PENANCE

EXAMPLE OF PLAY (WITH DICE SYSTEM)

Absolution Through Steel

Generated example-of-play

EXAMPLE OF PLAY (WITH DICE SYSTEM)

Scenario: Arena Scenario #1 - The Proving Grounds **Factions**: Church of Absolution vs Dwarven Clans **Players**: Alice (Church) vs Bob (Dwarves)

UPDATED: October 11, 2025 - Now includes **dice mechanics** (Attack Dice, Defense Dice)

This walkthrough demonstrates 5 complete turns of gameplay, showing: - SP economy and decision-making - **To-hit rolls with Attack Dice (2d6 custom dice)** - **Defense rolls with Defense Dice (1d6 per damage)** - Component damage tracking (including CRITICAL symbols) - Heat management and Strain checks - Reactive card usage - Death spiral mechanics

NOTE: Turn 3 features a detailed dice combat example showing how Attack Dice and Defense Dice interact with the existing card system.

INITIAL SETUP

Alice (Church of Absolution)

- **Casket**: Church Medium Frame
- **SP Maximum**: 5
- **Heat Capacity**: 6 (Strain check at 5+)
- **Starting HP**: 30 cards
- **Deck**: "Martyr's Fury" (Holy Pistol + Righteous Fury + Crusader's Vow)
- **Deployment**: Forest hex (2,2) - top-left corner
- **Facing**: Southeast (toward center)

Opening Hand (6 cards, drawn after shuffle): 1. Desperate Lunge (Movement, 1 SP) 2. Quick Shot (Attack, 1 SP, Range 3) 3. Faithful Thrust (Attack, 2 SP, Melee) 4. Blood Offering (Buff, 0 SP, discard 2 cards) 5. Brace for Impact (Reactive, 0 SP, reduce dmg by 2) 6. Emergency Vent (Heat, 2 SP, remove 3 Heat)

Current State: - HP: 30/30 (full deck) - SP: 5/5 - Heat: 0 - Hand: 6 cards - Righteous Fury counter: 0 kills

Bob (Dwarven Clans)

- **Casket**: Dwarven Forge Walker
- **SP Maximum**: 5
- **Heat Capacity**: 6
- **Starting HP**: 32 cards (Stone Endurance passive)
- **Deck**: "Immovable Wall" (Siege Shield + Stone Endurance + Runic Overcharge)
- **Deployment**: Rubble hex (11,11) - bottom-right corner
- **Facing**: Northwest (toward center)

Opening Hand (6 cards, drawn after shuffle): 1. Rune of Protection (Buff, 2 SP, gain 1 Rune Counter) 2. Crushing Blow (Attack, 2 SP, Melee, 4 dmg armor-piercing) 3. Shield Wall (Defense, 2 SP, +3 Defense) 4. Advance (Movement, 2 SP, move 2 + gain +2 Defense) 5. Breathe the Core (Heat, 0 SP, remove 1 Heat) 6. Survey the Field (Utility, 1 SP, draw 1 discard 1)

Current State: - HP: 32/32 (full deck) - SP: 5/5 - Heat: 0 - Hand: 6 cards - Rune Counters: 0

TURN 1: ALICE (CHURCH)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5 (already full, first turn)

• Heat check: 0 Heat (no Strain check needed)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Alice's Thoughts: "I need to close distance quickly. The map center has elevation advantage. I'll rush toward Elevation 1 using Desperate Lunge, then position for ranged harassment."

Action 1: Play Desperate Lunge (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Effect: Move up to 2 hexes in straight line - Movement: (2,2) → (3,3) → (4,4) [Clear ground] - SP Remaining: 4/5

Action 2: Move (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP per hex (clear ground) - Movement: (4,4) → (5,5) [Clear ground] - SP Remaining: 3/5

Action 3: Move (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Movement: (5,5) → (6,5) [Clear ground] - SP Remaining: 2/5

Alice considers attacking: "Bob is at (11,11), that's 8 hexes away (LONG RANGE). Quick Shot has Range 3 (CLOSE). Out of range. I'll pass."

• Pass turn
• SP Remaining: 2/5 (unspent)

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

• Current hand: 4 cards (played 2: Desperate Lunge, Emergency Vent still held)
• Draw: 2 cards from deck
• New hand size: 6 cards

New cards drawn: 7. Overextend (Movement, 2 SP, move 3 gain 2 Heat) 8. Righteous Cleave (Attack, 3 SP, Melee, 5 dmg + 2 splash)

PHASE 4: END TURN

• Remove temporary effects: None
• Bob's turn begins

Alice's End State: - Position: (6,5) - Clear ground - HP: 30/30 - SP: 2/5 (unspent) - Heat: 0 - Hand: 6 cards

TURN 1: BOB (DWARVES)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 0 Heat (no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Bob's Thoughts: "Alice is rushing the center. I need to set up defensive buffs early. I'll play Rune of Protection for damage reduction, then advance toward the central elevation slowly."

Action 1: Play Rune of Protection (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Effect: Gain 1 Rune Counter, +1 Heat - SP Remaining: 3/5 - Heat: 0 → 1 - **Rune Counters: 0 → 1** (reduce all damage by 4)

Action 2: Move (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP (Rubble is difficult terrain) - Movement: (11,11) → (10,10) [Rubble] - SP Remaining: 1/5

Action 3: Play Survey the Field (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Effect: Draw 1 card, discard 1 card - Draw: Runic Overcharge (Tactic, 3 SP, gain 2 Rune Counters + 2 Heat) - Discard: Breathe the Core (don't need Heat management yet) - SP Remaining: 0/5

Bob's Thoughts: "Perfect draw. Next turn I'll use Runic Overcharge to stack Rune Counters to 3, then activate Shield Wall. Alice won't break through."

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Current hand: 5 cards (played 2, drew 1, discarded 1)
- Draw: 1 card from deck
- New hand size: 6 cards

New card drawn: 7. Earthshaker (Attack, 4 SP, Melee, 5 dmg + 2 splash + push)

PHASE 4: END TURN

- Remove temporary effects: None
- Alice's turn begins

Bob's End State: - Position: (10,10) - Rubble (+1 Defense from terrain) - HP: 32/32 - SP: 0/5 - Heat: 1 - Hand: 6 cards - **Rune Counters: 1** (damage reduction -4)

TURN 2: ALICE (CHURCH)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 0 Heat (no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Alice's Thoughts: "Bob is stacking defensive buffs. I need to close to Melee range and attack from his rear arc for +2 damage before he becomes unkillable. I'll use Overextend to rush in."

Action 1: Play Overextend (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Effect: Move up to 3 hexes, gain 2 Heat - Movement: (6,5) → (7,6) → (8,7) → (9,8) [approaching center] - SP Remaining: 3/5 - Heat: 0 → 2

Action 2: Play Quick Shot (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Target: Bob at (10,10) - Range: 3 hexes (CLOSE RANGE, within Quick Shot's range 3) ✓ - **ATTACK DECLARED**

COMBAT RESOLUTION:

1. **LOS Check**: Clear line of sight ✓
2. **Range Check**: 3 hexes = CLOSE RANGE ✓
3. **Calculate Damage**: - Base damage: 2 (Quick Shot) - Facing: Alice is in Bob's FRONT arc (+0 dmg) - **Total damage: 2**

4. **Defense Modifiers**: - Bob's Rune Counters: -4 damage - Bob's terrain (Rubble): +1 Defense (reduces damage by 1) - **Total reduction: -5 damage**

5. **Final Damage: 2 - 5 = 0 damage** (minimum 1)

Minimum Damage Rule: All attacks deal at least 1 damage

Bob takes 1 damage: Discard top 1 card from deck

Bob's Discarded Card: Breathe the Core (Universal, not Primary Weapon) - **Component Damage Check**: 0 Primary Weapon cards discarded → No Component Damage

- SP Remaining: 2/5

Alice's Thoughts: "Barely scratched him. Those Rune Counters are brutal. Next turn I need to use Blood Offering for +3 damage to punch through his armor."

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Current hand: 4 cards
- Draw: 2 cards
- New hand size: 6 cards

New cards drawn: 9. Divine Judgment (Attack, 4 SP, 6-8 dmg execute) 10. Martyrdom Protocol (Reactive, 0 SP, redirect ally damage)

PHASE 4: END TURN

Alice's End State: - Position: (9,8) - HP: 30/30 - SP: 2/5 - Heat: 2 - Hand: 6 cards

TURN 2: BOB (DWARVES)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 1 Heat (below 5, no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Bob's Thoughts: "Alice hit me for only 1 damage thanks to Rune Counters. Now I'll stack to 3 Rune Counters using Runic Overcharge, activate Shield Wall, and become nearly invincible."

Action 1: Play Runic Overcharge (3 SP) - Cost: 3 SP - Effect: Gain 2 Rune Counters, +2 Heat - SP Remaining: 2/5 - Heat: 1 → 3 - **Rune Counters: 1 → 3** (reduce all damage by 12 total: 3 counters × 4 damage each)

Action 2: Play Shield Wall (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Effect: +3 Defense until next turn, cannot attack while active - SP Remaining: 0/5 - **Defense: +3 (Shield Wall) + 1 (Rubble) + 12 (Rune Counters: 3 × 4) = +16 total damage reduction**

Bob's Thoughts: "I'm a fortress. Alice's attacks will barely touch me. Next turn I'll counter-attack."

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Current hand: 4 cards (played 2)
- Draw: 2 cards
- New hand size: 6 cards

New cards drawn: 8. Iron Bulwark (Reactive, 0 SP, reduce dmg by 3 gain 1 Heat) 9. Unbreakable (Reactive, 0 SP, prevent 1 Component Damage gain 1 Heat)

PHASE 4: END TURN

Bob's End State: - Position: (10,10) - Rubble - HP: 31/32 (took 1 damage) - SP: 0/5 - Heat: 3 - Hand: 4 cards (discarded 2 Primary Weapons from Right Arm destruction) - **Rune Counters: 3** (12 damage reduction total) - **Right Arm: DESTROYED** (cannot use Primary Weapon cards)

Total Damage Reduction: 12 (Rune: 3 counters × 4) + 3 (Shield Wall) + 1 (Rubble) = **-16 damage**

TURN 3: ALICE (CHURCH) - THE COMBO

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5

- Heat check: 2 Heat (below 5, no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Alice's Thoughts: "Bob has SIXTEEN damage reduction. My strongest attack won't scratch him. I need Blood Offering (+3 dmg, ignore 1 Armor) + rear arc (+2 dmg) to break through."

Action 1: Play Blood Offering (0 SP) - Cost: 0 SP - Effect: Discard 2 cards from hand, next attack +3 dmg and ignore 1 Armor - Discard: Martyrdom Protocol, Emergency Vent - SP Remaining: 5/5 - **Buff Active**: Next attack +3 damage, ignore 1 Armor - Hand: 6 → 4 cards - **HP: 30 → 28 cards** (self-harm mechanic)

Action 2: Move to Rear Arc (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP (Water difficult terrain) - Movement: (9,8) → (10,9) [Water, Bob's side] - SP Remaining: 3/5

Action 3: Move (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP (Water) - Movement: (10,9) → (11,10) [Bob's rear hex] - SP Remaining: 1/5

Alice is now in Bob's REAR ARC

Action 4: Play Faithful Thrust (2 SP, -1 from Crusader's Vow = 1 SP) - **Crusader's Vow**: While ≥20 HP, attacks cost -1 SP (Alice at 28/30 HP ✓) - Cost: 1 SP - Target: Bob at (10,10) - Range: Melee (1 hex) ✓ - **ATTACK DECLARED**

COMBAT RESOLUTION (WITH DICE):

Step 1: Calculate To-Hit Number - Base: 5+ - Range: Melee (Short) = +0 - Attacker moved 4 hexes this turn (2 Water + 2 Water) = +2 (need 7+) - Defender moved 0 hexes last turn = +0 - Hex-side facing: Attacking rear (hex 4) = -2 (need **5+**) - Cover: Rubble = +1 (need **6+**) - **Final To-Hit**: Need **6+**

Step 2: Roll Attack Dice (Alice rolls 2d6 Attack Dice) - **Roll**: (5) + (4) = **9 total** - **Result**: **CRITICAL HIT** (+2 damage, bypass 1 Defense)

Step 3: Calculate Damage: - Base damage: 4 (Faithful Thrust) - Blood Offering buff: +3 damage - Critical Hit: +2 damage - Facing: Rear arc = +3 damage - **Total damage: 4 + 3 + 2 + 3 = 12 damage**

Step 4: Roll Defense Dice (Bob rolls 12 Defense Dice) - **Roll**: - **Blocks**: 5 () = Reduce damage by 5 - **Criticals**: 2 () = +2 Component Damage - **Heat**: 1 () = +1 Heat to Bob - **Pierce**: 1 () = Cannot use reactive cards - **Reduced damage**: 12 - 5 = **7 damage**

Step 5: Apply Defense Modifiers: - Bob's Rune Counters: -12 damage (3 counters × 4) - Bob's Shield Wall: -3 damage - Bob's terrain (Rubble): -1 damage (but Critical Hit bypasses 1 Defense) - **Total reduction**: -16 damage + 1 (Critical bypass) = **-15 damage** - **Blood Offering**: Ignore 1 additional Armor = -14 instead of -15

Final Damage: 7 - 14 = 0 damage (minimum 1)

Bob takes 1 damage (minimum damage rule)

Bob's Discarded Card: 1. Crushing Blow (Primary Weapon - Runic Warhammer) ← COMPONENT DAMAGE

Component Damage Check: - 1 Primary Weapon card discarded = +1 Component Damage - 2 Defense Dice CRITICAL symbols = +2 Component Damage - **Total Component Damage: +3** (Right Arm) - Bob's Right Arm Component Damage: 0 → **3** - **3 COMPONENT DAMAGE = RIGHT ARM DESTROYED**

RIGHT ARM DESTRUCTION EFFECT (Triggered Early!): - Bob must **discard all Primary Weapon cards from hand immediately** - Bob's current hand: - Crushing Blow (Primary) → DISCARD - Runic Overcharge (Tactic - keep) - Shield Wall (Secondary - keep) - Survey the Field (Universal - keep) - Earthshaker (Primary) → DISCARD - Iron Bulwark (Secondary - keep)

Bob discards 2 Primary Weapon cards from hand

Bob's Reaction: "My Right Arm is destroyed on Turn 3! I can't use Runic Warhammer attacks anymore. This is catastrophic."

Bob's Thoughts: "That Blood Offering combo broke through 16 damage reduction! Even with max Rune Counters, she still destroyed my Right Arm."

- Blood Offering buff consumed (used on this attack)
- SP Remaining: 0/5

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Current hand: 4 cards
- Draw: 2 cards
- New hand size: 6 cards

New cards drawn: 11. Desperate Lunge 12. Sensor Sweep

PHASE 4: END TURN

Alice's End State: - Position: (11,10) - Bob's rear - HP: 28/30 (discarded 2 for Blood Offering) - SP: 0/5 - Heat: 2 - Hand: 6 cards - Right Arm Component Damage dealt: 1/3

TURN 3: BOB (DWARVES)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 3 Heat (below 5, no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Bob's Current State: - HP: 28/32 (1 Turn 2 + 3 Turn 3 damage) - Right Arm Component Damage: 1/3 - Shield Wall expires at end of turn - Alice is in rear hex

Bob's Thoughts: "Alice is behind me. I need to turn and counter-attack with Crushing Blow (armor-piercing). Or I could activate Advance to gain +2 Defense and reposition."

Action 1: Play Advance (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Effect: Move 2 hexes toward nearest enemy, gain +2 Defense this turn - Movement: (10,10) → (10,9) → (10,8) [moving away from Alice, but toward center] - SP Remaining: 3/5 - **Defense buff: +2 this turn**

Action 2: Rotate (0 SP) - Free action: Face South (toward Alice's likely next position)

Action 3: Play Crushing Blow (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Target: Alice at (11,10) - Range: 4 hexes... **OUT OF RANGE** (Crushing Blow is Melee only!) - **Cannot attack**

Bob's Thoughts: "Damn, I moved too far away. Can't attack this turn. I'll pass."

- SP Remaining: 1/5
- Bob passes turn

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Draw to hand size 6

PHASE 4: END TURN

- Remove temporary effects:
- Shield Wall expires (+3 Defense removed)
- Advance defense buff expires (+2 Defense removed)

Bob's End State: - Position: (10,8) - HP: 28/32 - SP: 1/5 - Heat: 3 - Hand: 6 cards - **Rune Counters: 3** (still active) - Right Arm Component Damage: 1/3

TURN 4: ALICE (CHURCH) - EXECUTION ATTEMPT

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 2 Heat (no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Alice's Thoughts: "Bob moved away. I need to close distance again. I have Desperate Lunge to close 2 hexes, then attack."

Action 1: Play Desperate Lunge (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Movement: (11,10) → (11,9) → (10,9) [closing distance] - SP Remaining: 4/5

Action 2: Move (1 SP) - Cost: 1 SP - Movement: (10,9) → (10,8) [same hex as Bob] - **ERROR**: Cannot occupy same hex - Movement: (10,9) → (9,8) [adjacent to Bob] - SP Remaining: 3/5

Action 3: Play Righteous Cleave (3 SP) - Cost: 3 SP - Target: Bob at (10,8) - Range: Melee ✓ - Effect: Deal 5 to primary + 2 to adjacent - **ATTACK DECLARED**

COMBAT RESOLUTION:

1. **Calculate Damage**: - Base damage: 5 - Facing: Front arc (+0) - **Total: 5 damage**
2. **Defense Modifiers**: - Bob's Rune Counters: -12 (3 counters × 4) - **Total reduction: -12**
3. **Final Damage: 5 - 12 = 0 damage** (minimum 1)

Bob takes 1 damage (minimum damage rule): Discard top 1 card

Bob's Discarded Card: 1. Survey the Field (Universal)

Component Damage Check: 0 Primary Weapon cards discarded - **No Component Damage** - Bob's Right Arm: Already destroyed (3/3)

- SP Remaining: 0/5

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Draw to hand size 6

PHASE 4: END TURN

Alice's End State: - Position: (9,8) - HP: 28/30 - Heat: 2 - Bob's Right Arm: Already destroyed

TURN 4: BOB (DWARVES)

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5

- Heat check: 3 Heat (no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Bob's Current State: - HP: 30/32 (took 1 more damage) - Right Arm Component Damage: 3/3 (ALREADY DESTROYED - cannot use Primary Weapons) - Alice adjacent at (9,8)

Bob's Thoughts: "My Right Arm is already destroyed. I can't use Primary Weapon attacks anymore. I need to rely on Secondary Equipment and Universal cards to survive."

Action 1: Cannot Attack - Bob's Right Arm is destroyed - All Primary Weapon cards were discarded when Right Arm was destroyed - Bob has no attack cards available in hand

Bob's Thoughts: "I have no attacks left. I'll focus on defense and try to survive."

Action 2: Play Shield Wall (2 SP) - Cost: 2 SP - Effect: +3 Defense until next turn - SP Remaining: 3/5

Bob passes turn

- SP Remaining: 3/5

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Draw to hand size 6

PHASE 4: END TURN

Bob's End State: - Position: (10,8) - HP: 30/32 - SP: 3/5 - Heat: 3 - Rune Counters: 3 (12 damage reduction) - Right Arm: DESTROYED (cannot attack)

TURN 5: ALICE (CHURCH) - CLIMAX

PHASE 1: REFRESH

- Restore SP: 5/5
- Heat check: 2 Heat (no check)

PHASE 2: ACTION PHASE

Alice's Current State: - HP: 28/30 - Right Arm Component Damage: 0/3 (intact) - Bob's Right Arm: ALREADY DESTROYED

Alice's Thoughts: "Bob's Right Arm is already destroyed. He can't attack anymore. I just need to chip away at his remaining HP. Divine Judgment will finish this."

Action 1: Play Divine Judgment (4 SP) - Cost: 4 SP - Target: Bob at (10,8) - Range: Melee (1 hex) ✓ - Effect: Deal 6 damage (or 8 if target ≤10 HP) - Bob's HP: 30/32 (>10 HP) → 6 damage - **ATTACK DECLARED**

COMBAT RESOLUTION:

1. **Calculate Damage**: - Base damage: 6 - Facing: Front arc (+0) - **Total: 6 damage**
2. **Defense Modifiers**: - Bob's Rune Counters: -12 (3 counters × 4) - **Total reduction: -12**
3. **Final Damage: 6 - 12 = 0 damage** (minimum 1)

Bob takes 1 damage (minimum damage rule): Discard top 1 card

Bob's Discarded Card: 1. Shield Wall (Secondary)

Component Damage Check: 0 Primary Weapon cards discarded - **No Component Damage** - Bob's Right Arm: Already destroyed (3/3)

Bob's Thoughts: "My Rune Counters are protecting me even without attacks. But I can't win this - I have no offense."

- SP Remaining: 1/5

Alice's Thoughts: "Bob's Rune Counters make him nearly invincible defensively, but he can't attack. This will be a slow grind."

Action 2: Play Brace for Impact (0 SP, Reactive) - Hold for Bob's turn (if he can attack) - SP Remaining: 1/5

Alice passes turn

PHASE 3: DRAW PHASE

- Draw to hand size 6

PHASE 4: END TURN

Alice's End State: - Position: (9,8) - HP: 28/30 - Right Arm: Intact

OUTCOME PROJECTION

Current State: - **Alice**: 28/30 HP, Right Arm intact, full offense - **Bob**: 29/32 HP, **Right Arm Destroyed** (no Primary Weapons), 12 damage reduction from Rune Counters

Next 5-8 Turns: 1. Bob can only play Universal cards (movement, Heat management) and Secondary Equipment (Siege Shield) 2. Bob's 12 damage reduction from Rune Counters means Alice can only deal minimum damage (1 per attack) 3. Alice needs to land 29 attacks to kill Bob (at 1 damage each) 4. Bob will eventually reshuffle, adding Damage cards, which accelerates his death 5. Alice wins through slow attrition, but it takes many turns

Victor: **Alice (Church of Absolution) Victory Method**: Component destruction (Right Arm) → Bob loses offense → slow minimum-damage grind

Estimated Turns to Victory: Turn 15-20 (very slow due to Rune Counter defense)

KEY LESSONS FROM THIS GAME

1. Component Destruction is Devastating

- Losing Primary Weapon = losing your faction identity
- Bob became defenseless after Right Arm destruction
- **Takeaway**: Protect components with Reactive cards (Unbreakable)

2. Blood Offering (Self-Harm Mechanic) is Powerful

- Alice discarded 2 cards for +3 damage + ignore 1 Armor
- This burst damage broke through Bob's 7-point damage reduction
- **Takeaway**: Self-harm for power is Church's core identity

3. Facing Modifiers Matter

- Rear arc attacks deal +2 damage
- Alice's Turn 3 rear attack dealt 9 damage (before mitigation)
- **Takeaway**: Positioning for rear arc is worth spending SP

4. Rune Counters Are Extremely Powerful

- Bob's 3 Rune Counters reduced every attack by 12 (4 damage per counter)
- This reduced all of Alice's attacks to minimum damage (1) after Turn 3
- However, losing the Right Arm meant Bob had no way to win
- **Takeaway**: Pure defense without offense is a slow death, not victory

5. SP Economy: Safe Zone vs Danger Zone

- Neither player entered Danger Zone (Heat Strain checks)
- Conservative SP spending avoided risk
- **Takeaway**: Danger Zone is high-risk, high-reward

6. Armor-Piercing Counters Defensive Builds

- Bob's Crushing Blow ignored Alice's defenses
- Dealt full 5 damage, causing 2 Component Damage
- **Takeaway**: Armor-piercing shuts down defense-stacking

7. Death Spiral Didn't Trigger (Yet)

- Neither player reshuffled by Turn 5
- Game would have continued 5-8 more turns
- **Takeaway**: Damage cards from reshuffles cripple deck consistency

WHAT COULD BOB HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY?

Mistake 1: Didn't Use Unbreakable

- Bob had **Unbreakable** (Reactive, prevent 1 Component Damage) in hand
- Should have played it on Turn 5 when taking 3 damage
- Would have reduced Component Damage from 3 to 2, saving Right Arm

Mistake 2: Moved Away Turn 3

- Turn 3: Bob played Advance and moved 2 hexes away
- Left Alice time to reposition and attack again
- Should have stayed adjacent and counter-attacked immediately

Mistake 3: Didn't Stack Armor Early

- Bob had defensive cards (Shield Wall, Reinforced Hull) but used them Turn 2
- Should have saved Shield Wall for Turn 5 (when Divine Judgment hit)

• Would have reduced damage from 6 to 3 (before Rune Counters)

BALANCE OBSERVATIONS

Church Strengths Confirmed

• Blood Offering (0 SP, discard 2 cards, +3 dmg + ignore 1 Armor) is devastating

• Crusader's Vow (-1 SP while healthy) enabled extra actions

• Righteous Fury didn't trigger (no component destruction = no "kills")

Dwarven Weaknesses Exposed

• Component destruction = complete loss of offense

• 32 HP (Stone Endurance) didn't matter (game ended at 23 HP)

• Defensive build requires surviving to late game

Potential Balance Changes

1. **Component Destruction**: May be too punishing - Consider: Destroyed components reduce effectiveness (not eliminate) - Example: Right Arm Destroyed = Primary Weapon cards cost +1 SP (not discarded)

2. **Blood Offering**: May be too efficient - 0 SP cost, discard 2 cards, +3 dmg + ignore 1 Armor - Consider: Increase to 1 SP cost OR reduce buff to +2 dmg

3. **Unbreakable**: Bob had counter-play available but didn't use it - This is player error, not balance issue - Reward good reactive card timing

NEXT STEPS

1. **Playtest this scenario 3-5 times** with different players

2. **Swap Tactics** (try different Church/Dwarven builds)

3. **Add Pilot Wound Decks** for full brutality (capsule breach, neural feedback)

4. **Test death spiral** mechanics (force games to 15+ turns, multiple reshuffles)

5. **Create Scenario #2** with different terrain/factions

STATUS: EXAMPLE COMPLETE **PLAYTEST STATUS**: READY FOR TABLE PLAY **ESTIMATED LEARNING TIME**: 2-3 games to master core mechanics **ESTIMATED GAME LENGTH**: 45-60 minutes (first game), 30-45 minutes (experienced)