

Keep / Change / Leave

Turn one promising idea into a decision you can use. Keep what belongs, change what needs your voice, and leave one question open on purpose.

Fictional example: A night harbor uses a bell pattern to decide which ships may enter. The writer keeps the bell as a public ritual, changes its meaning from “safe” to “licensed,” and leaves open who first taught the harbor to listen.

DECIDE

What is the one idea worth carrying into the world?

WRITE

What will you keep, change, and make concrete?

LEAVE OPEN

Which unresolved question can stay alive?

Your canon decision

Seed idea

KEEP — the part that already belongs

CHANGE — the part you want to make yours

Why does the change matter in this world?

LEAVE OPEN — a question, tension, or detail not ready yet

One usable sentence

Write a sentence that shows the kept or changed idea doing work in a scene.

One Change, Four Consequences

Trace a changed fact into the people or organization that controls it, ordinary work and travel, and a scene a reader can witness.

Fictional example: Messages now cross the sea faster than ships. The Tide Relay Office controls the route; merchants plan around instant warnings; a dockworker learns that a storm report arrived before the vessel carrying it.

DECIDE
What changed, in one plain sentence?

WRITE
Fill one row from control to lived consequence.

LEAVE OPEN
What second-order effect is still unknown?

Consequence ledger

Changed fact	Who controls it?	Ordinary work or travel	Scene evidence

Decide — the changed fact in one sentence

Who benefits first?

Who must adapt?

Leave open — what consequence should you not solve today?

The Market That Tests Your Map

Give a border market a reason to exist. Decide what moves through it, when the road closes, who controls passage, and what a detour costs.

Fictional example: A market sits where a mountain road meets a salt marsh. Grain moves east, salt moves west, and a bridge guild closes the road during spring melt. The detour takes three days and changes which traders can afford to arrive.

DECIDE

What exchange makes this market necessary?

WRITE

Describe the road, gate, and price of passage.

LEAVE OPEN

What does the market not know about its own future?

Market card

What moves through the market?

When does the road or route close?

Who controls passage?

What does a detour cost?

Who pays first, and who waits?

Scene: show a traveler arriving when the normal route is closed

Leave open — a pressure the market has not faced yet

Make a Magic Rule Matter

Give two claimants a dispute, choose who judges it, define the price of proof, and allow one exception that reveals the rule's pressure.

Fictional example: Two healers claim the same spell can mend a broken oath. The Archive Court judges the dispute; proof costs one remembered day; the only exception is a vow made during a shipwreck.

DECIDE
What does the rule permit, and what does it refuse?

WRITE
Stage a dispute where using the rule has a price.

LEAVE OPEN
What edge case remains dangerous?

Dispute card

Claimant A	Claimant B	Who judges?	Price of proof	One exception

Decide — write the rule without explaining why it is fair

What does each claimant fear losing?

What evidence can the judge accept?

Scene: show the rule being tested in public

Leave open — an exception you will not resolve yet

Three Stories Behind a Settlement Name

Give one settlement three useful names: the terrain name, the ruler's official name, and the short name residents actually say.

Fictional example: Nine-Reed Ford describes the river crossing on older maps. Queen Oren's charter calls it Oren's Span. Residents shorten that to The Span in daily speech.

DECIDE

Which physical feature would a traveler notice first?

WRITE

Place each name where its speaker needs it.

LEAVE OPEN

Which name is changing, and who resists?

Three-layer naming card

Layer	Your name	Who uses it?	Where it appears	History it carries
Terrain			Map / route	
Official			Decree / record	
Local			Conversation	

Decide — the feature that anchors the terrain name

What act made the official name?

What saves residents breath?

Scene: two people use different names for the same place

Leave open — a name that no longer fits perfectly

A Faction That Outlives Its Founder

Make an organization continue after its founder is gone. Define the necessary work, shared resource, succession choice, and internal conflict.

Fictional example: The Lantern Wardens maintain a chain of lighthouses. They share lamp oil and replacement glass, confirm a successor at winter gathering, and argue over whether the harbor or outer lights deserve the reserve.

DECIDE
What must happen tomorrow even without the founder?

WRITE
Give loyal members a disagreement with stakes.

LEAVE OPEN
What part of the founder's purpose is disputed?

Organization card

Part	Your answer	Evidence in a scene
Necessary work		
Shared resource		
Succession choice		
Internal conflict		

Decide — what must happen before midday?

Who acts without waiting?

What does each side protect?

Scene: the first difficult morning after the founder's death

Leave open — a new disagreement left behind