



Gatling Grimoire

*Hear ye, weary mages,
From now on your battles
Are fated both by chance
And by your dice's dance.*

*Beware the dungeon bars
Shining with thousand stars.
Dance through the deadly choir
Of the Gatling Grimoire.*

Credits

Development, Writing

Cezar Petreanu

Illustrations

Cezar Petreanu, David Petreanu,
various *Creative Commons Zero* images.

Playtesters

Cezar Petreanu, 2025

Version dev.25.1.3

DISCLAIMER: THIS DEVELOPMENT VERSION CONTAINS PLACEHOLDER TEXT AND IMAGES. **THIS VERSION SHOULD BE USED FOR PLAYTESTING PURPOSES AND SHOULD NOT BE PUBLISHED.**

Contents

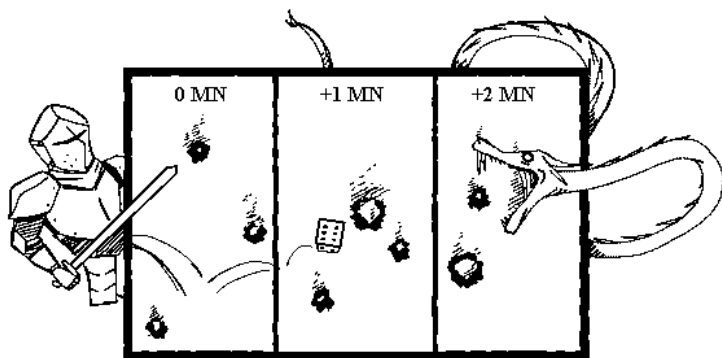
Introduction	4
Preparing	5
Quick Rules	6
1. The Game	9
The Mages	10
The Aspects	12
The Duel	14
The Battle Board	18
2. The Grimoire	21
Patterns	22
Spells and Curses	50

Introduction

Gatling Grimoire is a fantasy duelling game in which the players' dice rolling skills are put to the test against various attacks and spell patterns.

In a duel, it's up to your strength and dexterity how you get out of the firefight: you can plunge straight into danger, play it safe, or dodge the bullets in style.

The only thing fate decides are what patterns will be cast and **how hard they will hurt** (your progress in completing the Grimoire).



Preparing

Gatling Grimoire is a physical tabletop game intended for groups of 2-4 players but it can also be played solo.

To run the game, you will need:

Item	Uses
6-sided dice for each player *	Combat rolls
52-card deck (without jokers)	Pattern pages
A paper divided into 3 equal zones *	Battle board
8 small objects * (other dice, small blocks, coins etc)	Bullets
Pen and paper	Stats and spell
The Gatling Grimoire rule- book	Rules, patterns and spells

Most items should be easily accessible (e.g. the d6, the small objects for the bullets) or can be replaced with digital alternatives (e.g. the rulebook, a virtual deck of cards).

* However, the dice, the bullets and the battle board are required and must be physical.

Quick Rules

1. **Before dealing the cards**, write the following table to track your stats:

MN	♥	♦	♠	♣
0	0	0	0	0
Spells and Curses				

2. **Shuffle the deck and deal the cards equally** to the players (mages) face down. In case of a 3-player game, discard the remaining card.
3. **The round begins**, the players take turns clockwise. The first player is the attacker:
 - **Draw a card** from the top of the deck.
 - **Look up the card's number** in The Grimoire (pg. 21) and arrange the bullets as shown in the pattern, starting from the top of the board.
 - **Put the card back** at the bottom of the deck after the rest of the players rolled.

4. **The other players roll their dice** from the bottom of the board, in the order of their turns. All dice should stay on the board:
- **If the die touches a bullet**, the attacker gains a number of cards from the player's deck equal to the number on the die (\pm the power of the suit or spell). The cards are placed at the bottom of the deck. **Other players can push your die into a bullet.**
 - **If the die leaves the board** without touching a bullet, the player loses 1 MN and re-rolls. **If the player has no MN left**, the attacker gains one card from them.
 - **Each player gains 0, 1 or 2 mana (MN)** based on how many board zones the dice have crossed. All players can gain a maximum of 6 MN.
5. **After all players attacked**, everyone rolls to take turns for spells. Each player can spend MN to cast a spell from The Grimoire (pg. 50), upgrading a suit or cursing an opponent.
6. **A new round begins**, repeat step 3.

**A mage with no cards left is out of the game.
The last mage conquers the Gatling Grimoire.**

Good Luck

For more details, check the next pages.



1. The Game

The Mages

You take the role of **mag**es. Whether you are royal magicians or outcast sorcerers, you dedicated your lives to completing a powerful, volatile spellbook.

When playing the game, you start with the following objects:

- **A paper divided in three parts**

This will be the battle board (pg. 19), where the duel's action takes place.

- **A deck of cards (26/17/13 cards)**

This is your fragment of the Gatling Grimoire.

Each card represents a page that contains a **pattern** (the number) and an **aspect** (the suit). Use them to unleash your attacks.

- **A 6-sided die**

Mages are represented by this humble object.

During the duel, you have to roll and dodge through volleys of bullets.

- **8 small objects**

Each page of the Grimoire launches a number of magical bullets in various patterns.

Arrange the bullets on the battle board and see your opponents try to avoid them.

Be careful not to touch them. Hitting a bullet will make you lose pages!

- **Pen and paper**

Mages will have to keep track of their spell power, strengths and weaknesses in the following table:

MN	♥	♦	♠	♣
0	0	0	0	0
Spells and Curses				

Mages have power over four **aspects** (pg. 12), and each page is marked by one of them. Add your power of the marked aspect to your attacks.

Mana (MN) can be used to cast spells, to increase or decrease the power of the aspects or to place a curse on your opponents.

The Aspects

The rules, morals and legends written and spoken across the world are all based on four **aspects** that govern the Realm.

As mages, you call upon the four aspects to aid you in the final duel.

In battle, add the power of the aspect that matches the drawn card.

If a mage touches your bullet, you gain **more or less pages** from them.

(dice number \pm the aspect's power)

For example:

You draw a page with Wild(♣) aspect and the power of your Wild(♣) aspect is 2. If a mage gets hit by your attack and their die is 5, you gain 7 pages from them.

After all the mages have finished their round, they can use MN to **boost one of their own's aspect** or decrease the power of an opponent's aspect.



♥ The Blood

The people, the tools and the kingdoms that keep shaping the world. A story of perseverance and adaptation written by the victors.



♣ The Wild

The thrill for the unknown and the drive for survival. With the elements of nature, one can get a step closer to tomorrow.



♠ The Lost

The fate of the greedy for magic. Those imprisoned will find no way out, for the rest who cannot have the power shall not let others get it.



♦ The Divine

The beauty of what could be. The world praises and defies their ideals, they can see them but shall never attain them.

The Duel

For years, mages around the Realm went on the hunt for the lost pages. There are only a few left now, face to face in one final duel.

The last mage standing conquers the Gatling Grimoire.

Your goal is to take back the rest of the pages from your opponents and complete the Grimoire.

1. Scatter the pages

First, shuffle the deck. The cards will be dealt equally to the mages. Next, establish who is fighting:

- **Free for All:** 4 mage duel—13 pages

Fate brought all the mages from all the four corners of the Realm to witness the power of the Grimoire.

- **The Odd One Out:** 3 mage duel—17 pages

The duel gets personal when a page gets lost forever in a magic accident.

Discard the remaining card.

- **The Final Showdown:** 2 mage duel—26 pages

The stakes are at their highest. The last two mages meet at the edge of the Realm and will not hold back.

Before the duel, **roll your die for each aspect to get your power.**

- **Tag Team:** 2 vs 2 mage duel—13 pages

Mages join forces in an unlikely alliance. Make strategies to reach your goals, be it containing the Grimoire or keeping it to yourself.

Make teams of two. **Each team shares one aspect power table.**

2. Cast the attack

Mages take turns clockwise to attack.

- Take a page from your deck.
- Look up the page's number on the Grimoire (pg. 21)
- Arrange the bullets on the battle board according to the pattern, starting from the top of the battle board.

***Tip:** Optionally, narrate the looks or effects of your magic attack to bring life to your duel.*

3. Dodge the bullets

The other mages carefully throw their dice from the bottom of the board. **The die must touch the bottom zone first, do not overshoot to higher zones.**

After all dice are rolled, follow the list to determine what happens to each mage. If their die...

- **...touched a bullet**

Check the number of their die and add the corresponding aspect power to it. The affected mage must give the attacker that number of pages from their deck.

Tip: If your aspect power is negative, you get a minimum of one page.

- **...didn't touch anything**

The mage is safe. However, if another mage pushes you into a bullet, you lose pages according to the previous point.

- **...left the board**

The mage loses 1 MN. If the mage has no MN left, the attacker gets one page from their deck. The mage then rerolls and checks the list again.

4. Tension rises

Each mage gets a number of MN based on how many board zones their dice passed.

- **Bottom zone — 0 MN**

“Iron rusts from disuse”... Staying in the back might be safe, but on the long run you risk falling behind your rivals.

- **Middle zone — 1 MN**

You get close to danger, analyze it, learn from your mistakes and, eventually, get more courage.

- **Top zone — 2 MN**

Whether you got here by luck or recklessness, your adrenaline will soon turn into magic power.

6. Increase your powers

After all mages attacked, roll your dice to take turns for spells (pg. 50), starting from the lowest.

Spells cost MN and can be used to change the rules of the next duel round.

Usually, you can **increase or decrease one of your own or an opponent's aspect**, 2 MN for 1 aspect point.

7. A new round begins.

Eventually, as the battle goes on and your attacks get stronger, some mages might have no pages left in their Grimoire.

A mage with no pages is out of the duel.

The Battle Board

The battle board is the arena where the duel takes place.

It's a piece of paper, usually gridded (9x8 squares), divided into three horizontal **board zones**.

For convenience, each zone can have noted the number of MN that mages can obtain, from bottom to top: **0 MN, +1 MN, +2 MN**.

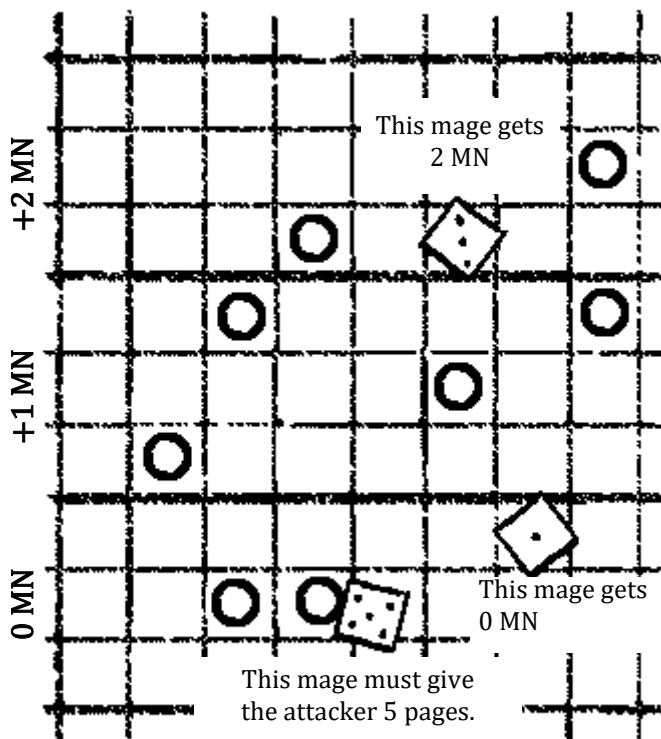
When attacking, bullets must be thrown or arranged **from the top** of the board.

The other mages must roll starting **from the bottom** of the board. **The die must touch the bottom zone first, do not overshoot to higher zones.**

***Tip:** You have control over how you throw your dice. A good way to do it is to pick your die with two fingers, aim at the direction you want your die to roll, and gently throw it on the board.*



Attackers arrange the bullets from the top.



Mages roll the dice from the bottom.





2. The Grimoire

Patterns

Patterns are the attack spells of the Gatling Grimoire.

There are 13 unique patterns. Mages must look up the number of their page to find its corresponding pattern.

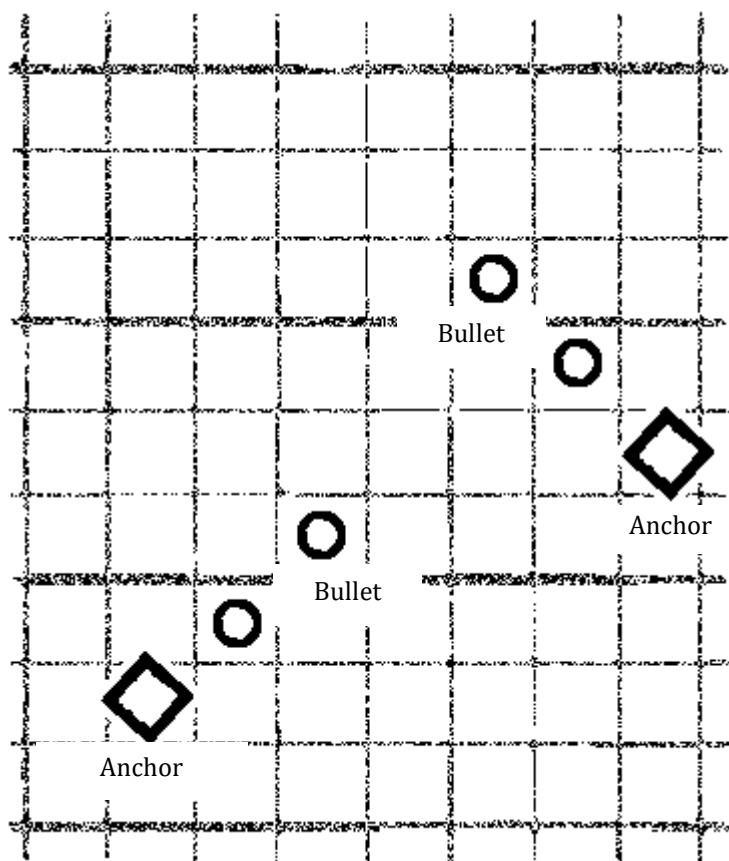
Each pattern contains instructions for the attacker:

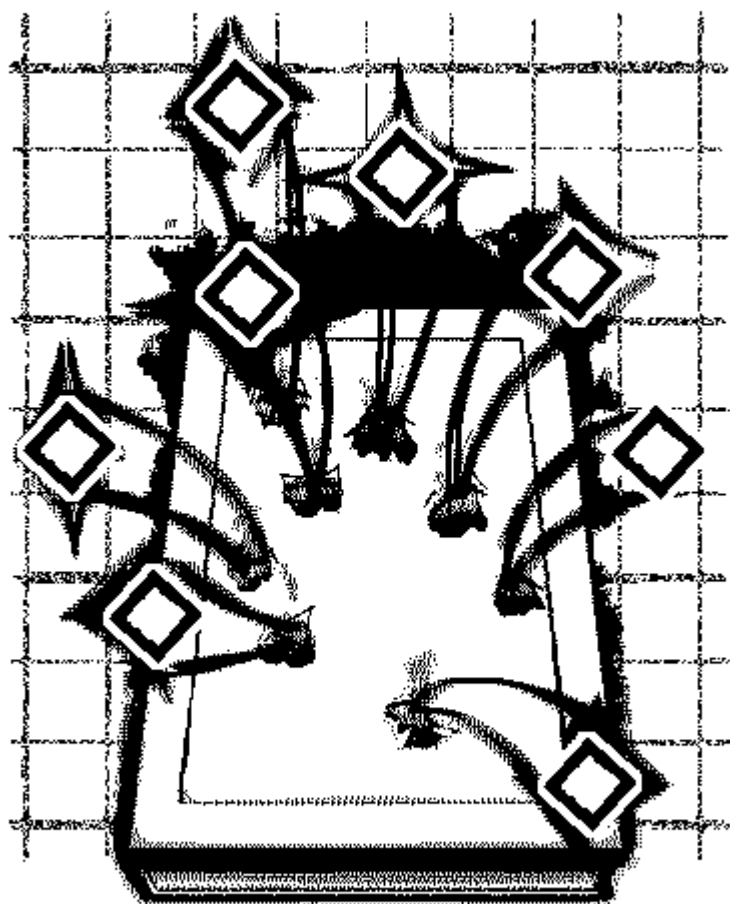
- how many **bullets** (○) are used
- how to arrange them on the board
- other variations, if you can move the pattern

Some patterns have a fixed form, one pattern (1—Gatling) throws all bullets randomly across the board, but some patterns require to roll an **anchor** first.

An anchor (◇) is a bullet that will guide the placement of other bullets. If an anchor leaves the board, you may reroll it.

When arranging the bullets, **the pattern must fit within the board**. You are allowed to move the pattern one square at a time if a bullet is out of the board.





1-Gatling



Archers' Volleys



Volcanic Eruption



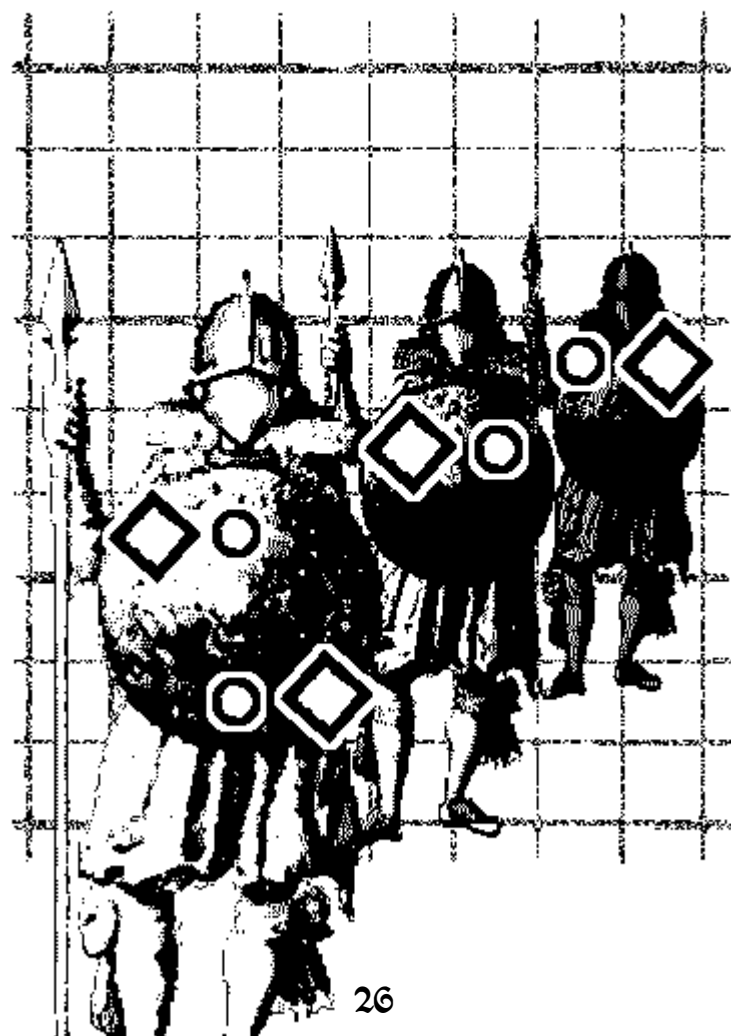
Mass Hysteria



Constellation

Pattern

Roll **♦8 Anchors** randomly on the board. Reroll any bullets that fly off the board.



2-Barricade



Soldier's Stance



Rumbling Avalanche



Rising Gravestones

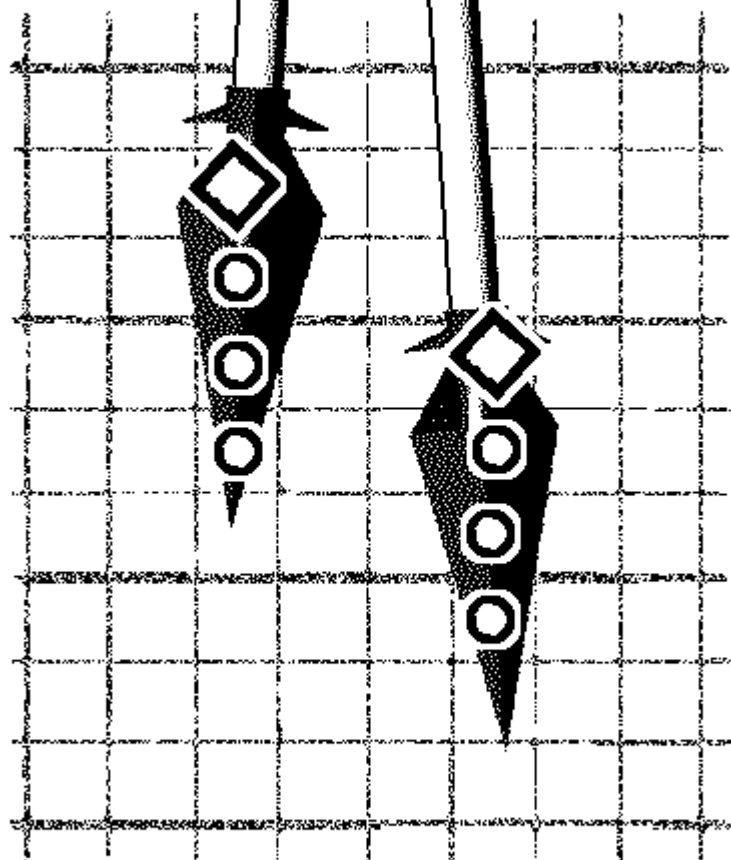


Legendary Guardians

Pattern

Roll **♦4 Anchors** on the board. Reroll any bullets that fly off the board.

For each, place **○1 Bullet** on either side horizontally.



3–Pierce



General's Spear



Diving Talons



Necrotic Touch

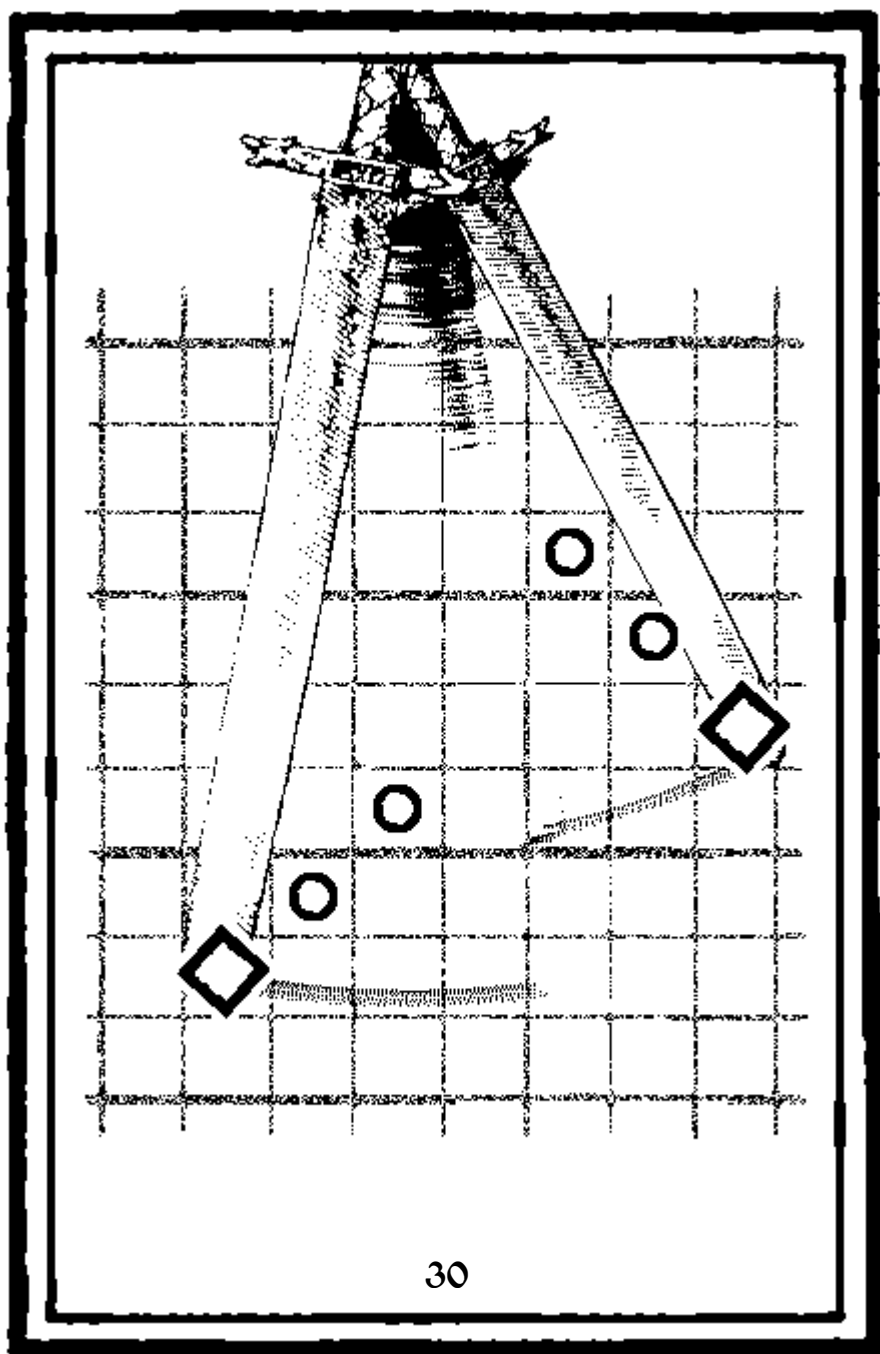


Lightning Bolt

Pattern

Roll **◇2 Anchors** on the board. Reroll any bullets that fly off the board.

For each, place **○3 Bullets** vertically. Extend the anchor either upwards or downwards, keeping the pattern within the board.



4-Slash



Knight's Sword



Sharp Claws



Soul Reap

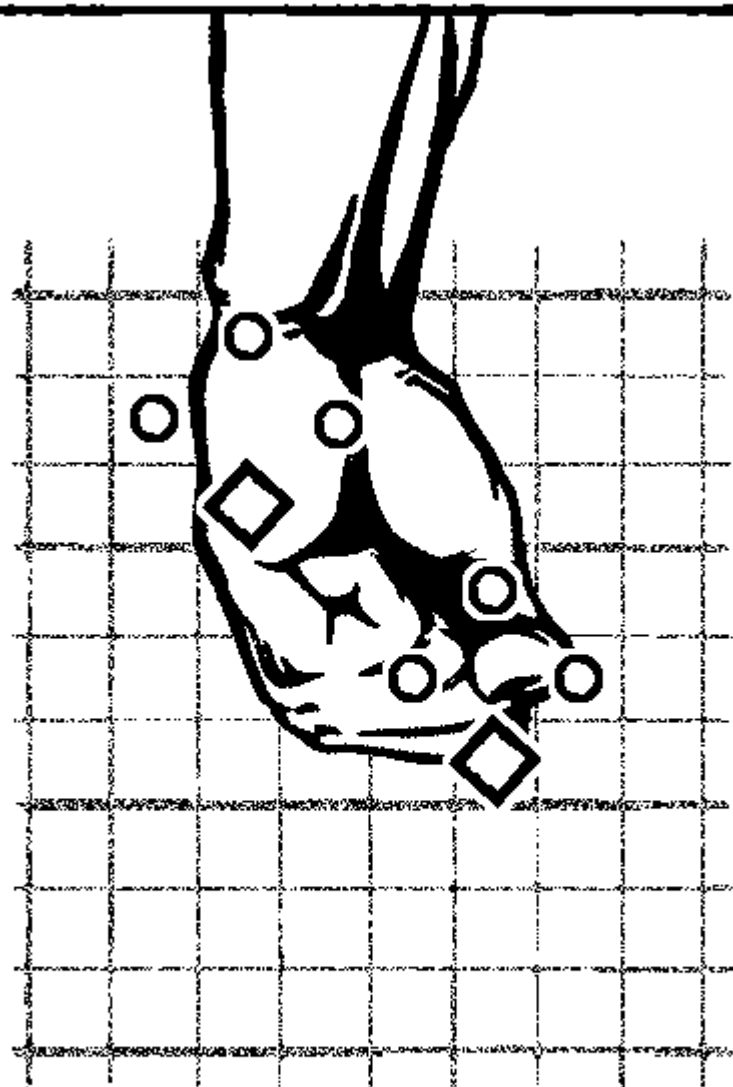


Corporeal Cleanse

Pattern

Roll **◇2 Anchors** on the board. Reroll any bullets that fly off the board.

For each, place **○2 Bullets** diagonally, forming a trail. The trail may be oriented in any diagonal direction as long as the pattern is within the board.



5-Strike



People's Courage



Fierce Pounce



Restless Past



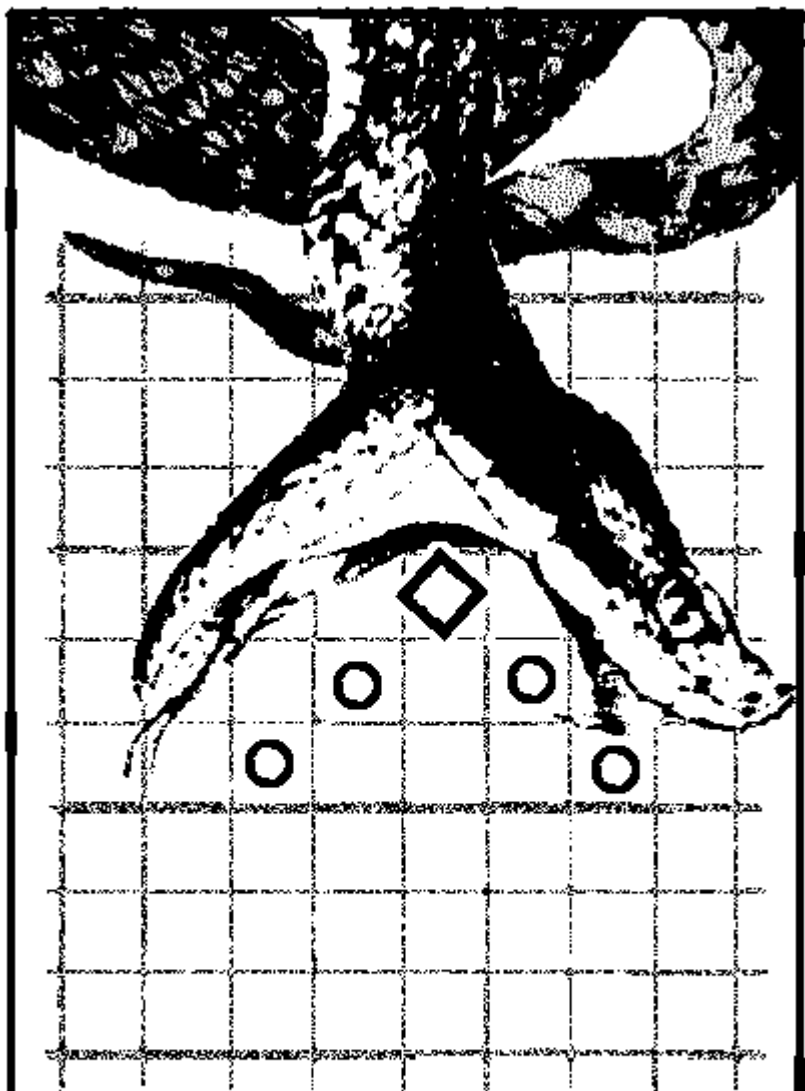
Pulsar Burst

Pattern

Roll **◇2 Anchors** on the board. Reroll any bullets that fly off the board.

For each, place **○3 Bullets** to form a diamond shape or a small circle.

The shape may be oriented horizontally or vertically as long as the pattern is within the board.



6-Jan



Berserk's Impulse



Venomous Bite



Thaumophage



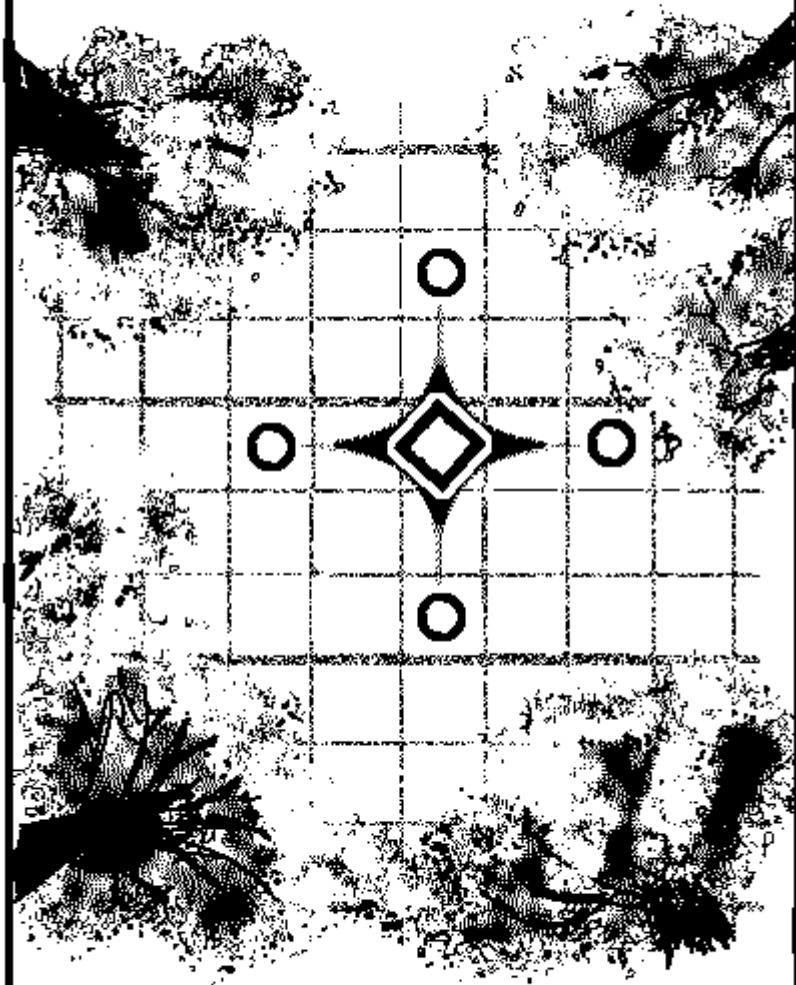
Event Horizon

Pattern

Roll **◇1 Anchor** on the board. Reroll if it flies off the board.

Place **○4 Bullets**, 2 on each side, diagonally and downward, forming a triangle.

The pattern may be moved slightly, one square at a time, if the bullets do not fit inside the board.



7-Star



Mage's Mercy



Heatstroke



Evil Eye



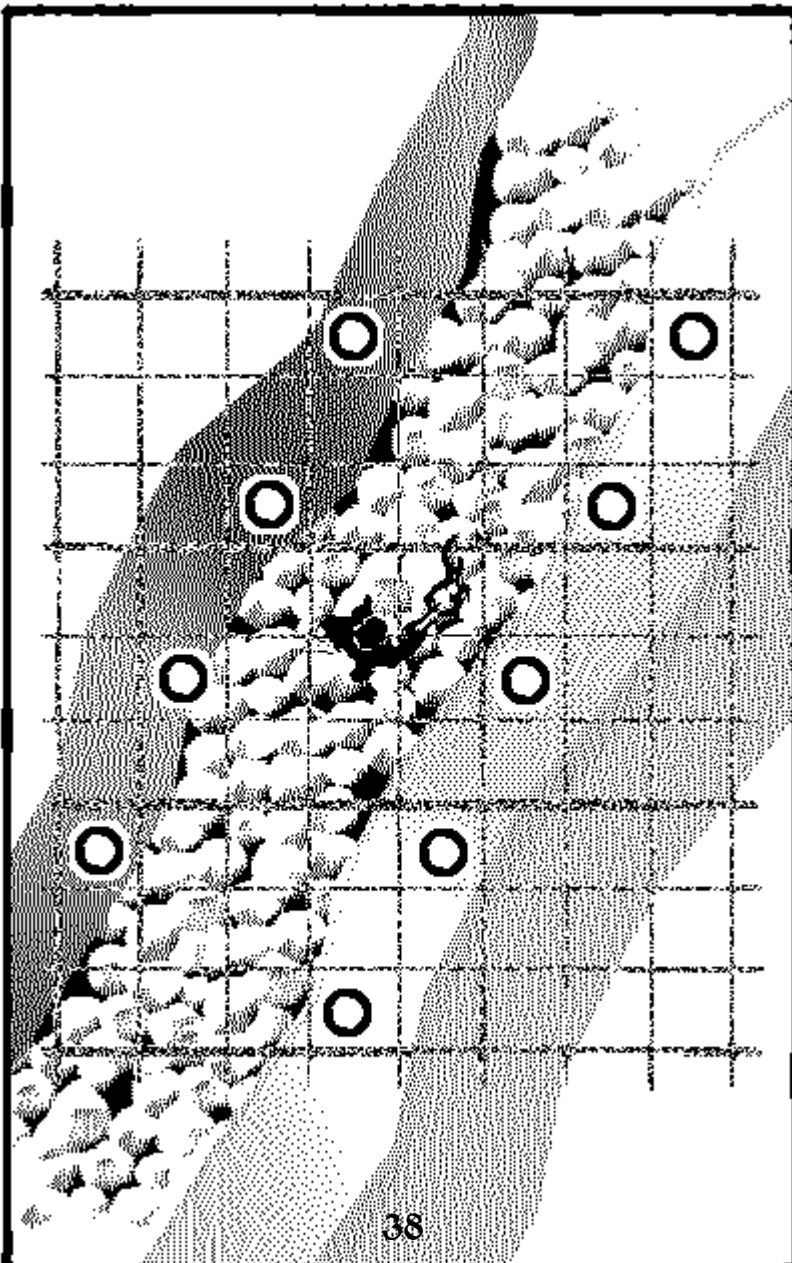
Orbital Revolution

Pattern

Roll **◇1 Anchor** on the board. Reroll if it flies off the board.

Place **○4 Bullets**, 1 on each side of the anchor, leaving 1 square between them.

The pattern may be moved slightly, one square at the time, if the bullets do not fit inside the board.



8-Passage



Bandit's Tunnel



Turbulent Currents



Envious Grab

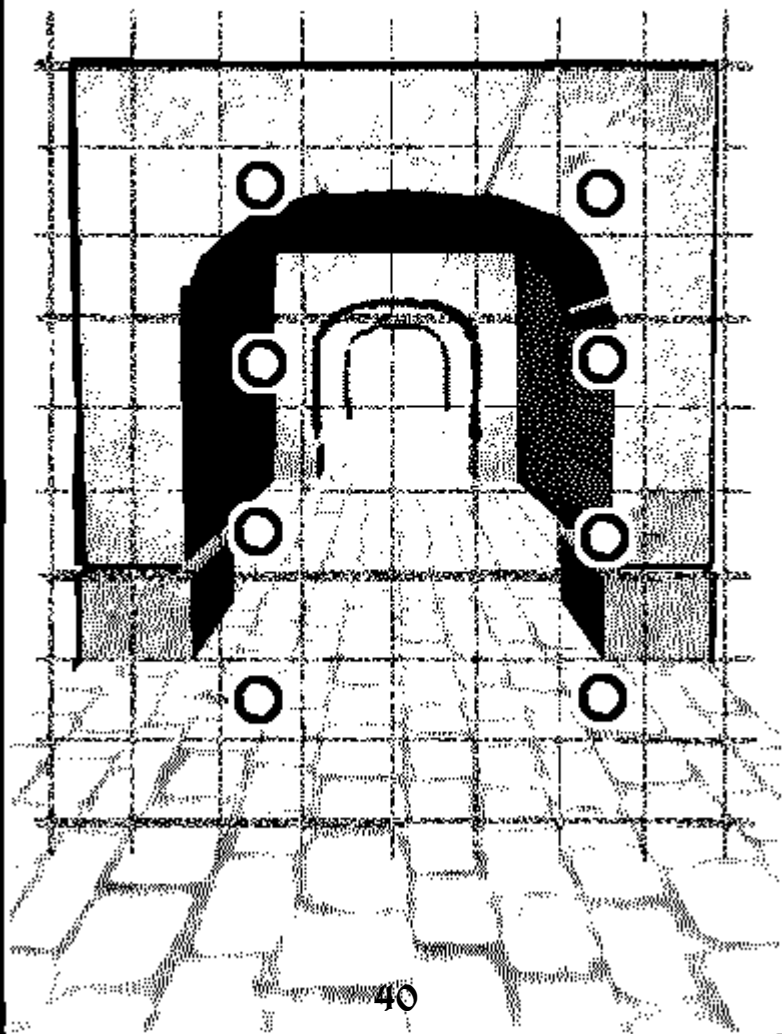


Chosen Path

Pattern

Arrange **08 Bullets** to form two parallel and diagonal rows, as shown in the drawing.

The pattern may be flipped horizontally.



9-Hall



Catacomb's Pillars



Wild Stampede



Dark Torches



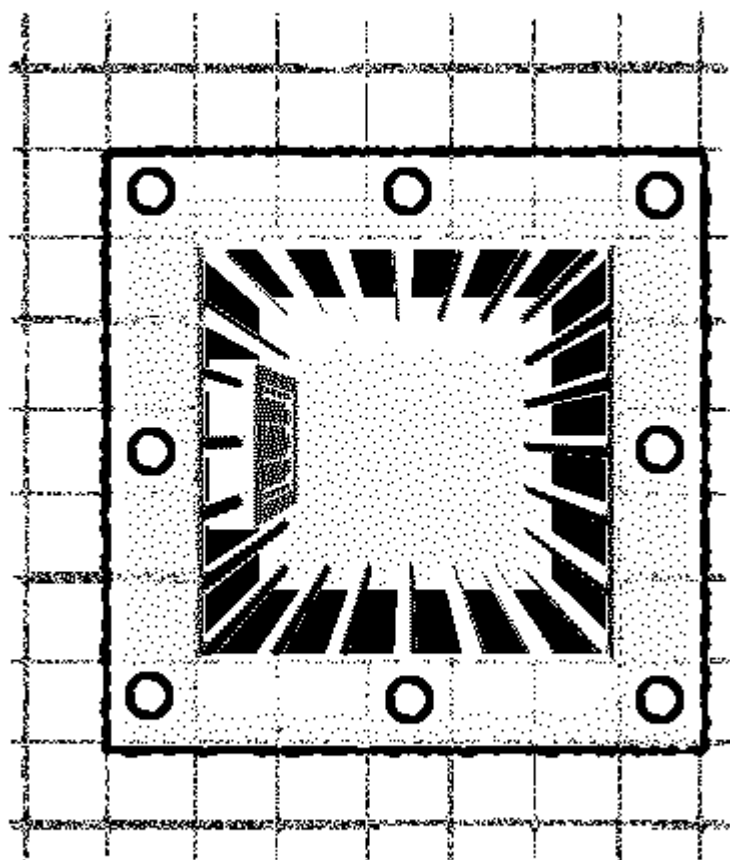
Last Walk

Pattern

Arrange **08 Bullets** to form two parallel rows.

The rows should be 3 squares apart, and each bullet should be 1 square apart.

The pattern may only be moved horizontally.



10-Cage



Convict's Fate



Overgrown Thorns



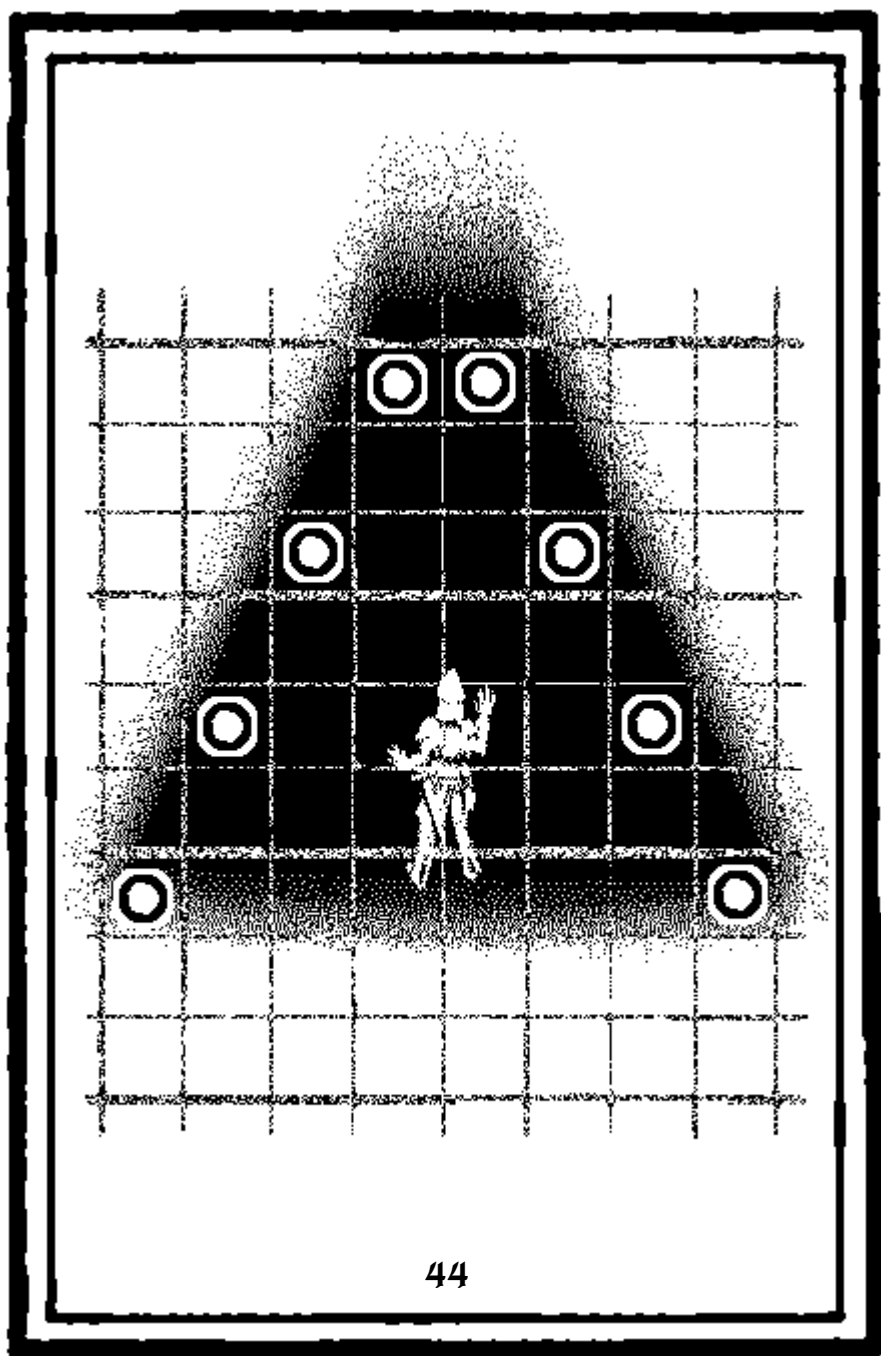
Claustrophobia



Purgatory

Pattern

Arrange **♦8 Anchors** on the board to form a square.
The pattern may be placed anywhere within the board. The bullets should be 2 squares apart from each other.



11-Cone



Trap's Tar



Fire Breath



Cold Stare

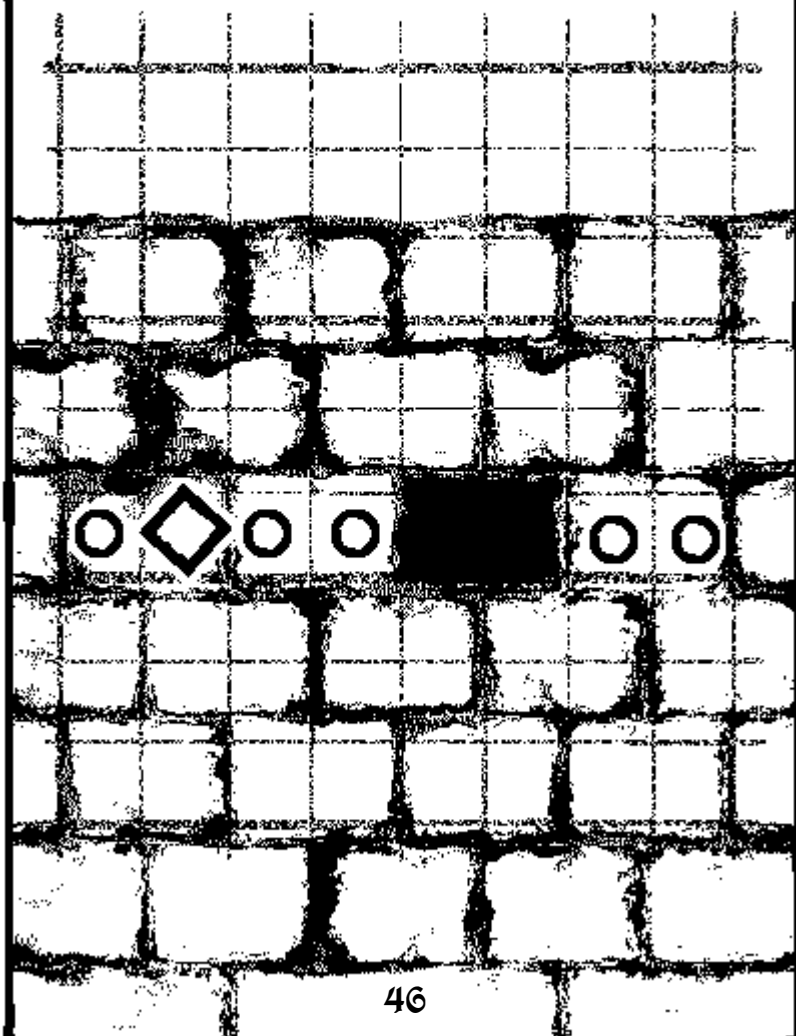


The Judgement

Pattern

Arrange **8 Bullets** to form an elongated, symmetric triangle, as shown in the pattern.

The pattern should begin from the top of the board. Each bullet should be placed two squared down and one square to the side of the previous one.



12–Breach



Rogue's Escape



Weak Spot



Close Call

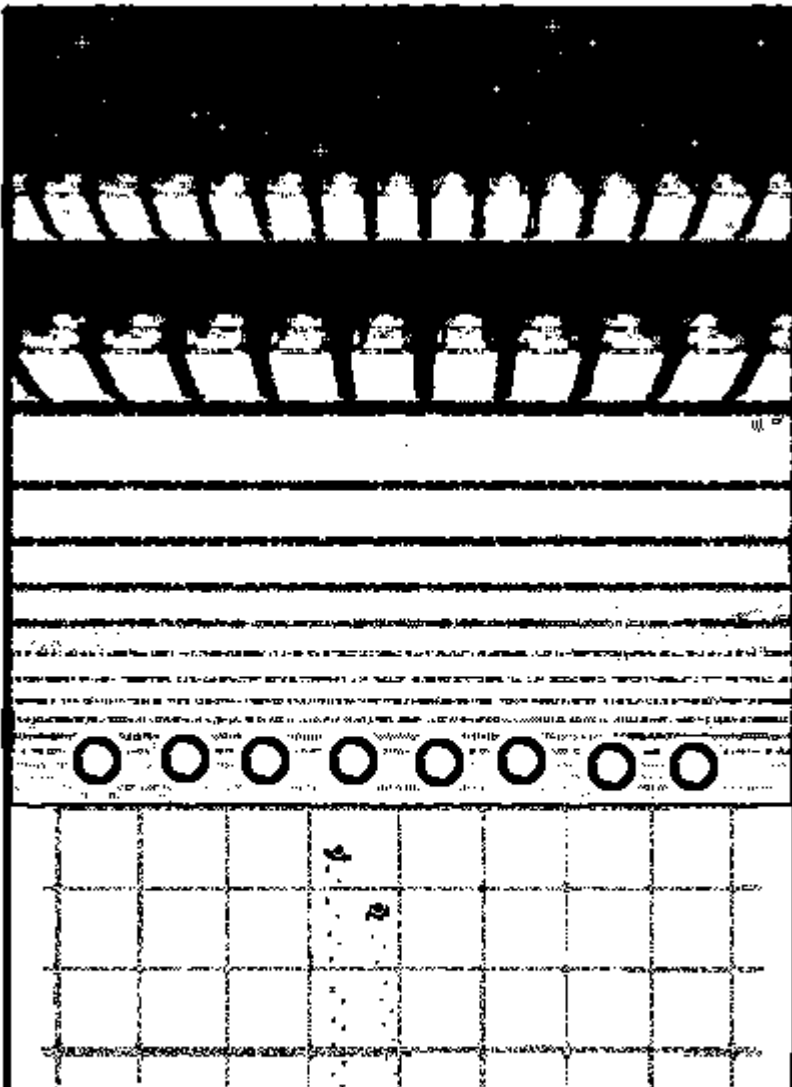


The Promise

Pattern

Roll **◇1 Anchors** on the board. Reroll if it flies off the board.

Place **○5 Bullets** on the same row as the anchor, leaving a 2 square wide gap anywhere.



13—Denial



Kingdom's Walls



Mountain Range



Dead End



The Limit

Pattern

Arrange 08 **Bullets** as shown in the pattern, denying the access to higher zones of the board.

Spells and Curses

Mages can cast **spells and curses** to change the rules to their advantage or add a fun twist to the game.

At the end of a round, all mages roll their dice (mages in a tie roll again). Each mage, starting from the lowest, can **spend MN to cast spells**.

***Tip:** A common spell lets a mage spend 2 MN to increase or decrease one of their own or an opponent's aspect power.*

Some spells' effects will be **instant** or last for the entirety of **the next round**.

Spells and curses are grouped into **tiers**. The higher the tier, the more powerful and expensive the spell:

- 1 MN — **Tricks:** playful curses for mages.
- 2 MN — **Bufs:**
- 3 MN —
- 4 MN —
- 5 MN —
- 6 MN — **Chaos:** the Gatling Grimoire breaks free.

1 MN – Tricks

Playful curses to taunt your opponents *for the entire next round*.

The caster curses **one mage**. If the cursed mage forgets to do their command, they must give **one card** to the caster.

- **Bard's Itch**

Make a rhyme before drawing a card or rolling.

- **Get Ready**

Do a quick warm-up before rolling (e.g. 5 lateral stretches, 5 jumping jacks).

- **Opposite Day**

Always speak the opposite of what you mean.

- **Natural Failure**

Anytime you get hit, describe a funny or embarrassing way you failed to dodge the attack.

- **Transformation**

The caster turned you into an animal of their choice! You can only make that animal's noise.

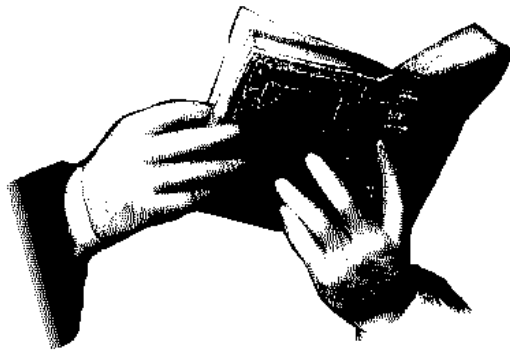


2 MN – Buffs

- **Aspect power (*Instant effect*)**
Instant effect. Increase one of your own aspects or an opponent's aspect power by 1.
- **Aspect resistance (*For the next round*)**
Choose an aspect. You are now resistant to it. If you take damage and you are resistant to the attack's aspect, roll a die aside and take the lower number. This will be the new damage.
- **Aspect weakness (*For the next round*)**
Curse variant of **Aspect resistance**. Choose an aspect and a target mage. If they take damage, the targeted mage will roll a die aside and take the higher number. This will be the new damage.
- **Weapon proficiency (*For the next round*)**
Choose a range of patterns: 2-4, 5-7, 8-10, 11-13. Anytime you cast a pattern within that range, you get +2 damage.
- **Damaged weapon (*For the next round*)**
Curse variant of **Weapon proficiency**. The targeted mage will have a -2 damage for the chosen range.

3 MN –

- **Energy efficiency (*Instant effect*)**
Increase one of your own max. MN or decrease an opponent's max. MN (min. 5) by 1.
- **Taking control (*For the next round*)**
On your turn, look in your deck and choose an attack.
- **Mind Reading (*Instant effect*)**
Choose a mage and look into their deck.
- **Pacify (*For the next round*)**
Choose a mage. The targeted mage cannot get +2 MN from the second board zone.
- **Footwork (*For the next round*)**
Once per turn, you don't get any penalties if your die goes out of the battle board.



4 mn –

- **Second wind** (*For the next round*)
Choose a range of patterns: 2-4, 5-7, 8-10, 11-13.
If you get a pattern from that range, you may cast the same attack again.
- **Equivalent exchange** (*Instant effect*)
Choose a mage and roll your die. Swap as many cards as shown on your die with the target (if they have less cards, swap as many cards as they have in hand).
- **Out of control** (*For the next round*)
Choose a mage. The targeted mage must dodge their own attacks. If they take damage, they will give their cards to you.
- **Close Quarters** (*Instant effect*)
Choose a mage. Both you and the targeted mage roll your dice. The highest number wins (reroll on a tie). The loser must give the winner as many cards as shown on the winner's die.
- **Fright** (*For the next round*)
Choose a mage. The targeted mage cannot get MN.

5 mn –

- **Wisdom Steal** (*Instant effect*)
Choose a mage. Roll your die and take as many cards from the targeted mage as shown on it.
- **Unravel** (*Instant effect*)
Rearrange the cards in your deck to your advantage.

6 MN – Chaos

- **Chaos** (*For the next round*)
After all mages rolled, cast as many Gatling attacks as there are fours, fives or sixes on the board. The other mages will still get MN if possible.

Image index

- (pg. 8) picryl.com — *Soldiers Arguing* (Leonard Bramer) - Nationalmuseum -22317, 1700-1900.
- (pg. 8) unsplash.com — Patrick McManaman - *Spiral gray and black digital wallpaper*, 2016.
- (pg. 20) commons.wikimedia.org — *Sidney Hall - Urania's Mirror - Draco and Ursa Minor*, 1825.
- (pg. 20) metmuseum.org — *Seated Carthusian Holding an Open Book*, Jean Restout the Younger, 1711.
- (pg. 26) openclipart.org — *Sword 2 by Firkin*. From a drawing in '*Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters*', Georg Grupp, 1894.
- (pg. 26) openclipart.org — *Muscle Arm by j4p4n*
- (pg. 34) openclipart.org — *Snake 6 by Firkin*. From a drawing in '*Amerika: eine allgemeine Landeskunde*', Wilhelm Sievers, 1894.
- (pg. 46) cc0-textures.com — *Bricks 076 C by CC0 Textures*.
- (pg. 51) openclipart.org — *Frog by Firkin*. From a drawing in '*Three Sunsets, and other poems*', Lewis Carroll, 1898.