

Yourself

An Allegory

A game by Kaden Ramstack

Yourself through Introduction

Game Description

Yourself is a solo roleplaying game where the player records a story based around drawing cards and using the prompts from the included tables.

This is a game of introspection and identity, as such you will not have a set goal or challenge to overcome. Instead you will engage in an in-depth character study of who you are, what you feel, and why.

Although this game addresses the player as if they were the character, you may choose to write the story in third person (using he/she/they instead of I/me) if you desire.

Yourself though Narration

Story Description

You lived believing as you were told, that you were human in entirety. Strong magic held back its influence, but the signs were always there. The illusions have gone thin--you are no longer bound to lies and you know Yourself a Changeling.

But what sort are you?

Yourself, Replaced

Traditional stories say the fae take a human child and replace them with either one of their own kind or something under an illusion to look human. Are you a living fae or a bundle of sticks?

Yourself, Descended

Some modern stories use the term “changeling” to refer to people who are part-human part-fae. They have faerie qualities hidden away by illusions or other means. You may also choose to have an ancestor who was fae instead of a parent.

Yourself through Caution

Content Warnings and Safety

This game contains themes of identity in reference to both heritage and the body and contains prompts that include:

- Rejection
- Abandonment
- Body dysmorphia/dysphoria
- Minor fantasy-based body horror
- Self doubt

Feel free to reject or modify prompts for any reason.

Yourself through Instruments

Game Tools

Required: Tarot or French Deck, Recording Method

Optional: d6, d20 if using French Deck

The instructions assume you will be using a Tarot Deck, but for the French Deck alternative see the rules below.

French Deck Alternatives

Major Arcana

To represent the major arcana roll a d20 and use the card that corresponds to the number on the die. Using a physical d20 will eliminate the possibility of pulling The Fool or The World but there are random number generators online which can be used instead. Or simply choose your card.

Minor Arcana

Swords - Spades

Pentacles - Diamonds

Wands - Clubs

Cups - Hearts

Yourself through Play

Game Instructions

Setup

Separate the deck into five suits: Major Arcana, Pentacles, Swords, Cups, Wands. Each Act will use a different suit.

Shuffle the Major Arcana

Draw the top card: This is your Human Side. This is who you believed you were. Use this as a guide for your past and connections to humans.

Draw the Bottom Card: This is your Fae Side. This is the new part of you. Use this as a guide for the unknown parts of yourself and your connection to the fae.

Keep these cards nearby and draw inspiration from their meaning as you answer the questions for each act. You will not return these cards into the deck until Act 5.

Gameplay

To start the game, draw a card from the correct Minor Arcana deck, read over the prompt, draw one card from the Major Arcana, then record your response to the prompt.

The Minor Arcana prompt will either give you questions to answer or a statement about yourself for you to elaborate

The Major Arcana represents your response to the prompt. It may be the person you talk to, how you feel about something, a memory, or an object. There is no wrong way to interpret the Major Arcana. Feel free to use the traditional meaning, a new meaning, or ideas from the art or name of the card.

At the end of each Act shuffle the Major Arcana cards you drew back into the deck. Do not return the Human Side and Fae Side cards to the deck unless it is Act 5.

Number of Cards

There are two different ways you can use to determine how many Minor Arcana cards there are for each Act.

Set Number Method

Choose the amount of cards you will draw for each Act. The recommended number is three, but you can always answer more or less depending on your story. Act 5 will always have one card.

Random Method

Roll 1 six-sided die to determine how many cards you will pull for the Act. Act 5 will always have one card.

Writing the Story

Keep in mind both Sides of yourself when answering prompts. You may be as vague or direct as you wish in your response, and may choose to answer the prompts implicitly instead of explicitly. There are two different methods for recording the story.

One Entry Method

For this method you will draw all three Minor Arcana cards at once, and draw only one Major Arcana card. You will combine them into one narrative entry.

Multiple Entry Method

For this method you will draw one Minor Arcana card, one Major Arcana card, and record your entry before drawing the next two cards.

Basic Flow

1. Draw Minor Arcana
2. Read Prompt
3. Draw Major Arcana
4. Record Entry
5. At the end of the Act, shuffle Major Arcana

Text Version

The text version of this game also includes each Act Prompt Sonnet by itself at the end of the document for ease of reading.

Act 1 Pentacles: Yourself in Reflection

The signs that only made sense in retrospect

A Deep down inside you knew the truth

You always knew. Maybe you were in denial? Maybe you kept it a secret because others wouldn't believe you. And now you don't have to hide.

2 You felt that something's always wrong

You always had a nagging sensation deep in your chest. What did you used to think it was? What did you used to do to try to feel right?

3 You'd never fit with other youth

How were you different from the other children? Was it how you looked? Was it how you behaved? Did you try to fit in? Did it work?

4 You have felt you don't belong

You thought yourself an outsider to your own home. Did other people actively make you feel unwelcome or was this a private feeling? In what ways did you feel alone? How did you deal with these feelings?

5 You felt the eyes of no one there

You always felt as though something was watching you but you could never find them. How old were you when you first realized they were watching? Did you ever figure out who or what it was?

6 Your reflection appeared askew

Something was always wrong with the mirrors. It was as if there was a haze around your image. You know now this is the illusion spell to keep up your human appearance. What did you tell yourself when you were younger? Did others see it as well? What did they think it was? How did this affect your self image?

7 There's something wrong with clothes you'd wear

You couldn't find something that made sense. Everything you put on felt wrong in a way that words couldn't express. What was odd about your clothing choices? Were they the wrong pieces for your body parts? Gloves on your feet? Or wrong for the current season? How did people react?

8 It seemed the animals all knew

The animals around you acted differently than other humans. How would wild animals react? And pets? Were they overly friendly or were you regarded as a danger?

9 A mundane trait that tipped the scales

A birthmark, overlapping toes, odd ears--some small physical attribute that a human would also have. This wasn't anything of interest and by itself it would have never been an indicator, but when combined with the other aspects it's clearly also a sign.

10 It seemed that dairy spoiled fast

You were always throwing away milk or eggs. They all seemed to rot faster than normal in your presence. When did you first notice this was different from other households? Have you changed what you eat because of this?

P You're more at home on nature trails

You were at peace when you were surrounded by nature. What was your favorite environment? How was your connection to nature different from other people? How did this impact your interests?

Kn A talent you had far surpassed

You were always too good at something, supernaturally so. You were far better than your peers and impressed your teachers and others. What was it? Something artistic, technical, or perhaps interpersonal? Did you enjoy doing it or learn to hate it?

Q A youthful ploy seen in new light

You did something once as a child that makes no sense. Was it something you actively did or was it a reaction to something that happened to you? Or perhaps you survived something that should have killed you.

K Why did the stories never feel right?

You had heard of other Changelings, read a few stories, heard third hand accounts from people who didn't understand, and one or two first hand experiences. But none of them matched your own. Why would you think you were one of them if your experience was so different? How was it different? What made you realize not everyone is the same?

Act 2 Swords: Yourself in Clarity

The changes to your body and your feelings towards it

A How does it feel to see your face?

When you look in the mirror what do you see? Who do you see? Is it still you?

2 Of yourself, are you in control?

Do you feel more or less in control over your body, mind, your fate? Is there a way you could be in more control?

3 There something wrong with you and space

You know your size is wrong. Are you big or are you small? How does this alter your perception both literally and figuratively?

4 There's a joy through truth in whole

What about knowing the truth has brought you the most joy? Was it a physical change? Emotional growth? How do you express this to yourself? Do you express this to others? How or why not?

5 Your speaking voice has found new sounds

How does your voice sound? Has it changed at all? Do you want it to change? Do you still sing?

6 You take the time to know your skin

How does it feel? How has it changed? What does it feel like to touch something? What does it feel like when someone touches you? Do you still want to be touched in the same ways?

7 The oddity of clothes compounds

How has your new body changed the clothing you wear? Do you still try to wear your old things? Do you try something new? What about the clothes you buy don't work for you? Can you even find things that fit? How much of you is what you wear?

8 An abundance or lack wherein

There is not enough, or is there too much? Of what? Is it something physical with your body or sustenance you need? Or is it something emotional?

9 There's something wrong with your two hands

Is it something physical? Extra joints? Palm too long? No fingers at all? How has the feeling of touching things changed?

10 Do you find movement strange and new?

Does your body still work the way it used to? How does it feel to move? How have activities changed?

P Accommodation's new demands

Each day you need to take into account your body or mind in a new way. What is it and how does this make you feel?

Kn Does the illusion still hold true?

Do you seek a way to break the illusion in its entirety? If yes, how? If no, why do you not want to? How much of your decision is for others?

Q Does doubt still linger in midnight hours?

When you are awake in your bed at night do you sometimes wonder if you are right? Is there ever a feeling that you don't truly understand what it is to be a Changeling and you are simply pretending because it is the only explanation you know? Have you fooled even yourself? How can you be certain?

K The Relief of Truth Empowers

How does it feel to finally have the words for what you are? How are you free without the weight of uncertainty? Describe your serenity or perhaps euphoria.

Act 3 Cups: Yourself in Relation

Your friends, your family, and the fae

A The Strange have always found another

The queer have always found each other before they know themselves. One of your friends is also one of the fae. Are they like you or are they different?

2 But did the ones who raised you know?

Were they complacent or simply ignorant? If complacent, why didn't they tell you? If ignorant, how do they react when you tell them?

3 And have you sought to find each other?

Do you seek the company of other Changelings? If yes, how do you find them? If no, why not and would you join them if they came to you.

4 Fae-chased relations tend and grow

Do you seek out a fae relative? The one that made you or an ancestor? If yes, how and do they respond? If no, why, and would you speak with them if they looked for you?

5 There's someone who won't take your word

Someone doesn't believe you. Do you try and convince them or do you sever your ties and is it painful or a relief?

6 A dear friend that you can't replace

Someone is always by your side. Who are they and how do they support you?

7 Secluded whispers thought unheard

People say things when they think you cannot hear. What are they telling each other? What do you wish you hadn't heard?

8 A stranger to a well known face

Someone you knew thought you were a stranger. What did it take for them to recognize you? How did this make you feel?

9 A secret or delight to share

Do you avoid telling people or do you let everyone know when given the chance? What is the reason you do this?

10 Received gifts from new relation

The fae have brought you a gift. What is it, how did you find it, and what do you give in return?

P A human aberration bare

There is something strange that humans do that makes no sense to the fae. Why have you abandoned it and how much better do you feel by doing so?

Kn And through descendancy elation

In what way do you connect to your fae heritage and how does it bring you joy? What do you enjoy the most about it?

Q Misfortune brews, are you to blame?

The humans believe you have attracted more fae to the area. Do they blame you for their ill fortune?

K They wish to find and know your name

One of the fae wishes to meet you. How do you receive the message? Do you go? If yes, who is it and what do they want? If no, why have you spurned their companionship and what do they do in retaliation?

Act 4 Wands: Yourself in Prospect

The encroachment of the future

A Through what appearance have you changed?

Why do you look different? What made you decide to change? Was it something small or something big?

2 You need discard something once dear

You have gotten rid of something you once thought important. What is it, what have you done with it and why do you no longer need it?

3 Your sights at night newly arranged

Do you still dream at night? How have these dreams changed? Are they pleasant, nightmares, or something inhuman all together?

4 Do you still feel your home is here?

Can you stay where you are? Where will you go? Where do you think you will be most happy?

5 A brand new thing brings joy unstilled

You have found something that brings you new happiness. What is it and how did you discover it?

6 A talent that you have returned

You go back to a skill you have always been good at. Does it bring you joy or revulsion in knowing your skill is through heritage not merit. Do you still engage in this activity?

7 How is the void inside you filled?

You feel there is something missing now that you know the answer to the biggest mystery of your life. What do you do to occupy yourself instead of questioning yourself?

8 You brim with questions and concerned

You still have questions for the fae. What are they, how will you find them, and what are you willing to sacrifice for answers?

9 Your life awry, a plan discarded

Things have changed. What was something you had planned that you can no longer do? What will you do instead?

10 How have you changed your home, your room?

What alterations have you made to your living space? Have you redecorated or rearranged or even started over completely?

P Both sides of you should be regarded

How do you balance being both of fae and human origin? Have you had to make any compromises?

Kn Through hardships fledgeling ties do bloom

You have made new connections. Who are they and how will they help you? Where do you see these relationships going in the future?

Q Are you compelled to choose a side

The fae seem to accept you, the humans aren't too sure. You feel compelled to choose a side to stay. Which one? Why? What will you do?

K And to the fae are you still tied?

Do you still continue to seek out the fae? What do they still have to offer you? If no, why not, and how do they react? Do they still wish a connection with you? What are the consequences for continuing or severing this relation?

Act 5: Yourself in Entirety

You

Take your Human Side then take your Fae Side and shuffle them both into the Major Arcana deck.

Spread the Major Arcana out along your table face down or fan them out in your hand with the backs facing towards you. Select which one calls to you then answer the corresponding prompt.

0 The Fool 1 The Magician 2 The High Priestess 3 The Empress
4 The Emperor 5 The Hierophant 6 The Lovers 7 The Chariot 8 Justice
9 The Hermit 10 Wheel of Fortune 11 Strength 12 The Hanged Man 13 Death
14 Temperance 15 The Devil 16 The Tower 17 The Star 18 The Moon
19 The Sun 20 Judgment 21 The World

What does it mean be

Yourself?

The choice was always yours to make

Credits and Acknowledgements:

The author would like to acknowledge that most changeling legends are the root in the ableist belief that children with disabilities were not considered humans, which lead to abuse and infanticide. These stories do not take into account the perspective of the children or changelings.

This game is made In Memory of Anamnesis

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