

FATE™ WORLDS

VOLUME ONE: WORLDS ON FIRE



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Flexible RPG systems like **Fate Core** are terrific if you have the time and energy to put into building a world. But we also realize that sometimes extensive prep just isn't feasible. The good news? You can still experience the Fate awesomeness with the help of the **Fate Worlds** expansion.

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FATE CORE



FATE™ WORLDS

VOLUME ONE: WORLDS ON FIRE

TOWER OF THE SERPENTS

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This is "express permission." Carry on.

This is a game supplement where people have made up stories
about wonderful, terrible, impossible, glorious things. All
the characters and events portrayed in this work are fictional,
or in the case of those based on history, fictionalized.

Resemblances to real people, fantasy adventurers, power-mad cyborgs,
enraged sorcerers, practitioners of witchcraft, werewolves, evil
World War One era flying robots, mutants, superheroes, cowboys,
politicians, or gorillas is purely coincidental, but kinda hilarious.

Except for the firefighters of Fight Fire.
Because that one is about real heroes, yo.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Fate Core* Kickstarter campaign was nuts. Seriously nuts. The good kind of nuts. The kind of nuts that makes the numbers seem like pure imagination and fireworks—until you start to get the chance to turn those numbers into something *real*.

The book you're reading now is one of those real things.

With that in mind, let's say then that the *mixed* nuts of that happy occasion were found throughout the project's stretch goals in twelve delightful flavors of settings and adventures for *Fate Core*. Originally, these weren't thought of as a unified whole. Each world-setting stands on its own to provide a brief, easily digested tour of one set of possibilities for the game.

The direction I gave to each author was simple: create a world, support it with *Fate Core* rules, and keep an eye out for doing something a little different with the mechanics—something an enterprising reader might steal for their own games. And deliver they did, as you'll soon see, and as our project's backers already have. In fact, they delivered too much to fit into one book.

And so, here we have *Worlds On Fire*, the first volume of *Fate Worlds*. Each of the settings offered here teeters on the verge of something explosive—or has already survived the explosion and is doing what it can to survive the burn, and maybe even master the flame itself. Here's what you can look forward to:

In Brennan Taylor's **Tower of the Serpents**, characters from the “implied” fantasy setting of *Fate Core* must survive the conflicting agendas of three separate factions—not to mention a quick-to-anger sorcerer—if they want to come out on top. It's low fantasy like you've never seen it before!

In Filamena Young's **White Picket Witches**, a sleepy island town hides dark secrets and old bloodlines brimming with witchcraft. It's time to tune in to your favorite supernatural soap that never was.

In Jason Morningstar's **Fight Fire**, you'll play the realest heroes you ever could: the women and men who serve as firefighters in our own world. Explore their lives, loves, and losses outside of the firehouse, and strap on your gear to take on the inferno. Anyone who's ever wondered how “On Fire” works in the *Fate* system will be thrilled with what they find in this one.

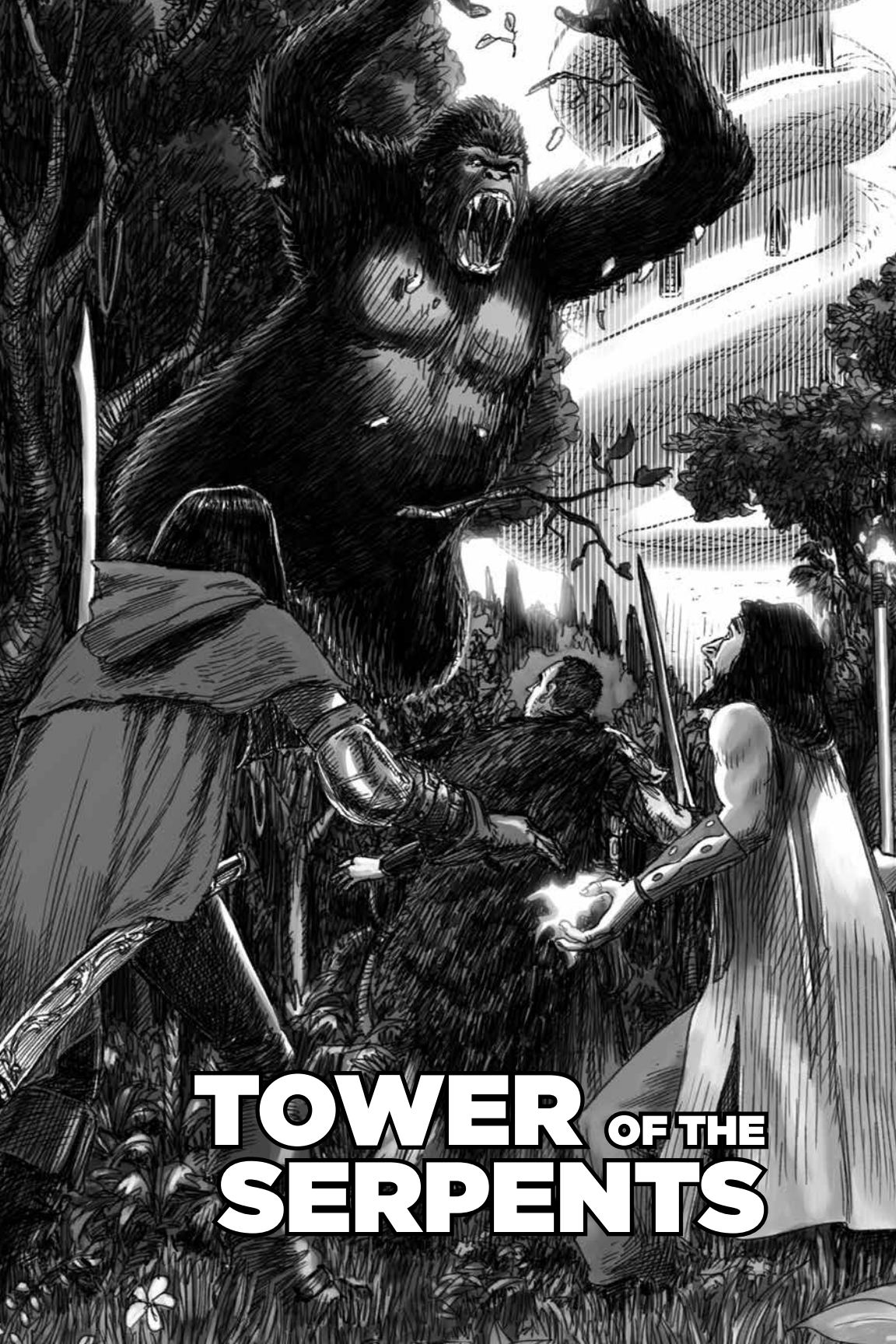
In Clark Valentine's **Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie**, players are a motley crew of famous flying aces from the World War One era facing the cybernetically-piloted biplanes of a mad scientist as they jockey for top dogfighter status and a favorable report in tomorrow's newspaper. And if they happen to save the world while doing it, why, that's great too!

In Sarah Newton's **Burn Shift**, the world is in ashes following the Burn. It's up to the mutated, mechanical, and mundane heroes of this changed land to pick up the pieces, build communities anew, and fight for freedom and prosperity.

And in Brian Engard's **Wild Blue**, fantasy cowboys and cowgirls with superpowers are the frontier law in a new land that isn't all that happy to see them ride on in. Will they come to amicable terms with the Folk—or be crushed by them?

All in all these are some of the strangest, most exciting settings I've ever seen in gaming. I can't wait to play them myself—and more to the point, I can't wait for *you* to play them. When you do, please email us about it at fatestories@gmail.com!

— Fred Hicks



TOWER OF THE SERPENTS



They say the Palace of Hadrin is one of the seven Wonders of the World. It rises 300 feet, its sheer porphyry walls without seam or mortar, its walls overtopped by minarets and domes made of crystal. Constructed in ancient times by methods lost to modern craftsmen, the Palace was once home to the Satrap of Sarnac. Travelers from all corners of the world come to the city of Riverton just to gaze upon it. In the days since Sarnac's destruction it became home to the local Governor. The bulk and height of the Palace leaves a whole district on the north side in permanent shadow, a place where the sun never touches. They call that place Darkside, and no travelers come here. Or if they do, they never come out again.

Darkside is a sprawling slum, a shantytown where a life can be bought and sold for only a few copper coins. The Governor's men do not go there unless in numbers. Darkside's streets are occasionally convulsed with gang warfare, and in those times blood runs ankle deep in the muddy streets. This, however, is not one of those times. Hugo the Charitable rules there now, his Scar Triad thugs walking unopposed. None dare challenge him; and even the Governor seems content with Hugo's rule over this den of thieves.

At the very center of this vile cesspool stands a tower, the Tower of the Serpents. Older than the Palace, older than the city, it is made of an unknown material, white and hard as steel. The tower's single spire rises nearly as high as the Palace walls, twin entwining serpents carved curling up the tower's sides. A sorcerer lives there, they say, and this rumor seems likely true. The tower has a garden around it that grows despite the lack of sun, and strange lights shine from its upper rooms at night. No one is ever seen entering or leaving the place and the single gate in the garden wall never opens. Darksiders say that on moonless nights you can hear the loathsome flutter of unholy wings from the top of the tower, and perhaps it is by this conveyance that the sorcerer comes and goes.

They also say the tower holds a treasure of incalculable value.

PART I: ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

Darkside is a dangerous place. Where better for rogues such as yourselves to rest your feet? Besides, coin can be hard to come by these days, and a Darkside flophouse costs practically nothing. Mama Sabba's is where you find yourself, a grim little dive with a low ceiling and rank straw on the floor, with what passes for rooms in the back. This tiny hole is big enough for maybe 20 people.

Darkside Aspects:

- *The Sun Never Shines*
- *Hive of Villainy*

Mama Sabba's Aspects:

- *No Murder at Mama's*
- *A Rough House for Rough Custom*

These situation aspects are on two different scales. One set applies to the whole area of Darkside. They can be used wherever the adventurers are within Darkside. The other set applies only to Mama Sabba's. While they are within that establishment, these aspects may be used.

Now that you have some situation aspects, how do you use them? Let's look at one in particular and give some examples. In Darkside, *The Sun Never Shines*. A player might want to *Invoke* this aspect when attempting to shadow someone through the streets. She can call on the aspect by pointing out the darkness hides her movements and spending a Fate point. She then may make a *Stealth* roll, adding a +2 to her roll. Or, if she rolls extremely poorly, she may choose to reroll all of her dice. If she doesn't have *Stealth*, she can use the aspect to create a *Fair* (+2) obstacle for her quarry to spot her moving through the streets.

Of course, *The Sun Never Shines* is an aspect, so it can work *against* the adventurers, too! You can use this to *compel* a player, telling him that the darkness hides numbers far above his original estimate and giving him a Fate point. Then six more thugs step out of the dark alleys to surround the adventurer.

Your group of adventurers may be just passing through, in which case they gravitated to Darkside because there no one asks questions. If this is your first adventure, it may be that the city of Riverton is the group's home base. If you already came up with a setting, and it has a slum where a mysterious sorcerer's tower could be placed, feel free to do so! Any of the NPCs in this adventure can easily be renamed or replaced with some that were developed when you built your setting.

This section, Part 1, is to get the adventurers in motion, and introduce three of the four factions with an interest in the storied treasure of Tower of Serpents. The order you introduce these elements is not really important. All of these people should get a chance to try to bribe and probably also threaten the adventurers before they make their expedition into the tower, just so they know what's at stake and who's after the treasure. These introductions don't have to take a lot of time, but if the players want to do some wheeling and dealing before going in, feel free to allow them to do so. Everything should go pear-shaped after the heist one way or another as everybody will want a piece of the adventurers.

Geshon the Mouth

Geshon is a local layabout who is happy to spread rumors for a little coin. He is still alive because he's smart enough not to say anything to offend Hugo or any of his men. His loose lips have their limits; those limits lie right where his words might threaten the integrity of his skin. Despite all that, he is happy to pass along information of less sensitive nature to anyone willing to buy a drink or two. Just remember that you can be sure that anything you tell him will doubtless make its way back to Hugo and his friends.

When he spots the rough-looking adventurers, Geshon makes a beeline, all friendly greetings and significant looks at their drinks. He lets it be known that he has information for them and invites them to buy him a drink to discuss it. Geshon has been instructed by the caravan-master Samar to find a likely group of thieves to obtain an item for him. Geshon has already sent three such groups to the caravan-master, but each has been rejected. Geshon will extoll the virtues of Samar, talk about the great reward and generally talk up the whole adventure as being worthwhile for the party. He'll really do his best to get them to go visit Samar. He really doesn't know much specifically about the job other than the fact that it's dangerous and highly paid.

To find out more, the adventurers need to pay a visit to Samar, who's at the caravan camp by the main market.

There are a lot of ways to approach good old Geshon here. The simplest is that Geshon is just giving the adventurers his info, for a small fee, of course, end of story. Many adventurers won't be willing to leave it there. It's unlikely they want to harm this fellow, he's a local loudmouth but useful in his weasely way. Despite that, the only extra information the adventurers might get out of him is that he's planning to blab to Hugo the Charitable immediately after sending them on their way. He's planning to tell the City Watch, too. Geshon sees no reason he can't get paid by every interested party.

GESHON THE MOUTH**Aspects:** *Unabashed Coward, Ask Old Geshon, Notoriously Loose Lips***Skills:** Great (+4) Contacts Good (+3) Rapport
Fair (+2) Deceit Average (+1) Investigate**Stunts:** Eavesdropper: Discover or create one additional aspect when using an Investigate roll to create an advantage by listening in on a conversation.**Stress:** Physical: Mental: **TROUBLE IN DARKSIDE?**

The players' adventurers are more than capable of taking care of themselves, so small-time thugs and pickpockets don't molest them. This adventure isn't really about that, but if you want an amusing distraction take a look at the Footpad and Guttersnipe NPCs. These NPCs can be used to create quick distractions and minor threats, such as a purse grab or an attempted mugging, but should be relatively easy to roll over. They are also useful if the adventurers need a quick ally or hireling.

FOOTPAD (FAIR)**Aspects:** *Dangerous in Numbers, Darkside Predator***Skills:** Fair (+2) Fight Average (+1) Stealth, Burglary**Stress:** Physical: Mental: **GUTTERSNIPE (AVERAGE)****Aspects:** *Never Far Away, Master of Distraction***Skills:** Average (+1) Stealth, Athletics**Stress:** Physical: Mental:

Samar The Caravan-Master

The caravan camp lies near the main market of Riverton. The market is inside the city, a large open square, filled with tents and shops just inside the gates, a place where you know you can get goods from all across the Empire and beyond. The caravan camp lies outside the city walls by the Governor's order. Trade is well and good, but it wouldn't do to have such traffic in and out through the gates. Riverton is a trade hub, with goods shipping up and down the rivers, and several overland trade routes ending here. The caravan camp is filled with foreign merchants and travelers even in the depths of winter. People of all sorts can be found here, and no one stands out here no matter how outlandish their appearance.

Samar's caravan is camped near the road, the wains drawn up in a row. Several fires burn here, even in the daytime, and Samar himself is seated on a modest stool by the main wagon. He is a lean man in his later years, his skin matted by years of sun and travel. He is dressed modestly in a southern style robe, rings glittering on his fingers and the people in his camp pay him deference worthy of a king. His smile rarely flees his face. Samar's camp seems quite well-defended, much more so than any other nearby caravan, with a dozen well-armed mercenary guards clustered about. Their leader is a burly, scarred woman with short-cropped red hair. She stands by Samar's right hand and does not share his good nature. She scowls at you constantly.

Samar is in fact a disciple of the Cult of Tranquility, a friendly face to their hidden plan. His bodyguard entourage is headed by Bloody Nikka, a veteran mercenary and callous murderess. She and her guards ensure that no trouble gets started here in the camp. Samar doesn't want trouble; he wants to hire the adventurers to raid the Tower of the Serpents.

Samar welcomes the adventurers in with a big smile, and explains what he's after. There is an artifact within the Tower, a figurine of a strange creature, similar to a six-legged lizard with tusks and a trunk like an elephant, but shorter. This is the Idol of the Hellaq, the item that Samar wishes the adventurers to recover for him from within the Tower of the Serpents. He offers a very lucrative reward to retrieve the item and deliver it to him.

Samar knows that the sorcerer will be absent from the tower in two night's time, under the new moon, which also falls on the Spring equinox. He instructs the adventurers that it's during that time they'll stage their raid. Samar has a charm in the form of a small wand, carved from witchwood and wrapped with silver wire, holding small pearls of jade. This is required to defeat the magical lock on the Tower. After the adventurers agree to take the job, Samar gives them this item, and warns them that this charm only helps them to open the door the Tower by overcoming any spells the sorcerer has placed on it, but that it has no power to defeat a physical lock. He also warns the adventurers quite sternly not to take anything within the Tower except for the Idol of the Hellaq.

If the adventurers are curious or suspicious, they may try to take a closer look at this caravan camp. Nikka and her thugs do their best to keep them corralled near Samar, and Samar is cryptic in his responses. In reality, the Cult of Tranquility requires the Idol of the Hellaq for a sinister and dangerous ritual, one which summons the Hellaq, a being that heralds the End Days according to Cult lore. Samar of course doesn't share this information with the adventurers, but the Mother of Silence, one of the leaders of the Cult, is within one of the wagons. She is completely shrouded in ochre linens, even across her face. She appears to be a woman beneath the cloth, but her voice is a terrible whisper, and there is no way to determine her age.

The adventurers may not want to just take Samar's word for everything. Samar is very tight-lipped about what the Idol is or what it does, but an adventurer may very well try to weasel more info out of him. This requires an opposed roll against Samar, using Rapport or possibly Provoke against Samar's Empathy or Will. If the adventurer wins this contest, they can get the impression that Samar is not all he seems, but is part of some larger organization that wants the Idol. If they succeed with style, Samar accidentally lets drop a hint that the Idol is needed for an important ceremony, and the adventurer catches a gleam of insanity in the caravan-master's eye.

One of the adventurers may try to slip away and poke around in the caravan camp. This is difficult, as Bloody Nikka is watching. To get away from her watchful eye requires a contest against her Notice. A success gets the adventurer away, but Bloody Nikka notices one of the adventurers is missing and send some of her mercenaries to find them. If they succeed with style, Bloody Nikka doesn't even notice that the adventurer is missing.

An adventurer with a few minutes to poke around may find some artifacts relating to the Cult of Tranquility. These can be discovered on a Good (+3) difficulty Investigate roll. They also notice that one of the wagons seems to hold an important cargo. This wagon has more security; it appears a bit more luxurious than the others, etc. This is the cart that holds the Mother of Silence. If the adventurer sneaks in, she speaks with them, but in a roundabout and unsettling conversation. She primarily tries to pry personal information from an adventurer in conversation.

After Samar has given the adventurers their task and they are leaving, Bloody Nikka makes sure she gets the final word in, outside of Samar's earshot. With a smile of genuine, if terrifying, pleasure, she tells the adventurers that if they attempt to double cross Samar, she will relish skinning them alive.

What Nikka is trying to here is to put an aspect on the adventurers that she may later take advantage of. This could be a boost or a situation aspect, depending on how well she rolls. Allow the adventurers to defend against the Provoke roll. Only those who fail must take the aspect *Terrified of Bloody Nikka*.

Caravan Camp Aspects:

- *Travelers from All Over*
- *Valuable Trade Goods*

SAMAR THE CARAVAN-MASTER

Aspects: *Friendly Face, Clever Negotiator, Always Hiding Something*

Skills: Superb (+5) Rapport Great (+4) Deceit
 Good (+3) Resources Fair (+2) Will
 Average (+1) Empathy

Stunts: Best Foot Forward: +2 to first Rapport roll with a given individual, provided he's using it to create an advantage.

Stress: Physical: Mental:



BLOODY NIKKA**Aspects:** *Cruel Streak, Veteran Killer, Ready for a Fight*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Fight Superb (+5) Provoke
 Great (+4) Physique Good (+3) Notice
 Fair (+2) Athletics Average (+1) Will

Stunts: Killing Stroke: Once per scene, when she forces an opponent to take a Consequence, spend a Fate point to increase the severity of that Consequence.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

NIKKA'S MERCENARIES (FAIR)**Aspects:** *Experienced Fighter, Work as a Team*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight Average (+1) Physique, Provoke

Stress: Physical: Mental:

MOTHER OF SILENCE**Aspects:** *Terrible Whispers, Shrouded in Cloth, Unspeakable Knowledge, Aura of Dread, Loyal Minions, Leader of the Cult*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Lore, Empathy
 Superb (+5) Will, Resources
 Great (+4) Deceit, Notice
 Good (+3) Rapport, Crafts

Stunts: Indomitable: +2 on Will rolls to defend against Provoke.
 Mind Games: Use Deceit to make mental attacks, provided she already knows a secret in the form of an aspect to use against a person.
 Lie Whisperer: +2 to Empathy rolls to discern or discover lies.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

The Governor

After the adventurers leave the caravan camp and attempt to re-enter the city, the Governor's Watch at the gate detains them and escorts them directly to the palace, under orders of the Governor herself.

You are escorted directly to the palace, its massive walls looming overhead. The courtyards and towers are far too rich for what would be a mere imperial outpost, but the Governor lives well for a minor official. You are escorted into a small audience chamber. This is not the vast one in the main hall, where immense columns lead to an intimidating throne, but instead a smallish chamber with a chair that is only a single step above the floor. The Governor sits here, gazing down at you. She is an older woman, a bit overweight due to her comfortable lifestyle, but her gaze is cold and steely. Standing at attention at her side is the captain of the Watch, Helen Thirdcoin, so called because it's said that the city merchants give her every third coin they earn in exchange for the honor of doing business in Riverton.

The Governor has been keeping a close eye on the doings of Samar since he came to town. She's well aware that he is no ordinary caravan-master, and she wants to know what he's up to, and if it sounds lucrative, get herself a taste. She closely interrogates the adventurers about their meeting with Samar. She knows he hired them to do something, and if she finds out it is a raid on the Tower, she is disturbed. The Governor has avoided dealing with the sorcerer so far, and she's in no big rush to do so now. Still, the Idol of the Hellaq sounds valuable, and she wants to get her hands on it before Samar.

Helen Thirdcoin is a strong and intimidating figure, though not nearly as terrifying as Bloody Nikka. Helen is a very large and heavy woman; her comfortable figure does not conceal her strength. She bears a massive two-handed axe, which she casually leans upon while she stares at the adventurers with a superior smirk. If they are from town, she knows them and does not approve. She does not express any reservations in front of the Governor, however.

After the adventurers leave, Helen has a city guard detachment follow them. This guard can be spotted with a Fair (+2) Notice roll, and the adventurers can try to dodge them from there. If they don't spot or evade the guard, Helen and the Governor can show up more quickly in Part III.

The Governor's offer is this: She offers the adventurers an extra fee, beyond what Samar had promised, if they bring the Idol of the Hellaq to her *instead*. She is a shrewd negotiator, and doesn't intend to allow the adventurers to leave the audience chamber without promising to give her what she wants.

Negotiating with the Governor is difficult—she’s a skilled politician. She uses every trick at her disposal to get what she wants. This won’t be a simple roll, but a full-on conflict of wits. Use the mental contest rules to play this out. Any mental stress the adventurers suffer can be cleared away relatively quickly, but the Governor doesn’t play nice. She doesn’t hesitate to threaten physical harm or incarceration, if that’s what’s required. She wants to scare them badly if they won’t make the promise she desires.

THE GOVERNOR

Aspects: *Ruthless Political Operator, Skeletons in the Closet, Soft from High Living, Clever Mind, My Bodyguard Is Well Paid, Competent Administrator*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Resources, Will
Superb (+5) Deceit, Contacts
Great (+4) Notice, Rapport
Good (+3) Empathy, Provoke

Stunts: Indomitable: +2 on Will rolls to defend against Provoke.
Money Talks: Use Resources instead of Rapport in any situation where ostentatious displays of wealth might help her cause.
Lies Upon Lies: +2 to create a Deceit advantage against someone who’s already bought one of her lies.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

GOVERNOR’S BODYGUARD (GOOD)

Aspects: *Experienced Fighter, Work as a Team*

Skills: Good (+3) Fight Fair (+2) Provoke
Average (+1) Athletics, Physique

Stress: Physical: Mental:



HELEN THIRDCOIN

Aspects: *Greedy to a Fault, Comfortable Position, Runs Riverton with an Iron Fist*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Fight Superb (+5) Investigate
Great (+4) Resources Good (+3) Provoke
Fair (+2) Physique Average (+1) Will

Stunts: Attention to Detail: Use Investigate instead of Empathy to defend against Deceit.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

THE CITY WATCH (FAIR)

Aspects: *Open to Bribery, When You Hit, Hit Hard*

Skills: Fair (+2) Provoke Average (+1) Fight, Physique

Stress: Physical: Mental:

The Scar Triad

Leaving the Palace, it seems your troubles are still not over. As soon as you return to Darkside you find yourself shadowed by rough-looking characters, all falling into step around you. You immediately recognize one of them as Little Hâr, a knife-man for Hugo the Charitable. The thugs all wear the green silk armband of the Scar Triad.

Little Hâr has instructions to bring the adventurers to see Hugo. Geshon's mouth has run on and on, and Hugo wants to know what Samar hired them to do. Hugo's welcome is friendlier than the Governor's, and the adventurers are brought to one of the Scar Triad houses, where Hugo sits at a table laden with food and drink. He invites the adventurers to join him in a meal, and some of his thugs join them, including Little Hâr.

Hugo shows off his knowledge, and discusses both their visit to Samar and the Governor. Hugo tells them that he's likely to help them by taking all of these complicated negotiations off their hands, as a favor to them, you see. They should just bring whatever it is the Governor and Samar want to him instead, and he will see to the resale. The threat of danger is never explicitly stated, as Hugo does not want to be vulgar. If the adventurers are rude, Little Hâr viciously threatens them, only to be gently admonished by Hugo. Although he does not say it outright, it is clear that if they do not do as Hugo asks, they make an enemy of the Scar Triad. Life in Darkside is going to be very difficult if that happens.

Negotiating with Hugo can be difficult. Like all the others, he won't want to take no for an answer. He's got a lot of intimidation to call on. It's not Hugo's style to be open about this, he lets his underlings do the threatening, and once they've softened the adventurers up by putting some advantages on them, Hugo calls them in, all reasonable words and conciliation. Directly challenging him can be dangerous, though. He won't like to have his power challenged in front of his people, and he'll take his revenge in an open way if someone does so.

Scar Triad House Aspects:

- *Den of Murderers*
- *Surprisingly Defensible*

HUGO THE CHARITABLE

Aspects: *I Rule Darkside, Network of Criminals, Iron Fist in a Velvet Glove, Absolutely Ruthless, Trust No One, Criminal Mastermind*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Rapport, Resources
 Superb (+5) Empathy, Contacts
 Great (+4) Notice, Deceit
 Good (+3) Stealth, Burglary

Stunts: The Weight of Reputation: Use Contacts instead of Provoke to create advantage based on his sinister reputation.
 Danger Sense: At the start of a physical conflict that would normally be a surprise, make a free Notice roll to gain an advantage since he's not really surprised.
 Security Specialist: set up defenses to counter Burglary and make an opposed Burglary roll against anyone trying to overcome these defenses.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

SCAR TRIAD THUGS (FAIR)

Aspects: *Dangerous in Numbers, Code of the Triad*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight Average (+1) Stealth, Burglary

Stress: Physical: Mental:

LITTLE HÂR

Aspects: *Toys with His Prey, Not a Nice Man, Mostly Loyal*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Shoot Superb (+5) Provoke
 Great (+4) Burglary Good (+3) Athletics
 Fair (+2) Fight Average (+1) Stealth

Stunts: Armor of Fear: Use Provoke to defend against Fight attacks, but only until the first time he suffers stress in a conflict.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

Deciding on a Course of Action

Everybody wants this thing. What are the adventurers going to do? It's probably a good idea to let the players take a few minutes to discuss their conundrum and possibly come up with a plan. The fact that three different factions want to get a hold of it is a problem, but it could also be an opportunity. Allow the adventurers to entertain plans to make as much money as possible out of this situation. It should be clear at this point that none of these factions will accept the adventurers choosing someone else over them. This is the problem they will have to deal with at the end of this venture, but for now, the problem directly lying ahead is the Tower itself.

One of the problems with a planning scene is that players can spend an excessive amount of time making a plan, and not getting to the adventure. Excessive caution can kill your pacing in a game, and Fate has a lot of ways to get around this.

Before they go in, they can use Investigate or Burglary to case the place. This allows players to create some advantages for themselves before they go in, and lets them get a good look at what they can see and come up with some strategies for overcoming them. Knowing what they will face helps cut down on planning time. Information on what they can discover is included in each of the descriptions of the Tower below.

As GM, you should definitely push them along if they are spending too much time on this anyway. Once they have a workable plan in place, jump ahead to the night in question. If the players are nervous about this, let them know they can still make rolls to create advantages based on their prep work, even after they are making their move. This is a really useful technique and can apply to the fallout when the various factions come calling for the Idol at the end as well.

PART II: TOWER OF THE SERPENTS

The Tower of Serpents is an anomaly. It has a high wall, like a villa, with a great wooden gate. Within, the tops of trees peek out above the wall, evidence of a fine garden. At the center, the white tower rises pristine above the filth of Darkside. It would be more at home in an untouched forest, or even in the wealthy quarter of town. Here it has no place, a fine building and grounds with rickety shanties clustered around, but never touching, its walls.

This is the goal. Samar has specified that the time to make their move is in two nights, when the new moon falls on the Spring equinox. The adventurers now just need to figure out a plan for getting in, finding their target, and then making their escape.

On the night of the raid, the night is black as pitch, with only the stars providing light. The torches and candles within Darkside are poor substitute for moonlight, and the area around the Tower is particularly dark. The Tower itself is dark, with a light shining only from a single window near the top. As you approach the wall, you hear a loathsome flutter overhead, as if unseen creatures with oily wings pass by. The sound clusters at the pinnacle of the Tower, and then moves away to the north. The light at the top of the Tower then winks out.

Situation Aspects:

- *Night of the New Moon*

The Wall

Your first obstacle is the wall. It appears to be an entirely ordinary wall, constructed of mortared stone, and standing roughly 15 feet high. There is only a single gate, a massive construction of oak timbers and iron fittings. This gate has never opened in living memory.

The gate is chained and barred from the inside. Dirt and trash has built up outside, and it would require a little excavation to get it to open even if the bars and chains are removed. Although it looks like an entrance, it is for all intents and purposes no different than another stretch of wall, built of wood rather than stone.

The top of the wall itself comes to a peak of mortar topped with iron spikes, making it an uncomfortable place to perch. The peak and spikes actually make it rather easy, though, to hook a grapnel onto it, which is probably the best way over the wall. Its stone and mortar construction also give it a rough, grooved surface, a relatively easy job to scale it, free climbing, a Fair (+2) difficulty Athletics roll. The climb takes only a few minutes. A rope makes this a Mediocre (+0) difficulty climb, taking less than half the time.

Curiously, although the rough shacks and shanties of Darkside cluster against all available vertical surfaces, even the walls of the Palace, no one has built a single structure within 20 feet of these walls, leaving a large open lane, littered with trash and debris, between the slum and the outer walls of the tower. This space is easy enough to cross, but can be hazardous for the incautious. Discarded bits of wood and metal can gouge or pierce feet or legs if someone crosses quickly, without taking care to pick their way. It takes a few minutes to cross carefully. An Athletics roll can cover the distance more quickly, but it is hard not to injure oneself. It is a Fair (+2) difficulty roll. A failure means a character must suffer 1 physical stress from a gouge in the shin or the sole of the foot.



These difficulties can all be discerned in advance with a Fair (+2) Investigate or Burglary roll.

The Garden

Within the wall is the garden, a park-like area of cultivated trees, grass, and flowers. It seems quite pleasant and peaceful, a curious atmosphere within the filth and danger of Darkside. This appearance is, without a doubt, far too good to be true.

This garden is, indeed, a trap. The garden itself is completely harmless, and a place that the sorcerer wanders when in a contemplative mood. The sorcerer is in no danger from the garden's guardian, but the adventurers have no such immunity.

When they examined the Tower from outside, it is possible they noticed some large shape moving through the trees and causing them to bend and shake. This is the first true guard of the Tower, a massive ape twisted by sorcery into a horrific monster. It stands fully 10 feet high at the shoulder, and its skin is studded with knobs and spikes of bone. Its fingers and toes have long, wickedly curved talons, and the tusks within its mouth have sprouted into immense curved fangs, as long and sharp as knives. It dwells within the garden and is the reason no thieves have so far entered the tower. All previous Darksiders who ever dared to cross the wall made a meal for the beast.

The shaking trees can be spotted with a Good (+3) Investigate or Burglary roll. A success with style allows an adventurer to spot the massive dark form of some animal moving through the trees. The ape can't be made out clearly in advance, but his great size is obvious with higher roll.

Despite its great size and savagery, the ape is also cunning and stealthy. It moves through the trees to get behind the adventurers, and then strikes suddenly from ambush. If it can catch up and carry off a single adventurer in the rear of the party, it does so, dragging its unfortunate victim up into the trees for snacking. As soon as the adventurers are aware of it and ready to fight, it openly attacks. The ape leaps down suddenly from a tree to strike, then retreats back up into the branches. It hurls massive branches at adventurers with ranged weapons, and tries to escape their view, moving around to another side, and then attacking again from hiding. The ape is a formidable opponent. Make the adventurers work for their victory.

The ape won't pursue anyone outside the garden. If its victims retreat over the wall, or into the tower, it merely waits for their return. It is enchanted with a compulsion to guard the Tower, and doesn't stop trying to do so unless killed or otherwise incapacitated.

This is the first big conflict of the adventure unless the adventurers dealt with one of the earlier scenes really poorly. The first thing to do is make a quick sketch of the garden for the players to look at. Mark the wall, trees, and the door to the tower. Split this into zones. The garden itself is two zones across from the wall to the tower. The debris field outside the wall is also a zone, and crossing the wall is a barrier 3. Climbing up into a tree is possible, but this counts as a barrier 2. It's only a barrier 1 for the ape.

Make sure it's clear where everyone is in the scene before the ape attacks, and then start the conflict. The ape does his best to make use of the barriers and blockage of line of sight to hit and run on a single adventurer each time he attacks, if possible. He's just one creature, so the adventurers are likely to try to use the force of numbers to win, you should make sure the ape uses as many tricks as possible to avoid getting cornered or ganged up on.

Garden Aspects:

- *Concealing Vegetation*
- *Low Visibility*



THE BEASTLY APE

Aspects: *Savage Beast, Huge and Powerful, Cunning Hunter*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Physique Superb (+5) Fight
Great (+4) Athletics Good (+3) Stealth
Fair (+2) Provoke

Stunts: Grappler: +2 to Physique rolls made to create advantages by wrestling or grappling with enemies.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

Entering the Tower

The tower has few windows, and those that pierce its side are tall and extremely narrow, too thin for a person to fit through. There is a door at the base of the tower, by a gravel path that leads into the garden. It is made of the same substance as the Tower, white and harder than steel. There is no breaking down this door, not with the tools you have at hand. There is a great lock upon the door.

The door to the Tower is locked, both physically and with arcane spells and wards. The wand that Samar gave them neutralizes the wards, but the lock itself must still be picked. If the adventurers no longer have the wand for any reason, one of their number who knows magic can try to defeat the magical locks. This is very time-consuming and difficult. Defeating the physical lock takes roughly half an hour, along with a Great (+4) difficulty Burglary roll. If they must break the magical wards, this takes much longer: several hours, and a Superb (+5) difficulty Lore roll. Needing to take several hours on this task compresses the rest of the venture quite a bit. The adventurers need to rush the next phase or the sorcerer returns before they have made away with the Idol of the Hellaq.

If the lock on the door can't be defeated, this kills the adventure. It's boring to get stuck on something like this. The way to avoid this being a complete, brake-screaming roadblock is to make the time element the engine driving the tension. If the adventurer picking the lock fails her roll, it takes a long time to get the lock open, leaving the party only one hour before the sorcerer returns to the Tower.

Another way to keep the adventure rolling is to provide an alternate way in. If they decide it's going to take too long, there is one other way. There is another entrance at the very top of the Tower, but the party would need to scale the Tower, not an easy task. Scaling the Tower is a Great (+4) difficulty Athletics roll, and takes an hour at the least. Once one adventurer makes it up, he can drop a line to the others. With a Fair (+2) Athletics roll, the rest can then make it up in a few minutes. If they fail, it takes an additional half hour.

Tower Exterior Aspects:

- *Smooth White Surface*
- *Harder Than Steel*

Tower Interior Aspects:

- *Growing Sense of Unease*
- *Things Man Was Not Meant to Know*

Within the Tower

The outer door swings open to reveal a parlor. It is richly appointed and would look at home in any wealthy person's home. The carpets and hangings are a bit shabby upon closer examination, and everything is centuries out of date. Doors hide smaller receiving chambers, and at the back of the parlor is a stairway leading higher up into the Tower. Everything is perfectly ordinary in appearance, but unsettling on some subconscious level that you cannot properly understand.

The interior of Tower really is like the residence of a wealthy but ancient noble or merchant. It is appointed with fine furniture and artworks. The lower half is a residence, but as the adventurers rise higher, the rooms become successively more arcane and mysterious, housing alchemical labs, libraries, and workshops of obscure purpose. There is an unsettling air within the Tower, of something subtly not right. This feeling grows more and more oppressive as they rise. The labs and workshops also become progressively more disturbing and terrifying.

The upper labs have mysterious stains, manacles set into the walls, books and items of weird and terrible appearance. Looking at these items for too long actually causes stress, and touching them is even worse. Adventurers may defend themselves with a Fair (+2) difficulty Will or Lore roll, or take 1 point of mental stress.

The true danger within the Tower is not any physical attack, but the psychic damage caused by the sorcery within. This is made far worse if an adventurer touches or tries to take an object with them. Adventurers with magical ability are more frightened, if anything, because they have some inkling as to what this stuff is.

If they do loot some other item or items from the Tower, there is little immediate harm if this is a mundane item like a box, statue, artwork, or something from the living quarters. Items farther up in the building are more enchanted and can have more serious effects, and the adventurer risks picking up something that is actually enchanted, which causes all sorts of trouble.

As GM, think about triggering any aspects related to greed or thievery within the Tower. Later, these items can cause complications or prove to have magical abilities.

Some sample items:

- A blade of *Ancient Craftsmanship*, but it is a *Cursed Blade* that always causes more harm than intended.
- The broken head of a much larger statue with the gift of prophecy when fed with wine. Although it tells the future, it can only utter *Prophecies of Doom*.
- A magical whetstone that can make any edge *Razor Sharp* but if used more than once causes *Extreme Brittleness*.
- A cedar box containing the tongue of a powerful sorcerer which, when soaked with blood, will tell *Arcane Secrets*.

The top of the Tower is home to the ultimate magical library and the repository of the Idol of the Hellaq. There are a couple of rooms above this, including the one where the sorcerer comes and goes on his unwholesome conveyance. This is the room that is accessible from outside the Tower if someone scales the exterior. This top room is permeated with a smell so foul and uncanny that it causes a person actual harm to stay there for longer than a few moments. A Mediocre (+0) difficulty Will roll is required to avoid 1 mental stress. If the character lingers, require successive Will rolls, each more difficult than the last (Average (+1), then Fair (+2), etc.). Beneath this chamber is a tackroom with gear built for some creature the imagination cannot conceive. Looking at the tack is nearly as bad as enduring the stench above.

Within the next room down, the Idol of the Hellaq lies within a case of crystal. This room is a library containing the most magical and unholy texts the sorcerer possesses. A single one of these tomes is very valuable, but the consequences of just touching one could be severe. Some lingering magical corruption sticks to any adventure that does so. Getting the Idol out of here is the next challenge.

Stealing the Idol

The Idol of Hellaq, exactly matching Samar's description, lies within a library of arcane and forbidden books. The very air of this place is oppressive, and everything you see or touch seems subtly wrong, even the most mundane items like candlesticks and furniture. A strange scent wafts down the stairway from above, making you feel slightly sick and awakening that sense of dread you've been feeling ever since you came into this place. The Idol is on a pedestal of strange green stone, encased in a spire of crystal. The acrid smell of magic surrounds the whole thing. The crystal spire has a door worked into it, you can almost see some hinges and a catch.

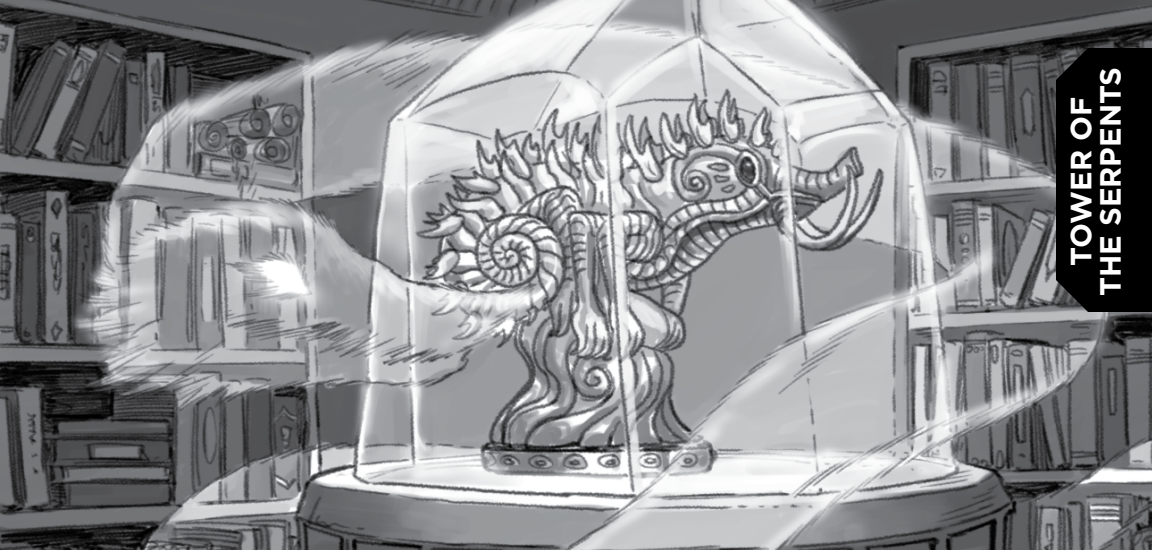
The sorcerer has created a spirit guardian to protect the contents of this room. This guardian appears if the adventurers touch any item within the room, not just the Idol.

The case that contains the Idol is not locked, but it is enspelled with powerful protection. There are two ways to get the Idol of the Hellaq: bust it out and suffer the consequences, or pierce the defenses with magic. The magical defenses are quite good. To bypass them requires a Superb (+5) difficulty Lore roll. If they can't be bypassed, then they are triggered. Just physically opening the case triggers them if they aren't first disarmed.

This is an excellent time for teamwork! A high difficulty roll like this is a good time to have several players take some actions to Create an Advantage, and then pass that bonus on to the adventurer attempting to open the case. Burglary, Crafts, Investigate, and Lore are all good skills to use to create advantages of one sort or another, calling out a detail here or there and passing this information on to the adventurer making the attempt on the magical defenses. Players new to Fate may not know how to do this, so as GM call this to their attention.

If the wards are triggered, the first thing that happens is a large magical explosion. This takes the form of a blinding green light that burns anyone within the room, but leaves the books and other artifacts untouched. Adventurers must defend against this blast with both Physique and Will. A Fair (+2) Physique roll reduces the physical stress, and a Fair (+2) Will roll mitigates mental stress. The blast causes serious damage, 4 physical and 4 mental stress. After the blinding light fades, a ghostly figure with a sword stands beside the case. This spirit guardian attacks the adventurers so long as they remain in the Tower.

If they managed to bypass the magical defenses, the explosion doesn't occur, but the spirit guardian still appears.



Library Aspects:

- *Tomes of Secrets both Ancient and Vile*
- *Magical Defenses*

SPIRIT GUARDIAN

Aspects: *Magical Construct, Pure Energy, Single-Minded*

Skills: Superb (+5) Fight Great (+4) Athletics
Good (+3) Physique Fair (+2) Notice

Stunts: Heavy Hitter: When it succeeds with style on a Fight attack, it gains a full situation aspect with a free invocation, rather than just a boost.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

Escaping the Tower

If the adventurers were clever and lucky enough to steal the Idol of the Hellaq without setting off the magical defenses or lingering long enough for the sorcerer to return just before dawn, leaving the Tower is easy. They must merely climb back down, leave through the door, cross the garden, climb over the garden wall, and walk off into Darkside. Unless the spirit guardian was not destroyed, or they did not eliminate the threat of the beastly ape, they can leave unopposed.

If the spirit guardian was not destroyed, it pursues them, attempting to slay as many as possible. It won't cross the garden wall, so if the adventurers can reach the wall and climb over, they can escape it.

If the beastly ape is still in the garden and able to attack, it also attempts to kill the adventurers while they are within the garden. Like the spirit guardian, the ape will not cross the wall.



PART III: NOW THAT YOU HAVE IT

Getting the Idol of the Hellaq is not the conclusion of the adventurers' troubles. Now they need to deal with the many people who want the Idol. Dealing with this is at least as difficult, if not more so, than stealing the damned thing in the first place. One way or another, the adventurers are going to piss two important and dangerous people off. And then there's the little issue of the sorcerer. He's not going to be happy when he gets home.

Part III can seem like a no-win situation. Four different factions want to get a hold of the Idol and they are all very insistent. What you want to avoid here is the players getting demoralized or feeling like there is no way out. This is meant to be a sticky and complicated situation, but not one that has no escape. There are a variety of ways to handle this, and the one that's least likely to succeed is fighting your way through all of the factions.

In Fate, fighting is only one of the tools in a player's arsenal. Social and mental skills can be used here to find a solution to this situation the adventurers find themselves in. Encourage the players to come up with other methods, and if they come up with a solution, give them a go at it. The absolute most simple escape is to just grab the Idol and run. If they want to do this, roll with it! Now they have all these groups chasing after them or looking for them. That's the beginning of a great adventure in and of itself.

Trickery and fraud are also likely ways to wiggle out of this situation. Let the adventurers run a con on one or more of the factions, or recruit one faction like the Scar Triad to help them run a scam on another, like the Governor. Deceit, Rapport, Crafts, or Lore can be used to work another angle. Help them out! When they try a scheme, figure out the opposition and have them roll. Tricking the brutes and fighting the brains is always a good method to deal with this stuff. The tough fighters are much more vulnerable to trickery, and the bosses are not so strong in a physical altercation. Always encourage to players to apply the right tool for the job.

The Scar Triad

Shadowy figures lurking in the nearby alleys and streets move forward, and you find yourselves confronted by a gang of thugs from the Scar Triad. The unwelcome face of Little Hâr resolves itself in the lead. "I hope you haven't forgotten who gets first taste in Darkside," he says. Another figure appears by his side, this time recognizable as Hugo the Charitable. He offers a deep, friendly laugh, but the mirth does not reach his eyes.

Hugo and his Scar Triad thugs are waiting in the slums outside the Tower. They took up positions after the adventurers went over the wall, and now he's waiting to see if they might emerge. He plans on getting the Idol from them, and right away, and as soon as they come back over the wall he and his thugs emerge from the shadows, closing in. Hugo and Little Hâr don't immediately attack or try to physically lift the Idol. Hugo starts by acting as if this was the plan all along, to give him the Idol once they lifted it. If they don't play along, that's when things get dicey.

The adventurers could just give him the Idol of the Hellaq, but Samar and, more importantly, Bloody Nikka definitely comes looking. Evading Hugo may not be that easy, though. If they don't hand it over, Hugo and his thugs try a grab for it. They don't want to hurt anyone at the moment, they just want to get the Idol. If the adventurers draw steel, things may escalate. Little Hâr is happy to have them escalate, and he might do it himself. Hugo is more inclined to deal with this reasonably. If blood gets shed, then it's a brawl for sure. The Scar Triad tries to incapacitate, not kill, unless one of their number is killed, then it's attempted murder all around.

If the adventurers don't want to hand the Idol over to Hugo they'll need to figure some way to get past the Darkside crime boss. There's the direct route of violence, of course, but that definitely leaves some bad blood.

The adventurers could also try talking their way past. This requires some serious persuasion, based on an opposed Rapport roll. This is another great place to have multiple players help a main negotiator. Hugo is no pushover in a social conflict.

They can also make a dash for it. The Scar Triad definitely pursues, and you can run a fun chase scene through Darkside. This goes against the pursuers Athletics score, and again, encourage the players to create advantages for themselves to help with this roll. If they do evade the Triad, Hugo and his thugs certainly show up in a later scene to further complicate things. Throw them in the mix at the caravan camp if they are still able to contest for ownership of the Idol.

Another option would be running a scam on Hugo, possibly passing off a fake Idol or some other trick the players come up with. Again, Hugo is a tough nut to crack in a social conflict, but if they do manage to pull one over on him, they can get free of the Triad for now. A simple success means that Hugo figures out he's been tricked before long and shows up in a later scene. Succeeding with style in this instance means Hugo is out of the picture for the rest of the adventure, for good or ill.

Hugo is a character that the adventurers are very likely to have to deal with again, so it's in their interests to try to get out of this situation without causing bad blood. Murdering any Scar Triad members will definitely raise Hugo's ire. However, Hugo is the boss that is most amenable to a deal of some sort. He just likes a taste of the action, and isn't stuck on handling the sale himself. Bribery or the promise of future favors is likely to work on Hugo. He's a canny negotiator, though, so he's likely to get a good deal out of the adventurers.



The Sorcerer Pursues

The shadows seem to deepen, and a disconcerting whispering emanates from everywhere around you. A dark and forbidding figure rises up, seemingly from the very ground. With a twisted gesture from his hands, strange warriors made of shadow, earth, and stone rise up around him. It seems the sorcerer has noticed his Idol is missing.

If the adventurers tripped the wards on the case, the sorcerer is already on his way back. He arrives very quickly after they leave the compound, pursuing them immediately. If they managed to avoid tripping the alarms, that reduces the adventurers' problems by one, at least until dawn. One way or another, the sorcerer returns just before sunrise, and discovers the theft.

Once he knows about the theft, he uses his magic to track the adventurers' whereabouts. He wants the Idol of the Hellaq back, pretty urgently, and he travels via magic, emerging from the shadows near the adventurers wherever they are. He tries intimidation first, demanding the return of the Idol of the Hellaq. If they do not immediately comply, he attacks, using his magic to summon up spirit warriors constructed of shadow, earth, stone, or whatever material is easy to hand in the scene. While these creatures engage the adventurers and whoever else is around, he uses his magic to draw the very breath from an adventurer's lungs, and wrack his victim in throes of terrible pain. He'll target whoever has the Idol of the Hellaq and try to seize the artifact.

If the adventurers have already traded it away, he tortures them in this way to get them to reveal who they gave it to. Even if they tell him, it doesn't help much. He leaves, but his minions remain and try to kill all of the adventurers.

The sorcerer is the most unreasonable of all the factions. He really wants his Idol back! Talking their way out of his anger is extremely difficult. Misdirection is the gambit most likely to work here. Tricking the sorcerer into chasing the wrong people, like the Scar Triad for example, is the most likely approach to work when he shows up. If he can be convinced someone else has the Idol, he's a powerful weapon the adventurers have now turned on another faction.

THE SORCERER

Aspects: *Dark and Terrible Aspect, Twisted by Magic, Unwholesome Aura, Quick to Anger, Legendary Arrogance, Powerful Sorcerer*

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Lore, Shoot
Superb (+5) Crafts , Will
Great (+4) Notice, Resources
Good (+3) Investigate

Stunts: Occult Specialist: +2 on all Lore rolls dealing with the occult.
Called Shot: Spend a Fate point and declare a specific condition he wants to inflict on the target, like *Starved for Breath*, the target suffers the condition as well as stress if the Shoot roll is successful.
Indomitable: +2 on Will rolls to defend against Provoke.

Stress: Physical: Mental:

ELEMENTAL SPIRITS (FAIR)

Aspects: Abominations Against Nature, Magical Constructs

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight Average (+1) Athletics, Physique

Stress: Physical: Mental:

The Governor and the Watch

You catch a flash of the Governor's livery, and before you know it a contingent of the city Watch is jogging toward you, led by the intimidating figure of Helen Thirdcoin. "Halt!" she cries. "The Governor has business with you!"

Before they can reach the caravan camp, the adventurers next problem is the Governor and Helen Thirdcoin. Helen has set lookouts around Darkside to spot the adventurers when they leave. She then marches a good force of Watch guards to intercept them before they can leave the city. Helen tries to detain them until the Governor arrives with her bodyguards, and then the Governor demands the adventurers turn over the Idol. If the sorcerer hasn't shown up yet, this is a great time to throw him in the mix.

The adventurers can try to talk or fight their way past Helen, or negotiate with the Governor when she shows up. The Governor wants the Idol for herself, but would settle for a cut one way or another. It is very difficult to get out of this situation without promising a taste of some kind.

If the Scar Triad is following or pursuing, they hang back until it looks like the Governor might get the Idol, and then they move, trying to start up a riot to distract the Watch and grab the Idol. They pay a big mob of Darksiders to make a lot of noise and throw things, creating the situation aspect **Chaotic Mob**. They mix in with the rioting citizens to disguise themselves and try to lift the Idol by stealth. They won't openly tip their hand as Triad members, they don't want that kind of trouble.

The Governor's interests are a combination of personal and political. She'd like the valuable Idol, but what she wants more is to keep it out of the hands of Samar or the sorcerer. She never liked that magical terrorist living in her city anyway, and she doesn't trust the Cult farther than she can throw Helen Thirdcoin. The Governor is most interested in getting this Idol out of circulation entirely and locked up in a vault in the Palace. Because of this, negotiation or misdirection is the best approach with her. Any solution that openly puts the Idol in someone else's hands will be a really hard sell.

The Cult of Tranquility

The caravan camp is much as before, but due to the late hour perhaps you see hardly anyone except at Samar's campsite. Samar is waiting for you in his chair, and Bloody Nikka is there with her mercenary goons, all armed up like they're expecting a war. Maybe they are. Samar smiles and gestures expansively as you approach. "Ah, our adventurers return!"

At last! If the adventurers can get past the Scar Triad and the Governor, they can deliver the Idol to Samar and his cultists. Samar pays, as agreed. The trouble here comes when the Governor or Scar Triad show up, which they will if some agreement has not been reached. Also, the Cult comes looking if the adventurers deliver the Idol to someone else, or even if it gets taken from them. Bloody Nikka doesn't care if it's not their fault, she'll kill them just the same, after they tell her who has the item.

If the sorcerer doesn't already have the item, he definitely strikes here. It is imperative to him that the Cult does not get this Idol, and he'll expend most of his effort to thwart them. If he can get the Idol from an adventurer prior to this handoff, all the better. The Mother of Silence appears to fight him, if it comes to that.

The Cult of Tranquility need the Idol of Hellaq. They will do anything and everything to get their hands on it, to the point of open warfare with the Scar Triad or the Governor. They have a small contingent of mercenaries with them, but a sudden and vicious strike might do the trick. They will take hostages, threaten death, and assassinate to get their way. Anything short of delivery as agreed earns their enmity and retribution. If the adventurers flee with the Idol, they will pursue to the ends of the earth.

Aftermath and Wrap-up

However the adventurers resolve this, they've probably got at least three enemies by the end. How much enmity was created depends on how directly they thwarted any of the factions. If they played their cards right, maybe they didn't get blamed for this mess at all!

If there are some lasting troubles, generate some aspects relating to the issues, like *Hugo Holds a Grudge* or *Bloody Nikka's Sisters Out for Revenge*. This is a great way to generate some history for the adventurers and keep reincorporating the past into your plot. These aspects can be taken by adventurers, or if no one wants one of these complications, placed on NPCs or locations as appropriate.

This adventure is worthy of a milestone. It should be a tough row to hoe, and the adventurers need to be quite lucky to escape without harm or some powerful enemies.



**WHITE
PICKET
WITCHES**

Sharon felt a dozen sets of eyes on her, the flickering of the tiki torches making the shadows shift and dance more than the footpath lights would have. The others, frozen margaritas and fresh fudge in hand, stared at her in utter disbelief. How dare she come here, crash this party, and draw so much attention to herself after everything she did to embarrass herself! The nerve!

“Look,” she said, lifting her chin and squaring her shoulders. “I know you all don’t like me, and your families haven’t liked me since before I was born. I get that. And tomorrow I figure you’ll go back to not liking me for whatever suburban faux pas I’m guilty of, whatever domestic sins you see as unforgivable. I can live with that. What I can’t live with is that right now, right now, six of our kids are out in those woods and in danger. Right. Now. So we can either do something about that together, or we can let all of this bullshit kill our kids.” As she spoke, the threads of magic wove subtly around her and toward all who listened, the air buzzing with the strength of her words—and their mood began to shift in her favor.

For only a moment.

“Very. Nice. Speech. Sharon.” A slow clap in beat with every word spoken came from the other end of the yard. Everyone turned to look at the speaker. Sally Parsons stood tall, beautiful, proud, shadows deftly woven about her. “It’s such a pity that none of us have any reason whatsoever to trust you.” She spoke with a charm in her words, spiteful magic in her tight smile that worked to dispel Sharon’s. Sharon and Sally moved slowly toward each other, the air around them crackling with energy as each gathered their power. The party went absolutely silent, backing away as the two witches faced off.



MOON ISLAND TO THE OUTSIDE

The story goes that inexplicably in 1691, six of the wealthiest, most influential families of Salem County built estates on Moon Island, a small but habitable island in Boston Harbor.

In 1692, seized by mass hysteria, Salem Village made famous the phrase “witch hunt” by accusing and trying scores of people, nearly all women, for witchcraft. Many innocents were executed in the frenzy and chaos. The six families were left untouched by the madness. No one unwelcome ever approached the island.

As time passed, and more settlers came to the island, the march of progress eventually turned the six households into a small village complete with shops, schools, and other community needs. Today, the affluent town hosts a population of 5,000, give or take a few souls.

Only five of the original six families remain now, the sixth estate abandoned. These families are wealthy, powerful, and often involve themselves with the other residents of the Island. To varying degrees, they act as sponsors or patrons of some islanders, while bedeviling the lives of many others. Behind it all, most islanders feel there’s some greater secret beyond the mundane secrets so very common to families of this age and influence.

At least, that’s what those who live on Moon Island see and believe, or how the Island’s affairs look to the outside world. But what’s really going on?

Well, that’s where *you* come in...

MOON ISLAND ON THE INSIDE

Inside the walls of the houses of the five great families of Moon Island are hidden truths zealously guarded from outsiders, secrets and scandals that would break the families apart—and likely get people killed.

The most important one, the only assumed secret in this setting is that the remaining five families still practice Witchcraft, each family having an affinity for one of the magical assets described later. The island itself houses many other secrets: spirits, ley lines, monsters, and other untold wonders and dangers. What else might be there is up to you and your group as you build Moon Island for your stories.

DEFINING MOON ISLAND

In *Fate Core*, your group will go through the process of building characters and the world in a very open and flexible way. Because *White Picket Witches* is a setting on a smaller, more intimate scale, you won’t be building the whole world. Instead, you’ll be defining Moon Island as you create your characters. While there may be more limits here than in *Fate Core*, think of them instead as a recipe for a spell with a specifically intended outcome. After all, you can’t (or shouldn’t) put just anything in a love-charm, and the same is true of a narrowly focused *Fate* game.

Familiarize yourself with all the steps of defining Moon Island. You and your group may bounce around from theme to theme, or place to place—and that’s fine. While you’re creating your character, this creative process may help you discover an aspect for one of the Places of Power—so jump there, define it, and then jump back. Consider this process as more of a checklist to assure you’ve gotten everything prepared for great play, rather than a strict order that must be completed.

Building the Five Families

Much of the drama that will happen on Moon Island will be directly related to or caused by the Five Families, in their interactions with one another as well as with the rest of the island’s inhabitants. As a group, you’ll need to define them with aspects, so that you have something to build upon. Each Family should have a predilection for one of the types of magic. In addition, each person at the table should be given the opportunity to provide an aspect for each of the Families, going around the table taking turns until all Five Families are described.

The sixth family should remain a mystery for now. Leave it for the GM to use as she will—perhaps she’ll reveal dirty secrets about them at opportune times, as your group’s stories unfold...

WITCHCRAFT AND THE FIVE FAMILIES

A more thorough explanation will come later, but for now, here’s a quick summary of the five types of known magic, called magical assets. These are deliberately left vague, encompassing skills that can handle a number of different sorts of spells. They’ve been stripped of “real-world” connotations so that the setting’s witchcraft isn’t heavily based upon or biased toward any one ethnic or culture reference. But, hey, if you want to add some back in, like having one of the families practice their spells like Aboriginal Dream-shamans or South American Obeah, go for it! Aim for authenticity, maintain respect for the tradition, and have fun doing it!

Magical assets will work like other assets described later. Aside from the spells each asset produces, you can **Overcome**, **Create an Advantage**, **Attack**, and **Defend**.

Breath Work: Knowledge outside your ken. Knowing before the fact. Invocation. Prayers to light, warm and inviting, or cold and logical.

Skin Work: Glamour and manipulations of what is seen, shallow illusory work, healing the surface.

Blood Work: Things to do with family, ancestry, matters of the heart and loins.

Muscle Work: Shape-shifting, extraordinary physical capability. Healing deep. Changing the body.

Bone Work: Dark, challenging things. Dead, wise things. Deadly things. Demonic forces. Prayers to shadows and the protection you can’t find in the cold, hard light.

Places of Power

As each player creates their character, they should also name a location on the island that is a **Place of Power**. While action can happen anywhere on or near the island, a Place of Power is particularly important because this is where Face-Offs will happen.

As you get a better idea of what a Face-Off is, you'll see that it's always better to bring one to an existing Place of Power than it is to create a new Place of Power to go with the scene. Finding a new Place of Power should be a big deal. If players want to create a new one, allow them to during any Milestone where they could select a new stunt in place of that stunt.

Here are a few things to consider when naming a Place:

- Why are there people just hanging around the Place of Power? What reason do they have for being there?
- Is the Place of Power open to the public, and if so, when is it likely to be frequented, or when would people have to be sneaky to be there?
- What kind of access do the characters have, or easily are they able, to get to these Places? For a Face-Off to happen, characters have to find some way to be there if it's not immediately obvious how to do so.

PLACES OF POWER IN STORY

A Place of Power is an in-character concept as well. Witches well educated in the craft and keenly aware of its workings, in addition to those few “mundanes” sensitive to magic, know that some locations on the island have a “pull” to them. Occultists suggest that the island is crisscrossed with ley lines of unusual intensity. Wherever these ley lines cross you'll find is a Place of Power. Either because of the pull of magic, or the manipulations of the Five Families, construction on the island often coincides with these magically potent spots.

Whether the characters and/or NPCs are aware of a specific location being a Place of Power will vary, depending on your game. Keep in mind that while it might be common knowledge that passions run strangely hot at the public pool, or that the halls of the hospital feel slightly tinged with dread and despair, most of the Island's inhabitants couldn't tell you why.

What Is a Face-Off?

You know that moment in a movie or TV show when two characters, fraught with emotion, are driven to a point where they have no other choice but to clash wills, regardless of whoever or whatever else is around them? And you're sitting on the edge of your seat shoving popcorn into your mouth as fast as you can? That's a **Face-Off**. *White Picket Witches* is driven by these character confrontations, where the stakes of the conflict might be higher than any realize—not to mention the entertainment value for your game's imaginary audience if your session were a movie or TV show. The consequences of these confrontations are often unpredictable (and sometimes final). The details and mechanics for Face-Offs will be explained later.

Face-Offs happen in Places of Power. If the character's aren't in a Place of Power, you can use a Combat or a Contest as is appropriate.

WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

It's you.

Everyone at the table—the GM and the players—is the viewing audience of the “show.” If your younger brother is playing video games in the next room while you play, and he's paying attention from time to time, he's your audience. If you play online and broadcast your game, anyone who views it and makes comments about it is your audience.

But mostly, it's *you*, because you're probably one of the game's biggest fans. Thinking about what the fans love and want to see more of is a powerful part of staging the game. When a GM is wondering when to help or hinder players, she can fall back on the audience, asking herself, “what would the fans want to see most right now?” It's a tool for players too, because thinking about the game from the audience's perspective will inspire them to make bold choices. Making dramatic mistakes is good for your character, great for the game, the kinds of things that will suckdraw in the audience.

This can manifest mechanically too. Sometimes a player will have an idea so good or have their character action in a way that will be so clearly to satisfy the audience, earning them a , that the GM can hand out a fate point from the GM. Or, in a scene with multiple NPCs, the GM may offer a fate point to one of the players to take over their favorite NPC for to handle a Face-Off against another player, or to otherwise add to the drama.

Reasons for a Face-Off

- Cathy needs to confess her feelings to Elias. Too bad Elias already knows how she feels, and has plans for how he's going to manipulate her.
- One-on-one basketball can be a great way to unwind with a friend. But when you and your brother are in love with the same woman, hoops can become punches pretty fast.

- It's a race against time to stop a supernatural serial killer! Even though Sheriff Anders knows Mercy could help, he won't let her anywhere near the scene of the crime to gather clues.
- If someone doesn't talk to Nate soon about his drinking, someone's going to get hurt—and bad. Kyle just can't stand by anymore. This intervention is going to be rough, though, really rough.
- It's finally come to this: a witches' duel between two of the Families. The terms demand a deathless victory, but beyond that? Anything goes. It could (and probably will) get gruesome.

Building Places of Power

As your characters evolve and you talk with the other players about backgrounds and the connections between them, ask yourself “where did this take place?” While some logical locations may spring to mind at the start, also consider those that are personal to your story—and remember that these places are where Face-Offs will happen, so they'll set the tone of the game. For example, if Moon Island High School becomes a Place of Power, you're going to have to have reasons either for adult characters to be there regularly, or have the characters be teenagers, or some mix of both. If someone puts forward the Moon Island Park and Duck Reserve, you'll want to consider why there might be extra actors in any scene there, working, playing, or otherwise being a part of both background and potential conflict. If you pick an estate of one of the Five Families, why would it be open to the public? Or if it isn't, why are there people around there anyway?

Places of Power should have a “character sheet,” requiring no more than an index card to record its details: the location's name, its leitmotif, and three assets. A Place of Power also has its own fate points and refresh rate, equal to the character with the highest refresh plus one. If a character increases their refresh rate, a Place of Power of their choice also increases by one.

Leitmotif

Leitmotif is really just an aspect common to the location, a mood or theme that characterizes the place. If the location is Moon Island High School, and its leitmotif is *Spooky*, the scenes and Face-Offs that happen there are going to be very different than if the leitmotif were *Competitive*. Think of this in terms of music in a movie or TV show, where the leitmotif is the theme song that regularly plays (or is musically hinted at) in the soundtrack whenever characters are at the Place of Power. In fact, your group might have some ideas for a specific song for each location as its leitmotif, provided everyone at the table has an idea of how you would use that song as an aspect.

Once per scene in a Place of Power, one player can invoke its leitmotif for free.

If a particularly important scene is coming up at a Place of Power, a player can spend a fate point to temporarily change its leitmotif. In general, a player would do that to provide other players with a free invoke even if their own character wasn't going to be involved in the scene. Again, think about it in terms of the scene's soundtrack: if the place normally has an angst-y popular music tune, and you shift the mood to an "adagio for strings," be sure everyone understands you expect tragic drama.

Jeremy thinks it would be hilarious if his Keisha's character, the mousy and dull librarian Frank, somehow paired up with Linda. Linda is a hunky sexy dangerous loner type played by Alex. Jeremy isn't doesn't have a character in this scene, but acting as the audience, he's throwing fate points around for the fun of it! When Alex announces she's going to start a scene in the library—Linda has research to do—Jeremy jumps on that. Although Jeremy, doesn't have a character involved in the scene, acting as the audience and fan of the game, he spends a fate point to declare that the library's leitmotif of the library should shift to a sultry jazz tune with suggestive lyrics—everyone else at the table suddenly takes note. Later in the scene, Frank needs some help in a Face-Off: he takes his glasses off to focus on some text, and his hair slips out of its makeshift ponytail as he loosens his tie and takes off his jacket. The fading afternoon light coming in through the library's cupola shows how beautiful Frank's eyes truly are. The audience (that is, everyone at the table) eats it up! Linda plays dumbstruck and Frank creates a Unexpectedly Excitednticed aspect for Linda to overcome. Jeremy's really earned his gotten his fate point's worth here, and both Keisha and Alex have plans to set Jeremy's character up in the future. All in the name of fun, of course!.

Assets

Assets will be explained in more detail later. In short, during a Face-Off, a Place of Power can inflict harm on your stress track, and has assets just like your characters. When you create a Place of Power, it needs three assets: one Great (+4), one Good (+3), and one Fair (+2). Keep the leitmotif in mind when assigning assets so that they complement each other. Or if you decide they shouldn't, consider what it will imply about scenes that take place at that Place of Power should they be discordant.

It's Topher's turn to create a location. So far, he's set down that the County Hospital is small, confined, and more than a little bit strange. He's decided the leitmotif is a trippy song from the '60s about vets and mind-altering substances in VA hospitals. Topher looks over the list for assets to assign. He decides that Sensitive should play into it a lot: the hospital may expose hidden fears and insecurities, for example. He assigns it as a Great (+4). Inspired by the song, he thinks the hospital should have an edge of Treacherous to it—it's not a nice place to be. Topher assigns it Treacherous at Good (+3). Finally, he decides that sometimes—maybe all too often—patients go in with minor maladies but never come out alive. He adds Dangerous at Fair (+2). Now, the hospital has a creepy energy about it—and everyone can't wait to set a scene there!

Metaplot

While you're building the Island, consider **metaplot**. Metaplot is very similar to issues as described in *Fate Core*, page 22. As ideas form, the GM picks two elements for the characters to contend with, above and beyond their interpersonal struggles. Players are also welcome to suggest potential metaplot elements, but shouldn't be too focused on any one character—unless everyone agrees that the focus of the game should be on something dramatic happening to or around a specific character. Which could be cool.

Metaplot should come in two flavors: a current problem characters are dealing with now, and a looming threat that awaits them, which they may or may not know about.

Examples of Metaplot:

- One of the families is warming up the cold war it's engaged in with another.
- All magic on the island will dry up on All Hallows Eve of next year unless...
- Bodies have started washing up on the beach near the light house, obviously murdered.
- An apparent scion of the sixth family has come to the Island to claim the abandoned estate.
- Vampires.
- A disease of supernatural origin has been released on the island—but by whom?

Antagonists

Each player is responsible for defining an NPC Antagonist for their character: someone who, for whatever reason, is going to get in the character's way. There may not initially be malice between them, and the Antagonist could very well be the character's sibling or best friend. When defining Antagonists, give them a Canon aspect and a Casting aspect (described below), and make a shorthand character sheet for them, like those found at the end of this chapter. Later, specifically in Face-Offs, we'll talk about how players can grab and play Antagonists for each other to both take the burden off of the GM and give everyone the chance to shake things up as another character in the ongoing story. With that in mind, make sure you make these characters interesting enough to play in their own right!

If they would like, instead of making an Antagonist for each character, players may decide that the antagonist another player has created is also a problem for them. In this case, the Antagonist gets an additional aspect and should be given a full character sheet with assets, stress, and stunts. Any other player may throw in so that all characters have one major very powerful Antagonist to deal with, or it may remain an ensemble cast of troublemakers.

Aspects

Your characters are going to need aspects, the magic that powers *White Picket Witches*, like any other Fate game. Where *Fate Core* takes you through the creation of a character's aspects as a part of their history while also integrating them with the stories of the other PCs, the process here is a little different in order to suit the needs of the genre, as well as allowing for those scenes where characters may be meeting for the first time.

Canon Aspects

Like the high concept aspects in *Fate Core*, this aspect is a short and clear definition of your character. Think about it as if you were a screenwriter or producer: what about your character is so important that, without a big change, behaving against this aspect would be non-canonical? For more on high concept and aspects creation in general, see *Fate Core*, page 32 .

Tragic Flaw

Fate Core describes this aspect as “trouble.” For the sake of the genre, we'll call it a tragic flaw, the one aspect of your character that will draw them into danger and/or cause them to make bad choices nearly every time. This aspect will be a big source of dramatic tension, story elements and, of course, fate points.

Casting

Roleplaying isn't always the most visual medium, but sometimes a little shortcut to character creation can be a big help. As you describe your character, consider which actor you'd cast for the role if you were a producer making your group's game into a movie or TV show. Like a leitmotif, communicate with the other players to see if all of you agree on what your casting says about the character you've created.

This can be challenging if you aren't a mediavore, an avid watcher of TV dramas, or don't have easy access to the Internet. That's okay. You can fill in casting with a brief description like “smooth brown-eyed boy” or “full-figured dynamo,” just like the notes a casting director might get from the producer. Or you can even ask the other players who they think would be good for the role.

If, after the first session, you change your mind about your character's actor, change the casting aspects to suit what you're looking for—consider the first play session to be a “pilot” episode. For fun, talk to your GM about a surprise recasting between the first and second game session to see how it might change the tone of your character.

Childhood

Moon Island, like Neverland, is an place just small enough that adventures are back-to-back for the children of the island: an island this rich in magic naturally leads to childhoods full of mischief and escapades. Your character will likely know almost everyone else who grew up there the same time as they did. For this element to work best, the characters should have grown up on the Island, though they may have moved or gone to school elsewhere later in life.

Your childhood aspects should also foreshadow your behavior going forward. If your character lived a *Charmed Life* as a child, will they be unprepared for hardships that may come up in the game? If they had *The Worst Parents on the Island*, did that leave them bitter toward other kids who had it better?

This is also a good place to incorporate other characters. *Mallory and I Were Thick as Thieves* says a lot about who your character and Mallory will be to each other now.

Heritage

Any tie your character has to the Five Families is an important setting consideration. Each character should have some kind of relationship with the Families, though that can vary from character to character. Perhaps being a witch on the island with *No Blood of the Five* creates a new twist in the setting worth exploring. Keep your character's Heritage different from those of the other characters, since a heritage aspect should be unique—unless, say, your character and another share the aspect *Twin Heads of the Skinworking Family*?

Assets

In character creation in *Fate Core*, you get a ton of skills and a ton of points to buy skills. In *White Picket Witches*, you have a much more limited palette to work with. Instead of roughly 20 skills, you'll pick from the seven listed below. Because they are much broader, having less to do with what you know or have learned than with what you're capable of doing, we'll call them assets instead.

In addition to the seven assets, you'll also pick one magical asset to reflect the sorts of spell work you're good at. You have eight points worth of assets to buy. One point takes you one step up the ladder to a maximum of Great (+4), taking four skill points. You can divide your points up anyway you like, provided there is only one Great (+4) asset. So if you want to take Dangerous at Great (+4), you could have Savvy at Good (+3) and Sensitive at Average (+1), or four other assets at Average (+1), or anything in between.

Assets are conceptual: they're meant not to reflect what you do so much as how you do it. If you are pushing someone off of a pier, using your Powerful asset to do so, it implies something very different than using your Dangerous asset to do the same thing.

Frustrated and angry, Frank gave Todd a Powerful shove off the pier, pushing him into the water below.

Frank let his rage consume him, giving Todd a Dangerous shove off the pier, pushing him toward the jagged rocks in the water below.

As you can see, you can change the story and potential outcomes of your action based on the asset you tap. Not every asset works for every action, and the GM is the final arbiter as to what will or won't work. Simply put, the asset you choose has a definite effect on the outcome the story you are creating.

Fate Core also calls for a skill pyramid to keep skills balanced. Because there are so few assets in *White Picket Witches*, we won't worry about that here.

Brilliant

You shine the brightest. Your smile is more radiant than the sun, or the power of your intellect awes everyone you talk to. Those who appreciate you love to watch you shine. Those who don't "get you" usually dwell in your shadow, suffering terrible jealousy. It isn't like you can help yourself—you're just that damn good. Stars may shine, but you irradiate.



Overcome: Make a plan. Think it through. Solve the problem with raw genius. Flex your mind to inspire and/or incite. You overcome problems because you're the sharpest tool in the shed, and cunning and wit are your bread and butter.



Create an Advantage: If you're making plans, you might as well create aspects to reflect them. Being well-prepared is one of the many traits of an exceptional mind. Let your aspect reflect how well you prepared, or angles only you could have thought of.



Attack: Hit 'em with laser-like precision, leaving nothing but ash. Don't waste energy. You know when to make a called shot for the knee, or how to apply exactly the right amount of social pressure. A brilliant attack is blinding in its execution.



Defend: You're too smart to get sullied by their accusations. Of course you wore body armor under your clothes. Yes, it was obvious to you that the police officer had been bribed. You win when your opponent attacks because you're just plain smarter.

Classy

You're the person the Joneses try to keep up with, but never quite can. You have so much style and grace that the cruelest taunt you suffered in high school was being called your "Your Highness." You shake hands after beating an opponent, praising their effort against you—and mean it! Even people who hate you respect you nonetheless.



Overcome: There's a right way and a wrong way to solve any problem, and you always know the right way. It's not what you do, but how you do it. When you overcome a problem with Classy, you take the high road, personal cost be damned. There are appearances to uphold, after all.



Create an Advantage: Whatever stand you take, you always stand for something—tradition, ceremony, true love, reputation, and so on. When you create aspects with Classy, you seek to establish your authority or superiority. You raise the tone and stakes of a situation. Your Classy aspects are exemplary and meant to be admired.



Attack: It's a sad fact of life that most people don't instinctively understand how they ought to behave. You demonstrate the folly of bringing a gun to a swordfight, or inform a plebe as to why, exactly, one stands up when a woman enters the room, even if you are a woman. When you must be aggressive, you do it with style.



Defend: Classy truly shines when you defend with it. When you're all Classy, you appear untouchable. Better than the best, and beyond reproach. People think twice about fighting dirty with an opponent as Classy as you.

Dangerous

Your actions suggest violence. Even when you're just talking, the promise of danger and pain to come is visible in your grin. Adrenaline courses through your system at the slightest provocation. Being Dangerous may come across as hot or hulking. No matter what you do, when you do it, things are going to get sticky in the end—usually with blood.



Overcome: When a task calls for anything but subtlety, you may overcome with Dangerous. When the situation calls for violence, there's none better than you to resolve it. You are both havoc and the dog of war let slipped.



Create an Advantage: You're the short fuse, the loose cannon, a time bomb with the clock a couple of seconds away from zero. Use Dangerous to create an advantage for yourself through fear, intimidation, brutalization, or unhinged chaos.



Attack: When you attack with Dangerous, you usually open with an elbow to the throat or a kick to the groin. You open old wounds with your words, holding nothing back in your insults. When you think about hurting someone—which you often do—you're going to do it grievously and without concern about consequences.



Defend: No one attacks a rabid dog head-on, and most people know to slow down when driving on a icy road. You defend yourself with Dangerous by reminding everyone in the scene just how perilous any conflict with you is going to be.



Savvy

If anyone is in the know, or can assess the scene with a single glance, it's you. You just "get it" in nearly every situation. Whether it's because you've researched the subject at hand most of your life, or because you simply feel it at the gut level, you know exactly what the situation is.



Overcome: When the obstacles in your way are chaotic, obscure, or intended to confuse, use Savvy. While other characters might be lost or unable to decide what to do, you're on the ball and act fast. If an obstacle calls for thinking on your feet, Savvy is what'll save your bacon.



Create an Advantage: You think faster than nearly everyone else, and you create advantages that demonstrate it, aspects that tell everyone that you suss the scene and caught a detail that no one else did...or could.



Attack: Attacking with Savvy is all about knowing you have the edge and using that knowledge to your advantage. You shoot from the hip, or go for the eye. If it's a verbal joust, you catch tells and flinches fast enough to create all sort of edges for yourself, making your attacks count.



Defend: Physically or socially, you're good at finding cover. You know where the bullets are going to hit and make sure you're not there, or can set yourself up in just the right spot politically to be untouchable by the town police.

Treacherous

Some things just need to get done by any means necessary. You use Treacherous to get one over on your enemies, or ruin a friend's life without a second thought. Whether it's a coldly calculated business, or hot-blooded revenge, TreacheryTreacherous will get the job done. You never shy away from the hard choice if it means getting what you want. Selfish, yes, but that's the way a winner looks to a loser—and history is always written by the victor.



Overcome: You're not afraid to take the low road—in fact, it's your preferred route. If there's a shark in the water, you'll kick another swimmer in the gut so you can get away. You find the easy escape, the sneaky way, the solution that costs you the least, even—or especially—if it costs others the most. You don't overcome so much as escape with the skin on your back, because it's being taken off someone else's—after you set them up, of course.



Create an Advantage: Creating an advantage for yourself really means creating a disadvantage for someone else. Oil slicks, angry bears, computer virus, whatever: use Treacherous to give yourself an edge by making your opponent's life harder.



Attack: A knife in the back, a shot to the kidney, or a good old-fashioned low blow are all par for the course with Treacherous. Destroy an enemy's reputation before they can come after you, or expose their secrets before they expose yours. What they call blackmail, you call fair compensation for protecting their secrets. All's fair in love and war—but when have you ever played fair?



Defend: You know how people think when they think the worst—that's where you live. A lot of treacherous defense is about planning for the worst. Of course you have an escape plan, because there's always something you need to escape from. You're always prepared for an attack, because at some level you know you have it coming and have therefore planned accordingly.

Powerful

You are a force of nature, both terrible and beautiful to behold. Use Powerful to dominate and endure. You neither bend nor yield, and you never will. Lesser people fear and resent you, because they know they'll always be weaker than you. You are the very definition of indomitable.



Overcome: You overcome with force of presence or strength of body. It may or may not be swift, but it's almost always brutish. You never hesitate, nothing stands in your way. If you can't break through the door, you'll go through the wall instead. You win an argument simply by shouting your opponent down until they're too exhausted to respond.



Create an Advantage: You build with stone and steel. Aspects you create are all about stability, strength, and overwhelming force. Primal, elemental, and unstoppable are the very strands of your DNA. You take the advantage by taking complete control. Because you can.



Attack: You muscle your opponents out or browbeat them into submission. You exude supremacy and authority. Your attacks are either bullying or breathtaking—or both. It wouldn't be the first time—nor the last—you've been accused of overkill.



Defend: Your attackers would have better luck bringing their fight to the mountain than to you. Unstoppable on the offense, you're completely untouchable on the defense. You take a slap to the face without flinching, and insults or social pressure barely register with you, if at all.

Sensitive

You know what people are saying, even if you can't hear them—and what's more, you know what it is they *aren't saying*. You notice miniscule temperature drops, and just “get a feeling” before someone is about to call you with important news. You can sense when children or animals are going to get sick, or know what's about to happen because you dreamt it the night before. Your mind is awake when everyone else around you seems asleep, seeing and knowing things no one else can.



Overcome: Sensitive makes you aware of an obstacle just before or right as it becomes a problem for you, allowing you to act fast to avoid it. You pick up clues or details no one else seems to notice, sensing the answer to a question before most even know it's been asked.



Create an Advantage: You create advantages because you see things no one else does. You create aspects based on the secrets you have privy to or can somehow sense, giving yourself an edge with empathy or cunning in equal parts.



Attack: You know where a person hurts most or is most vulnerable, and while it may pain you to do so, that's exactly where you strike. You sense where the chinks in the armor are, and you've ferreted out secrets they'd rather never see the light of day. If you have to, you'll expose them and do some serious damage.



Defend: Unfortunately, Sensitive leaves you exposed to incoming attacks, distracted as you are by processing sensory input. But sometimes you can make that work to your advantage. You're often discounted, underestimated, or assumed by your opponents to be a lesser target that can be dealt with later. You're tougher than they think because you've seen and experienced the pain and suffering of others, so much so you can withstand more than they can imagine inflicting.

Stunts and Refresh

As in *Fate Core*, you can pick or invent one stunt free for your character, and start with three refresh. You can take up to two more stunts at the cost of lowering your refresh by one each—you can never have a refresh lower than 1. You can create stunts to go with your assets (*Fate Core*, page 88), or you can take an existing stunt and apply it to one of your assets. For example, you might decide to take the Athletics stunt **Roll with the Blow** (*Fate Core*, page 98) and apply it to your Sensitive, changing it as follows:

When you succeed with style on a defend action using Sensitive against an opponent's attack roll during a Face-Off, you gain a scene aspect with a free invocation, as opposed to a boost.

Pick a Spell

In addition to your stunt(s), you can pick one free spell, listed below. Unless your character has a reason why not to do so, you should pick a spell from the magical asset your family favors. You buy spells just like you buy additional stunts, any extra spells beyond the first spent from your refresh rate.

DESIRES, LIES, AND KEEPING UP APPEARANCES

While *Fate Core* allows you to take any kind of character on any sort of adventure you can imagine, the focus in *White Picket Witches* is a bit more narrow in order to stay true to the genre.

What Do Characters Do?

An island full of secrets and magic is a place ripe for adventure and exploration. It abounds with mysteries, secrets, lies, and the potential for monstrous behavior, both human and inhuman. All the vices, from lust and gluttony to wrath and pride, can and will pop up. You can take your game anywhere you want to go—even off the Island. But, when the characters are stressed out and pushed too far, and the sooner the better, the GM needs to bring them back home to the Island, to a Place of Power for the inevitable Face-Off.

And that scene plays out like this:

- The players or GM propose what scene should happen. Confrontation, investigation, seduction, showing-off, ...whatever it is that the characters want or need to accomplish.
- The GM encourages the players to pick a Place of Power in which to frame the scene. A player can spend a fate point to declare details: things like the time of day, who else might be around, or even the weather. These become Situation Aspects with a free invoke for the person who spent the fate point to use, or give away to another player as they wish.
- The scene progresses, roleplayed as normal with obstacles arising as in any other scene, until two or more characters—either PC or NPC—come into conflict. At that point, a player can call for a Face-Off. NPCs can call for Face-Offs, either at the GM's behest, or as requested by one of the players as fitting with the story for that NPC. Whenever possible, the GM should encourage the Face-Off to be between two characters, so that more the other players are having more things to do.



Stages of a Face-Off

Has a player agreed to a Face-Off? Great! Here's how that works. (Not that they have much of a choice to trying to avoid it, in keeping with the genre.)

Engage a Face-Off and Declare Intent

The first player to ask for a Face-Off declares her intent, what they want to accomplish, or how they'd like to see this scene end. Usually, this is an in-character intent, as in *"Melody wants to expose Jacquelyn's infidelity in front of her Family's Elders during a game of bridge."*

Intent can be on a "meta" level as well, with the declaring player acting as if they were a writer for the show. She might say, *"I don't really care what the conflict is about, I just want to highlight how much Tyler's drinking has influenced his magic."* The other PCs involved in the Face-Off should also declare their intents. It's okay if players share intents—they don't have to be mutually exclusive.

Choose Sides

A Face-Off is ultimately between two characters: character vs. character, generic NPC vs. character, or a character being challenged by their Antagonist (or vice versa). However, sometimes it's a gang-up as well. To deal with that, have the characters choose sides. No matter what intents are declared, all characters must choose sides. Ultimately, there should be two teams, starting with the character who initiated the Face-Off and the character Faced-Off against. These will be the "main actors" for the scene. The teams don't have to be even—only one character per team is actually at risk of being taken out of the scene. For every other character siding with her, a main actor gets one extra temporary stress box. Make note of which new stress box comes from which extra character. If the character is totally on her own, with no one choosing her side, then she gets an extra temporary minor consequence—lone wolves have the most interesting scars, after all.

What Does the GM Do? Places of Power.

Because the conflict in a Face-Off is often (if not usually) between players, it may be confusing at first as to what a GM should be doing during it. A GM's usual duties apply: acting as the NPCs, making final calls, adding color and detail where necessary, and so on. In a Face-Off, the GM also has the added duty of acting as the Place of Power, using the location's fate points and assets to influence the scene and add to the drama.

Build Aspects and Obstacles

Go around the table, with each character taking an action. At this point, the players should be creating advantages for themselves, gathering fate points as best they can, and/or setting up obstacles for the other actors in the Face-Off. Go around the table as many times as feels right.

Compel Flashbacks

During this part of the Face-Off, each actor, or character in the scene, can compel a flashback against the other. While it may be challenging for a player to think on their feet, the GM and the other players can (and should!) offer helpful ideas if someone gets stuck on what to do.

To compel a flashback, the actor offers a fate point to their opponent, naming both an aspect and an asset. They then ask the opponent to describe a time when the negative side of that aspect got in the way of their asset, to be described in flashback form. The opponent might talk about the time her *Competitive Personality* caused her to ignore her younger sister's cries for help just before she was hospitalized for a stress-related illness. The opponent then has two choices after the flashback: she can either decide her character grew and changed as a result of the experience, or that it's a wound she still deals with.

If she learned from it, she rejects the offered fate point, taking a -2 on any roll when using the named asset for the coming Face-Off. The GM takes the first actor's offered fate point and keeps it for use by the Place of Power. If it's a wound she hasn't yet dealt with, she accepts the fate point from the first actor, but cannot use that particular asset during the Face-Off.

GM Intervention

At any point she likes, the GM can begin tempting the actors to engage in the final phase of a Face-Off. Acting as the Place of Power and using its fate points, the GM can offer a fate point to the first actor willing to make the first move in the final phase. If no one goes for it on the first offer, the GM can give the characters a chance to escalate the set-up further, and then offer two fate points; the GM can use as many fate points as the Place of Power has.

The Exchange

When an actor makes a move, the characters begin a back-and-forth exchange to inflict harm to one another's stress track, until one or the other is taken out of the Face-Off and therefore taken out of the scene. This runs similarly to the way a combat would work in a standard *Fate Core* game, but replaces the standard challenges, contests, and conflicts rules. The actors call in all their aspects and fate points to check off each other's stress tracks—the major difference here is narrative, and that each character has more stress boxes and consequences to absorb harm with.

At its simplest, this back-and-forth is a push-and-pull of assets. One actor might use Powerful to describe how he's browbeating the other. She resists by saying her Sensitive is enough to realize he doesn't really intend to follow through on his threats. The players roll: he gets a Fair (+2) roll after using whatever aspects he pulls in, and she gets a Great (+4) after doing the same. She takes no stress. If he rolled Great (+4) and she rolled Fair (+2), she'd take the difference between the two in harm, to either absorb with stress boxes or consequences.

Remember, *White Picket Witches* doesn't separate physical, emotional, or even spiritual stress: everything is accounted for on the same track, so that a Face-Off can switch between any number of different conflicts while keeping the dramatic pacing the same. A dramatic kung-fu duel between a policewoman and a mysterious assassin runs on the same track as a heart-to-heart discussion between a worried mother and her untrusting teenage son. Both conflicts go back and forth until someone gives, and the other character achieves their intent.

But because there's witchcraft on Moon Island—and more than a fair share of other supernatural elements and creatures—arguments, debates, confrontations, and just plain fighting tends to be more complicated. Spells and monster powers may change the scope of the story, and this will often be reflected by actors in a Face-Off creating obstacles between themselves and the other actor. *Fate Core* rules apply here, where a player can choose to create an aspect and roll their asset: if it is Fair (+2) or better, they get a Fair (+2) obstacle between them and getting taken out of the scene.



Example

The heads of two of the Five Families are Facing-Off. Under any other circumstances, they might simply throw insults back and forth, but these are powerful witches from ancient magical lineages, and the stakes of the conflict are much higher. Instead of harsh words, lightning bolts are flung with the intent to boil each other's blood and so on, in a dramatic display of force and power.

Merina, a master of Breath Work, seeks to confuse her opponent with an *Illusionary Double*. She uses her turn to cast a spell, rolling her Breath Work asset. It's a gamble, but she hits her mark and the GM determines that her opponent must overcome a Fair (+2) obstacle to see through the illusion next turn, or else she can't make a move to inflict stress on Merina. As in *Fate Core*, the obstacle exists for only one turn—if she wants it to stick, Merina's player will have to spend a fate point each turn to keep it in place. If her opponent overcomes it, however, it's dispelled and no longer a factor in the conflict.

The Place of Power Moves

After each actor has had a turn at inflicting harm on the other, and any other characters that have sided with the main actors have had their say, it's time for the GM to take an active role by having the Place of Power make a move. The GM decides on an asset the Place has, rolling it against one of the actors to inflict harm. This is just an asset roll, with the actor resisting as above. The Place of Power has a limited number of fate points, but can use them in these attacks if left over from earlier bidding. The GM can also call on the Place's current leitmotif, or call out any of the actor's consequences just as a normal actor in the Face-Off.

WHY DO THIS?

The GM has many duties in a game of *White Picket Witches*. During the Face-Off, she's trying to influence the scene to bring out the most drama and narrative tension possible in the story. She's acting as a surrogate for both the "producers" and the imaginary audience for the "show" that this game is bringing to life. She's also helping the players heighten that tension by adding the setting's mystical gravity to events taking place in important places on the Island.

Who Does the GM Move Against?

There's really no right or wrong answer to this question as long as you're making your choice fairly, with fun and enjoyment maximized for everyone in your group. What makes sense for the story? What might make the story more interesting? Follow your intuition on this, and that's where you'll find your answer. Or, follow one of the suggestions on the next page.

- **Do It as an Upset:** Target the actor who is doing the best in the scene to take them down a peg or two, making sure no one walks away unscathed. Be sure to give reasons, though, why it happens that way.
- **Do It to Move Things Along:** Target the actor who is losing. End them quick or push them into early concession. This can be a mean move, so make sure your players are game for this sort of turn of events before you do it.
- **Do It Because Magic Is Powerful:** Target the actor who first brought magic into the conflict. Within the setting Places of Power are real and you can reinforce that concept by having bad luck follow those who use magic haphazardly or brazenly.
- **Do It Because the Chance Is Too Good to Pass Up:** Target an actor in a compromised position. Maybe one of the actors has pushed the other toward the edge of the pier, or threatened the other with a gun. Perhaps someone shouted loud enough to draw attention from uninvolved bystanders. Regardless, don't worry about who is "winning" the Face-Off: go for the actor who may slip off the pier, accidentally get shot, or get caught with his pants down by his wife, or any number of other harm-inflicting turn of events. Remember that rolling assets affects the narrative, so lean on those assets heavily when deciding what happens when misfortune (and the Place of Power) makes their move.

The GM can only move for a Place of Power once per turn or per table go-around. If the characters are evenly matched, no one is using magic, and no one is particularly compromised, the GM can wait until another turn to make a move.

Taken Out

Getting taken out in Fate Core is pretty dramatic. It's dramatic in *White Picket Witches* too, but considerably more common, more of a knockout or setback than a consequence-laden defeat. Any Face-Off will end in either a knockout or with one of the actors conceding to the other, thus ending the scene.

If an actor defeats another by knockout, their intent is satisfied and becomes a part of the ongoing story. Additionally, the winning actor gets an aspect based on this intent, which they can invoke once for free, even if not against the character they had the Face-Off with.

Kendra and her best friend Ty have a long, weepy heart-to-heart about Kendra's childhood off of the Island. Their players use the Face-Off rules to determine how the scene works out, and in the end, Kendra is exhausted by Ty's tough but well-meaning questions. At the start of the Face-Off, Ty's player declared his intent was to show Kendra she's *Safer on the Island*. Since Ty has exhausted Kendra, his point is made: she can't help but agree that she seems to be safer on the island. Gracefully, Kendra's player has her character internalize this fact and she now believes it pretty deeply. Ty gets to write the aspect *Kendra Is Safer With Her family* on his sheet. Two scenes later, Ty is confronted by Robin, Kendra's ex-lover from off the Island

who is out for blood. In the scuffle—another Face-Off—Ty calls on the new aspect to charge his attack against Robin. After all, he’s got to keep proving to Kendra it’s true. He could use the aspect against Kendra too, say, to convince her not to run away later—this aspect doesn’t have to apply to just one situation.

Once a character gets to declare a new intent as true, any previous intents-turned-aspects are erased—characters should have only one intent-based aspect on their sheet at any given time.

Concession

If you’ve decided your character might back out, run, or simply knuckle under, that’s a concession. It’s not necessarily a defeat: maybe the player started a Face-Off just to take some stress and rough up their character, in order to build up some fate points for an even more dramatic Face-Off later (very much in keeping with the genre). In *Fate Core*, the conceding character gets a fate point. In *White Picket Witches*, to drive dramatic escalation from one scene to the next, a conceding character does not get a fate point, but instead gets to change how things play out (a bit). The actor accepting the concession declares a trait they’d like to go along with their declared intent. The character who concedes can either add one word to the aspects, or change a word if the aspect is a short phrase. This change should be thematically appropriate and up to the GM to accept or decline, should a player try to get silly or otherwise avoid any real consequence.

Using the example above with Kendra and Ky: if Kendra’s player had conceded before she was completely knocked out, she could change the aspect instead to read ***Kendra Is Safer With Ty*** for Ty’s sheet. Or, maybe she tweaks it to read ***Kendra Is Weak With Her Family***. Consider the consequences of changing the phrase to ***Everyone Is Safer With Their Families***, suggesting this fight left Ty with a sense that family is all you can trust and everyone should stick to their own—and yes, it’s okay to change pronouns and articles to make the aspects make sense.

If the victor really hates the tweak suggested by the conceding player, either the GM can step in, or the conceding player can offer two more tweaks in addition, one of which the victor must select.

Example of Play

Jackson (played by David) and his brother Mark (played by Sarah) have been arguing over Tina, a seductive Alpha werewolf. Their scene begins in a Place of Power: the Basketball Court, built in a park right on the edge of the werewolves’ woods. Their players describe the scene as “evening, the mood grim and tense.” Alex, a player not in the scene, tosses in a fate point to change the location’s leitmotif to “moody rock song that gets fast and angry at the end,” just to make things interesting. The scene starts with the brothers playing a game of hoops. Sarah notes how Mark is shirtless—for the show’s fans, of course—and nets a fate point for her play to the audience.

They roleplay a bit, talking about the last scene they were in. Things are a little too calm (read: not advancing the story) for the GM, so she revs things up by having Tina show up. Tina flirts with both characters at first, jacking the scene's sexual tension up, and then suddenly starts mocking Jackson, casting aspersions on both his athletic and magical abilities. Mark laughs at what she says, and Jackson loses his cool—David tells the GM that “Jackson's gonna need a Face-Off.”

The GM asks them both to declare their Intent. David decides that Jackson intends to *Remind His Brother That Family Comes First*. Sarah ponders a bit about it and decides that Mark needs to *Take My Big Brother Down a Peg or Two*. Tina isn't going to be involved in the Face-Off directly, so there's no one to choose sides—this conflict is just between Jackson and Mark.

The GM notes the assets and current leitmotif for the Basketball Court—the Place of Power for the scene—while also considering the sorts of things that might make the scene more dramatic from the audience's point of view.

Sarah and David take some time building up aspects and fate points for their characters. Mark makes a Treacherous roll to cheat a basket off of Jackson, using the opportunity to hit him with a simple *Frustrated* aspect he'll invoke later. The GM points out that Jackson has *Big-Hearted* as an aspect, and holds up a fate point. The table laughs. Jackson, now goaded by the audience to take an underdog role, accepts the GM's compel, letting the downside of *Big-Hearted* get the better of him. He's wounded emotionally, and David plays it to the hilt.



Mark calls out Jackson's *Arrogant for a Reason* aspect and compels him to have a flashback with it and his Dangerous asset. Jackson considers his options, decides he needs the fate point and accepts the compel. He takes the fate point and describes a time where he warned a bunch of his friends not to go swimming at the quarry after dark. Greg, Jackson's best friend, got in his face about it, and he played Savvy over Dangerous. Greg ended up breaking his leg in the water, losing his college scholarship and a professional football career—and to this day, Jackson wonders if he'd been more aggressive, would things have been different for his friend? In the current situation, Jackson won't be using Dangerous against Mark in this Face-Off, thanks to the "Compel a Flashback" rule above.

The GM steps in, putting up one of the Basketball Court's fate points to the first player to make a move. They look at their piles, and Sarah flinches and has Mark take the point, shouting out something cruel about Jackson's love life (and maybe his manhood). She rolls Mark's Treacherous—it was a really low blow—and scores a Superb (+5) with the help of his *Little Brothers Are Like That* aspect. Jackson's too mature for that sort of thing, and chooses to roll his Classy to resist—a bad roll leaves him sitting at only a Fair (+2) result. The difference is 3 shifts in Mark's favor, so David marks that down as stress for Jackson, determining that maybe jealousy and his own lackluster love life may play a part in his anger regarding Tina. Neat!

Jackson has lost his cool for the second time, deciding that mere words aren't going to cut it now. Jackson charges Mark, intending to pick him up by the neck and shove him back into the chain-link fence around the Court. Because a Face-Off replaces and extends past conflict rules, there's no reason to switch gears: we're still dealing with a couple of guys arguing over a woman, even if they're throwing punches instead of just yelling at each other. Jackson's player uses Powerful, with Mark defending with Powerful as well, resulting in Mark taking 3 boxes of stress. Instead of taking the stress, however, Sarah decides that Jackson misjudged his own strength, resulting in Mark getting pretty roughed up, taking a moderate consequence *Just a Little Internal Damage, Nothing Serious*, and he spits blood out. He couldn't take a minor consequence, carrying one from a previous scene he was in—hey, Mark lives on the edge, he's trying to date a werewolf, after all! With blood on his teeth, Mark taunts his older brother.

If there were multiple characters involved, they'd each get to take turns adding to the scene, making things tougher on Mark and Jackson respective to whichever side they picked. As it's only the two characters, the GM moves next. She decides that Jackson is still "losing" by guesstimating who has how many stress boxes remaining, as well as enough fate points to buff themselves with—it's an imperfect guess, but life on the Island isn't always fair. So now, the Basketball Court has Dangerous as an asset, and the GM decides to roll that to see what happens.

Without really knowing what's going on, Mark resists with Savvy—and it's a good thing he did. He beats the GM's roll, and therefore doesn't take any harm from the Court itself. If he had, the GM might have had something happen, maybe that the fence actually tore him up more than Jackson intended or, worse, Tina's pack smelling Mark's blood and come howling. Either way, it's not a concern this round, else it'd be reflected with potential stress for Mark to absorb or be overcome by.

Remember that assets imply story: since Jackson couldn't use *Dangerous*, and instead uses *Powerful*, David takes that in to account. He decides Jackson's intention wasn't to hurt Mark: upon seeing blood on his brother's teeth, Jackson backs off. He turns his back to his brother and talks about family bonds and understanding. It's a powerful story moment, and David is going to back it up by pulling out all the stops. He declares that this is all a part of a sympathetic *Blood Work* asset cast by Jackson to break the hold Tina has over Mark. This isn't a specific spell from the spell lists, but rather an on-the-fly application of *Blood Work*. He pulls in a bunch of free invokes thanks to using family magic, and on family even, along with a number of other aspects he's been prepping since the start of the scene. He even calls on Mark's *Just a Little Internal Damage, Nothing Serious*. It's a blowout. Mark tries to resist with *Powerful* again, but he can't overcome Jackson's magic and is taken out.

The GM decides that Tina, seeing all this, retreats back to the woods. Carrie, another player at the table, even pitches in a fate point to make Jackson's guess true: it turns out that Tina was using some kind of werewolf pheromone to sway Mark, and they're only just now seeing it. Very dramatic! Because Jackson was victorious, he takes his Intent *Family Comes First* and, considering the scene, changes it to *My Brother's Keeper*. Everyone decides that's awesome and they move on to the next scene.

Other GM Tricks

- A character can have a Face-Off against their Antagonist, which is basically permission from the player for the GM to take their gloves off and bring the drama! Consider passing the Place of Power off to another player temporarily.
- If it seems like the Face-Off is going too fast for your liking, add an obstacle for the characters to get past. Using the example above, imagine if Tina got between the two brothers, with an impassioned plea that they stop fighting! She's a tough cookie, so the GM could declare she's a Great (+4) obstacle to overcome before they can get back to the business of arguing with each other.
- Also, juxtaposition is fun! Stage two Face-Offs in different Places of Power between different characters, switching back and forth between them just like on TV!



MAGIC IN SUBURBIA

To keep things fluid, as well as allow players to explore different forms of witchcraft derived from literary or folklore sources, *White Picket Witches* treats magic as a skill. The skill is meant to justify character actions outside of a mundane scope and should be flexible, limited by the GM only if necessary. It's possible that, like the rest of the setting, definitions and limits of what magic can do might come up in play. Once one of these rules or limitations comes up, it remains true—until the GM decides it isn't (which she shouldn't do that often, or at least not without good reason).

The descriptions below are loose, with lots of room for interpretation. A clearer idea of what these skills do should come as the characters define the Five Families and as the story the group is creating progresses. The only thing that must be adhered to is what your group decides at the table, not what is written here. These are just examples. Pick what works for your game and ignore the rest.

The sample spells here are only a starting point. They are not the only magic a character can make happen. They're just specific spells that tweak the rules in much the same way stunts do. When creating your own spells, use the stunt creation rules in *Fate Core*, page 88.

Breath Work

Breath Work is tied to your sense of taste and smell. It grants knowledge outside your understanding, drawing magic out of song and sound. It is lighter than air, calls to the light, and is all about movement.

Breath Spells

- **Mystical Conveyance**

The distance between your fingers and any handheld item you've touched in the past is trivial and easy to overcome with a little Breath Work. If you succeed against a Great (+4) difficulty, you have the item in hand; if you succeed with style, you get a boost associated with that item.

- **Kid Icarus**

It's as if your feet were winged, you move that fast and light. Add a +2 to any asset roll that requires you move fast or stay light on your feet.

- **Tongues**

Use Breath Work to create an aspect based on a language, even one based on a subculture or gang. So long as you keep that aspect alive, native speakers or members of the culture will accept you as their own, despite any appearances otherwise.

Skin Work

Skin Work exists only on the surface. It tricks the mind and the eye. Skin Work is charms and brief bursts. It changes paper and written words. It is technomancy, and may have something to do with the fae.

Skin Spells

- **Charm**
Roll a Good (+3) or better roll, and strangers and casual acquaintances become automatically fond of you. During this scene, you are immune to one attack by the Place of Power.
- **Minor Healing**
On a Fair (+2) or better roll, you can erase a minor consequence.
- **Touch the Machine**
Spend a fate point to identify a piece of machinery or technology to be affected by this spell. The GM gives this item of tech an aspect for the scene. On a Good (+3) or better roll, you may swap one of your aspects with the tech's aspect, acting as if you have that function or facet of the tech yourself. If you succeed with style, you get a free invoke of this aspect.

Blood Work

Blood Work reaches back to your ancestors. It creates and destroys disease. It is alchemy, with a connection to plants and other simple life forms. It affects the deepest parts of the heart, as well as the loins. Blood Work is connected to fire.

Blood Spells

- **Blood Ties**
Thanks to your sympathetic ties, you get a +2 to any roll that would add stress to a member of your own family.
- **Healing**
On a Good (+3) or better roll, you can reduce a moderate consequence down to minor.
- **To Spite Your Face**
If you take a consequence during a Face-Off, roll Blood Work. On a Fair (+2) roll, ignore a minor consequence, Good (+3) ignores a moderate one, and Great (+4) ignores a major one. These consequences cannot be compelled or invoked, and are considered gone for the duration of the current Face-Off. In the next Face-Off, though, they return magically and can be freely invoked for the first time like a new consequence: the use of magic always exacts its due.

Muscle Work

Muscle Work changes your body. It controls animals and is deep under the surface, shaking the earth. It heals the deepest wounds, but at great cost. Muscle Work is transformation, shape-shifting.

Muscle Spells

- **Quake**

Spend a fate point and roll: on a Great (+4) or better roll, the earth under your feet trembles. While not necessarily dangerous, it does agitate or intimidate those present. Any amount of harm inflicted on any character during this scene (except you) is increased by one.

- **Deepest Healing**

On a Great (+4) or better roll, you can reduce a serious consequence down to moderate.

- **Animal Form**

On a Great (+4) or better roll, you can assume your pre-designated animal form. This animal form has the same number of aspects as you, but should be redefined to make them consistent with the form (subject to GM approval). To have a second or third animal form, each with their own specific set of aspects, you'll need to buy a new spell slot for each.

Bone Work

Above all, Bone Work is dangerous. Deeds done for the dead, an animation of inert material. Bone Work is a whisper in the shadows, a prayer to selfish spirits. Bone magic is restless and secretive.

Bone Spells

- **Curse**

If a character is forced to take a consequence as a result of your actions, spend a fate point and roll: on a Good (+4) or better, increase the consequence one level up, e.g. minor to moderate, moderate to major, and so on.

- **Dead Man's Tales**

Once per episode, you may take a boost, representing a secret whispered to you by the dead, granting one free invoke of it before it fades away.

- **Serpent's Skin**

While not really snakeskin, it's actually little boney growths all over you—hope no one investigates too closely. On a Good (+4) or better roll, reduce the shift difference by one in any physical attack or action intended to hurt you, if the opponent could normally inflict harm on you. This spell can reduce your stress taken to zero, so long as the damage is physical.

OTHER BUMPS IN THE NIGHT

The characters in your game of *White Picket Witches* may be too busy with intra-family drama, in addition to balancing their normal life with their witchcraft, for the GM to introduce any kind of monsters or other supernatural elements to the game. But any good GM will push the characters' limits anyway, or else why bother playing? With an eye toward the genre and making things even more interesting for the characters, here's a bit more on the other creatures that go bump in the night in the quaint (but really queer and/or creepy) small-town setting that is Moon Island. Remember, like Neverland, the Island is small enough that trouble usually rubs up on other trouble, making life even more interesting and complicated for the characters.

Ideally, any monsters that do exist on Moon Island, and what they are capable of, should emerge from gameplay. Players will describe these beasties with aspects, defining them as they are discovered by the characters. The GM will want to pay attention to what the players say, even if they are only musing or half-joking, taking notes on everything, and then listing the aspects specifically mentioned, or those that can be derived from what's been mentioned. If you're using index cards (and we always recommend you do, in any *Fate Core* game), a hole-punch and locking ring is a great way to have an entire *White Picket Witches* bestiary on hand for your campaign!

If, however, you have to jumpstart things and need some ideas on how to turn an emergent one-off monster into a more serious, recurring threat, here are some ideas to get your started. Each character or beastie below has a small bio, complete with aspects and assets, along with a clever trick or two appropriate to their species or monster type. Feel free to mix them up: if you love what the Fae do, but feel like their abilities would work better for werewolves, go for it! The Casting aspect is left blank for you to fill in as you go along—you're the casting director here, so choose whatever actor you want for the role that fulfills your vision of it!

Mr. Scratch, the Charming Devil

It is particularly unfair to characterize Mr. Alistair Scratch as evil. He really isn't. There's no malice in his intention, so much as a need to serve his nature—and his nature is the gathering and trading of favors. He feeds off of the negative psychic energy created when someone is in debt to him, whether it's something as simple as a gambling debt, or a spiritual quid pro quo magically realized and impossible to satisfy on the human side. So Scratch makes deals, offers, and tempts. He helps, really, in his own way—not because he's evil, but because that instance where someone gets in over their head, and the energy he derives from it, enables him to stick around. For a very long time.

The stories say that on rare instances, he'll forgive a debt, but how or why that might happen is the stuff of legend.

MR. SCRATCH, THE CHARMING DEVIL

Aspects Canon: Cunning Devil
 Tragic Flaw: Hubris
 Casting: ??

Refresh: 2

Assets Classy: Fair (+2) Savvy: Good (+3)
 Treacherous: Great (+4)

Trick

The Deal: Scratch can make just about anything happen, but at a cost. A character can make a request, up to and including changing their Canon Aspect, and/or just about anything else in the setting short of character death. (Scratch doesn't kill, or at least not directly.) He names a price, something extremely difficult but possible within the scope of a serious adventure, or at a terrible cost to the character. If the character agrees, they get what they want immediately. However, until they've paid off their end of the bargain, their refresh is lowered by one and Scratch's raised one higher. Suffice it to say, it is not uncommon for Scratch to intervene to keep the character in debt just a little longer. Or forever.



May, Lady-in-Green

When she seduced your grandfather, she went by the name of June. Two generations ago, her name was July and they say she stole children right out of their beds. There are so many stories about the Lady-in-Green that it's not possible for all of them to be true. And yet these tales of her still get passed around the Island and down through the generations. A tall, beautiful woman with long shining black hair and eyes like cut amethysts. There was no mistaking her when you saw her in the Mayor's office. Despite the contracts she carried and her business attire, she wore stunning green, a dead giveaway. But what could a wild and dangerous spirit of the wood want to do with city planning? And what does it have to do with your family's estate?

MAY, LADY-IN-GREEN

Aspects	Canon: Like the Sea, Eternal And Fluid	
	Tragic Flaw: Better Dead Than Captive	
	Casting: ??	
Refresh:	3	
Assets	Dangerous: Fair (+2)	Powerful: Great (+4),
	Sensitive: Good (+3)	

Trick

Trixy Curse: If May comes in physical contact with a character, she may spend a fate point and give the character the “Charmed” moderate consequence, even if they already had some other moderate consequence. So long as that consequence exists, the character's highest and lowest asset switch ratings. So if they have Dangerous at Great (+4), and Brilliant at Mediocre (+0), they'd roll Dangerous at +0 and Brilliant at +4 until the consequence is removed.

Adam, the Sorrowful Dead

Owning a rental property is always a headache—but especially a haunted one on Moon Island. The house was supposed to be empty. The family renting it from you left in a panicked hurry one night. When you went in to see if they'd trashed the place, you found a man dressed in muted colors, his suit out of fashion for decades (if not more), with the deepest, most soulful eyes you'd ever seen. He spoke softly, with a distinctly old-fashioned but unplaceable accent, telling you he was a sub-letter, giving you a bank account number. He'd wire money, he said, and you believed him without question. You asked if he minded that the place was believed to be haunted. He laughed, more morose than mirthful, shaking his head. “Not at all. I can manage,” he said. “Maybe the spirits here are just lonely. No bother at all. I could use the company.” The whole exchange left you with a nagging sense of sadness, and a vaguely unsatisfied curiosity.

ADAM, THE SORROWFUL DEAD

Aspects	Canon: Forlorn Romantic Tragic Flaw: It's Impossible to Let Go. Casting: ??	
Refresh	3	
Assets	Brilliant: Fair (+2)	Classy: Good (+3)
	Sensitive: Great (+4)	

Trick

Lost in Memory: When aggravated or cornered, Adam can bring those he remembers best back to life, after a fashion. His ghostly powers overwhelm any character in the scene. He rolls Sensitive, against which they may defend normally. If he beats their roll, he can temporarily replace any one of their aspects with one from someone in his past for every shift he achieves—for the duration of the scene, they believe, in some way, that they are people from Adam's mortal life. If Adam succeeds with style, the change lingers for another scene after the current one.

Aunt Rose, Bloody Matriarch

Aunt Rose is actually a devastatingly beautiful woman in her early thirties who dwells in one of the larger houses on the Island not owned by one of the Five Families. She has a family of her own, in fact: a pair of good-looking nephews, a niece, and a missing sister. Aunt Rose is just trying to keep her family together, doing her best to keep a handle on things. The problem is that she and her family are undead: she's a centuries-old vampire trying to reform, with mixed success.

AUNT ROSE, BLOODY MATRIARCH

Aspects	Canon: Searching for Lost Humanity Tragic Flaw: Hunger That Cannot Be Sated Casting: ??	
Refresh	4	
Assets	Dangerous: Great (+4)	Classy: Good (+3)
	Savvy: Fair (+2).	

Trick

Call to the Blood: By spending a fate point, Rose can instantly summon up to two existing family members to her side. If she is engaged in a Face-Off, they are assumed to have chosen her side, granting her additional stress boxes and aid as per "Choosing Sides" in a Face-Off.

Ulrich, Brilliant Beast

Fishing is a way of life for many on Moon Island, and its fishing community is tightly knit and especially wary of outsiders. There's a good reason for that. Recently one of the Island's most prominent elders, the 75-year-old fisherman Franz Luk, took his boat out during a storm and never returned. Since then, his son Ulrich has taken over as elder and spokesman for Moon Island's fishermen. There's something powerful and feral about Ulrich, bordering on uncontrollable. While Old Man Luk had a penchant for the wild side, he at least had the wisdom to keep himself in check. Ulrich doesn't seem to have benefitted from that wisdom, despite the fact that he is clearly much smarter than the Old Man was, which could mean big trouble for the Island.

ULRICH, BRILLIANT BEAST

Aspects	Canon: Overburdened Alpha	
	Tragic Flaw: Chafes When Collared	
	Casting: ??	
Refresh	-	
Assets	Brilliant: Great (+4)	Dangerous: Good (+3)
	Powerful: Fair (+2).	

Trick

Wild Man: In any Face-Off that involves violence, the threat of violence, or physical romance, Ulrich can ignore the first three stress boxes he'd otherwise take as harm.



**FIGHT
FIRE**

INTO THE FIRE

Fire is bad news and if you were sensible you'd be running away from it rather than into it.

The book says fire is rapid oxidation accompanied by light and heat. Combustion is a rapid chemical reaction that gives off energy or products that cause further reaction. You learned this in fire school because it was on the test, but you didn't *learn* it until your first interior attack, humping a blitz line into a hoarder's Georgian revival mansion.

Then you got to see what "combustion gases" really meant—carbon monoxide and dioxide, hydrogen cyanide and water vapor, any of which could kill you. The ones that didn't burn you were diligently trying to work their way past the seal of your air pack mask. Near the seat of that first fire visibility dropped to zero as flying ash plastered your face plate in a disorienting whirlwind of impossibly dense black smoke. The heat was extraordinary—both thermal and radiant—and knocking it down with water created clouds of scalding steam. The house, its very bones consumed as fuel, started to collapse on and around you. *That* was an education.

You saw a fire's life tracked across the five stages you'd been taught.

First is ignition. This is the point at which fire starts. Ignition can be caused by matches, overheated wiring, chemical reactions, solar radiation or a million other things. Fire is confined, at this stage, by its initial fuel. A just-ignited fire is weak but bold, eagerly expanding as it finds combustibles and oxygen. In just seconds it can turn into something deadly.

Inside that mansion, you saw pinpoint blazes ignite across the room as if by magic. You know it isn't magic—it's the terrifying power of radiant heat.

Second is growth. Heat and smoke levels increase as oxygen is consumed. Hot gases rise and spread from ceiling to walls. If fuel and oxygen are available, the fire will spread, but it is still dependent on its fuel source. A growing fire is devious and opportunistic, creeping horizontally along ceilings and seeking out voids where it can smolder and grow.

During your primary search of the ground floor, you watched a tiny little fire find a dumbwaiter shaft and auto-extend to the mansion's second floor as if it knew what it was doing.

Third is flashover. This is the transition between a growing fire and a fully developed one. It is a stage rather than an event. Heat and smoke output continue to increase. Any exposed combustible is burning. Visibility approaches zero as hot gases are swirled by radiant heat from the gas layer at ceiling height in a vicious circle of heat amplification. A fire in flashover is aggressive and determined, consuming everything in its immediate vicinity and building into something truly awe-inspiring.

You reached the second floor landing behind your partner as the hallway burst into flame, as though someone had flipped a switch. Suddenly the hose you were hauling didn't seem so formidable.

Fourth is full development. This is the real deal—a genuine conflagration. The maximum possible heat is being released, and the volume of the fire is completely dependent on the size, number and location of ventilation openings. Unburned gases flow ahead of the fire and ignite as they encounter more oxygen in previously untouched spaces. A fully developed fire is desperate and chaotic, seeking oxygen and fuel wherever it can. It is a freight train burning at 600 Celsius.

Above the seat of the fire you could hear it roaring through the closed bedroom door in front of you on its way to the now-ventilated roof and open air. Your partner took the door off its hinges with his Halligan and you stared directly into hell for the first time.

Finally, a fire falls into decay. Lack of fuel causes fire intensity to decrease. A fire in decay is weak but subtle, seeking to preserve whatever hot spots it can, hoping to rekindle after the fireground has been declared safe.

You poked at what remained of the mansion, much later. You looked under the treads of the stairs you'd climbed, and in the scarred shell of the dumbwaiter shaft. The fire wasn't done but you finished it anyway.

How We Roll

Welcome to the Fire Department, probie. Let's get you oriented.

We're divided into companies here. A fire company is typically four or five fire-fighters and an officer, usually a Lieutenant, whose work centers around a single fire apparatus. A fire station often houses two or three companies, and is commanded by a Captain. That's your boss. *Her* boss is the Battalion Commander, who is not to be trifled with.

An **engine company** attacks a fire by pumping water or foam at it from a variety of hoses, protecting life and property. A pumper truck will carry 500-1000 gallons of on-board water, many hoselines of various dimensions, and a basic assortment of ladders and tools. They may have a deck gun for high volume coverage.

A **truck company** (also called a ladder company) is usually about the same size as an engine company, and is tasked with forcible entry, ventilation, search, and rescue. A ladder truck will have a vast assortment of tools and ladders, life-saving equipment, and specialized search and rescue gear. They may have a built-in aerial ladder for rapidly accessing upper floors.

A **rescue company** consists of specialists focused on emergency medical treatment, extrication and stabilization. Many sub-specialize in swiftwater or high angle rescue. A rescue truck will have equipment and gear for a variety of situations—chocks and shoring tools for stabilizing motor vehicles, airbags and power tools and specialized gear. Sometimes instead of a dedicated company, a smaller battalion will have a dedicated apparatus staffed by truck and engine company personnel as needed.

A collection of companies form a battalion, supervised by a battalion commander. For example, Manhattan's Battalion One comprises four firehouses that field four engine companies, three ladder companies, a specialist decontamination unit, and a command unit. A collection of battalions forms a division, and divisions, a department.

Although there are exciting, dramatic stories to be told across this chain of command, Fight Fire focuses on the daily grind and occasional heroics of a single truck company—*your* truck company.

Settled in? Got your turnout gear squared away in your new locker? Good, because it's time to drag it all back out again—there's a fire call and you're up, so grab your gear.

The Gear

Every firefighter has **turnout gear**—heavy protective clothing, boots and a helmet. The whole kit weighs around 25 pounds, more when it's wet, which is always. A helmet-mounted primary light and a two-way radio are also essential equipment.

Anyone attacking a fire is going to have an **air pack** consisting of SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) and a facemask as well, providing a 45 minute supply of clean air. This weighs another 25 pounds. Many departments integrate a **PASS** (Personal Alert Safety System) device into the air pack. PASS, emitting a loud, piercing tone when it fails to detect motion, is the final line of defense for a firefighter in distress. **Thermal imaging cameras** allow firefighters to scan through thick smoke, and are lifesavers in departments that can afford them.

Hand tools will vary by responsibility, but every firefighter can handle any tool if necessary. Beyond the ubiquitous **fire axe** there's the **Halligan**, a heavy multi-purpose tool for prying, twisting and generally wrecking stuff. Together these are referred to as “the irons”. A **pike pole** extends a firefighter's reach and is useful for probing and punching through drywall or roofing to get at the seat of a fire. In addition to these staples, every firefighter has a collection of small tools they find personally useful—a multitool, a spring-loaded center punch, vice grips, extra lights, door wedges and whole pockets full of loose stuff.

Beyond these basics are a constellation of specialized tools. A **Rabbit tool** is a hydraulic spreader used for forcible entry. Roof and ventilation firefighters often employ modified chainsaws called **roof saws**. **Smoke ejectors** (Positive pressure ventilation fans) can be set up to control airflow on the fireground. Motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) often require generator-powered hydraulic spreaders and cutting tools, as well as airbags, chocks and specialized extrication equipment.

Since equipment failure can be lethal, a lot of care is taken to maintain and stay current with the tools of the job.

For more gear and more terminology, see the glossary on page 109.

How to Fight a Fire

Let's pretend you were the Lieutenant and the incident commander on your very first fire call—that Georgian revival mansion. I know, laughable, but stick with me, okay?

It's a typical house fire, one room fully involved, thick black smoke pouring out a broken window, conflicting reports on whether all the occupants are accounted for. Let's walk through it by the numbers. You have a ladder truck and an engine at your command. Always remember that your number one concern is keeping your firefighters safe.

First, size it up. What's going on? Where's the fire now and where is it going? Are there immediate hazards to life (including yours)? Is it too big for a single engine and ladder truck team to handle? How are you going to approach this thing and control the situation?

You call it in: *“Central, this is Command, Ladder Ten is first in at 410 North Fairview. We have a three story wood frame residence with full attic and fire showing on A side on second floor. We're going to elevate some handline on the ladder and get some water in the attic and attack the fire from the front door. Requesting one additional alarm. Second company is FAST, we will need supply.”*

Next, make an attack plan. The three things you *must* do are: ventilate, enter and search. What kind of ventilation is needed, and where? Who is searching and how are they getting in? Who are your rescue firefighters, backups in the event of an accident? Where do you want your engine company laying attack lines and bringing water to bear? Do you have any special equipment? Your apparatus' chauffeur, the firefighter who actually drives the rig and controls the big ladder, is already getting in position. In addition to being a driver, the chauffeur works with the rest of the company to distribute tools, ladders, hose and rope and stands ready to assist in any position.

“I want a forcible entry team with a blitz line on the front door doing primary search as soon as the FAST team is in place. Chauffeur, get the aerial in position to put a guy on the roof with a saw; we're going to need some vertical ventilation to clear the way for the interior attack. Can we get a charged line to knock out some of those second story windows?”

Ventilation is the science (and, in the hands of an expert vent firefighter, perverse art) of controlling a fire by controlling its access to oxygen. This is done by opening windows and making holes—sometimes really big holes—in walls and roofs. Ventilation extends the time for search and rescue and reduces danger for trapped occupants. It increases visibility and can reduce the spread of fire, as well as the danger of flashover or backdraft. You vent for fire as a precursor to directly and safely attacking the seat of the fire. When you vent for fire, you are giving the products of combustion—heat, gas and smoke—somewhere to go that isn't in your face. Conversely, you vent for life when there's a chance that victims remain alive within.

Venting for life is designed to rapidly remove smoke—the biggest killer on the fireground—and improve search visibility. The two types of venting are mutually incompatible—vent for life and you'll actually kick up the intensity of the fire. Vent for fire and you'll choke the structure with deadly smoke. Seek your ventilation firefighter's advice. There's a reason they are called “Vent” on the team. This firefighter is rocking a pike pole and a Halligan.

The first phase of a fire incident is search and rescue. You want to get in there and search while containing the fire. This is a coordinated effort and you shouldn't go rushing in unsupported—communicate with your engine company and get them to lay down some protective streams between victims and the fire if possible, and have a FAST team (see page 110) on standby.

Entry may be as easy as walking through the open front door or require extraordinary measures that would make a hardened burglar proud. Your forcible entry

firefighter—“Irons”—is a valuable resource here—this is someone trained to find a way in and force a breach, making a big forcible-entry-firefighter-sized hole if necessary. Irons carries an eight pound flathead axe, a Halligan, and possibly a Rabbet tool. He or she is usually someone who likes to break things.

Right behind your forcible entry firefighter will be an extinguisher firefighter—“Can”—either humping a hose line or a chemical extinguisher, knocking down the fire and helping to clear a path to the seat of the fire. Can is searching, too, looking for trapped or panicked victims. A pike pole and a 2.5 gallon extinguisher or an attack hose are Can’s primary tools. Can and Irons are a tight team. Hopefully your engine company is backing them up. Water is a critical part of search and rescue—it can keep the fire away from victims and away from you, and it can help control evacuation routes through stairways and corridors. Contain the fire and keep people safe.

“Engine Ten, can you get me some streams on the second floor, B side, maybe try to knock down that fire so my guys can advance up there?”

You’ll probably want someone on the roof—assign a team member to be “Roof” and get them moving. From the roof they can help ventilate and keep an eye on the structure’s overall integrity, as well as gain access to any attic, cockloft or upper floor. *Everything* needs to be searched. Roof is going up there with a roof saw—basically a modified chainsaw—as well as a pike pole and a Halligan. Vent and Roof work together to control fire and smoke at your command.

On the roof, skylights and scuttles (hatches providing access from the interior to the roof) can be cleared to provide ventilation. Failing that, a hole can be cut. One large hole is preferable to several small holes. great care must be taken not to cut structural members or to open the roof into a fully involved lower area unawares. A Vent firefighter can open windows and create horizontal holes to control fire, working down from the structure’s highest point.

“Vent, this is Command, make a big hole up there on the A side, I want lots of room to clear this thing.”

Stay in constant communication with your team. Depending on the circumstances, you may be needed to assist in any position—traditionally as a truck company officer you have a lock puller, also known as a **K-tool**, and anything that might slow down your interior firefighters is your business to sort out. Keep your backup team of rescue firefighters alert and ready to roll. Keep your people safe. Once the fire is contained, bring all your water resources to bear. This requires careful communication, because an aggressive attack hose can actually drive a fire toward other firefighters, or even cause a flashover. Interior firefighters working a blaze should use solid streams to minimize steam.

“Irons, this is Command, continue primary search on the second floor, be advised Engine Ten is directing streams onto B side and we’re opening some vertical ventilation for you.”

When the fire has been beaten back and the initial search is over, send in more firefighters for a detailed secondary search. The last thing you want to do is miss somebody. Finally, consider the salvage and protection of property.

After search and rescue, this is the most essential activity. Your goal should be to protect adjacent structures and those parts of the building not yet involved.



The fire is in dynamic motion and you will need to control it. Smoke, heated air and gases, and flying embers are moving around both vertically—through convection—and horizontally where its upward path is blocked. Heat is radiated in all directions, including through solid material, and can ignite new fires. Wood will ignite, but metal will weaken slowly and collapse suddenly. Remember that surfaces and structures above a fire are most at risk.

“Engine Fourteen, this is Command, when you arrive see if you can jackknife around the C and D sides and cover those exposures. Be advised we have an interior attack team on the second floor.”

After the excitement of the attack phase, you must conduct the hard work of overhaul and salvage. Overhaul means to carefully examine the fireground for signs of continued fire and leave the structure as safe and secure as possible. Salvage is the preservation of the structure and its contents and the minimization of damage. Covering furniture, ejecting smoke and avoiding excessive forcible entry and ventilation damage are all part of salvage.

When it is all done, you’ll want to conduct an after action report. What was the plan? What went well and what didn’t? What should have been done differently, and who needs to know?

MAKING FIREFIGHTERS

You'll be making a truck company, and it will be a collective endeavor in the Fate tradition. Your firefighter will have a specialized role on the team, but cross-training is common and the basics are ground into everyone in school.

It's worth noting that advancement isn't part of Fight Fire—you are already really good at your job. This allows the game to be extremely focused on the core of the firefighting experience—the list has been pared down to just nine skills, for example.

Character Idea

Discuss among yourself what role on the truck interests you, as well as where you see your guy officially fitting in in the company. The positions are **Officer**, **Chauffeur**, **Vent**, **Irons**, **Can**, **Roof**, and there is one of each. Any unclaimed position will get assigned to an NPC.

Big Picture Aspects

Your character's high concept and trouble Aspects are going to see a lot of use, so choose really good ones. Particularly for trouble, you might want to wait and see how the three phases play out before assigning one.

High Concept Aspect

Who are you? This aspect is best framed as a single word that embodies your character. It should define their place in the company and also provide a hook into their personality and problem-solving approach. Is she a *Roughneck* or the *Clown*? Is he the perpetual *New Guy* or a *Grizzled Veteran*?

Trouble Aspect

Your firefighter has an issue that is going to bring trouble. The issue is also going to play havoc with getting the actual job of fighting fire done sometimes. You may create your own, or maybe your GM will ask you about this during character creation. If so, accept the question as the gift it is and answer thoughtfully. In any event, tie your character's Issue in with other characters as tightly as you can. That impacts his or her relationships, and those relationships probably point strongly in its direction already.

Phrase the answer to the question in the form of an Aspect. For example, if you are asked "Tell me where all the money is going", write down *Compulsive Gambler* or *Soft Touch*.

Name

Name your firefighter. Consider asking the table to provide a nickname at some point as well.

Phase trio

As in vanilla Fate, there are three phases.

Phase One: School

This is where you made the choice to fight fire. We might see you in fire school, or regular school, or with your best friend or worst rival growing up. You meet another firefighter and earn an aspect during or after school.

Phase Two: Station

Your firefighter has relationships inside the station, in the company and in the battalion.

A bestie? A bitter rival? A mentor and, by extension, a mentee? Is there someone whose job you want? Is there someone you think is incompetent, dangerous, or unlucky? Talk to your friends and build professional relationships in opposition and concordance. If somebody is clearly angling for the hot-shot rookie, that's a signal that they need a grizzled, risk-averse veteran—and that's a very fun combination, so jump in with both feet.

Remember that strong camaraderie binds you together—you may be called on to save one another's lives in a very literal sense, and no one will hesitate to risk it all to save another firefighter. So go ahead and build up contentious, difficult relationships fraught with conflict and drama.

Write down your character's most important professional relationship as an aspect.

Phase three: Home

Your firefighter also has relationships *outside* the firehouse, of course. In this phase include another player's firefighter in your home life somehow. What does your character's life away from the station look like? Is there a spouse? Probably. Children? Could be. Parents? Definitely. Friends? Sure. These are interesting, important people that complicate, amplify, and throw work priorities into sharp relief. You must have them and they must matter. If you have the slightest doubt, make your firefighter married with a pair of kids, one a teenager. And then figure out what role another firefighter plays in all this.

As you are developing your characters, don't hesitate to intertwine relationships—fire families are tight knit. Are you (competitive) brothers? Did you marry that guy's sister? Is that guy's mother the local Chief (who has no respect for you)? Let your important personal relationships echo and contrast what you have established on-duty.

Write down your character's key home relationship as an aspect.

DISCLAIMER

Reading this supplement won't make you a firefighter. Tactics (and facts) have been bent and broken in the service of gameplay.

Skills and Stunts

The skills included in Fight Fire are the core skills of the firefighter. This is what you *do*.

Choose **one skill at Great, one at Good, two at Fair and two at Average**. The skill list is ruthlessly focused and half as long as the default Fate list, so you have fewer allocations to make.

Rather than the standard three stunts, in *Fight Fire*, a character starts with one stunt, and has the option to purchase up to two additional stunts. Remember that purchasing additional stunts lowers your refresh.

Advance

Moving through a burning building is, in itself, a skill. It is something you can do very, very wrong. On the fireground you will be moving through hazardous terrain in zero visibility under extreme pressure wearing heavy turnout gear and hauling heavier equipment. Advance includes operating in confined spaces, like clambering around inside a convenience store's cockloft or entering a crushed car via the trunk.



Overcome: The potential obstacles you might need to move through are too numerous to list. The interior of buildings with active fires are pitch black and full of hazards that delay and entrap.



Create an Advantage: Advance is not primarily about creating advantages, but certainly aspects like “*the path has been cleared*” are appropriate.



Attack: Advance is not an Attack skill. Look to Extinguish for your fire attack needs!



Defend: Oppose a burning fire's attack action using Advance to escape the heat and flames.

Advance Stunts

- **Rolling Dirty:** You can make Search rolls simultaneous to Advance rolls, greatly speeding your progress.
- **On Guard:** When you are a designated FAST firefighter, you have +2 to Advance rolls used to reach a firefighter in distress. For a fate point, you can also make a free Advance roll to Create an Advantage—either for yourself or the firefighter in distress.
- **The Carry:** When carrying someone, you have a +2 to Advance rolls.
- **Keep It Together:** Use Advance rather than Cope (see page 81) to avoid being disoriented on the fireground.

Breach

This is Irons' primary skill. Sometimes you need to punch holes in things that you can walk through; changing fire conditions radically—feeding great gouts of oxygen to a starved fire—can be very dangerous. The second piece of the normal firefighting VES methodology—vent, enter, search.



Overcome: Breach can be used to batter, pry, twist and smash your way through and around obstacles.



Create an Advantage: Walls and floors can be torn apart for ease of access and then stabilized to minimize the threat of collapse.



Attack: Breach is not an Attack skill.



Defend: A judiciously placed breach might extract a victim, protecting them from the fire.

Breach Stunts

- **The Hammer:** You like to break things with speed and ferocity. Whenever your primary source of opposition comes from time pressure, a tie on your Breach roll is considered a success.
- **Going Down:** (Requires Vent stunt Roof Rat) You can breach vertically as well as horizontally, a very useful skill in a multi-story fire.
- **Black Bag:** On a successful Breach roll, you can enter without causing any damage.
- **Shadetree Mechanic:** +2 to Breach rolls involving automobiles, as well as encyclopedic knowledge on how to tear apart cars. You won't forget to disconnect the battery of a burning hybrid, either.
- **Suck It Up:** At the cost of a fate point, you can reduce the severity of a moderate physical consequence to a mild physical consequence, or erase a mild physical consequence altogether, once per session.

Care

Care wraps up the very human skill-set of the compassionate individual—rapport, empathy, and understanding others. Stabilizing an MVA victim requires Care, as does smoothing things over with a neglected spouse.



Overcome: A variety of challenges might be met with Care, including first aid and basic life support as well as any sort of delicate emotional negotiation that relies on honesty and compassion.



Create an Advantage: Understanding can lead to the creation of new aspects, as can building friendship and trust.



Attack: Care is not an Attack skill.



Defend: Care is not a Defend skill.

Care Stunts

- **Listener:** Once per session you can reduce someone else's consequence by one level of severity (severe into moderate, moderate to mild, mild to nothing at all) by succeeding on a Care roll with a difficulty of Fair (+2) for a mild consequence, Good (+3) for moderate, or Great (+4) for severe. You need to be able to talk with the person you're treating for at least half an hour in order for them to receive the benefits of this stunt, and you can't use it on yourself.
- **Lifesaver:** +2 to Care rolls related to basic life support, first aid and patient care.
- **Observer:** You are a student of human behavior, and can substitute Care for Search when conducting a primary search.
- **Stand Up Guy:** People know you have their back, and are willing to help you out because of it. Once per session you can substitute Care for Grease.
- **People Person:** Use Care instead of Cope when determining your mental stress boxes.

Cope

A firefighter needs tenacity and mental toughness to weather the long stretches of boredom punctuated by sharp moments of danger, fear and horror. Unlike the more technical job-oriented skills, Cope will come into play away from the fireground as well. Changing a baby's diaper may occasionally qualify as a brief moment of danger, fear and horror, after all.



Overcome: A firefighter may need to Cope with the immediate danger presented by the fireground—confusion, disorientation, sheer terror—or the after-effects of traumatic stress on family and friends.



Create an Advantage: Using Cope to create an advantage will result in aspects associated with either resolution and resolve or coming to terms with a problem through accommodation or acceptance.



Attack: Cope is not an Attack skill.



Defend: Cope might come into play in a situation where harm is going to result from trauma, immediate or buried.

Cope Stunts

- **Size Up:** When later confronted with hidden details about the fireground, you're entitled to make a free Cope roll to Create an Advantage. You saw it coming and quietly prepared.
- **Keep Cool:** +2 to Cope rolls to avoid becoming disoriented, lost or shocked. This applies to both fireground challenges and emotional trauma after the fact.
- **Stay Frosty:** You can use Cope as a defense against physical fire attacks, provided you can justify your ability to overcome your danger through rational thought and reason.
- **Consummate Professional:** Once per session you can choose to ignore a mild or moderate consequence for the duration of the scene. It can't be compelled against you and can't be invoked by your enemies. At the end of the scene it comes back worse, though; if it's a mild consequence it becomes a moderate consequence. If it was already moderate, it becomes severe.

Extinguish

This is Can's primary skill.

There are lots of ways to fight fire, but usually you end up spraying stuff on it. Water sometimes, foam sometimes. From a 2.5 inch attack line sometimes, from a portable extinguisher sometimes. Noticing a subtly-smoldering fire requires Extinguish. In fact, the "notice" skill common to Fate core and absent in Fight Fire is bound up in hard-learned professional training. It defaults to the relevant skill. Noticing a loose section of shingles is all about your Rescue training, for example. Every skill is a "notice" skill within its domain.



Overcome: Extinguish can be used to defeat challenges. Obviously a surging fire can be beaten back temporarily to allow passage, but the applied pressure from a large hose can knock down debris and clear paths. Use Extinguish to remove situation aspects that a fire creates with Spread (see page 94).



Create an Advantage: The most obvious aspect applied to an object through the use of Extinguish is "*not on fire*". If some object or location is fully involved and blocking access or threatening to spread fire, this can be very useful.



Attack: Extinguish is *the* attack skill. If you knock down a fire through the use of hose or canister, you Extinguish.



Defend: You can use Extinguish as a defensive skill as well. A burning fire's attack action can be kept at bay and away from yourself or others.

Extinguish Stunts

- **Water Dog:** +2 to attack rolls when using a hose line.
- **Fire Takedown:** Once per scene, when you force a fire to take a consequence, you can increase the severity of the consequence that the fire must take (so mild becomes moderate, moderate becomes severe). If the fire was already going to take a severe consequence, it must either take a severe consequence and a second consequence or be taken out.
- **Buying Time:** When attacking a fully developed conflagration in a particular zone, you can knock the fire down to a survivable level temporarily. How long? Hard to say; fire is capricious. Probably long enough to cross the zone to get somewhere you need to go, but you don't want to linger.
- **250 Gallons of Ventilation:** You can use Extinguish in place of Vent for horizontal ventilation, provided you control a blitz line and there are windows or walls your hose stream can demolish.

Grease

Pull, suction, influence, connections—who you know and who knows you. This skill is almost irrelevant when confronted with the seat of a raging fire, but extremely relevant when the company needs a new Smoke ejector and all the purses are closed. A Firefighter Officer will *definitely* have some Grease. So will a serial philanderer.



Overcome: Cutting through red tape, getting the attention of a senior officer, or pushing through a night off on your anniversary are all examples of using Grease to overcome an obstacle.



Create an Advantage: This is the quintessential use of Grease—using your own pull to create an aspect that will help you or further your goals.



Attack: Power and influence can be used to harm another, if it becomes necessary.



Defend: Appealing to important protectors—probably at heavy personal cost in reputation or favors owed—is a great use of Grease.

Grease Stunts

- **Follow Me:** When there is a conflict, confusion or dissention on the fire-ground, make a free Grease roll to create an advantage that will help sway your team to rally around you.
- **Baseless Gossip:** You can use Grease to make mental attacks at +2, provided you have some dirt on the victim in the form of an aspect.
- **Local Hero:** Once per session, when you meet someone for the first time, you can make a Grease roll against a Fair (+2) difficulty to declare that you already know them and are on good terms with them. Place an aspect to this effect on the target, but you don't get any free invocations on that aspect.
- **Making A Few Calls:** You can use Grease in place of Rescue where the presence or prompt arrival of vital resources is at stake.

Rescue

This is Roof's primary skill. It is gear-intensive and attracts a certain kind of technical mind.

At its simplest, this is the skill of getting safely on top of stuff using ladders and ropes, but it includes everything from high angle rigging to extrication. Ropes, saws, shoring equipment, and other hardware to stabilize a scene, extract a victim, or facilitate a rescue all fall within the Rescue skill. In addition to getting onto roofs, Rescue becomes crucial in complex motor vehicle accident or swift water rescue situations—but removing a 700 pound man from his tub is a rescue, too.



Overcome: The obstacles are infinitely varied and infinitely dangerous. A roof firefighter might be confronted with slippery, high-angle surfaces, unstable decking and trusses, or weak anchor points.



Create an Advantage: The heart of the technical rescue is the safety and support system built on the fly from a hardware and rope smorgasbord.



Attack: Rescue is not an attack skill.



Defend: Technical rescue systems, properly employed, can mitigate harm and save lives.

Rescue Stunts

- **Technician:** Once per scene, when rigging, shoring, or extricating a victim using technical rescue tools, you can spend a fate point to reduce the severity of a consequence, either for yourself or someone else.
- **Roof Rat:** You are at home on and in roofs. As long as you are on a roof or in an attic, Rescue rolls are +2.
- **I Got One of Those:** When you need a certain tool, chances are you have one. Make a Rescue roll to have one in a random pocket. If you succeed with style, you can add a boost to that item.
- **Gearhead:** Choose a field of specialization unrelated to normal fire calls, such as HAZMAT, high angle rescue, or swiftwater rescue. You get a +2 to all Rescue rolls relating to that field of specialization.

Search

The search is the core of what you do. You have to go in. You have to be sure. Search is all about finding *people*—children crouched in fear in a hidden loft playroom, adults overcome by smoke or other firefighters in distress. The third piece of the normal firefighting VES methodology—vent, enter, search.



Overcome: In addition to locating victims, the seat of the fire as well as potential hazards and troublesome spot fires can all be located during the search.



Create an Advantage: Identifying and communicating dangers to others is central to the search.



Attack: Search is not an Attack skill.



Defend: Search is not usually a Defend skill, but enterprising firefighters might find ways to use it. Perhaps during a search you found an area that will be protected from a collapsing roof, or your search-trained eye spots an exit at the last moment.

Search Stunts

- **Everyone Comes Home:** +2 on Search rolls to locate firefighters, whether they are in distress or not. This also applies to bar crawling after hours.
- **Tot Finder:** +2 on Search rolls made to locate children.
- **Old Timer:** When surprised by unexpected events, you're entitled to make a free Search roll to create an advantage—maybe that would have caught you if you were greener.
- **Safety First:** Once per session when engaged in primary search, you can spend a fate point to reduce the severity of a consequence, either for yourself or someone else.



Ventilate

This is Vent's primary skill. Controlling fire can be more important than eliminating fire, particularly when there are lives on the line. Ventilating a fire judiciously allows you to make it do what you want—which may be to intensify, trading more fire for less smoke. The first piece of the normal firefighting VES methodology—vent, enter, search.



Overcome: Ventilate can be used to clear smoke (venting for life) if you are disoriented or lost.



Create an Advantage: When you ventilate, you are helping your teammates fighting the fire from the structure's interior. Venting for fire helps them beat it back. Venting for life clears the air to aid their search.



Attack: Venting for fire can attack the fire directly.



Defend: Venting for life can prevent the fire from inflicting harm.

Ventilate Stunts

- **Magic Touch:** +2 to Vent rolls when venting for life.
- **Smoke Eater:** +2 to Vent rolls when venting for fire.
- **Vent Boss:** (Requires Magic Touch stunt) At the cost of one Fate point, you can vent for life without the fire-raising side effects. Effectively you can eject the fire's products of combustion while minimizing flame as well.
- **Smarter, Not Harder:** Use Vent instead of Breach when determining your physical stress boxes. Breaching is for those who lack finesse.

LIFE OUTSIDE THE FIREGROUND

Fight Fire spends a lot of time talking about how to fight fires, but that's not all there is to life. Just as important are the things that happen between the action: interactions with your fellow firefighters, with your spouse or children or friends, altercations in local bars, or any other point of personal drama.

When you happen into one of these points of drama, remember that everything follows the fiction. What does that mean? It means if you've got a *Drinking Problem*, that's true whether or not the GM compels it. If your face is *Badly Scarred*, keep that in mind when you're dealing with people, and the GM will too. Look to your aspects to determine what kinds of dramatic things should occur, invoke them to make things happen, and accept compels from the GM when they make sense.

When your aspects aren't doing the whole job, there are some skills you can use outside the fireground. Skills like Cope, Care, and Grease are obvious ones, but even the less obvious skills can be used outside of a fireground. You can use any of them to represent general knowledge about those subjects, knowledge which is likely to come up when you're interacting with your fellow firefighters. Search might come in handy when you're trying to find an important document to study before your big exam or trial, an Breach is certainly helpful when dealing with a mean drunk. Try to think about what these skills say about you and how you approach life rather than just what you're good at on the fireground.

Stress and Harm

Firefighters can suffer physical and mental stress, and when they do the consequences can be lingering and severe. Firefighting is dangerous and people will get hurt—physically and mentally. Not everyone can be saved. Not every choice is a good one, and second-guessing can be corrosive to morale and mental health. The interior lives of the player characters are part of the game, and should not be neglected. Mental stress, and stress transformed into aspects, can guide this facet of play.

Physical Stress

Every firefighter has to be in decent physical shape. Physical stress is tied to the most bodily demanding skill, Breach.

Mediocre Breach gives you a 2-point physical stress box. You should have failed your practical exam—what’s the story there?

Average, Fair or Good Breach gives you a 3-point physical stress box.

Great Breach gives you a 4-point physical stress boxes. You’re a beast.

Mental Stress

Mental stress is directly tied to Cope.

Mediocre Cope gives you a 2-point mental stress box. You should have failed your psych evaluation—there must be a really interesting reason why you didn’t.

Average, Fair or Good Cope gives you a 3-point mental stress box.

Great Cope gives you a 4-point mental stress boxes. You don’t rattle easily.

Consequences

All firefighters have three consequence slots by default—one each of mild, moderate, and severe intensity. The way they are handled is a departure from Fate Core. Consequences never go away.

When a consequence slot opens up, you transform the consequence into an aspect reflecting the event’s impact on your character’s life.

Physical consequences transform into aspects like *trick knee*, *ugly scar*, or *crushing medical bills*. These should be a reminder of how the injury occurred and complicate either how a character does the job or how their competence is perceived.

Mental consequences transform into aspects like *timid*, *problem drinking*, or *poor impulse control*. These should be ruthlessly paired with existing relationships.

In a long-term game perhaps a consequence-related aspect can be shaken, but it should be a major goal defining a character’s arc.

INCIDENT COMMAND: THE GM

Building Your Company

These rules assume that your players will form one shift of a tight-knit truck company. Part of your job, either by yourself or in consultation, is to place that company in context.

What

With your players, choose a general tone. Are you going for gritty realism, dark heroism, or something less serious? Despite its intensely focused subject, Fight Fire can handle any of these.

A Fight Fire game should have a couple setting aspects supportive of your tone. Two solid suggestions that are universal:

- Everyone goes home
- Fire is a living thing

Who

Give your fire station a number and a boss—the Captain who runs the station and most likely the paired engine company as well. Listen carefully and ask questions as the players generate their characters, incorporating NPCs they spin off and creating new ones as foils, adversaries and friends. Some can be firefighters in their own company on the opposite shift, some can be in the engine company, some can be superiors like the Battalion Chief, and some can belong to other fire companies, EMS, the news media or the police department. Think about spouses, parents, children, and friends outside the circle of first responders as well.

Inviting Trouble

Players may have great ideas for trouble aspects, but you should definitely be involved. Ask questions! Tie in your NPCs! Reinforce the game's tone by stirring the pot a little. Here are some suggestions, written as prompts:

Pride

- Tell me about when you were the best, now a distant memory.
- Tell me about the promise you made your parent and how you broke it.
- Tell me what you didn't reveal at your last mandatory physical, and who else knows.
- Tell me about your in-laws and the loan and how you plan to pay it back.
- Tell me about the unopened letter in your locker.

Loss

- Tell me who died and why it was your fault.
- Tell me about the divorce and why you see your ex-spouse nearly every day.
- Tell me why you won't speak with one of your parents and what that means to the family.
- Tell me where all the money is going.
- Tell me about Angela Rossi.

Abandonment

- Tell me about the most recent time you disappointed your child.
- Tell me about the time you left a firefighter and ran from a fire.
- Tell me who you left behind when you chose to fight fire.
- Tell me about the ways you neglect your spouse.
- Tell me about 17 Maiden Lane.

Pressure

- Tell me why you and your spouse are at wit's end, and why you can't fix it.
- Tell me the dangerous thing you do to prove worthy of your family legacy—or gender role.
- Tell me about what you're doing to become “more than just a firefighter”.
- Tell me about the thoughts you bury deep, and when they come crawling to the surface.
- Tell me about what you drink to forget.

Poor Judgement

- Tell me about your very bad habit, and who sometimes shares it with you.
- Tell me about your past, and which higher-up has discovered it.
- Tell me about your superstition and how it routinely gets you into trouble.
- Tell me about those bruised knuckles and cut lips you show up with every Monday.
- Tell me about Tomcats Show Club.

Where

The easiest and perhaps most dynamic setting for your company is in a two or three apparatus firehouse in a busy urban area that can offer all kinds of calls. Industrial, high rise, residential, and institutional structures abound, often in high density with dangerous exposures. Nearby highways result in frequent MVA calls, some quite serious. You can ground your game in a real city—perhaps even your own—or fictionalize it easily.

When

The default assumption in *Fight Fire* is a contemporary company, but setting your game in another era could be really interesting. The late sixties could introduce racial tensions, riots and mass fires. The late seventies would have elements of economic malaise, stretched resources, and crumbling infrastructure. In either case, equipment, apparatus and technique would all be much cruder—say goodbye to air packs, PASS gear, and similar life-savers.

Balance and Pacing

As GM, you can easily generate minor fire calls as needed. You should think about the ebb and flow of your session, devoting lots of time to interpersonal scenes away from work and in the firehouse as well as alarm calls. Alarm calls themselves need not be intense all-hands affairs every time, either, and a minor kitchen fire or uncomplicated MVA is a good chance to explore character relationships as well. These should comprise enough alarm calls for a sense of routine to develop.

It's a good idea to think about larger, set-piece events to punctuate your session as well—consider beginning in media res with an incident in progress, punching up the middle of a session with a major fire, or closing with the firefighting equivalent of a “boss monster”.

“Real life” outside the job should be a big part of play. Characters have family and friends, as well as a web of relationships and issues related to other firefighters and the job. As GM, you need to identify and push on these things. The pressure you provide will make the game infinitely more compelling.

Your players have told you what they are interested in by making choices as they built their characters. Honor these choices and create tension between their obligations, their goals, and the people they care about.

Sounding the Alarm

The alarm call is a convenient tool for ramping up excitement and tension. Some interpersonal scenes will benefit from cliffhanger interruptions! Don't hesitate to call in an alarm at the very moment a player is confronted with a difficult choice. An advanced move is to make the content of the call reflect the character's interior struggle somehow. Maybe the drunk guy pinned in his truck can serve as a reminder to the alcoholic character of the dark path he walks. Used sparingly, this sort of parallelism can be very effective.

Playing With Fire

There are three ways to deal with fire in this game: as a situation aspect, as a challenge, and as a full-blown NPC opponent with its own character sheet.

The “On Fire” Aspect

On Fire is one of the most common aspects used in a Fate game. In the context of *Fight Fire*, it’s the simplest way to deal with a fire, and you should use it in scenes where some other type of action or goal is more important than the fire itself.

Of course, it’s also the aspect to put on a character who ends up on fire, which means it could play a role in more complex scenes as well.

On Fire is pretty versatile. You can use it to:

- Justify passive opposition to move between any physical space in a scene.
- If it’s on a character, justify passive opposition to nearly anything that character does.
- Compel any character to give up an objective due to the fire. (Think mustache-twirling villain getaways... “if only it weren’t for this damn fire!”)
- Invoke it to integrate the fire into your action, like knocking an opponent into it or lighting an improvised weapon.

Because it’s fire, you should treat any failed rolls against the opposition it provides as a failed defense—you’re going to take physical stress and consequences. Getting taken out by a fire is serious business, meaning severe smoke inhalation, charred flesh, and other bad stuff.

Fires as Challenges

If you want to resolve a fire call quickly and have variable results, but you don’t want it to be the centerpiece of your session, then resolve it as a challenge instead, as per the rules on page 147 of *Fate Core*. This can be a great way to start a session, with a quick set of rolls to see how the last call went to get things moving.

Vent, **Breach**, and **Search** are going to be your normal three skills for this, but **Extinguish** and **Rescue** may apply also depending on the situation. Use the full NPC fires for ideas about levels of opposition, keeping in mind the -2/+2 rule—Fair (+2) will be easy for a group of characters to deal with, and Fantastic (+6) will probably result in a majority of failures without the intervention of fate points, because their skills cap at Great (+4).

With challenges, you read across the results like an oracle to determine what finally happened and where to assign the fallout, if any. Pretty much any failure will result in extensive property damage that might have been avoided, injury (both mental and physical) to someone on the squad or someone in the house, or even death.

Fires as NPCs

This is the big one, and our nod to the proposed issue, *Fire is a Living Thing*. Even though fire is a natural force, it's easy to personify it when you're a firefighter and see it as your nemesis, the same way doctors personify death. Playing that up will bring drama and dynamism into your conflict scenes.



Fire Skills

Like the player characters, fires have their own set of skills.

Spread

- 👉 **Overcome:** Use this for movement, to creep or climb through a structure. You can autoextend vertically as well, if combustibles are above you. PCs oppose this with Extinguish or Vent.
- 👉 **Create an Advantage:** Use this to identify new sources of fuel for expansion or intensifying heat. PCs oppose with Extinguish.
- 👉 **Attack:** Use this to flare up, intimidating and scaring those in your wake, causing mental stress. PCs must defend with Cope.
- 👉 **Defend:** Use to defend against attacks from Extinguish or Vent.

Special: Spread determines the amount of bonus stress boxes a fire gets. Their track starts at four boxes rather than two.

Burn

- 👉 **Overcome:** Use this to destroy structures with pure heat and destructive power. PCs oppose this with Extinguish.
- 👉 **Create an Advantage:** Use to create impositions for the firefighters—barriers of flame and heat, or obstructions from parts of the structure you've collapsed or weakened. PCs oppose this with Extinguish, Vent, or Breach, depending on the circumstances.
- 👉 **Attack:** Use this to burn someone or subject them to intense heat, causing physical stress. PCs oppose this with Extinguish or Advance.
- 👉 **Defend:** This skill doesn't use the defend action.

Smoke

- 👉 **Overcome:** Use to obscure things from the firefighters, whether it's the precise location of your seat, the nature of your movement, or just the right path in a complex structure. PCs oppose this with Search.
- 👉 **Create an Advantage:** Use to blacken out and fill rooms in a structure. PCs oppose with Vent.
- 👉 **Attack:** Use to suffocate people, causing physical stress. PCs oppose with Vent.
- 👉 **Defend:** This skill doesn't use the defend action.

Types of Fires

We have three kinds of character archetypes for fires: open fires, void fires, and smoldering fires. They each have a special stunt.

Open Fires

Open fires are the most obvious and the most aggressive, and could be anything from an untended pot on a stove to a fully involved room (see the glossary). They favor Burn and Spread, and generally seek to consume everything in their path.

Intensify: Once per conflict, an open fire can make a Spread roll to clear out its stress track or remove its least severe consequence. PCs oppose this with Extinguish.

Void Fires

Void fires are creepy and insidious. They travel behind walls and ducts and unpredictably jump from place to place. Void fires are easy to miss and difficult to suppress. They favor Spread and Smoke, and generally seek to escape notice until they can transform into a smoldering or open fire.

Morph: A void fire's next action after transformation is at a +2.

Smoldering Fires

Smoldering fires are patient—difficult to detect, difficult to extinguish, and extremely dangerous. With plenty of heat and fuel, a smoldering fire only needs oxygen to turn into a deadly conflagration, and may transform into an open fire. They favor Smoke and Burn, and generally seek to create obstructions, disorient, and suffocate.

Backdraft: Once per conflict, and if the smoldering fire succeeds with style on a defense, it may immediately create a backdraft explosion; attack everyone in the zone with a Burn roll at +2. PCs defend with Extinguish or Advance.

TRANSFORMATION

Fires aren't static constructs. They grow and change rapidly over the course of their lifespan. Given enough time, all fires will become open fires.

A fire can transform when a PC concedes to the fire in a conflict or is taken out by it, or the fire succeeds with style on a Spread roll. Void fires may become smoldering or open fires, but smoldering fires only become open fires. Open fires can't transform. After transformation, rearrange the skill levels to match the new fire type.

Fire Aspects

Fires are bound to locations, so their aspects typically have to do with what's in the room or what's going on in the situation around them. So, instead of assigning individual fires a list of aspects, figure out what your situation aspects are, and fine-tune those so that the fire can make easy use of them.

Good sources for fire aspects include:

Anything that can be set on fire: Point out that *Propane Tank Under The Sink*, or *Shop Room Sawdust*, or *Barrels of God Knows What* to set the PCs' teeth on edge.

Structural hazards or problems: A fire in *Maze-Like Hallways* can get people lost and turned around, and a *Partially Collapsed Roof* may prevent PCs from effectively getting to the seat of the fire. Breaching a safe room that's *Built Like a Fortress* can prove problematic.

People: Any innocent (or not-so-innocent) lives that are at risk are good fire aspects. Ms. *Bonnefrey's Eighteen Cats*, a *Spaced-Out Squatter*, an *Unconscious Husband*, a *Helpless Infant* (Warning: Careful about your players' sensibilities with this one, because, holy shit.), or an *Onlooker With a Hero Complex* can all help a fire complicate a situation.

Smoke

The smoke billowing out of a burning structure is a witches brew of carbon monoxide and dioxide, soot, water vapor and toxic gases like cyanide.

Smoke is the major killer on the fireground, far more than fire itself. Coughing, vomiting, nausea, exhaustion and disorientation are the usual side effects of smoke inhalation. Exposure to hot gases lead to burns of the mouth, nose, and respiratory system. Pulmonary injuries are agonizing and frequently fatal.

An experienced firefighter can "read" smoke. Smoke color and density tell a fire's story. White smoke occurs early in a fire, where it is mostly water vapor, or indicates smoke that has traveled a long distance depositing soot along the way. Black smoke indicates a hot, well developed fire. Brown smoke indicates a high volume wood fire, often indicating structural involvement. Some burning materials generate more smoke than others. Burning liquids tend to generate huge quantities of dense black smoke, as do plastics, rubber, and paint.

Like a fire, smoke can be introduced in *Fight Fire* as its own particularly nasty and dangerous character. Smoke plays by its own rules, which make it a formidable opponent.

A smoke character has no stunts or stress track and cannot be attacked directly. Think of smoke as fire's cringing, sneaky minion.

The intensity of the smoke in a zone is determined by the highest Smoke skill rating of a fire in that zone. The intensity of the smoke determines its highest skill value. Smoke has two skills: **Choke** and **Disorient**.

Choke

- ☞ **Overcome:** Choke is primarily an attack skill.
- ☞ **Create Advantage:** Definitely. A choking firefighter is vulnerable.
- ☞ **Attack:** This skill is great for direct physical attacks, particularly against opponents not wearing air packs. Go after trapped victims.
- ☞ **Defend:** Stubborn smoke can use this skill to defend against advantages being placed on it.

Disorient

- ☞ **Overcome:** Unique circumstances might dictate using Disorient to Overcome, but it should be rare.
- ☞ **Create Advantage:** This is what this skill's all about. The smoke disorients firefighters by placing aspects on them that represent the fact that they're turned around, lost, or panicking.
- ☞ **Attack:** Disorient can be used for mental attacks, of course, just like Provoke in the core rules (see page 120 of *Fate Core*)
- ☞ **Defend:** Same as above.

A smoke character should have several aspects as well. Here are some suggestions:

Toxic fumes
Billowing

Sticky soot
Dreamlike

Inky black
Boiling hot

When all the fires in a zone are extinguished, the smoke in that zone is reduced to intensity 1. Once all fires in the fireground have been extinguished, the smoke clears.

For simpler scenes, smoke can be subsumed into a fire's Smoke skill and rolled normally. If you're using smoke characters, the Smoke skill is only used for determining the smoke's starting intensity and getting rid of advantages placed on smoke, should the need arise.

Venting for Life and Fire

When you vent for life, you roll against the highest intensity of smoke in the zones you're affecting. Success reduces the intensity of the smoke by number of shifts, reducing its skills, to a minimum of 1. However, venting for life clears out the stress boxes of any fires in those zones, and gives them all a free advantage like Second Wind. Using a smoke ejector for ventilation creates a situation aspect you can invoke when you're venting for life in that zone.

When you vent for fire, you attack the fires in the zones you're affecting directly. It's basically an area-of-effect attack on all of those fires; one roll applied to all of them. However, when you do this you also increase the intensity of the smoke in all of those zones by the number of shifts you got on each attack. So if you got 2 shifts on a fire in a particular zone, the smoke's intensity in that zone goes up by 2.

It's a trade-off; make it carefully.

Making a Fire Incident

In essence, a fire incident is a long, running conflict between the PCs and the fires at a certain location. The PCs make their way through the zones in a location, knock down or vent fires as they go, try to evacuate people caught in the place, and work their way to the ignition site. In each zone, there's a series of obstacles and threats to get past.

The first thing you need to do is think of the fire's location. What kind of building is it? Is it a house? An insurance office in a strip-mall? A high-rise luxury apartment? Think about what kind of unique challenges those spaces offer, and write them down for situation aspects.

Then, think about who and what—who's trapped in the fire? Who's around? What are they doing when the firefighters get there? Write those down for aspects.

Finally, shuffle those aspects between one and five zones, to be the arenas of your conflict. Each zone should have at least one fire, with an open fire at the ignition site. Don't worry about covering every inch of a certain location. Just think about where the most interesting flashpoints of action would be, and put fires in those zones along with a handful of interesting aspects.

Let's do one together, and then we'll provide a few more examples.

Full Steam Coin-Op Laundry, 56 West Holland Drive

Location: Building is a taxpayer—a shoddily constructed retail building with an integrated drop ceiling. Firefighters hate them because they are dangerous and make fire suppression difficult. This one has an open plan full of industrial laundry machines and a back room full of cleaning supplies. So, let's go with *Shoddy Construction*, *Falling Tiles*, *Laundry Machines*, *Flammable Cleaning Supplies*, and *Not to Fire Code*.

People and Circumstances: There's a panicking crowd of folks in the parking lot, and let's say one of the laundromat employees was taking a nap in the break room. So, *Panicked Crowd* and *Hapless Laundromat Worker*.

Zones: It's a small place, so the main room and the back room are really the only two zones we need.

The Main Room (Smoldering Fire)

Aspects: Shoddy Construction, Falling Tiles, Not to Fire Code, Panicked Crowd, Laundry Machines

Skills: Good (+3) Smoke, Fair (+2) Burn, Average (+1) Spread; five stress boxes

The main challenge is really to suppress or vent this fire well enough to make navigation to the back clear. Some members of the crowd might still be in here, lost in the smoke. The fire's trying to choke everyone out and impede movement to the back room—just trying to bulldoze past with Advance should have Legendary (+8) opposition unless something is done about the fire first.

If the PCs are forced to concede to the fire here or are taken out, any of the trapped crowd will begin dying from smoke inhalation, and the fire will transform into an open one.

The Back Room (Ignition Site, Open Fire)

Aspects: Shoddy Construction, Falling Tiles, Not to Fire Code, Flammable Cleaning Supplies, Hapless Laundromat Worker

Skills: Superb (+5) Burn, Great (+4) Spread, Good (+3) Smoke, seven stress boxes

The laundromat worker is unconscious and needs rescue, but the flames are everywhere—many of those cleaning supplies were stacked onto high shelves. Breaching from the roof will probably be the only option to get him out at speed.

The laundromat worker dies if the PCs are forced to concede or are taken out, the fire will spread into the main room, and the building will be unsalvageable.

Change it up: The marquee sign fills with water and collapses over the front entrance. A family is living in the back illegally. The dead walk-in is filled with LP gas cylinders.



More Incident Examples

The “Cat’s Cradle” Mansion, 544 West Terrace Drive

Location: Structure is a Georgian revival mansion, two stories with basement and attic. This sort of old wood frame construction burns easily and presents a complex interior layout along with a high probability of trapped victims. As icing on the cake, the *steeply pitched roofs* are very dangerous.

People and Circumstances: *Ms. Bonnefrey* is an elderly woman who lives alone with her 18 cats. No one has seen her since the fire was called in.

Zones

Basement (Open Fire)

Situation Aspects: Maze-like, Tinderbox, Piles of Junk

Skills: Fair (+2) Burn, Average (+1) Spread, Mediocre (+0) Smoke; four stress boxes

Downstairs (Ignition site, Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Maze-like, Tinderbox, Unstable floors, Piles of Junk, Cats everywhere

Skills: Great (+4) Burn, Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Smoke; six stress boxes

Upstairs (Open Fire)

Situation Aspects: Maze-like, Tinderbox, Unstable floors, Piles of Junk, Cats everywhere

Skills: Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Burn, Average (+1) Smoke; five stress boxes

Attic (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Maze-like, Tinderbox, Unstable floors, Piles of Junk

Skills: Great (+4) Smoke, Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Burn; six stress boxes

Change it up: The mansion has been split into three dwellings that have no access to one another. *Ms. Bonnefrey* is a hoarder and advancing inside is almost impossible. The incident is the result of a murder-suicide, triggered in multiple locations.

Casbah Apartments, 1300 Meredith Avenue

Location: Structure is a three story building with six apartments on either side of a central covered stairwell. The Casbah is mid-sixties construction and *not up to code*. It is low-rent immigrant housing.

People and Circumstances: There are *crowds in the street*—residents desperate for their homes to be saved and most of the neighborhood as curious onlookers. Nobody can find *Mrs. Lupo* from 1300-A. *Miguel Flores* is trying to break into his ex-wife's apartment, 1300-C, because his 11-year-old daughter *Inez* may be alone inside.

Zones

1300-A (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Cheap framing, Family treasures, Locked doors and barred windows

Skills: Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Smoke, Average (+1) Burn; five stress boxes

1300-B (Ignition site, Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Cheap framing, Family treasures, Broken stairwell, Locked doors and barred windows

Skills: Superb (+5) Burn, Great (+4) Spread, Good (+3) Smoke, seven stress boxes

1300-C (Smoldering fire)

Situation Aspects: Cheap framing, Dripping roof tar, Broken stairwell, Locked doors and barred windows

Skills: Great (+4) Smoke, Good (+3) Burn, Fair (+2) Spread; six stress boxes

Change it up: Individual apartments are heavily secured. Residents refuse to vacate. There is loose asbestos between floors, containing fire somewhat but making it a HAZMAT scene.

Pinhook Warehouses, 200 Block of Edison Street

Location: Structure is a brick warehouse adjacent to a school and a renovated apartment building, both of which offer magnificently *dangerous exposures*. It's *bowstring truss roof*, vulnerable to weakening and collapse due to fire. The second floor spans both warehouses. This should be a multi-alarm blaze.

People and Circumstances: The warehouses are empty, but the neighborhood is a busy mix of homeless, students and loft-dwelling hipsters—and the Pinhook warehouses are notoriously easy to gain access to.

Zones

205 Edison Warehouse (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Rows of metal shelving, Broken steam pipes, Slippery floor

Skills: Great (+4) Smoke, Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Burn; six stress boxes

206 Edison Warehouse (Ignition site, Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Rows of metal shelving, Barrels of God-knows-what, Slippery floor

Skills: Superb (+5) Burn, Great (+4) Spread, Good (+3) Smoke, seven stress boxes

Shipping and Receiving (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Barrels of God-knows-what, Tractor trailers, cabinets of paper records

Skills: Fair (+2) Spread, Average (+1) Burn, Mediocre (+0) Smoke; four stress boxes

Second Floor (Open Fire)

Situation Aspects: Weak floor beams, sagging roof, broken glass, vast open space

Skills: Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Burn, Average (+1) Smoke; five stress boxes

Change it up: The warehouses are abandoned and used as a homeless squat. A heavy air handler unit has been illegally installed on the roof and is going to collapse it. The upper floor is heavily secured, difficult to enter, and an industrial meth lab.

The Cave-Merritt Building, 467 East Holland Drive

Location: Structure is an upscale ten story residence. There are four private apartments on the eighth floor, two on the ninth and one on the tenth. The tenth floor also has an outdoor area with a swimming pool. It is a *long way to the fire* and *out of reach* for non-specialized apparatus. Tall tower ladder trucks will take time to arrive. The *elevator* is working. This should probably be a multi-alarm blaze.

People and Circumstances: *Wealthy residents* have many specific demands regarding their safety and property. A *Socialite* named James Kenneth Sherman is sleeping through the fire, zoned out on pills. Nobody has noticed that he is missing.

Zones

Eighth Floor (Smoldering Fire)

Situation Aspects: furious poodle, toxic fumes, glass windows, void-filled walls

Skills: Fair (+2) Smoke, Average (+1) Spread, Mediocre (+0) Smoke; four stress boxes

Ninth Floor (Ignition site, Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Blocked stairs, priceless works of art, toxic fumes, glass windows, void-filled walls

Skills: Superb (+5) Burn, Great (+4) Smoke, Good (+3) Spread, seven stress boxes

Penthouse (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Blocked stairs, priceless works of art, toxic fumes, glass windows, void-filled walls, swimming pool

Skills: Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Smoke, Average (+1) Burn; five stress boxes

Change it up: Political fund-raiser in progress. Partial collapse of eighth floor with people trapped above and others pinned in debris. Mountains of packaged cocaine in a bedroom on the ninth floor with some dudes in respirators (who won't budge) guarding it.

Motorco Manufacturing Building,

1000 Block of Meredith at Edison

Location: Structure is a large tool and die shop in two conjoined brick buildings. The building has a very large and *complex interior*. The crumbling walls are *prone to collapse*. This is emphatically a multi-alarm blaze.

People and Circumstances: The *Security guard* insists the place is empty. He's wrong—a *homeless guy* has a hiding place in the tool loft and he's scared out of his mind.

Zones

Shop Floor (Ignition site, Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Falling debris, Massive machines, Metal scraps, Flammable chemicals

Skills: Fantastic (+6) Burn, Superb (+5) Spread, Great (+4) Smoke; eight stress boxes

Offices (Smoldering fire)

Situation Aspects: Falling debris, piles of paperwork, electrical equipment

Skills: Superb (+5) Smoke, Great (+4) Burn, Good (+3) Spread, seven stress boxes

Loading Dock (Void fire)

Situation Aspects: Falling debris, Stacks of parts, Flammable chemicals

Skills: Superb (+5) Spread, Great (+4) Smoke, Good (+3) Burn, seven stress boxes

Tool Loft (Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Falling debris, Stacks of tools, Metal scraps, Flammable chemicals

Skills: Great (+4) Spread, Good (+3) Burn, Fair (+2) Smoke; six stress boxes

Store Room (Open fire)

Situation Aspects: Falling debris, Massive machines, Metal scraps, Flammable chemicals

Skills: Good (+3) Spread, Fair (+2) Burn, Average (+1) Smoke; five stress boxes

Twists: The building contains hazardous chemicals. The building is an old brick structure poised to collapse. The warehouse has an extremely dangerous Z-truss roof.

Local 506 Union Hall, 18 Evergreen

Location: Structure is a cinder block and concrete open-plan meeting hall. It has few openings and will be *hard to ventilate*.

People and Circumstances: *Union members* are on the scene and furious, suspecting arson. They have opened a hydrant to no good effect and are attacking the blaze with hand-held extinguishers. A few have already been hurt.

Zone**The Hall (Ignition site, Open fire)**

Situation Aspects: Wide open space, Windowless, Heavily secured

Skills: Good (+3) Burn, Fair (+2) Smoke, Average (+1) Spread; five stress boxes

Change it up: There are a pair of vicious guard dogs. It's an abandoned building used as an illegal dump. It's arson, and five gallons of accelerant are poised to explode.



Hellshow Toolbox

The toolbox contains a firefighter's worst nightmares—things that can and will go wrong on the fireground. This is inspirational reading for the *Fight Fire* GM.

Infrastructure and Equipment Failure

- Gear (Comms failure/partial failure, channel mix-up, incompatibility, SCBA failure)
- Power (To fireground equipment like smoke ejectors)
- Water (No pressure at main, low pressure at main, tangled/damaged/delayed hose, hose incompatibility)

Psychology

- Panic (Firefighter freaks out, civilians hide or fight, crazed pet)
- Intimidation (Firefighter morale plummets, orders refused, civilians behave irrationally)
- Temptation (Misguided firefighter heroics, poor decision making funded by liberal compels)
- Distraction (Problems and stress outside the fireground interfere—marital, social, etc)

Perception

- Deception (Fire appears extinguished, under control, isolated)
- Surprise (Fire behaves unpredictably, fireground in chaos)
- Confusion (Firefighter is disoriented, instructions are garbled or missed)
- Distraction (Firefighters lack focus on details, ignore checklist/protocol, lack of technical precision)

Hindrance

- Obstruction (Forward progress is halted by debris, fire, smoke)
- Delay (Equipment malfunction, waiting for personnel/approval, winded)
- Entanglement (Debris traps firefighter)

Guile

- Direction (Incident pushes and guides firefighter in a particular hazardous direction)
- Decision (Incident offers firefighter difficult choice)
- Exposure (Incident reveals hidden hazard)

Harm

- Injury (Incident directly injures firefighter through falling debris, cuts, burns, fall, musculoskeletal strain)

Trigger

- Trigger fire effect (Flashover, flameover, backdraft) (Good for Smoldering fires)
- Trigger smoke effect (Smoke explosion)
- Trigger structural effect (Collapse, Z-truss collapse, trip, fall, unstable footing)
- Trigger material effect (LP gas cannister, drop ceiling collapse, instability, resist stabilization attempts, chemicals or power sources)
- Trigger special effect (Steam explosion, roof cistern collapse)

Motor Vehicle Accidents

Vehicle crashes are complex emergencies, combining technical rescue with the danger (or, in a worst case scenario, the reality) of a hazardous materials fire. In terms of building MVA incidents, treat them like fires with a single zone or several very tight zones.

MVA Hellshow Toolbox

Additional aspects and stunts for a motor vehicle accident incident. The vast majority of regular firefighting challenges can also apply.

Infrastructure and Equipment Failure

- Gear (Hurst tool failure, airbag failure, misplaced shoring, generator failure)

Psychology

- Intimidation (Unidentified chemicals loaded into vehicle, pressure to clear the wreck fast)
- Temptation (Firefighter on camera tempted to hot dog)

Perception

- Deception (Victim appears stable but isn't, additional victims hidden in trunk, cabover, or footwell or elsewhere)
- Surprise (Firefighter recognizes victim)
- Confusion (Incident command is unclear, contradictory orders given, crews argue)
- Distraction (Busy highway and news crews)

Hindrance

- Obstruction (Extrication is halted by stubborn vehicle frame, odd angle, precarious balance, crushed vehicle prevents access to passenger compartment, vehicle is underneath another, no viable helicopter landing zone)
- Hazard (Downed electrical wires, toxic smoke)

Guile

- Direction (Fire continues to smolder in insulation, ignition system wiring, air cleaner)



FIGHT FIRE

Harm

- Injury (Incident directly injures firefighter or victim through falling debris, cuts, burns, fall, musculoskeletal strain)

Trigger

- Trigger fire effect (Ignition of fuel via catalytic converter, pressurized fuel system)
- Trigger structural effect (Collapse, crushing shift, increased hazard or confinement to victim)
- Trigger material effect (Electrical shock hazard from hybrid or battery cables, cooling system explosion—freon produces toxic vapors when heated, front and rear bumper hydraulic explosion, gasoline can in trunk)
- Trigger special effect (battery explosion, LP gas or LNG tank explosion, hydraulic system explosion, shock absorber explosion, toxic gases from burning materials, airbag deployment, incident reveals LP gas or LNG tank, spray paint or ammunition, gasohol that requires special chemical agents)

APPENDIX A: FIREFIGHTING GLOSSARY

A/B/C/D Side: The side of the structure facing the street or, if that isn't a helpful designation, the side facing the first company on scene. B is the side immediately clockwise from A; C is the rear, and D is the side immediately clockwise from the rear. "We've got heavy smoke but no fire concentrated on the B side. We need to vent the roof."

Air Pack: Also known as SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus), this is a face mask, rebreather and pressurized air tank required for any firefighter who might make an interior attack. Breathable air is usually rated at 30-45 minutes, but under stress it can be half that. PASS is integrated into the air pack. "Don't get excited, your pack will last longer."

Airbags: Inflatable devices for lifting and stabilizing, useful in crushed car MVA scenarios and building collapses. They can lift several tons. Vehicular airbags, in contrast, represent an explosive hazard to firefighters. "I want airbags on the front and rear right quarterpanels, let's get some room to maneuver in there."

Apparatus: Any motorized firefighting resource. A ladder truck, a pumper, a tanker, etc.

Autoextended fire: A fire that has traveled upward through a window or other opening to ignite combustibles on a higher floor or roof. Bad news. "It autoextended through that dormer and now the third floor's involved."

Backdraft : A condition where there is insufficient air to support combustion. A sudden introduction of fresh into an oxygen-starved fire causes a backdraft explosion. Signs of backdraft include puffing smoke going in and out of the building, dark smoke in the structure with little flame, smoke emitting from openings in building. Backdraft is relieved by venting at the highest point in the structure. A backdraft can cause a powerful explosion, structural damage, or simply ignite every combustible surface spontaneously.

Battalion: A collection of companies form a battalion, supervised by a battalion commander. Manhattan's Battalion One comprises four firehouses that field four engine companies, three ladder companies, a specialist decontamination unit, and a command unit for example. A collection of battalions forms a division, and divisions, a department.

Blitz line—A 1 3/4" hose line and nozzle pre-positioned on a truck for initial attack. The tool of choice for the firefighter in Can position during an interior attack. "Irons put a hole in the wall and we're doing the primary search with a blitz line in tow."

Boiling liquid expanding vapor explosion (BLEVE): A BLEVE is the explosive release of expanding vapour and boiling liquid following the catastrophic failure of a pressure vessel holding a pressure liquefied gas such as propane or LPG. A BLEVE is the worst possible outcome when a propane or LPG tank is exposed to fire. BLEVE hazards include fireballs, blast, projectiles and possible toxic clouds or vapour cloud explosions. "BLEVE: Blast Leveled Everything Very Efficiently."

Charged line: A pressurized hose. “Charge the line!”

Cockloft: Structural space above ceiling and below rafters, usually found in commercial buildings. Fire in a cockloft spreads horizontally, making them very dangerous. “Roof fell through and she’s stuck in the cockloft!”

Command—The Officer in charge—incident commander.

Defensive operations: When the incident commander decides the risk to firefighter safety is too great, or the fire’s intensity exceeds available resources, all companies shift to defensive mode. Confinement and protection of surrounding exposures becomes the priority, and no one enters the burning structure.

Elevator key: The control panel override key for operating elevators in multi-story buildings.

Engine: An engine company attacks a fire by pumping water or foam at it from a variety of hoses, protecting life and property. A pumper truck will carry 500-1000 gallons of on-board water, many hoselines of various dimensions, and a basic assortment of ladders and tools. They may have a deck gun for high volume coverage.

Exposure: Property near a fire that may become involved due to its proximity; a neighboring home or business, for example. “Engine Ten from Command, see if you can knock down the fire on C, exposure’s pretty tight.”

Extinguish: To lower a fire’s temperature or deny it fuel, usually by applying vast quantities of water. “Knock it down!”

Extrication: Removal of a trapped person such as a motor vehicle accident victim. “Bring up the Hurst tool; we’re going to need to peel the whole roof off that thing to get her out.”

FAST: Firefighter Assist and Search Team, two or more firefighters who stand ready to assist firefighters in distress on the fireground. The core principle of two in, two out requires a FAST team on standby before anyone enters a burning structure outside of a clear emergency rescue situation. “Command says nobody goes in until we have FAST in place.”

Fire Behavior: The products of combustion (Heat, gas and smoke) want to rise. They will find a way to do this—sometimes directly and sometimes with devious subtlety. Any vertical shaft, such as a stairwell or heating duct, is a direct pathway to the top of a structure. When the heat, gas and smoke reach a high point they will either exit or they will start to travel horizontally.

Fireground: The scene of a fire in which an Officer, as incident commander, is in control. “Get that showboat off my fireground.”

First In: The first company who arrive on the scene of an incident. “Ladder Ten, first in.”

Flashover: The transition between a growing fire and a fully developed one. It is a stage rather than an event. Heat and smoke output continue to increase. Any exposed combustible is probably burning. Visibility approaches zero as hot gases are amplified by radiant heat from the gas layer at ceiling height.

Forcible entry: Gaining entry to secured spaces using specialized tools and brute force.

Fully involved: Term of size-up meaning fire, heat, smoke in a structure are so widespread that internal access is unsafe until the fire has been knocked down by streams from the exterior. A true conflagration. “The kitchen is fully involved and we’re getting out.”

Halligan: A heavy multipurpose tool for prying, poking, and smashing. A Halligan is half of the irons, along with a fire axe. “Clear out that window with your Halligan, we need some ventilation.”

Horizontal ventilation: Removing smoke and fire through openings in walls, doorways and windows. Once adequate horizontal ventilation is in place, mechanical ventilation can be employed.

Mechanical ventilation: Smoke ejectors are powerful fans designed to move large amounts of smoke and heated air out of a burning structure. Positive pressure ventilation (PPV) reverses the flow, blowing clean air into the fire, usually at the back of an attack crew.

Motor vehicle accident (MVA): Often a complex scene that requires generator-powered hydraulic spreaders and cutting tools, as well as airbags, chocks and specialized extrication equipment. An MVA becomes a police matter once the scene has been made safe and all lifesaving is completed.

Multiple alarms: A request by an Officer in charge for support from additional truck and/or engine companies at a large incident. An initial call, unless extremely dramatic, will be a single alarm. “Central, this is Engine Ten, I am calling two alarms.”

Offensive operations—Aggressive interior firefighting operations to confine and extinguish a fire at its point of origin. Offensive operations place firefighters within burning structures, often in a search and rescue context.

Overhaul: The process of carefully examining an area in which a fire has been suppressed, looking for remaining hot spots that might re-ignite. This is difficult, dirty, and often destructive work—walls, ceilings and floors must often be torn up to look for remaining fire hazards.

PASS: Personal Alert Safety System, a device that is integrated into the air pack harness. PASS, emitting a loud, piercing tone when it fails to detect motion, is the final line of defense for a firefighter in distress.

Passing Command: When an incident commander needs to become actively involved in managing the fire attack operations, command is passed to the Officer of the next arriving company. Someone always needs to be in charge, and that person needs to know who is where at all times.

Probie: A probationary firefighter. The new guy, subject to testing both official and unofficial. The probationary period is typically a year. In a good department it includes mentoring and skill-building. In a bad department it includes hazing and humiliation. In either case, probies will be first awake and last asleep—and they'll be making the coffee.

Pike pole: This hooked pole extends a firefighter's reach and is useful for probing and punching through drywall or roofing to get at the seat of a fire. Lengths vary.

Primary search: A hasty search for victims done in conjunction with the initial interior attack. Primary search occurs in the most hazardous conditions early in firefighting effort. It is followed, once the situation is stabilized, by a secondary search.

Radiant extension: Fire that has transferred heat to adjacent materials across open space, causing remote ignition of combustibles. "We knocked the fire down but the I-beams were hot enough to extend and ignited the wall behind us."

Rescue: A rescue company (Sometimes called a Squad) consists of specialists focused on emergency medical treatment, extrication and stabilization. Many sub-specialize in swiftwater or high angle rescue. A rescue truck will have equipment and gear for a variety of situations—chocks and shoring tools for stabilizing motor vehicles, airbags and power tools and specialized gear. Sometimes instead of a dedicated company, a smaller battalion will have a dedicated apparatus staffed by truck and engine company personnel as needed. "Central, Rescue Ten, Rescue Ten is inbound, ETA five minutes."

Salvage: The ongoing process of preventing loss to a structure or its valuable contents. Salvage activities include covering valuables with tarps, de-watering, and opening rather than smashing windows when possible. "Think salvage the whole time you are on the fireground."

Secondary search: A methodical search of the entire structure once the fire has been contained. "We found her during our secondary search but it was too late."

Specialized tools: A ratchet tool is a hydraulic spreader used for forcible entry. A K-Tool is a piece of hardware designed for removing door handles. Other tools include shove knives, Denver tools, and J-bars. Since equipment failure can be lethal, a lot of care is taken to maintain and stay current with the tools of the job.

Size up: The first responding Officer's estimate and report of the fireground situation. As incident commander, this Officer's priorities are, in order: Life safety (including the safety of firefighters), then Exposure, then Containment and Extinguishment, and finally Overhaul and Salvage. Calling in your size-up:

“[Dispatch call sign], [Company designation] is first in at [location]. We have [description of structure] with [description of visible fire effects] on [side and floor]. We are going to [method of attack]. Second truck is FAST and we will need [additional resources]. Passing Command.”

“Central, Ladder Ten is first in at 410 North Fairview. We have a two story wood frame residence with full attic and fire showing on A side in attic. We’re going to elevate some handline on the ladder and get some water in the attic and attack the fire from the front door. Second company is FAST, we will need supply. Passing Command.”

Supply: Additional water, provided by follow-on Engine companies, dedicated tankers, or other resources called in. “Central, this is Engine Ten, requesting additional supply.”

Thermal imaging camera (TIC): This infrared/night vision device allows a firefighter to scan through thick smoke, and can be a lifesaver in departments that can afford them. “Get Chauffeur to bring up a camera.”

Truck: A truck company (also called a ladder company) is usually about the same size as an engine company, and is tasked with forcible entry, ventilation, search, and rescue. A ladder truck will have a vast assortment of tools and ladders, life-saving equipment, and specialized search and rescue gear. They may have a built-in aerial ladder for rapidly accessing upper floors. A truck with a mounted ladder (ending in a basket or not) is called an aerial.

Turnout Gear: Also known as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or bunker gear, this is the fire-resistant clothing and helmet issued to every firefighter.

Two-in, two-out: Refers to the standard safety tactic of having one team of two firefighters enter a hazardous zone while at least two others stand by outside in case the first two need rescue (The latter two forming a FAST team).

Vertical ventilation: Removing smoke and hot gas by opening up the roof, either by cutting it or by opening skylights and scuttles. By allowing the products of combustion to rise and escape naturally, a firefighter can minimize the risks of a backdraft in a tightly-sealed structure. A vertical vent opened on a pent-up fire is both hazardous to the Vent firefighter and spectacular to behold. “See that black smoke blowing out and sucking back in on D? We need a big damn hole in the roof because that is a backdraft waiting to happen.”

Void: Empty space within walls or ceilings providing a concealed channel through which fire can smolder and travel. “I tapped the drywall with my pike pole and there was a roaring void fire back there.”

Z-Truss: Metal trusses, often exposed in commercial buildings, that easily fail en masse under heat. A collapsing Z-truss can bring the entire roof down, and this type of construction accounts for many firefighter fatalities.

APPENDIX B: MAKE YOUR OWN ALARM CALL

These tables are designed to quickly generate fire department alarm calls. They are weighted toward the mundane and routine, but can produce nasty, dangerous calls as well. Roll two six-sided dice, or simply choose. Reject or modify any result that makes no sense or that you don't like. Start with the type of alarm on Table A.

A. Alarm Call

- 2 Complex motor vehicle accident (Go to Table J)
- 3 Commercial fire, wealthy neighborhood (Go to Table C)
- 4 Complex medical (Go to Table K)
- 5 Single vehicle motor vehicle accident (Go to Table J)
- 6 Commercial fire, poor neighborhood (Go to Table C)
- 8 Simple medical (Go to Table K)
- 9 Industrial fire (Go to Table D)
- 10 Brush, trash, car, or open lot fire (Go to Table C for adjacent structure)
- 11 Residential fire, wealthy neighborhood (Go to Table B)
- 12 Technical rescue (Confined space/swiftwater/high angle/body recovery)

B. Residential Structure Fire (poor -2, wealthy +2)

- 0 Homeless encampment
- 1 Housing project
- 2 Row house, vacant, Heavily secured.
- 3 Crumbling mansion
- 4 Retail with apartments above, Heavily secured.
- 5 Row house, Heavily secured.
- 6 Single floor standalone residence.
- 7 Apartment building
- 8 Single floor standalone residence.
- 9 Multistory standalone residence.
- 10 Condominium
- 11 Multistory standalone, vacant, foreclosed
- 12 College dormitory, up to code with sprinklers.
- 13 Modern mansion, Heavily secured
- 14 High-rise apartment

Add victims and fireground chaos if desired. Vacants may contain squatters, drug markets or unauthorized dumping/storage. Regardless of outcome, go to Table E.

C. Commercial Structure Fire
(poor -2, wealthy +2)

- 0 Open air street market
- 1 Bus station
- 2 Motel or nursing home
- 3 Government service center
- 4 Parking garage or church
- 5 Convenience or grocery store
- 6 Restaurant/bar
- 7 Taxpayer
(A cheap, unsafe retail building)
- 8 Commercial trucking warehouse
- 9 High end retail or gas station
- 10 Bank or hotel, Heavily secured.
- 11 Office complex
- 12 Multi-floor professional building
- 13 Luxury merchandise showroom
- 14 Luxury entertainment property

Add victims and fireground chaos if desired. Regardless of outcome, go to Table E.



D. Industrial Structure Fire

- 2 Chemical factory
- 3 Utility plant
- 4 Vacant factory
- 5 Repurposed warehouse
- 6 Storage yard
- 7 Full warehouse
- 8 Manufacturing facility
- 9 Vacant warehouse
- 10 Multi-floor factory
- 11 Enormous factory complex
- 12 Laboratory

Add victims and fireground chaos if desired. Vacants may contain squatters, drug markets or unauthorized dumping/storage. Regardless of outcome, go to Table E.



E. Structural Quirk (poor -2, wealthy +2, Industrial roll twice)

- 0 Extensive fire-transporting ductwork
- 1 Metal structural supports weakened by radiant heat
- 2 Bowstring trusses prone to collapse
- 3 Old, shoddy construction, deathtrap
- 4 Mazelike interior modifications
- 5 Masonry walls bearing excessive loads
- 6 Heavily secured against entry
- 7 New, shoddy construction, tinderbox
- 8 Sprinklers and fire resistant construction
- 9 Numerous voids in walls and ceiling
- 10 Efficiently secured against entry
- 11 Excessive weight load (roof air handlers, heavy objects)
- 12 Z-truss metal roof
- 13 Ornamental wood exterior, highly flammable
- 14 Undocumented Halon fire suppression system

Regardless of quirk, go to Table F.

F. Fire Severity

- 2 Apparent false alarm, but not really
- 3,4 False alarm
- 5 Fire in Ignition phase
- 6,7 Fire in Growth phase
- 8, 9 Fire in Flashover phase
- 10,11 Fire fully developed
- 12 Fire already decaying

If you have an actual fire, go to Table G.

G. Ignition Source

- 2 Intentional
- 3 Open flame
- 4 Cleaning equipment or supplies
- 5 Electrical equipment (Wiring, plug, fan, air conditioner)
- 6 Trash or rubbish fire
- 7 Cooking equipment (Cooktop, oven, hot plate, microwave, grill)
- 8 Heating equipment (Fireplace, chimney, furnace, space heater, boiler, water heater)
- 9 Lighting equipment (Lamp, cord, exterior lighting, inset lighting)
- 10 Smoking
- 11 Foolishness
- 12 Act of nature

Cooking equipment is often found in industrial or commercial break rooms. Regardless of outcome, go to Table H.

**H. Ignition Location
(Residential -2, Industrial +2)**

- 0 Roll twice
- 1 Laundry room/basement
- 2 Exterior
- 3 Bathroom
- 4 Concealed space/cockloft/attic
- 5 Break room/kitchen
- 6 Sales floor/public space
- 7 Garbage storage area/compactor
- 8 Ductwork or wiring
- 9 Office/bedroom
- 10 Exterior wall
- 11 Heating equipment room
- 12 Garage or alley
- 13 Power closet
- 14 Alley or garage

If the fire is growing, in flashover, or fully developed, go to Table I.

I. Growth

- 2 Roof covering or eaves, fire spreads vertically
- 3 Rubbish, fire smolders
- 4 Ceiling, fire spreads vertically
- 5 Cooking materials/flammable liquid, , fire spreads vertically and smolders (Roll one more time)
- 6 Structural member or framing, fire spreads vertically
- 7 Wall covering, fire spreads vertically
- 8 Electrical conduit, fire spreads vertically and horizontally (Roll one more time)
- 9 Bedding or cloth, fire smolders
- 10 Upholstered furniture, fire spreads horizontally
- 11 Rug, carpet, fire smolders and spreads horizontally (Roll one more time)
- 12 Paper, fire spreads horizontally

If the fire is in flashover or fully developed, use the information you have to logically intensify it. The progression of the fire tells a story.

**J. Motor Vehicle Accident
(Roll three times for complex MVA)**

- 2 Wreck, injured occupant/s concealed with growing fire
- 3 Wreck, injured occupant/s trapped with growing fire
- 4 Wreck with growing fire and hazardous materials
- 5 Wreck with growing fire
- 6 Injured pedestrian
- 7 Wreck, injured occupant/s or pedestrian
- 8 Wreck with ignited fire
- 9 Wreck, injured occupant/s trapped
- 10 Wreck with fully developed fire
- 11 Wreck, injured occupant/s trapped with ignited fire
- 12 Wreck, injured occupant/s trapped and requires technical rescue

**K. Medical
(-2 for simple, +2 for complex)**

- 2 Patient dead on scene
- 3 Unusual patient requires extrication/aid
- 4 Patient in distress requires extrication
- 5 Routine eval/transport (cardiac)
- 6 Routine eval/transport (respiratory)
- 7 Unnecessary call/false alarm
- 8 Accident (Fall/cut)
- 9 Distress (shock/poisoning)
- 10 Severe accident (burn/blunt trauma/gunshot)
- 11 Vehicle-related injury (Roll on Table J)
- 12 Injured patient drugged and combative and/or missing

OUR THANKS GO TO

- FDNY Bureau of Training
- Fire Station #3, Troy, MI
- Fire Station #4 and Rescue 4, Anchorage, AK
- Fire Station #6 and Ladder 6, Durham, NC
- Clark Valentine
- Matthew D. Gandy

And special thanks go to Brian Engard for his contribution of the “Life Outside the Fireground” text.



KRIEGSZEPPPELIN VALKYRIE

FROM THE AUTHOR

I hope people have some fun with this scenario. Maybe it ends with the destruction of Schottky's lair (or the destruction of Valkyrie!). But maybe not! Use this as a springboard to pulp action in the 1920s—maybe incorporating elements of the world of Spirit of the Century.

Most of the characters mentioned by name are based on real historical figures. Wikipedia is my primary resource, but I took a great many liberties both in time and personality. My apologies especially to Walter Schottky, who as far as I can tell showed no signs in reality of being an evil scientist of any sort. In fact, he was instrumental in the development of semiconductors (diodes, specifically), without which modern electronics would be impossible.

Because this scenario involves somewhat recent history, I tried my best to refrain from providing as playable characters any historical figures who did horrible things in real history. This was especially important to me with the German characters, as it was (perhaps unsurprisingly) challenging to find German flying aces who both survived the First World War and did not become Nazis in the 1930s. Please accept my most profound apologies if I have included someone as a playable character who shouldn't be—and tell me about it. (Walter Schottky shouldn't be confused with William Shockley, who also worked with semiconductors, but had some pretty despicable ideas about eugenics. Different guy.) Likewise, if you stat out a historical pilot that I didn't for this scenario, I'm eager to hear about it. I'm on Twitter (@clarkvalentine) or you can send an email to Evil Hat—they know where to find me.

Have fun and good hunting!

— Clark Valentine, 2012

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to acknowledge my major media and game influences for *Kriegszepelin Valkyrie*.

Media influences include *Battlestar Galactica* (clearly the main inspiration) with a healthy serving of *Top Gun*'s swagger and the ensemble casts of films like *The Dirty Dozen* and *Kelly's Heroes*. For WWI aerial action, I turned to movies like *The Blue Max* and Müllerschön's 2008 version of *The Red Baron*. Also, every movie or comic book that's ever featured a Zeppelin, because Zeppelins are freakin' cool.

I have two primary game influences. Providing a minimal setting for a one-shot or short campaign was strongly inspired by John Harper's "Lady Blackbird," a beautiful example of simplicity and elegance in scenario design. Using historical characters as playable PCs was strongly inspired by Bill White's "Siege of Antioch" scenario for *Chronica Feudalis* and *The Big Hoodoo* supplement for *Trail of Cthulhu*, which both put players in the roles of real historical figures.

Playtesting was conducted at the wonderful 2012 Metatopia convention in Morristown, New Jersey. Cam Banks, Lisa Padol, Brian Engard, Tom Cadorette, Bob Bretz, Michael Consoli, and Shane Harsch were among the playtesters. There was one other, but I've criminally misplaced the card on which I wrote his name (if you're him, contact me!) Many thanks especially to Shane, who provided the idea of only doing full damage with a maneuver. Many thanks also to Bill White, who helped brainstorm ideas for the setting location and opposition.

Many thanks to Dave Leaman for his suggestions for additional pilots and the stat block for Eugenia Shakhovskaya, and to Oliver Graf for a correction in my German spelling. Thanks to Lillian Cohen-Moore for the suggestion of using Ernest Hemingway. Thanks to all the Kickstarter backers who made corrections and suggestions based on the preliminary PDF release!

Finally, many thanks to John Adamus, Amanda Valentine, and Lenny Balsera for their fine editing and development work.

INTRODUCTION

It's early 1919, the immediate aftermath of the Great War, and the victorious Allies are discovering that their victory is not yet complete. The madman Dr. Walter Schottky is missing, but British investigators have found evidence of his work on "galvanic intelligence" in a secret laboratory south of Berlin, as well as plans for an installation in German East Africa.

Meanwhile, towns and aircraft across Africa and the Mediterranean are coming under attack by machines equipped with the results of Schottky's research. Mechanical nightmares are raiding towns from Lilongwe to Benghazi, burning and looting their way across the war-torn land.

How can he be stopped? Allied High Command thinks it has the answer.

Deep inside Germany, postwar inspectors have discovered the largest Zeppelin ever constructed—*Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie*. She's a flying aircraft carrier, capable of launching, recovering, and servicing over a dozen fighters while aloft. High Command has placed her under the command of General Geoffrey Salmond, head of the Royal Air Force, and has convinced *Valkyrie's* builder, Dr. Hugo Eckener, to join the mission.

The last piece of the puzzle is a motley collection of flying aces and barnstormers to pilot the planes—that's you. Your orders from Allied High Command: "Destroy Walter Schottky's galvanic forces."

Highly Romanticized Aerial Warfare in 1919

In reality, there was nothing the slightest bit romantic about early aerial combat. Pilots endured freezing temperatures, constant loud noise, and unreliable aircraft with a tendency to burst into deadly flame when damaged. The planes were flimsy and provided no protection from the hot lead filling the air. The pilots wore no parachutes and couldn't escape a plummeting aircraft; those who survived being shot down were often horribly burnt and suffered terribly. Life expectancy for new pilots at the front was measured in weeks.

This game is not about that stuff.

This game is about the race to be recognized as the best of the best. It's about foolhardy, reckless courage in the face of a terrifying foe. It's about defeating your foe with as much panache as you can muster—your scarf flapping heroically in the breeze as you close in on them and pound the hell out of their plane with your guns. It's about being the sort of warrior who grins when he—or she—fights. It's about the papers all wanting that exclusive interview with you.

PLAYING THE GAME

In *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie*, players take on the roles of First World War era fighter pilots operating from a gigantic flying aircraft carrier. You're tasked with stopping Dr. Walter Schottky and destroying his galvanic army.

While Schottky's galvanic armies are the obvious enemy, fighter pilots are perhaps the most competitive creatures on the planet. Each one wants to prove that they're the best. Will you put aside your differences to defeat the common enemy? Will you seek your own glory at the expense of your comrades? Or can you walk the line of defeating Schottky while winning aerial victories and fame for yourself?

Aerial Victories and Fame

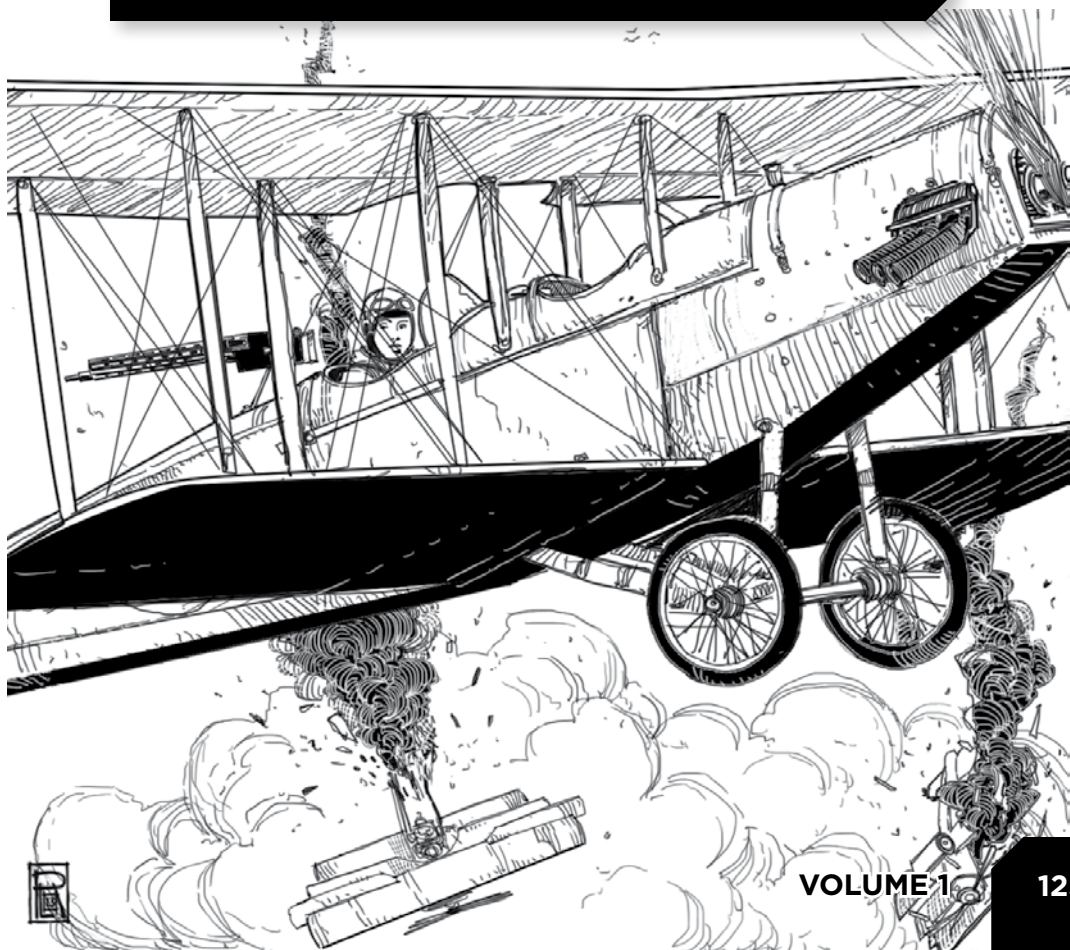
Yes, of course you're in this to defeat Dr. Schottky and his army of galvanic nightmares, but what you're *really* after is proving that you're the best—and what good is being the best if nobody knows about it? To determine who's the best, you keep a running tally of two scores during the game: aerial victories and fame.

Aerial Victories are a count of how many enemy planes you shoot down. (This is different than the "victory" from *Fate Core's* contest rules on page 150.) Everything flying counts (airplanes, balloons, airships, etc.) and each flying craft shot down counts as one victory, no matter how big it is. But a "true" count isn't what really matters; it's a count of confirmed aerial victories that your commanding officer signs off on. After each mission, General Salmond will debrief you and get to the bottom of how many aerial victories you should be credited with.

Fame is a measure of your notoriety and celebrity among the civilians back home. The journalist Ernest Hemingway is your ticket to fame; the pilot with the most aerial victories won't necessarily be the most famous, but it helps. After each mission he'll want to talk to all the pilots, and the one he thinks is most interesting and has the best tale will be the star of his report to the AP (and may even help him write the headline).

QUICK START

1. Choose a PC from the list available.
2. Choose an aspect reflecting your relationship with one or more of the other PCs.
3. Choose additional aspects, skills, and stunts either now or during play.
4. Choose a plane for you and your wingman.
5. Decide how you want to get to Kilimanjaro.
6. Claim aerial victories & defeat Schottky—in that order!



Choosing and Completing Player Characters

There's a stack of playable characters starting on page 155. Each one has a unique background, and the GM will help you figure out some additional details and establish relationships with other player characters. Remember that aviators from this era are swashbuckling adventure seekers. They're exceedingly competitive with one another and most have never met a newspaper headline they didn't like.

The playable characters are based on real-world personalities (some of them loosely). They include:

- René Fonck (page 155)
- Eddie Rickenbacker (page 156)
- Philip Fullard (page 157)
- Billy Bishop (page 158)
- Marie Marvingt (page 159)
- Eugene Bullard (page 160)
- Heinrich Kroll (page 161)
- Bessie Coleman (page 162)
- Amelia Earhart (page 163)
- Katherine Stinson (page 164)
- Alexander Kazakov (page 165)
- Kwon Ki-ok (page 166)
- Eugenia Shakhovskaya (page 167)

If you don't see a pilot you like, create your own; there are dozens of possible personalities from the era, especially if you play a little loose with time lines. Just start with a similar spread of skills and aspects and you're good to go. Possibilities include: Estonian aviation pioneer Ljuba Galantschikoff; German aviatrix Amelie Beese; Irish-born ace Tom Hazell; American Neta Snook, the pilot and mechanic who taught Earhart to fly; Japanese aviator and inventor Hino Kumazo; French aviatrix Raymonde de Laroche. There are dozens more.

Playable characters not chosen by any player should be put aside.

We assume that the reader has read or played *Fate Core*, but it's the sort of game that novice players tend to pick up very quickly if the GM is familiar with it.

Aspects

Each player character starts with a **high concept**, a **trouble**, and two other **aspects**. One aspect "slot" remains open; players may fill that in with an aspect of their choice, either at the start of the game or during play.

Skills

Each player character has an array of **skills** assigned to them, in a pyramid from +4 to +1. Assume that any skill not listed is a +0. Two skill “slots” in the pyramid remain open—one at +2, and one at +1. (See *Fate Core*, page 46, if this doesn't make sense to you.) Players may fill in these slots at the start of the game or during play.

We use a modified skill list for this game. Most are straight from *Fate Core*, but a few are new.

From *Fate Core*:

- Athletics: Running, jumping, climbing trees, dodging bullets (on foot). As in *Fate Core*.
- Deceive: Lying, feinting, bluffing. As in *Fate Core*, but see the Swagger skill below.
- Empathy: Guessing intentions, detecting lies. As in *Fate Core*.
- Fight: Fisticuffs, brawling, wrestling. As in *Fate Core*.
- Notice: Spot the attacking squadron, hear the leaking hydrogen. As in *Fate Core*.
- Physique: Toughness, endurance. As described in *Fate Core*.
- Rapport: Getting along with people, getting them on your side. As in *Fate Core*.
- Shoot: Using firearms, including aircraft-mounted weapons. As in *Fate Core*.
- Stealth: Sneaking around. As in *Fate Core*.
- Will: Mental toughness and ability to shrug off confusion and intimidation. As in *Fate Core*.

New skills:

- Machinery: Measures your knowledge of machines, engines, and other devices. Overcome an obstacle by repairing damage or improvising a part. Create an advantage by observing an opponent's plane maneuver or modifying your carburetor.
- Pilot: This is very close to the Drive skill from *Fate Core*, but it's used in place of Athletics to defend against attacks in a dogfight, and for pulling aerial stunts and maneuvers.
- Swagger: Relating to people through presence and confidence; exaggeration and tall tales often fall under Swagger, rather than Deceive. Attacks can cause mental stress by overtly frightening or threatening your opponent. Overcome an obstacle by intimidating an unhelpful NPC. Create an advantage by impressing someone whose confidence you require.

Stunts

Stunts may be selected from the following list and from the list in the *Fate Core* book, or players may make up their own based on *Fate Core*'s guidelines. As in *Fate Core*, the first three stunts chosen are free, but each stunt chosen thereafter decreases the character's amount of refresh by one. Refresh begins at 5. Players may choose stunts either at the start of the game or during play.

Each player **must** choose an airplane, most of which have a refresh cost associated with them depending on their quality—you'll want to keep that in mind when choosing your stunts.

Aerial Knife Fight (Pilot): You gain a +2 to Pilot rolls aimed at creating an advantage or overcoming an obstacle dealing with getting close to a target you intend to attack.

Barrel Roll (Pilot): Spend a fate point to add a +2 on any Pilot roll to create an advantage and also gain a +2 on Pilot rolls used defensively until your next turn.

Combat Spread (Shoot): In aerial combat, gain a +1 on any Shoot roll, but grant a boost to the next opponent that makes an attack against you in this combat.

Defensive Spiral (Pilot): Once per conflict, you may clear all stress inflicted on you in a single round of aerial attacks and give yourself a single disadvantageous situation aspect instead.

Defensive Split (Pilot): In aerial combat, if you're flying with a wingman (see Squadrons, page 131 below), you may take a +2 to a defensive use of your Pilot skill, but your wingman cannot aid you in any way until the end of your next round.

Everybody Calm Down (Will): Once per round, an ally may use your Will score instead of their own to defend against attempts to create an advantage related to causing confusion or fear.

Feint (Pilot): Use your Pilot skill rather than Deceive to create an advantage related to feints and misdirection while at the controls of your plane.

Hide in the Clouds (Stealth): You're a master of the ambush; gain a +2 to Stealth rolls used to create an advantage.

Immelmann (Pilot): On a successful aerial attack, this stunt allows you to do full damage against an opponent even if you haven't placed an aspect on them. (Normally, in aerial combat, you can only inflict 1 stress of damage to an opponent unless you've spent a round putting an aspect on them. See page 131 for more discussion of this special rule.) Grant a boost to the next opponent to attack you in this conflict. You can't use this stunt in two consecutive turns.

Lighten the Mood (Rapport): Gain a +2 to Rapport rolls used to create an advantage by increasing your own allies' morale through telling jokes, sarcastic comments, or the like.

The Need for Speed (Pilot): You gain +2 to Pilot rolls for creating an advantage or overcoming an obstacle when raw speed is the main component of your tactics.

One Shot One Kill (Shoot): In your first attack against any given target in aerial combat, you receive a +2 to your Shoot skill.

Split S (Pilot): Gain a +2 to Pilot rolls used to eliminate an aspect placed on you when an opponent creates an advantage.

Aircraft as Equipment

Aircraft in *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie* are treated as **stunt-based extras** (see *Fate Core*, page 270). Some aircraft are more powerful than others, reflecting that some aircraft are more advanced than others; S. E. 5a and Fokker D.VII dominated the skies at the end of the war, with the SPAD S.XIII not far behind. More powerful airplanes have a higher refresh cost.

Pilots are listed with suggested aircraft, reflecting the type of plane each historical figure flew in or around the time of the Great War. We assume that each PC's wingman flies the same model of plane as the PC pilot.

S. E. 5a (refresh cost—3): This heavily armed, fast fighter grants a +1 to all Shoot attacks, and a +2 to all Pilot rolls used to create an advantage when speed is of primary importance.

Fokker D.VII (refresh cost—3): The Fokker was the terror of the skies in the fall of 1918. It grants a +2 to all Pilot rolls to defend and to create an advantage. Once per combat, it grants Weapon:2 on a successful hit.

SPAD S.XIII (refresh cost—3): A tough, heavily armed aircraft, the SPAD grants a +1 to all Shoot attacks. Once per combat, it grants Armor:2 when hit by enemy fire.

Sopwith Camel (refresh cost—2): A highly maneuverable aircraft, the Camel grants a +2 to all Pilot rolls to defend and to create an advantage.

Nieuport 28 (refresh cost—1): Obsolete but still in wide use at the end of the war, the Nieuport 28 grants a +2 to all Pilot rolls used to create an advantage.

Pfalz D.III (refresh cost—1): The Pfalz D.III may be obsolete, but it's still a tough plane with heavy guns; once per combat, it grants Weapon:2 on a successful hit.

Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny" (refresh cost—2): A tough, versatile plane, it's easy for the JN-4's ground crew to swap out equipment. Prior to takeoff, the Jenny's pilot should choose one benefit: +1 to Pilot rolls to create an advantage; once per combat gain Armor:2 when hit by enemy fire; once per combat gain Weapon:2 on a successful hit.

Curtiss Stinson Special (refresh cost—1): A smaller version of the versatile JN-4, the pilot may choose one benefit prior to takeoff: +1 to Pilot rolls to create an advantage, or once per combat gain Weapon:2 on a successful hit.

Nieuport 17 (refresh cost—0): The cutting edge of technology in 1915; too bad it's 1919. Hopelessly obsolete, this plane may be the best a poverty-stricken air force like that of Soviet Russia can muster. It grants no particular advantage to its pilots, but costs no refresh. Other pilots may snicker at you at first, but start bringing down enemies in an obsolete aircraft and you may earn even greater respect.

KRIEGSZEPELIN VALKYRIE

Valkyrie is a gigantic airship, nearly 400 meters long, its colossal envelope suspending a gondola far more massive than any ever built before; atop her rigid frame is a wooden runway just large enough to launch an airplane. She's an intimidating sight—even veteran airship crews remark that something so large has no business flying. Designed by Dr. Hugo Eckener, she was intended to be a super-weapon that would bring France to its knees and ease a possible invasion of Britain, but the Great War ended before construction could be completed.

The gondola consists of two main personnel decks, which house *Valkyrie's* crew and flight complement. The crew consists of two dozen experienced German Zeppelin crew and a dozen British Royal Marines. The bridge and the wireless room are also in the gondola, as are the engine rooms and much of her defensive weaponry. At the center of the gondola is a highly armored bunker storing fuel.

The hangar deck is directly above the gondola, built into a void in the envelope among the hydrogen gas bags. This is where aircraft are stored when not in flight, and where they're repaired, rearmed, etc. Munitions are stored (very carefully) in wooden crates at the center of the deck. An elevator can take two aircraft at a time up to the flight deck.

The flight deck is a small wooden airfield where aircraft are launched and recovered. It's mounted directly atop the envelope (the gigantic oval-shaped structure containing the gas bags), at the very top of the Zeppelin. Aircraft move to and from the hangar deck via a winch-operated elevator. Exposed to the howling winds, crew working the flight deck are supposed to wear cumbersome safety lines, but they often ignore this rule.

Armament

Valkyrie's main defensive armament is provided by several machine gun emplacements. While they're distributed well enough to provide good, overlapping coverage around and below the Zeppelin, only one of these gun emplacements is above the envelope. As a result, *Valkyrie* is vulnerable to attacks from above; she generally relies on her contingent of fighter aircraft to provide top cover.

While *Valkyrie's* air squadrons provide the real teeth of her offensive abilities, she carries a couple of weapons of her own. She has a store of gravity bombs which can be dropped by *Valkyrie* herself, or loaded onto aircraft designed to carry them. She also has a small howitzer mounted in her belly that can be used to shell surface targets or, with extreme difficulty, enemy airships. The howitzer is tremendously difficult to aim accurately.

Operations

Valkyrie's engines can push her through the air at surprisingly vigorous speeds. Her fuel storage would allow weeks of sustained thrust, except for the need to fuel her aircraft and provide power to the hydrogen generators. Hydrogen leaks from the gas bags are one of *Valkyrie's* quirks that the designers have never been able to solve. They were forced to install a water electrolysis device that produces enough hydrogen to replace losses, but it consumes a great deal of fuel and fresh water to operate.

Expect to replace water and fuel stores at various towns and settlements as you cross Africa. You'll get a friendlier reception at some places than at others. *Valkyrie* is equipped with strong ground anchors and can "land" easily enough to pump on fresh water and aviation gasoline, as well as to allow crew to embark and disembark to conduct ground operations. While on the ground, of course, *Valkyrie* is especially vulnerable, particularly to ground-based artillery fire. So be careful about ticking off the locals when you're attempting to acquire fuel.

Crew

Aside from the player character pilots and their wingmen, a handful of NPCs make up *Valkyrie's* crew.

General Sir Geoffrey Salmond

Gen. Salmond (United Kingdom) is the commander of the *Valkyrie* expedition. An ace pilot in his own right, Salmond has a reputation as a daring commander, but he's always open to suggestions and persuasion from squadron leaders under his command. He has a decent working relationship with Dr. Eckener, but doesn't fully trust the Germans aboard *Valkyrie*. Salmond is meticulous about record keeping and he debriefs every pilot after every combat action. His character sheet is on page 153.

Dr. Hugo Eckener

Dr. Eckener (Germany) is *Valkyrie's* designer and chief engineer. He's a veteran Zeppelin captain and a brilliant scientist. While friendly enough, he's almost always preoccupied by one minor mechanical crisis or another; it takes a lot of attention to detail to keep aloft the largest airship ever built. While Salmond is nominally in command of *Valkyrie*, the German crew of 20 hands generally looks to Eckener for orders (if for no other reason than because they don't speak much English). His character sheet is on page 154.



Ivonne Riotte

Riotte (Germany) is an expert airship pilot, the first woman in Germany so licensed. Fascinated by these behemoths since she first laid eyes on them, she used her sheer force of personality to bulldoze her way to flying. With her cutlass and spyglass, Riotte is a warrior out of time, more at home at the helm of a Napoleonic era sailing ship than anywhere else. Chief airship pilot and first mate of a Zeppelin is as close as she's going to get. Her character sheet is on page 153.

Ernest Hemingway

Hemingway (United States) is a young and extremely eager Associated Press journalist along to document the expedition both in print and in photographs. He's able to operate *Valkyrie's* wireless set, which he uses to send his stories home, and is an expert at improvising field darkrooms to develop his photos. He's a hard-drinking, gregarious man who feels at home in the company of high-ego people like soldiers and pilots. His character sheet is on page 154.

Captain Sir Stephen Holmes, KBE

Capt. Holmes (United Kingdom) is the commander of the contingent of Royal Marines aboard *Valkyrie*. Holmes is a tough, no-nonsense sort of man, 35 years of age. His battle-hardened Royal Marines operate *Valkyrie's* weaponry, provide security if necessary, and conduct ground operations should the need arise. His character sheet is on page 154.

Valkyrie's Crew

A variety of experienced German Zeppelin hands form the backbone of *Valkyrie's* crew. These include: Hedda Kohn, chief mechanic; Hans Gottlieb and Thomas Freeh, mechanic's mates; Julia Schmidt, navigator and first pilot's mate; Eric Meier, master of hydrogen; Jan Schiffer, officers' steward. There are fourteen other German hands.

FATE CORE AND KRIEGSZEPELIN VALKYRIE

We assume you have the *Fate Core* rules and are at least passingly familiar with them. It's worth a discussion of how we imagine those rules applied to this scenario, and we need to call out special rules put into place for this particular expression of Fate.

Special Rules

Some rules of *Fate Core* are tweaked a bit for *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie*.

Aerial Dogfighting and Fate Core

The twisting and fluid dance of the aerial dogfight is best expressed as a series of maneuvers followed by an attack. To represent this, pilots who make an attack without first gaining some sort of advantage over their target may do no more than *one* stress damage, no matter how much they succeed by or whatever bonuses to damage any stunts may grant. In order to do full damage against another airplane, a pilot must first gain some advantage over their target (in game terms, use the create an advantage action, page 136 in *Fate Core*); the attacker need not invoke the aspect representing the advantage, but the aspect must be present.

Sudden, slashing attacks can be very effective against large targets like Zeppelins or ground installations, so such targets aren't subject to the same restrictions.

Word of fancy flying gets around. Boosts that you gain in combat for Success with Style can be saved and applied toward the post-mission debriefings with Gen. Salmond and Ernest Hemingway (see **Aerial Victories and Fame**, page 135).

Taking Damage while Piloting

If a player character takes damage while piloting their plane, they still suffer stress and consequences as normal. You can opt to lose a squadronmate in place of a consequence (see below). Consequences resolve as in standard *Fate Core* (see page 50)—stress and mild consequences vanish or can be repaired; more serious consequences take time.

Squadrons

Each pilot has a wingman (or woman)—an ally in an identical airplane that flies with them. Wingmen don't act independently in aerial combat. The game effect of their presence is simply to absorb damage and increase the PCs' own effectiveness. Lone fighters tend to be highly vulnerable, so almost no pilot takes to the sky without one. *Fate Core*'s mob rules (see page 216 in *Fate Core*) represent this; if a PC's wingman is with them, they gain a +1 bonus where having a wingman would be helpful. Similarly, Schottky's Galvanic Fighters tend to operate in pairs or sometimes even mobs of 3 or 4.

Losing a Wingman

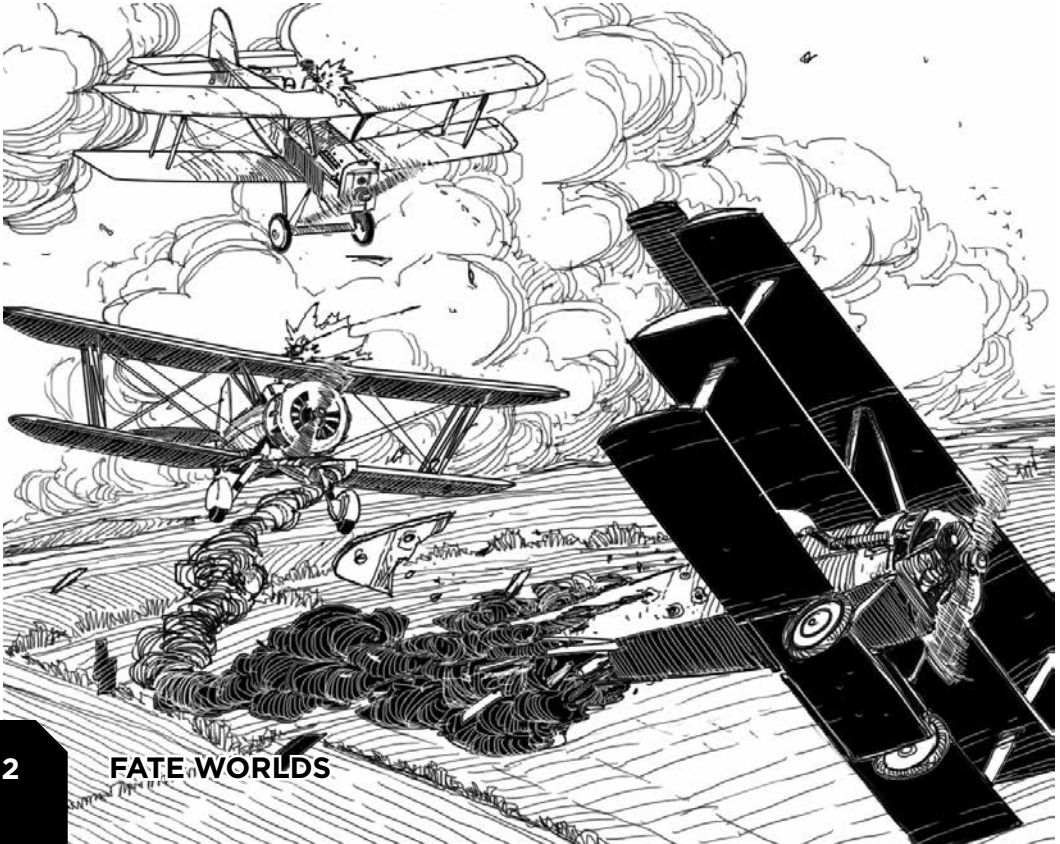
Wingmen can make PC pilots extremely powerful, but they're also prone to getting shot down. All PC pilots can accept losing their wingman in place of a moderate or serious consequence. Do you mount a rescue mission to recover your wingman? Do you try to recover & repair the plane, or obtain a new one somewhere? Possibilities for side adventures abound!

Glory, Aerial Victories, and The Press

Defeating Schottky's army of automatons is clearly the advertised mission, but every pilot in the sky knows that the real goal here is to rack up aerial victories and look good for the press.

When in combat, track the number of enemy aircraft you shoot down. After combat, General Salmond debriefs each pilot, who's expected to report number of enemy planes they downed. He'll be asking for witnesses and confirmation; he knows your wingman will lie for you, so he'll talk to other PC pilots to confirm your report. Of course, some pilots have a better Deceive skill than others, so there's that.

What's more, a young, eager reporter named Ernest Hemingway is along on the campaign on his first assignment for the AP. He interviews pilots and asks about their adventures; he writes his story, then radios his reports back home. So being on his good side is probably a good idea—unless you're fine with your derring-do being left out of the popular record of the fight.



GMING KRIEGSZEPELIN VALKYRIE

So far, we've been talking about *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie* from a player's point of view. If you're planning to play a PC pilot, you should have what you need to get started, and you may want to skip the rest. The remaining sections are for the GM.

Here, we talk about how to GM the game from two perspectives—the characters and the plot. Following that is a section on the opposition, including stat blocks for galvanic forces, NPCs, and other people the PCs might come into contact with. Finally, there's a series of character sheets of playable characters.

GMing the Characters

As GM, it's your job to ratchet up the pressure on the characters to not only succeed at their mission, but to achieve the greatest personal glory. Don't plan for them; let them take lead on that. If they get too passive, have bad guys kick in the door (or whatever the equivalent is for a flying aircraft carrier) and start shooting.

Pushing Buttons

Ask leading questions. Challenge the pilots' egos. Use relationships to set the pilots against one another. Use Salmond's reports on confirmed aerial victories and Hemingway's news reports to drive jealousy among the crews.

Remember that perception is everything. How far will pilots go to reinforce the perception that they're the best? Keep some leading questions/suggestions in your back pocket. These make great compels on the trouble aspects of most pilots.

- “Are you going to confirm that she scored four victories in that last fight? Two of them were pretty far off; you might not have seen them too clearly...”
- “Sounds like he's trash talking you to Hemingway; you're just gonna take that?”
- “You gonna go break up that fist-fight between your and Bishop's wingmen?”
- “Yeah, you could try to take out the enemy on her tail, but she's a damned Bolshevik, isn't she?”
- “Soak a rival's ammo in a bucket of water? The very ideal!”

There are two specific mechanics that assist you in playing up the character side of the game: **relationships** and **aerial victories/fame**.

Relationships

The GM helps the players establish relationships among the pilots. One of the best ways to do this is to let the players choose the nature of the relationship randomly. Here's the suggested method.

Get a handful of index cards. Write one relationship prompt from this list on each card:

- Debt
- Friendship
- Personality Clash
- Rivalry
- Incompetence
- Suspicion
- Blackmail
- Something to Prove
- Shared Secret
- Any other interesting relationships you might think of

Have each player randomly choose one card and show it to the group. This card describes the nature of the relationship of that player's pilot to the player on their left (which means each player should have two relationships). Both players should talk about the details of the relationship and define the circumstances that led to it. Some of them imply things like hidden agendas, secrets, and such; let the players run with those as far as they like.

Once the relationship is defined, treat it as a situation aspect (see *Fate Core*, page 58) that can be invoked and compelled anytime it makes narrative sense to do so.

- Debt: One of you owes the other, big. Is this a noble "I promise to repay you for saving my life" sort of debt, or a less honorable "Dead men don't repay poker debts" situation?
- Friendship: The two of you hit it off, and you became fast friends. How far would you go to make sure your buddy comes home with their fair share of the glory?
- Personality Clash: The polar opposite of the above. The two of you just plain hate each other. Why?
- Rivalry: The two of you have an intense rivalry. Maybe it's friendly, maybe not. Maybe it's public, played out in newspaper headlines across the world.
- Incompetence: One of you suspects the other doesn't have what it takes and doesn't trust them in the sky. This does not bode well for aerial cooperation.

- Suspicion: One of you thinks the other has a hidden agenda. Maybe it's even true. Nationalistic tensions, personal grudges, and simple pride didn't go away on Armistice Day.
- Blackmail: One of you knows what the other one did. It'd be a real shame if Hemingway found out about that incident in Munich before we left...
- Something to Prove: Just you wait. I'll show you, and no mistake, you'll thank me if all you do is eat crow in front of everyone.
- Shared Secret: If word of this gets out, we're both finished. We gotta keep this quiet.

Of course, feel free to change these up as the fiction dictates, if a new player comes in, and so on. These relationships should drive interesting situations in play; the moment they become restrictive, they're going against the whole point.

Aerial Victories and Fame

After every combat mission (or whenever narratively appropriate), General Salmond and the journalist Hemingway interview and debrief the pilots. These interviews represent the military and the civilian world's interest in how the campaign is progressing. They're tracked by two scores: aerial victories and fame. Each pilot's score begins at zero.

After each mission, have Salmond conduct an interview of each pilot in some location that makes narrative sense—*Valkyrie's* cramped briefing room, the busy hangar deck, the mess table. Sometimes the interviews may be individual; sometimes they may be collective, with all pilots present. During that interview, he attempts to get an accurate count of the aerial victories each pilot scored; there's no rule that says any pilot must tell the truth, of course, but confirmation from another PC pilot helps (ask another pilot if they'd like to confirm a claim; if so, treat that as an aspect on the scene that the pilot can invoke in their final roll). Have the pilots make rolls as appropriate to create aspects helpful to themselves or to affect other pilots' rolls. Boosts (see success with style, *Fate Core* page 132) gained during the mission can be used here.

Once the interview is completed, have the pilot make a final roll on the social skill that best reflects what she used during the session—generally it will be Rapport or Swagger, opposed by an appropriate skill of Salmond's (typically Empathy or Will, respectively). Once again, boosts gained during combat can be used here, as can any aspects gained during the conversation. If the pilot succeeds, Salmond believes her account of aerial victories, within reason (he's not a fool—if the pilots start claiming ridiculous numbers of victories he's not going to buy it.) If the pilot fails, he waits to hear from other pilots before writing that number down—part of each debrief may be asking about other pilots and their respective victories. Track the cumulative total aerial victories credited to each pilot.

Hemingway, similarly, interviews everyone, usually together, after important or noteworthy missions. During the conversation, look for pilots making statements that could be construed as attempts to create an advantage and overcome an obstacle; track aspects created and eliminated by those. Boosts gained during combat can be used here.

As with Salmond's debrief, have everyone roll once the conversation is complete, using the skill that best reflects the conversation type they used most, opposed by the appropriate skill of Hemingway's. Any remaining boosts gained during the combat are lost after this step, so pilots that have them might as well use 'em. The pilot with the current highest total of aerial victories gains a +2 to her roll, as does the pilot with the highest current fame (although these don't stack if it's the same pilot). The pilot who succeeds by the greatest margin gains +2 fame, the pilot in last place gains zero fame, and all others gain +1 fame. Track each pilot's cumulative fame score. The pilot that gains the +2 fame can help Hemingway compose the headline for the article that he's sending back to the AP on *Valkyrie's* wireless.

Ultimately, it's fame and victories that these pilots are after; every one of them has an aspect reflecting that. Of course, if they fail to defeat the enemy, they all lose, but each one wants to be on top when the dust settles.

GMing the Plot

The plot of *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie* is pretty straightforward; the PCs must proceed from southern Europe to Mt. Kilimanjaro and destroy the lair of Dr. Walter Schottky.

As *Valkyrie* traverses her path, Eckener and Salmond consult all the squadron commanders for advice. At all times, allow the players to hash out where to go next. Allow them to request deployment of the Marines when appropriate. Mercilessly compel aspects on *Valkyrie* to force expeditions to replace consumables like fuel and water.

Consult the map provided and use the aspects for various regions to guide you in deciding which encounters to run. From a plot perspective, it's your job as GM to throw encounters in their path to keep things interesting (see **Detailed Encounters**, page 147). Mix up the encounters to challenge a wide variety of their skills—some are designed to let them show off strengths, others are designed to force them to overcome their weaknesses.

Learning Enemies

Galvanic Fighters don't start the campaign terribly smart. The first time the PCs encounter them, they should butcher the robots in fairly short order. But the genius of Schottky's design is that the 'bots learn. It all depends on the presence of a Galvanic Flight Leader. The Flight Leaders can fight, yes, but their main jobs are to observe and lead.

The result of this is that the more the PCs fight against galvanic aircraft, the more the galvanic aircraft will start to resemble the PCs.

For each combat in which at least one Flight Leader is present (even if they're not directly involved with the fighting), the Flight Leader(s) learn one facet of each player character pilot. Things they might learn include:

- Skills that get used in combat
- Non-gear-related stunts that get used in combat
- Aspects that get used in combat

Every Galvanic Fighter begins attempting to imitate one of the player character pilots after the first encounter between the PC pilots and Galvanic Fighters. So if you have three PC pilots, three varieties of Galvanic Fighters will start to emerge. After each combat, do one of the following: choose a single skill that the PC pilot is better at (provided it was used in the combat) to raise one step, or add a new stunt mirroring one the PC used, or add an aspect from the PC's character sheet that the PC invoked in that combat. The Galvanic Flight Leaders observe these and radio them back to base immediately.

EXAMPLE OF LEARNING ENEMIES

Suppose that in one combat Alexander Kazakov uses his aspect *Ramming Speed* to wreck an opponent's plane and Billy Bishop guns several down. A Galvanic Flight Leader observes this.

In the next combat, one mob of Galvanic Fighters will have the Shoot skill one notch higher, and another mob will have the aspect *Ramming Speed*. Galvanic Fighter mobs continue to develop like this, gaining characteristics that resemble particular PC pilots.

Note that the engines and airframes of the Galvanic Fighters don't change, so stunts related to the PCs' planes or other gear can't be copied (unless you come up with some narrative justification for it).

In time, you should start to get a variety of very tough Galvanic Fighters that the players may begin to recognize. Drop hints, if necessary.

Challenges on the Journey

Schottky's base is a series of caverns deep within Kilimanjaro near the edge of German East Africa (in modern day Tanzania). This is deep within Africa and will push *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie* and her pilots to their limits. Several challenges confront the crew as they journey.

What exact challenges you decide to throw at the players at any given time depends on your own groups' preferences and your sense of pacing.

Obtaining Consumables

Valkyrie depends on several varieties of consumables that need to be replaced from time to time; she'll go through some more often than others, depending on her route and events that occur on the journey. The main consumables are water, fuel, spare parts, and ammunition.

Valkyrie uses large quantities of water, both to keep her crew hydrated in the dry air aloft and also as a raw material for her hydrogen generators—necessary to keep her gigantic gas bags full and buoyant. She'll need to make several stops to refill her water tanks during the journey. Fresh water is best, but seawater can be used in a pinch (she carries a small desalination plant). Rivers, desert oases, or the sea all can serve as sources of water.

Aviation fuel is essential for *Valkyrie* to get anywhere. Almost everything she does uses quantities of fuel; her engines burn it, the power source for the electrolysis-driven hydrogen generator burns it, and of course her compliment of aircraft burn it. She can get fuel from fuel depots scattered around Africa, from the brand-new refineries starting to exploit the region's oil reserves, or from ships carrying large quantities of marine diesel (while not ideal, *Valkyrie's* engines can use it). In a similar way, spare parts used for maintenance and ammunition that *Valkyrie* and her pilots go through will need to be replaced.

Of course, none of these sources will willingly hand over fuel, bullets, or parts, so the crew will need to work out a way to convince them to part with it.

Local Armies & Militias

During her journey, *Valkyrie* has to pass through numerous nations whose people may not welcome a foreign military force borrowing its airspace. Perhaps the crew can negotiate friendly passage, but it's possible they'll have to sneak by or even fight their way through.

Attacks from Galvanic Forces

Schottky has established a variety of far-flung bases and lairs scattered around Africa, from which his forces launch raids. These bases may need to be destroyed for *Valkyrie* to get through safely.

Kilimanjaro

The final challenge is destroying Walter Schottky's lair hidden within Mt. Kilimanjaro. See **Endgame—Kilimanjaro** on page 149.

Getting Shot Down

If a PC pilot gets taken out in a fight, or even if they concede, a possible outcome is that they get shot down. Does the pilot survive? Unless it's a climactic moment of awesome then probably yes, they'll live; these are Flying Aces of the highest skill, and they aren't going to get killed by some nameless bad guy who gets lucky. Sounds like a rescue mission is in order.

The downed pilot may be rescued, but their plane is probably a pile of sticks and fabric in the Sahara; what are they going to fly? If they have a surviving wingman, taking over their plane is one solution. If not, they may have to talk one of the other pilots into donating a plane from their own squadron. Hm. Hope you haven't alienated everyone aboard.

Getting There

To reach the lair and end Schottky's threat, *Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie* must traverse Africa and assault the fortress. Of course there are innumerable routes they can take, but most of them fall into one of three broad categories.

The Western Route

This route goes straight south from Italy, across Libya and the Sahara, turning east in the jungles of central Africa, and approaches Kilimanjaro from the west. It has the advantages of increased possibility of surprise—the desert is largely undefended—but at the cost of being largely devoid of settlements where *Valkyrie* can resupply. They may be able to find water at a desert oasis somewhere; they might be able to fuel up at a remote desert installation of Standard Oil or Royal Dutch Shell, pumping and refining oil from newly discovered reserves deep in the desert. The remote reaches of desert may also hide a forward base from where Galvanic Fighters and Warriors can operate. Dust storms and intense heat are a potential danger. The forests of central Africa are just as remote and dangerous. Additionally, severe tropical thunderstorms may pose a danger to *Valkyrie*.

Major cities along this route include Tripoli and Kinshasa.

The Nile Route

This route goes south from Cairo, following the Nile to Lake Victoria and assaulting German East Africa from the north. This route has access to the most fresh water, from the Nile River. Unfortunately, it's at its low point in the spring, so they may face some competition for water from locals. It's also perhaps the most obvious route, and almost certain to be watched—Galvanic Warriors occupy some towns along the river, and patrols of Galvanic Fighters will certainly spot *Valkyrie* on her journey south.

Major cities along this route include Port Said, Cairo, Khartoum, and Nairobi.

The Coastal Route

This route crosses the Sinai to the Red Sea, hugs Africa's east coast to Mombasa, and approaches Kilimanjaro from the east. Fresh water is rare, but not quite as rare as in the Sahara. There are rumors of pirates operating out of the southern Red Sea coast of the Arabian Peninsula, so *Valkyrie's* crew had best be watchful; some of the pirates are rumored to have airships.

The most heavily populated of the major routes, major cities along this route include Suez, Jerusalem, Jeddah, Djibouti, Mogadishu, and Mombasa (possibly as far as Zanzibar and Dar Es Salaam, if you go a bit south).

GMING THE OPPOSITION

Walter Schottky's forces are formidable and grow moreso as the campaign goes on, but they're not the only ones the PCs will encounter. Here are some stats of NPCs, typical adversaries, bad guys, and others they might run into.

Galvanic Fighter

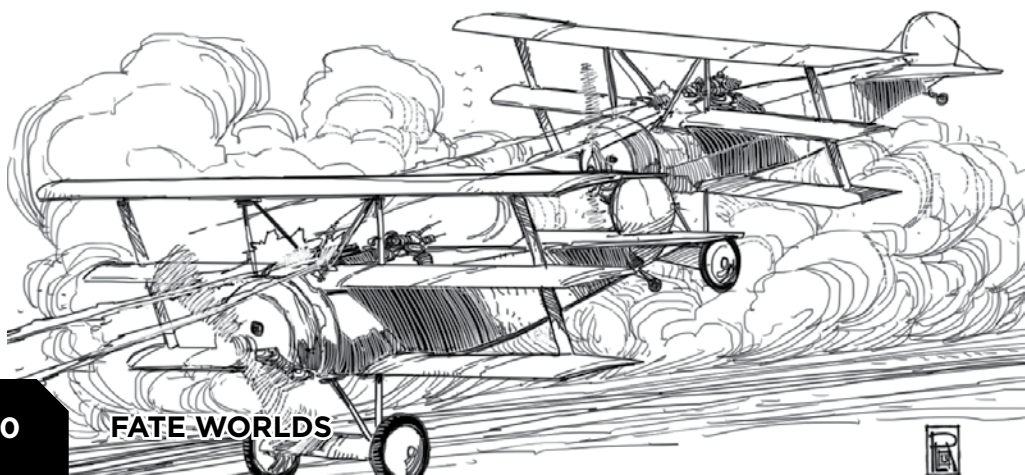
Schottky's Galvanic Fighters are automated fighter aircraft controlled by a galvanic intelligence unit. The design is small, light, and agile. Its big power plant gives it plenty of power; armed with twin machine guns, it can be a formidable foe. Its only problem is that it's controlled by a galvanic intelligence unit, which lacks a human pilot's inventiveness and situational awareness. They're short range fighters, so there must be a remote base around here somewhere...

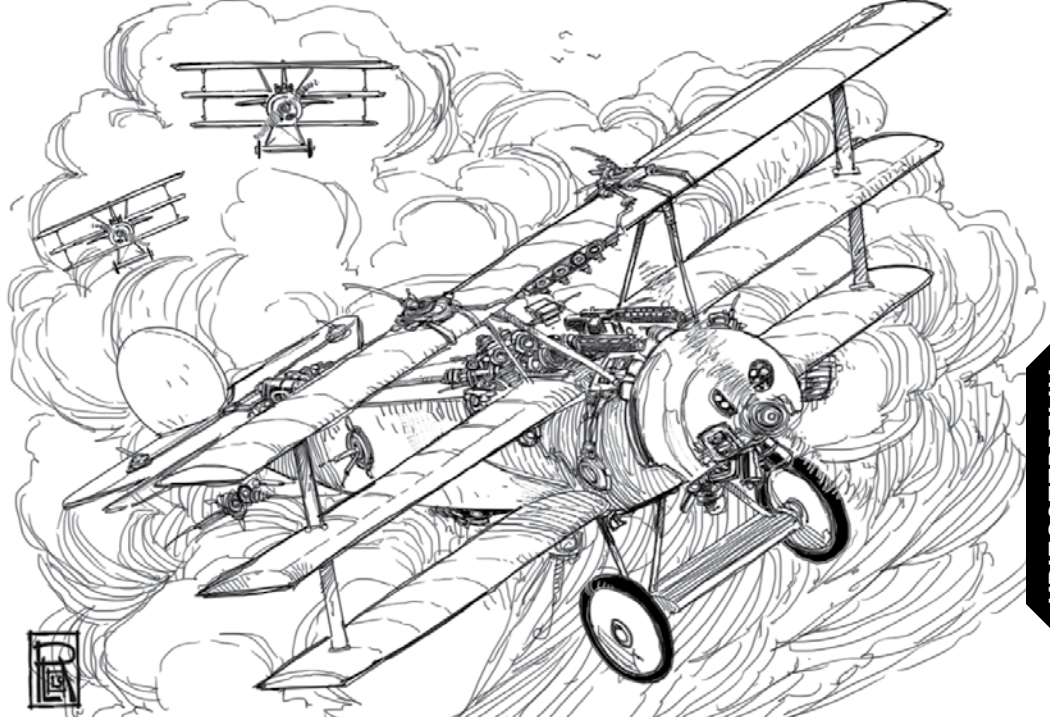
GALVANIC FIGHTER

Aspects	<i>Small & Agile</i> Additional aspects due to Learning Enemies
Skills	Notice: Average (+1) Pilot: Good (+3) Shoot: Fair (+2) Plus additional skills due to Learning Enemies
Stunts	None; additional stunts due to Learning Enemies
Stress	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Tactics

Galvanic Fighters tend to operate in mobs of two or, more often, four (see mobs, page 216 in *Fate Core*), which are often accompanied by a Flight Leader aircraft. They can learn new tactics, skills, and even personality quirks based on the opposition they face (see **Learning Enemies** on page 136).





Galvanic Flight Leader

The Galvanic Flight Leader is a fighter built on a reinforced version of the Galvanic Fighter's airframe, with a much more advanced galvanic intelligence unit and sensor array. They set ambushes and try to draw out reckless opponents; they're less prone to confusion than their less advanced fellows.

GALVANIC FLIGHT LEADER

Aspects *Canny Tactician*

Skills Notice: Great (+4) Physique: Fair (+2)
Pilot: Good (+3) Shoot: Good (+3)
Stealth: Fair (+2) Will: Fair (+2)

Stunts **Flight Leader (Will):** In the presence of a Flight Leader, Galvanic Fighters can use the Flight Leader's Will against attempts to confuse them.

Regroup (Will): When present in a combat, a Galvanic Flight Leader may spend an action to reorganize Galvanic Fighters in the same zone into new mobs of no more than four.

Stress Physical

Tactics

Galvanic Flight Leaders organize larger groups of Galvanic Fighters to launch ambushes out of cloud banks; they know how to use the sun and terrain to their advantage. They help scattered Galvanic Fighters regroup into effective flights (mobs).

Galvanic Gunship

Galvanic Gunships are the strike aircraft of Schottky's forces. They carry big guns and bombs for hitting larger stationary or slow-moving targets (*Valkyrie* would be a sitting duck if they got close enough). They carry several swivel-mounted machine guns for defense. Like Galvanic Fighters, they're flown by galvanic intelligence units; they tend to be fairly stupid and predictable. The last thing they want to do is go fast or turn quickly. However, with their bombloads and cannons, they hit very, very hard. Their limited ammunition generally restricts them to a single big attack, then they have to split for home.

GALVANIC GUNSHIP

Aspects *Mighty Warbird; Lumbering and Clumsy*

Skills Notice: Fair (+2) Physique: Great (+4)
Pilot: Average (+1) Shoot: Good (+3) (Active Defense)
Will: Average (+1)

Stunts **Active Defense (Shoot):** This craft uses its Shoot skill purely defensively, but a successful Defense roll using Guns causes stress vs. the attacker.

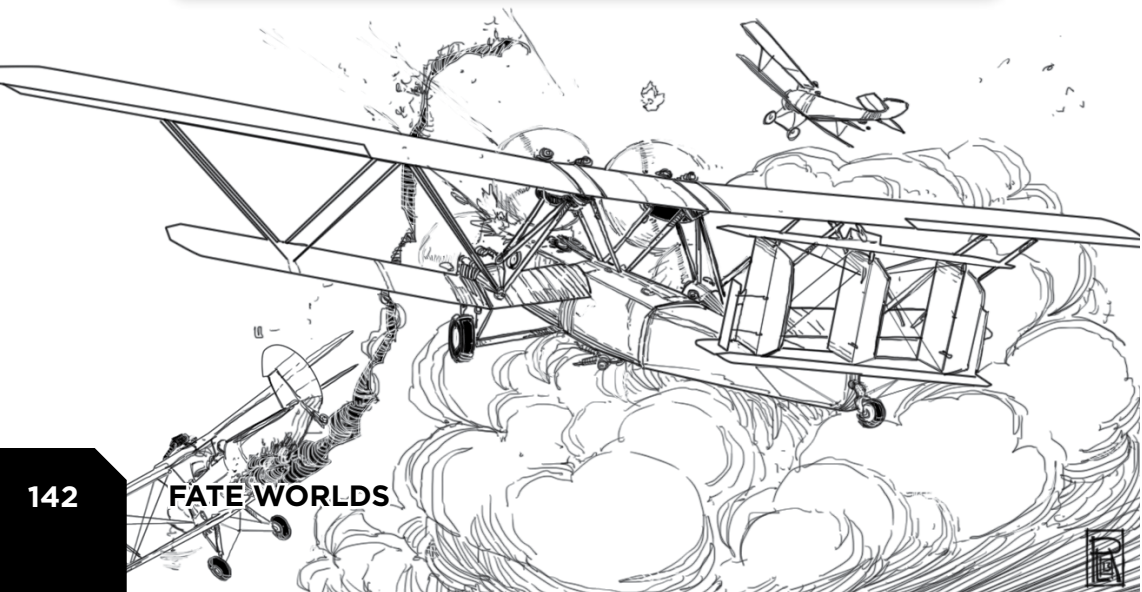
Behemoth (Physique): Gains one additional stress box.

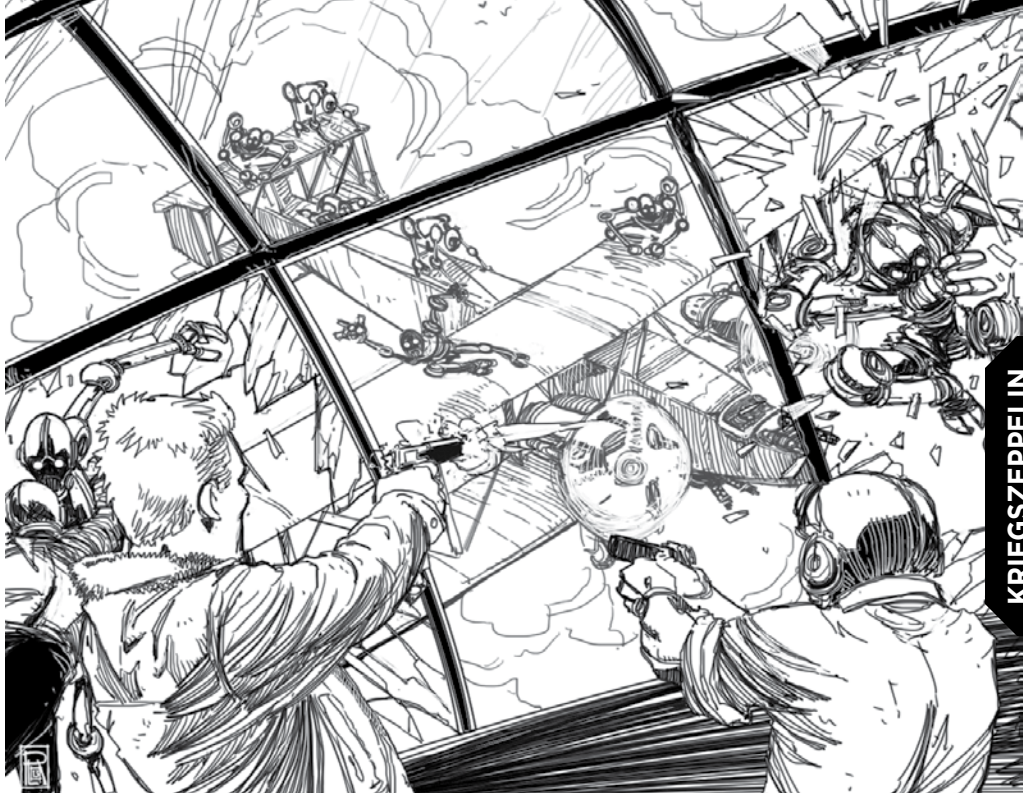
Bomber (Physique): This craft uses Physique, as opposed to Shoot or Pilot, to make attacks.

Stress Physical

Tactics

Gunships tend to lumber toward their targets, make one big attack, then leave; they depend on their fighter escorts or their own machine guns for protection.





Galvanic Troopship

Galvanic Troopships are the transport aircraft of Schottky's forces. Each carries two mobs of Galvanic Warriors. Otherwise, they're armed with machine gun mounts used to ward off attacking fighters.

GALVANIC TROOPSHIP

Aspects *Lumbering and Clumsy*

Skills Notice: Fair (+2) Physique: Great (+4)
Pilot: Average (+1) Shoot: Good (+3) (Active Defense)
Will: Average (+1)

Stunts **Active Defense (Shoot):** This craft uses its Shoot skill purely defensively, but a successful Defense roll using Guns causes stress vs. the attacker.
Behemoth (Physique): Gains one additional stress box.

Stress Physical

Tactics

Galvanic Troopships attack *Valkyrie* by either crashing into her flight deck and disgorging their load of Galvanic Warriors, or coming up behind and under the gondola, where the Galvanic Warriors can climb aboard. Either way, *Valkyrie's* crew have a boarding action to contend with.

Galvanic Warrior

Schottky has built a small army of bipedal galvanic intelligence-controlled robots to raid towns across Africa and defend his lair on Kilimanjaro. About two meters tall, these machines have the general shape of human beings (two arms, two legs, head, torso) with glowing yellow eyes. Most are armed with guns, but they're formidable foes even unarmed. Like Galvanic Fighters, they're not terribly smart.

GALVANIC WARRIOR

Aspects *Galvanic Warrior*

Skills Athletics: Average (+1) Fight: Fair (+2)
Notice: Average (+1) Physique: Fair (+2)
Shoot: Good (+3) Will: Average (+1)

Stunts None

Stress Physical

Tactics

Galvanic Warriors generally operate in mobs of four. They tend to be fairly stupid. They don't usually bother using cover, but may attempt basic tactical maneuvers like flanking attacks.

Infantry or Cavalry Troop

Rifle-armed human infantry or cavalry. Also useable as airship pirate crew.

INFANTRY OR CAVALRY TROOP

Aspects *Local Fighters*

Skills Athletics: Fair (+2) Fight: Fair (+2)
Notice: Average (+1) Shoot: Fair (+2)
Stealth: Average (+1) Will: Average (+1)

Stunts Assign as appropriate.

Stress Mental Physical

Tactics

Basic riflemen, these soldiers usually operate in mobs of four. If it's cavalry, give them horses and fast movement. For highly trained troops like Royal Marines or sky pirates, boost Shoot and Physique scores by one (which grants an extra box of physical stress).

Hardened Commander

Use this for a militia commander, an airship pirate captain, etc.

HARDENED COMMANDER

Aspects *Been There, Done That*

Skills Athletics: Average (+1) Deceive: Average (+1)
Empathy: Average (+1) Fight: Good (+3)
Physique: Fair (+2) Shoot: Good (+3)
Swagger: Fair (+2) Will: Fair (+2)

Stunts **In Command (Will):** When in command of troops, the troops can use her Will to defend against mental attacks or maneuvers intended to cause a breakdown of command.

Stress Mental Physical

Tactics

A veteran of many battles, she leads her dudes in combat and is pretty much a badass.

AA Gun

A basic anti-aircraft gun. Also deadly when trained on personnel on the ground, or at a landed airship.

AA GUN

Skills Shoot: Good (+3)

Stunts None

Stress Physical

Tactics

Not much to this—it sits there and shoots. A solid hit can take it out. When operating in a battery (mob), it can be a formidable opponent.

Airship

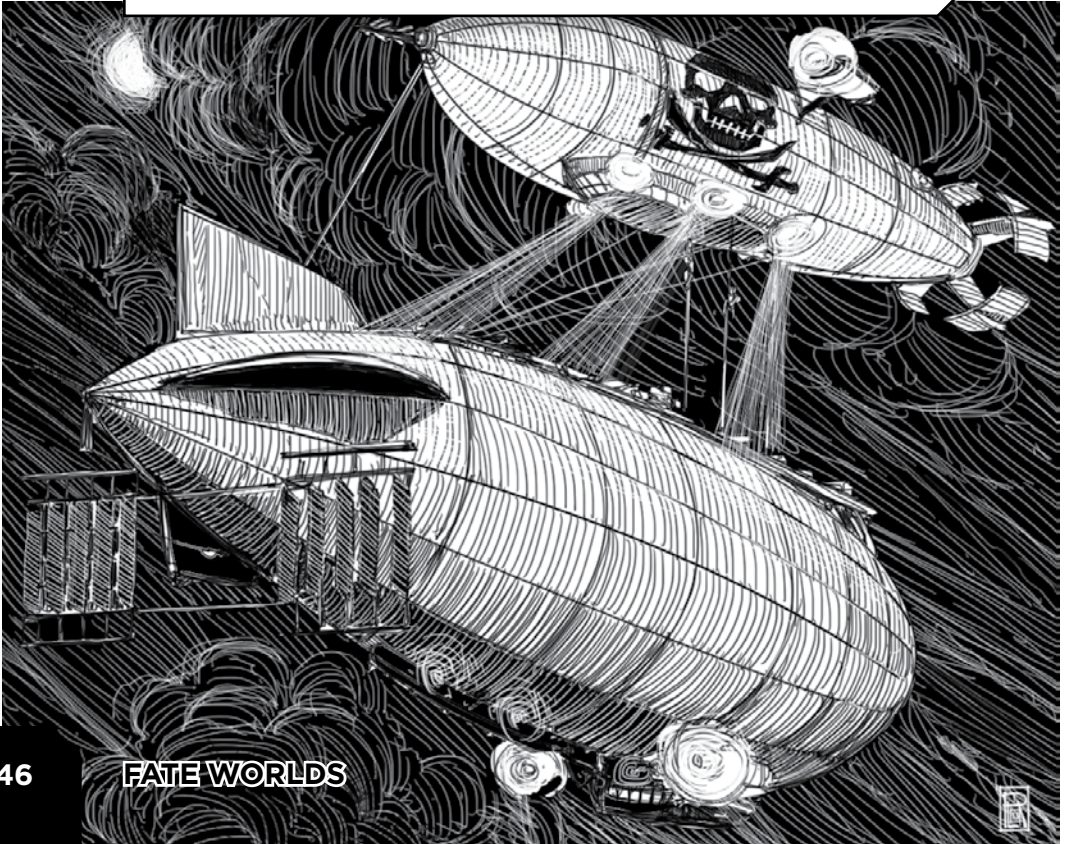
This stat block represents a small airship of the type that air pirates of the Red Sea are rumored to use.

AIRSHIP

Aspects	Nimbler Than It Looks	
Skills	Notice: Good (+3)	Physique: Great (+4)
	Pilot: Fair (+2)	Shoot: Good (+3) (Active Defense)
	Stealth: Average (+1)	Will: Fair (+2)
Stunts	Behemoth (Physique): Gains one additional stress box.	
	Machine Gun Defense (Shoot): This craft can use its Shoot skill to defend against attacking fighters.	
Stress	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	

Tactics

Airships flown by Red Sea sky pirates may attempt to board *Valkyrie* by pulling alongside and grappling the gondola or sending their three mobs of pirates (use Infantry or Cavalry Troop, page 144) repelling onto the flight deck.



Detailed Encounters

As GM, it's your job to choose which encounters to throw at your PCs. Choose based on the location and the narrative demands of the fiction—if it gets boring, have some Galvanic Fighters kick in the door and start shooting! Here are a handful of detailed example encounters.

Air Attack

A group of Galvanic Fighters attacks *Valkyrie* with the intent of downing or capturing her.

Order of Battle:

- X4 Mobs of Galvanic Fighters
- X4 Flight Leaders
- X2 Galvanic Gunship OR X2 Galvanic Troop Carrier

Tactics: The fighters engage the pilots, attempting to tie up the player character pilots while the gunships or troop carriers attempt to attack *Valkyrie*.

Remote Base

Let the pilots find a remote base if they track anything (a Galvanic Fighter, Warriors, etc.) back to base, or if they actively go on patrol in search of one.

Order of Battle:

- X6 Mobs of Galvanic Fighters
- X4 Flight Leaders
- X4 Mobs of Galvanic Warriors
- X2 AA Guns

Tactics: Give a Flight Leader a Notice action at the start of the fight; if they succeed, two mobs of fighters are in the air prior to the pilots' arrival. While on the ground, aircraft defend at zero (they might be able to wipe out several at a go!).

Resupply

Valkyrie is running low on fuel; the only place to get it in any quantity is the little town of Abri (place this wherever is convenient for you—maybe it's on the Nile, maybe in the desert, maybe in the forest.)

Royal Dutch Shell built a small refinery and underground fuel tanks just outside of town. The facility is currently controlled by a group of rebels who are planning to use the fuel for an offensive against government troops controlling the town.

Rebels

Order of Battle:

- Hardened Commander
- X10 Infantry Troop
- X2 Cavalry Troop
- X1 AA gun
- X1 Artillery

Government

Order of Battle:

- Hardened Commander
- X6 Infantry Troop
- X1 Cavalry Troop

Tactics: The PCs have several options—talk the rebels out of the fuel, aid the government troops in defeating the rebels, or just take it themselves. Oh, and *Valkyrie* needs to be careful of that artillery if she lands.

Other Encounters

Surprise Attack: Enemy fighters attack! 2 flights Galvanic Fighters, 1 Flight Leader

Air Assault: Enemy aircraft try to destroy *Valkyrie*! 4 flights Galvanic Fighters, 2 Flight Leaders, 4 Gunships

Hostile Militia: Local military forces object to *Valkyrie* resupplying! 2 Infantry or Cavalry Troops, 1 Hardened Commander

Forward Base: *Valkyrie* locates a forward operating base of Schottky's forces! 8 flights of Galvanic Fighters, 4 Flight Leaders, 4 troops of Galvanic Warriors, 2 AA guns

Occupied Territory: Galvanic forces occupy a settlement! 4 troops of Galvanic Warriors

Thunderstorm or Dust Storm: Mother Nature throws sand, lightning, and hail against *Valkyrie*; PCs must assist the crew in weathering the storm. Nature makes attacks and tries to create advantages vs. *Valkyrie*'s Physique at +5. PCs must mitigate consequences or create advantages to keep her together (though not necessarily aloft—landing could help!) using whatever skills they have.

Local Politics: A well-stocked town isn't overtly hostile, but many of the people are suspicious of *Valkyrie* and her crew; they won't easily part with needed supplies. 4 Infantry or Cavalry Troops, 1 local governor; perhaps something even more complicated.

Air Pirates: Buccaneers operating out of a pair of heavily armed airships attempt to raid *Valkyrie*! 6 Infantry Troops, 2 pirate airships, 1 Hardened Commander

Fist Fight: Two squadrons' minor pilots have come to blows on the rain-slicked flight deck. Will anyone stop it before someone goes over the side?

Sabotage: Someone's interrupter gear was deliberately damaged; is there a mole aboard *Valkyrie*? Did a rival squadron cause the malfunction?

Endgame—Kilimanjaro

Kilimanjaro is a large stratovolcano with a summit of nearly 6000 meters. The landscape along the mountain slopes and at the summit is harsh and forbidding; the PC pilots need to be very careful.

We've detailed several locations at Kilimanjaro for the PCs to explore.

The Slopes

Suggested situation aspects: *High Altitude; Steep and Unsteady Slopes; Watchful Eyes*

Possible opposition: Patrol(s) of Galvanic Warriors, Galvanic Fighters, and/or Galvanic Flight Leader

The slopes of the mountain rise up from the plains of occupied German East Africa. The lowest slopes are heavily forested, with a handful of villages abandoned during the fighting of the past war. As the altitude increases, the vegetation thins out. Eventually the land becomes barren and quite inhospitable. The slopes are watched by a combination of patrols of Galvanic Warriors (especially in the forests along the lower slopes) and Flight Leaders that occasionally observe the upper slopes and summit. Intruders are dealt with harshly.

Several tunnels are hidden at various points in the mountainsides, leading to the inner parts of Schottky's lair. A handful of tunnels—just large enough for a person to walk through—lead to the **staging area**. One moderately sized tunnel has a railroad track leading into it, which supplies the **fabrication plant**. Finally, one large tunnel leads to the **hangar**, which aircraft use for takeoff and landing.



The Summit

Suggested situation aspects: *Barely Air; Perpetual Winter; Waste Heat*

Possible opposition: Galvanic Fighters and/or Galvanic Flight Leader

Kilimanjaro's summit is capped by a permanent glacier. The air is thin (both *Valkyrie* herself and the PCs' planes can fly here, but they struggle) and oxygen is scarce. If the PC pilots search around thoroughly, they can locate an artificial heat vent—large enough for a person to climb through—that leads through a long tunnel to the **power source**. If the PCs take some precautions against the hot air, they can use the shaft to sneak into the heart of Schottky's lair.

Staging Area

Suggested situation aspects: *Armory; Cramped; Guarded*

Possible opposition: Patrol(s) of Galvanic Warriors

Staging areas (there are several) are rooms where Galvanic Warriors gather to prepare to leave for patrols, and rearm and recharge afterwards. Corridors from the outside slopes of Kilimanjaro lead to staging areas. Most staging areas lead to the hangar or fabrication plant.

Power Source

Suggested situation aspects: *Giant Cavern; Hotter Than Hell; Humming With Power*

Possible opposition: Patrol(s) of Galvanic Warriors

This enormous room contains giant banks of thermocouples that use the temperature gradient between Kilimanjaro's magma chamber and its glacier-capped summit to generate staggering amounts of electrical power. The chamber looks like a power switching station; cables run everywhere and electrical gear and equipment is stacked nearly to the roof of the cavern. The nearby magma chamber makes this room stiflingly hot. The noise of electrical humming and rumbles of shifting magma are ever-present.

Corridors lead to the Galvanic Brain and the fabrication plant.

Fabrication Plant

Suggested situation aspects: *Giant Cavern; Industrial Facility; Moving Parts*

Possible opposition: Patrol(s) of Galvanic Warriors

The fabrication plant is even larger than the power source. It's an underground factory where machines work night and day—or, at least, as long as the supplies hold out—to build more galvanic monstrosities to threaten the world. Characters that don't watch their step are liable to get clobbered by one of the factory machines.

Corridors lead to the power source, the hangar, a few staging areas, and the Galvanic Brain.

Hangar

Suggested situation aspects: *Giant Cavern; Planes Everywhere; Underground Runway*

Possible opposition: Patrol(s) of Galvanic Warriors, all manner of galvanic aircraft

The hangar is the storage area for the galvanic aircraft that operate from Kilimanjaro. The pilots can see dozens of galvanic airplanes of all kinds, lined up in neat rows, ready for whatever mission their master gives them. A large corridor, doubling as a runway, leads through a kilometer of rock to the outside; skilled pilots (such as the PCs) could easily fly their planes into and from here. Other corridors lead to the fabrication plant and two staging areas.

Just off of the hangar, past steel blast doors, is a fuel depot where row after row of 55 gallon drums of aviation gasoline are stacked.

Control Center

Suggested situation aspects: *Communication Systems; Electrical Equipment; High Voltage*

Possible opposition: Mobs of Galvanic Warriors (2), Walter Schottky

This is it. The pilots find a Frankensteinian laboratory, full of machines festooned with lights, vacuum tubes, and arcing electrical doodads. A large radio system sits against one wall, linking this room with all the galvanic forces spread across Africa and the Mediterranean. And Dr. Walter Schottky, looking as smug as you'd expect a mad scientist with his toys arrayed around him, stands at the center of it all. Or, what was once Dr. Walter Schottky, for he has enhanced his own brain and body with the same sort of technology that his robots have been wielding against the player characters.

The Galvanic Brain is the big machine in the center of the room.

Cyborg Walter Schottky

Once a brilliant protégée of Dr. Max Planck, Schottky's interest in semiconductors and electrical theory led him to several major breakthroughs just as the Great War broke out. He had no interest in aiding Germany's war effort, instead turning his genius to madness and retiring to German East Africa where he could work in peace (ahem). With the British Army chasing the Germans all around East Africa for several years, he had just enough time to complete his work.

CYBORG WALTER SCHOTTKY

High Concept:	<i>Mad Scientist of Kilimanjaro</i>	
Trouble:	<i>The World Will Be Mine</i>	
Other Aspects:	<i>Electrical Genius; Monologue!; Transcend Biological Limits</i>	
Skills	Athletics: Good (+3) Empathy: Fair (+2) Machinery: Superb (+5) Physique: Superb (+5) Stealth: Average (+1) Will: Good (+3)	Deceive: Fair (+2) Fight: Great (+4) Notice: Fair (+2) Shoot: Great (+4) Swagger: Good (+3)
Stunts	Tough As Nails (Physique): Once per session, Schottky can reduce a mild or moderate physical consequence (see <i>Fate Core</i> , page 50). Get In Front Of Me (Machinery): Once per session, Schottky can direct a Galvanic Warrior to leap in front of him to absorb the stress from a single attack.	
Gear	Cyborg Schottky has an embedded machine gun in one arm, granting him the following stunt: Automatic Fire (Shoot): When attacking multiple targets in the same zone, Schottky adds +4 to his result, not the usual +2 (see <i>Fate Core</i> , page 205).	
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

General Geoffrey Salmond

Nationality: UK

GENERAL GEOFFREY SALMOND	
Aspects	<i>I Know Pilots but Don't Suffer Fools</i> <i>North Africa Expert</i> <i>Tactician</i>
Important Skills	Empathy: Fair (+2) Machinery: Fair (+2) Pilot: Great (+4) Rapport: Good (+3) Shoot: Good (+3) Will: Fair(+2)
Stunts	Pilot's Eye (Pilot): Use Pilot instead of Notice to spot aircraft in flight Your Bluster Does Not Impress Me (Will): +2 to defend against Swagger rolls used to cause mental stress or create an advantage against you.
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

KRIEGSZEPELIN
VALKYRIE

Ivonne Riotte

Nationality: Germany

IVONNE RIOTTE	
Aspects	<i>Swashbuckling Zeppelin Pilot</i> <i>Full Speed Ahead</i> <i>Looking For A Fight</i>
Important Skills	Athletics: Fair (+2) Fight: Good (+3) Physique: Fair (+2) Pilot: Great (+4) Swagger: Good (+3) Will: Fair (+2)
Stunts	To Cutlasses And Attack (Fight): +1 to Fight rolls when making an attack with a sword
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Ernest Hemingway

Nationality: USA

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Aspects	<i>Get the Story</i> <i>On a Deadline</i> <i>Hard Drinking, Hard Living</i>	
Important	Deceive: Fair (+2)	Empathy: Great (+4)
Skills	Rapport: Good (+3) Will: Fair (+2)	Swagger: Good (+3)
Stunts	Lie Whisperer (Empathy): +2 to Empathy rolls to discern lies	
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Dr. Hugo Eckener

Nationality: Germany

DR. HUGO ECKENER

Aspects	<i>Valkyrie Is My Ship</i> <i>Keep Her Flying</i> <i>Schnell! Schnell!</i>	
Important	Machinery: Great (+4)	Notice: Good (+3)
Skills	Pilot: Fair (+2) Shoot: Average (+1)	Rapport: Fair (+2) Will: Fair (+2)
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

Capt. Sir Stephen Holmes

Nationality: UK

CAPT. SIR STEPHEN HOLMES

Aspects	<i>Knight of the British Empire</i> <i>Veteran of the Gallipoli Campaign</i> <i>Mean Right Hook</i>	
Important	Athletics: Fair (+2)	Notice: Fair (+2)
Skills	Physique: Great (+4) Will: Good (+3)	Shoot: Good (+3)
Stress	Mental <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Physical <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

René Fonck

Flag: France

Nationality: France

Squadron: Escadrille Spad 103 “The Storks”

Suggested Aircraft: SPAD S.XIII

René Fonck is the reigning leader in aerial victories among survivors from the Allied side of the Great War, with 75 confirmed enemy aircraft downed and dozens more claimed but unconfirmed (he never quite got over Manfred von Richtofen having more confirmed victories than he did). He approaches aerial combat as an engineering challenge; while off duty he spends his time endlessly planning missions and thinking about tactics, a time when other pilots are relaxing and socializing. This leads to the perception of a charisma deficit—the newspapers never sang the praises of his exploits to the degree they did other French aces.

In combat, he is merciless and precise, preferring efficiency over flash. While he has a trusted wingman with him aboard *Valkyrie*, he sometimes patrols solo.

RENÉ FONCK

High Concept: *The Paragon*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *All Work, No Play; Sportsmanship Is for Sportsmen*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills

Athletics: Fair (+2)

Notice: Good (+3)

Physique: Average (+1)

Pilot: Great (+4)

Shoot: Good (+3)

Stealth: Fair (+2)

Swagger: Average (+1)

Will: Average (+1)

Choose 1 additional skill
at +2.

Choose 1 additional skill
at +1.

Stunts

Starting Refresh: 5

Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts
may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress

Mental

Physical

Total Victories:

Total Fame:

Eddie Rickenbacker

Flag: USA

Nationality: USA

Squadron: Hat-In-The-Ring Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: SPAD S.XIII

Eddie Rickenbacker was a well-known race driver in the USA prior to the Great War; he signed up with the Army hoping to pilot a fighter. A skilled mechanic, they initially thought him more valuable maintaining airplanes than flying them, but he soon persuaded the Army to let him fly and racked up 26 victories, the most for any American pilot. In combat, he is utterly fearless and doesn't hesitate to attack formations far larger than his own. He relies on his race driver's reflexes to keep him away from enemy guns.

Rickenbacker was already well known to the US public prior to the war, and his exploits in the French sky only added to that. He hopes that this mission will cement his legend.

EDDIE RICKENBACKER

High Concept: *The Celebrity*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Famous in America; Racer's Reflexes*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills

Athletics: Fair (+2)	Machinery: Good (+3)
Physique: Average (+1)	Pilot: Great (+4)
Rapport: Average (+1)	Shoot: Fair (+2)
Swagger: Good (+3)	Will: Average (+1)

Choose 1 additional skill at +2. Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts

Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Philip Fullard

Flag: Great Britain

Nationality: English

Squadron: No. 1 Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Sopwith Camel

With a knack for getting in close with enemy aircraft and gunning them down at point blank range, Philip Fullard scored 40 aerial victories in the Great War, the most of any Englishman. He's a highly effective leader, bringing a quiet confidence that rubs off on his comrades.

He's also an outstanding athlete, an avid player of both soccer and field hockey. In fact, it was in a soccer match just after the Armistice that he broke a bone in his leg, an injury that still hasn't fully healed. Despite the doctors' warnings against aggravating the injury, he takes to the sky anyway.

PHILIP FULLARD

High Concept: *The Quiet One*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Bum Leg; Point Blank Range*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Athletics: Fair (+2)	Notice: Average (+1)
	Physique: Fair (+2)	Pilot: Good (+3)
	Rapport: Good (+3)	Shoot: Great (+4)
	Swagger: Average (+1)	Will: Average (+1)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Billy Bishop

Flag: Great Britain

Nationality: Canadian

Squadron: No. 85 Squadron “The Flying Foxes”

Suggested Aircraft: S. E. 5a

Billy Bishop is credited with 72 aerial victories in the Great War, almost as many as René Fonck; there are many more unconfirmed. He’s a highly aggressive pilot, regularly leading his squadron from the front against superior forces. His large total of victories led to wide notoriety across Europe and North America, where the Army put him to work recruiting.

Bishop has excellent eyesight, a gift that helped him when he flew recon missions prior to being assigned to a fighter squadron. He’s well known as a crack shot.

BILLY BISHOP

High Concept: *The Hawkeye*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I’m the Best*

Other Aspects: *Never Tell Me the Odds; Recon Specialist*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Deceive: Average (+1)	Fight: Average (+1)
	Notice: Good (+3)	Physique: Average (+1)
	Pilot: Good (+3)	Shoot: Great (+4)
	Swagger: Fair (+2)	Will: Fair (+2)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Marie Marvingt

Flag: France

Nationality: France

Squadron: Escadrille R.26

Suggested Aircraft: SPAD S.XIII

Marvingt was already widely known as an elite athlete and experienced pilot when war broke out in 1914, but she still managed to serve in the front-line infantry with both the French and Italian armies by disguising herself as a man—then her gender was discovered and she was sent home. While not slogging it out in the mud, she flew bombing missions for the French 26th squadron, making her one of the most combat-experienced women in the world by 1919. Her physical toughness and gunnery skills are legendary, and Gen. Salmond specifically sought her out for the *Valkyrie* mission.

MARIE MARVINGT

High Concept: *The Tough One*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Legendary Gunner; Oui, I Can Do That*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Athletics: Fair (+2)	Physique: Good (+3)
	Pilot: Good (+3)	Rapport: Fair (+2)
	Shoot: Great (+4)	Swagger: Average (+1)
	Stealth: Average (+1)	Will: Average (+1)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: _____ **Total Fame:** _____

Eugene Bullard

Flag: France

Nationality: USA

Squadron: Lafayette Flying Corps

Suggested Aircraft: Nieuport 28

An African-American born in Georgia, USA, Eugene Bullard left the States for Europe to get away from rampant racial discrimination. He held odd jobs across Britain, including spending time as a boxer, until he settled in Paris; when war broke out he joined the Foreign Legion. He transferred to the Lafayette Flying Corps and quickly earned the nickname Black Swallow of Death from the other fliers, a nickname he embraced.

Bullard returned to Paris when the war ended, intending to teach flying. But when he heard about *Valkyrie's* mission, he gathered some of his old comrades and signed on for one more chance at glory.

EUGENE BULLARD

High Concept: *The Black Swallow of Death*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Decorated Foreign Legion Veteran; Two-Fisted Flier*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Empathy: Average (+1)	Fight: Good (+3)
	Physique: Average (+1)	Pilot: Good (+3)
	Rapport: Fair (+2)	Shoot: Great (+4)
	Swagger: Fair (+2)	Will: Average (+1)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Heinrich Kroll

Flag: Germany

Nationality: Germany

Squadron: Versailles Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Pfalz D.III

With 33 victories to his credit, Heinrich Kroll was an experienced and successful ace for Germany during the Great War. He was particularly adept at fighting single opponents; he took down France's second ranking ace in one of his earliest flights. He had a habit of getting his plane shot out from under him; he was shot down several times, but was never seriously injured.

Kroll had to beg, plead, threaten, and persuade Salmond to let him and his squadron participate in this mission. Allied High Command doesn't fully trust the Germans associated with the mission, but Kroll impressed them with his demeanor as an apolitical professional soldier, and Dr. Eckener demanded he be allowed to fly. High Command agreed, but on the condition that the German pilots not be allowed to fly Fokker D.VII.

HEINRICH KROLL

High Concept: *The Consummate Professional*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Shoot Me Down, I'll Fly Again; I'll Show Them German Steel*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills

Athletics: Average (+1)

Deceive: Average (+1)

Physique: Fair (+2)

Pilot: Great (+4)

Rapport: Good (+3)

Shoot: Fair (+2)

Swagger: Average (+1)

Will: Good (+3)

Choose 1 additional skill at +2.

Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts

Starting Refresh: 5

Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh. Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.

Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress

Mental

Physical

Total Victories:

Total Fame:

Bessie Coleman

Flag: USA

Nationality: USA

Squadron: Barnstormer Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Curtiss JN-4 “Jenny”

Bessie Coleman was the first African-American and the first woman to gain an international pilot’s license. Stopping at nothing to gain the necessary training to do the kind of flying she wanted to do, she sought teachers in France who didn’t see her race as a barrier to flying. She gained considerable notoriety flying aerobatics shows around the US and Canada in her Curtiss JN-4.

When assembling *Valkyrie’s* crew, Salmond specifically sought out barnstormer pilots like Coleman for their fearlessness and willingness to take on unconventional risks. “Queen Bess” is certainly a fearless pilot—and she’d already worked out how to arm her JN-4 with surplus guns and armor plate. She jumped at the chance to join the mission.

BESSIE COLEMAN

High Concept: *Queen Bess*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I’m the Best*

Other Aspects: *Fierce Pride; No Stunt I Haven’t Done*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Machinery: Average (+1)	Notice: Average (+1)
	Physique: Average (+1)	Pilot: Great (+4)
	Rapport: Fair (+2)	Shoot: Good (+3)
	Swagger: Fair (+2)	Will: Good (+3)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories:

Total Fame:

Amelia Earhart

Flag: USA

Nationality: USA

Squadron: The Coal Canaries

Suggested Aircraft: Sopwith Camel

Amelia Earhart is a gifted pilot. Her family's vast fortune helped her overcome the barriers present for women fliers in the US, and she was trained by many of the best. Her specialty is endurance flying, where she uses her excellent athletic ability to stay alert and sharp at the controls in spite of her chronic sinusitis that flares up at altitude.

The versatility of her skills means she can complete any mission she takes on, in any aircraft she's able to get hold of. It was this specific skill set Gen. Salmond was seeking when Earhart and her crew showed up in Germany demanding a piece of the action. Salmond wasn't about to turn down one of the most promising up-and-coming pilots in the world.

AMELIA EARHART

High Concept: *The Natural*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *The Papers Love Me; No Mission Too Long*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Athletics: Average (+1)	Machinery: Average (+1)
	Physique: Good (+3)	Pilot: Great (+4)
	Rapport: Fair (+2)	Shoot: Fair (+2)
	Swagger: Good (+3)	Will: Average (+1)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Katherine Stinson

Flag: USA

Nationality: USA

Squadron: The Stinson Sisters

Suggested Aircraft: Curtiss Stinson Special

Stinson—known as “The Flying Schoolgirl” due to her youthful appearance—has been flying stunt exhibitions since 1912. Together with her sister Marjorie, she hit the stunt show circuit around North America in Curtiss JN-4s modified to their specifications, which Curtiss called the Stinson Special. Together they became known for their spectacular displays of stunt work and aerobatics.

The Stinsons were already in Europe doing stunt shows when the *Valkyrie* expedition began. Gen. Salmond recruited Katherine specifically for her experience as a stunt pilot. She wasn’t about to say no to that.

KATHERINE STINSON

High Concept: *The Stunt Pilot*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I’m the Best*

Other Aspects: *My Sister Marjorie; Loop the Loop*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Athletics: Fair (+2)	Machinery: Average (+1)
	Physique: Average (+1)	Pilot: Great (+4)
	Rapport: Good (+3)	Shoot: Good (+3)
	Swagger: Fair (+2)	Will: Average (+1)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Alexander Kazakov

Flag: Imperial Russia

Nationality: Russian

Squadron: Romanov Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Fokker D.VII

Alexander Kazakov was already an experienced flier when war broke out in 1914. He fought over the endless skies of Poland, Russia, and the Ukraine (achieving 32 victories against German and Austrian forces), and became known for unconventional tactics; several times he brought down enemy aircraft by simply ramming them.

After the Russian Revolution of 1917, he joined the anti-Bolshevik White Army forces operating out of Arkhangelsk. The White Army has assigned him to this mission in hopes of cementing goodwill with the victorious Western powers and securing their aid; he is skeptical, but willing to give it one last chance. He and his squadron may have a line on some captured German Fokker D.VII fighters...

ALEXANDER KAZAKOV

High Concept: *The Old Man*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Last Chance for Glory; Ramming Speed*
Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Deceive: Fair (+2)	Empathy: Average (+1)
	Notice: Average (+1)	Physique: Average (+1)
	Pilot: Good (+3)	Shoot: Great (+4)
	Swagger: Good (+3)	Will: Fair (+2)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories: **Total Fame:**

Kwon Ki-ok

Flag: Free Korea

Nationality: Korea

Squadron: Korean Patriotic Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Pfalz D.III

A Korean patriot seeking ways to free her country from Imperial Japanese occupation, Kwon (Kwon is her surname) was inspired to learn to fly after seeing a traveling air exhibition in 1917 in her hometown of Pyongyang. Seeing aviation as a possible tool for the infant Korean resistance movement, she traveled to Europe as soon as the war ended to seek instruction from one of the many newly minted fighter aces.

She sees the *Valkyrie* campaign as her chance not only to build her own skills in the air, but to show the rest of the world that Korea deserves its independence, hopefully putting pressure on Imperial Japan. She may not have much experience as a pilot, but her natural talent and her determination to capture the world's attention convinced General Salmond to accept her on the mission.

KWON KI-OK

High Concept: *The Idealistic One*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *Inexperienced But Talented; The World Will See Korean Pride*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills	Athletics: Average (+1)	Notice: Average (+1)
	Physique: Average (+1)	Pilot: Great (+4)
	Shoot: Good (+3)	Stealth: Fair (+2)
	Swagger: Fair (+2)	Will: Good (+3)
	Choose 1 additional skill at +2.	Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts Starting Refresh: 5
Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh.
Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.
Adjust refresh accordingly.

Stress Mental Physical

Total Victories:

Total Fame:

Eugenia Shakhovskaya

Flag: Soviet Russia

Nationality: Russia

Squadron: November Revolutionary Squadron

Suggested Aircraft: Nieuport 17

Shakhovskaya was born to a wealthy family. Her privileged upbringing and excellent education opened doors; she learned to fly in Germany, and when war broke out in 1914 she petitioned the Czar to join the Imperial Air Force, becoming the world's first female military pilot. Her time in Germany provided an opening to her family's enemies; she was falsely accused of being a German spy and sentenced to death. She was freed during the 1917 revolution and immediately joined the Bolsheviks, looking to issue some payback to the people who nearly got her executed and to serve the movement that saved her.

The infant Communist government assigned her to lead the Soviet contingent on the *Valkyrie* expedition; given that the Americans, British, and French have all contributed troops to expeditionary forces fighting against her own government, the situation aboard *Valkyrie* is a bit tense.

EUGENIA SHAKHOVSKAYA

High Concept: *The Revolutionary*

Trouble: *I Will Prove I'm the Best*

Other Aspects: *My Friends Deserve My Loyalty, My Enemies Deserve My Vengeance; Counterrevolutionaries, Every One of Them*

Compose one additional aspect during play.

Skills

Deceive: Fair (+2)

Empathy: Fair (+2)

Notice: Average (+1)

Physique: Average (+1)

Pilot: Great (+4)

Shoot: Good (+3)

Swagger: Average (+1)

Will: Good (+3)

Choose 1 additional skill at +2.

Choose 1 additional skill at +1.

Stunts

Starting Refresh: 5

Choose an aircraft, which might reduce your refresh. Choose up to three stunts for free; additional stunts may be chosen by reducing refresh.

Adjust refresh accordingly.

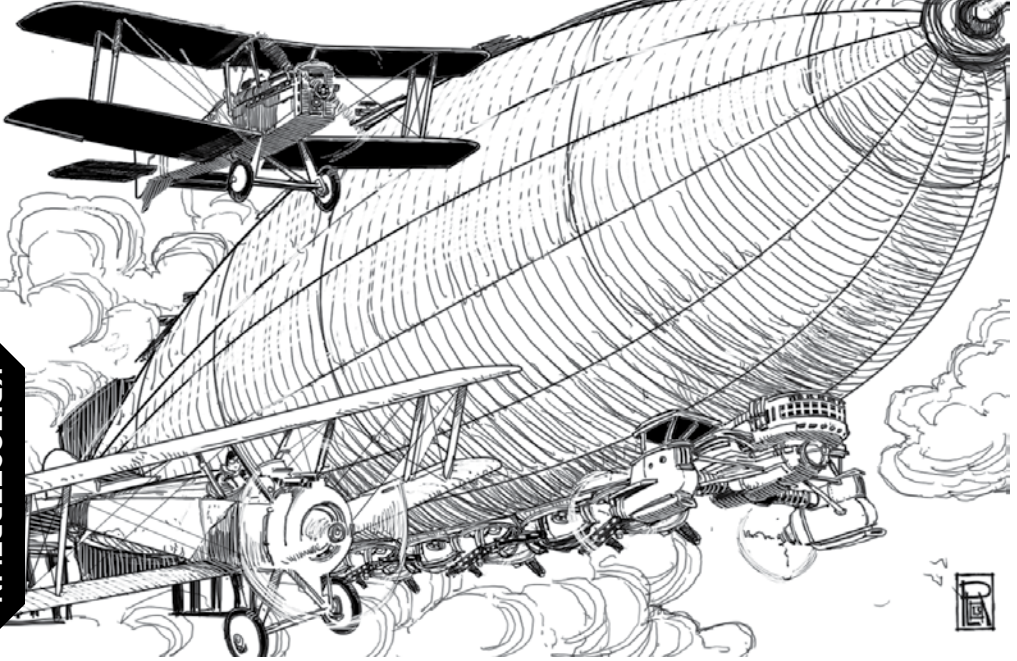
Stress

Mental

Physical

Total Victories:

Total Fame:



Kriegszeppelin Valkyrie

KRIEGSZEPELIN VALKYRIE

High Concept: *Gigantic Aircraft Carrying Zeppelin*

Trouble: *Limited Consumables*

Other Aspects: *Brainchild of Hugo Eckener; Topside Blind Spot*

Skills Use these skills to represent *Valkyrie* when she's directly involved in combat.

Athletics: Mediocre (+0) Machinery: Good (+3)

Physique: Fantastic (+6) Shoot: Great (+4)

Stunts **Bomber (Physique):** Use Physique rather than Shoot to attack ground targets.

Defensive Guns (Shoot): Use Shoot to defend against attacks made by fixed-wing aircraft shooting at you.

Crewed Platform (Will): When defending against attempts to gain advantage focused on deception or confusion, use General Salmond's stats (or whoever is in command).

Stress Mental Defense: For mental attacks, use Salmond's defenses and stress (page 153).

Physical , +1 minor consequence



BURN SHIFT

TALES FROM THE WOUNDED EARTH

“This night a great light like the midday sun has appeared in the northwest, accompanied by a powerful wind which swept the sky clear of clouds. It hangs there still, whilst the True Sun burns redly, shrouded by a ragged brown haze. None know what this portends, but all day great flocks of birds have been crossing the sky, fleeing the direction of this False Sun, as though autumn were already upon us.”

- **The Holy Oak Chronicles, HR90/119**

INTRODUCTION

The Age of Space is gone, blasted to atoms. Now the sky flickers with colored lightning, and the children of posthumanity, twisted by strange energies from their geneered perfection, struggle to survive in the ruins of a once-glorious civilization. And where some perish in this harsh, unforgiving world, others thrive with the uncanny powers of the **burn shift**.

Burn Shift provides a unique twist on the post-apocalyptic genre. Where most post-apocalyptic RPGs end, *Burn Shift* begins: rather than wallow in devastation, you push through, rebuilding communities, going beyond... Whatever the future will be, it won't be like the past. In *Burn Shift*, your characters get to tell its story.

The Wounded Earth

This supplement describes a small corner of the **Wounded Earth** known as the **Pure Hills**, a highland region with scattered tribes of herders, hunters, and farmers—humans and mutants alike. They are protected by peaceful Holy Oak and warlike Ironfort, united through the trade of the secretive Wheeler Cult, and threatened by the Slavelords to the west in the Valley of Flies. All around them lie ruins and hostile mutations left by the **Burn**, which destroyed civilization two centuries ago.

Three generations past, the people of the Pure Hills were united against the new threat of the Slavelords, led by the hero Irwin Commando from his base at Holy Oak Watch. For a time, he was successful; but after his death, the Slavelords returned, and soon the Pure Hills suffered under an onerous burden of tribute. Holy Oak struggled to keep the twin flames of knowledge and freedom alight under Slavelord domination.

A decade ago, a new hero named Gorrdan Ironfist appeared, carving himself a domain around an Ancient war-machine north of the Thirty-Glow Forests. He refused to pay the Slavelords tribute, and his resistance has made people whisper of Irwin Commando reborn.

Govnor Gorrdan Ironfist is spreading his influence with his militaristic Wardens, who are rallying the various tribes and villages of the Pure Hills to his banner. The Watchers of Holy Oak urge caution and negotiation with the Valley of Flies, but signs of war are everywhere. There are even rumors that Harad Slaughter, Lord of War and Death, has left his camp beyond the Slave River and is poised to mete terrible punishment on the Pure Hills, to show the price of resistance once and for all.

Wounded Earth Timeline

Holy Oak Reckoning	Slavelands Reckoning	Event
-6 – 0	-91 – -85	The Lost Years
1	-85	The Burn
1 – 30	-85 – -55	The Long Dying
1 – 13	-85 – -72	The Great Migrations
13 – 40	-72 – -45	Fight for Survival
41 – 46	-44 – -39	The Marcher Wars – Two Rivers vs. Rezervoy
47 – 65	-38 – -20	Devastation of the Rad Raiders
75	-10	Two Rivers shakes off the thralldom of the Rad Raiders
85	0	Rise of the Slavelands and wars of expansion.
90	5	The Night of Fire and the Great Blight – creation of the Plague Coast and the Domain of Second Strike
c.110	c.25	Swarm Wars of Lord Raver I in the Black River valley
108 – 113	23 – 28	Slaver Wars between the Slavelords and the Pure Hills
110	25	Battle of Magnet Hill: Irwin Commando's greatest victory over the Slavelords.
113	28	Irwin Commando dies in battle against the Slavelords. The Pure Hills pay the Slavelands Tribute.
163	78	Rafik Biter , an intelligent canid, is born
170	85	Gorrdan Ironfist assumes the title of Govnor, and sets himself up in a stronghold built around an Ancient war-machine
180	95	Rafik Biter leads the canids against Truck Stop
181	96	Truck Stop appeals to Gorrdan Ironfist for support, and is taken under the protection of Ironfort.
182	97	Truck Stop , with Ironfort help, fends off the canids of Rafik Biter.
183	98	Jeremiah Gunn leads a warband against Rafik Biter's stronghold but is repulsed. There are sporadic raids between the canids and the Pure Hills.
184	99	The Present Day – Gorrdan Ironfist refuses to pay the Slavelands Tribute.

THE SECOND STRIKE RECKONING

Rumors from the Domain of Second Strike say the Mech use a calendar far older than that of Holy Oak. The Watchers want to know more about this “Second Strike Reckoning,” believing they may be closer to the return of the God Nailed High prophesied by the *Shine* manuscript than anyone thinks.

CREATING YOUR *BURN SHIFT* GAME

This supplement provides background to set up your post-apocalyptic game: histories, locations, NPCs, creatures, communities, equipment, and mysteries. Before play, sit down and decide your *Burn Shift* game’s two Big Issues (*Fate Core* page 22) by considering what **tones** and **themes** you want.

Themes

Burn Shift provides many hooks to tie your characters, play style, and goals to the setting. What stories do you want to tell? What do you want to achieve? Do you want to find out what happened to the world? Rebuild its shattered peoples into something better? Or just become the biggest mutant bad-asses around?

Have that discussion right now, before you create your characters and start play. You don’t need to know all the setting’s details in advance (it might be better if you don’t) but that doesn’t mean you can’t express a preference for the kind of game you’d like to play. Once you’ve decided on your preferred themes, work with the GM to flesh out your game’s issues into game aspects which will carry you through your first adventures. Here are some ideas.

The Fight for Freedom!

Tribesfolk are being displaced, and there are rumors of Rad Raiders in the highlands above the Valley of Flies. Gorrdan Ironfist’s refusal to pay the Slavelands Tribute has everyone on edge; when will Dengiz Han arrive to punish this defiance?

The Rise of the Machines

Second Strike is on the move; machines across the Pure Hills are observing secretly, conducting unfathomable business. Mutants displaced from the Plague Coast talk about new constructions built by machines in the west—and growing closer!

The Rise of the Animals

Twenty years ago no one had heard of animals that could talk; now they’re everywhere. The canid Rafik Biter has a stronghold in the Pure Hills, and mutated animals from the Plague Coast are spreading east. People fear and despise them, but they seem unstoppable.

The Seeds of War

Conflict is everywhere; even in the Pure Hills, where Holy Oak Watch tries to keep the peace while Gorrdan Ironfist forges the tribes into a confederation to resist the Savelords. What will the New Animal Army and Second Strike do when the fighting begins?

The Shine Prophecy

People once went to the stars: the Shine Prophecy says they will again—and the God Nailed High will decide who is worthy. But maybe no one is? Is the God Nailed High good or evil? And what, or *who*, is *Shine*?

Posthumanity

Humankind, changed even before the Burn, has diverged into new species; and with the rise of the machines and mutated animals, human DNA is no longer a requirement! What kind of society will come out of this melting pot?

Before the Burn

The Ancient world fell—the big question is why. Was there a war? Societal collapse? Or perhaps a disaster, an invasion from outside? There are legends and myths from Before the Burn; perhaps you'll find the truth.

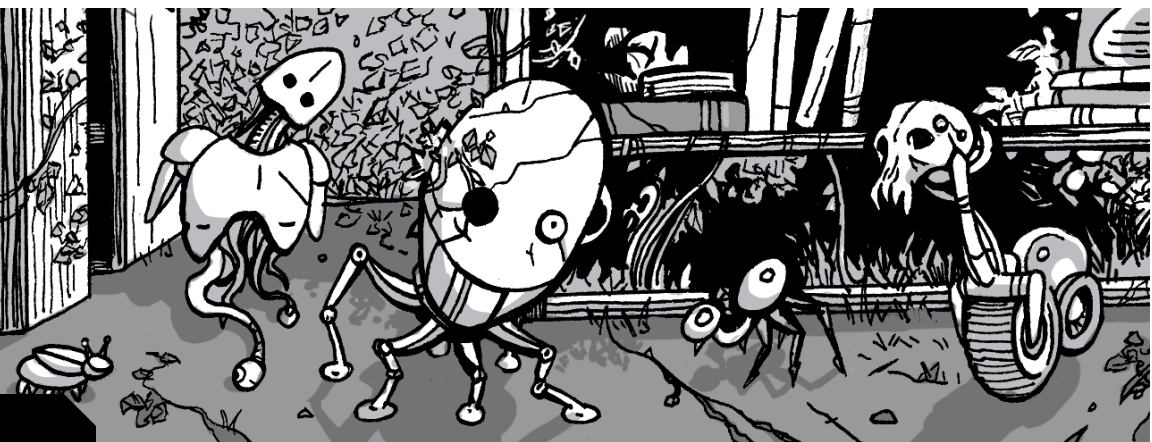
Rebuilding

Ancient ruins are everywhere, far greater and better than anything today. Can you salvage their lost glories, and rebuild the Ancients' civilization? And can you stop it from falling again?

Defining the Future

The world has changed completely—it's now about building a future civilization from the ashes of the past. What form will it take? Who will rule? And who will be the enemy?





Tone

Once you've decided on your game's theme, think about its **tone**. There are many different ways to play post-apocalyptic games.

- **Gritty:** you're scabbling for food, fighting off disease and wild animals to survive.
- **Gonzo:** you're interacting with a strange and much-changed world, in a game of pulpy mayhem and wild mutations!
- **Heroic:** you're fighting for freedom against oppressive foes.
- **Investigative:** you're exploring and rediscovering a lost civilization—to work out what brought it to its knees.
- **Interpersonal:** you're creating networks of consensus, defeating tyrants, and exploring personality.
- **Building:** you're building a new empire, rebuilding a lost civilization, or just forging your community's place in a savage wilderness.

"When fifty centuries have passed, I shall come among you again, and anoint those who will descend into the depths of the earth, and those who will return to the stars."

— from *Shine*, the Prophecy of the God Nailed High

CHARACTERS

In *Burn Shift*, your character is a **survivor**, eking out a precarious existence in the ruins of a once-great post-human civilization. In your grandfather's grandfather's time, the world almost destroyed itself; seas boiled, continents buckled, and humankind was thrown into savagery.

But you're not alone. Maybe you belong to a tribe, or a secret alliance; maybe you want to do more than simply survive.

Character Concepts

Think about your character's **high concept**. Civilization has entered a dark age, awash with burning radiation and weird mutations. What are you? What do you do? Here are a few ideas.

Peaceful Healer

The world is wounded, and you can fix it. You have a good Lore skill, and healing stunts. You may have strange artifacts, concoctions, or burn shifts. Maybe you're a Watcher from Holy Oak.

Mysterious Hunter

People need to eat, and the world teems with food. Or maybe you're fighting predators. You have good Stealth and Shoot skills; you may be part of a community, or a loner without allegiance.

Barbarian Raider

Civilization fell, and there's no point rebuilding except to be stronger than everyone else. Everything's there for the taking—you have good Fight and Physique, and you fight harder and dirtier than everyone else. The Rad Raiders arrive every year in an orgy of destruction—maybe it's time to raid them back!

Cunning Scavenger

Ancient ruins are everywhere, and you can get in and out without being killed. People pay for the relics you discover—unless you use them yourself. You have good Lore and Resources skills.

Obsessive Techno

The Ancients made the world a paradise before they destroyed themselves—the evidence lies all around. If only you can work out how they did it, maybe you can restore that paradise. You have good Lore and Crafts, and maybe a minor artifact or two.

Warrior Defender

It's a violent world, and chaos is only a lost battle away. You have good Fight and Shoot, and train hard so you don't lose those battles—or those you protect. With the Rad Raiders, Slavelords, and now the New Animal Army, there's always someone to fight.

Genotypes

Are you still human? Were you ever? Even before the Burn, people had been transformed by technology; now, the inhabitants of the Wounded Earth have been reshaped by two centuries of mutation. Many are no longer human; some are even machines. Even stranger, in recent years, mutated animals have arisen who can think...

This is your **genotype**, and it gives you certain abilities. It becomes part of your aspects, perhaps even your high concept: *ferocious mutant warrior*, *peaceful mutated wolf healer*, and so on. Choose one genotype.

Human

Before the Burn, human beings were physically and mentally enhanced, with extended lifespans, improved health, and sharpened senses. The humans of *Burn Shift* are their descendants—or, at least, those who resisted the Burn's twisting radiations.

Extras: You don't start with any **burn shifts** (page 179), although you may develop them later. Use your extras budget (page 179) for **gear**, **enhancements**, or your **community**—humans are great community builders.

Genotype Aspect:

Invoke: To resist burn shifts; have DNA-keyed Ancient artifacts recognize you as human, making them easier to figure out (page 206); to blend in to human and sometimes mutant communities.

Compel: To have difficulty developing new burn shifts (page 179); be ostracized from non-human communities.

Mutant

Mutants were once human; some may even be descendants of divergent transhumans from before the Burn. Others manifest startling new abilities through the power of the burn shift.

Extras: Use your extras budget to acquire burn shifts (page 179). You may take a community as an extra, but your involvement is typically limited.

Flaws: You must take at least one **flaw** (page 184).

Genotype Aspect:

Invoke: To resist radiation damage; to achieve startling results with otherwise human capabilities.

Compel: To be unable to pass for human before Mechs and DNA-keyed artifacts; to develop sudden physical or mental problems.

Mutated Animal

Unintelligent mutated animals appeared soon after the Burn. However, in recent years, mutated animals have appeared with human-like intelligence, and humans and mutants regard them as a threat.

Extras: You **must** take a genotype aspect indicating your human intelligence and animal heritage.

Flaws: You must take at least one **flaw** (page 184).

Genotype Aspect:

Invoke: To be accepted among mutated animals; to draw on your animal nature to accomplish a task.

Compel: To have difficulty using human equipment, including Ancient artifacts; to be ostracized in human and mutant communities, or even attacked; to have your animal nature assert itself at awkward moments.

The Mech

Robots and AI installations were ubiquitous before the Burn, and many survived the Long Dying. Most now swear allegiance to Second Strike (page 234) and are enemies of the Pure Hills. Many Mech are humanoid, but others have more exotic forms.

Extras: You may select burn shift abilities, but these represent mechanical capabilities (weapons, tools, etc) instead of mutations.

Flaws: You must take at least one **flaw** (page 184).

Genotype Aspect:

Invoke: To ignore mental trauma; be physically robust; tolerate hazardous environments; to interface with Ancient tech; to remember things before the Burn.

Compel: To have difficulty understanding organic beings; be too literal-minded or obviously inhuman; to malfunction or encounter programming bugs.

CAN I CHANGE MY GENOTYPE?

You can always redefine your aspects, even your high concept, during play (see *Fate Core* Page 32). If it's appropriate for you to change your genotype, go right ahead! A human could be uploaded to a computer; a mutant could become fully human; an animal could become mixed with another species. Burn shifts and technology are crazy like that!



Skill List

Burn Shift uses the same skill list as *Fate Core*, with the following changes:

Crafts

The Crafts skill is used to repair, use, and create advantages with artifacts.

Crafts Stunts

Techno: gain a +2 bonus when using an artifact to create an advantage.

Investigate

Investigate is used to **figure out artifacts** (page 206).

Lore

Lore is used to **figure out artifacts** (page 206).

Lore Stunts

Burn Lore: +2 bonus to Lore rolls relating to the Burn, including radiation, irradiated ruins, etc.

Mutant Lore: +2 bonus to Lore rolls relating to mutants and mutated animals. You can identify the mutations displayed by creatures you encounter.

Techno Lore: +2 Lore bonus when figuring out artifacts.

Ride

This skill mostly replaces Drive. Drive is now a skill that requires a **permission**; you must first have figured out an Ancient vehicle before you can take it.

Will

Will is used to **figure out artifacts** (page 206).

Your Extras Budget

Burn Shift characters have **burn shifts** (mutations), Ancient technology, enhancements, and ties to tribes, cults, and other communities. These are defined as **extras**; *Burn Shift* characters have an **extras budget**, additional aspects, stunts, and skill points which *must* be spent on extras. Each character receives the following, over and above the standard *Fate Core* starting character:

- +1 aspect
- +2 stunts (doesn't reduce refresh)
- +6 skill points

Characters may also use character creation points to buy extras.

Burn Shifts

Burn shifts are mutations—special abilities unleashed by the mutagenic Burn. They may be aspects, stunts, or skills, or a combination. This section provides example burn shifts: these aren't exhaustive, and you're encouraged to make up your own.

Where a burn shift has multiple components (ie an aspect **and** a stunt), you can acquire them gradually. You can first select a burn shift as either an aspect or stunt, then later add the other component to extend its powers.

Additional Limbs

Cost: 1 aspect, 1 stunt

Effects: You have additional legs or arms, giving increased speed and dexterity. Gain a +2 Athletics bonus when creating advantages, and invoke the aspect depending on the nature of your limbs (*Six Legs Better Than Two Legs*, *Dazzling Four-armed Swordplay*, etc).



Additional Organ

Cost: 1 aspect or stunt

Effects: You have a second (or third, etc) organ—a duplicate of one you already have. Choose from the following; you may select this burn shift multiple times.

- **Heart (stunt):** +2 Physique when calculating physical stress and consequences.
- **Stomach (aspect):** invoke an *I'll Eat Anything That Can't Outrun Me*-type aspect to eat unusual things (grass, raw meat, rocks); compel to rest while digesting.
- **Lung (stunt):** +2 bonus to Physique rolls when holding your breath, acting at altitude, resisting gas attacks.
- **Liver / Kidney (stunt):** +2 Physique bonus when resisting poisons and toxins.
- **Thyroid (stunt):** +2 radiation resistance, and take one additional Mild radiation consequence.

Body Size Change

Cost: 1 aspect, 1 stunt

Effects: Your body is larger or smaller than normal.

- **Smaller:** As a stunt, gain a +2 Stealth bonus.
 - **Invoke:** To be unobtrusive; present a smaller target; appear unthreatening; squeeze into small spaces; move stealthily or with agility.
 - **Compel:** To find equipment is too large; fail Provoke rolls; be underestimated or taken for a child; be socially disadvantaged or ignored; suffer increased effects from alcohol, poison, or wounds.
- **Larger:** As a stunt, gain a +2 Provoke bonus.
 - **Invoke:** To be highly visible; get a good viewpoint; appear dangerous or impressive; get the drop on someone; do massive damage with a smashing weapon.
 - **Compel:** To be unable to wear normal clothes or armor or use normal equipment; be unable to pass through a restricted space, or become trapped; be highly visible and unable to move stealthily; be clumsy.

Energy Projection

Cost: 1 aspect, 1 stunt

Effects: You can project energy (choose one of heat, light, radiation, electricity, gravity) from your mouth, eyes, hands, etc. As a stunt, gain a +2 Shoot bonus to these attacks.

Invoke: To destroy a structure of significant size, like a building, vehicle, or tree. Invoke on any Shoot roll that uses your energy projection ability, including to create an advantage (like a wall of energy to block a target's move).

Compel: To cause collateral damage to buildings and bystanders; be visible or detectable.

Enhanced Limbs

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Your limbs are stronger, more agile and dexterous. Select one enhancement below. You may take this burn shift multiple times.

- **Stronger Legs:** +2 Athletics bonus when running, climbing.
- **Stronger Arms:** Gain a Weapon:2 bonus on Fight attacks.
- **Dexterous Arms:** +2 bonus when creating an advantage with an appropriate skill (Burglary, Crafts, etc).

Heightened Health

Cost: 1 aspect

Effects: You have a boosted constitution; you've probably never been ill.

Invoke: To resist illness, damage, radiation, poisons.

Compel: Medical treatments (poison antidotes, disease treatments, artifacts like autodocs) may not work on you—you're too resistant!

Heightened Strength

Cost: 1 aspect, 2 stunts

Effects: You have obvious muscles or are wiry strong. As a stunt, gain a +2 bonus when creating advantages involving great strength, and on Fight attacks.

Invoke: To destroy things with great strength, lift heavy objects, intimidate people.

Compel: To be muscle bound and inflexible, stand out in a crowd, be unable to handle delicate things.

Hyper-Sense

Cost: 1 aspect, 1 stunt

Effects: One sense (sight, hearing, smell, touch, or taste) is preternaturally sensitive. As a stunt, gain a +2 bonus to overcome rolls made with Notice and Investigate using the sense. You may select this burn shift multiple times for different senses.

Invoke: To perceive beyond normal human capability; detect an ambush; see through deception; detect something at great range.

Compel: To incur damage when exposed to strong sensory stimulus (loud noise, bright light, etc, including sonic or laser weapons); to not pay much attention to other senses.

New Body Part

Cost: 1 aspect and / or 1 stunt

Effects: You've grown a new body part for your species. Select one:

- Horn (stunt): Gain a +2 bonus to Fight attacks.
- Prehensile Tail (aspect): Invoke a My Tail Has a Life of Its Own-type aspect to take an additional action or enhance an existing action.
- Shell (stunt): Gain Armor:2 against Physical stress damage.
- Solar Crest (aspect): As long as you're in sunlight, invoke to metabolize your own food, gain an energy boost, recover from wounds quickly. Compel the reverse in darkness.
- Stinger (stunt): Gain a +2 Fight bonus to create Poisoned-type advantages against a susceptible target (Mech aren't usually affected, for example). See "Poison" below.
- Tentacles (aspect, stunt): Invoke to immobilize targets, reach hard-to-get areas, make surprising and flexible movements. Compel to be noticeable, lash clumsily, have difficulty using equipment. As a stunt, gain a +2 bonus to create advantages using Physique or Fight.

POISON

Poison usually creates advantages (like *Poisoned*, *Gasping for Breath*, *Creeping Paralysis*), which can be invoked to oppose the victim's actions; the victim must make a Fair (+2) overcome roll using Physique (sometimes Will) to act. Characters skilled in treating poison who overcome a Fair (+2) passive opposition (using Healing Lore, etc) may remove the advantage before the scene ends.

New Movement

Cost: 3 stunts

Effects: Choose one new movement mode from **Flying**, **Swimming**, or **Burrowing**. You gain the following abilities:

- As long as you're using your new movement mode freely, you may ignore the usual ground-based obstacles.
- You can use Athletics to do all the actions usually associated with the Drive skill.
- You get an additional free zone of movement. For example, you can move to an attack someone up to two zones away.



New Organ

Cost: 1 aspect and / or 1 stunt

Effects: You've developed a completely new organ. Select one:

- **Acid Saliva:** Gain a Weapon:2 rating on Fight attacks with your bite.
- **Fire Spittle (stunt):** Gain a fiery spittle attack using Shoot, with a +2 bonus. If you succeed with style, create an advantage like *On Fire*.
- **Heat Absorption (stunt):** Make a Fight attack on the whole zone: all targets must defend with Athletics (or Physique, if there isn't room to run away), or take cold damage.
- **Gills (aspect):** Invoke when breathing underwater; compel if away from water for too long.
- **Poison Glands (stunt):** +2 with Fight or Shoot to create advantages like *Poisoned*. See "Poisons" above.
- **Radiation Emission (stunt):** Make a Fight attack on the entire zone: all targets must defend with Athletics or take radiation damage. This may cause burn shifts (page 179).

New Sense

Cost: 1 aspect and / or 1 stunt

Effects: You have developed a new sense, and may have new sensory organs.

- **Infravision (aspect):** Invoke to see heat sources and unshielded machinery. Compel to be blinded by bright light or an absence (or abundance) of heat.
- **Magnetic Field Detection (aspect):** Invoke to know direction, interfere with, or detect machines. Compel to become disoriented by magnetic fields.
- **Radar (stunt):** Make Notice and Investigate rolls at great range, and in darkness or overcast weather. You emit radio waves when doing this, and may have special organs like antennae.
- **Sonar (stunt):** Make Notice and Investigate rolls in complete darkness. You make noise when doing this.

Regeneration

Cost: 1 aspect

Effects: Invoke to succeed at recovery obstacles, or reduce the time to recover from a consequence by one step. When regenerating, compel to be forced to rest, even at times of great danger or stress (like during combat!).

Flaws

Flaws are negative aspects, representing genetic defects, bad mutations, or physical or mental limitations. They are similar to troubles, but do not count against the normal aspect limit. A character with burn shifts must select a flaw. **Any** character may also take a flaw (so mutants can have 2 flaws). A non-mutated human who takes a flaw **may** be compelled to not register on DNA-keying (page 206).

Feeble

Effects: You're physically weak and prone to fatigue. Lifting things and traveling is difficult. You avoid physical exertion.

Hemophilia

Effects: Your blood lacks clotting agents, making the slightest wound potentially deadly. You're reluctant to expose yourself to injury, and if wounded bleed copiously, making combat hazardous.

Increased Metabolism

Effects: Your body requires huge amounts of food; either you have an inefficient digestive system, or require vast quantities of energy. You must frequently stop to eat, or simply lie down and digest. You're constantly hungry, and may have a distended belly.

Narcolepsy

Effects: Some physical stimuli cause you to lose consciousness, usually under maximum stress—the heat of battle, or climbing a dizzying cliff.

No Sensory Nerve Endings

Effects: You have little or no sense of touch—great for not feeling pain, but lousy when you don't realize you're bleeding to death.

Periodic Insanity

Effects: Your mind is shattered by heredity or experience. Choose a madness which occasionally overwhelms you: obsessive-compulsive, psychopathic, homicidal, neurotic, catatonic, etc.

Rage

Effects: You're prone to fits of irrational anger, preventing a normal social life and leading to violence, ostracization, and worse.

Sensory Deficiency

Effects: One sense doesn't work properly: pick one. You may be hard of hearing, nearly blind, or have no sense of smell. When it counts, this causes considerable trouble.

Split Personality

Effects: You have one or more additional personalities which take over at inopportune moments, usually to your detriment. You have black-outs, and can't remember large chunks of your life.



Acquiring a New Burn Shift

Characters who incur a Severe consequence as a result of the Burn may acquire a new burn shift. The character must live with the Severe consequence for the rest of the session. At the beginning of the next, he may pay a fate point instead of making a recovery action, and redefine the Severe consequence as a **burn shift consequence**. This restates the original consequence to indicate the capabilities of the burn shift it will become.

For example, a character incurs a Severe consequence **Agonizing Rad Burns**. His player decides to develop an “Electricity Projection” burn shift.

At the beginning of the next session, he pays a fate point and redefines the Severe consequence as **Skin Burning with Electricity**. This can be invoked and compelled for effects approaching the eventual burn shift in nature.

At the end of the scenario (the recovery time for a Severe consequence), the character pays the extra cost for the new “Electricity Projection” burn shift, writes it on his character sheet, and removes the consequence.

Developing an Existing Burn Shift

Once a character has acquired a burn shift, he may use advancements to add skill levels, stunts, and aspects. A character could begin with an “Electricity Projection” burn shift as an aspect **Bolts of Electricity!**; then, later, he could add the “Energize!” stunt, giving a +2 bonus to create advantage actions, representing the character refining his power.

COMMUNITIES

Every character has a **community**—you must take one as an extra during character creation, at least as an aspect, stunt, or single extra skill. Your community may be your tribe, clan, or settlement, or another group or organization to which you owe allegiance.

Burn Shift communities use the scale rules, and have a **size** (page 191) from Tiny to Enormous; most communities are Small, Medium, or Large.

Communities can also be described as NPCs, have skills, stunts, and aspects, and take stress and consequences. Example communities are provided below.

Community Skills

Communities sometimes use skills in different ways.

Athletics

Athletics determines a community's **mobility**. Nomadic tribes have high Athletics; settled communities less so.

Contacts

Contacts determines ties to other communities. A high Contacts represents political alliances, trade ties, informers' networks, etc.

Crafts

Crafts represents the abilities of community crafters, useful when the community builds something, or a community member repairs a character's gear.

Deceive

Deceive represents the community's ability to bluff or dissemble, hide weapons, pretend to be something else. The secret base masquerading as an innocent farming settlement has a high Deceive.

Fight

Fight represents the community's ability to physically attack other communities. They must be in the same zone, so this usually requires one community to move into close proximity using Athletics.

Lore

Lore represents a community's knowledge; what it knows about the outside world, and its keepers of that knowledge.

Notice

Notice represents a community's alertness to attacks or other threats.

Physique

Physique measures a community's physical robustness; fortifications, or the health of its members. A community uses Physique to resist Fight attacks.



BURN SHIFT

Provoke

Provoke is the power of a community's reputation to push other communities around, including getting them to submit to authority, provide tribute, etc. Often communities with low Provoke have leaders with high personal Provoke and stunts like "Feared Leader" (page 228).

Rapport

Rapport indicates a community's diplomatic ability, and how well it gets on with its neighbors.

Resources

Resources measures a community's wealth and equipment. It's a particularly useful extras skill for characters.

Shoot

Shoot represents a community's ability to attack another community at a distance. This usually represents raiding parties, etc.

Stealth

Stealth indicates a community's ability to hide; nomadic tribes and secret alliances have high Stealth. It represents actual camouflage, rather than pretending to be something else (measured by Deceive).

Will

Will represents a community's morale or collective will, used when undertaking an arduous task, resisting Provoke, etc.

Community Actions

Communities may take actions like characters. They may attack one another, move from place to place, create advantages, and defend against Provoke or physical raids.

Communities have physical and mental stress, and sometimes consequences. They may be nameless NPCs, **Supporting NPCs**, or main NPCs. Example community statistics are given below.

Using a Community as an Extra

Every character in *Burn Shift* has a community as an extra. A community extra represents your character's ability to persuade his community to act on his behalf.

For example, a character using his community extra's Fight is actually asking his community's warriors to make an attack—usually on another community, although you might ask your tribal champion to fight a duel on your behalf. A character using his community extra's Rapport is using the diplomatic skills of his community's elders or leader. Using your community extra's Resources or Crafts represents you asking your community to provide or repair equipment.

Taking Stress and Consequences for your Community

When your community extra takes stress or consequences, you may take the damage instead. This represents you interposing yourself in a conflict and protecting your community in some way: perhaps you took responsibility for a failed embassy, or were injured in a raid.

Shared Communities

Frequently, a group of PCs in *Burn Shift* belong to the same tribe or village, creating a **shared community**. The skills, stunts, and aspects which a single character purchases for that community with his extras budget exist both on his character sheet, and on a notional "community sheet."

Shared communities have several other features (which continue on the following page):

- If you have an appropriate personal stunt (Feared Leader, Warlord, etc), you get a teamwork bonus from the extra's skill for your character skill, when used for a community action.
 - For example, you have Great (+4) Fight and the Warlord stunt, which lets you use your Fight skill against other communities (leading the militia, etc). You also have Average (+1) Fight as a community extra skill. This gives you a teamwork bonus when using your Warlord stunt, for a total Superb (+5) Fight skill when leading your community against other communities.

- If you **don't** have that skill as one of your extra's skills, you can get a teamwork bonus **only if** the character who **does** have it as an extra skill takes an action to give you a teamwork bonus. You must still have the stunt.
 - For example, if another player's character has the Average (+1) Fight skill as an extra skill for the community in the example above, you can get a teamwork bonus when using your Warlord stunt only if that PC takes an action in a community conflict to give it to you. If the PC is taking a different action, you receive no teamwork bonus and simply use your unmodified Great (+4) Fight skill to attack an enemy community.
- If two characters sharing an extra each contribute to the same skill, they can both take advantage of the full final skill level.
 - If, in the above example, both you and the other PC have Average (+1) Fight as an extra skill for the same community, this is written as Fair (+2) Fight on the community sheet. You still only get a +1 teamwork bonus when using your Warlord stunt, but the other PC may also make a community attack action using the total Fair (+2) Fight skill.

VYING FOR CONTROL

You may have an extra skill for a community which is lower than that community's total in that skill. For example, you may have an extra skill of Good (+3) Fight for a community which actually has Superb (+5) Fight when statted as an NPC. This is more likely if you take a large community as an extra, indicating that you're sharing that community with notional NPCs you might not know.

In this case, you don't have full control over your community's fighting forces. If you attack another community, you only do so with your Good (+3) Fight skill. It's even possible that the remaining 2 skill levels in Fight which you don't control may not agree with your action, and try to stop you!

This is a great opportunity for a challenge; the GM may declare you need to make an overcome roll to avoid the obstacle the remaining force is posing. This could be a Rapport roll (representing negotiation), Provoke, or even Fight—representing an internal conflict, mutiny, or even civil war! Internal politics within large communities are fraught with intrigue and factionalization.

More than One Community?

There's no restriction to the number of communities you can take as extras. You can belong to the community of Electric Falls **and** be a member of the Wheeler Cult. If you have conflicting aspects as a result—so much the better. That's the stuff great drama is made of!

Community Size

Every community has a **size**. Communities of the same size may interact (negotiate, fight, etc) without difficulty; larger and smaller community interactions use the *Fate Core* Scale rules, as follows.

- A smaller community gets a +1 defense bonus per point of size difference when interacting with a larger community.
- A larger community gets a +2 damage bonus per point of size difference when interacting with a smaller community.

Community size is determined by population. Additionally, a community of a given size has a maximum number of skill points before it increases to the next size.

Size	Maximum Skill Points	Example	Population
Tiny	6	Family, gang, war band	Tens
Small	19	Clan, village	Hundreds
Medium	34	Tribe, town	Thousands
Large	55	City	Tens of thousands
Huge	83	Nation	Hundreds of thousands
Enormous	84+	Empire	Millions

Nested Communities

Smaller communities can belong to larger ones; interactions are handled using the community size rules above. For example, the Watchers of Holy Oak, a Small community, is part of Holy Oak Watch, a Medium community.

Growing Your Community

Using advancements, you can add skill points and stunts to your community, and change its aspects, to represent it increasing in size and sophistication. You should also change its **high concept** whenever it increases (or decreases) in size.

Damage to Communities

Communities may shrink by being **taken out**, if that's the likely result of an attack or event (like war or plague). A community which is taken out becomes disorganized, disunited, and reduces its skill point total to half the maximum skill points of the size below.

For example, a Medium community of 2000 people with 24 skill points, with high concept **Fortified Stockade on the Clearwater River**, is taken out by the Rad Raiders. The dazed survivors find there are only a few hundred of them left, a **Small** community, with a skill point total of 10 (rounded up); the community has lost crafters, warriors, and much of its fortifications. It redefines its high concept as **Devastated Clearwater Village**.

Sample Communities

The Pure Hills mostly share a culture, but are still quite diverse in outlook, laws, and capability. Think of cultures like the Norse or the Geats; Arab, Scottish, or Ugandan clans; or some Native American tribal groups. They are all alike in culture and history, but vary widely among themselves. The following sample communities are found in the Pure Hills, but they are by no means the only ones. Use them as templates to create your own.

TAKING A SAMPLE COMMUNITY AS AN EXTRA

There are two ways for your character to take a *Burn Shift* sample community as an extra.

1. Start from Scratch

For maximum flexibility, ignore the existing stat block for the community your character has taken as an extra. Give him the community's name, and let him design it from scratch. This works well for smaller communities, where the PCs may be the only contributors to a community's character sheet.

2. Integrate the Two

For larger communities, combine your character's chosen extra skills with the community stat block. If your character wants a skill higher than the stat block, you can "override" the written skill; where a character selects an extra skill at a lower level than the stat block, this indicates your character is sharing his community with an NPC who may oppose his actions—see "Vying for Control."

Holy Oak Watch

Medium community

This settlement of 1000 people is home to the Watchers (page 198). It has a large library and store of Ancient artifacts, but few weapons; the Watchers give strangers little reason to attack. Of the three ancient domed observatories, only one is functioning. Governed by the Watchers' Council led by High Watcher Caithin Whitehair (page 227), Holy Oak is pacifistic and non-confrontational. Opposition is tolerated and debate encouraged, and the Constructor Heresy and the Second Chancers cause significant friction.

FATE WORLDS

HOLY OAK WATCH

Physical Stress: □□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 3 + 1 mild

Aspects: *Repository of Ancient Lore, Battleground of Debating Factions, Pacifistic, Ancient Observatories*

Skills: Superb (+5) Lore, Will; Great (+4) Rapport, Resources; Good (+3) Contacts, Crafts; Fair (+2) Deceive, Notice; Average (+1) Fight, Physique

Stunts: **Disarming Tolerance:** +2 defense bonus in mental conflicts when physical violence is not an option.
Far-Sighted: use watchtowers and observatories for a +2 Notice bonus when creating advantages.
Hospital: use Lore for recovery obstacles and on individual injuries.

Ironfort

Medium Community

Built 20 years ago by the young Gorrdan Ironfist as a base from which to become Govnor of the Pure Hills, Ironfort sits around an enormous Ancient war-machine, immobile but blistering with functioning weaponry. Newer buildings of stone, wood, and salvaged dустrock camouflage its outline. The Iron Fist, Govnor Gorrdan’s pro-human and pro-mutant warrior elite, is based here.

IRONFORT

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 3 + 1 mild

Aspects: *Ancient War-Machine Fortress, Regimented and Militarized, Ruled by the Govnor’s Iron Will, Blistering with Weapons*

Skills: Great (+4) Physique, Shoot; Good (+3) Crafts, Fight; Fair (+2) Notice, Resources; Average (+1) Lore, Will

Stunts: **Ancient War Machine:** weapon:2 rating in Shoot attacks, armor:2 rating against Fight and Shoot attacks.
Point Defense: use Shoot in defense actions against Fight and Shoot attacks.

The Mech

Medium Community

Before the Night of Fire, Rezervoy extended to Pult and the Rust Marshes, descendants of a military base which held out through the Long Dying. When the Savelords settled the Valley of Flies, they invaded Rezervoy and inadvertently activated an Ancient AI known as Second Strike, which detonated a mutation bomb and destroyed both sides. Most of Rezervoy became the Domain of Second Strike (page 234); the easternmost wastelands became the Plague Coast.

THE MECH

Physical Stress: □□

Mental Stress: □□□

Consequences: 3

Aspects: *Aggressively Expansionist, Machine Life, The Flesh is Weak, Second Strike Leads Us to Victory!*

Skills: Superb (+5) Shoot; Great (+4) Notice; Good (+3) Crafts, Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics, Physique; Average (+1) Deceive, Will

Stunts:
Ancient Weaponry: gain a Weapons:2 rating to Fight and Shoot attacks.
Mech Endurance: +2 bonus to strategic movement actions due to lack of need for rest and provisions.
Terrifying: +2 bonus to Provoke attacks against human communities.

The New Animal Army

Medium Community

General Rafik Biter entered the Plague Coast a year ago on his “Long March,” and discovered many newly-evolved sentient animals. He immediately began to raise his New Animal Army, usurping the equipment, organization, and even philosophy of the Rezervoy military regime which once existed there.

The New Animal Army wants an alliance with Second Strike. So far, the Mechs don’t recognize them as foes—but General Biter fears this may change. He’s gathering his forces at the Great Beast Military Reserve, planning to attack Trove and establish a “New Animal Empire.”

THE NEW ANIMAL ARMY

Physical Stress: **Mental Stress:**

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Expansionist Army of Mutated Animals, General Biter Will Lead Us to Victory!, My Enemy's Enemy is My Friend, Tomorrow Belongs to Us!*

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke; Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Resources

Stunts: **Instinctive Fear:** +2 Provoke bonus when attacking humans or mutants.

Old Mech

Medium Community

With 2000 slaves, 200 slavers, and 300 “support personnel,” Old Mech is the Slavelands’ capital, built on an Ancient mechanized farming facility using slave labor.

OLD MECH

Physical Stress: **Mental Stress:**

Consequences: 3

Aspects: *Capital of the Slavelands, Built on the Bones of Slaves, Ancient Mech Farm, Terrifying Reputation*

Skills: Superb (+5) Provoke; Great (+4) Deceive, Physique; Good (+3) Crafts, Fight; Fair (+2) Notice, Shoot; Average (+1) Lore, Rapport

Stunts: **Life is Cheap:** +2 defense bonus in physical attacks due to reckless use of slaves.
The Slavers Ride Out! +2 to Provoke attacks when the Slavers ride out.
Underground Tunnels: +2 bonus to creating advantages in physical and mental conflict when attacked in situ.

Rad Raiders

Large Community

The Rad Raiders are insane human “worshippers” of the Burn, horribly mutated. A moderate, radiation-resistant faction broke away a century ago to form the Slavelords.

Led by Harad Slaughter, the Rad Raiders ride mutated horses and plutonium dogs (page 212), and live to bring the world the cleansing fire of the Burn. There are thousands in the blasted wastes to the southwest.

RAD RAIDERS

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 3

Aspects: *Psychopathic Worshippers of the Burn, Force of Mindless Destruction, The Cleansing Fire of Harad Slaughter, Rad Hound Riders*

Skills: Superb (+5) Fight, Provoke; Great (+4) Athletics, Shoot; Good (+3) Physique, Will; Fair (+2) Deceive, Notice

Stunts: **Burn Worship:** use Will for mental recovery obstacles when exposed to radiation.

Highly Mobile: +2 bonus to movement actions when mounted.

Mutant Terror: +2 bonus to Provoke attacks.

The Slavelords

Large Community

A breakaway Rad Raider faction who rejected mutation and embraced xenophobic racial purity, the Slavelords aim to enslave the Pure Hills. Their population is mostly slaves, excluding mutated animals, whom they kill out of hand. Cruel and bloodthirsty, they favor blackened plate armor, studded leather, tattoos, scarification, and brutal spiked mauls. They’re ruled by Dengiz Han (page 228), known as “The Slaver.”



THE SLAVELORDS

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□

Consequences: 3

Aspects: *Evil Oppressors, The Destiny of Man is Purity!, Cruel Hatred, Dengiz Han Will Reign Supreme!*

Skills: Superb (+5) Fight, Provoke; Great (+4) Resources, Shoot; Good (+3) Lore, Physique; Fair (+2) Crafts, Will; Average (+1) Athletics, Notice

Stunts: The Power of Hate: +2 attack bonus against non-human foes.
 Oppressive Rule: +2 Provoke bonus to overcome actions.
 Rigid Hierarchy: +2 bonus to create tactical advantages as long as the chain of command is functioning.

Trove

Small Community

Trove is the easternmost settlement of the Plague Coast, site of a famous market. Its population of 150 are mostly mutated animals. The Wheeler Cult has a presence here, at the end of one of Wheeler Jack's caravan routes. Trove is threatened by the New Animal Army.

TROVE

Physical Stress: □□ **Mental Stress:** □□

Consequences: 1 mild

Aspects: *Scavenger Community, Famous Wheeler Cult Market, Mutants and Humans, General Paranoia*

Skills: Great (+4) Resources; Good (+3) Contacts; Fair (+2) Crafts; Average (+1) Lore

Stunts: **Mercantile League:** use Resources instead of Rapport for diplomatic actions.

The Watchers of Holy Oak

Small Community

The Watchers are collectors of knowledge, teachers and healers, academic pacifists dedicated to preserving Ancient lore and rescuing the world from its dark age. Led by Caithin Whitehair (page 227), they're based at Holy Oak Watch.

THE WATCHERS OF HOLY OAK

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Revered Council of Teachers and Healers, Centered in Holy Oak, Travel the Land, Caithin Whitehair is our Sage Guide*

Skills: Great (+4) Deceive; Good (+3) Lore, Rapport; Fair (+2) Contacts, Will; Average (+1) Athletics, Resources

Stunts: Peacemakers: use Lore for recovery obstacles.

BURN SHIFT



EQUIPMENT

Acquiring Equipment

There is little money in the Wounded Earth, and barter is vital. When creating a character, you automatically get whatever low-tech gear you need to use your skills and stunts; Shoot gives you a weapon, Crafts give you tools, and so on. This basic gear (including weapons like clubs, spears, and knives, and armor like hides, skins, and furs) *doesn't* provide a bonus—its use is subsumed within the skill.

There are several ways of acquiring more complex gear. First, for a bonus or similar special effect, you can buy equipment as an **extra**, either during character creation or play. Second, you can acquire equipment during play using Resources to create advantages. In either case, if you want you acquire **techno gear** (also known as **artifacts**), you must have a **permission** (*Fate Core* page 274). This usually entails finding an artifact during play and successfully figuring it out (see below).

Equipment as Aspects

To acquire non-techno gear to give you a mechanical advantage during play—equipment more sophisticated than simple clubs, hides, and shields—you can make a Resources roll to create an advantage. This gives you an **aspect** for the item in question; if you later want to convert it to an extra, you may spend points to do so. You'll probably come up with gear like this on the fly. In some cases, the GM may also allow you to acquire items of techno gear in this way.

Examples might include *Exploding Black Powder Grenade* (a Great (+4) Resources roll), *Giant Spiked War Maul* (Fair (+2) Resources), or *Armor of Salvaged Metal Plates* (Fair (+2) Resources).

Equipment as Extras

For mechanical effects more complex than an aspect, define an item as an **extra**, either by “fixing” an item acquired as an aspect or using your extras budget or advancements. Most such items are artifacts, which you need a **permission** to acquire—meaning at least a good narrative justification.

As these items are a little more involved than aspects, we've provided examples. The following items are just guidelines: you can acquire them at higher or lower cost, with correspondingly poorer or greater abilities. Maybe the item you found is broken or damaged—or an upgraded version!

Complexity refers to the difficulty of **figuring out** the item: see page 206.

Weapon Extras

Black Powder Pistol

Complexity: Fair (+2) (**Complex**)

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Provides a Weapon:2 rating on Shoot attacks, and a *Slow Loader* aspect.

Bomb

Complexity: Superb (+5) (**Complex, Hair-Trigger**)

Cost: 4 skill points, 1 stunt

Effects: Attacks with a +4 Fight bonus on the entire zone.

Concussion Grenade

Complexity: Great (+4) (**Complex, Hair-Trigger**)

Cost: 2 stunts

Effects: Attacks the entire zone; pay 1 fate point to force anyone injured to take an automatic consequence instead of stress damage.

AMMO AND GRENADES

Ammo isn't usually an issue in *Burn Shift*, unless it's a narrative element which adds interest and excitement to a scene—assume a weapon has the ammunition it needs. Instead, you can compel the weapon's user at key moments to run out of ammo, have the weapon jam, etc.

Some weapons (like grenades and missiles) are finite by definition. Work out with the GM roughly how many you have (five or ten is a good number); when you run out, you get the points of your extras budget back to spend on something else.

Disintegrator Pistol

Complexity: Good (+3) (**Simple**)

Cost: 2 stunts

Effects: +4 bonus to Shoot attacks.

Energy Weapon

Complexity: Superb (+5) (**Complex**)

Cost: 1 aspect, 1 stunt

Effects: Energy weapons include blasters and lasers; they work like the Energy Projection burn shift (page 181).

Hallucinogen

Complexity: Great (+4) (**Simple**)

Cost: 4 skill points

Effects: When delivered to a target, it attacks with a Great (+4) Provoke skill for the rest of the scene or until treated.

Howler Rifle

Complexity: Good (+3) (**Simple**)

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Any successful Shoot attack also creates an advantage such as *Blasted by Screeching Sound*, *Demoralized*, or *Disoriented*.

Kill Drone

Complexity: Great (+4) (**Complex**)

Cost: 1+ skill points

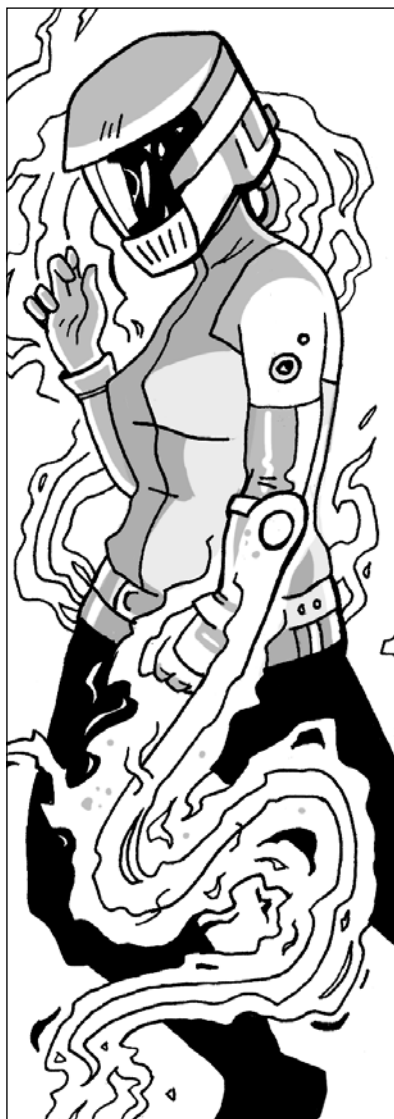
Effects: Gives you an additional Shoot attack up to a 2-zone range.

Micro-missile Launcher

Complexity: Great (+4) (**Complex, Limited Ammo**)

Cost: 2 stunts

Effects: Provides a +2 Shoot bonus to attacks on an entire zone, which must be within a 4-zone range. All targets must roll Athletics to avoid the attack.

Neural Phaser**Complexity:** Good (+3) (**Simple**)**Cost:** 1 stunt**Effects:** Does mental stress damage. For a fate point, you may force the target to take a consequence instead.**Neural Whip****Complexity:** Average (+1) (**Simple**)**Cost:** 1 aspect**Effects:****Invoke:** to cause excruciating wounds.**Compel:** to become tangled.**Poison****Complexity:** Mediocre (+0) (**Simple**)**Cost:** 1 stunt**Effects:** This is a poison paste, liquid, or powder, spread on a weapon. It gives a +2 Fight bonus to create *Poisoned*-type advantages against a susceptible target. (See “Poison,” page 182.)**Slave Field Projector****Complexity:** Great (+4) (**Complex**)**Cost:** 4 skill points, 1 stunt**Effects:** A pistol-like weapon providing a Great (+4) Shoot skill; it does mental stress damage and creates an *Entralled*-type advantage.**Slug Thrower****Complexity:** Fair (+2) (**Simple**)**Cost:** 1 stunt**Effects:** Provides a Weapon:2 rating to Shoot attacks.

Spiked War Maul

Complexity: n/a

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: This non-techno weapon gives a +2 bonus to Fight attacks.

Stun Baton

Complexity: Fair (+2) (**Simple**)

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: +2 Fight bonus when creating an advantage like *Stunned*. Can also be used for normal Fight attacks causing physical stress.

Armor Extras

Assault Armor

Complexity: Good (+3) (**Complex**)

Cost: 6 skill points, 2 stunts

Effects: This enclosed suit of techno armor incorporates combat routines providing a Good (+4) Fight skill and a Fair (+2) Athletics skill, and Weapon:2 and Armor:2 ratings.

Battle Armor

Complexity: n/a

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Non-techno armor like bone, lamellar, splinted or mail armor, providing a +2 Athletics bonus when defending against Fight and Shoot attacks.

Composite Armor

Complexity: Fair (+2) (**Complex**)

Cost: 2 skill points, 2 stunts

Effects: A superior form of powered armor, providing a Fair (+2) Athletics skill, a +2 Fight attack bonus, and an Armor:2 rating.

Energy Shield

Complexity: Fair (+2) (**Complex**)

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Provides an Armor:2 rating against Shoot attacks.

Force Field

Complexity: Great (+4) (**Complex**)

Cost: 2 skill points, 1 stunt

Effects: Provides a Fair (+2) Athletics skill for defending against attacks, and an Armor:2 rating against Shoot attacks.

Powered Armor

Complexity: Fair (+2) (**Simple**)

Cost: 2 stunts

Effects: +2 bonus to Fight attacks, and Armor:2 against Fight and Shoot attacks.

Miscellaneous Gear as Extras

Aircar

Complexity: Superb (+5) (**Complex**)

Cost: 1 aspect, 6 skill points

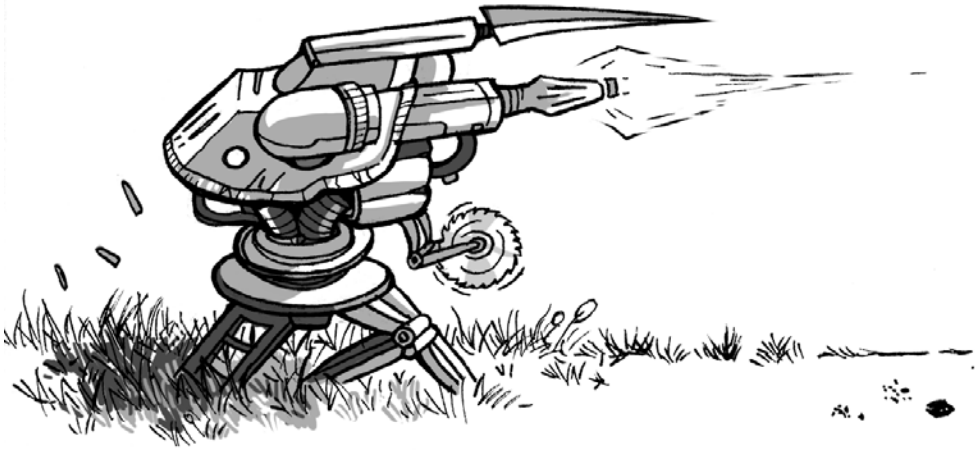
Effects: A flying vehicle seating 6 people plus gear. It has an *Anti-Grav Aircar*-type aspect, and a Fantastic (+6) Drive skill.

Autodoc

Complexity: Superb (+5) (**Complex, Intimidating**)

Cost: 4 skill points, 1 stunt

Effects: Coffin-shaped and intimidating to the subject, it provides a Great (+4) Crafts skill for recovery obstacles, or a +2 bonus to a tending character's Lore skill.



Automated Defender System

Complexity: Superb (+5) (Complex)

Cost: 6 skill points

Effects: A static installation which can be dismantled, rebuilt, and set to defend a single zone, attacking up to a 2 zone range. It has Good (+3) Fight, Fair (+2) Shoot, Average (+1) Notice.

Pacification Field

Complexity: Good (+3) (Complex)

Cost: 1 stunt or 2 skill points

Effects: +2 Rapport bonus, or a Fair (+2) Rapport skill, to create an advantage like *Pacified*.

Portacomp

Complexity: Superb (+5) (Complex)

Cost: 6 skill points

Effects: Provides a Fantastic (+6) Lore skill.

Stimdose

Complexity: Good (+3) (Simple, Limited Doses)

Cost: 1 stunt

Effects: Provides a +2 bonus to create *Clear Thinking*-type advantages. May be used with various skills—anything requiring concentration and focus.

Figuring out Technology

When you first find a techno item, you don't know how to use it, but must **figure it out** by rolling against its **complexity** (usually a passive opposition). **Simple** artifacts require only a single roll of Investigate or Lore (player's choice); **complex** artifacts require a challenge, typically involving rolling the following three skills in order:

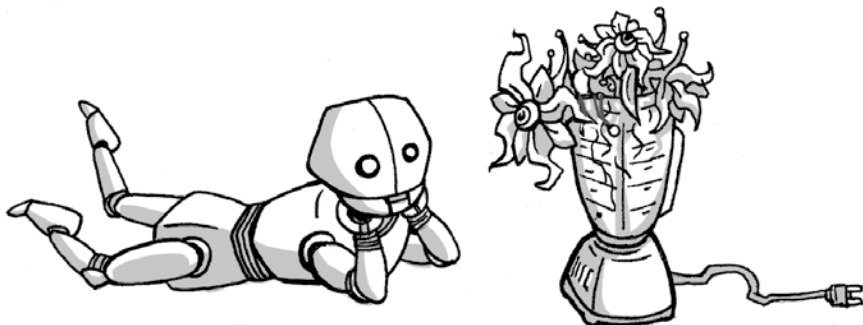
- **Lore:** *Do you know what it is?* Use what you already know to identify the artifact. Failure only allows progress with a minor or serious cost, usually making the next roll more difficult.
- **Investigate:** *Can you figure out what it does?* Examine the artifact closely to work out what it does. Failure imposes a minor or serious cost, typically making the next roll more difficult.
- **Will:** *Can you make it work?* Apply concentration and willpower to persevere with the artifact. On a failure, you can't make it work; or, for a serious cost, you can, but either by breaking the artifact, placing a damaging aspect on the scene (Contaminated, On Fire, Blown Up! etc), or injuring yourself.

In some cases the GM may replace Lore with the skill you'd use to use the artifact, or use that skill to create advantages on the above rolls. For example, you might use Shoot instead of Lore, or to create an advantage, when figuring out a ranged weapon, or Drive (if you have it) when figuring out a vehicle.

Once you figure out an artifact, you **create an advantage**, giving you an aspect for the item. Thereafter, you can use your extras and advancements to buy the artifact's other abilities one at a time.

DNA-KEYING

Many pre-Burn artifacts are DNA-keyed to prevent unauthorized use. This means they're only programmed to respond to "normal" humans; mutants or mutated animals face complexities two levels higher when figuring them out, and the GM may compel their genotype aspect to declare the device does not recognize them.



MUTANT BESTIARY

The following creatures are sample denizens of *Burn Shift*, statted as main, supporting, and nameless NPCs. Feel free to upgrade or downgrade them to suit your game.

Bindweed

Supporting NPC

Bindweed is a deadly, motile vine. Its lashing tendrils are blindingly fast, with jagged thorns injecting a painful poison. It's frequently covered with sweet-scented blossom or tasty red fruit; characters making an Average (+1) Lore roll recognize it for what it is.

BINDWEED

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Motive Vine, Razor-Sharp Poison Thorns, Sweet and Deadly, Lashing Tendrils*

Skills: Great (+4) Fight; Good (+3) Stealth; Fair (+2) Physique

Stunts: **Poison Thorns:** see Poison on page 182.

Flaw: *Susceptible to Fire*

Bloodbat

Average (+1) Nameless NPC

These giant vampire bats are the size of a small dog, and hunt in lethal groups of up to 10 individuals after dark.

BLOOBBAT

Stress:

Aspects: *Mob of Screeching Flapping Biters!*

Skills: Average (+1) Fight

Crawler

Good (+3) Nameless NPC

These hideous carnivores are a cross between centipedes and humans, with pallid humanlike heads and eight pairs of human legs on a seven-foot-long body. Their eyes are weak, but they hunt by smell—and they're never alone.

CRAWLER

Stress: □□□

Aspects: *Scuttling Nightmare, Navigates by Smell*

Skills: Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics;
Average (+1) Notice, Stealth

Death Fungus

Supporting NPC

A fast-growing fungus ejecting a cloud of heat-seeking and -absorbing spores, freezing and absorbing prey within hours. It's difficult to destroy; fire only causes the spore cloud to expand!

DEATH FUNGUS

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Heat-Eating Fungus, Fast-Growing, Deadly Spore Cloud, Difficult to Destroy*

Skills: Great (+4) Physique; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Stealth

Stunts: **Heat Absorption:** see stunt on page 183

Flaw: *Slow-Moving*

Forest Giant

Supporting NPC

The giant green-skinned forest-folk of the Dustrock Valley are xenophobic, introverted, and rarely seen. Feared and hated by the Pure Hills tribes, they're said to have great mental powers, kidnapping people and driving them insane with horrific illusions.

In reality, Forest Giants have a mysterious rapport with their mutated forests, developing a technology based on plant mutations.

FOREST GIANT

Physical Stress: □□□□ **Mental Stress:** □□□□

Consequences: 2 mild, 1 moderate

Aspects: *Lumbering Green-skinned Behemoth; Preyed Upon by the Swarm; Primitive Dwellers of the Deep Forest; Tree Huggers*

Skills: Superb (+5) Physique, Great (+4) Will, Good (+3) Fight, Fair (+2) Stealth, Average (+1) Athletics

Stunts: **Illusion Generation:** make Will attacks by generating terrifying illusions.
Plant Control: use Fight to make ranged attacks using plants at a 2-zone distance.

Flaw: *At a Disadvantage Away from the Forests*

Ghost Cat
Supporting NPC

Great cats descended from feral pre-Burn pets, Ghost Cats are incredibly stealthy despite their size. Rumor has it they can become invisible, and humans and mutants are their favorite meal. A single Ghost Cat can drive communities to panic. They possess an above-average animal intelligence, and seem to enjoy playing with their food.

GHOST CAT

Physical Stress: □□□ **Mental Stress:** □□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Super-stealthy Apex Predator, Maneater, Strikes Terror, Pouncer*

Skills: Superb (+5) Stealth; Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2): Athletics; Average (+1): Physique

Stunts: **Terrorize:** make Provoke attacks against communities.

Hellboar

Good (+3) Nameless NPC

Evil-tempered mutant pigs the size of horses, Hellboar males in particular are dangerous omnivores. They forage in sounders of up to 4 adults.

HELLBOAR

Stress: □□□

Aspects: *Giant Bellowing Pig-Monster, Fights Until Hacked to Pieces*

Skills: Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Athletics

Hive

Good (+3) Nameless NPC

These small insect-like humanoids are individually unimaginative, but highly coordinated in a group (usually up to ten drones). No one seems to know their goals, but they frequently come into conflict with people over resources.

HIVE

Stress: □□□

Aspects: *Small Chitinous Humanoid, Hive Intelligence, Unfathomable Goals*

Skills: Good (+3) Provoke; Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Crafts, Deceive

Meltoid

Supporting NPC

Meltoids were once human, but are afflicted with a plague which causes their skin to melt and slough away in maddening agony. Their only ease is to devour unmutated flesh; an outbreak of Meltoids often leads to an entire community self-destructing horribly. A character taken out by a Meltoid may become a Meltoid himself.

MELTOID

Physical Stress: Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Hideous Melted Mutant, Desperate to Feed, Once Was Human*

Skills: Great (+4) Will; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Athletics

Stunts: **Melting Touch:** for a fate point, force any target you've attacked for at least 2 stress damage to take an *Agonized Melting*-type consequence instead.

Flaw: *Mindless with Agony*

Orox

Supporting NPC

A highly territorial and bad-tempered omnivore which roams plains and woodlands. Massively strong and violent, it's armored with a thick carapace. It's a mark of great courage to hunt one.

OROX

Physical Stress: Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Bad-tempered Giant Bull, Territorial, Thick Carapace, Terrifying Charge*

Skills: Great (+4) Physique; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Provoke; Average (+1) Athletics

Stunts: **Impenetrable Carapace:** +2 to defense actions with Fight.

Flaw: *Easy to Provoke*

Plutonium Dog

Supporting NPC

A huge baleful mastiff with glowing blue eyes, a Plutonium Dog is highly radioactive, and widely regarded as a harbinger of death. The Rad Raiders use them as steeds, and call them Rad Hounds.

PLUTONIUM DOG

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Huge Baleful Mastiff, Highly Radioactive, Harbinger of Death, Steed of the Rad Raiders*

Skills: Great (+4) Provoke; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Physique; Average (+1) Athletics

Stunts: Radiation Emission: see page 183

Flaw: *Unable to Hide*

Puppeteer Plague

Supporting NPC

It's unclear whether the Puppeteer Plague is a result of the Burn Shift or a pre-Burn bioweapon. It only affects humans and near-humans (mutants can invoke their genotype aspect when defending), and subjects group together as though controlled by an invisible "puppeteer." The effect is passed on by touch or injury; affected "Puppets" become part of a marauding band, but there are rumors of Puppeteer packs with more complex motives.

PUPPETEER PLAGUE

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild

Aspects: *Dominated by a Hidden Will, Stumbling and Violent, Invisible Contamination*

Skills: Great (+4) Notice; Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Physique

Stunts: Dogged Pursuit: +2 Athletics bonus in chases.

Flaw: *Group acts as a single being*



Rad Hawk

Supporting NPC

Rad Hawks are the size of a large cat, found in areas of active Burn. They're adapted to irradiated environments, and attack prey—including wounded travelers—with focused blasts of radiation.

RAD HAWK

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 1 mild

Aspects: *Radioactive Giant Hawk, Resistant to Radiation, Close Attack, Small*

Skills: Great (+4) Fight; Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Notice; Average (+1) Provoke

Stunts: **Radiation Emission:** see page 183

Flaw: *Poor Physical Attacks*

Rubble Dweller

Fair (+2) Nameless NPC

Ancient ruined cities are nightmarish labyrinths of twisting tunnels and rubble-strewn skytower canyons, inhabited by cannibalistic savages. Rubble Dwellers roam in packs of 5 or so, eating vermin, raiding for captives, and devouring one another when times are hard.

RUBBLE DWELLER

Stress:

Aspects: *Frenzied Mob of Bestial Savages, Troglodytic Cannibals*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Athletics

Screamer

Supporting NPC

These withered, dog-like creatures look like emaciated and hairless wolves, with wild eyes and foam-flecked jaws. They're stalkers but not very strong, and rely on their ear-splitting screech to stun prey before pouncing.

SCREAMER

Physical Stress: □□

Mental Stress: □□

Consequences: 1 mild

Aspects: *Withered Hairless Dog-Monster, Stalker, Ear-splitting Screech, Lightning Pounce*

Skills: Great (+4) Stealth; Good (+3) Provoke; Fair (+2) Notice; Average (+1) Fight

Stunts: **Sonic Screech:** +2 Provoke bonus to create a *Stunned*-type advantage before pouncing.

Flaw: *Poor Runners*

Slavelord

Supporting NPC

A typical savage warrior of the Slavelands, this human is covered with scars and tattoos, brandishes spiked weapons, and lives by a creed of violence and hatred.

SLAVELORD

Physical Stress: □□□

Mental Stress: □□

Consequences: 1 mild + 1 moderate

Aspects: *Cruel and Vicious Slaver, Enemies of All Mutants, Do You Know How I Got These Scars?, Blackened Iron Plate Armor*

Skills: Great (+4) Fight; Good (+3) Provoke; Fair (+2) Physique; Average (+1) Notice

Stunts: **Spiked War Maul:** +2 bonus to Fight attacks.

Slavers

Fair (+2) Nameless NPC

Usually found in groups of 4 or so, driving captured slaves or hunting new ones.

SLAVERS

Stress:

Aspects: *Sadistic Supremacist Slavers*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Provoke, Notice

The Swarm

Fair (+2) Nameless NPC

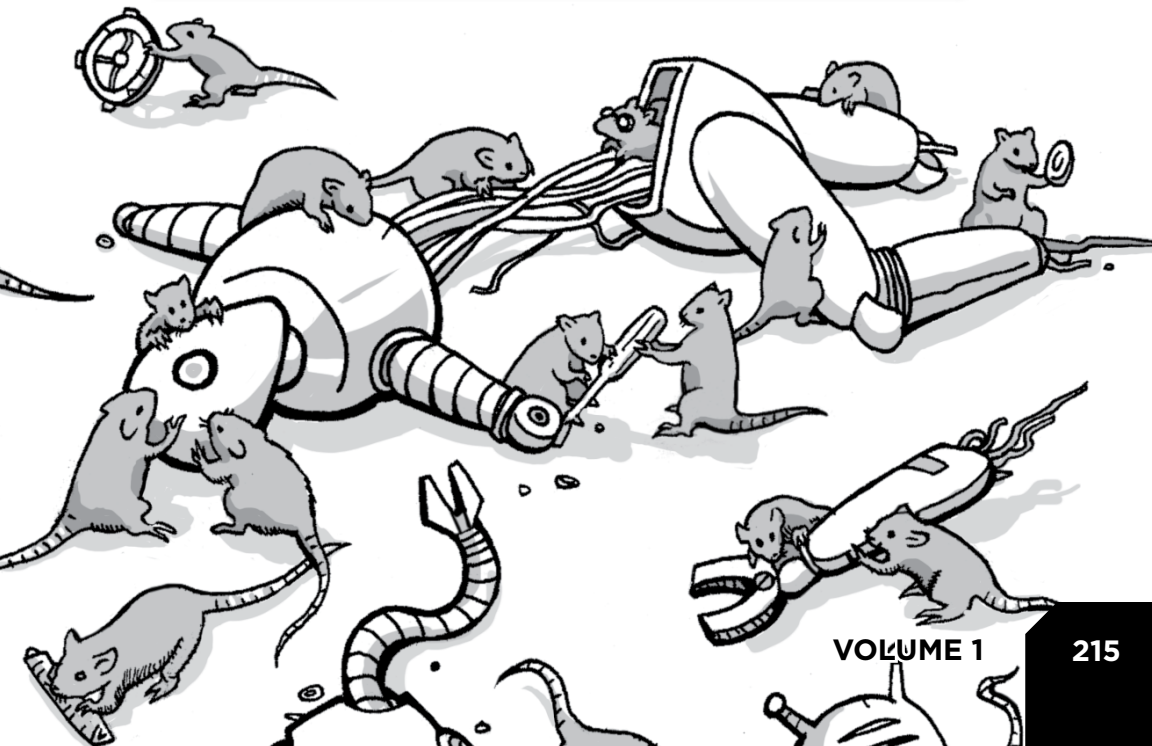
Vicious mutated rats with an almost human cunning. Their leader, Lord Raver (page 231), is sentient. They're encountered several dozen at a time; treat as multiple mobs of 10 individuals each.

THE SWARM

Stress:

Aspects: *Vicious Giant Mutant Rats, At Lord Raver's Command*

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight; Average (+1) Athletics, Stealth



Troglodyte

Supporting NPC

The pale-skinned and half-blind Troglodytes are mutated survivors of the Burn who sheltered in the tunnels and maglev stations of the Hollow Mountains. They occasionally raid the surface for supplies, including (it's rumored) breeding partners, but for the most part guard Ancient treasures and secrets, and cultivate fungi and insects beneath the earth. They're devious trap-makers, and use a form of Greek Fire.

TROGLODYTE

Physical Stress:	□□	Mental Stress:	□□
Consequences:	1 mild		
Aspects:	<i>Subterranean Mutants, Keepers of Mysterious Lore, Insect Herders, Hyper-Hearing, Greek Fire</i>		
Skills:	Great (+4) Notice; Good (+3) Lore; Fair (+2) Shoot; Average (+1) Stealth		
Stunts:	Greek Fire: +2 bonus to Shoot attacks; successful attacks also create Greek Fire-type advantages. Hyper-hearing: see page 184 Sonar: see page 184		
Flaw:	<i>Half-blind</i>		

Yagger

Supporting NPC

These pre-Burn attack robots were once rare and low on power. Since the rise of Second Strike, their numbers have increased, striking terror everywhere.

YAGGER

Physical Stress:	□□	Mental Stress:	□□
Consequences:	1 mild + 1 moderate		
Aspects:	<i>Ancient Hunter-Killer War-Machine, Literal Programming, Bristling with Weapons, Impregnable Shell</i>		
Skills:	Superb (+5) Notice; Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Stealth		
Stunts:	Micro-missile Launcher: see page 201		
Flaw:	<i>Prone to Malfunction with Age</i>		

THE CAMPAIGN

Hazards and Events

The environment in *Burn Shift* is a lethal and important part of the setting; characters may often feel the whole world is trying to kill them! Many hazards act like characters, making attacks and causing harm.

Most hazards are handled as **contests** with an **Intensity**, representing the raw power of a hazard, which a character may use one of several skills to resist when trying to tough out the hazard's effects (see below). Complex hazards may also have a **Magnitude**, which indicates how wide an area the hazard covers, and therefore how hard it is to avoid or get out of the area of. It's used when a low-intensity hazard may be spread over a wide area and harder to escape (radiation is a good example).

Characters may resist a hazard's Intensity or Magnitude using the skills indicated in the examples below; achieving a three-victory lead means the hazard has been successfully avoided. If the hazard gains a three-victory lead, the character suffers a consequence based on the nature of the hazard.

There are a wide range of possible hazards—here are some examples.

Electromagnetic Storms

The skies of *Burn Shift* are the canvas for great light shows and aurorae, often associated with the “eruptions of lightning” which light up the ancient ruins at Electric Falls.

ELECTROMAGNETIC STORMS

Aspects:	<i>Eruptions of Lightning</i>
Skills:	Good (+3) Intensity; Fair (+2) Magnitude
Countered with:	Resist the storm's Intensity with Physique; avoid the storm's Magnitude with Athletics, Drive, Lore, Ride.
Consequence:	Incur a consequence representing personal injury or damage to equipment.

Nanite Swarm

Nanite Swarms are often found in Ancient ruins, but sometimes as bizarre weather conditions. They're highly damaging to techno devices, causing them to malfunction or even come to a strange "machine life."

NANITE SWARM

Aspects:	<i>Barely Visible Swarm of Buzzing Nanites</i>
Skills:	Great (+4) Intensity
Countered with:	Resist Intensity with Physique, Techno Lore, force fields or electromagnetic fields.
Consequence:	A <i>Nanite Infestation</i> aspect on an item of equipment, which may be removed using Crafts.

Poison Cloud

Bad winds, particularly out of the Forbidden Zone to the south, are responsible for random mass die-offs across the Wounded Earth. Often there's only a few seconds warning as birds drop from the sky.

POISON CLOUD

Aspects:	<i>Birds Drop from the Sky</i>
Skills:	Good (+3) Intensity; Good (+3) Magnitude
Countered with:	Resist Intensity with Physique, poison resistance, hazmat suits; avoid Magnitude with Athletics, Drive, Ride.
Consequence:	Causes a <i>Poisoned</i> -type consequence.

Rad Storm

This is a mobile version of the Burn, which may descend from an empty sky. Roll 4dF to find its duration.

4dF	Duration
-4 to -2	several minutes
-1 to +1	several hours
+2 to +4	several days

See "Radiation—The Burn," below, for a Rad Storm's effects.

Radiation—The Burn

Rather than attempting to realistically portray the miserable effects of radiation poisoning, *Burn Shift* uses a more play-friendly version typical of the post-apocalyptic genre, where “radiation” is treated as a source of burning wounds and bizarre mutations. It’s present in the post-apocalyptic landscape in ruins, ancient buildings, and craters surrounded by strange plant life, or even contaminated Ancient technological devices. Merely being in a radioactive area or touching a contaminated object can irradiate a character.

RADIATION—THE BURN

Aspects: *Invisible Mutagenic Radiation!*

Skills: Good (+3) Intensity; Average (+1) Magnitude

Countered with: Resist Intensity with Physique, radiation resistance, hazmat suits; resist Magnitude with Athletics, Drive, Ride (may create advantages to resist with Burn Lore)

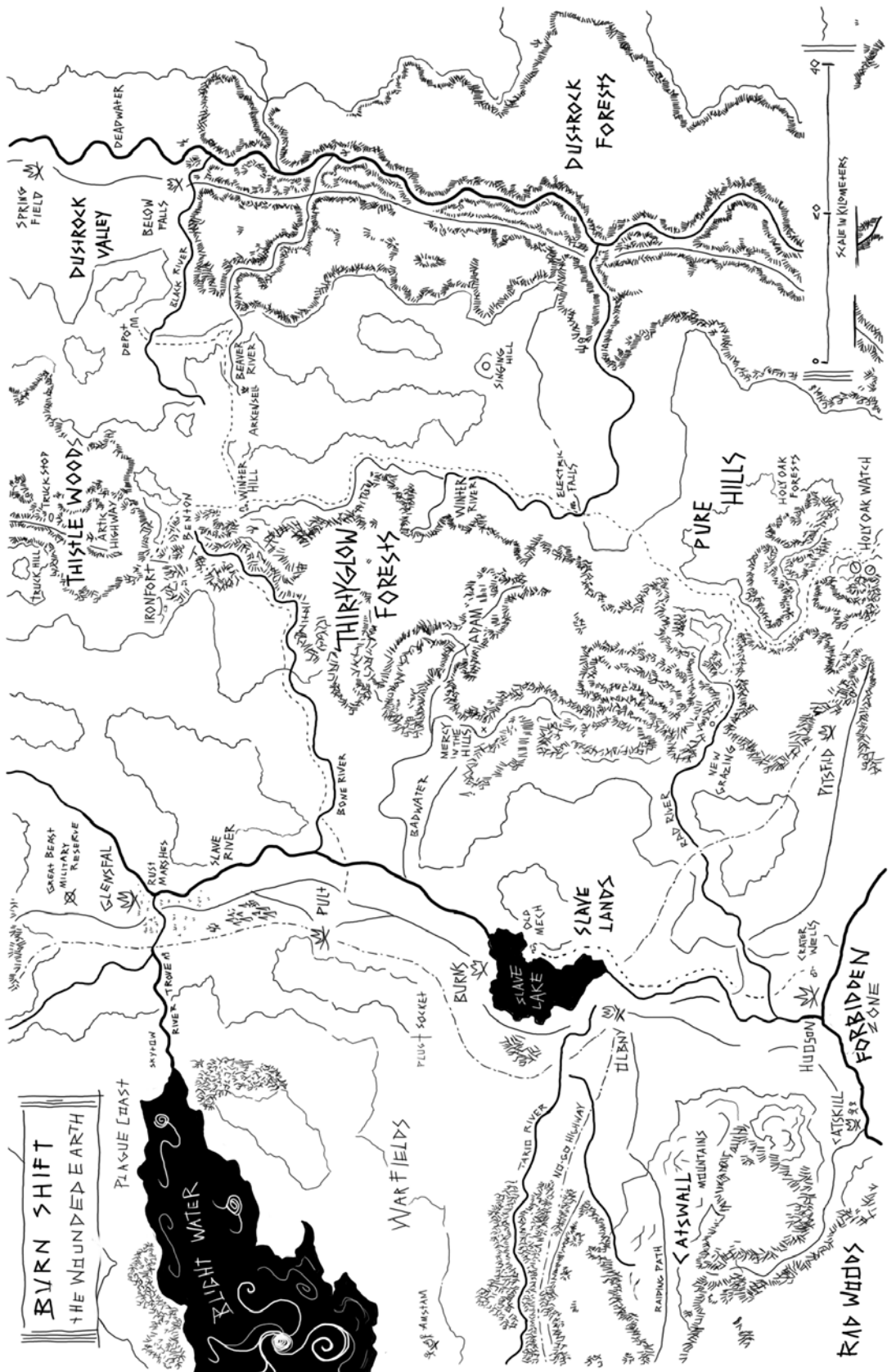
Consequence: Causes *Irradiated*-type consequences, which may be burn shift consequences (see page 186). Intensity and Magnitude vary widely with the Burn.

Scythe Grass

This is an obstacle with a passive opposition of Fair (+2) or above; each shift of failure when trying to cross it is treated as physical stress damage, and the character makes no progress. Patches of Scythe Grass are notorious places for ambushes.

Weird Weather

The weather of the Wounded Earth is no longer stable; bad rain, burning sun, cold snaps, dry storms, and sudden hurricanes wrack the land. **Weird Weather** is an obstacle which must be overcome to proceed. Failing the overcome roll causes physical stress, or possibly a consequence, and the character is unable to proceed for that exchange. This is usually a Fair (+2) passive opposition, but severe weather may be higher.



BURN SHIFT
THE WOUNDED EARTH

PLAGUE COAST
BLIGHT WATER

DUSKROCK VALLEY

THIRKLOW FORESTS

DUSKROCK FOREST

PURE HILLS

SLAVE LANDS

FORBIDDEN ZONE

WART FIELDS

CATSWALL MOUNTAINS

RAD WOODS

40
KILOMETERS

Key to the Campaign Map

The following locations are in addition to the communities described above.

Adam

These Ancient ruins contaminate the Badwater river.

Amstam

Ancient ruins infested with savage rubble dwellers.

Arkensell

A great column of water erupts hundreds of feet into the air, forming an enormous rainbow. It's been here since before living memory, and forms the source of the Beaver river.

Arctic Highway

An Ancient road used by the Wheeler Cult and Gorrdan Ironfist's warriors.

Badwater

A contaminated, discolored river, perilous to drink.

Beaver River

A fresh, clean watercourse which flows into the Dustrock Forests.

Below Falls

Ancient ruins often visited by the Swarm—visitors should be cautious!

Benton

Ironfort keeps an eye on these Ancient ruins, and sends occasional patrols.

Black River

The river running through the heart of the Swarmlands.

Blightwater

A "freshwater" lake, some areas of which are more poisonous than others—although it's all pretty bad.

Bone River

This river sometimes washes strange things down from Benton.**Burns**

Ancient ruins on the northern edge of the Slavelands, claimed by the Slavelords.

Catskill

Ancient ruins on the edge of the Forbidden Zone. Local conditions here are often very unusual.

Cats Wall Mountains

Tribal highlands to the southwest, attacked by the Rad Raiders and home to the Two River communities, also known as the Catswall Tribes.

Crater Wells

This fortified Slavelord settlement is the last stop for water before the Forbidden Zone. They force their thralls into the wastes on lethal searches for artifacts, a fate worse than death.

Deadwater

A lifeless, poisoned river running through the Dustrock Valley, said to be poisoned by vast Deathlands to the north.

Depot

An Ancient underground aircar depot and base of the Meckers, a cult-like organization dedicated to figuring out Ancient vehicles; they're the source of the Govnor's fabled Aircar. Heavily fortified against Lord Raver's Swarm, Depot is a haven for exploring the ruins of Below Falls and Spring Field.

Dustrock Forests

Impenetrable forests filled with ruins, death, and treasure. For most Pure Hills tribes it's taboo to enter here; you never know what you may disturb.

Electric Falls

An Ancient broadcast power station occupying a picturesque location by a waterfall on the Winter River, Electric Falls was miraculously missed by the Burn. The station occasionally lights up with energy beams from orbit, electrifying the river. Cranks and mad researchers come here to "harness the lightning."

The Forbidden Zone

Blasted and radioactive wastes, said to stretch many days to a poisoned sea.

Glensfal

Ancient ruins on the edge of the Plague Coast.

Great Beast Military Complex

An Ancient military installation once the easternmost outpost of the lands of Rezervoy, it was abandoned after the Night of Fire and the rise of Second Strike. Recently it's been reoccupied as the headquarters of General Biter's New Animal Army.

Hollow Mountains

Mountains to the east of the Dustrock Valley, home to the Troglodytes.

Holy Oak Forests

Wild but mostly untainted forests, home of tribes allied to Holy Oak Watch.

Hudson

Ancient ruins on the edge of the Forbidden Zone. The Slavelords of Crater Wells claim them, but their control is non-existent.

Maglev Lines

Ruined highways which are difficult to access (usually raised at least 10 meters above the surrounding countryside), but which often provide safe passage through difficult terrain.

Mercy-in-the-Hills

An abandoned Ancient hospital on the Mercy River, the site of frequent Slavelords patrols. In relatively good condition, it's an object of pilgrimages for Pure Hills healers. Holy Oak Watch has never had the strength or will to occupy Mercy-in-the-Hills; Gorrdan Ironfist is thinking of finally attempting it, gaining a propaganda boost if successful.

New Grazing

Founded at the end of the Slaver Wars, until recently the small farming settlement of New Grazing sent over half its produce down the Rad River as part of the Slavelands Tribute, which after half a century many of the younger generation viewed as unnecessary. Since Gorrdan Ironfist stopped payment of the Tribute, things have been tense.

No-Go Highway

So called because it goes nowhere anyone wants to go. It's traversable for most of its length, but only the foolish use it.

Olbny

Ancient ruins and the southernmost ruins of the Slavelands. The Rad Raiders are frequently encountered here.

Pitsfild

An Ancient ruin, occasionally visited by daring expeditions from Holy Oak Watch.

The Plague Coast

Since the Night of Fire the Plague Coast has been subject to ferocious mutagenic radiation, and swarms with mutated animals. In recent years these have even included sentient ones; the rodent Swarm originated here, as did the canid leader Rafik Biter.

The Plague Coast remains savage, though some mutated animals have formed settlements with humans and mutants.

Plug and Socket

A strange power station or laboratory, damaged during the Lost Years and sealed beneath millions of tons of concrete. The earth shifts of the Burn ejected this concrete "plug," leaving the irregular, steep-sided "socket." The area is still contaminated, and filled with dangerous lifeforms and unknown artifacts.

Pult

Ancient ruins of the Green Hills Orbital Catapult, treasures are still sacrificed to the Ancients here, either by burning or hurling into the sky.

The Pure Hills

Prevailing winds and accidents of geography spared the Pure Hills from the ravages of the Long Dying. Although it has its share of glowing Ancient ruins, most of the land is good, with fertile soil and clean water. It's inhabited by agricultural communities and hunting clans.

Rad River

No one knows why this clear and uncontaminated river bears such an inauspicious name.

Rad Wood

These forests are radioactive, filled with unpleasant mutations. On occasion they teem with the Rad Raiders.

Raiding Path

The Rad Raiders use this route into the Valley of Flies and beyond.

Rust Marshes

Pools of stagnant, poisoned water and oil slicks, with remnants of twisted and rusting metal. Nothing good grows here, and there are some horrendous hazards.

Singing Hill

This bank of wind turbines in a high windy valley still produces power—the turbines “sing” when the wind blows just right.

Skytower River

There are many ruined skytowers along this river, especially by the Blightwater and the Rust Marshes, where they poke above the water.

Slave Lake

A partially artificial lake in the Slavelands. The water around Old Mech is potable.

Slave River

Heavily polluted, with radioactive ruins, much of it dominated by the Slavelords.

Spring Field

Ancient ruins in the Dustrock Valley, said to be rich in Ancient treasures.

Thirty-Glow Forests

The forests here do indeed glow; it's said that the trees absorbed the poisons of the Burn and kept the land alive, and in return became cursed with intelligence. It's an eerie place, and most travelers prefer to keep to the trail along the Winter River.

“The Dog Which Walks Like A Man. The tales which filtered down the Artic Highway last winter have been confirmed by refugees from the Wheeler Cult. Amidst the packs of wild mutant dogs which have long plagued the Thistle Woods, there has emerged a leader which walks upright and displays signs of a high and cruel intelligence. This is something new in the world, and the first instance of an animal with intelligence rivaling man. Time will tell if this breeds true: if so, we may see a new chapter in the strange history of our world.”

- The Holy Oak Chronicles, HR180/96

Thistle Woods

The site of frequent skirmishes between Rafik Biter's canids and the warriors of Gorrдан Ironfist. There are many packs of mutant dogs here.

Truck Hill

The center of power for the canids. It's been attacked several times by Jeremiah Gunn, but has never been taken.

Truck Stop

Truck Stop was never considered part of the Pure Hills until recently, when Jeremiah Gunn (page 230) became the Govnor's warden to protect it against Rafik Biter's canids. It was a Wheeler Cult center even before the Slavlands, a transport hub for goods from the northern wilderness down the Artic Highway, and is the Pure Hills' main source of information about the outside world. Before the Burn, it was a refueling and repair center.

Valley of Flies

A tainted and polluted valley, with many old industrial facilities. It's frequently the site of terrible battles.

War Fields

Site of the Slaver Wars between the Slavlands and Rezervoy a century ago. A great Mech leader called Warhead (page 235) is at large here.

Winter Hill

Lying by the source of the Winter River in an area of springs and clean water, this walled settlement is the birthplace of Gorrдан Ironfist. Its principle resources are agriculture, lumber, fish pools, and crops.



Main Campaign NPCs

Use these characters as allies or villains in your game.

Aidan Walker

Aidan Walker appeared from the lands beyond the War Fields twenty years ago looking for “Irwin Commando reborn,” and formed the Walker Cult. He’s now old by Wounded Earth standards, and still looking. He has a complicated relationship with Gorrdan Ironfist, who would be happy if Aidan recognized him as “Irwin Commando Reborn”; so far he has steadfastly refused to do so.

AIDAN WALKER

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Mystical Hero of the Walker Folk*

Trouble: *When the Land Has Great Need*

Phase I: *From the Lands Beyond the War Fields*

Phase II: *I Am No One’s Mouthpiece!*

Phase III: *The Quest Goes Ever On*

SKILLS

Great (+4): Empathy

Good (+3): Contacts, Rapport

Fair (+2): Deceive, Lore, Will

Average (+1): Athletics, Fight, Investigate, Provoke

STUNTS

Diplomat: Use Rapport against other communities

Mystical Insight: +2 bonus to Lore and Rapport when linking current events to ancient prophecies.

Lead out of Peril: +2 Will bonus when helping a community resist a hazard’s Magnitude.

EXTRAS

The Walker Folk: Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Resources; Average (+1) Fight

Attraction Field: +2 Contacts bonus when creating advantages

Magnetic Field Detection (New Sense):

Invoke: To detect direction, operational devices.

Compel: To become disoriented by powerful magnetic fields.

Uncanny Insight: +2 Empathy bonus when creating advantages.

Flaw: *Occasionally Lapses Into Mystical Fugue State*

Caithin Whitehair

High Watcher of Holy Oak, Caithin Whitehair is getting old, and has trouble standing up to Gorrdan Ironfist. She fears the consequences of his refusal to pay the Slaveland Tribute.

CAITHIN WHITEHAIR

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *High Watcher of Holy Oak*

Trouble: *Aspiring Keeper of the Peace*

Phase I: *The World Will Be Restored!*

Phase II: *Holy Oak Must Remain Neutral*

Phase III: *The Wrath of Dengiz Han Will Be terrible!*

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Rapport

Great (+4): Empathy, Lore

Good (+3): Contacts, Investigate, Will

Fair (+2): Athletics, Notice, Stealth

STUNTS

Diplomat: Use Rapport against other communities

Healer: Use Lore for recovery obstacles

Patient Negotiator: +2 Empathy bonus when creating advantages in negotiations

EXTRAS

Holy Oak Watch: Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Crafts; Average (+1) Fight

The Watchers: Good (+3) Lore; Fair (+2) Contacts; Average (+1) Athletics

The Crucible of Healing

Invoke: To speed the healing and diagnosis of wounds.

Compel: To encounter people begging for treatment.

Dengiz Han

Cruel and sadistic leader of the Slavelands, Dengiz Han has sworn to kill Gorrdan Ironfist. He refuses to believe that the New Animal Army poses any threat.

DENGIZ HAN

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Lord High Slaver of the Slavelands*

Trouble: *Blinded by Bigotry and Hatred*

Phase I: *Succeeded Through Betrayal and Violence*

Phase II: *These Animals Are Not Worth My Attention*

Phase III: *I Will Have Gorrdan Ironfist's Head on a Spike!*

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Provoke

Superb (+5): Fight

Great (+4): Physique

Good (+3): Shoot, Will

Fair (+2): Deceive, Notice

Average (+1): Athletics, Empathy, Ride

STUNTS

Feared Leader: Use Provoke against other communities

Sadistic Fighter: +2 Fight bonus when creating an advantage

Armour of Hate: +2 defense bonus when succeeding in physical or mental combat against non-humans. Only applies until the moment Dengiz Han incurs stress damage.

EXTRAS

The Slavelands: Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Lore; Average (+1) Crafts

Neural Whip: see page 202

Powered Armor: see page 204

Gorrdan Ironfist

Govnor of the Pure Hills and Warden of Iron Fist, Gorrdan Ironfist is the first to hold the title since Irwin Commando.

GORRDAN IRONFIST

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 1

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Govnor of the Pure Hills Tribes*

Trouble: *Compared with Irwin Commando*

Phase I: *Rose to Power*

Phase II: *Unity is Strength*

Phase III: *We will defeat the Slavelords!*

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Fight

Superb (+5): Notice, Rapport

Great (+4): Empathy, Provoke, Shoot

Good (+3): Athletics, Contacts, Physique, Will

STUNTS

Diplomat: Use Rapport against other communities.

Iron Hand in Velvet Glove: Use Provoke against other communities.

Warlord: Use Fight against other communities.

EXTRAS

Ironfort: Great (+4) Physique; Good (+3) Crafts; Fair (+2) Resources; Average (+1) Will

Assault Armor: See page 203

The Govnor's Legendary Aircar: See page 204

Jeremiah Gunn

Ironfort warden of Truck Stop, Gunn is young and dynamic, and waging a personal crusade against Rafik Biter.

JEREMIAH GUNN

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Warden of Truck Stop*

Trouble: *Personal Crusade Against Rafik Biter*

Phase I: *No One Gets Left Behind!*

Phase II: *I Enforce the Govnor's Will!*

Phase III: *Any Friend of Wheeler Jack is a Friend of Mine!*

SKILLS

Great (+4): Will

Good (+3): Contacts, Rapport

Fair (+2): Empathy, Fight, Investigate

Average (+1): Athletics, Notice, Physique, Shoot

STUNTS

Community Leader: Use Rapport on behalf of his community against other communities.

Lookouts: May use Contacts instead of Notice to become aware of threats when travelling in places he's visited before.

Orator: +2 Rapport bonus when creating advantages on those he is leading.

EXTRAS

Truck Stop

Foreign Center of the Wheeler Cult

Good (+3) Resources; Fair (+2) Lore; Average (+1) Contacts

Intelligence: Gain a +2 to Investigate rolls to uncover information relating to activities along the Wheeler Cult trade routes

Black Powder Pistol: See page 200

Lord Raver III

A gigantic rat, four feet high on his hind legs, and fully intelligent, Lord Raver is one of the new genotype of intelligent mutated animals. He leads the thousands of mutated rats in the Dustrock Valley—the Swarm. He is the third ruler of the Swarm to bear the name.

LORD RAVER III

Physical Stress: □□□

Mental Stress: □□□

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Lord of the Swarm*

Trouble: *Eternal Foe of the Meckers*

Phase I: *Born to Rule*

Phase II: *The Ruins of Below Falls Will Be Mine!*

Phase III: *Giant Mutated Rat*

SKILLS

Great (+4): Provoke

Good (+3): Deceive, Fight

Fair (+2): Athletics, Physique, Will

Average (+1): Contacts, Notice, Rapport, Stealth

STUNTS

Feared Leader: Use Provoke against other communities.

Misdirect: May use Deceive instead of Stealth to remain undiscovered by others trespassing on his territory.

Primeval Terror: +2 bonus to mental attacks against humans when the victim is fully aware of Lord Raver's nature.

EXTRAS

The Swarm: Good (+3) Shoot; Fair (+2) Resources; Average (+1) Lore

Genius: As aspect.

Disintegrator Pistol: See page 200

Rafik Biter

Leader of the Canids of Truck Hill. Rafik Biter rose to lead the Canids around Truck Hill about 5 years ago, and a year ago began his “Long March” to the Plague Coast, led by a dream. He found newly-evolved sentient animals there, and began to raise his “New Animal Army” (page 194). So far, Rafik’s intelligence is breeding true.

RAFIK BITER

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 3 + 1 mild

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *General of the New Animal Army*

Trouble: *Driven by Dreams of Conquest*

Phase I: *Evolutionary Leap Forward*

Phase II: *The Mech Will Be Our Allies—Or Be destroyed!*

Phase III: *Father of a Nation*

SKILLS

Fantastic (+6): Rapport

Superb (+5): Fight, Will

Great (+4): Physique, Provoke, Shoot

Good (+3): Athletics, Contacts, Empathy, Notice

STUNTS

Military Genius: Use Fight and Shoot to create advantages in community conflicts.

Pack Leader: May “attach” a mob of nameless NPCs and gain a teamwork bonus and additional stress.

EXTRAS

The Canids: Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Provoke

The New Animal Army: Superb (+5) Provoke; Great (+4) Shoot; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Resources

Bodyguard: Usually has 6 Average (+1) Nameless NPC canid bodyguards, giving him a +6 attack bonus and able to take 4 stress for him.

Laser Pistol: See page 201

Random Access

A renegade from the Domain of Second Strike and a type of “hobbyist” AI, Random Access seems to be checking out the power structure in the Pure Hills. It may “adopt” a community and intervene actively on its behalf, including offering healing, guidance, and protection; it’s unclear whether it will be a force for good or for ill.

RANDOM ACCESS

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Renegade AI*

Trouble: *Hobbyist*

Phase I: *On the Run from Second Strike*

Phase II: *Under My Wing*

Phase III: *Mixed Blessings*

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Investigate

Great (+4): Crafts, Rapport

Good (+3): Empathy, Lore, Will

Fair (+2): Deceive, Physique, Provoke, Resources

STUNTS

Community Analysis: +2 Investigate bonus when analyzing communities.

Mech Lore: +2 Lore bonus for Mech-related issues.

The Power of Deduction: See Fate Core page 113.

EXTRAS

Automated Defender System: See page 205

Autodoc: Use Crafts skill for recovery obstacles.

Energy Shield: See page 204

Pacification Field: See page 205

Second Strike

The “First Among the Mech,” Second Strike was deactivated during the Lost Years by the predecessors of the Rezervoy military regime, when it tried to wipe out all humans and establish a machine life hegemony. Then, 95 years ago, it was reactivated by Slavelords invading the lands of Reservoy. Second Strike is far above the inhabitants of the Wounded Earth in intelligence and capabilities, and remembers life before the Burn.

SECOND STRIKE

Physical Stress: □□□□

Mental Stress: □□□□

Consequences: 3 + 2 mild

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *First Among the Mech*

Trouble: *Superior Post-Human Intelligence*

Phase I: *Survivor of a World Long Dead*

Phase II: *Machine Life is True Life*

Phase III: *Dominator*

SKILLS

Epic (+7): Lore

Fantastic (+6): Crafts, Investigate

Superb (+5): Physique, Resources, Shoot, Will

Great (+4): Deceive, Fight, Notice, Provoke

STUNTS

Cold Calculation: +2 Lore bonus when creating advantages against targets.

Dispersed Control: Use Fight to attack via any linked part of the Domain.

Scorched Earth: Use Provoke against communities.

EXTRAS

The Mech: Superb (+5) Shoot; Great (+4) Notice; Good (+3) Fight; Fair (+2) Athletics; Average (+1) Will

Dispersed Intelligence:

Invoke: Able to act through any piece of networked equipment.

Compel: Unable to reach exactly where it needs to.

Energy Shield: See page 204.

Kill Drones: Superb (+5) Shoot; see page 201.

Minions: Able to field 9 Average (+1) Mech.

Warhead

A type of mobile AI from the Domain of Second Strike, rumored to have appeared in the War Fields several months ago and currently at large there with a great “camp” of the Mech. It may be attempting to extend Second Strike’s Domain.

WARHEAD

Physical Stress: □□□

Mental Stress: □□□

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 2

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Mobile War-Machine from the Domain of Second Strike*

Trouble: *Single Purpose*

Phase I: *Lord of the War Fields*

Phase II: *Leader of the Mech Camp*

Phase III: *Territorial Acquisition*

SKILLS

Great (+4): Shoot

Good (+3): Fight, Provoke

Fair (+2): Athletics, Notice, Physique

Average (+1): Contacts, Deceive, Stealth, Will

STUNTS

War Leader: +2 Shoot bonus when creating tactical and strategic advantages.

Strategic Manipulation: +2 Provoke bonus when forcing an enemy’s hand.

Micromissile Launcher: See page 201.

EXTRAS

Mech Camp: Marauding Mech Camp

Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Resources; Average (+1) Lore

Raider Squads: Use Fight, Provoke, and Shoot at community level.

Wheeler Jack

The most famous caravan master of the Wheeler Cult, Wheeler Jack is constantly on the move, and one of the most knowledgeable people about the lands beyond the Pure Hills. He spends part of every year traveling the unknown wilderness north of the Artic Highway. He's based at Truck Stop, though he's rarely there, and is great friends with Jeremiah Gunn.

Wheeler Jack loves whiskey, and one of his annual caravans trades barrels of the stuff. It's unknown where he gets it; some say he's discovered an Ancient distillery.

WHEELER JACK

Physical Stress:

Mental Stress:

Consequences: 3

Refresh: 3

ASPECTS

High Concept: *Caravan Master of the Wheeler Cult*
Trouble: *Got to Find Out What's Over the Next Hill!*
Phase I: *The World is Full of the Stuff People Need.*
Phase II: *Rafik Biter's Mutants Must Be Wiped Out!*
Phase III: *Jeremiah Gunn Saved Our Hides.*

SKILLS

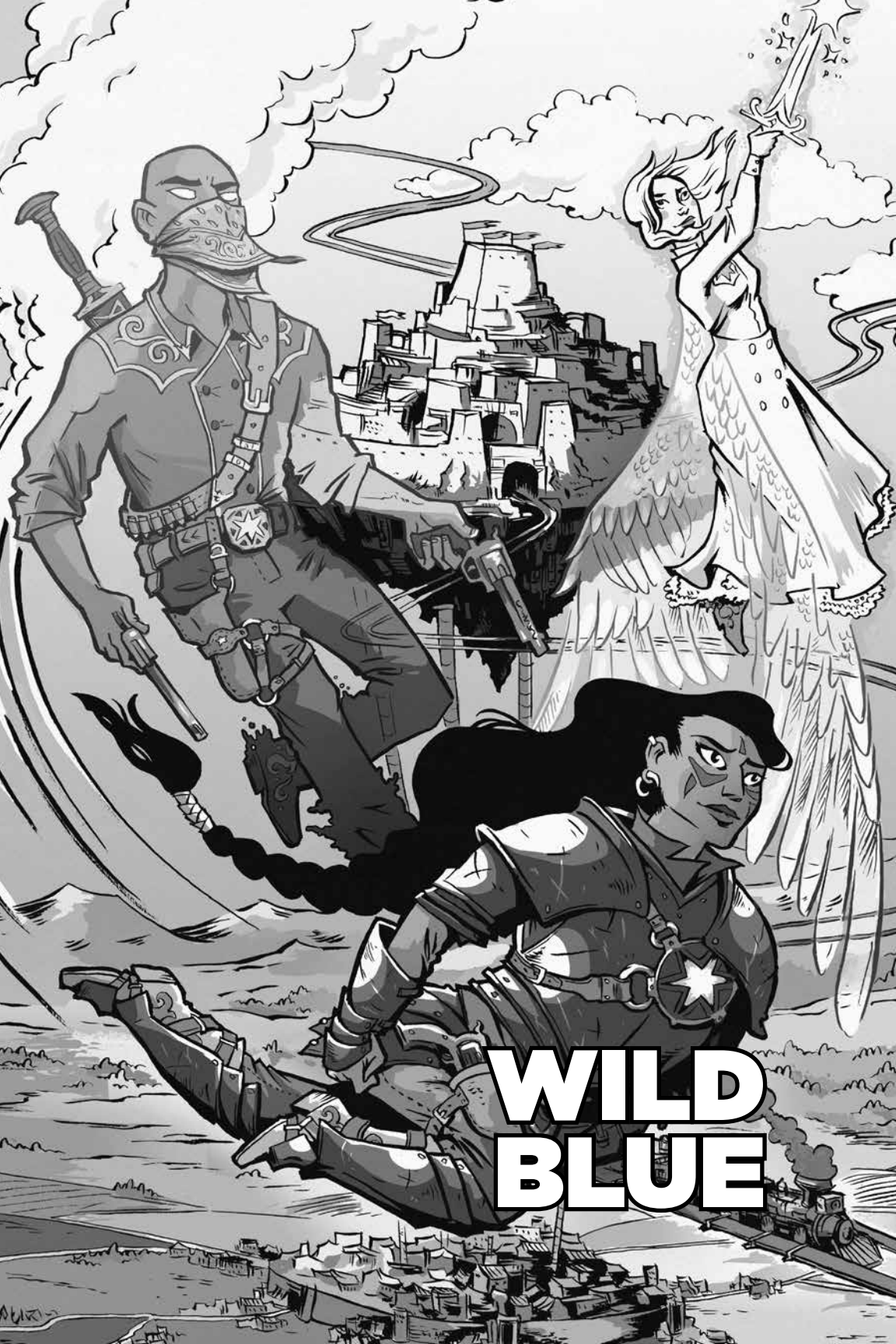
Superb (+5): Rapport
Great (+4): Resources
Good (+3): Contacts, Lore
Fair (+2): Investigate, Notice, Ride
Average (+1): Deceive, Drive, Shoot, Will

STUNTS

Charismatic Leader: Use Rapport in actions against other communities.
Demagogue: +2 bonus when using Rapport to sway his followers.
Whiskey Talking: Use Rapport instead of Provoke when both sides are drunk.

EXTRAS

Caravan: *Wheeler Jack's Caravan and Retinue*
The Wheeler Cult: Good (+3) Athletics; Fair (+2) Stealth; Average (+1) Fight
Howler Rifle: See page 201
Mail Armor: See page 203



WILD BLUE

LEMME TELL YOU HOW WE GOT HERE . . .

Most don't remember how we got here or where we came from. Hell, it's only been a few generations but it seems like people got pretty short memories. Maybe they just got more pressing concerns. Folks got stories though.

What the history books say is that we fled a great vast empire who wanted to stamp us out because we recognize the Sun as giver of life and ruler of all creation. Heretics, they called us. We weren't having any of that so we up and left, sailed the great blue seas until we found this place. We settled it and we prospered.

I ain't entirely convinced that that's the whole story though. This land is just a little too rich in magic, in resources, in valuable and wondrous things for our arrival here to be an accident. We may have fled that empire, and it may have had something to do with our faith, but I think wealth had something to do with it too.

Whatever the case, we're here. There were people here when we got here, though I don't rightly know that *people* is the right word. They call themselves the Folk, and they sure as hell ain't human. They come in all shapes and sizes, some pleasing and some downright monstrous, and they're steeped in the magic of the land like a sponge that's been sitting in water for a spell.

They did not welcome us with open arms.

Of course, they didn't exactly turn us away either, but things back then were . . . tense, as I understand it. Some of them left us alone, but some of them harassed us, demanded tribute, or just plain killed people who got too close to their sacred sites. We fought back.

In hindsight, maybe we fought back a bit too hard. The war was long and bloody, with lots of casualties on both sides, and it ended with an act of vicious cruelty followed by an act of staggering violence. We won. We drove the Folk back, up north into less hospitable lands, and we took these lands—the Blue Lands—for ourselves.

That's when things got weird.

Who Am I?

I'm Whitehorse. I'm a Warden of the Queen, have been for quite some time now. I'm a tracker, a gunslinger, a lawman, and a killer. More importantly, I'm the guy who's telling you how things are in the Blue Lands.

Some of this is stuff you learned in the history books, and you might be inclined to just skip on past it. Do what you want; there ain't gonna be a test or nothin'. Unless you consider the world out there a test. It'll kill you quicker than a bullet to the brainpan if you let it, and knowing it is the best defense against that fate. That being the case, it might be to your advantage to pay attention. You *are* a Warden after all.

The Powers

This continent that we settled is . . . different from the old country. Folks don't know a lot about the old country but there's one thing they can agree on: there were no Powers there. That's why it was such a shock when they first started to appear.

It happened with the first generation born here. When they came of age, a few of them developed abilities that were just plain impossible. Some of them were pretty small, like the ability to light a candle by looking at it, while others were a lot more impressive, folks who could jump over buildings, lift horses over their heads, shoot an apple with a pistol from a mile and a half off. It was only a few at first, a handful; nobody knows exactly why some were born with gifts and others weren't.

When the next generation came of age, we were all expecting a few Powers; what we got were such a great damn many of them, far more than folks back then anticipated. A dozen or so Powers grew to a hundred, with maybe ten or fifteen of them being of the really impressive variety. Happened again the next generation, and the next. With every generation there are more Powers, and with every generation the number of exceptional Powers gets bigger. Today there are maybe a couple thousand Powers in the world, maybe three hundred of them what we call Major Powers.

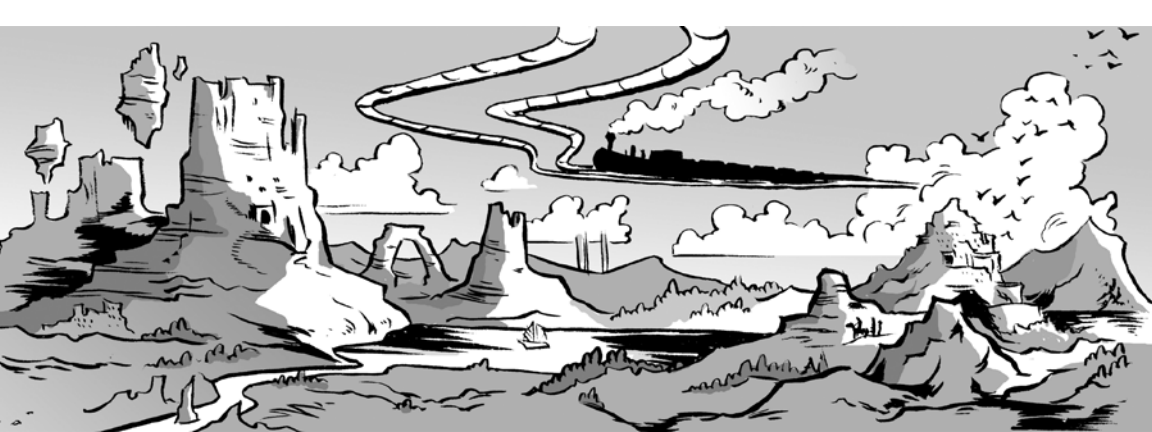
Three hundred.

Nobody knows why someone is born a Power. It ain't passed through family lines, it's got nothing to do with where you live. Maybe something happens to the mothers when they're with child, sparks something in the baby while it's in the womb. Who knows? I certainly don't.

At any rate, after a few generations the Queen realized she had to keep them under control or there'd be a great damn problem to deal with when they figured out they could just do whatever they wanted if they banded together. To her credit, Queen Aurora had a brilliant idea: she gave them a job.

She created an organization called the Queen's Wardens, built a great flying Citadel in Cobalt (our capitol city) for them, and gave them the job of protecting the realm. Today, the Wardens are lawmen and women. They uphold the Queen's laws throughout the Blue Lands and they can act as judge, jury, and executioner when the situation warrants it. They've got a lot of authority but, luckily, most of them live up to the responsibility and do right by the Queen and her people. The Wardens today number about two hundred, most of them Major Powers. They're a force to be reckoned with.

Of course, they're not the only Powers in play. The Wardens mostly come from Cobalt and the Five Points around it; beyond that, in the border towns and the Outlands, quite a few Powers are born out there and not reported. Some of them live normal lives, some of them take over entire settlements, and some become bandits or pirates or outlaws of some other kind. It's them—and the Folk who still fight us—that the Wardens protect us from.



How Things Are

The Blue Lands are frontier country, a place of wildness and lawlessness, of monsters and bandits and pirates, of opportunity and independence and the will of the Queen.

Most of the Folk are shoved up into the Folklands: out of sight, out of mind. Some have integrated into our society but those are few and far between, and they don't always get the warmest reception. They're not quite second-class citizens, but they don't quite have the same rights and privileges (and trust) as everyone else, either. Those ain't the ones you've gotta worry about though; no, the ones that keep us up at night call themselves the Crimson Council. The Council hides somewhere on the fringes of the Blue Lands or maybe in the Outlands and they hatch their plots. They want revenge or justice or maybe just their lands back, and they'll hurt anybody they have to in order to get it. Ain't many of 'em, but they're dangerous, don't mistake that.

In the Blue Lands things are pretty civilized—at least, if you're near Cobalt or one of the Five Points. Beyond that things get wilder and wilder, less and less *civilized*. That's not to say people past the Five Points are savages; they're subjects of the Queen like you or me, they just don't have access to the same kinds of resources and technology as you do in the cities. They make do with what they have, they trade for the rest, and they pay their taxes to the Queen when the Wardens come a-calling. Some of them are a bit independent-minded . . . they'll sometimes refuse to recognize your authority or even draw down on you, if they're stupid or desperate. That's a crime, and you're within your rights to shoot them when they do it. Ain't gonna make many friends that way though.

Beyond the Blue Lands are the Outlands. What a damn mess. The Outlands are technically part of the Queen's domain but we just don't have the manpower to hold onto it. Bit by bit, the holdings out that far into the frontier got taken by petty despots or Powers or bandits or pirates or even Folk. None of them recognize the authority of the Queen or her Wardens, so be careful out there.

But that ain't nothin' compared to the Folklands. The Folk are so steeped in the magic of this land that the world around them changes when enough of them are in one place, so the Folklands are stranger than you can imagine. Never been there myself, but I've heard stories. What you need to know: here there be monsters.

Welcome to the Wardens. Welcome to the world. Ain't what you were expecting, was it?

WILD BLUE

Wild Blue is a setting for *Fate Core*. This is a game about wild lands, rugged people, six-guns, and super powers. There are monsters and bandits and gun-slingers and trains that travel on tracks in the sky.

Wild Blue is a western in that that's where many of its influences come from. The Blue Lands are a mythic wild west, the American West as viewed through the lens of the fantastical. There are monsters and magical beings, but there are also shootouts and saloons and stage coach robberies.

It's a dangerous world out there, but opportunities abound for those willing to help themselves. The Blue Lands are rich with resources both valuable and magical, and these resources are in high demand. Cobalt, the mineral that the land's capitol city takes its name from, is chief among these. You can burn it like coal and, when you do, it generates enormous amounts of power for a long time; a single nugget of cobalt can power a sky train for a week. You can also work it into bluesteel to make it harder, sharper, lighter, and able to channel magical power.

Less valuable but still pretty amazing is skywood, a kind of tree that gets lighter the older it gets. Skywood trees start off in the ground, then uproot themselves after a few years. They float higher and higher as they age and grow, making them harder to harvest. The people of the Blue Lands do harvest skywood though; it's necessary for things like the Citadel (page 256) and the Sky Rail (page 257). Pirates also use skywood to make their great skyships, which they use to attack the people of the Blue Lands.

Beyond its western trappings, *Wild Blue* is also a game about super-heroes. You play a Warden, a member of an elite law enforcement agency with no limit on their jurisdiction. The Wardens are made up entirely of Powers, people born with innate superhuman gifts that set them apart from the general population. They can fly, bend steel bars, throw fire, ride the lightning, and perform myriad other amazing feats beyond the capabilities of normal people. Every gift comes with a cost of equal potency though.

Throughout this book you'll find rules sections like these (all set in a different font). Whitehorse will tell you about the world; we (the *Fate Core* rules monkeys) will chime in when we have to tell you how the world works in the context of the game. These sections contain rules and other game elements to help you bring the world of *Wild Blue* to life.

HOW YOU FIT IN

So how do you fit into all this? Glad you asked.

You're here because you're a Power, and a potent one at that. See, the Wardens don't take just any old Power into our ranks. If you can light a match with your mind, well that's mighty fine for you if you like starting campfires or using stoves. Don't make you a Warden though.

But your Power ain't the only thing that defines your place here. You can fly? Great. You can punch a wall down? Even better. But those things mean nothing if you don't know how to shoot, fight, track, talk to people, find a criminal, or do any of the various and sundry things the Wardens'll call on you to do. Might be that you know some of this stuff already; might be that we'll need to train you up some. When you're done, you'll be a Warden.

Issues

Wild Blue has two issues at work: the threat of the Crimson Council and the danger of living in frontier territory. These are the aspects for those issues:

- *The Crimson Menace*
- *Wild and Dangerous Lands*

Character Creation

Character creation in *Wild Blue* follows the same steps as character creation in *Fate Core*: you choose your aspects, select your skills, and take some stunts. There are two additional steps that you go through as well: choosing your gear and choosing your gift. We'll talk a bit about those later.

When you create your aspects, follow the exact same steps detailed in *Fate Core*, starting on page 30. There's no change for *Wild Blue*. Stunts also work the exact same way, so you can refer to the section on how to create your own stunts on page 88 of *Fate Core*, or you can select stunts from within the skill list starting on page 243 of that book; most of those stunts are still appropriate, though a few might need a little tweaking to make them work in a mythical wild west setting.

For the most part, you use the same skill list presented in *Fate Core* starting on page 98; there are one or two changes. First, remove the Drive skill from the game. There are vehicles within the game, but most of them require an entire crew of people to pilot, so a Drive skill isn't necessary. Then, add the following skills to the game:

Ride

The Ride skill covers riding horses and other more exotic animals, as well as piloting animal-driven vehicles like wagons and stage coaches.



Overcome: Ride is the equivalent of Athletics when you're on horseback (or other-creature-back) or when you're piloting one of the aforementioned vehicles. Use it to do difficult things or to do normal things under difficult circumstances, like moving through rough terrain, squeezing through small spaces, jumping chasms, and so forth.



Create an Advantage: You might use Ride to put some distance between yourself and a pursuer, get some extra speed from your horse, or declare that you know a *Convenient Shortcut* or something similar.



Attack: By default, Ride isn't an attack skill.



Defend: You'll use Ride to defend against most attacks made against you while you're on horseback; you can also use it to defend when your mount is under attack.

Ride Stunts

Animal Ken: You can use Ride as if it were Empathy when you're communicating with domesticated animals; you can also use it as if it were Rapport or Provoke, but you can only communicate basic ideas and simple directions. If you spend a fate point, you can use this stunt on wild animals for the rest of the scene.

Ride Like the Wind: You get a +2 to Ride bonuses made to create speed-based advantages.

The Whistle: You can spend a fate point and whistle for your horse, and she'll show up within a few exchanges. It has to be *your* horse, a horse you've owned for a while and created a bond with. Your horse's arrival can be improbable, but if the GM deems it impossible that she'd be there, you get your fate point back.



Survival

Survival is the skill of living off the land, finding shelter, identifying useful (and dangerous) things out in nature, and generally keeping yourself alive when you're not near civilization.



Overcome: When you overcome an obstacle, you're finding a place to stay during a storm, gathering food for yourself and your friends, tracking a fugitive through the woods, and so forth. Not getting lost is also a big one and, beyond that, navigating from one point of civilization to another.



Create an Advantage: Advantages often come in the form of preparations you've made beforehand, like setting a snare or gathering firewood. An advantage could also represent your knowledge of the land (or an opponent's lack of knowledge). Maybe you know that bush over there has *Riled Up Vipers* in it and the guy with the gun doesn't.



Attack: Survival isn't used for attack.



Defense: Survival isn't generally used for defense either. That said, if the GM wants to model a storm or starvation or some other thing as an attack against you, Survival is the skill you'd be most likely to defend with (either that or Endurance).

Survival Stunts

Herb Lore: As long as you're in a natural environment with access to plants and herbs, you can use Survival instead of Lore to treat wounds and sickness.

Pathfinder: You never get lost, even in the worst weather, even in unfamiliar surroundings. You've got an internal compass that's always right and you always know which way is north and the general direction of major landmarks. If you ever find yourself in truly alien surroundings (like maybe you're in the Folklands and you've never been there and don't know how things work up there), you're still always allowed to make a Survival roll against Good (+3) opposition to know where you are in relation to landmarks you do know.

Tracker: You get a +2 to Survival rolls made to find and follow tracks in natural environments.

So you know your way around a six-shooter, you can ride a horse, you can track a bear, and you can throw your weight around a little. That's good; it's a good start. What do you do when you find that bear? If you're gonna shoot it, you'll need a gun. If you're gonna run away, a horse might be good. Gear's important; don't let anybody tell you different. Out there, in the Wild Blue, a bedroll can save you from the cold and a good rifle can put food in your belly.



Gear

Gear is important for a Warden. Even if you can run at incredible speeds, it might be useful to have a horse from time to time. If you want to take down some bandits, you might want a weapon of some sort. Some skills (like Shooting and Ride) *require* gear in order to use. You can't roll Shooting to take down a thug if your hands are empty, after all.

Gear in *Wild Blue* does two things. First, it provides story justification for certain actions. Having camping gear allows you to make camp without having to worry too much about the elements. No matter what you do, you can't cut someone's throat with your fingers (well, maybe you can if that's your gift), but a dagger suddenly makes that action possible. Any time you attempt an action that requires some piece of gear, look at your list of gear and see if you actually have it first.

That said, not every piece of gear needs to be detailed. You're assumed to have clothes and various odds and ends: matches, a book, a shaving kit, hair brush, perfumes, or anything else that you'd reasonably have on you at a given time. An item only needs to be considered *gear* if it's likely to be fictionally important.

The second thing that gear does is that it acts as an aspect. That is, each piece of gear you have is an aspect that you can invoke, or that the GM can compel. You can invoke a piece of gear any time you use it for a purpose it's suited for. If you shoot someone with your revolver, you can invoke it. If you set your tent up to help you survive the coming snow storm, you can invoke that too. The GM can compel a piece of gear whenever the disadvantages of that item would come into play.

Example: Yardley is trading shots with an enemy gunslinger, and has been for a few minutes. He wants an edge, so he invokes his revolver, describing it as lining up a perfect shot and squeezing the trigger just so. He wounds the enemy gunslinger pretty badly, but he's still got to take the guy out.

While the gunslinger is wounded, he creeps around to the side and lines up another shot. When he pulls the trigger though, the GM compels his revolver: he's out of ammo! Things are about to get interesting ...

When you create your character, you'll start with some gear. Some of this is stuff the Wardens gave you, some is stuff you bought, and some might be stuff your family gave you. However you got it, you start with these things. Feel free to rename these things to suit your particular concept. Where there's a category of gear, there are also examples for each.

- **The Cobalt Star.** This is your badge of office, a representation of your authority in the Blue Lands.
- **A weapon.** Examples: hunting knife, bluesteel sword, Sunblade, revolver, rifle, scattergun, massive club, whip, stiletto.
- **Pick Any Two:** Survival Gear (tent, bedroll, trail rations, rope, etc.), Crafting Toolkit (hammer, saw, chisel, pliers, goggles, etc.), Horse, Scholarly Books (books on magic, nobility, botany, philosophy, etc.), Thieves' Tools (lockpicks, rigged dice, black facepaint, soft-soled shoes, etc.), Spyglass, Doctor's Bag (medicines, poultices, bandages, etc.), Finery, Tools of the Wise (magnifying glass, vials, measuring devices, chemicals and herbs, journals, etc.), or an extra weapon.
- **A personal item,** something important to you. Examples: your grandfather's pocket watch, the doll you had as a kid, your lucky coin, a photograph of your daughter, the ticket from the first Sky Rail trip you ever took, your favorite book, the lockpicks you stole from that old thief.

You can buy gear during play with a Resources roll; this is an overcome roll with passive opposition set by the GM. The opposition is usually between Fair (+2) and Great (+4), but can be adjusted up or down based on availability, how precious or useful the item in question is, or how loath the seller is to part with it. Some things you might buy are:

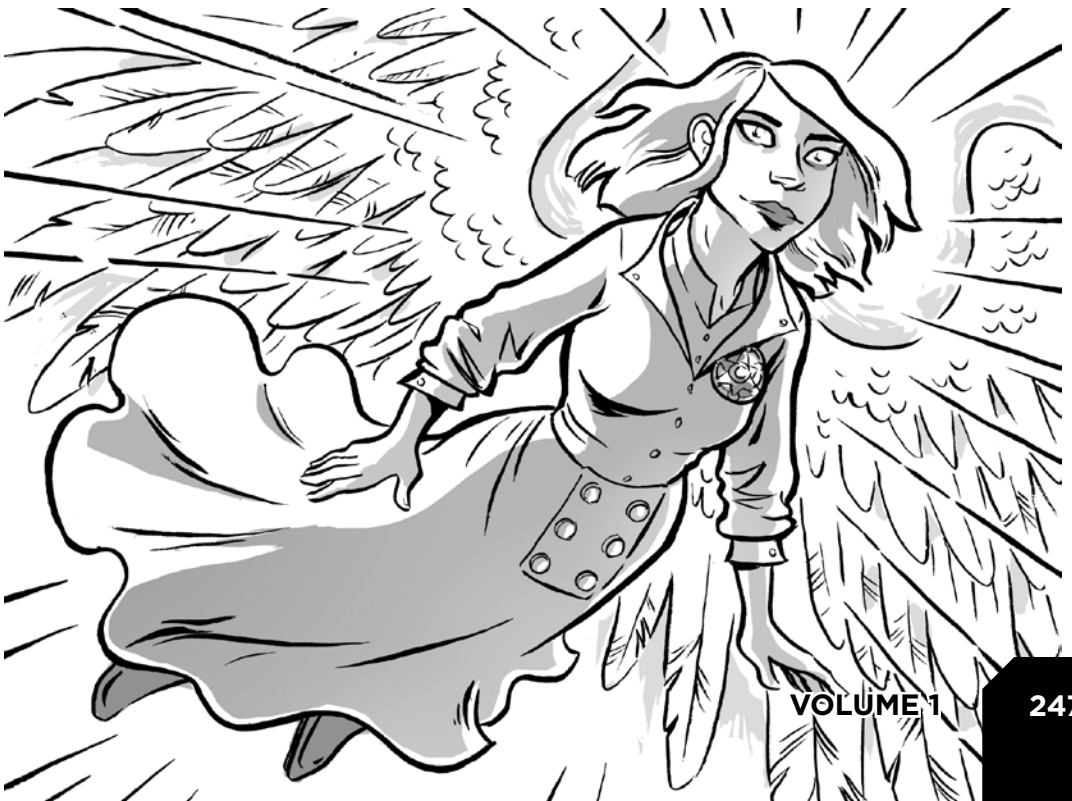
- Ammunition for your gun
- A whetstone
- Cold weather clothing
- Maps
- Gems for trading
- Climbing gear
- Fishing gear
- A bear trap
- A bluesteel dowsing rod
- A skywood skiff
- A wagon
- A horse or mule
- Food
- More weapons
- A big impressive coat
- A hat

Things you *won't* find in the world of *Wild Blue* include:

- Armor (available but considered antiquated)
- Any technology beyond what you'd expect to see in a western
- Huge amounts of bluesteel, cobalt, or skywood (these things are rare and expensive)
- Magic swords, scrolls that cast spells, healing potions, or other similar fantasy tropes

Yep, now we get to it. You've got a gift; you know it, I know it, and we both know you want to use it. Knowing how to use your gift, that's easy. Everyone born with a gift knows how to use it; it comes like instinct, natural as breathing or smiling or running away from something scary. The tricky part, the part that separates any old Power from a Warden, is knowing *when* to use it, and when *not* to use it.

You've probably worked this out for yourself by now but I'm going to go ahead and explain it like you're stupid: every gift has a cost. Ain't nothing in this world for free, and your special magical ability to bounce around from place to place without covering the intervening distance is no different. You've probably noticed it: maybe flying makes you sick to your stomach, makes you throw up if you do it too long. Maybe you can read someone else's thoughts but they automatically know your worst secret if you do. Maybe you're invincible, but only under the light of the moon. Every gift has a cost, and that's the same for every Power out there no matter how much training you've got.



Gifts and Costs

Like Whitehorse said, this is where we get to it: the good stuff. *Wild Blue* is a wild west fantasy, but it's also a game about super-heroes and super-villains, and about power with strings attached.

You play a Warden in this game, and every Warden is also a Power: one of those people born with supernatural gifts that set them apart from everyone else. Some people fear you, some hate you. Some worship you the way a modern person sometimes worships a celebrity or an athlete, but more so. You see, in addition to being powerful and flashy and super-cool, you also keep them safe. You watch over them, protect them from criminals, bandits, pirates, monsters, wild Powers, and the Crimson Council. You're a hero.

The thing that cements your role as a hero is your **gift**, your super-power. Every Power has exactly one of these (there are rumors about Powers born with more than one gift, but those are just rumors, right?), and every gift comes with an associated **cost**. When you create your gift and your cost, you'll fill out a part of your character sheet that looks like this:

I HAVE THE POWER TO _____

. . . BUT _____.

Where it says "I have the power to", what you're filling in there is your gift. This is the superhuman ability that sets you apart from the rest of the population, the thing that you can do and *nobody else can*. Some Powers might have gifts similar to yours, but nobody else has *your gift*. The way you make this true is by phrasing it in a way that makes your gift unique. Sure, others can fly, but only you **fly on wings of light** or **walk on the air as if it were solid**. Treat this a bit like an aspect (because it is, in some ways), but feel free to make it an aspect that you'll invoke a lot more than the GM compels it.

Where it says ". . . but", that's where you put your gift's cost. Every gift has a cost, and the cost must be roughly equal in potency to the gift. They do not, however, have to be directly linked. You can have a gift and a cost that have nothing to do with each other. Maybe one person can **fly on wings of light** . . . but **only in the light of the sun**, while another person can **walk on air as if it were solid** . . . but **cannot say something that is not true**. Both approaches are fine, as long as both gift and cost are likely to come up with the same level of frequency.

But what do they do? I'm glad you asked.

A gift . . .

- Provides justification for fictional actions.
- Provides two stunts worth of benefit.
- Can be invoked as if it were an aspect.
- Gets better with time and experience.

A cost . . .

- Provides justification for fictional actions.
- Provides context and limitation for your gift.
- Can be compelled as if it were an aspect.

Let's tackle these one by one.

A gift/cost provides justification for fictional actions.

This is the most important thing that a gift or cost does: it tells you what you can (and can't) do *without going to the dice*. If you have the ability to ***disappear and reappear suddenly behind people***, then you can do that. When you tell the GM that you want to teleport behind one of the bad guys and stab him in the kidney, the GM says, "Cool. Describe it." If you have the power to do it, you can do it. Period.

GMs, if all you're bringing is passive opposition that a player's gift could reasonably overcome, skip the roll. If the only active opposition comes from nameless NPCs, the player automatically wins. This is the default assumption for gifts. If you're super-strong, you can break down that wall. If you can turn invisible, you can waltz right past those mooks. If you can change your shape, you don't need to roll until someone important gets the chance to see through your disguise.

Costs are similar. If your cost is ***but I cannot speak more than four words at a time***, then you have to obey that limitation. It'll be difficult (and sometimes it'll earn you a fate point; see *compels* below), but it's what you chose for your cost so you have to stick to it.

A gift provides two stunts worth of benefit.

To create the specific game rules of your gift, follow the same rules you would for creating a stunt (*Fate Core* page 88). With a gift though you have *four* shifts of effect to use rather than just two. You don't have to spend them all on the same thing, but you can. If your super-strong, for example, maybe you get a +2 on Physique rolls to lift heavy things and a +2 on Fighting rolls to attack bare-handed. Or, maybe you just hit really hard and you get a +4 to Fighting rolls to fight bare-handed.

These bonuses to skills don't always need to come into play. Refer back to the stuff we said about providing fictional justifications; sometimes you just do it. In many cases, your gift is just going to provide you with automatic success. When the bonuses become important is when important NPCs (or even PCs) start to provide opposition for you. That's when you have to roll, though when you're using your gift your roll will often be really good.

This isn't the case for NPCs who are Minor Powers. Minor Powers have weak gifts that don't have specific mechanical effects. They get the other effects of a gift, but not this one.

A gift can be invoked as if it were an aspect.

Whenever you're pushing your gift above and beyond what you can normally do with it, you can invoke it as if it were an aspect. You get the same benefits: a +2 or a reroll. You can even use your gift to make a declaration.

The important distinction between invoking your gift and simply using it is that, when you invoke your gift, you're doing something special with it. Maybe you're using your wings of light to fly at the speed of light, or maybe you're using your ability to see into the future to see your own death and avoid it (yeah, *that* won't bite you later). Whatever you're doing, it has to be something special. Which leads us into the next heading . . .

A gift gets better with time and experience.

The phrasing of your gift (and your cost) gives you a good idea of what you can do with it and what you can't. What if there's a question though? What if you can teleport to places you can see, but you want to try to teleport somewhere you can see in your mind's eye? That might be covered by an invocation as above (though it would definitely require a skill roll, and might go catastrophically wrong), or you might want to decide that that's something that falls under the purview of your gift. If that's what you want to do, you can expand your gift.

When you expand your gift, you reduce your refresh by 1 exactly as if you were buying a stunt. Then you fill in the blank:

WITH MY GIFT, I CAN _____

This is an additional thing you're capable of doing with your gift. It acts as a gift in its own right in that it can be invoked like your gift and provides fictional justification for you to do things (like teleporting to a place you can recall from memory). It doesn't come with any additional stunt-like benefits, though it might require some rephrasing of your gift's stunt-like benefits.

There's a catch though; there always is. When you fill out the clause above, the GM gets to complete it with:

...BUT _____

You can give feedback, but it's ultimately the GM's decision what goes in that blank. This second cost acts like your original cost, providing context and limitation, providing fictional justification, and allowing the GM to compel it. All power comes at a cost.

You can do this as many times as you want, as often as you want, as long as there's fictional context for the new ability (and cost), and as long as you have the refresh to spend.

Example: Skiff has the power to glide amongst the shadows . . . but she cannot affect another person while she does so. This gift has served her well for a few sessions, but she's ready to expand on it a little. When she and her team are sneaking into a bandit camp one night, she asks the GM, "When I glide amongst the shadows, am I invisible?"

The GM looks at her sideways and says, "Do you want to be? That can be part of your gift if you buy it."

Skiff thinks for a second, then nods, slides over a fate point, and reduces her refresh by 1. She says, "When I use my gift, I can move unseen and unheard . . ." then looks at the GM expectantly.

The GM ponders for a moment, smiles, and says, ". . . but you can only see things within a few yards of you when you do so."

A cost provides context and limitation for your gift.

Strictly speaking, this isn't always the case. You could, for instance, have a cost that has nothing to do with your gift, in which case it doesn't provide much in the way of context or limitation to your gift (though it provides context and limitation to other facets of your character). It's more accurate to say that you *can* use a cost to do this. Earlier we talked about someone who could *fly on wings of light* but *only in the light of the sun*; this provides context and limitation to your ability to fly.

A cost can be compelled as if it were an aspect.

If the GM wants to make your cost a factor, she can offer you a fate point to compel your cost *exactly* as if that cost were an aspect. You can refuse as normal, and it'll cost you a fate point as normal.

Often you'll find that your cost complicates your life without the GM's direct help. In most cases, these are de-facto compels and you should ask for a fate point.

Examples

There are examples of gifts and costs throughout the rest of this book. Look specifically at Windhammer on page 257 and Whitehorse on page 260 for examples of gifts and costs the PCs might have. Marian Voltar on page 262 is an example of a Minor Power, a character with a gift weaker than what a PC has access to. Finally, the Folk often have more than one gift; each of these can be taken individually as an example of something a PC might have, though some Folk gifts are equivalent to a Minor Power's gift. For some Folk examples, check out Black Tom on page 265, the Green Lady on page 267, and the Fair Lord on page 271. Also, if you want *even more* examples, here are some sample gifts, costs, and mechanical effects for you to pilfer, modify, or disregard as you like.

I have the power to stir the weather up to violence . . . but I can't control it once I get it started.

Effect: You can create an advantage based on volatile weather whenever you're outside, regardless of the current weather conditions. You don't have to make a roll, and you get to invoke it once for free. It's going to get compelled a lot though.

I have the power to teleport from shadow to shadow . . . but I always leave something behind when I do.

Effect: You get a +4 bonus to any rolls made to overcome obstacles having to do with distance or physical obstacles in your way, provided you're in a shadow and there's a shadow on the other end.

I have the power to throw fire from my hands . . . but doing so uses up my own body heat.

Effect: You can make fire-based attacks with Will, either at range or up close, at a +2. Whenever you do, the GM may compel your cost to deal a 1-point physical stress hit.

I have the power to read the thoughts and emotions of others . . . but I can't always separate them from my own.

Effect: You can make Notice checks at +4 to create an advantage by discovering someone else's aspect or by reading someone else's thoughts. If you discover someone else's aspect, the GM can now compel that aspect as if it were one of *your* aspects. If you're creating a new advantage, it works like a regular advantage except that the GM is encouraged to compel it against you.



I have the power to shrug off all physical harm . . . but others always suffer when I do.

Effect: Whenever you take physical stress, you can choose to ignore it. If you do, the GM may compel your cost in order to make someone else take that stress instead (or to create some other form of collateral damage that will cause suffering), and she gets to choose who or what it affects.

I have the power to create machines that *should not work* . . . but they break down spectacularly at inopportune moments.

Effect: Given enough time, you can create virtually any piece of gear you can think of, even if it has no business working in the world of *Wild Blue*. At some point in the future though, the GM's going to compel it, and it's going to be really, really bad for whoever's using it.

There's something else you've gotta do once you're trained up and ready to become part of the Queen's Wardens: you have to choose a name. See, when you become a Warden, it's for life. You're putting your old life down and picking a new one up, and there's no going back. Wardens don't retire, we don't quit. We die or we become teachers to the younger generation or we get some office in the Citadel, but once you're a Warden you're always a Warden.

To symbolize your new life, you choose a new name. It can be whatever you want, but have a care: this is what your fellow Wardens will most likely call you from now on. We've all got one; hell, Whitehorse ain't the name I was born to, but it's what I chose to be called when I took up the mantle. You don't have to stop using your old name—ain't no rules about that. But we expect you to answer to your new name, and it's what most people'll call you. Choose wisely.

THE WIDE WORLD

There's a lot of world out there for you to see, and most all of it'll try to kill you at some point or another. You're young; you haven't been to most of the places I'm about to talk to you about. Hell, that's why I'm about to talk to you about them. Buckle up, kid. The world's a weird place.

THE BLUE LANDS

You ain't never been outside the Blue Lands, have you? Well, you might think you know what's what around here, but I'm going to fill you in on some of the stuff you might not know. If I talk about stuff you already learned in your history books, keep your mouth shut and assume that what *I'm* telling you is the truth.

The Blue Lands is the name we gave to our home, those east-most lands on this continent, with the Vast Ocean on the one side and a whole lot of unfriendly territory on the other. The most "civilized" parts of the Blue Lands are the Five Points, five settlements that draw an uneven sort of star if you trace them on the map. The lowest point is Cobalt, our capitol city, where we first settled. The other points are Laketown, Crystal Falls, Tom's Crossing, and Ressen. The Blue Lands technically stretch for a ways beyond the Five Points, but I wouldn't suggest venturing out there unless you've got a posse at your back.

Cobalt

Issue: Noisy, Crowded, and Dirty

When we fled across the Vast generations ago, we landed at a place both beautiful and dangerous. We fought the Native Folk back, carved out a small pocket of land for ourselves, and we settled. Town didn't have a name for nigh on five years, and even then, the name came gradually.

See, for a while we struggled. We had food and shelter, but we brought all these machines over from our old home, and we had no coal to power it. Coal's pretty scarce in these parts. But before too long we found something even better: cobalt. Cobalt's this bluish mineral, you find it underground. You can build things out of it; forge it into bluesteel to make it stronger, sharper, and to give it *power*; and you can even burn it. You burn a hunk of cobalt the size of my hand, it'll power a mid-sized engine for weeks. We found it aplenty in the caverns beneath the town and with it we found a means of powering our machinery, of thriving. Also, we found a name for our town.

That town grew, became a city, and became the greatest city in the land. Nowadays, Cobalt's home to thousands, it's the seat of the Queen's government, it's where you'll find the Wardens' Citadel, and it's the biggest trading hub in the Blue Lands.

The Blue Palace

Issue: Den of Intrigue

Seat of Queen Aurora V, the Blue Palace is something to behold: sparkling blue stone, strong walls, and spires that reach to the sky. It's beautiful, but don't let that fool you; the place is a den of vipers and they'll bite you if they've a mind to.

The Palace is where the politicians and the courtiers and the nobles squabble over lands and titles and whatever fashions or slights are worth arguing about this week. Queen Aurora stays above it—mostly—but even she's not completely immune to the politicking that goes on in that building.

It's also home to the Queen's Guard, a bunch of highly-trained fighters (not Powers; at least, not Major Powers) who are supposed to be the spearhead of the military but who mostly sit around and guard the Queen and make us do all the damned work.

If you're going to the Blue Palace, you'll have to deal with the Royal Chamberlain, Martin Thoss. I've met him a few times and he seems a decent kind of man, but I don't trust him. You don't spend that much time with bickering backstabbers without doing a little of it yourself. He's got a keen eye for liars, so best to tell the truth around him if you can help it. His family lives on the grounds and he's fiercely protective of his daughter, Abigail. She's almost seventeen and turning some heads, but I'll be surprised if he lets anyone near enough to court her anytime soon.

MARTIN THOSS, ROYAL CHAMBERLAIN

Aspects: The Queen's Right Hand | "Don't even LOOK at Abigail." | Takes a Liar to Know One | Too Clever By Half | The Greater Good

Skills Great (+4): Rapport

Good (+3): Deceit, Empathy

Fair (+2): Contacts, Provoke, Lore

Average (+1): Athletics, Crafts, Investigate, Ride

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts Popular (FC 121)

Ear to the Ground (FC 101)

Lie Whisperer (FC 109)

Gear Queen's Seal
Deep Purse



The Citadel

Issue: A Place Apart

The Citadel's where you'll be going when your training's done, when you're a Warden. See, we train here in Ressen but the main force of the Wardens proper live and operate out of the Citadel in Cobalt. It's our offices, our base of operations, our home. When you become a Warden, you give up your old life; you're not the person you were and you can't live that life anymore. The life of a Warden is a hard one, and sometimes a lonely one, but we stand between these lands and those who'd destroy us.

The Citadel itself is a . . . unique building. It's a fortress, a tower, but it sits atop a piece of floating rock, tethered to the ground by great chains. It floats a couple hundred feet above the Queen's Sound, casting its shadow down onto entire neighborhoods of the city.

Inside the Citadel you've got living quarters, training grounds, meeting rooms, stores, places to eat, and just about anything else a growing team of Powers needs to stay fully functional and keep protecting the Blue Lands.

The whole thing is run by the Lord Warden Windhammer. He's one part steward, one part military captain, one part lawman, and one part bear. Seriously, the guy's huge. Stands about a head taller than any other man I've ever met, stacked thick with muscle, huge bristling beard, and hands like great rock hammers. With all that power you'd think he'd be slow, but that's where his gift comes in. See, Windhammer's *fast*, fast like you wouldn't believe. That's what makes him dangerous. The muscle, the girth . . . that's all smoke and mirrors, misdirection. His enemies get an idea of what he's like in a fight from what he looks like, and that's usually the one and only time they make that mistake, one way or another.

WINDHAMMER, LORD WARDEN OF THE CITADEL

Aspects: Leader of the Queen's Wardens | Emotions are Weaknesses
| Faster than He Looks | Slow but Terrible Anger | The
Weight of Experience

Skills Superb (+5): Will
Great (+4): Fight, Physique
Good (+3): Contacts, Crafts
Fair (+2): Athletics, Lore, Rapport
Average (+1): Provoke, Notice, Ride, Shoot

Stress Physical: Mental:
+ 1 extra mild consequence slots

Stunts Tactician: You get a +2 to Fighting rolls made to create
advantages in battle.
Heavy Hitter (FC 111)
Killing Stroke (FC 111)
Danger Sense (FC 117)

Gift I can move with unexpected and blinding speed . . . but my
enemies always see me as the greatest threat.

Effect: You get +4 to Athletics rolls made to create
advantages when you move with unexpected speed.
“Unexpected speed” in this case is literally speed that
others don't expect you to use. Once they start expecting
you to move quickly, this bonus disappears.

Gear Lord Warden's Badge
Sandalwood Revolver

The Sky Rail

Issue: The Safest Travel, If You Can Pay

We started building the Sky Rail about twenty years ago, and in that time we've managed to connect Cobalt, Ressen, Laketown, and Crystal Falls to each other, and we're working on Tom's Crossing. It's a train, like we used to have in the old country, but we've put our own twist on the idea.

Each of the settlements that the Rail connects has a rail tower, a tower a couple hundred feet tall. Between those towers stretch hundreds of miles of track, track made of cobalt alloy and skywood, hovering there a mile or so into the sky. The Sky Rail rides those tracks, strong and fast and comfortable like a train, but light like only cobalt and skywood can manage.

Why would we build a train in the sky? How does that help us? Well, the ground is pretty dangerous. Monsters and bandits and hostile wildlife make travel a risky proposition at best, though it is a lot cheaper than rail travel, even if you factor in the cost of hired guards. We lose merchant caravans every day to the perditions of the wild blue, but on the Sky Rail you're safe. For the most part. Hell, there's still the pirates you have to worry about from time to time, but they're a rare occurrence and we're getting better and better at dealing with their attacks. The Sky Rails' the safest travel there is. Expensive, but safe.

If you want to travel the Sky Rail, you'll have to deal with the Rail Captain. She oversees all rail travel in the Blue Lands, making sure that everyone who rides the rails is vetted and deemed safe. Now, she doesn't do all this personally; she delegates. But every Rail Officer deals with her on a personal basis, she knows them all by name and by sight, and you might as well consider them to be extensions of her authority.

I don't want to give you the impression that she's some sort of unfair taskmistress; that's not the case at all. She's firm but fair, and she keeps the Rail running smoothly and safely day after day. There's not many who would want her job, and there's even fewer who would do it even half as well as she does. But don't cross her if you ever want to ride the Rail again.

AMERILLE QUINN, RAIL CAPTAIN

Aspects: "I keep the Rail running." | Zero Tolerance for Trouble | Firm but Fair | Nobody Knows the Rail Better | Mechanical Genius

Skills
 Great (+4): Crafts
 Good (+3): Lore, Notice
 Fair (+2): Contacts, Empathy, Provoke
 Average (+1): Rapport, Resources, Shoot, Will

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts
Rail Master: +2 on all Lore rolls made to recall information about the Sky Rail.
Better than New! (FC 103)
Okay, Fine! (FC 120)

Gear
 Railman's Tools
 Revolver
 Badge of Office



Ressen

Issue: Targeted by the Crimson Council

Ressen's a coastal town, a port. We don't do a whole lot of sea trade, but what we do generally comes through Ressen. It's a smallish town, made of wood and some stone, filled with fishers and merchants and people going about their business. Of the Five Points, it's farthest away from the Outlands, which means it's generally the safest from bandits and raiders and pirates and such. We still get a few, mind you, and we get our fair share of wild beasts and Folkbeasts who come our way, but overall we're pretty insulated from the real dangers. I know for a fact that the Crimson Council are planning an attack within the next few years, but that's a little ways off.

Beyond that, and far more importantly in my estimation, Ressen is home to the Academy, where all Wardens go to train. The Academy's been here for more than a hundred years, ever since the Queen decreed the Wardens into existence. Every Power is tested at a young age and the ones that turn out to be Major Powers get sent here, to the Academy, for training.

We teach you to fight, to survive, we assess your skills and your natural inclinations, we nurture your gift, we teach you to deal with the cost, and we induct you into the Wardens. Once that's done, you're off to the Citadel for your first assignment and it's out of my hands.

I ain't in charge of the Academy, but the bigwigs here seem to think I churn out the best and the brightest so I get the lion's share of inductees, and most of the Wardens of this generation were trained by my hand. I used to be one of you, young and eager and more than a little scared. I trained in the Academy, then I went to the Citadel and I made a name for myself as one of the best killers in the Blue Lands.

That surprise you? Probably not; I'm sure you've heard the stories. Hell, some people still use those stories to scare unruly children. It's been a good twenty years since I was young enough to go on a mission though, so they put me here. Can't say I blame 'em; my gift means I know what you'll become better than you do, and I can train you accordingly. It used to make me one of the best trackers in the land, now it makes me the best teacher. Funny how life works out.

WHITEHORSE, ACADEMY TEACHER

Aspects: Grizzled Old Gunslinger | Seen Too Much | Spare the Rod...
| Cold Blue Eyes | Was a Killer, Now a Teacher

Skills
Great (+4): Shoot
Good (+3): Provoke, Survival
Fair (+2): Lore, Notice, Will
Average (+1): Athletics, Contacts, Fight, Ride

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts
Quick on the Draw (FC 125)
Tracker (page 244)
Armor of Fear (FC 120)
Provoke Violence (FC 120)

Gift I can see pieces of the future . . . but I'm not allowed to change what I see.

Effect: You can spend a fate point to have a vision of the future. The GM might tell you what it is, or she might allow you to tell her what it is. Either way, you get +3 to any rolls you make to act on the information, as long as you're ensuring that your vision comes true.

Gear Cobalt Star Old Revolver
Short Sword



Crystal Falls

Issue: Five Miles from a Bomb

Cobalt may be named for our most valuable commodity, but Crystal Falls is where most of it actually comes from. A few years after we started mining cobalt from the earth beneath our capitol city, we figured out how to tell where you could find a rich deposit. For some reason or another that we don't understand, there's a blue luminous crystal that grows atop large cobalt deposits. There were a few small crystal growths in and around Cobalt, but nowhere near what we found when we settled Crystal Falls.

The town's named for the crystal deposit. It grows up the side of a cliff five miles from town, looks like crystal is raining down like water, like a great waterfall of glowing blue shards. That's where the town takes its name from. It's the biggest crystal growth we've found so far, and beneath it is the source of the vast majority of our cobalt. It's a rich deposit, one we mine relentlessly, and it provides us with power, strong steel, light metals for our Sky Rail, and components for the Wise to use in their experiments.

Here's the thing though, the thing I ain't told you yet about unworked cobalt: it's volatile. You might've guessed that from the fact that we burn it for energy, but let me tell it to you plain. Cobalt in its unworked form is highly explosive when it comes into contact with an open flame, so you've gotta take precautions to mine it. For one thing, no open flames in the mines. Since that crystal that grows near cobalt deposits glows, that's what we use for light down there. It ain't as bright as a torch or a lantern but it lasts a bit longer and it has the advantage of not detonating the entire mine. I shudder to think what would happen if some fool or blaggard lobbed some dynamite into that mine. That's one of the reasons it's guarded all day every day.

The town itself is small but bustling. Cobalt and glowing crystal are its main exports, and it imports just about everything else. There's not much farmland in the area and Crystal Falls don't even sit on a body of water, so they have to import all their food and water from other places in the Blue Lands. They do some hunting, but if that cobalt deposit ever dries up, so will the town.

The other thing Crystal Falls has plenty of is the Wise. They study the cobalt and the crystal and even the skywood they import from Tom's Crossing and they perform their experiments and forge bluesteel and find all manner of clever uses for our various magical resources. Chief among them is Marian Voltar; she's the foremost scholar of magical stuff in the Blue Lands and she lives in Crystal Falls. Magical materials, uncanny weather, supernatural beasts—she knows more about all of that than any other person living, and she's learning more all the time. She even managed to replace that arm she lost with one made of bluesteel, though nobody knows quite how she did it.

MARIAN VOLTAR, WISE WOMAN

Aspects: Chief among the Wise | Curiosity Untempered by Caution
| Bluesteel Arm | Smartest One in the Room | People Get
in the Way

Skills Superb (+5): Lore
Great (+4): Investigate
Good (+3): Crafts, Notice
Fair (+2): Contacts, Resources, Will
Average (+1): Burglary, Deceit, Fight, Provoke

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts Always Making Useful Things (FC 103)
I've Read about That! (FC 115)
Attention to Detail (FC 113)

Gift I can change the color of my spit . . . but my peripheral
vision is tinted green.

Gear Laboratory Toolkit
Lots of Books Cowl of the Wise

SO YOUR SPIT CAN CHANGE COLOR, HUH?

This is something that a Minor Power might be capable of. Minor Powers have gifts that are mostly useless or, at best, provide very minor utility. Their costs are similarly small. They still behave like aspects, but they lack the stunt-like rules punch that Major Powers' gifts get, and they're mostly there for color. Most Powers in the world of *Wild Blue* are Minor Powers; however, Minor Powers don't get to be Wardens. If you're a PC you're a Warden, and if you're a Warden, that means you're a Major Power. Stuff like this is strictly for NPCs.

Laketown

Issue: Internal Power Struggle

Laketown's where we get all our fish. Heh. Well, that ain't *all* we get from Laketown. There's also a bunch of medicinal herbs that grow in and around Lake Pullic, and the lake farmers grow and harvest them so the apothecaries and the Wise can make our medicines and remedies. The river that flows from Cobalt to Laketown and up north is also a fast, safe way to get around, and we need boats for that. The Boatwrights' Guild takes care of that.

Laketown's an unusual place. See, it's not just a town on a lake; the town is built around and on top of the lake. There are some buildings on the shore, but there's a network of bridges and walkways with barges all throughout the lake itself, and that's where most of the people who work the lake in one way or another live. There ain't no accurate maps of Laketown on account of the fact that the barges and bridges are always shifting and moving with the currents, and the people move them around as alliances and friendships—as well as feuds and rivalries—change.

See, that's the other thing Laketown's got a lot of: political struggle. There's more guilds in Laketown than any other place in the Blue Lands, and I'll be moon-addled if I know why. There's the Lakemen's Guild, the Boatwrights' Guild, the Apothecaries' Guild, the Fishers' Guild, and half a dozen smaller guilds all scrabbling for the scraps the bigger ones leave behind. The town's ruled by a Council of Guildmasters, the richest and most powerful people in Laketown all coming together to argue about the best way of doing things. Each Guildmaster thinks that his or her own guild is the one that should rule Laketown, and they all politic and scheme to make sure that happens. Place is a mess, and it's a wonder anything ever gets done.

The current top dog is Cedric Unger, Guildmaster of the Lakemen's Guild. His guild is responsible for cultivating and harvesting the lake's herbs, and old Cedric has leveraged his control of the raw medicine to get the Apothecaries in his camp as well. He's also got the Boatwrights on account of the fact that a lot of those herbs can be turned into stuff you can use to treat boat wood, make it stronger, waterproof, fireproof and such. Since Cedric has made the other two Guildmasters rich, they're happy to keep him on top of the pile . . . for now.



CEDRIC UNGER, GUILDMASTER OF THE LAKEMEN'S GUILD

Aspects: Power-Hungry Merchant Prince | Trust is for Fools | Richest Man in Laketown | Family Man | Patron of the Arts

Skills
 Great (+4): Resources
 Good (+3): Empathy, Deceit
 Fair (+2): Contacts, Rapport, Lore
 Average (+1): Crafts, Investigate, Ride, Shoot

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts
 Money Talks (FC 123)
 Savvy Investor (FC 123)
 Eavesdropper (FC 113)

Gear
 Guildmaster's Ring Fine Revolver
 Deep Pockets

Tom's Crossing

Issue: An Uneasy Accord

Tom's Crossing is the smallest of the Five Points, barely more than a village on the edge of the Crying Forest. There's not many who'll live there; most are scared of the Forest, and more than a few are scared of Black Tom.

Near on eighty years ago, people came to settle Tom's Crossing and found someone already living where they wanted to set up shop. Black Tom is a Folk-spirit, a mischievous creature bound to the area by ancient oaths and such. He wasn't too keen on letting our people settle the area, but they struck a bargain with him. Every year, on the first new moon of the year, they give him a child. In exchange, he keeps Tom's Crossing safe from the critters that lurk in the Crying Forest—not to mention the fact that he keeps the village safe from *himself*.

People in Tom's Crossing don't like this deal; they don't like having to give up one of their children every year. Thing is, they're terrified of what old Tom'll do if they renege on the deal, not to mention what the Forest'll do. So why live there? Why do people even stay in Tom's Crossing at all?

Skywood.

Skywood's an uncanny kind of wood; the older the tree gets, the lighter it gets. It starts off planted in the ground like any other tree, but as it gets bigger it uproots itself and starts floating in the air. By the time it's full-grown, a skywood tree hovers a good mile up, just floating there like some kind of cloud. The Crying Forest—specifically, the part of the Crying Forest near Tom's Crossing—is one of the only places you can find the stuff, and the people of Tom's Crossing harvest it.

Without skywood, the Citadel wouldn't be possible. More importantly, without skywood we wouldn't have the Sky Rail, and travel around the Blue Lands would be a good bit more dangerous. Tom's Crossing is a dangerous and terrifying place to live, but the people who live there do a great service for the rest of us. As long as we need skywood, we need Tom's Crossing to stay where it is.

BLACK TOM, FOLK-SPIRIT

Aspects: Mischievous Folk-Spirit | Bound by Ancient Oaths | Honor the Accord | Always Watching, Never Where You Expect | Inhuman Hungers

Skills Great (+4): Deceit

Good (+3): Burglary, Stealth

Fair (+2): Lore, Notice, Will

Average (+1): Athletics, Fight, Provoke, Investigate

Stress Physical:

Mental:

Stunts Mind Games (FC 104)

Deadly Shadows: When you attack from a position of hiding or when your target's guard is otherwise down, you can use Stealth instead of Fighting for the attack.

Ninja Vanish (FC 126)

Slippery Target (FC 126)

Gifts I can manipulate the shadows . . . but not in the light of the sun.

Effect: You get a +4 to Stealth rolls made to create advantages based on shadows and the placement of shadows.

I can change my shape . . . but my eyes are always bright gold.

Effect: You can make an overcome action with Deceit at +2 to convince someone you're a different person or animal. They oppose with Notice, which they get at +2 if they already know your tell.



The Crying Forest

Issue: Most Haunted Place in the Blue Lands

There's a legend about the Crying Forest that dates down to the war with the Folk, just after we landed here. They say that the Forest was the site of a great battle; our people came across an entire contingent of Folk soldiers—as well as some non-combatants they were escorting to safety. They were resting, sleeping during the day as the Folk are wont to do. Sensing vulnerability, the captain of our army—a cold and callous man—ordered his men to swoop down upon the slumbering Folk and murder every last one.

They did; it was the bloodiest day in the history of the war, and not just for the Folk. You see, shortly after our soldiers had killed the last of those Folk, their spirits—and some say the spirit of the land itself—rose up and took vengeance upon them. Every soldier, the captain included, was transformed into a tree and, in the span of a few minutes, where once there was a bloody field of butchery, there was now a great and hoary forest. They say you could still hear the wailing of men and Folk alike, each lamenting their own fate.

Now, I don't know if that legend is true; I never put that much stock in legends. What I do know is that the Crying Forest is one of the most dangerous and haunted places in the Blue Lands. Things live in those trees that prey upon anyone who ventures in—human or Folk—and those who venture in do not often return. And you *can* still hear the wailing of the trees at night.

If you venture into the Forest, the creature you have to worry about most is the Green Lady. Some say that the captain of the Folk who died there rose back up in spirit form and continues to haunt those woods. Some say she's a manifestation of the Forest's anger, a primal spirit of nature, red in tooth and claw. Either way, she's bad news.

THE GREEN LADY, VENGEFUL NATURE SPIRIT

Aspects: Vengeful Spirit of the Crying Forest | Bound without Physical Form | Red in Tooth and Claw | Protect the Forest | Haunted by Grief

Skills Great (+4): Will
Good (+3): Athletics*, Fight*
Fair (+2): Empathy, Lore, Physique*
Average (+1): Investigate, Notice, Stealth, Survival
*The Green Lady can only use these skills when she inhabits a physical form; they replace those of the host if they are higher.

Stress Physical: □□□* Mental: □□□□

*This replaces the host's physical stress track if it is higher.

Gifts I can control plants and animals . . . but only within the Crying Forest.

Effect: You can make attacks and create advantages through plants and animals within the Crying Forest as if you were making the attack yourself. When you do, you roll Will to do so.

I can inhabit humans and inspire them to violence . . . but I have no physical form.

Effect: You can make a Will attack against a human's Will to possess that human. You enter the human and move with her, and the human gets an aspect, *Green Lady's Puppet* which the GM can compel in order to allow you to attempt full possession for a time. When this happens, roll Will versus the human's Will again; if you succeed, you control the human for a time and your skills replace those of the human if they are higher. If you fail, the human staggers about stunned for a few moments but otherwise fights off your attempt at control.

THE OUTLANDS

If it ain't part of the Blue Lands, it's part of the Outlands. They're vast and untamed and very damned dangerous, so have a care when you venture out there into them. And you *will* venture out into them.

See, one of the things a Warden does is venture out into dangerous places in order to tame them so that the Queen can send her soldiers and builders and farmers and so forth out into these newly tamed places and expand the reach of the Blue Lands. There's a great big world out there to see, and it's full of stuff we want.

Of course, it's also full of people and things that don't like us much.

The Sky Kings

Issue: Can't Trust a Pirate

Sky Kings. Heh. That's what they call themselves, hunkering out there in their mountain holes, building their great flying ships, sending raiding parties into the Blue Lands to attack traveling merchants or outlying villages or even the Sky Rail from time to time. Mostly I call 'em pirates, because that's what they are.

It ain't clear how they got there. They're human, like us, and judging by how developed their gifts are and how many Powers they've got (at least, that we've seen), they've been here for about the same amount of time we have. One theory is that one of our boats got separated from the rest, washed down south in some squall or another, shipwrecked on the shore at the foot of the mountains, and settled those lands lacking any other options.

They thrived though. Maybe not so much as we did, or maybe it's just because there ain't as many of them, but they've got a well-defended little piece of territory out there and a whole mess of skywood to build their skyships with.

Their leader—their *current* leader—is a man named Corvis Laird. Never met the man myself, but from what I hear he's ruthless and dangerous, and a Major Power besides. The man can lift things with his mind and, since this includes people and himself, that means his boarding parties are the most effective around. Ruthless and dangerous as he is though, I also hear he's got a twisted sense of honor. Likes single combat for settling things, won't attack a defenseless target. Of course, that don't mean his pirates won't.

CORVIS LAIRD, PIRATE KING

Aspects: Ruthless Sky-Pirate | Code of Honor | Loyalty through Fear
| "I'll provide for my subjects." | Live By the Sword

Skills Superb (+5): Fight
Great (+4): Provoke
Good (+3): Stealth, Will
Fair (+2): Contacts, Crafts, Physique
Average (+1): Athletics, Rapport, Resources, Shoot

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunts **Armor of Fear** (FC 120)
Killing Stroke (FC 111)
From the Rigging: When you're fighting on ship of any kind, there's always something convenient to climb on or swing from within arm's reach. When you do so, take +2 to any Athletics roll to create an advantage.

Gift I can move things with my mind . . . but I cannot speak an untrue word.
Effect: You can use Will to move objects and people with your mind within your zone and adjacent zones. You can use this to create advantages, but not to attack; an unwilling subject can resist you with Physique.

The Crimson Council

Issue: Driven by Vengeance

The Crimson Council are the single greatest threat to the people of the Blue Lands today. That ain't exaggeration; they attack our settlements, kill our people, stir up our more violent neighbors, release foul beasts into our wilds. They may not be the root of *all* our problems, but they certainly start a good number of them.

Not that they're entirely unjustified in their anger. After the war, we pushed the Folk up into the north, into what we now call the Folklands, and we forgot about them. We took their lands for our own, left them with the hardest, driest, coldest earth that was left over, and we forgot they were there. A few stayed behind though. Some of them integrated into our society. Hell, some of them still live among us, and though most people don't exactly trust the Folk, we tolerate them and we let them stick around.

That wasn't enough for some of them though. Some of them were bitter, angry, and resentful at our treatment of them. They pulled back into the Outlands, into the wilds, and they plotted and stewed and grew and became a unified front against us.

That's what the Crimson Council is: a unified group of Folk who have every reason to want us driven from the Blue Lands once and for all. There ain't many of them, but they're each powerful on their own and they have the advantage of being long-lived (or maybe even immortal; hell, I don't know), so they can afford to be patient.

Chief among them is a being we call the Fair Lord, though I don't rightly know what he calls himself. He's tall, maybe eight feet, and so beautiful it hurts to look upon him. Lean, muscular, with a face that's both child-like and masculine, and great antlers that grow from his head like a crown of bone. As beautiful as he is, his insides are twisted by hate. He hates us more than anyone else does, and it's that hate that keeps the Crimson Council thriving, plotting, and doing bad things in the dark.



THE FAIR LORD, LEADER OF THE CRIMSON COUNCIL

Aspects: Twisted Lord of the Folk | Driven by Hatred | Fairest of them All | "I've seen thousands of your lifetimes." | Schemes within Schemes

Skills
Superb (+5): Rapport
Great (+4): Provoke, Physique, Will
Good (+3): Athletics, Fight, Lore
Fair (+2): Contacts, Deceit, Empathy, Notice
Average (+1): Crafts, Investigate, Resources, Survival

Stress Physical: Mental:

Stunt
Indomitable (FC 127)
Killing Stroke (FC 111)
Long-Lived: Because you've lived so long and survived so many battles, you get two extra 2-point physical stress boxes.

Gifts
I have the power to cow people with my beauty and words . . . but the touch of iron burns me.
Effect: You can use Rapport to make mental attacks, provided people can both see you and hear your voice. You get a +2 on such attacks. However, increase any stress dealt by iron weapons by 1.
I can walk unseen among the mortals when I wish . . . but I cannot stand the sound of music.
Effect: You can use Will as if it were Stealth to walk unseen amongst mortals, even when you don't have anything to hide behind or in. Shadows, concealment, and line of sight are all irrelevant; you are effectively invisible unless someone succeeds on a Notice roll.

Gear Scepter of the Fair Kings Moon Sword

THE FOLKLANDS

Issue: The Rules Don't Apply

To the north is a hard stretch of bare land. Not much good soil, not many trees, not much in the way of anything of value.

That's where we pushed the Folk after we beat them.

Fair to say they probably don't like us much but, unlike the Crimson Council, they leave us alone for the most part. Oh sure, every once in a while you get some ogre or Folkbeast or high lord or somesuch with an axe to grind, and they either come down to the Blue Lands and wreak havoc until we put a bullet to 'em (or, in some cases, several dozen), or they join up with the Council and become a more long-term threat. But mostly the Folk keep to the Folklands and leave well enough alone.

That's fine by most people down this way, but I've gotta wonder: how do they survive up there? Not much for food or water or shelter, not much of anything really. How do they keep going?

Thing you've got to understand about the Folk is that they're a people steeped in the magic of this land. You know how every successive generation of our people born here sees more and more Powers? Well they were here for *centuries* before we got here. Every last one of them is a Major Power at the very least; some even have two or three gifts, a thing that's unheard of amongst our people. It's possible that magic sustains them.

Of course, there's another possibility. The legends and even the history books talk about how strange and wondrous this place was when we arrived, how everything was different and powerful and alien and full of magic. Over the years it seems like it's gotten . . . less so. *We've* gotten more magical, but maybe we're leeching that power out of the land itself, and it's becoming more and more . . . normal. Now, I don't have anything to show you that proves any of this; it's just a theory right now. But what if wasn't the Folk who were steeped in the magic of this land? What if it was the other way around?

There's something that supports that idea, though it's hardly verifiable fact. Every now and again people venture up into the Folklands, and some of them even come back. When they do, they rant and rave about a place where natural law doesn't apply, even natural law that's bent as far as it is in the Blue Lands. They talk about a place of magic and bounty and rules so alien the mind can't make sense of them. They all say similar things, but they all wind up in the nuthouse too. See, they ain't right in the head when they get back.

So yeah, maybe there's something to that. Maybe the magic of this land comes from the Folk, and we're just stealing the remnants of what they left behind. Maybe they're making their land up north just as magical as the Blue Lands ever were, turning them into some sort of alien paradise or somesuch. I don't know. Like I said, all just theories.



THE JOURNEY BEGINS . . .

From here you'll take the Sky Rail to Cobalt. You'll present yourself to Her Majesty Queen Aurora the V, there'll be a ceremony and a feast and a new class of Warden Recruits will become a part of the Queen's Wardens. You'll go to the Citadel; you'll get your assignments, your team, and your home. You'll travel, you'll fight, you'll enforce the Queen's law and you'll face down the most dangerous creatures in this land. You're trained now.

Are you ready? Are you prepared for the danger, the violence, the utter *strangeness* you'll find out there in the wild blue? Hell, I don't know. You're trained, and that's where my job ends. I've done what I can for you.

The rest is up to you.

—Whitehorse

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