

CASTLES[®] CRUSADES

THE CRIMSON PACT



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THE CRIMSON PACT

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This module is designed for 3-4 characters at 3rd-8th level or higher, with predominantly warriors and those capable of sustaining themselves in combat against epic odds.

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THE CRIMSON PACT



Cyngen hefted his long spear into the throng of the Orddwy tribe. He was hoping to hit one of the chiefs or a champion if his aim was any good; it would give him some status among his own people. It wouldn't be as glorious as facing one of the foes face to face and cutting them down, but it would be a start.

This feud was an explosive matter that split the three tribes instantly, rending a delicate peace that had remained for several decades since the weakening of the Imperial conquerors from Italia began. Now the Pact was shattered and there was no going back as blood was shed and age old grievances aired again, never entirely forgotten.

Cyngen called upon the Fey and the Gods to guide his hand; he would need their aid if this border dispute would end. Bards circulated on the fringes of the crimson fray, watching the warriors

and hoping to catch a glimpse of greatness and feats of valor akin to the gods' own in order to transform them into poetic art.

Carnyxes blared deafeningly from all sides, signaling the time for a furious charge between the Orddwy and Tegeingl tribes. Showers of arrows and spears commenced hailing on the heads of the two peoples in a deadly rain. On the signal from the bronze animal-headed horns, the hairy wild-men dashed towards each other.

Sliding out his leaf bladed sword, Cyngen was on the front-line of his tribe's rush. Although the Pact was sworn decades ago before Cyngen was born, he knew that it must be avenged because the druids said so.

The sunny day shone golden across the golden field in the highland region of the north. The warriors of the three tribes cared nothing for the present kingdom that now ruled the region, Gwynedd, or its cruel king Maelgwn. They just wanted to settle the injustice and find the ones that committed the unspeakable atrocity.



This adventure concerns the frequency of tribal feuds and bitter betrayals over a small region in which the adventurers will find themselves caught. The story is complex and involves multiple warring groups, a point of contention, and back-stabbings due to a secret agenda, in addition to the players being able to formulate a clever answer to solve the dilemma by its end.

It is designed for 3-4 characters at 3rd-8th level or higher, with predominantly warriors and those capable of sustaining themselves in combat against epic odds. The players must discover the point of contention which has created the break in the once fairly harmonious peace among the many tribes, and try to bring order to the land as outsiders. An ancient Pact was broken by members of several tribes and it exploded into pure chaos.

This adventure circles around Celtic myth and history with an Arthurian angle and can be easily integrated into the world of Airhde. Using Welsh sources primarily, the monsters, faeries, and peoples are adaptable for any fantasy setting.

INTRODUCTION

Four hundred years ago, during the occupation of the Island of the Mighty by foreign invaders from Italia, the native tribes were mostly subjugated by these armor-clad, red-tunic-wearing soldiers. To the northwest, however, the many tribes were never completely ensnared into the empire. The Orddwy, Tegeingl and Gangani tribes made an uneasy Pact to channel their animosity towards the enemy instead of each other.

Between the many tribes of the Island of the Mighty and Éire, there was a secret involvement with the Immortal beings of the Otherworld. The exchange of the two worlds was a random mix of positive and not, with the joining of blood-lines going back to far antiquity and beyond.

One involvement that concerns the three tribes, is a prized sword that was claimed from an elf champion after a conflict. The battle was fought between the three tribes and an Otherworldly army during one Nos Calon Gaeaf (Halloween) over a sacred hill.

The hill, Bryn Maenhiri, is one of many portals to the Otherworld found in the countryside and each tribe wanted it for themselves at any cost, so a terrible war was fought to claim it. This bloodshed and fury brought the attention of the Immortals, who sent their own army to disperse the troublesome Humans. After much death was wrought by their hands, the Immortals sent their champion, an elf named Eifion, to slay and drive off the many Humans. Eifion was unmatched in the struggle that day; no one man could cut him, owing to the strength of his sword.

By a combination of warriors from all three tribes, the elfin warrior was slain and the Otherworldly army was driven back into the hill. Eifion's sword, a magical blade named Haeardarian (Thunder Iron) was shattered into three pieces in the battle. Each piece was taken by one of the three tribal chiefs as part of a Pact: to guard and watch the hill and the many other places like it in their territories and to drive the Otherworld visitors back if needed.

Now after four centuries, the three pieces of Haeardarian ('Hi-ay-arn-dar-ian') are missing from the hidden collections of the chiefs with no explanation. It took no time for the tribes to return to their old grievances with this discovery. Bloodshed has erupted

again across the three tribes' borders over the Pact, each blaming the other for the missing sword fragments.

Unbeknownst to the tribes, a descendant of Eifion has come to claim his father's sword from the hands of the Mortals and return to Faery to fix the sword. The adventurers will happen across the elf on his travels, bearing the sword pieces; he will be very secretive and uncaring about the chaos he left behind in the tribes. The son of Eifion seeks only an entrance to the Otherworld and the adventurers will end up having to track him through both worlds and back before setting the many wrongs to right.

FOR THE CASTLE KEEPER

Wherever the adventurers encounter the elf bearing his mysterious wrapped package, they will find he is impatient and rude and wants to make his way without them. Somehow one fragment of the sword will fall into their hands before they ever arrive into one of the tribes' lands and the elf on the run. This shard will cause the characters untold difficulty and many trials before everything is resolved.

This complex mess with the three tribes will never likely be completely resolved by the adventurers, but their intervention might create new problems or improvements on the dilemma. This adventure will require the adventurers to travel to the Otherworld and back, as well as contend with the bitter and angry tribes in the Mortal world over the magic sword.

Several adventures' worth of gaming is wrapped up in this dilemma that could easily become the makings of a large campaign if the CK decides; otherwise it would only take 2-4 sessions to complete.

Unless the CK has his/her own plans, these are several hooks that might assist the story along and send the adventurers on their way to become a part of this adventure:

HOOK 1: While camping, the Son of Eifion might cross them on his way to the nearest Otherworld Portal. He might ask for a place briefly by the fire to warm and rest before moving on. However it happens and plays out, he drops a piece of the magic sword for the adventurers to find.

HOOK 2: As the adventurers are journeying across country, the Son of Eifion could accidentally run into them, causing an accident. During this accident a fragment of the sword is lost and falls to the feet of the adventurers as the elf runs on.

HOOK 3: Talk of tribal unrest and bloody battles finds its way to the adventurers wherever they are, and with it the word of opportunity and even profit. The tribes are hiring extra swords to aid them in this feud and ignore the threats of their king Maelgwn. The adventurers could be arriving on the border of two tribes and encounter the Son of Eifion.

HOOK 4: While the adventurers are on their travels they find a gleaming fragment of Haeardarian. Knowing it is of a magical origin, the quest is now about trying to find the rest of it and restore it. Unknowingly they will encounter the tribal feuds and find out about the Pact and realize the source, and perhaps offer to track the elf.

However the CK incorporates this adventure into his/her campaign; it will quickly become complicated as they are entangled in the inter-tribal dispute and hunt for the sword fragments.

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ACT 1 – A SHATTERED PACT OVER A SHATTERED SWORD

THE ELF WITH A SECRET

(Noting the many Hooks listed in the CK's section, this is one method of placing the players into the crux of the matter.)

While the adventurers are making their way in their travels across country, they are blindsided by a hurried elf. The elf is dressed in a white and golden tunic emblazoned with a great oak tree, checkered trousers, a torque and other rich jewelry, and a dark green cloak. His hair is long and fair, and his eyes are almond and a shining blue. (He is a Morwyn elf.)

Amren ap Eifion is the elf's name; he is a warrior of the Red Branch in the Otherworld. He views Mortals as little more than a nuisance and has no time for them to get in his way. Under his arm is a wrapped canvas holding something important. He is unusually impatient and fidgety for an elf.

Amren will not have time to deal with the adventurers as he is trying to make his way to a Portal to the Otherworld. If he must, he will draw his own sword to fend them off;

"Let me be on my way, Mortals; I have an urgency that must be addressed with no delays. Stand aside and do not risk challenging me."

The elf will not fight if he can help it and will use powers to evade the adventurers and fade into the woods with his goods, unaware the he dropped a piece of the sword of his slain father.

NOTE: It is essential to the later story in this adventure that Amren is left alive. He is needed later in the story when they journey to the Otherworld, to hunt both for him and the sword remnants. The CK must somehow involve the players and let them find one of the fragments while letting Amren run on.

Amren's trail in the Fey haunted woods will be difficult to track (CL:13) as he is using enchanted boots. The adventurers would not be able to find the hill of standing stones that he will use this first time around; it will evade their attempts until they first deal with the next encounter.

(The Sword Fragment Properties)

One large shard of the elfin blade is in the hands of the adventurers now. Its Fey metal is covered in highly detailed and intricate Celtic patterns, golden and shimmering. They move and have a life of their own, even though it is just a shard of metal. Its edges are dangerously sharp and cannot be dulled. It was constructed by elven smiths and possesses limited powers of its own, even in its current state.

ABILITIES: Fey creatures and entities can sense the shard piece and are drawn to it at all times in the Mortal world. Used as a small knife in the palm, the fragment can be stabbed as a weapon holding a +3. The shard cannot be melted down or modified by Mortal means; only Fey magic can alter it.

THE DAY OF BLOOD

The blares of thunderous bronze horns echo around you from all sides, mixed with the harsh battle-cries of men. A cloud of dust in the air around you hints at the arriving hordes that descend from the surrounding hills and wilderness. Before you know it or are aware, dozens of tattooed, wild-haired warriors hurl themselves at each other with you caught in the middle. Only pure rage and fury is in the eyes, voices and muscled bodies of these men. Swords and spears flash in their tight grips as they spring to action.

The adventurers will be thrown into this battle whether they want to or not. Fierce tribesmen will hurl themselves at each other and the adventurers relentlessly and without any forethought. This first encounter will undoubtedly force the players into the situation as they fight for their lives. Whether the adventurers are in the woods or out in the open hills, this battle will greet them either way.

These tribesmen are considered as Barbarian class in the C & C rules and can played as such.

TRIBAL WARRIORS x 2d10+5 (These are neutral, human 1st level fighters whose vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 11, and HP 12. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and wisdom. Their significant attributes are physical. They attack by spear 2d6, longbow 1d6, longsword 2d8.)

If the battle is brought to a lull or standstill, two warriors from each tribe will come forward in the sweaty, dusty fray to either side of the adventurers. Animosity is high and the tension is great. The bloodied warrior, Talfan, holds his spear aimed at the adventures and says:

"Until you rats bring us the fragment and restore the Pact we will not stop hacking your people into swine food! Where is it? This deception will end one way or another, with your people feeding the crows or the Pact restored."

A warrior from the other tribe, Cenwyn, snarls in rage and points his bloody sword at the adventurers:

"The druids spoke of this happening and what may come in this world if it does. Confess your guilt to this crime. Who amongst you took the pieces and why? Give us an answer or this day will end with your death upon this grass!"

NOTE: If the adventurers reveal that they hold one of the pieces of the sword, matters become complicated fast. The two tribes will focus their attentions on them about to hold them prisoner to get the fragment back and to torture and interrogate them. It is up to the players to decide what to do from this point. There are several options:

OPTION 1: Choose to go with one of the tribes and meet their chief to discuss the situation of the Pact and the broken elfin sword.

OPTION 2: Fight off the tribesmen from trying to take them prisoner and only make matters worse, instead creating more enemies and ending up not knowing how to proceed. If this is the case, proceed to the Fey Woods and Scouts section.

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CAPTIVES AMONG SAVAGES

Whichever tribe they choose to go with in the aftermath of the ambush, the following results will be the same. This gives the story the impetus to begin officially.

The adventurers are taken to a large hill-fort to meet the chief in his hall. The fort is walled by a wooden palisade and an earthen bank and manned by dozens of hairy, tattooed warriors. Inside the walls sit over thirty round houses, silos, stables, etc.

The chief's large wooden and thatch hall dominates the fort's interior. Inside the large, smoky hall reserved for the warriors of the leader (Teilu) sits the scarred old man on his throne.

Standing around the chief are three old bearded men in faded green robes: druids who mutter to him often and look at the adventurers with curious elderly eyes.

Warriors escort the adventurers, at sword point if needed, to their chief's throne. Slightly drunken, the chief speaks to them:

"I see that you strangers have become involved in our age-old pact. It is a bloody mess, all of it. We do not know how the other tribes managed to steal the fragments but they did and we want ours back. Four hundred years have passed and we had nothing but small disturbances, cattle-raids and the like but not this. Now we have a complete three-way bloody battle that won't end until the three pieces are restored, or... the other two tribes are dead."

(If the adventurers mention/show the sword fragment :)

"That piece is not ours but we would happily claim it as our own and resort the others for the other tribes in turn. You say that you know who has these fragments and they were not taken by a Mortal, but some of the Fey? We can give you some of our finest trackers to hunt this individual down and reclaim what is rightfully our own."

NOTE: The chief does not know the actual function or purpose of the magical fragment; he does not know it is a part of a sword at all. If he knew, he would greedily seek the whole thing for his own needs and use it against his rivals. He merely inherited the task of securing it as his ancestors had before him, and lost touch with what it actually was. The moment he discovers what it is, he will try to take the fragment by force from the players using all of his might.

The chief will send as many of his warriors as possible to first try to take the sword piece by force, and then his druids by magic. The characters will need to ride and flee the fort physically or use a magical means to exit the suddenly dangerous place. If the chief does know of the purpose of the fragment he says:

"Hand me that piece of the elfin sword, strangers, and you will not be harmed. We will hold onto it until you find the other two shards as insurance. If you refuse, we will have to become violent and take it from you by force! The gods have shown us a blessing by your arrival and this fragment, but they can always curse you just the same. Do not make this more difficult than it is..."

TRIBAL WARRIORS $\times 2d10+5$ (These are neutral, human 1st level fighters whose vital stats are HD 1d8, AC 11, and HP 12. Their primary attributes are strength, constitution and wisdom. Their significant attributes are physical. They attack by spear 2d6, longbow 1d6, longsword 2d8.)

NOTE: The warriors will use their horses to prevent the characters from getting too far. It will take Riding skill rolls (X 5) to out-distance and trick the tribesmen to get to the gates before they close. The CK will need to make it difficult but not impossible for the characters to leave the fort and ride/run free. They will be pursued for miles by scouts until (and if) they reach the thick woods where the Fey dwell. Make the players roll frequent Riding skill rolls (CL:10 average), three to four, before they can reach the forest to be safer in the chase. The pursuit should be tense and frantically paced.

If the players DO hand over the sword fragment to the chief, they will be less threatening and in fact be offered rooms for the night and help leaving to track the elf with the sword pieces. If this occurs, then replace the hunting scouts and hounds in the next section with another tribe seeking the adventurers and magical sword shards instead.

THE FEY WOODS AND THE SCOUTS

Taking the thick, wildly overgrown Fey haunted woods; the characters can begin to slow their pursuers while finding any hint of the elf Amren's trail. It won't be just the one tribe they left behind following them, but others will be seeking the sword shard as well, sending scouts into the woods. The travel through the forest should be one of great tension and difficulty with the effects of the shard on the Fey and the tribal scouts.

The word will spread fast from the chief's court that the old object of the Pact was a part of an elfin sword and it will reach the other tribes in a day or two from merchants and travelers.

Before a couple of days go by, the three tribes will be aggressively searching for the adventurers and the sword shard. Scouts will be out in force for them before they know it.

While in the forest by day, the magic shard will be a constant lure for Fey and monsters to the holder(s); at night the draw increase greatly. Encounters can be given at the CK's whim and refer to the table below:

D6	ENCOUNTER
1	d10 Goblins
2	d3 Gwyllgi/Hell Hounds
3	d4 Spriggans
4	d6 Dark Faeries mob (CK's call on what or whom)
5	d4 Kobolds
6	d8 Hobgoblins

COMMON GOBLINS (These lawful evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d6, AC 15, and HP 12. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a short sword for 1d6, knife 1d4+2, bite 1d3+1 or claw for 1d3 points of damage. They have twilight vision and dark vision.)

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SPRIGGANS (These chaotic evil fey's vital stats are HD 1d8+3/4d8+5, AC 15, and HP 15/30. Their primary attributes are physical. Each attacks with a tree-like club, doing 1d10/3d10 damage. They can grow into a gigantic form if angered and have a vulnerability to iron.)

GWYLLGI/CWN ANNWN (These lawful evil hounds' vital statistics are HD 4d8, AC 16, and HP 20. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with bite 1d6+1d6 or fire breath 2d8. They have an immunity to fire, tracking and dark vision.)

KOBOLDS (These lawful evil fey's vital statistics are HD 1d4, AC 12 and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by bows 1d6, slings 1d4 or by throwing darts/spears 1d4+1. They have light sensitivity and dark vision.)

WILL O' THE WISP (These neutral evil feys' vital statistics are HD 9d6, AC 29 and HP 12. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack by touch 2d8. They have immunity to magic and natural invisibility.)

HOBGOBLINS (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are HD 1d8, AC 15 and HP 8. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by sword 1d4+3, spear 1d6 and bite 1d4. They have dark vision.)

(The CK can add more beings and monsters as s/he sees fit during the day or night to spice up the game even more if needed.)

The tribe the characters escaped from, if Orddwy, Tegeingl or Gangani, will also send hounds after them to smell their scent on the trails. These dogs are like greyhounds in breed and speed and will not slow down once sent after the adventurers.

Shortly after the characters go into the forest, they will hear the baying of dogs far behind them. To deceive the hunting hounds and hide their tracks, each player must roll on Stealth (CL:15) or the dogs will gradually catch up with them.

Following behind the hounds will be many tribal scouts (2d10) that will not stop until the adventurers are in their hands. For the scouts stats use the Tribal Warrior given. If the players are

unable to shake the pursuers in the woods, they will be attacked by the hounds and men in a bloody battle; it won't end until their enemies are dead or the tribesmen have the shard.

SEARCHING FOR THE PORTAL

Amren ran to a hill-top of standing stones, crowded by thick oaks and elms deep into the woods. The mountains lie near to where he went; Yr Wyddfa and the others (See the Goblins of Mount Shadow module). The wild wood is dense and not full of very much 'civilization' with no traces of roads, villages, etc.; only untamed forest as far as the eyes can see.

Elves or any Fey-derived races within the adventuring party would be able to sense such Otherworldly portals faintly (Magic Sense) but in the Mortal world there are many. They can be found in these various places for example:

- a.) Inside hillocks
- b.) Caves
- c.) Underwater
- d.) Groves
- e.) Circle of Standing Stones
- f.) Enchanted Music/spells, etc

Amren's trail in the forest, once found (CL:15), must be maintained with several skill rolls (Tracking skill X 4). The elf's path weaves and twists in the woods, only perceivable by the slightly bent blades of grass, or nudged flowers and disturbed stones underfoot. The trail is so slight that it is almost non-existent.

WISDOM OF THE WOODS

R Exp. Level/10 ft. D Exp. Level/min.

With this ability the faery can sense the pathways deep in the forests. Each level (increased every three experience levels) is more intense, enabling the user to find the most hidden trails and paths.



Although the knowledge of these many secretive paths can be beneficial for the character, they can also lead to dangerous places and encounters if used carelessly.

LEVEL 1: Deer/animal trails, commonly-traveled Mortal and faery pathways.

LEVEL 2: Druidic, Grig, and Ley trails.

LEVEL 3: Pixie, Tree-folk and all other Sylvan-folk pathways.

LEVEL 4: Divine trails.

By the time the adventurers follow the trail in the forest they are 15 or more miles deep into the greenery. It will not slow their tribal pursuers unless they were already confronted and defeated by some means earlier in the chase. What awaits them is a hill, overgrown with thick foliage, which has a ring of six large grey standing-stones. The hill is populated by butterflies, bees and dragonflies fluttering among the flowers and herbs in the sunlight.

NOTE: It is unlikely, but unless the characters already possess a means to open Portals to the Otherworld on them, they will be at the mercy of the Portal to open. Below are the many means that it can be done.

OPENING THE PORTAL TO THE OTHERWORLD:

- 1.)** There is a period of limited time at dusk and dawn that it will open with a magical green light and work for both worlds.
- 2.)** Certain holidays/times of the year it will open. These are Samhain, Beltaine, Summer Equinox, Winter Solstice.
- 3.)** Using a lot of magic through spells, etc., near the Portal could agitate the thin layer between the worlds enough to open it. (1 out of a d10 +1/per each magical action performed). Powerful entities and gods can open these portals with ease if needed.

Once the Portal opens the players will witness:

A streaming, glowing green light flows thickly around the weathered edges of the ancient standing stones. It seethes and flows from the thin outer edge of each monolith and creeps around them slowly until the green glow connects each stone to the next.

The mighty scent of flowers, pollen, honey and herbs fills the air, along with the chirping of birds and the noises of an unfamiliar wilderness. A sweet wind stirs from inside the stone circle, unlike any breeze in the Mortal world. Its divine sweetness tingles the body and awakens the mind.

The powerful presence of this new, magical place looms from inside the stones and reaches out to touch everything around you in a way unrivaled in your experiences. Before you beckons the Otherworld...

The moment the characters step through the portal, their bodies are swept up in a teleportation doorway between worlds. Every atom of their existence is carried by these divine energies (granted more or less by the gods) from a world with Time to one without.

Every sense goes wild in the character's minds. Their thoughts and memories flash and flicker out of control with no direction. Nightmares flash and will briefly cause terror in each adventurer while they fly between the worlds.

ACT 2 – THE ENCHANTED CHASE

THE WITCHES OF THE LAND OF THE OWLS

The green light and energies shimmer and shift in your eyes and mind as your body hums. The sensation is just short of flying as the two worlds blur and meet for a moment when you step into the Portal. Your internal clocks cease to recognize the passage of Time in the predictable way they've always done.

In seconds you are hurled from the Mortal world to another one, and you crash onto unfamiliar earth. Around you are dark and heavily drifting mists that creep around tall looming evergreen trees. If there is a sun, it is hidden behind the dense crowns of the gigantic trees and dense fog. Around you, the forest is in a state of twilight and makes little sense.

Deep, haunting hoots from owls echo in the gloom, far and near. Occasional squawks from ravens and the flapping of wings come from the grey-white mists above. The scent of odd herbs and unseen flowers fills the air. In the surrounding forest, the snapping of twigs and mysterious shuffling noises seem almost sentient.

Dumped out of the air with a slight crash on the dark, shadowy, fog-ridden forest floor, the adventurers hit the ground, disoriented. This is the edge of Tir Tylluanod (The Land of the Owls) where the Faery Amazons, the Gwiddonod ('Gwith-on-odd') dwell. They are the descendants of the War Goddess Mórrígan and her two sisters Bodh Catha and Nemhain.

NOTE: This adventure provides a small scale sample of gaming time spent in the Otherworld, to start the players' orientation in such an unusual place. This will help them in future adventures as they acquire more knowledge and familiarity in the scope of a campaign.

For the adventurers to continue the trail of Amren in Faery, it will take a Tracking skill roll at CL:20. Amren's trail leads, unbeknownst to the players, away from the main land of Tir Tylluanod ('Teer duh-thoo-an-od'), towards another allied land where the Wood Elves (Pren) dwell.

If the adventurers find Amren's trail, they will have less chance of encountering the terrible Gwiddonod (1 out of a d10), but if they cannot find the trail and end up lost (CK's decision), the encounter odds go up greatly by the hour (3 out of a d8).

Unnoticed by the players, the many owls and ravens are the watchful eyes and ears to their cruel elven masters. They will fly close, perch on nearby branches and be a semi-constant presence around the adventurers.

Barely beyond the thick mists and woods is an odd mountain range. The peaks are jagged and very unnatural in form, cloaked in dark clouds and ominous portents. If an encounter occurs, use this table below:

D6	ENCOUNTER
1	d10 Gwiddon scouting party with d6 Cwn Annwn
2	d8 *Gwiddon warriors returning from a raid in Pren territories
3	d6 Cwn Annwn (they will raise an alarm for Gwiddonod to come)
4	d4 Owls (they will attack the adventurers fiercely)
5-6	d12+4 *Gwiddon warriors with Fey captives in nets.
*Gwiddon will be riding on strong Fey horses, black in color and swift-footed.	

GWIDDON (These lawful evil faerys' vital statistics are HD 2d8, AC 18, and HP 16. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack using spears 2d6, axe 1d10, bow 1d6 and magic. See Full Gwiddon stats.)

Once on the adventurers' trail in the misty haunted woods of Tir Tylluanod, the Gwiddonod threat will not stop until the party crosses into the Pren territories of Ildáthach ('Ill-da-hach'). The Gwiddonod do not care about the shard as they live in a world occupied by magic on a level that Mortals cannot understand, but they would prefer to capture and enslave the menfolk and mercilessly slaughter the rest, as is their custom.

THE GWIDDONOD – DESCENDANTS OF THE WAR-GODDESS

Born from the violent and turbulent divine blood of the three sisters of war, death and terror (Mórrígan, Bodh Catha and Nemhain), the elven Amazons occupy the misty, thickly-forested hills and valleys of the Land of Owls (Tir Tylluanod). Structured in a Celtic manner except for an exclusively female-dominated perspective, they are prone to violence and pure aggression.

There are roughly three dozen royal houses, each lead by a Pen Widdon (Head Witch) whose courts are filled with intrigue and dark plots against one other and the rest of Faery. These Houses are all ruled by the Unbennes Widdonod (Queen of the Witches/Witch Queen), the direct daughter/descendant of the Mórrígan herself.

Menfolk, taken from the other elf races (Morwyn, Pren) and Mortals alike, are enslaved and made to live a life of servitude under the Pen Widdon and her court. Womenfolk are often slain during raids, to deny the men 'options' or any competition. The Gwiddonod are jealous by nature of other women and see the non-aggressive sort as a waste of existence.

The Gwiddonod would be seen as Lawful Evil by their behavior because they praise their Mother Goddesses and try to emulate them by following a strict code. Their blood enemies lie on the borders of Tir Tylluanod in Ildáthach, the very tribal and bold Pren elves. The Gwiddonod do not usually ally themselves with other Dark Fey and choose to stand alone normally. The King of Ravens and his hordes are considered unsaid allies, along with the Pen Annwn and his Shadow Elves (Ysgodiaid). The three groups are called the 'Tri Lys Dyllyl' (The Three Dark Courts).

Being elven, they use magic and their own natural Faery abilities alongside the arts of war, making them a formidable foe. In early

Faery times their Mother Goddesses were allies with the Plant Dôn and the other Children of Light clans, but since the disastrous and short-lived attempt at conquest over part of the Mortal world, they have since lapsed into Darkness.

Owls, ravens and crows are their familiars and the two have formed an ancient symbiotic relationship. Many of the Gwiddonod have been able to blur the line between Faery and animal and possess many of the abilities and traits of their animal allies. Each Gwiddon has one of these birds as a close companion that has been raised since it was a chick. The two function as a deadly team, often fighting or exchanging duties as scout or guard.

Typically the Gwiddonod dress in drab, grey, black or dark green dresses with their hair long and wild sometimes braided and plaited, with magical tattoos over their perfect elven bodies. They are all extremely beautiful in appearance, but beneath the surface simmers a savage, wild and brutal aspect of femininity. For weaponry they use axes of many sorts, swords, and spears in battle. They ride Fey horses and use elaborate war-chariots.

IF CAPTURED BY THE GWIDDONOD

The adventurers will be subdued, netted and taken by the War Witches by horse to the nearest Court. A Gwiddon Court is a round stone structure with thatching, large bramble, stone and earth walls surrounding a courtyard with stables, servants round houses and owleries.

Dragged and shackled in iron-chains, the adventurers will be dumped into a dungeon cell. It is gloomy, pest- and spider-ridden, and populated by many unfortunate Fey (5d10) of various races awaiting their terrible fates. The characters will be disarmed and made unable to resist, the more they fight, the nastier the Gwiddonod respond.

The leader will be chosen to go before the Pen Widdon to represent them and explain who they are and why they are in Tir Tylluanod (it will ultimately be futile):

You are dragged forward up stone steps into a dark, gloomy wooden hall. In the shadows you can see beautiful Gwiddon elves gossiping and mumbling, gathered around the intricately crafted wooden, jewel-encrusted throne where the even more spectacular Head Witch sits.

She has long, shimmering blond hair that falls to her bare legs and her dark eyes are shaped like an owl's. She has a sinister air about her and she eyes you like a bird of prey does a helpless mouse. Her purple and black dress is revealing enough to be distracting. In the high rafters, owls perch and fly about in this unusual Court. Their large eyes shine down at you with a coldness that hints at contempt.

The three Gwiddonod that escort you to her throne drop you abruptly at her feet. The many murmurs and chatter of the Fey women of the court go silent with your arrival. Their eyes fall on you from all sides, eagerly watching your every action.

The Pen Widdon glares down at the group leader with a smirk and an expression of distaste; she speaks with a loathing in her perfect voice:

8 CASTLES & CRUSADES

“What excuse do you have for being in our lands, outsider? Unless you are slaves or, goddess forbid, trying to scout for an invading force, the excuse better be good. You do realize that your men will be taken by us as slaves while the rest of you will be fed to the crows or sacrifices to the Great Queen.

Are you allied with the Pren or the Three Kingdoms of the Morwyn? Speak, fool! Do not try my patience. Let us hope that your gods have blessed you and that our Queen does not take interest in you, or you and your friends will be sent to her on her island, to a much worse fate.

Some of your friends may find themselves in the Twr Breini to be eaten upon by the hungry ravens and crows if you make matters difficult.”

Based on the behavior and words of the interrogated leader, the Pen Widdon will choose to do different things in turn. The more pleasant the character(s) act, the more lenient she will be in return. The ‘Twr Breini’ is the ‘Crows Tower’, a cell/cage that sits atop high trees where the birds feed on the entrapped and dying prisoners. Otherwise, if nothing dramatic (read: foolishly heroic) happens in the Pen Widdon’s Court, she will return the leader(s) back to the holding cell.

It is already assumed that no player will stand for captivity, especially by cruel and arrogant Fey Amazons for long. Escape from the cell will require a Pick Lock vs. CL:17. Once out of the cell, the characters will need to sneak out of the dungeon without catching the attention of the ever-watchful owls in the rafters or the wandering Gwiddonod (Stealth vs. CL:18).

NOTE: The other captive Fey will beg and plead for freedom once they spot the characters breaking free. If freed, it will become pure chaos in the Court as they flee in all directions and try to rebel.

Once the characters are free they risk a chance of encountering Gwiddonod or their birds often: 2 out of a d8 - Gwiddon are encountered, 2 out of a d10 - Owls. If so, there would be d12 Gwiddon initially and once the alarm is given a d4 more will arrive each turn thereafter. Eventually it will be a furious escape from the Court and a race out into the misty forests to again regain Amren’s trail.

THE GWIDDON COURT

Constructed of stones laid without mortar, the large Court is a glorified tribal palace. A thatched roof and delicately carved wooden columns and frame support the partially rounded building. Typically the Llys (‘thl-is’) has two upper floors and one lower level for the dungeon and treasury. There are many chambers for the Pen Widdon to dwell in, but her gathered supporters (court) are normally only allowed in the main hall unless they are patrolling as guards.

LEVEL 1 – BELOW GROUND

AREA 1 – DUNGEON

One large stone chamber with many faery iron-barred holding cells (Lock is CL:18 to pick) and one entrance/exit. At any one time there are 4d10 Fey (and more rarely, Humans) held here in misery, awaiting their fates. Owls perch in the rafters and use tunnel-ways to fly about the Court, to and from the Pen Widdon’s hall, bearing news. Fey Witches will arrive often to check up on the captives or take/add prisoners kicking and screaming; this chance is 3 out of a d8 based on the CK’s decision. The stairs that exit this underground chamber of the Court will come out into a main corridor that sits in the middle of the Llys.

The Dark magics and influences from the ghost-haunted underworld of Annwn seep into this level and cast a dim blue glow which can often infect the minds and souls of those held captive here. (Magic save to resist). If infected, the Elf or Good Alignment character will have nightmares and be slightly corrupted in thinking and behavior until they are beyond the influence on the level. A solid Fey iron door with a lock (CL:17) keeps this room closed off from the rest of the Llys.

AREA 2 – PEN WIDDON’S TREASURY

Using a separate stone stair from the dungeon, this large chamber is where the Head Witch stores her personal wealth. Although wealth in Faery has little importance, this is used for bribes and payment among the other Dark Fey (and some Twilight races). The door is always watched by two Cwn Annwn outside, and owls in the rafters inside the chamber.

To generate the amount of wealth that the Head Witch may possess roll below:

3d8 gems (CK’s decision on what type), d4 Magic Items, d2 Magic Weapons, d12 Gold/silver items. (The CK can choose to use the Monsters & Treasures tables for the nature of the magical items/weapons to fit their campaign.)

LEVEL 2 – THE HEAD WITCH’S PRIMARY FLOOR

This level is full of the functional chambers that the Pen Widdon and her Gwiddonod court use for their own, often cruel, purposes. It is always well populated by the Fey women and their animals day or night, even if the Head Witch is not present. For strangers, it is a very dangerous place to be caught.

Encounter odds are significantly higher on this level: 4 out of a d8 for Gwiddonod (3d12), 3 out of a d6 for Cwn Annwn (2d4) and 4 out of a d6 for Owls/ravens (d20). It is pure suicide for any weakened band of adventurers to tread this level unless they are made of heroic stuff.

AREA 3 – HEAD WITCH’S MAIN HALL

As described previously in this section, the Head Witch’s hall is the central location in the Llys, thus its name. The large chamber is always populated with Gwiddonod and their animal companions and there is a 5 or less on a d10 chance that the Pen Widdon herself is present. The characters are not ready to contend with the Pen Widdon. If it is required, place her at 7th-9th levels and give her plenty of magic and combat skills as needed to make her unbeatable.

This hall is long (50 ft X 15 ft), usually with a wooden or stone-tiled floor, ornate columns detailing the characteristic Gwiddon symbols: ravens, owls, wild war women in chariots or on horses in battle, large ominous trees, mountains and images that reflect the Mórrigú. Massive oaken rafters, taken from druidic groves in spite are high above, where the birds roost and watch the goings-on below. The only light that shines in this shadowy hall is derived from dangling blue or purple colored crystals.

THE CRIMSON PACT 9

The Pen Widdon's Court seems chilly when filled with Gwiddon, but suspiciously, there are no fireplaces. There are stone stairs that go up to the second floor (2) and down to the dungeon off the hall.

AREA 4 – FEASTING CHAMBER

One large long oaken table sits in the middle of this lengthy chamber for the Head Witch and her chosen to hold grand feasts. It is usually a magnificently decorated and arranged chamber. Male slaves tend to the Gwiddonod obediently and silently. Architecturally, the chamber is made in a similar style to the Pen Widdon's main hall. Usually Cwn Annwn (2d4) sleeps on the floor to eat the scraps thrown by the Fey women in their feasting.

AREA 4A – FEASTING PREPARATION QUARTERS

The foods and drinks gathered for the Fey Witches' feasts are collected, prepared and served from this simple stone room. The slaves come and go when there is such an event, bearing great trays of goods. When there is no event or function in the Llys, this room sits bare with only several plain wooden tables to attest to its purpose.

AREA 5 – OWLERY

This room purposely has the only open windows outside from the Court. At any time, there are many owls resting here (4d10) among the nests and perches. These owls are either assigned to a Gwiddon in the Court or they belong to the Pen Widdon personally. These large grey-black Fey birds are fiercely loyal to their companions and will never betray them. It would require great magic or epic skills of Stealth, etc. to sneak in this chamber and evade the winged occupants.

AREA 6 – THE ARMORY

This is the armory used by the Pen Widdon's retinue, not her personal collection. Her guards, hunters and warriors store and put to use the weaponry held in this stone room. A magically-locked door (CL:15 to undo) denies entry except to those assigned.

At any given time, the room (except during alarms and battles) holds any mix of these items:

- d10 Swords
- d20 Long Spears
- d12 Hunting Spears
- d10 Shields
- d10 Daggers
- d10 War-Axes

The weapons in this room are made of Fey Iron, an enchanted metal similar to the iron mined and forged in the Mortal world but without the painful side-effects to the faery wielder.

(OUTSIDE)

Outside in the courtyard, there are always many Gwiddonod, either patrolling or on guard atop the tall walls (5d10), and plenty of birds about (5d12). The characters will need some smart thinking and some brute force to escape these grounds.

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AREA 7 – STABLES

This is a large, round building constructed of wood and thatch that can hold 30 Fey Horses in stalls, and six chariots. The nicest of the chariots is the Pen Widdon's and is a prized vehicle in Tir Tylluanod and beyond. It is better built than those used by the Gwiddonod, only bettered by the Witch Queen's own on Ynys Unbennes.

AREA 8 – SLAVES' QUARTERS

This area is large round building where the primarily male (98%) slaves taken from the Fey lands (and sometimes Mortal) are left to stay. They live in squalor, which is rare to find in Faery. Twelve Gwiddonod Witches guard this filthy building at all times, outside the two Fey Iron doors.

Inside there is an average of 5d20 slaves held within, while the rest are serving the Pen Widdon in various capacities. The slaves will rebel, given the chance, and will bring a furious struggle for freedom however possible. This can be advantageous for the characters.

AREA 9 – TWR BREINI

This is the 'Tower of Crows/Ravens'. Usually each Gwiddon Llys has dedicated three tall Alder trees to this purpose in the courtyard. Lofty and dangerously high, the prisoners are placed inside an iron cage that sits atop the middle of a crown of leaves. The bars are made so that the hungry birds can feast on the dying or dead and then leave freely. There are an average of 2d6 prisoners held here and 3d8 birds.

NOTE: In Faery, it is not possible to perish from pure starvation, unlike the Mortal world. A prisoner would simply linger in a weakened state, losing weight and strength over time, and unable to move or function until fed. Faery never suffers drought or famine except in rare times when the Dark Fey rule or cause worldwide war ('Dark War'). The Timeless nature of Faery makes the torture of never quite dying from starvation a true torture indeed.

AREA 10 – THE GATES

Two tall wooden iron-braced doors (20 ft) are guarded by six-nine Gwiddonod on the walls and behind the doorway. The doors are framed by large slabs of stone shaped as a henge where the skulls of enemies sit as warning symbols and trophies.

3d8 Fey Witches patrol the walls surrounding the Court. The doors are kept from opening by a simple wooden plank and bar and open on flawless bronze hinges every time. A road leads out of the Llys into the surrounding foreboding woods.

AREA 11 – CEREMONIAL SANCTUARY

Here stands a large circular stone space with six standing stones (each with a niche for a skull) where the savage rites to their War Goddesses are performed. Male slaves, the troublesome ones, form the majority of the chosen when times are needed to call for blessings or curses.

Sacrifices are led by the Pen Widdon, who will take the sacrifices to the center of the circle and kill them by one of three methods: stabbing/cutting of throat, burning/drowning, or by choking. Only for very special or powerful prisoners will all three methods be used at the same time.

Images of ravens feeding on the dying and slain are carved on the stones, displaying the grim detail the purpose of the site. Much blood has been shed here by the Pen Widdon and her following.

LEVEL 3 – UPERMOST DWELLING OF THE HEAD WITCH

AREA 12 – PEN WIDDON’S CHAMBER

A magically locked (CL:20) wooden door protects the richly decorated chamber. Thin gossamer tapestries hang in the circular chamber, showing the various motifs and images of the Courts of Tir Tylluanod. The furniture in this room (dressers, desks, etc) is filled with clothing and her many accessories. She has a large walk-in closet/wardrobe filled with her countless royal dresses, cloaks and robes.

Fey crystals hang on silvery threads and light the chamber with a touch. The room is scented with alluring odors derived from the flowers and herbal sprigs which have been collected and then placed in the room. Though it is for the Head Witch, the chamber is does not ‘feel’ instantly evil. Instead it is relaxed and calming.

Her room is guarded by a large Fey Owl at all times. If anyone manages to break into her chambers, the bird will attack on sight. Due to the random nature of the three dozen Head Witches throughout Tir Tylluanod, the variety of wealth, magical items and weapons kept by this particular Pen Widdon is at the discretion of the CK (Refer to the Monsters & Treasures Book).

There is a chance that the Pen Widdon is in her chambers when/if the characters break free (3 out of a d6). If she is, there will be a terrible battle and an alarm will be given magically throughout the Court.

AREA 13 – THE HEAD WITCH’S ARMORY

Aside from ‘normal’ weaponry, the Pen Widdon also possesses a +3 Axe, Bow of Sure Aim (+3 and enables user to see with its sights unnaturally far), +4 Dagger, and +5 Shield. The chamber is a small stone room where the weapons hang on pegs in the walls. A black Cloak of Owl Summoning is also on a peg (The wearer can call upon d6 owls at any time to serve them.)

AREA 13A – SECRET NICHE

Hidden behind several large stones on the wall (CL: 18 to locate), this small space stores the Pen Widdon’s tome of magical spells and curses. The tome possesses the secret spells of Diabolical/Dark Fey magic (CK’s decision on what is appropriate for their campaign.)

Leaving The Land of the Owls on Amren’s Trail

Fleeing into the woods from the Gwiddonod Court, the dangers will be worse than if the characters were never caught because now the Fey Witches will be using magic to assist them.

As they were in the Mortal world, the characters will be hunted. Make the chase from the Gwiddonod tense and terrible to give the players a wild ride before it ever becomes calm (e.g., a chariot/horse chase, etc.).

The encounters chart below is to be used at CK’s whim when s/he deems it best to add more tension:

D6	ENCOUNTER
1	d10 Gwiddon Warriors, d6 Cwn Annwn, d4 Owls
2	d8 Gwiddon on chariots and horses, d4 Owls
3	d6 Alder Tree Hags
4	d6 Baobhan Síth
5	d6 Cwn Annwn
6	d4 Gwiddon and d4 Alder Tree Hags

ALDER TREE HAGS (These chaotic evil tree witches vital statistics are 8d8 HD, AC 16, and 64 HP. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with a branch at 1d10+6 damage. They have low-light vision and plant traits.)

BAOBHAN SÍTH (These chaotic evil faeries vital statistics are 2d10 HD, AC 13 and 10 HP. Their primary attributes are magical. They attack by bite 3d13 and claw doing 2d8 damage. They can drain blood from their prey and seduce men with their beauty.)

The chase (if there is one) through the woods will lead the characters to the Mynyddoedd Eufydd, meaning mountains of the god Eufydd (Ogma). These looming, oddly-angled mountains form a border to Tir Tylluanod and the rest of the isle of Ildáthach.

The rocky borders have only three passes through on roads. The Gwiddon guards watch them from wooden towers with Fey steeds and chariots at the ready. If there is trouble the Gwiddonod will scramble to action (3d8) and prevent prisoners from escaping the land or keep outsiders from entering (unless they are Gwiddonod).

Amren’s trail does not lead to one of the mountain passes; he instead took a more perilous route high in the surrounding rocks (Climbing skill x 5). His trail will go high in the dangerous rocks and make his way towards the low forested valleys beyond, but first the characters must get there alive.

The shard will draw monsters and Fey towards the holders just as it did in the Mortal world. This is a 3 out of 10 chance of an encounter, using the table below:

D8	ENCOUNTER
1	Gwiddon scouts (2d10)
2	Common Goblins (3d6)
3	Spriggans (3d6)
4	Cwn Annwn (2d10)
5	Alder Hags (1d4)
6	Athach (1d4)
7	Kobolds (2d6)
8	Eldritch Goblins (2d6)

The CK can choose to use this random table as often as they please in order to make the journey from Tir Tylluanod as terrible as possible. Survival from the Fey Witches’ land should be difficult.

ATHACH (These chaotic evil giants vital statistics are 4d12 HD, AC 17, and 48 HP. They attack by club 3d10 and fist doing 2d10 damage. They are tragically giants once noble.)

kingdom of gwynedd

GANGENI

TEGEINGL

trêfwyd

yr wydd

yr araf

penwynt

ucheldd

kingdom of p

GLYNDEIRAU

TEION

Llyn Clun-ffynnon

ORDDWY

TREHENAF

Llyn Llydaw

PENWIGNT

Llyn Gwynant

Llyn Dinas

PENLLYN



1 INCH : 25 MILES

Once the characters climb and fight their way free from Tir Tylluanod they will find a lush, more attractive Fey forest on the other side. Amren's trail must still be followed (CL:15).

THE FOREST OF BRITHELL (COED BREITHELL)

A rich forest awaits the characters on the other side of the Mynyddoedd Eufydd. Exotic flowers and plants with colorful, gleaming forms dot the thickly overgrown woods. Colorful crystalline birds fly about in the air and perch on trees. The smell of honeysuckle and healthy foliage fills the air. The Fey forest is alive with exuberant life on a level the characters have never seen.

The powerful scent of the richest forest you have ever encountered fills your senses to the brim. Flowers and herbs give odors that are not familiar but enticing and wondrous.

Strange glass-like birds fly in the boughs of the gigantic trees and make unusual calls. A breeze blows on your face to cool you perfectly just when you needed it. The vastness of the woods and the scale of the trees is breathtaking and almost impossible to comprehend. Thick vines weave and twist around the wide trunks and tangles of branches. These woods shimmer in emerald and other spectacular colors in the sunlight.

Crystalline butterflies and hummingbirds flit about the flowers and herbs. Small humanoid forms, faces and voices emit from the woods before you. The more you take focus to locate and isolate these individual elements, the more difficult it is to find them.

Distant snorts, grunts and bellows from stags, boars and other beasts echo in the woodlands. It feels pleasant, absolutely perfect, with no blinding sun or unbearable heat to endure. Behind you, beyond the mountains, the far hoots of the owls find their way to your ears. The Fey Witches may not be too far behind on your trail.

This endless woodland is in stark contrast to the grim and dark Tir Tylluanod. Amren's path leads down to the woods and it must be followed if they still seek the pieces to complete the magic sword of Eifion.

Over the massive mountains and woods of Tir Tylluanod to the 'West' in Faery, the characters can spot something they haven't been able to see before in this world – a gigantic oak tree touching the sky. The Tree of Life is miles away, out to sea beyond this isle, but is magnificently breathtaking by its size and stature.

Taking the forest, it quickly becomes evident that movement is very restricted due to the heavy undergrowth.

NOTE: The Gwiddonod will not pursue the characters into this land normally; their many enemies inhabit these lands.

Traveling for a time in the woods, the characters only find signs of stags, wild boar, and a plethora of other wildlife around them. It seems that every aspect of this forest is perfection. There is no forest that can compare to its beauty and form. The temperature is always ideal with a cool breeze whenever it is needed. It is the forest of their dreams literally made real.

Without warning, a band of Pixies emerge from the greenery. They blend in with nature magically. The Pixies (3d12) are covered in moving, colorful Celtic tattoos, with wild red hair and spears in hand. The feral creatures snarl like beasts, surrounding the characters and standing barely three feet high with Puckish faces.

One bestial Pixie warrior jabs his spear threateningly at the lead character:

"Do not resist us, strangers; you tread in Breithell, one of the lands of Bucca Gwyn. If you are with the Witches then we will show no mercy. Hand over your weapons and follow us."

If the characters put up a fight, refer to the stats for the Pixies and make their passage hunting Amren through this forest difficult. This encounter and those in Breithell are meant to be less troublesome for a time, as the characters are traveling in Twilight Faery (Neutral alignment) haunted woods.

The green Fey surround the characters, occasionally disappearing as their special abilities cause their appearance to blend with the foliage. The Pixies cautiously escort the characters deeper into the strange forest. The tense Faery warriors move around the characters, carefully bristling with their spears.

Among the countless sights to witness in Breithell, the characters spot large glowing mushrooms, strangely shaped and pruned trees, writhing and shimmering moss, waterfalls from leafy hills that sparkle and hiss pleasantly, flowers that appear made from crystals, and plentiful wildlife, along with hints of Faery presences in the barks of trees, leaves, and ivy.

After a trek led by the Pixie warriors, they find themselves in a forest village, cleverly melded into the ivy-covered trees and undergrowth, of little homes constructed of bark, leaves, branches and other foliage (flowers, herbs, etc). The village stretches over this part of the forest for quite a distance with a population of several hundred.

Pixie children emerge with their parents in curiosity to view the characters arriving.

THE PIXIES – WILD FOREST FOLK

Twilight Faeries (Chaotic Neutral), the Pixies live in harmony with the wilderness. They do not involve themselves with other races, and rarely ally with anyone for any cause. Like all Twilight Faeries, they are only out for themselves and their own kind's well-being. Pixies do not get caught up in great causes or take on massive challenges.

Standing around three feet tall, Pixie kinds have large, odd-shaped heads with red wild hair. Their eyes are colorful and almond shaped on their Puck-like faces, with tiny noses and large mouths. In the Mortal world they live in isolated settlements and often interact with Humans but usually in a negative way, causing mischief and trouble. In Faery, however, they inhabit and exhibit their true nature in several regions of the plentiful forests of Coed Breithell and Gwlas an Veyn usy Lesky ('The Land of the Burning Stones'). Their king is Bucca Gwyn, an ambivalent leader who has the solitary and unique power to unite the Pixies in all worlds if he so needs.

14 CASTLES & CRUSADES

Being a part of the wilderness, they have abilities which assist them in co-existing with the wildlife and greenery. Pixie warriors are great in courage and skill but rarely need to show it because they are so rare to actually encounter in the forests. They have two main enemies in Faery: the Gwiddonod of Tir Tylluanod, and the Dark Pixies of Bucca Dhu. Bucca Dhu is the rival and brother to King Bucca Gwyn; he lives in the more ominous and darker forests and preys on the vulnerability of the innocent and needy.

The Pixies of the Land of the Burning Stones mine the extremely magical and rare Dragon Stones, glowing amber gems that are filled with flames of pure magic and that can encase spells and powers within. Dragon Stones are hard to come by, even in Faery, and can instantly enchant any item/object they are in contact with. Only the Pixies know the secret 'language' of the Stones and can shape them and properly inlay them into items.

Pixies are known for their savagery and bestial behavior, their nature blurring the line between Faery and animal. Wild and feral, they are a race that is greatly misunderstood in Faery and even more so among Humans. The Dark Pixies are often violent and display a cold heartlessness that almost seems evil. By appearance, they are almost imperceptible from the Pixies of Bucca Gwyn, especially to outsiders.

THE PIXIE CAPTORS

Many warriors (3d8) join those that escorted the characters and all will wait until their chief arrives. Villagers gather around them in wonder and curiosity in the few minutes before the drums sound to signal the arrival of Chief Gorran mab Talwyn.

An elaborately garbed royal Pixie chief arrives from out of a magnificent tree-house and all Pixies bow in his honor. He smiles and studies the characters from head to toe before he stops within ten feet of them. Warriors surround him from all sides and snarl at the characters fiercely.

Gorran says:

"What unusual strangers we have among us here! You are not with the Gwiddonod, that is obvious, but you are also not with anyone in Tir Hud either. I am Chief Gorran mab Talwyn, and I lead this and two more tribes in Breithell. Please tell us why you are here and what you want and we can let you be on your way."*

(* 'Teer heed', means 'Land of Magic'.)

PIXIES (These neutral faeries vital statistics are 3d6 HD, AC 12, and 18 HP. They attack by sword 1d6, spear 1d4 and bows doing 1d6+1 damage. They can blend into nature naturally and shape and use Dragon Stones.)

NOTE: The Pixies are akin to mercenaries. They will only help the characters if they can benefit in some way from it. Either by being paid some coins, gems, etc. in exchange; they will aid the characters in finding Amren. If they are betrayed or lied to, they will instead sabotage the characters' efforts and make the rest of their adventure difficult, using their masterful prankster abilities.

Gorran will continue:

"We can assist you in tracking this Morwyn. He might be going to the Pren lands of Ildáthach to find a blacksmith to reforge the sword, at least partially. We will only do this at a price, you must understand, for we Pixies do not so easily help others, no matter how noble or grand the cause. I can assign six scouts to you, to help along the way. It isn't far to the borders of Ildáthach and the Pren are... difficult, as elves go."

"We know little about the sword of which you speak, except that it was used by Eifion against the giants of the southlands and has slain several Fomorian lords in its time here in our world, before it found its way to yours. Haeardarian is a mighty Morwyn blade, not the mightiest, but it is great in fame."

"The Son of Eifion cannot complete the sword without the missing shard, but he can prepare it so that he can. If this sword brings a peaceful pact among your people, then you must retrieve it, but it is his family's inheritable weapon and he won't let it go voluntarily."

(If the characters are agreeable with the chief, they will have no problems with the Pixies from here on. Gorran will assign them six of his most able wild Pixies to help them on the hunt.)

Without any further incident or event, the chief will let the characters (and their scouts) leave the village and continue their trek into Brithell. The day is still roughly at Noon or a little thereafter, with the sun shining brilliantly in skies above. The Pixie scouts move quickly, merging in and out of the Fey woods at times, always ahead and to the side.

Hours and miles will pass under the guidance of the Twilight folk. By dusk, the outer edges of the wondrous forest are in sight and beyond are vast, even more splendid grassy plains and hills. The distant shape of villages and a few hill-forts are in view; it is the land of Ildáthach where the Pren elves (Chaotic Good) dwell.

NIGHT FALLS IN THE OTHERWORLD

If the characters decide to set up camp, finding kindling and an ideal spot is easy. The world changes character by dusk and night. Breithell's woods become pleasant, if a little ominous, but not overtly dangerous as in Tir Tylluanod.

The Pixie scouts will hunt food for the characters if asked nicely. Otherwise they can provide many wonderful role-playing opportunities due to the culture and race barriers between them and the adventurers. Wandering off into the woods alone is dangerous for a stranger to this world; there are many unusual beings and entities to be encountered.

Though it is the CK's ultimate call to add more to the original story by including gods, etc., experiencing Faery by night is usually an experience in itself. Below is a table for some random encounters the character(s) could experience while exploring the Coed Breithell by night:

D8 ENCOUNTER

- 1 **God(dess):** One of the many Celtic deities could either appear before the character(s), be encountered doing something significant, or whatever the CK's decides. This can be a major plot turning point in that character's life in some way. They could be given a magical item, side quest, etc.
- 2 **Dark Pixies (2d6):** They will purposefully confuse and deceive the character(s) and try to sabotage their quest. One major plot twist could be the stealing of the sword shard and fleeing off into Coed Brithell (to be hunted down in the night.)
- 3 **Gwiddonod Raiding Party (2d8):** Along with Cwn Anwnn (d6) and Fey Owls (d8), the party has gone far in its nightly raid into the forest, causing havoc and terror wherever it treads.
- 4 **Wandering Fey:** The character(s) find a quirky little Faery that wants to speak to them. Its intention is not clear at first, but it wants to play a Game of Riddles, with the price being the sword's shard if the character loses. This will require the CK to be clever enough to win the challenge. If the Faery stranger loses or wins, it will wander off into the forest and vanish.
- 5 **Being Lead Astray:** Usually it is the mischief of the Pixies to cause this, but in this case it could have been a stray enchanted piece of sod, etc., that was underfoot and caused it. The character(s) will have to make a Magic Save (vs. CL:12) or be completely lost. Even if the camp site is less than 50 feet away or more, they will not be able to break the spell. Even aided by the others in the party, they will not be able to find their directions.
- 6 **Alder Hags:** d4 will prey on the character(s) aggressively until they are either defeated or fled away from.
- 7 **Enchanted Pool:** A clear pool sits in an idyllic spot in the foliage, its waters shimmering on the leaves and surrounding woods. Inside the waters, however, sit d4 Undines seeking to lure victims into the waters and then drown and devour them.
- 8 **Goblin Raiding Party:** A group of 2d6 Common Goblins, led by two Eldritch Goblins, is roaming the shadowy woods, seeking victims and slaves. They will show no mercy and will be terrible if encountered.

The Coed Breithell is alive at night with fireflies and small faeries lit by their own colorful shines, phosphorescent fungi, insects, night-birds and plants, and the snorting of stags and wild packs of boars. The woods are peaceful and serene even with the plethora of life. There is always a presence or trace of the Fey in the environment, as faces, bodies, limbs and moving forms are commonly found in the peripheral vision.

By dawn, the green wood again transforms into another aspect of the Fey forest, revealing more beauty and wonder to the characters. Among the things the characters may witness: tiny faeries emerging from dawn-crisp dew drops in flowers and nooks of foliage, flying groups of small Fey flittering through the boughs of trees while chasing insects/birds, herds of deer dashing through the foliage, the rutting of gigantic stags with spider webs strung in their massive antlers, and the awakening of the bright colorful flowers to the sun.

16 CASTLES & CRUSADES

The Pixies are ready to move on by dawn; they seem hurried for faery-folk in a Timeless realm. Using the Pixie scouts keeps the characters from needing to make more Tracking skill rolls. Only a few hours of travel in Coed Breithell is needed before the scintillating plains of the Pren tribe-lands are in view.

ACT 3 – THE THUNDER-IRON AND THE CRIMSON PACT

THE LAND OF MAG MÓN

Vast and epic, the plains of Illdáthach are called the Plain of Sport or Mag Món ('Moy Mon') by the many different Fey in this world. Hills of all sizes are scattered in every direction, many topped by forts with villages clustered at the base.

Before you, beyond the edge of the forest of Breithell, you see endless miles of sunlit rolling hills and plains. The grasses calmly sway in the breeze and scattered herds of unusual looking horses run wild.

Ahead in the distance, you find yourself closer to the giant oak which stretches into the skies and fades into the clouds.. Golden, shimmering acorns dangle from the bottom of the massive crown of the Great Tree. The mere scale of this oak is even more impossible to comprehend than the rest of this strange world you are now in.

Less than a mile away sits a small village at the base of a large hillside where a walled fort rests. Although at first the village and fort appear Human, you get a sense that they are not the standard to which you are accustomed, though you cannot define how or why.

Amren's tracks can scarcely be seen in the grasses heading in the direction of the fort ahead. The elfin warrior must have had a similar route from your world to his own."

Herds of splendid wild horses and Fey breeds run in different groups across the plains. The Pixie scouts continue to find Amren's trail in the wind-blown emerald grasses. They head to the nearest hill-fort a few miles away.

It is quickly evident that the Morwyn elf went to the Pren fort on the nearby hill and the adventurers will need to go there to find him. The Pixies are hesitant about mingling with the elves and will slow in their pursuit.

DÚN NERT – THE FORT OF THE STRONG

Many countless thatch-roofed, stone, round houses cluster around the base of this large looming hill where a magnificent wooden Pren fortress sits. Horses run about the land, and elves can be spotted amongst the homes

At first appearance, these elves seem like the wild Picts in the Mortal world by dress and custom by they do not toil with the chores and labor that Humans must endure. The arrival of the characters into the village of Dún Nert ('Doon Nert') will bring instant attention and shouts are made to signal the warriors.

In seconds, 3d12 Pren warriors will arrive, armed with spears, swords and shields in hand. The male Pren have a well-built, muscled form

with facial hair the same as Mortals. Dazzling magical, animated tattoos cover their perfect physiques in wondrous patterns.

Villagers will gather to look on in curiosity at the adventurers. As with all elven kind, they are ethereally attractive; not a single one could be considered ugly or even average in appearance. Unlike the Mortal world, this village and setting have an almost idealized look about them; everything is perfect and without the crude manner that Mortal analogs possess.

THE PREN ELVES – IMMORTALS OF THE WILDERNESS

Children of Light (Plant Golau) are feral elves which more resemble the physique of Humans than the usual elven races. The men are muscular, hairy-faced, and for all comparisons appear like the ‘ultimate’ Celt. They cover their bodies in elaborate, magically inked tattoos that move and seem alive over their bodies (like the Pixies). Although they can be found throughout Faery, they are predominately located across the beautiful plains of Mag Món, on the isle of Illdáthach, where their many tribes have claimed territories and hold back the Dark Fey from all quarters (Fomorians in the south and Gwiddonod to the east).

Pren are bold and epic, their behavior and actions always larger than life, seeking fame and glory for their feats and deeds in battle. The other elven races consider the Pren savages and more like animals than peers. They are quick to anger and even faster to boast and brag of their family lineage and deeds.

As with most socializing Fey, they gather around great leaders in forts with a hierarchy of champions and heroes at the feasting table. If they are not holding athletic sports to keep training, they are in battle or feasting; love-making is not a preoccupation for them, unlike many of the other Fey races.

In times of need, when war is spreading, they will boldly join their allies in masses and send thousands of their warriors to claim the glory if possible. Their racial name ‘Pren’ denotes ‘tree’, a descriptive name they were given early in Faery because of their height and strength. Their alignments are generally Chaotic Good, but there are exceptions which can range all alignments.

During battle the Pren are constantly attempting and accomplishing wild stunts and feats; they do not fight simply, always dramatically. When they speak, their use of language is as dramatic as their battle and they do not take anything lightly. Chariots and horses are heavily used by them in war and battle, and they often play at cattle-raids (táin) with each other during peaceful times to keep their alertness up.

Pren women are as strong as the men with an Amazonian attitude, but their wild beauty is nearly unrivaled in Faery. They and the Morwyn elves are allies and also rivals for the claim to glory in the war against their Dark Fey foes. Many of the gods in Faery derive from the Pren kind, with famous Divine Families, but generally the Pren are too busy living a grandiose life to bother with aspiring to Divinity.

TAKEN TO THE HALL OF CHIEF GRÁDA

The adventurers are taken up the long road to the gated fortress of the Pren chief. Excitement and tension is strong with the elven villagers about the arrival of the strangers. The Pixies snarl and keep the elves at a distance, not wanting to mingle with them if given the chance.

The large and well-made feast-hall of Chief Gráda already has many Pren warriors standing around the chief’s throne, talking. A Morwyn elf is present; the adventurers will instantly know him – Amren ap Eifion. Once the adventurers arrive, the elves turn their attentions to them while the Morwyn glares.

As they are brought before the Pren chief, he speaks:

“My hall has many visitors on this day, I hope it is a fortuitous matter and there is great glory to be had. Speak and let your purpose be known to me, Mortals and strange breeds. This day my company and I speak about the doings of war and have no time for chatter. There are enemies afoot near our borders.”

If the adventurers tell the Chief the situation, he and Amren speak privately for a time before the Pren lord continues:

“Our guest Amren ap Eifion tells me that you possess the missing shard from his family sword and asks that you give it back. If you refuse and deem your Mortal concerns more important than restoring his ancestral sword that was used against our ancient blood enemies, you have a problem. As chief of this tribe, I command you to hand over that piece and let the sword be made complete.”

NOTE: If the adventurers hand over the shard then Amren will take the piece off to the blacksmith and restore Haeardarian. It will take a short time to do so before the next event occurs (Fomorian attack). But if they refuse and demand to take the rest of the sword, Amren will demand a duel.



"You have been brave enough to track me into my world and keep to my trail, and that is bold, especially of Mortals, but to demand my father's sword from me is foolish and you risk being slain for such words. I will give you one chance to back away and forget this or I will have to make you pay by blood for this outrage.

You are brave and that is clear, but you are also quite ignorant. My father's sword is not for the greasy hands of Mortals to hold. I should make all the descendants of those who slew my father pay, out of a vendetta, but my honor and creed dictate that I do not act so rashly."

If a duel is made to happen, Amren will draw out his own sword and the Pren will clear a space in the feast-hall for the fight to come. The chief and his men will eagerly watch this. Morwyn and Pren elves are Children of Light and do not kill so easily unless the foe is an evil nature; they are honorable races.

AMREN AP EIFION, MORWYN RED BRANCH ELFIN WARRIOR: *(This lawful good Morwyn elf's vital statistics are HD 2d10, AC 17, and HP 55. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks by enchanted sword 1d10+3 and spear 1d6+3 damage. He is vulnerable to iron.)*

The honor fight between Amren and a player character can be a long, dramatic struggle, lasting for as long as needed and for the sake of the story. If the sword shard is not given to Amren or the Pren, then what will happen next will be difficult for everyone.

THE ATTACK OF THE SEA-GIANTS

Unbeknownst to the characters and the Pren, a long-boat of Sea-Giants comes ashore not far from Dún Nert. These Fómori wish to plunder, take captives, and destroy everything in their path, their usual practice.

Before anyone is aware of it, the 15 Giants and their 20 goblins will send flaming arrows and torches into the elven village. Villagers scream and panic and flee in all directions as the alarm sounds. Brave Pren warriors charge down the hill-fort to try to stop the Giants, but they are easily slaughtered.

The adventurers will see from the chief's fort:

Far below, behind the black smoky columns that snake into the skies, you see a dark gathering of figures. They are clearly not elven nor Human and are creating havoc in the village.

Tall, dark blue skinned giants, garbed in chain with iron helms and large shields, shout their thunderous orders to the goblins that cower at their feet.

Terrifying horns sound from the Giants and the Pren villagers scream and flee in terror in all directions before their onslaught.

Tattooed Pren warriors dive into combat to stop these Dark Fey but they are easily repulsed by axes, swords and spears.

Many elves are taken and tossed into bags slung over the backs of several Giants. The elves yell and holler in terror, but cannot get free.

One giant points at Dún Nert and shouts orders in his rough harsh voice. His large glowing red eyes glare at the fortress in hate.

NOTE: If the sword Haeardarian is able to be fixed by the Fey blacksmith, it will be used by Amren against the enemy. If not, then this battle will be a bloody slaughter to the last one standing. Whether Amren uses the fixed Faery blade or not, he will die in battle at some point. The CK can make the Morwyn's death out to be as dramatic as needed for the sake of the adventure.

FOMORÍ *(These chaotic evil giants vital statistics are 4d12 HD, AC 14 and 48 HP. They use a sword 1d12, spear 2d10 and bite doing 2d8 damage. These giants are brooding, hateful and fierce in manner and behavior)*

The Giants and their goblin minions will work their way up the hill towards the fort. Anyone that stands in their way will be slain or taken captive in ropes and nets, and be dragged back to the dark ship.

If the battle at Dún Nert ends up being too easy for the players, then the CK can send a warband (12 or more) of Gwiddonod after them, still hot on their trail from Tir Tylluanod. These Fey Witches will sound their horns and ride in on their steeds, charging into battle to assist the Giants and goblins against the Pren elves and adventurers.

HAEARNDARIAN: *(if fixed) has these properties - +5 Sword of Dark Fey Bane, 50 ft. radius of Dark Fey Attraction, Fire Protection for Wielder.*

LEAVING THE OTHERWORLD

In the midst of the battle, smoke and fire, an elfin druid will come forward and try to aid the adventurers in whatever way possible.

It is evident that the Dark Fey will win this battle and leave no one standing in the end; it would be suicide to withstand them for too long.

The druid, Donal, tells them (after taking them into the chief's feast-hall):

"Mortal strangers, this battle is not for you. If you stay here any longer and try to right this wrong, it will follow you to your world and be a curse on your people. It is best that you go back to where you belong...before it gets worse.

Take the sword/shards, you have earned it, and go to your peoples in peace. The Giants of the Sea-Hag won't forget you. They will smell out your scent and seek revenge. Now step into this circle and do not stray!"

Donal lifts up his hands and chants quickly as the Giants and goblins batter the hall's door down. A magical green glow emerges from the hearth-pit before Chief Gráda's throne and the sounds, smells, and noises of a forest can be perceived.

Once the adventurers step through the Portal, they are transported back to their own world in a forest at night with the magical sword in hand and the dangers of the Otherworld far behind.

ACT THREE – RESTORATION OF PEACE

Now the adventurers must decide what to do about the sword and the three warring tribes they had left behind. For the sake of game-play, no time has passed since the adventurers were in Faery, but if the CK desires they can roll on the table below to give some unexpected passage of time in the game:

D6	TIME PASSED
1	d20 hours
2	d12 days
3	d6 weeks
4	d4 months
5	d4 years
6	None

Regardless of the time passed, the three tribes have not forgotten about the old pact and are still deeply involved in the blood feud.

If the adventurers want to try to avoid the tribes and keep the sword for themselves, make it difficult and guarantee that they will encounter more tribesmen along the way. Remember that this sword is the sole reason for all of their troubles and difficulties thus so far.

While traveling in the dark woods at night, the CK can roll for encounters of Dark Fey along the way, enough to be a persistent annoyance.

D6	ENCOUNTER
1	d10 Goblins
2	d3 Gwyllgi/Hell Hounds
3	d4 Spriggans
4	d6 Dark Faeries mob (CK's call on what or whom)
5	d4 Kobolds
6	d8 Hobgoblins

SPRIGGANS (These chaotic evil fey's vital stats are HD 1d8+3/4d8+5, AC 15, and HP 15/30. Its primary attributes are physical. It attacks with a tree-like club doing 1d10/3d10 damage. They can grow into a gigantic form if angered and have a vulnerability to iron.)

GWYLLGI/CWN ANNWN (These lawful evil hounds vital statistics are 4d8 HD, AC 16, and 20 HP. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack with bite 1d6+1d6 or fire breath 2d8. They have an immunity to fire, tracking and dark vision.)

KOBOLDS (These lawful evil fey's vital statistics are 1d4 HD, AC 12 and 8 HP. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by bows 1d6, slings 1d4 or by throwing darts/spears 1d4+1. They have light sensitivity and dark vision.)

WILL O'THE WISP (These neutral evil feys' vital statistics are 9d6 HD, AC 29 and 12 HP. Their primary attributes are mental. They attack by touch 2d8. They have immunity to magic and natural invisibility.)

HOBGOBLINS (These chaotic evil creatures' vital statistics are 1d8 HD, AC 15 and 8 HP. Their primary attributes are physical. They attack by sword 1d4+3, spear 1d6 and bite 1d4. They have dark vision.)

The magic of the sword is again at work and bringing trouble wherever it goes.

MEETING WITH THE TRIBES

By dawn the adventurers, will see the nearest fort of the local Mortal tribe (assuming they are planning on giving back the weapon and bringing peace again).

Scattered everywhere on the ground, in the farm fields and on the horse trails, are the signs of past bloody battles. Nothing remains but fragments of old cloth and useless bits and pieces from weapons and accoutrements.

This situation will get overly complicated if one of the three tribes is aware of the magical shards are now fixed back together into a sword. Each tribe will do what they can to get it from the adventurers unless it is played smartly.

One possibility is that representatives from each tribe can be sent to meet in a neutral location, and the story of the sword can be discussed. Otherwise each tribe will seek to 'discuss' this matter on their own home turf. They will be very forceful and adamant about wanting to do so, to the point of being violent.

- There are many possible outcomes involving the volatile tribes and the magic sword:
1. One tribe will get the sword and use it against the others in an all-out bloody war of vengeance.
 2. No tribe gets the sword or shards back and the adventurers can try to make peace even still.
 3. Another outside group obtains the sword (Dark Fey, Irish or Saxon raiders, etc.) and the situation between the tribes does not change.
 4. The sword is broken into shards again to given back to each tribe - peace is restored.

Only Faery fires can forge and fix the sword since it was made in such a way, no 'normal' flame could mend it.

However it is resolved, a calm will settle over the three tribes for a time in the aftermath. This calm will not be without something terrible occurring in turn by the next day.

THE BLOOD HUNT OF IMMORTALS

From before the adventurers spent in time Faery and the trail of destruction and damage they wrought, Dark Fey have been and are still now hot on their path.

NOTE: Assuming that Haeardarian was used against the Giants, goblins and witches while in Faery, they now know about it and seek to have it destroyed before it harms anymore of their kind. The Dark Fey also seeks vengeance for what the adventurers did in their world; they won't stop until it is exacted or they are slain.

Without warning, the alliance of Giants, goblins and Gwiddonod will emerge from a portal in the Bryn Maenhiri to cause havoc among the dwellings of the innocent tribal-folk overnight. They will raid, burn to the ground and make a trail of devastation as they go, drawing out the wielders of the sword.

Very likely, the adventurers might be celebrating the (hopefully positive) outcome to the matter of the Crimson Pact at a large wild feast or in a tavern. Loud celebration and happiness is common now as people frolic and carouse by firelight, unaware of the danger that is coming their way.

The Dark Fey alliance heading to ravage the Mortal tribes is quite large in size. Quickly an alarm will be given in all three tribes by riders wielding firebrands and shouting about 'raiders' and 'attacks by strangers'.

Warriors muster, drunken and disorientated, to put the raiding army to a stop. Horsemen ride and warriors rush on foot towards the distant fires that dot the dark countryside.

This large battle will take the combined effort of the three tribes to stop it from getting any worse and the magic sword Haeardarian if it is restored and in hand. Spearheading this effort will be the adventurers, who must lead the charge and counter the Otherworldly foe.

The CK can place small, scattered battles in front of the adventurers as they go, but these many little struggles will gradually lead everyone deep into the woods, to the same hill of standing stones where the Crimson Pact was first sworn 400 years ago. It is from this place that the Dark Fey enter the Mortal world.

THE CRIMSON PACT II

Realizing that the Dark Fey are emerging from the hillside, there is no other choice but to put a stop to it before more enemies arrive. The adventurers will see:

A ghostly green magical light shines around the grassy hill where the stone ring stands. The magic light writhes and twists unnaturally, and an entrance is opened at the base of the hillside.

Charging forward is a long stream of goblins, Gwiddonod and Giants from the Otherworld with bestial wrath on their faces and weapons in hand.

These hordes emerge and begin to slay any who stand in their way. But one Fómorian Giant stands above them all. He shouts orders and points with his black fingernail towards you and the other Mortals close by. This Giant is feared by the rest.

The adventurers see 10 more Giants, mixed with 15 goblins and 10 Gwiddonod, storm out of the faery hill into the woods and enter into battle without hesitation.

The lead Giant is Crafanc Rúa, a minor Fómor chief who has a private agenda: to retrieve Haeardarian for his master in Faery – the King of Ravens. Though there are many magic swords in the worlds, this sword has an infamy about it that has made its worth great in the eyes of evil. The Raven-King wants to destroy the weapon and possess its innate magics for himself. The blood it shed has given it a greater presence than before.

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NOTE: In order to stop this from continuing any further, Crafanc must be slain and the stone door in the hillside must be closed. Closing the doorway will require several series of Strength Ability checks (4 x CL:15) before it is done.

The faery hill can be entered by the adventurers, of course, but they will again end up in the Otherworld. One interesting possibility is that to stop the flood of vengeful Fey the adventurers could 'sacrifice' themselves by entering this portal and destroying it. It would only stop this one portal for a time, but it would halt the assault by the evil faeries. If the adventurers choose this option they can end up in the Otherworld and will need to find another way back to their own world (if they even care to do so) in time.

The CK can use the other adventure modules in this series, adapting and modifying as they go for whatever is needed, or can use the *Codex Druidum* when it is released that further defines the Otherworld. The possibilities and options are many from this point on if they take a drastic measure.

On the other hand, if the adventurers do what is immediately 'right' in this adventure, they should either break the elf sword back into its three pieces and give them back to the three tribes to resume the ancient peace pact, or find a clever way to resolve the dilemma and possibly keep possession of the sword or hand it over to one of the tribes. The only absolute 'correct' ending to this adventure is to restore peace among the three tribes.

The Dark Fey won't retreat, no matter how long the battle takes. Crafanc cannot fail his master in the Otherworld or he will die by his wrath. The Gwiddonod have allied themselves with the Giants and minions of the Raven-King because they share the same enemy and seek the same weapon.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF THE PACT

In the aftermath of the battle against the Otherworldly foe, the remaining tribesmen will return back to their villages and chiefs to report the outcome. The adventurers are invited to come along since they were responsible for much of what happened. They will be honored as heroes among the tribe(s) and praised.

That night they will be given a grandiose festival with plentiful merrymaking, drinking, dancing and celebratory activities.

However the players settle this situation with the three tribes and the sword, they are likely honored by one or more of the three peoples surely. It is hoped that they did not make a lot of enemies within these peoples.

NOTE: One of the possible story angles that can result of this entire hassle with Amren and his father's magical sword is that many of the rest of the elf's clan might seek vengeance. The Morwyn clan of Eifion's people could plot to retrieve the sword again, but this second time will do so in a worse manner, using druidic magic and more warriors.

NEW MONSTERS

ALDER TREE HAG

(Large Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-100

HD: 8d8

MOVE: 20 ft.

AC: 16

ATTACKS: Branch (1d10+6)

SPECIAL: Low-light vision, plant traits

SAVES: M, P

INTELLIGENCE: Inferior to Average

TREASURE: None

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

EXPERIENCE: 300 + 8

Alder Tree Hags are the Dark Fey equivalent to Tree Warriors except they are animated and not sedentary. Their trunks and branches display an eerily ghastly hag's face and form amidst the leafy branches, with green glowing eyes and hungry mouths. They serve mainly the Gwiddonod on both worlds and often dwell in woods alone, preying on the foolish that cross their paths. Tree warriors speak Druidic and Sylvan.

COMBAT

Alder Hags carry on fighting until they perish or are commanded to stop by their Fey Witch masters. Depending on the odds, Alder Hags generally use one branch-arm for entanglement and the other for strikes against entangled opponents or other nearby foes.

ENTANGLE (EX): The Alder Hag may attempt to entangle opponents using the vine-like finger-branches of its hands. The Alder Hag may either make a touch attack if it chooses only to entangle, or it may attempt to entangle an opponent while striking with its normal branch attack (in addition to causing the normal damage from the attack). If the Alder Hag succeeds with its attack, the opponent is entangled just as if they had been hit with a net (see Chapter 7 of the Players Handbook for details), except the opponent receives an Escape Artist check to avoid the entanglement (DC:16). Once an Alder Hag has used one of its two branch-arms to entangle an opponent, it cannot use that arm to attack until the ensnared opponent breaks free. Like a net with a control rope, the Alder Hag may choose to restrict an entangled opponent's movement.

CONSTRICTION (EX): Any opponent entangled by an Alder Hag takes 1d6+6 damage automatically each round.

ATHACH

(Giant Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-3

HD: 4d12

MOVE: 75 ft.

AC: 17

ATTACKS: Club 3d10, Fist 2d10

SPECIAL: None.

SAVES: M, P

INTELLIGENCE: Inferior

TREASURE: 3

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

EXPERIENCE: 90 + 4

Athach are large, lumbering giants with limited intelligence. They are prone to violence and do not like being mocked or made fun of by the more fortunate (in intelligence). These monsters vary in appearance, but they are all ugly and hideous alike. Athach wander the gorges of mountains, shores of lochs, and other isolated and desolated places, looking to terrorize, loot, and devour any unfortunate lost people they find.

BAOBHAN SÍTH

(Medium Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-6

HD: 2d10

MOVE: 35 ft.

AC: 13

ATTACKS: Bite 3d12, Claw 2d8

SPECIAL: Drain Blood (Vampirism)

SAVES: M

INTELLIGENCE: Superior

TREASURE: Standard

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

EXPERIENCE: 100 + 2

COMBAT

Baobhan Síth are the vampiric children of the Baobh Catha, one of the Three Sisters of the Mórrígan. They draw blood by using their sharp fingernails and sometimes fangs and mainly target men.

They dwell mainly in Tir Tylluanod as cousins of the Gwiddonod but can be found elsewhere in the worlds too. Baobhan Síth usually are fair skinned and beautiful, and don green dresses to hide their hoofed feet. Baobhan Síth stay out of the sunlight, only stalking their prey in the darkness. She will entice a man by dancing seductively for him; then the distracted victim is bled dry.

FÓMORÍ

(Giant Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-30+

SIZE: Giant Fey

HD: 4d12

MOVE: 75 ft.

AC: 14

ATTACKS: Sword 1d12, Spear 2d10, Bite 2d8

SPECIAL: nil

SAVES: M, P

INTELLIGENCE: Inferior to Superior

TREASURE: Standard

ALIGNMENT: Chaotic Evil

EXPERIENCE: 120 + 4

Fomorian Giants are blue-skinned and ugly Fey beings, long since devoid of their elvish traits and origins, not submerged in their hideousness of darkness. Many among their kind have magical powers and abilities, granted by the blood of their mother goddess Domnu.

The Giants and their goblin minions will work their way up the hill towards the fort. Anyone that stands in their way will be slain or taken captive in ropes and nets, and be dragged back to the dark ship.

GWIDDON

(Medium Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-50

HD: 2d8

MOVE: 25 ft.

AC: 11

ATTACKS: Sword (+2 melee) 2d6, Spear (+1 melee) 1d8

SPECIAL: Night Vision (50 ft.), Faery Abilities

SAVES: M, P

INTELLIGENCE: Average to Superior

TREASURE: Standard

ALIGNMENT: Lawful Evil

EXPERIENCE: 120+4

Born from the violent and turbulent divine blood of the three sisters of war, death and terror (Mórrígan, Bodh Catha and Nemhain), the elven Amazons occupy the misty, thickly-forested hills and valleys of the Land of Owls (Tir Tylluanod). Structured in a Celtic manner except for an exclusively female-dominated perspective, they are prone to violence and pure aggression.

There are roughly three dozen royal houses, each lead by a Pen Widdon (Head Witch) whose courts are filled with intrigue and dark plots against one other and the rest of Faery. These Houses are all ruled by the Unbennes Widdonod (Queen of the Witches/Witch Queen), the direct daughter/descendant of the Mórrígan herself.

Menfolk, taken from the other elf races (Morwyn, Pren) and Mortals alike, are enslaved and made to live a life of servitude under the Pen Widdon and her court. Womenfolk are often slain during raids, to deny the men 'options' or any competition. The Gwiddonod are jealous by nature of other women and see the non-aggressive sort as a waste of existence.

The Gwiddonod would be seen as Lawful Evil by their behavior because they praise their Mother Goddesses and try to emulate them by following a strict code. Their blood enemies lie on the borders of Tir Tylluanod in Ildáthach, the very tribal and bold Pren elves. The Gwiddonod do not usually ally themselves with other Dark Fey and choose to stand alone normally. The King of Ravens and his hordes are considered unsaid allies, along with the Pen Annwn and his Shadow Elves (Ysgodiaid). The three groups are called the 'Tri Lys Dyllyll' (The Three Dark Courts).

Being elven, they use magic and their own natural Faery abilities alongside the arts of war, making them a formidable foe. In early Faery times their Mother Goddesses were allies with the Plant Dôn and the other Children of Light clans, but since the disastrous and short-lived attempt at conquest over part of the Mortal world, they have since lapsed into Darkness.

Owls, ravens and crows are their familiars and the two have formed an ancient symbiotic relationship. Many of the Gwiddonod have been able to blur the line between Faery and animal and possess many of the abilities and traits of their animal allies. Each Gwiddon has one of these birds as a close companion that has been raised since it was a chick. The two function as a deadly team, often fighting or exchanging duties as scout or guard.

Typically the Gwiddonod dress in drab, grey, black or dark green

clothes with their hair long and wild, sometimes braided and plaited, with magical tattoos over their perfect elven bodies. They are all extremely beautiful in appearance, but beneath the surface simmers a savage, wild and brutal aspect of femininity. For weaponry they use axes of many sorts, swords, and spears in battle. They ride Fey horses and use elaborate war-chariots.

GWIDDON FAERY ABILITIES

D8	Ability
1	Ravensister
2	Nightflight
3	Eye of the Hag
4	Witchwood
5	Owlflight
6	Witch Moon
7	Profound Stare
8	Roll on Dark Faery Abilities

ABILITIES

The Fey Witches, descendants of the Mórrígan, possess many of their own unique abilities that are not seen anywhere else in Faery or in the Mortal world. They are all mostly harmful and damaging, as with the Ghost Elves of Annwn, and very terrifying in nature.

RAVENSISTER: Because of the blood from Mórrígan, Bobh Catha and Nemain, certain Góidon are born with the ability that carries that legacy strongly in their ancestry. There are three levels to this, and each provides a newer option that gives more power to the possessor of this heritage.

Each level's duration is equal to the Góidon's experience level in rounds total, and can be used three times a day.

Each level is obtainable once another three experience levels are earned by the Góidon (1,3,6), and each has advanced benefits. First level enables the Fey Witch the ability to transform partially into a raven and elf, similar to the Ysgod Gwethron. The Góidon will become a black feathered, taloned and sharp beaked monstrosity in this form. Its bite deals 1d6 damage, talons 1d8 and can cast spells and still use weaponry if needed.

The second level allows the Fey Witch the power to transform into a giant raven from the elfin form. Flight is obviously now an option, 100 ft. with the other attacks as before. As a giant raven, the Witch can cast only certain spells, speak, and be unable to wield any weapons.

The third level is the most terrifying of the three. The Gwaedfrân or 'Blood-Raven' is a large sized version of the first level which gains Giant's Growth and other abilities automatically: Prickle Blades, Storm Moon, Horrible Visage, Eye of the Hag and Shriek of Dread.

The Ravensister must roll a Charisma Save when surrounded by the blood and gore of battle or give in to a bloodlust. If so, the Góidon will be in a killing frenzy and be out of control until the presence of the blood is done and gone.

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NIGHTFLIGHT: With a taste of fresh blood, the Elf Witch can fly by moonlight. The moon must be present in the night-sky, in any phase but New to allow this ability to work. This flight ability is not as flexible as Fey Flight or by spell, but it does grant the Góidon the means to know by sense places where other Góidonot dwell while in flight.

This can be used three times a night, and will last in duration equal to the experience level in hours. Flight speed is 120 ft. a round while in Nightflight and the Witch can fly high in the sky, 100 ft. The only difficulty in this ability is the magical barrier that streams and rivers (flowing waterways) provide to the Góidon while in flight. If the Elf Witch tries to cross these places, she will suffer a D10 damage for as long as it takes to cross.

If the Wild Hunt is out during the use of this ability, the Góidon is drawn to join the horde on their frenzied rampage. Only a Charisma Save can deny the Witch a chance to be forcibly be a part of it.

EYE OF THE HAG: The Góidon's eyes can become ghost white and gaze into the eyes of the victim causing a curse on them. This ability works the same as the Ysgodiaid's Dark Eye.

WITCHWOOD: With this ability, the Witch can transform into a Rowan tree-like form and rend enemies and spread terror. Roots, Branches, leaves, and bark form on the Góidon giving the elf an appearance of a moving tree. With this ability, the elf gains many advantages: Strength + 2D10, AC 18, Branch Slam 3d12, Impale 2d8.

As a Witchwood, the elf can only use this with certain conditions: the witch must be in a forest that is populated with rowan trees, after sunset, and the drinking of the chosen rowan tree's sap in a vampiric act must be done. Once this is done, the Góidon can remain in this form until one of the three conditions are met: the first rays of dawn, chooses to change back or altered by a spell effect or slain.

In this form the elf witch can cast spells, battle with weaponry if needed and almost be 'normal'. This ability allows the Góidon the option of lying in disguise in the forests to ambush their enemies. Like trees however, the Witchwood are vulnerable to fire and being cut down by axes.

OWLFLIGHT: From her outstretched arms emerge the feathered wings of an owl when summoned. This can be used per day or night equal to the witch's experience level and lasts the same amount of time in hours.

The Góidon can fly 80 ft. per round with Owlflight. The vague semblance of an owl will be found in nuances in the she-witch with this ability. It can be seen in feathers, the eyes and the merest hint of talons on the hands and feet.

Once the Góidon reaches 5th level, this ability gives the elf a chance to transform into an elfin, owl hybrid much like the Ravensister does the raven. With a deadly beak, 2d6 damage, and talons, 2d10 damage, the Góidon can still use weaponry and cast spells in this monstrous form.

WITCH-MOON: The Witch-Moon is essentially the Moon Child natural born ability and works the same. The Góidon was born under the darker influence of the moon in the night sky and her life is guided and shaped by its movement in the sky.

PROFOUND STARE: To use and emphasize the elf witch's beauty and allure, Profound Stare enables the Góidon to seduce and charm others to do her bidding. This is similar to Faery Lure except that it functions through the witch's eyes.

It can work on both genders easily and the same if they fail their Charisma Save. Once it does work, the target will be under the complete control of the Góidon. The witch can enslave as many people as equal to the witch's experience level over time. The target can only be freed from the Profound Stare if she chooses; dies or a divine intervention occurs (cleric or god). The charmed cannot be made to do anything that inflicts harm on themselves under the sway of this ability, but they can be told to serve the witch otherwise and even cause harm on others.

The victim(s) often will not even be aware that they are so influenced, or those around them, and can act as sleepers of their witch mistress. She can choose to activate them and let her charms take over to get whatever he objectives are accomplished through them.

PIXIE (PYSKY)

(Small Fey)

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1-20+

HD: 3d6

MOVE: 60 ft.

AC: 12

ATTACKS: Sword 1d6, Spear 1d4, Bow 1d6+1

SPECIAL: Blend with Nature, Low-light vision, Camouflage, Faery Abilities

SAVES: M, P

INTELLIGENCE: Average

TREASURE: Standard (See Below)

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

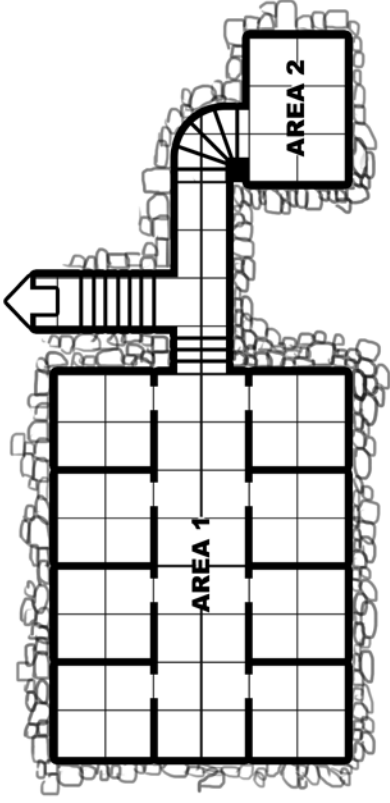
EXPERIENCE: 75

Pixies are short, usually green skinned and red-haired faeries that display the full gamut of Twilight Fey nature. They are well known for causing havoc among Mortals at night and pestering bad people. Pixies are common among the Woodfolk in Faery and are one of the few political forces of the Twilight persuasion.

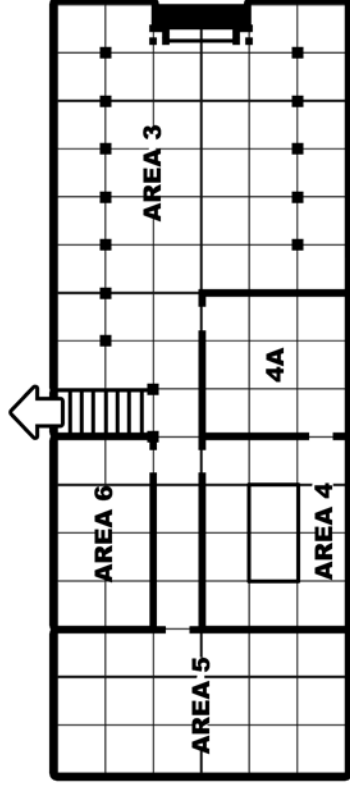
Many mine the precious Dragon Stones from the earth, while others simply collect items of wealth and fascination. In battle, Pixies are fierce warriors, using their abilities and skills to their full advantage against their foes. The Dark Pixies of Bucca Dhu follow the same statistics.

(PLAYER CHARACTER INFO:) +5 Dexterity, +2 Strength.
Typical Classes: Any.

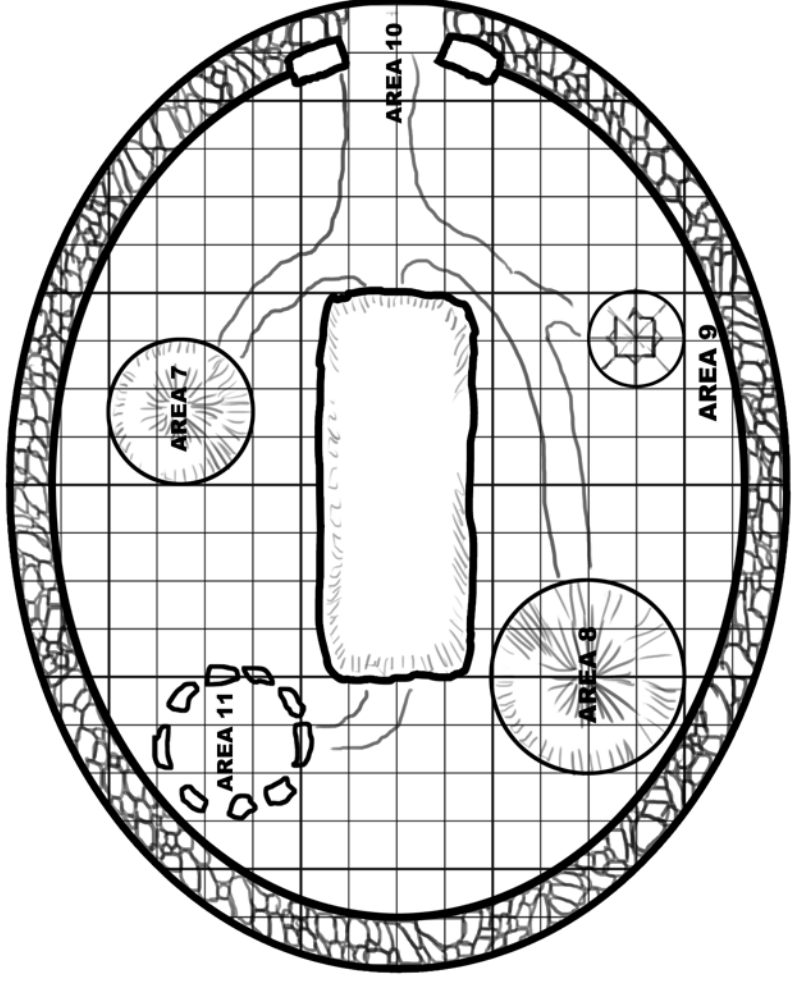
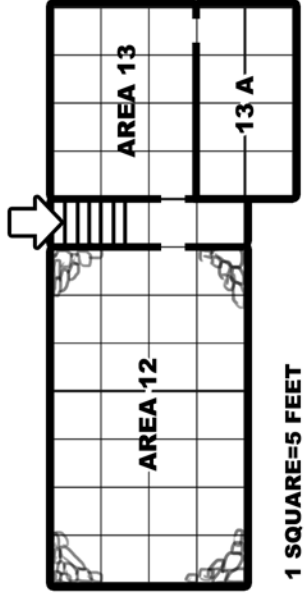
LEVEL 1



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CASTLES[®] CRUSADES



BEYOND THE COMFORTS OF HOME LIE WORLDS OF EPIC ADVENTURE

THE SLOPES OF **BRYN MAENHIRI** PLAY HOST TO A PORTAL, A DOOR THAT OPENS TO THE **OTHERWORLD**, THE LANDS OF **FAERY**, AND POSSESSION OF IT BRINGS MEN POWERS UNTOLD. SO THE TRIBES OF MEN WAGED WAR WITH ONE THE OTHER TO HOLD IT; UNTIL THEIR BATTLES BROUGHT FORTH AN OTHERWORLDLY HOST FROM THE LANDS **FAERY**, ELVES, FEY, TERRIBLE AND WONDERFUL, WILD MEN OF THE WOODS, GIANTS AND OTHER SUCH HORRORS. IN COUNTLESS BATTLES THE FOUR REALMS STRUGGLED TO TAKE AND HOLD OF **BRYN MAENHIRI**, WHERE TOO OFTEN THE DEEP GREEN GRASSES KNOW THE WARM STAIN OF BLOOD AND THE IRON OF SHOD BOOTS.

IN TIME THE OTHER WORLDERS SENT FORTH THEIR CHAMPION, THE ELF-LORD **EIFION**, AND HE CARRIED WITH HIM THE SWORD **HAEARN**DARIAN. WITH THIS BLADE FEW COULD STAND AGAINST HIM SO THAT HE FELL UPON THE LUCKLESS WITH WILD ABANDON, SLAUGHTERING THE MEN IN DROVES. BUT IN THE END HIS VANITY UNIDID HIM AND HE FELL AND HIS BLADE SHATTERED BY THE HEROES OF MEN. THE HOST OF **FAERY** FELL BACK INTO THE HILL AND UPON THE RED SOAKED FIELD THE THREE KINGS OF MEN MADE PEACE WITH ONE THE OTHER AND SWORE A PACT TO KEEP THE HILL CLOSED. THEY EACH TOOK A SHARD OF THE SWORD FOR SAFETY. SO PEACE CAME TO THE WHOLE OF THOSE PEOPLE.

BUT NOW THE SHARDS HAVE GONE MISSING; STOLEN BY SOME UNKNOWN HAND AND WAR SPREADS ACROSS THE LANDS. FEAR GRIPS MEN FOR RUMORS OF A HOST OF FEY RETURNED SPREADS THROUGH WHISPERS IN EVERY HOUSEHOLD. BLOODY WAR AND MURDER GRIP THE HEARTS OF MEN. THE **CRIMSON PACT** IS A HARD HITTING ADVENTURE MODULE THAT PITS ANY WOULD BE ADVENTURER AGAINST A VERITABLE HOST OF PROBLEMS THAT HARD SWORD STROKES ALONE WON'T SOLVE. **CRIMSON PACT** IS DESIGNED FOR USE WITH MID-LEVEL CHARACTERS AND FOR PLAY OVER SEVERAL GAMING SESSIONS.



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