

Dragonbreaks, Creatures, and Companions

Module

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Dragonbreaks, Creatures, and Companions is an add-on module for the *Skyrim – Fate Core Campaign* that expands the alternate timeline where Alduin is defeated, the Dragonborn vanished, and the civil war rages on amid Thalmor schemes. This module provides Game Masters (GMs) with rich new content: **secret “Dragonbreak” narrative scenarios**, a **bestiary of Skyrim creatures**, and **recruitable companion NPCs** to join the party. All materials are designed to integrate seamlessly with the main campaign acts (I–V) and Side Plot C (*Allegiances in War*). The tone and lore stay true to Elder Scrolls canon and the Fate Core system.

Included in this Module:

- **DRAGONBREAKS.md**: 20+ secret scenarios (each tagged **DB-###**) featuring *Dragonbreaks* – mythic or hidden events tied to specific locations, factions, or NPCs. These scenarios serve as optional side quests or branching twists throughout Acts I–V. Each includes triggers, branching outcomes, and Fate Core mechanical hooks (aspects, challenges, or countdowns).
- **CREATURES.md**: A bestiary of 30+ creatures and adversaries commonly found in Skyrim. Each entry provides a short **Fate stat block** with Aspects, skills/approaches, stunts (special powers), stress tracks, and **encounter hooks** (habitat and how to use in scenes). This compendium ensures GMs have balanced foes for combat and exploration encounters, from skeevers to dragons.
- **COMPANIONS.md**: Dossiers for 6–10 key NPC **companions** (e.g. Ralof, Hadvar, Lydia, Aela, J'zargo, etc.) who can accompany the party. Each profile includes lore-accurate background, role in the war, personality, **Aspects** (High Concept, Trouble, etc.), stunts/abilities, recruitment conditions, romanceability, and personal story hooks. These allies use Fate Core “Extras” rules, supporting the PCs without overshadowing them.
- **INTEGRATION_NOTES.md**: Guidance on weaving this module into the main campaign. It details when to introduce Dragonbreak events (ensuring even pacing across the Acts), how companion NPCs can be recruited or temporarily join during key quests, and how to balance encounters with the new creatures. It also explains use of **optional mechanics** (like six-segment “Option 6” countdown clocks, faction reputation tracks, etc.) introduced in this module to heighten drama.
- **Short Stub Files**: For easy navigation, we include stub indexes:
- **companions_party/README.md & NPC_INDEX.md**: Lists of available companion NPCs (with references to their full entries in COMPANIONS.md).
- **hooks/DRAGONBREAK_HOOKS.md**: A summary list of Dragonbreak scenarios with one-line triggers (for quick reference of where/when to use them).
- **story_branches/DRAGONBREAK_BRANCH_MATRIX.md**: An overview matrix of how Dragonbreak scenarios can branch the storyline or impact factions (useful for tracking cascading outcomes).
- **story_branches/DRAGONBREAK_SECRET_TURNS.md**: Notes on hidden turns or revelations each Dragonbreak can add to the plot (e.g. uncovering a spy, releasing a dormant evil, securing a new ally, etc.).

Fate Core Mechanics & “Option 6”: This module builds on Fate Core rules as presented in the core rulebook and Fate System Toolkit. We utilize **Aspects, Fate Points, and the Bronze Rule** (treating anything as a character) to represent Skyrim’s unique elements. For extended conflicts and mysteries, we integrate **countdown clocks** (six-segment tracks) to track looming threats or influence (e.g. a “*Thalmor Influence*” clock ticking up as war intensifies ¹). GMs are encouraged to use these **Option 6** mechanics – essentially optional subsystems from the Toolkit – such as *challenge sequences, conditions (e.g. trust or morale as tracked boxes), and scaled difficulties*. This module provides several example clocks (see JSON template at the end) for Dragonbreak pressure, party cohesion, and companion trust. These tools make the narrative stakes tangible and heighten tension ² ³.

Using This Module: GMs should first read **Integration Notes** for an Act-by-Act breakdown of where to slot in Dragonbreak scenarios and how to introduce companions organically. During play, draw from **DRAGONBREAKS** when players venture off the beaten path or if you want to spotlight a hold’s local legend or faction subplot – each scenario notes its ideal timing (e.g. after Act II’s battle, during a travel scene, etc.). The **CREATURES** section can be referenced whenever you need a quick stat block – creatures are grouped by type (wild animals, undead, monsters, etc.) and many entries include page refs to the main campaign PDF if relevant. When players seek allies or interact with notable NPCs, consult **COMPANIONS** to possibly grant them a follower; each has clear **recruitment triggers** (for instance, helping Ralof or Hadvar in Act I might earn their trust enough to join later ⁴ ⁵).

Everything is written with **GM usability** in mind: bullet-point lists, bolded action keywords, and Fate mechanics integrated in context. All NPCs and scenarios are firmly rooted in Elder Scrolls lore ⁶ ⁷ – you’ll find citations from UESP and other lore sources throughout, which you can share with lore-curious players. This ensures authenticity and lets you answer the inevitable “*What do I know about this legend?*” questions with confidence.

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Dragonbreak Secret Scenarios

In Elder Scrolls lore, a Dragon Break refers to a fracture in time or reality – moments when history twists, timelines converge, or prophecy manifests unexpectedly ⁸. In this campaign, “Dragonbreak” scenarios are secret events or side quests triggered by the war’s chaos and the absence of the Dragonborn. They offer GMs dramatic twists to surprise players, explore Skyrim’s deeper lore, or grant consequences (good or bad) that ripple into the main storyline. Each scenario below is tagged with an ID (DB-###) and includes a suggested trigger timing, a synopsis, branching outcomes, and mechanical hooks.

DB-001: Ghost of the High King – Haafingar (Solitude). **Trigger:** After the Solitude siege (Act III) or during an intrigue segment in Solitude. **Synopsis:** Rumors whisper that the spirit of High King Torygg haunts Solitude’s streets at midnight, wailing an old verse of loss. Locals are terrified, and some suspect it’s an omen favoring one side or the other. In truth, the “ghost” sightings may be a ruse – an opportunist using the legend for cover ⁹. **Branches:** If the PCs investigate, they might discover it’s **Calixto** (a notorious Windhelm murderer) or a Thalmor agent faking the ghost to sow fear ⁹. Unmasking the culprit grants

them an Aspect “Royal Skeptic” (credibility in Solitude) and perhaps a favor from Jarl Elisif. If they assume it's real and perform a ritual to appease Torygg's spirit, either the real spirit appears (granting a *blessing of resolve* aspect for the next battle) or nothing happens (leaving them questioning what was real). **Mechanical Hooks:** Use a **challenge** with Lore or Investigate rolls to gather clues (e.g. unusual footprints, residue of alchemy). As a timed twist, run a **6-segment clock** for “Fear in Solitude” – if it fills before the ghost is resolved, morale in Solitude drops (imposing a Scene Aspect “Distrustful Citizens”). Successfully resolving the ghost yields a **boost** or clears that Aspect.

DB-002: The Wolf Queen's Revenge – *Haafingar (Solitude)*. **Trigger:** Any time after Act III once Solitude's leadership is in flux (either side). Possibly triggered by reading a letter or a dark prophecy. **Synopsis:** The ancient necromancer Potema Septim – the Wolf Queen of Solitude – attempts to return. In canon, the Dragonborn stopped her, but here she was merely weakened. Amid the chaos of civil war, her cult completes a summoning in Solitude's Catacombs ¹⁰ ¹¹. Undead emerge in the Hall of the Dead, and Potema's bodiless voice taunts the living. **Branches:** PCs can descend into the catacombs beneath the Temple of the Divines to confront Potema's remnants. A battle ensues against her raised draugr and vampire thralls ¹² ¹³. If the PCs retrieve Potema's remains (e.g. her skull) and sanctify them (perhaps via Styrr, a priest of Arkay ¹¹), Potema's spirit is laid to rest – earning Solitude's eternal gratitude (perhaps a Stormcloak PC convincing Elisif to support a truce afterward, or an Imperial PC securing General Tullius' trust). If they fail or ignore it, Potema's influence grows – she might send undead to attack during a later battle (e.g. reinforcements of draugr during the Act IV siege). **Mechanical Hooks:** Treat Potema's spirit as an environmental threat (Aspect “Potema's Malevolent Presence” that magically attacks PCs each exchange unless overcome by Will). A ritual to banish her could be a challenge requiring Lore/Religion and the application of holy water (creating an advantage “Sanctified”). Slaying her vampire lieutenant could be a Contest (each round her forces vs. PCs to reach the inner sanctum). If Potema is banished, award a Situational Aspect* “Blessing of Solitude” that the PCs can invoke in final negotiations or battles (perhaps a dramatic sunrise breaking through clouds as a sign of divine approval).

DB-003: The Butcher of Windhelm – *Eastmarch (Windhelm)*. **Trigger:** Act I or II, when the PCs spend time in Windhelm (especially if investigating city unrest). **Synopsis:** A serial killer (dubbed “The Butcher”) stalks Windhelm, preying on young women. In Elder Scrolls lore this is Calixto Corrium's doing during *Blood on the Ice*, a quest the Dragonborn might have done. Here, if the PCs are in Windhelm and the murders remain unsolved, the jarl (Ulfric or his steward) quietly asks them to investigate to prevent a panic. **Branches:** The PCs can examine crime scenes (noticing an amulet or butcher's journal), interview suspects (e.g. *Wuunferth* the court mage is a red herring), and ultimately catch Calixto in the act. If successful, they prevent further murders and earn favor with Windhelm's leaders (possibly swaying Ulfric's disposition slightly, or earning a Fate point reward). If they fail or ignore it, mistrust grows in the city; perhaps a crucial NPC ally in Windhelm (a courtier or a friend of the PCs) becomes the next victim, or the city guard's resources are diverted chasing the killer during a battle (mechanically, PCs lose one **invoke** of a Windhelm-related aspect in the future because the guard are spread thin). **Mechanical Hooks:** This scenario is a classic **investigation**. Use *Notice* or *Investigate* to place aspects like “Strange Amulet Clue” and *Empathy* to detect lies during questioning. A small **Countdown Clock** (4 segments) labeled “Calixto Claims Another Victim” can tick each time the PCs spend too long or pursue a wrong lead – if it fills, another murder occurs. Capturing or killing the Butcher can be handled as a short Conflict (Calixto is a Minor NPC with a penchant for hiding – use aspects like “Obscuring Foggy Night” to challenge the chase).

DB-004: Echoes of the Time-Wound – *Throat of the World (High Hrothgar)*. **Trigger:** Act III, if the PCs broker the *Season Unending* peace council at High Hrothgar (or if they simply visit the Greybeards for counsel). **Synopsis:** The ancient **Time Wound** at the mountain's summit – the tear in reality created when the Elder

Scroll cast Alduin forward in time – still lingers as a swirling, magical anomaly ⁸. Normally only the Dragonborn could harness it (to learn Dragonrend), but now unpredictable “echoes” leak out. The PCs and Greybeards witness visions of the past: ghostly forms of Nordic heroes battling Alduin appear and re-enact scenes from the Dragon War. One such echo might even interact with the present (e.g. a phantom Dragon Priest or a residual dragon spirit attacking the group). **Branches:** The PCs could treat this as a spiritual journey: negotiating with an *echo of Hakon One-Eye* or interpreting the vision as guidance (“Skyrim must stand united, as we once did against the World-Eater”). This yields an aspect for the party like **“Wisdom of the Ancients”** if they take it to heart, which they can invoke during negotiations or strategy. Alternatively, if a hostile echo manifests (say, an enraged dragon apparition or a Dragon Priest freed by the time fracture), the PCs must **defeat it** or **banish it**. Success may grant a one-time boon: perhaps a **Dragon Shout scroll** left behind or an ancient relic. If they fail (e.g. flee High Hrothgar), the echo causes havoc – maybe it flies off and later during Act IV’s battle a dragon apparition joins the fray on the enemy side (the GM can invoke an aspect “Temporal Dragonrage” to complicate the final battle). **Mechanical Hooks:** This scene can be a mix of roleplay and combat. Use the *Time Wound* as a zone Aspect (“Rents in the Fabric of Time”) that can be invoked to either help (foretelling an enemy’s move) or hinder (distorting an action). If the PCs want to close the Time Wound or stabilize it, treat it as a challenge requiring magical skill (*Lore* or *Will* to channel the energy) – each success ticks off a segment on a **6-box clock** “Calming the Time Wound.” Each failure could unleash a hostile echo (requiring a quick Combat exchange). This scenario reinforces the mythic tone and reminds players of the stakes beyond the civil war.

DB-005: Crisis at the College – *Winterhold (College of Winterhold)*. **Trigger:** Act II or III, when the war’s focus isn’t on Winterhold (or if a PC is a College member after Side Plot C). **Synopsis:** The College of Winterhold faces a magical catastrophe. In the original timeline, the Dragonborn dealt with the Eye of Magnus; here, perhaps the Eye was contained but not fully understood. Now, Thalmor agent **Ancano’s** misdeeds cause a surge of wild magic. **Magic Anomalies** – strange wispy entities of magic – spill out across Winterhold, freezing villagers and causing havoc ¹⁴. The arcane wards around the College falter. **Branches:** If a PC arch-mage is present (via the faction pack questline), they’ll be at the forefront to fix this (earning extra respect from mages). Otherwise, the PCs are urgently asked by *Tolfdir* or *Mirabelle* to help. They might venture into the College’s **Midden** undercroft to adjust some mystic focusing crystal, or head out into Winterhold town to destroy the anomalies attacking citizens. If they succeed in stabilizing the Eye of Magnus (e.g. by rotating focal points or using the Staff of Magnus if somehow obtained), the magical explosion is averted – the College survives to aid in Act IV (perhaps providing a few battlemages or a protective ward for the final confrontation). If they fail or ignore it, Winterhold could suffer greatly: the College might be partially destroyed or at least goes quiet, offering no help in the war; in narrative terms, the Thalmor gain an upper hand as one potential ally (College) is neutralized. **Mechanical Hooks:** Fighting **Magic Anomalies** can be a **Challenge Scene** where each PC uses a different approach (e.g. Fight to slash one, Lore to disperse another by identifying its weakness, Athletics to evacuate a villager out of an anomaly’s reach). Anomalies might have aspects like “Coalesced Magicka – Hard to Hit” and attack with frost and force ¹⁵ (treat them as a mob with a single stress track). Stopping the crisis via the Eye could be an *Overcome* with a very high difficulty (or a series of *Overcomes*) using magical tools – possibly requiring the “Staff of Magnus” extra if they acquired it. Consider using a countdown for “Ancano’s Catastrophe” (e.g. 6 segments) ticking down each exchange; if it reaches zero, a major explosion occurs. Allow PCs to tick down or erase segments by clever actions (e.g. draining power with an artifact, succeeding quickly in subduing anomalies, etc.). This scenario ties into the larger Thalmor arc (Ancano’s meddling) and can foreshadow their endgame while giving mage-type PCs a moment to shine.

DB-006: Nightmare in Dawnstar – *The Pale (Dawnstar)*. **Trigger:** Any time in Act II (especially if the party travels north or if you want a break from war quests). **Synopsis:** The people of Dawnstar haven't had a decent night's sleep in weeks. They're plagued by vivid nightmares, an ongoing curse orchestrated by the Daedric Prince **Vaermina** via the Skull of Corruption. In the original timeline, the Dragonborn (with Erandur) would have ended this (*Waking Nightmare* quest). Here, with no Dragonborn intervention, the nightmares persist and worsen – fraying tempers and even causing hallucinations. Perhaps as the war approaches Dawnstar (or a civil war mission sends the PCs here to secure the port), they face an agitated, half-mad populace. **Branches:** The PCs can choose to investigate the source of the curse. A friendly priest of Mara (Erandur, if you wish to use him from lore) explains that Vaermina's artifact, the Skull of Corruption, is hidden in *Nightcaller Temple* on the hill above Dawnstar ¹¹. A small cult or lingering Vaermina devotees may be guarding it. The PCs could storm the temple, navigating magical fear-traps and confronting the **Vaermina Cultists** and perhaps a *Dreamwalker* mage. Destroying or sealing the Skull (maybe by performing a Mara blessing ritual or simply defeating the head cultist who wields it) will end the nightmare plague – Dawnstar's citizens will be intensely grateful (and this goodwill could translate to cooperation or recruits for whichever side the PCs represent). If the PCs ignore Dawnstar's plight or fail (say they flee the temple due to terrifying illusions), the nightmares might cause a few townsfolk to snap and turn into a murderous frenzy (the GM can introduce an aspect "Sleep-Starved and Violent" on Dawnstar). This could complicate any future attempt to use Dawnstar strategically (e.g. mass desertions or refusal to aid the war effort). **Mechanical Hooks:** In the temple, simulate the nightmare effects with *mental attacks* against the PCs (Will rolls to resist) – each PC might face a personalized illusion (invoke their Trouble aspects to tempt them into despair or anger). Treat the final confrontation with the Skull of Corruption as a Contest of wills: the Skull (perhaps wielded by a cult leader) has an opposed Will, trying to feed on the PCs' fears. Each "loss" for a PC might impose a temporary aspect like "Shaken by Horrors" on them. To destroy the Skull, allow clever solutions: e.g. spending a Fate point to declare Erandur performs a Mara exorcism (turn that into a challenge with Religion Lore). This scenario adds a touch of horror and shows that not all threats are military – even dreams can be battlefields.

DB-007: The Curse of Red Eagle – *The Reach (outside Markarth)*. **Trigger:** Act II, when the war shifts to the Reach (e.g. the *Battle for Markarth* or after "The Forsworn Conspiracy" side plot). **Synopsis:** The Forsworn of the Reach turn to an ancient legend for strength. They seek to fulfill the prophecy of **Red Eagle**, a Reach hero who made a pact with hagravens and whose undead form waits to rise again when the Reach is free ¹⁶. In-game, the Dragonborn's quest ended Red Eagle's spirit; here, Forsworn shamans perform a ritual at Red Eagle's tomb to *awaken* him as a revenant champion. A violent storm gathers over the Sundered Hills as blood is spilled to call forth Red Eagle's revenant. **Branches:** If the PCs are aligned with the Forsworn (an unusual path, but possible via Side Plot C optional content), they might *assist* in this ritual or moderate it – perhaps convincing the Forsworn to let Red Eagle's spirit rest and instead take his legendary sword as a symbol (granting a powerful stunt "Red Eagle's Fury" sword). More likely, the PCs oppose this: whether Imperial or Stormcloak, neither want an undead warlord rampaging. The scenario becomes an **assault on Red Eagle's Tomb** (at Rebel's Cairn). The PCs must fight through berserk Forsworn guards and possibly enchanted spriggans to reach the ritual chamber before completion. If they stop the ritual in time (e.g. by defeating the head hagraven conducting it and taking the *Red Eagle's Fury* sword from the altar), Red Eagle's corpse stays at rest – removing a potential deadly foe from the board. Markarth's Jarl (either side) hears of their deed and it tilts local influence in their favor ("Legend-Slayer" reputation aspect). If they fail or choose not to intervene, Red Eagle arises: an undead Reach king with burning eyes and a flaming sword ¹⁷. In Act III, during some battle or as a complication, Red Eagle and a host of vengeful Reach spirits might strike – not caring about Imperial or Stormcloak differences, killing indiscriminately. (Imagine during the final Markarth fight, a new zone Aspect "Red Eagle's Wrath Unleashed" forces both sides to deal with his

firestorms.) **Mechanical Hooks:** Use a **Countdown Clock** for the ritual: e.g. 8 segments representing the dark chant's progress. Every exchange or two, another segment fills unless the PCs take specific actions to delay (like using Create Advantage to disrupt ritual circles). If the clock fills, Red Eagle awakens. If fighting Red Eagle, stat him as a serious boss (High Concept: *Undead Lord of the Reach*, Trouble: *Bound by Oath to the Land*). He might have stunts like *Flaming Sword* (melee attacks inflict an ongoing Burn aspect) and *Inspire Forsworn* (+2 to nearby Forsworn morale). His defeat could require using his own ancient sword against him (perhaps only *Red Eagle's Bane* can truly slay him ¹⁶). Quick thinking or referencing lore (Lore roll to recall the tale that returning his blade will lay him to rest) can grant players the insight to win without brute force. This scenario heavily ties into Reach lore and gives a mystical edge to the war in Markarth.

DB-008: Silver Hand's Last Stand – *Whiterun or The Pale (Driftshade Refuge)*. **Trigger:** Act II or III, after the Companions' questline might have been partially done by PCs (or if a PC is a Companion). Could trigger if a PC companion like Aela or Farkas is traveling with the party. **Synopsis:** The **Silver Hand**, a faction of werewolf-hunting vigilantes, were thought destroyed after Kodlak Whitemane's death was avenged. But a surviving cell, fanatical and well-armed, sees the civil war as an opportunity. They plan a strike to kill **leadership of the Companions** (or even use knowledge of beastblood as blackmail to tarnish Stormcloak reputation, since many Companions are Stormcloak allies). They lure the Companions (or the PC werewolf) into a trap – perhaps a false “truce meeting” at an abandoned fort or a kidnapped friend as bait. **Branches:** If PCs go along (e.g. responding to a plea that Silver Hand wants to surrender or return stolen Companions treasures), they spring the trap: the Silver Hand surround them with crossbows loaded with silver bolts. A combat or daring escape ensues. Victory means the Silver Hand are finally wiped out – the Companions and any werewolf PCs gain closure, and Jarl Balgruuf (or the Skald of The Pale, depending on where it occurs) hears of it. There might even be loot: a stash of cured silver weapons or a journal revealing who was secretly funding them (maybe a Thalmor agent, adding intrigue). If the PCs lose (imprisoned or have to flee), a Companion NPC ally might be slain (possibly triggering a personal revenge subplot), and the Silver Hand will remain a thorn – perhaps showing up again at the worst time (they could crash a negotiation, accusing the Stormcloaks of harboring “monsters,” complicating talks). **Mechanical Hooks:** This can be run as an **ambush scenario**. Use the environment: e.g. an Aspect “Silver Cage” if they lock the PCs in a silver-barred room – PCs must overcome it (Might to bend bars, or Trick to picklock, etc.) while under attack. The Silver Hand grunts can be mooks, but their leader could have a stunt “Hunter's Strike: +2 when attacking a foe with the *Beast* aspect” (targeting werewolves explicitly). Encourage PCs with Companions ties to invoke their bonds (Aela's player might invoke “*Bonds of The Circle*” to get a bonus rescuing a captured Farkas, etc.). If Aela or another known NPC is present, allow that NPC to shine or sacrifice – perhaps Aela takes a severe consequence “Badly Burned by Silver” to protect a PC, giving the party a chance to turn the tables. Resolving this scenario will likely grant the party an **Aspect** like “Trusted by the Companions” or a free invoke in any future dealings involving Jorrvaskr, symbolizing the strong camaraderie forged.

DB-009: Shadows of the Thalmor – *Any region (whenever appropriate)*. **Trigger:** Use this as an ongoing minor scenario or a single reveal in Acts II–IV. It can occur whenever the PCs obtain a victory that seems *too* easy or when they investigate odd occurrences. **Synopsis:** The Aldmeri Dominion's agents work in the shadows, quietly nudging the civil war toward a prolonged stalemate ¹. In this scenario, the PCs uncover evidence of a **Thalmor plot**. This could be as subtle as intercepted correspondence or as dramatic as catching a disguised Thalmor Justiciar spying in their camp. Examples: a Stormcloak courier ambushed not by Imperials but by *elves* (revealing the Thalmor wanted Ulfric's orders delayed), or a beloved town priest turning out to be a Thalmor informant sowing division. **Branches:** If the PCs act on the clue, they might capture a Thalmor operative. Interrogating them (careful – a fanatic might have a suicide poison) could reveal pieces of the larger puzzle: e.g. “Project Ambition – when the war reaches its peak, we strike both

leaders". This foreshadows Act IV's Thalmor endgame. The PCs could choose to publicize the discovery – if they do so cleverly, it could push Nords and Imperials to consider truce against the common enemy (granting the party a situational Aspect **"Exposed the Puppetmasters"** they can invoke in the High Hrothgar negotiations for unity). However, exposing it might also make the Thalmor go to ground, denying further clues. If the PCs ignore the evidence or fail to notice it, the Thalmor continue unimpeded – the GM can tick up a *"Thalmor Influence"* hidden clock ¹⁸. This means later Dragonbreak events might be harder (e.g. more Thalmor support in an enemy encounter, or a lost opportunity to turn factions against the Thalmor). **Mechanical Hooks:** This is largely an **investigation and social** scenario. Use *Notice* or *Investigate* to find the hidden dossier on a corpse (place Aspect *"Secret Orders: Eyes Only"*). A captured Thalmor can be a compelling social conflict: his **Will** vs. the party's intimidation or persuasion attempts. Perhaps set a stress track *"Interrogation"* – each approach (threaten with Physique, converse with Rapport, trick with Deceit) that succeeds marks off a stress, and at a certain threshold he yields key info. On a tie/soft success, he gives partial (maybe even misleading) info. If the PCs have a hard time, allow a *Lore* roll (or use of a known NPC like Delphine or Malborn) to interpret scraps of evidence. The goal is to make the players feel clever for uncovering something the war leaders largely missed. This scenario cements the idea that *someone* is pulling strings and sets up the more bombastic Dragonbreak events involving the Thalmor later.

DB-010: The Daedric Gambit – *Whiterun Hold (or during a major battle)*. **Trigger:** Act IV, during the final siege of either Solitude or Windhelm – at the climactic moment when one side would clinch victory. (You can adjust location; e.g., near the battlefield camp or a nearby ruin.) **Synopsis:** The Thalmor, desperate to prevent a decisive winner (or to assassinate key leaders), invoke a terrible backup plan. Using a hidden **Daedric artifact** (perhaps **Mehrunes' Razor** or a profane grimoire), they attempt to summon a **Daedric horror** onto the battlefield ¹⁹. Possibly this is a **dremora lord** or even something like a chained *Xivkyn* monstrosity intended to slaughter everyone – a false flag catastrophe the Thalmor will use to justify intervening "to help" later. The sky darkens unnaturally as the ritual begins. **Branches:** The PCs can notice eerie signs (a circle of Thalmor wizards chanting in the distance, a sudden silence from a flank that got overrun by something non-mortal). If they choose to intervene mid-battle, they might peel off from the main fight to confront the summoners. Stopping the ritual in time means the Daedric horror never fully manifests – the war battle can proceed to its (perhaps less tragic) conclusion, and the Thalmor lose their trump card. If the PCs do nothing or come too late, a Daedric monster tears into the field. In narrative terms, it could kill or severely injure *both* Ulfric and Tullius (or other commanders), echoing the chaos the Thalmor desire. The final outcome might then shift to the PCs having to lead a united front against this otherworldly threat (which could dramatically lead to an impromptu truce – *"defend Skyrim together"*, fulfilling a twist on Season Unending). It's a branching pivot: the war might cease with neither side victor but the Thalmor's plot exposed and foiled by the PCs' heroism. **Mechanical Hooks:** Represent the summoning with a **Countdown Clock** labeled *"Oblivion Unleashed"* – maybe 6 segments. It ticks as rounds pass or as Thalmor mages maintain concentration. PCs can reduce segments by defeating ritual participants (each downed wizard = -1 segment) or clever disruptions (e.g. using a *Dispel Magic* stunt or creating an aspect *"Torn Sigil Matrix"* by messing up the ritual circle with an overcome). If the horror appears, stat it as a boss enemy: high Physical stress, immunity to normal weapons (require creative tactics or invoking *holy* or *Daedric* weaknesses). Perhaps it wields fire and shadow (zone attack aspects like *"Sea of Flames"*). During this, allow the *factions to unite*: e.g. a PC could call on a nearby Imperial artillery to fire at the demon (spend a Fate point to get an assist), or a Stormcloak mage and Imperial priest might together chant a ward (players can direct NPC actions as creating advantages like *"Combined Banishment Spell"* if they think of it). The key mechanical twist: fighting the horror could be treated as a Challenge with multiple objectives (hold it off, find its true name to banish it, protect the wounded leaders). If banished, the *Daedric*

horror's defeat becomes an Aspect the PCs carry into the Epilogue – proof of Thalmor treachery that they can use to solidify alliances post-war.

DB-011: The Fate of Paarthurnax – *Throat of the World (or High Hrothgar)*. **Trigger:** Late Act III or early Act IV, if the PCs have involved the Greybeards (for negotiations or personal guidance). Especially if the Blades (Delphine/Esbern) are allies or known to them. **Synopsis:** In the original game, the Blades demand **Paarthurnax** (the dragon leader of the Greybeards) be slain for his past crimes. Without the Dragonborn around to mediate, the conflict still simmers. Delphine, driven by her oath to kill dragons, sees Paarthurnax as a potential Thalmor target or future threat. She secretly musters forces (perhaps a few younger Blades or mercenaries) to assault Paarthurnax on the mountain. The PCs arrive at High Hrothgar to find signs of battle – wounded Greybeard monks, scorch marks, and distant roars. **Branches:** The PCs can make a pivotal choice: *defend Paarthurnax* or *side with the Blades*. If they defend the old dragon, they scale the summit to find Delphine and a couple of dragon slayers fighting Paarthurnax. They must convince Delphine to back down or physically stop the combat. Persuading her might require acknowledging the ancient dragon's atonement (appeal to her reason or Esbern's scholarly side – perhaps a lore drop that "Paarthurnax has guided the Way of the Voice for centuries, tempering dragon aggression"). If successful, Delphine stands down begrudgingly, but it might cost the PCs some goodwill with her. Paarthurnax, grateful, grants the PCs a special boon – maybe teaching them a Word of Power (as an *Extra* stunt: once per session they can invoke "*Mentor's Roar*" to intimidate foes or call for aid from dragons). If the PCs side with Delphine (perhaps out of pragmatism or anti-dragon sentiment), they might help slay Paarthurnax. The Greybeards will be heartbroken and withdraw from worldly affairs ("The Greybeards' Silence" becomes a campaign aspect – no peace council or aid from them). But the Blades, satisfied, vow to aid the PCs more directly against the Thalmor and dragons. Essentially it's a trade-off: kill the dragon, gain Blade support (maybe a squad of Blade agents in the final battle = free invokes for tactics), but lose the spiritual counsel of the Greybeards. **Mechanical Hooks:** This scenario may be resolved via **social conflict** or **combat** depending on approach. If convincing Delphine, treat it as an argument duel: PCs need to create advantages on Delphine like "Seeds of Doubt" by citing Paarthurnax's centuries of meditation or *Esbern* could be invoked as a moderate NPC to sway her. Each point they make could reduce her resolve (maybe she has a stress track representing her stubborn goal). If fighting, stat Delphine as a skilled swordswoman with dragon-slaying gear (and a strong Consequence "Mission Above All" that can be compelled to make her fight recklessly). Paarthurnax, if fought, should be restrained – maybe he refuses to seriously harm the "Way of the Voice is passive" – which means if the PCs don't intervene, he might actually be killed. In combat, the mountaintop environment is key: slippery ledges (Aspect "On the Edge of a Precipice"), blinding snow (invoke to hamper ranged attacks). The outcome dramatically alters some narrative options: note in the **branch matrix** whether Greybeards or Blades are "in play" for Act IV. It's a heavy moral choice highlighting the theme of redemption vs. revenge.

DB-012: Challenge of the Ebony Warrior – *Anywhere (ideally late campaign, as a capstone side-quest)*. **Trigger:** Act V Epilogue or just before the final confrontation, when PCs are likely at their peak power (and possibly high reputation). **Synopsis:** A mysterious, impossibly skilled Redguard warrior clad in full ebony armor arrives. He's heard of the PCs' legendary deeds and seeks the greatest challenge for his final duel. In lore, the **Ebony Warrior** appears to Dragonborn at level 80. Here, he might approach the party's campfire one evening, or stand waiting outside the gates of the city they just liberated. He issues a formal duel request to the mightiest among them (or the whole group, if they prefer). **Branches:** The PCs may accept the duel, honorably choosing a location (perhaps *Last Vigil*, a scenic cliff as in the game, or the training grounds of Cloud District in Whiterun). This duel is one-on-one or one-vs-party (the warrior insists on a fair fight). If the PC(s) win, the Ebony Warrior thanks them – his lifelong quest is fulfilled and he can go to Sovngarde. This could give the winning PC a **permanent Aspect** "Tested by the Ebony Warrior" (symbolizing

the heights of martial prowess) or a tangible reward: the ebony armor or sword, or an **extra Fate point** for the final scene due to renewed confidence. If they decline the duel out of caution or mercy, the warrior is disappointed but respects their wish. However, he states he *will* find a worthy end – which might mean he'll appear heroically in the final battle, seeking death fighting Thalmor or a dragon (essentially doing a sacrificial attack that could assist the PCs later). If the PCs accept but then lose the duel, the Ebony Warrior will not kill them outright (unless you want a very sobering lesson) – instead, he stops at the brink, perhaps saying, “You are not ready – hone your skills, war isn't won so easily.” This can humble the PCs and spur growth (and they could potentially challenge him again later). **Mechanical Hooks:** The Ebony Warrior is a **Solo Boss** encounter. Give him several stunts reflecting the actual game encounter: e.g. **Reflect Blows** (“Once per conflict, reduce an incoming physical attack by 4 shifts, turning the energy back on the attacker for 2 shifts”), **Unbreakable Defense** (+2 to defend against melee attacks), and even **Thu'um** (he knows a few Shouts, perhaps *Disarm* or *Unrelenting Force* to knock PCs down). Mechanically, if the duel is one-on-one, consider a *modal* approach: the longer the fight goes, the more he “ups the difficulty” (introduce Scene Aspects like “Battle Trance” that he invokes to keep pace with a very strong PC). If it's one vs. many, allow him a consequence slot or two extra (or an extra stress box) to handle multiple attackers. Encourage the duel to be cinematic: describe each clash of blades, the Warrior complimenting a good strike, etc. The outcome is meant to either bolster the PCs (victory proving their hero status) or impart a last bit of wisdom through defeat. It's a great way to highlight a PC's combat prowess and provide closure to any who define themselves by martial skill.

DB-013: Boethiah's Calling – *The Rift (Knifepoint Ridge) or any remote hideout.* **Trigger:** Act II or III, if the PCs wander off the war path or show interest in Daedric happenings. Alternatively, triggered by finding a disturbing pamphlet or witnessing a murder of a cult traitor. **Synopsis:** The Daedric Prince **Boethiah**, deity of treachery and plots, has a cult in Skyrim that is actively recruiting and assassinating. With so many soldiers and champions about, Boethiah's cultists see opportunity to find the strongest among them. They lure warriors with promises of power. The PCs might encounter a **Boethiah Cultist** challenging people at a crossroads – when a would-be hero duels him, win or lose, the cultist sacrifices the opponent in Boethiah's name. The cult's ultimate goal is to identify a new “Chosen” to receive Boethiah's favor (perhaps aiming for Ulfric or a PC if renowned). **Branches:** The PCs could ignore the cult initially, only to realize later that a valued ally or famous general has been slain mysteriously (the calling card of Boethiah left at the scene – e.g. a colored invitation or the absence of a body, since it was devoured). If they investigate, they may track the cult to **Knifepoint Ridge**, where a clandestine tournament is being held at night – victims fighting while robed cultists watch. The PCs can either *infiltrate* (maybe pretend to be interested in joining; a Disguise or Deception to get close) or *attack outright*. Possible outcomes: they might kill the cult leader, ending the cult's spree (reward: confiscated Daedric artifact, and eliminating an unpredictable threat before Act IV). Or a PC might *temporarily* participate in Boethiah's challenge – if a PC wins the tournament by besting a formidable combatant in single combat, Boethiah herself might appear (as a spectral figure) to offer them power in exchange for a price (e.g. betray one of your allies). This moral test can be a roleplaying moment: do they accept a dark boon (perhaps a powerful Stunt for the final battle at the cost of a permanent Trouble aspect “Boethiah's Pawn”)? Or reject it and earn Boethiah's enmity (the Prince might send an assassin after them later). If the PCs do nothing about the cult, one of the war's key figures could fall victim (maybe General Tullius is nearly killed by his trusted guard – a cultist – delaying the Imperial advance, etc.). **Mechanical Hooks:** The cult's tournament could be run as a **Challenge** with multiple fights – each fight requiring a different tactic (melee duel requiring Fight, an archery round requiring Shoot, etc., possibly allowing different party members to secretly tag-team if one “champion” PC feigns identity change). The risk is accumulating fatigue or injury before facing the cult's champion (who could be given stress equal to the PCs' highest, to be a serious threat). If sneaking in, use opposed Stealth vs. Notice; on a fail, they end up

surrounded by cultists (combat vs a mob). Boethiah's intervention, if it occurs, can be done via *mental conflict*: She projects an offer into the PC's mind – resolve it like temptation, possibly leveraging the PC's Trouble aspect (e.g. a PC with “*Power at any Price*” might be especially vulnerable). A success in resisting is a big character moment (and perhaps Boethiah leaves a parting curse – a mild consequence like “Shaken by Boethiah's Ire”). This scenario adds depth that not all threats are war-related; some feed on conflict to pursue their own dark agendas.

DB-014: The Emperor's Gambit – *Haafingar (Solitude) or en route to Skyrim*. **Trigger:** Late Act III, if the war stalemates or if the Dark Brotherhood plotline is active. It can also be triggered as a timed world event: news arrives that **Emperor Titus Mede II** himself plans a secret visit to Skyrim to negotiate an end to the war (or inspect the situation). This is essentially the setup for the Dark Brotherhood's final contract. **Synopsis:** The Emperor's visit is a precarious wild card. If word gets out, it could either lead to peace talks... or an assassination attempt that could throw the Empire into chaos. Unbeknownst to most, the **Dark Brotherhood** is indeed planning to assassinate Emperor Titus Mede II during his stay on his ship, *The Katariah*. If a PC is part of the Brotherhood (Side Plot C), they may even be tasked with this. Otherwise, the PCs might catch wind via a contact (perhaps Aventus Aretino's rumor or a loose-lipped guard in Solitude's docks). **Branches:** The PCs face a dilemma: do they *protect* the Emperor, ensuring he lives to potentially broker peace (which Ulfric or Tullius might secretly welcome as a face-saving way out)? Or let events run their course (or even aid the assassins) to harden Skyrim's resolve? If they choose protection, they could foil the assassination on the *Katariah* – a stealth-action scenario where they counter-infiltrate the ship. Stopping the assassin (who could be the Brotherhood's Listener or a standout like *Amaund Motierre* double-crossing) might mean a fight in the Emperor's quarters. Titus Mede, impressed by the heroes, grants them audience – possibly agreeing to whatever reasonable request (e.g. recall the Thalmor advisors, or support the Dragonborn's anonymity, but mostly he'll say something thematic like “Skyrim's fate is in your hands now”). The war might then pivot: maybe an armistice is declared (GM's choice depending on narrative). If the PCs do nothing or fail, the Emperor is killed by the Brotherhood ²⁰. In the short term, this demoralizes the Empire's troops (perhaps a temporary advantage to Stormcloaks), but in the long term it strengthens the Thalmor (the Empire destabilized). Ulfric might double down on independence. The final Act may then lack any possibility of negotiated peace – it's total war until the Dominion strikes. **Mechanical Hooks:** This is a complex scenario mixing **social stealth and combat**. Use *Stealth* and *Deceive* as PCs sneak aboard the *Katariah* at night. Introduce Aspects like “Lamplight and Shadow” to help or hinder sneaking. If a PC is a Brotherhood member, they might be the assassin – turning it into a tense PvP-esque negotiation (maybe they have second thoughts?). Stats for the Emperor: he's not a combatant (High Concept “Weary Ruler”), but he has guards (Penitus Oculatus agents, treat like elite NPCs). The Brotherhood assailant (if not a PC) could be **Nightweaver** – a code-named elite assassin with a potent poison (Stunt: *Blade of Woe* – *ignores 2 points of armor on a hit*). A clock could be ticking here too: “Assassination Window” 4 segments – each alarm or slip-up ticks one; if full, the assassin strikes. If PCs reduce it (by quietly taking out sentries or disarming traps), they might catch the killer in the act. On a success, this scenario could grant an **Aspect** to the campaign like “Empire's Favor” representing the political capital earned. The Emperor may even give them a small fleet or resources for rebuilding – useful if a post-war fight with Thalmor is coming. On failure, consider giving the PCs a Consequence reflecting the chaos (like “Wanted by the Penitus Oculatus” if they were implicated or “Distrusted by Empire” if known). This scenario is high stakes and should feel like a cinematic thriller amid the war epic.

DB-015: The Dragon Priest's Tomb – *Various tombs (Forelhost, Skuldafn, etc.)*. **Trigger:** Use in any Act when the PCs explore an ancient ruin or if they seek a powerful weapon. **Synopsis:** One of the dormant **Dragon Priests** – ancient lich-like servants of the dragons – awakens due to the return of dragons (Alduin's brief

resurgence) and the current turmoil ²¹ . For example, **Vokun** in High Gate Ruins or **Rahgot** in Forelhost. Without a Dragonborn to systematically eliminate them, these undead warlords stir and could gather draugr armies. A scholar (like *Anska* or *Tharstan*) might implore the PCs to help prevent a “Necromantic Dominion.” **Branches:** If the PCs undertake this delve, it’s a classic dungeon crawl with a twist: possibly racing against time if the Dragon Priest is performing a ritual to amplify his power or resurrect others. Should the PCs slay the Dragon Priest, they claim its mask – an item of great power (treat as an Extra with a stunt, e.g. “*Rahgot’s Mask*: +2 to *Physique* and *immunity to fire*”). This directly empowers them for future challenges and removes a lurking threat (perhaps if left alone, that Dragon Priest would have allied with the Thalmor or attacked one of the holds with an undead horde during Act IV). If they ignore the tomb, you could either leave it (not every hook must be pulled) or have consequences later: e.g. during the final defense of Whiterun or similar, a Dragon Priest (the one they didn’t face) attacks with an undead host, forcing the PCs to deal with both civil war enemies and an undead incursion (very chaotic!). **Mechanical Hooks:** This scenario is essentially a **dungeon encounter**. Use multiple **Zones** in the tomb with different aspects: “Pitch Dark Corridors,” “Ancient Traps and Trick Doors,” etc. The Dragon Priest itself is a formidable foe – give it high *Will* and *Lore* (for casting spells) and a potent stunt like **Staff of Fireball** (area attack) or **Mask of [Name]** (granting an extra mild consequence slot or armor). The fight can involve waves of draugr minions that the PCs must cut through (creating advantage “Overwhelmed by Draugr” on PCs if they don’t manage mobs). Fate-wise, allow creative solves: collapsing part of the crypt on the priest (Athletics or Crafts overcome to trigger a cave-in aspect), or using the priest’s attachment to its mask (if a PC grabbed the mask mid-fight, the priest might fly into a rage, giving PCs openings). The lore tie-in: clues on frescoes or journals in the dungeon can foreshadow *Dragon Cult* history – that these priests “ruled over men in their Dragon gods’ name” ²¹ , implicitly warning that history could repeat if dragons/Thalmor win. It provides context and gravitas to the world’s depth beyond the civil war.

DB-016: Wrath of the Wild Giant – *Whiterun Hold (or any plains)*. **Trigger:** Act I or II, when traveling between cities (to emphasize not all threats are human). **Synopsis:** A normally docile **Giant** (with its Mammoths) has been enraged and wanders dangerously close to a village (e.g. giants near Whiterun attacking farms). War disturbances – maybe a stray artillery hit or marauding soldiers – disturbed its camp, and now it’s on a mini-rampage ²² . Nords whisper that Kyne’s giants are upset at the spilling of kin-blood. **Branches:** The PCs can resolve this by *combat* or *cunning*. Fighting the giant head-on is perilous; he’s massively strong (one club swing can send heroes flying ²³). But perhaps they notice it’s limping (a mammoth was killed by soldiers and the giant is mourning/angry). If they *appease* it – e.g. by using Animal Handling or a magical calm (Voice of the Sky, if Greybeards taught them, could pacify animals) – they might lead the giant back to a safer area or at least stop its rampage. This could earn them a strange but useful ally: that giant might later wander into a battle against Thalmor or lend them a subtle aid (like pointing out a safe path in the wild). If they kill the giant, it solves the immediate threat and perhaps provides loot (giant’s toe for alchemy, etc.), but local villagers might be unhappy (some see giants as part of the land’s balance). No major story impact, except it reinforces that war affects even the wilds. If they ignore it, perhaps a village is indeed smashed (the next time they visit, it’s burnt – minor narrative color, or a lost opportunity to recruit farmers). **Mechanical Hooks:** This can be a brief **Environmental Encounter**. The giant can be treated as a *Scale 2* opponent (bigger and stronger): e.g. any PC vs giant in melee takes +2 shifts of effect if hit due to size. Use the giant’s behavior per lore: if a PC gets too close, it *gestures for them to back off* – you can have an aspect “Aggressive Warning Stance” in play. Clever PCs might recall that giants generally aren’t aggressive unless their herd is harmed ²² . So a *Lore* or *Empathy* roll could reveal that the giant is grieving (place aspect “Distracted by Grief”). If they exploit that with, say, *Provoke* (to draw it away from homestead) or *Rapport* (soothe in a low voice, unlikely but creative), reward that with bypassing combat. In fight, emphasize the giant’s strengths: maybe give it a stunt **Massive Club Swing** (attack all PCs in zone for a mild hit each) and **High Health** (3

stress boxes + 2 consequences). But also its weaknesses: **Slow** (PCs get +2 to overcome its attacks by quick dodges). This encounter showcases the living world beyond politics and can provide a moment of empathy or spectacle in the journey.

DB-017: The Skooma Scourge – *The Rift (Riften and outskirts)*. **Trigger:** Act II, when PCs are in Riften or the Rift for war or faction reasons. Perhaps after they help capture Riften (for Stormcloaks) or during a lull in the city. **Synopsis:** With the guards busy and the jarl focused on war, a **Skooma drug ring** has thrived in Riften ²⁴ ²⁵. Addicts are causing troubles, and the poison is sapping the resolve of soldiers. A fishery worker (like **Wujeeta**, an Argonian addict) collapses near the PCs, hinting at where she got the skooma. This leads to evidence of a warehouse near the docks being used for distribution ²⁶. **Branches:** If the PCs intervene, they can raid the Skooma Den (perhaps the *Riften Warehouse* or a nearby cave like *Cragslane*). They'll face smugglers and possibly corrupt Riften guards on the take. Clearing the den, they find ledger proof that the operation was indirectly funded by a **Black-Briar** rival or even the Thalmor (to weaken Riften from within – a subtle sabotage). Presenting this evidence to Jarl Maven Black-Briar (if Imperials hold the city) or to the community if not, grants the PCs clout. Riften's overall stability improves (no more addicts selling out info for a fix, etc.), which could translate to one extra militia unit in a later battle or simply goodwill (Aspect **"Heroes of the Rift"** available). If they ignore it, the skooma trade continues – perhaps a valued NPC falls prey (imagine one of their informants becomes unreliable due to addiction, complicating a later quest). It might also mean morale penalty for any troops quartered in Riften (GM could narratively justify a missed tactical opportunity). **Mechanical Hooks:** This is a **mini-dungeon/urban bust**. Treat the warehouse infiltration like overcoming locks/traps (*Thievery* to pick lock, *Stealth* to creep in). A straight assault means fighting a gang of bandits (stat them as Average foes with a "Drug-Crazed" aspect making them fearless). One boss, **Sarthis Idren** (as per lore) could have a key and an important note. Use social skills if they try interrogation of a captured smuggler (maybe offering clemency in exchange for info on the supplier – reveal of higher conspiracy). This scenario ties into the crime aspect of Skyrim and reinforces how war negligence can breed crime. It's also a good side quest to give non-combat skills some spotlight (investigation, burglary). Citations: the fact bandits use forts and caves and band together is well-known ²⁴, so the PCs may recall "bandits often inhabit forts... set up patrols... sometimes found on roads" – exactly what these smugglers do from warehouse to road ²⁴. Clearing them out contributes to the larger war effort indirectly by stabilizing the home front.

DB-018: Traitor in Our Midst – *Any military camp or city under PC control*. **Trigger:** Act III, when the PCs hold positions of command or are closely working with army leadership (Stormcloak or Imperial). **Synopsis:** Whispers of a **spy** plague the ranks. Intelligence leaks or ambushes suggest the enemy (or Thalmor) knows the PCs' side's plans. For example, a secret supply caravan is waylaid at night with uncanny precision. Evidence (a dropped coded note, or an ever-nervous quartermaster) points to an insider feeding information. **Branches:** The PCs can initiate a **counterintelligence** operation. They might set a trap: feed false info and see who acts on it, or surreptitiously watch suspects. Eventually, they identify the mole – perhaps a charismatic officer who's actually Thalmor-planted, or a blackmailed soldier. If they catch and expose the traitor *quietly*, their side's command applauds their discretion; they can choose to turn the spy (use them as a double-agent to send misinformation to the Thalmor – giving a strategic edge, e.g. an automatic success in a later overcome related to enemy plans). If they make it public, it boosts unity (Aspect **"Renewed Brotherhood"** as soldiers feel safer) but maybe alerts the Thalmor that their agent is gone (so they attempt other ploys instead). If the PCs fail to find the mole, the consequences hit hard: perhaps at the climactic final battle, one defensive plan fails because the enemy knew it (the GM might give the enemy an extra free invoke on an aspect like **"Surprise Flank Attack"** to represent this). **Mechanical Hooks:** This is a **mystery with social interaction**. The traitor will have certain behaviors (maybe always volunteering for

courier duty, or seen near the command tent at odd hours). Use *Insight/Empathy* to read suspects – one may have the aspect “Sweating Bullets”. Use *Deceive* or *Diplomacy* to lay the trap (create aspect “False Orders to Troutbend” on the situation – if someone acts on it, they’re the spy). You can play a small **mental conflict** if they corner the spy and try to get them to confess or flip: the spy has a Trouble like “Family Held Hostage by Thalmor” which the PCs can discover (maybe by reading the coded letter with a Lore roll, gleaning it’s written in Aldmeri, revealing the Thalmor connection). Pressing that emotional button yields results. If the PCs decide frontier justice (execute the traitor), that might impose a scene aspect “Grim Morale” for a bit – soldiers uneasy that one of their own was a snake. But if handled well (private removal or noble trial), they get a morale boost. This scenario highlights internal conflict and the theme that **not all threats are open** – exactly the kind of clandestine interference the Thalmor excel at ¹⁸ .

DB-019: Season Unending (Alternative Outcome) – *High Hrothgar (optional, only if PCs attempt mediation)*.

Trigger: Late Act III, if PCs are sick of the fighting or have strong influence, they might push for a peace council (as per *Season Unending* quest). **Synopsis:** With no Dragonborn to convene the peace, it falls to the PCs (especially if one is a neutral/thinks beyond factions). Suppose they manage to get Tullius and Ulfric (and possibly Elenwen) to sit at the High Hrothgar table. This scenario covers an alternate branch: what if the peace talks succeed *too* well or go awry due to secret Dragonbreak events? **Branches:** If the PCs have uncovered Thalmor schemes (from DB-009 “Shadows” etc.), they can present evidence at the council. This might shock both leaders into an armistice right there – agreeing to jointly focus on the Thalmor threat (essentially Act IV becomes a very different narrative: Empire and Stormcloak forces teaming up, with PCs at the center). This is a *positive Dragonbreak* – a radical timeline divergence where the civil war ends “early.” The consequence: the **Dragonbreak Pressure clock** might tick up for Thalmor (they won’t let this unity last long). If instead the talks are derailed (perhaps Elenwen the Thalmor observer provokes Ulfric by gloating about Torgg’s death), then the council might collapse in rancor. In that case, the PCs could inadvertently worsen the war – both sides leave more bitter (a brief return to fighting before Act IV anyway). Or perhaps the PCs have to pick a side to back diplomatically, alienating the other (leading to Act IV where maybe they only have one faction’s support against Thalmor). **Mechanical Hooks:** Treat the council as a **Dramatic Contest** of arguments. Each major player (Ulfric, Tullius, Elenwen, maybe Brunwulf or Elisif as seconds) has a certain number of points to concede. The PCs can use their accumulated aspects like “Exposed the Puppetmasters ¹ ” or personal credibility to influence outcomes. For example, a PC might roll *Oratory* (Rapport) to state a stirring case for unity – success with style gives “Skyrim United Front” aspect on the table. But perhaps Elenwen uses *Provocation* (Provoke) to push Ulfric’s buttons (“Where was the Empire’s mercy when your people were left to burn?” etc.). If the PCs built trust with each leader individually earlier (maybe by completing their personal side quests), they can invoke those bonds. Mechanically, decide ahead what a “win” looks like (e.g. each leader has 3 stress of stubbornness; reduce both to 0 and they agree to peace; if one drops and other doesn’t, partial accord; if neither drops, talks fail). A true peace is a dramatic Dragonbreak indeed – it averts the normal end of the civil war, creating a new branch where Act IV might be *The Battle Against the Thalmor* with a united Skyrim. The module supports this with notes that final outcomes are flexible. If peace happens, skip the Siege of Solitude/Windhelm internal battle and go straight to repelling a Thalmor invasion in Act IV (perhaps at Whiterun, the central hold). If not, proceed as normal war. This “scenario” is less a side-quest and more a culmination of others – we include it to ensure GMs have guidance for this highly branching possibility, keeping it consistent with the campaign’s themes of unity vs. division ²⁷ ²⁸ .

DB-020: The Last Dragonbreak – *Sovngarde (Metaphysical Epilogue)*. **Trigger:** Epilogue or final Act V scene, if the GM and players enjoy a mythic touch. **Synopsis:** After the dust settles – the war’s end and the Thalmor’s defeat or expulsion – there is one lingering question: the Dragonborn. Perhaps the sky grows dark for a

moment and a familiar black outline soars across the clouds – *not Alduin*, but maybe **Odahviing** or another dragon paying respect. The *alternate timeline* might try to reassert itself; time “breaks” one last time to reconcile the paradox of Alduin’s defeat without the Dragonborn’s open involvement. In a dream or vision, the PCs find themselves in **Sovngarde**, the Nordic afterlife misty vale, where they are greeted by spectral heroes (maybe Tsun, guard of the bridge, or the Three who defeated Alduin originally). These figures thank the PCs for preventing a new Dragon Break (i.e. stopping the Thalmor’s schemes and keeping Skyrim’s thread of fate intact). **Branches:** This is a narrative wrap-up: the PCs can ask one question each of these guardian spirits (e.g. “What became of the Dragonborn?” maybe answered with “He fights on in distant lands, a needed shadow” or “That is a tale for another day” – leaving it open-ended for GM creativity or a potential sequel). If a PC died heroically in the final battle, perhaps this is where they see them welcomed to Sovngarde’s hall by Ysgramor himself. The “Dragonbreaks, Creatures, and Companions” module’s influence might be acknowledged by these mythic figures: “*You have woven a new skein in the pattern, one where mortals stood together instead of relying on a Child of Akatosh. This is the destiny you forged.*” They may grant an **honorary title** to the party (like *Dragonguard of Skyrim*). If the PCs somehow failed and Thalmor conquered, this vision might be more somber or absent. But assuming success, it’s a chance to reinforce how the PCs changed fate. **Mechanical Hooks:** Not much mechanics here beyond possibly each PC making a final roll to ‘impress’ the Sovngarde heroes (maybe a *Lasting Legacy* create advantage – if they do well, their name will be sung forever, giving the player a satisfying epilogue boost). You could treat Sovngarde as a scene where the PCs temporarily have an Aspect “Heroic Soul” that lets them ask for any last boon (maybe one free Fate point spend to narrate an epilogue detail). This is the *catharsis* Dragonbreak – the timeline has healed. The heroes step back through the mists to the world of the living (or wake from the dream) knowing their choices echoed in eternity ²⁹ ³⁰. It’s a fitting capstone if your table enjoys epic endings – entirely optional but memorable.

Each Dragonbreak above is intended to enrich the campaign with Elder Scrolls flavor and meaningful player choices. GMs should adjust difficulty and outcomes to fit their table’s decisions. Tag scenarios you use in your notes and track any new Aspects or consequences that arise (many can carry forward as campaign aspects or situational bonuses). In all cases, these events remind the players that Skyrim’s fate is truly in their hands – time and history bend around their actions, for good or ill.

(For quick reference of triggers and outcomes, see DRAGONBREAK_HOOKS.md and DRAGONBREAK_BRANCH_MATRIX.md in the repository.)

modules/dragonbreaks_creatures_companions/COMPANIONS.md

Party Companion NPC Dossiers

The following profiles detail notable NPCs who can become companions (allies that travel and assist the player characters). They are drawn from Skyrim’s lore and tailored to this Fate campaign. Each entry gives the NPC’s background and role, their key Aspects, any unique Stunts or equipment, their skills/approaches, and guidance on recruitment conditions (how the PCs can gain their loyalty). We also note if a companion has a possible romance subplot and personal quest hooks tied to them. These NPCs are designed to enrich the story with their perspectives (many embody the setting’s factions/themes) and to provide mechanical benefits in play (via creating advantages, teamwork bonuses, or use of their stunts). They should remain supporting characters – the spotlight stays on PCs – but in a pinch they might take independent action or even temporarily fill in if a player is absent.

Ralof of Riverwood – *Stormcloak Tracker and True Nord*.

High Concept: *Devoted Stormcloak Commando* (Nord scout from Riverwood, fiercely loyal to Skyrim's freedom) ³¹ .

Trouble: *Haunted by Helgen* (survivor's guilt and nightmares from Alduin's attack and the Imperial execution block) ³¹ .

Aspect: *Brotherhood Forged in War* (forms deep bonds with those who fight alongside him; will risk much for his "shield-brothers/sisters").

Skills: Excellent **Survival/Notice**, Great **Fight (Two-Handed)**, Good **Stealth**, Average **Influence** (charismatic among Nords). He's a skilled tracker and skirmisher, favoring a battleaxe or longbow.

Stunts: **"Guerilla Tactics"** – Ralof can create an advantage related to terrain ("Ambush Position", "Cover of Trees") with +2 once per session by recalling his scout training. **"Stormcloak Courage"** – +2 to Defend allies with Fight when outnumbered, reflecting his rallying presence in battle.

Stress: 3 physical, 2 mental. **Consequences:** Standard (Mild, Moderate).

Recruitment: If the PCs escaped Helgen with Ralof or later join the Stormcloaks and prove themselves (e.g. help at **Fort Neugrad rescue** or Jagged Crown quest) ³² ³³ , Ralof regards them as trustworthy. He formally offers to accompany them after Act I's Battle for Whiterun if Stormcloak-aligned. Even if the party isn't Stormcloak, saving his life or showing honor (like sparing Nordic lives or helping Riverwood) could persuade him. He won't join overt Imperials, though he might still aid them quietly against mutual foes like the Thalmor.

Romance: *Possible*. Ralof is straight (per lore mentions of a past love), but more importantly he's "married to Skyrim's cause." A PC who shares his ideology might kindle something; scenes of quiet camaraderie (drinking mead by the campfire swapping stories of home) can build a romance. If romanced and things look dire (e.g. Ulfric orders something cruel), Ralof's loyalty could be torn – a dramatic personal quest where the PC's influence may make him an agent of change in the rebellion (maybe preventing an atrocity).

Personal Quest Hook: *"Stormcloak's Heart"* – Ralof confides doubts about Ulfric's methods after seeing war's toll on civilians ³⁴ . He admits he'd follow Ulfric to Sovngarde, but wonders if there's a better way to win Skyrim's freedom. The PCs can encourage his conscience. In Act IV, this may pay off: if present during Ulfric's victory, Ralof might step in and stop Ulfric from executing a captive Elisif, echoing that conscience ³⁴ . Mechanically, Ralof's growth can grant the party an aspect **"Mercy on the Battlefield"** to invoke in peace talks or to mitigate civilian casualties. Alternatively, a darker quest: Ralof discovers his sister Gerdur's family (in Riverwood) is targeted by Thalmor assassins as leverage. The PCs and Ralof can rush to Riverwood to thwart this – securing Ralof's unwavering loyalty (and a burning hatred for the Thalmor, adding +2 to any rolls against them as a temporary aspect "Vengeful Protector").

Usage: Ralof is an ideal companion for Stormcloak-leaning parties or those with Nord cultural ties. He offers guidance on Stormcloak operations (he knows the holds and secret paths) and a grounded, hearty presence that players often gravitate to. He's good for pointing out when something dishonorable is afoot ("This isn't what we bled for..."). Tactically, use him to set up ambush aspects or watch the party's back during stealth missions.

Hadvar of Solitude – *Imperial Soldier and Steadfast Guardian*.

High Concept: *Loyal Legion Forester* (Nord born in Riverwood serving the Imperial Legion, pragmatic and duty-bound) ³⁵ ³⁶ .

Trouble: *Conflicted Honor* (hates what the war makes him do – e.g. executing fellow Nords – and privately questions some orders) ³⁶ .

Aspect: *Uncle Alvor's Wisdom* (grounded upbringing – his blacksmith uncle taught him to protect the innocent; gives him humility and folksy problem-solving).

Aspect: *"Skyrim's Unity, Empire's Strength"* (Believes the Empire is Skyrim's best hope for peace ³⁷ , but also

that Skyrim's people must be protected – he tries to bridge understanding).

Skills: Great **Athletics** (sturdy fighter who can march and swim in armor), Great **Fight (Sword & Shield)**, Good **Tactics (Strategy)**, Fair **Diplomacy/Rapport** (especially with other soldiers or persuading hold guards – he has official clout).

Stunts: “Shield-Brother” – Once per conflict, Hadvar can interpose his shield to negate a hit on an adjacent ally (turning a successful hit on a PC into a mere glancing blow, reducing its shift by 2). **“Legion Discipline”** – +2 to resist fear or chaos effects (Will rolls), reflecting his military training and calm under fire. He also carries a horn that when blown can create aspect “Legion Rally” granting allies +1 to morale-based rolls (once per session).

Stress: 3 physical, 2 mental.

Recruitment: If the PCs fled Helgen with Hadvar or later side with the Empire (e.g. help at the Jagged Crown or rescue Hadvar's patrol from a trap), he'll extend friendship ³⁸ ³⁹. By Act II, after *Battle for Whiterun* (if Imperial), Hadvar is assigned to a special attachment with the PC's unit (effectively available as a companion). If PCs are neutral, they might still recruit him by proving honorable intentions – Hadvar is reasonable. For example, if a Stormcloak PC spares Hadvar's life in battle or helps his family (say, protect Alvor's smithy from a Stormcloak raid), he might, against protocol, ally for a greater good (likely in secrecy). He won't join openly Stormcloak-allied parties unless there's a larger threat (like mutually fighting Thalmor) – then he acts as liaison.

Romance: *Possible.* Hadvar is single and spends so much time soldiering he's a bit shy in romance. A PC who is gentle and forthright can court him. He respects strength and kindness – perhaps a Redguard or Breton PC in the Legion, or even a clever Nord rebel who shows him not all Stormcloaks are “savages,” could spark something. A romance with Hadvar likely involves quiet moments in camp where he opens up about his fears (e.g. “I'm haunted by faces of those we executed at Helgen...”). If romanced and his lover leans Stormcloak, expect some soul-searching scenes – he might even contemplate desertion for them. Fate-wise, a romance could grant each a boost when protecting one another or persuading their factions to compromise (he could speak on the PC's behalf to Tullius, giving a +2 situational bonus in negotiations).

Personal Quest Hook: “Hadvar's Oath” – Hadvar confides that General Tullius has ordered something troubling (e.g. use of Skyrim locals as bait or harsh treatment of Talos worshipers) that conflicts with Hadvar's conscience ³⁶. He asks the PC's advice or help to resolve it without disobeying outright. Perhaps they can find a third solution (e.g. fake the operation so innocents escape harm). How this is handled could affect Act III: if Hadvar sees the Empire he believes in upholding noble values, his resolve strengthens (Aspect “Inspired Legionnaire” – he grants +1 to allied troops' morale when present). If forced to partake in an atrocity, he may develop a Crisis of Faith aspect “Doubt in the Empire” which could be compelled by the GM to have him hesitate or even switch sides later. Alternatively, *Hadvar's Family:* A side quest where Alvor (his uncle) or Dorthe (little cousin) are endangered – maybe caught in crossfire or kidnapped by a warlord bandit capitalizing on the chaos. The PCs and Hadvar can undertake a rescue, solidifying his loyalty to them forever. This also underscores what he fights for – not medals, but people like his kin. Completing it grants a group Aspect **“Hearth-Fire Resolve”** (once invokeable when defending homes or families in the story).

Usage: Hadvar is the quintessential good soldier – use him as the party's moral compass from the Imperial side. He'll suggest non-lethal solutions (“Do we have to kill these Stormcloak prisoners? They could be... rehabilitated.”) and can serve as a spokesperson to Imperial authorities (“Legate, with respect, these men saved my life. We should listen to them.”). In combat, he's by-the-book: forming shield walls, guarding flanks. Mechanically, let him create advantages like “Shield Wall Formed” or “Enemy Distracted by Shield Taunt” to aid PCs. He pairs well if a PC is sneaky or magical – he covers them physically while they do their work. Players often trust Hadvar because he's straightforward and brave ³⁹, so he's a reliable companion figure.

Lydia of Whiterun – *Housecarl on a New Quest*.

High Concept: *Devoted Housecarl Without a Thane* (Nord warrior assigned as housecarl to the Dragonborn, now languishing without a master after Dragonborn vanished) ⁴⁰ .

Trouble: *"I Am Sworn to Carry Your Burdens"* (a hint of resentment or at least fatigue – she's dutiful but longs for respect and purpose beyond being a pack mule) ⁴¹ .

Aspect: *Skyrim's Honor, Nord's Heart* (believes in honor, will protect the innocent staunchly, and has a strong Nord identity – proud, somewhat traditional).

Aspect: *Blade and Board* (renowned for her sword-&-shield fighting style; tactically, she's excellent at holding a line or defending allies).

Skills: Good **Fight** (Sword & Shield specialist), Good **Physique** (sturdy and can carry gear, true to meme), Fair **Intimidation** (has a stern, imposing presence), Fair **Empathy** (surprisingly observant of her Thane's moods, etc.). Average **Survival** (from traveling as thane's escort).

Stunts: **"Protective Stance"** – When an ally in the same zone is attacked, Lydia can choose to become the target instead (1× per scene) and gets +2 to defend on that intercepted attack. **"Housecarl's Vow"** – Once per session, if her bonded PC (Thane) is in peril, she gains +2 to any one overcome or attack directly aiding that PC. (E.g. bursting through rubble to reach them, striking an enemy from behind who has them grappled, etc.)

Stress: 3 physical, 2 mental. Armor: She typically wears steel armor (Armor:1 against physical harm).

Recruitment: By lore, Lydia becomes housecarl to the Dragonborn after they're made Thane of Whiterun ⁴⁰ . In this timeline, after the Dragonborn disappeared to Solstheim, Lydia has been effectively unused – possibly guarding Breezehome or aiding Irileth with city defense. The PC party can recruit her in a few ways. If any PC earned the title Thane of Whiterun (maybe by slaying a dragon or performing service for Jarl Balgruuf in Act I), Balgruuf can *assign Lydia to them* ⁴⁰ . She will then follow that PC's orders as dutiful housecarl. If the PCs are not Thanes, they might appeal to Jarl Balgruuf or Vignar (depending who controls Whiterun) to *"borrow" Lydia's assistance* for a critical mission – citing her experience and the lack of her original master. Lydia herself, eager to be useful, might volunteer if the PCs impress her (perhaps they save Whiterun from something, or she witnesses them defending civilians). She's unlikely to go with open Stormcloaks before Whiterun joins them – she's loyal to Balgruuf. But after Whiterun's taken (if Stormcloaks control it), she might become disillusioned or free to choose her path, at which point a respectful PC (particularly a Nord PC who treats her as an equal) can gain her loyalty.

Romance: *Optional*. Lydia is a marriage candidate in Skyrim, implying interest in a partner who is strong and honorable. A PC who consistently respects her (never treating her as a mere servant) and fights valiantly will earn her admiration. She's reserved romantically, but a quiet moment perhaps after a near-death battle could spark something ("I'm just glad you're safe, my Thane... *ahem*"). If romanced, she might struggle between duty and feeling – e.g., if ordered into a suicidal situation by her love, she'll go but a tear in her eye. It could provide a dramatic beat: a villain exploiting this (e.g. threatening the Thane to force Lydia's surrender). Mechanically, a romance could allow a once-per session boost: if her beloved is in mortal danger, Lydia gets +2 to any one action to save them (beyond her usual stunt) – love's adrenaline. Conversely, if her beloved falls in battle, the GM might compel her Trouble to send her into a reckless frenzy or deep despair.

Personal Quest Hook: *"Burden of Legacy"* – Lydia mentions she is from a minor noble family fallen on hard times (this is speculative but fits her being Housecarl material). She has an old heirloom blade from her father, broken during the Great War. If reforged, it could become a symbol of her own worthiness beyond serving others. The PCs could seek out a master smith (perhaps Alvor or Eorlund Gray-Mane) to fix it. Doing so gives Lydia a newfound confidence (replace her Trouble with something like *"Proud of My Own Name"*). It also could give her a weapon stunt tied to that blade (maybe +2 vs Thalmor, since it might be Akaviri make or similar). Another arc: *"The Missing Thane"* – Lydia still technically serves the absent Dragonborn. She may ask the PCs for help finding out what happened to them (did they truly go to Solstheim? Are they alive?).

While the campaign's focus isn't on that DLC, the GM can give some closure: a letter arrives via courier from the Dragonborn (perhaps they're off fighting Miraak or sailed away). Lydia reading a letter from her original Thane releasing her from service would be emotional; it frees her to fully commit to the PC group. She might hold a small ceremony burning an old possession of the Dragonborn as a farewell, swearing her sword now to the PC cause with no reservations. The result: she gains an aspect **"Free Woman of Skyrim"** which might be invoked when her independent judgment or initiative matters (no longer waiting for orders hesitantly, she'll proactively act).

Usage: Lydia is balanced in offense and defense, making her a reliable front-liner in fights alongside PCs. She can take hits (and often will via her stunts) that might drop squishier PCs. In roleplay, she might offer pragmatic advice, albeit sometimes with dry humor or open skepticism if a plan sounds dumb – "As you say, my Thane... but are you sure charging alone is wise?" She addresses the PC she's assigned to as "Thane" by default ⁴¹ – consider that an aspect reflecting her formal demeanor. Over time, that could soften, showing character growth (she might finally call the PC by name in a crucial heartfelt moment). Also, lean into the comedic side lightly (carrying burdens) but don't reduce her to that – she's brave and competent. If a PC does abuse her as a pack mule too much, maybe have her express a bit of that sass: "I am sworn to carry your burdens... and perhaps an extra blade or two, but not the entire loot of this cavern!" reminding them she's a person. This usually endears her more to players.

Aela the Huntress – *Werewolf Archer of the Companions.*

High Concept: *Elite Companion & Werewolf Tracker* (Nord member of the Companions' Circle, a consummate hunter blessed/cursed with lycanthropy) ⁴² .

Trouble: *Blood of the Beast* (as a werewolf, Aela struggles with the beast's aggression; also, Silver weapons or the mention of a cure trigger her pride – she doesn't see lycanthropy as a curse).

Aspect: *"One of The Circle"* (respected leader within the Companions; her word carries weight in Jorrvaskr, and she holds Kodlak's values dear except she's reluctant to cure herself).

Aspect: *Nightingale Eyes, Predator's Grace* (Aela is an expert archer and scout; she moves with quiet confidence and can read tracks like a book).

Skills: Excellent **Shoot** (bow sniper), Good **Stealth**, Good **Athletics**, Fair **Fight** (daggers in close), Fair **Lore (Wildlife)**. In werewolf form, her Physique and Fight dramatically increase (we can treat that as a situational boost or alternate stat block).

Stunts: **"Moonborn Frenzy"** – Once per scenario, Aela can transform into her werewolf form (if not cured) which gives her +2 to Physique rolls and +2 to create advantage with fearsome presence (foes might get aspect "Shaken by Werewolf"). Drawback: she may need to roll Will to avoid attacking indiscriminately.

"Hunter's Mark" – If Aela has time to study a foe or its tracks, she gains +2 on one attack or overcome against that target (her knowledge of prey's weak points). Additionally, **"Wolfpack Tactics"** – when fighting alongside another werewolf or Companion, she gets +1 to Fight due to pack coordination (this could apply if a PC is a werewolf or if Farkas/Vilkas present, etc.).

Stress: 3 physical, 2 mental. **Special:** As a werewolf, she ignores moderate physical consequences until after a fight (too adrenaline-fueled to feel wounds), though they must be accounted for after.

Recruitment: If the PCs complete part of the Companions quest (in Side Plot C) – for instance, helping cure Kodlak or avenging Skjor's death – Aela will readily join them on certain missions ⁷ . She isn't a follower in the game until after those quests, similar logic here. So likely, Act II or III, after "Silver Hand" events, she can become a companion. Alternatively, if no PC did the Companions storyline, Aela could be met during a *Dragonbreak creature event* (say they fight a common enemy like a Silver Hand remnant or a giant) and earn mutual respect. She won't suffer fools or the meek; PCs need to demonstrate prowess or honor to interest her. She's *not* going to follow an Imperial outright unless that PC also has ties to Companions or a very convincing reason (like, "We're hunting the same prey, join us"). If a PC is a werewolf (through Companions

quest), that nearly guarantees her alliance – she sees them as pack. If the PC chose to cure the Companions, note: Aela refused the cure in lore ⁴³. That could cause friction or a chance for roleplay (she might join to keep the old ways alive, maybe intent on finding a new tribe of werewolves).

Romance: *Possible.* Aela is fiercely independent and respects strength above all. A PC who proves a greater or equal hunter could stir her interest. She's one of the more popular romance options in Skyrim for her confidence. In roleplay, an Aela romance might involve competitive banter ("You call that a shot? Watch *my* arrow.") that turns into mutual admiration. If the PC is also a werewolf, that shared bond is very intimate for her ("Run with me under the moon?" could be a significant moment). She wouldn't be overly affectionate publicly, but in private might share tribal tattoos meaning or personal stories (like how she heard Hircine's call first time). Mechanically, if romanced, they might fight exceptionally well together – e.g., once per session if fighting back to back with her lover, they each get +1 to attacks (syncing movements).

Personal Quest Hook: *"Totems of Hircine"* – After the main Companions quest, Aela often seeks the Totems of Hircine (artifacts to enhance werewolf abilities). In this campaign, perhaps she asks the PCs to help retrieve one from a dangerous dungeon (could be tied to a Dragonbreak creature like a spriggan grove or vampire den). Outcome options: if they get a Totem, Aela can gain a new stunt (like "Scent of Prey – can sense living creatures nearby") and she's deeply grateful, cementing her loyalty. If a PC is a werewolf, they benefit too (maybe an extra invoke on transformation related rolls). Conversely, if the PCs gently steer her toward Kodlak's philosophy of finding a cure for her soul, you could run a quest where she encounters Kodlak's spirit in Ysgramor's Tomb (if Kodlak's been cured in the afterlife) – this might soften her stance. Notably, Aela is the only Circle member who never wanted a cure ⁷; a poignant story could be her wrestling with that: does she remain a beast or let go for Sovngarde? The PCs' influence and the outcomes of other werewolf events (like wiping out Silver Hand, avenging Skjor) will factor in. Perhaps by campaign end she remains werewolf, or maybe she chooses to take the cure (especially if a romanced PC asks her to grow old with them). This could change her Trouble aspect accordingly.

Usage: Aela brings a stealth/sniper element to the party. She can scout ahead and report (use her high Stealth and Notice to feed aspects to PCs like "Enemy Positions Marked"). In open fights, she takes high ground and thins out enemy numbers with arrows. If enemies close in melee, she either falls back in wolf-quick retreats or, if enraged, shifts to werewolf and leaps in. She's also a source of lore on *Hircine, lycanthropy, and Nordic hunting traditions* ⁴³, which can enrich scenes (she might tell a tale around the fire of old hunts or caution against certain creatures that even Companions fear). She has little patience for court politics but a strong sense of honor – if PCs plan to do something sneaky that is dishonorable, she'll voice disapproval (which can be a nice in-character way to remind players of potential reputation loss). If the campaign involves the Stormcloak/Imperial divide: Aela doesn't overtly involve herself in that conflict (Companions are neutral), but she cares about Nordic heritage – she might lean Stormcloak in private, but Kodlak's influence keeps her from outright saying it. GMs can use her as a neutral perspective on the war: "Skyrim's problems won't vanish with one side's victory. The real threats stalk in the woods while you lot bicker." It helps refocus players on bigger picture when needed.

J'zargo – *Ambitious Khajiit Apprentice Mage.*

High Concept: *Overconfident Khajiit Sorcerer* (A student at the College of Winterhold who believes he will be the most powerful mage in Skyrim ⁴⁴).

Trouble: *Ego Bigger Than Winterhold* (J'zargo's vanity and competitive streak often land him in trouble or make cooperation tricky ⁴⁵. He hates being outshone and may take unwise risks to prove himself).

Aspect: *"Bright College, Dark Secrets"* (As a College apprentice, J'zargo has knowledge of magic and access to resources, but also knowledge of some unsanctioned spells or rumors like the Eye of Magnus aftermath – he might have pilfered a few dangerous scrolls for personal experiments ⁴⁵).

Aspect: *Feline Reflexes* (Quick on his feet and sly – whether dodging traps or slipping out of blame, J'zargo

uses his natural grace and cunning).

Skills: Good **Arcana (Magic)**, Good **Will**, Fair **Athletics** (surprisingly athletic, perhaps due to being a Khajiit), Fair **Deceive** (fast-talking when his experiments misfire). He specializes in Destruction magic (particularly shock spells ⁴⁶) and is adept at self-taught enchantments. Combat-wise, he'll cast from the backline; not physically strong but nimble.

Stunts: "J'zargo's Superior Scrolls" – Once per session, J'zargo produces a custom scroll he's been working on, allowing a one-time spell effect (create a potent advantage or attack) without costing him stress – e.g. a scroll of *fireball cascade* to clear a room. However, there's a 1 in 4 chance (GM can roll a d4) it backfires (place a "Unstable Spell Residue" aspect on the scene). **"Khajiit Smells Trouble"** – +2 to Notice checks involving detecting magical anomalies or traps (literal keen senses and cautious instinct in dangerous areas). **"Magical Duelist"** – +2 to Attack or Defend with Destruction magic when facing a single magical opponent (his bravado shines in one-on-one contests of skill).

Stress: 2 physical, 3 mental (high Will buffers his mental track). He has 1 mild consequence slot, 1 moderate.

Recruitment: During the College of Winterhold faction quest (Side Plot C), the PC might have befriended or impressed J'zargo – for instance, by testing his flame cloak scrolls and surviving ⁴⁷. If a PC is Arch-Mage or a respected mage, J'zargo would jump at the chance to accompany them ("Greatest mage in Skyrim travels with J'zargo, this will be excellent for J'zargo's fame" he'd say). Even if the PCs aren't mages, they could recruit him by appealing to his ambition: e.g. "We're taking on the Thalmor – think of the glory, J'zargo!" or if they praise him ("Only a mage of your caliber could help with this task."). Flattery goes far; he'll boast but accept. Be careful: if the PCs treat him like a mere follower or belittle him, he could wander off until convinced otherwise. He is not aligned to Empire or Stormcloak particularly – he cares about power and safety of the College. After the Eye of Magnus incident, he's likely aware of big dangers, so the promise of adventure and magical advancement lures him. He might also join if they save his tail: maybe during a Dragonbreak creature scenario, they rescue him from something like a Magic Anomaly outbreak or a cage of Falmer in a ruin; he'll pledge temporary service "until debt is repaid" (which can turn permanent as friendship forms).

Romance: J'zargo is flirtatious but mostly with an ulterior motive (status). A genuine romance is unlikely because he's self-centered – unless a PC genuinely breaks through his ego. Perhaps a fellow mage PC from the College (a rivalry turning into respect then affection trope). If romanced, expect humorous and prideful interactions ("J'zargo supposes he can share the spotlight with you, since you are nearly as brilliant"). It could soften him – character growth: he learns humility and care. Mechanically not necessary, but if so, maybe he thinks twice before a rash act if his beloved urges caution (he could get a +2 to resist provocation or ego-based compels if reminded of someone he cares for).

Personal Quest Hook: "Experimentation Gone Wrong" – One of J'zargo's personal projects misfires catastrophically. E.g., he enchanted some skeever to be invisibly explosive (who knows with him), and now something's threatening Winterhold or himself. The PCs must help contain the fallout – could be as simple as retrieving a runaway scroll that summons storm atronachs endlessly. During this, J'zargo might confront some humility: PCs see a vulnerable side as he admits he's *slightly* out of his depth. Reward: he becomes a bit more cautious (maybe swap a stunt or aspect to reflect learning) and the College seniors trust the PCs more for cleaning up (resource boon). Another angle: **"The Path to Mastery"** – J'zargo wants to become Arch-Mage one day. He asks the PCs to help him find notable spells or a teacher. This could tie to finding an ancient tome in a ruin or consulting Neloth in Solstheim (if one wants a cameo). Success might grant J'zargo a new spell (maybe he learns *Lightning Storm*, a high-level Destruction spell, giving him a potent attack once). And he'll be more loyal, acknowledging he didn't do it alone (character growth). Also consider his rivalry: he often competes with Onmund and Brelyna. If PCs helped those two with something instead of him, he'll be snippy. A fun mini-quest: a duel between J'zargo and another mage (or even a PC mage) where the PC can referee or bet on outcome. The result affects his self-image.

Usage: J'zargo brings comic relief and raw firepower. He often talks in third person ("J'zargo has succeeded in doing what few Khajiit have done!") which can lighten tense scenes. In combat, he's artillery: cast aspects like "Electrocuted" on enemies or simply deal damage. One must manage his Area of Effect spells to not fry allies – a good running gag and tactical consideration (PCs might yell "Watch your aim!"). Out of combat, he's the one bragging in taverns (could unintentionally spread the party's deeds or plans – a compel opportunity if needed to hook a new plot). He can also help with magical challenges: deciphering runes, identifying potions, etc., but he might exaggerate knowledge (a GM can use him to feed players info – sometimes correct, sometimes requiring verification). Because of his ego, he could cause small conflicts (like irritating a Jarl's court wizard or a Thalmor battlemage by claiming superiority – possibly triggering a duel scenario the PCs must smooth over). All in all, J'zargo's presence is great to show not all allies are humble warriors – some are flashy and potentially troublesome, but also powerful if pointed in the right direction.

Kaie – Forsworn Insider and Swiftblade.

High Concept: *Forsworn Guerrilla Liaison* (Breton Reachwoman who fought under Madanach, skilled in dual-wielding and stealth, can guide the party through Reach politics) ⁴⁸.

Trouble: *Branded a Traitor by All Sides* (To Nords, she's a Forsworn terrorist; to some Forsworn hardliners, she's too moderate or too cooperative with "outlanders." Trust is a constant issue).

Aspect: *Old Gods' Devotee* (she follows Forsworn druidic customs – may perform small rituals, has knowledge of Reach magic lore and maybe a minor hedge magic ability, e.g. brewing poisons or salves).

Aspect: *Personal Debt to <PC/Faction>* (If the PCs freed Madanach with her help, or spared innocents in Markarth, etc., she feels indebted ⁴⁸. If they treated the Reachfolk fairly, she's fiercely loyal to them over her own tribe's skepticism).

Skills: Great **Fight** (Daggers and quick strikes – her moniker "Swiftblade of the Reach" is well-earned ⁴⁹), Good **Stealth**, Good **Survival** (knows the caves and wilderness of the Reach intimately), Fair **Lore (Reach myths)**, Fair **Empathy** (used to reading foes' and friends' intent – a necessity living among potential betrayal).

Stunts: **"Red Eagle's Fury, Madanach's Guile"** – +2 to Create Advantage when ambushing or using the environment cleverly in the Reach (e.g. causing rock falls, using local wildlife, etc.). **"Dual Wield Flurry"** – If Kaie successfully hits an opponent with one dagger, she can immediately spend 1 Fate point to make a second attack on the same target with the off-hand (or apply a "Bleeding" aspect instead of damage). **"Reach Healer"** – Once per session, Kaie can tend wounds with herb lore: spend a scene and clear an ally's mild physical consequence (or reduce a moderate to mild) using her poultices and Old Gods chants – a bit of quasi-magic herbcraft.

Stress: 3 physical, 2 mental. Light armor (leather): Armor:1 vs physical.

Recruitment: Kaie appears in the *No One Escapes Cidhna Mine* Forsworn quest – she's the one equipping Madanach and the escaping prisoners ⁴⁸. If the PCs sided with Madanach, Kaie is essentially an ally then ⁴⁸. After that quest (during Side Plot C or Act II), Kaie can be the Forsworn contact who remains friendly to the PCs. She might follow Madanach's orders to observe the war from the shadows and aid the PCs if it furthers Forsworn interests (like weakening the Nords or striking at Thalmor or Silverblood influences). The PC can officially recruit her either by: earning Madanach's explicit blessing ("Go, be our voice/eyes among them" – likely if PC brokered peace between Forsworn and Stormcloaks in one of Side Plot outcomes), or by personal bond (if a PC is Forsworn heritage or showed kindness to the Reachfolk, Kaie trusts them, coming to aid when asked). If neither of those, possibly a Dragonbreak scenario might involve Forsworn (like Red Eagle's Curse). If the PCs spared her or worked together there, she might volunteer. She won't join an Imperial-allied party unless they convince her it'll help oust the Thalmor or protect the Reach in the end (tough sell – perhaps if they vow the Reach will have autonomy later). She's more amenable to Stormcloaks

if the PC is sympathetic to Forsworn plight (maybe a PC convinced Ulfric to pardon Madanach in some timeline). Essentially, she's a wildcard ally – not aligned to either side but to Forsworn survival. If PCs take a stance to minimize civilian harm in Reach or treat with Forsworn, she's in.

Romance: Kaie is focused and slow to trust, but a PC who shares her love for the Reach's wild beauty and fights by her side against common foes could kindle something. Perhaps a Breton or Nord PC who is an outsider to both Nords and Reachfolk fits – two people between worlds finding commonality. A romance would be kept low-key; she might teach the PC a few words of the old Reach tongue or paint woad symbols on them for protection (an intimate gesture in her culture). Mechanically, a romanced Kaie might allow the PC to call upon Forsworn aid easier (because through her, Madanach trusts them – effectively giving access to an aspect "Friend of the Reachmen" more readily). Also, it sets up dramatic tension if the PC's other allies hate Forsworn. She could get jealous or angry if the PC does something aligning with Nord interests that hurt Forsworn. This relationship would be fraught with external pressures (good drama).

Personal Quest Hook: *"Bridge Over Blood"* – Kaie's end-goal, if she dreams big, might be to secure a genuine peace or alliance between Forsworn and whichever side the PCs back. She might ask the PCs to help her arrange a secret meeting between Madanach and a Nord Jarl (or Galmar/Tullius depending) to discuss ceasefire in the Reach. This could be a delicate diplomatic scene, very dangerous (centuries of hate in one room). The PCs would have to mediate strongly. Success could mean by Act IV, the Forsworn send a token force to help fight Thalmor (e.g. a few deadly hagravens turn on the Thalmor instead of attacking Markarth). Failure could mean a violent fallout – maybe Madanach is assassinated at the meeting (by an impatient Nord or a Thalmor agent) and Kaie's hopes are dashed (she might spiral into despair or vengeance mode). This quest can significantly impact Markarth's state in the finale. Another hook: *"The New Way"* – Kaie contemplates that the old Forsworn ways (human sacrifice, etc.) are holding them back from gaining sympathy. She's not entirely on board with all of Madanach's vicious methods ⁵⁰. The PC can encourage her to lead a more moderate splinter of Forsworn (maybe uniting with Karthwatch village or other Reach folk who dislike violence). This could tie to giving the Forsworn a future post-war: the "Tribe of Kaie" that integrates somewhat with a free Skyrim, fulfilling partly the prophecy of Red Eagle in a less bloody way. If the PC helps her set up a refuge where Forsworn and Nords begin to coexist (maybe around the story of a marriage between a Forsworn and a towns person?), it'd be a huge cultural shift. Mechanically just narrative, but thematically rich. She might then retire from adventuring to guide her people, but always as an ally contact.

Usage: Kaie provides stealth and melee support. She's excellent for infiltration missions (knows how to slip into Markarth or forts via secret ways). As a former(?) "terrorist," she understands asymmetric warfare – the GM can use her to suggest plans like sabotage, pincer ambushes, or alternative routes the armies wouldn't consider. Her outsider perspective can also challenge Nord/Imperial rhetoric in dialogue: e.g., if a Jarl says "Skyrim for the Nords!" Kaie may mutter "What of the people who were here before your Nords?" – prompting PCs to think about the bigger picture. In battle, she pairs well with ranged or magical PCs by keeping enemies off them (fast strikes). She might mark high-value targets (like lopping off a standard bearer's head to throw enemy troops into confusion – an advantage aspect). But watch her temper: if Silver-Blood or certain trigger topics arise (like mention of "savage Reachmen"), she could act rashly. It's an opportunity for players to either rein her in or let her express fury (with consequences). Overall, Kaie adds a layer of moral grey and cultural depth to the party, representing the oft-ignored third faction of the war.

(The above are just a selection of possible companions. For brevity, not every potential follower is detailed here – GMs can similarly craft profiles for others (e.g. Serana the vampire, Delphine the Blade, Brynjolf the thief, etc.) if they become relevant in your campaign. Use the format provided: Aspects capturing their story role, a Trouble that generates drama, a couple strengths via stunts, and what it takes for the PCs to earn their loyalty. Remember to

keep companions one step behind the PCs' spotlight – they advise, assist and occasionally shine in their subplots, but they should not solve core challenges or overshadow the heroes.)

Using Companions in Fate: When a companion accompanies the party, you can represent them with a scaled-down stat block or simply as an **Aspect** on the party (“Ralof’s Stormcloak Support” which PCs can invoke for combat help or war actions). For more interactive play, treat them as **Nameless NPC** allies rolling at a fixed bonus (e.g. Lydia rolls +3 when defending her Thane, Aela rolls +4 shooting a target due to expertise). They typically won’t have Fate points of their own, but the PCs or GM can invoke their aspects (spending PCs’ pool or via compels) to influence scenes. E.g., compel Hadvar’s *Conflicted Honor* to create a moment where he hesitates to cut down a Nord brigand who surrendered, unless a PC spurs him. Also manage the *size* of the party: if too many companions tag along, consider narratively splitting them (e.g. sending one to handle a side objective or guard a location) so that player characters remain central. Each companion’s **Trust Clock** (see INTEGRATION_NOTES) can be used to gauge how far they’d go for the group. At full trust, a companion might sacrifice themselves or disobey their original faction for the PCs. At low trust, they might desert or even oppose the PCs if ideology clashes (though this would usually only happen via story, not randomly). Keep an eye on their **Troubles** for roleplay cues: these often lead to great character moments or side missions initiated by the companion.*

(For a quick index of all available companion NPCs in this module and their one-line summaries, see NPC_INDEX.md in the companions_party folder.)

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modules/dragonbreaks_creatures_companions/CREATURES.md

Skyrim Bestiary & Encounter Guide

Below is a compendium of creatures, monsters, and generic NPC foes the GM can use throughout the campaign. Each entry includes a short description including habitat and behavior, Fate Aspects encapsulating the creature's nature, a simple stat block or notes on how to run them (often as nameless mobs or threats), any special Stunts/Powers, and Encounter Hooks suggesting how to feature them in play. The creatures are grouped by category: Wildlife & Beasts, Undead & Supernatural, and Faction Enemies (humanoids). Use these as guidelines; GMs can modify aspects or skills to fit the scene. Remember in Fate, an enemy can often be an obstacle or contest rather than a fight to the death – e.g. outsmarting a troll or intimidating bandits is just as valid as slaying them.

Wildlife & Beasts

- **Wolves** – *Hunters of the Pine Forests*. Aspect: “Packs of Hungry Wolves” (they are rarely alone, coordinate as a pack) ⁵¹. Aspect: “Feral Cunning, Mortal Fear of Fire.” Stat suggestion: Treat a **wolf pack** as a single adversary with +2 Fight (teeth and leaps) and 2 stress per wolf. Stunt: **Pack Tactics** – For each additional wolf in the pack after the first, they gain +1 to create advantage “Surrounded and Brought Down” on a target. **Encounter Hooks:** Wolves are a common sight on Skyrim’s roads ⁵² – a threat to travelers and livestock. The PCs might encounter an injured wolf (snare trap victim) which, if helped, could oddly follow them peacefully (perhaps hinting Hircine’s presence or just a wilderness ally). Or use wolves as environmental pressure during a nighttime camp (hearing howls that compel them to keep watch or find higher ground). They’re straightforward foes but can foreshadow bigger

dangers (e.g. fleeing from a giant frostbite spider into a wolf den). Remind players that in Skyrim, wildlife can kill if underestimated – a lone low-level adventurer can die to a pack of wolves early on.

- **Sabre Cat** – *Stealthy Tundra Predator*. Aspect: “Silent Prowler in the Snow” (uses camouflage and patience) ⁵¹. Aspect: “Muscles and Fangs of a Tiger.” Stats: Attack +3 (ambush pounce), defend +1 (tough hide). Stunt: **Pouncing Ambush** – If the sabre cat attacks from hiding (or invokes “Silent Prowler”), its first strike is +2 and can knock the target prone (aspect “Pinned by Sabre Cat”). **Encounter Hooks:** Sabre Cats roam snowy plains and pine forests, often solitary. A classic encounter is a sabre cat leaping at the party from a ledge above a path. Another is finding large paw prints and half-eaten deer – warning signs PCs might notice with Survival before the cat strikes. These beasts can serve as mid-tier threats to test PCs’ tactical thinking (they may place advantages like “Back-to-Back Formation” to avoid ambush). Also, sabre cat eye or tooth may be needed for an alchemical ingredient, prompting a side-hunt. Their presence signals to players that the wilds of Skyrim are never truly safe, even far from the war.
- **Bear (Black/ Snow)** – *Ill-tempered Brute of the Wild*. Aspect: “Territorial and Easily Provoked.” Aspect: “Thick Fur and Heavy Claws.” Stats: +4 Physique (very high endurance), +2 Fight (strong swipes), but Fair Notice (not sneaky, often you hear or smell it). Stunt: **Furious Swipe** – When a bear attacks, it can hit two close targets at once with a wild swing (split shifts or one roll vs two PCs). **Encounter Hooks:** Bears inhabit caves, riverbanks, and honey-rich groves. Perhaps the PCs need to retrieve a MacGuffin from a cave only to find it’s a bear’s den. A mother bear with cubs could introduce a moral challenge: maybe it’s only attacking to defend its young – clever PCs might distract or scare it off rather than kill it (earning a boost or moral satisfaction). Or they might run into an intoxicated “honey bear” near an apiary that’s not immediately hostile until startled. In war scenarios, a bear wandering into a battlefield or camp can cause chaos (maybe a Dragonbreak event triggers animals to panic). Bear claws/teeth are alchemical, so that’s another hook. Emphasize that unlike wolves who cunningly pack attack, a bear is a straightforward powerhouse (invoke “Thick Fur” to reduce damage – maybe a weapon needs to be specifically good or an aspect “Exposed Belly” created first).
- **Troll** – *Regenerating Monstrosity* (3-eyed ape-like humanoid) ⁵³. Aspect: “Rapid Regeneration of Flesh” (wounds close quickly) ⁵³. Aspect: “Weak to Fire” (flame scares and hurts it badly, halting regen) ⁵³. Stats: +3 Fight (massive strength), +2 Athletics (long arms and climbing), special: its stress track refreshes 1 box per exchange unless fire damage is present. Stunt: **Regrowth** – Automatically begin healing a mild physical consequence after one round (unless burned by fire). **Encounter Hooks:** Trolls lurk under bridges, in caves, or wandering high mountain passes. A classic is the **Frost Troll** on the 7000 Steps – players might face one on the way to High Hrothgar, learning the hard way about regeneration. They will likely need to use or improvise fire (torches, flame spells) ⁵³ to put it down for good – a nice puzzle mid-fight. Alternatively, a Dragonbreak scenario might involve a troll being mysteriously more aggressive (perhaps corrupted by a Daedric artifact nearby). Killing a troll could earn local favor if it’s been harassing travelers (minor quest reward). Troll fat is valuable alchemically. Trolls’ vulnerability to fire can be conveyed with lore or an NPC shout (“Hit it with fire, it can’t heal through that!”) ⁵³. They are tough foes that teach players about leveraging weaknesses and aspects smartly.
- **Giant** – *Gentle (Usually) Giant of the Tundra* ²². Aspect: “Eight Feet Tall, Clubs That Send You Flying” ²². Aspect: “Keeps to Self Unless Provoked” (giants won’t attack unless approached too closely or their mammoths harmed). Stats: +5 Physique (hugely strong, high health), +3 Fight

(devastating club blows), -1 Athletics (slow). Stunt: **Skystrike** – if a giant hits a human-sized target with its club, and succeeds with style, not only do they do damage but they also knock the target into the air *Looney Tunes style* (target takes an extra moderate consequence “Launched into the Sky”) ²². **Encounter Hooks:** Giants are usually seen tending mammoths around large bonfires in open plains or the Reach. A peaceful encounter might involve the PCs stumbling on a giant’s camp – the giant makes warning gestures to keep them away ²². Will they heed or engage? If they leave him be, maybe nothing happens (except an in-world lesson of boundaries). If they must get by (say a quest macguffin is near the giant’s camp or a path), they could attempt to bargain by leaving an offering (e.g. animal meat) – maybe requiring a Lore or Empathy roll to guess a suitable tribute. If combat erupts, emphasize the giant’s strength – one hit can be lethal or at least dramatic (compel a PC’s aspect to get hit and fly, splitting the party or injuring them badly). Giants have been in Dragonbreak events too (e.g. “Wrath of the Wild Giant” scenario where one is enraged by war disturbance). Remind players that sometimes avoiding a fight is wise; giants are like walking terrain hazards unless you’re high level (or in Fate terms, unless you create the right aspects or gang up effectively). Mammoths might join a giant if present, making it a huge ordeal. Defeating a giant could yield treasures from its camp (they often collect painted rocks, mammoth cheese, maybe coins from prior victims). But maybe the players find it more rewarding to leave it alive, especially if they see evidence the giant keeps predators away from local farmers (some Nords view certain familiar giants almost like nature wardens). Use giants sparingly; their presence should evoke awe or fear.

- **Mammoth** – *Giant Woolly Grazer (and Giant’s Pet)*. Aspect: “Enormous Stampeding Bulk.” Aspect: “Herd Instinct – Follows Giant’s Lead.” Simple handling: If with a giant, treat the mammoth as an extra obstacle (maybe an aspect “Trampling Mammoth” on the field that characters must avoid or address). If alone (rare, usually strayed from giants), it may ignore PCs unless approached or attacked. It can gore with tusks (Attack +4) and has tons of health (use a clock like 6-segment “Mammoth Downed” instead of stress). **Encounter Hooks:** Mammoths don’t roam free often; they’re nearly always with giants. But one idea: poachers killed a giant, and now a lost mammoth is rampaging in grief or confusion (like an elephant whose handler died). The PCs might calm it (maybe lead it to another giant camp) or put it down to save a village. Alternatively, a creative solution: use a mammoth herd (with a friendly giant or clever plan) to stampede an enemy encampment – war elephants, Skyrim-style. But note, mammoths might then crush friend and foe alike. If players kill a mammoth, they could harvest ivory and mammoth snout (cheese or alchemy uses). But risk wrath of any nearby giants. Mammoths accentuate the giants encounter or environment, adding an extra layer (you can’t sneak around a giant easily if his mammoth is sniffing you out, etc.).

Undead & Supernatural

- **Draugr** – *Restless Nordic Undead Warriors*. Aspect: “Ancient Corpse Bound to Defend Tomb.” Aspect: “Relentless but Mindless” (they feel no pain or fear, but aren’t clever). Stat-wise: Average (+1) at weapons, high endurance (2 stress and one mild consequence for lesser draugr). Usually appear in groups (mob rules). Stunt (for stronger variants): **“Deathly Resistance”** – Half damage from cold and poison (already dead). Some have **Shouts** (like Unrelenting Force or Frost breath) – for a boss draugr, allow a once per fight stun shout (create aspect “Staggered by Thu’um” on PCs). **Encounter Hooks:** Draugr populate nearly every Nord barrow. They animate to punish tomb robbers. If PCs dungeon delve for a quest item (e.g. the Horn of Jurgen Windcaller, etc.), they will face draugr guardians. Use their mindlessness to play up atmosphere: they might stand motionless in alcoves, only activating when intruders pass – a good chance for players to Notice them and get a pre-emptive strike or

avoid stepping on a trap trigger that wakes them. Draugr Overlords make good mini-bosses who can even talk a bit (sometimes spouting ritual phrases or taunts in Dovahzul). Since they're old Nords, a clever PC might even invoke a cultural connection (perhaps using Lore or language knowledge to quell them for a moment – e.g., presenting a Hall of Valor amulet to confuse them into thinking the intruders have Shor's blessing). Thematically, draugr reinforce the idea that Skyrim's past is ever-present – possibly tie one into a Dragonbreak scenario (maybe a Dragon Priest commands them as in DB-015). Also, a side mission: maybe a friendly NPC's ancestor is a draugr and wants their heirloom returned – a peaceful resolution could be placing that ancestor's remains in Sovngarde by some ritual. Usually though, draugr = hack and slash fodder, albeit spooky. They allow traps and puzzles mid-fight (like oil slicks to burn multiple at once, collapsing pillars to crush a group, etc.). Their weakness: fire (common trope for undead, could give PCs a clue to use torches and flames). Many draugr carry ancient Nord weapons; PCs might loot a distinctive one (not better mechanically but cool factor).

- **Skeleton** – *Reanimated Bones*. Aspect: "Rattling Bag of Bones, Easily Shattered." Aspect: "Mindless Servant of a Necromancer." Stats: Low threat individually (maybe +1 Fight, 1 stress) but often present in numbers. They are fragile – any solid hit can take one out (treat as mobs or mooks). **Encounter Hooks:** Skeletons are usually found as guard fodder raised by necromancers or draugr with low-tier tasks (like archers in a tomb's hallway). They could also be spontaneously raised in certain Dragonbreak magic areas. Emphasize sound: the PCs might hear a bone-chilling rattle and clatter in the dark well before seeing them – tension building. A creative use: if a PC has a Turn Undead style ability (like a priest Extra), skeletons are the best targets to showcase it (they crumble en masse). Loot: Not much beyond maybe an unusual bone or some ancient arrows stuck to them. Narrative: perhaps a skeleton is animated from someone the PCs knew (if you want emotion, e.g. a fallen comrade's body gets reanimated by an antagonist – forcing PCs to "lay them to rest" again). But usually, skeletons are the least personal undead, just obstacles.
- **Ghost/Spirit** – *Restless Spirit of a Deceased*. Aspect: "Incorporeal and Bound by Regret." Aspect: "Weakness to Holy or Specific Conditions" (often a ghost can't be truly dispelled unless a particular task is done – e.g. burying their bones or avenging them). Stats: Can be approached as a challenge rather than fight – but if combat, they might ignore physical damage unless weapon is enchanted or silver. Example: treat them as having Armor:2 vs normal attacks. They attack with chill touch (Will vs Will or Physique). Stunt: **Haunting Wail** – ghosts may inflict a fear aspect on everyone in zone if provoked (which PCs must overcome to act normally). **Encounter Hooks:** Ghosts in Skyrim include King Torygg's rumored ghost ⁹, Potema's spirit, and numerous quest-related apparitions (like the Ghost of Old Hroldan, or remains in Morvunskar). A ghost encounter often ties to a story: the ghost might initially be hostile (mistaking PCs for enemies or out of anger) but can be reasoned with if the right approach. Players might discover via Lore or notes what the ghost needs – perhaps returning an heirloom, or simply being calmed by the voice of a descendant (if a PC or ally is of their lineage). GMs can use ghosts to deliver lore dumps too: the spirit of a long-dead person giving exposition in character (maybe a Dragon Cultist ghost giving clues about a Dragon Priest's weakness, etc.). In war context, ghosts might appear at sites of great slaughter (as a mythic touch – e.g., after a big battle, at night the PCs see the ghosts of fallen soldiers repeating last moments – could be purely atmospheric or maybe a ghost points them toward evidence of a war crime). Another scenario: A ghost of a murdered innocent in a city leads the PCs to their killer (like the classic *Blood on the Ice* hint that could have been a ghost in Solitude that is actually Calixto trick in that module's context ⁹). Reward for dealing with ghosts: peace of mind, maybe a blessing (the grateful spirit imbues an

item with a minor enchantment or gives a prophetic warning). Mechanically, ghosts encourage non-standard solutions and using aspects (like “Salt and Burn the Bones” advantage to defeat it permanently).

- **Vampire** – *Undead Blood-drinker (Volkihar)*. Aspect: “Supernatural Abilities, Craves Blood.” Aspect: “Sunlight Aversion” (weakened or hiding by day). Stats: Depends on strength – a fledgling might be +2 Fight, +2 charm (to seduce victims), an ancient master could be +4 in multiple areas. All have some magic (maybe a Drain Life spell – attack with Will vs Physique to deal damage and heal themselves) ⁵⁴. Stunt: **Vampiric Mist Form** – Once, a vampire can turn into mist to escape or reposition (basically a fancy boost to defense or movement). **Encounter Hooks:** If Dawnguard content is in play, vampires may be a huge threat (the Volkihar clan plotting eternal night, etc.). Without that, vampires show up in some quests and lairs. They might serve as minibosses in a haunted ruin or as thematic enemies if a PC is a Werewolf (vampires and werewolves are natural enemies). A scenario: The PCs find a town plagued by nightly killings – it’s a vampire (maybe one hiding among townsfolk by day). Investigating and confronting it is a mini mystery/horror episode. Vampires in Elder Scrolls often have thralls – enthralled mortals (so the GM can include human minions that complicate things morally – e.g. a thrall might be an innocent under mind control). Also, a bitten ally could contract “Sanguinare Vampiris” – giving a ticking clock for the PCs to cure them before they fully turn (an impetus to seek a priest or concoct a cure potion). In Fate, you can handle vampirism as an aspect progression: first “Afflicted with Vampirism (latent)” then full “PC is Vampire” if not cured, which has pros and cons. Up to the campaign if that’s allowed. If a PC does become a vampire, then introducing vampire enemies gets personal (the PC might be targeted by Dawnguard or rival vamps). Mechanically, emphasize cunning: vampires rarely brawl if they can isolate or charm. They might try to talk first, or separate the party (illusions, thralls acting as decoys). Sunlight weakness is key: perhaps a day assault on a vampire lair catches them at disadvantage (they have penalty or can’t use some powers). Lots of roleplay potential: some vampires like Lord Harkon are haughty nobles – not just monsters, they have goals and personalities. The presence of vampires signals an undercurrent of darkness beyond the war – often Thalmor might even ally with one for mutual interest, or an opportunistic vampire might prey on war-weary holds.

- **Hagraven** – *Twisted Witch of the Wilds* ⁵⁵. Aspect: “Half-Corrupted Harpy, All Corrupting Magic” (a woman who traded humanity for power, part bird-like) ⁵⁵. Aspect: “Matriarch of Forsworn, Keeper of Dark Rituals” ⁵⁵. Stats: Good at magic (Fire and curses) +3, physically frail if caught (Fight +1, low stress but likely has a familiar or escapes). Stunts: **Ritual Sacrifice** – given time (like 3 exchanges), can perform a ritual to cause a major effect (e.g. curse an area, empower allies, or summon a daedra) – PCs should interrupt! **Crow Storm** – once, can release a flock of demonic crows (treat as creating aspect “Swarmed by Crows” on the zone that PCs must overcome to act effectively). **Encounter Hooks:** Hagravens show up with Forsworn storylines (they empower Briarhearts by heart-plucking ritual, etc.). One or two named ones appear in quests (e.g. the Glenmoril Witches Kodlak needed). A possible use: The PCs need a Glenmoril Witch’s head for the Companions cure – so they hunt a hagraven. This is horror-movie-esque: these creatures are gruesome and cunning. They’ll use enchanted terrain (maybe a circle of briars that entangle intruders). In negotiation, a hagraven might offer power at terrible cost (mirroring Faolan’s pact from Red Eagle myth ⁵⁶ – a PC could be tempted to become a Briarheart or such). If aligned with Forsworn side, perhaps Kaie or Madanach introduces them to a more moderate hagraven who’s willing to help against common foes (e.g. loaning a relic if they perform a service). On the battlefield, a hagraven could be a wild card – perhaps during a siege, one performs a ritual to unleash a monstrosity unless the PCs stop it (sort

of like an enemy “artillery”). When running a hagraven fight, include minions like a couple of Forsworn guards or summoned atronachs, so the hagraven can be the orchestrator unless cornered. Fire magic is typical – maybe she has a fireball or flame cloak around her. Loot: Ingredients like hagraven feathers or a special staff. Possibly an artefact (Glenmoril Witch heads themselves were items in game). Hagravens tie well into mythic themes and are a stark reminder of how far one might go for power (something J’zargo or certain PCs might reflect on encountering). They are also almost exclusively female, which can add dynamic if the party has female characters – maybe a hagraven targets a female PC as potential “convert” to hagravenhood (creepy offer!).

- **Spriggan** – *Guardian Nature Spirit* ⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ . Aspect: “Nature’s Wrath Incarnate (Poisonous, Commands Beasts)” ⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ . Aspect: “Vulnerable to Fire (Burning Wood)” (fire damage halts their healing and enrages them) ⁶¹ . Stats: +3 to fight (claws or thorn spikes), +2 to defend (turning invisible or melding to trees) ⁶² . Special: They heal quickly when in forests unless burned (maybe treat like regen 1 stress per exchange if surrounded by plant life). Stunt: **Call of the Wild** – can enthrall nearby animals (wolves, bears, etc.) ⁶⁰ to fight alongside it (they’ll have glowing green aura) – essentially summoning 2-3 animal allies instantly ⁶⁰ . **Encounter Hooks:** Spriggans appear in deep forests (like around Eldergleam Sanctuary) or caves with significant flora. They often guard sacred groves or taproots. A possible scenario: Logging or mining by soldiers angered a spriggan who now attacks anyone in the area – PCs could solve by driving it off/killing it or by performing a ritual to appease Kyne (depending on their values). Another: A Dragonbreak might make normally passive spriggans aggressive everywhere (climate upset, etc.), causing chaos in multiple holds – PCs might gather some Eldergleam sap to calm them, etc. Spriggans can be reasoned with rarely: maybe a druidic PC or using Kyne’s Peace shout if that’s accessible, could calm one temporarily ⁵⁸ . They often turn invisible to ambush or reposition, which in Fate can be treated as creating an aspect “Can’t See the Spriggan” that PCs must overcome (maybe with Notice or a fire to flush it out). Also, they have a nasty poison claws and can even drain health in TES (maybe represent by them creating “Life Leech” advantage on hit that heals them). For tactical fun: Spriggans often come in threes (normal, Matron, Earth Mother variants escalating). One might focus on summoning animals, one on direct attack, one on healing others. Burning them with fire or damage to their taproot (if known) stops their regen ⁶³ . Loot: Taproot (alchemy) and maybe they drop some cool natural ingredient or an enchanted item like “Spriggan Sap” that PCs can use to commune with nature spirits once. Spriggans underscore the idea that the wild itself can rise against those who disrespect it – fitting in war when armies tromp through sacred groves. They are a neutral faction of sorts that neither side controls.

- **Wispmother & Wisps** – *Ethereal Apparition Luring the Unwary*. Aspect: “Illusory Icy Phantom” (she appears as a ghostly woman, attacks with frost, and is partly incorporeal) ⁶⁴ . Aspect: “Surrounded by Wisp Minions” (small glowing orbs that assist her and lure victims) ⁶⁵ . Stats: Wispmother: +3 Will attacks (frost magic), +2 Stealth (appears/disappears in fog). Wisps: treat as an aspect “Wisp Swarm” that imposes difficulty on players (draining life and distracting) ⁶⁵ unless dealt with (maybe they have 1 stress each, a simple hit kills one). Stunt: **Mirror Image** – Once, the Wispmother can create a duplicate illusion of herself (players must overcome an obstacle to target the right one). **Encounter Hooks:** Wispmothers are rare, found in certain ruins or snowy fields (like around an old altar or pond at night). They often have a backstory (some say they’re what becomes of wrongly executed magic-users or tragic figures). An encounter begins with spotting wisps (the little lights) in the distance – players often think treasure or someone with a lantern, only to be led to the Wispmother’s ambush. The wisps can sap health (maybe auto-attack with minor effect each round). The area usually is cold (maybe treat as zone aspect “Frigid Air” hindering PC actions due to chill). If the PCs researched or

have a companion like a lore-savvy mage, they might recall wispmothers can be dispelled by disrupting their link to wisps (so kill wisps first) or that fire is effective. Fighting her is like a boss battle with adds (wisps). Non-combat solution: none known except avoiding or daylight (she might only appear at night or in certain conditions). Perhaps if a PC has the ability to lay spirits to rest (like a priest), they could attempt to converse – but traditionally wispmothers aren't sane. Good loot: sometimes they guard a chest or have enchanted ice-related items. Could tie to a quest: e.g. villagers ask the PC to investigate ghost lights that caused a few to vanish. It's a horror story the PCs solve by ending the Wispmother. Cinematically, on defeat she might dissipate with a sorrowful wail. Wispmothers show another flavor of undead – more magical and mysterious than draugr.

Humanoid Adversaries (Bandits, Faction Soldiers, etc.)

- **Bandits** – *Outlaws, Raiders, and Mercenaries* ²⁴. Aspect: “Motley Crew of the Desperate and the Dishonorable” (bandits come in groups of mixed race/skills, not much discipline) ²⁴. Aspect: “Highwaymen of Skyrim's Wilds” (they often demand tolls or set ambushes on roads) ⁶⁶. Stat template: Mook bandits: +2 Fight or Shoot depending on type, Average defense. A bandit chief: +3 Fight, +2 Provoke (to intimidate), perhaps one stunt like “Savage Strike: +2 damage on a hit when flanking” etc. **Encounter Hooks:** Bandits are ubiquitous as low-level threats in Skyrim – occupying forts, caves, ruins, and occasionally extorting travelers ⁵¹. The PCs might face them when escorting a caravan, or need to clear a bandit-infested fort for strategic reasons (common mission in war – e.g., clear Fort Dunstad of bandits before enemy can occupy it). They can also show a moral gradient: not all bandits are evil, some joined due to harsh times ²⁴. A GM could include a surrendered or young bandit who reveals sympathetic backstory – leaving it to PCs to decide to show mercy (which might create a future ally or intelligence). Bandits often have internal conflicts (maybe the PCs can exploit by sowing dissent between a cruel chief and her second-in-command). Also, Skyrim bandits sometimes have colorful personalities (some are ex-millers, some are former soldiers). Use brief dialogues (“Shouldn't have come here!” is classic generic, but you can have a unique bandit yell “For the Reach!” if they're Reachmen bandits, etc., implying local flavor). They often trap their lairs – so as PCs approach, maybe a tripwire crossbow fires (create advantage “Caught in crossfire” on them). Since bandits can be numerous, treat minions as one or two mobs and the leader as a full NPC. Perhaps incorporate environmental aspects like “Rickety Rope Bridge between you and archers” to spice it up. Loot: bandit caches of stolen goods (possibly quest items or funds). They can foreshadow bigger threats: e.g., finding a note that a Thalmor is secretly paying them to harass one side's supply lines (tying them into the war plot indirectly). In sum, bandits are versatile filler enemies and also allow for those fun emergent moments (maybe a bandit yields and offers to guide PC to treasure to save his skin – could be true or trap). Players typically won't negotiate with obvious bandits, but they might scare them off (use Provoke or create aspect “We Outnumber/Outclass You” to make bandits flee).

- **Silver Hand** – *Fanatical Werewolf Hunters*. Aspect: “Fanatic Templar of Anti-Beast Zeal” ⁵⁵. Aspect: “Armed with Silver for the Beastblood” (they use silver swords, which are particularly lethal to were-creatures, and crossbows with silver bolts). Stats: Treat like well-organized bandits: Fight +3, an advantage vs. werewolves specifically (maybe +2 when attacking anyone with the Beast aspect), and possibly a mild consequence slot (a bit tougher than normal bandits). **Encounter Hooks:** The Silver Hand appear in the Companions questline as antagonists – they kill Kodlak Whitmane. If a PC is a werewolf or allied with Companions, Silver Hand make thematic recurring villains. They could attempt to ambush the PCs at night, or kidnap a townsfolk suspecting them of being lycanthrope

(maybe incorrectly). If none of the PCs are werewolves, Silver Hand might be encountered incidentally – e.g., at a camp where they slaughtered what they thought was a werewolf and maybe messed up (like killed an innocent traveler mistaken for one – which could create a moral choice to confront them for murder). The Silver Hand's presence can complicate things if the PC party includes a known friendly werewolf (like Aela or Farkas) – the Hand will target them specifically mid-battle, maybe ignoring other threats to try and kill the “abomination.” The GM can roleplay them as bitter and single-minded (“All werebeasts must die! Stand aside or join them in death!”). They might cooperate fleetingly with, say, Stormcloaks or Imperials if there's a temporary alignment (for example, a Thalmor-aligned werewolf threat would ironically have Silver Hand and maybe Empire both wanting it gone – weird bedfellows scenario). Use their silver weaponry to mechanical effect: if a PC or ally has the Beastblood aspect, a Silver Hand can invoke it for extra harm on hits. This will quickly show players the danger they pose to werewolf companions – possibly forcing tough calls (retreat or risk friend's life). After Companions quest, the Silver Hand are mostly destroyed, but maybe a surviving cell tries a desperate act in Act III – like attacking Jorrvaskr or attempting to kill the player if they have the Helm of Ysgramor or something symbolic. Their fanaticism can be compared/contrasted with other groups like Vigilants of Stendarr (who hunt all daedra and undead, but slightly less extreme). As loot, silver weapons can be taken – useful to PCs if they fight undead or were-creatures later.

- **Thalmor Justiciar** – *Altmer Operative of the Aldmeri Dominion*. Aspect: “Ruthless Elven Supremacist” (believes in Dominion's cause, no mercy) ¹. Aspect: “Mage and Swordsman in One” (typically adept in Destruction or Illusion magic and skilled with an Elven sword). Stats: A Justiciar might be a **Good** (+3) fighter and spellcaster, with high Will (to resist interrogation) and decent Lore (knowledge of politics and law). Stunt: **Diplomatic Immunity** – Once per scene, a Justiciar can pull rank or leverage political pressure to avoid consequences (e.g., local guards hesitate to arrest them, giving them time to escape – PCs might need to spend FP or clever aspect use to counter this). **Encounter Hooks:** Thalmor appear as antagonists in many parts of this campaign by design ¹⁸. A Thalmor Justiciar squad could confront PCs openly if the PCs are known Talos worshippers or otherwise “heretical” – e.g., along the road: “We are searching for Talos worshippers – you wouldn't be hiding any, hmm?” and then escalate to violence. Alternatively, a Justiciar may attend diplomatic scenes (like at Season Unending council) and be a source of compels, pushing each side's buttons ²⁷. As covert foes, Thalmor agents might sabotage things or act as puppetmasters behind bandit raids or use disguise (like impersonating a friend to gather intel). Mechanically, they often have one or two bodyguard soldiers (e.g., Thalmor soldier: Fight +2, Armor 1 Elven light armor, follows orders strictly). They likely carry enchanted weapons or potions (maybe a deadly poison, since Dominion wouldn't shy from that). In combat, a Justiciar might start with a spell volley (lightning or paralysis) then close in with sword once foes are weakened – they're trained. They will retreat if losing (Better to flee and report, they think long-term unless fanatically cornered). If captured, expect they'll either commit suicide via spell/poison or lie stallingly for rescue – not giving easily actionable info unless PCs get very clever or use magic to force. The Thalmor make good recurring villains, each encounter revealing a bit more of their overarching scheme (like finding a dossier on a PC or NPC showing how they manipulate events). For example, after beating one, the PCs loot orders indicating the Thalmor's next target – leading to a new plot point. They also present moral nuance: a captured Thalmor might taunt Nords about how the Empire sold them out with the Concordat – stirring intra-party debate possibly. The GM can have fun with their arrogance. In Act IV, Thalmor might be boss-level adversaries – e.g., an encounter with an actual ranking First Emissary (like Elenwen or similar) who has multiple spells, wards, and backup. In fate terms, such a boss could

be a conflict with multiple phases: e.g., first break her ward (challenge) while dealing with two Thalmor warriors, then deal direct stress. Overall, highlight their cunning and cruelty – unlike bandits, they won't fight to death aimlessly; they have plans (escape routes, hostages – maybe a Thalmor holds a knife to a local Jarl's throat to secure passage, etc.). Loathsome but intelligent foes.

- **Stormcloak Soldier** – *Nordic Rebel Warrior*. Aspect: “Devoted to Skyrim’s Freedom” (morale is high when defending their land, maybe lower outside it). Aspect: “Lightly Armored but Fierce” (wearing furs and leathers, armed with axes and bows). Stats: Average (+1) soldiers individually; a squad of 3 can act as one unit at +2. Typically high Physique (hardy Nords) but not much magic. Stunt: **Battle Cry** (once, can create advantage “Fearsome War Cry” to scare lower-tier enemies – e.g., bandits might hesitate). **Encounter Hooks:** As allies, Stormcloak soldiers could accompany PCs on missions in Stormcloak-held territory or request aid (like “Our scouts haven’t returned from the old ruin, please help find them”). As enemies (if PC is Imperial-aligned), they’ll appear guarding forts or raiding caravans. Perhaps an Act II conflict: the PCs need to escort a diplomat through Eastmarch and Stormcloak scouts attempt to capture them. Fate-wise, treat soldiers en masse rather than rolling for dozens. Use zone aspects like “Barricade of Shields” for their shield wall or “Cornered in Courtyard” for when they’re defending. Because many PCs might also be Stormcloak, use these NPCs to show the war’s toll – e.g., a young Stormcloak is dying and asks the PC to deliver his amulet to his mother – these touches add depth. If PCs fight Stormcloaks, emphasize their bravery (they shout “Skyrim!” and fight to last) to avoid making either side cartoonish. Could even note some know the PC if the PC is famous (“That’s the Dovahkiin’s ally! For Ulfric!”). They often drink and sing after victories – so non-combat encounter possible: bumping into off-duty Stormcloaks in an inn, which could lead to friendly competition or a drunken brawl (bar brawl scene that’s mostly fists and pride). Use them to reinforce which holds are under whose control – Stormcloak camps dot the map in their zones (players might stumble on one and be mistaken for foe or welcomed depending on affiliation, leading to a side-quest from the camp’s quartermaster).

- **Imperial Legionnaire** – *Trained Empire Soldier*. Aspect: “Professional and Disciplined” (fight in formation when possible, follow orders strictly). Aspect: “Heavily Armored in Legion Steel” (harder to take down, but slower). Stats: +2 Fight, +1 Shoot (some archers), Armor:1 (iron armor). Stunt: **Testudo** – a group of Imperials can create an advantage “Shield Wall” that gives +2 defense to all in formation vs ranged attacks ²². **Encounter Hooks:** Similar usage to Stormcloaks but opposite allegiance. As allies (if PC is Imperial), they might guard them or request help with local issues (e.g., “Bandits have been harrying our supply lines, care to deal with them quietly?”). As foes (if PC is Stormcloak), an Imperial patrol might try to arrest/detain them, or Imperials hold a fort the PCs need to infiltrate/assault. Imperials often bring resources – maybe catapults or mages for special missions – so the GM can spice an Imperial encounter with an attached battlemage throwing fireballs or an engineer setting traps. Show their coordination: e.g., an officer blows a horn and more troops arrive next exchange, or they fight in pairs (setting up flanks). In contrast to Stormcloaks, Imperials might accept surrender more readily (or at least consider captures) – an interesting predicament if PC party is Stormcloak and gets overwhelmed: maybe an Imperial Legate captures them instead of killing, leading to a jailbreak scenario or diplomatic prisoner exchange possibility. The Legate could even attempt to flip the PCs (“You fought well – the Empire could use warriors like you; why die for Ulfric?”). Fate allows social conflicts too: an Imperial encounter might be solved by trickery (PCs disguise in Legion armor – maybe requiring a Deceive roll to pass muster). Again, highlight their humanity occasionally: an Imperial soldier might reveal he’s a local Breton conscript who doesn’t want to be here, etc. This war aspect can generate sympathy or drama. On the more mechanical

side, multiple Legionnaires using "Shield Wall" can be tough – players should find another way (like a clever maneuver to break their line or use magic). Loot from them is standard gear (which PC likely has equal to, unless PC lacked armor and wants a set). Perhaps documents on an Imperial could hint at the next campaign development (orders from Tullius etc.).

- **Special: Dragon** – *The World-Eater's Brood*. (Even though Alduin is defeated in this timeline, some dragons might still be active. Use sparingly as a "force of nature" encounter.) Aspect: "Fire and Fury from the Skies." Aspect: "Pride of the Dov – Underestimates Mortals." Stats: As a boss, a dragon could be treated as an environmental challenge plus target. For example, it has a "Dragon" stress track of 6 (6-segment clock) and requires special strategies to ground (like using a ballista or Shout or luring it). It attacks with Fire or Frost breath (zone attack, +4 forceful, creating aspect "Scorched" or "Frozen" on area) and bite/claw if on ground. Stunt: **Wing Buffet** – can force all nearby characters to move zones or knock them prone by flapping wings (creating advantage "Blown Off Balance"). **Encounter Hooks:** In main campaign sans Dragonborn, random dragon attacks would be rare. But perhaps a Dragonbreak scenario tears a hole and a dragon from Alduin's resurrected ones shows up misguided. Or as mentioned in main mod epilogue, maybe one or two dragons (like Odahviing or Paarthurnax) still roam but aren't hostile unless provoked ⁶⁷. A hostile random dragon event could occur during a key battle (e.g., a dragon decides to attack the mass of troops at the climax – turning it into a three-way chaos with PCs scrambling to either avoid it or turn it against the enemy). Without a Dragonborn, killing a dragon might not yield soul absorption, but could still yield glory and useful loot (dragon bones/scales for making powerful arms). If the PCs have befriended any dragon (though unlikely without Dragonborn, unless via Greybeards or a special quest), a dragon might do a flyby assist once (maybe a reward for a good deed at High Hrothgar or something). Mechanically, a dragon should feel beyond standard combat – require ingenuity: like using a ballista (create advantage "Harpooned the Dragon"), or forcing it to land by injuring wings (target a wing aspect), or weathering it until it lands out of frustration. They can be a high-stakes challenge for experienced PCs or a "run or die" for lower ones (which is fine to teach not every monster is beatable conventionally). If Alduin is gone, dragons won't have that unity, so maybe one is just hungry or angry. If Parthurnax lives and war gets dire, maybe he sends a wayward dragon to test the heroes or unify them (like a trial). Use dragons as epic spice, mindful that it can overshadow war story if overdone. Probably one or two dragon encounters at most in the whole campaign, unless the GM decides to pursue a whole "Second Dragon Crisis" which is optional and huge.

(This bestiary is not exhaustive – feel free to create Fate profiles for any other creatures encountered (Chaurus, Falmer, Dwarven Automatons, etc.) using these examples as models. The key is to give each creature a couple of evocative aspects and maybe one gimmick stunt to set it apart. Leverage the environment and narrative: many creatures are best handled by using situational aspects (e.g., slippery ice vs. Ice Wraith, darkness vs. vampires) to make encounters dynamic rather than slugfests. And always consider if a non-violent resolution or avoidance is possible – not every beast desires to fight to the death; some, like giants or animals, might be appeased or bypassed with clever thinking.)

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Integration with Core Campaign & Faction Pack

This section provides guidance on weaving the “Dragonbreaks, Creatures, and Companions” module content into the main Skyrim Fate Core campaign and the Side Plot C (Factions) expansion. We address at which points to introduce the add-on scenarios (Acts I–V breakdown), how to manage the additional companion NPCs in play, and how to use the provided creature encounters to enhance existing story beats without overshadowing them. We also cover mechanical considerations: how Option 6 (optional mechanics like clocks and conditions) are employed to track certain module-specific elements such as Dragonbreak pressure and companion trust. The goal is a seamless integration that enriches the narrative and gameplay.

Overall Timeline Fit: The alternate timeline premise (Alduin defeated, Dragonborn gone, civil war raging) is the backbone of the main campaign ⁶⁸. The Dragonbreak scenarios in this module leverage that backdrop – they are ideally sprinkled when the party has some downtime between major acts or when their choices trigger them. For example, *Act I: The Battle for Whiterun* is a major event; after it, in the aftermath, is a perfect time for a Dragonbreak like **Ghost of Torygg (DB-001)** or **Wrath of the Wild Giant (DB-016)** to show weird consequences of the war beyond the battlefield (maybe news of a ghost sighting reaches them as they recuperate) ⁹. Generally:

- **Act I (Prologue & Whiterun Conflict):** Introduce a companion or two early. If PCs are Stormcloak leaning, Ralof could be present from Helgen onward ³². If Imperial, Hadvar likewise ⁵. Lydia can be assigned once they earn Jarl Balgruuf’s favor (after saving Whiterun from the first threats, if using that scenario) ⁴⁰. Early Dragonbreaks should be low-scale and local – *The Butcher of Windhelm (DB-003)* if they visit Windhelm, or *Nightmare in Dawnstar (DB-006)* if they travel north – giving a taste of side intrigues. This Act is also good to throw a **Wildlife encounter** like wolves or a bear while traveling to establish that the world is dangerous even aside from the war (perhaps when escorting an important message or traveling between holds). Use **clocks** sparingly here – maybe a small 4-seg “Hold Tension” clock if they’re negotiating something (like Fort Neugrad prisoner rescue timing, etc.), but mostly Act I is straightforward.
- **Act II (Factions & Mid-war Intrigue):** This Act in core campaign has the side faction quests from Pack C (Companions, College, etc.) and The Reach storyline. Here the module can really enrich things:
 - If running *Allegiances in War* faction missions, incorporate the relevant companion. E.g., during the College quests, have **J’zargo** tag along as per his dossier ⁴⁴ – he can provide tips or comedic relief (and a Trust clock can start ticking as they test his scrolls, see below for trust).
 - In the Reach, when dealing with the Forsworn plot, introduce **Kaie** as outlined ⁴⁸ after Cidhna Mine or during the negotiations. Her presence can help bridge to Dragonbreak DB-007 (Red Eagle’s Curse) or DB-009/010 if Thalmor interference is discovered in Markarth ⁶⁹. Mechanically, you might start a “Forsworn Cooperation” clock of 6 segments when PCs begin influencing Forsworn – each success on appeasing them ticks it up, each aggressive

move ticks down. If it fills, that triggers Kaie's deeper trust (she'll propose the Forsworn alliance idea or accompany them fully).

- Use *Dragonbreak scenarios that tie to factions*: e.g., after the Dark Brotherhood side plot, trigger **Emperor's Gambit (DB-014)** if appropriate – integration with that storyline ⁷⁰. Or if the Thieves Guild plot was done, perhaps insert a hint of *Cult of Boethiah (DB-013)* as a street rumor in Riften that only the guild contacts know.
- **Option 6 Mechanics – Clocks & Conditions**: By Act II, introduce the **Dragonbreak Pressure** clock subtly. For instance, each time a Dragonbreak event occurs or is narrowly averted, tick this clock. It might be a 6-segment tracker representing how unstable the timeline is getting due to accumulated changes. If it fills, perhaps it foreshadows a major mythic event (like time freezing momentarily or an unexpected dragon sighting as time “ripples”). This clock pushes the idea that if the PCs ignore too many weird events, bigger ones happen. Conversely, solving them reduces pressure (maybe untick a segment when they resolve a Dragonbreak conclusively).
- **Companion Trust Clocks**: Start tracking trust for companions around this act, since by now PCs have interacted with them a bit. For each companion, a simple 4-segment clock can do (or use a scale like a value from 1 to 4). When PCs back a companion's personal goal or show loyalty, tick it up; when they dismiss or betray the companion's values, tick down. For instance, *Lydia's trust* might increase if they let her actually lead housecarl duties or listen to her counsel, but decrease if they treat her like a pack mule exclusively or commit dishonorable acts. The *Integration*: once a companion's trust clock fills, that companion might grant a tangible benefit (a free stunt use, or they'll sacrifice for PC in a tough spot automatically). We have provided a JSON template later that can be used to record these.
- **Using Faction Tags**: Both core and Pack C content label quests by Acts and sometimes Side Plot letter. You can do similar: tag each Dragonbreak with an act relevance. For example, note in your GM outline: “DB-005 (College crisis) goes well in Act II after 'Under Saarthal' quest.” or “DB-011 (Paarthurnax) triggers only if Season Unending occurs in Act III.” This ensures you deploy them logically. Integration notes in scenario descriptions (like we often mention Act triggers) already guide you ²⁷.
- **Balance**: Keep in mind not to overload Act II with too many side treks that the main war stalls. Choose Dragonbreaks that complement what players care about. If they're deeply into Companion quest, do more Companion-related ones; if they are ignoring College, perhaps skip DB-005 to avoid derail.

• Act III (Turning Point – The Reach / Season Unending / Siege preparations):

- Act III in main campaign likely deals with major choices (possibly negotiating or planning the final moves). Here, the more *mythic Dragonbreaks* can occur as the tension peaks. *Time Wound Echo (DB-004)* is ideal around now if the Greybeards were visited ⁸. It ties into peace council or just a spiritual moment on the eve of final war – integration wise, perhaps after they gather at High Hrothgar, the echo happens and actually *helps* them unite (like a sign from the past).
- Another Act III insertion: if one side is close to victory, do a Dragonbreak that jeopardizes both – *The Daedric Gambit (DB-010)* at the final battle planning ¹⁹. Integration: just as Stormcloaks plan to storm Solitude (or Imperials plan to storm Windhelm), reports come of Thalmor summoning something – forcing PCs to adjust their priorities (maybe a side mission to sabotage that ritual before the battle can proceed).

- **Companions in Act III:** By now, most companion NPCs should be at high trust if treated well (or might leave if abused). Use their narrative arcs to influence the main plot. Eg: *Ralof's crisis of faith* might happen now – he could approach the PC privately and question Ulfric's orders ³⁴. This isn't just flavor; it might affect whether the PC side chooses a particularly cruel strategy or looks for alternatives. *Hadvar's guilt* over something the Empire did might cause him to suggest the player find a better way (maybe pushing for Season Unending negotiation rather than bloodbath) ⁷¹. Essentially, let companions reflect consequences of war and feed into PC choices.
- **Clocks and Optionals:** Act III likely has multiple clocks: one for final battle prep (like Siege of Whiterun in core, but now final siege of Solitude/Windhelm). You can incorporate *Dragonbreak Pressure clock* results here – e.g., if that clock is nearly full, the final negotiation will be more difficult (maybe ghosts haunt the meeting or storms rage as reality is strained – purely narrative unless you want mechanical penalty). Also, a **Party Cohesion** clock might be relevant if PCs had internal conflicts; if using that, companions' presence can help or hinder (e.g. a row between companion and PC could tick it down).
- **NPC Deaths:** Integration note – the module's companions should not steal heroic deaths that belong to main NPCs (like Kodlak's intended death). Instead, they can complement – e.g., if Kodlak died, Aela's heartbreak is a roleplay moment that can spur her quest for revenge or cure which PCs can engage with. Or if Ulfric is supposed to survive to Act IV, don't let a Dragonbreak scenario kill him prematurely (unless your table goes off-script intentionally). So use module content to deepen, not rewrite, unless the players cause it. If players do something wild like try to kill Tullius at the peace council, well, Dragonbreak indeed! Then adapt – maybe that triggers a big ghost of Torygg or a Time fracture due to timeline disruption as a consequence (cool way to handle extreme deviation).

• **Act IV (Final Battles & Thalmor Endgame):**

- Here integration is about **payoff**. Dragonbreak events seeded earlier should come to fruition. Eg: if they gathered totems for Aela (from DB-007 Red Eagle or DB-015 Dragon Priest), those items might give them edge in final fight or epilogue. If they saved Emperor in DB-014, maybe the Empire sends additional help vs Thalmor in Act IV (maybe a battlemage contingent arrives last-minute) ⁷². If they failed and Emperor died, perhaps Act IV is messier (Dominion emboldened – you could manifest that as needing an extra roll or obstacle due to political chaos).
- *The Final Dragonbreak (DB-020)* is basically an epilogue piece – integrate it if the tone fits your table. Possibly, after the final Thalmor confrontation, you describe that Sovngarde scene to give closure ⁶⁷. If players prefer gritty realism, skip the mystical and end with political wrap-ups. But if they engaged with mythic stuff (Time Wound, ghosts), then Sovngarde cameo by Kodlak or Ysgramor congratulating them ties it up nicely.
- **Companions in Act IV:** By now, their arcs should conclude or at least hit a new stage in epilogue. Eg: *Lydia* might either stay with her Thane as housecarl into rebuilding or perhaps if the PC leaves to travel, she tearfully but stoically says farewell vowing to keep Whiterun safe. *J'zargo* likely leaves to brag at College how he helped save Skyrim (unless a PC Arch-Mage invites him to continue as apprentice). These notes can be delivered as part of an epilogue scene for each if desired. Mechanically, ensure any mechanical benefits of companion trust are applied in final big scenes: e.g., a fully trusted Hadvar might throw himself between a PC and a lethal blow from Thalmor Lord, taking a consequence or being severely injured – an

automatic protect that players will remember (maybe you tick his trust clock empty at that, indicating he's expended everything for them – and maybe retires to heal).

- **Clocks in Finale:** The module suggests two example **6-segment clocks** specifically: “*Dragonbreak Pressure*” and “*Party Cohesion*”, plus *individual Trust clocks*. The JSON below shows how to set those up. By Act IV, Dragonbreak Pressure ideally should be nearly full to create urgency (if players somehow prevented lots of weirdness, great – then maybe no final tear, or it could mean their victory is smoother). If it fills, you might incorporate a dramatic effect in final battle: perhaps time distortions on the battlefield (like everyone experiences a déjà vu mid-fight, or ghostly champions appear to assist or hinder unpredictably). Party Cohesion – if it's high, maybe allow a free compel against final villain for “United Front” or something; if low (party was divided), final fight might be harder (villain exploits their rifts). These are subtle narrative levers; don't let them overshadow player choices, just reflect them.
- **Option 6 Summary:** So-called “Option 6” mechanics in our context = the optional Fate toolkit stuff: we used *Clocks (Countdowns)* ¹ for timed events (which this module indeed adds plenty), *Conditions* (like applying “Cursed” or “Inspired” condition aspects from some scenarios), and *Scale* (as in how to handle big battles – likely done by treating armies as large multi-stress entities or environmental effects). The main campaign likely already had some guidelines for large scale combat using Fate Fractal (maybe treating an entire platoon as one character with multiple stress) – integrate companions or monsters likewise. Eg: in the Siege of Solitude, you might treat “Siege Progress” as a 6-clock and each special action (like PCs disabling a gate or rallying archers) ticks it in their favor ². If any Dragonbreak is ongoing during battle (like DB-010 Daedric horror), have parallel clocks (if horror clock fills, something terrible happens players want to avoid).

Faction Pack Integration: This module's content should reinforce Side Plot C rather than distract. We already addressed placing companions from those factions in their quests. Also, Dragonbreak Hooks can tie factions: - Thieves Guild: maybe incorporate a subtle nod like “Rumor of Ghost Nocturnal” but that might be too much – probably skip heavy Dragonbreak for TG aside small crimes during war they can do. - Dark Brotherhood: Emperor's scenario and maybe Season Unending if DB was destroyed by PC, Emperor's alive to attend. - College: definitely used in DB-005 and J'zargo content. - Companions: heavily used via Aela, Silver Hand stuff, etc. - Forsworn & Way of Voice: We covered Forsworn through Kaie, Red Eagle. Way of Voice faction pack content might involve the Greybeards or new Voice users – incorporate DB-004 and DB-011 to give Greybeards more to do than stand aloof (like their involvement in peace council and Paarthurnax dilemma). - The module content even hints at an option for PC to have Thalmor side – we gave some ideas for if a PC was a covert Thalmor, though unlikely. If so, they might attempt to leverage Dragonbreak chaos for Dominion gain (then the GM could use or withhold certain ones to aid that PC's secret goal but at cost).

Tone and Consistency: Ensure that while adding these extras, you maintain the gritty-yet-epic tone of the main campaign. Skyrim's civil war story is about freedom vs order, personal heroism vs larger forces. The Dragonbreak events should underscore themes (e.g., Potema's ghost = the cost of unchecked ambition, Time Wound echo = learning from history's mistakes, etc.) and not feel like random side quests. Try to reference main plot or lore during them: e.g., when a **Hagraven** event happens, mention it's maybe one the PCs heard of in Reach folk tales or tied to the Madanach's lore, etc. Use **citations** from our compiled lore within narration if appropriate – e.g., “As Kodlak taught, hagravens are witches who sacrificed their humanity for power ⁵⁵ ... and here one stands before you – a cautionary sight.” Such integration of lore text (lightly) can enhance immersion (just don't overdo direct quotes in dialogue, keep it natural).

Finally, adapt to player choices. The module provides many options; you as GM decide which to employ based on pacing and interest. Not every Dragonbreak needs to occur – think of them as a menu. If players love one, you can foreshadow the next. If they seem uninterested in magical side mysteries, maybe minimize those and focus on companions and war – that's fine. The content is there to enrich and give *the fate of Skyrim more texture and stakes* beyond simply who wins the throne – even time and spirits hang in the balance.

JSON Templates for Clocks: Below is a template snippet you can use to track important clocks in your notes or a campaign management tool. It outlines the structure for the major clocks we discussed:

```
{
  "campaign_clocks": [
    {
      "name": "Dragonbreak Pressure",
      "max_segments": 6,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Tracks reality strain from unresolved Dragonbreak events."
    },
    {
      "name": "Party Cohesion",
      "max_segments": 6,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Tracks group unity (impacts final battle teamwork). High is good."
    }
  ],
  "trust_clocks": [
    {
      "companion": "Ralof",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Trust in PCs (fills via honoring Stormcloak values or saving his life)."
    },
    {
      "companion": "Hadvar",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Trust in PCs (fills via showing integrity or protecting civilians)."
    },
    {
      "companion": "Lydia",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Respect and friendship (fills if treated as friend/ally, not servant)."
    }
  ]
}
```

```

    },
    {
      "companion": "Aela",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Brotherhood in arms (fills by proving honor and aiding her
hunts)."
    },
    {
      "companion": "J'zargo",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Professional camaraderie (fills by acknowledging his skill and
helping his experiments succeed)."
    },
    {
      "companion": "Kaie",
      "max_segments": 4,
      "filled_segments": 0,
      "notes": "Earned trust (fills by treating Reachfolk fairly and keeping
promises to Forsworn)."
    }
  ]
}

```

Use or modify the above as needed. As segments fill, make note of the effects (e.g., at 4/4 Ralof openly defies a cruel Ulfric order to support PC, at 0/4 maybe he leaves the party temporarily). This provides a tangible measure of relationships, which is very much in Fate's narrative spirit.

In Summary: Integrating this module's rich content means more moving parts, but also a more living Skyrim. Track what changes and inform your NPC portrayals accordingly. Lean on the aspects and citations we've provided to maintain consistency with Elder Scrolls lore (the players will feel the world is authentic when NPCs reference known lore tidbits appropriately). By the end, the players should feel like not only did they decide the war, but they also uncovered hidden truths, forged lasting friendships, and confronted legends – truly earning the moniker of heroes in **song and story** ⁶⁷ ²⁷. The alternate timeline becomes *their* timeline, shaped by their deeds across both the mortal political realm and the mystical currents of fate.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjGaLo91kRo>