

Fall of the Dark Lens

GM Guide

A Fate2.0 adventure in Aurelion



INFERNAL LANDS

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AQUATIC LANDS

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Introduction

Welcome to this Game Master guide for the Fate 2.0 adventure “Fall of the Dark Lens”. This document, alongside the player guide, will provide you with all the necessary information you would need to run the adventure in the world of Aurelion. The info provided below is meant for a GM that improvises more than they plan out. Should your style differ, then this document should be used as a basis rather than a full guide.

Other information on the world of Aurelion is available and could make character creation easier/more interesting. Knowing more could also allow you to come up with more interesting improvised events when the adventure inevitably goes off-script. If you would like to read up more on the lore of this world it can be found in the Aurelion Compendium, available at the same place that the GM Guide came from.

The idea of the “Fall of the Dark Lens” is to be a relatively short adventure in which a party of adventures has been called to investigate rumours of suspicious activity in the city of Lunalae, a trade hub and capital city of the Dukedom of the Dark Lens. The party will need both wits and combat prowess to uncover the truth behind these rumours and will pass judgement on the characters around that truth.

Story Information

This section will contain all the information on the story of the adventure. The info is intentionally sparse in this regard to allow for each adventure to run its course in accordance with the actions of the players. Should you want to have a bit more of a guided story there will be some tips and minor additions within this section that will help with expanding the predetermined story.

Quick Synopsis

Fall of the Dark Lens will take players through the city of Lunalae in an attempt to find out the truth behind some rumours of 'suspicious activity' within its walls. The adventure will mostly consist of the players interacting with their environment and each other to deduce what's happening and how to deal with it. There will also be a few combat encounters though this is not the main focus of the adventure.

The players will arrive at the city and meet up as a party in one of a few ways, explained later, after which they can explore the city and find lodgings. The real fight begins after night falls. The party should at some point be pointed to the Noble Quarter as their destination, be it through knowledge obtained during the day or through some happening during the night-time.

In the noble quarter they will find a congregation of Scourgebound cultists, which they will likely have to fight. Depending on how quickly the party got there the cultists can have succeeded in summoning a Scourgebeast which would make the fight much more difficult.

The final (few) cultists will attempt to run away through a separate passage. This passage will lead to the Grand Cathedral where the party will encounter the Duke of the Dark Lens. A violent outcome can be avoided should the party be able to convince the Duke not to fight them. After this (combat) encounter, the party will make their way to the Guild quarter to report on their findings and be on their way.

Key Moments

This list contains explanations of all key moments pre-made for this adventure. Some can be left out and new ones can be added at your discretion. Some will have their titles in **bold** lettering, this is to denote a core part of the story and these will function as anchor points for your own story to aim towards/jump off of.

- **Arrival:** The party arrives at Lunalae. It is advised that the players work their presence in the Earthen Coalition into their character creation process. This makes it easier for you as GM to work their story into the adventure. Even if this is not the case, do work with your players to rationalise their presence in Lunalae to an extent.
 - o Having the player characters know each other beforehand is a relatively easy way to rationalise partying up. Another relatively easy place to have them get together is in the Coalition Embassy.
- News on the great square: At noon everyday a town crier will update the local populace of any notable happenings. For the past few days this has consistently

included a message to newcomers to go by the Coalition Embassy to talk about a bounty. People have been disappearing at night and the people of the residential district have scraped together 30 gold coins for whoever can put an end to the activity.

- Coalition Embassy: The party can come here to meet with a Coalition Ambassador who will inform the party that rumours have been spread about Scourgebound activity within the city and that those who bring evidence of such activity or the lack thereof will be rewarded.
- **Inn:** The party should arrange lodgings within the city. There are a few inns within the residential district. The innkeeper and other travellers may have some interesting things to say. If asked about the rumours, the innkeeper will say that he doesn't really believe anything to serious is going on, though he does warn the party that the nightly disappearances are very real and to be careful. Any other patron is likely to do the same or make a relatively offhand remark about it "probably being those snooty nobles". It is advised to mix this hint in with other conversation to make it less obvious.

The inn will function as a bit of a home base for the party and can always be travelled to for rest.

- Commercial District: During the day the party can explore the commercial district to look for clues as well as purchase new equipment. Most merchants will have a similar level of knowledge as the people in the inn. The exception being the Clothier, as explained in the Location Info section. The people here can also note that the disappearances have been focussed around the Cathedral and that the guards may know more.
- Guard Barracks: The party will not be able to get very far into the guard barracks as long as they are strangers to the land. They can ask about the disappearances where they will be told that the disappearances are indeed focussed around the Cathedral, in particular where the residential, noble and cathedral wards intersect. If the party is familiar with the city/the guards they may be let into the barracks (which would also provide free lodgings). The guards may also let go that they are beginning to suspect the Duke might be up to something, as he has been appearing to the public less and less.
- **The Lens Darkens:** When night falls over Lunalae it becomes a much more dangerous place. Should you want to focus more on combat this would be the time to do it. It is also at this time that the party should be guided towards the Noble Quarter more strongly.
- Noble Quarter at night: When the party arrives at the Noble Quarter they will be able to spot a congregation of shady characters walk to a nearby building. The group will enter a small shack in which a tunnel leads to a large underground area. The party will likely engage in combat with the group of cultists that can be found here. Depending on the actions of the party, the cult will have succeeded in summoning a Scrougebeast, making combat much more difficult.

This could be an end point of the story, gathering evidence from the cultists and bringing it to the Embassy will see the party rewarded and so ends Fall of the Dark Lens

But if, after combat, the party should be led down another tunnel leading away from where they came from, then this will lead the party to the Cathedral where the Duke of Lunalae awaits them.

- **The Cathedral Encounter:** When the party enters the cathedral from the tunnel (a hatch takes them to the Duke's office) they will be greeted by the Duke of Lunalae. He will introduce himself as such and pose an ultimatum to the party. They could join him as one of the Scourgebound or die by his hand. If 'persuaded' to share his motives, he will talk about his future plans (described in the NPCs section). The Duke is a powerful Scourgebound spellsworn who will use his enhanced abilities to make a fight quite difficult. All players can now decide a course of action: to fight the Duke, to join the Duke or even to convince the Duke to stop. Should combat be initiated, see the Combat Information section for tips on how to balance this encounter based on the number of players on either side. Based on the outcome of this confrontation the end of Fall of the Moon is different.

- o The party fights and wins against the Duke: The Duke can be spared if the party sees fit to do this. If he is killed the party will receive a lesser reward from the Embassy, as killing the local lord isn't ideal. If he is left alive he can be brought along with the party to be further questioned by the Coalition. Either way the party should present evidence of the goings on and be rewarded for their efforts.

At this point the story of Fall of the Moon is over and should the players wish to advance their character for future use this is the time to do it.

- o The (remaining) players join the Duke: The players that decided to join the Duke, possibly after defeating the other players, should gather some of the cultist gear and present this as evidence to the Embassy that the problem has been dealt with. They will be rewarded and visit the Duke, who will tell them that they will be initiated into the Scourgebound.

At this point the story of Fall of the Moon is over and should the players wish to advance their character for future use this is the time to do it, making sure to include their new Scourgebound powers. These powers can really be left up to the players and what their idea is of an evil power in this world, do take into account the Scourgebound magic rules stated in the player guide.

- o The players convince the Duke to stop his support of the Scourge: This third option should be difficult to achieve but functions as a non-combat alternative to the 'good' ending of Fall of the Moon. The Duke himself will confess his involvement with the cult to the Coalition and will be forced to step down. The party will be rewarded greatly by the Coalition for their help and a bonus should be added for their actions.

At this point the story of Fall of the Moon is over and should the players wish to advance their character for future use this is the time to do it.

Location Info

A section on all important locations within the city of Lunalae. All functional locations will be included in this section along with all their functions. Some of the locations are not immediately included in the story but could be run into, at your discretion, should the players decide to explore outside of the main path.



Commercial District

- **Blacksmith:** An artisans store where the players can purchase any smithing/woodworking related gear or use the amenities themselves for a small fee. The artisans working at the Smithy are particularly suspicious of the nobles when it comes to the rumours, but will have no conclusive testimony to incriminate them.
- **City Streets:** (This location also exists in the **Residential District**) The streets in the city of Lunalae are relatively narrow and are mostly uninteresting apart from the occasional inn or tavern. At night, most of the combat/NPC encounters will happen in the streets, see the Combat Information section for examples.
- **Clothier:** The clothier will sell garbs as well as leather armour. The Clothier has deeper connections to the cult than the other shopkeepers and can be pressured to reveal a decent chunk of information about them. They can provide cloaks to blend in better with the cultists should the party have such knowledge. At some point during the day the clothier will be contacted by the cult to provide cloaks for new initiates.
- **General Store:** The general store sells all manner of adventuring and survival related items. The owner will not have much to say on the rumours, though they may note

that most of their business is with travellers so the local gossip usually passes them by.

- **Jeweller:** The Jeweller sells all manner of accessories both magical and mundane. If properly 'persuaded' the jeweller will be able to provide a lot of information on the noble district, including more exact info on where a cistern might be.

Grand Cathedral

- **Main Hall (Day):** During the day the main hall of the Cathedral can be visited for religious purposes or if the party wants to visit the Duke. The hall itself, a large rectangular space mostly filled by pews, will have a few guards posted around the place as well as have a number of worshippers of the Twin Gods busy with their faith. A priest of the Twin Gods can be found near the back of the church. They can be asked about the faith as well as assist in worship (See the Compendium for more on the Faith of the Twin Gods)
- **Duke's Office (Day):** The Duke can be encountered and talked to during the day, though he will not spill any information about the cult. He will be busy organising the day-to-day running of the city and will be impatient and curt in conversation. When asked about the rumours he will be more open to conversation, though hesitant to take action. If the party has obtained actionable evidence, then the Duke will invite them to return in the evening to discuss it when he has more time.
- **Main Hall (Night):** At night the main hall is not accessible from the main doorway unless the Duke has invited the party, in which case a guard outside the door will lead them to the office. Otherwise the area really only serves as the stage for a combat encounter with the Duke, unless combat is avoided and some decide to join the Scourgebound, at which time the hall will be used to host the initiation into the cult.
- **Duke's Office (Night):** If the players come in through the hatch and are seen, the Duke will immediately attempt to leave to the main hall and call for the guard. If allowed to do so, the combat in the main hall will include the guards as well as the Duke himself. If he is stopped from fleeing, through force or other means, the Duke will attempt to get the party members on their side. This is almost the same conversation the Duke would have with the party if they were invited. If combat is not avoided through this conversation, then combat will initiate in the room and quickly move to the Main Hall
- **Tunnel Access:** The tunnel access leading from the Cistern to the Cathedral is a narrow and dimly lit tunnel. It is a mostly unremarkable area though it could be a good place to hide some loot within some hidden alcoves. The tunnel ends in a ladder that will take the players up to the Duke's office through a hidden hatch.

Great Square

- **Guard Barracks:** The Guard Barracks consists of three sections: the reception area, the guard quarters and the jail. If the players come here for information they will spend their time in the reception area talking to the guards posted there. The quarters can be accessed as a resting area should the guards like the players enough. The jail could be

used as a space to hold a cultist should you decide so, as an alternate way of gathering the required information.

- **Main Gate:** At the start of the adventure the guards at the gate will ask all that enter what their business is. If it is made clear that the players are adventurers they will be pointed to the embassy.
- **Marketplace:** The marketplace contains stalls of all shapes and sizes and can be used by the players to both purchase items as well as gather information. All classes of citizen can be found here. Most stalls will be run by travelling merchants, who will not have very much information on the rumours. The marketplace also has a small podium at its centre where the town crier will deliver news and updates at noon every day.

Guild Quarter

- **Coalition Embassy:** The coalition embassy is the place through which all things related to the Earthen Coalition go. It will have a single receptionist that will help the players with their quests/bounties and rewards. The rest of the building is offices and meeting rooms where the players could gather NPCs if they wanted to.
- **Library:** The library located in the Guild Quarter is the place to go for anything relating to stored knowledge. Any character could go here if they wanted to gather info on Aurelion (All of the information provided in the Aurelion Compendium should be available at the library). Spellcasters can also go here to make changes/additions to their Magic Contracts.

Noble Quarter

- **Cistern:** A small circular room underneath the Noble Quarter where the cult gathers to summon dark creatures.
- **Noble Streets:** During the day this section will be mostly inaccessible, with guards posted at the entrance to the quarter. Unless the players have actionable evidence or very good stealth skill can they access the Noble quarter. If they do, then the streets will be mostly empty and they can be accosted by patrolling guards. At night, a single guard will guard the gate and hooded figures can occasionally be seen sneaking around.

Residential District

- **City Streets:** See **Commercial District**
- **Inn:** There are multiple inns around the residential district that all have a similar layout/clientele. The inn will provide the players with a place to rest and gather their thoughts. Many travellers go through the inn and the other patrons will know of the rumours, though they won't be able to help much. The innkeeper is much the same, though they will be able to point the party to the commercial district, where the shop keeps may know more.

Character & Combat Info

This section will contain basic NPC character descriptions as well as templates and guidelines to design the combat encounters in the story. It will contain enough examples to have stats ready for all the main combatants faced during the story.

NPCs

Below you will find the description of some key NPCs within the story. Most are meant to help guide a combat encounter and will include an example FATE 2.0 based 'stat sheet'. The Combat Tables provided are meant to make Dynamic Test based combat more interesting, so that fodder enemies are weaker while bigger enemies are stronger. It is assumed that the player characters use the standard table on their side, though it might be interesting to tinker with them based on their aspects.

The NPCs described in the section below are made with the intent of being faced by a low-level three man party. For ease of use its assumed that magic attacks made by NPCs act the same as normal attacks (not using the special insanity rules that the players do) this was done to make balancing encounters easier, though feel free to take a shot at using other magic rules.

As a general rule of thumb it should be noted that most people in Lunalaë are used to seeing many travellers and will usually be quite forthcoming and helpful, with the notable exception of the nobles, who are snooty and quick to look down on outsiders. Any non-human character will have a much harder time socialising, particularly now that there are rumours of Scourgebound activity. The effect of having a non-human member in the party will affect everyone in the party and will make most NPCs much more hesitant to share information should it become known that the party has an affiliation with the Tainted.

Guard

Aspect	Level
Soldier	1
Strong	1
Earthen Servant	1

Description

Equipped with a spear and a shield, the average Lunalae guard is a formidable opponent one-on-one, though they tend to quickly lose sight of a situation if too many people are involved.

Combat encounters with Guards are rare but if they do occur the standard combat table should be used, listed below for ease of access.

MOS	LADDER	NOTES
0		Scratched
1	□□	Clipped
2 - 4	□□	Hurt
5 - 6	□□	Injured
7+	X	Taken Out

The Duke

Aspect	Level
Scourgebound	2
Earthen Noble	1
Spellcaster	2

Description

Enhanced through the power of the Scourge and wielding a large enchanted blade, The Duke should not be underestimated in combat and poses a real threat to the unprepared.

The Duke is usually a kind man and is usually more inclined towards diplomacy than violence. However, he is when it comes to combat and will protect that which he deems important at any cost.

Having been threatened by a large Scourgebound faction he has started working with them in the hopes of saving the city as a whole from invasion. The Duke, though ashamed that he needed to resort to such measures, will fight those that figure out his association to keep them quiet, unless they can be convinced to stay silent or join.

Eventually, the Duke plans to free himself and his city from Scourgebound influence, though he is relatively reluctant to share this for fear of being found out.

In combat the Duke is formidable and not easily beaten. If with his Guards, he will attack using elemental magical attacks from a distance and he has +2 to any defensive roll and -1 to the offensive ones. While alone and outnumbered, the Duke loses his roll alterations but will attack twice in every exchange.

MOS	LADDER	NOTES
0		Scratched
1	□□	Clipped - Clipped results do not affect the Duke's rolls though two or more results in one exchange will overflow into Hurt.
2 - 4	□□□	Hurt - Each Hurt result will affect the Duke with a -1 to every roll (capped at -3)
5 - 6	□□□	Injured - Each Injured result will affect the Duke with a -2 to every roll (capped at -3)
7+	X	Taken Out - When a Taken Out result is achieved the Duke will attempt to once more persuade the party to join him, being much more open about his motives, if refused he attempts one final large-scale elemental magic attack affecting all in the Cathedral hall, after which he collapses.

Duke's Guard

Aspect	Level
Soldier	2
Strong	2
Veteran	1

Description

Part of the Duke's personal guard, these people have distinguished themselves in both loyalty and skill with the blade. Equipped with a sword and a shield, the Duke's Guard is a force to be reckoned with.

Only encountered alongside the Duke in Combat, or in front of the Cathedral at night,

MOS	LADDER	NOTES
0		Scratched
1	□□	Clipped
2 - 4	□□□	Hurt -
5 - 6	□□	Injured -
7+	X	Taken Out -

Cultist

Aspect	Level
Scourgebound	1
Spellcaster	1
Earthen Citizen	1

Description

Equipped with a dagger and some basic elemental spells, the basic Scourgebound Cultist does not pose a huge threat on their own, though in greater numbers they can quickly overwhelm.

Any encounter with a number of cultists that is less than or equal to the number of players can be resolved as a dynamic check if that is preferred. If the cultist is part of a dynamic combat challenge it is advised to use the table below for each individual cultist, Clipped and Scratched outcomes do not get removed during combat and will overflow into higher outcomes.

MOS	LADDER	NOTES
0	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Scratched
1	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Clipped
2 - 4	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Hurt - Cultist may attempt to flee if this outcome is reached. Will usually stand their ground if their allies are still healthy.
5 - 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Injured - Cultist will attempt to flee if this outcome is reached. If allowed to do so may return in a later fight down the line.
7+	X	Taken Out - Cultist is knocked out

Infested Wolf (Scourgebeast)

Aspect	Level
Scourgebeast	2
Strong	3

Description

Summoned using methods only known to the truly devoted Scourgebound followers, a scourgebeast is a terrifying amalgamation of flesh and bone whose strength is only matched by its bloodlust.

The Scourgebeast is a menacing beast that is about the size of a horse, though its shape resembles that of a wolf (aesthetically inspired by "Sulyvahn's Beast"). The very sight of the beast is terrifying to most and, due to its arcane nature, every wound inflicted by this beast tests the mental strength of the recipient.

Enemies with the Scourgebeast aspect force a player hit by its attack to make a Mental fortitude check. The difficulty of the check is based on the rank of the Scourgebeast aspect. Each point of MoS makes it so the player can skip mental fortitude checks for an exchange, but each point of MoF forces the player to roll that many Insanity die.

MOS	LADDER	NOTES
0		Scratched
1	□□	Clipped
2 - 4	□□	Hurt -
5 - 6	□□	Injured -
7+	X	Taken Out -

Encounters

There are three main “combat” encounters during the latter part of the adventure. Other encounters can be added if needed. The Cultist is a decent base to use for bandits/hoodlums for such added encounters.

- **Noble Streets (Night):** At night, when the players have made it past the guard into the noble district, the players can encounter a group of cultists moving towards a small shack from which loud animalistic noises are coming. It is advised to size this group to be equal in number to the amount of players.
- **Cistern:** Inside the shack, through a tunnel, the players will encounter a single cultist maintaining a barrier through Scourgebound Magic. This barrier splits the room in half and has a mass of writhing unformed flesh behind it. This flesh will form into the Infested Wolf after a short time. The cultist will stop maintaining the barrier if threatened. A magically inclined character could maintain the barrier in their stead and someone familiar with Scourgebound Magic could be able to reverse the summoning. If the barrier falls, then the Scourgebeast will immediately attack the nearest NPC and will need to be defeated.
- **The Duke:** If the Duke is approached after the beast has been dealt with he is likely to be more hostile to the player characters to silence them about what they saw. He will initially simply attempt to bribe them into silence, if this fails he will attack them. The Duke will be accompanied by Duke’s guards so that their numbers equal that of the player group.