# The Feather-Cloak

You're shifty kind, and a bird: resourceful, cheerful, busy, graceful, and humble.

In the circus, you can be barker & caller, aerialist & tumbler, lookout, and provisioner. You're always there with advice and gossip.

You might play someone by making them blink, or by serving them tea and honeycakes. You might play a situation by hiding away, or by watching for your chance.

(And your voice it is sweeter than the lark or the linnet or the nightingale at the break of day, belts out the Hob, with no more sense than that.)

# The Feather-Cloak:
a playbook for
# Under Hollow Hills

Large Print Version

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a lumpley game

# The Feather-Cloak

To play the Feather-Cloak, create your name, your summer & winter imagery, your place, your plays, your trappings, and your bindings.

## Your Job

Your job as a player is to:

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

## Your Name

Choose a color and a short name, and combine them in either order.

Examples: Yellow Jo, Bob White, Sallie Blue, Periwinkle Kim.

# Your Summer & Winter Imagery

Choose 1 for summer & 1 for winter: Nests, bracken, sunbeams, mossy stones, willow catkins, little running streams, pine cones, snow storms, red berries, fog, branches clacking in the wind.

Choose 1 for summer & 1 for winter: Bright eyes, dancing eyes, bushy eyebrows, trilling laugh, two-tone hair, soft hair, downy beard, quick body, compact body, spindly limbs, round face, sharp features.

Choose 1 for summer & 1 for winter: Soft gray, golden brown, buttercup yellow, sky blue, copper-flecked black, moss green, leaf brown, glittering black, speckled black and white.

Choose 1 for summer & 1 for winter: Long striped stockings, a velvet hood, many pockets, brass buckles, a cob-web lace gown, a fine shirt with ruffles at the neck, weather-worn rough coat, bright-colored linen vest, drab clothes, neatly cut clothes, sweet-smelling clothes.

Choose 1 for summer & 1 for winter: Mannish, womanish, androgynish, boyish, girlish, childish, queerish, sexy, sexless, charming, forbidding, enticing, unapproachable, —.

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

Choose your pronouns for summer and winter as well.

Example:

| Summer | Winter |
|---|---|
| ● Mossy stones | ○ Pine cones |
| ● Trilling laugh | ○ Compact body |
| ● Copper-flecked black | ○ Leaf brown |
| ● Many pockets | ○ Brass buckles |
| ● Womanish | ○ Girlish |

Begin play in full summer: mark the summer column.

## Your Place

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

## Plays

You can make all of the obvious plays and the Feather-Cloak plays.

Mark +2 next to your choice of three plays, +0 next to two, -1 next to two, and +1 next to all of the rest. These are only your plays' starting rolls; you'll have many opportunities to change them.

Mark: +2, +2, +2, +1, +1, +1, +1, +1, 0, 0, -1, -1

## Trappings

You get all of the listed trappings.

# Bindings

Everybody introduces themselves. On your turn, tell everyone your name, your playbook, your summer imagery, your place in the circus, your wagon, and any of your other trappings you think the others might find noteworthy.

Once everyone's introduced themselves, go around again for bindings. On your turn, ask for volunteers:

- One of you, I once beat in a challenge. Who? I can never again draw you out.
- One of you sheltered me in a time of great danger. Who? I can never put you off or hide away from you.

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

On the others' turns, volunteer as you choose.

# The Feather-Cloak

Name: _____

| Summer | & | Winter |
|---|---|---|
| ○ | | ○ |
| ○ | | ○ |
| ○ | | ○ |
| ○ | | ○ |
| ○ | | ○ |
| Pronouns: | | Pronouns: |

## Place

- Barker & caller;
- Aerialist & tumbler;
- Lookout;
- Provisioner;
- Always there with advice and gossip.

## Plays

- You can make your Feather-Cloak plays. To play someone, you can make them blink; or serve them tea and honeycakes. To play a situation, you can hide away; or watch for your chance.
- You can make all of the obvious plays. To play someone, you can confront them; draw them out; open up to them; put them off; size them up; or waylay them. To play a situation, you can: call for a line; sniff the wind; use your trappings; or weather the storm.

## Trappings

- A small tidy wagon festooned with ivy, pulled by a gentle mare with a little foal gamboling alongside.
- A changeable cloak of real and embroidered feathers, warm and waterproof.
- Neat crates and bundles of useful things: buttons, buckles, ribbons, needles and thread, candles, combs, wire, scissors, sharpening stones, polish, paint, grease, and sweets.
- Teas, teacakes, teapots, cups, and saucers.
- A tiny golden crown: pin it to your cloak and you may go as a bird.
- If you'd like to add any other prostheses, sensory aids, communication aids, or mobility aids, please do:

## Bindings

- I once beat — in a challenge. I can never again draw them out. Who?

- — sheltered me in a time of great danger. I can never put them off or hide away from them. Who?

# Feather-Cloak Plays

## Make Them Blink

## Your Roll: ___

When you make someone blink, roll. On any hit, choose 1 of the following.

- They thought you were one place, but no, you're someplace else.
- They thought they were ready, but no, you've caught them off guard.
- They thought they were paying attention, but no, their attention wandered.
- They thought they had something well in hand, but no, they've lost their grip on it.
- For a second they thought they saw something startling, and it leaves them uncertain. What?
- You really do something or they really see something startling, and it leaves them astonied. What?

On a 10+ hit, however you decide to play it now, take +1 to your roll. On a miss, ask the MC what goes wrong. They might have you choose 1 anyway, but be prepared for the worst. Perhaps they've been onto you all along.

# Serve Them Tea & Honeycakes

## Your Roll: ___

When you serve someone tea and honeycakes, roll. Your magic can help them change their fate. On any hit, they may, as they wish, become invisible until the next setting of the spheres, sun or moon. On a 10+ hit, choose 1 of the following that they may, if they wish, also receive.

- Comfort, calm, and courage.
- Good fortune and increase, up to and including a coming child.
- Progress toward summer.
- Insight into the weakness of their rival or enemy.
- Some favor of the one they name, and if their intended refuses, it's an insult to you, your magic, your tea, and your cakes, all.

On a miss, they choose 1 of the above to receive for themselves, but they do not become invisible.

# Hide Away

## Your Roll: ___

When you hide away, roll. On any hit, no one can find you, no matter how carefully they search, and no trouble alights on you. You choose when to emerge. On a 7–9 hit, choose 1 of the following, though.

- Someone carries you off by accident. Ask the MC where they're taking you.
- The effort to keep so still chills you. Step toward winter.
- You're sharing your hiding place with something small and nosy. Ask the MC what or who.
- You forget what's come before, and emerge with your mind befuddled.

On a miss, you hide between worlds, and when you emerge from your hiding place, you're no longer with the circus. Ask the MC where you are now.

# Watch for Your Chance

## Your Roll: ___

When you watch for your chance, roll. On any hit, choose 1 of the following to tell the MC.

- At the precise moment that — happens, I do —.
- — happens just when I predicted it, and I'm already in motion. I do —.
- Eventually — happens, right? When it does, I do —.
- If — happens, I'm going to notice it or realize it at once. Does it? If it does, I do —, but if it doesn't, I do —.

On a 10+ hit, however you decide to play it next, take +1 to your roll. On a miss, ask the MC what goes wrong. They might have you choose 1 anyway, but be prepared for the worst. Perhaps your very act of watching changes what will happen.

# The Obvious Plays

## To Play Someone

Confront them. Your roll: ____

Draw them out. Your roll: ____

Open up to them . Your roll: ____

Put them off. Your roll: ____

Size them up. Your roll: ____

Waylay them. Your roll: ____

## To Play a Situation

Call for a line. (No roll)

Sniff the wind. Your roll: ____

Use your trappings. (No roll)

Weather the storm. Your roll: ____

# Consequences

## Summer & Winter

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

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

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

## Insults

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

## Beholden

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

## Violence

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

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

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

# Under Hollow Hills

There is a traveling circus under the Hollow Hills.

It travels by moonlight, small wagons creaking in the night silence. It travels lost roads, where fireflies and whisps hover to watch it pass, where goblins peer down from their treebranch perches, and owls. It travels the night world and the day world, fairyland and the living earth, and places otherwise, and no border can keep it. It has mysteries to pose, drama to perform, it has music, juggling, acts of death-defying peril, pratfall comedy. It has dangerous secrets to tell.

Step up, step up. Come great, come small, come revelers all!