October Daye - the Fixed Stars Gauntlet (Jumpchain)

In the late 20th century, a changeling knight named October Daye was transformed into a fish for most of two decades, and returned to find the world had changed without her.

This is not her story.

Long before the Knight of Lost Words fought for changelings' rights, Emrys of Camelot was fighting for changelings' *existence*.

The year is 572, early in Faerie's history, as such things are measured in Toby's time. Tomorrow night, blood will stain the stones at Brocéliande, fortress of Titania, where Arthur shall be crowned, in a final battle between Faerie's least and Faerie's greatest. If the merlin army proves victorious, they will guarantee a place for themselves in the world. If the purebloods carry the day, any Fae with even a trace of human blood will be hunted down and slaughtered in perpetuity.

You begin within Brocéliande itself, as a member of the pureblood army, or in Emry's camp, among your merlin allies. Your choice.

You must fight in and survive the ensuing battle to succeed this gauntlet- and it is a gauntlet, so you're reduced to your body mod and warehouse- though if you die or fail to fight in the battle, you merely lose everything you earned here, rather than failing your chain. You do not get any (Changeling's) Choice Points for free, but may take Drawbacks to acquire them. You may freely choose your sex and age.

+0 CP.

Drawbacks

Englisc (+100) While you'd normally be given a grasp of the language just for coming here, you do not seem to have been given any understanding of Old English, which is the local lingua franca. Hope you know some from a previous jump, or this'll be awkward.

Speak Truth, or Not at All (+100) Like the Luidaeg, you cannot deliberately lie, and if you accidentally speak falsehood, you generally have to acknowledge it immediately. Fortunately, you can still joke, tell stories, or be sarcastic without issue. Worth double with the Full Span.

Mortal Eyes (+100) Much of Faerie is closed to humans; it doesn't concern them, and they weren't meant for it so they can't see it. Furthermore, some of what they can see is dangerous to look upon, in and of itself. Even as a pureblood, you suffer from the same issue, needing fairy ointment to perceive Faerie properly, and being susceptible to the beauty of fae like the Gwragedd Anwwn.

Drop In (+100) You have no past within this world, and no memories within it, which will make your sudden appearance the day before the final battle awkward, if not outright dangerous.

Racist (+100) You have a strong bias against the opposing side of the conflict, causing you to underestimate their strength, intelligence, and determination. I hope you're not in a command position…

Once Broken Faith (+100) Previous actions have given you such a reputation that your allies doubt your loyalties, rightly or wrongly, and while they probably won't betray you on the battlefield today, they might…

Where House? (+100) Your warehouse is sealed for the duration of the gauntlet. Worth double with Full Span.

What are the Fire Kingdoms? (+100) Your education on Faerie's internal divisions and details is incomplete, leaving you with potentially dangerous gaps in your knowledge.

Full Span (+200) Rather than being stuck here for two days, you begin at your starting location in 565, and the gauntlet lasts until the same day in 579. I can't say if violence has broken out yet, but it will soon.

Sea Witch (+200) You are bound to grant any favor within your power, and while you may - and must - demand a fair price for it, you cannot speak great truths or do large favors without payment, unless you can spin it as somehow selfish, and even then great debts can block it. Worse, everyone knows it. Worth double with Full Span.

Oberon's Law (+200) Oberon set down one capital-L Law; pureblood shall not kill one another, save during a declared war or by royal command. Unfortunately, other purebloods (and Oberon himself) universally agree that you are the exception to this Law, and anyone who kills you will likely go unpunished. Not available to merlin, human, or changeling, since they're already exempt. Requires Full Span.

Poor Control (+200) You were not trained to control your magic properly, and so it leaks. Your spells are inefficient, and your innate powers may activate automatically. Not available to humans without A Great Wizard.

A Parent's Strife (+200) You know a mother's grief, as you have lost a beloved child to age, violence, or so forth. If taken as a human, they may optionally be a changeling stolen by the fae, and you might yet get them back and take them as a companion. In Titania's Faerie, this is extended to merlins as well.

Perfumes of the Battlefield (+200) You've never fought in battle before, and the first time you see a man die will likely traumatize you. I hope you aren't in a command position, because you're green as grass, no matter how well trained you are.

May Faerie Forgive Me (+200) One of the high ranking members of your faction is a traitor, and their actions may well spell your defeat.

One Big Family (+200) All the fae, including changelings and merlins, are descended from one man and two sisters, usually within four generations. They're so closely related that it isn't even funny, but at some point, they forgot this. You are one of the few that remember, and will weep for every drop of blood Faerie sheds.

Rebel Leader (+200) You wake not as a footsoldier, but as Emrys himself - or Emryn, if preferred. Your duty is to lead the merlins to victory or else fail the gauntlet. Merlin faction only.

Twenty Flavors of Reality (+200) One of the Firstborn wondered if there was more to reality than fae can see, just as there's more than humans can see. If there wasn't before, there is now. The fae cannot easily see them, though men and changelings might, but there are magical forces and groups hidden beyond Faerie's borders, which are peer or superior to Faerie itself. Some of them may feature in local faith or future fiction, and while they probably aren't Lovecraftian, knowing the other side might have an Iron Druid or a Fateweaver or a literal demon or a coterie of vampires or a pack of werewolves or who knows what else won't make things easier- even your allies are less predictable. Worth double with Full Span.

Reversing the Tides (+400) It all goes as it should, Emrys and the sea witch will conspire to ensure that the merlins prove victorious, setting the stage for October and others millennia down the line. You must stop this from happening or fail the gauntlet. Unfortunately for you, you've lost all memory of the canon events here. Pureblood faction (and assholes) only.

Titania's Faerie (+400) Nevermind Albion and 572. The year is 2015, and you are in the Kingdom of the Mists, AKA California. Only it isn't the proper timeline - it's "fair" Titania's wretched fantasy, where changelings are chattel, shapeshifters are extinct, and soothsayers are anathema. And this time it's no illusion- this is how this world is and has always been, since Maeve's Ride was broken, though a few out of place figures still seem to exist. Your mission is no longer to fight in the battle - merely to survive. This requires Full Span, and may only be taken as a seer, shapeshifter, human, changeling, or merlin. This adjusts other drawbacks in various ways - for instance, if taken with Rebel Leader, you are responsible for rising in rebellion and winning the changelings and merlins greater rights. Your jump would continue until you die or succeed in that case.

Throwing Down the Gauntlet (+500) If you fail the gauntlet, you fail your chain and will be sent home in failure. Worth double with Full Span or Reversing the Tides, triple with both.

Race

You may only purchase one of these, unless you purchase the Hybrid perk.

Aes Sidhe (100) Human-sized descendants of pixies, these children of Maeve have wings and water magic, though it's unclear if they can still fly.

Adhene (100) A short race of unknown descent known for their ability to detect deliberate lies - as well as their violent aversion to them. Origin unknown.

Banshee (100) Descendents of Titania known for their fearsome wail, which can kill or incapacitate as desired. Grieving banshees often wail by reflex.

Barrow-wight (100) A pale and diminutive race known for their physical strength. Ancestry unknown.

Bridge Troll (200) A study, dependable people made from stone, who tower over humans and most other Fae. Descended from Maeve.

Daoine Sidhe (200) A pale but ethereally beautiful race known for illusions, reading memories in blood, and a particular aversion to iron. Claimed by Titania.

Doppelganger (50) A race known for borrowing the shape and magic of others, though most fae don't consider them people, and they can't cast spells under their own power. Neither the King nor his Queens claim them.

Cait Sidhe (200) A race of shapeshifters descended from all Three Creators of Faerie, who Oberon granted political independence and reign over lost things. They walk the Shadow Roads as easily as a mortal might cross the street.

Changeling (+100) You are the result of a fairy dallying with a human, which leaves you at a crossroads. Your human heritage makes you resistant to iron, but it also leaves you with less magic, and ensures you will eventually die of old age- given a few centuries. Most fae will not consider you a person, especially in this era.

Cu Sidhe (100) Fae hounds with the intelligence of humans but the kindly, straightforward temperament of dogs. Each one has a unique dog form, but can also walk as a human or take the form of a fae sighthound. Unlike most fae, they can shapeshift without leaving a magical signature.

Ellyllon (100) Healers and hedonists with useless, gauzy wings. Ellyllon periodically molt, regenerating with new faces. Ancestry unknown, probably Titania.

Hob (Free) Hearth fae Titania created to act as servants - which they generally do, though not always for her. Still, it's hard to beat magical cooking and cleaning.

Morgen (200) Illusionists of the highest caliber, famed for the Llangefni screens which can be cast on a victim to totally shut them out of Faerie, even if they have access to Faerie ointment. Claimed by Titania, and extinct by 2015.

Glastig (200) A Satyr-like race best known for persuasion magic. Claimed by Maeve.

Gremlin (100) Faerie's metal-workers, a race resistant to iron but weak to yarrow wood, who helped build Brocéliande itself. Claimed by Maeve.

Gwragedd Anwwn (200) A primarily female race descended from Maeve's daughter Black Annis, known for their fatal beauty and skill with illusions. Lake maidens always bear new Gwragedd, but the rare males can sire mixed-blooded children.

Gwragen (200) The finest illusionists in modern Faerie. Descent unknown, probably Titania.

Human (+300) You are an ordinary human, a son of Adam or daughter of Eve, without even a trace of Oberon or Maeve or Titania's blood to grant you magic. Much - though not all - of Faerie is invisible to you by default, though you can use some minor marsh-water charms if you know how. No connection to the King and Queens of Faerie.

Korrigan (100) A race of soothsayers thought to be extinct, and most likely claimed by Maeve.

Night-haunt (100) A race tasked with disposing of the bodies of other Fae by eating them and creating mannequins for the humans to find. They take on the form of their most recent victim, and hold it for as long as that fairy or human lived, dying if they cannot find a new meal. Those that eat the living risk becoming Fetches, and die with their new twin. Claimed by Maeve.

Merlin (Free) Merlins are an anomaly; humans with a tiny spec of Fae ancestry that somehow allows them to work magic on par with a pureblood without conferring Faerie weaknesses, like iron, rowan, and sunrise. They belong to all lines, and none.

Piskie (200) Size-changing cross breeds of pixies and Aes Sidhe, claimed by Maeve alone, and described as natural thieves, though that might just be a stereotype.

Salamander (200) A child of the Fire Kingdoms, ancestry unknown, famed for their power to survive, generate, and control flames.

Shyi Shuai (200) A Chinese race of Fae claimed by Maeve, with the ability to read and manipulate luck, albeit at a price.

Silene (100) A practical but jealous race of centaur-like Fae claimed by Maeve, whose Firstborn will join them at Brocéliande.

Tlachtgae (100) A race of soothsayers sired by Mug Ruith, now called Blind Michael, and himself a son of Maeve, who is probably very protective of you, since you're supposed to be extinct. I'm sure Eira's looking for you.

Tuatha de Dannan (200) A race of teleporters claimed by Oberon and known for their rigidly honorable personalities.

Tylwyth Teg (100) A blonde haired and blue eyed race known for alchemy and flying on yarrow sticks. Claimed by Maeve.

Roane (200) Seers and stormsingers descended from Maeve through the Luidaeg, who possess the ability to take on the form of seals. Few now remain after a massacre some forty years ago.

Perks

Armed Conflict (50) You are familiar with swords, spears, axes, sixth century armor, standing guard, and fighting in a line.

Archer (50) You are skilled with blade and bow, but more so with bow than blade.

Investigator (50) Fairies usually dismiss mortal methods, but you're a detective worthy of a twenty-first century license or badge, which may come in handy.

Bard (50) You are a master of lutes and singing, know many songs, and may write more yourself, given time and purpose.

Blacksmith (50) By the standards of this time, you are a skilled smith.

Forager (50) You know how to hunt and gather food from the wilderness.

Protection (50) You have enough control over your fertility that you'll never unintentionally or unwillingly create offspring, no matter what other circumstances occur. Wise Firstborn should take this.

Courtier (100) You have centuries of experience as an aristocrat, making you a master of subterfuge, politicking, and resource management.

Marsh-water Magic (100) Purebloods have power to waste, but for the rest of us, there's marsh-water charms. You know the tricks and techniques used to make magic flow easier and go further than it otherwise would.

Hybrid (100) You may purchase a second option in the Race section of this specific jump. This may be taken twice.

Our Responsibility (100) You have the knowledge and empathy necessary to raise a child into a healthy adult. You're also afflicted with strong feelings of duty towards any child you may have, ensuring you'll never abandon or abuse them.

Hand Picked (100) You can walk swiftly and silently when you wish to, and are skilled at avoiding detection, entering places uninvited, and stealing possessions off people or buildings.

Advisor to the Throne (100) You are learned in a wide variety of subjects, including diplomacy, history, economics, and mathematics. Any monarch would be lucky to have you providing information and wisdom when necessary. This updates every jump or decade.

Best in the Kingdom (100) Most fae can use most magic, but you're particularly talented and particularly skilled with a particular branch of the magic you can use. You probably won't live up to the name without getting really specific or picking something your race is generally good at, but this can be as broad as blood or water magic, though alchemy and wards and healing are popular choices.

An Actual Changeling's Choice (100) To preserve Faerie's secrecy, every changeling child is given a choice; be human and die, or be fae and leave the Earth until their mortal parent dies. Some would call it necessary. I call it cruel. You won't have to worry; any of your children or descendents who make that choice loses the offending ancestry, as though they'd used a hope chest.

Captain (200) You know enough about tactics, strategy, logistics, and public speaking to be Emrys' second in command- or his equal.

A Great Wizard (200) Your magic runs unusually strong, making you a royal kitten instead of a common Cait Sidhe, or Emrys among the merlins, or so forth. If you don't have the ability to cast spells under your own power, you gain it for taking this, though only to a minor degree. See Toby in book one. Discount merlin faction.

In the Hundreds (200) You may import all of your companions into this and every future jump. They don't get any points unless they take drawbacks, however, and they cannot take the "global" drawbacks. Discount merlin faction.

I Have Betrayed You (200) You are a masterful manipulator, capable of creating and swiftly adapting schemes that stretch centuries and millennia, even across kingdoms. Discount pureblood faction.

Like a Bonfire Next to the Sun (200) You are exceptionally difficult to find or predict using divination and other means, including apparent work arounds like quantum computing. Discount pureblood faction.

Firstborn (500) You are a direct child of Oberon, Titania, or Maeve- or at least, you have the power and status of one. Your choice on both accounts. You are a unique creature, with a vast well of magic and the ability to create new descendent lines. You are also impossible to kill, unless struck with both iron and silver.

Items

Possessions bought here are replaced or replenished after 24 hours, not that it'll help you during the battle.

Weapon (50) A steel sword, spear, battle ax, or bow and quiver of arrows. You also get a tent, a shield, and a coat of arms. This may be taken multiple times.

Faerie Ointment (50) A pot full of the concoction which allows mortals to see Faerie properly and completely. It will have similar benefits in later worlds.

Armor (50) Fae forged armor, fitted perfectly to your body.

Silver Dagger (50) A dagger of silver.

Iron Arrows (50) A quiver of fifty arrows, all of which are tipped with pure iron for maximum fairy-killing action.

Cold Iron (50) An alchemically reinforced weapon of the purest iron and highest quality. You may choose to shape it as any weapon that exists in this time period.

Coffee (50) A steaming mug of the finest modern joe, enchanted to remain warm and affect even the most powerful fae exactly the way it is designed to. Not typically available in this setting, but perfectly matched to your tastes.

Elf Shot (100) A potion invented by the Daoine Sidhe Firstborn, Eira Rosynhwyr. It knocks purebloods out for a century, but kills those with human ancestry, because she's a psychotic bitch who hates mixed bloods, shapeshifters, and humans, among other things.

Blood Vials (100) A few dozen vials of blood taken from common varieties of fae. Daoine Sidhe and other bloodworkers can drink them to briefly mimic the donor's powers.

Hugleikr's Scabbard (200) A magical sheath which can transform any metal into purest iron. This could easily destabilize a kingdom's economy, but having weapons against the fae could save many lives.

Hollow Hill (200) A small fief of your own, complete with a knowe and staffed with a few dozen fae loyal to you, including a handful of guards who have come to fight the battle alongside you. For double points, it's a modern dutchy instead of a current county, which makes it many times larger and more diverse.

Hope Chest (300) A magical artifact used to change the balance of a fairy's blood, allowing changelings to become mortals or purebloods, and mixed bloodlines to be purged. More will be created after the battle at Brocéliande, if all goes well, but for now there are only a few. Outside this world, it may affect most other sorts of paranormal heritage, though there are many it can't remove.

Companion

Those you purchase here become your companions, and may follow you into later jumps. Given the short timeframe, they have already been convinced to come with you, but that doesn't necessarily make them trustworthy.

Import (50) One of your companions from a previous jump is also here. They get a faction and half points on any drawbacks you take. They can also take certain drawbacks of their own, specifically the ones that only affect them. All powers and items from previous jumps are sealed for them as well, however.

Emrys of Camelot (100) A great wizard among mortals, a student of the Luidaeg, and the general of a mongrel army fighting for the right to exist. He is one of the first and most influential merlins, and so his nickname becomes their title.

The Luidaeg (200) A Firstborn daughter of Maeve and Oberon, cursed by Titania to speak no lies and grant all favors, so long as her price is paid. Few can match her in divination, magic, or cunning, and her old age has granted her a rare wisdom and empathy.

Blind Michael and Acacia (300) A glorious monster in the making, this young son of Maeve sees through the eyes of others, as his own are sightless. He is married to the mother of the trees, a daughter of Titania who cannot travel easily, but will roam with him.

Stacy Brown (100) A woman out of time, but one who deserves better than she got. You can think of her as a sort of Firstborn, and while her magic is rather weak, it's a good comparison. All curses on her have been removed.

An Actual Evening Winterrose (100) Another person out of time, this arrogant but caring Daoine Sidhe is very lost, but willing to get more lost with you thanks to the actions of Eira Rosynhwyr.

Ending

After the battle, you may choose to Go Home, Stay Here, or Move On. If you were slain, you cannot choose to Stay Here, and lose everything you won or purchased in this world, but may still decide to Go Home or Move On to another jump.

If you succeeding the gauntlet, and don't choose to Stay Here, you receive this perk;

Heartless (Special) No matter its distance or condition, you and your descendants retain a connection to the Heart of Faerie which sustains all fae life.

Notes

Made in honor of book 19, which just came out, and also the fact that it's October.

Changelings and merlins may choose what sort of fae they're descended from, though it doesn't really matter to merlins. Changelings must select a race that exists in this timeframe, but are allowed to Undines and other races that eschew mortal reproduction.

Iron weapons purchased here will retain their ability to devour and destroy most magic in other worlds. This does not extend to the sheath, however. Cait Sidhe have a similar grace for the Shadow Roads, and bloodworkers don't need magic to live in the blood the same way it does here to mimic it. The purchases from the race section may be considered perks.

An Actual Evening Winterrose is included because I liked Toby's descriptions of her dead friend and thought certain later developments were a tragedy.