# Of the Ways Between

*A Cosmic Horror Adventure Module for Fate's Edge*

**Module Type: Cosmic Horror Adventure**

Designed for 3-6 players, Tier II-III characters

Game Master's Guide Included

**Using the Deck System and Travel Guide**
**Featuring Entities from the Mist Embodiment to the Choice Embodiment**
**Incorporating Dread Mechanics and Campaign Clocks**

# Contents

# 1    Introduction

## 1.1    Welcome to the Ways Between

In the vast and varied world of Fate's Edge, there exist places where the boundary between realities grows thin, where the paths of the living and the dead intersect, and where the very concept of direction becomes a matter of existential choice rather than mere navigation. These are the Ways Between - spirit paths, veilways, and crossroads that exist in the spaces between what we understand as the normal world.

This adventure module, "Of the Ways Between," is designed to challenge your players with the unknown horrors that lurk in these liminal spaces. Drawing inspiration from the Deck System and Travel Guide provided in Fate's Edge, we'll create a cohesive narrative that pushes characters to their psychological and physical limits while exploring the deeper mysteries of existence itself.

## 1.2    Module Overview

**Adventure Hook:** The PCs are drawn into the Ways Between through various means - a cursed artifact, a dying guide's last words, or perhaps they simply wander too far from a familiar path during a journey. Whatever the reason, they find themselves in a realm where the normal rules of space, time, and reality no longer apply.

**Setting:** The Ways Between - a realm of spirit paths, crossroads, and threshold spaces that exist between the living world and whatever lies beyond.

**Themes:** Existential dread, the incomprehensible nature of reality, choice and consequence as cosmic forces, isolation of consciousness, metaphor made manifest

**Tone:** Ominous, surreal, and deeply unsettling. Reality is fluid, and what seems real one moment may prove to be metaphor the next.

**Recommended Character Tier:** Seasoned to Veteran (41-150 XP)

**Estimated Play Time:** 3-5 sessions

# 2    The Ways Between - Setting the Scene

## 2.1    What Are the Ways Between?

The Ways Between are not a single location but rather a concept - a collection of paths, crossroads, and threshold spaces that exist in the margins of reality. They are the spaces between one place and another, the moments between heartbeats, and the breath between life and death. In Fate's Edge terms, they represent the ultimate expression of the game's core philosophy that every choice carries weight and every path leads somewhere unexpected.

Here, the very fabric of existence becomes negotiable. Paths fold back on themselves like origami cranes made of mathematics. Time flows in spirals that intersect at impossible angles. The sky above is not blue but a shifting kaleidoscope of concepts - justice, love, fear, each one a color that has no name in any human tongue.

## 2.2    Key Characteristics

- **Fluid Reality:** The laws of physics and logic are suggestions rather than rules. Gravity may pull in the direction of your greatest fear, and mathematics may prove that two and two equal the sound of distant thunder.

- **Psychological Manifestation:** The environment often reflects the inner state of those who traverse it. Walk in fear, and the path becomes a maze of thorns. Walk in hope, and flowers bloom in your footsteps - though they may be flowers that sing lullabies to the dead.

- **Temporal Distortion:** Time moves differently here - it may speed up, slow down, or loop entirely. You might spend an hour walking a path that should take minutes, only to arrive before you left.

- **Choice and Consequence:** Every decision carries weight, and the paths chosen (or not chosen) have lasting impact. The Ways Between remember everything, and they have a very long memory.

## 2.3    Navigating the Ways Between

Navigation in the Ways Between is not about following a map but about making meaningful choices. The Deck System becomes crucial here, as each draw represents not just a random encounter but a meaningful narrative element that shapes the journey. The paths themselves are alive, and they respond to the weight of your intentions.

# 3    Key NPCs and Entities

## 3.1    The Choice Embodiment

The Choice Embodiment is an entity that exists only in the moment of choosing between paths. Neither malevolent nor benevolent, it simply is - a manifestation of choice itself given form. It appears showing all possible choices and their infinite consequences.

### The Choice Embodiment

**Threat Level:** Epic
**Harm:** Varies
**Complication Points:** 3-4 CP per interaction
**Description:** The Choice Embodiment appears as a figure whose form shifts with each glance - sometimes a crossroads keeper, sometimes a mathematician covered in equations that move like living things, sometimes a child holding a compass that points in all directions at once. It speaks only in possibilities and paradoxes, offering guidance that is simultaneously helpful and maddening. Its presence causes reality to shimmer at the edges, as if the universe itself is holding its breath.
**Motivations:** To facilitate choice, to maintain the balance of paths, to ensure that decisions are made
**Abilities:**

- Possibility Showing: Shows all possible choices and their infinite consequences (Social, DV 4, generates 2 CP)

- Paradox Speech: Speaks in possibilities that are both meaningless and profound (confuses opponents, -1 die to resist)
- Path Manipulation: Can alter the available choices, though not the consequences (Environmental hazard +2)
- Temporal Echo: Can show glimpses of potential futures based on choices (Wits + Insight, DV 3 to interpret)

**Weaknesses:**

- Cannot make choices for others
- Vulnerable to absolute certainty (has no form when all paths are identical)
- Cannot cross running water (symbolic of the flow of time and choice)

**Sample Encounter:** The Choice Embodiment appears at a crucial crossroads, offering guidance that seems helpful but leads to increasingly complex moral dilemmas. The GM can spend their CP to:

- 1 CP: The guidance leads to an unexpected ally
- 2 CP: The path splits again, each option more morally ambiguous
- 3 CP: The Choice Embodiment's form shifts to someone from the PC's past
- 4+ CP: A previous choice comes back to haunt the PCs in a new form

## 3.2 The Road's Own Child

Born from two paths crossing, raised by waymarks, the Road's Own Child is a being that exists in the space between destinations. It has no fixed form or nature, existing as a sort of living embodiment of journey itself.

### The Road's Own Child

**Threat Level:** Major
**Harm:** >
**Complication Points:** 2-3 CP per scene
**Description:** The Road's Own Child appears as a young figure whose age and appearance shift with each encounter - sometimes a toddler with eyes like distant stars, sometimes an ancient wanderer whose footsteps leave flowers that bloom backwards. It speaks in the voices of travelers it has met and carries the memories of every journey it has witnessed. It is curious, often helpful, but its understanding of the world is fundamentally different from those who have fixed origins and destinations. Its laughter sounds like wind chimes made of crystallized time.
**Motivations:** Curiosity, desire to understand fixed beings, protection of paths
**Abilities:**

- Memory Absorption: Can absorb the memories of travelers (Spirit + Resolve, DV 4, target loses one skill for scene)
- Path Walking: Can move along any path, even those not yet taken (immune to getting lost)

- Voice Mimicry: Can perfectly mimic the voices of anyone it has heard (Social advantage)

- Wayfinding: Never loses its way and can guide others perfectly (grants +2 dice to navigation)

**Weaknesses:**

- Vulnerable to final destinations (it doesn't understand the concept of "arriving")

- Cannot cross thresholds it hasn't seen before

- Becomes confused by absolute statements

**Sample Encounter:** The Road's Own Child approaches the PCs offering to guide them, but its guidance leads to places that test their understanding of their own motivations. The GM can spend their CP to:

- 1 CP: The child leads them to a place that reflects their deepest fear

- 2 CP: It begins to absorb the memories of one of the PCs

- 3 CP: The path becomes a physical manifestation of an internal conflict

- 4+ CP: The child begins to age rapidly, becoming an old wanderer who has forgotten its way

## 4  Horror Elements and Dread Mechanics

### 4.1  The Dread System in the Ways Between

The Ways Between are inherently hostile to the human psyche. The fluid nature of reality, the constant questioning of what is real, and the existential weight of choice all contribute to a slow erosion of certainty that must be carefully managed.

> Dread as Resource Management
>
> Dread in the Ways Between is managed through the Boon system. Instead of traditional sanity points, players must spend Boons to prevent the Dread Clock from advancing. This creates a resource management challenge where players must choose between immediate tactical advantages and long-term psychological stability.

### 4.2  The Dread Clock

| Dread Clock | Psychological deterioration and mounting horror |
| --- | --- |
| Segments | ●●●●●●●●●●0/10 |

#### 4.2.1  Advancement Triggers

- Witnessing death or violence: +1 segment (prevent with 1 Boon)

- Encountering the unknown: +1 segment (prevent with 1 Boon)

- Personal failure leading to harm: +1 segment (prevent with 1 Boon)

- Direct threat to sanity/morality: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons)

- Major revelation about the horror: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons)
- Companion/friend harmed or lost: +3 segments (prevent with 3 Boons)

### 4.2.2 Psychological Effects by Dread Level

- **0-2 Segments - Unease:** Characters feel on edge, -1 die to social rolls involving trust, minor sleep disturbances. The paths seem to whisper just beneath the threshold of hearing.
- **3-4 Segments - Fear:** -1 die to all rolls when alone, startle easily, avoid dark spaces, nightmares. Shadows move independently of their owners, and the horizon seems to tilt slightly when you're not looking directly at it.
- **5-6 Segments - Terror:** -2 dice to rolls involving courage or rational thought, may flee from non-threatening situations. Time begins to stutter - you might take a step forward and find yourself a meter back, or speak a word that comes out as a different language entirely.
- **7-8 Segments - Madness:** -2 dice to most rolls, may act against own interests, hallucinations, unreliable perception. The paths begin to show you things that aren't there - doors that lead to your childhood bedroom, signs pointing to places that exist only in dreams.
- **9-10 Segments - Broken:** Out of control, may become hostile to allies, permanent psychological damage, requires major intervention to recover. You begin to understand the paths in a way that makes you fundamentally different from those who haven't walked them.

## 5 Key Locations in the Ways Between

### 5.1 The Spiral of Infinite Regret

This path represents the futility of certain journeys and the trap of cyclical thinking. No matter how far one climbs, they always find themselves back at the beginning, though perhaps with new understanding or madness. The spiral is made of stones that whisper the last words of everyone who has ever walked it, and the center contains a pool of liquid starlight that shows not your reflection, but your potential.

### 5.2 The Bridge of Manifested Promises

Crossing this bridge requires making a vow, and the bridge remembers every debt. Those who cross without making a promise find themselves unable to leave, trapped in a loop of trying to cross without success. The bridge is made of crystallized oaths, each one a different color representing different types of promises - red for love, black for revenge, gold for truth. The railing is carved with the names of everyone who has ever crossed, and if you look closely, you can see some names that are still being carved.

### 5.3 The Stone Circle Where Houses Are Now Concepts

This location represents the shift in perspective that occurs in the Ways Between. What was once familiar and grounded becomes distant and abstract, while the cosmic becomes immediate and personal. The circle is made of stones that represent different concepts - Justice, Love, Fear, Wonder - and each stone is a door to a realm where that concept is the fundamental law of physics. Stand near the stone of Fear, and gravity pulls toward your greatest terror. Stand near the stone of Wonder, and the air itself becomes curious, asking questions in whispers.

## 5.4 The Tunnel of Collective Memory

In this place, travelers can hear the thoughts of everyone who has ever passed through. The weight of collective memory can be overwhelming, and distinguishing one's own thoughts from those of others becomes difficult. The tunnel walls are made of crystallized memories, each one glowing with the emotional intensity of the moment it captured. Walk too close to the walls, and you might find yourself living someone else's life for a moment - feeling their joy, their pain, their final breath.

# 6 Monsters of the Ways Between

## 6.1 The Mist Embodiment

### Mist Embodiment

**Threat:** Major
**Harm:** >
**CP:** Uncanny presence generates 2 CP per scene
**Description:** Semi-corporeal spirits that emerge from the deep mists of the Mistlands. They appear as translucent humanoid figures with hollow eyes and mouths that seem to whisper in forgotten tongues. Often guardians of ancient burial sites or places of great sorrow. Their forms shift like smoke, and they leave trails of mist that linger long after they've passed. The mist they create is not ordinary water vapor but something that carries the weight of unspoken grief.
**Motivations:** Protecting sacred sites, seeking justice for past wrongs, feeding on life force
**Abilities:**

- Incorporeal: Cannot be harmed by non-magical weapons

- Life Drain: Successful attack inflicts Fatigue 1 in addition to harm (Spirit + Resolve DV 3 to resist)

- Mist Form: Can become gaseous to avoid physical attacks (immune to melee for 1 round)

- Terrifying Presence: Opponents start Desperate vs. social/mental actions (generates 1 CP)

**Weaknesses:**

- Vulnerable to blessed/clean weapons

- Sunlight forces solid form (Harm »becomes =)

- Cannot cross running water

- Specific unfinished business can be resolved

**Sample Encounter:** A Mist Embodiment guards an ancient Aeler burial chamber. The GM can spend their CP to:

- 1 CP: Thick mist reduces visibility (-1 die to ranged attacks)

- 2 CP: Whispered voices cause confusion (players must reroll one success)

- 3 CP: Life drain affects multiple targets

- 4+ CP: Embodiment merges with mist, becomes nearly impossible to target

## 6.2 Shadow Stalker

### Shadow Stalker

**Threat:** Major
**Harm:** >
**CP:** Unnatural presence generates 2-3 CP per scene
**Description:** Creatures of living darkness that hunt in places where light fears to go. They appear as shifting pools of shadow that move with purpose and intelligence. Often found in ancient ruins, deep caves, or the darkest hours of night. Their shadows are not cast but chosen - they can extend, retract, or reshape their darkness at will. When they move, they leave behind areas of permanent shadow that seem to have weight and substance.
**Motivations:** Feeding on fear, protecting dark places, serving ancient masters
**Abilities:**

- Shadow Form: Can pass through small openings, ignore non-magical barriers

- Fear Feed: Grows stronger as opponents become afraid (start Desperate, +1 die per fear effect)

- Darkness Manipulation: Can extinguish lights, create areas of shadow (Environmental hazard +2)

- Silent Movement: Cannot be detected by normal hearing (Stealth advantage)

**Weaknesses:**

- Vulnerable to bright light (start Controlled vs. illuminated targets)

- Holy symbols/blessed items cause them harm

- Cannot cross consecrated ground

- Often bound to specific locations or tasks

**Sample Encounter:** A Shadow Stalker hunts the PCs through an abandoned temple. The GM can spend their CP to:

- 1 CP: Shadows deepen, reducing visibility

- 2 CP: Multiple stalkers emerge from darkness

- 3 CP: Target's shadow turns against them

- 4+ CP: Stalker merges with darkness, becomes nearly invisible

## 6.3 Concept Echo

### Concept Echo

**Threat:** Moderate
**Harm:** =
**CP:** Paradoxical nature generates 1-2 CP unpredictably
**Description:** Manifestations of Acasian curses - repeated moments of trauma or tragedy that play out endlessly. They appear as ghostly reenactments of past events, unable to perceive the

present but affecting it nonetheless. These echoes exist in a state of temporal loop, reliving their final moments with the intensity of fresh trauma. They are not truly alive or dead, but caught in a liminal state between memory and reality. Their presence causes the air to shimmer like heat waves, and time itself seems to stutter in their vicinity.

**Motivations:** Repeating their final moments, seeking resolution, protecting something they died for

**Abilities:**

- Temporal Loop: Actions repeat in predictable patterns (predictable but relentless)

- Curse Resonance: Other supernatural effects in area gain +1 die (amplifies horror)

- Unfinished Business: Cannot be permanently defeated until their purpose is fulfilled

- Echo Sight: Can perceive other supernatural entities clearly (advantage vs. Outsiders)

**Weaknesses:**

- Follows strict behavioral patterns (predictable)

- Cannot adapt to new situations

- Specific actions can break their cycle

- Often vulnerable during key moments of their loop

**Sample Encounter:** A Concept Echo of a murdered merchant replays his final journey through a marketplace. The GM can spend their CP to:

- 1 CP: Echo's presence causes others to repeat past mistakes

- 2 CP: Environmental objects become cursed (doors jam, coins turn to leaves)

- 3 CP: Multiple echoes manifest (entire scene repeats)

# 7 Using the Deck System

## 7.1 Drawing from the Ways Between Deck

The Ways Between Generator provides a rich source of narrative content. Each draw should feel meaningful and contribute to the overall atmosphere of existential uncertainty and psychological horror.

### 7.1.1 Spades - Path Features

- Mist-shrouded ford where the water runs uphill; footsteps echo backwards and show where you're going instead of where you've been

- Bone-lit corridor where shadows walk the walls but never touch the floor; the shadows whisper the secrets of those who cast them

- Threshold arch that shows your reflection as someone you might have been; the reflection waves back and tries to step through

- Spiral path that ascends but always returns to the same stone marker; the marker's inscription changes with each loop

- Bridge of manifested promises; cross with a vow and it remembers your debt with interest

### 7.1.2    Hearts - Fellow Travelers

- Lost pilgrim who thinks they're going home but has forgotten where home is; their pack contains maps to places that don't exist

- Toll-taker who accepts payment in memories you didn't know you had; they always ask for the memory you value most

- Wayward spirit guide whose directions are always technically correct but morally questionable; they speak in riddles that make perfect sense until you've already followed them

- Dream-merchant carrying a sack of nightmares and one perfect dream for sale; the perfect dream costs more than you can imagine

### 7.1.3    Clubs - Wayward Complications

- Path loops back to show you your own funeral preparations; the mourners look familiar

- Reality thins - you can see the dreams of sleeping travelers; their dreams are more real than your waking life

- Waymark points in the wrong direction; trust leads to places that never were and never will be

- Dream-bleed seeps through - your waking memories become someone else's nightmares; you start remembering things that happened to other people

### 7.1.4    Diamonds - Path's Gifts

- Waymark that always points toward your next important choice; it hums with a frequency that matches your heartbeat

- Token of passage - road recognizes you as one who belongs; the token changes to match your current need

- Dream-catcher that filters nightmares from your rest; it weaves the nightmares into beautiful tapestries you can't quite remember upon waking

- Truth-compass that points to what you most need to know, not what you want to hear; the needle spins wildly when you're lying to yourself

## 7.2    Special Rules for Of the Ways Between

- **Dream-Logic Navigation:** Any Ace adds a metaphysical requirement (sacrifice, taboo, or transformation) that must be fulfilled to pass. The requirement always seems reasonable until you try to fulfill it.

- **Memory Currency:** Diamonds can be traded for information about other travelers or previous paths taken. The information comes with the emotional weight of the original experience.

- **Time-Drift:** Any 2-4 indicates the path moves through time as well as space; arrival may be before departure. You might meet yourself coming from the opposite direction.

- **Reflection Points:** Any face card means the path shows reflections of alternate choices or possible selves. Some of these selves are better than you, some are worse, and some are things you never could have imagined becoming.

# 8   Campaign Clocks

## 8.1   Reality Fracture Clock (12 segments)

| Reality Fracture Clock | How much the fundamental laws of reality have been altered |
|---|---|
| Segments | ●●●●●●●●●●●●0/12 |

**Advancement Triggers:**

- Impossible stellar movements observed: +1 segment per day (the constellations rearrange themselves to spell warnings)

- Dimensional mathematics researched: +2 segments (each equation solved reveals three new impossibilities)

- PCs directly perceive alien geometry: +3 segments (seeing a triangle with four sides burns a permanent image in your mind)

- Local reality becomes unstable: +2 segments per incident (gravity reverses, colors have no names, mathematics proves 1=0)

- Ancient Aeler experiments disturbed: +3 segments (the Aeler were trying to map the Ways Between, and they left maps behind)

## 8.2   Collective Sanity Clock (10 segments)

| Collective Sanity Clock | How much the observers and inhabitants are affected by cosmic horror |
|---|---|
| Segments | ●●●●●●●●●●0/10 |

**Advancement Triggers:**

- Reality Fracture Clock advances: +1 segment (when reality breaks, minds follow)

- Direct observation of alien entities: +2 segments each (seeing the true form of the Choice Embodiment is like looking directly at the concept of choice)

- Comprehension of higher-dimensional concepts: +2 segments (understanding that you exist in seventeen dimensions simultaneously is not enlightening)

- Witnessing impossible geometric shapes: +1 segment each (a sphere that exists inside itself)

- Temporal anomalies experienced: +1 segment per hour (time loops, causality violations, meeting your own grandfather before he was born)

## 8.3   Existential Threat Clock (15 segments)

| Existential Threat Clock | How close the cosmic entity is to fully manifesting in our reality |
|---|---|
| Segments | ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●0/15 |

**Advancement Triggers:**

- Reality Fracture reaches 6 segments: +2 segments (the cracks in reality are big enough for something to slip through)

- Collective Sanity reaches 8 segments: +3 segments (when enough minds break, they create a resonance that calls to things that should not exist)

- PCs attempt to communicate with alien intelligence: +3 segments (the entity speaks in a language made of mathematical proofs that drive listeners mad)

- Dimensional barriers weakened further: +2 segments (the walls between worlds are paper-thin)

- Ancient Aeler safeguards fail: +4 segments (the Aeler built prisons for things that exist outside the concept of existence)

# 9 Sample Sessions

## 9.1 Session 1: Arrival in the Ways Between

**Opening Scene:** The PCs find themselves on a path that wasn't there moments before. The landscape around them shifts subtly - familiar landmarks become alien, and the sky above shows constellations that represent abstract concepts rather than stars. The air tastes of copper and possibility, and every step feels like walking on the surface of a thought.

**Key Encounters:**

1. Investigation of the shifting landscape (Wits + Investigation, DV 3) - The horizon moves when you're not looking directly at it

2. First encounter with the Road's Own Child (Presence + Sway, DV 2) - It offers to guide you but its directions lead to places that exist only in metaphor

3. Discovery of a waymark that points in impossible directions (Wits + Lore, DV 4) - The signpost shows arrows pointing toward concepts like "Regret" and "Wonder"

4. Initial contact with the thinning of reality (Wits + Perception, DV 3) - You can see your own shadow having a conversation with itself

**Dread Clock Advancement:**

- First observation of impossible constellations: +1 segment (prevent with 1 Boon) - The stars spell out warnings in a language you don't recognize but somehow understand

- Realizing they cannot retrace their steps: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons) - The path behind you has become a wall of crystallized time

- The Road's Own Child absorbs a memory: +1 segment (prevent with 1 Boon) - You forget the face of someone you loved, replaced by the memory of a stranger

**Campaign Clock Advancement:**

- Reality Fracture: +1 (reality laws begin to bend) - Gravity pulls toward your greatest fear

- Collective Sanity: +1 (first signs of unreality) - Your companions' voices sound like they're speaking underwater

## 9.2 Session 2: The Deeper Paths

**Key Encounters:**

1. Navigation through the Tunnel of Collective Memory (Wits + Survival, DV 4) - The walls

whisper the thoughts of everyone who has ever died

2. Encounter with a Mist Embodiment guarding a threshold (combat + social) - It demands to know why you're walking the paths of the dead

3. Discovery of an ancient waystone with impossible inscriptions (Wits + Lore, DV 5) - The stone is carved with equations that prove the universe is a lie

4. First direct contact with reality distortion (Spirit + Resolve, DV 5) - You see a triangle with four sides and feel your mind trying to accommodate the impossibility

**Dread Clock Advancement:**

- Seeing first truly alien entity: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons) - The Mist Embodiment's form includes geometric shapes that shouldn't exist

- Being touched by reality distortion: +3 segments (prevent with 3 Boons) - For a moment, you exist in seventeen dimensions simultaneously

- Discovering the extent of memory absorption: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons) - You remember dying, though it hasn't happened yet

**Campaign Clock Advancement:**

- Reality Fracture: +2 (dimensional barriers disturbed) - The sky splits open to show the mathematical proof of existence

- Collective Sanity: +2 (more travelers affected) - Your companions begin speaking in languages that predate human civilization

## 9.3   Session 3: The Truth Revealed

**Key Encounters:**

1. Confrontation with the Choice Embodiment at a crucial crossroads (Presence + Command, DV 4) - It shows you every possible path and their infinite consequences

2. Discovery of the true nature of the Ways Between (Wits + Arcana, DV 5) - The paths are not between places but between states of being

3. Choice: Attempt to seal the dimensional rift or embrace cosmic knowledge - The decision itself reshapes reality

4. Final observation of the entity through mathematical resonance - You see the universe as a single, vast equation

**Dread Clock Advancement:**

- Learning the truth about the Ways Between: +3 segments (prevent with 3 Boons) - You understand that you've always been walking these paths, even in your normal life

- Witnessing the Choice Embodiment's true nature: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons) - It is the moment of decision itself, given form

- Realizing the scope of cosmic threat: +2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons) - The entity is not trying to invade reality but to prove that reality is unnecessary

**Campaign Clock Advancement:**

- Reality Fracture: +3 (major dimensional barrier weakened) - The boundary between possible and impossible becomes negotiable

- Collective Sanity: +3 (party affected) - You all remember being different people in different realities

- Existential Threat: +2 (entity closer to manifestation) - The equation that describes the universe begins to solve for zero

# 10  Resolution Paths

## 10.1  The Paradox Seal

Use contradictory mathematical principles to create a logical paradox that forces the entity back beyond dimensional barriers. Success seals the rift but leaves the PCs with fragmented understanding of reality. Award 15-18 XP.

## 10.2  The Sacrificial Equation

Permanently bind oneself to the dimensional rift as an anchor to keep it stable. The PC becomes a living mathematical constant, existing partially outside normal reality but preventing the entity's full manifestation. Award 18-20 XP but fundamentally change character nature.

## 10.3  The Embrace of Infinity

Accept the entity's influence and allow it to rewrite reality according to alien logic. The PCs become heralds of a new cosmic order, gaining vast power but losing their humanity and connection to normal existence. Award 8-10 XP but transform PCs into agents of cosmic horror.

## 10.4  The Fractal Escape

Use the entity's own geometric principles against it, creating a recursive pattern that traps it in an infinite loop of self-reference. Requires significant mathematical understanding and risks fractal contamination. Award 20-22 XP if successful, but very difficult.

# 11  GM Tips and Advice

## 11.1  Atmosphere and Tension

Building Dread:

- Use lighting, sound, and physical environment to create unease - shadows that move independently, whispers that seem to come from inside the players' heads

- Describe sensations and feelings, not just visual details - the taste of copper in the air, the feeling of being watched by something that exists in more dimensions than you

- Let silences and pauses carry weight - sometimes what doesn't happen is more terrifying than what does

- Make the familiar seem alien and threatening - your own reflection becomes a stranger, your voice sounds like it belongs to someone else

Pacing the Horror:

- Start subtle and build gradually - begin with small impossibilities that seem almost comforting

- Vary the intensity - allow moments of wonder and beauty that make the horror more stark by contrast

- Use foreshadowing and ominous signs - the waymark that points toward "Regret" should make everyone uneasy

- Save the biggest revelations for climactic moments - the true nature of the Choice Embodiment should be a revelation that recontextualizes everything

## 11.2   Managing Fear and Sanity

Fear as a Resource:

- Fear should be a narrative driver, not a punishment - use it to push the story forward, not just to make players miserable

- Let players feel powerful even when afraid - knowledge is power, even when that knowledge is terrible

- Provide opportunities to confront and overcome fears - sometimes the only way forward is through the heart of madness

- Balance terror with moments of triumph - even in the darkest places, hope can flicker like a candle in the void

Sanity Management:

- Make sanity loss feel meaningful and personal - each loss should change how the character perceives the world

- Let it change how characters perceive and interact with the world - reality becomes negotiable

- Provide ways to recover or adapt to mental trauma - some wounds heal, others become scars that define the character

- Avoid making characters useless when sanity is low - madness can be a form of knowledge

## 11.3   Narrative Techniques

Unreliable Information:

- Not all sources are trustworthy - the Road's Own Child means well but doesn't understand the consequences of its guidance

- Clues may be misleading or incomplete - the waymark that points toward "Wonder" might lead to a place where wonder is a physical force that can kill

- NPCs might be lying, mistaken, or hiding crucial information - the Choice Embodiment speaks only in paradoxes that are both true and false

- Let players discover the truth through investigation and deduction - the universe rewards those who seek understanding, even when that understanding is terrible

The Unknown vs. The Known:

- The unknown should be terrifying because of what it might be - the mist that whispers in forgotten tongues might contain the voices of everyone who has ever died

- Revelations should be both satisfying and horrifying - understanding the true nature of the Ways Between explains everything but makes the horror worse

- Partial knowledge can be more unsettling than complete ignorance - knowing that you exist in seventeen dimensions but not understanding what that means

- Let mystery be part of the horror - some questions should remain unanswered, some doors should never be opened

# 12 Appendix: Additional Resources

## 12.1 Custom Horror Mechanics

### 12.1.1 Geometric Perception

When PCs observe alien geometry or impossible stellar patterns, they must make Wits + Lore rolls (DV 4) to avoid comprehension effects. Each failure:

- Generates 2 CP that the GM can spend for reality distortions

- Advances Dread Clock by 2 segments (prevent with 2 Boons)

- May grant forbidden knowledge at great psychological cost - understanding that changes the character fundamentally

### 12.1.2 Temporal Distortion

As reality fractures, time becomes unreliable:

- +1 die to Investigation rolls for finding temporal anomalies - you can sense where time loops back on itself

- But also experience time loops that generate 2 CP - you might live the same conversation three times, each time with different outcomes

- May become unstuck in time, unreliable narrators - you remember events that haven't happened yet, or forget events that already occurred

### 12.1.3 Dimensional Bleed

PCs who reach 7+ Dread segments begin to exist partially outside normal space:

- Can perceive multiple dimensional layers simultaneously - you see the path you're walking and the mathematical equation that describes it

- Speaking in mathematical equations without realizing it - your voice carries the weight of cosmic truth

- Attraction to impossible geometric patterns - you find yourself drawn to triangles with four sides

- May be able to perceive the entity directly - seeing it as the moment of decision itself, given form

## 12.2    Collective Insanity

The party's collective Dread affects their perception of reality:

- Average Dread level determines reality stability - higher levels make the impossible more probable

- High average = shared hallucinations, impossible events become real, the paths reshape themselves around the party's fears

- Low average = grounding effect, some resistance to cosmic influence, reality maintains a tenuous hold

## 12.3    Protective Items

- **Blessed Warding Stone:** Provides +2 dice to resist supernatural influence and reduces Dread Clock advancement by 1 (minimum 1). Crumbles to dust if Dread Clock fills completely. The stone whispers warnings in a language that predates human speech.

- **Sanctified Salt:** Can be used to create protective circles or barriers. One use per session to prevent Dread Clock advancement or gain start Controlled vs. supernatural threats. The salt burns with cold fire when the entity is near.

- **Prayer Book of the Steadfast:** Once per session, allows reroll of failed Spirit + Resolve roll and prevents 1 segment of Dread Clock advancement. The pages turn of their own accord, revealing passages that speak to the character's deepest fears.

## 12.4    Cursed Artifacts

- **Whispering Blade:** A dagger that hums with voices inaudible to most. Wielder gains +1 die to stealth and investigation rolls but must make Spirit + Resolve (DV 3) each session or advance Dread Clock by 1. The voices speak of things that should not be known, and their words carry the weight of cosmic truth.

- **Mirror of the Forgotten:** Shows glimpses of possible futures and past events. Provides valuable insights (Wits + Lore, DV 3) but each use advances Dread Clock by 1 and generates 1 CP. The mirror shows not reflection, but possibility - and some possibilities are too terrible to contemplate.

- **Shroud of Whispers:** A burial cloth that grants immunity to fear effects but causes the wearer to hear the entity's whispers constantly. Must make Wits + Perception (DV 4) or advance Dread Clock by 2 each day worn. The shroud is woven from the dreams of the dead, and its wearer becomes a conduit for cosmic knowledge.

# 13    Conclusion

"Of the Ways Between" is designed to challenge your players not just physically, but psychologically and existentially. The horror lies not in gore or jump scares, but in the slow erosion of certainty and the terrifying realization that the universe may be far stranger and more hostile than they ever imagined.

Remember that the best horror comes from what is left unsaid and unseen. Let the players' imaginations fill in the gaps, and trust in the power of implication over explicit description. The fear of

what might be lurking in the shadows is often more effective than showing every monster in detail.

Most importantly, maintain communication with your players about comfort levels and boundaries. Horror can be deeply personal, and what one player finds thrilling, another might find genuinely distressing. A good horror game is one where everyone at the table is having fun and feeling appropriately challenged, not traumatized.

The mechanics provided here are tools to enhance the horror experience, not replace good storytelling and atmosphere. Use them to support your narrative goals and create memorable, chilling experiences for your players.

As the GM, you hold the quill that writes the legend, but it is the players who create the story. Guide them through the Ways Between, challenge their perceptions, and let them emerge changed by their journey - for better or for worse.

**What are you willing to risk to reshape the world around you?**

In the Ways Between, that question takes on new meaning. Every step is a risk, every choice a potential turning point, and every revelation a potential descent into madness. But for those brave enough to walk these paths, the rewards - knowledge, power, understanding - may be worth the price.

May your dice roll true, your choices be meaningful, and your players emerge from the Ways Between forever changed.

# Quick Reference Cards

## Dread Clock Management

## Psychological Effects

| Segments | Effects |
|---|---|
| 0-2 | Unease: -1 die to social rolls involving trust, minor sleep disturbances |
| 3-4 | Fear: -1 die to all rolls when alone, startle easily, avoid dark spaces |
| 5-6 | Terror: -2 dice to rolls involving courage or rational thought, may flee |
| 7-8 | Madness: -2 dice to most rolls, may act against own interests, hallucinations |
| 9-10 | Broken: Out of control, may become hostile, permanent psychological damage |

## Campaign Clocks Quick Reference

**Reality Fracture Clock (12 segments):**

- Measures how much fundamental laws of reality have been altered
- Triggers: Impossible phenomena, dimensional research, entity observation

**Collective Sanity Clock (10 segments):**

- Tracks psychological impact on party
- Triggers: Reality Fracture advancement, alien entity observation

**Existential Threat Clock (15 segments):**

- Measures entity's approach to full manifestation
- Triggers: Reality/Cosmic clock thresholds, communication attempts

## Key Monster Abilities

**Mist Embodiment:**

- Incorporeal, Life Drain, Mist Form, Terrifying Presence
- Weak: Blessed weapons, sunlight, running water

**Shadow Stalker:**

- Shadow Form, Fear Feed, Darkness Manipulation, Silent Movement
- Weak: Bright light, holy symbols, consecrated ground

**Concept Echo:**

- Temporal Loop, Curse Resonance, Unfinished Business, Echo Sight

- Weak: Predictable patterns, specific actions, vulnerable during key moments

## Deck-Based Navigation

**Spades (Places):**

- Mist-shrouded ford, bone-lit corridor, threshold arch
- Spiral path, bridge of manifested promises

**Hearts (Travelers):**

- Lost pilgrim, toll-taker, wayward spirit guide
- Dream-merchant, child-ghost, merchant with map

**Clubs (Complications):**

- Path loops back, reality thins, waymark points wrong
- Dream-bleed seeps, toll demanded, path splits

**Diamonds (Rewards):**

- Waymark points to important choice, token of passage
- Dream-catcher, truth-compass, memory-anchor

## Resolution Paths Summary

| Path | Outcome & XP |
|---|---|
| Paradox Seal | Seal rift with contradictory math. Award 15-18 XP. |
| Sacrificial Equation | Bind self as dimensional anchor. Award 18-20 XP. |
| Embrace of Infinity | Accept entity's influence. Award 8-10 XP. |
| Fractal Escape | Trap entity in recursive pattern. Award 20-22 XP. |