

Allies & Adversaries

A Fate's Edge module for companions, cohorts, and organizations

Version 0.1 (Playtest)

Design Goals

- **Companions with teeth:** Followers act on-screen and off-screen with clear risks, clocks, and costs.
- **Social fabric as engine:** Loyalty, morale, bonds, and rivalries generate scenes and consequences.
- **Organizations as levers:** Cohorts and institutions move through clocks, strings, and orders without spreadsheets.
- **Plug into core:** Uses Position/DV, SB, clocks, Favor/Leverage/Exposure, Reputation, and Strings. No new dice math.

Principle: Add procedures and tracks that tell you when to roll, what to tick, and how to escalate.

Quickstart (2 minutes)

1. Make 1–3 **Follower Sheets**; mark **Loyalty [6]** and **Morale [6]** on each.
2. Attach **Strings** the follower controls (permits, keys, oaths). These matter more than stats.
3. Pick an **Organization** (if any) and fill **Cohesion [6–8]**, **Exposure [6]**, and **Bandwidth** (orders/phase) = 1–3.
4. At scene start, choose for each follower: **Assist**, **Cover**, or **Delegate**.
5. Between sessions, run **Orders & Entanglements** for organizations.

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Follower Sheets & Templates

Follower Sheet (Template)

[NAME & ROLE]

Tier: Green / Trained / Veteran / Elite

Playbook: Combat Ally / Specialist / Magical Assistant

Capabilities (2{3}): short phrases like "shield wall", "ledger-eye", "silent step"

Edges (1{2}): what they do exceptionally well

Liabilities (1{2}): what gets them in trouble

Strings (1{3}): permits, keys, rites, access, local reputation

Costs: wages / shares / favor / oath / taboo

Tracks:

- Loyalty [6]: long-term commitment to the PCs' cause

- Morale [6]: short-term willingness to risk; wavers in hard scenes

- Harm [3]: minor / serious / broken (or corrupted, if mystical)

Tags: (2{3 personal or social tags that matter on-screen)

Notes: relationships, debts, secret, ambition

Tier (quality) guidance

- **Green:** When acting alone, start one step worse Position.
- **Trained:** Baseline Position.
- **Veteran:** Treat DV -1 when acting on their Capabilities.
- **Elite:** Position +1 when acting on their Edges.

No new dice. Followers don't have separate pools; their tier nudges Position/DV and their tracks/tags determine fallout.

Templates

Combat Ally (guard, scout, duelist)

Capabilities: formation fighting; hold a doorway; skirmish in alleys

Edges: fearless under missile fire; shield others

Liabilities: pride; feud; easily baited

Strings: watch rotation; barracks armory key

Costs: shares; honor code taboo

Specialist (scribe, pilot, barrister, spy, apothecary)

Capabilities: crack ledgers; navigate fog; wris & filings; ghost a meeting; treat wounds

Edges: unobtrusive; encyclopedic gossip

Liabilities: temper; debts; guild loyalty first

Strings: archive desk; ferry passbooks; guild seals

Costs: wages; bribe budget; guild tithes

Magical Assistant (rite-acolyte, hedge-mage, psion acolyte)

Capabilities: ward a room; amplify rites; anchor a vision; soothe a crowd

Edges: ritual precision; calm presence

Liabilities: taboo; frail; omen-prone

Strings: sanctuary access; oath-tablet registry; reliquary key

Costs: offerings; rest days; ritual purity

Onboarding a Follower

Name two non-overlapping Capabilities and one Liability; the table adds one Tag. Tie them to the map with one **String** that matters this arc. Mark **Loyalty 2/6, Morale 3/6**, Harm none.

Followers On-Scene

At the start of a scene, declare the role for each present follower.

Assist

They bolster a PC's action on their Capability.

- **Effect:** Improve **Position +1** or treat **DV -1** (once/scene per follower).
- **SB Hook:** On any 1 in the roll, the GM may tick follower **Morale +1** (shaken) or **Harm (minor)** instead of a PC-facing complication.

Cover

They absorb heat or run interference.

- **Effect:** Once this scene, reduce a GM **Social SB** spend by 1 or cancel a single **tag flip** against the party in their venue.
- **Cost:** Tick follower **Exposure +1** (if tracked) or **Morale +1** (took the blame).

Delegate

They take an independent scene action (legwork, duel, petition, infiltration). Resolve with the **PC's roll** that commands, enables, or coordinates (e.g., Presence+Command, Wits+Tactics, Wits+Investigation).

- **Effect:** On a hit, fill the target Situation Clock by effect or create a useful tag; on a partial, do it but suffer **Harm (minor)** or **Morale +1**; on a miss, GM banks SB and may apply a temporary Liability tag (e.g., *Compromised*).
- **Tier Nudge:** Apply the Tier bonus/penalty when setting Position/DV.

Alone vs with PCs: Acting alone in hostile ground starts one Position worse; with a PC on-screen, use the higher Position among the pair.

Harm & Recovery

- **Harm [3]:** minor (-) / serious (can't Assist/Delegate) / broken (removed until healed). Treat mystic overloads similarly.
- **Heal:** *Shield* or *Biofeedback* scenes may reduce Harm; otherwise Significant Time + coin/favor reduces one level.

Loyalty & Morale

Loyalty [6] (long-term)

Tick up when promises are kept, credit/coin shared, public protection given, or their Ambition advances. Tick down for oath-breaking, humiliation, skipped payment, or betrayal of values. At 0: they leave or flip neutral (rescue resets to 1). At 6: trigger a **Loyalty Event**—they offer an oath or ask a Price; choose for a lasting Tag (e.g., *Oath-Bound*) or a new String.

Morale [6] (short-term)

Mark Morale for fear, hunger, injury, or public shame.

- 4+: bold; may Assist/Delegate freely.
- 2–3: hesitant; Delegate starts one Position worse.
- 0–1: balk; require *Reassure* (Presence+Sway) or *Command* at DV 3–4 to act; on miss, they withdraw.
- **Reset:** Rest, food, respect scene, or public praise clears 1–2 Morale.

Paying the Costs

Each follower lists Costs (wages, shares, favor, taboo). When skipped two sessions in a row, tick Loyalty –1 and start **Debt** [4]. Clearing the clock cancels the penalty.

Follower Advancement (Long-Term)

At arc end or every 2–3 sessions, if the follower was central, choose one:

- **Capability +1:** add a new Capability or sharpen an Edge; gain that Edge's Tier nudge for one more context.
- **String Gained:** seize/cut a String via play; write it on their sheet.
- **Harm Tolerance:** add *Armor* (1) tag once per session when acting on their Capabilities.
- **Bond Deepens:** start **Bond** [4] with a PC; acting for that PC's ideal grants Position +1 once/scene.
- **Reputation:** convert three favors from one institution into **Standing (Tag)** tied to the follower.

If a follower becomes plot-defining, promote them to a **Lieutenant**: they can carry an **Off-Screen Order** without PC oversight.

Organizations (Guilds, Armies, Syndicates)

Organization Sheet (Template)

[ORG NAME]

Tier: street / guild / city / crown / synod

Aim (this season): what this org wants now

Leaders & Lieutenants: names + one-line intent

Cohorts (2{4}): "dockside crew", "auditors", "pickets" ...

Strings (3): permits, routes, seals, charters

Tracks:

- Cohesion [6{8}]: unity/discipline; fill → schism/strike/coup
 - Exposure [6]: heat/visibility; fill → audit/raid/purge
 - Resources [6]: operational slack; empty → shortages & concessions
- Bandwidth: 1{3 orders per cycle
Entanglements: debts, rivals, promises

Using Cohorts

A cohort is a follower group. When a cohort acts on-screen, apply Tier nudges like a Veteran/Elite follower. Wounds/fear usually tick **Cohesion +1** rather than individual Harm.

Orders & Entanglements (Between Sessions)

Once per session or when Significant Time passes:

1. **Allocate Bandwidth:** choose up to Bandwidth orders: Audit, Guard, Smuggle, Petition, Strike-bust/Strike, Patrol, Build, Research, Evangelize, Bribe, Expose.
2. **Resolve Each Order:** one roll by the directing PC (or a Lieutenant). Set Position/DV from fiction; apply Org Tier as DV -1 within its wheelhouse.
3. **On Hit:** fill a related Project Clock (4-8) or create a lasting Tag. On 1s, GM banks SB and may tick Exposure +1 or Cohesion +1.
4. **Upkeep:** if Resources drops to 0, choose: accept Crisis +1, lose Bandwidth -1, or start **Shortages [6]**.
5. **Entanglement Roll:** for each banked SB this cycle, trigger a minor entanglement (rival, debt call-in, inspector visit). Convert into clocks, not binary losses.

Relationship Dynamics

Bonds & Frictions

Start a **Bond** [4] between a PC and a follower who has shared scenes. When the PC publicly protects/praises the follower, fill 1; when they shame or endanger them, clear 1. When full, add a permanent tag (*Devoted, Trusted Confidant*); once per scene, acting in line with that bond grants Position +1.

Frictions [4] capture triangles, rival mentors, or ideology splits. On fill, start a **Follower Conflict** or add the tag *Soured*.

Romance & Family (optional)

Treat as Bonds with consent. A full romance Bond may convert to a **String** (access to a house/court) or a **cost** (taboos, obligations).

Reputation & Standing

Followers can hold **Standing** with institutions. In that venue, Standing acts like a once/scene Position +1 or DV -1, and counts toward party reputation checks.

Follower Conflicts

When Allies Disagree

Frame the splitting question. Start a **Dilemma Clock [4–6]**. Each side argues via Petition/Broker/Expose; use Assist/Cover from their allies. On 1s, spend Social SB to escalate: *Ultimatum, Walk-out, Lever-age Leak, Public Scene, Split the Crew*.

Resolution: on fill choose one—**Concession** (one side wins; other Loyalty -1), **Compromise** (create a new String you must honor), or **Break** (follower departs; start **Recruit/Repair [6]**).

Competing Agendas (Long-Term)

Give key followers a private **Agenda [4]** tied to a String or ideal. Tick when off-screen orders favor them; clear when you publicly choose against it. On fill, they demand a scene to cash it in—or flip a String against you.

Generators & Tables

Follower Seeds (d66)

11–12: penitent enforcer; 13–14: debt-sold pilot; 15–16: oath-keep scribe; 21–22: relic courier; 23–24: disgraced auditor; 25–26: crowd-reader mummer; 31–32: hedge-rite acolyte; 33–34: picket captain; 35–36: ash-lantern warden; 41–42: smugglers’ quartermaster; 43–44: bridge-lord’s nephew; 45–46: psion novice; 51–52: syndicate fixer; 53–54: canal pilot; 55–56: inquisitor’s clerk; 61–62: ex-legion drill; 63–64: dye house chemist; 65–66: caravan law clerk.

Costs & Ambitions

Costs: wages; shares; favor; bribes; offerings; rest days; ritual purity; family duty.

Ambitions: vindication; mastery; homecoming; reform; riches; reputation; faith; revenge; discovery.

Entanglements (roll 1–2 between sessions)

Rival poaches a cohort; Auditor audits your Strings; a family claim interrupts a mission; Debtor calls; old oath resurfaces; festival duel challenge; informant flips; patrol biased; riot brewing in their home ward.

Example of Play (short)

Scene: The party needs a sealed ledger from the Archivolt. Their *Specialist* (ledger-eye) **Delegates** to pull it during a playhouse feast. Position: **Controlled** (venue tags + String); Tier: **Veteran** (DV -1). Roll *Wits+Investigation* to coordinate. Partial: ledger secured but **Morale +1**. A 1 shows → GM spends Social SB to start **Rumor [4]** about bribery.

Between sessions, the party’s **Guild** runs two **Orders**: *Audit* (to validate the ledger) and *Bribe* (to cushion exposure). One hit, one partial: a **Project [6]** advances; **Exposure +1** ticks on the Guild. Next arc, the Specialist’s **Agenda [4]** (protect guild loyalties) fills and they demand edits before release.

GM Reference (one page)

- **Follower roles:** Assist (Pos +1 or DV -1) • Cover (cancel 1 Social SB or tag flip once/scene; cost: Morale/Exposure) • Delegate (independent action via PC roll; apply Tier).
- **Tracks:** Loyalty [6] (0 leave/flip; 6 event) • Morale [6] (0–1 balk; 2–3 hesitant; 4+ bold) • Harm [3].
- **Org tracks:** Cohesion [6–8] • Exposure [6] • Resources [6] • Bandwidth 1–3.
- **Orders:** Audit • Guard • Smuggle • Petition • Strike-bust / Strike • Patrol • Build • Research • Evangelize • Bribe • Expose.
- **SB spends (social):** Ultimatum • Walk-out • Leverage Leak • Public Scene • Split the Crew • Permit Pulled.

Changelog

v0.1 — First pass: follower sheets/tiers, on-scene roles, loyalty & morale, advancement, organization sheets & orders phase, bonds/frictions, conflicts, generators, and GM reference.

This module adds procedures only; defer to the core SRD for roll math and basic adjudication.