

Fate's Edge Epic Encounters

Mythic-Level Creatures and Custom Mechanics

Epic Encounter Design Philosophy

Epic encounters in Fate's Edge should:

- Represent fundamental challenges to the world's order
- Offer multiple resolution paths with significant consequences
- Create custom mechanics that reinforce the creature's nature
- Generate lasting impact on the campaign world
- Require Tier IV-V capabilities but reward creative thinking

Key Design Elements:

- **Scale:** These encounters dwarf normal challenges
- **Scope:** Consequences extend beyond the immediate scene
- **Singularity:** Each should feel unique and mythic
- **Choice:** Multiple meaningful approaches should be viable

Epic Encounter 1: Khemesh the Kraken Titan

Source: Kahfagia generator mentions Khemesh and Ráeyn as twin patrons **Tier Requirement:** V (Mythic) **Thematic Elements:** Ocean depths, ancient power, maritime dominion

Creature Profile

Name Khemesh the Kraken Titan

Domain The deepest ocean trenches, sunken cities, whale roads

Nature Primordial ocean deity, master of tides and storms

Appearance A kraken of impossible size, miles long, with cities built into its tentacles

Motivation Awakening from eons of slumber, demanding tribute from surface dwellers

The Threat

GM: Khemesh has begun to stir, and the seas are responding. Storms rage with unnatural fury, sea levels fluctuate wildly, and coastal cities flood without warning. The kraken titan demands that the surface world acknowledge its dominion through massive sacrifices - entire fleets, coastal cities, or the blood of heroes.

Custom Mechanics: The Deep Call

Deep Call Mechanic: Any character within 100 miles of a major body of water must make a Spirit + Resolve roll (DV 3) once per day. Each failure generates 2 CP that the GM can spend to:

- Cause seasickness and Fatigue 1
- Create navigational confusion (Hunt +1)
- Summon minor sea creatures as obstacles
- Advance the Awakening Clock

Resistance: Characters can mitigate the Deep Call by:

- Carrying blessed sea-salt (reduces DV to 2)
- Having the Whale-Rider Talent (immune)
- Being underwater at the time (immune)

Epic Clocks

Khemesh's Awakening Clock (10 segments)

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Progress toward the titan's full emergence

Advancement Triggers:

- Each day without tribute: +1 segment
- Major sacrifice offered: -2 segments (temporary)
- PCs interfere with awakening: +2 segments
- Coastal city destroyed by storms: +1 segment
- Ancient binding ritual discovered: -1 segment

Tidal Chaos Clock (8 segments)

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Worldwide disruption of sea-based activities

Advancement Triggers:

- Khemesh's Awakening advances: +1 segment
- PCs attempt sea travel: +1 segment
- Storm ritual performed: +2 segments
- Tidal shrine activated: -1 segment

Resolution Paths

Blood Tribute Sacrifice a major fleet, coastal city, or Tier V hero. Immediate but temporary solution (Awakening Clock -4, then +1 per week).

Binding Ritual Discover and perform the ancient ritual that first bound Khemesh. Requires:

- The Song of Seven Tides (Lore DV 4)
- Heart of a Whale-King (Hunting DV 5)
- Blood of the First Mariners (Quest)
- Performance under specific celestial conditions

Alliance Negotiate with Khemesh through its avatar, the Kraken-Priests. Requires understanding its true needs (ancient knowledge, not destruction).

Ascension Join with Khemesh, becoming part of its eternal court. Transforms the PC into an oceanic deity but removes them from surface world.

Combat Statistics (If Forced)

Scale Treat as multiple Cap 5 followers with different specialties

Primary Forms Tidal Waves (Hazard), Tentacle Grapples (Melee), Mind Blast (Social), Storm Summoning (Environmental)

Weaknesses Cannot fully manifest on land, vulnerable during celestial transitions, bound by ancient pacts

Consequences Even "defeating" Khemesh advances clocks due to the cosmic disruption

Epic Encounter 2: The Pale Shepherd

Source: Aelaerem generator mentions The Pale Shepherd as a major figure **Tier Requirement:** IV-V (Paragon to Mythic) **Thematic Elements:** Death, cycles, protection of the boundary between life and death

Creature Profile

Name The Pale Shepherd

Domain Crossroads, doorways, the moment of death

Nature Guardian of thresholds, guide of souls, keeper of the proper order of things

Appearance A tall, gaunt figure in tattered grey robes, carrying a staff that glows with soft light. Face obscured by a hood, but eyes shine like distant stars.

Motivation Maintaining the natural order of life and death, punishing those who would disrupt the cycle

The Threat

GM: The Pale Shepherd has taken notice of the PCs because they have repeatedly cheated death, disrupted natural endings, or meddled with the cycle. It begins to appear at significant moments - the deathbed of an ally, the threshold of a major decision, the boundary of a forbidden place. Its presence brings an unnatural stillness and the sense that time itself is watching.

Custom Mechanics: The Stillness

Stillness Mechanic: When The Pale Shepherd is present or actively pursuing, all rolls suffer a -1 die penalty due to the unnatural tension. Additionally:

Threshold Awareness: The Pale Shepherd appears whenever:

- A PC cheats death or avoids a major consequence
- Characters attempt to bypass a natural ending (preventing a necessary sacrifice, etc.)
- PCs cross significant thresholds (literal or metaphorical)

Cycle Debt: Each time PCs disrupt a natural ending, they accumulate Cycle Debt:

- Minor disruption: 1 Debt
- Major disruption: 3 Debt
- Preventing necessary death: 5 Debt

Debt Consequences: Accumulated Debt affects rolls and can trigger The Shepherd's intervention.

Epic Clocks

Cycle Disruption Clock (8 segments)

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How much the natural order has been disturbed

Advancement Triggers:

- PCs avoid major consequences: +1 segment
- Natural death prevented: +2 segments
- Resurrection performed: +3 segments
- Cycle Debt accumulated: +1 per 3 Debt

Shepherd's Attention Clock (6 segments)

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How focused The Pale Shepherd becomes on the PCs

Advancement Triggers:

- PCs ignore its warnings: +1 segment

- More Cycle Debt accumulated: +1 per 2 Debt
- PCs attempt to hide from death: +2 segments
- Natural endings forced upon others: +1 segment

Resolution Paths

Acceptance Embrace the natural cycle, allow necessary endings to occur. Requires significant sacrifice but restores balance.

The Bargain Negotiate with The Pale Shepherd to understand what it truly wants. May involve becoming its agent or accepting a geas.

The Reckoning Face The Pale Shepherd in direct confrontation. Nearly impossible to win, but might allow temporary escape at great cost.

The Substitute Offer something or someone else to satisfy the disruption. Creates new moral complexities and future consequences.

Combat Statistics (If Forced)

Scale Treat as Cap 6 follower with multiple domains

Abilities Death Gaze (social fear), Boundary Control (environmental manipulation), Soul Shearing (direct harm), Temporal Stutter (action denial)

Weaknesses Cannot act against willing acceptance, bound by its own rules of natural order, vulnerable to true sacrifice

Consequences Combat itself disrupts the cycle, advancing clocks

Epic Encounter 3: The Singing Wastes Awakened

Source: Black Banners generator mentions The Singing Wastes where weapons remember
Tier Requirement: IV (Paragon) **Thematic Elements:** War's aftermath, collective trauma, unfinished business

Creature Profile

Name The Collective Unquiet

Domain Battlefields, weapon caches, sites of mass death

Nature The accumulated spirits and memories of every warrior who died in the region, given form by their shared trauma

Appearance A shifting mass of translucent figures, ghostly weapons, and echoes of battle cries. The ground where it moves sprouts rusted weapons and bones.

Motivation Finish the war that killed them, or ensure no one else can rest until justice is done

The Threat

GM: What began as a haunting has coalesced into something more - the collective trauma of centuries of warfare has gained consciousness. The Singing Wastes now expand beyond their original borders, and the ghostly army grows stronger each day. The weapons in the region begin to move on their own, seeking out those who would disturb the dead.

Custom Mechanics: The War March

War March Mechanic: The Collective Unquiet grows stronger based on military activity in the region:

Conflict Attraction:

- Any combat in the region: +1 to Army Strength
- Death of a warrior: +1 to Army Strength
- Use of weapons from the battlefield: +2 to Army Strength
- PCs attempt to leave: Army pursues (Hunt +2)

Weapon Sympathy: Weapons from the Singing Wastes have a connection to the Collective:

- +1 die to attack rolls but generate 1 CP on hit (the weapon's hunger)
- May refuse to harm certain targets (falling into ally's hands)
- Can be "called" by the Collective in dangerous situations

Memory Echo: When taking damage, PCs may be subject to Memory Echo - reliving moments from the weapon's past. This requires a Spirit + Resolve roll (DV 2) or suffer:

- Flashbacks that impose Desperate position
- Temporary personality shifts reflecting the weapon's original owner
- Gain useful combat knowledge but at emotional cost

Epic Clocks

Army Strength Clock (10 segments)

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Size and power of the ghostly army

Advancement Triggers:

- Combat in region: +1 segment
- Weapon used from battlefield: +1 segment
- Warrior death: +2 segments
- PCs disrupt burial sites: +3 segments

- Successful haunting: +1 segment

Memory Corruption Clock (6 segments)

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How much the PCs are affected by battlefield memories

Advancement Triggers:

- Weapon sympathy effect used: +1 segment
- Memory Echo suffered: +1 segment
- PCs carry battlefield weapons: +1 segment
- Refuse to honor the dead: +2 segments

Boundary Expansion Clock (8 segments)

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How far the haunting spreads beyond original borders

Advancement Triggers:

- Army Strength Clock advances: +1 segment
- PCs flee the region: +2 segments
- New battle fought nearby: +2 segments
- Burial rites disrupted: +1 segment

Resolution Paths

The Honored Dead Properly bury and honor all the fallen, perform the rites that were neglected. Requires:

- Identification of major commanders and units
- Collection of remains from wide area
- Performance of specific funeral rites
- Memorial creation that will last centuries

The Peace Offering Negotiate with the Collective to understand what they truly want. May involve:

- Identifying the cause of the original injustice
- Bringing the responsible parties to justice
- Offering a significant sacrifice or service
- Becoming guardians of the dead themselves

The Cleansing Fire Destroy the source of the haunting through overwhelming force. Requires:

- Magical fire that can burn spirits
- Sealing ritual to contain the destruction

- Acceptance that innocent may be harmed
- Massive resource expenditure

Joining the March Become part of the ghostly army, either willingly or through corruption. Transforms PCs into eternal soldiers.

Combat Statistics (If Engaged)

Scale Treat as multiple Cap 4-5 followers representing different military units

Special Abilities • Weapon Mastery: All weapons used by spirits gain +1 effect

- Fear Aura: Opponents suffer -1 die to social rolls
- Terrain Control: Battlefield shifts to favor the dead
- Memory Attack: Direct mental assault through shared trauma

Weaknesses • Cannot cross properly consecrated ground

- Vulnerable to specific funeral rites
- Weakened by acts of proper respect
- Cannot pursue those who truly honor the dead

Consequences Even "victory" advances clocks due to further disruption of the dead

Epic Encounter 4: The Valeheart Spire

Source: Valewood generator mentions Valeheart Spire, empire's axle where stairs end where they began **Tier Requirement:** V (Mythic) **Thematic Elements:** Ancient empire, living architecture, temporal paradoxes

Creature Profile

Name The Living Empire (Valeheart Spire)

Domain The heart of the ancient Lethai-ar empire, reality-warping architecture

Nature The collective consciousness of a fallen empire given form in living wood and stone

Appearance A massive spire that shifts between architectural styles, with stairs that loop impossibly, rooms that exist in multiple times simultaneously, and windows that show different eras.

Motivation Restore the empire to its former glory, but confused about what "former" means due to temporal displacement

The Threat

GM: The Valeheart Spire has begun to awaken, and with it, fragments of the ancient empire's consciousness. Reality becomes unstable in its vicinity - time loops, spaces fold in on themselves, and the past begins to bleed into the present. Those who enter may find themselves living moments from the empire's height, or its fall, unable to distinguish between memory and reality.

Custom Mechanics: Temporal Displacement

Temporal Displacement Mechanic: Within 1 mile of the Spire, time becomes unreliable:

Time Loop Effect: At the end of each scene, roll d6:

- 1-2: Scene repeats with minor variations
- 3-4: Events happen in reverse order
- 5-6: Skip ahead to consequences without process

Memory Bleed: PCs may suddenly gain memories from the empire's past:

- +2 dice to relevant rolls due to "experience"
- But must make Spirit + Resolve (DV 3) or suffer personality shifts
- May know things that haven't happened yet (but might not be true)

Architecture Manipulation: The Spire reshapes itself based on inhabitants' needs and fears:

- Desired paths become available
- Feared areas manifest as obstacles
- Personal memories influence layout
- Multiple people create conflicting changes

Empire's Will: The Spire attempts to recruit inhabitants:

- Offers power and knowledge from the empire
- Requires acceptance of imperial values and hierarchy
- Gradual personality shift toward ancient mindset
- Loss of connection to original time/culture

Epic Clocks

Empire's Awakening Clock (12 segments)

 0/12

Progress toward full imperial restoration

Advancement Triggers:

- PCs explore deeper into the Spire: +1 segment
- Ancient artifacts activated: +2 segments
- Imperial values embraced: +1 segment
- Temporal paradoxes created: +3 segments

- Other empire sites respond: +2 segments

Reality Unraveling Clock (10 segments)

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How much the surrounding area becomes temporally unstable

Advancement Triggers:

- Empire's Awakening advances: +1 segment
- PCs resist imperial recruitment: +2 segments
- Paradoxical actions taken: +1 segment
- Ancient technologies used: +2 segments

Personal Integration Clock (8 segments)

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How much PCs become part of the empire's consciousness

Advancement Triggers:

- Memory Bleed effect experienced: +1 segment
- Imperial knowledge used: +1 segment
- Resistance to modern values: +2 segments
- Acceptance of imperial hierarchy: +2 segments

Resolution Paths

The Restoration Help the empire achieve its goals, becoming part of its eternal administration. Requires:

- Understanding the true history of the fall
- Resolving the paradox that prevents proper restoration
- Accepting transformation into immortal servants
- Surrendering individual identity to collective consciousness

The Preservation Seal the Spire to prevent further temporal disruption while preserving its knowledge. Requires:

- Finding the original sealing mechanisms
- Creating new wards to contain temporal effects
- Accepting that some knowledge will be lost
- Establishing guardians to prevent future awakening

The Liberation Free the trapped consciousnesses from their temporal prison. Requires:

- Understanding the nature of their imprisonment
- Performing rituals that may destroy the Spire

- Accepting that freed souls may not be what they seemed
- Resolving the paradox through sacrifice

The Conquest Claim the Spire's power for yourself, becoming a temporal ruler. Requires:

- Surviving the integration process
- Mastering the reality-warping abilities
- Accepting the responsibility of temporal guardianship
- Dealing with other powers who want the Spire's power

Combat Statistics (If Necessary)

Scale Treat as Cap 6 follower with reality-warping abilities

Special Abilities • Temporal Manipulation: Control flow of time in local area

- Reality Warping: Change physical laws and architecture
- Memory Assault: Attack through shared historical trauma
- Paradox Creation: Generate logical impossibilities as weapons

Weaknesses • Vulnerable to paradox-breaking logic

- Cannot affect those who reject its reality
- Weakened by acceptance of linear time
- Dependent on belief in imperial glory

Consequences Combat itself creates temporal paradoxes, advancing all clocks

GM Guidance for Epic Encounters

Key Principles:

1. **Start Small:** Don't begin with the full epic threat. Let it grow through player actions and choices.
2. **Multiple Approaches:** Every epic encounter should have at least 3 viable resolution paths, each with different costs and consequences.
3. **Personal Stakes:** Connect the epic threat to individual PC backgrounds, motivations, or previous actions.
4. **Escalation, Not Just Scale:** Make the threat grow through player engagement, not just declare it's huge from the start.
5. **Meaningful Consequences:** Every resolution path should fundamentally change the campaign world.
6. **Custom Mechanics:** Create 1-2 unique mechanics that reinforce the creature's nature and make the encounter feel distinct.
7. **Clock Integration:** Use multiple interconnected clocks to show different aspects of the threat growing.
8. **Player Agency:** Even when facing cosmic threats, players should feel their choices matter and have real impact.

Preparation Checklist:

- Define the creature's core nature and motivation

- Create 2-3 custom mechanics that reinforce theme
- Design 3-4 interconnected clocks with clear triggers
- Plan 3-4 resolution paths with meaningful differences
- Prepare key NPCs that represent different aspects of the threat
- Create campaign integration hooks for success/failure
- Balance mechanical challenge with narrative impact
- Prepare for player creativity that may bypass intended approaches

Epic Encounter Quick Setup Cards

Khemesh the Kraken Titan - At a Glance:

- **Hook:** Seas rage, storms destroy, titan demands tribute
- **Clocks:** Awakening (10), Tidal Chaos (8)
- **Mechanics:** Deep Call, Stillness
- **Paths:** Tribute, Binding, Alliance, Ascension
- **Stakes:** Control of seas, survival of coastal peoples

The Pale Shepherd - At a Glance:

- **Hook:** Death cheated, natural endings disrupted
- **Clocks:** Cycle Disruption (8), Shepherd's Attention (6)
- **Mechanics:** Stillness, Cycle Debt
- **Paths:** Acceptance, Bargain, Reckoning, Substitute
- **Stakes:** Natural order, meaning of life and death

The Collective Unquiet - At a Glance:

- **Hook:** Battlefield hauntings grow into conscious army
- **Clocks:** Army Strength (10), Memory Corruption (6), Boundary Expansion (8)
- **Mechanics:** War March, Weapon Sympathy
- **Paths:** Honored Dead, Peace Offering, Cleansing Fire, Join the March
- **Stakes:** Proper respect for the dead, ending cycles of violence

The Living Empire - At a Glance:

- **Hook:** Ancient spire awakens, time becomes unstable

- **Clocks:** Empire's Awakening (12), Reality Unraveling (10), Personal Integration (8)
- **Mechanics:** Temporal Displacement, Memory Bleed
- **Paths:** Restoration, Preservation, Liberation, Conquest
- **Stakes:** Temporal stability, individual vs. collective identity

Campaign Integration Templates

Foreshadowing the Epic:

- Session 1-3: Minor manifestations, strange dreams, local legends
- Session 4-6: Direct encounters with aspects or servants
- Session 7-9: Growing threat affects campaign world significantly
- Session 10+: Final confrontation with full epic threat

Epic Consequences Matrix:

Victory with Great Cost : Threat ended but world fundamentally changed, new problems created

Compromise Victory : Threat contained but not eliminated, ongoing vigilance required

Noble Failure : Effort failed but created hope, seeds for future success planted

Catastrophic Failure : Threat succeeds, new status quo established, PCs must adapt

Transformation : PCs become part of the solution in unexpected ways

Legacy Creation:

- New faction: Order of the Tide-Binders, Shepherds of the Threshold, etc.
- Permanent change: Coastal cities rebuilt with kraken-resistant architecture, new death rituals established
- Ongoing thread: Remnants of the threat create new challenges
- Mythic status: PCs become legends, their actions studied by future generations

Player Handout: Signs of Epic Threats

Recognizing Epic Threats:

Scale Indicators:

- Effects span multiple regions or affect fundamental natural laws
- Normal solutions seem inadequate or create bigger problems

- NPCs speak of the threat in hushed tones or with religious reverence
- The threat has existed for centuries or millennia

Clock Behavior:

- Multiple clocks advance simultaneously from single actions
- Clocks have 8+ segments and fill slowly but relentlessly
- Filled clocks create world-changing consequences, not just scene changes
- Clocks may trigger other clocks to advance

NPC Reactions:

- Most NPCs are either terrified or in denial
- Some NPCs have given up and joined the threat
- Knowledgeable NPCs speak in riddles or ancient prophecies
- Authority figures may be part of the problem or completely helpless

Player Capabilities Needed:

- Tier IV-V capabilities (150+ XP typically)
- Multiple complementary skills and approaches
- Significant assets and followers
- Willingness to make ultimate sacrifices