

# LOST EAGLE

A Wretched & Alone  
Solo Journaling RPG

By Noah Chapman



# INTRODUCTION

The sounds of battle have faded. The screams no longer echo through the forest. Three days of slaughter, and now... silence. You are Gaius Severus, Centurion of the XVII Legion, survivor of the Teutoburg Massacre. The eagles are lost. Varus is dead by his own hand. And you... you must lead what remains of your century through these cursed woods, past tribes baying for Roman blood, back to the Rhine. Back to civilization.

But the Germans are watching. Always watching. And your men... your men are changing.

Record your journey so that Rome will know what became of the lost sons of the XVII Legion. You are Wretched and Alone. The Eagles may be lost... but honour remains.



Based on The Wretched (found at <http://loottheroom.itch.io/wretched>), product of Chris Bissette and Loot The Room, and licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license.

# REQUIREMENTS

- Standard Deck of Cards: Each suit represents different challenges facing your century
- Jenga Tower: Represents your overall mental stability and the cohesion of your unit
- Tokens: Start with 30 representing your remaining soldiers and supplies,
- 5 Tokens representing your ability to apply effort and make command decisions.
- Two six-sided dice: Used for encounters with Germanic tribes and internal conflicts
- A journal to record your logs
- Appropriate atmosphere (optional)



# PLAYING THE GAME

## Turns

A Turn is a single day in the Germanic forest. To start a turn, roll 1d6 and draw that many cards – these represent the Events of your first day of survival. Follow the instructions on the cards and record your experiences.

## Supply Tokens

Start with 30 supply tokens. Each Turn will always remove one supply token. Events present the possibility of gaining or losing additional tokens.

## Event Cards

Events are drawn one by one. Journal these events in a way that makes sense to you. You may want to structure your writing by time of day. Try combining events together within the narrative! If an event does not make narrative sense to be resolved immediately (for example, something that happens while making camp or at night), you can leave it for a later part of the turn.

Events are divided into Challenges, representing the trials and tribulations of survival, and Encounters, representing encounters with other people, be they friend or foe.





## Effort

The player can use Effort Tokens to influence the outcome of rolls. This represents their ability to go above and beyond- to use their authority, skills, and sheer will to overcome difficulties. When you apply effort, be sure to describe how you did so! To apply effort, discard an effort token to re-roll an unsuccessful Challenge or Encounter roll. Effort can only be applied once to each event.

## The Final March

If you have at least 10 tokens remaining when the Ace of Hearts is drawn, you've found the path to the Rhine. You must make three final moves:- Pull one block each move- Draw one card each move- If you survive, you've reached Roman territory- If the tower falls, you perish within sight of salvation

## Victory Conditions

- Reach the Rhine with your sanity intact (tower standing)
- Maintain at least one token (surviving soldier)
- Your journal tells the tale of your journey

*Your log will be read in Rome. What parts will you burn before presenting it to the Senate?*



# EVENTS

## Challenge Rolls

Most events will ask you to make a challenge roll. When rolling, consider the context of the interaction or observation being made. The roll result should lead to immediate in-game consequences and influence the narrative, either stabilizing your mental state or exacerbating fears and tensions.

Normal Challenge Rolls succeed on a roll of 4-6.

Hard Challenge Rolls succeed on a roll of 5-6.

## Interpreting Challenge Results:

Unsuccessful Roll: The outcome skews from less to a more negative, distrustful or fearful interpretation, reflective of the Century's heightened paranoia and cultural biases. This symbolizes a regression or negative response.

Successful Roll: The outcome skews from less to a more positive, insightful or accepting interpretation. This outcome represents hope, progress or enlightenment.

## Encounter Rolls

Some events will involve encounters with other groups or entities.

Roll two dice to resolve the encounter.

## Encounter Results

1-5: A hostile encounter or ambush. Your men fear an attack or trick. Pull two blocks.

6-9: A neutral encounter. Potential for reflection; no immediate effect but the prospect to address lingering dread in the journal entries.

10-12: A friendly encounter. Recognizing the humanity and adaptability of others grants two tokens.



# SPADES: THE HOSTILE FOREST

*The Germans know these woods. We do not.*



Ace: Difficult Challenge- A massive Germanic war party spotted ahead. Shepherd your men around them!

- Unsuccessful Roll: Pull two blocks. Lose three supply tokens.

King: Difficult Challenge- A night raid threatens your camp. Rally the defence!

- Successful Roll: Remove one block. Lose two supply tokens.
- Unsuccessful Roll: Remove one blocks. Lose four supply tokens.

Queen: Encounter- The woods go silent. Roll dice as distant drums begin.

- Hostile Encounter: Lose three supply tokens.
- Friendly Encounter: Gain two supply tokens.

Jack: Difficult Challenge- A swamp in front, Germans to the rear. Regardless of your choice, Pluto will soon receive guests.

- Successful Roll: Remove one block. Lose two supply tokens.
- Unsuccessful Roll: Remove two blocks. Lose three supply tokens.

10: Challenge- Strange marks on the trees seem to be leading you somewhere. Roll dice to determine if this is a trap or salvation.

- Successful Roll: The marks lead to German hunting territories! Luckily, there are no German hunters present. Add two supply tokens.
- Unsuccessful Roll: Angry German hunters chase you off their territory. Lose one supply token.

9: A soldier dies in a pit trap. As the commanding officer it is up to you determine what happens to his body. Remove one block.

8: You can't tell the forest from the trees. They cast strange shadows on the ground. Haven't we been this way before? Remove one block. Lose a supply token.

7: A strange statue is placed at the fork in the road. Some of the men argue that this is a monument to Mercury, while other argue to Janus, while still others think that the gods of the Germans are too different from ours. Roll dice for insight. On a 4-6, gain one effort token.

6: Signs of recent tribal movement. Roll for insight. On a 4-6, gain one effort token.

5: Exhausting search for open land. Amidst the search, distant voices echo. Roll dice to interpret them as either disconcerting or insightful. On a 4-6, gain one effort token.

4: A torrential rainstorm stops your march early. After the storm, you discover that supplies are missing. Muddy footprints are discovered leading away. Decide whether to follow and roll dice for the potential outcome. Lose a supply token.

3: The rain makes weapons rust and armour chafe. Decide whether you will carry on (pull one block) or discard equipment (lose a supply token).

2: Challenge- Germanic warriors challenge you with taunts and insults. Keep your men in line.  
Unsuccessful Roll: Lose two supply tokens.



# HEARTS: THE PRICE OF LOYALTY

*Rome rewards service, but first you must survive.*

Ace: Roman trumpets heard in the distance! Set the Ace of Hearts beside your supply tokens. At each turn's end, roll d6. On 6, should you have 10 supply tokens remaining, attempt THE FINAL MARCH.

King: Difficult Challenge- Some of the remaining Equestrians still have their horses. The men argue that we should eat them. The Equestrians argue that their horse is their right as citizens and is secured by the Laws of Rome. Arbitrate this conflict.

- Successful Roll: A few of the Equestrians agree to give up their horses. Pull one block. Gain one supply token.
- Unsuccessful Roll: Violence breaks out as a group of men attempt to seize the horses. Lose three supply tokens. Pull two blocks.



Queen: Encounter- Your path takes you close to a small German village. There is debate among the men whether to approach the village, and how.

- Hostile Encounter: Raid the village. It is poorly defended, with mostly the elderly, women, and the young. Following the raid, you recognize the tribal marking of those of the Marcomanni, a tribe relatively friendly to Rome. Gain two supply tokens. Pull three blocks.
- Friendly Encounter: The Germans turn out to be a group of friendly Marcomanni. They teach you new techniques for survival but cannot spare any food. Gain one effort token.

Jack: Challenge- Fighting breaks out over the last of the Roman rations.

- Successful Roll: Despite your best efforts, some of the men leave with the remaining rations. Lose one supply token. Pull one block.
- Unsuccessful Roll: A number of men break away from the group. Lose two supply tokens. Pull two blocks.

10: A soldier confesses to having Germanic ancestors. How do you handle this revelation? Roll dice. On a 4-6, gain one effort token.

9: Soldiers suggest adopting Germanic clothing for camouflage. Roll dice to determine how this affects unit cohesion. On a 4-6, gain one effort token.

8: One of the men blames you for "following along with that accursed fool Varus". Pull one block

7: You find mutilated bodies of other Romans. Germans? Animals? Roll for insight. Pull one block.

6: Challenge- The men reminisce that the Ludi Romani will be happening in Rome right now. They talk of the games, religious celebrations, and plays that they are missing out on. You feel deeply homesick. Do you indulge in this talk? On an unsuccessful roll, pull one block.

5: A group of men refuses to march in the rain, not even after being threatened with insubordination. Decide if you will leave them behind or not. Pull one block.

4: A murder of crows follows your century for several hours. The men whisper that this is a fell omen. Decide if you will ignore it (pull one block) or leave an offering (lose one supply token).

3: The veterans argue for keeping to Roman discipline. The recruits, many of them of Gallic ancestry, are more open to adopting German ideas. Roll to arbitrate this conflict. Note what side you are on.

2: Find a fallen eagle standard. Pull one block.



# DIAMONDS: RESOURCES AND SURVIVAL

*The forest provides... if we dare to learn its ways.*

Ace: Challenge- You discover an abandoned Germanic village.

- Successful Roll: Gain five supply tokens
- Unsuccessful Roll: Pull one block, gain one supply token

King: Difficult Challenge- Winter approaches. Distribute dwindling supplies.

- Successful Roll: Lose one supply token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose four supply tokens, pull one block

Queen: Challenge- Disease spreads through the ranks.

- Successful Roll: Lose one supply token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose three supply tokens, pull one block

Jack: Encounter - Local tribe offers trade. Roll 2d6.

- Hostile (1-5): Lose three supply tokens in robbery
- Neutral (6-9): Fair trade, no effect
- Friendly (10-12): Gain three supply tokens

10: Equipment breaks in marsh. Lose two supply tokens.

9: Challenge - Find wild food without poisoning.

- Successful Roll: Gain two supply tokens
- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose one supply token, pull one block

8: Weapons rust in constant rain. Lose one supply token.

7: Challenge- Cross dangerous river with supplies.

- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose two supply tokens

6: Encounter - Find a Germanic storehouse. Roll 2d6.

- Hostile (1-5): It's a trap, lose two supply tokens
- Neutral (6-9): Take some supplies, pull one block
- Friendly (10-12): Gain three supply tokens

5: Night watch exhausts rations. Lose one supply token.

4: Challenge - Preserve meat in wet conditions.

- Successful Roll: Gain one supply token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose one supply token

3: Must abandon heavy equipment. Lose two supply tokens.

2: Challenge - Find drinkable water.

- Successful Roll: Gain one supply token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Pull one block



# CLUBS: MENTAL STRAIN

*\*Are we still Romans? Or are we becoming something else?\**

Ace: \*Encounter\* – Veterans demand to elect a new leader. Roll 2d6. Successful Roll: Gain five supply tokens

- Hostile (1-5): Lose four supply tokens, pull one block
- Neutral (6-9): Lose two supply tokens
- Friendly (10-12): Gain one effort token

King: Challenge– Howls in the distance. The men mutter amongst themselves. Wolves? Barbarians? The Angry Gods of the Forest? The men think we should leave an offering. Pull Two Blocks.

- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose two supply tokens.

Queen: \*Difficult Challenge\* – Must decide whether to abandon wounded.

- Successful Roll: Keep the wounded, pull one block
- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose three supply tokens, pull two blocks

Jack: Challenge– A soldier goes berserk, claiming to be possessed by Germanic gods. He denounces the gods of Rome.

- Successful Roll: The man is subdued, but not before injuring several others. Lose one supply token, pull one block.
- Unsuccessful Roll: Mass panic. Lose two supply tokens, pull two blocks

10: Nightmares of Varus's shade. Pull two blocks.

9: \*Encounter\* – Meet survivors from another century. Roll 2d6.

- Hostile (1-5): They try to steal supplies, lose two tokens
- Neutral (6-9): Share information, pull one block
- Friendly (10-12): Join forces, gain three supply token

8: \*Challenge\* – Keep order during a thunderstorm.

- Successful Roll: Gain one effort token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Pull one block

7: A soldier kills himself in despair. Lose one supply token.

6: \*Challenge\* – Resolve dispute over remaining water.

- Successful Roll: Fair distribution, gain one effort token
- Unsuccessful Roll: Pull one block

5: Men demand to know your plan. Choose: truth (pull block) or lie (lose token).

4: \*Challenge\* – Maintain discipline during march.

- Unsuccessful Roll: Lose one supply token

3: \*Encounter\* – Deserters beg to return. Roll 2d6

- Hostile (1-5): They were spies, lose two tokens
- Neutral (6-9): Accept them back, pull one block
- Friendly (10-12): Gain one supply token

2: You catch yourself speaking in Germanic tongue. Pull one block.



# DESIGNER'S NOTES

This game explores the tension between Roman military identity and the necessity of survival in hostile territory. It asks questions about what happens when civilization meets wilderness, and how much of one's cultural identity can survive *in extremis*. The historical Teutoburg Forest disaster resulted in the loss of three entire Roman legions and profoundly impacted Roman expansion into Germania. Many small groups of Roman soldiers likely attempted similar journeys of survival, though few made it back to Roman territory.



This project incorporates generative AI for game and imagery design. We consider AI to have interesting potential application for historical education and expression. However, this project involved a great deal of human intervention to ensure accuracy. This is a non-profit, academic project.