Midsummer

Fairytales in the Mundane World

Midsummer: Fairytales in the Mundane World
Playtest Edition, May 2013

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For my heart and soul, Donna.

Powered by the Apocalypse

Changes

May 2013 Edition
- Added references to the Character Creation chapter
- Expanded Ground Rules
- Adjusted Animals, Wee Ones and More sidebar
- Adjusted Test Fate
- Adjusted Talk in Circles in the Child storybook
- Adjusted Before You Start questions
- Added Giving Everyone Their Due sidebar
- Added Neverland realm book
- Added The Wild realm book
- Added Wonderland realm book
- Corrected various typos

Feb 2013 Edition
- Added references to the Character Creation chapter
- Added The Fairytale World sidebar
- Added Popularity Deeds sidebar
- Added Animals, Wee Ones and More sidebar
- Adjusted Storybook move instructions
- Added Defending Against NPCs sidebar
- Added Counterspell move
- Changed the Maimed disability to Addled
- Replaced Child moves Armored by Innocence and Wily with Disobedient and Impulsive
- Updated Fairy's Fairytale Move to match bargain rules
- Removed gender references from Prince and Princess
- Adjusted Princess stats
- Updated Villain move Deceitful and Backstabbing
- Adjusted Wild Animal stats
- Added When Do I Roll the Dice? sidebar
- Expanded Perform a Feat of Fable description
- Expanded Threaten Harm description
- Expanded Borrow Something notes
- Expanded Command description
- Added Defending Against Magic Items sidebar
- Added magic item category lists
- Added a few magic items and cleaned up a few others
- Added Advanced Rules
- Corrected various typos

Contents

Introduction

Midsummer is a roleplaying game dedicated to playing fairy tale characters struggling to survive in the modern world. Cinderella and three blind fellows seal a business deal in a Parisian cafe. A bag lady who calls herself the Evil Queen recruits Miss Gale's help in restoring her beauty. Mr. Midas has a light-fingered butler named Pinocchio. Baloo plans on proposing to the owner of Sugar Plum Coffee in Central Park. Any character from a classical fairy tale, fable, myth, folktale or nursery rhyme will work.

One player is the narrator. The other players each choose a storybook and a fairytale. You play together to find out what happens.

Fairytales

Each player chooses a fairytale and their corresponding storybook to play. They all fall into one of the following types of storybooks. The Character Creation chapter has more details on how to pick a storybook.

Child

You are filled with the pure wonder and innocence of childhood, for you are an eternal child. Tricks and tales are your method of living in a grown-up world that wants you in school or cleaning your room. You might never want to grow up, or you might long to be an adult, but either way you are stuck as a child.

Domestic Animal

You have walked hand in hand with humankind for as long as you can remember, sharing their varied tastes and predilections. You might rely on your wits, causing trouble wherever you go, or you might be more fond of comfort and security. Regardless, you find it difficult to live in a world that expects you to live like one of your mundane brethren.

Fairy

The twilight green of fairyland is your true home, for you are one of the otherworldly spirits known to mortals as fairies. Your very nature is magical, ephemeral and mysterious. Your words, your lies, have power that binds and the illusions you spin are indistinguishable from truth.

Hero

You can be found at the center of every nursery rhyme, fairy tale or legend. A sometimes lazy hero who triumphs, not through morals or righteousness, but rather through trickery. Your easily won fame and fortune are often short lived, slipping through your fingers as soon as you loosen your grip.

Magician

You are well known as a conjurer of magic, whether due to trickery or through something genuinely magical in your blood. You may be called a witch, a sorceress, a wizard, or simply a magician by those who value your power and wise counsel. The mysteries of the world lie at your fingertips.

Prince

Damsels in distress are your bread and butter. As a young, handsome suitor whom others swoon over, your very name is used to refer to an ideal paramour. Though you may be cursed into a less appealing form, or beset by misfortune or disaster, you always come through, whether through sheer luck or determination.

Princess

You are every inch the royal princess, and everyone knows it. Sure you may be cursed or bewitched, poor or bedraggled, but there's just something about you that inspires others. Your strong heart and tenacity usually carry you through any adversity, even through death itself.

Villain

Your dark heart desires always more than what you have. Others are merely pawns or annoyances that stand in the way of your plans. Though you might appear trustworthy at times, or even noble, you can always be counted on to leave your dagger plunged into someone's back before the tale is done.

Wee One

The world is a very large place, particularly for someone as tiny as you. You might be a few feet tall or smaller than an inch, but your ambition has always been bigger than a mountain. You dream of the jewels of the earth, great adventures, companionship, or a place to fit in that's just your size.

Wild Animal

You were born as a natural member of the Kingdom of the Wild. You might slither on the ground, walk on all fours, or fly through the air, but however you are formed, it's the Wild that sings to your heart. As you may imagine, this can cause no end of problems in the mundane world - particularly when you decide to speak.

The Mundane World

For some reason the fairytales find themselves stuck in the modern mundane world. Perhaps the fairytale lands they remember no longer exist. Perhaps the mythic lands are locked away or dangerous. Maybe it is the world itself that has become mundane, having once been a domain of fable and magic. Whatever the reason, the world has very little magic in it now and most

mundanes have no idea that fairytales are real.

Sidebar: The Fairytale World

You might find that you'd rather play a game set in a fairytale world, the Fairy Court, or even Wonderland. You may want to set the mundane world aside and play fairytale characters in another era, a magical realm, or even a different genre such as high fantasy. No problem. See the A Fairytale World chapter for more information.

The Goal of the Game

The goal of Midsummer is to get together with friends and tell stories. The stories aren't the kind you find in Grimm's books. They aren't written down and no one, not even the narrator, knows what will happen. Together, at the table, you find out.

Three Reasons to Play

1. It's fun to play actual living, breathing fairytales. Snow White. Rose Red. The Wicked Witch of the West. Myths, legends, folktales, and fables. The stories we all know.
2. It's fun to think about what the characters behind the fairytales might actually be like. How come every princess ends up marrying this guy named Prince Charming? Was Captain Hook really a woman and Peter Pan really a girl? You get to put your own stamp on the classic tales; to add to the legend.
3. It's fun to see what happens when fairytales are set loose in the mundane world. What happens when the Evil Queen exists in a world with cosmetic surgery and photoshop? How does Pinocchio get by if he stays a real boy forever? You get to find out.

How to Use this Book

The first half of this book, up to the Narrator chapter, is written for players. The second half is written for narrators. Players should probably read the Introduction (this chapter), the Playing the Game chapter, familiarize themselves with the storybooks, and read over the basic moves. Narrators should read the whole book. You don't have to memorize anything, but you should be familiar with how things work.

What You Will Need

...besides this book, that is. You'll need somewhere to play and a few supplies.

Somewhere to play might be:
- a dinner table
- a comfortable cafe
- the floor of an apartment
- a table at a game store
- over chat on the internet

You will need the following supplies:
- pencils and erasers
- a copy of each storybook
- at least 1 copy of the reference sheets
- heart tokens (counters or poker chips work great)
- boon tokens (use a different color or type than the heart tokens)
- at least 2 normal, six-sided dice
- snacks and drinks (consider cheese, nuts, bread, fruit, cookies, cakes and tea)

How to Play

Playing Midsummer is like having one long conversation. Everyone playing gets into the action, and collectively the group creates a shared fictional world. The players play their fairytales and say what their fairytales do. They act like them and speak like them. The narrator plays everyone else - other fairytales, the mundanes, the fairytale realms and the mundane world itself. Sometimes - probably often - certain events in the fiction will trigger gameplay. That's when you pick up the dice to find out what happens.

Altogether, there's a bit of acting, a bit of storytelling, and a bit of gameplay.

Playing the Game

Making Moves and Rolling Dice

All of the gameplay that happens occurs as moves. There are basic moves that any player can make, storybook moves that players might be able to make, fairytale moves that each character possesses one variation of, and narrator moves that only the narrator can make. Players roll dice to see what happens when they make a move. Narrators decide what happens according to the rules.

Moves happen when the fiction demands them. A player describes what his character is doing. If the description indicates a move, the player makes the move. Depending on the results of the move, the narrator and the players describe what happens next. The cycle continues.

Moves don't happen just because you want them to. There has to be a bit of fiction in the game world to support the move first. You have to say you're knocking the princess out of the way of an oncoming car before you make the move that determines if you succeed. You have to say you shoot the dragon before you make the move to see if the beast is harmed. You have to say what you want and how you are trying to get it before you make the move to determine if your trick worked. Always remember - fiction first.

Active Moves

Active moves require a dice roll to find out what happens. All of the basic moves and many storybook moves are active moves. Each mentions which stat you should use with the move. Stats are discussed more in the next section.

To make an active move, roll 2 dice and add them to your stat. On a 6 or less, you miss. On a 7 or higher, you hit. A 10 or higher is a strong hit, while a 7 to 9 is a weak hit. Strong hits represent total success. Weak hits represent partial success or success tinged with complications. On a miss, the narrator makes a move and you won't like it.

All of the active moves follow this basic format, with specifications for how to handle weak and strong hits. Sometimes rules for misses are specified as well.

Stats

All player characters are rated by five universal stats. Stats may be as low as -3 and as high as +3, but most PCs will have stats in the range of -1 to +2. The Character Creation chapter explains how to assign stats when creating your character.

Courage

The ability to overcome fear, perform great deeds, and find inner resolve.

Brawn

The ability to use raw physical force, instill fear in others, and harm others.

Cunning

The ability to outwit others, spin tales of fancy, and use your wiles to get what you want.

Wisdom

The ability to find the correct answer, known when to come in out of the rain, and use magic.

Popularity

The ability to endure through the ages, outlast fads, and be recognized.

Highlighting

Each PC will have two stats highlighted that represent particular areas of focus for them at the moment. Highlighted stats are chosen together by the group. They will change over time. When you use highlighted stats enough, you will be able to improve your character.

Boons

Often times you will be rewarded with a boon or two as a result of moves. A boon is a token that you set aside. You can spend your boon tokens on moves to make them harder or easier. If you don't spend all your boon tokens by the end of the session, they are gone.

You can spend a boon token to:
- give a +1 to someone's dice roll before they roll the dice for a move
- give a -1 to someone's dice roll before they roll the dice for a move

You can spend any number of boons - all of them if you want - on a single roll. You can spend them on yourself or others. There's no point in spending them on the narrator (since they don't roll dice).

Items Mundane and Magical

Each storybook comes with an assortment of magic items to choose from, and the fairytales will have many opportunities to acquire more during play through the use of moves. Mundane items can be acquired or possessed based on the fiction, and sometimes through moves. Magic items are special, unique, and - well - magical. Mundane items are plentiful and intrinsic to the mundane world.

Items, both mundane and magical, are primarily used when creating fiction. A car can get you somewhere. Magic beans can get you to the kingdom in the clouds. A computer can get you on the internet. A ring of need can find what you're looking for.

That fiction may lead to moves. A car chase might require a Perform a Feat of Fable to catch an adversary. Magic beans might be used to Bargain. Insulting your enemy on the internet might require a Threaten Harm. Finding your way in the back streets of Cairo with a ring of need might require a Ponder Fate.

Items are rated in points of wealth that represent their relative value. Some items can be used as weapons or armor and will have corresponding weapon and armor ratings. Some items may also have custom moves to represent unique abilities.

See the Bargains chapter for examples.

Terminology

- Active: a player move that requires a dice roll. Active moves are used when the outcome is in doubt.
- Another: one other character; either PC or NPC if unspecified.
- Boon token: a counter used to keep track of how many boons a character has available.
- Easy bargain: a bargain where the price is less than the offer.
- Fairytale: a character from fable, myth, folklore, nursery rhymes, or classical fairy tales.
- Flashback: a special scene created by a player that explores the previous lives of the PCs.
- Location: a single place such as a bookstore, cafe, apartment or street. Locations may be conceptual or broader in scope such as an entire city, a dream, or fairy court.
- Magical: something from the fairytale realms or created with magic.
- Mundane: non-magical. Something from the mundane world.
- Non-player character: a fairytale or mundane character played by the narrator, as opposed to the players. Abbreviated as NPC.
- Passive: a player move that doesn't require a dice roll. Usually a passive move modifies an active move or provides some benefit that is not in doubt.
- Player character: a fairytale character played by one of the players, as opposed to the narrator. Abbreviated as PC.
- Others: several other characters; either PCs or NPCs if unspecified.
- Scene: the action taking place in one or more locations concurrently. A scene ends when the PCs change location or time.
- Signature: items, usually magical, that are tied to a particular fairytale.
- Unequal bargain: a bargain where the price is more than the offer.

Character Creation

Get together for the first session and pass out the storybooks. Look them over and get a general feel for the options. You are going to have to choose one of them. No sharing.

The Seed

You should have a good idea by now what storybook you might be interested in. You may also want to select a fairytale character you want to play. Your fairytale can be drawn from your favorite tale or a character you are interested in. You can draw ideas from classical fairy tales, myths, folktales, fables, or other stories. Try to picture your fairytale living in the mundane world.

Don't worry if someone else takes the storybook that best fits your fairytale. Most characters will fit into multiple storybooks, perhaps with a little creativity. You might also consider swapping out your selected fairytale's traditional role. The villain of a tale might actually be misrepresented. Maybe the hero was actually the villain. You may also consider changing your character's gender or ethnicity. Perhaps the Princess, Briar Rose, is actually a man.

Your combination of fairytale and storybook says something about the character you are going to play. Consider the difference between playing Goldilocks as a Child versus making her a Villain.

Ground Rules

You should talk with your group about any ground rules in place. You may want to focus on certain types of stories or draw all the fairytales from a single tale. You might want everyone to make a different version of the same fairytale. Some of the storybooks may be removed by the narrator, or the narrator may provide additional storybooks of their own. Whatever the ground rules are, you should all agree on them as a group.

Here's some built-in ground rules:
- Your characters can talk. Whether they are a regular animal, a girl raised by wolves or living doll.
- Your characters know each other. They might be friends, allies, or even enemies. They have certainly run into each other many times over the centuries.
- Your characters are unique. There might be many fairytale princesses around, and certainly some mundane princesses, but there's only one Princess. Everyone is the hero of their own tale, and all the PCs may act heroic. However, there's only one Hero.
- The narrator is on your side, or rather, they don't take sides.

Steps to Create Your Fairytale

1. Choose a storybook.
2. Choose a True Name.
3. Note any aliases you use.
4. Choose options for your description according to your storybook.

5. Choose your mundane life.
6. Follow the rules in your storybook for assigning stats.
7. You get all the basic moves.
8. You get a number of storybook moves, according to your storybook. At the narrator's discretion, you may choose a move from another storybook instead of choosing a move from your own storybook.
9. Follow the rules in your storybook to determine your Popularity.
10. Follow the rules in your storybook to determine what magic items (if any) you start with.
11. You get a special fairytale move from your storybook.

Brief Intros

- Child: you are an eternal child stuck in a world that treats you differently than grown ups.
- Domestic Animal: you are born of one of the domesticated pets or farm animal, yet you yearn to speak and to live the ways of humankind.
- Fairy: you are one of the alien people of the Fairy Courts, filled with magic and strange rules.
- Hero: you are the hero of the tale, who succeeds through trickery and cunning.
- Magician: you are wise and powerful, either through magic or trickery.
- Prince: you are the dashing knight, fated to fight dragons and rescue damsels.
- Princess: you are the beautiful princess with a pure heart and delicate sensibilities.
- Villain: you are a black hearted rogue liable to stab a friend in the back over a chest of gold.
- Wee One: you were born smaller than others, perhaps a mere dwarf or perhaps even smaller than an inch.
- Wild Animal: you are a beast of the Wild, forced to live in a world run by your prey.

True Names

Every fairytale has a True Name. Some names are obvious, such as Pinocchio. Other tales may have multiple choices, such as Aurora or Briar Rose. Some fairytales have never revealed their True Name, such as the Evil Queen from Snow White. Modern retellings have given the queen various names, but the original tales were silent on the matter.

Each storybook has a suggested list of True Names. When the name is actually a title, you'll see "the" preceding it (the Evil Queen). In such cases, you will need to decide on your fairytale's True Name. You might also decide to alter a True Name to better suit your fairytale. Perhaps Captain Hook was actually a woman and you want to make your True Name Jamie Hook instead of James Hook.

Aliases

You have at least one alias that you use with mundanes. It's the name on your driver's license. You may also list other names you've been known by over the ages.

Description

Your description is a few words or phrases that describe you. They might describe your voice, the color of your hair, your preference for clothing, or personality traits. You may also include a picture, if you like.

Mundane Life

Your mundane life is what you do in the mundane world. You may have once been a princess living in a castle, but nowdays, out in the mundane, you might just be a shoe salesman struggling to get by with a small apartment. You may also list other mundane occupations or lives you have lived in the past.

Sidebar: Stats

- Courage: the ability to overcome fear, perform great deeds, and find inner resolve.
- Brawn: the ability to use raw physical force, instill fear in others, and harm others.
- Cunning: the ability to outwit others, spin tales of fancy, and use your wiles to get what you want.
- Wisdom: the ability to find the correct answer, known when to come in out of the rain, and use magic.
- Popularity: the ability to endure through the ages, outlast fads, and be recognized.

Moves

You get all of the basic moves and a few storybook specific moves to start. Follow the rules in your storybook to find out which storybook moves you get. See the Narrating Moves chapter for more information on specific moves.

Sidebar: Animals, Wee Ones and More

You may be wondering how you can possibly get by in the mundane world if you don't fit in. How do you hold down a job as a 1-inch tall human or a walking, talking animal? Here are a few ways to fit in:

- There are a variety of moves that place the hardship under your control. You often don't have to take these moves, but they offer a method of gaining some benefit for struggling to fit in. Glamoured, for example, allows you to mark experience whenever being an animal causes you problems. This might be because someone sees you, or it might just be because it's hard to hold a wine glass with a paw. Small Troubles is a similar move for Wee Ones. Taking the move means you are signaling that you want to have difficulty being small.
- Pick up a magic item that lets you mask your strangeness at start. These might be temporary help if you end up losing the item, but you can always fall back on one of the other methods listed here. Some examples include the disguise skin, the shape-

changing belt, and the lordly boots.

- Use magic to make yourself fit in. Various moves and magic items grant access to magical abilities that can hide you. The easiest way is to use Cast a Spell when you need to fit in. Either gain access to it yourself or bargain with the other PCs or NPCs.
- Stick to Fairytale City. No one looks twice at a talking mouse or a troll there. If you never need to leave to visit the mundane world, you are probably safe. You might even live in a special district designed for folks that mundanes would be shocked by.
- Depending on the answers you give to the narrator, mundanes may not even notice that you are a snake in a top hat. They may just naturally see you as an adult, a child, or a non-talking animal - it all depends on how you present yourself.

Popularity

Your Popularity determines how resilient you are (and how immortal). Popularity is the one stat that is out of your control. Once everyone has chosen their moves, go around the group to figure out your Popularity. Your storybook tells you what to do.

Popular fairytales often have magic items associated with their tales. Those items tend to take on myth of their own and end up passed on to other fairytales. The higher your Popularity is, the less likely you are to hold onto magic items.

Sidebar: Popularity Deeds

When naming deeds from a fairytale's past, you can be as creative as you can get away with. You can draw from movies, comics, or cartoons that featured your character. You can even make up events entirely. Just make sure nobody objects.

Here are a few examples:
- The Evil Queen abandoned her daughter, Snowdrop, in a meadow. The queen has always harbored a black jealousy of her daughter's beauty.
- Peter Pan lost his shadow once, until Wendy sewed it on for him.
- Merlin cast a spell on King Uther to make him look like his enemy Gorlois, which lead to the birth of King Arthur as the wizard had foreseen.
- The Big Bad Wolf solved the murder of Rose Red when she was apparently killed in her apartment.
- Orochimaru tried to kill the Nine-Tailed Fox with the sword Kusanagi, but the fox escaped by using magic.
- Uncle Nancy once tricked the Sun into falling in love with the Moon, which is why the Moon must flee from the Sun.
- Snow White's daughter was hidden from the Evil Queen when she was born.

Are the deeds named true? Did they actually happen, or are they just stories that people have told about you? Play the game to find out.

Magic Items

You get a small number of magic items to start with. Follow the rules in your storybook.

Fairytale Move

Every PC gets a special fairytale move from their storybook. When you use your fairytale move, you create a scene of your own devising that takes place sometime in the past. This is called a flashback scene. The current scene ends and the flashback scene begins. You can choose to end your scene whenever you like, and resume the game in modern day. Once your flashback scene ends, you receive the benefits of your fairytale move.

Your storybook explains any special rules for your fairytale move.

Flashback Scenes

To create a flashback scene, you'll need to answer the questions below:
- Does the scene take place in the fairytale world or the mundane world?
- Where does the scene take place?
- When does the scene take place?

Each player grabs a flashback sheet and answers the following questions:
- If the scene takes place in the mundane world, decide whether you use the same alias as modern day or a different alias.
- If the scene takes place in the mundane world, decide if you live the same mundane life or not. If the scene takes place in the fairytale world, decide on your fairytale life.
- Set aside your current magic items. Follow the rules in your storybook to determine what magic items (if any) you have for the flashback scene.
- Everything else remains the same (stats, moves, etc.)

Before the First Session

Once everyone is done with their character, you have one last step. You need to find out which of your stats are highlighted. Here's how it works:
1. If you have the highest Popularity, you get to highlight one stat for each player. Any stat you like. If you are tied for highest Popularity, you should each roll 2d6, with the highest roll declared winner. Only one player gets to highlight stats.
2. The narrator will highlight a second stat for each player.

Basic Moves

See Basic Moves book.

Storybooks

See Storybooks book.

Improvement

Your fairytale will improve over time. Each session you will have the opportunity to gain experience and improve.

Experience

Mark experience whenever you roll a move that uses one of your highlighted stats or when a move tells you to. When you have marked 5 experience, erase your experience and choose 1 improvement from the list in your storybook. You may only choose each improvement once.

If you gain experience as the result of a move, wait until the move completes before you improve.

Improvements

Each storybook has a similar list of improvements available. You can raise your stats, choose additional moves from your storybook, choose additional moves from other storybooks, or gain a special benefit available only to your storybook. Special benefits are usually fictional in nature, as opposed to moves or stats changes. They may grant you access to additional wealth, items, or bands of allies.

Anytime you choose an improvement, it should make sense with the ongoing fiction. If the improvement doesn't make sense, introduce some new fiction to explain it.

Changing Highlights

At the beginning of each session, you have the opportunity to change your highlighted stats. It works just like at the end of character creation. You should try to get highlighted stats that match your preferred moves. Conversely, you should match your strategy in play to the stats you have highlighted. If you have your Brawn highlighted, that calls for throwing your weight around, intimidating your others, and even using violence to get what you want. A highlighted Cunning calls for using trickery, riddles, and tall tales to get what you want.

Advanced Improvement

Once you have improved 5 times, you may choose from the list of advanced improvements below instead of using the list in your storybook. This is optional. You can still choose the improvements in your storybook (if you have any left). You may only choose each advanced improvement once.

Advanced Improvements

- Add +1 to any stat (maximum of +3).
- Advance 3 basic moves.
- Advance 3 basic moves.

- Change your fairytale to a different storybook.
- Live happily ever after and make a new character.
- Create an apprentice and play 2 characters.

Advanced Moves

Most of your basic moves can be advanced to offer an additional success level. When you roll a 12 or higher, you get an advanced hit. See each advanced move for specifics.

Perform a Feat of Fable

On a 12+, your performance is so extraordinary it will be remembered for some time to come. Gain 3 boon tokens.

Threaten Harm

On a 12+, they have to do what you want. They can't bear the thought of taking their medicine.

Strike a Blow

On a 12+, you get all 4, plus choose 1 option twice.

Tell a Tall Tale

On a 12+ versus an NPC, your trick works, and you or another PC involved in the trick become the NPC's True Love.

Ponder Fate

On a 12+, ask any 3 questions you want of your opponent or the narrator. Gain 1 boon token when you act on the answer to one of your questions.

Live to Tell the Tale

On a 12+, you somehow avoid the harm and are restored to full heart tokens.

Bargain

On a 12+, you strike an unequal bargain and may lower your offer.
    Ask your narrator if this advanced move is available.

Cast a Spell

On a 12+, your spell is permanent or extraordinary in effect and you gain 3 boon tokens.
    Ask your narrator if this advanced move is available.

Counterspell

On a 12+, the spell is countered and you have the option of reversing it against the caster.
    Ask your narrator if this advanced move is available.

Changing Storybooks

You can explore a new aspect of your fairytale by changing storybooks. Choose a new storybook and copy your character over. Don't toss out your old storybook, as you'll still need parts of it. Follow these steps when changing storybooks:

1. Copy your True Name.
2. Copy any aliases you use.
3. Copy as many options from your description as you like. Replace any you leave behind with options from your new storybook.
4. Copy over your mundane life.
5. Copy your stats as is.
6. Keep the moves you have in your old storybook.
7. Copy over your magic items.
8. Keep any improvements you've made, except perhaps your storybook's special improvement. Ask the narrator about the special improvement. Any improvements you didn't take from your old storybook are closed to you now. The list of improvements in your new storybook are now open. Any advanced improvements you have made remain.
9. You get a number of new storybook moves, according to your new storybook.
10. Replace your fairytale move with the fairytale move in your new storybook.

Live Happily Ever After

You retire to the home for forgotten fairytales, ride off into the sunset, or take up a supporting role as an NPC. You might marry your True Love, or pass on your position to a successor. Tell the narrator what you want to do. They might want to play it out during the session.

Once you select Live Happily Ever After as an improvement, your character is safe. They won't die or become an adversary, but you don't get to play them anymore. Grab a new storybook and make a new fairytale.

Apprentices

You can play two characters if you like - just pick out a new storybook. Your new fairytale becomes an apprentice to your old fairytale. They can be related like Peter Pan and Tinker Bell, but they don't have to be. Each character should have their own pool of heart tokens. Share one pool of boon tokens between them.

New Characters and Popularity

When you create a new fairytale after the group has already been playing, you'll need to figure out your Popularity. Do this with the group like you normally would. If you are playing more than 1 character, just count yourself once for naming stuff about your new character.

Harm and Healing

In times of action and danger, you may end up dealing out or receiving harm. The following chapter explains when that happens, how much harm is dealt or taken, what that means, and how you can recover from harm.

Harm

When Do You Take Harm?

You take harm when:
- You Perform a Feat of Fable, and take harm as a result.
- You Strike a Blow, and take harm as a result.
- Another player chooses to Strike a Blow against you, and you take harm as a result.
- Another player chooses to Threaten Harm against you, and you choose to take your medicine.
- The outcome of a storybook move results in harm to you.
- The narrator chooses to inflict harm upon you.

How Much Harm?

Normally the amount of harm is equal to the weapon of the attacker minus the armor of the defender. If for some reason there are multiple weapons or armors involved, use the highest of each. This may be modified in the following ways:
- Avoiding serious harm means 0 harm against individuals and -1 harm against bands.
- Terrible harm means add +1 to the harm.
- Stunning doesn't modify the harm, but the defender can't act until they recover.
- The amount of harm may be specified by the move, rather than the weapon. Don't subtract armor in this case.
- Magical weapons bypass mundane armor.
- You avoid serious harm when using magical armor against mundane weapons.
- Individuals take terrible harm from bands.
- Bands avoid serious harm from individuals.
- Small bands take terrible harm from plentiful bands.
- Plentiful bands avoid serious harm from small bands.

Suggested Harm of Weapons

Weapons normally inflict an amount of harm equal to their fictional capacity for harm. Here are some examples:
- 0 harm: grappling, pebbles
- 1 harm: fists, rocks, light falls, dehydration
- 2 harm: swords, axes, bows, pistols, falls, fire
- 3 harm: rifles, shotguns, great falls

- 4 harm: legendary falls, machine guns, crashes
- 5 harm: explosions, dismemberment, drowning, plane crashes

Suggested Protection of Armor

Armors normally protect from an amount of harm equal to their fictional capacity for protection. If you are protected by multiple armors, use the highest protection value. Some armors may include a plus sign (+1) in their value. In this case, you may add the bonus to another armor. Here are some examples:
- 0 protection: normal clothes
- 1 protection: motorcycle jackets, crash helmets, shields
- 2 protection: ballistic vests, plate armor
- 3 protection: bomb suits

Heart Tokens

You get 4 heart tokens. Each point of harm you take crosses off one heart token. When you cross off your final token, you are in danger of dying and must attempt to Live to Tell the Tale (as in the basic move).

Healing

Your heart tokens are restored at a rate of one per scene. They are all restored between sessions. Stunned characters recover at the end of the current scene.

The Narrator

We call you the narrator. The narrator as in the classical definition of the person who tells the story. You're not the author, or at least, not the only author. You won't get exclusive control of the story - no one will. You are going to work with the players to create drama. Stories will unfold and you will all find out together what happens. This chapter lays out what you need to do.

Your Agenda

- Make fairytales living in the mundane world seem real
- Fill the PCs' lives with drama
- Play to find out what happens

These 3 things are your goals as narrator. Everything you do should accomplish all 3. You don't have any other goals. Don't try to make the players lose. Don't stand in their way, judge them or punish them. Don't lead them to dead ends. Don't read to them or give them books to read. Don't try to force a storyline or outcome.

Making the World Seem Real

Make the world seem real through the fiction you create during play. Establish an atmosphere. Describe a few details. Nothing too extensive, just a word or two for the players to hang their imaginations on. A woman with golden curls. A shop built out of green bricks. A sour smell in the alley. A boy who smells like cinnamon. Not too much that anyone struggles to remember the details.

Always speak as your NPCs. Don't describe what they say. You can use your voice and physical mannerisms to bring to life distinct NPCs. Again, just use a few quirks. An accent or a slight stutter. Hand gestures or hands on hips. Nod your head a lot or slump down. Something to make each NPC memorable. Once you start using your voice and body while speaking, even doing nothing will create an impression of a bland, vanilla character.

You can create physical handouts to add to the atmosphere, such as business cards, theater tickets, and maps. Just don't expect anyone to actually read the diary you give them in order to find the 3 clues you've hidden. At the very least, everyone not reading the diary will be bored. You will be bored while they read. And, probably, the player who has to read the diary will be bored. You are also running dangerously close to deciding on a storyline and telling the players what happens. Don't do that.

As an alternative, consider filling your play area with objects, books, and snacks that evoke the atmosphere of the game. Objects related to the city the PCs live in are great. Antiques, particularly if they have a fairy tale quality, are good. Books of fairy tales, particularly during character creation, are great. Just be wary of anyone who sits around reading. Special snacks can include cultural or fairy tale themed food.

Creating Drama

Drama means the journey a PC takes to overcome those things that prevent them from achieving a specific, acute goal. In every scene, push the players to define what they want. Those wants should create fiction that leads to a move. The move answers whether they get what they want. Think about what happens if the move is unsuccessful and they don't get what they want. Why do they need it now?

Do this every scene and you get drama. Don't do it and the game will be boring. If the scene bores you while you are running it, the players will be bored too. It's your job to create the drama. It's not the players' job. Their job is to find goals for their characters. Your job is to push them to find goals, push them to act now, and then figure out what happens right now if they fail.

When you create a scene, there is often an easy cue to figure out the PCs' goals. Why are they in the scene? Why did they show up? The result of the moves in a scene create another easy cue to set the next scene. Did they get what they wanted? Where do they go from here?

Remember, it's not your job to figure out what's going to happen next. You get to determine what happens when they fail right now, but not what the eventual outcome will be. You should wonder what happens next. The players should wonder what happens next. If everyone is wondering what will happen next you are doing a great job.

Play to Find Out

This sounds simple, but it's very important. Never plan out what will happen ahead of time. Always figure out what happens right now, as it happens. In particular, as narrator, this means you shouldn't be hoping for any particular outcomes. Just because it's your job to figure out what happens immediately when someone fails, doesn't mean you want them to fail. You don't want them to succeed either. You want the game to move forward so you can find out what happens.

When it comes time for you to say what's happening right now, don't think about what you want to be happening. Think about the fiction. Think about the logic behind what has happened before. What have the PCs done? What are the NPCs doing? Think about logical cause and effect from the fiction. Then say what's happening.

Your Job

There are clear differences between you and the players. The players' job is to say what their characters say and what their characters do - to define the goals for their characters. It's their job to say what they think, and what they feel. It's up to them to answer your questions about their character or their characters' lives. Your job is everything else, to describe the world and everyone else in it, what's happening, and most especially to push the players to define goals.

Always be honest. Always give them the facts they need. This doesn't mean that one of the adversaries you've prepared can't pretend to be their friend. It doesn't mean NPCs have to tell the PCs the truth. It means that you have to be honest. Tell them when something is dangerous or risky, or what the consequences might be. Tell them what's happening. Don't try to weasel out of giving them the benefits of moves they succeed at. Don't shy away from the

consequences of failure or hide those consequences.

Finally, always remember, you're on their side. Don't try to defeat them.

Sidebar: When Do I Roll the Dice?

You don't. Only the players should be rolling dice. This doesn't mean you should be arbitrary in deciding what happens. Instead, look to your agenda and the principles to figure out which moves you should make. Let's look at an example of how that works - particularly when it comes to physical combat and harm.

Rose Red is surprised in an alleyway by a massive ogre who's after her blood. Sticking to just the basic moves, she has a number of ways to respond. Depending on the move she makes and the roll she gets, you then have a number of moves you can make in response.

If Rose tries to perform a feat of fable to outrun the ogre, she rolls the dice and adds her Courage. On a 10+, she outruns the ogre and picks up a boon token in the process. Rose gets her goal, which was to get away. Unless she pauses or another player interrupts, you should let her make another move if she wants. You don't get to make a move for the ogre until you get an opportunity.

On a 7-9, what happens depends on her choice from the results. She gets away, but at some cost. If she chooses the 1 harm as her cost, you could say that the ogre grabbed at her and scraped her back as she fled. Or maybe she banged her knee jumping over a brick wall. Either way, that's the only harm the ogre inflicts. If Rose doesn't choose 1 harm as her cost, then she gets away at some other cost, but no harm is inflicted by the ogre. After you make a move as part of the cost, such as inflicting the 1 harm from a banged knee, Rose gets to make a move again. If she hesitates, make another move. Otherwise, let her continue.

On a miss, you get to decide what happens by picking a move. You can choose harm someone to have the ogre smash a dumpster into Rose as she gets away (3 harm). You can choose kidnap them to have the ogre knock Rose out and drag her off to its lair. You can choose steal something from them to have the ogre snatch away her bag as she runs away. It's up to you, but once you make a move, give the players an opportunity to respond. Always follow your move with, "what do you do?"

Let's look at a different move. Maybe Rose decides to go toe to toe with the ogre and strike a blow with her baseball bat. She rolls the dice and adds her Brawn. On a hit, she gets to choose several of the 4 possible results from the list. She can hit him under the chin before he can react (stunning him and avoiding serious harm) and then take his wallet (stealing from him) if she rolls a 10+. She could just hit him under the chin on a 7-9 (stun and avoid serious harm), without stealing his wallet. As long as she avoids serious harm, the ogre won't really be hitting her. If she doesn't choose that option, then you'll be trading blows to inflict harm from the ogre (3 harm). On a miss, you get to choose any moves you like. Trading blows is the most likely, but you can also choose any of the options from the perform a feat of fable example.

The key here is that what happens, and whether the ogre harms Rose, arises out of the choices she makes and the results of her dice rolls.

The Principles

During play, you should keep in mind the following principles of play.

Sprinkle Fairy Dust

Cover your characters and scenes with a bit of fairy dust. Make them sparkle, make them enchanting, and make them monstrous. Fill your head with visions of fairy courts, giants, talking animals, magic carpets, and dragons. Imagine how they fit into the mundane world. Imagine what it means to be immortal. Businesses run by fairytales replace their labor with goblins, talking mice or lilliputians. Dragons prefer to transform into mundanes and fly first class. The fairy courts rank their royalty based on how many social media likes they have, competing desperately online for attention. Wizards prefer to talk shop over lattes and blow the steam into fanciful shapes.

You can cultivate fairy tale imagery by reading books and comics, watching movies and television, and reading the original tales. Most of the originals are available for free online.

Talk to the Characters

Address a player by the name of their character - their True Name. Tell them what their character knows or sees. Say "Snow, what kind of car do you drive?", or say "You think he's lying." Don't say "Donna, what kind of car does Snow drive?", and don't say "Snow thinks he's lying".

Ground your Moves

Choose your moves based on drama and then reveal them as part of the fiction. Think about what makes a good dramatic possibility when choosing moves, but never use that as the reason the move happens in the fiction. This means that if you decide a good move would be to trigger a PC's curse, you should say what leads to it in the fiction.

Let's say Peter Pan rolls a miss on Threaten Harm against some muggers, and so you make a move in response. You decide to trigger Beast's cursed form (monstrous when his wife is unhappy). You don't say that Beast transforms into a monster because Peter failed to threaten the muggers. Instead you say that Beauty yells angrily at Beast that he's useless and so he starts to transform into a monster.

Don't Name Your Moves

Never say the name of the move you're making. Just say what happens. Think of the fictional cause and describe the effect. This goes hand in hand with grounding the move.

Let's go back to Peter Pan and Beast for a second. When you decide to make the move trigger a curse, don't announce that you're triggering a curse. Instead describe how Beauty screams, "Are you kidding me? Are you just going to stand there?" Then Beast begins to change. His teeth elongate, his jaw cracks, horns poke from his forehead, and he grows hair all over.

This doesn't work the same for players. Players have to make clear what move they are making so you can follow the rules. You shouldn't ever make clear to the players what move you are making.

Sharpen Your Axe

Everything you own is up for grabs. NPCs, locations, items, realms, whatever. If you own it, and you are thinking about it, consider destroying it. No NPC is safe from death. No location is immune to destruction. No item cannot be stolen, lost, or melted down into slag. Always keep a sharp axe ready to lop the head off an NPC. If it makes sense for someone to die, then they do.

Give Everyone a Name and a Goal

When an NPC is introduced into a scene, always think about who they are and what they want right now. Are they a fairytale? Pick which one. Are they a mundane? Give them a mundane name. Now think about what they want, even if it's just to get something to eat or get through the day in one piece.

      Once that's done, the fiction should come easy. Wherever and whenever the NPC's goal conflicts with the PCs' goals, push hard. Throw the NPC in their way. Force the players to make choices.

Ask Lots of Questions

Ask the players about their characters. Where do they live? What do they do? How did they end up in that line of work? What do they think about mundanes? Are they married? What happened to their prince? How did they get that magic item? All kinds of questions.

      Whenever you get a chance, ask them something really specific. Has your True Love ever cheated on you? How long do you think you've been alive? What are you wearing right now? What kind of cloth is the carpet made from? Ask anything that sounds interesting or that leads to more fiction.

      Once they answer, you should expand on it a bit by sprinkling some fairy dust on it. Then store it away and bring it back later. Think about what the answer could mean. How could that show up later? Wonder about it for a bit.

      So, let's say you ask, "Has Prince Charming ever loved anyone else?" Cinderella says, "Well, he's cheated on me a few times over the centuries when we were apart." You sprinkle on some fairy dust with, "Yeah, he spent a few decades as a special guest of the fairy court. And there was that time in the seventies when you caught him using a dating service for fairytales." Then you file it away for awhile. The next time you sit down to prepare an adversary, you remember the unfaithful prince and decide to make the adversary a fairy that the prince once dated.

Twist the Knife

You aren't trying to kill the PCs, but you are going to stick your knife in and twist. Twisting the knife means causing complications or obstacles. When they do something, there's a downside or unexpected consequences. Keep pushing them onwards into new goals, building more drama.

      Occasionally, when they least suspect, you'll want to let them have exactly what they wanted with no strings attached. Show them the promise of victory. Then twist the knife next time.

Push for Goals

This is really important. You have to push the players to set goals for themselves. Not long term goals such as restoring the honor of their family. Goals for right now. This scene. What do they want to accomplish right now?

Sometimes players will need a bit of prodding. They might have no ideas for goals, or set very boring goals. That's where asking lots of questions comes in. Build on that with some twisting of the knife, and pretty soon they'll find a goal worth fighting for.

Let's say Red Riding Hood is working out at the gym. Her stated goal is to work out, which is kinda boring and you don't really see how to create some drama. Not much of a goal at all, but let's go with it. You ask Red about the gym and she says it's called Jack's Gym because Jack, the trickster who killed all those giants, owns it. "What do you think about Jack?", you ask. "He's a gambler, and a lowlife, but a good friend in a pinch," she says. So you twist the knife and have some goblin leg-breakers show up on a collection. They threaten Jack, but Red doesn't respond and just wants to work out. Now you have an acute goal. She'd rather finish working out than stick her neck out for a friend. That's interesting. Twist the knife some more with a little begging from Jack, and a little threatening towards Red from one of the leg-breakers. Eventually she will have to make some type of move to either help Jack or get out of there intact.

All the time you are just pushing for the player to set goals that lead to moves. You don't care if she finishes her workout or not, and you don't care what happens to Jack or his gym. You just sharpen your axe and get ready to burn them down.

Create Poison Apples

After the first session, you are going to start preparing for play before each session. Your job when you prepare is to create dangers that will threaten the PCs. Don't make plans of what will happen. Remember, you're going to play to find out what happens. Instead, think about what might happen.

Create juicy, red apples that will entice the PCs. Offer them bargains. Show them stuff they want. Tell them how they can get what they want. Then poison the apples with danger. Think about what might happen if they accept the bargain, or if they take the stuff. Don't take the apples away. Make them poisonous.

The Adversaries chapter explains how to do this.

Be a Fan of the PCs

Always be the PCs greatest fan. Care about their stories. This doesn't mean give them a free pass or take it easy on them. Make their lives hard. Give them drama. Give them pain and suffering. And, yes, give them rewards now and then. Think about what makes them interesting and keep it intact. Just be interested in them.

Sidebar: Giving Everyone Their Due

Most of the time the conversation will flow back and forth between you and the players. A player will do something and you will react. Other players will jump in. You will do something and the players will react. Everything will happen in turn and no one will outshine anyone else.

Sometimes though, you'll find that everyone talks at once or you'll find that one player in particular will hog the spotlight. This will usually happen when things get tense. In these times, you should go around the table and give each player a turn. Either choose an order that makes sense to the fiction or just go clockwise. It's your job to make sure everyone gets a chance to shine. Be a fan of the PCs.

Think Offstage Too

While the PCs are thinking about what they want to do, or you're trying to pick out a move, always remember to think about your cast members that aren't in the scene. What are the NPCs up to? How are the adversaries' plans progressing? Are the ticking clocks advancing? The world doesn't stand still while the PCs do their thing. Just because they decide to ditch Pinnochio to go off on their own, doesn't mean the Forest Witch won't snatch him while they aren't paying attention. Make sure the world feels like a real place where stuff is always happening.

Delegate Some Decisions

If you don't know what move to make, you can use the questions below to find out what happens. These can also be used when you don't want to decide on a whim what to do. The questions are:
- What do the NPCs want? Is there someone with a goal that can make the decision for you? Does one of the NPCs have a stake in the outcome? This means you use the fiction to decide, as opposed to your own desires.
- What do the players want? Can you just ask them to decide what happens? Do they have a stake in it? This turns the decision over to them.
- Can you create a ticking clock? If you can create some space between what happens now and the eventual, horrible outcome, do it. Wind a ticking clock by putting the eventual outcome at midnight. Create 2 or 3 events along the way and assign them to hours on the clock. When the fiction tells you to, move the clock forward and let one of the events happen.

Your Moves

When the players aren't making moves, it's up to you to make your moves and keep the game running. Anytime there is a pause or a break in the dialogue around the table, look over your list of moves and pick one. Then ask the players, "what do you do?".

When picking a move, find one that can follow logically from the fiction happening right now. Your move should create drama, following your agenda. It should also create an opportunity for the players to respond. If possible, it should demand a response. If nothing else seems right, you can always show something wicked that will happen.

You'll also be making moves when a player misses on their roll. This is the most important time for you to make a dramatic move in response. Don't be afraid to trade harm for

harm, if warranted by the fiction. You can also split them up, trigger a curse or kidnap someone. Anything that ramps up the tension and drama is good. The players should not like missing a roll.

Let's look at how this works. Peter Pan and Gepetto are having lunch at a diner and nothing much is going on. You decide to throw someone into the fire, by having a couple of local outlaws rob the joint. The pair has been robbing places all over town. You have the door bang open and Red Riding Hood and Boy Blue bust in with shotguns in their hands. "This is a stickup. No funny business!," shouts Red. "What do you do?" you ask them. Peter tries to trick them into leaving and misses his roll. You have Blue level his shotgun at Peter and pull the trigger. "What do you do?" you ask.

Narrator Moves (You should...)

Separate them.

Take one or more PCs and separate them from the group. When the PCs have been spending a lot of scenes together, that's a good time to split them up. Leave them alone in a dark forest.

Kidnap them.

Take a hostage. Imprison someone. Tie them up and make them walk the plank. One of the common methods adversaries use is imprisonment.

Introduce a mystery.

Reveal something mysterious, strange, or seemingly contradictory. Don't answer the mystery - even to yourself. A secret past, a familiar stranger, an intruder, or a sudden discovery are all good. If the mystery develops enough, you can use it when crafting the next adversary.

Throw someone into the fire.

Set out a nice oven, heat it up to the right temperature, and then push someone in and close the door. This means throw them into danger or action. Threaten them.

Show something wicked that is happening.

A funny smell. Gunshots in the distance. Sirens. People running this way screaming bloody murder. Something bad is happening nearby.

Show something wicked that will happen.

This is a good one and important to use a lot. Tell them about something bad that will happen. The snake looks venomous. The lion looks hungry. They overhear a villain plotting to get rid of them. They hear someone moving downstairs.

Announce a wicked consequence of their actions.

This is another good one. If there is a downside or a risk involved in their plan of action, tell them so. If they want to try to sneak past the dragon, warn them it might eat them if it smells them. Tell them how many cops with how many guns are at the police station before they assault it. Don't make it a surprise.

Steal something from them.

That item they always depend on? Take it away. They drop it. Someone steals it. It needs repair. Maybe not permanently, but just long enough to make their life more interesting. Remember, you are their biggest fan. This means you shouldn't take away anything permanently that makes them who they are. Don't take away Excalibur from King Arthur.

Trade blows.

When someone strikes a blow, strike one back, dealing harm, if it makes sense. Honor the choices the players make when they roll a hit on strike a blow.

Harm someone.

A box falls on your head. The building explodes. The car crashes. You fall off the cliff. The kidnapper punches you in the mouth. This should usually come only after you announce something wicked that will happen and the players miss on a move in response. Blue levels the shotgun at Peter and pulls the trigger. Peter tries to perform a feat of fable to push everyone out of the way and misses. You have Blue deal harm to Peter as he pushes people out of the way and take the full blast himself.

Ask them for a bargain.

Tell them something an NPC has and ask them if they want to bargain for it. Generally, this is something they are already looking for.

Offer them a bargain.

Have an NPC offer them something. It might be an easy bargain or a hard bargain. Let the players decide if they take it. (If they don't decide, then this is stealing something from them.) Try to make the offer something they actually want - a carrot.

Trigger their curse.

Whatever triggers their curse comes into play. A werewolf on the full moon. A princess pricks her finger. A fairy who can't cross salt.

Make their move a bane.

Take what they did and turn it around on them. Blick threatens the Evil Queen with harm, and she decides to blast him. Jack tries to trick a giant into thinking that Jack himself is a giant in disguise in order to get the giant to lay off. The giant believes him and decides that Jack must go see the giant king immediately. Circe transforms Baba Yaga into a slug, and the old crone changes into a lion and swipes at the sorceress.

End the scene (and start a new scene).

Once the PCs have either achieved or been thwarted from their goals, bring the scene to an end and start a new one at a later time, a different place, or both. You can ask the players if they intend to do anything before the next scene takes place. You can even prod them to fill in the time or place. "When did you want to go to the theater?" "What are you doing the next

morning?"

Make an Adversary move

Each type of adversary has special narrator moves you can make with them. Consult the Adversaries chapter for more information.

Scenes and Sessions

Each session of play is divided into a number of scenes that you and the players will create. A scene is similar to the scenes you're familiar with from movies and plays. You can think of them as a specific time and place. The Candy Shoppe at dawn. The airport hanger as the prince arrives. Dinner at Pinocchio's. Once the time or place changes, the scene is over.

Starting the Session

At the start of each session you'll want to review with the players what happened at the end of the previous session. You should also ask them if they want to change their highlighted stats. If anyone says yes or there are any new PCs, follow the same procedure for highlighting stats from the first session. Once everyone is settled, begin your first scene.

Starting a Scene

All you will need to begin a scene is a time and place. For the first scene of a session, you might want to continue the scene that ended the last session. You can also skip forward to a time or place in the future. Even years, if you like. You could also choose to begin a flashback scene.

You may offer the players a chance to start a scene earlier than what you have chosen. "Do you do anything before dinner that night?" You don't have to make that offer though. You can always figure out what happened between the last scene and the dinner scene later - if it becomes important.

Once you've got the time and place settled, establish who is in the scene. Which PCs are present and which NPCs? Then make one of your moves and follow up with, "what do you do?"

Ending a Scene

Scenes will have a natural lifespan. Once the purpose of the scene has run it's course, don't be afraid to end it. Once the PCs have either achieved their goals or been thwarted in achieving them, use your next move to end the scene.

Ending the Session

As you start to get close to the end of your session, start to look for a good scene to end on. A good ending scene is one that opens new questions and unresolved drama, such as a cliffhanger. The best ending scene is one that leaves you and your players wondering what's going to happen next session.

After your final scene, have each player test fate to see which magic items they get to keep. If you forget to test fate, give them a break and do it next time.

Often times the PCs will be spread out all over the map at various locations. Their goals may sometimes coincide, but they'll often be working alone or in pairs towards resolving them. No problem. Decide on multiple places (or even times) and create a concurrent scene. Decide for each location and time who is present. Allow all the players to make moves in any order they like, as normal. Just remember to keep who is where separate.

Tấm and Trusty John are breaking into Uglyane's mansion to steal the Golden Goose, while Tom Thumb is asking around the Street of Lights for the talking rat that ran off with Thumbelina. Mulan is talking with Mr. Wolf at St. Nicholas's, while Momotaro is fighting off a mysterious assassin. Detective Ja'far is investigating the scene of a grisly murder at a dance club in the present, while Beauty and Charming are fighting off the murderer in the same dance club three hours earlier.

Tips

- Make lots of maps. Sketch out locations. Ask the players to sketch out the maps for stuff they own. This is particularly good for locations that show up a lot.
- Turn questions back on the players. When they ask for details, turn it back on them to decide.
- Throw in a detailed description of something at least once per scene or two. Don't forget to sprinkle fairy dust on it.
- Sometimes you should zoom out. Months or years pass. A fight happens in a blink. The interrogation of a crowd is summed up in a sentence. Other times you should zoom in. Describe what happens minute by minute. Each blow is detailed. Every witness must be questioned at length. Skip back and forth. Let them interview a witness or two, and then zoom out to describe the rest. Whenever zooming in becomes tedious, zoom out. Don't zoom out too much though.
- Take turns with the players. Make sure everyone gets something to do, and no one gets too much to do. Focus on the shy players and the quiet players.
- Take breaks. Get snacks. Go to the bathroom. Take a breather. Breaks are particularly good for anyone lost for ideas. This includes you.
- Create space. Good drama is often enhanced by pausing or spacing out the conflict. Tension can be built by spreading out the drama, instead of bunching it up into a small amount of time. This means that when the players are about to resolve a goal, either by succeeding or failing, you should create some space. You can throw yet another obstacle in their way or you can shift focus. Shifting focus can include moving to another player, taking a break, ending the session (on a cliffhanger), changing scenes, or beginning a flashback scene. You can even move back and forth between conflicts, shifting focus between them at key moments. Cinderella is just about to confront Bluebeard about his murder spree, when you introduce a flashback detailing how they first met. In the flashback, she is just about to be eaten by a giant, when you shift back to the present to continue her confrontation.

- Don't speak of the devil. Don't make scenes with two characters talking about a third character who isn't there. If the players do this, you can always have the NPC they are talking about show up in the scene. Another option would be to run a concurrent scene where two characters at one location are discussing a character at another location. Why? Because sitting around talking about someone else doesn't create drama.
- Don't use the game as an opportunity to read a story to the players. Don't let the players do this either. If anyone wants to explain at length about something that happened in the past, you should make it a flashback scene.
- Finally, don't worry if you forget something or make mistakes. You can always revise or add in changes later. This goes for the players too.

The First Session

Like the pilot of a television show, your first session of play will be special. The players will establish their characters, and you'll set up the world around them.

Before You Start

Before you show up for the first session, you'll want to be familiar with the game, the rules and the storybooks. Spend some time thinking about fairy tales and wonder about how they might exist in the modern world. You might even brush up on some inspirational material or read through a few tales. Just don't commit yourself to any particular fairytales or plans though.

After the players have finished creating their characters, there are a few things to do as a group before you begin.

Highlighting

Highlighted stats represent particular areas of focus for a PC during the session. They are used by the players to gain experience towards improving their fairytale. Before you begin your first session, you'll need to determine which two stats each PC has highlighted. You will highlight a stat and one of the players will highlight a stat.

To begin, the player with the highest popularity will choose a stat for each PC to highlight. If the players are tied for the highest popularity, have them each roll the dice and let the highest roller highlight. The highlighting player can choose any stats they like for each PC - even their lowest stats. They can be nice or mean, at their whim.

Once the player is done highlighting, you should choose a stat for each PC to highlight. This must be a different stat than the one the player chose. Use your choice to the benefit of the player. You should consider either highlighting their highest stat or highlighting their second highest stat. You can also highlight stats that have moves they would benefit from using.

During play, each time the player makes a move that uses one of their highlighted stats they will mark experience. When they have marked 5 experience they will improve. See the Improvement chapter for more information.

The World

You are going to decide together with the players a few things about the world. The following questions will establish some ground rules you'll find helpful for structuring your fiction. The whole group - including you - should vote on the answer to each question. You can cast a tie-breaking vote if needed.

Write down the answer the group decides on for each. If you need more detail, such as which real world city, decide on that as a group and write it down. Other details, such as who the enemy is, can be left open to figure out during play.

Why are the fairytales in the mundane world?
- They've always been here - mundanes just don't know it.

- The Enemy has forced them here.
- They are trapped here.
- They were sent here.
- They don't remember why.

Why don't mundanes know fairytales are real?
- There is a magic law that prevents it.
- It's a conspiracy, and it must be protected at all costs.
- Most mundanes can't see fairytales for what they are.
- Fairytales don't know who they are any more than mundanes.
- Magic doesn't work in the mundane world.

Where do the fairytales live (also known as fairytale city)?
- A real city such as New York, Seattle, Paris, or Chicago.
- A fictional suburb of a real city such as the Street of Lights in Paris.
- A fictional city in the country such as Twilight Eaves.

What type of authority governs fairytale law?
- A single authority figure such as a governor or mayor.
- A council made up of representatives.
- A collection of dominions ruled by individual authorities.

Are there other magical realms such as Neverland or the Fairy Court?
- There were once other realms, but they disappeared long ago.
- There are other realms, but they cannot be reached.
- There are other realms, but they are in the hands of the Enemy.
- There are other realms and fairytales can travel to them.

Running the Session

Now you are ready to begin.

Start simple. Go around the table and introduce the PCs. Figure out where they live and who lives with them. Where do they work? What's their morning routine look like? Follow them around as they wake up for a typical day and get to know them a bit. Find out who they are. How do they struggle with the mundane world?

You ask Elder Gruff where he lives and he says, "In my grandmother's basement. She's a sweet old lady who let's me stay for free." You ask what his morning is like and he replies, "I get up early, do a quick workout routine to keep myself sharp, and then head down to the corner to look for day labor work." "Do you say goodbye to your grandmother first?" "No, I don't want to bother her."

As you are following them around, do everything it says to do in the Narrator chapter. Follow your agenda, do your job, and follow the principles. As the session unfolds, here's a few things you should try to do.

Describe fairytales in the mundane world.

Talk about the mundane world in boring detail. Not so much that the players actually get bored, just enough to make it drab. Then sprinkle fairy dust on all the special, fairy tale parts. Throw in small details that remind the players where they are. A fairy with a dirty band-aid on their knee. A former prince sweeping an alley. Remember how Dorothy starts off in a dull, gray world and then enters the technicolor realm of Oz? Like that, but go back and forth.

"Down on the corner there's a dozen men queuing up for a spot in the landscaping trucks that pull by. They're dressed rough, in stained sweat shirts, canvas jackets and blue jeans that have faded naturally with time. All except one guy who has silver and gold stars sewn into his jacket. Across the street, a dealer and his crew lean against a stoop selling something hard and expensive to passers by. It glitters like star dust in the small bags they hand it out in."

Make it about the characters.

Take everything that the players decided on during character creation and use it. Their mundane life, their True Name, their aliases, the moves they picked - use it all.

"Gruff, you chose mobster as your mundane life. How come you're working as a day laborer?" "I just got out of jail. I was in for a long time and I'm kind of out of the game right now." "Gotcha. So what did you used to do?" "I was a legbreaker."

Ask lots of questions.

Don't just tell the players how things are. Ask them. Let them decide what their office is like or who their annoying neighbor is. Ask them what happened to other characters from their tales. Create the world together.

"One of the thugs across the street selling dope - you think you recognize him. Who is he?" "Well, he could be the kid of one of my old buddies. Maybe the last time I saw him he was only 8." "That's cool. So now he's doing what you and his pops used to do - acting as muscle. What's his name?" "Willy."

Don't answer all the questions.

Wonder about them. What happened to the Evil Queen? Is the dwarf really dead? What happened to his fortune? Why does her assistant hate her so much? When you think the answer to a question has a lot of dramatic potential, write down the question and tell yourself you'll answer it later.

"So, what kind of mob do you work for? Mundane? Fairytales?" "The goblin mob. But I don't work for them anymore. Not since I went to jail." Instead of asking why, you note it down. That's got some interesting potential.

Pay attention to the players' goals.

Look for things that they want right now. What are they trying to gain? What are they trying to control? What do they value?

"After I'm done with work, I head over to my old sweetheart's place to look her up." "Yeah, who's that?" "She's Mother Goose's daughter, Penny." "You and her used to be an item?" "Yeah. She was all I thought about while I was away."

Threaten their goals.

Once you've found them, you have to ramp up the drama by throwing some obstacles in the way of their goals.

"Mrs. Goose says, 'Penny moved out awhile back.'" "'Where's she gone, mam?'" "'She's working up at the council hall, and she doesn't need thugs like you coming around. You stay away from her.'"

Nudge the players to set goals and make moves.

You can start this off easy by asking if anyone has any moves they need to do at the beginning of the session. When a player hasn't made a move for some time, focus on them and throw them in the fire. Push them to state whether they are threatening harm, striking a blow, or telling a tall tale.

"I throw him against the wall and tell him to leave Penny alone." "Are you trying to harm him or just threatening him?" "Just threatening him I guess." "Okay, so that's the move called threaten harm. Go ahead and roll."

Put two or more PCs together in a scene.

Don't just have them bump into each other - make it a good scene. Put them in the same place when they are both after the same thing, or put them together when they are at odds. Ask them how they know each other and build from there.

"Peter, you're a cop and Gruff used to be a mobster. How do you know each other?" "I helped put Gruff away." "Yeah? Well, you thought he was still up the river but there the old goat is, just walking up the council stairs towards you with some flowers in his hands."

Make all your NPCs memorable.

Pull them from a fairy tale or make them a mundane, but give them a name and a goal. Make them human - even if they aren't.

"'Hey man,' the guy in the jacket with stars on it says. 'I'm Merle. I haven't see you around these parts before." "'I've been away.'" "'Well listen man, I ain't working for my health. I'm casing the corner operation over there, and I could use someone with your muscle. You interested in scoring a little fairy dust?'"

Put them in danger.

A fight, a bomb, a fire, a murder - anything will work. Give them some excitement.

"That kid you know from your old days - Willy? Yeah, as you're walking back to your grandmother's place you see him stomping the life out of another guy in an alley. Willy sees you looking and pulls out a knife. 'You looking at something, pops?' What do you do?"

Fill up your diary.

Take your session diary and fill it out. Start with the True Names of the PCs in the center. As you introduce NPCs, note them around the edges near the need that seems right for the NPC. Draw a line to any PCs they have a relationship with - maybe to other NPCs too. Write a label next to the line for the relationship. Mother, boss, neighbor, etc. As you wonder about questions, write them down too.

You write down Elder Gruff in the center of the sheet. Later, as they get introduced, you add Penny, Willy, and Merle. Penny goes near pride, Willy near cruelty, and Merle near desire. You draw lines from each of them back to Gruff. Penny's line gets labelled "ex-flame." Willy gets "son of old friend." As you label Willy, you wonder about the friend, so you write down, "Who is Willy's father?" Merle gets "stranger" as his label, and maybe it changes to "partner" later. You write down "Why doesn't Gruff work for the mob anymore?" when it comes up.

After the First Session

Before you play your next session, you've got to prepare some foundation. Think over what happened in the first session. Picture the NPCs that came into play. Think about the relationships between the characters. Think about the answers the group gave to the questions about the world. Now it's time to prepare your first adversaries.

Adversaries

Generally, you'll want to have about 2 or 3 adversaries prepared before you start a session. Many of the adversaries will carry over from session to session, others may not last more than a single session. Just make sure you have at least 2 or 3 before play begins.

To create your first few adversaries, look at your session diary for ideas. Take an NPC and fill them out into part of a method or a full fledged adversary. Use the questions you wondered about to create stakes.

Keeping up with Elder Gruff, Merle looks like an excellent adversary. So does Willy. We've also got the goblin mob, whom Gruff used to work for. Merle and Willy seem naturally opposed, so you group them into separate adversaries. Merle might be the adversary himself, while Willy seems more like a method of a so far unseen adversary - maybe the goblin mob boss. You could also set up a rival for Penny's affections as a, perhaps, less sinister adversary.

Research

You can use your time between sessions to do a little research for your upcoming sessions. Real world details, maps, and maybe even some props can add life to your fairytale city. Maybe the city or region has its own folklore you can incorporate. Look up and read fairy tales, particularly the tales of your PCs and NPCs. Make notes of other characters, items, and locations that might be interesting to bring into play. Think of this as getting your fairy dust ready to sprinkle. Just don't overload yourself.

Elder Gruff and the other players picked New York as their fairytale city. You print out a few maps from the internet and color in the fairytale suburb, Little Avalon, with a highlighter. You also print out a subway map, and spend some time reading up on life in New York from blogs and Wikipedia. For folktales, you find a bunch of interesting material on ghosts, witches, and fictional residents of the city. You decide to turn your favorite folktale of New York, Auntie Greenleaf, into an adversary. Finally, you reread Billy Goat Gruff and note down the other 2 brothers and the bridge troll.

Non-Player Characters

Your cast of thousands that you will populate the world around the players with is commonly called non-player characters (NPCs). They receive much less mechanical detail when compared to PCs. They don't have stats or moves, and never roll dice.

Creating an NPC

Following the principle of making all your NPCs memorable, you will need two things for every NPC - a name and a goal. Giving them names makes them real, separates them, and makes them more than a taxi driver, a doorman, or a barista at the cafe the PCs frequent. Giving them a goal will set them up with clear instructions for how you should play them and how they might conflict with the PCs.

      If the NPC is a fairytale themselves, decide which one, and by what name they go on. Any character for a tale that interests you, that the players haven't grabbed already, is fair game. If they are a mundane, give them a mundane name. Make it gray and dull. Average. Angelique Polychrome is good for a fairytale; Brad Hill is good for a mundane. There's a helpful page of fairytale and mundane names in the reference sheets that you may find handy to keep with you. When you use a fairytale name, cross it off from the list. When you use a mundane name, feel free to use it again later.

      The goal you set for an NPC should be immediate. Something in the current scene. It can be mundane, like get through their job so they can go home. It can be dramatic like kidnap Red Riding Hood to take to the secret lair of Ali Baba. The goal doesn't have to be complex, and is probably better kept simple. Basic needs. What does the NPC want right now?

      If you want, you can also equip an NPC with items, both mundane and magical. Anything appropriate to their station and career. Their current goal may play a part. A kidnapper might have a gun that they wouldn't normally carry. You really only need to think about weapons and armor, but you can also adlib those later when they come up.

      Once you've got those decided, write down the NPC's name in your diary. You don't need to write down their immediate goal, but you can jot down anything else you'd like to remember about them. Their job. Who they are connected to. A descriptive word or phrase. Nothing too detailed. If they die or are otherwise removed from the story later, just cross them off.

      Now, when you use the NPC have them act and do the things that they can do. The barista can serve coffee, but probably not leap the counter and stop a mugger. The taxi driver can drive, but probably not as good as the world famous thief the players are chasing. Magicians can cast some spells, but probably not too frequently. Animals can do animal things. It's all up to you and what you think makes sense within the fiction.

Aid

When an NPC aids a player, normally the benefit is a matter of fiction. Their aid is included in the moves as written. However, sometimes you may want to give a little more help. At your

discretion, you can award a player 1 boon token when they get aid from a specific, relevant NPC. See the band rules below for a large group of NPCs aiding a player in combat.

Morgan le Fay joins with 2 PCs in a magic circle and you give each of the PCs in the circle 1 boon token. Jack Beanstalk raises Excalibur and charges into battle next to a PC and you give the PC 1 boon token. Titania serves as a witness in court for a PC's case and you give the PC 1 boon token.

Bands

A band is a group of NPCs working together. Many storybook moves grant the players access to bands of followers. You can also treat a group of NPCs as a band anytime it makes sense to you. For the most part, you can treat a band just like you do any NPC. You treat them as part of the fiction and incorporate them into your moves. There are a few additional rules though.

First of all, bands are either noted as small or plentiful in size. A small band, sometimes just called a band, usually means a handful or less people. A plentiful band is simply larger than a small band, but usually a dozen or more individuals in size. All the members of the band can be similar, or they can be varied in type and gear.

A player can use their band as a weapon, or you can use the band as a weapon against a player. Use the average weapon of the band members as the default harm. You'll modify the harm based on whether the band is being used against an individual or another band. Consult the Harm and Healing chapter for more information.

Harm and NPCs

Like PCs, NPCs can be harmed by attacks and have heart tokens.

When do NPCs take harm?

- A player chooses to Strike a Blow against them, and they take harm as a result.
- A player chooses to Threaten Harm against them, and they choose to take their medicine.
- The outcome of a storybook move results in harm to the them.
- You choose to inflict harm upon them.

NPCs and Heart Tokens

NPCs only get 2 heart tokens. When you cross off their final token, the NPC is dying or taken out. You decide their fate after remembering to sharpen your axe.

Bands and Heart Tokens

Leaderless bands only get 3 heart tokens. Bands with leaders get a full 4 heart tokens. When you cross off their final token, the band is defeated. You decide their fate after remembering to sharpen your axe. This also applies to each heart token they lose. With each heart, decide if 1 or more of the NPCs in the band are dead or dying.

Monsters

What if you want an NPC that is actually a powerful monster such as a dragon or a giant? You'd probably like the beast to have a little more power and be a little more threatening. They might even be insurmountable without a special weapon or knowledge of their secret weakness.

First, consider making the monster an adversary. This will give them access to adversary moves (see the Adversaries chapter). Make sure one of the monster's methods is sorcery or mayhem. Then use your adversary moves to turn the PC's moves back on them and ignore attacks that don't target the monster's weakness.

You can also do one or more of the following to boost a monster's power:
● Treat the monster as a band - either small or plentiful.
● Give the monster a natural magical weapon of 4 or 5.
● Give the monster natural magical armor of 2 or 3.

True Love

Sometimes, as a result of a move, a player will nominate an NPC as their True Love. This elevates the NPC and gives them a special shield of protection that's not available to other NPCs. They won't die or be destroyed. For this one NPC, don't sharpen your axe.

Flashback Scenes

Flashback scenes are a special kind of scene that takes place sometime in the past. History, motivations, special magic items, and characters can all be highlighted by the scene. Players can learn more about their past relationship with a new character that shows up. The origin of a magical box may be revealed. How the PCs met can be explored. An adversary's motivations can be highlighted. Whatever the reason, all of the PCs have the opportunity to take part in the scene.

Players can trigger a flashback scene by using the fairytale move in their storybook. You can also trigger flashback scenes whenever you like, and end them whenever you like. To create a flashback scene, answer the following questions:

- What are the goals of the PCs involved in the scene?
- Does the scene take place in the fairytale world or the mundane world?
- Where does the scene take place?
- When does the scene take place?

When the flashback scene ends, you decide whether or not to go back to the previous scene from before the flashback or move to a different scene in modern day. If the flashback scene was created by a player, make sure that they get to use the benefits of their fairytale move.

When running flashback scenes, don't worry about strict continuity or seemingly inconsistent facts that pop up. Flashbacks may or may not actually have happened exactly as you play them. Two characters can tell their own versions of the same event. Characters may be present in the flashback who were not actually there. A character may die only to be alive again in present day. Memories and written records may all conflict. Remember, even the official sources for fairy tales differ significantly on the details. The point is - this is the story that is told.

Flashbacks and Heart Tokens

Before a flashback scene begins, the PCs should be restored to full heart tokens if they are injured. When the scene ends, they should likewise be restored to full hearts.

Sidebar: Flashback Sessions

Flashbacks can be extended to an entire session. This is a great way to deal with absent players. You simply create a flashback session that includes the players present. You can either run a flashback session as a first session - following the rules for first sessions - or create a single adversary just for the flashback.

Narrating Moves

This is how moves work. The first thing that happens is the player creates some fiction that enables the move. They say what their character says or describe what they does that sets up the move. "I walk over and punch him." "'If you let me go, I can show you an entire hoard of gold.'" "I transform into a deer." Those all set up moves. Don't skip this part! It's important to set up every move with fiction. Don't let a player roll the dice until they explain the move first.

Once the move is established, the player rolls 2 dice and adds them to their stat. On a 6 or less, they miss. On a 7 or higher, they hit. A 10 or higher is a strong hit, while a 7 to 9 is a weak hit. Strong hits represent total success. Weak hits represent partial success or success tinged with complications.

Whenever the players miss on a move, unless the move itself says what to do, that means you get to make your own move in response. Your move can be as deadly and direct as you like. Basically, a miss is permission for you to do what you want. You decide the outcome.

The following is some guidance on how to use the moves.

The Moves

Basic Moves

Perform a Feat of Fable

A feat of fable usually refers to an amazing physical act such as leaping the gap between two buildings, sliding down a wire on your feet, lifting a safe, or leaping from a moving car onto a speeding truck. If the human body might be capable of the act and it would amaze onlookers, you can safely name it a feat of fable.

A feat of fable can also be used as a defensive move against NPCs. When you have the NPCs threaten to harm a PC or actually try to harm them, the PC can Perform a Feat of Fable to avoid the outcome. The fictional effect could be staring down the danger, taking heart, dodging out of the way, or even blocking with a shield of some sort. They could also Perform a Feat of Fable to escape by running away or leaping across a building. As long as they conceivably have a chance of avoiding the outcome, they can make the move to do so.

This is also a great move to start with when you decide that a player should roll, but you're not sure which move. A feat could be sneaking into a guarded warehouse, catching a sword with your teeth, or taming a tiger. If the player doesn't have a better move to use, then fall back on perform a feat of fable. The key is that a feat of fable usually does not directly affect another character.

One word of caution. Don't overuse this move. If there is no point in rolling the dice, if you can't think of an interesting outcome of failure, or if you don't want to zoom in on the specific act, then just tell the player they succeed. Say yes.

Threaten Harm

Threatening harm means naming some harm that will befall someone if they don't do something specific. Ideally, the move should always have a threat of specific harm and a request for something specific. "Give me the crown or I'll shoot you" is really clear. Sometimes the threat or the request will be less clear. "Give me the crown if you don't want to make me mad" is less clear.

The threat can be physical in nature, such as threatening to stab someone or push them off a ledge. It can also be social in nature, such as threatening to reveal a secret or post compromising photos on the internet. The threat doesn't have to actually inflict damage or remove hearts to be valid. There are several Storybook moves that allow the PC to threaten harm without resorting to Brawn.

These really become important on a 10+. If the opponent doesn't understand the request, it will be hard to give the player what they want. On the other hand, if the threat isn't clear and the opponent decides to take their medicine then the player may not know how to backup their threat. There may not even be an immediate threat.

If a PC tells an NPC on the phone that they better do what the PC says or else, that counts as threatening harm. If the NPC decides to take their medicine then the PC won't be able to do anything about it immediately. Unless the PC is some kind of magician - maybe.

It's best if the move is clear.

Strike a Blow

When a blow is stuck, it's a fight. Both sides get to deal harm, unless they aren't trying to harm the other side. If a player wants to strike down a target without getting hit in return, they'll need to roll a hit and choose the option "you avoid serious harm." Otherwise they're going to take some pain.

Each side takes their weapon's harm and subtracts the other side's armor to figure out how much harm they deal. If the person making the move chooses to inflict terrible harm, they add 1 to their total. If they choose to avoid serious harm, then they take 0. When a player chooses to stun someone, that means they are out of action for the rest of the scene.

Strike a blow can also be used for grabbing objects from someone else's hands. The player should choose the result "you steal something from them" to take something by force. Depending on which other results they choose, they may also knock the target over or take harm in return. This result is also great for disarming a target.

See the Harm and Healing chapter for more information on dealing and taking harm.

Tell a Tall Tale

When someone tells a tall tale, that means they are using a trick to get what they want from someone else. There has to be a trick involved though. Telling someone the truth isn't enough to get anything. That's just talking. The player has to make what they say and do a trick to make the move. Tall tales are also great for threatening someone with harm that doesn't exist.

"Drop your guns or my giant will smash you, " is threatening harm if the player has a giant. If there's no giant, then it's telling a tall tale. See the threaten harm move for ideas on what an NPC will do when tricked into believing they might be harmed. You can also request that the trick lead into a threaten harm move to find out the results.

Proof means something the player does or says that adds to the illusion of the trick. A threat of a giant that doesn't exist is bolstered by a giant footprint. A dwarf hides in a cabinet to trick the wolf pursuing him that the dwarf has escaped. Proof for the dwarf's trick might be an open window or a stone thrown down a hall to create a noise in the distance. In the tale of Snow White, the Evil Queen offered proof that the apple was safe by biting the part of the fruit that wasn't poisonous.

A player can also use tell a tall tale for riddle games or even transformation games (assuming they can transform). They can say a riddle or just name the object of the riddle and then make their move. If the trick works, their opponent can't guess the riddle. If the player rolls 7-9, proof means actually saying the riddle. For transformation games, they should name the eventual transformation they want to win with. If they have to provide proof, they need to name a few others along the way.

"'Answer my riddle or let me pass.' I'm going to tell a tall tale and engage in a battle of riddles. The answer to my riddle is gold." "Cool, the sphinx will play along. Roll the dice." "8." "8? What's your riddle?" "Okay...'I shine like the sun, but I am born from the earth. What am I?'" "Okay, that will work. 'Are you cave moss?'" "'Nope! I'm gold. Now, let me pass.'" "The sphinx ponders your riddle as you slip past him into the offices."

"I transform into a lion and eat the witch. I want to do this as a transformation battle with tell a tall tale, by tricking her into a form I can eat." "Okay, so 'you'll start off as something else? Go ahead and roll." "7." "Okay, so what did you start off as to trick her into something a lion can eat?" "How about I start as a worm, so she changes into a grouse to eat me." "Done. Once she's a grouse, you lion-out and eat her?" "Yeah."

Ponder Fate

A player should use ponder fate when they are trying to find an advantage. They want to know something that will help them against an enemy, or they want to figure out what their plan should be. It might involve research, looking around, sizing someone up, or even asking someone questions such as an interrogation.

If they are asking you, you'll have to make up any answers you don't know. Stick to your answers though. Once you say it, it's the truth. Try to make the answers dramatic in their own right. Look for an opportunity to place an obstacle between the player and their goal.

You might let them ask other questions that seem appropriate, but you don't have to unless the PC has the advanced move. If you do allow other questions, and the same question comes up a lot, add it to the list of allowed questions.

Live to Tell the Tale

Whenever a PC might die, they need to roll to live to tell the tale. This means when they run out of heart tokens, but it can also mean whenever you think it's appropriate. If the PCs get pushed off a building, zapped by lightning, or crash a plane into a mountain, you can call for them to make a live to tell the tale move.

On a 7-9, you get to decide whether they are merely unconscious, mostly dead, or lost based on the fiction and whatever seems dramatically appropriate. If a PC was pushed off a building, maybe they wake up in a full body cast in an ICU ward. A lightning strike or a blow to the head might leave them lying somewhere unconscious. A plane crash might strand them in

the wilderness with a broken leg.

A word here about harm. PCs can normally take a shot or two before they go down. NPCs usually go down in one shot. Bands can take a bit more.

Bargain

First of all, it's up to you whether you want to include this move in the game. If you do, it's a basic move that every PC has. Normally, NPCs can't force a player to take a bargain. Players can use this move and a few of the storybook moves to force another player or an NPC into a bargain.

In all cases, the player making the bargain move gets to name the request and the price. When a PC is allowed to make an unequal bargain, this means they can ask for more than they give. When a PC has to make an easy bargain, this means they have to give more than they ask. More means a higher wealth rating. See the Bargains chapter for more information.

Cast a Spell

This move is only available to some PCs, according to their storybooks and the moves they have selected.

The players can use this move to cast any spell that makes sense in the fiction, except that the mechanical effect is limited to gaining boon tokens. This means a spell can't really harm someone, provide armor or restore heart tokens. A player could create an illusion of harm or armor, but not the real thing. It also means the PCs can't immediately leave the scene with a spell or bring someone into the scene immediately. Spells are not intended to be used as fireballs and magic bolts.

A spell can be used indirectly to harm or protect by spending the boon tokens on another move's roll. A spell can certainly curse the rolls of others or curse them indirectly by raising the caster's roll. All kinds of fictional effects such as flying or running faster are possible. The caster can combine their spell move with another move immediately afterwards and describe the fiction as a result of the spell. In this case, they spend their boon tokens from the spell on the second move roll. A PC could cast a spell that places a sword above an opponents head and then threaten harm with the sword.

You may also allow the PCs to create mundane items with spells. These should make sense within the fiction. They can also summon their existing magic items to their hand or send them away to a vault or other safe place.

Spells with a lasting effect generally last until a time change such as until midnight, until the new moon, or until spring. For longer lasting spells, see the cast a spell advanced move in the Improvement chapter.

The advanced move of cast a spell may also be able to exceed the limits above, at your discretion.

Counterspell

This move is only available to PCs that have access to the Cast a Spell move.

Counterspell is used for any type of magical duel where the player would like use their magic to cancel or counteract the spell of another. Rather than use Cast a Spell to defend, they should use Counterspell.

On a 7-9, you get to fill in the details based on the player's choice. You can choose the alternate target, decide how long the spell is held off, or choose the alternate form the spell takes. Generally, alternate targets should be NPCs and the spell should at least be held at bay for the current scene. If the player chooses an alternate effect, make it less baneful than the original. This is your opportunity to twist the knife and throw them into the fire. Just be careful not to invalidate their move, and don't be afraid to delegate the decision.

Test Fate

This move is meant to remove excess magic items and keep players from depending on their magic items. You can decide not to include it, or you can opt not to use it every session. Don't use it as a punitive measure though. Be fair.

Each PC should make this move at the end of the session. They get to choose from among their items when they have to discard one. If they don't have any items of the appropriate wealth rating, they can ignore the results. You or they can explain how the item is lost.

Storybook Moves

For the most part, storybook moves are self-explanatory. They work in a similar fashion to the basic moves, except that some are passive. Passive moves don't require a roll to work. Some are always on and do something specific. They might allow the player to roll a basic move with an alternate stat, raise a stat by +1, or give a special benefit once per session or scene.

A PC can never use storybook moves they don't have. If it seems like they ought to be able to use a move even though they don't have it, look to the basic moves to find one that fits. Perform a feat of fable is the most likely choice for many situations. For example, the Child storybook has a move called borrow something that lets them steal. What if someone else tries to steal an item? In that case, strike a blow is most appropriate. On a hit, they will be able to choose results to steal something and avoid serious harm. The difference is that they have to roll on Brawn and they can't avoid being seen or substitute their target item with something else. In the fiction, they just roughly grab the item rather than sneakily taking it with their light fingers.

Child Moves

- Eternal Child: the signature Child move. The intent of this move is to encourage the player to avoid improving their character, thus remaining the same. When they mark experience, always ask, "Would you like 3 boon tokens instead?" They can say no if they like, but always be there to tempt them.
- Borrow Something: when the player uses this move, pay attention to who sees what they do and think about what their response would be. It might not be immediate - such as blackmail or informing the authorities. Substitutes will be discovered when it would become logical. A substitute need not resemble the borrowed object. This move can be combined with various types of tricks to make the substitute more believable - perhaps even indistinguishable. When they miss, that could mean they steal the item but are caught red handed. Note that being caught may also mean that the victim sees the item in the thief's hands, but not the act of theft itself.

- Disobedient: this move encourages the player to break the rules and go against the grown-ups. You can read authority figure to be any grown-up, or you can be a bit more picky about who counts. Parents and guardians certainly count. Either way, the player should only get the reward once for breaking a particular rule.
- Friends: the companion this move grants should be genuinely loyal and helpful to the PC. They may not be so loyal and helpful to other PCs though.
- Impulsive: this move prods the player to take risks, at the expense of the rest of the players. If done right, this should cause some annoyance and exasperation. Other players shouldn't like it when the Child leaps forward. If the Child is somehow restrained from leaping without looking, they don't get the reward.
- Play Hide and Seek: on a 7-9, the player can't choose to lose a boon token if they don't have any. If they choose to leave something behind, you decide what, and this is your opportunity to twist the knife or throw them in the fire.
- Repetitive: fairy tales are filled with situations where a trick is tried until it works. This move encourages those situations.
- Stay Out of Harm's Way: this move creates the stereotypical trope where children are not unduly harmed by violence. This is a good move for scenes of battle where the character is running through the melee without getting caught up in it.

Domestic Animal Moves
- Talking Animal: this signature move can be triggered by you or a player, but you should judge whether the situation warrants marking experience. Generally, you should count any situation that requires a bit of the fiction (not necessarily a move) dedicated to the hardship. In effect, the player gets to determine if being an animal causes them trouble or not.
- Elusive: this move is essentially teleportation, perhaps combined with a bit of invisibility, but note that they can be present in multiple scenes at the same time. They don't have any special ability to find someone who is not already in a scene, but they can teleport to a specific location using this move. The PC can also appear in any scene occurring at the table, whether or not they should know about it. This move is perfect for the Cheshire Cat.
- Golden: this move allows for the player to be the actual golden goose or golden hen. This can also be a good source of drama such as kidnapping and ransom.
- Servant: the master of the PC should be, on balance, more helpful than bothersome. They may ask nothing at all of the PC, depending on the fiction.
- Talk in Circles: this move allows the player to gain advantage over others. Removed from the scene means the others are sent away, flee, or leave. Trading places usually means trading positions, such as a guard agreeing to trade places with a prisoner. Depending on the fiction, this move usually doesn't imply anything magical. The targets are merely convinced to do what the player wants.
- Simple at Heart: this move, unlike other moves that grant armor, gives a +1 that may be added to other armor already in use. It usually can be represented as dodging or getting out of the way of harm.
- Slow But Steady: this move is good for slow creatures such as slugs and turtles.

- Strange: this move implies something strange in the PCs makeup. They are likely a magical animal such as a fairy creature.

Fairy Moves

- Fairy Geas: this signature move makes bargains more powerful, particularly bargains of deed. The player can force others into service, for example, and cause death or misfortune to those who try to leave. NPCs will generally try to honor a bargain, even without a geas, but they might be forced or tricked into breaking one. Even when the other party is forced or tricked into breaking the bargain, this move still applies.
- Immaterial: this move means the PC can become ghost-like. The fiction can vary, but they can at least pass through walls or through cracks. They may be an actual ghost, composed of mist, or partly ethereal.
- Fairy Dust: this is the classic fairy dust from Peter Pan, and is great for fairies like Tinker Bell. You don't have to be too restrictive with the once per scene allowance. The PC can also use their own dust to fly, and it doesn't count as their one use per scene. They can also count a small group as one use.
- Fairy Magic: see cast a spell for more details.
- Nimble: this move represents fighters who strike through trickery or deftness, rather than force of arms.
- Place a Glamour: a glamour is a powerful fairy illusion, but the specifics are up to the player. They may devise their own unique method of glamouring. Glamours are generally short lived or last until a particular condition, similar to cast a spell. For all intents and purposes, the glamours appear real to other characters.
- Royal Fairy Magic: the Fairy Court is a place of trickery and deceit, and this move reflects that. Generally, PCs with this move do actually cast a form of fairy magic known to the royals of the Fairy Court.
- Under a Geas: this is a very permanent form of geas, but is otherwise similar to fairy geas. Usually a geas takes the form of a taboo such as not fighting during moonlight or not touching dead flesh. It can also be a foretelling such as always victorious in battle. Foretellings don't grant any bonus to a PC, other than the experience when they come true.

Hero Moves

- Brave Hearted: this move represents those who inspire fear through their conviction, rather than their size or strength.
- Familiar with Magic: see cast a spell for more details.
- Handy with Trinkets: this move allows a player to always have a handy magic item for the situation. The reason the PC has the items can vary from a large stash from their travels to a bag that produces what they need to a magic charm that summons them. Trinkets should generally be a magic item worth 1 or 2 points of wealth.
- Leader: the band granted by this move should generally be useful to the player. This move is good for heroes typically associated with a band of followers such as Robin Hood and his Merry Men.
- Shield Another: this move is good for heroes that often serve as the guardian of another.

- Steadfast: this move is great for heroes who choose low Courage. It represents victory through knowledge, sticking to one's guns, or by choosing the right moment to act.
- Superstitious: for fearful heroes that flinch at the dark, this move grants the player a reward for running away or freezing in their tracks.
- Trust to Luck: this move is great for heroes who prosper more from lucky coincidence than cunning or wits.

Magician Moves

- Charlatan: this move is for all the magicians (and wizards) who don't actually know any real magic. The effects of the tall tale can seem similar to cast a spell, but the magic is not actually real. Flight is accomplished through wires. Charms do not actually work. Curses are merely artifice. The specifics depend on the fiction.
- Force a Bargain: this move represents forcing another into a bargain through magic. The player may always choose to use the value of their offer instead of their Wisdom, if their offer is a higher value.
- Magical Blood: this move would be the signature move for Magicians, if they could all use magic. A PC with this move can actually cast real magic. See cast a spell for more details.
- Powerful: this move represents threatening others through the use of magic, reputation, or powerful aura.
- Summoner: the creature summoned should be genuinely useful to the PC, within the fiction of it's nature. Elementals are good at destruction. Fairies are good at trickery. Demons are good at wicked deeds such as murder. Golems are good at physical labor. The summoned creature can vary widely from session to session or can remain the same creature, as the player sees fit.
- Transform into an Animal: this move does exactly what it says. Characters turned into animals will be limited to what the animal can do. Depending on the fiction, this may prevent them from making some moves. PCs keep the same stats, but must follow the fiction. A goldfish, even one with +3 Brawn, won't be able to threaten most other characters with harm. Animals without the ability to speak will generally act like animals rather than people. On a 7-9, use the opportunity to twist the knife and throw them into the fire.
- Wise: this move represents trickery through knowledge or tactics rather than cunning.
- Wonderworker: this move is similar to other moves that grant magic items per session, except that it is permanent. As long as the PC doesn't lose the item, bargain it away, or get it stolen from them, they get to keep it. This move generally represents the manufacture, in some form, of magic items.

Prince Moves

- Royalty: the signature Prince move. This move is purely fictional, and the effects will vary depending on the fiction the group creates. In some games, it may mean almost nothing. This is why the Prince gets 3 starting moves, instead of the normal 2.
- Brave Danger: this move represents charging into a dangerous situation. As the dragon breathes out a stream of fire, the Prince raises his shield and leaps towards the

princess. Unlike other similar moves, any harm is completely negated on a hit. Instead of causing less harm, a 7-9 result gives you a chance to twist the knife or throw them into the fire. If you choose to curse the PC, make it something temporary that fades within a scene or two.

- Break the Spell: this move represents a Prince's uncanny ability to unravel magic through their deeds. Spells affected can be temporary or permanent, and can include curses, transformations, glamours, and geas. This is one of the few ways to break permanent magic without the original caster's consent. A year of service might be traded for the lifting of a curse or the breaking of a transformation. Slaying an ogre might end the geas placed on the Prince. A stolen enchanted rose might break the spell of sleep on a maiden. The power is placed in the player's hands to decide what deed can break the spell.
- Charm Another: this move lets the player gain the aid of others. It can be used to win over enemies and turn bullies into allies.
- Cursed Form: this move is good for the classic curses such as Beast or the Frog Prince. The player is rewarded for making their character's life difficult.
- Foolish: this move encourages the player to act like the fools that so often fill fairy tales. Leaping into danger without thinking, stepping blindly, and taking unnecessary risks are all good examples of acting foolish.
- Grant True Love's First Kiss: this move is a classic for fairytale princes, almost their signature move. Any Prince named Charming should have it. The nature of True Love and who they have kissed before is up to the player. Note that the PC can use this move as many times a scene as they want, but only once ever per character.
- Wise Through Others: this move represents relying on the advice of others to seek the answers to questions.

Princess Moves

- Royalty: the signature Princess move. This move is purely fictional, and the effects will vary depending on the fiction the group creates. In some games, it may mean almost nothing. This is why the Princess gets 3 starting moves, instead of the normal 2.
- A Friend to Animals: this move represents characters who have a natural affinity for making animal friends. They can use this in their fiction. In addition, the band they get should be fairly useful to them. The terms have a bit of overlap, and it's up to the player what kind of animals exactly are in their band.
- Command: this move is great for commanding characters who are used to having others follow their direction. A 7-9 result is a nice chance for you to twist the knife and throw them in the fire. The effects of the command should generally be limited to about one scene.
- Create Beauty: creating beauty means making something artistic. It should take some time, at least as much time as a short poem or song. It could take longer such as painting a picture. A witness could be any character that sees, hears, tastes or otherwise experiences the creation. The witnesses don't have to be selected from those immediately present, but the total number of witnesses affected is limited by the result. The results should occur either immediately after the witness experiences the beauty

or sometime before the next scene - whatever makes sense. Curses cured temporarily should generally be abated for the current scene.

- **Cursed Fate:** this move is perfect for characters like Sleeping Beauty, who may still suffer under the effects of a permanent curse. The player is rewarded for making their character's life difficult. The curse can be removed, but that just means the player won't be able to mark experience with this move in the future.
- **Fabulously Wealthy:** this move is great for players who like to throw their wealth around. For most PCs, being wealthy is just part of their description. They don't receive any tangible benefit. For the character with this move, they can freely use their 3 points of wealth as mundane cash or magic items for bargains. Generally, the magic items should be trinkets worth 1 or perhaps 2 points at most. Cash can be up to 3 points. Any magic items used in a bargain will last beyond the current session - this includes items bargained with other PCs.
- **Summon:** this move is good for characters in a position of power where they expect others to pay attention when they call. This is also good for great beauties who command attention through their presence alone. Once a summons is answered, the character summoned may act as they choose.
- **World Famous:** characters with this move are usually known worldwide due to Hollywood movies or widely translated novels. Most original fairy tales and folklore are not well known enough on their own to be world famous. Snow White is a good example of a world famous fairytale. Note this is the only way a character can raise their Popularity beyond it's starting value.

Villain Moves

- **Deceitful and Backstabbing:** the signature Villain move. The player is rewarded for acting like a blackheart - including betraying other PCs.
- **Curse:** use the cast a spell guidelines for the effects and duration of the curse.
- **Fearsome:** this move represents threats made through devious words rather than forceful display.
- **Hard to Kill:** this move gives the PC 5 heart tokens and is great for ancient evils such as Koschei the Deathless. There is no other way to gain 5.
- **Master:** the band granted by this move should be generally useful to the PC. They may be craven, untrustworthy, and despicable, but they still come in handy. This move is great for Villains known for leading bands of evil followers such as Captain Hook and his pirates.
- **Owner of an Infamous Weapon:** this move is for Villains who are known for using a particular weapon, but the player can get creative. Hook's hook. Bluebeard's knife. The Forest Witch's oven. The Snow Queen's chilling cold.
- **Possessed of a Magical Workshop:** this move is for characters who disappear to a secret lair in order to work great wickedness. The player should generally be able to get what they want. The easy bargain should be easy, but it's your opportunity to twist the knife or throw them in the fire. Don't make the bargain out of reach though.
- **Scheming:** this move represents characters who perform great physical feats through deftness and quick thinking.

- Tiny: the signature move of the Wee One. This move is usually triggered through some magic that makes the Wee One normal sized. You should make any such magic short lived - lasting no more than a session. If the player wants to become regular sized all the time, they should use an advanced improvement to change storybooks to something more appropriate. Thumbelina could become a full-size Princess or Fairy. Tom Thumb might be a Fairy or a Hero. Note also that certain moves, such as mount and mundane marvels, won't work for a full-sized Wee One.
- Affinity with Earth: this is a good move for dwarfs and gnomes, who are known for dwelling underground.
- Hide in Plain Sight: similar to the Child move, this move is great for tiny heroes that can easily stay out of sight. A 7-9 presents you with a golden opportunity to twist the knife or throw them into the fire. Note that they get to choose which result, but not the specifics.
- Magical Birth: see cast a spell for more details.
- Mount: this is a small mount; something that would not serve as a mount for a full-sized fairytale. It should be generally useful to the player, and can probably pass unnoticed among mundanes.
- Mundane Marvels: this move represents the fantastic creations that Wee Ones tend to make out of ordinary junk. A needle becomes a sword in their hands. An acorn and a rubber band becomes a shield. Anything that the player can come up with from normal, everyday items cobbled together is fair game. Note that these items don't necessarily disappear at the end of the session and that they can only be used by the Wee One. You may allow other characters of the same size to make use of the items as well.
- Small Troubles: this move is for players who want being a Wee One to be tough. It's great for characters who pine after being normal size.
- Speak Loudly: this move is a good combo with hide in plain sight, but it also works great on it's own. When others don't realize the PC is a Wee One, that means their voice is loud enough for a full size person. If the others know where the voice is coming from, but not that it is from a Wee One, that means they can tell the general area but are looking for the full sized person it belongs to.

Wild Animal Moves

- Wild at Heart: this signature move grants the player a benefit for being an animal. When they are granted a boon token, they can use it immediately on the action that grants them the boon or they can bank it for later. The benefits chosen should make sense for the type of animal they are. The Big Bad Wolf shouldn't have wings or be tiny. Mr. Toad shouldn't be large and strong.
- Animal Royalty: this move is great for the king or queen of beasts such as lions or tigers.
- Glamoured: this move makes the PC into a sort of lycanthrope. They can freely shift between animal and human forms, particularly when using wild at heart. It's up to the player when that happens, which means it's effectively under their control when they get rewarded. You should use any such situations to twist the knife, if you can.

- Maneater: this move rewards savage behavior. The harm must occur before the reward, so the boons can't be spent on the move that causes the harm.
- The Mold: this move is for characters that are the original animal of their kind. If the player wants all wolves to have come from the Big Bad Wolf, this is the move for that. Great for characters that are legendary, mythic or drawn from fables such as Anansi, Coyote and Lion (from The Lion and the Mouse).
- Poisonous: this move is for deadly, poisonous Wild Animals such as Nagaina. The harm from this move is the highest available in a move and is magical. If you want, the harm inflicted might cause the target to enter a deep slumber or coma instead of death.
- Roar: this move is like a more focused threaten harm that drives away others. Great for ferocious beasts such as lions and bears.
- Speak Intentions: this move sets up the common fairy tale trope where a Wild Animal announces their intentions to eat or kill someone before attacking. The player can gather boon tokens by doing so, but it gives their opponent a chance to act first.

A Fairytale World

The setting presented in Midsummer is a fairly broad framework rather than a concrete world. The PCs, their allies, and their enemies are drawn from classic fairy tales, folklore, nursery rhymes, fables, myths, or perhaps even fantasy fiction. The mundane world is as we know it, with the addition of fantastic elements in the cracks and seams. Strange realms and creatures lurk just out of sight, magic is real, and the stories we believe are just stories are - in fact - based in truth.

There are common, shared elements for you to draw on, but the details will be created through the fiction you form at the gaming table together. Concepts like the Princess, the Hero, the Enemy, fairies, the Wild, Fairy Court and magic itself are left for you to flesh out from the broad hooks contained in this book. Nothing is this book is sacred or sacrosanct - there is no official setting. There are no set characters. The world is up to you to make.

This chapter includes some suggestions to get you started.

Once Upon a Time

Where do the fairytales come from? Why are they immortal? Why do mundanes have stories written about them, but don't believe that they are real? These questions will be present in the background of your sessions, and you or some of the players may be very interested in the answers. Together, as a group, you'll start to fill in the details - starting with the first session questions. You probably won't fill in all the details in your first session, and some of the answers may remain ambiguous and mysterious throughout your play.

Fairytales may have been born in the mundane world or in a separate fairytale realm. You might mix and match, depending on the character. Each group of related fairytales might come from their own unique realm, or they might all come from the same place. Perhaps they were all born as normal mundanes once, before their stories began to be told.

Something special sets the fairytales apart from mundanes. It might be that they come from magical realms, or perhaps something happened to them to make them special. They might all have a trace of fairy blood. Maybe they were all brought to life by the collective imagination of mundanes, or perhaps by the pen of a very special author.

Once you've answered your first session questions, you've already decided as a group why the fairytales are currently in the mundane world and why mundanes don't know about it. During the following sessions you'll want to expand on those answers. You can use flashbacks to flesh out how they came to be in the mundane world. When the PCs use blatant magic in front of mundanes, or even try to convince mundanes of their True Names, that's a golden opportunity to flesh out how exactly the mundanes don't know that fairytales are real. The players might even decide to go public and play out the results.

Magic

Magic works as you and the players want it to. You can all stick to similar conventions or each character can have their own unique style of magic. Magic might be flashy and spectacular like

the effects from a Hollywood blockbuster or subtle and mysterious. It can be full of circles and designs of light like a favorite anime, or based on kung fu and physical movement. Anything you can dream up is fair game.

The limits of magic are up for grabs as well. Can wishes bring back the dead? Can you wish for more wishes? Do the transformed remember who they were? Can a wizard bend the will and the minds of others to his purposes? Can witches fly? Do they need broomsticks? It's all up in the air to be decided at the gaming table.

When deciding how magic works or what the limits are, remember your moves and your principles. Sprinkle fairy dust on everything, sharpen your axe for NPCs, ask lots of questions, twist the knife, and poison the apples. Ask for bargains, offer bargains, trigger curses, make their moves a bane, and always think about throwing them in the fire. When in doubt, delegate the decision of how magic works. All this is not to say that you should impose strict limits or barriers. This is not a game about saying no to the players; it's a game about creating drama.

Let's say Circe is searching a safe and you introduce a mystery. She finds a ring of magic wishes in the safe, but doesn't know right away what it is. She asks to ponder fate to find out the purpose of the ring, and describes her encyclopedic knowledge of magic. Circe rolls a miss. You twist the knife and say, "It's a ring of wishes. You know it is, because you owned it a few centuries ago. Unfortunately you already used the 3 wishes."

The ring changes hands and ends up with the Cheshire Cat, and the cat is ready to make a wish. How does it work? You delegate the answer and look to the fiction to decide. You remember Aladdin had a ring of wishes before he found the lamp. The jinn of the ring was described as less powerful than the jinn of the lamp. You decide that the 3 wishes can be used by anyone physically possessing the ring, by rubbing it like in the story. The jinn of the ring will try his best to fulfill the owner's wish, as long as it is within the jinn's power. Lastly you decide, based on the arabian tales of jinni, that the jinn of the ring is a blue cloud of hot air with vaguely arabian features and a haughty way of speaking. You could have also asked the cat for a description of the jinn.

Cheshire makes her first wish and wishes for the jinn to make the villainous Orochimaru disappear. You sharpen your axe and decide that the jinn is clearly more powerful than the serpent wizard, even though the wizard is one of the adversaries you've prepared. The jinn announces he will return in 1 hour, after dispatching the villain. That's the end of Orochimaru.

Fairies

What exactly are fairies, who are so often found at the heart of fairy tales? They might be magical beings, angels or even some form of extraterrestrial. They are most certainly outsiders - strangers from another world. Perhaps they are a long lost race of humans that dwell on another plane, dimension or planet. Depending on the choices you and your group make, they may not even exist in your game.

Your game may have a single race of fairies or a multitude. They may be tiny, small, human-sized, or even gigantic. Fairies are often known for their beauty or ugliness. They may be hideous beings that glamour themselves to appear beautiful with powerful magic. Some may be small and ugly, while others are fair and graceful. Some may fear the touch of cold iron. Touching them with iron may burn them, pierce their glamour, or do nothing at all.

The desires and motives of fairies are often alien or inhuman. Some may be helpful and good hearted, while others may be cunning and malicious. All fairies may be ascribed the same traits, they may be divided into separate Fairy Courts that share certain traits, or they may be varied as individuals. There may be dark fairies and light fairies, or perhaps they are beyond the concepts of human morality.

The world the fairies come from is usually a separate realm - a strange and often magical place that they call home. Perhaps they were born there, they changed into what they are today under the influence of that realm, or they may have fled there from our world. Their world is often called a Fairy Court due to their tendency towards kings and queens, and there may be more than one court. Their world is often beautiful, deadly, and filled with traps for the unwise. There may be food aplenty or starvation and want. The Other Realms chapter has rules for building a Fairy Court.

Curses

Fairy tales and folklore abound with curses. The beautiful, innocent or noble are transformed into monstrous beasts, birds, or frogs. An entire kingdom slumbers. The eyes of a child are changed so he can only see the ugliness in the world. Heroes are destined to die or murder their beloved. The curse pushes those afflicted into a wicked fate that they have difficulty escaping.

The most common source of a curse is an evil witch or sorceress. Other times the curse may have been cast by a wicked dwarf, a powerful spirit or even a malicious god. The source of the curse was likely offended in some way by the afflicted. A promise broken or an insult hurled. Often, the offense was simple oversight on the part of the afflicted. An invitation mistakenly unsent.

No matter the source of the casting, all curses are a form of powerful magic. They cannot easily be undone, broken, or avoided. Sometimes the afflicted may think they have escaped, only to fall under the curse's effects again in the future. A princess freed from magical slumber may fall asleep again as soon as she pricks her finger. A prince may revert to the form of a dog whenever he becomes angry.

Why are curses more powerful than other magic? Perhaps they are a special form of magic, from a particular realm. Or they might be all powered, in some way, by a particular evil spirit. Maybe they require a blood sacrifice that gives them their power. The world may simply reinforce their power as a natural phenomenon of magic. Play to find out the answer.

Wishes

Wishes are our hopes, dreams, and wants made manifest through powerful magic. Some wishes may be no different than casting a spell for what is desired. Others use a form of almost limitless magic to grant the wish maker whatever they desire. On a case by case basis, you'll need to decide how to handle wishes in your game.

When the players get their hands on wishes, the magic usually takes one of the two forms mentioned above. Either they can duplicate the effects of the cast a spell move, or they can exceed the normal limits of spells. These two categories are called lesser wishes and

greater wishes. Lesser wishes are more common, but greater wishes are by no means out of reach. In fact, some of the storybooks may start with magic items that grant greater wishes.

For lesser wishes, you should treat the results as if the player has rolled a 10+ or a 12+ on cast a spell. Lesser wishes are usually fairly unlimited in frequency of usage. Magic items that grant lesser wishes can be used over and over again, usually once per scene. Some examples are the magic belt from Oz and the magic wishing cap of Fortunatus. Depending on the item, there may be limits to the type of results that can be wished for. The cap of fortunatus can transport its wearer to wherever they wish, but it cannot turn lead into gold.

Greater wishes offer a wide open scope of possibilities. They can accomplish feats that mere spells cannot, such as lifting curses or killing outright. They are normally limited to 3 uses per item or source per user. No matter how much time passes, more wishes cannot usually be wrung out of the item. Jinni rings and lamps are the most common examples of this type of wish.

Greater Wishes and Limits

The limits of wishes will vary from game to game, and you may decide where their power begins and ends. The best way to do this is to play to find out, but here are some questions regarding the power of greater wishes you may consider:
1. Can the wish maker gain additional wishes?
2. Can a greater wish bring the dead back to life?
3. Can a greater wish cause True Love?
4. Can a greater wish permanently lift a curse?
5. Does 1 wish have to be used to protect the wish maker from any side effects?
6. Can a greater wish undue another wish?
7. Can a greater wish reverse or change the course of time?
8. Can a greater wish reach beyond the current realm?
9. Who imposes these limits? If it is the jinni, can the jinni be tricked into breaking the limits?

How Many Wishes?

When a PC encounters a particular item that grants greater wishes, you can use the following move to determine how many they get. This move is completely optional, at your discretion.

Master of the Jinni

When you are the Master of the Jinni, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a 10+, you have never met this jinni before and are granted 3 wishes. On a 7-9, you have met the jinni before but you still have 1 wish remaining. On a miss, you have already used the wishes from this particular jinni.

Cursed Wishes

Here's an optional move you can use if you'd like to make wishes more like the Monkey's Paw kind. The player might get what they want or they might get something horrible.

Make a Wish

When you Make a Wish, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, you get exactly what you wished for. On a 7-9, you get what you wanted, but choose 1 of the following consequences:

- someone you know dies
- you catch the attention of something wicked
- you lose something valuable in exchange
- the results are life threatening and you must Live to Tell the Tale

On a miss, you get what you want, but the narrator will tell you the horrible consequences of your wish.

The Enemy

The Enemy, if present in your game, is a single source of hardship for the lives of fairytales. It might be an all-powerful entity, an evil sorcerer, or even just another fairytale who tricked their way into power. The Enemy might be an organization, a society, an empire, or even an entire realm. The Enemy might even be a mundane person or mundane organization who has it out for fairytales.

Here's the key - if the Enemy is present in your game, don't plan out what it is. Play to find out. Maybe the players will determine the Enemy for you. Hey, you can just ask them! If they don't know, then watch what happens in play. You may introduce a mystery or an adversary, and then suddenly the Enemy falls into place from that. If it comes down to it, and you need to know right now in play who the Enemy is, you can always delegate the decision.

Of course, if the players say they don't want a big bad Enemy in the game, then listen to them.

Genre Mashups

Midsummer sits comfortably in the genre of urban fantasy, but you can mash it together with other genres pretty easily. You might consider running a historical fantasy that takes place in the past, perhaps during the events of the fairy tales themselves. Ancient Greece, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance era, and Victorian times are all particularly appropriate time periods. You can even go with a pure fantasy version and set the game in a made up world at a particular technology level.

Midsummer is primarily based in the worlds of western tales, but you can shift to an alternate cultural setting fairly easily. Chinese wuxia is a natural fit as a fantasy genre. The characters may still be based on fairy tales, either western or eastern, or they can be completely original creations. The time period could remain modern day, Ancient China, or the time of Manchu rule during the Qing dynasty. The world could be the mundane world or a wuxia fantasy realm.

Other genres such as the wild west, cyberpunk, superheroes, and post apocalyptic are all possible. They key is an interesting idea, a simple seed to start with, and a group of willing players. You really don't have to think about it too much beforehand, as you should still create the setting at the table with the players and play to find out what happens.

For the most part, you won't have to change many of the rules when changing genre. The storybook list can be edited to exclude anything inappropriate, and some of the moves can be restricted or even altered to fit. You will probably want to alter the sample list of items and perhaps magical items. You can look at other games that are Powered by the Apocalypse for storybooks and moves you can grab. What will change most is the fiction. The names of characters, their lives, and the world around them could be very different.

Other Realms

Beyond the gray mundane world of humans lie fantastic and magical other realms. This chapter explains how to create them.

Creating Other Realms

Each other realm is represented by a realm book. Realm books are just like storybooks, except you make the choices in the book as a group. Some games may not need them, while others may end up using multiple copies of the same realm book. Most games will end up with a single copy of a realm or two.

Realms are created the first time you need them. This usually means the first time you need to know something very specific about the realm, or the first time the PCs visit the realm. This should almost never be during the first session or outside of gameplay.

When you need to create a realm in play, just tell the group and end the current scene. Take out the book, let everyone take a look, and then fill it out as a group. Once you are done, resume play with the next scene.

Follow these steps to create a realm:

1. You choose the appropriate realm book.
2. Choose a True Name by group vote.
3. You and each of the players choose options for the realm's description, according to the realm book.
4. You and each of the players choose inhabitants of the realm, according to the realm book.
5. You and each of the players choose powers of the realm, according to the realm book.
6. You and each of the players choose known gateways leading to the realm, according to the realm book.
7. PCs gain access to a number of realm moves, according to the realm book. These moves are only available when they are in the realm, but are granted automatically while there. At your discretion, you may swap a move from another realm book with a move from the realm book you are working on.

Brief Intros

- Fairy Court: the land beneath the hills or over the sea where fairies dwell.
- Land of Oz: the fairy country of the great wizard and the four witches of the compass.
- The Wild: the primeval wilderness unspoiled by humans and their constructions.

True Names

Just like fairytales, every realm has a True Name. Some realms have been known by many variations, while others have been known by only a few. Many modern tales have introduced new names for the realms that may not be listed here, and you may even have your own ideas.

The correct answer depends on your game. Whatever you and the players decide is the one True Name, no matter how many variations may exist.

Description

Each realm can be described by a few words or phrases. They might describe common colors, sights, or even smells that define the realm. The location of the realm, common weather, flora and fauna may all be part of the description.

Inhabitants

Realms have a number of unique, intelligent inhabitants that are not found in the mundane world. Most are magical in nature, and may include giants, dragons, tin men, centaurs, and talking animals. The inhabitants you choose are common and typical of the realm, but other, strange creatures and peoples may also exist.

Powers

The movers and shakers of a realm are called powers. They might be actual leaders, generals, kings and queens or they might be powerful hermits that avoid contact with outsiders. They can be one of the inhabitants of the realm, other fairytales, powerful creatures, or even mundanes who have come to live in the realm. Anything is possible, but powers are at least the most important individuals of a realm.

A PC cannot be a power unless they spend the majority of their time in the realm. Since the game normally takes place in the mundane world, this will normally not be feasible. Consult the fiction you've built for what makes sense.

Known Gateways

Each realm is linked to the mundane world through a number of hidden gateways. Gateways are magical connections that allow travel to and from a realm, but they may not be physical. A gateway might be anything from a doorway in a back alley, a particular dance, a powerful magic item, a magical ritual, or even a storm.

Gateways might be one-way or they might allow access back and forth. Getting in a realm is usually a lot easier than getting out. Magic items, the powers of the realm, and sometime the realms moves can be help in returning. They can be wide open, blocked, warded, or require a key.

Other gateways can and probably do exist, but those chosen are the ones the players know about.

Realm Moves

Realm moves are special moves that any PC can use while they are in a realm. They include moves for travel, interacting with the realm, finding resources, and unique abilities or features offered by the realm's magical properties. Several moves for each realm will start out as

unlocked, or available for use by the players. As the realm is explored, additional moves may be unlocked for use by improving the realm.

Improving Realms

A player should mark experience in the realm book whenever they make a realm move or the rules tell them to. When a player marks the fifth experience in the realm book, erase the experience and choose an improvement from the list in the realm book. The player who marked the experience should choose. Collectively, the group may only choose each improvement once.

When a player chooses a realm move that includes the word personal, that refers specifically to the PC involved. That PC, and that PC only, gets the improvement. Otherwise, the improvements apply to all the PCs.

The Other Realms

See Other Realms book.

Adversaries

An adversary is a creature, person or organization that threatens the PCs and the fairytale city. There is something they want, and they will use the resources at their disposal to get it. Their threat may be physical in nature, or merely a danger to livelihood and security. Something wicked will surely happen if the players do nothing to stop the adversary.

After the first session, you will start to create adversaries as part of your preparation for future sessions. Generally you will want to have about 2 or 3 adversaries on hand. They may last for a single session each or stay around as a threat for many sessions. Your initial adversaries should come out of the first session play, as discussed in the First Session chapter. After that you can develop more from your ongoing play.

Adversaries are primarily a fictional construct with a few mechanical bits tacked on. They will help drive your moves and give you a focus for directing NPC goals. As you select moves during play, look over your adversary sheets for ideas. You can work them into the standard list of narrator moves or select special moves based on their methods.

As you play, look for NPCs that interest you and the players. You can either make them into full adversaries or include them in a greater adversary's methods. You can also pick adversaries that interest you or start with an idea for a wicked plan. If you can imagine something wicked happening to the players, start there and work backwards.

Once an adversary's wicked plans have been thwarted or become irrelevant, take some time before the next session to plan out what to do with them. If they remain interesting to you and the players, roll them into a new adversary sheet with a new wicked plan. Keep what you want from the old sheet and come up with anything new you need. On the other hand, if the adversary is boring, tiresome or just plain gone, then you should set them aside. If they are still relevant to the fiction, keep them around as an NPC, but keep them in the background. Perhaps later you'll have an idea for another wicked plan, and you can dust the former adversary off and put them on a new sheet.

Creating an Adversary

- Choose a fairytale.
- Choose a need.
- Detail their wicked plan.
- Detail 2 to 4 of their methods.
- Define what's at stake.
- Note the cast.
- Wind any ticking clocks.

Fairytales

An adversary is usually a fairytale just like the PCs. You can either select a fairytale you like, or choose one from the True Names listed in the storybooks. Just make sure the fairytale in question is not already in use by one of the players. The fairytale chosen should fit into one or

more of the following:
- a fairytale drawn from the tales of one of the PC fairytales
- a fairytale not connected with any of the PCs
- a fairytale that is normally not portrayed as a villain
- a group of closely related fairytales
- a mundane individual or organization
- a creature of folklore from the region of the fairytale city

Needs

Need means the force inside the adversary that is driving them. In any scene, it's their goal. It's why they made their wicked plan. If you are using a fairytale adversary, this might be a need they are associated with. Pinocchio desired to be a real boy. Geppetto made a living puppet out of desire for wealth. The Evil Queen was envious of Snow White's beauty. Mulan became a soldier out of pride for her family. Choose one of the following needs:
- Envy
- Desire
- Pride
- Cruelty
- Hatred
- Hunger
- Conquest

Wicked Plans

Every adversary has a wicked plan they want to accomplish. They might want someone dead or defamed. They might want to takeover fairytale city. They might even want to expose fairytales to the world. Think about what they want and why it is bad. Picture what wicked things will come if their plan succeeds.

You should keep in mind that a wicked plan is not a plot for the story. The plot and the story will happen as you play - as you and the players create the fiction together. Instead, a wicked plan is what the enemy wants and what that result might look like if the players stand still. This doesn't even mean the players have to directly oppose the wicked plan - they might make it irrelevant due to their actions.

One thing you might try with the wicked plan is showing it to the players. You could even play it out as a flashback scene (more of a flashforward, really). Consider this option for PCs that have magical forecasting abilities or some type of visions. Perhaps a magic mirror could show the scene as a vision.

Creating a Method

Adversaries go after their goals using concrete methods. These are the primary ways that players will interact with the adversary, and potentially thwart their wicked plan. If the players thwart or disarm all of an adversaries methods, the adversary themselves is effectively thwarted. Methods can be personal, such as skills and gear possessed by the adversary. They

can also represent mobs, organizations, and creatures in the service of the adversary. Create each of an adversary's methods by doing the following:
- Name it.
- Choose a category and type.
- Write a description.
- Detail the cast.
- Decide if you need a custom move.
- Decide if you need to wind a ticking clock.

Category

Each method falls into one of the following broad categories:
- Spy
- Sorcery
- Disguise
- Goblins
- Mayhem
- Imprisonment

Spy

Adversaries often employ spies to do their dirty work and gather intelligence on their foes. The adversary themselves might perform the spying, they might use a magic item, or they might employ the services of a specialized agent.

Choose a type of spy:
- Talking Animal (impulse: to cower and taunt)
- Ordinary Citizen (impulse: to smile when learning secrets)
- Magic Mirror (impulse: to be literal)
- Crystal Ball (impulse: to cast sorcery upon those revealed)
- Stealth (impulse: to learn weaknesses)
- Gossip (impulse: to distort facts)
- The Wind (impulse: to batter and blow garments)
- Men in Black (impulse: to intimidate through violence)

Narrator moves for spies:
- Turn someone's plan inside out
- Show up uninvited at their home
- Turn up dead, murdered as a message
- Steal a magic item and give it to the adversary
- Offer someone a bargain that someone else won't like
- Trigger someone's curse
- Cause a deadly distraction from the adversary
- Sneak up behind someone and strike
- Leave something behind
- Watch from a distance

Sorcery

The most powerful adversaries often resort to sorcery to get the job done. Sorcery always implies magical effects that come from the adversary themselves, but the players may only ever encounter the effects from a distance.

Choose a type of sorcery:
- Enchantment (impulse: to curse with misfortune)
- Wishes (impulse: to own everything)
- Transformation (impulse: to offer a bargain that will undo the transformation)
- Poison (impulse: to cause sleep)
- Bargain (impulse: turn the payment against the other party)
- Destroy (impulse: to announce before acting)
- Control (impulse: to use visible magic)

Narrator moves for sorcery:
- Transform someone
- Cast a spell on someone
- Fill a location with deadly traps
- Enter any scene at any time
- Destroy someone or something utterly
- Control their allies and make them yours for now
- Put someone to sleep
- Ignore harm other than a weakness
- Spend great wealth freely
- Curse someone who displeases you
- Display your power
- Reverse a PC move
- Insult or belittle someone

Disguise

The adversary has taken on a disguise that prevents them from being recognized. This differs from spying or a sorcery effect in that the disguise is not temporary. For the duration of their wicked plan, the adversary will attempt to remain disguised.

Choose a type of disguise:
- Lies (impulse: to pretend to be long lost family)
- Old (impulse: to pretend weakness or frailty)
- Dead (impulse: to watch from a distance)
- Ally (impulse: to avoid close friends)
- Imperilled (impulse: to delay)
- Fearful (impulse: to startle)
- Advisor (impulse: to give bad advice)

Narrator moves for disguise:
- Tell someone a lie
- Show weakness in response to a threat
- Avoid a subject or change the subject
- Lurk on the fringes in an overcoat, hat and dark glasses
- Avoid answering a direct question
- Disappear when threatened
- Pretend to be harmed
- Create division between them
- Drive their allies away
- Cause panic and madness

Goblins

Armies of single-minded, brutal servants are common among adversaries. Goblins are not necessarily actual goblins. They might be simple mundanes, creatures, or some other type of monstrous servant.

Choose a type of goblins:
- Angry Mob (impulse: to attack their enemy)
- Winged Animals (impulse: to steal or carry off)
- Insect Swarm (impulse: to sting with poison)
- Pack of Beasts (impulse: to tear and chew)
- Ugly Children (impulse: to taunt and destroy beauty)
- Normal Servants (impulse: to betray the adversary)
- Puppets (impulse: to destroy the fleshy ones)
- Thieves (impulse: to steal magic items and wealth)
- Monstrous Beast (impulse: to roar and delay)
- Soldiers (impulse: to attack others)

Narrator moves for goblins:
- Assault the fairytale city
- Capture someone by force
- Threaten to burn something down
- Burst in through the windows
- Poison someone
- Carry off their ally
- Ruin or despoil something they care about
- Appear behind someone or over their shoulder
- Stop anyone who tries to get through
- Guard a magic item
- Eat someone, swallowing them whole
- Attack with mundane weapons
- Rob someone

Adversaries are often known for a particular brand of mayhem that they love to inflict. This can range from murderous behavior to simple theft.

Choose a type of mayhem:
- Arsenal (impulse: to stockpile more armaments)
- Contracted (impulse: to kill anyone who threatens the contract)
- Murderous Secret (impulse: to reveal the existence of the secret)
- Beheading (impulse: to threaten beheading)
- Cannibalism (impulse: to gather special ingredients)
- Transformation (impulse: to destroy the transformed)
- Burglary (impulse: to destroy items)
- Monstrous (impulse: to consume whole)
- Greed (impulse: to demand gifts)
- Bomb (impulse: to tick and tock)
- Assault (impulse: to threaten with bluster)

Narrator moves for mayhem:
- Steal their weapons
- Attack with a great weapon
- Harm someone who learns your secret
- Ask for a counteroffer
- Sharpen your knives, load your gun
- Kidnap someone who looks tasty
- Chop up meat and savor the smell and taste
- Transform someone into something weak
- Wreck their home and steal their stuff
- Swallow someone whole
- Ignore an attack that doesn't target your weakness
- Ask for a gift, perhaps through a threat
- Reveal a ticking bomb
- Make a direct attack on someone

Imprisonment

Imprisonment is a favored tactic of those who want obstacles removed from their path. Adversaries who rely on imprisonment normally use minions to either capture or hold the prisoners.

Choose a type of imprisonment:
- Magical Geas (impulse: to force the unwilling)
- Magical Cave (impulse: to offer magic items)
- Dungeons (impulse: to reveal plans)
- Bargain (impulse: to offer gifts)

- Servitude (impulse: to ignore the servant)
- Riddles (impulse: to make the answer personal)
- Abandonment (impulse: to discuss the plan beforehand)

Narrator moves for imprisonment:
- Trap someone in one location
- Place a geas on someone that they must follow
- Lock someone behind a door
- Offer a bargain that includes imprisonment for something they want
- Reveal yourself as someone's boss
- Ask a riddle as part of a bargain
- Leave someone stranded somewhere
- Kidnap their allies and leave some clues
- Throw them in jail for a crime they might have committed
- Introduce a cellmate that they may know already

Description and Cast

Describe the particulars of the method and any cast of characters involved. The cast includes disguises, aliases, minions, guards, spies, allies, and sometimes targets. If the method is purely personal, you can leave the cast blank. Include any locations or magic items of particular importance in the description.

Custom Moves

Sometimes, methods will deserve a custom move for the PCs. This usually means you want to include some custom results in a basic move, change the stat for a basic move, or throw some uncertainty into a particular situation. You can use custom moves to simulate the effects of powerful magic or spells, unusual circumstances, or otherworldly creatures. You can also use them to allow the PCs to avoid the results of the method. Unlike most player moves, you normally keep the details of these moves a secret on your adversary sheet.

The following moves are examples for each method that you can use as templates.

Spy: Question the Spy. The first time you Question the Spy, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, the spy either reveals their master or their purpose, as chosen by the narrator. On a 7-9, the spy either reveals they have a master (but not who) or flees to a hidey hole, as chosen by the narrator.

Sorcery: Resist the Spell. If you can Cast a Spell, when you Resist the Spell cast by the adversary, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a 10+, you avoid the spell and know who cast it. On a 7-9, you avoid the spell.

Disguise: Question the Disguise. The first time you Question the Disguise, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, you know exactly who it is. On a 7-9, you know that it is a disguise, but not who is underneath.

Goblins: Escape the Goblins. When you run to Escape the Goblins, roll the dice and add your Courage. On a 10+, you can choose to either escape them or lead them into a trap. On a 7-9, you escape them.

Mayhem: Avoid the Mayhem. When you Avoid the Mayhem, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, you avoid the mayhem with time to spare. On a 7-9, you avoid the mayhem just in the nick of time, but leave something behind.

Imprisonment: Try to Breakout. When you Try to Breakout, roll the dice and add your Brawn. On a 10+, you break free of the prison and find a key to free any others. On a 7-9, you break free of your prison, but have to flee or get caught again.

There are more examples of custom moves below in the examples section.

Ticking Clocks

Some methods will indicate a timeline of events that will occur if nothing else changes. A goblin takeover of a neighborhood. The spread of rats. Murdering the town council one by one. You might create a cascading effect of ticking clocks that must be fulfilled before the adversary's main ticking clock completes. An arsenal must be gathered and troops trained in order to invade, which will supplant the current rulers of fairytale city.

For more on what ticking clocks are and how to create them, see the section below.

Stakes

Stakes are fundamental questions raised by the wicked plan. Does someone survive? What happens to the mayor? Do people riot? Do the mundanes find out about fairytales? Writing questions down as stakes means you are agreeing with yourself to delegate the answer rather than deciding what happens.

If the Three Pigs are trying to shutdown the restaurant district of fairytale city as part of their evil plan, you might write down "Does the restaurant district survive?" as one of the stakes. See the examples of adversaries below for more ideas.

Ticking Clocks

A ticking clock is a timeline of events. The events will occur based on what happens in the fiction. They may have a trigger, or they may be a gradual process that must be stopped. To make a ticking clock, draw a clock face with hours (or use one provided). Label midnight as the end result or final event. Throw a halfway point at 6. Space any other events around the clock in order, with no more than 1 per hour. They should be arranged chronologically, but the time on the clock won't usually have any meaning in the fiction.

Adversaries should have at least one ticking clock that counts down to their wicked plan. Their plan goes off at midnight, with supplemental events leading up to the end result. You can create events around your main clock that trigger based on ticking clocks in the adversary's methods.

Examples of Adversaries

Bluebeard (Mr. B)

- Need: Envy

- Wicked Plan: Hundreds of millions witness Bluebeard murder Snow White on a live video posted online. Bluebeard becomes the most (in)famous and powerful fairytale.
- Stakes
    - Does Snow White die?
    - Do fairytales get outed to the mundanes?
- Ticking Clocks
    - 3:00 - Bluebeard invests in social media businesses
    - 6:00 - Bluebeard creates a popular online page dedicated to Snow White
    - 9:00 - Snow White captured
    - 12:00 - Snow White murdered on live video

Methods

FableUs Inc.
- Goblins: Normal Servants
- Impulse: to betray the adversary
- Description: FableUs is a mundane social media company controlled by Mr. B tasked with making a popular Snow White page online.
- Cast: Jack Jones (president of FableUs), marketing drones, developers, corporate lawyers, the Page (sentient, magical), Mr. B (Bluebeard)
- Custom move: Social Takedown. When you try to destroy the popularity of Snow White's page through a clever scheme, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, the page is relegated to the dumps of the internet, never to be seen again. On a 7-9, the page has a huge setback, but will recover it's popularity with time.
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - Mr. B takes over
    - 6:00 - Snow White page created
    - 9:00 - marketing drones replaced with actual goblins
    - 12:00 - guerilla marketing tactics make page popular

Warehouse B
- Imprisonment: Dungeons
- Impulse: to reveal plans
- Description: Snow White and anyone who gets in Bluebeard's way are captured by goblins and imprisoned at a warehouse in the mundane harbor district.
- Cast: goblin jailors, goblin tactical squad
- Custom move: Breakout. When you attempt to break out of the warehouse, roll the dice and add your Brawn. On a 10+, you break free of the chains and find a key to free any others. On a 7-9, you break free of your chains, but have to flee or get caught again.
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - Warehouse B rented
    - 6:00 - tactical squad follows Snow White
    - 9:00 - Snow White captured
    - 12:00 - Snow White imprisoned

Murder
- Mayhem: Beheading

- Impulse: to threaten beheading
- Description: Bluebeard intends to announce who he is and behead Snow White on a live video posted to her popular social media page. He and she will be dressed as fairytales.
- Cast: Bluebeard, Snow White
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - announcement video posted
    - 6:00 - Snow White captured video posted
    - 9:00 - sharpening axe video posted
    - 12:00 - Snow White beheaded on live video

Rose Red

- Need: Conquest
- Wicked Plan: The talking animals revolt and takeover fairytale city, installing Rose Red as the ruler. Mayor Belle and Sheriff Aladdin are imprisoned or killed.
- Stakes
    - Will Belle and Aladdin survive?
    - Who will join Rose Red's angry mob?
- Ticking Clocks
    - 3:00 - organize the revolution
    - 6:00 - arm the revolution
    - 9:00 - lay the battle plans
    - 12:00 - invade fairytale city

Methods

Browny Pig
- Spy: Ordinary Citizen
- Impulse: to smile when learning secrets
- Description: Browny Pig has been sent to fairytale city to learn their defenses.
- Cast: Browny Pig
- Custom move: Secret Cover. The first time you try to find out why Browny Pig is in fairytale city, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, he either reveals that he was sent by Rose Red or that he is here to investigate the defenses. On a 7-9, he either reveals that it wasn't his choice (but won't say more) or flees to a hidey hole.
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - Browny arrives in fairytale city
    - 6:00 - Browny makes friends with someone in power
    - 9:00 - Browny starts asking questions
    - 12:00 - Browny learns one secret of fairytale city's defenses

Talking Animals
- Goblins: Angry Mob
- Impulse: to attack their enemy
- Description: Rose Red has organized a revolution on the farm where the talking animals live.

- Cast: Blacky Pig, Whitey Pig, Father Bear, Baby Bear, Mother Bear, Shere Khan, Golden Goose, Chicken Little, Mr. Toad, Baloo
- Custom move: Avoid Capture. Whenever the talking animals are hunting for you, roll the dice and add your Courage. On a 10+, you escape to temporary safety and find an ally among your enemies. On a 7-9, you are found by one of your pursuers.
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - Rose Red recruits a few to her cause
    - 6:00 - half the animals have joined her
    - 9:00 - suspected traitors are put to death
    - 12:00 - the majority of the animals have joined the cause

Modified Armaments
- Murder: Arsenal
- Impulse: to stockpile more armaments
- Description: The talking animals are building a stockpile of arms for their pending invasion with the unwilling help of Trusty John.
- Cast: Trusty John
- Custom move: Salvage a Weapon. Whenever you try to Salvage a Weapon, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a 10+, you salvage a 4 harm mundane weapon or a 2 harm magical weapon. On a 7-9, you salvage a 2 harm mundane weapon or a 1 harm magical weapon.
- Ticking Clock
    - 3:00 - weapons are gathered
    - 6:00 - Trusty John is captured
    - 9:00 - many weapons are modified for animal use
    - 12:00 - there are enough arms for all the revolutionaries

Cursed Chains
- Imprisonment: Magical Geas
- Impulse: to force the unwilling
- Description: Rose Red bought a set of cursed chains from the Forest Witch.
- Cast: the Forest Witch
- Custom move: Freedom. Whenever you try to free yourself or another from the geas, roll the dice and add your Cunning. On a 10+, you do it. On a 7-9, you must provide a way to trick the geas.

Bargains

Fairy tales are rife with bargains. A stranger offers three magic beans for a farmer's last cow. A monster offers a single rose for the imprisonment of a man's beautiful daughter. A witch offers a plant for the price of a child. An imp offers a room full of gold for the price of a firstborn child.

In Midsummer, a bargain is an exchange of wealth or deeds between 2 characters. The wealth or deeds are each rated from 0 to 3 points to represent their value. One character makes an offer for a price from the other character. When the price is worth less than the offer, the bargain is easy. When the price is worth more than the offer, the bargain is unequal.

In case you are wondering, the magic beans for the cow is an easy bargain. The rest are unequal.

Player Bargains

Before the game begins, you should decide how to handle PC bargains in play. You can either handle them through the fiction or allow the use of the Bargain basic move. Most of the time you should consider allowing the basic move, as it adds a level of uncertainty to the deal and takes the pressure off making a decision.

See Bargain in the Narrating Moves chapter for more details on the move.

NPC Bargains

For your characters, you have the option of offering a bargain or asking for a bargain. Adversaries may rarely force a bargain through sorcery, but otherwise players always have the choice of accepting a bargain or offering one back in return with the Bargain move.

Bargains of Wealth

Some examples of wealth are:
- 0 point bargains: mundane weapons, mundane library, mundane cow, mundane flowers
- 1 point bargains: magic beans, healing fruit, magical harp, poison apple, poisoned comb, three drops of blood, golden egg, a mundane luxury car, the shadow of a boy
- 2 point bargains: seven league boots, seven league hat, cloak of invisibility, everfull purse, golden hen, magical sword, cap of knowledge, shoes of swiftness, magic mirror, a mundane luxury house
- 3 point bargains: royal titles, wishing ring, magic lamp, a mundane fortune

Bargains of Deed

Some examples of deeds are:
- 0 point bargains: trivial labor
- 1 point bargains: labor, theft, testimony, safety
- 2 point bargains: child, murder, marriage, imprisonment, geas, glamour, transformation

- 3 point bargains: servitude, firstborn, true love's first kiss, death, permanent geas, permanent glamour, permanent transformation

Combining Wealth

Don't do it. You can't add two items of wealth together. Two magic beans worth 1 point of wealth each are not worth 2 points of wealth together. If you absolutely must combine wealth, you'll have to figure out the relative value in the fiction. Maybe a whole bag of magic beans is worth wealth 2.

By the same token, deeds cannot be combined either. 2 deeds of testimony does not equal a child.

Magic Items

Any magic item drawn from fairy tales or other stories is possible in Midsummer. PCs can get their hands on Excalibur, Aladdin's lamp, the Magic Belt of Oz, magic beans, and many other strange and wondrous items. Anything is possible - including items that exceed the power of any move the PCs might possess. You can even come up with your own.

In this chapter you will find rules for creating your own items and a catalog of commonly referenced items.

Designing Magic Items

1. Choose an item featured in a fairy tale or other work. Alternately, dream up an item of your own concept. Nothing is out of bounds, from magic beans to rings of wishes to floating castles in the sky.
2. Name it.
3. Describe what the item can do.
4. Assign a wealth value using the guidelines in the Bargains chapter and existing items in the catalog as examples.
5. If the item can cause harm, assign a magical weapon value using the guidelines in the Harm and Healing chapter. Generally speaking, weapon values fall somewhere between the wealth value of the item and the wealth value +2. For example, a weapon with a wealth value of 2 usually ranges from 2 to 4.
6. If the item can protect from harm, assign a magical armor value using the guidelines in the Harm and Healing chapter. Generally speaking, armor values fall somewhere between the wealth value of the item and the wealth value -1. For example, armor with a wealth value of 2 usually ranges from 1 to 2.
7. If the item enhances its owner, assign a stat bonus. Generally speaking, stat bonuses fall somewhere between 0 and the wealth value of the item. For example, an item with a wealth value of 2 might grant a bonus to Brawn between 0 and +2.
8. If the item warrants, assign one or more other tags such as caster, invisibility, or teleport.
9. If the item warrants it, create a custom move. Use the catalog for examples, or see the Advanced Rules chapter for more on creating custom moves.

Magic Item Tags

Magic items have tags that impact their usage in game. Tags can be mechanical, constraints, or cues. Mechanical tags have a direct impact on the game mechanics. Constraint tags create a fictional requirement for use. Cue tags are used to add to the fiction you create when using the item.

There are 3 tags that represent the range of an item. These normally apply to a weapon or an item with an effect that can be cast. The ranges, from nearest to farthest, are close, far, and beyond.

- armor n (armor 1, armor 2, etc.) (mechanical): reduces incoming harm by n much.

- beyond (constraint, range): the item can affect those who are beyond visual range. There is usually an alternate constraint such as sympathetic.
- caster (mechanical): grants the owner the ability to use Cast a Spell once per scene.
- close (constraint, range): the item can affect those near enough to touch, perhaps with a bit of effort.
- consumed (constraint): to use the item, it must be used up.
- far (constraint, range): the item can affect those out of reach, but still in line of sight.
- healing (mechanical): heals all heart tokens when used.
- invisibility (cue): renders the owner undetectable by normal means.
- magical (magical armor, magical weapon) (mechanical): inflicts or protects from magical damage. If an item is not magical, it is said to be mundane.
- stat +n (Courage +1, Cunning +1) (mechanical): adds n to a particular stat when used.
- stun (mechanical): stuns the target instead of inflicting harm.
- sympathetic (constraint): the item relies on a sympathetic connection to its target, such as hair, skin or nails.
- teleport (cue): grants the owner the ability to move between locations instantly.
- wealth n (wealth 1, wealth 2, etc.) (mechanical): the wealth value of the item.
- weapon n (weapon 1, weapon 2, etc.) (mechanical): inflicts n much harm.
- weapon +n (weapon +1, weapon +2, etc.) (mechanical): adds +n to harm inflicted.
- wishes (mechanical): grants the owner a number of greater wishes.
- worn (constraint): to use the item, it must be worn.

Sidebar: Defending Against Magic Items

Magic items with the weapon or caster tags use moves to do their work, but many items just do what they do without a move. What happens when Merlin aims his Wand of Transformation at Momotaro? It all depends on whether Merlin and Momotaro are PCs or NPCs.

- Merlin and Momotaro are both NPCs: whatever you want to happen. Remember to sharpen your axe and delegate the decision if you like.
- Merlin is a PC; Momotaro is an NPC: sharpen your axe. Momotaro is transformed without a roll. Note that this is more powerful than the Transform into an Animal move that Merlin may have. In the case of that move, Merlin will have to roll to find out what happens.
- Momotaro is a PC; Merlin is an NPC: Momotaro should get a chance to react with his own move before the spell takes effect. If it makes sense in the fiction, he can either try to dodge out of the way with Perform a Feat of Fable or use another move such as Counterspell to avoid the magic. He could also try to Strike a Blow and take the wand away or knock Merlin out before the wizard can use it.
- Merlin and Momotaro are both PCs: this works the same as if Merlin is an NPC.

Magic Items Catalog

Magic Items by Type

Apparel

Belt of Bragging
Cap of Darkness
Cap of Knowledge
Cloak of Cobwebs
Cloak of Invisibility
Disguise Skin
Fairy Armor
Glass Slippers
Golden Cap
Lordly Boots
Mad Hat
Magic Belt
Magic Garments
Seven League Boots
Shape-Changing Belt
Silver Fly Wings
Silver Shoes
Wishing Cap

Armor

Enchanted Tiara
Fairy Armor
Knight's Shield
Magic Garments
Protective Amulet
Walnut Shield

Artifacts

Conjuring Bag
Death's Scythe
Great Book of Records
Jinni Lamp
Magic Belt
Miracle Mallet
Sampo
Wishing Cap

Jewelry

Dwarf Crown
Enchanted Tiara
Fairy Crown
Jinni Ring

Jungle Crown
Pocket Watch
Poisoned Comb
Protective Amulet
Ring of Beauty
Ring of Invisibility
Ring of Need

Musical Instrument

Bone Kantele
Enchanted Harp
Fish Flute
Golden Fiddle
Horn of the Unicorn
Horn of Waking
Little Fiddle
Pan Pipes

Oddities

Cursed Mirror Shards
Everfull Purse
Little Black Casket
Love Magnet
Magic Stones
Philosopher's Stone
Powder of Life
Timeless Tea Set

Potions, Edibles and Elixirs

Blue Rose Tea
Courage Flask
Drink Me Potion
Eat Me Cake
Elixir of Life
Fairy Medicine
Magic Healing Herb
Moon Cheese
Poisoned Apple
Swine Potion
Wishing Pill
Wishing Well Water

Travel

Enchanted Horse

Enchanted Motor Car
Flying Mortar
Magic Carpet
Miniature Chariot
Pumpkin Coach
Rainbow
Royal Chariot
Seven League Boots
Silver Fly Wings
Silver Shoes
Snow Sleigh
White Horse
Wooden Horse

Trinkets

Belt of Bragging
Bloody Key
Bone Kantele
Bread Crumbs
Cloak of Cobwebs
Courage Flask
Disguise Skin
Drink Me Potion
Dwarf Crown
Eat Me Cake
Enchanted Forest Wood
Enchanted Harp
Enchanted Horse
Everfull Cup
Fairy Crown
Fairy Medicine
Fairy Ointment
Feather of Aid
Fish Flute
Flower of Transformation
Flying Mortar
Glass Slippers
Golden Arrow
Golden Egg
Golden Fiddle
Golden Key
Horn of Waking
Jungle Crown
Lamp of Seven Kingdoms

Little Fiddle
Lordly Boots
Magic Beans
Magic Dowsing Wand
Magic Glass Eye
Magic Healing Herb
Magic Picture
Magic Quills
Magic Shears
Magic Spyglass
Magic Tar
Miniature Chariot
Mirror of Gazing
Moon Cheese
Needle Sword
Poisoned Apple
Poisoned Comb
Pumpkin Coach
Ring of Need
Roc Egg
Sack Full of Gems
Silver Fly Wings
Silver Knife
Singing Quilt
Snow Sleigh
Swine Potion
Treasure Map
Walnut Shield
Whip of Fox and Snake Tails
Wishing Well Water

Wands

Blasting Wand
Fairy Wand
Flower of Transformation
Magic Dowsing Wand
Rose of Love
Sword of Stoning
Wand of Transformation
Wizard's Staff

Weapons

Antique Pistol
Blasting Wand

Enchanted Wood Axe
Excalibur
Fairy Sword
Green Axe
Kladenets
Knight's Sword
Large Cudgel
Magic Quills
Needle Sword
Sharp Sword
Silver Knife
Sword in the Stone
Vorpal Sword
Whip of Fox and Snake Tails
Wizard's Staff
Wooden Sword

Complete Catalog

Antique Pistol
wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / far
An old pistol, enchanted by long use, and small enough for a child or animal.

Belt of Bragging
wealth 1 / worn
A fancy belt that makes the wearer seem mighty, embroidered with large letters that spell out, "SEVEN AT ONE BLOW."

Blasting Wand
wealth 2 / magical weapon 3 / far
A slim wand of tapered wood enchanted to produce fire, lightning, or other harmful effects on command.

Bloody Key
wealth 1
A fancy key that appears stained with blood when held by the guilty.

Blue Rose Tea
wealth 2 / consumed
Special blue roses made into a tea that can reverse the effects of time on the drinker.

Bone Kantele
wealth 1 / caster

Made from the jaws of a giant fish, the bone kantele is a string instrument capable of producing magical songs when plucked.

Bread Crumbs

wealth 1 / consumed
Crumbs of fairy bread, useful in marking paths in strange wilderness such as the Fairy Court and the Wild.

Cap of Darkness

wealth 2 / invisibility / worn
A fairy hat that makes the owner invisible when worn.

Cap of Knowledge

wealth 2 / Wisdom +2 / worn
An old cap that tells the wearer all they want to know.

Cloak of Cobwebs

wealth 1 / worn
A flowing, fairy garment of soft material that seems to be woven from cobwebs.

Cloak of Invisibility

wealth 2 / invisibility / worn
A simple cloak that makes the wearer invisible when worn.

Conjuring Bag

wealth 3
A bag that may contain many mundane things, some of which are too large to fit within it.

Courage Flask

wealth 1 / Courage +1 / consumed
A container of clear liquid that imbues the drinker with courage.

Cursed Mirror Shards

wealth 2 / worn
Shards of glass, which can be inserted into the eyes or fashioned into eyewear, from a mirror cursed to reflect only the ugly truth

See the Truth

When you want to See the Truth about another, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a 10+, the narrator will tell you about up to 3 of the secrets they possess. On a 7-9, the narrator will tell you about 1 secret they possess. On a miss, you are unable to make sense of what you see.

Death's Scythe (or Harvester of Souls)

wealth 3 / caster
The fabled scythe of Death, that can reap the souls of the living with but a touch.

Harvest the Soul

When you Harvest the Soul of another, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a 10+, they die. On a 7-9, they lose all but 1 of their heart tokens and are stunned. Against PCs: On a 10+, they must Live to Tell the Tale or die.

Disguise Skin

wealth 1 / worn
The skin of an innocuous beast that can mask the form of even the most deadly predator.

Drink Me Potion

wealth 1 / consumed
A potion that shrinks any who imbibe the contents.

Dwarf Crown

wealth 1 / worn
A golden crown worn by the king of the dwarves.

Eat Me Cake

wealth 1 / consumed
A cake that causes any who consume it to grow very large.

Elixir of Life

wealth 2 / consumed
A golden liquid capable of granting the imbiber eternal youth.

Enchanted Forest Wood

wealth 1 / consumed
Often used for making living puppets, fairy wood that has a life of its own.

Enchanted Harp

wealth 1
An enchanted, golden harp that plays by itself.

Enchanted Horse

wealth 1
A magnificent, golden maned horse that can run like the wind.

Enchanted Motor Car

wealth 2 / teleport
An early motor car, enchanted from long use by fairytales, and capable of traversing great distances in a blink.

Enchanted Tiara

wealth 2 / magical armor 1 / worn

A glittering tiara enchanted to protect its wearer.

Enchanted Wood Axe
wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A woodsman's axe, enchanted to cut through anything it strikes.

Everfull Cup
wealth 1
A goblet that fills with water or wine on command.

Everfull Purse (or Pocket Full of Gold)
wealth 2
A fairy wallet that fills with money each morning.

Excalibur
wealth 2 / magical weapon 3 / close
The fabled sword of King Arthur and others, also known as Caledfwlch and Durandal.

Fairy Armor
wealth 2 / magical armor 2 / worn
Knight's plate armor, fashioned of gold and silver, and made for an elf prince.

Fairy Crown
wealth 1 / worn
A crown, fashioned from leaves and twigs, and worn by fairy royalty.

Fairy Medicine
wealth 1 / healing / consumed
Brewed by fairies, a salve that can heal the broken in body, if not spirit.

Fairy Ointment
wealth 1 / consumed
A oil that, when rubbed in the eyes, allows the invisible to be seen.

Fairy Sword
wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A slim and delicate blade fashioned in the Fairy Court.

Fairy Wand
wealth 2 / caster / far
A branch, adorned with golden leaves, and capable of great feats of magic.

Feather of Aid
wealth 1 / consumed

A feather capable of summoning griffins to aid the owner by releasing it into the wind.

Fish Flute
wealth 1
A flute that, when played, calls on the aid of a magical fish to retrieve items lost in the ocean depths.

Flower of Transformation
wealth 1
A blood-red flower, possessing a single pearl at its center, and capable of restoring the transformed to their true forms with a touch.

Flying Mortar (or Flying Umbrella)
wealth 1
Baba Yaga's flying mortar, capable of propelling its rider through the air.

Glass Slippers (also Golden Slippers and Rose-Gilded Slippers)
wealth 1 / worn
Fairy slippers, made of gold, silver or glass, that can only fit the dainty feet of the Princess.

Golden Arrow
wealth 1
An enchanted arrow, with a golden head and a shaft of silver, that marks the greatest archer.

Golden Cap
wealth 2 / worn
A ruby and diamond encircled golden cap, which the winged monkeys of Oz have promised to obey 3 times per owner.

Golden Egg
wealth 1
An egg of solid gold laid by a golden hen.

Golden Fiddle
wealth 1
A fiddle, made of gold, that plays the finest music.

Golden Key
wealth 1
A fairy key that opens any door.

Great Book of Records
wealth 3 / Wisdom +3
A book that records everything that happens within its pages, as events happen, everywhere.

Green Axe

wealth 2 / magical weapon 3 / close
A large green axe of fairy make, capable of chopping a head off in a single stroke.

Horn of the Unicorn

wealth 2 / healing
The preserved horn of a fabled unicorn, capable of healing the sick.

Horn of Waking

wealth 1
A horn capable of waking anything living.

Jinni Lamp

wealth 3 / wishes
An old, brass lamp that contains a powerful jinni of the first order, who will appear and obey the owner when the lamp is rubbed.

Jinni Ring

wealth 2 / wishes / worn
An old, brass ring that contains a lesser jinni of the second order, who will appear and obey the owner when the ring is rubbed.

Jungle Crown

wealth 1 / worn
A glittering crown of the Wild, worn by the royalty of the Wild.

Kladenets

wealth 2 / magical weapon 3 / close
A fabulous magical sword also known as the Asp.

Knight's Shield

wealth 2 / magical armor 1 / worn
A white kite shield with a red emblem favored by dragon slayers emblazoned on it.

Dragon Slayer
You avoid serious harm from dragon breath.

Knight's Sword

wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A shining sword forged for the Knights of the Round Table.

Lamp of Seven Kingdoms

wealth 1
A lamp that glows with the light of day when lit, banishing darkness across seven kingdoms.

Large Cudgel

wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close

A gnarled club of fairy wood.

Little Black Casket

wealth 2

A small black casket, locked with a key hanging on its handle, and containing a great quantity of brilliant treasure.

Little Fiddle

wealth 1 / caster

A small fiddle, perfect for a cat, that plays marvellous music.

Lordly Boots

wealth 1 / worn

Fine boots that give the wearer the appearance of a wealthy and important person.

Love Magnet

wealth 2

An enchanted metal horseshoe that causes the owner to be loved by those they meet.

Mad Hat

wealth 2 / caster / worn

A wild and oversized top hat, adorned with a card that reads "10/6", and capable of strange feats such as producing items from within.

Magic Beans

wealth 1 / consumed

Strange-looking beans that, when planted, sprout into a beanstalk that leads to the Cloudlands.

Magic Belt

wealth 3 / caster / worn

A broad belt, studded with jewels, that bestows the wearer with great magic.

Magic Carpet

wealth 2 / teleport

An ornate carpet, woven of enchanted thread, and capable of transporting any who sit upon it great distances.

Magic Dowsing Wand

wealth 1

A forked branch that points the way to the owner's desire.

Magic Garments

wealth 2 / magical armor 2 / worn
Clothing enchanted to protect the wearer from harm.

Magic Glass Eye

wealth 1
A glass orb that grants exceptional sight to those who hold it to their foreheads.

Magic Healing Herb

wealth 1 / healing / consumed
Rare healing herbs that grow in the Wild.

Magic Picture

wealth 1
A painting that shows the viewer whatever they wish to see.

Magic Quills

wealth 1 / magical weapon 1 / close / worn
Quills of the Wild, worn like a coat, that can be launched a short distance at enemies.

Magic Shears

wealth 1
Shears sharp enough to cut through anything.

Magic Spyglass

wealth 1
A baroque spyglass that shows the viewer what they are looking for.

Magic Stones

wealth 2
Silver fairy stones, which shine for their owners eyes only, revealing their location even from great distances.

Magic Tar

wealth 1 / consumed
Thick, black tar that can trap even the strongest in its grasp.

Miniature Chariot (or Miniature Stagecoach)

wealth 1
A tiny chariot, sized for wee folk, and pulled by mice capable of travelling like the wind.

Miracle Mallet

wealth 3 / wishes
A tiny hammer, sized for wee ones, and capable of great feats of magic when swung.

Mirror of Gazing

wealth 1
A magic mirror that shows the viewer whatever they wish to see.

Moon Cheese

wealth 1 / consumed
A silvery, young cheese found on the Moon.

Travelling to the Moon
You can travel to the Moon with Cast a Spell.

Needle Sword

wealth 1 / magical weapon 1 / close
A tiny sword fashioned from a needle, that nonetheless can inflict harm on normal sized opponents.

Pan Pipes

wealth 2 / caster
An enchanting flute, crafted by Pan of the Wild, that produces eerie music capable of commanding the mind and the body.

Philosopher's Stone

wealth 2
A legendary mineral used by alchemists to turn base metals such as lead into gold.

Pocket Watch

wealth 2 / worn
An antique pocket watch, which hangs on a chain and fob, and allows the wearer to open gates to Wonderland.

Poisoned Apple

wealth 1 / consumed
A bright red apple, poisoned with dark magic, and deadly to those who eat it.

Poisoned Comb

wealth 1 / worn
A beautiful comb, poisoned with dark magic, and deadly to those who wear it.

Powder of Life

wealth 2 / consumed
A magical powder, stored in a pepper shaker, that brings inanimate objects to life.

Protective Amulet

wealth 2 / magical armor 1 / worn
An amulet enchanted to protect the wearer from harm.

Pumpkin Coach

wealth 1

A beautiful fairy coach fashioned from a pumpkin.

Rainbow

wealth 2 / teleport

A multicolored ribbon of light capable of transporting its owner to anywhere they please.

Ring of Beauty

wealth 2 / Courage +2 / worn

A ring that makes the wearer appear radiant and beautiful.

Ring of Invisibility

wealth 2 / invisibility / worn

A golden ring that makes the wearer invisible when worn.

Ring of Need

wealth 1 / worn

A ring that leads the wearer to what they desire most.

Roc Egg (or Dragon Egg)

wealth 1

The gigantic egg of a Roc, an enormous white bird capable of carrying off an elephant.

Rose of Love

wealth 2

A delicate, fairy rose capable of inspiring love for the owner with but a single touch.

Royal Chariot

wealth 2 / teleport

A magnificent chariot, of magical make, that is designed to transport royalty over great distances swiftly.

Sack Full of Gems

wealth 1

A sack full of priceless gems of impossible size and clarity.

Sampo

wealth 3 / caster

One of the magical pillars of the universe, found in many forms - including a compass, astrolabe, mill, chest, coin die, shield or relic, that brings fortune to its owner.

Great Fortune

At the beginning of each session, gain 3 boon tokens.

Seven League Boots (also Seven League Hat, Seven League Ring and Shoes of Swiftness)

wealth 2 / teleport / worn
Boots or another article of clothing that allow the wearer to travel a great distance with each step.

Shape-Changing Belt

wealth 2 / worn
A belt crafted by a Queen of the Fairy Court that allows the wearer to transform into animals of their own size.

Sharp Sword

wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A medieval sword enchanted to be sharper than any natural blade.

Silver Fly Wings

wealth 1 / worn
Tiny wings, sized for a wee one, that allow the wearer to fly like a bird.

Silver Knife

wealth 1 / magical weapon 1 / close
A fancy, silver knife fashioned by fairies.

Silver Shoes

wealth 2 / teleport / worn
Silver shoes, with pointed toes, capable of transporting the owner wherever they wish.

Singing Quilt

wealth 1
A magic quilt that sings when touched.

Snow Sleigh

wealth 1
A white sleigh that travels quickly throw the snow.

Swine Potion

wealth 1 / stun / consumed
A potion, often hidden in wine, that dulls the senses of the drinker and banishes their memories of home.

Sword in the Stone

wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A blade of destiny that anoints kings and heroes.

Draw the Sword from Stone

Whenever you Draw the Sword from Stone, roll the dice and add your Courage. On a 10+, you draw the sword and may keep it as a weapon. On a 7-9, you draw the sword and it disappears in a blaze of light. On a miss, you are judged unworthy to draw the blade and may not attempt to do so again.

Sword of Stoning

wealth 2 / close
A dull sword that turns those it touches permanently to stone.

Timeless Tea Set

wealth 2
A mismatched tea set capable of stopping or distorting time for those who drink from its cups.

Treasure Map

wealth 1
A map that leads to a fabulous treasure in one of the other realms.

Vorpal Sword

wealth 2 / magical weapon 4 / close
An exceedingly sharp blade, capable of slicing through the toughest of beasts.

Walnut Shield

wealth 1 / magical armor 1
A tiny shield made of a walnut shell, and enchanted by fairies.

Wand of Transformation (also Silver Wand of Transformation)

wealth 2 / close
A wand, often made of silver, capable of permanently transforming others into beasts.

Whip of Fox and Snake Tails

wealth 1 / magical weapon 1 / close
A wicked-looking whip made from the tails of foxes and snakes.

White Horse

wealth 2 / teleport
A magnificent steed, capable of carrying its rider across vast distances in a blink.

Wishing Cap

wealth 3 / wishes / worn
A powerful magic cap capable of granting its wearer 3 wishes.

Wishing Pill

wealth 2 / consumed
A large pill that, when consumed, grants a single wish.

Wishing Well Water

wealth 1 / caster / consumed
Water from a magical wishing well that grants the drinker a minor wish.

Wizard's Staff

wealth 2 / magical weapon 3 / far
A staff fashioned for a wizard, capable of blasting the earth with power.

Wooden Horse

wealth 2
An enchanted hobby horse carved from wood that can carry it's rider great distances in a blink.

Wooden Sword

wealth 2 / magical weapon 2 / close
A child's sword fashioned from wood that has been enchanted to strike truer than a blade of steel.

Advanced Rules

This chapter covers stuff you don't strictly need, but that you might want. You should play a few sessions before using anything here.

Custom Player Moves

Making your own custom moves for your players is pretty easy. Below you'll find some templates and advice, as well as a few examples to get you started. The only hard part is the idea, but if you are thinking about creating a custom move you probably already know what you want the move for.

Most custom moves you create will be for adversaries or magic items. You can also use custom moves to expand the storybooks or realm books. You can even create your own books. You might also want a custom move for a particular situation that doesn't arise from an adversary. See the examples below for ideas.

Move Templates

Every move falls into one of the two templates below, depending on whether the move is active or passive. The templates are broken down line-by-line, and each line is noted as optional or required. All of the required lines must usually be in a move. The optional lines should only appear when you need them for the move. Each line includes cutouts meant to be replaced by your own words. A cutout is surrounded by brackets like [this]. Some options for the cutouts are listed below.

These templates are not really meant to be used directly, and none of the moves in this book were made using templates. However, they do provide a breakdown of how moves usually work and should be useful in understanding the structure of a move. Once you see how the parts fit together, you should be able to make your own moves without following the templates.

One thing you should always keep in mind when designing custom moves - they are always written to address the player. "You" means "you, the player." You can also streamline the description, remove clutter, or add a line of flavor text to better explain the intent of the move.

Active Moves
- Required: When [trigger], roll the dice and add your [modifier].
- Optional: On a hit, [effect].
- Required: On a 10+, [effect].
- Required: On a 7-9, [effect].
- Optional: On a miss, [effect].

Passive Moves
- Required: When [trigger], [effect].

Triggers

Choose one of these triggers.
- The character does something. Examples: strike a blow [basic], transform into an animal [magician], create beauty [princess], see the truth [magic item]
- The character does something under special circumstances. Examples: perform a feat of fable [basic], stay out of harm's way [child], grant true love's first kiss [prince], draw the sword from the stone [magic item]
- Special circumstances exist. Examples: live to tell the tale [basic], handy with trinkets [hero], fabulously wealthy [princess], great fortune [magic item]
- The character gains the move. Examples: royalty [princess], fearsome [villain], mount [wee one], travelling to the moon [magic item]

Modifiers

Choose one stat to serve as a modifier.
- Courage. Examples: perform a feat of fable [basic], shield another [hero], break the spell [prince]
- Brawn. Examples: threaten harm [basic], roar [wild animal], try to breakout [adversary]
- Cunning. Examples: tell a tall tale [basic], play hide and sneak [child], talk in circles [domestic animal]
- Wisdom. Examples: cast a spell [basic], curse [villain], master of the jinni [magic item]
- Popularity. Examples: live to tell the tale [basic], charm another [prince], summon [princess]
- Wealth. Examples: bargain [basic]

Effects

Choose one or more effects that will occur.
- Substitute stats. Examples: nimble [fairy], wise through others [prince], tiny [wee one]
- Alter another move. Examples: repetitive [child], free from sickness and death [land of Oz], slow but steady [domestic animal]
- Gain wealth. Examples: golden [domestic animal], handy with trinkets [hero], fabulously wealthy [princess]
- Increase a stat. Examples: world famous [princess], the mold [wild animal]
- Add a tag. Examples: simple at heart [domestic animal], wild at heart [wild animal], armies of Oz [land of Oz]
- Change magic items. Examples: bargain [basic], test fate [basic], owner of an infamous weapon [villain]
- Choose a cost. Examples: perform a feat of fable [basic], brave danger [prince], hide in plain sight [child]
- Inflict harm. Examples: threaten harm [basic], strike a blow [basic]
- Heal or avoid harm. Examples: live to tell the tale [basic], stay out of harm's way [child], create beauty [princess]
- Change boon tokens. Examples: eternal child [child], slow but steady [domestic animal], born of the fairy court [fairy court]

- Choose results. Examples: strike a blow [basic], create beauty [princess], call upon the fae [fairy court]
- Get answers. Examples: ponder fate [basic], consult an oracle [land of Oz]
- Alter the fiction. Examples: perform a feat of fable [basic], cast a spell [basic], friends [child]
- Mark experience. Examples: small troubles [wee one], call of the wild [the wild], cursed form [prince]
- Alter behavior. Examples: tell a tall tale [basic], command [princess], charm another [prince]

Some Examples

The following examples illustrate the parts used in creating a custom move.

Adversary

Here's a custom move for the Jabberwocky as an adversary that makes physical combat against the monster more difficult.

Behead the Beast [Jabberwocky]
- Active: When you harm the Jabberwocky (the character does something under special circumstances), roll the dice and add your Courage.
- On a 10+, you behead the Jabberwocky (inflict harm).
- On a 7-9, you inflict the harm as normal (inflict harm).
- On a miss, your blow rebounds off the thick hide of the creature (heal or avoid harm).

Magic item

The hourglass of death might have a custom move to represent it's importance or power. This move both encourages the bearer to dwell around death and empowers them with extra boon tokens.

Death's Timekeeper [hourglass of death]
- Passive: When someone is killed near you (special circumstances exist), gain 1 boon token (change boon tokens).

Expanding a storybook

This move was dropped from the Child storybook, but could still be used.

Armored by Innocence [child]
- Passive: When you take this move (the character gains the move), you are treated as having mundane armor 3 (add a tag).

New storybook

Here's an idea for a move for the powerful Elemental storybook. Elementals represent the very fabric of the universe personified and are often dangerous opponents.

Deadly [elemental]

- Passive: When you inflict harm (the character does something), add +1 to the harm inflicted (inflict harm).

Situational

This move was prepared in advance for a game featuring mythic and legendary locations such as Mount Olympus. One does not merely walk into Mount Olympus.

Climb to the Peak [custom]
- Active: When you climb Mount Olympus (the character does something), roll the dice and add your Brawn.
- On a hit, you reach the Realm of Olympus (alter the fiction).
- On a 10+, you are welcomed to the realm of the gods (alter behavior).
- On a 7-9, you are challenged at the gates of Olympus and must prove your worth in one of the following ways (choose a cost):
    - fight a gate guardian in single combat in the arena
    - offer proof of your divine blood
    - beat a gate guardian in a contest of riddles
    - offer a fabulous treasure (wealth 3)

Passing time

After a prolonged break, you may want to prepare special moves for your players to find out what happened in the interim. This move is designed for a Villain who is a real estate tycoon.

Check my Portfolio [Jamie Hook]
- Active: When the session begins (special circumstances exist), roll the dice and add your Cunning.
- On a 10+, real estate is booming and you have 3 extra wealth points to throw around this session (gain wealth).
- On a 7-9, the real estate market is doing fairly well and you have 1 extra wealth point to throw around this session (gain wealth).
- On a miss, the real estate market is struggling and your finances are all tapped out (alter the fiction). You can't possibly make any bargains this session (alter another move).

Making the Game More Deadly

If you would like the game to be more deadly, where fights end up bruising both parties, consider making these changes:
- Avoiding serious harm always means -1 harm.
- Heart tokens heal at a rate of 1 per session.

Alternates to Popularity

Some groups may find that Popularity doesn't match up with the characters they want to play. Popularity defines the immortality and fortitude of PCs based on the familiarity of their tales. Well known fairytales are rewarded for being famous. This might not work if you want to create

your own characters, or if you want to run a game where the PCs aren't really legendary. You may want to start at the beginning of a fairytale's story. You may even want to mix and match, allowing each player to choose which version they will use.

If you use one of the alternatives below, replace any reference to Popularity with your chosen alternate. For example, players should roll the chosen alternate stat when trying to live to tell the tale.

Destiny

The ability to achieve greatness, making a name for yourself that will last through the ages. Replace the Popularity section of each storybook with the following:

Destiny

Everyone tries to name one deed that will make you famous.
- If no one can name anything, your Destiny is -1.
- If one person can name something, your Destiny is 0.
- If at least half can name something, your Destiny is +1.
- If everyone can name something, your Destiny is +2.

The deeds named can be familiar parts of your tale, or they can be invented on the spot. They can be good or bad; simple or complex. You may live to see your fate become legend, or you may come to find that your destiny is out of reach.

Examples of destiny

- Snow White will destroy the Evil Queen.
- John Darling will break the curse over Neverland.
- Ye Xian will marry the Prince and live in a fabulous castle.
- Captain Hook will lose a hand to Peter Pan.
- The Ungrateful Dwarf will be eaten by a great bear.

Obligation

The ability to focus on a higher calling, putting your responsibilities to others before yourself. Replace the Popularity section of each storybook with the following:

Obligation

You may name one duty that you hold to each other PC.
- If you do not name any duties, your Obligation is -1.
- If you name a duty to one other PC, your Obligation is 0.
- If you name a duty to at least half of the PCs, your Obligation is +1.
- If you name a duty to everyone, your Obligation is +2.

The duties named can be specific or general. Mark experience when your obligations cause you difficulty.

Examples of obligation

- Miss Thursday must keep Mario safe.
- Princess Ozma must mentor Miss Gale in the magical arts.
- Wesley serves Koi as his guardian.
- Nick follows his family's tradition of hunting werewolves.
- Merlin must not speak of the secrets of the Order to outsiders.

An Alternate Cast a Spell

You may want some more concrete mechanical options for the spells created with the Cast a Spell move. If so, consider replacing the basic and advanced moves with the alternate versions below. The exact fiction of the spell, such as how it is cast, what ingredients are required, and ultimately what form the magic takes is still up to the player. Stunning another could mean turning them to stone. Warding a location against ghosts might involve a circle of salt.

Counterspell should still work as written, but you can use the results below for ideas on altering the duration, target or effects.

Cast a Spell

You only gain access to spells if it says so in your Storybook. When you want to Cast a Spell, roll the dice and add your Wisdom. On a hit, your spell is cast. On a 10+, choose 3 results from the list below. You may pick the same result multiple times. On a 7-9, choose 1 result from the list below.
- Inflict 1 magical harm (as magical weapon 1)
- Inflict harm as a small band
- Stun another (as magical weapon stun)
- Heal 1 heart token on yourself or another
- Recover another from stun
- Grant yourself or another protection from harm (as magical armor 1)
- Grant yourself or another 1 boon token
- Take a boon token from another
- Ward a location against others
- Trap another in a warded location
- Break a warded location
- Exorcise a spirit or demon from another
- View another location or time
- Your spell lasts for multiple scenes

Advanced Move

On a 12+, choose 3 results from the basic list and 1 result from the advanced list below.
- Your spell is permanent
- Remove a temporary curse
- Remove a temporary transformation
- Transform another into an animal
- Inflict harm as a plentiful band

Ask your narrator if this advanced move is available.