

Six Winters

Playtest Rules

V24.0

Six Winters is a cooperative fantasy campaign game for two players based on the *Wrath of the Autarch* tabletop role-playing game.

These rules default to the two player game, but there are options for 1 and 3 player games at the end.

Players control *Brightdune*, a society under threat from the *Empire of the Autarch*. The Autarch works to achieve a sorcerous apotheosis, rendering The Empire unstoppable and spelling certain doom for Brightdune. The players have six winters to stop this from happening. Each game of *Six Winters* is 90-120 minutes long and plays out one year in the chronicle of Brightdune. A series of six games is called a *campaign*.

During a session of the game, players select from a rotating cast of characters and undertake *scenarios* against the Empire. Each scenario has its own unique win conditions, but they usually involve completing a number of narrative scenes before either time runs out or threats grow out of control. Special *victory scenarios* played during year six determine whether players win the campaign and defeat the autarch.

Each character has their own unique capabilities and limitations. Effectively managing these characters over the six winters is critical to successfully stopping the Empire!

As this document is very much in progress, designer thoughts and notes are captured using this highlighted format.

These notes help provide context, but are not essential to understanding the game. The playtest version number matches that used in Tabletop Simulator and gitlab. All of the graphic design, art, and layout is for prototype purposes and will change at production time.

The first few games will take closer to the 120 minute mark as you learn the rules. Two experienced players can finish a game in around 90 minutes.

Since this is a playtest version of the game, feel free to reach out with any questions. The best place to leave feedback or rules questions is on the boardgamegeek page: <https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/382841/six-winters>. The most recent rulebook, character sheets, scenarios and (eventually) a sample playthrough will also be at <https://github.com/ziapeitagames/six-winters>.

Feedback will go towards clarifying the rules and tuning the game. Current focus areas for playtesting are noted at the end of these rules.

Components

Resource Dice 🎲

The conflict against the Empire is fought using six **resources** depicted with the icons shown at the bottom of the page. These resources are also represented by a set of dice that come into play each turn.

Resource dice match the color of the resource icons. There are 6 resource dice of each color, for a total of 36 resource dice.

Resource dice are finite, if they run out for some reason, new resource dice may not be put into play until some become available again. As mentioned above, resource dice on location cards are called assets.



Resource Dice (6 x Resource)

One of the goals of playtesting is to determine how many of each type of resource dice are needed to avoid frequently running out. It may end up that different resources have different maximums.

Resource Tokens

A set of 12 resource tokens are included. These map to the different types of resources and indicate which locations (see below) are capable of generating the resource type.

One side indicates a **resource location**, the other side, which has a circle around the resource, indicates an **improved resource location**.



Military Resource Location



Improved Military Resource Location

Action Dice *

Each player has a pool of ivory action dice available each turn. These dice are spent to perform actions in the game. There are 18 action dice included in the game.



Action Dice (18)

Action Dice are like action points in many boardgames. Thematically, lower valued action dice represent quicker actions and higher valued dice represent longer and slower actions. Quicker actions are better at overcoming obstacles (see below) and slower actions are better at building assets (see below).

Stress Dice

Each player has one red die to track body stress ❤️ and one gray die to track psyche stress 🧠. Stress is used to track how worn down a character is.



Stress Dice (2 / Player)

These may get swapped out with tokens. Particularly because characters don't have very high numbers for body or psyche (usually under six).



Hindrance Tokens ★

There are 12 yellow cubes, which represent hindrance for obstacles (discussed later).



Hindrance (12)

Progress Tokens ⚖

There are 12 blue cubes, which represent progress in overcoming obstacles (discussed later).



Progress (12)

Threat Tokens 🌹

There are 12 red cubes, which represent unresolved threats. Accumulating too many threats is the most common way to lose a scenario.



Threat (12)

Resources 💰

Support



Technology



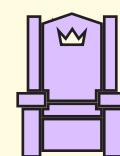
Espionage



Military



Diplomacy



Sorcery



Character Mats and Character Sheets

There are character mats for the seven characters in the game. Character mats are used along with character sheets during play to track the character. At the start of the campaign Fuscus, Thea, Menas, and Keel are unlocked and available.

You can find blank character sheets and the character mats at <https://github.com/ziapeلتاgames/six-winters>.

Skills

The back of each character mat shows how proficient the character is at a set of eight **skills**. Skills are ranked from 0 to 5. Starting skills for each character are marked. Skills may be improved further during play.

Stress

Each character has two stress pools: one for **psyche** and one for **body**. Psyche is tracked with a **gray die**, and body is tracked with a **red die**. At the start of a game, each **stress die** is set next to the icon of the appropriate type. These dice function as counters. As a character takes stress, the die is lowered in value.

If a character takes stress such that the stress die would go to zero or lower the character is **knocked out** for the rest of the game. The players lose if either character is knocked out.

Conditions

Instead of being knocked out, I'm currently working on longer lasting issues called **conditions**. These reduce a character's effectiveness. Characters recover by not undertaking a scenario for a year.

Abilities

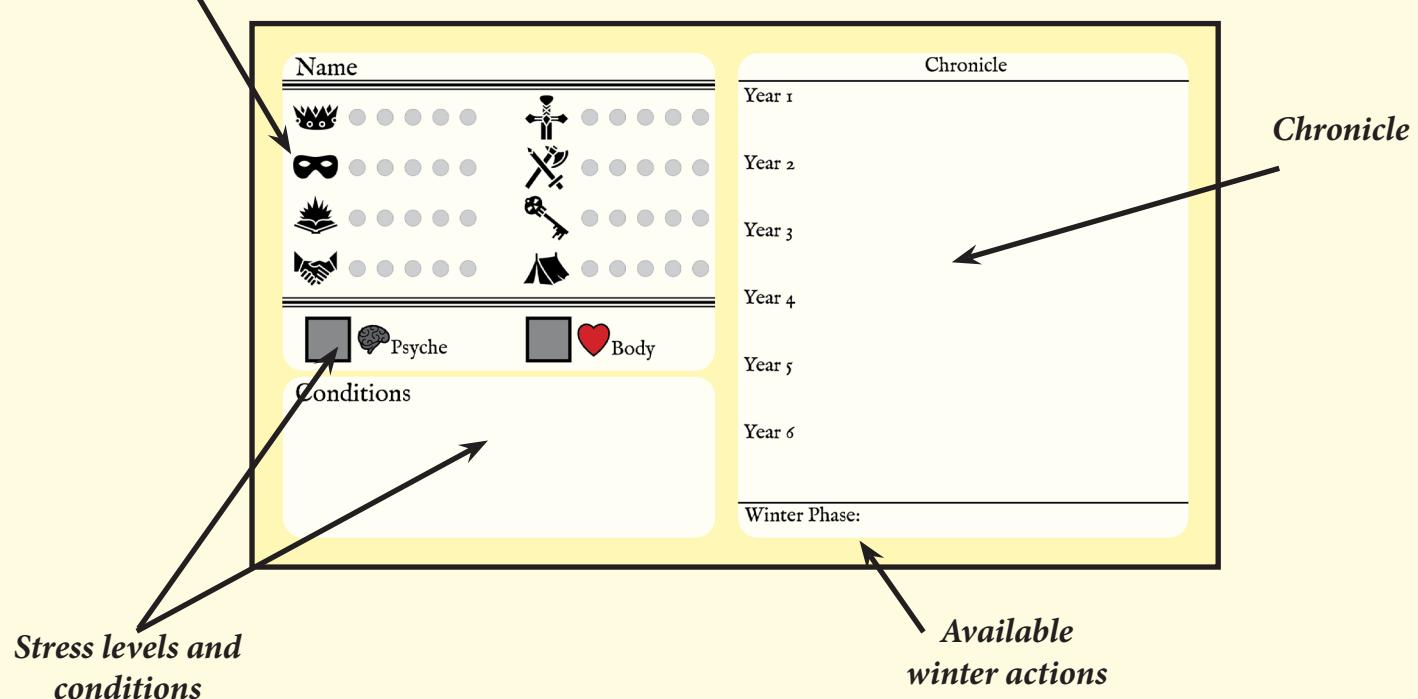
Abilities are available at any time while players take actions during their turn. Typically abilities are fueled by using an action die or an asset die at the character's location.

Many abilities may only be used once a turn. These should be marked with a counter. Abilities that have a around an icon store dice for some future action and may be used more than once per turn.

Character abilities are described in more detail at the end of the rules.

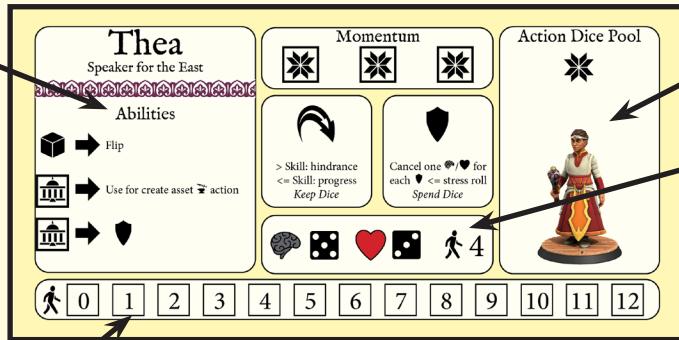
Fill in starting skills when character is first played

Character Sheet



Starting abilities

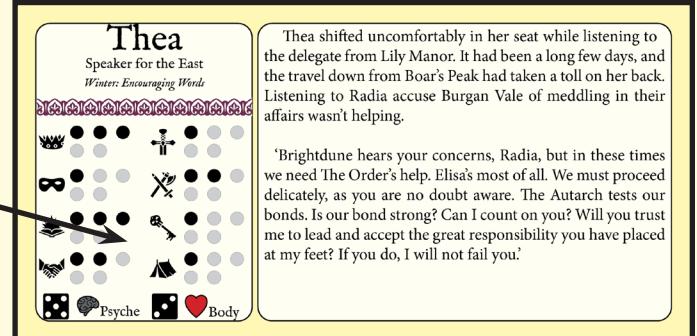
Character Mat (Front)



Space for unspent action dice

Starting stress levels and movement points per turn

Character Mat (Back)



Character Sheet

When a character is unlocked for the first time in the campaign, a new character sheet is filled out with the character's name, starting skill ranks, base stress levels, and starting winter action.

Players may fill out sheets for Fuscus, Thea, Menas, and Keel at the start of the campaign.

Winter Phase

After the first game, a winter phase takes place where characters who weren't involved in the scenario take special actions. Some characters have special actions only available to them.

This is an active area of development.

Character Stand-Ups

There are stand-ups for each character in the campaign. These are moved around the different location cards during play.

Tabletop Simulator uses character miniatures.

Skills

Command



Disguise



Lore



Rapport



Combat



Tactics

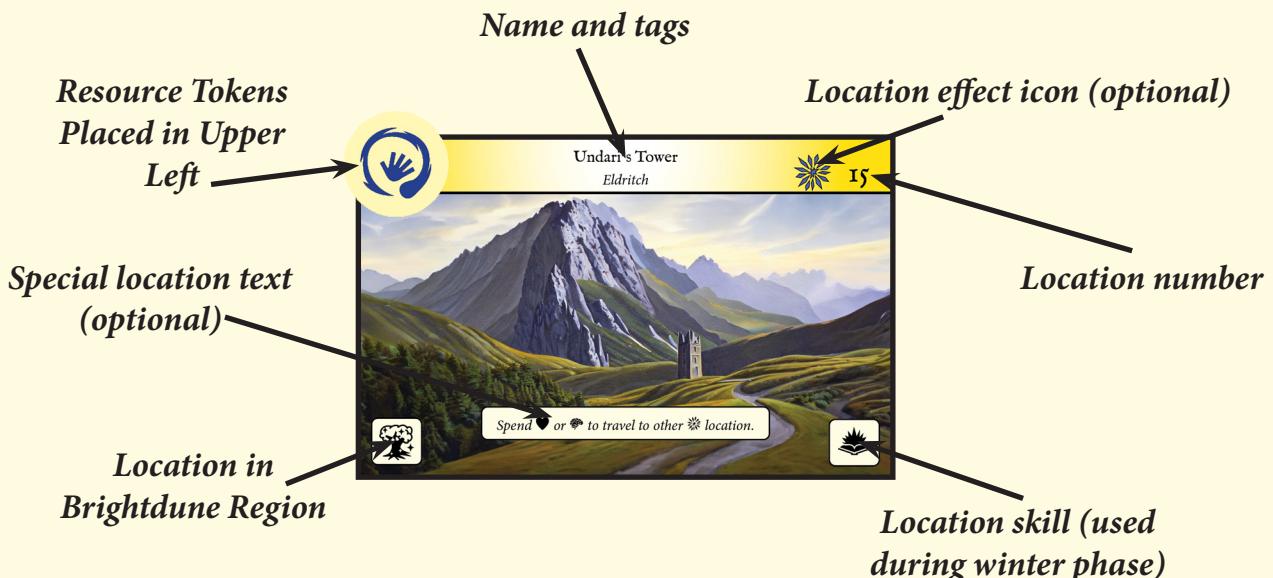


Thievery



Survival





Location Cards

During play, characters move to different locations represented by cards. Each location is assigned to one of the following regions:

- █ The Empire
- █ Brightdune
- █ Settled Lands

Location Tags

Location cards have a variety of tags used by other game effects.

Resource Tokens

At the start of the campaign, and at certain points afterward, some locations gain the ability to produce resource dice. These locations are marked with a token. Place these tokens at either the base or improved level in the upper left corner of the location card.

Location Effect Icon (Optional)

The upper right of each location card contain optional icons indicating various effects.

- » █ **Port**: A character may move from this location to another port for the cost of one action die.
- » █ **Magic Gate**: A character may take stress to move from this location to another magic gate.

Location Text (Optional)

Locations may have a variety of effect text as well. This text applies to any character at the location, or in some cases moving to the location.

- » █ **Action**: By spending an action die (value doesn't matter), players may apply the indicated effect.
- » ➔ **Activation**: This text takes effect if this location is activated during the activation phase.

Asset Cards

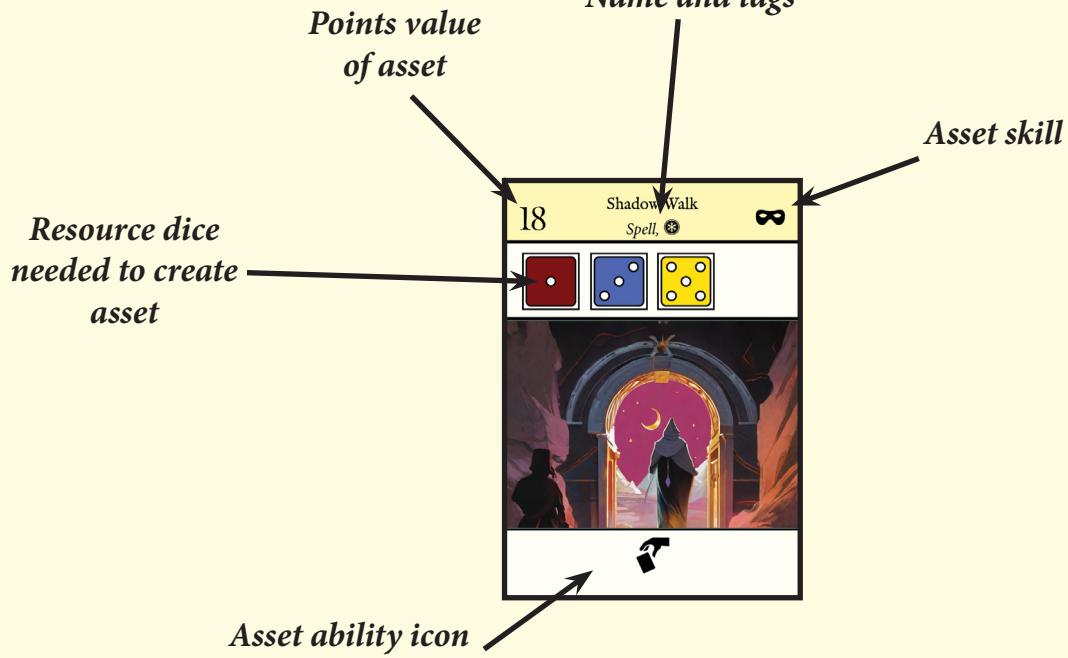
Creating assets is the main way players complete scenarios and make progress during the campaign. Assets are created by placing resource dice symbols shown near the top of the asset card.

These symbols restrict what sorts of resource dice may be placed on the card. These restrictions are depicted by colors and symbols on each square:

- » **Any:** Any resource die.
- » **Any Value:** Resource must match the resource type (by color), but may be any value.
- » **Any Type:** Resource must match the value, but may be any resource type.
- » **Type and Value:** Resource must match both the resource type (by color) and value.
- » **Region:** Resource die must be taken from location in listed region. If the region symbol is colored, the resource type must match as well.

Completing an Asset

When all of the dice have been slotted onto an asset, it is created. This allows the player to use its effects during play and apply its points towards completing scenarios as desired. This process is described in detail later in the rules.



Asset Tags

Tags represent the type of asset. Occasionally effects refer to the tags. The number of ⚩ symbols indicate the campaign year an asset is added to the campaign deck. A symbol indicates the asset is unlocked only when indicated by a scenario or scene.

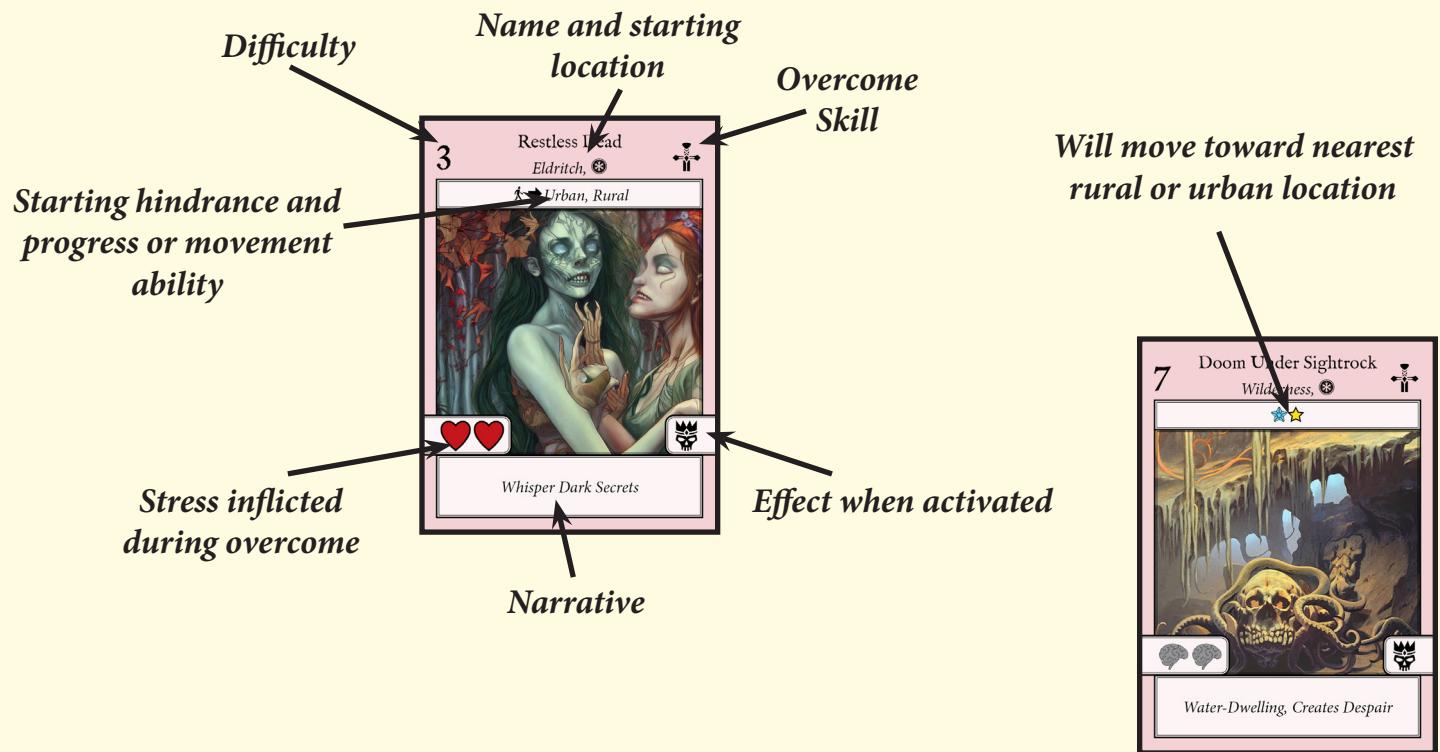
Asset Skill

All assets have a particular skill they're better suited for. This comes into play when scoring points for the scenario, and can affect any abilities they have.

Asset Abilities

All assets have an ability icon or text describing how they function in play. These are described in more detail later in the rules. Many asset abilities may only be used once per turn - the asset is turned 90 degrees to indicate it has been used.

- » **Play during scene:** This is the most common type of asset. These score points only once, and are discarded after being played. Occasionally an asset has additional effects when it is played.
- » **Defend:** Once a turn, may use to defend against an obstacle of the asset's skill type.
- » **Bonus movement point:** Character's starting movement point total is increased by one.



Obstacle Cards

Obstacle cards represent adversaries and challenges the characters are confronted with during a scenario. There is one deck of obstacle cards during the campaign.

The obstacle deck will change during the game based on scenarios players select and how they overcome obstacles in play.

An obstacle at a location is **attached** to it.

Starting Location

Below the obstacle name, a location is listed. When an obstacle is drawn, it is attached to a location of the given type. If there are multiple such locations, the lowest numbered location without obstacles is used.

The number of  symbols indicate the campaign year an obstacle is added to the campaign deck. A  symbol indicates the obstacle is unlocked and placed only by scenario or scene effects.

Difficulty

The upper left of the obstacle shows its difficulty number. This comes into play when overcoming the obstacle.

Overcome Skill

The upper right of the obstacle indicates the character skill used to remove the obstacle from play.

Hindrance, Progress, and Movement

The following symbols are found below the starting location of the obstacle:

- »  **Hindrance:** Add the indicated number of hindrance tokens onto the obstacle when it is put into play.
- »  **Progress:** Add the indicated number of progress tokens onto the obstacle when it is put into play.
- »  **Movement:** During activation, the obstacle will move to the nearest location of the indicated type. If more than one location type is listed, it will move toward the nearest location of either type.

Effect

When an obstacle is activated, it has a particular effect. After applying the effect, the obstacle is discarded.

- »  **Threat:** This is the most common type of obstacle. When activated, a threat token is moved

from the scenario card to the location the obstacle is attached to.

- » **♥ / 🧠 Stress:** The obstacle causes the indicated stress type to all characters at the location.
- » **💣 Resource:** All resources of the given type are discarded from this location. If the 💣 symbol is present, all resources are discarded.
- » **🏃 Movement:** This effect is always applied, regardless of if the obstacle is activated. For each 🏃 symbol, characters moving into this location must spend one additional movement point. This type of obstacle does not have any additional activation effects. Progress and hindrance or simply used to determine if the obstacle may be removed.
- » **⟳ Repeat activation:** This obstacle is not discarded after it activates.

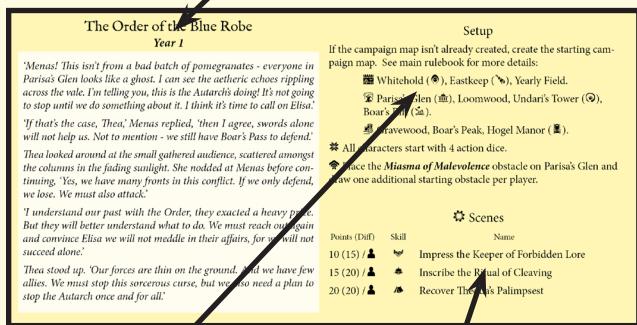
Stress Type

Each obstacle may inflict psyche stress, body stress, or both. This occurs when a character fails to defend during the overcome obstacle action.

Narrative

Narrative highlights of the obstacle. This is used as inspiration when completing scenes for a scenario.

Scenario title, requirements, and background



Setup details

Scenes

Scenario threat pool

Scenario threat effects

Scenario Cards

One scenario is chosen for each game, representing a year of game time. Scenarios provide goals and an overall narrative arc for each year of play, along with different rewards for completing **scenes** within the scenario.

These effects may unlock or replace different locations, unlock new characters, or apply campaign level effects that change available actions while in play.

Scenario Requirement

Not all of the scenarios cards are available at the start of the campaign. Most scenarios only become available when a specific year of the campaign occurs. For instance, all of the Year 2 missions are available in the second year and afterward, etc.

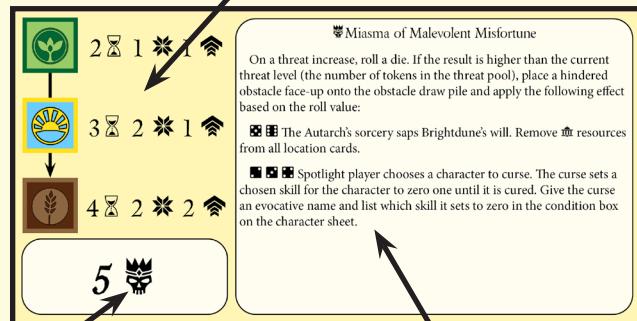
Scenarios may have more specific requirements: a particular location must be in play, or a previous scenario must be successfully completed.

I have many scenarios outlined, but this is an active area of development. The intention is for each scenario to be a complete game in its own right - but allow for linking of scenarios to open up a more strategic campaign.

Setup

Each scenario has a number of steps to follow at the beginning of a session. Find the listed scene cards, and update locations, obstacles, and assets as directed.

Number of turns available each season, along with action dice refresh amount and new obstacles per turn



Scenes

The points and skills for each scene are listed on the bottom of the scenario card as an aid to choosing which scenario to undertake.

Seasons

Each scenario has a listed number of turns for each season during the year. The current turn is tracked using a die. If the players run out of time, they fail the scenario.

Sometimes the season turns are a range, in which case a die is rolled to see if the season advances.

Seasons can have many effects, but they usually dictate the number of action dice players receive each turn, as well as the number of obstacles that are put into play.

Threat Pool

Each obstacle has a threat pool, which is filled with the listed number of threat tokens at the start of a game. If a threat token is placed by on obstacle, it is taken from this pool. If this pool is empty, the players have immediately failed the scenario.

Threat Effect

Furthermore, each time a threat token is placed, a die is rolled. If the die is higher than the number of tokens in the threat pool, the matching scenario threat effect is applied.

Scenes

Each scenario has a set of scenes which must be completed to finish the scenario.

Completing scenes requires going to the listed location, and playing created assets and overcome obstacles which equal or exceed the points value of the scene.

Scenes also allow players to craft a narrative of what happened during the scenario: how these particular assets and obstacles influence the scene.

Location

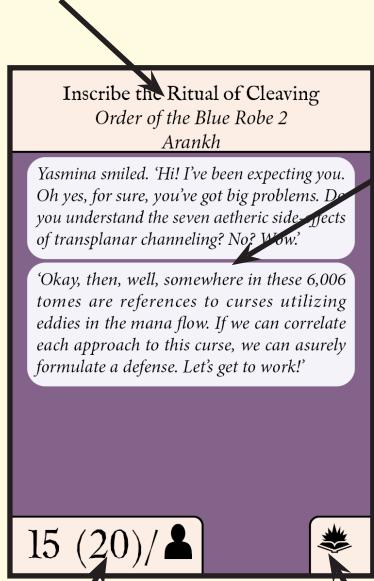
The next scene in the scenario is placed at the indicated location. If there are multiple locations of the indicated type, players may choose which location is used.

Points

As a group, the players must have a number of points as shown on the scenario card to complete the scene. This number is per player. When playing on a difficult mode, use the points value in parentheses.

A score card is used to track the points needed as well as the current points accumulated between all of the players.

Name and location



Background text

Skill and Stress

Each scene has a particular skill which gives players bonus points for assets and obstacles which match the skill type.

The skill is also used for defense if the scene can cause stress. Stress effects are listed on the back of scene cards.

Guiding Questions

Guiding questions aid players in creating a narrative. These are optional, but may be answered as part of scoring assets and obstacles.

Completion Effects

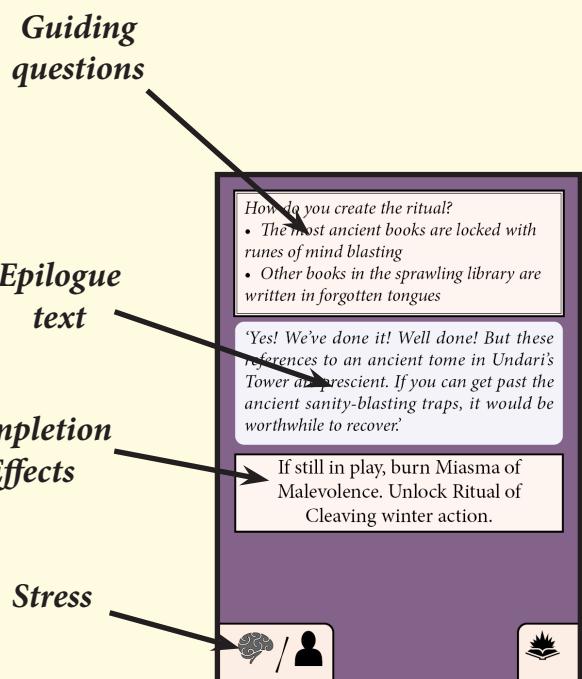
Most scenes have text that must be followed when the scene is completed. This could be beneficial for the players, or could add complications or difficulties for the remainder of the scenario.

Guiding questions

Epilogue text

Completion Effects

Stress



Points, Difficult Mode in Parentheses

Skill

Campaign Setup

Starting a new campaign requires a few additional setup steps: creating a world map, setting up the obstacle deck, and setting up the asset deck. Additionally, character sheets are filled out for each starting character.

1. Create and Record Starting Map
2. Create Campaign Obstacle Deck
3. Create Campaign Asset Deck
4. Fill Out Starting Character Sheets

Create and Record Starting Map

The starting map is set up as shown below. On the back of one of the character sheets, write in the locations and resources each location has available.

Alternatively, players may construct the world map with the restrictions detailed below. Note: there are trade-offs which aren't obvious to new players, so don't do this for your first campaign.

- All locations within one region (Empire, Brightdune, and Settled Lands) must be adjacent to at least one location from the same region.
- One Brightdune location must be adjacent to at least one Empire location and one Settled Lands location.
- The entire map must fit within a 4x7 grid, so it may be recorded on the back of a character sheet.

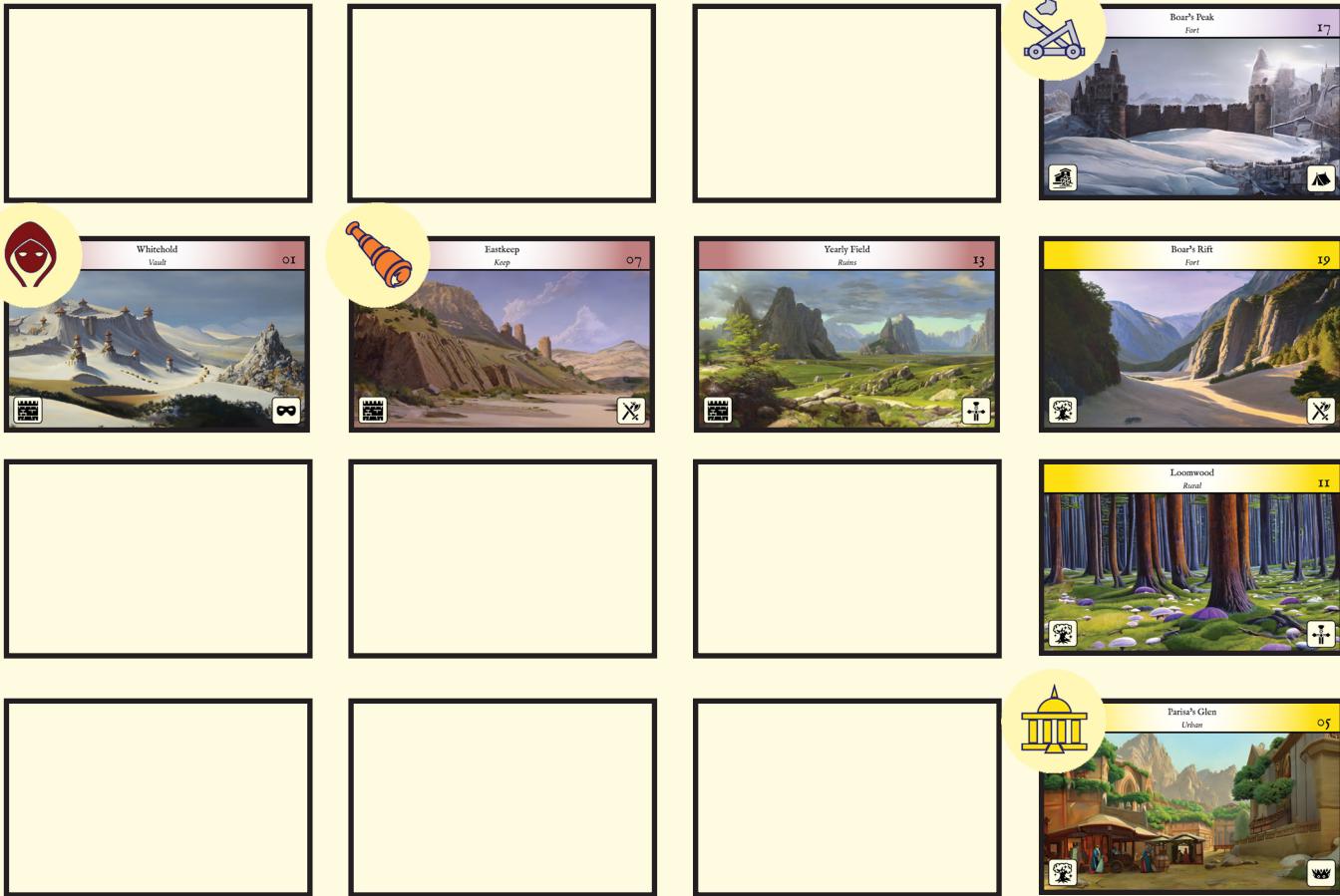
Create Campaign Obstacle Deck

The obstacle deck for the campaign persists between games. For the first game, use all of the one  obstacle cards in the starter kit. Set aside any  obstacles and any obstacles with more than one  symbol.

Create Campaign Asset Deck

As with the obstacle deck, the asset deck persists between games. Use all of the one  assets in the starter kit. Set aside any  assets and any assets with more than one  symbol.

Standard Starting World Map



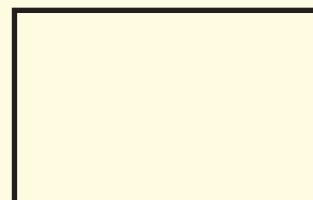
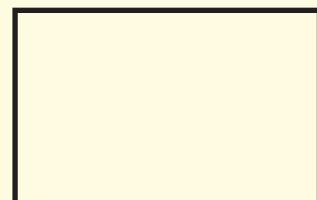
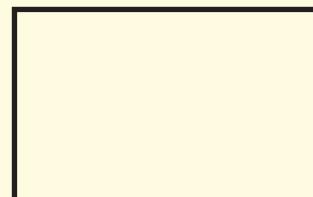
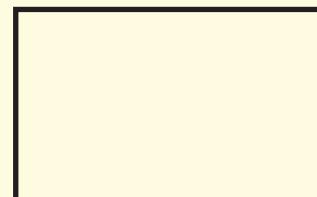
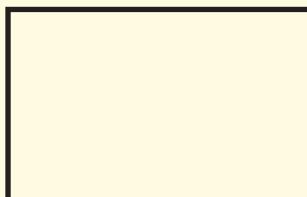
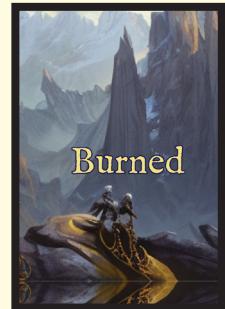
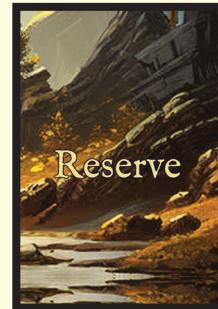
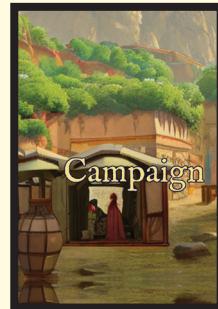
Fill Out Starting Character Sheets

Fill out starting character sheets for Keel, Thea, Menas, and Fuscus. Can use the sheet with the map on the back for one of the characters.

Card Storage

There are tuckboxes available on Game Crafter to store the various decks, or you can use other card holders you have available.

The Campaign tuckbox is for the asset and obstacle decks, along with Brightdune **community assets** (see later in the rules). There are no community assets at the start of the campaign. The Reserve tuckbox can hold cards which haven't come into play yet, and the Burned tuckbox can hold permanently removed cards.



Session Start

Perform the following steps at the start of each session.

1. Choose Spotlight Player
2. Restore Campaign State (Years 2-6)
3. Choose Scenario
4. Winter Phase (Years 2-6)
5. Choose Characters
6. Choose Starting Assets (Years 2-6)
7. Add Obstacles and Assets (Years 2-6)
8. Scenario Setup
9. Play Initial Scene
10. Shuffle Obstacle and Asset Decks
11. Fill Asset Staging Area
12. Refresh Resource Dice and Action Dice
13. Place Characters at Starting Locations

Choose Spotlight Player

Choose one player to be the spotlight player this game. The spotlight player is responsible for making certain decisions during the game, and some effects specifically target the spotlight player's character.

This role should be shared as evenly as possible over the course of the campaign.

Restore Campaign State (Years 2-6)

Recreate the current world map as recorded on the back of the character sheet. This includes *placing threat tokens* in any locations which have them.

Place Set aside the current obstacle deck and asset deck. Retrieve all archived assets and set them aside.

Choose Scenario

Choose an available scenario (where all requirements are met) to play this session.

Winter Phase (Years 2-6)

Each character who didn't take part in the previous scenario may *either train or rest*. Write down which choice the character took on their character sheet for the previous year.

There may be a more involved winter phase in the future. In that variant, players may choose from a variety of options for characters who didn't undertake a scenario during the previous year. Currently playtesting options.

Choose Characters

Each player chooses one character from all unlocked characters for this game. Take the chosen character's mat, action dice, and a die to track psyche and body.

Also take the character sheet for the character. Place the gray psyche and red body die at their starting values.

Finally, if the character has spent the previous year(s) either training or resting, apply any unspent training and resting years now.

For each year spent resting, remove one condition from the character. For each year spent training, increase any skill by one (to a maximum of five).

Choose Starting Assets (Years 2-6)

Each player may take a limited number of assets from the community archive. These selected assets begin play already created and any abilities may be used from the start of the game.

A character may not start with more assets of a given skill type than the **matching character skill minus two**.

For instance, if a character has a  skill of 1 or 2, they may not start with any community assets that have a  skill icon. A character with a  skill of 4 may start with up to two  assets from the community pool.

In the first game, there are no community assets.

Scenario Setup

Follow the directions on the front of the scenario card for setup. This can include modifying locations, the obstacle deck, and the asset deck. Read the narrative text for the scenario.

For the first scenario of a campaign, will need to set up the world map as shown on the previous page.

After following scenario setup instructions, flip the scenario card over and fill the starting threat pool. Place a die on the spring season space to use as a turn tracker and set it to one.

Play Initial Scene

Play the first scene card for the scenario at the location indicated. Set the scoring track with the points needed for the first scene, based on the number of players and difficulty, as shown on the scene card.

Add Obstacles and Assets (Years 2-6)

Find any obstacles and assets with a number of  symbols less than or equal to the current year. Add these to the current obstacle and asset decks.

Shuffle Obstacle and Asset Decks

Shuffle the obstacle and asset decks and set them near the locations.

Fill Asset Staging Area

Draw two asset cards per player and place them face up in a line next to the asset deck.

Refresh Resource Dice and Action Dice

Roll and place a matching resource dice on each location that generates resources (has a resource token). For improved resource tokens, roll and place two resource dice.

Each player starts with four action dice in their pool. Roll the four action dice and place them on the unspent action dice area on the player mat.

Place the rest of the resource dice and action dice in an easily accessible location nearby.

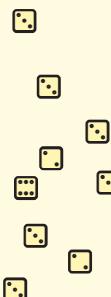
Place Characters at Starting Locations

Each player places their characters standup at any location they wish.

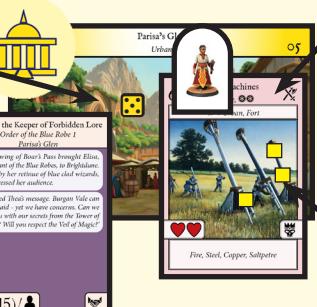
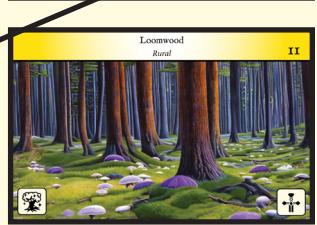
The screenshot shows the main interface of the Thaea game. At the top, there's a row of numbered boxes from 0 to 12. Below this is a section titled "Action Dice Pool" containing a stylized robot-like character and several dice icons. To the right of this is the "Altimetrum" section, which includes a 4x4 grid of icons representing different actions or abilities. The central part of the screen features the word "Thaea" in large letters, with "Speaker for the East" written below it. To the right of "Thaea" is the "Abilities" section, which contains icons for "Body", "Peachie", and "Knife". The bottom right corner shows the "Chromide" section, which includes a 5x5 grid of colored dots and some small icons. The overall design is colorful and futuristic.



Initial resource dice



First scene in scenario



Slide character sheet under character mat

Starting stress dice

Name *Fucus*



Abilities

Momentum

Action Dice Pool

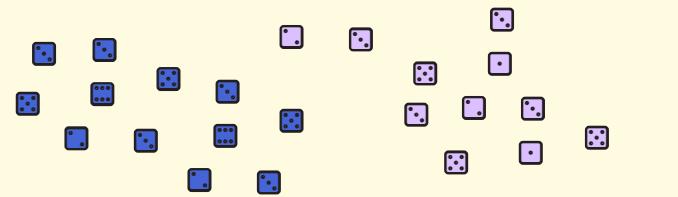
Fucus
Master of Coin

Abilities

Momentum

Action Dice Pool

Order of the Blue Robe Scenario Setup (Year One)

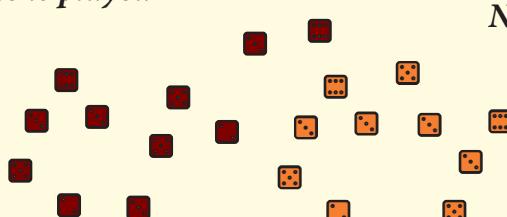


**Obstacles from scenario setup
(Miasma + 1 random/player)**

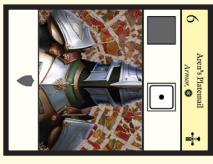
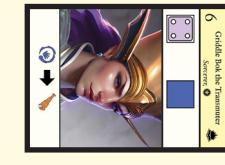


Obstacles draw pile

**Initial progress and hindrance
when obstacle is played**



Asset staging area



**Current points
are at zero**

Current Scene Score Tracker														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90

**Need 20 points for the first scene
(2 players, normal difficulty)**

Spring turn 1

Miasma of Malevolent Miasma
On a threat increase, roll a die. If the result is higher than the current miasma level (the number of tokens in the threat pile), place in a miasma die and add it to the threat pile. The obstacle draw pile is shuffled after each turn.

The Archdruid's secret says Brightfairy's will. Remove 3 resources from all location cards.

Spindrift player chooses a character to curse. The curse sets a chosen skill for the player to one or null if it is cured. Give the curse an evocative name and list which skill sets to zero in the conditions box on the character sheet.

Turns

Each turn is composed of the following steps.

1. Advance Time
2. Actions
3. Refresh Characters and Resources
4. Draw Asset
5. Activate Obstacles
6. Escalate Obstacles
7. Season Check

Advance Time

If this is the first turn of a season, set the turn tracking die on the scenario card to one. Otherwise increase the value of the turn tracking die by one.

Actions

During the actions step, players spend their action dice to perform actions. Players may freely use character and asset abilities during this step.

Typically character and asset abilities may only be used *once per turn*. Turn asset cards 90 degrees to indicate they have been used. Some abilities, indicated by a box around them, hold either action dice or resource dice. These dice remain on the character ability or asset ability until used. See the Abilities section at the end of the rules for more details on specific abilities.

Actions may be taken in any order by any player. When all players are done spending action dice and using abilities, the actions step is complete. See the Actions section for a detailed explanation of all possible actions.

Players may save *one action die for each momentum slot on their character sheet or asset cards* for next turn. Place the saved action dice on the momentum slots.

Refresh Characters and Resources

Reset any single use assets and character abilities. They may be used again next turn. Reset character movement points to their starting amount. Movement points do not accumulate between turns.

Next, take new action dice as indicated by the  symbol for the current season on the scenario card.

Add all of the saved momentum action dice with these new dice to form one pool, and roll them all. Place all of these action dice on the unspent action dice section of the character mat for next turn.

Finally, if a location with a resource token has no matching resource dice, roll a new resource dice of the matching type and place it at the location. ***Do not reroll any resource dice already on the location***, and do not remove any dice at the location.

If a location has an improved resource token, it gets one additional resource die if there are less than two resource dice of the matching type.

Draw Asset

Draw an asset from the asset deck, placing it faceup at the end of the asset staging area.

Activate Obstacles

For each obstacle in play at a location, perform the following steps:

1. **Determine number of activations.** Each obstacle activates *once plus the number of assets in the staging area with matching skill symbols*. That is, if the obstacle's overcome skill is  and there are two assets with  skill in the asset staging area, the obstacle will activate *three* times.
2. **Remove progress or hindrance.** For each activation, the spotlight player must remove either one progress or one hindrance token on the obstacle. The spotlight player may choose which type to remove if both are present. If there are no more activations after this step, this obstacle is finished activating. Move on to the next obstacle, otherwise remaining activations are used first for movement and then for the activation effect.
3. **Move obstacle.** If the obstacle has a movement icon, move the obstacle one adjacent location for each activation remaining. The obstacle moves towards the nearest location with a matching tag. If there are multiple location types in a list, they move to the nearest location matching any of the tags. If there are no more activations after this step, this obstacle is finished activating. Move on to the next obstacle, otherwise apply the activation effect.
4. **Apply activation effect.** Finally, if there are activations remaining after removing progress/hindrance and moving the obstacle, apply its activation effect. Usually, obstacle apply their activation effect once and then are discarded. If the effect has a  symbol next to it, it is applied repeatedly and the obstacle isn't discarded. The most common effect is to move a threat token  from the scenario card to the location where the obstacle is located.

Threats

When an obstacle applies a threat effect, take one of the red tokens on the scenario card and move it onto the obstacle's location. If this is the last threat token on the scenario card, ***the players immediately lose.***

Otherwise, roll a die and compare it to the number of threat tokens on the scenario card. If the die is ***higher than the number of threat tokens***, take the following steps:

1. **Play a hindered obstacle.** If there are hindered obstacles, take the first hindered obstacle and put it on top of the obstacle draw pile face-up.
2. **Apply matching scenario threat effect.** On the scenario card, apply the scenario threat effect with a matching die icon. Generally, the lower the die value, the worse the threat effect is.

Exploding Threats

If there are ***already*** threat tokens on the location when a threat token is placed, place a threat token on the location and place an ***additional*** threat token on an adjacent location.

If that adjacent location also has any threat tokens, continue placing threat tokens on adjacent locations until either the players lose or there is a location in the chain that does not have threat tokens.

Escalate Obstacles

First, ***play all face-up obstacles on the obstacle draw pile.*** These are usually previously hindered obstacles that get placed on the deck during the threats step.

Next, draw and place new obstacles equal to the number next to the  icon for the current season on the scenario card. Place the obstacle at the location type indicated below its title. Additionally, add any starting progress or hindrance on the obstacle as indicated.

Season Check

Finally, check to see if this is the last turn of the season. This is the case when the turn tracking die is greater than the number next to the  symbol for the current season. If so, move the turn tracking die to the next season's slot. If this is the end of the fall season, the game is immediately over and the players lose.

Some scenario cards have a range next to the  symbol. For instance, 3-5 . In this case, when the lower number of turns is reached, there is a chance players get more turns for the season. Roll a die: if the result is a 1-3, advance to the next season. Otherwise, players stay at the current season. If the turn tracker matches the higher number, advance to the next season regardless.

Actions

Taking actions makes up the bulk of a turn. Many actions require the use of action dice. Character abilities, asset abilities, and location effects may be used at any time during this step. Most character abilities and asset abilities may only be used once each turn. See the abilities section at the end of the rules for more details.

The available actions are:

- Move ⚑
- Muster ⚑
- Create Asset ⚒
- Overcome Obstacle ⚓
- Narrate Scene ⚔

Move ⚑

Characters have a set number of movement points available to them each turn. By spending one movement point, characters may move orthogonally to an adjacent location.

Some locations affect movement costs or provide special modes of movement. Characters may move between two port ⚛ locations by spending one movement point.

Characters may move between two portal ⚙ locations by spending one stress (either ♡ or ☮).

Muster ⚑

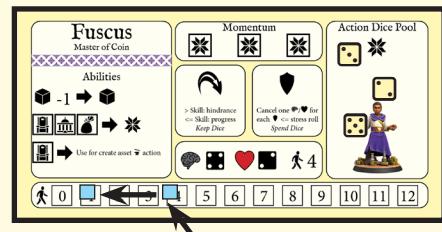
Movement points may also be spent to muster resources. If the character is at a location with a resource marker, **spend three movement points** to take a new resource die matching the location's resource type, roll it, and place it at the location.

Alternatively, a player may **spend three movement points** to reroll any unspent action dice on their character mat or any resource dice on the location card where their character is located.

Muster (Add Resource) Example



1. Fucus is at Undari's Tower.
This is a sorcery resource location



2. The player spends 3 movement points to roll a sorcery resource die and add it to the location, sliding the movement point tracker from 4 to 1



3. The player rolls a ⚒

Create Asset

Players may work to complete ***up to two assets at a time***. If a player has fewer than two assets in-progress, they may take an asset card from the asset staging area and place it ***above their character mat*** at any time during the actions step. This does not cost any resources or action dice.

When a character is at a location, they may move resource dice from the location to any in-progress assets by spending an action die. The resource dice taken from the location must have values ***less than or equal to the action die spent***.

When an asset has resource dice matching all of the resource dice requirements, the asset is completed. When an asset is completed, discard the resource dice on it back to their pools and move the asset below the character mat. Any asset abilities are now available to the player.

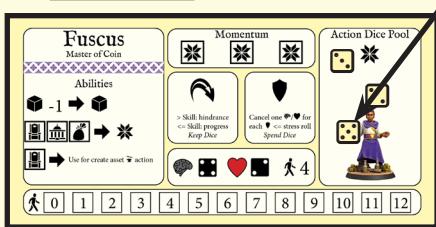
Create Asset Example



1. Fucus is at Undari's Tower. There are three sorcery resource dice available



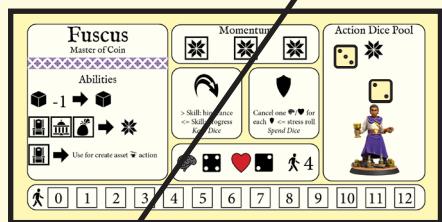
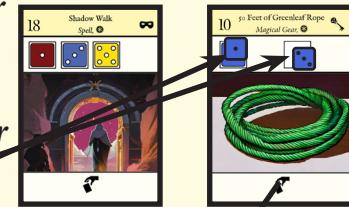
2. The player is currently working on two assets (the maximum that can be in progress at any time)



3. The player spends  to take all resource dice with a value less than or equal to 5. In this case  and  but not 

4. Resource dice must be placed on matching slots for in-progress assets. In this case, the player could divide them between assets or complete the 50 Feet of Greenleaf Rope asset

The player chooses the latter, moving the asset below the character mat and discarding the resource dice on it



Overcome Obstacle ↗

The overcome action allows players to remove obstacles from the location where their character is located. Overcoming an obstacle with the following steps:

1. Allocate Action Dice for Defense and Overcome
2. Obstacle Stress Roll
3. Spend Defense Dice
4. Apply Stress to Character
5. Add Progress and Hindrance to Obstacle
6. Check for Overcome or Hinder

Allocate Dice for Defense and Overcome

Players may place any number of unspent action dice onto the defense section ♦ of their character mat to form a **defense pool**. Players do not have to put any action dice into the defense pool. Any dice placed into this pool will be spent at the end of the overcome obstacle action regardless of whether or not they are used to defend.

Any action dice not placed into the defense section of the character mat may be placed in the overcome ↗ section. Overcome dice will not be spent at the end of this action.

Obstacle Stress Roll

Roll a die for each stress symbol, either ♥ or ♣, on the obstacle card.

If an obstacle causes both ♥ and ♣ stress, it can be handy to use matching red and gray dice for this roll.

Spend Defense Dice

Each die in the defense pool may be spent to cancel one stress die. The **value of the defense die must be less than or equal to the value of the stress die to cancel it.**

After canceling any stress dice, all action dice allocated to the defense pool are spent, regardless of if they were used or not.

Many asset abilities and character abilities also allow players to defend during the step. Remember that most asset and character abilities may only be used once each

turn, so after they are used, turn the card or mark the ability to indicate it has been used.

There is a little push your luck in allocating to the defense pool. It's a more cautious way to deal with obstacles, at the cost of using more action dice.

Apply Stress to Character

Any stress dice that were undefended in the previous step may now cause stress to the character. **Each stress die higher than the character's skill for the obstacle causes one stress** of the matching type.

The higher the character's skill for the obstacle in question, the less likely they are to take stress. Since skills can't be increased beyond 5, an undefended value 6 stress roll will almost always cause stress unless specific character or asset abilities can stop it.

If the character takes their last stress point of either type, they **immediately take a condition** and reset their stress levels to their starting amounts. See the conditions section later in the rules for how to take conditions.

Add Progress and Hindrance to Obstacle

Any action dice not spent on defense may now be used to add progress and hindrance to an obstacle. Usually progress is preferred, since it permanently removes an obstacle from play.

For each action die in the overcome pool with a value **less than or equal to the character's skill** for the obstacle, place one progress token □ on the obstacle. Lower valued action dice place progress on the obstacle.

For each action die in the overcome pool with a value **greater than the character's skill** for the obstacle, place one hindrance token ▲ on the obstacle. Higher valued action dice place hindrance on the obstacle.

Check for Overcome or Hinder

If the number of **progress tokens on the obstacle is greater than or equal to the obstacle's difficulty**, the obstacle is **overcome** and the player takes the obstacle and places it face up next to their character mat. The obstacle may be used for points when narrating scenes and will never come back into play at a location.

If the number of **hindrance tokens on the obstacle is**

greater than or equal to the obstacle's difficulty, the obstacle is **hindered** and the player takes the obstacle and places it face-up next to the obstacle discard pile and any other face-up obstacles already there. This obstacle could come back into play at a location during this session. It may not be used for scoring during scenes.

Teamwork

Multiple characters may work together to overcome an obstacle, provided they are at the same location with the obstacle. In this case, players create defense and overcome pools independently, but obstacle stress dice are

only rolled once. Either player may cancel stress dice using their defense pool dice. Players may decide which character should take stress for each undefended stress die.

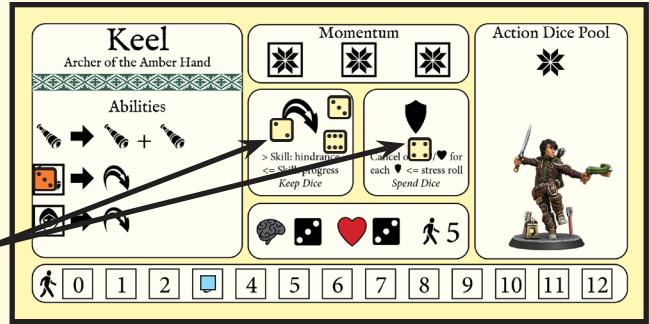
Additionally, when calculating overcome progress, apply all action dice in the overcome pools of both players..

Overcome Example

1. A player wants to the Remote Influence obstacle at Keel's location. The obstacle already has three progress and two hindrance on it

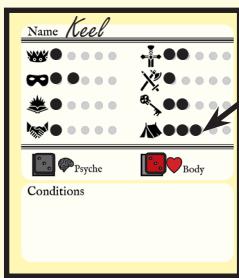


Keel has four unspent action dice, and allocates to the defense pool and and to the overcome pool. Keel also has a die on his ability



2. Two red stress dice are rolled for obstacle stress . The stress dice roll results in and

4. The stress die remains. This is not higher than Keel's skill of 3, so Keel does not take a stress



3. The defense die may cancel the stress die since the defense die is less than or equal to the stress die. The stress die may not be canceled. At the end of this step, all defense dice are spent, regardless of if they were used to defend

6. Neither hindrance nor progress has reached the obstacle difficulty of 6, so it is not overcome. However, the die in Keel's overcome ability may be spent to add a progress, since it is less than or equal to Keel's skill. If this is done, the obstacle is overcome and placed next to Keel's character mat.

5. Two progress are added to the obstacle from the and dice because they are less than or equal to Keel's skill. A hindrance is added from the die because it is over Keel's skill



Narrate Scene

Narrating scenes is how players complete a scenario. Scenes are narrated by taking the following steps:

1. Characters are at Scene Location
2. Read Scene Background Text
3. Total Points From Assets and Obstacles
4. Answer Guiding Questions
5. Play  Assets and Obstacles
6. Apply Scene Stress
7. Apply Scene Completion Effects
8. Play New Scene or Complete Scenario

Characters are at Scene Location

All characters in the game must be at the scene location to complete the scene.

Read Scene Background Text

Read the scene background text on the front of the card.

Total Points From Assets and Obstacles

Each scene has a required number of points per character in the game. Players may use completed assets and overcome obstacles to add toward this point total. Obstacles are worth points equal to their difficulty.

The total of all cards played between the players must be equal to or higher than this total, but each player does not need to contribute equally. It is even fine if one player contributes the entire point total.

Bonus Points

For each obstacle or asset played which matches the scene skill, **characters get bonus points equal to their skill value.**

Answer Guiding Questions

The spotlight player should now read the guiding questions on the card. Players take turns answering these questions, using the different obstacles and assets that were played for the scene. The spotlight player should

help guide this process.

Which obstacles and assets came into play? How? Each player should briefly help contribute to this narrative.

This is the element of the game which most closely approximates a role-playing game. Players can choose how detailed to make this portion. Some players enjoy creatively telling stories, and there is a great opportunity here to weave together characters, assets, and obstacles with the current scenario.

However, Six Winters is still fundamentally a board-game. So just reading and answering the questions, or providing a very brief summary of how an asset helped in the scene is completely fine.

Play Assets and Obstacles

Any asset with a play icon  is a single use asset. After the points are applied from the asset for the scene, flip the asset over and set it next to the character mat into a discard pile.

All obstacles used for the scene are also flipped over and discarded next to the character mat. Keep obstacles and assets played for scenes in a discard pile next to the character mat. They're used at the end of the scenario.

Assets that don't have a  icon may have their points applied to the scene but remain completed and in play. They may be used multiple times for points during a scenario.

Apply Scene Stress

Many scenes cause stress to characters the same way obstacles do. As with points, the number of stress dice is **for each character** in the scene. These stress dice may be divided amongst characters in any way.

Players may place unspent action dice into the character's defense pool before the stress dice are rolled. These dice may cancel the stress dice as they do for obstacles.

Any stress dice which are not canceled apply stress to the character. Abilities and assets may also be used to defend against stress as they do for obstacles.

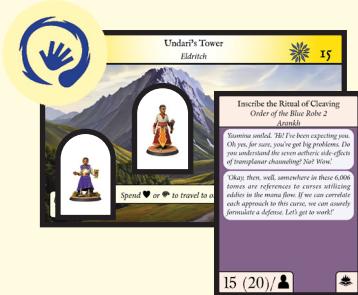
Apply Scene Completion Effects

Read the scene epilogue and follow the scene completion text.

Play New Scene or Complete Scenario

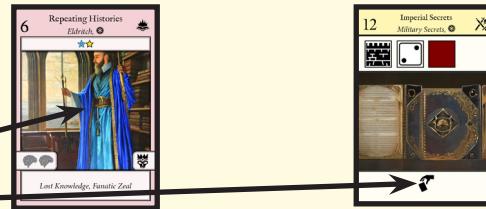
Finally, play the next scene as indicated by the scenario. If this is the final scene, the scenario is completed. Immediately follow the steps listed under Session End below.

Scene Scoring Example



In a 2 player game, Thea and Keel are attempting to Inscribe the Ritual of Cleaving. This is a ♣ scene that requires 30 points between them. Thea has a ♣ of 3 and Fuscus has a ♣ of 2. Both characters are at the scene location

Thea Plays:



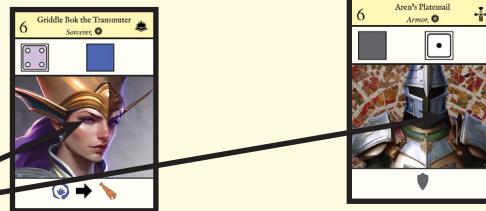
*6 + 3
(Thea's ♣ is 3)*



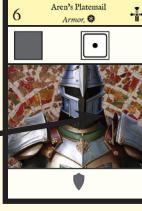
+ 12 = 21

Discard all obstacles and ♣ assets after scoring

Fuscus Plays:



*6 + 2
(Fuscus's ♣ is 2)*



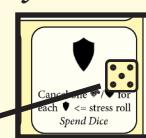
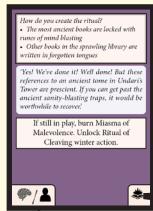
+ 6 = 14

The non ♣ assets are kept, and may be used for abilities and future scene scoring

The total is 35, which is enough to complete the scene

Scene Stress Example

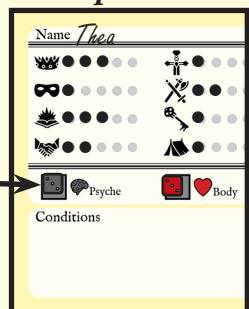
Thea has an unspent ☷ action dice, which the player decides to use for defense



Players divide up 2 ♦ stress (1 ♦/人物). Thea decides to take both stress dice

The unblocked ☷ is higher than Thea's ♣ of 3, so causes one ♦ stress. The ☷ is spent

Next the stress dice are rolled, resulting in a ☷ and ☷. The ☷ is canceled using the ☷ in Thea's defense pool



Session End

After scenarios for years 1 through 5, complete the following steps. At the end of year 6, move on to the Campaign End instead.

1. Improve Skill
2. Archive Completed Assets
3. Update Obstacle and Asset Decks
4. Update Threats
5. Update Campaign Map
6. Update Character Journal and Status
7. Store Game

Instructions to burn obstacle or asset cards refer to placing them out of play for the remainder of the campaign, unless specifically told otherwise.

Improve Skill

Gather all of the completed assets and overcome obstacles for each character. Include those obstacles or assets discarded next to the character sheet when spent to complete scenes.

Out of all the assets and obstacles, determine which skill symbol is the most common. The character improves this skill by one.

If there is a tie for the most common skill symbol, the player may choose which skill to advance. If the character has already advanced this skill to five, use the next most common skill symbol on the obstacles and assets.

Archive Completed Assets

All players should set aside completed assets which don't have the  symbol. These are placed into a separate area called the archive.

Some scenarios or scenes have players place an asset directly into the archive. This allows them to be used in future games without needing to be completed.

These may be used in future games and start play already completed (with some limits on the number each character may have in play).

Practically speaking, archived assets can be stored with the obstacle deck and asset deck by facing them a different direction.

Update Obstacle and Asset Decks

Gather the remaining completed  asset cards and all overcome obstacles. Each player selects one completed asset and one overcome obstacle to be burned. The selected asset and obstacle are removed from play for the remainder of the campaign.

The remaining assets and obstacles are placed back into the obstacle and asset campaign deck.

Update Threats

Remove one threat token from every location. Locations with remaining threat tokens will have threat start in play next game!

Update Campaign Map

On the back of the selected character sheet where the map is recorded, update with new or changed locations and current threat token totals.

Update Character Journal and Status

Update the active characters journals with the missions undertaken this year, the results of those missions, and any relevant notes. May record score totals from obstacles and assets if desired.

Store Game

For Tabletop Simulator, the game can be left as-is after performing session end steps (in particular, remember to clear off unused assets from location cards).

For the physical game, the campaign obstacle deck, asset deck, and asset archive will have to be stacked in such a way that they are easy to recover for next session.

Campaign End

If the players succeed at any of the Year 6 missions, they are victorious in the campaign! Congratulations!

Campaign Scoring

The game is mostly about the experience along the way, but following is a score which reflects how difficult the campaign was and overall amount of success.

Add up scores from the following:

- Each successful mission: 7
- Each successful difficult mission: 10
- Each resource capability: 2
- Each improved resource capability: 3
- Each asset in archive: 1

Can compare results to the chart below:

Results

Score	Title
1-30	Noob
31-50	Novice
51-70	Expert
71-99	Master
100+	Champion of Brightdune

Winter Phase

Currently under playtesting. This adds a fiddly layer onto an already complex game. But it also does give the characters a little more depth, and harkens back to downtime sorts of actions in tabletop role-playing games.

I even had a more involved mini-game involving rolling and trading the resource dice from the various locations prior to the game starting.

In addition to either resting or training, characters may take a specified winter phase action when they weren't active for the previous mission. This is done at the start of a game beginning in Year 2, before choosing characters.

Each character starts with one available winter action and further reserve actions may be unlocked during the campaign.

Many of these actions act on another character in reserve (the characters who are not going to be active for that years game). Fictionally, this represents the characters in reserve spending more time together.

Character	Starting Reserve Action
Thea	Encouraging Words
Menas	Military Tactician
Fuscus	Hollow Promises
Keel	Sabotage
Yasmina	Magical Healing
Lucia	Assassin
Oniri	Deathtouched

Assassin

Burn any spy or foe obstacle from the obstacle deck.

Deathtouched

Increase the base body stress die by one for another character in reserve. Write this new value on the character sheet. May not increase base body die beyond ☷.

Encouraging Words

Clear one 🤕 condition on another character in reserve.

Forager

May give another character an additional 🌱 asset from the archive at the start of the game.

Hollow Promises

Burn any diplomat from the obstacle deck.

Hunter

Burn any foe from the obstacle deck.

Magical Healing

Clear one ❤️ condition on another character in reserve.

Military Tactician

Increase the ✊ or 🛡 skill by one for another character in the winter phase. This includes going from not having a skill to having one rank.

The military tactician character is spending this year teaching the chosen reserve character. As such, may not use this to improve a skill rank beyond the teacher's rank.

Sabotage

Burn any trap obstacle from the obstacle deck.

Smuggler

May give any character a drug asset from the archive.

Strategic Planning

May increase the 💸 resource capability at any one location.

Character Abilities Reference

Character abilities may be used at any time during the Actions turn step. Most abilities are activated by spending a particular type of resource or action die.

I may end up using character ability cards so that it's easier to turn them, indicating they have been used for the turn. That would also make them consistent with how assets are used.

Dice Stash Abilities

Many abilities have a  symbol, usually with another symbol inside the box. These are called ***dice stash abilities***. Unsurprisingly, matching dice are placed on the box to fuel them. If empty, they may hold any resource die or unspent action die.

Dice placed on the box must come from the character's location (if the ability takes resource dice) or from unspent action dice (if applicable). Once dice are placed, they remain even on the ability if the character moves.

Dice placed on one of these ability slots may not be returned to the character's location! They're locked until used.

Dice from these abilities may be spent whenever desired to activate the indicated effect. When spent, they go back to the appropriate pool.

Additionally, these abilities may be used more than once per turn, provided enough dice are available to spend and the ability allows for it.

Other Character Abilities

Other character abilities may only be used ***once per turn***. You may use a token or die to indicate when an ability has been used.

A  is a common symbol for these abilities. This refers to any resource at the character's location or any unspent action die.

Thea

 → Flip die

Generates a die of the same type (type of resource or unspent action die) as the spent die, but the die is flipped to its opposite face, changing its value. A  is flipped to a , a  to a ,  to a ,  to a , and  to a . May be used once per turn.

 → Use for create asset action

May spend the stashed  die for the create an asset action. That is, the die is spent, and any resource die less than or equal to the die's value at Thea's location may be placed on to matching in-progress asset cards. Would want to stash a high-valued  die.

 → 

May spend the stashed  die for  when overcoming an obstacle or defending against stress from a scene. The  die is placed into Thea's  pool. This may only be done once per overcome action or narrate scene action. But it may be done multiple times a turn.

Menas

 → Set to any value

Once per turn, Menas may set a  resource die at his location to any value.

 → 

May spend the stashed  die for  when overcoming an obstacle or defending against stress from a scene. The  die is placed into Menas's  pool. This may only be done once per overcome action or narrate scene action. But it may be done multiple times a turn.

 → 

May spend the stashed  die for  when overcoming an obstacle. This die applies to either progress or hindrance, depending on the value. However, unlike action dice, ***it is spent*** after the overcome obstacle action.

Keel

TBD



Spend a asset at Keel's location, and gain two assets. The two assets must sum to the value of the spent asset.

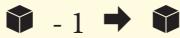


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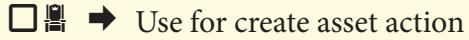
Fuscus



Generates a die of the same type (type of resource or unspent action die) as the spent die, but with a value one lower. May be used once per turn.



May spend a stashed resource die, resource die, and a resource die of any type to immediately take an action die. Roll the action die and place it in Fuscus's unspent action dice pool.



May spend the stashed die for the create an asset action. That is, the die is spent, and any resource die less than or equal to the die's value at Fuscus's location may be placed on to matching in-progress asset cards. Would want to stash a high-valued die.

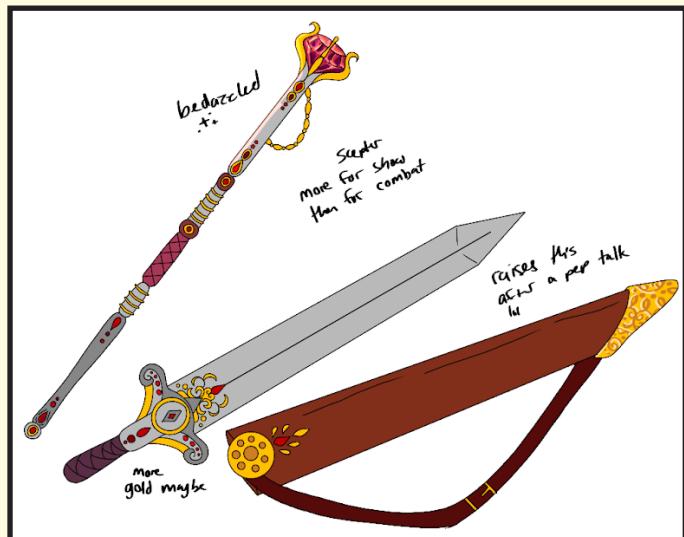
Yasmina

TBD

Oniri

TBD

Lucia



Asset Ability Reference

Asset abilities may be used at any time during the Actions turn step. Most abilities are activated by spending a particular type of resource or action die.

As with character abilities, there are dice stash abilities and other abilities. Unlike character abilities, a few dice stash abilities do allow players to move dice from the asset card back to the character's location.

Asset abilities are not available until the asset is completed.

Aren's Platemail



Once per turn, may use Aren's platemail to defend against a obstacle or stress die from a scene. Rotate the card to indicate it is used for this turn, and **roll one fewer stress die of any type** when determining stress. This may result in no stress die being rolled.

Artificer's Gear



When overcoming a obstacle, may use this card to add an additional progress token. This is done after the obstacle causes stress, as normal. Rotate the card to indicate it has been used for this turn.

Baron Barksalot



Once per turn, may spend a resource at this character's location to get a resource die of the same resource type at the location. Alternatively, may spend a value unspent action die to gain a value unspent action die. Rotate the card to indicate it has been used for this turn.

Cart



May spend one movement point to move one resource from the character's location on to the cart. The cart may hold up to two resource dice. Whenever desired, a resource die may be moved from the cart to the character's location without spending a movement point.

Griddle Bok



Once per turn, may spend a resource die at this character's location to get a die at the same location. The value of the die is the same as the value of the die. Rotate the card to indicate it has been used for this turn.

Ilko the General



May spend two stashed value dice to gain three value dice of the same type. All stashed dice must either be unspent action dice or resource dice of the same type.

Jugglepuff



Once per turn, may use Jugglepuff to defend against a obstacle or stress die from a scene. Rotate the card to indicate it is used for this turn, and **roll one fewer stress die of any type** when determining stress. This may result in no stress die being rolled.

Stoutleaf Blade Polish



When overcoming a obstacle, the stress dice for the obstacle are rolled before allocating dice to the pool. Any dice are still allocated or not as normal, but players will use the already known stress dice values prior to deciding. Rotate the card to indicate it has been used for this turn.

Thedda's Palimpsest



Once per turn, a player may take one stress to gain two additional unspent action dice. These dice are rolled and placed into the character's dice pool.

Warhorse



When overcoming a obstacle, may use the warhorse to add an additional progress token. This is done after the obstacle causes stress, as normal. Rotate the card to

indicate it has been used for this turn.

Location Reference

Windillipus Bronson

TBD

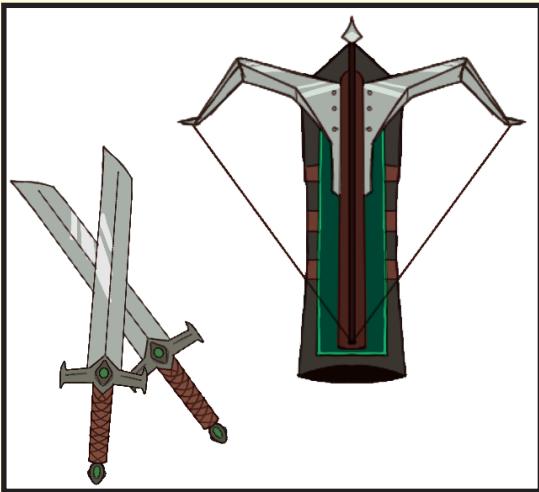


Starting the turn after the player completes this asset, the character begins each turn with one additional movement point.

Xeph

1 ⚑ : □ ⚙

May spend one movement point to move one resource from the character's location on to Xeph's card. Xeph may hold one resource die at a time. Whenever desired, a resource die may be moved from the card to the character's location without spending a movement point.



Notes For Solo, Three or More

TBD

Solo Play

TBD

Three Players

TBD

Playtest Guidance

The general structure of the game is fairly set at this point. I'm interested in specifics surrounding pacing and ability interactions, with an eye towards the following questions:

- Did any characters get knocked out during a session? When and what session? Did it feel arbitrary, or was the risk fairly well understood?
- Did any resource dice ever run out from the supply? When? How often? How many resource dice are needed so they don't run out? This question is driven by the cost of including dice in the game. (I think 10 dice per resource is somewhere in the right ballpark.)
- Which character abilities are the most fun? Which character abilities aren't? Is there a place for each character in the campaign?
- How much progress was made in each session? Was it easy to win?
- Were there any particularly memorable interactions between characters, assets, and obstacle cards?
- How does scene narration feel? Is it interesting or fun? Is there something you're doing which isn't spelled out in the rules but which makes it more fun?

Asset, Obstacle, and Location Effects

As with character abilities, there are tons of options for asset, obstacle, and location effects. That kind of tuning can go on forever, but it's good to prune the cards that really aren't working, and lean into the ones that are.



Credits

The following people made this game possible.

Game Concept and Design: Phil Lewis
Character Concept Art and Design: Jack Mitchell
Narrative Development: Alhana Lewis

Legal

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