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Hello! I'm Peter ('Universal Head'), and for more than 10 years I've been creating these famous rules and references, and bringing you hundreds of entertaining, informative videos about tabletop gaming.

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v1.1

Jan 2025

Game: **TAINTED GRAIL: KINGS OF RUIN**

Publisher: **Awaken Studios (2024)**

For best results, print at 100% (on double-sided paper), laminate and trim to size.

TAINTED GRAIL
KINGS OF RUIN

CAMPAIGN SETUP

Each player chooses a **character**, takes their **character tray** and **model**, and reads their **starting letter**. Mark your starting ENERGY and TERROR levels by placing cubes in their starting slots. Place the L-shaped HEALTH marker in its starting slot (starting slots are highlighted with 2 red chevrons).

Your marker can never move past your limiter.

Record your **starting attributes** by placing red universal markers in the slots under the attribute names marked with red chevrons. Record your **starting resources** by placing the corresponding numbers of markers in the appropriate slots:

Elgan: 2 **FOOD** and 1 **MAGIC**.
Gerdwyn: 2 **FOOD** and 1 **WEALTH**.
Iunis: 3 **FOOD**.
Osbert: 1 **FOOD**, 1 **WEALTH**, and 1 **MAGIC**.

Create your 10 card **combat** and **diplomacy** starter decks (those with your name and B at the bottom of the card). Shuffle them and place them to the left (combat) and right (diplomacy) of your character tray.

The rest of the cards (with your name and B at the bottom) are your **advancement pools**. Store these behind the advancement pool dividers in the character compartments in the box.

WORLD SETUP

Place the **starting location** card (101), **clear** ✛ side up, in the middle of the play area and place all the character models on it.

Find the location card with the location number matching the **direction key** on the top edge of the starting location (102) and attach it to the direction key, **wyrdness** ✳ side up. Leave the rest of the location deck near the play area.

Take all **item A** cards, *consumable* item cards, and small **secret** cards, and place them in separate decks near the play area (shuffle both item decks and leave the secret deck unshuffled). Place all **medium secret cards** in the world save box, with the secret deck dividers in the correct places.

Never look at the secret cards when you are instructed to take a specific one.

Take a fresh **status sheet**. This is used to mark statuses that permanently change the way some locations and people respond to your group (on the back there is space for notes).

Each player takes 1 **order of the day card** with the action list on the back. Leave remaining **help cards** and the *you are dying* and *you are going insane* status cards on the table.

Take all the **encounter cards** and sort them by color into 3 piles.

Place the **time**, **quest**, **universal markers**, and **dice** near the play area.

Place the **exploration journal** nearby. Shuffle all the **random event cards**, and place them near the play area (they will be added to the event deck during play). Then, follow the instructions on the **Chapter I setup card**, starting from the front side, to build the **event deck** and **encounter decks**. Return any unused encounters and events to the box behind their corresponding dividers.

The final part of the Chapter I setup card includes instructions that start the game.

CHRONICLER

Optionally, in 2-4 player games, choose 1 player to be the **chronicler**. They play the game, but are also responsible for reading the exploration journal aloud; performing upkeep tasks (eg, revealing new event cards, removing time markers, rolling the guardian die); maintaining the save sheet; marking and checking statuses; managing location cards; dealing item and secret cards; and breaking ties and making a final decision where necessary.

THE ORDER OF THE DAY

1. START OF THE DAY

1. **Resolve start of day effects:** Any effects that should be resolved now are resolved in any order chosen by the players.

2. **Remove time markers:** Remove 1 ⧗ (timed actions) and 1 ⧖ (story-related actions) from each card that has at least 1 of them.

3. **Flip location cards to the wyrdness side:** Check each location in play and flip all locations that don't have a waystone in one of their corners to their wyrdness ✳ side (flipping a location does not cause ⚡ effects to trigger).

4. **Activate guardians:** If there are any **guardians** 🗡 on the table, roll the **guardian die** for each (in any order).

5. **Clear active events area:** Discard all non-quest events from the **active events** area. Place discarded random event cards at the bottom of the random events pile. Place special and story event cards back in the box. Events containing quests remain on the table until the moment specified on their cards.

6. **Reveal a new event:** Reveal and read the top card of the event deck. Then move the revealed card to the active events area.

2. DURING THE DAY

Players perform actions, one at a time, in any order they agree on. Players may perform multiple actions in a row, and may change the order at any time. This continues until everyone agrees to proceed to Stage 3: End of the Day.

Each action in the game is marked with an action icon that also indicates its cost. If you cannot pay the cost fully, you can't perform the action.

A group of 2 or more players sharing the same location may agree to take the same action together, at the same time, as a **party**.

To perform this action, pay the indicated **ENERGY** cost: move the marker that many slots down on the ⚡ track.

To perform this action, pay the indicated **HEALTH** cost: move the marker that many slots down on the ♥ track. If it would cause the ⚡ marker to be above the ♥ marker, move the ⚡ marker to be in the same line as the ♥ marker.

To perform this action, pay the indicated **TERROR** cost: move the marker that many slots up on the 👁 track.

To reduce downtime, a player might resolve an encounter while other players perform their actions. Players should plan how to spend their **EXP** or how to modify their combat and diplomacy decks, in advance during Stage 3: End of the Day.

0⚡ EXPLORE

Only available in ✛ locations without a guardian.

Open the journal to the page with the explored location and start reading from the top. When you read **exploration ends**, close the journal and continue performing actions during the day.

In a party, the cost of decisions and options doesn't scale with the number of party members (unless the cost specifically states *per party member* or *per character*).

1⚡ TRAVEL

Move your character to any location card connected to your current one. The adjacent edges must share the same **direction keys**.

When you arrive in a new location:

1. Check whether the new location has an **instant icon** ⚡. Anything marked with ⚡ must be resolved now.

2. Find the cards that match the direction keys on the edges of your new location and attach them to the corresponding keys with the correct side facing up:
   - If the new card doesn't have a **waystone** in any of its corners, place it ✳ side up.
   - If the new card has at least 1 **waystone** in any of its corners, place it ✛ side up.

If you are no longer in a location you traveled or moved to after resolving a ⚡, do not attach any new locations.

In a party, the cost of travel scales to 1 ⚡ per party member. Any ⚡ triggered by your new location must be resolved as a party. Right before triggering the ⚡, other characters in the location you traveled to may join your party to resolve the effect as 1 party.

2⚡ ACTIVATE A WAYSTONE

If the location you are in has an empty **waystone slot** in any corner, it contains an inactive waystone that may be activated with this action. Choose one of these options:

- Pay 1 **MAGIC** per character in the game and 1 **HEALTH** or **FOOD** per character in the game.
- Offer the **blood price**: Pay 3 ♥ and gain 2 👁 per character in the game (you must be able to gain this fully).

Place a waystone model in a chosen empty waystone slot on your location (1 waystone model may be present in up to 4 neighboring location cards at a time). Then flip all wyrdness locations that touch this waystone to their ✛ side. If all waystone models are already used, take one from any location.

In a party: Activation costs can always be split between all characters in the party in any way, even paying and gaining ♥ and 👁 through the blood price.

0⚔ CHALLENGE A GUARDIAN

Only available in a location with a guardian.

Any time you are in a location with a guardian encounter, you may **challenge** it. Start an encounter with 1 guardian in your location.

In a party, you resolve this encounter together.

1⚡ LOCATION ACTION

Only available in a location without a guardian.

You may activate the action on a location card whenever you are present in the location.

In a party, you may activate a location action as a party. Pay the cost only once and receive the output of the action once. Players in the party may help pay each other pay costs, splitting them any way they want; if they trigger an encounter, they resolve it as a party.

1⚡ CHARACTER ABILITY, SECRETS, ITEMS, AND SKILLS ACTIONS

Every character has a **personal ability** on their character tile. Some items, secrets, and skills also provide your character with additional actions.

In a party, only your character can use an action from your character tile, secret card, item card, and skill token, but party members may help pay the ⚡ cost.

The character performing the action must *always* pay at least 1 ⚡, ♥, or 👁 (if they are part of the cost).

3. END OF THE DAY

When all players agree, every character resolves these steps:

1. **Resolve end of day effects:** Any effects that should be resolved now are resolved in any order chosen by the players.

2. **Rest:** If you are not **exhausted**, place your ⚡ marker on the starting slot of its track. If you are **exhausted** (last red slot on the track), gain 4 👁.

3. **Recover:** You may pay 1 **FOOD** to gain 1 ♥, gain an additional 1 ♥ and lose 1 👁.

4. **Suffer from wyrdness:** If you are in a wyrdness location ✳, lose 2 ♥ and gain 2 👁.

5. **Advance your character:** If you have any EXP, you may pay them to raise your attributes, gain new skills, or add new combat and diplomacy cards to your deck.

6. **Modify your character's decks:** You may customize your combat and diplomacy decks with any cards you have already gained. You can also remove cards, but **each deck must have at least 10 cards**. Place removed cards next to your character tray or in your character's save compartment.

7. **Experience visions:** If the location you're in has a ✳, you *may* open the last page of this location section of the exploration journal and read the **vision**. All characters in the same location resolve visions as a party.

8. **Start the next day.**

PARTIES AND PARTY ACTIONS

Players may form a group or split up as they see fit. Whenever a character takes an action, other characters in the same location may decide to join them. If the character performing the action agrees, all characters form a **party** and take the action together.

All characters in a party are referred to as **party members**.

If you're in a party with another character, you may pay ⚡, ♥, 👁, **FOOD**, **WEALTH**, or **MAGIC** instead of another party member, and may even cover the entire cost of the action for all the other party members. However, when performing an action found on your character tile, skill, secret card, or item card, the owner of that action must always pay some of the cost.

LEAVING A PARTY

Each party action must be taken and approved by all party members. Any character not wanting to take a specific action with the rest of the party must leave the party before the action begins.

You may not leave a party in the middle of an action.

If a character gets removed from an encounter that happens during exploration, they are temporarily removed from the party (for the purposes of 🗡 effects that affect each party member), but after the encounter is finished they immediately rejoin the party and must continue the exploration.

QUESTS & LEADS

Quests are the main missions that lead to the end of the chapter and let you progress through the campaign. They are on events and are marked by a **red padlock symbol**.

Many quests and optional tasks (and some encounters) use **quest markers** 📑 to track their progress. Quest markers are *not* removed at the start of the day.

Leads are small side missions or clues that you may choose to pursue. They have no separate cards and no defined end conditions.

Unlike quests, they are not tied to the chapter and may be completed at any point (at least until your actions permanently change the location card they are contained in).

EXPLORATION JOURNAL

Refer to the exploration journal whenever you see the 📖 icon, perform the **EXPLORE** action, or you are instructed to go to a character's **memory**. When reading a verse, all information in the Verse is available to you.

The journal has 4 sections:

Locations: When you explore a location, start reading from the top of the first page of that location.

Book of Secrets (BOS): When you are instructed to go 📖 *Book of Secrets (BOS) Verse XXX*, go to that verse in this section.

Echoes of Ruin (EOR): When you are instructed to go to *character's memory X*, find it in this section.

Tutorial Exploration Journal (TEJ): Use only in the **open & play** scenario.

Some verses require you to choose one of several options (marked with bullet points). Some choices may be locked behind various requirements; if a choice consists of few requirements all of them must be fulfilled. **In a party,** party members may fulfill requirements between them.

Unless otherwise specified, any effect that asks you to *roll a die* requires you to roll a standard d6. You may have to add an attribute level to the result. **In a party,** always use the highest attribute level available among the party members.

Characters should always try to share loot in a way that's both fair and maximizes their potential. When gaining, paying, or losing resources, note these different statements:

Gain 2 WEALTH means the party gains 2 **WEALTH** and may distribute it between themselves.

Each party member gains 1 WEALTH means each character in the party gains 1 **WEALTH** (a character exploring alone is considered a single party member).

Each character gains 1 WEALTH means each character in the game (whether or not they are in the party) gains 1 **WEALTH**.

Pay and lose: If you don't have enough resources to cover a payment, you cannot pick an option that requires you to pay. But if a choice causes a loss, you may always select it, even if you don't have the required resources.

Hidden content: Reading sections obscured under a colored area is only possible after you find the appropriate color reveal filter.

Energy cost: Some options have a set **ENERGY** cost (the first icon in the option, before the option's name and effect). You must pay the cost to choose the option. **In a party,** this cost does not scale with the number of characters; you may split this cost between party members in any way you like.

When you reach *exploration ends*, close the exploration journal. During exploration, players cannot split the party or end the exploration on their own in any way.

VISIONS

If a location card has a **seal** next to its name, its last journal page will contain a **vision**. During Stage 3: End of the Day, characters in such locations may read those visions. They are always resolved as a party and can be read once per day in a given location, but can occur in several locations at the same time. Whenever you reach *the vision ends*, close the exploration journal.

ECHOES OF RUIN

Echoes of Ruin is an optional expansion that features personal achievements and memories. To use it, give each character their achievement sheet when prompted by the journal.

When you earn an achievement by meeting its requirements, mark it on your sheet and read the appropriate memory. You may read your memories at any convenient time.

If you earn all 3 achievements in a section, you gain the relevant **legendary action card**. Mark its box so you know you've received it. You may use the action at any time, unless the card states otherwise, then remove the card from the game. You cannot earn that card or use it during this campaign again.

When you earn all 9 achievements and their 3 legendary actions, your final achievement unlocks. When you meet its prerequisites, its memory grants you a final advanced ability, which may be used just like the ability on your character tile.

ATTRIBUTES & ADVANCEMENT

Characters have 6 basic **attributes**, divided into 3 opposing pairs.

🐗	Aggression	🦉	Empathy
🐢	Courage		Caution
🐍	Practicality	🦌	Spirituality

The cost of raising attributes is 2 **EXP** + 1 **EXP** for each point of attributes in the attribute pair.

GAINING SKILLS

If you have an attribute raised to its current maximum, you may gain a **skill** of the same type by paying 4 **EXP** + 4 **EXP** for each skill in a pair of opposing attributes. Find all your personal skill tokens bearing the appropriate attribute's icon, then pick 1 side of 1 token and attach it to the appropriate edge of your character tray.

ADVANCING COMBAT/DIPLOMACY DECKS

To advance your combat or diplomacy deck, pay 2 **EXP**. Then, choose either your combat or diplomacy advancement pool and draw 3 cards from it. Pick 1 of them and shuffle it into your deck. Shuffle the remaining 2 cards back into the advancement pool.

RESOURCES

You cannot carry more than 20 of each resource (except **EXP**). Resources gained above this limit must be given to another character in the same location or are discarded immediately.

Each purple universal marker is worth 5 red ones

FOOD and **WEALTH** may be traded with other characters in the same location who are not involved in an action. **EXP** and **MAGIC** may never be traded, but during encounters you may pay **MAGIC** costs of your party members.

ITEMS

Some item cards have one of these **keywords**: WEAPON, ARMOR, SHIELD, and RELIC. You can have any number of items, but **you may never use more than 1 item or secret with a single keyword at the same time** (with the exception of the PERSONAL and GLOBAL keywords).

All items you possess but are currently unused should be placed facedown. If you have multiple items or secrets with the same keyword, you may change the ones you are using by flipping the inactive ones facedown before any action during the day (but not during an action, encounter, or in the middle of resolving an effect).

When you gain new items or secrets with the same keyword as another of your faceup ones, you must immediately decide which one to use (even if it's during an action).

Characters may freely trade items when they are in the same location and they're not involved in an action.

In encounters, unless an item states a timing in which it may be used, you may use it at any moment during your activation. Unless specified otherwise, item effects only apply to the item's owner.

You may decide whether or not to use 💀 effects.

STATUS SHEET

One **status sheet** is used for all players. You will often be asked to check a certain status (or a numbered part of the status) on the sheet. If there's a status marked on the sheet, all characters have it.

The back side of the sheet contains **time passes** statuses corresponding to every chapter of the game. When you are asked to mark such a status, find one that corresponds to the current chapter you are playing and mark the first unmarked spot in clockwise order.

DEATH AND INSANITY

If your ❤ falls to 0, attach the *You Are Dying* card to your character tray (use the solo or co-op versions if appropriate), and immediately remove yourself from your current encounter.

Do not resolve any additional effects. If you were the last Character in this encounter, discard it (unless it's a guardian). This is treated as losing the encounter.

Resolve all additional rules on the *You Are Dying* card. If this happened during exploration, continue it.

DEATH

If your character dies and you don't have secret card 6,8, or 9, the game ends for all players. If you do have one of those secret cards, read the **death** section of the secret rules.

INSANITY

If your 🧠 reaches the red slots of its track, attach the *You Are Going Insane* card to your character tray and follow its rules.

ENCOUNTERS

Encounter cards some in 3 different types and are divided into 4 difficulty levels.

The **blue** deck is used mostly when you visit settlements and it contains dangerous situations, plus personal and diplomatic challenges.

The **green** deck contains natural threats such as animals, legendary beasts, outlaws and other travelers. Many of these encounters grant **FOOD** when defeated.

The **purple** deck contains mysterious and supernatural threats.

When you are instructed to resolve an encounter, unless it has specific rules immediately begin **combat** or **diplomacy**, depending on the type of card. Both are turn-based confrontations between a character (or group of characters) and an enemy. Characters build a shared sequence of cards. In combat, the aim is to gain enough markers in a combat pool to defeat the enemy. In diplomacy, the aim is to push a marker on the encounter card's affinity track to the green space as the duration runs out.

Cards always form a single straight line so the bottom keys always meet. No keys should ever be obscured. Each card contains opening and closing halves of keys. Closing halves are on the left side of a card, and connect to the halves on the card preceding it. Opening halves are to the right and connect to the halves on the card that come after.

When 2 cards are placed in the sequence, some halves of keys connect, gaining the character a bonus shown in the closing half, provided they meet the requirement shown in the opening half. Keys are considered connected even if you don't meet the requirement to gain a bonus.

Cards are either **normal** or **passive**. Passive cards have their ability always visible when in sequence, so their keys are on the opposite edges of the card. Abilities of passive cards and the last card in the sequence always apply and may be used by the active character.

If you are instructed to find a specific **guardian** and that encounter is already in play, remove that guardian from its location and resolve the encounter normally.

Secret encounter cards are in the secret deck. If a secret is not there, it was added to one of the encounter decks; find it there. If secret cards were added to the encounter decks or encounters in the box, they also take part in deck preparation.

LOCATIONS

The **location number** on a location card refers to that location in the exploration journal. A letter refers to a variant of a standard location. If the location card with a number indicated by the direction key is no longer available, use the first available number with a letter, starting from **b**.

A location card may one or more **location seals: vision** ✨, **settlement** 🏛, or **ritual** 🔥.

A location may have a ⏳ icon near its action or ⚡ effect. As long as there are no ⏳ on that location, you may perform these actions and effects normally, but after doing so you must place on the location a number of ⏳ equal to the number of (⏳), indicating that action or effect won't be available again for that many days.

If you must flip a location card, all models (including waystones, standees, markers, and cards return to their place on the card.

If you must replace a location with another one, discard all markers from the old location; only models, standees, and cards should be placed back on the new location.

If you are instructed to place your character in a location, perform this instantly at no costs; this does not count as travel, but does trigger ⚡ effects and reveal new locations as normal.

WAYSTONES

As soon as a ✨ location has a waystone in its corner, immediately flip it to its 🜨 side.

Some events and other effects can cause waystones to **fade**. If it happens, remove the appropriate waystone from play. Fading doesn't cause locations to automatically flip to their ✨ side.

GUARDIANS

If you fail to defeat a guardian encounter, place its standee/miniature on the location where you triggered it and its encounter card nearby.

In step 4 of the start of the day phase, roll the guardian die:

1. **Cardinal direction:** Move the guardian to a connected location in the direction indicated. If there's no connected location there, move it to the highest-numbered connected location.

2. **X:** Resolve the first that applies:
   - If the guardian is in a location with a **character**, each character there resolves an encounter with it (as a party).
   - If the guardian is in a location with a **waystone**, *fade* it (if there is more than 1 waystone, fade the one that touches the lowest-numbered location first).
   - Move the guardian to the highest-numbered connected location.

Characters may not perform explore and location actions in locations with a guardian. Forced exploration caused by ⚡ effects or triggered by the game still take effect.

If you want to remove a guardian from your location, you must perform a **challenge a guardian** action and win the encounter with it.

DISCARDING & REMOVING

Never discard or remove any cards containing a **quest**, unless you're instructed to do so.

DISCARDING CARDS

When you must discard a random event, encounter, or an item card, put it at the bottom of its deck. When you must discard a location or a secret card, put it back in its deck in order.

If an effect asks you to discard item cards, omit any **secrets**, even if they have an item-specific keyword.

Discard combat and diplomacy cards are placed in separate discard piles. At the end of an encounter they are shuffled back into the corresponding decks.

When you discard a story or special event, and after you resolve an encounter that isn't part of your prepared encounter deck, return it to the box.

REMOVE FROM THE GAME

If you must remove a card from the game, put it back in the box, behind the **removed from the game** divider of the appropriate size. It is no longer a part of this campaign and should not return to any deck, unless you're specifically asked to bring it back.

After you fully resolve a **setup card**, remove it from the game.

REMOVE FROM PLAY

Return the component to the box, but it may return to the game.

SECRET CARDS

SMALL-SIZED SECRETS (1–50)

These story related, numbered objects and powers should never be a part of the item decks. They may never be lost or sold, unless specified otherwise. They are not counted toward any rules that limit the number of item cards you have.

Players may trade secret cards when they are in the same location and not involved in an action.

Personal: Secrets with this keyword are special and can never be traded or transferred to another character (unless specified otherwise).

Global: Secrets with this keyword are not in any characters' possession and should be placed in the play area. Their effects are applicable to every character at the same time or to the game as a whole.

Only secrets with keywords commonly associated with items may be inactive or placed facedown during the game. Others should always be placed faceup, and multiples of them may be active at the same time. If the game asks a character if they have a secret in their possession, both active and inactive secret cards count.

STANDARD-SIZED SECRETS (105–325)

If you want to find a standard-sized secret card with a certain number, look only at the numbers in their top-left corners. It's recommended to keep this deck in the world save box. The game will instruct you when to gain them or return them back to the secrets deck.

If the game does not instruct you what to do with a card drawn from this deck and when to return it, place it back into the secret deck as soon as it is no longer actively used.

SAVING THE GAME

The game can be saved at nearly any time during the day, when characters are not in an action, but it is recommended to do so at the very beginning of the During the Day phase. You will also find recommended spots for saving the game during the campaign.

To save the game, follow these instructions:

EACH PLAYER SAVES THEIR CHARACTER:

1. Pick 1 character tray diagram on the save sheet. Sign it with your character's name and write the current location of your model. Then mark your current attribute values and their attached skill numbers, your resources, and your **ENERGY**, **HEALTH**, and **TERROR**.
2. Remove all markers from character tray and store them in the box.
3. In an empty character save compartment, place in the following order:
   - Your diplomacy and combat cards.
   - Your advancement pool dividers.
   - Advancement pool cards.
   - Your items and secrets (in the smaller, dedicated space).
   - Gained skills.
4. Write down any additional info you deem important in the player's notes section.

SAVE THE STATE OF THE WORLD:

1. Note the current location of all waystone models, guardian standees, companion standees, and the King of Ruin model (if present).
2. Write down any locations with markers on them.
3. Place all models, markers, and standees in the box.
4. Store all revealed locations and all help cards in the oversized compartment of the world save box. Do not flip any location cards.
5. Store all active guardians, all 3 of your current encounter decks, and all active standard-sized secret cards in the standard-sized compartment of the world save box behind their corresponding dividers.
6. Store your event deck and all active quests and events in the standard-sized compartment of the world save box behind their corresponding dividers. Do not flip any event card.
7. Store available item decks and small secrets deck in the small-sized compartment of the world save box.
8. Place all remaining components in the main box in their corresponding slots.

To restore a saved game, reverse this process.

ALTERNATIVE MODES

STORY MODE

You may decide to use all or only some of these modifiers to make the game a more relaxed, story-oriented experience.

STARTING ITEMS

When preparing the secret and item decks during setup, each character gains 1 item A.

TACTICAL GENIUS

Gain secret card 49. It allows you to play additional cards during your turn without gaining the [icon] bonus, so you can build your sequence more easily.

ENCOUNTERS AND EVENTS

When you prepare encounter decks at the start of the chapter or whenever the game requires you to place random events on top of the event deck, treat the number of characters in the game as if there were 1 character fewer (min. 1).

HEALTH LIMITER

Remove the [heart] marker plastic piece from the game and mark [heart] with a regular marker instead. Your [heart] no longer limits your [icon].

WAYSTONE COST

Change the additional costs of **activate a waystone** action to:

- Pay 1 **MAGIC** per character.
- Pay the **blood price**. Pay 2 [heart] per character and gain 1 [icon] per character.

In both cases, the [icon] cost remains the same.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Whenever you advance your combat or diplomacy deck, draw 1 more card to choose from.

PASSAGE OF TIME

During each chapter, when you would gain 1 or more parts of the **time passes** status for the first time, gain 1 part fewer.

CHALLENGE MODE

You may decide to use all or only some of these modifiers to make he game more challenging.

EMPOWERED ENCOUNTERS

Gain secret card 48. It adds an additional effect to each enemy attack and response.

ESCAPING COMBAT & AVOIDING DIPLOMACY

After the enemy attack, if you're escaping, roll a die:

1-3: You remain in combat.

4-6: You successfully escape.

Whenever you avoid diplomacy, resolve the red conclusion effect (unless the encounter says otherwise).

EVENTS

Whenever the game requires you to place any random event cards on top of the event deck, treat the number of characters in the game as if there were 1 character more.

WAYSTONE COST

The **activate a waystone** action additionally costs 1 [icon] per character. This affects both normal payment and the **blood price**.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

Instead of the standard experience costs, use the list below:

3 **EXP**: Draw 2 combat or 2 diplomacy cards from your advancement pool. Choose one, put the other back, and shuffle the pool.

3 **EXP** + 1 **EXP** for each point in a pair of opposing attributes = point in that Attribute pair.

5 **EXP** + 5 **EXP** for each skill in a pair of opposing attributes = skill in that attribute pair.

ITEMS

You may carry up to 5 items (secrets do not count).

CLASSIC RESTING

Change the rules of recovery during the End of the Day step:

- Each character must pay 1 **FOOD** during each recovery. They gain 1 [heart] and lose 1 [icon] as normal, but they don't gain an additional 1 [icon].
- For each character that does not pay 1 **FOOD** during recovery:
  - If they were exhausted this turn, they lose 1 [heart].
  - If they were not exhausted this turn, they place their [icon] marker on slot 4 of their energy track.

LIMITED STABILITY

Whenever you gain part of the **time passes** status, fade a waystone farthest from all characters.

TAINTED GRAIL
KINGS OF RUIN

THE ORDER OF THE DAY

1. START OF THE DAY

1. **Resolve start of day effects.**
2. **Remove time markers:** Remove 1 ⧗ and 1 ⧖ from each card that has at least 1 of them.
3. **Flip location cards to the wyrdness side:** Flip all locations that don't have a waystone in a corner to their wyrdness 🕸 side (this does not cause ⚡ effects to trigger).
4. **Activate guardians:** If there are any **guardians** on the table, roll the **guardian die** for each (in any order).
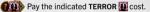5. **Clear non-quest events from the active events area.**
6. **Reveal a new event:** Reveal and read the top card of the event deck and move it to the active events area.

2. DURING THE DAY

Players perform actions, one at a time, in any order, until everyone agrees to proceed to Stage 3: End of the Day.

A group of 2 or more players in the same location may agree to take the same action together, at the same time, as a **party**.

🟤 Pay the indicated **ENERGY** cost.

❤️ Pay the indicated **HEALTH** ❤️ cost. If it would cause the 🟩 marker to be above the ❤️ marker, move the 🟩 marker to be in the same line as the ❤️ marker.

🟣 Pay the indicated **TERROR** 👤 cost.

0🟩 EXPLORE

Only available in ✦ locations without a guardian.

Read the location entry in the journal. When you read **exploration ends**, close the journal and continue performing actions during the day.

In a party, the cost of decisions and options doesn't scale with the number of party members (unless the cost specifically states *per party member* or *per character*).

1🟩 TRAVEL

Move your character to any location card connected to your current one. The adjacent edges must share the same direction keys. **When you arrive in a new location:**

1. Check whether the new location has an **instant icon** ⚡. Anything marked with ⚡ must be resolved now.
2. Find the cards that match the direction keys on the edges of your new location and attach them to the corresponding keys with the correct side facing up:
   - If the new card doesn't have a **waystone** in any of its corners, place it 🕸 side up.
   - If the new card has at least 1 **waystone** in any of its corners, place it ✦ side up.

   If you are no longer in a location you traveled or moved to after resolving a ⚡, do not attach any new locations.

In a party, the cost of travel is 1🟩 per party member. Any ⚡ triggered by your new location must be resolved as a party. Before triggering the ⚡, other characters in the location you traveled to may join your party to resolve the effect as 1 party.

2🟩 ACTIVATE A WAYSTONE

If the location you are in has an empty **waystone slot** in any corner, it contains an inactive waystone that may be activated with this action. Choose one option:

- Pay 1 **MAGIC** per character in the game and 1 **HEALTH** or **FOOD** per character in the game.
- Offer the **blood price:** Pay 3 ❤️ and gain 2 👤 per character in the game (you must be able to gain this fully).

Place a waystone model in a chosen empty waystone slot on your location. Then flip all wyrdness locations that touch this waystone to their ✦ side.

In a party: Activation costs can always be split between all characters in the party in any way, even paying and gaining ❤️ and 👤 through the blood price.

0🟩 CHALLENGE A GUARDIAN

Only available in a location with a guardian.

If you are in a location with a guardian encounter, you may **challenge** it. Start an encounter with 1 guardian in your location.

In a party, you resolve this encounter together.

⁉️🟩 LOCATION ACTION

Only available in a location without a guardian.

You may activate the action on a location card whenever you are present in the location.

In a party, you may activate a location action as a party. Pay the cost only once and receive the output of the action once. Party members may help each other pay costs, splitting them any way they want; if they trigger an encounter, they resolve it as a party.

⁉️🟩 CHARACTER ABILITY, SECRETS, ITEMS, AND SKILLS ACTIONS

Use the **personal ability** on your character tile, or the actions provided by some items, secrets, and skills.

In a party, only your character can use an action from your character tile, secret card, item card, and skill token, but party members may help pay the 🟩 cost. The acting character must *always* pay at least 1 🟩, ❤️, or 👤 (if they are part of the cost).

3. END OF THE DAY

1. **Resolve end of day effects:** Any effects that should be resolved now are resolved in any order chosen by the players.
2. **Rest:** If you are not **exhausted**, place your 🟩 marker on the starting slot of its track. If you are **exhausted** (last red slot on the track), gain 4 🟩.
3. **Recover:** You may pay 1 **FOOD** to gain 1 ❤️, gain an additional 1 🟩 and lose 1 👤.
4. **Suffer from wyrdness:** If you are in a wyrdness location 🕸, lose 2 🟩 and gain 2 👤.
5. **Advance your character:** If you have any **EXP**, you may pay them to raise your attributes, gain new skills, or add new combat and diplomacy cards to your deck.
6. **Modify your character's decks:** You may customize your combat and diplomacy decks with any cards you have already gained. You can also remove cards, but **each deck must have at least 10 cards.** Place removed cards next to your character tray or in your character's save compartment.
7. **Experience visions:** If the location you're in has a 💫, you *may* open the last page of this location section of the exploration journal and read the **vision.** All characters in the same location resolve visions as a party.
8. **Start the next day.**

TAINTED GRAIL
KINGS OF RUIN

COMBAT

Combat starts whenever you draw/pick a card with the **combat encounter layout** and at least 1 open **key** on its right edge. Set the card in the play area with space to its right.

Each party member then draws 3 cards from their combat deck. Check to see if the enemy has any **traits** that take effect now.

If you don't like your starting hand, you may discard it and draw a new hand with 1 fewer card. You may repeat this until you only have 1 card left in hand.

Whenever you must discard a card from your hand but you don't have any, discard a card from the top of your combat instead.

In each combat turn, complete these phases in order:

I. PICK THE ACTIVE CHARACTER

The party members decide who will be the **active character** out of the characters who have not been activated this combat turn (and therefore have no ⚔ on their character tray). Place a ⚔ on the active character's tray.

II. CHARACTER ACTIVATION

1. Delayed abilities

Remove 1 ⚔ from each combat card in the sequence that has any, starting with the encounter card and checking along the sequence. When the last ⚔ is removed from a card, check if it triggers any delayed abilities on that card.

2. Play cards

The active characters plays cards from their hand and adds them to the sequence. If you can't or don't want to play cards, resolve the opportunity attack at the bottom of the encounter card and proceed to Phase III: Enemy Attack.

a. Play the first combat card: When playing the *first* card during your activation, you may choose any card from your hand; it just needs to line properly with the previous card in the sequence.

If you cover a non-passive card that has any ⚔ on it, remove them immediately but do not resolve the delayed ability.

- Check if both halves of **attribute keys** connect. Going from top to bottom, gain the bonuses found in the closing halves of these keys (you must have the specific attribute value found on the opening half of the attribute key).
- If a **magic key** is connected, you may pay 1 **MAGIC** to gain its bonus.
- Connect the bottom, **free key** and gain the bonus in its closing half. Multiply the bonus by the multiplier in the opening half of the key.
- Check the **ability**: if it triggers now, resolve it.
- Check if playing this card triggered the effects of any other card or skill.

b. Play additional combat cards: To play additional cards after the first, every such card *must* connect with a ⚡ bonus to be gained from one of its keys.

The ⚡ bonus must appear on the card you want to play (not the previous card) and must be gained. If you have no cards that have this bonus, or you can't find a way to gain it, you may not play any additional cards. Resolve any cards you play as above.

III. ENEMY ATTACK

Find the **attack** in the encounter card's combat table that matches the number of markers in the combat pool. Apply the attack to the last active character, resolving the effects in order from left to right.

In a party, parts of an enemy attack with a 👥 before them are applied to each party member.

IV. CHECK READINESS

Check that all the party members have been activated this turn (have ⚔ on their character trays).

If there are none left to activate, proceed to Phase V: End Turn. If there are still characters yet to be activated, return to Phase I: Pick the Active Character.

V. END TURN

- Each party member discards down to 3 cards in hand.
- Each party member draws 1 card from their deck. Do not draw if your character **panics**.
- Remove all ⚔ from the character trays (not on combat cards).
- **Start a new turn** with Phase 1: Pick the Active Character.

COMBAT TRIGGERS

Abilities on encounter cards usually have a trigger icon indicating when to resolve them:

⬇ **On placement:** Resolve this ability after placing the card in the sequence and connecting its keys.

⏳ **Delayed ability:** The active player (it doesn't have to be the card's owner) resolves this ability when the last ⚔ is removed from the card. When you cover a non-passive card with a ⚔ on it with another card, discard all ⚔ from it without resolving any delayed abilities.

🗡 **Damage:** Your character must lower their ❤ by the indicated amount.

⚔ **Unpreventable damage:** This damage cannot be prevented. Effects that cancel the attack or transform damage into another effect may still apply.

🟥 **Connected attribute key:** This refers to attribute keys that have the left and right halves physically joined.

🟦 **Connected magic key:** This refers to magic keys that have the left and right halves physically joined. The opening half always shows a 🔷🔷 icon. When connected with a closing half, the bonus is only gained if you immediately pay 1 **MAGIC** (this can only be paid once).

👥 **Multi effect:** Apply the effect listed right after this icon to each party member.

🟥 **Destroy:** Discard the last combat card of the sequence. If a card with *"if this card is . . . 🔥"* discarded from the sequence, the corresponding effect is resolved. Resolve multiple destroy effects one by one.

💀 **On enemy attack:** This effect modifies the enemy attack, either by adding additional effects or preventing ones made by the enemy.

   Before 💀: This effect is resolved after you finish your activation but before any 💀 effect takes place.

   After 💀: This effect is resolved after you apply all parts of the enemy attack.

If you have any items with 💀 effect you may use them to protect your character from both single target and 👥 attacks (but you can't apply them to other characters).

🎴 / 🎴 / 🎴 **Attributes requirements:** To gain the bonus connected to this key, your value of the depicted attribute must be at least 1/2/3.

⚡x **Free key multiplier:** Multiplies the next bonus.

KEY BONUSES (MANDATORY)

🟥 **Combat pool markers** are usually seen with gain or lose keywords instructing you to place or remove that many markers from the combat pool. As a key bonus it always means to gain that many markers.

➕ **Draw a card.**

⚡ This unique **bonus key** is checked before any other keys. If a card you want to play is not the first card played this turn, it must be able to gain this bonus. Gaining multiple instances of this bonus does not have any effect, and if multiplied by 0x it isn't gained.

OTHER COMBAT RULES

CHARGES

Charges are markers placed on cards to indicate a number of times an ability on a card may be used. These abilities start with *Pay X Charges* text and may be used at any moment during a character's activation (unless specified otherwise). The ability cannot be used if there is an insufficient number of charges.

In a party, the active character may use *Pay X Charges* abilities from any cards in the sequence, but the owner of the card must agree.

PANIC

You **panic** when you are **going insane** (your 🔴 marker is the red slot of your terror track).

During Phase II: Play Cards, instead of playing the first card of this turn from your hand, play the top card from your deck to the end of the sequence and resolve it. Then you may play any additional cards from your hand, according to the normal rules. **Do not draw new cards in Phase V: End Turn.** Any additional cards gained from bonus keys, skills or abilities are still drawn as normal.

NEGATIVE COMBAT POOL

The combat pool can never become negative. Whenever an enemy attack or another effect asks you to remove a marker from the combat pool, but there are not enough markers, the last active character discards a card from the top of their combat deck for each missing marker.

EMPTY DECK

Whenever you have to draw a combat card and there are not enough cards, nothing happens. Draw as many as possible.

RESOURCE COSTS

During an encounter **FOOD**, **MAGIC**, and **WEALTH** costs may be paid by any party member, but 🟢, 🟣, and 🟠 costs must be paid by the active character.

CANDLE CARDS

These are a special subtype with a **candle** 🕯 icon under the card's name. Some cards and skills refer to this icon.

COMBAT POOL TRACKER

Instead of placing markers in the combat pool, you can use the **combat tracker**. Rotate the wheel to mark the current value of the combat pool.

COMBAT TRAITS

DREAD

Before 💀, if you have 1 or fewer cards in hand, gain 1 🔴.

ENTRAPMENT

At the start of the encounter, each party member discards 1 card from their hand or loses 1 ❤.

EXHAUSTIVE

Before 💀, discard 1 card from the top of your deck.

HARASS (X-Y) EFFECT

Before 💀, if there are at least X, but no more than Y cards in the sequence, resolve the corresponding effect.

HASTE

You may play at most 3 cards during your activation.

SHATTER

At the end of combat, if you won, each party member still remaining in combat discards a chosen weapon they were using.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER

VICTORY CHECK

If at any point the number of markers in the combat pool is higher than or equal to the encounter's **value**, you immediately win the encounter (do not resolve any remaining effects). Gain the **loot** on the bottom of the encounter card.

In a party, only effects with 👥 before them scale with the number of party members. Other effects are only gained once per encounter and should be distributed between party members.

DEATH, ESCAPE, AND RUN AWAY

When your ❤ drops to 0, take a *You Are Dying* card, which removes you from the encounter. You **lose** the encounter and gain no loot.

You may **escape** at any time during your activation by losing 1 🔴 and proceeding to the Phase III: Enemy Attack. Then place the encounter card on the bottom of its deck and reshuffle your combat deck. You **lose** the encounter and gain no loot.

In a party, the rest of the party remains in the encounter and proceeds to Phase IV: Check Readiness. When all players escape, place the encounter card on the bottom of its deck and reshuffle all combat decks.

Some creatures have a **run away** effect. When it triggers, the encounter ends and it counts as winning, but you gain no loot.

CLEANUP

If you've lost against a **guardian** 🛡, place its standee/miniature in your location.

Otherwise, place the encounter card on the bottom of its deck (or return it to the secret deck or the box, as appropriate). Then shuffle all combat decks, including any cards in hand, sequence, and discards. Remove all ⚔ from the character trays.

If the encounter happened during exploration, continue it now, applying any additional effects if necessary.

TAINTED GRAIL
KINGS OF RUIN

DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy starts whenever you draw/pick a card with the **diplomacy encounter layout** and at least 1 open **key** on its right edge. Set the card in the play area with space to its right.

Each party member then draws 3 cards from their diplomacy deck. Set a **duration die** to the number shown by the ⟲ at the top of the encounter. Place a universal marker in the starting slot (S) of the **affinity track**. Check to see if the enemy has any **traits** that take effect now.

If you don't like your starting hand, you may discard it and draw a new hand with 1 fewer card. You may repeat this until you only have 1 card left in hand.

Whenever you must discard a card from your hand but you don't have any, discard a card from the top of your combat instead.

In each diplomacy turn, complete these phases in order:

I. PICK ACTIVE CHARACTER
The party members decide who will be the next **active character** out of the characters who have not been activated this combat turn (and therefore have no ⏳ on their character tray). Place a ⏳ on the active character's tray.

II. CHARACTER ACTIVATION
During this phase, if *all* party members agree, the encounter can be **avoided**. Lower the marker on the affinity track by 4 spaces and lose all ⟲. Immediately end the encounter (ignore any remaining effects) and resolve the conclusion.

1. Delayed abilities
Remove 1 ⏳ from each card in the sequence that has any, starting with the encounter card and checking along the sequence. When the last ⏳ is removed from a card, check if it triggers any delayed abilities on that card.

2. Play cards
The active characters plays cards from their hand and adds them to the sequence.

a. Play the first diplomacy card: When playing the *first* card during your activation, you may choose any card from your hand; it just needs to line properly with the previous card in the sequence.

If you cover a non-passive card that has any ⏳ on it, remove them immediately but do not resolve the delayed ability.

- Check if both halves of **attribute keys** connect. Going from top to bottom, gain the bonuses found in the closing halves of these keys (you must have the specific attribute value found in the opening half of the attribute key).
- If a **magic key** is connected, you may pay 1 **MAGIC** to gain its bonus.
- Connect the bottom, **free key** and gain the bonus in its closing half. Multiply the bonus by the multiplier in the opening half of the key.
- Check the **ability**: if it triggers now, resolve it.
- Check if playing this card triggered the effects of any other card or skill.

b. Play additional diplomacy cards: To play additional cards after the first, every such card *must* connect with a 🟨 bonus to be gained from one of its keys.

The 🟨 bonus must appear on the card you want to play (not the previous card) and must be gained. If you have no cards that have this bonus, or you can't find a way to gain it, you may not play any additional cards. Resolve any cards you play as above.

III. ENEMY RESPONSE
Apply the result of the **enemy response** to the last active character, resolving the effect from left to right.

In a party, parts of an enemy attack with a ⚓ before them are applied to each party member.

IV. CHECK READINESS
Check that all the party members have been activated this turn (have ⏳ on their character trays).

If there are none left to activate, proceed to Phase V: End Turn. If there are still characters yet to be activated, return to Phase I: Pick the Active Character.

III. END TURN
- Each party member discards down to 3 cards in hand.
- Each party member draws 1 card from their deck. Do not draw if your character **panics**.
- Remove all ⏳ from the character trays (not on diplomacy cards).
- **Start a new turn** with Phase 1: Pick the Active Character.

ENDING THE ENCOUNTER
DURATION
Use a **duration die** to track the **DURATION** value. If effects lower or increase the duration, turn the die to the correct side. Duration can never go above 10 (nothing happens if it is increased further).

CONCLUSION
If at any point the duration is reduced to 0, the encounter immediately ends and the **conclusion** is resolved (do not resolve any remaining effects). Reducing the duration to 0 or gaining the *You Are Dying* card while being the last character in the encounter are the only ways to finish diplomacy.

Apply the **conclusion effect** depending on the color of the slot with the affinity marker. Green means a favorable outcome, gray is neutral, and red means something went wrong.

In a party, only effects with ⚓ before them scale with the number of party members. Other effects are only gained once per encounter and should be distributed between party members.

CLEANUP
Place the encounter card on the bottom of its deck (or return it to the secret deck or the box, as appropriate). Then shuffle all diplomacy decks, including any cards in hand, sequence, and discards. Remove all ⏳ from the character trays.

If the encounter happened during exploration, continue it now, applying any additional effects if necessary.

DIPLOMACY TRIGGERS
Abilities on encounter cards usually have a trigger icon indicating when to resolve them:

⟲   **Duration:** How long the encounter lasts. Some effects cause you to gain (increase) or lose (decrease) duration.
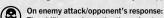
⬇   **On placement:** Resolve this ability after placing the card in the sequence and connecting its keys.

⏳   **Delayed ability:** The active player (it doesn't have to be the card's owner) resolves this ability when the last ⏳ is removed from the card. When you cover a non-passive card with ⏳ on it with another card, discard all ⏳ from it without resolving any delayed abilities.

⚔   **Damage:** Your character must lower their ❤ by the indicated amount.

✕   **Unpreventable damage:** This damage cannot be prevented. Effects that cancel the attack or transform damage into another effect may still apply.

💀   **On enemy attack/opponent's response:** The ability remains active throughout your activation's entire step 3.

🟥   **Connected attribute key:** This refers to attribute keys that have the left and right halves physically joined.

🟦   **Connected magic key:** This refers to magic keys that have the left and right halves physically joined. The opening half always shows a ◇ icon. When connected with a closing half, the bonus is only gained if you immediately pay 1 **MAGIC** (this can only be paid once).

⚖   **Multi effect:** Apply the effect listed right after this icon to each party member.

⚜   **Guardian:** If this icon is on a card's conclusion, the encounter is placed on the location as a guardian.

🗂   **Destroy:** Discard the last combat card of the sequence. If a card with *"if this card is . . .▪"* discarded from the sequence, the corresponding effect is resolved. Resolve multiple destroy effects one by one.

💀   **On enemy response:** This effect is applied during enemy response. If it has the same effect as the 💀 effect add the 💀 effect value to the enemy response.

If the 💀 effect is not in the enemy response, resolve the 💀 effect as the last effect of the enemy response:

Before 💀: This effect is resolved after you finish your activation but before any 💀 effect takes place.

After 💀: This effect is resolved after you apply all parts of the enemy response.

🟥 / 🟥 / 🟥   **Attributes requirements:** To gain the bonus connected to this key, your value of the depicted attribute must be at least 1/2/3.

🟧2x   **Free key multiplier:** Multiplies the next bonus.

KEY BONUSES (MANDATORY)
⬆/⬇   Move the marker 1 slot up or down the affinity track.

🜊   Check if the encounter card has a rule corresponding to the attribute this bonus is connected to. If it does, resolve that effect once.

➕   **Draw a card.**

⚡   This unique **bonus key** is checked before any other keys. If a card you want to play is not the first card played this turn, it must be able to gain this bonus. Gaining multiple instances of this bonus does not have any effect, and if multiplied by 0x it isn't gained.

OTHER DIPLOMACY RULES
CHARGES
Charges are markers placed on cards to indicate a number of times an ability on a card may be used. These abilities start with *Pay X Charges* text and may be used at any moment during a character's activation (unless specified otherwise). The ability cannot be used if there is an insufficient number of charges.

In a party, the active character may use *Pay X Charges* abilities from any cards in the sequence, but the owner of the card must agree.

PANIC
You **panic** when you are *going insane* (your 😱 marker is the red slot of your terror track).

During Phase II: Play Cards, instead of playing the first card of this turn from your hand, play the top card from your deck to the end of the sequence and resolve it. Then you may play any additional cards from your hand, according to the normal rules. **Do not draw new cards in Phase V: End Turn.** Any additional cards gained from bonus keys, skills or abilities are still drawn as normal.

YOU ARE DYING
When your ❤ drops to 0, take a *You Are Dying* card, which removes you from the encounter. Other party members continue.

MOVING BEYOND THE FINAL AFFINITY SLOT
The marker on the affinity track can never be lower than the bottom affinity slot or higher than the top affinity slot.

Whenever an enemy response or another effect asks you to ⬇ the marker below the bottom affinity slot, the last active character discards 1 card from the top of their diplomacy deck for each ⬇ instead. Whenever an enemy response or another effect asks you to ⬆ the marker above the top affinity slot, nothing happens.

EMPTY DECK
Whenever you have to draw a diplomacy card and there are not enough cards, nothing happens. Draw as many as possible.

RESOURCE COSTS
During an encounter **FOOD**, **MAGIC**, and **WEALTH** costs may be paid by any party member, but 🗡, ❤, and 😱 costs must be paid by the active character.

CANDLE & BOLT CARDS
These are special subtypes with a **candle** 🕯 or **bolt** 🟨 icon under the card's name. Some cards and skills refer to these icons.

DIPLOMACY AFFINITY TRACKER
Instead of moving a marker along the affinity track, you can use the **diplomacy affinity tracker**. At the start of the encounter, slide the tracker on the starting slot of the affinity track and move it up and down whenever you resolve ⬆/⬇.

DIPLOMACY TRAITS
DISCOURAGING
When you avoid, always resolve the red conclusion effect.

DREAD
Before 💀, if you have 1 or fewer cards in hand, gain 1 😱.

GREEDY
At the start of the diplomacy, pay 1 wealth or gain 1 ⟲.

HARASS (X-Y) EFFECT
Before 💀, if there are at least X, but no more than Y cards in the sequence, resolve the corresponding effect.

HASTE
You may play at most 3 cards during your activation.