

ASCENDED

BECOME CHOSEN

RULEBOOK

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ASCENDED

BECOME CHOSEN

WAKE UP!

The cold penetrates your ragged clothes like a knife ready to wreck your very soul. You look around, confused and sored. The only thing you see is a blurry division of space between black and grey. Slowly, you manage to recognize two sets of tracks stretching into the woods, ending where you are. You quickly get up, panting and searching for some kind of familiar sign in distant horizons. No success. A hundred words echoe through your mind, but you don't understand their meaning.

An intense spasm makes you drop to the ground again. You have to move, fast. It doesn't matter where. You need to find shelter or you'll die.

You make your way into the dense forest, following one of the sets of tracks, stumbling and completely blind to what's ahead. Lurking shadows and ocasional blurs of dim light fill your vision here and there, but strangely you're unafraid. The smell of whatever is ahead is intense.

A fire...a camp. Nobody. You slowly start perceiving your surroundings with more clarity. You search around. Some abandoned clothes, finally. The footprints, you look back, see where they came from, where they are going... No, it can't be. Your footprints are not that big.

WERE YOU FOLLOWED?

A large shape appears on a small clearing up ahead. As you carefully approach to take a better look at it, you understand. You're being watched... hunted. That's no ordinary animal. Movement in the bushes... the faint sound of steel touching stone... as you slowly slide down a fallen tree to hide, you realize you've walked into a trap.

For a moment, only the wind makes its presence known, but you can't stop shaking from the adrenaline rush. You close your eyes just for a second, trying to desperately remember what you are and why you're here.

A branch snaps and suddenly you remember something. A sudden burst of energy fills your soul as you look towards the sky and rush into a loud prayer. As the strange shadow slowly approaches, you witness in awe as your skin turns to stone and your claws sharpen and grow... and you know you've been heard.

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GAME ARTWORK AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOANA HIGINO
CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREA ALEMANNO

What's in the Box ?

- 1 Rulebook;
- 10 D6 (6 faces) and 1 D12 dice (12 faces);
- 4 Player Dashboards and markers;
- 1 Game Dashboard and markers;
- 4 individual models;
- 100 Terrain Tiles of 7 different types;
- 4 Special Profile Cards;
- 30 Artifact Cards;
- 30 Mutation Cards;
- 12 Villain Cards;
- 12 Companion Cards;
- 28 tokens (Origin, Power, Superstition, Wound)

THE PATH TO ASCENSION

Ascended is a game of survival and magic, where you play a creature that wakes up alone and lost in a cold and dark world, oblivious of who or what it is. Your objective is to survive and discover your true self, while at the same time exploring the world around you. This rulebook will help you do that.

- **Ascended features two distinct chapters: Awakening and Ascension.** During Awakening, you explore your surroundings and build up your strength. Then, during Ascension, you come to realize who you are and fight your way through the perils of this world, overcoming amazing challenges in search for a godly reward. Each chapter has its own rules and lasts for a pre-determined number of rounds, **each round featuring three phases: MOVE, DECIDE and BREATHE.**
- **During these chapters, two different game cycles will occur: Daylight and Darkness, represented by each of the sides of the terrain tiles.** The game starts during Daylight. When the cycle changes, you will have to flip all the terrain tiles over in the same direction, to show the corresponding cycle.



The game ends...

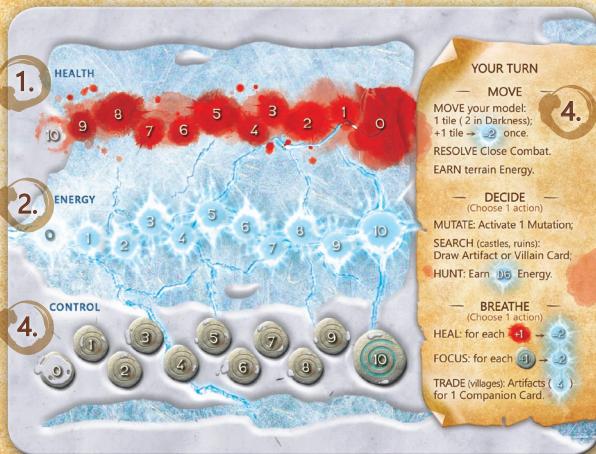
The game ends and the winner is determined when one of these conditions is met:

- One player manages to activate a special profile, score 30 points and return to his Origin;
- You reach the end of Round 30, and then the player with the highest score wins.

Ways of Earning Points:

- Energy Cost of traded Artifacts (see TRADE - page 10);
- 1 point for each damage inflicted to opponents in Combat (see CLOSE COMBAT - page 8);
- 5 points for each controlled populated tile (see PLACES OF POWER - page 9).

DASHBOARDS & TOKENS



Player Dashboard

1. Your Health Level is based on **Hit Points**, that are reduced when you sustain **Damage**. If you reach zero, you immediately lose all points, Energy and Control and place your model as closest to the tile where your Origin Token is as possible, with Health Level 10.
2. **Energy** is used to activate artifacts, move faster and recover Hit Points.
3. **Control** allows you to activate Mutations, and move unnoticed.
4. The **Turn Sequence** allows you to take decisions during your turn.

Game Dashboard

1. Here you can track the **Round** number and cycle.
2. You can use this scale for tracking each player's **Points**.
3. The Inquisitor (**Villain**) is a famous local creature that emerges to lead an attack against each player, when locals become restless and a **Great Witch Hunt** occurs (page 9).



ORIGIN TOKEN

This token is placed on your starting terrain tile.



POWER TOKEN

These tokens are placed on populated terrain tiles after you take control of them.



SUPERSTITION TOKEN

These tokens are drawn whenever you fail a Stealth test.



WOUND TOKEN

These tokens are used to track Companion and Villain Hit Points.

PLAYING CARDS



Artifact Cards

(effects usually last for one turn only)

- You can activate Artifacts with Energy at any time during your turn and trade them in a Village, earning points, during your **Breathe Phase – TRADE**;
- You can only trade **previously activated** Artifacts;
- You can have a **maximum of two untraded Artifact Cards** at any given moment.

Mutation Cards

(once activated effects are constant)

- Mutation Cards can be activated during the **Decide Phase – MUTATE**;
- Each time you activate a Mutation card, decrease your **Control Level** proportionally to its value;
- The maximum number of active Mutations any player can have at any given time is three;
- Mutations will remain active until destroyed or you replace them, during your **Decide Phase – MUTATE**.



Artifact and Mutation Cards have three types, that provide different benefits:

BODY TYPE



Body Type Mutations and Artifacts are usually related to increasing Combat abilities.
Active Body Type Mutations are usually better for offensive play.

SOUL TYPE



Soul Type Mutations and Artifacts are usually related to influencing opponent actions.
Active Soul Type Mutations are usually better for defensive play.

GEO TYPE



Geo Type Mutations and Artifacts are usually related to adapting to terrain.
Active Geo Type Mutations are a way to balance offensive and defensive play.

Unless otherwise stated in cards or in specific rules:

- Companion and Villain's Bonus represent the number of Combat Dice they roll AND their starting Hit Points.
- Villains use their own Combat Skill in Combat, while Companions use yours.
- Both Villains and Companions do not generate less Combat Dice when they lose Hit Points.
- The rules listed on Villain and Companion cards are only active in Combat and only apply to themselves.
- The word "opponent" is used to refer to other players, not to Villains or Companions.

Villain Cards

(Some concepts are better explained in the Combat section)

- Villain Cards are drawn in three types of situations:

- When Allya recruits a Villain as her Companion (see page 15);
- When a Great Witch Hunt ends (see page 9);
- When you try to take control of populated tiles (page 9).

In this last case, **you immediately attack the Villain**.

Follow all the rules for Close Combat (page 8) with these exceptions:

- Use the highest current terrain difficulty as your Combat Skill;
- Villains spawned in tiles generate and roll Parry dice equal to the number of total active Superstition tokens in play and the remaining as Thrust Dice, up to their Combat Bonus value;
- If you do not defeat him (remove all his hit points) after the first Combat, you have two choices: repeat Combat ONCE, or give up, in which case you count as having failed a Stealth Test (page 9) and discard the Villain;
- If you defeat him, you gain control of the tile or free it from the control of opponents - see page 9 for more details

Companion Cards

- Companion Cards are instantly activated (no cost) when you draw them, normally during your **Breathe Phase – TRADE**. They remain active until they lose their last Hit Point or you replace them.
- You can have a maximum of two active Companions.

Combat Bonus
& Hit Points



AWAKENING

The first 10 rounds

The Awakening Chapter represents the period of time during which players gather their strength and start to explore the terrain that surrounds them.

○ This Chapter starts on Round 1 and lasts until the end of Round 10.

○ During the Awakening Chapter, the active game cycle is Daylight.

Game Setup

- Shuffle and arrange **4 decks**: Mutations, Artifacts, Companions, Villains;
- Draw a **Villain card** (Inquisitor) and place it facing up on the Game Dashboard;
- Draw a **number of inactive Superstition tokens** equal to the Inquisitor's Combat Bonus;

Each player starts with:

- 1 Model and 1 Player Dashboard;
- 3 inactive Mutation Cards;
- 2 inactive Power Tokens and 1 Origin Token;

- Zero Energy and Control and 10 Health;
- 1 Snow Tile facing up (Daylight), isolated from other players - place your Origin token here.

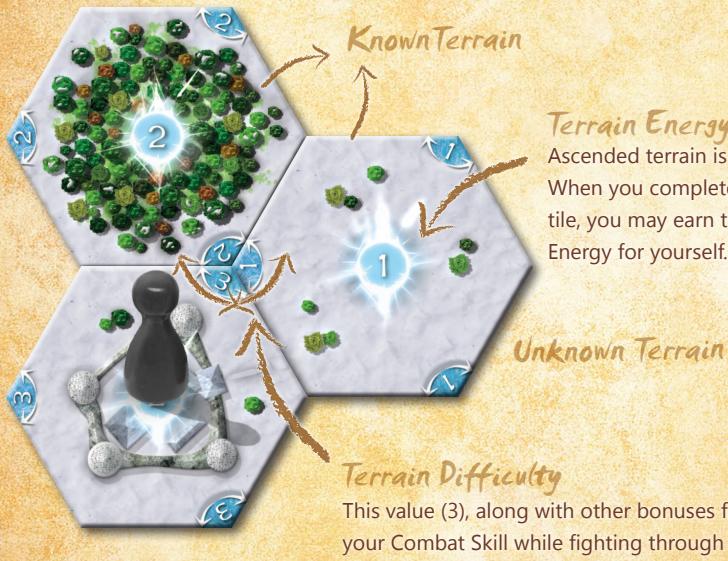


— TURN SEQUENCE —

- During Awakening Chapter, you must follow the Turn Sequence defined on the Player Dashboard.
- The turn sequence is composed of three Phases: Move, Decide and Breathe.
- During the Decide and Breathe Phases, you may only choose one action.

I - MOVE

1. During the Move Phase, you can move your model one tile into known or unknown terrain.
 - For an extra 2 Energy you may increase your movement by one in known terrain, ONCE per turn.
 - If you move outside of known terrain roll the D12 dice and add a new terrain tile according to the terrain generator chart (last page). Place your model on top.
 - When you move into a tile containing an opponent model, you enter Close Combat (page 8).
2. Add the current terrain's Energy value to your Energy Scale.



Terrain Energy Value

Ascended terrain is infused with Energy. When you complete a move into a terrain tile, you may earn the right to collect that Energy for yourself.

Terrain Difficulty

This value (3), along with other bonuses from cards, represents your Combat Skill while fighting through these two edges (attacking or defending). The higher the value, the higher opponents will need to roll on their Combat dice to inflict damage to you, or successfully defend against it in Combat - in this example, they'll need to roll a 4 or higher.

Close Combat

1. Determine Combat Skill and the Combat Dice Pool (D6 []) for both players:

COMBAT SKILL = Terrain Difficulty + Other card bonuses

- This is the value opponents have to beat when rolling combat dice to inflict or avoid damage.

COMBAT DICE POOL = Base Combat Dice + Companions Combat Bonus

- Base Combat Dice are dice generated by your Active Mutations (see below).
- Companion Bonus are dice generated by Companion Cards, subject to their own rules.
- The attacking player generates all "Thrust" dice, and the defender generates all "Parry" dice.

DICE POOL	BASE COMBAT DICE (per active Mutation)			COMPANIONS	
	Body Mutation	Soul Mutation	Geo Mutation		
Attacker (Thrust)	[] [] []	+	[]	+	+ Combat Bonus
Defender (Parry)	[]	+	[] [] []	+	+ Combat Bonus

- Before rolling dice - and starting with the defender - each player may change any number of his generated Parry dice to Thrust dice and vice-versa, spending  for each dice changed this way.

2. Each player then rolls his Combat Dice (Thrust and Parry) and compares the results:

- All dice results that beat the opponent's Combat Skill are successes;
- A roll of 6 is always a success and a roll of 1 always fails (before applying any modifiers).
- Successful Parry rolls cancel out successful Thrust rolls and uncancelled Thrust rolls inflict damage;

3. Resulting damage is allocated and combat is resolved (1 damage inflicted = 1 point).

- Damage suffered is freely allocated by each player to his Companions or his Health scale;
- The player that inflicts the most damage wins Combat (ties mean the attacker lost);
- The losing player retreats to one empty adjacent tile chosen by the winning player.



1. Combat Skill: 1
 Dice Pool = 1 (Soul) + 2 (Geo)
 (Thrust) [] []
 Changes: 0

2. Roll Thrust: 3 V V X
 Roll Parry: 0 [] [] []

3. Damage Inflicted: 1
 Allocates damage to Health Scale



Combat Skill: 2
 Dice Pool = 1 (Body) + 2 (Assassin)
 (Parry) [] []
 Changes: 2
 (Assassin) [] []

Roll Thrust: 2 V V X
 Roll Parry: 1 [] [] []

Damage Inflicted: 1
 Allocates damage to Assassin



It's a Tie: Blue player loses combat. Both players score 1 Point.

Places of Power

(Village, Castle and Ruins Tiles)

You must be careful in **populated tiles**, as locals are very suspicious of strangers. However, if you're strong enough, you can convince them to become your allies and resist other players influence!

When you start your Decide Phase on one of these tiles and you don't have a Power token on it, you must test for **STEALTH**: roll a D12 dice and compare to your Control Level. If D12 is higher, the test is failed: draw a Superstition token and lose one Hit Point. If it's your turn, also skip the Decide Phase.

When all Superstition tokens have been activated, locals will organize a **GREAT WITCH HUNT**.

GREAT WITCH HUNT



- Each player is immediately **attacked by the Inquisitor in Close Combat**;
- The Inquisitor rolls a number of combat dice equal to the **number of active Superstition tokens of each player**. Use the highest current terrain difficulty as each Player's Combat Skill;
- Players cannot use **Parry** or **Thrust** Dice against the Inquisitor's attack;
- Finally **discard all the Superstition tokens** and draw a new Villain to become the next Inquisitor.

If you passed your Stealth test, you can attempt to **take control of these tiles** (see below - maximum of two per player), **earning 5 Points per controlled tile**. If you succeed, place a **Power token** on that tile and/or remove any others (the player that has his token removed loses 5 points). Players starting their Decide Phase on a tile controlled by an opponent must either try to take control of it or automatically fail their Stealth Test.

Ruins



Castle



Village



Taking Control of Ruins and Castles:

Upon entering the terrain tile and during your **Decide Phase** you must **SEARCH** for a Villain and **defeat it** (page 5).

Taking Control of Villages:

Upon entering the terrain tile, instead of choosing an action during your Decide Phase, **reduce your Control Level by 8**. If you do not have enough Control, you count as having failed your Stealth Test.

II - DECIDE

Starting the Decide Phase, you may choose ONE action (Mutate, Search or Hunt):

— MUTATE — you look to the skies and pray for divine help:

You may choose two of the options below and proceed by any order:

- **Activate one Mutation Card from your hand**, spending Control equal to the card's cost;
- **Draw a new Mutation card**;
- **Swap any number of your inactive Mutation cards** with the deck.

— SEARCH — you look around for treasure... or glory:

(Castle and Ruins Tiles only)

Draw one random card from the Artifact Deck OR from the Villains Deck, in case you're trying to take control of the tile.

— HUNT — you choose to hunt for food and regain energy:

Add D6  Energy to your Energy Scale.

III - BREATHE

Starting the Breathe Phase, you may choose ONE action (Heal, Focus or Trade):

— HEAL — you patch your open wounds as best you can:

Recover lost Hit Points by spending two energy per Hit Point.

You cannot recover lost Hit Points of Companions or Villains.

— FOCUS — you take a moment and concentrate, taming your delusions:

Increase your Control Level by spending two Energy per level.

— TRADE — you visit the local tavern seeking hired help:

(Village Tiles only)

You may **trade one or more of your activated Artifact Cards for Points** (1 Energy = 1 Point).

Each time you earn **4 or more Points in a single trade**, you can **draw one random Companion**.

Blue Player Map
Starting Position



End of Round 10 - Cycle Change
Blue Player has highest Control Level

At the end of Round 10, the player with the highest Control Level will join all player's maps, anyway and anywhere he chooses, but keeping each map's original layout. Ties are resolved by scoring the highest on the roll of a D6 dice. After joining maps, flip all terrain tiles over to show the Darkness side.

Example A



Example B



Blue Player Map
Ending Position

AFTER JOINING,
FLIP ALL TERRAIN TILES OVER

**Black Player
Map**

ASCENSION

The last 20 Rounds

This chapter starts on Round 11 and lasts until the end of round 30. The **Darkness** cycle lasts from Round 11 to Round 20, followed by a final Daylight cycle, lasting from Round 21 to Round 30.

- During **Darkness**, players can move through two terrain tiles in known terrain, but cannot explore.
- At the beginning of each of your turns, check if you have activated the **number and type of base profile mutations** listed on any of the character's entry. If so, you immediately **unlock the corresponding special profile and its abilities and unique turn sequence**. These will remain active until the game's end.
- You cannot activate any other mutations unless an active one is destroyed or replaced, in which case you can only replace it for one mutation of the same type, respecting the profile requirements. If you lose one or more Mutations after activating a profile, you still use its abilities, but may roll less dice in Combat.
- After activating a special profile, place the special profile card over the Player Dashboard turn sequence.



TERR MORPH



— Base Mutations —



Terr Morph - The Unbroken

Silence falls. You look at your pale reflection on the ice, under the moonlight. This is you, the creature that looks more and more familiar. Little cracks emerge on the surface. You witness as they form, apparently randomly at first, but slowly converging into your face's reflection, filling it with small beacons of light. This is your home, you realize. You've always been here, amongst these mountains, these lakes. They are sacred to you, and you are their blessing, their ancient protector of a thousand trespasses, their stone-hard shield.

The puny locals call you Morph in disdain - mostly fear, but these other souls you sense...they're different. You feel anger at the thought of failure. They never broke you in the past. No stranger will break you now.

- When activating an artifact of the Geo Type choose one opponent. He cannot use one of his active Mutations until the beginning of your next turn (you choose which).
- Roll +1 Base Combat Dice for each active opponent Power token on the map (maximum of 3 dice).

— Base Mutations —



Magnus Zor - The Holy Quest

A bright light comes before you, hovering above the snow. The white intruder fills your shelter with small shadows and your soul with clarity. You finally know the path you must take, and from it you shall not go astray, no matter the cost. The luminous being whispers words that bind your destiny and bring up memory. The rusty sword you found now violently glows, ready to shine inside your enemy's guts once more.

Magnus is your birthname. Zor is your holy title, the one your followers chanted as you walked the earth, filling the ranks and pockets of your white legion, purifying the souls of the wicked. Your memories are mostly of glory and gracious light, but an obscure, nameless treachery also stains your past and stings your heart. You feel the traitor is still alive, and near. Your pain is still fresh. Avenge it you must. Now.

- When activated, Magnus immediately draws a random Companion.
- When Magnus is attacking, and before starting Combat, opponents must test for Stealth.
- Magnus rolls +1 Base Combat Dice for each of his opponent's Superstition tokens.

ALLYA LOVE



— Base Mutations —



Allya Love - The Lost Queen

Just as your eyes are becoming lost in the intense flame of your campfire, you suddenly realize there is a shadow up ahead, darker than darkness itself. You walk towards it, unafraid. Every step you take makes you feel more and more focused and confident. When you stop, there is nothing there but yourself - Allya.

A cascade of memories floods your head. You are both loved and feared by the thousands. Your beauty and persuasion is legendary, unparalleled, supernatural. You have been the queen of the ages, ruling amazing tribes through the sheer unrelentless use of your mind. You were everything, to everyone... but masses are weak, vicious and ignorant, jealous and obsessed. Years of superstition and fanaticism have left you alone, isolated and countryless. They banished you. No more. You'll bind them all to your will, forever.

- When activating an Artifact of the Soul Type reduce one opponent's Control by 2. After that, he immediately tests for Stealth;
- Allya can recruit Villains (except The King, in which case you return the card and draw another). These count as two Companions for all purposes, except they can never generate Parry dice.

— Base Mutations —



Malus - The Red Fury

The feeling of hunger fills the air around you. You behold as your last hunt draws its final breath, and know this is what you were waiting for. At last you feel in control of your beautifully enraged self... you are.

The red liquid flows through the snow, arousing your senses. Under the full, furious moon, the crystal clear truth hits you... you are vampire. You feel unstoppable, just like you did on your last battle, a glorious massacre.

A name echoes in your head - Malus – the undisputed ruler of a kingdom of endless black marble landscapes and red, passionate disorder. The home of a million dancing beings, chanting high in the sky or under the earth with no rules and no limits. No greater power than their own, lustful will. This blighted paradise is all you've ever known, and you'll do anything to get it back. You'll start right here.

- When activating an Artifact of the Body Type Malus earns 1 Wound token worth 2 Hit Points. When he takes damage he may discard this token instead of decreasing his Health Level;
- During Darkness, before comparing results of Combat rolls, Malus can roll one additional Base Combat Dice for each unsuccessful opponent roll.

SINGLE PLAYER RULES

During a Single Player game, you will escape captivity with the help of a friendly Companion.

You will know more about your surroundings, but you'll be hunted by unpredictable foes!

Your objective is to score as many points as you can until reaching end of Round 30, without ever having lost all your hit points.

You will use similar rules to those of multi-player gameplay, with a few exceptions outlined below:

- You will be playing against Villains, which you will consider to be "opponents" for all purposes. They will act as if they have a single opponent - **you**. You can play against a maximum of 3 Villains simultaneously.
- Just like any opponent, these Villains will follow a normal turn sequence, use a specific model and use an individual dashboard. They will activate Mutations and Artifacts and generate Combat Dice on their own, as described ahead. However, Villains can never be joined by Companions, cannot explore or take control of terrain tiles, do not activate special profiles and will ignore Stealth Tests.
- Villains will always try to activate Artifacts or Mutation cards they draw, discarding them if they can't. They will ignore effects that allow exchanging of cards and will always be assumed to take the decision that is most likely to prevent or slow down your success - for example: if faced with a multiple choice of paths towards attacking you, they will always try to attack from a terrain tile edge that minimizes your combat skill.

Game Setup

During Single Player games, the game setup is different from that of normal games:

- Draw the Inquisitor, the corresponding inactive Superstition Tokens and your 3 random Mutation cards and 2 Power Tokens as normal. Ignore Origin tokens;
- Draw a random Villain Card and associate it to one individual Player Dashboard;
- Villains always start with these levels: **10 Health, 0 Energy and 10 Control**;
- Draw 1 random Companion Card and activate it for free;
- Draw 3 Snow, 3 Forests, 2 Mountains, 1 Lake, 1 Ruins, 1 Castle and 1 Village tile;
- Set up a single map anyway you like (except a straight line!), facing Daylight;
- Place the Villain model in the Ruins, Castle or Village tile;
- Place your model on any tile, more than 2 tiles away from the Villain.

You start the game.

Turn Sequence

- Each time you activate a Mutation, draw a new random Villain Card, adding it to a new Player Dashboard and place its model as closest to an empty Ruins, Castle or Village tile of your choice as possible.
- At the beginning of each of the active Villain(s) Move Phases, roll a D6 . On a **4 or more**, that Villain will try to move the maximum number of tiles in your direction (even entering Combat). On a **3 or less**, it will remain stationary. The Villain cannot end this phase on a tile occupied by other Villains;

At the beginning of each Villain's Decide Phase, roll a D6  :

- On a **1 or 2**, the Villain will try to Mutate. Draw a random Mutation Card and check if he can activate it. If he can't, return the card to the bottom of the deck;
- On a **3 or 4**, the Villain will try to Search for Artifacts - if he is in a Ruins or Castle tile, draw a random Artifact Card and check if he can activate it. If he can't, return the card to the bottom of the deck;
- On a **5 or 6**, the Villain will Hunt.
- Skip the Villain's Breathe Phase.

Close Combat

In Combat, these Villains will behave just like any other human opponent, except:

- Their Combat Dice Pool is composed of their Base Combat Dice plus the Combat Bonus listed on their card (similar to what happens with Companions in normal play);
- They only apply the rules listed on their card to their Combat Bonus Dice.
- Every time you defeat an opponent Villain (remove all his Hit Points), another one will appear at the beggining of the next round, in the same way as if you had activated a Mutation.

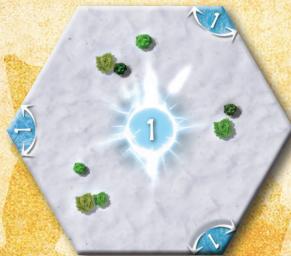
TERRAIN TILE GENERATOR

No exploring during Darkness Cycles

- When exploring unknown Terrain, roll a D12 dice and add a new Tile according to the result below.
- In your turn, and during the Awakening chapter only, you can spend 2 Control to choose the terrain tile to place when exploring, instead of rolling for it.
- Optional: If no populated tile is deployed during the Awakening chapter, the player that earns the right to join the maps at the end of Round 10, also adds one populated tile of each type to a map edge.

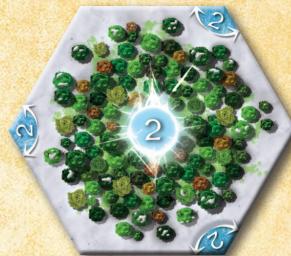
1 to 3

Snow Tile



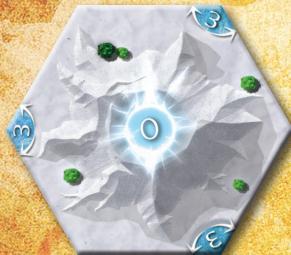
4 to 6

Forest Tile



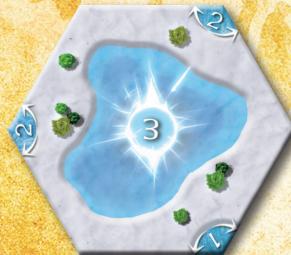
7 and 8

Mountain Tile



9

Lake Tile



10

Ruins Tile



Populated Tile

11

Castle Tile



12

Village Tile



Populated Tile