

TREATMENTS, MARKS & COLOUR



A BALLAD OF CHAOS

BRAND KIT

ANKIT CHOUDHURY

ALL ART BY THE AUTHOR

The saga is the brand. Every book is a bearing struck from one mark.

This is the working reference for anything that carries the series name — covers, retail art, the site, an audio edition, a licensed product, a pitch deck. It exists so a designer who has never read the books can produce something that looks like it belongs, and so that nothing already in print gets quietly contradicted.

The values in this kit are the values. Ink #0A0809, bone #EFEADF and one ember #C54A2C carry every artefact; the support tones, paper and gold, the volume accents, the seat palette and the three faces complete the set. Nothing outside those pages carries the series name. The second rule is discipline about the accent. The field is ink, the type is bone, and exactly one warm accent carries per artefact. Two accents in one frame reads as a mistake, not a choice.

The system has one rule underneath all the others. A **Ballad of Chaos is the brand; the individual books are volumes of it.** The series name sits above the volume title in every hierarchy — on covers, spines, banners and metadata. This was learned the hard way: the first generation of covers led with the book title and the five of them never read as one property.

THIS KIT IS THE TREATMENTS · THE COMPANION IS THE STRUCTURE

Everything here is *how a thing is made* — the marks, their treatments, the separators, the colour and the reasoning under each. **The Identity System** is the companion document: what the assets are, how they rank, and how the whole set fits together.

SERIES FIRST

The saga name is the largest text element on any cover, spine or banner. The volume title is secondary.

ONE ACCENT

Ink field, bone type, one ember accent per artefact. Never two accents competing in one frame.

THE MARK LEADS

Where space allows, the sigil carries the identity alone. It is the most recognisable asset in the system.

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Creation is not ruled — it is staffed. Making, ending and unmaking are offices, and an office can be inherited, usurped or counterfeited.

THE PREMISE THE WHOLE IDENTITY SERVES

Two lockups. Nothing else.

Cinzel at weight 500, tracked open. The two lockups treat the articles differently, and that difference is the rule. Stacked sets *A* and *OF* at two-thirds size and 72% opacity so the two nouns carry the read across three lines. Inline keeps every word at one size — on a single horizontal line the nouns already dominate, and shrinking the articles there just makes the mark look broken at small sizes.

STACKED · PRIMARY



The default. Covers, spines, title cards, avatars — anywhere the mark is the focal element and vertical space exists.

INLINE · SECONDARY



For horizontal bands: site headers, newsletter mastheads, banner strips, footers. One size throughout — no article de-emphasis. Never stacked and inline on the same surface.

COLOURWAYS

SHOWN ON THE STACKED LOCKUP

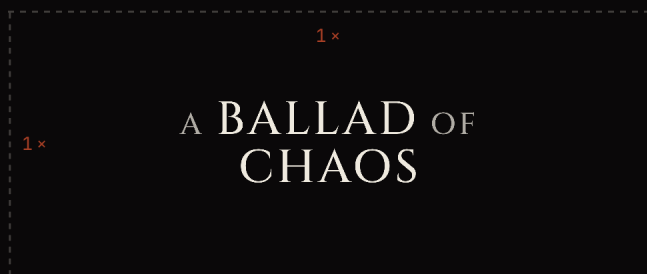


Bone on ink is the house pairing. White only where a print process cannot hold bone. Gold is reserved — collector editions and foil. Red for retail art where the mark must fight a busy plate. Black exists solely for light stock and paperwork.

The mark needs the silence around it.

Two rules travel together: how much room the wordmark is owed, and the size below which it stops working and the sigil takes over.

CLEAR SPACE = CAP HEIGHT OF
"CHAOS"



Measure the cap height of the word CHAOS and keep that much free on all four sides. Nothing enters it — no rules, no sigil, no author name, no page edge.

MINIMUM SIZES

STACKED · PRINT	28 mm wide
STACKED · SCREEN	110 px wide
INLINE · PRINT	42 mm wide
INLINE · SCREEN	170 px wide
SPINE · 5×8 TRIM	13 pt, tracked .18em

Below the inline minimum the tracking closes up and the four words run together. At that point switch to the stacked lockup or to the sigil alone.

FAVICON & AVATAR

Never shrink the wordmark for a favicon, app icon or social avatar. Use the sigil in its ward instead — it is built to survive 32 px.

BELOW THE MINIMUM, THE SIGIL
CARRIES

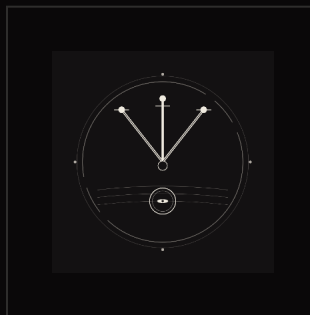
FAVICON · APP ICON ·
AVATAR



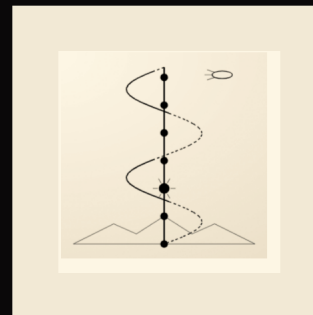
32 PX FLOOR



WARD INTACT



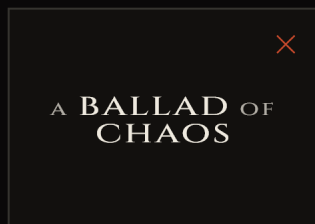
MONO FALLBACK



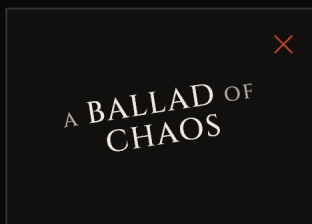
LIGHT STOCK

Eight ways to break it.

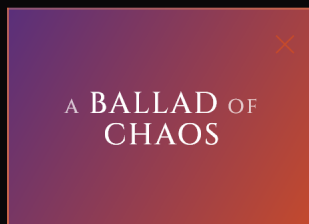
Each of these has been tried. None of them survived contact with a printed cover or a retail thumbnail.



Never stretch, condense or otherwise redraw the letterforms.



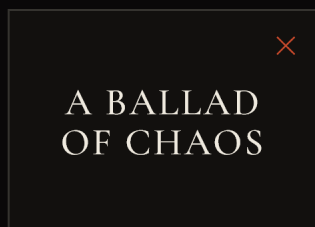
Never rotate or set the mark on an arc.



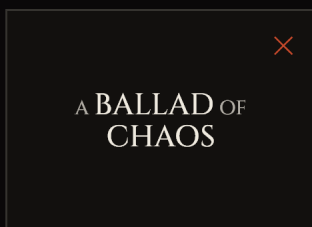
Never place it over a gradient or a busy plate without a veil beneath.



No glows, bevels, outer strokes or drop shadows. Ever.



Never re-set the name in another face — including the body serif.



Never flatten the tracking. On the stacked lockup, never flatten the article hierarchy either.



No field colour outside ink, bone, paper or a volume accent.



Never crowd the mark against the sigil — respect the clear space.

ONE STANDING EXCEPTION

The horizontal strip application on page 19 sets the sigil beside the inline mark. It clears the full cap-height measure between them, and the band is struck on ink so the marks read at their drawn weight. That layout is approved as drawn — it is not a licence to nest the two marks more tightly.

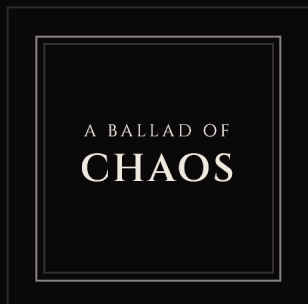
A bordered plate for small places.

Two cuts of one idea: the series name in two lines with CHAOS carrying the weight, held inside a border, nothing behind the type. The badge goes where the sigil is too intricate and the wordmark too wide — retail chips, spine feet, endpapers, stamps and seals.

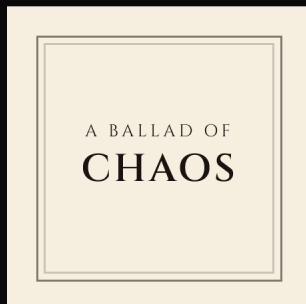
SQUARE • THE DEFAULT

PRINT, ENDPAPERS, RETAIL CHIPS

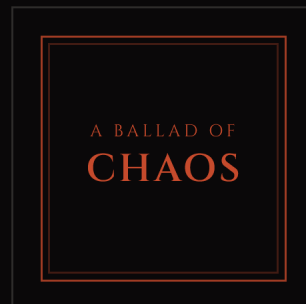
INK • PRIMARY



PAPER • INTERIOR



EMBER • ACCENT



ROUND • THE SEAL

CONCENTRIC RINGS + ZODIAC PIPS

INK • PRIMARY



PAPER • INTERIOR



EMBER • ACCENT



CONSTRUCTION

Square: borders inset 9% and 11.5%, both hairline. “A BALLAD OF” at .2em tracking, “CHAOS” roughly 2.2× beneath it, the block optically centred — slightly above true centre.

THE ROUND BADGE IS ITS OWN MARK

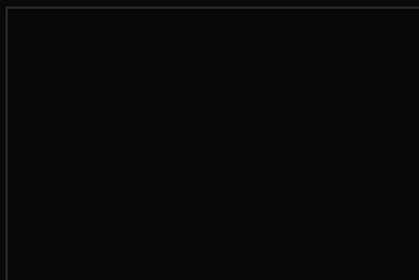
Not the square plate with rounded corners. Three rings — hairline at r97, solid at r93, the cover's dash pattern at r86.5 — and twelve zodiac pips at the rim, every third struck in the accent.

NO FLOURISHES

Nothing sits below CHAOS — no rule, pip triad, crossed blade or numeral. The round badge holds its wordmark down to 200 px; below that, the sigil alone.

Ink, bone, and one ember.

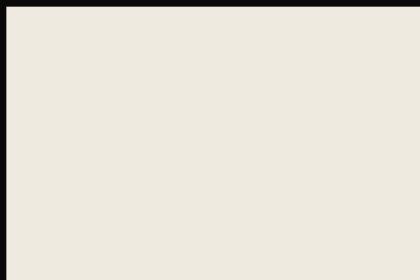
Three colours do almost all the work. Ink is never pure black — it carries a trace of warmth so it sits with the ember instead of fighting it. Bone is never pure white, for the same reason.



INK

#0A0809 · 10 8 9

The field. Every cover, every dark surface, every spine. Warm-shifted black.



BONE

#EFEADF · 239 234 223

All type on ink, all hairlines, the mono apparatus. Reads as aged paper, not as white.



EMBER

#C54A2C · 197 74 44

One value, two roles: the series accent and Lucifer's current. Sigils, rules, volume numerals, the single accent line. One per artefact.



INK 2

#12100E

Card and plate fills a step off the field.



INK 3

#1A1613

Image wells and empty frames.



PAPER

#F6EFE0

Interior stock, ink-on-light editions.



GOLD

#C9A24B

Reserved. Collector editions and foil only — never a volume accent.

CONTRAST

Bone on ink clears 14:1. Ember on ink clears about 4.4:1 — fine for rules, numerals and short display strings, never for body copy.

GOLD IS RESERVED

Gold is #C9A24B, one value everywhere it appears. It is not a second accent and not a volume accent: collector tier and foil only. Book V's board is struck in dawn-amber #D8A24A — a separate value, never substituted.

Colour is metaphysics here, not decoration.

The books run on three currents. The Red is one value with two roles: the series accent and Lucifer's current. The Blue and The Green are canon colours only — they belong to maps, diagrams and world material, and neither is ever pressed into service as a UI palette or a secondary brand ramp.



THE RED

#C54A2C

One value, two roles: the series accent and Lucifer's current. Rebellion, passion, the whisper of the fallen. Lucifer's domain.



THE BLUE

#4A6F9C

Order, intellect, the will to define. The breath of creation.



THE GREEN

#5C8A63

Death, stillness, the mercy that ends cycles.

VOLUME ACCENTS · ONE PER BOOK · THREE IN THE EMBER RANGE, IV AND V DELIBERATE EXCEPTIONS



I · NIGHT & CHAOS

#C0392B



II · LIGHT & LIES

#D9822B



III · PERDITION

#A63D3D



IV · FLAME & RUIN

#8E9AA8



V · DAWN & ORDER

#D8A24A

△ THE CURRENTS ARE THREE — THERE IS NO FOURTH

The Silence is not a current, not an Ancient and not a throne: it is the Seventh Seal. It gets no swatch here and no seat on any palette. Where it appears in artwork it appears as absence — the one place the linework stops.

WHY IV IS GREY AND V IS AMBER

A Reaper of Flame and Ruin is the cold book — grey ash and a teal storm, with the fire kept off the palette — so its accent cools to storm-grey and steps outside the ember family on purpose. Book V goes the other way: it is the only volume set at dawn rather than in the dark, and its accent warms to dawn-amber. That is a volume accent, not the reserved gold on page 8. Those two exceptions are load-bearing. Books I, II and III stay within the ember range.

Where canon colour actually originates.

The currents are the cosmology's colour. The seven Ancient seats are where colour enters the story: each value is the light an opal tablet released as it clicked into its socket in Book I. Five have a canon colour. Two were never filled, so their values are taken from the volume artwork instead — and any diagram should mark the difference.



SALVATION

#EFEADF

“White light danced across the chamber.”



LOVE

#C9A24B

“Shimmered gold as it found its home.”



CREATION

#4A6F9C

“Blue energy pulsed outward.”



DESTRUCTION

#5C8A63

“A faint ring of green light.”



JUDGMENT

#C54A2C

“Glowing crimson.”



CALAMITY

#8E9AA8 · ARTWORK

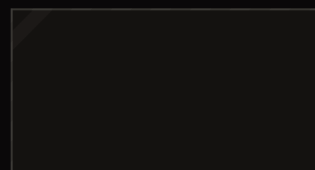
Never filled — no tablet light. Value from the Book IV artwork.



WAR

#A63D3D · ARTWORK

Never filled — no tablet light. Value from the Book III artwork.



THE SILENCE

NO SWATCH

The Seventh Seal. No colour, no seat, no ring.

△ THE ORDER IS THE DIAGRAM

Salvation · Calamity · Love · Creation · War · Destruction · Judgment. Never reorder, rename or alphabetise: every Ancient has power over the ones to their left, and power to expunge the one on their right. Set left to right, the names grow as the emerald line beneath them thickens.

HOW TO USE IT

A world-material palette, like the currents — diagrams, plates, endpapers and the sigil boards. **Not** a UI ramp and not a secondary brand palette. The two artwork-sourced values carry a dashed ring wherever they are drawn, so the never-filled seats stay legible as never filled.

Three faces, three jobs, no overlap.

CINZEL • 500 • THE WORDMARK ONLY

A BALLAD OF CHAOS

STACKED • ARTICLES AT TWO-THIRDS

A BALLAD OF CHAOS

INLINE • ONE SIZE THROUGHOUT

Cinzel appears in exactly one place: the wordmark and the badge. It never sets a headline, a title, a caption or a line of copy. Stacked de-emphasises the articles; inline holds one size throughout. The two never share a working surface; a specimen row is the one place they appear together.

CORMORANT GARAMOND • 600 / 500 ITALIC • TITLES & VOICE

A REAPER OF FLAME AND RUIN

Not Betrayer. Betrayed.

Book titles set in 600 uppercase, tight leading, tracking near zero. Taglines, epigraphs, volume numerals and pull quotes in 500 italic — the italic is the series' speaking voice and carries the ember accent when it stands alone.

JETBRAINS MONO • 400 • APPARATUS

VOL • IV • ANKIT CHOUDHURY • EPIC FANTASY

Everything that is data rather than voice: author name, volume numbers, category, ISBN, price, section labels, folios, captions. Always uppercase, always tracked between .25em and .55em, never above 13 px in a cover context.

BODY COPY

EB Garamond or Cormorant Garamond at 15–16 px / 12 pt minimum, leading 1.6. Justified in book interiors, ragged right everywhere else.

SLIDE & COVER FLOOR

Nothing below 24 px on a 1920×1080 surface; nothing below 12 pt in print. Mono labels are the only exception and they are graphic elements, not reading text.

NEVER

No Inter, Roboto, Arial or system sans anywhere in the identity — including web fallbacks. If the serif fails to load, fall back to Garamond, then Georgia.

Nine cuts, each with one job.

FOUR UNFRAMED

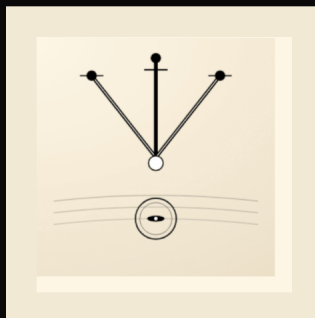
MARK ALONE • WHERE A CONTAINER ALREADY EXISTS



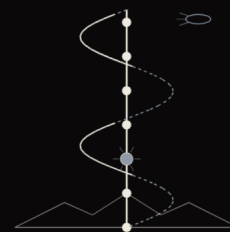
COLOUR ON INK



BONE • CLEAR



INK ON PAPER



TRANSPARENT

FOUR FRAMED • THE WARD RING ADDED

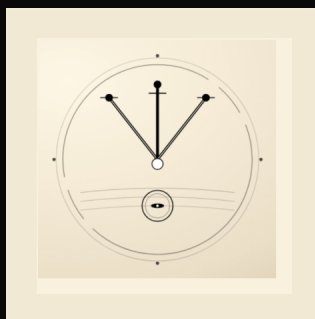
STANDS ALONE • SURVIVES 32 PX



COLOUR FRAMED



BONE FRAMED



INK FRAMED



TRANSPARENT FRAMED

THE AVATAR CUT • RENDERED AT TRUE SIZE

SOCIAL & APP ICONS • CIRCULAR CROP



96 PX



64 PX



44 PX



32 PX

One cut serves every icon slot, in each volume's own accent. The ward holds at 32 px, which is why the wordmark is never shrunk for an avatar.

HOW A SIGIL IS BUILT

A stable outer ward, a chaotic interior, one central glyph on a vertical axis. **The ward never changes; the interior always does.**

CHOOSING ONE

Colour where the sigil is the hero. Bone beside type it must not outrank. Ink-on-paper for interiors and single-ink print. Transparent only as a layer you are compositing yourself.

DO NOT RECOLOUR

Every mark is exported in its own volume accent. Never hue-shift one book's sigil into another's colour to fill out a grid — the accent is part of which book it is.

Six scene breaks, three finishes each.

Every volume has its own scene-break rule, drawn from its sigil's figure. One universal series ornament covers front matter, back matter and anything that is not a specific book. All six are specimened below, in each of the three finishes. Every ornament exists in every finish.

ON PAPER • INK EDITION	THE INTERIOR DEFAULT
	
SERIES • UNIVERSAL	I • NIGHT AND CHAOS
ON INK • ACCENT EDITION	DIGITAL & DARK SURFACES
	
II • LIGHT AND LIES	III • PERDITION
ON INK • BONE EDITION	WHERE THE ACCENT WOULD OUTRANK NEARBY TYPE
	
IV • FLAME AND RUIN	V • DAWN AND ORDER

THREE FINISHES

Paper/ink for interiors, dark/accent for digital, dark/bone where the accent would outrank nearby type. Six ornaments × three finishes.

SIZING

Roughly 40% of the text measure, centred, with one blank line above and below. Never larger — a scene break is a breath, not a section opener.

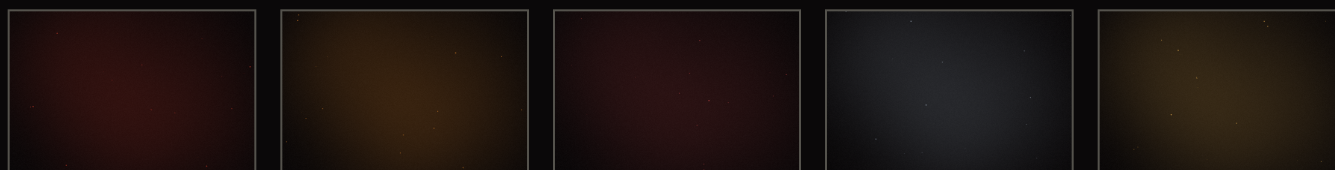
MIXING

One ornament per volume throughout its interior. Do not alternate between books' rules inside a single volume, including in the omnibus.

Two atmospheres: smoke for the cycle, starfield for the omnibus.

Two families. The five volumes get smoke, embers and grain in their own accent. The omnibus gets a starfield with an ember vignette — the vigil, watching. Both are available on ink and as transparent overlays for compositing.

VOLUME ATMOSPHERES • SMOKE + EMBERS + GRAIN



I

II

III

IV

V

THE VIGIL STARFIELD • THREE DENSITIES



STANDARD • 110 SPECKS

DENSE • 320

VERY DENSE • 650

PRINT PLATES

A 10½" × 8¼" starfield at print resolution exists for full 5×8 wraps, on ink and transparent. Use it rather than upscaling a screen plate — the specks go soft above about 140%.

GRAIN IS NOT OPTIONAL

Every field carries grain at 18–22% in overlay. It is what keeps the ink from reading as flat digital black, and it survives print far better than a gradient does.

The sigil boards.

The current generation. Ink board, the volume's mark struck inside its ward, series name largest, book title quiet in the lower third, author in mono beneath a hairline. No figure, no fire, no horizon — the art moved to the interiors and the retail plates, and the covers became type and geometry.

The badge is the board's status, not the volume's: Books I–IV are published, and the boards are in print for I and II.



ONE TREATMENT, FIVE VOLUMES

Books I to V are identical in construction — same board, same ward, same type positions. Only the mark and the accent change. That uniformity is the point: it is what makes five covers read as one cycle on a shelf and at thumbnail size.

THE STANDALONE IS NOT THIS SYSTEM

Book V also ships as *A Lament of Dawn*, a standalone edition on a near-white field. That edition sells on its own and sits outside the board system entirely — it is not a light-field variant of these covers, and it is not a licence for one.

WHAT CHANGES ON BOOK V

The volume is *A Harbinger of Dawn and Order*, and its board carries that title. Two things inside the mark change with it: the sigil reverses polarity — order as fragile human geometry inside, chaos at rest around it — and it is struck in its own accent, dawn-amber #D8A24A, rather than a red. The construction around them does not change.

SPINES READ AS A SHELF

Five 76 pt spines and one 112 pt omnibus board. Series name largest, volume title in the accent, numeral at the head, author at the foot.

Where the whole saga has to fit in one frame.

The series banner is the one asset that carries all five volumes at once: the master ward and the wordmark at the left, the volumes as a numbered list at the right. The horizontal strip is the same idea reduced to a band — lockup ranged left, the five bearings ranged right.



THE SERIES BANNER • 970 × 600 • IN USE

ONE ACCENT PER ROW

The banner is the only artefact that shows all five volume accents together, and it earns that by keeping each one inside its own row. Anywhere else, two accents in one frame reads as a mistake.

THE MARKS ARE UNALTERED

The strip runs the colour exports at their drawn weight on a matching ink field — which is why this band is struck on ink rather than the lighter panel tone. Thickening the linework to gain contrast deforms the ward.

INLINE ONLY, NEVER STACKED

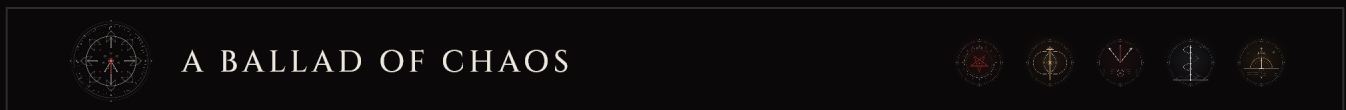
A horizontal band takes the inline lockup at one size throughout, with a full cap-height of clearance between the ward and the mark.

THE HORIZONTAL STRIP

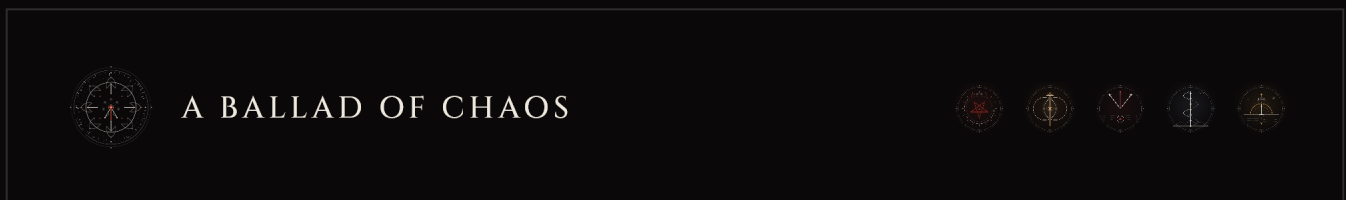
LOCKUP LEFT • FIVE BEARINGS RIGHT



SITE HEADER • 1440 × 120



NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD • 600 × 90



Take what you need. Two uses need a yes.

Covers, marks, a photograph and the boilerplate are free to use for press, review and editorial work — with credit, and no form to fill in. Two uses are different and need written permission first: branding something that is not this saga — a project, a channel, a product, a service — and merchandise, meaning anything sold carrying these marks. Neither is a no — ask: hello@balladofchaos.com. Credit Ankit Choudhury. The writing and the artwork are his; the music is written, arranged and produced by him.

WHAT IS FREELY AVAILABLE

The covers — each book and the omnibus, as the web cuts the site runs on. The marks — vector, print-ready. The documents — this kit and the Identity System. The author photograph and the boilerplate below.

HOW THE WORK WAS MADE

Made the same way everything else was: by one person, in whichever medium the story asked for next. The films are cut from the saga's own imagery — none of it commissioned — set to music he wrote, arranged and produced, out of books begun fifteen years before anyone could read them.

WHAT IS SENT ON REQUEST

Print-resolution covers and interior plates are sent on request, as are longer extracts and the soundtrack stems. Enquiries and permissions: hello@balladofchaos.com.

⚠ DO NOT RECOLOUR, CROP OR RESET THE MARKS

The covers and marks are supplied finished. Recolouring a sigil, cropping a cover to a new proportion or resetting the wordmark all break the system this kit exists to hold. If a piece needs a shape the assets do not have, ask for it.

⚠ TWO THINGS NEED WRITTEN PERMISSION

Branding anything that is not this saga with the covers or sigils, and merchandise of any kind. Both are about identity, not copying — neither is refused as a rule, but neither goes ahead without written consent. Full terms: balladofchaos.com/license.html

⚠ RESERVED, IN FULL

Screen, stage, audio and interactive adaptation rights are reserved and granted to nobody. The writing, artwork and marks are expressly reserved against text and data mining and against training any AI system — the first four are a conversation, the last a reservation.

WHERE TO GO

ENQUIRIES	hello@balladofchaos.com
PRESS KIT	balladofchaos.com/press.html
LICENCE	balladofchaos.com/license.html

IF A PIECE WANTS THE REASONING

Why the coda has no wings, why one book is cold and the other four burn — that is written down at length, in the author's own words, in *The Anatomy of Chaos*, the canon reference behind every decision in this kit.

