

Chapter 1: The Lab

Inside the lab, a stranger would never have guessed there was a war among the inhabitants of Xolo. Huddles of people from both houses worked together diligently. The scientists from the House of Jathum were easily distinguished by their pearly white cloaks and emerald green eyes. They believed they were the direct descendants of the Ancients and it was their duty to carry out the words from the ancient texts. Most scientists from the House of Norn did not believe this but also tended to be aloof about such lineage. Members of the House of Norn wore a distinct black utility belt with an orange dome symbol. Their pupils were also a striking orange and when one from the House of Norn looked into the eyes of another, there was an indescribable intensity. It was nearly impossible to shy away from these orange gazes and it felt like someone was looking through your eyes and into your thoughts.

In the center of the lab was a large glass enclosure in the shape of a cylinder. This inner glass room spread from floor to ceiling containing glowing orbs of liquid. Each orb floated gingerly on top of metal discs. With just a point of a finger, bits of mass from the orbs would slide from one disc to another, mixing and melting together.

“We have it!” yelled a group from one of the huddles. A pulsating orb floated above one of the discs. Cheering erupted in the room. Everyone laughed and yelled in relief. Little by little, the cheering stopped. As each lab member remembered their childhood studies of the ancient text.

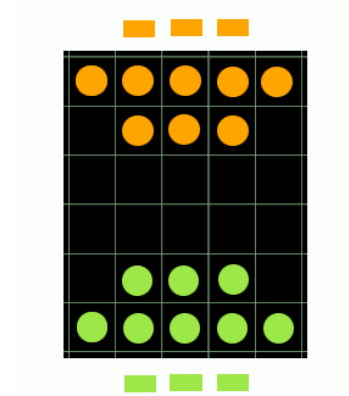
“...over the land and into the great sky door the savior ship must sail, take heed for the door will only open once.”

The portal created by the Ancients was only guaranteed to work a single time for a single ship. Once a ship passed through, it was unknown if a second would be able to follow.

The lab began to separate. White cloaks clumped and gathered together while those with orange eyes stared at each other, communicating silently. Quickly, each side began to fill three vials with the precious fuel. As the scientists from the House of Jathum and the House of Norn eyed each other, the race began. Each side needs to get the vials out of the lab and into their ships!

Setup

Arrange the pieces as shown below.



The 8 path pieces represent the discs that will pave the way for the fuel.

The 3 slider pieces are the precious vials of fuel.

Place the 3 corresponding slider pieces off the edge of the board.

Rules

- Randomly select the first player.
- On each turn, a player must move a path piece and then a slider piece.
- A path piece can move 1 space in any direction.
- A path piece can also make a leap move where it can jump over any single piece (either color) in any direction (orthogonal or diagonal) to an empty space. Multiple jumps are allowed as long as there are empty spaces connecting the jumps.
- A slider piece that is off the board can move onto any square that contains a path piece in the last row closest to the player.
- A slider piece on the board can move freely across the board (like a queen in chess) as long as there are path pieces on the squares. It does not matter if the path pieces belong to the opponent.
- Slider pieces can not move onto squares without path pieces.
- Sliders can not move through any other slider pieces.
- A path piece can not jump over any other path piece with a slider on it.
- If a player moves their slider piece into one of the opponent's corner square, the piece is removed from the board and one of the vials of fuel has successfully left the lab.

The first player to escape with all 3 vials of fuel wins.

(i.e. move all their slider pieces off the board)

If a player is unable to move a piece (either path or slider), the opponent wins.