

Name: _____

—Summer—

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—Winter—

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—Place—

- Ringmaster;
- Spectacle;
- Planner;
- Layabout;
- Always there with impractical ideas.

—Plays—

Elfin Knight Plays:

—Demand their courtesy

—Woo them

—Receive the blow

—Stand guard

Obvious Plays:

—Confront them

—Draw them out

—Put them off

—Set a scene for them

—Size them up

—Waylay them

—Ride disaster down

—Sniff the wind

—Stand against the tide

The Elfin Knight

When you demand someone's courtesy, roll. On a 10+ hit, tell them honestly what you'd consider your due courtesy. If they do it, nevertheless you aren't beholden to them, and if they refuse, they insult you. On a 7-9 hit, the same, but add an insult or dismissive remark to them. On a miss, instead of telling them honestly what courtesy requires, make an exorbitant, humiliating, or insulting demand.

When you woo someone, roll. On any hit, choose 1 of the following and tell them that's how you woo them. They may ask you for a detail or two, perhaps a vignette or montage. On a 10+ hit, before you tell them, they choose in secret how they would like to be wooed. If you chose the same as they did, then they may choose whether to refuse you or embrace you, but otherwise, they must refuse you. On a 7-9 hit, they must refuse you, even if they would rather not, but they may whisper to you how they might like to be wooed in the future.

- With music and song.
- With feats of arms and daring.
- With flirting games.
- With an outpouring of ardent passion.
- With tender romance.
- With whispers and stolen glances.

On a miss, choose how you woo them, same as for a hit. They must refuse you, but more, they must refuse you coldly, cruelly, with a lie, or by taking another lover than you.

When you receive a blow, check the list below. If you haven't marked the blow you're receiving, roll. On any hit, you are impervious to it, and it glances off your shield, your armor, your warding sword, or even just your outflung hand. On a 7-9 hit, it does you no harm, but you feel a fraction of its force and must shift your feet a half step back. On a miss, the blow still doesn't harm you, but its force is undeniable and you must give way before it. Ask your enemy where they drive you.

At the beginning of play, mark 1 of the following. This is the only blow that can wound you, not even a blow struck with mortal iron.

- A blow struck with a goose feather.
- A blow struck with a broom.
- A blow struck on a bridge, or on board a boat or a ship on the water.
- A blow struck by one who loves you truly.
- A blow struck over a fence or a wall, through a window, or across some other boundary.
- A blow struck at the moment of dawn, noon, sunset, or midnight.

Whenever you reach full winter, mark another of the above, until you've marked all 6.

When you stand guard, roll. On a 10+ hit, no enemy can get past you. On a 7-9 hit, only a force of enemies could get past you, at least five or more fighting you alone. On a miss, though, any one enemy could draw you out of your position, creating the opening for others to get past.

—Trappings—

- A fine wagon with shuttered windows and fluttering pennants, pulled by a sturdy, patient, well-behaved pony.
- A dashing fairy charger, who can race the treetops or the rushing river as fleetly as it can race a level road.
- A supple war-lance and a slim sword made of forged starlight, sharp as glass, cold as ice.
- Elfin mail as light as rain, a shield that rings like a bell, and a helmet with a swan's-feather crest.
- The devicéd pennants of your defeated foes.
- A stoppered horn of mead: sip from it and you can speak with birds.

—Bindings—

- — has never yet deferred to me, no matter how I demanded it, but only defies me. On my honor I will never *woo them* or *draw them out*. Who?

- I am afraid of —, like of nothing else under the earth or the sky. I can never *demand their deference*, nor bear to *receive a blow* from them. Who?

The Elfin Knight

To play the *Elfin Knight*, create your name, your summer & winter, your plays, your place, your trappings, and your bindings.

Your Job:

Your job as a player is to:

- Make your character vivid.
- Play your part in the circus.
- Take the bad with the good.

Name:

Choose a noble name. Make your honorific include a reference to the night sky.

Examples: Alisande the Crescent Moon, Jerrold Night's-storm, Mathilde Orion-crowned, Mattieu of the Evening Star.

Summer & Winter:

From each of the following, choose one for summer and one for winter:

- Roses, iris, forget-me-not, hyacinth, apple blossom, ripe cherries, bitter quince, the dragonfly.
- Elfin face, striking face, forbidding face, wrinkled face, luminous eyes, shadowed eyes, secret smile, expansive smile, unkind smile.
- Grass green, rose, violet, blue-violet, moth gray, mouse gray, lustrous gray, silver, shining white, shinking gold, ebony, mahogany.
- Silk robe, velvet tunic, shot-silk gown, simple shift, linen surcoat, brocade surcoat, padded arming-vest.
- Mannish, womanish, boyish, girlish, childish, queerish, sexy, sexless, forbidding, unapproachable.

You can choose 2 sometimes if you want to, why shouldn't you?

Example (summer / winter):

Hyacinth / bitter quince
Striking face, secret smile / striking face, luminous eyes
Moth gray / shining white
Velvet tunic / brocade surcoat
Mannish, queerish / Mannish, sexy

Begin play in full summer: mark all of the lines in the summer column.

Plays:

You can make all of the obvious plays and the Elfin Knight plays. Mark +2 next to your choice of three plays, +0 next to two, -1 next to two, and +1 next to all of the rest. These are your plays' rolls.

Place:

In the circus, at need, you can take any and all of the listed roles.

Trappings:

You get all of the listed trappings.

Bindings:

Everybody introduces themselves by name, summer & winter (or the corresponding), and place, including any details they like. Take your turn.

List the other characters' names.

Go around again for bindings. On your turn, ask for volunteers:

- One of you has never yet deferred to me, no matter how I demanded it, but only defies me. **Who?** On my honor I will never **woo you** or **draw you out**.
- One of you, I'm afraid of, like of nothing else under the earth or the sky. **Who?** I can never **demand your deference**, nor bear to **receive a blow** from you.

If no one volunteers, so be it and move on. If more than one volunteers, accept them all, choose one, or ask them to decide between them, as you like.

On the others' turns, volunteer as you choose.

-Consequences-

Summer & winter:

When you move toward summer, erase one of the marks in the winter column and mark the same line in the summer column.

When you move toward winter, erase one of the marks in the summer column and mark the same line in the winter column.

Whenever you move toward summer or toward winter, take 1 from one of your plays' rolls and add 1 to a different play's roll. Choose intentionally, to match your feeling about the change. Keep to a minimum of -2 and a maximum of +3.

Violence:

Violence in fairyland is considered visceral, irrevocable, and horrifying. **When you're wounded, shocked, affronted, or dismayed**, you must immediately choose 1:

- You die.
- You withdraw at once in a cold, dignified fury.
- You writhe, moan, and curse in a display of melodramatic agony.
- You proceed immediately and fully to winter.
- You consider yourself cruelly mistreated and maimed, and will long nurse your injuries and your grudge.

True death: there are only a few things that can truly kill a fairy. Cold iron is one; there are others. There's no coming back from true death.

Insults:

When someone insults you, you're allowed by fairy law and your fairy nature to answer it. It's considered to be your own unimpeachable right to weigh the insult and respond in due measure, so only you can choose what form your answer should take and how extreme it should be. Other fairies may gossip, but no fairy would rightly stand before you and assert that you've overstepped.

Beholden:

When you are beholden, fairy law and your fairy nature demand that you make good and deliver the balance. If you are recalcitrant or uneager to do so, your debtor may consider it an insult or a worse offense.