

RYAN LAUKAT

NOW OR NEVER

Rule Book

1-4 Players, 90-180 Minutes, Ages 14+

Far to the south of the Last Ruin lies a cliffside village called the Monument. For generations, it protected an ancient shrine until the day a crystal meteorite descended. The meteor's denizens slowly crept out into the world—bizarre monstrosities from nightmare, attacking all in their path. As they spread across the land, there was no intelligent malice nor grand invasion strategy; the creatures acted like a fungus—expanding into new territory sporadically.

After many fruitless attempts to expel the monsters, the people of the Monument fled as their village crumbled, exiled to distant lands, resigned to a nomadic existence.

Twenty years later, there are rumors that the bizarre monsters are growing weak. They're slower, some undergoing a gradual petrification until they crumble to dust. Is it something in the air? Are they dying of old age? Do they suffer from a strange disease? No one is certain, but as the news spreads, various factions set their eyes on the vacant, ruined village of the Monument. The original villagers, now refugees, are desperate to return and rebuild. But they must do it quickly, before someone else claims their home. This is their chance. It's now or never.

In *Now or Never*, you and up to three friends compete to best rebuild your ancestral village and guide the rest of the villagers on their journey home. Although the creatures of the meteorite have lost much of their strength, many of them remain, and you must fight them off to protect traveling villagers. *Now or Never* is the third game in the Arziium storybook series that includes *Above and Below* and *Near and Far*.

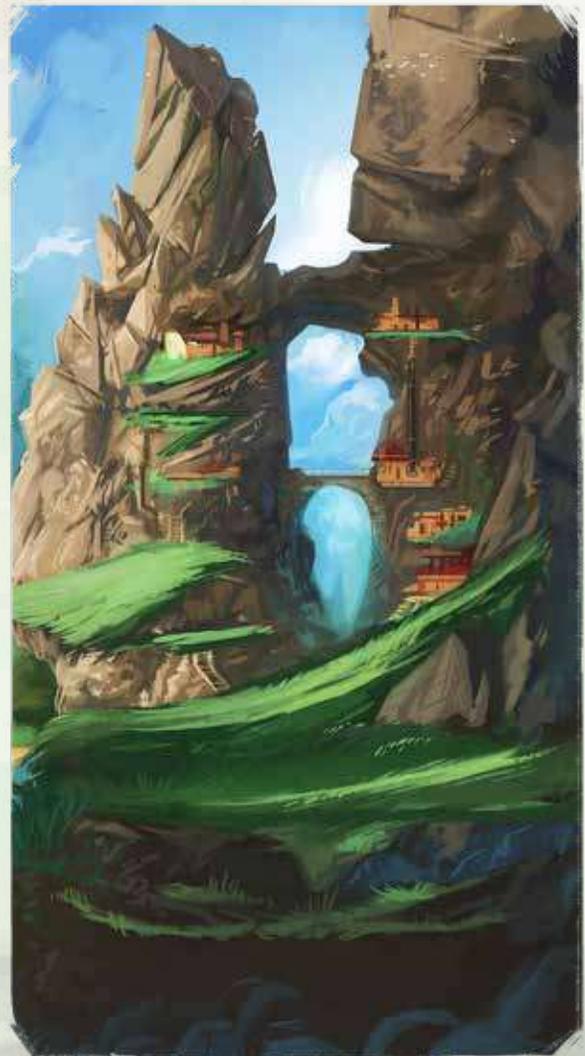
Now or Never is a competitive strategy game that allows you to:

- Choose one of four asymmetrical characters to play.
- Rebuild the village so that returning villagers have a place to live. You must carefully choose what and where to build to maintain an advantage, earning the biggest rewards for long-term planning.
- Interact with other players by hiring their specialists to perform special actions.
- Combat dangerous creatures to rescue villagers.

• Explore a fantasy landscape filled with bizarre places, technology, and people.

Now or Never includes **two modes of play: standard and story**. When playing in story mode, you read from a storybook when you explore, making choices and learning more about the characters and the world. Each character has their own set of stories, unique to the locations they explore and diverse in plot, perspective, and motive. You must choose what direction your own story will take.

Journey to the Monument and help rebuild your ancient home!



Components



Game Board (1)
(double-sided)



Town Boards (4)
(double-sided)



Season Board (1)
(double-sided)



Hero Boards (4)



Book Markers (4)



Season Marker (1)



Coins (42 ones, 12 fives, 12 tens)



Shell Markers (4)



Mana Tokens (20)



Experience Tokens (15)



Tool Markers (4)



Hero Action Tokens (15)



Enemies (34)
(4 each of enemies 1-8;
2 of enemy 9)



Bottled Demon Markers (4)



Heart Markers (4)



Building Tiles (4 identical sets of 20)



Crystal Markers (4)



4-sided dice (4)



1st Player Token

Not Pictured: Rulebook, Story Books (6), Solo Cards (9), Player Aid Cards (8), Plastic Standees (8-use these for the hero cutouts, there are 4 extra)



Red Banner Gear (9)



Quest Cards:



The components below are used only in story mode or when playing with the underground map. Place them in a separate bag and only use them when the game instructions tell you to retrieve them.



Hero Mission Tokens/Reputation Markers (2 per hero)

9. Each player chooses a hero board and sets up their individual play area by following these instructions:

- Place your 2 starting specialists face up on 2 available slots at the top of your hero board.
- Place a heart marker on the space farthest to the right on your heart track, indicating full health.
- Place 1 mana token on each mana symbol to the right of your heart track.
- Take 3 hero action tokens and place them on the faded arrow symbols on your hero board.
- Take your 6 matching hero ability tokens (3 red, 3 blue) and place them **below your hero board**.
- **Take 17 coins from the supply.**
- Place 1 die near your player board.
- Take a town board and place it to the side of your hero board (with the above ground side face up).
- There are 4 identical sets of building tiles in the game. (Each set is differentiated by the color on the back of the tiles.) Take 1 set of tiles, shuffle them face down, and place them face up in a 5x4

grid to the side of your town board. Once placed in this grid, the tiles cannot be rearranged unless you take specific actions in the game.

- Draw 6 **basic** quest cards, 1 **artifact** quest card, and 1 **advanced** quest card. Choose 4 cards to keep, and discard the others in their own discard piles to the side of each draw pile.
- Place your hero cutout in a standee, and place it on the Monument space on the game board.
- Take the following markers and place them on the 0 space on the resource track at the bottom of your town board: book, shell, tool, bottled demon, and crystal.

10. Place the coins and experience tokens to the side of the board. This is called the “supply.” *These components are not limited. If you ever run out, use a suitable replacement. All other game components are limited by amount.*

11. The player who most recently won a game takes the first player token. Play moves in a clockwise direction. **The 2nd and 3rd players start with 1 extra coin, and the 4th player starts with 2 extra coins.** Return any other unused components to the box.



Town Board Basics

BASICS

Before you learn the game rules (starting on page 8), it is helpful to understand a few symbols on the town and hero boards.

Each town has 4 rows, each with 4 building spaces. Gain these victory points if you have 4 buildings in this row at the end of the game.

This column is the housing area. Each space in the area corresponds to its row for housing. When you gain villagers, you can place them in the space if you have enough housing in the same row. The victory point symbol in each box is rewarded at the end of the game if you have at least 1 of each type of villager in the row. Villagers are **NOT** placed on building tiles.



This star indicates that this is the starting building row.

When you build in this space, gain 1 tool.

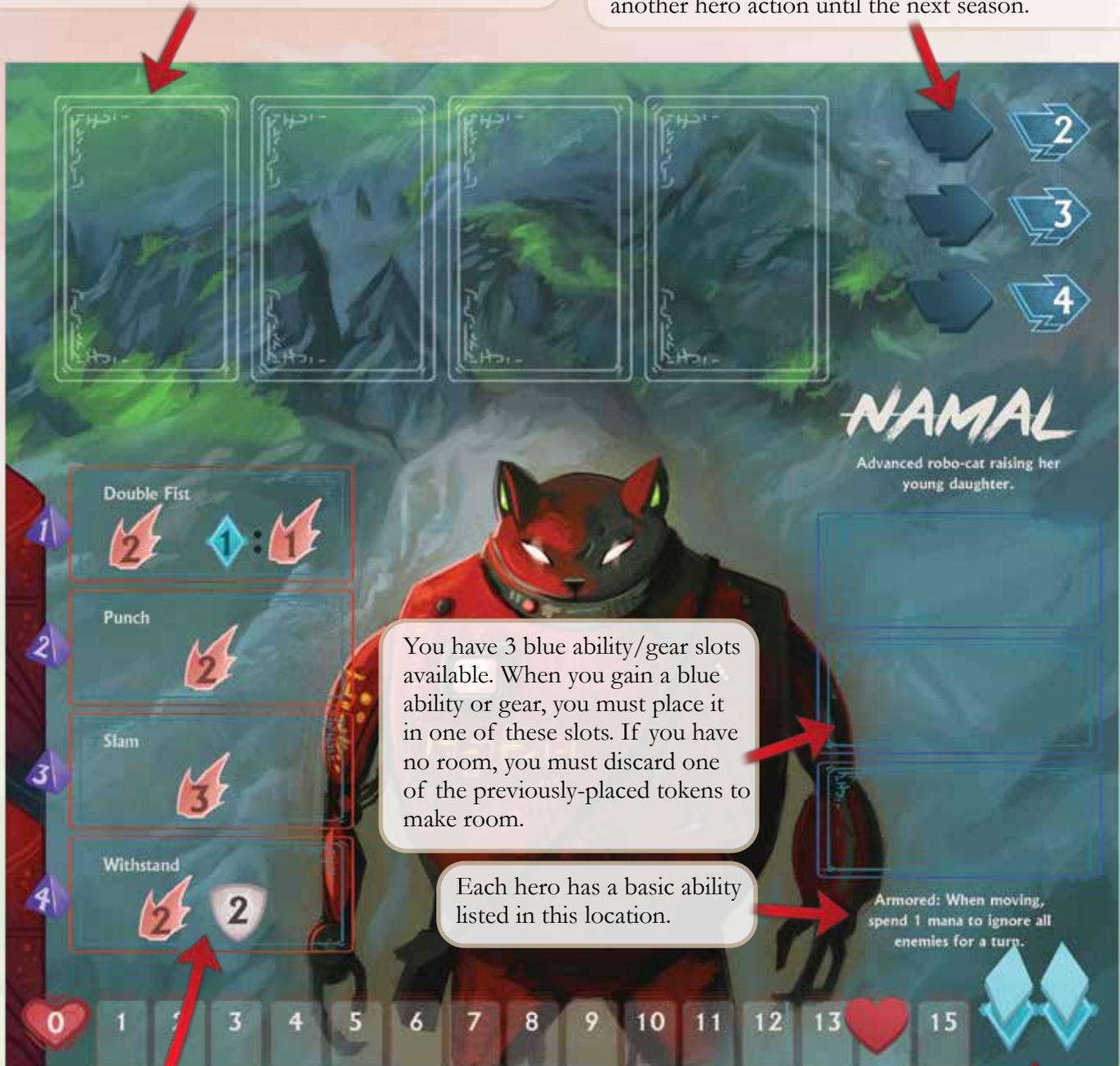
Building in this space costs 2 extra coins.

At the bottom of your town board is the resource track. Use the 5 resource markers to keep track of how many of each resource you own. These include shells, tools, bottled demons, crystals, and books. Whenever you gain, produce, lose, or sell a resource, move the marker up or down to keep track of your current quantity. If you ever have more than 9 of a good, place a coin token on top of the marker and start again on 0 on the track (the coin represents +10 of that good). Each of these resources **except books** are also known as “goods” and can be sold at any time for coins (described on page 15).

Hero Board Basics

Place your specialists in these 4 specialist slots. You can only have 4 at once. If you ever gain a specialist but all slots are filled, you must discard an old specialist to make room for the new one.

You have 3 hero action tokens. When they're in this position, it means they're available to be used. When you take a hero action, move a token so that it covers the arrow with the number to the right. Once all 3 arrows have been moved to the right, you cannot take another hero action until the next season.



You have 3 blue ability/gear slots available. When you gain a blue ability or gear, you must place it in one of these slots. If you have no room, you must discard one of the previously-placed tokens to make room.

Each hero has a basic ability listed in this location.

Armored: When moving, spend 1 mana to ignore all enemies for a turn.

You have 4 red ability/gear slots available. When you gain a red ability or gear, you must place it in one of these slots, covering the previous ability. If you have no room, you must discard one of the previously-placed tokens to make room.

Keep track of your hearts on this track. When you reach 0 hearts, you cannot take any more hero actions until you have at least 1 heart. You may never have more hearts than the maximum number on your heart track.

These slots hold your mana tokens. When you spend mana, remove the token from your board until the next season. You can never have more mana than slots unless a card/gear/ability specifically states that you can.

Overview and Player Turns

MODES OF PLAY

There are two ways to play *Now or Never*.

Standard Mode: Compete to rebuild the Monument, defeat enemies, and find lost villagers. The remaining pages in this rulebook (except for the “Story Mode” section) teach how to play standard mode. Game duration: 45 minutes per player.

Story Mode: Play through a story campaign consisting of six game sessions, called chapters. Players read from a storybook instead of uncovering search tokens. Each chapter also has some modified setup rules, listed at the start of each chapter. This mode takes slightly longer to play. The stories allow you to interact with the world through your character, making individual choices and pursuing mystery and adventure. We recommend that you play at least one game of standard mode before trying story mode because of the additional complexity. For story mode rules, see page 22.

GAME STRUCTURE

Now or Never is played in rounds, called seasons. Each season, starting with the first player, players take turns in clockwise order performing one action each until all players pass. When all players have passed, players simultaneously perform the production phase. After this, a new season begins and play continues.

After six seasons, the game ends. Players perform the final production phase and score victory points. The player with the most points wins.

BASIC TURN

On your turn, **choose one** of two actions, described on pages 9-14.

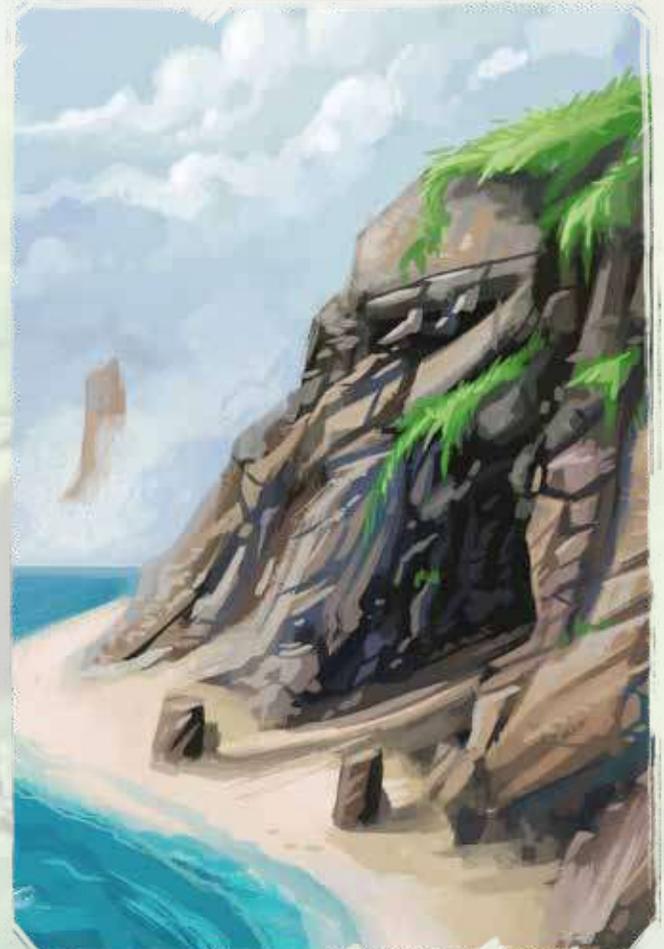
SPECIALIST ACTION:

- Pay a specialist to perform that specialist’s action, or
- Recruit a new specialist and perform that specialist’s action, or
- Rest a specialist.

or

HERO ACTION:

1. First, you must move.
2. Then you may play a quest card (optional).
3. Then choose one of the following:
 - Visit a Location, or
 - Fight an Enemy, or
 - Search.



SPECIALIST ACTION: Pay a specialist to perform that specialist's action. You may choose one of the following three options:

- Pay your own specialist. You may pay any face-up specialist on your own hero board. Pay the large (upper) coin amount to the **supply**. Then perform the specialist's action.
- Pay another player's specialist. You may pay any face-up specialist on another player's hero board. **You pay** the large (upper) coin amount to the **supply**. The **other player** collects the small (lower) coin amount (called the "tax") **from the supply**. Then you perform the specialist's action.
- Recruit a new specialist from the row to the side of the board. Pay **DOUBLE** the large (upper) coin amount to the supply. (Always pay double the upper coin amount when recruiting. Do not pay or collect the tax when recruiting.) Take the specialist and place them in one of the 4 slots at the top of your hero board. If there is no slot available, you must discard one of your specialists to make room (put the old specialist in the game box). You may replace either a used (face-down) specialist, or an unused (face-up) specialist. Then **immediately** perform the new specialist's action. Draw a new specialist from the pile and place it in the row so that there are 4 available specialists at all times.

As soon as you pay any specialist (yours or another player's) and perform their action, **flip the token face down**. That specialist cannot be used again until the next season.

You may pay a specialist and perform no action, or only part of the specialist's action. You still flip the token face down in this case.

The possible specialist actions are described on the following pages.

Coin cost to perform action.

Action (Build)

Tax: This is how many coins you collect from the supply when another player uses your specialist.

Instead of using the specialist's action, you may spend a turn flipping them face down to gain 1 coin or 2 hearts. This is called "resting."



Specialist

Player Turns

SPECIALIST ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

A) BUILD: You may place 1 building tile on your town board. Choose 1 tile from your unbuilt building grid and place it on the town board, according to the following rules:

- If this is your first building in the game, you must choose a building from the outer border of your grid. On future building actions, you may **only** choose buildings adjacent to empty spaces in the grid. (The outside border of the grid doesn't count.)
- You must place your first building in one of the 4 building spaces on the starting building row of your town board (the row with the star). After this, you must place new buildings adjacent to any previously placed building in the town.
- Pay the coin cost of the building to the supply. (The coin cost is listed in the bottom right corner of each building tile.) **Buildings only cost coins, not resources or books.**
- If you place a building on a town space with a resource (such as a shell), gain 1 of that resource immediately.
- If you place a building on a space with this (coins: build) icon, you must pay the indicated coin cost to build there.
- If the building you place has this book and arrow icon on the tile, you immediately **gain 1 book** (only when you build it). **This is not a cost.**
- Some buildings give a bonus when built (see the building ability descriptions on page 19).



A resource icon in this light gray area in the bottom left corner means that you gain this resource during each production phase.



This building has a bed icon, so it can house 1 extra villager (2 villagers total).

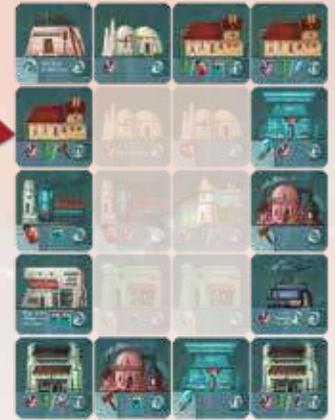
This building costs 5 coins to build.

Every building built in your town can house 1 villager in the villager space on its row.

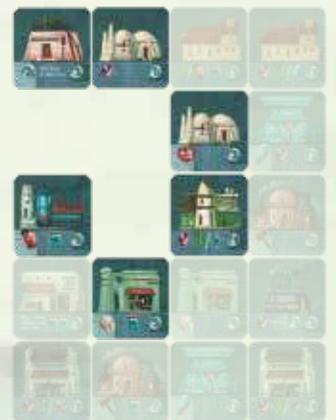


Build

Your first building must be selected from the outer border of buildings in your grid.



After your first building, only buildings adjacent to empty slots may be built (in this case, these 3 buildings).



If your building grid looked like this, you could build any of the buildings that are not faded out.



You must build your first building in any one of the 4 spaces on the bottom row of your town board. When you build it on any of these town spaces, gain 1 shell immediately, because there is a shell icon on each starting town space.

If the build icon has a “+hearts” icon next to it, gain the indicated number of hearts after you build. If there is an experience icon next to it, gain 1 experience after you build. If there is a resource icon next to it, gain 1 of that resource.

B) HEAL: Move your heart marker on your hero’s heart track to the furthest space to the right, indicating full health. If there is a “+mana” icon, restore the indicated number of mana (without exceeding your maximum mana slots). If there is a resource icon next to it, gain 1 of that resource.

C) GAIN EXPERIENCE: Gain 2 experience tokens and any listed bonuses (such as a resource).

D) BUY GEAR: You may immediately purchase 1 gear token from the season board. Pay the coin cost shown on the gear token, place the new gear on a matching red or blue slot on your hero board, and draw from the appropriate pile to refill the empty slot on the season board. If you do not have a matching open slot on your hero board for the gear token, you must make room by putting an old token in the game box. When placing red gear, you cover up a basic ability on your hero board.

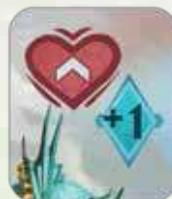
E) REST: Instead of paying a specialist, you may simply flip the specialist face down and gain either 2 hearts or 1 coin (as shown on the bottom right of each specialist). You may only rest **your own** specialists, not those of other players.



*Build & Gain
3 Hearts*



*Build & Gain
1 Experience*



*Heal & Gain
1 Mana*



*Heal & Gain
1 Tool*



Gain 2 Experience & 1 Tool



Buy Gear



Rest to gain 2 Hearts or 1 Coin

Player Turns

HERO ACTION: You may only perform a hero action if you have at least 1 heart and you have an unused hero action token on your hero board. When you take a hero action, you 1) move, 2) play a quest card (optional), then 3) take an action on the board.

1. MOVE: First, slide one of your available hero action tokens so that it covers the hero action slot to the right. Move your hero on the game board according to the following rules:

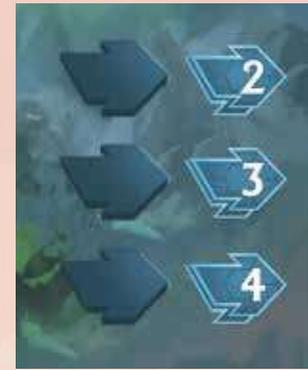
- You **must** move to a new space. (You cannot stay put and take an action on the same space.)
- You may move a number of spaces up to the number in the blue arrow that you cover with a hero action token, plus any bonuses from gear, buildings, etc. To move farther, lose 1 heart per extra space. (You can move as many extra spaces as you want, as long as you have enough hearts to pay for it.) You may stop moving at any time. **You may not move diagonally.**
- When you enter a space with a mountain icon, you lose 1 heart.
- If you enter a space with an enemy and choose not to fight it, you lose 1 heart. You may continue moving if you choose not to fight.

2. PLAY A QUEST CARD (optional): When you decide to stop moving, you may play 1 **quest card** (explained on page 18). To play a quest card, you must have stopped on its matching location.

3. CHOOSE ONE: Visit a Location, Fight an Enemy, or Search.

A) VISIT A LOCATION: Locations are indicated by a name on a scroll with an action beneath the scroll. When you visit a location, you may perform the action. Generally, you must pay something and/or lose hearts to gain something else. **Each location action can only be performed once per turn.**

Refer to page 20 for a detailed description of each location action.



Hero Action Slots



Mountain



Quest Card



Example: Namal has 2 movement. She starts at the Monument space and moves to the space on the right first, losing a heart because it has a mountain icon. Then she moves to the space below. She's out of movement, but she can continue to move by losing hearts. She loses 1 heart to move to the right, deciding to stop at the Undergarden space. She then plays an Undergarden quest card. Finally, she visits the Undergarden location, paying 2 experience to draw 2 quest cards (keeping 1) and gain 6 coins.

B) FIGHT AN ENEMY: If you stop on a location with an enemy, you may combat the enemy by following these steps:

- Roll a die. Check the result on your **red** combat abilities. Each hero starts with 4 basic combat abilities, one for each number on a 4-sided die. (When you gain a red hero ability token or a red gear token, place it on top of one of your basic combat abilities.) Deal any damage listed on the ability you rolled. The enemy attacks you simultaneously, and you lose hearts equal to the enemy's attack damage (minus any defense that you have, either from blue abilities/gear or any from the red combat ability you rolled). Only the red ability matching your die roll applies to that round of combat.
- If you've dealt cumulative damage equal to the enemy's health, the enemy is defeated. If you haven't defeated the enemy yet, you must either start a new combat round or retreat. To start a new combat round, roll to attack again, and repeat the instructions in the previous step, keeping track of the running total of damage you've dealt to the enemy. (Use the enemy combat track and a spare token, if needed.) If you defeat the enemy, gain the rewards (white symbols & resources) on the enemy token and discard the token (leaving the rest of the stack below).
- If you run out of hearts **at any time** during the attack, even if you simultaneously have dealt enough damage to defeat the enemy, you lose the combat and your turn ends immediately.
- You may keep attacking until the enemy is defeated, you run out of hearts, or you retreat. To retreat, you leave your hero on the same space, but your turn ends immediately.
- If you retreat or run out of hearts during combat, the enemy token remains and returns to full health. You do not receive the listed rewards, but you do gain 1 experience token. (Only gain this if you retreat or run out of hearts.)

The rewards for defeating an enemy are experience, villagers, coins, and resources. If you defeat an enemy, you rescue villagers trapped or waylaid by the enemy! You choose villagers from any available villager tokens face up on the season board. If there are no villagers left, draw 6 new villagers from the supply and refill the empty slots on the season board. Only refill the row of villagers if there are no more villagers left in the row.



When you defeat this monster, gain 1 experience and 1 villager.



Refill this row ONLY when it is empty.



If Namal rolls a 1, she deals 2 damage. At this time, she could spend 1 mana to deal an additional 1 damage.



This gear provides 1 defense, reducing damage you take from enemies by 1 each combat round.



You can keep track of enemy health by using this track (found on the back of a player aid card) and a spare mana token.

Player Turns

RED ABILITIES/GEAR: Some red abilities and gear deal extra damage or defense if you pay mana, and some even require that you pay mana to gain any effects at all. A red combat ability **can only be used when you roll its assigned number**, and only once per attack round. *Example: If Zeik rolls a 1 on his first combat roll and Dark Flame is the weapon in his "1" slot on his hero board, he deals 3 basic damage. At this time, Zeik may pay 1 mana to deal 2 extra damage. Zeik can only activate this ability once per roll.*

BLUE ABILITIES/GEAR: Unless otherwise stated, a blue ability that costs mana can be activated at any time on your turn, and you may activate it multiple times (by paying the mana cost each time you activate it). Some blue abilities do not cost mana, such as defensive gear. Defensive gear only activates once per attack round, and it does not apply to damage taken outside of combat.

C) SEARCH: When on a space with an unclaimed search token, you may roll a die and lose hearts equal to the result. If you reach 0 hearts, your turn ends and you do not gain the search token.

After rolling, take the search token and gain the reward listed on the opposite side. After this, keep the token face down near your town board. It provides 1 coin during each production phase for the rest of the game, including the final production phase. Some search tokens instruct you to discard them.

Do not keep these as income.

See specific search token descriptions on page 26.



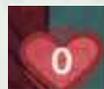
Search Token

PASS

If you cannot or do not wish to take any more actions this season, you pass. Once you pass, you cannot take any more actions until the next season. Play continues until all players pass. Then the production phase begins.

RUNNING OUT OF HEARTS

If you ever reach 0 hearts during a hero action, your turn immediately ends. You cannot take another hero action until you have at least 1 heart. If this happens when visiting a location, you do not gain any of the rewards of the action. If this happens during combat, the combat ends and the enemy returns to full health. If this happens when picking up a search token, you must leave the search token on the board.



When you roll the assigned number for this red ability, you deal 3 damage, and you may deal an additional 2 damage if you pay 1 mana.



This blue mana ability can only be activated once per attack round.



This blue mana ability can be activated at any time on your turn.



Defensive Blue Gear: Blue gear that gives defense (without any mana cost) reduces damage taken during each enemy attack round in combat, but it does not apply to anything else, such as rolling for search tokens, visiting locations, etc. Defense from gear stacks together.

Example: An enemy deals 5 damage but you have 3 gear tokens that give 1 defense each. 5 damage – 3 block = 2 damage.

ANYTIME ACTIONS: You may take the following actions **at any time**, even after you have passed or when it is not your turn. You can even perform these actions during the production phase.

- **Sell goods for coins.** The season board lists combinations of goods and how many coins you gain for selling them. Be sure to reduce each good you sell on your resource track by the correct amounts. *For example, if you sell a single shell, you gain 1 coin. If you sell 3 shells together, you gain 5 coins. If you sell a shell, a tool, a bottled demon, and a crystal, you gain 12 coins. Etc.*
- **Place one of your villagers** (gained through combat or other means) in the housing area on the right side of your town board. You must choose one of the four rows, and you must have enough buildings in that row to hold the villager. Each building allows you to place one villager in the housing space on the same row, and each building with a **bed icon** allows you to place one additional villager there. Once you place a villager in housing, you cannot move that villager to a different row or trade it out with an unhoused villager. *Once a villager gets settled in, they don't want to move to a new house or sleep outside again!* When you gain a villager token through combat or another way, if you have room, you may place the villager in housing immediately. If you do not have room, or do not want to place the villager in housing yet, you may place the villager below your town board, placing the villager in housing at any later time as long as you have enough housing to support them.

- **Complete one of your order tokens.** Pay the specified goods to gain the listed coin reward. After this, place the token face down near your town board. **You can only complete each order once.** You gain order tokens by visiting the Tower of Miners. At the end of the game, you gain 2 victory points per completed order. You cannot complete an order token in the final production phase!



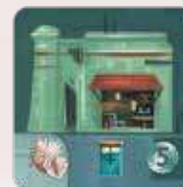
- **Pay 2 experience to refill all the empty villager slots on the season board early.** You can do this at any time, even in the middle of gaining 2 or more villagers.



- **Purchase one of your hero abilities.** Pay the specified amount experience and place it on your hero board (in an appropriate red or blue slot). To purchase an ability, you must also meet the ability level requirements. The ability level is indicated by small hexagons on the right side of the token. You must first own a level 1 ability to purchase a level 2 **in the same color**, or a level 2 before purchasing a level 3. *For example, if you want to purchase Halia's level 2 red ability, Cinder Slash, you must first own her level 1, Dark Flame. Once you own one level 1 ability, you can purchase any number of level 2 abilities in the same color.*



Check the season board to see how many coins you gain by selling different combinations of goods.



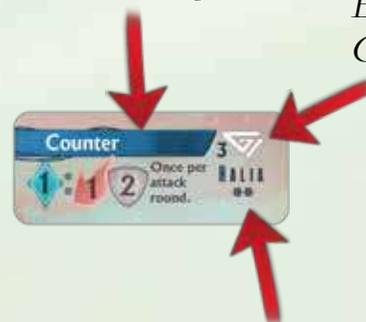
Building with a bed icon. This building can support 2 villagers.



This row has 1 building with a bed, so it can support up to 2 villagers in housing.

Blue Ability

Experience Cost



This is a level 2 blue ability. You must first have a level 1 blue ability to buy this.

Production Phase

PRODUCTION PHASE

When all players have passed, follow these steps:

(If it is the final round, see “End of the Game” on the next page.)

1. Collect produced goods, adding the totals to your resource track. Each of your villagers in housing produces a specified good, while villagers not in housing do not produce goods. Some buildings also produce a good or other bonuses at this time (specified on the building within a light gray area at the bottom left of the building token). See building descriptions on page 19. **Also**, collect 1 coin per search token you own.
2. Refresh your mana by returning any spent mana to the empty mana slots on your hero board.
3. Return all hero action tokens to their starting spaces, to the left of the numbered arrows, so that they're ready to use again in the next season.
4. Flip all of your specialists face up.
5. Move the season marker 1 space forward.
6. Begin the next season, starting with the player that has the first player token.



Production Area

This villager only produces a crystal if she is in housing on your town board. Do not place villagers on buildings. Place them on the right side of the town board.

IMPORTANT!

- Players **DO NOT** refresh their hearts at this time.
- Only villagers in housing produce goods.
- Specialists **DO NOT** produce goods in the production phase.
- After you have played 6 rounds, the game ends. Play the final production phase instead of a normal production phase, and count victory points.

END OF THE GAME

During the sixth and final production phase, follow these steps:

1. Before producing, you must **discard all of your coins and set your resource markers to 0 (except books).**

Also discard any quest cards or order tokens that are not completed.

2. You may now produce goods and coins from search tokens as normal and sell all of your goods to gain as many coins as possible.

3. Now count your final victory points:

- Each coin is worth 1 victory point
- You gain victory points for building 4 buildings in the second, third, and fourth row from the top: 6, 8, and 8 victory points, respectively.
- You gain victory points for each housing row that contains villagers that produce at least 1 of each type of good (shell, tool, bottled demon, and crystal): 5, 5, 6, and 7 victory points, respectively.
- Some buildings give victory points for specific requirements (see page 19).
- Gain victory points for completed quest cards.
- Gain victory points for completed orders (remember that you cannot complete additional orders in the final production phase).

The player with the most victory points has done the most to rebuild the Monument and restore the villagers to their hometown and is declared the winner! If there is a tie, the player with the most remaining experience and books is the winner. If still tied, the player with the most remaining hearts is the winner.



This building gives 2 victory points for each bed icon in an adjacent building.

Once you have produced goods in the last production phase, trade them at the market to gain as many coins as possible.

Each coin is worth 1 victory point.

Remember, you may not keep coins or goods from previous rounds.

If this housing row contains villagers that produce at least 1 of each of the 4 types of goods, you gain these victory points.

If you have built 4 buildings in this row, you gain these victory points.



QUEST CARDS

After you move your hero, you may play 1 quest card from your hand that matches the location in the space where you stop moving. You play the quest card before visiting a location, combat, or picking up a search token.

- Follow the instructions on the quest card. Many times you must pay a resource, coins, or experience to gain a reward. The cost (or other requirement) to play the card is in the top right corner of the card. If there is an asterisk, check the gray area of the card for the requirement.
- You **must** be at the location specified in white text on the red background. For example, you must be at the Undergarden to play the Lightning Fungus card.
- After you play the card, tuck it beneath the bottom of your town board so that only the bottom half of the card is showing (with the victory point icon and any ONGOING or AT GAME END effects showing).
- **Artifact quest cards** usually cost 2 books and give you an ability you can use by paying mana, which you can use on your turn. Some of these abilities are limited to once per combat round, or once per season. To keep track of the once per season uses, place your spent mana on the card. Remove it at the end of the season.
- Advanced quest cards usually cost 2 books and give lots of victory points. Some have other requirements to play.
- Whenever you draw quest cards, you can choose to draw them from any of the three piles. There is no hand limit. If a pile runs out, reshuffle the discard pile.

Pay 2 books to play this card.



This card has no cost to play.

When you play this card, immediately start the combat listed on the card. If you are successful, gain the rewards listed on the bottom of the card. If you fail, you must discard this card.



If you have played this card, follow these instructions at the end of the game. This card also gives 4 victory points at the end of the game.



*To play this, you must pay 2 books **and** meet the specific requirement listed at the bottom of the card at the time you play it.*

Gain these victory points at the end of the game if you have played this card. It has no other ability or effect.

Bottled Demons Lab: Gain 3 victory points at game end per bottled demon you produce in the final production phase. All produced bottled demons in the final production phase are counted (from buildings and villagers), before you sell them for coins/victory points.



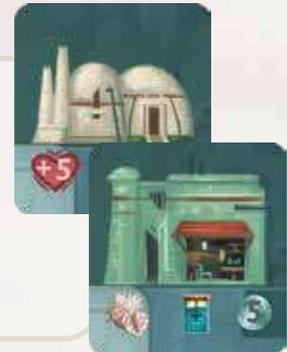
Market Hall: Gain 4 victory points at game end per building in town that is adjacent to this building that produces any 1 of the 4 goods (not hearts or coins).



Construction HQ: Pay 1 fewer coin each time you build another building.



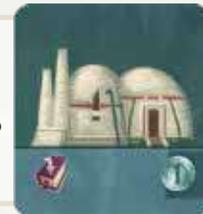
Production Buildings: These buildings produce at the end of each season. They produce the good/hearts specified within the light gray area at the bottom left of the token.



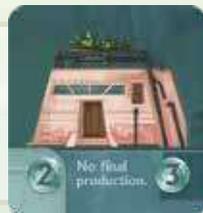
Crystal Lab: Gain 3 victory points at game end per crystal you produce in the final production phase. All produced crystals in the final production phase are counted (from buildings and villagers), before you sell them for coins/victory points.



School: This building gives you 1 book when you build it, but it has no other abilities.



Garden House: Collect 2 coins during production **except** during the final production phase.



Snail Ranch: Each time you take a hero action, you have +1 movement.



Inn: This building has 2 extra beds, which means it can house up to 3 villagers. Also, you may, at any time, move a villager placed in housing on this row to any other row with available housing.



Town Hall: Gain 2 victory points at game end per bed icon in a building in town that is adjacent to this building.



Library: Gain 3 victory points at game end per building in town that is adjacent to this building that has a book icon. (Do not count this building.)



Workshop: Gain 2 victory points at game end per tool you produce in the final production phase. All produced tools in the final production phase are counted (from buildings and villagers), before you sell them for coins/victory points.



LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS

Note: When visiting a location, if you cannot pay the specified cost, you cannot gain any of the rewards. You can only complete a described action at a location once per turn.

Tower of Miners: Draw 2 order tokens and keep 1. (Place the other tile at the bottom of the pile). Place the order face up near your town board. You can complete the order at any later time (except in the final production phase). When you complete an order, place the token face down near your town board. You can only complete each order once.

Hermit's Hut: You may swap the location of two buildings in your unbuilt building grid (so that you can more easily access a specific building that you want to build). Also gain 1 shell and 4 hearts.

Crystal Meteorite: Roll a die and lose the resulting number of hearts. Gain 1 crystal and 1 experience.

Nomad Camp: Lose 1 heart, pay 1 book, and gain 1 villager (from the season board). If there are no available villagers, draw 6 new villagers to refill the slots.

Ublo Tower: Lose 1 heart to gain 1 tool.

The Monument: Gain 4 hearts and 1 coin. Also take the first player token. If you still have the first player token at the start of the next round, you take the first turn. (Another player may claim the first player token after you.)

Scholars' Tower: Pay 3 coins to gain 1 book.

Undergarden: Pay 2 experience, draw 2 quest cards of any type, keep 1 (discard the other), and gain 6 coins.

Forest of Faces: Lose 5 hearts to gain 5 coins.

Snail Caves: Lose 2 hearts to gain 1 experience and 2 coins.

Flying Casino: Pay 1 coin. Draw 3 quest cards of any type and keep 2 (discard the other). Gain 5 hearts.

City of Spirits: Lose 2 hearts. Gain 1 bottled demon and 1 coin.

Istreka: You may buy 1 gear token from the season board. Pay the gear coin cost, place the new gear on a matching red or blue slot on your hero board, and draw from the appropriate pile to refill the empty slot on

the season board. If you do not have a matching open slot on your player board for the gear token, you must discard an old token to make room (putting the old token in the game box). Also draw 2 quest cards of any type and keep 1 (discard the other).

Wailing Cavern: Lose 8 hearts and pay 1 mana to gain 1 villager from the season board. If there are no available villagers, draw 6 new villagers to refill the slots.

UNDERGROUND LOCATION CHANGES

Tower of Miners: You may buy 1 gear token from the season board. Pay the gear coin cost, place the new gear on a matching red or blue slot on your hero board, and draw from the appropriate pile to refill the empty slot on the season board. If you do not have a matching open slot on your player board for the gear token, you must discard an old token to make room (putting the old token in the game box). Also gain 1 shell.

Hermit's Hut: Gain 1 experience. Draw 3 quest cards of any type, and keep 1 (discard the others).

The Monument: Gain 4 hearts. Also take the first player token. If you still have the first player token at the start of the next round, you take the first turn. (Another player may claim the first player token after you.) You may also swap the location of two buildings in your unbuilt building grid (so that you can more easily access a specific building that you want to build).

Undergarden: Pay 1 experience to gain 2 hearts and 4 coins.

Forest of Faces: Pay 1 coin, 1 mana, and lose 5 hearts to gain 1 villager (from the season board). If there are no villagers, draw 6 new villagers to refill the slots.

Flying Casino: Lose 5 hearts to gain 5 coins.

Snail Caves: Pay 2 experience. Draw 2 quest cards of any type and keep 1 (discard the other). Gain 6 coins.

Istreka: Gain 1 heart. Draw 2 order tokens and keep 1. (Place the other tile at the bottom of the pile). Place the order face up near your town board. You can complete the order at any later time (except in the final production phase). When you complete an order, place the token face down near your town board. You can only complete each order once.

Wailing Caverns: Lose 8 hearts. Draw 3 quest cards and keep 2 (discard the other). Gain 1 shell.

GEAR DESCRIPTIONS

Note: You can purchase multiple copies of the same gear.

Arzian Helm: Any time you roll a 4 during combat, gain 1 heart. You can choose when during the attack round to gain the heart. *For example, you could roll, deal damage, take damage, and then gain the heart. Or you could gain the heart before taking damage.*

Azure Gloves: If both the Azure Gloves and the Azure Coat are equipped, you gain +1 max mana. Gain the extra mana as soon as you equip this gear. As long as they are both equipped, this mana replenishes at the end of each season.

Shield Crystal: When you equip this, you gain +1 max mana. Gain the extra mana as soon as you equip this gear. As long as the Shield Crystal is equipped, this mana replenishes at the end of each season.

Vampire Knife: Gain 1 mana immediately (if you have an empty mana slot). You can use it to activate abilities on the same attack roll. *For example, if you rolled the Vampire Knife, you could use the mana to immediately activate Zeik's Rock Shield.*

HERO ABILITY DESCRIPTIONS

BASIC HERO ABILITIES (On each hero board.)

Marklun (Haste): Pay 1 mana to move 2 extra spaces during a hero action. You may do this multiple times in the same turn/move action.

Halia (Strange Luck): Pay 1 mana to reroll a die. You may perform this ability multiple times in the same turn, or even multiple times on the same die roll.

Namal (Armored): You may pay 1 mana to ignore all enemies for 1 turn. (You may move through them without taking damage.)

Zeik (Farsight): Once per season, you may pay 1 mana to draw a quest card from any of the 3 piles.

OTHER HERO ABILITIES

Toughness (Zeik): Take 1 fewer damage each time you search/make a choice in a story encounter. *For example, if you roll 1 when you search, you take no damage.*

Self-Repair (Namal): You may spend 1 tool to gain 7

hearts. You may only use this ability outside of combat and you may only use it once per season. You may not gain more hearts than there are spaces on your heart track.

Leadership (Halia): Whenever you recruit a new specialist from the row, you pay 1 fewer coin.

Research (Marklun): Pay 3 mana to gain 1 book. You may perform this as many times in one turn as you want.

Siphon Power (Marklun): Pay 1 bottled demon to gain 4 mana. You may not gain more mana than you have available empty mana slots. You may perform this as many times in one turn as you want.

Gravity Orb (Marklun): Spend 1 mana to roll a die and add the result to damage.

ARTIFACT ABILITIES

Demon Trap: Pay 1 mana at any time (except during the final production phase) to gain 1 bottled demon. You may only perform this once per season. Place the mana spent activating the artifact on the token to help you remember that it has been used.

Warp Stone: When taking a hero action, pay 1 mana to move +4 spaces. This does not give you a free hero action; it can only be used to help you move further during a standard hero action.

Metal Hound: Pay 3 mana on your turn to pick up any unclaimed search token on the game board. You may only perform this once per season. Place the mana spent activating the artifact on the token to help you remember that it has been used.

Life Candle: Pay 1 mana at any time (except in the middle of combat) to gain 6 hearts. You may only activate this artifact once per season. Place the mana spent activating the artifact on the token to help you remember that it has been used.

Magic Chest: Pay 1 mana at any time (except during the final production phase) to gain 4 coins. You may only perform this once per season. Place the mana spent activating the artifact on the token to help you remember that it has been used.

Lightning Fungus: Pay 1 mana to take 1 hero action with a movement of 3. You may only use this on your turn, and it takes 1 turn to use. This is limited to one use per season.

STORY MODE

In story mode, you play through a campaign consisting of 6 game sessions, called chapters, starting with chapter 1 and continuing in numerical order to chapter 6. This mode takes longer to play and it is slightly more complicated than standard mode, so it is recommended that you play at least one game in standard mode before trying story mode.

SETUP CHANGES

There are 6 chapter booklets, 1 for each chapter. Retrieve the correct book for your current chapter and return the rest to the game box. Each chapter has some modified setup rules, listed at the start of each chapter. Be sure to check these before starting.

When playing story mode, use the side of the season board with the reputation track at the bottom. Players gain or lose victory points at the end of the game depending on where they are on this track. Players start the game with their hero's reputation marker at 0.

RULE CHANGES & READING STORIES

Each character has their own set of stories for each chapter. These stories often contain the same event or encounter for each character, but have slight text, choice, or reward differences based on the hero's abilities and personality. Some stories are completely different and tell more about the particular hero's past and current story.

Each time you search, instead of looking at the hidden rewards of the search token, check the letter on the space on the board and read the specified paragraph for your hero in the storybook (make sure to read the correct hero). *Example: Zeik A, or Halia D.* If the space does not have a letter, look up the story by the location name. *Example: Zeik Crystal Meteorite.* **Ignore the random reward icons on the search tokens** (you do not get these in story mode; instead, your rewards are listed in the stories).

The player to your left is the reader (unless playing solo, in which case you, of course, are the reader).

The reader then reads the story paragraph (normal text just below the story number). After this, the reader reads the choices (indicated by letters A, B, etc.). The reader only reads the title and the skill or combat level of each choice, not the reaction paragraph beneath the choice OR the rewards (in bold at the bottom of each reaction

paragraph). When playing solo, you are allowed to read the rewards for each choice.

You must make a choice, roll the die, and choose how many hearts to lose. Then read the reaction paragraph to gain rewards/consequences.

For example, when reading this example, the reader first only reads the circled text:

A robot head sticks out of the dirt, the head blinking and twirling.

A. Dig out the robot. Skill 6

As soon as the robot is free, it bashes you in the head and strides away. When you gather your senses, you discover a few useful treasures at the bottom of the hole where the robot was stuck.

REWARDS: 2 coins, 1 tool. BONUS (+2): 1 experience and 1 coin.

B. Reprogram the robot to dig itself out. Skill 8

The robot pulls at the dirt, shoving it downward like a mole. In moments it stand before you. "Ready for assignment," it beeps.

+2 reputation. REWARDS: Gain the ROBOT Y9 token. BONUS (+2): 1 tool, 1 experience.

After the reader has finished, you select one of the choices and state your choice out loud. You then roll one die and lose hearts in an attempt to reach or exceed the skill required to succeed. Each heart you lose adds 1 to the final result. **After rolling**, you choose how many hearts to lose (for example, roll 3, add 5 hearts, for a total of 8).

For combat rolls, you begin combat as if you were fighting a enemy.

In either case, if you reach 0 hearts, the search ends immediately and you do not gain the search token or any rewards.

If the total roll plus lost hearts is equal to or greater than the required skill (or if you succeed at the combat), then you succeed. The reader then reads the reaction paragraph for the choice and you receive the listed rewards.

If your total is 2 or more above the required skill, then you also receive a bonus reward (listed after the base rewards). *For example, if Jenny had a skill 8 for the choice "Dig out the robot." in encounter 41, she would gain the standard 2 coins and 1 tool and ALSO 1 experience and 1 extra coin.*

After completing the story, you remove the search token and place it next to your town board (so that it gives you 1 income at the end of each season, as in standard mode).

If you do not gain enough skill to succeed, you fail the search and your turn ends. You do not get any rewards or the search token. The token remains on the board.

Note: Some story choices require a payment of some kind in addition to a skill roll or combat. For example, if a story says “-1 coin” then the player must pay 1 coin to select this choice.

Reputation: When a player gains or loses reputation as a reward from a story, the player **must** mark this on the reputation track (they cannot choose to ignore it).

At the end of the game, players earn (or lose) victory points depending on their final reputation. A player with positive reputation earns the victory points listed on their space on the track, or the next space to the left. *For example, if Zoey has 5 reputation, she earns 2 victory points.* If a player has negative reputation, they lose victory points equal to their space (-1 or -2). **Also,** the player with the most reputation gains 3 extra victory points. If multiple players are tied for most, they each gain 3 extra victory points.

MISSION TOKENS: Sometimes a story will instruct you to place your mission token somewhere. When this happens, place the token with your hero image on the instructed location. You may perform a search action at this location to continue a storyline. When you complete the search action, remove your token from the board (or place it in a new location if instructed). You must take a random search token from the box and place it with your other claimed search tokens so that you gain 1 coin during production (unless the story mission specifically said to discard the search token). Only you may perform the search action where your mission token is located.



Reputation Track

CAMPAIGN SHEET

When playing story mode, keep track of each player’s victory points at the end of each chapter. Also track their final reputation. When you complete all 6 chapters, each player combines their points from the 6 chapters for a campaign score. The player with the highest total reputation combined from all 6 chapters gains an additional 25 victory points. The player with the highest total victory points is the campaign winner.

Each time you start a new chapter (except for the 1st chapter), the player who had the lowest score in the previous chapter starts with +4 coins and +1 reputation. The player who had the highest score in the previous chapter can choose to start on any space on the game board.

Campaign 1					Campaign 2				
Players	Halla	Zalk	Markin	Mansul	Halla	Zalk	Markin	Mansul	
Ch. 1									
Ch. 2									
Ch. 3									
Ch. 4									
Ch. 5									
Ch. 6									
Total									

Campaign 3					Campaign 4				
Players	Halla	Zalk	Markin	Mansul	Halla	Zalk	Markin	Mansul	
Ch. 1									
Ch. 2									
Ch. 3									
Ch. 4									
Ch. 5									
Ch. 6									
Total									

Solo Play Rules

When playing solo, you play against an artificial player referred to as a bot. The bot performs game actions but it does not score victory points. Your first victory is achieved when you score **100 or more victory points**. After this, you win by beating your high score.

SETUP CHANGES

1. Shuffle the 9 solo cards and place them in a face down stack.
2. Select one of the unused hero boards for the bot and place the two starting specialists on the board. The bot does not use hearts, mana, a town board, buildings, resources, experience, coins, ability tokens, quest cards, or a standee.

RULES

BASIC BOT RULES: The bot never scores victory points or collects coins, goods, books, or experience. When the bot gains a villager or search token, simply place the villager or search token on the bot's hero board. If you're playing in story mode, the bot does not read stories and simply takes search tokens when instructed. If the bot starts combat, it is always successful. When the bot uses a specialist, it simply flips the specialist face down, ignoring the specialist's specific action.

TURNS: You always go first each season. Each time you take a turn, after your turn is finished, draw and reveal the top card from the solo deck. Perform the listed instructions for the bot. After this, you may begin your next turn or pass. If you pass, the bot does not take any more actions that season and you start the production phase.

PRODUCTION: During the production phase, the bot does not produce any goods. To prepare for the next season, shuffle all solo cards and make a new pile. Turn all of the bot's face-down specialists face up.

BOT'S SPECIALIST: You may pay to use a specialist belonging to the bot. The bot does not collect the tax.

GAINING VILLAGERS: When the bot gains villagers, the bot chooses villagers with the following priority: first crystal, then bottled demon, then tool, then shell.

SEASON END: The season ends when you pass. The bot does not take an action after you pass.



Solo Cards Back



SEARCH: The bot takes the search token nearest to you. If there are multiple tokens that apply, you choose which one the bot gains. Place the search token on the bot's hero board.



RECRUIT SPECIALIST: The bot gains a new specialist, the left-most available on the season board. If there are no available specialist slots on the hero board, you choose one of the old specialists to discard. Redraw so that there are 4 specialists available.



ATTACK (first time): If the bot has not yet attacked this season, the bot defeats an enemy at the lowest available level (for example, if there are no level 1 enemies left, the bot defeats a level 2 enemy). Discard the enemy token. The bot gains villagers from the display equal to the villager reward on the enemy. The bot does not gain any other listed rewards. If the bot has already attacked this season, ignore this card and **draw again**.



ROLL A DIE: Place either the order token or the quest cards face down on the bot's hero board.



EXHAUST SPECIALIST: The bot uses the left-most available specialist on their hero board OR your hero board (the card text specifies), flipping the specialist face down. If the bot uses your specialist, the bot pays you the tax from the supply.

Search Tokens

Keep each of these search tokens after gaining the rewards. Place them **face down** near your town board. They produce 1 coin during the production phase for the rest of the game. **Do not** keep the “Lost Villager” search token.

Abandoned Camp:
Gain 4 coins and draw 1 quest card.



Hidden Cave:
Gain 1 crystal and 1 experience.



Abandoned Camp:
Gain 5 coins.



High-tech Ruins:
Gain 1 bottled demon and 1 shell.



Lost Villager: Gain 1 villager. **Discard the search token!**



High-tech Ruins:
Gain 1 bottled demon and draw 1 quest card.



Old Teacher: Gain 2 experience.



Lost Knowledge:
Gain 1 book.



Crashed Vehicle:
Gain 2 tools.



Ruined Shelter:
Immediately gain 1 gear token from the season board at -6 the standard coin cost.



This is to remind you that this token produces 1 coin during every production round.



Search Token Back (face down)

Underground Board in Standard Mode Rules & Reroll Variant

If you'd like to play standard mode with the underground board, use the opposite sides of the game board and town boards. Replace the standard enemies with the underground enemies of the same level (levels 2, 5, and 7). You can tell which monsters are underground monsters because they have cave art on the backs of the tokens. The location actions and the town board rewards are slightly different on this map and town board, but all other game rules are the same.



REROLL VARIANT: If you want to play a game with more luck mitigation, use this rule: at any time, a player may spend a good (shell, tool, bottled demon, or crystal) to reroll one of their die rolls. A player may spend multiple goods to reroll the same die multiple times.

CREDITS

Game Design: Ryan Laukat

Illustrations and Graphic Design: Ryan Laukat

Rule Book: Ryan Laukat

Editing: Ryan Laukat, Malorie Laukat

Development: Ryan Laukat, Malorie Laukat

Writing: Ryan Laukat, Malorie Laukat, Brenna Asplund

Proofreading: Malorie Laukat, Brenna Asplund, Diana Parkin

Playtesters: T. Alex Davis, Brenna Asplund, Eric Rayl, Brandon Laukat, Scott Hendrickson, Dave Jeffers, Jake Simmons, Katie Arends, Jean-Samuel Gauthier-B., Elisabeth Desjardins, Richard Junior Charron, Michael Blank, Thorsten Blank, Diego Castro, Helge Burger, Derek DiCesare, Davis Fettes, Kyle Grimsley, Amanda Grimsley, Andreas Nienkötter, Christian Sievers, Nuyki, Dan Miller, Jerry Hsu, Sara Belisle, Becky Nelson, Timothy Nelson, Tom Castellani, Leon Niewoit, Sarah Niewoit, Alison Parkllan, Bryce Parkllan, Bill Webb, Paris Nicolaides, Amelia Grimaldi, Mitchell Cooper, Felix Bestehorn, Birgit Komander, Niko, Xyon, Tom Castellani, Leon Niewoit, Davis Fettes, Nynke Rixt Bosma, Mandy Franz, David Connick, Thorin Finch, Hadrian Finch, Bennett McBrayer, Oliver Goeken, Aidan Klein, Ethan Cheney, Kyle Patterson, Johnathan Frunzi, David Hull, Seth Blackman, Douglas Fenderson, Chaslyn Drilling, Bayard Catron, Teresa Telesco, Jeremy Knutson, Luke Knutson, Allison Bradley, Mike Jones, Eric Liegel, Sophie Schwabe, Bayard Catron, Jamey Pratt, Ben Burch, Lloyd Gyan, Ramsey Shehadeh, Christopher Gross, Daniel Dowan, Simcha Kuritzky, Steven Quade, Eddie Chen, Rachel Walkowiak, Stephen Daldry, Lloyd Gyan, Justine Archambault, Johanne Richard, Jonathan Roy, Frédéric Fortier, Greg Forster

Copyright 2021 Red Raven Games

Icons and Reminders

SEASON

Each player takes one action at a time. Choose either a specialist action, a hero action, or pass. When all players have passed, move to the production phase.

SPECIALIST ACTION (pages 9-11):

- Pay a specialist to perform that specialist's action, or
- Recruit a new specialist and perform that specialist's action, or
- Rest a specialist.

HERO ACTION (pages 12-14):

1. First, you must move.
2. Then you may play a quest card (optional).
3. Then choose one of the following:
 - Visit a Location, or
 - Fight an Enemy, or
 - Search.

PRODUCTION PHASE (page 16)

When all players have passed, follow these steps:

1. Collect produced goods. Collect 1 coin per search token. Unhoused villagers do not produce goods! Specialists do not produce goods!
 2. Return any spent mana to your hero board (but **do not** refresh hearts).
 3. Refresh your hero action tokens (slide them to the left).
 4. Flip all specialists face up.
 5. Move the marker on the season track 1 space forward.
 6. Begin the next season.
- **The game ends after 6 seasons (page 17).**

INDEX

Anytime Actions	15
Artifact Quest Cards	18, 21
Experience	15
Build	10
Building Abilities	19
Buy Gear	11, 20
Combat	13
Fight an Enemy	13
Gear	11, 14
Heal	11
Hearts	7, 14
Hero Action	12-14
Mana	7, 14, 16
Production	16
Quest Cards	18
Rest	11
Search	14, 26
Specialist Action	9-11
Visit a Location	12, 20

ANYTIME ACTIONS (page 15)

- Sell goods for coins.
- Place a villager in housing.
- Complete an order.
- Pay 2 experience to refill all empty villager slots.
- Spend experience on a hero ability.