

SEMPER FIDELIS

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!

ASPARAGUS JUMPSUIT

We believe in literacy, curiosity, and creativity. Through these things individuals, societies, and the entire world are enriched and transformed. The Fate + Fiction line was created to help uphold and promote these values.

Building Better Worlds
AsparagusJumpsuit.com



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

By Gary E. Weller

The knife was sharp. He made sure it was sharp. His father had taught him how to make the blade sharp. Gunnery Sergeant Greene wouldn't have had it any other way. There was no other way. It was his way or the highway.

"John, never give your enemy any mercy," he could hear his father's gravelly voice in his ear, intoxicating his mind, punctuated with the Gunny's fists.

Today was different. Gunny had taught him to make the knife sharp. Gunny had trained him to show no mercy. John stared at the knife in his father's chest.

It was done.

Welcome to Fate + Fiction

By *Berin Kinsman*

I've been playing and gamemastering tabletop roleplaying games since 1979. What keeps me in the hobby aren't cool new settings or game mechanics. It isn't the steady stream of interesting new monsters, or the awesome new powers that I can use to kill them. It's the creative and social dimensions inherent to these types of games. No matter what the genre, or blend of genres, are present, what I love is the ability to hang out with my friends and collaborate on telling a story. Good settings and good mechanics certainly help to facilitate that, by presenting possibilities that players and gamemasters can work with and build upon. But at some point, it all comes down to your own skills, and your own creative imagination.

The point of the Fate + Fiction line from Asparagus Jumpsuit is to present you with a story, pull out some of the possible Fate RPG Aspects that can be mined from it, ask questions, and explore the possibilities. We want to get you thinking about characters and situations in different ways, with the goal of helping you to bring more of that depth and texture into your tabletop games. By learning to look at fiction analytically, we hope to create better gamemasters, better players, and better overall storytellers.

Our mission statement in the sidebar isn't a put-on. We really do believe that literacy, curiosity, and creativity are what make the world go 'round. Tabletop roleplaying games are a good training ground for those skills. You have to read, for a start. Reading games launched me into reading fantasy, science fiction, horror, and eventually classics and literary fiction. I fell in love with history because of roleplaying games, read a ton of biographies, and even developed an interest in science. I became a writer because of roleplaying games, even though most of what I write these days has nothing at all to do with fantasy or genre fiction. Tabletop roleplaying isn't just a game to me, for that reason; it's important, and it needs to be supported, promoted, and shared.

About *Semper Fidelis*

This isn't a very long story, only 100 words, but there's a lot of character in there. We don't know much about John Greene, but we can imagine the important bits and extrapolate or invent the rest. We know he's been up to and, to at least a

Situation Aspects

John stared at the knife in his father's chest.

John has this image in his head before the deed is even done. It's his goal. In an expanded story, it's what he's preparing for and working toward.

Character Aspects

His father had taught him how to make the blade sharp.

John Greene, or any other character with this Aspect, will pay attention to the little details, especially about their equipment.

Gunny had trained him to show no mercy.

There is an unflinching dedication to completing the mission, without emotion, no matter how unsavory the job.

Consequences

That a knife in the chest will make you dead is obvious. That beating your kid will lead to resentment and revenge killing is a less obvious consequence.

Boosts

The blade was sharp. He made sure it was always sharp.

Anyone using one of John Greene's knives (or of Gunny's, for that matter) will get a boost because the equipment is top quality and well maintained

small degree, why. There's enough here to pull the essences of John Greene and his father out and either build characters around them, or instill the bits of them important to the story into other characters.

The plot here is more of a hook, but it's a good hook. It begs other questions, and those questions are the things a gamemaster can flesh out to build stories with. What happened to make John hate his father so? It's implied that Gunnery Sergeant Greene beat him, but what if there's more to it than that? Did he beat him simply because he was an abusive father, or was there something sinister or unnatural about John? What if revenge for childhood abuse wasn't the motive for the killing at all? What if Gunny was up to something truly evil, and had to be stopped? What if John is actually the hero of this tale?

Situation Aspects

There's no overt "adventure" here that sets up player characters to go from A to B and accomplish X, Y, and Z. There won't be in most Fate+Fiction releases. But there are clear Situations, which a gamemaster can leverage and exploit. We know, or can infer, that Gunny is (was) a strict military man and enforces rules. We have an abusive household. We have an opportunity to learn military skills. We have a plot for retribution.

There are other things that are implied about the world. Did Gunny serve in a war, or was he a peacetime Marine? Was the war (or peace) on while John was growing up? If you drop this into another setting, you can incorporate the military situation there into the background of John and Gunny's situation. Change the Marines to anything from an order of medieval knights to futuristic space troopers, and the situation between father and son remains the same.

Character Aspects

We only have two characters in the story, and one of them is dead. If you want to expand the story, it's easy to add John and Gunny at an earlier time. It's easy to impose their character traits onto existing characters in your game as well. We don't know what John does for a living, or what else has happened in his life. We don't know much about Gunny. We can create them from whole cloth, or we can drop Aspects relevant to the story onto other characters to allow this story to be told.

John's mother could also be an important character. Where is she? What did she think and feel about the dynamic between father and son? How could her presence (or absence) affect the outcome of this tale?

Consequences

Consequences here aren't as clear as *potential* Consequences. Of course a knife in the chest is going to kill a man, even a veteran Marine who may have survived combat only to be murdered by his own son. One Consequence is that when Gunny beat his son, he planted the seed of hatred that blossomed over time. In Fate+Fiction, we'll discuss Consequences in the basic format of "if X happens, then Y will result".

Boosts

The knife isn't just a knife. It's an agent of irony. John didn't kill Gunny with a knife; Gunny was killed by his own demand for precision. The irony would extend if a player character intervened, disarmed John, and killed or injured him with his own meticulously sharpened weapon.

This is the sort of boost we love pointing out in Fate+Fiction. It's great to have a +1 sword, but it's great when the boost is really the result of a theme, trope or literary device at play in the story.

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