

FATE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 5
HALLOWEEN 2016

CODEX

INNOCENCE LOST

MISSING CHILDREN LEAD TO
SOMETHING DARKER IN AN
URBAN FANTASY THRILLER

THE PLAGUE OF PULPS

PURSUE DARK MAGICS
LURKING IN FORGOTTEN
MANUSCRIPTS

ESCALATION DICE

IMPOSE NEW COSTS
WITH DICE THAT
RAISE THE HEAT

IMPROVISATIONAL MYSTERIES

DESIGN EXPLORATORY
INVESTIGATIONS WITHOUT
EASY ANSWERS



FATE **CODEX**

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 5 HALLOWEEN 2016

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ABOUT *THE FATE CODEX* – VOL. 3, ISSUE 5

by MARK DIAZ TRUMAN

This year's Halloween issue has a special focus on urban horror, a genre that grew near and dear to my heart long before I worked on *URBAN SHADOWS*. I'm always excited to put together our annual Halloween issue—we featured zombies for Volume 1 and suspense/thrillers for Volume 2—but this year's issue may be my favorite yet. Urban horror presents our world through a dark mirror, monsters lurking just around the corner from heroes who may become monsters themselves...

We're proud to have André La Roche return for another piece, contributing an urban horror Quick Start titled *Innocence Lost* that draws on his piece for the last issue (*The Arch*). André's Quick Start is a perfect example of what I love about our mostly-monthly publication cycle: if we get a piece we love in one issue, we can build on it for the next!

In addition to André's piece, we've also got a collection of articles that can fuel more urban horror at your table: a Building Block with horrific pulp pamphlets, systems for escalating conflict in fun ways, and a great essay from Felipe Real on how to run improvisational mysteries in Fate. In other words, this issue has everything you need to make urban horror work in Fate, including a few things you probably haven't even thought of before today.

Again, thank you for all your support! This has been an interesting and tumultuous year for all of us at Magpie Games, but we're excited that the Fate Codex still retains your interest!



Editor in Chief
Mark Diaz Truman



PLAGUE OF PULPS

by DON BISDORF

Thousands of years ago, Babylonian sorcerers established contracts with the immaterial beings that modern occultists refer to as the Watchers. From that time forward, any magician who knew the particulars of the contracts could call upon the services of the Watchers.

Generations of magicians have preserved the Babylonian Contracts, guarding them from anyone who lacked the understanding necessary to employ the contracts safely. The magicians who owned these documents always copied them in their original Sumerian language, so that no outsider could decipher them.

Deciphering the Secrets

In 1896, a Philippine secret society known as the Katipunan was planning a revolution to win their country's independence from Spain. Among their allies was Severino Reyes, a scholar with access to the Spanish government's collection of occult manuscripts. Reyes stole a copy of the Babylonian Contracts and fled to the Philippines, where he prepared a series of short translations that would allow any reader to evoke the power of the Watchers.

Reyes wrote twenty-one different sorcerous manuals in Tagalog, the language favored by the Katipunan. Each manual was less than twenty pages long and contained the incantations and responses necessary to compel the Watchers to action. The Katipunan distributed several sets of these manuals to various generals and agents before Spanish police discovered the operation and arrested those involved.

In practice, the manuals proved not to be as safe or reliable as Reyes hoped, and it's unclear whether they affected the course of the revolution beyond producing a few unanswered mysteries and gruesome footnotes. But this was not the end of Reyes's legacy.

Ten-Cent Grimoires

Reyes's manuals continued to multiply after the conflict ended. Handwritten and typewritten copies drifted around the globe, translated into language after language, passing into the hands of anarchists, disappearing into the libraries of collectors, or hiding in the pockets of criminals.

By 1910, the term "Manila Manual" had come to stand for any of these copies of Reyes's work. Many of these documents are nonsense-filled counterfeits, while others are incomplete or inaccurate. Only one out of a hundred will be a true Reyes translation, and the original Katipunan manuals are even rarer. Complete and functional translations of Reyes's manuals carry as much power and danger as the originals.

A true copy of an original Manila Manual will be in Tagalog. Readers unfamiliar with Tagalog may find this to be an obstacle, but the original Tagalog manuals are the most accurate means of contacting the Watchers other than the actual Babylonian Contracts.

A proper Manila Manual contains a collection of incantations, written phonetically to reproduce the original Sumerian phrases of the Babylonian Contracts. If the reader correctly pronounces the incantations, the Watchers will scratch their responses on the fabric of reality, producing glowing white symbols that hang briefly in the air. These may be counteroffers or requests for clarification, and the manual will give the reader the necessary incantations to use in reply.

The Manila Manuals

Few people know for certain what all of the manuals were intended to achieve, but some of the rumored powers of the manuals include:

- Traveling great distances with a single step by leaving the rational confines of our universe.
- Curing any wound or illness, at the cost of seeing the condition return at some unpredictable time in the future.
- Summoning a chaotic storm capable of destroying any fortification.

Using a manual requires no magical training, though a strong education may help the reader to comprehend important nuances of the text. A character who wishes to employ a manual must use the Lore skill twice: once to examine the manual and identify any flaws, and once to recite the incantations according to the manual's instructions.

EXAMINATION

A careful magician who finds a Manila Manual should determine its authenticity and accuracy before using it. Even if a manual is genuine, the notes that accompany the incantations may not correctly represent the effects the magician should expect.

The character must study the document for several hours, and then overcome using Lore against Great (+4) opposition. The GM may reduce the opposition if the document is a clumsy forgery, but should not reveal the opposition level to the player.

- On a failure, the character believes that the document is genuine and will produce exactly the results the document claims.
- On a tie, the character knows whether the document is genuine or a useless forgery. If the incantations are genuine but will have a different effect than the document claims, the character will not detect this until performing the incantation.
- On a success, the character knows if the document is genuine, and if so, the character also knows exactly what effect the incantations will produce.
- Success with style grants the same benefit as a success, and grants a boost the character can use when performing the incantations.

INCANTATION

The reader uses Lore a second time to recite the manual's incantations. Opposition for this task may be as low as Fair (+2) if the document is a competent translation. If the document is poorly organized or littered with errors, increase the opposition.

- On a failure, the PC may choose to either achieve the desired result at a major cost, or may choose to fail with catastrophic results. Failure may be preferable if the cost of success is too terrible to contemplate. The GM should explain the consequences of both options before the PC chooses.
- On a tie, the PC may choose to achieve success at a minor cost, or produce a slightly inaccurate version of the desired results. For an inaccurate result, the effect might be weaker than desired, or might affect unintended targets, or might

include unwanted side effects. The GM should explain the potential cost and inaccurate result before the PC chooses.

- Success achieves the document's intended result, which may not be what the reader was expecting, based on the result of prior examination.
- Success with style allows the PC to adjust the results slightly. The PC might make the effect more potent, or might narrow its scope to prevent collateral damage, or might introduce a delay before the magic takes effect to give allies time to get clear.

Front: It Came from the Newsstand

It's the year 1913 in Chicago, and Alfonso Petrelli's newsstand is the place to go for information on the latest current events, or just some cheap entertainment to brighten your evening. Though Petrelli is a short-tempered and suspicious proprietor, his stand is always well stocked with the latest newspapers and dime novels.

He has a few reliable suppliers, and turns away any hopeful peddlers who aren't already in his good graces. But when a salesman with an odd accent and an armful of magazines approaches him, Petrelli finds that he has bought a dozen in spite of himself. The magazines are strange looking, but Petrelli has paid good money for them, and he intends to earn a profit on them. He places twelve copies of *The Words of Doom* on his shelves, not suspecting the havoc they will unleash in Chicago.

THE MANUAL

The Words of Doom is a clumsy English translation of one of the original Manila Manuals. On its cover is a drawing of a tuxedo-wearing man, casting rays of energy at a cringing thug in a wrinkled suit. The manual's introduction explains that it contains magical incantations to utterly destroy a human target.

Examining the document for authenticity is a task with Great (+4) opposition. Success will reveal that the document is genuine, but its true purpose is not what it claims. The manual's incantations exhort the Watchers to transform the victim into a savage, inhuman monstrosity. The creature will attack anyone it can find and will not stop until someone kills it.

PLAGUE OF PULPS

To use the incantations, a character must overcome using Lore against Good (+3) opposition.

- On a tie, the character may choose to inflict either a mild or delayed transformation. A mild transformation leaves the victim disfigured, but still sane and recognizably human. A delayed transformation produces the full effect at any time from a month to a decade in the future, according to the whims of the Watchers.
- On a failure, the incantations will either transform a completely unintended target chosen by the GM, or the reader of the manual must herself be transformed.
- On a success with style, the character reading the manual may specify the first victim the transformed creature will seek out. After this first murder, the creature will be uncontrollable.

CAST

Alfonso Petrelli, newsstand owner; Clement Watts, an unhappy advertising executive who picked up a copy of *The Words of Doom* on a whim; Dorothy Earle, an overworked salesperson; Anna Scheben and David Holyoke, teenage students with a grudge against a teacher; Lillian Decker, an elderly and powerful occultist who will do anything to possess all copies of the Manila Manuals.

COUNTDOWN CLOCK

12:00-3:00: An anonymous salesman provides Petrelli with twelve copies of *The Words of Doom*, and then vanishes from the city. Over the course of a few days, Petrelli sells all but three of the magazines.

3:00-6:00: After Dorothy Earle treats Clement Watts rudely at the department store where she works, he decides to use the power *The Words of Doom* promises him. He stalks Earle after her shift ends, catches up to her at a train station, and uses the manual to transform her. She mauls several people before falling off the platform in front of an oncoming train, which kills her.

6:00-9:00: Lillian Decker arrives in the city, on the trail of the salesman who approached Petrelli. She abducts Petrelli and violently interrogates him to learn who bought the magazines. She leaves him critically wounded in an alley, and starts to hunt for the new owners of the manuals.

PLAGUE OF PULPS

9:00-10:00: Anna Scheben and David Holyoke transform their school-teacher, who goes on a bloody rampage through the school. When the police arrive, the former teacher kills several police officers before they can bring him down.

10:00-11:00: Decker catches up with Scheben and Holyoke and demands *The Words of Doom*. She is neither polite nor patient, and when the encounter turns violent, she uses her magic to kill them.

11:00-12:00: Decker finds Watts, but he transforms her before she can employ her power against him. Watts is now convinced that he is unstoppable, and continues to use the manual to prey on the many citizens of Chicago he carries a grudge against.

WHAT IS A FRONT?

A front paces the plots and schemes of villains or the terrible doom awaiting the PCs if they don't engage with the problems emerging within the setting. Think of a front like a train, hurtling down the tracks toward a brick wall, ready to smash through everything unless the PCs get in the way.

Each front features a countdown clock, a prescriptive and descriptive measure of both what will happen if the front is left unchecked and how much more time is left before the front is fully realized. If the front is ignored, you tick down each section of the clock, until it reaches the doom that awaits the PCs (prescriptive); if something achieves a portion of the front's future plans early, move the clock directly to that section (descriptive).

As the clock gets closer to midnight, the action becomes more elevated and the stakes become more dire. If the PCs can stop the front early, they may be able to avoid the worst of the consequences; waiting to intervene until the clock is nearly exhausted means that the front will have permanent effects on the setting even if the PCs manage to stop it.

Engaging the Manila Manuals

Finding a Manila Manual is like finding a vial of a deadly plague—with its safety seal broken. If you know what it is, you'll not only want to handle it with care, but you'll also want to know who's been exposed to it and how it's been used.

PLAGUE OF PULPS

They can turn up anywhere. They're not ominous-looking tomes; they're lightweight pamphlets, as innocuous as a magazine or comic book. They might be in an executive's briefcase, or in a secretary's desk, or on a child's bookshelf. Wherever you find one, you're likely to find unexplained deaths and bizarre phenomena.

Here are a few methods you might use to include a Manila Manual in a game scenario.

QUEST

The PCs might need to find a specific Manila Manual for a variety of reasons:

- Someone hired the PCs to find it.
- The power of the manual will help the PCs achieve another goal.
- Someone is planning to use the manual, and the PCs must stop him.
- Someone has already used the manual, and the PCs need to find it so they can reverse its effects.

DIFFICULT CHOICE

If a PC finds a Manila Manual, it might present a tempting solution to an insurmountable problem. Using the manual might remove an enemy, or might conceal the PC's misdeeds, or might reveal information. On the other hand, the consequences of reading the incantations can be horrifying, even if the PC performs the ritual correctly. Presenting a choice like this provides an opportunity to explore the limits of a character's principles, and to confront her with the consequences of her actions.

CLUE

A Manila Manual found at the scene of a murder—even an apparently mundane one—might provide a path of investigation. Was the murderer looking for the manual? Does the manual suggest that either the murderer or the victim was an occultist? Is the manual the murder weapon?

Adapting the Manila Manuals

The Manila Manuals are unreliable documents that give easy access to terrible power. Other settings and worlds might have similarly dangerous items in different forms, such as those below.

SUPERHEROES

In the 1970's, a villain named Professor Ultimate placed advertisements in comic books, offering to sell occult instruction manuals for a mere fifty cents. Those who met her price received a randomly selected pamphlet containing the instructions to perform one of several magical feats, such as how to make oneself invisible, or how to gain the power of flight, or how to read minds. The instructions in these pamphlets were genuine, although some had more sinister effects than they claimed. The superheroes of the era eventually apprehended Professor Ultimate and put an end to her scheme of occult proliferation, but some of her pamphlets escaped destruction, and photocopies, scanned images, and even a few original specimens survive to this day.

Alternate Stunt

Eternal Amulet of Ir: The Council of Ir has deemed you a worthy champion of Earth and has charged you with the task of defending humanity from those who use sorcery for evil. This amulet gives you a +2 bonus to oppose or remove magical effects.

FANTASY

The spellcasting scrolls produced by the ancient sorcerer Xavar are written in a language that is inherently magical, and that anyone—even the illiterate—can read or copy. These scrolls place the powers of a master wizard in the hands of whoever holds them. Unfortunately, copies of Xavar's scrolls aren't as dependable as the originals, and reading one may produce unexpected or disastrous results.

Alternate Stunt

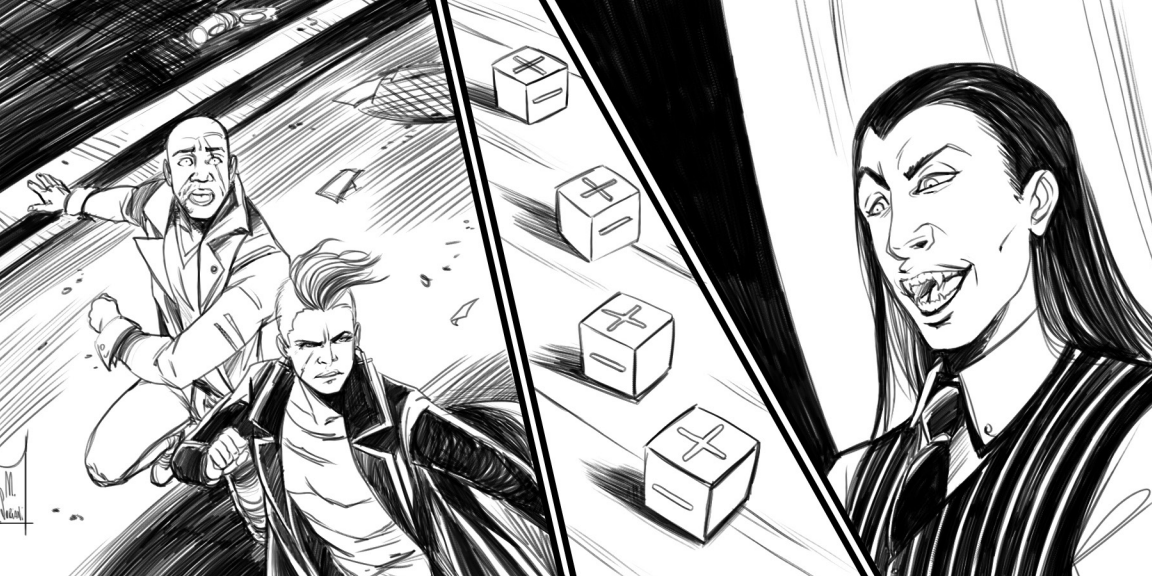
Obfuscate: You may use Lore—or another appropriate skill—to place a *Magically Scrambled* aspect on a document. The text becomes illegible to anyone but you. If you could not read the text before, you still can't, but no one else can, either. You may actively oppose any attempt to remove the aspect, even if you aren't present at the time.

CYBERPUNK

Just before the Trade Wars of the 2060's, the cybernetics corporation AlphaThought had discovered how to reprogram the human mind to produce psychic abilities. AlphaThought didn't survive the orbital bombing of their headquarters in Manila, but some of their software did. If you search the right networks on the Grid, you can find a copy, download it through your neural interface, and wake up the next day with telekinesis or clairvoyance. Of course, the AlphaThought project was still in an early testing phase, so the software might have a few glitches. And if you're downloading a third-hand copy of the original goods, who knows what other malware you might stream into your brain?

Alternate Stunt

Neural Buffer: The Grid is more powerful than the old Internet, but it's also more dangerous. With this upgrade installed, your neural interface provides an extra mild consequence you can use to absorb stress from malware attacks. 📡



ESCALATION DICE

by BRENDAN CONWAY

Fate gives a huge amount of power to the PCs. That's a good thing! It's one of the core appeals of the game—you get to play awesome, cool characters who are capable *and* emotionally interesting.

But a side effect of all that power is that sometimes conflict is robbed of its tension. After all, you're all pretty capable—so if you really want to win a conflict, you can. The GM could give the opposition high enough skills, with enough refresh and stunts, to be a bigger challenge, sure... but that risks tipping the seesaw too much in the other direction, creating a threat that's insurmountable even with the advantage of fate points. What's more, a foe of such drastic power can be a frustrating surprise for players who've spent most of the game expecting to be able to overcome any given threat.






The escalation die system gives you a means to create tension in conflicts without deeply unbalancing conflicts against PCs or smacking them with a surprisingly powerful opponent. The system gives the GM additional resources to use for the opposition in the form of an **escalation dice pool** kept in front of them during play. This article describes the core particulars of the system, along with a few variations you can use at your table.

Core Escalation Dice System







When using the escalation dice system, the GM sets four fate dice in front of them. Each one is turned to the ■ side to start. These are the GM's escalation dice or, collectively, the GM's escalation dice pool.

On any roll, the GM can swap any number of the dice in the escalation

ESCALATION DICE

dice pool for the same number of their own rolled dice. This is a straight swap—for every one fate die that goes into the escalation dice pool, another comes out, and vice versa. The GM only ever has four fate dice in the escalation dice pool at any given time. The GM can choose to swap a  in the escalation dice pool for a rolled —thereby disadvantaging their own roll to store a  in the escalation dice pool for future use—or, they can swap a  in the escalation dice pool for a rolled —thereby bringing up their own roll but depleting their escalation dice pool.










The GM can't swap dice in the escalation dice pool with dice that the players rolled.





During a fight between the PC monster-hunters and a nightmarish werewolf, Jack Silverbolt (a PC) fires a silver arrow at the werewolf. I roll for the werewolf's defense, and get . I swap one  in my roll with a  in my escalation pool, leaving me with a roll of  and an escalation dice pool of . If I wanted, I could swap both of  out of my roll and into my escalation dice pool, but I don't want to go quite that far.


Variations

The core escalation die mechanic, as presented above, is pretty simple. That means there are plenty of ways to tweak it for different effects or specific forms.

CONSTANT ESCALATION

In this variant, the escalation dice slowly shift from  to  to  on their own. Every time a PC succeeds on a roll, the GM can shift one die in their escalation dice pool up a face, from  to , or  to . Every time a PC succeeds with style, the GM can shift one die in their escalation dice pool all the way from  to , or can shift two separate dice each up a face.

Jack Silverbolt has hit the werewolf, with a total of +4 against the werewolf's +2. I get to shift one die in my escalation dice pool up a face, leaving me with an escalation dice pool of . Later in the same conflict, Ariel Brightblood lands a deadly blow on the werewolf, succeeding with style. I decide to shift one  all the way to a , leaving me with an escalation dice pool of .

This simple system raises the stakes against the PCs at a much more constant rate than when the GM can only store  by swapping dice.

DE-ESCALATION

In this variation, every time a PC fails a roll, they get to shift a die in the escalation dice pool down one face. Every time a PC accepts a compel, they get to shift a die in the escalation dice pool down one face.

Jack Silverbolt accepts a compel on his *Dark Hero with Deep Compassion* to let the were-cheetah get away while he tries to save the life of the monster's innocent victim. Jack's player gets to shift one of my escalation dice down a face, taking a 6 down to a 5. When Jack rolls to apply first aid, he fails, and again gets to shift one of my escalation dice down a face, taking that 5 to a 4.

This variation gives players a means to intentionally defuse the escalation dice pool at a slow rate—by pursuing compels or by engaging with challenges that are beyond their skills.

PASSIVE OPPOSITION AND ESCALATION DICE

In this variation, the GM can spend dice out of the escalation dice pool to elevate passive difficulty. Any time the PCs are up against a passive difficulty, the GM can spend one escalation die set to a 6 by turning it to a 5 and raising the passive difficulty by 1.

Since the GM sets all passive difficulties, it may seem pointless to allow them to also boost the passive difficulty of dangerous actions with the escalation dice. The objective with this variation is to give the GM a valve by which to justify making the passive difficulties higher. The GM still has to initially judge the situation based on the fiction, but can then choose to amp up the tension by spending escalation dice, if they desire.

Ariel Brightblood is trying to cast a complicated magic ritual, and fast. I set the difficulty at Great (+4) to start, because of the situation. But then I decide that this is a tense moment, and I want to make it even more so. I spend an escalation dice out of my pool, changing it from 6 to 5, and raise the passive difficulty by +1 to Superb (+5).

Use this variation if you want to give the GM an additional way to use escalation dice, outside of just using them in conflicts or with active opposition.

CONFLICT ESCALATION

In this variation, the escalation dice pool directly modifies the rolls of the NPCs throughout each conflict. This is a deeper change to the core escalation dice pool mechanics than the other variations. In this variation, the GM can no longer swap dice between their escalation dice pool and their rolls. Instead, their escalation dice pool only changes when PCs either succeed or fail, as per the *Constant Escalation* and *De-escalation* variants.

When using this variation, in conflicts—and only in conflicts—the GM adds the full total of their escalation dice pool to every roll they make.

My escalation dice pool is **⊕⊕⊖⊖**, for a total of +1. Ariel Brightblood is engaged in a duel with the terrifying Baron von Sanguinus. When she attacks the Baron with an opening salvo of thrown silver blades, I add the escalation dice pool total to the Baron's defense roll. I succeed in my defense, which means Ariel fails in her attack, and gets to shift one of the escalation dice down a face. Her player takes the **⊕** down to **⊖**. Then, when Baron von Sanguinus attacks her in turn using his deadly blood-rapier, I still add the total of the escalation dice pool. But the pool is now **⊕⊖⊖⊖**, so that total is +0

This variation makes the escalation dice far more consistently important, and removes the need for the GM to make a decision about when to use them. Because they modify every GM roll, they also have a natural balancing mechanic. As the escalation dice pool becomes stronger (with more and more **⊕**), the GM succeeds more, and the PCs fail—thereby de-escalating the dice in the pool. If the escalation dice pool is ever too low, then the GM's roll fails, and the PC succeeds, thereby bringing the escalation dice pool back up.

CONFLICT DURATION


This variation is meant to push PCs to try to end the conflict as quickly as possible. When using this variation, at the start of every round of conflict, the GM can shift one escalation die to a **⊕**.

It's the start of a new conflict between Jack Silverbolt and the Creature of the Abyssal Depths. My escalation dice pool is **⊕⊖⊖⊖**. I immediately get to shift one die all the way to **⊕**, so I shift the **⊖**, leaving my pool with **⊕⊕⊖⊖**. Once every character has taken an action (and I haven't swapped any dice into or out of the pool), we start a new round of the conflict, and I again get to shift one die all the way to **⊕**, leaving me with an escalation dice pool of **⊕⊕⊕⊖**.

ESCALATION DICE


This variation gives PCs a strong incentive to try to end a conflict as quickly as possible. Over the course of the conflict, the escalation pool is likely to get stronger, and slowly wear them down, if given the chance. They are instead incentivized to spend their resources to win up front, or to concede.





Combining Variations: Conflict Duration and Conflict Escalation

You can combine these two variations easily to provide a very, very intense conflict escalation system. Every round of conflict, the GM gets to set one of their escalation dice to , and then adds all their escalation dice to every roll they make, just like the normal Conflict Escalation variant. The net result is that a lengthy conflict may very well get utterly overwhelming for PCs, laying an even stronger emphasis upon either ending the conflict quickly or conceding. In the right tone—say, the kind of game in which the odds should be meaningfully stacked against the PCs—the system might provide exactly the right kind of intensity.

ESCALATION SURGES

This variation gives the pool additional effects, beyond just changing the results of rolls. It makes the specific die faces matter still further.

If the escalation dice pool is ever showing one of the following combinations, the players can choose to *spend* all the dice, resetting the pool to , to introduce that effect. The GM can do the same by spending a fate point. So PCs might want to deplete the escalation die pool to diminish their opposition, but will have to suffer some fictional setback to do it.

If the escalation pool is...	...then you can spend all the dice in the pool to make a PC:
	Concede a conflict immediately; the other side gets to demand a major concession, and the PCs receive no additional benefit.
	Concede a conflict immediately; the PCs still get to set the terms, but they receive no additional benefit.
	Take a consequence, moderate or higher.
	Accept a compel without receiving a fate point; if they wish to resist the compel, they can just leave the escalation die pool as is.

ESCALATION DICE

I've managed to get my escalation dice pool up to **⚰⚰⚰⚰** over the course of an epic battle between the Wraithataur and the two PCs, Jack Silverbolt and Ariel Brightblood. They're still in the fight, but Jack's player eyes that escalation dice pool warily, and decides to do something about it. They concede the conflict. But since the dice were at **⚰⚰⚰⚰**, Jack and Ariel don't get any additional benefit, and they have to acquiesce to a major concession from the Wraithataur. I propose that the concession is the Wraithataur getting its hooves on the Dream Medallion they were protecting, and Jack and Ariel's players agree. The conflict ends with the Wraithataur escaping, Dream Medallion in its paw, but the escalation dice pool stands at **⚰⚰⚰⚰**.

Follow the normal procedures for concessions and compels, with the exceptions to the process noted above. If the PCs take a consequence, work together to decide exactly what form that consequence takes, fitting the fiction.

This variation incentivizes the players to disadvantage themselves to defuse the escalation dice pool. It puts more pressure on some options in Fate that can be overlooked, and leads to more complicated, consequential fiction in your game.

Escalating Your Game

Keep in mind the tone of your game when deciding whether to use escalation dice at all, or to use any of the variants. This system increases the odds against the PCs, making things just a bit harder on them. It lends more tension to your conflicts, and makes it more likely that the PCs will have to deal with failure or defeat. If you're not interested in a Fate game that puts more pressure on the PCs, then this probably isn't for you.

But if you want to play Fate with more emphasis on tension and pressure on the PCs, this system gives you what you're looking for. Experiment with the variations to get the right mix of tension and pressure for your game, and always keep an eye on finding just the right balance for your particular game. 🎲



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IMPROVISATIONAL MYSTERIES

by FELIPE REAL

One of the greatest strengths of the Fate system is its flexibility when it comes to telling different kinds of stories. Despite this, there are a number of genres that are usually considered to be difficult or even problematic to model.

Mystery is one of those.

However, both Fate Core and Accelerated are not only great when it comes to telling mystery stories, they are also some of the best RPG systems to do so. The gaming framework of Fate provides a unique experience when it comes to the genre—that of an improvisational mystery game.

What Is a Mystery?

For mystery stories in literary genres, there are usually at least three characteristics that describe what we have come to expect from this type of story.

MYSTERIES ARE, WELL, ABOUT MYSTERIES

From an enigmatic death to a crime that needs to be elucidated, the core of a mystery story is the act of investigating an unknown in order to reveal the “truth” behind it.

THE PROTAGONISTS OF A MYSTERY ARE INVESTIGATORS

Although they can be men and women of action—and they often are—the protagonists of mysteries usually have some combination of brilliant

minds, powerful instincts, or even supernatural perceptions. With these abilities, they approach the unknown through careful observation and are typically more interested in unveiling the truth of the matter than other goals, such as serving justice with their bare hands.

THE ANTAGONISTS OF A MYSTERY ARE PRESENT FROM THE VERY BEGINNING

Since the mystery is basically a confrontation between those who want to know the truth and those who would have it remain hidden, the antagonists have to be present in the story from an early stage. In some stories they are even identified as such—the “suspects.”

The Fate Mantra and the Mystery Genre

In order to evaluate if a type of story fits the Fate system, you have only to resort to the basic “mantra” of the game, as presented on page 18 in *FATE CORE*, where it explicitly mentions that the game “works best when you use it to tell stories about people who are *proactive, competent, and dramatic.*”

The mystery genre fits the bill perfectly. Investigators in all kinds of mysteries are always proactive and competent, perfectly capable of confronting both the unknown and the suspects with both expertise and skill.

Furthermore, drama is an essential part of mysteries. Even in its most “tame” form, the stakes for both investigators and suspects are always high. For the former, the stakes could be monetary compensation for proving someone’s innocence, whereas for the latter the result of the investigation could bring catastrophic consequences, including huge losses or even jail time.

As such, mysteries can be run as comfortably with Fate as action, pulp, or any other kind of “heroic” fiction. The real question, then, is how to make the best out of the Fate system for this genre.

THE CLASSIC MYSTERY

One possibility is to present a mystery as any other type of story. The players create the setting and their characters, the GM presents the inciting incident, and the game progresses as usual, one scene after the other, until the PCs discover the culprit the GM has determined beforehand.

This isn’t the optimal way of employing the Fate system when it comes to running mysteries, however. It kills the drama for at least one of the players: the GM. If the GM already knows who committed the crime and how, what surprise is there in the game for them? One of the most fundamental joys of playing a mystery is to be, as an audience, a kind of

investigator, and if the GM knows the answers then they are deprived of that joy.

This has been a common manner of running mysteries in RPGs since at least *Call of Cthulhu* (CoC). Nevertheless, Fate is different enough from CoC to deserve its own way of approaching mysteries—one that relies on the robust narrative framework of the game to explore the genre from a somewhat different angle.

THE IMPROVISATIONAL MYSTERY

What would happen if instead of deciding before sitting down to play who the culprit is and why, you only presented the PCs with a number of possible suspects and had no definite answer to the mystery? First, you would be following the genre's main tenet: finding the truth about a mystery through careful investigation. Second—and more importantly—you'd be enjoying the experience of investigating as much as the other players at the table.

The improvisational mystery is, then, a way of running a mystery in Fate by playing on the strengths of the system, as well as adhering to the traditionally fundamental characteristics of the fiction it's trying to model. The main precept is that, as long as you present all the necessary information to the players *and* develop well-rounded suspects, you *don't* need to know the solution of the mystery in advance.

Present all the Necessary Information

The first and perhaps most important principle is simple: you must provide the PCs with *all* the relevant information—aka “clues”—needed to solve the mystery.

One of the carryovers from D&D that made its way into a radically different game as CoC was the adversarial position of the GM. This, in the case of an investigative RPG, got reflected in the misled notion that PCs have to *succeed* to obtain the necessary information to reveal the truth of the mystery. This has led, in the best of cases, to an overreliance on lucky rolls and high skills and, in the worst, on games that got stuck because nobody had any idea where to go to next because of insufficient information.

Visualize mysteries as puzzles. The exercise and ability required to solve both is the same: you have to put the pieces together in order to see the full picture. However, who could do that if there were missing pieces? Maybe a couple missing pieces wouldn't derail the endeavor at large, but what about those that connect and give meaning to the whole? Those that really help you reveal the big picture?

In the case of improvisational mysteries, then, the solution is simple: you give *all the relevant information* to the PCs at all times, no matter the result of the dice. You don't withhold information from them because, in fact, you *don't* have any extra information; you're discovering the truth about the mystery along with them.

The only caveat is that the PCs have to *ask* for the information.

The PCs Are Investigators—and They Should Act Accordingly

“Investigators” is not a cute way of referring to the PCs: it's a fundamentally different way of approaching the game. Yes, the PCs are still as proactive, competent, and dramatic as in any other great Fate game, but their most important skill and/or approach is not written on their character sheets. What makes a PC an investigator is an inquisitive mind.

Or, in other words, asking questions.

Encourage your players to ask questions at all times. When they enter a zone in a given scene, provide the simplest description and let them explore it with their actions. When they answer your familiar “What do you do?” with prepackaged answers such as, “I search the room,” pressure them. “*What* are you looking for?” and “*How* are you searching?” are great starting points, but you have to go even further. Remember that these questions are the way in which you are discovering the clues that will lead the investigators—and yourself—to discover the truth behind this mystery. The PCs as investigators will provide you with the clues—your role isn't to create the clues but to join them together in one logical and coherent story.

When to Roll—and What the Results Mean

The correct place of rolls—and their interpretation—in an improvisational mystery isn't whether or not the clues can be uncovered, but in *how* they are uncovered.

Or, in other words, at what *cost* they're obtained.

Imagine that the investigators are working on an unsolved murder and you, running an improvisational mystery, are willing to provide them with all the relevant information necessary to solve it. The question is, how do you provide that information while still integrating skill rolls?

The answer: you have them suffer the consequences of their acts.

To follow with the unsolved murder, the PCs ask questions and act on the crime scene where the victim's body was found. An investigator says, “I look around the room in case something catches my attention.” In that case, if you're playing in Fate Core, you could have them roll Notice to create an advantage; if you're playing in Fate Accelerated, you could have

them roll the corresponding approach, probably Careful.

No matter what happens, the PC will get *at least* the necessary information to keep the investigation going. In this case, they'll find out at least a clue that points to one or more suspects as the culprit. Remember: they're the ones creating the clues, saying what they find, while you interpret the results of rolling, saying what consequences they suffer.

If they succeed in a roll, you should ask them, "What did you find?" They in turn might answer something like "A fingerprint." Since they succeeded, they suffer no consequences. So, they receive the **Complete Fingerprint** aspect with one free invoke. The fingerprint is useful, clean, it can be used in court, and it's properly stored, for example.

If they tie, you still ask "What did you find?" When they mention the fingerprint, you should probably modify the result to **A Partial Fingerprint** and, as per the usual rules, it's only a boost now. This will, in turn, create tension for the investigators, as they have to decide when to use that boost to their maximum advantage. They have a key piece of the puzzle, yes, but they aren't free to use it as they please. In this case, the fingerprint may decay over time, be extremely difficult to process, or otherwise last for a very short time; the PCs have to find the best way to use it—and they have to find it *now*.

If they fail—following the rules as presented in Fate Core—again you would ask, "What do you find?" But in this case, with the same answer (a fingerprint), the investigators would still get the aspect **Complete Fingerprint** ...but the free invoke goes to their *opponent*: in this case, one or more of the suspects. Maybe the investigators found a complete fingerprint, yes, but one that incriminates someone innocent instead of the "real" culprit. Or perhaps the investigators lied about their identities or entered private property without the necessary permissions, both situations earning them the mistrust of government authorities and even some legal problems of their own. Go with whatever fits the fiction—and the suspect's *modus operandi*—better.

In all cases, the investigators obtained the clue necessary to continue their investigation, no matter the result of the dice. A clue that, in fact, you never even knew about! The important thing is, once again, *not* to decide in advance what the clues are going to be and, instead, leave the PCs to invent them.

What you should *not* do here is intervene and say what they find; instead, let the investigators decide. They're leading the investigation and you're just making the necessary connections in order to give shape to the overall story. In an improvisational mystery game, your role is not to hide the necessary information behind the rolls, but to string together the results in such a manner that moves the story forward.

It Starts with the Victim

The best way to run a successful improvisational mystery is to develop robust suspects. This is the only part that's truly yours as a GM, and it should be the focus of your pre-game preparation. In order to do this, you need to start with the center of the mystery: the victim.

Depending on which type of mystery you're running, your victim can be dead or alive—or even both. In any case, you need to develop this character in as much detail as possible. In Fate terms, write a character sheet as complete as that of the investigators, and pay special attention to the relations of the victim.

You started out by deciding on a classic victim: an old millionaire who has been found dead. The victim, in this case, has a number of relations that, in turn, will form the base of your suspects. You have the young spouse who got married only because of the money; the children that could benefit from the inheritance; the ex-spouse that is still heartbroken after their separation; etc. All of these relations have the potential to be suspects and, in turn, to become the culprit behind the murder.

Know Your Suspects

Now you develop the suspects in a robust and simple way by following these three simple steps:

GIVE EVERY SUSPECT A GOOD MOTIVATION TO BE THE CULPRIT.

If you give every suspect a reason to have committed the crime in question, you will have all the necessary tools to improvise their behavior no matter what the investigators do.

This motivation emerges from the relationship they have or had with the victim. The motivation can be as simple as a desire for revenge or a monetary benefit, or as twisted as a misguided sense of duty or a perverted notion of love.

This is the one thing you absolutely must know in advance in order to run the suspect properly.

You are running a 1920s cosmic horror mystery. A professor died under mysterious circumstances and one suspect immediately comes to mind: a former student. What motivation could she have to kill her mentor? He refused to provide her with the material necessary in order to continue her enquiries into forbidden knowledge, afraid of the consequences. She, however, seems obsessed and would probably stop at nothing to learn more about the topic.

GIVE EVERY SUSPECT AN ALIBI.

This is what allows you to run a truly improvisational mystery. If everybody has a reason to be the culprit *and* a good explanation for it not being them, everything is up in the air. The result of this combination is that, even though you can have some idea of who could have committed the crime, every suspect can turn out to be culprit without hurting the sense of logic or the suspension of disbelief necessary to make your game a satisfying experience for everyone at the table.

The student of the occult is obsessed and on the brink of madness, it's true, but it's because she was secretly in love with her teacher, and not because of his access to the restricted section of the library. This facet of her character, however, will only come to light if the characters lead the investigation to the conclusion that she's *not* the culprit. If they decide that she's the culprit, this alibi can be twisted to become part of the suspect's motivation to have committed the crime.

DEVELOP THE SUSPECTS AS MUCH AS YOU NEED TO—AND NOTHING MORE.

Apart from the motivation and alibi, you don't need to develop much more of the suspects in order to run them properly. It's a bonus if you can give them a good—i.e., easy-to-remember—name, a couple of personality traits, and maybe a distinct voice, but only the motivation and alibi are absolute musts when it comes to improvising their behavior. Everything else should and will evolve as a natural result of the understanding that both the motivation and alibi provide of the suspects' inner workings.

The danger, instead, is in developing *too* much of the suspects' inner workings. The more you develop a suspect, the less flexible you'll be at the table to accommodate the investigators' findings. Even worse, too much development—especially the kind that's inclined toward specific descriptions and convoluted motivations—creates suspects that end up being neither useful nor easy to run on an improvisational mystery, defeating their purpose.

At the Table

Here are some techniques, tips, and advice that may help you to run an improvisational mystery at the table.

THE MORE YOU IMPROVISE, THE MORE STRUCTURE YOU NEED

Sounds like an oxymoron, but the truth is that improvisational mysteries require quite structured game play. Even more so than in other

Fate games, you must be aware of beginning—and, more importantly, ending—scenes when necessary. Don't tarry or delay on irrelevant details. If the PCs are figuring out the puzzle on the run, battling against time and/or their enemies—as they should—do not stop the action to describe the minutiae of three long hours of reading at the library; just note the passage of time, if necessary, and ask the players, “What did you find?”

RUN THE SUSPECTS WITH GUSTO

Don't fall into the clichés. Go for the twist, the surprise, and the unexpected; make your suspects memorable and play them with as much love as your players put into their PCs. Feel free to actively work against the PCs, but do so in such a way that makes the investigation more exciting, not more oppressive. Also, consider logic and plausibility: geniuses like Moriarty should be the exception, not the rule, and the conflict should be unfair only if that creates a high stakes situation that can later be confronted by the PCs in a more or less advantageous manner. As always, do whatever fits the story, the PCs, and the suspects' motivations better.

IMMERSION

Make the investigation something exciting in and of itself. In this case, use the PCs' answers as a jumping point to describe the clues and situations in as much as detail as the story demands. Make your descriptions as grounded or fantastic as you want, but, above all, make them memorable. Follow the tropes corresponding to the subgenre of mystery you're using as framework and, if necessary, subvert or even throw them out the window. However, never sacrifice the delivery of clear and useful information for flavor and flourish.

PRESSURE THE INVESTIGATORS

Don't let the investigators go about their businesses without opposition. Use your suspects cunningly, and make the investigation as painful and grinding while still entertaining—without denying the investigators the essential information to solve the mystery. Extend the web of relations beyond the suspects and explore their other relations: the current partner of the vengeful ex-husband, jealous of the—apparently murderous—intention the ex- received; the lawyer of the only heir that could benefit greatly from an unfortunate accident to her client; etc. All of these help to make the world of the investigation come alive, deepening your players' immersion while developing a rich setting you can keep coming back to whenever you want.

MAKE THE MYSTERY IMPORTANT AND DRAMATIC

Try to make the results of the mystery something relevant to *all* the investigators. Make them have personal stakes involved and don't encourage an emotionally detached attitude to the game. If anything, inspire yourself in the classics of *noir* or hardboiled stories and encourage your players to create overly dramatic, overblown characters. Aim for the larger-than-life personas, the all-or-nothing characters that live and breathe to uncover to truth no matter the costs. This is a crucial part of your role during character creation, but even after that you should try to tailor the story—and especially the suspects—to the specific investigators trying to solve the mystery.

LISTEN TO YOUR PLAYERS

Let them create the clues and listen to their speculations. Allow them to discuss and theorize at large; if they're entertained, leave them be. If not, throw some opposition their way and provide them with more information. Don't play the game of red herrings; if they agree on a theory, let them get to the bottom of it and discover it to be the truth. Your role isn't to withhold information; it's to provide a satisfying investigative experience for everyone at the table, including yourself.

GIVE THEM MORE INFORMATION THAN WHAT THEY NEED

Don't be afraid to provide the players with more information than they can possibly need to resolve the mystery. Remember: the game is not about denying them clues, but about making the investigators pay for them in sweat, blood, and tears. Use every roll of the dice to provide them with more information and, at the same time, gather as many “resources” as possible—aspects, invokes, compels, etc.—for the suspects to escalate the stakes of the investigation.

In Conclusion

Running an improvisational mystery may seem like a daunting task at first, but with the right mindset can be one of the most satisfying experiences. The excitement of discovering the truth along with the players—instead of frustratingly waiting for them to figure out *your* truth—is something that few RPG systems can offer. And if there ever was one up to the task, that has to be Fate. 🍀

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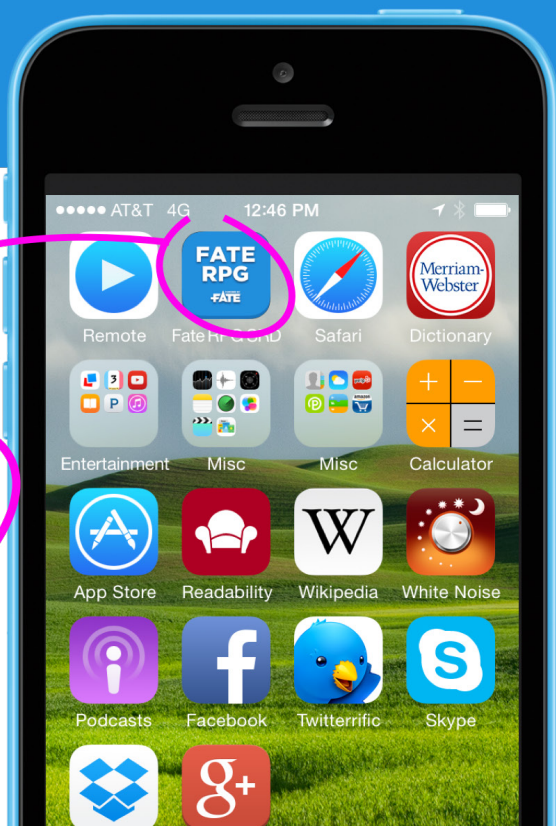
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INNOCENCE LOST



INNOCENCE LOST

by ANDRÉ LA ROCHE

“There can be a certain kind of mercy in keeping secrets. Secrets can hide powerful and frightfully maddening truths from those who are incapable of handling them. Those secrets allow the rest of us to carry on with our lives. But there are others out there who hold the burden of this knowledge. They have seen the true face of the dark. They know its intimate caress, and are changed by it. It’s time for the rest of us to learn these secrets, to carry our own fair share of the burden.”

—Mia Pine’s Blog

A Dark World

Most people go about their lives without ever knowing the true nature of this world. They never have to deal with the strange or unexplainable, the horrors that prowl in the night. These are considered the stuff of legend, fairytale, and old folk tales. In the eyes of most people, monsters and the occult belong in a darker, more ignorant era. Modernity has banished these beasts and burdens as surely as it banished polio and tuberculosis.

Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Every story you have heard is real; every folk tale, every urban legend, every ghost story and fairy tale has its roots in the truth. Vampires, werewolves, fairies, goblins, and other alien monsters—these are things that go bump in the night and prey upon the innocent.

They once roamed freely and openly during ages of antiquity—the very reason we have stories chronicling their existence. But something happened—humanity grew bolder, more organized, more disciplined. The Renaissance occurred, and from there led to the enlightenment. They fought back and developed weapons capable of fighting off the night terrors. Licking their collective wounds, the supernatural entities sulked back into the darkness, biding their time and waiting to rise again.

THOSE WHO FIGHT THE DARKNESS

Over the centuries that humanity warred against monsters, organized groups emerged to carry forward the flame into the darkness. Originally arising during the Holy Roman Empire, and later the Dark and Middle

Ages, humanity created Esoteric Fraternal Orders and Sisterhoods, sects of the Church, secret societies, and many others. As the monsters retreated to the shadows, so too did these noble institutions, fading from our collective memory, erasing their tracks to keep us safe.

Today, each of these groups recruits the most spiritually aware individuals, teaching them their traditions and educating them about how the world really works. Members of these groups are tasked with keeping humanity safe from the threats that nightly prey upon it while also hiding the truth.

The most famous and widespread of these organizations are the Scions of the Sun—an organization dating back to the year 1290 A.D. The Scions have long fought supernatural forces while pretending to be mere business leaders or members of society. In this day and age, the Scions are still present, and most think of them as a mere fraternal charitable organization engaged in fundraisers and civic service. However, the inner circle of the Scions are still intimately involved in defending humanity's interests against encroachment by the supernatural.

THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE DARKNESS

While groups like the Scions battle to keep us safe, some humans have always succumbed to the influence of the darkness, losing their humanity to become something... other. Whether these people have become sorcerers, vampires, werewolves, or demonic servants, they now belong to forces few could understand. Some are completely lost to the monstrous parts of their souls; others, clinging to the last vestiges of their humanity, fight to hold back the darkness even as they must slake inhuman appetites.

THE STRUGGLE

Presently, the conflicts among the supernatural and humanity resemble a free-for-all rather than an organized war. Supernatural factions are just as likely to squabble and fight one another as they are to try and gain a foothold against humanity in the world. The disorganization of the forces of darkness gives humanity's defenders an advantage; their cause unites them against our enemies. Yet as humanity itself pushes deeper into the shadows—exploring what few places have thus far gone unexplored—it is only a matter of time before humanity is once again made aware of the cousin spirits who inhabit the world.



Setting Creation

As a Quick Start Adventure for Fate Core, *Innocence Lost* has everything you need to jump right into your first session. Before you start, discuss the broader setting with your group, perhaps even reading aloud the descriptions of *A Dark World*, *Those Who Fight the Darkness*, *Those Who Live in the Darkness*, and *The Struggle* so everyone is on the same page.

At the start of play, explain the **current issue** to your players and ask them to fill in one or two additional faces associated with *The Children Are Missing*. These additional characters will provide new plot hooks and twists that will tie your players more deeply to the current mystic happenings.

Then ask your players to choose from one of the two available **impending issues**: *Supernatural Serial Killer*, or *A Convergence is Occurring*. Have them fill in one or two additional faces for their chosen impending issue as well, rounding out the larger cast of characters with their suggestions.

CURRENT ISSUE: THE CHILDREN ARE MISSING

Children across the city have begun to go missing without notice. They come from a diverse set of homes and circumstances, and the investigations surrounding their disappearances routinely clear parents and close family members of any wrongdoing. The current working theory that police are exploring is that a single kidnapper is behind the disappearances. However, at the scene of each disappearance are drawings made by each child that point to a unifying supernatural element. In actuality, the children are being called by a powerful ancient artifact known as The Arch, and crossing through it to dimensions unknown. (For more information on The Arch, see *The Fate Codex* Issue 4, Vol. 3).

Faces:

- Austin Chang, Frightened Father
- Mia Pine, Conspiracy Theorist

THE CHILDREN ARE MISSING

Austin Chang

Frightened Father

Mia Pine

Conspiracy Theorist

The Arch

For the duration of the main issue *The Children Are Missing*, The Arch calls out to the minds of the weak or vulnerable. It grants +2 to all overcome rolls made by individuals who seek it out with a skill, skill mode, or approach rated Average (+1), Mediocre (+0), or worse.

IMPENDING ISSUES

In addition to *The Children Are Missing* and the investigation around it, there are a number of other impending issues that are of concern to the player characters.

Supernatural Serial Killer

Over the past year, a serial killer has struck. Victims are brutally and savagely murdered, torn apart by something seemingly inhuman. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to when and where the victims are attacked, save that each attack occurs under cover of night. Sometimes the killer strikes multiple times in a single week; other times it won't strike for months at a stretch. Again, for those with the sense for these things, the crimes seem to have a distinctly supernatural element to them.

Faces:

- Jacoby Hill, Newspaper Photographer
- Det. Elisa May, Dogged Law Woman

A Convergence Is Occurring

One thing that the supernatural community is in agreement on is that some sort of mystical convergence is about to occur. The stars are right, ley lines seem turbo-charged with power, signs and omens are appearing with increasing frequency. Something big is about to occur, and everyone wants a piece of the action. Esoteric factions are beginning to squabble and fight over the power, and their fights threaten to spill out into public.

Faces:

- Jamal Uribe, Occultist Extraordinaire
- Nyoko Hoshi, Spirit Enforcer

SUPERNATURAL SERIAL KILLER

*Det. Elisa May
Dogged Law Woman*

*Jacoby Hill
Newspaper Photographer*

*A CONVERGENCE
IS OCCURRING*

*Jamal Uribe
Occultist Extraordinaire*

*Nyoko Hoshi
Spirit Enforcer*

Character Creation

Innocence Lost works best with Fate Core characters—the existence of the Fate Core skills lend themselves well to the street-level supernatural feel of an *Innocence Lost* game, but you can use Fate Accelerated approaches instead of the more traditional skills if you prefer the simplicity of FAE.

In *Innocence Lost*, players take on the roles of supernatural investigators. Characters fall into one of two categories: awakened humans or supernatural entities. During character creation, each player chooses which category applies to their character. Members of each group possess abilities above and beyond the average human being, people who are uniquely suited to solve the supernatural problems besetting the city on all sides.

AWAKENED HUMANS

Awakened humans are human beings who have been inducted into the mysteries of the esoteric world. Some gained their awareness through formal education or induction, others by witnessing firsthand the horrors that stalk the night. Most awakened human beings have turned to the occult as a way of evening the odds with their opponents. They utilize spells, charms, sigils, and seek out artifacts of power. Others instead decide to devote themselves to achieving peak physicality, reaching new levels of human excellence to defend humanity from the darkness.

SUPERNATURAL ENTITIES

Supernatural entities used to be human. Through some trauma or inevitable transformation, they have become something different altogether. Characters can be any kind of supernatural entity that makes sense to the group and Gamemaster. Common kinds of supernatural entities for player characters are vampires, werewolves, ghosts, gargoyles, or reanimated corpses.

CHARACTER CREATION

Players should create characters normally as per the Fate Core rules—including five core Aspects (High Concept, Trouble, etc), traditional Fate Core Skills, and normal refresh—with one added twist: each player must randomly determine what supernatural touch has afflicted their character. This randomness represents the unasked-for fate of being drawn into the supernatural war.



Each player can either determine their character's Supernatural Touch first, allowing them to build the rest of their character around











this element, or they can roll it at the end of character creation. The first option allows players to create characters who are veterans in the supernatural war. The second option better represents someone who lived a normal life that was suddenly derailed by the supernatural.

Random Character Creation

This system for random character creation is drawn from *Fate Lifepaths* by Philippe Saner in THE FATE CODEX Volume 3, Issue 3. Check it out to learn more about generating random characters in Fate Core!

The Supernatural Touch represents the basic abilities that each supernatural character gains. Feel free to create other supernatural stunts and extras at the game-table that bolster the themes and abilities of each character.

To use the Supernatural Touch tables, roll the four Fate dice. Starting in the top-left corner, move one column right for each , and one row down for each .

SUPERNATURAL TOUCH					
					
	Hyde	Awakened Human (Spirit Walker)	Awakened Human (Envoy)	Biomechanical Being	Divine-Touched
	Awakened Human (Hunter)	Awakened Human (Esoteric Agent)	Vampire	Living Zombie	
	Werewolf	Awakened Human (Occultist)	Fay-Blood		
	Gargoyle	The Resurrected			
	Infernal-Touched				

AWAKENED HUMAN (ENVOY)

You are a human who serves the supernatural world.

Supernatural Liaison: You are a human liaison to the supernatural world. You gain a +2 bonus to Rapport rolls when dealing with supernatural entities.

Hidden Among Humanity: You gain a +2 to Hide rolls when attempting to create an advantage to pretend that you're just a normal human being.

AWAKENED HUMAN (ESOTERIC AGENT)

You are a member of a powerful Esoteric Order.

Cell in Every City: You gain a +2 to Contacts rolls when attempting to find an Esoteric Order in a city.

Financial Backing: You gain a +2 to Resources rolls when calling upon for assistance from an Esoteric Order.

AWAKENED HUMAN (HUNTER)

You have sworn to ruthlessly hunt down those who threaten the human world.

Natural Tracker: You gain a +2 to Notice rolls when tracking supernatural entities.

Occult Fighter: You gain a +2 to Fight rolls when fighting against supernatural or occultic entities.

AWAKENED HUMAN (OCCULTIST)

You have been thoroughly inducted into the Dark World. You know it intimately well.

Spellcasting: You can cast occultic spells. Describe to the GM the effects you hope to achieve, and the GM will set a difficulty for you to beat when you overcome an obstacle by rolling Lore.

Arcane Knowledge: You gain a +2 to Lore rolls when attempting to identify supernatural influences.

Friend on the Other Side: You have one good supernatural friend who feeds you information. You gain a +2 to Rapport rolls when gleaning information from this friend.

AWAKENED HUMAN (SPIRIT WALKER)

You have learned to send your spirit out of your body.

Out of Body: Once per session, you can have your spirit present at a scene when your body is not present. You are visible to all present, and cannot physically interact with anything or anyone.

Numbed Pain: You are so used to detaching yourself from your body, that once per game session, you can ignore a successful Attack against you by spending a Fate Point.

BIOMECHANICAL BEING

You have been changed by something from beyond. You're part human, yet somehow machine-like.

Understanding from Beyond: You gain a +2 to all overcome or create advantage rolls when attempting to understand occultic items.

Fading Humanity: You no longer think like a human being. You gain a +2 bonus when rolling Empathy to defend against Mental attacks.

DIVINE-TOUCHED

You are blessed by the divine.

Angelic Aura: You are able to exude a calming aura. Anyone within the same zone as you gains a +2 bonus when rolling Empathy to defend against Mental attacks.

Healing Touch: Once per scene, your touch can heal two stress boxes on yours or another's stress track.

FAY-BLOOD

You are of the Fay—an elusive nature spirit.

Forest Child: Once per scene, a Fay-Blood can teleport through trees, entering into one tree and emerging from another up to three zones away.

Court Servant: Fay-Blood are bound to either the Light Court or the Dark Court at the time of character creation. They gain +2 to Contacts rolls when dealing with members of their chosen Court.

Iron Vulnerability: Anytime a Fay-Blood touches iron, they take one shift of stress. This stress occurs in addition to any other stress inflicted by an attack.

GARGOYLE

You are a defender of the night.

Gliding: You have powerful wings that allow you to glide two zones horizontally for every zone you descend vertically. You cannot gain altitude unless finding an updraft by succeeding at a Good (+3) Athletics roll to overcome an obstacle.

Claws: +2 to Fight rolls when using their claws.

Stone Form: You become an Immobile Sleeping Statue during the day. Anyone attempting a smashing attack against you gains a free invoke on this.

HYDE

You have a dual nature—you have a second you that's stronger and darker than you.

Dual Form: You have a second form that is physically stronger, and better than your normal one. You gain +2 to all Physique and Athletics rolls when in this second form.

Foggy Memory: You have a hazy memory of the actions you took in your alternate form. The difficulty for all rolls to recall the nights' events is increased by +2.

INFERNAL-TOUCHED

You are descended from demons and devils.

Fire Blast: Once per scene, you can shoot forth a blast of fire from your hands by using the Shoot skill.

Brimstone Love: You gain +2 to all Rapport rolls when attempting to seduce a mortal.

Holy Weakness: When touched by holy items (holy water, holy relics, holy texts) you take one shift of stress.

LIVING ZOMBIE

You have become a zombie and must feed on brains or else wither away physically and mentally.

Hunger for Brains: For each week you go without consuming a brain take a consequence representing the deterioration of body and mind. You can only erase these consequences once you've consumed a human brain. If you can't take any more consequences, your high concept is changed to Mindless Rotting Zombie.

You Are What You Eat: You can temporarily call on the memories belonging to the last brain you ate. You gain a +2 to Lore rolls when attempting to learn a fact known only by the brain's owner.

THE RESURRECTED

You died. But then, somehow, you got better. The experience has left you...changed.

Touch of Death: You brought back a bit of the nether world with you when you came back to life. Your touch deals one extra shift of stress when you attack someone using your bare hands by rolling Fight.

Fire Vulnerability: For whatever reason, you have become susceptible to fire since your resurrection. Anytime you are injured by fire, you take one additional shift of stress.

VAMPIRE

You have become the undead, forced to stalk the night and drink the blood of the living.

Thirst for Blood: You have a thirst for blood, and must drink blood at least once every 72 hours.

Uncanny Strength: You gain a +2 to all Fight and Athletics rolls when attempting feats of raw strength by night. You lose this strength if you have not drank blood within the last 72 hours.

Daylight Weakness: During the daytime you not only lose your Uncanny Strength, but roll all actions at -2. If you have not had any blood to drink, this penalty increases to -4.

WEREWOLF

You were bitten by a werewolf, or born as one. You change into a wolf around the full moon.

Wolf Form: You transform into a wolf form on the night of a full moon as well as the immediate nights before and after. When in this form, you gain a +2 to all Athletics rolls, and Fight rolls.

Foggy Memory: You have a hazy memory of the actions you took in your wolf form. The difficulty for all rolls designed to recall the nights' events is increased by +2.



Running Innocence Lost as an Improvisational Mystery

This same issue of the Fate Codex provides rules and guidelines for running mystery games that are improvisational in nature. (See *Improvisational Mysteries* by Felipe Real, page 21). The scenes described in this Quick-Start provide you with the basic outlines of the information necessary to run this scenario. Using those rules, when the PCs investigate, have them roll Notice to create an advantage. As described more fully in Felipe's article, each advantage created represents a clue that they found at the scene.

To make full use of those rules, flesh out the NPCs more to make them potential suspects in this mystery. Or, instead of suspects, have each clue lead the PC's to eventually discovering the truth about the Arch.

The ultimate question for you as a GM, though, is how far do follow the improvisational nature of the mystery? Do you tie it back in to the plotline articulated here, or do you follow the theories and thoughts of the players, no matter how far afield from the written scenes in this quick-start? This is something to think about as you prepare for the game session, and is likely a judgment call that you will have to—ironically—improvise at the table.

OPENING SCENE: THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

The player characters are granted a chance to investigate the most recent child disappearance. The players were expressly sought out for their expertise in the occult. They were contacted directly by Austin Chang, the father of the missing child, who is desperate to get his five-year-old daughter Alice back—so desperate that he's willing to entertain the possibility of supernatural explanations for his daughter's disappearance. Austin was referred to the PCs by Mia Pine, a local conspiracy theorist blogger who suspects the PCs' connection to the occult.

When the PCs show up at the Chang household, Mia is present, and Austin and his husband are arguing about consulting occultists in finding their daughter. Eventually, Austin's husband relents and they allow the PCs to enter their house and begin to investigate for clues surrounding their daughter's disappearance.

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Their daughter's room is filled with toys, and shows no sign of a struggle. If the PCs are diligent, they eventually find a sketchpad that the little girl uses for drawings. The first third of the book contains childish drawings of her, her family, friends, and television characters. After a third way through the sketchbook, the drawings take on a more sinister tone. She began to draw pictures of quadrupedal eyeless monsters and a doorway that appears to be covered in bones. In all the pictures, there is running water—likely indicating that the drawing occurred near the river that runs through the city.

The PCs can attempt to reach out to parents of the other children who have gone missing. In all cases, they can discover nearly identical drawings at those households. Whatever happens, Mia insists on tagging along with the PCs so that she can write about the investigation for her blog. If the PCs refuse to allow her to join them, she concedes their wishes, but trails them in secret, using a video recorder to document their actions.

Austin Chang

HIGH CONCEPT: WORRIED AND LOVING FATHER

TROUBLE: BLINDED BY FEAR

OTHER: MONEY IS NO OBJECT • MY DAUGHTER IS MY LIFE • ROCKSTAR BANKER

SKILLS

GREAT (+4) Resources

GOOD (+3) Contacts, Physique

FAIR (+2) Athletics, Drive, Will

AVERAGE (+1) Empathy, Notice, Provoke, Rapport

STUNTS

Money Talks. You can use Resources instead of Rapport in any situation where ostentatious displays of material wealth might aid your cause.

Savvy Investor. You get an additional free invoke when you create advantages with Resources, provided that they describe a monetary return on an investment you made in a previous session.

Trust Fund Baby. Twice per session, take a boost representing a windfall or influx of cash.

STRESS

Physical:

Mental:

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2) | Moderate (4) | Major (6)

Mia Pine

Mia is an intrepid blogger who is intent on exposing the hidden truths of the world to humanity. She is canny and strong-willed, and will do whatever it takes to expose the truth. She does this through a blog that she runs.

SUPERNATURAL TOUCH: NONE (ORDINARY HUMAN)

HIGH CONCEPT: CONSPIRACY THEORIST

TROUBLE: STICKS HER NOSE WHERE IT DOESN'T BELONG

OTHER: RECORD EVERYTHING—AND I MEAN EVERYTHING! • PUNK ATTITUDE •
ALWAYS A COP AROUND WHEN YOU DON'T NEED ONE

SKILLS

GREAT (+4) Investigate

GOOD (+3) Empathy, Notice

FAIR (+2): Athletics, Provoke, Rapport

AVERAGE (+1): Contacts, Fight, Resources, Will

STUNTS

Conspiracy Scenester. Mia can roll Investigate as though it were Contacts when interacting with fellow conspiracy theorists.

Go Bump in the Night. Mia gains a +2 bonus to Investigate rolls when creating an advantage to learn more about the supernatural.

Hit the Web. Once per scene, you can immediately upload footage you've acquired to the internet.

STRESS

Physical: Mental:

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2) | Moderate (4) | Major (6)

NOTES:

Refresh: 3

MIDDLE SCENE: A CREATURE PROWL

The PCs follow-up on the drawings contained in the Changs' house and can investigate the river that their daughter drew. Along the riverbanks, there are the signs of some kind of animal lairing there—the corpses of small animals, raccoons, dogs, cats, but no human remains.

As the PCs investigate, eventually they are attacked by a ghastly and unnatural creature: an archspawn. The archspawn is a quadruped roughly the size of a large dog with black rubbery skin, razor-sharp teeth and claws, and no eyes. It has a long wiry tail and moves with the grace and ease of a jungle predator. If the PCs begin to gain the edge, the archspawn will concede the fight, running away from the PCs, leaving a clear trail for the PCs to track the creature back to where it originally came from.

Archspawn Creature

HIGH CONCEPT: A CREATURE FROM BEYOND

TROUBLE: LEAVES BEHIND THE CORPSES OF SMALL ANIMALS

SKILL MODES

FAIR (+2) Hunting, running, attacking, and hiding.

STRESS

□□□

FINAL SCENE: ENTER THE ARCH

The PCs can follow the creature back to an empty warehouse along the riverfront. They see it enter the warehouse, but it is in hiding if they follow it inside. The warehouse contains a powerful eldritch artifact known as The Arch. Strewn all over the floor of the warehouse are children's toys and drawings much like those found at the Chang's household.

The Arch is a powerful gateway that connects locations across time and space. Characters who are occult-trained can attempt to roll Lore to overcome a Superb (+5) obstacle. Succeeding allows the character to recognize The Arch as an item written of in rumored tones. The character knows that the Arch calls out subtly to the weak and vulnerable in society, hypnotically enticing them to walk through the gate. Those who enter The Arch are never heard from again.

As the PCs investigate the area, The Arch flares to life, and one more archspawn as well as a greater archspawn emerge from it. The original archspawn chooses this time to emerge from hiding and join up with the new arrivals to attack the PCs. After these new creatures arrive, The Arch flashes in a blinding display of light and disappears from the warehouse.

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If Mia Pine is still following the PCs at this point, she makes her presence known after witnessing the battle, and seeing The Arch disappear. She's insistent that she's going to blog all about it and expose the truth of the Dark World to all of humanity. The players are left with the sinking feeling that Alice Chang and the other children are gone from this world forever—something they must now tell Austin and his husband. Sometimes being a hero sucks.

Greater Archspawn

HIGH CONCEPT: UNFATHOMABLE ATROCITIES FROM BEYOND

TROUBLE: TOO RABID FOR THIS WORLD

SKILLS

GREAT (+4) Athletics, Fight

GOOD (+3) Notice, Stealth

STUNTS

Danger Sense. You have an almost preternatural capacity for detecting danger. Your Notice skill works unimpeded by conditions like total concealment, darkness, or other sensory impairments in situations where someone or something intends to harm you.

Heavy Hitter. When you succeed with Style on a Fight attack and choose to reduce the result by one to gain a boost, you gain a full situation aspect with a free invocation instead.

Sprinter. You move two zones for free in a conflict without rolling, instead of one, provided there are no situation aspects restricting movement.

STRESS

Physical: Mental:

CONSEQUENCES:

Mild (2) | Moderate (4) | Major (6)

Plot Hooks and Adventure Seeds

The adventures of the PCs can continue beyond this scenario! The players may be determined to find the children—even if the search puts them into grave danger—or they may now find their hands full with Mia’s threat to expose the supernatural world to the public at large.

CHARTING THE ARCH’S NEXT APPEARANCE

The PCs can consult occultic tomes to learn as much as they can about The Arch. If they’re persistent, they can learn that there is an obscure and rare tome that claims to contain vast amounts of information about The Arch. Among its rumored contents, are a means for charting The Arch’s next appearance, or summoning it altogether. The PCs can try to track down this tome, facing opposition and challenges along the way. Once they procure the tome, how accurate is it really? And will its information provide them with any measure of control over The Arch?

KEEPING MIA QUIET

Mia Pine now has video proof that the world contains dark terrors. She believes that for the good of the public, this information must come to light. However, this insistence of exposure flies in the face of the global esoteric consensus that such matters are not for public consumption. What will the PCs do about Mia? Will they aid her in exposing the truth? Or will they go to extreme lengths to silence her?

THE CHILDREN’S CRUSADE

A month after The Arch disappears, people begin to report sightings of the vanished children, including Alice Chang. Sightings report that they see the children in public, appearing translucent and weeping. Attempts to communicate with and console the children are ignored, and the children vanish in front of the witness’s eyes. What’s going on? Is there a chance that the missing children can still be found? Or is this some cruel after-image produced by The Arch?

AUSTIN CHANG, MAN ON A MISSION

Grief is a powerful emotion that can cloud the mind. If the PCs report to Austin and his husband that Alice is gone forever, Austin blames the group for his daughter’s disappearance. He accuses them of offering his family false hope and swears that he will go to any length possible to make the PCs feel the pain and loss that he feels. As a powerful banker in the city, he has the means to do it and reaches out to the PCs landlords

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and employers, doing anything he can to get them evicted or fired. These are only the first steps in his quest to completely ruin them. How will the PCs deal with this powerful but mundane threat to their lives while juggling their investigations of supernatural activities?

Det. Elisa May

Elisa May is a relentless detective. However, after being attacked by a strange dog earlier this year, she's been having blackouts, and has no clue what's happening during that time. She's beginning to suspect that there's more to the world than she knew.

ASPECTS

SUPERNATURAL TOUCH: WEREWOLF

HIGH CONCEPT: DOGGED DETECTIVE

TROUBLE: UNDIAGNOSED LYCANTHROPY

OTHER: CUT TO THE HEART • A REAL BLOODHOUND
THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE

SKILLS

GREAT (+4) Investigate
GOOD (+3) Shoot, Rapport
FAIR (+2) Athletics, Fight, Physique
AVERAGE (+1) Drive, Empathy, Notice, Will

STUNTS

Community Connections. Elisa may roll Investigate as though it were Contacts when attempting to gain information from community members.

Heightened Senses. Elisa gains a +2 to Notice rolls when overcoming an advantage at night.

Sure Shot. Elisa gains a +2 bonus to Shoot rolls when attempting to create an advantage to slow a target.

STRESS

Physical: Mental:

CONSEQUENCES:

Mild (2) | Moderate (4) | Major (6)

NOTES

Refresh:3

Werewolf Abilities:

- **Wolf Form:** Elisa transform into a wolf form on the night of a full moon as well as the immediate nights before and after. When in this form, she gains a +2 to all Athletics rolls, and Fight rolls.
- **Foggy Memory:** Elisa has a hazy memory of the actions she took in her wolf form. The difficulty for all rolls designed to recall the nights' events is increased by +2.

Jamal Uribe

Jamal was inducted into the world of the occult at an early age. He learned everything he knows about the Dark World from his grandmamma, a powerful witch. Jamal has been successful at cultivating a reputation amongst humans and supernatural entities alike for being in-the-know at all times.

ASPECTS

SUPERNATURAL TOUCH: AWAKENED HUMAN (OCCULTIST)

HIGH CONCEPT: OCCULTIST EXTRAORDINARE

TROUBLE: CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT

OTHER: ANYTHING CAN BE A SPELL COMPONENT
KNOWN AMONGST THE NIGHT • SHADOWS ARE MY SHIELD

SKILLS

GREAT (+4) Lore
GOOD (+3) Shoot, Will
FAIR (+2) Empathy, Provoke, Rapport
AVERAGE (+1) Athletics, Drive, Fight, Notice

STUNTS

Call in a Favor. Once per game session, Jamal can call in a favor from someone who owes him. He declares both the nature of the favor, and the identity of the person granting it.

Knows the Back Alleys. Jamal can roll Lore as though it were Athletics when trying to escape from someone by disappearing in the back alleys of the city.

Scion of the Streets. Jamal gains a +2 to Rapport rolls when interacting with street-level magic users.

STRESS

Physical: Mental:

CONSEQUENCES:

Mild (2) | Moderate (4) | Major (6)

NOTES

Refresh:3

Awakened Human (Occultist) Abilities:

- **Spellcasting:** Jamal can cast occultic spells. Describe to the GM the effects he hopes to achieve, and the GM will set a difficulty for him to beat when he overcomes an obstacle by rolling Lore.
- **Arcane Knowledge:** Jamal gains a +2 to Lore rolls when attempting to identify supernatural influences.
- **Friend on the Other Side:** Jamal has one good supernatural friend who feeds him information. He gains a +2 to Rapport rolls when gleaning information from this friend.



CREDITS

DON BISDORF tells stories through fiction and roleplaying, having detoured briefly through video game programming and webcomics. He is the author of the Fate Adventures & Worlds setting *Sails Full of Stars*, and a self-published fantasy novel titled *Stone of Names*. He has more Fate projects in progress and will almost certainly brag about them at <http://donbisdorf.blogspot.com/>.

When not writing or editing, **SALLY CHRISTENSEN** crochets unspeakable evil. She lives in the wilds of north Toronto, along with two cats, a Portuguese viking, and her tiny overlord.

BRENDAN CONWAY is a co-owner of Magpie Games, and has worked on the *Firefly RPG* from Margaret Weis Productions, the upcoming *Bulldogs!* (Fate Core edition) from Galileo Games, and numerous Magpie Games projects including *Urban Shadows* and *The Fate Codex*. His solo projects include three Chaos World settings for *Dungeon World—The Last Days of Anglekite*, *The Cold Ruins of Lastlife*, and *The Green Law of Varkith*. He is currently at work on an upcoming game about young superheroes, *Masks: A New Generation*.

THOMAS DEENY is a graphic designer who specializes in book layout and game design. His layout and design work can be found in about half of things in Brendan's bio above, but the two have never actually met. Strange. Additional work of his can be found in Atlas Games' *Unknown Armies*, John Wick Presents' *7th Sea*, and Growling Door Games' *Chill*. You can review his published works at denaghdesign.com and follow him on Twitter at [@denaghdesign](https://twitter.com/denaghdesign).

CREDITS

SHELLEY HARLAN is an editor by day, and by night...is also an editor, because you can't get too much of a good thing. She works for the indie RPG company Faster Monkey Games and still can't quite get used to the idea that people will pay her money to read gaming material. She also thinks it's a fun game to see if you can spot the typo in this bio.

ANDRÉ LA ROCHE is a gamer and an attorney. Despite this otherwise deadly combination of character flaws, he's pretty relaxed at the gaming table. He previously worked on Margaret Weis Productions' *Dragonlance* game line. André aspires to be a warrior-poet, and spends his free time randomly spouting existential platitudes.

MIKE MUMAH has worked for the better part of a decade as a roleplaying game illustrator. His work has appeared in such games as *Shadowrun*, *Rifts*, *Dead Reign*, *Part-Time Gods*, *Babylon 5*, and several others. The Michigan-based artist is currently at large from the Briarsbrook Institute for the Criminally Insane and considered extremely dangerous. If sighted, do not approach him! He may seem very affable and friendly but don't be fooled! Please call the authorities and delay him with free coffee, bourbon, and/or hot wings. He will take the time to enjoy this bait until he can be apprehended. This is for the public's best interest.

JUAN OCHOA: Gumshoe whistleblower reporter hero? A narcissistic antagonist out for blood? Fall-guy for a horrifying nanite invasion? Sleeper agent for extraplanar feline intelligence? The FACTS on El Mucho Colombianísimo: he is a straight-dealing, smooth-lined, grit-toothed artist, twainsplit mirror-master-magician-carouser-cavorter, and noted wizard, with knowledge bilingual, exotic, and esoteric, who theoretically does most of his thinking in Español.

FELIPE REAL is a writer, editor, and translator (EN-SP/SP-EN). He has won various minor literary contests in Chile, Spain, and Mexico and his stories have been included in assorted anthologies and literary magazines. He has translated a number of authors and works, including Neil Gaiman's "I, Cthulhu" and *The Gods of Pegāna* (2014) by Lord Dunsany. He currently works as an editor at Fantasia Austral & EN World TRAILseeker.

CREDITS

JUSTIN ROGERS has had an uncommon introduction to RPGs—he’s played five or six different Apocalypse World hacks and a bunch of Fate, but doesn’t really have any idea what “a Pathfinder” is. He works sporadically on various projects: a Baltimore city guide for *Urban Shadows*, his analytics-oriented sports blog (thesplog.com), songs for his barely-existent rock band Kodiak Arrest, and his astrophysics Ph.D. thesis, though not necessarily in that order.

MANUELA SORIANI lives in the same small town in northern Italy where she was born in 1979; she studied to become an accountant, but Art asked to be part of her life. After six years in comic books for the Italian market (including Jonathan Steele for Star Comics), Manuela began creating both traditional paper books and animated apps for electronic devices. Around 2013, she added back comic book projects in her daily job, alongside children books and cover art. In early 2016, she was successfully backed for her first illustration book “Butterflies” and is currently working on the comic series *TIN* (by Ilya Dvilyanski), *BoyLord* (by Nathan Peabody), and *Girls Heist Out* (by Rob Wieland).

MARK DIAZ TRUMAN is an independent game developer and co-owner of Magpie Games (magpiegames.com). Mark has authored two indie RPGs—*The Play’s the Thing* and *Our Last Best Hope*—and written a number of pieces for Evil Hat Productions, including parts of THE FATE TOOLKIT and *Timeworks*. Mark is passionate about creating an inclusive and diverse gaming community and is thrilled to have the chance to put forward pieces by both fresh voices and old friends in THE FATE CODEX!

AMANDA VALENTINE is a freelance RPG editor and developer. Her work includes the *Dresden Files RPG*, *Marvel Heroic Roleplaying*, *Fate Accelerated Edition*, *Little Wizards*, and many others. She also edits fiction, including several of the *Spirit of the Century* novels. She blogs sporadically at ayvalentine.com about editing, parenting, and gaming. At reads4tweens.com she writes spoilerific book reviews for adults who care about what the kids in their lives are reading. You can find her on Twitter as [@ayvalentine](https://twitter.com/ayvalentine) and [@reads4tweens](https://twitter.com/reads4tweens).

TARA ZUBER grew up on fairy tales and remains mildly obsessed with stories to this day. She looks forward to exploring the Fate system further and discovering new stories to tell and share. Tara can be found in Chicago or online on Google Plus at [+TaraZuber](https://plus.google.com/+TaraZuber).



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