



TRAIN OF THOUGHTS

A ONE-SHOT ADVENTURE FOR THROUGH THE BREACH

By: JOSHUA FAVLISKO

Through the Breach (TtB) has been out for a few months now and you, dear reader, must be clamoring at the bit for shiny new things! Never fear, this module is here! This module is designed to do two things: show off elements of TtB's mechanics and provide you with a one session story that you can use as you see fit. Either way, since it's free, you'll be getting the biggest bang for your Scrip!

If you're not running a TtB game, now's the time to leave to avoid spoilers.

THE GAME

Estimated time to play: 3-5 hours for 5 players

Tarot tie-ins: CRSC 10X "If you allow the hands to pull you down" could relate to allowing the Guild to arrest you.

CRNC 1X: "for you must dredge the waters till the just give up their dead" could relate to having to stir up the animosity between the engineers to find Charles.

Summary: The Fated are called in for questioning by a Guild officer about a robbery of a train and the fact that all evidence has tied the Fated to the theft. The officer is fairly sure the Fated are being framed, and after questioning the Fated, gives them 24 hours to figure out who did steal the train before they're locked up.

This mystery will take the Fated through tumultuous relationships as they attempt to discover the real thief. At the end, they're left with a moral quandary: What do you do with someone who's willing to tear down the world to save one life in it?

Brief character summaries for some of the Fatemaster characters can be found at the end of the adventure.

PROLOGUE - AWARENESS

The story starts with the Fated sitting in a Guild interrogation room with Officer Thompson McMeel. Paraphrase or read aloud the following:

The soft ticking of the Guild officer's pocket watch is the first sound you hear as he enters the room. He looks fairly young with a neatly trimmed chestnut brown mustache and a set of wire-framed spectacles resting snugly on his face.

Clicking the pocket watch closed, the man sits down and states, "We haven't much time, so I'll be brief. You've all been brought in because of a train robbery. Someone's gone to extraordinary measures to place the theft of this train on you, and when someone goes out of their way to tie a man to something, there's something special about who's getting tied. As the old saying goes 'You can't look at bloody feathers and not say there's a dead chicken.'"



He pauses a moment. "Well, I'm not going to let them get away with it. It's time to make hay while the sun shines. You have 24 hours to clear your names. I'm going to be spending today trying to distract my superiors from the fact that 500 tons of metal isn't where it's supposed to be. You guys have that long to figure out whom actually took it. Otherwise, you're going to jail. No need to tarnish my perfect record." He gives you a wink.

"We questioned everyone, including the 3 engineers that helped build these trains, but we got nowhere. It's a bit of a dead end, and I don't have time to look into it further myself. Officer Loath is outside to assist you and bring you up to speed. She may act like she thinks your guilty, but think nothing of it, that's an officer's job.

SCENE 1 – ESTABLISHING THE STAKES

With Officer McMeel gone, the players are left sitting in his office. It's a fairly spartan room with little to see. Outside the door is McMeel's partner Sara Loath, another officer of lower rank who is prepared to provide more information to the Fated, should they require it. She's not privy to all the information, so the Fatemaster should try to play her off as willing but hostile, happy to take a few jabs at the players. The Fatemaster should use this opportunity to let the players roleplay their characters and have a bit of banter and conversation with Officer Loath. Below is the information she can provide:

- If the Fated were framed and they don't solve it, she's going to assume they did it. Loath isn't going to let McMeel take the fall for the Fated.
- Officer Loath will accompany them to provide them the access needed, but it's not her job to prove them innocent when everything points to guilty.
- If the Fated publicly discuss the incident, it's likely to bring the Guild Inquisitors in, which are less likely to provide the Fated the opportunity to clear their names. They should be careful about how much they share and with whom.
- While the Guard was patrolling train storage, they saw the Fated near *Her Majesty's Rail Line 223*, a cargo train that was scheduled to be moved in the next few days for reclamation. This is why the Fated were originally brought in.

- Fingerprints were found at the scene that match the ones taken from the Fated.
- Line 223 is 4 cars and the engine. The specifics are kept under wraps, but Line 223 contained contraband material.
- There were no overt signs of a break-in, so presumably there was someone inside who was helping the Fated.
- The culprits must have access to magic because McMeel determined the sighting of the Fated near the train was an illusion designed to get the Guild on their trail (no, she doesn't know how he determined that).
- McMeel is unsure what exactly is on the train, but he believes that there's Arcanist contraband on it. Loath knows the engineers that worked on the train were questioned about the whole thing, but the information wasn't helpful. The engineers investigated were Charles Faraday, Richard Davy, and Frederick Winsor.

Once the players are satisfied with the information they have, Loath will ask them where they want to go and they can begin trying to solve the crime.

SCENE 2 – FEAR

Scene 2 takes place in multiple locations with multiple people. Its overall structure is represented by an Ongoing Challenge (Fated Almanac page 196) as a way to allow the Fated to investigate in a less structured way. That said, it's important that the players recognize the possibility of failure here, which would result in having their characters locked up – often a fate worse than death!

An Ongoing Challenge provides a cinematic feel of time passing as the Fated take on the role of private investigators. This Challenge has two 'paths' of skill checks: the **Method Path** and the **Motive Path**. The number of successes achieved on each path will trigger certain events as the Ongoing Challenge progresses, as well as alter game elements in Scene 3. The number of failures will count as lost time for the players, giving the villain more time to prepare. The skills listed in each of the paths are the more common suggestions; Fatemasters are encouraged to consider Fated suggestions for skill usage as well.



Ongoing Challenge

TN: Varies based on skill and location. See individual paths for more information.

Duration: Each triggered event represents 3 hours passage.

Increment Requirement: 15 successes to progress the story automatically to Scene 3.

Keep note of the number of events the players have triggered.

METHOD PATH: HOW WAS THE TRAIN STOLEN?

Location: Train Yard

This will involve investigating the train yard proper. Loath will be able to get the Fated some clearance, but they will need to maintain a low profile. The train yard is fairly active, but well within the day-to-day norm. There are 5 trains currently in the station. There's clearly defined Receiving and Departure Yards, an old weathered looking Engine House with a corrugated tin roof, and a 3 room office with a rail worker clock-in station.

Possible Skill Uses: Notice/Track/Engineering could be used to investigate where the train was positioned. The important information to add into the narrative is that whoever swiped the train took it out on the tracks, but which tracks are unknown. The theft must have been in the works for a while given the precision with which it was completed.

TNs: 7-9 for examining the train tracks and following where it was supposed to be.

People: Rail Station Workers

Should the players want to investigate the people in the train yard, they'll have their pick of a skeleton crew of workers, custodial staff, the train yard foreman and a handful of conductors.

Possible Skill Uses: Most of the staff will respond better to pleasant Social Skill checks given that this is simply a "babysitting" job for most of them. The important information is that 3 trains have left the yard in the timeframe that the train could have

been stolen. The staff can let the Fated know that each departure and arrival has to be handled by someone, but as long as the paperwork is filled out, no one really makes a big deal about the amount of oversight.

TNs: 7-9 for "pleasant" interactions, 11-13 for more hostile interactions

EVENTS

First 5 Successes (Method):

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

The sound of bickering draws your attention to two workers arguing. "How many ways I gotta say it bub? I don't care that you put my train on the wrong track, but trying to pass it off like I clocked out that train too? It's completely inexcusable. Apologize, learn from your mistake, and I won't report you" says a man. From his dress, he appears to be a conductor.

"I didn't do nothing! Yer full of it and messed up yourself. Don't pin this on me" the worker yells back as he begins to walk away.

If the Fated investigate, either individual can tell them that Line 442, a coal and construction materials line scheduled to head up north, wasn't on the correct track for the conductor to head out this morning (so whatever train left that morning on Line 442 is a fake). The worker is adamant and telling the truth that he didn't move the train, so if the Fated investigate, they'll find what looks like a lot of tool marks and odd angular tracks all over the engine room. A TN 10 Artefacting check reveals that these marks are from multiple automatons messing with the trains.

Second 5 Successes (Method):

Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

You are approached by an older looking man who looks like a watchman. The man pushes his horn rimmed spectacles up on his nose and asks, "What EXACTLY is going on here?"



The watchman is a bit suspicious and will take three successful TN 11 Social Skill checks to convince that the players are legitimate. If Sara Loath is still with them, they gain a  to this flip. If convinced, the only thing he knows about the robbery is that the "paperwork looked a bit clean for a conductor, but it was in order." The watchman also managed to learn from the man that the conductor was "off to visit an old friend up north."

Final 5 Successes (Method):

The following event occurs:

The Fated overhear a group of workers complaining about a "madman of a conductor" who destroyed their construction gear on his hurry to "the old Murdstrom cemetery." If pressed for information, the leader of the group will comment that "it was Line 233, or 223, or something like that." The leader will joke that "the guy must have a cold wife waiting for him to bring home dinner."

MOTIVE PATH: WHY WAS THE TRAIN STOLEN?

Engineer: Charles Faraday

The Fated can follow up on Faraday at his blacksmithing shop, a simple two story brick and mortar building with a hook conveyor system that travels around the ceilings. The Fated will meet with Charlotte, a young intern currently running the blacksmithing shop. Charles has been home sick with the flu for several days, but Charlotte has been checking in on him daily, making sure he is OK. If the Fated go to Charles' house, they will find him absent.

Skill Checks (TNs 6-10): The Fated can use Social skills to determine a lot about the situation: Charlotte was an orphan adopted by Charles and his fiancée Rebecca. She showed an impressive aptitude for building, an aptitude Rebecca did her best to encourage. After the mining accident took Rebecca (Charlotte doesn't know much about it since Charles was a quiet man), Charlotte ended up handling more of the business. "I don't like to gossip, but I think it was the combination of losing her, and Mr. Davy kicking him out of the partnership for more money that really hit dad." Charlotte checked in on Charles this morning (approximately when the train could have been stolen). She's a little uncomfortable with letting people just walk around the shop, but could be politely talked into it.

Engineer: Frederick Winsor

The Fated can follow up on Frederick at a small cuckoo clock shop, nestled in a quiet neighbourhood next to a bakery and several homes. The shop is a single story with a delicately carved wood front door. The inside of the shop feels comfortably stuffed with marionettes, cuckoo clocks, and other carved knickknacks. Frederick is currently working on a marionette duck when he notices the Fated.

Skill Checks (TNs 7-9): The Fated can use Bewitch or Convince to get some information out of Frederick: He doesn't seem excited to talk about his engineering past, but will cover the basics of it. He and the other two on the list were once friends Earthside who were hired for their background who ended up growing apart. Frederick wasn't interested in the cold science of building; he liked the art of it. Richard and to a lesser extent Charles were the ones who liked the numbers. They tried to open a business, but Richard was the only one who wanted to run it. "Charles wanted to pursue life when he met Rebecca, Richard always chased after the Scrip. After Rebecca died, the civility the two had died with her. I think Richard was sweet on her, but she was drawn to Charles."

Engineer: Richard Davy

The Fated can follow up on Richard at his machinery plant, a large warehouse that hums with the buzzing of all the workers there. Richard is clearly doing well for himself, shouting and pointing, signing papers, and otherwise being a hands-on manager.

Skill Checks (TNs 8-11): The Fated can use Intimidate or Barter to learn more about the situation: Richard is an arrogantly busy man, and usually seems irritated by the questioning the Fated have. If they bring up Charles or Frederick, he will immediately stop whatever he's doing, get in the character's face and say "What, does Frederick need more money for that fire-trap of his? I'm done feeling guilty for him not wanting to move forward with the times." Richard tries to keep the conversation on the facts and the progression of business. He and Charles were aggressively pushing forward impressive technological leaps, but Charles lost his taste for business after falling for Rebecca.



EVENTS

First 5 Successes (Motive): This event occurs at the current engineer the Fated are interviewing. Richard will react nonplussed, and Charlotte and Frederick are noticeably nervous. Read aloud or paraphrase the following:

A brutish rail worker walks in, four lackeys in tow. The leader approaches [the person the Fated are talking to], and says, "oi... I needs mah arm worked on proper-quick, and you're suppose ta be a great engineer."

He turns to his lackeys, clearly ignoring everyone until they decide to look at his arm, which he's holding out. "Can you believe that conductor? Barely got off the track before he blew through. Coffin real estate going so fast that ya gotta blaze down the track like a cat on fire?"

The man, who the Fated learn is known as "the Shovel", cleared his crew out of the way of an "odd looking coal burner." It was a bit odd that the train was using an older set of tracks, but it wasn't entirely out of line with the Guild to proceed on a schedule without informing people who are working in the way. The Shovel will say the train was heading to the north of town.

Second 5 Successes (Motive):

The following event occurs:

A dramatic attack happens at Richard Davy's warehouse (the Fated either hear about it, or experience it first hand). Several people are injured in the attack, but no casualties are reported. If the Fated are there or go to investigate, with a TN 13 Notice check they'll see a small quadruped slinking away with what looks like piping or other mechanical bits in its mouth. If the Fated attempt to follow it, it will take a TN 14 Stealth by each person or they will be spotted. If they all succeed, proceed to Scene 3.

Final 5 Successes (Motive):

The following event occurs:

Next time the Fated change locations, Charlotte will walk up to them, looking incredibly distressed. "I'm

sorry. I wanted to make sure my dad wouldn't get into trouble. He said he was going to go get mom at the cemetery... he said she wasn't actually dead, just in... 'suspended animation'."

SCENE 3: THE CLIMAX

The Murdstrom cemetery has been a fixture since before the Breach opened, dotted with trees that seem to drip to the ground under their own weight and an excessive amount of elaborately sealed mausoleums.

If the Fated get to the cemetery from the first event, they'll arrive in time to see the tell-tale signs of smoke drifting up from a train. If they approach fairly quickly, they'll see Charles Faraday loading what looks like an iron lung with frost clinging to it onto the train by crane. If the Fated arrive after the second or third event, the iron lung will be loaded, and Charles will be completing final checks before boarding the train and leaving. If the Fated arrive after any other number of events, the train will be in the process of pulling away.

If the Fated try to stop Charles from leaving, Charles will get his guard 'dogs' to buy him time (use the stats for the Hunter on Pg 147 of the Fatemaster's Almanac, adjusting the number based on the number of players). Charles' focus during the fight will be on escaping, so he will avoid fighting the Fated to that end. If the Fated do not defeat the Hunters after 5 rounds, the train will begin to leave.

If the train leaves, the Fated will be able to make it on by running and jumping onto the train, but they will suffer 2 damage unless they pass a TN 9 Acrobatics check. As they proceed forward on the train, they'll find that while the 2nd and 3rd car have been fused into one with the only entrances coming from the engine or the 4th car.

Inside the Train: Charles personally constructed the train to help bring Rebecca back to life, and as such has built in a several defences to help make sure he will finish the job. Should the fight make it to the inside of the Train (as opposed to the Fated stopping Charles before the train leaves), Charles will spend most of his time using the defences of the train (use the Craftsman stats on Pg 127 of the



TRAIN MAP [45YDS X 100YDS]



Fatemaster's Almanac, treating Charles as a Rank 8 character) from near Rebecca. This position will provide him with almost total cover from any attacks at range.

At the start of Charles' initiative, he can spend a 0 action to make a board effect occur. Unless otherwise stated, board effects affect all legal targets in the area. On the side of the train cars nearest the engine, the Fated will see what looks like an iron lung with sheets of ice clinging to it. If a blast token hits it, Charles will immediately refocus his attentions on the one who caused the damage, going from defensive to what offense he can muster, flat out trying to kill that person. "You leave Rebecca ALONE!"

Quips for Charles during the fight: "You probably want there to be some nefarious reason why I framed you for this crime, but truthfully it was a matter of convenience... it seems I misjudged the Guild's devotion to their job though."

"You flail like children at spiders. I have defied many stronger than you."

In addition to Charles, he will have some reinforcements in the form of Hunters. The Hunters will enter from both sides of the traincar and proceed to attack the players, but they will also be affected by anything Charles does. If the Fated are winning the fight too easily, add more Hunters entering the train car.

BOARD EFFECTS:



Heavy Crane (10yd x 60yd)
Anyone within a 2yd aura must make a TN9 Spd check or take 2 damage and be pushed 2yds away.



Cover (50mm marker)



Electro Coils (40mm marker)
Targets in a line between 2 points must make a TN 9 Df check or suffer 2 damage and gain the Slow condition.



Rebecca (40mm marker)

EPILOGUE:

After defeating Charles, he mourns the fact that he can't save his beloved, and curses the Fated for being lap-dogs. What happens next is entirely up to the Fated. They have a train that's years past what others could make, a slightly mad genius inventor, and a head-start. You also have a Guild officer that knows who each of you are.



THE CAST:

Charles Faraday: The driving force behind this story. The quote that best describes him is “They say seeking the answers to staving off death is sacrilege. Perhaps the answer is in seeking the right questions.” The cycle of death and life had always been a cold fact of life to Charles; it lacked any emotional meaning because it was the inevitable result. The study of this inevitability drew Charles towards building constructs; metal and gears after all were much more efficient machines than flesh and bone. This stark analytical life began to be challenged when Charles met Rebecca. They both worked with the M&SU, and through a chance encounter became inseparable. Charles referred to her as “the heart he didn’t know he had lost”. Mere days after proposing to her, Charles got the news no one wanted to hear; she had been caught in a mining explosion.

With all the skills and resources at his disposal, the best Charles could do was put her into a medically induced coma. Charles became obsessed with trying to bring his fiancée back to full life. When Charles began exploring texts that flirted with Resurrectionist teachings, the other members of the M&SU decided to distance themselves from Charles in order to keep the Guild from coming after them directly.

At the start of the adventure, Charles is setting in motion the plan to claim his train that had been caught up in a raid. He’s ready to bring his wife back; he simply needs the materials on the train to complete the job.

Faraday is a man on a mission. He’s accepted that people will try to stop him because he’s crossing some perceived line, but Rebecca is the only person Charles has ever truly cared about. NOTHING is too far to save her.

Richard Davy: The more “commercial” of the engineers. Time is money with Richard, so he’s always after the most efficient way of doing business. Richard is always dressed sharply; he doesn’t flash his wealth, but quietly displays it. He should be presented as sharp and incredibly focused; he makes definitive decisions and doesn’t waste time with ‘ums’ or ‘well...’.

Frederick Winsor: The “softest” of the engineers. Frederick looks like what you would expect a clock maker to be; several pounds overweight, slightly frayed dusty brown hair that’s traveling to grey, and a mostly knit wardrobe. He should feel like a polar opposite to Richard. Present him as a guy who slightly rambles, takes his time getting to a point, and is just enjoying the company.

Charlotte the Intern: Charlotte is a 16 year old girl with vibrant auburn hair in a loose ponytail most of the time. She dresses like a tinkerer in overalls, goggles sitting on her head, and is constantly fiddling with some widget in her hands. Present her as a girl who’s constantly observing and parsing information.

Thompson McMeel: Officer McMeel has been with the Guild for a few years now, and is an astute investigator. His uniform is showing slight signs of wear and tear, but he prides himself on looking his best. Present him as a man who’s only going up in rank the longer he works.

Officer Sara Loath: A snarky young Guild officer dedicated to McMeel. Loath knows what a valuable mentor and boss she has in the incredibly talented McMeel, and would rather see the Fated take the fall than her boss. She’s mostly amoral and disinterested (because she knows she can make the Fated take the blame).

