



# SEALING THE FATE

AN OCCULT  
STEALING THE THRONE  
HACK  
BY NICK WEDIG

# SEALING THE FATE

For millennia, your order of witches has worked in the shadows. In the modern world, magic has become so thoroughly hidden that most people don't believe it exists. This is all part of your order's centuries-long plan.

You are witches and oracles. For generations, you have been watching for the Chosen One. An ancient prophecy foretells the Chosen One coming and seizing divine power. You have a different plan for them, though.

There have been many potential Chosen Ones before, but all have failed to fulfill their destiny on their own. The elders of your order believe it is best to wait patiently for the Chosen One to arrive naturally. You believe differently. You are going to secretly steer them toward the fate you have picked out for them.

And once they fulfill their destiny, you'll be able to steal their godlike power from them at the moment of apotheosis. Then you'll become gods on your own.



*Sealing the Fate* is a hack of *Stealing the Throne* by Nick Bate. It is a GMless storytelling game for 3-5 players. Together you will create a chosen child of destiny, and the prophecy they must fulfill. Then you will try to manipulate their lives to make sure that prophecy is fulfilled in subtle ways, so that their ultimate fate benefits you specifically.

# OMENS

The game begins with the Omens phase. During this phase, you gather materials, discuss player safety tools and determine your setting and prophecy.

# MATERIALS

You will need:

A deck of Tarot cards

A six sided die

A way of keeping notes (index cards works well)

For the playing cards, only the numerical rank is important. Pages are worth 11, Knights 12, Queens 13 and Kings 14.

(If you don't have Tarot cards, you could just use regular cards. You'll just have to invent fictional details on your own rather than interpreting imagery from the cards, though.)

# SAFETY TOOLS

The point of a game is to create entertainment in yourself and your fellow players. But this is an improvisational game, so it is possible to accidentally wind up telling a story that does the opposite: one that makes the other players uncomfortable, angry or upset. So before play, choose some tools that the players can use so that everyone knows the story they are telling is one that makes everyone else happy.

There are a variety of emotional safety tools available online, and you should find one (or more than one) that works for your group in particular. I'd highly recommend the X-card by John Stavropoulos or Script Change by Beau Sheldon.



# The Chosen One

Separate the major arcana from the minor arcana. Shuffle them and draw a single card to signify who the Chosen One is. Work as a group to decide on an interpretation. At the beginning of the story, the Chosen One knows nothing about their destiny. They are living a mundane life in the modern world. The Chariot might suggest that they are a bus driver or maybe a driver on one of those gig economy apps. The Empress might mean that the Chosen One is a powerful businesswoman, or living a life of luxury. The Devil might mean a criminal, or it might mean they are the lead singer in a black metal band. Work with your fellow players to decide what the card signifies.

Choose a name and where the Chosen One lives.



# Background

Each player takes a turn drawing a card from the major arcana and interpreting it to mean either:

***Tell us about sign that identifies this person as the Chosen One***

or

***Tell us why you plan to do once you have their magical power***

For each response, another player describes one of the miraculous powers the chosen one will have once they achieve godhood. Write each on a separate index card. These will be used in the Apotheosis phase.

Continue until every player has answered at least one prompt, and you have at least 3 reasons why you want to seize their magical power. (If you have already answered one prompt, answer the other prompt when drawing another card.)

Once you have created your background, move onto the Convergence phase.

# Convergence

The convergence phase consists of one scene per witch. In each scene, the witch will be presented with one prophesied event, and work to manipulate the Chosen One into fulfilling the prophecy as described. The more thoroughly the Chosen One fulfills the prophecy, the better for the witches' plan. Once the prophesied events have been fulfilled or failed to come true, the Apotheosis phase begins and the remaining witches try to seize the Chosen One's magical power.

# Roles

There are three roles to play the Chosen One, the Witch and the Watchers. The roles will change hands every scene, and each player will play each role over the course of the game.

Remove the four Ace cards from the minor arcana deck. Choose one suit - **Swords**, **Wands**, **Pentacles** or **Cups** - to represent your coven of witches. Name your coven, based on that suit ("The Illustrious Sisters of the Blade", "The Bearers of the Chalice of Living Mirages" etc.) Use the Ace of that suit to represent the player currently playing their witch. Each scene, place the Ace face up in front of the player playing their Witch as an easy reminder who is the witch in the scene.

Choose a different suit to represent the Chosen One, based on what you know about them. Take the Ace of that suit and use it to track who is



currently playing the Chosen One. Place it in front of the person playing the Chosen One in each scene, as an easy reminder who is the Chosen One in the Scene.

Everyone else are the Watchers. They help the Chosen One describe the scene by adding details and answering questions and roleplaying other NPCs than the Chosen One. If the Witch needs assistance, they can call upon Watchers for assistance.

The Watchers each take a facedown card to signify their role. With three players, use one ace facedown as the signifier for the Watcher, and remove the other one from the game. With four players, use both remaining aces to signify the Watchers. With five players, take a random minor arcana from the deck without looking, and use it as the signifier for the final Watcher.



## The Ritual

Shuffle the minor arcana. Deal 3 cards to each player. You can look at your own cards, but keep them secret from the others for now.

(You'll use one card to manipulate fate during the Convergence phase, and one card to seize magical power during the Apotheosis phase. The third you can use to aid another witch during the convergence, or to help yourself gain magical power during the Apotheosis. Choose carefully. Higher is always better.)

The six-sided die represents the Maelstrom level, how uncontrollable the magical energies associated with fate have become. Set it to 1. As the Maelstrom level rises, magic becomes more uncontrollable, and the witches will have to take bigger risks in their efforts.

Take any discarded cards and shuffle them into the appropriate deck (either minor arcana or major arcana). If at any time during the rest of the game you run out of cards in a deck, reshuffle all the discarded cards of that type to create a new deck.

## ONE The Roles

In each scene, one player will be the Chosen One, and each player will play the Chosen One in a single scene. In the first scene, anyone who volunteers can play the Chosen One. In subsequent scenes, only someone who played a Watcher in the previous scene can be the Chosen One. With 4 players, no one can be a Watcher more than twice in a row. With 5 players, no one can be a Watcher more than 3 times in a row.

## TWO The Scene

The Chosen one draws a major arcana and interprets it to describe an event of prophecy that the witch wants the Chosen One to fulfill, using the Maelstrom level as a guide. As the magic becomes more uncontrollable, the witches have to force the Chosen One into fulfilling more unlikely and dangerous tasks to maintain control.

Prophesied event based on Maelstrom level:

- 1 *Common, everyday events*
- 2 *Something improbable outside their control*
- 3 *Something bizarre or unpleasant*
- 4 *Something illegal or immoral*
- 5 *Something dangerous to themselves or others*
- 6 *Something apparently impossible*

Whatever prophesied event is named will not happen, unless the witch intervenes in some way to make it happen.



The Chosen One then describes a scene - where and when the witch finds the Chosen One and tries to manipulate events to make sure the prophecy happens.

Once the scene is set, the Chosen One draws one minor arcana face up and a number of minor arcana face down equal to the Maelstrom level. No one looks at the facedown cards yet.

## Three the Witch

Another player volunteers to be the witch dealing with this task. They draw a major arcana card and interpret it to describe their witch's particular magical specialty, which will be useful in fulfilling the propesied event.

Because magic has faded from our world, most magic is subtle or deniable in nature. But you might decide that the Wheel of Fortune means you can manipulate probability slightly, or The Tower means you can cause decay and destruction with a touch. Perhaps Strength means impossible physical feats, or perhaps it is a force of will that you can project, or the ability to control animals.

## FOUR the PLAN

At this stage, the Witch player describes their witch's effort to use magic and manipulation to fulfill the prophecy. The Chosen One player describes how the Chosen One reacts to these efforts. The Watcher player(s) add interesting details, ask questions and roleplay other NPCs as needed. Everyone continues freeform roleplaying the scene until you reach a point of uncertainty.

## FIVE the CLIMAX

At some point during the scene, you'll have to know whether the witch's efforts succeed or fail. This is the moment of truth, and the cards will tell you how things turn out.

The witch player chooses and plays a card from their hand. The chosen One then reveals their facedown cards.

If the numerical value of the witch's card is higher than all of the Chosen One's cards, then the witch has succeeded in fulfilling the prophecy. The witch then describes what their success looks like.

If the Chosen One has the highest card (or there is a tie) then the Chosen One becomes aware of their manipulation. This awareness immediately increases the Maelstrom level by 1. The Chosen One's player interprets the imagery on their highest card to explain how the uncontrolled magic manifests in the larger world. The arcane forces are let loose, and can create nearly any outcome imaginable, such as transmogrifying nearby objects, unleashing spirits, animating inanimate objects, etc.

Once the magic has become uncontrolled, the Witch has 3 options:

† *Call for assistance*

† *Blaze of glory*

† *Betrayal*



## CALLING FOR HELP

The Witch asks the Watchers if one of them can play a card from their hand to assist. Only one Watcher can assist. If someone agrees to assist, they describe why their witch cares about the other player's witch. Then they describe how they intervene in the scene (perhaps a preplanned intervention). Add the assisting card to the Witch's original card to determine if the manipulation works. If no one is willing to help, or if the Witch's total after assistance is still not enough to beat the Chosen One's highest card, then the Witch must choose the Betrayal or Blaze of Glory options.

## SELF SACRIFICE

The witch can choose to absorb the magical energy released by the failed prophecy. This will eliminate them from the game, perhaps killing them, banishing them to a nightmare dimension or transform them into a toad. The Witch player is given a moment to spotlight their character and their sacrifice.

Sacrificing yourself in this way reduces the Maelstrom level by 1, helping the plan succeed for the other witches.

## BETRAYAL

The Witch player reveals to the other players that they have been working to sabotage the plan the entire time. They take one of the Chosen One's cards into their hand. During the Apotheosis, they will reveal that they were working all along for a rival order of magicians, one working to stop the witches' plans.

If a player chooses betrayal, the other witches won't know of their inevitable betrayal until the Apotheosis phase. But the players will, and they can use that knowledge to play up the dramatic irony and tension as they put their trust in someone that we as players know they shouldn't.



## ELIMINATION

If a player runs out of cards before the Apotheosis, then their witch is eliminated - captured, killed, exiled to another reality consumed by magical energy, etc. Their player gets a moment to describe their demise.

Elimination means your witch is out of play, but you the player aren't. You still need to play the Chosen One if you haven't already, and you still can be a Watcher.

SIX

the end

Briefly roleplay out the results of the witch's actions, whether they succeeded or failed. Wrap up the scene quickly, though, so you can move on to the next witch's scene.

Discard all played cards, end the scene, choose a new Chosen One for the new scene, repeat until everyone has been a Witch once and the Chosen One once.

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# APOTHEOSIS

Finally, you have reached the moment when the Chosen One is supposed to receive godhood, the moment when you need to act to steal their divine power for yourself. Draw a major arcana and interpret it as a group to describe where and how the final apotheosis occurs.

Any player with 2 cards left in hand can place one card on a Divine power card to claim it. Describe how you steal that power, and how it manifests in you.

The apotheosis then acts as a montage where each player describes a short scene where they try to drink from the firehose of magic that is flowing through the Chosen One into the universe. Reality around you is malleable and chaotic, and you have to seize control of the flow if you want to achieve godhood.

One player whose witch has survived and remained loyal goes first.

Deal 1 card from the minor arcana if the Maelstrom level is 1-3, or 2 cards if the level is 4-6. These will be the Chosen One's cards.

The Witch describes their magical efforts to control the situation and bind the Chosen One, and play the remaining card from their hand. They can also call upon a claimed divine power describing how that power helps them and adding the minor arcana's card value to their own card's value.

If the Witch's total card value is higher than the Chosen One's highest card, then the witch is successful. If the total is equal or lower, the witch has failed and they are eliminated. The witch's player describes how the near-divine Chosen One destroys the witch. (The witch cannot ask for help, and dying now does not change the Maelstrom level).

If any witches betrayed the order, then they can interrupt a player's narration to add one of their cards to the Chosen One's hand of cards. Each traitor can only do this once during the apotheosis. Roleplay out how their treachery is revealed.

Take turns until everyone has determined their witch's fate.

If any witches survive the apotheosis phase, then they describe an epilogue for their characters as they wield their newfound magical power. Any witches who were eliminated can describe an epilogue for any other character or aspects of the game, following this knowledge. Any witches that betrayed the order narrate their own destruction at the hands of the newly divine witches they tried to top.

If no witches succeed in seizing godlike power, then the betraying witches describe how the Chosen One wields their power. The witches who died each add a detail where the Chosen One creates harm and destruction with their godlike power.

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Created for the *Stealing the Jam* <https://itch.io/jam/stealing-the-jam>

Based on *Stealing the Throne* by Nick Bate. All the mechanics come from that game. I just reskinned them.

If you liked this game, let me know at [nickwedig@yahoo.com](mailto:nickwedig@yahoo.com) or [@nickwedigt](https://twitter.com/nickwedigt) on Twitter.

