

DAK KODAK

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

George Eastman watched his friends leave with a bit of sadness in his heart. He knew it was going to be the last time he saw them. They were good workers, businessmen and confidants. George was going to miss them all. Without them, he knew that the entire world would have already succumbed to the Dak. Very few actually knew about the species let alone see them in their natural form. George kept that secret to himself and a scant few within his company that was founded so long ago.

He only became aware of the Dak by accident. It was during the planning of the trip to Santo Domingo. The enormous amount of devices that he was trying to pack for the trip leaked into his spare clothes and toiletries. It was too late for George to not be affected by the chemicals that had already soaked into the silk pocket-square. With eyes burning from the combination of chemicals, George Eastman's vision quickly and surprisingly came into focus.

The beings seemed to shimmer into an existence without the knowledge of everyone else around them. George looked up and down the street and couldn't believe what he was seeing. Between the men and women carrying about their business throughout the day were the unspeakable *things* that flickered in and out of reality. Strange pops and sizzles came from them.

Altogether too many of the beings seemed to group together communicating in a series of flashing lights from orbs circulating around their misshapen and lumpy heads. What George took as their faces were little more than a bristly series of insect-like antennae that absorbed the light from the circulating orbs. The bristles radiated colored sparks all along the misshapen head and then arced to another of the alien's lumpy and bristled heads to start the process all over again.

Three of the things were in tow surrounding Roland Jenkins, one of his mother's boarders. The man was bedraggled as the sparks passed through him from one Dak to another. Jenkins' eyes were puffy and dark circles lined his eyes as if he were punched in the nose.

"Dak skzzzzzzzzat."

"Dikdak,"

"Dakdak stzkozat dek-DAK."

As he approached the house, George could see the strain on Jenkins' face. He often complained of headaches and now George could see the cause of them. The Dak were passing their lightning through his body and soul.

It was then that George Eastman knew God's plan for him. More pops and sizzles sounded off from further down the street. Everywhere that George looked, there were more Dak slithering in that impossible gate near people passing their lighting to each other through the men and women walking about Rochester.

Divine Providence gave him the power to see the unholy monstrosities and he knew that God would give him the tools and knowledge to somehow destroy them. George didn't know what else to do but try to get a picture of the beasts.

Situation Aspects

The entire world would have already succumbed to the Dak.

There I some sort of alien or extradimensional menace, invisible and unknown to the people at large, but the main character and his cohorts are in the process of saving the world.

As quickly as humanly possible, George Eastman began to set up the bulky mass that he was to bring to Santo Domingo with his mother. The task was important. He had to capture the image on the glass plate and get the image developed. Others had to know that these creatures, these *Dak* were in the world. His destiny unfolded before him within colored snaps and pops from an alien race. Colors flooded his mind as he ran. Soon, he began to understand them.

“He’szh dak-shtzzzzztak.”

“Kidakdek shzee us!”

George prepared the plate and slid it into the wooden frame and opened the aperture to illuminate the coated glass. Immediately he regretted it. The noise on the other side of the curtain was terrible and loathsome as the *Dak* seemed to stop in place. High pitched screams mixed with equally loud pops and sizzles began to fill the air.

“Kodak! Kodak!” Slowly George came out from underneath the curtain as the image burned itself into the silver salts that were coating the glass plate. He let the aperture of the camera close as many of the *Dak* came to a halt in the street. The color faded from their orbs and the lightning passing between them ceased. The tentacled, deformed bodies did not move as the wind took their particulate like smoke from a stack.

“Tzzze meat hazzt kodak uzzt!” The sickly voice came from behind George. Turning, he faced the *Dak* and stared. The imprint of the alien visage burned into his mind. The *Dak* squelched and popped ambers and reds at George. He could only smile at the feeble attempt at the attack. He could live with a headache.

It would only take three years of experimentation for George to perfect the next stage. He, Henry Strong, and the others that were brought into the fold fought the *Dak* at every turn – with every picture. The secret war began in earnest in 1888 when the Kodak Camera was given to the public for only \$25.00.

George looked to the window and smiled at the light shining through it. It only took five decades to defeat the *Dak* in the United States. Still, there was much work to be done. Every amateur and professional photographer or shutterbug was destroying the *Dak* with every click of the shutter. Yes, they pressed the button, Kodak did the rest.

Pain lanced George’s hands as he grabbed a pen and wrote out the note for his friends and loved ones. The scrawl simply read, “*My work is done. Why wait?*” George knew that some wouldn’t understand the action he was about to take. His loyal soldiers would know too well. They knew the threat the world faced.

George had to concentrate to keep his hands steady as he opened a drawer in the writing table and withdrew the pistol. The fight would go on, but it would have to go on without him. George smiled again at the light, pointed the pistol at his heart and pulled the trigger.

About *Dak Kodak*

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. The alternate reality here is that George Eastman invented the Kodak camera not just to advance the art of photography, but as a weapon against an invasion by invisible aliens he calls the Dak.

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.

Without them, he knew that the entire world would have already succumbed to the Dak: It seems as if the Dak are causing harm to humans without even realizing it. They communicate with one another, so they seem intelligent. While the harm to humans has to stop, and Eastman's solution seems ingenious in its ability to fight the fight without alerting the public to the truth and causing a panic, one wonders about the ethics and morality of what boils down to genocide against a species that doesn't seem actively malicious.

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?

George Eastman is an alternate version of a real person, an inventor and entrepreneur. He did invent the Kodak camera, the first to use roll film and bring photography into the mainstream. His last words in this story are his actual last words, and he did in fact commit suicide, although it was likely due to chronic pain caused by a degenerative spinal disorder that had grown to be more than he could bear. In this story, perhaps Eastman has guilt about initiating the genocide of intelligent beings who don't seem to realize the harm they're doing.

The Dak are described as being lumpy with bristly hair that carries electrical arcs. These electrical arcs also seem to be how to communicate with one another and, incidentally, cause damage to humans who get in the way of those arcs. They seem to exist on another plane, or are invisible to humans, who can't see or hear their electrical discharges either.

The phrase *the beings seemed to shimmer into an existence without the knowledge of everyone else around them* would indicate that they're not necessarily hostile toward humans, and are as oblivious to the existence to humans as humans are to them. This makes it doubtful that they're malicious, although in your own Fate RPG game anything is possible.

Character Aspects

The beings seemed to shimmer into an existence without the knowledge of everyone else around them.

To some degree the Dak seem as oblivious to humans as the humans are to them.

Communicating in a series of flashing lights from orbs circulating around their misshapen and lumpy heads

The Dak are strange looking, and communicate via some form of electricity.

Consequences

The Dak were passing their lightning through his body and soul.

The Dak's means of communication or whatever it is they're doing, poses a real threat to the health and well-being of humans.

The color faded from their orbs and the lightning passing between them ceased.

What happens when you take a photograph of the Dak.

Boosts

Yes, they pressed the button, Kodak did the rest.

In a scenario where characters are aware of the Dak and what they're doing, the Kodak would give a bonus toward killing them.

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. Here's what I found.

The Dak were passing their lightning through his body and soul. Even though the humans and the Dak can't see each other, the energy exchange has an effect on both. The Consequence of getting in the middle of such an exchange, for humans, is a drain of what seems to be life force.

The color faded from their orbs and the lightning passing between them ceased. The tentacled, deformed bodies did not move as the wind took their particulate like smoke from a stack. This special effect is what happens to the Dak when they get in the frame of a photograph taken by a Kodak camera.

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.

Yes, they pressed the button, Kodak did the rest. If you didn't want to make the destruction of the Dak an automatic thing whenever a Kodak picture was taken, then the camera would create some sort of bonus to killing the Dak.

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Dak Kodak

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Edited by

Stefan Livingstone Shirley

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