



THE NIGHT CAGE

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RULEBOOK

1-5 Players | Ages 14+ | 50 minutes

YOU AWAKE
in the dark.

Your body cold
Your mind blank.

You have nothing

but your fear,
your candle,
and a question...



How long will your light last?

OVERVIEW

You awake to discover that you and several others are imprisoned within a pitch-black labyrinth. The rough-hewn, stone passages provide barely enough room to crawl through and the walls claw at your skin as you pass. Equipped with nothing but dim candles, you must work together to explore the maze and escape. Distressingly, the weak candlelight only illuminates your immediate surroundings. Worse still, you're beginning to suspect something else is moving in the suffocating darkness - just beyond the flickers of your candle.

And it despises the light.

The Night Cage is a cooperative, tile placement game that traps 1 to 5 lost souls within an ever-changing labyrinth of eternal darkness. Each prisoner has nothing but a candle to aid them in their escape, but its weak light can only illuminate the passages directly adjacent to them. As players move, new pathways are revealed while old ones disappear, consumed in the darkness forever. Every move will require thoughtful consideration and collective strategy to keep your candles burning long enough to find the way out.

OBJECT

To WIN, each Prisoner must first collect a Key. That accomplished, the group must find and make their way to a single Gate. Only when assembled there, together, can the Gate be unlocked by turning the Keys in unison, escaping The Night Cage.

The Prisoners LOSE if:

- All 4 Gate Tiles have been lost.
- The Prisoners cannot each collect a Key.
- The Prisoners cannot all bring their Keys to a Gate before the darkness isolates them.



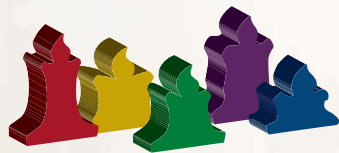
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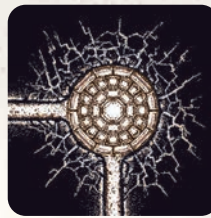
1 Double-Sided Game Board



4th Prisoner Marker



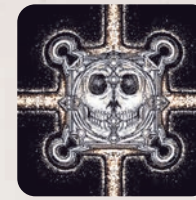
5 Prisoner Tokens



5 Start Tiles



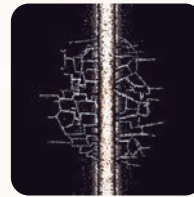
8 Key Tiles



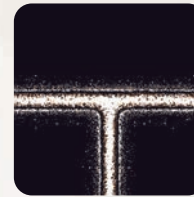
4 Gate Tiles



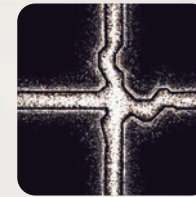
12 Wax Eater
Monster Tiles



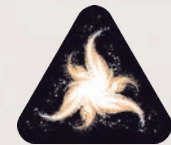
10 Straight
Passages



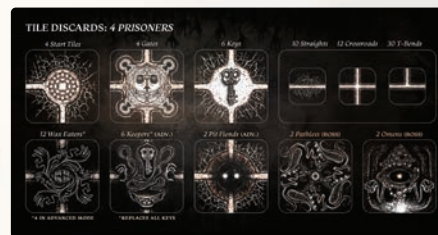
32 "T"
Passages



12 4-Way
Passages



14 Nerve Tokens



1 Double-Sided Discard Board



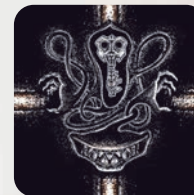
5 Prisoner Status Cards



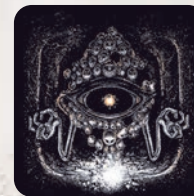
1 Tile Holder (4 Pieces)



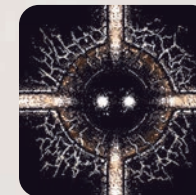
5 Key Tokens



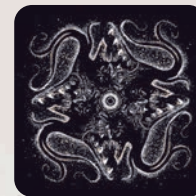
8 Keepers



5 Omens



3 Pit Fiends



3 Pathless



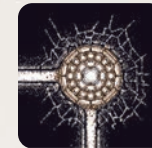
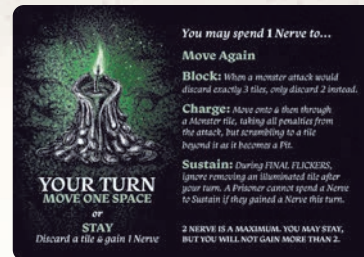
1 Dirge

Advanced Game Monster Tiles

SET UP

PRISONER MATERIALS

Each Prisoner in the game needs a **Prisoner Status card** and a candle-shaped **Prisoner token** of that same color. Each Prisoner also begins with one **Nerve token** and a **Starting tile**.



1-4 Player Games

Use the 6x6 grid side of Game Board. Remove 2 Keys from the pool of tiles and place them in the box. Your tile count should contain **6 Keys** and **12 Wax Eaters**. Whether there is just one player or up to four players, there are always 4 Prisoners, each requiring a full set of Prisoner materials set around the board.

1 Player Game: The player controls all four Prisoners, taking a turn for each.

2 Player Games: Each player controls two Prisoners, taking a full set of materials for each Prisoner. It is recommended that players take both their Prisoner turns one after the other, rather than alternating for simplicity.

3 Player Games: Each player controls their own Prisoner with the 4th Prisoner being a dummy player. A full set of Prisoner materials is set at the table as though a live player was seated. Control of the 4th Prisoner is shared, beginning with the host or owner of the game, who takes the 4th Prisoner marker. When the 4th Prisoner is scheduled to take their turn, the holder of the marker does so. After which, the marker is passed clockwise to the next player for the following round.

4 Player Games: Each player controls one Prisoner.

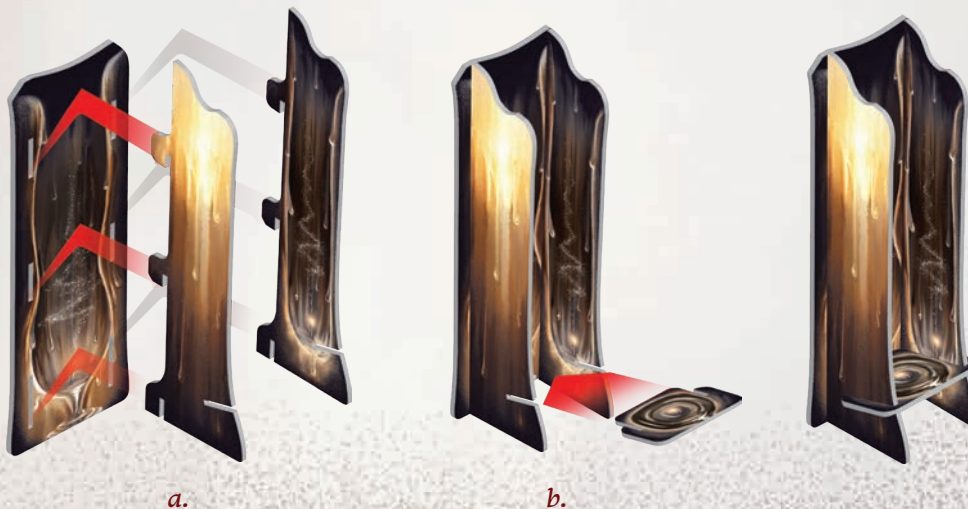
5 Player Games

Each player controls one Prisoner. Use the 7x7 side of Game Board. Remove 1 Key and 2 Wax Eaters from the pool of tiles and place them in the box. Your tile count should contain **7 Keys** and **10 Wax Eaters**.

Assemble the Tile Holder

a. Insert the candle sides into the slots on the candle back, so that the 'lit' side of each piece faces outwards, with the darker images forming the inside.

b. Then slot the floor of the candle into the slots on the sides as shown.



SET UP (Cont'd)

Place the Game board in the center of the table.

Place the metal Key tokens on the corner of the board.

Place any unused tiles (i.e. extra Starting tiles, tiles removed for the specific player count, and the Advanced Game tiles) in the box, if not there already.

For 1-4 players, set aside 4 'T' tiles, 2 four-way tiles and 2 straight tiles. For 5 players, 5 'T' tiles, 3 four-way tiles and 2 straight tiles. These are the opening tiles. Stack them face down (with the Pit side facing up) and shuffle them.

Place all the remaining tiles face down in a pile (with the Pit side facing up) and mix them thoroughly.

Then, stack them at random into the Tile Holder, keeping them face down. When all the tiles have been placed into the holder, add the stack of opening tiles you set aside on top. Then place the Tile Holder near the board, in easy reach of all players.

The tiles in the holder are called the Draw Stack. They represent the remaining candlelight and any hope of escape. Conserve their use. When all the tiles have been drawn, you can no longer illuminate new passages. (See *Final Flickers*, pg. 15)

Place the Discard board with the correct player count facing up. During play, sort the discarded tiles by type onto the board in order to:

- Quickly identify the number of Gates, Keys, and Monsters encountered. It will help you strategize, as well as let you know if your game is already lost. You may count them at any time during play.
- Help re-sort tiles for the next game.

The owner, or host, of the game will be the first player and play will proceed clockwise throughout the game.

In a 3-player game, give them the shared 4th Prisoner Marker to start the game.

Set Up for 4 Prisoners



A CAGE WITHOUT BARS

The edges of the board wrap around to their opposite side in an infinite loop of impenetrable darkness. Prisoners can freely travel from edge to edge. When you arrive at an edge, illuminate any relevant tiles on the opposite side as well. You are never far from the other Prisoners, or the dangers they may discover. Likewise, monsters are not limited by the edge of the board and may attack along connected passages from one side to the other.

Prisoner Starting Positions

On each Prisoner's first turn, they will do the following:

1. Choose any unoccupied spot on the board (Fig. 1).
2. Place their Starting tile on that spot and rotate it as desired (Fig. 2).
3. Place their Prisoner token on the Start tile (Fig. 3).
4. Then, one at a time, draw a tile from the Tile Holder and flip it face up to examine it. Choose a space that your Starting tile exits onto and place the tile so the passages connect, otherwise orienting it as you like. (Fig. 4).

Once all Prisoners, in turn, have completed these actions, the game may begin.

FAQ on Starting Positions

Can I connect my Starting tile to another Prisoner's corridor(s)?

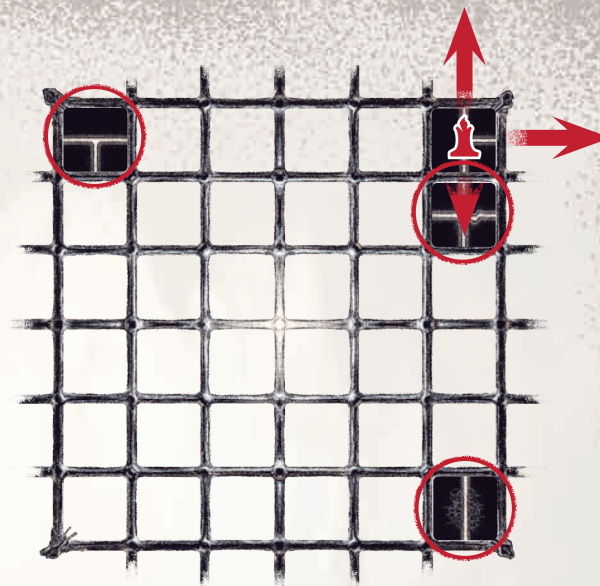
Yes, you can place your Start tile in any unoccupied space. Doing so, and staying closer to other players, can reduce the number of tiles drawn. On the other hand, staying close together increases the chance of Monsters striking more than one player. It is a delicate balance.

Can I place my Start tile next to a dead end?

You may. It forms an impassable wall. And, even if the light of the player in that passage moves away, the light of your candle against the dead end wall will keep the tile in place. This is true of any tile you place during the game.

Can I start completely dead-ended?

Yes, though it will likely be a disadvantage. You will be unable to move from this spot and will FALL through a Pit on your first turn (see Pits, pg. 10).



On the corner of the board, If RED moves to the Right or Up, their move wraps to the other side of the board.

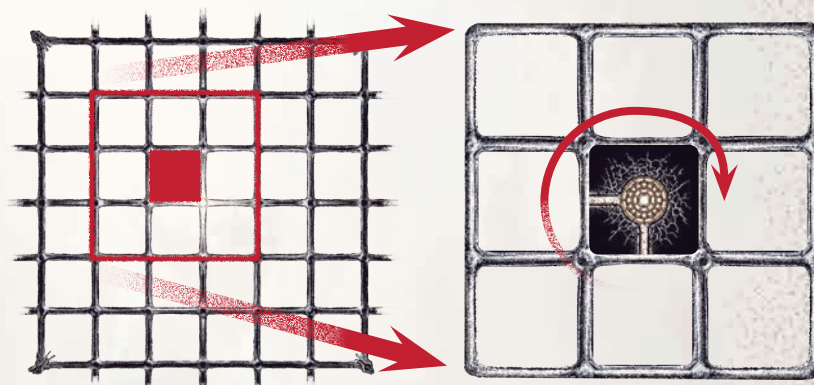


Fig. 1
RED chooses a spot on the board.

Fig. 2
RED places and orients their Start tile as desired.



Fig. 3
RED places their Prisoner token.

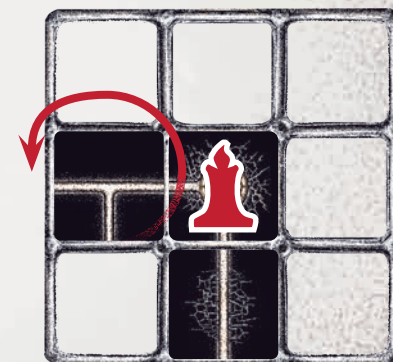


Fig. 4
RED "Illuminates" the Passages. Drawing & placing tiles one at a time.

LIGHT & DARKNESS

A Prisoner's candle can only illuminate connected Passages in a one-space radius around your current location (Fig. 1). Diagonal spaces are not illuminated.

When you Move, the radius of your candlelight moves with you, revealing new Passages. Any tile passing too far outside of your candlelight is lost to Darkness and discarded forever (Fig. 5). This means, if you retraced your steps, the pathway would be changed completely, making the labyrinth an ever-changing and distinctly unnatural place.

Adjacent tiles not connected to you by a Passage should also be discarded. However, adjacent tiles that are blocking a Passage remain, since you can still see the wall they create (Fig. 2A).

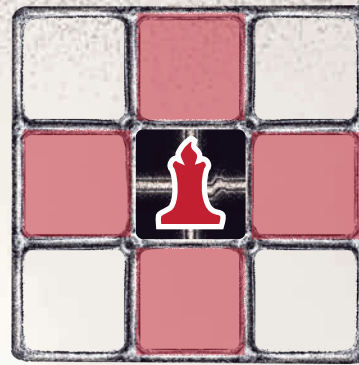


Fig 1.

RED's candle illuminates the board in a 1 space radius. No diagonals.

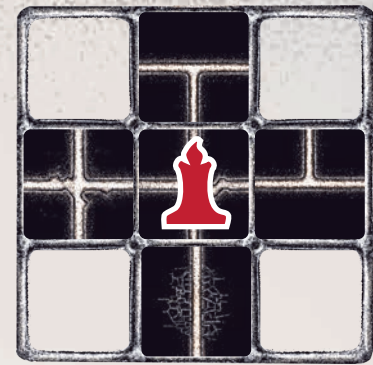


Fig 2.

RED draws and places tiles in all empty illuminated spaces.

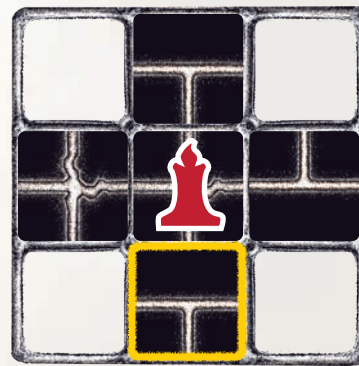


Fig 2A.

Since this tile was placed by another prisoner, RED only needs to Draw & Place 3 other tiles. If the other prisoner moves away, RED continues illuminating the dead end wall, so the tile would remain.

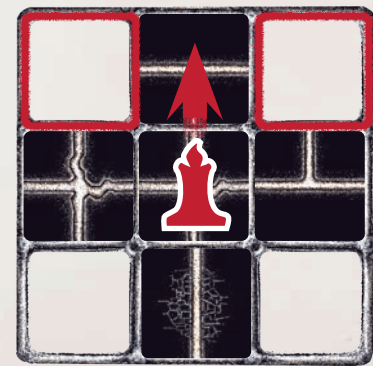


Fig 3.

RED moves & Illuminates 2 new Passages.

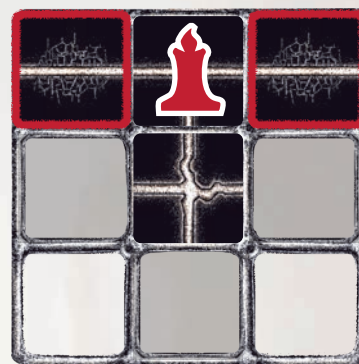


Fig 4.

The Passages outside of RED's candle are discarded. Gone forever.

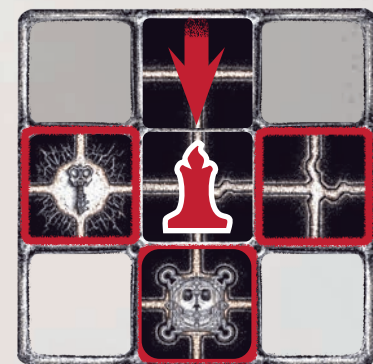


Fig 5.

If RED backtracked, they would discover NEW Passages.

PLAYING THE GAME

EXPLORING THE MAZE

Starting with the first player and proceeding clockwise, each Prisoner will take a turn. As this is a cooperative game, discussions on strategy are encouraged, but all final decisions fall upon the player controlling the Prisoner.

Each turn you must choose to MOVE or STAY. You will almost always MOVE. Choosing to STAY is more a strategic decision based on board conditions that will become clearer a few turns into the game.

STAYING

You are choosing NOT to move and you remain in the space you currently occupy.

1. Gain 1 Nerve token (see *Nerve*)
2. Staying still burns wax. Discard 1 tile from the Draw Stack face up, so you can see what was lost to The Darkness, and place it on the Discard board.

2a. IMPORTANT: *If the tile you would discard is a Monster, do not discard it. Instead you MUST replace one of the tiles connected to you with the Monster tile.*

NOTE: Staying does NOT trigger Monster attacks (see *Monsters*, pg. 12).

3. If you Stay on a Crumbling tile, you Fall when it crumbles this turn (see *Pits*, pg. 10).
- 3a. *Falling can trigger Monster attacks.*
4. Your turn ends and play passes clockwise.



MOVING

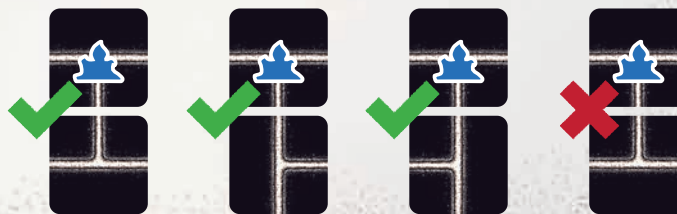
You will Move 1 space along any Passage onto a connected tile.

NOTE: *Passages are too narrow to have more than one Prisoner on the same tile. Gate tiles are the only exception. Any # of Prisoners may occupy a Gate tile at the same time.*

After moving, remove all tiles no longer Illuminated and place them on the Discard board.

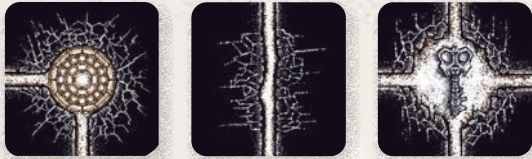
Next, Illuminate the new passages.

1. Tiles are drawn and placed one at a time. Draw 1 tile from the Draw Stack for each open Passage leading from your new space. Flip it face up and look at it to choose which open space to place it in.
- 2a. *No tiles are drawn for any Passages already Illuminated by another Prisoner.*
2. Tiles may be placed in any orientation as long as the Passageway connects to your current tile (example below)
3. Draw and place until all Passages extending from your current location have been Illuminated.
- 3a. *If there are no more tiles in the Draw Stack, skip Illumination. (See Final Flickers, pg. 15)*
4. Remove all tiles no longer Illuminated & place on Discard board.
5. Your turn ends and play passes clockwise.



Legal Tile Orientation

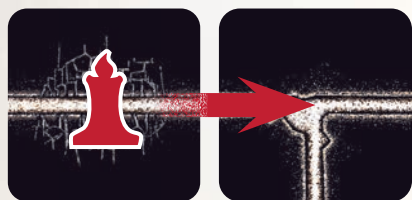
CRUMBLING TILES AND PITS



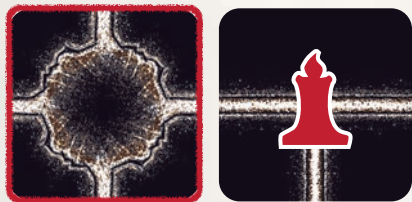
Starting tiles, Straight Passages, 2 of the “T” tiles, and Key tiles all show thin crack lines around them. These are **Crumbling tiles**.

Crumbling tiles collapse into **Pits** the turn AFTER you step on them. When a Pit forms, flip the tile over to reveal the Pit graphic on the back.

If you decide to **Move**, it collapses as you scramble onto the next tile.



RED MOVES off a Crumbling tile



The Crumbling tile is flipped to form a Pit as RED scrambles forward.

If you decide to **Stay**, you Fall into the Pit this turn. (See *Falling*)



If RED STAYS, the Pit forms beneath them and they FALL.

Pits remain until they are no longer Illuminated, and are then removed as normal.

FALLING

Falling into a Pit does not mean certain death. On the contrary, at times it is even helpful. In this unnatural place, you will eventually fall right back into the labyrinth. A Prisoner may even choose to jump into an adjacent Pit they are connected to.

Whether you leap into the Pit by moving onto a Pit space, or by having one form beneath you when you Stay, falling into a Pit will end your turn. You will fall through blackness and void, off the board, until the beginning of your next turn.

1. Place your Prisoner token along the board edge, either by the edge of the row or column you once occupied.
2. Discard any tiles no longer Illuminated by your light.
3. At the start of your next turn, Choose an empty, unlit space along the row or column you chose. Draw a tile to land upon and place your Prisoner token on it. Illuminate any unlit connected spaces around you.
4. **Then, take your turn as normal.**

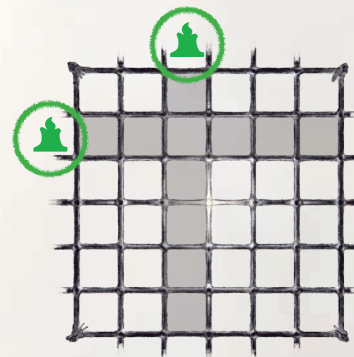


Fig. 1

When you Fall, place the Prisoner along the row or column that intersects the Pit

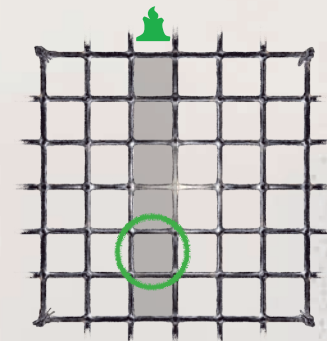


Fig 2.

Next turn, choose an empty space in the row / column selected to land on. Draw and place a tile to land on.

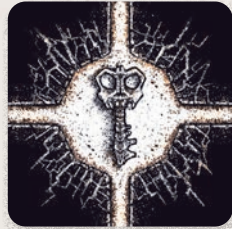
There are, however, **two dangers** that may await you.

- If you land on a **Monster**, it immediately attacks before you illuminate beyond the tile you landed on (see *Monsters*, pg. 12). After the attack and suffering its penalties, move onto an existing adjacent tile, or draw a new tile to move into an unlit space.
- If you are falling and there are no tiles in the Draw Stack left to land on, you fall in Darkness forever and the game ends in a loss.

If you are falling and there are no empty spaces (highly unlikely) land on an existing tile.

KEY TILES

Key tiles are drawn and placed like any other tile. To escape, each Prisoner must recover a Key from one of the Key tiles. To claim a Key, simply move onto the Key tile and place a metal Key token, from the reserve, next to your Prisoner Status card as a free action.



A player can only carry a single Key at a time, as your other hand holds the candle. Therefore, a Prisoner who reveals a Key tile when they already hold a Key is faced with a dilemma. If you walk away and no longer illuminate the space, the Key will be lost. Additionally, Key tiles are Crumbling, so if you walk through the space, the Key will be lost when the tile becomes a Pit next turn. If you block the only Passage to the Key, no one else can get to it.

However, a Prisoner may pass a held Key to another Prisoner if, on one of the Prisoner's turns, they are adjacent to each other and connected by a passage.

Passing a Key is a free action.

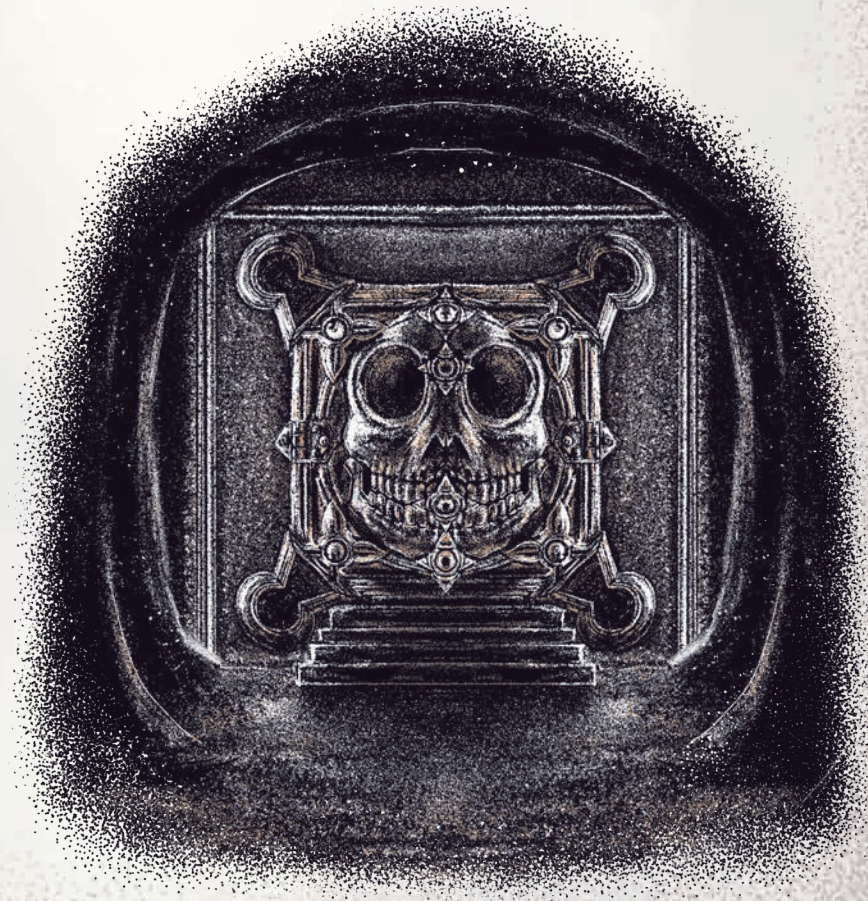


GATE TILES

You can only escape The Night Cage through a Gate. Gate tiles are drawn and placed like any other tile. The Gate is the only tile in the game that can be occupied by multiple Prisoners at the same time. To win, all Prisoners must gather on the same Gate, at the same time, with their Keys in hand to escape.



If all Gates are lost to The Darkness, there can be no escape and you lose the game.

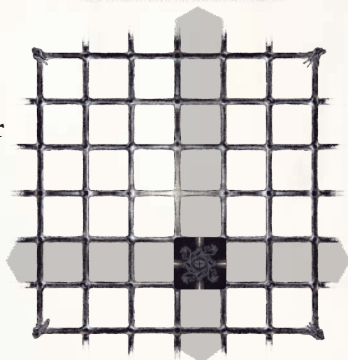


WAX EATERS/MONSTERS

Wax Eaters roam the labyrinth, nightmarish monsters that despise the light and attack any soul that moves in their presence. They are the only monsters inhabiting the core game, but they are to be avoided at all cost.

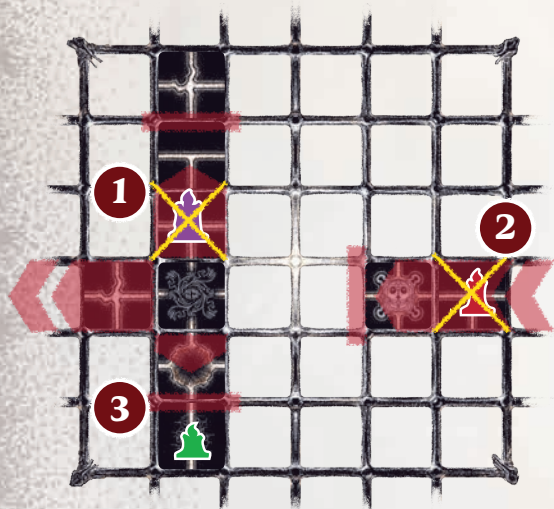


Wax Eaters are drawn & placed like any other tile. Once placed, Wax Eaters are motion sensitive. They will attack anytime a Prisoner moves along, into, or out of a pathway connected to them in a straight line. Wax Eaters attack in all 4 directions simultaneously, as far as they can reach down an uninterrupted pathway, including around the wrapping edge of the board.



POTENTIAL range of attack, wrapping around all edges to the opposite side.

An empty space, without a tile, creates an interruption that the Monster cannot see past. Likewise, Pits interrupt the pathway and therefore a Monster will not trigger, nor strike, a Prisoner across an existing Pit.



1. The attack UP hits PURPLE but stops at the "T", unable to strike the 4-way above it because the path is interrupted.
2. The attack RIGHT is stopped by empty spaces. But the attack LEFT hits RED as it wraps to the other side of the board.
3. The attack DOWN is stopped by the PIT. GREEN is not hit.

Monsters are triggered to attack when a Prisoner **MOVES** within their line of sight, by **FALLING** onto one, and/or in a **CHAIN REACTION**, where another Monster's attack hits them.

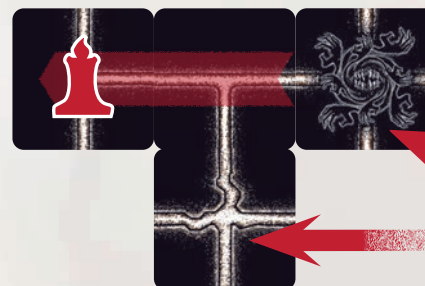
Moving In Line of Sight:

While movement in their line of sight triggers an attack, moving out of a Monster's line of attack evades their strike and its penalties.

RED has Illuminated a WAX EATER. Their next move will trigger an attack.



If RED moves down the Passage, the Monster will trigger and hit them.



Then these two tiles are discarded.

If RED moves to the side, the Monster is triggered, but they avoid the attack.



Then these two tiles are discarded.

This is true of **falling through a Crumbling** tile or **leaping into a Pit**, as well. It's like taking a side Passage. The Monster will be triggered, but falling avoids the attack.

WAX EATERS/MONSTERS (Cont'd)

Falling on a Monster:

This triggers a Monster immediately, attacking the Prisoner who landed on it AND any Prisoner in line of sight. After the attack, the falling Prisoner scrambles to an adjacent space, either an existing tile, or a newly drawn one.

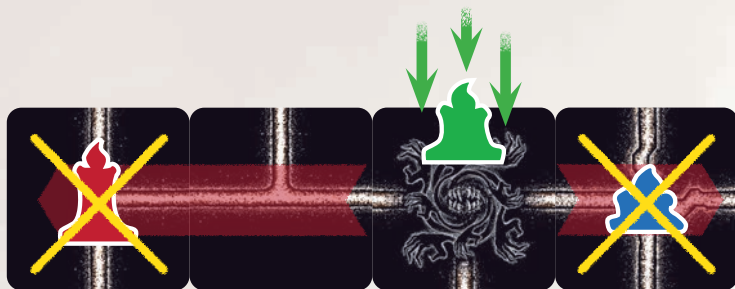


Fig. 1

GREEN places a tile to land upon. It is a Monster! The Wax Eater attacks, hitting GREEN, BLUE and RED immediately.

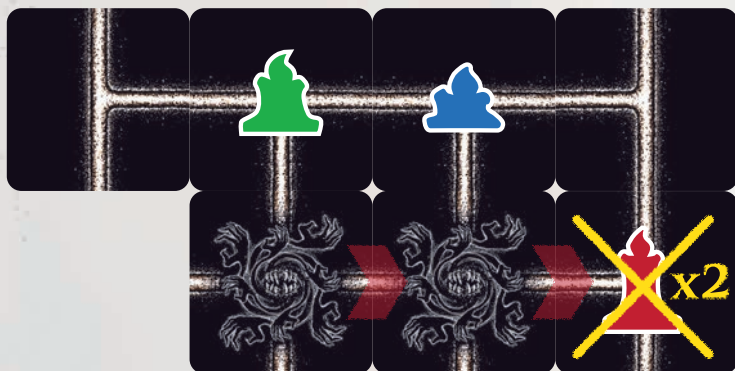


Fig. 2

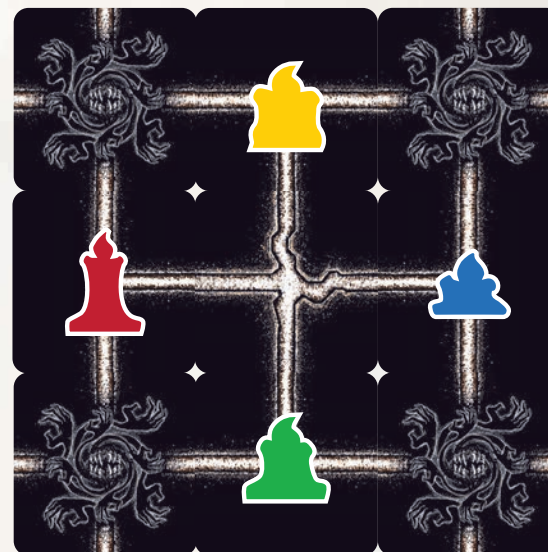
After attacking, the Monster turns into a PIT and GREEN Moves onto an existing or newly drawn tile.

Chain Reactions:

If a Wax Eater's attack hits another Monster, that Monster also attacks in a chain reaction. Below, a single move by any Prisoner will trigger all Monsters. Only the first player to Move or Fall can avoid being hit.



If BLUE or GREEN moves, the other is hit and RED is hit twice.



If one Prisoner moves, the others are all hit twice at the cost of up to 18 tiles.

WAX EATERS/MONSTERS (Cont'd)

Penalties:

When a Prisoner is struck by a Wax Eater attack (*either at range or by falling on one*):

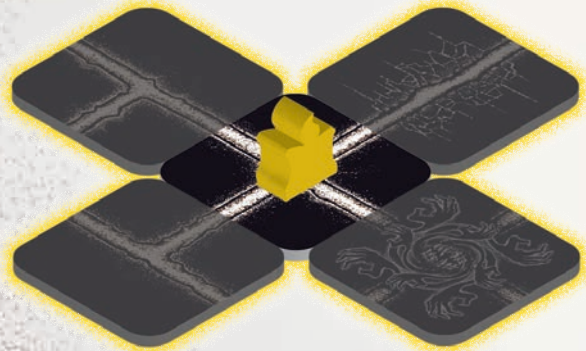
- Discard the top 3 tiles from the Draw Stack face up.
- That Prisoner goes **LIGHTS OUT**. (see *Lights Out*)

These penalties are incurred for **each** Prisoner hit by a **given** Monster. Multiple Prisoners can be hit at the same time and/or a Prisoner can be hit by multiple monsters, leading to a massive amount of tiles discarded from the Draw Stack. Such a large loss of tiles risks discarding critical tiles needed to win – or simply devour so much wax that your lights will fail before you can escape.

Flip your Status card



You are alone in the dark



Discard all tiles not Illuminated by other Prisoners.

Lights Out:

When struck by a Wax Eater attack, a Prisoner goes **LIGHTS OUT**. Flip your Prisoner Status card to its LIGHTS OUT side. With your candle extinguished you can no longer perceive anything beyond the tile you occupy. Remove all tiles that you had been Illuminating (*unless they are still lit by another Prisoner with a lit candle*).

Going Lights Out comes with these penalties:

- You are now panicked & compelled to Move every turn. You may not Stay (*unless you spend a Nerve. See Nerve pg. 15*).
- Without light, you move forward blind to the dangers ahead. When you move, draw a tile only for the space you move into and discard the tile from the space you left (*if no one else Illuminates it*). As always, your new tile must be oriented so that it connects to your previous location.

If you move onto a Monster tile, the Monster attacks immediately, hitting you and any other connected Prisoners. You remain LIGHTS OUT, discard 3 tiles – and immediately scramble onto an existing adjacent tile, or a newly drawn one.

Re-Lighting:

When a LIGHTS OUT Prisoner becomes adjacent via a connected Passage to a Prisoner with a lit candle, their candle is automatically relit. This may happen on either of the Prisoner's turns. When a Prisoner is relit, the player whose turn it is draws the tiles to fill in newly Illuminated Passages at the end of that turn. Flip their Status card to the LIT side.



NERVE

All Prisoners begin the game with a Nerve token. Additional Nerve can be gained when a Prisoner chooses to STAY on their turn up to a limit of 2 Nerve.



Nerve can be **spent** to gain temporary advantages, bending the rules to your benefit. One or both of your Nerve tokens can be used on a turn. (*'Move / Move' or 'Charge / Block' for example*)

SPEND 1 NERVE TO:

Move Again: You may spend one or both Nerve in this way.

Stay: When you are LIGHTS OUT and otherwise could not. You do NOT gain a Nerve for Staying.

Block: Discard only 2 tiles instead of 3 when hit by a Monster attack.

Charge: You may deliberately move onto a Monster tile, immediately suffering its attack and going Lights Out (therefore not Illuminating unlit spaces adjacent to it). You Move onto an existing or newly drawn tile.

Sustain: During Final Flickers, skip removing an Illuminated tile from the board after your turn.



FINAL FLICKERS

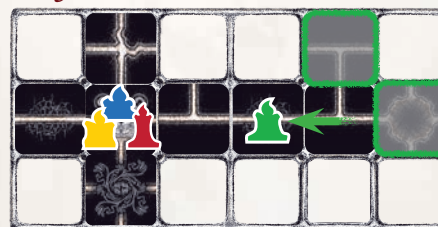
NO CANDLE BURNS FOREVER. When the Draw Stack is empty, Prisoners have only the final flickers of their light to make their escape. No new tiles can be added to the board. However, play continues with Prisoners using any tiles still left on the board.

At the end of every Prisoner's turn, after removing tiles that are no longer Illuminated, you must also remove one **additional** tile from anywhere on the board (*unless Nerve was spent to prevent this*). A Monster can be removed in this way.

IMPORTANT: During Final Flickers, the additional tile is removed from the board only after all extra Moves are made through spending Nerve.

The encroaching Darkness may isolate a Prisoner, as they find themselves cut off and unable to bring their Key to the Gate with the others. Or a falling Prisoner may end up unable to draw a tile to land upon and keep falling forever. If either of these fates occurs, or you simply lose too many Keys or Gates, the players lose the game, consumed by Eternal Darkness.

Fig. 1

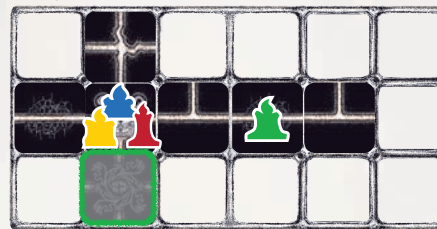


There are no more tiles in the Draw Stack.

Final Flickers begins immediately.

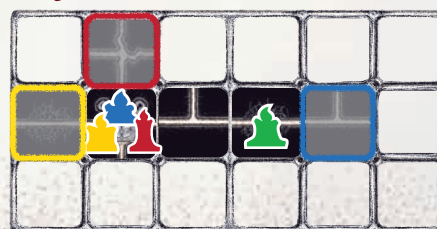
GREEN moves 1 space. The unlit tiles are removed from the board.

Fig. 2



Then, Final Flickers forces GREEN to discard any one Illuminated tile from the board.

Fig. 3



The other Prisoners, in turn, STAY & also discard one Illuminated tile from the board.

Next round, if GREEN can't spend Nerve to Move Again or the others can't Sustain, GREEN won't make it.

ADVANCED GAME

IN THE ADVANCED GAME, Prisoners will face two horrifying new monsters, **KEEPERS** and **PIT FIENDS**, that increase the challenge.

Set Up Changes

Remove all the Key tiles and 8 Wax Eater tiles (leaving 4) from the game and put them back in the box.

Add **6 Keeper** tiles for a 1-4 player game (or 7 for 5-player games) as well as **2 Pit Fiends**.

Continue the rest of Set Up per usual.



KEEPER

There are no Key tiles in the Advanced Game. Instead, you will need to acquire Keys from within a Keeper. Keepers have Keys inside of their ethereal bodies and are the only type of Monster whose presence persists even if they are not Illuminated. They are permanent additions to the board until their Key is removed.



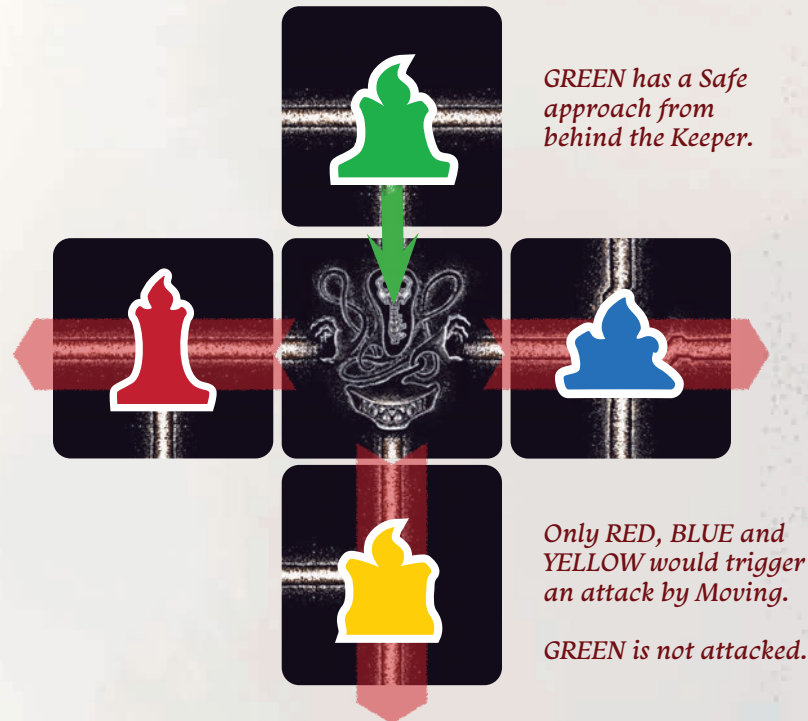
Mouth

When placing a Keeper, the Mouth of the creature always faces you. They are triggered to attack in the same way as Wax Eaters, however they only strike in three directions and cannot strike behind themselves. Being hit by a Keeper at range (as opposed to landing on it) forces you to discard 1 tile from the Draw Stack.

The ranged attack of a Keeper cannot be Blocked using Nerve.

If a Keeper is hit by another monster from behind, it does not cause a chain reaction.

Moving onto the Keeper earns you a Key, just like a Key tile would. Approaching from the rear, where the monster cannot attack, is the only safe way to get a Key and incurs no penalties. However, if you spend 1 Nerve to **CHARGE**, you may move onto a Keeper tile from a direction other than the rear. Doing so is not possible without spending Nerve, but it does come with penalties.



GREEN has a Safe approach from behind the Keeper.

Only RED, BLUE and YELLOW would trigger an attack by Moving.

GREEN is not attacked.

Moving (or Falling) onto a Keeper from any direction other than the unprotected rear causes you to go Lights Out and discard 3 tiles from the Draw Stack. This 3 tile attack CAN be Blocked by spending Nerve. A Falling prisoner without a Key can take the Key as they land. Once the Key is collected, the Keeper immediately becomes a Pit. The falling Prisoner must scramble onto an existing adjacent tile or a newly drawn one placed adjacent to the Pit.

ADVANCED GAME (Cont'd)

PIT FIENDS

Pit Fiends can be one of the most devastating monsters in the game, though they do not attack Prisoners directly. Instead, they radically change the board by turning existing tiles, quite suddenly, into Pits.

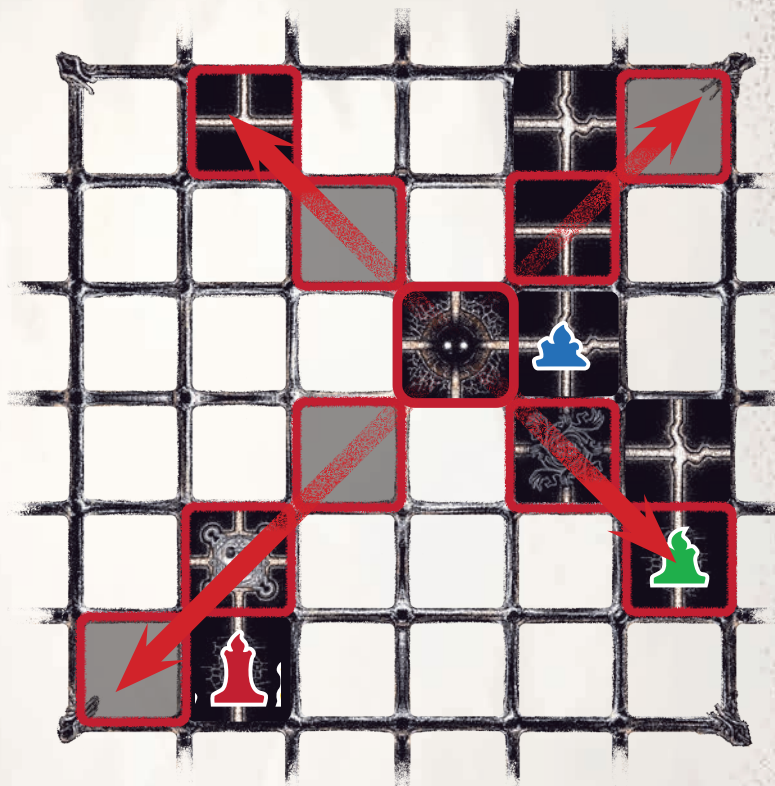
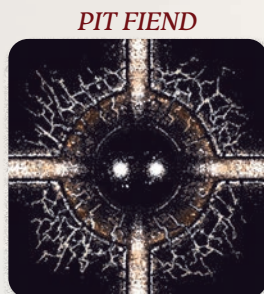
Pit Fiends are placed like any other tile. Once placed, Pit Fiends immediately turn every tile in a diagonal line from it (including Key, Gate, and Monster tiles) into Pits, even if separated by empty spaces.

The Pit Fiend itself then becomes a Pit after attacking. Luckily, Pit Fiend attacks DO NOT wrap around the board, but end at the its edges.

Any player who has a Pit created beneath them by a Pit Fiend immediately Falls, out of turn. Normal turn order then resumes.

Pit Fiends are especially terrifying towards the end of the game, where their attack could well remove your last Gate or a critical Key tile.

(Try adding a 3rd Pit Fiend for an even harder challenge.)



In the example, BLUE places a PIT FIEND. All the spaces outlined in red are in range, stopping at the board's edge. All tiles in this range become Pits instantly. GREEN immediately Falls, placing their token along the board edge. The Wax Eater becomes a Pit and is no longer a threat. The Gate becomes a Pit, potentially ending the game if it were their last. If BLUE places the Pit Fiend on the other available space, they can dramatically reduce the impact. Place with care!

ADJUSTING THE DIFFICULTY

THE NIGHT CAGE is intended to be difficult to win, but you can make simple tweaks to adjust the difficulty for your specific group. To increase the difficulty, try removing a single Key or Gate tile from the recommended number (*or both, if you are a glutton for punishment*). To make things easier, adding a Key tile or 2 to the recommended number will make a big difference.

BOSS MONSTERS

You can add further to the challenge of the Standard or Advanced Game with the inclusion of one or both **Boss Monsters**, **THE PATHLESS** and **THE DIRGE**. Boss Monsters have overpowered abilities, designed to create dread and spark new strategies in anticipation of their arrival.

THE PATHLESS

There are 3 Pathless tiles included with the game.

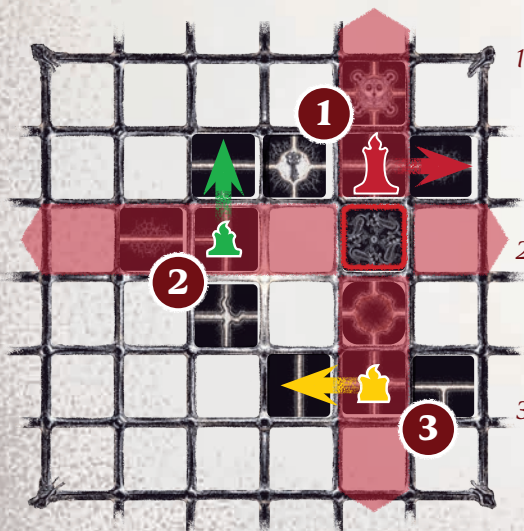
To add The Pathless, shuffle 2 Pathless tiles into the Draw Stack during set up. (*Add the third for even more of a challenge.*)

The Pathless is placed on the board as with any other tile and is triggered just like a Wax Eater. However, it has the following important differences.



The PATHLESS

- The attack of The Pathless is not prevented by walls, gaps between tiles nor Pits. Their attacks reach every space along the row and column they intersect with.
- Their attack causes 5 tiles to be discarded. This attack cannot be Blocked by using Nerve.



1. If RED moves, GREEN is hit, even separated by an empty space and a wall. YELLOW is hit, even over a pit.
2. If GREEN moves first, no attack is triggered. GREEN is not in line of sight of The Pathless.
3. If YELLOW moves first, no attack is triggered. Pits block line of sight.

THE DIRGE

The Dirge is a colossal Monster, covering 9 tiles worth of spaces, impacting more than a quarter of the board when it finally arrives. That arrival is foretold by Omens. Shuffle 2 Omen tiles into the Draw Stack during set up.

Omen tiles act as a countdown to the arrival of **The Dirge**.

- When the 1st Omen is revealed, place it alongside the board and redraw a new tile to replace it.
- When the 2nd Omen is revealed, place it onto the board as you would any tile. This both signals the arrival of The Dirge AND serves as an anchor point for placement of the oversized Dirge token.



The OMENS

Place the Dirge onto the board so that part of its body overlaps the Omen you have just placed. The specific placement and orientation of The Dirge is within your control, but no part of the Dirge can hang off the edge of the board; its entire shape must fit within the board's boundaries. You may experiment with its placement before deciding on a final placement.

When the Dirge is finally placed, everything beneath its massive form is swallowed in Darkness. All Prisoners beneath The Dirge go Lights Out, must discard 3 tiles from the Draw Stack, and then fall into a Pit.

THE DIRGE (Cont'd)

This may include the Prisoner who placed the Omen, if they choose to position it overtop of themselves. This attack can be Blocked by using Nerve, reducing the tiles discarded to 2. Then, all tiles on the board beneath The Dirge, including the Omen, are removed from the board and discarded.

Once all these effects are resolved, flip The Dirge token to its Pit side, overlaying the same spaces it occupied (This may require rotating the token). This forms a chasm-sized Pit covering 9 spaces. The Pit will remain on the board until it is no longer lit by any Prisoner's candle.

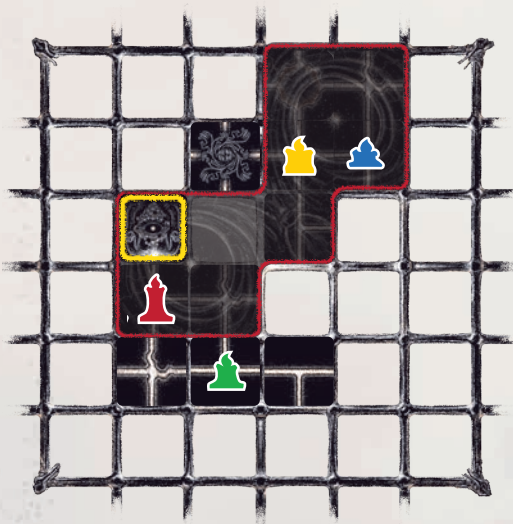


Fig. 1
The DIRGE must cover the Omen and stay within the board boundaries.

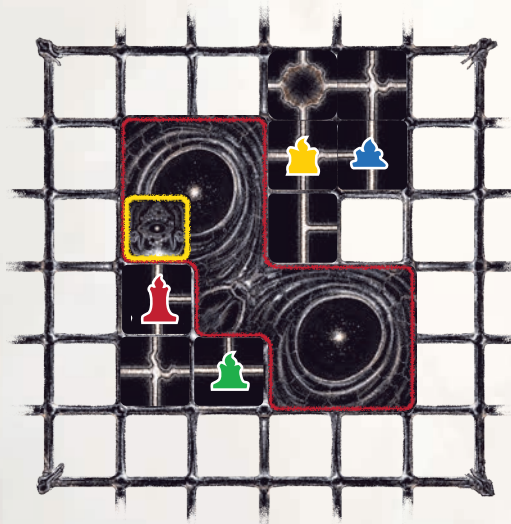


Fig. 2
But this is a far better placement where no Prisoners are hit.

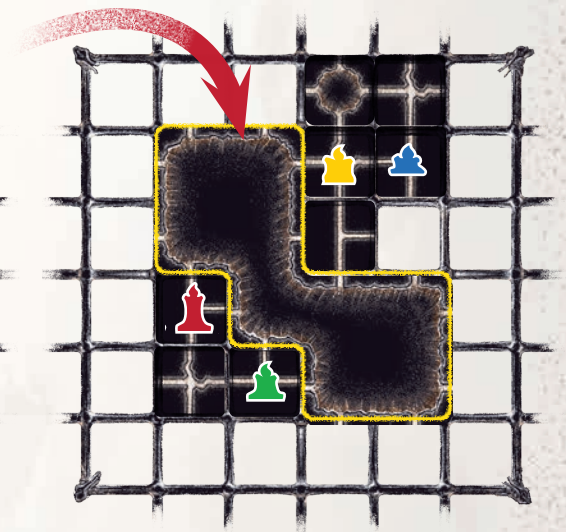


Fig. 3
The DIRGE flips, becoming a large Pit, illuminated by three Prisoners. All tiles below the Dirge are discarded

CREDITS

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SND 1008
The Night Cage



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TURN PROGRESSION

If **FALLING**, choose an unlit space to land. Draw and place a tile.
Place your Prisoner on it. Illuminate all connected passages.

STAY

Gain 1 Nerve. Discard a tile
from the Draw Stack.

IF DISCARD IS A MONSTER,
swap it with a connected tile.

OR

MOVE

Move 1 space.

PITS FORM

If you **STAYED** on or **MOVED** from a Crumbling tile,
it flips and becomes a Pit.

FALLING

If the tile you are on is a Pit, **FALL** immediately.

TRIGGER MONSTERS

If you **MOVED** or **FELL** while in line of sight of a Monster,
trigger that Monster.

HIT BY MONSTERS

*Any Prisoner still within line of sight of a triggered monster is hit.
Discard 3 tiles from the Draw Stack. Go **LIGHTS OUT**.*

LIGHT & DARKNESS

Remove & discard tiles no longer Illuminated.
DRAW, ORIENT, & PLACE newly Illuminated tiles.

IF A LIGHTS OUT PRISONER WAS RELIT THIS TURN,
current player draws their newly Illuminated tiles.

OPTIONAL: Spend a Nerve to Move Again (Go to **MOVE** step)

IF FINAL FLICKERS

Discard an additional Illuminated tile from anywhere on the board.

PLAY PROCEEDS CLOCKWISE TO NEXT PRISONER.