The Words We Leave Behind

An epistolary duet RPG by Craig Duffy inspired by This is How you Lose the Time War by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone.

IMPORTANT

THIS GAME IS AN ASHCAN AND UNDER ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT

Thank you for supporting this pre-release of The Words We Leave Behind. This edition is released as is, unedited and without art while it undergoes additional playtesting and development.

Please direct any feedback or comments to rpg@lunarshadow.net

You may download a digital edition of the game from (link)

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Inspirations

This is how you lose the time war by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone.
Against Time and Death by Nick Bate.
Mechanics adapted from Signal to Noise

Introduction

Reality is fragile. It encompassess everything, that is, was and could be. Known and unknown, existence and nothingness. You and I, everything that we were, are and might be. Throughout it there are those that would bend it to their will, that craft the flow of time and myriad of disparate universes to achieve the outcomes that they desire. They have many names, innumerable facets and endless patience. You are but one of their proxies, dispatched through the threads of reality to further unseen, unknowable objectives that aid your allies and frustrate unseen enemies.

But you are not alone - You have a counterpart. An agent from another faction whose actions frustrate your goals and spin your achievements towards their own agenda. You have never met, but you know them by the impression of the void, their subtle changes to the timestream and choice of keepsakes that announce their fleeting presence.

They are your opposite. Your reflection. Your foil. Your nemesis. You know next to nothing about them.

But they intrigue you enough to break protocol and reach out to them…

The Words We Leave Behind is an epistolary RPG for two players inspired by the novella 'This is how you lose the time war.' During the events of the game each player will take on the role of a Proxy as they fight over a single strand of reality on behalf of an unseen Faction. As they are sent throughout time and space they will slowly change historical events to favour their own faction while entering into a back and forth correspondence with their opposite number.

These events play out asynchronously within the text, as the Proxies amend events to benefit their faction and slowly change the course of history. As they do so they will learn about one another, building an emotional bond that may bring them together or drive them to destruction.

The War

The existence of variable reality threads, distributed quantum intelligence and temporal displacement technology meant war was inevitable. For every peaceful civilisation that isolated its timeline there was another willing to manipulate reality to secure power and its place in history. Each thread that could be aligned with their own strengthened their hold on existence while the loss of a thread could doom individuals, planets and civilisations as their timeline spun off into the void.

The factions quickly learned that direct, overwhelming action had consequences. The larger the incursion, the greater the uncertainty of the outcome and countless threads were lost as desperate powers gave in to the temptation of reckless action. Those that survived learned the value of patience and small, subtle actions that built atop one another.

In the fight for survival some factions pruned individual threads from the infinite masses, removing thoughts and tiny events that pulled away from their vision. Others watered hope and nurtured the concepts that embodied their beliefs. One even wove its future and past together, creating a knot of existence that anchored it into the tapestry and locked its timeline into a self fulfilling prophecy.

As each sought to further themselves a few came to recognise the truth - in waging an endless war across the cosmos they had intertwined themselves with one another so tightly that victory was no different from defeat. Survival became a balancing act, a constant struggle to exert just enough influence to provoke a response but not so much that the consequences led to excessive instability.

This is the job of the Proxies, precision weapons fighting an unwinnable war of survival.

Setup

You will need

- Two players.
- A deck of cards each.
- Individual email accounts or a way to send messages to one another.
- A shared online document that you can both edit (for example a Google Doc, OneDrive file etc).

During setup you will create the outline of reality that you fight over before describing your factions and characters in broad strokes. You will then prepare the cards and gameplay documents for the start of the game. Setup should be completed together and play should not start until both players are happy with the choices that have been made.

Safety

The Words We Leave Behind is a game about change, emotions and the development of messy relationships over time. As a time travel story there is the potential for the story to include a range of themes, settings and events. Before deciding on the details of the game, discuss the themes that you want to explore and whether there are any periods of history or topics that you wish to avoid. Sci-fi is often used to reframe old ideas and issues within a new context - be careful that in doing so you do not accidentally push the game past the boundaries you have set.

Discuss what you will do if the game pushes into uncomfortable territory. Read the Emotion and Incursion prompts before starting play, if any raise undesirable topics or themes discuss them with the other player and rewrite them if you need to.

These suggestions on safety are a first step and you should make use of any additional tools or checks that you feel are necessary.

Document setup - The Timestream

Create a shared document named "The Timestream" that can be opened and edited by both players. This document will record the history of the reality that your characters fight over. During play you will describe events called Incursions and add them as entries to The Timestream. The order of these entries will be determined by the cards as you jump back and forth through time.

Add a line at the start of the document that reads THE PAST, add 10 blank lines and then a line that reads THE FUTURE. You will add your Incursions between these, using them as points of reference to determine if an event occurs in the relative past or future.

Creating Setting, Factions & Characters

The reality that your characters know is one of change, with history slowly shifting as Proxies complete their missions. The only constant is your home thread, which is protected from all but the greatest of changes.

To create your setting first decide on the scale:
1. Earthly
2. Galactic
3. Dimensional

Consult the section below for the scale you have chosen and work together to answer the included questions. This will help outline your world and provide thematic touchpoints. Remember that the influence of the Proxies throughout time will have already altered the world so when exploring historical events focus on themes over accuracy. Any discrepancies with real history can be attributed to the impact of Incursions by other Proxies.

Guidance and prompts for Galactic and Dimensional games will be added in a future update.

Earthly

Earthly games take place within the limits of known history as Proxies are dispatched to humanity's homeworld to affect its early development. Use this setting if you want to explore famous events and the impact that small changes may have on the world we know.

During the setup of an Earthly game answer the following questions to define your setting:

1. Are there any periods or individuals that are off limits?
2. Are there any periods of history we want to specifically explore during the game?
3. How close is this thread to that of the real world? Does it mirror our own or are there radical differences? If there are differences describe 2-3 major changes or choose to let each player introduce differences during play.

Factions

The Factions that the Proxies fight for have been at war since before they were born and will continue to struggle for dominance long after they pass. Each Faction is unknowably large and driven by complex and secret goals.

Factions are guided by emotional profiles, which they consider to be the driving force behind the rise and fall of civilisations. Your Proxy was extracted from their prior life at a point when their emotions were in perfect sync with this profile.

What emotions does your Faction value? Pick one prime emotion and up to two secondaries. Describe the society that your Faction believes these emotions will give rise to in the far future. What do they value and how does this affect the way they approach the war?

After you have described your Faction, ask the other player why they fear or despise you? Are your emotions in opposition to their own? Do they seek to build while you destroy? Are you too similar to one another, competing for the same resources and threads of reality?

Characters

Every Proxy is a unique individual, recruited from across the Timestream because they embody the values of the Factions that they fight for. Most will complete only a handful of missions before returning to their original lives.

You are not like most.

You are a weapon, dispatched to endless flashpoints by your Faction. Your actions are subtle, brutal and efficient. Your Incursions are scrutinised by the enemy and celebrated by your superiors.

What world did you leave behind when you were recruited and what was your name? Ask the other player what name their Faction has given you.

Advanced technology allows Proxies to shift their face and form at will as they slip across the Timestream. Describe your favourite form, the one you wear between missions. Ask the other player how they know it.

To prevent Proxies from losing their identity each possesses a trio of anchors that tie them to their roots.

The first is a reminder of home. Describe it and ask the other player why it is alien to them.

The second is a symbol you covertly leave behind during your missions. Draw it and ask the other player where they last saw it.

The final anchor is a trinket you have carried with you since you were young. What is it? It should be small enough to conceal in one hand and ideally an item that you (the player) already possess. If you do not write the description down on a piece of paper, carefully fold it up and keep it safe until the endgame is triggered.

Finally decide how your character perceives themselves and the enemy they oppose. Choose a pair of contrasting words to describe each. If you need inspiration draw a card at random and consult the table below.

Character pairs
A   Calculating / reckless
2   Vicious / benevolent
3   Gentle / brutal
4   Subtle / crude
5   Modest / boastful
6   Expressive / Surgical
7   Vain / modest
8   Confident / arrogant
9   Peaceful / violent
10   Romantic / practical
J   Caring / cruel
Q   Loyal / opportunistic
K   Logical / emotional

Tell the other player your outlook using the sentence:

I am [descriptor] and you are [descriptor].

Expand on this if you wish, stating why your character believes this to be true but remember that your opposite number may see things very differently.

Determining the first player

Remove the jokers from your deck of cards, shuffle them and draw one card each. The player that draws the highest value goes first, with Aces counting as 1s. In the event of a tie redraw until one player wins.

Deck and Hand Setup

Separate your deck into the four suits and place the jokers to one side. Shuffle each suit, place them face down and take the top card from each to create your starting hand of 4 cards. Keep the deck separated into the individual suits, making a note as to which pile is which.

If you wish to play a game that is more likely to reflect the themes of "This is how you lose the time war" both players add an additional Heart into their hand.

Principles of Play

Engage with each other. The story you will weave together is about the unlikely connection between individuals on opposite sides of an endless war. This requires that the Proxies actively engage with one another and the messages that they receive. Think about their motivation and what drives them to leave messages for their opposite number. Are they curious about other ways of life? Are they trying to provoke a reaction to prove their superiority or glean an insight that can be exploited? Or maybe they are disillusioned by the war and seek one whose experiences mirror their own.

Embrace your emotions. As the game progresses your emotions will shift and escalate. Embrace them and use them to colour your Incursions and messages. If your Proxy becomes angry, make them reckless and dangerous; if they are curious, explore the world and question their priorities. You will have, on average, only 4-5 turns in which to explore your character's feelings. Don't hold back.

Challenge your beliefs. Just as the Proxies are dispatched to reshape reality you should also be prepared to challenge their assumptions about the war. It is assumed that they are loyal to their Faction at the start of the game; let the story push against it and reshape their beliefs. Does their counterpart tempt them

with freedom, drive them to despair or push them to ask the questions they have been avoiding?

Build a shared world. While the thread of reality that you fight over may share similarities with our own it is a unique chronicle of the universe. When framing a new Incursion consult those that already exist and introduce details that provide a connection and sense of continuity between scenes.

Be bold and be subtle. Each Incursion offers an opportunity to showcase the depth of your Proxies talents. Mix bold, world changing action with subtle and creative moments that will take decades to come to fruition. Vary your approach and infuse each mission with your emotions as they spiral out of control.

Let small changes accumulate. When Cascading the Changes it will be tempting to immediately counteract the alterations made by the other character. Instead, think long term and twist their actions in your favour. If the cascade led to a politician surviving your assassination attempt, think about how it has changed them and how this may be used to benefit your Faction.

How to Play

Play consists of a series of turns, with a player taking control of the narrative and writing to their counterpart. Each turn after the first you will read the message from the other character, be dispatched to a point in time to manipulate events (an Incursion) and write a message of your own to send.

If this is the start of the game the first player:
1. Randomly draws and plays 1 card from their hand.
2. Progresses the emotional state of their Proxy that matches the suit of the card they have just played (Escalating Emotions - page XX).
3. Compares the value of the card played to the Incursion table to get a prompt for this round (Incursions - page XX).
4. Describes the opening Incursion and adds it to the Timestream document. It should start with the value and suit of the card that was played.
5. Draws a card matching the suit of their played card and adds it to their hand.
6. Writes and send their first message to the other character, influenced by their current emotional state. It should start with the value and suit of the card that was played (Writing Messages - page XX).

On every turn after the first the current player:

1. Reads the message they have just received.
2. Adds 1 card to their hand matching the suit listed at the start of the message.
3. Draws a card from their hand at random and plays it.
4. Progresses the emotional state of their Proxy that matches the suit of the card they have just played (Escalating Emotions - page XX).
5. Compares the value of the card played to the Incursion table to get the prompt for this round (Incursions - page XX).
6. Describes their Incursion and adds it to the Timestream document.
7. Amends downstream Incursions as the effect of their actions ripple through the Timestream (Cascading the Changes - page XX).
8. Draws a card matching the suit of their played card and adds it to their hand.
9. Writes and sends a message to the other Proxy, starting it with the suit and value of the card that was played (Writing Messages - page XX).

During their turn a player may choose to spend an anchor (page XX). Play continues until one player has played 3 cards of the same suit and triggers the endgame (Reaching the End - page XX).

Escalating Emotions

Contact with the enemy is forbidden by the Factions for a simple reason - interaction allows for emotional connections that destabilise Proxies and distract them from their mission. When you play a card consult the suit to determine your emotional state and the growing connection you have to your opposite number. Through your interactions you will affect each other's emotional states, as the card you play will determine the first card the other Proxy adds to their hand at the start of the round.

Your current emotional state is determined by the collection of cards that you have played during the course of the game. On your turn, after playing your card, add up how many cards you have played of each suit and consult the entries for each suit matching those numbers. For example, if you have played 2 Hearts and 1 Clubs consult prompts 2 and 1 for these suits. If, on your next turn, you play another Heart then you would consult emotion prompts 3 and 1 for the two suits.

Hearts

1. A burst of adrenaline accompanies the reading of the message. Direct communication with the enemy is forbidden but this illicit contact is thrilling and you devour the words that were meant for you and only you.

2. The wait for contact was agonising, made all the worse by the need to seek out the message discreetly, lest your superiors discover the treachery that grows within you. If this is wrong then why does it lift you so?
3. You can stand this no more. This longing for contact and need for contact. You know that you must seek them out, to once and for all find completion or destruction in front of them.

Clubs

1. These words before you are an insult to your talents and commitment to the cause. You know you should ignore them but hours later the words remain on the tip of your tongue, a bitter taste you cannot shake.
2. The actions of your counterpart continue to push this thread away from the future that you seek for it. Their presence is infuriating and as you undertake your latest mission you wield your abilities crudely, distracted by thoughts of the enemy.
3. The anger comes freely now, as you fill the air with curses from a dozen long dead languages. You have burned threads from the tapestry for insults less than this and you will do so again before this is over. One way or another, this ends now.

Spades

1. This letter from the enemy shouldn't exist and as you read its contents your gut reaction is one of unease and wrongness. You know you should destroy it and wipe all trace of it from the timeline but it will never truly be gone, not while you still remember.
2. Another letter. It's only a matter of time before your superiors detect it and you are branded a traitor to the cause, regardless of your true loyalties. There's nothing you can do, it's inevitable.
3. You know now they will never stop, this distant foe whose life is now intertwined with your own. They have invaded your dreams and wormed their way into your psyche so thoroughly that you wake screaming night after night, only for their ghostly presence to linger at the edge of your vision.

Diamonds

1. Could it be that their words are sincere? The thought is so ludicrous that the mere possibility is invigorating — honest communication with the enemy. But if that is true then why? What has changed?
2. The probes that you have seeded across the threads have been productive, swamping you with data points, parallels and deviations from

the norm. This timeline stands out, unique amongst them and it is painful to tear yourself away from the analysis when your latest instructions arrive.

3. You understand now. It makes sense, everything was building towards this inevitable moment where contact is made. No matter the outcome this will change everything and you are giddy as you take the next step into a new future.

Incursions

On each turn you will undertake a mission on behalf of your Faction to alter history and align reality threads with your own. This is known as an Incursion.

After playing your card do the following check the Timestream to determine if a card of the same value has already been played - if one has then see Revisiting an Incursion.

If there are no Incursions matching your card then compare its value to the value of the card played on the previous turn (which should be at the start of the message you have received). If the value of your card is lower see Climbing into the Past. If it is higher see Diving towards the Future.

For Earthly and Galactic games the Incursion prompts can be found on pages XX and XX. For Dimensional games players create and describe scenes of their own choice, without the confines of the prompts.

Revisiting an Incursion

If the value of the card you have played matches the value of an existing Incursion then your Faction has dispatched you to further meddle in this event, either because your enemy was here or because your own actions did not result in the desired outcome.

- Consult the original prompt and add a new section of text to the start or end of this Incursion that describes your actions.
- You may frame the new Incursion as a direct continuation of the prior events or shift the focus to a new perspective/individual/location.
- You may not directly interact with any time travellers that are already involved in this Incursion (regardless of whether it is you or your counterpart).
- When Cascading the Changes the new, longer text counts as a single Incursion.

As each player has their own deck it is possible (but unlikely) that an Incursion will be revisited multiple times. Use this opportunity to introduce unexpected reveals and twists into the narrative as you compete with the enemy to control the flow of time.

Climbing into the Past

If the value of the card you have played does not match an existing Incursion and it is lower than the value of the last card that was played then you have been sent further back in time.
- Consult the Incursion prompt for the card that you have played and think about the mission you are about to undertake.
- Find the Incursion that was added to the Timestream on the previous turn - your new

Incursion must take place closer to THE PAST than this entry.

- You may choose to put your Incursion immediately before the previous one or to go further back in time.
- Consult the Timestream to determine which period of time you have arrived in (This will be most important for Earthly settings, where the order of events of historical events are already known).

Diving towards the Future

If the value of the card you have played does not match an existing Incursion and it is higher than the value of the last card that was played then you have been dispatched into the future to exploit the cascade that your opposite number initiated.

- Consult the Incursion prompt for the card that you have played and think about the mission you are about to undertake.
- Find the Incursion that was added to the Timestream on the previous turn - your new Incursion must take place closer to THE FUTURE than this entry.
- You may choose to put your Incursion immediately after the previous one or to go further into the future.
- Consult the existing Incursions in the Timestream to determine which period of time you have travelled to.

Describing your Incursion

It is up to you how you present your Incursion within the Timestream. You may choose to write from the perspective of your character, describing events in first person. Alternatively you may wish to place them within the scene as merely one of many individuals and describe how events play out in third person.

The prompts for each Incursion are designed to provide inspiration without locking you into a specific event, time period or course of events. Use them to help frame the scene and determine the goal of your Proxy within it. Remember that you are there to change the flow of history. Think about what might happen if your Proxy was not present; you do not need to describe this in the text but it is an option.

Cascading the Changes

The ultimate goal of any Incursion is to shift the Timestream into a direction that supports one future over another. This occurs through a cascade of changes that ripple into the future, one Incursion at a time.

In the game this is reflected by amending the entries in the Timestream document. Each individual amendment is small but over time they build up as the two Proxies fight over history. After adding a new Incursion into the Timestream document you must amend each Incursion that occurs after it.

An Incursion is considered to occur after the current one if it is closer to the end of the timestream marked as THE FUTURE than the entry that has just been added to the Timestream document. Incursions that are closer to THE PAST than the current incursion are not affected by the cascade. This positioning reflects the order of Incursions in the linear timeline; time travellers will encounter, and remember, these events in a very different order.

You may change each Incursion that occurs after the current one by:
- Rewriting 1 sentence, this may be a complete rewrite or as little as the change/addition/deletion of a single word.
- Adding 1 new sentence to any point of the entry.

or

- Deleting 1 sentence from the Incursion.

The changes must make sense within the context of the Incursion as a whole.

Spending Anchors

During the course of the game each Proxy may make use of their Anchors to exert their will directly onto reality. You may spend each anchor once.

For the first two anchors choose one from below:

- Look at your hand and choose the card you play that round.
- Change three sentences within a single Incursion when Cascading the Changes.
- Force your changes to cascade in the opposite direction, affecting events closer to THE PAST than THE FUTURE.

You may spend your third anchor, the trinket, to achieve one of the following effects:

- Revert an existing Incursion back to its original form. Find the text that was included in the email message and use it to restore history in the Timestream document.
- Convert an Incursion into a fixed point in time using a Temporal Lock. Add the text [Temporal Lock Initiated] to the start of the Incursion and [Temporal Lock Completed] to the end of the Incursion. From now on when Cascading Changes neither player may amend this Incursion.
- Take a second turn instead of writing and sending a letter at the end of your turn. This will

result in you creating 2 Incursions this round and ending with you sending a single message to your opposite number. Only add the value and suit of the second Incursion to the top of your message.

Sending Messages

After adding your Incursion to the Timestream write and send a short message to the other Proxy. Your messages should form a back and forth correspondence and are the only direct form of communication you have with them. You should respond to their communications and reflect on your current emotional state. It is likely that these emotions will be complicated and conflicted.

You may find yourself growing to love them while being outraged at their actions or despairing at their success.

Lean in to this.

Each message must start with the suit and value of the card that you played. At the end include a copy of your Incursion but make it clear that this is not a part of the communication sent to the other Proxy.

The format and length of your messages are up to you. They may be written text or audio/visual attachments. Make your messages heartfelt and direct as you build this most unusual of relationships. While some games will be shorter and others longer you will normally only have 4-5 messages to connect with your opposite number. Don't hold back.

Reaching the End

The game enters the final phase when one of the players completes an emotional prompt suit by playing their third card of that suit.

Optional rule: If the game ends too quickly you may together choose to continue by ignoring the endgame trigger. Play continues as long as desired until a player chooses to trigger the endgame as below.

After playing this card they complete their turn as usual but must end their message with the phrase

"I think it's time, meet me in/at" followed by a location and time. For example, they may sign their final message

"I think it's time, meet me in the Venice clocktower, an hour before the meteor strike of 2139"

The players should then arrange to meet in real time, either face to face or online using a video call. They must have their trinkets, or a representation of them, close to hand. During the meeting the Proxies will finally come face to face and determine their fate by making a choice - **To place their trust in the other** or to **Seize the opportunity**.

This choice is informed by the events of the game, their current emotional state and the letters that each have sent. Can the words that were sent in secret be trusted or are they merely a trick orchestrated by a resourceful and cunning opponent?

If a Proxy decides to **Place their trust in the other** then they are choosing to leave the war behind them and accept their fate, whatever it is. Making this choice requires that they believe that they will choose an outcome that is beneficial to both of them.

If they instead choose to **Seize the opportunity** then they give in to their training and seek to control the course of reality. Whether they do this for themselves or their faction is irrelevant, the impact on reality will be the same.

During the meeting the players take turns to describe the situation as the Proxies come face to face with one another. This should include:
1. A description of the location where the meeting is taking place.
2. The significance of the time period and its impact on the war.
3. The appearance that they have chosen for the meeting.

Players should add descriptions and details a little at a time. They may stick to out of character descriptions or roleplay from the point of view of their character. Once

both are happy with the description they must make their final choice.

If a player decides their Proxy will **Place their trust in the other** then they should secretly place the trinket in the palm of their hand and hold up their closed fist.

If they decide that they will attempt to **Seize the opportunity** then they should hold up a closed fist with nothing inside.

They then reveal their decision.

If both chose to **Place their trust in the other** the players should describe together a positive outcome for their Proxies in which they leave the war behind. Do they escape to lead lives with each other or do they make peace with their differences and depart to walk their own path? How do their Factions react?

If one player chooses to **Place their trust in the other** and the other chooses to **Seize the opportunity** then the second emerges victorious. Their player should describe how they, or their Faction, gain the upper hand. The defeated Proxy should then describe the cost and consequences of this shift in power. What becomes of their Faction and what new force emerges to maintain the delicate balance that is reality?

If both players choose to **Seize the opportunity** then they should describe how the war escalates and ruin

consumes their fragment of the tapestry that is creation. The players should describe the consequences of open warfare on reality as the two factions throw everything they have at the enemy. What is lost, whose timelines are extinguished and what darkness consumes the threads that they fight over? As the end approaches what becomes of the two Proxies whose connection became the downfall of their Factions?

Epilogue

After describing the endgame there are two final scenes to be played out - the moments that each Proxy came into possession of their trinket.

Taking turns each player frames a scene for their own Proxy, describing the moment where they acquired the Trinket and why it was so important to them.

After framing the scene the other player then describes the role their own Proxy secretly played in the scene and describes why they went back to this point in time.

Incursion Prompts

Earthly Incursion Prompts

A - You have a rare chance to take direct action against the enemy. What stronghold or individual is your target? What weakness will you exploit to get close and how will your actions strengthen your own faction?

2 - As you approach the temple, familiar faces greet you and usher you in, away from the desperate crowds that have gathered outside. Who are you to these people that they welcome you with reverence and humility? What great cataclysm approaches and do you offer them words of wisdom or false hope as they turn to face it?

3 - It is the night before the coronation and you stalk the halls, whispering truths and falsehoods in the ears of all who will listen. Who is due to be crowned and will your words cement their rule or topple it before it has even begun?

4 - You have concealed yourself aboard a vessel undertaking a great voyage. What ocean do the crew travel, what is their destination and how will the changes you make affect their journey?

5 - Words carry power, transfix crowds and lift people to greatness. As the masses gather in the space below,

what advice do you gift to the figure before you? Do they bring them hope or drive them to despair?

6 - You have been sent to the climax of a famous conflict. What/where/when is it? Whose future have you been sent to alter? Are they a general, leading armies into battle; a common soldier, fighting for their life; or an innocent bystander caught in the crossfire?

7 - Your training has taught you that even the smallest of changes can cause a chain reaction along the timestream so you do not question when you are dispatched to ensure a drunk stumbles left down the street rather than right. Who are they and how does this change what was to transpire the following day?

8 - As the warmth of the fire brings comfort to the survivors you linger in the shadows, unseen by tired eyes. Where are they stranded and what tragedy befell them? Were your actions responsible for their plight or will you ensure aid reaches them in time?

9 - It takes years for you to weave yourself into the life of your target, slowly guiding them to be the person that your Faction demands. What are they like and who are you to them? Do you prepare them for greatness or infamy? As you approach the critical juncture do you stay to watch from the sidelines or extract yourself and leave history to unfold?

10 - During the din of battle, who would think to check the fate of a doomed vessel? What war sealed its fate? As its crew flee for safety, what secret do you conceal for future generations to find?

J - A body lies on the floor beside you, slowly going cold. Their death was not your doing, you are merely here to ensure that the scene points the investigators in the right direction. Who lies before you, how did they die and how will you use their death to further your goals?

Q - Compared to the temporal mathematics of your own time the breakthrough you have been sent to inspire is a simple yet vital revelation about the world. What secret of reality do you point the researchers towards and how will it affect their world? As they push the boundaries of knowledge will they use it to support civilisation or will it be turned against them?

K - You are sent to revisit a moment from your own personal history. Pick from one of the prompts below and then cross it out.

Heart: A key memory from before your recruitment
Spade: The first mission you were sent on.
Clubs: A moment you regret
Diamonds: A momentous achievement

Special: When playing a King you revisit a moment from your own personal history. If any Kings have already been played you do not cross over with that event.

Instruct your opposite number to add a Joker to their hand. If they have already added both jokers then they add a card of the matching suit as normal.

Joker: You infiltrate the personal history of your opposite number. Pick a King incursion that they have written and insert yourself into it. You may not directly interact with your opposite number but may reveal details about that point in time that they were previously unaware of.