

The Banner Swap in the Wind

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A Black Banners Adventure for Fate's Edge (no gunpowder)

Adventure Overview

Tier: II–III

Length: 2–3 sessions

Theme: Banner politics, village defense, condotta manipulation

Hook: A Vilikari village caught between two rival banner companies offers the party a chance to play the companies against each other for the village's survival.

Setup: The Village of Saltmere

Saltmere sits in a strategic valley where two trade routes converge. The **Iron Lanterns** (siege specialists who promise “no fire in hospitals”) and the **Thornwrights** (sappers/road-cutters who price bridges by the breath) hold *conflicting charters* to secure the valley. Village elders approach the PCs to manipulate both banners into terms that spare Saltmere.

Saltmere at a Glance

- **Assets:** Winter granaries, shrine-hospital (old stone), river ford, timberyards, waymarket green.
- **Strings:** Ledger of Small Kindnesses (debts owed), ford-right witness-stone, bell-token set (for parley).
- **Clocks:** *Granary Seizure [4], Shrine Fire Rumors [4], Village Panic [6]*.

The Companies & What They Want (concrete aims)

Iron Lanterns — Siege Specialists

Captain Thorne Ironwright (methodical, honor-bound) seeks:

- **Garrison Charter:** permanent *winter garrison* with stipend.
- **Sanctuary Credit:** public recognition of Lantern hospital rites.
- **Bridge Priority:** stamp rights if siege breaks a crossing.

Quartermaster Bray wants predictable *Pay-day and rations*.

<p>Thornwrights — Sappers & Road-Cutters</p> <p>Captain “Cut” Marrick (reckless innovator) seeks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition Writs: license to <i>fire-set & wedge</i> old footings. • Reconstruction Fees: toll schedule until <i>the bridge is paid.</i> 	<p><i>bridge is paid.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exclusive Road Works: first refusal on all valley roads. <p>Engineer Tessa Chain wants materials and <i>no audits.</i></p>
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Props & Handouts (printables)

- **Charter Excerpt Cards (index-sized):** one for each company with *said* and *meant* lines.
- **Bell Dawn Rite Card:** the three-bell sanctuary text.
- **Articles of the Camp Sheet:** quick examples (below).

Articles of the Camp (examples & violations)

Article (exemplar text)	Typical Violation / Evidence
No open flame nor fire-setting within twenty paces of a sanctuary.	Char streaks, heat-stress in stone, pitch jars and braziers in shrine yard.
Take no road you will not defend.	Abandoned picket, unpaid tolls during raid, missing watch roster.
Record both said and meant; do not trade on ambiguity.	Conflicting orders, unsigned addenda, missing witnesses.
No seizure of granaries without Bowl (fairness) first.	Grain carts diverted without ledger entry; stamped but unsigned receipts.

Article Cite (mechanical): Citing a relevant Article under witness grants **Position +1** for that parley; presenting *material evidence* adds **DV -1**.

Session Structure & Pacing

Act I — Council (45–60 min). Frame crisis, place clocks, hand out charter cards.

Interlude Orders (10–15 min). Each PC may take 1 *Between-Scene Order:* *Scout*, *Audit*, *Canvas*, or *Secure Proof*. Resolve with a single roll; deliver leads as cards.

Act II — Manipulations (60–90 min). Run Parley, Debts, False Orders, and/or *Forgery Mini-Score* (below).

Act III — Crisis & Charter Endgame (45–75 min). Roll Allegiances-in-Flux once mid-talks; resolve a *Synthesis*, *Gambit*, or *Third Way*.

Investigation Beats (choose order)

1. **Charter Analysis (Wits+Lore or Diplomacy (Broker) DV 3):** Overlaps with *different end terms* (*first frost* vs. *bridge is paid*). Note *witness gaps*.

2. **Ledger of Small Kindnesses** (*Wits+Investigation DV 4*): Concrete debts: Lanterns owe *sanctuary upkeep*; Thornwrights owe *bridge toll arrears*.
3. **Scout Reports** (*Wits+Survey DV 3*): Sightings: mantlets staged; *lever-frames, pitch-kettles, and rope-saws* positioned at old footings.

Between-Scene Order Option: PCs can push any one beat off-screen for speed.

Forged Ledger, Real Stakes (mini-score)

Make *The False Ledger* an active heist in four steps; three successes needed before 2 SB are generated.

1. **Materials** (*Craft+Wits or Subterfuge DV 3*): Acquire proper paper, stamps, inks. *SB: Shortfall—add Watermark Test later.*
2. **Language** (*Lore+Wits DV 4*): Match charter idiom; fill *said/meant*. *SB: Anachronism—adds DV +1 to Delivery.*
3. **Witness Seal** (*Diplomacy+Presence DV 3*): Coax a minor clerk/bell-witness to “remember” witnessing. *SB: Loose Tongue—Rumor [2].*
4. **Delivery** (*Subterfuge+Stealth DV 4* or *Performance+Presence DV 4*): Plant or present without cross-exam. *On hit:* target unit *Withdraws 1 ring* or suffers *Cohesion +1*. *On miss:* *False Orders /4/* flips on PCs.

Bell Dawn Parley (set-piece)

Presence+Sway DV 4 under witness; Wits+Diplomacy may Assist. Ring three bells; both captains attend. If *Ledger Debt* is presented, choose 1:

- Impose *No-Seizure of Granaries /4/* jointly.
- Establish *Single Banner Hour* (only one company shows colors in town per day).

Condotta Flip (Allegiances in Flux)

Roll 1d6 at scene starts or on a PC trigger; interpret via their play:

- A. **Charter Challenge:** Accuse Thornwrights of storing *pitch-kettles and resin jars* in shrine bounds; Lantern inquiry (Position +1 to press).
- B. **Debt Reminder:** Thornwrights fluster; Captain orders an audit (their Payday +1 if unfunded).
- C. **False Orders:** Conflicting movements begin (*False Orders /4/* ticks).
- D. **Broker’s Market:** Exclusive lane offers narrow claims (gain *Bridge Peace /4/* on hit).
- E. **Village Leverage:** Threaten provisioning the rival (on partial: *Village Panic +1*).
- F. **Article Violation:** Formal accusation under witness; force parley or lose face.

Charter Synthesis Workshop (make it tactile)

Draft a new charter by choosing **2 clauses** (and 1 *cost*) from each list; then roll *Broker+Petition DV 5* with Position based on choices made.

Lantern Clauses (pick 2)

- Winter Garrison capped at *20 spears* and *no levy*.
- Sanctuary care funded by *toll tithe* (1 in 20 breaths).
- Bridge priority stamps only *during declared emergencies*.

Thornwright Clauses (pick 2)

- Toll schedule sunsets after *two harvests* or *Bridge Paid [6]*.
- **Fire-setting** limited to *downriver footings*; *no flame* within sanctuary radius.
- First refusal on *road repairs* for one year.

Costs (pick 1)

- Village owes *Indemnity [4]* if raids spike.
- PCs pledge *Witness Duty* (be present for violations; Reputation at stake).
- Market day tithe funds a neutral *Broker's Bell*.

On hit: both patrons accept; gain *Broker's Favor* x2. *On partial:* one accepts; the other demands *Indemnity [4]*. *On miss:* *Political Pressure [4]* enters play.

Endgame Options

The Village Gambit

Lore+Diplomacy DV 4 under witness. Invoke *Ledger Law*: old debts narrow present claims. If upheld, both banners pull to outer rings; village keeps core.

The Third Way

Command+Presence DV 4. Joint defense against a common threat; start *Shared Defense [6]*. On fill, both banners leave with honor; village gains *Watch Rights*.

Mechanical Hooks & SB Menu

Key Dice Rolls

- **Charter Reading:** Wits+Lore (DV 3–4); +1 die with *witness gaps*.
- **Banner Law Parley:** Presence+Sway (DV 4); *Article Cite* grants Position +1.
- **Village Negotiation:** Diplomacy or Broker (DV 3–4).
- **False Evidence:** Subterfuge+Lore (DV 4–5) after the mini-score setup.
- **Supply Cut/Restore:** Tactics+Streetwise or Engineering (DV 3–4).

Story Beats (Keeper Spend)

- **False Orders** (colors cross at the ford)
- **Ally Turns** (shamed officer flips)
- **Cut Supply Lines** (granary cordon tightens)
- **Camp-Fever** (restless troops)
- **Gear Failure** (*mantlet collapse; wedge-snap rockfall*)
- **Authority Intervention** (lord's reeve arrives)
- **Winter Omens** (first frost early)

Outcomes & Reputation

Success

- **Clean Victory:** Both withdraw honor-intact; PCs gain *Broker's Favor* with both.
- **Pragmatic:** One stays as protector on narrowed charter; PCs gain a *Village String* (ford free).
- **Innovative:** Synthesis adopted; PCs tagged as *banner mediators*.

Failure

- **Village Lost:** Saltmere destroyed; PCs earn a *Black Mark*.
- **Banner War:** Companies clash; *Skirmish Spiral [6]* begins.
- **Patron Wrath:** *Political Pressure [4]* follows the party.

GM Aids

When you want to... (Order guidance)

- **Cool things down:** Call *Bell Dawn Parley* (push Position to Controlled).
- **Re-route a company:** Run *False Orders* (threaten Cohesion).
- **Bind with paper:** Use *Charter Synthesis Workshop*.
- **Make it tactile:** Trigger the *Forgery Mini-Score*.

Quick Reference: Scene DVs

Scene	Primary Test	DV / Notes
Charter Reading	Wits+Lore	3-4; +1 die if <i>witness gaps</i> noted
Bell Dawn Parley	Presence+Sway	4; Position +1 if Article Cite + evidence
Forgery — Materials	Craft/Subterfuge	3; sets later Watermark Test
Forgery — Language	Lore+Wits	4; avoid anachronism
Forgery — Witness Seal	Diplomacy+Presence	3; risk <i>Rumor [2]</i>
Forgery — Delivery	Subterfuge/Performance	4-5; on hit, Withdraw 1 Ring or Cohesion +1
De-escalate Spiral	Command+Tactics	4; clear 1 from <i>Skirmish Spiral</i>