



PUPPET HERESY

Puppet Heresy – Role Playing Game
www.daimongames.com

This is an **Alpha version** (0.1 or something)

Feedback: Write with your comments to
davide.pignedoli@gmail.com

Concept and Italian edition: Claudio Casini
English edition and conversion to Fate: Davide Pignedoli

License: Concept and Art, Copyright Claudio Casini
Cover art and illustrations: Claudio Casini
www.claudocasiniart.com

This work is based on Fate Core System and Fate Accelerated Edition (found at <http://www.faterpg.com/>), products of Evil Hat Productions, LLC, developed, authored, and edited by Leonard Balsera, Brian Engard, Jeremy Keller, Ryan Macklin, Mike Olson, Clark Valentine, Amanda Valentine, Fred Hicks, and Rob Donoghue, and licensed for our use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).

INTRODUCTION

Puppet Heresy (currently an Alpha version) is a Role Playing Game **based on Fate Accelerated**; in its final release it's also going to be a complete setting and a colorful, beautiful art-book, full of incredible characters and monsters and landscapes.

This game was initially written in Italian and built on different, more traditional mechanics. What we're doing with this project is not just to convert the material in English, but also adapt the game to Fate Accelerated. This is more than just a translation: as we go over the original material, we don't just switch language. We edit, cut, expand, improve; and we dig under the hood to tune the system to work at the best with Fate Accelerated.

We hope you'll like what we're doing here; any feedback, comment, suggestion (encouragements, also!) are welcome at davide.pignedoli@gmail.com

Content

This Alpha version contains:

- * A brief introduction to the setting, and to the Puppets
- * A short presentation of Landfill, one of the game locations
- * Instructions to create your Puppet characters
- * A list of 4 different Puppet species, with some basic Aspects and Stunts
- * An introduction to Classes, with additional Aspects and Stunts
- * Dedicated Puppet Heresy basic mechanics
- * Short summary of the Fate Accelerated rules

Setup and material

To play the game you will need:

- * One of you in the role of the GM
- * Two, but better three or four Players that will play Puppets Characters (PCs)
- * One set of Fate Dice (better one set per Player)
- * Tokens to keep track of Fate points
- * Printed Puppets sheets to keep track of characters info, and a **paper clip for each sheet**, to track Essence points
- * Pencils, erasers, paper, food, drinks and so on



SETTING

Thousands of years have passed since humans, an almost legendary species that populated the planet, are gone extinct. Earth, now commonly named **Scrapland**, is the reign of **Puppets**.

The original Puppets were the product of an alien technology, created by the mysterious Matrixes, large metallic and spherical devices programmed to give life to Puppets. The purpose of the original Puppets was, in fact, to wipe out the human race. Once the task had been completed, the aliens recovered the Matrixes, and the original surviving Puppets, and disappeared. What they left behind was a ruined planet, wakened by the previous human exploitation and reduced to wasteland.

A century later, new Puppets began to appear on Scrapland. Some Matrixes, hijacked by humans during the brief, desperate and futile resistance against aliens, were loaded with chunks of human DNA. Other Wild Matrixes, in every remote corner of the world, originally programmed to build Puppets using any available resource (animal DNA, plants, rocks etc.), were left behind the aliens, that considered them destroyed.

These Matrixes started to work again, activated by lightning storms that scourge the planet. New forms of life began to emerge.

A new life

Hijacked Matrixes and Wild Matrixes work in a similar way: they mix organic and inorganic material according to complex algorithms, originally defined by aliens and modified by the adaptation process of the Matrix. The result is the production of new forms of living creatures.

The **Hijacked Matrixes** are giving birth to **Puppets**: they are as close to humans as it gets, now. But they're not human; their DNA is a mixture of alien technology, human and animal DNA, mixed perhaps with other elements. Perhaps as programmed, perhaps because of the influence of their human part, Puppets have begun to rebuild a sort of civilization here on Scrapland. The Hijacked Matrixes are called also simply Matrixes, and they work now under the supervision of Puppets.

The **Wild Matrixes**, on the other hand, are completely out of control. Some of them also incorporate human DNA, but more often just mix scraps of alien DNA and local components, sometimes in really, really crazy ways. These Wild Matrixes give birth to **Wild Creatures**: some of them relatively harmless, but most of them with an instinct to kill and destroy.

Puppets and Essence

Puppets are not regular forms of life, at least not if compared to the ancient humans and animals that populated the planet. Still, they contain significant segments of human DNA and that's why they resemble humanoid creatures. They have human-like emotions and psychology, although they also have a certain inclination to violence; perhaps because of the harsh life conditions in Scrapland, or because of the original alien imprint to kill.

They do not have a clear male or female sex distinction, although sexual attributes are sometimes present, sometimes not, sometimes mixed. In any case, while they retain a natural inclination to form relationships for friendship, love, or protection, personal gain, etc., Puppets **do not procreate**. The new Puppets are born, adult-like, from the Matrixes.

Puppets are stronger than humans: they need less oxygen, less water, and no food. They feed, instead, on **Essence**: a mysterious liquid secreted by the Matrixes. Without Essence, a Puppet slowly loses its force and eventually dies.

They are also less vulnerable to conditions such as heat or cold, but still, even if they can operate in harsh conditions that would kill a human, they have limits.

Other Creatures

Because of the destruction brought by the aliens and by their war-creatures, the original Puppets, there is little left of the original, native life forms that once populated the planet. Still, once the aliens left the orbit, little by little life began once again.

The majority of the life forms **are plants and insects**, while large animals are mostly extinct. Moreover, whatever survived, mutated heavily because of the very harsh conditions of Scrapland. Also, the leftover Matrixes continued to produce additional creatures: those with enough human DNA started to group together and form the basics of new societies, while others, the majority, are born from Wild Matrixes.

These are generically named **Wild Creatures**, and are of different sizes and types. Any combination, in the Wild Matrixes, that have been thousand years out of control, is possible. Animal, vegetable and inorganic are combined, as in a nightmare. Think of stone centaurs with scorpion tails, of ice giants, of metal-eating rodents, insect-like giant predators, humanoid robots hunting in packs, and so on. What the Wild Creatures share with the Puppets is the **hunger and need for Essence**, which they collect from Wild Matrixes, or more often by hunting and feeding of other creatures or Puppets.

Landfill

Scrapland is the name given to the continent populated by Puppets: it's a vast, unwelcoming, dangerous and restless territory. Wandering Wild Creatures hungry for Essence hunt in the wilderness, and the few areas where the Puppets population brought back a form of civilization, things are not much easier.

Landfill is the center of the continent: it's an enormous and politically neutral city, heart of the new civilization. Its neutrality made it become the most populous city of the empire, and its commercial core hub. Its origins remain a mystery (Puppets are not so much for keeping written records) but the legend says that a group of the first Puppets born from Hijacked Matrixes found here the remains of an ancient, advanced civilization.

For many years these Puppets explored the city in ruins, and what was once a city and hydroelectric power plant became the refuge for other wandering Puppets. Centuries ago, perhaps a thousand years ago, one of the most gifted Puppets unveiled the secret of electric energy and immortality.

This Puppet, **the Archon**, also restored into activity the **Punishers**, powerful ancient robots that now patrol the city to ensure the Archon laws are respected. These robots are self-repairing machines, kept active by the restored electric power, and answer only to the Archon itself – whom, by the way, has not been seen in public for hundreds of years.



Nearby locations include:

- * **StillRusty**: south-west of Landfill, it's a rich and industrial port, connected to Landfill with an old highway patrolled by Punishers.
- * **Riverstreet**: a small, busy and almost anarchic outpost, on the frontier with the northern territories.
- * **The Black Forest**: wild forest that surrounds Landfill; the highway to StillRusty is the only (relatively) safe way to traverse it.

THE PUPPETS

Puppets are the protagonists of your game, and the only **known** intelligent and social creatures in Scrapland. The continent is large, though, and mostly unexplored; so there's plenty of room to make exciting discoveries. Puppets are more than just a mixture of animal features: a large share of their bodies is composed by inorganic and artificial material, and all is animated **by Essence**. To make things easier: think of Puppets almost as elemental spirits, humanoid bodies, and mysterious psionic powers.

As already explained Puppets are born already as young adults, from the Matrixes, in different areas of the continent; depending by which Matrix they're born from, they obtain unique features and talents, related to the given Matrix.

For example, StoneHeads are born from a Matrix located in deep caves in the northern mountains, and these Puppets have special powers that control stone.

Originally, the Matrixes were surely configured to produce identical individuals, but the hijacking with human DNA (or the damage and lack of maintenance of the Wild Matrixes) changed this, and now each single Puppet is unique.

In this game, you're going to play gifted, special Puppets: your characters are going to be better than the other average Puppets.

In this Alpha version, you will be able to choose between four different species of Puppets:

- * **StoneHeads**: rock and stone Puppets
- * **Sinixters**: metal and scrap Puppets
- * **Felidains**: sand and feline Puppets
- * **Fireyes**: heat and fire Puppets

And four classes:

- * Warrior
- * Rogue
- * Gunner
- * Enchanter

In the next pages you will find a first introduction to species and classes, with sample Aspects and Stunts, and the instructions to create your Puppets character(s).

In the next versions we're planning to release:

- * **HornsCrowns**: big horned-mammal looking Puppets
- * **Mutiles**: swamp and reptile Puppets
- * **Sunkens**: water Puppets
- * **Treants**: tree Puppets

Society

Puppets tend to gather together in structures similar to those of humans, although they do it mostly for defense or pleasure for company, not for reproduction, since they're born out of Matrixes. Every location – from a large city like Landfill to a small remote outpost – offers occasions for social gathering, commerce, and often, fights.

Puppets also love to make rules and demand obedience: it is part of their traditions and instincts to struggle to get into a position of power, and from there, abuse anybody else with absurd, convoluted and sometimes really unreasonable laws. You might call this another feature of their human heritage.

Technology & Magic

With the progresses in the trade and the growing connections between the various species of Puppets, new discoveries are made also in the area of technology. In the past Puppets just managed to use the most simple artifacts from the past, but now they started to produce their own instruments, or to modify and adapt the remains of the previous civilization for new purposes.

Think of the Puppets technology as borderlines steampunk (a few railways, gas lighting, unreliable but fascinating firearms), with an alien and exotic touch.

Magic is also a very powerful tool, but it comes mostly as an innate talent than as a trained discipline. Every Puppet in fact has the potential to control to some extent the material it's made of (i.e. a StoneHead can modify parts of its body which are made of stone).

In terms of game mechanics, Magic is treated as a series of Stunts, which are more articulate for Puppets of the Enchanter class.



CREATE A CHARACTER

You make your character very much like you would do in other Fate Accelerated hacks:

- * Pick a **name** and an **idea** for your character; perhaps discuss it briefly with the other players
- * Choose a **species** (i.e. StoneHeads or Sinixter) and a **class** (i.e. Warrior or Rogue); these are presented in the next pages
- * Make up the **high concept** and the **trouble** Aspects; use the species and/or class examples to guide you. You can make also new Aspects, but perhaps try to use or just tune the given examples, for your first game(s)
- * Define up to **another three Aspects**, again guided by your choice as species and class. If you want you can follow the **Fate phase-trio system**. You can also define these aspects during the first sessions, while you're already playing
- * Make or select up to **three Stunts**, again using the species and/or class examples to guide you. Make at least one now, but you can make up the others as you play. Do not make more than a Stunt of the same type (i.e. not more than one Stunt per character giving additional stress)
- * Give **scores to the Approaches**: one at +3, one at +2, two at +1, two at +0
- * Start the game with a **Refresh** set to 3, and with **3 Fate points**, as in other Fate games. If you decide to add more Stunts, reduce the Refresh accordingly

About Aspects

Aspects in a game of Puppet Heresy are a great way to portrait **how unique** your Puppet is, with regard not only to the class (i.e. warrior or rogue) but also to the species.

When you make up an aspect, remember that if you write something that the GM can compel, you create a good possibility for you to gain Fate points during the game (which is something you want!).

Also, you're not bound to keep these Aspects forever: at the end of a session or of an adventure, if you feel that the Aspect should be **tuned or changed**, feel free to discuss it with the GM and the other Players. Since an Aspect has to be invoked at the price of one Fate point, it's unlikely that this will lead to unfair exploitation. On the other hand, an Aspect which is not very relevant or invoked/compelled often enough, is boring or nearly useless, and as such deserves to be discarded and replaced with something else, with better potential.

Finally, remember that Aspects are also a good way to represent **special equipment and gear**, things which are really notable and that should have an impact on the game and the story.

Basic equipment does not deserve an Aspect (nor much tracking), but special objects do.

About Stunts

Stunts are another matter: they can typically be used freely. There are limitations, sometimes (once per scene, per session, or even Essence points to pay), but in terms of pure in-game bonuses, they bring often a more immediate advantage to Players.

You should therefore design them with care, and keep an eye to try to maintain the system balanced.

The advice is to proceed according to these guidelines:

- * Assign an **approach** (i.e. forceful, quick) to the Stunt; the Stunt gives a bonus only to that type of roll
- * Limit the Stunt, unless otherwise stated, to **one usage per scene**
- * If the Stunt allows more than one bonus (i.e. covers every roll of the scene, or every roll in combat), give it a price, for example **1 Essence point** to pay, or a limit like **once per session**
- * If the Stunt allows a bonus **to any approach**, again put a limit or a price on it
- * Additional **stress boxes** are cheaper (no limitation nor price) but **clearing consequences** should be limited (once per session or pay 1 Essence Point)

As for the Aspects, you can use a Stunt also as a way to represent a piece of equipment which is very special.

Essence and Structure

Adventure after adventure, your Puppet will gain experience and become stronger, wiser, and more skilled. Puppets don't really age, but the passage of time consumes the Structure of their bodies. Puppets restore part of their Structure when they consume Essence, feeding on it, but never fully recover.

The rules for Advancements, therefore, will increase the Puppet's capabilities (scores, stunts, stress boxes, etc...) but at the same time **consume Structure**, until the Puppet will have to retire, or die – like an old human would. A dedicated chapter addresses the rules for this.



STONEHEADS

StoneHeads are made mostly of stone, and usually build with strong, burly bodies, although with some exceptions. Sometimes purer crystals are embedded in their bodies, and rarely, some of them are made almost entirely of crystal. One of their most prominent habits is painting their bodies with semi permanent colors, resembling tattoos.

Because they're built with a significant component of stones, StoneHeads are usually resistant, though and strong, but also heavy and slower.

The Rock

The Rock is the heart of the StoneHeads domain, in the mountains north of Rivestreet. Originally, the Hijacked Matrix was hidden in an abandoned mine, and since then the StoneHeads have continued to work and build new tunnels.

The legends say that almost every mountain for days and days around the Rock is filled with a labyrinth of tunnels, and that even the Stone Heads themselves do not know how to navigate all of them.

The Matrix is venerated and kept in maximum regard, hidden deep in the bowels of the Rock.

Only the wisest and oldest of the StoneHeads know its precise location. The council of the Ten Wisest elects periodically a Spiritual Leader, who is in charge of the entire community, although local clans – especially far from the Rock – have certain independence.

StoneHeads love trade and commerce, although they are tough negotiators and often get the better end of a deal. The Rock trades minerals, metals, sometimes precious stones, especially with the southern neighbors of Landfill (through Rivestreet).

Rumors say that StoneHeads demand mostly payments in Essence, so that they don't need to consume Essence from their own Matrix – which, according to whoever is telling the tale, is either stored in the mountains in preparation for war, or used to produce more StoneHeads in preparations for war, or to build Giant StoneHeads in preparation for war.

Example Aspects

Examples of **high concept**:

- * They call me Head of Rock; and for a reason.
- * A young and smart StoneHead merchant in Landfill
- * StoneHead bodyguard protecting caravans on the road
- * My body is like a solid, heavy rock
- * My fists of stone can break anything



Example of **trouble**:

- * There is nothing I cannot bend or break
- * I never walk away from a good deal
- * I never have enough Essence in my personal stash
- * The time for negotiations is now over

Example Stunts

Examples of **stunts**:

- * When I crash and destroy forcefully, I gain a +2 for my size and weight, once per scene
- * I gain one more stress box for my heavy build and resistance: 4 □
- * When I turn my fists and arms into stone, I gain a +2 for forceful for the entire combat (pay 1 Essence point)
- * I have connections with StoneHeads merchants, once per session I can find a useful ally or equipment
- * Once per session, when I turn my skin to stone, I ignore (don't mark) a consequence I would suffer
- * Once per session, when I turn into a stone wall to protect someone or something, I spare them every damage at the price of a mild consequence

Name

Description

Species

Class

Approaches

Fate & Refresh

Careful	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------	--------------------------

Fate	<input type="checkbox"/>
------	--------------------------

Clever	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------

Refresh	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------	--------------------------

Flashy	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------

Level	<input type="checkbox"/>
-------	--------------------------

Forceful	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------	--------------------------

Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----------	--------------------------

Quick	<input type="checkbox"/>
-------	--------------------------

Sneaky	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------	--------------------------

Aspects

High concept

Trouble

--

--

--

Stress & Consequences

1	2	3			
---	---	---	--	--	--

mild (2)					
----------	--	--	--	--	--

moderate (4)					
--------------	--	--	--	--	--

severe (6)					
------------	--	--	--	--	--

Essence Points

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---



Stunts

--

--

--

--

--

Equipment and notes

--

--

--

--

6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	----

Name

Description

Species

Class

Approaches

Careful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clever	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flashy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forceful	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quick	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sneaky	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fate & Refresh

Fate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refresh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Level	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure	<input type="checkbox"/>

Aspects

High concept
Trouble

Stress & Consequences

1	2	3			
mild (2)					
moderate (4)					
severe (6)					

Essence Points

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---



Stunts

Equipment and notes

6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	----