

Department Nine



A roleplaying game about Destiny

by Nick Wedig

Playtest Version 0.3
8/5/2010

You work for the Fates, manipulating people's destinies to make sure everything goes according to **The Plan**. But you broke the cardinal rule of **FATE**'s employees, and looked into your own future.

Worse, you didn't like what you saw there. Now, you're trying to change your own destiny, with your former colleagues working to stop you.

This game works best with a small group of players, some poker chips and a writing surface where all game information is visible to everyone playing. In particular, three or four players is ideal, and five players is straining the system. A group of six or more should split into two or more groups.

You Will Need:

Three to five players, including yourself
(if you have more, I propose splitting into two groups of 3)

15 or so tokens per players.
(Poker chips work well)

20-30 stones of two or three distinct colors
*(these need to be indistinguishable by touch,
something other than stones could work)*

An opaque bag
(or hat or something to draw objects from at random)

Five index cards or scraps of paper per player
(and writing utensils for filling things out)

Changelog: Added additional Keyword categories, reduced randomness in character creation/building.
Eliminated obsolete legacy mechanics like Fate Manipulation and Divining the Future.

1.1 Welcome to Department Nine and Preliminary Briefing

Congratulations on being hired to work for FATE's subdivision, Department Nine. As you by now know, Fate is responsible for the management and control of the destinies of every major lifeform on Earth, and has liaisons with extraterrestrial [REDACTED].

Many new applicants have substantial questions concerning the nature of FATE and why the division exists. These questions will be answered in the "Questions From New Recruits" section (see page XX). [REDACTED]

1.2 History of FATE

FATE was founded centuries ago, after a mortal hero [REDACTED]. After this unfortunate tragedy, the gods of Olympus and associated anthropomorphic personifications deemed it best to operate clandestinely thereafter. Thus the Greek pantheon removed itself from Mount Olympus to an undisclosed location.

In order to operate covertly, and to deal with the growing number of humans with relatively trivial destinies, the three Fates created a cult of holy priests, who were granted the secrets of destiny itself. Their role was to oversee mundane lives in the goddess's stead and to untangle snarls in the web of destiny. This team has since grown into FATE, which we assure you is now a strictly non-denominational organization. As the agency has grown in size, so too have the regulations that agents must follow. So please read your agent's manual very carefully, and remember: these are people's lives you are dealing with.

1.3 Divisions of FATE

The FATE agency is divided into three sub units, each of which is headed by one of the Moirae, the goddesses who control destiny. These divisions are:

- Our own Department Nine, managed by Clotho. Department Nine is in charge of Beginnings: we put every piece of a person's life in place so their destiny can play out according to The Plan. A secondary role of the department is managing the past: sometimes past events need to be hidden to hide the activity of the gods or the relation between current events and the past needs modified. These modifications need to be careful, though to avoid "Snarls", which are Inconsistencies in the C/E Thread. Agents violating C/E is strictly prohibited.

- Department Ten, controlled by Lachesis, monitors and regulates events as they progress. They observe critical events in history or a person's life to make sure everything is on track for the appropriate destiny. Therefore, they are typically the first department to notice any potential Snarls in the C/E thread, which are then reported to premonitors in the Division of Predetermination (q.v.) for verification. If the Snarl is a verified Inconsistency, then a task force composed of agents from one or more departments is assembled to rectify the situation.

- The Division of Predetermination, is under Atropos's command. Atropos's section deals with endings, destinies and deaths. High rankings Fate Assignment Agents in the department determine the eventual end of every person. Thereafter, it is up to the other departments to make the determined destiny happen. Premonitors from the Division of Predetermination observe the entire process, watching for Inconsistencies that could unravel the Web of Fate. Because their role concerns both monitoring people's fates and the activities of agents in the field, the Department of Predetermination also contains the Internal Affairs section of FATE.

1.4 Guide for New Recruits

Many new recruits, especially the "mundane" recruits, have questions about the FATE organization, the world normally hidden from the general public, and the jargon of the association. This guide is designed to help you learn the things a veteran FATE agent takes for granted.

In general, nearly everything you knew about the world before joining FATE is still true. Chicago is still a city in Illinois, the President still runs the United States from the White House, cars still run on gasoline. But there is, behind all the public information, a layer of reality where the sun rises because Apollo wants it to, where the stars are each people you may need to visit on a business call, where [REDACTED], and most importantly for you, where the destiny of every sentient being is controlled by three ancient women at FATE HQ.

Terminology:

Terms denoted *Slang* are not acceptable in formal departmental communications or field reports. They are included here only to assist in informing new recruits, not because FATE or Department Nine approves of their usage in any way.

Agency, the: FATE. Sometimes replaced with “the Loom” (*q.v.*) to differentiate FATE from other agencies FATE employees have to deal with. Often used in speech to avoid confusing FATE with an individual’s destiny.

C/E or C/E Thread: the Cause/Effect threads that connect events. Used in the singular, it refers to all the threads as a totality, as if they were all a single thread. Used in the plural, C/E Threads refer to all the various causal relationships between events, people and objects. Incautious manipulation of the C/E Thread may lead to Inconsistencies, and so require proper authorization and supervision.

Creatures: *Slang.* Somewhat derogatory nickname for sentient beings of the non-human persuasion. FATE and D9 have very strict non-discrimination policies, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, morality, species, temporal paradoxes, morality or diet. FATE makes every effort to accommodate non-humans in their special needs.

D9: Department Nine

D10: Shorthand for Department 10

DP: The Division of Predetermination

Gardeners: *Slang.* A very insulting nickname for agents of the Division of Predetermination. DP agents do not like to be called this to their faces.

Heroes: *Slang.* Humanoid agents or civilians who have inherited genetically some of the power of from the Men Upstairs. Note that being a Hero does not actually guarantee the moral character of the sentient you are dealing with.

Inconsistencies: When an event occurs further down the C/E thread, but the cause has been removed, this is an Inconsistency. Inconsistencies are bad, and so need to be avoided. FATE agents are continuously monitoring the C/E thread for inconsistencies so agents can be dispatched to deal with them.

Loom, the: *Slang.* A term for FATE, often used as a nickname or to preserve signal security. Often used in speech

to avoid confusing FATE with an individual’s destiny.

Mamas: *Slang.* Agents of Department Ten. D10 agents have been known to threaten disciplinary action for using the term. The case of Sutherland v. Aganippe is at the time of this printing still ongoing, so FATE and Department Nine are unable to comment on it.

Men Upstairs: *Slang.* A collective term for the supernatural beings of immense power formerly known as the Olympian Gods. Term is generally used regardless of Gender; though see The Women Upstairs (*q.v.*). The term “Gods” is frowned upon in both official and unofficial contexts, as it implies a level of worship and sanctity not necessarily appropriate to the being in question.

Navel Gazers: *Slang.* Agents in charge of destiny monitoring. Though the job of these agents is quite important to the functioning of FATE, field agents have been known to look down upon monitoring agents. We at D9 HQ request that you learn to “get along” with your fellow agents, regardless of their position or rank, thereby making FATE a better place for all to work.

Snarls: AKA Inconsistencies (*q.v.*)

Spinsters: *Slang.* Agents from Department Nine, using it is like teasing D9 agents.

Web or Web of Destiny: the sum total of C/E threads, interlinking everything on Earth to everything else.

Women Upstairs: *Slang.* The three Fates specifically. While the Men Upstairs (*q.v.*) refers to all the various gods formerly known to inhabit Mount Olympus, the “Women Upstairs” refers only to the Fates, who are at the head of this agency.

Introduction:

Welcome to *Department Nine*: a roleplaying game about destiny. How should I describe this game?

Take the classical idea of Fate, complete with three goddesses who administer to Beginnings, Middles and Ends. After a few centuries, the Fates found it taxing to administer the destinies of every single person on earth, so they created FATE, a group of priests to administer over mundane lives. Over the centuries, FATE has become increasingly large and bureaucratic. It is dominated by petty paper pushers, centuries old dogma and a belief in the rigidity of destiny. Any spark of the vibrant, personal or human in the organization has long since gone out.

The player characters are agents of FATE who broke the cardinal rule of the organization: they checked their own future, and they didn't like what they saw. Now they have gone rogue (overtly or covertly) and are working to change their future. They still have the skills the Department taught them, but changing events can attract the attention of FATE agents. Can they save those things they hold dear, and make things better?

Each player will take turns starting a scene, where one or more player characters try to accomplish something. The player of that character will describe their actions, and possibly spend some points from their pool to succeed at their action. Other players can start a conflict to take control of the scene. Conflicts are driven by a combination of auction and drawing colored stones out of a hat (or opaque bag). Many of the scenes will drive the player characters closer to facing their final future, at which point they will need to stop that fate or fail and face the consequences. For each time you failed to stop the events leading up to your fate, changing the fate itself will be more difficult.

Each player has a Flag, which identifies what that player wants to see happen in the game. Flags automatically reward players for introducing those elements into the game. In addition, one Flag is built into the system, to encourage adversity and conflict. It will help direct the game towards a satisfying climax, I hope.

Character Creation:

To create your character, first you need to create a set of Keywords. Keywords are used as creative spurs to build characters from. This is like a free-association game: pick a category and come up with a detail, image or idea that relates to that category. Write that concept or phrase on an index card. Do this six times, picking a different category each time.

There are twelve categories, but you only need to write six Keywords. So pick categories that appeal to you and that spur on your creativity. Once you've come up with a more specific image or idea and written it down, the category itself will no longer matter (don't write that on the card, just your more specific version).

The categories are:

- **Action Adventure** – You know, like a big Hollywood blockbuster with explosions and stuff.
- **Bureaucracy** – Department Nine is a giant, ancient organization full of obtuse rules and obscure regulations
- **Espionage** – you're secret agents doing highly classified work, here
- **Family** – family relationships make for compelling gameplay
- **Time Travel** – What sorts of paradoxes arise from knowing the future? What happens if you can change the future?
- **Mistakes** – Confusion, accidents and wrongful assumptions make for excellent comedy and tragedy both.
- **Myth** – as in ancient Greek myths and the gods and monsters associated with them
- **Neo-Noir** – The classic crime drama updated to modern sensibilities
- **Paranoia** – Who do you trust? What secret motives and shady dealings lurk beneath the surface of Department Nine?
- **Precognition** – You can know the future. How does that change your behavior?
- **Romance** – Always a good motivation. Who do you love? Why do you love them?
- **Tragedy** – You're trying to evade a terrible fate, right? What horrific things lurk in the near future?

Your keywords should be short, punchy and interesting. You want someone to read the word and immediately get their brain firing based on all the cool ideas they have for using it. You also need to keep Keywords vague in order to allow for maximum combination: if

you're too specific, then it's hard to combine with something else.

Once everyone has written out six keyword cards, take all the Keywords together and shuffle them into a pile. Deal out six to each player. Now you will look at the Keywords that you received. Pick one to help determine your relationship with the player on your left, and another to determine the relationship with the player on your right.

Look at the cards that you received and the cards of your neighboring players. Figure out how to combine those cards to describe what the relationship is between your characters. Talk with your neighbors and figure out how "Bureaucracy – supervisor" and "Espionage – Security cameras" fit together. Are you hacking into the security cameras to avoid your supervisor catching you at something? Or are you a security professional, supervising the security cameras in the office?

Some keywords might be hard to fit together if they tie directly to specific kinds of relationships. If you have "Family – Mother" for the player on your left and they have "romance – Mother", then you have two choices: A) steal from Oedipus Rex and have an inappropriate romantic relationship with your own parent/child or B) decide that the two Keywords apply to an NPC that is relevant to both of you. In this case, the NPC might be your mother and the other PC's lover, which still tells us something about your relationship with the other PC. If you're stuck, be creative, introduce NPCs to triangulate, and ask for help from uninvolved players. If all else fails, ask the table if it'd be reasonable to pick a new pair of Keywords to define your relationship.

Now that we have relationships defined, we should be getting a good idea what sort of character you're playing. Now you pick another Keyword card that will define what sort of Fate you're dealing with. The term it provides might be something you want to stop or avoid, or it may be something you hope to gain. The card may represent some relevant NPC, or it may represent something you want you PC to become. Think about the card, and come up with a Fate that your character has that you want to change in some way.

The remaining three cards in your hand will be used to frame scenes for your own character or for other characters. Think about how you'll use these cards later on as you pick relationship and Fate cards.

Note:

Determining your Fate establishes a lot about the tone of your character and the game in general. Establishing a silly Fate, like "Forced to marry an ugly girl", for your character suggests a silly game, in this example a romantic comedy sort of game. And that is fine, provided the group as a whole wants that sort of game. Similarly, the Fate might be defined as "Chicago is destroyed by terrorists in a nuclear explosion", which suggests the game is a more action oriented game. Along with your Keywords and Flags (which come in later), defining your Fate is your primary way to set the tone and to communicate mood to the other players.

Use your powers wisely: create a Fate you think would be interesting to watch happen, and also interesting to thwart.

Flags:

Finally, you need a Flag. Your Flag is something you, the player, want to see happen in the game. (Your character may or may not want it.) You could define it as something concrete, like “Ninjas” or “swordfights” or “espionage tradecraft”. Alternately, it might be something more abstract, like “Hubris punished” or “player characters failing” or “moral dilemmas”. If you go for abstract, make sure it’s clear enough to everyone at the table exactly what behavior matches the Flag.

When someone does whatever your Flag asks for, they will be rewarded. Every Flag will start with one token on it. Each time a player does something that fulfills another player’s Flag, they take all the tokens off that Flag. Every other Flag gets a token added to its pile.

Example: *Alex, Belinda, Carl and David are playing*

Department Nine. *When Alex fulfills Belinda’s Flag of “mistaken identity” by confusing the oncoming FATE agent for his PC’s ex-wife, Alex takes the tokens that have accrued on the Flag. Alex, Carl and David each add one token onto their respective Flags, Belinda gains the pleasure of seeing the Flag fulfilled. The System Flag also gains a token.*

So the idea is that the other players will want to introduce things you like into the game, increasing the fun for both involved. You can change your Flag whenever you like, provided you’re not doing it to be a jerk. How do you know if you’re being a jerk? If you change your Flag to avoid letting a player get the reward from hitting it, that’s being a jerk. If someone protests to the change because they wanted the tokens your Flag acquired, give them a chance to hit the Flag, and then change it to whatever you want.

If you don’t have any tokens on the Flag, don’t worry about it, and change your Flag as often as you’d like. If you’ve got a bunch of Tokens on your Flag and no one’s going for it, change it until someone takes the bait. After all, having a bunch of tokens on the Flag means it’s been a long time since you got the sort of input a Flag gives you.

Naming a specific player or PC in your Flag (e.g., “I want to see Jim’s PC caught by FATE agents”) creates a strong potential for jerkiness, so use it carefully. It’s often better just to generalize the Flag (so “I’d like to see a PC caught by FATE agents”). No, you can’t hit your own Flag. This is a tool for collaboration, and you can’t

collaborate with yourself.

Really small groups should consider giving each player two Flags. This is only recommended for groups of three players, but it gives the players more options. In groups of four or more you should have enough different potential goals that you don’t need additional Flags. Once again, though, make this game your own.

If you ever hit two Flags in the same action, take the chips off of them in whichever order you prefer.

The System Flag:

To create some conflict and adversity, there is automatically one Flag in play, which is predefined and unchanging. It is:

- **Win a conflict while portraying an NPC** which is opposing a PC.

This System Flag acts identically to the other, player defined, Flags, including acquiring tokens as other Flags are hit, rewarding a player when they are fulfilled and putting tokens on other Flags when it is hit. It is only distinct because it is predefined and unchanging.

Once everyone has played the game a couple times and has a good handle on how things work, you might as a group do away with or modify the System Flags. Or you may decide to create additional System Flags (any Flag that is predefined and not controlled by a specific player). That’s great: make the game your own. But make sure you have the discussion about changing the Flags before you start playing the game.

Beginning the Game:

Once you have created character and outlined their Fates, you just need to write everything where every player can see it, and distribute three starting tokens to each player. This is their initial pool of points they can spend (in Fate Manipulation or in Conflicts).

It is helpful to have all the player's Fate and relationships written out where everyone can see them. Write them on the index cards. Or write them on a large sheet of paper, or a chalkboard, or a dry erase board, or on a parking lot using sidewalk chalk. Whatever you want, as long as the information is publicly accessible. Similarly, you might want to each Player's Flag written where everyone can see them. We used more index cards, and stacked poker chips on the cards as other Flags were hit. But you could use coins, glass beads or any other tokens you want instead of poker chips, and write Flags on anything, so long as everyone can see them, and they can be easily modified. So don't tattoo your Flags on your chest or anything, okay?

Throughout the text, I tend to use tokens, chips and points pretty interchangeably. (Stones are something separate and specific and used in Conflicts.) There should be a big pile of chips in the center of the playing field, so everyone can grab them as appropriate. There's no theoretical limit on how many chips can be placed on a Flag on in a player's pool, so I'd suggest ten to twenty chips per player need to be in this pile.

Scene Framing:

Starting at random, each player will take turns playing a Keyword card from their hand and framing a scene based on that card's Keyword. These scenes will be events that lead up to a character's final Fate: if they can change things here, then they will find it easier to change their final fate. Framing a scene can include describing the setting, timeframe and situation in which characters find themselves. This can be as simple as stating "I want to see Mr. Adrastus have to fight a monster that FATE agents sent after him." Or it could be much more complicated and specific, tying together multiple plot threads and characters. You can frame scenes for other player's characters, if you want. After you describe the scene and one player character that is involved, every player not yet involved can choose to be present in the scene, provided they can justify their character's presence.

Feel free to invent any non-player characters

that you feel are appropriate to the scene. The non-player characters (NPCs) can be controlled by anyone at the table, and can switch control from scene to scene. When you frame the scene, offer the NPCs to any player not currently involved, to see if they wish to play them.

If there are no more Keyword cards left to draw, it is time for the PCs to begin facing their final Fate.

Playing NPCs:

Often, a scene will call for a non-player character to be present. The player framing the scene gets to declare what NPCs are present (though they should be open to suggestions from other players).

If possible, an NPC should be roleplayed by a player whose PC is not in the current scene. If there are multiple players not in the current scene, one can volunteer, or you can decide to take turns, randomly or whatever you want. Just make sure the NPC gets played by someone.

Any time you agree to roleplay an NPC for a scene, you gain one token for your pool. This is to encourage roleplaying NPCs, and to keep everyone involved, even if their PC is not present.

If all players currently have a PC involved in the scene, then anyone can volunteer to play the NPC(s). It's ultimately the responsibility of the scene framing player to see that NPCs get played by someone.

Portraying an NPC and winning a conflict as one will automatically hit the System Flag, and earn you a reward.

Conflict Resolution:

Conflict works by a process called sortition. It's like drawing lots, and was used as the basic of Athenian democracy in the golden age of Greece. Stones of two or more colors will be put in an opaque bag. One will be drawn out of the bag at random, and which color it is will determine who wins the conflict.

Other things than stones might work, like maybe poker chips, so long as they're visually distinguishable but not distinguishable by touch. But I'll call them stones simply because that gives me a convenient term for description. You'll want at least three colors of stones, with about 12-20 (?) stones of each color, and a bag big enough to hold nearly all the stones. Four or more colors would be helpful. You can purchase glass beads and the like at craft stores, or pay twice as much for the same thing packaged as life counters for Magic the Gathering. You could use the same sort of counter as you use for the general tokens, but it'll avoid some minor issues if you use separate things for each.

A conflict has begun because at least two people disagree about how something should turn out. Each of those people chooses one color of stone and places a stone of that color in the bag, describing how they begin their conflict.

At this point, anyone can spend chips from their pool and narrate in facts to aid one side or another. They can't narrate in facts that decisively end the conflict altogether, but they can add additional details and complications. So in a fight scene, "I punch him hard" is fine, but outright narrating the death of your primary opponent is not. Killing him would decide the conflict instead of adding more detail and excitement to the conflict. (Killing minor NPCs and henchmen is probably okay if you want a more action-oriented game.) Save the big decisive moves for when we reach the end of the conflict. Your group can probably sort out what is kosher and what is not for themselves.

If there's a lot of confusion and people talking over one another, you can go around the circle in turn, each person getting a chance to narrate events and spend points in turn (starting with one of the two main opponents, I guess). But most of the time, you can just say that stuff is happening and spend your points on it. The order that stones go in the bag doesn't really matter any, so just say stuff that happens as you get cool ideas on what to do.

Each time you narrate in a new event, you need

to do two things: spend one point from your pool and place a colored stone in the bag. At the end of the conflict, one stone will be pulled at random from the bag to determine the winner, so having more stones of a certain color helps that side's chances of winning. (See below for concluding a conflict.)

If you don't have any poker chips in your pool, you can suggest things to other people but your word doesn't carry any narrative weight. The only way to make your statements actually be narrative truth is to spend chips.

Each time you narrate, the details you describe need to be new and interesting. Don't get repetitive. If you say "The rock is too big for you to move" one turn, adding "It's really, really big" the next isn't sufficiently different. Perhaps you should instead describe how it is a slippery rock, or how it's hard to find a place to push it from or something. Make sure every time you spend a stone, that you're introducing something new into the game for other people to work with.

Most of a conflict will consist of the two main opponents narrating events for their own favor. Sometimes, other people may want to aid a certain side in a conflict, so other players are free to narrate and add stones to the bag for either side. If you're particularly impressed with a player's narration or cool idea, feel free to spend chips to aid their side as well, as a reward for their general awesomeness. Or if you just feel that one side really should win for whatever reason, you can add stones of their color (by spending your chips). Of course, you should still add a detail for every stone put in the bag, so that other people have more details to build on.

Eventually, people will be out of ideas to narrate or they will be unwilling to spend more tokens on this conflict. At this point, the conflict has ended, and we need to know who wins the final narration for it. Someone should mix the bag of stones around and draw one out. Whichever player had that color stone then has won the conflict. They get to describe the final outcome of the conflict. (Note that they don't need to describe good or bad things for their PC, just that they get final say in what happens.) They explain how the conflict comes to a close, and what the outcomes are for the various people involved.

The rest of the stones should get removed from the bag and made available for use in later conflicts.

Multisided Conflicts:

Sometimes you'll get three players who want in on a conflict. Sometimes you have multiple people opposing the same person. Sometimes everyone is opposed to each other. If you have a bunch of people in conflict, you need to discuss whether this is all the same conflict, or if there are multiple conflicts to be done in serial format.

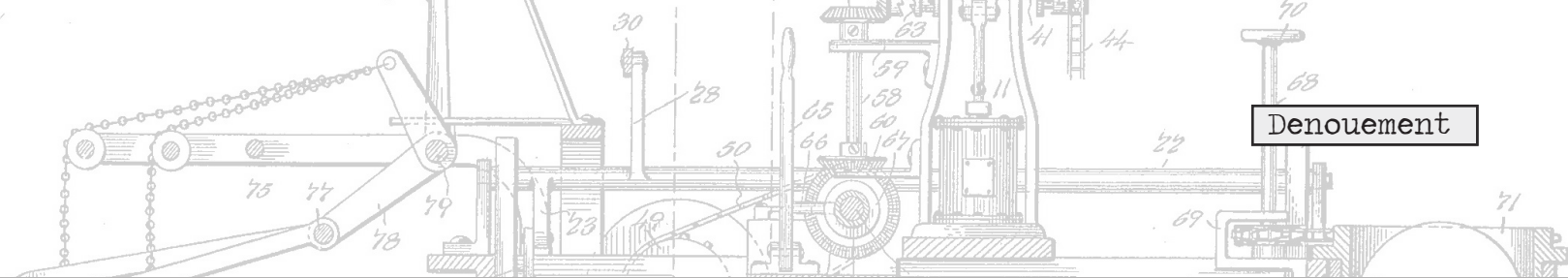
If you have three or more participants each with their own desires, you'll need to have three or more colors of stones to put in a bag. Beyond that detail, three sided conflicts run the same as two sided ones: you pay tokens to narrate facts and put stones in the bag.

If a player is pushing for the same outcome as another player, it may be simpler to have one be the primary participant in the conflict and the other person be assisting them. In this case, the assistant would not get their own color of stones: they would be paying to place stones of the primary participant's color in the bag.

Ending a Scene:

After a conflict or fate manipulation ends, any players not involved in the conflict can choose to end the scene and then we go back to taking turns framing a new one. If another player later wishes to return to that scene, that's great, you can pick up where you left off, like the intercutting between battles in a Star Wars movie.

If everyone is involved in the conflict, or if there is no conflict in a scene, end a scene by group consensus. Propose to end a scene, and if everyone else agrees, move onto the next one, possibly coming back to that scene.



Ending the Game:

As the game progresses, you character will face the events leading up to their Fate. They will try to deal with these Causes one way or another, and try to manipulate destiny to make the event turn out differently. If you are unable to change these events when they occur, then these events become “locked in”, and impossible for a FATE agent to change. Having failed to change a Cause event will make it harder for a PC to change their Fate in the final scenes of the game.

Once everyone has played out the Keyword cards from their hand, you have reached the end of the game. At this point, the other players decide by voting which PCs avoid their fate and which do not.

Pause for a moment, and consider which PCs have managed to change the causes of their fates. Consider which PCs you feel empathy towards and which you feel deserve their failure. Decide for yourself which PCs in your mind should succeed or fail, based on whatever criteria you want. Now you have to allocate your tokens from your pool, splitting them between the PCs of the other players. You can divide your tokens up however you want: perhaps one PC gets all your tokens, or perhaps they are split evenly between two PCs, or you throw a single token off to a PC because he explained well how he worked to avoid his fate.

When everyone is done writing down their votes, everyone reveals where tokens are going. If a PC received enough tokens from the other players, then they succeed in avoiding their fate. If the other players spent at least five on a given character, that PC can avert his or her Fate. If not, then the PC has failed and their dreaded Fate comes true. Go around the table once more, with each player narrating for their own PC how they manage to change their fate or how they suffer through their fate.

Example: Nick's PC is the corrupt bureaucrat, is finally facing his Fate, which is “being caught and punished for his illegal activities”. He has just emerged from a wrecked car after a badly botched – but exciting – car chase. FATE's agents are on his tail, so he ducks into a nearby Olive Garden™ restaurant. Nick failed to avert one of the causes of his fate – that same car chase. But Nick makes a compelling argument to the other players about why his character should survive, and the vote reveals that he got the needed 6 tokens. Inside the Olive Garden™, Nick's PC pulls one last ditch fate manipulation to coincidentally find a spare restaurant employee uniform, which he quickly dons and uses as a disguise to escape pursuit.

Another Example: Adam's PC failed to stop the bumbling politicians and counterterrorism officials ignoring warning signs, and was unable to stop the bomb reaching Times Square, so when he is sitting in Times square trying to defuse a bomb, Adam needs at least seven tokens to change his destiny. Unfortunately, Adam only receives six chips in the final vote, so the bomb goes off, killing Adam's PC and many more innocent civilians.

After everyone has had a scene dealing with their fate, you can go around the table once more to describe each character's epilogue. Just a brief description of what happens to the character will do. If they defeated their Fate, describe a happy ending for them. If they failed, describe a tragic one.

Example: Amber's PC, Agent Odysseus, succeeded in changing his Fate of “My family does not recognize me when we are reunited”, so he is able to rejoin his wife and children. Amber narrates how after finding Odysseus and the happy reunion, Odysseus retires from FATE and finds a job that doesn't require leaving his family on any sort of business trips, ever again.

Another Example: Adam's PC, Mr. Adrastus, failed to stop the bomb exploding in Times square. This doesn't stop Adam from narrating an epilogue for his character, though, as he describes the funeral for his character, how FATE posthumously court martials him and how Mr. Adrastus's family never finds out why he was at Times Square that day.

And that's the entire game. You could reuse some or all of the player characters again, if their situation allows for it, but the game should create a self contained story, so you would be just as well off creating all new characters. Or some of your group could reuse a character, whereas others might choose to make new characters.

Example: The second time Nick and Amber decide to play, Adam cannot make it to the game. But Nick and Amber are joined by additional players Dan and Geoff. Amber decides her character from the first game has finished his story, and so creates an entirely new character. Nick likes the situation his first PC finds himself in: on the run from FATE with a small amount of cash from fixing horse races. He thinks that would make a good place to start the second game. Dan and Geoff both also create new characters, obviously. Though Nick's PC returns from a previous game, he does not start with any particular benefit.