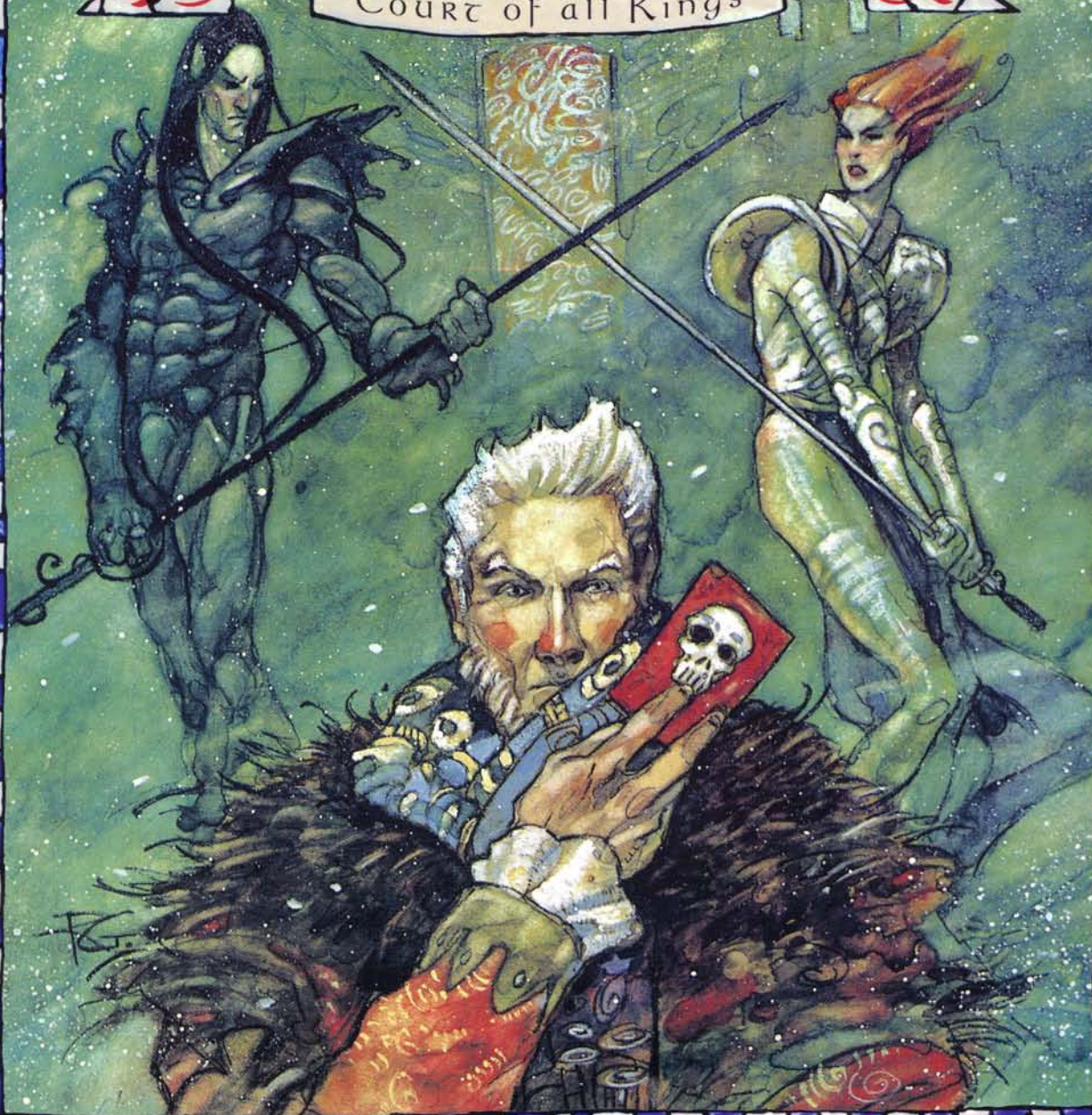


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Court of all Kings



IMMORTAL EYES

Court of all Kings



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Dedication: To my teachers both formal and informal. To all the poets and musicians who have kept the spirit of the land alive and to my Irish ancestors who left the green hills of Hibernia for a new life in the mountains of America.

Author's Special Thanks

To **Jackie Cassada**, sister and co-creator.

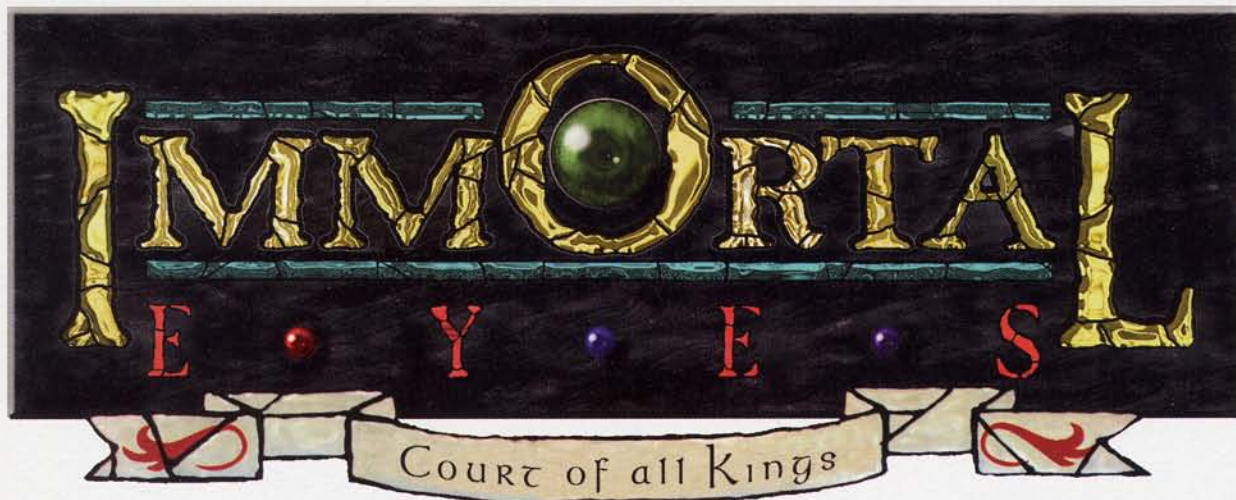
To **Stephen "Nearside" Herron**, my online friend from Belfast, from whose excellent "Belfast Child" stories much of the information on Ulster changelings was gleaned. Thank you, Stephen for your unfailing dedication, your meeting of every deadline I set you and your Northern Irish "Unseelie humor."

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Contents

Introduction	4
Book One: The Emerald Isle	8
Chapter One: Setting	8
Chapter Two: A Mythical History of Ireland	22
Chapter Three: Geography	54
Book Two: The Fair Folk	82
Chapter Four: Nobles	82
Chapter Five: Commoners	108
Chapter Six: The Gallain and Prodigal	118
Chapter Seven: Scenes	126
Appendix: Treasures and Timeline	138



Introduction



Immortal Eyes: Court of All Kings is the third in a new kind of World of Darkness supplement called a chronicle sourcebook. It provides you with the information needed to create your own chronicle, but is not meant to be the only source of ideas for your chronicle creations. Feel free to change any part (or every part) depicted herein. Settings, characters, storylines — any and all are fair game. Make of them what you will to run the chronicle you want.

The setting contains enough information for you to do this, though familiarity with the main characters of the

chronicle is necessary if they are to play an active role in your story. Plenty of information on the geography and important sites of Ireland is included here, though any extra research you do on Irish history, politics and folklore can only enrich your chronicle.

This book is the third and final in the **Immortal Eyes** chronicle sourcebooks. Along with **Immortal Eyes: The Toybox** and **Immortal Eyes: Shadows on the Hill**, it forms a trilogy of sourcebooks which accompany the novels of the same name.

The Immortal Eyes Chronicle

This series of chronicle sourcebooks will provide you with many tools to use in running your regular **Changeling** chronicle. You will be able to run dozens of different sessions based on it. Though it is intended as a long-term continuing saga, any part can be excised and used on its own or the events depicted spread apart and separated by other stories. Each sourcebook provides more information on the total picture of where the overall story is heading, so you will need to decide before you start playing the **Immortal Eyes** chronicle whether you want to involve your players with the epic quest that is the backbone of all three novels and sourcebooks.

Backstory: The Quest of the Eyes

If you've played the sample story (also called "The Toybox") in the Appendix of **Changeling: The Dreaming**, then your players' quest for the Immortal Eyes has already begun. Further details on the quest can be found in

the other two sourcebooks. Depending on your players' progress, you may be ready for the final leg of the journey presented here.

We have not provided all the details of the quest here, but rather have provided enough material to run other plots in your story as well as the main quest depicted in the novels. From San Francisco, the quest has taken the heroes to the Hawaiian islands. Now they continue their journey to the fabled homeland of the sidhe, to Ireland, known to the fae as Hibernia. If they accept the quest, your characters become the focus of an epic saga, a tale worthy of the greatest bardic song, that may shake the foundations of the Dreaming itself and alter the fate of two worlds — both Earth and Arcadia.

An Emerald Isle Chronicle

If you are not the sort of Storyteller who likes to run this sort of chronicle, don't give up on us. We have provided extensive information on cities and important sites in each of the sourcebooks, making them suitable as settings for any story you wish to set there. Book One in each sourcebook can be used alone, completely ignoring the story of the **Immortal Eyes**, should





you so desire. You can even raid Book Two for characters you'd like to include. Unlike other city sourcebooks previously published by White Wolf, Book One of each **Immortal Eyes** sourcebook contains a general introduction to the geography and history of the areas covered.

How to Use Book One

Chapter One provides a general overview of Ireland with practical information. Chapter Two focuses on the history, both real and chimeric. Chapter Three briefly covers the geography of both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

How to Use Book Two

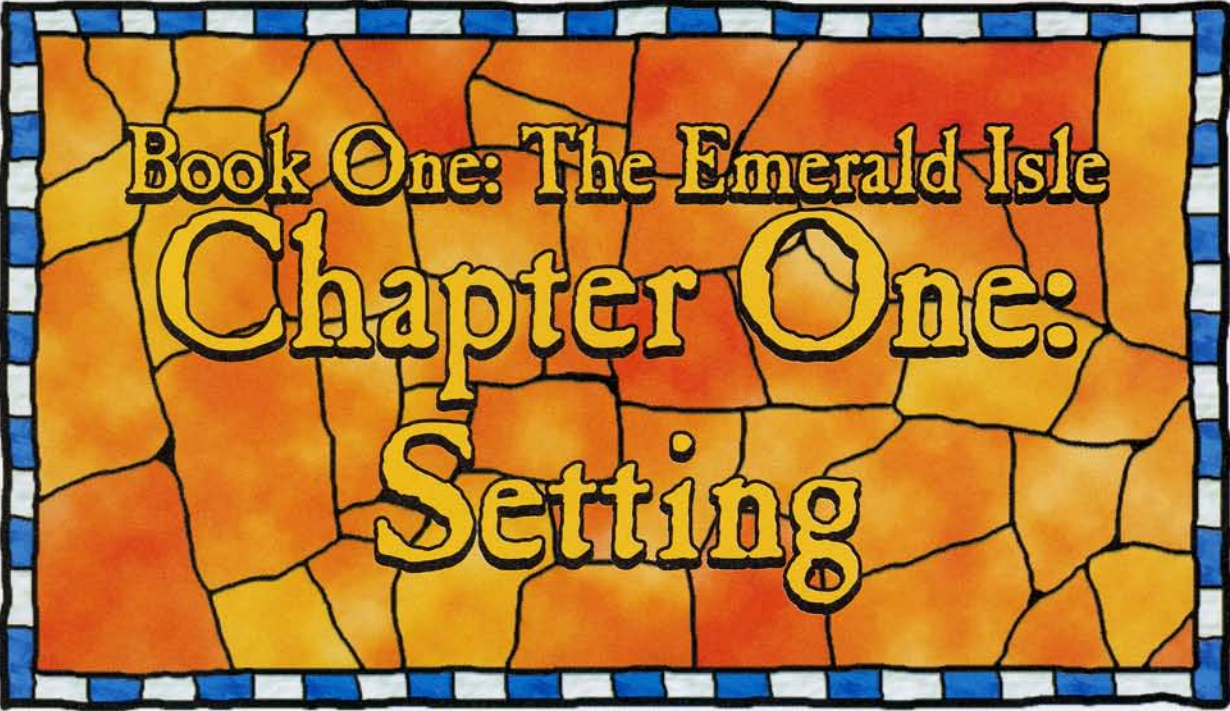
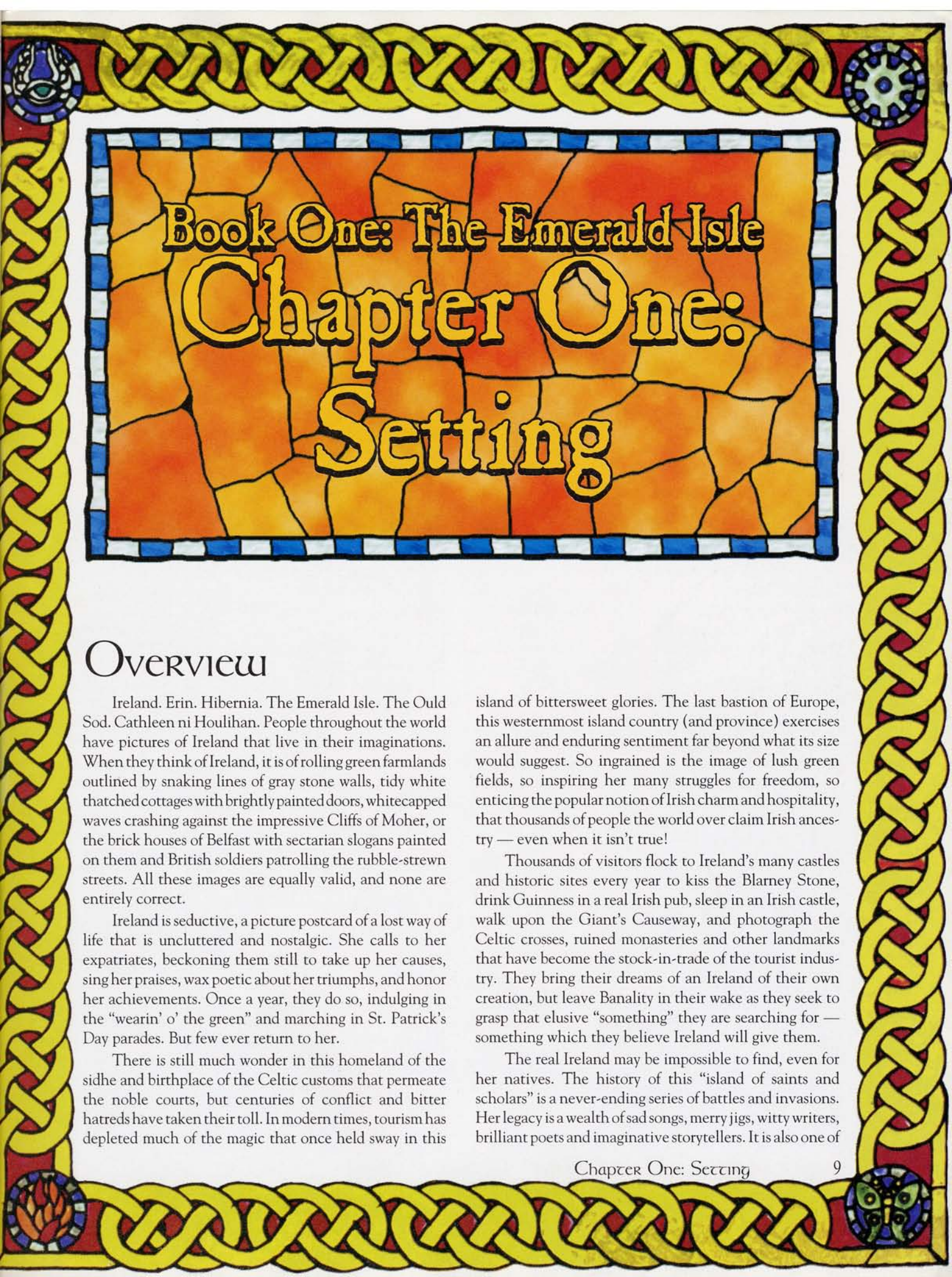
Chapter Four details the nobles of the land, both Seelie and Unseelie. Chapter Five deals with the commoners. Chapter Six focuses on Ireland's other supernatural

inhabitants and unveils a new changeling kith. Chapter Seven provides two tales set in Ireland, and allows the characters to become involved in the quest for the Immortal Eyes without actually becoming a part of it. The Appendix features a chronology of the *Court of All Kings* novel, a detailing of the four Eyestones and some of the faerie treasures of Ireland.

A Final Word

If you wish to truly recreate the spirit of Ireland, immerse yourself in the fairy tales and heroic stories of Cuchulainn and the Cattle Raid of Cooley, Finn MacCool and the Fianna, and tales of the Tuatha de Danaan. Consider playing some Irish traditional songs or the harp music of Turlough O'Carolan as background for your game. Finally, description can only go so far in portraying the look of a place. Travel books and picture books of Ireland (and some videotapes) are readily available at most public libraries. Pick up a few for inspiration. Enjoy.





Book One: The Emerald Isle

Chapter One:

Setting

Overview

Ireland. Erin. Hibernia. The Emerald Isle. The Ould Sod. Cathleen ni Houlihan. People throughout the world have pictures of Ireland that live in their imaginations. When they think of Ireland, it is of rolling green farmlands outlined by snaking lines of gray stone walls, tidy white thatched cottages with brightly painted doors, whitecapped waves crashing against the impressive Cliffs of Moher, or the brick houses of Belfast with sectarian slogans painted on them and British soldiers patrolling the rubble-strewn streets. All these images are equally valid, and none are entirely correct.

Ireland is seductive, a picture postcard of a lost way of life that is uncluttered and nostalgic. She calls to her expatriates, beckoning them still to take up her causes, sing her praises, wax poetic about her triumphs, and honor her achievements. Once a year, they do so, indulging in the “wearing o’ the green” and marching in St. Patrick’s Day parades. But few ever return to her.

There is still much wonder in this homeland of the sidhe and birthplace of the Celtic customs that permeate the noble courts, but centuries of conflict and bitter hatreds have taken their toll. In modern times, tourism has depleted much of the magic that once held sway in this

island of bittersweet glories. The last bastion of Europe, this westernmost island country (and province) exercises an allure and enduring sentiment far beyond what its size would suggest. So ingrained is the image of lush green fields, so inspiring her many struggles for freedom, so enticing the popular notion of Irish charm and hospitality, that thousands of people the world over claim Irish ancestry — even when it isn’t true!

Thousands of visitors flock to Ireland’s many castles and historic sites every year to kiss the Blarney Stone, drink Guinness in a real Irish pub, sleep in an Irish castle, walk upon the Giant’s Causeway, and photograph the Celtic crosses, ruined monasteries and other landmarks that have become the stock-in-trade of the tourist industry. They bring their dreams of an Ireland of their own creation, but leave Banality in their wake as they seek to grasp that elusive “something” they are searching for — something which they believe Ireland will give them.

The real Ireland may be impossible to find, even for her natives. The history of this “island of saints and scholars” is a never-ending series of battles and invasions. Her legacy is a wealth of sad songs, merry jigs, witty writers, brilliant poets and imaginative storytellers. It is also one of

grim repression, the sundering of families, wasted chances, martyrs to "the cause" of Irish freedom, economic hardships and ongoing violence in the name of patriotism. Ireland's sons and daughters have been forced to emigrate in search of a better future, leaving in waves since the Great Famine and scattering around the world.

There are now far more people of Irish ancestry who live in the United States than populating the whole of modern Ireland. Nor are the Catholic Irish the only ones who have fled. The Scot-Irish of Ulster were among those who became the American pioneers. But the energy and talents both groups brought to America were lost to those left at home. History and religion have created a divided island, with the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland adamantly opposed to reuniting the island, and a Catholic majority in the Republic of Ireland who is uncertain it could shoulder the burdens that would fall to it should there actually be a reunification.

And what of the changelings? They bask in the dreams and creativity to be found throughout Ireland, but they also live in the shadows engendered by banal tourist traps and the poisoned Glamour of "the Troubles" (as the quarter-century-long escalation of violence in Northern Ireland is euphemistically known). For a time, during the recent cease-fire observed by both the IRA (Irish Republican Army) and the Protestant Loyalist groups, there had been hope of a new beginning. But the cease-fire has proven to be a broken dream, and Winter once again looms on the horizon.

Chimerical Ireland

Ireland is known to changelings as the Kingdom of Hibernia. Both Northern Ireland and the Republic are considered to be a part of the overall kingdom. This all sounds very unified, except that there is no high king as there is in Concordia. Instead the island is divided into four kingdoms that correspond to the four historic provinces of Leinster, Munster, Connaught and Ulster. Divided by the drawing of lots so as to prevent conflict, they are each controlled by a different noble house. Leinster consists of 12 counties in the East, and is ruled by King Bran of House Gwydion. Munster falls under the dominion of Queen Nuala of House Eiluned. It claims six counties in the Southwest, and is the largest of the four. Connaught's ruler is King Fiachra of House Dougal. He claims five counties that lie in the Northwest of the island. Ulster, the northernmost kingdom, includes three counties that fall within the Republic of Ireland and six more that comprise the entirety of Northern Ireland. Ulster's ruler is King Finn of House Fiona, who has thus far hidden his Unseelie nature from the other monarchs.

Aside from these regional kingdoms, the whole island is inundated with petty kings claiming a particular county, town, forest, mountain, village, ruined fort or even the remembrance of a freehold that once existed. Duchies, baronies and other holdings are awarded to those sidhe (and a very few commoners) who by birth or service to the four Great Kings (as they are called) are entitled to them. Additionally, many petty kings and queens bestow holdings upon those who support their claims to a kingdom, however small. Many of the petty kings acknowledge the overlordship of the Great Kings, and thereby benefit from their protection and resources. Some few of the petty kingdoms are ruled by members of Houses Liam, Scathach, Balor and Leanhaun.

Many of the ancient freeholds and glens that once were so plentifully supplied with Glamour have become depleted in the centuries since the sidhe fled the island. Though some powerful magics remain, in many areas the returning nobles had to make do with lesser holdings than they had imagined. There is thus a great disparity between the Great Kings and the lesser ones, and even between the Great Kings of the four kingdoms. While it would have seemed natural for King Bran to claim Tara as his seat of power, the constant comings and goings of tourists through the years has robbed the ancient site of its Glamour. Whatever Glamour now resides in Tara is brought there by those who dream of its days of glory. Conversely, King Finn of Ulster was able to return and take Navan Fort, which has been called the "Tara of the North," as his chief holding. Once known as Emain Macha, it was the dwelling place of Conor Mac Nessa, king of Ulster in the time of the original Red Branch Knights and the great hero Cuchulainn.

The commoners of Hibernia, including the native kith known as clurichaun, have a few holdings they can call their own. For the most part, so long as they behave themselves, the sidhe either tolerate or ignore them. Some are attached to the various noble houses, and many live in faerie towns, distancing themselves from the snobbery and intrigues of the noble courts.

Unlike their American cousins, the Irish sidhe had no high king to make an accord with the commoners. Battles were fought and freeholds claimed. Eventually a sort of peace was declared among most of the Kithain, but they continue to distrust one another to some extent. The sidhe, cognizant of their few among the great number of commoners, are proud of their noble status, loath to give up any of their privileges or rights to rulership, quick to take offense, and swift in dealing out judgments and retributions. In short, they exist under a siege mentality not unlike that of the Protestants of Northern Ireland who were sent centuries ago to hold the land for the English crown against the "wild, disloyal" Irish.

Climate

Ireland is one of the wettest countries of Europe, though the temperature is mild due to the Atlantic Gulf Stream, which softens and warms the westerly winds. No point on the island is farther than 70 miles from the ocean, giving the whole of it a temperate climate that rarely falls below 40°F in winter or rises above the low to mid-60s in summer. Rain is more plentiful in the West, while the Southeast is the driest part of the island. Snow is rare, usually falling only in the higher elevations, and never lasts for long.

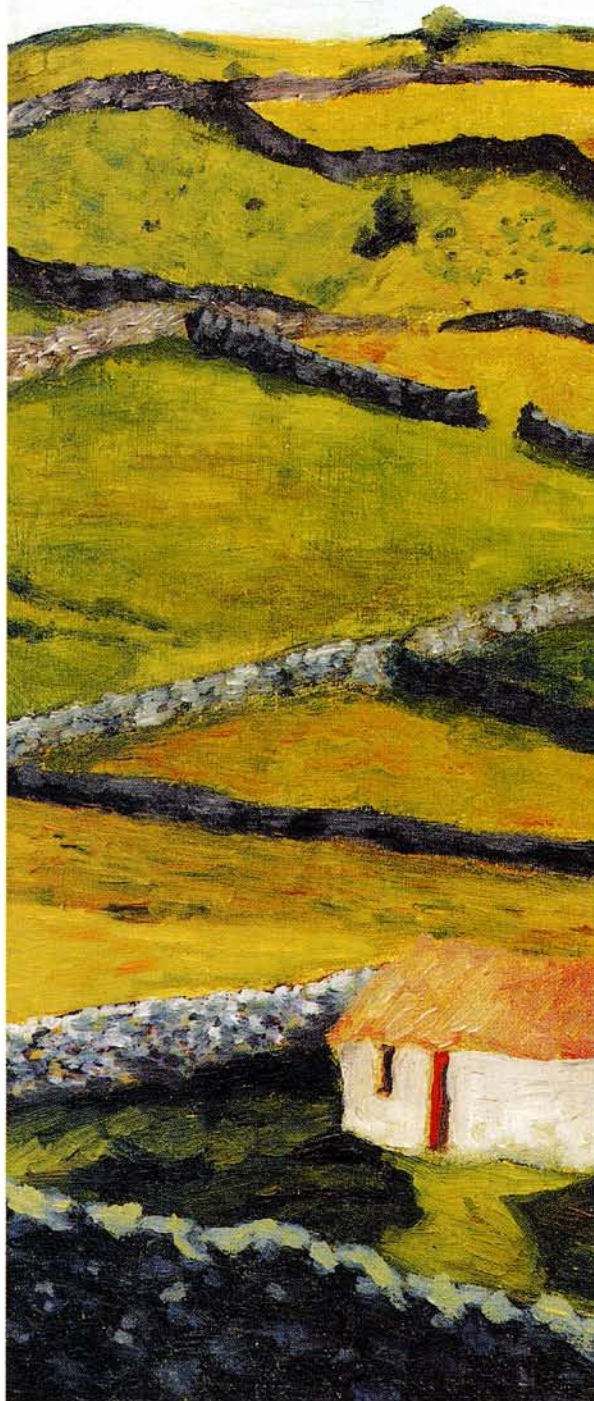
Most of Ireland is subject to the gray, overcast days of light, drizzling rain, which the Irish refer to as “soft weather.” Most days, however, have at least partial sunshine. The West gets heavy rainstorms, and frightening squalls blow in off the ocean. The weather is notorious for its capriciousness, changing in the space of a few minutes or hours from gray and rainy to clear and sunny. It is not unusual on a day that has been heavily overcast to suddenly have the clouds open and spotlight portions of the land with brilliant shafts of sunlight, or for the clouds to disappear entirely in time for a rosy sunset. The humidity of the island sets the stage for spectacular rainbows, which are most frequently seen in the Southwest.

People

Fewer people live in the whole of Ireland than live in the city of London. With a population of just over 5 million (of which 3.5 million reside in the Republic and 1.5 million in Northern Ireland), it constitutes one of the most sparsely populated areas in Europe. At one time, Ireland claimed over 8 million people. The Great Famine in the 1840s, and its attendant disease and emigration, reduced this by half. Emigration since that time further reduced the number in the Republic to less than 3 million by the 1960s. That number has now climbed over the 3 million mark again.

Approximately one-third of the population of the Republic lives in the capital of Dublin, and one-third of the people of Northern Ireland reside in its capital of Belfast. While the North has always been more industrialized, this constitutes a major shift for the people of the Republic who were more agrarian in the past.

In the Republic of Ireland, Catholics comprise 95% of the population, with Protestants representing only a little over 3%. In Northern Ireland, Protestants have a 55% majority, and Catholics are a large minority with 40% of the population. While there is supposed to be no discrimination, in actual fact, it was unavoidable because of the division of the island. The percentage of





Protestants has declined in the Republic, while in the North, disenfranchisement of Catholics was built into the province at its inception, and preference for Protestants has existed for centuries. Ironically, while the Catholics of the North were discriminated against by the Protestants, the Protestants themselves (Presbyterians and others) were (and continue to be) looked down upon by the established Church of England. Religion is still an important part of life in Ireland, and has had a profound effect on its political, economic and social development.

In both the North and the South, almost half the population consists of young people under 25 years of age. Most are well-educated, though the high unemployment rate in both the Republic and the North have left many with few choices other than emigration. Recently there has been a shift away from large families due to the availability of contraceptives, and to leaving the traditional farming life which required many children to work the land.

Usually characterized as being amiable, helpful, good-hearted and eloquent, the Irish people (both North and South), are generally friendly and talkative, as is evidenced by the profusion of local pubs that serve as centers of social life. There, people gather to engage in *craic*, which is basically a rousing good time involving lots of humorous talk, drink, good fellowship and debates on everything. Their speech is flavored by the cadences of Irish Gaelic, and their love of storytelling harks back to the oral traditions of the Celtic bards. The Irish are noted for both their wit and love of gossip, and visitors are treated with great hospitality, warmth and generosity, all of which help make strangers relax and feel at home.

On the other hand, the Irish are also seen as melancholy dreamers holding onto vain hopes and bygone glories. That they are given to introspection is not unusual in light of the sorrows which have afflicted this small island throughout its history. There are few Irish who cannot relate at least some of that sad past in either story or song.

All too often, the people of the South are dismissed as being quaint, uncultured and superstitious, while those of the North are perceived to be dour, stubborn and unforgiving. Better descriptions of both might emphasize their charm, resilience and resourcefulness throughout a history brimming with conflict. Too often, however, today's decisions are based on glorious yesterdays that never were or terrible wrongs that should never have been. Myth and history have become political weapons wielded by both sides in the ongoing Troubles in Northern Ireland, where warring dreams clash in violent conflict.

Economics

The picturesque peasant cottages so dear to the imaginations of tourists held grinding poverty within them until quite recently. While still a very poor place compared with most of their European neighbors, Ireland has begun the move into the modern age. Since joining the EU (European Union) in 1973, the Republic has acquired new industries and foreign investments. In the West, traditionally the part of Ireland most dependent on agriculture, farms have been forced to modernize, foreign industry has arrived, and forestry is a developing business. Ireland's denuded hills have been reforested in many places. But the trend toward planting conifers rather than hardwoods has led to lines of dreary, dark trees that conflict with rather than contribute to the wild beauty of the rural West.

Once one of the greatest industrial cities of the British Isles, Belfast has been in decline, its industries outdated, most of its linen mills now closed. Newer, more modern industry has been recently introduced, however, and has begun to make inroads. Cross-community initiatives that hire both Protestants and Catholics bring hope in areas where unemployment reaches 80%. The city of Derry has begun an economic recovery as well, but only by an almost total segregation of Catholics and Protestants.

Both parts of Ireland are plagued by the problems that beset most modern urban societies: a rising crime rate, drug use and high unemployment rates. Nonetheless, they are beginning to edge toward greater prosperity, and some of the worst slum areas have been replaced by better housing. In both North and South, tourism has become the industry of the moment. Despite the Troubles, the confusing exchange rate, and the exasperating delays and difficulties inherent to Ireland, the tourists grow more numerous every year.

Traveling Around Ireland

Air Travel

The Republic of Ireland has four international airports (Dublin, Shannon, Cork and Knock). In Northern Ireland, Aldergrove Airport near Belfast is the only international airport of the province. Regional airports exist in Galway, Killarney, Sligo and Waterford in the Republic, and in Derry (Londonderry) in Northern Ireland. Aer Lingus serves not only as international transport, but has several flights per day from Dublin to Cork, Shannon and Galway. Smaller airlines provide domestic flights, with Aer Arann flying from Carnmore airport near Galway to the Aran Islands.

Flights from many English airports as well as from Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland are available to Dublin, Shannon

(near Limerick), Waterford and Cork. From the United States, flights aboard Aer Lingus are direct from New York or Boston to Shannon and Dublin airports. Most air travel from Europe goes to Great Britain first. From there a flight to Ireland takes about an hour. Dublin is the usual entry point to Ireland, though Shannon airport's famous duty-free shopping attracts thousands of visitors a year. Getting from the airport to the city can be done via bus service or taxi in all the main airports.

Land and Sea Travel

Ireland and Britain are linked by several ferry routes. The most frequently used is the ferry to Dún Laoghaire (pronounced Dunleary) and Dublin. Ferries also run to Cork, Rosslare Harbor and Belfast. The shortest trip is about two hours (from Holyhead to Dún Laoghaire), while the longest (about 11 hours) runs from Liverpool to Belfast. Further travel is available through connections to the Irish Rail service and various private and national bus companies.

DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) is an electric rail service that runs between Howth in County Dublin and Bray in County Wicklow. It stops at 25 stations along the way, many of them in Dublin. One DART station is located at Dún Laoghaire where the ferry lands and provides a 10-15 minute ride to downtown Dublin.

Getting Around in Ireland

All of Ireland's large cities can be reached via air travel, bus or train. Many package tours also take visitors to smaller towns and notable tourist attractions. One of the best ways to see Ireland, however, is by car.

There are major highways only in the Dublin and Belfast areas. The rest of the island is served by major roads, which generally connect the larger cities, and small local roads, which are usually not very well maintained. Traffic is relatively heavy on the major routes, while the minor ones often have obstacles such as wandering cows and sheep blocking them. Although nowhere is very far from anywhere else in Ireland, many of the island's most beautiful attractions are in rural areas where the roads are narrow, public transportation is virtually nil, and the pace of life is slow. Patience is a requirement when traveling in Ireland.

Signposts on major routes are usually well-maintained, but those on minor routes can be difficult to interpret. Ireland is slowly changing to the metric system, though it isn't always apparent where. Older signposts are white with black writing in Gaelic or both Gaelic and English. These may list distances in either miles or kilometers. Newer signs have white lettering on green or blue backgrounds, and are written in both Gaelic and English with the distances in kilometers. In Northern Ireland, signposts are only in English and distance is measured in miles. It should be noted that *speed limits* are noted in miles throughout Ireland, though gasoline is sold in liters rather than gallons.

When crossing into Northern Ireland, travelers are advised to stay on the main roads and cross via the border posts that are marked on most maps. In Northern Ireland (particularly in Belfast), there are areas marked as "Control Zones," where no parking is allowed. Vehicles parked within those zones will attract police attention due to the North's history of car bombings.

Other Methods

Other options for travel include bicycling and renting horse-drawn caravans. Ireland's many quiet roads and light traffic make bicycling a pleasure, though the winds, rains and many, many hills require a lot of stamina. Caravans are replicas of the round-topped wagons favored by the Irish traveling folk (tinkers). Capable of housing up to four people, the wagons are driven by caravan operators. The horses must be fed oats and turned out for pasturage each evening, making this a leisurely way to travel (usually no more than 10 miles a day or so) to fixed itineraries.

Travel by water is possible on the Shannon River and the lakes and canals that connect to it. These form a web of inland waterways. Cabin cruisers with up to eight berths may be rented for a cruise on the waterways.

Lastly, there is always the option of walking. Although it is more usual for those who want to hike to find a central location and make day-trips around it, it is possible to hike from one town to the next in less than a day in many parts of Ireland. Since 1978, over 600 miles of footpaths and designated hiking trails have been developed and marked, including some interesting paths through Ireland's peat bogs.

Tourism

Tourism has become a huge industry in Ireland. In the West, farming communities are now running tours of their local sites, whether historical or ecological in nature. In the North, those who were once intimidated by the Troubles have poured into the provinces since the cease-fire of 1994. Throughout the island, castles have been converted into luxury hotels, and small bed-and-breakfasts have sprung up almost overnight. Standing stones and earth mounds that the locals ignored (or plowed around) for years have acquired historical significance and sport new signs or spiffy new visitors' centers.

While one of the main attractions for visitors is undoubtedly the presence of many, many historical sites, these have never been the only draws. Ireland's reputation as a paradise for fishers and golfers is well-deserved. Unfortunately, the popularity of golf has led to the creation of so many golf courses (about 250 of them) that it is almost impossible to travel for more than a few miles before running across yet another one of the pesky things. Amazing, and perhaps a little excessive in a place slightly smaller than the state of Maine!

Many visitors come for the sports. Hurling and Gaelic football attract thousands of fans, as does soccer (which they call football) in the North. Horse and greyhound racing are well-established pastimes, as are various equestrian pursuits such as trail riding and hunting. Sailing and swimming have their adherents, and eco-tours involving hiking and bird-watching are gaining in popularity. For the less physically inclined, Ireland's many festivals showcase Irish music, dance, theatre and literature.

On the positive side, the influx of tourists and the need to accommodate them, entertain them, sell them souvenirs, and (hopefully) lure them back, has led to the creation of new jobs, to increased sensitivity to the needs of the disabled and to a new era of palatable cuisine designed to appeal to world travelers. While it has undoubtedly made many sites more accessible to those who would wish to visit them, government sponsorship and "improvements" to some historic places have rendered them inconsequential by trivializing them. Such is the case with the meticulously engineered megalithic site of Newgrange. No longer must visitors to Newgrange await the winter solstice to see a shaft of sunlight illuminate the interior chamber. Now this amazing moment is recreated for visitors by the "magic" of modern, scientific showmanship several times a day. And while the Giant's Causeway is devoid of some of the worst excesses, such as ice cream vendors, it has been so widely publicized that it is often difficult to take a photograph of it without catching dozens of strangers in the picture.

While it is still possible to enjoy a leisurely tour of out-of-the-way scenic spots, such idyllic getaways are becoming more scarce as movie stars and the glitterati have discovered the unpretentious charm of Ireland. And in their wake come tour buses filled with camera-wielding vacationers bent on "discovering Ireland" in five days or less. The Banality they bring with them hangs over whatever sites they visit, stripping them of their Glamour and leaving them devoid of the very magic they sought to find there.

Fading Glamour

As more and more historic sites are turned into tourist traps, changelings find themselves faced with the prospect of losing most of their ancient freeholds. Those that were claimed by commoners during the Interregnum were mostly the poorer, more isolated sites since the *sidhe* often closed off access to their fine palaces before leaving. When they returned, the *sidhe* found themselves in the awkward position of having to search for suitable spots to rebuild. Most of their cherished castles and holdings had long since crumbled under the onslaught of encroaching Banality brought about by centuries of conflict and modern marauders clad in khaki and brandishing video cameras. While some of their ancient strongholds survive, these are now castles under siege.



Events and Festivals

Wherever there is Glamour to be had, changelings congregate. They are never more in evidence than at some of the many festivals and events held throughout the year all over Ireland. Aside from the legal holidays observed in the Republic and Northern Ireland, there are well over 125 special events and festivals well-known enough to be considered either famous or international in scope. Many feature the arts, with traditional singing, dancing, literary readings, drama and art exhibitions topping the list. A significant number feature horse racing and trading. Some have religious connotations, and others celebrate local culture. A few of the best known, most interesting or just plain strange are listed below. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

- Point-to-Point season opens in January. These are small steeplechases (a sport invented in Ireland) held in different places each Sunday until May.
- Dublin Film Festival — 10 days of the best international cinema, with lectures and seminars on film-making.
- Punchestown Bloodstock Sales — One of most important racehorse auctions in Ireland, Naas, co. Kildare.
- Horse Plowing and Heavy Horse Show — An old-time plowing competition, the show has been held for over 100 years at Fair Head, Ballycastle.

• St. Patrick's Day — A national holiday in the Republic, parades all over the country are featured. In Dublin, the parade features guest bands from the US. A festival of traditional Irish music called the Dublin Feis Ceoil takes place now as well. It is a time-honored tradition for the *taoiseach* (Ireland's prime minister) to travel to Washington and present a Waterford crystal dish filled with shamrocks to the US president on St. Patrick's Day.

• Belfast Civic Festival and Lord Mayor's Show — 21 days of concerts, competitions and exhibitions with floats and bands.

• "Bloomsday" (June 16th) in Dublin — Celebration of Joyce's *Ulysses* with readings, dramatizations, costumed breakfasts and pilgrimages.

• Sheep and Wool Festival — Sheep-shearing demos, wool spinning and dances in Connemara.

• City of Belfast International Rose Trials — Over 100,000 roses vying for the honor to be accorded official status.

• Galway Arts Festival — The largest in Ireland; 10 days of theatre, music (all kinds including rock), readings, parades, street events, films, children's shows, art exhibitions and comedy.

• Galway Races — A week of horse racing in the week following the Arts Festival. These are the famous races celebrated in song.

• O'Carolan Harp and Traditional Irish Music Festival, Keadue, co. Roscommon.



- Street Entertainers' and Buskers' Championships, Enniskillen

- Clifden Community Arts Week, Clifden, co. Galway — Concerts, exhibitions and readings are featured; top literary and musical names usually attend.

- Gaelic Football and Hurling Finals, Croke Park, Dublin.

- Ireland's Harvest Matchmaking Festival, Lisdoonvarna, co. Clare — Traditionally farmers went to Lisdoonvarna to look for a wife once the hay and crops were in. This has become a week of dances and events at which single people have the chance to meet each other.

- Oyster Festivals — At the beginning of September is the Clarinbridge Festival, co. Galway., the original Oyster Festival. At the end of the month is the Galway City Oyster Festival. Lots of oysters and smoked salmon are consumed, accompanied by competitions, music, dancing and drinking.

- Ballinasloe Great Fair and Festival — One of biggest and oldest horse and cattle fairs in Europe.

- Dublin Theatre Festival — Two weeks of drama with up to 40 international and Irish productions.

- New Year Viennese Ball, Belfast City Hall — The Ulster Symphony Orchestra performs music by Johann Strauss.

- St. Stephen's Day — When traditional Wren Boys in blackface and fancy dress sing in the streets and demand money (which goes to charity).

Ireland's Legal Holidays

The Republic

January 1

March 17 (St. Patrick's Day)

Good Friday (widely observed, but not official)

Easter Monday

First Monday in June (Bank Holiday)

First Monday in August (August weekend)

Last Monday in October (Autumn Bank Holiday)

December 25 (Christmas Day)

December 26 (St. Stephen's Day)

Northern Ireland

January 1

Good Friday (widely observed, but not official)

Easter Monday

May Day (May 1) or First Monday in May (Spring Holiday)

Last Monday in May or first Monday in June (Bank Holiday)

July 12 (Orange Day, anniversary of Battle of the Boyne, 1690)

Last Monday in August (August Bank Holiday)

December 25 (Christmas Day)

December 26 (Boxing Day)

Changeling Festivals

In each of the four great kingdoms, the ruler's birthday is celebrated. The Leinster court holds a grand ball and bardic festival on King Bran's birthday (July 22nd). Munster has a moodier celebration with poetry sessions, chimeric sculpture competitions and a great feast in honor of Queen Nuala's September 22nd natal day. Connaught's court is far more practical. King Fiachra likes all sorts of machinery, so on his birthday (on May 6th), there is a mechanics' fair featuring new inventions, interesting gadgets and train rides. King Finn's November 20th birthday is celebrated by a gathering of all those who owe fealty to him to pledge their loyalty and drink to his health. Finn's court usually manages to arrange some sort of extravaganza to entertain the visitors, but these change from year to year.

Irish Kithain also acknowledge the following holidays: Samhain, the winter solstice, Imbolc, Beltaine Eve, Midsummer Night and Lammass. Not all changelings celebrate each festival, but many do. There has recently been some talk of instituting a festival to commemorate the Cattle Raid of Cooley and the triumph over Balor of the Evil Eye and his Fomorians, but dates have yet to be set.

Things Irish

Irish traditional music and song, played by such masters as the Chieftains, are known and celebrated the world over. So are exports such as U2, Van Morrison, Thin Lizzy, Clannad, Enya, Mary Black, Dé Dannann, Sinéad O'Connor, Planxty, the Hothouse Flowers, the Pogues and the Cranberries. There are a few instruments and practices that may not be as familiar, however:

- **Step dancing** is a form of traditional dance in which the participants leap high into the air and execute a number of complex patterns with their feet, all while holding the upper half of their bodies rigid with their arms straight down at their sides.

- **Sean Nós singing** features a very old style in which an unaccompanied singer performs a song with several verses, with each successive verse showing variation as the song is developed. The singing is in Irish, and the emphasis is on ornamentation, rhythm and melody.

- **Traditional instruments** such as the fiddle, flute and tin whistle (also called a penny whistle) are the mainstays of Irish traditional music. Less familiar, though usually in the mix somewhere, are the *uilleann pipes*, which are similar to bagpipes except that they are pumped by bellows squeezed by the player's right arm against his side. *Bones* from sheep or goats (each about 4-6 inches long) are held in one hand and knocked together to produce the complex "clickety-clickety" rhythms (somewhat like spoons are played in a jug band). The *bodhran* (pronounced bo-rann) is a small drum with only one head. Traditionally made of goatskin stretched over a wooden frame, it is played with a small, double-headed stick or tapped with the hand. Its rhythms provide the steady beat over which the interweaving patterns of the other instruments are laid. The *Celtic harp* has been around since the time of the Gaels. It was played by the great poets, and is undergoing a revival of popularity for the delicacy and intricacy it brings to traditional music. The best-known compositions for harp were composed in the 18th century by the master harpist Turlough O'Carolan. The Celtic harp is recognized the world over as the symbol of Ireland.

- **Irish wakes** have achieved a reputation that they probably deserved at one time. Until the end of the last century, they were common in Ireland. Some still follow the practice, but do so more discreetly and quietly. The purpose of the wake was to allow relatives, friends and neighbors to gather together the night before the funeral and pray for the deceased. At one time it was also used to make certain that the person was actually dead. To this end, the wake was a "waking of the dead" in which the corpse was treated as if he were still alive. Drinks were placed on the dead person's coffin (or nearby on a table), card hands were dealt to him, and occasionally, someone who was really far gone with drink would grab the corpse and dance a few steps with him.

In general, wakes usually turned into wild parties given in the dead person's honor. Though there would be keening and solemn prayers, eventually the gathered crowd would tell amusing stories or relate stirring examples taught them by the dead person's exemplary (or not so noble) life. Games, drinking (often of the illegal whiskey known as *poteen*), eating, drinking, storytelling and more drinking were the mainstays of a rousing Irish wake. Frowned upon by the clergy, wakes were a community ritual designed both to reaffirm those left behind and to make a final farewell to cherished friends and family members.

Accommodations

Ranging from elegant and expensive converted castles and country houses to smaller, comfortable and friendly hotels to unpretentious youth hostels, Ireland's selection of accommodations is truly vast. The choice depends on what you want, how much you can afford, and where you're going. Prices range from about \$6 for hostels to \$20 or so for a decent room in a small hotel up to \$200 for exclusive lodgings in an island castle. Bed-and-breakfasts are popular (and seemingly ubiquitous), as they allow tourists to meet natives (and other travelers) in a more intimate setting — usually a private home with a little extra space. B&Bs serve a full Irish breakfast of eggs, sausage, bread, cereal, bacon, orange juice and coffee or tea. For the adventurous, there are campsites, though many of these are intended for use by caravans rather than tent-users. Designated campgrounds have toilets, running water and showers, and occasionally they have kitchens, laundries and shops as well. Camping is not allowed in state forests and national parks, and those making a cozy bed for themselves in the boglands should remember that peat is highly flammable.

General Information

Public Services

Both the Republic and Northern Ireland have local and international phone service and mail. Medical services for visitors can be obtained through arranging for insurance to cover the cost of emergency care and specialists' fees. Some pharmacies are called chemists, and some are identified only with the symbol of an old-fashioned serpent entwined around a goblet (reminiscent of the caduceus).

In the Republic, the police are called the Gardaí (pronounced Gordee), while in Northern Ireland, they are known as the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Despite the popular belief that Northern Ireland is a constant war zone, neither the Republic nor Northern Ireland have much personal violent crime. The Gardaí are friendly and helpful. Their Northern counterparts are somewhat less approachable, having been the target of bullets and bombs for so long.

Despite the recent cease-fire in Northern Ireland (particularly since the apparent cancellation of that cease-fire in early February of '96), visitors should not leave packages unattended, as this may cause concern in an area that until recently was targeted by both package and car bombs. Some shops may ask customers to reveal the contents of packages brought into the store as a routine precaution. In general, even at the height of the Troubles, tourists were rarely in any danger.

Other difficulties can usually be handled either through travelers' package tour operators, Bord Fáilte, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board or through the various embassies in Dublin.

One service which has garnered much attention in modern times is genealogical research. Those seeking to trace their roots can find help at the Registrar General, the Public Records Office, Registry of Deeds and the National Library, all in Dublin. Local parishes also keep old records. In Northern Ireland, the Public Record Office in Belfast serves the same function.

Passports and Customs

British citizens do not need a passport to travel to Northern Ireland or to enter the Republic if they travel directly from Britain. All others require a passport or national identity card to enter either the Republic or Northern Ireland. Visas are not required of visitors from the EU (European Union), US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Currency and Banking

Northern Ireland uses the Northern Ireland pound sterling as its currency while the Republic of Ireland uses the punt (also called the Irish pound). The punt is divided into 100 pence. The two currencies are not interchangeable. Money from the United Kingdom is accepted in the Republic at the value of its Irish equivalents (about 98%). In the North, the Northern Ireland pound has the same value as the British pound and both are accepted. Strangely, although British pounds are accepted in both North and South, the South does not accept the Northern Irish pound, nor does the North take the Irish punt.

Money can be changed at international airports, bureaus of exchange, several banks and at the General Post Office in Dublin. An Irish punt is worth approximately \$1.60 US currency, while the pound is worth about \$1.55. Travelers' checks and credit cards are widely accepted in the larger cities and towns.

Media

Ireland is served by two television channels, RTE (Radio Telefís Éireann) 1 and Network 2. Additionally, the four British television channels are available in most parts of Ireland. Cable TV has become common in the Republic, with many hotels offering the service. There are three national radio stations, one of which is in the Irish Gaelic language, in addition to many local stations.

Six national daily newspapers and five Sunday papers are available, with the *Irish Times* being noted for its excellence. The *Belfast Telegraph*, which goes on sale in the afternoon, is Northern Ireland's top paper. The *Times* and other British papers are available in large towns, and

magazines such as *Newsweek* and *Time* can be found in major cities. Local and regional papers have good sections on events, performances and celebrations in their areas. *Gay Community News* has comprehensive listings of gay locales including pubs and nightlife.

Time

All Ireland is on Greenwich Mean Time, which is five hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time (New York and the eastern United States). From March through October, Ireland observes Summer Time, which is one hour in advance of Greenwich Mean Time.

Openings and Shopping

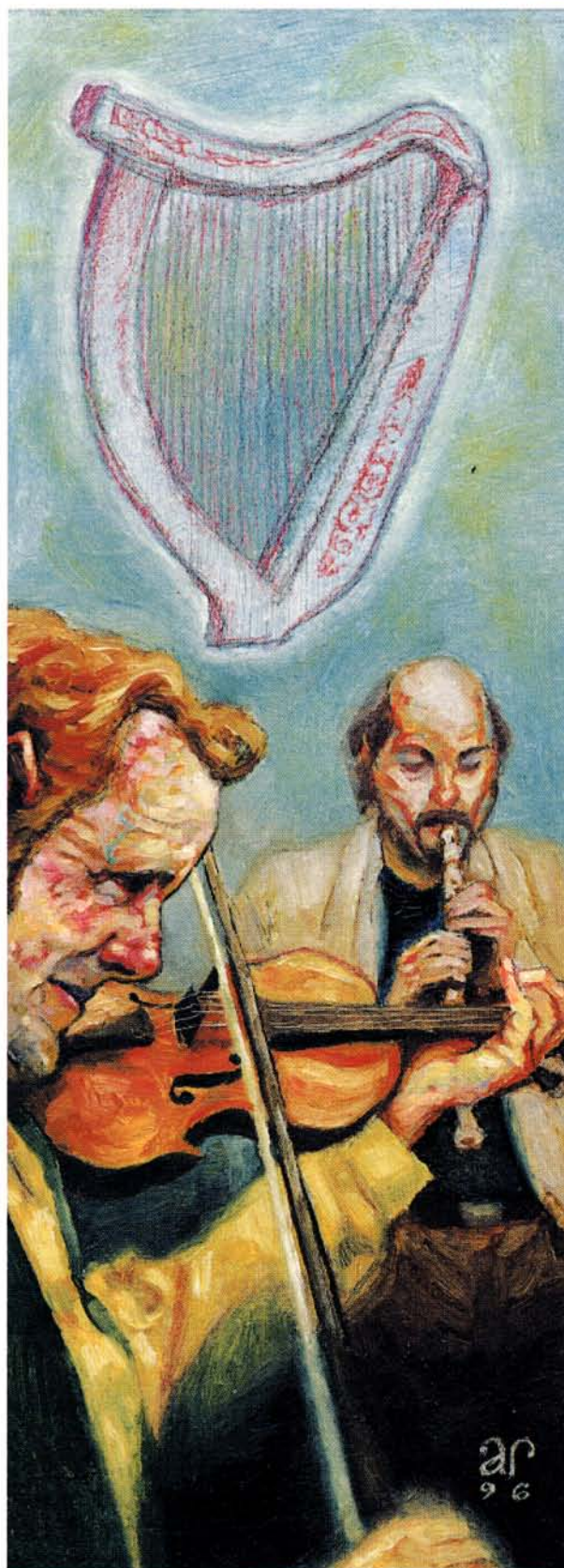
Shopping is usually a leisurely affair. Dublin and Belfast have main shopping areas where stores are within easy walking distance of one another. Those displaying an overabundance of Irish symbols (leprechauns, shamrocks and harps) are tourist traps with their "Irish" goods made in Singapore. Shops with fine quality Irish-made goods usually display a Guaranteed Irish symbol.

Among the most popular goods bought in Ireland are Waterford crystal, tweeds from Donegal and Connemara, jewelry with small pieces of Connemara marble in them, Aran sweaters, Belleek porcelain, reproductions of Celtic brooches, linen tablecloths and claddagh rings. Northern Ireland is famous for its linen goods. Several small craft workshops are located throughout rural Ireland, many of which welcome visitors to demonstrations of their art from leatherworking to sculpting thousand-year-old bogwood.

Many of the landmark buildings, castles and sites that are of most interest to tourists have variable opening times depending on the time of year and local whim. A general rule of thumb is that most sites open at 10 a.m. and close at 5 p.m. Some few are open later, depending on the season; others close for lunch. Many are closed on Sunday and Monday. During the summer, all attractions are open, but are inundated with tourists. In winter, many are closed except for certain days of the week (unless they're closed for the entirety of winter). Some open for holidays such as Easter, then close again until summer.

Mood and Atmosphere

Ireland is the natural home of changelings. They glean Glamour from the thousands of tourists who come to Ireland with dreams of an emerald paradise. Willing to suspend their disbelief, tourists kiss the Blarney Stone to become eloquent and buy "lucky" shamrocks by the score. They attend medieval feasts in Bunratty Castle, and search for great-grandma's grave with sentimental tears. They are willing to let Ireland's magic work on them and forget their mundane cares.



Ironically, though they provide changelings with much-needed Glamour, when they converge on historic sites and landmarks, or arrive *en masse* at a pub rumored to feature the best in local talent, their lust for sensation, to cram as much of Ireland into their itineraries as is possible, strips all the Glamour away, leaving changelings bereft and sealing the taint of Banality to the area. Often, the tourists themselves feel it, leaving unsatisfied and vaguely troubled that highly recommended attractions failed to move them.

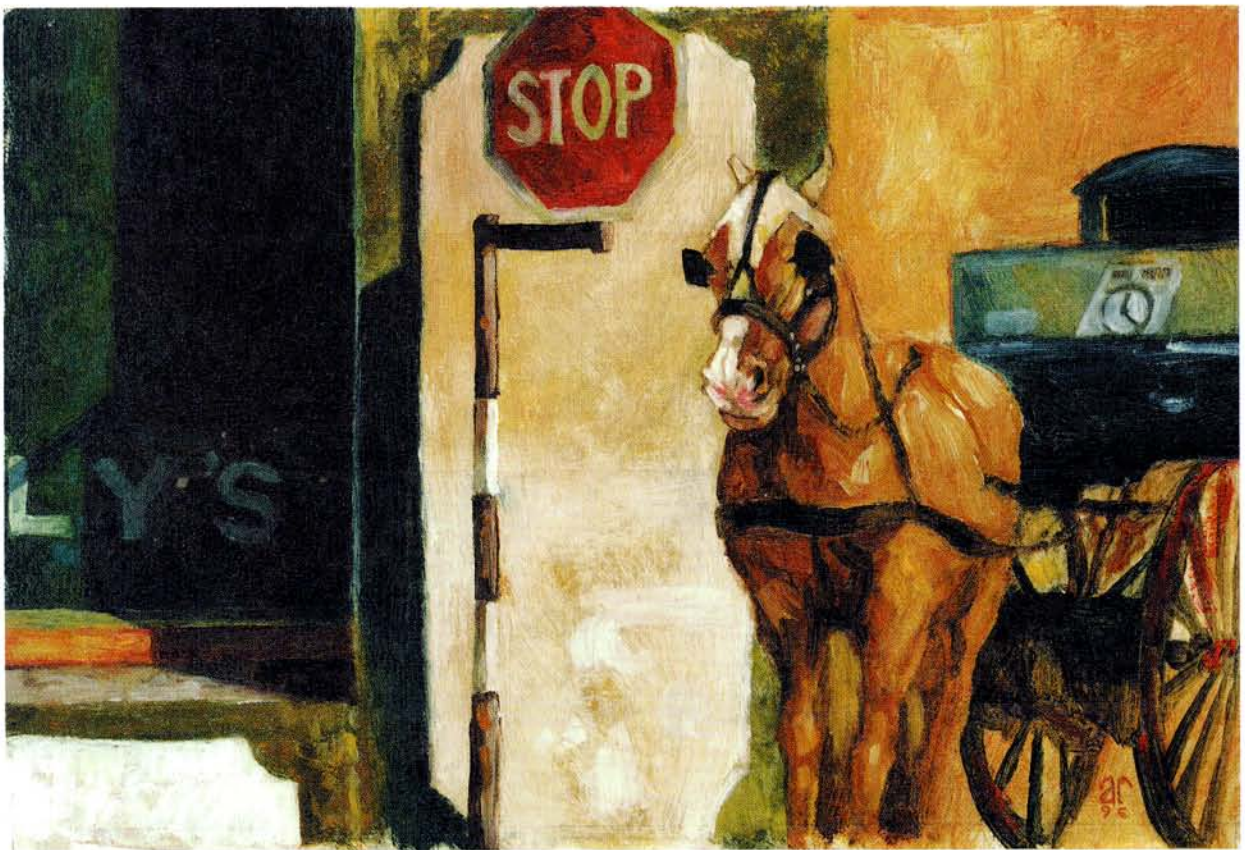
Tourists are not the only source of Banality, however. Centuries of strife, sorrows and the diaspora of the Irish people have engendered Banality as dreams were crushed, dreamers were executed or fled, and old hatreds were allowed to fester into violence. In the North, the hard men of the IRA and the Protestant terrorist organizations, the stubborn extremists on both sides, and the terror and angry reprisals of the British have created a pall of tainted Glamour that threatens to overwhelm any changeling coming into contact with it and wrench her into the deepest throes of her Unseelie nature.

Nonetheless, there is still a sense of timelessness and magic in the land. As the people re-evaluate their feelings and look forward to a more prosperous future, they dream new dreams. And while the cease-fire has held, new changelings have emerged in Northern Ireland, at last able to climb out from under Banality and contact the Dreaming that lies hidden beneath the surface.

The Language

The official language of the Irish Republic is Irish Gaelic. Should you be unfamiliar with the language, don't despair. Most of the Irish don't speak it either; everyone speaks English. Though there has been a campaign to save the old language, and it is taught in schools and posted on many signs, it is dying out. Of course, Irish has almost died out before only to be rescued by W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn, who formed the Abbey Theatre, creating a demand for plays and literature written in the language. It has also served in the past as a rallying-point for those who wished to throw off Britain's grip on Ireland, and many Republicans use it in political slogans.

Only in the *Gaeltacht*, areas where Irish is spoken daily, does it really survive. Most of those places are in the West of Ireland, far from the more cosmopolitan East. Even when Irish Gaelic is written and spoken, there are variations in the spelling and the pronunciation. Ask two Irish speakers from different areas how to pronounce Bord Failte (which literally means "the welcome board"), and one will tell you it's pronounced Bord Falt-sche while the other says it's actually Bord Foil-tshe. This is made all the more difficult because many of the letters in Irish Gaelic



words are not pronounced at all, a state of affairs that prompted a revision of their spelling earlier this century. Not everyone agrees on the new versus the old, however.

The odd language constructions so familiar as stereotypical “stage Irishisms” actually came about due to Irish speakers also speaking English and adapting Gaelic grammar into English sentences. Thus, many otherwise unsterotypical Irish may still say such things as, “I’m after going to the store,” or “It won’t do at all, says he,” or “I’ll be thanking you not to track mud into the house.” Though

less frequent now than in the past, some of these are still in evidence, especially in the more remote areas. Oddly, while Irish Gaelic is dying in the Republic, there is a renewed interest in the language in Northern Ireland — not only, as might be expected, among those with Republican sympathies, but among Protestant young people who wish to explore their ties to an Irish heritage they may not have been exposed to before. Translations of some Irish words, particularly those related to place names can be found in any good travel guide on Ireland.





Chapter Two: A Mythical History of Ireland

*There is no present or future — only the past,
happening over and over again — now.*
—Eugene O'Neill, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*

A Brief Note from the Chronicler

To My Patrons,

The history presented here is called mythical, though many true historical facts are contained within it. The earliest histories of the land are so wound about with legend that the two are inseparable. While we know for a fact, for example, that the first children of the Tuatha de Danaan were the sídhe, we are less clear on such suppositions as that the Fir Bolg retreated to Greece before reoccupying Ireland — or for that matter, that they were not inspired to build such marvels as Óin Aenghus by the Tuatha. A goodly portion of what I say shall undoubtedly be unpopular with those who would have things be otherwise than they are. Much of that era has been lost to us, and we can only make our best guess as to what is "real" and what constitutes some misguided historian's pet thesis. As the Hidden Ones have endeavored to make all such questions impossible to answer, I can only provide you with the facts as I know them.

I remain your humble servant,

Siobhan ní Oghma,

Selkie chronicler to King Fiachra of Connaught

The Mythic Age

The Earliest Settlers

Crossing a land bridge from Europe, which extended north to cover what are now the British Isles, the first Irish arrived about 8000 BC. Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, these nomads used crude stone tools. Though they failed to penetrate much farther than Antrim because of the dense forests of oak and elm, many built defensible lake homes called *crannógs*, artificially constructed islands upon which they built their houses. Surrounded on three sides by water, these circular wooden structures could be reached only by a well-guarded causeway, a hidden pathway of stones laid under the water or by boat. Even after the people disappeared, their *crannógs* were discovered by new arrivals and used for hundreds of years. The basic design inspired the use of moats around castles.

The Origin of the Fomorians

Born of the fear-filled dreams of the earliest settlers in Ireland, the ur-fae known as Fomorians, or Fomhoire, were nightmare creatures with gigantic, monstrous bodies and twisted minds. It is unknown whether they took their name from the human tribes or from a great chieftain or leader among them. Terrible in warfare and frightening in their command of the nascent magic which would come to be known as the Arts of the fae, the Fomorians demanded and received tribute from their human creators. So cruel and greedy were they that many of the humans fled to Scotland and into remote, isolated areas where the Fomorians could not find them.

The Fir Bolg

Sometime around 3700 BC, a group of tribes arrived in hide-covered coracles, sailing over from Scotland via the North Channel. Neolithic farmers, they moved into the interior, clearing forests to plant crops and building stone pens for their livestock. Rather than congregating in villages, they preferred to dwell in isolated family settlements. Their houses had stone foundations, thatched roofs and walls made of planks or wattle and daub. This architectural style has proven its longevity, as it is the design of the quintessential Irish cottage.

Despite their scattered dwellings, these people, known as the Fir Bolg, are credited with having built

the megalithic monuments that dot the island. There are an estimated 1200 such sites in Ireland, ranging from court tombs and portal tombs to the great passage tombs such as Newgrange. While they are called "tombs," there is little evidence that most of them were originally constructed as burial mounds. Rather, they align with underground waters or along straight tracks known as ley lines, and some are arranged with such precise engineering that a shaft of sunlight is focused into the interior at a given time on the winter solstice. The megaliths are still associated in the minds of the Irish people today with "the fairy folk."

The Fir Bolg lived under the rule of the Fomorians. Each year at Samhain, they were required to pay a tribute to the hated Fomorians of two-thirds of their corn, milk and children. Finally, they rose in rebellion against their overlords. Only a few survived the battle. These quit the island, supposedly traveling to Greece, but later returned with greater strength. The Fir Bolg divided the island into five provinces — Leinster, Munster, Connaught and Ulster for the four cardinal directions, and Meath, which occupied the center of the country. Meath was later to be divided up among other provinces by the British. Further, they instituted government by a king and a warrior elite. Sporadic fighting with the Fomorians continued, but the Fir Bolg would eventually be ousted by the legendary Tuatha de Danaan.

Midhe

Fae legend tells a different story of the province of Meath. Rather than a physical location in the center of the island, it was actually the "heart" of the land, the kingdom of Arcadia. Though it was not then called Arcadia, this "middle kingdom" (known as Midhe) was accorded to the Fair Folk as a sign of respect. Many *sidhe* believe it was from this location that the Tuatha de Danaan entered Hibernia — and where they later returned when they left the island to the Milesians. Others claim that the mighty beings appeared from a storm cloud atop a hill in Connaught.

The First Celts

Near the beginning of the Bronze Age, in approximately 2050 BC, early Celtic tribes known as the Beaker People reached Ireland. Makers of delicate pottery, exquisite bronze weapons and gold jewelry, these talented folk were the dreamers associated with the Tuatha de Danaan.

The Tuatha de Danaan

*We were wise, oh so wise,
Not given to lies or deceit.
We juggled secrets at our fingertips,
Wore diamonds at our feet.
We showed you ways to play old airs.
We said we could be friends.
But when our backs were turned, you got us in
the end.*

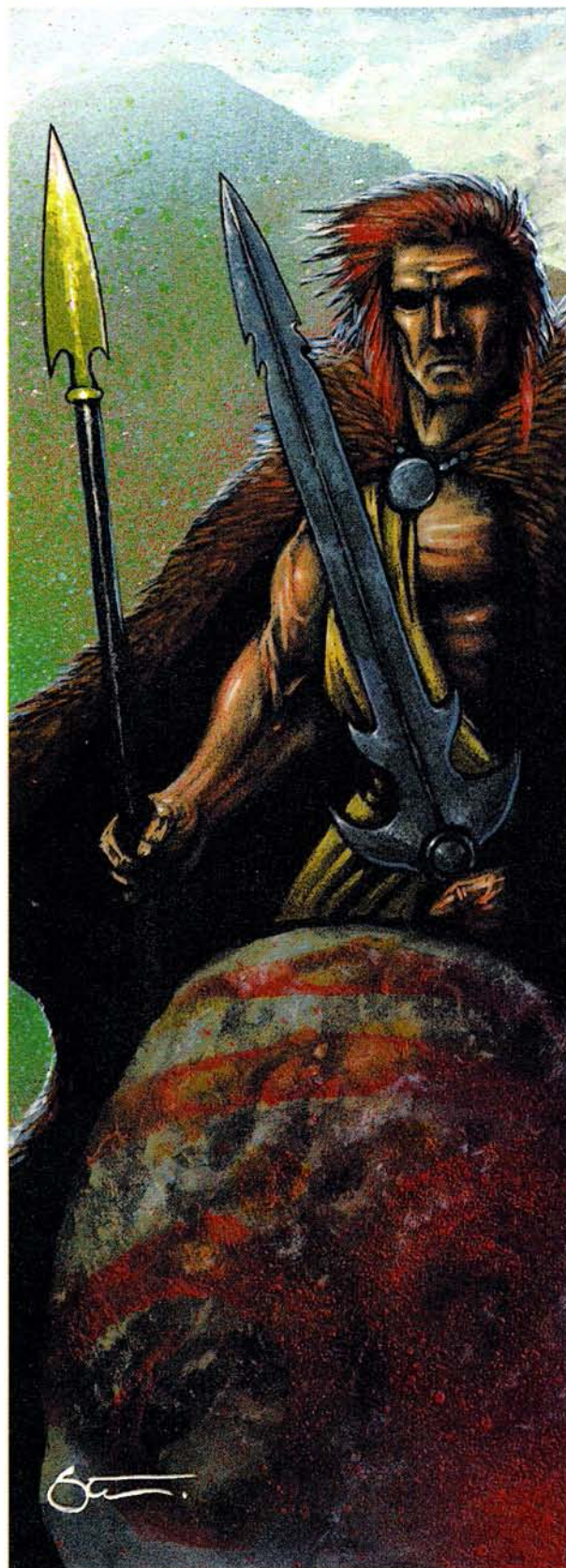
—Horslips, "Sideways to the Sun"

Where the Fomorians were hideous and the Fir Bolg small and dark, the Tuatha de Danaan were tall, fair and beautiful. Greatly skilled in the magical arts, the Tuatha fought and defeated the Fir Bolg in a series of bloody battles. Gracious in triumph, they allowed the defeated Fir Bolg to settle in the west of Ireland.

Treasures of the Tuatha de Danaan

When the Tuatha de Danaan came into Ireland (which they called Ériu) they brought with them four great magical treasures. The Lia Fail (Stone of Destiny), which shrieked when touched by the rightful king, was long kept at Tara (coronation place of the high kings). The Spear of Lugh guaranteed victory. The Sword of Nuada was inescapable, and the Cauldron of the Daghdha always provided so much food that no one would be unsatisfied. Other treasures of note were the Daghdha's harp, the Silver Arm of Nuada and the sea chariot of Manannan Mac Lir.

The whereabouts of the sword, spear and cauldron are a matter of great speculation to all Irish Kithain, especially the sidhe. While there is still a large stone on the hill of Tara, it is unknown if it is truly the Lia Fail. Countless visitors to the site have destroyed whatever Glamour may once have been there. Still, rumors persist that if a high king of the fae ever again comes to Tara, the dormant magic within the stone will once more proclaim the rightful ruler. High King David of Concordia has never put the stone to the test. Because of this, the Irish Kithain do not acknowledge him as High King.



Godlike in their powers and wrapped in Glamour, it was only a matter of time until the Tuatha de Danaan were challenged by the might of the jealous Fomorians. Nuada, king of the Tuatha de Danaan had been maimed in the war against the Fir Bolg. Bres (known as "the Beautiful"), whose mother was of the Tuatha and whose father was a king of the Fomorians, was chosen as the new king. He proved to be proud and lacking in generosity, and when the Tuatha demanded that he renounce the kingship, he gathered an army of Fomorians to punish them. There followed a terrible battle in which the warring factions were so mighty that the whole of the island is said to have been bathed in the blood of the slain. Balor of the Evil Eye, king of the Fomorians, was slain by Lugh, who had been proclaimed the new king of the Tuatha. Defeated, the Fomorians were expelled forever from Ireland.

Consolidating their gains, the Tuatha de Danaan and their dreamers established their rule over the whole of Ériu. This was a golden age for

the fae. Working alongside humans, they graced the land with fertility, improved upon the workings of the Fir Bolg, and constructed great chimeric holdings. The Tuatha taught humankind many wondrous arts and used their magics to make life pleasant for all. As time went on, however, the Tuatha began to specialize in certain arts and skills. Some, like the smith Goibhniu, became workers in silver, gold and bronze, creating wondrous items and imbuing them with Glamour, while others, like the Morrigan, found themselves drawn to the warlike arts. Cairbre and his progeny embraced the arts of poetry and lore, while Dian Cecht was drawn to healing and magic.

Soon thereafter, other fae, created from the dreams of the early Celts, were born. Because their lives were less hard and more settled, the new fae were somewhat less powerful as their godlike elders. The Tuatha cherished these new children and guided them in the ancient arts but already the first winds of the sundering had begun to blow across the green fields of Ériu.

House Balor

The sidhe, whose memories stretch back to the earliest times, claim that all Kithain are descended from the Tuatha de Danaan. This arrogant assumption that their Irish ancestors are the only stock from which the fae sprang not only infuriates commoners not of Celtic stock such as the eshu, but blinds them to a terrible danger that resides within their midst — the Unseelie fae of House Balor. This secretive house claims to be the progeny resulting from Tuathan-Fomorian unions.

All members of House Balor are marked by some sort of deformity, a throwback to their Fomorian blood. Such deformities are not always apparent, nor are all of them physical. It is little remembered by most fae that this Unseelie house (who are accorded the status of full sidhe) is actually related to the Fomorians; most believe that the house name is simply an Unseelie joke, a slap in the face to the proud Seelie. The twisted mem-

bers of House Balor have no intention of disillusioning them.

An amusing footnote: While Lugh (whose name means "Shining One") is considered the most perfect example of the graces and strengths of the Tuatha de Danaan, and is claimed as the forefather of many noble houses, it should not be forgotten that his usual epithet, Lámhfhada, means "of the long arm." Though this is usually taken to mean that he fought from a distance with weapons such as a spear, it was an accurate description. His arms were slightly longer than is usual. While not enough of a deformity to keep him from the kingship, it did point to his actual ancestry as a Fomorian-Tuathan cross. Ironically, Lugh was the grandson of Balor, whom he slew. Most sidhe do not remember this detail — or prefer to forget that Lugh, though not usually considered Unseelie, was one of the first members of House Balor. (More information on House Balor can be found in *The Shadow Court*.)



To my patrons:

It has been claimed by many ancient sídhe that the Tuatha went out from Hibernia (or Ériu as it was then known) into other parts of the world. There they took on different forms, becoming the gods and goddesses or the faerie folk of many disparate cultures, from Africa throughout the whole of Europe and into Asia. For example, Lugh was known as Lleu to the Welsh and Mercury to the Gauls and Romans. His name graces such far-flung places as Lyons in France and Leiden in the Netherlands. Other cultures also revered what was essentially a sun god, who probably corresponded to Lugh. As the Celts migrated from Bohemia and southern Germany across most of Europe, it is not inconceivable that the Tuatha returned to those places where their dreamers once ruled. Nor is it impossible to imagine that they may have taken on those forms first, as their dreamers migrated, before they ever arrived in Hibernia. They may even have originated in Africa or Asia; we cannot be sure how far they traveled, as they are no longer available for commentary.

While I mean no insult to you and the other nobles of the land, if the Tuatha indeed intermixed or were the genesis of fae in Africa, Asia and Europe, it certainly raises an interesting question as to why the sídhe are called noble, while their other children are assumed to be commoners.

I remain your servant.

Siobhan ní Oghma

Some among the Tuatha de Danaan elders felt that their close proximity to humans was harmful to the dreamers. Some among the humans, rather than accepting and embracing their faerie brethren, were jealous of their powers and greedy for their wealth. To assuage these fears and hungers, the more powerful among the Tuatha began to withdraw from human society, spending more time in Arcadia while leaving contacts with mortals to their less powerful, less fearsome children.

Many of the noble houses became established at this time, though only the eldest among each house remembers the ancient connections. House Dougal is descended from Dougal, grandson of Goibhniu, master smith of the Tuatha de Danaan. House Gwydion reckons their lineage back to Lugh, the elected king. From this comes their claim to rulership. House Liam's most famous ancestor was Nuada of the Silver Arm, who was ever concerned with the well-being of all. When he was maimed, Nuada gave up his kingship; after the treachery of Bres, when he was once again king, Nuada stepped down in favor of Lugh, who was best suited to lead. The fiery passions of House Fiona are legendary — and easily understood since their connection to the Tuatha de Danaan is through Brigit, daughter of the Daghdha and goddess of fire and poetry.



Both the Unseelie House Ailil and House Eiluned hark back to a common ancestor — Ailil, the husband of Queen Maeve of Connaught. It was Ailil's possession of a magnificent white-horned bull that aroused his wife's jealousy and sparked the Cattle Raid of Cooley. Because they are known for their magical skills and are close kin to the Unseelie of Ailil, House Eiluned is distrusted by many of the other noble houses.

The Iron Age

The Cold Winds of the Sundering

By 500 BC, a noticeable shift in the attitudes of humans was taking place. Many failed to acknowledge the fae's help; others demanded service rather than asking for aid and thanking those who answered them. Humankind and the fae began to grow distant from one another. The Sundering took many fae by surprise, though in retrospect, it should have been obvious that the old ways were dying. Respect for one another became harder to find; the Unseelie such as Houses Balor and Leanhaun began pushing for more than their share of rulership. Rather than relinquishing their hold when the year turned to the summer months, they argued for a war to wipe out those who had lost respect for them.

At this vulnerable moment, while Seelie and Unseelie waged a war of words, a new Celtic tribe entered Ériu.

The Milesians

Coming upon the more savage Fir Bolg in the west, new arrivals, who called themselves the Sons of Míl or Milesians, began to carve out a new kingdom for themselves. Sophisticated and vigorous, possessed of a set of legal and social customs governed by Brehon law (from the word *brehon*, which means "jurist") and a precise and comprehensive oral tradition, the people who were also known as Gaels or Celts would become the dominant culture of the land. They brought with them the one weapon against which the Tuatha de Danaan had no chance: the cold, killing metal known as iron.

The Míl Espáine ("soldiers of Spain," which came down to us as "Milesian") sailed to the island from Spain because they believed that the name Hibernia was derived from Iberia. A branch of the Celtic tribes who had spread from the steppes of western Russia across the face of Europe and into India, they became a dominant power, controlling lands as far east as Portugal. Considered to be barbarians by the Romans because they chose not to entrust their legends and history to a written language, they were quite culturally advanced. The Celts were ruled

Cuchulainn and the Cattle Raid of Cooley

The importance of cattle to the Celts is clearly demonstrated in the part of the Ulster Cycle known as the *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle Raid of Cooley). Maeve, queen of Connaught, comparing her wealth with that of her husband Ailil, found that in all things they were equal — except that Ailil had a fantastic bull among his cattle and Maeve did not. Learning that the king of Ulster owned a brown bull the equal of her husband's, she sent a messenger to offer the king generous gifts (including herself) for the loan of the bull for a year. As the king was about to accept, the queen's emissaries boasted that they could have taken the bull regardless. Insulted, he sent them back to Connaught empty-handed. Angered by his refusal, Maeve led her people to war to take the bull as a prize.

Because of a curse, the warriors of Ulster could not awaken to do battle with Maeve's forces. Instead, Cuchulainn, son of Lugh, went out alone to fight them. His invincible spear (the *gae bolg*) and battle fury stood him in good stead, and he killed many Connaughtmen each day until he agreed to single combats instead. Though Cuchulainn won against each champion sent to fight him, Maeve secretly stole the bull while Cuchulainn was engaged in battle and drove it back across the border into Connaught. There it fought with the bull of Connaught and killed it. Having received terrible wounds itself, the brown bull of Ulster returned home and dropped dead.

One of the champions Maeve sent against Cuchulainn was his foster brother Ferdia. Ferdia had no wish to fight Cuchulainn because to do so, the two had to break their brotherly oaths to each other. Maeve insisted, and as her sworn warrior, Ferdia had to accept the challenge. Ferdia was slain in the battle. Cuchulainn's *dán*, or fate, caught up with him after Ferdia's death. En route to his final battle he was met by the Morrigan (goddess of warfare, and some say death), who invited him to share a meal of roasted dog with her. Cuchulainn was under two *geasa*: never to refuse a feast, and never to eat dog. Forced to break one *geas*, he chose to dine rather than insult the goddess. Thus doomed, Cuchulainn fought his last battle and was mortally wounded. Tying himself to a stone pillar, he battled on until he died.

by elected rather than hereditary chiefs, and enjoyed a tripartite society composed of free men who were noble warriors and owned cattle and land, professionals (priests, bards, diviners, storytellers, jurists and poets) and slaves who performed most of the agricultural and herding duties. Over each community or tribe was a king who owed allegiance to an overking, who in turn owed fealty to a high king (called the *Ard-Rí*).

The Celts reckoned their wealth in cattle. Cattle raiding and ritualized warfare were hallmarks of their society. To prevent easy theft and surprise attacks by natives, they built numerous earthenwork and stone ring forts. With their iron weapons and tools, the Celts, though a minority, became the overlords of the island, defeating the Beaker People, intermarrying and mingling the earlier culture with their own. Thus the fierceness and energy of the Milesians and the poetic artistry of the Bronze Age Irish melded into a society that would mold the Irish character for the next thousand years.

The Withdrawal of the Tuatha de Danaan

Landing in the southwest of Ireland on Beltaine, the Milesians pushed toward Tara, seat of the high king, and met there with the Tuatha de Danaan. Finding that these earlier Celts had much in common with themselves, the Milesians agreed to allow the Tuatha time to gather their hosts for war. The Milesians briefly withdrew from the island, and fought their way ashore again despite a magical storm sent by the Tuatha that threatened to blow them out to sea. Despite the magical might of the Tuatha de Danaan and their children, the sons of Míl prevailed, defeating the Tuatha at Tailtiu, the site of annual festivities that were instituted by Lugh. Most changelings attribute their victory to their possession of iron swords, but this fails to tell the whole story.

Had the Milesians landed earlier than Beltaine, they would have been met by a host of the Tuatha led by the Unseelie among them. The Unseelie had often urged their people to total war against humankind for their "crimes" against the fae, but at the changing of the year during the Beltaine feast, the ancient ways were followed, and it was with a Seelie court that the Milesians dealt. The Seelie among the fae recognized that the Celts were distant cousins of their own people with many similar customs and an honorable method of waging warfare. Some among the fae foresaw that the time of closeness between Earth and Arcadia was drawing to a end, and counseled their people to accept what could not be changed. They urged complete withdrawal. Others thought that if they could defeat the upstarts, the Sundering would die away and they could return to the old ways. These fae called for total, unconditional war.

The majority of the Tuatha, however, recalling the seas of blood which had washed the land during their battles with the Fir Bolg and the Fomorians, were reluctant to unsheathe their weapons of great might against their children's children; they refused to bring forth the Sword of Light or Lugh's spear, lest their destructive powers be loosed upon both human and fae alike. Instead, they met the Milesians with honor, armed only with bronze. And they lost.

Legend states that the corn would not grow, nor the cows give milk until the Milesians agreed to divide the island with their defeated foes. It was agreed that the Celts would henceforth occupy the overlands and that the fae would retreat beneath the earth. Many fae had holdings within raths and megalithic stone monuments, and it was to these they actually withdrew, all but disappearing from the world. The misunderstanding concerning where they went caused the Celts to name them the *sidhe* or "gods who dwell within the earth."

Some mortals still sought out the *sidhe*, hoping thereby to gain knowledge of their magical Arts and secrets, and the *sidhe* still held their old festivals and rode out to the hunt every now and then. Those who still believed in them made pacts with them, promising to honor their ancient places and to make token offerings of respect.

The Children of the Tuatha

A curious division among the fae now took place. Because it was within their accorded underground realms, certain fae became associated with mining. From these developed the kith known as *nockers*. Those who set out the required offerings or who were truly in need were often assisted by the fae who became the *boggans*. The storytellers and poets, called *shanachie* by the Irish, were the ancestors of the *eshu*. Though African faeries claim that they were the first *eshu*, there has long been a tradition of wandering storytellers in Hibernia. It is likely that the two strains came together in the Dreaming, where distances are not always so great, and merged into one kith.

Tricksters or "wise fools" had always been accorded a place with the Celts, as had the tradition of shapeshifting and affinities with certain animals. Those who best filled those roles became the irrepressible *pooka*. From the angry faeries, many of whom were *Unseelie* who disagreed with the decisions made by the *Seelie Court*, arose kith who still went forth and battled humans, dipping their caps in the blood of their enemies as a sneer at the sensibilities of the other fae and to terrorize the hated mortals. From these rose the *redcaps*.

Lusty and vain, those whose music could set hearts aflame with passion became the *satyrs*. They were more associated with Greece than Hibernia, but may have simply returned to a land their dreamers (the *Fir Bolg*) had found pleasant. The largest warriors among the fae became the *trolls*. Giants had been known in Ériu and Scotland, and these would eventually mingle with the many who were born of the dreams of the Northmen or Danes.

The *sidhe* (though not yet known by that name), whose interests lay in governance and warfare, were already established, being the closest to their tall, beautiful Tuathan parents. Interestingly, those closest to the *sidhe*, who knew many great secrets, chose to actually occupy some of the underground places set aside for them, many of which were originally tombs. As time passed, they changed to fit their environment. The Celts who saw the hosts of fae ride out to the hunt on certain nights of the year called them the *Sluagh Sidhe* — the Fairy Host. Eventually, the "shining ones" came to be known as the *sidhe*, while the whisperers in the dark became the *sluagh*.

Two other kith were associated with Ireland. The first combined aspects of some of their dreamers, the *Beaker People* — practical, yet exquisite craftsmanship — with that of their other dreamers, the *Fir Bolg*, from whom they derived the talent to disappear in "the twinkling of an eye." Thus were born the *clurichaun*, singers of songs, players of exquisite music, collectors of fine items, diplomats of unparalleled ability among the fae and notorious tipplers. They are often confused with *leprechauns* (whom many fae believe to be nonexistent), shoemakers to the Fairy Host and reputed owners of pots of gold.

The second kith were the *selkies* and their cousins the *merrow*, or *merfolk*. Their story is tied in with that of Lugh. Balor, Lugh's grandfather and king of the Fomorians, was told by a prophet that he would be slain by his grandchild. Hoping to prevent this, Balor first locked away his daughter. When she met a young warrior of the Tuatha and had children by him (six, so it was said), Balor caught all of them except Lugh and flung them into the sea. The five children survived this brutal fate when they were changed into seals — some say by the magic of Manannan Mac Lir. These became the first *selkies*. Their kin, the *merrows*, rose up against the *sidhe* when they blocked access to Silver's Gate at the time of the Shattering. They were so utterly defeated that they fell back into the sea, forgetting their faerie natures and remaining ever since as the friendly, playful dolphins. Whether they ever recovered their fae identities is unknown.



Celtic Sovereignty

Throughout the rest of Europe and in Britain, the Roman legions began to carve out an empire and impose Roman law on the conquered lands. Despite plans made to invade Hibernia, however, the Romans never did. The Celts were thus left to develop their society, holding to the Brehon law and following their own customs. Practicing piracy along the shores of Britain, they did come into contact with Rome and invented a written language based on a system of lines and notches, each representing a different letter. These were carved upon the corners of huge, upright stones that came to be known as *ogams* (rhymes with “poems”).

There were many battles, both political and actual, among those nobles who sought to become high king. Those who had been content to be doughty warriors of their tribes now became noble lords and ladies, vying for honors and lands. And the fae followed suit. The stage was not yet completely set with all the props that would make up the Irish character and society, however. That would have to wait for the arrival of Christianity.

The Fenian Cycle

The Fenian Cycle celebrates the values of the Celtic culture from which it sprang. The heroes are loyal to their clan, warlike, extravagant, larger than life, boastful and filled with pride. They also value honor, prowess in battle and poetry. Because of the end of the stories, they also represent a transition period during which Ireland moved from paganism to Christianity, and the Sundering rendered the things of faerie more and more distant from the things of the Earth.

The songs and poems of the Fenian Cycle concern the great hero Finn MacCool (Fionn mac Cumhaill) and his warband, the Fianna. Like the Red Branch Knights, the Fianna (or Fenians) of Erin were a famous band of heroes, each chosen for his strength, bravery, prowess in battle and athletic ability. Many among them were also accomplished poets and diplomats. Sworn to fight against any foreign invaders for the high king, they roamed the island (particularly the southern and eastern portions) and served as peace-keepers among the lesser kings of the realm. Their most famous leader was Finn MacCool.

Finn's father Cool was leader of the Fianna until his rival, Goll Mac Morna, slew him, stole the Treasure Bag of the Fianna, and drove Cool's family into Connaught. Fleeing Clan Morna, Cool's wife gave birth to Finn and gave him into the care of two of her bondswomen to rear him in secret until he was old enough to challenge Goll for leadership of the Fianna. His caretakers took him to the Slieve Bloom Mountains in Tipperary, where he grew up learning all the skills of a warrior and many secrets of nature. When Finn was 14, Goll heard tales of the golden youth, and Finn was forced to leave and take service with kings and nobles.

Gathering a band of youths around him, Finn traveled through the countryside. They came upon a woman who put Finn under *geas* to avenge her son's death. When he did so, he recovered a strange bag made from the skin of a crane. Taking the bag, they traveled until they came upon the remnants of his clan, led by his uncle Crimnal. Crimnal identified the bag as the Treasure Bag of the Fianna, and said it had been prophesied that when the bag was recovered, Finn's clan would once again rule the Fianna.

Along the way to reclaiming his heritage, Finn studied poetry with a bard named Finnegas who fed him the Salmon of Knowledge, said to impart to its eater all the wisdom of the world. Finn traveled on to Tara where he promised to slay a goblin who burned down Tara every year in return for the leadership of the Fianna. He succeeded with the help of an enchanted spear. Goll swore fealty to him, and Finn became captain of the Fianna. Under his leadership, the Fianna were renowned for their honor, bravery and generosity.

Finn fell in love with the faerie maiden Sava and sheltered her in his home from the Black Druid, who wished her ill. When he was called away to fight raiders, he cautioned her to stay within his dun's ramparts, but she was lured out by an illusion of Finn, changed into a fawn by the Black Druid, and driven away. Finn searched for her for seven years. Though he never found her, he discovered a wild, golden-haired boy who was the son Sava bore him. Finn took his son home and named him Oisín.

Finn's quarrel with Diarmaid over the fair Gráinne became the basis for the tale of Tristan and Isolde. Oisín, the poet of the Fianna, was taken away to the Land of the Ever Young by Níav of the Golden Hair, daughter of the king of Faerie. Desiring to see his homeland once more, Oisín rode a faerie steed back to Erin, but was told by Níav not to let his foot touch the ground or he would never see the Land of the Ever Young again. When he returned, Oisín saw a holy man and asked where the Fianna were. The priest replied that the Fianna had been gone from the world for 300 years. Disbelieving, Oisín rode on, but stopped to help some men lift a slab of granite out of a quarry. His saddle girth broke, and he plummeted to the ground. The faerie horse became a wisp of smoke as all 300 years of Oisín's true age rushed on him at once, and he sank to the ground in death.

It is claimed that before he died, Oisín had time to tell his story and that of the brave Fianna to the holy man — a holy man named St. Patrick.

The Christian Era

The Island of Saints and Scholars

I arise today through the strength of heaven...

*Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left...*

—Saint Patrick, "Lorica"

Saint Patrick

Although there were scattered attempts to bring Christianity to Ireland as the new faith took hold in Europe, it was not successfully imported until the fifth century AD with the advent of St. Patrick. Other Irish saints, such as Columcille, Brendan, Brigid and countless more guided the young faith and left their particularly Irish stamp on it, but it is Patrick who is first in the hearts of the Irish. As a young man, this aging missionary had been captured by Irish raiders and made a slave for several years. Escaping back to his native Wales, Patrick took his vows and became a priest. Over the next 20 years, he studied scripture and learned administration and construction. Always in his heart he desired to return to pagan Ireland to bring its people to Christianity. His wish was granted when he was some 40 years old.

Driven out of Wicklow, he sailed north, putting in to Strangford Lough and landing in the shadows of the Mountains of Mourne where he climbed to a barn and celebrated Mass. Díchu, a local chieftain to whom the barn belonged, became Patrick's first convert and deeded him the land and barn, where he built his first church. With the end of winter, Patrick set out for Tara to win the patronage of the Ard-Rí, or high king.

This was the eve of King Laoghaire's birthday, and his royal decree was that no fires be lit until his Druids kindled a blaze atop the Hill of Tara. From the darkness across the Boyne River, all suddenly saw a blaze spring up. The king demanded of his Druids who had done such a thing. They are said to have replied, "Unless that fire is extinguished this night, it will burn forever. It will outblaze all fires that we light, and he who lit it will conquer us all and rule over this island henceforth." The king sent soldiers to put out the fire and capture the one responsible for lighting it.

Though they took Patrick prisoner and led him back to Tara, legend states that they were unable to quench Patrick's paschal flame, lit in honor of Easter. As he and his followers were taken to Tara, Patrick composed the Loric as a shield against harm and a comfort for them.

Patrick argued his case so convincingly that the Ard-Rí allowed him to preach and convert. From that time until his death, Patrick and his entourage, who were able to build a church from whatever materials lay at hand, crisscrossed the island making converts, consecrating priests, and building churches. The saint is said to have spent 40 days atop Croagh Patrick, a conical mountain that rises above Clew Bay, in fasting and prayer. He took counsel with an angel there. To this day, Croagh Patrick is a place of special pilgrimage, and once a year there is a procession to its top. Many of those who climb it do so in bare feet as a sign of their submission and commitment.

Stories abound concerning Patrick driving the snakes out of Ireland. Since those reptiles never made it across the land bridge before Ireland became an island, it has often been surmised that the literal meaning is that he defeated and drove out the Druids. This seems unlikely as almost 100 years after the saint's death, St. Columba was known to tell his listeners, "Christ is my Druid." It is far more likely that Patrick, like many other missionaries throughout the centuries, reconciled Christian belief and practices with those of the pagan Druids, in effect, taking over where they left off.

Near the end of his life, Patrick constructed a great stone cathedral at Armagh, only two miles from the fortress of Emain Macha. A school and monastery were added, and it eventually became a great university. Though he wished to die in Armagh, he heard God's voice tell him to return to Strangford Lough where he had built his first church. Patrick died there on March 17, AD 493. He was buried in a spot that adjoins the churchyard of Downpatrick Cathedral; his grave is marked by a stone boulder upon which is carved a cross and the simple inscription: "Patric."

The Early Church

The early Christians of Ireland were very ascetic. They built monasteries in wild places such as the Skelligs, barren windswept islands off the coast of Kerry. Being mainly scholarly and missionary in their aims, the early saints attracted followers and made converts wherever they traveled. Their monasteries became renowned throughout Europe during the Dark Ages as the light which kept the flame of Christianity and learning alive. Their illuminated manuscripts, such as the Book of Kells, are justifiably famous. From their monasteries in Ireland, the priests reached out and became missionaries across the face of Europe.





The monasteries also became the focus for many of the land's riches. Abbots were often relatives of petty kings and nobles, who left their treasures and worldly goods in the care of the monks (gaining blessings thereby). Additionally, Christian kings often deeded great tracts of land to their local monasteries. The Church thus held not only spiritual power over the people, but in many cases acted as their landlords as well.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish version of that faith did not always see eye to eye. For one thing, many Irish priests were married and had children. It was not unusual to find that a monastery was founded and maintained by an extended family consisting of the clan head (the abbot), his wife and children, their spouses and children and whatever cousins chose to live with them as well. The Irish faith also embraced much of the lore and mysticism of the land, including the belief in faeries.

Faerie Knights and Celtic Christianity

Like their dreamers, many of the fae who were left in Ireland embraced the Celtic Christian religion, which linked the new faith with older pagan rituals. Thus, in the Celtic Christian faith, the fire goddess Brigit became associated with St. Brigid, and many Druidic customs and rites became a part of the Christian celebration in Hibernia. New fae, born in Christian times, became Christian knights. Many of these were *sidhe* nobles who found inspiration through their espousal of this new faith. Stories, poems and songs still abound concerning both the deeds of the noble faerie knights and of Christian knights who found themselves enamored of faerie lovers.

Some fae even found that the passionate dreams of the vital young religion fired them to become priests themselves. Among these were many commoners who felt a kinship with the lowly carpenter's son who became the King of Heaven. Certainly the glorious illuminated manuscripts that were drawn during this period still resonate with the Glamour of the devotion and artistry that went into their making.

Conformity

From the sixth to the ninth century, the church grew in size and importance, until, as the Druids prophesied, its flame conquered all and looked to rule over the island forevermore. In AD 664, the Synod of Whitby declared that the Irish Church should conform to Rome regarding the date of Easter. It would only be a matter of time before the mystical hybrid that was the Celtic Catholic Church would be forced to bow to Rome and conform to her dictates regarding doctrine and practice.

The Fae As Demons

Despite many noble faes' embracing of the new religion, the change in tone and beliefs enforced on the Celtic Christian Church by Rome inevitably excluded most of the fae. Faced with edicts that labeled them demons, sorcerers and agents of corruption, some fae who had accepted the new faith now found themselves ostracized by the Church, banned from holy ground and forbidden to participate in the Church's rituals. Their pagan cousins, who had never accepted Christianity, welcomed them back into the fold and incited them against the Christians. While some lamented their loss and sought to prove themselves worthy, many of the fae were greatly angered at this perceived treachery by the Church. Though the sidhe claim that most of the more outrageous practices visited upon Christians by embittered faeries were the work of the commoners, they certainly engaged in their own ill wishings and treachery against the close mindedness of the Roman Church.

These fae deliberately set out to act out the demonic roles the Church assigned to them. They stole mortals away to Arcadia (especially impressionable children whose dreams intrigued them), cursed the cow so her milk was soured, and seduced Christians with their fae beauty, leading them to sheltered spots where they danced, feasted and loved in fierce opposition to Church doctrine. This in turn led to the Church's further condemnation of the fae as seducers and corrupters of the faithful.

It also led to frictions among the fae themselves. Christian faeries, who felt that they were unjustly persecuted, but who nevertheless sought to protect their mortal neighbors from predation by the most vicious anti-Christian fae, found themselves battling their own kin. Many mortals still believed in faeries and honored them in the ancient ways despite being nominally Christian. Other mortals were genuinely frightened by stories of malicious, evil faeries, and their protectors, such as those of Houses Liam and Scathach, tried to shield them from the wrath of the vengeful fae. Despite their efforts, as the Church gained in prosperity and power, the fae lost ground and were relegated to their new role as demons and agents of Satan. While fae families were ripped apart by religious bickering and outright battle, while noble fought commoner and Christian fought pagan, mortal perceptions began to erode the very essence of the fae. Many who had chosen to stay in the world now left for Arcadia; others fell into their Unseelie natures in response to Christian beliefs. Behind the smooth serenity of mortal acceptance of a Christianized Hibernia, battles that would lead to continued enmity and lifelong hatreds raged among the fae. And the nightmares set in motion by the condemnation of the fae slowly and inevitably led to the Shattering.

The Vikings

The peaceful life enjoyed by the people of Ireland was rudely shattered by the arrival of Viking raiders in AD 795. These wild sea wolves plundered the defenseless monasteries and communities, making off with their treasures and often many of their people. Some of the reavers came only to slaughter, making sacrifices to their gods. The terrified monks and farmers were particularly afraid of the huge warriors among the Vikings. Gigantic, fierce and strong, the trolls of the Norsemen had arrived. Panic ruled whenever Viking ships were sighted.

To protect themselves, the monasteries built great round towers which served as lookouts for Viking raiders and into which the monks quickly loaded their treasures (and themselves) whenever Viking ships were spotted. The towers, such as the noted one at Glendalough, had no door at ground level. Instead the entryway was high up the side of the tower, reached by a rope ladder which was pulled up behind the fleeing monks.

By AD 850, the Vikings had begun to establish port towns in Ireland. Dublin, Waterford, Limerick and Wexford were all walled towns built by the Vikings. Despite their fierceness, the Vikings began to trade with the Gaels rather than raiding. They taught the Irish new farming methods, introduced them to coinage, and taught them the Viking method of shipbuilding.

The Vikings became overlords in many parts of the South, and were often approached to provide military strength to back up one king's claim or another's to the high kingship. After a period of relative peace (in which the Irish trolls made overtures to their Viking cousins), more Viking raiders invaded and began plundering again. After a period of warfare, Sitric Silkenbeard, Viking king of Dublin, surrendered in AD 999 to Brian Boru of Munster, high king of Ireland (who had usurped the high kingship from the O'Connors).

In 1014, Brian found that he had to battle the Vikings again, and defeated a joint army of Vikings and the King of Leinster at Clontarf. Though this broke the power of the Vikings, Brian was murdered in his tent after the battle, and the O'Connors, the O'Loughlins and the O'Briens began fighting among themselves to determine who would become high king. Many Seelie-Unseelie battles and feuds arose during this time. The Vikings themselves began to integrate with the native population. Their legacy can be seen among many natives of Ireland to this day in the bright red hair they inherited from their Danish ancestors.

A Few Remaining Faithful

Though many of the leaders of the land either scoffed at the idea that the fae lived among them or that they had ever existed, the common people kept them in their hearts, telling the old tales, speaking respectfully and paying the old tithes of a bowl of milk or a drop of whiskey left out to appease "the Fair Folk." Nevertheless, ravaged by their internal battles and responding to the new perceptions of them as demons, many fae chose to leave the earth. A mass exodus to Arcadia began. Places that had once held faerie palaces were sealed up and forgotten; mortal dreams and aspirations turned to more practical pursuits; and the Glamour began to fade from the land as fewer and fewer faeries remained. Soon, although some mortals still left gifts for the fae on their doorsteps, there were often no fae left to claim them.

The Norman Invasion

While the great lords fought among themselves and failed to unify under a strong leader, the people of the land suffered. Because of the lack of unity among the Irish kings and the continued adherence to Celtic mysticism by the Irish Church, the country was ripe for invasion. In true Irish fashion, great consequences resulted from a seemingly private family matter. Dermot MacMurrough, king of Leinster, had made off with the wife of Tiernan O'Rourke. Having also supported the wrong candidate for the high kingship, MacMurrough found himself hard-pressed by the united forces of O'Rourke and high king Rory O'Connor. In 1166, he fled overseas and swore an oath of fealty to the English king Henry II in return for permission to raise an invasion force of Norman knights. Angered by the Irish Church's continued "pagan" practices and wishing to support his homeland (he was an Englishman), the Pope gave his blessing to the proposed expedition.

Some 100 or so years after they had helped William of Normandy win the English crown, the descendants of those Norman knights invaded Ireland. The native Irish had poor weapons compared to the Normans, who overran large tracts of land, then consolidated their hold on them with castles, moats and walled towns.

The Anglo-Norman nobles, led by Richard de Clare (nicknamed Strongbow), occupied the major towns, leaving only a few poorer lands in the west and north of Ireland to the Irish. King Henry, a little concerned by his nobles' success, proclaimed himself overlord of Ireland, a title the Pope confirmed in 1172

Cousin Against Cousin

While it is possible that the fae might have turned the tide had their knights fought alongside the overmatched Irish, they had little incentive to do so. In truth, they were engaged in difficulties of their own. Aside from their internal bickering (matching that of their human counterparts), they found themselves assaulted on all sides by Banality as fewer and fewer people came to truly believe in them. Even worse, they would have found themselves pitted against their own cousins, the fae of Normandy. Given such a choice, they instead extended a welcome to their relatives, a choice which made it possible for the Normans to easily overcome the Irish.

when the Normans began founding new monasteries — monasteries that had English abbots and conformed to Rome's doctrines. Henry granted fiefs in Ireland to his Norman barons. The Irish chiefs, having little choice, were forced to pay him homage. The Normans built mighty castles to defend the land they had taken, which came to be known as the Pale. For the first time, inland towns were founded to serve as market places and staging areas from which the barons could assert their authority. MacMurrough, restored as king of Leinster, gave his daughter to Strongbow and made him his heir in return for helping him regain his lands.

Though the Anglo-Normans became the dominant force in the south and east of Ireland, the area known as the Pale fluctuated greatly. The Gaelic lords continued fighting for over four centuries, and most of their holdings in the north and the west were never fully conquered or subdued. John de Courcy, a Norman knight, did conquer large sections of Counties Down and Antrim. He is best remembered for donating relics of Sts. Patrick, Columba and Brigid to the town of Downpatrick and appointing himself Earl of Ulster. When John Lackland became king of England, de Courcy refused to do homage, allying himself instead with the native Irish kings. For this he was stripped of his earldom and his lands awarded to the de Lacys.

The English kings were beset by other problems, and the barons in Ireland became both independent and powerful. Many, such as the de Burgos (Burkes) became "more Irish than the Irish themselves." Due to their power, the Anglo-Norman rulers of Ireland were able to convene the first Irish Parliament in Dublin in 1297. Though it was a Parliament of the Anglo-Norman landholders, it still served notice to the English crown that the Irish nobles were beginning to think in terms of independence.

Death of the Dream

In 1314, Robert Bruce of Scotland defeated the English forces at Bannockburn. He dreamed of a united Celtic kingdom and invaded Ireland to make it a reality, placing his brother Edward on the throne of Ireland. 1316 was a year of famine and disease, however, and the war made things worse. Edward's rule was a disaster. He was killed at Dundalk, ending Bruce's dream. The Irish great chiefs continued to hold their territories, and the lands of the Pale became smaller and smaller.

Prelude to the Shattering

The Church, fighting for the souls of the faithful in its attempt to institute a common, agreed-upon doctrine, found it convenient to equate the old faeries with demons and devils. And more and more fae began to respond to these beliefs. Arcadia was drawing ever farther from the Earth, and many of the noble houses had already withdrawn there, perhaps foreseeing the time when passage along the trods would be impossible. Though there had been many warnings and the build-up was gradual, there is still a date which singularly marks the Shattering.

1348 was the year that the Black Death came upon the lands. One-third of Ireland's population died of the plague in three years. In pain and fear, humans turned against those they believed responsible, the fae they now saw as devils and tormentors. All over the world, the freezing force of Banality crashed in, annihilating the fae and slamming shut the gates to Arcadia.

To My Patrons.

As you know, historical fact after the Shattering is very difficult to verify for the sídhe. Since you were not present during most of the events yet to be recounted, I shall offer them in brief form. These constitute what the mortal historians believe happened, shaded by the views of the commoners. While I am certain that many of these Kithain are quite honest, their vested interest, coupled with your ignorance of these events, leads me to be cautious in my belief that every one of these "historical events" recounted here is fact, rather than fancy. With that caution in mind, I hereby present you with the history of the Interregnum.

Your servant,

Siobhan ní Oghma





The Statutes of Kilkenny

Various land grabs and arranged marriages among the aristocracy resulted in giving Irish land into the hands of English absentee landlords. The Anglo-Irish lords, who intermarried with the Irish and adopted many of their customs, actually lived in Ireland and became a distinctive class. Concerned that the English residents were "going native," Edward III sent his son Clarence to Ireland. Under his auspices, the Statutes of Kilkenny were formulated. These included such restrictions as: forbidding trade or marriage with the Irish, banning the use of Irish names, the institution of English common law, and no contact with Irish singers and poets would be tolerated, since they were obviously "spies."

Though the crown lacked the power to adequately enforce these restrictions, their intentions were clear: to stop the English aristocracy from becoming Irish, and to limit the effectiveness of the native Irish, lest they revolt against those they still saw as "foreigners."

Changeling Spies

In actuality, there were spies among the Irish poets and singers, but less to spy on English doings than to judge the pulse of the new society and to look for signs of continued dreaming among the mortals. Clurichaun bards, eshu storytellers and pooka jesters crept from the ashes of the Shattering to once again find their places on the fringes of mortal society. They kept alive the old stories and tales that the fae should not be forgotten, and wove new legends from the deeds of grand ladies and lords.

Ireland Under the Tudors

From this time until the succession of Henry VIII to the throne, England was unable to formulate any coherent plan for Ireland. Occupied by war with France and the War of the Roses, the English mostly ignored the Irish, leaving them to the governance of the Anglo-Irish earls. From about 1420 on, the earls were virtually autonomous. New Irish nationalist feelings emerged, led (strangely enough) by one of the great Norman families, the Geraldines. The earls backed the wrong horse in the succession, however, and the Irish Parliament was forbidden to meet without royal consent in 1494.

Many of the Anglo-Irish were just as tired of English overlordship as the native Irish. In 1534, Silken Thomas Fitzgerald (one of the Geraldines), head of the Kildares, renounced his allegiance to Henry VIII. Then in 1535, desiring a divorce from his wife and unable to obtain it from the Pope, Henry broke with the Catholic Church. He founded the Church of England and dissolved the Catholic monasteries in 1539.

Catholic against Protestant against Pagan

As if the battle between paganism and Christianity had not been devastating enough, Henry's decree created a new split among the changelings. Despite their persecution by the Church, almost all the changelings of Ireland now found themselves being born into Catholic families and practicing the Catholic faith. Some among them embraced Henry's new religion as a means of escaping Rome's stranglehold. As in the mortal world, battles ensued. House Scathach, in their role as the only *sidhe* left, attempted to mediate among the various groups, but usually to no avail. All too often they fell to their own passions, provoking worse battles than those they attempted to stop. Those who continued to adhere to the old beliefs refused to deal with either of these Christian religions, feeling they were both equally banal.

Knowing that the Catholic Irish on his doorstep could prove to be a problem, Henry bribed the Irish Parliament into declaring him king of Ireland. He assumed "ownership" of all Irish land, then gave it back to the aristocracy in the form of grants. Sweeping aside their own laws which had failed to recognize the Irish at all, the English granted the native Irish land for the first time under English law. The O'Neills, the O'Briens and the Burkes became earls.

The reforms this was intended to bring about were not really successful, and Henry gained little support from the native Irish because he failed to understand the nature of Irish clan society. Native Irish chieftains were not feudal lords who owned the land. Rather, they were elected from within the clan (usually by virtue of being the strongest male). Henry's attempts to anglicize the Irish through hereditary earldoms could not work because the leader was not always from the same family.

At this point, it became apparent that warfare and legislation would never win Ireland over for the English. Edward VI attempted to make Ireland a Protestant country by burning St. Patrick's staff and other holy relics. Even against the Catholic monarch Mary Tudor there was resistance. Mary confiscated land from the O'Connors and the O'Mores, planted English settlers on the land, and created King's County (Co. Laois) and Queen's County (Co. Offaly) in 1557.

Resistance continued against Elizabeth I. Sporadic wars flared up and died, notably the Geraldine revolt

(ended in 1583 due to Irish disunity as much as any other cause) and the revolt of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, which was ultimately put down by Mountjoy, Lord Deputy of Ireland. Neither revolt worked because Ireland was too politically unstable to unify and fight for freedom. In effect, the revolts occurred in a vacuum and ultimately achieved nothing except to break the power of the earls.

The Flight of the Earls

In 1606, British authorities formally abolished the traditional Irish system of Brehon Law. Although Hugh O'Neill had submitted to the crown after his revolt was crushed and had retained his lands in Ulster, pressure was being placed on him and his authority was being curtailed. The overwhelming majority of his followers were Catholics, and James I insisted on levying the recusancy fine on them (for failure to attend Church of Ireland services; the Church of Ireland was virtually synonymous with the Church of England). Apparently unwilling to rule without real authority in lands his family had held for generations, O'Neill and his younger brother Rory, the earl of Tyrconnell, left Ireland in what has come to be known as the Flight of the Earls. This left the native Irish with no real leaders of their own, and opened the lands in Ulster to settlement by Scots and English, an event which shaped the history of the province. The Troubles in Northern Ireland today can be traced back to the plantation of Ulster.

My dear Patrons.

Although we have no absolute proof of this, it has been theorized that the disillusionment of the earls and their subsequent flight may have been exacerbated by the underhanded workings of 'Unseelie' elements among the commoners. Native Irish 'Kithain' have argued that the 'Unseelie' English 'Kithain' attempted a takeover of the northern portion of the island. That the earls were persuaded to abandon their holdings in September, mere weeks before the 'Unseelie' were to assume control of the court, may be seen as evidence of the truth of this theory. If it is indeed true, the 'Unseelie' must bear a good portion of the blame for the subsequent sorrowful battles that have enmeshed the North ever since.

I remain your servant.

Siobhan ní Oghma

A Land Divided

*The harp that once thro' Tara's Hall the soul of music shed
Now hangs as mute on Tara's wall as if that soul were fled.
So sleeps the pride of former days, so glory's thrill is o'er.
And hearts that once beat high for praise now feel that pulse
no more.*

—Traditional, "The Harp That Once Through Tara's Halls"

The Plantation of Ulster

In 1610, the lands of the departed earls (which just happened to be in the most stubbornly Catholic province of Ulster) were divided up and given out to army veterans, private companies and settlers. A small portion of the land — invariably the poorest plots "high in the heather" — was set aside for the Irish. This "plantation" was intended to uproot the disloyal, difficult Catholic Irish and replace them with solid, loyal Protestant subjects. The Ulster plantations were on a large scale and well-funded. Enclaves of Protestants were placed in fortified positions, forming islands of English prosperity among what has been called "a hostile sea of dispossessed Irish."

Irish resentment took concrete form in 1641 when the Irish rebelled, inflicting atrocities on the Protestants. All over the island, the Gaelic people, who had been burning for the chance to inflict punishment on the English overlords, took out their frustrations on the Protestant settlers. Though there were equally horrific reprisals, the Ulster Protestants never forgot their treatment at the hands of the Irish. From this has come the so-called "siege mentality" of the Protestants of Northern Ireland, which underlies many of their fears at union with the Republic where they would constitute a definite minority.

The differences between the Cavaliers and the Roundheads during this time consumed England, and the Irish seized the opportunity, gaining control of much of the island and declaring an independent capital at Kilkenny Town. Disputes and internal squabbling soon entered in, however, and the confederation dissolved by 1648.

Plantation Changelings

Along with the English and Scottish settlers came many changelings. Church of England noddies and Presbyterian boggans accompanied their human kin, and found themselves assaulted by Catholic redcaps and trolls and the pagan pooka and sluagh of Hibernia. House Scathach itself was split down the middle as many remained Catholic, while others were born into Protestant families. The clurichaun, many of whom considered themselves either fully pagan or Celtic Catholic, entered the fray on the side of their Irish kin, using their gifts to inspire and incite their countrymen against the invaders.

Cromwell

The Protestants who died in 1641 found an avenger in Oliver Cromwell. Leading his Puritan army, he began a systematic and brutal punishment of the Irish, sacking Drogheda and Wexford, where he slaughtered soldiers, priests and civilians equally. With ruthless efficiency, Cromwell subjugated all of Ireland by 1653. All Irish lands were confiscated, and Irish landowners were banished west of the Shannon River, given a choice between "Hell or Connaught." The fertile lands to the east of the Shannon were divided among Cromwell's soldiers (in lieu of payment) and those who were loyal to England. Thousands of Irish were sent to the English colonies in Virginia and the Caribbean to work as slaves. Thus began what is known as the Protestant Ascendancy in which Irish-speaking Catholic peasants were completely ruled by English-speaking Protestant overlords.

The Battle of the Boyne

The monarchy was restored in England, and when James II, a Catholic, came to the throne, he appointed Catholics to high offices and revoked Cromwell's land distributions. Though this was never acted upon, England's anti-Catholic Protestants were so alarmed that James was forced to flee to France. With the help of Louis XIV, James went to Ireland to raise an army to reclaim his throne.

Meanwhile, the English invited James' son-in-law, a staunch Dutch Protestant known as William of Orange, to become king of England. He became King William III in 1689. William's forces landed in Ireland and gave battle to James. They broke the siege of Londonderry, where a group of apprentice boys had shut the gates in James' face as he sought to take the city. Food supplies in the city could not support everyone, and many starved during the 15-week siege, but they would not give in. The foodship *Mountjoy* broke through a boom across the Foyle and relieved the siege, a major psychological victory for the Protestants and one that they celebrate in Londonderry to this day on Apprentice Boys Day. This symbol of Protestant determination is still commemorated in Loyalist areas of Northern Ireland with the words, "No Surrender," usually painted on walls in bright red.

James decided to meet William's forces at the Boyne River. William's 36,000 man army crushed James' 25,000 Irish and French troops, and James fled. Limerick was in turn besieged by William, and the Irish made an equally heroic defense of Limerick. Finally the Treaty of Limerick was signed in which William guaranteed Catholics the same rights they had under Charles II. It returned Catholic estates that had been registered before 1662, and gave

Catholics the right to be lawyers, judges, hold commissions in the army and sit in Parliament. The final clause allowed those who had fought to leave for France under safe passage. Once all the fighting men had departed, however, the rest of the treaty was not honored.

This underhanded trick convinced the Irish people that treaties with Britain were useless, and that they could never negotiate peaceful settlements with those who had no honor. The incidence of such maneuvers (usually for political expediency) has fueled the distrust of modern extremists, who feel justified in calling for violence as the only solution to British perfidy. In all, 11,000 Jacobites (as James' adherents were called) sailed to France to join her army and formed the Irish Brigade. Many other Irish joined them over the years as they gave up on ever achieving equal rights in their native land. They are remembered in Ireland as the Wild Geese.

The Wild Geese

Many broken-hearted changelings left with the Irish who fled to France in the wake of the broken treaty. While many redcaps refused to be driven from their homes and stayed to harry the invaders, some nobles of House Scathach and many trolls, eshu and even clurichaun believed that their time in Hibernia was over. Though they longed for a free Ireland, it seemed to them that the best way to achieve it was to leave and fight elsewhere, hoping to return when they had gained more expertise and times were more settled. Like their human kin, however, they gave their hearts to their new homeland, where they were welcomed and cherished. It has been said that outside of Ireland everyone loves the Irish. Though the changelings left behind expected them like they waited for the annual migration of the wild geese, most who left never returned.

The Penal Laws

The defeat of the Jacobites resulted in the confiscation of even more land and a bargain with the Protestant planters. In return for a complete monopoly of political power and most of the land, they would act as Britain's garrison to insure peace and keep the Catholics from power. To help them maintain control of the rowdy Irish, the British passed the Penal Laws. They stated that:

- No Catholic could purchase freehold land, and any son of a Catholic who turned Protestant could turn his parents off their land and claim it for himself. Land was to be parcelled out among all their children (thus making what were formerly profitable holdings uneconomic).

- All Catholics were forced to pay a tithe toward the upkeep of the Anglican Church, while all Catholic priests were banished. No Catholic schools were allowed. (Paid spies ferreted out attempts to run "hedge schools" in which teachers and priests secretly taught Catholic children.)

- Catholics were not allowed to enter a profession or hold a commission in the army.

- No Catholic could own a horse worth more than five pounds. (In effect, this meant that any horse a Catholic owned could be bought out from under him by any Protestant who waved five pounds under his nose.)

The effect of the Penal Laws was to turn the Irish people into a nation of smugglers, liars and lawbreakers as they sought to survive under such harsh conditions. It became heroic to break the law in clever ways, outwitting both the Protestants and the English crown. It also created an almost impossible gulf between the Irish Catholics and their Protestant neighbors. Neither side understood the other. Ironically, the Protestants were betrayed as well by England's imposition of heavy taxes on whatever Ireland produced, in effect, making certain that Ireland could not compete.

Such total disenfranchisement had an interesting effect on the Irish peasantry, however. Instead of becoming Protestants as the English hoped, they became even more fiercely Catholic, clinging to their faith and protecting their priests with their lives. Furthermore, they turned once again to the stories of Ireland's glorious past, remembering the reign of the Tuatha de Danaan and the heroes Cuchulainn and Finn MacCool. They remembered faeries.

The Dreamers Awaken

In actuality, belief in the "good folk" and the "little people" had never entirely waned, but in the hour of need, they were recalled with great clarity. In the midst of sorrow and want, there sprang up wells of Glamour from the hedge row teachers and traveling shanachies who sought to keep their people's hopes alive through stories of ancient heroes and clever faeries. No Kithain practiced this more heartily than the eshu, clurichaun and selkies, while the pooka regaled their listeners with tall tales of the ancient days. Both House Scathach and the commoners, most of them sympathetic to the plight of their dreamers, responded to ease suffering where they could—whether the one in need was a Protestant who still feared Irish takeover and slaughter or a Catholic dreaming of the day he would hold his own land again. The mortals responded by building upon the old legends and fashioning new stories that emphasized Celtic achievements and Irish pride, in effect continuing an old tradition and infusing their changeling neighbors with some much-needed Glamour.

Agrrarian War

In the 1700s, Parliament gained more independence from Westminster, and in 1793, in response to Catholic secret societies who rode against their landlords (and were in turn punished by Protestant groups), the Penal Laws were relaxed. Catholics were allowed to bid on land. Desperate to regain land, they outbid Protestants, tying themselves to ridiculous rental agreements and exorbitant loans, but also taking away land the Protestants considered theirs (after some 200 years of holding it for the British crown). Brutal fighting between the two factions continued. After a particularly nasty battle in 1795, the victorious Protestants renamed themselves the Orange Order in honor of William of Orange, to whose victory at the Battle of the Boyne they likened their triumph.

The United Irishmen

Inspired by the American War for Independence, the United Irishmen sought to open the Irish Parliament to all Irishmen, disregarding their rank or religion. They were led by a Dublin lawyer named Wolfe Tone, who persuaded France to help Ireland gain her freedom. A French invasion force was sent, but kept from landing by terrible storms. In May of 1798, rebellion broke out, but many of the United Irishmen's leaders had been arrested, the Protestants within the organization were distrusted by the Catholics, and there was no overall plan. Tone himself was captured as he tried to lead another French invasion fleet and was executed. He became a symbol to the Irish, and is recorded among the "martyrs to Irish freedom."

My Patrons.

Those who had been exiles attempted to return to Hibernia at this time. Reborn into French families, some of the changeling Wild Geese who had left Hibernia with the Jacobites now returned with the French invasion force. They were doomed to failure and disillusionment once more. Unknown to them, dozens of Unseelie changelings working with the English had concentrated their Glamour, focusing on creating a terrible storm system that prevented the French from landing. In this they returned to the tactics used by the Tuatha de Danaan against the Celts. It has been theorized that to do so they used one of the Immortal Eyes, the sapphire known as the Waystone, reversing its usual properties to bar the way rather than opening it. If this is so, it raises interesting possibilities for the use of such treasures should they ever be found again.

I remain,

Siobhan ní Oghma

Confusion reigned as the British tried to set the Orangemen against the United Irishmen, some of whom were fellow Protestants. Offers of amnesty were made to men of property for surrendering their arms. In all, 30,000 people (peasants with pitchforks, women and children among them) were shot down. Cooperation between Catholics and Protestants was discredited, and so were the Protestants Britain had counted on to control Ireland. It became obvious to the English that if they wanted order restored, they would have to do it themselves.

Union

Union between Great Britain and Ireland seemed the only reasonable answer. In 1800, Prime Minister Pitt bribed the Protestants in the Dublin Parliament by creating earldoms for them. Pitt promised Catholics equality, and the Act of Union was passed. Catholics were disappointed, however, for Pitt soon lost his office and King George III (mad King George who had lost the American colonies) opposed Catholic emancipation.

In 1803, Robert Emmet led a brief uprising that was doomed by its disorganization. He too became a Nationalist martyr.

The "Liberator"

Daniel O'Connell, a barrister and great orator, organized peaceful "monster rallies" of up to a million people in pursuit of Catholic emancipation. He was elected MP (Member of Parliament) for Clare in 1828. After a five-year campaign by Daniel O'Connell, the Catholic Emancipation Act was passed in 1828, giving a limited number of Catholics the right to vote. O'Connell hoped for a separate Parliament in which Catholics would hold the majority (as they comprised the majority of people in Ireland). He didn't succeed for several reasons. First, he was against trade unions, and these organizations were important to the workers of Ireland. Second, he understood very little about Ulster, and failed to see why the Protestants would not fall in line and accept their few minority seats in a Dublin Parliament. That Ulster's prosperity (due to her booming linen trade) was seen as a direct result of union with Britain didn't occur to him. He achieved half his aims, but could never persuade Britain to restore home rule.

The Great Famine

In 1845, Catholics owned only five percent of the land in Ireland. Most of them farmed land for absentee landlords who charged them rent — mostly in the form of grain, which the Irish grew for profit. Agents were greedy and rents were high, meaning that the difference between making it another year and going under was very slim. For

their own consumption, they grew potatoes, which were easy to plant and care for. Potatoes are the only crop that can provide total sustenance, and they can be grown in small plots, but still produce enough to feed large families. Families became dependent on their potato crop as their sole reliable food source. Such reliance on any one crop set the stage for disaster. This was the situation in Ireland when the potato blight struck.

Potatoes that had been healthy-looking rotted in the bins; most turned to slush in the ground. Though the Irish turned to cabbage, turnips and wild plants, they could not be found in great enough numbers to feed the population. Many of the absentee landlords had mortgaged their estates so that they might maintain town houses in Britain, and were dependent on the rents to retain their property. They had to have the other crops produced by their tenants to sell in English markets or go under. The British government was reluctant to interfere in private enterprise; grain and cattle left Ireland for English markets as the people starved. With starvation came "famine fever," dysentery. The English government allowed corn to be brought into Ireland in an attempt to feed the populace because nobody had a vested interest in the crop. Private charities set up food distribution and started some public works.

The Irish were faced with the choice of starving or being thrown out of their homes for failure to pay the rent. Mass emigration began, with many people sailing away to America or Canada in "coffin ships," leaky, overcrowded vessels that were lucky to make the crossing at all. Many Irish went deeply into debt to the "gombeen men," loan sharks who charged exorbitant interest, in order to pay for seed to plant the next year's crops. Somehow, they hung on, waiting out the loss of their crops. And then it happened again. And again. And again. In all, the potato crop failed for four straight years.

Although somewhat sympathetic to the plight of the Irish, after four years, the English people and government were tired of hearing about Irish famine. Most didn't really understand the problem. They couldn't see how the Irish could be starving when exports of grain and cattle continued without interruption. Between evictions, emigrations, starvations and death due to disease, Ireland lost over a quarter of her population. By 1847, over a quarter million Irish were emigrating annually.

After the famine, the Irish would never be the same people again. The Irish had always been poor, but they had met adversity with courage, resourcefulness, humor and an abiding sense that they would eventually triumph. The famine left the people broken, their dreams shattered. Never again would the Irish be a people whose gaiety was not tinged with sadness, and never again would they dare to dream without doubts and reservations within their hearts.



The Changelings Lament

Irish changelings would never be the same either. Though they had weathered years of religious bickering, various risings and the other difficulties of life in Hibernia, they were unprepared for the onslaught of nightmares engendered by the Great Famine. As their dreamers lost hope, so did the changelings. Many fell to Banality, becoming embittered Dauntain. Others found themselves consumed by their Unseelie natures as the only defense against the sorrow and horrors of mass starvation and epidemic.

Since the time of the famine, Irish changelings have become both more fey (as they divorce themselves from everyday human concerns in an attempt not to be swallowed up by Banality) and closer to their Unseelie natures. Underlying even the most riotous Irish changeling is a core of cynicism and pessimism that things will never turn out as planned. Irish changelings truly hope for the best and dream of glory and wonder. But in their heart of hearts, they expect disaster.

Home Rule and Republicanism

Many who fled the famine harbored great hatred for the British government and their lack of action during the famine. Their children inherited that hatred from them, a hatred that would lead them to participate in bloody uprisings and support armed insurrection into the 20th century. These formed the nucleus for such groups as the Fenian Brotherhood (named after the legendary Fianna), many of whom joined Republican uprisings in Ireland, and Clan-na-Gael, which collected money and provided support for such organizations as the Fenians.

A Quick Note to My Patrons.

I have heard that the Fenian Brotherhood was actually started by a knight of House Scathach as an attempt to rekindle old memories of a time of glory. Whether this is merely rumor, or whether the legendary Scathach temper got the better of the founder and the Brotherhood, is impossible to say. In any case, the lofty ideals that prompted the founding of this group were sacrificed to the necessity of waging guerrilla warfare in a hostile land. That changelings were involved is not in dispute, but whether Seelie or Unseelie has yet to be determined and may never be clear. Every rising and every protest in Ireland since this time has contained its share of changelings. The story of the Irish Kithain is the story of Ireland's quest for independence. Are they then Seelie heroes or Unseelie conspirators? Even the historians cannot say. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter, and when dreams themselves take sides in the ongoing battle, the lines become truly blurred.

Yours,

Siobhan ní Oghma

In Ireland, James Stephens founded a movement that was similar to the Fenians. It was called the Irish Republican Brotherhood. In 1884 the Gaelic Athletic Association was formed to promote Irish traditions. Once again, Irish nationalism and dreams of old times were in the air.

By 1900, Ireland's pre-famine population of eight million had fallen by half. Starving tenant farmers were evicted from their lands, prompting the founding of the Land League, which began a campaign for tenants' rights. This was followed by demands for independence from Britain. In Parliament, the Catholics' new hope, Charles Stuart Parnell, lobbied for "home rule."

Two home rule bills were passed in Parliament, but vetoed by the House of Lords. If a third home rule bill passed, it would become law regardless of opposition from the Lords. In 1912, Edward Carson rallied the Ulster Protestants who created a solemn covenant to defeat home rule. It was signed by 471,414 people. In 1913, the Ulster Volunteer Force formed to demand that six counties in Ulster remain part of the United Kingdom (that being the number of the original nine counties in which the Protestants had a clear majority). Gun-running became the order of the day as the Protestant North armed against a sell-out by the British. In 1914, the home rule bill was passed but suspended for the duration of World War I. Irishmen, both Catholic and Protestant, were called upon to do their duty and volunteer for service to prove their worthiness to the British government. The time lag between its passage and implementation, however, gave critics of the home rule bill time to see its limitations. Nationalists despaired of Parliamentary solutions, though the Irish people were not receptive to organizations like the Irish Republican Brotherhood and its political counterpart, the Sinn Féin party founded by Arthur Griffith.

The Easter Rising

Believing that armed insurrection was the only way to gain Ireland's freedom, a small force of Irish rebels planned an uprising. They counted on German support that didn't materialize. Despite confusion in the ranks, in which some leaders cancelled their areas' portions of the rebellion, a rising commenced in Dublin. Led by Patrick Pearse of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, 2000 Irish volunteers occupied several sites around the city (among them the General Post Office), raised the tricolor flag of their new Irish Republic, proclaimed Ireland's freedom, and appointed themselves Ireland's provisional government. They stood up to English soldiers and artillery for a week, then surrendered.

The Irish people were horrified by civilian loss of life; many had sons in the British army and felt that the uprising betrayed them. The 1916 Easter Rising had been

very unpopular until the British made the mistake of executing the leaders after secret trials. Details emerged that pointed to British cruelty. James Connelly, badly wounded, was carried out in a chair and shot. Suddenly they were no longer nuisances, but Irish patriots fighting for the freedom of their country. Sentiment swung in favor of the nationalists, and the same people who threw garbage at them as they were taken into custody now hailed them as martyrs.

1916 was an important date in the North as well. It marked the date when thousands of Ulstermen gave their lives at the Battle of the Somme. They greatly resented the rising and the idea that they would be forced to be a part of an overwhelmingly Catholic Ireland. After the Easter Rising, the North was assured by Lloyd George that the six northeastern counties of Ulster would be excluded from the home rule bill.

In 1918 conscription was begun in Ireland, and the Irish people flocked to the Sinn Féin party in droves, giving them all but six of the Irish seats in Parliament. Of course, 44 of those representatives were imprisoned in English jails, but the rest met and set up their own Dail Eireann. Eamon De Valera, saved from execution for his part in the Easter Rising because of his American birth, escaped from prison and was elected the first President of the Irish Republic in 1919. The Irish Volunteers became the Irish Republican Army, and the Dail declared the independence of Ireland.

The War of Independence

Britain was caught by surprise. After dealing with the Treaty of Versailles, they reacted by sending in the Black and Tans to reinforce the police. These were mostly ex-soldiers who wore a mixture of police and army uniform. Their brutal methods were met head-on by retaliations from the Irish Republican Army. Michael Collins, head of military operations for the IRA, had set up a very effective intelligence system. Acting on information from them, he was able to wage a vicious campaign against British forces. Most famous of all were Collins' Flying Columns — small, mobile groups who could strike quickly and retreat before real opposition could be formed against them. Seemingly, they could be anywhere, anytime. The British public urged compromise, and a truce was declared in July 1921. In October, an Irish delegation, including Griffith and Collins, went to London to negotiate a treaty.

Unknown to them, Lloyd George had already concluded an agreement with the Protestants of the North. The British offered the Protestants partition. They would have their own Parliament while remaining a part of

Britain. English sentiment was clearly on the side of the Protestants, who had proven time and again their loyalty to the crown. That the Protestant Loyalist leaders were willing to arm their followers to fight British soldiers if they didn't get what they wanted has rarely been mentioned except in Republican circles.

The Irish delegates were presented with partition as a non-negotiable part of any treaty they gained. Under threat of "immediate and total war" should they fail to sign the treaty, the delegates signed a document granting Ireland dominion status (similar to Canada). The six counties were carved away from the rest of the island, and it was demanded that Irish legislators take an oath of allegiance to the crown and that certain ports be designated as usable by the British navy.

Civil War

Michael Collins, who claimed he signed his own death warrant when he signed the treaty, saw it as a stepping stone toward achieving total independence and eventually winning back the six counties. Others disagreed. The anti-treaty side was against the oath and unwilling to accept a divided Ireland. De Valera, firmly anti-treaty, resigned as head of the Dail. The IRA split on the issue, with part of it breaking away and beginning a violent campaign in the North against the newly created Northern Ireland. Collins reorganized the rest into the Free State Army, but in the violent civil war that erupted between pro- and anti-treaty factions, Collins was assassinated. People who had fought side by side against the Black and Tans now shot one another on sight. In 1922, the Free State government, attempting to deal with the dissident IRA, passed measures as draconian as those usually decried in Northern Ireland: internment and floggings. Finally, the anti-treaty side, now known as Republicans, sued for peace. De Valera ordered a cease-fire. For the first 10 years after the civil war, the Dail concentrated on building up the 26 remaining counties into a strong state. In 1926, De Valera broke with Sinn Féin and formed the Fianna Fail party. In 1932, his party gained control of the Dail.

In 1937, De Valera drew up a new constitution declaring Ireland a republic and containing an article that claimed the right of the Dublin government to exercise jurisdiction over the whole of Ireland. It further recognized the special position of the Roman Catholic Church in the new state. The country's name was changed to Éire. Embarrassed by the extremist IRA, De Valera declared them an illegal organization. In reality, the IRA continued to receive support from both the government and the people so long as they didn't go too far.



The Changeling Response

Reflecting the hatreds and bitterness that surrounded them, the Kithain went to war as well. Pro and anti-treaty changelings fought just as viciously as any mortal. Trolls squared off against redcaps, selkies withdrew from the conflict, and the clurichaun were about evenly divided on the issue. Most of House Scathach were based in the South and welcomed the treaty for their own homes' sake, but feared it would interfere with their duty as Riders of the Silver Court to protect King Meilseoir (their greatest duty and their greatest secret; see the *Court of All Kings* novel for more information on the Riders and the king). Boggans andnockers argued more than engaging in actual battle, the satyrs were more concerned with access to good whiskey than with treaties, and the pooka were in their glory disseminating misinformation to both sides.

Response to Partition

Neither the Irish nor the British actually expected partition to be forever. A boundary commission was set up to determine just how much of Ulster could be said to contain a clear Protestant majority. Catholics thought the commission would draw up boundaries that made it into an impossible economic unit. IRA attacks that commenced before the boundary commission could even begin work provoked the Unionists and gave them an excuse to introduce paramilitary police. The Catholics, believing the situation would resolve itself when it was seen how ridiculous it was to partition the island, refused to join Northern Irish institutions such as the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary).

Embattled by the IRA and faced with Catholic boycotts, the Unionists believed that all Catholics were likely traitors to the new state. They felt like a garrison in hostile territory. The response to their fears was the creation of the Special Powers Act of 1922 under which possession of a firearm was a capital offense and people suspected of Republican sentiments could be flogged. Though their reasoning may seem absurd to outsiders, they believed they were fighting for their survival. Since the IRA's stated aim was to overthrow their new country, they felt justified in invoking extreme measures.

Blatant gerrymandering of wards and districts ensued, designed to insure Protestant majorities even in territories where Catholics actually outnumbered them. Thus an area that held thousands of Catholics was all made into one district, while an area that held an equal number of Protestants might be divided in two so they would be able to elect more representatives. The border question became embroiled in attempts by both sides to gain territory while

cutting the other side out, and was eventually left as a dead issue when the Free State accepted the original partition.

The '30s and '40s were marked by increased sectarian division as a depression hit. Rather than bringing together working class Protestants and Catholics, the fear of unemployment made Protestants grateful for their superior position. At least they were employed, no matter how bad the conditions—and it was made very clear to them that their continued employment depended on their support for the British crown and their Protestant employers. To some extent, sectarian violence was even encouraged as a means for letting out some of their frustrations, though this was never actually stated.

Éire declared neutrality during World War II. Northern Ireland, on the other hand, provided men, ships, aircraft and agricultural goods to the war effort. In response, the Germans bombed the province four times, including one raid in which 700 people were killed and 100,000 made homeless in Belfast. After the war, legislation from the Labour government was extended to Northern Ireland, providing them with free health care, secondary schooling, grants for attending universities and welfare benefits. Nationalists hoped the Labour party might be more sympathetic to their cause, particularly in forcing the Unionists to adopt the one man-one vote law rather than granting a number of votes equal to the value of the property held, so that some Protestants got up to six votes, while the poorer Irish (already outnumbered) had to make do with one. In 1949, when Éire became a Republic outside the British Commonwealth, the British government declared that Northern Ireland would not cease to be a part of the United Kingdom until the Parliament of Northern Ireland consented to it.

Funded by generous grants from England, advances were made in agriculture and the development of industry in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, in too many cases, the Catholics were mostly forgotten. Unemployment among the Catholic population remained high and their housing substandard. Seen as disloyal by their Protestant neighbors and the Unionist government at Stormont, the Catholics became more and more disillusioned by life in Northern Ireland, and many fled across the border to the Republic.

Beginning in 1956 and lasting until 1962, the IRA began a series of attacks across the border with the goal of ending partition. Though much damage was done, the Catholic population, given benefits by the English, failed to support the campaign, and it was called off as being ineffective. Rather than seeing the Catholic response to the IRA as an indicator that they supported Northern Ireland, the Unionist government continued to regard them as disloyal and potentially dangerous. Catholics continued to be discriminated against in education, housing and positions in government. Attempts to grant the Catholics more jobs or equal rights met with vehement backlash from extremists among the Protestants.

The Troubles

Young, better-educated Catholics and Protestants began to agitate for better conditions and an end to injustice. In 1967, the Civil Rights Association, inspired by the American civil rights movement, was born. Concessions toward Catholics were already being made, but many of these came far too late. Unionists such as Ian Paisley (a Presbyterian minister who had broken with his church and gone independent) regarded any softening in attitudes toward Catholics as tantamount to treason and reacted with violence. A peaceful civil rights march at Burntollet in 1969 was stoned by a Paisleyite mob as the police stood by and did nothing.

The Return and the Troubles

It is not coincidence that the return of the *sidhe* in 1969 coincided with violent confrontations between Catholics, Protestants and police. Some of those difficulties resulted from conflicts between the *sidhe* and commoners that escalated out of control. "The Return," as it was called in Hibernia, was even more shockingly violent than in America. Fears and hatreds ran high, as is ever the case in Ireland. Some Kithain welcomed the return of the nobility, hoping they would put things right, but they forgot that the *sidhe* had left the world when feudalism held sway. The *sidhe*'s assumption of their right to reclaim old freeholds and places of power and to once again set their rule over commoners whose struggles had mirrored those of the Irish people was greatly resented, and those resentments flared into battle on more than one occasion.

In particular, the redcaps and trolls who had borne the brunt of fighting throughout Ireland's struggle toward freedom refused to bow before the *sidhe* and surrender the freeholds and advances they had gained. Theirs was the most violent clash, but other Kithain fought in their own way to make the *sidhe* aware of the changes wrought by time. From fighting a war for Catholic civil rights, the changelings turned to a war for commoner rights. Since it was waged under the guise of the other struggle, much of the changeling battle for supremacy in Ireland was camouflaged as Catholic-Protestant violence.

Because the only *sidhe* they had dealt with for hundreds of years were those of House Scathach, who do not possess the Art of Sovereign, the commoners underestimated this most devastating power of the returning nobles. Despite their bravery, the commoners were defeated by the *sidhe*'s powers to command their obedience. Eventually, it became apparent that the *sidhe* would grant the commoners certain rights in return for their acknowledgement that the *sidhe* once again ruled the island. There was never an actual accord, merely a cessation of hostilities. The commoners retreated to their freeholds, and the *sidhe* divided the island into four kingdoms.

A similar confrontation in the Bogside in Londonderry was even more violent, and eventually resulted in the disbanding of the B-Specials (a Protestant-dominated, often ultra-violent, part-time police force who were given special powers to search out IRA members). More significantly, to restore order, British troops were ordered into Northern Ireland. Though this would have been the perfect time for the IRA to win supporters by protecting the Catholics, they were woefully disorganized and failed to seize the initiative. In Belfast, disgusted Nationalists quipped that the IRA actually stood for "I Ran Away." Instead, the Catholics welcomed the British soldiers as their saviors and protectors from virulent Protestants such as the Paisleyites.

The New IRA

The IRA was not long idle. An internal struggle occurred in which some members wanted to move away from violence toward left-wing political activities, and the traditionalists broke away and formed the Provisional IRA (named for the provisional government declared by Patrick Pearse in the Easter Rising). The latter, known as Provos (but more often just referred to as the IRA), declared their intention to wage a campaign in the North. While the Catholics had initially welcomed British soldiers, their heavy-handedness in dealing with security threats soon alienated the Catholic community. The IRA began moving into Catholic areas and acting as the "natural guardians" of the people there. Their aim was to break down law and order, and they began to shoot down both army and police (reasoning that both were tools of the British oppressors and the Unionists) and set off bombs in the cities.

Dealing With the Problems

Stormont (Northern Ireland's government and Parliament) began to address some of the civil rights issues, such as allocating housing more fairly, stopping job discrimination, overhauling the RUC, and disbanding the B-Specials. A new part-time security force, set up within the British Army, was called the Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR). Much of this was seen as being too little too late. Support for the soldiers declined, the IRA's bombing campaign intensified, and British soldiers responded to hatred directed toward them with even more heavy-handedness. When the IRA killed the first British soldier in 1970, the Catholic nationalists cheered. When the army was called in to quell a riot in the Bogside in 1972, they ended up killing 13 people. Hatred of the army grew with their destructive house searches, and the cycle of violence answered with more violence spiraled out of control. Instead of helping, the presence of the British and the renewed presence of the IRA created an even more divided society, split along sectarian lines. This left the region a legacy of bitterness, hatred and violence.

Northern Changelings

While the sidhe are ostensibly in control of all of Hibernia, the kingdom of Ulster has never been fully pacified. Continued fighting between commoners and nobles has been sparked by terrorist actions of both Protestants and Catholics. In some cases, lesser nobles have used the British army to quell disturbances in areas where they knew commoner changelings had their homes. For their part, the commoners associate the army with sidhe terrorism designed to curtail their rights. It has been claimed that some changelings were targeted for death by sidhe, who persuaded enchanted human soldiers to shoot them, thus leaving their own hands clean. King Finn of Ulster is the acknowledged ruler of the land, but it has been rumored that he has fallen into depression over the unceasing violence of his kingdom, embracing his Unseelie nature in response to it.

In 1971, internment was instituted, which allowed suspected terrorists to be imprisoned without trial. This polarized Catholics even more against the British as they saw British "justice" used as a terror tactic against their community. Though internment was phased out, the Diplock system of Criminal Courts was introduced in its place. These were courts in which alleged terrorists were tried by judges who presided over the trial without a jury. The argument made for these courts was that juries could be subjected to intimidation — presumably by both the IRA and extremist Protestants. Though it is probably true that some way was needed to curb the terrorists, denying anyone the right to trial by a jury of their peers violates the very heart of the British justice system. Whether the courts were fair or not, it was inevitable that they would be seen as secret, kangaroo courts designed to imprison those who spoke out against injustice.

In 1972, the Stormont government and Parliament were suspended, and the British implemented direct rule from Westminster. There is now a Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (who is appointed by the British Prime Minister), and English civil servants administer the province. The various political parties still elect representatives, but these now sit in Westminster and try to get the House of Commons to listen to Northern Irish issues.

The Sunningdale Agreement

Leaders of the Northern Irish parties met with Ministers from both the United Kingdom and (for the first time) the Republic of Ireland at Sunningdale in 1973 and set up a Council of Ireland. The council was intended to provide a framework for cooperation between the North and South. Additionally, a power-sharing agreement was called for that would

result in a joint government of Catholic and Protestant representatives. Terrified that the agreement constituted abandonment by the British, the Unionists reacted to quash it. The Ulster Workers' Council called a general strike that paralyzed the province. Rather than having the army stop the strike, the British allowed the Protestant paramilitary groups their way, a reaction that the Catholic community understood to mean that whatever the Protestants did would be winked at, while anything the Catholics did would be immediately shut down. The Unionist members of the proposed new executive resigned, and direct rule was reinstated.

Since that time, Northern Ireland has suffered greatly. Sectarian killings, bombings, economic woes due to lack of investment in the area, hunger strikes by IRA prisoners seeking reinstatement of their status as political prisoners, and the attendant publicity have marked the province in a way few outsiders can understand. Those born since 1969 have never known peace. Unceasing violence and turmoil, uncertainty and economic hardship have infected the communities with feelings of fear and despair of ever seeing an end to things.

1973 also brought the beginning of the IRA's bombing campaign in England. Reasoning that one bomb in London was worth dozens in Belfast because of the attendant publicity, the IRA bombed New Scotland Yard, the Old Bailey and other such "strategic" targets. They soon moved beyond that, however, setting off bombs in Guildford and Birmingham that killed many civilians. Anti-Irish hysteria and demands by the public for the government to do something resulted in the arrest of the wrong people, who were convicted and jailed, although it later became apparent that the British authorities knew they were not guilty (a situation that was addressed in the film *In the Name of the Father*).

The IRA used this to point up British injustice, and in response the British government implemented the Prevention of Terrorism Act under which hundreds of innocent Irish citizens have been held. The Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Emergency Provision Act made it lawful for British forces to stop anyone, anywhere, at any time and demand their names, addresses and destinations. Further, anyone could be arrested at any time and held for up to seven days for interrogation — all without being charged for any crime. The European Court of Human Rights ruled that seven-day detentions are in violation of the European Convention. Tortures used to extract confessions prompted the Court of Human Rights to find the British government guilty of "inhuman and degrading" treatment of prisoners. Though intended to strike at terrorists and quickly

remove them from the streets, the legislation has often been misinterpreted and misused.

Some of the less extremist "silent majority" Catholics and Protestants came together to try to end the violence, and the organizers of the Ulster Peace Movement, Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo for their efforts in 1976. Though many desired peace, skepticism about British justice, continued unemployment and old, bitter hatreds continued to rule the day through the '80s.

In 1981, hunger-striker Bobby Sands (and several other, less publicized prisoners) died in H-Block of Longkesh Prison. While he did not achieve his aims, the publicity surrounding his hunger strike and death once again focused world attention on Northern Ireland.

Economic Realism

It is truly sad and ironic that so much effort is spent and so many lives lost in the attempt to reunify the six counties with the rest of Ireland and the reaction against that attempt by the Loyalists. For reunification with the Republic is not really an option for Northern Ireland at this time. Even if the Unionists agreed to it (a very remote possibility), the reunification is not economically feasible. The Republic is just beginning to benefit from their membership in the EU and starting to attract industry and foreign investment, while Northern Ireland is the most heavily industrialized part of the island. On the surface it would appear that the North would be welcomed and would benefit from the recognition that they were bringing much-needed industry to Ireland.

The problem with this utopian view is that the Republic's standard of living is lower than Northern Ireland's (which in turn is poor compared to the rest of the UK). The Irish government could not afford to keep up the unemployment benefits currently paid out by the British government. Further, the government cannot afford to adequately fund services such as transport and health in the counties they already administer. Adding six more counties and another million and a half people would swamp their resources entirely.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement

Margaret Thatcher, then British Prime Minister, and Garrett Fitzgerald, leader of the Fine Gael party, were instrumental in the passage of the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. The basics of the agreement were that Northern Ireland would remain a part of the United Kingdom for as long as the majority desired, and that the Dublin government would have the status of being a consultant in Northern Irish affairs. Unionists desperately clutched at continued union with Britain, fearing that this was another attempt by England to cast them off. Nationalists were dismayed because it seemed that the Republic had finally given up on reclaiming the six counties that make up Northern Ireland. Opposition by the Loyalists and Republicans proved bitter. Murders, fire bombings and beatings continued.

In 1990, Mary Robinson became the first female President of the Republic, an event that has been seen as an achievement by Irish feminists in their fight to throw off the domination of the Catholic Church. While the Anglo-Irish Agreement was discredited, peace initiatives moved forward as the IRA continued bombing campaigns in London. Protestant terrorists continued their campaign of murder and mayhem against Catholics that was the equal of anything the IRA dealt out. Whereas the Protestant groups see the Catholics as their enemies, the IRA believes their true enemy is the British government.

After an IRA bomb killed 10 people in Belfast and the extremist Loyalists retaliated by shooting 14 people in a pub in Greysteel, more moderate leadership in the IRA allowed Sinn Féin to begin lobbying for peaceful solutions. Gerry Adams, head of Sinn Féin, became a well-known figure as the political arm of the IRA rose to the forefront. In one of those ironies so typical to Ireland, even as the IRA was bombing "soft targets" such as the homes of policemen and shooting Catholics who tried to join the RUC, Gerry Adams was assigned an RUC guard to protect him from assassination.

The Downing Street Declaration

The Irish and British Prime Ministers issued a joint declaration in 1993 which stated that: "Britain had no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland." The statement further said that the people of both Southern and Northern Ireland have the right to

"self-determination," and that the status of Northern Ireland can only be changed if the majority of people wish it to. The Irish government agreed to drop its claims to the six counties. Both governments offered to accept negotiators from extremist factions on both sides if they renounced violence.

After several months delay, the IRA declared a cease-fire in 1994. This was followed by a Protestant cease-fire one month later. For the first time in 25 years, there were no troops on daylight patrols in Northern Ireland, and many of the barricades and checkpoints were dismantled.

Drug Money

It should be noted that certain levels of violence never ceased despite the cease-fire. Both the IRA and the Loyalists tend to "keep order" in their respective territories. This includes beating those they disapprove of with baseball bats or kneecapping teenagers who steal cars to go for joyrides. Additionally, each group has become dependent on the money they make through the drug trade. It seems unlikely that they will simply cease operations if an agreement is ever reached — especially since unemployment remains a significant problem in the region.

Breakdown in Negotiations

Sinn Féin expected to be invited to peace talks within three months, but delays have mounted. The British demanded that the IRA hand over its guns before they would be allowed a place in negotiations, and in retaliation, Sinn Féin demanded that the British army and RUC give up their arms as well. They called for the RUC (seen in Nationalist areas as an instrument of Protestant oppression) to be disbanded entirely. After 17 months of relative peace, none of the extremists had given up their guns. Many have questioned why the British thought that either side would give up their arms before peace was assured. It seemed more of a roadblock to progress than a real demand since it was so unlikely as to be ridiculous.

John Major, the British Prime Minister, then called for elections to choose delegates to the peace talks. Because of various rules, this would make it very difficult for Nationalists to win enough votes to actually elect representatives — especially the representatives most likely to be apprised of all the issues. Sinn Féin accused Major of stalling tactics to derail the peace initiative. It is hard to refute their argument. Major only remains

Prime Minister as long as his party is in power, and his majority depends on support from the Northern Irish delegates (many of whom either have ties to or must answer to those who vehemently wish to maintain their union with Britain). Whether Northern Ireland's chances for a permanent peace have been sacrificed on the altar of political expediency, only the principal players know. But the peace has been shattered.

My Patrons.

This history is almost concluded, but I felt that I must state my suspicions regarding events in the Kingdom of Ulster. King Finn, for all his power, is young and inexperienced. It is my belief that the ongoing turmoil in Northern Ireland has unbalanced him, casting him into his Unseelie nature. I do not think this is an innocent occurrence, however. I suspect that some agent is at work who is deliberately undermining the Seelie Court in Hibernia. Whether this is the Shadow Court or an independent, I believe that you need to take a closer look at your fellow monarch before he succumbs entirely to the madness surrounding him. Forces are at work who wish to see the cease-fire end and violence become a way of life again. For the sake of the Seelie Court and the changelings and people of Ulster, I ask you to intervene. Though you may think this is not within my realm of historian, I ask you to consider the past and see its effect on the future. The choice is yours.

I am, as always, your servant.

Siobhan ní Oghma

End of the Cease-fire

In February of 1996, the cease-fire ended abruptly when a bomb exploded in London's Canary Wharf. It followed a brief announcement from the IRA stating that the cease-fire was over. The nonviolent stance of Sinn Féin has apparently been overruled as rumors surface that the IRA leadership has undergone a reorganization. Such rumors indicate that the former commander of the IRA's Northern Operations has assumed overall control. The commander, whose name was not given, is noted for his ultra-violent policies, including the human bomb campaign which forced civilians to drive booby-trapped vans loaded with bombs to British army posts under threat of having their families killed. The Protestant terrorists and their political counterparts may decide to call off their own cease-fire as well — especially if the bombing campaign moves back to Northern Ireland.

All in all, it's business as usual in Ulster.



Who's Who Among the Initial Crowd

*They shoot without shame, in the name of a
piece of dirt,
Or a change of accent, or the color of your shirt.
Better the pride that resides in a citizen of the
world than
The pride that divides when a colorful rag is
unfurled.*

—Rush, "Territories"

In many cases, the term "Catholic" is seen as being synonymous with the words Irish, Nationalist and Republican, while "Protestant" is thought of as English, Unionist and Loyalist. In fact, all the terms are not interchangeable. Some Unionists are Irish Catholics who see the union with Britain as more desirable than being a part of Ireland as a whole. Many Protestants feel that they have an Irish heritage as well as an identity with Britain.

There is even confusion engendered when speaking of the two places. To the Unionists (and the British), the six northeastern counties of Ulster are Northern Ireland. Those with Republican leanings are more apt to refer to it as "the six counties." Those who want a less political word for the region often use "Ulster," but this is not entirely correct. Ulster had nine counties, not six. Probably the most politically neutral term is "the North," but even that is incorrect, as parts of the Republic reach farther north than Northern Ireland. Then there is the problem of Derry. Renamed Londonderry when the London guilds took over funding it, the city has always remained "Derry" to the Catholics. To call it Londonderry was to betray Unionist sympathies, while to call it Derry was to mark yourself as a Republican. The name has been changed back to Derry, but many still attach the word "London" to the front of it.

It is difficult enough to try to follow the intricacies of Irish politics when you know who the players are. Without that knowledge, the web of initials and similar-sounding party names quickly strands neophytes in a morass of confusion. Some of the principle players are detailed below.

Alliance Party — This is a middle-of-the-road party made up of both Catholics and Protestants. The party supports British rule but also promotes links to Dublin. They enjoy about 10% of the popular vote.

Fianna Fáil — The Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny) party was created by Eamon De Valera and

his supporters in response to the signing of the treaty partitioning Ireland. The party was anti-treaty. Linked with the IRA, delegates elected from this party refused to take their seats in the Dail because they refused to swear allegiance to the British crown. Finally in 1932, Fianna Fáil came to power in coalition with the Labour party.

Fine Gael — The Fine Gael (United Ireland) party was started to oppose Fianna Fáil in 1933 from the remnants of those who had accepted the treaty and served in the Dail since 1922. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael have dominated politics in the Republic of Ireland since that time.

IRA — This one is a little complex. Never disbanded after the Irish Civil War, the Irish Republican Army sought to free the whole of Ireland from the British and reclaim the six northeastern counties through the use of guns and bombs. Declared illegal in both the Republic and Northern Ireland, the IRA reorganized after the 1969 civil rights marches. The Marxist members who advocated peaceful agitation called themselves the Official IRA (OIRA), while the traditionalists who wanted to continue the fight became the Provisional IRA (PIRA).

After 1972, there were feuds within the IRA resulting in the appearance of the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and their political arm, the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), led by Bernadette McAliskey (the former Bernadette Devlin who achieved fame in the Burntollet Bridge incident and for slapping the Home Secretary's face while she was an MP at Westminster). In many ways the INLA and IRSP were outgrowths of the OIRA and Sinn Féin. The IRA and INLA engaged in a bloody battle for dominance, with assassinations on both sides. In 1977, a truce was called. Since that time, the action has been carried on by the "Provos," the PIRA that is usually just referred to as the IRA. Got that?

Loyalists — Those who not only favor union with Great Britain, but who are hardliners. Often the word is used to describe paramilitary membership or sympathies.

Nationalists — Anyone who supports a united Ireland is known as a Nationalist. They are primarily Catholic and often accused of being in cahoots with the IRA.

The Nationalists have one main party in Northern Ireland:

- The **SDLP (Socialist Democratic and Labour Party)** holds the biggest Nationalist vote. It was founded in 1970 to achieve a united Ireland through peaceful, democratic means.

Orange Order — Formed from the vigilante Peep-O-Day Boys, a Protestant working class secret society who fought the Land League, the Orange Order took its name from their hero, William of Orange. The Orange Order has traditionally feared Catholics would somehow obtain a majority, displace them in their jobs and homes, and force a unification with the rest of Ireland. Staunchly Unionist, they have often erupted into violence and rioting when Catholics seemed on the verge of gaining advantages they consider threatening. During their traditional marches in July and August commemorating Protestant victories over Catholics (in 1690 no less), they frequently provoke disturbances by choosing routes through Catholic areas.

Republicans — Hardline Nationalists are called Republicans. The word usually carries the connotation of being a member of or sympathetic to the IRA.

RUC — The RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) is Northern Ireland's police force, though they often must act in concert with the British army to maintain security as well. Reorganized in the 1970s in an attempt to make them less overtly Protestant in nature, they are still viewed with much suspicion by Catholic Nationalists who see their actions as repressive measures against peaceful dissenters. While it is true that the RUC earned such distrust in the past (by such measures as standing aside while peaceful protest marchers were beaten by Protestant mobs), they have tried to clean up their act and entice more Catholics into their ranks to make the police more representative of the overall population. Their efforts in this area have been frustrated because any Catholics who join the RUC are singled out for death by the IRA.

Sinn Féin — The original Sinn Féin was the party that won independence for Ireland. Today's Sinn Féin is technically known as Provisional Sinn Féin (though hardly anyone calls them that). It acts as the political wing of the IRA and also serves as a radical working class Nationalist party. They refuse to recognize British rule of the North.

Unionists — Unionists is the term used for those who support continued union with Great Britain.

Unionists see no legal foundation to the Republic's claims on the six counties, and interpret involvement by Dublin as an attempt to assert their (nonexistent) authority over a British territory. They fear that Dublin's aims are to force a reunification between Northern Ireland and the Republic. The Unionists hold 13 seats in Parliament and thus hold crucial votes in support of the Conservative government. Should they withdraw their support, John Major's party would no longer be in the majority. It is therefore in the interest of the Conservative government to keep the Unionists happy. Of course, nobody else wants the Unionists, at least for now, though there has been a long history of deals made and allegiances purchased by one British party or another.

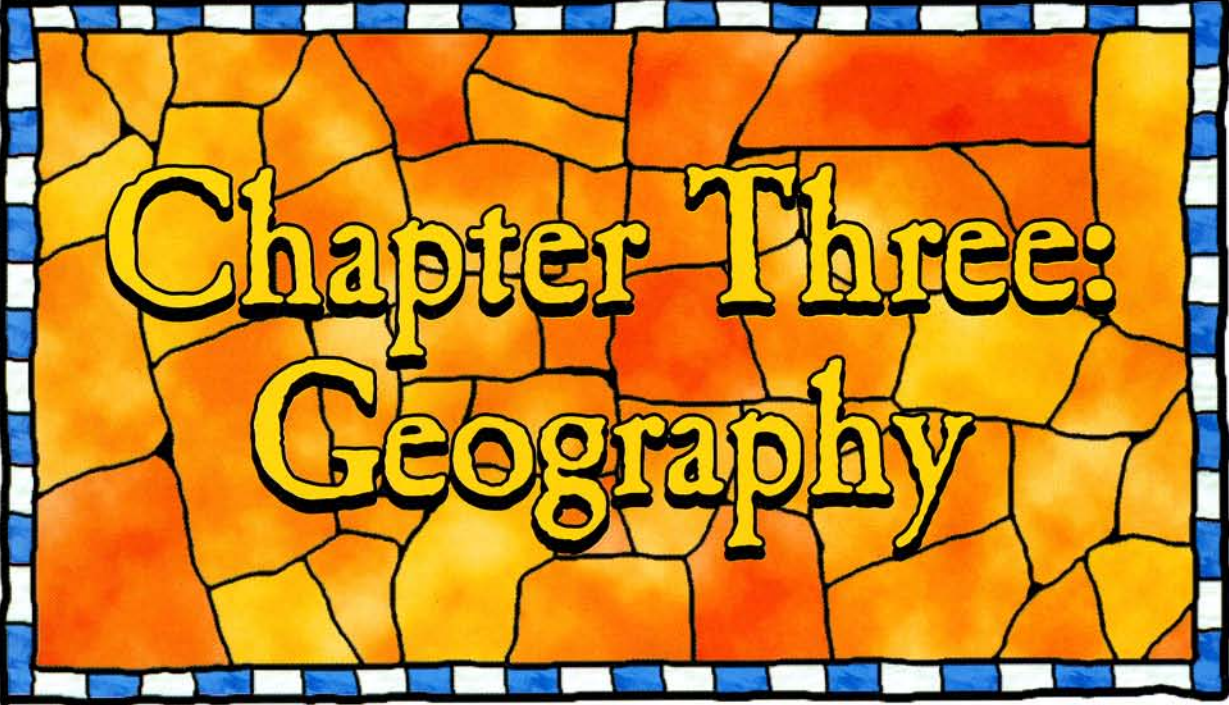
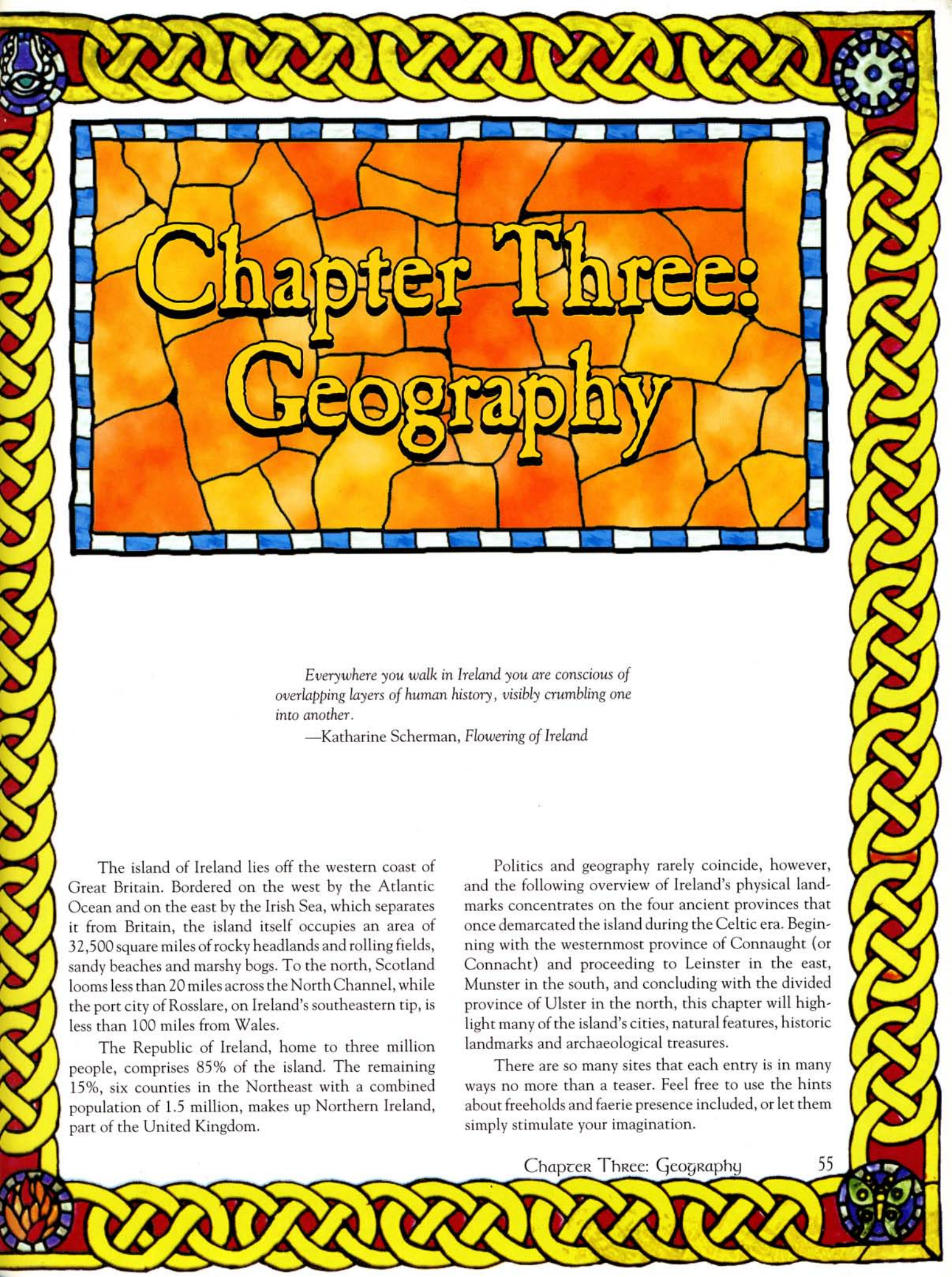
There are two Unionist parties:

- The **UUP (Ulster Unionist Party)** is the larger, more moderate group who advocate making Sinn Féin a mainstream party through election to an assembly.

- The **DUP (Democratic Unionist Party)** is led by Ian Paisley. Extremely right-wing in attitude, members of this party are very set against any cooperation with Dublin or any plans for power sharing with the SDLP. Paisley has called the Vatican "anti-Christ."

UVF, UFF and UDA — The **UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force)** and the **UFF (Ulster Freedom Fighters)** operate as smaller units under the protection of the **UDA (Ulster Defense Association)**. All are illegal Protestant terrorist organizations whose main support comes from the working class. While they should probably be referred to as "Loyalist" terrorists rather than "Protestant," since they are (so far as is known) totally comprised of Protestant members, it is as accurate to call them Protestant terrorists as it is to identify the IRA as being exclusively Catholic. The UDA was considered legal until 1992, a state of affairs which greatly angered the Catholic community who saw this as another instance in which their side was kicked while the Protestants were allowed to do whatever they pleased. None of the groups have any aim other than terrorizing and frightening Catholics and performing revenge killings in response to IRA attacks. The Ulster Defense Association's political arm is known as the Ulster Democratic Party, and serves much the same function as Sinn Féin does for the IRA.





Chapter Three: Geography

Everywhere you walk in Ireland you are conscious of overlapping layers of human history, visibly crumbling one into another.

—Katharine Scherman, *Flowering of Ireland*

The island of Ireland lies off the western coast of Great Britain. Bordered on the west by the Atlantic Ocean and on the east by the Irish Sea, which separates it from Britain, the island itself occupies an area of 32,500 square miles of rocky headlands and rolling fields, sandy beaches and marshy bogs. To the north, Scotland looms less than 20 miles across the North Channel, while the port city of Rosslare, on Ireland's southeastern tip, is less than 100 miles from Wales.

The Republic of Ireland, home to three million people, comprises 85% of the island. The remaining 15%, six counties in the Northeast with a combined population of 1.5 million, makes up Northern Ireland, part of the United Kingdom.

Politics and geography rarely coincide, however, and the following overview of Ireland's physical landmarks concentrates on the four ancient provinces that once demarcated the island during the Celtic era. Beginning with the westernmost province of Connaught (or Connacht) and proceeding to Leinster in the east, Munster in the south, and concluding with the divided province of Ulster in the north, this chapter will highlight many of the island's cities, natural features, historic landmarks and archaeological treasures.

There are so many sites that each entry is in many ways no more than a teaser. Feel free to use the hints about freeholds and faerie presence included, or let them simply stimulate your imagination.

Enchanted Ireland

Once a plentiful cauldron of Glamour, Ireland still holds a wealth of faerie magic — freeholds, glades, thorpes and faerie rings. These enchanted sites are described, along with those who inhabit them, in inserts scattered throughout this chapter. These sections will also detail significant differences in geography between chimeric and physical sites. Much of the island's magic has been greatly weakened by overexposure to nostalgic tourists and greedy entrepreneurs or else tainted by centuries of war, famine and internal strife.

Four Green Fields

*"What did I have" said the fine old woman
"What did I have" this fine old woman did say
I had four green fields, and each one was a jewel
But strangers came, and tried to take them from me
I had fine strong sons and they fought to save my
jewels
They fought and died, and that was my grief said she
— Tommy Makem, Four Green Fields*

Connaught

Buffeted by the rough Atlantic winds that often bring heavy rains and enshroud much of the coast in a perpetual drizzle, Ireland's West contains some of the island's wildest and most beautiful scenery. Sparsely populated and still largely rural, the ancient province of Connaught includes the counties of Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Roscommon and Leitrim as well as the Aran Islands.

Rathcroghan

In County Roscommon, not far from Tulsk, lies the ring barrow of Rathcroghan. Also known as Cruachain, this gently sloping mound once served as the seat of the kings of Connaught. Irish legends claim the area as the home of Ailil MacMata, husband and rival of Queen Maeve, the instigator of the infamous Cattle Raid of Cooley. The land around Rathcroghan contains a number of ancient formations including a pillarstone known as Medb's Lump, the Cave of the Cats (Oweynagat), an artificial cave (or souterrain) reputed to house an entrance to the Other World, and the Hill of the Corpses, a stone ring fort built around a standing stone commemorating the grave of Daithi, Ireland's last pagan king.

The Court of Connaught

South of Rathcroghan lies the Hill of the Cairns, the coronation site for Connaught's pagan kings, where they joined with the goddess Medb in an intoxicating ritual of divine revelry. Beneath the hill, Fiachra of House Dougal, King of Connaught, holds his court. While less splendid in physical detail than the courts of his fellow rulers, Fiachra's Great Hall is a worthy specimen of chimeric architecture, combining traditional Celtic and neolithic building techniques with modern structural designs of earth-friendly, innovative architects patronized by the farseeing king. Recently, more frills have started to find their way into the trappings of the court due to the insistence of Fiachra's fosterling, Princess Bethany, on "prettying up" the hall's severe elegance. Fiachra's palatial residence lies superimposed upon the ruins of nearby Roscommon Castle.

Galway

Located where the River Corrib flows into Galway Bay, the port city of Galway combines a rich Irish-speaking tradition with a more modern outlook brought about by having a university in its midst. Its protected bay and strategic location made Galway a natural trading center for ships from Spain as early as the 14th century. For two centuries following its Royal Charter in 1396, Galway enjoyed the status of a city-state ruled by 14 merchant families, known as the 14 tribes of Galway. Its allegiance to the British Crown had dire consequences during the reign of Cromwell, whose army ransacked the city in 1652. The forces of William of Orange also attacked Galway in 1691. After the defeat of the Battle of the Boyne, Galway's prosperity dwindled as trade moved eastward and England loomed even larger in the fortunes of Irish history.

Modern Galway, with a population of 47,000, is the largest city in Ireland's West. In the last two decades, the city has undergone a resurgence due to a two-pronged revitalization process aimed at capitalizing on the city's colorful past and investing — through the cultivation of high-tech industries — in the future. Good road and rail transportation link the city of Galway with the rest of Ireland, making it a popular weekend destination for residents of the country's more populous Eastern regions.

Full of narrow, winding roads dating from its origins as a walled Anglo-Norman fort and trading post, Galway provides an ideal venue for walking tours of the city's historic and cultural landmarks. Though Lynch's Castle (a

16th century medieval structure embellished with gargoyles and numerous other stonework delicacies) now houses a bank, its stately façade — along with that of the nearby Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas — lends an air of dignity that sometimes clashes with the distinctly carnival atmosphere fostered by the city's new commitment to cultural celebration.

Today, Galway bills itself as a "carnival city," boasting over 50 festivals during the period from March through December. These events celebrate everything from traditional art, literature and music to modern pastimes such as vintage cars, horse and auto racing, regattas and trout fishing competitions, and the annual Galway International Oyster Festival.

Claddagh Rings and Pucans

On the west bank of the Corrib just beyond the Spanish Arch lies the region once known as the Claddagh. Once an independent close-knit community of Gaelic-speaking fisherfolk — including a number of selkies — ruled by their own "king" or "mayor," the village was demolished in the 1930s, its thatched cottages replaced by more functional housing. Little remains of the lost culture except for the sentimental silver claddagh (or friendship) ring, featuring two hands embracing a crowned heart, and the wooden sailing boats known as "hookers" or pucans once used by the Claddagh folk for fishing and ferrying peat, cattle and other goods. A community of mute swans occupies the river near Claddagh, some say in silent testimonial to the lost way of life.

The Kithain of Galway, however, know that the spirit of the Claddagh has not been entirely lost. Inhabited by a motley of selkies, pooka, boggans and a sidhe warrior of House Scathach, the pub known as the Crown and Heart, located on a side street off the Claddagh Quai, radiates a quiet aura of faerie magic that reminds all who pass by its weathered front of the pride of the Claddagh fisherfolk. During the hours near dawn and sunset, a chimeric *pucan* plies the waters of Galway Bay, sometimes traveling along the coast to visit other small freeholds along the shores of Connaught. Members of the Crown and Heart motley wear genuine claddagh rings, faerie treasures that give them the ability to detect insincerity when spoken in their presence. One of the mute swans, actually a pooka named Branwyn, makes her living (when she's not being a swan) performing as a mime for the many festivals throughout the city.





GORT and Thoor Ballylee

Although characterized as a colorless little town, Gort (population 1,100) bears noting for its association with the life of William Butler Yeats and other writers of the literary revival of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The tower of Thoor Ballylee, a four-story square stone keep dating from the 16th century, served as Yeats' home-away-from-Dublin from 1921-29. Today, a museum honoring the poet occupies the structure. Nearby is Coole Park, once the residence of Lady Augusta Gregory, famous for her collections and retellings of many Irish folk legends. Her house no longer stands, although the estate and gardens — newly restored — still attract visitors eager to see the "autograph tree." George Bernard Shaw, Jack Yeats, John Millington Synge and other writers and artists of the time carved their initials into a copper beech on the grounds of the estate.

The Calliopeans

Thoor Ballylee and Coole Park are popular rendezvous spots for cliques of Calliopeans who draw their Glamour from the modern aspiring poets and writers who visit the area in search of inspiration by Ireland's famous writers. Despite having to contend with tourists, whose Banality spirals through the area, the changelings still glean Glamour from the writers who make pilgrimages to the famous spot.

Sligo

*Ah we poor poets in our pride
Tread the bare song road all our summer,
To wake on lips of some new comer
"A poor man lived here once and died."*

— W. B. Yeats, *A Double Moon or More Ago*

The town of Sligo forms the heart of what is known as "Yeats Country," bound up as it is with the life of Ireland's most famous poet. With a population of only 17,000, Sligo is, nevertheless, the largest city in northwestern Ireland. Situated along the banks of the Garavogue River between Sligo Bay and Lough Gill, the town has weathered invasions by Vikings in the ninth century as well as the later Anglo-Norman conquerors who settled in Ireland to become "more Irish than the Irish themselves."

Besides the obligatory landmarks that mark the presence of Sligo's native son — the Yeats Memorial Building which houses the Sligo Art Gallery, the statue of the poet near Hyde Bridge, and the Sligo County Library and Museum where the paintings of Yeats' father John and brother Jack are displayed along with other Yeats memorabilia — are the ruins of Sligo Abbey, the town's only remaining medieval structure. Visitors to the area usually find their way to one of Sligo's better known pubs, either Hargadon's or Beezie's, located on O'Connell Street, for a taste of genuine Irish conviviality before ranging outside the town to view the local landmarks.

The Broken Harp: Where the Unseelie Play

Just off O'Connell Street, sandwiched between a corner pub and a greengrocer's shop, lies a shabby storefront, apparently closed for repairs or refurbishing. To changelings' faerie senses, however, the building appears in its true chimeric form as the Broken Harp, a gathering place for the local Unseelie Kithain. Although the bar is run by Lurgan, a redcap bartender, the unofficial movers and shakers of the Broken Harp are a pair of sidhe brothers, twins of House Ailil named Donal and Dougal.

Here, changelings dissatisfied with the stolid rule of King Fiachra or with the placid life dictated by their largely rural surroundings meet to discuss everything from insurrection to the coming long Winter. Some, as in any drinking establishment, come merely to sample the local brew and listen to the rowdy music that often fills the freehold during evening hours. Mad Caitlin and the Drunken Poets, a band of Kithain musicians led by a charismatic wilder of House Leanhaun, sometimes raise the roof with their manic interpretations of traditional Irish ballads and reels. Prominently displayed along the walls of the freehold are a series of imaginative, though irreverent or downright bawdy, paintings purported to be the work of Jeffrey Yeats, the poet's "other, really talented brother." In actuality these are the offerings of Evin Delaney, a local eshu artist of Irish tinker stock.

Carrowkeel Passage Cemetery

South of Lough Arrow, in County Sligo, the Bricklieve Mountains house a remote collection of Stone Age burial sites known as the Carrowkeel Passage Cemetery. 14 passage tombs, containing cruciform graves and elaborately corbeled vaults, salt the heath and bogland covering the sometimes treacherous mountain slopes. One such passage tomb rivals Newgrange in size and complexity, although sunlight from the summer and not the winter solstice illuminates its burial chamber once a year. Not far away are the ruins of Stone Age huts, marking this lonely spot as one of the oldest inhabited places in Ireland.

Knocknarea and Queen Maeve's Tomb

Near Sligo, atop Knocknarea Mountain, rests a massive stone cairn reputed to be the burial mound of Queen Maeve of Connaught (an honor claimed by a number of other megalithic sites in western and northwestern Ireland). The massive mound of stones (weighing in at nearly 40,000 tons) is clearly visible from five counties, the fickle weather of Ireland permitting, of course. Despite its temptation to archaeologists, the cairn has never been explored or excavated, although many visitors to the area undertake the hour-long climb to the top of Knocknarea to view it up close and personal. Tradition dictates that each pilgrim to the cairn bring with her a rock to add to its mass — a custom which, over the years, has made the thought of probing its contents increasingly less likely.

The Banshee of Knocknarea

Unknown to most Kithain, the tomb houses one of Irish legend's most feared creatures — the wailing spirit known as the Bean Sidhe, more commonly called "banshee" by mortals. (See **Nobles: The Shining Host** for more details on this forlorn faerie spirit.) Entombed by a group of angry fae tired of her Ravaging attacks upon their Glamour, the rocky prison served to contain, though not destroy, her deathless spirit, which languished in growing desperation until recently released through the power of the Keystone (one of the Immortal Eyes). Whether she is, in fact, the ravenous spirit of the legendary Maeve, Queen of Connaught, or some other faerie queen of old, is something her fractured memories cannot recall.

Connemara

The western part of Galway, a peninsula bordered by an erratic coastline carved by the persistent activities of water on stone, exemplifies the heart of the Irish wilderness. A ridge of mountains, collectively referred to as the Twelve Bens, rises in the center of Connemara, while the Roundstone Bog covers a large part of the area southwest of the mountains. Lakes, heaths, rivers and rock-strewn ground provide a feast of wild beauty that ranges from barren splendor to lush extravagance. Orchids abound in certain parts of Connemara, along with hooded crows, merlins and peregrine falcons. Connemara teems with small predators such as badgers and foxes, and larger animals including the Connemara pony and the recently reintroduced red deer. Otters play along the rivers, while gray seals live near the rocky shores.

A Pooka Paradise

The Connemara National Park, open year round and containing four of the Twelve Bens as well as heathland and bogs, houses a faerie glade frequented by pooka from all over Ireland. Here, a gentle Connemara pony pooka named Ben (sometimes called the Thirteenth Ben) hosts the annual All-Hibernian International Tall Tale Festival, a celebration of the kith's expertise in creative storytelling. The festival is held twice a year, on the evenings of the summer and winter solstice.

Roscommon

The capital city of County Roscommon is a small but busy town of sheep and cattle farmers that serves as a base for sightseers wishing to see the nearby stone monuments of Rathcroghan and other sites west of the Shannon River. The remains of a 13th century Dominican abbey founded by Felim O'Connor, then King of Connaught, house the king's tomb whose sides are carved with the figures of Scottish mercenaries (called gallowglasses) who hired out as bodyguards to the Irish nobles. The splendid ruins of Castle Roscommon, west of the town, stand as mute evidence of the area's weathered past. Built in 1269, the castle was destroyed by the armies of Hugh O'Connor, another King of Connaught. Restored a decade later, the castle stood until 1652, when it was severely damaged by Cromwell's men. The castle's eastern and western gateway, along with four round towers, hint at the imposing presence that once dominated the landscape.

Fiachra's Castle: the Ruins of Castle Roscommon

Although its physical structure bears little resemblance to its former grandeur, Roscommon Castle presents an entirely different view to faerie kenning. Atop this stately ruin, King Fiachra has created a truly magnificent faerie fortress. This chimeric restoration augments the castle's original design with a few of Fiachra's own innovations, such as a domed garage to house his fleet of racing cars and vintage autos, a tall tower ideal for hang-gliding, and a circular railroad that forms the perimeter of his freehold. Beneath the castle, in the area which once housed the fortress' dungeon, Fiachra has constructed a gallery to display his chimerical replicas of famous racing vehicles and miniature trains. Within this gallery also burns the freehold's balefire, indicative of Fiachra's sense of where the heart of his holding lies. Not far from the castle, Fiachra also keeps a farm run by enchanted mortals. Here he breeds a stock of racehorses fine enough to compete in many of the regional and national competitions.

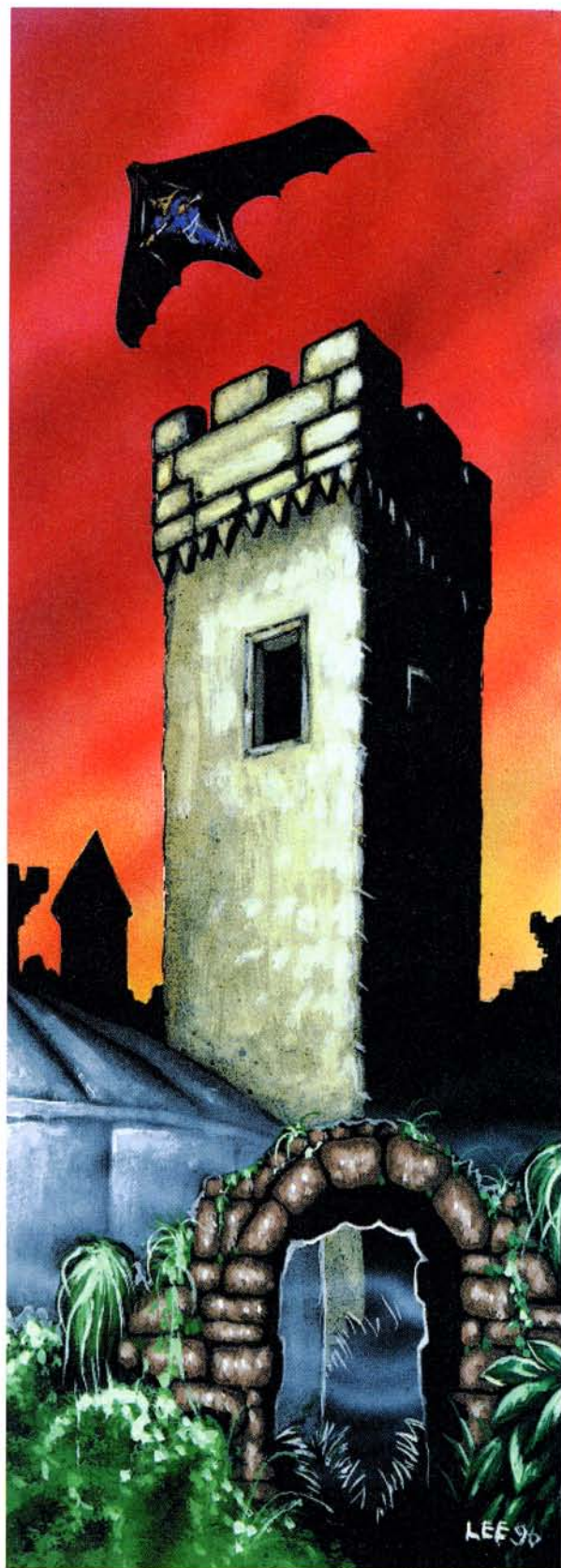
Aran Islands

The Aran Islands form a rocky buffer that stretches across Galway Bay. Formed of carboniferous limestone, these stony islands have almost no natural soil to speak of, yet they support a population of approximately 14,000 inhabitants who manage to wrest a living from their unyielding surroundings. The people of Aran are Gaelic-speakers, proud of their heritage and determined in their conviction to preserve a way of life that is fast disappearing from the rest of Ireland. Although the tourist industry has brought a measure of prosperity to the islanders, fishing remains an important part of the islands' fragile economy. Once accessible only by boat, a small airport on each of the three principal islands now connects Aran to the outside world.

Inis Mór, or Inishmore, the largest of the three main islands, contains a number of pagan and Christian sites. In addition to St. Enda's Church, which honors the sixth century founder of Irish monasticism, the island is also the site of Dún Aenghus, a massive circular stone fort on the edge of a 300-foot tall cliff above the ocean. Three concentric walls make up the Bronze Age structure, which is embellished by a line of pointed stones as a protection against attackers from the sea. In the center of the fort lies a raised stone platform. Evidence suggests to archaeologists that this might have been the site for public sacrifices. The smaller fort of Dún Eochla occupies a high piece of ground near the western end of the island. The village of Gort na gCapall, birthplace of Irish author Liam O'Flaherty, shares the island along with Kilmurvey House, once the residence of Inishmore's biggest and most ruthless landowner, known for his unfair evictions and unyielding attitude toward his tenants.

The island of Inis Meáin (Inishmaan) lies across from Inishmore by the strait known as Gregory's Sound, named for St. Gregory whose coffin supposedly rose from its burial in Rome and made its way back to the islands in response to the saint's wish to lie in the earth of Aran. A number of historic and legendary sites dot the landscape, including the stone fort of Dún Fearbhai, Cill Cheannach, a 12th century stone church, and a cottage made famous as the summer residence of playwright John Millington Synge. Dún Chonchúir, located atop the highest point of Inishmaan, derives its name from Conor, the brother of the Fir Bolg chieftain Aenghus.

Nearest to the mainland of Ireland, a short hop by air from the town of Doolin on the coast of Clare, the island of Inis Oírr (Inisheer) contains the ruins of St. Cavan's Church, a 13th century building which is the site for a yearly pilgrimage in honor of the island's patron saint, and O'Brien's Castle, a 14th century edifice demolished by Cromwell in 1652.



Dún Aenghus

Once the fortress home of a legendary Fir Bolg chieftain after that race's exile by the Tuatha de Danaan to the west of Ireland, Dún Aenghus later became a powerful site of faerie magic. After its abandonment by the original inhabitants, a prince of House Dougal discovered the three-fold stone circle's innate association with the dormant magic of the earth. Using Glamour to evoke and awaken the sleeping power, this nameless prince constructed a massive treasure vault in which to house some of the sidhe's most valuable possessions. Sensing the imminent departure of his kind from the mortal world, this farsighted lord hoped to lay by a store of magical items in hopes of a time conducive to the return of the sidhe. Unfortunately for his dreams, he had only begun to amass his horde when the forces of the Shattering compelled him to leave for Arcadia by the nearest gateway, Silver's Gate. He fell in the battle that raged during the gate's final moments, his dreams forever lost, and with them, the key that would unlock the entrance to his cache.

During the Interregnum, a small group of sluagh, who found the limestone cliffs and rocky ground of Inishmore ideal for their habitation, claimed Dún Aenghus as their freehold. These enterprising Kithain embellished the site with their own chimeric protections in the form of traps and mind-befuddling mazes. Despite their familiarity with the structure's physical and chimerical details, they did not find the hidden treasure horde. They did, however, sense a powerful emanation of Glamour just beyond their reach. Word leaked out to other Kithain of a great lost treasure of the fae, and Dún Aenghus soon became the site for a succession of Kithain battles, with the freehold changing hands several times before the return of the sidhe.

Today, a motley of Unseelie Kithain, including a sluagh descended from the original creators of the freehold, inhabits Dún Aenghus, which they have turned into an unofficial headquarters for what they hope will be the eventual ousting of the sidhe from the halls of Kithain power. They, too, have heard the rumors of buried treasure beneath their fort and hope that, among the wealth, are a few good weapons which can be turned to their advantage. All they need is to find someone who can unravel the mystery of where the treasure lies.

Achill Island

Only 20 feet of water separates Achill Island from mainland Ireland. The island is 12 miles across at its broadest expanse, 13.5 miles long, and covers an area of 55 square miles. It is a microcosm of Ireland's West, containing mountains (some over 2,000 ft.), dramatic cliffs, fine sandy beaches, stretches of heather and bleak moors.

The Michael Davitt Bridge connects Achill Island to the Mayo coast and leads to the market village of Achill Sound, the primary center for shopping, with facilities for boat rental and other water sports.

Achill Island's highest peak, Mount Slievemore, lies along the northern coast. Near the base of the mountain are the sad ruins of Slievemore Village. Below Slievemore, on the seaward side, are the Seal Caves, accessible only by water.

Along the island's south coast, the villages of Dooagh and Keel are fishing communities, noted for their picturesque beauty and fine beaches. A two-mile stretch of white sands lies between Keel and the 800-foot-tall Menawn Cliffs and the Cathedral Rocks. West of Dooagh, Keem Bay offers not only fine views of the nearby coast but also occasional sightings of basking shark, which frequent the temperate Irish coastal waters. Also along the south coast, the ruins of Kildownet Castle mark the island's connection with Grace O'Malley, Ireland's notorious pirate queen.

Mount Croaghnaun (2,192 ft.) dominates the western end of the island. From its heights, a knife-edge ridge of cliffs slopes toward Achill Head, the westernmost tip of Achill Island. Beyond this sprawls the Atlantic Ocean.

Silver's Gate and the Isle of Dreams

The Isle of Dreams sparkled atop the water, a verdant expanse of gently rising ground that culminated in a rounded hill in the island's center. Atop the hill, a faerie castle of crystal spires and prismic towers crowned the island's highest point. Before the gate of the castle stood a pair of stone statues, elegantly clad knights with long, flowing hair.

— Jackie Cassada, *Court of All Kings*

The legendary Isle of Dreams, once the meeting place for the Court of All Kings and the site of Silver's Gate, sank beneath the ocean off the tip of Achill Island after a fierce battle during the final moments of

the sidhe's flight to Arcadia. (See **Nobles: The Shining Host** as well as the **Immortal Eyes** novels for fuller details about the battle for Silver's Gate.) Since the Shattering, the island has rested in a pocket of mute Glamour at the bottom of the ocean.

When it was an active freehold, the Isle of Dreams represented a piece of Arcadia within the world of mortals. Roughly circular in shape and approximately the size of Inisheer, the chimeric form of the island rises in the center to a rounded hill, atop which stands an ethereal castle housing the Hall of the Shining Ones, the chamber in which the faerie kings and queens of Ireland convened four times yearly, at each change of the seasons. At the base of the castle, the shining archway of Silver's Gate provided relatively easy access between the mortal world and Arcadia.

After the Battle of Silver's Gate, a pair of eyeless stone statues — the calcified ruins of the twin brothers' whose enmity led to the sinking of the island — replaced the silver pillars which once anchored the gateway.

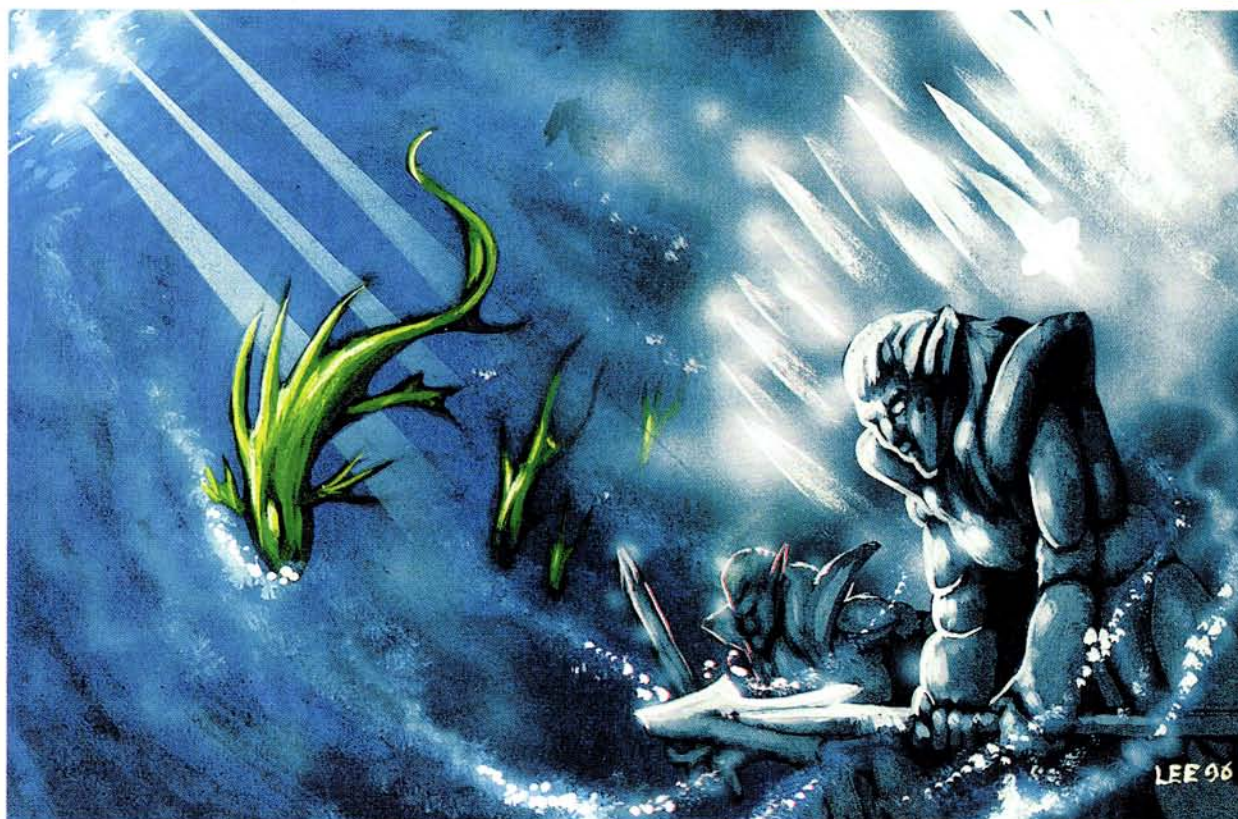
Traditionally, the guardianship of Silver's Gate has belonged to the selkies who live in the nearby Seal Caves of Achill Island.

Seal Caves: the Selkie Domain

The physical caves that lie below Slievemore conceal a selkie freehold that has existed since before the Sundering. Here reside the descendants of the original guardians of Silver's Gate. Since the disappearance of their legendary Queen Merala, doomed by her own curse upon the fractious Kithain whose hatred barred her kith's return to Arcadia, the selkies have refused to elect another queen. Their legends tell of a time when Merala's curse will be lifted, freeing her to return once again to assume her rightful place as first among the selkies.

Leinster

The Eastern counties of Louth, Longford, Meath, West Meath, Dublin, Offaly, Kildare, Laois, Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford make up the province of Leinster. From its midlands (often called the cradle of Irish civilization) to its southeastern shores (close enough to England to invite invasion), this varied land of pastures, hills, rivers, lakes and bogs bears the burden of history with dignity and humor.



Dublin

But the trees in Stephen's Green were fragrant of rain and the rainsodden earth gave forth its mortal odour, a faint incense rising upward through the mould from many hearts. The soul of the gallant venal city which his elders had told him of had shrunk with time to a faint mortal odour rising from the earth...

— James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

The capital of the Republic of Ireland, Dublin holds nearly one-third of the Republic's population. From its origins in the ninth century as a Viking outpost, the city's strategic location at the mouth of the River Liffey facing England's west coast has placed Dublin in the forefront of Irish history. The seat of British power for many centuries, it was also the center for the doomed Easter Rising of 1916. Its contradictory nature, which combines Nationalist sentiment with an appreciation for the best of British culture, has resulted in the blend of Anglo-Irish and Roman Catholic traditions that set Dubliners apart from the rest of the Republic's population.

The River Liffey, spanned by no fewer than seven bridges, divides the city along an east-west axis. North of the Liffey are several buildings and sites associated with the Easter Rising and the Irish Civil War of 1920-21, including

the Dublin GPO (General Post Office), O'Connell Street with its statue of "The Liberator," the Four Courts and the Custom House. Here, too, the James Joyce Cultural Centre celebrates the life and works of Dublin's greatest writer, while the Abbey Theatre, founded in 1898 under the support of W. B. Yeats and Lady Augusta Gregory, provides a venue for dramatic productions by Irish playwrights. St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Dublin's major Catholic church, is home to the illustrious Palestrina Choir.

Even more monuments to Dublin's rich culture and history lie south of the Liffey. Trinity College, founded in 1592 by Queen Elizabeth I, now serves as the repository for Ireland's greatest treasure — the Book of Kells. In addition, Trinity's chapel has the distinction of being the Republic's only interdenominational church. The National Gallery houses many works by Irish painters, including an entire room devoted to the paintings of Jack Yeats, considered to be one of the country's most important artists. Dublin Castle, the heart of British rule for 700 years, has undergone numerous renovations and reconstructions since its erection in the 13th century. Today, it is a national monument and conference center. Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin's premier Protestant establishment, houses the remains of Richard de Clare, known as Strongbow, leader of the Anglo-Irish nobles whose arrival in Ireland signaled the beginning of English rule.



Architecturally, Dublin reflects a kaleidoscope of styles, from remnants of the medieval city to the splendid 18th century Georgian town houses of the Age of Elegance. Wide thoroughfares such as O'Connell and Parnell Streets give way to narrow, mazelike back-streets. In addition to a cosmopolitan collection of shops that range from major department stores to specialty shops and boutiques featuring traditional and contemporary wares, Dublin hosts a boundless supply of restaurants and drinking establishments, many of which feature traditional music in addition to more modern bands.

The Book of Kells

During the Dark Ages, Irish monks preserved many important writings from falling into obscurity through their painstaking commitment to the aptly named art of illuminating manuscripts. The most famous of these lavishly illustrated texts is the Book of Kells. This breathtakingly beautiful manuscript now rests in the Treasury of Trinity College, where its pages are turned periodically to allow limited display of its intricate designs and brilliant colors.

Despite its long exposure to the public view, the Book of Kells still radiates the Glamour of its inspired, anonymous creators. A persistent rumor among Ireland's faerie population maintains that the presence of a few changelings within the country's monastic communities gave rise to the glorious dreams that guided the hands of the scribes of the Book of Kells and other comparable manuscripts. The spiritual orientation of Ireland's cloisters certainly afforded some protection from Banality, while the infusion of Christianity with pagan traditions made it possible for these changelings to remain true to the Dreaming. The major argument among Kithain consists of which kith deserves the credit for this remarkable achievement.

Trinity College is a favorite gathering place for Ireland's Kithain drawn to scholarly and cultural means of gathering Glamour. Sir Odhran, King Bran's archivist, occupies a curatorial position here in his mortal guise.

Leinster House: King Bran's Residence

Occupying a Georgian town house in a slightly dilapidated area of northern Dublin, near King's Inns, King Bran of Leinster keeps himself close to the heart of his constituency. While the physical proportions of the building differ little from others of its kind, its chimeric outer form

resembles a Norman fortified tower, a design which attracted Bran because of the aura of solidity and responsible guardianship projected by its dimensions. The interior of Leinster House is less severe, and reflects the King of Leinster's keen interest (fostered by Sir Odhran) in Irish culture. Here Bran displays his collection of historic curios and fine musical instruments.

In his first floor drawing room, Bran holds unofficial court where he meets with his nobles and occasionally commoners of note to discuss Kithain politics. Although he maintains a standing invitation to Dublin's Kithain to "come and talk things over" with him, he rarely allows anyone who takes him up on his word to see more than his public rooms. His private quarters, on the second and third floors, are just that. In his bedroom and private library, Bran keeps his most cherished faerie treasures.

Wexford

The capital of County Wexford, southernmost of Leinster's territory, is noteworthy as the site of the Wexford Opera Festival, an international affair that supplies the local Kithain with a yearly infusion of Glamour, and of Selskar Abbey, where King Henry II was alleged to have repented for the murder of Thomas à Becket. The nearby Wexford Wildfowl Preserve hosts a variety of swans, waders and birds of prey as well as serving as the winter home for large numbers of Greenland white-fronted geese.

Wicklow Mountains

South of Dublin, in County Wicklow, lie the Wicklow Mountains, long a refuge for rebels against the British Crown. Once part of the area known as the Pale, the Wicklow Mountains served as a home for the warlords of the O'Toole clan. After the abortive uprising of 1798, many rebels hid out in the Wicklow Mountains until the British carved its Military Road through the landscape in an attempt to get at the fugitives.

The mountains themselves are watered by several rivers and lakes and include Powerscourt Waterfall, Ireland's highest cascade, where the River Dargle flows over a granite escarpment to its base 425 feet below. The Sally Gap, Vale of Clara (with its minuscule village consisting of a church, a school and a pair of houses), the monastery ruins of Glendalough and the glen of Glenmacnass are other noteworthy sites in the area.

Warlords of Wicklow vs. Caretakers of St. Kevin

The Wicklow Mountains hold two rival groups of Kithain, one Unseelie and the other nominally Seelie but more eccentric than anything else. Within the hills near the Sally Gap lies a freehold created in secret by Kithain disaffected with King Bran's assumption of the rule of Leinster. Kindled by stolen balefire, the ruins of a cottage thought to be associated with Michael Dwyer, one of the leaders of the 1798 rebellion, serve as the headquarters of the Warlords of Wicklow. Led by a clurichaun calling himself O'Toole, this collection of nockers, boggans, redcaps and pooka plot the overthrow of Bran and Ravage the tourists to the region under the guise of "friendly locals" eager to give tours of the area's historic sites. Many who succumb to them come away thoroughly depressed instead of revitalized by their connection to Irish history.

On the other end of the spectrum, the area near Glendalough monastery is home to the Caretakers of St. Kevin, a group of Kithain drawn by the various legends associated with the holy hermit. A member of the royal house of Leinster in the fifth century, Kevin renounced his heritage to dwell in a cell (or cave, according to some tales) near Glendalough, where he founded a monastery dedicated to healing the sick and illuminating manuscripts. His extraordinary lifespan (120 years) has convinced the Caretakers that St. Kevin was actually one of the fae.

This circle, led by the ascetic sidhe Iarfhlaith (pronounced YAR-lath) Finleigh, occupies a freehold atop the site of St. Kevin's Cell, the ruins of a beehive hut in which the saint was thought to make his home (when he wasn't living in a cave, presumably). They devote themselves to contemplation and to undoing the work of the Warlords, attempting to re-inspire mortals drained by the Unseelie Ravagers. They owe nominal fealty to the King of Wicklow (one of Bran's nobles), but prefer not to go crying to their liege, feeling it is their duty to wage their campaign against the Warlords in private, as their namesake would have done.

Valley of the Boyne (Newgrange, Dowth, etc.)

The fertile valley of the River Boyne, which flows through County Meath, contains a wealth of landmarks significant to Ireland's past. Megalithic structures such as the passage tombs of Newgrange, Dowth and Knowth jockey for the limelight with the faded splendor of the Hill of Tara, once the seat of Irish high kings, and Christian monuments such as the Hill of Slane, the location of St. Patrick's famous paschal flame.

Later history catapulted the Boyne Valley into prominence as the site of William of Orange's decisive victory over the Irish armies loyal to James II. The banks of the river are home to all sorts of wildlife, including kingfishers, herons and cormorants. In places, stretches of whitewater provide a challenge for canoers.

Hill of Tara

The low, grassy hill where once the high kings of Ireland held court houses a collection of Iron Age forts and other earthwork structures, although their original purposes are not

Newgrange to Dowth: the Court of Leinster

Although it is Ireland's most celebrated passage tomb, the impressive mound of Newgrange has had its inherent Glamour, invested by its original creators, greatly weakened by its popularity as an archaeological dig and tourist attraction. Before the Sundering, the Seelie Court of Leinster met within its vast underground chambers from Beltaine to Samhain. Symbolic of the renewal of life and the coming spring, on the winter solstice, sunrise sends a shaft of light down the 65 feet passage to light the central chamber.

At Samhain, honoring the twofold tradition of Winter and Summer courts, the now Unseelie Court would move their location to Dowth, where the setting sun illuminated its innermost chamber on the winter solstice. Linked to an ancient Druid curse, the name Dubad (or "darkness") was placed upon Dowth, a fitting name perhaps for the darkness of the Unseelie Court.

Upon their return from Arcadia, the sidhe of Leinster attempted to recover their original court at Newgrange but found it sadly unsuitable. Now the full-time Seelie Court meets in the formerly Unseelie chamber beneath Dowth in an area chimerically reconstructed to give the impression of a forest glade under Arcadian skies.

A secret trod connects Newgrange and Dowth, and it is this passage that the Court uses to enter, rather than approach their new home directly.

readily apparent to viewers unfamiliar with what they are seeing. An oval fort, the Royal Enclosure, surrounds an earthen structure known as Conor's House, site of the Lia Fail or "stone of destiny" upon which the high kings were crowned.

Munster

The Southern portion of Ireland includes Cork, Waterford, Tipperary, Clare, Limerick and Kerry. Its associations with the tradition of rebellion against England, as well as its classic "Irish" scenic beauty make this part of Ireland popular with visitors tired of the cosmopolitan Dublin region and the starkness of the West. Here, too, are popular centers for items associated with Ireland — lace, crystal, castles and "blarney."

Slievenamon

Rising 2,358 feet above the Suir Valley in County Waterford, the quartzite dome of Slievenamon ("the mountain of women") affords a panoramic view of the countryside. From its top, the green slopes and lush plains of Counties Tipperary and Kilkenny to the north, the mist-shrouded Comeragh Mountains to the south, and the fertile Suir Valley, watered by the River Suir, display their finery. Despite intrusions by the modern world (a television antenna near the mountain's top and gashes in the landscape where hedges have fallen to the desire for greater agricultural convenience), Slievenamon retains much of its singular dignity.

Finn MacCool's Mountain Home

Slievenamon lives on in legend as the home of Finn MacCool, the giant-sized hero of tall tales and myths both comic and tragic. The mountain's gentle slope served as the site for a race among the land's eligible maidens for the "honor" of winning Finn in marriage. The sorrowful tale of Diarmaid and Gráinne has its beginnings in the outcome of that race, won by Gráinne to her regret. Preferring young Diarmaid to the aging Finn, Gráinne *geased* Diarmaid to run away with her, only to be pursued by Finn and his Fianna band. The slopes of Slievenamon now serve as an occasional meeting place between the Kithain and the Fianna, a Garou (werewolf) tribe that calls itself after the warrior giant. Once thought to be an important faerie freehold before the Shattering, it is now part of the bawn (or perimeter) of a Garou caern.

Cork

Called the Republic's "second city," Cork, with its nearby port of Cobh, lies in the low marshland around the River Lee on the southern coast of Ireland. From its founding as a monastery in the seventh century by St. Finnbarr, it grew into a Viking settlement and later a Norman city. Cork's history as a hotbed of rebellion comes from its support of James II against Cromwell's armies, its involvement in the Fenian uprising, and, later, in the Irish Civil War, and its continued opposition to the treaty which ended that war and established a divided island. The atmosphere of modern Cork attests to the presence of a large university population as well as a thriving artistic community.

Cork's landmarks include St. Finbarr's Cathedral, a 19th century structure belonging to the Church of Ireland (Protestant) built atop the ruins of the original monastery; the Beamish Brewery; the Butter Exchange (now a craft center); University College and the Cork Museum, which includes exhibits of the city's early history along with memorabilia from the period of the Irish Civil War. Nearby Cobh (literally, the Cove of Cork), served as the departure point for many American-bound emigrants from Ireland in the years following the Great Famine.

Blarney Castle

This 15th century castle, situated high above the River Martin northwest of Cork, enjoys worldwide fame as the home of the Blarney Stone, thought to be half of Scotland's legendary Stone of Scone given in tribute to Cormac MacCarthy for his support of Robert Bruce in the Battle of Bannockburn. The magical properties attached to it (its ability to confer eloquence on anyone who kisses the stone) stem from the fact that it once served as a potent repository for Glamour before the Sundering — long before its installment in the castle wall. (It was, perhaps, one of the largest examples of dross known to fae.) The succeeding centuries and long lines of eager tourists have diminished its store of faerie magic until only a glimmer of its former splendor remains, and that is inaccessible.

The grounds around the castle ruins, now a series of landscaped gardens and an arboretum, contain several oddly shaped limestone rocks reputed to have associations with Druidic worship. A stand of yew trees still serves as the meeting place for a coven of Verbena mages, while the nearby "Fairy Glade" radiates a strong enchantment discernable by Kithain. There are rumors that it serves as the entryway to a hidden freehold of one of the ancient sidhe, trapped in her castle by the sudden collapse of a nearby trod that would have borne her to Silver's Gate.

Kithain from Cork sometimes travel to the area around Blarney Castle in hopes of locating the precise entry to the freehold, if it still exists.



Beara Peninsula

Forming the upper half of the shoreline around Bantry Bay on Ireland's southwesternmost tip, the Bera Peninsula and its many small fishing villages had a reputation as a center for smuggling operations in earlier centuries.

Castletownbere, the principal town on Bera, accommodates both tourists and agents of the fishing industry. Much of the inland area still retains a relatively unspoiled character, filled as it is with lakes, woods, fields and moors. Local Kithain find it a good place to "get away" from more Banality-laden environs.

Puxley Castle and Copper Mines

Near Castletownbere, the ruins of Puxley Castle and its associated copper mines tell an ignoble story of greed and the exploitation of the once-rich mineral resources of the surrounding lands. The Puxley family, Anglo-Irish industrialists, grew rich for a time on the labor of local miners. Their residence, built in the middle of the 19th century, reflected their love for pomp and tasteless extravagance. In 1921, after the mines played out and the family was forced to return to Cornwall, the old IRA put the mansion to the torch.

Today, the ruins exude an eerie aura, and many have sworn that they have sighted ghostly figures hovering nearby. The copper mines serve as a freehold for a motley of sluagh, who delight in the privacy the underground location affords. The potential hazards caused by unmarked mine-shafts discourage hordes of sightseers, thus helping to protect the integrity of the freehold.

Ring of Kerry

The scenic road called the Ring of Kerry circumscribes the Iveragh Peninsula on Ireland's southwest coast, encompassing several historic and natural landmarks: coastal fishing villages, sandy beaches, the home of Daniel O'Connell and the mountain range known as MacGillycuddy Reeks, which contains Ireland's highest peak, Carrantuohill. The ring fort known as Staigue Fort, constructed without mortar, dates from the Iron Age. According to legend, the structure was built in a day and a night. Derrynane House, where Daniel O'Connell lived for many years, lies on the southern end of Iveragh on the outskirts of the town of Caherdaniel.

Near the southeastern end of the peninsula, the village of Kenmare, founded by a surveyor under Cromwell's command, has near its town center a ring of stones known as the Druid's Circle. Lough Currane, a



small lake separated from Ballinskellig Bay by a strip of land occupied by the fishing village of Waterville, contains Church Island, site of several early Christian ruins including a beehive hut thought to have been the home of St. Finan. The ruins of a sunken castle are visible on a clear day beneath the waters of Lough Currane.

Killorglin and the Puck Fair

Though its hilltop location overlooking the River Laune makes the village of Killorglin a picturesque spot for salmon fishers and sightseers, its main attraction is the annual Puck Fair held for three days every August. A wild mountain goat, caught for the occasion and crowned as Puck, presides over the festivities, which feature livestock sales, drinking, dancing and general merrymaking. The traveling community of Ireland once converged upon Killorglin during the fair.

One story concerning the origin of the Puck Fair claims that it commemorates a stampede of wild goats that once warned the village of an impending assault by the English. Other legends claim that the celebration originated before the coming of Christianity to honor the old magic of the land.

Commoners Court

Today, the Kithain of Munster (particularly the commoners) use the fair to hold an annual commoners court, to the dismay of Queen Nuala. On a few occasions, a daring pooka has served as the feted Puck of the fair, although a persistent story circulates about one such fearless Kithain who was never seen again after being so honored. The eshu population of Ireland, most of whom come from traveling stock, congregate here for rounds of storytelling and to reaffirm their solidarity with others of their kith.

Dingle Peninsula

Dingle Bay separates Iveragh from the Dingle Peninsula, a finger of land noted for its seascapes, Iron Age forts, ogham stones, early Christian ruins and a sizable Irish-speaking community. Sheltered beneath the slopes of Ballysitteragh Mountain, the town of Dingle once served as a major trading port with Spain until its destruction by the forces of Elizabeth I and, later, those of Cromwell. In the 18th century, it was a haven for smugglers. Today, Dingle is a tourist town famous for its local celebrity — Fungie the dolphin.

The town of Ventry, on Dingle's southern coast, has a distinguished place in both Irish history and legend. One of the last of the lands occupied by the

Danes, Ventry is also the site of Finn MacCool's legendary battle with the "King of the World." On the western edge of the peninsula, the village of Dunquin (Dun Chaoin) plays an important role in the preservation of the Irish language and culture, offering courses in Gaelic and serving as a center for traditions which are disappearing elsewhere on the island. Currachs still ply the waters off its coast. The Gallarus Oratory, a dry-stone church near Smerwick Harbor, dates from the early Christian era (sixth through ninth centuries). The Iron Age structure known as Dunbeg Fort and the ogham stones at Ballintaggart in the southeastern portion of the peninsula are from Ireland's prehistoric era.

The McSkeath Household

South of the village of Ballyferriter lies the homestead of the McSkeath family, kinain of House Scathach. A large farmhouse and several smaller buildings for tools, livestock and the family's one truck forms a small enclave within a sheltered valley. While not a freehold, it is nevertheless relatively free of Banality's taint due to the knowledge possessed by its inhabitants of the reality of the fae.

In every generation since the Sundering, at least one member of the McSkeath family has awakened to her faerie nature, perpetuating the tradition of Scathach protection over the Kithain and mortal inhabitants of the area. Sorcha McSkeath is the latest in that unbroken line. Her brothers, while they know of their sister's dual nature, are fully human (with faerie blood).

Skellig Islands

The rocky pair of islands called the Skelligs rise off the coast of the Iveragh Peninsula. In the sixth century, monks retreated to Skellig Michael (or Greater Skellig), the larger of the two islands, where they built a monastery on its craggy slopes. The six beehive huts, two oratories and a church (built in the 12th century) formed the physical structure for a small, self-sufficient community of religious ascetics. The monks spent their time in prayer and the illumination of manuscripts, when they weren't hunting seals or gathering birds eggs and feathers to trade with the mainland in return for the few items they could not produce for themselves. A 600-step staircase carved into the rock by the industrious monks provided a precarious path to the monastery.

Until their abandonment of the island sometime before the 13th century, 13 monks always inhabited the monastery. After their departure, the island became popular with pilgrims, who would brave the sometimes stormy

crossing to climb the stairs and visit the ruins, occasionally continuing on to the top of the island to pay their respects at the Needle's Eye, a standing stone on its crest.

The smaller island, Little Skellig, has long served as the home for an astonishing variety of birds. Many nest on the cliffs of Skellig Michael. Since 1987, both Skelligs have become bird sanctuaries, off limits to tourists and pilgrims alike, although boat tours around the island are sometimes available from local fishermen.

Castle of the Merfolk

Long before the Shattering, Greater Skellig once housed a castle belonging to merfolk who dwelled in the waters off the coast of Ireland. Here, in lonely splendor, the fae of the waters would host their landbound faerie cousins. By the arrival of the first monks, however, the merfolk had departed for other regions, some say to Arcadia, while others claim that they retreated beneath the island where they dwell in an underwater domain inaccessible to the world above.

The clurichaun claim that there is yet another island, Caer Skellig, which exists beyond the visible Skelligs. Hidden from mortal view by strong enchantments, this faerie isle serves as a shelter for a small group of old fae trapped in the world by the closing of the gateways to Arcadia. Another tale holds that the third Skellig operates as a base for a group of Kithain pirates who raid the mainland's freeholds for faerie treasures and dross. Neither rumor is confirmed, although a few selkies who make their homes not far from the Skelligs have occasionally explored the nearby ocean waters for signs of the isle's existence.

Tralee

North of the Dingle Peninsula, the town of Tralee, with a population of 16,500, is the capital of County Kerry. Twice torched by its garrison before finally surrendering to the English in 1691, Tralee contains only buildings constructed after the 17th century. Once a harbor city, modern Tralee now serves the surrounding area as a market town and center for tourists on their way to the Dingle and Iveragh Peninsulas. Once a year, the city hosts the Rose of Tralee International Festival, an all-Ireland beauty pageant commemorating William Mulchinock's sentimental poem. The world-renowned Siamsa Tire folk theatre summers in Tralee in between its tours promoting the best of Irish traditional culture. The Steam Railway, a train that runs along a narrow-gauge track between Tralee and the Blennerville Windmill, provides a scenic route to the largest working windmill in the country.

Five miles northwest of Tralee, the cathedral of Ardfert stands amid the ruins of earlier religious structures, including the remains of a monastery founded by St. Brendan the Navigator in the sixth century.

The Rose of Tralee

Rosemaire, the freehold of Lady Rowena, lies just outside Tralee near Ardfert. A modest looking, two-story framework house showing signs of gentle decay, it conceals a chimeric manor house complete with festive gardens. Here, Lady Rowena exercises her duties as Queen Nuala's agent over the Kithain of Kerry. Despite her aloof demeanor, the Fiona noble holds open court in her freehold twice a month and judiciously hears complaints and decides issues brought to her by her subjects. Occasionally she also plays hostess to King Fiachra of Connaught, who delights in visiting Tralee for a chance to ride the Steam Railway.

Killarney

The town of Killarney sits at the mainland edge of the Iveragh Peninsula, at the head of the Ring of Kerry. A popular tourist venue noted for its pony-drawn tourist cars and other picturesque relics of bygone times, Killarney is also the base for exploring the nearby Killarney National Park. Within the park are the three connected lakes that make up the celebrated "Lakes of Killarney." Ancient forests still survive around the waters of the lakes; stands of yew, holly, birch and hazel provide shelter for smaller plants and shrubs such as the strawberry tree, tree-fern, thorn-apple and bamboo of various kinds. Despite its frequent visitation by tourists and sightseers (and the attendant problems that accompany careless trompers through wild places), many parts of the lakesides and the surrounding park remain relatively uncluttered.

County Clare

If it's music you want, then go to Clare.

— Christy Moore, "Lisdoonvarna"

Sandwiched between Counties Galway and Kerry, County Clare boasts some of Ireland's loveliest natural scenery as well as some of its best music. The western part of the county, along the rocky coast, contains spectacularly dramatic landmarks, while the remainder of the land holds a quieter attraction, with a number of historic sites and one Bronze Age re-creation center.

Ennis

The capital of County Clare, the town of Ennis once housed the kings of Thomond, the O'Brien clan whose roots in the area date from the 13th century. Noted for its many folk festivals and "singing pubs," Ennis also houses the ruins of the Ennis Friary, founded by the O'Briens in the 14th century. Statues of Daniel O'Connell and Eamon De Valera commemorate more recent history.



Doolin

The tiny village of Doolin, on the coast of Clare, offers a ferry service to the Aran Islands from March through October. In addition, Doolin has developed a reputation as a gathering place for the best traditional musicians in Ireland, with a trio of pubs that provide venues for evening performances by groups from all over the country. Many young musicians summer in Doolin to study music from the best of the best.

The Pub of Plenty

There is a fourth pub in Doolin, although it is less crowded by visitors, noted for its music and merrymaking. Run by an elderly clurichaun fiddler named Jock O'Ryan, the Pub of Plenty is actually a freehold sponsored by Lady Rowena in the interest of preserving local music. The enchantments that surround the freehold prevent the sounds of its music from straying much beyond its doorway (which advertises a perpetually booked bed-and-breakfast), and though many Kithain venture forth from it to visit the other pubs, few mortals are invited to reciprocate. The rare human musician who finds herself tapped by an attractive piper or harpist and drawn to the environs of the Pub of Plenty for an evening of musical splendor takes away only the haunting memory of a faintly remembered tune and a feeling of having been transported to another place and a far older time.

Cliffs of Moher

Rising more than 650 feet and stretching for five miles along the western tip of Clare, south of Galway Bay, the Cliffs of Moher thrust straight upward from the gale-ridden Atlantic to form a massive wall of sheer stone made of alternating layers of sandstone, flagstone and black shale. All along the cliff face, sea birds make their nests along the rock ledges that mark the layered rock. Breathtaking in their stark beauty, they are probably one of the most photographed sights in Ireland. At their highest point stands O'Brien's Tower, built in the 1800s as a lookout point for Victorian tourists. Near the tower, a car park provides a place for visitors to leave their vehicles to view the scenery around (and far, far below) them. Musicians and other performers gather in the car park for spontaneous performances.

The Burren

One of Ireland's most curious natural phenomena, the flat expanse of bare, broken limestone rock that forms the Burren in northwest Clare only appears barren to casual viewers. The cracked, stony ground actually hosts an astonishing variety of plant and animal life, which mixes alpine and Mediterranean species in a unique environment. Over 25 species of butterflies, many birds, wild goats, hares, badgers and other small mammals also inhabit the pasture lands and

turloughs (shallow seasonal lakes) in and around the Burren. Still, to the uneducated eye (and most tourists), the area appears deserted.

Lisdoonvarna

The seaside resort and spa village of Lisdoonvarna dates only from the Victorian era and enjoys a spotty reputation among tourists as either a center for cultural festivities or a commercialized tourist trap. In either case, its main attraction is the annual Matchmaking Festival, where Irish bachelors come to find suitable wives (and vice versa). Nonetheless, a lovely song known as "The Road to Lisdoonvarna" is in just about every traditional Irish musician's repertoire, so it has to have something going for it.

Limerick

Situated on the River Shannon, Ireland's third largest city (population 80,000), has its origin, along with many other Irish towns, in the Viking settlement of the area. Prosperity under the Normans gave way to deprivation under British rule, and Limerick became a center of rebellion against Cromwellian forces. As one of the last Jacobite strongholds, Limerick suffered greatly when it finally surrendered. The Treaty of Limerick, which detailed the city's capitulation, lasted only a few months before the English victors began instituting harsh restrictions upon their conquered subjects. Into the 20th century, the city boasted a tradition of nationalism and rebellion, culminating in a general workers' strike in April 1914 to protest British martial law. Modern Limerick shows signs of industrial and commercial revitalization, a boon to a city known for its high unemployment and rampant crime.

Three distinct areas encapsulate the city's history. King's Island, connected to the rest of the city by the Thomond Bridge, forms the heart of the original walled medieval settlement and contains King John's Castle (now a history museum) and St. Mary's Cathedral, a 12th century structure altered by later additions that give its Gothic architecture a distinctly Romanesque twist. When the city came under English control, natives — barred from the city's center — developed their own community outside the walls. Known as Irish Town, this collection of small shops and houses includes a few more elegant structures dating from the Georgian period, including the Customs House (now an art gallery) and St. John's Cathedral, which has the tallest spire of any church in Ireland. The third section, Newtown Pery, centers on O'Connell Street and includes many Georgian houses with brightly painted doors, formerly the homes of Limerick's gentry class.

Chimeric Limerick

Centuries of religious persecution and economic deprivation have made Limerick a center for local Unseelie activities. In addition to a small group of Kithain working to undermine Queen Nuala's rule, the city houses several motleys which seem to have no greater purpose beyond causing trouble and being generally rowdy. Much of the city's Glamour stems from the repressed anger which collects in a town famous for its broken treaties and shattered dreams.

Rock of Cashel: Queen Nuala's Freehold

Rising 200 feet above the plains of County Tipperary, the steep, craggy hill known as the Rock of Cashel served as both the site from which the kings of Munster ruled and as a religious landmark, commemorating the spot upon which St. Patrick baptized King Aengus in AD 450. In 977, the legendary Brian Boru was crowned King of Munster atop the Rock, and it remained the seat of Munster's royalty until 1101, when it was given over to the Church.

Atop the summit of the Rock stands a complex of buildings including the 13th century ruins of Cashel Cathedral, Cormac's Chapel (built in the 12th century) and St. Patrick's Cross (a modern copy of the original).

Inside the rock, accessible through a hidden doorway near the base of the hill, is Cashelmore, the freehold of Queen Nuala of Munster and the center of the region's Seelie Court. Apprised by her late sister Morgania of the existence of an ancient faerie stronghold within the stone, Nuala devoted the first few years after her arrival in Hibernia to reawakening the enchanted site and reconstructing its glittering palace from the chimeric ruins left behind by its original owners.

Surrounding the palace is a glade of perpetual twilight, complete with chimeric skies of dusky rose and gray in which glimmer a few evening stars. The lush grounds around Nuala's palace of shining spires and graceful towers feature a riotous array of night-blooming flowers.

Aside from the rooms set apart for official receptions and audiences, the remainder of the rooms inside the palace reflect Nuala's keen interest in the pursuit of magical knowledge. She owns a vast library of real and chimeric books and manuscripts, including a handwritten collection of Yeats' unpublished early poetry (a gift from King Fiachra of Connaught). She also has several fine historic artifacts, gifts from her nobles and other admirers.

Commoner Kithain are allowed inside only on designated court days and on formal occasions. Nuala does not feel easy in their company, blaming them for the death of her sister during the Accordance War (despite the fact that few Irish commoners had any involvement in that Concordian struggle for sidhe dominance).

Waterford

The capital of County Waterford serves as the major seaport for Ireland's southeastern coast. Known for its famous crystalware, the city of Waterford also contains several relics of its past as a Viking settlement. Reginald's Tower, the newly restored 11th century Norman keep built atop the original Viking tower, houses a civic museum. A series of Viking arches, called sallyports, once provided passageways for the ships that trafficked along the river. Other medieval sites include the 13th century ruins of Blackfriars, a Dominican structure, and Greyfriars, a similar Franciscan abbey later taken over by Huguenot refugees. Other buildings in the city date from the Georgian and Victorian eras.

Modern Waterford, like many cities in the Republic, suffers from a high unemployment rate. The Waterford Crystal Factory, reopened in 1947 after a hiatus of nearly a century, provides some jobs, and the city continues to function as a busy seaport.

Waterford Crystal Factory: Boon for the Boggans

Founded by the Penrose brothers in 1783, the original Waterford glassworks factory enjoyed a reputation for fine crystal until taxes forced its closing in 1851. Reopened in 1947, with master crafters imported from Europe to train local artisans, the new Waterford Crystal Factory has revived the distinct cut-crystal technique that makes Waterford crystal unlike any other in the world.

Located below the factory's showroom gallery is a small freehold inhabited by a motley of boggans who derive Glamour from the creative processes involved in the making of the crystal. The group's leader is herself a master glass blower, while several of the younger members work as apprentices in the factory.

Ulster

The counties of Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan, together with the six counties which comprise Northern Ireland — Armagh, Down, Antrim, Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh — make up the ancient province of Ulster. Occupying the northeastern corner of Ireland, these lands constitute some of the most heavily industrialized parts of the island as well as some of its most picturesque and striking landscapes.

Donegal

For a town with a population of less than 2,500, Donegal has an impressive history, beginning with its name — Dún na nGall or "fortress of foreigners." Founded as a Viking garrison town, Donegal later came under the control of the O'Donnell clan. Hugh O'Donnell destroyed his castle before joining other Irish nobles in their exile during the "Flight of the Earls." In the 1600s, the English "planted" Donegal with loyal Protestant settlers.

In the town square stands an obelisk honoring the Four Masters, a group of Franciscan friars who wrote the *Annals of the Four Masters*, an illuminated manuscript detailing Celtic history from just before the Flood to their own time. The ruins of Donegal Abbey where the Four Masters lived (and presumably illuminated) lies along the banks of the River Eske.

Just outside the town, the Donegal Craft Village contains a collection of shops that display the work of local crafters.

Glenveagh National Park and the Derryveagh Mountains

The Derryveagh Mountains rise in the center of Donegal County. Part of the same seismic convulsions that gave birth to the Caledonian ranges in Scotland and the Appalachians in North America, these granite and quartzite upthrusts of stone rise above a landscape of gentle hills, valleys, lakes and marshes. Twin-peaked Errigal Mountain, the highest of the Derryveagh range at 2466 feet, dominates the surrounding lands.

Part of the Derryveagh mountain range lies within the grounds of Glenveagh National Park, a three-mile preserve centered on Glenveagh Castle, a fanciful Victorian recreation of a medieval castle, perched on the shore of Lough Veagh. Beyond the castle, the parklands include formal gardens, thick woodlands, steep cliffs and a marshy valley called the Poisoned Glen (from a poisonous plant that once proliferated there). Ireland's largest population of red deer dwells within the parklands.

The Forest of the Hidden King

A forest of oaks within the National Park conceals the freehold of an ancient faerie king. The Glamour that protects the glade of this not-quite Lost One radiates such a powerful enchantment that only Kithain can penetrate the circuitous paths that lead from the mortal forest to the king's glade.

Kithain led by their dreams to the king's freehold find themselves passing through a forest that alters around them with every step. The oak trees become intermixed with birch, yew, holly, ash, rowan and other sacred trees. As the nature of the forest changes, so does the appearance of the trees. Their leaves, bark and fruit seem molded from the finest silver, copper and gold or take on crystalline forms of diamonds and other precious gems. Many strange chimera wander through the forest, sometimes acting as guides to Kithain summoned by the king, often acting as protectors warding off unwanted visitors.

Unfortunately, the Banality-infused mortal bodies of changelings can only go so far before becoming a threat to the safety of the Hidden King. Even the trusted circle of sidhe nobles known as the Riders of the Silver Court dare go no farther than the clearing known as the Dreamers' Glen. This enchanted spot, with its covering of wildflowers and its protective circle of massive oak trees, serves as a meeting ground for the king and his subjects, who come there to sleep and gain an audience with their liege through their dreams.

The actual heart of the freehold, the King's Glen, contains the castle of King Meilseoir as well as a circle of standing stones that surround the king's balefire. Within the center of the stone ring lies an ancient trod under the king's control. This trod reputedly leads to many of Hibernia's most important freeholds (some no longer in existence or else inactive), including the fabled Isle of Dreams. The trod is unusable by anyone unless in the company of the king or of someone possessed of sufficient Glamour and Gremayre to learn the means of its navigation.

Slieve League

Slieve League, Europe's tallest cliffs, forms a massive rock wall along Donegal's coast. A few places along the waterline provide access to the shore by boat, but in general, the cliffs present a vertical barrier to the waves that crash headlong against its unyielding stone. The light of the setting sun strikes directly onto the cliffs, awakening colors hidden within the rock — warm ochre, red, brown, amber and in some places, cobalt, verdigris, yellow and green. This rainbow of hues comes

from the varied rocks that make up the structure of the cliffs, including quartzites, slates, mineral ores and schists.

Formidable winds play across the top of Slieve League, making it a risky (though rewarding) spot for viewing the panoramic scenery outward to the horizon and downward, to the ocean nearly 2,000 feet below. A number of sea birds swoop and dive around the cliffs, and at times the air is filled with gulls, jackdaws and choughs.

Tory Island

Located off the northwest coast of Donegal, Tory Island is the home of a dedicated community of Gaelic speakers who have their own king (an elected position) and who steadfastly treasure their relative independence from the rest of the world. A thriving school of primitive artists, founded in 1968 by local painter James Dixon, figured prominently in the island's resistance to a government campaign to remove the residents to the mainland.

It is not always possible, due to the frequently bad weather that stirs up the waters, to make the passage from Meenlaragh across Tory Sound to the island, which is, itself, barren and windswept, barely supporting its small population. In addition to the pair of towns (East Town and West Town) that house most of the island's inhabitants, Tory Island also contains a number of old sites, including the ruins of St. Columbkille's monastery with its primitive Tau Cross. Visitors planning on an overnight stay should bring a sleeping bag and hope for floor space in the island's one hostel or hotel.

Balor's Fort: Home of the Shadow Court

On the eastern edge of Tory Island, a rock promontory fort called Balor's Tower marks the legendary home of Balor of the Evil Eye. Since the return of the sidhe, this site has become the freehold of Doireannara, field commander of the army of the Shadow Court. Here this sidhe terrorist trains what she hopes will be a host of Kithain who will "liberate" Hibernia from the autocratic rule of its Seelie monarchs.

The perilous seas that sometimes isolate Tory Island from the mainland suit the Shadow Court's purposes, since they discourage all but the hardest and most determined visitors and afford them the privacy so necessary for their secret work.

Near the center of the island, within the monastery ruins, lies a group of stones called "wishing stones" (or, alternatively, "cursing stones"). Reputed to have the power to cause destruction to enemies, the stones were last used in 1884 to prevent the British gunboat *Wasp* from collecting taxes. Only six crew members survived the sinking of the boat.

So far, the Shadow Court has not discovered the means of evoking the magic of the stones, which may, in fact, have drained away in the intervening century.

Glencolumbkille

The tiny village of Glencolumbkille (pop. 260), only a few miles from the northern end of Slieve League, lies along the rocky harbor of Glen Bay. The surrounding countryside contains more than 40 ancient sites, many of them associated with St. Columba. Atop a cliff overlooking the village, the House of St. Columba contains stone formations which supposedly served the ascetic saint as bed and chair. On the saint's feast day, groups of barefoot pilgrims make a 2-mile circuit, referred to as *An Turas* ("the journey"), of 15 medieval crosses, known as the Stations of the Cross.

Just outside the town, the Folk Village serves as a living museum depicting traditional Irish lifestyles and crafts.

Glenlea: a Faerie Thorpe

Not far from Glencolumbkille, though it won't be found on any map, lies the faerie thorpe of Glenlea, a small enchanted village inhabited entirely by Kithain and a few enchanted mortals lucky (or unlucky) enough to fall in with one of the villagers and receive an invitation to "leave the cares of the world behind."

The town itself consists of a main street lined with shops and thatched houses with a few side lanes leading to other dwellings. It includes a smithy run by a troll smith named Hogan, a bake-shop presided over by the elderly boggan Mother Cobbins, and other centers for local Kithain artisans and artists. Although not permanent residents, members of nearby selkie freeholds sometimes come inland as far as Glenlea to enjoy the company of their landbound cousins. Although the town appears only as a collection of dilapidated, abandoned huts, its reputation among Hibernia's Kithain (particularly the commoners) makes it possible for changelings who know what to look for to locate the turn in the road that leads to Glenlea.

The thorpe's prime watering hole, the Flowing Cup, is a center for nighttime merrymaking. Many of the residents are proficient musicians and supply an endless round of jigs and reels for dancing and ballads for sing-alongs. The bartender brews his own faerie mead, a heady concoction also known as "Clurichaun's Bane."

Belfast

*O the bricks they will bleed and the rain it will weep,
And the damp Lagan fog lull the city to sleep;
It's to hell with the future and live on the past:
May the Lord in His mercy be kind to Belfast.*

—Maurice James Craig, *Ballad to a Traditional Refrain*





Located on the northeastern coast of Ireland, the city of Belfast, capital of Northern Ireland, occupies a stretch of low land near the mouth of the River Lagan, which runs through the city on a north-south axis. With a population of 305,000 people, it is Ireland's second largest city (Dublin is larger) and its biggest industrial center. Unlike so many other Irish cities, Belfast is relatively young, coming into existence as a busy port town in the 18th century and achieving the official status of "city" only in 1888.

The name Belfast comes from "Béal Feirste," which means "the mouth of the sandy ford," and aptly describes the geography of the region. The land the city now occupies once formed part of the holdings of the O'Neill clan, whose fort was destroyed in the 12th century. John de Courcy, a Norman knight, built a castle to replace the fort and a town grew up around it. Later, the area became the property of an English nobleman, Sir Arthur Chichester, whose son became the Earl of Donegal. In 1613, the town of Belfast received a charter from James I. Belfast became a haven in the 17th century for groups of Huguenots, who brought with them their linen-making skills.

Massive debts forced the second earl to place his properties on the market. A number of speculators bought the land along the banks of the Lagan, hired a trio of noted architects to design

the city, and before long, a prosperous community hospitable to the growing linen and shipbuilding industries arose.

During the Irish Civil War, Belfast, with its close ties to England, became the center for resistance to Irish independence. With the treaty that created two countries out of the island of Ireland, Belfast emerged as the undisputed capital of Northern Ireland. Its most famous role in history, however, has occurred during the last half of the 20th century, as the focus for the violent outbursts of Republican activity and Unionist backlash collectively (and with typical Irish understatement) known as "the Troubles."

Physically, Belfast is a city of contrasts. Impressive, castlelike structures such as the Renaissance style City Hall, the neo-Romanesque St. Anne's Cathedral, the late Victorian Grand Opera House and the Tudor-style main building of Queen's University exist alongside modern office buildings, cramped row-houses, areas of small shops and pubs, and dingy slums — industrialization's bane.

West Belfast contains two of the city's most politically entrenched communities: the Protestant Shankhill Road, and the Catholic Falls Road. Both neighborhoods are made up largely of working class families, both are deeply committed to their respective politics, and both are most keenly affected by the rise and fall of Belfast's economic prosperity (or lack thereof).

Five miles southeast of the city's center stands Stormont, a massive building constructed in an Anglo-Palladian style that exudes authority and control. Designed to house the Northern Ireland Parliament, Stormont remained the symbol of British rule until the Parliament was disbanded in 1972 in favor of the imposition of direct rule. Today, the building holds a number of government offices.

The Ulster Museum, near the Botanic Gardens and Queen's University, displays a wealth of treasures recovered from the *Girona*, one of the ships of the Spanish Armada which foundered and sank near the Giant's Causeway. Additionally, the museum holds many fine artifacts detailing the history, archaeology and culture of Ulster.

Perhaps the most distinctive landmarks in Belfast are the twin cranes dubbed Samson and Goliath, the symbols of the Harland and Wolf shipyards, builders of great ocean-going ships, most notably, the *Titanic*.

Chimeric Belfast: The Brick Glade and Other Freeholds

The Kithain of Belfast move in and out of their dreams with unsettling frequency, due to the sometimes overwhelming sense of futility caused by the Troubles and the often depressed economic conditions of the city. Many Belfast changelings did not awaken to their faerie natures until recently, when the cease-fire brought with it the hope for lasting peace between the two warring factions within the city. Thus, Kithain who might have undergone their Chrysalis as childlings became wilders, while would-be wilders experienced a delayed transformation, emerging as grumps near the autumn of their lives as children of the Dreaming.

King Finn of Ulster has handed out a number of freeholds within the city to various nobles loyal to him, but there is one Kithain sanctuary that remains a secret to all but a few of the city's changelings. This is the abandoned building known as the Brick Glade, the residence of Lord Galway and a haven for those who oppose the policies of Duke Lorenzo.

This derelict building located in one of the city's working class sections consists of a hollow shell with grass growing on the floor and bushes springing up inside the walls. Once a Garou caern, the Brick Glade has since passed into the hands of the Kithain of the city, although few of them know the reason for this transference of power. It is in many ways more like a glade than a freehold, since its power comes from a balefire as well as from a sacred stone containing an Umbral spirit bound there by its original owners. The basement of the building is the heart of the glade, and

it is here that Lord Galway lives, protecting the site and receiving its protection in return. Its chimeric appearance is that of a huge oak tree, entered only by a door in its side. Only those who already know about it can find it with any regularity.

The freehold of Duke Lorenzo, a grand manor house built on an estate on the outskirts of Belfast, typifies the grandiose ambitions of its lord. Chimerically ostentatious, it both attracts and repels those who visit it. Needless to say, the manor house has changed drastically since the ousting of Duke Kestry, its former occupant.

Other freeholds in Belfast attest to the variety of the city's Kithain population. An abandoned toy store in West Belfast belongs to the Belfast Runners, a group of the city's childlings, many of them street urchins, who occupy themselves by carrying messages from one freehold to another, ignoring the invisible boundaries of religion and politics. The Storyteller's Circle, which includes several eshu, a pooka and a clurichaun, occupies a building near the Linen Hall Library and makes frequent use of the library's collection of rare books. The Midnight Crawlers, a motley consisting of a neopunk sidhe wilder musician and her entourage of Kithain groupies, makes their home in a small, out-of-the-way pub called Splendour Falls Road, where they serve as house band for the freehold and attract many of the city's younger Kithain.

The rule for Ulster freeholds is that they are a reflection of the people who live there. Thus, they involve warmth and safety against the long Winter nights. Alcohol and fighting also feature strongly in a town where violence and long periods of idleness are frequent intruders upon the fading dreams of its inhabitants.

Giant's Causeway

County Antrim's north coast holds one of the world's most peculiar and bizarre natural structures, the Giant's Causeway. Formed from the interaction of volcanic basalt with chalk limestone, the 37,000 or so rectangular, circular and polygonic pillars of stone thrusting up from the sea provide proof of just how eerie and unearthly parts of Ireland really are.

Naturally, the Causeway now belongs to the National Trust, which both preserves and controls access to it, posting signs along designated walks intended to guide tourists by the most prominent rock formations, which include the Wishing Chair, Lady's Fan, Giant's Organ, Giant's Cannon and Chimney Point, among others. Despite the potential hazards posed by the sometimes slippery rock, visitors delight in scrambling, stepping or leaping across the irregular surface of the columns, some of them barely big enough to stand on.

Finn's Road

Legends associate the Causeway with Finn MacCool, who is said to have created it as either a means of crossing to the home of his lover, a Scottish giantess, or of creating a bridge to reach his enemy, the Scottish giant Fingal. A third (and most typical of Irish humor) story maintains that Finn built the Causeway to get to Scotland for a drink.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the Causeway still holds a repository of Glamour, although it is sometimes difficult to sense and, when it is, it feels somehow tainted, as if poisoned by the Troubles that have so long beset the nearby lands. Some Kithain, even those with keen faerie sight, are unable to detect even the faintest traces of the fickle magic that surrounds them. The Wishing Chair, a formation of rocks on the Causeway that resemble a small seat, is believed to have the power to grant wishes.

The Causeway is the origin and terminus of a great faerie trod known as "The Causeway Road," although passage through it is often bleak and cold. The erratic nature of the structure's Glamour may be due to the fact that use of the trod "ties up" the magic of the Causeway so that it does not bleed into the mortal world at certain times.

Whether or not the Causeway once served some other purpose has been forgotten by both commoners and nobles, although some of the sidhe maintain that it used to be a gathering place used as a dancing ground by the ancient Seelie Court and for darker purposes by their Unseelie counterparts. It is possible that King Meilseior or Queen Merala remember the Causeway's true function, but it is just as likely that the long centuries of forgetfulness have erased those memories from their minds.

Navan Fort

Navan Fort, a large, circular megalithic structure atop a hill west of the city of Armagh, was once the coronation site of the ancient kings of Ulster as well as the headquarters for the Red Branch Knights, of whom Cuchulainn was the most famous. Its physical appearance consists of a large, grass-covered mound protected by an earth rampart and a surrounding ditch. The remains of what might have been a sizeable, round wooden structure show evidence of ritual destruction by fire.

Although the site has been excavated and attracts tourists, many of them are content to visit the nearby interpretive center in lieu of a direct experience. Thus, some of its original Glamour remains untapped.

Emain Macha: Seat of the Kings of Ulster

Legends refer to Navan Fort as Emain Macha ("Macha's twins") and associate it with the dying curse of the fleet-footed wife of Cruinnig. This powerful landowner once boasted that his wife Macha could outrun the fastest horse of Ulster's King Connor. Despite Macha's pregnancy, Cruinnig forced her to make good his challenge. She won, but the exertion brought about an early labor. Near death, she gave birth to twins, uttering a curse against all the men of Ulster so that they would undergo the pangs of childbirth whenever threatened in battle. Those too young to fight and foreign soldiers, such as Cuchulainn, were exempt from the curse.

Upon his assumption of the kingship of Ulster, Finn of House Fiona claimed Navan Fort as his freehold and the site of the Ulster court. Deep within the mound, he has constructed a chimeric reflection of his profoundly disturbed nature. Although his palace is beautiful, its odd geometry and the dark, rich colors of its interior induce a moodiness redolent with the weight of history and legend, full of latent violence and deep passion. In spite of this, however, there is a grandness attached to Finn's palace that inspires hope in the midst of despair.

Derry

The walled city of Derry (or Londonderry) lies along the banks of the River Foyle. The prolific St. Columba founded a monastery in the sixth century by the river near an oak grove (or *doire*). This became the foundation of the city. In a familiar pattern, the Vikings arrived and later the English. When James I instituted the plantation of Ulster, he encouraged the craft guilds of London to set up shop in the city of Derry, at which time it acquired the name Londonderry. During the time of Cromwell's war against the Catholic troops loyal to James II, the city of Londonderry found itself under siege. Only the courage of a group of apprentice boys, who closed the gates of the city, kept Londonderry from falling to the Royalists.

During the Troubles which escalated during the late 1960s, Derry became a center for the civil rights movement and suffered its share of violence between Protestants and Catholics. The Catholic area known as

the Bogside, located outside the walls of the city, soon became known as "Free Derry" and was a hostile environment for British soldiers sent to quell the growing disturbances. The bitterness engendered by the deaths that marked January 30, 1972 as Bloody Sunday still taints the memories of many of the city's inhabitants, Protestant and Catholic alike.

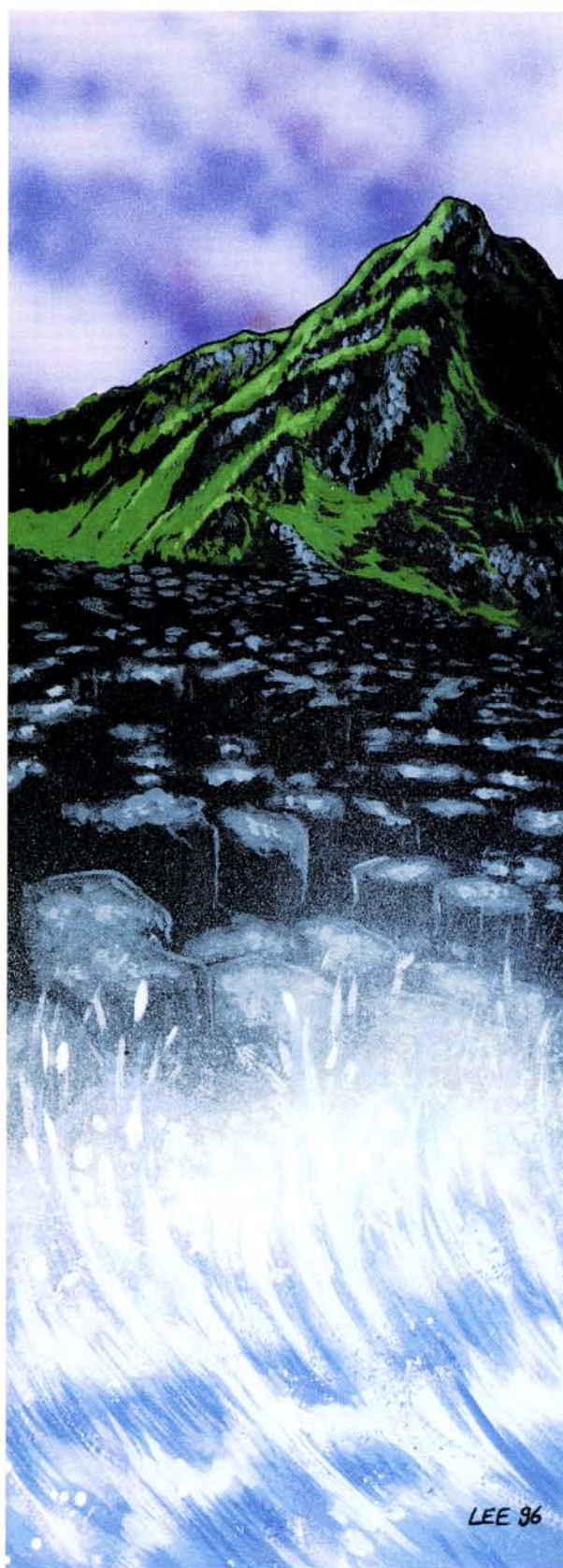
Today, Derry is a divided city in many ways. Since the Troubles, most of the Protestant population has relocated along the east bank of the city, leaving the west bank and much of the city center to its now-Catholic majority. Derry is experiencing a resurgence of prosperity and vitality, but many Protestants have taken themselves "out of the loop" in the process.

Within the 17th century walls surrounding the old city lie St. Columb's Cathedral (the first Catholic church built after the Plantation) the Victorian style Guildhall, O'Doherty's Tower (the home of the Tower Museum) and the Craft Village, a recent addition to the city as part of an urban revival plan. The walls, themselves, are perhaps the prime attraction for visitors, since their relatively intact nature makes them the best example of city fortifications of their period.

Chimeric Derry: Up Against the Wall

From her splendid mansion outside the city, Geraldine Quigley, the Duchess of Derry, rules over the local Kithain. Despite her loyalty to King Finn, she is preoccupied with the peculiar problems of her city and works assiduously to bring together Kithain representatives of both factions of the population. This is not an easy task, for Derry's changelings are notorious for their stubbornness and loyalty to whatever cause they espouse.

Among the motleys within the confines of Derry are the Apprentices, a mixed group of boggan and nocker crafters who have a small freehold near the Craft Village, and the Bogside Militia, an even odder collection of redcaps and trolls who have banded together to "keep the peace" — according to their definition of the term. Their freehold lies in an abandoned house in the Bogside.





A Guide to Hibernia's Archaeological Structures

Boulder Tombs are small capstones set low to the ground on upright supports.

Cairns consist of stones piled on top of one another to form a heap, usually an above-ground means of burial.

Cliff Forts are nothing more than partial ring forts (see below) set on top of a cliff edge, which forms part of its defense — presumably the major part.

Clochans are the beehive huts so popular with early Christian hermits.

Court Tombs are structures made up of a flat-roofed gallery with a courtyard or part of a courtyard in front.

Crannogs are artificial islands that serve as the base for a dwelling.

Dolmens are stone tables. They are also known as portal tombs (see below).

Hill Forts are defensive structures usually built to encircle the top of a hill.

Megalithic Tombs consist of a complex of roofless courts associated with a covered gallery (see *court tombs*, above). They often have several chambers and nearby dolmens.

Mounds are simply what archaeologists call hills, some of which are natural and some of which are constructed.

Ogham Stones are standing pillars of rock inscribed with the characteristic marks of early Irish writing, called *ogham*.

Passage Tombs are underground corridors usually leading into a larger, central chamber. Most of these are located within mounds (see above).

Pillarstones are single standing stones. These are sometimes found as part of one of the other structures listed here. As often as not, however, they simply stand like stone fingers pointing at something in the sky.

The pillarstones that have writing on them are called ogham stones (see above).

Portal Tombs are made from at least three (usually more) upright stones capped by a horizontal piece of larger rock.

Promontory Forts are defensive structures built across a peninsula or part of a mountain. They are not to be confused with hill or cliff forts.

Raths are earthenwork ring forts (see below).

Ring Forts are defensive structures built in the form of a circle, sometimes surrounded

by other protections (likewise circular) such as ramparts, banks, ditches or moats.

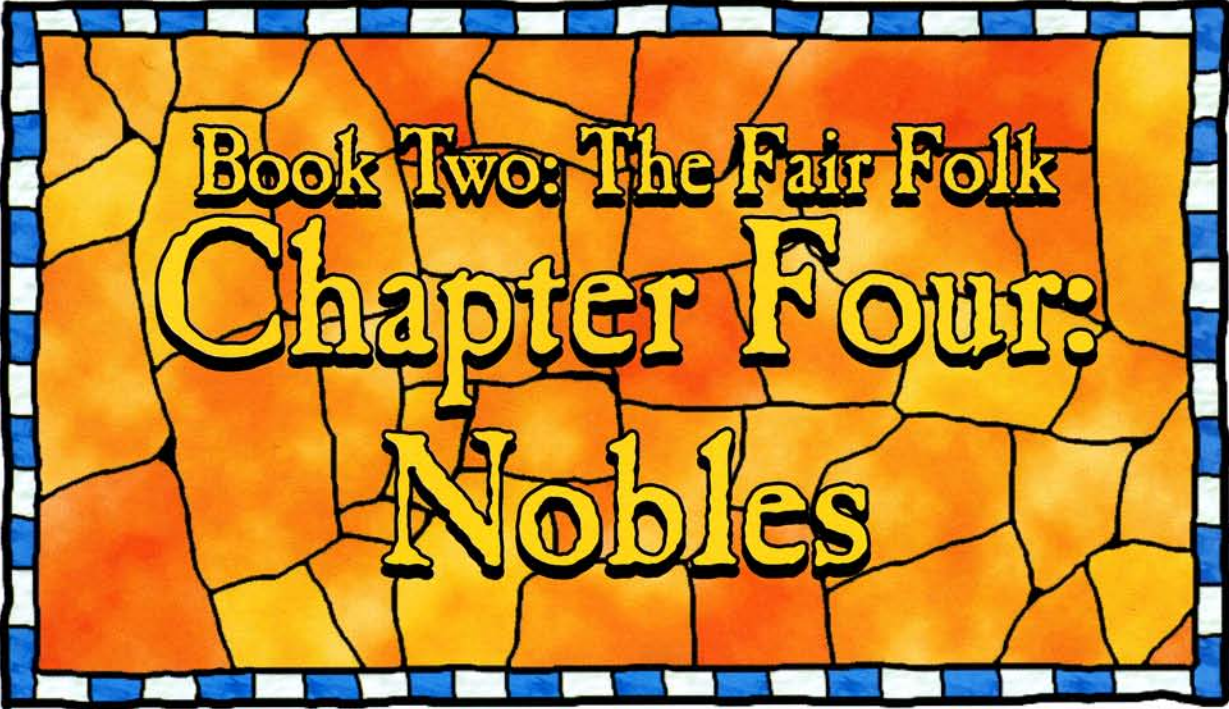
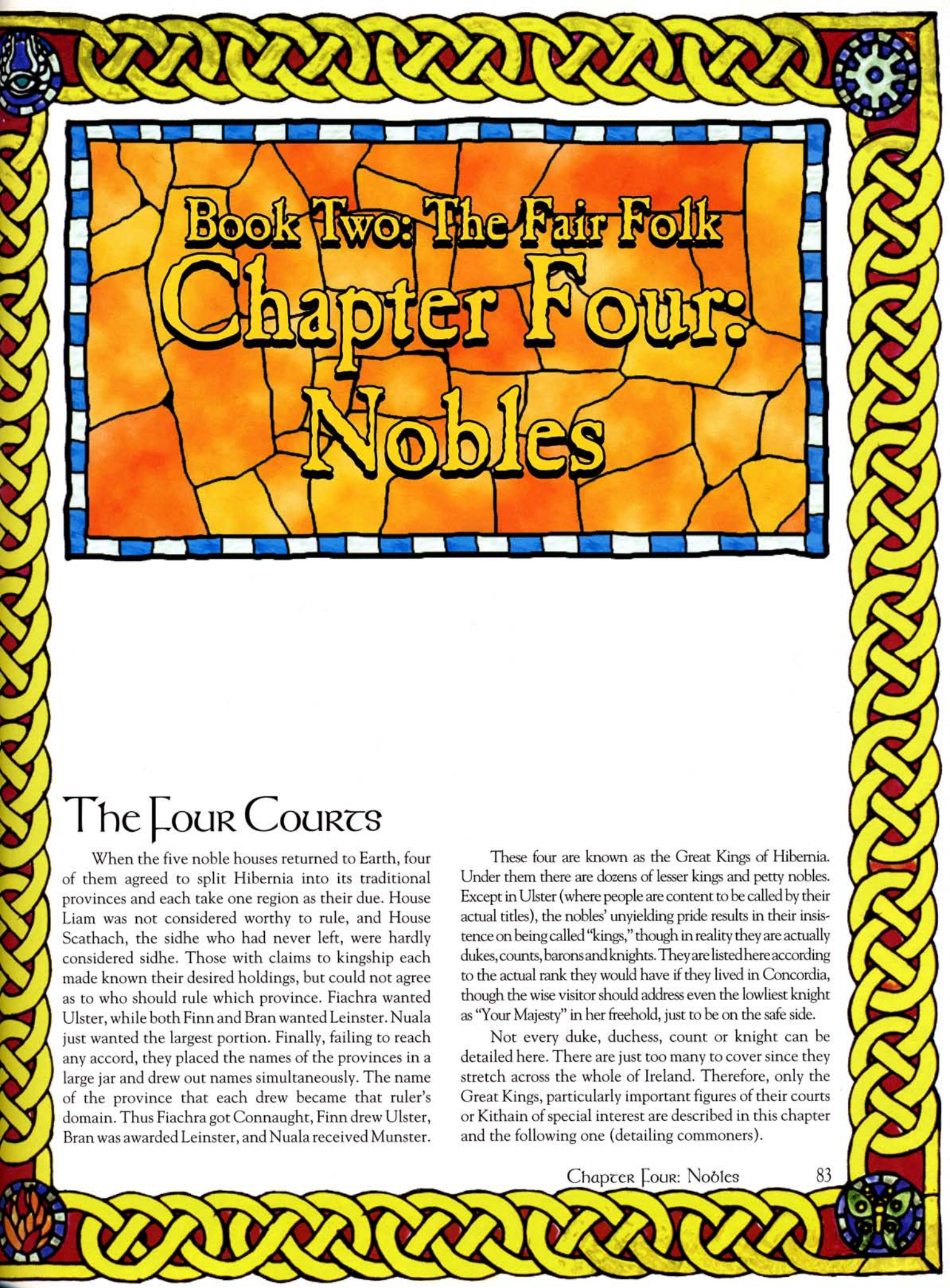
Souterrains are artificial caves carved into hill-sides or rock faces.

Standing Stones are pillarstones. Most of them have a purpose, though what it is is often lost to history or folklore. They sometimes occur in groups.

Stone Circles are, not surprisingly, standing stones that form a ring or other roughly circular shape. Sometimes they surround something (often another stone).







Book Two: The Fair Folk

Chapter Four:

Nobles

The Four Courts

When the five noble houses returned to Earth, four of them agreed to split Hibernia into its traditional provinces and each take one region as their due. House Liam was not considered worthy to rule, and House Scathach, the sidhe who had never left, were hardly considered sidhe. Those with claims to kingship each made known their desired holdings, but could not agree as to who should rule which province. Fiachra wanted Ulster, while both Finn and Bran wanted Leinster. Nuala just wanted the largest portion. Finally, failing to reach any accord, they placed the names of the provinces in a large jar and drew out names simultaneously. The name of the province that each drew became that ruler's domain. Thus Fiachra got Connaught, Finn drew Ulster, Bran was awarded Leinster, and Nuala received Munster.

These four are known as the Great Kings of Hibernia. Under them there are dozens of lesser kings and petty nobles. Except in Ulster (where people are content to be called by their actual titles), the nobles' unyielding pride results in their insistence on being called "kings," though in reality they are actually dukes, counts, barons and knights. They are listed here according to the actual rank they would have if they lived in Concordia, though the wise visitor should address even the lowliest knight as "Your Majesty" in her freehold, just to be on the safe side.

Not every duke, duchess, count or knight can be detailed here. There are just too many to cover since they stretch across the whole of Ireland. Therefore, only the Great Kings, particularly important figures of their courts or Kithain of special interest are described in this chapter and the following one (detailing commoners).

The Connaught Court

King Fiachra of Connaught (Fergus O'Reilly)

When the sidhe returned to earth in 1969, they had to inhabit adult human bodies in order to survive the onslaught of Banality. While most sidhe chose attractive hosts, Fiachra decided to inhabit a body whose mind was gone and whose body was far from perfect. Fergus O'Reilly was a failed prize fighter whose last bout in the ring had cost him his left eye and had left him in a permanent coma. Had he ever awakened, he would have been a drooling vegetable anyway. Fiachra performed the ritual of change and became Fergus O'Reilly.

He soon learned that Fergus had all the talent necessary to make it; he'd just never had the drive or the proper training. The prize fighter's body stood him in good stead in the battle between the sidhe and the commoners for control of Hibernia. One-eyed Fiachra became the terror of Kithain who thought they could take advantage of a handicapped sidhe. Though he is fierce in battle, he is equally quick with forgiveness, and commoners under his rule have no cause for complaint that he is not receptive to their suggestions or responsive to their needs. In many ways, he is more like the commoners he rules, without the pretensions so frequent among some of the sidhe.

After the brief war, Fiachra set about crafting a replacement for the eye he was missing, trusting to his own smithcraft more than those available through the medical profession. Constructed using Glamour, the new eye has vision every bit as sharp as the natural one, giving him perfect vision again — with one exception. Fiachra has trouble with his depth perception. While he's perfectly able to tinker and craft, and mingle without bumping into the furniture or stepping on his guests' toes most of the time, he cannot adequately judge road conditions and so cannot drive. A cruel fate for someone as fascinated with automobiles and trains as King Fiachra. He adores spending time aboard anything that moves fast; fast cars, fast trains, even fast horses are his great loves in life. If he could figure out a way to own his own jet without causing comment, he would.

His love of tinkering has led him to study the Art of Legerdemain, a fact which he keeps concealed from all but close friends. Fiachra has great knowledge and skill and is quite a powerful sorcerer, but he prefers to save his Glamour and solves most problems through intelligence and hard work. Because of this and his less than grandiose appearance, many people tend to underestimate him. Their mistake.

When Hibernia was split into its four traditional provinces, Fiachra hoped he would get to rule Ulster because of its concentration of industry. He felt that he would be best suited to understand the province and to deal with the Troubles there. He was very disappointed when he instead received Connaught, but wasn't about to let the others know. Being sent to a backwater where the roads are often potholed, blocked by sheep and sometimes all but nonexistent, he did the only thing he could: he began patronizing car rallies and narrow gauge trains. He is concerned that some of the new industries, which he promoted, are beginning to radically alter the countryside, spoiling what was a severe, wild beauty. The proliferation of bed-and-breakfasts and the recent takeover of many ancient sites in the name of "preservation" (i.e., making it a tourist trap) has him quite worried.

As if he didn't have enough problems on the homefront, he has begun to hear disturbing rumors about some of his neighbors in Ulster. Reports of blatant Ravaging that has gone unpunished have led him to begin a quiet investigation. Though he hesitates to offend King Finn, he truly believes that the wilder king may have need his greater experience.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Bumpkin/Fatalist

House: Dougal

Seeming: Grump

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl (Boxing) 4, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Instruction 3, Intimidation 3, Kenning 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken (horses) 3, Crafts 4, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Leadership 3, Mechanics 4, Melee 4, Repair 2, Security 2, Survival 3, Temporal Sense 3

Knowledges: Computer 3, Dream Lore 2, Enigmas 2, Finance 2, Investigation 1, Law 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Medicine 2, Military Science 3, Mythlore 3, Politics 2, Science 2

Arts: Dream Craft 1, Legerdemain 3, Primal 3, Soothsay 4, Sovereign 4

Realms: Actor 2, Fae 4, Prop 5, Scene 2

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Contacts 5, Dreamers 3, Gremayre 2, Holdings 5, Resources 3, Retinue 1, Title 6, Treasure 4, Trod 4

Glamour: 7

Banality: 6

Willpower: 6



Treasures: Fiachra has the Kingly Treasures of Connaught (crown, scepter and seal), which he tends to keep locked up in a treasure room and often forgets he has. His most cherished treasure is a computer he has infused with Glamour that he uses to help him design new chimerical cars and trains, which he then “creates.” Fiachra’s private gallery is filled with these chimeric replicas along with the race tracks they compete on. He has access to any number of small treasures, which he awards to those who help better the kingdom in some way. He uses only chimeric armor and sword as he never wishes to be responsible for a changeling’s actual death. Against physical threats from non-changelings, he is more than adequately armed with his boxing skills and cantrips.

Image: In his mortal seeming, Fiachra has light brown hair and intense dark brown eyes. He favors the tweed jacket, wellingtons, flat cap and knitted sweater look that most people think of as “typically Irish,” but which is actually western Irish workingman gear. Appearing to be about 30 years old, he is of average height, though more muscular than some others his size might be. Set down among other similarly dressed men, Fiachra would be hard to pick out, but for two details. He lacks the deeply etched facial lines that speak of a life spent working in the open, and his nose has that particularly bulbous and squashed look that many prize fighters seem

to acquire. Nonetheless, he has the sort of looks that are often labeled “ruggedly attractive.”

In his fae seeming, Fiachra seems several inches taller, though he retains his muscular build. His hair lightens, becoming more blond, and his eyes deepen into an almost impenetrably dark brown, giving him a piercing, somewhat unsettling gaze — no mean feat when one of his eyes isn’t real. When he is forced into court attire (which he wears out of respect for his subjects when holding court or attending court elsewhere), he can actually look quite handsome.

Roleplaying Hints: You’ve made the best of becoming King of Connaught, and truth be told, the region suits you. You have little patience with pomp and ceremony as an everyday diet. You leave that to King Bran of Leinster. Of course, the occasional ceremony is good for everyone. You’ve done your best to encourage the more mundane aspects of life to take on a little Glamour. Car rallies, train rides, horse racing — now those are fun! Anyone who ever accused you of being too serious and practical has obviously never seen you attending any of the festivals in Galway. You know how to have a good time, you just don’t muck it up with all sorts of unnecessary frills. Working dreams that are honest, straightforward and untainted — that’s the way you like it.

Princess Bethany

Born in 1982, Bethany came into her fae seeming as a very young childling. Recognized as a queen-to-be of House Gwydion, she was taken to live at King Bran’s court in Leinster. He became her guardian and accepted her as his heir. She thus had an extended childhood — until she began to rebel. Possessed of a romantic heart and a talent for mischief-making, Bethany began to slip away from Bran’s house and court, and proceeded to make her way through some of the commoner hangouts in Dublin.

Disturbed by her insistence that she had fallen in love with a clurichaun (an always tipsy third-rate poet), Bran decided she needed some country air to clear her head. He sent her to Fiachra, saying, “If it’s commoners you wish to treat with, at least meet respectable ones, and learn how to rule them while you’re at it.” She thus became Fiachra’s fosterling.

Bethany likes Fiachra, but she wishes sometimes he weren’t such a stick in the mud. She has managed to wrap him around her little finger, persuading him to sponsor plays, festivals and musical extravaganzas along with his overlong car rallies, dull sheepshearing contests and obnoxious oyster festivals. Her best friend lives in Galway, a mute swan pooka named Branwyn. Unknown to Fiachra, Bethany has kept up her romance with Bevan, her clurichaun poet, who has moved into an abandoned cottage in the vicinity. He is having a hard time of it in the West since he speaks not one word of Irish.



Court: Seelie
Legacies: Troubadour/Peacock
House: Gwydion
Seeming: Wilder
Kith: Sidhe
Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3
Talents: Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression (poetry, lyrics) 4, Kenning 3, Seduction 1, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Leadership 1, Melee 2, Performance (singing) 3, Security 3, Stealth 2
Knowledges: Computer 1, Enigmas 1, Mythlore 2, Occult 2, Politics 1
Arts: Chicanery 1, Sovereign 3
Realms: Actor 2, Fae 2, Scene 1
Backgrounds: Chimera 2, Gremayre 1, Holdings (5), Resources 1, Title (6)
 The numbers in brackets represent what her potential holdings and title will be when she becomes queen.
Glamour: 8
Banality: 3
Willpower: 3
Treasures: None (yet)

Image: At age 14, Bethany is 5' 5" tall and weighs a little less than average. She has very pale peaches-and-cream complexion with a scattering of freckles over her nose (which she takes great pains to hide, calling them "hideous!"). Her hair is that shade of red-brown that isn't quite either color, but flashes with red in the sunlight. Her eyes are pale green. She favors current fashions, and delighted in appearing in ripped jeans and tiny T-shirts to King Bran's uncomprehending consternation. The same tactics used with Fiachra merely caused him to remark, "Yer fanny'll freeze right off if you go out in that cold with that outfit on." She has learned to dress more practically while in the West.

In her fae seeming, Bethany's hair becomes a dazzling flame red, and her green eyes take on a smoky hue that speaks of future seductions. Though she is still obviously a young girl, she manages court attire with a poise that fosters hope in Bran's heart that she will one day become the queen he believes she can be.

Roleplaying Hints: They just don't understand. They speak of dreams, but have no respect for yours, as if changelings weren't allowed to have dreams of their own. Court, court, court. Duty, duty, duty. You need poetry and music to live! And love... without love, you would have long since ceased to be a changeling at all! Of course, you'll assume your proper place when the time comes (who wouldn't want to be queen?), but for now, you want to enjoy your freedom. Love and magic are for the young; they're wasted on the oldsters.

The Leinster Court

King Bran of Leinster

Bran was the leader of the forces who retook the island of Hibernia when the sidhe returned from Arcadia. He did so by diplomacy and reason when possible and quick, decisive military operations when it wasn't. He believed he deserved the kingdom of Leinster for his pains, and was much relieved when the draw to decide which king would rule which region went in his favor. With fully one-third of Ireland's population living in Dublin, Bran has no shortage of dreamers under his rule.

He quickly established himself as a fair ruler, handing out titles to some of the commoners who had been most instrumental in holding things together during the Interregnum. While some accepted these, many others refused to take what they considered to be crumbs thrown them by the high-and-mighty sidhe. Consequently, while Bran is well-loved by many commoners, he is much hated by a small but powerful group

who consider his rule to be just as abhorrent as British rule ever was over Ireland. These vociferous commoners, who call themselves the Winter Knights, have many contacts (including some with the IRA) and keep Bran from resting entirely easily in his domain. This is one of the reasons he was so concerned by Bethany's constant slumming. He wasn't being arrogant, but concerned that she would encounter those who would hurt her to get at him. Though he has no proof, he believes her erstwhile boyfriend, a drunken clurichaun named Bevan, is secretly in contact with the Winter Knights and intends to use her against him or worse yet, corrupt her.

Bran is genuinely concerned for the well-being of the Kithain in his kingdom. He holds court at least twice a week to hear complaints and decide issues that his dukes and duchesses are unable to rule upon. He has shown great wisdom in appointing Sir Odhran of House Liam as his archivist, and further in allowing him to take his place among the Riders of the Silver Court who attend the Hidden King (although Bran is unsure exactly what it is the Riders do or who it is they protect). Bran is keenly interested in learning all the history that passed while the sidhe were absent in Arcadia, and is enthralled with the changes in Irish music since that time.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Courtier/Beast

House: Gwydion

Seeming: Wilder (barely)

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Intrigue 3, Kenning 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1,

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Leadership 4, Melee 4, Performance (harp) 4, Temporal Sense 4

Knowledges: Dream Lore 2, Enigmas 3, History 3, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, French, Italian, German) 4, Medicine 2, Mythlore 3, Occult 3, Politics 4

Arts: Chicanery 1, Chronos 2, Dream Craft 3, Soothsay 2, Sovereign 5, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 5, Nature 3, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 5, Contacts 4, Dreamers 4, Gremayre 3, Holdings 5, Resources 4, Title 6, Treasures 5, Trod 4

Glamour: 8

Banality: 4

Willpower: 5

Treasures: Bran's treasures include the Kingly Treasures of Leinster (crown, scepter and seal), the Sword of the Fianna and the Ruby Ring of Tara. The Sword of the Fianna is a short, broad, bronze sword of the type used before the advent of the Iron Age. The sword has three interesting properties: it strikes against Kithain and all creatures of the Dreaming (including enchanted mortals) as if it were chimeric rather than physical, doing chimeric damage; it confers two extra dice for causing damage (whether chimeric or real); and it can crumble small iron objects (no larger than an average sized sword, door bar or tire iron) into rust with a touch. Multiple touches are, of course, possible, but take additional time. Thus, someone armed with the sword could eventually cut his way through an iron door, but it might take half an hour.

Bran has no idea what the ruby ring does. It is reputed to be usable only by one who becomes High King of Tara. Bran merely holds it in trust.

He owns several nice treasures (including a harp played by Turlough O'Carolan) that he displays in various galleries of the court. Occasionally, he uses a treasure or two to cement friendly relations with his fellow monarchs or reward those who do him a service.

Image: Bran is a handsome young man with the kind of face that can seem both ageless and inordinately wise. He is 5'10" tall with shoulder-length auburn hair and sea



gray eyes. Whether dressed formally or casually, Bran always looks impeccable and comfortable. Because he has spent a great deal of time in his freehold and at court, he has aged little since coming to Earth in 1969. He has no trouble with Bedlam, however, for he makes certain to schedule several long trips outside Dublin and the court each year.

In his fae seeming Bran looks much like he does as a mortal. His face becomes thinner, his cheekbones higher, his ears elongate and become more pointed, and he seems perhaps a touch more handsome. Overall, the main effect is of him becoming even more like himself. He wears court attire with a grace that marks him as true royalty.

Roleplaying Hints: House Gwydion is noted for its wise and competent rulers, and you are no exception. You are committed to rulership through diplomacy rather than might, and you always listen to what others have to say before making a decision. You are a gentle manipulator, who tries to persuade others to your viewpoint through playing to their strengths rather than against their weaknesses. Under your guidance, Dublin (and the whole of Ireland by extension) has joined the modern age, and the dreamers have begun to dream of greater prosperity and a place in the European Community. Old ways, old bitterness and outmoded thinking are being set aside in favor of more constructive ways of living. Though you have great reverence for the things of the past, you believe that only if you keep up with the modern world can the sidhe survive. If history has taught you anything, it is that you must adapt to changing conditions; though many see you as unchanging, you are actually quite modern in your views — for a sidhe.

SIR ODHRAN, KING'S ARCHIVIST

While some sidhe came through directly to Hibernia, many who eventually ended up in Ireland first returned to Earth in Concordia. Sir Odhran was one such. A knight of House Liam, he was among the sidhe who fought for Pacifica in the Battle of the Redwoods. When his friend Lord Groton of House Fiona and Groton's love, Lady Morgania of House Eiluned, were killed in the battle, he brought Groton's broadsword and Morgania's younger sister Nuala to Ireland where he hoped they'd be safe. Not knowing where else to go, he sought the sidhe in Dublin. There he met Bran and introduced Nuala to the Seelie Court of Hibernia.

Nuala's birthright as queen was acknowledged, and she eventually took over the rule of Munster. Though she invited Sir Odhran to become a part of her court, they both found that one another's company caused each painful memories of the war they would rather forget, and he declined. King Bran, noting Odhran's interest in history and impressed by his conduct during the Accordance War, offered him the position of archivist within the Leinster

court. As Odhran wished to remain in Hibernia, he accepted and has served Bran with distinction ever since.

A year after he took service with Bran, he received a dream summoning him to the glade of the Hidden King in the Derryveagh Forest. Telling Bran only that he had been summoned by the Dreaming, Odhran went to the forest where he met with a group of other sidhe and became one of the Silver Riders, the guardians of the Hidden King. Odhran now fills both positions. When with the Riders, he acts as an agent for King Bran, bringing him pertinent news and keeping him abreast of events in the other kingdoms. Under the direction of the Hidden King, who speaks to the Riders in dreams, Odhran works to encourage dreams and inspire creativity throughout Hibernia, awaiting the day when Arcadia will once again be accessible from Earth.

Odhran is quite aware that both his positions are ones of great honor. He is often a little too formal and overly correct in dealing with others, because he fears that they might believe a member of House Liam is unfit for such exalted duties. Despite his outward conformity to tradition, he is something of a radical thinker, encouraging Bran in his historical studies and speaking out for commoners' rights. More sentimental than he would like people to know, he cherishes the friends he has and feels quite deeply the loss of those who are gone.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Sage/Fatalist

House: Liam

Seeming: Grump

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 3 Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Instruction 4, Kenning 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Leadership 2, Melee 4, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Temporal Sense 2

Knowledges: Bureaucracy 2, Computer 2, Dream lore 3, Enigmas 3, Geography 3, History 4, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, French, German, Welsh) 4, Medicine 1, Mythlore 4, Philosophy 2, Politics 2, Science 2

Arts: Primal 3, Sovereign 4, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 3, Nature 3, Prop 2

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 2, Gremayre 3, Holdings 2, Resources 2, Title 2, Treasures 5

Glamour: 7

Banality: 5

Willpower: 4



Treasures: Sir Odhran keeps two swords in his freehold. One is his own sword that he wielded during the Accordance War. It is a plain-looking broadsword that allows him to strike twice in the time it would normally take to strike once or to strike and defend almost simultaneously. Although quite useful, Odhran prefers to merely display it, as he would rather he never had to pick it up in earnest again. The other sword, which rests alongside his own, was the broadsword of Lord Groton of House Fiona, Odhran's commander during the war and best friend, who fell in the Battle of the Redwoods. It is decorated with a silver lion on the hilt. When used by a member of House Fiona in honorable battle, two chimerical silver lions may be called forth to fight alongside the wielder. To honor Groton's sacrifice, Odhran brought the sword to Ireland, the place Groton wished to live when the war was over.

One treasure that he does keep with him is the Brooch of the Hidden Way. With it, Odhran is able to travel about without being noticed. In effect, it makes him inconspicuous. While it does not confer actual invisibility, people who do see him tend to not notice that he is there or to pay no attention to him, relegating him in their minds to the category of "supposed to be there; can safely ignore." If Odhran spends a point of Glamour, he can utilize the brooch to temporarily "hide" up to nine other people as well as himself.

Image: Odhran is tall and well-muscled, but he also has the air of a scholar about him. His hair and eyes are both dark brown, and he sports a short, well-trimmed beard. He favors well-made, though unostentatious clothes, but he has a decided weakness for his velvet-collared smoking jacket when relaxing at home.

In his fae seeming, Odhran favors tunics and trousers or chimerical armor suited to his position as one of the Silver Riders. His hair has more curl to it, and is slightly longer than the just-touching-the-collar-in-the-back look he favors in mortal seeming. His face looks somewhat cold and haughty due to his long nose and high cheekbones, but Odhran is actually much less snobbish than his appearance would suggest.

Roleplaying Hints: Many people do not truly understand you. While you are concerned with fulfilling your duties as archivist to King Bran and as one of the Silver Riders who guard the Hidden King, that doesn't necessarily mean that you are hidebound. You merely conform to the expected and traditional ways of doing things so that there will be no questions about your suitability. That's the only real drawback to being of House Liam; people assume you are all oathbreakers and treat you accordingly. It is much easier to wear the insignia of House Gwydion, which you are entitled to do as the king's archivist. Then nobody assumes the worst before getting to know you. Nonetheless, you stand by the ideals of House Liam, and you never deny your house if asked.

The Munster Court

Queen Nuala of Munster

Nuala was quite young when the sidhe returned to Earth. She followed her sister Morgania to Concordia and straight into the Accordance War. Morgania was the lover of Lord Groton of House Fiona, and co-commander with him of the sidhe army who fought the Battle of the Redwoods. There, despite the heroic efforts of her sworn troll guardian, Morgania was shot down and killed by an arrow when the group was swarmed by commoners. Nuala herself was slightly wounded, but spirited away to safety by Sir Odhran. When the war was over and she could travel freely, Nuala begged Sir Odhran to take her to Hibernia, where she and her sister had intended to go. He agreed and escorted her to Dublin, where she met King Bran and the other Great Kings of Hibernia and was acknowledged queen herself.

She wanted Munster for her realm, and was lucky enough to win it in the draw. Though she felt obligated to invite Sir Odhran to become her champion, he refused, which was a relief to both of them. Instead he went to serve King Bran of Leinster, a far enough distance away that she can admire him for what he is, but doesn't have to put up with his day-to-day mannerisms that try her patience. She went to the Rock of Cashel, inside of which Morgania had told her was a powerful freehold once inhabited by the Eiluned. There she made her court.

Nuala is somewhat distant in her manner toward those she rules. She prefers to be alone or to have little company. She concentrates on the mystical Arts rather than on battle skills, though she insists that an honor guard of four sidhe knights be with her at all times (even if they aren't always in evidence). She tries to hide the fact that she detests commoners. She simply cannot forget that their cowardly long distance attack by arrow slew her sister. She hides her feelings as best she can so that her subjects (and fellow monarchs) won't find out. The rampant sexism of Ireland (where men just assume that women need protecting) annoys her almost as much as having her domain referred to as a "kingdom" does. She considers herself to be the expert on things magical among the monarchs, and as such, believes she is first among equals.



Court: Seelie

Legacies: Hermit/Riddler

House: Eiluned

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 1, Dodge 4, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Intrigue 3, Kenning 4, Seduction 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Crafts (jewelry design) 4, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Performance (Acting) 4, Stealth 3, Survival 1, Temporal Sense 4

Knowledges: Computer 1, Dream Lore 3, Enigmas 4, Investigation 1, Law 1, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Medicine 2, Mythlore 4, Occult 4, Politics 3, Psychology 2

Arts: Chicanery 3, Chronos 2, Dream-Craft 3, Primal 2, Soothsay 5, Sovereign 4, Wayfare 3

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 4, Nature 4, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Contacts 1, Dreamers 3, Gremayre 3, Holdings 5, Resources 3, Title 6, Treasures 5, Trod 3

Glamour: 8

Banality: 3

Willpower: 6

Treasures: Nuala has the Queenly Treasures of Munster (crown, scepter and seal) as well as a potent treasure known as the Druid's Staff. When she wields the staff, she is able to fade out and become transparent (thus becoming all but invisible), making her a much harder target in combat. Additionally, the staff has the property of ensorcelling people's minds. Anyone she touches with it (fae, supernatural or mortal) must gain two successes on a Willpower roll against a difficulty of 8 or believe Nuala has transformed him into a pig (for the remainder of the scene).

Image: Nuala is a smoldering beauty with long, wavy black hair that falls to the small of her back and startling emerald-green eyes. Whenever she is in her mortal seeming, she usually wears her hair pulled back with a clasp and favors simple, elegant clothing such as sheath dresses or tailored blouses and pants.

In her fae seeming, she is even more exquisitely lovely. Her delicacy is accentuated and her taste legendary. When attending court functions, she wears her hair swept back and up into an elaborate, braided coiffure that shows her long graceful neck. She prefers to dress in dark colors set off by a few, sparkling jewels. Her chimeric armor and sword are night-dark with glints of silver.

Roleplaying Hints: You are difficult for people to get to know, and you like it that way. There are far too many forward people in the world and far too much presumption on their part. Being a ruler does not mean having to wallow in the most petty and foolish doings of those whom you rule; on the contrary, those with any sense eventually realize that a true queen rises above it all and doesn't fraternize with the commoners. Not that you are impolite to them or treat them with anything but chill courtesy. Queens cannot afford to love those they rule if they are to look after the realm as a whole and treat everyone equally. At least nobody can accuse you of favoritism, for you show none. Your love is saved for your lover; you need not love your court to do your duty as queen.

The Duchy of Cashel

Duchess Lenore

Lenore chose to be exiled to Earth because she was literally starving for mortal attention. She traveled straight through to Hibernia and managed to avoid any of the fighting between sidhe and commoners. Once in Hibernia, she set herself up with a stable of musicians and began feeding them inspiration. Then she sat back and waited for the Glamour to flow in from them. So far, she has been careful. She has managed to rein in the beast within her that shrieks to be fulfilled all the time. She has been exceedingly subtle. In all the years she has been back on Earth, she has only used up 12 musicians — unheard of self-control for one of her house. Lately though, she has begun to notice that despite all her care, she has begun to age. She can't allow that, and might have to step up her program to gather enough Glamour to stave off grumpdom.

Three years ago, Lenore met Nuala, Queen of Munster. The two immediately hit it off. Taking a cue from her mortal dreamers, Lenore played the part of the mystery woman to the hilt. Nuala, true to her Eiluned soul, was intrigued. During the courtship that followed, Nuala created the Duchy of Cashel for Lenore to rule and elevated her love from her rank of knight to that of duchess. There has been some grumbling among the lesser nobles of the court, but since Nuala carved up her own lands to create the duchy, it really didn't take anything away from them. They therefore have little to complain about. And Lenore has used her talents to charm those who did object.

Lenore loves the social whirl of court life, but is willing to grant Nuala the peace she usually desires. After all, she can go visit one of her dreamers and fill up on all the Glamour she wants, or find excitement at a ceili or pub where good music is being played and people are out for a good time. She is careful never to offend the queen or to go against her wishes in any way. Thus she keeps her own position and seems to second Nuala's decisions in all matters. Life for Lenore is definitely comfortable.



Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Beast/Troubadour

House: Leanhaun

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 5, Expression (lyric poetry) 5, Intimidation 2, Kenning 3, Seduction 5, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Crafts (woodworking) 3, Disguise 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Melee 3, Performance (mandolin) 5, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 3, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Mythlore 3, Occult 4

Arts: Primal 2, Soothsay 3, Sovereign 2, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 3, Prop 2, Scene 2

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 3, Dreamers 5, Gremayre 1, Resources 1, Title 5

Glamour: 8

Banality: 3

Willpower: 5

Treasures: Lenore has no treasures of her own. At any given time, however, she might be armed with something Nuala has loaned her for a while.

Image: Duchess Lenore is almost Nuala's opposite, having frosty silver-blue eyes and white-blond hair. Her skin is very pale, and she has been referred to as the Ice Queen (though not in Nuala's hearing). She dresses well, though less traditionally than Nuala, preferring pale colors and soft materials or going for the stark black look that always works so well on blondes.

In her fae seeming, Lenore looks positively ethereal. She favors frothy gowns that seem to billow in nonexistent winds (like the bedclothes worn by helpless heroines in every bad Gothic horror film from the '50s). On her, it looks good.

Roleplaying Hints: You live to feel fulfilled. Take what you want, but do it subtly. If most people knew about you and your practices, they would be horrified. But that is the nature of your house. It isn't fair for others to judge you according to standards they set when they don't understand your needs. Some people even misunderstand your relationship with Nuala. They believe you are just out for what you can get. There is that element, of course, as in any relationship, but you truly care for the queen. While you might not take a blade for her were she endangered, you'd do your best to protect her.

The Ulster Court

King Finn of Ulster

King Finn of House Fiona has been the regent of Ulster for 24 years. A year after the return of the sidhe to earth, he participated in the lottery that determined his holding in Ireland. His takeover was quick and bloodless (unlike some others), and he stunned the commoners with his appearance and knowledge. He opened old freeholds, handing them out to noble and commoner alike. His charisma and generosity prompted those whom he ruled to believe that the legendary Finn MacCool had come back to the land. Golden and glorious, his looks and skills led others to question whether he might not instead be Lugh, ancient High King of the Tuatha de Danaan. He made many friends and his few enemies were more likely to be jealous than to seriously hate him. Things started well.

Then he began to change. As Finn learned more and more of what had been happening in the land during the Interregnum, he became troubled. He watched as the people of the land fought one another, not warrior to warrior, but in cowardly ways — with shootings in the dark and bombs left to slaughter innocent women and children. Members of his court took sides and fought one another on the slightest pretext until Finn outlawed all dueling on pain of a year's exile. While there were many dreams of freedom in the air, there were also nightmares of ancient slaughter. Dreams of

anger, hatred and retaliation began to poison the king. Tainted Glamour from the tourist sites that remained open in Northern Ireland coupled with the new ones opened for the news media (bomb sites, entrenched sectarian neighborhoods, army posts and prisons) began flowing into him, changing his outlook and making him cynical. He began holding court at night and spent the summer months in private, seeing others only in autumn and winter.

Looking within himself for some solution to the horror, he found only riddles and puzzles wrapped up with truths and lies so old they might never be untangled. In the early '80s, for three years he spent much of his time in meditation, during which his sorrowful courtiers kept his condition from his subjects and the other kings. When he at last emerged, he was Unseelie. No one knows if Finn had simply found it all too much to bear, or if he has some plan in mind that can only be accomplished by hardening himself to realities. He remains outwardly as kind and courtly as ever, and the other kings have never suspected, believing he is merely worn from coping with the many troubles that beset his kingdom.

Finn began to enact a plan designed to bring all the freeholds into the Unseelie fold. He sent his favorite, a noble named Lorenzo, out and about, talking with and cajoling the worried nobles and giving them fine treasures from the king. The treasures were filled with Finn's poisoned Glamour, however, and as the nobles accepted them, they found themselves ensorcelled and slowly coming around to Finn's viewpoint. One noble, Duke Kestry of Belfast, suspecting some of what was happening, refused the gifts. Finn was furious but couldn't simply strip Kestry of his duchy (since appointing the young noble of House Liam was acknowledged as one of his finest moments as ruler). Finn assigned Lorenzo to keep an eye on the wayward duke and to cause as much trouble as possible for him. Eventually the two ended up in a duel, and Finn was able to exile Kestry. It annoyed him that he also had to exile Lorenzo, but he comforted his faithful retainer by awarding him with the prize duchy of Belfast upon his return — Belfast, with one-third of the population of Northern Ireland. All those dreamers....

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Riddler/Regent

House: Fiona

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 4, Kenning 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 4, Leadership 3, Melee 4, Stealth 3, Temporal Sense 3



Knowledges: Computer 2, Dream Lore 3, Enigmas 4, Law 2, Mythlore 4, Occult 3, Politics 4

Arts: Chronos 2, Dream-Craft 3, Soothsay 4, Sovereign 5, Wayfare 3

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 4, Nature 3, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 5, Dreamers 5, Gremayre 4, Holdings 5, Resources 4, Title 6, Treasures 5, Trod 4

Glamour: 8

Banality: 3

Willpower: 4

Treasures: Finn's treasures include the Kingly Treasures of Ulster (crown, scepter and seal) and the Spear of the North, said to have once belonged to Ferdia, the hero who fought and was slain by Cuchulainn. Whether that amazing lineage is true or not, the spear is certainly a treasure, giving Finn an extra three dice of damage (it causes intense cold) when used in battle. It can also be used to heal all wounds on its wielder once in a 24-hour period. The king also has access to many ancient treasures that were stored in Emain Macha, many of which he has handed out to the dukes and duchesses of his kingdom.

Image: Like one of the ancient Tuatha de Danaan from legend, Finn is tall, golden and perfect. He prefers clothing that is loose and flowing, but form-fitting enough to show off his perfect body. He is rarely seen in his mortal

seeming, however. To fae eyes, his golden beauty is even more pronounced. His waist-length golden hair is streaked with red, and his amber eyes take on a golden glow. When dressed for battle, Finn's chimerical armor blazes like the sun with a reddish amber glow. His house symbol is etched upon the breastplate, with whirls and curves reminiscent of the carvings on the megalithic stones of Ireland decorating the helm. His cloak changes hue from golden to rosy depending on his mood.

Yet there is a sadness to him that is noticeable to those who take the time to look. A hint of Winter intrudes upon his golden glory, like the sun on a clear December day. Finn is a step away from Bedlam. His façade is almost perfect. To those whom he wishes to fool, he shows wisdom, kindness and a subtle wit; to his enemies or those who cross him he is furious, overpowering and utterly mad. He switches back and forth between his Seelie and Unseelie natures so quickly it is sometimes difficult to guess which he might be at any given moment.

Roleplaying Hints: It is imperative that none of the others find out. They would try to stop you, and they have no idea what the consequences of that would be. You know. You have looked within and discovered the truth. You are the land. The land is you. No one must ferret out your secrets, or the land will die.... But you can control it. Everyone admires you, and you are wise beyond mortal reckoning. Those to whom you've shown such kindness have given you their complete support. They love you. And you love them. You are king. You will care for them all... except the ones who have betrayed you. They must be harshly dealt with — if you could only remember who they are and what they've done.... It is so hard sometimes being the broken heart of a nation.

The Duchy of Belfast Kestry

The former Duke of Belfast is noble in the unconscious way that all truly noble spirits are. He has an air of quiet authority that puts people at ease. His friends (and they are many) include nobles, commoners, werewolves and vampires. In his mortal life, Kestry is a lawyer dedicated to seeing justice done for the downtrodden, regardless of sex, race, religion or other distinguishing trait. In Kithain society, though his rank would have given him a duchy, his affiliation with House Liam would have led to his being disinherited in any other court than Finn's. Realizing Kestry's abilities and gifts, Finn made Kestry duke of Belfast, the largest duchy in Ulster.

Then Finn changed, and tried to force Kestry to change as well. Kestry felt betrayed by his king. Beset by a group of Unseelie Ravagers called the Vikings, Kestry and

his friends fought for the dreamers of Belfast. At the heart of the Troubles, he found the strength to resist all attempts to corrupt him and his duchy. Though he is slow to anger, when aroused, Kestry is fierce — particularly in defense of the defenseless. One night he had finally had enough. Discovering that the Vikings were being led and encouraged by Lorenzo, a favorite of King Finn, Kestry challenged and defeated him. That was some 17 months ago. Finn took the opportunity to rid himself of Kestry, using his ban on dueling to banish Kestry for a year. Though Lorenzo was also banished, Finn stripped Kestry of his title and ducal treasures and awarded them to Lorenzo.

To Kestry, though he was sad to leave his home and friends, at least he knew he had accomplished something; from the time he defeated Lorenzo, a cease-fire was called by the IRA (reflecting the calmer feelings that became prevalent as the Ravagers were stopped). During this hiatus, the first time in 25 years that the constant war was stopped, new changelings began to emerge, discovering their faerie souls in the wake of new hope and dreams of peace.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Regent/Wretch

House: Liam

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression (oration) 4, Kenning 2, Streetwise 1

Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Leadership 4, Melee 4

Knowledges: Computer 1, Enigmas 3, Law 4, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, French), Occult 3, Mythlore 2, Politics 4

Arts: Primal 3, Sovereign 4, Wayfare 3

Realms: Actor 4, Fae 4, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Gremayre 3, Holdings (4), Resources 2 (4), Title (5), Treasure 3, Trod (2)

Note: The numbers in brackets indicate his position before he was stripped of his title and banished for a year.

Glamour: 6

Banality: 5

Willpower: 7

Treasures: Though he once had access to the usual ducal treasures, Kestry was compelled to give them up when Finn stripped him of his title. They now belong to Lorenzo. Finn did not allow Kestry to take any other treasures with him into exile.

Kestry owns a very old book of French fairy tales. Anyone who can read them can gain a point of temporary Glamour from them. Kestry's other treasure is a tiny brooch (or lapel pin)

shaped like a Celtic harp. Made of silver and set with spun glass strings, it is the symbol of a secret group known as the Harpers of Erin. Named for a society of scholars who met in Belfast at the end of the 18th century to preserve the Irish language and cultural heritage, the Harpers of Erin are an oathcircle of Kithain (and associated others) dedicated to the inspiration and protection of humans. Kestry is their leader. When the oath is sworn to join the Harpers of Erin, the enchanted brooch bestows a point of Glamour on the oathmaker. If the oath is ever broken, the harp brooch disappears, leaving the oathbreaker branded chimerically with a glittering sable harp visible to all members of the society.

Image: Kestry is 6' 2" tall, and tends to stand out above the crowd. His short hair is very blond, and his eyes are a startling shade of blue. With high cheekbones and a longish straight nose, he is considered handsome. He prefers to wear suits, as they tend to gain him respect among the businessmen and law professionals with whom he usually deals, and a duster-length trenchcoat. Of course, since he was banished, he hasn't practiced law for over a year.

In his fae seeming, his blond hair is shoulder length, and he dresses in more colorful attire. At need, he dons chimeric armor that is clean, shining silver. His longsword is a shade between silver and blue, and the pommel is worked with the blasted silver tree of House Liam on a cerulean-blue background.



Roleplaying Hints: You have been dispossessed; you were banished, your duchy (and home) confiscated. Not because of any wrong you committed, but because your beloved monarch, King Finn, has changed, becoming Unseelie. Aside from your own group of friends, you have been unable to convince anyone of this. Others now think that anything you say against him is a lie born of your bitterness. All members of House Liam are seen as oathbreakers anyway, so you have two strikes against you to start.

The cease-fire held for a while, but Lorenzo's excesses have led to the beginning of hostilities again. You are back from exile at last and must somehow stop his Ravagers. Many believe that you are far more serious than any changeling should be, but they do not understand the responsibilities that you bear. Lorenzo is not the Duke of Belfast for all that King Finn has appointed him to that position. Leadership must be granted by those who are willing to be led; he simply takes what he wants. They are your people, and it falls to you to protect and defend them.

Duke Lorenzo

Lorenzo was exiled from Arcadia for crimes he doesn't quite remember, but which have given him a poor reputation among sidhe with high Gremayre. He doesn't really care, even if he remembers a life of honor long ago. He earned King Finn's favor during the Return and volunteered to go on Glamour-gathering missions for the king, supposedly marking particularly talented mortals for later Musing. In actuality, Lorenzo is a practiced Ravager, and brought back more and more tainted dross for the king. Pleased with his protegee's success, Finn made Lorenzo his champion, though he kept this a secret. Eventually Lorenzo tired of even pretending to bring back Glamour from creative sources, and turned to stripping the Glamour from the dark pleasures of the Troubles. Slimy and slick, he and his cadre of Unseelie Ravagers, named the Vikings (for the raiders who once terrorized Ireland) encouraged hatred among the people of Belfast, and even had old men beaten to death just for the pain-wracked Glamour it brought them. Unknown to Finn (or anyone else in Finn's realm), Lorenzo is actually working for Doireannara, field commander of the Unseelie army of the Shadow Court of Hibernia. She had him insinuate himself into Finn's good graces in order to remove the threat that Finn posed as King of Ulster.

When Finn realized that he had to silence the dukes or be discovered as Unseelie, he sent Lorenzo to each in turn. Lorenzo persuaded most of them to accept the treasures Finn offered them (called "gifts of friendship"), and talked them around to Finn's way of thinking. The one noble he couldn't convince was Duke Kestry of Belfast. Enraged at his failure, Lorenzo focused all his attention on Ravaging Belfast. Finally, Kestry called him out in a duel. Though Lorenzo had meant to cheat, the Vikings were unexpect-

edly detained, and Kestry won the battle. Finn banished them both for dueling, but he secretly promised Lorenzo the duchy of Belfast when he returned. He has been back a few months, and has taken charge of Kestry's old home and ducal treasures. He revels in his newfound power.

As duke, Lorenzo has been surprisingly subtle in his manipulations. Rather than engaging in all-out Ravaging, he has used the cease-fire to encourage tourism. He searches for all the secret freeholds in Belfast (and nearby) that belong to those who might oppose him. These he intends to open up as tourist attractions (where possible) and take the Glamour from the balefires within as his own. He awaits his next meeting with Kestry, hoping to catch him at an unguarded moment and put an end to his rival. Lorenzo has not been popular as duke; he hopes a public defeat and humiliation of Kestry will establish him as a ruler to be feared. Especially when he shows that he's not afraid to actually kill another changeling.

Unknown to Lorenzo, he was sent from Arcadia to prepare for a takeover by House Balor. To that end, he has been *geased* to work in their behalf and to bring down the Seelie courts of Hibernia. Because he is working under a *geas*, even Lorenzo sometimes doesn't know why he does what he does. Occasionally, the *geas* conflicts with orders from Doireannara, and Lorenzo just shuts down for a little while until the conflict goes away. Since the two sides have at least some goals in common, this is not often a problem.



Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Peacock/Paladin

House: Balor (though he often claims to be Eiluned)

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Kenning 4, Intimidation 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Computer 2, Enigmas 3, Investigation 3, Law 2, Mythlore 4, Occult 4, Politics 4

Arts: Chicanery 4, Primal 3, Soothsay 2, Sovereign 4

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 4, Prop 3, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 5, Gremayre 2, Holdings 4, Patron 5 (King Finn), Title 5, Treasure 3, Trod 2

Glamour: 7

Banality: 4

Willpower: 3

Treasures: Lorenzo has taken possession of the ducal treasures of Belfast (the signet, pennons and hearthstone) and of Kestry's longsword, a silver and bronze weapon of ancient beauty named *tine chreasa* ("flashing fire") that can shine with the light of sun or moon and blind opponents in battle. Lorenzo has yet to actually claim the sword, fearing that some enchantment attuning the blade to Kestry will harm him if he does.

Chimera: Lorenzo has a very powerful chimera known as the Smoke Dragon. Large and sinuous, this fearsome creature made of mist and smoke has keen black eyes that search out prey as it flies far overhead. The chimera originally drew its power from the bombs and explosions of the Troubles, and is thus, quite powerful. It can be utterly silent, hiding among clouds, or terrifyingly loud, flapping its wings with a sound like crashing thunder. Because of its snakelike shape and insubstantial form, the Smoke Dragon can twist itself into impossible angles and enter the smallest of spaces, stretching itself out into a thin line of smoke to do so if necessary. Oddly enough, it is quite beautiful, with each scale perfectly formed in white, silver, misty blue, gray and cream colors. In sunlight, the scales take on a brilliant golden hue; at sunset, it reflects yellow, orange, red and pink, just like clouds on the horizon.

Lorenzo uses it as a spy, sending it to mingle with clouds outside or the haze of cigarette smoke up near the ceiling in crowded pubs. His favorite uses for the chimera include loosing it to herd changelings in his direction when he wants them rounded up, and as an airborne attacker. The chimera cannot be seen except by changelings and those

who have been enchanted. Although he originally "inherited" it as it formed itself, because Lorenzo has worked on the chimera so long to perfect it, if the Smoke Dragon is killed, Lorenzo can recall it and reform it at its original strength within 24 hours.

Statistics for the Smoke Dragon: Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 3; Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Subterfuge 3, Stealth 4

Image: Lorenzo is tall and painfully thin, more like a sluagh than a sidhe. In his mortal seeming he has lank black hair that he wears tied back in a long ponytail. He favors dark clothing that accentuates his lean build, though of fine, expensive materials.

In his fae seeming, his hair has more body, almost a life of its own. His eyes are a piercing gray and look as though they would suck the life out of whatever he turns his gaze on. As a member of House Balor, he has a deformity. His is physical, and is represented by his extremely gaunt frame and hungry-seeming eyes. Lorenzo is always hungry — for food, excitement, treasure, Glamour, pain, pleasure or praise. He can never get enough, and he always hungers for more, even when he has just been sated.

Roleplaying Hints: They claim you committed some dark crime in Arcadia. Who cares? That was long ago and far away. This is here and now, and you mean to savor every second of it. The idiots don't have a clue what's really possible — or what's really going on. You've found a never-ending source of Glamour. Screw the fools who spend a year slowly preparing some whiny mortal to create a painting or a story. Hate is eternal; bitterness never ends. It's easy to find what you need, feed on it, and use it to promote the creation of even more tasty pains and fears. You knew the Shadow Court would bring you power, and you were right. They're all yours now, the hapless people of Belfast. Use them as you will.

Lord Galway (Leo Gallagher)

Lord Galway is in his 40s, and as such is a confirmed grump. Born in Belfast, he spent his fosterage in Galway. Young Leo was a large boy, and often found himself in the position of peacemaker since his size accorded him instant respect. He seemed to have an innate sense of honor even as a child. Leo discovered his fae nature when he was almost a grump. He honed his fighting skills by joining the army. A few years later, when his stint was over and he was visiting Sligo, he foiled an attempt by unknown agents to kill the young Kestry, who had just undergone his Chrysalis. Kestry's parents took him back home to Belfast. King Fiachra of Connaught located Leo, told him that he had foreseen that Kestry would be a changeling of note, and asked him to go

to Belfast to protect the young wilder. Leo agreed, and King Fiachra made him a knight for saving the young changeling. Having fought many chimerical foes, and even werewolves and vampires on one occasion, he felt that he could handle one young fae. Coincidentally, Kestry himself invited him to Belfast to act as his personal guard. Bemused that the Dreaming should have conspired to place him where he intended to go anyway, he gladly accepted.

Gallagher became Kestry's confidant and teacher. When Finn recognized Kestry's noble status and gave him the duchy of Belfast to rule, Kestry used his status to give Leo a title. Remembering his foster home fondly, he chose to be known as Lord Galway. For his freehold, Kestry gave Galway the Brick Glade, a Garou caern that had been given to Kestry as a gift (see under the Brick Glade entry in the Belfast section for the whole story). Galway understands the caern's significance and guards it carefully. He has sworn himself to Kestry and to the Harpers of Erin, and is utterly trustworthy. When Kestry was exiled, he forbade Lord Galway to accompany him, insisting that the troll stay and watch over the people of Belfast.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Paladin/Savage

House: Affiliated with House Liam

Seeming: Grump

Kith: Troll

Physical: Strength 6 (mighty), Dexterity 3, Stamina 5 (tough)

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 1, Intimidate 3, Kenning 3, Streetwise 2

Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Leadership 1, Melee 5, Security 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Medicine 2, Mythlore 2, Occult 2, Politics 2, Science 1

Arts: Primal 4, Sovereign 1, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 2, Fae 4, Prop 3, Scene 2

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Holdings 2, Resources 2, Title 3, Treasure 4

Glamour: 5

Banality: 5

Willpower: 7

Treasures: Lord Galway has the treasures usual for a baron (his hearth and weapon). The weapon is a gigantic broadsword called Foestriker that refuses to be swung at anyone who is a friend of the troll. This doesn't mean that if an enemy is acting friendly, the sword won't strike; it is backed up by the magic of the Dreaming and can easily tell who means Galway harm and who doesn't. Against foes,



the weapon confers an extra die of damage (as if he needed it). Galway also has one of the harp brooches that identify members of the Harpers of Erin. His most beloved treasure, however, is an ancient flintlock rifle. It hardly appears to be capable of firing to mortal eyes, but its chimerical form is quite dangerous for changelings, stripping away their Glamour at the same rate as a bullet fired from a hunting rifle would cause damage to a mortal.

Image: Lord Galway is as tall as Kestry, but is easily twice his weight. In his mortal seeming, he appears like a middle-aged soldier with short-cropped red-brown hair and a faraway gaze in his hazel eyes. He walks the streets, apparently a tramp, yet he is too well-dressed and clean to actually be one.

In his fae seeming, he is a giant, even among trolls. His muscles ripple, and his braided beard and hair speak of his proud Norse ancestry. His chimeric armor is practical and solid-looking, though he sometimes embellishes it with Celtic knotwork patterns (when he has the time and energy). On the breastplate is a small heraldic design of House Liam's blasted silver tree.

Roleplaying Hints: You have sworn your life to the service of Kestry of House Liam, and you've never regretted that decision. Under your tutelage, the lad has turned out to be a fine leader. Some might question why a commoner should be so concerned with teaching a noble, but you've known from the first that Kestry is not like many of the

sidhe. It was very hard for you to stay in Belfast while Kestry was exiled. You did your best to hold the fort, and the ceasefire allowed many young Kithain to emerge as the children began to dream again. You have held the Brick Glade as a sort of open house for them, though you don't allow Unseelie to enter. When you acted as Kestry's second in his duel against Lorenzo, that sorry excuse for a sidhe swore he'd have his revenge against you. Upstart whelp! Let him try.

The Court of the Hidden King

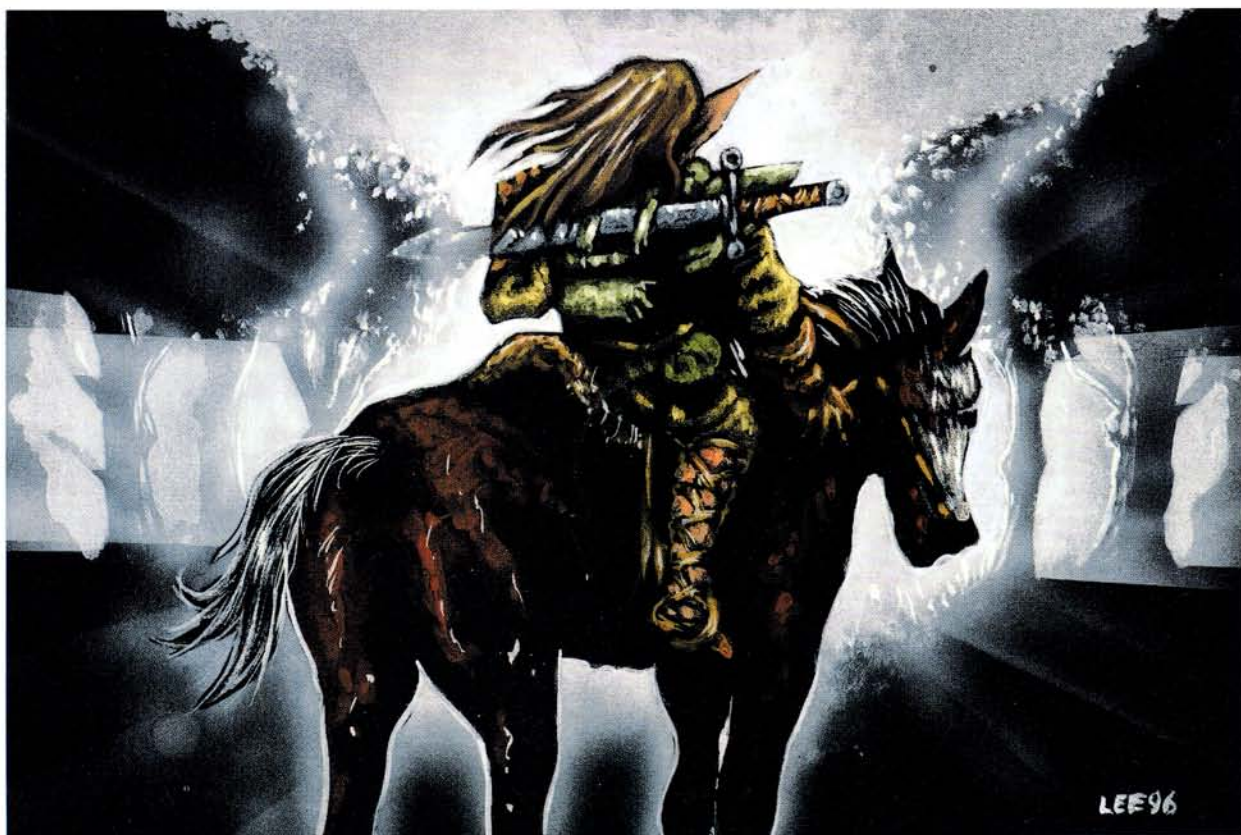
The forest of the Hidden King is a Glamour-enwrapped glen in which an ancient sidhe has dwelled since before the Shattering. It has one permanent resident: Meilseoir, who communicates with his guardians, the Riders of the Silver Court, through dreams. Because he is so old, the statistics given below are merely approximate to allow the Storytellers some idea of his actual power. It is quite likely that Meilseoir has other Arts that are lost to the fae of this time. Though he is described here as the heroes of the **Immortal Eyes** chronicle saw him, that may be only one of his many forms. Certainly he has treasures that have yet to be discovered by outsiders, some of which he might choose to bestow upon worthy and deserving changelings.

Meilseoir (pronounced MEL-shyahr)

So old that history was not yet written, so ancient that he has had many names (among them names of gods), Meilseoir has been the hidden source of much of the Glamour that keeps the island's megalithic stones and faerie mounds from falling fully to Banality. Foreseeing the fate that would befall the fae, he locked himself within the prison of his forest to await the day when the selkie queen's prophecy would be fulfilled.

There he has waited, constructing chimera and a castle of dreams to make his long exile bearable. His knowledge of temporal and dreaming Arts has mercifully allowed him respite from the tedium that has eventually killed other fae who retreated to glens to escape Banality and found themselves trapped all alone. Little happens in Hibernia that the king does not soon become aware of through tendrils of dreams, which reach him from even the most distant spots, or the news the Riders bring. He is able, at times, to reach beyond the threshold of his dream and summon certain Kithain to him. Whether they respond is not in his power to command.

Undoubtedly, Meilseoir is insane due to his long isolation within his glen. Luckily, his insanity takes the form of extreme dedication to a duty he set himself long ago.



Court: Seelie

Legacies: Regent/Riddler

House: Ailil (many claim he is Ailil)

Seeming: See below

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 6, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 7, Manipulation 5, Appearance 8

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 7, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 5, Expression 4, Intimidation 5, Kenning 5, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Crafts 4, Etiquette 4, Leadership 5, Melee 5, Performance 3, Temporal Sense 5

Knowledges: Dream Lore 5, Enigmas 5, History 4, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, other ancient tongues now lost) 4, Mythlore 4, Politics 4

Arts: Chicanery 5, Chronos 4, Dream-Craft 5, Primal 5, Soothsay 5, Wayfare 5

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 5, Nature 5, Scene 5

Backgrounds: Chimera 5, Contacts 5, Gremayre 5, Holdings 5, Title 6, Treasures 5, Trod 5

Glamour: 20

Banality: 0

Willpower: 9

Treasures: Not detailed, but see above for information on awarding treasure to worthy Kithain.

Image:

The companions saw a figure wreathed in the light of Glamour, his features impossible to distinguish through his glowing aura. Their eyes received only impressions of hair like spun gold and silver and copper, eyes that were at once as pale as morning and as dark as midnight, and a form that stood up to no description other than "beautiful."

...but this time they could see his face and form clearly outlined in the starlight that bathed his realm in its soft radiance. His features were as finely etched as if carved from crystal yet there was nothing frail in the strong line of his jaw or the firm set of his mouth. He wore armor that seemed made from the light of the stars beneath a midnight-colored cloak made of something richer than velvet.

—Jackie Cassada, *Court of All Kings*

Enough said.

Roleplaying Hints: More than any other king, you are the land. Yours is the spirit that keeps alive the light of Glamour in Hibernia. You are so old that you have forgotten more than you remember, but your duty holds you to the island, and will hold you still when others have once again opened the gates to Arcadia. All the changelings in Hibernia are your children and your responsibility; you cannot desert them, no matter what the cost to yourself. Guard them well.



The Unseelie Houses of Hibernia

Three other houses made the trip from Arcadia at the same time as the acknowledged five, though in such small numbers they are usually not accorded any particular notice or status. As they are all Unseelie, this is hardly surprising. House Ailil, which has known members throughout the world, also claimed a few freeholds in Hibernia. The others, members of Houses Balor and Leanhaun, did not originally come through in Concordia at all. As their ties lay more closely with Hibernia, they chose to travel smaller trods and concentrate on establishing bases in their "original" homeland. It is unknown whether the three Unseelie houses are working to further some Unseelie scheme — possibly to advance the aims of the Shadow Court — or in collusion with the Fomorians. Certainly House Balor has ties to those monstrous beings, if only those of shared blood (see the entry under House Balor in Chapter Two). Houses Ailil, Balor and Leanhaun are covered in more detail in **The Shadow Court**.

The Shadow Court

For all practical purposes, the “known” Shadow Court in Hibernia is a joke. Widely acknowledged as a catch-all for the powerless discontented (more like a drinking brotherhood for the whiners than anything else), no one is particularly disturbed at the thought that they might be planning a takeover. It would be more likely that they’d fall on their faces trying to take over the dart board at a local pub. Of course, that’s exactly what the real Shadow Court wants people to think. It gives them a little more room to work.

Composed of a number of members from Houses Ailil, Balor and Leanhaun, the Shadow Court has recognized the need for commoners among them as well. Many are seen as little more than cannon fodder in the eventual battle; others have skills the noble houses value and have been given titles — presumably ones they will get to keep “when the revolution comes.” Never ones to let little things like corruption and Banality stand in their way, the Shadow Court’s tentacles enmesh a few vampires and werewolves as well. Somewhere back in prehistory, the Black Spiral Dancers who have answered the call to join the Shadow Court of Hibernia are closely related to House Balor. Picts, Fir Bolg... there’s really little difference.

Those who belong to the real Shadow Court have all been required to prove their loyalty to the cause. This takes the form of some sort of test that each must pass. Those who succeed are known as the Initiated or the Blooded. Unknown to the patsies who believe they are the Unseele presence in Hibernia, the real Shadow Court meets at Dun Aenghus and on Tory Island. When Yrtalien of House Ailil made his presence in Hibernia known, there was a long debate on what to do with him. Many among the Shadow Court who noted that the prince was in the throes of Bedlam, voted for assassination before he could unbalance their own plans. Eventually, however, it was decided to let him do whatever it was he was up to and work behind the scenes to pick up whatever benefits came their way as a result.

House Ailil

House Ailil has a small presence in Hibernia, but only a few of them are involved with the actual Shadow Court.

Donal and Dougal O’Mallory

Not important (or annoying) enough to warrant being exiled, Dougal and Donal decided to make the trip to Earth as a lark. Sometime around 1979, they figured they’d take a small trod to Ireland and set themselves up as kings before a lot of other people even knew those trods



were open again. Twins in Arcadia and therefore closer than life, they decided they had to be twins on Earth as well. They set off down the trod quite merrily, little realizing that a convenient pair of male twins wouldn’t just be standing about near the exit point waiting to be taken over by faeries. They had to settle for a pair of about-to-be-borns in Sligo. Pity their poor mother, who was convinced the bratty children she had to raise must be changelings.

Some 17 years later, they are the bad boys of Sligo — and kings of the local pub. Slackers from the start, neither Donal nor Dougal amounted to much, being content to just drift along being “bad.” Their lack of real ambition has made the Shadow Court avoid them. Though they walk the walk, talk the talk and even Ravage when the mood suits them, they really don’t have the kind of guts and commitment it takes to be an important part of a revolutionary army. As far as the Shadow Court is concerned, if Donal and Dougal wanted to join, they’d be given the job of stabbing themselves to test the iron knives for sharpness.

Frankly, they simply aren’t mean enough. Like many mortals their age, they are looking for an identity. They go for style over substance and think they’ve got it covered. In many ways, they’d like to do the right thing and be heroes. They’ve just had lousy role models. Meeting Yrtalien and falling under his power is the

greatest danger the twins have ever faced. Whether they mature because of it and whether they choose to remain Unseelie has yet to be determined.

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Rake/Wayfarer

House: Ailil

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Kenning 3, Seduction 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Boating 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Melee 4, Performance 3, Security 3, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Computer 1, Enigmas 2, Geography 2, History 2, Investigation 1, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Medicine 2, Mythlore 2, Occult 2, Politics 1

Arts: Chicanery 2, Legerdemain 2, Primal 2, Soothsay 3, Sovereign 2, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 4, Fae 3, Nature 2, Prop 2, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 2, Greymare 2, Holdings 1, Resources 1, Title 1, Treasure 1



Glamour: 7

Banality: 4

Willpower: 3

Treasures: Each brother has a small bag of dross (worth about 3 Glamour).

Image: Donal and Dougal look just alike. In their mortal seeming, they are long-haired toughs in leather jackets and torn jeans. Their dark blond hair falls halfway down their backs, while in front it is an unruly mass of untrimmed bangs that obscures their gray eyes. The tips of their ears are pierced with silver rings. They'd look naked without the cigarettes dangling from their mouths.

In their fae forms, they look pretty much the same, though their ears are pointed and they seem a little "prettier." They don't go in for court dress, and have to work at coming up with chimeric armor that's cool-looking enough.

Roleplaying Hints: You and your brother are the juvenile delinquents of the faerie world. You've never gotten the kind of respect you think you should have, even though you're obviously cool. It doesn't matter what anyone else thinks, though. As long as you've got your brother, you'll be all right. But people had better stop messing with you!

Field Commander Doireannara (Doireann ni Leachlainn)

Exiled from Arcadia for her continual attempts to undermine the social order of fae society, Doireannara of House Ailil chose to return to Hibernia. An ancient sidhe, Doireannara went to Tory Island, where she contacted a number of her co-conspirators who had been exiled as well. Using Tory Island as their base, they set about building an Unseelie army and a true Shadow Court with the eventual goal of taking over Hibernia completely. Doireannara was named field commander of the army.

The North suited them. They were right in the midst (though shielded from) the Troubles. They held themselves aloof from the fighting between sidhe and commoners so that whenever they discovered disaffected "subjects" of the new sidhe kings, they could recruit them under their "revolutionary" banner. Doireannara has spent her time teaching noble and commoner alike the arts of warfare: battle, tactics, explosives, terrorist actions, subdual of occupied territories.... She is quite good at indoctrinating the troops with visions of a class-free fae society in charge of mortals who work to bring them Glamour. Many of her students have passed their final exams by constructing, planting and setting off bombs in

various parts of Northern Ireland, all as members of one terrorist outfit or another.

She is utterly dedicated to bringing about victory for her side. One of her greatest achievements in nullifying potential opposition has been the corruption of King Finn of Ulster. Sending out her Ravagers to draw off all the untainted Glamour in the province was inspired; sending her personal friend Lorenzo of House Balor to taint the king himself was worthy of a legend.

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Outlaw/Paladin

House: Ailil

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

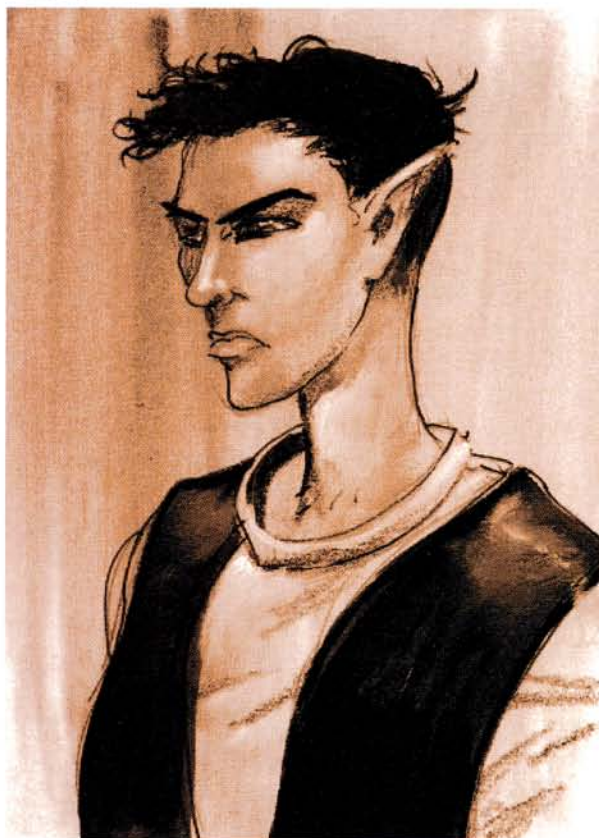
Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 6

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Expression (Oration) 4, Instruction 3, Intimidation 5, Intrigue 3, Kenning 3, Search 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3,

Skills: Archery 3, Disguise 4, Drive 3, Etiquette 4, Firearms 4, Leadership 4, Melee 4, Performance (Acting) 4, Security 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Temporal Sense 3



Knowledges: Computer 2, Enigmas 3, History 3, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, Pictish, French, German) 4, Medicine 2, Military Science 4, Mythlore 3, Occult 3, Politics 4, Psychology 3, Science (Chemistry, explosives) 4

Arts: Chicanery 3, Chronos 3, Primal 5, Sovereign 3, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 2, Fae 5, Prop 4, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 5, Contacts 5, Gremayre 4, Holdings 4, Resources 4, Retinue 3, Title 5, Treasures 5, Trods 3

Glamour: 8

Banality: 5

Willpower: 7

Treasures: Doireannara wears a flak jacket that not only provides her with an armor rating of 4 (she gets 4 extra dice to roll on soak rolls), but has been enchanted to turn chimerical melee strikes aside as well. If she succeeds in overcoming all damage rolled against her while wearing the jacket, her attacker must make a soak roll versus the damage he would have inflicted. Any damage that the attacker does not manage to offset affects him, in effect, bouncing back off the enchanted armor.

Image: Ramrod straight and with a no-nonsense military bearing, Doireannara puts to rest for all time the notion that women can't be soldiers. Though she is not overly strong, she has the body of an active athlete. Her height of just under six feet gives her an advantage in intimidation attempts (not that she needs it). Her curly black hair is close-cropped, ending just below her ears, and her eyes are a gun-metal blue. She favors practical soldier's gear, disdaining dresses and heels as "useless rubbish." She dons feminine clothing when she must deal with someone who wouldn't understand her usual attire or when she wishes to travel incognito.

In her fae seeming, she looks much the same, but her tight-lipped revolutionary zeal can almost be seen sparking from her eyes. Those who have seen Doireannara lose her temper haven't lived to tell about it, so there are no reports whether she's "beautiful when she's angry."

Roleplaying Hints: You are in charge of the army that's going to change the world. Enough with the "protect the dreamers" crap. They should be down on their knees thanking the fae for teaching them how to dream in the first place. Things will change when the Shadow Court comes into its own. No more lazy, useless, pathetic changelings who can't pull their own weight. If they can't make it in the new society, you don't need them. They'll take up space and whine for their share of the Glamour. You'll give them Glamour all right. At the business end of a mortar.

House Balor

Though it has been forgotten by all but a few of the eldest fae, the Kithain of House Balor trace their ancestry back to a line of sidhe who mixed their blood with that of the Fomorians. Each member of House Balor therefore has some sort of deformity — physical, mental or emotional. While this does handicap them to some extent, the Fomorian blood shields them from the worst effects of iron. While cold iron still causes members of House Balor some discomfort, they take no penalty when performing tasks while in contact with the metal, nor do they lose any points of temporary Glamour when struck by iron weapons. If slain by an iron weapon, however, their faerie souls are destroyed just like any other changeling's.

Many changelings of House Balor flirt with disaster by carrying and utilizing iron weapons as a way of thumbing their noses at the other sidhe. They do not suffer from Banality's Curse, the frailty of most sidhe. They are even more likely to fall into fits of depression, however. Additionally, not all members of the house are Unseelie. As other fae forget House Balor's origins, the house forgets they have boasted such heroes as Lugh of the Long Arm and Cuchulainn among their number.

If their particular deformities bring them powers (such as Balor's burning eye), they haven't admitted it to anyone. It is believed that the powers ascribed to the ancient Fomorians were not passed along to their half-breed offspring. While some members of House Balor are cooperating with the Shadow Court, the House has its own agenda which it hopes to eventually implement. For now, they act in concert with Houses Ailil and Leanhaun, content to bask in the prestige of bringing the Black Spiral Dancers and the modern Fomori into an alliance with the Unseelie.

"Black-Tongue" Dooley

No one but Black-Tongue himself remembers his fae name. Exiled to Earth, he met Doireannara of House Ailil and became her most ardent recruit. Foul in the extreme, no crime is too hideous for Dooley. He has raped children, tortured helpless captives, stolen food intended for a homeless shelter, given a heroin overdose to a 12-year-old just to see what would happen, and blown up a nursery school all in the pursuit of Glamour. He makes an art form of pain and torture, delighting in causing mental anguish in equal measure.





Dooley is most effective as the silent, sinister figure who lurks behind Doireannara whenever she addresses the troops. If they respect and fear her, they are terrified of Dooley. He has only to lick his lips with his putrescent black tongue to command instant obedience. He likes it that way. He delights in inflicting little tortures even on his comrades-in-arms, requiring them to stand perfectly still for half an hour while balancing on their toes, for instance. Alternatively, he occasionally requires "favors" to refrain from such pastimes. Inability (or refusal) to perform is met with swift and painful punishment. Unknown to Black-Tongue, however, Doireannara has begun watching him. If she thinks he's going too far (such as driving away recruits with his excesses), she'll squash him like the bug he is.

Because of his particular deformity (a hideous-looking black and putridly rotting tongue), Black-Tongue cannot speak. He communicates either by gesture or through writing out his questions, answers and thoughts. Nor can he taste food. Trying to cheat his condition, Black-Tongue has secretly captured and imprisoned a silversmith of House Dougal. Chained with cold iron, the hapless changeling is forced to work long hours attempting to

create a working silver tongue for Dooley. If he is successful, Dooley will demand several replacement tongues, then kill him. Should he get a working tongue, Dooley would be in a unique position to spy on House Dougal, who would undoubtedly believe he had made the tongue for himself in response to his own tongue's loss.

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Beast/Crafter

House: Balor

Seeming: Grump

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Intimidation 5, Kenning 2, Search 4, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Drive 3, Firearms 4, Melee 3, Security 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Mythlore 2, Occult 4

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 4, Wayfare 4

Realms: Actor 5, Fae 3, Nature 3, Scene 1

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 3, Gremayre 1, Resources 3, Title 1

Glamour: 7

Banality: 6

Willpower: 4

Treasures: None

Image: Black-Tongue looks like one of those broken-down bums who walk the streets mumbling to themselves and glaring at passers-by. He has muddy brown hair and rheumy brown eyes, a four-day stubble and rumpled clothing of some indeterminate color. He hunches along, hands in pockets.

In his fae seeming, his hair becomes a tangled knot of graying brown and the stubble masquerades as a short beard. His mouth is a brown slash in his face, and his black tongue lolls half out of it, dripping saliva down his chin. When he manages to pull his tongue in, he looks almost normal, though still ugly for a sidhe.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a pain artist. You know you intimidate people, and you revel in it. Because you cannot speak, you carry a black notebook with you to write out whatever communications you need to. Use that to your advantage; make it look like you're keeping notes on people and their performance. Look as menacing as possible and grunt occasionally.

House Leanhaun

Members of House Leanhaun are intimately tied to mortal inspiration, and those who chose to leave Earth suffered greatly during their enforced isolation in Arcadia. Like all fae, the Leanhaun need Glamour; unlike others, without Glamour they begin to age rapidly. Cut a childling Leanhaun off from regular, hefty infusions of Glamour, and within a matter of months, she has undergone a painful metamorphosis into a wilder. A year or so later and she is a grump. Within three to five years, she has become an ancient, wizened hag who is nearing death. Though other fae know that this house is so cursed, they are unaware of the cure for it. If they knew, they would probably hunt down all the members of House Leanhaun and extinguish them regardless of the cost to their faerie souls.

Rhapsody

The effects of aging can be reversed given a little time and a lot of potent Glamour. While any Glamour will stop the unnatural aging process, actually reversing it takes a special kind of Glamour, called Rhapsody, that is engendered by particularly creative mortals in response to the Leanhaun's influence. Rather than simply inspiring mortals indirectly, those of House Leanhaun have the ability to directly channel faerie Glamour into a talented individual — a practice which the fae are expressly forbidden to engage in. This is called creating a Rhapsody. The mortal who is thus inspired burns with enhanced creativity, pouring his whole life into his art, be it music, poetry, prose, painting, sculpture, dance or any other art form. The Leanhaun feed off the Glamour thus produced, drinking it in and using it to reverse aging or to maintain their present age for an unnaturally long period of time.

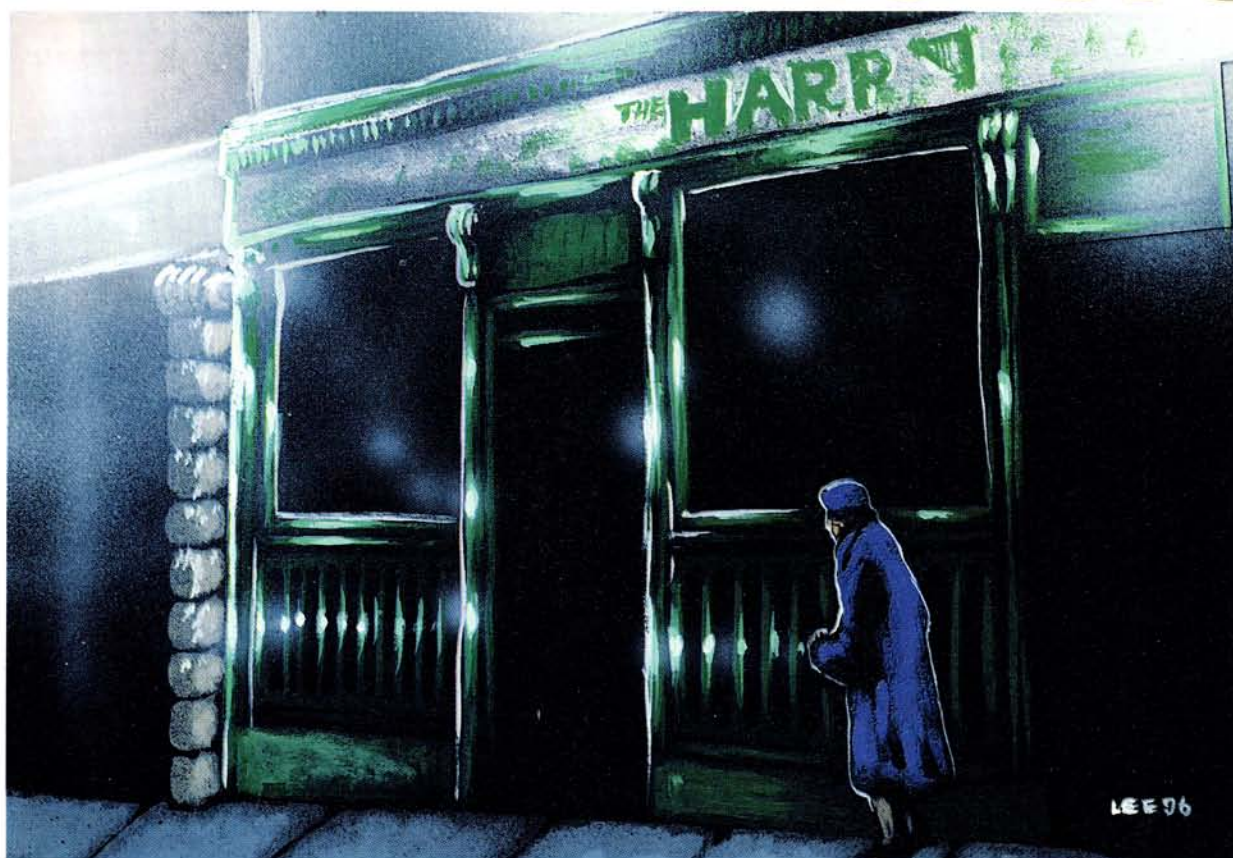
Often fae of House Leanhaun become the lovers of those they Rhapsodize, and the mortals become utterly obsessed with their sidhe lovers. Such a direct channel to the Dreaming and the creative and emotional outpouring it produces is very dangerous for the mortals involved. While they fashion the sort of amazing art that every artist aspires to and only a few ever produce, their absolute focus on and devotion to their faerie lovers robs them of the ability to properly care for themselves. Like meteors that streak across the sky leaving glory in their wake, mortals touched by the Leanhaun sidhe live all too briefly, burning out with a rapturous, incandescent flare.

John O'Dreams (Jamie MacLeod)

Like many others of his house, John suffered greatly during his time in Arcadia. Although he could not die, even the Glamour of the Dreaming could not completely keep him from aging. Beset by the infirmity and pains of extreme old age, John convinced some of his younger acquaintances to bring him to Hibernia when the trods once again opened in 1969. Rather than take a handy adult body and have it immediately shrivel with age, John chose to take the body of a young child. The shock of the transference muddled many of John's memories, and he has had to rebuild many of his Abilities from scratch.

Soon after John became Jamie MacLeod, his father, Camden, an accomplished, but uninspired musician, began to compose and play brilliantly. His group attracted considerable attention in his home town of Waterford and began doing small tours of Ireland. Though it seemed ridiculous to the other band members, Camden insisted that Jamie travel with them. Before they could be signed to a recording contract, however, Camden suffered a massive coronary and died. Jamie was heartbroken.





As he grew into a teenager, Jamie seemed to always be on the fringe of crowds that gathered around newly discovered geniuses, mostly musicians — who invariably died within a year or so of seeing their talent blossom. When he reached age 17, Jamie decided that he'd grown old enough. Reveling in his youthful body, he now travels throughout Ireland, playing music and meeting and inspiring mortals as the mood strikes him and the need arises. He believes that those whose genius he nurtures would have died in obscurity, never reaching the heights they were capable of without his help. But he's beginning to wonder if it's worth it. He gives them a wondrous year or two of bliss and perfection, and suffers dreadfully when each one inevitably dies. Every time it happens he swears he'll never Rhapsodize another mortal, but another one comes along, and he remembers what it was like being old and sick and knows he can't face that again, no matter what the cost. And another mortal is lost. And he retains that golden youth, but his heart turns to Winter inside him.

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Rake/Wayfarer

House: Leanhaun

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Sidhe

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Kenning 3, Seduction 5, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Craft 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Melee 4, Performance (traditional music) 5, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Art 3, Enigmas 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic) 2, Medicine 1, Mythlore 3, Occult 1, Philosophy 2, Psychology 2, Theatre 2

Arts: Chicanery 2, Soothsay 4, Sovereign 3, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 4, Fae 3, Scene 3

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 3, Dreamers 5, Gremayre 1, Resources 1, Retinue 4, Title (unclaimed) 3

Glamour: 9

Banality: 3

Willpower: 6

Treasures: None

Image: John O' Dreams, as he bills himself, is of average height, but a bit on the thin side. He has wavy russet hair that falls to his shoulders and deep brown eyes that people can get lost in. His face is androgynous looking, with enough masculine and feminine qualities to it that he seems both attractive and unthreatening.

In his fae seeming, he is taller, his thinness translated into slenderness. His eyes become pools of shadow that drink in all they see. In both forms he prefers trousers and boots, open-necked pirate-style shirts

and vests. He never wears court attire, as he never attends court. He finds the whole "noble" versus commoner thing dull. Kind of like living in Arcadia.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the muse that inspires great art in mortals. Their lives are yours to mold, and you must help them make the most of the short time they have. Love each of your mortals unsparingly, with true devotion. After all, they won't be around for long, a tragic side effect of your Glamour-laden touch. No one can understand how incredibly sad that makes you.





GUAY



Chapter Five: Commoners

Between the plethora of kings, queens, dukes, duchesses, countesses, barons and knights that populate the Irish countryside, it sometimes feels as though you'd be hard-put to find a commoner in the place. That isn't true, of course, but the Irish are so used to "watching the royals" that even the lowest redcap sometimes claims to be the second cousin of the wife of the duke of Ballymacwhatever.

Nonetheless, there are plenty of motleys. In fact, Ireland boasts an enormous number of commoners for its relatively small size. Luckily, the fae went underground (literally) hundreds of years ago, or the land would be so covered with fae there'd be no room for the sheep!

Only a few of the many, many commoners of Hibernia are detailed below. Most aren't even the most powerful ones, just people the characters are likely to meet. Feel free to add in others as you see fit.

The Scalawags

Claiming to bring art to the benighted souls of the more rural parts of Hibernia, the Scalawags are a traveling repertory company cum circus. Among their number they claim a nocker (Miles), a troll (Tully), an eshu (Evangeline) and a pooka (Wisp), making them one of the most diverse and notable motleys in Ireland. Traveling in traditional caravans from place to place, they rarely travel more than 10 miles in a day. When they reach a likely area, they make camp, set up a makeshift stage, and advertise their presence to the community.

Somewhat unorthodox in their repertoire, they are actually more like commedia del arte performers than actors. Their favorite tactic is to invite (coerce) members of the audience to join them onstage to read (and act out) the bit parts — particularly those that feature saucy double-entendres (for the adult crowds) or silly pratfalls

and wardrobes (for the children's shows). While they make the participants look like utter fools, the volunteers rarely have a problem. Most revel in the chance to do something a little silly, and the attention it brings them isn't unwelcome. A lot of them wait for the next year's show with great anticipation, hoping to be chosen again. There's nothing really mean-spirited in the shows, and people intuitively understand that it's all in fun and respond in kind. The Glamour the audience (and performers) give off is more than sufficient reward for the Scalawags.

Miles Leighton

Miles was never happy living at home. He always seemed to get in arguments with his parents, especially when they caught him taking apart the radio, the television, the stove... all in the name of making them work better. Eventually he went through his Chrysalis, discovered his nature, and decided he didn't need to live at home anymore.

Miles had always wanted to see more of the world, and he got his chance when a traveler (usually mis-called a tinker) gave him a ride in his caravan after Miles helped him fix a broken wheel. He loved it and decided he'd never again live anywhere else but in a caravan. Saving the money he made doing odd jobs, he managed to buy into the lucrative tourist caravan trade, which made enough

money for him to purchase caravans for his own use. In the meantime he met Tully and Evangeline, and the three took to traveling together. When Miles realized that Evangeline's stories and Tully's strong man act were bringing in money, he and the others recruited some like-minded Kithain and started the Scalawags.

Although he claims he prefers to "just work on the wagons and props and take care of the business end," Miles is actually never happier than when he's onstage playing the hot-under-the-collar father of the bride-to-be or assisting a patsy from the audience to make a fool of himself. He would never admit that Wisp's singing entralls him, or that he secretly adores Evangeline, though he hasn't got a clue what she's really like. Despite his gruff exterior and rough language, Miles has found a life and a family he loves.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Bumpkin/Grotesque

Seeming: Grump (barely)

Kith: Nocker

Physical: Strength 3 Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Expression (acting) 2, Intimidation 2, Kenning 2, Streetwise 2

Skills: Crafts 4, Caravan Driving 4, Drive 1, Firearms 1, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Performance 1, Repair 5, Security 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 1, Law 1, Medicine 1, Mythlore 2, Theatre 1

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 3, Primal 2, Wayfare 2

Realms: Actor 4, Fae 2, Prop 5

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 2, Dreamers 2, Gremayre 1, Resources 2

Glamour: 7

Banality: 5

Willpower: 5

Treasures: None

Image: Miles is "just under" 5' 9" (or so he says—he's actually barely pushing 5' 7") and a little on the chubby side. He wears carefully pressed jeans (none of this "lived in" look for Miles) and colorful paisley shirts with sports sandals over thick woolen socks. He is apparently glued into a woolen cap as well, and his scraggly blond hair spills out from underneath it, looking as if it hasn't been combed for years. His eyes are a watery blue.

In his fae form, his hair bleaches out to white, his ears become sharply pointed, and his face becomes a clownish white with a spot of red on each cheek and one on his nose as if he'd been on a week-long drunk. He goes whole-hog on



clothing when in this form, with swirls and curves decorating so much of his attire that those looking at him too long or intently might become nauseated or motion sick.

Roleplaying Hints: You are what you are. Some people might think its a little strange that you hang out with trolls and sluagh and eshu and run a theatrical company. Well @*&\$ 'em!

Evangeline (Eileen MacNamara)

Born in the Bogside (the Catholic area of Derry) from the union of a local girl and a black British soldier, Eileen was kept secret for the first three years of her life. Her mother feared that the baby might suffer or be killed if anyone knew about her affair with one of the hated "Brits." Eventually, her mother managed to scrape together enough money to move to Liverpool. Eileen ran away from home when she was 11 after she discovered her faerie nature. She returned to Ireland where she met the person who would become her mentor and give her a direction to her life, Doireannara of House Ailil.

Under the Unseelie commander's tutelage, Eileen learned all the skills necessary to become the perfect spy and assassin. She traveled to many remote areas on funds provided by the Shadow Court and learned techniques from various terrorist groups. Even those groups who initially refused to deal with her because she was a woman eventually yielded their secrets to her. Of course, enchanting them helped. She returned to Ireland and began moving around the countryside discovering information for the Shadow Court and doing the occasional wet work. So far, these have been humans (and one vampire who couldn't fight back because she was in torpor), but Evangeline dreads the day when she's asked to kill a changeling. Her travels with the Scalawags afford her the perfect cover.

Evangeline plays the part of "Egyptian royalty" to the hilt, using kohl on her eyes, speaking in a foreign accent, and moving in a very languorous fashion. She is always attended by her faithful bodyguard Tully, who not only watches over her, but fetches and carries and puts up with a lot of teasing from her as well.

Though she is committed to the cause of Ireland's freedom from "the oppressive regime of the sidhe overlords," and she certainly doesn't mind the idea of having her own barony, Evangeline is beginning to notice that with each killing more Banality clings to her. She truly enjoys her roles as actress, fortune teller, dancer and storyteller with the Scalawag Players, and genuinely likes all the people she travels with. If only someone could infect her with a sense of right and wrong....

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Outlaw/Courtier



House: Affiliated with House Ailil

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Eshu

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Expression 4, Intimidation 2, Intrigue 3, Kenning 3, Search 3, Seduction 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Disguise 4, Etiquette 3, Firearms 4, Melee 4, Performance 3, Security 4, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, Arabic) 2, Medicine 2, Mythlore 2, Politics 3

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 1, Primal 2, Soothsay 2, Wayfare 4

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 3, Scene 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Contacts 3, Gremayre 2, Holding (3), Mentor 4, Resources 1 (3), Title (3). Treasure 3

Note: The numbers in parentheses indicate backgrounds that Evangeline has been promised should she accomplish all her mentor's tasks.

Glamour: 8

Banality: 5

Willpower: 4

Treasures: Evangeline has been promised a barony and several treasures when she completes her mentor's agenda. At present, she actually owns two treasures of her own. The first is a bag of feathers. When placed on or under a pillow, they assure the sleeper of a good night's rest and pleasant dreams. The second treasure is an ever-replenishing pot of kohl that comes all the way from Egypt. Though the eshu she got it from (won on a bet) swears it belonged to Cleopatra, Evangeline isn't dumb enough to fall for that one.

Image: With her dusky skin, almond-shaped violet eyes and midnight black silky hair, Evangeline is one of the most beautiful non-sidhe many Kithain have ever seen. Were her skin a little lighter, she would look a lot like the young Elizabeth Taylor. Evangeline dresses in flowing, Gypsy-esque clothing with an Egyptian flavor (an ank and a golden collar set with blue and red glass beads reminiscent of the ones worn by the pharaohs). She moves easily from her usual attire to the costumes used on stage to her "fortune teller garb." When on a job, she always disguises herself and wears black clothing similar to that worn by ninjas (for ease of movement and concealment).

In her fae form, she is even more striking. Her hair falls in silken waves almost to her knees, and her eyes have a luminescent quality. She prefers to create chimerical clothing that looks like that worn by Egyptian queens (gauzy garments, colorful jewelry, golden sandals, etc.). As the gauze is see-through for the most part, she has quite shocked some of the more staid members of courts from Cairo to Coleraine.

Roleplaying Hints: By day, you are one of the ever-clever, humorous and lovable Scalawag Players. By night, you are sometimes called upon to be someone else entirely. You are a black cat prowling through the darkness. You enter unseen and unheard, take what you're told is needed or slay whoever you're asked to kill for the cause. You're beginning to tire of the violence, though. At first, it was a challenge, a bet you made with yourself to see if you could do it. Lately, it's just been a bore.

Tully (Thomas Tully)

Tom Tully barely qualifies as a wilder. Born in Cork, he was always a large child who tripped over his own feet. The other kids made fun of him, implying that since he was so big, his brain must be really small. He learned early on that it wasn't acceptable to smash the ones who laughed at him. But he could take out his frustrations on a punching bag and dream of being a great hero.

On a trip to a small, local museum, he literally stumbled upon a packing crate that was half-open and sitting next to a display case. Reaching inside to make certain he hadn't broken whatever was in there, he pulled out a magnificent Viking helm. The Glamour within the helm enveloped him,



triggering the beginning of his Chrysalis. A beautiful lady found him and helped him through it. When he was well enough, she urged him to come with her to get the training he needed since he was apparently a very special someone after all. Her name was Evangeline, and she helped him learn to be a warrior. The two of them traveled around, with him doing strong man tricks and her telling stories, until they met up with Miles and became part of an official traveling show.

Tully loves Evangeline fiercely, thinking of her as his second mother. Since he knows he is much bigger and stronger, he swore that he would always protect her. Tully knows that Evangeline has a secret life, but he has no idea what it entails. He believes that she is a freedom fighter for equal rights for all Kithain, and it makes him proud to be her personal bodyguard. He would do just about anything to protect her.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Paladin/Wretch

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Troll

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Kenning 2

Skills: Crafts (weaponsmith) 4, Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Melee 4, Performance 3

Knowledges: Computer 1, Law 1, Military Science 3, Mythlore 2

Arts: Primal 3, Wayfare 1

Realms: Actor 2, Fae 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 2, Gremayre 2, Resources 1, Treasures 3

Glamour: 8

Banality: 4

Willpower: 4

Treasures: Tully has a Viking helmet which he wears when he thinks he'll have to go into battle. It has been enchanted, and when worn it gives him an extra Health Level before he becomes Bruised.

Image: As a mortal, Tully stands just over 6' 6" tall and weighs about 230 lbs. He has bright orange hair and green eyes. He wears jeans, shirts, sweaters and boots, and whatever costume Evangeline thinks is appropriate for his appearances onstage. Tully has been trying (unsuccessfully) to grow a beard. Maybe when he's 15....

In his fae seeming, Tully's skin takes on a bluish tinge, his hair darkens to a deep black, and his eyes shine like emeralds. His chimeric armor has a distinctly Nordic look about it, and he carries a huge chimeric war axe.

Roleplaying Hints: Life is lots more fun in a traveling show. You get to have lots of friends, and go different places, and show everybody how strong you are, and best of all, nobody laughs at you except when you're trying to be funny onstage! Sometimes, though, you wish Miles would buy new wheels for the caravans. You get tired of having to hold up the whole wagon while he fixes a broken wheel.

Wisp (Wilsie Brody)

Wisp refuses to divulge either her true background or her real name. Of course, trying to elicit that information from a pooka can be a trial in any case. A gifted singer and instrumentalist, Wisp joined the traveling show after she apparently wore out her welcome in Limerick. Something about too many dirty puns in her poems....

In actuality, Wisp is on the run from her mother's uncle Doyle, a pooka who recently became one of the Dauntain. He knows of Wisp's changeling nature, and is determined to "save her from herself." Uncle Doyle was the one who saw Wisp through her Chrysalis when she first learned that she was an Irish wolfhound pooka, and taught her what she knows about the Kithain. Wisp's last image of him was of a terrifyingly tall monster looming over her with an iron-tipped club in

his hands. The frightened pooka ran as far as she could, then hid out in the group's costume wagon. When discovered some two days later, she begged to join the show and has been with them ever since. They provide a good cover, and would defend her if Uncle Doyle ever showed up.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Orchid/Fool

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Pooka

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Expression 4, Kenning 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Disguise 2, Melee 1, Performance 5, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Enigmas 2, Mythlore 2

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 2, Soothsay 2

Realms: Fae 3, Nature 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Gremayre 3, Mentor (Miles) 3, Resources 1

Glamour: 8

Banality: 4

Willpower: 3



Treasures: None

Image: Wisp looks nothing whatsoever like her name. She is 5' 10" tall, and well-muscled, with a happy, though not overly pretty face. She has short, shaggy light hair that looks as though she has prematurely grayed. She prefers big, loose shirts belted over jeans and walking shoes. She and Tully often end up at the same place looking for new clothes. As a laugh (or sad jest), she wears a spiked dog collar.

While her ears and tail are no more evident than any Irish wolfhound's, her overall structure and facial hair (the envy of Tully and Wilsie's bane) identify her as what she is immediately. She doesn't have any court clothes except the bardic costumes she wears for performances.

Roleplaying Hints: You've started to relax a little. Maybe your uncle can't find you so long as you continue to travel around, never staying in any one place very long. Your playing and singing have become so much better, honed by hours of practice and nightly performances, that you could probably ask for a position as bard at any court, but you like the people you're with and feel safer staying on the move. Just remember, though, your uncle is out there somewhere. That bump in the night may be nothing at all, but it may very well be him coming to get you. Take no chances.

Independents

While not a part of any specific motley, the following are examples of commoners that the characters are likely to encounter while in Ireland. Shanachie travels all over the island and could presumably meet the characters anywhere; he might even serve as a link between stories, with his eshu talents and bardic insight enabling him to point the characters in the right direction. Robin is a part of the group that is gathered around Kestry, the former duke of Belfast, and provides a good excuse to get the characters noticed by Kestry or Galway. Gaddy "Bull" McDonough (and his gang of childling redcap clones) makes a nice twist to throw against the characters when they're relaxing in a pub somewhere.

Shanachie (James Spencer)

Born in Belfast the same year that the sidhe returned to earth, James has lived among the Troubles all his life. He went through his childhood and teen years completely unaware of his faerie nature due to the unending stresses and the Banality that were the result of those unsettled times. Despite the madness that periodically took hold in the city, he managed to get through university with a degree in English and his love of stories and old tales

intact. He had always wanted to travel, and had just made up his mind to do so when the cease-fire began in 1994. James was swept up in the relief and renewal of dreams in the region. Before he knew what had happened, he had entered his Chrysalis.

Lord Galway found him and brought him to the Brick Glade, where he emerged into his eshu nature and learned about the Kithain. After spending a month or so becoming knowledgeable about his other heritage, James decided he was ready to try traveling again. Armed with the names of a few places where changelings congregated, he left home for the first time. He need not have worried about money. Everywhere he went, his stories brought him recognition, meals, drinks and free lodgings. He told old tales and newly created ones celebrating both his Irish and English sides, helping each group learn to better understand the other. People began calling him "the Shanachie," after the storytellers who used to travel through Ireland telling tales and spreading news. The name stuck.

He has often run across two other travelers, and whenever the three happen to be in the same spot (which occurs more frequently than it might, since they are all eshu), James, Richard and Jonathan all band together and do round-robin storytelling to the absolute delight of all the locals. One of them begins a story, then breaks off in mid-sentence. The next in line takes up the narrative, then he stops, leaving the third one to finish the story. Each tale has to have some point or moral to it (often a humorous or punning one). Then they switch places and the one who went second begins. Whoever can't hold up his part of the narrative (by vote of the audience and the other two tellers) has to buy each of the others a drink. Needless to say, by the end of the evening the stories are getting very creative and hardly intelligible.

Since 1994, Shanachie has become a noted traveler. Kithain seek out the pubs where he stops for the evening, hoping to gain Glamour from his deft storytelling, and they are rarely disappointed, as are mortals who have heard of his reputation. Those who stop to give a ride to the tall dark-haired stranger are also in luck, for he never refuses a request for a telling. He gains in knowledge as he travels, too. Changelings from all over the island share stories and local news with him, and he has quickly progressed in learning Arts and Realms as others offer to teach him in return for his tales. Though he has not yet been asked to join the Harpers of Erin, members of that group have been observing him since his Chrysalis, and it is certain that he'll be offered a spot before the year is out.



Court: Seelie

Legacies: Sage/Rogue

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Eshu

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression (Storytelling) 5, Kenning 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Leadership 3, Melee 2, Performance 4, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Knowledges: Computer 2, Enigmas 3, History 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic) 1, Mythlore 3, Occult 3, Politics 2, Theatre 3, Theology 2

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 2, Sovereign 2, Wayfare 4

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 4, Scene 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 2, Contacts 5, Dreamers 4, Gremayre 3, Resources 1, Treasures 2

Glamour: 9

Banality: 3

Willpower: 6

Treasures: Shanachie has one treasure, an enchanted sleeping bag that keeps him dry and warm regardless of the weather.

Image: Shanachie is tall, just over 6' and of average weight. He has relatively short dark brown hair, a goatee and brown eyes. He dresses in practical traveling clothes, though he takes along a nice tunic or two for performances. He wears a golden torque given to him by King Bran of Leinster in recognition of his art.

In his fae seeming, his hair is somewhat longer and glints with auburn highlights. His dark eyes glitter with the light of the stars, and he becomes even taller. He wears no chimeric armor; instead he carries a chimeric pennon which proclaims him to be a true bard. So many changelings recognize him as such (including all four of the Great Kings of Ireland), that anyone attacking him would be hunted down.

Roleplaying Hints: You are both dreamer and dream, the storyteller and part of the ongoing tale. Though you have only recently emerged from your long night of ignorance, you have embraced your fae nature and seek to bring the same joy to all those around you.

Robin McAllister

Robin came into her fae seeming less than six months ago. She fainted in a shop in the city center as her Chrysalis overcame her. Lord Galway managed to get to her and took her back to the Brick Glade where the rest of the city's Kithain joined him (at least the ones Galway allows in the Brick Glade). She has been coming to terms with her pooka heritage ever since.

Robin's mother is a writer of children's books. Her latest work is being illustrated by Alicia Daniels, a San Francisco-based artist noted for her fantasy-inspired paintings (and incidentally, the mother of Morgan Daniels). She has often written stories based on wild tales Robin tells her, and has lately been very inspired by her daughter's newest inventions. Robin gains Glamour from her mother's stories in return.

Though she is young-looking for her age, appearing to be around 10, not 13, Robin is on the verge of wilderhood. She has a crush on Kestry, a development he is aware of to some degree, though he doesn't realize how serious it is to Robin. She's been plotting for some time to come up with new ways to get him to notice her in the way she would like him to.

Robin is a regular at the Brick Glade, often stopping there after school to do her homework and hang out. She is especially fond of flying up into the tree in the center while in her robin form and then swinging down as a girl. She has been known to start a drop out of the treetop, then change to robin form halfway down. Luckily, she hasn't been inadvertently seen by someone as she attempts this — the



results could be somewhat catastrophic! As might be gathered, she is fearless in the way children can be when they don't seriously consider the idea that they can be killed.

Strangely, Robin seems to be able to tell almost the exact truth to those she likes. Doing so for those she doesn't like (bullies, bores and mean-spirited people) is much harder for her, perhaps in compensation. She is considered a treasure by both Galway and Kestry, one of the new childlings to emerge as the Troubles seemed to be ending.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Orchid/Riddler

Seeming: Childling

Kith: Pooka

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity (Light Touch) 4, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma (Cute) 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 1

Talents: Alertness (Keen-eyed) 4, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 4, Empathy 1, Kenning 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Crafts 1, Etiquette 1, Performance 2, Stealth (Light) 4, Science 1

Knowledges: Computer 1, Enigmas 1, Mythlore 1, Occult 1

Arts: Chicanery 1, Primal 2, Soothsay 1

Realms: Actor 1, Nature 2, Scene 1

Backgrounds: Chimera 2, Dreamers 1, Mentor (Galway) 3

Glamour: 7

116

Immortal Eyes: Court of all Kings

Banality: 2

Willpower: 4

Treasures: None

Image: Robin is small for her age, slender and light on her feet. Her hair is a pretty auburn, and her eyes change color from green to blue to gray depending on the colors she is wearing and her mood. She is most often seen in her school clothes, though she likes wearing nice dresses and also goes for the jeans and T-shirt look.

In her fae seeming, her hair becomes brilliant red, and she has small, downy feathers behind her ears. She has yet to have occasion to work up chimeric court clothing. She does, however, occasionally make herself a chimeric bracelet or necklace.

Roleplaying Hints: Until recently you didn't even know you were a faerie child. You'd always thought you might be a princess in disguise, however. Now you've met other changelings, and come to really love one of them in particular. Somehow, you have to gain his love, but you can't let him know how you really feel about him. He'd just say you're too young. He used to be the duke of the city, and was banished, but now he's back. Even though he's a sidhe, he isn't stuck-up. Maybe you can show him that you are brave and resourceful so he'll know you can help him keep the city from "falling to Lorenzo's depredations" (whatever that means).

Gaddy "Bull" McDonough

Born in the Irish Town section of Limerick, Gaddy was a troublemaker from the age of six, when he came into his redcap nature. Neighbors around the McDonough household had begun to complain about missing pets (as well as pies from window sills, a pottery plant holder and all the trash bin lids), by the time he decided he couldn't live at home anymore. So at the age of 10, Gaddy now runs his own gang — all of them redcap childlings like himself. The other local changelings stay out of their chosen territory except to occasionally "lose" some money, clothing or other useful items so the kids will be able to make it on their own. The gang, who call themselves Bull's Bullyboys, lives together in an abandoned house. The house is never slated for demolition, though it has sat apparently empty for over 50 years.

Gaddy changed his name to Bull so he'd get more respect. His gang members have chosen similarly evocative names (Cool, Killer, Demolition and Razor). Cool lords it over the other gang members as she's the only female. Bull lets her run with the gang because, "She's entitled, okay?" What he doesn't tell the others is that Cool fought him to a bloody standstill for the right — and damn near beat him! They pull petty thefts, shake down kids for treat money, and sneak in places for fun. Together



they form a clique that goes Glamour-gathering at bakeries, toy stores and other areas where children congregate and dream of wonders. When annoying adults, the gang's favorite tactic is to gorge on really vile garbage then throw up in front of them.

He has "forgotten" to tell the rest of the gang why he insists that someone always stay on guard during the day to warn the others if anyone gets curious about the house. It has to do with the vampire who sleeps in the root cellar. Bull agreed to act as daytime guard for the renegade Tremere, Brendan Garrity, in return for a permanent place to live. The two hardly ever meet.

Court: Unseelie

Legacies: Grotesque/Wayfarer

Seeming: Childling

Kith: Redcap

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2, Kenning 2, Search 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Firearms 1, Leadership 2, Melee 2, Security 3, Survival (Urban) 4

Knowledges: Enigmas 1, Mythlore 1, Special Knowledge: Movie Trivia 2

Arts: Chicanery 1, Legerdemain 4

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Holdings 1

Glamour: 6

Banality: 5

Willpower: 4

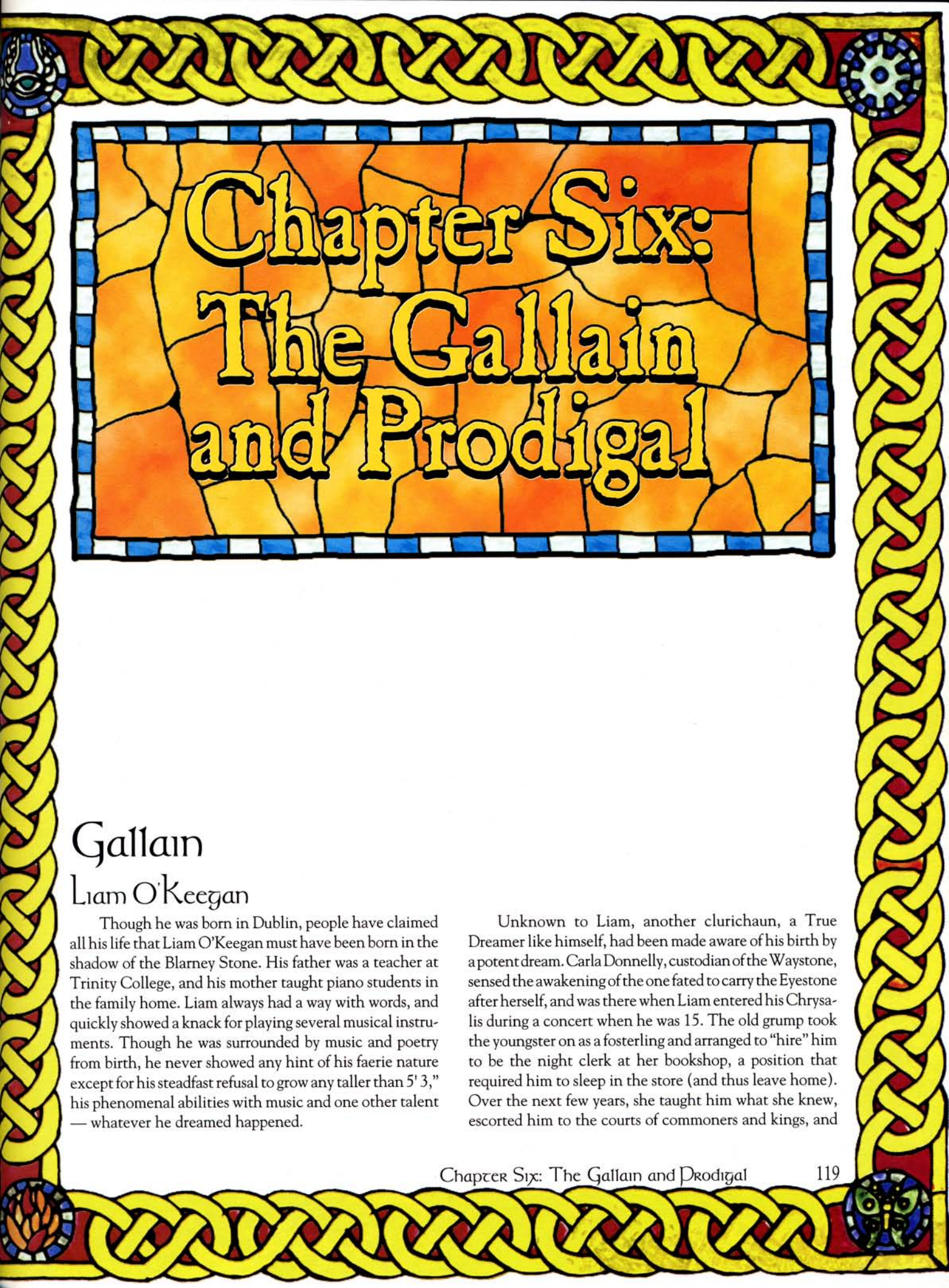
Treasures: None

Image: Bull is just 4' tall, but heavily muscled, making him look sort of squared off, like a tank... or a bull. He has greasy brown hair and hazel eyes, and he dresses in cast-offs and street chic (depending on what he can get).

In his fae seeming, he has the usual wide mouth with lots of teeth and retains his stockiness.

Roleplaying Hints: You're in charge. Let the others know that, and don't let them challenge your leadership. It's your responsibility to plan targets for the gang to rob or to arrange to sneak into the movies. You have to be smart and think quick to lead a gang; you do both really well. Don't let them find out about the old bloodsucker in the basement; they might not understand. He's an all right fellow, though. He taught you to read, though you haven't admitted you can to the others yet.





Chapter Six: The Gallain and Prodigal

Gallain

Liam O'Keegan

Though he was born in Dublin, people have claimed all his life that Liam O'Keegan must have been born in the shadow of the Blarney Stone. His father was a teacher at Trinity College, and his mother taught piano students in the family home. Liam always had a way with words, and quickly showed a knack for playing several musical instruments. Though he was surrounded by music and poetry from birth, he never showed any hint of his faerie nature except for his steadfast refusal to grow any taller than 5' 3," his phenomenal abilities with music and one other talent — whatever he dreamed happened.

Unknown to Liam, another clurichaun, a True Dreamer like himself, had been made aware of his birth by a potent dream. Carla Donnelly, custodian of the Waystone, sensed the awakening of the one fated to carry the Eyestone after herself, and was there when Liam entered his Chrysalis during a concert when he was 15. The old grump took the youngster on as a fosterling and arranged to "hire" him to be the night clerk at her bookshop, a position that required him to sleep in the store (and thus leave home). Over the next few years, she taught him what she knew, escorted him to the courts of commoners and kings, and



finally, when she felt that it was her time to forget her nature and pass on into her waning years, she deeded him the shop and entrusted him with the Waystone.

Saddened by the loss of his mentor, Liam traveled the world. While in a Boston bar, he began to drink heavily in an attempt to drown out the loud, untuneful music being played by a local band. The combination of the drink and the bad music quickly placed him in a rather sour mood. He then noticed another fae on the barstool next to him. Noting the extreme Banality that clung to the man, Liam tried to bring him back to his faerie self. The Waystone made it known to him that his time of carrying it was over; Liam pulled it out and handed it to the Dauntain known as Cyprian Ryder, and the stone fused itself into Ryder's palm.

Liam has since made his way all around Ireland while awaiting the coming of the heroes who will unlock Silver's Gate. He is an unofficial member of the Harpers of Erin, feeling that he couldn't be more than a sometime ally when he might be called upon as a guide for the heroes. While he is well-known to many Kithain all over Ireland, he spends most of his time in Doolin, a small town on the Clare coast that is a haven for excellent musicians. He has a small room there where he keeps his collection of ancient musical instruments.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Crafter/Rogue

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Clurichaun

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Intrigue 2, Kenning 4, Seduction 3, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Crafts 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Leadership 2, Melee 3, Performance (music) 5, Security 2, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 3, Geography 3, History 3, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, French, Russian, Spanish) 4, Medicine 2, Mythlore 3, Occult 3, Politics 2

Arts: Chicanery 4, Legerdemain 2, Primal 3, Soothsay 4

Realms: Actor 4, Fae 4, Nature 3, Scene 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 3, Contacts 5, Dreamers 4, Gremayre 3, Resources 1, Treasures 4

Glamour: 8

Banality: 3

Willpower: 6

Treasures: Liam owns an enchanted penny whistle. It can be used to play tunes in any key (unlike normal penny whistles which each have a set key). Additionally, it can restore three points of Glamour to a fading changeling for every point of Glamour Liam invests in it. The whistle can store three points of Glamour (which can be used as the whistle is played). This allows Liam to load it up when he has a lot of Glamour to spare. If all three points are used up, however, the whistle ceases to be enchanted and becomes an ordinary (though finely made) penny whistle. Alternatively, Liam can directly channel his own Glamour through the whistle and into a changeling that needs it. In this case, none of the stored Glamour is used. Liam has been known (on occasion) to use the whistle as a focus for creating particularly imaginative chimera.

Image: Liam is 5' 3" tall. He has the stocky build that is the hallmark of his kind, looking solid without seeming fat or blocky. His hair is a shoulder-length mop of tawny curls, and his eyes are sparkling green. His smile is enough to melt the coldest heart, and he uses it often. Liam always dresses as though he expects to be performing soon and never looks less than his best, even when tramping about through the woods. Though his voice is a soothing tenor, Liam speaks with that curious Dublin accent that seems almost nasal and adds extraneous "Ns" to words (so that "daughter" sounds like "daunter," for example).

In his fae seeming, it is clear that he has fine, sculpted features like a sidhe and delicately pointed ears. His eyes sparkle even more and change from the palest clear green to moss to emerald depending on the light.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a True Dreamer and a servant of destiny. That doesn't mean you have to be serious all the time, though. In fact, it's usually more fun to engage in banter than to be endlessly straightforward. You can be as serious as the situation demands — but not until the situation absolutely demands it!

Selkies

For further information on selkies, see the Appendix of **Immortal Eyes: The Toybox**.

The Court of All Kings

Once the meeting place of all the royalty of Hibernia, the Court of All Kings that lies beyond Silver's Gate is now deserted. Even with the opening of Silver's Gate, the great hall itself remains closed and dark, awaiting those with the courage to explore its shadowed halls. Rumors of fantastic treasures will undoubtedly lead Kithain to the Isle of Dreams now that it is accessible once again, but whether they will succeed in evading the selkie guardians of the ancient freehold, none can say. With the return of Merala, the Court of All Kings has a queen in residence again in any case.

Merala, the Selkie Queen

A fae of great power and passion, Merala was acknowledged as queen of the selkies hundreds of years ago. Faced with the obstinacy of two sidhe, brothers who would not allow other Kithain to pass through Silver's Gate because of their squabbling over precedence, Merala first begged them to give way. When they refused to hear her pleas for her people, and she knew that the selkies were doomed to exile from Arcadia because of the quarrel, she cursed the brothers and laid a ban upon the gate itself that it could only be found and opened under certain conditions. Having pronounced this doom as the Shattering reached its peak, she was caught along with the brothers and the gate in her own potent curse.

Honored by her people and the other fae alike, Merala was openly acknowledged as a queen in her time. No one ever replaced her as queen. Since the time when she became trapped beneath the waves, the selkies have never had another monarch, only leaders of small groups. The fate of the selkie queen has been told in tales passed down from that time with reverence and awe.



Freed at last from her fate when the heroes and the Hidden King called the Isle of Dreams from the ocean floor, Merala went at once to find her people. The reunion was brief as she then led them back to fight to keep the Unseelie Forsworn Prince and his forces from storming across into Arcadia. Now, she has once again taken up her position as queen. Though greatly honored by all selkies, she has lost a good deal of her more powerful magics in the centuries she remained trapped, and she has much to learn about the modern world.

Court: Seelie

Legacies: Regent/Fatalist

Seeming: Wilder

Kith: Selkie

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Kenning 5, Seduction 4, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Boating 4, Crafts 2, Etiquette 4, Leadership 4, Melee 4, Performance 3, Stealth 2, Survival 4. Temporal Sense 3

Knowledges: Enigmas 4, Linguistics (Irish Gaelic, Sealspeech) 2, Mythlore 4, Politics 3

Arts: Chicanery 3, Chronos 4, Primal 4, Soothsay 5, Sovereign 3, Wayfare 3

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 5, Nature 4, Scene 4

Backgrounds: Chimera 4, Gremayre 4, Holdings 4, Title 6

Glamour: 10

Banality: 3

Willpower: 7

Treasures: None at present.

Image: Sleek and dark, Merala exudes a sensual, though regal air. Her dark brown hair trails to mid-thigh, and her eyes are extremely dark brown, large and liquid. She has slightly webbed hands and feet.

In her fae seeming, the webbing is more pronounced, her hair is streaked with iridescent strands of blue and green, and she often wears diaphanous gowns blending all the colors of the sea. She carries a chimeric green spear and wears a necklace, bracelets and crown made from fine pearls and gold coins recovered from shipwrecks.

Roleplaying Hints: At last! You are free again! No one will ever understand how terrible it was to be confined — apparently for eternity — with only the crumbling faces of the horrible sidhe brothers to look at. You know you must have slipped into a long dreaming during this time, for your memories are of passing storms, strange faraway noises under the sea and the everlasting wash of the tides. Now you are queen again, and you have resumed the guardianship of Silver's Gate. Though you intend to do your duty as queen and protector of the trod, you yearn for just a little time free from all cares to see a little more of this new world in which you've awakened.

The Prodigal Vampires

For the most part, changelings avoid vampires, as the Banality they give off sets their teeth on edge. Some few have dealings with vampires, but always cautiously. A few of the better known vampires are:

Brendan GARRITY

Brendan is a relatively new Kindred, having been embraced in 1985. A 10th generation Tremere, he is a renegade since his sire never got around to informing her elders that she had made a childe. He is the result of an experiment she carried out on her own, an Embraced unAwakened mage. For a time she taught him secretly, but



hunters caught up with her, and Brendan has been on his own ever since. He has no real connections to any other Kindred, and spends much of his time hiding out from them (having been warned against them by his sire). He now lives in the root cellar of an old house in Limerick, watched over by a gang of childling redcaps. Thus far, he has only interacted with the group's leader, whom he taught to read and write. He is considering his options, and might make himself known to the rest of the gang, perhaps to try organizing them into effective spies.

Robert de Courcy

Younger brother of the Norman knight who conquered parts of Ulster, Robert de Courcy is a 7th generation Ventrué who owns extensive holdings in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. Although his principal residence is in Dublin, he travels back and forth to Belfast, Cork and Galway several times a year. Though he himself rarely attends, he has a keen interest in the Rose Trials held in Belfast each year, and has created one successful candidate, a blood-red double rose named the de Courcy, which is now recognized. Though not known for what he is, "Mr. de Courcy" is a frequent contributor to various festivals and cultural events throughout the island. Some Ventrué accuse him of Toreador leanings, but he claims his artistic pursuits are investments.



The Malkavians of Belfast

Following a Sabbat raid into the city in 1993, most of the Kindred of Belfast were either killed or left in torpor. Of those left, the great majority seem to be Malkavians named Malcolm. Even those who are named Henry, Stephen or Harold now tell those they meet that their names are Malcolm. It is unknown whether this some huge Malkavian prank, or they hope to defeat Sabbat spies who are trying to get an accurate count of the Camarilla Kindred left in the city.

GAROU

Garou presence in Ireland is mostly confined to the Fianna, Silver Fangs and Get of Fenris. There is a substantial Glass Walker presence in Dublin and Belfast, and scattered Bone Gnawers might be found just about anywhere. Individual changelings (such as Kestry in Belfast and Fiachra in Connaught) have some contact with local Garou, but most changelings are put off by the Garou tendency toward violence. A few of the better-known Garou are:

Peter McKibben

Peter is surely in the least enviable position of any werewolf in Ireland. A lost cub of the Get of Fenris, he

first encountered Garou when some of his fellow RUC members were attacked and slain by them in Fermanagh. His Ragabash auspice must serve in good stead since he became a companion to the former prince of Belfast, who was recently exiled in a daring Sabbat *antitribu* ritual. Having helped to defeat the Sabbat incursion, Peter is now *de facto* prince of the city (in lieu of any Kindred candidates), ruling over a number of Kindred in torpor. Furthermore, he has just become aware of a curious group of folk known as changelings....

The Wolf's Hill Caern

Wolf's Hill is an actual hill outside Belfast where the last wolf in Ireland was shot by a hunter (a former prince of the city). Two Glass Walkers, Eff Tee and Divis, live there as part of the Sept of the Sentinels. They watch over a couple of Bone Gnawer tramps who call themselves Big Mac and McNugget. A few years ago, a subsidiary of Pentex came to Belfast hoping to cash in on cheap labor. Kestry, then Duke of Belfast and a friend of Divis (who runs a homeless center), helped weave an illusion around Wolf's Hill, hiding it from their agents. In return, he was given the Brick Glade (since the Garou could only hold one caern and the Glade was a minor site at best).



Derek Hanrahan

Derek is one of the Fianna. As an airline pilot for Aer Lingus, he is of enormous use to the IRA, for whom he manages to smuggle in guns from the United States.

Mages

The Verbena have several covens spread around Ireland. They often meet at some of the lesser-known megalithic structures for rites. The Order of Hermes has a presence in Dublin, Cork and Sligo, while the Celestial Chorus can be found in Dublin, Armagh, Derry, Belfast and Galway. The Technocracy has a surprisingly small presence in Ireland, confined mostly to Belfast and Dublin, but beginning to spread to the West, where new industry and development are taking root. Many are Progenitors who seek fertile grounds for testing their experiments before exporting the results to larger population centers.



Wraiths

From all the tragic stories told of Ireland, it would seem that no one could take a step without passing through one ghost or another. There are flourishing Necropoli in both Dublin and Belfast, testament to their bloody histories and large populations. The changelings of Hibernia have little to do with wraiths. If any are in contact with them, it is on an individual basis. Among the more interesting wraiths to be found in various parts of the island are:

- The Flying Column — This group of Renegades has made a name for itself by taking over the GPO, site of the Easter Rising, and giving a slap in the face to the Hierarchy. They are in contact with a Fianna Theurge named Dierdre ni Breanainn.
- "Jenny" — This small girl appears by the side of the road. She is dressed in rags, is terribly thin, and has green stains around her mouth (as if from eating grass). She is a



spirit left from the Great Famine and if offered food and a warm place to sleep, disappears.

- “Sean” — Sean is a tousle-haired teenager. He can be found in Derry where he died when his house was torched during a riot. He often appears when someone is in danger, beckoning them down alleyways and streets he knew well when alive. Once the danger is past, he flares into a column of flame and is gone.



GVAY

Chapter Seven: Scenes

The two stories that follow allow the characters to become involved in the periphery of the **Immortal Eyes** chronicle. If they are engaged in that epic quest, these may be worked in among the larger story. If not, they can stand alone and be an introduction to the Seelie/Unseelie political situation in Hibernia. The first one, "The Parting Glass" should be run before "Treasure Hunt." Additionally, if the characters are involved in the quest, both should take place before they discover how to find Silver's Gate, and "Parting Glass" can serve as a good introduction to Liam.

The Parting Glass

Oh, all the money that ere I spent, I spent it in good company

And all the harm that ere I've done, alas 'twas done to none but me

But all I've done for want of wit, to memory now I can't recall

So fill to me the parting glass

Good night, and joy be with you all

— J. B. Goodenough, "The Parting Glass"

"The Parting Glass" is a brief adventure designed to tie in with the **Immortal Eyes** chronicle without demanding that the characters become deeply involved in it unless they wish.

Theme and Mood

While it has a serious aim, the mood should be somewhat light throughout parts of the story. It begins as a pleasant diversion in which Irish music should figure in prominently, if possible. Though they are going to perform a rescue, it should have something of the feel of a "lark" about it, kind of like the crazy escapades against overwhelming odds the Irish are so fond of. The theme is simple: your weaknesses can always be used against you.

Background

Liam O'Keegan, a clurichaun bard known throughout Irish changeling society for his fine music and reputed to be a True Dreamer, has fallen prey to the weakness of his kith for drink. A motley based in Dún Aenghus has kidnapped Liam from a pub in the town of Doolin, on the edge of the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, across from the Aran Islands. They are holding him in their freehold within the megalithic fort, where they hope to extract from him the secret to the hidden treasure reputed to be somewhere within the ruins. Normally Liam might be able to extricate himself from his predicament on his own, but his captors, knowing the weakness of clurichaun for liquor, have made certain that he is well soused and thus unable to think or act rationally. Additionally, they have bound him with

iron, which is not only painful to him, but prevents him from exercising the clurichaun ability of disappearing "in the twinkling of an eye."

Unless the characters are extremely altruistic (or very bored), they should have some built-in motivation for coming to Liam's rescue. If they are involved in the **Immortal Eyes** quest, this can serve as a way for the characters to meet up with Liam (who can provide them with information that will further their quest). If they have already met and befriended him, they may not need additional encouragement. If the Storyteller simply wants to insert this adventure into her own chronicle, she might intimate that helping Liam may result in a number of benefits, including friends in high places.

The story begins in the town of Doolin, a small village on the west coast of County Clare known for its fine music. If they have previously paid their respects to Queen Nuala, they will hear from Una Feeney, a satyr bard from Connaught who occasionally visits friends in the Munster court, that Doolin has "the best music in the land." She implies that anyone who seeks to gather Glamour from inspired musicians will find the town a feast for the ears. She will tell them of Doolin's three mortal pubs as well as the Pub of Plenty, the changeling freehold and "fourth pub" in the town. If the characters are currently pursuing some other goal, Una will also inform them that the town's pubs are good places to pick up information relevant to their activities. "Where musicians gather, news is just around the corner. The best musicians are in Doolin, and so is the best information."

Act One: "The Tune That Came Out"

Scene One: "Jug of Punch"

The characters arrive in the town of Doolin. If they have been given directions, the Pub of Plenty is not hard to find. Entertainment, however, is strangely lacking. According to Jock O'Ryan, the clurichaun bartender, Liam O'Keegan was supposed to perform, but has failed to show up for his gig. While the characters wait for the tardy bard, some local Kithain musicians strike up an impromptu session. Since the characters have just arrived and haven't yet gotten involved in anything else, O'Ryan seeks them out and asks them to "run 'round to Liam's room in the back, and see if he's fallen asleep or drowned in the wash basin." He hands them the key to the apartment where Liam stays when in Doolin, and tells them the building is just behind the pub.

Scene Two: "Toss the Feathers"

Liam's "room," is a small ground floor apartment, with its own entrance, in a building which backs onto the Pub of Plenty. Upon arriving there, the characters will notice that the key they have is superfluous. The door is already partway open. Entering the front room of the apartment, they will have a few seconds to notice the general disarray inside, as if someone tossed the place searching for something, before they are attacked by the chimera left there by Liam's kidnappers to impede anyone looking for him.

Morag, the Raven

Huge and terrifying, this giant raven (about 6' tall) has feathers as black as night, sharp talons and a wicked beak. Rather than typical beady black crow eyes on either side of the head, however, Morag has human eyes set so as to give the bird binocular vision. Morag has no purpose other than to fight until she is slain or conquers. As the room is little over nine feet in height, and there is stuff (including some priceless antique musical instruments) tossed about the floor, the space gets real crowded real quick. There is not room for more than two people plus the raven in the room. Her first attack is from above where she was waiting against the darkened ceiling.

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Intimidation 3, Dodge 4, Melee 4, Stealth 2

Willpower: 7

Morag's Brawl is used when she attempts to peck someone. Her Melee is used when she uses her talons.

Drawn by the noise of the battle with the chimera, the boggan landlady who lives above the apartment comes down to investigate. She will tell the characters, once she realizes that they are not responsible for the room's disarray, that Liam was last seen headed over to O'Connor's in the company of a scrawny sluagh.

Scene Three: "The Humours of Whiskey"

O'Connor's is one of the major gathering places for traditional musicians in Doolin. A combination drinking establishment and grocery store, it usually draws a young, boisterous clientele, many of whom are musically inclined and not ashamed to show it. Even with the crowd and the noise, it should not be difficult for the characters to spot a furtive-looking sluagh trying to look inconspicuous despite being bothered by the volume of the music. (He is the only other Kithain in the pub.)



If the characters accost him and ask about Liam, the slough, whose name is Sneak, will snivel a little and finally offer to tell what he knows in exchange for dross or money (or for free, if the characters use strongarm tactics to intimidate him). Sneak claims that he called in a favor to get Liam to accompany him to O'Connor's, since the pub's bouncer refused to allow Sneak in unless someone guaranteed at least two paid drinks for him. Liam agreed, but before he could leave the bar, a bunch of apparent fans approached him and urged him to have "just one drink" with them. Liam refused at first, but they acted offended and accused him of being "too high and mighty to drink with the common folk." Finally, the clurichaun's resolve caved in and he took one drink, which led to another, and another. When Liam was completely "round the bend," his drinking companions slung him over their shoulders and carried him out of the bar, letting slip something about catching the last ferry to Inishmore. That was when Sneak began to realize that he had been used as a lure, and he has been trying to make himself scarce since then. He is afraid to leave the bar, even to travel the short distance to the Pub of Plenty, where he would be safe — discounting the flak from O'Ryan for depriving him of the evening's main act.

Scene Four: "The Dogs Among the Bushes"

As the characters leave the bar, presumably to follow up on Sneak's information, a group of rowdies, friends of the shanghaiers, start a fight. They are local toughs, not changelings, and are unaware that they are dealing with Kithain. They have no intention of doing serious harm to the characters (broken bones do not count with them as serious harm), but just want to discourage them from following their friends.

The toughs (two for each person in the group):

These bully boys (and girls) carry baseball bats (treat as clubs) and knives. They aren't subtle, but wade right in and start fighting (unless dissuaded through magical means). Their applicable statistics are listed below:

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Streetwise 3, Melee 4, Law 1

Willpower: 4



Act Two: "Banish Misfortune"

Scene One: "The Boatman"

From the information they have learned so far, it should be obvious to the characters that Liam has been kidnapped and probably needs rescuing. If Una has accompanied the characters to Doolin and is still with them, she will be all for going to Inishmore to retrieve Liam, and will ask the characters to help if they don't immediately volunteer to accompany her. If they seem reluctant or think that it will be enough to report what they have learned to O'Ryan at the Pub of Plenty, the freehold's proprietor will offer the characters some inducement to go after Liam, stating that Connaught's King Fiachra, who values Liam as a "national treasure," (unlike Nuala, who doesn't seem to care for him at all) will most likely reward them if they are successful.

Scene Two: "Midnight on the Water"

From Doolin, the Doolin Ferry Company makes a daily run to the Aran Islands in the winter, with more frequent passages in the summer. Since it is important for the characters to go that evening, they will either have to use their Arts to convince a local ferryman to make a special trip or they will have to find some way to get to the island on their own. O'Ryan can give them the name of Timmy Dwyer, an employee of the Doolin Ferry Company, stating that: "Dwyer might be persuaded to take his own boat out to the islands for a small fee." O'Ryan or Una will front the money for the ride if the characters are without funds.

Dwyer should be relatively easy to locate, since he usually spends his evenings at his home or else at one of the pubs. When they find him, Dwyer will tell the characters (if they ask) that he remembers bringing over a group earlier in the evening "by special arrangement" after the last run to the islands. Those particular passengers gave him the shivers, and they had with them a young fellow that was "tore out of his head with drink." They were talking about Dún Aenghus. The characters can find out from Dwyer some basic information about the ruins if they have not already heard of it. Dwyer will dicker for a good price to make yet another crossing at this time of night. Although the Storyteller may wish to stress the difficulties of navigating even a narrow stretch of ocean late in the evening, the trip itself should be uneventful.

Scene Three: "Drunkard's Path"

The circular stone fort of Dún Aenghus sits on the edge of a 300 foot cliff by the ocean. The motley who use it as their freehold and occasionally host the Shadow Court there have brought Liam to its center, within the innermost set of three concentric walls. (See Chapter Three for more details of its design.)

Although the structure itself is easily reached, getting past its wards will present a problem. The primary obstacle is a chimeric maze. Characters with Enigmas may make an Enigmas + Intelligence Roll (difficulty 8) to successfully traverse the winding pathway that leads to the freehold's inner sanctum without setting off an alarm (a slow, resonant gong that alerts the motley). If the characters have decided against a frontal assault (a bad idea since the fort was constructed thousands of years ago for the express intent of defending against such tactics), they will have to deal with the additional problem of avoiding alerting the residents to their presence as they near the center — assuming they successfully evaded the gong in the outer ramparts.

Scene Four: "Pay the Reckoning"

Liam's kidnappers have taken him to the stone platform in the fort's center, where they have bound him with an iron chain. There they have been threatening him with reinstituting the practice of "human" sacrifice associated with the place's history. Because he is bound with iron, even though Liam has almost recovered his wits, he is unable to make his escape.

The group's leader, a female sluagh named Nainsi, is descended from a long line of her kith who have at one time or another occupied Dún Aenghus. She and her companions have been hanging out in Dún Aenghus waiting for orders from Doireannara and have gotten bored with doing nothing.

Nainsi believes that Liam still possesses the Waystone, which she knows only as a great faerie treasure capable of finding anything. (Her information is sadly out of date.) Kidnapping the clurichaun and forcing him to find the hidden treasure was her idea, as was tearing apart his room when they couldn't find the stone on him anywhere. The chimera was one she had been working on for some time.

Once the characters have breached the fort's defenses, they will have to either battle the freehold's residents to rescue Liam, or, if they are devious enough, concoct a sufficiently believable story (such as being agents of the Shadow Court) to fool Nainsi and her mates into delivering Liam over to them. If they have taken the time to scout the territory or if they possess the Soothsay ability Tattletale, they will have overheard the interrogation going on inside the fort, and thus

gleaned enough information about the motley's alliance with the Shadow Court to pull off a ruse of this nature.

A good picture of Dún Aenghus is highly recommended (or failing that, a picture of a similar fort) so the characters realize what they're up against.

Nainsi and the Motley

There should be one defender for each member of the rescue party. If the characters use their Arts to take out defenders and the battle is too easy, simply bring in a couple more "hidden" ones. The pertinent statistics given immediately below should be used for Nainsi and her fellow sluagh Trevor. The ones below that are for the redcaps in the group. All of them are Unseelie wilders. Half of them should be armed with chimerical weapons, one-quarter with real weapons, and one-quarter with iron weapons.

Sluagh

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Kenning 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4, Melee 3, Security 2, Stealth 3, Enigmas 2, Mythlore 2, Occult 2

Arts: Chicanery 3, Legerdemain 3, Primal 2, Soothsay 2

Realms: Actor 3, Fae 3, Prop 3

Willpower: 7

Redcaps

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Abilities: Alertness 2, Brawl 4, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3, Kenning 2, Streetwise 3, Melee 4, Security 1, Mythlore 2, Occult 1

Arts: Chicanery 1, Legerdemain 3, Primal 3

Realms: Fae 3, Nature 2

Willpower: 5

Scene Five: "Farewell to Whiskey"

If the characters succeed in rescuing Liam, the clurichaun will indeed be grateful to them. He will reward the characters by introducing them to any of his contacts (he has hundreds), or, if they are involved in the quest for Silver's Gate, with information that they need to continue their search. If they were promised a reward for assisting him, they will receive either small treasures (no greater than level 2) or a bag of dross (worth about 5 Glamour) from King Fiachra within two to three days. In any case, Liam makes a "pooka's vow" never to drink again (hah!).

Treasure Hunt

*My Soul. I summon to the winding ancient stair;
Set all your mind upon the steep ascent,
Upon the broken, crumbling battlement,
Upon the breathless starlit air,
Upon the star that marks the hidden pole;
Fix every wandering thought upon
That quarter where all thought is done:
Who can distinguish darkness from the soul?*

—W.B. Yeats, "A Dialogue of Self and Soul"

"Treasure Hunt" is an adventure that introduces the characters to the Unseelie kingdom of Ulster, and the factions that seek to rule there. It can be played using the heroes from the *Immortal Eyes* trilogy (detailed in *Immortal Eyes: The Toybox*) or utilizing your troupe's own characters. Those who have played through the other two sourcebooks will probably want to be in on the final leg of the journey. Alternatively, you can allow Irish characters, so long as they are not from Belfast. In the adventure, they must somehow acquire a series of tainted treasures given to the dukes and duchesses of the realm by King Finn's agent, Lorenzo. If they are successful, they have the option of becoming part of a secret organization called the Harpers of Erin and may be able to save King Finn from his melancholy plunge into Bedlam. The adventure assumes that the characters are Seelie or not actively part of the Shadow Court.

If they are part of that illustrious group, it might be run so the party backstabs the contact who first told them of the treasures and tries to acquire them for themselves. In this case, the contact (Lorenzo) simply tells them that there are a number of treasures and offers to split them with the characters if they help him get hold of them. He doesn't mention that the treasures are tainted or cursed....

Alternatively, if they are active in Hibernia's Shadow Court, the characters might have been sent by Doireannara to find out why Lorenzo is trying to take away the tainted treasures he so carefully placed with the nobles to start with.

Theme and Mood

"Treasure Hunt" is intended to mislead the characters and make them question which side they are actually on, or rather, which side is actually telling them the truth. The mood is serious, the stakes quite high. The characters are being asked to go and beg, borrow or steal faerie treasures from the noble rulers of Ulster. That this is for their own good makes no difference. Technically, these are gifts from their monarch, and the characters could get in a lot of trouble — assuming they aren't bested somewhere along the way, stripped of their Glamour, and left to wonder what on earth they're doing in Antrim....

The Background

The king without his sword... the land without its king!
—Sir Lancelot, *Excalibur*

The story of King Finn's slide into his Unseelie nature and Bedlam is told under his entry in Chapter Four. Lorenzo's role in the affair is detailed under his entry there as well. Kestry, Lord Galway and Doireannara can be found there, and Robin is listed in the chapter on commoners. The story in short: King Finn sent Lorenzo to the various nobles of Ulster offering them gifts, unique faerie treasures that were filled with tainted Glamour. When they accepted the treasures, they became ensorcelled and began to change toward their Unseelie natures. Though the treasures were once positive, sealing dark Glamour into them changed each one, exacting a price for their beneficial effects. Thus, using them can cause great harm. Unfortunately, with repeated use comes the compulsion to continue using them. The one noble who refused the gift was Duke Kestry of Belfast, leader of the Harpers of Erin, who was later stripped of his title and his Glamour and exiled after dueling Lorenzo. Lorenzo is now Duke of Belfast. It is he who contacts the characters asking them to help him regain those treasures.

Unknown to Lorenzo, the *geas* placed on him to aid the cause of House Balor is at work. Lorenzo has been charged with getting the treasures away from the nobles not to help them, but to cripple them and make a takeover by Balor easier. He is to take the treasures (which the Unseelie house hopes each noble is addicted to) and hold them for ransom, use them to blackmail their owners or simply withhold their use until House Balor controls each duchy (from behind the throne, of course). Lorenzo has managed to convince himself that he is doing what both Finn and Doireannara want in removing the treasures, but he's dead wrong. Their displeasure with his actions may be useful in helping the characters should they get caught stealing the treasures.

Customizing the Story

"Treasure Hunt" is a skeleton story. By that we mean that although the basic story and some details have been included, we have left the actual statistics to the Storyteller to supply. There are several reasons for this: The adventure ranges over many of the duchies of Ulster, meaning there are far too many nobles to detail each one; there is also the annoying matter of scenarios that are too strong or too weak for the Storyteller's individual troupe. Some groups may enjoy going the sneaky route, attempting to burgle the freeholds while others will want to use diplomacy, tackle the nobles in frontal assaults to grab the treasures, or even issue honorable challenges with the treasure as a prize in the event that they win. Undoubtedly, there will be other variations as

no troupe is the same as another. It is best to mix all these methods up unless your troupe is very single-minded.

Names, locales and some hint of the best approach for each are given, but except for the main Storyteller characters (Lorenzo, Kestry, Lord Galway, Robin, and even Finn and Doireannara, if you wish to include them) the Storyteller is free to assign to the opposition whatever traits she thinks will challenge her players. A good rule of thumb is to have singular opponents be strong enough to seriously challenge any two or three player characters. If there are more than three characters, henchmen are always an option and should be added as needed and common sense would dictate.

Finally, although some of the treasures have been detailed, a few have not been so that the Storyteller can generate treasures the characters might be especially tempted by. Ah, greed — the bane of many a character...

Nobles, Treasures and Freeholds

Under each duchy, the noble ruler is detailed along with what treasure the noble received. Ideas on the best approach to take in getting the treasure back are mentioned as well as some of the obstacles to doing that.

- **Emain Macha** is the court and freehold of King Finn of Ulster. He also holds the title of Duke of Emain

Macha. The duchy of Emain Macha is small, stretching out perhaps two miles from Navan Fort itself. It incorporates a number of ancient sites and approximately 100 mortals, many of whom Finn enchants as he needs them to assist with festivals and other courtly affairs. The only Kithain in the duchy are King Finn and his entourage (some six knights, two of them trolls). Finn also has a pact with the Fianna, granting them the rights to several caerns in Ulster, and three of them serve as his personal bodyguards whenever he leaves his stronghold. The treasures originally came from Emain Macha and are tainted with Finn's dark Glamour.

- **Belfast** is the largest, most populous duchy in Ulster. Until recently it was ruled by Duke Kestry of House Liam. He dueled Lorenzo to stop the Ravaging of Lorenzo's toadies, a group that call themselves the Vikings. Both were exiled for a year, but Lorenzo was then awarded Belfast as his duchy and Kestry was ousted. Lorenzo has taken over a manor house on the outskirts of the city, while Kestry is homeless and sometimes stays in the Brick Glade with his loyal friend Lord Galway. Kestry is attempting to rule the city from the streets to keep Lorenzo from tearing the city apart. Lorenzo has no tainted treasures. Lorenzo can call upon his bodyguard, a sidhe named Folly and four to eight Ravagers (the Vikings) if given about 20 minutes or so.



• **Antrim** produces more Glamour than the rest of the kingdom, containing as it does the Giant's Causeway and the lovely Antrim coast, site of over a dozen small glens. It is ruled by Eoin Connor, Duke of Antrim, an aging sidhe who is close to King Finn. He gives the king large amounts of dross, and has received several small treasures in return. The dross from the causeway has changed in the last few years. Where it once consisted of small, hexagonal crystals, it now appears in the form of tourist trinkets, a sure sign that something is amiss with the causeway. The tainted treasure that Eoin has is the Mead Cup of Everflowing. Basically, it is an enchanted goblet that provides a cupful of rich, honeyed mead whenever it is set down and picked up again. The drawback is, of course, even the tiniest sip makes the imbibor roaring drunk. Naturally, he doesn't realize this and takes great offense at anyone suggesting that he might be intoxicated. It's not nice to insult the duke in his own home.

The duke lives in the small village of Armoy a few miles inland from Ballycastle, where he has a small mansion. Protection for the duke is provided by several chimeric men at arms and his own talent with a sword. Honorable to a fault, Eoin will react most favorably to a sporting challenge or series of contests — unless he's been drinking, when he becomes a lot less sociable.

• **Down**, ruled by the fair Duchess Aishling (Ashleen) O'Brennan, is a duchy of beautiful hills and mountains. Several sources of Glamour, mostly ancient burial sites, are scattered across the Drumlin country. The Mourne Mountains contain hidden valleys where dross grows as faerie rings. She rules with a gentle hand from her court in Castlewellan Forest Park, though she lives on her family's farm near Downpatrick without pretensions or grandeur. She has no protections other than her four brothers, two uncles and a really feisty aunt.

Duchess Aishling's treasure is the Ebon Nightingale, a clockwork bird made of gold and ebony that sings so beautifully that all who hear it lose a point of Banality. The song lifts the heart and erases cares. This property is usable twice a month (at the waxing and waning quarter moon). The drawback is the hearer can become dependent on the nightingale for a "quick fix." If used more often than twice a month, the nightingale not only fails to remove Banality, but tends to encourage a slackening of the hearer's wits as he or she puts aside all cares to listen to the dulcet tones of the bird. Aishling has not been affected yet. She will probably require some sort of quest in exchange for the treasure (to prove the group's worth), since she is not yet addicted.

• **Armagh** is ruled by Duke Richard O'Reardon, who resides in the County Museum in Armagh city.

Usually a wise, quiet and thoughtful sidhe, he is in the unenviable position of ruling a duchy that contains another duchy within its boundaries (Emain Macha). There is little Glamour found in Armagh except for that generated by the king's stronghold. Richard is protected by locked doors and guards who patrol the museum as well as his own potent cantrips. The treasure he received is a ring called the Ring of Wrath. It can generate storms and send out bolts of lightning (not a pretty picture in a museum!). He has tried it a few times outside. The drawback is, he is finding it harder and harder to rein in his temper. In fact, he will not give up his treasure without a fight.

• **Fermanagh** is a small, but very beautiful duchy with hills in the southwest and the grand twin Loughs of Erne. Between the Loughs is the entrance to a long cavern complex known as the Marble Arch Caves. This is where Duchess Sally Kelly both lives and holds her court. There is a powerful source of Glamour in the caves, which Sally uses to hold in check a dangerous chimera that lives in the Loughs. Apparently left from a more powerful time, it has taken on a life of its own and occasionally drags mortals and changelings down to the cold depths below. If the characters want her treasure, they will have to defeat the chimera or persuade it to go elsewhere.

Knowing her love of peaceful solutions to vexing problems, Lorenzo gave Sally the Golden Glass Bell. A small, golden-colored glass bell with an equally tiny mallet, the bell can be clearly heard in a nearly 500 feet radius, thick walls permitting. When struck, the bell sounds a note so pure that all who hear it must pause to listen to the clear, vibrant sound. It has the property of "clearing the air," or making those who are angry or engaged in arguments stop and reconsider, even if only for a moment, why things seem so difficult and unpleasant. This may give others the chance to jump in and defuse their anger or solve the argument. The drawback is, those who hear the bell more than once a month begin to lose their ability to feel deep emotion. They lose love and hate, then liking and disliking, annoyance, pleasure and finally any feelings at all. Sally has fallen prey to this (as might be noted by her sending the characters to face a monster).

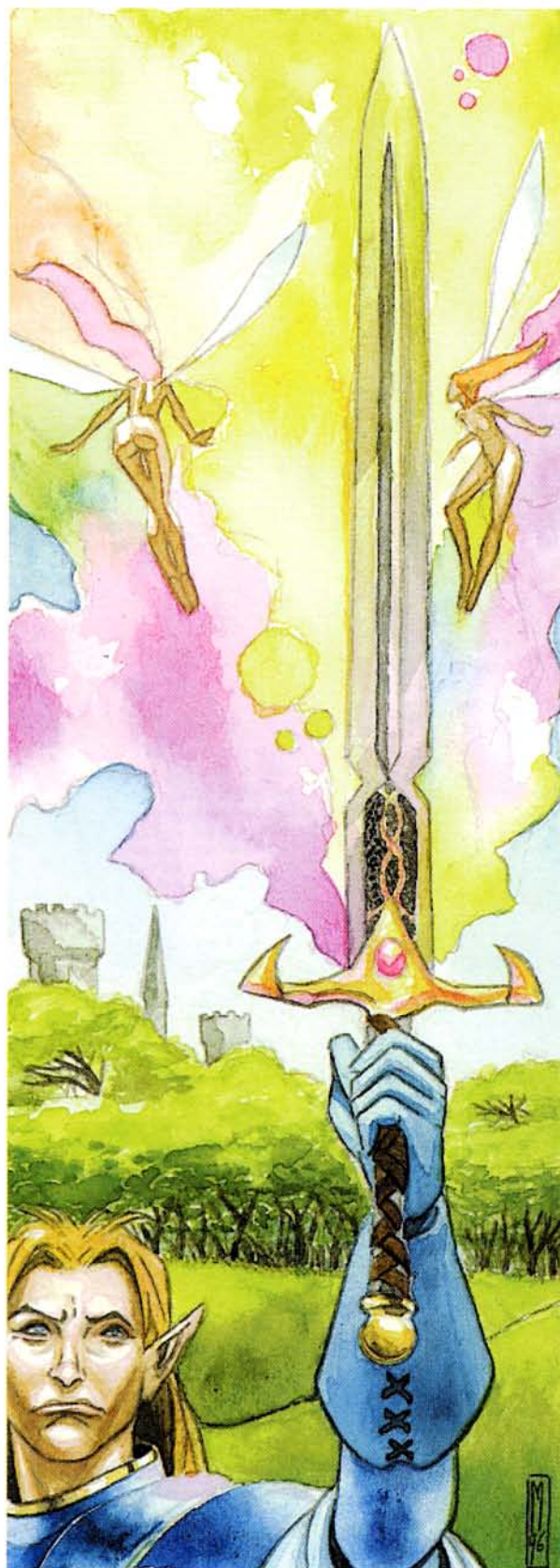
• **Tyrone**, a fief in the heart of Ulster, contains the Sperrin Mountains, where recent discoveries of large gold deposits have sparked dreams of prosperity. Known for its music and talented poets and writers, it is ruled by Duke Jon Montrose from his court at the Beaghmore Stone Circles outside Cookstown. Montrose also keeps a manor house in town. Always one to look for advan-

tages in battle, Montrose eagerly accepted the Cap of Fading, a bright green cap that when donned makes the wearer fade from view (over the period of about a minute) until he is invisible. Once the cap is removed, the wearer slowly fades back into view. The drawback is, after the cap has been used three times, each time it is donned by the same person, he fades a little more. He becomes a little less solid and real around the edges, a fact which may not be apparent to the user himself. If he continues using the cap, he becomes transparent, like a ghostly apparition, and can no longer leave his fae seeming, dooming him to Bedlam. Montrose has used the cap several times and is on the edge of becoming transparent for good. He is loathe to give up his treasure, despite the harm it is causing and may demand another treasure in its place.

- **Derry** varies from stormy sea coasts to wild mountains to peaceful valleys. It also holds the city of Derry, where Duchess Geraldine Quigley has her manor house. Despite the city's tumultuous past, there are efforts underway to inspire new dreams there. Concerned for the welfare of her people, Geraldine was overjoyed to receive the Soup Stone, an enchanted stone that makes a nourishing and delicious soup when added to water. The stone will fill a kettle with six quarts of soup once per week. Though it will sustain mortals, they should not eat the soup more than once a week or they will become enchanted. The drawback is, fae who eat the soup every week for a month find that other food no longer has any taste. They can only be satisfied with the soup from the stone which, while somewhat nourishing, cannot take the place of a balanced diet. Refusing to eat any other food, a changeling could starve herself to death. Geraldine is currently much thinner than she should be... nonetheless, she will fight the characters tooth and nail (very unlike her nature) to keep the stone, as she is utterly addicted to the soup. She has lots of supporters who would do anything to protect "the dutch."

- **Cavan** is quiet, dreamy and unspoiled, with few people and fewer tourists. Brian Molloy, the Duke of Cavan rules from his chimeric freehold beneath the standing stones known as Fionn MacCumhail's Fingers. Brian and his duchy are so quiet that no one remembered to give him any treasures, so he is completely free of Unseelie influences. He would make a good ally (and possible protector) for the characters in their quest to save the duchies. He has been worried for some time about King Finn's behavior.

- **Donegal** encompasses the Gaeltact's mountains, moors and bogs and rich pasturage as well as





impressive Atlantic sea coasts. The duke, Sean Cianan, lives in the village of Glencolumbkille and often slips into Glenlea faerie thorpe incognito. Feel free to generate a treasure that your players would appreciate. Sean is protected by a sworn company of six trolls. Furthermore, any sort of disturbance in the tiny village of Glencolumbkille is bound to be noticed.

- **Monaghan** has gentle, rolling hills, rich farmland and a profusion of copper beech trees. Duchess Moira Hanrahan's estate lies on the outskirts of Carrickmacross, a town famous for its handmade lace. Any treasure you think would be appropriate can be detailed here. Moira is noted for her expertise in things occult, and is rumored to often entertain a mysterious visitor who is probably one of the Prodigals (a vampire). The truth? He is her brother, a Toreador who was Embraced only a few years ago. Nonetheless, he'd be very angry if anyone bothered his little sister....

The Bait and Switch

Lorenzo approaches the characters and asks for their help in freeing the nobles of the land from the tainted treasures they have been given. He explains that King Finn has been ill and that the treasures were inadvertently poisoned. Lorenzo asks the characters to retrieve the treasures and bring them back to him, claiming he knows how to cleanse them (he's lying). Once they have succeeded in bringing back one or two treasures, Kestry gets wind of what is happening and gets in touch with them.

Kestry tells the characters that Lorenzo is responsible for handing out the treasures to begin with and is probably up to no good. He asks the characters to get the treasures and bring them to him rather than turning them over to Lorenzo. At this point they need to decide who to believe.

Simply gaining possession of the treasures is not enough to cure the nobles of their influence, although Lorenzo claims that this is so. Kestry knows that the items need to be destroyed to free their owners of taint. Since, hopefully, they have already turned over at least one or two treasures to Lorenzo, they will have to get them back if they decide to trust Kestry.

Lorenzo, meanwhile, has discovered that Kestry is sticking his nose in, and has taken a hostage to force him to stop interfering: Robin, the little pooka who is under Kestry's and Galway's protection. If nothing else convinces the characters that Kestry is the trustworthy one, this should. As Lorenzo is guarded by

Folly (who owns a chimeric rifle like Lord Galway's), four trolls and four redcaps, Kestry needs some help to rescue the little girl.

Anytime things seem to be getting dull, you can always have either Finn or Doireannara discover what Lorenzo is up to. Strange, momentary alliances might easily give way to betrayal and backstabbing. Once it is clear that Lorenzo is acting under *geas* (and has been enchanted to forget why), they will be a little more

understanding, but still understandably annoyed. If the characters managed to retrieve the majority of treasures and destroy them (by blade, fire and water), the nobles may be persuaded to band together to help Finn regain his Seelie nature and his mind. That is an epic struggle in and of itself. Should they reach this point, nice rewards should come their way. Then again, if they weren't working for her, they've made an enemy of Doireannara, no matter what they do.







Appendix: Treasures and Timeline

Clurichaun (CLOOR-uh-cohn)

"Always after me Lucky Charms!?" Gack! Somebody strangle that thing!

—Liam O'Keegan, well-known clurichaun bard

Popular myth speaks of leprechauns, those small, round-bellied shoemakers to the noble faeries, who hid their pots of gold rather than see a ha'penny of it spent or lost. Leprechauns are arguably the most well-known faeries in existence. Throughout the world they are recognized on sight as the bearded little men dressed all in green with buckled shoes, curved pipes in their mouths and a jug of whiskey close at hand. Along with shamrocks, they have become a symbol of all that is most touristy about Ireland and things Irish.

Clurichaun aren't actually like that at all, though they made the mistake of fostering that notion in mortal

heads, and it has clung to them ever since. Though they are considered Gallain, clurichaun feel that they are just one more type of commoner. They are really only present in large numbers in Ireland, but they do have a point when they claim that a few of them have made the transition to areas where the Irish immigrants are plentiful. If the Kithain of Boston or Chicago or Toronto or Melbourne don't realize they have clurichaun among them, well, they just aren't looking hard enough, are they?

Clurichaun are endearing kith who both excel at revelry and can hold their own when given responsibilities. They love a good time and work hard to make sure everyone enjoys themselves. Pooka have nothing on clurichaun in the joke department, though clurichaun jokes tend to be

less bitter and manic. Clurichaun have a talent for fitting in and smoothing things over. They always seem to be aware of the changing currents in any social situation, and Seelie clurichaun use these insights to say and do the right thing at the right time. They are very responsive to the needs of the moment, and can be trusted to live up to any responsibilities or duties placed upon them.

Not that they don't annoy other Kithain sometimes. Those who are Unseelie use their talent to do exactly the opposite of what is indicated. If silence is called for, they delight in being loud and obnoxious; if a few stern words might serve to stop a party that's gotten out of hand, they pour oil on the fire, becoming more wild than the most outrageous partygoer.

All the above goes right out the window the minute they imbibe any alcoholic beverage. Once they start, they just can't quit, and they draw farther and farther into themselves, brooding on all the cares of the world. When drunk, Seelie clurichaun become maudlin, getting teary-eyed and sloppy. They can get passionately sentimental over what they had for breakfast that morning, holding it up as the never-to-be-found-again ideal of all Irish breakfasts that ever were. The Unseelie just get mean. They hate the whole world, and they don't care who knows it. Anyone who gets in their way when they're in this state had better move or be able to stomp them flat before the clurichaun tear them a new... well, you know. This is why many Kithain (especially those who know little else about clurichaun except for their reputations as sots) view them with suspicion and not a little aggravation. No doubt the clurichaun became so proficient at disappearing in "the twinkling of an eye" in response.

Though they like to think of themselves as jacks-of-all-trades, they are particularly adept musicians. They are widely acknowledged as preeminent bards, and even the least talented clurichaun can pick up an instrument and produce a few chords or pick out a simple tune. Clurichaun are insatiable when it comes to music, dance and tales, soaking them up like sponges and adding to their repertoires anything new, be it a dance step, turn of phrase, joke, amusing tale or musical passage. Harking back to their Celtic roots, clurichaun have prodigious memories and often act as traveling bards.

Beginning clurichaun characters cannot assign more than 3 dots to any one Ability except Performance (even using freebie points). This reflects their eclectic outlook on life. In general, clurichaun rarely improve one Ability without then becoming bored with the concentration and moving on to learn more about something else. This serves

them well in their bardic capacities, as they always seem to know at least a little bit about everything.

They bring the same intensity to their other great love — collecting. Sometime between being a childling and becoming a wilder, clurichaun usually become fascinated by a particular thing, be it matchstick models, shiny rocks, handwritten poems of minor poets, recordings of every traditional group in Ireland, pictures of clouds, muffin pans or Hollywood scripts. Whatever attracts the clurichaun becomes a lifelong fascination and object for collecting. Pity the poor clurichaun who doesn't realize his faerie nature before he's a grump. All that collecting time lost! So much to make up for! While they won't go to suicidal lengths or betray their friends (well, most won't) to obtain marvelous examples of their chosen collectible, they will do almost anything else to get it. Legends of clurichaun hoarding pots of gold came from this curious practice, and probably account for their relative paranoia about letting just anyone view their precious collections.

Appearance:

Clurichaun rarely grow above 5 feet 5" tall. Their bodies are compact and muscular, giving the impression that they are stocky and solid. Their features, while almost always good-natured, change greatly depending on their seeming. Their ears are pointed, but smaller and less noticeable than those of the sidhe. Clurichaun usually have red or tawny colored hair and green or blue eyes that slant slightly upward at the outer edges. In modern times, clurichaun who have emerged in black families tend to have reddish tints to their hair and hazel or light brown eyes.

Rather than wearing the green jackets, kneepants and hats popular a century ago, clurichaun tend to don more normal clothing. They do have a decided preference for green, gray and brown, however, earthy colors that allow them to disappear in natural surroundings. Clurichaun craftspeople wear sturdy workclothes and craft aprons, while musicians prefer jeans and T-shirts with leather jackets. When they go to court, they usually construct chimerical clothing that is vaguely medieval-looking so they'll blend in with the crowd. Regardless of whatever else they wear, they always have a little bit of green in their attire — a ribbon, a belt, a coat or cloak, a hat or a green stone set in a ring. Only the clurichaun know why, but others theorize that they accepted some sort of *geas* long ago that demands the "wearin' o' the green." Additionally, clurichaun prefer gold jewelry such as torques, heavy rings and Celtic-style cloak pins.

Seemings:

☉ **Childlings** are always extremely cute, with chubby red cheeks and twinkling bright eyes. Their ready smiles win the hearts of everyone they meet. Childlings usually show great interest in several crafts or creative skills (such as pottery making, sewing, singing, etc.). Their voices are bell-clear, and they always sing in tune.

☉ **Wilder** are slightly older versions of the childlings except that their cheeks are not so rosy and chubby. Their faces, while still somewhat broad, have matured into rakishness. Their eyes are very bright. Many wilders start collections which they will add to throughout their lifetime. Most clurichaun have mastered at least one instrument by this time whether they were previously aware of their faerie nature or not.

☉ **Grumps** are most like the popular conception of leprechauns. Clurichaun grumps have faces that look like dried apples—all wrinkles and creases, most of them laugh lines. Their bright eyes are lost in folds of skin as their eyebrows become bushy (yes, even the women's). The males often grow beards. As grumps settle into their roles as elders, they focus more fully on their collections, and their accumulated "treasures" (as they call them) are lovingly displayed in their homes. Grumps are honored among the clurichaun as repositories of ancient songs.

Lifestyles:

Clurichaun can be found traveling about playing and singing, storytelling, as members of repertory companies, making the craft show circuit or as tinkers (who call themselves the travelers, not tinkers, by the way). Some prefer a more settled life and own their own craft

shops or pubs. A very few accept posts as court bards. Whether travelers or sedentary, all clurichaun have some place they call their own where they store their collections. Only their most trusted friends are invited to their homes since they have often spent their lives accumulating just the right collectibles and have a horror of seeing them gnawed by a hungry redcap or used as juggling balls by a pooka.

Affinity:

Actor

Birthrights:

☉ **Twinkling of an Eye** — Clurichaun have a talent for disappearing from potentially troublesome situations. Should someone take his eye off a clurichaun (if only for a moment), the wily fae can disappear into the nearest cover so quickly that it's impossible for anyone to find her. One minute she's there, the next she's gone! They can effect this trick even if being grasped by someone, but not if they themselves are blindfolded (or otherwise unable to see) or if bound with iron.

☉ **Insight** — Whenever a clurichaun is in a social situation (i.e., when not alone), she can roll on her Charisma + Empathy (difficulty 7) to assess what the most appropriate response to it is. She can then say the right thing or perform the correct actions (the player may need a judicious Storyteller hint or two) to smooth things or make the situation more pleasant. Unseelie may, of course, do or say the opposite of whatever is indicated if it suits them. (Note: This does not take the place of good roleplaying. If a player is misusing the Birthright by constant overuse, she's probably burned out the talent for awhile.)



Frailties:

• **Tippling** — Clurichaun have a terrible time resisting alcohol, and whenever they tipple, they undergo a change. Those of the Seelie persuasion become maudlin and incapable of anything but singing sad songs and telling sad, often pointless, tales. To take action when in this state, a clurichaun must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8). Unseelie clurichauns evince extreme cruelty. Their jests are barbed, their stories and humor bitter and angry. Unseelie clurichaun must make a Willpower roll (difficulty 8) whenever they drink alcohol to avoid picking a fight with the nearest person (or group).

Quote:

"Let me play you the tune, and see if you can chime in with the words. Um, by the way, you'll not be needing that (insert name of desired collectable), will you?"

Outlook

• **Boggans** — Wonderful Kithain who understand both the idea of crafting and of keeping a hand in during social situations. Steady.

• **Eshu** — Fantastic storytellers if you can ever get one of them to stay in one place long enough to hear the whole thing.

• **Nockers** — These sourpusses are what gave people the idea that clurichaun were all bad-tempered shoemakers. Well, if the shoe fits....

• **Pooka** — When they're in the mood for a bit of fun, they can't be beat for companionship, but some of their pranks can be downright deadly.

• **Redcaps** — Bullies and cutthroats, the lot of them. Best avoided.

• **Satyr**s — The true scholars among the fae, all too often, they are dismissed as nothing more than randy hedonists.

• **Selkies** — A group that has been ignored for far too long. And nice to look at.

• **Sidhe** — Well, la-di-dah, the kings have come again. Let me dust off the throne for you there, Your Majesty. Oh, and mind you don't trip over the Lia Fail on your way. Seriously, though, they do bring a bit of needed nobility back on the scene.

• **Sluagh** — It's hard to like these slithery folk, but they have some fabulous stories to tell, if you can get it out of them.

• **Trolls** — Rock-hard and true-hearted, despite their Viking origin.

TREASURES

The Immortal Eyes

Facing each other across the gate, they locked eyes in a battle of wills. Even as their bodies paid the toll of the Glamour they expended, the orbs in their faces grew harder and harder, until they glowed with malice like four cold, translucent gems.

—Jackie Cassada, *Shadows on the Hill*

As Silver's Gate was closing, two sidhe brothers (one Seelie, the other Unseelie) fought to determine whose people would go through first. Their stubborn battle kept many of the commoners from escaping the Shattering through this last trod. Angered by her people's enforced exile, Merala, queen of the selkies, pronounced this curse upon the brothers and the Gate:

"As your hatred has turned your hearts to stone, so let your outward forms reflect the hardness within. As you have kept us from returning to the Dreaming through this, the last gateway to Arcadia, so let this portal remain hidden from your kind and any fae who serve your kind until the inheritors of your legacies can face each other across its portals with love in their hearts."

The brothers changed into stone statues, their eyes becoming gemstones which fell from their heads. These gems, known alternately as the Eyestones and the Immortal Eyes, were sent to safety among the commoner groups friendly to the selkies.

The Seelie Eyes

The Keystone

The Keystone, also known as the Eye of Opening, is an emerald. Given to the guardianship of the nockers, it opens anything it touches, regardless of whether the object is simply closed or securely locked and warded. It is powerful enough to open portals that lead to other realms, so long as those portals are not barred on the other side as well. Its true power, however, lies in its ability to open up the hearts of people and as a means of uncovering information that has been locked away or forgotten. It is a stimulator of memories.

System: Consider the user of the Keystone to automatically succeed if a point of Glamour spent to open a locked or closed door, portal, or other item. These successes are added to a normal Dexterity + Security roll. Additional Glamour may be channeled through the stone to lower the difficulty to as low as 3 for any attempt to open



something that has been magically locked or sealed. While in possession of the Keystone, its holder cannot botch any Security roll involving opening something. For purposes of uncovering information, the Keystone adds two successes to any roll involving Knowledges or Kenning. It confers the equivalent Gremayre 5 on the bearer (subject to Storyteller discretion). The Keystone has been known to trigger a changeling's Chrysalis by its mere presence.

The Waystone

The Waystone, a deep blue sapphire, was given to the clurichaun. It is both a pathfinder and a locator, leading its user to the place she needs to be or the object or person she needs to find. It also has a deeper use in that it will often lead people to their destinies.

System: The Waystone automatically succeeds in leading its user to the person, place or object of her intent. The player must make a roll on her character's current Willpower (difficulty 7), however, to determine just how direct a route (both in terms of time and in terms of obstacles encountered) the stone chooses to take. Three or more successes indicates that the journey from point A to point B is relatively quick and painless, while one or two successes denote either slight delays or a more circuitous path to the goal. No successes results in a period of apparently aimless wandering before finally reaching the desired person, place or thing. A botch indicates a disastrous journey and the possibility of arriving on the scene at just the wrong moment.

The Unseelie Eyes

The Changestone

The Changestone, a fiery ruby, was given to the satyrs to guard. It confers the power to change its holder's appearance in the mortal world and tends to alter circumstances in the favor of its user (sometimes to the detriment of those around her). Its real magic lies in its ability to transform someone into his or her true self — restoring such a one to his or her faerie nature. Some believe that the Changestone can even reverse the process of mortal aging.

System: The user of the Changestone has access to Primal 5 (Elder-Form), and the following Soothsay effects: Fair Fortune, Boil and Bubble, and Fate Fire. The user may invoke these powers without the necessity of performing Bunks, but a point of Glamour must be spent when the Changestone is so used against non-fae. If the holder of the Changestone has her faerie nature stripped away by chimeric damage or proximity to cold iron, the Changestone replaces her lost Glamour at the rate of one per hour until she recalls her true nature.



The Shadowstone

The Shadowstone, a black opal, was entrusted to the menehune of Hawai'i. It has the power to absorb and transform Banality and increases the user's ability to act "in the shadows," i.e., by stealth and in darkness. When used by those who understand the true interplay between Banality and Glamour, the Shadowstone can purify a changeling, cleansing her of all Banality without the unfortunate side effect of causing Bedlam. In some ways, it is the most powerful and dangerous of all the stones, inevitably corrupting all but the strongest personalities through inuring them to Banality's harshness. It sends dark dreams as well.

System: The Shadowstone can absorb as many points of Banality as the user has current Glamour (in effect, doubling the Glamour of the user while reducing her Banality rating accordingly). It also confers Stealth 5 and Subterfuge 5 on the user. The Storyteller may require the holder of the Shadowstone to make periodic Willpower rolls (difficulty 7) to avoid slipping into her Unseelie Legacy if this power is used to excess or in a spurious fashion. The holder of the Shadowstone may spend a point of Glamour to send troubling dreams to someone she knows and can invoke "waking nightmares," extremely strong and realistic hallucinations, in others by spending two points of Glamour and accepting a point of temporary Banality herself. Such nightmares can be used to torture others (such as the torture Yrtalien inflicted on Glynnis or the pain he caused Chevalier).

A botch on any roll when attempting to use the Shadowstone results in the user experiencing a Nightmare at some appropriate time during the story.

The Four Gems

All four of the Immortal Eyes serve to enhance the innate power of their users, an effect which is cumulative. They can be used by a single person to greatly magnify her ability to use her Arts, or they can be used jointly among oathmates. Because the stones are so "charged" with Glamour, they protect their users from ambient Banality. Using even one of the stones as a shield will enable one of the true fae to withstand the ravages of the mortal realm for a limited amount of time. Once the stones have been brought together in one place, they become attuned to one another and, if subsequently separated, can be used as homing beacons, enabling the possessor of one of the stones to find any of the other three stones.

System: So long as they have access to any Glamour at all, the stones' supply of Glamour is relatively inexhaustible. (In other words, they don't "run out" of Glamour.) Anyone possessing one of the stones may

double her temporary Glamour rating (even if this causes it to exceed 10). Possessing two stones triples a changeling's current Glamour, three stones gives her four times her normal rating, while holding all four stones together gives her five times her normal Glamour. (Yes, they *are* powerful!) If the stones are shared among an oathcircle, the extra Glamour becomes part of a "pool" that can be drawn from by any of the oathmates to power their cantrips or replenish their own.

When used as a shield against Banality, treat each stone as if it has a Glamour of 10 for rolls versus the local Banality of a person, place or object. The difficulty for overcoming Banality in these cases is lowered by 2 for each stone possessed. Only one success is necessary to ward off the effects of Banality when using one of the Eystones as a shield.

In order for the stones to attune themselves to one another, they must be brought together in one place for at least 24 hours. After that, the stones will automatically locate their companion stones regardless of the distance that separates them.

On the surface, the Unseelie gems (the Changestone and the Shadowstone) appear to be more powerful than their Seelie counterparts (the Keystone and the Waystone), but this power is deceptive. The Seelie gems work more subtly and gently, and therefore more permanently. Their power is enduring and compassionate; the Unseelie gems' power is overwhelming and ruthless.

Together the stones are meant to find the gate, open it, cleanse those who hold them of their taint of Banality, and give them suitable forms (i.e., that of their true faerie selves rather than their changeling forms) to wear when they cross over into Arcadia along the silver path. This is both to protect changelings from the onslaught of the pure Dreaming and Arcadia from intrusion by Banality-tainted beings.

Other Notable TREASURES of HIBERNIA

These are some of the many treasures noted in the oldest legends of Ireland, and might be found there still. Those that have already been described in the section on Tuathan treasures in Chapter Two are so noted. And there are more to be found by perusing the old stories yourself. Enjoy.

- The Sword of Light (Some argue that this is Caliburn, which is in the possession of King David of Concordia.)
- The Spear of Lugh (This may or may not be the *gae bolg*. It is one of the four Tuathan treasures.)
- The Sword of Nuada (mentioned earlier)





- The Cauldron of the Daghdha (mentioned earlier)
- The Harp of the Daghdha (on which he could play the three strains — sleep, sorrow and mirth — that were the hallmark of the true bard.)
- The Crane Bag (Also called the Treasure Bag of the Fianna, it supposedly held many treasures useful in battle.)
- Nuada's Silver Arm (made for him when his own was lost in battle.)
- Manannan Mac Lir's Sea Chariot (which was pulled by horses over the ocean waves)

Chronology of Court Of All Kings

December 25, 1995

Tor finds shelter at the Mission of Refuge in Hilo. Vargas tracks him there but is turned away. Valmont contacts the sluagh, who advise him to try to find Tor at the Mission.

December 26, 1995

Yrtalien and his company, which now includes Edmund, track down Malacar. The oathmates are reunited after a fight with Vargas and Diana.

December 29, 1995

The oathmates travel to Ireland where they are met by selkies who take them to the faerie town of Glenlea. Vargas and Diana, waylaid by the Kithain of Hilo, awaken en route to Hong Kong.

December 30, 1995

Yrtalien lands in Sligo and makes contact with a pair of Unseelie sidhe. Signe, the former Dauntain, journeys to San Francisco.

December 31, 1995

The oathmates meet Liam, a clurichaun bard who offers them information vital to their quest. Yrtalien unknowingly releases a Bean Sidhe from her long imprisonment. Signe makes peace with the inhabitants of the Toybox Coffee Shop and begins her journey to find the oathmates. The Bean Sidhe attacks Rasputin.

January 1, 1996

Liam leads the oathmates to the forest of the Hidden King, a secret freehold where they can find the answers they need. They are captured by the Riders of the Silver Court, who protect the freehold. Edmund begins to repent his betrayal. Leigh claims the right to trial by combat to decide whether or not the oathmates can meet the Hidden King. Leigh meets her rival, a warrior of House Scathach named Sorcha. Leigh and Valmont become lovers.

January 2, 1996

Leigh and Sorcha battle to first blood. Leigh wins, but Sorcha insists on fighting to the death and impales herself on Leigh's sword rather than survive defeat. At the Giant's Causeway, Edmund makes a wish in the Wishing Chair and resolves to undo his mistakes. Yrtalien realizes that Leigh and her companions are in Ireland. The oathmates meet the king who gives them conditions they must fulfill before learning the location of Silver's Gate.

January 3, 1996

Having recognized who Tor is from Morgan's locket, Sir Odhran, one of the Riders, invites them to the court of the King of Leinster. Signe arrives in Dublin. Yrtalien forces Edmund to tell him again of the battle for Silver's Gate.

January 4, 1996

At the court, Tor is honored as one of the heroes of the Accordance War and his memories return. Valmont is humbled by Tor's true nobility. Two of the king's conditions are fulfilled. Leigh learns of Yrtalien's presence in Ireland. Yrtalien compels everyone but Edmund to swear fealty to him. He takes Mr. Dumpy as hostage. The chimeric clown helps Edmund (with Malacar) escape, giving him the Waystone to take him to his oathmates.

January 5, 1996

The oathmates attend a wake for Sorcha. Rasputin makes his peace with his past, and Leigh finds release from her guilt at Sorcha's death. They realize that they need to go back to the king's forest.

January 6, 1996

The oathmates are reunited, Morgan and Edmund fulfill their conditions, and they meet once more with the Hidden King. Yrtalien raises his "army" of Unseelie Kithain for the assault on Silver's Gate, using his stones to lead him to Edmund and the Waystone.

January 7, 1996

The companions, along with the Hidden King, journey by faerie trod to Achill Island. They confront Yrtalien and get the stones. The king calls the Isle of Dreams up from the sea. The companions attempt to open Silver's Gate, but Yrtalien and his army attack. The Bean Sidhe attacks the king. Leigh defeats Yrtalien. Rasputin dies preventing Malacar from stealing the Eyestones. Morgan realizes that she needs to stay behind. Leigh, Valmont, Edmund and Tor go through Silver's Gate. Signe appears to take Morgan home. Liam takes the king back to the glen, and the selkies once more take up guardianship of Silver's Gate.



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Court of all Kings

The Emerald Isle

Ireland — the heart of Celtic myth and legend. Here is a land divided by petty kings, a land of ancient mysteries and of powerful magic. And most sought after of all is Silver's Gate, the last gate to Arcadia — rumored to be hidden somewhere along the island's rocky shores.



Quest's End

The **Immortal Eyes** trilogy has spanned the globe, from San Francisco, to Hawai'i, and now finally to Ireland. **Court of all Kings** is the final installment in the **Immortal Eyes** trilogy.

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