

Assets, Allies, and Adversaries

A Fate's Edge Module for Holdings, Companions, and Organizations

Design Goals

- **Make Holdings Matter:** Assets have tags, strings, upkeep, and project clocks that change scenes. Patronage brings Position, seals, and coin—and obligations, audits, and scandals.
- **Companions with Teeth:** Followers act on-screen and off-screen with clear risks, clocks, and costs. Social fabric (Loyalty, Morale, Bonds) generates scenes and consequences.
- **Organizations as Levers:** Cohorts and institutions move through clocks, strings, and orders without excessive bookkeeping.
- **Use the Core:** Leverages core Fate's Edge mechanics: Position/**DV**, **SB**, Clocks, Favor/Leverage/Heat, Reputation, Strings. No new dice math.
- **Campaign Continuity:** Assets and relationships persist and evolve across story arcs.

Quickstart (5 minutes)

1. **Pick an Asset:** Choose a type (safehouse, workshop, etc.). Mark Integrity [6] and Resources [6]. Attach 1-2 Strings (permits, seals). Choose 1-2 Project Clocks [4]-[8].
2. **Name a Patron(optional):** Set Patron **Tier** and Obligations.
3. **Create 1-2 :** Name them, pick a Playbook (Combat Ally, Specialist, etc.). Mark Loyalty [6] and Morale [6]. Attach Strings they control.
4. **Pick an Organization(if any):** Mark Cohesion [6]-[8], Heat [6], and Bandwidth (1-3 orders/cycle).
5. **Each Session:** Issue **Asset** Orders, run **Followers** on-scene, confront Events & Audits, and tick Upkeep.

1 Assets and Worldly Patrons

1.1 Core Concepts

Exposure Clock: A unified [8] track measures growing attention from rivals, authorities, and the public. High Exposure increases DV for social actions and triggers audits or attacks.

Resource Status: Assets have a simple status instead of a Resources track:

- **Solvent:** Normal operations (default)
- **Strained:** +1 DV to Cycle rolls; clear with strong hit or capital injection
- **Broke:** Cannot generate yield; must resolve financial crisis

1.2 Asset Sheet (Template)

[AssetNAME]

Type: safehouse / barge company / workshop / archive / shrine / etc.

Locale: district & city

Strings (1–3): permits, seals, routes, rites, keys

Tags (2–4): (See Tag List below)

Tracks:

- **Integrity [6]:** condition/standing; fill → shutdown or seizure
- **Exposure [8]:** attention/risk; fill → audit/attack/crisis
- **Resource Status:** Solvent / Strained / Broke

Projects (0–2): named [4]-[6] clocks for upgrades.

Legacy Notes: campaign events, reputation effects.

Notes: staff names, neighbors, rivals.

1.2.1 Asset Tags (pick 2–4)

- **Fortified:** Shield/Petition here starts Dominant
- **Sanctified:** Breaking rites here ticks Exposure +1
- **Licensed:** Broker/Petition **DV**-1 in license scope
- **Secret:** First expose against you starts Desperate
- **Crowd-Facing:** Audience tags persist +1 scene
- **Hazardous:** On 1s, GM may start Accident [4]
- **Mobile:** Can act in adjacent districts
- **Prestige:** Petition **DV**-1 with elites; scandal risks +1 Exposure
- **Ward-Woven:** Infiltrate starts Desperate without key

1.3 Asset Play

Cycle Roll (Each Downtime): For each asset, roll **Wits + Resource** or **Presence + Command**:

- **Strong Hit:** Asset thrives. Upkeep paid + generate Yield (coin/favor/clue)
- **Partial:** Choose: pay upkeep (no yield) OR generate yield (status → Strained)
- **Miss:** Crisis. Status → Strained/Broke + trigger Event + tick Exposure +1

Asset Orders (Between Sessions): Choose 2 orders per solvent asset:

- **Operate:** Generate Yield + risk Exposure
- **Improve:** Advance Project Clock
- **Secure:** Reduce Exposure -1
- **Expand:** Add new String or Tag

1.4 Worldly Patrons

1.4.1 Patron Sheet (Template)

[PatronNAME]

Type: noble / guild / office / temple / factor

Stance: Allied / Wary / Hostile

Strings (2-3): writs, permits, routes, rites

Obligations: tithes, appearances, tasks

Tracks:

- **Favor Ledger:** favors owed/granted
- **Sanction [4]:** warning → censure → revocation → hunt

Patron Tier: 0 Contact / 1 Sponsor / 2 Patron / 3 Protector

1.4.2 Patron Tiers & Benefits

- **Tier1 — Sponsor:** +1 Position in venues; 1 stipend/session
- **Tier2 — Patron:** Cancel 1 Social **SB**/session; Petition **DV**-1
- **Tier3 — Protector:** Start public scenes Dominant

2 Allies and Adversaries

2.1 Follower Sheets & Templates

2.1.1 Follower Sheet (Template)

[NAME & ROLE]

Tier: Green / Trained / Veteran / Elite

Playbook: Combat / Specialist / Support

Edges (1-2): Special capabilities (e.g., ledger-eye, silent step)

Liabilities (1): Plot hooks (e.g., grudge holder, debt)

Costs: wages / shares / favor

Tracks:

- **Spirit [6]:** loyalty/morale (4-6: Dominant; 2-3: Controlled; 0-1: Desperate/quit)
- **Harm [3]:** minor / serious / broken

2.2 Followers On-Scene

Declare role for each present **Follower**:

- **Assist:** Improve PC's Position +1 or **DV**-1 (once/scene)
- **Cover:** Reduce GM **SB**spend by 1 or cancel tag
- **Delegate:** Independent action (PC coordinates roll)

On partial/miss: tick Spirit or Harm +1

2.3 Organizations

2.3.1 Organization Sheet (Template)

[**OrganizationNAME**]

Tier: street / guild / city / crown

Aim: current seasonal goal

Cohorts (2-3): specialized teams

Tracks:

- **Integrity [8]:** health (5+: Bandwidth 3; 2-4: Bandwidth 2, +1 DV; 0-1: Bandwidth 1, +2 DV)
- **Exposure [6]:** visibility/risk

2.3.2 Organization Orders

- Allocate Bandwidth (based on Integrity)
- Resolve orders with PC roll + **Tier**bonus
- On 1s: tick Exposure or Integrity +1

3 Integrated Procedures

3.1 Events & Complications

Trigger 1-2 between sessions when Exposure 4 or on missed Cycle roll:

- **Inspection [4]:** Official scrutiny
- **Accident [4]:** Mishap with consequences
- **Rival Move:** Theft, poaching, sabotage
- **Obligation Called:** Patron demands immediate service

3.2 Example of Play

Setup: Tollhouse (**Asset:** Licensed, Prestige), Spirit 4, Solvent. Bridge-Lords (**PatronTier**2).

Cycle Roll: Partial → Choose yield (clue) → Status → Strained.

Delegate: Specialist to archives → Partial → gets info but ticks Spirit -1.

Event: Tax Assessor arrives (Inspection [4]) due to Strained status.

Orders: Secure (reduce Exposure) + Improve (project progress).

GM Reference

- Track: Integrity, Exposure, Spirit, Sanction
- Status: Solvent/Strained/Broke
- Tier benefits modify Position/**DV**
- High Exposure/Sanction triggers crises

4 Assets & Worldly Patrons Quickstart (2 minutes)

1. Pick/design an **Asset**; mark **Integrity** [6] and **Resources** [6].
2. Name a **Patron** (optional); set **Patron Tier** and **Obligations**.
3. Attach 1–2 **Strings** (permits, seals, routes, rites).
4. Choose 1–2 **Project Clocks** [4–8] to improve or expand the asset.
5. Each session: issue **Asset Orders**, confront **Events & Audits**, and tick **Upkeep**.

5 Asset Sheet (Template & Tags)

5.1 Asset Sheet (Template)

| |
|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">[ASSET NAME]</p> <p>Type: safehouse / barge company / workshop / archive / shrine / foundry line / office / permit / theatre / farm / mine / caravan yard / canal lock lease</p> <p>Locale: district & city (matters for Position & dials)</p> <p>Strings (1–3): permits, seals, routes, rites, keys</p> <p>Tags (2–4): see tag lists below</p> <p>Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integrity [6]: condition/standing; fill → shutdown, collapse, or seizure - Resources [6]: cashflow, inventory, staff slack; empty → shortages/concessions - Heat [6] (optional): locals' attention; fill → protest, inquiry, rough visit <p>Projects (0–3): named [4–8] clocks to upgrade, expand, or pivot</p> <p>Upkeep: coin/favor/rites required each cycle (choose 1–2)</p> <p>Legacy Notes: campaign events, reputation effects, historical significance</p> <p>Notes: staff names, neighbors, rivals, liens</p> |
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5.2 Asset Tags (pick 2–4)

- **Fortified** (doors, shutters, hidden room) — *Shield/Petition* here starts **Dominant**.
- **Sanctified** (rites, hospitality) — breaking rites here ticks **Heat +1** (offender).
- **Licensed** (writ, seal) — *Broker/Petition DV –1* in scope of license.
- **Secret** (concealed use) — first *Expose* against you here starts **Desperate** for the attacker.
- **Crowd-Facing** (shop, theater) — *Audience tags* created here persist an extra scene.
- **Hazardous** (kilns, reagents) — on 1s, GM may start **Accident [4]** instead of other SB spend.
- **Mobile** (barge/caravan) — can act in adjacent districts without penalty.
- **Prestige** (old name, art) — *Petition* here **DV –1** with patricians; *Blackmail +1 SB* against you if scandal hits.
- **Ward-Woven** (sigils, bells) — *Infiltrate* here starts **Desperate** unless key is held.
- **Unionized** — *Strike* is a valid Event; *Broker* with unions here starts **Dominant**.
- **Shadowed** (underworld ties) — *Smuggle DV –1*; *Expose Position –1* against you.
- **Water-Right** — acts as a **String** for bridges/canals toll negotiation.
- **Archive** — *Research/Expose DV –1* with proof assembled here.

5.3 Integrity & Resources

- **Integrity [6]** ticks from sabotage, audits, disasters, or neglect. At fill: choose **Shutdown**, **Seizure**, or a **Catastrophe** scene.
- **Resources [6]** drop from upkeep, shocks, strikes; refill via Orders, scenes, or Projects. If Resources = 0, future Upkeep requires **Favor** or a concession clock.

6 Asset Play

6.1 Acting Through an Asset (On-Scene)

Stage a scene at or with an asset; apply its Tags and Strings to Position/DV like any venue. A named staffer may act as a *Follower* or as a cohort (tick **Integrity** instead of Harm on failures).

6.2 Upkeep & Yield (Each Cycle)

- **Upkeep:** Pay 1–2 of coin/favor/rite. If skipped: tick **Resources –1** and start **Creditor [4]** or **Inspection [4]**.

- **Yield:** If **Resources** ≥ 3 and no active **Accident/Inspection**, gain one: coin, **Favor (narrow)**, **Clue**, or **Leverage (1)** themed to the asset.

6.3 Asset Orders (Between Sessions)

Choose up to **2 orders** per session per asset (1 if **Resources** ≤ 2):

- **Operate:** generate Yield with risk (on 1s, tick **Heat** +1 or **Integrity** +1).
- **Improve:** advance a **Project** [4–8].
- **Secure:** reduce **Heat** –1 or add a **Security** tag for one scene.
- **Expand:** start a new Project to add a String (route, permit, office).
- **Audit:** convert one unspent Favor at this venue into **Standing (Tag)** after proof.
- **Exploit:** trade 1 **Integrity** for immediate coin + Favor; mark **Heat** +1 to someone.

Resolution The directing PC rolls once per order (appropriate action). Tier/Tags adjust Position/DV. On hits, apply the order effect; on 1s, GM banks SB and hits Heat/Integrity/Heat.

7 Campaign Continuity

7.1 Asset Legacy System

Assets evolve and leave marks across campaigns through their **Legacy Notes**:

- **Reputation Effects:** Notorious (feared), Respected (trusted), Infamous (recognized), Legendary (historical significance)
- **Historical Events:** Siege Survived, Scandal Weathered, Expansion Completed, Crisis Averted
- **Relationship Changes:** Patron Gained/Lost, Rival Created/Resolved, Community Bond/Feud
- **Physical Evolution:** Renovated, Damaged, Expanded, Relocated

Legacy Benefits: Assets with positive legacy gain +1 Resources or +1 Integrity at start of new campaigns.

Legacy Burdens: Assets with negative legacy start with Heat +2 or Sanction +1 with relevant patrons.

7.2 Patron Relationship Continuity

Worldly Patron relationships persist with modified standing:

- **Active Patrons:** Reduce Tier by 1 but retain 1 Standing tag
- **Dormant Patrons:** Convert Tier to Favor Ledger entries; can be reactivated
- **Former Patrons:** Become Rivals [4] or Contacts [4] based on ending relationship
- **Legacy Patrons:** Historical figures whose mandates still influence current politics

7.3 Campaign Transition Events

At campaign end/beginning, roll for transition events:

- **Economic Shift (d6):** 1-2 Resources +1, 3-4 No change, 5-6 Resources -1
- **Political Change (d6):** 1-2 Gain new patron opportunity, 3-4 Status quo, 5-6 Lose a patron string
- **Physical Event (d6):** 1-2 Asset improves, 3-4 No change, 5-6 Asset takes Integrity -1

8 Worldly

Patrons

8.1 Patron

Sheet

(Template)

| |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">[PATRON NAME]</p> <p>Type: noble / guild / office / temple / factor / satrap / councilor</p> <p>Stance toward PCs: Allied / Wary / Hostile</p> <p>Strings (3): writs, permits, routes, rites, audiences</p> <p>Boons: what they can grant (seals, escorts, stipends, protection)</p> <p>Obligations: tithes, appearances, tasks, ideological lines</p> <p>Tracks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Favor Ledger (narrow favors owed or granted) - Sanction [4]: warning → censure → seizure/revocation → hunt/prosecution - Patron Heat [6]: public risk to them from association with you <p>Patron Tier: 0 Contact / 1 Sponsor / 2 Patron / 3 Protector</p> <p>Mandate/Crisis Effects: how their public wins/losses alter your Position/Heat in their venues</p> <p>Legacy Status: Historical role, ongoing influence, campaign connections</p> |
|---|

8.2 Patron

Tiers

&

Benefits

- **Tier 0 — Contact:** 1 **Audience**/session; one minor seal once.
- **Tier 1 — Sponsor:** +1 **Position** once/scene in their venues; 1 **Stipend**/session (coin or permit access).
- **Tier 2 — Patron:** cancel **one Social SB** per session in public; **DV -1** on *Petition* to their offices; claim **Escort** once.
- **Tier 3 — Protector:** start public scenes **Dominant** in their venues; **Endorsement** creates a 4-clock *Bandwagon* on targets.

Advance a Tier Hold **Standing** with them or convert **3 favors** into **Standing** and complete a **Patron Task [4–6]** on-screen.

8.3 Obligations

&

Sanctions

- **Obligations:** tithe; keep scandal quiet; show at rites; take contracts; avoid rivals; uphold a doctrine. Skipping two cycles: tick **Sanction +1**.
- **Sanction [4]:** *Admonish* (lose once/scene **Position** boost) → *Censure* (no stipends; add **Audience: Skeptical**) → *Seizure/Revocation* (lose a String or asset tag) → *Hunt/Prosecution* (start **Warrant [6]**).
- **Patron Heat [6]:** Your public failures can tick this; at fill they *distance* (Tier -1) or *flip* to Hostile.

8.4 Bargaining

Procedure

(Negotiation

Scene)

Frame: what boon you want and what obligations you accept.

Set: venue tags; your Reputation/Standing apply; use *Petition/Broker/Expose*.

On hit: gain the boon; write the Obligation and tick Favor Ledger ± as appropriate.

On 1s: GM may add a secret clause, leak leverage, or start **Rival Patron [4]**.

8.5 Multiple

Patrons

You may keep two active patrons without penalty. A third creates **Split Loyalty [4]**; on fill, one patron issues an ultimatum: choose, public denunciation, or give up a String.

9 Events,

Audits,

&

Market

Shocks

Roll or draw 1–2 between sessions per active asset/patronage.

- **Inspection:** start **Inspection [4]**; on fill, tick **Integrity +1** or **Sanction +1**.

- **Accident: Accident** [4] threatens staff; on fill, Integrity +1 and **Audience: Fearful**.
- **Shortages: Resources** −1 and start **Short Rations** [4].
- **Tax/Lease Hike:** choose coin cost or **Sanction** +1.
- **Rival Claim:** assert prior right; start **Litigation** [6] or **Duel of Proof** [4].
- **Rumor Run:** if *Crowd-Facing*, add **Skeptical**; if *Prestige*, add **Fascinated** (cuts both ways).
- **Favor Called:** a patron demands service; refuse → **Sanction** +1.

10 Blueprints (Projects & Upgrades)

Pick a **Project** [4–8] to install a blueprint; on fill, add the effect and tag.

- **Safehouse (4):** add *Fortified* + *Secret*; gain **Leverage (1)** once/session from stashed goods.
- **Workshop (6):** add *Hazardous*; once/session, turn coin → **Clue/Prototype** tag.
- **Archive Annex (6):** add *Archive*; *Research/Expose* DV −1 here; bank **1 Clue** each cycle if Upkeep is paid.
- **Shrine-Nave (6):** add *Sanctified*; once/session *Host Rite* starts **Dominant**.
- **Barge Fleet (8):** add *Mobile* + *Water-Right*; once/session move a scene to adjacent district at same Position.
- **Guard Contract (6):** add *Licensed*; once/session *Call the Watch* auto-succeeds at minor level.
- **Union Hall (6):** add *Unionized*; once/session flip a **Strike** counter one step toward peace (if dues paid).
- **Playhouse Front (4):** add *Crowd-Facing*; create Audience tags more easily; once/session convert **Audience: Warm** to **Favor (narrow)**.

11 Regional Kits (Examples)

Mid Ahkaz — Violet Steppe/Meadows

Assets: Caravan Yard (Mobile, Licensed); Dye Vault (Hazardous, Secret).

Patrons: Coin-Weigh Tribunal (Sponsor→Patron), Oasis Clans (Protector with water rites).

Events: forged Water Share deeds; desert guides strike; curfew at Steppe Gate.

Ecktoria — Marble & Fire

Assets: Aqueduct Valve Lease (Licensed, Ward-Woven); Foundry Line (Hazardous, Unionized).

Patrons: Imperial Exarchate (audit stipends), Legions Remnant (escort writs).

Events: water theft panic; audit sweep; relic procession crowds disrupt supply.

Silkstrand — City of Bridges

Assets: Tollhouse on Archivolt (Licensed, Prestige); Playhouse (Crowd-Facing, Secret).

Patrons: Bridge-Lords (tolls), Playhouse Guild (licenses).

Events: fog bell failure; satire lawsuit; Night Keys leak.

Thepyrgos — Synod & Collegium

Assets: Harbor Pilot Office (Water-Right, Licensed); Scriptorium Desk (Archive, Prestige).

Patrons: Archons' Synod (writs), Collegium (oath registry).

Events: censure threat; procession scandal; tithe curse.

Zakov — Iron River, Ash Lanterns

Assets: Ash-Lantern Line (Licensed, Hazardous); Smugglers' Cut Lease (Shadowed, Mobile).

Patrons: Ironmasters' Collegium (ore contracts), Lantern Wardens (curfews).

Events: ash curfew; lantern line failure; picket riots.

12 Example of Play (short)

Setup: PCs lease a *Tollhouse* (Licensed, Prestige) in Silkstrand. Integrity 4/6, Resources 3/6. Patron: *Bridge-Lords* (Tier 1 Sponsor; Obligations: dues, public decorum).

Scene — Petition: They seek a *Tariff Exemption* for a festival barge. Position **Dominant** (Prestige + patron venue). DV 3. Strong hit: gain the boon; Favor Ledger +1; GM banks SB from a rolled 1 →

Rumor Run starts.

Orders: *Operate* (yield coin; a 1 ticks Heat +1). *Improve* (Archive Annex [6] +1 segment).

Event: Inspection [4] begins. PCs *Secure* next cycle; on a hit reduce Heat -1. A satirical Playhouse offers help for a cut—risking **Patron Heat** if mocked.

Dilemma: A rival **Patron** (Playhouse Guild) offers Tier 2 if they host a scandalous masque; **Split Loyalty [4]** begins. On fill, Bridge-Lords demand: cancel the masque or surrender *Night Keys (String)*. **Campaign Transition:** At arc's end, roll Economic Shift (d6: 3 = No change), Political Change (d6: 1 = Gain new patron opportunity), Physical Event (d6: 6 = Asset takes Integrity -1). Tollhouse becomes "Notorious" legacy with "Scandal Weathered" event.

GM Reference (one page)

- **Asset Tracks:** Integrity [6] (fill = shutdown/seizure), Resources [6] (0 = shortages), Heat [6] (fill = rough visit/audit).
- **Orders:** Operate • Improve • Secure • Expand • Audit • Exploit.
- **Upkeep/Yield:** pay costs → choose coin/Favor/Clue/Leverage if safe.
- **Patron Tiers:** 0 Contact • 1 Sponsor (+Pos once/scene; 1 stipend) • 2 Patron (cancel 1 Social SB; DV -1 to Petition) • 3 Protector (start Dominant; Bandwagon clock).
- **Sanctions:** Admonish → Censure → Seizure/Revocation → Hunt/Prosecution.
- **Events:** Inspection • Accident • Shortages • Tax/Lease Hike • Rival Claim • Rumor Run • Favor Called.
- **Continuity:** Legacy effects modify starting conditions; patrons retain Standing; transition events reshape holdings.

Assets & Worldly Patrons

A Fate's Edge module for holdings, leases, and mortal patronage

Version 0.2 (Playtest Revised)

Design Goals

- **Make holdings matter:** Assets have tags, strings, upkeep, and project clocks that change scenes.
- **Patrons with teeth:** Patronage brings Position, seals, and coin—and obligations, audits, and scandals.
- **Use the core:** Position/DV, SB, clocks, Favor/Leverage/Heat, Reputation, Strings. No new dice math.
- **Low bookkeeping:** Track names, tags, and a few clocks; orders and events move the world.
- **Campaign continuity:** Assets and patrons persist and evolve across story arcs.

Quickstart (2 minutes)

1. Pick/design an **Asset**; mark **Integrity [6]** and **Resources [6]**.
2. Name a **Patron** (optional); set **Patron Tier** and **Obligations**.
3. Attach 1–2 **Strings** (permits, seals, routes, rites).
4. Choose 1–2 **Project Clocks [4–8]** to improve or expand the asset.
5. Each session: issue **Asset Orders**, confront **Events & Audits**, and tick **Upkeep**.

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13 Asset Sheet (Template & Tags)

13.1 Asset Sheet (Template)

[ASSET NAME]

Type: safehouse / barge company / workshop / archive / shrine / foundry line / office / permit / theatre / farm / mine / caravan yard / canal lock lease

Locale: district & city (matters for Position & dials)

Strings (1–3): permits, seals, routes, rites, keys

Tags (2–4): see tag lists below

Tracks:

- Integrity [6]: condition/standing; fill → shutdown, collapse, or seizure
- Resources [6]: cashflow, inventory, staff slack; empty → shortages/concessions
- Heat [6] (optional): locals' attention; fill → protest, inquiry, rough visit

Projects (0–3): named [4–8] clocks to upgrade, expand, or pivot

Upkeep: coin/favor/rites required each cycle (choose 1–2)

Legacy Notes: campaign events, reputation effects, historical significance

Notes: staff names, neighbors, rivals, liens

13.2 Asset Tags (pick 2–4)

- **Fortified** (doors, shutters, hidden room) — *Shield/Petition* here starts **Dominant**.
- **Sanctified** (rites, hospitality) — breaking rites here ticks **Heat +1** (offender).
- **Licensed** (writ, seal) — *Broker/Petition DV –1* in scope of license.
- **Secret** (concealed use) — first *Expose* against you here starts **Desperate** for the attacker.
- **Crowd-Facing** (shop, theater) — *Audience tags* created here persist an extra scene.
- **Hazardous** (kilns, reagents) — on 1s, GM may start **Accident [4]** instead of other SB spend.
- **Mobile** (barge/caravan) — can act in adjacent districts without penalty.
- **Prestige** (old name, art) — *Petition* here **DV –1** with patricians; *Blackmail +1 SB* against you if scandal hits.
- **Ward-Woven** (sigils, bells) — *Infiltrate* here starts **Desperate** unless key is held.
- **Unionized** — *Strike* is a valid Event; *Broker* with unions here starts **Dominant**.
- **Shadowed** (underworld ties) — *Smuggle DV –1*; *Expose Position –1* against you.
- **Water-Right** — acts as a **String** for bridges/canals toll negotiation.
- **Archive** — *Research/Expose DV –1* with proof assembled here.

13.3 Integrity & Resources

- **Integrity [6]** ticks from sabotage, audits, disasters, or neglect. At fill: choose **Shutdown**, **Seizure**, or a **Catastrophe** scene.
- **Resources [6]** drop from upkeep, shocks, strikes; refill via Orders, scenes, or Projects. If Resources = 0, future Upkeep requires **Favor** or a concession clock.

14 Asset Play

14.1 Acting Through an Asset (On-Scene)

Stage a scene at or with an asset; apply its Tags and Strings to Position/DV like any venue. A named staffer may act as a *Follower* or as a cohort (tick **Integrity** instead of Harm on failures).

14.2 Upkeep & Yield (Each Cycle)

- **Upkeep:** Pay 1–2 of coin/favor/rite. If skipped: tick **Resources –1** and start **Creditor [4]** or **Inspection [4]**.

- **Yield:** If **Resources** ≥ 3 and no active **Accident/Inspection**, gain one: coin, **Favor (narrow)**, **Clue**, or **Leverage (1)** themed to the asset.

14.3 Asset Orders (Between Sessions)

Choose up to **2 orders** per session per asset (1 if **Resources** ≤ 2):

- **Operate:** generate Yield with risk (on 1s, tick **Heat** +1 or **Integrity** +1).
- **Improve:** advance a **Project** [4–8].
- **Secure:** reduce **Heat** –1 or add a **Security** tag for one scene.
- **Expand:** start a new Project to add a String (route, permit, office).
- **Audit:** convert one unspent Favor at this venue into **Standing (Tag)** after proof.
- **Exploit:** trade 1 **Integrity** for immediate coin + Favor; mark **Heat** +1 to someone.

Resolution The directing PC rolls once per order (appropriate action). Tier/Tags adjust Position/DV. On hits, apply the order effect; on 1s, GM banks SB and hits Heat/Integrity/Heat.

15 Campaign Continuity

15.1 Asset Legacy System

Assets evolve and leave marks across campaigns through their **Legacy Notes**:

- **Reputation Effects:** Notorious (feared), Respected (trusted), Infamous (recognized), Legendary (historical significance)
- **Historical Events:** Siege Survived, Scandal Weathered, Expansion Completed, Crisis Averted
- **Relationship Changes:** Patron Gained/Lost, Rival Created/Resolved, Community Bond/Feud
- **Physical Evolution:** Renovated, Damaged, Expanded, Relocated

Legacy Benefits: Assets with positive legacy gain +1 **Resources** or +1 **Integrity** at start of new campaigns.

Legacy Burdens: Assets with negative legacy start with **Heat** +2 or **Sanction** +1 with relevant patrons.

15.2 Patron Relationship Continuity

Worldly Patron relationships persist with modified standing:

- **Active Patrons:** Reduce Tier by 1 but retain 1 Standing tag
- **Dormant Patrons:** Convert Tier to Favor Ledger entries; can be reactivated
- **Former Patrons:** Become Rivals [4] or Contacts [4] based on ending relationship
- **Legacy Patrons:** Historical figures whose mandates still influence current politics

15.3 Campaign Transition Events

At campaign end/beginning, roll for transition events:

- **Economic Shift (d6):** 1-2 **Resources** +1, 3-4 No change, 5-6 **Resources** -1
- **Political Change (d6):** 1-2 Gain new patron opportunity, 3-4 Status quo, 5-6 Lose a patron string
- **Physical Event (d6):** 1-2 Asset improves, 3-4 No change, 5-6 Asset takes **Integrity** -1

16 Worldly Patrons

16.1 Patron Sheet (Template)

[PATRON NAME]**Type:** noble / guild / office / temple / factor / satrap / councilor**Stance toward PCs:** Allied / Wary / Hostile**Strings (3):** writs, permits, routes, rites, audiences**Boons:** what they can grant (seals, escorts, stipends, protection)**Obligations:** tithes, appearances, tasks, ideological lines**Tracks:**

- Favor Ledger (narrow favors owed or granted)
- Sanction [4]: warning → censure → seizure/revocation → hunt/prosecution
- Patron Heat [6]: public risk to them from association with you

Patron Tier: 0 Contact / 1 Sponsor / 2 Patron / 3 Protector**Mandate/Crisis Effects:** how their public wins/losses alter your Position/Heat in their venues**Legacy Status:** Historical role, ongoing influence, campaign connections**16.2 Patron Tiers & Benefits**

- **Tier 0 — Contact:** 1 **Audience**/session; one minor seal once.
- **Tier 1 — Sponsor:** +1 **Position** once/scene in their venues; 1 **Stipend**/session (coin or permit access).
- **Tier 2 — Patron:** cancel **one Social SB** per session in public; **DV -1** on *Petition* to their offices; claim **Escort** once.
- **Tier 3 — Protector:** start public scenes **Dominant** in their venues; **Endorsement** creates a 4-clock *Bandwagon* on targets.

Advance a Tier Hold **Standing** with them or convert **3 favors** into Standing and complete a **Patron Task** [4–6] on-screen.

16.3 Obligations & Sanctions

- **Obligations:** tithe; keep scandal quiet; show at rites; take contracts; avoid rivals; uphold a doctrine. Skipping two cycles: tick **Sanction +1**.
- **Sanction [4]:** *Admonish* (lose once/scene Position boost) → *Censure* (no stipends; add **Audience: Skeptical**) → *Seizure/Revocation* (lose a String or asset tag) → *Hunt/Prosecution* (start **Warrant [6]**).
- **Patron Heat [6]:** Your public failures can tick this; at fill they *distance* (Tier -1) or *flip* to Hostile.

16.4 Bargaining Procedure (Negotiation Scene)**Frame:** what boon you want and what obligations you accept.**Set:** venue tags; your Reputation/Standing apply; use *Petition/Broker/Expose*.**On hit:** gain the boon; write the Obligation and tick Favor Ledger ± as appropriate.**On 1s:** GM may add a secret clause, leak leverage, or start **Rival Patron [4]**.**16.5 Multiple Patrons**

You may keep two active patrons without penalty. A third creates **Split Loyalty [4]**; on fill, one patron issues an ultimatum: choose, public denunciation, or give up a String.

17 Events, Audits, & Market Shocks

Roll or draw 1–2 between sessions per active asset/patronage.

- **Inspection:** start **Inspection [4]**; on fill, tick **Integrity +1** or **Sanction +1**.
- **Accident:** **Accident [4]** threatens staff; on fill, Integrity +1 and **Audience: Fearful**.
- **Shortages:** **Resources -1** and start **Short Rations [4]**.
- **Tax/Lease Hike:** choose coin cost or **Sanction +1**.

- **Rival Claim:** assert prior right; start **Litigation** [6] or **Duel of Proof** [4].
- **Rumor Run:** if *Crowd-Facing*, add **Skeptical**; if *Prestige*, add **Fascinated** (cuts both ways).
- **Favor Called:** a patron demands service; refuse → **Sanction** +1.

18 Blueprints (Projects & Upgrades)

Pick a **Project** [4–8] to install a blueprint; on fill, add the effect and tag.

- **Safehouse (4):** add *Fortified* + *Secret*; gain **Leverage (1)** once/session from stashed goods.
- **Workshop (6):** add *Hazardous*; once/session, turn coin → **Clue/Prototype** tag.
- **Archive Annex (6):** add *Archive*; *Research/Expose* DV –1 here; bank **1 Clue** each cycle if Upkeep is paid.
- **Shrine-Nave (6):** add *Sanctified*; once/session *Host Rite* starts **Dominant**.
- **Barge Fleet (8):** add *Mobile* + *Water-Right*; once/session move a scene to adjacent district at same Position.
- **Guard Contract (6):** add *Licensed*; once/session *Call the Watch* auto-succeeds at minor level.
- **Union Hall (6):** add *Unionized*; once/session flip a **Strike** counter one step toward peace (if dues paid).
- **Playhouse Front (4):** add *Crowd-Facing*; create Audience tags more easily; once/session convert **Audience: Warm** to **Favor (narrow)**.

19 Regional Kits (Examples)

Mid Ahkaz — Violet Steppe/Meadows

Assets: Caravan Yard (Mobile, Licensed); Dye Vault (Hazardous, Secret).

Patrons: Coin-Weigh Tribunal (Sponsor→Patron), Oasis Clans (Protector with water rites).

Events: forged Water Share deeds; desert guides strike; curfew at Steppe Gate.

Ecktoria — Marble & Fire

Assets: Aqueduct Valve Lease (Licensed, Ward-Woven); Foundry Line (Hazardous, Unionized).

Patrons: Imperial Exarchate (audit stipends), Legions Remnant (escort writs).

Events: water theft panic; audit sweep; relic procession crowds disrupt supply.

Silkstrand — City of Bridges

Assets: Tollhouse on Archivolt (Licensed, Prestige); Playhouse (Crowd-Facing, Secret).

Patrons: Bridge-Lords (tolls), Playhouse Guild (licenses).

Events: fog bell failure; satire lawsuit; Night Keys leak.

Thepyrgos — Synod & Collegium

Assets: Harbor Pilot Office (Water-Right, Licensed); Scriptorium Desk (Archive, Prestige).

Patrons: Archons' Synod (writs), Collegium (oath registry).

Events: censure threat; procession scandal; tithe curse.

Zakov — Iron River, Ash Lanterns

Assets: Ash-Lantern Line (Licensed, Hazardous); Smugglers' Cut Lease (Shadowed, Mobile).

Patrons: Ironmasters' Collegium (ore contracts), Lantern Wardens (curfews).

Events: ash curfew; lantern line failure; picket riots.

20 Example of Play (short)

Setup: PCs lease a *Tollhouse* (Licensed, Prestige) in Silkstrand. Integrity 4/6, Resources 3/6. Patron: *Bridge-Lords* (Tier 1 Sponsor; Obligations: dues, public decorum).

Scene — Petition: They seek a *Tariff Exemption* for a festival barge. Position **Dominant** (Prestige + patron venue). DV 3. Strong hit: gain the boon; Favor Ledger +1; GM banks SB from a rolled 1 → **Rumor Run** starts.

Orders: *Operate* (yield coin; a 1 ticks Heat +1). *Improve* (Archive Annex [6] +1 segment).

Event: Inspection [4] begins. PCs *Secure* next cycle; on a hit reduce Heat -1. A satirical Playhouse offers help for a cut—risking **Patron Heat** if mocked.

Dilemma: A rival **Patron** (Playhouse Guild) offers Tier 2 if they host a scandalous masque; **Split Loyalty** [4] begins. On fill, Bridge-Lords demand: cancel the masque or surrender *Night Keys* (*String*).

Campaign Transition: At arc's end, roll Economic Shift (d6: 3 = No change), Political Change (d6: 1 = Gain new patron opportunity), Physical Event (d6: 6 = Asset takes Integrity -1). Tollhouse becomes "Notorious" legacy with "Scandal Weathered" event.

GM Reference (one page)

- **Asset Tracks:** Integrity [6] (fill = shutdown/seizure), Resources [6] (0 = shortages), Heat [6] (fill = rough visit/audit).
- **Orders:** Operate • Improve • Secure • Expand • Audit • Exploit.
- **Upkeep/Yield:** pay costs → choose coin/Favor/Clue/Leverage if safe.
- **Patron Tiers:** 0 Contact • 1 Sponsor (+Pos once/scene; 1 stipend) • 2 Patron (cancel 1 Social SB; DV -1 to Petition) • 3 Protector (start Dominant; Bandwagon clock).
- **Sanctions:** Admonish → Censure → Seizure/Revocation → Hunt/Prosecution.
- **Events:** Inspection • Accident • Shortages • Tax/Lease Hike • Rival Claim • Rumor Run • Favor Called.
- **Continuity:** Legacy effects modify starting conditions; patrons retain Standing; transition events reshape holdings.

Changelog

v0.2 — Added Campaign Continuity section with Legacy System, Patron Relationship Continuity, and Transition Events. Enhanced templates with Legacy Notes and Status fields.

v0.1 — First pass with Asset/Patron sheets, tags, orders & upkeep, patron tiers/obligations/sanctions, events & blueprints, regional examples, and a worked example of play.

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

21 Integration & Cross-System Play

21.1 The Web of Influence

Assets, Patrons, Followers, and Organizations don't exist in isolation—they form an interconnected web where each element supports and complicates the others. Understanding these connections is key to Tier III+ play.

21.2 Asset-Patron Synergies

- **Patron Venue Bonus:** When using an asset that aligns with your patron's domain (e.g., Bridge-Lords patron + Tollhouse asset), gain +1 Position for related actions at that location.
- **Strings as Leverage:** Patron-granted strings can be used to improve asset projects. Spending a patron string gives +2 segments on a relevant project clock.
- **Obligation Mitigation:** A well-maintained asset can absorb minor patron obligations. Mark asset Integrity -1 instead of ticking Sanction +1 for missed minor obligations.

21.3 Follower-Asset Operations

- **Staff Roles:** Assign followers to manage assets. A follower with relevant edges reduces Cycle Roll DV by 1 for that asset.
- **Delegated Security:** A follower assigned to **Cover** role at an asset can automatically counter one minor Event per cycle without requiring a player order.
- **Morale from Success:** Successful asset operations (strong hits on Cycle Rolls) give +1 Spirit to followers assigned to that asset.

21.4 Organization-Asset Scale

- **Cohort as Staff:** Organization cohorts can staff assets, providing the benefits of multiple followers without individual Spirit tracking.
- **Asset as Organization Base:** An asset with appropriate tags (Fortified, Archive, etc.) gives +1 Integrity to an organization using it as headquarters.
- **Cross-Contamination:** High Exposure on an asset spreads to organizations based there (tick Organization Exposure +1 when asset Exposure reaches 6+).

21.5 Cross-System Downtime Procedure

Use this unified procedure between sessions:

21.5.1 1. Resource Phase

1. Resolve **Cycle Rolls** for all assets
2. Pay **Upkeep** for assets and followers
3. Generate **Yield** from successful operations

21.5.2 2. Order Phase

1. Allocate **Asset Orders** (2 per solvent asset)
2. Issue **Organization Orders** (based on Bandwidth)
3. Assign **Follower Tasks** (Delegate, Assist, Cover)

21.5.3 3. Event Phase

1. Trigger 1-2 **Events** based on highest Exposure level
2. Resolve **Patron Obligations** or tick Sanction
3. Advance **Project Clocks** from successful orders

21.6 Crisis Chain Reactions

High pressure in one system spills into others:

- **Asset Crisis → Patron Problems:** Asset Integrity failure ticks Patron Sanction +1
- **Patron Scandal → Follower Doubts:** Patron Sanction at 3+ gives -2 Spirit to all followers
- **Follower Betrayal → Organization Schism:** Follower at 0 Spirit may trigger Organization Integrity -2
- **Organization Collapse → Asset Vulnerability:** Organization Integrity failure removes asset security tags

21.7 Cross-System Bonus Actions

Once per session, you can perform these combined actions:

21.7.1 Patron-Asset Gambit

Spend a patron favor to automatically succeed on one asset order, but tick both Exposure and Sanction +1.

21.7.2 Follower-Organization Maneuver

Delegate a follower to lead an organization cohort. Use the follower's edges and the cohort's scale for +1 Effect on organization orders.

21.7.3 Asset-Organization Project

Commit both asset resources and organization bandwidth to a project. Complete a [8] clock in one cycle but risk Exposure +2.

21.8 Integrated Threat Assessment

Use this matrix to gauge cross-system risk:

p3cmp3cmp3cm **Low Risk** **Medium Risk** **High Risk**

All Exposure 3 Any Exposure = 4-5 Any Exposure 6
 All Integrity 4 Any Integrity = 2-3 Any Integrity 1
 Spirit all 3 Any Spirit = 1-2 Any Spirit = 0
 Sanction = 0 Sanction = 1-2 Sanction 3

GM Tip: When 2+ systems enter High Risk, trigger a compound crisis that requires addressing multiple problems simultaneously.

21.9 Progressive Unlock Pattern

As parties advance through tiers, systems unlock naturally:

- **Tier II:** First asset + Tier 1 patron
- **Tier III:** Second asset + Tier 2 patron + 1-2 followers
- **Tier IV:** Organization + Tier 3 patron + asset network
- **Tier V:** Multiple organizations + patron alliances + regional influence

21.10 Troubleshooting Integration

- **Too Many Clocks?** Combine related clocks (e.g., asset Exposure and patron Sanction can share a unified "Trouble" clock)
- **Overwhelmed Players?** Let them focus on one system per session—assets one session, organizations the next
- **Balance Issues?** Remember that scale brings vulnerability—more assets means more Exposure vectors
- **Narrative Drift?** Tie all systems to character goals—every asset should serve a character's ambition

21.11 Example: The Duskwardens' Web

The party's interconnected systems create emergent gameplay:

- **Tollhouse (Asset)** provides base for **Protective Association (Organization)**
- **Bridge-Lords (Patron)** grant legitimacy to both asset and organization
- **Jensen (Follower)** manages day-to-day operations, linking all systems
- **Crisis:** High Exposure from tollhouse operations threatens patron relationship, which could collapse organization funding, testing follower loyalty

This creates meaningful choices: sacrifice asset integrity to protect patron standing? Risk follower spirit to save organization cohesion?

The true power of these systems emerges in their interaction. A well-managed web provides compounding benefits, while neglect in one area can unravel everything.

22 Villains: Narrative Engines of Change

22.1 Introduction: Villains as Narrative Engines

In Fate's Edge, villains are not merely obstacles to be overcome—they are narrative forces that shape the world and drive the story. The best villains in this system are not defined by their hit points or damage output, but by their impact on the world and the choices they force the players to make.

This chapter provides GMs with tools for creating villains that are:

- **Narrative Engines:** Forces that drive the plot forward
- **Systemic Challenges:** Problems that require more than combat to resolve
- **Living Worlds:** Villains who react to player actions
- **Thematic Forces:** Embodiments of the campaign's core themes

Design Philosophy: Villains should never feel like static obstacles but dynamic elements that evolve alongside the campaign.

22.2 The Villain Spectrum: From Obstacle to Catalyst

Fate's Edge villains exist on a spectrum of narrative impact:

| Type | Description | Example | Best For |
|------------|--|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Obstacle | Minor barrier to overcome | Bandit leader | Early Tier I sessions |
| Adversary | Direct opponent with clear goals | Rival explorer | Mid-tier, character-focused stories |
| Rival | Equal threat who may become ally | Noble house leader | Political drama |
| Antagonist | Central to the plot, drives the story | Usurper king | Mid-tier campaigns |
| Catalyst | Doesn't need to be "beaten"—creates lasting change | The Shattered Crown | High-tier campaigns |

22.3 The Villain Construction Toolkit

22.3.1 Core Villain Blueprint

Every villain in Fate's Edge should have:

- **The Drive (Heart):** What do they want and why? (Not just "world domination" but their personal, emotional reason)
- **The Structure (Spades):** How do they operate? Their organization, resources, and methods
- **The Complication (Clubs):** What makes them dangerous beyond raw power?
- **The Reward (Diamonds):** What the players gain by defeating them (not just loot but narrative currency)

Example: Lord Silas (The Merchant Prince)

- **Drive:** To prove his family's merchant house is the only one worthy of ruling the trade routes

- **Structure:** A vast commercial empire, with networks in every port city
- **Complication:** His power is diffused; attacking him means angering neutral merchants
- **Reward:** Control of the trade routes, or exposure of his corruption

22.3.2 Villain Clocks

Rather than hit points, villains are tracked through narrative clocks:

- **Influence Clock (6-8 segments):** How much control they have over the world
- **Momentum Clock (6 segments):** How close they are to achieving their goal
- **Moral Clock (4-6 segments):** How far they've strayed from their original ideals
- **Alliance Clock (4 segments):** Who still stands with them

Example: The Usurper King

- Influence: 4/8 (controls capital, but not the countryside)
- Momentum: 3/6 (gathering forces for invasion)
- Moral: 2/4 (killed one noble, now justifying more)
- Alliance: 3/4 (most nobles oppose him, but he has the army)

22.3.3 The Villain's Action Economy

Villains don't just wait to be fought—they act on their own timeline:

- **Strategic Actions:** The villain's major moves (1 per scene)
- **Tactical Actions:** Reactions to player actions (1 per clock segment filled)
- **Environmental Actions:** How the villain shapes the world around them

22.4 Villain Archetypes for Fate's Edge

22.4.1 The Systemic Villain

Core Concept: Not a person but a system, institution, or force that must be reformed or dismantled.

Examples:

- The Guild of Silent Traders (corrupt merchant guild)
- The Clockwork System (oppressive bureaucracy)
- The War Machine (endless conflict)

Mechanics:

- Multiple clocks representing different facets
- Defeat requires changing the system, not killing a leader
- Player actions affect multiple clocks simultaneously

Example: The Fractured Guild

- **Structure:** Divided into warring merchant houses
- **Complication:** Any action strengthens one house while weakening another
- **Defeat Path:** Reunite the guild or replace it with something new

22.4.2 The Mirror Villain

Core Concept: A dark reflection of the PCs, showing what they could become.

Examples:

- A former ally who took a different path
- A future version of one of the players
- Someone who shares the PCs' goals but disagrees on methods

Mechanics:

- Shared clocks with the PCs (Moral Clocks, Relationship Clocks)
- Defeat is not always destruction—may require redemption or integration
- Player choices directly impact the villain's path

Example: The Shadow Chancellor

- **Drive:** To reform the government by any means necessary
- **Mirror Trait:** Willing to sacrifice principles for the greater good
- **Defeat Path:** Can be recruited to the cause or must be stopped

22.4.3 The Unbeatable Villain

Core Concept: A threat the players cannot defeat through force, only outmaneuver.

Examples:

- A plague that can't be cured
- A prophecy that seems inevitable
- A force of nature

Mechanics:

- No "defeat" clock—only alternative paths
- Player success is measured by reducing consequences
- Often requires redefining what "victory" means

Example: The Drowning City

- **Drive:** Natural disaster (rising sea levels)
- **Complication:** The city must be saved or abandoned
- **Defeat Path:** There is no defeat—only adaptation or loss

22.5 High-Tier Villain Design

22.5.1 The Mythic Antagonist

Core Concept: A threat that reshapes the world and requires multi-stage resolution.

Framework:

- Has their own **Legacy Project Clock** (8-12 segments)
- Their goals are world-shaping
- Defeat requires multiple steps across different domains
- Leaving a legacy: Defeating them creates a new problem or opportunity

Example: The World-Weaver

- **Legacy Project:** Rebuild the world according to their vision
- **Clocks:**
 - World Reformation [8]
 - Follower Loyalty [6]
 - Moral Cost [10]

- **Defeat Path:** Stop the reformation, reverse the changes, or become the new World-Weaver

22.5.2 The Villain as Player

In high-tier play, let players take control of a villain for a session:

- **The Villain's Turn:** Alternate between player and GM control of the villain
- **Shared Vision:** Players and GM collaborate on the villain's goals
- **Consequences:** Actions taken by players as the villain affect the real campaign

Example: The Usurper's Perspective

- Players take turns controlling the Usurper
- Each session, one player makes the villain's strategic moves
- Their choices directly impact the next session's conflict

22.6 Sample Villain: The Shattered Crown

22.6.1 Blueprints

- **Drive (Heart):** To reunite the fractured kingdoms, no matter the cost
- **Structure (Spades):** A splintered royal court with rival factions
- **Complication (Clubs):** The more he unites, the more he loses himself
- **Reward (Diamonds):** The crown's secrets or his redemption

22.6.2 Clocks

- **Crown Unity [8]:** How many of the fractured kingdoms he has united
- **Personal Cost [6]:** How much of himself he has sacrificed
- **Resistance [4]:** How many factions still oppose him

22.6.3 Villain Actions

Strategic Actions:

- Unite two city-states (Advance Crown Unity by 1)
- Suppress a rebellion (Reduce Resistance by 1, but increase Personal Cost by 1)
- Search for the Crown's Secret (Advance Clock, risk Personal Cost)

Tactical Actions:

- When players intervene, the Shattered Crown may:
 - Offer a truce (if Personal Cost is high)
 - Demand loyalty (risking Resistance)
 - Withdraw and regroup (strategic retreat)

Environmental Actions:

- The land itself responds to his actions:
 - Unified regions become prosperous
 - Resisted regions fall into disrepair

22.6.4 Player Options

- **Unite with the Shattered Crown:** Accept his vision but risk losing themselves
- **Defeat him:** Restore the old order but lose the opportunity for change
- **Transform him:** Find a way to help him heal the crown without sacrificing himself

22.7 GM Implementation Tools

22.7.1 Villain Generation Deck

Using the standard 52-card deck, draw one card per category:

- **Spades (Structure):** 2-5=Minor threat, 6-10=Significant, J-Q-K=Major, A=Pivotal
- **Hearts (Drive):** 2-5=Personal, 6-10=Ideological, J-Q-K=World-shaping
- **Clubs (Complication):** 2-5=Logistical, 6-10=Systemic, J-Q-K=Existential
- **Diamonds (Reward):** 2-5=Material, 6-10=Strategic, J-Q-K=Narrative

22.7.2 Villain Relationship Matrix

Track how the villain interacts with the world:

| Faction | Relationship | Influence | Current Action |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|
| City Guard | Hostile | 2 | Patrolling borders |
| Merchant Guild | Tense | 3 | Demanding tribute |
| Religious Order | Neutral | 1 | Observing |
| Player Characters | Adversarial | 4 | Preparing defense |

22.7.3 Villain Timeline

Create a timeline of the villain's actions:

- What they did before the players arrived
- What they're doing now
- What they plan to do next
- When their clock will fill without intervention

22.8 Philosophy: Why This Approach Works

- **Narrative First:** Villains become story engines rather than combat encounters
- **Player Agency:** Players engage with villains on their own terms
- **Meaningful Consequences:** Defeating a villain changes the world in tangible ways
- **Scalable:** Works for Tier I to Tier VI play
- **Thematic Resonance:** Villains embody the campaign's core themes

The best villains in Fate's Edge are not the most dangerous foes, but those who force players to make hard choices that change who they are. They are the shadows that define the light, the counterpoint that gives the story its meaning.

By using this framework, GMs can create villains that feel like an organic part of the world, whose defeat (or redemption) matters because it changes the narrative in meaningful ways. In a game where "every action matters," villains should be the forces that make those actions truly count.

23 Non-Player Characters: The Living World

23.1 Introduction: NPCs as Narrative Threads

In Fate's Edge, non-player characters are not background props but living threads in the world's tapestry—each with their own stories, desires, and relationships that weave through the campaign. The best NPCs don't just hand out quests or stand in combat—they breathe life into the world and give meaning to player actions.

This chapter provides GMs with tools for creating NPCs that:

- **Emerge from the world:** Rather than being pre-fabricated, NPCs should grow organically from the setting
- **React to player actions:** NPCs who remember, adapt, and respond meaningfully
- **Drive narrative:** Characters who create new story opportunities, not just obstacles
- **Feel real:** Individuals with depth, not cardboard cutouts

Design Philosophy: NPCs should feel like people first, game pieces second. The best NPCs are those the players remember long after the mechanics have been forgotten.

23.2 The NPC Spectrum: From Background to Catalyst

Fate's Edge NPCs exist on a spectrum of narrative importance:

| Type | Description | Example | Best For |
|----------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cameo | Brief appearance with no lasting impact | Barkeep, messenger | Scene color |
| Background | Minor role with potential impact | Shopkeeper, guard | World building |
| Faction Member | Represents a larger group | Guild enforcer, soldier | Political dynamics |
| Contact | Regular ally with specific skills | Blacksmith, information broker | Player support |
| Rival | Opponent with competing goals | Merchant, noble, rival explorer | Character conflicts |
| Foil | Reflects PC traits in a different way | Former mentor, mirror character | Character development |
| Catalyst | Drives plot through actions | Prophecy bearer, revolutionary | Major story arcs |

23.3 The NPC Construction Framework

23.3.1 Core NPC Blueprint

Every meaningful NPC in Fate's Edge should have:

- **The Spark (Heart):** What makes them interesting or memorable beyond their role
- **The Role (Spades):** Their place in the world and connections to power structures
- **The Need (Clubs):** What they want and why they need it now
- **The Connection (Diamonds):** How they relate to the players and campaign themes

Example: Alis, The Wounded Scholar

- **Spark:** A brilliant historian whose eyes were burned out by forbidden knowledge
- **Role:** Keeper of the Forbidden Archives, respected but feared
- **Need:** To share her knowledge before her mind fades completely
- **Connection:** Her knowledge holds the key to the city's founding secret

23.3.2 NPC Tracks

Rather than stat blocks, track key narrative elements:

- **Favor Clock (4-6 segments):** How well-liked the NPC is by the players
- **Loyalty Clock (6 segments):** Their commitment to the party or cause
- **Knowledge Clock (4-8 segments):** What they know and are willing to share
- **Influence Clock (4-6 segments):** Their power and connections in the world

Example: Captain Rael

- Favor: 3/6 (helped during crisis)
- Loyalty: 2/6 (has competing loyalties)
- Knowledge: 4/8 (knows about the sea routes)
- Influence: 3/4 (respected among sailors)

23.3.3 The NPC's Action Economy

NPCs don't just wait to be interacted with—they act on their own timeline:

- **Strategic Actions:** Major moves that affect the world (1 per scene)
- **Tactical Actions:** Reactions to player actions (1 per clock segment filled)
- **Personal Journey:** How the NPC is changing based on events

23.4 NPC Archetypes for Fate's Edge

23.4.1 The Dynamic Ally

Core Concept: Not just a sidekick, but an active participant who evolves with the story.

Examples:

- Former enemy turned ally
- Recruit from the ranks of the common people
- Noble with a change of heart

Mechanics:

- Has their own clocks: Loyalty, Skill, and Morale
- Gains experience through exposure to the party's journey
- Can gain **Follower** status with the party through Loyalty Clock advancement
- Can choose to leave if Loyalty Clock drops too low

Example: Kaelen the Outcast

- **Role:** Scavenger from the edge of the city
- **Loyalty Clock:** 3/6 (helped the party, but fears retribution)
- **Knowledge Clock:** 4/6 (knows the undercity)
- **Growth Path:** At 6/6 Loyalty, gains Follower status; at 0/6, leaves the party

23.4.2 The Shifting Rival

Core Concept: An opponent whose relationship with the party is dynamic and can change.

Examples:

- Noble house rival
- Competing explorer

- Disgraced former ally

Mechanics:

- **Tracks:** Rivalry Clock (6 segments), Trust Clock (6 segments)
- **Rivalry Clock:** Advances when interests conflict; fills at 6
- **Trust Clock:** Advances when the rival trusts the party; fills at 6
- When Rivalry Clock fills, the rival must choose: compete, cooperate, or withdraw
- When Trust Clock fills, the rival becomes an ally

Example: Lord Dain, the Rival Noble

- **Rivalry:** 4/6 (competing for royal favor)
- **Trust:** 2/6 (saw party help a commoner)
- **Tipping Point:** One more conflict will force a choice

23.4.3 The Hidden Patron

Core Concept: A mysterious figure who guides the party without revealing their true agenda.

Examples:

- A masked benefactor
- A religious order representative
- An old friend from the past

Mechanics:

- **Patron Clock:** Tracks the patron's trust in the party (6 segments)
- **Secret Clock:** Tracks how much the party knows about the patron (4 segments)
- **Favor Bank:** Spent to activate hidden benefits

Example: The Veiled Benefactor

- **Patron Clock:** 3/6 (has provided safe passage and resources)
- **Secret Clock:** 2/4 (party suspects they're a former royal)
- **Favor Bank:** 2 (can be spent to avoid danger or gain information)

23.5 High-Tier NPC Design

23.5.1 The Legacy Figure

Core Concept: A character who leaves a lasting mark on the world, even when not present.

Framework:

- **Legacy Clock (8-12 segments):** Tracks the character's influence after they leave the story
- **Echoes:** Minor NPCs who carry on their work or philosophy
- **Legacy Events:** Specific effects that occur at key milestones
- **Fading Clock:** Tracks how long their influence lasts

Example: Master Elara, the Archivist

- **Legacy Clock:** 7/10 (her knowledge is slowly being lost)
- **Echoes:** Three students who follow different interpretations of her teachings
- **Legacy Events:**
 - At 10/10: Her final work is rediscovered
 - At 5/10: A schism forms among her students

- At 0/10: Her knowledge is nearly lost

23.5.2 The World-BUILDER

In high-tier play, some NPCs shape the very fabric of the world.

Mechanics:

- **Influence Sphere:** The area or domain they control
- **World Clock:** Tracks how the world changes under their influence
- **Faction Network:** Their connections to other NPCs and organizations

Example: The First Speaker

- **Influence Sphere:** The Council of Voices (a governing body)
- **World Clock:** 4/8 (has reshaped trade laws but faces opposition)
- **Faction Network:** 3 major factions, 2 minor ones, and several contacts

23.6 Sample NPC: Elara, The Wounded Scholar

23.6.1 Blueprints

- **Spark (Heart):** A brilliant historian whose eyes were burned out by forbidden knowledge
- **Role (Spades):** Keeper of the Forbidden Archives, respected but feared
- **Need (Clubs):** To share her knowledge before her mind fades completely
- **Connection (Diamonds):** Her knowledge holds the key to the city's founding secret

23.6.2 NPC Tracks

- **Favor Clock [6]:** 4/6 (helped the party, but they must earn her trust)
- **Loyalty Clock [6]:** 3/6 (willing to guide them through the archives)
- **Knowledge Clock [8]:** 5/8 (can share city history and secrets)
- **Influence Clock [4]:** 2/4 (respected by scholars, distrusted by authorities)

23.6.3 NPC Actions

Strategic Actions:

- Share a fragment of dangerous knowledge (Loyalty Clock +1)
- Warn of impending danger (Favor Clock +1)
- Withhold information (Loyalty Clock -1)

Tactical Actions:

- When players make a mistake: "I could help you, but at what cost to your understanding?"
- When players help her: "The knowledge you seek is not free—it will change you"
- When danger approaches: "We must move quickly before they come for the archives"

Personal Journey:

- Beginning: Reclusive and distrustful
- Midpoint: Opening up to share her knowledge
- Climax: Making a choice between safety and truth

23.6.4 Player Options

- **Earn her trust:** Through patience and respect for knowledge
- **Bargain for information:** Offer to protect the archives

- **Rescue her:** When her knowledge makes her a target

23.7 GM Implementation Tools

23.7.1 Relationship Matrix

Track NPC connections to the world and the party:

| Faction | Relationship | Influence | Current Action |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| City Council | Distrustful | 3 | Monitoring her closely |
| Scholar's Guild | Respected | 4 | Protecting her from the Council |
| Religious Order | Hostile | 2 | Seeking her books |
| Player Characters | Cautious | 4 | Seeking knowledge |

23.7.2 NPC Evolution Clock

Track how the NPC changes through the campaign:

- **Level 1:** Background Character (no special mechanics)
- **Level 2:** Notable Character (1 clock)
- **Level 3:** Impactful Character (2 clocks, can evolve)
- **Level 4:** Central Figure (3+ clocks, can change world)
- **Level 5:** World-Shaper (leaves lasting legacy)

23.7.3 The NPC Timeline

Create a timeline of the NPC's journey:

- What they were doing before meeting the players
- What they are doing now
- What they plan to do next
- How they will react to major events

23.8 Philosophy: Why This Approach Works

- **Narrative First:** NPCs become story engines rather than statistics
- **Player Agency:** Players influence NPC development in meaningful ways
- **Meaningful Relationships:** Player choices create real connections
- **Scalable:** Works for Tier I to Tier VI play
- **Thematic Resonance:** NPCs embody the campaign's core themes

The best NPCs in Fate's Edge are not mere obstacles but characters who matter to the story. They should feel like real people who breathe life into the world and respond to the players' actions.

By using this framework, GMs can create NPCs that feel like part of a living, breathing world—one where every interaction has weight and consequence. In a game where "every action matters," NPCs should be the people who make those actions matter most.