

# The City of Forgetting

A Siege Adventure for Fate's Edge

*“Some cities are built on stone.*

*Heugen is built on the things people would kill to forget.”*

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# 1 Introduction

## Premise

The city of *Heugen* stands where the **Paladian River** meets the deserts of Galanina — a bustling port of exiles, runaways, and those who have bargained away their shame.

Two centuries ago, **Temple of Light** crusaders founded a fortified camp here, sworn to bring “radianc order” to the desert tribes. They failed catastrophically: their campaign collapsed into scandal, atrocity, and defeat. Their martyrs were denied, their narrative broken.

In the ruins of their faith, something answered.

They turned to **Aveh**, the Veiled Patron of Release, who promised them life without the weight of their past. The camp became a haven for the disgraced. Wells were blessed, lotus-fields planted, and rites woven to *soften* memory and *unhook* old vows.

Now *Heugen* is a thriving port-city of:

- exiled nobles and disowned heirs,
- deserters and oath-breakers,
- victims fleeing their abusers,
- witches and hedge-priests seeking peace.

Its *lotus-tinctured wells* and *forgetting rites* give it its nickname:

## The City of Forgetting.

To followers of **Mykkiel**, Angel of Law, this is an abomination: a wound in the fabric of justice where crimes go unpunished, oaths lie fallow, and names are deliberately blurred.

An army marches under Mykkiel’s chained-halo banners. Their goal is simple: *erase Heugen from the desert and restore memory to its fugitives*.

Can the adventurers save a city built on forgetting? Should they?

## Adventure Tier and Scope

This adventure is tuned for:

- **Tier:** III–IV characters (experienced to veteran)
- **Tone:** Moral drama, siege horror, political intrigue, memory magic
- **Structure:** 4–6 sessions (or more, if expanded)

It can be used as:

- a standalone mini-campaign centered on the siege of *Heugen*, or
- a major arc in a longer Fate’s Edge campaign.

## Themes and Safety

This adventure touches on themes of:

- shame, trauma, and the desire to forget;
- justice vs. mercy;
- institutional abuse and religious zealotry;
- memory manipulation and loss of self.

Use safety tools appropriate for your group:

- Lines and Veils (what is off-limits vs. faded-to-black),
- X-Card or Script Change,
- open table check-ins during intense scenes.

### Player-Facing Summary

**Hook:** An army of fanatical law-bringers marches to erase the City of Forgetting, where lotus-blessed wells and secret rites let people leave their past behind. You must choose: defend the city, expose its buried truths, bargain between gods — or burn it all down.

**Core Questions:**

- Is forgetting mercy, cowardice, or both?
- Who deserves a second life?
- What happens if memory itself becomes a battlefield?

## 2 Heugen at a Glance

### City Identity

*Heugen* is:

- a **river-port** on the Paladian, wedged between dunes and marsh;
- a **trade hub** for salt, glass, lotus-ink, and contraband;
- a **refuge city-state** ruled by a Council of Masks (names optional);
- a **ritual engine** built atop wells that *store* memory instead of erasing it.

Lotus motifs are everywhere:

- stylised lotus sigils on doors (“I do not ask your past”),
- lotus petals in wine and tea,
- lotus pattern tilework in bathhouses and shrines,
- lotus-ink used for anonymous contracts.

### District Sketches

Use these briefly sketched districts as flexible locations for scenes and encounters.

### **Lotus Wells Quarter**

- Narrow lanes, shaded balconies, public wells watched by lotus-wardens.
- People come at dusk for “forgetting draughts” and confession-like rites.
- **Hook:** Fights often break out when someone *refuses* to drink.

### **Riverfront and Docks**

- Flat-bottom barges, desert skiffs, and foreign galleys.
- Smugglers, runaway crews, desert tribesfolk, cloaked pilgrims.
- **Hook:** First place Mykkiel’s vanguard blockades with river-chains.

### **Mask Market**

- Stalls selling masks, veils, false papers, and crafted new identities.
- Artisans who weave “lotus-names” — public aliases bound to a charm.
- **Hook:** A PC may already have a lotus-name they forgot taking.

### **The Cistern-Depths**

- Flooded tunnels under the city where old water and older memories pool.
- Rumors of whispering echoes that call out your *true name*.
- **Hook:** The heart of the final choice: keep the memories buried or release them.

## **3 Major Factions**

### **Mykkiel’s Host (SIEGE • LAW)**

An army of auditors, paladins, and penitents under Mykkiel’s chained-halo icon.

- **Goal:** Destroy Heugen, restore memories to its people, purge “stolen law.”
- **Methods:** Siege, ritual audits, public “naming trials” where forgotten deeds are read aloud.
- **Face:** PRELATE-SENECHAL RADAN, who genuinely believes he is saving souls by forcing them to remember.

### **The Lotus Council (CITY • AMNESTY)**

Heugen’s shifting government: masked elders, exiled generals, and lotus-priestesses.

- **Goal:** Preserve the city’s function as a refuge and its pact with Aveh.
- **Tension:** Some want open war; others prefer bargaining or evacuation.
- **Face:** SPEAKER-OF-PETALS, a veiled leader whose identity may tie closely to a PC.

## Aveh, the Veiled Patron (MERCY • OBLIVION)

A subtle, quiet patron whose miracles always *cost* something.

- **Goal:** Protect those who cannot bear their past, blur the sharp edges of memory.
- **Secret:** The memories are not destroyed; they are stored in the cisterns beneath Heugen.
- **Manifestation:** Lotus petals falling in still rooms, the taste of river-water like half-remembered lullabies, dreams where your younger self negotiates with a shadow.

## Optional: Local Witchcraft Circles (COMMUNITY • THRESHOLD)

Neighborhood circles of threshold-witches (see Threshold magic section if using that module):

- maintain warded doorways and street-corners;
- shelter victims of both Temple and Mykkiel abuses;
- can become powerful allies or targets during the siege.

## 4 Adventure Structure

Run this adventure in four broad acts. Each act can hold one or more sessions.

1. **Act I: The Approach** — Arrival in Heugen as Mykkiel's host closes in.
2. **Act II: Under Siege** — Street-level missions, hard choices, and lotus bargains.
3. **Act III: The Wells Below** — Descent into the cistern-depths and memory vaults.
4. **Act IV: Judgment of Heugen** — A ritual, a siege climax, and the fate of memory itself.

### Light Mechanic: Memory Pressure

Track a simple **Memory Pressure** [4] clock for the group.

Mark a segment when:

- the PCs exploit the city's forgetting for easy gain;
- they use lotus-draughts to dodge emotional consequences;
- they bargain away someone else's memories;
- they openly side with total erasure or total exposure.

When it fills, introduce a major twist:

- a PC's forgotten past resurfaces at the worst time;
- Aveh demands a collective price;
- Mykkiel's host gains a tactical advantage through revealed secrets.

## 5 Act I: The Approach

### Goals

- Introduce Heugen, its lotus culture, and its contradictions.
- Present Mykkiel's Host as a looming but not-yet-inevitable threat.

- Tie at least one PC personally to the city's past or its wells.

## Opening Hooks

Choose one or mix several:

- **Lotus Contract:** The PCs are hired by the Lotus Council to act as outside negotiators or troubleshooters — plausible deniability when dealing with Mykkiel's emissaries.
- **Pursued Exile:** One PC (with consent) is secretly from Heugen, having once drunk from the wells. Mykkiel's vanguard has their *true name* on a writ.
- **Lost Pilgrims:** The PCs escort refugees toward Heugen as rumors of the oncoming crusade spread along the river.

## Key Scenes

### 1. The Lotus Gate Arrival at Heugen's river-gate:

- guards wear lotus sigils and mirrored veils;
- new arrivals may choose to *drink* or not;
- a tense moment when an old enemy of a PC fails to recognise them.

### Choices:

- Drinking gains short-term social safety (fewer questions) but risks memory complications later.
- Refusing marks PCs as “anchored” — useful allies, but suspect to some locals.

### 2. Rumors of Chains In taverns, bathhouses, and markets:

- talk of an army marching under chained-halo banners;
- former Temple of Light veterans grow quiet or leave the room;
- a lotus-priestess asks the PCs what *they* would do if their worst deed were read aloud in public.

### 3. The First Writ Mykkiel's Host sends a small delegation under a white flag:

- they deliver a **Writ of Abrogation:** Heugen is to be vacated, its wells sealed, its records surrendered;
- they publicly read one anonymous but horrifying past act tied to someone in the crowd — proving their power;
- the PCs can intervene to protect, expose, or bargain.

## Escalation Trigger

End Act I when:

- the Lotus Council formally asks: “*Will you help defend Heugen, or help us evacuate/appease Mykkiel's host?*”
- or when the PCs commit to a strong stance (defense, compromise, or betrayal).

## 6 Act II: Under Siege

### Act Tone and Function

Act II shifts from rumor and positioning to **immediacy and consequence**.

Mykkiel's Host begins siege operations:

- river blockades tighten,
- outlying wells collapse under holy bombardment,
- masked elders debate surrender behind closed doors,
- exiles panic as old identities begin resurfacing.

The PCs navigate moral territory:

- Do we defend the city that hides sins?
- Is forgetting a mercy — or a refusal to heal?
- Should some memories be restored?

This act is about **choosing sides while discovering what those sides really are**.

### Key Siege Clocks

Introduce these as the scaffolding of Act II:

- **Siege Line [6]** — when full, the Host breaches the riverfront.
- **Council Schism [4]** — when full, the Lotus Council fractures, spawning rival factions.
- **Memory Surge [6]** — when full, forgotten pasts erupt everywhere.

PC actions can fill or reduce these.

#### Siege Pressure Effects

Whenever a clock ticks up:

- increase ambient tension,
- show patrols, barricades, ration lines, and water-rites at the wells,
- reveal small tragedies — families drinking to forget, or refusing and breaking.

### Major Scenes and Missions

Pick 2–4 for your group.

**1. The First Breach Attempt** Mykkiel's siege engineers deploy *halo-chains* across the river.

- PCs respond to a call for aid by lotus-wardens.
- A ritual duel of **Naming vs. Forgetting** plays out on bridges.
- PCs can:

- sabotage chains,
- parley with zealots,
- or sacrifice a well's power for temporary reprieve.

**2. Masks Fall from Faces** Someone important to the PCs is *recognized* by a former foe or victim.

- Optional twist: the PC does not remember who this person is.
- PCs can mediate, deny, or demand a lotus working.
- This is where personal stakes crystallize.

**3. Council of Masks Fractures** The Lotus Council calls the PCs into its chamber.

- one faction favors **surrender**,
- one advocates **total erasure** (collapse the cistern-depths),
- one proposes **sanctioned remembrance**: return pasts – selectively.

PCs may tip the scales.

#### GM Prompt: Cost of Influence

Any PC-recommended course becomes a public expectation:

- Success? They are praised as saviors.
- Failure? They are blamed as traitors or fools.

**4. The Lotus Refineries Burn** Mykkiel's Host uses sanctified fire to destroy the lotus-drying towers.

- Players must save workers,
- or protect lotus knowledge,
- or steal fire-secrets from the attackers.

This is a set-piece battle with lotus petals burning in violet haze.

**5. The Memory Plague Emerges** As siege pressure rises, memory instability hits Heugen:

- Crowds forget children,
- lovers forget grievances,
- zealots suddenly remember atrocities and crack.

The PCs must stabilize outbreaks with:

- lotus rites,
- threshold-magic,
- or brutal Mykkiel audits *if they ally with the Host*.

## Act II NPC Gallery

Use these living chess pieces:

**Speaker-of-Petals** Veiled negotiator for the Lotus Council; pragmatic, haunted, might be tied to a PC's forgotten past.

**Marshal Cruciant** Siege tactician of Mykkiel's Host. Secretly doubts his cause but fears consequence.

**The Aster Keeper** A witch who runs the lotus wells. Protective, motherly, and terrifying when the water is threatened.

**An Unnamed Child** Shows up repeatedly, follows the PCs, calls one of them "*mother*" or "*father*". GM decides truth later.

## Faction Shifts

Let faction alignment evolve:

- **PCs aid the city:** Mykkiel's Host escalates earlier.
- **PCs strike a bargain:** Lotus Council schism advances.
- **PCs betray a well:** Aveh withdraws, manifest wrath, or offers new pacts.

## Act II Mechanical Twist: Lotus Tokens

Introduce **Lotus Tokens**:

- PCs earn 1 token when they defend someone's right to forget.
- PCs earn 1 token when they uncover painful hidden truth.

At 3 tokens, each PC receives a one-time benefit:

- **Lotus Mercy:** Remove a consequence *or*
- **Lotus Revelation:** regain/restore a forgotten bond.

But each token spent fills **Memory Pressure**. Lotus power always has a cost.

## Transition to Act III: The Wells Below

Trigger Act III when:

- the PCs demand to know what lies beneath Heugen; *or*
- the lotus wells become unstable; *or*
- Mykkiel's Host breaches the outer wall.

A lotus-priestess (or Aveh itself) says:

*“To save a city of forgetting, you must remember what lies beneath it.”*

Lead the party into:

- the cistern-depths,
- vaults of stored memory,
- lotus-root catacombs,
- and perhaps the city’s buried origin.

## 7 Act III: The Wells Below

### Act Tone and Function

Act III shifts the siege narrative inward.

The city's surface burns, starves, and fractures — but beneath Heugen lies the **cistern-labyrinth** where Aveh's blessing first took root.

This act is:

- **fantastic archaeology,**
- **metaphysical infiltration,**
- and **personal crisis.**

The PCs descend past lotus wells, aqueduct-veins, and memory-galleries into *the buried truth of Heugen*.

### Environment: The Lotus Catacombs

The cisterns are not silent.

#### Features:

- Black, still water canals reflecting unreal versions of the PCs.
- Wall carvings showing pilgrims drinking the water and erasing names.
- Petal-falls drifting like snow, forming echoes of forgotten events.
- Lotus roots like ivory ribs arching overhead and underfoot.

**Travel Dynamics:** Treat the descent as a hazardous exploration:

- **Root Collapse [4]** — instability increases with noise or violence.
- **Memory Echo [4]** — hallucinations tempt PCs to alter their past.

### Key Scenes and Revelations

Choose or remix these for pacing:

**1. The Flooded Gallery** Murals depict the founding crusaders kneeling not before light — but before a lotus-robed figure offering water.

- Perception / Lore tests reveal Aveh was once human.
- PCs may glimpse their own pasts in the water (GM selects).

**2. The Vault of Unwritten Sins** A spiral chamber of suspended clay masks.

- Each mask corresponds to a forgotten wrong.
- Touching one summons the event for judgement:
  - resolve it peacefully,
  - or accept a Mark of Memory (Condition),
  - or shatter it — evolving the *Memory Surge*.

**3. The Sacrarium of Names** An underground tribunal where lotus-priestesses once weighed guilt.

- PCs learn the **Lotus Sacrament of Consent**: no one was forced to forget — they *asked* to.
- Reveal that some fled justice by choosing erasure.

This is the moral hinge of the campaign.

**4. Aveh's Chrysalis Chamber** A chrysalis of lotus fibre and ossified bone.

- Aveh's presence speaks in divided voices: "*I gave them mercy; they called it escape.*"
- PCs confront that *forgetting is not healing*.

Aveh may offer:

- boon,
- bargain,
- indictment,
- or unsettling truth.

## The Wells of Heugen: Memory Economy

Drinking the Waters removes burdens—at a price.

### Memory Tokens

Every PC begins with:

- **Contacts** (1-3 people they matter to)
- **Histories** (coping scars, debts, vows)
- **Identity Pillars** (titles, roles, reputations)

Treat these as *Memory Tokens*.

They may be **spent** during a scene to:

- Gain **Position +1** for a roll
- Reduce a DV by 1

- Convert a Miss into a Partial
- Add **+2d** to a plea, duel, or rite

**But:** When you spend one, it is **erased from the character**—until restored by story or ritual.

## City Cap and Power Scaling

The **City Cap** (Heugen's Fate) scales the benefit:

**Cap 1:** +1d or DV–1 only.

**Cap 2:** as above plus heal a Condition.

**Cap 3:** spend 1 Token to **cancel a scene clock tick**.

**Cap 4+** spend 1 Token to **rewrite fictional positioning:** create an exit, expose a lie, force a truce.

When the crusade escalates, Cap increases. PCs can accelerate this—at terrible prices.

## When Tokens Run Out

If a PC reaches zero Tokens: *They become a Child of the Wells.*

- Contacts forget them.
- Background and reputation dissolve.
- They can no longer use Aveh rites that require identity.

To reverse this, they must:

1. publicly name what was forgotten, and
2. be recognized by another as true.

## Encounters and Adversaries

**Lotus Husk-Guardians** Forgotten sentients whose identities dissolved.

- Attack with lotus-laced touch that forces Memory Echo tests.
- Can be calmed by naming rituals or Lotus Tokens.

**Unremembered Priests** They offer rites with unknown cost, unable to recall their own vows.

- Bargain for safe passage,
- reveal lore,
- or collapse into hostile guilt-spirals.

**Siege Intrusion** Mykkiel's zealots breach into the cisterns.

- PCs may face exorcists who seek to *purify the wells*,
- triggering breach fights among root-chambers.

### Act III Special Mechanic: Memory Trials

When a PC hears their name in the echoing water, they must resist revising their history.

#### Memory Trial

Roll *Spirit + Resolve* against DV determined by guilt-weight (3–6).

**Success:** You keep your memory; gain 1 Lotus Token.

**Partial:** You lose a detail truthfully; GM may introduce a new past tie.

**Miss:** You forget something important; the GM marks **Memory Surge**.

### NPC Gallery

**The Quiet Mask** A silent judge of the Sacrarium; offers gestures, not words.

**The Aster Keeper Returned** Appears here as her unforgotten self; reveals contradictions.

**Aveh (Manifest / Soft-Spoken)** Neither god nor ghost — an ideology that learned to speak.

### Player Choices and Moral Forks

By the end of this act, PCs should decide:

- **Does Heugen deserve protection?**
- **Should forgetting be defended or dismantled?**
- **Do we ally with Aveh, Mykkiel, or neither?**

### Transition to Act IV: Revelation and Reckoning

Trigger Act IV when:

- PCs commune directly with Aveh,
- or the Memory Surge reaches [6],
- or Mykkiel's Host breaches into the catacombs.

Aveh whispers:

*“You cannot defend a city of forgetting without remembering what was buried.”*

The way opens deeper — into the lotus-root vault, where the *truth origin* of Heugen sleeps.

## 8 Act IV: Revelation and Reckoning

### Act Function

Act IV reveals that the conflict is not between gods, but between *those who claim to serve them*.

The city stands at a contested threshold:

- Aveh's agents preach belonging without judgment,
- Mykkiel's agents demand truth without exemption,
- both insist the Patron wishes their version obeyed.

The PCs must navigate competing “mouthpieces” of power.

### The Root-Vault of Heugen

**Location and Symbolism** An inverted lotus chamber beneath the dunes:

- petals formed of salt and glass,
- memory-water flows upward in thin rivulets,
- sleeping inscriptions vibrate when truths or lies are spoken.

This is where the founders swore the covenant — recorded, but never understood.

### Factional Arrival

**Aveh's Delegates** Three rival emissaries descend:

- The **Mask-Bearer**, who promises absolution for a price,
- The **Unbound Herald**, who insists belonging means never naming harm,
- The **Archivist of Strays**, who believes belonging demands accountability.

Each claims: *Aveh wills this.*

**Mykkiel's Delegates** Judicial expedition forces breach the vault:

- The **Sword-Reader**, pronouncing sentence on the city,
- The **Law-Singer**, who insists truth must be tempered by survival,
- The **Seal-Bearer**, who would bind the city instead of destroy it.

Each claims: *Mykkiel decrees this.*

### Scene Structure

Run Act IV in three escalating stages:

## 1. The Memory Tribunal

The Lotus stirs, projecting suppressed memories — but no Patron speaks.

Instead:

- emissaries cite scripture differently,
- delegates try to recruit PCs as witnesses,
- old sins of the city echo without a clear voice.

Mechanic: PCs may declare a personal truth to gain 1 **Truth-Favor**.

## 2. The Schism Court

The Root-Vault becomes a court, but no judge presides.

**Play Priority:** the conflict is doctrinal, not divine.

- Aveh's factions accuse each other of betraying the Patron's mercy.
- Mykkiel's factions declare each other heretics misreading the Law.
- PCs serve as arbitrators or agitators by choice or necessity.

The vault reacts not to theology, but to:

- stated truths,
- acknowledged harms,
- reconciled contradictions.

## 3. The Lotus Fracture

Competing doctrines destabilize the vault:

- memory-water erupts into sandstorms,
- petals crack and bleed light,
- siege lines above buckle.

This is both literal and symbolic: **no Patron intervenes** — their will is inscrutable, and their agents are the ones tearing reality.

### Special Mechanic: Truth Arbitration

**Truth-Favor (Campaign Currency)** When a PC:

- names a painful truth,
- bridges opposing doctrines,
- refuses to permit doctrinal violence,

they earn 1 **Truth-Favor**.

Truth-Favor can:

- reduce DV of persuasion in the vault,
- countermand a doctrinal “sentence,”
- prevent a Lotus collapse event.

## Win Conditions of Act IV

Resolution does not come from:

- slaying emissaries,
- summoning Patrons,
- or proving one creed “right.”

Instead, the vault stabilizes when the PCs demonstrate:

- **Synthesis:** belonging acknowledged, truth accounted for.
- **Restraint:** neither delegations nor zealots decide alone.
- **Naming Harm:** the city’s past is spoken instead of swallowed.

Trigger Act V when:

- emissaries fall silent,
- inscriptions react to the PCs instead of agents,
- and an ancient voice — not a Patron, but the first founder — asks:

*“Whose will shall we live by — yours, or another’s?”*

## Doctrine Conflict Subsystem

Emissaries of Patrons assert competing interpretations of divine will. The PCs resolve these conflicts through narrative arbitration rather than force.

**Doctrine Claims** When two factions assert incompatible readings of a Patron’s will, create a **Doctrine Clash [4]** clock.

- Fill 1 tick when emissaries escalate rhetoric.
- Fill 1 tick when PCs stall, equivocate, or refuse to engage.
- Clear 1 tick when PCs articulate a reconciling truth or expose contradiction.

**Clash Resolution** When Doctrine Clash fills, the factions split violently:

- riots, purges, or zealotry erupt,
- siege lines fracture,

- and the Lotus Vault destabilizes.

When Doctrine Clash empties through reconciliation:

- emissaries fall silent,
- a third path becomes available,
- and the vault reacts to PCs as arbiters rather than witnesses.

**PC Leverage: Truth-Favor** When PCs:

- name painful truths,
- spotlight hypocrisy,
- or invoke shared stakes,

award **1 Truth-Favor**. Spend 1 Truth-Favor to:

- clear 1 tick on Doctrine Clash,
- or suppress zealot escalation for a scene.

This subsystem rewards narrative mediation while making doctrine tension tangible without requiring divine intervention.

## 8.1 Bestiary

[The Wells-Worm — Shame Devourer] BOSS • MEMORY • DESERT • PSYCHIC

Sand bulges like lungs; whispering voices underfoot; lotus petals desiccate.

It never speaks first. If someone confesses truth, it recoils. If someone lies, the sand stirs.

### Profile

- **Tier:** IV
- **Scale:** Huge (city threat)
- **Presence:** Oppressive, horizon-spanning
- **Position:** Starts Dominant
- **Resonance:** Gains strength from forgotten things

### Boss Moves

- **Consume Memory:** Force a PC to lose a Memory Token and heal a Phase.
- **Sand Maw Drag:** Pull a PC underground into a hallucinated past.
- **False Relief:** Offer to take away a burden—mark Corruption if accepted.
- **Echoed Guilt:** Speak in the voice of someone the PC failed.
- **Burrowing Surge:** Erupt under a group, scattering them across zones.

## SB Menu (GM Spending)

1. Target loses 1 Memory Token (unnamed).
2. The Worm becomes Hidden until provoked.
3. A PC hears a forgotten voice—mark *Shadowed*.
4. Crowd or NPCs panic and flee or betray.
5. A crusader claims “This proves the city must burn.”

## Phases of the Wells-Worm

The creature cannot be slain—only *forced to disgorge what it has eaten*.

It manifests in three escalating forms:

### Phase I: The Burrowed Serpent

- **Attack:** Sand Lash (Fatigue 2 + displacement)
- **Trigger:** PCs reveal vulnerability → The Worm surfaces
- **Vulnerability:** Public naming of personal truths lowers its Position

### Phase II: The Mirror of Shame

- **Attack:** Manifest someone forgotten, forcing confession
- **Trigger:** First Phase defeated or someone Confesses
- **Special:** PCs must speak truth or lose 1 Memory Token
- **Vulnerability:** Collective witness (three or more PCs acknowledge truth)

### Phase III: The Voice of Forgetting

- **Attack:** The Offer — “Let it go, and walk free.” PCs may:  
*Accept:* Heal a Condition but lose 2 Tokens.  
*Refuse:* Take Fatigue +1 and become *Shadowed*.
- **Trigger:** First two shells unraveled
- **Vulnerability:** PCs must confess an unspoken truth — and be witnessed.

## Confrontation & Negotiation

Negotiation is possible—at grave risk.

- **DV:** 5 (Desperate)
- **Stake:** On Miss, the Worm eats the negotiator’s *Identity Pillar*
- **Reward:** The Worm releases 1 eaten soul or memory into play

## Weaknesses

- **Confession.**
- **Collective witness.**
- **Name-speaking:** When three truths are named aloud, reduce its Scale.

## Defeat Conditions

The Worm cannot be slain — but it can be driven back if:

1. at least one truth is confessed publicly,
2. three witnesses acknowledge it, and
3. someone refuses its Offer at cost.

If all are met, it *vomits up* a reliquary: a lotus kernel containing memory, soul, or city secret.

## Escalation: The City Under Judgment

Each time the Wells-Worm is confronted:

- Raise the City's **Cap** by 1
- Shift one district toward:  
*Forgetfulness* identity dissolves, or  
*Remembrance* painful truth surfaces
- Crusade Clocks advance: "Proof of Sin" or "Purging Justified"

## Crusader Propaganda: The Wells-Worm as Proof of Sin

The adherents of Mykkiel do not see the Wells-Worm as a horror to understand—they see it as **confirmation**.

To them, it is the *inevitable consequence* of a city built on hidden shame: a desert-born parasite that thrives on unconfessed truths.

Their commanders call it:

"A scourge fed by secrecy, and thus proof the people are unworthy to rule themselves."

**Messaging Themes** Crusader preachers and heralds twist sightings into a narrative:

- **The Worm is Aveh's Shadow:** evidence that the city's pact is corrupt.
- **It Feeds on Forgetting:** therefore its existence reveals a population too weak to remember righteousness.
- **Only Purification Ends It:** siege, confession, subjugation—or flame.

**Mechanics: Siege of Narrative** Treat propaganda as a Weapon:

**Effect:** Each time the Worm surfaces publicly, the *Crusader Moral Clock* ticks +1.

**If full:** The Crusaders' resolve becomes unbreakable; parley DV +2 until the city performs a public Rite of Contrition.

**Scene Effects** When crusader agents spread this rhetoric:

- **Civilians fracture:** some demand absolution, some denial.
- **City Guard morale wavers.**
- **Priests of Aveh grow divided:** is the Worm a test or a curse?

**Rumor Engine** Whenever the Worm acts or is glimpsed, roll 1d6:

- {c—p9cm 1 “The Worm speaks—the city hides something.”  
2 “Aveh cannot protect us; Mykkiel saw this coming.”  
3 “The Worm appeared at the well—it smells our guilt.”  
4 “The crusaders warned us; now they must save us.”  
5 “The walls are lies, the Worm is the truth.”  
6 “Only submission will end this horror.”

Each rumor advances one clock:

- **Crisis of Faith [4]**
- **Crusader Legitimacy [6]**

**Counterplay: Truth as Rebuttal** PCs or Aveh's agents reduce these Clocks by:

- **Public Witness to truth**
- **Naming wounds and sins openly**
- **Leading communal rites of remembrance**

These reduce either Clock by 1–2, depending on crowd size and sincerity.

**Design Note for GMs** Do not overwrite player success with propaganda—use it as tension. Every sighting of the Wells-Worm increases pressure to either:

- **cleanse** the city, or
- **change** it

Both paths are victory conditions—but with radically different endings.

[Mask-Bearer of Aveh] EMISSARY • BELONGING-AS-FLIGHT • MERCY-TWISTED Veiled face; lacquered mask; voice soothing but hollow. Offer absolution without cost; erase confessed memory; inflame denial of harm. Mask-Pardon (ignore a Sin clock tick), Forgetting Rite (one shame erased), Sanctuary Under Mask (1 scene). Unmasked truths; survivors whose harm persists; any demand for accountability. [Archivist of Strays] EMISSARY • BELONGING-AS-ACCOUNTING • REPARATIVE Featherless quill; scrolls that bleed ink; calm counting tone. Name unpaid harms;

price restitution; stabilize conflict through witnessing. Record of Reckoning (DV -1 to mediation), Ledger of Mercy (reduce Harm by 1 if debt named), Witness Seal (1 scene truce). Silence; lies; crowds demanding clean absolution. [Unbound Herald] EMISSARY • BELONGING-AS-DENIAL • HONEYED Open palms; too-smooth voice; always interrupts accountability. Deflect blame; collapse nuance; turn reconciliation into accusation of division. Sweetness of Silence (DV -1 to ignore conflict), “We Are One” Mantle (Position +1 vs truth-sayers). Named specifics; harmed voices; receipts of consequence.

### 8.1.1 Mykkiel’s Emissaries

[Sword-Reader of Mykkiel] EMISSARY • LAW-AS-BLADE • ZEALOT Razor bound in scripture; no shadow; verdicts spoken as cuts. Pronounce sentence without context; escalate punishment; mark heresy clocks. Sentence Seal (one person bound), Purity Look (truth forced), Blade of Measure (Position +1 to dominate parley). Ambiguity; testimony of nuance; conflicting doctrine.

[Law-Singer of Mykkiel] EMISSARY • LAW-AS-TEMPERANCE • PRAGMATIC Balancing tones; sand-shaped runes; voice like steel smoothed. Reinterpret verdicts into mercy; grant amnesty clauses; stabilize crowds. Harmonized Mandate (reduce Suffering clock by 1), Tempered Seal (truce scene), Binding Hymn (DV -1 to reconciliation). Extremes—either faction freezes them out.

[Seal-Bearer of Mykkiel] EMISSARY • LAW-AS-BINDING • CARCERAL Lead scrolls; waxen sigils; keys for unseen locks. Bind a region under oath; demand confession for liberation; convert conflict into custody. Bond-Seal (bind a district), Confession Rite (DV -1 on interrogation), Safe Custody (protect a target while holding them). Ungoverned spaces; refusals to name wrongs; impossible witnesses.

## 9 Emissary Clash Encounter Tables

Emissary clashes occur when rival interpretations of Patron will collide in view of mortals. These tables generate scenes, pressure points, and third-party complications.

Roll 1d6, or select for thematic fit.

### 9.1 General Doctrine Flashpoints (1d6)

1. **The Misheard Miracle:** A small supernatural sign is witnessed; two emissaries issue contradictory readings.
2. **The Surviving Victim:** A harmed voice interrupts ritual narratives, demanding accountability or mercy.
3. **The Unclaimed Dead:** A body becomes locus of dispute — punishment or absolution?
4. **The Found Testament:** A fragment of doctrine surfaces but its ambiguity fuels escalation.
5. **The Crowd Turns:** Onlookers adopt the most dramatic interpretation, driving panic and zealotry.
6. **The Public Accusation:** One emissary denounces another as heretical; the clash polarizes bystanders.

## 9.2 Aveh-Sided Challenges (1d6)

1. **Confession Without Cost:** Mask-Bearers offer absolution so freely it destabilizes bonds; reckoners object.
2. **The Forgotten Debt:** A victim remembers harm despite absolution, triggering repudiation of false mercy.
3. **Ledger Crack:** Two Aveh emissaries argue whether belonging requires consequence or forgetting.
4. **Sweet Denial:** The Unbound Herald interrupts accountability, accusing truth-seekers of betrayal.
5. **Runaway Refugee:** A supplicant flees into Aveh's faction — was it sanctuary or abduction?
6. **Memory Leak:** A forgotten truth resurfaces; Aveh-aligned factions recoil, Mykkiel's escalate.

## 9.3 Mykkiel-Sided Challenges (1d6)

1. **Sentence Without Context:** Sword-Readers demand punitive verdicts; Law-Singers struggle to temper them.
2. **Confession Shaping Truth:** A Seal-Bearer demands public testimony that distorts narrative for custody.
3. **Mercy on Trial:** A Law-Singer grants reprieve; zealots call it heresy.
4. **Binding the Wrong One:** A Seal-Bearer shackles an innocent; Aveh emissaries weaponize outrage.
5. **Purity Riot:** Punishers whip a crowd into zealotry; PCs must redirect or disperse.
6. **Doctrine Split:** Two Mykkiel factions pronounce opposed interpretations; schism clock rises.

## 9.4 Third Path Complications (1d6)

These scenes appear when PCs clear *Doctrine Clash* (§8) or assert reconciliatory truths.

1. **Reconciliation Vision:** A supernatural sign points to shared stakes — emissaries hesitate.
2. **The Forgotten Clause:** A doctrinal artefact surfaces showing both sides once shared a covenant.
3. **The Returning Witness:** Someone harmed by both sides demands a new framework, not victory.
4. **The Lotus Insight:** PCs glimpse a transcendent reading — emissaries falter, crowd listens.
5. **The Silent Audience:** A supernatural hush forces emissaries to hear, not speak.
6. **The Ledger Tears:** A metaphysical record splits — PCs can rewrite doctrine or let chaos rewrite it.

## 9.5 Doctrine Escalation Indicator

Whenever three emissary scenes occur without reconciliation, increase the **Doctrine Clash** clock by 1.

Whenever a Third Path scene resolves peacefully, reduce the clock by 1.

## 10 Talents and Rites of Mykkiel and Aveh

This section provides thematic Talents and usable Rites for two opposed but intertwined Patrons: **Mykkiel** (Law, Form, Judgement) and **Aveh** (Forgetfulness, Refuge, Unmaking of Shame). These entries reflect mortal interpretation — Patrons do not act directly.

## 11 Dual-Faith Conversion Mechanics

Some characters walk between Patrons. This subsystem enables dramatic, mechanical representation of dual-faith loyalty without complex bookkeeping.

Patrons possess *want and will but no agency*; their followers act in their names, often at cross-purposes.

### 11.1 The Devotion Spectrum

Each character may track faith tension on a single spectrum:

−3 (*PatronAextreme*)    0 (*Balanced*)    +3 (*PatronBextreme*)

Only major revelation, vow, or rite scene shifts the spectrum.

#### Mechanical Effects by Position

**-2 or lower:** Gain Position +1 when acting in Patron A's ethos, but Position -1 when acting under Patron B's ethos.

**0:** Gain +1d when mediating faith conflicts, but suffer DV +1 on either side when pressed to choose.

**+2 or higher:** Gain Position +1 under Patron B's ethos, but Position -1 under Patron A's.

### 11.2 Faith Conflict Scenes

When a scene revolves around doctrinal choice, the GM places the character at Controlled, Desperate, or Dominant based on:

- which Patron's ethos the action aligns with,
- their current spectrum position,
- witness pressure (emissaries, crowds, oathkeepers).

### 11.3 Dual-Oath Resolution

If a character simultaneously holds vows from two Patrons:

- When rolling under either vow, any **1s** trigger a choice:
  1. Offend One Faith — mark *Spiritual Conflict* (Condition) with that Patron; or
  2. Delay Judgment — increase the Devotion Spectrum by 1 toward indecision (toward 0).

**Resolving Spiritual Conflict** A dramatic scene is required:

- **Public prioritization** of one vow over another, or
- **Syncretic declaration** recognized by witnesses.

Clearing the Condition restores normal action.

### 11.4 Synthesis Tokens

When a character successfully blends rites, customs, or mediates opposed faithful, they gain a **Synthesis Token**.

Each token may be spent to:

- improve Position +1 on a faith-based roll,
- gain +1d on parley between opposed factions,
- establish *temporary sanctuary* in contested religious space.

Synthesis Tokens reset after significant betrayal or revelation.

### 11.5 Faith Venue Tags

Scenes may be marked with religious tags:

**Shrine-Favored:** Those aligned to Patron A gain Position +1; Patron B aligned suffer Position -1.

**Temple-Favored:** Reverse of Shrine-Favored.

**Contested Ground:** Both sides Position -1 until someone bridges the divide (GM may spend 1 SB to create opportunity).

Venue tags shift only after decisive events or rites.

### 11.6 Patron Ambassadors

Characters who consistently bridge opposed faiths may earn:

**Ambassador Status:** Once per session, convert a faith-based Position penalty into a bonus.

Ambassador Status is lost if the character publicly betrays one faith.

## 11.7 Ritual Contamination

Performing a Patron's rite in unfavored ground marks a **Contamination Token**:

- suffers -1d on faith rolls until purified, forgiven, or confessed.
- may be *converted to XP* (1 token = 1 XP toward faith talent).

## 11.8 GM Guidance

- Faith tension works best when visible to NPCs.
- Place opportunity in scenes for syncretic declaration.
- Let emissaries disagree over interpretation — Patrons do not act in person, only through mortal mandate.

**Play Intent:** These mechanics frame conversion as *identity conflict with consequences*, not a statline optimization.

## 11.9 Rites of Mykkiel, Angel of Law and Form

**Domain Themes** Oaths, structure, duty, naming, binding, revelation through ordeal.

- **Seal the Ledger** [BIND] [TRUTH] [SANCTION]

Mark a witnessed oath. Until fulfilled or renounced, both sides gain +1d when acting in alignment, and suffer +1 DV when acting against it.

- **Sword of Interpretation** [JUDGE] [CUT] [CLARIFY]

Force one truth into prominence. A contested scene must pivot around that interpretation; resisting it costs +1 Fatigue.

- **Light of Sentence** [REVEAL] [SHAME] [FORM]

Unmask one concealed intention or guilt. Targets must speak or pay 1 Harm or Condition (GM discretion).

- **Sanctified Witness** [SEAL] [ORDER] [TEST]

Create a space where actions become binding and logged. Social or magical violence carries an added price (Condition: *Marked*).

- **Clause of Mercy** [REPRIEVE] [BALANCE] [LEDGER]

Designate a sin forgiven — but bind the forgiven to one duty that, if failed, doubles consequences.

- **Sword-Quiet** [SILENCE] [COMPULSION] [LAW]

Still a riot or argument long enough for judgment. Lasts one scene; backlash creates rivals with *Just Cause*.

## 11.10 Talents of Mykkiel

**Doctrine-Bearer (4 XP):** Once per session, declare one outcome as *precedent*. Allies gain +1d when invoking your ruling; enemies do so too in appeal.

**Witness of the Unnamed Price (6 XP Prestige):** When you mark someone guilty (fictionally), once per session you may shift one failed roll into a partial — but mark 1 Fatigue for the burden of judgment.

**Mercy as Blade (4 XP):** When you spare someone, gain Position +1 against them until they betray or defy your mercy.

### 11.11 Rites of Aveh, Keeper of Unburdening and Estranged Ways

**Domain Themes** Forgetting, refuge, belonging, shedding past harm, dissolving identity into new masks.

- **Drift the Ledger** [FORGET] [MASK] [BREAK]

Remove one witnessed shame or debt for a scene. Afterward, roll DV 3: on Miss, it resurfaces twisted.

- **Mask Right of Sanctuary** [REFUGE] [ROLE] [COST]

Grant someone absolution from past name or crime; they take on a new mask until dawn or crisis. This creates debts the GM may invoke.

- **Lotus Sip** [FORGET] [CALM] [SUBLIME]

Ease Harm or Fatigue in a target, but they temporarily lose an important memory or drive.

- **Unmake the Chain** [SUNDER] [ESCAPE] [UNMAP]

Break a declared consequence, bond, or pursuit. Alarmingly popular with fugitives.

- **The Sweet Lie** [VEIL] [COMFORT] [HOOK]

Offer a truth as they wish it to be. For one scene, they gain +1d when acting under the lie; at scene end, mark a complication.

- **Breath of the Nameless Feast** [ABSOLVE] [FADE] [COST]

Consume a small shame or misdeed — gain 1 Boon, but someone else experiences its consequence.

### 11.12 Talents of Aveh

**Mask-Shift Initiate (4 XP):** Once per session, remove a social or narrative stigma from yourself or an ally — it returns later in altered form.

**Keeper of Lost Doors (6 XP Prestige):** You can declare “There was always another way out.” Spend 1 Fatigue to rewrite one exit or solution into the fiction.

**Sap of Forgetting (2 XP Minor):** When you comfort someone, you may ease their Condition — but they lose a small truth or detail they valued.

## 12 Conversion Rites (Opposed Faiths)

Conversion between Patrons is never simple. These rites represent ritualized thresholds that mark allegiance, temptation, conflict, or synthesis between opposed faiths.

All conversion rites carry risk: they may shift the Devotion Spectrum (§11) or mark *Spiritual Conflict*.

### Rite of First Leaning

LOW [DECLARATION] [OATH]

**Effect:** The supplicant publicly voices doubt in their current Patron or expresses aspiration toward another. Gain:

- +1 **Synthesis Token** if done with witness
- OR shift the Devotion Spectrum one step toward the desired Patron

**Cost:** Mark **+1 Exposure** to emissary scrutiny. If secrecy is kept, gain no benefit.

### Rite of Renunciation

STANDARD [OATH] [CONFLICT] [TRIAL]

**Effect:** A symbolic cutting of ties: burning a token, unmaking a vow, or shaming a past title.

Shift Devotion Spectrum by 2 toward the new faith, but mark **Spiritual Conflict** unless a witness validates the act.

**Push It:** If the rite is performed in unfavored ground without permission, gain +1d on the shift but mark a **Contamination Token**.

### Rite of the Two Lamps (or Two Wells)

STANDARD [MEDIATION] [BALANCE]

**Effect:** A ritual of dual affirmation: one hand to each altar, lamp, or well. Roll Spirit + Resolve to maintain balance.

- **Success:** Gain *Ambassador Status* for this scene.
- **Partial:** Mark 1 *Synthesis Token* but suffer DV +1 vs either side.
- **Miss:** Trigger a doctrinal challenge scene immediately.

### Rite of Invocation by Doubt

HIGH [TEST] [REVELATION]

**Effect:** The supplicant petitions a Patron through uncertainty: “I do not know; show me.”

GM frames a vision or emissary encounter. Resolve a DV 4–5 *Insight* test.

- **Success:** Shift devotion one step AND gain a hidden name, phrase, or rite fragment from the target Patron.
- **Partial:** Shift devotion but mark *Spiritual Conflict*.
- **Miss:** Emissaries contradict — gain +2 Suspicion in the opposing faction.

### Rite of Severance and Binding

EXTENDED [OATH] [SACRIFICE] [WITNESS] [SCAR]

**Effect:** A profound vow: the supplicant binds themselves to a Patron's ethos while severing their former identity.

Choose:

- Sacrifice a Resource
- Sacrifice Harm 2
- Sacrifice a Reputation tag

Shift devotion 2–3 steps and clear *Spiritual Conflict*.

**Obligation:** Mark an **Obligation Clock** [4]:

- fulfill a service,
- spread doctrine,
- restore something wronged.

If unfulfilled, the spectrum swings back by 2.

### Rite of Syncretic Crown (Final Rite)

LEGENDARY [UNITY] [NARRATIVE] [JUDGMENT]

**Effect:** This rite may only occur once the supplicant has:

- touched both faiths meaningfully,
- mediated a conflict scene,
- survived emissary judgment.

The supplicant declares their synthesis — a principle that both Patrons *could* accept.

### Mechanical Resolution:

- Roll Spirit + Command or Spirit + Lore (DV 5+)
- Spend 1–3 *Synthesis Tokens*

### Success:

- Character moves to Devotion 0 (Balanced)
- Gain permanent **Ambassador Talent** (ignore first Position penalty in faith scenes per session)
- Either faith may claim them as a righteous example

### Partial:

- Balanced devotion, but mark **Spiritual Conflict**
- One faction becomes hostile or demands a price

**Miss:** The rite is rejected publicly — shift devotion to the extreme of whichever faith dominates the scene and mark **+2 Suspicion**.

## Possession & Exorcism

A soul may be seized by:

- guilt too large to bear,
- a memory denied,
- or a hungry emissary's doctrine.

### Possession Procedure

When a PC or NPC breaks under pressure, mark:

**Shadowed:** they hear whispers of their buried truth.

**Claimed:** they act upon it without consent.

**Lost:** the entity speaks through them.

### Exorcism as Rite or Duel

#### The Mykkie Method: Purge by Confession

- DV 4 (Desperate)
- spend 1 Memory Token (named)
- roll Spirit + Resolve
- On Success: entity expelled but shame remains as scar

#### The Aveh Method: Relinquish and Rewrite

- DV 4 (Controlled)
- PCs or target **rewrite** the memory: change “what happened” into “what it means now”
- spend 1 Contact or Pillar
- On Success: entity dissolves; target heals but forgets

### Failure Effects

- Entity becomes external (spawn “Shame-Worm spawn”)
- PCs gain Corruption or lose Token involuntarily
- Crusaders gain proof the city must burn

## Dual-Faith Exorcism

If both rites are used:

- PCs spend 2 Tokens combined
- Target is freed *and* remembers—**but must now choose a patron**