

PLAYERS: 2

PLAY TIME: 2-3 hours

PREP: We've no time for that; The hour is getting late.



LAYOUT & ILLUSTRATION: Lu Quade
PLAYTESTING: Shane Liebling, Ary Ramsey, Phillip Wessels
EDITING: Lauren McManamon



The Wind Began to Howl

THE SONG

Choose a version of the song and listen to it together. There are many renditions available on YouTube. The lyrics from the original are listed below.

VERSE 1

“There must be some way out of here”
Said the joker to the thief
“There’s too much confusion
I can’t get no relief
Businessmen, they drink my wine
Plowmen dig my earth
None of them along the line
Know what any of it is worth”

VERSE 2

“No reason to get excited”
The thief, he kindly spoke
“There are many here among us
Who feel that life is but a joke
But you and I, we’ve been through that
And this is not our fate
So let us not talk falsely now
The hour is getting late”

VERSE 3

All along the watchtower
Princes kept the view
While all the women came and went
Barefoot servants too

VERSE 4

Outside, in the distance
A wildcat did growl
Two riders were approaching
The wind began to howl

The Agenda

VISUALIZE THE STORY THE LYRICS TELL

The song tells a story through evocative vignettes. We'll play to fill in the scenes those vignettes sketch out.

EXPLORE THE MOOD

Desperation, closeness, and the thrill of chaos are just some of the emotions the song evokes. Play to these emotional states.

IMAGINE THE DOOM

The song ends on a powerfully ominous note. Imagine what it means to you and your characters.

The Roles

Among the two players, one will take on the role of the Joker, and the other will take on the role of the Thief. You will describe the world and the challenges the characters face together.

- If the Joker or the Thief is acting, the other player can play the role of the world and the supporting cast.
- If both are acting, work together to describe the other roles.
- When a character encounters consequences for a roll, their player has first say in what happens to them.

Optional rules for three players: One player will take on the additional role of the facilitator. They will facilitate reading and understanding the rules, and play the roles of the world and supporting cast. The facilitator can also make suggestions for position, effect, and consequences of rolls. However, the player connected to the character who is rolling has first say in what happens to their character.

The Characters

Fate

PCs share a pool that starts at 2 points. If it reaches zero they fail in their objectives. Fate can be spent for +1d. It is acquired by the players hitting fictional triggers unique to their characters.

The Joker

Stats

Resources: 3

Resolve: 1

Wits: 2

Fate Trigger

Take fate when you act with conviction and purpose.



The Thief

Stats

Resources: 1

Resolve: 3

Wits: 2

Fate Trigger

Take fate when you overcome a problem with wit and cunning.



Flow of Play

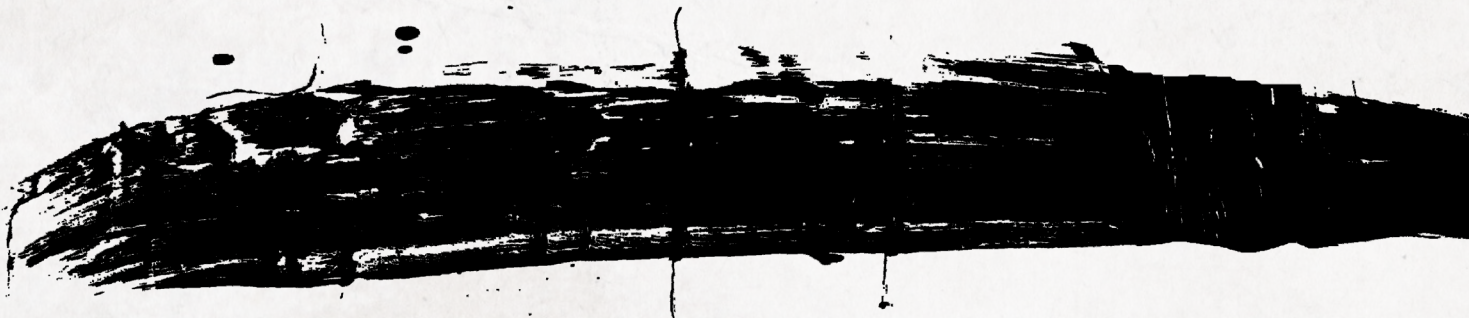
For each Verse, the player who first paints the scene also takes the lead and reads the lyrics. Play then proceeds step by step until the next Verse begins. The first three verses set up the narrative, and the final verse plays out the protagonists daring actions.

If you have never played a Forged in the Dark game, make sure you take your time to read through the rules in Verse 4. Otherwise, the Verse 4 rules should be familiar.

VERSE 1: *There must be some way out of here*

*“There must be some way out of here”
Said the joker to the thief
“There’s too much confusion
I can’t get no relief
Businessmen, they drink my wine
Plowmen dig my earth
None of them along the line
Know what any of it is worth”*





PAINT THE SCENE

Joker

What about this place oppresses you?

Thief

What makes you better than these people?

Joker

Why has this place fallen into confusion?

Thief

How does The Watchtower offer salvation?
What is the terrible cost?

OPENING


The Thief enters the scene surreptitiously;
the Joker makes a display of malaise.

CRISIS

The Joker expresses their feelings to the Thief

QUESTION

Why does the Thief let the Joker in on their plan?



VERSE 2: The hour is getting late

*“No reason to get excited”
The thief, he kindly spoke
“There are many here among us
Who feel that life is but a joke
But you and I, we’ve been through that
And this is not our fate
So let us not talk falsely now
The hour is getting late”*





PAINT THE SCENE

Thief

As you draw closer to the Joker, what in the scene fades from your attention?

Joker

What in the Thief's reaction stirs hope in your heart?

Thief

You notice something that gives you a powerful sense of urgency. What is it?

Joker

What do you hope the Thief might give you?

OPENING


The Thief offers their assurances to the Joker.

CRISIS

The Thief propositions the Joker to aid in their bold assault on The Watchtower.

QUESTION

What about the plan shakes the Joker out of their despair?





VERSE 3: All along the watchtower

*All along the watchtower
Princes kept the view
While all the women came and went
Barefoot servants too*





PAINT THE SCENE

Joker

Who are the Princes? Why have they gathered at The Watchtower?

Thief

What do the Princes fear the most?

Joker

What offers them reassurance and solace?

Thief

Why should they still be afraid?

FORTUNE'S ROLL

Roll 1d6. Results are as follows, if there is a facilitator, they briefly describe how they resolve. Otherwise, the players decide together:

6	The Princes are weakened by a fatal flaw.
4-5	The Princes' defences are bolstered. They are not reassured without reason.
1-3	A dark force unknown to all parties stalks the night. What is it? Why does it promise to bring the worst to all involved?





VERSE 4: The Wind Began to Howl

*Outside, in the distance
A wildcat did growl
Two riders were approaching
The wind began to howl*



PAINT THE SCENE

Thief

What beast announces your presence?

Joker

How do you make your approach?

Thief

What does the weather add to your foreboding appearance?

Joker

In the moment, how do you recognize yourself as a herald of doom?


ENGAGEMENT ROLL

This roll determines the PCs starting position in their assault on The Watchtower. Start with 1d6, build a dice pool by answering the following questions:

- Do you feel bolstered by each other's company? +1d
- Do you feel conviction in your heart? +1d
- Are the Princes weak to your approach? +1d

RESULTS

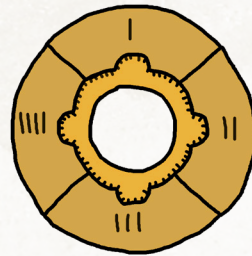
6	Controlled position
4-5	Risky position
1-3	Desperate position



THE CLOCK

A clock to track progress is set by the facilitator or by the players collectively. When the PCs succeed at a challenge the clock advances. The length of the clock sets the difficulty of success.

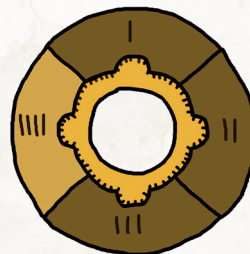
Easy	4 segments
Challenging	6 segments
Hard	8 segments
Extreme	10 segments



A four segment clock.

The clock is advanced according to an action's effect level:

Limited	1 segment
Standard	2 segments
Great	3 segments



Three segments marked.

ACTION PROMPTS

If you are unsure of what to do with your next scene use these prompts to help keep the action moving.

- The opening gambit.
- An unexpected calamity.
- The defenders push back.
 - The Princes' fear.
 - Desperate struggle.
 - A final conflagration.



ACTION ROLL

When one or both of the PCs do something challenging they make an Action Roll to see how it turns out.

Position & Effect

The players refer to the results of the last roll and the current situation to decide if their position is controlled, risky, or desperate. They then consider how the Joker and the Thief's actions match up to the circumstances and decide if they should have great, standard, or limited effect. If there is a difference of opinion, the player whose character is taking the lead decides their own position and effect.

Rolling the Dice

One PC is the center of action and rolls a number of six-sided dice (d6) equal to their Resources, Resolve, or Wits.

The other PC may roll a d6 to try to help if they act according to their Fate Trigger. On a 4-6, the central PC takes +1d and 1 point is added to the fate pool. On a 1-3, the Action Roll is unchanged, but the fate pool is reduced by 1.

RESULTS & CONSEQUENCES

The players look at the roll result, and match it to the position and effect according to the following table. **Count the highest single die result, unless you roll a critical success (more than one 6).**

CONTROLLED

A dominant advantage, seize the initiative.

- **CRITICAL:** You do it with increased effect.
- 6: You do it.
- 4/5: You hesitate. Withdraw and try a different approach, or else do it with a minor consequence: you have reduced effect or you end up in a risky position.
- 1-3: You falter. Press on by seizing a risky opportunity, or withdraw and try a different approach.

RISKY

A moment of decision, confront your fears.

- **CRITICAL:** You do it with increased effect.
- 6: You do it.
- 4/5: You do it, but there's a consequence: you have reduced effect or you end up in a desperate position.
- 1-3: Things go badly. You end up in a desperate position, you lose this opportunity.

DESPERATE

Hope glimmers faintly, chase its light or taste defeat.

- **CRITICAL:** You do it with increased effect.
- 6: You do it.
- 4/5: You do it, but there's a consequence: reduce your stat by 1 and you have reduced effect.
- 1-3: It's the worst outcome. You lose two ticks on the clock as The Watchtower gains in power, and you lose this opportunity for action.

CONCLUSION

As a group, answer the question corresponding to whether you succeeded or failed.



If you succeed in seizing your goal:

What does the power you have won grant you? How does it unleash chaos on the land?



If you fail:

Do you find *humour*,
despair,
or *relief* in your last moments?





... Hope glimmers faintly, chase its light or taste defeat ...