

# ALTAR QUEST

## A Visual Tutorial

By Doctor Bandage

### FOREWORD

Adam Sadler here from Blacklist Games. First off, I want to thank everyone for their interest in *Altar Quest*! Brady and I are so happy to see so many people enjoying the game. We are aware that there have been several people who have struggled to learn the game using the rulebook and that we should have included more examples to help new players.

It didn't take us long to find out about the visual tutorial put together by Doctor Bandage on the Board Game Geek website. We were so impressed by what Doctor Bandage put together that we reached out and asked how the good Doctor would feel about offering up the tutorial as an official PDF. And now here we are! We can't thank Doctor Bandage enough for helping so many players get started in *Altar Quest*. We hope this document will help more people enjoy the game!

### INTRODUCTION

Hello! My name is Doctor Bandage and in this visual tutorial we're going to learn the 1-4 player game, *Altar Quest*! I've seen several people around the internet lamenting that there aren't enough examples in the rulebook and are in need of a good how-to-play video. Unfortunately I'm no good at making videos so you'll have to keep waiting on that front. However, I thought I'd try my hand at making a visual walk-through that teaches you how to play the game. Apologies in advance for the amateur photography skills.

**Disclaimer Part 1:** This tutorial is not designed to teach you how to play *well*. I purposely make strategically foolish moves at several points throughout the game in order to show off the rules as completely as possible.

**Disclaimer Part 2:** This is meant to supplement the rulebook, not replace it. Please refer to the rulebook for full details on all game effects I'll also be omitting talking about allies, rivals, extra equipment, or the campaign and story modes to simplify this tutorial.

**A quick note on gold-bordered hero cards:** The gold bordered copies of hero cards are Hero Upgrade cards. These do **NOT** belong in a hero's deck during normal games and are only added during the campaign/story mode. You should make sure to remove these cards from your hero decks before playing your first game. Here's an example of a normal hero card versus an upgraded hero card (note the gold border):



Photo Credit: @JordanBerlyn, editing by @DoctorBandage

With that out of the way, let's begin with a quick tip that's not in the rules! As you may already know, this game comes with a *lot* of stuff. It behooves you to take some time to organize this stuff. A well organized game of *Altar Quest* is vastly quicker to setup. I'll leave it up to you to find the best method for your own personal needs, but my storage solution can be found detailed [here](#). Of relevance to this tutorial, you'll see my tokens, feature minis, door minis, and lurker minis are not on the table like the rulebook describes. They're instead off to the side in their respective boxes so I can grab them quickly when needed.

Over the course of the visual tutorial I will highlight important **terminology** or **clarifications** in bold. Pay close attention to when you see one. You will likely need that knowledge again later.

I encourage you to set up your board and play along with me! Having the real thing in front of you when reading this will help you learn to play easier.

## SETUP

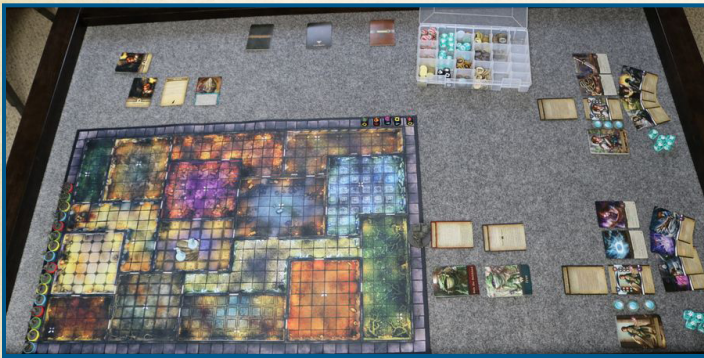
We're going to be playing the recommended first game setup on page 9 of the rules with 2 players. Our heroes will be Rowen and Quella. Our quest is The Search and our enemies are the Frox led by Bolx, the Belchlord. Let's setup to play! If you already understand the setup and the concepts of mulligans, play areas, and the altar pool then you may skip ahead to page 7.

First, a quick terminology lesson. *Altar Quest* is made up of a series of **play areas**. These are rows of cards. Anytime a new card is added to a play area, it is placed to the right of any other cards already in the play area.



## Choose Your Table

Find a large table. *Altar Quest* takes up quite a bit of space.



Here's what a game might look like when it's all set up. This table has a roughly 3x5 foot playing area and a 2 player setup takes almost all of it.

## Choose The Game Board

You may use either the board from the core game or the one from the Stretch Goals. It doesn't really matter which one, it's mostly an aesthetic difference. I'll be using the neoprene mat version of the core game's board here to cut down on glare in the photos.

## Choose Your Heroes

Pick your heroes and collect their decks and miniatures. We've already picked Rowen and Quella.



Place the hero's character card down first and then all equipment or ally cards in that hero's deck to the right of the character card. The overwhelming majority of heroes will have 2 equipment cards and 0 allies in their deck, but some heroes will have 1 of each. This row of cards is known as your **hero play area**. Shuffle the remaining cards of your hero's deck and place it to the left of the hero play area. Leave room for a discard pile. Collect 3 action tokens and place them nearby - I like to place them next to my character card.

Then, start a 2nd row of cards above the **hero play area** by placing the hero turn reference card. Every card to the right of this is called the **threat area**. This area is empty for now, but it will soon hold all sorts of sinister cards that make exploring the dungeon more difficult.

Finally, draw 4 cards from your deck to form your starting hand. *Altar Quest* does not have a **hand limit**.



Quella sets up the same way. However, she is unhappy with her starting hand. She has drawn 3 of the same card (Stoneskin) and would like to diversify. Luckily, *Altar Quest* allows a one-time mulligan of the starting hand. You may set aside any number of cards from your starting hand, draw replacements, and then shuffle the set-aside cards back into the deck.



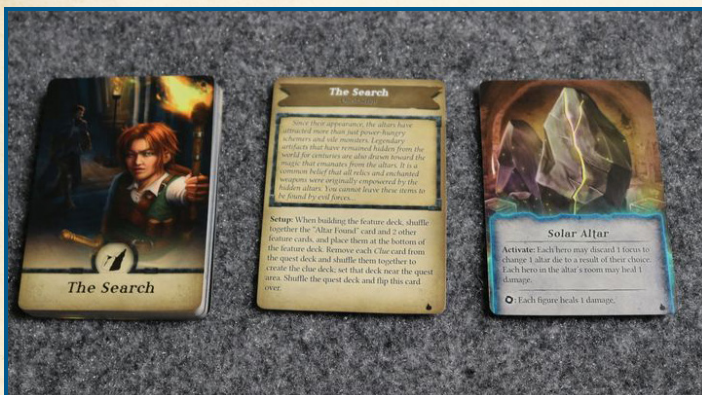
Quella mulligans 2 copies of Stoneskin and gets her wish for a more diverse hand.

## Choose Your Quest

We've already chosen 'The Search'.

First, we create the **quest area** by placing the quest's setup card on the table, leaving a lot of space to the right. Do not resolve the setup text just yet - we'll do that in a bit.

Next, we'll need an Altar. Shuffle your altar cards and draw a random card. Alternatively, more experienced players may choose an altar. In this case we randomly drew the Solar Altar. Place the altar card in the **quest area** to the right of the Quest Setup card.



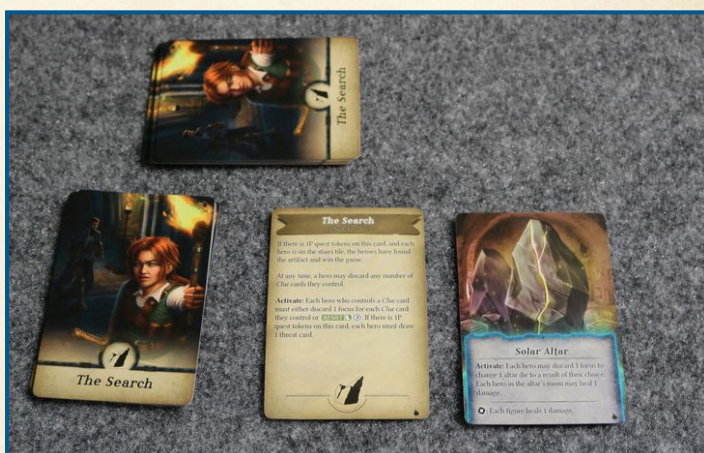
Now, roll the 5 altar dice to form the **altar pool**. I like to place my altar pool along the board edge. We rolled pretty lucky here and got lots of variety. Note that this tutorial will be using the stretch goal version of the altar dice. The only difference between these dice and the altar dice found in the core box is that these are color-coded. The two sets of altar dice are exactly the same otherwise. Also note that if you own both sets, you should still only be using 5 altar dice during a game.



Finally, resolve any setup text on the Quest Setup card. In our case, this means two things:

- 1 Modifying how we construct the feature deck. We'll come back to this when we setup the feature deck in a moment.
- 2 Searching the quest deck for all cards with the 'Clue' trait and making a separate 'clue' deck. Making a separate deck out of quest cards is a common instruction - I like to place this deck sideways nearby to remind myself it's not the regular quest deck.

Then we flip the Quest Setup card over to reveal the Quest Rules. We'll talk more about these in the next section.



## Choose the Threats

We've already chosen the Frox.

Collect all the miniatures associated with the chosen threat deck; you may look at the cards for reference to help with this step.

You will need 12 enemy miniatures - 3 sculpts with 4 copies each. **The 5th copy of each sculpt is reserved for the Lurker deck.** Attach the plastic rings to each miniature so that each sculpt has one of each color - blue, yellow, red, and green. Pro setup tip: You can paint the rims of the minis in the appropriate colors to never have to fiddle with the plastic rings again. The enemy colors are fixed and do not change from game to game.

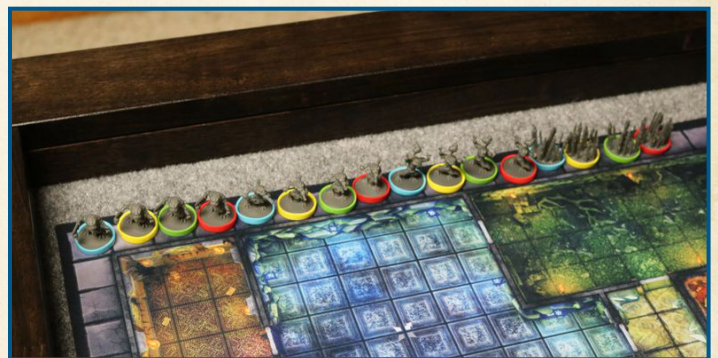
Additionally, collect the 4 colored trap tokens from the box. If you happen to own the stretch goals, you may use the associated threat's trap miniatures instead. If you do, attach the plastic rings in the same way you did the enemy miniatures. We'll be using the trap minis in this visual tutorial.

Place all of these minis somewhere within quick reach. I like to place them along an unused edge of the board.

Finally, find the Reference card in the threat deck and place it on the table. Shuffle the remaining cards to form the threat deck and place it to the left of the Reference card.

**Pay close attention to this reference card!** It describes what special abilities the enemies in this threat deck have and what threat tokens do. In this case, the threat tokens for the Frox represent poisonous sludge. Characters that suffer damage from inflict tests will gain a threat token. Characters with threat tokens will find it harder to heal themselves, as they must get rid of the poisonous sludge first!

We'll explain inflict tests and healing in the next section, but be sure to keep the threat reference card in mind whenever one of those pesky Frox are on the prowl.



## Choose the Villain

We've already chosen Bolx.

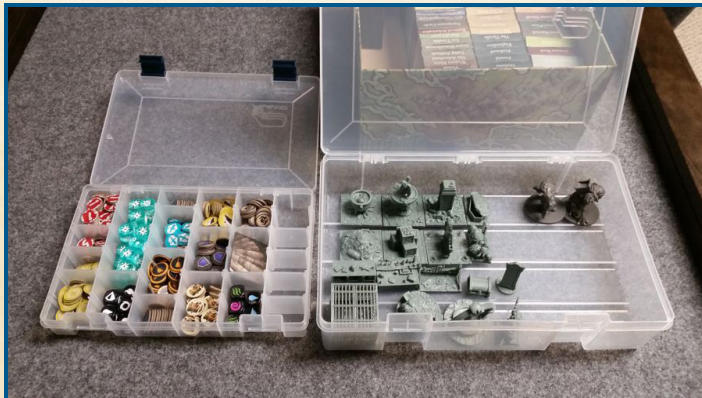
Place the villain's card 'Scheme' side up to form the villain area. Some bosses (not Bolx) will add cards into this area over the course of the game.

Place the villain miniature nearby.



## Prep Tokens and Other Minis

As mentioned in the introduction, I've already performed this step for all future games by organizing my collection.



## Prep Remaining Decks

Shuffle the search cards and place them nearby. Do the same for the Lurker cards. A quick reminder on Lurker cards: do not shuffle in the 'Thief', 'Spy', 'Fanatic', or 'Traitor' lurker cards to the normal deck. These lurkers are Rivals and are reserved for either 'The Hunt' quest or to optionally add difficulty to the game. We will not be using them in this tutorial.



Finally, we have to set up the feature deck. Find the 'Altar Found' card and set it aside. Then randomly draw 7 other feature cards from the remaining cards. If you only own the core game, you will only have 7 other feature cards but players with expansions will need to return any remainder to the box.



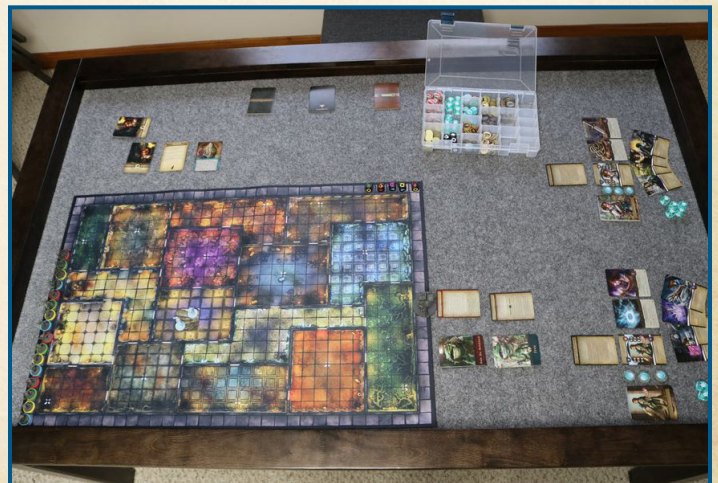
Recall from page 4 that during Step 3 that the quest is modifying how we build this deck. Normally we would just shuffle the 8 cards and be done. Instead, set aside the 'Altar Found' card and 2 other random feature cards. Shuffle the remaining 5 feature cards together. Then shuffle (facedown) the 3 cards you just set aside together and place them underneath the other feature cards. This will ensure the Altar is always found towards the end of the quest. Pro-tip: Become familiar with this modification; many quests will ask you to do it.

## Choose a Room

Place the stairs tile in that room's feature space and the heroes in any space on the stairs tile.



That completes the setup!



# GAME OBJECTIVE

The goal of an *Altar Quest* game is to complete the Quest. The Quest Rules card will usually tell you how to win the game. In this case, the heroes must find artifacts and escape the dungeon. Hidden throughout the dungeon are clues that the heroes can collect. A matching pair of clues can be transmuted at the Altar for an artifact. Since we're playing with 2 heroes, we must find 2 artifacts and return to the stairs tile to win.

Players lose the game if *any* hero is defeated or if a game effect says so. We only have to worry about the former in this quest.

Ready? Let's begin!

## ROUND 1

Each round is composed of 4 turns:

- 1 Hero Turn:** Each Hero (in any order) completes a Hero Act Phase (Consisting of an Action Step followed by a Card Step)
- 2 Threat Turn:** Each Hero (in any order) completes a React Phase
- 3 Villain Turn**
- 4 Quest Turn**

After completing every turn, the next round begins with another Hero Turn. This process repeats until the players either win or lose.

### Hero Turn

Each hero will perform a **hero act phase**, which has two steps: an **action step** and a **card step**. In our case, we have 2 heroes so 2 hero act phases will be performed, one after the other. Heroes can collectively decide the order of their hero act phases each round.

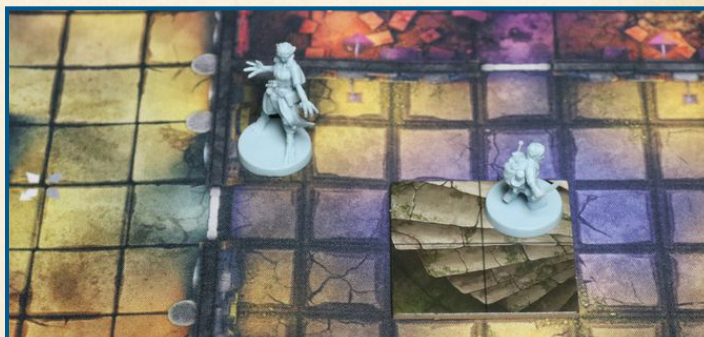
Normally heroes will first **refresh** any exhausted cards and flip their actions tokens to their ready side, but they currently have no exhausted cards and all action tokens are already on the ready side from setup, so nothing happens at this time. We'll talk more about exhausting and refreshing cards later on.

Quella decides to perform her hero act phase first.

Then she will take her **action step**. During the action step, Quella can perform up to 3 actions. For a full list of actions available, check the turn reference card or page 13 of the rulebook. **It is very important to understand that if an effect is not listed on that card/page then it does NOT cost an action!**

There's not much to do while standing on the stairs, so Quella will use a **move action**, flipping over 1 action token. Move actions let the hero move up to 3 spaces in any direction, including diagonally.

Quella wanders aimlessly around the room. Hmm. Not much of interest in here... maybe there's something in the next room?

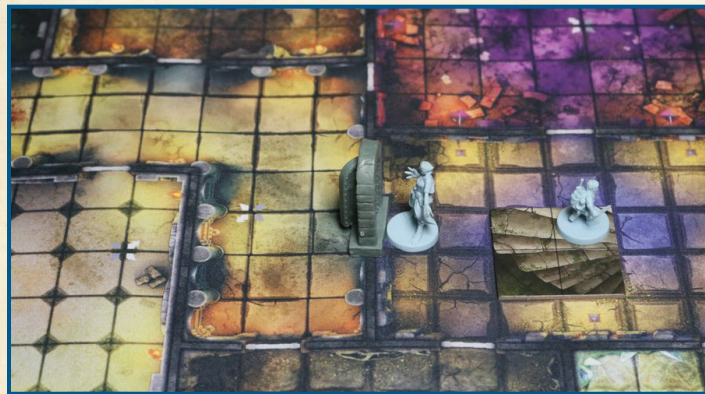


Quella takes another move action, flipping over another action token, to walk towards the door. The two spaces on either side of the door are called

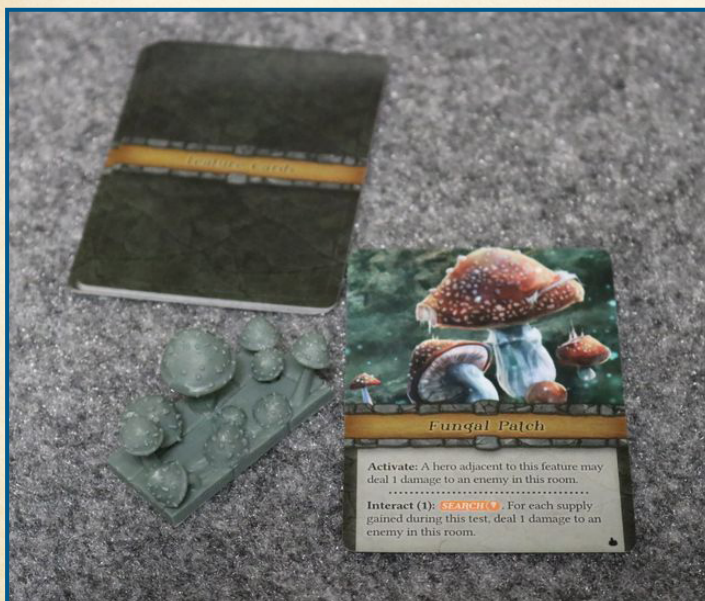


**door spaces.** Door spaces are special for a couple of reasons. For starters, heroes that are standing on them may open the door. This does not cost an action nor does it waste any movement points. When a door is connected to a room the heroes have not entered before you must **reveal** the room. **Only one room may be revealed per hero act phase.** Pause your move and remember how much movement you had remaining; you will be able to use the rest of it in a moment.

Quella opens the door, **revealing the room.**



When a room is revealed, you must perform 4 steps in order. First, place a door mini to mark the door as open. Second, draw a feature card and find its corresponding mini.

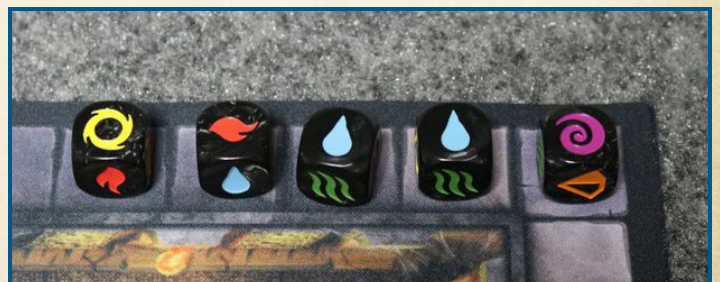


Place the feature card into the **quest area.**

Place the feature in the revealed room's feature space - 1x1 features go on the feature space itself, 1x2 features go on the two white arrows, and 2x2 features go on both the white and gray arrows. In this case the Fungal Patch is a 1x2 mini so it will cover the two white arrows.



Third, draw a quest card and perform its 'When Revealed' effect. We happened to draw Swirling Mist, which re-rolls the entire altar pool and then attaches to the feature card just drawn. Attaching cards is as simple as placing one card underneath the other - these two cards are now linked.

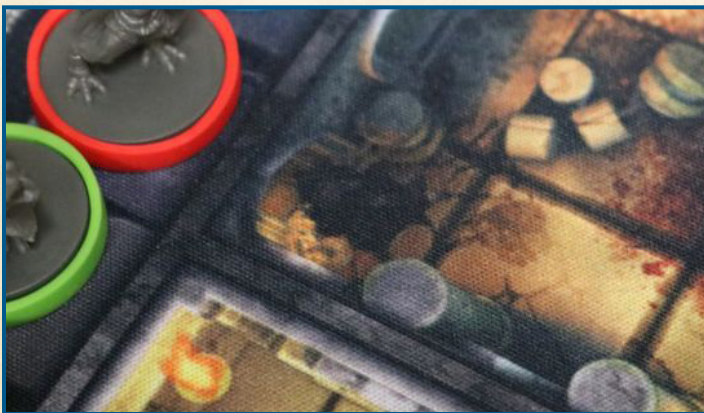




Finally, each hero must draw and resolve a threat card. In this case, Quella drew a Frox Raider enemy and Rowen drew a Frox Muckslinger enemy. These cards are placed into the **threat area** of the hero that drew them and the respective miniatures are spawned on (or as close as possible to) the room's shadow space.



Shadow spaces can sometimes be a bit tough to spot, but there is only one per room and it will look like a dark hole in the ground.



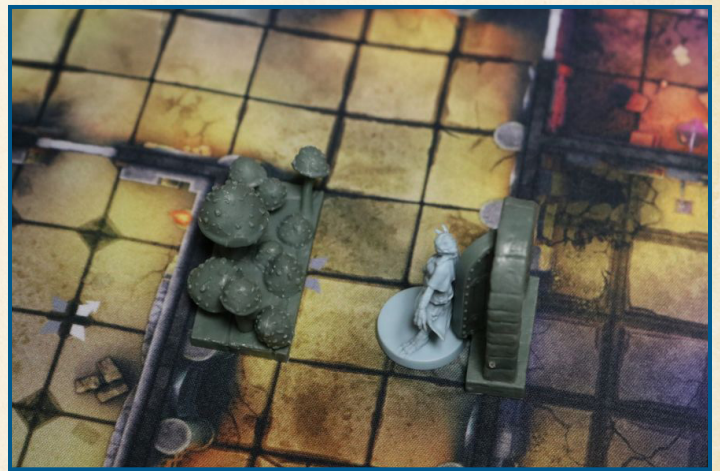
The enemies appear!



With the room now fully resolved, play now reverts back to the middle of Quella's move action. She had two spaces left.

I said earlier that door spaces were special and we're about to find out the 2nd reason. Normally figures can move diagonally between spaces but **when moving into a different room you must move from a door space to the connected door space in the adjacent room**. Connected door spaces will always be orthogonally adjacent to each other, so there is **no diagonal movement through doorways**.

Quella steps through the door to the connected door space and may then move diagonally toward the Fungal Patch.



This new altar pool the Swirling Mist rolled is a bit inconvenient. Luckily Quella is adept at tweaking the Altar Pool. In her hand she has the Feat card "Rhunic Insight". **Feat cards do not cost an action to play, but must be played during your action step.** Quella plays Rhunic Insight.

Before we can resolve this card we must briefly learn about tests. Almost every time a hero rolls the teal hero dice, they are performing a **test**. Tests come in many different types (see page 17 of the rulebook) that represent heroes overcoming a variety of obstacles.

We'll discuss each test type in more detail as they arise. Tests are performed by rolling a number of hero dice equal to the attribute value being tested that is listed on the hero's character card. Each attribute value has a name, color, and unique symbol. You can find a list of the attribute names on page 17 of the rulebook and this visual tutorial will use those names for clarity.

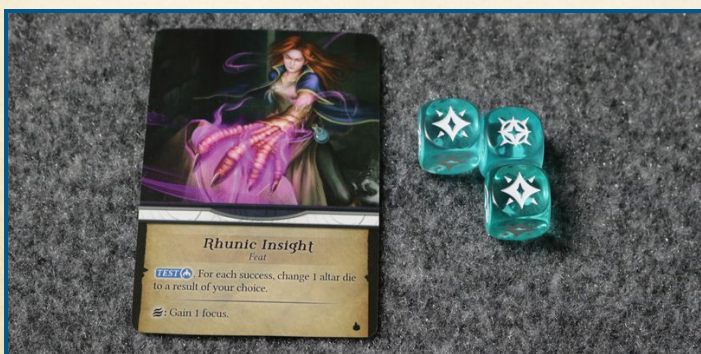
However, if you're explaining the game to others you may find it convenient to refer to the color or symbol instead (e.g.: "test the red attribute" or "test the attribute with the moon"). Some tests will come with a difficulty (a number in a white circle). The difficulty will, generally speaking, give you an idea of how hard the test is.

Rhunic Insight begins with a (general attribute) Test of willpower (TEST ♁). Quella's willpower is 2 so she will roll 2 dice.

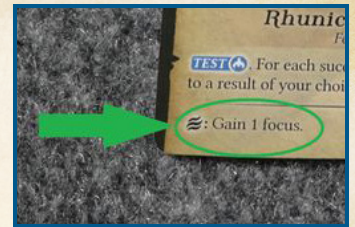


She gathers those dice and rolls them. One of the symbols is a success but the other is a critical success! A critical success counts as a success and allows you add another die to the roll.

Quella rolls the additional die and gets a third success. Rhunic Insight says that for each success, change 1 altar die to a result of your choice. Quella has three successes and changes the symbols on three altar dice.



That looks a lot better! Most importantly, she makes sure one of the altar dice is a wind rhune because this card has a rhune effect! Whenever you see a rhune symbol on its own like this on a card, this represents a rhune effect. Rhune effects are bonus effects that trigger after the other effects on the card if the right rhune is in the Altar Pool. **Heroes may decline to resolve rhune effects on their own cards, but rhune effects on enemy and quest cards are mandatory.** In this case Quella very much wants to resolve the rhune effect. Whenever a rhune effect resolves, re-roll 1 altar die with the matching symbol and then perform the text of the rhune effect.



Quella decides to resolve the rhune effect (re-rolling 1 wind rhune in the altar pool) and gains 1 focus token. We'll see how focus works in a moment.



After fully resolving Rhunic Insight, it is placed into Quella's discard pile.



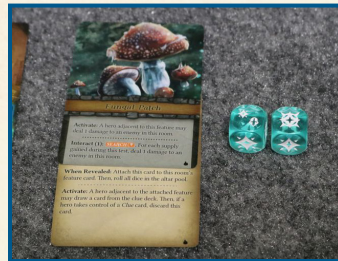
For her final action, Quella performs an **Interact** action. She chooses an Interact keyword on any card in any **play area**. If she is within range of that figure/token (denoted by a number in parenthesis), she may perform that Interact keyword's effect. In this case, she is choosing to interact with the Fungal Patch. Because she is within 1 space away, the fungal patch's interact allows Quella to perform a Search test using her fortitude, which is 2.

Search tests allow the heroes to attempt to find items and supplies hidden within the dungeon.

Quella rolls a critical success along with a success and focus. She resolves the critical and rolls another success and focus. Whenever a hero rolls a focus symbol they have a choice to make.

Heroes may spend focus tokens to convert focus results into successes or alternatively wait until after the test is resolved and gain an equal number of focus as remaining focus results. **A hero is limited to a maximum of 5 focus tokens.** Quella decides to spend her only focus to convert 1 focus symbol to a success for a total of 4 successes. Next the number of search tokens on the feature card cancels (subtracts from the total) an equal number of successes - but there aren't any search tokens on the card! This leaves a final result of 4 successes.

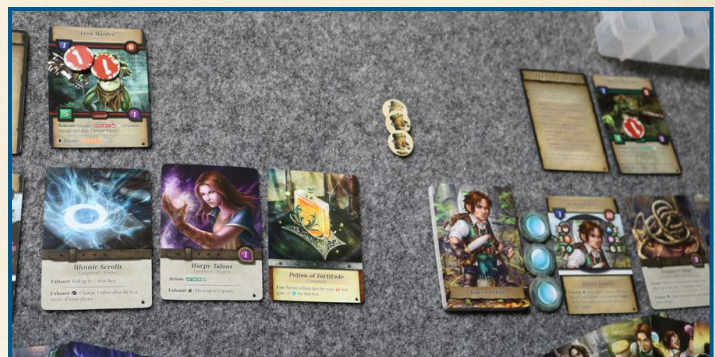
The first success draws the hero a search card - a Potion of Fortitude in this case. Then any remaining successes gain the heroes an equal number of supply tokens. We'll talk about supply later on. Lastly, she gains 1 focus for the remaining focus result.



Finally, after searching a room you must place 1 search token on its feature card. This completes the search test.

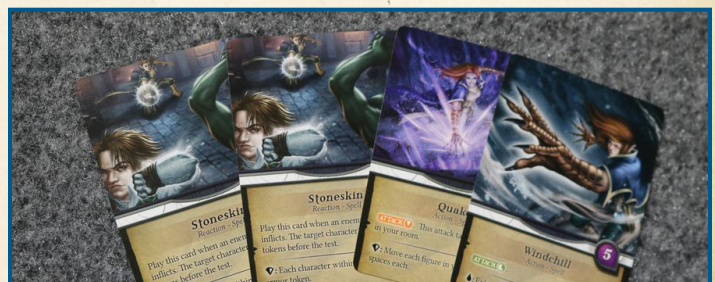


The remaining text on the Interact says that for each supply Quella gained during that test, deal 1 damage to an enemy in this room. She decides to spread this damage around to both enemies - 1 damage on the Muckslinger and 2 damage on the Raider.



**This completes Quella's action step.**

During a hero's card step, they simply draw 1 card from their deck and add it to their hand. Quella draws a 2nd copy of Stoneskin. She just can't seem to get rid of this card!

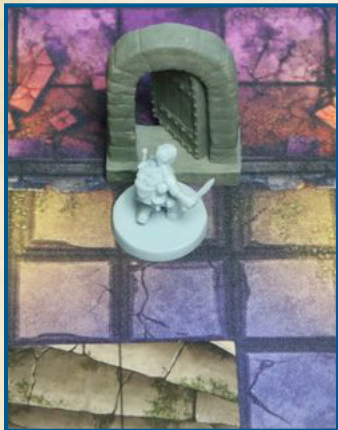


**This completes Quella's card step and hero act phase. It is now Rowen's hero act phase.**

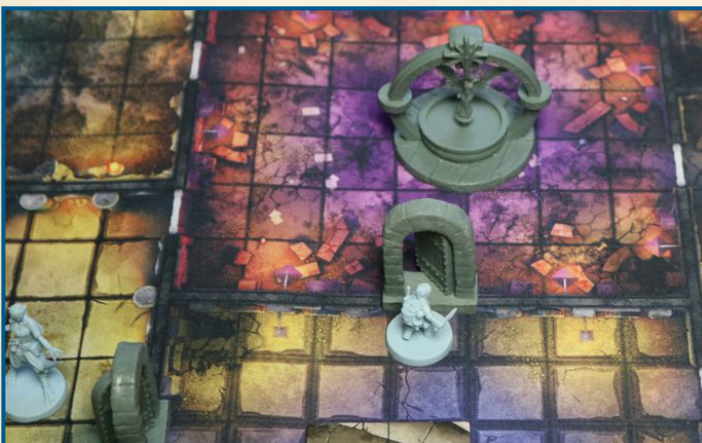


Rowen's first action is a movement action. He moves 2 spaces up (1 remaining) and opens the door. This **reveals** another room. Just like last time, we follow the same steps when revealing a room. Remember - **a hero can only reveal 1 room per hero act phase**. Because this is a different act phase than Quella's, we are still within the rules to reveal this room.

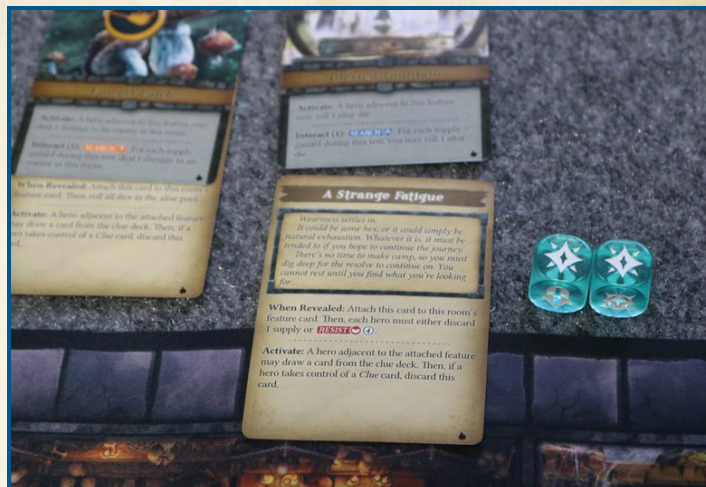
First we place the door mini. Then we draw a feature card and find its associated mini.



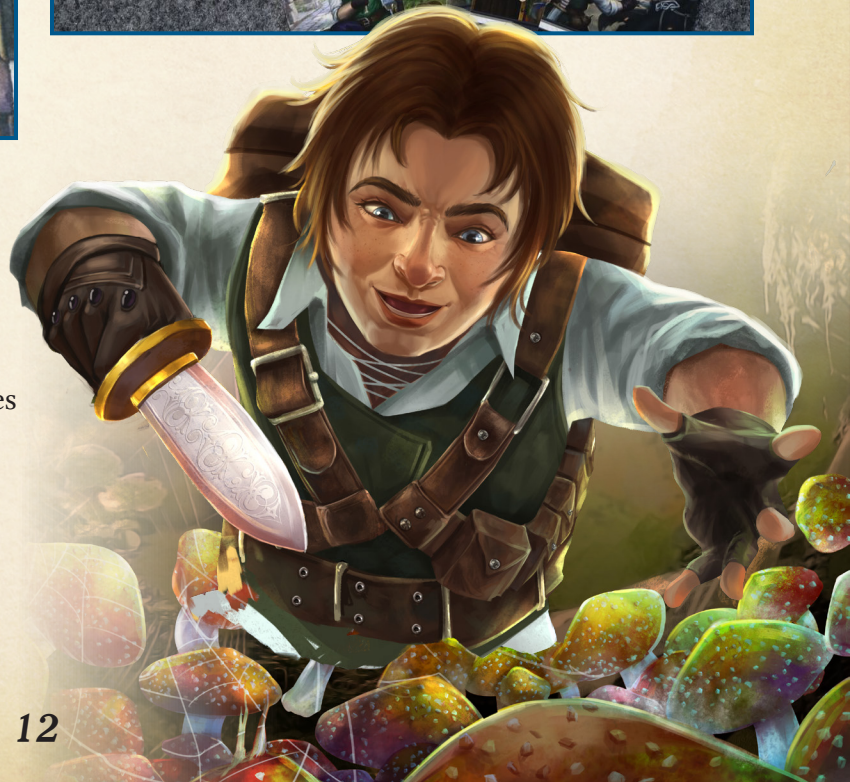
Because this feature is 2x2, it will cover both the white and grey arrows around the feature space.



We then draw a quest card and resolve its 'When Revealed' effect. The quest card is **attached** to the feature and each hero must either discard 1 supply or **RESIST** (4). This is a new type of test. When a hero resolves a Resist test, they are rolling to reduce the damage they will take. The amount of damage is indicated by the difficulty - 4 in this case. Rowen decides to take the test first. His Might is 2, so he rolls 2 dice and comes up with 2 successes. A respectable effort. We'll discuss defense and armor a bit later on, but it's important to mention here that **Resist tests ignore defense and armor**.



The Resist test's difficulty was 4 and Rowen rolled 2 successes to cancel 2 of that, so the net result is that Rowen will take 2 damage. Quella, despite only having 1 Might, also decides to take the Resist test rather than losing the precious supply. Luckily for her she rolls three criticals in a row and a success (not pictured) to get away unscathed!



Finally, each hero must draw a threat card. Quella draws an event card. Event cards are typically resolved and then discarded, but this one instructs Quella to put it into her threat area. She will have to contend with this Froxling Swarm until she can spend an action and focus to discard it, per the interact action.

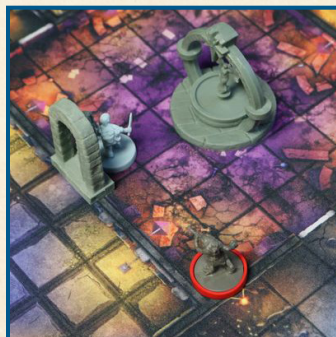
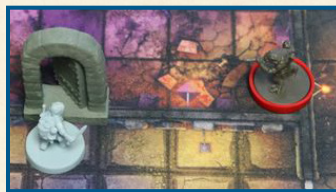


Rowen draws another Muckslinger which spawns in the room's shadow space.



Now that we've resolved two room reveals together, **in the future I'll omit showing you pictures of all the steps.**

Play resumes on Rowen's movement action. He has 1 movement left and steps into the room. **Remember that heroes can only move orthogonally from one room's door space into the next room's door space.**

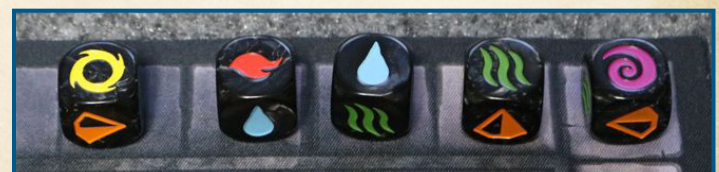
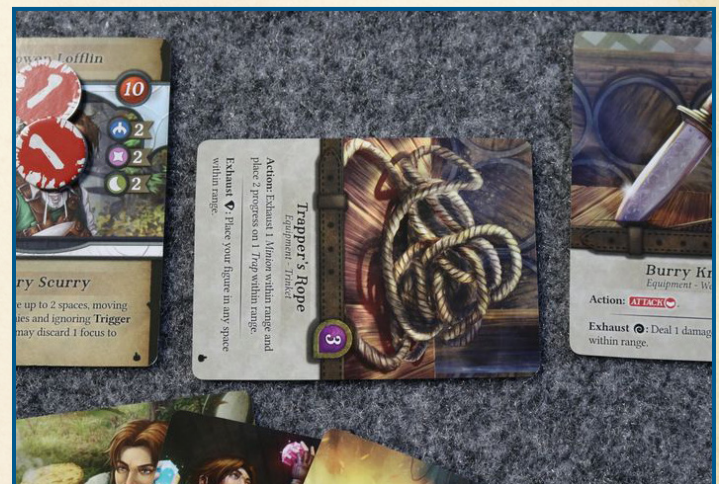


Rowen wants to move to the next door, but spending another move action doesn't seem like a good idea. Luckily, Rowen comes prepared with a rope!

One of Rowen's equipment is the Trapper's Rope. This equipment has two instances of an effect we haven't seen yet - **an Exhaust effect**. Exhaust effects do not cost an action and can be used any time - even outside the Hero's act phase! Note that there are some timing restrictions on when an exhaust can be used, but you can check the full rules for those details. We want to get swinging using the bottom exhaust!



In order to resolve an exhaust effect, simply exhaust the card by turning it sideways. Exhausted cards are not 'out of commission' - **you may still resolve any other effects on them such as Action or Use effects**. The only thing an exhausted card cannot do is be exhausted again. If the exhaust effect also has rhune symbols, you must additionally re-roll a corresponding symbol in the altar pool in order to resolve the effect. Luckily for Rowen there is an earth rhune in the pool which turns into a water rhune. Uh-oh. Hopefully that won't be a problem later...



Anyway, Rowen resolves the exhaust effect and places his figure in a space up to 3 spaces away. Specifically, he lands in the door space leading to the room Quella is in and opens the door! Remember that heroes are only limited to **revealing** 1 room per act phase. They may open any other number of doors during their act phase as long as they all lead to rooms that are already revealed. It's also important to remember that opening a door does not cost an action nor does it have to be part of a move action. The only requirement is to be standing in the door space.

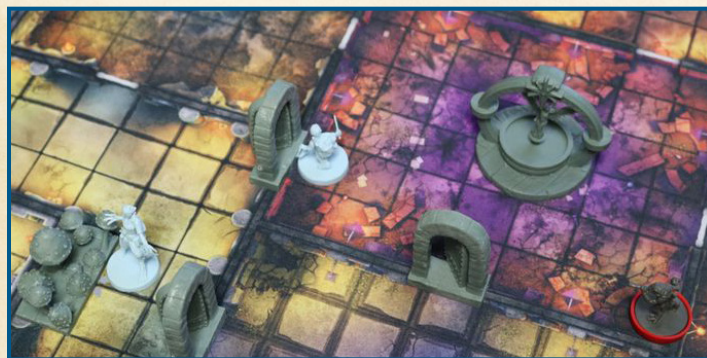


Because this room was already revealed, we do not need to perform the reveal steps again.

Rowen then uses a Rest action as his final action. A rest action discards 1 supply to heal 2 damage. Remember that supply is shared amongst the heroes - even though technically Quella earned this supply either hero may spend it at will. We'll discuss another use for supply tokens in a moment.



**This completes Rowen's action step.**



During Rowen's card step, he draws 1 card - a Feat card named "I Can Cook This". This may be handy later.

Rowen's 2nd action is to play the card 'A Lofflin Hot Pouch'. This is an Action card. As you might expect, these do cost an action to play. This card also has the 'Ongoing' trait. Instead of being played, resolved, and discarded like normal, Ongoing cards are instead played into a hero's play area and remain there until some other effect discards them (typically the Use effect written on the card). This card says it may be played on a hero within range 3. **Note that heroes are considered at range 0 from themselves, so you may always target yourself with such effects**, but seeing the bind that Quella is soon to be in, Rowen tosses the Hot Pouch to Quella, putting it into her play area.



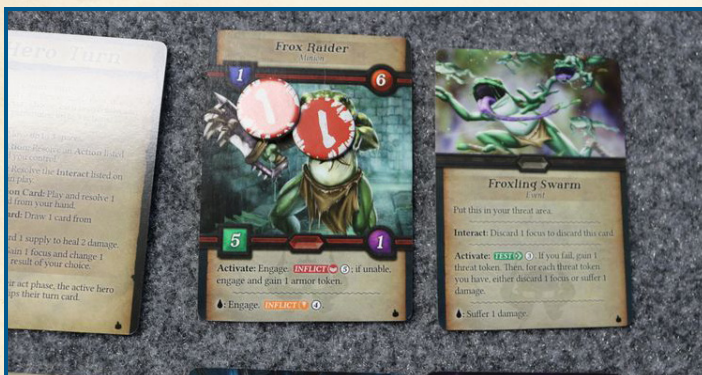
**This completes Rowen's card step, hero act phase, and the entire Hero Turn.**

## Threat Turn

During the threat turn, each hero must perform a **React Phase**. Heroes may perform their react phases in any order and may change this order from round to round. Quella decides to perform her react phase first. She becomes the **active hero** during this phase.

During a react phase, the active hero must **Activate** all cards in their **threat area**, from left to right. This is one of the reasons it is so important to place new threats to the right of old threats - the activation order matters.

First up is the Frox Raider. When it activates, it will **Engage**. Engage is a new, but important game concept so let's take a moment to understand how this works.



## ENGAGE

Engage is the primary way enemies will move around the dungeon. When an enemy engages it is trying to move into the 'optimal position' to strike the nearest character. When an enemy engages, it will perform a few steps.

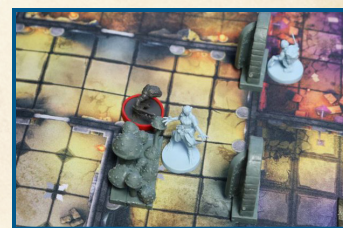
- 1 Locate the nearest character. This character becomes the 'target' of the engaging enemy. If two or more characters are equidistant to the enemy, players should collectively choose which character is the target.
- 2 Find all the spaces that are simultaneously farthest from, but still within range and line of sight to, the target. These spaces are the 'candidates' for optimal position. If there is only 1 candidate, the enemy moves to that space and the engage effect is complete. Note that this means enemies with a range of 2 or greater may move away from the heroes.
- 3 If there is more than one candidate for optimal position, the enemy will prioritize the candidate space that is farthest from, but still within range and line of sight to, as many characters as possible.

- 4 If the above step does not result in a single unique space for optimal position, players may choose any of the remaining candidate spaces for optimal position and move the enemy to one of those spaces.

When faced with multiple choices for the enemy's final space placement, remember the 2nd golden rule - for a more difficult play experience, players may opt to choose the outcome that is least beneficial to them as a group.

Engaging sounds more complicated than it really is. When in doubt, just use your best judgement on where an enemy would move to. The game system is not so fragile as to break from a few enemies moved the wrong way.

The Frox Raider has a move of 5 and a range of 1, so it wants to get right next to a hero when engaging. As it turns out, 5 movement is just enough to reach Quella.



Now the Raider will **INFLECT** ⑤. This is another new test, so let's briefly discuss it.

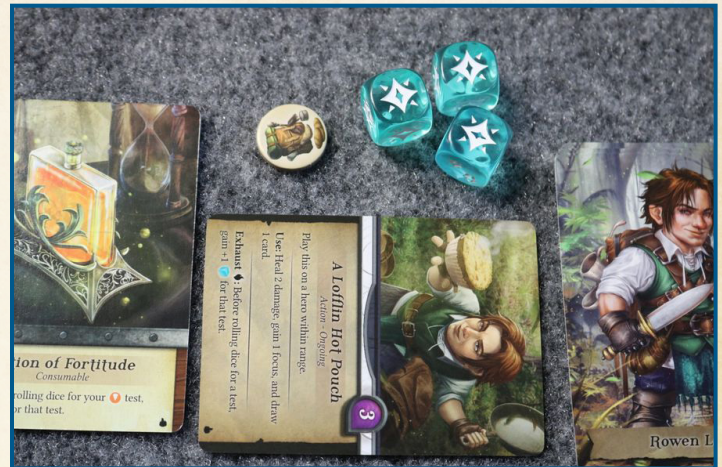
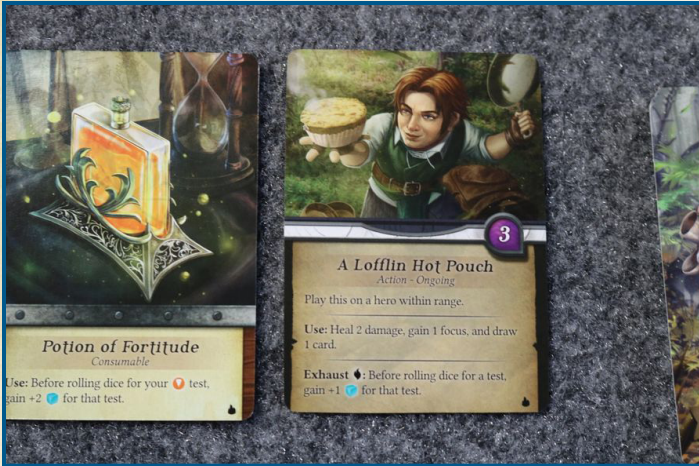
An Inflict test is the enemy's version of an attack. The enemy is inflicting damage on the hero who will test the appropriate attribute, **in conjunction with their defense value and armor tokens**, to see if they can reduce the damage taken. The hero would roll dice equal to the corresponding attribute. Each success rolled would reduce the incoming damage by 1. Then, the heroes defense value would reduce the incoming damage again. Finally, the hero may **optionally** discard any number of armor tokens to reduce the incoming damage again. If any damage remains at this point, the hero will take the remainder.

In this case, the Raider is attempting to inflict 5 damage on Quella. Unfortunately, Quella has a measly 1 for her might attribute AND a defense value of 0 AND no armor tokens. This would probably not go well for her. But there are always options in **Altar Quest!**



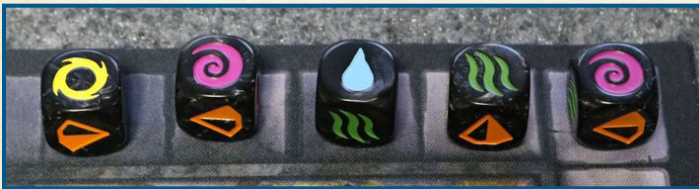
Rowen just put a card into Quella's play area that can be exhausted for an extra dice during a test. Inflict tests are tests, so Quella exhausts this card to add 1 die to the 1 her might attribute provided.

Quella discards a supply token to add a third die to this test. She rolls 3 successes. This brings the incoming damage down to 2.



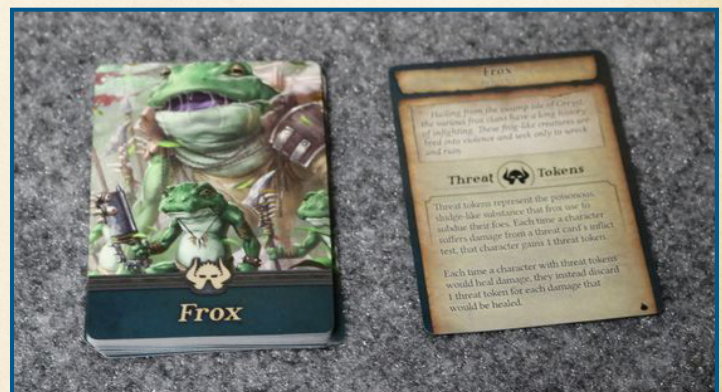
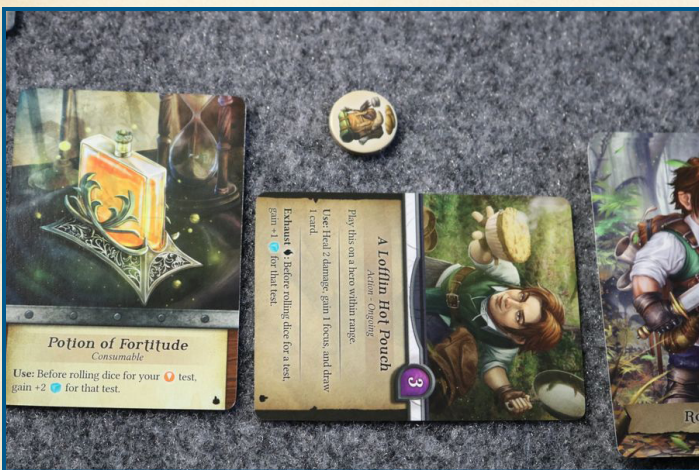
This exhaust also costs a fire rhune from the altar pool, which Quella re-rolls. But even 2 dice might not be enough...

Unfortunately Quella still has 0 defense value and no armor tokens, so she takes this damage. Additionally, per the Frox Threat Reference card we read during setup, Quella has suffered damage from a threat card and must gain a threat token.



Suddenly, Quella remembers the supply tokens! **Before rolling dice for a test, the testing hero may choose to discard 1 supply to roll 1 additional hero die during that test. This may only be done once per test.**

As a quick reminder, the threat reference card describes what special abilities the enemies in this threat deck have and what threat tokens do. In this case, the threat tokens for the Frox represent poisonous sludge. Characters that suffer damage from inflict tests will gain a threat token. Characters with threat tokens will find it harder to heal themselves, as they must get rid of the poisonous sludge first!





Because the Raider was able to Inflict, the wording on the card says that the rest of the text on the Activate effect does not apply. Phew, we really didn't need an armored Raider...



But wait! What's that at the bottom? That's right - enemies can have **rhune effects** too! While rhune effects on hero cards are optional, **rhune effects on all other cards are mandatory**. If there's a water rhune in the Altar pool, the Frox Raider must perform its rhune effect.

And look what happens to be in the altar pool... Uh-oh. The Raider is going to Engage and Inflict again! Even worse, the water rhune re-rolls into another water rhune!



Upon resolving the engage, we find the raider is already in optimal position to target Quella and no other space would also put it within range of Rowen, so it does not need to move.

Quella braces herself for another hit... but wait a moment... that's right!

These Stoneskin cards may come in handy after all! Stoneskin is a **Reaction** card. Reaction cards are the final type of hero cards (Feat and Action being the other two types). Reaction cards can be played when the card says so, and will often interrupt other game effects. **Playing a Reaction card does not cost an action.** It's



also worth mentioning that **the heroes may only play 1 Reaction card in total for each triggering event**. That means even though Quella has 2 copies of Stoneskin in her hand, she can only play one in response to this inflict. She should have played the other one earlier during the first inflict test!

Quella chooses herself as the target of the card and gains 2 armor. There is no earth in the altar pool, so the rhune effect on this card cannot be resolved.

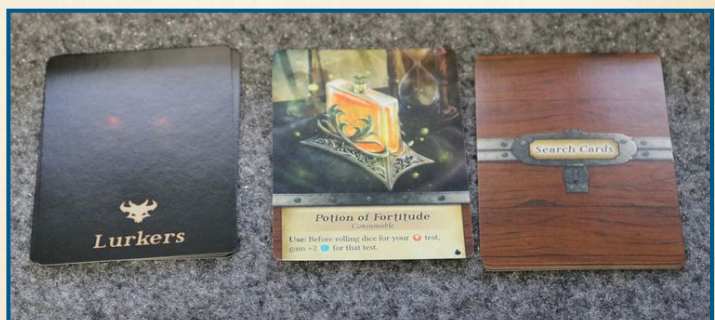


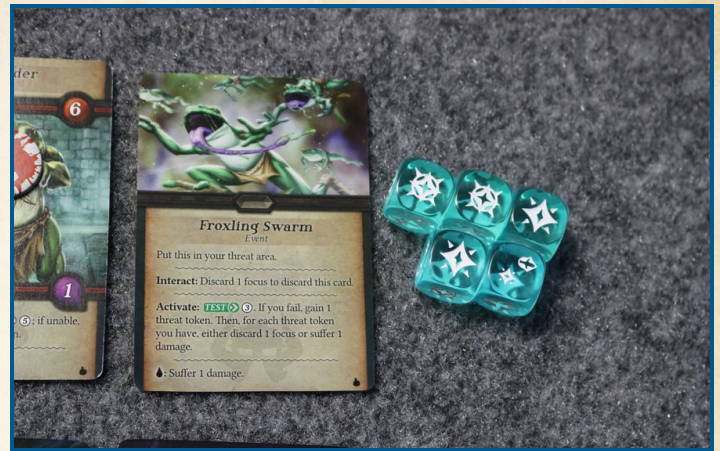
Fearing this might not be enough, Quella decides to **Use** the potion of Fortitude. Much like Exhaust effects, Use effects can be resolved outside of the hero act phase. The key difference though is that a **Use effect discards the card!** It's a one-time bonus.



**Pro-tip:** Remember - exhausted cards do not make other effects on the card unavailable. If a card is exhausted you can still resolve its Use effect. If you have a card that can do both an Exhaust and Use effect, be sure to try to do the Exhaust effect before resolving its Use effect for maximum card value!

The potion is discarded to add two dice to the two from Quella's Fortitude attribute.





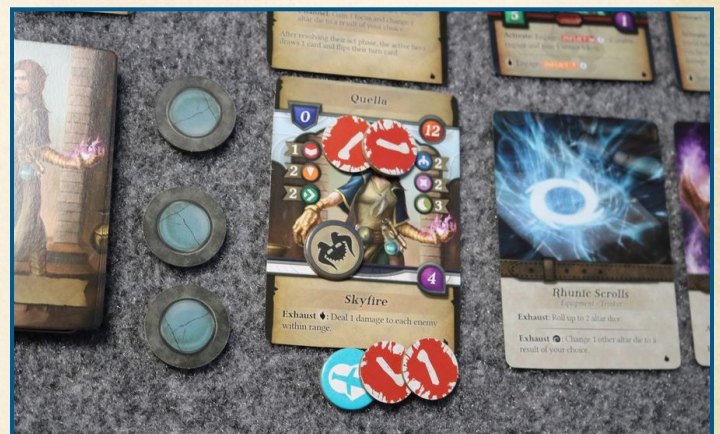
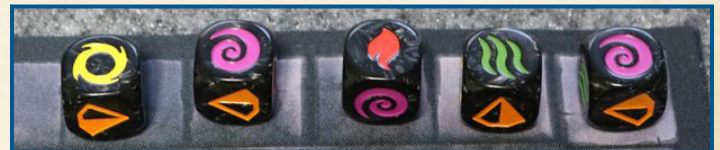
Oof. A bit of a rough roll here. Luckily Quella does have a focus token, so she uses it to convert one focus result to a success. That gives her two successes, reducing the incoming damage from 4 to 2.

She still has no defense value, but she does have 2 armor which she gladly discards to reduce the incoming damage to 0. Phew. Finally, Quella should have gained 2 focus tokens here... if I hadn't forgotten to take them. Whoops! Even I make mistakes sometimes. We'll just have to continue the tutorial without them. Sorry, Quella!

However, the rest of the Froxling's activate effect will resolve regardless of how the test went (see Page 2 of the rulebook, 'Conditional Effects' for details). Quella has no focus (does anyone else hear a faint cursing of their name? No? Just me?) so she suffers the 1 damage.

Worse still, that water rhune is still around so she will have to suffer an additional damage because of the rhune effect.

The water rhune is re-rolled and Quella takes her wounds and a focus token for the remaining focus result. (Note: As mentioned above, Quella should have earned this focus earlier!)



That completes the Frox Raider's Activation.

Next is the Froxling Swarm. It activates and makes Quella **TEST** (3). She easily passes this with the help of a few criticals so she does not need to gain the threat token. (Note: I made another whoops here! Quella should have gained the focus from this roll as soon as this Test was over. I didn't give her the focus until after resolving the entire Froxling Swarm card. Sorry again, Quella!)

This completes Quella's react phase. Rowen becomes the active hero and resolves his react phase.

The green Muckslinger will Activate first. Like the Raider, it will also Engage and Inflict. However, the Muckslinger has a range of 5.

Quella is the nearest hero, so the Muckslinger will find the most optimal position to target her when it engages. In this case, it only needs to move a few spaces to be within range 5. Since this room has a bend in it, it's a good idea to double check that we have line of sight when inflicting or attacking.

Two figures have line of sight to each other if:



- 1 They are both in the same room OR one figure is in the room and the other figure is the adjacent room's connecting door space (with the door open). \*

AND

- 2 You can draw a line from any part of one figure's space to any part of the other figure's space without crossing a wall or closed door.

*Note that figures and features do not block line of sight - only walls and closed doors do.*

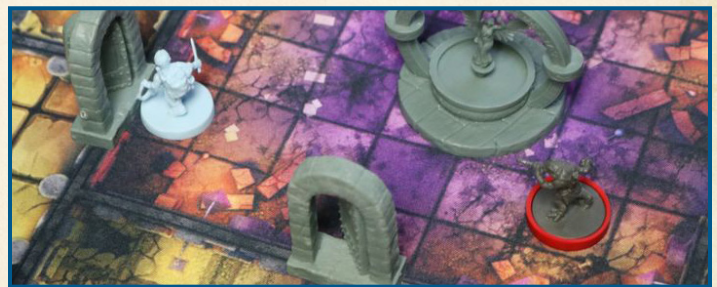
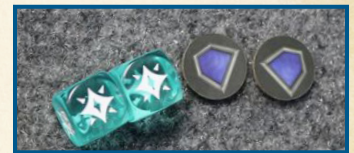
We definitely meet the first criteria and a quick check using something with a straight edge (the laser line is overkill here, but it shows up well on camera) shows we meet the second criteria as well. Note that line of sight is bidirectional: **if you can see them, they can see you.**

*\*Note: For a visual example regarding door spaces and line of sight, refer to page 14 when Rowen opened the 3rd door. Because he is standing in the door space, he satisfies condition 1 for drawing line of sight into the room with Quella and the Fungal patch. You can also visually check that he meets the 2nd condition for line of sight to both Frox and Quella herself.*

When the Muckslinger attempts to Inflict, Quella is ready this time. She plays the other copy of Stoneskin to gain more armor.

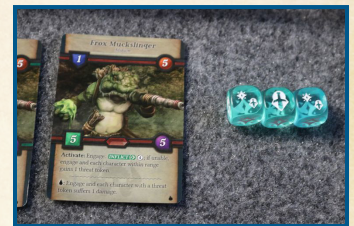
Then she resolves the Inflict test, rolling 2 successes. Those combined with the two armor tokens prevent her from taking any more damage.

The red Frox Muckslinger now activates. It moves 1 space closer to be in the optimal position and Inflicts Agility 4 on Rowen.



Although Rowen has a strong agility attribute value of 3, he doesn't have any focus tokens to take advantage of this roll. He at least rolled two successes, which reduces the incoming damage to 2.

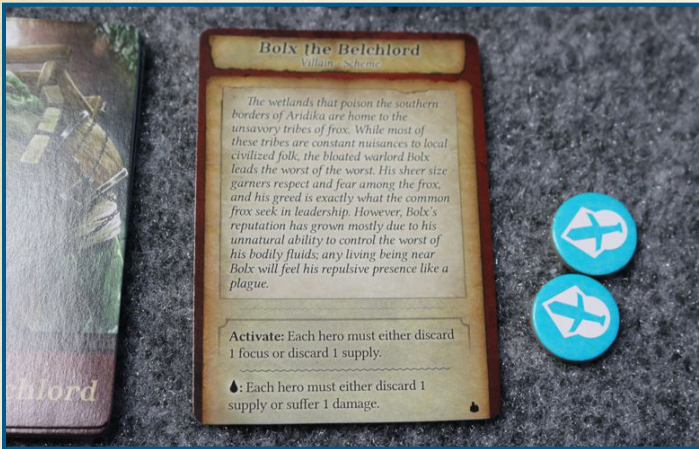
Rowen's defense value is 1 and it further reduces the incoming damage to 1. That's enough to trigger adding a threat token though, so he gains 1 damage token, 1 threat, and 3 focus from his remaining focus results.



**This completes Rowen's act phase and the Threat Turn.**

## Villain Turn

Much like the threat turn, we Activate all cards in the villain area, left to right. Bolx only has the one, but other bosses may accumulate more over the course of a game.

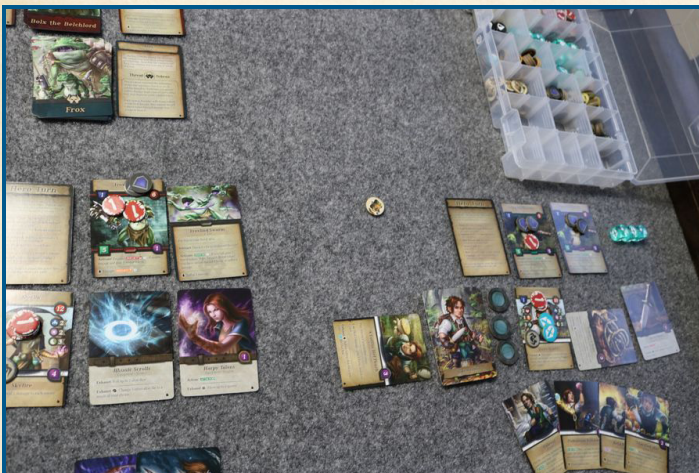


The heroes decide to discard a focus each. There is no water rhune in the altar pool, so the rhune effect is not resolved.



After activating all cards, the heroes draw 1 (and only 1) villain card. This is an Event card, so we will resolve it and then discard it.

Each minion gains 2 armor. That's bad news for the heroes.



This completes the Villain turn.

## Quest Turn

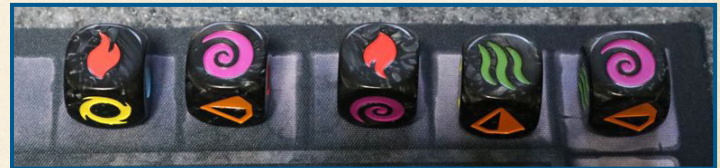
Once again, we'll be resolving Activate effects from left to right, beginning with the Quest Rules card. No hero currently has any clues, so the Quest Rules activation does nothing at this time.



The Solar Altar activates next. The heroes elect not to discard any focus, as they're okay with the current altar pool.

As we saw with the enemies, non-hero cards can have rhune effects too. Remember that rhune effects on non-hero cards are mandatory.

The light rhune is re-rolled and each **figure** heals 1 damage. That includes the enemies! This altar is a bit of a double edged sword..



Also remember that the threat tokens make healing more difficult for the heroes - they 1 discard threat token for each damage they would have healed. That clears the threat tokens from both heroes.

Next is the Activate on Fungal Patch. Note that when cards are attached like this, resolve the top card's Activate first and then the attached card's Activate. Since Quella is adjacent to the Fungal Patch when it activates, she may deal 1 damage to an enemy in her room.

She chooses the green Muckslinger.

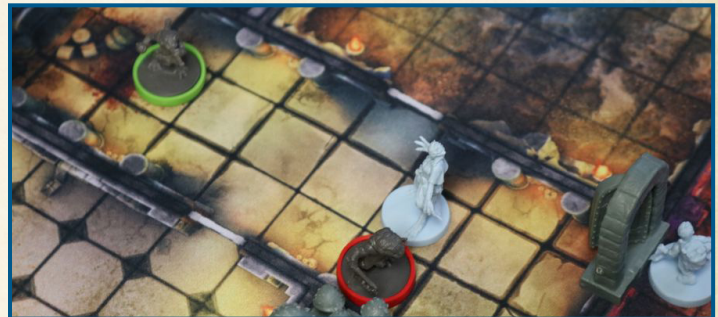


Then she resolves the Activate on the attached quest card. Because she is adjacent to the feature, she may draw from the clue deck. She finds a clue!

While she could give this to Rowen, she decides to take control of this clue and places it into her hero play area.



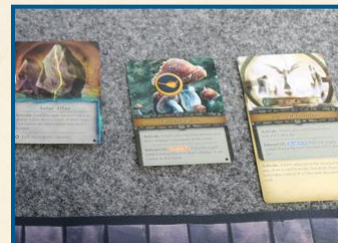
This puts her within 4 spaces of both Frox in the room.



She exhausts her character card and re-rolls a fire rhune to deal 1 damage to both Frox in range. Remember that defense and armor are only used during attack and inflict tests, so this damage is dealt directly.



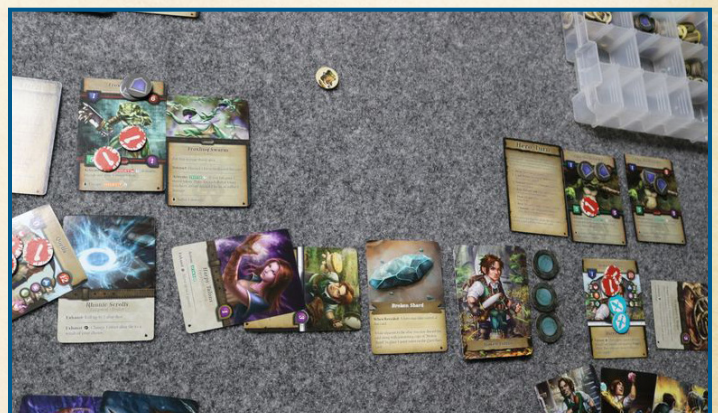
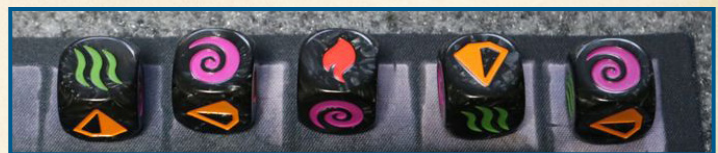
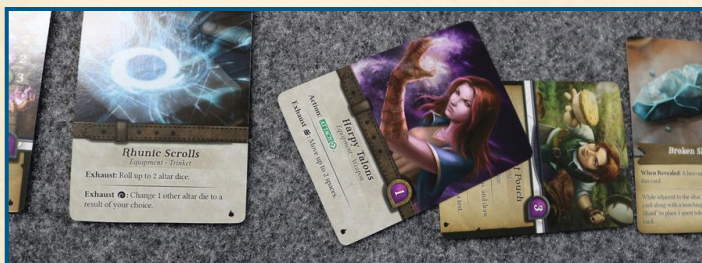
Because she took control of a clue, the quest card attached to Fungal Patch is discarded.



Because no heroes are adjacent to the Blessed Fountain, both of the remaining Activate effects do nothing.

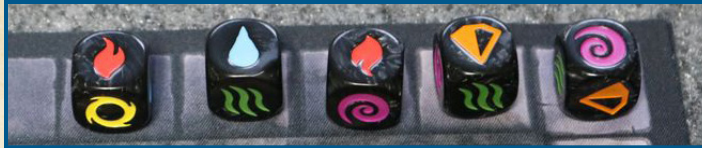
While this is technically the end of the Quest turn, the heroes want to resolve some exhaust effects before the next round. Remember that exhaust effects can be performed outside of the hero act phases.

Quella exhausts Harpy Talons and re-rolls the wind rhune to move 2 spaces.



Rowen wants in on the fun too.

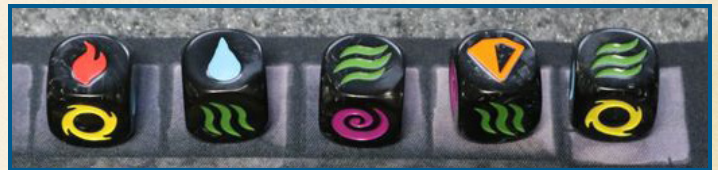
He exhausts his character card to move 2 spaces and then exhausts his Burry Knife to stab the raider in the back.



Quella decides to resolve the Use effect the Lofflin Hot Pouch. This heals 2, gains a focus and draws... another Stoneskin! Quella can't even complain about pulling yet another copy of this. The other 2 came in very handy recently. Remember that resolving a Use effect discards that card from your play area. Since Lofflin Hot Pouch was from Rowen's deck, it will be discarded to Rowen's discard pile.



Finally, Quella exhausts Rhunic scrolls for the bottom rhune effect to tweak the altar dice one last time this round. She's got plans for the next round.



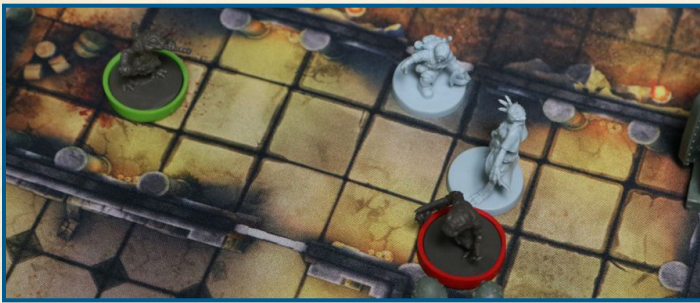
**Speaking of which, this completes Round 1.** Now that we've completed an entire round together, hopefully you've gotten a good idea of how the game works. There's still a bit more to learn, but moving forward, **I'm going to go use fewer images** unless I need to show you a new concept.

## ROUND 2

Each hero refreshes all of the exhausted cards in their hero play areas. Do not refresh any cards in the threat, villain, or quest areas. To refresh a card, simply turn it back upright. Then each hero flips over their action tokens.

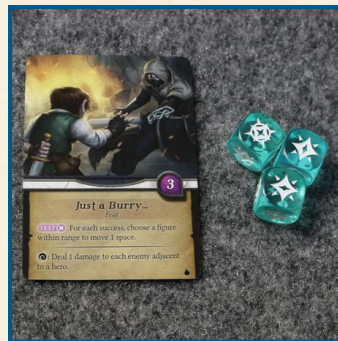
Rowen decides to go first this time.

However, Quella quickly interrupts him by exhausting her character card to deal 1 damage to each Frox in the room. The fire rhune rerolls into a shadow rhune. Well, that's actually rather convenient. Rowen exhausts his Burry Knife to place another damage on the Raider, re-rolling the shadow rhune into another shadow rhune. Only 1 damage left to defeat the Raider. Well this is all working out nicely.

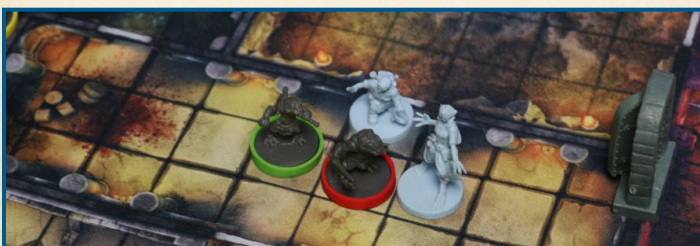


Then Rowen exhausts his character card, re-rolling the wind rhune into a fire rhune, to move into the door space.

He then plays the feat card 'Just A Burry' and Tests charisma. He rolls a critical and 2 successes.



For each success, he may move 1 figure 1 space. He chooses the raider first, drawing it closer. Then he chooses the Muckslinger twice in a row, drawing it 2 spaces closer. Surprise! It's a Burry ambush! Rowen resolves the rhune effect (re-rolling shadow into light), to deal 1 damage to each enemy adjacent to him.



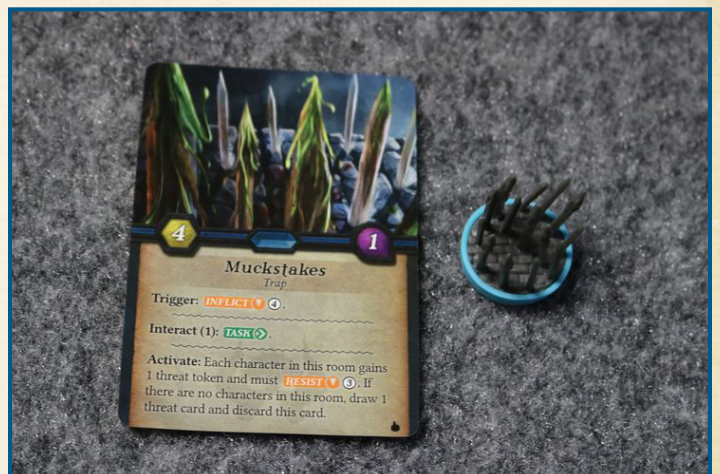
That is enough to put a 6th damage on the Raider. It is defeated! When an enemy is defeated, remove its miniature from the board, clear all tokens from its card and put the card in its respective discard pile.

**Whenever a Minion is defeated or a Trap is overcome, the heroes gain 1 supply.** Since the Frox Raider was a Minion, Rowen takes 1 supply. It's been a good turn so far and we haven't even used an action!



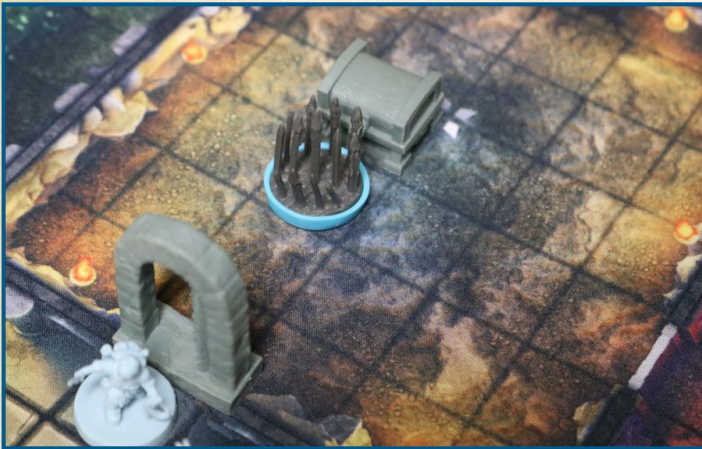
Since Rowen is on the door space, he decides to open the door and **reveal** the next room. We place the door mini and then draw a feature. It's the Locked Chest. This is a 1x1 feature, so it goes directly on the feature space. Then we draw a quest card - Mystical Aura. This attaches to the feature card and then lets the heroes spend focus to manipulate the altar pool if they wish. The heroes elect not to.

Finally, each hero must draw a threat card. Quella draws another Froxling Swarm but Rowen draws something we haven't seen yet: a Trap.

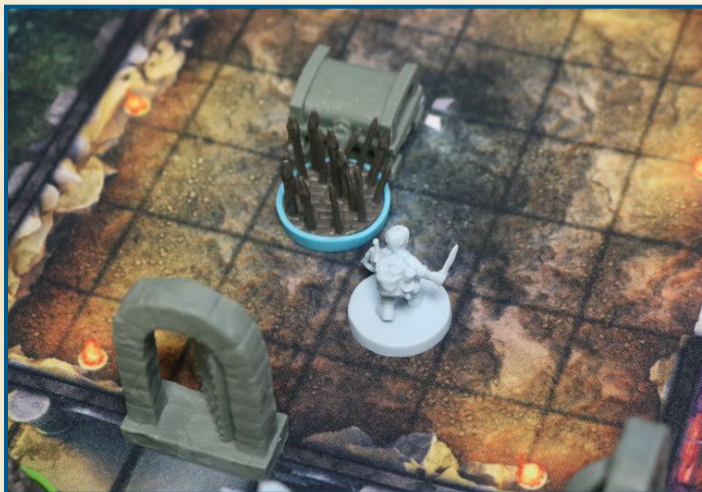


Traps represent nefarious contraptions that make exploring the dungeon that much more difficult. Traps will resolve their Activate effects during the threat turn, but they also have Trigger effects that resolve whenever a hero gets within range. We'll see how this works in a moment.

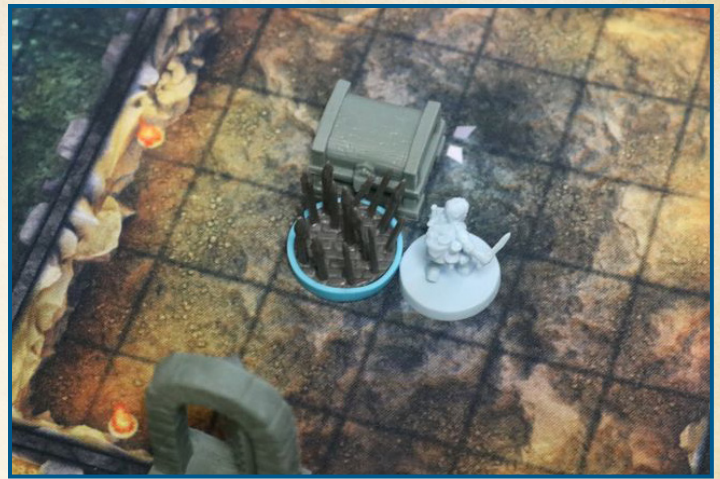
A Trap drawn while revealing a room is placed adjacent to the feature, as close to as many characters as possible.



Rowen sees the trap right in front of him, but he just can't help himself! There's treasure to be had! He takes his first action to move. He gets two spaces into the room which puts him in range of the trap! It triggers, inflicting fortitude 4 on Rowen. Rowen only has 1 fortitude, but he manages to roll a critical and a success, reducing the incoming damage to 2. His defense value blocks another point of damage for a net 1 damage. The trap is a threat card though, so Rowen also gains a threat token for taking damage from its Inflict.



A little poison poke won't stop Rowen's hunt for treasure though. He takes the last step of the movement action towards the treasure... which triggers the trap again! Ouch! This time Rowen only manages to roll a single success, which combined with his defense value, reduces the incoming damage to 2. He gains 2 damage and another threat token. I hope it was worth it Rowen!



Rowen decides he's had enough of this trap and wants to disarm it. On the trap card, there is an Interact (1) that lets a hero **TASK** (🎲). Task is another new type of test. *Note: Performing an interact costs an action. This should have cost Rowen his 2nd action... but I forgot to flip the token! Whoops again! We'll have to continue the tutorial without charging Rowen an action for this though. Maybe this makes up for Quella's missing focus from earlier?*

When a hero Tasks, they are attempting to add progress tokens on a card in an effort to complete some task, such as disarming a trap, dispelling a curse, etc. They roll hero dice equal to the tested attribute. If the Task has a difficulty, it will cancel that many successes. The remainder is added to the targeted card as progress.

Before rolling dice, Rowen decides to spend a supply to add 1 more dice to his roll. He rolls 3 successes and 2 focus results. He spends a focus to convert one focus result into another success. Since the Task had no difficulty, the net result is 4 progress placed on the trap. This is enough to overcome the trap. Its miniature is removed from the board and its card is discarded. Remember, whenever a Minion is defeated or a trap overcome the heroes gain 1 supply, so the heroes will gain 1 supply. Finally, Rowen gains a focus token for the remaining focus result.

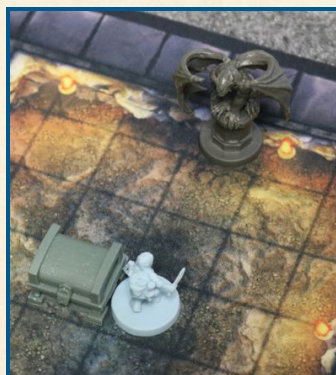
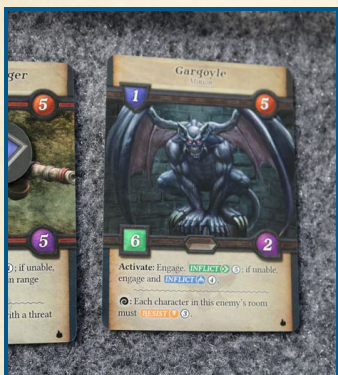




Rowen plays Professional Rummager as his 2nd action (Hm? What interact action? I don't know what you're talking about...). He performs a Search test, rolling 3 successes. Since this room's feature does not have any search tokens yet, none of the successes are cancelled. The first success earns him a search card - the Discarded Pack Event. This card gains him 2 supply and is then discarded. The remaining two successes gain him 2 more supply. Quite a good haul! Lastly, place a search token on the Locked Chest card. The remaining text on Professional Rummager lets him discard supply to move, which he elects to do once and take one more step into the room. Finally, he decides to resolve the rhune effect (re-rolling the earth rhune into a wind rhune) to draw another search card. He draws another event card, but this one isn't so good. This one spawns a **Lurker**.

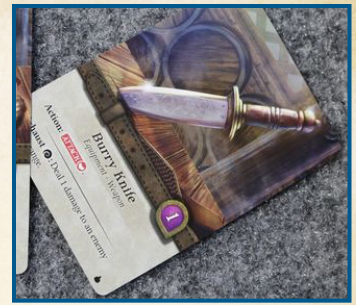


Lurkers are wandering monsters that roam the dungeon. They don't belong to the threat deck, but act much like the enemies in the threat deck. In this case Rowen draws the Gargoyle. Its card is placed into Rowen's threat area and its miniature in the shadow space nearest Rowen.



Rowen is not prepared to deal with a Gargoyle right now. Luckily he brought a rope.

For his final action, Rowen performs a **Card Action**. This is an effect on a card you control with the Action keyword. He chooses the action on his Trapper's Rope, which lets him exhaust a minion in range. **Exhausted enemy cards will not resolve the next time they would be Activated. Instead, they simply refresh.** Rowen exhausts the Gargoyle, buying him some time to think.

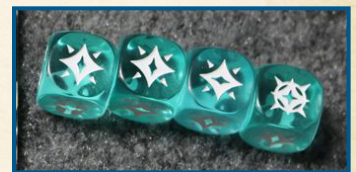


This completes Rowen's action step. He then performs his card step, drawing 1 card from his deck - the action card Burryland Instincts. Rowen's hero act phase is now complete.

Quella begins her hero act phase by taking the **Draw 1 Card Action**. As you might expect, this draws you 1 card from your deck. Quella draws the Action card Searing Blast.

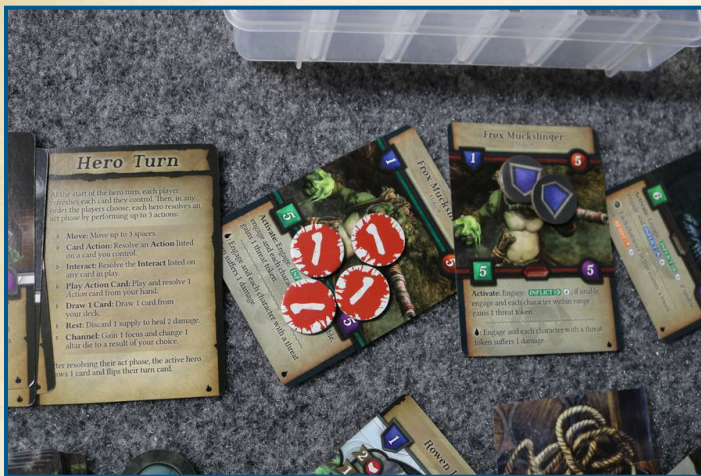
Next, it is finally time for what you've all probably been waiting for: the Attack test.

Quella plays Windchill, which allows her to perform an **ATTACK** (C). She targets the green Muckslinger in her room. The Attack test is the final type of test and allows heroes to attempt to damage enemies. As with all tests, you will be rolling dice equal to the testing attribute - 3 dice for Quella's 3 Intellect. She rolls a critical and three successes. That's 4 potential damage to the enemy, but enemies aren't totally helpless. This damage is first reduced by the enemy's defense value. The Muckslinger has a defense value of 1, so the potential damage is reduced to 3. Finally, if the enemy has any armor tokens they will discard as many as they are able to or are needed to reduce the potential damage. **While heroes have the option of using armor tokens during Inflict tests, enemies will always use armor tokens if able to.** The Muckslinger has 2 armor tokens, so the potential damage is reduced to just 1. The Muckslinger takes 1 wound.

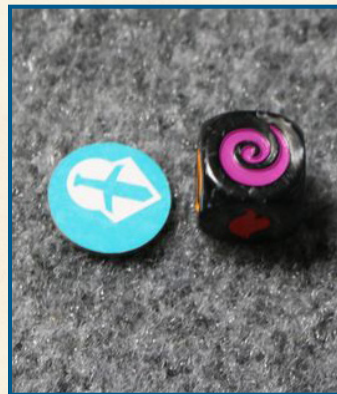


Quella elects to spend the water rhune (which re-rolls into another water rhune) to resolve Windchill's rhune effect. The green Muckslinger is exhausted.

Rowen resolves his react phase next. The green Muckslinger is exhausted. Instead of resolving the Activate effect, the Muckslinger card is simply **refreshed** by turning its card upright. That's all that the green Muckslinger will do this phase.



For her last action, Quella performs the **Channel Action**. This gains her 1 focus and allows her to change 1 altar die to a side of her choice. She does not want to leave water in the altar pool for the Frox or Bolx to use, so she changes that rhune to a shadow rhune.



With her action step completed, Quella resolves her card step by drawing 1 card. She draws another Searing Blast. **This completes Quella's hero act phase.**

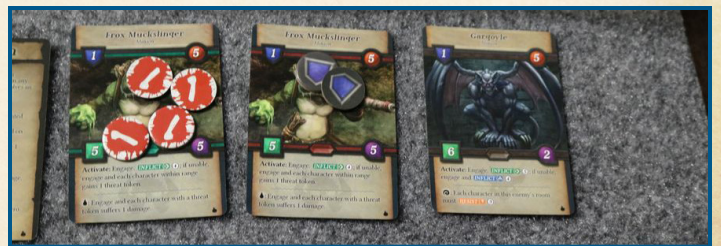
Next, the red Muckslinger activates. It engages, moving to the door space. From the door space it can draw line of sight to Quella, and Inflicts. Quella rolls a success and a focus, which she elects not to convert to another success. She suffers 3 damage, gains a threat token, and gains a focus token.

## Threat Turn

The heroes must now each resolve a react phase. Quella decides to resolve hers first. She has two Froxling Swarms in her threat area. These do resolve one after another, but for expediency, we can say that each one makes her **TEST** (3). She passes both tests, gaining 1 more focus as the net result of her rolls. Since she has no threat tokens, the rest of the text on both Froxling Swarm cards does not apply to her. Her react phase is complete.



Finally, the Gargoyle **refreshes**. This completes the Threat Turn.



## Villain Turn

Bolx activates, forcing each hero to either discard a focus or a supply. Rowen chooses to discard a focus. Quella wants to keep all her focus and discards a supply.

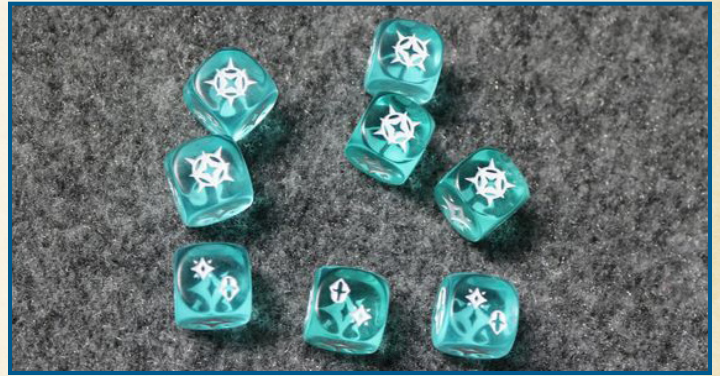
Then, 1 villain card is drawn - the event card Tongue from the Dark. Each hero must **RESIST** (C) (4). Quella uses a supply to add a die to her roll and gets two successes. She suffers 2 damage. Rowen rolls a success and a joint success/focus result. He elects not to spend a focus to convert the focus result, so he will suffer 2 damage and gain 1 focus. Since both heroes suffered damage, the remainder of the event card forces them to either discard a supply or exhaust an equipment card.

Both heroes elect to exhaust equipment - Harpy's Talons and the Trapper's Rope respectively. This completes the villain turn.



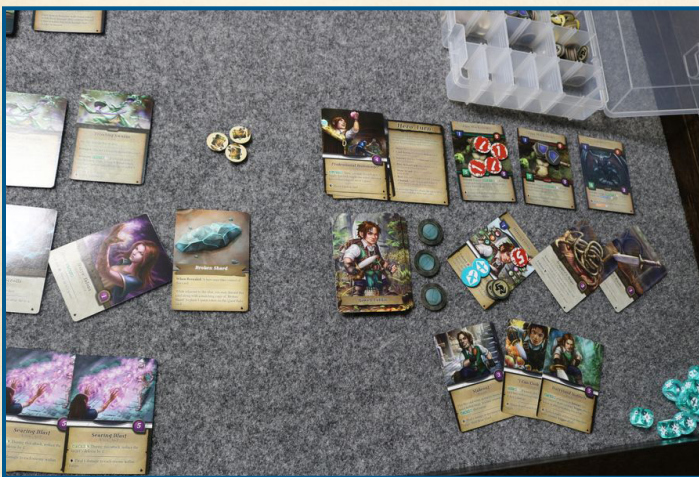
## Quest Turn

Each card in the quest area activates, beginning with the quest rules card. Quella has a Clue card, so she must make a choice of discarding focus or taking a **RESIST** (C) (3) test. Since her Intellect is strong with a value of 3, she decides to take the Resist test.



Wow! Quella absolutely shrugs off the test, rolling a bunch of critials and 3 joint success/focus results.

While she does have three focus results here, Quella can only gain 2 more focus tokens because **Heroes are limited to a maximum of 5 focus tokens.**

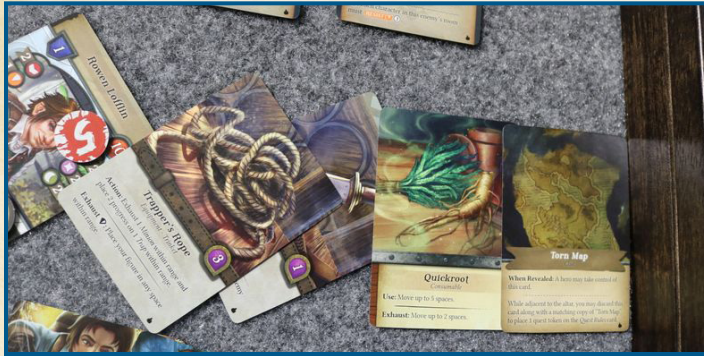


Next, the Solar Altar activates. The heroes decline to spend their focus on manipulating the altar pool. Since there is a light rhune (which re-rolls into wind), each figure heals 1 damage. This heals 1 damage from the green Mucklsinger and removes 1 threat token from each hero.

The Fungal Patch activates but since no hero is adjacent nothing happens. Likewise, the Blessed Fountain and attached quest card both activate but since no hero is adjacent nothing happens.

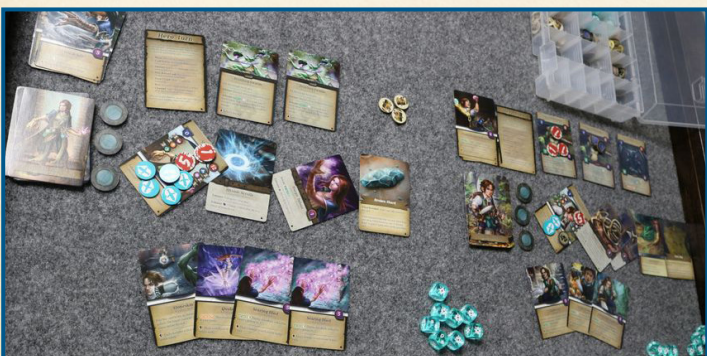
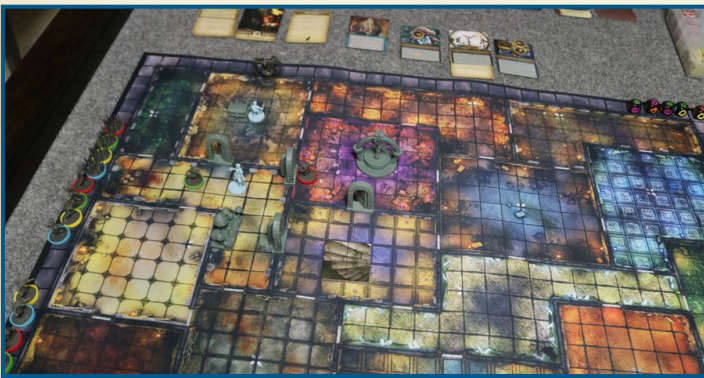
Finally, the Locked Chest activates. Rowen is adjacent, so he elects to place 1 search token on the card to draw a search card. He finds some Quickroot. Then the attached quest card activates. Rowen is still adjacent, so he draws from the clue deck...

It's another clue - the Torn Map. While Rowen could give this to Quella, he decides to hold onto it. Since a hero took control of a Clue, the quest card attached to the Locked Chest is discarded.



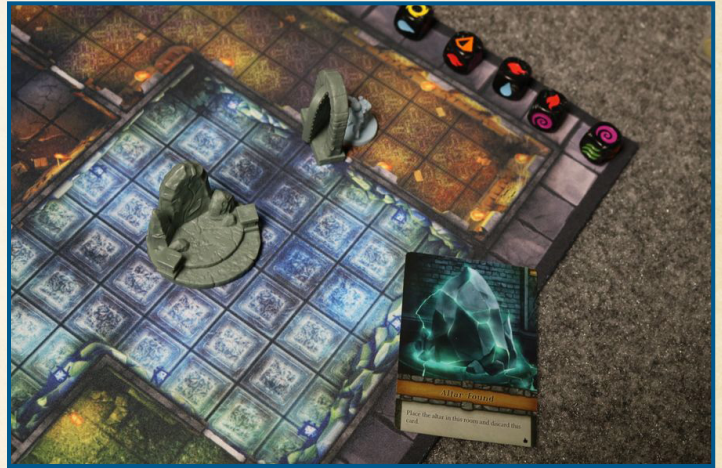
And that completes the Quest Turn and Round 2.

This is the current state of the game at the end of Round 2. If you've been following along so far, now is a great time to take over and see if you can finish the quest from here. You should know 95% of what you need to know to finish a game of Altar Quest now. There's just a few more things I want to cover with this tutorial, but we'll have to peer into our crystal ball to see what may happen in the not-so-distant future.



## IN THE NOT-SO-DISTANT FUTURE PART 1

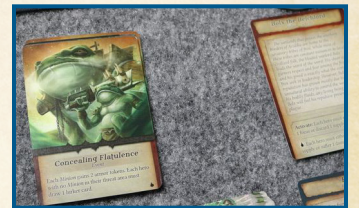
Rowen reveals a room and draws the Altar Found card. Unlike normal feature cards, the 'Altar Found' card is not placed into the quest area. Simply place the Altar miniature in this room's feature space and use the Altar



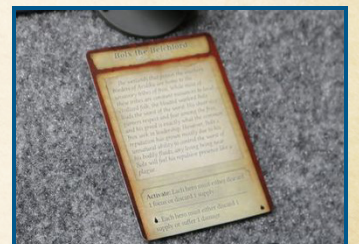
Card that's already in the quest area as the feature card for this room.

## IN THE NOT-SO-DISTANT FUTURE PART 2

It is the villain turn. The players have just resolved Bolx's activate effect and now need to draw a villain card. But the deck is empty!



This means the villain spawns! Place the villain's figure in the shadow space nearest the most characters and flip the villain card over. **The villain immediately activates.**



Depending on the quest, defeating the villain is not always mandatory. But if players do manage to defeat the villain there will be no villain card to activate and no villain cards to draw. The dungeon is whipped into a frenzy over their fallen leader. **After the villain is defeated, heroes will no longer draw a villain card. However, each hero must now draw 1 threat card during the Villain turn instead.**



Finally, a quick note about Bolx and movement. Bolx is a Huge figure. You can find the complete rules for moving huge figures on page 16 of the rulebook, but the quick version is that Huge figures ‘teleport’ to wherever they want to be.



And with that last brief look into the crystal ball, this tutorial is complete!

## CONCLUSION

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If you’ve made it this far, congratulations for reading this entire tutorial. I hope you’ve found it helpful. If you have any questions about rules, I strongly encourage you to visit the [unofficial FAQ](#) as your first resource. If you have any questions about this tutorial or notice any errors I made, don’t hesitate to ask in the comments of the original post, which can be found [here](#).

Thanks for reading! Good luck out there, adventurers!

Check out my other Altar Quest articles!

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[Altar Quest: Deck Overview, Quest/Encounter Summaries, Difficulty Modification guide, and New Player Suitability Ratings](#)

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