

Fey

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Fey

Issue 1: Chrysalis

London, England, on the eve of World War I, and polite society is abuzz with gossip about a magic-wielding, gossamer-winged woman who saves people from the city's criminals. Aristocratic Lady Caroline is a Changeling, a fairy creature raised as a human, though as a member of London society she is forced to keep her true nature secret. By day, Caroline campaigns for social reform and women's rights. By night, Fey uses her inhuman powers to help the oppressed more directly. Her circle of friends includes Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose keen mind comes close to discovering her secret. Fey's nemesis is a ruthless arms manufacturer who has learned her weaknesses and is determined to capture her. Caroline must understand the secrets of her own origins before she can overcome his traps and emerge victorious.

This is the first issue of a three-issue introductory story arc. While not exactly an origin story, enough background will be provided for the reader to understand the origin and nature of Fey, with enough details left unrevealed to allow further exploration in future story arcs. Though Fey has mystical powers, the threats she deals with in the first arc are strictly human in nature.

The first issue will be mainly concerned with introducing the character and the main supporting cast (all of whom are introduced within the first five pages). The nature of Fey will be explored through the conversations of the main characters, as it becomes evident that she knows little about it herself. Note that she doesn't name herself "Fey", this is a name attached to her by others.

The second issue will reveal the villain and ends with his capture of Fey. We will see that he understands her nature better than she does herself, as he uses her weaknesses against her.

The third issue sees Fey begin to understand her own nature and use that understanding to escape from the villain. Although the villain apparently dies, his body is noticeably absent at the end.

Future story arcs will introduce other characters from English folklore (Tam Lyn, Thomas the Rhymer, etc.). Each of these encounters will serve to allow Fey to understand more of her origin, while at the same time explaining the fantasy world's background to the reader. We will also show how Fey is affected by the start of the Great War.

The comic is set in London, England, in the spring of 1914. The setting should be a realistic one, so characters' clothing and hairstyles will be appropriate to the time, as will furnishings and backgrounds. Making the setting mundanely authentic is key to emphasising the unearthliness of the main character.

FEY is a FAIRY. Though she looks like a full-sized human woman, the pair of gossamer wings growing from her back give her away; big, delicate, lacy things somewhere between those of a butterfly and a dragonfly. Wings that can't possibly allow a human to fly (it's magic, of course). When Fey flies, her body remains upright, so it's more like she's floating along. In fact, Fey will never touch the ground – she constantly hovers at least a few inches above it. Fey wears long, flowing, translucent (but not transparent – this isn't a Mature book!) white clothing which floats around her as if in a breeze. She is barefoot and bareheaded. Her hair is long and black and also floating in the breeze. (Note: she looks like she's standing next to a wind machine regardless of whether any wind is blowing or not – even when indoors. It's magic.) Beneath her diaphanous clothing is a slim but

shapely figure. Her face is that of a beautiful young woman but with something not quite Earthly about her.

The best look for her would be like something out of a Pre-Raphaelite painting, like a Burne-Jones (e.g. <http://www.artmagick.com/pictures/picture.aspx?id=6043&name=evening-star>) or Rossetti (e.g. <http://www.artmagick.com/pictures/picture.aspx?id=6199&name=lady-lilith>).

Fey's powers involve the manipulation of matter (in a modern book we would call it telekinesis and transmutation).

Ideally, her speech captions should have a distinctive look. Either a coloured background, coloured border, distinctive font, or something... whatever looks good and marks her speech as "inhuman".

LADY CAROLINE HAMILTON, Fey's alter ego, shows no sign of being anything but human. She is a beautiful young woman. She has Fey's face, figure, and long, black hair (but her hair will usually be worn up, in the fashion of the day) and her clothing will also be entirely proper for a young Edwardian lady. Yes, a close observer (i.e. the reader) will recognise the same woman, but characters in the comic will be oblivious to the similarity.

Page 1

Six panels in a standard 3x2 grid.

Panel 1

A narrow East-End street at night, the scene illuminated by gas lamps. A woman walks alone by the side of a brick wall. She wears an abundance of makeup and a gaudy dress that shows more skin than polite society would allow. Her profession should be fairly easy to guess.

CAPTION:

London's East End.

CAPTION:

May 1914.

CAPTION:

Evening.

Panel 2

The woman passes a burly man in labourer's clothes. She looks hopefully at him.

WOMAN:

Need a bit of company?

Panel 3

The man has the woman forcibly pressed against the wall and holds a small knife at her throat. She's terrified.

WOMAN:

Aaa! Please – please don't cut me – I'll do anything –

MAN:

Yeh? Well maybe what I **want** you to do is **bleed!**

Panel 4

Same view, but now the woman's eyes are fixed on a point over the man's shoulder. He has also turned to look. The off-panel caption comes from the direction they are looking.

FEY (off panel):

Let her go.

MAN:

What the bleedin' –

Panel 5

The man is now spread-eagled with his back against the wall, his arms flung wide. It's as if he's been spun around and pinned there by an invisible force. The knife is falling from his hand. The woman is cowering on the ground but it's the man who now looks terrified.

MAN:

Aaaaaa!

FEY (off panel):

Remain there.

Panel 6

Same view. Now the bricks of the wall itself have deformed: bulging out, growing, forming manacles around his wrists so that he is firmly held in place, embedded in the very fabric of the wall. Bricks are similarly growing around his mouth.

MAN:

Mother of God!

FEY (off panel):

And be silent.

MAN:

Mmmph!

Page 2

Full-page splash panel.

Panel 1

The splash shows us FEY for the first time. She is hovering several feet above the cobbled street. One arm is extended in front of her, fingers gesturing, commanding the bricks of the wall to do her bidding.

The panel could also show her trapped victim and the cowering woman, but it's not essential so I'll leave that the artist's discretion in what makes the best scene.

No dialogue on this page but this is where the story title and credits will go.

Page 3

Seven panels, with 3-4-5 being a sequence of small close-up panels.

Panel 1

Fey hovers over the cowering woman, reaching a hand down towards her.

FEY:

He cannot harm you now. He will remain there until a constable comes.

Panel 2

The woman is now standing, looking defiantly up at Fey.

FEY:

Why are you in these streets alone at this hour?

WOMAN:

A girl's got to make a livin', ain't she?

Panel 3

Close up of Fey's hand reaching down to pluck a small weed growing between the cobblestones. A dandelion (because of the colour).

No dialogue.

Panel 4

Close up of the weed in Fey's open palm.

No dialogue.

Panel 5

Identical view of Fey's palm – but the weed has vanished, to be replaced by a gold Sovereign.

Panel 6

Fey presses the coin into the disbelieving woman's hand.

FEY:

You and your child can live in safety for a few days.

WOMAN:

How did you know about –

Panel 7

Fey is in the panel foreground, floating towards us and away from the woman. The woman, in the panel background, watches her departure with a look of wonder.

WOMAN:

Please – are you an angel?

FEY (softly):

I fear not.

Page 4

A change of scene to a drawing room in a wealthy London house. This is the house where LADY CAROLINE lives and therefore one that will appear often. The occasion is a dinner party given by the owner of the house: Lady Maude, Caroline's aunt. Ten people are currently present, four female guests (including the hostess), five male guests, and a butler, and all should be shown in this panel.

Key players for our purposes are:

LADY MAUDE HAMILTON: the hostess, a refined lady of 50 or 60, always elegantly dressed and exhibiting impeccable taste and manners. A well-meaning busybody whose sole aim in life is to see Caroline suitably married.

FREDERICK "FREDDY" FERGUSSON: the romantic interest; young, handsome and debonair. He comes from "new money" and so not in the same social class as the others – he was a last-minute invite to make up the numbers after some more worthy guest sent his apologies. Freddy knows all this but he doesn't resent it – at least, not after laying eyes on Caroline. He's an intelligent young man, apart from his persistent inability to make the blindingly obvious connection between Caroline and Fey.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: the famous writer. The eldest male present (54 when this story takes place), and certainly the most famous, he will be treated with deference by all the other guests.

ALBERT FITZGERALD: our villain. A shrewd, sharp-eyed man in his 40s, tall and thin and with an intense manner.

MR HOLLAND: the butler, an elderly retainer (in his 50s) who has been in Lady Caroline's family forever. The archetypical English butler, completely unflappable and unfailingly proper and correct.

The other guests are unimportant and only here to make up numbers. None of the men should be as young or handsome as Freddy and none of the women as beautiful as Caroline (when she finally makes her appearance).

The people are conversing in pairs or small groups while they wait for dinner to be announced. The groupings will be suggested by the dialogue in the various panels.

This page mainly serves to introduce the main cast by name. Panel 1 is a large view of the room to set the scene. Panels 2-5 below it are smaller panels to focus on key characters.

Panel 1

A large view of the whole drawing room.

CAPTION:

London's Mayfair.

CAPTION:

The home of Lady Maude Hamilton.

CAPTION:

Shortly before dinner.

Panel 2

Lady Maude is speaking to Holland the Butler.

MAUDE:

Holland, where has my niece hidden herself?

HOLLAND:

I believe she is still dressing, Lady Maude.

MAUDE:

Ohh! She's an **impossible** girl!

Panel 3

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is addressing Freddy.

DOYLE:

Do I know your father, Fergusson?

FREDDY:

I should hope so, Sir Arthur. My father publishes the Courier.

DOYLE:

Ah, yes! Capital fellow!

Panel 4

Albert Fitzgerald has moved over to interrupt their conversation, putting his back to Freddy in a deliberate snub while speaking to Doyle.

FITZGERALD:

Doyle, read your piece about submarines and airships in warfare. Fascinating topic, must discuss it with you.

DOYLE:

I leave for America shortly, Fitzgerald, but perhaps we could meet at your club before I do?

Panel 5

A close up view of Lady Maude beaming at someone off-panel.

MAUDE:

Caroline! **There** you are!

Page 5

Panel 1 is almost a full-page splash again, giving Caroline the same grand entrance as her alter ego had. Beneath this is a strip of five smaller panels, showing the main cast's reactions to her appearance.

Panel 1

The first view of LADY CAROLINE as she is standing in the drawing room doorway. She looks dazzling in her evening dress, far outshining every other woman in the room.

CAROLINE:

Forgive me, am I late?

Panel 2

Holland looks disapproving (because, yes, she is late, and that's not the done thing).

No dialogue.

Panel 3

Doyle, not too old to be turned by a pretty face, beams his approval.

No dialogue.

Panel 4

Fitzgerald, with other things on his mind, merely scowls.

No dialogue.

Panel 5

Freddy has completely lost it. His mouth hangs open and he's on the verge of drooling. He's totally smitten.

No dialogue.

Panel 6

Lady Maude is still beaming.

MAUDE:

Shall we proceed to dinner? Caroline, Mr Fergusson will be escorting you.