

FATE

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1
MARCH 2016

CODEX

AMBER TWILIGHT

A CIVIL WAR THREATENS
THE FUTURE OF THE
GALAXY. CAN YOU STOP IT?



FAMILY FAVORS

ADD ORGANIZATIONS
THAT MATTER TO
YOUR FATE GAME

LA REINA DEL SOL

OUR FIRST
BUILDING BLOCK:
A POST-APOCALYPTIC
URBAN CRIME LORD!

MYTHOS ASPECTS

TAP INTO GENRE
BACKGROUNDS
TO MAKE ASPECTS
COME ALIVE



FATE **CODEX**

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1 MARCH 2016

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ABOUT *THE FATE CODEX* – VOL. 3, ISSUE 1

Another year...another volume of *THE FATE CODEX*!

Welcome to our third (and hopefully best!) year of *THE FATE CODEX*, our mostly-monthly Fate ezine dedicated to exploring new and interesting ideas in the Fate system. It's been an incredible honor to see over 500 pages of awesome Fate content pass through our ezine over the past two years, and I can't wait to see what this year has in store for our readers.

New years deserve new ideas, so we've decided to make a few crucial changes to *THE FATE CODEX* to keep things fresh:

- First, we're adding some new staff to the project: please welcome Tara Zuber! Tara has written several articles for *THE FATE CODEX*, and she's stepping up to take on Managing Editor duties over the next few issues. Each month, she'll be working to keep all the pieces we're working on moving, allowing us to deliver *THE FATE CODEX* more regularly and with fewer hiccups!
- We're also expanding the *THE FATE CODEX* beyond the pages of this ezine to the podcast airwaves. In addition to our monthly releases, we're now doing interviews, question and answer pieces, and more through *CODEX MACHINA*, our mostly-monthly podcast. We'll release a free preview to all backers each month, but folks who want to hear the full release should upgrade to a \$3+ backer level!
- Finally, we're debuting a new piece in this issue: Building Blocks. Thanks to feedback from our backers, we're focusing on more systems and setting pieces, moving away from fiction toward stuff that's more instantly usable at your game table. In this issue, I've written the first of these pieces: La Reina del Sol, a Machiavellian crime boss who can be dropped into your game or used as a seed to start a new campaign in a post-apocalyptic urban setting.

Thanks so much for joining us for this third year. We're excited about the next half a dozen issues we're going to publish, and we can't wait to show you new ideas, new systems, and new settings that you can bring to your table!



Editor in Chief
Mark Diaz Truman



FAMILY FAVORS

by JOHN LARGE

INTRODUCTION

One of the great things about Fate is the **bronze rule** (sometimes called the *Fate fractal*) almost anything within Fate can be represented as a character with aspects, skills, and stunts, etc. Using the bronze rule, you can represent a diverse array of different NPCs and objects, ranging from space-craft to gigantic monster, without having to master additional complex rules systems; once you understand the core rules of Fate you're good to go, saving time streamlining the process of planning your game.

In many television shows, movies, and RPGs, the central characters have the support of a large family or other organization that provides them with back-up and occasional favors with the understanding that something may be required in return in the future. Organizations, whether they be families or mega-corps, can be a great source of plot and intrigue in an RPG, as well as provide support and aid to their members in good standing. Obviously, the bronze rule can be used to represent these organizations, but the bronze rule alone doesn't tie these larger groups directly into the characters themselves.

This article shows how to create organizations using the familiar Fate rule structure, and how to make them have a more direct impact on your game and player characters. This will not only flesh out a group that exists in your campaign world, but will also give your heroes some extra options when it comes to tackling stubborn problems during an adventure.

How Central Should Organizations Be?

If you just want organizations and families as background flavor, simply having players mention them in one of their aspects works fine; these rules assume that you want organizations to take more of the spotlight in your game. Here are a few ways to feature organizations using this method:

Have all of the PCs be members of the same organization from the start. This ensures the importance of a single organization it can also tie together a group of disparate PCs, giving them a group goal and motivation to work together, along with a valuable support structure and hierarchy. Organizations can deliver orders, objectives, and goals to the PCs, keeping the plot moving without introducing an artificial framework every session.

Feature a number of conflicting and cooperating organizations. This approach involves slightly more work since you may have PCs belonging to different organizations, in addition to any NPC organizations that you create using these rules. However, the creation process is fairly quick and creates a ready-made source of plot for the GM. If you know that one of the PCs is a member of the monster-hunting Colt Family and that the Shandu Crime Syndicate is attempting to move in on their neighborhood, then you have a source of conflict and plot ready to go.

CREATING AN ORGANIZATION

First, decide what benefits membership offers and sketch out some of the important NPCs that are involved with your organization. As with all things in Fate, work together with your players to collaboratively build these elements, but don't be afraid to push your players to be specific about the organization goals, strengths, and weaknesses.

As an example of how this process works, we're going to take inspiration from a famous TV family of smart-talking, Impala-driving monster hunters. We're creating a group for our game called the Colt Family. Each step of creating and organization is accompanied by a short example of a group fleshing out the Colt Family.

Create Organization Aspects

An organization starts with fewer aspects than a player-character or a named NPC; these are the short sentences that help define your organization in plain English terms that are easy to read and understand. These aspects are:

ORGANIZATION CONCEPT

It helps to have a clear idea of what the organization is like and how it appears in your game. The organization concept is a short sentence that sums up the overall theme of the group and the place that they occupy in your campaign.

Examples:

- *Monster-Hunting Family*
- *Drug-Running Crime Syndicate*
- *Weapon-Smuggling Mafia Family*

DARK SECRET

Every business, family, or organization has some secret or flaw that it tries to hide, a vulnerability that can complicate life for its members. The secret is effectively the Trouble aspect of the organization; rogue members of the organization, a rival group, or perhaps an enemy that they have made.

Examples:

- *We're Being Hunted by a Demon.*
- *The Police Are Getting too Close*
- *The New Mayor's Crackdown on Smuggling*

ORGANIZATION GOAL

Most organizations are either founded with a goal in mind, such as making money or selling a product), or develop a goal as time goes on, as in the case of our monster-hunting family. The organization goal summarizes the main aims of the group in your game; not all members will slavishly follow this goal to the same degree, but having this written down from the start can help guide decisions on what sort of resources the organization has access to and how willing they are to help the PCs in various endeavors.

Examples:

- *Track Down the Creature*
- *Take Over the Drug Trade in the City*
- *We Need to Show the Mayor Who's Boss*

Creating Organization Faces

Create an NPC to represent each of the aspects you choose for your family or organization; for the **Organization Concept**, this will normally be the head of the family, whereas the **Dark Secret** might be a troublesome police officer or customs official, someone who causes issues and complications for the organization. The NPC for the **Organization Goal** can be viewed as a standard member of the organization whether that be a mobster or a monster hunter.

These NPCs do not have to be generated entirely, as with PCs but they should at least be given a name and a **High Concept** to describe them; if they prove to be more major figures in your campaign, then you can easily add stats to them later (FATE CORE SYSTEM, page XX). More general members of the family can be created using the rules for **Nameless NPCs** (FATE CORE SYSTEM, page XX) or even the **Mook** rules from Fate Accelerated (FATE ACCELERATED EDITION, page XX). The aspects chosen for the organization should give you a pretty good idea of the things your NPC will be skilled and unskilled at.

We want the Colt Family to be a roving gang of demon hunters, driven by a great loss in their family; they have members spread out across the countryside who use various confidence tricks to make money and secure supplies while engaging in their main activity of hunting down monsters.

For our Organization Concept we go for **Driven Monster Hunting Family**; the family has made many enemies during the course of its activities, mostly the creatures that they hunt and their servants, so we pick **Hunted by Demons** for the Dark Secret. We decide that the family patriarch will be the NPC that we define for the Organization Concept, naming him Robert Colt. We give him the High Concept **That Monster Took My Wife...**

The obvious choice for an NPC connected with the **Dark Secret** is the demon who actually killed Robert Colt's wife and helped albeit unwittingly launch the family on their demon hunting crusade. Giving the demon an actual name at this point would reduce some of the mystery, so we simply call it the Red-Eyed Demon and give it the High Concept of **Dark Murders with a Purpose**, implying that there is more to the demon than simply random murders.

Since the Organization Concept pretty much covers wiping out monsters, we've got to do a little work to flesh out the Organization Goal; instead we think a little about what originally propelled the family onto their monster-hunting path. We decide that the family patriarch's wife was slain by a particular demon and that his family has taken up the crusade to prevent the same terrible ordeal happening to other

families. We choose ***Protect our Home and the People from Demons*** as an aspect.

For this aspect, we create a member of the family, naming him Terrence Colt, and give him the High Concept ***Member of the Colt Family*** before creating some basic mook stats for him; he gets a +2 when dealing with monster hunting, conning people, or digging up lore, and a -2 at anything involving background checks or the legal system. Knowing what a baseline member of an organization looks like will help you to define areas where the player characters differ from this or are exceptional; it also means that if your players call in a favor to get some back-up, then you have stats for them ready made.

Choose Organization Skills

Each organization has a pool of skills related to its main business interests. For example, our monster-hunting family might have caches of equipment buried across the country, accessible to any member who needs gear. Taking some levels of Resources to represent this would be appropriate, as would a few levels of Contacts to represent folks in the community who support their work.

Choose three skills from the standard list to represent the skill pool possessed by the family; one of the skills should be rated at +2 and the others at +1 each. When a PC successfully calls on skilled aid from a member of the organization, they can add this bonus to their own skill check to represent the assistance that they are receiving.

The members of the family use various confidence schemes and scams to make ends meet, allowing them to follow their true calling. They've learned a lot about monsters, though so we set Lore at +2, Investigate at +1, and Burglary at +1, giving members of the family a chance to call on their fellows for assistance with investigating monsters and their weaknesses or engaging in more larcenous pursuits.

Create an Organization Favor Track

The favor track works like the consequences slot on the main character sheet, save that the number of boxes is dependent on the size and reach of the organization; a very small organization might have one box, a medium-sized organization four, and a countrywide organization eight. This is used to keep track of how many favors the PCs have called in from this organization. We'll cover how to use this track a bit later in the article (page XX).

JOINING AN ORGANIZATION

In order to claim the benefits of being in an organization using these rules, PCs must make mention of their membership in one of their aspects.

Player characters may also seek to join an organization after play has begun, although organizations will certainly only extend a membership invitation to those who have proven their worthiness and have passed tests of loyalty. Assuming that a PC has been accepted into the ranks of an organization, then they should change one of their character's aspects to reflect their membership; this can be done normally as per the rules for milestones on FATE CORE page XX.

For example:

- *Black Sheep of the Colt Family*
- *Rising Star in the Shandu Crime Syndicate*
- *Made Man of the Malvolo Family*

USING ORGANIZATIONS IN PLAY

Now that you've got your Organization or Family fleshed out, it's time to integrate it into your game.

Organization Aspects

One of the chief benefits of belonging to an organization using these rules is that the player can call on the aspects of the organization as though they were their own.

In fact, a player may invoke the aspects of their family without paying a fate point. However, each time they do, they accrue a favor owed to the family, and the character's name should be written in one of the favor track boxes. When all of the favor track boxes are full, no additional favors may be called upon from the family until some of the existing ones have been paid off.

The Colt family has **Protect our Home and the People from Demons** as their Organization Goal; if our PC, Simon Colt, is confronted by a demonic creature threatening his neighbors, then he could either pay a fate point to invoke the organization aspect as though it were one of his own or he could choose to save his fate points and instead accrue a favor to the family.

Information and Clues

Alternatively, when a player needs information in a hurry, they can choose to accrue a favor in order to be put in touch with someone who has the appropriate information by a member of their organization. The exact nature of the clue is up to the GM, but generally you should allow a player to do this if the information is at all relevant to the group's Organization Concept.

If the PCs are members of the Colt Family and are trying to dig up some information on the nesting habits of a particularly vile supernatural creature, then one of them could accrue a favor in order to get some info from another family member who has faced the creature or something like it before.

However, if the PCs were looking for information on the inner-workings of the police department or city hall, then being a member of the family would not be much use; they would have to investigate this matter personally, perhaps attempting to bribe a corrupt official or leaning on other contacts outside the organization in order to obtain this information.

Skilled Aid

Occasionally, even Fate characters have to call on the assistance of people with higher levels of ability. Being a member of an organization grants a PC access to other NPCs with variable skill pools; this is represented by the three skills chosen for the organization. If a PC wishes assistance from a member of their organization, then they may accrue a favor in order to have someone assist them, as long as it's feasible that another member of the organization could turn up and help them.

When gaining skilled help the PC should name the NPC helping them and define their area of expertise; they may then add the relevant organization skill rating to their roll in addition to their own skill.

Our member of the Colt Family is attempting to commit a burglary, breaking into the house of a person he believes serves the creature they are hunting; unsure whether his burglary skill of +1 will be enough, he contacts his cousin Terrence and arranges for them to meet up. The Colt Family has a burglary skill of +1, meaning that when Terrence arrives, the player adds an additional +1 for his burglary attempt, but he will owe the family some assistance in return in the future.

General Assistance

Players can normally spend fate points to declare fictional details. For example, they might spend a fate point to say there is a barrel of oil in a warehouse or that there is a single horse in the tavern barn; player characters who are members of a family or organization can owe a favor in order to do similar things with their organization, either receiving minor aid or filling in additional setting details.

Minor aid is something like crashing on a cousin's couch for the evening or borrowing a small amount of money, basically anything that doesn't put the family out or cause it significant expenditure.

To add additional setting details, the player accrues a favor and then narrates how the organization has either members or resources in the area that favor them in some way; for example, our member of the Colt Family needs to get his car fixed and accrues a favor to say that the mechanic knows his family and occasionally helps them out because they once helped his daughter who was possessed by an angry spirit.

When doing this the player should at least name the NPC or the resource and describe why being a member of the organization makes them available to them; final refusal of these elements rests with the GM, who may choose to either suggest alterations or disallow the adding of details if they seem entirely inappropriate.

Paying Off Favors

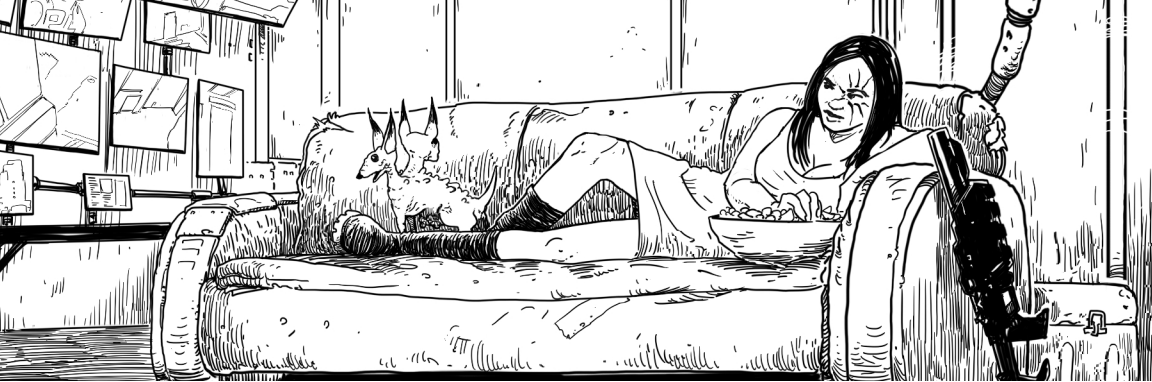
There are two ways that favors can be paid off:

- If the GM issues a compel related to the family's aspects and the player character has a favor box with their name on it, then the favor is paid off and their name removed from the track. The player may not pay a fate point to avoid the compel as per the normal rules, since they have already received the benefits when they accepted the favor earlier in the game.
- The PC can self-compel using one of the organization's aspect most likely the Dark Secret; assuming the GM approves the compel, then the player may choose to have one of their favors paid off instead of taking a fate point.

CONFLICT BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS

If you wish to represent conflict between organizations and families in a more direct manner, then you can give your organizations stress boxes and consequences like any other character. Attacks that would directly harm the family can be represented by them taking consequences in the same manner as a character would. When an organization is taken out of action, it means that it has fractured to such an extent that it is no longer capable of functioning in a cohesive manner.

In conclusion, using the rules in this article will help you create organizations that can be directly involved in your game without taking agency away from your players. These groups form a backdrop for your game, allowing the PCs access to additional resources but at the cost of further potential story complications down the line.



LA REINA DEL SOL

By MARK DIAZ TRUMAN

“You’d like to think you know my block. Truth is, the only person who knows Sol is me. Everyone else just sees what I want them to see.”

— *La Reina del Sol*

THE EASTERN SEABOARD ALLIANCE

In 2264, the Eastern Seaboard Alliance (ESA) implemented legislation to dramatically expand subsidized housing across previously condemned areas of what was once known as New Jersey. Following the nuclear detonations that accompanied the Sheffield Rebellion in 2229, large sections of the area had been condemned as unlivable; the ESA’s “starfield legislation” dedicated billions of public dollars toward new megadevelopments that would make better use of the irradiated countryside through public housing.

The Starfield

Friends and foes alike call the area “the starfield” because of the bill’s unfortunate acronym, a result of a late-night committee meeting: Special Trust Agreement for Reclamation and Recovery Yards (STARRY). Not to be deterred, the ESA Senator who shepherded the agreement through committee doubled down on the imagery: the various blocks of development—each miles wide and hundreds of stories tall—were named after star systems (Sol, Centauri, Sirius, etc.).

The starfield has stood for nearly thirty years, but little has been done to maintain or improve it after the initial legislation. The unemployment rate across the ESA spiked last year to 63%; millions of people live crammed into small areas rife with crime, drugs, and other unsavory shadow economies. Machines do the work that employed millions of

people just a century ago, but that doesn't mean that the surpluses of the automated economy are distributed evenly. Or at all, really.

La Reina del Sol

With the emergence of those underground economies came powerful cartels, arising throughout the starfield to traffic in guns, drugs, and other illicit goods. In the first few years, the police did their best to regulate such organizations, but the amount of money moving through these dense areas was overwhelming: drug organizations bribed all the police they needed to do their business virtually without interruption.

And as these organizations flourished, so did the fortunes of *narcas* like Erika Ramos, La Reina del Sol (The Queen of Sol). Rising to power on a wave of murders, power grabs, and innovative financing schemes, La Reina is the “unofficial” mayor of Sol, the person you need in your corner if you want to get ahead in a criminal enterprise. Cold, cruel, and paranoid, La Reina is a perfect shark, never sleeping in the same place twice, living on the edges of society, and always looking for prey.

Power and Pride

La Reina is a relatively young, light-skinned Latina—her black hair usually worn shoulder length—with a nasty scar encircling her left eye. She's fond of combat boots and dresses, but more for the ease of use in both cases than any particular fashion sense. She spends a great deal of time absorbing video streams from across Sol, looking for patterns, following up on hunches. She's brutally effective at discovering trouble before it strikes and she's rarely seen without her two-headed dog, Ciccio.

Rumors abound now that La Reina was married to the former head *narco* in Sol, a man named Ricardo Reyes. Patriarchal assumptions aside, many had seen them together in the weeks before his death and assumed that Reyes had taken an interest in the young woman who had climbed the ranks of his organization so quickly. Anyone in the know says without hesitation that Ramos and Reyes weren't an item...but they shut up quick when conversation turns to her role in his death.

The truth is that Reina has only been married once before...to the man who gave her the scars around her left eye. His fate was bloody and swift, and La Reina refuses to talk about exactly what led to the scar...or where his body ended up. She's given orders that no one speak his name in her block; he's merely *el hombre muerto* if someone needs to make reference to him.

ERIKA “LA REINA DEL SOL” RAMOS

ASPECTS

LA REINA DEL SOL • LOYAL TO A FAULT • THE PERFECT PREDATOR
STILL GOT LOVE FOR THE STREETS • UNDER SURVEILLANCE

SKILLS

SUPERB (+5) Resources
GREAT (+4) Provoke, Will
GOOD (+3) Deceive, Empathy, Rapport
FAIR (+2) Burglary, Contacts, Notice, Shoot
AVERAGE (+1) Athletics, Crafts, Fight, Investigate, Lore

STUNTS

More Than a Pretty Face: Add +2 to attacks with Provoke when you lash out at someone unexpectedly or with inappropriate force relative to the conflict.

Sol-bound: Roll with Resources instead of Contacts when you defend against someone trying to look into your criminal organization.

_____:

STRESS

Physical ☐ ☐ ☐

Mental ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

FRONT: HUNTING MOLYNEUX

La Reina does more than just control Sol. She works to keep her hold secure and her rule unchallenged, eliminating threats before they can blossom and expanding her power base within the nearby Centauri and Sirius blocks of the starfield. No one has yet ruled multiple blocks in the starfield, but La Reina figures that a queen can hold any space on the chessboard she wants, and she's willing to risk it all to claim more territory.

No one lives forever, *cabron*. Not even a queen.

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.

Description

La Reina has put a plan in motion to assassinate a rival drug kingpin operating out of Centauri: Mr. Elad “Monet” Molyneux. An amateur painter and educated gentleman, Molyneux is a charming contrast to Ramos, a well-protected member of the elite whose holdings happen to be slums throughout the starfield. Nevertheless, his control of the police makes an assassination attempt both difficult and expensive; La Reina has gone to great lengths to ensure he meets an unpleasant fate while attracting little attention to her own activities.

Cast

Erika “La Reina del Sol” Ramos, the cruel queen of Sol’s criminal underbelly; Mr. Elad “Monet” Molyneux, artist and drug kingpin of Centauri; Roberta Perez, *sicaria* for La Reina hunting Molyneux; Detective Claudia Byrne, an unwitting accomplice to La Reina’s plot.

12:00–3:00: Perez captures one of Molyneux’s money couriers working in Sol, disrupting a number of bribes Molyneux needed to keep the police away from his distribution centers around the Sol/Centauri border.

3:00–6:00: Det. Byrne, acting on an anonymous tip, requests a warrant for one of Molyneux’s distribution centers. To her surprise, the warrant is approved.

6:00–9:00: Det. Byrne raids the distribution facility, interrupting the supply of drugs flowing throughout both Centauri and Sol and sending Molyneux’s holdings into disarray.

9:00–10:00: Molyneux moves to lock down his control over his territory and travels into Sol to reprimand his lieutenant who oversees their border operations. Shortly after crossing the border, Perez and her gang attack his convoy.

10:00–11:00: Molyneux, disoriented and alone, tries to find cover at a local safehouse in Sol. Neighborhood kids see him enter and quickly spread the word to his enemies.

11:00–12:00: Perez finds and kills Molyneux. His lieutenants in Centauri split: some swear fealty to La Reina while others go to war to avenge Molyneux's death. Chaos ensues.

Special Rules

In addition to a countdown clock, fronts also contain a number of special rules revisions that focus play on the important themes of the setting:

Too Many: La Reina's forces in Sol are too numerous to be directly defeated. It is impossible to start a conflict with her forces inside her home block. Any fights are treated as contests (Fate Core System, page 150) to escape or evade her nearly infinite supply of goons.

Overdue Bills: Anyone looking for information on Molyneux's activities within Centauri may roll Resources instead of Contacts by bribing the disgruntled police.

Fronts in Play

When events in the front tick down toward the 12:00 doom, make sure the PCs are aware of the events. Depending on their position in the fiction, they might hear about something through the grapevine or directly witness one of the NPCs making a move. Give them chances to interrupt and get mixed up in the plot!

ENGAGING LA REINA DEL SOL

La Reina focuses on asymmetrical power: she always shows up with a crew, even when it's probably not needed, and she'd rather have discussions in her territory than make herself vulnerable. She's not worried about law enforcement, but she also doesn't take chances that don't have a significant upside. That said, she's got a number of buttons that are fairly easy to push; she'll go to great lengths to pursue someone if she feels that they undermined her authority in Sol.

Building blocks offer interesting characters and locations, but it's up to the GM to integrate them into a game of Fate. Sometimes the integration is obvious—an urban crime lord is an obvious addition to any modern or near-future setting—but here are a few ideas to help you generate interesting PCs to engage this building block if you aren't already running a game in an appropriate setting.

Antagonists

The PCs might be directly opposed to La Reina, characters that will work to not only stop her from assassinating Molyneux but also to bring her to justice. For some, this may mean working through a chain of evidence that would hold up in court; others may be happy merely killing her before she can do any more harm to the people of Sol. Of course, La Reina wasn't born yesterday; she's well prepared for attempts to disrupt her hold on Sol, even if they're coming from official personnel.

Examples: law enforcement, restrained vigilantes, private security, secret agents

Rivals

Rather than direct antagonists, the PCs might be rivals to La Reina, characters who would benefit from her fall but who aren't willing to work directly against her...yet. For example, Ramos has a number of rival drug lords all over the starfield in addition to Molyneux. Players looking to play rivals of La Reina ought to prepare themselves for a different and difficult setting in which they may not emerge victorious!

Examples: other drug lords, vengeful vigilantes, local street toughs

Lackeys

The PCs might also play characters who work directly for La Reina's gang, ranging from enforcers and street soldiers to freelancers who are sent on special missions to give La Reina plausible deniability. Remember to give these folks strong reasons to care about the front if you make use of it in your game; most of La Reina's employees won't be upset if a tragedy befalls Mr. Molyneux unexpectedly.

Examples: street soldiers, hired mercenaries, cartel operatives

Mixed Groups

It's also possible to construct a group of PCs who have competing interests around La Reina's activities, such as several vigilantes who are mixed up with law enforcement, rival cartels, and folks inside the criminal organization. Be careful with such mixed character types; make sure that there are plenty of character ties between each character and that all the players are prepared for the inevitable increase in player vs. player conflicts.

ADAPTING LA REINA DEL SOL

While La Reina is a perfect fit for the nearly post-apocalyptic urban blight of the starfield, she's also an excellent villain and antagonist across settings. Here are some ideas for adapting La Reina to other environments. Note the additional stunt that would make her character a more natural fit for the alternate setting.

Space Station

The starfield is easy to translate to a space station or small moon for games with a far-future setting. It may be necessary to replace a few skills—Crafts and Lore might be more specific skills like Engineering or Science—but overall La Reina can be queen of literal stars as easily as she controls Sol. In fact, it might make it more interesting for her to control an entire station, since the PCs ought to be surrounded at all times by her lackeys and potential allies.

ALTERNATE STUNT

Freshly Transported: Add +2 to creating an advantage with Resources when you pursue opportunities to make use of “lost” or “surplus” trade goods.

Western

La Reina's casual violence would fit well with a western setting, but the lack of a complex social structure would require her to have more personal strength: swap both Shoot and Fight up in her skill tree to replace Resources and Contacts, respectively. That's not to say she can't have a gang—she might be an outlaw more than the head of a criminal organization—but she won't have dozens of killers at her disposal.

ALTERNATE STUNT

At Dawn: When you challenge someone to a duel, treat any success to create advantage with Provoke as a success with style. If the opponent wins the roll, they cannot add any free invokes but still may create an aspect on the scene.

Medieval Fantasy

La Reina might also be well-represented as a literal queen or military leader in a low-fantasy setting. Like the western, you'll need to find a way to convey the scope of an organization in a setting that doesn't have an infinite number of goons, but La Reina can plot from the shadows with far fewer legal restraints. She can be a member of a court, for example, plotting just off screen to secure the throne for herself.

ALTERNATE STUNT

Distractions: Roll with Resources instead of Burglary when you wastefully display a resource to create an advantage for yourself.



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MYTHOS ASPECTS

EXPRESSING SOURCE MATERIAL WITH PREGENERATED ASPECTS

by JUNE SHORES

Mythos is a concept in TV production, a catch-all word for things like phrases, formula, and motifs that define the aesthetic of a TV show. Battle cries like “It’s morphin’ time!” and setting elements like The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants are examples of mythos in their particular franchise. You might have heard about a similar concept in the Lovecraft mythos, which encompasses Cthulhu and other Elder Gods.

When you sit down to play, say a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles campaign, each player comes with different experiences of the mythos that will inform how they approach the setting. An old-timer who only ever saw the children’s cartoon show when they were small is going to bring very different ideas from the twenty-four-year-old who grew up on the movies and recently did a marathon read of the original, grim-‘n’-gritty Mirage comic books. These approaches can clash and create dissonance and even arguments at the table about what is appropriate for a campaign.

This problem can be overcome with a thorough game-creation session, but running one often takes a long time. Working through things together is great! It’s often necessary for players to take some time to hash out what a Fate game is going to look like. But sometimes you want to get everybody on the same page about the aesthetics of a game without taking up a session or more. Sometimes, you want to eliminate blank-page paralysis and get things moving.

In this piece, I’ll show you how to use mythos to your advantage, giving your players solid ground on which to build their characters and letting them know what to expect from the world, by doing these things:

- Writing up a handful of setting and character **aspects** beforehand will help the players focus on the content the game should include.
- Giving these aspects **specific details** will make them more concrete in the players' heads, encouraging them to get to scenes faster.
- Asking the players **pointed questions** about these details will include them in the process without sacrificing any momentum.

Making these aspects part of character and game creation can help you to connect the players to the mythos in a big way without needing to take hours to get on the same page. The sort of content that you include in these details and questions will communicate the tone and focus of the campaign.

SETTING ASPECTS

Look at your premise and your genre. What do they look like? What are the iconic, recurring images that come to mind? If you're trying to emulate something, like Star Wars or X-Men, revisit the source material and examine what makes it feel authentic. What are the big ideas and aesthetic stylings that make it feel like that galaxy far, far away? What works to bring the setting to life, and how can you use that in your campaign? Write these details down. Look for common themes and group them together.

Creating Setting Aspects

Once you have some ideas for the aesthetic underpinnings of your game, you'll want to turn them into aspects. Some themes are obvious and iconic—the X-Men's struggle against prejudice, for example, is often expressed by *A World That Hates and Fears Them*. Other themes are much smaller or rely on other themes to communicate their whole meaning—Star Wars aliens, worlds, and space ships are all wonderfully diverse, and though they might logically be different things, they all make the world feel like *A Galaxy Far, Far Away*.

Take the details that you grouped into these themes and make a judgment call. What are the biggest ideas that come from the details you gathered? What details can you use to communicate the feeling that you want to lend to your campaign? For each aspect, narrow down the details to a list of four to six. The details that you eliminated are handy to keep in your notes. They are still bundled with the aspects in play and can be brought out when appropriate.

Some of these details are best presented simply. If you want something to be definitely true in your game, make it a detail like “Rodians are bug-eyed, twitchy weirdos” or “lightsabers are, in fact, laser chainsaws.” You can convey these details in play.

The other option is to pose a question to the players. The question hints at the detail, but leaves the expression open to interpretation. This is best if the detail varies depending on the context, or if you want to let a player have authority over the detail.

For example, we can take the aspect *A World That Hates and Fears Them* and narrow down the details like so.

AS A DETAIL	AS A QUESTION
Senator Kelly is trying to pass the Mutant Registration Act.	What is Senator Kelly trying to get passed that means bad news for mutants?
“Have you ever tried...not...being a mutant?”	What are each of your families’ attitudes toward mutants?
Magneto is scarred by his time in Nazi Germany.	What terrible things has this mutant endured, for the crime of being a mutant?

Some of these are better off as details given to the players, others as questions that the players can answer on their own. Some questions might even be asked several times during a single campaign, each answer adding something new to the story. Mixing and matching details and questions is encouraged, since these details will often vary in how specific they’ll need to be and in how much direct control you’ll want over them.

CHARACTER ASPECTS

In addition to mythos setting aspects, you can also create aspects for the characters themselves. When you create player character aspects with mythos details, you’re saying very directly, “These are the kinds of characters that are appropriate for this campaign.” It’s best to keep these aspects somewhat broad, though a couple very specific ones could help push concepts that need more specificity.

The distinction between character and setting aspects is that setting aspects are generally “zoomed out.” A good setting aspect suggests plenty of details or questions. However, most character aspects are already small enough to be their own detail. Instead of making a list of details and questions, let your character aspects be details themselves, and then attach a question to each. This gives you specificity, but still gives each player authorship over their character.

Creating Character Aspects

This process is much the same as creating setting aspects. Look for the iconic character traits and relationships in whatever genre or setting you're emulating. Keep them broad and look for patterns. Is the leader always in red? Is the rebel always a hothead, or does he feel like he needs to try harder? What difficulties does the brainy inventor have to overcome? What catches your eye about the character and what do they struggle with?

Make each of these details into an aspect, and write in a question to go along with it. Each question should be a counterpoint or embellishment of its aspect, something that could inspire scenes down the road, but easy enough for players to answer at the start of play. They can even be a prompt for a player to describe an NPC's background. Here are a few examples.

Aspect/Detail	Question
<i>The Leader</i>	What is one way that you fail to live up to your responsibility?
<i>The Smart Guy</i>	Define an NPC: Who is that megalomaniacal nerd they call Baxter Stockman?
<i>Struggling to Find My Path</i>	Who is watching you from the shadows?
<i>Animal Testing Escapee</i>	What triggers your worst memories of your time in the lab?

You'll want to point the players toward a functional group dynamic that echoes your source material, but let the players fill in the blanks with their own details. Encourage them to use their minor milestones to swap out aspects, whittling down their character concept from the broad, archetypal pieces you gave them into a unique individual. During the first few sessions, it's totally okay for a player to change their high concept into something more specific once they know their character.

The dial to turn here is how many aspects you want to be filled by mythos aspects. For a game that starts with characters in fairly rigid roles, you might have your players choose entirely from lists of mythos aspects. However, more-flexible party makeups might have just three or even two of each character's aspects slots filled with mythos aspects.

ORGANIZING MYTHOS ASPECTS

There are plenty of ways to organize your mythos aspects in a way that your players can digest. And you'll want to organize them, because there are few things worse than handing a player a huge stack of cards and asking them to pick five. Option paralysis sets in quick!

Label Organization

If you have a large set of setting aspects, it's often best to pick and choose them beforehand. But if you have two or three, then just present all of them to the players when you start the game. If you want players to have a hand in choosing these aspects, or if you have a large list, then it might help to label the aspects to help tell the players what's what. Keep these labels broad; you don't want too many. Here are some examples.

THEME

A World That Hates and Fears Them

- Senator Kelly is trying to pass the Mutant Registration Act.
- A culture of mutant paranoia
- What terrible things has this mutant endured, for the crime of being a mutant?

Welcome to Mutant High

- Do the students love or loathe this teacher?
- Cold opening in the Danger Room
- Mutations are diverse, but most are useless or strangely specific

Globetrotting Mutant Defenders

- Somewhere new each episode
- Mutants endangered, or endangering others

ORGANIZATION

The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants

- Led by Magneto, the Master of Magnetism, Holocaust Survivor
- Mutant supremacists with a mutant populist face
- Gathering forces

Department K

- Turning mutants into weapons (Weapon X)
- “We need a favor.”

The X-Men

- “To me, my X-Men!”
- In training
- Liaisons to the *homo sapiens* species

And you might go on to define aspects under **location** and **history** labels too, but whatever labels makes sense to you will work.

Character aspects are a little more straightforward: Just take your aspect categories—high concept, trouble, relationship, and backstory in FATE CORE—and use those as organizational labels. This makes picking and choosing easy, since you can just slot the aspects in where the character creation rules tell you.

Archetype Organization

Another option for character aspects is to define several **archetypes** for players to fill. When you note down character aspects from your source material for your players, a rough archetype will take shape for each character. The gist of this archetype will be the high concept. Sometimes you want to keep all of the aspects together in a single pool for players to pick a la carte, which can lead to some interesting character twists. However, for one-shot games or games with fairly rigid canons—say, a limited cast of protagonists that gets recycled in each iteration—more direction might be preferred.

This is just a matter of keeping each source material character’s details separate from the other characters’ and combining characters with similar high concepts. Underneath each character the same organizational labels above apply. Each player chooses a different high concept, and their choices of other aspects are narrowed down to only the aspects under their archetype. Here are some examples.

High Concept: The Rebel

Trouble

- *I need to go blow off some steam!* (Who has a problem with your reckless streak?)
- *Berserker Trigger* (What sets you off?)

Backstory

- ***The Long Lost Sibling*** (Who is the most important person you met while you were lost?)
- ***Animal Testing Escapee*** (What triggers your worst memories of your time in the lab?)
- ***No Patience*** (What is your first instinct when you're made to wait?)

Relationship

- ***Bullying*** _____ ***Is My Pass-Time*** (Where does your bullying stop?)
- _____ ***Needs to Get Off My Case Already*** (What does this person criticize about you?)
- _____ ***Has My Back*** (What experience brought you and this person closer?)

These lists with preprogrammed choices can almost act like playbooks from APOCALYPSE WORLD or other Powered by the Apocalypse games, getting the players into the game quickly without handing them a fully pregenerated character.

Going Forward

Using mythos to define the background of your setting and characters beforehand can be helpful in one-shot games where time is at a premium. Long-term games can also benefit from mythos by bringing disparate expectations together or by giving players clear archetypes to build characters from so they can get into play quickly. When setting creation and the phase trio can take a long time, it helps to have something ready to go and inspire your players when a blank page can be exhausting just to look at.

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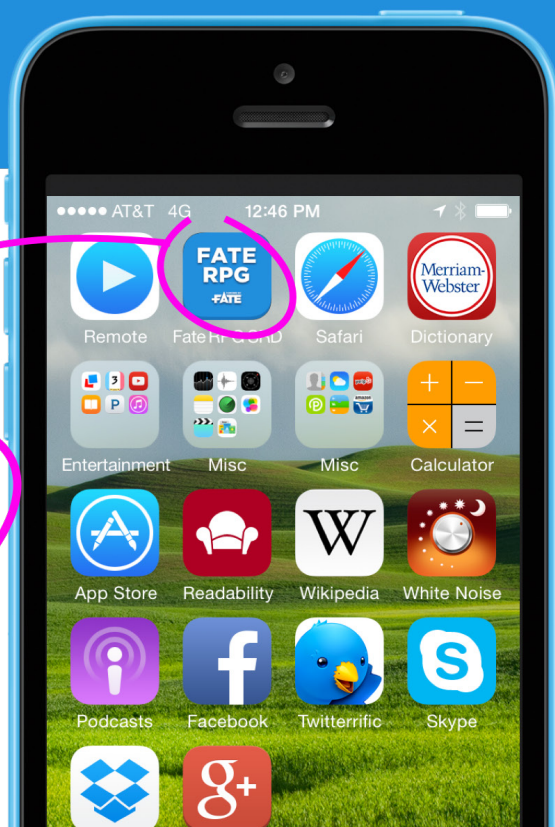
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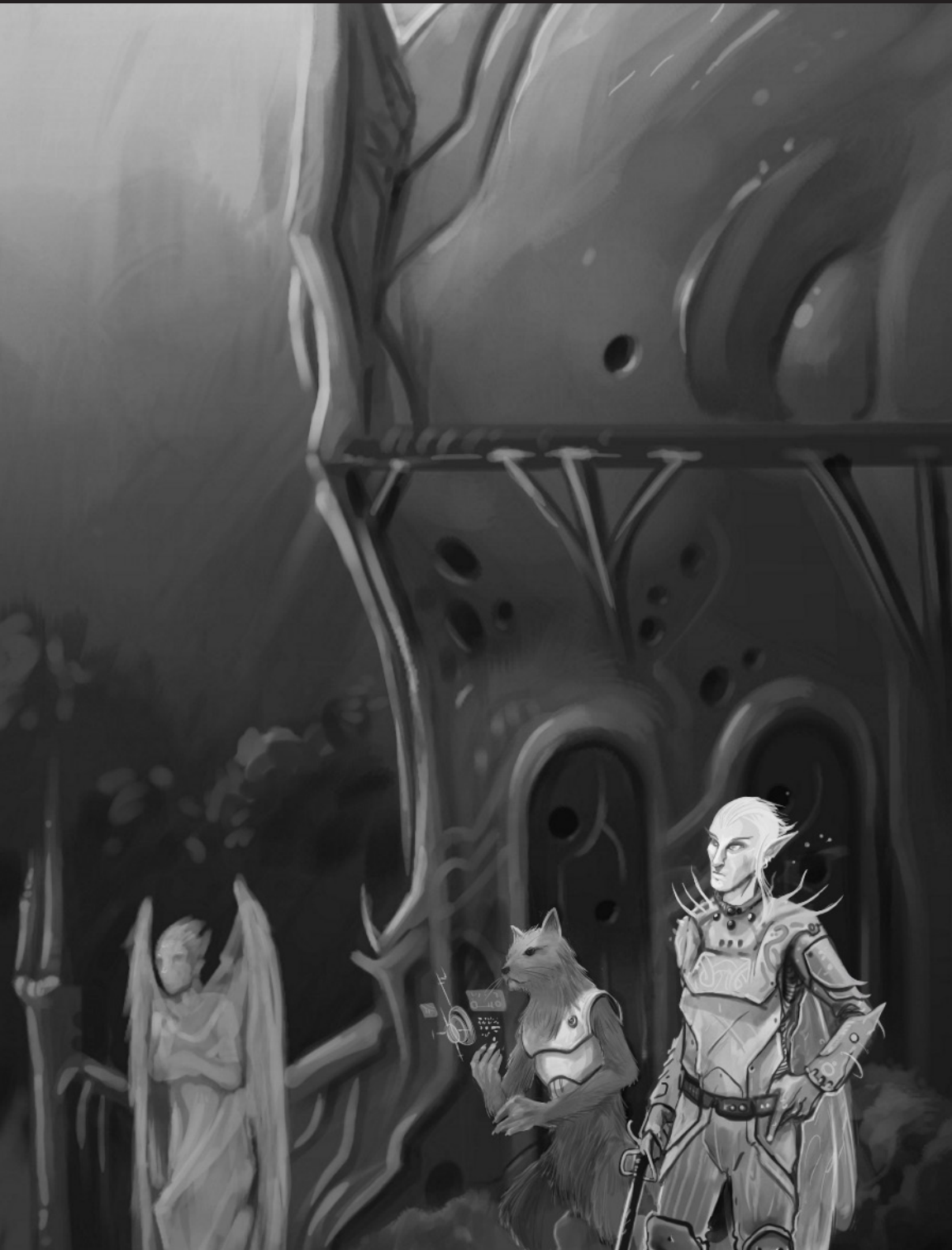
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AMBER TWILIGHT



AMBER TWILIGHT

by JIIMA ARUNSONE

The question we have to ask is: what is the Empire? Why it is still considered an authority over the whole of Human Space? It was an important power in the past, but now it is nothing but a collection of stagnant worlds at the far end of the galaxy. They aren't even ruled by humans anymore; they allowed these freakish Faeries to take all power there. And yet, they still think they can dictate to other systems how we should live. Why? Because they have irium? Well, I think their monopoly is only one more reason to end Imperial control altogether.

—Prince Aegius

THE VAST REACH OF SPACE

Human Space. More than twenty star systems, connected by vast network of space-time **gates**, all colonized by one intelligent species alone: *homo sapiens*. Through the last thousand years it has grown in peace, knowing no conflict larger than fights between two groups of colonists on a newly conformed world. But that galactic peace can be deceiving. Between planets, systems, and organizations there is a great deal of tension—old animosities and outright enmity—which only needs a small spark to be set aflame.

Mystech

Legends say the humanity was forced to search for new homes in space; a terrible war wrecked their world, the Cradle, and they lost not only their homes, but also their history, technology, and much more. The only thing that saved them from destruction was the discovery of **irium**, a mysterious amber-like substance which could manipulate the mystic energy of the universe. This discovery led to the creation of mystic technology—in short, **mystech**—which not only replaced the lost wonders of ancient ages, but also allowed for things previously thought impossible: the creation of new species, teleportation, transmutation, and more.

Inside every one of these wonders of technology lies a small matrix formed from a small amount of pure irium; there is simply no known replacement. Interestingly enough, most denizens of Human Space have no idea how irium is produced. Certainly it is available only on the Cradle—a long-abandoned homeworld of humanity—but the particulars of

its harvesting are secrets known only to a chosen few. The one who controls the Cradle, therefore, controls Human Space.

The Faeries

Some rare people in Human Space are...different. They are usually born as mundane human girls, but during adolescence they start to change, slowly growing insect-like wings and antennae. When their transformation is complete, they gain the ability to manipulate mystic energy by power of their will—an ability called *faery magic*—which allows them to control energy and emotions, create illusions, and even affect mystech devices. They also gain the ability to switch between their new, winged *faery form* and a normal human appearance.

But along with their powers, they also gain an unnatural hunger for emotions; to sate this hunger they must “feed” on human beings. This act is extremely pleasurable for the victim, but also exhausting, sometimes leading to their death. Because of their thirst, the Faeries are treated with suspicion and fear in many parts of Human Space, despite the fact that most of them control their hunger and pose no threat.

The Empire is a major exception to those prejudices. Long ago, powerful Faeries formed alliances with many noble families of the nascent Empire. Over time, they became an important part of Imperial society and even seized the Imperial throne. The Imperial population of Faeries is the largest in Human Space, and they control most important seats of power there.

The Faeries are numerous across all systems, but they are not unique in their ways and needs. Other creatures have alternate forms and hungers and most of them present with both genders. Known collectively as the Others, they share with Faeries the abilities to manipulate mystic energy and to shapeshift.

The Empire

Once, the Empire ruled the whole of Human Space. Now it is second-smallest faction, controlling just two star systems...and yet, it remains a major power. Their territory might be small, but the Empire’s holdings include the Cradle, the only source of irium, which means the whole production of this priceless amber is in Imperial hands.

Irium is the key to Imperial power and prosperity, but sadly it has also become its downfall. The income from the amber trade allows the Empire to provide all basic commodities for free to Imperial citizens. But years of buying goods from outside the system has devastated Imperial manufacturing and innovation; it’s always easier to buy pleasures from far way than to build anything worthwhile themselves.

This collapse has left the Empire stagnant. Imperials aren't motivated to change anything. More than half of the population is unemployed and most of them don't want to work. Its society is calcified and decadent, more interested in pleasures than in doing anything meaningful. The ruling class is no exception: even the Empress seems to be more concerned with expensive parties and beautiful lovers than with the Empire's future.

GUARDIANS

Despite a millennium of peace, all systems maintain military forces, usually using them as internal law enforcement. Among them is the Imperial Guard, seen outside of the Empire more as a curiosity or decoration than as any real military force. Composed entirely of Faeries, they look beautiful in their white uniform dresses; they're nice and generally harmless. This reputation is a useful misconception for the Guard, so the organization carefully maintains this image, allowing some members participate in trivial crime-fighting shows or even attain celebrity status.

In reality, the Imperial Guard is probably the last part of Empire that maintains its original focus, protecting the Empire from threats within and without. They are also crucial to maintaining the large population of Imperial Faeries—it's the Guard who maintain a special, mandatory school for newly awakened Faeries, called the Academy. There, young Faeries not only learn a standard curriculum, but also are taught how to control their powers and Hunger. After graduation, Faeries are required to serve three years in the Guard, although they can choose to stay on longer as career Guardians.

Anvedia

The largest human organization in Human Space is the Sultanate, a loose confederation of ten star systems connected by the nominal rule of the Great Sultan and a cult of ten beings of immense power, called Angels. Each Sultanate system has a large degree of independence, with their own culture, political system, and international contacts.

Anvedia is the smallest of the Sultanate systems, containing only one habitable planet. It is not especially developed and, until recently, was relatively poor. This situation changed thanks to the current Anvedian prince, Aegius. He ordered the creation of a new gate, creating a fast and safe path between Sultanate systems and the Empire, transforming Anvedia into a trading hub. He also secured trading deals with the Empire by arranging a marriage between the young Empress Selene and his son, Arius. All that doesn't change life on the Anvedia too much, however—most of the

business is in space near the gate, not on the planet—but such boldness made Aegius's fortune and solidified his local authority.

But the ambitious prince wants more. He's seen the Empire, and found it unfit to carry forward humanity's legacy. He believes the time has come for him to become the leader of Human Space. He only has to rip control of the irium from the rotting, wasteful hands of the Empire to secure the loyalty of every other system. Even if it means war.

SETTING CREATION

AMBER TWILIGHT is a Quick Start adventure, containing everything you'll need to jump into your first session. Before you start, discuss the broader setting with your players, and ensure they all know the concepts detailed in the previous section. You can give them these descriptions yourself, or read a few sections aloud during setup.

Before starting a game, explain to your players the current issue—*Desperately Seeking Fairie*—and ask them to provide at least one more face associated with it. These additional characters will provide plot hooks and twists that will tie your players to the high-stakes game of galactic politics in which they are involved.

Then ask your players to choose one of these two *impeding issues*: *Anvedian Wives* or *One Bad Apple*. Have them write down one or two more faces for the impending issue, rounding out the larger cast of characters with their suggestions.

Current Issue: Desperately Seeking Fairie

Unlike the nearby Arius Gate, the planet of Anvedia seems to be boring world, a planet where nothing interesting happens. Many whisper that the only reason the Empire maintains the Anvedian embassy is to give new recruits something to do. But one day, the Embassy is contacted by a desperate local merchant looking for her missing wife, a Faerie, setting into motion a mystery that may lead the Guardians down the path to discovering the truth of what is happening in this seemingly peaceful city.

Faces

- **Iskander Kilstan**, desperate husband of the missing Fairie.
- **Tamlin Ishval**, governor of Anvedia City.

Impeding Issues

Finding themselves in a new role is only the start. Something is fishy on Anvedia, and it'll be obvious from the beginning. Other possible leads are the *Anvedian Wives* and *One Bad Apple*.

ANVEDIAN WIVES

Anvedian society is conservative even by Human Space and Sultanate standards. Women are a rare sight in public, and most of them work at home if they work at all. But the Guardians arrive on Anvedia to find a lot of working women, many more than expected. Many of these women occupy jobs that used to belong to their husbands, and they don't always have the experience one might expect. When the embassy suffers a major computer network outage due to incompetence of a new local technician, the Guardians might have reason to start asking questions about the new women on staff...

Faces

- **Jasmin Chatnavy**, current manager of the embassy cafeteria.
- **Lisa Yared**, technician in DEC* service, who obviously is not fit for her role.

* Digital Enchantment Calculator (page XX)

ONE BAD APPLE

There are people who shouldn't work here in the embassy. They used their access to Imperial system of codes and passes to help a ring of smugglers transport their contraband to the Cradle System. They worked undetected for some time, but one of them was recalled to the Empire during a recent staff exchange, and a second lost her access to crucial systems. Now she'll have to find a new partner, and quick, because smugglers demand results, and they're not known for their patience.

Faces

- **Ianka Hertzog**, corrupt embassy official, working for smugglers.
- **John Macfarlane**, antiquarian and smuggler's contact in the capital of Anvedia.



CHARACTER CREATION

In *AMBER TWILIGHT*, there are two types of player characters: **Guardians** and **Specialists**. Guardians are powerful but relatively inexperienced Fairie representatives of the Empress. Specialists, as they are not Faeries, are lacking in terms of raw power, but competent in their field of expertise. At least half of the PCs should be Guardians.

Guardian characters are all fresh from the Academy. They've spent the last six years learning etiquette, law, tactics, practical sciences, and other subjects. Despite attending the same school, they come from various social strata and differ in strengths and weaknesses. What they're all lacking is practical knowledge: they have never used their skills and powers in real-life situations, and they don't know the world outside the controlled environment of the Academy.

Specialists are a different breed. They aren't Faeries: they can't transform or use mystical energy, and some even aren't Imperial citizens. But they have skills the Guardians don't have, and they're good at their jobs. For one reason or another, every Specialist is loyal to the Empire, and probably has some relationship to one or more Guardian characters.

Character Aspects

Your character will have the aspects described in *FATE CORE* (page 55). If your character is a Guardian, spin their high concept around their Fairie nature and social standing, like ***Failed Fairie Princess*** or ***Thief Awakened Against All Expectations***. Connect one of their aspects—be it their trouble or one of their phase trio aspects—to some intense, core emotion for them.

If your character is a Specialist, their previous adventures can justify all kinds of aspects, so you're mostly free in your choices. That said, you'll use one of their phase trio aspects to define their loyalty to the Empire or to one of the Guardians.

SKILLS

AMBER TWILIGHT uses the standard skill list from FATE CORE, but some skills are modified or “flavored” to better adapt them to the techno-fantasy setting: Crafts is replaced by Mystech and Glamour, Burglary is replaced by Intrusion, and Lore is replaced by Education.

Guardians get a broad, flat list of skills: one Good (+3), four Fair (+2), and six Average (+1) skills.

Specialists get the standard set of skills: one Great (+4), two Good (+3), three Fair (+2), and four Average (+1) skills.

Mystech: Because mystech creations are complicated, this skill only lets you fix, upgrade, tune, or assemble mystech devices from ready-made components.

- **Glamour:** Creation of constructs made from *glamour*, a sort of “illusion material” or visible force field. It can be used to display information and to create temporary items, even weapons, or mirages to fool enemies.
- **Intrusion:** Dexterity and lock picks are not enough in a world where a magical barrier can stun an unwary thief. Intrusion lets you detect and bypass mystech security systems of all sorts, from anti-theft purses to network firewalls, by rolling against their security measures.
 - **New Stunt—Remote Control (Intrusion):** Skilled hackers can not only disable devices, but also use them for their own needs. When you use Intrusion to create an advantage on a device, the aspect will show that you completely control it—for example, *Jacked In, In Control*.
 - **Education:** This skill encompasses general education and can be used when “school knowledge” would be useful, like knowing of a foreign culture or understanding some obscure law of physics employed in a spell.

NEW EXTRA: MAGIC

Magic in Human Space is a practical application of mystic energy to change reality around you. It is a science, not an art, and you’ll need specialized equipment to use it. For really large works, that equipment might be giant reactors, assembly lines, and laboratory equipment, but for technicians and dabblers, a specialized portable computer called a **DEC** is usually the only thing you’ll need.

The DEC

A **Digital Enchantment Calculator (DEC)** is a multipurpose portable computer used for shaping magical effects. Most of these devices are wrist-mounted bracelets that project holographic interfaces. The more powerful ones are larger, similar in size to and shaped like books or computer consoles.

Every DEC has a **performance rating** that defines the number of spells it can store. It also has an **energy stress track** with 2 to 4 boxes, equal to its performance rating. This stress track clears when the device's battery is recharged. The most powerful devices have one moderate consequence slot representing low-battery problem like **Slower Performance** or **Distracting Battery Warning**.

For Specialists and NPCs, getting access to a DEC and the necessary training requires a stunt. If you buy this stunt, you'll get a Fair (+2) DEC. You can get a better DEC by having an aspect that justifies it, or by taking a second stunt to get a Good (+3) DEC or a third stunt to get a Great (+4) DEC.

Guardians, of course, don't need such a device to manipulate mystical energies.

Spellcasting

Most mystech devices have fixed properties and do not require any special actions or knowledge to use. Energy pistols shoot light beams; game consoles show *glamour* displays that allow users to play games.

DECs are more versatile tools, allowing the user to program in any magical effect like one would code software in modern-day computers. Each spell is a procedure that must be written in advance and then activated. You can use a spell with any appropriate action, rolling with the most appropriate skill, or Education if no skill applies. A DEC can store spells equal in number to its performance rating.

- The **difficulty** of creating a spell is equal to the difficulty of doing what the spell will do. Creating a spell that does something mundane will most face Fair (+2) difficulty, but creating spells that transform elements, set up permanent barriers, or alter large areas will face much higher difficulties.
- The **time** needed to program a spell is at least a minute. By increasing the preparation time by one step on the time ladder (FATE CORE, page 197), you may decrease the preparation difficulty by one step. This means Specialists usually

prepare spells in advance, storing them in the memory of a DEC to activate in the future with an action.

- A spell's **duration** is usually instant or permanent, depending on its nature. If the effect is possible without magic, it is permanent. If the effect isn't possible without magic—such as a *glamour* effect or fire without fuel—it ends at the end of the next exchange. You can program an effect to last longer, increasing the difficulty by one step each time you double the duration. You can also **keep** spells up beyond their normal duration, but for each scene you keep any spells up, you must mark one energy stress.
- **Energy** is drained if you succeed with a cost, keep up spells, or someone inflicts stress on you with an attack designed to disable a device. If the DEC is taken out, it might take some serious damage that requires serious repairs.

Jenny, who's playing a Specialist named Darius, wants to change his clothing to blend into a crowd. This is either a Glamour or Deceive action, and the GM sets the difficulty to Good (+3) because he needs a disguise that won't raise suspicion from the locals. He has plenty of time to program, though, so he works for a few minutes, lowering the difficulty of preparing the spell by one step to Fair (+2). He finishes preparing the spell without issue and activates it. This creates the advantage of **One With a Crowd** on him with a free invoke. The disguise will exist as long as he wants, but every scene he keeps the disguise active will inflict one energy stress to the DEC.

DEC Stunts

These stunts apply to magic use, so they all require the DEC stunt as a prerequisite.

Fast Casting: You can program magical effects quicker than others can. You need one fewer exchange to prepare a spell for one skill, chosen when you take this stunt.

Signature Spell: You've learned one spell so deeply that it's become part of you. You don't need to store this spell in your DEC, and you can cast it without preparation.

NEW EXTRA: FAERIES

These rules define the special abilities of Guardian characters. Specialists don't use these rules, but receive higher-ranked skills and broader aspects.

Core Emotion

Every Fairie has one emotion to which she is the most tuned, defined by one of her aspects. Your Fairie might play well with this emotion or try to stifle and control its expression. Either way, Faeries are drawn to any expression of this emotion in others, perhaps even to the point of violence.

Hunger

The Hunger is an unnatural craving that forces Faeries to consume emotions. If it is allowed to grow unchecked, it can force a Fairie to enter a frenzied state, in which she would even kill to get sustenance.

Hunger is represented by mental stress and consequences. You can gain it by assuming **Faery Form** or by using Fairie magic and Fairie stunts.

If you have suffered any Hunger consequences or are in **Faery Form**, the presence of any emotion that resonates with your core emotion may make you feel your Hunger; this would be a compel on **Faery Form** or a Hunger consequence.

You can control Hunger by overcoming against a difficulty equal to your highest Hunger consequence, but failure means becoming **ravenous**. If you're becomes taken out from Hunger stress, you become ravenous and cannot roll to control it. This frenzy lasts until at least your highest consequence is removed. Ravenous Faeries are treated as NPCs.

A ravenous Fairie attacks any nearby human for sustenance, transforming into **Faery Form**. She feeds using physical contact, usually a kiss, overflowing the victim with emotions. If you feed, you remove consequences related to Hunger by inflicting an equal amount of mental stress to the victim; for example, removing a mild consequence inflicts two mental stress.

Fed-upon humans feel drained, depressed, or unable to feel certain emotions. In extreme cases, the victim can even die from overload.

Hunger consequences can only be removed while in human form. In **Faery Form**, these can be removed by feeding the same way as in frenzy but in less traumatic conditions. Faeries can choose which condition (or mental stress) she heals, and inflict one stress less. Faeries can feed on any sentient being that can feel emotions—even other Faeries—and no matter the partner, it is usually an intimate act.

Faery Form

A Fairie's true nature manifests in ***Faery Form***, which they can at will. Faery Form is similar to human form, but is usually slimmer and with unusual body and hair colors. A Fairie in this form has slightly larger eyes, human in shape but insect-like in composition, along with small antennae on their forehead and large wasp-like wings on their back. Their clothes also change, transforming into flowing robes or skin-tight suits depending on the Fairie's preferences.

To transform, you'll create an advantage using Will. Succeeding transforms you into ***Faery Form***. Succeeding at a cost usually inflicts Hunger stress. You can invoke your ***Faery Form*** to augment your Fairie magic, fly at normal walking speed, or dazzle anyone with your beauty. However, ***Faery Form*** can be compelled to provoke your Hunger.

Fairie Magic

Even in human form, Faeries can use magic without any mystech device, though they can use DEC magic if they'd like. The rules for Fairie magic are the same as for DEC magic, with these changes:

- Faeries don't use programming skills, but a sort of mystical instinct. You can prepare Fairie magic in half the time needed to code a DEC program.
- Faeries store prepared spells in memory. You can memorize spells equal in number to your Will rank.
- Faeries take Hunger mental stress instead of energy drain.

Fairie Stunts

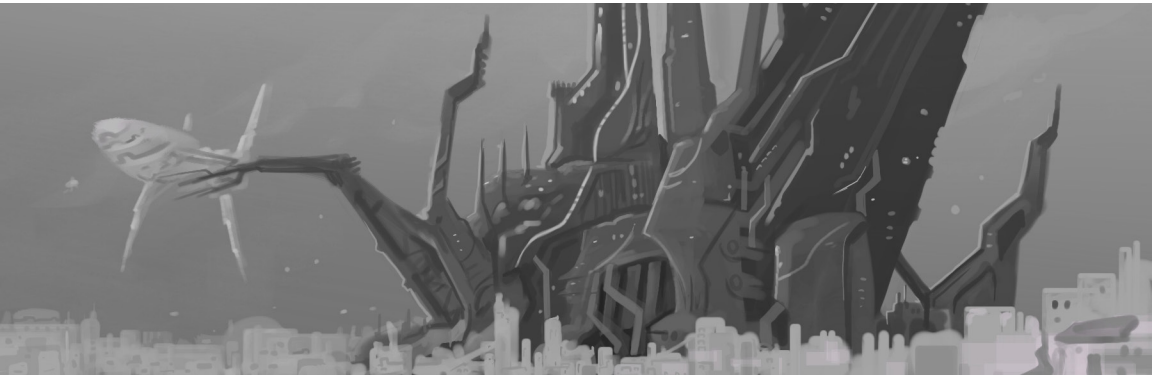
These stunts only work in ***Faery Form***. In addition to their normal allotment of free stunts and refresh, a Fairie character gets one free Fairie stunt.

Fairie Sting: Using Will to attack, you can shoot a blast of greenish light from the palms of your hands. This attack has a Weapon rating of 1, dealing +1 stress on a success.

Etherealness: Once per scene, you can become half-material and effectively invisible. You can move through walls and even through hostile environments such as space. You can be attacked by magic, energy weapons, and Fairie powers, you get Hunger stress instead of physical stress, and you can be forced to materialize instead of getting a mild consequence.

GUARDIAN STUNT

Morph: Morph bracelets are Guardians’ badges of honor. When wearing a morph bracelet, your *Faery Form* becomes humanlike and incapable of flight, but protected by *glamour* armor, reducing physical stress you take from attacks by one shift. A morph bracelet can also inject some concentrated irium into your bloodstream to stop a Hunger frenzy immediately. This option is a risky proposition, though, as it gives you a moderate physical consequence.



DESPERATELY SEEKING A FAIRIE

Opening Scene: Anvedia City

The Imperial Embassy is located in the capital of Anvedia: Anvedia City. It is a small, isolated complex of buildings in the Imperial style, including living quarters, offices, and a cafeteria. After arriving, the characters are met by Tamlin Ishval, governor of the capital, who welcomes the new Guardians—mostly ignoring the Specialists—and assures them that everything they need will be provided.

The governor states that the Guardians’ predecessors rarely left the embassy and advises them to be similarly cautious because “people still have not adjusted to the new chapter of cooperation between our peoples” and they might have trouble with women in command. The governor also assures the Guardians that they will meet Prince Arius at an “appropriate time.” However, he notes that Specialists are free to leave the embassy as they wish.

When any of the PCs visit a city, however, they will be contacted by Iskander Kilstan, who pleads for a Guardian’s help. It seems his wife is missing, and the authorities have turned down all of his requests to investigate her disappearance. He believes the Guardians are his only hope because the missing woman is a Fairie.

Middle Scene: Anything for Love

Kilstan is not stupid, so he'll never approach Specialists too close to the embassy and reject any invitations to visit it. He will propose a meeting in an abandoned shrine instead, a place avoided by most Anvedians because it is supposedly cursed. If Guardians refuse to meet him, he'll try to contact Specialists again and again. He has nothing to lose, so he can be persistent.

When they meet, Kilstan will tell the Guardians the whole story. His wife, Ailin, disappeared shortly before the Guardians' arrival on Anvedia. She worked as a singer in a club, and according to the club owner she left after work as usual, but she never came home. The police started a search, but the case was canceled after one day; they refused to reopen it and even suggested that he "find a normal human girl as a wife." He started to look for her on his own, and after contacting some other Fairie families he learned that his wife was not the only one missing, and at least three other cases were being treated by the authorities in the same way!

As they continue to talk, it becomes clear that Kilstan is under observation. The spies following him aren't extremely competent, so they can be at least detected—if not caught—if the PCs set guards. The spies will try to escape first, fighting only if there are no other options. They won't reveal anything, and if they're arrested, there will be an official request to release them from the governor's office—and possible diplomatic action; Guardians aren't authorities, and they can't arrest anyone.

ANVEDIAN AGENT

ASPECTS

ANVEDIAN SPY • LOYAL

SKILLS

- GOOD (+3) Shadowing, avoiding combat
- AVERAGE (+1) Fighting
- POOR (-1) Resisting magic

Final Scene: Trap!

No matter how the Guardians solve the spies problem, the spies' masters know about Kilstan now and move to control the damage the Guardians might do, knowing that the Imperials will start to look for the missing Faeries on their own.

Mr. Kilstan doesn't know much, and the other families are even more intimidated than he is; they still believe there is a chance the kidnapped women will return if they behave. The Guardians must be really convincing (or make liberal use of mind-manipulation magic) to get any clues from them.

They can mostly confirm Kilstan's version, but also at least two of missing Faeries' families know they were contacted by some mysterious person, and they were asked to meet with someone in the area of the cursed shrine. They can also tell the Guardians about why that place was abandoned: some people went mad there during a ceremony, including one Fairie who started attacking other attendants.

As the Guardians are investigating, they are contacted again, this time via video call. The caller will identify herself as the missing Fairie, Ailin! She tells them a completely different story, saying that Faeries on Anvedia are not full citizens, and because of that, she and her few fellow Faeries were forced to marry some wealthy merchants as trophy wives. They managed to escape and they don't plan on allowing their ex-husbands to catch them again.

Of course, it is left to the players to determine whom they believe. If they doubt Ailin's story, she will agree to confront Iskander Kilstan, but only if the Guardians will guarantee her safety. She will propose the haunted shrine as a place of meeting.

Unfortunately, the whole thing is a trap set by an Anvedian agent, San Ingmar. He is using the mind-controlled Ailin as a puppet to lure the Guardians and Kilstan to the shrine. Once they arrive, he activates the shrine's curse, a powerful psychic attack affecting only Faeries and inciting their Hunger. (For more, see the Drain stunt on page XX.) He hopes that the ravenous Guardians will drain Kilstan; then he'll be able to arrest them for murder and expel them from Anvedia.

Of course, the Guardians aren't defenseless. They'll know about the curse from the Anvedian families or embassy personnel, they can check around the shrine because they've had run-ins with spies before, and if nothing else works, they can always use their morph bracelets to prevent their Hunger frenzies—that is, if they have morphs at all.

Make the showdown with Ingmar challenging: he is not alone, and his guards know how to fight. If his life becomes at stake, he'll concede to the Guardians, knowing his family will demand his freedom later.

SAN INGMAR

San doesn't have to work in such underhanded dealings; his family could provide him anything material he'd want. But he wants excitement, and he wants to do something meaningful, and these things cannot be bought. So he became one of the prince's many agents. This position puts him at odds with his family, but they will try to protect him if he finds himself in trouble.

San is a thrill-seeker, which can be his weak point. Of course, he is a professional, and the mission comes first for him, but if he has a chance to do something showy to demonstrate his superiority, he'll do it. He travels with a group of Anvedian goons (page XX).

SAN INGMAR

ASPECTS

THRILL-SEEKER • SPYMASTER • SHOW-OFF

SKILLS

GREAT (+4): Athletics, Stealth

GOOD (+3): Contacts, Education, Fight

FAIR (+2): Provoke, Notice, Will

AVERAGE (+1): Investigate, Physique, Resources, Shoot

STUNTS

Signature Spell ("Drain"): San can use his knowledge of Anvedian religion to activate wards in a shrine. This is magical attack using Education against all Faeries in a zone, inflicting Hunger stress.

DEC Magic: Ingmar uses customized Good (+3) DEC with a special display visible only to the user, so he doesn't risk betraying his position when he uses it.

Become a Shadow: +1 to Stealth when he stays in the shadows.

Plot Hooks and Adventure Seeds

Surviving an ambush and avoiding a diplomatic crisis is only the beginning of the Imperials' problems. Ailin might be found, but the kidnapers have wiped her memory; she can't help in the search for the remaining Faeries. And there are impeding issues at work, too, all connected to some terrible conspiracy on the planet. Here are a few plot hooks and adventure seeds to keep the story going.

MISSING FAERIES

What happened to the rest of missing Faeries? Where are they? Are they still alive after the ambush, especially if Ingmar and his goons were defeated? Why were they kidnapped in the first place? Following this trail might lead the PCs to troubling discoveries: most of the victims were Imperial citizens connected in one way or another with the Cradle and irium harvesting. There is a high risk that their investigation will run into not only more Anvedian agents, but also the Imperial bureaucracy. But why? Is the conspiracy rooted in the Empire as well?

Meet the Ingmar Family

If the PCs imprisoned San Ingmar, that will quickly turn into more trouble than it is worth. The spy has powerful kin, and his family will do everything to free him from hands of the "inhuman Imperial bastards." San knows that too, so he won't cooperate with the Imperials. On the other hand, he might be willing to exchange information if the Guardians are willing to help him with his family's long-term interests in undermining the establishment's hold on the gate. Are the Imperials willing to get mixed up in Sultanate politics to get to the truth?

SHADOWS OF THE FORGOTTEN PAST

The powers that be on Anvedia play a dangerous game, and they have a few aces in the hole to secure their success. If the PCs start to know too much, they might discover one such ace the painful way. Aegius's agents have access to strange guns that throw irium-coated darts, which disrupt energy shields and are poisonous to Faeries. These weapons don't use a mystech matrix, but some unknown technology, drawing up on materials that fell into disuse ages ago. Is it possible that the Anvedians found some cache of Last War technology? And why it is so terribly efficient against Faeries?

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Wilhelmina “Will” von Lovenstein

Unlike her praised older sisters, Wilhelmina is a sort of black sheep in the family. She is known to hang out with troublesome students, avoiding family politics and at least one social scandal. The truth is, though she’s as competent a diplomat as every other Lovenstein, she simply wants to control her own fate, and not become another Lovenstein princess.

Maybe serving on a remote post, far from Imperial courtly games, will be the first step on her way to independence?

WILHELMINA “WILL” VON LOVENSTEIN

ASPECTS

HIGH CONCEPT: INDEPENDENT FAIRIE PRINCESS

TROUBLE: THAT OTHER LOVENSTEIN DAUGHTER

OTHER ASPECTS: FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES

LOVE CONQUERS ALL • OPEN SLOT

SKILLS

GOOD (+3)	Rapport
FAIR (+2)	Athletics, Education, Empathy, Deceive
AVERAGE (+1)	Contacts (Anvedia), Notice, Provoke, Resources, Shoot, Will

STUNTS

Still a Princess: If she’s willing to make a concession to her family in exchange for help, Wilhelmina gains +2 to a Contacts or Resources roll.

Morph (page XX)

Signature Spell (“Erised”): If you know someone’s desire—for example, by knowing a pertinent aspect of theirs—you can try to temporarily reverse it. Doing so is creating an advantage with Deceive, against a difficulty equal to the target’s Will.

Seraphina Fiery

A daughter of a no-income family from the poorest part of Luna, Seraphina usually describes herself as the lucky one. She awakened as a Fairie, she befriended some cool people in the Academy, and despite her numerous blunders she got an embassy assignment instead of the boot camp that the most lowborn Academy students go to. She's slightly overenthusiastic Fairie with a tendency to end in troubles, especially when her rough honesty is not the best answer.

SERAPHINA FIERY

ASPECTS

HIGH CONCEPT: TROUBLEMAKER WITH A FOUR-LEAF CLOVER

TROUBLE: CURIOSITY KILLS THE CAT

OTHER ASPECTS: THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE
SOMETIMES VIOLENCE IS THE ANSWER • OPEN SLOT

SKILLS

GOOD (+3) Athletics

FAIR (+2) Fight, Notice, Provoke, Will

AVERAGE (+1) Education, Empathy, Intrusion, Physique, Rapport, Stealth

STUNTS

The Bottom Is Always the Same: When among the lowest levels of society, Seraphina gets a +2 bonus to her Rapport.

Morph (page XX)

Signature Spell ("Shield"): Seraphina can use Fight to parry any physical attack using a *glamour* shield. Casting the spell is a Fight roll against Average (+1) difficulty to create the advantage **Shielded**. The spell lasts until the end of the next exchange, two if succeed with style.

Artemis Chershire

Grumpy and usually unfriendly, Artemis is still one of the best mystech instructors in the Academy. Only a few of students consider him a friend, but those who deserve his friendship know that under Chershire's grumpiness there's loads of sincere loyalty. Artemis is a modified organism, one of the cat-people. Because of that, he is not especially fond of leaving the Academy and visiting places where ones like him are still considered things, but if a friend asks, he really won't have a choice.

ARTEMIS CHERSHIRE

ASPECTS

HIGH CONCEPT: CAT-HYBRID SECURITY EXPERT

TROUBLE: LOOKS LIKE A FREAK, FEELS LIKE A FREAK

OTHER: LANDS ON FOUR PAWS

WHEN A FRIEND ASKS... • OPEN SLOT

SKILLS

GREAT (+4)	Intrusion
GOOD (+3)	Athletics, Investigate
FAIR (+2)	Fight, Notice, Stealth
AVERAGE (+1)	Deceive, Crafts, Physique, Resources

STUNTS

Cat Instincts: Artemis gains a +1 bonus to Notice when spotting enemies or defending against surprise.

Hacker: Artemis is skilled at bypassing the security of computer systems. He gains a +2 bonus to Intrusion when hacking software to get access.

Remote Control (page XX)

Fair (+2) DEC ☐ ☐ (page XX)



CREDITS

JJIMA ARUNSONE has been role-playing for about two decades as a game master, LARP director, and a driving force behind a few local conventions in a long-forgotten past. Published a scenario once, but everyone forgot what it was about. A die-hard fan of Star Wars, zombies, magical girls anime, ponies, and computers (don't ask). Working in spare time on some weird settings, but spare time is a rarity when you're a parent. Lives in Warsaw, Poland.

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).

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.

JOHN LARGE picked up his first roleplaying book in his early teens and, like many people back then, ended up being the GM because he had the books and no one else wanted to do it. He publishes Red Dice Diaries on YouTube, which has over 100 videos of actual play streams, GM advice, and player tips. Keenly interested in ancient myths and religions, John has many bookshelves creaking with works on mythology and civilizations from round the world. An avid fan of the Fate system, John enjoys the flexibility of the game system and the ease with which it allows ideas to be transferred from the GM's mind to the tabletop.

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

JUNE SHORES has only been in the role play gaming hobby for a few years now. Her first experience with a tabletop RPG was with Fate, back when the *Dresden Files RPG* came out, and she has been in love with the system ever since. With this new hobby came an all-consuming urge to hack and drift games to suit her needs. From pastel-colored magic ponies to anime-flavored fantasy, June has produced many solo projects that are scattered across the internet today. She attends The University of Maine at Farmington to pursue a degree in new media and blogs at her web site, [Headpigeons](#).

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).

JOSHUA YEARSLEY is a professional editor of roleplaying games, board games, and technical literature. He works with Evil Hat Productions as the lead editor of their *Fate Worlds* and *Adventures* line of supplements, along with a variety of other small and independent publishers.

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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