

FAERY'S TALE

DELUXE



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If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales.
If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.

— Albert Einstein

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Preface

It is not children only that one feeds with fairy tales.

—Ephraim Gotthold Lessing



In 2006, the release of **FAERY'S TALE** introduced thousands to the magical world of the fey. A world of tiny fey heroes fighting on behalf of light and life in the enchanted forest of Brightwood; a world endangered by the malevolent schemes of their dark faery kin.

This deluxe edition presents the original game, and then some—providing us with a rare chance to fine-tune the original text, graphic design, and artwork, plus respond to suggestions from fans for new rules, information, adventures, and references.

So many people, of all ages and from all walks of life, have taken time this year to share with me their enjoyment of **FAERY'S TALE**. In particular, hearing from parents who've chosen it to introduce their children to hobby games has been a magical experience.

Just as in the fairy tales of our youth, the heroes of **FAERY'S TALE** rarely are the biggest or strongest people in the story – in fact, they're often the smallest and weakest of all.

But even the tiniest person can be a hero.

Despite the wondrous powers of the faeries, their heroism springs not from fey magics or incredible gifts, but from courage, kindness, and friendship. And those are gifts which all of us possess.

In a world that often seems clouded by darkness and doubt, those are not bad lessons for people of any age.

Patrick Sweeney
July 10, 2007

About Firefly Games

Based in California, Firefly Games publishes quality family- and child-friendly games providing dynamic fun for all ages. Contact Firefly Games at patrick@firefly-games.com or visit our website at www.firefly-games.com.

About Green Ronin Publishing

Green Ronin Publishing is a Seattle-based company known for its dedication to quality books and games. Founded in 2000, Green Ronin has won more awards for excellence and innovation than any other game company in the new millennium, and took home the coveted ENnie Award for Best Publisher an unprecedented three years running. With great licenses like *Thieves' World* and the *Black Company*, groundbreaking games like *Mutants & Masterminds* and *Blue Rose*, and a roster of top flight designers and illustrators, Green Ronin Publishing is a leading light in the hobby game industry.

A Pixie's Tale



One day in the enchanted forest of Brightwood, under the wide, spreading boughs of the tree everyone calls Father Chestnut, three friends gathered to celebrate the birthday of a fourth. Gimlock the pooka was to be a hundred years old that day and, although among the faery folk a birthday is usually a time for high spirits, prank-playing, and the drinking of sweet dew from tulip-petal cups, his friends knew he would need even more cheering up than usual. Gimlock, you see, was a perpetually gloomy fellow. He had the gift of second sight, but only saw the bad that was about to happen, and never the good.

So his pixie friend Willow brought an acorn stuffed with her magic dust, which could brighten his world in a dozen ways. Katria, a brownie, had cakes of honey and oat, which she'd made from table scraps from the human cottage she lived in. Flynn, a jaunty sprite with eyes as blue as a robin's egg, had forgotten to get Gimlock a gift, but on his way to Father Chestnut had composed a poem about his own exciting adventures, which he was sure would be much more jollying than cakes or pixie dust, as good as those things were.

The three said happy hellos to one another but Gimlock did not show up right away. When he appeared out of the thick weeds and dandelions at the edge of the clearing, his pumpkin-shaped head was held down and his splayed, mismatched toes scuffed the ground.

"Happy birthday!" his friends cried, as if the gathering was a surprise, and had not been prearranged weeks before.

"What's happy about it?" Gimlock moaned. "This bright sunny day shines in my eyes. The cool spring breeze makes me sneeze. And most woeful of all, one of the humans Katria lives with—the little girl—is about to be kidnapped."

"Portia?" cried Katria. "No!"

"Yes," Gimlock mournfully nodded. "By dark faeries and a troll."

Flynn unsheathed his mighty sword, which was made from a sewing needle. "Then we must away, to free the child from her twisted captors!" He smiled at the clarion sound of his own ringing voice.

Gimlock covered his face with his stubby, hairy fingers. "No, no! That's not the worst of it! You will go to rescue her, but you, Willow, will fall into a monster's nest. Katria, you'll be swept away into a raging stream. And you, Flynn, will wind up in a hag's boiling soup pot. So don't..."

He stopped talking, because his friends were gone already.

Willow took the lead, both in talking and running, as she always did. "We can't worry about the dangers!" she said, her flaxen hair flowing behind her as she ran. "We must be brave! Gimlock saw me fall into a monster's nest, but he didn't say that the monster eats me. He said you, Katria, will be swept into a raging stream, but not that you would drown!"

Katria gulped. A homebody, like most brownies, she didn't like the idea of being swept anywhere, let alone into a stream. But Willow was as inspiring as she was personally brave, and Katria suddenly felt infused with the pixie's own confidence and heroism.

"And you, Flynn. He predicted you'll be in a hag's boiling soup pot, but said nothing of winding up in her belly!"

Flynn smiled and brandished his sword. He'd never admit it, but he'd been thinking of turning back, too—just a little.

They came to a dense patch of brambles. Both Katria and Flynn were slowed, held back by reaching thorns. But Willow, who flew on gossamer wings, zipped along without the others. She had to find the girl.

Willow sped through red curtains of sumac leaves, around the dangling paper house of a buzzing hornet colony, and through a floating cloud of dandelion tufts. In no time at all, she reached the clearing on the edge of Brightwood where her brownie friend lived, in the ramshackle cottage of the Oakmede family.

There, she saw exactly what dour old Gimlock had predicted. Portia Oakmede, short golden hair falling around her terrified face, was beset by two dark faeries, as small as Willow herself, and a troll, bigger than a man and dripping with damp moss—a river troll, Willow reckoned. One of the dark faeries was a goblin, a twisted, bulbous-nosed monstrosity with dark, staring eyes. Willow identified the other as a boggart, a corrupted brownie, hunched and greedy-faced.

The goblin jumped and hissed. “Yes, yes, that’s the one! Her father tossed a pitchfork at me. He’ll learn to regret crossing us darkfolk!”

The sight of the frightened child redoubled Willow’s courage. She flashed out of the woods to confront the kidnappers. She was outnumbered, but if she acted as if she could beat them, maybe she could put them to rout. Brightwood’s dark creatures were a cowardly bunch when put to the test. “Put the girl down!” she cried.

The troll grunted and hefted Portia over its sopping shoulder. The boggart bared yellow, sharpened teeth, and scampered into the distance. She dashed to fly at the troll’s face, but was flung from the air by a pebble, which struck her in the back. She landed hard, on the edge of a hole dug into dry and yielding earth.

It was the goblin who’d stoned her. Now, hefting a larger rock in its clawed paw, it rushed at her.

Willow took the present she’d meant for Gimlock from the purse attached to her belt. She blew the acorn lid full of pixie dust onto the goblin. The tension fell from his bestial features; he staggered slowly forward, ensorcelled by her spell.

“You’re no threat to anyone,” she told him.

“Nuh, no,” he stammered. “I’m not.” He grinned stupidly at her, as if she was the prettiest creature in the world. Which she was, or near enough; but, at the moment, that was not the point.

“To tell the truth,” she told him, “you are extremely sleepy.”

“Yuh-yah. I am.”

The goblin yawned.

Tottered.

And fell into Willow, knocking her into the earthen hole.

The goblin fell on top of the hole, sealing her in. Everything went dark. And then there was the soft sound of a slow, determined slither.



Introduction

You are a tiny, magical being who lives in the enchanted forest of Brightwood. You might be a winged pixie cavorting with butterflies, a clever brownie secretly helping a family in a

humble cottage, a sprite knight riding to battle on a buzzing bumblebee, or a wild pooka changing shape into a dog or horse to play a naughty prank. You are a faery.

A World of Enchantment

You live in a wondrous world of toadstool houses, mystic faery rings, loyal animal friends, glittering pixie dust, and astonishing feats of magic.

Leanan, the beautiful Faery Queen, watches over the good faeries. She dwells in a realm outside time and space, where her Fey Court enjoys magnificent feasts, dances, and revels.

Goblins, mean and ugly faeries who cause trouble everywhere they go, are your enemies. These dire faeries are fallen pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas,

who have forsaken good for the power of darkness. Goblins lurk in the gloomy places of the world, spinning nightmares to send to sleeping children. Sluag, the foul Goblin King, rules the dark faeries, who threaten everything bright and good with their sinister schemes.

Fairy tales are more than true: Not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten.

—G.K. Chesterton

You are the secret protectors of the world.

You foil dark faery plots, rescue youngsters from giants, overthrow sorcerous tyrants, awaken princesses from enchanted slumbers, watch over faery godchildren, and have many other amazing adventures. Dancing at festive faery balls, singing mirthful songs, playing clever pranks, or romping with your woodland friends, you also are emissaries of joy.

Most people don't believe you exist. They are too big to see you, and too busy to notice you. But you're always near, forever doing your best to ensure the story ends happily ever after.

In the places no one looks, in the adventures no one knows, you are the tiniest of heroes—and the greatest.

A Storytelling Game

FAERY'S TALE is a storytelling game. You don't just listen to the story, you help tell it.

In a way, you live the story.

One person, the Narrator, describes the world, acts the part of the other characters in the story, and presents challenges to be overcome. The others play the roles of the faeries who are the heroes of the story—you decide what your faery says or does about the events presented by the Narrator.

For example, Miranda plays Buttercup, a brave little pixie. One day in the forest, Buttercup sees some goblins trying to cut down one of her tree friends. Miranda could have Buttercup fly home to get help from other pixies, use her magical pixie dust to scare off the goblins, or do something else. It's up to Miranda; she decides what Buttercup

does. Then the Narrator tells her what happens as a result of her faery's actions, and Miranda can make further choices as the story goes on.

A simple dice pool system provides some structure and a way of deciding what happens when something exciting occurs in the story. These fun, easy-to-learn rules ensure that no one knows what will happen next, yet don't intrude on the story.

Unlike a board or card game, there are no winners or losers in an storytelling game. Play is cooperative, not competitive. As long as you all have fun, everyone wins.

Best of all, the story never has to end. Your faeries can have adventure after adventure, meeting new friends, exploring new places, and facing new challenges, happily ever after.

Beyond Brightwood

Brightwood is a place of classic faery tales come to life—deep forests, hardworking villagers, soaring castles, wicked witches, enormous giants, and wild magic.

It's an ideal backdrop for **FAERY'S TALE** stories, particularly for younger players, since anyone who has ever heard a faery tale knows the essentials, if not every detail, of the realm. It's the perfect place to re-enact your favorite stories or create new ones.

The adventures of the immortal fey span all times and places, however, and you are limited only by the scope of your imagination. **FAERY'S TALE** adapts easily to any chosen tone or setting, from the grim Dark Ages to modern urban fantasy.

Faery Lore

FAERY'S TALE re-imagines classic legends of fey folk from many lands and times, blending them into a game fueled by imagination and whimsy. Readers seeking strict adherence to traditional lore no doubt will find details in this book with which to quibble, but it's a game, not a treatise on folklore.

And, in the end, who can say which of the many contradictory bits of faery lore are true? Only the faeries know for certain.

Inside Faery Lore boxes are details drawn from legends of long ago. These are provided for flavor and to give Narrators ideas; not all these bits of lore need apply in any particular game.

Live-Action Roleplaying

As a streamlined game, **FAERY'S TALE** is ideal for live-action roleplaying. In a live-action game, you don't just say what your faery does—you put on a costume and act it out! *A Sense of Wonder: How to Play* has more tips on live-action roleplay, whether impromptu games of “dress up” for younger players or full-fledged costume balls for adults.

For Kids

Scattered throughout this book, For Kids boxes provide tips and advice on playing **FAERY'S TALE** with children. The simple rules and faery tale theme are perfect for children, although the game is suitable for players of all ages.



Inside This Book

Introduction provides an overview of **FAERY'S TALE**.

Once Upon A Time: The Faery World describes faeries and the faery-tale land of Brightwood.

One of the Fey: Your Faery presents simple rules for inventing your own faeries to play in the game.

A Sense of Wonder: How to Play provides easy-to-learn rules of play, including options for diceless and live-action play.

Faery Princesses & Magic Wands: Titles, Boons & Charms outlines the faery social order, gaining titles, acquiring and using boons, and creating enchanted items.

Here There Be Dragons: Creatures contains information on beings both natural and fantastic.

Tales of the Fey: Adventures presents tips on creating stories and sample adventures.

A Brownie's Tale



atria the brownie parted the fronds of a fern by the bank of a fast-moving stream. She gulped; her pooka friend Gimlock had seen with his second sight that she would wind up in a rushing river. And here it was, waiting for her, kicking up a frothing spray of cold, cold water droplets.

She didn't feel as brave as she had before, when her pixie friend Willow had been with her. Willow had a way of inspiring confidence. And confidence was a trait Katria lacked, at least when it came to rescuing people from trolls and dark faeries. But that was exactly what she had to do, because, according to Gimlock's vision, it was Portia Oakmede who'd been nabbed.

Like every brownie, Katria lived with humans, performing chores in the night; doing little favors, to make their hard lives easier, in exchange for a roof over her head and the odd crumb that fell from the table. Rescuing little Portia from monsters—now that was quite the favor; much greater than ought to be expected of a humble brownie.

That wouldn't stop her, though, no matter how scared she was. Gimlock's second sight wasn't always right. He only saw the bad side of a situation. She wouldn't fall in any old stupid stream. Katria was too cautious to drown. She'd save the girl, and she'd do so safely.

She turned back to her companion, Flynn the sprite. Now, sprites were bravos and scrappers. He'd know what to do. He could do most of the rescuing and Katria—well, she would maybe cook up a thimble of broth when it was all over.

"Flynn?" asked Katria. He was gone. Oh dear.

Yes, now she remembered. He'd said something about going to get a trusty flying steed—a bumblebee or perhaps a dragonfly. If there was a troll involved, Flynn would need to rise up into the air to get at him. Trolls, you see, were large, taller than humans even, and an inch-high faery had little chance of defeating them from underfoot.

Katria heard growling coming from the west, from the same direction as the Oakmede cottage. Turning invisible, as brownies often did to hide from ponderous humans and curious house cats, she peered again through the fronds. A tall, fat-bellied troll ambled awkwardly down the riverbank. He was damp and mossy, like a river troll. Over his shoulder he'd slung a sack, which could only contain the girl. A tiny figure, Katria's size, dogged the troll's leather-shod heels. It was a greedy-faced, sharp-toothed boggart—a spiteful brownie who'd turned to evil, who broke people's dishes and stole their food.

"Well then, Grugh," the boggart nattered, in a high, grating voice, "I've discharged my boon to you. I found the goblin, who found the girl, who you can turn over to the hag. Now you must let me go on my way, before the humans come to look for their brat."

Grugh snorted dismissively. "If humans come, I will crack their bones and eat their marrow. Your debt stays until mine is canceled."

Giving Portia to a hag? Katria didn't like the sound of that, not one iota. Where was Flynn? She didn't want to have to act all on her lonesome.

The troll stopped, setting the unconscious girl down in the sand next to the noisy stream. Long slippers of soft leather clad his feet, each of which was at least 18 inches long. Bits of nail peeked out from holes worn in their toes.

"What are you waiting for?" the boggart demanded.

"My feet hurt," the troll complained. "The shoes that phouka sold me are no good at all. They pinch where there should be room, and bulge where there should not."

Katria straightened her shoulders, summoned up the last reserves of courage Willow the pixie had given her, became visible, and marched out past the ferns. She might not be any good at slashing with swords or riding on the backs of bees, but if there was one occupation at which she was an expert, it was sewing.

The boggart saw her, reared back, and flashed rotten teeth at her. "Who are you?" he cried. "Stay back! Stay back!"

Katria bowed her head. "I am but a humble brownie, and as such, a threat to no one. Especially not such a fearsome boggart as yourself, or a towering river troll, like Mr. Grugh there."

The boggart thought for a moment. "It is true, you are no danger to us—no more than a flea, or a smudge upon the ground. But what business do you have with us?"

"Unlike you boggarts, who only are interested in breaking things, we brownies understand how to fix what's in need of mending. I myself have sworn to repair any broken shoe I should come across, like those in my family have always done."

The boggart drew his face into a knot of suspicion. "Sounds fishy to me..."

"Bah!" said the troll. "My feet hurt, and, like you say, she cannot harm us! Come here, homely brownie, and fix my aching slippers."

So Katria pulled out her needle and thread, which, of course, she kept ready for all occasions, and got to work on the shoes. She concentrated hard to turn the thread invisible. Normally she could make it so that neither she or the possessions she carried could be seen, but this task was a little different. It was hard, but, because it was so important, she found it in her to make it work.

Once finished, she placed the shoes flush up against each other, on the side of the riverbank. "Put your feet in these, Sir Troll," she said.

And he did. Sewn together with invisible thread, they stayed in place when he moved his feet to test the new fit. He toppled backwards, falling into the stream's fastest currents, which carried him swiftly away.

Katria would have felt happy indeed, a tiny brownie defeating a huge, nasty troll.

If it weren't for the fact that he'd knocked her into the river with him when he fell.

Once Upon A Time

The Faery World

No one, not even the faeries, knows when or how they came to be. Perhaps they are part of the world itself, as natural and indispensable as spring rain or summer sun.

The Faery Queen

Leanan rules the good faeries. These emissaries of joy while away the ages playing and dancing in the enchanted places of the earth, at the very edge of sight of those who dismiss faeries as mere figments of imagination. Whether pixie, brownie, sprite, or pooka, all faeries are eternally vigilant against cruelty, injustice, and other wrongs.

Just as there always have been faeries, bright and good, so too have their wicked kin, goblins, forever blighted the world. Goblins are fallen

When the first baby laughed for the first time, its laugh broke into a thousand pieces, and they all went skipping about, and that was the beginning of fairies.

—Sir J.M. Barrie

fey—faeries twisted in body and spirit by their own wickedness. Ruled by the tyrant Sluag, the Goblin King, the malign dark faeries scheme in their gloomy halls deep below the earth

to remake the sunlit upper world into a place of ugliness and despair.

Giants, hags, trolls, dragons, and other fierce creatures of folklore lurk in wait

for the unwary or unwise. And yet the world also contains magic and wonders almost beyond imagination, from wishing wells to faery godmothers.

Behind the world most people know, the ageless champions of the Faery Queen fight a hidden war to save us all from the shadows of evil.

Faeries

Faeries are tiny, mystical beings who share the world right under disbelieving human noses. Most people scoff at the very idea of faeries, which is why very few people know they truly exist. Fewer still have ever seen one, for only eyes full of wonder can spot a faery.

There are many types of faeries hailing from many lands. Some fey folk, such as pixies, brownies, sprites, and pookas, are good at heart, if a bit mischievous.

Dark faeries, on the other hand, are mean-spirited, ugly creatures who take joy only in destruction. Fallen fey are twisted shadows of their former selves, turned into sinister wisps, boggarts, redcaps, and phoukas. Goblins are the worst sort of dark faeries—pixies, brownies, sprites, or pookas who have chosen to give their hearts over to nastiness and wickedness.

The good-hearted faeries fight a never-ending war to save the world from their malevolent kin.

All faeries are only a few inches tall, although some faeries can change size or even turn into animals.

Faeries are immortal magical beings. They never grow old, and never die. Each faery possesses a mystical life force known as Essence. Faeries tap this inner power to work wonders, such as casting fey magic or changing reality. A faery who runs out of Essence falls into a deep magical slumber while her life force replenishes.

Since they are immortal, faeries do not have children. Otherwise, faeries would fill up the whole world before long! There are boy faeries and girl faeries, however.

Many faeries are workers of magic. Often, a particular type of faery casts its own kind of magic, such as the glittering dust used by pixies or the travel magic of pookas. Faery magic can do almost anything imaginable.