

# Kbernestich

Designed by: Hayato Sato  
Players: 3-4; Length: 45'; Ages: 10+

## Prologue

*19th century Austrian Empire. The Duke of Kuverne, who rules over a remote region, was praised for his once-in-a-50-year beauty. I didn't care about Marie, the beautiful only daughter, who was called the self-rely Marguerite. The misfortune that happened to this family 100 years ago, the curse of Zabine, which originated from "the murder of Hannah's mother", was on this Marie. Twenty-two years ago, on the day Marie was born, the prophet of the public aide prophesied:*

*"This child will be the reincarnation of Princess Marguerite. And that's why I seem to have been born with an inescapable fate. At the age of 22, I deserve to be my wife's partner and as my successor to this country.*

*If you don't have a successor, the disaster may continue for the princess..."*

*For more than 22 years, four candidates who responded to the public call were gathered as suitors. Marie's 22nd birthday was approaching a few days later.*

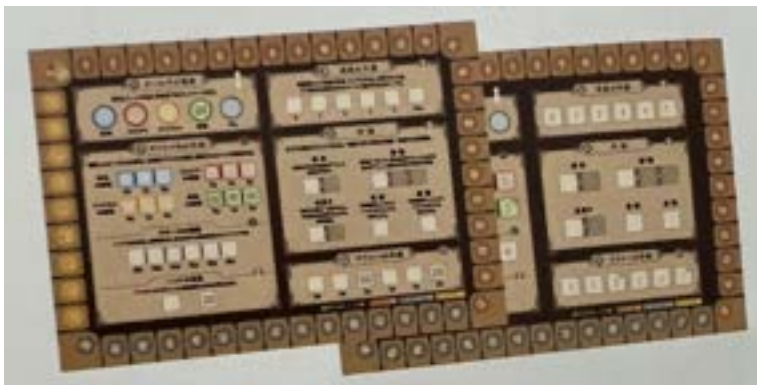
## Key

Example Play

Important terms/rules

## Components

- One plot sheet (from the messenger of Rochbernet to the 5 letters to Marie, it consists of 5 areas and a score track around the outside. Double-sided)



- 4 discs (4 colors x 1 per player)



- 20 cubes (4 colors x 5 per player)



- 4 pawns (4 colors x 1 per player)



- 1 trump card display pawn



- 48 cards

4 colors, 12 cards per color. The rank is 2 to 12 and the icon by itself. For each suit, red represents charisma, blue represents intelligence, yellow represents physical, and green represents dignity. *The colors represent the humanity that Kuverne and Marie are looking for.*



- A rulebook

## Setup

The following rules are for a 4 player game, unless specified.

1. Place the plot sheet in the center of the table (It is double sided. You can choose which side to use. There are differences in either side, but we recommend that you use the side with the help text until you are familiar with this game). Leave room for supplies to the side of the plot sheet. Place the trump pawn near the plot sheet.
2. Each player chooses their color. Take 1 disc, 5 cubes, and a pawn of the chosen color
3. Whoever proposed to marry their spouse most recently will be the start player
4. The start player places their disk on 0 the spot of the scoring track. In clockwise order, the next player places their disk on the 2 spot, then 4, and finally the 6 spot. Each player keeps their 5 cubes and color pawn near them.
5. Shuffle all 48 cards. Distribute 11 cards to each player face down. The remaining 4 cards are set to the side face down. Do not show your hand to other players.

## Game Flow


The game will be played over 4 rounds. There will be 11 tricks per round. If we call these tricks Trick 1 to Trick 11, then only the four tricks from Trick 1 to Trick 4 are preceded by a phase called the Plotting Phase. In this phase each player places his or her cube(s) on the plot sheet.

At the beginning of each round, the player with the lowest score becomes the starting player for that round. The starting player decides the color of the trump suit for the round. To do so, he places his trump pawn in the red, blue, yellow, green, or no trump circle in the **Ambassadors of Kuberne** area. This determines the trump suit for this round.



From left to right: Intelligence, Charisma, Physical, Dignity, No Trump

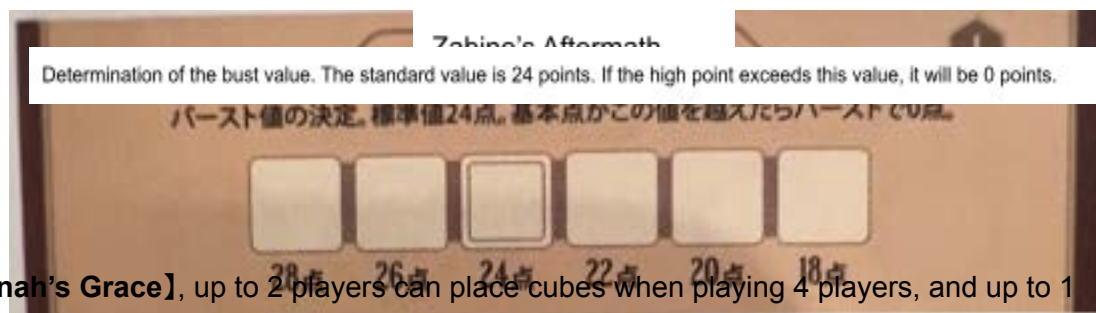
Then the first Plot Phase move is made clockwise from the start player. After everyone has taken a turn in the plotting phase, the first trick is started with the start player as the lead player.

In the Plot Phase, squares marked as blank (or, in a 4 player game, squares marked with ) can be used. Each player may place up to two cubes in each square per turn, as long as no one has placed a cube in that square yet. If a player has no cubes, they are skipped. Once a cube is placed, it cannot be moved until the end of the round. After everyone has had one turn, the Plotting Phase ends and the trick begins.

The **[(2) Letter from Marie]** area determines the number of points per card earned for tricks. Up to one cube of each color may be placed. Once a cube is placed by one of the players and the per-card score for that color is determined, no one can place a cube of that color in that round.

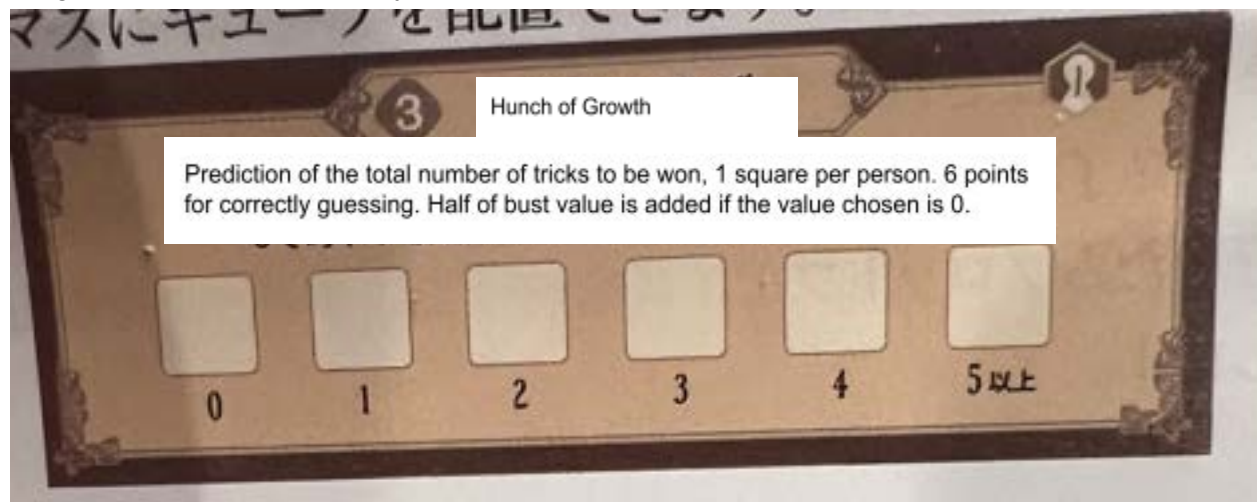


In **[Zabine's Aftermath]** only one player can place a cube here. This cube determines the bust value for that round. If no one places a cube in the Plotting Phase, the bust value is "24 points".

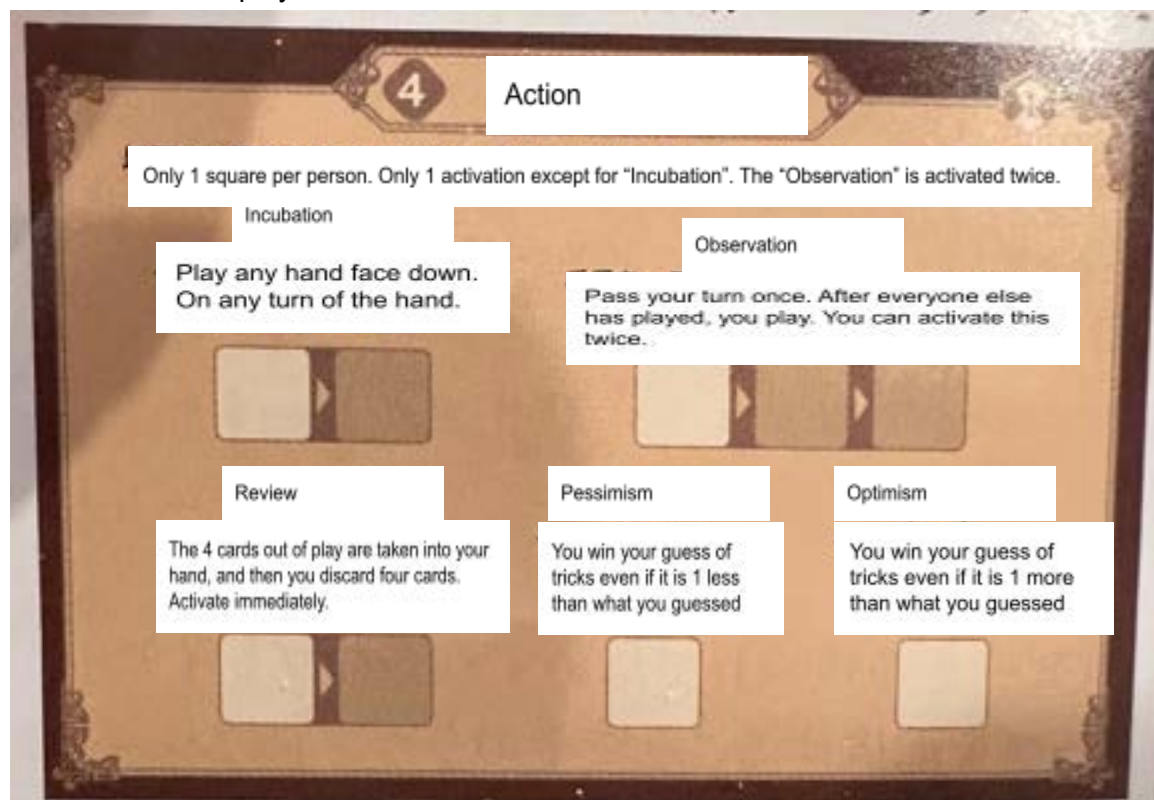


In **[Hannah's Grace]**, up to 2 players can place cubes when playing 4 players, and up to 1 player can place cubes when playing 3 players. When playing with four players, one player cannot play here more than once.

In the **[(3) Hunch of Growth]** area, each player will predict the total number of tricks he or she will get in this round. Each player can place up to one cube in one of the squares per round.



In the **[(4) Action]** area, each player can place up to one cube in one of the squares per round. This means that each player can take a maximum of one action per round. Once an action is claimed, no other player can claim that same action this round.





The **[(5) Letter to Marie]** area allows unlimited placement of cubes (the principle of a maximum of two cubes per turn applies, of course). There is no limit to the amount of cubes a player can have in this area. This area gives points based on number below.

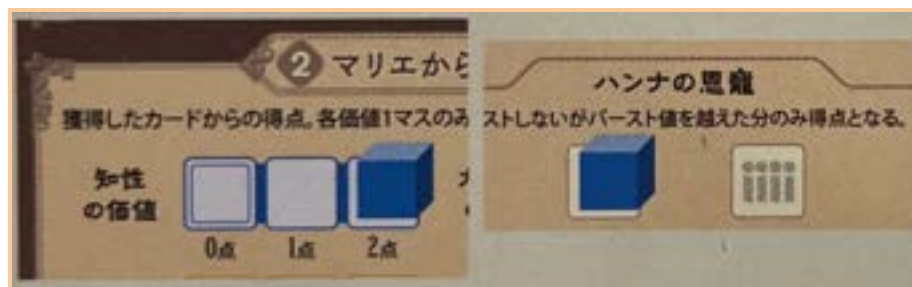


## Play Example

- 1) Schmidt was the starting player. He was the “Ambassadors of Kuverne” area, placing a pawn in the blue circle, and this round's trump card is Intelligence (blue).



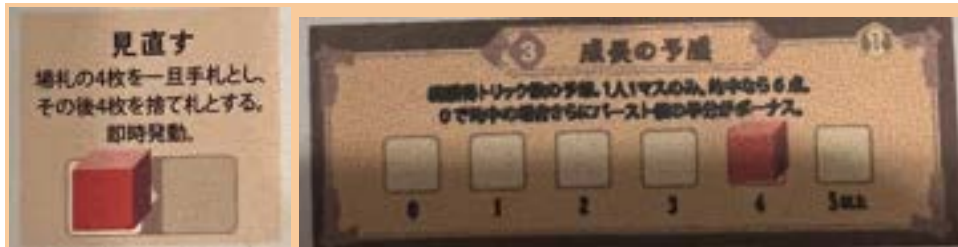
- 2) Next, we begin the plot phase with Schmidt. He first places the cube in the "Intelligence" square in the "Letters from Marie" area. Then he places his second cube in the "Hannah's Grace" square in the same area.



- 3) Next, Hans, to the left of Schmidt, goes. He first places a cube in the "Charisma Value" square in the "Letter from Marie" area for 0 points, then places a cube in the "Zabine's Aftermath" square for 22 points in the same area, and finishes his turn.



- 4) Next, Alea, to the left of Hans, takes her turn. She places a cube in the "Review" square of the "Action" area. Immediately she moves the cube to the already executed square and performs the action. She then places a cube in the 4 square in the "Hunch of Growth" area.



- 5) Finally, Gault performs the plotting phase. He first places the cube in the 0 square of the "Physical" area of the "Letters from Marie" area, and then places the cube in the 0 square of the "Hunch of Growth" area.



This ends the first plot phase. Schmidt is now the lead player and begins the first trick.

### **Kbernestich is a must follow trick taking game.**

The lead player may play any card in his or her hand. The color (suit) of the card played becomes the lead suit. The following players must play a card of the lead suit. If there are multiple cards of the lead suit in their hand, the player may play any one of them. If they do not have any cards of the lead suit in their hand, the player may play any one card from their hand.

When all players have played one card each in this way, the player who played the strongest card wins the trick and all cards played.

The strength of a card is determined by two factors: color (suit) and number (rank). The colors (suits) are: trump suit > lead suit > other suits. The trump suit is the strongest, followed by the lead suit, and finally the other suits.

**The numbers (ranks) are: icon alone > 12>11>10>>2, in that order. The icon alone is the strongest card, followed by 12, 11, 10..., and 2 is the weakest.**

In determining the strength of a card, the color is given priority over the number. If there is no trump suit, the card with the highest number in the lead suit is the strongest. This means that the card with the trump icon alone is the strongest of all cards, and the card with the 2 is the weakest of all cards.

The winner of a trick places the four cards he or she has won face up in front of him or her. The cards should be slightly shifted so that the numbers are visible, and each trick should be clumped together so that the number of tricks won is known at the end of the round.

The winner of a trick also becomes the starting player in the next plot phase and the lead player in the immediately following trick.

### **Play Example (continued)**

- 6) Schmidt is the lead player and begins the first trick. He played the green 11.
- 7) Next, Hans played a green 6. He had green 3, 6, and 8 in his hand. Any of these three cards could be played. He chose the 6.
- 8) Then it is Alea's turn to play. Alea has no green cards in her hand. She could have played any card in her hand, but she played her trump, the blue 2.
- 9) Gault only has the green 12 in his hand, so he plays the green 12.
- 10) The winner of the trick is Alea, with her blue (trump) 2 card. Alea places the four cards face down in front of her, slightly shifted so the numbers are visible.
- 11) Alea starts the next plotting phase. She will also be the lead player for the second trick.

The Plot Phase and Trick Phase are alternated in this manner, but after the fourth trick, the Plot Phase is no longer used, and only the Trick Phase is used from this point on. (Any remaining cubes at the end of the fourth and last Plotting Phase can be carried over to the next round.) In other words, the Plot phase is only performed before the first four tricks.

The flow of each round can be summarized as follows: trump suit is determined → (plot phase → tricks 4 times) → tricks 7 times → calculation of victory points → processing at the end of the round (or the end of the game).

The game ends with the following steps.

### **Calculation of Victory Points**

After 11 tricks, the winning points are calculated.



The calculation is made starting with the player with the highest current score, then moving in descending order to the player with the lowest score. If a player moves into a spot with an occupied disc, place it on top. The player that is on the bottom of the stack is in the lead.

The calculation of the points is done for each area in the following order: **Letter to Marie**, **Hunch of Growth**, **Letter from Marie**. Move the disk each time and reflect the score immediately.

In the **Letter to Marie** area, you score points for the square the cube is placed.

In the **Growth Hunch**, 6 points will be awarded if the number of tricks acquired is correct. Please be sure to check that no cubes are placed in the "Pessimistic" and "Optimistic" action areas. If you predict 0 and the actual number of tricks is 0, you will receive half of the bust value as a misery bonus in addition to the usual 6 points.

In the **Letter from Marie** area, the cards acquired are color-by-color. The number of points per card is checked by referring to the score of each value. The total is then multiplied by the number of cards of that color to get the base score. The color for which no cubes are placed in the plotting phase is worth 0 points per card. The score will be the base point. If this base point value does not exceed the bust value, all the points can be earned, but if the value is above the bust value, they cannot be earned and the score is 0. In addition, if you have placed a cube in **Hannah's Grace**, points are earned by subtracting the bust value from the base value.

The bust value is calculated by looking at the number underneath the square that has a cube on it in **Zabine's Aftermath** area. **Note:** the bust value will be 24 points if no one places a cube in **Zabine's Aftermath**.

## **Play Example (continued)**

- 12) Calculate the victory points starting with the Gault who has the highest current victory points (since he is the last player, he starts the game with the most points). Gault placed a cube in the 3 and 1 spaces in **Letters to Marie**. We move his disc up 4 spaces on the score track. Next, the cube was placed on the 0 square in the **Hunch of Growth** area. The number of tricks Gault won this round was 1. He placed his cube on the "optimistic" spot of the **Action** area so he was right on the money with 1, so he gains 6 points. Gault won the following cards this round: 0 blue, 2 red, 2 yellow, and 0 green. According to the **Letter from Marie** area cards were worth the following: 2 blue, 0 red, 0 yellow, 2 green points per card. Gault earns 0 points.
- 13) Next we score Alea. Alea scores 2 points for the 2 square in **Letters to Marie**. The cube was placed in the 4 square of **Growth Hunch**. He won 2 tricks this round so no points were earned. Alea has the following cards: 1 blue, 3 red, 2 yellow, 2 green. She earns 1x2 (blue), 3x0 (red), 2x0 (yellow), 2x2 (green) for a total of 6 points. The bust value is not exceeded so the points are awarded.

- 14) Next we score Hans. Hans scores 2 points for having a cube in both 1 squares in **Letters to Marie** area. He placed a cube on the 3 space in the **Hunch of Growth** area. He won 3 tricks so he gets 6 points. He won the following cards: 4 blue, 4 red, 2 yellow, 8 green. The base score was 24 points. The bust value was 22 points. He placed his cube in **Hannah's Grace** area so he will still score points. His score is calculated by taking base score - bust value:  $24 - 2$  so he scores 2 points.
- 15) Finally we score Schmidt. Schmidt scores 2 points for placing a cube on the 2 square in **Letters to Marie**. Schmidt placed his cube in the 5+ space of **Growth Hunch** and in the pessimistic square in **Action** area. The number of tricks won was 4 so the target was hit and 6 points is awarded. He has the following cards: 7 blue, 1 red, 4 yellow, and 2 green. His base score is 18. The bust value was not exceeded, but since he placed his cube in **Hannah's Grace** he will score 0 points since he did not go over the bust value.
- 16) After the first round of tricks, Gault scored 10 points, Alea 8, Hans 10, and Schmidt 8.

## End of a Round/End of Game

After the scores are calculated, the trump display pawn is moved aside from the plot sheet and all cubes on the sheet are returned to the supply (the remaining cubes each player has in their area are not returned to the supply, players keep those). The cubes are then distributed according to the current points for each player. They are distributed as follows:

Current Score	Cubes
0 - 25	5
26 - 40	4
41+	3

If there are fewer than the number to be distributed in the supply, then that is all that will be distributed. Example: Hans kept 2 cubes from the previous round. He has 24 points currently. He should get 5 cubes from the supply, but since he only has 3 cubes in the supply, he will only get 3 cubes and thus have a total of 5 cubes in his hand. That is to say: 5 cubes is the max number of cubes any player will ever have at any given time.

If this is not the end of the fourth round, all cards are shuffled, and 11 cards are dealt to each player, with the remaining four cards placed in the center of the table, and the player with the lowest score becomes the starting player to begin the next round of play.

At the end of four rounds, the player with the highest score at that point becomes Marie's fiancée and exorcizes Zabine's curse. He also becomes the rightful heir of the Duke of Kuverne and wins the game. If players are tied, the disc on the bottom is the winner.

## **Regarding Actions**

There are five actions, but the player can only choose one of them. The cube is placed in the left square when plotted, and some actions move the cube to the right square (indicated by the arrow) when executed. Note that the timing of when an action can be triggered depends on the action.

**Incubation:** You may execute once on any turn during a trick. Once executed, you can play any hand of cards face down. Note that you can play any card in your hand at this time without regard to must-follow and other rules. Cards played are not taken into account in determining the strength of the trick, and are placed face up in front of the player after the winner of the trick has won, just like any other cards in the hand. When performed, the cube is moved to the executed square on the right and cannot be performed in the following rounds.

**Observation:** This can be executed 0, 1, or 2 times in a round. Once executed, the player skips his/her turn and it is the turn of the player to his/her left. After all players have played their card, it is your turn to play. If you are the lead player and perform this action, the player to your left becomes the lead player and starts the trick. Each time you perform this action, you move the cube to the square on the right.

**Review:** The player immediately executes the action once the cube is placed. The four cards in the center that were not dealt to the players at the beginning of the round are taken into their hand. The player then chooses four cards from their hand to discard. They are returned face down to the supply. These four cards are kept here until the next round is ready to start. When the cube is executed, the cube is moved to the executed square on the right side and cannot be executed in the following tricks


**Pessimism:** When determining if your bid was successful at the end of the round, the bid is considered successful even if the number of tricks won is one trick less than the expected number of tricks. If a cube is placed in a square marked "5 or more" in the **Growth Hunch** column and a cube is also placed in this square, the bid will be considered successful even if the number of tricks won is 4.

**Optimism:** At the end of the round, when the bidding is confirmed, even if the bidder has won one trick more than the bid, the bidder is considered to have still been successful in their bid. If a cube is placed in the 0 square of the **Growth Hunch** and a cube is also placed in this square, the bid will be considered successful even if the number of tricks won is 1. However, the player does not get the misery bonus (half of bust value).

## **Changes for 3 Players**

(Setup step 4) The starting player places the disc on the victory point track at 0, the player to the left of the starting player places the disc on 3, and the player to the right of the starting player places the disc on 6.

(Setup step 5) From the 48 cards, all 12 green (dignity) cards are returned to the box and are no longer used. The remaining 36 cards are all shuffled and dealt to each player face down, 11 cards to each player. The remaining three cards are placed face down in the center of the table.

In the Plotting Phase, you can only place your plots in plain squares (you cannot place them in squares marked ).

In the **Review** action, the player collects the three left over cards to make a hand, and then discards the three cards in his or her hand.

## **Official Rules Variant**

### **The Future We Knew in Advance**

At the beginning of the round, after the starting player has determined the color of his or her trump card, starting counterclockwise from the player to the right of the starting player, each player may place a cube near any color in the **Letter from Marie** area for determining the value of each color. This gives the player “the right to determine” the value of the chosen color. If the player does not wish to place a cube, they do not have to. The first plotting phase then begins as usual with the starting player. Each player who placed a cube in the manner above can determine the score of a color by moving a previously placed cube to a square of that color instead of placing one in any plot phase. If the color is not decided by the beginning of the fourth trick, the value of the color is automatically set to one point and the cube is moved to the square with one point. No other player during the plotting phase can place a cube for this color.

### **Their Memories**

The acquired tricks are placed face down. Only the player who won the trick may check the values of that trick. They can do so at any time.

### **The Long Road**

You can play 6 or 8 rounds, instead of 4 rounds.

## From the Designer

Kbernestich is a delicate game. Always pay close attention to the movements of others. Sometimes it is unavoidable, but the slightest oversight can cost you a great deal of ground. In addition, it is often easier to win a game if you are trying to destroy the interests of others rather than your own. Always weigh the two and make the best decisions carefully.

Cubes are valuable resources (especially the higher the score). The higher the score, the fewer cubes are distributed. Unused cubes can be carried over to the next round, so after 26 points, you should carefully watch the situation and try to conserve them so that you do not run out of cubes at the critical moment.

Actions are useful, but they should not be abused too easily. Sometimes it is better to earn a point by writing a Letter to Marie. Please use "actions" that have a purpose and a meaning, and try to become one of the advanced players.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank many people from the author. In particular, to h, m, S, and w (in abc order), and to I, I, and W for their test play.

## Credits



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