



## FAERIE LANDS

仙境 SENKYŌ

**domains** Mounts Kurama, Hira, Akiha, Hiko, Ueno, Ōmine, Fuji, Takao, and Iizuna  
**join the faeries if ...** you want to represent natural grace and mystery

### IN THE COURT OF THE GOBLIN KING

The character 仙, the “sen” in “senkyō,” has several meanings. In Chinese, it refers either to a fey or celestial being, or to an immortal who cultivates their conduct in the wilderness—typically a Daoist internal alchemist of some kind. In a Japanese context, the Daoist becomes the enlightened mountain ascetic who practices 修験道 shugendō (literally “the way of discipline and trials”), an esoteric religion

which combines Japanese folk practices such as Shintō with Thunderbolt Vehicle Buddhism. These ascetics are called “disciplined and tested ones” (修験者 shugenja) or “those who prostrate themselves in the mountains” (修験者 yamabushi). So “immortal country” might be just as good a translation as “faerie land,” but the term implies both, intertwined in the wilderness.

The faerie lands’ inhabitants are diverse, strange, and often dangerous. The humans who climb the mountains in search of religious enlightenment may expect to be surrounded by talking animals with good or bad intentions, mischievous forest goblins, and all manner of bizarre monsters and spirits. In these regions, authority is rare, but some point to the Great Goblins who live atop certain mountains, demonic fae who have pursued shugendō as assiduously as any human, in hopes of a better rebirth or an escape from the prison of reincarnation.

How did you end up here? You could have been born in the mountain wilderness as a fey or demonic being, as a result of pride and misbehavior in a previous life. You could have decided to practice shugendō, either alone or part of a small community. Or, you could have run away from some political enemy or personal scandal and found a home in a mountaintop sanctum or a goblin king’s court. You might even be seeking magical or martial power in the form of an ascetic miracle-worker or a goblin fencing master. Cruel and mischievous fae are also known to spirit children away to the faerie lands, not even bothering to leave a changeling in their place, and only returning them once their experience among the faeries and immortals of the wilderness has forever changed them.

## MINAMOTO NO YOSHITSUNE, THE TRAGIC HERO

Of all the humans who ran away into the faerie wilderness, most famous of all is Minamoto no Yoshitsune. Born to the Minamoto clan, one of the first clans of warrior aristocracy to challenge the primacy of courtly nobility in the Heian era, Ushiwakamaru (as he was called in his childhood) spent his childhood on the run as an imperial succession crisis engulfed many of the most prominent families. He eventually wound up among the monks of Mount Kurama, under the tutelage of the goblin king Sōjōbō. The old demon trained him in the military and academic arts, preparing him for success later in life as the Minamoto clan’s hero during the Genpei War. Yoshitsune’s bodyguard, the ogre-like warrior monk Saitō Musashibō Benkei, joined the young man after Yoshitsune bested him in a famous duel. They remained best friends through the war, and then through Yoshitsune’s subsequent betrayal at the hands of Minamoto no Yoritomo, his own half-brother. Benkei famously gave his life fighting Yoritomo’s entire army as Yoshitsune died by seppuku. The two men are the subject of countless fictional representations as the best-loved heroes of the twilight of the Heian era.

## BUILDING CHARACTER

The three Faerie Lands special moves represent three important aspects of the Faerie Lands: strange creatures such as shapeshifting monsters; mysterious natural surroundings; and a folktale-style relationship with other humans, where kindnesses and insults are repaid in kind as in the stories of the Crane Wife, the Peach Boy, and others. With the third one, I like to give my help a fey or supernatural flavor if I can.

The most traditional role pairings for this allegiance are, of course, the Warrior Monk and the Summoner. A Faerie Secret Agent is also a good way to represent certain ninja from Japanese folklore, cartoons, and comics. The downloadable Fox playbook on the Galileo Games website also matches well with this allegiance, of course; even if you don’t use it, the special moves may be well worth borrowing with an advance.

## TO PLAY A FAERIE ...

- See every moment as an opportunity for enlightenment or mischief

- Punish the prideful, hypocritical, and greedy
- Rely on the natural world as your guide and ally

## NAMES

Choose a two-character name from the law names list.

## RINGS

Add one to void and one to water, fire, or wind. Subtract one from earth.

## SPECIAL MOVES: CHOOSE ONE TO START

- ☐ 空 **Shapeshifter** You are a shapeshifting goblin-creature yourself. You have an animal form that looks like a slightly odd version of an animal (commonly a raptor, cat, raccoon dog, weasel, or spider, though Japanese myth abounds in options); a human form, which retains a single subtle animal feature of your choice; and a half-human, half-animal form, human-sized but with many animal features, versatile but terrifying.  
When you change your form and you have time and peace, you may do so freely. When you change your form quickly or under stress, roll with void. On a hit, you succeed. On a 10+, you may shift one point from one ring to another when you do (no more than +2, no less than -2). On a 7-9, you must shift one point. On a miss, you're trapped in the form you neither started in nor wanted to wind up in; you may not shift again until you either see a sunrise or sunset, whichever happens first, or you increase Self by one.
- ☐ 風 **Spider's Web Forest** When you vanish into natural surroundings to conceal yourself from others, roll with wind—with advantage if you're completely in an animal form as per SHAPESHIFTER. On a hit you blend into the wilderness and are invisible until you exit the area. Should you have companions or a section with you, they can hide alongside you if there's enough space. On a 10+ choose one.
  - The location is perfect for an ambush or sniper attack
  - Anyone who ventures into the area where you hide is overcome with fear
  - The cover is extensive, allowing you to move to another useful location
  - The terrain is overgrown and rough, impeding or ensnaring others who aren't with you
  - A helpful spirit, friendly to you, is around here
  - The area is breathtakingly beautiful; you might want to bring a date here
- ☐ 取 **Reap What You Sow** When someone changes the result of your roll by INDULGING THEIR ATTACHMENT to you, write down the number from your final roll next to their name. Afterward, when you help or interfere with that same person, instead of rolling to INDULGE YOUR ATTACHMENT you may turn their result into a number you have written down, then erase that number. No one else can change the roll any further, but your target can apply +forward as normal.

## MATÉRIEL: CHOOSE EITHER THIS, OR THOSE FROM YOUR ROLE

You have a single bizarre weapon. It is both awesome and cursed. Name it and answer any questions the other players have for you about where, how, and from whom you got it. Give it one strength ...

- ☐ It can transform at your command between three different hand weapon forms (for example “axe, shield, and musket”)
- ☐ Targets wounded by the weapon glow with unearthly light and emit freaky sounds until they're next wounded; the next person to attack them takes +1 forward
- ☐ The striking surface is made of pure magic; you may roll with void to fight with this weapon in SINGLE COMBAT

- ☐ When the weapon is out of your hand, you can summon it at will, and it will rush to your grip with the speed of a stooping hawk from wherever it is; if something heavy blocks it, you intuit its location and where it's stuck
- ☐ Its movements command an element; when you wield it, on a hit you can knock your foe back with a football-sized blast of your chosen element, or create a door-sized shield of that element
- ☐ Bearing the weapon grants you the ability to command all members of a certain species of non-human animal in a scene as if they're your section—you may roll with void to do so; if you roll a miss they rise in revolt against you until you leave the scene

... and one fascinating idiosyncrasy ...

- ☐ The weapon inflames your passions. While you carry it on your person, take +1 to all rolls to RESIST OR INDULGE YOUR ATTACHMENT.
- ☐ It's obvious. When it's drawn, it manifests a supernatural appearance, smell, or sound that makes you and it extremely conspicuous to everyone within a kilometer: examples include screaming and roaring in demonic voices, an eye-watering brimstone stench, or smoldering with cold fire and violet smoke which rise high into the heavens even if you throw a blanket over it.
- ☐ It has opinions of its own, expressed as a voice in your head. Write it in as a new attachment; you may have to RESIST OR INDULGE YOUR ATTACHMENT not to do what it wants. If you roll and get a hit, while you're doing what it wants, you exhibit obvious supernatural vibes of the GM's choice. If you obsess over it, direct your attention to Possession (*Thousand Arrows* p. 184).
- ☐ The weapon craves blood and pain. After you draw it, you can't put it away unless you either wound an enemy, or wound yourself and increase Self by one.
- ☐ It's fused to your body somehow. You might have a giant scythe blade for a hand, a whiplike tail with a thagomizer, or a mouth full of tusks and fangs. Whatever it is, it takes a LOT of work to hide it under clothing or a mask or whatever—like, enough that someone looking at you will probably think “what the hell are you wearing?” even if they can't see your arm arquebus.
- ☐ Choose a category of beings: humans of a certain family, class, or nation of origin in your spheres; animals with a certain quality such as gills, scales, or wings; or supernatural creatures. Your weapon cannot harm such beings, and as long as it's on your person you are at permanent disadvantage to act against them. That probably won't come up, though, right?

You may spend an advance to imbue the weapon with an additional strength.

## SECTION: CHOOSE ONE OF THESE, OR THOSE FROM YOUR ROLE

**12 Goblins** Swords (any kind). Bird, human, and in-between forms. Matchless fencers. Screwballs.

**12 Anchorites** Quarterstaves or muskets, short swords. Religious. Stealthy. Wilderness survival training.

## RECOMMENDED DRIVES

**Faith** or **Play**.