

# Changeling Packet

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## Chapter 1: Dummy's Guide to Changeling in One Page of Text

Basic Premise: Changelings are full supernatural creatures rooted in folklore about fairies. They are beings of two souls intertwined, one human, one pure fairy. They exist in two worlds at once, the "fairy world" (also called the Dreaming) and the mortal world. They can see into both worlds and are affected by both worlds, but to others they look and function like humans. Their own world, and their supernatural qualities, are invisible to others, though it goes on all around mortals and other supernaturals. A changeling can be sliced by a fairy sword or a real sword, but a werewolf cannot be harmed by a fairy sword or even see one. Fairies can make their imaginary world temporarily real and visible for an individual (by Enchanting). Changelings can also manifest their own individual full fairy self and make all of their magic real temporarily by using the Wyrd, allowing their powers to fully effect others. Things which are fairy/imaginary are referred to as "**Chimerical**".

Good and Bad: Changelings' main resource is Glamour (comparable to blood or gnosis), which is drawn chiefly from mortals in a process called Musing which involves fostering their creativity. It can also be drawn from rare places of power called Freeholds (comparable to Caerns). Changelings are repelled/harmed by disbelief (like mages and paradox) as well as mundane tedious tasks or people: this is called Banality. The goal of all changelings is to bring wonder/creativity/imagination back to the world.

"Masquerade": Even in the rare times one can see fairies (by being Enchanted or if they call upon the Wyrd), a force called the Mists causes those who see them to forget the experience. A bit like the Delirium, but does not fully affect other supernaturals and is more confusion and amnesia than fear.

Powers: Changelings have magic called Arts, structured in a similar fashion to disciplines (different categories, 5 levels, called Cantrips, in each). The biggest difference is that targeting. Changelings also have Realms which describe what they can target with their magic. For example, knowing the realm that covers shirts and knowing the Cantrip that heals things means you could heal a tear in a shirt. If you knew the Realm that covers other changelings, you could heal them instead. Realms also allow for "area of effect" Cantrips, which is one of the most powerful aspects of changeling magic. You can stack realms as well. For example if you stack the realm that affects werewolves and the realm that effects an area, you can effect all werewolves in an area. In order to cast a cantrip, you must perform a Bunk, a random act demanded by the Dreaming as payment (examples vary widely. Bunks are could be compared most closely to Mage Foci and the most elaborate the Bunk the more powerful the Cantrip.

Divisions: Fae are divided into Courts either seelie ('light fae' associated with honor, tradition, order) and unseelie ('dark fae' associated with freedom, chaos and deception), though all fae carry the potential for the other Court in them. Also divided by age: Childling (until roughly 13), Wilder (until early 20s) and Grump (up to mid 30s). Changelings are further divided into Kiths, which are akin to vampire clans but denote extreme physical differences of fairy races. They are also divided between noble and commoner, with nobles further divided by social structures called Houses.



## Chapter 2: Changeling Social Hierarchy

A core concept of the changeling genre is the fealty-based system of *Title* and the numerous binding oaths and traditions that come with it. *Title* is not merely a construct of society, but is backed by the Dreaming itself (though such means as the *Sovereign* art). Though the majority of changelings do not possess *Title* it is a core part of those who do.

### Oaths and Titles:

All individuals with *Title* must have an oath of fealty to another who grants them their title and that individual must be of a higher *Title* than they. A Knight (*Title* 2) may be sworn to a Duke (*Title* 5) but could not be sworn to another Knight or a Page. An oath of vassalage is also exchanged, commanding that the lord not abuse their vassal. This process of fealty is a critical element in the changeling system and should not be ignored. All PCs with titles should have a PC or NPC lord to which they must answer. Remember, all nobles are served and are servants themselves.

The penalties for breaking an oath of fealty are severe, both socially and those enforced by the Dreaming (see *The Shining Host* for details) and include going blind. Because there are instances of civil war even between nobles, in cases of potential illegitimacy of a lord STs are encouraged to allow the question of whether an oath of fealty was broken to be decided after the fact. For example, if there is a coup against an incompetent count by his daughter, not all vassals of the count who side with his daughter involved simply go blind. At least, not until she fails.

Each noble of higher than *Title* 2 should have at least a few vassals of the *Title* below them.

### Commoner vs Noble:

A noble is an individual with title regardless of their Kith, but often sidhe are thought of as the noble kith. Indeed, almost all sidhe hold at least one or two levels of *Title*, barring non-Arcadian Scathach sidhe. However, commoners (those of non-sidhe kiths such as Trolls) can be granted title as well, though this is a rare and special occasion. They are often thought of as less than sidhe nobles by the sidhe and sometimes as sell-outs by rebellious minded commoners. Only a small handful of commoners in all of Concordia (America) ever rise above Knight. There is also the notion of commoners having small amounts *Title* due to heroic actions as outlined in the status section of the *Shining Host Player's Guide*.

### Nobles and Land (Fiefdoms):

Most *Title* above Knight should also command land (also called a Fiefdom) to go with it. Nobility and land go hand-in-hand as the very point of being a noble is to rule an area. While there are unlanded nobles above Knight, their *Title* is hollow and unimpressive. STs should discourage the presence of unlanded nobles above *Title* level 2. No Baron wants to have another Baron with no real power hanging around their barony scuffing up their *Title* after all. Unlanded nobles should be treated as having their *Title* halved, rounding up if they are allowed at all. A wedded couple or pair related in some other fashion (brother and sister) might rule over a place together, under certain circumstances.

Knights and Pages (*Title 2 and 1*) make up the bulk of nobility and aren't expected to have land, though well regarded Knights may well be granted a Freehold by their Lord which would be considered theirs to rule over.

It is not recommended that games begin with individuals with more than *Title 3* because of the nature of controlling land and strongly recommended that PCs not exceed *Title 4* as such almost certainly extends to having control of a region outside of a single game's control. Further, unlanded nobles of high title are especially peculiar and, in truth, vestigial to the noble structure. *Title 5* is not recommended for PCs and is coordinator approval. Higher titles are prohibited for PCs.

#### Title and Fiefdoms:

- 1- None
- 2- None or possibly a freehold or a very small town.
- 3- "Barony": A small-to-moderate sized city, which should include at least one personal freehold. A significant portion of a very large city. Ex: Manhattan in New York, Dayton, Ohio.
- 4- "County" A sizable portion of a state or a very large city. This should a few baronies in it. Ex: Los Angeles, California or the Florida Panhandle.
- 5- "Duchy" An entire state. Some very sparsely populated areas might include parts of more than 1 state. Ex: Kentucky, the Northwest Territory.
- 6- "Kingdom": A small country or a large portion of a large country. Ex: Portugal, the American South.

#### Heirs:

Traditionally, *Title* is inherited, though other methods are not entirely uncommon in modern Concordia which has given several concessions to commoners in varying regions. An heir might be the biological child of the noble parents, as individuals both of two fae are much more likely to undergo Chrysalis. However, there are no guarantees so it is just as common and accepted for a noble to have a ward whom they name their heir. Heirs are effectively unlanded nobles with no real power beyond their ability to influence their parents, which is why it is common for them to seek a real *Title* in addition to being heirs. It is very common for a baron's daughter to be a practicing Knight and a Queen's son might well be also be given a Duchy to rule over in addition to his *Title* of Prince.

“Lord” and “Lady”:

There are a few uses for these terms. Some games might find it useful to have an alternate word for *Title 2* that doesn't have the same martial meaning as Knight or Dame, in which case Lord can do nicely. This is particularly appropriate for individuals who might own a freehold or be employed in a vital but administrative role. It is also appropriate to refer to heirs of barons or counts in this fashion.

Other Titles:

Other cultures might employ terms such as “earl” (equivalent to duke or count) or viscount (equivalent to a baron). This is perfectly reasonable, but it should be conveyed to others which title level it reflects. The king of Burning Sun goes by “Chief” for example, even though he is a western sidhe and it's a little racist.

High Lords: In addition to the structure above, most noble Houses have a High Lord associated with them. Some of the house founders are still alive and serve as the High Lord, while other houses are temporarily without a High Lord because they are missing. While High Lords don't have land (explicitly anyway: it's possible they could be granted a fiefdom if they so wished), their power reigns over an entire House. Technically, Queen Mab is answerable to the High Lord of House Fiona. Their influence and power is such that they are generally regarded as the equals of Kings and Queens.

#### **Secret and not-so-secret societies:**

Changeling social networks extend far beyond simply being seelie or unseelie, commoner or noble. There are a dozen or more printed secret or open societies which range from sinister conspiracies such as the Beltane Blade or the Monkey's paw, to academic orders like the Crystal Circle to haute social clubs like the Cat's Cradle and the Golden Sickle. The specifics of these organizations can be found in source material. Membership is Coord Notify for almost all of them, admission is entirely controlled by STs. STs and players may also make up their own societies if they so wish.

#### **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Resurgence:**

As part of OWbN cannon, 9/11 brought about another, possibly final, wave of creatures from the Dreaming. While the 1<sup>st</sup> Resurgence brought back the (mostly seelie) nobility and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurgence brought the remaining (mostly unseelie) nobility, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Resurgence brought back a flood of dark Thallain and Denizens. These creatures have begun a wave of terror across all of Concordia and beyond, but their presence is not the most terrifying. Whispers abound that they are but heralds for the Fomorians, the ancient foes which time again defeated even the progenitors of the fae, the Tuwatha. It is said that they slowly awaken and return particularly in the wake of the shattering of the Red Star. For more information, see OWbN Changeling Genre Update below.

#### **The Shadow Court:**

The Shadow Court is a large and complicated body whose membership varies from doomsday cultists to those who simply seek equity for the unseelie. In many ways, the Shadow Court now suffers from its

own success: an unseelie King sits on the throne of a Concordian Kingdom and numerous unseelie houses now fly their flags prominently, bolstered by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurgence which is now more than a decade old. The Court has splintered in recent years, with entire swaths within departing as their goals have been met. Yet for those whose ideals are focused more on Winter, the struggle is bolstered greatly by the thalain-centric 3<sup>rd</sup> Resurgence, as well as the appearance of the denizens and the whisperings that the Fomorians begin to step into the world once more.

Because of this split there is no longer any noble house which has its entire membership in the Shadow Court. Even House Balor has membership which feels that the time for lurking in conspiracy is done, lead by the Guardians of the Gate who are wary of those things they see lurking at the edges of the Paths of Balor. For more details, see OWbN Changeling Genre Update below

### **The Parliament of Dreams:**

The truest vision of the legendary High King David, the Parliament was meant to end the conflicts between nobles and commoners, as well as to give a voice to the people. It failed spectacularly and crumbled when his overwhelming charisma no longer was there to maintain it. Many thought this would be the end for the Parliament.

However, some happened which none had forseen: the assassination of Queen Mary Elizabeth ap Dougal at the hands of werewolves. The death of this stalwart leader, and the chaos that followed, galvanized the Parliament into remaking itself, now under the chancellorship of Princess Lenoire ni Dougal, High King David's former heir. Though they managed, with the assistance of the monarchs of Concordia, to arrange a succession the dignity of the body did not last. Chancellor Lenore, as she prefers now, is constantly assailed by frustrations by a body which represents too many interests to be effective. Endless debate leads to frequent walk outs, shouting matches and even duels on the floor of Parliament. Thus, the body remains intact, though agreements are very rare and its enforcement powers, without the backing of the High King, rely on the monarchs of Concordia who are only bound to do so out of whatever obligation they feel to the long-absent David. For more details, see OWbN Changeling Genre Update below.

Individual games may have characters join the Parliament with coord approval, though it is preferred each game limit this to one PC. PCs of Title 5 may also stand as members without counting against this "max".

### **Conflicts:**

In the books, there is a certain focus on commoner vs noble conflicts. While this remains a valid story for anyone wishing to tell it, it's worth noting that almost no changelings remain alive from the Accordance War, save those who have been sheltered in freeholds, due to the brief cycle of a changeling's lifespan. Few even still hold on from the conflicts which arose after the High King's disappearance who were not childlings then and grumps now. Danwyn and Adama have both faded and their armies disbanded. All the while the conflict over the throne of Concordia was never resolved, leading to devolution of power back to the individual monarchs. Concrdia has decades to acclimate to the return of the sidhe in general

and well over a decade to acclimate to the noble houses being balanced between seelie and unseelie by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurgence. Much of the land has either made its peace with noble rule, fortified commoner rule or established an equitable mix of the two, though individual chronicles may of course establish local stories outside of this new norm.

Remember also that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Resurgence represents a flood of dark thalain, which threaten all fae alike.

#### **OWbN Canonical NPCs:**

Unless otherwise stated, all canonical NPCs are assumed to exist, having sheltered in freeholds in order to avoid forgetting themselves. Remember that canonical NPCs are under the control of the Changeling Coordinator's office and alterations to them for story purposes should be done in concert with the coordinator. Presently, the four highest ranking changes of note in OWbN that differ from cannon are that Brondolf Ap Aesin (featured in the Book of Lost Houses) is king of the Kingdom of Grass having replaced Queen Mary Elizabeth ap Dougal after she was killed by werewolves, that King Meilge ap Eilnud has retired (in order to try to hold together the Shadow Court) and named Faerilyth ap Eunlid as Queen-Regent of Willows and that Princess Lenore ap Dougal has taken up leading the Parliament of Dreams.



### **Chapter 3: The Dreaming**

The term "Dreaming" is among the most confusing terms in all of the Changeling genre, principally because it actually refers to numerous different concepts while being used interchangeably. For old and new changeling players, this packet seeks to clearly outline the differences.

#### **The Dreaming as a Universal Force**

The Dreaming is a collection of the psychic energy of all dreams, wishes, fears, thoughts and feelings of all creatures in existence. This is the grandest version of the concept, comparable to the Triad of Wyrms, Wyld, Weaver of the Garou genre or the consensual reality of the Mage Genre. In this sense, it is a universal power which capable of functionally boundless creation as well as control over the forces of destiny. When something is described as "The will of the Dreaming" (which happens a lot in changeling books), this is what is being described. The Dreaming isn't on anyone's side, per say, nor is it good or evil. However, it does take a hand in destiny and it does from time-to-time make mandates or enforce certain concepts. Noble *Title*, for example, is thought to be enforced by the Dreaming to some degree, as even those who are masters of the *Soverign* art cannot bind the will of those the Dreaming acknowledges to be of higher *Title*. The Dreaming is also thought to bring about things like High King David's destiny to reunite Concrdia. Glamour is the blood/manifestation of the Dreaming as energy and Arts are ways that that energy is channeled.

The Dreaming as a Universal Force is also the mutual origin of all things faery. Merfolk, Kinain, Kithain, Thalain, Chimera, Nunnehi, Denizens, Inanime and all other things which possess or are made up of glamour are 'of the Dreaming'.

The Dreaming as a Universal Force is opposed by Banality, a universal force which represents departure from creativity, loss of emotion, despair (though not fear) and drone-like compliance. Banality separates the normal world from knowing the magic of dreams through a force called the Mists, which causes almost all sentient beings (including supernatural ones) to forget about displays of the Dreaming. While some might think the Mists protect fae by masking their magic from the harshest form of disbelief or from those who would hunt them, in reality the Mists are there to make sure it is almost impossible for anyone to know how powerful dreams really are. Electronic recording devices are no less subject to the Mists than anything else and \$30 cell phones should not be allowed to circumvent cosmic forces and learn the truth.

### **The Dreaming as an Overlay on the mortal world**

Another way the word Dreaming is used is to describe the more magical version of the world that exists just over the waking world. It is a brighter, more colorful place that is perceived by changelings and other Enchanted creatures. Indeed, when a mortal (or supernatural) is Enchanted, what occurs is that they are able to see and interact with the Dreaming as an Overlay. Chimerical creatures can be seen here, old but still beloved buildings might reflect their former glory, playgrounds might be mad scientist labs, sandcastles might be besieged by tiny fire-breathing sand dragons and changelings appear as their fairy selves. This world is invisible and intangible to all non-enchanted beings which, for many purposes means it is not quite "real". Thus, a purely Chimercical death ray cannot harm someone who is not Enchanted (but see below).

A changeling (or other appropriately empowered entity of the Dreaming as a Universal Force) can call upon a particularly potent surge of Glamour from the Dreaming as a Universal Force to make their fae selves (and their own personal trappings such as their Arts) 'real', crossing the boundary into full effect on the mortal world. Doing so is called "Calling upon the Wyrd". Once the episode is over, the Mists cover up the effects in the memories of others. While memories are influenced, the effects on the physical world are not: if a nocker calls upon the Wyrd to make his death ray 'real' and shoots you with it for 3 Agg, the Mists will make you forget what dealt you the damage but they will not repair it.

### **The Dreaming as a Dimension**

This version of the Dreaming is, broadly speaking, a dimension in which lie the past and present dreams of all mortals as well as a variety of fantastical realms outside of even those imaginings. The Dreaming overlaps the physical world at its closest point (and can be seen by all changelings) but also departs from it as one ventures towards the deeper realms. Thus fae exist partly in the Dreaming at all time (see above), but can go there fully as well, mortal bodies and all. Once fae enter the Dreaming as a Dimension, they no longer are in a location which corresponds to the mortal world.



Frustratingly, there is almost no printed material which clearly defines mechanically how one goes to the Dreaming as there is with Stepping Sideways for Garou. For the sake of ST's sanity, Changelings and Kinain should be able to easily access the Dreaming from any Trod or Freehold and, even without those means, should be able to get to the parting between the mortal world Dreaming within roughly 10 minutes assuming the area isn't overtly Banal. However, they cannot freely escape into the Dreaming as werewolves can into the Umbra, unless using arts such as Flickerflash.

There are three levels of the Dreaming as a Dimension: the Near Dreaming, the Far Dreaming and the Deep Dreaming. Each of these is outlined in greater detail in source material.

It's also useful to think of the Dreaming, in all of its forms, as a willful entity. It has a plan, as well as whims, and could be seen as weaving through the other dimensions in the World of Darkness.

### **The Dreaming as a Dimension and the Umbra**

Is the Dreaming part of the Umbra? Like many things, cannon lore is divided on this topic. Some descriptions (usually found in other genre's books) clearly state that it is. Other sources suggest strongly it isn't. For example, there is a certain kind of Native American fae which can travel to the Umbra but is unable to travel to the Dreaming. These decisions are ultimately up to the storyteller as for how it works in their game, but it is the recommendation of this packet that STs have the two areas divided. Fae would otherwise be able to readily venture to the Umbra and there really isn't anything suggesting they do that.

Should STs wish to allow other supernatural types to access the Dreaming via the Umbra, it is strongly recommended that this not be an easy journey or a place where they can stay long without serious consequences even if powerful precautions are taken (such as rapid insanity, being taken under the hill, etc). Even powerful mages or elder werewolves simply are not made of the same stuff as fae.

Likewise, Changelings shouldn't have an easy time getting to the Umbra, even if such is allowed. It should, at minimum, require complete mastery of the art of Wayfare and the realm of Nature, as well as some amount of Lore.

### **The Dreaming and the Triad**

The Weaver, Wyld and Wyrms is lens through which the World of Darkness is often viewed, even for genres other than Werewolf. It often comes up, therefore, what sort of alignment the Dreaming, fae or other such creatures have. Usually the answer is Wyld, and there are certainly good, book-supported reasons to think that way. The real answer is, like so many other things, up to ST interpretation. If one wishes to think about fae in this kind of fashion, it is actually reasonable to think of fae as having elements of both Wyld and Wyrms, the latter particularly true of highly unseelie fae. It is further very reasonable to think that the Weaver is another term for Banality or at least that the two are closely related (at least the insane Weaver of modern WoD). By no means, however, should one think that the cosmology of one genre should fully define the cosmology of another. The Dreaming is not the same as the Wyld, nor is it some sub-element of the Wyld.

### Other Genres, the Mists and The Dreaming

It is entirely possible for other supernatural types to become Enchanted (able to perceive the Dreaming as an Overlay) by fae using the book-presented rules for doing so, either willingly or otherwise. During these times they should be able to interact with the fae as presented in the book.

What should not be allowed, however, is being “permanently Enchanted” and simply being casually allowed to view the Dreaming when one is not a fae creature. No matter how much the local baroness likes you, there is no book support for such occurrences nor are creatures without fae souls acclimated to the alien world of the Dreaming. Further, doing so effectively circumvents the Mists, which typically requires a 5 point Kinain-only fae blood power. Even kinain, individuals with blood ties to changelings, cannot always be enchanted without a different Kinain-only fae blood power and even that only allows them to enchant themselves using the normal rules. There are some obscure merits from the Dark Ages which allow greater ease of seeing the fae, but during the Dark Ages fae were easier to interact with as the Shattering had not even yet forced fae into the Changeling Way.

Remember that the Mists are a core part of changeling genre, as is the mystery around the fae. While STs could technically state that sunscreen allows vampires to walk around during the day, many would consider it bad form to do so. So too is circumventing the Mists and the inherent separation of fae from others and such is likewise strongly discouraged.

Does this mean that fae shouldn't be used cross-genre? Absolutely not! An excellent example would be that Bob the Son of Ether who hangs out with a guy whose license says James Smith. Now Bob can see that James is an elf in chainmail when he tunes his goggles correctly, but no matter what, he can never seem to recall that when they are turned off. And he might well recall getting into a scrap of some kind with James at his side, only to find three impaled ghouls laying dead at their feet. And James might even tell Bob they were dispatched by the Blade of Caer Solan, his ancestral weapon, but ultimately, all Bob is going to remember is a 16 year old kid with a spatula in hand. In this way Bob can understand that fae are real, that James is a fae and that fae can do some extraordinary stuff. Yet he remains firmly within genre and influenced by the Mists. While this is inconvenient to some kinds of RP, the same could be said for only being able to come out at night or not having flesh, but such things are rarely questioned for Vampire and Wraith genres.

The Mists, like the Dreaming, are a sentient force which actively pursue their role. Thus, digital recordings, mystic observation and other techniques are also influenced by them.



## Chapter 4: OWbN-Specific Changeling Genre

The following Genre Update passed council in 2016 and reflects OWbN-specific story updates for Changeling, including resolutions for the major events in War In Concordia. There are also current open-ended plots and events for STs to feature in their chronicles if they so wish.

### Section 1: The Fate of Concordia

(This plotline is rooted in War in Concordia and Kingdom of Willows)

High King David's disappearance remains a mystery. None discover the means by which he vanished nor are they able to recover him. He is not dead, but neither has he remembered the truth of his fae self...and may not ever again. Concordia mourns its monarch, but slowly even they begin to forget.

Sir Sief continues to search for him, retains control of Caliburn and is heard from less and less with each passing year as he ventures to stranger places still

High Queen Faerilyth completes her tour and spends years searching for David and hoping he will return. Eventually, however, even her faith begins to falter. Though popular among her supporters, she is never able to secure enough support to assure a place as the ruler of Concordia. She accepts a position as Queen Regent of Willows in light of King Meilge's "illness" (see below)

Queen Morwen remains similarly steadfast, blocking every maneuver Faerilyth attempts from the ever-more decaying seat of the High King. She grows cold as ice, but holds power over Tara Nar still, not budging an inch.

Princess Lenore: Much as Faerilyth never gained sufficient support to secure her claim to the throne, so too proved the case for Princess Lenore. Though there are some who still hold out hope, the Dougal girl accepts an almost exclusively ceremonial posting as the head of the newly reconvened Parliament of Dreams (see below).

Danwyn and Adama: The two entities battle for many years with their respective allies and armies, coming to no clear conclusion. Evenly matched, their war eventually crumbles from weariness and new dangers appearing. Though tensions remain high in some areas between commoners and nobles, active war draws to a close. Both are old now, having been away from freeholds. Adama with faded energy agrees to voice opposition in the parliament and Danwyn seeks refuge in the freeholds of his house, never having yet found his Kingdom.

Amid the diminished tensions (between commoners and nobles) and grand new dangers (see below), the Parliament of Dreams reconvenes, charged with an important task (see below). It is just as useless and bickering a body as it was near its end, but every now and then manages to get a thing or two done. Power decentralizes, falling much more to the individual monarchs, secret societies and other regional entities.

## **Section 2: The Second and Third Resurgence, the Queen's Death, the Shattering of the Red Star**

(Drawn from the Book of Lost Houses, the Book of Houses 2, Denizens of the Dreaming, events that will be forthcoming in cannon for OP C20 and OWbN original events.)

The reappearance of Aesin, Varich and Daireann during the second resurgence represents a massive change in the power dynamic of both the nobility as a whole and the unseelie nobility in particular. Whereas before the seelie houses could hold the unseelie in an easy minority, these powerful new entities will not so easily accept the burden of a drastically unfair seelie rule. It has been over a decade now and the shellshock of reappearing has worn off. Now the houses stand ready to make their demands.

The dreams of Concordia in particular (and the world in general) change on a fateful day that remains still almost too difficult to discuss. When the Heart of Apples, mere miles away from David's old winter retreat, is cut deep, the Paths of Balor and the portals without silver roads are flung open. Yet it is no shining host or gothic lords of unseelie that emerge now: it is nightmare Thalain, the dark Denizens and even some true Fomorians that emerge in far greater force than ever before. Yet they know with strange instinct that they must lie in wait, lurking in darkness as they seek a shattered star.

The breaking of the Red Star causes the Wyrms to thrash and tap allies not commonly seen in the lands: Thallain forces, true Fomori and the Denizens are encouraged to be used by storytellers across genres as antagonists who have laid in wait for this moment. The office of the changeling coordinator will be happy to assist in this matter for any unfamiliar with these baddies from nightmare.

The balance of seelie and unseelie is tilted dramatically to a much more even place. However, the Shadow Court, an institution built on resistance, both swells and bursts at the seams with this change. Aesin and Varich, bold, mighty and noble, have no need for such masks. The Purist faction, seeing a chance for real rule in the cold light of day, leaves the Court in almost its entirety. Even some Balor, a small but important society called the Guardians of the Gate, go with them to join an unseelie federation which demands open acknowledgement of its power. The vows and secret arts of the Shadow Court rob those departing of much of their memory, making sure that even as these lords enter the overt halls of power are not able to betray their former allies further.

King Meilge feigns illness, no longer able to both maintain his post as monarch while also holding fast on the ever increasing ranks of the Shadow Court. He appoints Faerilyth, now more under his thrall than ever in her grief, as his regent while he turns his attention to seeking to maintain the Court.

The Seelie Court, lacking the leadership of the High King and being presented with more palatable unseelie options, relinquishes portions of its control to their dark cousins. Many acknowledge the need of these lords of the north if the new surge of more drastic nightmare forces are to be combatted.

PCs and NPCs may now more freely choose their house, even if they wish to be part of the noble structure and not part of the Shadow Court. Some cities agree to have unseelie and seelie change with

the seasons, while other locations simply divide up territory more evenly. The seelie court still holds a larger sway at the highest levels but the power balance is much more even.

As a part of this pact, it is agreed that the successor to Queen Mary Elizabeth of Grass, who was slain by werewolves during attempted negotiations to form stronger ties, will hail from an Unseelie House. Brondolf ap Aesin (see The Book of Lost Houses) is eventually selected by a combination of royal lottery, the ascent of the other monarchs and through the efforts of the Parliament of Dreams. He is seen as an even-handed ruler, believing in a balance between seelie and unseelie and known to have a keen military mind. However, he shares the rage of House Dougal at the loss of the queen and is a known supporter of the Mithril Spur (see below).

The Order of the Mithril Spur: In the wake of the loss of their beloved Queen, some fae nobles (and commoners) have settled on a path of vengeance. Lead by extremists from House Dougal, they have toiled to develop weapons against the werewolves they blame for their loss. Though in reality it was the machinations of the Shadow Court and the Black Spiral Dancers who brought this tragedy, the Mithril Spur makes no distinction as this knowledge is poorly understood at best (made only more so by active deception from the Shadow Court and the power of the Mists). The House that once made the bane of fae (cold iron) into cherished steel has toiled to make a new treasures and chimera to bring voice to their pain. Some in houses with greater ties to the werewolves, such as Gwydion, still urge that peace or even alliance is possible. The Spurs, driven to unseelie urges, will have none of it and embark on their own crusade.

Note: The Mithril Spur is designed for use by storytellers as an antagonist for werewolf games and as an entity for influencing minds in chronicles featuring changelings. They represent the most hurt and extreme of changelings and while their viewpoints (all-out war with the werewolves). The specifics of their weapons are up to individual STs, keeping in mind that Dougal are among the greatest of fae craftsmen. These items are made for the use of changeling hands only and may not be acquired by creatures not of glamour. Clever fae will make their weapons purely from dreamstuff, where they are hidden from view until the wyrd is called upon to make them real and deadly. PCs are free to join the Order as well.

### **Section 3: A Changing World**

(original OWbN plot)

As time drags on and the signs of Winter grow stronger, there are those Reformist sidhe who feel both real guilt for abandoning their charges and a call to more truly join with those whose dreams foster them. Yet the Changeling Way, which most sidhe spurn, did not occur overnight. For some of these sidhe, the time to save the world and their kind from banality seems too short to wait.

Thus, the near-mad doomsday seers of House Beaumayn meet in secret efforts with select members of the human-loving and oathbroken House Liam. House Leanhaun hears of their efforts and manipulate their way forward, hoping that this peculiar endeavor might ease the burden of their curse. Through

forbidden and dangerous experimentation, the conspiracy yields grand results that inspire both wonder and fear.

The Ritual of Lost Rebirth is made and spread. By conducting the rite, which culminates by pricking one's finger on a cold iron spinning needle and falling into a deep nightmare ridden sleep for a month and a day, a sidhe may instantly undergo the Changeling Way and fully merge with their human host. Though initially thought just a wild rumor, highly progressive sidhe, including some of house Fiona, claim this as not only a boon against the tide banality, but a price owed to their abandoned commoner kin. Yet most sidhe view the process as an affront to their purity at best and complete madness or treason against their race at worst.

**Note:** PCs or NPCs undergoing the Ritual gain 1 permanent point of banality which may never be removed. They also gain the wraith of many of their peers, instantly losing a measure of Title and no longer being able to hold Title Higher than 3 under any circumstances. Further, they are 1 trait down on all Sovereign challenges. While these are heavy prices, the rewards are marvelous indeed: Such sidhe lose the Frailty: Banality's Curse and are reborn just as commoners or Scathach sidhe would be. Leanhaun sidhe may have their house curse lessened considerably or even eliminated, at storyteller discretion. Sidhe that undergo this ritual should be viewed with great suspicion by other sidhe, as this is a frightening and potentially ruinous trend. The ritual itself is filled with ill omens and, if played out ICly, should be a chilling experience. Commoners, however, may react positively to the move, seeing some of the distance between them and their rulers diminished. STs are encouraged to be creative, as any choosing this path should feel something very sinister at play, even if the results are positive and joyful.

