

Catalyst Rising — Branching Narrative (Decision Points) — v2

Added decision points across all acts; stable IDs appended as suffix letters.

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Act I — The Call and the Warrens (with Added Decisions)

S1 — Into the Warrens

Xal, Tissa, and Nef descend through the mirror; the void-lake calls.

DP-1 — Approach to the void-lake

- **Option A:** Perform the cautious ritual.
 - *Immediate:* +LI_TRUST; +CAW_DISCIPLINE; -VOID_TAINT (minor)
 - *Long-term:* Set RITUAL_RESPECT=1
- **Option B:** Improvise and drink.
 - *Immediate:* +VOID_TAINT (moderate); +ARENA_HEAT (minor)
 - *Long-term:* Set RITUAL_RESPECT=0
- **Option C:** Refuse; seek alternative power.
 - *Immediate:* Delay Catalyst onset; +GHOSTFLEET_INTEL (if exploration succeeds)
 - *Long-term:* Unlock side scene S1b

DP-1A — Save Nef or secure the relics (timeboxed)

- **Option A:** Save Nef first.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_DIMS; +LI_TRUST (minor); Lose some loot
 - *Long-term:* Set NEF_SAVED=1
- **Option B:** Secure relics first.
 - *Immediate:* +Artifacts; +VOID_TAINT (minor risk)
 - *Long-term:* Set NEF_SAVED=0; Unlock guilt banter later

DP-2 — Kazon's parley (bread/salt/name)

- **Option A:** Accept bread & offer prayer.
 - *Immediate:* +TISSA_LOYALTY; Flag PRAYER_BOUND=1
 - *Long-term:* Enable omen scenes
- **Option B:** Decline bread; distance.
 - *Immediate:* +CAW_DISCIPLINE; -REP_DIMS (minor)
 - *Long-term:* No omen scenes

DP-2A — Accept a demon mark as safeconduct

- **Option A:** Accept the mark (hidden).
 - *Immediate:* +Mobility; +Kazon favor; -REP_HASRA
 - *Long-term:* Flag DEMON_MARK=1; Special checks later
- **Option B:** Refuse the mark.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA; +CAW_DISCIPLINE
 - *Long-term:* Flag DEMON_MARK=0

S2 — The Call — Conscript Muster

Caw drills the trash legion; doctrine under pressure.

DP-3 — Handle barracks hazing

- **Option A:** Stand up publicly.
 - *Immediate:* +ARENA_HEAT; +REP_DIMS; Injury risk
 - *Long-term:* Unlock duel tutorial S2a
- **Option B:** De■escalate (doctrine).
 - *Immediate:* +CAW_DISCIPLINE; +Caw mentor scenes
 - *Long-term:* Set CAW_MENTOR=1
- **Option C:** Stealth payback via Tissa.
 - *Immediate:* +TISSA_LOYALTY; +VOID_TAINT (minor if void used)
 - *Long-term:* Add stealth tag later

DP-3A — Choose dec/quin composition for training

- **Option A:** Shield■heavy dec (tanks).
 - *Immediate:* +Survivability; -Tempo
 - *Long-term:* Tag DECCOMP=SHIELD
- **Option B:** Skirmisher quin (agile).
 - *Immediate:* +Tempo; -Stability
 - *Long-term:* Tag DECCOMP=SKIRMISH
- **Option C:** Balanced mix.
 - *Immediate:* +Flexibility
 - *Long-term:* Tag DECCOMP=BALANCED

S3 — March to the Pass

Past breached walls; attrition and logistics loom.

DP-4 — Scavenge vs. maintain pace

- **Option A:** Scavenge supplies.
 - *Immediate:* Gain consumables; -CAW_DISCIPLINE
 - *Long-term:* Random encounter risk
- **Option B:** Maintain pace by the book.
 - *Immediate:* +CAW_DISCIPLINE; Less fatigue
 - *Long-term:* Unlock Caw trust banter

DP-4A — Who carries the wounded?

- **Option A:** Rotate burden across the dec.
 - *Immediate:* +Cohesion; Higher fatigue

- *Long-term*: Cohesion scenes
- **Option B:** Leave them to the rear (grim).
- • *Immediate*: +Tempo; Moral cost; -REP_DIMS
 - *Long-term*: Set ABANDONED=1

S4 — Boss: The Dullahan Pursuit

Fog fight; execute mud█blindness trick to reach the golden airship.

DP-5 — Mud█blindness execution

- **Option A:** Full team coordination (needs CAW_DISCIPLINE ≥2).
- • *Immediate*: Clean escape; +LI_TRUST
 - *Long-term*: Set MUD_TRICK_MASTERED=1
- **Option B:** Chaotic retreat.
- • *Immediate*: Escape with injuries; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term*: Set MUD_TRICK_MASTERED=0

DP-5A — Who draws aggro?

- **Option A:** Xal uses void flare.
- • *Immediate*: +VOID_TAINT; +Team safety
 - *Long-term*: Void tells spread in city
- **Option B:** Caw anchors shield wall.
- • *Immediate*: +CAW_DISCIPLINE; Caw injury risk
 - *Long-term*: Caw injury storylet

Act II — Courts & Cannons (with Added Decisions)

S5 — Arena & Court Tour

Desidria's blood-grown arena; meet Erik, Lucretia, Crispus.

DP-6 — Exhibition performance

- **Option A:** Play to the crowd.
 - *Immediate:* +ARENA_HEAT (big); +REP_HASRA (spectacle)
 - *Long-term:* Media flags
 - **Option B:** Understated efficiency.
 - *Immediate:* +CAW_DISCIPLINE; -ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* Tactician respect

DP-6A — Choose a sponsor (soft faction lock)

- **Option A:** Kem Overseers.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA; +Payouts
 - *Long-term:* Sponsor=KEM
 - **Option B:** Temple Stewards.
 - *Immediate:* +Access to sanctums; -ARENA_HEAT growth
 - *Long-term:* Sponsor=STEWARDS
 - **Option C:** Independent (Dims patrons).
 - *Immediate:* +REP_DIMS; +Freedom; -Court access
 - *Long-term:* Sponsor=INDEP

S6 — Knife-Banquet (Poison Plot)

Crispus targets Erik; Tissa & Bha in the wings.

DP-7 — Assassination response

- **Option A:** Expose publicly.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA (mixed); +ARENA_HEAT; Crispus rival
 - *Long-term:* CRISPUS_EXPOSED=1
- **Option B:** Counter quietly; collect leverage.
 - *Immediate:* +TISSA_LOYALTY; +Li alliance
 - *Long-term:* BLACKMAIL_CARDS+1
- **Option C:** Let it happen.
 - *Immediate:* Erik removed; Moral cost; +VOID_TAINT (minor)
 - *Long-term:* Early regime vacuum

DP-7A — Protective detail assignment

- **Option A:** Guard Li.
 - *Immediate:* +LI_TRUST; +REP_CALMORA
 - *Long-term:* LI_SAVED=1 path
- **Option B:** Shadow Crispus.
 - *Immediate:* +Intel chance; +Risk
 - *Long-term:* CRISPUS_DIRT+1
- **Option C:** Secure the kitchen route.
 - *Immediate:* +TISSA_LOYALTY; -ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* KITCHEN_CLEAR=1

S7 — Spear of Jhordil — Mountain Docking

Calmoran air approach; ballista gauntlet.

DP-8 — Docking approach

- **Option A:** Conservative pattern.
 - *Immediate:* Low damage; +LI_TRUST
 - *Long-term:* Li mentorship scene
- **Option B:** Aggressive weave.
 - *Immediate:* Faster time; Damage risk; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* AIR_NERVE=1

DP-8A — Ritual etiquette at the Spear

- **Option A:** Follow rites precisely.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_CALMORA; +LI_TRUST
 - *Long-term:* RITUAL_ETIQUETTE=1
- **Option B:** Shortcut with void trick.
 - *Immediate:* +VOID_TAINT; -REP_CALMORA
 - *Long-term:* RITUAL_ETIQUETTE=0

Act III — War on Two Fronts (with Added Decisions)

S8 — Ghost Fleet Pattern

Ashianna briefs; crack the Fleet's routes.

DP-9 — How to gather intel

- **Option A:** Risk forward scouts.
 - *Immediate:* Faster +GHOSTFLEET_INTEL; Injury risk
 - *Long-term:* Recon casualty debuffs
 - **Option B:** Decode from ports (slow).
 - *Immediate:* +GHOSTFLEET_INTEL (slow); Resource cost
 - *Long-term:* Scholar assists

DP-9A — Ambush target selection

- **Option A:** Supply tenders.
 - *Immediate:* Starve Fleet; +VALYS_gratitude
 - *Long-term:* VALYS_AID=1
 - **Option B:** Flagship screen.
 - *Immediate:* High risk; big fame; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* SCREEN_BROKEN=1
 - **Option C:** Coastal cult cell.
 - *Immediate:* +Intel chain; +REP_HASRA (if reported)
 - *Long-term:* CULT_WEB+1

S9 — Conclave: Macha's Geas

Fomori conclave; rules of infiltration.

DP-10 — Infiltration rules

- **Option A:** Hardline targets only.
 - *Immediate:* Lower collateral; Slower progress
 - *Long-term:* +REP_CALMORA
- **Option B:** Any advantage.
 - *Immediate:* Faster progress; Moral cost
 - *Long-term:* +VOID_TAINT (minor)

DP-10A — Cover identity for Macha

- **Option A:** Dock scribe.
 - *Immediate:* +Access to manifests; Slower scenes
 - *Long-term:* MACHA_COVER=SCRIBE

- **Option B:** Temple novice.
 - *Immediate:* +Access to rites; Ethical scrutiny
 - *Long-term:* MACHA_COVER=NOVICE
- **Option C:** Arena handler.
 - *Immediate:* +Access to fighters; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* MACHA_COVER=HANDLER

S10 — The Fist — Forge & Fly

Upgrade the living airship; recruit crew.

DP-11 — First upgrade path

- **Option A:** Stealth shroud & sensor veil.
 - *Immediate:* +Stealth encounters; -ARENA_HEAT growth
 - *Long-term:* FIST_UPGRADES:STEALTH
- **Option B:** Ballista & ramming spine.
 - *Immediate:* +Sky combat; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* FIST_UPGRADES:ASSAULT
- **Option C:** Crew habitat & logistics.
 - *Immediate:* +Recovery; +Morale
 - *Long-term:* FIST_UPGRADES:SUPPORT

DP-11A — Crew composition

- **Option A:** Veteran marines.
 - *Immediate:* +Boarding power; Higher upkeep
 - *Long-term:* CREW=MARINES
- **Option B:** Scouts & riggers.
 - *Immediate:* +Recon; +Traversal
 - *Long-term:* CREW=SCOUTS
- **Option C:** Scholars & priests.
 - *Immediate:* +Lore; Ritual boosts
 - *Long-term:* CREW=SCHOLARS

Act IV — Endgame & Revelation (with Added Decisions)

S11 — Sedjet's Wyrm / Regime Fall

Desidria devoured; Crispus ascends.

DP-12 — Public stance on the coup

- **Option A:** Denounce Crispus.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_DIMS; -REP_HASRA; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* CRISPUS_ENEMY=1
- **Option B:** Work inside the system.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA; Intel access
 - *Long-term:* BLACKMAIL_CARDS+1
- **Option C:** Stay neutral.
 - *Immediate:* Lower heat; Fewer resources
 - *Long-term:* Neutral path to Game II

DP-12A — Broadcast to the city

- **Option A:** Call for calm & unity.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA; +REP_DIMS (minor)
 - *Long-term:* CITY_CALM=1
- **Option B:** Call out the lies.
 - *Immediate:* +ARENA_HEAT; +REP_DIMS
 - *Long-term:* CITY_CALM=0; Uprising seeds

S12 — Reactor & Names

Ducius hints at Xal ~ Xalegos; covenant choice looms.

DP-13 — Confront the name (Xal vs. Xalegos)

- **Option A:** Embrace (covenant).
 - *Immediate:* +VOID_TAINT cap increase; Faith-based powers
 - *Long-term:* Export DIVINE
- **Option B:** Reject (mortal).
 - *Immediate:* More social paths; Lower raw power
 - *Long-term:* Export MORTAL
- **Option C:** Defer (seek proof).
 - *Immediate:* Hold ambiguity; +GHOSTFLEET_INTEL
 - *Long-term:* Export AMBIG

DP-13A — Method of covenant (if embraced)

- **Option A:** Temple rite (public).
 - *Immediate:* +REP_CALMORA; +ARENA_HEAT
 - *Long-term:* DIVINE_PUBLIC=1
- **Option B:** Hidden pact (private).
 - *Immediate:* +Stealth; +Li concern
 - *Long-term:* DIVINE_SECRET=1

DP-13B — Mercy for the saboteur at the Reactor

- **Option A:** Spare and recruit.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_DIMS; +Intel
 - *Long-term:* SABOTEUR_ALLY=1
- **Option B:** Execute as example.
 - *Immediate:* +REP_HASRA; Fear effect
 - *Long-term:* SABOTEUR_ALLY=0

Ending Palette (Exports to Game II)

| Ending | Trigger Conditions (examples) | Exported State Highlights |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Sever the Cycle | DP-13=B; VOID_TAINT<40; CAW_DISCIPLINE≥3 | Mortal path; higher social reputation ceilings; limited access to divine artifacts |
| Master the Flame | DP-13=A; ARENA_HEAT≥50; FIST_UPGRADES contains ASGARDIAN | High ASGARDIAN path; higher aggro from factions; unique equipment |
| Re-seed the World | DP-13=C; RITUAL_RESPECT=1; REP_CALMORA≥0 | Distributed divinity; special rituals; broader alliances |