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The Wolf-King's Son
—A Coming-of-Age Story

Under Hollow Hills

Presents

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With an unannounced appearance by

- THE ONE THE ONLY •

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No Other Like It Under the Hollow Hills

The Wolf King's Son: a Coming-of-Age Story

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a lumpley game



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The Wolf King's Son

A Coming-of-Age Story

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The Wolf King's Son



You are the Wolf King's Son, for good and bad. Your father is the Wolf King of Winter. You left his court with hard words and now you're on your own.

One day, you'll find yourself in the Boondoggle Hob's Circus Astounding, the traveling circus under the Hollow Hills. On that day, you'll make choices that will cast your whole future. What you'll become, we won't know until then.

Meanwhile, today, you're on your own, afoot, in fairyland.

The Game

You play the Wolf King's Son.

The object of the game is to throw yourself into situations, to try on roles, and perhaps to discover both the core and the boundaries of your self. You might not be able to do it, though, because selves are never concrete, and how can you find the core and the boundaries of what has no boundaries and no core?

Before the game starts, print out your character sheet, the Volunteer's Guide, and "A Wolf's-Eye View of Fairy-land."

Follow the rules below to create your character.

Play in "sessions," each an episode or encounter along your way, a single opportunity to throw yourself into something, try on a role, and feel for the limits of your self.

For each session, you'll need two friends to volunteer to play against you. Their job is to take the part of fairyland and the people and things you encounter there, and to help you get yourself into trouble in any way that they can.

Between sessions, update your resources and keep track of what you've lost or gained. Your journey ends when you find the fairy circus, but the game ends only when you've played it as much as you care to and decide to stop.

The Wolf King's Son

Your Name:

& Pronouns:

Your Summer & Winter Imagery:

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Your Plays:

☐— *Confront Someone*
(and maybe *Resort to Violence*)

☐— *Slip Away*

☐— *Fall in Love with Someone*

☐— *Sniff the Wind*

☐— *Get Someone's Story Out of Them*

☐— *Tear Someone Apart*

☐— *Open Up to Someone*

☐— *Trust Your Instincts*

☐— *Size Someone Up*

Your Trappings:

•

•

•

•

Your Marked Danger:



Part I: Creating Your Character



Your Name & Pronouns

Your name, in fairy-tale tradition, is “The Wolf King’s Son.”

Your pronouns for now are “he, him, his.”

You are a fairy, and innately a shapeshifter, and gender is a game you play. Still, for reasons of his own, your father, the Wolf King of Winter, was set in his gendered ways, and taught you that you, too, are a man.

Whether he was correct or not, you haven’t yet learned.

So for now, until you discover otherwise in the bounds and the core of your self, you use “he, him, his,” if only out of habit.

Your Summer Imagery

Choose 3 of the following Signs of Summer. List them under “Summer & Winter Imagery” on your character sheet.

- ☞ *I am arrestingly beautiful.*
- ☞ *My smile is warm and friendly.*
- ☞ *A sweet breeze blows.*
- ☞ *I go on bare feet and bare-headed.*
- ☞ *The moon is huge and golden.*
- ☞ *An orchard, in gorgeous blossom.*
- ☞ *The sun casts pools of light.*
- ☞ *A berry bramble, in gorgeous fruit.*
- ☞ *A sudden thunderstorm, thrilling.*
- ☞ *A shirt open at the throat.*
- ☞ *My hands are beautiful.*
- ☞ *A colorful silk vest.*
- ☞ *I don’t know how handsome I am.*
- ☞ *I have a young man’s beard.*

During play, sometimes misfortune will make you erase a Sign of Summer and replace it with a Sign of Winter. This isn’t permanent.

Your Plays

On your journey, you'll encounter any number of people, creatures, and situations outside of your control. You can either submit to their whims, or else try to play them somehow.

The vocabulary is:

- ☞ *I'm making a play for it.*
- ☞ *Here's how I'm going to play them.*
- ☞ *I'm playing it safe.*
- ☞ *I'm looking for my best play here.*

It's your job to look for opportunities to make a play, and to take them!

Your Plays' Scores

When you make a play during a session, roll a six-sided die and add your score for the play. A sum of 5 or more is a strong play. A sum of 4 or less is a weak play.

In play and between sessions, you change your plays' scores, but to begin the game they are:

- +0 *Confront someone (and maybe resort to violence)*
- +1 *Fall in love with someone*
- +0 *Get someone's story out of them*
- 1 *Open up to someone*
- +2 *Size someone up*
- +1 *Slip away*
- +2 *Sniff the wind*
- 1 *Tear someone apart*

You can also simply plunge ahead, or go along with someone or with some developing situation, *trusting your instincts* to see you through safely and on your feet. When you do this, roll +1. Your instincts for self-preservation are very good.

Your Trappings

Choose 2 of the following and list them under “Trappings” on your character sheet. These are things that belong to you.

- ☞ *A bronze knife, sharp and useful, with this additional virtue: it can cut through any chain.*
- ☞ *A sheepskin to wrap yourself in to sleep or to go among sheep.*
- ☞ *A sack of food, smoked meat and hard bread, for you don't know whose hospitality will be open to you.*
- ☞ *A hunter's bow and seven arrows fledged with ducks' feathers. None are enchanted, for the virtue of an arrow is in the hunter's skill.*
- ☞ *A short bronze sword stolen from your father's armory.*
- ☞ *Fine clothing, in fact princely clothing, closed up magically inside a swan's egg inside a padded birchbark cannister.*

Once you've chosen your trappings, you're ready to begin the game!



Part II: Playing the Game



Starting A Session

Find two friends who'll volunteer to play against you. Pass them copies of the Volunteers' Guide and a copy of the Wolf's-Eye View.

They can be different volunteers each time you play. It's your responsibility to teach them how to play and tell them any points of continuity that you want them to know.

Choose a Starting Circumstance. For the first few sessions, choose from the list below. After you've played a few times, you can make up your own.

Tell your volunteers about your starting circumstance. Ask them what you see and hear, and answer any clarifying questions they have for you.

Ask and answer back and forth, and as soon as you can, make a play. If none are obvious, try *sniff the wind* or, if you've met someone, *get someone's story out of them*.

The Basics of the Game

1. Ask your volunteers what you see and hear. Ask them who's present, what they're doing, and what's going on.

Answer your volunteers' questions in turn, if they happen to have any.

2. Say what you do, and ask your volunteers what happens.

The basic interaction of the game is:

You say what you do.

Ask your volunteers what happens.

- ☞ *"I climb a tree. What can I see from up here?"*
- ☞ *"I watch the woodcutter from the treeline. What does she do?"*
- ☞ *"I tuck the rabbit gently into my shirt for warmth. What does it do?"*
- ☞ *"I curl up in the hay and go to sleep. When do I wake up? What wakes me?"*
- ☞ *"I'm not afraid of him, I'm curious, so I stand my ground. What does he do?"*
- ☞ *"Well, okay then, I get to work chopping firewood. Can I chop it all? Does anything stop me?"*

3. Make your play.

Going back and forth asking and answering questions is fine for as long as you want to do it, but making plays drives the game and gives both you and your volunteers more to work with.

Your volunteers aren't responsible for knowing your plays or prompting you to make one. That's all on you. Learn your plays so you can actively seek out and create opportunities to make them.

When you choose your play, choose freely, remembering that your goal is to discover the core and boundaries of your self, not necessarily to prevail.

You can also bring your Summer & Winter Imagery and your Trappings into play, along similar lines.

Ending a Session

Either you or your volunteers can end the session any time for any reason. Don't worry about how abrupt it might be.

The object of the game is for you to throw yourself into situations, try on roles, and discover both the core and the boundaries of your self. You can use this as an outline for a session, when it happens to work out that way. Have you thrown yourself into a situation? Have you tried on a role? Then you can end the session now, or else keep playing, trying to find a core or a boundary of your self.

At the end of the session, if you marked danger during the session but haven't resolved it, resolve it now. See "Resolving Marked Danger," below.

Between Sessions

Between sessions, choose as many of the following as you want, and do them.

- ☞ If you have no Signs of Summer and three Signs of Winter, add +1 to your score to *tear someone apart*.
- ☞ Erase a Sign of Winter and replace it with a Sign of Summer. You can choose the same one you lost, or a new one. If you don't have any Signs of Winter, naturally don't choose to do this.
- ☞ Keep something from the past session as a new trapping. If you already have four trappings, choose one to lose or abandon, replacing it with the new one.
- ☞ Reassign your plays' scores by 1 or 2 points. Take 1 from one play's score and add 1 to another's, one time or two times. You can push a play's score up to +3, or down to -1, no higher or lower.
- ☞ Change your name and/or your pronouns.
- ☞ Read up on the rules to make sure you aren't missing out on anything for next time.
- ☞ Tweet or toot, blog or vlog, or otherwise talk online about your adventures so far, using the hashtag #WolfKingsSon.



Summary



- ☞ You're the Son of the Wolf King of Winter. You left his court with hard words and now you're on your own in fairyland.
- ☞ You have Signs of Summer, Signs of Winter, Trappings you own, and Plays you can make.
- ☞ The object of the game is to throw yourself into situations, to try on roles, and perhaps to find the core and the boundaries of your self.
- ☞ To play, you need two volunteers to play against you. It's your job to tell them everything they need to know. Give them copies of the Volunteers' Guide and the Wolf's-Eye View.
- ☞ The basic order of the game is:
Ask your volunteers what you see and hear and what's going on;
Tell your volunteers what you do and ask them what happens;
Actively seek opportunities to make your plays;
Bring your Summer & Winter Imagery and your Trappings into play too.
- ☞ Play the game in sessions. Open a session with a starting circumstance and end it whenever you choose.
- ☞ Between sessions, you can change your character in a number of ways, if you want to.
- ☞ Play as many sessions as you want!



Part III: Your Character in Action



Using Your Summer & Winter Imagery

The general rule is that you say what you do, and ask your volunteers about what you see and hear, who's here, what they do, and what happens. The exception is, whenever you want, you're allowed to assert a Sign of Summer or Winter instead of asking.

- ✧ Instead of asking your volunteers what the weather is like, you can tell them that there's a sudden thunderstorm, dramatic and thrilling.
- ✧ Instead of asking them about the path you're on, you can tell them that it takes you through an orchard in gorgeous blossom.
- ✧ When you look out a tower window, instead of asking them what you see, you can tell them that you see the moon rising huge and golden.
- ✧ When you walk up to a troll on a bridge, instead of asking them how it responds to you, you can tell them that you're arrestingly beautiful and for now it's just staring at you.

You can also use your Signs of Summer or Winter as though they were trappings, as follows.

Using Your Trappings

To use your trappings, just say what you do and ask your volunteers what happens, as always.

If you use your trappings to make a play — if you put on your princely clothing to confront a Lord of Fairy, for instance, or if you use your bronze knife to tear someone apart — then you can ask your volunteers for a +1 to your roll. It's up to them whether they give it to you.

Marking Danger & Signs of Winter:

Some of your plays, when they go poorly, have you mark danger.

When you mark danger, don't interrupt play to resolve it at once. Instead, the next time you have a minute, perhaps at the end of the session, for each marked danger, erase one of your Signs of Summer and replace it with a Sign of Winter instead:

- ☞ *A heavy gray rain.*
- ☞ *A sudden, driving snowstorm.*
- ☞ *A dead garden.*
- ☞ *An orchard of thorns and poison trees.*
- ☞ *I'm shivering and shuddering with cold or fever.*
- ☞ *My hands are bruised, battered, chapped, swollen.*
- ☞ *I have a wild, trapped look in my eyes.*
- ☞ *My scowl is proud and unwelcoming.*
- ☞ *A raw hide wrap, stiff with blood.*
- ☞ *I have a skinny, hungry look.*
- ☞ *I realize how handsome I must be.*
- ☞ *Or something else along these lines, suitable to your bad experience.*

This resolves your marked danger, so erase it now.

If you've replace all your Signs of Summer with Signs of Winter, keep marking danger and resolving it. Just replace one Sign of Winter with another.

Making Your Plays

Confronting Someone and maybe Resorting to Violence

To **confront someone**, tell them frankly what's wrong and what they should do about it, then roll. This includes defending yourself from an attack.

On a **strong play of 5 or more**, have your volunteers choose one of the following.

- ☞ *They back down and do what I want them to.*
- ☞ *They reconsider and take to their heels.*
- ☞ *They defy me to my face and press on.*

On a **weak play of 4 or less**, have your volunteers choose 1 of the following instead.

- ☞ *They smack me down and I can't do anything to stop them. I mark danger.*
- ☞ *They laugh at me and casually dismiss me. I mark danger.*
- ☞ *They stall, explain, justify themselves, bargain with me, pass the buck, or otherwise prevaricate.*

Whatever the outcome, ask your volunteers for any details you want to know.

Resorting to Violence

If you confront someone and they defy you, or if you roll a weak play and don't like how it turns out, you can choose to resort to violence.

Ask your volunteers whether you should roll with a +3, a +2, a +1, or a -1. Tell them that, to decide, they should weigh your violent capabilities against your enemy's. Roll and add the bonus or penalty they give you.

On a **strong roll of 5 or more**, have your volunteers choose one of the following.

- ☞ *I gain the upper hand and they flee.*
- ☞ *I gain the upper hand and they submit to my mercy.*
- ☞ *I hurt or frighten them badly and they flee.*
- ☞ *I'm able to hold them off until [X] happens.*

On a **weak roll of 4 or less**, mark danger, and they gain the upper hand over you. Ask your volunteers whether they beat you and leave you for dead, take you captive, drive you away, or what.

Falling in Love with Someone

Fall in love whenever you want, with anyone you choose, and you can always fall in love again with someone you've already fallen in love with. Roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, choose 1 of the following:

- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you suddenly, visibly blush and become tongue-tied, and ask them what happens.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you speak up or step up with transparently false bravado. Tell them what you say or do, and ask them what happens.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you retreat awkwardly and go off by yourself. Tell them what you do then and ask them what happens.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you become nervously silly and do something clownish. Tell them what you do, and ask them what happens.
- ☞ Choose for yourself how falling in love makes you act. Tell your volunteers what you do, and ask them what happens.

On a weak play of 4 or less, the sudden rush of emotion, which you can't identify or understand, frightens you. Mark danger, and decide for yourself whether you can control your fear. If you can, choose one of the above, or else do nothing. If you can't, do or say something that you think will frighten, put off, or insult the one you've fallen in love with, and ask your volunteers how they react.

Getting Someone's Story Out of Them

To **get someone's story out of them**, you have to talk to them and draw them out, watch them for a while, or study the clues, so get yourself into a position where you can do it. Roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, tell your volunteers that you're able to get to the truth, and ask them: what's their story? They have to tell it to you and answer your questions about it.

On a weak play of 4 or less, tell your volunteers that you're trying to follow their story, but you get distracted or confused by something. You can ask them what distracts or confuses you, or tell them yourself.

Opening up to someone

To **open up to someone**, you need time with them, without urgency or immediate danger, and they must not regard you as their enemy. Once you've confirmed this with your volunteers, roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, pass this list over to your volunteers and have them choose 2 or 3 of the following questions to ask you. Answer them as thoughtfully as you can.

- ☞ *What are you afraid will happen?*
- ☞ *Who do you hope you'll become?*
- ☞ *How do you feel about [X]?*
- ☞ *Who did you think you'd be, who you aren't?*
- ☞ *What would your father expect of you now?*
- ☞ *What do you hope [X] will do?*
- ☞ *What do you wish [X] would ask you about?*

On a weak play of 4 or less, have them choose 1 of the above.

Sizing someone up

When you meet someone, you can **size them up** with a glance. Ask your volunteers what they look like and what they're doing, of course, but if you need to know a little more, roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, ask your volunteers one of the following questions.

- ☞ *How far are they willing to go, and how can I tell?*
- ☞ *What do they think of me, and how can I tell?*
- ☞ *What are they planning to do, and how can I tell?*
- ☞ *Something's off about them. What gives it away to me?*
- ☞ *I notice that they're trying to hide something. What is it?*
- ☞ *Or a question of your own along the same lines.*

On a weak play of 4 or less, ask your volunteers one of the above anyway, but then tell them that they also catch you staring frankly, maybe rudely. Ask them what they do about it.

Slipping away

When you want to *slip away*, or break away and escape, roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, tell your volunteers that you get away clean and, as appropriate, that no one notices your going, or that they lose your trail almost at once. Ask your volunteers whether anyone looks for you, and how long until they give up, and in any case where you are, now that you've given them the slip.

On a weak play of 4 or less, tell your volunteers that you're making a break for it. Ask them whether anyone pursues you. If no one does, you've gotten away, and ask your volunteers where you get away to. If someone does pursue you, though, then mark danger, and now they're chasing you. Ask your volunteers where you're running and how far behind they are. You'll have to figure out how to play it from here.

Sniffing the wind

Whenever you're free to act, you can take a minute to *sniff the wind*. Roll, but whatever you roll, first choose one of the following to ask your volunteers, or else show your volunteers the list and have them choose one to tell you.

- ☞ *I smell amazing food. Which way?*
- ☞ *I hear someone calling for help. Which way?*
- ☞ *Something unusual catches my eye. Which way, and what?*
- ☞ *I hear someone coming. Which way, and how do they sound?*
- ☞ *I smell something terrible. Which way?*
- ☞ *I'm able to hear which way [X] went. Which way?*
- ☞ *I sniff around and in one direction, the air smells fresher, so that's the way I go. Where does it lead me?*
- ☞ *Or a question of your own along the same lines.*

On a strong play of 5 or more, tell your volunteers that it's not a trap, unless it really has to be one, and it's up to them.

On a weak play of 4 or less, tell your volunteers that it's probably a trap, unless there's really no way it can be one, and that it's up to them.

Tearing someone apart

When you attack someone to *tear them apart*, roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, tell your volunteers that your victim has one chance to go limp and submit to you. If they do, you decide whether to tear them apart anyway, or let them live. If they don't, you tear them apart and there's nothing they can do about it.

On a weak play of 4 or less, tell your volunteers that your victim has one chance: go limp and submit to you, break away and flee, or fight back. If they do, they can survive your attack. If they hesitate or falter, you tear them apart.

Trusting your instincts

When someone or something is out of your control and you decide to throw up your hands and go along with it, or when you decide to plunge ahead without any more planning or reservation, you can *trust your instincts* to see you through. Roll.

On a strong play of 5 or more, tell your volunteers that you come out of it okay, on your feet and basically safe or basically successful. Ask them where you are now and what happened to get you here.

On a weak play of 4 or less, mark danger, and tell your volunteers that you can tell it's going badly for you. Ask them where you are and what's happening when you realize it. You can choose whether to make a play now, or leave it on the table and trust to your instincts again.



Part IV: Starting Circumstances



To begin every session, choose a Starting Circumstance. For the first few sessions, choose from the list below. After you've played a few times, you can make up your own.

Tell your volunteers about your starting circumstance. Ask them what you see and hear, and answer any clarifying questions they have for you.

- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come to the River Queen's winter palace, and that her steward meets you at the gate.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by addressing yourself to the River Queen's steward.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come out of the woods on an autumn night into a blowing field, where two goblin mowers are hard at work with sickle and barrow.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by approaching the goblins.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come to the edge of the fairy wood, and are looking out now at the human world: a plain low house with split-wood siding and candles in its windows, a road laid with gravel, a human woman calling her cat in for the night.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by approaching the house.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've followed your path — you thought — into a wet, low place, and now you're wading in mud, and you hear a voice quite nearby.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by deciding whether to answer the voice or keep silent.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come to the fortified house of a fearsome elfin knight, and that the knight's daughter has been watching your approach from her window.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by calling up to the elfin knight's daughter.

- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've taken up companionship on the road with a fox and a stoat, who have been flattering you, and now you've come together to a wide river crossing, and the ferryman's watching you warily.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by consulting with your companions.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that a hunting dog has caught your scent, and is leading a pair of hunters toward you.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by deciding what to do.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you're in the woods, and you hear crying. It's a human child, lost or abandoned here, alone.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by approaching the human child.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that by pure chance, I promise, you've come upon a flock of fairy sheep grazing a hillside, a fairy shepherdess drowsing in the shade of a spreading oak, the whole scene nothing if not delicious.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by deciding how best to approach.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you'd been walking among the ruins of an ancient castle, and a territorial bone-breaker of a Border Goblin caught sight of you and hunted you into a blind hollow. You're cornered and you can smell him coming.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play with the Border Goblin coming into your view.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come unknowing into the domain of the Stag of the Wood, your father's enemy, and that you've realized only just now that you're being paced by a pair of antlered warriors.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by choosing what to do.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've received an invitation from the Water-Lily Queen, to dine and converse with her and her Court of Nymphs.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by entering into the Water-Lily Court.

- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've fallen in with a gallows-ghost, a fearsome being who hunts travelers and rends them soul and mind, and that you're on the hunt with this creature this very night.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by asking what quarry comes near.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you've come to a goblin market on a fairy crossroads, busy, noisy, and wonderful.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by going into the goblin market.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that you're walking in high woods at night, and your path opens upon a beautiful pond, dark and moonlit. Someone else is here, an unlit shape by the water's edge.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by going into the goblin market.
- ☞ Tell your volunteers that a sudden storm has driven you to shelter in a cave, where you find fellow travelers already sheltering.
Take time to ask questions to set the stage, then begin play by approaching your fellow travelers.

Under Hollow Hills

Presents

“ A Wolf’s-Eye View of Fairy-land ”

In Six Parts:

I. Fairy Nobility

II. Dangers to Wolves

III. The Goblin Hosts

IV. Delectables

V. Human-kind in Fairy-land

VI. The Wolf King

COMPOSED & PRESENTED

For the edification of all

by

HIS MAJESTY

The Wolf King of Winter



I.

Here the Nightmare Horse

Dweller in deep water and in the darkness between the stars
Stealer of breath, stealer of hearts
Stayer of hands.

Here the River Queen

Blue-veiled, subtle
With sparkling gems on her cheeks and her lashes.

Here the Stag of the Wood

Crowned with antlers,
Crowned with swords
Fleet and fearless in flight.

Here the Kind Man, tree-tall, mountain-tall

The bear man
The bare man
The healer king.

Here the Chieftain Mouse

Proud Lord of all foodstuffs
Marshal of the clans of supper
The clans of breakfast
The fierce and ferocious midnight snacks.

Here the Harvest Queen

The Prince of the Orchard
The Great Green Reigning Beauty of May
Every Goddess and God of fence and field
Shuddering when Winter comes near.

II.

H ere Boneshoes

Wolf-breaker

Head-cracker

Stalker after skulls and he don't care whose.

Here the Giant's Daughter

Lark-charmer, song-singer

Friend to mouses

In her wolfskin mantle.

Here old Hobbled Hound

Trap-jawed, crooked-foot

Baying like a bronze bell for the God of the Hunt.

Here the Willow Hag

The hole-dweller

The mud-eater

Stealer of cubs and of careless.

Here the old moon-watcher

Undeceived

Unafraid

Layer bare of truth unwelcome

Cat keeper, Crooked Wand.

III.

Here the goblin hosts

The damsel flies
The whisps of the woods
The moon-owls and summer sprites
The nymphs of the gardens
The nymphs of the trees
Jack of the Lantern and Hob of the Gobs
The bent-back ragged man
Japer and jingler
Cat-chasing rafter man
Wee pesky meddler
The riders of rooftops
Weepers by lakeside riverside seaside and well
All the crossroads-gods and all the gallows-ghosts
The Knight of the Thistledown
The rose of the bramble
The Walking Tree and the wizard's live broom
The Stone-troll
The Feather-cloak
And every last capering elf—

Ha!

IV.

Braise of granny

Patience!

Melt the gristle all to satin.

Roasted Red Riding Hood

Done to the turn

Stuffed with cakes, buns, and wild strawberries.

Stewed shank of Peter

With caraway and barley

Mushrooms and sour cream.

Three little chicharrones.

V.

Here the stealer-in and stealer-away
Interloper and thief
Mortal-wise, wicker-wise
Carrying iron in secret.

Here the stolen and Lost
Changeling-child
Thoughtful, careful, walker of roads
Carrying iron by right.

Here the bold intruder
Strider and speaker
Wronged, Seeking right
Carrying iron unhidden and ready.

Here Half-a-Fool
A danger to all
Blunderer in and stumbler upon
Carrying iron and awful good luck.

Here the Messenger
Comer and goer
Opener of doors, shower of ways
Summoner of visions
Wearing ornaments of iron and gold.

VI.

Here the Wolf King of Winter
Here the killing frost
Here his teeth and jaws and yellow eyes
Here the werewolf, the war-wolf
The father of terror and of orphans
Here the chaser of the ragged clouds
the butcher of autumn's harried sun
the ripper of the throat of the year;

Here the witches' wind.

The Wolf-King's Son

♦ Volunteers' Guide ♦

Thanks for volunteering to play with me! Here are the rules.

1. I'm the son of the Wolf King of Winter, on my own in fairyland. My goal in the game is to throw myself into situations, try on roles, and maybe to find the core and the boundaries of my self.
2. You're playing fairyland and all the fairies and things who live there. Your goal is to help me get into trouble in any way you can.
3. Your only duty is to get with the other volunteer and make up answers to my questions.

I'll tell you where I go and ask you who's there and what's going on. I'll tell you what I do and ask you what happens. Sometimes I'll roll dice and ask you really specific questions, sometimes really open-ended ones. Sometimes I'll show you a list and have you choose from it.

If you want to ask me clarifying questions before you answer, please do. I'll answer them.

Otherwise, just give me whatever answer seems like the most fun to you, at that moment!

4. If I haven't asked you a question, you don't have to say anything, you can just wait until I get to it. If it seems like I've lost track and am rambling, you can remind me to ask you questions, if you feel like helping me out.
5. Nothing's true until both you and the other volunteer agree to it. You shouldn't often have any trouble coming to an agreement, but if you want to take the time to talk something over, please do. I'll wait.

The reason that there are two of you, by the way, is so you can trade off and build on each others' ideas. Neither of you have to do all the work.

6. You're doing me a favor just by playing, so you aren't responsible for making it fun for me as well. Make it fun for yourself! Always say things that you, personally, find honestly entertaining.
7. You can end the game whenever you want, for any reason or no reason at all. Don't worry about how abrupt it might be.

At any point, if you stop having fun, don't stick it out, just call an end.

8. Thank you!

You're the best.



The Wolf King's Son



You are the Wolf King's Son, for good and bad. Your father is the Wolf King of Winter. You left his court with hard words and now you're on your own.

One day, you'll find yourself in the Boondoggle Hob's Circus Astounding, the traveling circus under the Hollow Hills. On that day, you'll make choices that will cast your whole future. What you'll become, we won't know until then.

Meanwhile, today, you're on your own, afoot, in fairyland.

The Wolf King's Son is a tabletop role-playing game. It's an episodic coming-of-age story about identity, gender, and making your way in a world wider than your childhood prepared you for.

To play, you'll need this booklet, two friends who'll volunteer to play too, and a six-sided die.

*Meguey & Vincent Baker are the creators of Apocalypse World, Murderous Ghosts, Playing Nature's Year, Psi*Run, Under Hollow Hills, and the Wizard's Grimoire. Visit lumpley.games for more.*

