

FAERY'S TALE



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Christina Stiles is a freelance writer and editor living in South Carolina. She is the author of *Unhallowed Halls* and the co-author of *The Village of Briarton*, *Way of the Witch*, *Corwyl: Village of the Wood Elves*, and *Dezzavold: Fortress of the Drow*. Christina has also contributed to *Liber Bestarius*, *Sidewinder*, *Uncommon Character*, and *Into the Green*. In her spare time, she is a creative consultant for Firefly Games.

About Firefly Games

Based in California, Firefly Games publishes quality family- and child-friendly games providing dynamic fun for all ages. Contact Firefly Games at patrick@firefly-games.com or visit our website at www.firefly-games.com.

If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales.
If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.

— Albert Einstein

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A Pixie's Tale



One day in the enchanted forest of Brightwood, under the wide, spreading boughs of the tree everyone calls Father Chestnut, three friends gathered to celebrate the birthday of a fourth. Gimlock the pooka was to be a hundred years old that day and, although among the faery folk a birthday is usually a time for high spirits, prank-playing, and the drinking of sweet dew from tulip-petal cups, his friends knew he would need even more cheering up than usual. Gimlock, you see, was a perpetually gloomy fellow. He had the gift of second sight, but only saw the bad that was about to happen, and never the good.

So his pixie friend Willow brought an acorn stuffed with her magic dust, which could brighten his world in a dozen ways. Katria, a brownie, had cakes of honey and oat, which she'd made from table scraps from the human cottage she lived in. Flynn, a jaunty sprite with eyes as blue as a robin's egg, had forgotten to get Gimlock a gift, but on his way to Father Chestnut had composed a poem about his own exciting adventures, which he was sure would be much more jollying than cakes or pixie dust, as good as those things were.

The three said happy hellos to one another but Gimlock did not show up right away. When he appeared out of the thick weeds and dandelions at the edge of the clearing, his pumpkin-shaped head was held down and his splayed, mismatched toes scuffed the ground.

"Happy birthday!" his friends cried, as if the gathering was a surprise, and had not been prearranged weeks before.

"What's happy about it?" Gimlock moaned. "This bright sunny day shines in my eyes. The cool spring breeze makes me sneeze. And most woeful of all, one of the humans Katria lives with — the little girl — is about to be kidnapped."

"Portia?" cried Katria. "No!"

"Yes," Gimlock mournfully nodded. "By dark faeries and a troll."

Flynn unsheathed his mighty sword, which was made from a sewing needle. "Then we must away, to free the child from her twisted captors!" He smiled at the clarion sound of his own ringing voice.

Gimlock covered his face with his stubby, hairy fingers. "No, no! That's not the worst of it! You will go to rescue her, but you, Willow, will fall into a monster's nest. Katria, you'll be swept away into a raging stream. And you, Flynn, will wind up in a hag's boiling soup pot. So don't..."

He stopped talking, because his friends were gone already.

Willow took the lead, both in talking and running, as she always did. "We can't worry about the dangers!" she said, her flaxen hair flowing behind her as she ran. "We must be brave! Gimlock saw me fall into a monster's nest, but he didn't say that the monster eats me. He said you, Katria, will be swept into a raging stream, but not that you would drown!"

Katria gulped. A homebody, like most brownies, she didn't like the idea of being swept anywhere, let alone into a stream. But Willow was as inspiring as she was personally brave, and Katria suddenly felt infused with the pixie's own confidence and heroism.

"And you, Flynn. He predicted you'll be in a hag's boiling soup pot, but said nothing of winding up in her belly!"

Flynn smiled and brandished his sword. He'd never admit it, but he'd been thinking of turning back, too—just a little.

They came to a dense patch of brambles. Both Katria and Flynn were slowed, held back by reaching thorns. But Willow, who flew on gossamer wings, zipped along without the others. She had to find the girl.

Willow sped through red curtains of sumac leaves, around the dangling paper house of a buzzing hornet colony, and through a floating cloud of dandelion tufts. In no time at all, she reached the clearing on the edge of Brightwood where her brownie friend lived, in the ramshackle cottage of the Oakmede family.

There, she saw exactly what dour old Gimlock had predicted. Portia Oakmede, short golden hair falling around her terrified face, was beset by two dark faeries, as small as Willow herself, and a troll, bigger than a man and dripping with damp moss—a river troll, Willow reckoned. One of the dark faeries was a goblin, a twisted, bulbous-nosed monstrosity with dark, staring eyes. Willow identified the other as a boggart, a corrupted brownie, hunched and greedy-faced.

The goblin jumped and hissed. "Yes, yes, that's the one! Her father tossed a pitchfork at me. He'll learn to regret crossing us darkfolk!"

The sight of the frightened child redoubled Willow's courage. She flashed out of the woods to confront the kidnappers. She was outnumbered, but if she acted as if she could beat them, maybe she could put them to rout. Brightwood's dark creatures were a cowardly bunch when put to the test. "Put the girl down!" she cried.

The troll grunted and hefted Portia over its sopping shoulder. The boggart bared yellow, sharpened teeth, and scampered into the distance. She dashed to fly at the troll's face, but was flung from the air by a pebble, which struck her in the back. She landed hard, on the edge of a hole dug into dry and yielding earth.

It was the goblin who'd stoned her. Now, hefting a larger rock in its clawed paw, it rushed at her.

Willow took the present she'd meant for Gimlock from the purse attached to her belt. She blew the acorn lid full of pixie dust onto the goblin. The tension fell from his bestial features; he staggered slowly forward, ensorcelled by her spell.

"You're no threat to anyone," she told him.

"Nuh, no," he stammered. "I'm not." He grinned stupidly at her, as if she was the prettiest creature in the world. Which she was, or near enough; but, at the moment, that was not the point.

"To tell the truth," she told him, "you are extremely sleepy."

"Yuh-yah. I am."

The goblin yawned.

Tottered.

And fell into Willow, knocking her into the earthen hole.

The goblin fell on top of the hole, sealing her in. Everything went dark. And then there was the soft sound of a slow, determined slither.



Introduction

You are a tiny, magical being who lives in the enchanted forest of Brightwood. You might be a winged pixie cavorting with butterflies, a clever brownie secretly helping a family in a humble

cottage, a sprite knight riding to battle on a buzzing bumblebee, or a wild pooka changing shape into a dog or horse to play a naughty prank. You are a faery.

A World of Enchantment

You live in a wondrous world of toadstool houses, mystic faery rings, loyal animal friends, glittering pixie dust, and astonishing feats of magic.

Leanan, the beautiful Faery Queen, watches over the good faeries. She dwells in a realm outside time and space, where her Fey Court enjoys magnificent feasts, dances, and revels.

Goblins, mean and ugly faeries who cause trouble everywhere they go, are your enemies. These dire faeries are fallen pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas, who have forsaken good for the power of darkness. Goblins lurk in the gloomy places of the world, spinning nightmares to send to sleeping children. Sluag, the foul Goblin King, rules the dark faeries, who threaten everything bright and good with their sinister schemes.

Fairy tales are more than true: Not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.

—G.K. Chesterton

You are the secret protectors of the world. You foil dark faery plots, rescue youngsters from giants, overthrow sorcerous tyrants,

awaken princesses from enchanted slumber, watch over faery godchildren, and have many other amazing adventures. Dancing at festive faery balls, singing

mirthful songs, playing clever pranks, or romping with your woodland friends, you also are emissaries of joy.

Most people don't even believe you exist. They're too big to see you, and too busy to notice you. But you're always near, forever doing your best to ensure the story ends happily ever after.

In the places no one looks, in the adventures no one knows, you are the tiniest of heroes —and the greatest.

An Interactive Storytelling Game

FAERY'S TALE is an interactive storytelling game. You don't just listen to the story, you help tell it.

In a way, you live the story.

One person, the Narrator, describes the world, acts the part of the other characters in the story, and presents challenges to be overcome. The others play the roles of the faeries who are the heroes of the story -- you decide what your faery says or does about the events presented by the Narrator.

For example, Miranda plays Buttercup, a brave little pixie. One day in the forest, Buttercup sees some goblins trying to cut down one of her tree friends. Miranda could have Buttercup fly home to get help from other pixies, use her magical pixie dust to scare off the goblins, or do something else. It's up to

Miranda; she decides what Buttercup does. Then the Narrator tells her what happens as a result of her faery's actions, and Miranda can make further choices as the story goes on.

A simple dice pool system provides some structure and a way of deciding what happens when something exciting occurs in the story. These fun, easy-to-learn rules ensure that no one knows what will happen next, yet don't intrude on the story.

Unlike a board or card game, there are no winners or losers in an interactive storytelling game. Play is cooperative, not competitive. As long as you all have fun, everyone wins.

Best of all, the story never has to end. Your faeries can have adventure after adventure, meeting new friends, exploring new places, and facing new challenges, happily ever after.

Beyond Brightwood

Brightwood is a place of classic faery tales come to life—deep forests, hardworking villagers, soaring castles, wicked witches, enormous giants, and wild magic.

It's an ideal backdrop for **FAERY'S TALE** stories, particularly for younger players, since anyone who has ever heard a faery tale knows the essentials, if not every detail, of the realm. It's the perfect place to re-enact your favorite stories or create new ones.

The adventures of the immortal fey span all times and places, however, and you are limited only by the scope of your imagination. **FAERY'S TALE** adapts easily to any chosen tone or setting, from the grim Dark Ages to modern urban fantasy.

Faery Lore

FAERY'S TALE re-imagines classic legends of fey folk from many lands and times, blending them into a game fueled by imagination and whimsy. Readers seeking strict adherence to traditional lore no doubt will find details in this book with which to quibble, but it's a game, not a treatise on folklore.

And, in the end, who can say which of the many contradictory bits of faery lore are true? Only the faeries know for certain.

Inside Faery Lore boxes are details drawn from legends of long ago. These are provided for flavor and to give Narrators ideas; not all these bits of lore need apply in any particular game.

Live-Action Roleplaying

As a streamlined game, **FAERY'S TALE** is ideal for live-action roleplaying. In a live-action game, you don't just say what your faery does—you put on a costume and act it out!

A Sense of Wonder: How to Play has more tips on live-action roleplay, whether impromptu games of “dress up” for younger players or full-fledged costume balls for adults.

For Kids

Scattered throughout this book, For Kids boxes provide tips and advice on playing **FAERY'S TALE** with children. The simple rules and faery tale theme are perfect for children, although the game is suitable for players of all ages.

Inside This Book

Introduction provides an overview of **FAERY'S TALE**.

Once Upon A Time: The Faery World describes faeries and the faery-tale land of Brightwood.

One of the Fey: Your Faery presents simple rules for inventing your own faeries to play in the game.

A Sense of Wonder: How to Play provides easy-to-learn rules of play, including options for diceless and live-action play.

Faery Princesses & Magic Wands: Titles, Boons & Charms outlines the faery social order, gaining titles, acquiring and using Boons, and creating enchanted items.

Here There Be Dragons: Creatures contains information on beings both natural and fantastic.

Tales of the Fey: Adventures presents tips on creating stories and a sample adventure that can serve as the basis for a story.



A Brownie's Tale



Katria the brownie parted the fronds of a fern by the bank of a fast-moving stream. She gulped; her pooka friend Gimlock had seen with his second sight that she would wind up in a rushing river. And here it was, waiting for her, kicking up a frothing spray of cold, cold water droplets.

She didn't feel as brave as she had before, when her pixie friend Willow had been with her. Willow had a way of inspiring confidence. And confidence was a trait Katria lacked, at least when it came to rescuing people from trolls and dark faeries. But that was exactly what she had to do, because, according to Gimlock's vision, it was Portia Oakmede who'd been nabbed.

Like every brownie, Katria lived with humans, performing chores in the night; doing little favors, to make their hard lives easier, in exchange for a roof over her head and the odd crumb that fell from the table. Rescuing little Portia from monsters—now that was quite the favor; much greater than ought to be expected of a humble brownie.

That wouldn't stop her, though, no matter how scared she was. Gimlock's second sight wasn't always right. He only saw the bad side of a situation. She wouldn't fall in any old stupid stream. Katria was too cautious to drown. She'd save the girl, and she'd do so safely.

She turned back to her companion, Flynn the sprite. Now, sprites were bravos and scrappers. He'd know what to do. He could do most of the rescuing and Katria—well, she would maybe cook up a thimble of broth when it was all over.

"Flynn?" asked Katria. He was gone. Oh dear.

Yes, now she remembered. He'd said something about going to get a trusty flying steed—a bumblebee or perhaps a dragonfly. If there was a troll involved, Flynn would need to rise up into the air to get at him. Trolls, you see, were large, taller than humans even, and an inch-high faery had little chance of defeating them from underfoot.

Katria heard growling coming from the west, from the same direction as the Oakmede cottage. Turning invisible, as brownies often did to hide from ponderous humans and curious house cats, she peered again through the fronds. A tall, fat-bellied troll ambled awkwardly down the riverbank. He was damp and mossy, like a river troll. Over his shoulder he'd slung a sack, which could only contain the girl. A tiny figure, Katria's size, dogged the troll's leather-shod heels. It was a greedy-faced, sharp-toothed boggart—a spiteful brownie who'd turned to evil, who broke people's dishes and stole their food.

"Well then, Grugh," the boggart nattered, in a high, grating voice, "I've discharged my boon to you. I found the goblin, who found the girl, who you can turn over to the hag. Now you must let me go on my way, before the humans come to look for their brat."

Grugh snorted dismissively. "If humans come, I will crack their bones and eat their marrow. Your debt stays until mine is canceled."

A Brownie's Tale

Giving Portia to a hag? Katria didn't like the sound of that, not one iota. Where was Flynn? She didn't want to have to act all on her lonesome.

The troll stopped, setting the unconscious girl down in the sand next to the noisy stream. Long slippers of soft leather clad his feet, each of which was at least 18 inches long. Bits of nail peeked out from holes worn in their toes.

"What are you waiting for?" the boggart demanded.

"My feet hurt," the troll complained. "The shoes that phouka sold me are no good at all. They pinch where there should be room, and bulge where there should not."

Katria straightened her shoulders, summoned up the last reserves of courage Willow the pixie had given her, became visible, and marched out past the ferns. She might not be any good at slashing with swords or riding on the backs of bees, but if there was one occupation at which she was an expert, it was sewing.

The boggart saw her, reared back, and flashed rotten teeth at her. "Who are you?" he cried. "Stay back! Stay back!"

Katria bowed her head. "I am but a humble brownie, and as such, a threat to no one. Especially not such a fearsome boggart as yourself, or a towering river troll, like Mr. Grugh there."

The boggart thought for a moment. "It is true, you are no danger to us—no more than a flea, or a smudge upon the ground. But what business do you have with us?"

"Unlike you boggarts, who only are interested in breaking things, we brownies understand how to fix what's in need of mending. I myself have sworn to repair any broken shoe I should come across, like those in my family have always done."

The boggart drew his face into a knot of suspicion. "Sounds fishy to me..."

"Bah!" said the troll. "My feet hurt, and, like you say, she cannot harm us! Come here, homely brownie, and fix my aching slippers."

So Katria pulled out her needle and thread, which, of course, she kept ready for all occasions, and got to work on the shoes. She concentrated hard to turn the thread invisible. Normally she could make it so that neither she or the possessions she carried could be seen, but this task was a little different. It was hard, but, because it was so important, she found it in her to make it work.

Once finished, she placed the shoes flush up against each other, on the side of the riverbank. "Put your feet in these, Sir Troll," she said.

And he did. Sewn together with invisible thread, they stayed in place when he moved his feet to test the new fit. He toppled backwards, falling into the stream's fastest currents, which carried him swiftly away.

Katria would have felt happy indeed, a tiny brownie defeating a huge, nasty troll.

If it weren't for the fact that he'd knocked her into the river with him when he fell.

Once Upon A Time

The Faery World

No one, not even the faeries, knows when or how they came to be. Perhaps they are part of the world itself, as natural and indispensable as summer sun or spring rain.

The Faery Queen Leanan rules the good faeries. These emissaries of joy

while away the ages playing and dancing in the enchanted places of the earth, at the very edge of sight of those who dismiss faeries as mere figments of imagination. Whether pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka, all faeries are eternally vigilant against cruelty, injustice, and other wrongs.

Just as there always have been faeries, bright and good, so too have their wicked kin, goblins, forever blighted the world. Goblins

It is not children only that one feeds with fairy tales.

—Ephraim Gotthold Lessing

When the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of faeries.

—Sir J.M. Barrie

are fallen fey—faeries twisted in body and spirit by their own wickedness. Ruled by the tyrant Sluag, the Goblin King, the dark faeries scheme in their gloomy halls deep below the earth to remake the sunlit upper world into a place of ugliness and despair.

Giants, hags, trolls, dragons, and other fierce creatures of folklore lurk in wait for the unwary or unwise. And yet the world also contains magic and wonders almost beyond imagination, from enchanted charms to faery godmothers.

Behind the world most people know, the undying champions of the Faery Queen fight a hidden war to save us all from the shadows of evil.

Faeries

Faeries are tiny, mystical beings who share the world right under disbelieving human noses. Most people scoff at the very idea of faeries, which is why very few people know they truly exist. Fewer still have ever seen one, for only eyes full of wonder can spot a faery.

There are many types of faeries hailing from many lands. Some fey folk, such as pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas, are good at heart, if a bit mischievous.

Dark faeries, on the other hand, are mean-spirited, ugly creatures who take joy only in destruction. Fallen fey are twisted shadows of their former selves, turned into sinister wisps, boggarts, redcaps, or phoukas. Goblins are the worst sort of fallen fey—pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas, who have chosen to give their hearts to nastiness and wickedness.

The good-hearted faeries fight a never-ending war to save the world from their malevolent kin.

All faeries are only a few inches tall, although some faeries can change size or turn into animals.

Faeries are immortal magical beings. They never grow old, and never die. Each faery possesses a mystical life force known as Essence. Faeries tap this inner power to work wonders, such as casting fey magic or changing reality. A faery who runs out of Essence falls into a deep magical slumber while her life force replenishes.

Since they are immortal, faeries do not have children. Otherwise, faeries would fill up the whole world before long! There are boy faeries and girl faeries, however.

Many faeries are workers of magic. Often, a particular type of faery casts its own kind of magic, such as the sparkling magic dust used by pixies or the travel magic of pookas. Faery magic can do almost anything imaginable.

All faeries lead lives of wonder and excitement. Ever vigilant against evil, they are the hidden guardians of the world. Faeries

soar over sunny meadows and into starlit skies. Shining swords, loyal animal friends, and dazzling feats of magic are part of their everyday lives.

Faeries have all sorts of adventures. From rescuing trapped animals to helping human villagers, faeries set wrong things right. Goblins and other dark faeries are a constant threat to good people of all kinds, but Brightwood holds many other challenges for faeries to overcome. Blue-skinned witches called hags cast curses on hapless travelers, trolls lurk in the shadows under bridges, and fiendish giants imprison innocent people in their cloud castles.

Whether a prank by pixies or a tournament of honor-bound sprites, faeries also know how to have fun. Their world is filled with mirth and joy, and when the tiniest of heroes are the only ones who can help, faeries are always there, bringing light and hope to drive back the darkness.

Friendly Faeries

There are all kinds of faeries, from nature faeries to household ones. Some dwell deep below the ocean waves, while others play high above the cloud tops.

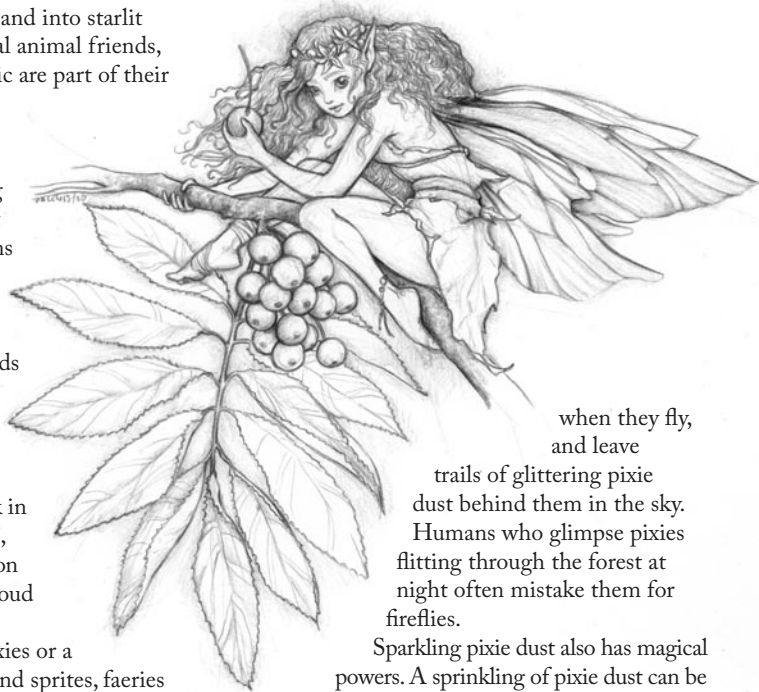
While faeries share some things in common, each type is distinct and plays its own role in the world of the fey. Pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas are the four types most commonly found in Brightwood, but many others exist both in Brightwood and elsewhere.

Pixies

Playful pranksters, pixies are winged faeries who live in forests and meadows.

Pixies look like pointy-eared and big-eyed humans, only a few inches tall. Fluttering faery wings allow pixies to fly. All pixies are very beautiful, and speak with clear, musical voices.

Some pixies wear clothing made from leaves or flower petals. Others wear gossamer gowns and tiaras of sparkling dewdrops. Pixies glow



when they fly,
and leave

trails of glittering pixie
dust behind them in the sky.
Humans who glimpse pixies
flitting through the forest at
night often mistake them for
fireflies.

Sparkling pixie dust also has magical
powers. A sprinkling of pixie dust can be
used to cast a charm, cause someone to fly, or
to perform other wondrous feats.

Pixies have no permanent homes. Late each
night, a pixie curls up inside a friendly flower
to sleep. The petals close around the pixie,
protecting her while she dreams, and open to
greet the sun at dawn.

Pixies are merry folk who love to sing, dance,
and play the day away. They often can be found
capering to the music of frogs, crickets, and
grasshoppers in enchanted faery rings.

They like clever pranks, which they use to
help good people and trick bad ones. A pixie
simply can't pass up a chance to fool someone.
Pixies particularly enjoy misleading travelers.
When played on friends or good people, these
pranks are harmless and all in fun. Even tricks
played on mean or bad people (or on goblins)
are meant only to embarrass, inconvenience, or
annoy, never to hurt or kill.

Pixies are friendly with most small forest
animals, but also with flowers, trees, and other
plants. Pixies often have tree or flower friends,
whom they visit and nurture.

Pixies take their names from things of
beauty. Joy, Love, Daisy, Buttercup, Dewdrop,
Moonglow, Violet, and Willow all are names
for girl pixies, while boys have names like Ash,
Happy, Oak, Mirth, and Lucky.

Faery Lore: Pixie-Led

Even good faeries like pixies are mischievous folk who delight in fooling others. A favorite sport of pixies is to lead mortals astray. Sometimes they will use illusions to hide a gate or path so that their victim cannot find her way out of a spot that may once have been familiar. A person who has been pixie-led winds up lost and bewildered. If she turns her coat inside out, however, the pixies abandon their mischief and leave her alone.

Brownies

Industrious brownies are household faeries who secretly help humans with everyday chores.

Brownies look like snub-nosed, pointy-eared humans, but only a few inches in height. They usually have a mischievous glint in their eyes. Some brownies are lean, others are fat. Brownies dress in rough clothes plainly recut from human rags, and often wear hoods or caps over their unruly hair. Sometimes a human gives a brownie a fine set of miniature clothing in gratitude for her help. By faery tradition, a brownie who is given such a gift must leave the home to find another family to aid.

Brownies have the magical power to turn invisible whenever they choose. They use this power to hide from people and keep their existence secret.

Unlike other faeries, who usually stay away from people, brownies secretly live alongside humans inside their shops or cottages. The faeries live in holes in the walls or in the rafters, building snug homes for themselves. Brownies decorate their homes with cast-offs from the human families whose cottages they share; an empty spool of thread might become a table, for example, or a discarded button a shield.

Sneaking out only when humans are away or asleep, brownies keep the hearth, home, barn, animals, and family whom they have adopted in tip-top order. They milk cows, churn butter, sweep floors, mend clothes, and scrub everything scrubbable until the whole cottage gleams; even small or young brownies can untie knots, straighten bent pins, line up shoes, or dust shelves. Some of their chores are performed by hand, while some are done with magic that cleans, brightens, repairs, or makes grow.

Brownies are sensitive folk, and a brownie who feels put upon by her adopted family usually turns to pranks to even the score; stacks of dirty pots mysteriously fall over, clean clothes are found spattered with mud, bowls of porridge are upset, and so forth until the brownie feels satisfied. The household faeries also cannot abide grumbling or slothfulness. Offenders are likely to be pestered into changing their ways.

Brownies normally eat human food that has been left over from a meal or set aside for the next day. Cream and brown bread are their favorites.



Faery Lore: Cold Iron

In some tales, only cold iron can truly harm a faery.

Most metal objects are forged from iron that has been melted and poured into a mold, then cooled in its new shape. This is called cast iron. Cold iron, also called wrought iron, isn't melted. Instead, it's heated, then bent or hammered into the desired shape.

The merest touch of cold iron instantly drains a faery's magical life force, causing her to fall into a deep healing sleep that may last hours, days, or even weeks.

Fortunately for faeries, cold iron is rare. Faeries don't craft it, for obvious reasons, and humans prefer steel or cast iron.

Faery Lore: Faery Rings

Tiny mushrooms often form rings many feet across in grassy meadows. They are supposed to be a favorite place for faeries to have a dance. Some rings have been found to be more than 600 years old.

There are tales of humans joining faeries in their dances. Usually, a traveler hears beautiful music coming from a faery ring, but doesn't see anything, and enters the circle out of curiosity. Transported to the faery realm, she joins the dancing faeries in their merry-making for what seem to be only a few minutes, an hour or two, or even all night.

But when she emerges from the ring, she finds that a year, seven years, or a century actually have passed. Other guests spend years in the faery realm only to find on their return that mere moments have passed in the real world.

Faery Lore: Greenies

Green-wearing cousins to the brownies, greenies live in the forests and fields around human habitations, and perform outdoor chores similar to those of indoor brownies: repairing fences, leading lost calves back to the barn, gathering firewood, or collecting wool that sheep leave behind on fences or prickly bushes. Greenies also are sometimes called guagach.

Brownies are friendly with mice and birds, but tend to fear cats.

Brownies takes names based on those of the humans they live with. A boy brownie may be named Bobbin (Bob), Tombli (Tom), or Wilkin (William), while a girl brownie could be named Nifer (Jennifer), Katria (Katherine), or Andreala (Andrea).

Sprites

Valiant sprites are the inches-tall knights of Brightwood, riding forth on bumblebees, dragonflies, and other loyal animal friends to do battle with goblins or other agents of darkness.

Resembling healthy, muscular humans with pointy ears, sprites do not fly, relying on their animal friends when they must take to the skies. Sprites wear armor crafted from leaves, bark, or gossamer silk, and carry miniature swords,

spears, lances, or other arms. They have strong, confident voices.

Sprites, unlike most other faeries, do not practice magic. As the finest warriors of the good faeries, sprites possess an innate feel for fighting enabling them to act with lightning reflexes. Dancing gracefully through combat, a sprite parries and strikes in perfect time to a joyful song of battle only she can hear—turning a chaotic fray into a thing of beauty.

The exceptionally large toadstools found in Brightwood provide homes for sprites. The faeries hollow out the stems, adding doors and windows, to create cozy cottages. Some even have fireplaces with little chimneys on the toadstool caps.

A code of honor tells each sprite how to behave. Sprites are taught to be truthful, brave, and kind. They fight only to stop wickedness or to defend others, and only as a last resort. A sprite always fights fairly, never striking by

surprise or from behind, and shows mercy to defeated foes.

When they aren't in battle, sprites enjoy festive tournaments where they feast, dance, and joust. Jousts are mock combats held for practice and honor, not to hurt each other. Two sprites, wearing armor, ride bumblebees or dragonflies at one another with blunt lances. The first to be knocked off by a lance blow loses the joust, and the winner gains fame. Other contests also are held at tournaments, from fights with padded weapons to pie-eating competitions. Prizes, such as medals, ribbons, or magical charms, are awarded to the winners of jousts and contests.

Pixies, brownies, and pookas often attend sprite tournaments to enjoy the feasts, compete in the contests, and watch the jousting. Sometimes, even goblins appear at tournaments under a banner of truce—usually when a champion of the dark faeries wishes to challenge a famous sprite knight to a joust or other contest. Stories are told and songs are sung of such tournaments for years afterward.

While pixies and brownies are friendly with animals, sprites form extremely close bonds with their animal friends. Of all the faeries, only sprites can *talk* to animals without use of magic. A sprite often has an animal companion who accompanies her on adventures, serving as a steed, ally, and trusted adviser. Bumblebees, frogs, dragonflies, butterflies, and caterpillars are just some of the animals typically befriended by sprites.

Boy sprite names are usually one syllable, with an air of strength and immediacy. Girl sprite names are often multi-syllable, with an air of fancy. Some names for girls include Arianna, Anastasia, Bri, and Rhiannon. Names for boys include Brand, Corr, Flynn, and Peregrine.

Pookas

Pookas are naughty, wild faeries with the power to change form into animals. While they are more likely than other faeries to live alone,



and often are considered slightly dangerous or untrustworthy by their faery-kin, pookas are, in the end, good-hearted fey whose naughty ways are all in fun.

In their natural form, pookas are endearingly homely, standing up to a few inches tall with huge, donkey-like ears. Their long, unruly hair often sticks straight up, and pookas have rubbery faces with big, pointy noses. Skin colors tend to be bluish or greenish. Since they may take animal form at any moment, pookas wear few clothes, normally just a cloak or a breechcloth.

A pooka has the magical power to take the form of any natural creature, from a ladybug to a full-sized horse. She gains the abilities of the

Faery Lore: Four-Leaf Clover

Finding a four-leaf clover isn't simply lucky. This plant has the ability to dissolve magical illusions, so that they don't affect the person carrying the clover. The faeries themselves make ointments from four-leaf clovers so they can see through illusions.



the fey, pookas have no permanent homes.

Instead, a pooka curls up to sleep inside a hollow log, under a rock, or wherever else she happens to find herself.

Naughtier than most other faeries, pookas love to play tricks on travelers. Often, a pooka first appears to someone as a harmless pony.

When mounted, the pony becomes a sleek, black horse with a flowing mane that carries its unwilling passenger off on a wild, all-night ride before dumping her into a distant pond or lake. On

the other hand, those who can

strike a bargain with a pooka may be conveyed safely to a far-off destination.

Pookas are said to be especially fond of blackberries.

Befitting their nature, pookas take wild or whimsical names. Names for boy pookas include Gimlock, Korren, Puck, and Wimble. Names for girl pookas are Finmalkin, Glimmil, Lindi, and Tylla.

chosen animal, allowing her to fly as a bird or track by scent as a dog, for example. Pookas also cast travel magic, allowing them to cover vast distances in a short time.

Pookas feel most at home in the wild, whether the dim tangles of the deep forest, the rocky desolation of the mountains, or some other remote locale. But, as the wildest of

Faery Lore: Other Names for the Faeries

In many tales, faeries, for some odd reason, do not like being called “faeries.” One never knows when the faeries could be listening in, invisible to human sight. In order to keep themselves in the good graces of the faeries, country folk call them by mostly flattering names:

- “The Good Neighbors”
- “The Honest Folk”
- “The Little Folk”
- “The Gentry”
- “The Hill Folk”
- “The Fey Folk”
- “The Forgetful People”
- “The Men of Peace”
- “The Tidy Ones”

Dark Faeries

Dark faeries represent the sinister side of faery lore. They are fallen fey—pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas corrupted by their own misdeeds into servants of darkness.

Twisted and evil, these dire faeries weave nightmares to send to sleeping children. They seek to bring ruin to the whole world. The Goblin King Sluag rules the dark faeries from his shadowy halls deep below the earth.

Fallen Faeries

When pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas use their powers for wickedness, they unleash a dire force known as Dark Essence. A polluted form of the mystic life energy that gives faeries their powers, Dark Essence slowly corrupts the fey into dark faeries.

A faery who willingly gives her heart to darkness becomes a goblin—a malevolent faery, wholly twisted in body and spirit. She loses her former form and gifts, taking on the hideous shape and awful powers of a goblin.

A handful of fallen fey, however, are only tainted by the shadow of evil, retaining a semblance of their former selves. Some spark of goodness lingers within, however forgotten, rejected, or ignored by the tainted faery.

Boggarts are spiteful brownies who torment human families with nasty tricks and pranks. Wisps are malign pixies who use their glow to lure the unwary into treacherous swamps or other hazards. Redcaps are savage sprites who wear blood-red hats and bully all those weaker than themselves. Phoukas are wicked pookas who often appear as shaggy, black dogs with blazing eyes, or dangerous black horses that gallop down village lanes in the dead of night, smashing gates, trampling crops, and terrifying livestock.

Tainted faeries vaguely resemble their pure-hearted cousins, but with a wild, feral look. Some also sport horns, forked tongues, fangs, claws, glowing red or yellow eyes, gray- or green-tinged skin, or other goblin traits.

Dark faeries—even goblins—are not wholly lost to evil. A dark faery may, through great sacrifice and strength of character, shed the taint of Dark Essence to restore her true self as a pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka.

Goblins

Mean, selfish, and ugly, goblins are the most common dark faeries in Brightwood. They hate beauty and happiness, and take joy in hurting others, taking stuff that doesn't belong to them, and breaking things. Goblins are fallen faeries, consumed by darkness.

A goblin is a squat, hideous creature with leathery, wrinkled skin covered by warts. Beady, red eyes glare over an upturned nose like that of a pig. Its forked tongue darts between the tiny, sharp fangs filling its snout-like mouth. A goblin has a long tail ending in a spade-like tip. Goblin skin colors include unhealthy shades of green, blue, red, purple, and gray. Goblins speak in rough, gravelly voices.

Their misshapen bodies are very twisty and bendy. Goblins can squeeze through any hole or crack, no matter how small, which helps them in their thieving, and contort themselves in other useful ways.

Even worse, goblins cast black magic—a corrupt, dangerous form of faery magic, born of decay, fear, and darkness, that brings ruin on everything it touches and all who use it.

Faery Lore: Harvest

Any crops not brought in by the last harvest festival of the year are considered to belong to the fey, particularly pookas. In some places, farmers leave a small share of the crop, called the “pooka’s share,” to placate the hungry creature. These wild faeries also cause unpicked blackberries to spoil at the end of autumn so as to have them all to themselves over the long winter.

Goblins try to frighten or torment anyone whose path they cross. When goblins come to visit, they stomp through the garden, punch holes in the roof, squish the fruit, gobble up the chickens, and sour the milk. Whatever goblins don't wreck, they steal or eat.

When not causing trouble for others, goblins enjoy fighting among themselves, admiring their ill-gotten treasures, gambling, and eating like pigs.

Like other faeries, goblins are friendly with animals, but these dark faeries associate with malign creatures such as wasps, centipedes, locusts, moths, toads, horseflies, worms, spiders, and scorpions. These creatures serve as steeds and allies of the goblins.

Goblins take new names, often naming themselves for particularly unsightly physical features, or ugly, disgusting things. Typical goblin names include Wormy, Slimmer, Wartnose, Brokenfang, and Prunepit.

Other Fey Folk

Pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas aren't the only fey folk in the world of faeries.

The sidhe are shapechangers who can alter their size and appearance to pass as humans through illusion magic. Some sidhe live in great underground palaces in hollow hills, while others are nobles who are part of the Fey Court.

Mermaids are faeries who dwell in the sea, while sylphs are winged faeries who live above the clouds. Gnomes are nature faeries who protect and care for forest lands. Dwarves live in caverns deep under the ground, where they craft all sorts of wonderful things from the ores and precious metals of the earth.

Faery Lore: Protection from the Faeries

People traveling alone near faerie-haunted places often do the following things to protect themselves (not always successfully) against faeries and their magic:

- Make the sign of the cross.
- Carry a cross, particularly one made of iron.
- Speak prayers or chant hymns.
- Carry or sprinkle holy water, churchyard mould, salt, or bread.
- Turn some item of clothing inside-out.
- Carry four-leaf clovers, rowan berries, St. John's wort, red verbenas, or daisies.
- Cross over a stream or other form of running water.
- Carry a staff made of rowan or ash wood.
- Ring a bell, particularly a church bell.

Faery Lore: Secret Names

Some faeries keep their true names secret to help shield against some forms of magic. Many of these same faeries seem to have the strange urge to proclaim their true names aloud when they think no one is around.

Faery Lore: Fey Courts

In fairy tales the Fey Court is also known as the Seelie ("Blessed") Court and the Summer Court. It's often shadowed by an Unseelie ("Cursed") Court ruled by the Goblin King or, in some tales, a Winter Court ruled by Grandfather Frost and the spirits of ice and snow.

Other faeries dwell in distant lands. For example, leprechauns are solitary, gold-loving faeries found scattered outside of settled areas, while djinn are faery-like beings from desert lands.

As with pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas, each faery type has a malign counterpart among the dark faeries. Sirens, for example, are wicked mermaids who use their beautiful songs to entrap sailors or lure ships to their doom.

The Faery Queen

The lovely Faery Queen, known by many names but called Leanan by the fey folk, rules the good faeries, who all love and obey her.

The Faery Queen spends most of her time in the Faery Realm, a wonderful and mysterious place where time has no meaning, but Leanan can come to the mortal world when she chooses, often appearing as a being of pure and beautiful light accompanied by fluttering pixies.

She is a kind and benevolent queen who helps her faery subjects whenever she can. Even so, Leanan wisely knows it is sometimes best for faeries to do or learn things for themselves, so her direct aid is not always guaranteed. Also, Leanan may demand a price of those who seek her help to escape their own foolishness, such as accomplishing a daring quest or giving up something of value.

The Faery Queen uses wish magic, the most powerful magic of all. She can cast her own wishes or fulfill the wishes of others. Wish magic can do anything that can be imagined.

The Fey Court

Nobles of the various faery types make up the Fey Court, which attends the Faery Queen in her wondrous realm outside time and space.

The Court is a place of endless feasting, dancing, and singing. Banquet tables offer every delicacy imaginable, while songs of haunting, unearthly beauty and dances of amazing grace are performed. Nobles of the Fey Court are also intriguers of the first order, continually trading gossip, sizing up newcomers, and plotting to outdo one another.

Faeries from many lands visit the Fey Court, and even some humans have been its guests, although they often return home after a few days of revelry to discover that years have gone by in their absence, or no time at all, no matter how long they lingered.

Other Inhabitants of Brightwood

Faeries are not alone in the enchanted forest of Brightwood.

Humans

Humans live in the towns, villages, and farms around Brightwood. There are nobles in castles, farmers tilling the soil, craftsmen in shops, and many others. Some are kind and good, while others are greedy, cruel, or mean-spirited. A few humans, such as sorcerers or witches, are able to cast magical spells or brew powerful potions, for good or ill.

Natural Animals

Any animal found in a normal woodland forest can be found in Brightwood. Their abilities reflect the way they appear in faery tales or folklore, though: owls are very wise, cats are very lucky, and dogs can never be surprised.

Faery Animals

The realm of the fey contains faery versions of many creatures, such as cats and puppies, as well as fantastic creatures like dragons. Faery animals are much like the natural versions, except faery-sized and possessing at least one magical gift—such as a winged puppy or invisible cat.

Hags

Malign beings called hags are the bane of Brightwood. Unlike human witches, who may be either kindly or wicked, all hags are evil-natured. In fact, while they resemble horrifically ugly women, hags are not human at all but are enchanted beings.

Hags often have warts or moles on their wrinkled faces and a faint bluish or greenish complexion. They favor black clothing.

Hags usually live in caves, huts, or cottages hidden deep in the forest, where they brew potions and work wicked magic. Hags normally lead solitary lives, but a few are sisters and dwell together.

All hags can change their appearance to fool others. Some hags are vain and use this ability to appear young and beautiful. Others are wily, and appear as harmless old women to avoid suspicion.

Some hags have curse magic, allowing them to bring misfortune to others. A mild curse might make a person unlucky, for example, while a powerful curse could age someone, put someone to sleep for 100 years, cause crops to die, or even turn someone into an animal. A curse can usually be lifted somehow, such as the kiss of a princess releasing a curse that turned someone into a frog.

Other hags have glamour magic, which they use to force people to do their bidding. Glamour magic tricks people into trusting and believing the hag, even if they would normally be suspicious of her.

Hags also can brew poisons and magic potions using disgusting ingredients like eye of newt and toe of frog. Some especially powerful potions require special ingredients, such as the feather of a magical bird or petals from a flower found only in a king's garden. There are all kinds of potions, including those of love, sleeping, and invisibility. Poisons, on the other hand, can sicken, cripple, or even kill.

Hags occasionally trade their potions to humans, sometimes for goods they need and sometimes just to cause mischief. The greatest potions are sold for the greatest price: the hag demands the next-born daughter of the customer.

When the
child is
born,



Friends of the Fey

While most humans aren't even aware that faeries exist, the fey do occasionally befriend a child. If they choose, faeries can use pixie dust to temporarily shrink their friends to fey size to join their adventures.

But faeries are immortal and never-changing. Not so, little girls and boys. In time, young friends of the fey grow up, leaving behind romping with faeries for romance, families, and adult responsibilities. Lonely and forgotten, the faeries wistfully watch from afar as their friends go on with their grown-up lives.

Scale

Faeries are very tiny, small enough to ride bumblebees and butterflies—even a human child must seem positively enormous by comparison. So how can such miniature beings interact with humans at all, let alone giants or dragons?

In whatever fashion suits the story best, of course, just like your favorite faery tales.

however many years later or however far away (and a girl child *will* be born eventually), the evil hag appears, claiming her and taking her into the wilderness. No one knows what happens afterward, but somehow the baby girl grows up to become a hag.

Many hags have familiars, animals who live with them and help them carry out their malevolent schemes. Some hags can see through the eyes of their familiars, using them as spies or scouts. Toads, rats, ravens, and black cats all are common familiars.

Trolls

Trolls come in many sizes, but most are bigger and stronger than humans. River trolls lurk under bridges, where they either rush out to gobble up travelers or demand they meet a challenge, such as answering a riddle, to pass safely. Night trolls, on the other hand, skulk about looking for people to eat but turn to

stone if touched by the sun's rays. Tunnel trolls are the smallest of trolls, barely larger than a human child and not much more menacing—at least, not on their own. Mountain trolls are the biggest and strongest trolls of all, but are rarely seen in Brightwood.

Giants

Immensely strong, giants resemble enormous humans. The very footfall of a giant makes the ground shake. Giants call caves or mountain peaks home, although a few of the most powerful live in magical cloud castles. Most giants are bad-tempered and dangerous. They even hate other giants, so they almost always are found living alone. Some capture and devour humans, just for fun. Evil giants sometimes also are called ogres.

A few giants, though, are good-hearted sorts. They just want to be friends and don't understand why people run away from them. Of course, even a friendly giant can be very dangerous to smaller folk; a pat on the head could knock someone out! Giants also tend to be clumsy and not too bright, so even a well-meaning giant can cause a lot of damage just by accident.

Giants do not practice magic but, then again, they are big and strong enough not to need any.

Dragons

Dragons are the most powerful, most ancient, and most magical beings in Brightwood. They are enormous, reptilian creatures that can breathe fire. Sparkling scales cover their hides, and huge fangs fill their mouths. Wings that can resemble those of butterflies, bats, or bees spring from their backs. Dragons come in many colors, from emerald green to crimson red. The Rainbow Dragon, whose scales reflect many colors as light plays across them, is the grandest and greatest dragon of all.

Dragons love gold and treasures, and amass gigantic piles of riches in the huge caverns in which they dwell. Dragons spend most of their time sleeping atop their beloved hoards of treasure.

Dragons are ancient beings with long memories, so they know the answer to almost any question. Faeries and other inhabitants of Brightwood sometimes seek out dragons to ask them important questions, but this is always very dangerous. Dragons are fickle beings who dislike being disturbed. Most people stay away from dragons unless their need is very great.

One of the Fey

Your Faery

Faeries are defined by Attributes and Gifts, giving each her own strengths, weaknesses, and talents. Each faery has a magical life force known as Essence that she

uses to achieve amazing feats, work magic, and resist injury. The rules in this chapter show you how to create your own faery.

Attributes

Each faery has three Attributes—Body, Mind, and Spirit—rated from 0 to 5 to start. The higher your faery's score, the better off she is in that aspect of her makeup.

What The Numbers Mean

| Score | Rating |
|-------|-------------|
| 0 | Deficient |
| 1 | Poor |
| 2 | Everyday |
| 3 | Capable |
| 4 | Exceptional |
| 5 | Elite |
| 6+ | Legendary |

Body

Body defines your faery's physical strength, stamina, agility, reflexes, and overall health.

Mind

Mind reflects your faery's intelligence, willpower, memory, and personal magnetism.

Spirit

Spirit describes your faery's inner strength, innate luck or good fortune, and sensitivity to magical forces. Spirit also determines how much Essence your faery has at the start of each story.

*Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,
You moonshine revelers, and shades of night,
You orphan heirs of fixed destiny,
Attend your office and your quality.*

—William Shakespeare

Essence

Essence is your faery's magical life force.

Faeries use Essence to exceed their normal abilities, work magic, and accomplish incredible feats.

Attacks on your faery sap her Essence. Finally, Essence can be used to change the story itself! When your faery's Essence runs out, she falls into a magical sleep until it replenishes.

Gifts

Your faery possesses two or more Gifts. A Gift enables your faery to do something extraordinary, like fly or work magic. Some Gifts are associated with being a pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka, while others are individual talents.

Some Gifts cost Essence to use.

Boons, Titles & Charms

Boons are favors owed to your faery. Titles, such as Knight of Flowers or Duke of Oranges, are granted to your faery in recognition of great deeds. And Charms are enchanted items, such as a Sword of Truth. Boons, titles, and charms are normally acquired in play.

Dark Faeries

Dark faeries, or fallen fey, once were good-hearted brownies, pixies, sprites, or pookas whose wicked deeds left them twisted in body and spirit.

Some, such as goblins, are wholly transformed by their fall from grace—losing their previous Attributes and Gifts in favor of those appropriate to their new goblin form. *Here There Be Dragons: Creatures* presents details on Attributes and Gifts for goblins. Other dark faeries, such as boggarts, wisps, redcaps, and phoukas, are twisted shadows of their former selves.

— One of the Fey —

Boggarts, wisps, redcaps, and phoukas possess the same Attributes and Gifts as brownies, pixies, sprites, and pookas, respectively. They simply use them for evil rather than good.

FAERY'S TALE presumes players will be creating pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas. No rules are presented for starting play as a dark

faery, though the Dark Essence rules in *A Sense of Wonder: Rules of Play* present a system by which fey who give in to their darker impulses may be ensnared by wickedness once play begins. Players determined to create dark faeries can easily extrapolate how to do so from those rules.

Creating Faeries

All faeries begin as formless, shapeless mystical energy—pure Essence. When a new faery comes into being, she chooses a form to inhabit. Pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas are the most common choices, but other shapes are possible.

The form is just a pattern, or mold. Now the faery-to-be must fill in the details.

First, she pours some of her primal Essence into her Attributes, making herself stronger, smarter, or luckier than other faeries of her chosen pattern. Each faery also has a number of wonderful Gifts, or special abilities. Some are associated with being a certain type of faery, and others are individual talents. Expending more of her precious primal

Essence, the faery-to-be chooses which individual Gifts she will possess.

Finally, she chooses a name, gender, and personality to complete the transformation from formless energy into a unique, living faery ready for adventure.

Choose a Form

First, you'll need to decide what type of faery to play—a playful pixie, industrious brownie, courageous sprite, or wild pooka. Then pick the corresponding pattern.

You may want to talk to the other players as you make your choices so you have a variety of faeries with a range of talents and abilities.

Patterns

These are patterns for the four most common sorts of faeries in Brightwood—pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas. These are basic versions of each faery type; you'll get a chance to individualize your faery next.



Beyond the Fey

FAERY'S TALE focuses on the world of the fey, particularly pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas, but just about any myth, legend, or faery tale can be a source of characters for a creative player or Narrator.

You can easily create new types of faeries, such as the sidhe of Ireland, or other enchanted beings of legend, such as djinn, dragons, giants, nymphs, or dwarves.

It's even possible to devise playable animal friends of the other faeries, such as a loyal mouse or wise owl. Faery animals, such as a winged cat or a tiny dragon, also make good playable characters. Or you can play human friends or godchildren of the fey.

The player and Narrator simply agree on two innate Gifts for the new faery or other being appropriate to lore and legend. A mermaid, for example, might have the innate Gifts of Aquatic, for living beneath the waves, and Song of the Sea, for communicating with fish, dolphins, whales, and other marine creatures.

Then the Narrator creates a customizable pattern, just like the others in this chapter, or the player creates her being using the optional point-based creation system.

Pixie

Pixies are winged faeries who tend to be light-hearted and fond of pranks.

| Attributes | | |
|----------------------------------|------|--------|
| Body | Mind | Spirit |
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Innate Gifts: Flying, Pixie Dust | | |

Brownie

Brownies are sturdy, household faeries who live unseen alongside humans in their cozy cottages.

| Attributes | | |
|---------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Body | Mind | Spirit |
| 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Innate Gifts: Household Magic, Invisibility | | |

Sprite

Sprites are magnificent faery warriors who fight for all that is just and right in the world.

| Attributes | | |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Body | Mind | Spirit |
| 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Innate Gifts: Champion, Animal Friend | | |

Pooka

Pookas are wild faeries who are usually naughty tricksters.

| Attributes | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Body | Mind | Spirit |
| 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Innate Gifts: Change Form, Travel Magic | | |

Choose Attributes

Next, you begin defining your faery as a unique individual by fine-tuning her Attributes and starting Essence.

Change Attributes

Spend 3 points to increase the Attributes given for your faery's chosen pattern. Each point spent increases that Attribute by 1. You may spend no more than 2 points in any single Attribute, however.

How you spend the points depends on whether you envision your faery as being particularly strong, smart, or spirited—or a balance of all three.

Example

ZACH: My sprite Flynn starts with Body 3, Mind 2, and Spirit 1. I want Flynn to be strong and fast, so I'll add 1 point to make it Body 4. And Flynn is very brave, so I'll spend 2 points on Spirit to have a Spirit 3.

Set Starting Essence

Your faery starts each story, or game session, with a set amount of Essence. Her Essence changes wildly during the story as she gains or uses Essence, but she always begins with this amount.

Double your faery's Spirit score to determine starting Essence.

Choose Gifts

Each type of faery has two Gifts unique to her kind. These Gifts are free and are possessed by every faery of that type.

Option: Point-Based Faery Creation

Advanced players may want a little more flexibility than even the customizable patterns offer. This optional point-based system gives you complete control when creating your new faery.

After deciding on a type of faery, gender, and name, give yourself a pool of 30 points, representing your formless primal Essence. You'll expend these points to buy Attributes and Gifts for your faery, just as a new faery uses primal Essence. Unlike the normal faery creation process, you'll use the same pool of points for both Attributes and Gifts.

Attributes start at 0 and cost 3 points per point in the Attribute. So, a Mind 3 would cost 9 points, and a Spirit 2 another 6 points.

Next, jot down your faery's innate Gifts based on her type—these are still free—then buy individual Gifts using the rest of your points. You also may choose to buy starting Boons or Titles. The point costs for Gifts, Boons, and Titles are as listed in this chapter.

Don't forget, you can always adjust your faery's Attribute scores while buying Gifts, either using unspent points to boost a score or reducing a score to get points back for more Gifts.

When you have spent all 30 points, you're ready to start telling stories.

Your faery also may purchase individual Gifts. These are your faery's personal talents or abilities. This is a good way to make your faery different from all others, even her fellow pixies, sprites, brownies, or pookas.

Each faery has 5 points for buying individual Gifts, and each Gift has a point cost listed next to the name. Just buy Gifts until you are out of points. These points also can be spent to buy Boons or Titles instead.

Pixies

All pixies have the Gifts of Flying and Pixie Dust.

Flying

Pixies fly using their beautiful faery wings and sparkling pixie dust. Amazing feats of flight, such as soaring over the cloud tops, cost 1 Essence.

Pixie Dust

Pixies use their glittering pixie dust to work magic. A pixie simply sprinkles a little of her sparkling dust on someone or something and decides what she wants the magic to do.

Effortless feats of magic, such as allowing someone else to fly, causing a flower to bloom, or dispelling invisibility, cost no Essence. Demanding feats, such as putting a pesky goblin to sleep for awhile, charming a human into forgetting she has seen a faery, or confusing a fierce beast cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as creating an object, causing someone to fall in love, or undoing a spell that has turned a handsome prince into a frog, require 2 Essence.

A physical object created by pixie dust vanishes at the next moonset. Using pixie dust to bring direct or indirect harm to someone costs +1 Essence.

Sprites

All sprites have the Gifts of Animal Friend and Champion.

Animal Friend

Insects, birds, and animals are naturally friendly to sprites. A sprite can talk to animals without the help of magic or charms, allowing her to calm an angry bumblebee or ask a favor of a kindly owl.

Befriending a creature for a single adventure costs 1 Essence. Acquiring a permanent animal companion, such as a dragonfly steed, costs 3 Essence.

Champion

Sprites are magnificent warriors. They are talented at swordplay, archery, jousting, and other martial skills. A sprite receives a +2 bonus to her Body score when resolving a story challenge involving fighting. Incredible feats in combat, such as knocking a mob of charging goblins down the stairs, catching an arrow, or leaping over the heads of an onrushing army, are possible at a cost of 1 Essence.

Brownies

All brownies have the Gifts of Household Magic and Invisibility.

Household Magic

Brownies cast spells that affect things in and around households, from tools and crops to people, pets, and domesticated animals. Attempting to cast spells on things outside of the household is more difficult, costing an extra +1 Essence.

Effortless feats of magic, such as moving a heavy butter churn, dusting the hearth, or mending broken dishes, cost your brownie no Essence. Demanding feats, such as causing grapevines to entangle an enemy or making an apple tree drop its apples on someone, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as enabling a pet, pig, horse, or other domesticated animal to speak to faeries, cost 2 Essence.

Invisibility

Brownies turn invisible at will. This helps them hide from the humans whose cottages they share. An invisible brownie cannot be seen by anyone, although she can still be smelled, touched, or heard.

A brownie can only turn herself, her clothing and anything she normally carries (such as a sword) invisible. Anything else, or anything she picks up after vanishing, remains visible and appears to be floating in midair unless the brownie spends 1 Essence. For 2 Essence, a brownie can turn a friend invisible, but the friend remains invisible only so long as she holds hands with the brownie.

A brownie who is invisible cannot be attacked, but other creatures can try to detect an invisible brownie using their other senses. This is a Tricky story challenge (see p.31).

For Kids

Younger players may be overwhelmed by the choices in creating a faery. In this case, it's best for an older player to ask questions about how the child envisions her faery—is she smart? Strong? Brave?—then choose appropriate Attributes and Gifts.

If a brownie attacks someone while invisible, that person or animal automatically knows where she is and can attack her.

A brownie who falls into a healing sleep after running out of Essence becomes visible again.

Pookas

Pookas possess the Gifts of Change Form and Travel Magic.

Change Form

A pooka can take the form of any natural animal or creature, though she cannot pose as a particular individual creature. For example, a pooka may change form into a mouse, but she cannot duplicate a particular mouse friend of another faery. Pookas cannot take the form of magical creatures, such as other faeries or dragons, nor can they pose as humans.

A pooka can turn into any roughly faery-sized creature, such as an insect or mouse, at will. Changing form into a creature up to the size of a cat or dog costs 1 Essence. For 2 Essence, a pooka can take the form of any creature up to the size of a horse.

When a pooka changes form, she also takes on the attributes and gifts of the creature (see *Here There Be Dragons: Creatures*). Whatever her form and other attributes, however, a pooka's Essence pool remains the same. She may remain in the new form as long as she wishes; returning to her natural faery form costs no Essence. A pooka who falls asleep from expending all her Essence returns to her normal form.

Travel Magic

Pookas cast travel magic allowing them to cover vast distances, particularly in combination with an appropriate animal form, such as a horse or bird.

Effortless feats of magic, such as traveling without becoming tired or quenching thirst or

— One of the Fey —

hunger after a long journey, cost your pooka no Essence. Demanding feats, such as moving twice as fast as normal, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as transporting herself and any passengers anywhere in the world in a single night, cost 2 Essence.

Individual Gifts

These Gifts can be purchased by faeries of any type during the creation process. Each faery has 5 points to spend on individual Gifts, and each Gift has a point cost listed beside the name. Simply pay the points, and your faery has that Gift.

The Gifts of the fey are numerous and varied, making every faery unique. Some provide bonuses on rolls to overcome challenges, others bypass rolls altogether to guarantee success at a feat, and some allow faeries to access amazing powers.

Acrobat

2 Points

Your faery can leap, tumble, roll, and perform other acrobatic tricks.

Effortless acrobatics, such as turning a cartwheel, balancing on a narrow branch, or rolling to your feet after being knocked down, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as balancing on a high wire or somersaulting over a charging enemy, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as climbing by bouncing from wall to wall, rolling out from a long fall to avoid being hurt, or using acrobatics to dodge all attacks for one turn, cost 2 Essence.

Example

NARRATOR: The nasty redcap says, "Ah, my old friend Flynn. I'd love to fight you, but I'm busy just

now. Too bad you didn't notice you're standing on a trap door!" He pulls a lever, and the floor drops out beneath your sprite's feet. You can make a Body roll to avoid being hurt by the fall, but it's a Tricky challenge.

ZACH: Wait! Flynn has the Gift of Acrobat, so unless it's a very long fall he automatically rolls out of it unhurt.

NARRATOR: You're right, I forgot. Good catch.

ZACH: I have another idea, though. Can Flynn spend 1 Essence to flip backward off the trap door as it's opening under him?

NARRATOR: That would be really cool. OK, give me the Essence, and that's what happens. The surprised redcap gasps, "What? You escaped my trap! Goblin guards, get him!"

Agile

1 Point

Your faery is known for her swift reactions, dexterity, coordination, and fleetness of foot.

Add +2 to your faery's Body score when resolving tests of agility.

Example

LAN: I'm going to try to pick the lock to this cage before the sorceress comes back. Gimlock, my pooka, has a Body score of 4, but he has the Gift of Agility so it counts as a 6 for this task. Wow!

Alert

2 Points

Your faery is perceptive and observant. Effortless feats of observation, such as hearing someone sneaking up behind your faery, smelling stinky goblins nearby, or spotting a clue overlooked by everyone else, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as discovering a hidden trap door or eavesdropping on a whispered conversation, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as finding a needle in a haystack, detecting the

Individual Gifts

| Gift | Cost | Gift | Cost | Gift | Cost |
|----------|------|-----------|------|------------------|------|
| Acrobat | 2 | Empathy | 3 | Musical | 2 |
| Agile | 1 | Fame | 2 | Seer | 3 |
| Alert | 2 | Fortunate | 1 | Sidekick | 3 |
| Brave | 1 | Hardy | 1 | Sneaky | 2 |
| Charming | 1 | Inspire | 3 | Strong | 1 |
| Clever | 1 | Lore | 2 | True Sight | 3 |
| Craft | 2 | Lucky | 3 | Whirlwind Strike | 3 |
| Destiny | 3 | Magical | 1 | Wise | 1 |

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presence of an invisible being from non-visual clues, or deducing the way out of a maze by smelling fresh air, cost 2 Essence.

Brave **1 Point**

Extraordinary courage defines your faery. She rarely gives in to her fears, and never gives up. Add +2 to your faery's Spirit score when resolving tests of bravery.

Charming **1 Point**

Your faery radiates personal magnetism and charisma. Add +2 to her Mind score when resolving challenges involving charm, persuasion, or diplomacy.

Clever **1 Point**

Your faery is skilled at finding clues and figuring out puzzles. Add +2 to her Mind score when resolving challenges involving problem-solving.

Craft **2 Points**

A natural craftswoman, your faery has a talent for turning out functional and attractive goods of all sorts. She also can repair damaged items.

Effortless projects, such as crafting everyday tools, clothes, furniture, or other items, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding tasks, such as forging swords or armor, cost 1 Essence. Difficult chores, such as repairing a magical charm or creating jewelry fit for faery nobles, cost 2 Essence.

Destiny **3 Points**

Fate has something in store for your faery, whether heroic or tragic. For example, your faery may be destined to someday become a famous swordswoman, betray her friends, or save the Faery Queen. Destinies often are ambiguous, though, and no one can ever say how they'll come true in the end. A prophecy that a faery will someday defeat a great evil might really mean that she will eventually become a wicked dark faery, then later redeem herself—overcoming the evil within.

Faeries with this Gift are special. They often play pivotal roles in the history of the fey, and attract the interest of the great powers of the world—for good or ill. Having a destiny doesn't make for an easy life, but it does promise a memorable one.



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You must work with the Narrator to come up with a suitable destiny for your faery. You also decide whether the destiny is secret—perhaps even from your faery herself—or known to others. The destiny should be fairly vague, and it's up to the Narrator to determine how it will come about.

When your faery acts according to her destiny in play, the Narrator may choose to give an Essence award. Acting in opposition to her destiny costs your faery from 1 to 3 Essence, depending on how strongly she defies her fate.

Empathy

3 Points

Your faery can transfer some of her own magical life force to another faery, healing an injury or replenishing spent energies. By spending 1 Essence, your faery can give up to three of her own Essence to another player or to a character controlled by the Narrator. The action must be entirely voluntary and heartfelt on the part of your faery, or it does not work. Also, you alone decide how much Essence your faery shares.

Your faery must have the Essence to give away, of course. It is possible for your faery to exhaust her own store of Essence by using this Gift.

Sharing her precious Essence in this way may entitle your faery to a Boon from the recipient.

Example

ELIZABETH: Oh no, the wasp sting took my last Essence. My pixie Willow falls asleep.

LAUREN: Katria the brownie will heal you. I use Empathy to give one of my Essence to Elizabeth's faery.

NARRATOR: Lauren, I see Katria has at least two Essence left, so give me one and give one to Elizabeth. As the fighting rages around her, Katria puts her hands over the wasp sting on the sleeping Willow. A warm, beautiful, golden glow surrounds the two faeries. Elizabeth, Willow awakens to see her friend Katria leaning over her as the glowing light slowly fades away.

ELIZABETH: Katria, you saved me! Thank you so much!

Fame

2 Points

Your faery has become well-known among the fey folk for some great achievement or

something else of note about her talents, personality, heritage, or personal history.

Effortless feats, such as using your fame to get invited to a fey banquet, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as using your fame to cause an enemy to hesitate in battle, or using it to request aid from a faery noble who owes you no Boons, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as using your fame to gain an audience with the Faery Queen in her court, cost 2 Essence.

Goblins or other dark faeries may have Infamy rather than Fame. Infamy can be used to frighten or bully others.

Fortunate

1 Point

Good luck graces your faery. Add +2 to her Spirit score when resolving tests of luck.

Hardy

1 Point

Your faery is notable for her great fortitude, strong health, and amazing endurance. Add +2 to her Body score when resolving challenges involving her constitution.

Inspire

3 Points

Your faery inspires others to heroic deeds with her words, songs, or own example.

By spending 1 Essence, your faery adds +2 to the relevant Attribute score of another faery for resolving a challenge that turn. By spending 2 Essence, your faery adds +2 to the relevant Attribute scores of all her companions for resolving challenges that turn. A faery with Inspire can only inspire others, however, and the bonus must be used in the same turn it is given or it is lost.

Example

IAN: My pooka Gimlock says, "Gee, there sure are a lot of goblins here. Maybe we need another plan."

ELIZABETH: Willow says, "Don't worry, faeries. I know we can sneak past these goblins and save the unicorn. You can do it!" I'm going to use my Gift of Inspire to help us try to avoid the goblin army. Here's 2 Essence.

NARRATOR: OK, everyone else gets +2 to their faery's Body score to roll to slip past the goblins guarding the kidnapped unicorn. Let's see what happens!

Lore

2 Points

Your faery's love of books and learning means she is well-versed in faery lore.

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Effortless feats of lore, such as knowing the way to the unicorn's glen, looking something up in your faery's personal library, or remembering a dragon's name, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as knowing the answer to a riddle or recalling how to undo a curse, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as breaking a code, deciphering an ancient scroll, or remembering a long-forgotten song, cost 2 Essence.

Lucky

3 Points

Fortune favors your faery. By using Essence, your faery gets some sort of a lucky break, though the Narrator has the final say on what occurs. If the situation is very dire, one lucky break might not be enough to get your faery completely out of trouble.

One Essence gets your faery out of a jam, at least to some degree. Two Essence earn a lucky break for your faery and her companions.

Example

NARRATOR: The nasty troll tosses Flynn over the cliff!

ZACH: Uh oh, Flynn can't fly. I'd better spend 1 Essence for a lucky break. Can I land on a ledge or something?

NARRATOR: No, but Flynn grabs a tree root sticking out from the cliff and manages to hang on. Looking up, you see the ugly troll peering over the edge at you. "Hey! He didn't fall! Bring rocks!"

Magical

1 Point

Arcane energy suffuses your faery. Add +2 to her Spirit score when resolving challenges involving magic.

Musical

2 Points

All faeries love songs and music, but your faery's merry melodies and perfect pitch set her apart from all others.

Effortless musical feats, such as entertaining a crowd, momentarily distracting someone with music, or composing a new song, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as soothing a raging beast or inspiring someone to heroic action, cost 1 Essence. Difficult challenges, such as compelling others to dance, softening the heart of a wicked hag, or deafening a foe with a discordant blast of noise, cost 2 Essence.

Seer

3 Points

Your faery has visions revealing distant events, or even the past or future. One Essence enables your faery to see faraway events as they unfold. Two Essence give her visions of the past or future. The Narrator decides what the visions reveal; some events or outcomes might be hidden from your faery's scrying powers, in which case no Essence is spent.

Sidekick

3 Points

Your faery begins play with a loyal companion: either another faery or an animal of some kind, like a mouse, bumblebee, dragonfly, frog or squirrel. Faery animals—tiny, magical versions of other creatures—also are good companions.

Once you decide what sort of sidekick you'd like for your faery, the Narrator creates and controls the companion. A sidekick is a loyal friend, but that doesn't necessarily mean your faery can just boss her around—she has her own ideas and wishes, too. A sidekick might even be quarrelsome or mischievous, or harbor a secret.

Sneaky

2 Points

Your faery's talents lie in stealth, silence, concealment, and sleight-of-hand.



Optional Rule: Passions

Faeries are passionate beings of strong emotions. At times, faeries follow their hearts rather than their heads.

Each faery has a particular Passion, selected at creation, that rules her thoughts and guides her actions. When something triggers this Passion, your faery must succeed at a Mind-based challenge to control her emotions. This is a Tricky task (see *A Sense of Wonder: How to Play* for information on Challenges). Otherwise, her Passion surges to the fore and she must act upon it, even to her detriment.

When your faery's Passion conflicts with her self-interest, you can earn Essence.

Examples of Passions include friendship, loyalty, love, justice, mercy, or honor. Dark faeries also have Passions, though often they are twisted, such as injustice, cruelty, or enmity.

Effortless feats of stealth, such as slipping by a distracted guard, creating a good hiding spot with camouflage, or staying unseen on a dark night, cost your faery no Essence. Demanding feats, such as sneaking past an alert guard, picking a pocket, or hiding in shadows, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as stealing an egg from under a bird in its own nest, sneaking up on a cat, or hiding in plain sight, cost 2 Essence.

Strong

1 Point

Exceptional strength is your faery's forte. Add +2 to your faery's Body score when resolving challenges involving brute physical strength.

True Sight

3 Points

Your faery sees through glammers and concealing spells. By spending 1 Essence, she can see invisible beings. By spending 2 Essence, she sees through illusions of all kinds.

Only the faery herself discerns the truth of what she sees, however—any companions are affected as normal by the powers of illusion or invisibility at work.

Whirlwind Strike

3 Points

Your faery fights with lightning speed. By spending 1 Essence, your faery can attack twice that turn, using her full attack pool for each strike—she does not have to split her dice pool among the attacks as is normally the case. She can try to strike the same target twice, or attack different enemies.

Wise

Your faery is known for her wisdom, common sense, and sage advice. Add +2 to her Mind score when resolving challenges involving wisdom.

Choose Boons, Titles, & Charms

Boons are favors owed to your faery by others. Titles are noble ranks, such as those held by knights or dukes. Charms are enchanted items, like a magical sword.

Faeries normally start play with no Boons, titles, or charms. They are gained during the course of the story. The Narrator can choose, however, to allow players to buy Boons or titles during faery creation instead of Gifts.

A Boon from someone less powerful than your faery costs 1 point. A Boon from an equal costs 2 points, and a Boon from someone more powerful costs 3 points. See *Faery Princesses & Magic Wands: Titles, Boons, & Charms* for more information on how Boons are used and traded.

A title of knighthood costs 5 points. It is not possible for faeries to start with a higher title than knighthood. See *Faery Princesses & Magic Wands: Titles, Boons, & Charms* for more information on your faery's rank.

Personalize Your Faery

Now you need to choose your faery's gender, name, and personality. Children will probably want to play faeries of the same gender. You'll need a good name for your faery, and you should do a little thinking about her personality. Is she bold, stubborn, joyful, proud, or clever? Do others see her as a prankster, a hero, or a mentor?

Keep it simple and creative. A few strong ideas that you can easily remember are better than a lot of detail and nuance at this point. The information on faery types in *Once Upon a Time: The Faery World* can help you get started.

A Sense of Wonder

How to Play

FAERY'S TALE is a game of imagination and make-believe in which you cooperatively tell a story—creating your own faery tales.

One person, the Narrator, runs the game. The others play the roles of the faeries in the story. Everyone contributes to the story, and no one knows exactly what will happen or how the story will end.

Rules come into play only when something important to the story is going on, and there's an element of chance or risk involved.

FAERY'S TALE uses a streamlined dice-pool system to resolve these challenges. Along with being easy for players of all ages to learn, these rules encourage fast-paced, exciting stories that don't stumble over tracking numbers or looking up charts.

Essence

Essence represents your faery's magical life force, used to overcome challenges, activate Gifts, work magic, and even alter reality to change the story itself. Acquiring, using, and tracking Essence are the heart of the **FAERY'S TALE** rules system.

Use something tangible to represent each faery's current Essence. Small polished rocks or decorative glass gems, available at any craft supply store, work particularly well.

Challenges

When a challenge comes up—your faery must sneak past a sleeping ogre, compose a song, or find a clue—a simple dice-pool system adds an element of chance to the game.

The Narrator assigns a Difficulty score to the task, and you roll one die for each point in your faery's relevant Attribute—Body for physical tasks, Mind for mental tasks, and Spirit for tests of magic or fortune. Ignore odd numbers, and count even numbers as successes. A 6 not only counts as a success, but also allows you to roll

a bonus die. If the new roll comes up even, add it to your pool of successes. Another 6 allows another bonus die, and so on.

Compare your total number of successes to the Difficulty of the task—if it equals or exceeds the Difficulty, your faery overcomes the challenge. If she comes up short, you can spend Essence to add successes to the total.

—W. H. Auden

Contests take place when two faeries or other beings oppose each other, such as in a riddling match or a foot race. Both parties roll dice, and the one with the higher total of successes wins. Essence can be spent to influence the outcome of contests, too.

Duels occur when faeries do battle—either physical clashes with fists or swords, or magical ones using arcane forces. In a duel, each faery divides her dice pool into attack and defense pools. If your faery rolls more successes in her attack pool than her foe does in her defense pool, the foe loses a point of Essence. Ties go to the defender. But both can spend Essence to change the outcome, as in contests and challenges.

Dark Essence

Faeries who use their powers for ill rather than good risk being corrupted by Dark Essence, a tainted form of the magical life force that sustains the fey. Those who gain too much Dark Essence are, in time, twisted in body and spirit into sinister dark faeries.

For Kids

Younger players sometimes have difficulty with the math involved in certain games. In **FAERY'S TALE**, the only math skills required are addition and telling even numbers from odd ones.

A Game of Imagination

A game of FAERY'S TALE consists mostly of cooperatively telling a story, using a few rules to provide some structure and ensure that everyone gets to participate.

One person takes the role of the Narrator. This can be the same person every time, or a different person for each story. Be fair. The Narrator has no faery of her own to control; instead, she acts the roles of everyone and everything else in the story—from the wicked Goblin King to a friendly bear to a raging winter storm.

Just like the narrator in a book, a FAERY'S TALE Narrator sets up each scene, describes what happens, and reveals how the actions of the characters change the story.

The other players take on the roles of faeries in the story. *One of the Fey: Your Faery* describes how to create your own pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka to play.

As the story goes along, the players play the parts of their faeries, like actors in a play or a movie—except they aren't just following a script, but making their own decisions. The choices of the players drive the story forward and help determine what happens next.

For example, the Narrator tells the players that their faeries come to a locked door. The faeries can knock on the door, peek through the keyhole, wait for someone else to open the door, look for a key, go somewhere else, or come up with some other plan.

Whatever they choose, the story changes. No one, not even the Narrator, knows how it will all turn out. And that's part of the fun!

Rules only come into play only when something crucial to the story is going on—there's a

chance of failure, and success or failure makes a difference to the story. Depending on the scene, this might be a challenge, a contest, or a duel.

Challenges

Challenges are obstacles—normally, some kind of task or predicament—that the faeries must overcome to achieve their goals or move on with the story.

The Narrator brings the challenge rules into play whenever faeries attempt something difficult or out of the ordinary. These rules are used only when there is a risk of failure, and success or failure at the task may be important to the story.

Occasional challenges add to the excitement and fun of the game, but too many can slow down the story and bore the players.

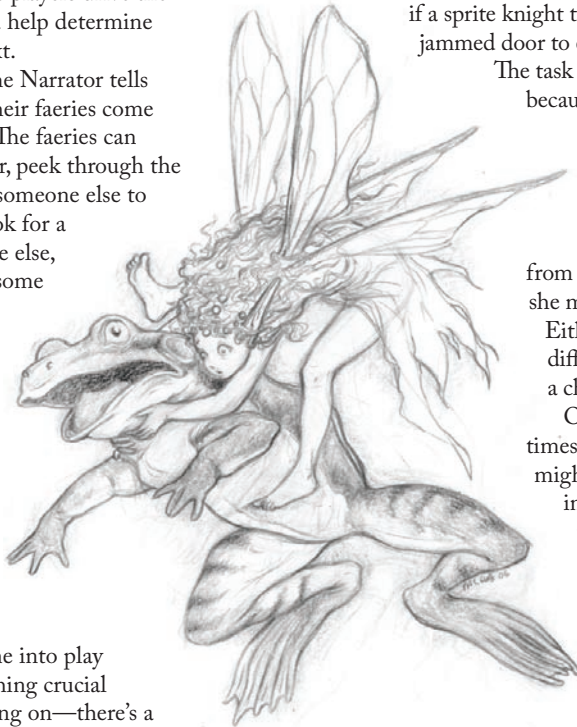
For example, a player does not normally need to overcome a challenge for her faery to open a door: Opening a door—even the door to a human cottage—is an everyday task that doesn't make much difference to the story.

But the Narrator might call for a challenge if a sprite knight tries to push open a jammed door to escape a goblin army.

The task is harder than normal because the door is jammed or blocked, and the circumstances are exciting: If the sprite succeeds, she might be able to hide from the goblins, but if not, she may have to fight them.

Either way, it makes a big difference to the story, so a challenge is appropriate.

Other examples of times when a Narrator might call for a challenge include solving a tricky puzzle, riding a dragonfly during a windstorm, seeing through a magical illusion, or leaping across a chasm.



Rating Challenges

Setting the Difficulty of challenges is the job of the Narrator. Don't base the rating on reality—can an inch-high pixie really ever lift the heavy trap door to the dungeon?—but on the needs of the story.

Try to scale challenges so they are easily overcome early in the story, but grow progressively harder as the faeries get closer to achieving their goals.

The biggest challenges of all come in the thrilling climax, of course.

Be fair and consistent when setting the Difficulty of a challenge. If wading a creek is an Easy challenge early in an adventure, then wading the same creek on the way back home also should be Easy—unless a storm has swollen the creek in the meantime, that is.

Challenge Difficulty

| Task | Rating |
|------------|--------|
| Everyday | 0 |
| Easy | 1 |
| Tricky | 2 |
| Hard | 3 |
| Heroic | 4 |
| Legendary | 5 |
| Impossible | 6 |

Overcoming Challenges

Once the Narrator assigns a Difficulty rating to the challenge, it's time to see if the faeries can overcome it.

First, the Narrator picks the relevant Attribute—Body for physical tasks, Mind for feats of intellect, charisma, or will, and Spirit for tests of magic, luck, or courage. Selecting the right Attribute is very easy once you listen to how the players describe the actions of their faeries in response to the challenge.

Then it's up to the players to find out whether their faeries overcome the challenge.

Roll one die for each point your faery has in the relevant Attribute; for example, if your sprite has a Body 4, you roll four dice to see whether she can climb a giant beanstalk up to a cloud.

An even number on a die counts as a success. Set aside any dice with odd-numbered results—they are simply ignored—and add up only the successes.

Not only does a result of a 6 on a die count as a success, it allows you to roll a bonus die. You may end up rolling two, three, or even more bonus dice this way if you roll multiple sixes. Even results on the bonus rolls are added to your total as successes, and rolls that come up with another 6 call for more bonus dice, until no more sixes are rolled.

If the total number of successes after all rolls and bonus rolls are counted equals or exceeds the Difficulty, your faery succeeds at the task. The Narrator describes what happens, and may choose to base the degree of success on how much you exceeded the Difficulty.

A total below the Difficulty means your faery fails to overcome the challenge, at least this time.

Your faery can draw on her magical life force—her Essence—to alter the outcome, however. By sacrificing some Essence, she can surpass her normal abilities to succeed where ordinarily she might have failed.

There's no limit to how much Essence can be spent on a particular task, unless your faery runs out.

For each point of Essence used, add one success to the total rolled on the dice.

Certain Gifts can sometimes be used to overcome challenges, too. The right Gift bypasses the normal challenge process—for example, a pixie who uses the Gift of Flying to cross a raging river simply crosses the river. There's no need to set a Difficulty or roll dice. Some feats require the player to spend Essence to activate the Gift, however.

Example

NARRATOR: Ian, your pooka, Gimlock, is lost in the maze of passages leading to the halls of the Goblin King.

IAN: Gimlock's going to try to remember a song or story about the halls. Maybe one has a clue about how to get out of this maze.

NARRATOR: Good thinking! There are several stories about the gloomy halls of the Goblin King, so that's an Tricky task for the Mind, requiring two successes.

IAN: Uh-oh, my pooka's not very bright. Gimlock only has a Mind 1, so I roll one die. A 6, for one success, and I get to roll a bonus die. Oh, it's odd, so I still only have one success and I need two.

NARRATOR: Do you want to spend a point of Essence to add a success?

IAN: Yes. I can't rescue my friends from the goblin prison as long as I'm lost in this maze.

Cooperating

Good faeries often cooperate to overcome challenges. Dark faeries seldom cooperate unless ordered to do so by a superior, since each selfishly wants the glory of success all to herself.

When two or more faeries cooperate at a task, all the players roll dice for their faeries and tally their successes to determine whether the faeries overcome the challenge by working together. Any or all of the helping faeries can add Essence to the total, too.

Example

NARRATOR: The gates to the giant's cloud castle are huge, thick, and heavy. How are you going to open them?

ELIZABETH: Can Willow the pixie push them open?

NARRATOR: That's a Hard challenge because they are so big and heavy, so Willow will need three successes to do it. What's her Body score?

ELIZABETH: A 2. Oh, I'll never get these gates open by myself. Hey ... Willow asks the other two faeries to help! Maybe all three of us can do it?

LAUREN: Don't worry, Willow! My brownie Katria says, I know we can do it if we work together.

ZACH: Flynn will help, too.

NARRATOR: OK, Lauren, Elizabeth, and Zach, roll your Body score in dice and let's total the successes.

ZACH: OK, Flynn has two successes, and Willow and Katria have one each—that's four successes in all.

NARRATOR: Your three faeries push as hard as they can. You push and push and push, and finally the gigantic gate slo-o-o-owly creaks open just a crack—but big enough for you to slip inside the cloud castle! You did it!

Failure

No one wins all the time, not even the fey. A failed challenge might land your faery in deeper trouble, or it might just mean she has to try again. The consequences depend on the circumstances of each challenge.

Since each try to overcome a challenge represents the best effort of the faeries, usually players will have to change the circumstances to try again. This might be a switch in strategy, such as sneaking into the giant's cloud castle instead of trying to batter down the gate. Or it might mean cooperating with other faeries, finding allies, gaining a charm, or learning more about the challenge before another attempt.

Contests

Some challenges pit your faery against a living opponent rather than an obstacle—for example, an arm-wrestling match between two sprites. These are called contests. They are resolved like challenges, except you match your dice-pool roll against those of others in the contest, not a rating set by the Narrator.

Physical contests, such as jousts or athletic competitions, use the Body score. Contests of willpower, charm, or wit, such as a riddling match, use the Mind score. And contests of magic, bravery, or luck, such as a gambling game, use the Spirit score.

Each participant—the Narrator, for other characters in the story—rolls and counts her dice as described under *Challenges*.

The highest total number of successes wins. A tie means nothing happens: no one succeeds, and no one fails. Things stay as they are for the moment.

Your faery can spend Essence to add to her successes, just like a challenge. If two faeries or other enchanted beings are in a contest, both can spend Essence!

In this case, each person in the contest decides how much Essence to spend, then hides that many Essence markers in her hand. Everyone opens their hands at once, revealing their choices. Add the Essence spent by each participant in the contest to her successes, and figure out who wins.

Example

ZACH: I say, "I am Flynn, Knight of the Dawn Star, and I challenge your champion to single combat for the freedom of this unicorn. If I fall, then take me as your prisoner."

NARRATOR: Very good, Zach. The Goblin King says, "I accept—but if you fail, you and your friends are all my prisoners, forever. Hahaha! My champion, Irontooth, Knight of Spiders, will face you."

LAUREN: "You can do it, Flynn," says Katria. "We believe in you."

ZACH: Flynn steps forward, draws his sword, and takes a defensive stance.

NARRATOR: The huge goblin knight, armored in spiderwebs, draws his serrated black sword and begins circling Flynn. Sure enough, one of his fangs is made of iron! "Attack me," he says. "Come on and fight."

ZACH: Flynn stands completely still in his defensive pose, not even turning to face the goblin champion as he circles.

NARRATOR: “What are you waiting for? Fight!”
says Irontooth. Hm, this looks like a test of bravery,
is that right, Zach?

ZACH: Yes, that’s what I want to do.

NARRATOR: OK, you roll your Spirit 3. Irontooth
also has a Spirit 3, and he gets two evens and one
odd, so two successes.

ZACH: A 4, a 2, and a 5, so Flynn also has two
successes. I want to spend Essence.

NARRATOR: Sounds good. Irontooth can spend
his Dark Essence, too. We’ll each hide how many
markers we wish to spend in our hands and, ready?
One, two, three—reveal!

ZACH: I spent 2 Essence and Irontooth only spent 1!
Flynn wins!

NARRATOR: Irontooth keeps circling Flynn as he
stands in the hall of the Goblin King. The other
goblins begin yelling at Irontooth. “Go on! Attack
him! What’s wrong with you? Are you afraid of
a sprite?” Irontooth begins to sweat as the taunts
grow louder. Finally, he throws down his sword—
clang!—and yells: “Aaaaaaaaabbbbbbbbbb!”

ELIZABETH: “You did it, Flynn!”

NARRATOR: The Goblin King Shuag looks disgusted,
and says, “This contest is over. Take your stupid
unicorn and go. But next time you enter my halls,
beware!”

Duels

Duels introduce an element of danger to
contests, as the loser in each turn’s rolls
loses an Essence point in addition to
any expended during the duel. This
might be a brawl, sword fight, pitched
battle, or arcane combat.

There are a few extra rules for
duels. Duels take place in turns.
Each turn is long enough for
every participant in the duel to
act once. Possible actions include
moving, attacking, casting spells,
or using Gifts.

The Narrator is the sole arbiter
of what actions are reasonable
in a turn, and may rule that some
proposed actions will take several
turns to complete.

All actions in a turn occur
simultaneously—each player
describes the actions of her faery, the
Narrator reveals the actions of other
characters in the scene, but all dice-pool
rolls are made at the same time and the
action takes place all at once.

Example

NARRATOR: You’re facing off against the goblins in
the garden, with your friend the injured field mouse
behind you. What do your faeries do?

LAUREN: We have to protect our friend! My
brownie, Katria, attacks the goblins with her
sword.

ELIZABETH: Didn’t you say earlier there was an old
spider web over us? Willow flies up to cut the web
loose so it falls on the goblins and traps them.

NARRATOR: Good idea, Elizabeth, but it will take
your pixie a turn to reach the web. Next turn she
can try to cut it loose. Still want to try it?

ELIZABETH: OK.

NARRATOR: All right, then. Lauren, one goblin
attacks Katria, while the others try to figure out
where the pixie’s going. “Look, she’s running away,”
one says. “Yay for us!”

Attack & Defense Pools

Actions in a duel are resolved each turn.

Physical combats use the Body score, while
magical ones rely on the Spirit score. As in
contests, your faery has a pool of dice equal in
number to her relevant Attribute score. In duels,
however, you split your dice into attack and
defense pools. You choose how many dice to
put in each pool, and can even choose an all-out
attack or all-out defense.



Optional Rules: Diceless

The FAERY'S TALE rules are well-suited to diceless play for those who wish to dispense with dice-rolling altogether. Doing away with the dice may make play even easier for very young players, as well.

Simply compare the faery's relevant Attribute to the difficulty rating—or to a foe's relevant score in the case of a contest or duel. If the faery's Attribute equals or exceeds the rating, she succeeds. If not, she can expend Essence to make up the difference. The other rules work as described.

Or you can substitute other randomizers for dice. For example, place an equal number of stones of two colors in a bag. When a faery is involved in a challenge, contest, or duel, the player draws a number of stones equal to her faery's relevant Attribute score from the bag. Stones of one color are successes, like even numbers on a die, while those of the other are null results, like odd numbers on a die. Essence can be sacrificed to change the outcome, and all other rules function as normal.

Roll your attack pool, count successes as normal, and compare to your foe's defense pool. If your faery's total number of successes exceeds that of her foe, she hits, causing the opponent to lose a point of Essence.

Then the foe rolls her attack pool against your defense pool. It's possible for both participants in a duel to miss, and possible for both to hit, in any given turn.

As in contests, participants in a duel can expend Essence to add successes to their attack or defense pools.

Once all attacks and defenses have been resolved, and any Essence losses recorded, the duel moves on to the next turn.

Example

NARRATOR: Lauren, let's see how your brownie Katria fares against the goblin. She has a Body 3, so how are you splitting up your attack and defense pools?

LAUREN: I have to stop the goblins from capturing our friend the field mouse. I will put two dice in attack and only one in defense.

NARRATOR: The goblin has a Body 3, but he's really overconfident so he puts all his dice into attack. "She's only a girl," sneers the nasty goblin to his friends. "She's probably too scared to fight big strong goblins like us."

LAUREN: "I'll show you, Mr. Goblin," says Katria as she charges with her sword. I roll two odds and an even, so one success.

NARRATOR: The arrogant goblin is so surprised you're attacking him that he doesn't even try to defend himself! Your sword strike is true, and the goblin loses an Essence point. "Aaahh! Look out!

She's dangerous," he yells. Now he rolls his three attack dice and you roll your brownie's defense die.

LAUREN: A success!

NARRATOR: And the goblin has one success, too, but it's only a tie, so Katria wins. The goblin tries to stab at you with his spear, but you parry it with your sword. Clang!

LAUREN: "You're not going to hurt my friend," Katria says. "Now run away!"

Multiple Opponents

Your faery can attack multiple foes in the same turn by splitting up her attack pool. For example, the player of a faery with a Body 5 puts four dice in her attack pool, then allocates two attack dice to each foe. Her faery could attack up to four enemies in the same turn, but at only one attack die each.

Your faery can split up her attack dice in this fashion only to attack multiple foes; she cannot strike the same opponent multiple times.

On the other hand, your faery may from time to time be attacked by multiple enemies, particularly by cowardly goblins who prefer to gang up on foes. In this case, you roll her defense pool for the turn separately against each attacker.

Example

NARRATOR: "Gah! Stop watching the pixie and help me, you stupid," shouts the goblin to his friends. This turn, two of the goblins are attacking your brownie, Lauren. The first one rolls two successes.

LAUREN: I have three dice in my defense pool. I roll and get three successes. Hah!

NARRATOR: Your steel sword flashing in the sunlight, you deflect the first goblin's sword. Now the second goblin tries to bite you with his nasty fangs. One success.

LAUREN: OK, I roll my defense dice again. One success for me, too.

NARRATOR: That's enough to block him. As the goblin lunges forward to bite your brownie, Katria nimbly jumps out of the way and he falls down.

Arms & Armor

Some faeries fight with punches and kicks, while others use swords, bows, lances, staves, axes, or other weapons. Faeries also wear leaf, bark, or gossamer armor into battle.

None of this has an effect on how duels are resolved, although it has a great deal to do with how you envision your faery—not to mention her status within the fey realm. Only great faery heroes wear gossamer armor, for example, while ogres never fight without a club at hand.

Charms are the exception to this rule—an enchanted faery sword, for example, may add success bonuses to attacks, defenses, or both, or have other qualities.

Ending Duels

A duel ends when one side has been defeated or retreats. Duels also can end when both sides agree

For Kids

The full rules for duels may be too complex or time-consuming for young or inexperienced players. Narrators can opt to treat battles as all-or-nothing Contests instead—all the parties roll dice and add Essence, with the highest total of successes winning the fight. The Narrator may rule that defeated foes fall into a magical healing slumber, or perhaps they are disarmed, captured, or driven away—whatever suits the story best.

to stop fighting, or when the duel cannot continue for other reasons, such as when a brownie turns invisible and her foes cannot find her.

Example

NARRATOR: "They're too powerful. We can't win," shouts one of the goblins. "Let's go!" The goblins run away from your faeries. "But what will we tell King Sluag?" one asks. "Who cares? Let's say a giant beat us up," says the other as they flee into the tall grass. You've driven them off, and saved your friend the field mouse.

Essence

Faeries are not creatures of bone and blood, but magical beings. Hence, all faeries possess a mystical life force known as Essence. Faeries use Essence to work wonders—achieving amazing feats, casting spells, using fey powers, or even altering reality.

Attacks on a faery or other injuries sap her Essence. A faery who runs out of Essence falls into a deep, magical sleep while it replenishes.

Tracking Essence

Your faery starts each story with twice her Spirit score in Essence. Use something tangible to represent your faery's Essence pool. Dice, coins, chips, or even candies will work, but it's more fun to use something interesting, like polished rocks or decorative glass beads, such as those available at most game shops or any craft supply store.

When your faery uses Essence, hand the right number of stones or other markers to the

Narrator. When she gains Essence, the Narrator will give you markers to represent it.

Gaining Essence

Your faery gains new Essence through her actions in the story. This can replenish lost Essence or boost her Essence pool for the challenges ahead—there's no limit to how much Essence your faery can accumulate during an adventure.

Only the Narrator can give out Essence. The Narrator should use Essence as a reward for good ideas, heroic actions, risk-taking, and good sportsmanship. This encourages better play and helps everyone have more fun.

Essence normally is given out 1 point at a time, but the Narrator can award multiple points for truly exceptional actions.

No matter how much Essence a faery accumulates or spends during an adventure,

she always starts the next story with double her Spirit score in Essence. This rule encourages players to use her faery's Essence instead of hoarding it.

Awarding Essence

Here are some examples of times when a Narrator might choose to award Essence:

- A faery chooses to rescue someone instead of chasing the escaping villain.
- A faery loses a battle or fails a task, but doesn't let it get her down.
- A faery dares to cross a rickety rope bridge across a deep chasm.
- A faery stands up to goblin bullies despite being outnumbered.
- A faery resolves a confrontation without fighting.
- A faery learns from a mistake.
- A faery turns an enemy into a friend.
- A faery gives up a prized possession to someone in need.

Adding Complications

Normally, the Narrator comes up with the challenges, contests, and duels in a story. Players can earn Essence by suggesting new complications for their faeries to overcome, however. As always, the Narrator has the final say on whether to accept such suggestions. The Narrator awards 1 to 3 Essence to the

suggesting player's faery, depending on the severity of the complication.

No one can think of everything, and players often come up with some great ideas that will make the adventure more challenging, but also more fun, for everyone. This rule actively encourages such brainstorming and cooperative storytelling.

In addition, this rule allows players who are feeling bored with the adventure to proactively introduce something that will excite their interest rather than simply hoping the Narrator has something more rousing on the way.

Example

NARRATOR: After a long journey through the snowy mountains, you arrive at the great stone castle of the Ice Queen.

ELIZABETH: Wait. If she's an Ice Queen, shouldn't she have a castle made of ice? A magical ice castle? So the walls will be all slippery and hard to climb.

NARRATOR: Oh, good suggestion, Elizabeth. You get 1 Essence for adding a complication. OK, you look out and see the glittering, frozen palace of the Ice Queen!

ZACH: That's neat, but I'm bored with this story.

NARRATOR: OK, Zach, what would make things more interesting for you?

ZACH: What if the Ice Queen has a general, and the general is Flynn's old sword-fighting teacher who's now a dark faery? Then they could have a big fight! That would be cool.

NARRATOR: Hmm ... well, you'll have to wait until you're inside the ice palace to find out if Flynn's former mentor is really working for the Ice Queen, but if he is, Zach gets 3 Essence.

For Kids

Essence awards also can be used as a teaching tool for younger players. For example, a Narrator whose child is learning the importance of telling the truth might award Essence each time her faery tells the truth in a difficult situation in the game. Likewise, Essence can be awarded for avoiding unnecessary fights, treating others with kindness, being polite, or other behavior the Narrator would like to reinforce both inside and outside the game.

Working Wonders

The fey use their magical Essence to bend, twist, and break the laws of nature by which everyone else must abide. Faeries alter physics, probability, and even reality at a whim.

In the game, your faery can use her Essence to break the rules.

Challenges, Contests, & Duels

Faeries and other magical beings can use Essence to affect the outcome of a challenge, contest, or duel. By sacrificing some of her Essence, your faery can exceed her normal

abilities to succeed where she might otherwise fail. See p. 31 for more details.

Gifts

Some Gifts, such as various forms of magic, require Essence to activate. Others tap your faery's Essence to fuel exceptional feats. These are described in *One of the Fey: Your Faery*.

Changing Reality

Faeries can use their magical Essence to alter reality itself—shifting probabilities and possibilities to make events come out in their favor.

This gives players some control over the course of the adventure, though the Narrator still has the final say on how much Essence must be spent or on what changes occur.

Only faeries controlled by players can use Essence to change reality—faeries or other creatures with Essence controlled by the Narrator cannot use these powers.

Catch a Clue

The fox managed to escape with the bunny, but a frightened field mouse points out the path the fox took. You neglected to write down the owl's poem like he suggested, but a little bird who overheard the owl flies by singing the poem.

Sometimes all you need is a little hint or reminder from the Narrator and you can do the rest on your own. You can spend 1 Essence to have the Narrator give you a clue, usually conveyed by a faery or animal too small, weak, or busy to be able to help you in any other way in the adventure.

Plot Twist

Your faery finds a forgotten treat in her pocket to soothe a snarling beast. The goblins who kidnapped a unicorn leave a vital clue behind. A second look reveals a handy fallen log crossing the raging stream. The ogre chasing your faeries gets stuck in a pool of mud.

You can spend 1 to 3 Essence to change some aspect of the world or story being described by the Narrator. The cost (which is set by the Narrator) depends on how radically you propose to change things. A simple change that gives your faery a momentary advantage, or one that helps move the story along, costs 1 Essence. A change that overcomes or negates a key

Sample Plot Twists

- Solve a riddle that has everyone stumped (1 Essence)
- Find a clue or receive a message that leads to the next scene (1 Essence)
- An attacking goblin clumsily trips over a rock (1 Essence)
- Discover a secret passage bypassing the trolls guarding the sorcerer's tower (2 Essence)
- Catch a ride to the giant's cloud castle on a friendly passing bird (2 Essence)
- Open the magical lock on the gate of the enchanted citadel (2 Essence)
- Accidentally knock a magic potion off a shelf onto the sorceress, turning her into a harmless toad (3 Essence)
- Find out that a little girl lost in Brightwood is really a princess (3 Essence)
- Sing a song to soften a mean giant's heart of stone (3 Essence)

challenge in the adventure costs 2 Essence. And a change that completely alters the course of the story costs 3 Essence.

The Narrator has the final say on plot twists, and can disallow proposed changes, in which case no Essence is spent. A better solution,

Plot Twist vs. Adding Complications

At first glance, a Plot Twist, which costs Essence, and Adding Complications, which gains Essence rewards, seem fairly similar—both are player-inspired changes to the storyline. But there's an easy way to tell them apart. If a proposed change makes things easier for the faeries, it's a Plot Twist and costs Essence. If it makes things harder, it's Adding Complications and may be worth an Essence reward.

Heroic Effort

In dire circumstances, a faery can expend *all* her remaining Essence (even if she only has 1) to change reality, whether or not she normally would have enough remaining Essence to do so. The Narrator decides whether a heroic effort will work—usually, only when things are at their worst and everything else has failed.

For example, the pixie Willow and her friends have been captured by goblins and imprisoned in a dark, dank dungeon deep beneath the halls of the goblin king Sluag.

The situation looks hopeless, and no one has enough Essence left to summon help.

So Willow courageously expends all her Essence to call on the Faery Queen for aid. Leanan appears in the dungeon as Willow, having used up her life force to save her friends, falls into a deep magical sleep.

Of course, the Narrator might judge that Willow's heroic act is worthy of an Essence reward, either after she awakens naturally or even to enable her to wake immediately, albeit very weak. The Narrator should not reward foolhardy or unnecessary uses of Heroic Effort, however, or it renders the penalty of sacrificing all Essence moot.

though, is for the Narrator to suggest a similar plot twist that would be permissible.

For example, on a quest to save children stolen by a hag, the sprite knight Flynn comes across a wall of thorns grown by the witch to protect her hut. Zach, Flynn's player, intent on his faery's mission, doesn't want to spend time trying to find a way around the thorns. He says he'll spend Essence to have a friendly squirrel show Flynn a hidden path through the thorn bushes. The Narrator decides that, while it avoids a particularly clever puzzle she'd planned, Zach's proposal could happen in a faery tale and doesn't harm the adventure. She approves the proposal, but tells Zach he must expend 2 Essence for the

plot twist, which essentially negates a key part of the hag's defenses. Zach decides to spend the 2 Essence, and the adventure continues.

Later in the same adventure, Flynn confronts the hag inside her hut while the captive children cower in a nearby cage. Zach says he'll spend Essence to have the hag run away at the sight of the mighty sprite. The Narrator decides to disallow this plot twist, since it isn't a very exciting way to end the adventure and doesn't seem plausible. Rather than simply refusing the plot twist, however, the Narrator suggests that Zach could instead spend 3 Essence to have Flynn's bravery inspire the children, who escape the cage and come help the sprite fight the hag.

Against All Odds

Summoning every bit of resolve, your plucky faery shoots an apple off her friend's head, figures out how to open the magically locked door, or hides from the goblin patrol.

When your faery just *has* to succeed, spend 5 Essence for an automatic success on a single challenge, contest, or duel. This completely bypasses the normal dice-pool rules. Your faery succeeds at the task, period.

The desired result must be within the realm of possibility, at least as defined in faery tales, though. No amount of Essence can help a faery lift a mountain or fly to the other side of the world in a single second, for example.

Call for Help

If only your friend the bat were here, he'd be able to guide you through the dark cave. Or if Mara, the pixie who sent you on this quest, were here, she could tell you what to do next. Or if the Faery Queen was here, she could heal all the faeries in the group.

You can spend 2 Essence to have an animal friend or another faery show up in the nick of time to help your faery win a fight or face some other challenge. The faery will be about the same age and ability level as the rest of the group; an animal friend will be the equivalent of any other animal friend already with the group.

You can spend 3 Essence to summon a more powerful faery to aid yours. She will probably be older, and more experienced than your faery, and will demand a Boon in return for her service. She'll also probably lecture your faery about why she got into trouble and what she can do

to prevent that sort of thing from happening in the future.

Or you can spend 4 Essence to have your faery summon Leanan, queen of the good faeries. This brings her to your faery's present location but doesn't guarantee her aid. Your faery must persuade Leanan to help. The Faery Queen loves her subjects but dislikes being called to solve problems that faeries could have handled on their own. If she decides that your faery doesn't really need her help, Leanan will leave, but the spent Essence won't be refunded.

Losing Essence

When your faery uses Essence to work wonders, she temporarily loses that amount of Essence. Lost duels also can cause your faery to sacrifice Essence.

As magical beings, faeries do not suffer cuts, bruises, or broken bones from accidents like other creatures. But serious mishaps, such as a long fall, can cost your faery Essence. The Narrator decides when a misadventure causes your faery to lose Essence.

Dark Essence

A corrupt form of the true Essence that is the life force of the faeries, Dark Essence is a malevolent mystic energy that brings only harm and threatens all that is good in the world.

Just as faeries earn Essence for acts of heroism or kindness, they earn Dark Essence for misdeeds, cruelty, and wickedness. Dark Essence taints a faery, slowly twisting her body and spirit until, in time, she becomes a dark faery.

Fey who willingly give their hearts to evil sacrifice their faery form and powers, gaining those of a horrible goblin. Other fallen fey, who retain some lingering spark of goodness within—perhaps unknown even to themselves—become twisted shadows of their former selves.

Pixies become wisps, dire spirits who lure the unwary into danger. Brownies transform into spiteful boggarts who torment households with their cruel pranks. Sprites devolve into bullying redcaps who wear blood-red caps. And pookas become dangerous phoukas, who terrify villagers in the dead of night as vicious, rampaging beasts with blazing eyes.

The transformation is not an all-or-nothing affair, however. As a faery gains Dark Essence,

For Kids

It's important to let younger players know that running out of Essence doesn't mean they lose the game or the story ends. It just means the faery falls asleep. When she wakes up, the adventure continues.

Faeries who run out of Essence, from any cause, fall into a deep sleep while their magical life force regenerates. Your faery awakens some time later, restored to her full starting Essence or double her Spirit score.

The Narrator decides how long a faery slumbers—the physical laws of the fey world are capricious, so one faery may awaken in a few minutes while another sleeps for days, or even weeks. Let the needs of the story—and, perhaps, whether the faery landed in such distress by persistent foolishness—determine how long a faery sleeps.

her appearance changes, growing more feral or perhaps exhibiting diabolical traits such as horns, red eyes, or a forked tongue, to reflect her growing inner ugliness.

Tracking Dark Essence

As with Essence, use something tangible to represent Dark Essence, such as dice, coins, chips, or something more interesting such as polished rocks or decorative glass beads. Most importantly, the Dark Essence markers must easily be told apart from Essence markers.

Gaining Dark Essence

Your faery gains Dark Essence through her actions in the story. As with true Essence, there's no limit to how much Dark Essence your faery can gain or use in an adventure.

Only the Narrator can give out Dark Essence. The Narrator should use Dark Essence very sparingly, reserving it for glaring, malicious acts of cruelty, cowardice, greed, or wrongdoing. Handing out Dark Essence for actions that are

For Kids

The Dark Essence rules add a layer of complexity and moral depth to the game that older players may appreciate, but which may confuse younger players. Parents may wish to consider these rules optional, at least at first.

merely questionable or for good intentions gone awry leads to arguments, not fun, and should be avoided.

Dark Essence normally is given out 1 point at a time, but the Narrator can award multiple points for exceptionally wicked acts.

Conflicted faeries can earn both Essence and Dark Essence in the same adventure.

Although your faery begins each story with double her Spirit score in Essence, as corruption sets in those points gradually change from true Essence to Dark Essence.

If a faery gains any Dark Essence in an adventure, her nature begins to corrupt. The next time she reverts to her starting Essence, either from exhausting her Essence or at the start of the next story, 1 true Essence is replaced by a

Dark Essence. The converted point remains Dark Essence unless the faery can reverse the process of corruption as explained below.

She has started down on the path to becoming a dark faery.

After each story in which the faery gains at least 1 Dark Essence, or uses even 1 Dark Essence, another true Essence in her starting pool is replaced by Dark Essence. This process continues until the faery's starting Essence has been consumed by Dark Essence, unless the faery has the strength of character to reverse her slide into shadow.

Becoming a Dark Faery

When only Dark Essence remains in the starting Essence of a pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka she becomes a dark faery—a wisp, boggart, redcap, or phouka, respectively. Her Attributes and Gifts remain the same, except now they are used for ill rather than good.

For example, while a pixie uses her powers to play harmless pranks on travelers, a wisp maliciously tries to lure others into places of danger, such as bogs or mine shafts.

Fallen player faeries normally do not become goblins, as this represents a faery who has wholly embraced evil. While even a goblin can redeem herself, it's best for player faeries to retain a semblance of their former selves both for the sake of simplicity and thematic purposes.

The Narrator may take on the role of the dark faery if the player wishes to play a new faery—former friends who have turned to evil can produce incredible stories. Or, if the player wishes to redeem her faery, she can continue to play.

Other faeries are unlikely to associate with an unrepentant dark faery, even a former friend, however, so it's not usually recommended that a player continue with a boggart, wisp, redcap, or phouka who has given herself wholly over to darkness.

Wickedness

Faeries can use Dark Essence just like pure Essence to overcome challenges, win contests or duels, cast magic, or work wonders. Dark Essence only may be used to wrong others or further wicked ends, however—never for a good cause.

Of course, using Dark Essence in this fashion only hastens the faery's fall from grace as more



of her starting Essence becomes corrupted.

Faeries with more Dark Essence than true Essence will be sorely tempted to tap these dark forces to overcome their problems—continuing down a path into shadow.

Overcoming Dark Essence

The fall from faery to dark faery is not inevitable, and can be stemmed or reversed by those of pure heart and strong will. Even a dark faery can earn redemption.

Faeries can reduce or eliminate Dark Essence by refraining from wickedness and doing good deeds. With great effort and sacrifice, even dark faeries can rid themselves of its taint to restore

their true selves as pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas.

Each time a faery has an adventure in which she neither gains nor uses Dark Essence, and earns at least 1 true Essence for an act of heroism or kindness, she replaces 1 point of Dark Essence with a point of true Essence in her next starting Essence pool. Dark Essence lost to attacks in duels during an adventure does not count against the faery as an active use of Dark Essence for this purpose.

As more of her Dark Essence turns to true Essence, the faery gradually appears less feral or sinister as her outward appearance begins to reflect her growing inner beauty. A dark faery fully returns to her original appearance when no Dark Essence remains in her starting Essence.

Live-Action Play

FAERY'S TALE works well for live-action roleplaying games, also called LARPs.

Live-action games have a very strong dramatic feel. You don't just say, "My faery lifts the rock," you walk over and lift it. They typically require some staging and prop-making for realism, as well as "extras" to play any allies or foes you have devised.

Scenery and props can be as elaborate or as minimalist as the Narrator has time to manage. At its simplest, the staging can consist of little signs building the make-believe environment; a "bubbling brook" sign on the throw rug means that rug *is* the brook. Likewise, a can of juice marked "magic potion" works as a prop. The can may have an envelope with a note inside taped to it describing the potion's effects, to be read by the player after drinking.

Costuming adds a lot to a LARP. Both children and adults enjoy playing dress-up, and a live-action game is the perfect excuse. Faery wings, tiaras, magic wands, and other appropriate accessories can be found at most novelty shops, toy stores, or game conventions.

And such props can even spice up a tabletop session. Instead of describing a scroll the faeries find, hand over the actual scroll to the players. A large mystic rock the players have to really carry is much more interesting (and suitably annoying) than simply a line written on one of their record sheets. Anything the faeries gain that the players can hold is worth considering making as a prop.

The biggest challenge in running a **FAERY'S TALE** live-action roleplaying game is limiting the setting in both space and time. While a LARP that's about a banquet at the Fey Court is pretty straightforward (serve dinner and let the players talk in character), a LARP that covers a war involving an entire continent and lasting months could be run reasonably well in regular **FAERY'S TALE** play but as a live-action game it's going to be tricky.

Try to (at first) limit your LARP adventures to a small number of settings occurring in roughly "real time."

Another difference between LARPs and tabletop play is that in a live-action game any ally or foe should be played, not just described by the Narrator. As long as the extras are never encountered at the same time, the Narrator can toss on a different hat, use a different voice, and be many people encountered during the adventure, but in scenes with multiple extras it's a good idea to recruit people to play these other roles.

They can be assigned to players whose faeries aren't present in a scene or to entirely new players, with specific instructions on how they should act. Playing extras can be a bit restrictive, though, as they have to follow the guidelines set out by the Narrator: the role of an extra is like improvisational acting, with a specific plot goal or function -- players' faeries are improvisational mayhem in comparison.

A Sprite's Tale



iding on the back of his new hornet friend, Stinger, Flynn the sprite arrived back at the stand of ferns by the riverbank. He'd left his brownie friend Katria there to wait, while he found the hornet.

Flynn kicked angrily at an empty snail shell.

"What's wrong?" asked Stinger, his voice reedy and buzzing.

"It's just like Gimlock's prophecy said. Katria is missing. Maybe she fell in the river, like he said. Willow was gone before I left. Could be she fell in a monster's nest—also like the prophecy."

Stinger regarded Flynn with sad oval eyes. Flynn had already explained to him how, despite a prediction of doom and disaster, the three faeries had set out to rescue the human girl, Portia, from a pair of dark faeries and a troll. What Flynn had omitted from his account was the fate he was supposed to face. He was supposed to end up in a hag's cookpot.

Flynn set his cap jauntily on his handsome head. Sure, he was worried about his friends, but he had a mission to perform, and perform it he would. He would succeed where the others had failed. Yes, Willow was brave and Katria was good-hearted, but Flynn was lucky, and there was no more useful quality than that.

He mounted Stinger's yellow-striped back and the two of them flew out by the river. They saw the tracks of a troll, which ended suddenly, as if it had fallen in. They saw the uneven tread marks of a faery-sized being. That had to be one of the dark faeries, Flynn concluded.

Then there was a curious mess of shapes in the sand. Flynn couldn't puzzle them out, but luckily it turned out that Stinger possessed a very unusual talent for a wasp. He was an expert in tracks, and made a hobby of figuring out especially confusing patterns on the ground. "This," buzzed Stinger, pointing an antenna at the marks in the wet sand, "is the bag where they had the little girl, as it laid on the ground. These are her large human-sized tracks, after the little one — a boggart would be my guess — made her come out of the bag. And see here, how her tracks get smaller and smaller?"

"It's like she vanished, and was replaced by a faery!" exclaimed Flynn.

The hornet ruefully shook his insect head. "No, no, no," he explained, patiently. "The boggart has some kind of shrinking magic. He made the girl small, so he could keep her in his control after the troll fell in the water."

"Of course!" exclaimed Flynn, "I was thinking exactly the same thing." He climbed onto Stinger's back. "Let's go find them!"

They buzzed along the riverbank for a long time. Up ahead, they saw a squat old hut, made of rotting wood, perched along the riverbank like a predatory frog. A cookpot bubbled outside, over a crackling fire of dried driftwood.

"A hag's hut," said Stinger.

"Just like in Gimlock's vision. If I'm to end up in that cookpot saving the girl, that must mean that the girl will show up here at some point. We probably beat them here, given that you are such an excellent flier."

"Why thank you, Flynn."

"Don't mention it, Stinger."

And the two of them flew off into the nearby bushes to wait for the boggart and the girl. It was not long before the two of them arrived. They heard the boggart's complaining voice before they saw anything.

"I don't even know why I'm bothering to bring you to Lucithera's hut. It was Grugh the troll who owed this boon, not me. But I don't want him coming after me if he ever gets out of that river. He is a river troll, after all. It's not completely improbable that he'd come after me." The boggart now came into view, shoving poor, bedraggled Portia, who indeed was shrunk down to his own tiny size.

"Let me go home," she sniffled. "Don't give me away to a nasty old hag, Mr. Boggart."

The boggart sneered. "Don't be so whiny. Whatever she has in mind for you, I'm sure it will involve tasty carrots, nice potatoes, and a good bit of gravy. Though strictly speaking they'll be more around you than in you."

Portia turned red and swallowed her tears, so the skulking dark faery would not have the pleasure of seeing her bawl again.

"Lucithera! Lucithera!" the boggart cried, yelling in the direction of the hut. "I have a gift for you, from Grugh the river troll!"

"This is too much!" snarled Flynn. He and Stinger rose together into the air, zooming straight at the sneering boggart. The girl ran because she didn't know what was going on. Flynn ignored her, dashing again and again at the boggart, driving him further and further from the hut. Stinger stung him, and he fell on his skinny behind. Flynn leapt from the back of his insect companion and gave the boggart a stout thrashing, first with his fists, then finishing the job with a kick or two. The boggart ran yelping into the underbrush. Having done his job splendidly, Flynn slapped his hands together, mounted Stinger, and flew back to find the girl.

"How are we going to return her to her proper size?" Stinger asked.

"We'll blunder our way through it," Flynn said.

"But what about the hag?" Stinger asked.

"Didn't you notice?" Flynn indulgently chuckled. "She's not here."

At that moment a hunched female figure, clad in foul-smelling rags, stepped out from the hut, blearily wiping the sleep from her eyes. She saw the sprite and his hornet steed, pointed her gnarled finger at them, and struck them with a paralyzing curse, which is one of the worst kinds of hag magic.

Flynn and Stinger spiraled down toward the bubbling liquid of her cookpot.

"I thought you said you were lucky," said the wasp.

"I forgot to mention that I'm also overconfident," replied Flynn.

The two of them crashed into a floating onion and sunk into the steaming broth.

Faery Princesses & Magic Wands

Titles, Boons & Charms

Faeries who do good deeds often are rewarded with titles, Boons, and charms, which mark their advancement in the fey world. Titles are ranks of faery nobility, such as knight or duke, and convey special abilities. Boons are simply favors owed, but are the true currency of the fey realms. Charms are enchanted items of amazing power, such as a magic wand or sword.

Some younger players may be satisfied playing faeries that never change, but most

older children and adults like to see their faeries gain in experience, talent, and social standing over the course of the game. The rules for titles, Boons, and charms provide some milestones by which you can measure the progress of your faery as her life story unwinds. These rules also provide some handy goals to which your faery can strive, such as earning the rank of faery princess or finding the lost faery Sword of Truth.

Titles

Sometimes a faery is recognized by others in Brightwood society for completing a quest or adventure through the grant of a title. Typically the title is given by the patron who sent the faery on the quest; quests that benefit all Brightwood result in titles granted by the Faery Queen herself.

While any faery can grant a Boon, only a titled faery can grant a lesser title to another faery.

All faeries normally start without titles—relative newcomers to the faery social world. Each title provides a faery with higher status in Brightwood's society (if she's completed many adventures or many people owe her favors, she must be important) as well as giving her extra abilities.

The Goblin King and his wicked court also bestow titles on worthy dark faeries, though they chiefly reward slyness, cruelty, and destructiveness, not heroism. Dark faeries normally do not bestow titles on good faery-kin, and vice-versa. Dark faery titles have the same effect as those of good faeries, but reflect

the vile tastes of their bestowers—rather than a Knight of Lilies, a goblin lord might appoint a Knight of Slime, for example.

The Social Order

The faery social order consists of a number of ranks based on titles.

Knight

A faery's first title is Knight, and her special ability is that she can trade Boons without worrying about who granted them to her.

A knighthood can be granted by any faery of higher rank, and the full title of a Knight is linked to that of the faery who granted the title:

Know you what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of today. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear, it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its soul.

—Francis Thompson

if Katria the brownie was knighted by the Lord of Oranges, her full title would be Katria, Knight of Oranges.

Along with the title, the faery gains certain privileges. For example, a Knight of Oranges will always be able to find a place to stay when within the Realm of Oranges, and no matter where

she is, she'll always be able to conjure up a full-size, fresh orange by spending a Boon.

Lord or Lady

Lord or Lady is the next rank within faery society, and Lords and Ladies can grant knighthoods to deserving faeries (at a cost of 2 Boons to the Lord or Lady). It's recommended that the Narrator not allow close friends to bestow titles on each other, lest the first faery in the group to become a Lady immediately declare all the other players' faeries Knights.

Lordships and Ladyships are always linked to a realm or part of a realm, so one could be a Lord of Brightwood, or a Lady of the Unicorn's Glen within Brightwood.

Count or Countess

At the next title, Count or Countess, a faery starts each story with three times her Spirit score in Essence.

Counts and Countesses can grant knighthoods (at a cost of 2 Boons) or lordships/ladyships (at a cost of 4 Boons) to faeries.

Counts and Countesses have titles linked to a realm or part of a realm, and when they grant a lesser title it has that same name. If the faery to whom they are granting a title has not yet been knighted under that name, then that's the title given. Only if a faery is already, say, a Knight of the River will the Count of the River consider granting her the additional title Lady of the River.

Duke or Duchess

The next title is Duke or Duchess. Faeries of this rank can exceed the limit of 5 for Attribute scores, up to a new limit of 10.

Dukes and Duchesses can bestow knighthoods (2 Boons), lordships/ladyships (4 Boons), or the title Count or Countess (6 Boons)



Multiple Titles

A faery can hold more than one title at the same time; Willow the Pixie, Lady of the Wind, Knight of the Wind and of Orange, for example. And unlike the real world, more than one faery can hold the same title within the same realm at one time; Flynn and Gimlock can both be Duke of Meadows if the Prince or Princess of Meadows decided they were both worthy of the rank. And two faeries with complementary titles (e.g., the Count and Countess of Moonshadows) don't necessarily have to be married to each other.

Other Titles

A Narrator can come up with other titles to give faeries. Along with titles taken from history (*e.g.*, Baron, Marquis) or from other cultures (*e.g.*, Pasha, Raja, Sultan, Khan), she can create new titles, such as Jack, a title for a faery who has, during her quests, faced down a giant. Or she can add extra terms to an existing title to honor particularly worthy deeds: Knight Defender, Lord Protector, *etc.*

on faeries. As with Counts and Countesses, Dukes and Duchesses grant titles from lowest to highest on a faery; if she's not yet a Knight and Lord of the Rainbow, the Duchess of the Rainbow won't grant her the Countess title.

Prince or Princess

A Prince or Princess can summon help once per day without the use of Essence. The faery summoned is a knight of the Prince

or Princess's realm; it can even be one of the players' faeries as the starting point of an adventure.

Princes and Princesses are able to grant any of the lower titles on deserving faeries (with the titles Duke and Duchess costing 8 Boons, and lesser titles priced as above).

Only a Faery King or Queen can grant the title Prince or Princess, and they do so extremely infrequently.

King or Queen

Each faery realm has only one ruler, a King or Queen. Brightwood is ruled by the Faery Queen Leanan, while the goblins are ruled by Sluag, the Goblin King, the Moon is ruled by Queen Selene, and so on. Ordinarily a player's faery cannot become a realm's King or Queen, because it would mean that the current ruler would have to abdicate or die (both very rare occurrences), and that the player would have to give up playing her faery, because kings and queens are much too busy running their realms to do anything as fun as going on quests and adventures.

Boons

In the mundane world, a boon is just a favor promised, and means the boon-giver will do something nice for the recipient at some future date. But in Brightwood, Boons are the currency of the realm. After all, almost anyone can create faery gold with a spell, but a promise *is* a promise, and breaking a magical promise is serious indeed.

Earning Boons

Boons are common and granted at a whim: for winning a duel, catching a lost chicken, or simply being helpful. Note that Boons can't be granted to close friends or immediate family; they're already expected to help each other.

Most Boons are freely granted, but sometimes a faery will demand a Boon of another—for example, a sprite knight who defeats a goblin might require a Boon to release her. Or a Boon might be the stakes for a competition or game of chance.

A Boon allows the holder to ask the giver for a simple favor. For example, a pixie who removes a hex from a castle guard may be given

a Boon. Later, she may ask that guard to let her pass a guarded gate in peace, and because of his personal honor the guard will likely do it. His boss will even accept the breach in security — “Oh, you owed a favor; I understand.”

Once she knows how (see *Titles*), a faery can even pass a Boon to another: If a castle guard grants a faery a Boon, she can give that Boon to a kindly witch to secure a potion, even though the guard and witch do not know each other — “Duncan owes me a favor; now he owes it to you instead.”

Giving Boons

Faeries controlled by the players can give Boons as well as earn them, and for the same reasons. As with earning Boons, players normally should not have their faeries give Boons to other player faeries, since friends are expected to help one another anyway.

Giving a Boon simply obligates the faery to do a favor for the recipient when asked—which may not always be convenient, and sometimes even goes against the faery's best interests! Unpaid

Faery Godmothers

Sometimes, when a very special baby is born to humans, the Faery Queen will name a faery godmother—or godfather, though these never seem to get mentioned in faery tales—to watch over the infant and help her as she grows.

The faery godparents don't have to be married, or even be friends, and they may or may not choose to reveal their existence to their human godchild. Regardless, they must work together to protect her and guide her into adulthood.

Needless to say, children in need of faery guardians often are in great danger for some reason or other. They also tend to have very powerful enemies—whether dark faeries, a vengeful hag, a wicked sorceress, or some other nemesis. Protecting such a child can be the source of many thrilling adventures.

Faery godparents have no social rank among the fey, but they may call on any faery to help them carry out their duties with respect to the child as if that faery owed them a Boon.

Boons are a great plot hook for Narrators, and can even kick off entire adventures—for example, a princess owed a Boon might ask the faeries to search for her lost prince in the wilderness. It's advisable to resolve unpaid Boons within an adventure or two of their granting, however, or they become bothersome.

Using Boons

Along with redeeming the promises bound into Boons, faeries can use them to buy a variety of objects or enhancements. If she's been knighted, she can trade Boons from any source for the things she wants, but if not she can offer Boons of her own for goods and services.

A faery can buy pretty much any normal item (e.g., clothing, a weapon, a suit of armor, food) for a Boon or two.

A faery can spend 4 Boons to have another faery train her to increase an Attribute by 1, up to the limit of 5.

Boons can help faeries gain animal companions.

A faery may spend a Boon (from any source) to have a companion help her for the duration of one quest. Pixies may befriend insects, such as ladybugs and crickets, or trees or flowers. Brownies favor mice or birds. A sprite may gain a bumblebee, dragonfly, or grasshopper steed. If a faery has the same companion through three successive quests, she may consider that companion an eternal friend, and never have to spend a Boon to gain its aid in the future.

A faery can acquire new individual Gifts by spending 6 Boons for each point in the cost of the new Gift. A 1-point Gift costs 6 Boons, a 2-point Gift costs 12 Boons, and a 3-point Gift costs 18 Boons. The faery gains this Gift permanently.

By spending 8 Boons, a faery can open a temporary passage to other places, such as the Moon (the ultimate source of pixie dust) or the faery realm of Water. The passage is one-way and only remains open for a minute or less, so another passage (also costing 8 Boons) may be required to return home at the end of a quest. Unlike all other uses of Boons, a group of faeries can pool their Boons in order to open a passage to another realm.

By spending 20 Boons, faeries gain permanent special abilities: a brownie can grant invisibility to one other person each day; a pooka can take the form of animals larger than a horse; a sprite can leap effortlessly about in combat, for all intents and purposes flying so long as she stays in battle; and a pixie can create bags of pixie dust (one per quest) she can give

to others so that they can cast spells (one per bag) as if they were the pixie.

Creative Narrators can devise other ways to spend Boons: gaining charms or service from more creatures and allies, building estates, joining schools, or taking on apprentices, for instance.

A faery may also trade 4 Boons for the title of Knight. These Boons can be from any source.

Nothing can be truer than fairy wisdom. It is as true as sunbeams.

—Douglas William Jerrold

Charms

Not only do the faeries in tales perform magic, but they also often possess various charms - items that have magic within them. Enchanted wands, swords, amulets, tiaras, and armor are just a few examples.

Charms can be tools that faeries make for personal use, goods to trade with other faeries, rewards for successful quests, treasures found along the way, or things that spark adventures themselves.

Common Charms

By spending 2 Essence, a spell-using faery can enchant an ordinary object, making it perform any task that she could do magically herself. An enchantment of this sort lasts until the next moonset. By spending 1 Boon at the same time as the spell is cast, the faery can make the enchantment last until the next full moon.

One has to be careful, though: Such charms are essentially mindless and can get out of hand if used carelessly. Leave a never-empty cup on its side and you get a small river; send your broom of sweeping to clear your lawn and it'll scour the grass away.

Unique Charms

In order for a charm to survive past the full moon, it must be Named.

In order to create a Named item, its creator has to specify it in detail for the Narrator's consideration. Generally, an item should be very single-minded in its purpose. A broom of flying or a broom of sweeping are great, but a broom of sweeping *and* flying is a bit much. It should be balanced too; if it's used frequently it shouldn't be too powerful, but if it's only useful rarely it can pack more of a punch on that occasion.

It needs a name and a description, based on what it does, who it helps, where it's from, or any other creative thing its creator thinks applies.

The faery then spends from 2 to 20 Boons (based on how the Narrator thinks it may affect the game; a needle of sewing might cost only 2 Boons while a sword of troll-slaying might cost 15 or more) and sacrifices 5 Essence, creating

the charm.

Most Named charms are about as smart as a dog. They can understand simple spoken

instructions, remember people they've met, and generally try to do the right thing. Almost all Named items can talk.

Heroes take journeys, confront dragons, and discover the treasure of their true selves.

—Carol Pearson

In addition, anything Named in the faery realms has its own personality. At the very least, such charms are eager to do their assigned tasks; Jared Broom of Eversweep is always trying to get out of the closet to clean, for example. Unfortunately, what personality a charm has isn't entirely up to its creator or owner: while some charms may work especially hard or be loyally resistant to theft, others will argue with their owners or try to sneak away from them.

When a Named item is created, the Narrator selects the item's personality and secretly decides on an unknown or unintended feature of it, that can range from a personality quirk (an always-full plate that refuses to create sweets until after it sees its owner eat a balanced meal, or sure-grip gloves that only stop talking to each other when they're holding things), to a side effect (an ever-sharp sword that turns its owner purple if he ever tells a lie, or a self-styling hairbrush that glows brightly when used), to a restriction (a knife of carving that won't function at night, or a hat of many colors that can only change colors a certain number of times per day), to a special goal (a self-playing harp that always seeks to escape its owner, or a suit of armor that does its best to earn its owner fame at any cost), to an extra power (such as looking glass that's particularly wise, or shoes of speed that are more potent in moonlight). A very powerful charm (one costing more than 10 Boons to enchant) may have multiple secret features, in part designed to prevent it from being used to solve all the faery's problems.

The charm's personality and secret features are things for the faery to discover over time; despite being created by a player's faery, the Narrator speaks for a talking charm and effectively runs the charm as one of the other characters in the story, just like the animals, monsters, and people the players' faeries meet.

Here There Be Dragons

Creatures, Beasts & Beings

Faeries are not alone in Brightwood, which is filled with many other creatures both natural and fantastic. Some are helpful, some inimical, and some just want to be left alone.

Along with serving as allies or enemies in stories, the creatures in this chapter can be used as templates for non-faery characters—for example, a player may wish to play an animal companion to another faery or a fantastic creature, such as a giant.

Attributes

Just like faeries, animals and other beings have three Attributes: Body, Mind, and Spirit. While faeries start with scores from 0 to 5, creatures may have scores up to 10, representing proportionally greater strength or other advantages.

Unlike faeries, most animals are natural creatures that possess no Essence. Very few humans have Essence, although most fantastic creatures do.

What The Numbers Mean

| Score | Rating |
|-------|-------------|
| 0 | Deficient |
| 1 | Poor |
| 2 | Everyday |
| 3 | Capable |
| 4 | Exceptional |
| 5 | Elite |
| 6+ | Legendary |

Essence

Creatures and beings with Essence are treated just like faeries in the rules—injuries reduce their Essence, and they can spend Essence to overcome challenges or activate Gifts. Creatures controlled by the Narrator cannot alter reality, however.

Creatures with no Essence lose Body when they are injured. Each time a foe bests the

creature in a duel, it temporarily loses 1 Body. Animals or people recover 1 lost Body point

per day if they rest or receive medical care. Also, a faery with the Gift of Empathy can restore lost Body to a being at the cost of 1 Essence per point of Body healed.

—John Lennon

A creature that is reduced to 0 Body is incapacitated, and possibly dying. It cannot move or act on its own.

Gifts

All creatures, both natural and fantastic, have at least one Gift. Some are similar to those possessed by faeries, but as there are many more sorts of animals they have many other types of Gifts.

Aquatic

These creatures can swim at the surface or underwater. They also can breathe underwater, and are otherwise fully adapted to watery habitats.

Black Magic

Creatures with this Gift practice Black Magic, a corrupt yet powerful perversion of faery magic. Black magic spreads decay, fear, and darkness, bringing ruin on everything it touches and all who use it.

For Kids

Younger players may not be ready to deal with the concept of death, particularly the death of a friend such as a faery's animal companion. The Narrator may simply say the creature is hurt, or declare that all inhabitants of Brightwood—not just those with Essence—fall into a magical healing sleep when sorely wounded or ill.

— Here There Be Dragons —

Effortless magical feats, such as souring milk, wilting flowers, or breaking pottery, cost no Essence. Demanding feats, such as scaring animals, warping wood, or sparking a fire, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as frightening other beings, shattering metal, or calling darkness on a sunny day, cost 2 Essence.

Casting black magic for kindly purposes costs +1 Essence. Physical objects created by black magic vanish at daybreak.

Breathe Fire

This Gift allows a creature to breathe flames on its foes as an attack.

Brew Potions

A being with this Gift can brew magical potions of many sorts. These potions require special ingredients, such as eye of newt or toe of frog. Powerful potions may require ingredients of even greater rarity, such as a feather from a phoenix or a strand of hair from a unicorn's mane.

Effortless potions, such as those of sleep, forgetfulness, or love, cost no Essence. Demanding potions, such as those of flying, invisibility, or speed, cost 1 Essence. Difficult potions, such as those of poison, healing, or giant strength, require 2 Essence.

Burrow

Creatures with the Gift of Burrow can dig tunnels in the dirt, moving around under the ground.

Change Appearance

Many creatures are able to change their appearance to hide themselves or appear as something other than what they are. Hags use this Gift to appear as harmless old women or beautiful maidens to trick their victims, while lizards and rabbits use it to change their color to escape detection by predators.

Climb

These creatures can climb exceptionally well, and gain a +2 to their Body score when overcoming challenges involving climbing.

Contortion

Creatures with the Gift of Contortion have twisty, stretchy bodies allowing them to squeeze through small holes or cracks. The creature can

squeeze through any opening, although tiny holes take longer.

Curse Magic

This Gift allows a fantastic being to magically curse others.

Effortless feats of magic, such as bringing bad luck on someone or causing someone to trip, cost no Essence. Demanding feats, such as blighting crops, breaking something precious, or causing someone to become ill, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as aging someone, turning a prince into a frog, or causing a princess to fall into an enchanted slumber, require 2 Essence.

Curses must have some way to be broken—such as a prince cursed with frog form returning to his normal self when kissed. The caster may have to pay extra Essence for a curse that's particularly difficult to break, such as requiring a kiss from a princess or the prince's true love.

Enormous Size

Some creatures, like giants, are enormously big. They are taller than the trees, and their long stride means they cover great distances very quickly.

Flying

Creatures with this Gift can fly through the air, and normally have wings. Amazing feats of flight, such as soaring over the cloud tops, cost 1 Essence for those creatures with Essence.

Glamour

This Gift allows a being to magically fool others into doing what she says. The person so ensorcelled trusts the caster implicitly and will go along with almost any suggestion.

Effortless feats of magic, such as charming someone gullible or trusting, cost no Essence. Demanding feats, such as charming an ordinary person, cost 1 Essence. Difficult feats, such as charming someone who is suspicious or hostile, require 2 Essence.

Jump

These creatures can jump long distances—much, much farther than ordinary creatures of their size and strength. They can jump up, down, or across equally well. Creatures with this Gift gain a +2 to their Body scores when overcoming challenges involving jumping.



Nightvision

A creature with the Gift of Nightvision can see just as well in the dark as in daylight.

Shell

Creatures with the gift of having a Shell are encased in a hard, protective armor, like a turtle's shell or beetle's carapace. They gain +2 to their Body score for purposes of resisting physical attacks or injury.

Sly

A creature with the Gift of being Sly can talk to other animals and faeries. The creature also gains +2 to its Mind score when using cleverness to overcome challenges.

Smell

The creature can detect and track others by their scent alone. It gains a +2 to its Mind score when perceiving by smell.

Venom

A creature with the Gift of Venom can poison its enemies with its sting or bite. In addition to the point of Essence or Body lost to a successful attack, this creature's victims lose a second point of Essence or Body a short time later, whether the creature strikes again or not, due to the venom injected into the victim.

Webs

These creatures can spin webs, either shooting strands at a single foe in combat or spinning a large web to catch the unwary, although this takes time.

Spotting the second sort of web is an Easy challenge based on your faery's Mind score. Breaking free of either kind of web is a Tricky challenge based on your faery's Body score.

Faeries

Goblins, mean and ugly, are dark faeries. They often are the minions of greater powers of darkness, such as other fallen fey or sorcerers.

| Goblins | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 4 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 2 |
| Gifts: Black Magic, Contortion | | | | | |
| Starting Dark Essence: 6 | | | | | |

People

Only a few humans, such as sorcerers or witches, possess Essence. Individuals with Essence are very special, and often the focus of much evil plotting by the malign dark faeries or other malevolent powers.

For this reason, when a baby with Essence is born, the Faery Queen often assigns a faery godmother or godfather, or both, to watch over her and keep her safe.

| Babies | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 4 |
| Starting Essence: 8 | | | | | |

| Children | | | | | |
|----------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 2 |

| Villagers | | | | | |
|-----------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 1 |

| Sorcerers | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 4 |
| Gifts: Black Magic | | | | | |
| Starting Dark Essence: 8 | | | | | |

| Witches | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 4 |
| Gifts: Brew Potions or Curse Magic | | | | | |
| Starting Essence: 8 | | | | | |

Fantastic Creatures

Fantastic creatures are magical beings, like faeries, and some possess Essence.

| Hags | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 4 | Spirit | 5 |
| Gifts: Change Appearance, Brew Potions, Charm Magic or Curse Magic Starting Dark Essence: 10 | | | | | |

| Giants | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 10 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 2 |
| Gifts: Enormous Size, Smell | | | | | |

| Naiads | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 4 |
| Gifts: Aquatic | | | | | |
| Starting Essence: 8 | | | | | |

| Mountain Trolls | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 6 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 2 |

| Night Trolls | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 6 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 4 |
| Gifts: Nightvision | | | | | |

| River Trolls | | | | | |
|----------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 6 | Mind | 3 | Spirit | 3 |
| Gifts: Aquatic | | | | | |

| Tunnel Trolls | | | | | |
|---------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 4 | Spirit | 5 |
| Gifts | | | | Burrow | |

— Here there Be Dragons —

| Dragons | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 8 | Mind | 6 | Spirit | 8 |
| Gifts: Breathe Fire, Fly | | | | | |
| Starting Essence: 16 | | | | | |

Natural Creatures

Natural creatures do not have Essence.

| Beetle | | | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Burrow, Shell | | | | | |

| Bluebird | | | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 2 |
| Gifts: Fly | | | | | |

| Bumblebee | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Fly, Venom | | | | | |

| Cat | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 5 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 3 |
| Gifts: Climb | | | | | |

| Dog | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 5 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Smell | | | | | |

| Dragonfly | | | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Fly | | | | | |

| Fox | | | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 4 | Mind | 5 | Spirit | 1 |
| Gifts: Sly | | | | | |

| Frog | | | | | |
|-------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 2 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Jump | | | | | |

| Grasshopper | | | | | |
|-------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Jump | | | | | |

| Ladybug | | | | | |
|------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 2 |
| Gifts: Fly | | | | | |

| Lizard | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Change Appearance | | | | | |

| Mouse | | | | | |
|----------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Contort | | | | | |

| Owl | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 4 | Mind | 5 | Spirit | 1 |
| Gifts: Fly, Nightvision | | | | | |

| Rabbit | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 4 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Burrow, Change Appearance | | | | | |

| Slug | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Climb | | | | | |

| Spider | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Climb, Venom, Web | | | | | |

| Squirrel | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 3 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Squirrels have an endless supply of Boons; when it looks like they've run out, they always have one Boon hidden away. | | | | | |

| Turtle | | | | | |
|--------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 1 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 2 |
| Gifts: Shell | | | | | |

| Wasp | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|------|---|--------|---|
| Body | 2 | Mind | 1 | Spirit | 0 |
| Gifts: Fly, Venom | | | | | |

Tales of the Fey

Creating Adventures

As the Narrator, it's your job to come up with the adventures on which the heroic faeries of the players will embark. Fortunately, you don't have to map out every twist and turn in advance. In fact, it's better if you don't, since the players will inevitably do things you never expected that take the story in whole new directions. Focus on the broad outline of the plot, particularly the starting point, and on what the antagonists are going to be doing. Don't spend too much time trying to anticipate the actions of the players, and never devise a plot that hinges on a single action or a particular clue.

If you're uncertain about your storytelling abilities, start off by adapting favorite faery tales, such as the sample *Jack and the Beanstalk* adventure in this chapter. Change the original story just enough to make the faeries controlled by the players the center of attention. Often, this will involve having them rescue or help the original protagonist of the faery tale, such as saving Jack from the giant or Hansel and Gretel from the hag.

But coming up with your own ideas for stories can be even more rewarding, especially since you can tailor them to the talents, interests, and desires of the players. Just think of the faeries as comic-book superheroes—unbeknownst to most people, they have amazing powers which they use to right wrongs, rescue others from danger, and, once in a while, save the world.

Throw in some challenges and adversaries to overcome, and you have the basis for a fun new story. A challenge might be a locked door, a washed-out bridge over a raging river, a curse, or any other obstacle to an immediate goal. Adversaries actively work against the faeries. They might be goblins, hags, dangerous animals, sorcerers, or even a force of nature, like a storm or forest fire endangering woodland friends of the faeries.

Corrupted faeries—boggarts, wisps, redcaps, and phoukas—are excellent villains. Not only

are they as powerful as the faeries, or more so with titles or wicked charms, but as faeries who have embraced darkness they are the antithesis of everything the heroes represent. Or a dark faery might be a tragic antagonist; one who fell from good intentions gone awry. The faeries might even help such an adversary see the error of her ways and eventually redeem herself, which may be the most satisfying victory of all.

Sometimes, the chief antagonist has a number of minions to do her dirty work for her. The heroes must first overcome these henchmen before getting a chance to deal with the

villainous mastermind.

For older players, this might stretch out over several adventures. For example, a nefarious human sorcerer might be in league with goblins and have a troll protecting his tower. Before they can confront the sorcerer, the faeries must face the

—Sir J.M. Barrie

goblins and find some way around the troll.

Finally, don't end the story immediately after the climactic confrontation with the arch-villain or antagonist. Include a short wrap-up scene at the end, in which the faeries reunite the kidnapped child with her parents, receive a medal from the Faery Queen in front of the entire Fey Court, earn a Boon or title, or are otherwise recognized for their accomplishments. This gives the players a moment to absorb the exciting events they've just experienced, and shows that their faeries' heroics are appreciated.

If you're going to be playing again soon, you might even set up the next adventure during this denouement—perhaps, during the ball at the Fey Court, after the ceremony, the faeries receive a letter from the escaped arch-villain vowing revenge!

The key to great interactive stories is to remember the player's faeries always are the heroes. Their choices or actions drive the story. The faeries may meet all kinds of interesting and even helpful faeries, people, and creatures along

*Come play with me,
I'll tell you of the moon,
And of the stars that shine and glitter.
I'll speak to you of fairy worlds,
Of happiness and splendor.*

For Kids

Children at various ages have specific developmental issues that it's useful for Narrators to keep in mind. Individual children go through these stages at different ages (and some stages are skipped entirely), so these are only rough guidelines of things Narrators should look out for.

Children younger than 6 years old often have trouble remembering and following rules consistently.

Moral issues are likely to confuse or bore children younger than 8.

By age 9, kids can handle looser enforcement of the rules of a game without running rampant. They also are strong at conceptualization with language, making this a good starting age for interactive storytelling games featuring simple concepts like, "Defeat an evil dragon, then go look for another to defeat."

From ages 10 to 12, social skills become important, and literary influences begin to really ramp up. The children become more interested in their roles within a group, as opposed to just what the group does and the story of the game.

The concept of "personal epic," where actual success or failure is less important than how the faeries deal with the situation, kicks in around age 11.

Children of different ages (or adults of different tastes) will often have desires for gameplay that differ, and a Narrator should take care to emphasize the aspects that are appropriate and that appeal to each player.

the way, but these Narrator-controlled characters must never steal the spotlight from the heroes—even if this means they sometimes fail. Nothing kills the fun of an interactive storytelling game faster for a player than being relegated to the sidelines by a Narrator who forgets the game's interactive aspect always trumps the story.

Storytelling Tips

Now that you've got the basics of being a Narrator down, here are a few more tips.

- Try to personalize the story. The faeries don't just save just any rabbit from the wolf, but their old friend Hopalong. Or the wisp behind the plot to kidnap the Faery Queen isn't just any pixie gone bad, but the ex-mentor or former best friend of one of the heroes.
- Ensure that each player gets a moment in the spotlight—a chance for her faery to shine. This might be a particular challenge or adversary tailored to their talents, a personal connection to the story, or anything else that lets her faery be the center of attention for a while.
- Although you'll want to avoid frightening younger players, the more dangerous, scary,

or wicked the villain, the more satisfaction players will take from defeating her. The best villains often return in later adventures for a rematch—sometimes teamed up with an equally villainous ally to pose an even greater threat!

- The livelier you can make the scenario, the better. Use different voices for the people you play. Don't worry if you can't do "realistic" accents, just make each voice different. Use high-pitched, low-pitched, and regular voices. Have some encountered characters talk very slowly or very rapidly, or even have some talk with fancy or simple words. Mix it up. The key is to make each character interesting. If the person encountered is interesting, the players will remember her.
- No one can win all the time, not even in a faery tale. But the Narrator can turn defeat into a temporary setback rather than an utter failure. This can be especially important for younger players, who often are afraid to lose. Perhaps a gloating villain reveals a vital clue while taunting the faeries, or their valor in the face of defeat gains the admiration of a mentor who can teach them how to win next time. Defeat in **FAERY'S TALE** is

never the end of the story; sometimes it's only the beginning of a brand-new, even better one.

Preparations

You'll need to make some preparations for play if you are the Narrator. Along with a basic plotline plus some antagonists, you'll want to be sure there are enough dice and Essence markers available. Props, such as faery wings, tiaras, or wands, work well for younger players. Stuffed animals are good Narrator props for scenes involving animals; when the faeries meet a bear,

bring out a stuffed bear. If the faeries are going to be finding a map, a letter, or a magic ring, try to have a prop ready rather than just describing it.

Finally, make sure you have a clean, pleasant, comfortable place to play with few distractions. A kitchen table works well, but since **FAERY'S TALE** requires only a little dice-rolling you can play on a couch, on the floor, or just about anywhere else you'd like. Some appropriate music in the background may help set the proper mood, but televisions, computer games, toys, or other distractions tend to create problems.

Jack and the Beanstalk

This adventure offers an example of how a familiar faery tale can easily be turned into a **FAERY'S TALE** adventure in which the story bursts free from the pages and anything can happen.

A New Day

The story begins with the faeries meeting in a forest glen in Brightwood for another day of adventures. A good way to start is to describe how each faery awakes that morning—pixies in their flower beds, sprites in their toadstool homes, brownies in their cozy nooks in the cottages of their human families, and pookas wherever they happen to be sheltering for the night.

Encourage the players to act the roles of their faeries as they greet each other and talk about what to do that day. When the interplay starts

to drag, tell the players their faeries have spotted something unusual:

Glancing up through the tree limbs overhead, you spot an enormous beanstalk reaching all the way up to the sky! It disappears into the clouds far above you. You're sure it wasn't there yesterday.

Have the players make Mind rolls for their faeries to guess where the beanstalk comes down. This is an Easy challenge, requiring only one success. Faeries with the Gift of Alert succeed automatically. Read the following italicized text to all who succeed:

It looks like the beanstalk must have sprouted in the nearby human village where your friend Jack lives.

Jack is a young human boy who has befriended one or more of the faeries. It's best that any brownies not live in his house, though. It may seem odd to simply announce the faeries have a friend whom the players have never heard about, but younger players will readily accept such statements. Older or more experienced players may be put off by such Narrator fiat, however, in which case Jack can be introduced in an earlier story or some other motivation found to get the faeries involved.

The Village

As the faeries approach the village, read the following italicized text:

For Kids

This is a good introductory adventure for younger players—since it plays off a faery tale with which they are probably already familiar, children will have a better grasp of the choices and expectations for their faeries than in a completely open-ended story. It also puts their faeries at the center of the action, reinforcing the idea that in these stories, they are the heroes.

A pleasant human farming village lies on the edge of Brightwood. The cottages all have whitewashed walls and thatched roofs. Down near center of town, near the well, are the shops of the blacksmith, cobbler, and other craftsmen.

On the edges of town are small farm cottages, including the one where Jack and his widowed mother live. A crowd of villagers has gathered around the garden plot next to Jack's cottage, from which an enormous green beanstalk rises to the clouds. His mother tells the other villagers her story.

"I sent my boy Jack to town yesterday to sell our milk cow, Bessie, but when he came home he told me he'd traded her for some magic beans. I sent him to bed without any supper for being so foolish, and when I woke up this morning, this giant beanstalk was growing in our garden, and Jack has disappeared. Oh where, oh where is my Jack?"

"I'm afraid that he's climbed this magic beanstalk and something has happened to him. Won't somebody help my boy?"

Their attention on the beanstalk and Jack's mother, the villagers do not notice the faeries unless they speak up or take some other visible action.

Remind the players that most people do not believe in faeries, and that the fey folk usually try to hide from humans. This presents an interesting, but low-key, dilemma for the players—do their faeries offer to help Jack's mother or stay hidden to protect their secrets? There's really no right or wrong answer, since even if they stay hidden the faeries will have an opportunity to talk privately to Jack's mother later, but it presents the players with a seemingly difficult choice.

The faeries can whisper among themselves without being noticed by others if the players wish to debate what to do. If they speak up, the reaction of the crowd depends on what they say. Some villagers may be frightened and run away, while others may nod approvingly if they offer to help the distraught woman.

If the faeries do not speak up, read the following italicized text:

The crowd of villagers shuffles nervously, and Jack's mother walks over to address a big, burly man standing with the others.



"Mr. Blacksmith, your arms are big and strong from working in your forge all day long," she says. "Surely you could climb this beanstalk and save my son?"

"Who? Me?" asks the blacksmith. "I, uh, of course I would, but I have to ... make some horseshoes. Yes, a big order of horseshoes. Very important. Sorry, sorry, too busy today to climb any beanstalks. Maybe tomorrow or the next day ..."

The blacksmith's voice fades as he hurries back to his shop. The other villagers also begin to drift away.

If the faeries choose not to intervene, read the next scene.

The crowd begins to disperse, murmuring about the strange events.

"Wait, good sir, you are the king's messenger, are you not?" cries the widow, accosting a lean man wearing the royal colors as he turns to go.

"Why, yes," he replies.

"You run hither and yon across the realm delivering the king's proclamations and orders," says the widow. "Your legs must be very strong, and your lungs, too. Certainly climbing even such a tall beanstalk as this would be no trouble for a man of your talents."

"Oh, um, well, but you see, I have to deliver a message ... an urgent message ... in fact, I'd better go right now!" the messenger says, running off down the road.

All the villagers have left, and the widow stands forlorn by the giant beanstalk in her garden.

"Who will save my Jack now?" she asks herself, sadly.

If the faeries approach her after everyone else has left, Jack's mother will be startled at first, remarking that she hasn't seen a faery since she was a little girl. She can easily be reassured—particularly if the faeries offer to look for Jack. His mother will thank them earnestly, and ask them to tell Jack that she loves him and wants him to come home.

The Beanstalk

Faeries can climb the beanstalk, fly up to the clouds it pierces, or ride on a flying animal companion such as an insect or bird.

Climbing the beanstalk is a Tricky challenge, requiring a Body roll with at least two successes. Failure means the faery gets too tired to climb further, or keeps slipping back down the beanstalk.

A pooka can transform into a flying insect for no Essence, or into a bird able to carry several other faeries for 1 Essence. Flying faeries will have to spend a point of Essence to fly above the clouds. A sprite who does not already have a flying animal companion can befriend one for this adventure for 1 Essence. A larger creature, such as a bird, may even have room to carry all the faeries. Of course, the sprite will have to persuade the creature to help. Play the part of the insect, bird, or other creature—perhaps a robin would rather look for worms, or a butterfly might be afraid to fly so high. Too much obstinacy may frustrate younger players, but a little byplay can be fun before the creature agrees to help.

Or the players may come up with other ways to use their Gifts or ability to work wonders to reach the top of the beanstalk. Encourage them to think creatively, and don't quash workable ideas just because they aren't covered in the text of the adventure.

The Cloud Castle

Once the faeries climb, fly, or otherwise travel up the beanstalk, read the following italicized text:

The top of the beanstalk pokes through a hole in the clouds. As you move up through the hole, you see the cloud tops spreading out around you like white, fluffy plains and hills. Off in the distance, you see a gigantic stone castle, even more gigantic than the castles humans use. Whoever lives in this castle must be 100 feet tall!

Faeries can step off the beanstalk or land on the cloud tops, which are soft and squishy but support their weight. The castle is built of solid stone with glass windows, and a pair of heavy gates are the only entrance.

Clever faeries can scout the castle by peeking through the windows, however. Most of the rooms contain only giant-size furniture, but there are two points of interest. A kitchen, filled with enormous pots and pans, contains an iron cage in which sits a forlorn Jack.

And deep snoring rumbles from a room in a tower—peeking in through the window reveals the giant sleeping in a great bed, covered by a blanket that rises and falls as his snores rattle the windows.

The windows are too thick for the faeries to get Jack's attention with noise, and he's too glum to look around much.

The Gate

Unless they figure out something else, the faeries are likely to try to enter the castle through the heavy wood gates. Pushing open the gates—even just enough for faeries to slip inside—is a Heroic challenge, requiring four successes. The faeries can cooperate to open the gate, but let the players suggest it. Or they might use magic or other Gifts to enter the castle. Again, don't stifle creative solutions, as long as they are reasonable—at least, for a faery tale.

Freeing Jack

Faeries who scouted the castle first can easily find their way to the kitchen. Others may have to wander about a bit first. Have some fun describing the giant furniture and other gigantic items they find, but try not to drag the search out or younger players may lose interest.

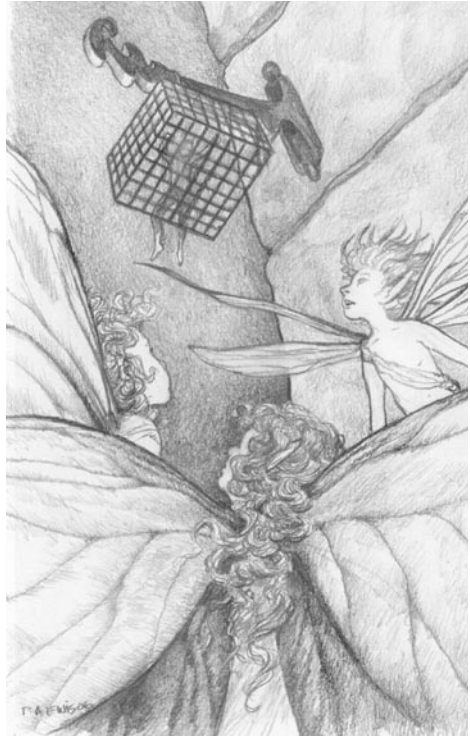
When they reach the kitchen, read the following italicized text:

You are inside a gigantic kitchen. Enormous iron pots and pans hang on wood racks overhead, and firewood the size of logs fuels the blaze in the stone fireplace. Steam rises from a big, black kettle hanging over the fire. A wooden table and chair fit for a giant stand in the middle of the kitchen.

An iron cage hangs from a hook near the fireplace, and your friend Jack sits with his head in his hands on the floor of the cage.

A deep snoring sound from another room in the castle rattles the pots hanging overhead.

Reaching the cage from the floor may be challenging for tiny faeries. Pixies can fly right up to it, of course, as can pookas who change form into appropriate creatures. Sprites and brownies may have to climb atop the nearby table, a Tricky feat requiring two successes, and then leap across the gap to the cage, a Hard task requiring three successes.



Faeries can fly or walk through the bars in the cage, but they are set too close together for Jack, a full-size human boy, to escape. The door to the cage is locked, and has a giant keyhole. When the faeries catch Jack's attention, read the following italicized text:

"My friends!" cries Jack in excitement. "You've come to save me from the giant! Oh, I was so foolish to run away and climb this beanstalk. Now the giant says he's going to eat me! Hurry, hurry, you must get the key and let me out before he comes back. He said he was going to take a short nap before dinner, and dinner is me!"

Jack tells the faeries that the giant wears the key to the cage around his neck. They can either go get it while the giant sleeps—a Hard task requiring three successes not to wake the giant—or find some other way to get him out of the cage. The iron bars cannot be bent, at least not by Jack or the faeries, but clever players may find a way to pick the lock, shrink Jack to faery size, or use some other strategy to get him out.



The Giant

If the faeries awaken the giant getting the key, or in any case once they free Jack, the giant awakens. Read the following italicized text—use a deep, rumbling voice for the giant:

The snoring suddenly stops with an enormous snort.

“Eh? What’s this? Fee fi fo fum, I smell the blood of ... faeries? Faeries! What are faeries doing in my castle! Arrrr!”

Boom! Boom! You hear the sound of enormous footsteps coming toward the kitchen!

The faeries and Jack may try to outrun the giant, but his long strides will soon catch up with them unless they manage to trick or distract him somehow.

The options open to the faeries are almost boundless. They may knock pots off the racks onto his head, lure him outside to fall off the cloud, trick him into following them into his dungeon and lock him in his own cell, use magic to bluff

or distract him, or even try to persuade him to become a friendly giant instead of a mean one.

The giant is very big, but not very bright. Just about any sort of clever stratagem is likely to work. If the players are completely stuck for ideas, Jack may suggest one or more of the above, but it’s best if the players devise their own plan as much as possible.

Just set Difficulty ratings for the challenges based on the actions of the faeries, and be as flexible as possible. If the faeries succeed too easily and the players don’t seem satisfied, perhaps the first try only slows the giant down and he’s soon back after them. While the giant shouldn’t be a pushover—this is the thrilling climax, after all—also remember that younger players often are easily frustrated when their plans go awry. Balance making the climax appropriately exciting and challenging with the needs of the players to ensure that everyone’s having a good time.

Back at Home

Once the faeries and Jack escape the giant down the beanstalk, they arrive back in Jack’s village. Read the following text:

As Jack steps off the beanstalk, his mother runs out from the cottage.

“Jack! Oh, Jack, you’ve come home,” she says, hugging her son.

“I’m sorry I ran away and scared you,” Jack says. “My friends, the faeries, came and saved me.” Jack’s mother turns to you.

“Thank you so much for helping my son when no one else would,” she says. “You are very brave little faeries. I owe each of you a Boon. If there’s ever anything a poor farmer woman can do for you, you only need to ask.”

Each faery now has a Boon from Jack’s mother. This finishes this story, but many others await. Depending on what happened to the giant, and the beanstalk, he might later come to Brightwood looking for revenge. Or perhaps Jack overheard something while in the castle that leads to another adventure. Listening to what the players have to say about the adventure may spark other ideas for your next story.

A Pooka's Tale



is pumpkinish head downcast, his misshapen toes pointed inward like a pigeon's, Gimlock the pooka moped through the forest, brooding on the day's events. Thanks to his gift of second sight, he knew in advance that his hundredth birthday would be his worst ever. And he'd had some pretty awful birthdays, let me tell you.

This one, however, took the cake. He had only three friends at his party, and he had warned them that they would all get into trouble trying to save a little blond-haired girl from being kidnapped by two dark faeries and a troll. His pixie friend Willow would fall into a monster's nest. The brownie, Katria, would be swept away by a raging stream. And Flynn the sprite was bound for a hag's cookpot.

It was terrible, terrible, with no way out. And Gimlock wasn't just thinking that because his powers as a seer allowed him to predict only bad outcomes. After sitting down to drink a cup of tea all by himself on his birthday, he read the leaves at the bottom. There he saw that he could save his friends if only he had an egg, a rope, and a bag of water. But he didn't have an egg, a rope, or a bag of water, so all three of them were doomed! O woe, thought Gimlock.

He walked for a long time, until he heard big footsteps coming. He hid and saw that it was the girl, Portia, he'd seen in his vision. Wonder of wonders, she was safe! He took a chance and called up at her.

"Portia!" he said, "You don't know me, and I am very ugly and you probably don't want to look at me, but..."

She loomed over him and, with the tip of her finger, tousled his matted hair. "You must be Gimlock. My brownie friend, Katria, told me all about you. Your friends helped me get away but now they're in trouble."

Gimlock clucked his tongue. "It's no use. To save them I need an egg, a rope, and a bag of water. And I have none of those things."

"I have this," said Portia, and she produced a boiled egg from her pocket. "I'm hungry but I didn't want to eat it because the boggart gave it to me. And everybody knows humans shouldn't eat faery food."

"Right you are," said Gimlock. She gave it to him, and he struggled not to be bowled over by it.

Together they walked back to her home. She said the whole adventure was like a bad dream, especially the part where the boggart shrunk her down to faery size. She'd returned to normal after he ran away from her.

They reached the spot where Willow had fallen into a hole, just like the vision had predicted. The goblin was gone, but Willow was still trapped, her foot ensnared by a root. She was about to be eaten by a monster: the hole was the nest of a garter snake.

Portia could not normally talk to animals, but the shrinking magic had funny side effects. She took the egg, leaned over the hole, and said, "Hey, snake. You can't eat my friend. I'll give you this tasty egg instead."

The snake readily agreed, but the little girl drove a hard bargain. "And what's that in your nest there? A piece of rope?"

Indeed, there was a length of half-rotten rope in the lair with the snake, and he was happy to be rid of it, because it reminded him of an old girlfriend. Portia, Willow, and Gimlock got well clear of its nest before the snake could tell them a long story about this former girlfriend of his.

"Well," said Gimlock, as the three of them walked along the riverbank, "now I have a rope. If only I had a bag of water, I could save my other friends."

Suddenly they heard a cry from the river. Katria was floating by, on what at first seemed like a raft, but turned out to be the water-logged form of the river troll.

Aiming carefully, Portia tossed the rope out to Katria, who grabbed onto it. "Bring his cap with you!" she called, and pulled on the rope, hauling the drenched and sputtering brownie to shore.

Willow and Katria embraced.

"Now we have only Flynn left to rescue," said Willow.

"If only we had a bag of water," Gimlock fretted.

Portia dipped the troll's cap into the water, filling it up. She handed it to the three faeries. "Take this with you to the hag's house," she said. "I hope you don't mind if I don't go with you. That hag is much too scary for me."

Agreeing that Portia should on no account go anywhere near the hag's place again, the three faeries set the little girl on her way back home. Then they struggled to carry the capful of water along the riverbank, until they finally reached their destination. There, Flynn and his hornet companion Stinger swooned in the boiling water of the hag's soup pot. Seeing the hag's back as she pattered in her hut, cutting carrots and garlic, Gimlock rushed up and dashed the capful of water onto the fire below the pot, dousing it. Willow flew up to rescue Flynn, making a second trip for the poor, sodden hornet.

And then they all ran like the wind before the hag came and got them.

Later, Stinger the hornet joined the four faeries under the tree called Father Chestnut, to finish off Gimlock's interrupted birthday party. They sang songs and played games and sipped sweet dew, but Gimlock stayed gloomy.

"What's wrong?" asked Katria.

"I've seen the future," moaned Gimlock, "and I'm going to be pelted with pieces of cake."

"Why is that?" asked Willow.

"Because you'll be mad that I'm still gloomy."

"And why is that?" asked Flynn.

Gimlock sank his head into his hands. "Because my predictions were all wrong, so I look foolish."

All together, Willow, Katria, Flynn, and Flynn's hornet friend Stinger pelted Gimlock with handfuls of cake.

The End?

Faery's Tale Character Sheet

Name: _____ Faery Type: _____

Attributes & Essence

Body: _____ Mind: _____ Spirit: _____ Starting Essence: _____ Dark Essence: _____

Gifts

Titles, Boons, & Charms

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