

QUICK AND DIRTY GUIDE TO FEY TRICKERY

Whether your party is going there for a few sessions or spending an extended period there, the feywild is a place of magic and whimsy. With underpinnings in real folklore and countless works of fiction to draw resonance from, there are countless options for how you might choose to flavour your fair folk. A common trope used when dealing with fey is the concept of trap language, words and phrases that are the verbal equivalent of snares and pits.

This Quick and Dirty Guide to Fey Trickery presents a handful of phrases which you can employ in your game to trigger unintended bargains with tricky fey.

MAY I HAVE YOUR NAME?

A perfectly harmless start to a conversation in the mortal realm, but in the realm of the fey... a potentially dangerous opener. Answering 'yes' can leave you without a name.

BEING NAMELESS

Being robbed of your name comes with a loss of reputation, trust and clout. Without your name, you cannot leverage your history with others and you cannot form proper bonds. You have disadvantage on Charisma ability checks. For added flair, have the affected player remove their name from their character sheet.

GIVE ME TIME

Be on your guard when a fey asks for your time... they might be asking for more than you realise. This can also trigger off phrases like 'can I have a moment?' or 'do you have a minute to spare?'.

MISSING A MOMENT

A moment or even a minute are not long periods of time, but they can matter. Being absent at the moment an ally casts an important spell, disappearing right before a pivotal moment in a battle.

LOSING A DAY

A larger period of time can come with the implication of service for that time period. Something in fair trade for whatever caused them to ask for time.

CAN I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION?

A common way to address someone who has become distracted from a conversation, which makes this one even more insidious. If you absent mindedly say yes, you give up your attention.

FRAGILE CONCENTRATION

You have disadvantage on Concentration checks.

WANDERING FOCUS

You need to succeed on a Concentration check in order to successfully make an ability check that requires focus.

COULD I HAVE A WORD?

Another example of common parlance that can get you in trouble among the fey. Being invite to a conversation could have you losing part of your vocabulary.

LOSING WORDS

When asked for a word or a few words, a character might find themselves not able to speak or write certain words. The fey might be able to have them speak those words whenever they choose, or keep them from being spoken at all.

GIVE ME YOUR HAND

Whether you're about to fall off a ledge or you think you're being asked to help, be wary when a fey mentions your hands.

FAERIE MATRIMONY

Giving your hand to fey could easily lead a character to being bound in marriage. What this means in your game can vary wildly... but a good source of tension for an adventurer might be that the marriage binds them to the plane of the feywild.

COMING UP WITH YOUR OWN...

If you're comfortable with word play and feel inventive, there are many ways you can twist language to suit your needs. Real life languages tend to be a chaotic jumble of half-rules and loan words, so finding ambiguities isn't often that hard.

An important thing to remember when constructing traps like these is that the players should feel tricked but not blindsided. You want their reaction to be "I should have seen that coming!" and not "Well, that's stupid." So remember to read your players.

DEALING WITH FEY TRICKS

There are a few ways to deal with fey trickery of this kind, each having it's pros and cons.

BARGAINING

A fey that tricks you into something like this usually wants something, so bargaining can be a way to get out of it. Players will probably be a lot more guarded with their language at this point.

PATIENCE

Some fey tricks are just a matter of waiting for them to be triggered, at which point their threat ends. It can sometimes be worth it to cut your losses and see what comes.

VIOLENCE

The old D&D standby. Sometimes the best solution is to put an end to the trickery once and for all.

IRONY

If your take on the fey and their trickery is very poetic, invoking irony can be enough to end their spells. Arresting the attention of a fey who has stolen yours, for instance.