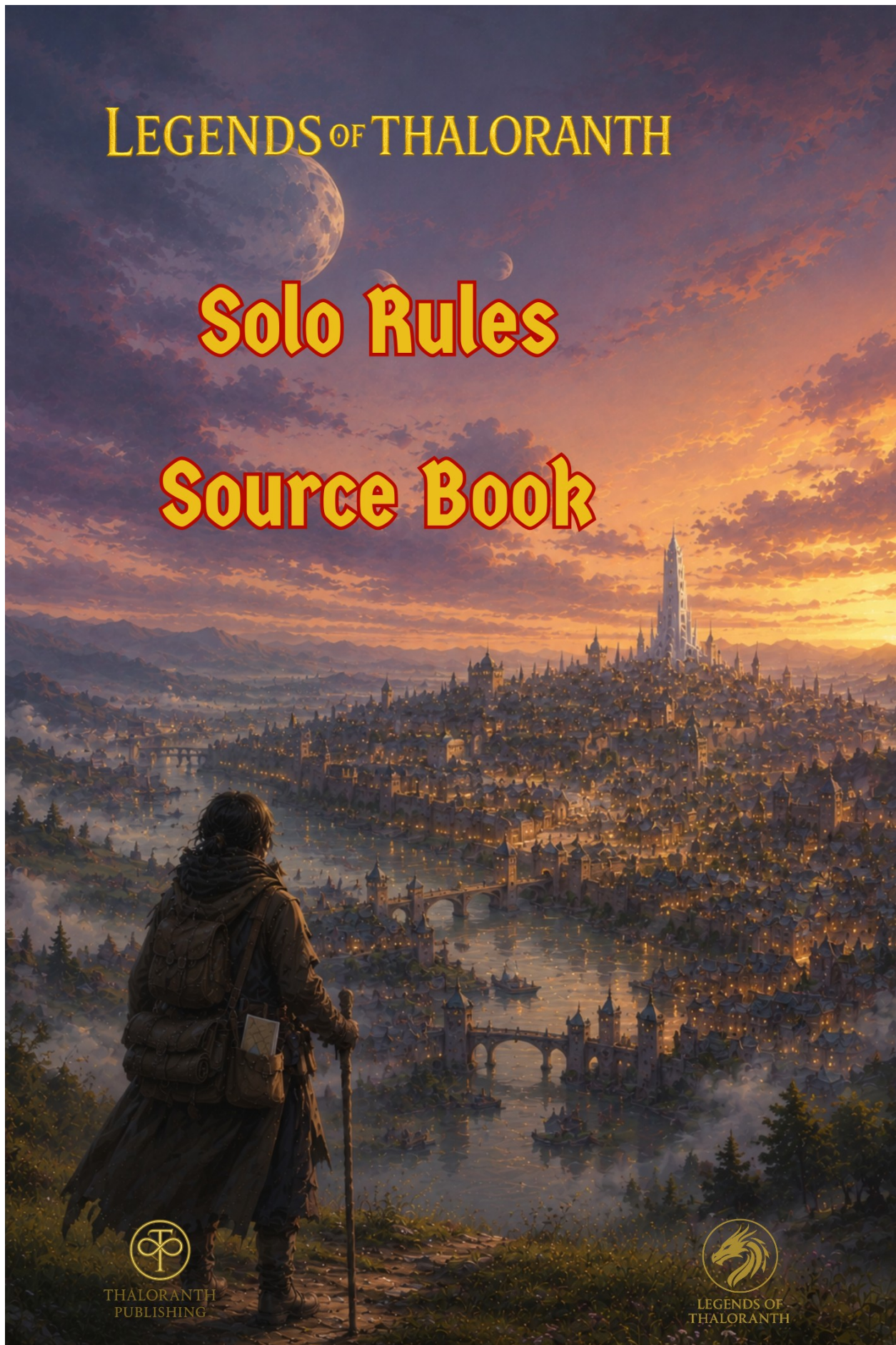


LEGENDS OF THALORANTH

Solo Rules

Source Book



THALORANTH
PUBLISHING



LEGENDS OF
THALORANTH

LEGENDS OF THALORANTH

Solo Rules Source Book

A complete guide to playing alone in the world of Vaeloranth.

All you need is this book, the Radia Mysteries Oracle Deck, two six-sided dice, and something to write with.

Thaloranth Publishing
First Edition

DEDICATION

To Robert Burns, my cousin, who introduced me to role playing games in 1978.

LEGAL INFORMATION

Legends of Thaloranth Solo Rules Guide Book

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Playtesters: Thaloranth Thursday Nighters

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INTRODUCTION

What This Book Is For

Solo roleplaying is not a compromise. It is a different kind of game.

In a group, the story emerges from the friction between players, competing ideas, unexpected choices, the surprise of what someone else does with a moment you thought you understood. In solo play, that friction comes from somewhere else: from a world that surprises you through cards and dice, from a character whose choices you commit to honestly even when they lead somewhere difficult, from the gap between what you hoped would happen and what the oracle says happened instead.

This book teaches you how to play Legends of Thaloranth alone. It gives you the rules for your character, the tools to replace a Game Master, and a framework for building stories that can last a single evening or an entire campaign. When you finish reading it, you will be able to sit down with a blank page and a shuffled deck and play.

What You Need

- **This book**, rules, oracle guidance, and your first adventure.
- **The Radia Mysteries Oracle Deck**, the primary engine for solo play. If you don't have the deck, the 2d6 fallback system in Chapter Six covers everything it does.
- **Two six-sided dice (2d6)**, for the Fate oracle and solo combat.
- **A character sheet**, blank paper works. A template is in the Quick Reference.
- **Something to write with**, optional but strongly recommended. Solo play rewards journaling.

What Kind of Game Is This?

Legends of Thaloranth is a narrative roleplaying game set in Vaeloranth, a continent of old powers, complicated politics, and cities built over ruins. The world is not a fantasy backdrop. It is a place with history, faction interests, and consequences that accumulate. The capital city of Radia sits at the heart of the kingdom of Thaloranth: a city of marble institutions and shadowed alleys, where the Merchants' Guild and the Council of Lords have faced each other across Kings Way for two hundred years, and where the Thieves' Guild runs a shadow economy beneath the very ward where magistrates argue over justice.

Further south, where the Meridian River plunges into the Caligothian Mare through three spectacular waterfalls, lies Marisalar, the city of masks and blades, where five great fencing academies have made reputation the only currency that matters and every conversation is a form of combat. Beyond both cities stretch the Wildlands, the Mare, and a dozen regions that have their own stories to tell.

The system is diceless for what your character does, your capabilities are compared against difficulty numbers and the outcome is determined by the comparison, not by luck. The dice enter only when the world acts, through the oracle system that replaces the Game Master in solo play.

A Note on Other Legends of Thaloranth Products

This book is the foundation of the solo line. Each product that follows, *Pirates of the Caligothian Mare*, *Shipwrecked in the Wildlands*, the *Radia* campaign line, the *Marisalor Academy* series, uses the rules and oracle framework established here and adds its own setting, scenarios, and mechanical extensions on top. If you have one of those books and this one, you have everything you need to play that setting. If you have only this book, you have a complete game.

The *Legends of Thaloranth Player's Guide* and *Game Master's Guide* expand every system in this book significantly, more *Origins*, more *Paths*, deeper rules for social encounters, mass combat, and political intrigue. This book is intentionally lighter. Its job is to get you playing.

PART ONE

YOUR CHARACTER

Who you are before the story begins

Before anything happens in your story, you need someone for whom it happens. Character creation in solo play follows the same principles as group play, four Stats, a skill set, a background, but is streamlined to get you to the table quickly. A playable character takes about fifteen minutes to build.

More importantly: your character is not just a collection of numbers. They are the lens through which you experience everything the oracle generates. Their Obligations, the debts, loyalties, and promises that bind them to the world, are what give the story its engine.

Chapter 1

CREATING YOUR CHARACTER

The Steps

- Step 1: Concept, Who are they and what do they want?
- Step 2: Origin, Where do they come from?
- Step 3: Stats, What are they made of?
- Step 4: Derived Values, What can they take and do?
- Step 5: Skills, What have they learned?
- Step 6: Path, What kind of person are they becoming?
- Step 7: Starting Obligation, What binds them to the world?
- Step 8: Gear and Finish

Step 1: Concept

Answer three questions before touching a number:

- What does this person want, the thing that gets them out of bed in the morning?
- What kind of trouble do they attract without trying?
- What is one thing they will not do, regardless of the cost?

You don't need a complete history. You need enough of a foundation that when the oracle generates something unexpected, you know how your character responds. That response is the story.

Step 2: Choose Your Origin

Origins are the five ancestral peoples of Vaeloraranth available in this book. Your Origin provides stat modifiers and one Origin Trait, a capability that reflects your people's heritage. Apply Origin modifiers after distributing your Stats in Step 3.

Human, Versatile, Adaptive, Driven

Humans are everywhere in Vaeloraranth because they fit everywhere. No single homeland, no defining tradition, only the capacity to become almost anything. In Radia they are merchants, knights, scholars, and criminals in roughly equal measure. In Marisalor they fill every tier of the city. What defines a human is momentum.

Stat Modifiers: None

Origin Trait: Adaptive Edge, Begin play with one additional Advantage (see Step 6).

Sylvani, Graceful, Long-Memored, Reserved

Ancient people shaped by natural and spiritual rhythms. The Sylvani move through Vaeloraranth with an ease that others sometimes mistake for arrogance, it is not arrogance, it is perspective. They have been watching the same patterns repeat for centuries. They speak less and mean more.

Stat Modifiers: Agility +2, Insight +1, Power -1, Social -2

Origin Trait: Harmony of Motion, Once per session, automatically succeed on one Agility-based check outside of combat.

Forgeborn, Enduring, Stoic, Built for the Long Fight

Stone-skinned, iron-willed people shaped by generations of labor in mountain halls. Forgeborn culture values mastery, loyalty, and the kind of strength that does not need to prove itself. In Radia's Harbor District you find them as dockworkers and smiths. In the Wildlands they are often the only reason a settlement survives its first winter.

Stat Modifiers: Power +2, Agility -1, Social -1

Origin Trait: Stonebound Endurance, Once per session, ignore the mechanical effects of exhaustion, encumbrance, or physical strain for one full scene.

Meadowkin, Sociable, Perceptive, Light on Their Feet

Small, quick-eyed people known for warmth and the uncanny ability to navigate social situations that would strand anyone else. Meadowkin thrive in cities, Radia's market districts are full of them, working as factors, fixers, and information brokers. They solve problems through connection rather than confrontation, which makes them underestimated right up to the moment they aren't.

Stat Modifiers: Social +2, Agility +1, Power -2, Insight -1

Origin Trait: Quick Read, Once per session, ask one yes/no question about an NPC's honest intentions. Treat the answer as a Clear Yes oracle draw.

Tinkersprite, Inventive, Restless, Technically Relentless

Small, brilliant people with an obsessive relationship with how things work. Tinkersprites see every problem as an engineering challenge and are consistently underestimated by people who mistake small size for small capability. In Marisalor's academies they are valued for their ability to analyze an opponent's technique with mechanical precision.

Stat Modifiers: Insight +2, Agility +1, Power -2, Social -1

Origin Trait: Tinker's Reflex, Once per session, improvise a functional device or tool from available materials. Simple devices always succeed. Complex ones may require a check.

Step 3: Distribute Your Stats

Four Stats define what your character fundamentally is, not what they've learned, but what they are made of.

Stat	What It Measures
Power (POW)	Physical strength, endurance, and the capacity to absorb punishment.
Agility (AGI)	Reflexes, speed, precision, and physical grace.
Insight (INS)	Mental acuity, perception, and the capacity to understand complex things.
Social (SOC)	Charisma, influence, and the ability to read and affect other people.

Distribute 5 points across the four Stats. All Stats begin at 0. Maximum +3 in any single Stat during creation. You may assign negative values down to -2 per Stat, each negative point gives you one extra point to spend elsewhere.

After distributing your points, apply your Origin modifiers. Origin modifiers can push Stats above +3. Stats cannot go below 0 after modifiers are applied.

STARTING POINTS
5 points to distribute + bonuses from negative Stats

Step 4: Derived Values

Calculate these six values from your final Stats and record them on your sheet.

Value	Formula
Vitality Points (VP)	$(\text{Power} + \text{Agility}) \times 2$
Action Points (AP)	$(\text{Power} + \text{Agility}) \times 2$
Luck Points (LP)	$\text{Insight} + \text{Social}$
Spell Points (SP)	$(\text{Insight} + \text{Arcana total}) \times 3$
Wealth Points (WP)	$(\text{Insight} + \text{Social}) \times 2$
Armor Rating (AR)	$\text{Agility} + 5 + \text{Armor Bonus} + \text{Shield Bonus}$

VP is how much punishment your character can absorb. At 0 VP you are incapacitated. You die when VP reaches a negative value equal to your Power score.

AP fuels everything you do in a tense scene, attacks, movement, skill boosts. It refreshes fully at the end of each scene.

LP can be spent to boost Saving checks or Wealth checks. It recovers once per in-game day.

SP fuels spellcasting. If you have no Arcana skill, your SP is 0.

WP abstracts economic resources. Compare WP to an item's Purchase Point Value (PPV). If WP meets or exceeds PPV, the purchase succeeds without cost. If WP falls short, WP drops by 1.

AR is the target number attackers must meet or exceed to hit you.

Step 5: Skills

Skills are trained capabilities built on your Stats. You have a Skill Point budget to spend:

STARTING SKILL POINTS (Insight + Social) × 3

Each Skill Point buys one tier of skill training. There are three tiers, purchased in order:

- **Base Skill (1 point):** Unlocks the category. Required before purchasing Sub-Skills.
- **Sub-Skill (1 point):** +1 to checks in this specific area. Requires Base Skill.
- **Specialization (1 point):** +2 to checks in a very specific application. Stacks with Sub-Skill for +3 total. Requires Sub-Skill.

Skill (Governing Stat)	Description & Sub-Skills
Melee Combat (Power)	Fighting with close-range weapons. Sub-Skills: Swordsmanship, Axe, Polearm, Grappling, Parry.
Ranged Combat (Agility)	Distance weapons. Sub-Skills: Archery, Crossbow, Thrown.
Athletics (Power)	Physical feats. Sub-Skills: Climbing, Swimming, Endurance.
Stealth (Agility)	Moving unseen. Sub-Skills: Urban Infiltration, Wilderness, Shadowing.
Investigation (Insight)	Finding and analyzing. Sub-Skills: Search, Research, Deduction.
Survival (Insight)	Wilderness navigation. Sub-Skills: Navigation, Foraging, Tracking.
Persuasion (Social)	Convincing and negotiating. Sub-Skills: Convincing, Charming, Negotiating.
Deception (Social)	Misleading. Sub-Skills: Lying, Disguise, Misdirection.
Intimidation (Social)	Coercing. Sub-Skills: Direct Threat, Presence.
Leadership (Social)	Directing groups. Sub-Skills: Inspiring, Commanding, Strategizing.
Arcana (Insight)	Magical practice. Sub-Skills: Arcane, Natural, Divine, Void Traditions.
Medicine (Insight)	Treating injuries. Sub-Skills: First Aid, Diagnosis, Surgery.
Engineering (Insight)	Mechanical systems. Sub-Skills: Devices, Construction, Trap Craft.
History (Insight)	Past events and cultures. Sub-Skills: Ancient, Recent, Institutional.

Step 6: Path and Advantages

Your Path is the archetype that defines your character's development direction. Choose one Path from the list below. Your Path provides two general abilities immediately.

You begin play with a number of Advantages equal to your Insight score. Humans gain one additional Advantage from their Adaptive Edge trait. Advantages are specific traits and capabilities outside the Stat/Skill system.

Path	Abilities
Fighter	Weapon Mastery: +1 damage with proficient weapons. Endurance: +1 to Power checks resisting fatigue.
Rogue	Agile Movement: +1 to Agility checks for dodging and acrobatics. Quick Reflexes: +1 to initiative.
Diplomat	Silver Tongue: +2 to Persuasion in social/political scenarios. Insightful Observer: +2 to Insight checks reading emotions.
Magus	Arcane Mastery: +1 to all magical checks. Mana Reserves: +1 to checks maintaining spellcasting under pressure.
Explorer	Trail Sense: +1 to navigation checks. Wilderness Endurance: Ignore environmental exposure penalties for one scene per session.
Shadow	Hidden Movement: +1 to Stealth in urban environments. Studied Target: +1 to attack and skill checks against a target you have observed for at least one full round.

Sample Advantages

Keen Senses, +2 to Insight checks involving perception and awareness.

Durable, Increase VP by 2.

Well-Connected, One reliable contact in a specific institution. Once per session, call in a favor.

Quick Study, Once per session, treat a skill check as if you had the relevant Sub-Skill.

Composed, Once per scene, ignore a Disadvantage penalty on a Social check.

Combat Instincts, You act before NPCs when initiative is tied.

Silver Lining, When you fail a check by exactly 1, treat it as a partial success.

Masked Intent, Once per session, conceal your true goal in a social scene. The NPC cannot draw correct conclusions about your purpose.

Step 7: Starting Obligation

Every character begins play with one Obligation, a debt, loyalty, promise, or circumstance that binds them to the world and gives the story its first engine. The oracle will generate complications, but the Obligation is what makes those complications personal.

The Obligation Economy is explained in full in Chapter Nine. For now, choose one of the following types and define it specifically:

- **Personal Obligation:** A debt owed to or by an individual. A promise made. A relationship with unresolved weight. Example: 'I owe three months' rent to Mira Stonefont of the Silverside bathhouse, and she knows where my sister lives.'
- **Institutional Obligation:** A standing relationship with a guild, faction, or institution. You may owe them service, information, or silence. Example: 'I carry Merchants' Guild credentials that I did not earn honestly. If the Guild discovers this, my standing in every market in Thaloranth collapses overnight.'
- **Narrative Obligation:** A promise made to the story itself, a mission accepted, a vow sworn, a purpose driving you forward. Example: 'I will find out who burned the Greenfield mill and why the Purple Knights covered it up.'

Write your Obligation in a single specific sentence. Vague obligations generate vague stories.

Step 8: Gear and Finish

Select a starting kit or build your own loadout. Your WP determines what you can afford.

Kit	Contents
Adventurer's Kit (3 WP)	Longsword, leather armor, dagger, bedroll, rope (50ft), rations (1 week), 2 torches.
Scout Kit (4 WP)	Short bow + 20 arrows, studded leather, camouflage cloak, dagger, rations (2 weeks).
Rogue Kit (4 WP)	Short sword, leather armor, lockpicking tools, disguise kit, grappling hook, dagger.
Courtier Kit (3 WP)	Fine clothing (Radia style), dagger (concealed), letter of introduction, coin purse.
Scholar Kit (3 WP)	Dagger, traveler's robes, spellbook, component pouch, writing materials, candles (6).
No Kit (0 WP)	The clothes you're wearing, one small weapon of your choice, and a reason to be here.

Armor bonuses: Leather +2 AR. Studded Leather +3 AR. Chainmail +6 AR (-2 Stealth/Athletics). Light Shield +1 AR. Medium Shield +2 AR.

Finally: give your character a name, note their personality in two or three words, and record their Obligation. You're ready.

Example Character: Sera Vane

Origin: Forgeborn | Path: Fighter

Stats: Power +3, Agility +1, Insight +2, Social +1 (after Forgeborn modifiers: Power +5, Agility 0, Social 0)

Note: Origin modifiers applied, Power +2, Agility -1, Social -1

Derived: VP 10 | AP 10 | LP 3 | AR 6 (unarmored) | WP 6

Skills: Melee Combat, Swordsmanship +1, Athletics, Intimidation

Path Abilities: Weapon Mastery (+1 damage), Endurance (+1 vs. fatigue)

Advantages: Keen Senses, Durable (VP 12 total), Combat Instincts

Kit: Adventurer's Kit (longsword, leather armor, dagger), AR now 8

Obligation (Institutional): I carry a Purple Knights discharge record that was falsified. The real record would show I was dismissed for striking a superior officer. If the Order of the Azure Star ever sees the original, my reputation in every institutional circle in Radia is finished.

Personality: Precise. Stubborn. Quietly furious about things she cannot prove.

PART TWO

HOW THE GAME WORKS

Rules for what your character does

This part covers the mechanics of play, how your character acts, what succeeds and fails, how combat and magic work. The rules are lighter than the full Player's Guide by design. Everything here is enough to play any solo product in the line. When a line product needs additional mechanics, it will tell you and provide them.

Chapter 2

CHECKS AND CHALLENGES

Most things your character attempts are handled by a single comparison: your total against a target number called the Difficulty Class (DC). If your total meets or exceeds the DC, you succeed. If it falls short, you fail, or succeed at a cost.

THE CORE FORMULA

$$\text{Stat} + \text{Skill} + \text{Modifiers} \geq \text{DC}$$

No dice. Your choices determine outcomes.

Difficulty Classes

Difficulty	DC
Easy	5
Moderate	10
Challenging	15
Difficult	20
Legendary	25

Advantage and Disadvantage

When circumstances strongly favor or work against a check, apply +2 (Advantage) or -2 (Disadvantage). These reflect the situation, not permanent modifiers. In solo play, you set these honestly based on the fictional reality, and the oracle's NPC Reaction cards can generate them for you.

Setting Your Own DCs

Without a GM, you set your own difficulty numbers. The principle is simple: set the DC before you resolve the check, and set it honestly, as if you were the GM, not as if you were trying to succeed.

Ask: how hard would this actually be for someone with no relevant skill? That's your baseline. Then adjust for specific circumstances using the table above. A locked chest in a merchant's warehouse is Moderate (10). The same chest in the Undercity's most dangerous district, rigged with a trap by a professional, is Challenging (15) just to pick the lock, with a separate check to notice the trap first.

The honest self-adjudication principle is the most important habit in solo play. It is also what makes success feel earned.

Spending Action Points

AP can be spent to boost a check after you see your total but before the outcome is determined. Each 1 AP spent adds +1 to the total. Declare AP spending before committing to the result. Standard cost: 1 AP per +1.

Luck Points

LP can be spent to boost Saving checks (when the world acts against you rather than you acting on the world) and Wealth checks. Each 1 LP spent adds +1. LP recovers once per in-game day.

Chapter 3

COMBAT

Combat uses the same check system as everything else, structured into rounds where everything costs AP. Keep it lean, a solo combat should feel tense, not procedural. If a fight becomes interesting to narrate, it is working. If it becomes bookkeeping, simplify.

Structure

Combat is played in rounds. On your turn, spend AP on any combination of actions you can afford. Rounds continue until the conflict is resolved, everyone on one side is incapacitated, someone flees, or the situation changes enough that combat ends narratively.

Initiative

Higher Agility acts first. Ties go to the player character. Use your Origin Trait or Advantage (Combat Instincts) if applicable.

Action Costs

Action	Cost
Melee or ranged attack	2 AP
Boost attack total	+1 AP per +1 bonus
Boost damage after a hit	+1 AP per +1 damage
Defense Boost (reaction)	+1 AP per +1 AR against one incoming attack
Move within zone	1 AP
Move to adjacent zone	2 AP
Cast a spell	2 AP + SP cost
Stabilize incapacitated ally	2 AP + Medicine check DC 10
Use item / draw weapon	1 AP

Attacking and Damage

MELEE ATTACK
Power + Melee Combat + Sub-Skill vs. Target's AR

RANGED ATTACK
Agility + Ranged Combat + Sub-Skill vs. Target's AR

A hit deals Base Damage + governing Stat. AR is a binary threshold, a hit deals full damage, a miss deals none.

Weapon	Base Damage
Dagger	2 + Power (or Agility)
Short Sword	3 + Power
Longsword	4 + Power
Short Bow	3 + Agility
Longbow	4 + Agility
Unarmed	1 + Power

Solo NPC Stats

Build NPCs as simply as possible. For most encounters you need only VP, AR, Attack Total, and AP.

Type	Suggested Stats
Minor NPC (guard, thug)	VP 10-16 AR 7-9 Attack 5-7 AP 8
Moderate threat (veteran, gang leader)	VP 18-28 AR 9-12 Attack 8-11 AP 10
Major threat (champion, dangerous mage)	VP 30-50 AR 12-15 Attack 12-15 AP 12
Boss (faction leader, legendary figure)	VP 50+ AR 14+ Attack 14+ AP 14

For solo play: NPCs spend their AP straightforwardly. A guard attacks once (2 AP) and maybe boosts once (1 AP) and moves if necessary. The oracle tells you whether they press an advantage or retreat, not a complex tactical decision tree.

Magic

Magic works through Spell Points (SP). SP is spent to cast spells. SP recovers fully between scenes with adequate downtime.

Offensive spells require an attack check: Insight + Arcana + Tradition Sub-Skill vs. target's AR. Non-offensive spells (utility, buffs, healing) resolve automatically. Taking damage while casting requires a Moderate DC Insight check or the spell fails and SP is lost.

Here are some basic spells. The complete list can be found in the Legends of Thaloranth Player's Guide.

Animal Communication (Nature)

- Description: Allows the caster to communicate with animals within a 15-foot range, understanding their thoughts and conveying simple messages.
- Range: 1 zone
- Duration: 5 rounds
- Base Cost: 2 points to cast

Ball (Damage-Causing)

- Description: Causes a damaging effect in a small area with a base damage of 4.
- Type: Acid, Cold, Fire, Water
- Base Range: 1 zone
- Base Cost: 2 points to cast

Calm Waters

- Type: Defensive
- Effect: Calm rough waters within a specified area, reducing the impact of storms and waves
- Range: 3 zones
- Duration: 1 scene
- Cost: 2 SP to cast
- Enhancements: Extend duration by 1 scene for 2 SP, increase radius by 1 zone for 2 SP

Light (Light)

- Description: Creates a bright light in 1 zone.
- Duration: 1 scene
- Base Cost: 2 points to cast

PART THREE

THE ORACLE

How the world surprises you

The oracle is the GM's replacement in solo play. It answers questions you cannot answer yourself, what happens next, how someone reacts, whether circumstances favor or oppose you. The oracle does not tell the story. It generates the raw material that you shape into story.

The Radia Mysteries Oracle Deck is the primary tool. The 2d6 system in Chapter Six is the fallback. Both produce the same range of outcomes and can be used interchangeably.

Chapter 4

THE RADIA MYSTERIES ORACLE DECK

The Deck at a Glance

The Radia Mysteries Oracle Deck contains 37 cards organized into six suits, each visually distinct by border color. The Reference Card summarizes the quick adventure generation procedure.

Suit	Function
Hooks (blue border, 6 cards)	The inciting situation. What draws your character in.
Complications (red border, 6 cards)	What makes the situation harder or morally complicated.
Settings (green border, 6 cards)	Where in Radia the scene takes place.
Discoveries (purple border, 6 cards)	What your character finds, good, bad, or transformative.
NPC Reactions (grey border, 6 cards)	How people respond to your character.
Fate Cards (gold border, 6 cards)	Direct answers to yes/no questions.

Two Modes of Play

The deck operates in two modes depending on what kind of question you're asking.

Story Mode, What Happens?

Use Story Mode to generate adventure content and discover what the world offers or throws at you. Draw from the Foundation suits (Hooks, Complications, Settings) to build an adventure framework, or draw from Discovery and NPC Reaction during play to find out what a scene contains.

Story Mode draws are not pass/fail questions. They are narrative invitations. The card names something that is true, now you determine what it means in your specific situation.

Fate Mode, Does It Happen?

Use Fate Mode when you ask a yes/no question about the world. Draw only from the Fate Cards when using Fate Mode, or use the 2d6 table. Fate Mode produces one of six outcomes ranging from unqualified success to compounding failure.

The key to Fate Mode is asking the right question. 'Does the guard believe my story?' is a good Fate question. 'What happens next?' is a Story Mode draw.

Story Mode: Adventure Generation

When beginning a new adventure or session, draw one card from each of the three Foundation suits to create your framework. Separate the deck by suit first. Draw one Hook, one Complication, one Setting.

The Reference Card Procedure

1. Shuffle all Foundation cards (Hooks, Complications, Settings) separately.
2. Draw one of each to create your adventure framework.
3. Use Fate Cards and Discovery/NPC draws to resolve scenes as play unfolds.
4. Follow the three-scene structure from Chapter Seven.

Example: Missing Person + Time Limit + Harbor District

"Someone important has vanished. The matter must be resolved quickly. It begins at the docks."

Now you ask: who is missing? Who hired you or why do you care? How much time is there?

The answers to those questions come from your character's Obligation and the first Fate draw.

The Hook Cards, What Draws You In

Hook cards establish the inciting situation for an adventure. When you draw a Hook, ask: how does my character become involved? What is their connection to this situation? What do they stand to gain or lose?

[HOOK] Ancient Mystery

The past reaches into the present

Something from Vaeloranth's history has surfaced, an artifact, a location, a name that should have stayed buried. In Radia, this might mean a scholar's discovery in the Royal University that connects to the city's foundation myths. In the Wildlands, it might mean ruins that the Purple Knights have quietly suppressed. Ask: who else knows, and what will they do to keep it hidden?

[HOOK] Missing Person

Someone important has vanished

The absence itself is the mystery. Was it willing? Was it violent? In Radia's networks of guild obligation and faction pressure, people disappear for many reasons, not all of them malicious. The Harbor District sees people leave on ships they did not plan to board. The Undercity receives people who do not return. Ask: who is missing, and who has the most to gain from their absence?

[HOOK] Stolen Property

Something valuable was taken

The value might be monetary, political, or deeply personal. A guild contract. A family heirloom. Information that only existed in one place. In Marisalor the stolen thing might be a reputation, a match result altered, a record falsified. Ask: stolen by whom, and is getting it back more dangerous

than accepting the loss?

[HOOK] Threatening Force

Danger approaches the city

Something is coming, organized, purposeful, and unwelcome. It might be a rival faction consolidating power, a mercenary company under contract to someone unnamed, or a political force whose interests require Radia to be destabilized. Ask: how much time is there, and does anyone with the power to act already know?

[HOOK] Forbidden Knowledge

Dangerous secrets surface

Information that someone powerful has paid to suppress has come to light, or is about to. The knowledge might implicate the Merchants' Guild, the Council of Lords, or someone in the Order of the Azure Star. In Marisalor it might reveal what one of the academies actually teaches its advanced students. Ask: who knows you have this information, and what are they willing to do about it?

[HOOK] Broken Alliance

A partnership fails

Two parties that were working together have split, or been split deliberately. The fracture creates opportunity and danger simultaneously. In Radia's guild ecosystem, a broken alliance between the Merchants' Guild and a noble family reverberates through the entire commercial district. Ask: what caused the break, is it recoverable, and which side approaches you first?

The Complication Cards, What Makes It Harder

Complication cards are drawn after the Hook to layer difficulty onto the situation. A Complication is not a separate problem, it is a dimension of the existing problem that makes the straightforward approach insufficient.

[COMPLICATION] Personal Stakes

Someone you care about is involved

The situation has acquired a personal dimension, a contact, an ally, or someone from your character's background is now part of the problem. In solo play, this Complication is most powerful when it directly engages your starting Obligation. The Merchants' Guild debt you carry suddenly becomes relevant when the missing person works for the Guild. Ask: what does this person mean to your character, and what will your character sacrifice to protect them?

[COMPLICATION] Resource Scarcity

Limited tools, allies, or information

You do not have what you need. The right contact is unavailable. The equipment required is beyond your current WP. The information exists but is locked behind access you don't have. In Radia's guild system, resource scarcity often means that the organization that could help you has its own reasons not to. Ask: what can be improvised, and what will the improvisation cost?

[COMPLICATION] Multiple Factions

Different groups want different outcomes

At least two organizations with different interests are now involved, and their goals are incompatible. Serving one means working against the other. In Radia this is the natural state, the Thieves' Guild and the City Watch both want information about the same warehouse fire, for different reasons. Ask: which faction has more power to help you, and which has more power to harm you if you choose wrong?

[COMPLICATION] Escalating Danger

Gets worse the longer you wait

Time is the enemy. Every scene that passes without resolution makes the situation more dangerous, more people know, more pressure builds, more options close. The Obligation Economy makes this Complication particularly sharp: an Institutional Obligation that could be resolved quietly now becomes a public crisis if it surfaces under pressure. Ask: what is the tipping point, and what changes when you pass it?

[COMPLICATION] Time Limit

Must be resolved quickly

There is a hard deadline. The ship leaves at dawn. The hearing is in three days. The festival provides cover that will not exist after tomorrow night. Unlike Escalating Danger, a Time Limit is fixed, it does not compress gradually, it simply arrives. Ask: what happens when the time runs out, and is there any way to buy more of it?

[COMPLICATION] Moral Ambiguity

No clearly right choice exists

Every available path involves compromising something. The person you need to protect is guilty of something real. The organization you need to work with does harm that you have witnessed. The right outcome for the mission requires the wrong outcome for someone who does not deserve it. In solo play, this Complication is an invitation to make your character's values visible under pressure. Ask: what does your character choose, and what do they tell themselves about why?

The Setting Cards, Where It Happens

Setting cards place the adventure in a specific location in Radia. Each setting has its own social texture, its own dangers, and its own opportunities. The setting is not neutral, it favors certain approaches and penalizes others.

[SETTING] Grand Marketplace*Commerce and crowds*

The beating heart of Radia where Kings Way and Noble View intersect. The Tower of the Conclave watches over the Exchequer Building. Every trade of consequence happens here or because of what happens here. The crowd provides cover and witnesses simultaneously. The Merchants' Guild is always present. Advantage to Social and Persuasion checks. Disadvantage to Stealth and any action requiring privacy.

[SETTING] Harbor District*Ships and sailors*

Radia's northwestern edge where the city meets the Meridian River. Working waterfront, docks, shipyards, warehouses. People arrive here from distant places and leave quietly. Information moves through here that never reaches the official districts. The Thieves' Guild maintains strong presence. Advantage to Investigation and Survival checks. Disadvantage to Social checks requiring institutional authority.

[SETTING] Noble District*Wealth and intrigue*

The estates of Radia's great families spread below the Royal District along Noble View. The Blue Diamond Inn is here, genuine neutral ground, which means every faction uses it carefully. Everything is measured and observed. Advantage to Social checks involving status and persuasion. Disadvantage to any action that would be inappropriate for the setting, fighting, overt surveillance, anything that looks like work.

[SETTING] Scholar's Ward*Knowledge and culture*

The Royal University, the Opera House, the Concert Hall. A district that takes culture seriously without taking itself too seriously. Information exists here that exists nowhere else, in the archives, in the private collections, in the conversations of people who have spent decades studying things no one else cares about. Advantage to History and Investigation checks. Disadvantage to Intimidation and direct confrontation.

[SETTING] Temple Ward*Faith and sanctuary*

The southern reaches of the city where Lady's Way links the temples of the pantheon. The Ward is genuinely neutral in ways that even the Thieves' Guild respects, not from virtue, but from pragmatism. Everyone needs the temples eventually. Advantage to Medicine and Social checks involving vulnerability or confession. Disadvantage to deception and coercion, people notice.

[SETTING] Undercity

Sewers and shadows

What lies beneath Radia is older than what sits above it. The Undercity is not simply a criminal district, it is a geography of its own, with routes, communities, and power structures that the surface city's institutions cannot map. The Thieves' Guild knows it best. The Assassins' Guild has its guildhouse here, beneath the Justice Ward. Advantage to Stealth and Investigation checks. Disadvantage to everything that requires daylight, official backing, or the ability to run.

The Discovery Cards, What You Find

Discovery cards are drawn during play when your character finds something, when you search a location, follow a lead, or explore a consequence. They are not rewards. They are facts that change what you know and what you must do next.

[DISCOVERY] Useful Information

A clue that helps

You have found something that advances your understanding of the situation. It might be a document, an overheard conversation, a physical detail that explains something previously unclear. In Fate Mode terms, this shifts the odds of your next related Fate draw, treat your next check in this area as having Advantage.

[DISCOVERY] Major Revelation

The situation changes completely

What you have found rewrites your understanding of the problem. The missing person was not taken, they left. The stolen object was not what it appeared to be. The faction you thought was your ally has a second set of books. A Major Revelation requires you to reconsider your current approach and may generate a new Obligation or complicate an existing one.

[DISCOVERY] Unexpected Ally

Someone offers aid

A person you did not expect offers genuine help. They may have their own reasons, shared interest, gratitude for something your character did, or simply the recognition that your goals align for now. In Radia's Obligation Economy, an unexpected ally always costs something eventually. Enjoy the help and write down who gave it.

[DISCOVERY] Valuable Resource

Gear, money, or leverage

You have found something materially useful, equipment you needed, coin that solves a WP problem, or leverage over someone who has been making things difficult. The find is real and immediate. Note what it is specifically, because resources in solo play are finite and tracked.

[DISCOVERY] Trap or Danger

Something threatens you

The scene contains a threat you did not anticipate. It might be physical (a trap, an ambush), informational (you have been seen by someone who will report you), or circumstantial (the route you planned to use is now compromised). A Trap or Danger draw requires an immediate response, it does not wait for your next planned action.

[DISCOVERY] False Lead

This isn't what it seemed

What appeared to be a useful path is not. Time and resources spent pursuing it are gone. More importantly, whoever created the false lead, deliberately or through their own misunderstanding, is now part of the picture. A False Lead draw does not end the investigation. It redirects it and often makes the real answer more interesting.

The NPC Reaction Cards, How People Respond

NPC Reaction cards are drawn when you encounter someone new and want to know their initial disposition, or when you want to know how a known NPC responds to something that has happened. They replace the GM's social judgment.

NPC Reactions can modify subsequent Fate draws: a Helpful or Enthusiastic NPC shifts your next Social Fate draw toward better outcomes. A Suspicious or Hostile NPC shifts it toward worse. Apply +1 or -1 to the 2d6 roll, or draw from the Fate deck with the knowledge that circumstances are weighted.

Reaction	Effect on Play
Hostile	They see you as a threat. Social checks start at Disadvantage. Combat or confrontation is possible without provocation.
Suspicious	They don't trust you. -1 to Social checks until you give them a reason to reconsider.
Neutral	They're indifferent. No modifier. They respond to what you do, not to who you are.
Curious	They want to know more. +1 to Social checks, they're open, but not committed.
Enthusiastic	They're eager to help. +2 to Social checks. They have their own energy about this.
Helpful	They offer assistance without being asked. +2 to relevant checks. Note what they want in return.

The Fate Cards, Does It Happen?

The six Fate Cards are the direct oracle for yes/no questions. Separate them from the rest of the deck when using Fate Mode. Shuffle and draw one when you need to know whether something happens, whether someone believes you, whether the door is locked, whether help arrives in time.

When to Ask a Fate Question

Ask a Fate question when the answer is genuinely uncertain and both outcomes are interesting. If success is almost certain given your character's capabilities, don't draw, just succeed. If the outcome is so unlikely it would undermine the story, don't draw, just fail. Draw when the answer could go either way and both ways lead somewhere worth going.

The Six Outcomes

Card	Meaning and How to Use It
Clear Yes	Success, as expected. You get what you were trying for, cleanly and completely. No complications. Move forward.
Yes, And...	Success with a bonus. You get what you tried for, and something additional falls in your favor, unexpected information, an NPC who is more helpful than anticipated, a door that opens onto something useful. Narrate the bonus specifically.
Yes, But...	Success with a cost. You get what you tried for, but something goes wrong alongside it, you are seen, you use more resources than planned, someone else benefits from the same outcome. The 'but' is real and has consequences.
No, But...	Failure with opportunity. You don't get what you tried for, but a door opens elsewhere, a new lead appears, an NPC who refused now offers something different, the failure reveals information that changes the picture.
No, And...	Failure with consequence. You don't get what you tried for, and something additional goes wrong, someone is alerted, a resource is depleted, an Obligation is triggered. The 'and' is significant.
Clear No	Failure, as feared. A clean, complete failure. What you attempted did not work and nothing softens it. Take the loss and decide what your character does next.

Reading Cards in Context

The most important oracle skill is interpretation, connecting the card's named meaning to your specific situation. A card is never wrong. It may be unexpected, which means it is doing its job.

Interpretation Practice

The question: 'Does the dockmaster believe Sera's story about the crate?'

Clear Yes: He believes her without hesitation. She gets what she needs.

Yes, And...: He believes her, and volunteers that the crate was moved last night. New information.

Yes, But...: He believes her, but his supervisor overheard the conversation and is now watching.

No, But...: He doesn't believe her, but he offers to check the manifest if she comes back tomorrow with documentation.

No, And...: He doesn't believe her, and he sends a runner to the Harbor Watch.

Clear No: He doesn't believe her. End of conversation. Different approach needed.

Every result is playable. The 'bad' results often generate the most interesting story.

Circumstances and the Odds

Not all Fate questions are equal. When circumstances strongly favor your character, you've done groundwork, an NPC is Helpful, you hold leverage, bias the draw by setting aside the two worst Fate Cards before drawing. When circumstances strongly oppose you, you're compromised, the NPC is Hostile, you're out of resources, set aside the two best cards before drawing.

This is the deck equivalent of Advantage and Disadvantage. Use it when the fictional situation clearly warrants it. Don't use it to protect yourself from bad outcomes, that defeats the purpose of the oracle.

PART FOUR

THE 2d6 ORACLE

When the deck isn't at the table

Everything the Oracle Deck does, the 2d6 system also does. The two systems are fully interchangeable, use whichever is at hand, and switch between them freely mid-session if you need to. The outcomes are the same. Only the physical tool differs.

Chapter 5
THE 2D6 FATE SYSTEM

The Fate Table

When asking a Fate question, roll 2d6. The bell curve of 2d6 produces results that cluster around the middle, outcomes of Yes, But and No, But are the most common, creating the messy, consequential middle ground that makes solo play interesting. Clear successes and hard failures are real but not the default.

Roll	Outcome
12	Yes, And..., Success with a bonus
10–11	Clear Yes, Success, as expected
8–9	Yes, But..., Success with a cost
6–7	No, But..., Failure with opportunity
4–5	No, And..., Failure with consequence
2–3	Clear No, Failure, as feared

Circumstance Modifiers

Circumstances shift the odds. Apply these modifiers before rolling based on the fictional situation:

Modifier	When to Apply
+2	Strong advantage, ideal conditions, Helpful NPC, superior preparation, leverage held
+1	Mild advantage, Curious/Enthusiastic NPC, modest preparation, circumstances slightly favor you
0	Neutral, no particular advantage or disadvantage
-1	Mild disadvantage, Suspicious NPC, some preparation lacking, circumstances slightly oppose you
-2	Strong disadvantage, Hostile NPC, poor preparation, actively compromised, out of key resources

NPC Reaction cards translate directly to modifiers: Helpful/Enthusiastic = +1 to +2. Curious/Neutral = 0. Suspicious = -1. Hostile = -2.

Story Mode with 2d6

For Story Mode draws, generating adventure content rather than resolving fate questions, the 2d6 system uses four separate tables. Roll 2d6 on the relevant table based on what kind of content you need.

Hook Table (2d6)

Roll	Hook
2-3	Broken Alliance, A partnership fails
4-5	Stolen Property, Something valuable was taken
6-7	Missing Person, Someone important has vanished
8-9	Threatening Force, Danger approaches
10-11	Forbidden Knowledge, Dangerous secrets surface
12	Ancient Mystery, The past reaches into the present

Complication Table (2d6)

Roll	Complication
2-3	Moral Ambiguity, No clearly right choice exists
4-5	Resource Scarcity, Limited tools, allies, or information
6-7	Personal Stakes, Someone you care about is involved
8-9	Multiple Factions, Different groups want different outcomes
10-11	Escalating Danger, Gets worse the longer you wait
12	Time Limit, Must be resolved quickly

Discovery Table (2d6)

Roll	Discovery
2-3	Trap or Danger, Something threatens you
4-5	False Lead, This isn't what it seemed
6-7	Useful Information, A clue that helps
8-9	Valuable Resource, Gear, money, or leverage
10-11	Unexpected Ally, Someone offers aid
12	Major Revelation, The situation changes completely

NPC Reaction Table (2d6)

Roll	Reaction
2-3	Hostile, They see you as a threat
4-5	Suspicious, They don't trust you
6-7	Neutral, They're indifferent
8-9	Curious, They want to know more
10-11	Enthusiastic, They're eager to help
12	Helpful, They offer assistance without being asked

Setting Table (2d6)

Roll	Setting
2-3	Undercity, Sewers and shadows
4-5	Harbor District, Ships and sailors
6-7	Grand Marketplace, Commerce and crowds
8-9	Scholar's Ward, Knowledge and culture
10-11	Noble District, Wealth and intrigue
12	Temple Ward, Faith and sanctuary

PART FIVE

RUNNING YOUR STORY

How sessions and campaigns work

Rules and oracle tools are only useful if you know how to structure the time you spend with them. This part covers scene structure, session pacing, the campaign framework, and journaling, the practical craft of running solo play.

Chapter 6

SCENE STRUCTURE AND SESSION PACING

The Three-Scene Session

A single session of solo play works best as three connected scenes. Three scenes is enough to introduce a situation, complicate it, and reach a consequence, not necessarily a resolution, but a moment that changes the story's direction. Three scenes also keeps a session to a manageable length: roughly two to three hours for most players.

Scene	Purpose
Scene One: The Hook	Establish the situation. Draw or roll your adventure framework (Hook + Complication + Setting). Play through the opening scene until your character has committed to a direction.
Scene Two: The Complication	The situation deepens. Something in your initial approach goes wrong or reveals new information. Draw a Discovery card or roll the Discovery table. NPC Reactions become relevant here.
Scene Three: The Consequence	The session's climax and its immediate aftermath. Use Fate draws heavily here. The scene ends when the immediate situation is resolved, for good or ill, and the next Obligation or question comes into focus.

The Scene Check

At the start of each new scene, you have a choice: play out what you expect to happen, or check whether the scene unfolds as expected. The Scene Check is a lightweight oracle procedure for the second option.

Ask: 'Does this scene unfold as I expect?' Then make a Fate draw or roll. Interpret the result:

Result	What It Means
Clear Yes / Yes And	The scene goes as planned. Play it out. The 'And' might add a useful detail you didn't anticipate.
Yes, But	The scene begins as planned but a complication emerges mid-scene. Draw a Complication card or roll.
No, But	The scene doesn't go as planned, but something useful happens instead. Redirect and draw a Discovery.
No, And / Clear No	The scene goes wrong. Draw a new Hook or Complication. The story has pivoted.

You don't have to use the Scene Check for every scene. Use it when you feel the story is becoming too predictable or too comfortable. It is a tool for introducing surprise, not a mandatory procedure.

Pacing Within a Scene

Each scene has its own rhythm. Solo players sometimes rush through scenes to get to the next oracle draw, which produces a thin narrative. Resist this. The oracle generates raw material. The scene is where you turn that material into something with texture.

A well-paced scene includes: a clear sense of where you are and what the physical environment is like, at least one interaction that is not purely mechanical, a moment where your character's personality or Obligation is visible, and a specific consequence that follows from the choices made.

When to Push vs. When to Linger

Push forward when: The current scene has reached its natural conclusion. The next step is clear. You have established the consequence and your character knows what they must do next.

Linger when: An NPC Reaction surprised you and there's more to explore in that relationship. A Discovery changed what you thought you knew and needs time to settle. Your character is at a decision point that matters to their Obligation.

The test: would a reader want to stay in this scene longer? If yes, stay.

Journaling

Journaling is optional but strongly recommended. The act of writing what happened, even a few sentences per scene, serves two functions. First, it creates continuity across sessions. Second, it forces you to commit to interpretations of oracle draws rather than leaving them usefully vague.

You don't need to write prose. A few bullet points per scene, recording the Fate draw results, any new Obligations created, and the names of NPCs encountered, is enough to return to a campaign after a week away and know exactly where you are.

Longer Campaigns

Solo campaigns work on the same three-scene structure scaled up. A campaign arc is three to five sessions that build toward a major Obligation resolution, the moment when the institutional debt is paid, the personal promise is fulfilled or broken, or the narrative goal is achieved or lost.

Between arcs, allow your character downtime: VP recovers, LP resets, new Obligations form from the consequences of the previous arc. The world does not freeze while your character rests, use the Scene Check to discover what has changed while they were away.

The solo products in this line each provide a campaign framework specific to their setting. Pirates of the Caligothian Mare structures a campaign around the factions of the Golden Triangle and the

Red Pirate Queen's ambitions. The Radia campaign line uses the Guild Standing system from the Gazetteer. Marisalor's Academy series tracks your character's progress through their fencing education and the politics of House Maris. Each framework uses the oracle and Obligation Economy from this book as its engine.

PART SIX

THE OBLIGATION ECONOMY

What binds your character to the world

The Obligation Economy is the social framework of Vaeloraranth. Every favor creates a debt. Every debt creates leverage. Every leverage creates a story. In solo play, Obligations are the engine that turns oracle draws into a campaign rather than a series of disconnected scenes.

Chapter 7

OBLIGATIONS

What an Obligation Is

An Obligation is a specific, named commitment that your character carries, something they owe, something owed to them, something they have promised, or something that binds them to a person, institution, or cause regardless of whether they want to be bound.

Obligations have three properties:

- **Specificity:** A good Obligation names names. Not 'I owe a merchant' but 'I owe Guildmaster Dorlath of the Merchants' Guild three hundred gold crowns and the return of a letter he would prefer not to exist.'
- **Stakes:** What happens if the Obligation is not met? What happens when it is? Both answers should matter.
- **Tension:** The Obligation should be in tension with something else your character values. An Obligation that is easy to fulfill is not an Obligation, it is a task.

The Three Types

Personal Obligations

Debts, promises, and relationships between individuals. The most intimate type, they name a specific person and a specific bond.

Personal Obligation Examples

I owe my life to Tomas Greyveil, a dockworker who pulled me out of the Meridian three years ago. He has never asked for repayment. I am afraid of what he will ask for when he does.

Mira Stonefont trusted me with a secret that could destroy her business. I have not betrayed it. She does not know that I know she has been watching me since then.

I made a promise to my father on his deathbed that I would find his missing brother. I have not done it. The promise is three years old and getting heavier.

Institutional Obligations

Standing relationships with guilds, factions, the Order of the Azure Star, the Purple Knights, the Council of Lords, the Thieves' Guild, the Merchants' Guild, or any other organization with a name and an interest. Institutional Obligations operate at scale, they affect your character's access, reputation, and options across entire districts or cities.

Institutional Obligation Examples

I carry Merchants' Guild certification that was falsified by someone I trusted. The Guild does not know. If they discover it, I lose my market access in every city in Thaloranth.

The Shadow Hand knows something about my past that I cannot afford to have made public. I have done three jobs for them without asking what the jobs were for. The fourth will come.

I testified on behalf of an Azure Knight at a conduct hearing. My testimony was accurate. The Knight was acquitted. He believes he owes me. I know that he doesn't, but I have not corrected him, because his belief is useful.

Narrative Obligations

Vows, missions, and purposes that drive your character forward. These are promises made to the story itself, the thing your character will not rest until they have done or understood.

Narrative Obligation Examples

I will find out who burned the mill at Greenfield and why the Purple Knights closed the investigation.

I will reach Marisalor and earn a place at one of the five academies before my money runs out.

I will understand what my mother was doing in the Undercity the night she disappeared, even if what I find destroys what I believed about her.

Creating Obligations During Play

Your starting Obligation is one commitment. The oracle will generate more. Any time a Fate draw produces Yes, And or No, And, any time an NPC Reaction card introduces someone who matters, any time a Discovery card reveals something that demands a response, ask whether this moment creates or modifies an Obligation.

The test: does this create a specific named bond between your character and a person, institution, or purpose that will matter in future scenes? If yes, write it down as a new Obligation.

Resolving and Escalating Obligations

Obligations resolve when the commitment is fulfilled, broken, or made irrelevant by events. When an Obligation resolves, make a Fate draw to see how it lands, a Clear Yes resolution might mean the debt is paid and a door opens. A No, And resolution might mean the attempt to fulfill it made things worse.

Obligations escalate when ignored. An Institutional Obligation that is not addressed will eventually surface through an oracle draw, often as a Complication (Escalating Danger or Multiple Factions) that makes the present situation more complicated precisely because the old debt is still unpaid.

The Obligation Tracker

Keep a running list of your character's active Obligations.

Mark each as: Personal / Institutional / Narrative

Note the specific person or faction involved.

Note what happens if it is fulfilled, and what happens if it is not.

Mark Obligations as: Active / Escalating / Resolved / Broken

An Escalating Obligation adds -1 to Fate draws in situations where it is relevant.

A Resolved Obligation may convert to a new Obligation or a permanent Advantage.

A Broken Obligation becomes a permanent -1 to relevant Social checks with that person or institution until actively repaired.

Guilds and Factions as Institutional Obligations

Radia's guild ecosystem is the richest environment for Institutional Obligations in the solo line. Each guild has its own interests, its own hierarchy, and its own way of calling in debts. A character who carries a Merchants' Guild obligation moves through the commercial life of Radia differently than a character who carries a Thieves' Guild obligation, and a character who carries both is navigating a web that is pulling in two directions simultaneously.

Institution	Nature of Obligations
Merchants' Guild	Control of trade routes and market access. Obligations involve commercial favors, information about competitors, and the suppression of rivals. The Guild tracks debts precisely and collects on schedule.
Thieves' Guild	A shadow economy sophisticated enough to rival the official one. Obligations involve operations, silence, and the understanding that the Guild knows where you sleep.
Order of the Azure Star	Thaloranth's most recognized knightly order. Obligations involve honor, testimony, and the complex social weight of institutional endorsement or rejection.
The Shadow Hand	The intelligence network that operates through Radia's underworld. Obligations are operational, jobs that cannot be declined without consequence.
Council of Lords	The noble families who have faced the Merchants' Guild across Kings Way for two centuries. Obligations involve patronage, political cover, and the accumulated weight of aristocratic favor.
Purple Knights	The city's primary law enforcement and gate management. Obligations involve access, information about movement through the city's gates, and the institutional memory of who has done what.

PART SEVEN

YOUR FIRST STORY

A complete three-scene adventure

This chapter walks through a complete solo adventure from setup to consequence. The example uses Sera Vane, the Forgeborn character from Chapter One, to demonstrate every system in the book. Instructions are written in second person throughout, Sera is the demonstration of how the systems work. Your character and your story will differ.

Read through the full example before playing your first session. Then try the same structure with your own character and your own oracle draws.

Chapter 8

THE VANISHED LEDGER

A three-scene adventure set in Radia.

Setup: Drawing the Framework

Before play begins, separate the deck by suit and draw one Hook, one Complication, and one Setting to create the adventure framework.

The Draw

Hook drawn: MISSING PERSON, Someone important has vanished.

Complication drawn: TIME LIMIT, Must be resolved quickly.

Setting drawn: HARBOR DISTRICT, Ships and sailors.

> *The framework: Someone important has vanished. The matter must be resolved before something changes, a ship leaves, a deal closes, a window closes. It begins at the docks.*

> *Interpretation: Sera's Obligation is her falsified Purple Knights discharge record. The Merchants' Guild holds her certification. How do these connect to a missing person in the Harbor District?*

> *She decides: A Merchants' Guild factor named Caldren Moth has gone missing from his usual morning post at Warehouse Seven. The Guild wants him found before the afternoon cargo manifest is locked, if the manifest is filed without his countersignature, a large shipment of goods will be flagged by the Harbor Watch and the Guild's operation exposed. The Guild has asked Sera because she owes them, and because she used to be Purple Knights, she knows how the Harbor Watch thinks.*

Scene One: Warehouse Seven

Setting the Scene

You arrive at Warehouse Seven in the gray early morning. The Harbor District is already awake, carters moving goods, sailors arguing over cargo, the smell of salt and tar and fish. Warehouse Seven is locked. The Guild's morning runner is waiting outside, confused. Nobody has seen Moth since last evening.

You want to search the area around the warehouse for signs of what happened to Moth. This is an Investigation check.

Check Resolution

Skill: Investigation (no Sub-Skill, Sera didn't invest here). Governing Stat: Insight +2.

Total: Insight +2 + 0 (no skill) = 2

DC set: Moderate 10. The area was active last night, there were people around. Evidence should exist.

Current total vs DC: 2 vs 10. This is going to fall short by 8.

> *Sera could spend AP to boost this check. She has 10 AP at the start of the session.*

> *She spends 4 AP for +4 to the check: 2 + 4 = 6. Still not enough.*

> *She decides to spend 2 more AP: total 8. Still 2 short of DC 10.*

> *Instead of spending all her AP on a check she may still fail, she draws a Fate card:*

> *Question: 'Do I find useful evidence around Warehouse Seven?'*

Fate Draw: YES, BUT...

Result: YES, BUT..., Success with a cost.

> *Interpretation: Sera finds something, a dropped leather satchel behind the warehouse's river-facing wall, Moth's initials stamped into the leather. The satchel is empty. Whoever took Moth took whatever was in it first.*

> *The 'But': While she is examining the satchel, a Harbor Watch patrol notes her presence. She is now a person who was found near a Merchants' Guild factor's last known location. They take her name.*

> *Consequence: Sera has a lead (the satchel, the river wall, what was taken). She also has Harbor Watch attention she did not want. Disadvantage to Stealth checks for the rest of this scene.*

You want to know who saw Moth last night. There is a cookhouse two docks down that opens before dawn, the dockworkers' morning meal. Someone there may have seen something.

NPC Reaction Draw

You draw an NPC Reaction card to determine the cookhouse owner's initial disposition.

Card drawn: CURIOUS, They want to know more.

> *The cookhouse owner, a broad-shouldered Meadowkin woman named Tessel, is curious about your interest in Moth. She saw him last night, he came in for khave, which is unusual (he usually eats at the Guild hall). He was waiting for someone. That someone arrived: a person in a grey cloak who sat with Moth for about twenty minutes. Then they both left toward the river gate.*

> *Tessel wants to know what happened to Moth. She liked him. She asks Sera directly: 'Is he in trouble?'*

> *Fate question: 'Does Tessel know anything else useful that she hasn't mentioned yet?'*

Fate Draw: NO, BUT...

Result: NO, BUT..., Failure with opportunity.

> *Tessel doesn't know more about Moth's meeting. But she mentions something she saw later: after Moth and the grey-cloaked person left, two Harbor Watch guards came in asking about him. That was before dawn, before Moth was reported missing.*

> *Implication: The Harbor Watch knew Moth was missing before the Guild did. Someone told them.*

> *New Obligation forming: Tessel has given Sera real help. Sera owes her honesty about what happened, or owes her the lie that keeps Tessel safe from whoever took Moth.*

> *Sera notes this as a nascent Personal Obligation: 'I owe Tessel Stonefont a truthful account of what happened to Moth, or a decision that the truth would put her in danger.'*

Scene One ends: Sera has a lead (the river gate, the grey-cloaked figure), unwanted Harbor Watch attention, and a new entanglement with Tessel. The clock is running, the cargo manifest locks in the afternoon.

Scene Two: The River Gate

Setting the Scene

The river gate at the south end of the Harbor District is one of Radia's four external gates, managed by the Purple Knights. Sera used to work this gate. She knows the Purple Knights stationed here, or did, three years ago. Whoever is on duty today may or may not remember her. More importantly: they may or may not have records of who passed through last night.

You do a Scene Check before entering the scene: 'Does this scene unfold as I expect, Sera approaches the gate, finds someone she knows, gets access to last night's passage log?'

Scene Check

Roll 2d6 for the Scene Check: result is 5.

5 = No, And..., The scene goes wrong, and something additional goes wrong.

> *The gate scene does not unfold as planned. And something additional has changed.*

> *Interpretation: The Purple Knight at the gate is not someone Sera knows, it is someone who knows her. Specifically, it is a junior officer who was present at the incident that led to her dismissal. He recognizes her immediately. His expression is not warm.*

> *The 'And': He already knows about Moth. He is the one who alerted the Harbor Watch before dawn. He was following orders from someone above him in the order, someone Sera never reported to directly.*

> *This is now much more complicated than a missing factor.*

His name is Warden Cressel. He is not going to give you access to the passage log. He is going to tell you to leave the Harbor District and let the proper authorities handle the investigation. The way he says 'proper authorities' makes it clear he is not referring to himself.

You attempt to read Cressel, to understand what he knows and whether he is afraid. This is an Insight check against DC 12 (Challenging, he's trained to conceal).

Check Resolution

Insight +2 + 0 (no Investigation Sub-Skill for reading people) = 2.

DC 12. Total needed: 12. Current total: 2. Gap: 10.

> *Sera spends 4 AP for +4: total 6. Still not enough.*

> *She uses her Path ability: Studied Target, +1 to checks against a target she has observed for one full round. She has been watching Cressel since she arrived.*

> *Total: 6 + 1 = 7. Still 5 short.*

> *Fate question instead: 'Is Cressel afraid of whoever gave him the order to watch for Moth?'*

Fate Draw: CLEAR YES

Result: CLEAR YES, Success, as expected.

> *He is afraid. Not performing caution, genuinely afraid. His hands are steady because he is well-trained, but Sera recognizes the specific quality of the stillness. She has worn it herself.*

> *She does not push Cressel. She leaves. But she now knows: this goes above a missing Guild factor. Someone with enough authority to give orders to the Purple Knights has an interest in Moth and in keeping that interest quiet.*

> *Discovery draw: what does Sera notice as she leaves the gate area?*

Discovery Draw: USEFUL INFORMATION

Card drawn: USEFUL INFORMATION, A clue that helps.

> *As Sera walks away from the gate, she passes a public posting board. Among the standard notices is one that does not belong: a cargo manifest page, partially torn, with Moth's countersignature on it. Someone left it here deliberately. The manifest shows a shipment that was not supposed to exist, goods flagged as agricultural that are listed by weight and density as something else entirely.*

> *Someone is helping her. Or testing her. Either way, she now has the document that the grey-cloaked figure took from Moth's satchel. Or a copy of it.*

> *The afternoon deadline now has a second dimension: she needs to decide what to do with this document before the manifest locks.*

Scene Two ends: Sera has the document, she knows this reaches into the Purple Knights hierarchy, and she knows someone is watching her closely enough to leave her a breadcrumb. She has spent 4 additional AP in this scene, 10 total, leaving her with 6.

Scene Three: The Warehouse and the Choice

Setting the Scene

Sera returns to Warehouse Seven. The Guild's runner is still waiting. The manifest deadline is two hours away. And Moth is still missing, but she now has a theory about where he is and why.

She believes Moth was not taken against his will. She believes he left voluntarily with the grey-cloaked figure because he discovered what the manifest was concealing, and he made a choice about what to do with that knowledge. The question is whether the people above Cressel in the Purple Knights got to him first, or whether whoever left Sera the document managed to get him somewhere safe.

Fate question: 'Is Moth still alive?'

Fate Draw: YES, BUT...

Result: YES, BUT..., Success with a cost.

> *Moth is alive. But he is being held, not by the Purple Knights, but by the Shadow Hand. The grey-cloaked figure was Shadow Hand. They are protecting him while they figure out what to do with what he knows.*

> *The 'But': getting Moth back means dealing with the Shadow Hand. And the Shadow Hand's interest in Sera's Institutional Obligation, her falsified Guild certification, is now clearly not coincidental.*

The scene plays out as a negotiation. The Shadow Hand's contact reveals themselves: a quiet Sylvani woman who gives no name, who explains that Moth discovered that the 'agricultural' shipment contains materials being moved for someone inside the Council of Lords. The Shadow Hand wants the manifest document. They will return Moth. They will also, as a side benefit, ensure that Sera's falsified Guild certification record becomes... less accessible to anyone who might want to find it.

This is a Social check, Persuasion or Negotiation, but also a moral choice. Sera can give them the document. She can refuse and try to find Moth another way. She can try to keep a copy. She can try to understand who inside the Council is involved before committing.

The Decision

> *Sera asks one Fate question before deciding: 'If I give them the document without conditions, will they keep their word?'*

Fate Draw: YES, BUT...

> *They will keep their word about Moth and about her certification. But they will also now know she can be reasoned with. She will hear from them again.*

> *Sera gives them the document. Moth is returned to the Guild before the afternoon deadline. The manifest is filed with his countersignature. Whatever the shipment actually contains moves through Radia without incident.*

> *Sera never learns who inside the Council of Lords arranged it.*

Session End: Obligations and XP

At the end of a session, update your Obligation tracker and note any XP earned.

After The Vanished Ledger

Obligations updated:

- Institutional (Merchants' Guild certification): **STILL ACTIVE**. The Shadow Hand said they would make the record less accessible. Less accessible is not resolved.
- Personal (Tessel): **ACTIVE**. Sera owes her the truth or a protective lie. She chose the lie. Mark this, it may surface later.
- New Institutional (Shadow Hand): **ACTIVE**. 'She will hear from them again.' This is now a named Obligation.

XP earned: 3 (1 per scene). Sera may spend this to improve skills, boost a stat, or purchase a new Advantage.

Next session hook: The Shadow Hand contacts her. They have a job. It relates to the Council of Lords and the shipment she helped move.

That is a complete solo session. Three scenes, multiple Fate draws, two NPC interactions, one new Obligation formed and one expanded. The story did not resolve, it transformed. That transformation is the engine for the next session.

QUICK REFERENCE

Core Formulas

Value	Formula
Vitality Points (VP)	$(\text{Power} + \text{Agility}) \times 2$
Action Points (AP)	$(\text{Power} + \text{Agility}) \times 2$
Luck Points (LP)	$\text{Insight} + \text{Social}$
Spell Points (SP)	$(\text{Insight} + \text{Arcana total}) \times 3$
Wealth Points (WP)	$(\text{Insight} + \text{Social}) \times 2$
Armor Rating (AR)	$\text{Agility} + 5 + \text{Armor Bonus}$
Starting Skill Points	$(\text{Insight} + \text{Social}) \times 3$
Starting Advantages	Equal to Insight score (+1 for Humans)

Difficulty Classes

Difficulty	DC
Easy	5
Moderate	10
Challenging	15
Difficult	20
Legendary	25

2d6 Fate Table

Roll	Result
12	Yes, And..., Success with bonus
10–11	Clear Yes, Success
8–9	Yes, But..., Success with cost
6–7	No, But..., Failure with opportunity
4–5	No, And..., Failure with consequence
2–3	Clear No, Failure

Circumstance Modifiers (2d6)

Modifier	When to Apply
+2	Ideal conditions / Helpful NPC / strong leverage
+1	Mild advantage / Curious NPC
0	Neutral
-1	Mild disadvantage / Suspicious NPC
-2	Actively compromised / Hostile NPC

The Oracle Deck, Complete Card List

Suit	Cards
HOOKS (blue)	Ancient Mystery, Missing Person, Stolen Property, Threatening Force, Forbidden Knowledge, Broken Alliance
COMPLICATIONS (red)	Personal Stakes, Resource Scarcity, Multiple Factions, Escalating Danger, Time Limit, Moral Ambiguity
SETTINGS (green)	Grand Marketplace, Harbor District, Noble District, Scholar's Ward, Temple Ward, Undercity
DISCOVERIES (purple)	Useful Information, Major Revelation, Unexpected Ally, Valuable Resource, Trap or Danger, False Lead
NPC REACTIONS (grey)	Hostile, Suspicious, Neutral, Curious, Enthusiastic, Helpful
FATE CARDS (gold)	Clear No, No And..., No But..., Yes But..., Clear Yes, Yes And...

Obligation Tracker Template

Number	Details
Obligation	Type / Person or Institution / Stakes if fulfilled / Stakes if broken / Status
1.	Personal / _____ / _____ / _____ / Active
2.	Institutional / _____ / _____ / _____ / Active
3.	Narrative / _____ / _____ / _____ / Active
4.	_____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____
5.	_____ / _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Origins at a Glance

Origin	Modifiers & Trait
Human	No stat modifiers. +1 Advantage (Adaptive Edge).
Sylvani	Agility +2, Insight +1, Power -1, Social -2. Auto-succeed first Agility check per session (non-combat).
Forgeborn	Power +2, Agility -1, Social -1. Ignore exhaustion/encumbrance one scene per session.

Origin	Modifiers & Trait
Meadowkin	Social +2, Agility +1, Power -2, Insight -1. Ask one yes/no NPC question per session.
Tinkersprite	Insight +2, Agility +1, Power -2, Social -1. Improvise a device once per session.

XP Costs

Improvement	Cost
Add a Base Skill, Sub-Skill, or Specialization	1 XP
Increase a Stat by 1	3 XP
Unlock a new Advantage	4 XP
Increase Wealth Points by 1	6 XP
Add a Path or advance within a Path	3 XP

Solo Session Structure

When	What to Do
Before play	Draw Hook + Complication + Setting for your framework.
Scene One	Establish situation. Commit to a direction. One or two Fate draws.
Scene Two	Complication deepens. Draw a Discovery. NPC Reactions come into play.
Scene Three	Climax and consequence. Heavy Fate draw use. Session ends with a changed situation.
After play	Update Obligation tracker. Note XP earned (1 per scene). Write 3 sentences about what happened.

The next step is your own story. Shuffle the deck. Create your character. Write your first Obligation. Begin.

The rest of the solo line, *Pirates of the Caligothian Mare*, *Shipwrecked in the Wildlands*, the *Radia* campaign series, the *Marisalor Academy* books, each provides a complete setting and scenario framework that uses everything in this book as its foundation. Bring this book to every session. Leave the rest at home until you need them.

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