

KNIGHTS OF INVASION



**RICHARD
BELLINGHAM**

A WORLD OF
ADVENTURE FOR

FATE
CORE SYSTEM

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ADVENTURERS

Person	Brian Shourd	Dirk Methner	Jackson Hsieh	Johnathan Wright	Matt Houck	R Roy	Simon Withers
Aaron W Scott	Brittany Lenda	Jake Linfood	Don Arnold	Jon Snejkal	Matt Landis	Rachel Hixon	Sion Rodriguez y Gibson
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Aidan Grey	Carl McLaughlin	Duane Cathey	James Husum	Jonathan Perrine	Matthew Whalley	Rebecca Harrison	Stephan
Al Billings	Carl-William	DudeInTheNight	James Marston	Jonathan Young	Max	Red Dice Diaries	Stephanie Bryant
Alan Phillips	Carlos Flores	Duncan	James Odom	Jordan Deal	Max Kaehn	Remy Sanchez	(Mortaine)
Alan Timothy Rogers	Cerity	Dylan Green	James Pacheco	Jose A.	Michael	Renzo Crispieri	Stephen Figgins
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Andy Arminio	Golin	Esteban Jauregui Lora	Jeff Mahood	Holbert	Mook	Rodrigo	Tevel Drinkwater
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ArthurDent	Dain	Francisco Castillo	Jere Kischel	Krzysztof Chyla	Humelsberger	Ryan C. Christiansen	Tim Davis
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beke	Daniel Ley	Garth Rose	Jeremy Kostlew	Lisa Hartjes	Noel Warford	Samwise Crider	Torolf de Merriba
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Brian Creswick	dharph	Istrian Gray	John Taber	Martin Terrier		Simon White	
Brian Kurtz	Dianne	J. Keith Wykowski	John Tobin	Marty Gentillon			
Brian S. Holt	Didier Bretin	Jack Gulick	John William McDonald	Mathias Exner			

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WRITING & ADVENTURE DESIGN

**RICHARD
BELLINGHAM**

DEVELOPMENT

**LEONARD BALSERA
& ROB DONOGHUE**

EDITING

JOSHUA YEARSLEY

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

SEAN NITTNER

ART DIRECTION

BRIAN PATTERSON

LAYOUT

FRED HICKS

INTERIOR & COVER
ARTWORK

TOM KILIAN

MARKETING

CARRIE HARRIS

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

CHRIS HANRAHAN



An Evil Hat Productions Publication
www.evilhat.com • feedback@evilhat.com
@EvilHatOfficial on Twitter
facebook.com/EvilHatProductions

Knights of Invasion

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This is a game where people make up stories about wonderful, terrible,
impossible, glorious things. All the characters and events portrayed
in this work are fictional. Any resemblance to real people, brave
knights, alien xenomorphs, scheming royalty, maniacal invasion fleet
commanders, or trusty steeds is purely coincidental, but kinda hilarious.

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INTRODUCTION

In *Knights of Invasion* you'll play warriors, alchemists, engineers, advisors, and others helping your monarch plan for the worst as the tensions between your kingdom and its neighbor threaten to boil over into war. During a celebratory tournament that's your last, best hope for peace, everything changes when aliens invade.

Will the two kingdoms unite against the invaders and forge a lasting partnership in the aftermath, or will one or both of them try to use the situation to their advantage? Whatever happens, you and your companions will be instrumental in shaping the future.

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

Knights of Invasion is designed as a three-act mini-campaign, but we'll also give you suggestions for using it as a one-shot convention game. Either option will also work well as the foundation of a longer game.

Chapter 1 helps you choose the themes and issues of your game, and describes the history, geography, and political issues of Regen and Stroming, the two kingdoms standing on the brink of war as our story begins.

Chapter 2 gives you everything you need to create and play a character in *Knights of Invasion*, including new skills and stunts (page 15) and rules for armor (page 22) and siege weaponry (page 24).

Chapter 3 explores three possible types of alien invasion, each giving one version of the invaders' agenda, whether that's Xenoforming (page 30), Conquest/Reclamation (page 33), or The Harvest (page 38).

Chapter 4 focuses on the invaders themselves and their technology. You can build your own alien race using the features provided (page 45), or use the one we designed (page 54), so each invasion will play differently from the last.



CHAPTER 1: A TALE OF TWO KINGDOMS

A *Knights of Invasion* game starts at a point of high tension between an island's two kingdoms, Regen and Stroming. Queen Kelda Brecht has recently ascended to the throne of Stroming and worsened a long-standing cold war due to her relations with Karl Ehrling, the King of Regen.

Whether they are personal, ideological, or economical, choose one or two issues that are provoking conflict in the run up to the alien invasion. Examples include:

- **The Jilting:** King Ehrling jilted Queen Brecht on the eve of their political wedding to marry his childhood companion, Rupert, ending an attempt to reunify the kingdoms by marriage.
- **The Kingdoms' Codes:** The kingdoms have substantially different codes of honor, bringing them into conflict.
- **The Aaldisle Question:** The kingdoms strongly disagree about whether they should exploit or leave alone the misty isle of strange green-skinned folk just off the shore of Stroming.
- **Wood for Metal:** Stroming is currently embargoing supplies of metal to the mineral-starved Regen. In return, Regen has restricted the export of timber to Stroming and is heavily taxing trade goods bound there.
- **Border Dispute:** A recent storm allegedly diverted the course of the river that is the border between the two kingdoms. The shift has given Regen some of Stroming's lands, but Stroming claims that Regen deliberately diverted the river as a land grab.

Feel free to use these issues or create your own. For a full description of the kingdoms and the issues between them, with their historical and political context, read on.

DISTANCES IN JORL

It's 300 miles from the farthest western point to the farthest eastern point of the island, and it's about 250 miles from north to south. Without killing your horse, you can get from place to place in these timescales:

- **Reyvik to Stroming:** A day
- **Dymfort to Dunnefort:** A week
- **Dymfort to Fort Firewatch:** Several days

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The State of Affairs in Jorl

The island kingdom of Jorl enjoyed centuries of peace and prosperity, ruled wisely by a benevolent succession of kings and queens. Alas, wisdom helped little when Nature smote the land with fire and dust.

Mount Bulta, the long-dormant volcano on the island's west coast, erupted with little warning and great violence. The ground shattered and flung vast quantities of dust and ash into the air. At the same time, a torrent of blue fire poured from the mountain's peak.

Thousands perished in the hours and days after the eruption as the pyroclastic flow of burning, toxic gases and the inescapable tides of lava spread in all directions. The bridges and fords across the river Jorl were destroyed, and its waters boiled off as lava flowed along its course. With the volcano blocking travel on the west side of the island and the river now completely impassable, the kingdom was split in half.

MOUNT DOOM?

Mount Bulta hasn't erupted since, though it sometimes grumbles to itself. It may yet spell doom for all of Jorl, if invading aliens tap into its vast stores of geothermal energy to further their nefarious plans.

In every disaster there are the seeds of opportunity, and the eruption gave an ambitious southern noble the perfect chance to seize power from the monarchy. His skillful leadership during the years it took for the disaster to subside gained him much support from those trapped in the south, and after the dust settled they aided him in defying the queen's efforts to reassert control. Reunification talks failed, and with her people already decimated by Bulta's eruption, the queen had no stomach for a civil war. With no other option, she signed the Treaty of Sundering, acknowledging the sovereign rights of the south in exchange for favorable trade terms and other concessions.

Thus were the northern kingdom of Regen and the southern kingdom of Stroming born from the ashes of old Jorl.

In the 200 years since the Sundering, Regen and Stroming have maintained a turbulent relationship. In After Sundering (AS) 39 and again in AS 124, tensions escalated into bloodshed as the kingdoms battled one another. For the last seventy-five years they have waged a cold war, with each maintaining standing armies, fortified positions, spy networks, and stockpiles of siege weaponry.

Both kingdoms value honor and chivalry—making the necessity of spies sit uncomfortably with their rulers—and induct their best women and men into knightly orders. Not all knights are trained in combat; some specialize in the healing arts, while others dedicate their lives to the study of siegecraft or fabric-weaving.

Recently, the relationship between north and south has deteriorated further, and the specter of true war looms on the horizon.

The Northern Kingdom of Regen

Code: *Freedom and Honor*

Other Aspects: *Pastoral Hub of Fashion and Commerce; Naval Supremacy*

Important Persons: King Karl Ehrling (page 18), The King's Consort Sir Rupert Andolf (page 19)

Regen is a temperate land favored by warm northerly winds and calm seas. Thanks to the ash left behind by Bulta's eruption, the land is green and fertile, and much of it is given over to vineyards, farming, and sheep grazing. Wool spun and dyed in Regen is prized around the world, and the capital city, Reyvik, is a hub for textiles, art, and the latest fashions. The kingdom also possesses a large natural harbor, making it ideally suited to its role as a thriving hub of international commerce.

The monarch of Regen is King Karl Ehrling, a charismatic young man of twenty-three years. He had been intended to marry Princess Kelda of Stroming when he turned sixteen, thus uniting the two kingdoms, but love intervened. On the eve of the wedding he threw his father's plans into disarray by marrying his childhood companion, Sir Rupert Andolf, instead.

On Karl's eighteenth birthday his father abdicated the throne of Regen and joined the crew of a merchant ship to explore the world as a commoner. He left a letter with his seal and signature to explain his decision, but Stroming spreads whispers that the old king instead went *into* the sea in a canvas shroud with rocks tied to his feet, murdered by his own son.

Reyvik is a walled city that surrounds the harbor. The city has far outgrown its walls in recent years, and plans are being drawn to build a second wall outside the first. For now, many of the newer buildings lie exposed, a subject of great concern given the recent rise in tension between Regen and Stroming.

Outside the capital, the folk live in small farming communities, villages, and towns. Many of these lie along the banks of the Jorl and shelter within the aegis of the king's timber border forts. In the far north of the kingdom stands a steep hill named Arlen Tor, the site of the kingdom's largest stone fort. With commanding views across the kingdom and siege weaponry able to rain down boulders almost as far as the eye can see, Fort Bertrand is the kingdom's first line of defense.

The southern flanks of the Tor are quarried to fuel the kingdom's appetite for stone, both for construction and for siege ammunition. Unknown to any but King Ehrling and his closest advisors, a secret tunnel has been excavated during the last century that connects Reyvik Palace to the bowels of Fort Bertrand.

Metal is in short supply in Regen. Mine shafts have been driven into the northern flank of Mount Bulta to seek ore, but while metals are plentiful in the southern slopes of the dormant volcano, the northern side is composed of lighter materials and few metal-bearing rocks.

Trees are plentiful, however, and the kingdom has many skilled carpenters and shipwrights. With Regen's command of the island's only natural harbor and the land's abundance of shipbuilding materials, the kingdom has built a significant navy that grants it dominion over the seas surrounding the isle.

Stroming enforces an embargo on selling metals and ores to Regen, so they must be smuggled across the border or imported by sea from farther afield. Regen has responded in kind, massively increasing the taxes collected on wood and luxury goods destined for Stroming.

The Southern Kingdom of Stroming

Code: *Duty Above All*

Other Aspects: *Industrial Powerhouse; Well-Equipped Army*

Important Persons: Queen Kelda Brecht (page 20), Lord High Seneschal Piotr Verenk (page 21)

Stroming is characterized by harsh and inhospitable conditions, but it is redeemed by its immense mineral wealth and highly defensible geography.

More than half of Stroming is in the rain shadow of Mount Bulta and suffers from arid conditions as a result. The southern coast of the kingdom features high, exposed cliffs with no useful bays or beaches, making it nigh impossible to reach Stroming by sea. While this makes naval assault of the kingdom infeasible, it leaves Stroming reliant on the more accessible kingdom of Regen—or the smugglers who ply their trade across the marshy delta of the River Jorl—when importing and exporting goods and supplies.

Stroming bears the brunt of autumn and winter's southerly winds. They gust hard and cold, lashing the southern coast with stinging sleet and snow. To survive, the kingdom's people must be a hardy lot, and even its nobles tend to be ascetic and hard-working. It's a common joke that the people of Regen are soft and need Stroming as a windbreak to protect them.

Stroming's harsh climate makes cereals and other crops difficult to cultivate, so its people live on staple foods of root vegetables, goat cheese and meat, and several varieties of mushroom that are grown underground. These foodstuffs are put to good use in the kingdom's famous liquor, Irnya, a rust-colored spirit with a mild hallucinogenic effect that's brewed from potatoes and fungi and matured in iron casks.

Metalwork occupies a majority of the kingdom's citizens. Ores are extracted from the deep mines bored into the side of the mountain and then transported to local smelters and refineries for processing into various useful metals. Some of the refined metal is exported, but a significant portion is shaped by local smiths and artisans into the finest arms and armor in the world.

The mountain is also shot through with precious metals and rich veins of precious and semi-precious stones, which are extracted along with the more useful ores. Stroming has some talented gemcutters and jewelers—though their preference for sturdy pieces isn't to every taste—but most of the unset material is exported.



Stroming takes its defense very seriously and has constructed a number of imposing stone and metal forts along its side of the Jorl, on Mount Bulta, and on the cliffs overlooking the southern sea. Each is built to appear as brutal and intimidating as possible—in sharp contrast with Regen’s utilitarian wooden forts—and garrisoned by a well-armed detachment of knights and men-at-arms. Stroming’s forts are a constant reminder of the kingdom’s military and industrial might.

The capital of Stroming is named Smyden, a large walled city about three times the size of Reyvik. The city’s growth has been managed to ensure that it remains contained by its walls, and its battlements bristle with ballistae and other siege defenses. Smelters, foundries, and blacksmiths are everywhere, and a permanent pall of black smoke hangs over the densely packed streets.

Stroming’s queen is Kelda Brecht, a forthright and intense woman in her thirtieth year. Ever since she inherited the throne a year ago, tensions have worsened between Regen and Stroming: Kelda resents King Ehrling—not because she was humiliated by his jilting of her, nor because she fell in love with him, but because he chose his own happiness over marrying her to reunite the kingdoms. For his part, King Ehrling is sympathetic toward Kelda and regrets that his decision prevented reunification, but is immensely frustrated that Kelda continues to hold a grudge.

Kelda is advised and supported by her Lord High Seneschal, Piotr Verenk. He is an elderly man with the appearance of a slightly bewildered owl, an effect caused by his massive, bushy white eyebrows, sunken eyes, and hooked nose. Verenk was her father’s closest advisor and played a key role in preparing Kelda to take the throne upon her father’s death. Something of a stabilizing influence, the seneschal tempers the queen’s natural inclination for bold, swift action with his more patient approach.

Aaldisle, the Forbidden Land

A few miles off the southern coast of Stroming lies the mist-shrouded Aaldisle. Ancient tradition and more recent treaties between Regen and Stroming forbid either nation from landing on the isle's shores, for the place is inhabited by people of an older race.

As stories have it, the Aaldfolk are the children of dragons and had settlements all around the world thousands of years ago. Shaped roughly like short women and men but with leaf-green skin and large, solid-black eyes, the Aaldfolk lived in their own cities, isolated by walls not of stone, but of choking mist.

Over time, the growing population encroached on the mist-shrouded places of the Aald, and conflicts with Aaldfolk became more and more common. Some intrepid adventurers even braved the mists and returned alive with treasures and artifacts stolen from within.

But they did not remain alive for long. The Aaldfolk emerged from their mists to punish the thieves, striking out with dragonfire weapons to destroy them and their communities.

Then, almost a thousand years ago, most of the Aaldfolk vanished overnight. Bright lights shone through the mists, and the ground trembled mightily, making the people fear that Mount Bulta was about to erupt. The lights shot into the sky with a “dragon’s roar” and by the next morning the protective mists had almost entirely receded, revealing that only bare rock and scorched earth had been left behind.

Still, isolated pockets of Aaldfolk remain behind, and for the sake of mutual preservation the people leave them well alone.

Recently, however, Stroming has been considering how they might benefit from exploiting the island just off their shores. If they could come to some kind of arrangement with the Aaldfolk—or conquer them—they could gain a significant advantage over Regen.

Regen’s royal spies have relayed word of these plans to the king, who is gravely concerned that, if Queen Kelda continues down this path, the Aaldfolk will launch indiscriminate reprisals against both Regen and Stroming. This is another source of tension between the two kingdoms.

For details of the inhabitants of Aaldisle and their capabilities, read page 54 in *Chapter 4: Creating an Alien Race*.

The Cold War Heats Up

The last seventy-five years have seen a state of heightened tension between Regen and Stroming, with saber-rattling on both sides but little actual violence. The recent ascension of Queen Kelda Brecht to the throne of Stroming has significantly worsened relations between the two kingdoms, and a hot war is looking increasingly likely. However, the queen's personal dislike of King Ehrling is just the tip of an iceberg of issues driving the conflict between the kingdoms.

The main points of contention can be divided into three types: personal, ideological, and economical.

Personal Issues

The Jilting: Kelda never wanted to marry Prince Ehrling, but accepted her duty with dignity. After the wedding was announced she became a recluse, isolating herself from people her age in order to prevent any hint of impropriety that could cause Regen to call off the wedding. When Ehrling annulled their betrothal by marrying his best friend, Kelda did not see it as a reprieve but as a mockery of everything she had sacrificed. She despises Ehrling for his selfishness and takes pleasure in thwarting his plans and ambitions in any way she can.

For his part, Ehrling keeps making peaceful overtures to Kelda only to have them spat in his face, and with each rejection he becomes more frustrated. He wants to put the past behind them and do what's best for their kingdoms rather than continuing to hold a grudge.

When the aliens invade, can the king and queen put aside their personal differences for long enough to unify against their mutual foe, or will one make a play in the chaos to become the sole monarch of a reunified kingdom?

Ideological Issues

The Kingdoms' Codes: The people of Stroming are an austere lot who believe in *Duty Above All* and pride themselves on their sensible, reliable nature. They have a strong work ethic and value, beyond all else, those who fulfill their obligations with good grace. The people of Regen instead focus on *Freedom and Honor*. These codes overlap somewhat, as it is honorable to meet one's obligations, but Regen's emphasis on freedom often runs contrary to this, and as the code implies, freedom comes first.

When the aliens invade, will the knights of Stroming accept the rule of their new overlords, out of pragmatism and duty to their people's safety, while the rulers of Regen fight on in the name of freedom?

The Aaldisle Question: According to treaty, neither Regen nor Stroming may interfere with the Aaldisle or its people. Primarily this treaty is designed to protect the kingdoms from potential reprisals should the Aaldfolk dislike people visiting their land, but Regen also prefers not to interfere for ideological reasons. The Aaldfolk have chosen to seclude themselves on their misty isle, they reason,

and so should be left in peace. The problem, then, is that Stroming believes that the Aaldisle could be a valuable resource for them. From picking through the scant evidence left behind by the departing Aaldfolk elsewhere in the world, it is known that they possess impressive metallurgical knowledge, which allowed them to create unknown alloys of surpassing strength and sharpness.

After repeated efforts to overturn the non-interference treaty, Stroming is close to giving up on a diplomatic solution, and they may soon take direct action that could have serious consequences for everyone. Regen's spies have discovered this, and King Ehrling is trying to decide on the best way forward.

When the aliens invade, are they the Aaldfolk themselves returning as conquering heroes? Will the enclave of Aaldfolk who remained behind help Jorl's people against the invaders, or will they side with the aliens? What if the invaders are actually looking for technology or secrets hidden on Aaldisle, and just using Jorl as a staging ground?

Economical Issues

Wood for Metal: As the cold war has heated up, Stroming has applied more and more restrictions to the trade of metal, weapons, and siege engine parts to Regen. As matters presently stand, there is a full embargo, meaning that Regen must import metal and arms from other kingdoms at considerable expense. In reply, Regen has heavily restricted the trade of timber cut from its forests and has applied hefty taxes to all goods being exported across the river to Stroming. Stroming has no port of its own, so this trade restriction has significantly inflated the cost of all import goods. The people who have most profited from this situation are the smugglers and black-marketeers who ply their trade on both sides of the border.

When the aliens invade, the smuggling routes between Regen and Stroming, and those who ply them, could be essential in getting people or supplies in and out of areas occupied by the aliens. If the aliens have flying saucers or similar technology, then all parties involved will be desperate to get their hands on them as a way of running blockades in the future.

Border Dispute: The course of the river Jorl was recently diverted by a "natural" dam that supposedly formed during a particularly impressive storm. By treaty, the river's course determines the border between Regen and Stroming, so this shift moved the border and gave Regen some of Stroming's lands. Regen states that the dam formed naturally and they are under no obligation to restore the river's course and return the land. Stroming accuses Regen of having deliberately constructed the dam to steal this fertile stretch of arable land.

When the aliens invade, what happens to the course of the river and the division between the two kingdoms? Border disputes are the least of both kingdoms' worries during the invasion, but in the aftermath will they make a grab for land? Or will the invaders force the kingdoms to unify in the wake of the alien attack?

CHAPTER 2: CHARACTERS AND SYSTEMS

In *Knights of Invasion*, each of you is a knight in the royal court of Stroming or Regen. You have your monarch's ear and are instrumental in helping to plan both for peace and for war. When the invaders arrive, the monarchs look to *you* to jointly plan and execute whatever it takes to save both kingdoms from the alien menace...while also gaining whatever advantage you can for your own kingdom.

Heavy is the head that wears the crown, but *your* monarch knows how to delegate.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A KNIGHT?

Knight is a title of rank. It doesn't mean you have to be an armored fighter or even know how to fight at all. It does confer the right to wear full armor and carry a sword in the presence of royalty, though.

Character Creation

Creating a character for *Knights of Invasion* works like this:

1. Choose your allegiance.
Equally divide your group between Stroming and Regen.
2. Choose a high concept and trouble.
3. Choose a code aspect—a short phrase that describes what you think is most important in life.
4. Choose two free aspects.
5. Pick one skill at Great (+4), two at Good (+3), three at Fair (+2), and four at Average (+1).
Available skills are: Athletics, Burglary, Contacts, Crafts, Deceive, Empathy, Fight, Hunt, Investigate, Lore, Notice, Physique, Provoke, Rapport, Ride, Resources, Shoot, Sieecraft, Stealth, and Will.
6. Choose one extra and three stunts.
Your refresh is three. You can spend up to two refresh to buy additional stunts or extras.

Choose Allegiance

Decide to which kingdom you owe allegiance. This game works best if your group is divided roughly equally between the two kingdoms, so discuss this with the other players to make sure you don't end up with a large imbalance. Your allegiance mainly affects the politics among the PCs, but when you pick your code aspect it must broadly align with the code of your kingdom, described more later.

- **Regen's Code:** *Freedom and Honor*
- **Stroming's Code:** *Duty Above All*

Choose Aspects

Pick your **high concept** and **trouble** as in *Fate Core*. Your high concept should make it immediately obvious why your monarch relies on you. If you’re stuck for ideas on either your high concept or trouble, you can use these tables for inspiration:

Roll	Descriptor	Role
⚔️⚔️	Meddling	Alchemist/Scholar
🕵️⚔️	Cunning	Diplomat/Spy
⚔️🛡️	Loyal	Animal Trainer/Ranger
👨🏻‍⚕️👨🏻‍⚕️	Kindly	Physician/Surgeon
🕵️🛡️	Inquisitive	Artificer/Siege Engineer
🛡️🛡️	Courageous	Warrior/Tactician

Roll	Trouble Inspiration
⚔️⚔️	You’re distrusted, feared, or hated by your own court
🕵️⚔️	You have a personal flaw like gambling, drinking, or a bad temper
⚔️🛡️	You have a hated enemy from either kingdom
👨🏻‍⚕️👨🏻‍⚕️	You’re unhappy with the status quo and an agitator for change
🕵️🛡️	You have a ward, spouse, or other positive relationship that causes you issues
🛡️🛡️	You have a virtue like honesty, kindness, or valor that gets you into trouble

Next, pick your **code**: a short phrase that describes what you think is most important in life. This is visible to others in the form of the motto on your coat of arms, and knights who fall short of their code are judged harshly by their peers.

Some examples of codes are *First, Do No Harm*; *If It Does No Harm, Do as You Will*; *Death Before Dishonor*; and *Honesty Above All*.

Your code must not contradict your kingdom’s code.

Finally, pick two free aspects to flesh out your character. These can relate to other characters, as described in the crossing paths section of the phase trio (*Fate Core*, page 42).

ASPECTS FOR READY-MADE CHARACTERS

GMs, if you’re planning to run *Knights of Invasion* as a one-shot session, you’ll need to prepare a character for each player in advance. Pick a high concept, a trouble, and one free aspect beforehand, then have each player pick their code and final free aspect when you begin play. This will give you an interesting mix of characters while saving time.



Choose Skills

Pick one skill at Great (+4), two at Good (+3), three at Fair (+2), and four at Average (+1).

Skills here are the same as in *Fate Core*, except for the following changes:

- We've added Hunt for dealing with hunting, tracking, wilderness survival and related matters.
- We've changed Drive to Ride, which is for training, controlling, and riding horses and other mounts.
- We've added Siegecraft for maintaining and working siege weapons, as well as defending against them.

SKILLS FOR READY-MADE CHARACTERS

Give each character an apex skill that's related to their high concept. Here are some apex skills for the example high concepts above:

Concept	Skill
Alchemist/Scholar	Lore
Diplomat/Spy	Rapport or Deceive
Animal Trainer/Ranger	Hunt or Ride
Physician/Surgeon	Lore
Artificer/Siege Engineer	Crafts or Siegecraft
Warrior/Tactician	Fight or Provoke

After you pick this, choose other skills that complement their apex skill or that make sense in the context of their high concept.

Choose Extras, Refresh, and Stunts

Choose one extra. There's more information about the types of extras on page 22.

You start with three refresh and three free stunts. You can buy up to two more stunts and extras total, each for a point of refresh.

New Skills and Stunts

Hunt

Hunting is a necessary skill for many peasants and a thrilling pastime for those who are better off. It encompasses animal handling and survival skills, along with knowledge of how to conduct a hunt and the typical behaviors of predators and prey.



Overcome: Hunt allows you to overcome obstacles relating to hunting and survival. This includes trailing prey—or people—through their tracks and other signs, catching small prey with a trained bird, and hunting with hounds. You can also find your way in the wilderness by using signs like the sun and stars, locate shelter in a storm, and otherwise solve problems using your knowledge of the natural world.



Create an Advantage: With Hunt you can create hiding places and ambushes, soothe or train animals, notice trails or clues relating to hunting or the wilderness, and predict animal behavior or weather patterns.



Attack: You can use Hunt to attack a typical prey animal like a rabbit, stag, or boar, as long as you use your usual hunting equipment, which can include a pack of hounds or a hunting hawk.



Defend: You can use Hunt to defend against attempts to track or follow you with the Hunt skill. This involves using your wilderness knowledge to make your trail harder to find.

HUNT STUNTS


Drunken Huntmaster: For you, drinking heavily is an important part of the hunt. +2 to attack or overcome with Hunt while you're affected by an aspect representing drunkenness.


Go for the Eyes: You've trained your hunting bird to attack your target's eyes. Once per scene, you can roll Hunt opposed by Athletics against a victim within two zones of you. If you succeed, they become *Temporarily Blinded* and remains so until they receive medical care, a Lore overcome against Great (+4) opposition—or Fantastic (+6) opposition if they try to heal themselves.





Ride

From mounted combat to endurance rides or horse races, Ride is what you need to be an effective equestrian. As well as giving you the ability to competently ride, this skill lets you groom, train, and look after horses.

 **Overcome:** Ride lets you win horse races, traverse rough terrain and leap obstacles on horseback, or arrive at your destination in the nick of time. You can also tame or train horses and deal with their care and maintenance.

 **Create an Advantage:** You can create advantages relating to improving your horse's grooming or mental state, outmaneuvering other equestrians, and gaining superior tactical positioning.

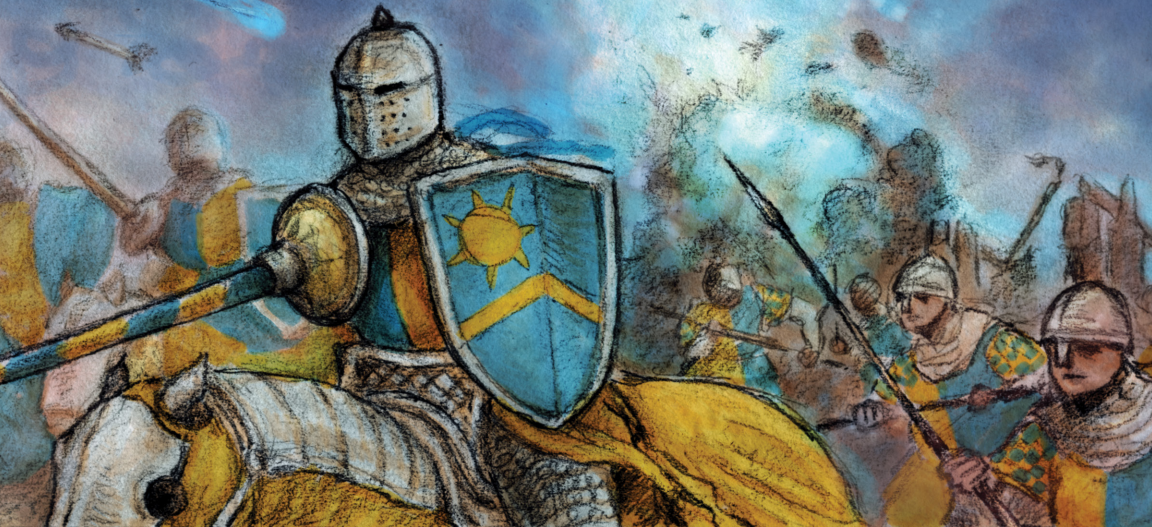
 **Attack:** When you're attacking someone from horseback, you use the lower of your Ride and Fight.

 **Defend:** You can use Ride instead of Athletics to defend against physical attacks when you're in the saddle and your horse is free to move. You can also defend against attempts to outmaneuver you on horseback or to tamper with your horse or its tack and fodder.

RIDE STUNTS

Jouster: When you're jousting, you use the higher of your Fight and Ride rather than the lower (page 27).

Horse Whisperer: You're naturally gifted at making horses do what you want. +2 to overcome or create an advantage with Ride when influencing a horse's mental state.



Siegecraft

Castles are tough nuts to crack, and specialist tools are required for the job. An expert in Siegecraft knows how to build, maintain, mobilize, and use a variety of large-scale weapons that can breach a castle's defenses. This is also the skill you use to prepare a fortress to defend against a siege.



Overcome: Siegecraft can be used to build or repair siege engines, crack open a castle, move siege weapons to where they're needed despite opposition, work out where sappers are undermining a castle's walls, and otherwise overcome obstacles relating to sieges and siege engines. Constructing siege engines is a slow process, usually taking several weeks.



Create an Advantage: Advantages you create with Siegecraft will relate to tuning or finding flaws in siege engines, finding weak spots in a castle's defenses, and monitoring or influencing the defenders of a besieged castle in regards to—for example—their supplies of food, water, and ammunition, and their overall morale.



Attack: Use Siegecraft when you're attacking something with a siege weapon (page 24).



Defend: Use Siegecraft to defend against attempts to find vulnerabilities in your siege equipment, sabotage it, or attack it directly. You can also defend against attempts to create advantages that affect defending or besieging troops, such as poisoning a well or excavating tunnels under the walls.

SIEGECRAFT STUNTS

Slap It Together: You can build and repair siege engines much faster than most. Instead of the several weeks usually required to complete a job, you can make it take around a day instead. If you do, the engine you worked on gains an aspect that relates to its jury-rigged nature.

Rain of Death: You're particularly skilled at using siege engines against troops. +2 to attack with Siegecraft against person-sized targets.

Important Persons

The rulers of each kingdom and their most trusted companions are significant NPCs in *Knights of Invasion*.

I WANT ONE!

Players, the stunts we've given here for NPCs are fine for you to take if your GM agrees. However, if you want one that gives the same effects as Kingsguard, it only works once per session. Otherwise, you can create your loyal bodyguard as a retainer with the rules on page 23.



King Karl Ehrling of Regen

High Concept: *Charismatic Young King*

Trouble: *Eternal Optimism*

Code: *One Must Choose One's Own Path in Life*

Free Aspects: *The People Love Me and I Love Them;*
Rupert Will Always Stand by Me

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Resources

Great (+4): Rapport

Good (+3): Empathy, Contacts

Fair (+2): Hunt, Fight, Athletics, Ride

Average (+1): Siegecraft, Physique, Provoke, Notice

STUNTS

Kingsguard: You always have a loyal bodyguard at your side who will defend you with Superb (+5) Fight if you're attacked. Your bodyguard is otherwise a Good nameless NPC, but won't take any actions other than defending you and trying to get you to safety.

I Shall Not Yield: When you're in desperate straits you fight your hardest. When you take a moderate or severe consequence, you gain +2 to Fight until the end of the scene.

King of Commerce: As the ruler of a thriving port city, you have access to a wealth of supplies. +2 to Resources to purchase anything that could have been imported by sea.

STRESS

Mental: ☐☐

Physical: ☐☐☐

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):

Severe (6):

Sir Rupert Andolf of Regen

High Concept:

King's Consort and Dashing Young Knight

Trouble: *Always Make Right, Always Speak True*

Code: *Protect the Vulnerable*

Free Aspects: *I Would Do Anything for Love;*

Notable Patron of the Arts

SKILLS

Great (+4): Fight, Athletics

Good (+3): Notice, Ride

Fair (+2): Hunt, Rapport, Empathy

Average (+1): Shoot, Physique, Will, Resources

STUNTS

Artist's Eye: You have an interest in art and dabble in painting yourself. Your studies of expression and gesture make it easier for you to analyze what people are thinking. +2 to Empathy if you draw a sketch of your subject while you're speaking with them.

Go for the Eyes: You've trained your hunting bird to attack your target's eyes. Once per scene, you can roll Hunt opposed by Athletics against a victim within two zones of you. If you succeed, they become *Temporarily Blinded* and remains so until they receive medical care, a Lore overcome against Great (+4) opposition—or Fantastic (+6) opposition if they try to heal themselves.

Don't Spare the Horses: When necessary, you can push your mount to the brink of exhaustion—but without permanent harm—to get where you're needed. Once per session, you can declare that you arrive at the current scene in the nick of time, even if the distance involved makes that implausible. You can't use the horse you rode again until it has rested for at least a few days.

STRESS

Mental: ☐☐☐

Physical: ☐☐☐

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):

Severe (6):





Queen Kelda Brecht of Stroming

High Concept: *Forthright and Intense Monarch*

Trouble: *No Patience for Weakness*

Code: *The Needs of the Many Outweigh the Needs of the Few*

Free Aspects: *Quick to Anger, Slow to Forgive, The People Respect Me*

SKILLS

Superb (+5): Provoke

Great (+4): Fight, Hunt

Good (+3): Athletics, Physique, Will

Fair (+2): Shoot, Ride, Empathy

Average (+1): Notice, Lore, Siegecraft

STUNTS

Stoic: You can take a lot of punishment and keep on going. You get an extra severe consequence slot, but can only use it if your moderate consequence slot is filled.

Defender of the Realm: You have an eye for weaknesses in your kingdom's defenses. +2 to defend with Siegecraft.

Obedience Through Fear: Your subjects fear your righteous anger. Your subordinates use the higher of your Provoke and their own Will when resisting attempts to persuade them to disobey your orders.

STRESS

Mental: ☐☐☐☐

Physical: ☐☐☐☐

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):

Severe (6):

Piotr Verenk,

Lord High Seneschal of Stroming

High Concept: *Trusted Advisor to the Queen*

Trouble: *Caught in a Web of Intrigue*

Code: *Whatever Is Required*

Free Aspects: *Friends in Unexpected Places;*
Loyalty Is the Highest Virtue

SKILLS

Great (+4): Deceive, Investigate

Good (+3): Contacts, Lore

Fair (+2): Resources, Will, Rapport

Average (+1): Provoke, Crafts, Hunt, Fight,
Athletics

STUNTS

Spies Everywhere: Once per session, you can spend a fate point to reveal that a single nameless or supporting NPC was in your employ all along. You get to control this NPC until the end of the session.

Seneschals Have an Unfair Reputation: People wrongly assume that, because you're a goateed seneschal, you're willing to betray your allies at the drop of a hat. You play to this image to elicit information from your enemies. +2 to Investigate when an enemy feels safe making a play for your support, such as in a private meeting.

I Know All Your Dirty Secrets: You have a wealth of information on people that they wouldn't want to become public, and use this to ensure they comply with your requirements. You can use Investigate instead of Provoke to intimidate another. However, the subject must have a dirty secret they'd rather stay hidden—this stunt doesn't work on the truly virtuous.

STRESS

Mental: ☐☐☐

Physical: ☐☐

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):

Severe (6):



Extras

The starting point for every ally, retainer, or piece of equipment in *Knights of Invasion* is an aspect. It can be as simple or as detailed as you like, from *Neverdull, the Family Sword* to *Rusty Broadsword*.

Representing an extra with only an aspect doesn't cost you anything, but you will have to justify it with your Contacts or Resources skill or one of your aspects.

Taking something as an extra makes it important to your character and to how you want the story to unfold. To reflect this, extras provide additional mechanical benefits, and each costs a point of refresh.

Equipment, Horses, and Weapons

Equipment: An item of equipment that's taken as an extra provides an effect equivalent to a stunt, along with the aspect that defines it.

Horses: A horse can be fast, sturdy, or steady. Pick two. If it isn't fast it's slow, if it isn't steady it's temperamental, and if it isn't sturdy it's delicate. Add these three words to a brief description of your horse to define it as an aspect. Taking your horse as an extra either deletes the negative word or gives the horse a stunt. Your horse can't take independent action but also can't be taken out. If you want a horse that can act by itself, buy it as a retainer (page 23).

Sir Robin's horse is a **Fast, Steady, but Delicate Roan Gelding**. Its stunt effect gives +2 Ride to Sir Robin when he's making a tactical withdrawal on horseback.

Weapons: If you take a weapon as an extra, then it has a Weapon rating of up to 3 (*Fate Core*, page 277) or provides a stunt effect, along with the aspect that defines it. Weapons with Weapon:1 are small arms like daggers and pocket crossbows, while weapons with Weapon:3 are much larger ones like pikes and lances. These larger weapons are challenging to use and should be subject to more frequent compels and hostile invokes.

Armor

There are four types of armor, and each type provides you with a set of pre-named consequence slots, seen at the top of page 23.

The **Fatigued** consequence clears with a few hours' rest. The others require a smith to repair your armor, which by default takes a few hours for each mild consequence and a few days—at least one session—for each moderate consequence. In an emergency you can use your armor while it's being repaired, but any consequences stay filled until the smith has finished their work.

Add a brief description of your armor to its type to define it as an aspect.

The Baron has **Crimson Spiked Super-Heavy Armor**.

Armor Type	Consequences
Light (boiled leather or chainmail)	Fatigued (mild)
Medium (heavy chainmail or light plate)	Fatigued (mild); Dented (mild)
Heavy (full plate)	Fatigued (mild); Dented (mild); Sundered (moderate)
Super-Heavy (heavy plate)	Fatigued (mild); Dented (mild); Weakened (moderate); Sundered (moderate)

Light and medium armors are vulnerable to crossbows, pikes, and other piercing weapons. If you are struck with such a weapon while wearing light or medium armor, the armor can be compelled to prevent you from using its consequence slots to absorb stress. Heavy and super-heavy armors are subject to hostile invokes and compels due to their weight and bulk.

WHAT ABOUT ENERGY WEAPONS?

The metal mined from Mount Bulta by Stroming's smiths resembles steel, but it is actually an alloy that would be unfamiliar to Earth's metallurgists. This material has a faint iridescent sheen and can be used to absorb attacks from alien lasers and heat rays. Well-maintained and unpainted armor is also **Highly Polished**—at least at the beginning of battle. This aspect can be compelled to redirect an energy attack toward a foe.

Retainers

If you want a companion—person or animal—who can take independent action, such as a squire, a falcon, or an unusually intelligent horse, take it as a retainer. A retainer is a Fair nameless NPCs as described in *Fate Core* (page 215). You can spend one of your free stunts or refresh to upgrade your retainer to Good quality, give them a stunt, or give them a mild consequence slot.

You can generally rely on your retainer to follow you around and do your bidding—unless a compel says otherwise. During a conflict or contest, you can act yourself or have your retainer act in a given exchange, but not both. You can work with your retainer to get a teamwork bonus on an action for which you both have the skill at Average (+1) or better.

Sir Rufus Hawke takes a bloodhound named Hound as his retainer. He decides that Hound is a **Loyal Bloodhound** with Fair (+2) Hunt and Average (+1) Notice and Fight. In a scene where Rufus is trying to hunt his quarry through the woods, he rolls with Hunt and gets a +1 teamwork bonus because Hound is assisting him and also has Hunt.



Systems

Here you'll find the systems for initiative, siege weapons, and tournaments.

Initiative

GMs, pick who acts first in a conflict according to what makes the most sense in the story. If you want one of your NPCs to take the first action of a conflict, you must invoke an appropriate aspect or use a proper stunt effect.

After a character acts, they pick who acts next; the last person to act in the exchange chooses who acts first in the next exchange. If you aren't picked to act next, you can steal the next action by invoking an appropriate aspect or using some stunt effects.

Siege-Scale Targets and Siege Weapons

Siege-scale targets include castles, alien spacecraft, giant alien monsters, and siege weapons. They can't be harmed by attacks using person-scale weapons.

Siege weapons are engines of destruction that you can use to crack open or completely destroy fortified buildings and other siege-scale targets. You can also use them against armies of smaller targets, but firing one indiscriminately into a melee is a good way to kill hundreds of your own warriors. Consequence slots on armor cannot absorb attacks from siege weapons, and siege weapons have Weapon:3 against anything smaller than a siege-scale target.

Every siege weapon has two aspects, three stress boxes, and one each of mild, moderate, and severe consequence slots.

Siege weapons need a crew of five people to be used effectively. Before a siege weapon can be fired, it must be readied, which requires the crew to create an advantage against Average (+1) opposition, which increases by one rank for each crew member the weapon is lacking.

Siege weapons are themselves siege-scale targets, but their crews can be attacked with handheld weapons. If you can get close enough to a siege weapon, you can also sabotage it with Sieecraft.

There are four general types of siege weapons: catapults, ballistae, battering rams, and siege towers. You'll find descriptions and examples below.

CATAPULTS

These include any weapons that fling large projectiles across a significant distance, including trebuchets, onagers, and mangonels. You can use these weapons to attack siege-scale targets, or you can create advantages based on precision strikes or the use of unorthodox ammunition like diseased corpses or pitch-soaked burning rocks.

When a catapult is used on smaller targets, it attacks a whole zone at once. Firing at ground targets is a risky business because uneven terrain, rocks, or shifts in wind can cause projectiles to go astray, sending them tumbling into your own forces. To reflect this, when you use your catapult in this way, you can be compelled to make your shots hit everyone in an adjacent zone.

Giant Trebuchet

Aspects: *Largest Weapon in the Land; Old Faithful*

Stress: ☐☐☐

Consequences: mild, moderate, severe

BALLISTAE

A ballista is a giant crossbow. It fires large metal bolts that can do minor damage to siege-scale targets or be used to lethal effect on anything smaller. You can use a ballista to create advantages on siege-scale targets by inflicting strategic, precise damage or by using fire bolts or other special ammunition such as grappling hooks. You can't attack a siege-scale target with a ballista, but you can attack person-scale targets in multiple zones.

When you attack person-scale targets, treat all the defenders as if they were part of a mob. That means if you take out the first defender, your bolt continues through and into the next target, and so on until you run out of shifts of stress to inflict. If someone defends successfully against your ballista, then the bolt loses one shift and carries on to the next target. Your bolt keeps traveling through zones until its shifts are depleted, it hits an impenetrable target, or it leaves the currently defined battlefield.

The ballista can only attack multiple person-scale targets in the same zone if everyone agrees they are in the line of fire, based on the narrative or conflict map. If any friendly characters are in a zone in the path of your bolt, you can be compelled to have the bolt hit one of them instead of an intended target.

Ship-Mounted Ballista

Aspects: *360-Degree Gimbal; Easily Dismounted*

Stress: ☐☐☐

Consequences: mild, moderate, severe

BATTERING RAMS

A battering ram in its simplest form is a large log that's carried by multiple soldiers and used to repeatedly ram walls or gates in an attempt to breach them. More-modern designs feature a wheeled, roofed enclosure designed to protect the ram's crew from projectiles, with the ram suspended on chains. A battering ram can *only* be used to attack siege-scale targets or to create advantages like *Breached Southern Wall*.

Ram's Head Battering Ram

Aspects: *Heavy Metal Ram's Head; Roofed Enclosure*

Stress: ☐☐☐

Consequences: mild, moderate, severe

SIEGE TOWERS

A siege tower is a wheeled rectangular tower which contains ladders for scaling castle walls. These engines are designed to allow soldiers to approach castle walls without being peppered with arrows or other projectiles, letting them climb up the walls in safety—represent this with an aspect, like *Safe Wooden Enclosure* for a wooden siege tower. A siege tower doesn't attack, but while abutting a wall it allows any within to climb over the wall and into the bastion. A siege tower can move one zone per exchange, but can't move at all if undercrewed.

Iron Siege Tower

Aspects: *Heavy but Well-Defended; Just Keeps Rolling*

Stress: ☐☐☐

Consequences: mild, moderate, severe

Tournaments

Tournaments are important events in both Regen and Stroming, designed to showcase the horsemanship and combat abilities of the great and good of the realms. Royal tournaments are open to all, though, and provide excellent opportunities for valiant but unknown warriors to draw the notice of their peers and secure a place for themselves at court.

There are two main events at a tournament: jousting and the melee. Both are very dangerous and sometimes lethal, but the victor of each event is granted a prize by the host of the tournament. Winning both the joust and the melee is a legendary feat that awards the very highest of laurels. An archery competition is often run in parallel to the melee for those skilled in ranged rather than hand-to-hand combat, and winning this also grants a prize.

GIMME THE PRIZE

The winners of the archery competition, the joust, and the melee each get an extra (page 22) representing their prize. One of the extra's aspects must represent the fact that it's a royal prize of the highest quality. If one person wins both the joust and the melee, they are also granted a *Royal Favor*.

JOUSTING

You and your opponent don your armor—or some you've borrowed—and then mount your horses on opposite sides of the field. Taking up a lance and shield, you then charge—or *tilt*—at your opponent as he charges at you. The aim is to strike your opponent's shield hard enough to knock him from his horse while staying in the saddle yourself. If you both remain mounted then you tilt again. Jousting in a tournament is a challenge of endurance, for the victor remains on the field to face the next challenger.

To resolve a tilt, each jousting rolls with Ride or Fight, whichever is ranked lower. Starting with whoever got the lower result, each of you must then split your result between attack and defense. After you both declare your split, you can use relevant stunts and invokes to improve your attack and defense, though each such bonus can only improve attack or defense, not both.

The Baron tilts at Sir Rupert and rolls, getting a Superb (+5) result, while Sir Rupert gets a Good (+3) result. Rupert decides to go all-out to deal some stress to the Baron, so he makes his attack Good (+3) and his defense Mediocre (+0). The Baron allocates four shifts to his attack, making it Great (+4) and leaving his defense at Average (+1). The Baron must absorb two shifts with stress or consequences, while Sir Rupert must absorb four.

After each tilt you can try to create an advantage, but this is a risky strategy. Failure means that you're distracted during the next tilt, so you must allocate your entire roll to either attack or defense, leaving the other at Mediocre (+0).

After the first tilt, the Baron calls for the squire to give him his heaviest lance. This is an attempt to get a free invoke on his *The Only Way Is Through* aspect. As there's no real way for his rival to oppose this, the Baron rolls against Average (+1) opposition.

Being taken out during a joust usually just means that you're unhorsed and lose the competition, but "accidents" do happen on the tourney field's bloody ground. You can concede at any time during the joust, but doing so too early will make the audience think you're a coward.

THE MELEE AND ARCHERY

In the melee, you and the other participants—armored and wielding blunted swords and axes or bludgeoning weapons like maces and morning stars—battle in a free-for-all until only one of you remains standing. It’s usual for knights to withdraw once their armor is dented and damaged but before they suffer any serious injuries. Simultaneously, those skilled with the bow compete to see who can score the highest in the archery contest.

If the group wants the melee to be a significant scene, you can run it as a full conflict between participants. Otherwise, resolve the melee as a contest using Fight. The first to three victories—or five, if you want to draw the event out slightly longer—is the winner. The losers don’t escape from the melee unscathed, though. Each loser must take a physical consequence of a certain level or higher. The required level depends on the number of victories between them and the winner as follows:

Victories	Minimum Consequence
1	Mild consequence
2	Moderate consequence
3+	Severe consequence

Victories are described in detail in *Fate Core* (page 151).

The winner of the melee may choose to take out—fatally or not—a single NPC who would otherwise accept a severe consequence.

The archery competition is for those who are skilled with Shoot rather than Fight or who want to take part in a less risky activity. It is resolved as a contest with Shoot.

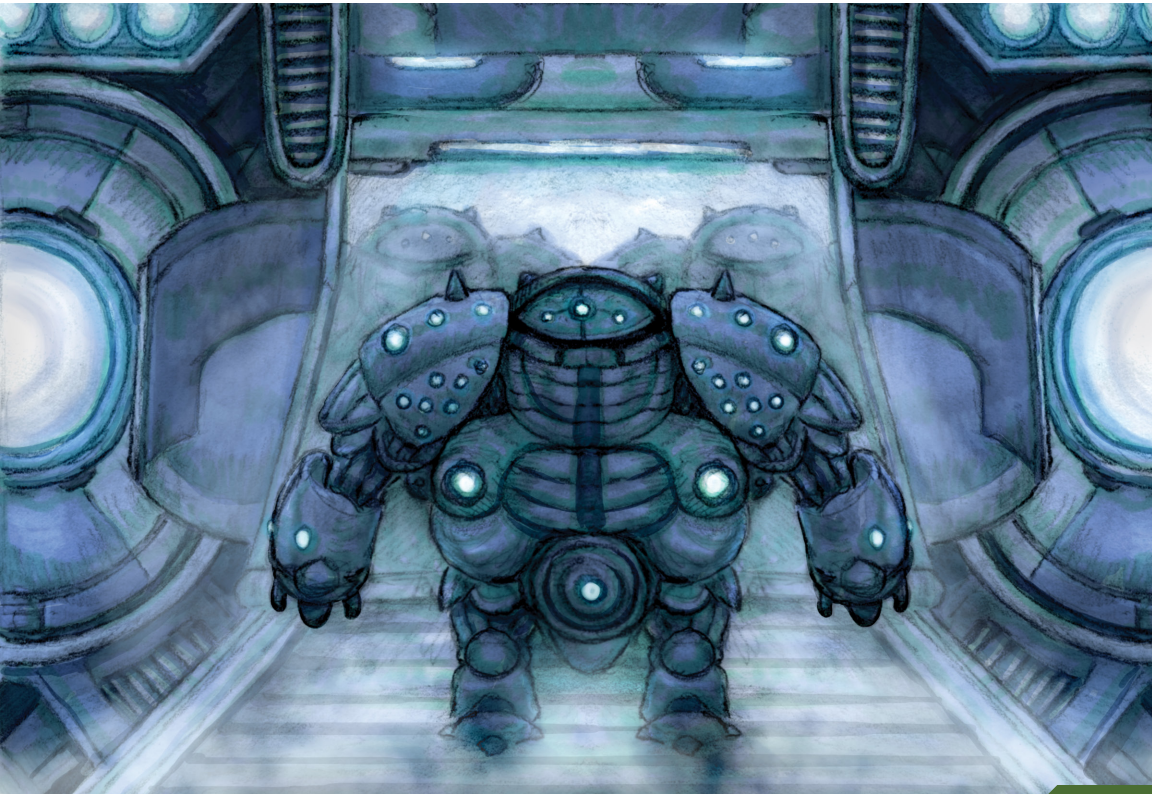
CHAPTER 3: SLOWLY AND SURELY, THEY DREW THEIR PLANS AGAINST US

The aliens are invading for a reason; they're certainly here to do more than mutilate cows and vandalize cornfields. In this chapter you'll find three alien agendas, and each of which will make the invasion play out completely differently.

Each agenda is broken into three acts, which form the beginning, middle, and end of a complete story. Each of these acts provides content for an entire session of play, including twists and turns to keep things exciting, but we will also give you advice on compressing each agenda so it can be played in a single session. Each agenda also gives some required **features** and **limitations** for the aliens, which are explained more in *Chapter 4: Creating an Alien Race*.

Every *Knights of Invasion* story begins with a celebratory tournament, and Act I of each agenda describes one way in which the tournament unfolds. In all cases, the great and the good of both kingdoms are gathering ostensibly to celebrate the king or queen's birthday. The real purpose of the tournament, however, is to bring the two monarchs and their trusted advisors together in the hope that peace can be negotiated on the eve of the war.

Of course, that's before the aliens arrive.



Agenda: Xeniforming

The aliens are coming to change the planet's atmosphere, ecosystem, and water composition so that they can live here without the need for domes or breathing apparatus. They have chosen Mount Bulta as their base of operations because they can use the geothermal energy and gases emitted from the reawakened volcano to complete their work.

Required Alien Features

The planet is suitable for xeniforming, but until the process is complete the aliens can't live here unaided. Pick two limitations to reflect this in addition to any you gave to your alien race when you created it.

For example, in *War of the Worlds* the Martians ***Can't Breathe the Atmosphere*** and have a ***Weak Immune System*** in addition to the ***Immobile*** limitation.

Act I: The Tournament

The tournament is being held in Regen by King Ehrling to celebrate his twenty-third birthday. The tournament grounds and encampments for local and visiting knights have been set up an hour's ride to the east of Reyvik. As they watch the action from their royal box, the king plans to have a quiet conversation with Queen Brecht to see if it's possible for the two of them to reconcile without their advisors getting in the way.

Queen Brecht also sees an opportunity afforded by the tournament, so she has tasked some of her trusted advisors with gathering information from the king's people as they mingle during the event.

Finally, because King Ehrling is fond of gambling, the queen plans to make a bet with him. If one of her knights wins both the joust and the melee, the king will agree to lift the embargo of timber to Stroming. If one of his knights achieves this instead, then she will agree to lift the embargo of metal to Regen. Of course, Queen Brecht has no doubt that her team, with their superior arms and armor, will win easily.

In the opening scenes of the game, politically and technically inclined PCs can become acquainted and verbally spar with their rivals in the other court to try to obtain useful information. At the same time, those who like to fight can compete in the tournament on their monarch's side. If you want to raise the stakes for the social encounter, you can resolve it as a contest in which the victors gain an advantage over the losers for use in later negotiations. Rules for tournaments are on page 26.

As the victors of the tournament are declared, the skies darken and strange lights are seen flickering in the clouds. A falling star daggers down into the peak of Mount Bulta with an enormous boom. Aftershocks rumble through the ground, growing in strength as time passes. Glints of blue fire are spotted at the peak of the mountain for the first time in years.

Viewed from the highest turret of Fort Bertrand, alien shapes emerge from the strange *thing* that now sprouts from the top of Mount Bulta, shapes that begin to make their way toward Fort Firewatch.

Act II: Invasion

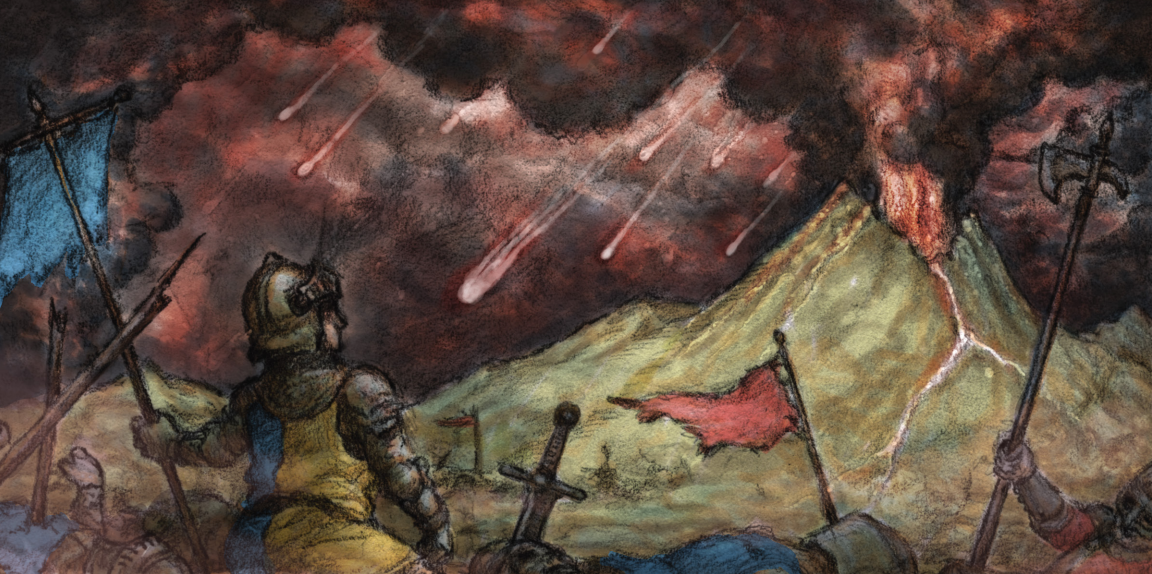
As the people reel in the aftermath of the Starfall, the monarchs of Regen and Stroming appeal for calm and order. They form a team of their most trusted knights to lead the way in defending both kingdoms from the threat posed by the alien things that emerged on Mount Bulta.

Initially, there are two issues to deal with:

- ***The Assault on Fort Firewatch:*** A scouting party from Fort Firewatch investigates the aliens swarming around the caldera. The aliens immediately attack them and then launch an assault on the fort. Can the knights get troops to the fort in time to prevent it from being captured or destroyed, weakening their tactical position on Mount Bulta?
- ***Volcanic Beachhead:*** The aliens have begun tapping into the volcano for geothermal energy. If left unchecked they will begin to extract sulfur and other gases from the volcano so they can commence xenoforming of the planet.

How things unfold from here depends on the actions of the knights, but this is what will happen if they don't interfere:

- In the first few hours after the falling star lands, it spreads its roots further into the mountain. It begins to taint the River Jorl with poisonous chemicals and causes the caldera to emit a ***Toxic Miasma*** that surrounds the peak for a mile or so in all directions. The invaders bustle around the peak like ants, setting up strange machinery and pipes.
- After a few days the ***Toxic Miasma*** has spread to cover the whole mountain and the surrounding land for miles around. Smyden is the first to be threatened by the toxic gases. Reyvik is partly defended by the northerly winds blowing the gases toward Stroming, but with the miasma's inexorable spread Reyvik will fall prey to the gas within weeks. Like trying to breathe during a house fire, using a water-soaked face cloth when you go outside keeps the worst effects at bay, for now. The disturbances to the land have now settled into a rhythmic thumping, like a giant's heartbeat. The cloud of gas around Bulta's peak is lit blue by the stoked fires within.
- After a few weeks ***Alien Life Forms*** begin to creep down the flanks of the mountain in the region affected by the miasma. They are dangerous and hostile to life. The Jorl also becomes ***Lethally Poisoned***, leaving the kingdoms reliant on wells and other secondary sources of water. The mountain's "heartbeat" becomes more rapid and intense, sending cracks through the foundations of buildings in Reyvik and Smyden.



Act III: Victory or Defeat

Disabling the falling star and killing the invaders defending it will stop Bulta from progressing any further toward eruption. The falling star poses a significant challenge for the knights and their siege engineers. From the outside this can only be accomplished—with difficulty—using siege weapons, but it's also possible to get inside the alien facility and destroy it from within.

If you're pushed for time once the knights and their siege engines are in position, you can resolve this as an overcome roll against Legendary (+8) opposition. If you resolve the assault as a conflict, the star has three stress boxes, one each of mild, moderate, and severe consequences, plus three aspects based on the nature of the alien invaders.

Some invaders can be persuaded to retreat once they realize that the planet holds intelligent life that will be destroyed by their xenoforming plans. It may not be easy for the knights to prove that people are intelligent or to make the aliens care about them, though.

If the aliens continue with their agenda, after a few months it becomes impossible for people to breathe the air or drink the water across the entire island. Bulta erupts and tosses thick clouds of ash and noxious chemicals in all directions across the world. Everyone dies.

Politics and Complications

The invaders' goal is inimical to all life on the planet, but fatalistic or treacherous people can offer assistance to the aliens in exchange for biomodification, survival suits, or an enclave of normal atmosphere once the planet has been xenoformed.

Which kingdom will mobilize the siege weapons necessary to destroy the falling star? Will the rival kingdom take advantage of this absence, launching an attack during the moment of distraction?

With Smyden being the first city to be affected by the *Toxic Miasma*, they might need aid and support from Regen to escape its effects. Will Regen lend the succor needed or exploit this opportunity to get concessions from Stroming? Or will they simply leave Smyden to its own fate while trying to defend Reyvik?

Agenda: Conquest/Reclamation

The aliens intend to take the island of Jorl and use it as a staging ground to claim the rest of the world. For some alien species this is just another conquest of new territory, but for one it's the reclamation of a long-lost homeland. The aliens are a splinter faction and not invading in force, so they need a safe base of operations from which to grow their army and draw their plans.

Required Alien Features

None, but this agenda works particularly well with the Little Green Man alien type (page 54). The strange “dragon-folk” who live on the Aaldisle south of Stroming are the descendants of Little Green Men who once ruled the planet and have now arrived to claim it back.

Act I: The Tournament

A celebration of Queen Brecht's thirtieth birthday, the tournament is being held in Stroming, on the field just beyond Smyden's southern wall. Brave knights intent on proving themselves by competing at this most auspicious event have been arriving for weeks now, and in the days running up to the tournament the city is heaving with guests from Regen and farther afield.

One knight in particular has been the subject of much speculation. Clad in iridescent green armor at all moments, the Emerald Knight arrived a few days ago and paid for room and board at an inn, not with coin but with assorted precious stones. The Knight doesn't say much—and speaks with a strange accent when they do say something—but has so far behaved honorably.

The Emerald Knight is causing considerable concern to both courts, though. Cursory investigations have failed to find out who gave the knight passage to Stroming, and nobody has any idea who the knight is or what their intentions are.

Queen Brecht's advisors suspect that the Emerald Knight is an agent of Regen or a foreign power, sent to assassinate the queen during the tournament or commit some other evil, such as killing one of her trusted advisors during the joust. King Ehrling's advisors suspect that the Knight is an agent of either Stroming or a foreign power with an insidious plan against Regen, perhaps a catspaw who will try and fail to attack Stroming and then claim to have been working on Regen's behalf all along.

The monarchs command the PCs to investigate the Emerald Knight during the tournament to discover who they are and what they're planning. The warriors among them will do so by taking part in the tournament and conversing with the Knight before and during the events, while the others will investigate by speaking with any who've dealt with the Knight and otherwise by using more cerebral methods.

The Emerald Knight

High Concept: *Aaldfolk Knight*

Trouble: *People Intrigue Me*

Code:

Everyone Deserves a Chance to Prove Themselves

Free Aspects: *Outcast from My Own People;*
Precision Over Speed

Limitations: *Can't Breathe the Atmosphere;*
Susceptible to High-Frequency Sound; Arrogant

SKILLS

Great (+4): Fight

Good (+3): Ride, Athletics

Fair (+2): Notice, Shoot, Physique

Average (+1): Will, Pilot, Hunt, Rapport

FEATURES

Regeneration: Once per session, you can clear all stress or begin recovering a consequence as if it were one level less severe.

Psychic Powers: You can take actions up to one zone away without using your hands or other limbs.

Enhanced Sense (Hearing): Your enhanced hearing lets you perform exceptional feats.

STUNTS

Precognition: You can choose who acts first in a conflict; if you pick an enemy, gain a boost.

Tough: When you are attacked, you can absorb the hit by marking two stress boxes rather than one.

Unpredictable Gait: When you defend with Athletics and succeed, gain another boost.

TECHNOLOGY

Ancestral Emerald Encounter Suit (superheavy armor): This environmentally sealed armor makes the Emerald Knight immune to drowning, heat, cold, dust, lightning, and similar hazards.

STRESS

Mental: ☐☐☐

Physical: ☐☐☐

CONSEQUENCES

Mild (2):

Moderate (4):

Severe (6):



The Emerald Knight is one of the Aaldfolk, the strange dragon-like people who still live on Aaldisle but have otherwise disappeared. Fascinated by people, the Knight has discovered the plans against Jorl being drawn by alien invaders and so decided to help the people to defend their territory. The tournament is a way for the Knight to get the attention of many people at once, including the rulers of the land.

The Knight's body is considerably smaller than their armor, and their helmet is empty. This allows for a fun scene during the melee where the Knight is decapitated but continues to fight on unharmed.

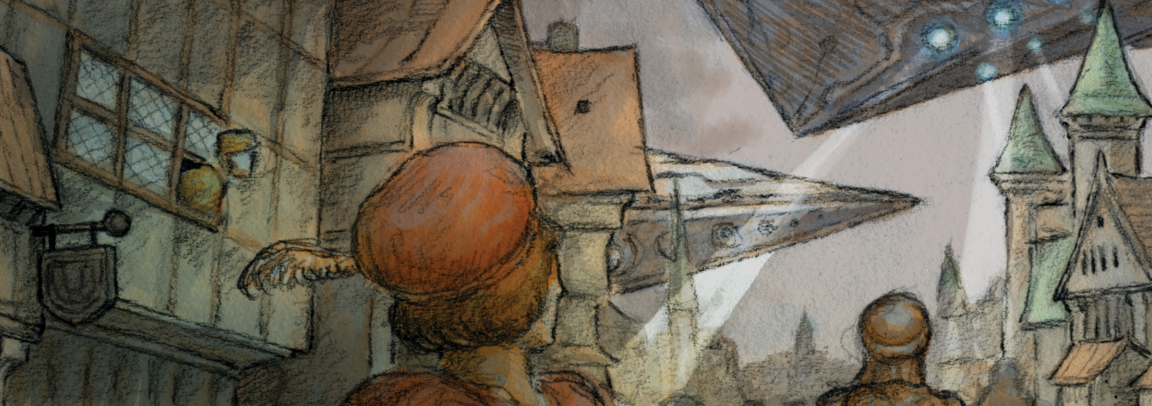
Investigating the Emerald Knight can reveal one or more aspects, or might uncover facts about the Knight and their movements so far:

- A smuggler who was rowing a cargo ashore to Stroming for a rendezvous will confess to seeing the Emerald Knight, who simply walked up out of the sea and climbed up the nearby cliff using the very ropes meant for sending up the smuggler's goods.
- Neighbors at the inn will report hearing the Knight speaking words they didn't understand in a strange guttural croak late at night. They also report that the Knight has called for a bath of the hottest water possible every night.
- Following the Knight reveals that they spend hours watching the minutiae of life around Smyden, with a particular focus on the behavior of children and the elderly.
- Fighting with the Knight during the tournament reveals subtle wrongnesses in the way they move and fight, indicating that there's something unusual about their body and that they learned to fight by watching others rather than through training.
- If questioned directly, the Knight is polite but won't reveal much information. They're saving their revelations for the end of the tournament.

At the end of the tournament, when the victors are declared and given their prizes, the Emerald Knight begs leave to address the audience—though if the Knight wins either event, they will have that right without needing to ask for it.

The Knight's armor splits open, revealing one of the Aaldfolk inside, before closing back up and concealing them once more. The Knight explains that they have come to assist the kingdoms in preparing for the approaching alien invasion, as they feel it is wrong for the invaders to conquer or reclaim the planet which now belongs to the people.

Time is of the essence, they say—the people have just a few days to prepare before the alien invasion begins.



Act II: The Invasion

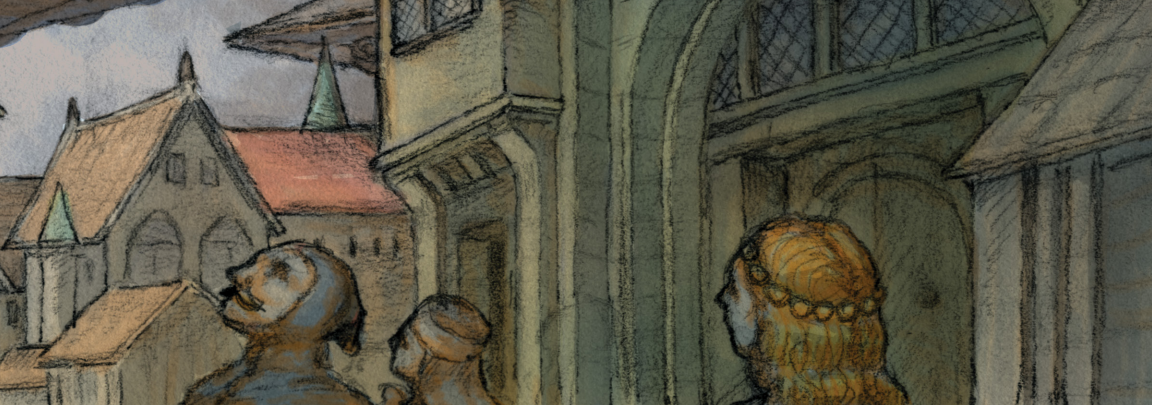
The monarchs of Regen and Stroming set their most trusted knights to the task of preparing the realms for the invasion. They will retreat to their capital cities and make ready for a potential siege while the knights do what they can to fend off the invasion before it gets that far.

Give the players three days to make their preparations. On each day, they will have time to hold brief discussions and to decide what concrete actions they'll take. If they are to have any effect on the outcome of events, they will need to mobilize large amounts of people and equipment, and this takes time.

Each PC can create one advantage on each day to help them with the forthcoming alien invasion. If someone fails on a roll, let them have the aspect with one free invoke at the cost of a minor complication.

How things unfold from here depends on the actions of the knights, but this is the timeline of the alien invasion:

- Very early in the morning on the fourth day after the tournament, there is a great roaring sound and a light shines in the sky. The alien ship descends on the sea to the north of Regen, floating upon the water's surface.
- After a few hours, doors open in the sides of the ship and the alien invasion force floods forth. If they're technological aliens they fly in small aircraft, while insectoid or bestial aliens swim, ride other aliens, or fly under their own power.
- The aliens attack Reyvik Harbor, which is relatively poorly defended unless the knights had the foresight and ability to place protections there. Depending on how the fighting goes, this incursion may force King Ehrling to evacuate the city. In this case the only real option is to evacuate the civilians to Stroming—if Queen Brecht agrees—while the soldiers and knights fight to reclaim Reyvik and try to prevent the aliens from spreading into the rest of Regen. Desperate measures like burning the city with the aliens in it may need to be considered.
- Alternatively, the knights could launch a naval counterattack on the alien ship. If they're able to do any damage with their onboard ballistae, then the aliens will partially withdraw from Reyvik to defend the mothership, but ultimately the knights won't have weaponry that can destroy the ship from the outside.



Act III: Victory or Defeat

If the aliens conquer Reyvik, they will consolidate their position and then strike out, attacking neighboring towns and Fort Bertrand until they have conquered all of Regen. Isolated pockets of resistance can employ guerilla tactics against the invaders.

If things are going poorly for the people, they may be able to obtain assistance from the Aaldfolk. The Emerald Knight will agree to take them to Aaldisle to speak with the elders there. The Aaldfolk are extremely insular and have a policy of non-interference, and the Emerald Knight is a rogue and a rebel, but they may be persuaded to help because the people are already being interfered with by the invaders. If they do assist, it will come in the form of advanced weaponry and armor that will be effective against the invaders and their ship, but only in very small quantities. The knights will need to get on board the mothership and fight to its core, where they can use the Aaldfolk weapon to utterly destroy the ship...if one of them stays behind to activate it.

If the alien mothership is destroyed, the aliens will quickly lose the ability to fight. The aliens are completely dependent on the mothership, whether because it resupplies their craft and weapons with energy and fuel, or because the aliens are drones that are psychically linked to it, or something else. The remaining aliens will be easy to kill or capture.

Politics and Complications

It's not possible to make a deal with the invading aliens, but Queen Brecht might see the incursion as an opportunity to make inroads with the residents of the Aaldisle. It's also possible that, if the invaders are in fact Aaldfolk as in the Reclamation variant of this agenda, she might threaten Aaldisle as a way of coercing the invaders.

Distrust of the Emerald Knight is also a rich source of complications. Why is this Aaldfolk trying to help the people of Regen and Stroming? Is the Knight's interest in people and chivalry really their only concern, or do they have a more insidious agenda?

What if the invaders aren't actually here to conquer Jorl at all, but rather to acquire something that belongs to the Aaldfolk? They'll casually crush Jorl's people so they can use the isle as a staging ground, but perhaps they can be negotiated with if the knights offer to help...



Agenda: The Harvest

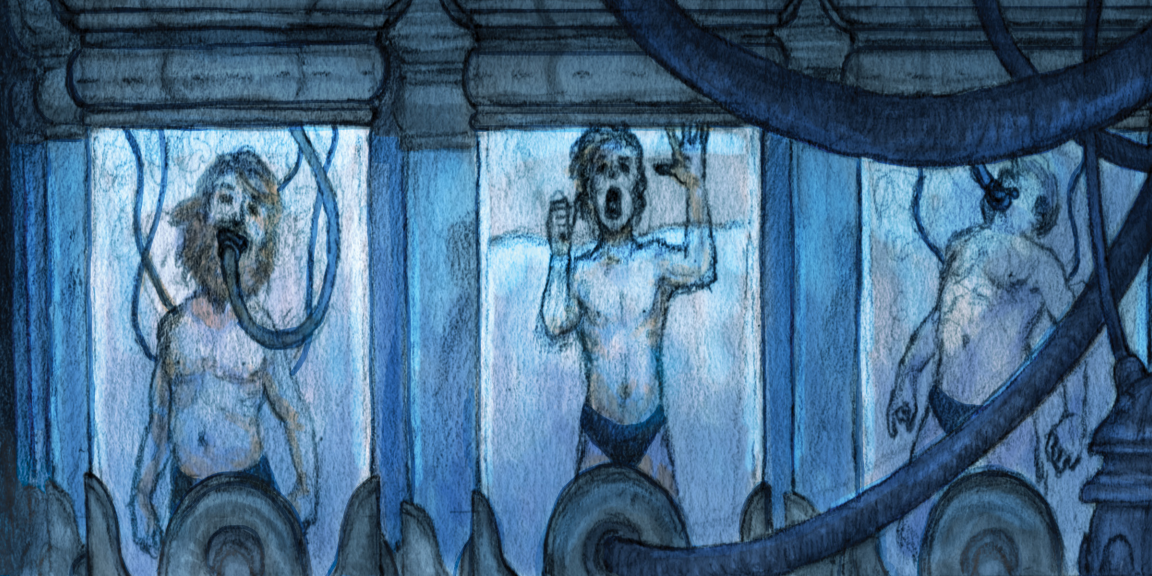
The aliens are invading to harvest people—or parts of people—for their own use. They picked Smyden as their first target because of its dense population and established industry, but left unchecked they'll spread outwards to harvest everyone they can find.

Required Alien Features

Whatever the aliens are, there's something they want from this world's people. Choose any number of the following things to be the target of the Harvest:

- **Body Parts:** The aliens are harvesting body parts such as limbs or organs, either as meat or as means of augmenting themselves or their technology.
- **Processing Power:** By keeping people in vats, like in *The Matrix*, the aliens can use their brains as a distributed computer.
- **Drugs:** The aliens are harvesting hormones or other biochemicals to make a medicinal or recreational drug.
- **Hosts:** The aliens are taking over people and using them as meat suits or incubators for their young.
- **Slaves:** People are being taken and brainwashed into willing slaves of the alien invaders. Alternatively, people's minds are being uploaded onto computers to be used as mental slave labor.

Make sure you pick alien features that are compatible with the purpose of the Harvest—energy beings won't harvest people for meat, for example.



Act I: The Tournament

The tournament is being held an hour's ride to the east of Reyvik to celebrate King Ehrling's twenty-third birthday.

During the tournament Queen Brecht tells her knights to speak to Rupert, the king's husband. She tasks them with quietly persuading him that it is his duty to divorce Karl, freeing the monarchs of Regen and Stroming to marry and reunify the kingdoms. Theirs will be a political marriage, of course, and she'll accept Rupert's presence behind closed doors as the king's consort and lover.

If her more diplomatic knights can't persuade Rupert of his duty, there are less savory methods for getting him out of the way. In this case, she asks her trusted knights who are going to compete in the tournament to arrange an "accident" for Rupert so that King Ehrling can be made to see reason.

How do the players react when they're asked to enact such a ruthless plan on the behalf of Queen and Kingdom? Will they accept that the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or will they rebel against the letter of the queen's instructions to do what they think is right?

Meanwhile, King Ehrling is unhappy that Rupert is planning to compete in the tournament even while rival knights from Stroming will be in attendance. He fears that something might happen to his husband and that it might not be an accident. He can't forbid Rupert from taking part without undermining the man's honor, though. Instead he tasks his knights with keeping an eye on Queen Brecht's knights to ensure that nothing untoward occurs, especially during the chaos and confusion of the melee.

At dusk, when the tournament is just coming to an end, an unearthly noise roars in the sky and strange lights descend toward Smyden. There's an earth-shaking boom and then everything falls quiet. It's difficult to make out what's happened given the distance, the darkness, and the plume of dust just thrown into the atmosphere. Queen Brecht decides to wait until morning to ride back to her city but sends a scout to investigate. He returns a few hours later, exhausted and covered in horrific injuries, and says just three words before he dies:

"Smyden has fallen."

Act II: The Invasion

The aliens are busy in the first few hours after their ship flattens Queen Brecht's palace, harvesting the guards at the gates and city walls before beginning the Harvest proper.

Initially, there are two issues to worry about:

- ***The Alien Blockade:*** After the aliens harvest the guards protecting the city, they use their own troops—or brainwashed people, depending on the aliens—to blockade the city, preventing anyone from entering or leaving.
- ***Infrastructure Preparation:*** The aliens start to capture smelting works, forges, slaughterhouses, and other industrial facilities that are ideal for use as harvesting stations. Any people who get in their way are harvested or killed.

Queen Brecht is eager to return to Stroming so she can gather her troops from the forts surrounding Smyden and fight to win her city back. King Ehrling is eager to find out what's going on, and concerned that whatever has happened to Smyden will soon be inflicted on Regen as well, so he agrees to help Queen Brecht in any way possible while also making preparations to defend Regen if necessary. This is a good opportunity to get concessions or favors from the queen in exchange for assistance.

As trusted knights in the courts of the king and queen, the PCs are asked to work together to take back Smyden and defeat the alien invaders. While they're planning, this is how the alien invasion unfolds:

- While the aliens begin harvesting people immediately, the process is slow at the beginning as they're using the limited facilities aboard their relatively small ship. After a few days, they finish capturing and refitting some industrial facilities, and the Harvest begins to accelerate.
- Inside the city, a relatively small number of resistance fighters try to slow down or stop the aliens, but they're outnumbered and outmatched and getting fewer every day. If the knights can communicate with the resistance—for example by carrier pigeon or message arrow—then they can try to coordinate actions inside the city without needing to get in themselves. The resistance hides in the mines in the north of the city and performs guerilla raids on the aliens when they get a chance.
- The aliens scour the city, fetching people for their harvesting facilities, and work methodically outwards from the captured industrial facilities.

- Stroming's troops travel from Fort Firewatch and the kingdom's border forts to surround Smyden and wait the return of the queen and her advisors.
- It will take a few weeks for the aliens to finish harvesting the people of Smyden, even if nobody interferes with the process. Once the harvest of Smyden is complete, the aliens will consolidate their position in the city and begin to construct their own harvesting facilities, a process taking a month or so.
- Once the aliens have prepared their harvesting facilities, they'll open the gates and spread forth, methodically spiraling out from Smyden to harvest everyone they encounter. If Smyden is under siege at this point, then the aliens will try to harvest or kill the besieging armies before spreading elsewhere.

Act III: Victory or Defeat

The two most likely scenarios for victory are:

- The king and queen successfully besiege Smyden and then march their troops through the city, fighting block by block to destroy the aliens' harvesting facilities and infrastructure before attacking their ship.
- The knights find a way to get themselves into the city, perhaps with some troops, so they can coordinate the resistance directly, then open the gates to allow the main body of their forces into the city.

Depending on the aliens, it may also be possible to negotiate with them or dissuade them from the Harvest by proving the people's intelligence.

Politics and Complications

With Smyden in the hands of the alien invaders, this agenda puts a lot of power in Regen's hands. Will they take advantage, or will they help Stroming in its time of need? If Regen drags its heels on mobilizing its troops, Stroming will end up weakened even if the aliens are ousted...but is this tactical advantage worth the loss of many innocent lives? Will the king be fit to help at all if the queen's plot to "accidentally" kill his husband during the tournament bears fruit? If he finds out about the plan, will the king be angry enough to cast Stroming to the wolves?

CHAPTER 4: CREATING AN ALIEN RACE

From insectoid aliens with acid blood to little green men with flying saucers and ray guns, this chapter will give you the tools to build a wide variety of alien invaders to pit against your players. We'll give you a step-by-step guide to building an alien race, along with some examples and all the stunts and rules you'll need.

You can use multiple alien races in the invasion, but one race will be in charge and the others will be servitors or sub-races. For example, space whales could relax in their aquatic ship while they send an army of mechanical life-forms to do the grunt work.

It won't be a fair fight, but the aliens won't have it *all* their own way. The invaders are not a mighty alien empire; they are outnumbered heavily by the people of Regen and Stroming, and have only limited amounts of aircraft and other high-technology equipment.

Step 1: Alien Type

The **type** of your alien race is the same as a character's high concept. Roll on the table below to get a random type, pick one you like the look of, or come up with one of your own.

	■	+	+	+	+
■	Space Whale	Amorphous Blob	Reptiloid	Ambulatory Plant/Fungus	Hive Mind
▬	Energy Being	Little Green Man	Insectoid	Gray	
▬	Aquatic Hybrid (fish-man, crab-thing, etc.)	Parasite	Mechanical Life Form		
▬	Floating Psychic Brain	Tentacle Beast			
▬	Space Cat				

You can hybridize some of the types with people to get results like *Humanoid Space Whale*. Combining types can also make for interesting aliens, such as an *Insectoid Hive Mind* or a *Tentacle Beast Energy Being*.

If you use the *Space Cat* type, then you can use the rules for character creation from *The Secrets of Cats*, another book in the Fate Worlds of Adventure line, to make your aliens.

Step 2: Limitations

Every alien race has at least one **limitation**, an Achilles' heel that gives the knights a fighting chance against it. Limitations work much like trouble aspects, but sometimes have other effects.

The limitation must make sense for your race's type. For instance, floating psychic brains probably don't have **Vulnerable Joints**.

If you're planning to run *Knights of Invasion* as a one-shot adventure, giving your alien race more limitations is one way to give the players an edge, making it more likely that they can finish the game in a single sitting.

Here are some sample limitations:

- **Allergy:** Your aliens are allergic to a particular substance that's native to Jorl. They can't recover consequences inflicted by weapons made of or coated with this substance, and its presence shuts off some or all of their stunts.
- **Arrogant:** Your alien race is extremely arrogant and always underestimates what it considers to be "lesser" races.
- **Can't Breathe the Atmosphere:** Your aliens require suits or other apparatus to survive the native atmosphere.
- **Compulsion:** Your aliens are compelled to act a certain way when they encounter a particular stimulus. For example, they might have to **Kill or Flee from Birds**.
- **Gravitationally Challenged:** The gravity here is much higher than your aliens are used to, causing them a degree of difficulty in going about their activities.
- **Gullible:** Your aliens have no concept of lying and always believe anything they're told. If this causes them to hold two contradictory beliefs as fact, they will fall into a frenzied rage or catatonic stupor.
- **Immobile:** Your aliens can't move under their own power, though they can use vehicles or be carried around by their servants.
- **Limited Senses:** Your aliens **Can't See in Color, Can't Hear, Can Only Detect Movement**, or have another sensory limitation.
- **Offspring:** Your aliens travel with eggs, larvae, or other juvenile aliens. Adult aliens must protect and nurture these offspring if the next generation is to arrive on schedule.
- **Squishy:** Your aliens are boneless and can squeeze through tiny gaps, but they can't lift heavy objects or batter down barriers unaided.
- **Susceptibility:** Your aliens can be harmed or killed by a particular sound frequency, water, a smell, a color, or something else which is completely harmless to people.
- **Vulnerable Joints:** Your aliens have exposed or weakened joints in some or all of their limbs.
- **Weak Immune System:** Your aliens are particularly susceptible to the diseases they encounter.



Step 3: Creature Size and Features

First decide how big your aliens are. Big aliens find it easy to stomp and crush smaller targets and are more resilient to attacks, but they're also easier to hit due to their bulk.

The scale ladder has the following rungs:

Insect < Rat < Cat < Dog < Person < Boar < Horse < Bear < Rhinoceros < Elephant

Anything larger than an elephant is a siege-scale target, and its attacks affect an entire zone of person-scale targets or one siege-scale target. Normal-scale weapons cannot harm siege-scale targets.

When normal-scale characters attack or defend against something bigger or smaller, apply the following bonus for each rung of separation on the scale ladder:

Size	Attacker	Defender
Larger	Weapon:+2	Armor:+2
Smaller	Attack +1	Defend +1

Now choose one to five **features** that make your alien race unique. Giving them only one or two will make your aliens a bit easier for the players to handle, which can be useful if you're running *Knights of Invasion* as a one-off game. Three is the average number, and anything more will make each of your aliens a force to be reckoned with.

Your aliens can express any of these features in their type, but the features listed also provide additional mechanical or narrative benefits.

Acid Blood: When you're physically attacked and accept any consequences or get taken out, your blood burns nearby targets. Roll an attack with Physique, defended against with Athletics. You can split any resulting shifts among anyone in your zone. If other aliens with acid blood were injured when you were, roll the attack with the highest Physique among you, adding one to the result for every alien beyond the first, and you can split the attack among anyone in the same or neighboring zones as aliens injured. Doors and other obstacles can also be destroyed by acid blood, but aliens of your species are immune.

Adaptive Camouflage: You have skin or technology that allows you to become invisible by changing color to match your background. When you turn this on—becoming *Camouflaged*—you can't be seen unless paint, smoke, flour, or something similar reveals your form. If you move you're a visible but indistinct blur, giving +2 to Stealth rolls.

Burrower: You can move through dirt and sand as easily as a person walks on firm ground. You can burrow one zone and take an action, or use an overcome action to burrow to any zone, as described in *Fate Core* (page 169). Boulders, underground stoneworks, and solid rock are impenetrable to you, acting as obstacles that slow or halt your progress.

Energy Drain: You can drain energy from your victims, whether it's their blood, cerebrospinal fluid, bioelectric energy, or something else. After you've restrained someone, you can create an advantage with Physique versus Physique to drain their energy. Succeeding makes you *Energized* and them *Drained*. Succeeding with style gives you another free invoke on either aspect. While the target stays restrained, you can attack them or you can create an advantage to get free invokes on your *Energized* aspect, rolling Physique versus Physique either way. If you're a multi-limbed tentacle monster or something similar, you can drain a target and immediately take another action, but any opposition to the second action increases by +2.

Enhanced or Extra Sense: You have thermal vision, the ability to detect tiny disturbances through the ground, the ability to detect magnetic fields, or another enhanced or extra sense. +2 to Notice rolls when your sense is applicable. Also, your sense lets you do things that would be impossible otherwise, such as seeing through walls with terahertz radiation vision.

Exoskeleton: You have a chitinous carapace, shell, or integrated metal armor that protects you from attack. This works like armor (page 23) and provides you with another mild consequence slot or another moderate consequence slot if you take a limitation relating to your thick exoskeleton. You can buy this feature multiple times; each time gives another mild consequence slot, but your exoskeleton can only provide one moderate consequence slot.

Flight: You have wings or some other natural ability that lets you fly, hover, or both. This enables you to ignore ground obstacles. While flying you can descend to attack someone and then return to the air, using your free zone of movement for the exchange, which prevents your victim from attacking you in close combat.

Gestalt: Your hive mind is particularly adept at working together, communicating, and sharing information. Your mobs each gain +1 to their total teamwork bonus—so a mob of three gets a +3 bonus rather than +2—and you gain another free invoke when you create an advantage related to your hive mind. This feature requires the Hive Mind alien type.

Hyperflexible: You have a squishy, boneless body or hypermobile joints. You can overcome aspects like *Chained Up* without rolling, and you can fit through any gap the size of your head—or your eyes, if you're completely squishy, like an octopus. If you have to roll, you get +2 to overcome small openings like arrow slits, murder holes, and pipes. This often goes with the *Squishy* limitation.

Lethal Tail/Tentacle: You have a spiked tail, tentacle, or similar natural weaponry that makes your attacks more likely to do lasting harm. With this, you can attack a target up to a zone away. Also, when you attack successfully and invoke your tail or tentacle, the defender cannot absorb the attack using stress boxes. This effect stacks with your chosen invoke effect, and it occurs regardless of whether you succeeded before or after your invoke.

Mimicry—Audible: You can perfectly mimic any sound you've heard. When trying to fool someone in this way, you roll with Deceive opposed by their Notice.

Mimicry—Physical: You're capable of transforming your body so that it looks and sounds like another living being. You can use this to perfectly mimic a living being you've seen that has similar biomass to yourself. If someone becomes suspicious of you, they can try to overcome your mimicry by rolling Notice opposed by your Deceive. This feature requires Protoplasmic Flesh.

Mimicry—Psychic: This feature works like Mimicry—Physical, except that you only make people *think* that you have transformed into something else, and it isn't restricted to things of similar biomass to yourself. This feature requires Psychic Powers.

Mind Reading: You can roll Will opposed by Will to create advantages relating to the contents of your victim's mind. This feature requires Psychic Powers.

Natural Weapons: You have dangerous claws, teeth, a proboscis, or similar close-range natural weaponry that makes your attacks more likely to do lasting harm. When you successfully attack someone in the same zone and invoke your natural weapons, the defender cannot absorb the attack using their stress boxes. This effect stacks with your chosen invoke effect, and it occurs regardless of whether you succeeded before or after your invoke.

Ovipositor: When you take out your opponent in a physical conflict, you can use an ovipositor to deposit an egg or juvenile alien in their body. It's up to you whether they're alive or dead. Either way, you can spend a fate point to make your victim "give birth" to a new member of your alien race when it's most inconvenient. Again, it's up to you whether they survive the experience.

Parasitize: When you take out someone in a physical conflict, you can parasitize them, making them a new member of your alien race. Maybe those of your race sit inside hosts, controlling them from within, or maybe you replace their biomass with your own. This effectively gives you the Mimicry—Physical feature, but only for your current host-victim.

Pheromones: You're capable of exuding pheromones that are irresistibly attractive to your victims. +2 to Rapport against those who can smell you.

Protoplasmic Flesh: Whether you're made of biological goop, liquid metal, or nanobots, your body is essentially a viscous fluid that you can shape and flow. You're immune to most weapons, and you can change size by adding or subtracting biomass. Instead of stress, you have a biomass based on your current size (see table).

When you defend against a cutting, piercing, or bludgeoning weapon, you must absorb shifts with your biomass, as your attacker slices or smashes off pieces of you, but you can't be taken out or absorb them with consequences. Attacks that burn with fire or chemicals—or which match your allergy or susceptibility limitations—can take you out, but you can absorb these with consequences as well as with your biomass.

You can take an action to regain one biomass by absorbing leaf litter, corpses, or discarded fragments of yourself lying around. If you have the Energy Drain feature, you can use it to gain one biomass rather than its usual benefits.

You can voluntarily shed as much of your biomass as you like at any time without using an action. Shedding two or more points of biomass at once grants you the boost *Rapid Size Change*, which you can use to help escape grapples and such.

Psychic Powers: You have strange abilities that let you manipulate matter with your mind. You can take actions up to one zone away without having to use your hands or other limbs. If you wish, you can explain other features you take—such as Flight—as consequences of your psychic powers.

Regeneration: Your body can quickly regenerate itself. Once per session, without an action, you can do one of the following: clear all stress, clear a mild consequence, begin recovering a moderate consequence that clears at the end of the scene, or begin recovering a severe consequence that clears at the end of the session.

Size	Biomass
Gnat	0
Bug	1
Rat	2
Cat	3
Dog	4
Person	5
Boar	6
Horse	7
Bear	8
Rhinoceros	9
Elephant	10

Superior Speed: You can move two zones in an exchange and still take an action, and you gain +2 to rolls to move multiple zones.

Superior Strength: +2 to create advantages or overcome obstacles where pure strength is applicable.

Teleportation: By spending a fate point and using your action, you can instantly teleport to anywhere you can see or you've been before. No obstacles can get in your way except ones made of a substance that triggers your susceptibility limitation. This feature requires the Energy Being alien type.

Terrifying Roar: Your roar contains infrasound harmonics that terrify your victims on a subconscious level. You can mentally attack with Provoke opposed by Will, even during a physical conflict and without justification.

Venom Gland: If you attack someone using your natural weapons, gained from the Natural Weapons and Lethal Tail/Tentacle features, and the victim takes a consequence, you inject them with a potent venom. The venom has four stress boxes and one Superb (+5) skill named for your venom's method of action, such as Necrotize, Paralyze, or Hemorrhage. At the beginning of the victim's turn, mark one of the venom's stress boxes, and then attack the victim with the venom's skill, defended against with Physique. Anyone can attack the venom with Lore to deal it stress. When the venom gets taken out, it has run its course. This feature requires Natural Weapons or Lethal Tail/Tentacle.

Wallcrawler: You can stick to walls like a gecko. You can climb vertical surfaces or move across ceilings as normal movement without a roll.



Step 4: Stunts

To round out your alien race, you can give them a stunt that all its members share. You can use any appropriate stunts from *Fate Core*, or you can build a stunt as described in *Fate Core* (page 88).

Here are a few sample stunts to give you some ideas:

Unpredictable Gait (Athletics): You move in a herky-jerky or otherwise unpredictable way. When you defend with Athletics and succeed, you gain a boost, or gain two if you succeed with style.

So Primitive! (Craft): As long as you aren't hurried for time, you always succeed on overcome actions with Crafts when dealing with local technology—no roll necessary.

Don't Run, We Are Your Friends! (Deceive): There's something about you that makes people give you the benefit of the doubt. +2 to Deceive rolls to make people believe that the terrible thing you just did was "a misunderstanding" and that your intentions are peaceful.

Mirror Neurons (Empathy): You're very good at discerning the thought processes and motivations of other races, but you tend to give away your own at the same time. You can reveal one of your own aspects relating to motivations, mood, or thought processes to discover a target's aspect relating to the same without a roll. If you use this feature during a conflict or contest, it requires an action spent talking to your target.

Arena Veteran (Fight): You're accustomed to fighting theatrically in one of the gladiatorial arenas on your home planet. When you create an advantage in a one-on-one fight, you gain an extra free invoke.

Apex Predator (Hunt): Your species is an apex predator on your home world, and even species from other planets can sense this. You can use Hunt instead of Provoke to scare victims.

Experimental Scientist (Lore): Your science is advanced even for members of your race. Once per session, you can declare that you have a device that breaks the laws of physics in some way that your race can't already do. The device is an aspect with a free invoke.

Precognition (Notice): You get to choose who takes the first action in any conflict. If you choose an enemy, you gain a boost.

Tough (Physique): You can handle a bit more abuse before you start to show the effects of a fight. You can mark two stress boxes rather than one to absorb an attack.

3D Thinking (Pilot): Your experience in flying aircraft and spacecraft has given you excellent all-around situational awareness. You can use Pilot instead of Notice when spotting threats above, below, or behind you.



Mount Symbiosis (Ride): You have a technological or biological link to your alien mount that lets you move as one being. You and your mount are a single target in conflicts. Also, when you are attacked while mounted, you can absorb shifts with any combination of your own or your mount's stress boxes and your consequence slots.

Wildly Inaccurate (Shoot): You're rubbish at firing your weapon accurately, but you make up for it with enthusiasm. Whenever you attack with your laser gun or heat ray, the defender gets +4 to defend. Then, until your next action, if anyone moves into or through the zone you were shooting at, you attack them without rolling and produce a Great (+4) result.

Natural Habitat (Stealth): +2 to Stealth rolls when you're hiding in an environment that approximates your natural habitat.

Alpha (Will): You have a deciding vote in your hive's actions, making you adept at gaining advantage in high-pressure situations. Whenever someone successfully creates an advantage related to surprising or provoking you, you get the free invoke and they don't. If they succeeded with style, you and they each get a free invoke; if they fail, the aspect isn't created and you gain a boost. This feature requires the Hive Mind type.

Step 5: Technology

What technologies do your aliens use? Some races need serious technology if they are to enact their agenda—for example, Space Whales might dwell in floating tanks and manipulate the world through drones—while others need no technology apart from the ship that brought them to Jorl, such as insectoid aliens.

First, write a single **technology aspect** that summarizes your aliens' predominant technological approach (or lack of one). Examples include:

Technophobic

Reliant on Drones

Advanced Biotechnology

Crystal Technology

Steampunk Technology

When you're describing the equipment used by your aliens, do it through a lens of their technology aspect. Aliens with **Crystal Technology** will have graceful, delicate-looking flying craft, while aliens with **Steampunk Technology** will have heavy, industrial designs with lots of visible gears and steam belching out of their innards.

There's no need to give aliens a specific gadget to let them attack at range; technological aliens are armed with laser guns or heat rays, letting them Shoot as far away as two zones.

The following are some examples of alien technology. To begin with, allow one tech item for each main NPC in the invaders' ranks: If every alien has a flying saucer or tripod they'll be overwhelming, but two or three among the invaders should be worthy targets for the knights' ballista crews!

If the knights have too easy a time of it, you can always bring more technology into play later on.

Gadgets

Encounter Suit: An improved version of the environmental suit that lets aliens survive and thrive despite the hostile atmosphere. This is **Super-Heavy Armor** (page 23) that also makes you immune to toxic gases, drowning, fire and boiling oil, cold, dust, lightning, and similar hazards.

Personal Teleporter: A small device that disincorporates you and then instantly reincorporates you at the aliens' main base of operations. You can carry a single voluntary subject with you, or an involuntary one if you restrain them first. If you use this gadget to escape a conflict, you concede it.

Robotic Retainer: You have a personal robot that does your bidding. Use the rules for retainers on page 23.

Stealth Cloak: This is a lightweight, shimmering cloak that gives the effects of the Adaptive Camouflage feature (page 45). The cloak can be your size or big enough to cover a vehicle.



The Pilot Skill

Alien vehicles are controlled with this skill. Players can't take the Pilot skill during character creation, but they may have an opportunity to learn it during play. Pilot works like Drive from *Fate Core* (page 106). Characters who learn Pilot can take these stunts:

Stunt Pilot: You're a natural at flying in complex aerial patterns. +2 to create advantages with Pilot relating to fancy maneuvers.

Juggernaut: Whether you have an innate knack or you lack fear or common sense, you're great at using your vehicle as a weapon. You can sacrifice your vehicle to double the shifts of an attack, providing you're able to ram the defender with your vehicle.

Alien Vehicles

Flying Saucer/Tripod: These siege-scale vehicles, holding a crew of three person-sized aliens, are fitted with a laser or thermal weapon that shoots through person-scale targets like a ballista and can attack siege-scale targets. Ballistae can disable these vehicles by targeting joints or engines. Flying saucers can soar from one side of Jorl to the other in an hour, while tripods can walk the distance in several hours. Tripods can grab people with tentacles—using their Great (+4) Capture skill—and carry up to twenty in their back panniers. To escape, you must overcome with Athletics against Fantastic (+6) opposition. Tripods can stomp targets, an attack with Pilot against all person-scale targets in a zone or one siege-scale target.

Alien Mount: Pick an aspect that describes your mount, such as *Six-Legged Horse Thing*. Your mount is a supporting NPC with three stress boxes and a mild consequence slot. If your mount shares whatever susceptibility and allergy limitations your race has, it also has a moderate consequence slot.



Weapons

Continuous Beam Weapon: Rather than firing short bursts of photonic or thermal energy, your gun fires a continuous beam, which makes it much easier to hit an acquired target. As long as you keep attacking the same defender, they can't use aspects or stunts relating to rapid movement or similar to help avoid attacks after the first.

Guided Thrown Weapon: You have a cunning thrown weapon like a knife, chakram, or spear that can be guided gyroscopically to its target. When you attack with this weapon, all obstacles between you and the defender are ignored unless invoked.

Laser Sword: When turned off, this is a useless yard-long rapier with a five-centimeter ball at the tip. When activated, the hilt projects a laser beam that bends around the tip, making a U-shaped blade of energy that can cut through just about anything—though fortunately it struggles with the metal used to make Stroming's armor. Attacks with this weapon can only be absorbed with consequence slots, whether a character's or armor's.

Making Alien NPCs

Rank-and-file alien NPCs have their race's type and limitations, as well as their race's stunt if any. Otherwise, they only have one Fair (+2) and two Average (+1) skills.

Main alien NPCs use the same rules for character creation as the PCs, so they have a high concept, a code, a trouble, and two other aspects. Their high concept combines their alien race with their specific role; for example, *Insectoid Hive-Queen*. They have all of their race's limitations and features and up to three stunts in addition to any you gave to the whole race. To make them unique among their species, you may swap one of their stunts for a feature. An example of a main alien NPC is the Emerald Knight (page 34).

Example Alien Race: The Aaldfolk

The Aaldfolk were once the native inhabitants of this planet. In fact, the people who live here now are distant descendants of the Aaldfolk. The species diverged hundreds of thousands of years ago when people evolved the ability to breathe the atmosphere as it changed, allowing them to roam freely over the planet while the Aaldfolk had to stay close to volcanic regions until they developed the technology to artificially create the atmosphere they needed.

Most of the Aaldfolk left the planet for the stars thousands of years ago, but isolated pockets remained until a thousand years ago, when increasingly tense meetings with people led to almost all of the rest departing the planet. Now, only a very few remain—such as the population of Aaldisle.

Type: Little Green Man

Limitations: *Can't Breathe the Atmosphere; Susceptible to High-Frequency Sound; Arrogant*

Features: Psychic Powers, Regeneration, Enhanced Sense (Hearing)

Stunts: None

Technology: *'60s Science-Fiction Style*

Notes: In appearance, Aaldfolk are green humanoids, around a meter tall, with high-domed hairless brain cases and beady black eyes. They use guns that shoot high-intensity flames—which is one of the reasons that people describe them as “dragon folk.” Normal Aaldfolk wear red environmental suits with clear, domed helmets when they have to leave their atmospheric generators behind.

THE MYSTERY OF THE AALDFOLK

We've given one truth about the Aaldfolk here, but here are some alternatives:

- They came to Jorl as the advance scouts for a larger army. When they left, they went to bring the army, and will soon return...
- They aren't aliens at all. They are actually descended from dragons and use magical powers rather than technology.
- The Aaldfolk who remained behind are the equivalent of an isolationist, survivalist encampment and will resent any attempts to trespass on their land.