

INTRODUCTION

“The progression of human societies follows predictable patterns of rise, decline, and revolution. However, the influence of other planes may lead to erratic outcomes. When immortals dabble in human affairs, the result is never certain.”

– Mordenkainen, forward to ‘The Prime Material Work Ethic and the Spirit of Adventure’

USING THESE BACKGROUNDS

The following backgrounds are inspired by a number of common fairy tale tropes. They can be used in any campaign, but are especially relevant in a setting where the Feywild plays an important role.

FEY-TOUCHED ARTISAN

You come from a family of artisans that is locally renowned for the finest craftsmanship. This reputation may instill respect in some, jealousy in others, but none know the secret behind your prosperity: your family’s success is due to help from the fey.

It may be that one of your ancestors earned a great boon from a fey lady or lord, that your family’s shop happened to be built on a fey crossing, or maybe some fey just took a fancy to you. Whatever the reason, faerie workers visit the shop each night to help craft your family’s wares, producing high quality products that have a glimmer of magic about them.

Your childhood was spent learning as much about the ways of faeries as about the family business. This also kept you somewhat apart from the common concerns of the material plane. Your relationship with other practitioners of your trade may be cordial or may be strained, but your family operated outside the normal craft guilds.

Your decision to become an adventurer may step from a great wanderlust: knowing your whole life that the mysteries of the Feywild were within reach, who could be satisfied with the life of a simple artisan? Alternately, seeing the world or accomplishing a great quest may be part of your apprenticeship into the craft, all the better to

stay in the good graces of the fey whom your family depend on.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Insight

Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan’s tools

Languages: Sylvan

Equipment: A set of artisan’s tools (one of your choice), traveller’s clothes, a pouch containing 20 gp, a metal or ceramic saucer, a candle, and one small, well crafted item from your profession with a minor magical property (never gets dirty, can change color by command, etc.)

BUSINESS

You can choose from the “Guild Business” table from the Guild Artisan background in the Player’s Handbook. You may also choose a more peculiar business from the “Atypical Businesses” table.

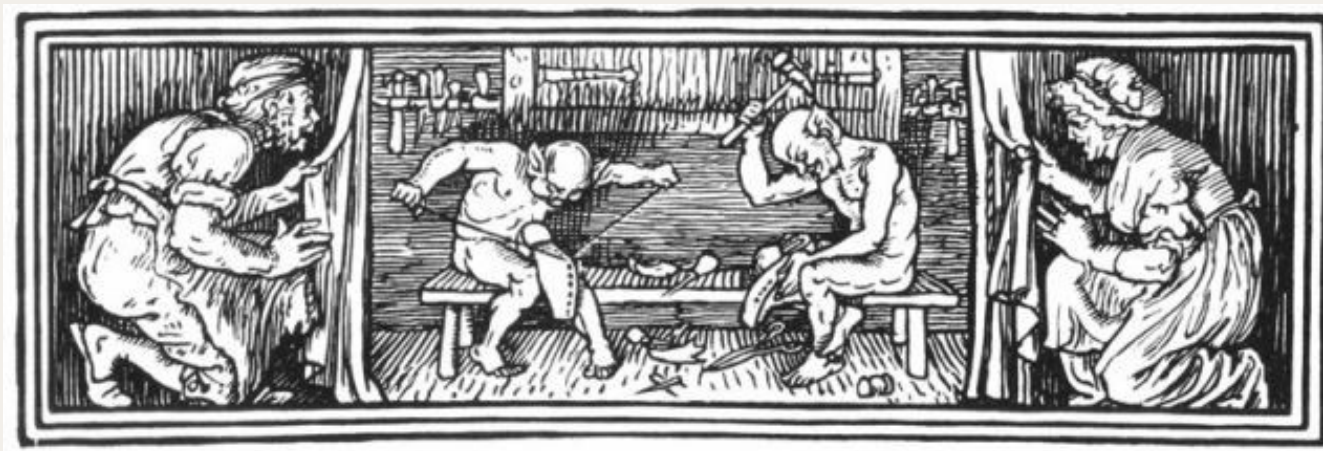
ATYPICAL BUSINESSES

d10 Artisan Business

- 1 Antigropelos Maker (galoshes)
- 2 Belly Builder (pianos)
- 3 Cork Sock Maker (soles of shoes)
- 4 Gummer (saws)
- 5 Nob Thatcher (wig maker)
- 6 Plumassier (ornamental feathers)
- 7 Scagliola Maker (faux marble)
- 8 Schrimpschonger (bone or ivory carver)
- 9 Xylographer (wood block printer)
- 10 Zythepesarist (barley beer boiler)

FEATURE: FEYWILD CONTACTS

You know the proper rituals and offerings to coax a fey creature into the material plane. Each night, you may attempt to get in contact with a minor fey who has a friendly disposition towards you. You may ask the fey for information on magical happenings in the area and its Feywild echo. The fey may ask for some service in exchange, at the DM’s discretion. The minor fey may also be able to help you contact more powerful fey patrons, but such bargains always have a price. The fey will not fight for you, nor will it cast free spells for you. If you do anything to displease a fey you contact with this feature, then other fey may avoid your call for some time into the future.



SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

In an artisan's household, all family members have a part to play in the business. Professional and personal life are not really distinct, so the artisan's craft can have an outsized influence on one's personality. A fey-touched artisan's outlook is also invariably shaped by their regular encounters with the weirdness and whimsy of the Plane of Faerie, and those who see the fey as useful servants or benevolent benefactors will have very different ideals.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

d8 Trait

- 1 I have lots of little rituals I follow during my normal routines. People call me superstitious, but they can't prove it's not effective.
- 2 I like to know how things work, and I can't stand not knowing something.
- 3 I go out of my way to help out my neighbors, both mundane and otherwise.
- 4 People seem to think I have strange ideas, but then again, what's so strange about wanting to live in a house made of meringue?
- 5 I'm resigned to my role in the family business, even though I don't like it.
- 6 When it comes to my lifestyle, I always have to have the best of everything.
- 7 I have a specific way of doing things, and I get easily upset if my routines are disrupted.
- 8 I'm always on the lookout for ways to turn a profit.

IDEALS

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Creativity.** Nothing can be achieved if we don't try something new. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Efficiency.** We can achieve more if there is an order to our actions. (Lawful)
- 3 **Equity.** Everyone deserves a fair chance and no one should go without. (Good)
- 4 **Ruthlessness.** Success comes to those who reach out and take it regardless of the cost. (Evil)
- 5 **Stability.** The status quo is worth keeping. (Neutral)
- 6 **Legacy.** I want to leave a mark on the world for the generations that follow. (Any)

BONDS

d6 Bond

- 1 I'd do anything to ensure my family thrives.
- 2 I may not be in a guild, but I see eye to eye with other artisans.
- 3 I have a connection to a fey crossing and feel constantly drawn into another world.
- 4 I owe the fairies who've helped me and my family, they deserve to receive as much as they give.
- 5 I'm dedicated to my trade and perfecting my work.
- 6 I share a spiritual kinship with all the folk who work with their hands.

FLAWS

d8 Flaw

- 1 I'm a perfectionist, I can't finish a project until it is just right.
- 2 I have a hard time saying no to requests, even if they're far outside my expertise.
- 3 I try to apply my zeal for organization to the lives of others, which is not always appreciated.
- 4 I'm so excited by the next thing that I have problems finishing what I sta...
- 5 I'm impatient with those who can't keep up with me or who don't share my tenacity.
- 6 I'm too hard working, I can never take a break. This can be good for productivity, but it tends to hurt my relationships with others.

HAG TUTORED

You may have known her as granny, or nana, or baba. She may have raised you exclusively, or she may have been a neighbor who took a particular shine to you. Two things are certain: she had a strong impact on your upbringing, and she was a hag.

Your hag mentor taught you many magical secrets about the world. She may have awakened a latent magical ability in you or introduced you to a magical patron. Even if you did not become a magical practitioner, your understanding of the arcane is exceptional, and you've picked up at least one small cantrip.

Hags have a reputation for being evil, but many defy this expectation. Work with your DM to determine why a hag decided to take you in. Was she genuinely goodhearted, or did she think you could benefit her in some way? Did she see great power in your future, or did she just take a shine to you in particular? Remember that even evil characters and monsters usually have loved ones whom they care for and protect.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana or Nature

Languages: One of your choice

Cantrip: You know one of the following cantrips: Mage Hand, Mending, or Minor Illusion. If your class grants cantrips, this does not count against your number of cantrips known for that class.

Equipment: A pouch containing 10 gp, a folk costume of your people, a small tin mirror, a comb and brush, a book of unknown glyphs

FEATURE: MYSTIC RESEARCHER

You are a skilled researcher of arcane mysteries and magical phenomena. When faced with a question of a mystical nature, you know where to go looking for an answer, whether that means referencing an obscure tome from a private collection, speaking with a particular fairy, or visiting a secluded grove on the night of a new moon. Depending on the nature of the question, this may only be the first step on a lengthy adventure.