have no physical weapons, relying instead on their *chill touch* and their ability to engulf their opponents and drain them of life, allowing their gaseous form to protect them.

***Chill Touch* (Sp):** Once a waff engulfs a victim, it uses its chill touch, as the spell. The victim takes 1d6 damage and must make a DC 15 Fortitude or take 1 point of Strength damage. Destroying a victim's life force in this way is how a waff sustains itself.

**Engulf (Ex):** Although it moves slowly, a waff can absorb Medium or smaller creatures as a standard action. The waff does not need to make a roll; it simply needs to position itself in the same space as the character it is engulfing. A character that is engulfed must make a DC 15 Reflex save. Success means that the character may leave the space using a 5-foot step. Failure means the character is grappled and trapped within the waff's inky cloud. Waff are considered to have a Strength of 16 for purposes



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of escaping the grapple. Additionally, an engulfed character can make no sounds as if under the affect of a *silence* spell.

**Camouflage (Ex):** Characters attempting to see a waff must make a DC20 Spot check.

***Gaseous Form* (Sp):** As the spell, this ability gives a waff damage reduction 10/magic and immunity to poison and critical hits. Waff may not enter water and are subject to wind damage.

**Symbiosis (Su):** Each waff is mystically bound to a single tree. The tree may be of any variety, but it will always be either a dead or blighted example. Some waff are attached to trees that have been used as hanging trees. Waff must remain in the shadow of their trees during the day or they died immediately if struck by the sun's rays.

**Special Weaknesses (Ex):** Waffs are creatures of pure shadow. They evaporate and die when exposed to sunlight. The *daylight* spell kills a waff immediately. The waff's bonded tree provides shelter from the sunlight. As long as a shadow dryad is in the shadow of its tree during the day, it can survive the sun's rays. The easiest way to hunt a shadow dryad is to locate its tree and chop it down at night, leaving it nowhere to retreat to when dawn comes.

Anyone with the Track feat receives a +5 bonus to follow the trail of a shadow dryad, provided the tracker is aware of the waff's nature. A waff leaves behind it a trail of dead and wilted vegetation as it floats across the countryside. Thus, they are deadlier in the fall and winter, since the sparse, dormant vegetation makes it harder to track their passage. A common belief states that if a waff slays a person in his house, the milk turns sour and any milk cows fail to give milk for a week.

**Skills:** Waff receive a +10 racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

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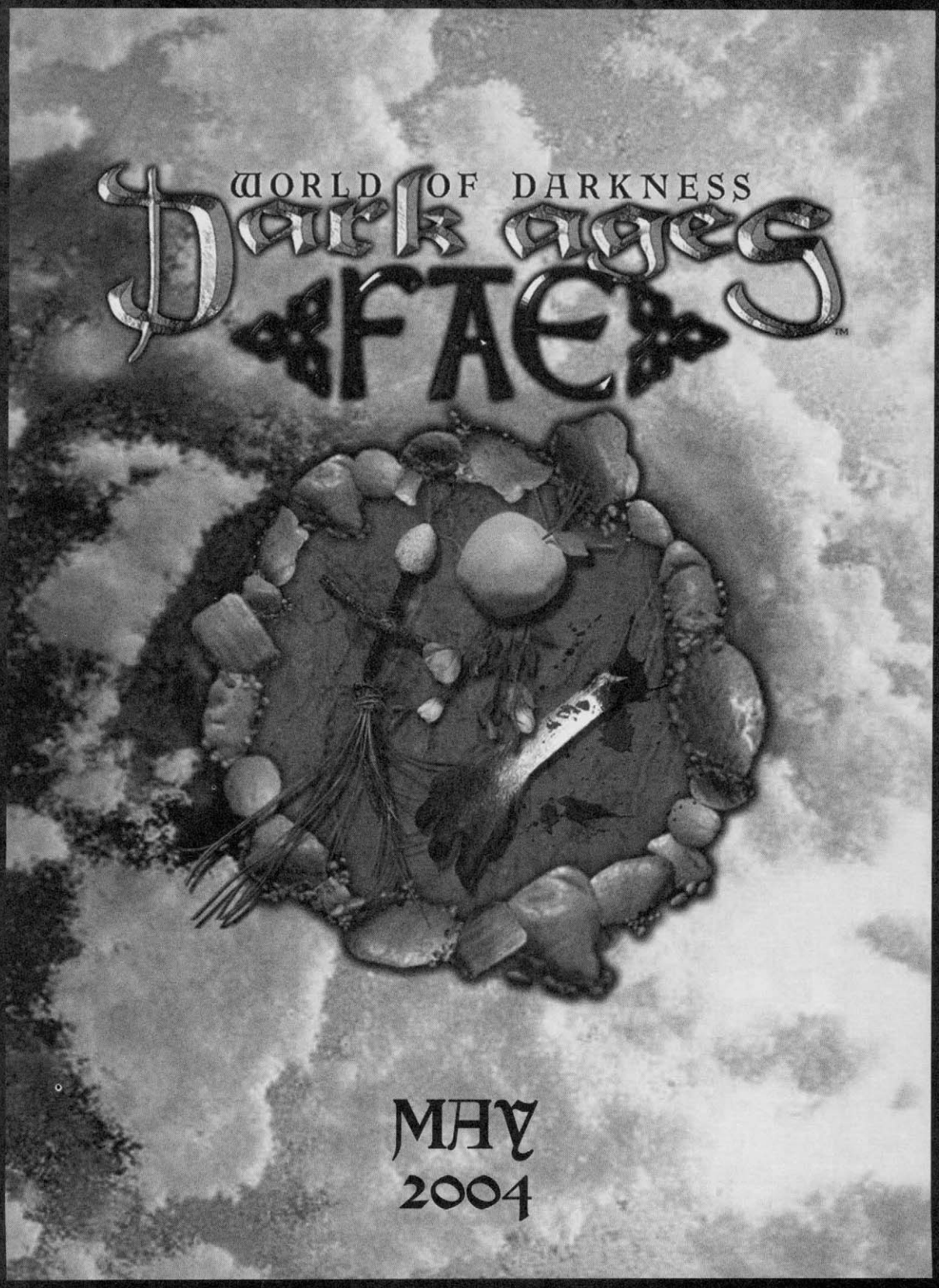


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