

CODE OF HAMMURABI

FATE + FICTION

is our line of original and classic short stories. Situations, characters, and other elements from the story are expressed as Fate RPG Aspects. Read and enjoy the stories on their own, then mix the Aspects you like into your own Fate Core or Fate Accelerated game!

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Fate Core System
Fate Accelerated Edition
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Fate was originally
created by Rob Donoghue
and Fred Hicks

By Gary E. Weller

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. It is also a truth universally acknowledged that a single woman in possession of a driving need to sustain a particular lifestyle must be in want of the aforementioned man. Tender and particular planning from both camps would lead hero and heroine to their perspective prey but only one would stand victorious.

Dancing and pursuit was what normally followed such an enticing and most dangerous game. There were always the lusty heartfelt passionate stares from across the court where the 'War of the Roses' was played out, however much of the primping and posing was so much useless pageantry. By the time that the single man in possession of a good fortune found his wife to be, so much more had been played out underneath his proverbial nose.

The craft that was performed was so much more than the alluring glance from gaily painted almond-shaped eyes hidden underneath raven locks. This mistress was no harlot or courtesan that laid in wait for the testosterone laden gentlemen to make her their mark.

It is a truth almost universally unknown that it was quite the opposite.

She was more than a sportsman or huntress when it came to the pursuit of her chosen prey. She was a battle-hardened champion that had plans within plans to ensure that her campaign would be won in a time and manner of her own choosing. No ordinary trollop could even imitate such a superlative assassin of what once was an innocent endeavor. A geisha paled in comparison to such a commander of the ways and means of lust, desire and what could be mistaken as love by any innocent bystander.

The most dangerous game is never about what could be misconstrued as the Alpha and Omega of romantic sojourns. Quite simply the objective of the melodramatic queen is often about financial recompense, revenge, boredom or just to see if the mark would give in to his unreal amorousness. Other times it was about building a power base in which to launch other attacks of the heart and mind.

A single coy twitch of an eyelash or the flash of a provocative smile from her could lay countries to waste and put countless bedraggled citizenry to their ultimate demise. More importantly her machinelike prepossessing accomplishments could put the lady hawk in a position to rule one of the most powerful entities in the solar system.

It is also a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of good fortune in want of a wife was one Vincenzo diAgriggio, President and CEO of Occultech Integrated Systems, the single legal entity in ownership of the planet Saturn and its precious ice rings. In addition, it is a truth universally acknowledged that the single most powerful woman in possession of a driving need to expand her dominance and stature was the Lady Jessica Leanne Francesco, agent provocateur and the single admissible entity in ownership of the affections of one Vincenzo diAgriggio.

Situation Aspects

The gaily lit arenas of corporate financiering, investment, and power brokering

Along with references to corporations owning entire planets, we have our setting.

Proletariat scum

There is a distinct class system defined by vast income disparity.

Bring about balance to our separate worlds.

A goal for the narrator and, in a game, this is a goal for the player characters.

Character Aspects

Agent provocateur and the single admissible entity in ownership of the affections of one Vincenzo diAgriggio

Not only a character that stirs up trouble, but is defined by the nature of her relationship with another specific character.

A battle-hardened champion that had plans within plans

Literally or figuratively, she's a geisha-assassin.

Within the shadow of legitimate occupations that seem to prevail in the space of the gaily lit arenas of corporate financiering, investment, and power brokering there is a special need for those in my profession. In the cold and vulgar words of the proletariat scum that cannot even dream to afford the services I can render unto them, I am a rogue, a scoundrel, a boogeyman.

Proletariat and bourgeoisie, as dissimilar as they are, truly have no idea of the amount of raw and undiluted power that I wield within my particular tradecraft. My blackened soul and devilishly genius mind creates the scenarios that cause the truly great and powerful to move and dance at my whim. Candidly, there are times that I perfunctorily perform my duties as blackguard and rapsallion *pro bono publico* as it suits me to impale certain members of the ruling class upon their own weapons – both literally and figuratively.

In the most current iteration of my services to the public works brought me to the Albergo Sole al Biscione in order to bring about the compliance of a certain gentleman of no uncommon persuasion within the solar system to release his stranglehold upon the ambrosia that was necessary for life itself. It is usually the behavior of the crème de la crème of the bourgeoisie to ignore the needs and ravings of the vast population of proletariats and minor bourgeoisie alike in lieu of increasing rank and profit, regardless of the potential lethality to one's soul.

Vincenzo diAgriggio was one such bourgeoisie of the bourgeoisie who was in need of education towards the fact that he was indeed in possession of a weakness that could be exploited. The man's affections towards the Lady Jessica Leanne Francesco were something of renown and a thing of increasingly egregious proportions. The couple was known to conduct the abduction of scads of working proletariats from a variety of ethnicities and wage spectrums onto a fast-track shuttle to an off-world facility in order to entertain the two in a reproduction of the infamous games of Gaius Sempronius Gracchus.

Sadly the two did not understand that one of the aforementioned individuals that were appropriated with much force and vigor and lack of concern or consequence was my own Alpha and Omega. Even though the couple did have knowledge of those such as I, and what we were collectively used for, they did not know of my particular existence or did they care about the fact that I was in a truth universally acknowledged and known by myself, my family and my close friends that I was a married man in possession of a vast and well established fortune in want of pleasing my wife.

The vile couple was soon to be separate as they had no knowledge that I was about to invoke the Code of Hammurabi and bring about balance to our separate worlds.

About *Code of Hammurabi*

by Berin Kinsman

I hope you enjoyed Gary's story. That would make me happy, and I know it would make Gary happy. Yet even if you didn't, I hope you can see how even a piece of fiction you don't like can be mined for ideas, and ways that those ideas can be remixed and reimaged and used as material for your own Fate RPG game.

Now let's deconstruct the story, pick out some of the elements that are present, and discuss ways that you might use those as possible Aspects in your own Fate RPG game. Understand that the following interpretations are only *my* interpretations, and not the only possible interpretations. The object of Fate+Fiction is to help you learn how to mine stories for pieces and parts that you can adapt for your own purposes.

Let's begin by trying to summarize the story. We start with some philosophy about what men and women, or at least certain types of men and women, look to get out of relationship. We then introduce two characters in such a relationship, and their status and importance to the political and economic stability of the solar system. Finally, we learn that identity of the narrator, and his mission to break the couple up (more or less) in order to undermine their collective power and restore balance.

The Situations

There are a few Situation Aspects that we can pull out of this story. These Aspects, or something like them, can then be adapted to your own Fate game. Let's take a look.

The gaily lit arenas of corporate financiering, investment, and power brokering: Along with references to corporations owning entire planets, we have our base setting. Events in a game will center on the power plays of the rich and fabulous.

Proletariat scum: There is a distinct class system defined by vast income disparity. The narrator doesn't have much respect for the *bourgeois* ruling class either, but seems to have contempt for the lower classes. I would Compel attitude towards class to try to sabotage social interactions with members of those classes.

Bring about balance to our separate worlds: A goal for the narrator and, in a game, for the player characters. The implication seems to be self-rule for the individual planets, but it could also mean an end to income disparity or a host of other things. Invoke this one when your character is performing some action that advances the cause, with a limit or once per game session or mission. As a gamemaster, Compel tis one to guilt the player characters into staying focused on the big picture.

The Characters

Now let's examine the characters in the story. For your own Fate game you don't need to use these exact characters. Look at existing player characters and supporting characters, and see who might fill the same roles in relation to the Situation Aspects. Who might the relevant Character Aspects, or something similar, be appended to?

Lady Jessica Leanne Francesco. She is described as an *agent provocateur and the single admissible entity in ownership of the affections of one Vincenzo diAgriggio.* This is not only a character that stirs up trouble, but is defined by the nature of her relationship with another specific character. She's also a *battle-hardened champion that had plans within plans*, which could literally or figuratively mean that she's some sort of geisha-assassin. How you choose to interpret that last part can also establish some facts about the setting, and how realistic or over-the-top you want to make things.

Character Aspects

The single legal entity in ownership of the planet Saturn and its precious ice rings

Corporations are people, or at the very least get defining Aspects as if they're characters.

I am a rogue, a scoundrel, a boogeyman

The type of person you need when saving the universe consists of breaking up a relationship.

The objective of the melodramatic queen is often about financial recompense, revenge, boredom or just to see if the mark would give in to his unreal amorousness

The motivation for and goal of a romantic relationship, for that character.

It was about building a power base in which to launch other attacks of the heart and mind.

Another Aspect shedding light on a character's views of romantic entanglements.

Consequences*Restore balance*

The implication is that the narrator's actions will set things right. This means that a whole series of events will be set in motion as the logical consequence of what he or she intends to do.

Boosts*The Code of Hammurabi*

Not the actual code, but the rules of romantic entanglement in this world. Play by those rules, and get a Boost to the applicable social interactions.

Vincenzo diAgriggio, described as *President and CEO of Occultech Integrated Systems*. Most of his identity is defined by his job title, including his relationship with Lady Jessica. I can picture this character as introducing himself by both name and title, and Invoking that for everything from getting a good table at a restaurant to getting out of a speeding ticket.

Occultech Integrated Systems. Corporations are people, or at the very least get defining Aspects as if they're characters. When you have nameless, expendable characters that work for an organization, you can assume that the organization's goals are their goals; as GM, I'd Compel them to do so. To some degree, any employee of Occultech can Invoke their relationship to the company to get out of trouble. The name Occultech could also imply the existence of magic or supernatural elements within the setting.

The narrator, who describes his- or herself with the phrase *I am a rogue, a scoundrel, a boogeyman*. This is exactly the type of person you need when saving the universe consists of breaking up a relationship. We don't know exactly what the plan is, but the broad skillset implied by the descriptive Aspect means that nearly anything goes and nothing's off the table so long as it gets the mission accomplished.

There are tons of phrases in here that can be pulled out as Aspects relating the motivations and goals of romantic relationships. For example, *the objective of the melodramatic queen is often about financial recompense, revenge, boredom or just to see if the mark would give in to his unreal amorousness*. There's also *it was about building a power base in which to launch other attacks of the heart and mind*. No one these seem to reflect healthy or lasting relationships with any genuine emotional content, and reflect back to the Situation Aspect establishing that everything is about money and power.

Consequences

Not every action has a clear or specific consequence, and sometimes we need to dig a little bit to discover them within a story.

Restore balance carries the implication that the narrator's actions will set things right. This means that a whole series of events will be set in motion as the logical consequence of what he or she intends to do. As gamemaster you can spell out those things. Not all of them will be positive; at the very least, surviving members of Occultech will probably want revenge, which can set up future adventures and stories. Things may backfire and lead to more complications, rather than the balance that was sought, and the people that hired the narrator and/or the player characters might impose Consequences for failure.

Boosts

Boosts are another set of elements that don't always make themselves explicit within a story. It often takes some probing and a little bit of imagination to discover something that could potentially provide a Boost in a Fate game.

The Code of Hammurabi: Not the actual real-life code, but the code of romantic entanglements established in this setting. Follow the rules of how men and women are expected to behave in these situations, and what the appropriate responses to various romantic power plays are, and the character will get a bonus to related social interactions. It's as simple as going with the flow of the established tropes.

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