

Sherry Street

Introduction

Sherry Street started as a series of social accounts of people who resemble “the mechanicals” in *A Midsummers Night’s Dream*. The phrase “this is the world a time traveling Shakespeare visited” as inspiration for the play was uttered and that gave the world itself even more dimension and we started to fill in more and more of the world to give it legs so we could tell a compelling story that supported the Audience of the Future Event.

Brief Story Overview

Fairies are known as “Goodfellows”, they are known to the humans of the world, but not generally discussed in much the same way one did not discuss the mafia in 1930s Chicago. These Goodfellows can provide favors to the humans and the humans will leave offerings to them.

Humans will also go to great lengths to ward off unwanted attention, surrounding their house windows with window boxes filled with marigolds, using ornate steel framed doors that just happen to be toxic to fairies and their kind.

Our world is full of a “marking system”, a secret language that only a few know (much like the hobo markings in the USA) that let fairies know what kind of humans live where.

But on occasion, humans will ask for a favor. Maybe for a sick parent, or for a child who is struggling. An offering is made, and in general, something can happen. Often it’s good, sometimes it’s really good, but on occasion the ask allows a cruel fairy to fulfill the favor and be very cruel at the same time.

Sometime in April 2020 the moon starts to crumble. The Department of Agriculture cannot fathom the reason why. Its best are on the case and no breakthrough. In reality a rift, beyond or comprehension is starting between Oberon and Titania. One fairy, Puck, against tradition, decides to enlist the help of the humans to fix this mess. He approaches the very well respected journalist Robin Starveling (who is actually not very well respected) and tells him the real reason the moon is crumbling.

Robin sets out to fix this mess by approaching his best friend Sheldon, a scientist who is looked on dimly at the DoA, and his girlfriend Eileen.

Worlds are about to collide.

The Secret Sherry Street Earth History

Our world is not dissimilar to the world in which our story takes place, but this world is more charming, tea always tastes better and fairies exist. We’ve started to note some big historical events in the timeline that we use as reference.

1066

King Harold Godwinson invokes Faerie magic to rush his whole army almost 200 miles in less than four days to smash a Viking invasion at Stamford Bridge. When he tries to renege on paying the full fee for their help, they turn on him. Three weeks later he gets an arrow through the eye at the Battle of Hastings.

1455 - 1487

Marital friction between Oberon and Titania is expressed in human lands as The War of the Roses, with Oberon backing the Red Rose of Lancaster, while Titania favored the White Rose of York.

1509 - 1547

Henry VIII, determined to be wholly independent, snubs Faerie at his wedding and is stricken with a curse because of it: he will never achieve the thing he most desires, a son to take the crown after him.

August - September 1588 - Mysterious wind devastates the Spanish Armada

Queen Elizabeth I conducted secret negotiations with faerie elements. In the weeks that followed, sustained winds forced the fleeing Spanish Armada into the rocky coast of Ireland, wrecking dozens of ships and putting an end to Spanish naval power. It is not known what price the British had to pay.

1687 - Isaac Newton founds modern botanical science

In his work *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Florentia* (Floral Principles of Natural Philosophy), Isaac Newton laid the foundations for understanding the characteristic properties of the major flower types, without which the Botanical Revolution of the Victorian era would not have been possible.

1778 - Fairy Prank Causes Regency Crisis

George III makes the mistake of confiding to Puck that “the Christmas season makes me mental” and promptly loses his mind from November to February, prompting a governmental crisis.

September 15 1830 - Beginning and end of the British rail system

The world’s first intercity railroad line, the British and Manchester Railway, opened to dramatic failure due to immediate, widespread madness among passengers and crew. The following morning the track was discovered to be rusted and decayed as if centuries had passed. All further plans for railway construction in England were abandoned.

1832 - 1845 Waterways and Nixies

The collapse of the railway effort did not eliminate the need to transport goods and people. Modern capital turned to the canal system. This time, however, a great deal more respect was paid to England's Nixies, as the Goodfellows of the water were called. At each stop on the river or canal, a barge would leave a small offering (often berries, coins, or small fish) along with a lock of the ferryman's hair. (Hence the term "locks").

From time to time a barge might not be allowed to progress, whether because some ritual had been mis-performed, or simply at the whim of the Goodfellows of the river. A journey thus cancelled was said to have been "Nixed" - a term that spread into more general usage as the canals became increasingly important.

1851 - The Rise of the Dirigible

The Great Exhibition of 1851 saw the maiden voyage of the HMS Thistledown. Once the British government's first dirigible had docked at the spire of the Crystal Palace, Queen and Prince Albert alighted to open the Exhibition to wild applause.

1854 - Infant Found in Handbag left in Bodleian Library

Astonished librarians found a Gladstone bag containing an infant with wavy black hair and a disturbing smile. They named him Oscar, with the surname Wilde, applied to any child believed to have Fairy blood.

Growing up as a Ward of the University, young Oscar was marvelously intelligent and highly mischievous. Even as a young man he was sought after as a portrait painter, for his pictures had the curious habit of growing old and tired over time, while those who sat for them stayed young and vigorous.

August 14th 1972 - Project Featherstone starts

Project Featherstone was initiated on August 14th 1972 in an attempt to communicate and ascertain more information about the believed inhabitants of the moon (see DoA Reference 52). For many centuries the DoA, or a form of the DoA, has known of the existence of magic and fairies in the world and while we have not forbidden this knowledge from the general public we've not generally talked about it on the 6 o'clock news.

December 24th 1988 - Dauntless launches

Dauntless remained in service for 4 days, 17 minutes, and 3 seconds before unexpectedly hitting a small object that ended its mission prematurely. Discussion and details of that small object are forbidden from discussion

April 1st 1989 - Project Featherstone closed down

May 1 2006 The Blair Witch Project

At a state dinner, Prime Minister Tony Blair boasts of his close relationship with the faerie leadership, particularly Queen Titania. Discovers mid-sentence that his pants are gone. Discovers he is dancing. Wakes up in bushes behind a Tesco. Discovers he has appointed an end table to the Privy Council.

Which Midsummer's Flower Are You?

Our world doesn't have astrology, instead you are born into the season of a flower. The App that accompanies our world lets you know which flower you are and what the fates have in store for you today. Below is the outline characters of the various flowers we plan to use in the world.

Daisy

motive: be happy, enjoy life

Daisies grow wild, flourish easily, spread beauty, enjoy life. Their name means literally "the day's eye" - when it's dark they fold their petals, and the open again when the sun comes. It's a new day! Woo!

It's easy to underestimate daisies and in many countries they're considered weeds. But they'll thrive in places where others would get bogged down in doom and gloom. At their worst, daisies might lack some empathy for the difficulties and sorrows of others. But they also serve as reminders to everyone around them that life is joy, and that's sometimes better than the wisest advice.

The daisy's main dilemma is, "why aren't more people like the daisy?"

"My crown is called content, a crown that seldom kings enjoy."
Henry VI, Part 3

Red Daisy
"beauty unknown to the possessor"

Columbine

motive: understand the world

Columbines are always curious, always attentive, always thinking about the world. These are the scientists, the documentary filmmakers, the explorers who will always be drawn to the next question or subject or undiscovered place.

Their latin name, Aquilegia, means "eagle" and derives from the flower's talon-like petals but in people, it's apparent in their sharp eyes, elevated perspective and somewhat fierce approach to knowledge.

They're independent and take care of themselves - they get their energy from looking outward and moving forward. At times they'll be so focused on the object of their curiosity, they'll need a reminder to pay attention to the people around them.

"Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven."
Henry VI, Part 2

green columbine

The fool. You may know nothing but on this journey you have everything to gain

Lily

motive: be true to an ideal or inner vision

The lily's elegance and delicate colors have always been identified with a higher plane, and its trumpet shape conveys a clarion call - to duty, to a dream, to a pure ideal. Lilies are unbending in their pursuit of a higher purpose. Just as they come in many colors, that purpose might be anything artistic, ethical, religious or just a personal code it's what guides them in their lives. They can be seen as cold and unyielding, but on the other hand an inspiration to the people around them. In the right place and time they can do great things. Don't try to tell them otherwise!

"Mine honour is my life; both grow in one; Take honour from me, and my life is done."
Richard II

Rose

motive: status and attention; passionate engagement

What hasn't been said about the roses? Beautiful, intoxicating, they draw the eye of all around them. They bring beauty, sumptuousness and passion to the world. They draw the attention of all around them like human magnets.

That doesn't make them especially easy to deal with. There's a reason why we see them alone and supreme on that long stalk. They can be selfish and make the whole garden about themselves. But they repay that demand for attention with a creative energy and a pleasure in life.

They may appear fragile but like many creative types they're tougher than you'd expect - cutting them only makes them blossom the more. And of course, thorns.

The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
Sonnet 54

Primrose

motive: be loyal, create personal bonds and community

The primrose grows low to the ground, tolerates cold and shade, and doesn't get a lot of credit for it. Primroses are the humble types who hold people, communities and possibly the world together. They don't get the attention the glamorous roses or exuberant daisies command but they grow just fine without it. The Irish knew it as medicine and ointment to cure a dozen ailments, and were placed on the doorstep as a symbol of protection.

“I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul remembering my good friends.”
Richard II

Pansy

motive: to help and heal wherever needed

These are the world's compassionate friends and professional healers, the ones who fix and repair whatever (or whoever) is around them that's been broken.

They're a common enough flower, growing low to the ground, easily overlooked except when you need them. The pattern on the pansy's multicolored petals can sometimes form a face - the face they show other people - but their need to be generous means they sometimes have to hide their real feelings.

‘Tis not enough to help the feeble up, but to support them after”
Timon of Athens

Poppy

motive: burn, burn, burn

The poppy blooms briefly but the brilliant flare of their red blossoms stands out anywhere. These are people who know that life could run out any day, and live accordingly. Poppies are bold and impulse-driven and passionate; they're artists, hedonists, and people who simply want all of life at once.

They're not durable - they need the full sun and withers in shade. And notoriously, they're the source of an intoxication that blots out the world.

Burn while you can, for life is fleeting. Who knows, perhaps it's worth it.

“Make the upcoming hour overflow with joy, and let pleasure drown the brim.”
All's Well That Ends Well

black swan - white poppy - saintliness, serenity, transcending the world

Carnation

motive: to survive and prosper in this world

The carnations keep their eyes open and focused on the real world around them, on wealth and abundance and, yes, profit and loss. To those who know them, they're unfailingly reliable, a source of wealth and stability for everyone around them. You'll never have to take care of them, they can do it for themselves - maybe sometimes a bit too zealously, but the balance sheet is always in the black.

Maybe don't look to them to write a play or sing an aria - in fact don't look to them for any kind of drama, interpersonal or otherwise. They're too busy getting things done.

"If money go before, all ways do lie open."
Merry Wives of Windsor

Miscellaneous Story Moment Bits

These are just bits of story that add to the world, they might be in the paper, or mentioned on a TV show in the background, or never mentioned at all, but they help us make the world feel more alive.

Department of Agriculture

CONFIDENTIAL - PROJECT FEATHERSTONE

Project Featherstone was initiated on August 14th 1972 in an attempt to communicate and ascertain more information about the believed inhabitants of the moon (see DoA Reference 52). For many centuries the DoA, or a form of the DoA, has known of the existence of magic and fairies in the world and while we have not forbidden this knowledge from the general public we've not generally talked about it on the 6 o'clock news.

Project Featherstone at first beamed radio waves at the moon during full moon cycles, but culminated on December 24th 1988 in the launch of an aerolooper craft that orbits both the earth and the moon in a figure eight pattern. This craft is called "Dauntless". That craft has sent pictures back of the moon in great detail which have been since been analyzed by the DoA. The craft also listens for radio signals or other sounds from the moon.

Dauntless remained in service for 4 days, 17 minutes, and 3 seconds before unexpectedly hitting a small object that ended its mission prematurely. Discussion and details of that small object are forbidden from discussion.

Due to the high cost Project Featherstone was shuttered and closed on April 1st 1989.

(above to be redacted fully)

FURTHER RESEARCH

All research into the moon must be cleared by the PM and funds approved for research need to be allocated pre approval in post annual budgets on a semi DoA form R-45A making sure that the Section 2 is approved and signed off on by the entire DoA Critical Response Team (CRT). The PM will not entertain any approvals without the pre approval of the funding and the CRT team will not approve the approval without the approval of the PM.

QUESTIONS

Your local library has a fully qualified section on the moon that will answer any questions on the moon. Your local florist can provide any guidance you require on matters related to moon cycles.

Dream Moment 1

Jennifer found Dream in the spring via a shared Instagram post of some flowers and instantly fell into the rabbit hole of our parallel world. She downloaded the florist app, followed the social feeds, and lightly followed the story of the crumbling moon. When the app told her about the event she was delighted and instantly booked tickets for her and her boyfriend and was very excited for the evening.

Which is why she was a little upset at the reporter and security outside the event slowing everything down. There was a giant gray rock, that seemed to glow slightly, hanging in what had been a great entryway and people in brown coats were examining it. The reporter saw Jennifer staring and pulled her to the side.

“Madam, can I ask you a few questions?”

“Sure”, Jennifer replied, still staring at the moon rock, wondering ‘why brown coats?’.

“With this the latest falling rock people say the moon itself might be crumbling, do you have any theories yourself?”

Jennifer was put off balance a bit, and right away fell for the ruse, “Surely NASA would know about this? Shouldn’t they be here? Can’t the Hubble or something look?”

The reporter frowns, this isn’t going to play well on the 9:30pm news. “Ma’am, these men are from the Department of Agriculture, they know what they are doing!”

Jennifer was about to follow up, but right then a very nice young man dressed in a “Not Right” store uniform motions for her and her boyfriend to use a side door to enter the store and she gladly obliges.

As she enters she hears the reporter telling the cameraman, “I don’t know what this NASA thing is, people keep asking, must be a local club or something? Maybe we should go down the pub, groups like that always meet there, good local color”

Dream Moment 2

Eileen peered through the rain up the street past Packworths to look for her boyfriend Sheldon. He was late. It was a full moon in rose season so she was hoping just this one time he would be on time. She wanted to propose union and had worked up the courage after asking the Marial, who owned the local florist store, for guidance.

Union was only the first part of a relationship, and generally it was the boy who asked the girl, and then the girl who cemented the relationship by then asking for his hand in marriage, but

Sheldon wasn't the asking type and Eileen wasn't the waiting type so here she was, waiting in the rain up the street from Packworths.

Sheldon was a scientist for the Department of Agriculture, mostly studying weather patterns and cloud formations. He had been petitioning the DoA that weather deserved it's own government department but the DoA was having none of it, and even as he hurried up the street to meet Eileen his mind was on the commotion at the DoA amongst the dowzers, they had suddenly all aligned on the same spot which if you know a dowser is pretty impossible.

Sheldon finally reached Eileen, he was soaked, his laptop bag was open and it's contents were suitably soggy as well. Sheldon was not the best organized human. Eileen, pleased yet unamused at his tardiness did not wait a second and drew a rose out of her satchel and bowed in front of Sheldon. She placed the rose on both of her hands in front of him and was about to utter the words she had practiced so many many times in her mind when the sky turned purple, a blinding light filled their vision, and a huge clap of monstrous thunder interrupted the now not so perfect moment.

Ears ringing, the rose dropped to the ground, they looked towards the North where a star seemed to have fallen from the sky.

Several dowzers ran by, greeting Sheldon as they sprinted towards the star.

At least the rain had stopped.

Reference

REFERENCE - HOBO SYMBOLS

 NO USE GOING THIS DIRECTION	 THIS WAY	 HIT THE ROAD! QUICK!	OR	 GOOD ROAD to FOLLOW	 ROAD SPOILED, full of other hobos	
 DOUBTFUL	 HALT	 THIS IS THE PLACE	 DANGEROUS NEIGHBORHOOD	 THIS COMMUNITY indifferent to hobos	 NOTHING to be GAINED HERE	
 YOU CAN CAMP HERE	 FRESH WATER, SAFE CAMPSITE	 DANGEROUS DRINKING WATER	 O. K. ALL RIGHT	 GOOD PLACE for a HANDOUT	 ILL TEMPERED MAN LIVES HERE	
 WELL GUARDED HOUSE	OR	 THE OWNER IS IN	 THE OWNER IS OUT	 A GENTLEMAN LIVES HERE	 THESE PEOPLE ARE RICH	
 KIND LADY LIVES HERE	 KIND WOMAN, tell grateful story	 FOOD HERE if you WORK	OR	 RELIGIOUS TALK gets FREE MEAL	 RELIGIOUS TALK gets FREE MEAL	
 IF YOU ARE SICK, AMERICAN RAILROADING	 DOCTOR HERE, WON'T CHARGE	 FREE TELEPHONE	 ALCOHOL IN THIS TOWN	 YOU CAN SLEEP in HAYLOFT	OR	 YOU CAN SLEEP in HAYLOFT