

Mary Donnelly's Freehold

Introduction

Mary Donnelly's Freehold is a terraced townhouse on the High Street between Rochester City and Chatham, which are a part of the Medway Towns. Rochester itself sits on the south side of the River Medway in North Kent, while the town of Strood sits upon the opposite bank and are linked by a road bridge and a rail bridge. Rochester is a magical place with its Cathedral (the reason why it has City status), ruined castle, and quaint Victorian High Street.

Several times a year on bank holidays major festivals are held for both the townsfolk and Fae alike. On the May bank holiday the Sweeps Festival is held, where local people dress up as chimney sweeps or in Victorian garb, and Morris Dancing Troupes from all across the country play and dance in the High Street to large crowds. The Town is famous for its links with Dickens, who pushed for social reform and warned the Fey of the dangers of Banality through his stories. He lived in a house in the centre of Rochester that is always full of tourists, mostly American, European, and Japanese.

Strood on the other hand is a heavily depressed area full of Banality dues to social exclusion and poverty. Most Fey in the area avoid it like the plague unless they absolutely have to go there.

Chatham, to the south of Rochester upon Medway, is another area of Banality. It was once a thriving Naval Garrison town until the docks were closed down in 1984 and about 5000 people lost their jobs. Now it is slowly creeping out of economic depression with the new dockyard developments including the housing development on Saint Mary's Island. The University of Greenwich has also opened up a campus just to the south of the docks, and the Kent Institute of Art and Design (KIAD) is situated in the west side of Chatham just before the New Road enters Rochester. KIAD is an island of glamour in a sea of Banality.

The Medway Towns, being on the River Medway in North Kent, falls squarely within the Kingdom of Chalk.

The Freehold itself is a large town house seemly occupied by a kindly, if a little eccentric, old lady with pearl white hair pulled into a tight bun at the back. Don't let appearances deceive you. Miss Mary Donnelly is a very wise and astute Pooka grump. She is charming and cordial and good with Childlings, but she is also a bit of a prankster.

First, Luceal's basement workshop...



The Basement

“What the hell are you doing down here, you furkin Boggan? This is no place for friggin’ Ongepotchket Meisters like you!” Effing Luceal, Nocker Toymaker

The basement is strictly Luceal’s domain. Even the odd wandering Nocker would get an ear full of abuse if he or she wanders in uninvited. Of course, what sounds like an ear full of abuse to us is probably a cordial greeting to them, but the two are usually hard to tell apart. The basement is an open plan room with a stairwell at one end leading up to the ground floor. There is an external door opposite, but you’d never be able to tell unless Luceal clears all the junk in front of it.

Along the outer wall are several workbenches with the tools of the trade and projects in various stages of completion scattered haphazardly across them, as well as holding rings with FUBAR’s in them. Everything you’d expect to find on a Nocker’s workbench is there, plus a few stranger items.

The back wall is taken up with hashed-together storage solutions. Old kitchen units, wooden shelving, cardboard boxes, anything and everything one could use to store things in or upon are used, apart from anything made of cold iron. The floor is littered with Luceal’s latest creations, including three-foot high walking automatons – think of those walking talking dolls out of Blade Runner and you get the picture. In the far corner of the room is an old mattress with a few blankets on for when Luceal works late into the night and can’t be bothered to go to bed. On such nights she is usually up till the sun has already risen, and she crashes out for a few hours until just after lunch.

In one of the kitchen floor units is the entrance to a tunnel, which leads through the Freehold’s back garden to a cave dug into the railway embankment. This is Luceal’s other workshop where she does her secret projects. The only other person who knows of its existence is Mary.

There is another room hidden on the other side of the stairs that contains “The Weird Thing in the Basement”. Rumour has it that sometimes Luceal swears at the Weird Thing whenever something goes wrong with one of her “creations”, and this causes her to be able to hold her tongue for the next half an hour. See Appendix II: The Weird Thing in the Basement for further details.



The Ground Floor

“So you’re new to the freehold? Ah, let me tell you a few things about the ladies who run this place. Mary is a sweet old Pooka, very cordial, but a bit of a prankster. Look out for her Hash Brownies, they are something else altogether. As for Luceal, she has a sharp mouth that one, but then, don’t all Nockers? Her bark is far worse than her bite though, unless you like that kinda thing...” A local Troll

The Hallway

The entrance to the Freehold leads into a large hallway with a white tiled floor, white wooden staircase, a tasteful Georgian / Edwardian décor, and several doors leading off from both sides. It is a very spacious hallway for the house’s size, and one can guess that some glamour is involved in making it larger than would normally be found in a town house. Along the walls are side tables displaying various bric-a-brac items that on closer inspection are invariably Treasures (mostly level one).

The left door leads off to the living room of the Freehold. The right door before the stairs leads off to a dining room, while the door behind the stairs leads off to the kitchens. At the back of the hall is the back door, which leads out to a spacious garden, beyond which is a railway embankment.

The Living Room

The living room is both spacious and sumptuous in design and décor. All the furniture is either Victorian or mock Victorian, and the walls are lined with bookshelves and display cabinets. There are a couple of large sofas in the middle of the room around a coffee table, as well as several easy chairs dotted around the room. This is the social room of the Freehold. No official business is ever conducted here, as it is all dealt with in The Gathering.

The Dining Room

The dining room is decorated in the opulence of the Art Deco period, with some later pieces thrown in for good measure. In the crockery display cabinet are pieces from the 1920’s and 30’s, as well as some Clarice Cliff pieces from the 1950’s. The large walnut dining table can seat ten people quite easily, and there are often feasts held in honour of guests and “just because”. On the back wall there is a serving hatch with which food can be passed through directly from the kitchens.

The Kitchen

The kitchen is the most modern part of the Freehold with fitted units and brushed aluminium appliances. Most of the pots and pans are metal handled for those who are into culinary creativity. Childlings are banned from the kitchen for safety reasons, but you will often see one or two outside of the door expecting treats and tit-bits, which they invariably get if Mary is cooking. When Luceal is cooking the kitchen is strictly out of bounds to all but Mary, and quite often there could be heard an explosion of expletives as she vents her frustrations during cooking. Despite her unsavoury language when within the kitchen (and anywhere else in the freehold), Luceal creates some of the most sumptuous dishes served in the Freehold's dining room.



The First Floor

“ ‘Tis a strange thing, the noises from the basement. Ever since Mary took over the Freehold in 2000, she has been silent about what the Weird Thing in the Basement actually is. Whatever it is, I hope it stays there...” A Sluagh.

The Recreation Room

The Recreation room is the most high-tech room in the Freehold, even though it is decorated in the Art Deco style. The electrical items are tastefully hidden away in fitted cupboards and are only seen when in use. Needless to say, computer games machines are banned in the freehold as Mary and Luceal view them as being Banal in the extreme, and the use of this room is heavily moderated with regard to Childlings.

Mary's Room

Mary, despite being a Pooka, has the usual flowery tastes in décor, as do most elderly English ladies. As soon as you walk into her room you are hit with pastel shades, flowery bed covers, and the smell of lavender and mothballs. But like a Pooka, a lot of her personal effects are chimerical in nature, and some are prankish in their use. Beware of the chair in the far corner of the room, as it was made to her designs by 'Effing Luceal. Whenever you sit down or move in it, it makes rude noises and emits a foul smell. Mary calls it her "Vicar Torturer".

In front of the window is Mary's Georgian dressing table with tilting mirror and various brushes, bottles of perfume, jewellery boxes, and makeup kits. One of her hairbrushes is a level one treasure called the Silver Brush of Fine Locks, which enables the user to create a perfect coiffeur with very little effort. See Appendix I: Treasures for further details.

Apart from when Mary needs to have her “quite little words” with people, her bedroom is her private space. Not even Luceal would enter without first knocking and asking for permission to enter.

Bathroom and Toilet

Even Changelings need to go to the bathroom. This one is decorated in a mock-Edwardian style with white ceramics and gold taps, and the bath doubles up as a shower unit with a tasteful white shower curtain. What else do you need to know about a bathroom?



The Second Floor

“Hmmm, The Gathering... Last time I was in there it was being used by a Ghille-Dhu. How the hell they managed to get a fucking woodland glade in there I’ll never know.” ‘Effing Luceal

Luceal’s Pit

Luceal’s Pit could be loosely described as her bedroom-cum-spare-workshop. A lot of her smaller projects are stored here either after completion, or during one of those DKWTFDWI (Don’t Know What The Fuck To Do With It) stages that all Nockers go through with their creations. To put it in Luceal’s own words, her room is a fucking mess and in dire need of a team of Boggan slaves chained to the wall to clear it up. Best not go in there unless either invited, suicidal, or both.

The Gathering

The Gathering is a formal meeting place of the local Seelie Changeling community, and as such, is host to many rituals and conferences and Sidhe emergency sessions (which seem to be occurring with ever-increasing frequency in recent times). Because of the nature of the Freehold, The Gathering is considered as a strictly neutral zone, so it is not uncommon to see both Seelie and Unseelie Fae there, but never any of the Shadow Court (to our knowledge, anyhow). Because it is The Gathering, the décor changes according to who is chairing any meetings being held, even though the contents themselves do not change. In other words, the room has all the usual paraphernalia of a conference suite, but what the room and its contents actually look like is forever changing. The last time a Sidhe of House Beaumayn hosted an emergency session, the room took on the appearance of a meeting hall inside a monastery. When the Ghille-Dhu last held meetings there, it looked like a woodland glade.

The Gavel of Quietus is found in this room. See Appendix I: Treasures for further details.



The Attic

The first thing you need to know about the attic is that the interior, like The Gathering, is forever changing. The only constant thing about the room is where the physical items like stairways are located. Everything else is subject to the whim of whichever Childling is “in charge” that day. It is not uncommon to find things like wardrobes that have Trods inside in the attic. Nor is it uncommon to suddenly find that the doorway at the top of the stairs is the Trod into the Near Dreaming.

The second thing that you need to know is that Wilders are only just tolerated up there and Grumps are almost totally banned from the attic altogether. The only sure-fire exceptions to this unwritten rule are Luceal and Mary, but then, they are the chosen guardians of the Freehold so their word is law, even in the attic.

The third thing you need to know is that there is an Oath that all Childlings are bound to before they are allowed to use the attic to play in; The Oath of Fae Equality. This Oath basically means that all Childlings are bound to treat each other with equal respect and dignity whosoever they are. There is to be no prejudice shown with regards to race, gender, Kith, rank, House or Court.



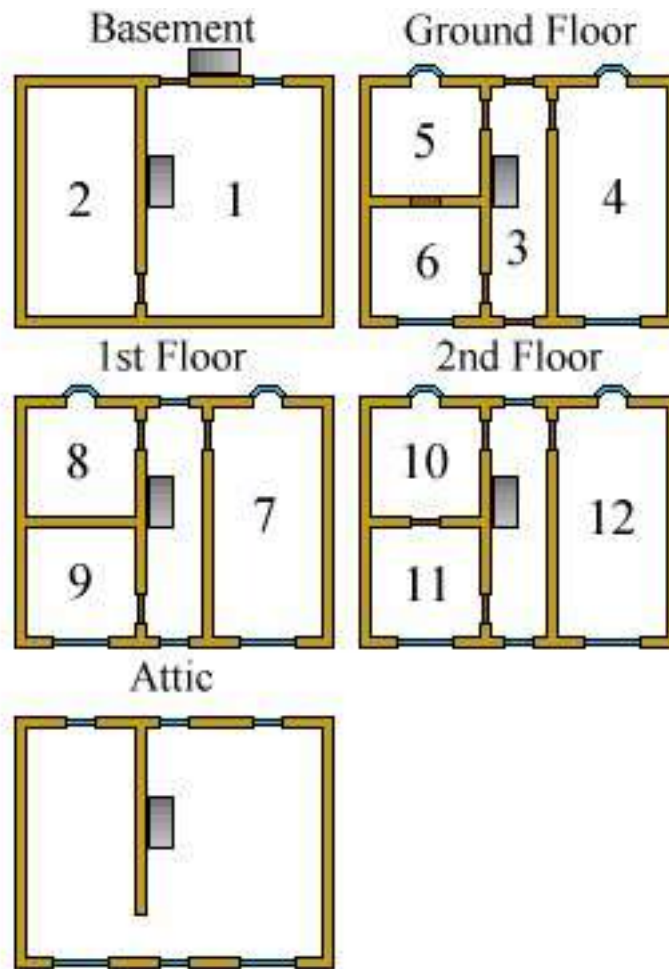
Storyteller Notes

This section is purely for storytellers, and is not to be read by players. In here you will find the low down on all the major characters with their motivations and secrets. The players will know that the Freehold is basically Seelie.

Also, there are various other visitors to this Freehold, and it is up to the Storyteller to make these Changelings up.



Plans to Mary Donnelly's Freehold



1. 'Effing Luceal's Basement Workshop
2. Prison of The Weird Thing in the Basement
3. Hallway
4. Living Room
5. Dining Room
6. Kitchen
7. Recreation Room
8. Mary's Room
9. Bathroom
10. 'Effing Luceal's Pit
11. 'Effing Luceal's Spare Workshop
12. The Gathering



Countess Mary Donnelly

It is no mystery why Mary went through Chrysalis so late in her mortal life. She spent all of her mortal days as a well-to-do spinster on every church and social committee going, taking in strangers, befriending the local children, and generally doing what spinsters do; holding down a respectable job in a bookstore and ignoring the advances of all suitors. Spending her days with books and strangers all her life left her very open minded, and as she went through the menopause her true Faerie self was suddenly revealed to her and she hasn't looked back since. Mary may envy the Childlings, Wilders, and younger Grumps their youth sometimes, but she has avoided the ravages of Banality that cause so many to forget their true natures.

Her Fae Mien is that of a sparrow, a small flighty bird that hasn't a lot of outer beauty but is full of character. This means to other Fae she has an ornothoptic quality to her seeming, with little beady eyes and a birdlike nose or beak.

Her only permanent companion is a female Nocker Toymaker and inventor called 'Effing Luceal who has a workshop in the large basement of her house. She makes all the toys that the Childlings play with in the attic, the rooms set aside for the Childlings to go when the Wilders and Grumps want to talk about more serious matters. There are rumours about the nature of their relationship, but the Nocker's sharp tongue and wit soon silences anyone who dares mentions them.

The truth of the matter is that Luceal was instrumental in guiding Mary through her Chrysalis, and they've been as close as sisters ever since. How Mary manages to put up with Luceal's foul mouth and constant outbursts of obscenity is a mystery, but through mutual respect Luceal rarely aims her barbed tongue in Mary's direction.

Mary earned the title of Countess, and the shared Guardianship of the Freehold, through disposing of the Thing in the Basement (see Appendix II). Note: Any stats in [square] brackets are for when she is in her Animal Mien.

Court: Seelie

Seelie Legacy: Courtier

Unseelie Legacy: Riddler

Kith: Pooka

Animal Affinity: Sparrow

Seeming: Grump

Attributes:

Physical: Strength 2 [1], Dexterity 2 [1], Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Abilities:

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Dodge 2 [3], Empathy 1, Kenning 3, Persuasion 1, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Etiquette 3, Leadership 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 3, Gremayre 3, Investigation 2, Lore (Fae) 4, Politics 2

Advantages:

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Holdings 4, Remembrance 3, Resources 3, Title 4, Treasures 3

Arts: Chicanery 3, Primal 2, Soothsay 3

Realms: Actor 2, Nature 2, Fae 3, Prop 2

Tempers:

Glamour 5

Willpower 5

Banality 5



Lady ‘Effing Luceal

Lady ‘Effing Luceal lives at Mary Donnelly’s Freehold on Rochester High Street, a Seelie Freehold located in an old town house. She is the typical Nocker – foul mouthed, obnoxious, rude and very hard to get along with, but she is tolerated because of her talent for building and maintaining Æthernet systems, along with the usual toys and weapons she is known for.

Her relationship with Countess Mary Donnelly is good, even if a little heated at times. It is very unusual for a Nocker and a Pooka to get along, so there are bound to be the occasional arguments, but somehow Luceal manages to never swear at Mary – she might swear in her presence, but never *at* her.

Luceal is the lover of Morigana, and as such is often found in her chambers when she isn’t working in her workshop in Mary Donnelly’s Freehold. Because of the time she spends at A Dream of Dark Velvet, there is a fair chance that she will turn Unseelie.

Luceal earned the title of Lady, and the shared Guardianship of the Freehold, through disposing of the Thing in the Basement (see Appendix II).

Court: Seelie
Seelie Legacy: Crafter
Unseelie Legacy: Grotesque
Kith: Nocker
Seeming: Wilder
Society: Toymakers Guild, Weapons Guild

Attributes:

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2
Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Abilities:

Talents: Intimidation 2, Kenning 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Crafts 5, Etiquette 1, Mining 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2
Knowledges: Chimerical Alchemy 4, Computer 2, Gematria 4, Lore (Fae) 2, Politics 1, Science 3

Advantages:

Backgrounds: Chimera (Golem) 2, Treasures (Basilisk Stone, Ornithopter) 3, Title 2
Arts: Chicanery 2, Infusion 4
Realms: Actor 2, Nature 3, Prop 3, Fae 2

Tempers:

Glamour 6
Willpower 4
Banality 4



Appendices

Appendix I: Treasures.

The Gavel of Quietus – Level Two Treasure

This gavel looks like a standard wooden gavel that is found in most courtrooms and meeting halls. If successfully used, it can call ANY meeting to order and the speaker immediately commands the respect of the room. Should the user botch it, the meeting descends into further chaos. Of course, Unseelie Fae can use this in the opposite way should they have control of the gavel.

To use the Gavel of Quietus, the user must make a successful roll against Charisma and Willpower at a difficulty of 6. The more successes the user gains, the longer its effect on the meeting in question.

- 1 success – 5 minutes
- 2 successes – 10 minutes
- 3 successes – 30 minutes
- 4 successes – an hour
- 5 successes – the entire meeting

In the case of an Unseelie Changeling using it to cause chaos in a meeting, the difficulty goes up to 8, on account of the fact that the Gavel was made to bring order to meetings, and not chaos. Also, should the Unseelie Changeling botch this action the Gavel cannot be used again for the duration of the meeting. Again, the amount of successes gained denotes the time that the Gavel has the desired affect.

Note: This Treasure is located in The Gathering.

The Silver Brush of Fine Locks – Level Two Treasure

The brush is an old-fashioned silver hairbrush, design circa 1900. It enables the user to create a perfect coiffeur with very little effort by spending a single Glamour point while using it. Without spending the single Glamour point it works just like an ordinary hairbrush.

Note: This Treasure is located in Mary’s room, on the dressing table.

The Vicar Torturer – Level One Treasure

The Vicar Torturer is a leather easy chair from the 1930’s that has been heavily worked upon by ‘Effing Luceal. It is designed to be a prank of the most embarrassing nature as whenever someone sits in it, the chair makes the sound of a very wet fart and emits a foul smell. This appeals to both Mary’s sense of Pooka prankishness and Luceal’s Unseelie Legacy (Grotesque).

Note: This Treasure is located in one corner of Mary’s room.



Appendix II: The Weird Thing in the Basement.

On the other side of the stairs leading down to the basement is a bricked off room that no one dares open up again. The doorway is located behind the stairs and is also blocked off with a pile of Luceal’s “junk”. When Mary and Luceal inherited the Freehold, it had been in disuse for some time, and a Chimerical creature had taken up residence in the basement due to the residue of Glamour still in the place.

According to local Changeling knowledge, during the sixties the freehold was a hotbed of the Free Love Culture, with most of the changelings taking on a Hippie image with both their mortal and Fae Miens.

When the first moon landing happened in 1969, there was a sudden influx of Glamour in the Autumn World, and all the sexual dreams and worries about the bomb manifested into a powerful Chimera, and the Freehold had to be abandoned. From then on, the King Paul ap Fiona, of the Kingdom of Chalk, declared the building off limits till such a time that a worthy hero could be found to dispose of, or otherwise deal with, this Chimera. How Mary and Luceal were able to trap this Chimera in a room in the basement and confine it there no one knows, but their reward for doing so was inheriting the honour of being the guardians of the Freehold, along with appropriate titles.

Sometimes you can hear it lurking about in its prison muttering obscenities and apocalyptic threats, and the general consensus is that you are best to ignore it and let Mary and Luceal take care of it.

Chimera Points Cost: 38

Attributes:

Physical: Strength 0, Dexterity 0, Stamina 0

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

Abilities:

Talents: Alertness 2, Intimidation 3

Skills: Stealth 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 2

Redes:

Dreamform

Befuddle

Fear

Hide

Shapeshift

Tempers:

Glamour 5

Willpower 3

Health Levels:

OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, DEAD



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Thanks to my parents for putting up with my imaginative inclinations as a kid – I wasn't much of a social person as a child and I guess they worried too much about this. They used to despair at my spending habits and reading material (I guess they still do).

Phil Brennán 2003.

And now for the legal stuff...

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