

# SANCTUARY

THE KEEPERS ERA

**+14**  
YEARS

**15-30**  
MINUTES

**1-2**  
PLAYERS



**RULEBOOK**

# Introduction

Sanctuary is a fast paced, hand management card game for 1-2 players.

In the dark fantasy world of Elnerth, we are in a time of war and wonders: The Keepers Era.  
The Keepers are fighting to preserve their Essences, ancestral energies that they can channel and tame through the Sanctuaries.

You are one of the Keepers and your objective is to prevail on the others by summoning your army of Acolytes and destroying their Sanctuaries.

Pick one of the six unique Factions and meet your Champion, a legendary individual chosen amongst the most faithful and talented devotees.  
Join the fight and accomplish your destiny: who will be the last one standing?

## Winning conditions

In order to win, you must destroy all your opponent's Sanctuaries.  
As the last opponent's Sanctuary falls, you are immediately declared the winner.

## Index

<b>Part 1 - Components</b>	<b>3</b>	5.4 - Battlefield	
<b>Part 2 - Cards Overview</b>	<b>3</b>	5.5 - Essence	
Acolyte and Champion Cards		5.6 - Rituals	
Ritual Cards		5.7 - Acolytes	
Sanctuary Cards		5.8 - Champions	
<b>Part 3 - Game Map</b>	<b>5</b>	5.9 - Sanctuaries	
<b>Part 4 - Base Concepts</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Part 6 - Attributes</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 - Summoning (playing cards)		6.1 - Common Attributes	
4.2 - Deploying Units		6.2 - Special Attributes	
4.3 - Flanks		6.3 - Simultaneous Effects	
4.4 - Replacing		<b>Part 7 - Setting Up a Game</b>	<b>9</b>
4.5 - Moving Units		7.1 - Sanctuaries and Champions	
4.6 - Destruction		7.2 - Starting Player and Starting Hand	
4.7 - Golden Rule		<b>Part 8 - Turn Structure</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Part 5 - Game Elements</b>	<b>7</b>	8.1 - Beginning of the Turn phase	
5.1 - Deck		8.2 - Summoning phase	
5.2 - Hand of cards		8.3 - Attack phase	
5.3 - Discard Pile		8.4 - End of the Turn phase	

## Part 1 - Components

### LANDS OF DAWN: Thannen - Antar - Ganto

1 Thannen Champion Card  
22 Thannen Acolyte Cards  
6 Thannen Ritual Cards  
4 Thannen Sanctuary Cards

15 Essence Crystals

1 Antar Champion Card  
22 Antar Acolyte Cards  
6 Antar Ritual Cards  
4 Antar Sanctuary Cards

8 Aegis Tokens

1 Ganto Champion Card  
22 Ganto Acolyte Cards  
6 Ganto Ritual Cards  
4 Ganto Sanctuary Cards

8 Splendor Tokens

### LANDS OF DUSK: Kras - Molran - Wul

1 Kras Champion Card  
22 Kras Acolyte Cards  
6 Kras Ritual Cards  
4 Kras Sanctuary Cards

15 Essence Crystals

1 Molran Champion Card  
24 Molran Acolyte Cards  
4 Molran Ritual Cards  
4 Molran Sanctuary Cards

8 Aegis Tokens

1 Wul Champion Card  
22 Wul Acolyte Cards  
6 Wul Ritual Cards  
4 Wul Sanctuary Cards

8 Splendor Tokens

### KICKSTARTER EDITION

1 Thannen Champion Card  
22 Thannen Acolyte Cards  
6 Thannen Ritual Cards  
4 Thannen Sanctuary Cards

15 Essence Crystals

1 Antar Champion Card  
22 Antar Acolyte Cards  
6 Antar Ritual Cards  
4 Antar Sanctuary Cards

44 Aegis Tokens

1 Ganto Champion Card  
22 Ganto Acolyte Cards  
6 Ganto Ritual Cards  
4 Ganto Sanctuary Cards

22 Splendor Tokens

1 Kras Champion Card  
22 Kras Acolyte Cards  
6 Kras Ritual Cards  
4 Kras Sanctuary Cards

1 Molran Champion Card  
24 Molran Acolyte Cards  
4 Molran Ritual Cards  
4 Molran Sanctuary Cards

2 Playmats

1 Wul Champion Card  
22 Wul Acolyte Cards  
6 Wul Ritual Cards  
4 Wul Sanctuary Cards

## Part 2 - Cards Overview

In Sanctuary there are four types of cards: Acolyte, Champion, Ritual, and Sanctuary.

**Acolytes** are soldiers and creatures that you summon on the battlefield to attack and defend Sanctuaries. Many of them also have special abilities.

**Champions** are the most powerful characters of each Faction.

**Rituals** may inflict direct damage, disrupt the enemy formation, or allow for strategic manoeuvres.

**Sanctuaries** are waypoints for channeled energy. Once they reach their maximum Splendor, their powers affect the entire battlefield. Destroying all enemy Sanctuaries is the winning condition of the game.

Since Acolytes and Champions share many similarities, we will use the term Unit when referring to both types altogether.



## Acolyte and Champion Cards

**SUMMONING COST:** The amount of Essence Crystals required to summon the Unit onto the battlefield.

**NAME & TYPE:** The name of the Unit and a reminder of the card's type.

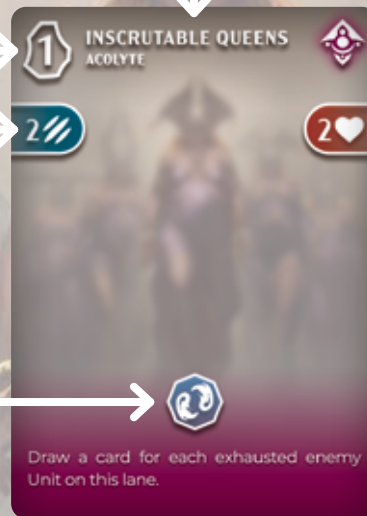
**FACTION ICON:** The card's original Faction.

**ATTACK:** One of the Unit's base values. Attack indicates how much harm may be caused to enemy Units or Sanctuaries.

**HEALTH:** One of the Unit's base values. Health represents the maximum amount of damage a Unit can endure before being destroyed.

**COMMON & SPECIAL ATTRIBUTE ICONS:** Each icon corresponds to a specific subset of rules. See Common Attributes (6.1) and Special Attributes (6.2) for reference.

**ABILITY DESCRIPTION:** Where all the card's special effects are listed.



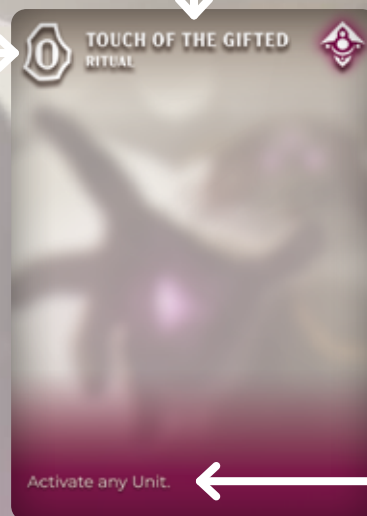
## Ritual Cards

**SUMMONING COST:** The amount of Essence Crystals required to cast the Ritual.

**NAME & TYPE:** The name of the Ritual and a reminder of the card's type.

**FACTION ICON:** The card's original Faction.

**ABILITY DESCRIPTION:** Where all the card's special effects are listed.



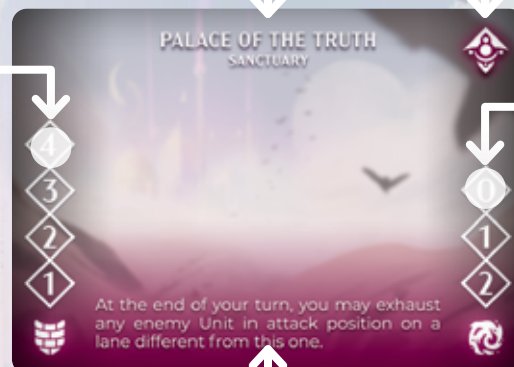
## Sanctuary Cards

**NAME:** The name of the Sanctuary.

**FACTION ICON:** The card's original Faction.

**AEGIS TRACK & COUNTER:** The damage a Sanctuary can withstand before collapsing.

**SPLendor TRACK & COUNTER:** A turn based counter towards the activation of the Sanctuary's ability. A Sanctuary's ability is ignored until the Sanctuary reaches the peak of its Splendor.



**ABILITY DESCRIPTION:** Where all the card's special effects are listed.

## Part 3 - Game Map

### Player's hand of cards

The cards available to be played.  
At the beginning of the game, you start with 4 cards drawn from your deck.

### Champion Area

A Champion card is never shuffled into a player's deck.

At the start of the game, place here the Champion card, face-up.

If a Champion is destroyed on the battlefield, put their card back into this Area, face-down. It is considered removed from the game.

### Sanctuaries Area

Place here your four Sanctuaries, ordering them by increasing Splendor value, from left to right. If two Sanctuaries share the same Splendor value, freely arrange them.

### Battlefield Area

This is where Acolytes and Champions are deployed. The battlefield is a 4x4 grid, divided into two sides, one for each player. A player's side is made of 4 **attack positions** and 4 **defence positions**.

DEFENCE POSITIONS

ATTACK POSITIONS

ATTACK POSITIONS

DEFENCE POSITIONS

### Deck

Your trustworthy deck. You may count the cards left in the deck anytime, but you cannot have a look at them.

### Discard Pile

Discarded cards are piled here, face-up. You may consult them anytime.

## Part 4 - Base Concepts

### 4.1 - Summoning (playing cards)

To put a card in play from your hand, you must pay the Essence Crystals required by its Summoning cost, indicated on the top-left corner of the card. After paying the card's cost, place it in on the battlefield in case it is an Acolyte, or just resolve its effect in case it is a Ritual. A Champion can be directly played from their Area onto the battlefield, given the card is face-up.

This core mechanic is called **Summoning**.

The act of selecting where to place a Unit is called **Deploying**.

### 4.2 - Deploying Units

**Deploying** means to assign a Unit which enters into play, due to a Summoning or by resolving the effect of a card, to an available position on the battlefield. The position of choice must be valid (e.g.: An Acolyte with the Fierce attribute cannot be deployed on a defence position). By default, Units are deployed into their controller's side of the battlefield. If you want to replace a deployed Acolyte with another who's just entering in play, see Replacing (4.4). Deployed Units always **enter the game exhausted** (card flipped sideways). They become **active** by the end of their controller's turn (card flipped vertically). Some abilities and effects may allow their controller to **activate** them.

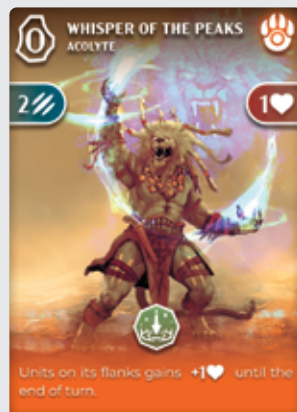
When a Unit is Deployed, resolve its Genesis ability (if any).

### 4.3 - Flanks

Some cards may use expressions referring to the flanks of a card: **the closest slots to left and right of a card**.

When resolving a card, always consider as if it is in the standard vertical orientation from the viewpoint of its controller.

*Example: The Whisper of the Peaks grants +1 Health to Mocking Hunter located on its left flank. Mocking Hunter is now capable to sustain 3 Damages without being destroyed (instead of 2) until the end of turn.*



### 4.4 - Replacing

If you want to deploy a Unit on the same position as another card of yours, first you must **destroy** the card already in play that occupies that position, then you may put in play the new Unit. This is called **Replacing**.

The unit that enters into the battlefield is actually deployed, thus it is exhausted and its Genesis attribute must be resolved (if any).

### 4.5 - Moving Units

Some Abilities and Rituals let you **move** a Unit already on the battlefield to a valid empty position on the same side. Deploying restrictions still apply (e.g.: Fierce attribute).

### 4.6 - Destruction

Sanctuaries and Units can be destroyed.

**A Sanctuary is destroyed when its Aegis counter gets to zero.**

This process usually takes more than one turn, but the damage taken by a Sanctuary is not reset at the End of a Turn phase (8.4).

Flip a Sanctuary card face-down to represent its destruction.

As soon as a Sanctuary is destroyed, its special effect is immediately interrupted.

**Acolytes and Champions are immediately destroyed when they receive damage equal or greater than their Health value during a player's turn.** Since all partial damage Units receive is reset at the End of a Turn phase (8.4), they can only be destroyed within a single turn.

Units can only get damaged, and potentially be destroyed, if they are in play on the battlefield.

Destroyed Acolytes are moved in the Discard Pile, while destroyed Champions are removed from the game. To represent the destruction of a Champion, put their card face-down in their controller's Champion Area.

**Acolytes can be also directly destroyed by some special effects or abilities, regardless of their Health value.**

**If a Champion is forced to leave the battlefield by any means, consider it as destroyed.**

### 4.7 - Golden Rule

If a specific rule on a card is in conflict with the rulebook, always follow the specific card's rule and ignore the rulebook.

# Part 5 - Game Elements

## 5.1 - Deck

Your deck is the set of cards you picked to face an opponent. A valid set must contain exactly 28 cards between Acolytes and Rituals, plus 1 Champion which is kept outside the deck. You may play with a standard Faction deck, made only by Faction-specific cards, or you may build a deck with all the cards in your collection. In the early case, consider a limit of 2 copies of each card maximum. In the latter case, you may only pick a single copy of each card.

During a game of Sanctuary, you cannot look at the cards left in the deck, exception made if instructed by specific cards' abilities. You may only count how many cards are left in the deck.

**At the beginning of your turn, if you have no cards left in your deck, you must choose one of your Sanctuaries to be destroyed automatically.**

## 5.2 - Hand of cards

At the beginning of the game, you always start with a hand of 4 cards, randomly drawn from the deck. The cards in your hand are kept secret and can only be disclosed by the effect of specific cards' abilities.

Your hand size limit is 4. At the end of the turn, if you have more cards than your hand size, discard cards until you reach your hand size.

**During the End of the Turn phase (8.4), if you already have a hand of 4 cards or more, you do not get to draw more cards.**

## 5.3 - Discard Pile

The Discard Pile collects all your destroyed Acolytes and resolved Rituals. Furthermore if an ability or effect tells you to discard a card, take it from your hand and put it directly in the Discard Pile.

## 5.4 - Battlefield

The battlefield is divided into two **sides**, one for each player. The vertical columns that connect Sanctuaries are called **lanes**. A player may only deploy Units on their side of the battlefield, choosing between attack and defence positions.

## 5.5 - Essence Crystals

**Essence Crystals are consumed to summon Units or cast Rituals. Each player automatically gains 2 Essence Crystals at the beginning of their turn**, exception made for the very first turn of the game, in which the starting player only gains 1 Essence Crystal. There is no limit to the amount of Essence Crystals you may gather during the game.

## 5.6 - Rituals

Rituals is a generic term for a variety of useful enchantments, horrible curses, and tactic maneuvers. You may cast Rituals from your hand, by paying their Summoning cost.

**Rituals are resolved immediately after being cast.**

After having being resolved, they directly go in the Discard Pile – without passing through the battlefield.

## 5.7 - Acolytes

Acolytes are the core of your forces. Each of them is unique, with a specific combination of values, attributes, and abilities. Usually, Acolytes from the same Faction share some common mechanics that characterize them.

**When they enter the game, Acolytes are always placed exhausted.**

Acolytes become **active** at the End of a Turn phase (8.4) of their controller.

Exhausted Acolyte's cards are rotated sideways, while active cards are kept in the standard vertical orientation.



**Exhausted Acolytes cannot attack or defend, yet their abilities are still active.**

*NOTE: Some attributes and abilities allow Acolytes to enter the game active.*

## 5.8 - Champions

Champions are the most powerful members of a Faction, and have a meaningful impact on the flow of a game. They follow the same rules as Acolytes but, when destroyed, they are removed from the game.

**If a Champion is forced to leave the battlefield by any means, consider it as destroyed.**

To represent the destruction of a Champion, put their card face-down in their controller's Champion Area.

## 5.9 - Sanctuaries

Each Sanctuary has two tracks: Aegis and Splendor.

**If the Aegis counter reaches the zero, the Sanctuary is destroyed.**

**If the Splendor counter reaches the end of the track, the Sanctuary ability is activated for the rest of the game.**

When a Sanctuary is attacked, the Aegis counter is moved down of an amount of spaces equal to the damage taken by the Sanctuary. This kind of damage is permanent and will not be reset between turns.

When a Sanctuary is destroyed, flip its card face-down.

Do not remove from the battlefield the units in its lane.

When a Sanctuary is repaired via a card's effect, the Aegis counter is moved up of the amount of spaces indicated by the card's ability description. Sanctuaries can only be repaired if their Aegis is higher than 0.

When a destroyed Sanctuary is attacked, the defending player removes from the game, face down, the first card of their deck (put this card in the box instead of the Discard Pile).

**As for a Sanctuary's Splendor counter, it automatically advances of one space during each End of Turn (8.4) of its controller.**

Once the peak is reached, the Sanctuary ability is immediately activated.

## Part 6 - Attributes

Aside from base values as Attack and Health, Units also have Attributes.

### 6.1 - Common Attributes

The way Common Attributes work is the same regardless of the Unit possessing them.



#### ZEALOUS

This Acolyte is deployed **active** (not exhausted) on the battlefield.



#### FIERCE

This Acolyte can only be deployed on an **attack position**.



#### VEIL

This Acolyte **cannot be targeted** by enemy Rituals or Abilities.



#### REAPER

If this Acolyte damages another Unit by any means, that Unit is **automatically destroyed**.

### 6.2 - Special Attributes

These Special Attributes describe the trigger condition for resolving a Unit's ability.



#### ONGOING

The Ability is resolved any time its requirements are met. Follow the card's Ability description for details. Some cards may instead provide a passive ongoing bonus, which has no requirements.



#### GENESIS

The Ability is resolved the moment the Unit is deployed. Follow the card's Ability description.



#### LAST WORD

The Ability is resolved the moment the Unit is destroyed. Follow the card's Ability description.

### 6.3 - Simultaneous Effects

During a game of Sanctuary, it may happen that two effects or abilities are triggered at the same time (e.g.: two Acolytes, who both possess the attribute Last Word, destroy each other). When this happens, the current player decides the order in which the abilities are resolved.



## Part 7 - Setting Up a Game

### 7.1 - Sanctuaries and Champions

Starting with the first player, each one places their Sanctuaries in a row, freely arranging them.

Place the Splendor and Aegis counters on the respective tracks, the first on value "0", the second on the track's maximum value.

*NOTE: if you are using a playmat, you can place the Splendor and Aegis counters in the horizontal tracks located above and below the Sanctuary area.*

Place the Champion of choosing in their Area.

### 7.2 - Starting Player and Starting Hand

Flip a coin to see who is going to be the first player.

Whoever wins the coin-flip may decide to go second instead.

Shuffle your deck, then draw 4 cards.

If you do not like your starting hand, you may decide to put them back in the deck, shuffle it and draw three new cards.

You may perform this action only once.

## Part 8 - Turn Structure

During a game of Sanctuary, players alternate to perform turns.

**A player's turn is made up of four phases.**

Some phases are divided into three sub-phases: a "**beginning**", a "**core**", and an "**end**".

Bear in mind this division as it is useful for understanding abilities and effects' timing.

- When a card refers to the beginning sub-phase, you may find the wording "**At the beginning of [...] phase**". Abilities and effects related to a beginning sub-phase must be immediately resolved as soon as the player enters the corresponding phase.
- When a card refers to the core sub-phase, you may find the wording "**During [...] phase**". Abilities and effects related to a core sub-phase can be resolved anytime during the corresponding phase. Usually, the majority of abilities and effects are the most useful when resolved in-between the beginning and end sub-phases. However, you may decide to use such abilities anytime during the corresponding phase, even between resolving cards during the beginning or end sub-phases.
- When a card refers to the end sub-phase, you may find the wording "**At the end of [...] phase**". Abilities and effects related to an end sub-phase must be resolved right before concluding the corresponding phase.

After all sub-phases are resolved, move onto the next phase.

Accustoming to declaring the phases will greatly aid you to remember all the cards' potential activations and triggers. If you forget to resolve an ability, consider it null and move forward.

When you find the wording "**Once per turn**" on a card, it always refers to its controller turns – if not specified differently.

### 8.1 - Beginning of the Turn phase

Gain 2 Essence Crystals.

Resolve all "At the beginning of your turn" abilities and effects.

*NOTE: On the very first turn of the first player, they only get 1 Essence Crystal instead of 2.*

### 8.2 - Summoning phase

Resolve all abilities and effects related to this phase.

In the Summoning phase, you may deploy Units and cast Rituals – in any order.

### 8.3 - Attack phase

Resolve all abilities and effects related to this phase.

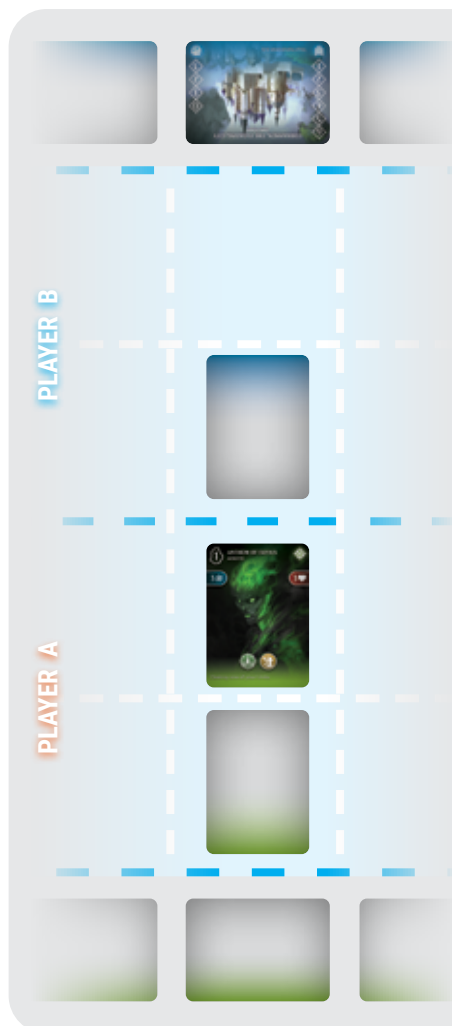
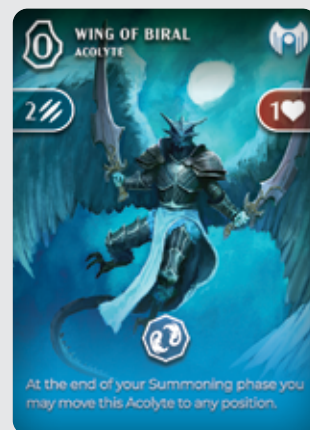
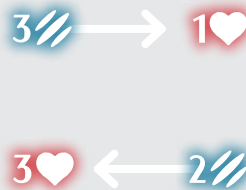
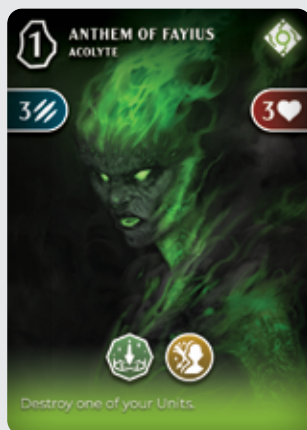
In the Attack phase, your Units in attack position start the offense towards the enemy Sanctuaries. Apply the following:

All your Units in attack position try to damage the enemy Sanctuary on the corresponding lane. If an enemy Sanctuary is shielded by an active Unit in defence position, that lane's attack is resolved against the defending enemy Unit instead (this is called **blocking**).

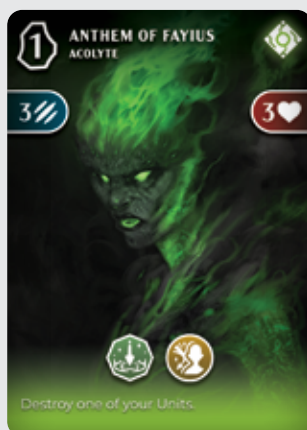
- If a Sanctuary is attacked while defenceless, reduce its Aegis counter by X, where X is the Damage value of the Unit attacking it.
- If the attack is resolved between two Units, the two of them inflict each other damage equal to their Attack value – at the same time. If the damage suffered by a Unit is equal to its Health value, that Unit is destroyed.



Example: Player A has entered their Attack phase. Let's consider only one lane of the battlefield. Wing of Biral and Anthem of Fayius are respectively on Player B's defence position and Player A's attack position. Anthem of Fayius tries to attack Player B's Sanctuary, but it is blocked by the Wing of Biral. Anthem of Fayius deals 3 damage to Wing of Biral, enough to destroy it, as it only has 1 Health. On the other hand, the Wing of Biral deals 2 damage to the Anthem of Fayius, which has 3 Health and survives the retaliation. Wing of Biral is put in its controller Discard Pile. The other Units in the lane are not involved. The process repeats for all the other lanes.



Example: Let's consider the same setup as the previous example but Player B has no Unit in defence position. Anthem of Fayius finds an opening to directly attack the enemy Sanctuary. They deal 3 damage to the structure, thus Player B moves the Sanctuary's Aegis counter down by three steps.



## 8.4 - End of the Turn phase

Perform the following actions in this order:

- All partial damage on Units is reset.
- All your Units become active (flip vertically all exhausted Units).
- All your Sanctuaries advance their Splendor counter by 1.
- Resolve all “At the end of your turn” abilities and effects in any order.
- Choose and discard any number of cards.
- Draw cards from your deck until you reach your hand size.



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