

THE CHANGING FEYTH (PART 2)

By **Sharkchild**

While others sleep, the feyth do not. While others dream beautiful and terrifying visions, the feyth always stir in the unrest of consciousness, never to experience the small pleasure of an escape or diluting respite. Memories, emotions, longings, regrets—they all linger in a swirling prison of chaos. All of them prance and prick endlessly, tirelessly. This is the mind of a feyth; this is my mind—every decision and every action remaining like bones in a grave.

Satisfaction is a curious element among the feyth. The significant damage of mental pain is always there. We may not scar, but we never heal, the open wounds scathing our insides. Each moment of breath is tinged with sadness or hatred or anger—this being one of the reasons why I chose to act and end the outrage of our plaguing existence. We are a disease among the living. I wish to be the cure.

I must be the blind dagger and efface myself to achieve the goal. My journey horrifyingly lives on.

Cattle died not long after I left Exitus.

His body had been taken to the Temple of Betterment. There, in the idol room of the temple, the ghosts of the priest—five of which I knew he had graciously brought him death. This was not done out of mercy for Cattle, but done in order to find my location. When a ghost entered Cattle's body to kill him, it could travel to any part of his body, no matter where it was, and seek its whereabouts. This could be done only at the time of fatality.

I knew it occurred the moment Cattle's muffles ceased and the awful silence proclaimed my horrible danger. I released to the ground the sackcloth bag holding Cattle's head, took his neck, and sliced it immediately. Not a second later, a ghost from the Temple of Betterment emerged from Cattle's eyes and darted towards me.

The ghosts of feyths do not resemble the physical body that once was. Instead, they are a contingency of spirit: an unapparent space of gray and white light that decays anything that comes within its touch. When they move upon the ground, the soil rots. When they move within the air, the sky burns. But once the ghost leaves, those dying things reemerge the same as they once were, a display of life, only to be dead on the inside, as if their presences were only distorted beneath the cover of strange looking glasses.

With their own knowledge gone, these ghosts become the servants of whoever claims them, doing what commanded and no more, no less.

The ghost that appeared would have killed me had I no protection, but I had already acquired the ghost of Cattle as my slave when I slit his throat and commanded it with my words. Using it as my shield, I held off the opposing ghost, which lashed upon my ghost with significant effort. The vision of the battle before me blurred in catastrophic distortion. The ground beneath the ghosts turned into a blackened pit of ash while the air within them singed in flames. Finally, the ghost of my enemy was forced to return to its own master, of whom it could not be apart from long.

I was one of the few feyth to ever control a ghost. It had been an unwritten law that the priests of the kingdoms of Tume slice the throats of any feyths that perished. This was how they enforced their power and religion, through the authority they bore with the possession of ghosts.

It would not be long until an army would converge upon me, along with such ghosts, but I rather liked the idea of them coming to me.

When the ghost from Exitus left, I took Cattle's head with its dripping neck and put it back into the sackcloth bag. I dug up the soil containing the fluids that had run freely from the head's neck moments before and put that also into the bag. Only on my watch would someone gain the knowledge of Cattle.

With but a days head start against my foes, I decided to find the grounds that would be to my advantage. I searched amongst the immediate terrain and came to settle upon a steeply sloped hillside. From the trees around me, I could tell I was still in the middle of Alterus Forest—the thick haven of pine trees and trepid fairies.

The hillside was jagged with large amounts of abstract rocks, creating only a few narrow passages, which would slow the army's march upon me. Using my whip, I wrenched large branches from the trees above and placed them as impediments among those trails.

If I was to survive, I had to gain much more power, and to begin that process I needed another ally besides a ghost.

The fairies of Alterus Forest had been known to be stealthy beyond the means of any other creature. Their speed and smallness of size made the perfect the spies. Rarely did they ever show themselves, save for those times when they were meant no harm. With my ghost, I could easily find them, and I did.

I ordered my ghost to seek one out and bring it back to me. It came not a few minutes later, swirling through the woods with a fairy within its grasp. The fairy squirmed in distress, its flesh gone beneath the hold of the ghost, and its bones flaking like dust in all directions. The ghost released it before me and I quickly grabbed it. When it left the presence of the ghost, its flesh and features returned as if they had never been marred. Holding the fairy in my hand, I thrust it into the remains of Cattle's head, forcing it to swallow some of the fluid that collected there.

In time, the fairy was speaking to me:

"Poisons be yer drenk! Such thengs are not meant to be known by the folk of er kind."

"I demand your allegiance, small fairy," I replied. "The time has come to end the regime of our sacred feyths. Perhaps, when all is done, my death will be your reward. Hate me, but hate me no less than those other feyths that run amuck upon our world, terrorizing the ignorant and enslaving them to their ways."

With the knowledge of Cattle bestowed upon this fairy, I knew it would understand the evil that had grown so prevalent. With its new memories, it would desire nothing less than to join me in my quest for vengeance.

"Ye speak harsh words, but my mend es haunted by worse. Yer deseres are sencere enef for me. Let me et of thes horrid sack and I well speak openly to you!"

I did as it requested.

Swiftly, the fairy exited the sackcloth bag, fluttering before me with shockingly, intrepid wings.

“My name is Wayward; what is yours?” I asked the little creature.

“Stermistassin Clover,” it said.

“I will call you Clover,” I returned, not asking for the fairy’s approval.

“Fen by me, but don’t ever have that ghost handle me again.” Little did it know that its physical body had already been stained.

The army from Exitus arrived sooner than I had expected. Clover’s retrieval of this sighting was invaluable. Men, armed with shields and spears, marched with unruly speed towards my location. Leading them were Solitary and Interim, raging with pride for their brethren and wanting nothing less than the victory of my defeat for themselves. It was this recklessness that would win me the battle and position me for the future slaughter of my kind. Along with the two feyths leading the army were the five ghosts of the priest, which meant he followed not far behind. The priest and his ghosts were the greatest threat to my success.

I positioned myself in the middle of the hillside, not at the top where they would expect me. My first move would be one of surprise and utmost importance.

Solitary was the first to come within my proximity. He was the oldest of the feyths from Exitus, but his quick death would be no homage to those years. When he ran to me, I leapt from my hiding, holding Cattle’s lifeless head to his turning gaze. As according to the rules of The Almighty of Shadows and Shade, Solitary died, and as he fell I slit his throat with my whip, conjuring his ghost to my aid.

Panic then shown on Interim’s face, who was only steps behind his humiliated comrade. He too was made of sudden demise, for he had no time to react to the new ghost under my command. The ghost burrowed deep within Interim’s flesh, burning him inside and out. He screamed a sound that I had never heard leave the lips of a feyth. It should have greatly disturbed me, but to the contrary, I felt enormous pleasure hearing it. When his scream was through, my whip was there to greet his neck, bringing to me yet another ghost of the feyths.

In but a moment’s time, I had depleted the grand city of Exitus’ feyths to nothing but ground meat—meat which Clover quickly nibbled upon as I had commanded it, gathering the knowledge of ages past.

With the service of two new ghosts, I deplored them to meet the priest’s ghosts and hold them from me while I made my way to the priest. Killing him was the last opposition to my victory.

I ran wildly through the ranks of the army, their weapons causing mere flesh wounds upon me. With my whip and a short dagger, I trudged through them easily, mercilessly chopping them down before me.

The priest of Exitus’ Temple of Betterment awaited me at the heel of the army. He stood with his own long dagger. Spirits of all kinds enveloped his surrounding space, protecting him and empowering him. They twisted in glee and gluttony, cackling like fire around freshly placed fuel. Without has much as a word, the spirits converged upon me, tackling me to the ground, pummeling me with invisible fists and evil necromancies. I felt the blood within my veins boil and thin, bringing my limbs to nothing more than lifeless fluid. I looked up

upon the priest's gaze, the priest I had known for so many years and the priest that had taught me the ways of The Almighty of Shadows and Shade. His face was menacing. His chest heaved in mighty breaths while hatred scoured through him.

In the midst of my pain, I saw the priest's demeanor change suddenly and his eyes bulge; I saw him fall to his knees with a gaping horror written on his lips; I saw him fall completely to the ground with a blade extending from the back of his head. And there, hovering where the priest had just been, was the small fairy I had only just met, stirring with a new frenzy behind its eyes. The knowledge within it bulged and I knew it wanted to kill the feyth more than myself.

No later had the priest died than his ghosts and spirits vanished forever from the material world, leaving my own ghosts the enjoyment of destroying the multitudes of warriors left. They erupted into gas and unrelenting pleas as the ghosts passed through them gracefully and easily.

I was ready to be an executioner.