

GOAL

To survive, you must cross several different Areas and complete the Final Area. Scavenge for resources during your turn. Venture as far as you dare while trying to gather enough food and avoid omnipresent Peril. Manage the risks, use your cards to mitigate chance and possibly work with others to make your way home. It will be far from easy in this darkness...

SCENARIOS

You can play in different ways depending on the **Scenario** you choose. **Scenarios** differ in length, difficulty, level of cooperation, and additional rules.



On the reverse of every **Scenario**, there is an Area for the last round that you will need to complete. *If the Area doesn't specify a win condition, just complete it to win.*

All **Scenarios** can be played with 2-6 players except for **Mad Prophet**, which is for 1 player only. *Try starting with Daring Retreat or Lost Expedition.*

CARD TYPES



SETUP

Pack and prepare to embark on this deadly journey. Hive is the destination and the leader is the boldest of the bold.

Form the Draw deck by shuffling all 1st, 2nd and 3rd tier cards together. Shuffle **Areas** to form the Area deck and **Afflictions** to form the Affliction deck.

Keep as many face down **Areas** as the chosen **Scenario** specifies and remove the other **Areas** from the game. Place the **Final Area** on the bottom of the **Area** deck.

To set up the 3-5 areas of **Wicked Few**, first, shuffle **Final Area** with 2 **Areas** and then add 3 other **Areas** on top.

Deal each player the cards specified by the chosen **Scenario**. If any of these cards do not have a number in the top left, discard them and draw again. Then shuffle any discarded cards back into the Draw deck.

Choose the starting player and give them the **Banner** - it is passed clockwise every round and marks the first player.

AREAS

After what happened, a lot was forgotten. We sense the way, yet none can guess what lies on the way to our salvation.

Each round is represented by an **Area** you need to cross. Each **Area** also has a passive effect on all players and a cost (in the top left).

Areas with lower costs tend to have unfavorable effects while those with higher costs actually help the players.

Once the **Final Area** is revealed, replace it with the Area on the reverse of the chosen **Scenario**. *This allows you to check what you need for the last round. In the case of Wicked Few it allows for randomization.* The **Final Area** always marks the last round of the game.

OVERVIEW



ROUND

1. The first player reveals the top **Area** and divides Draw deck into 3 temporary scavenge piles of roughly the same number of cards.
2. Players play their turns in a clockwise order starting with the first player.
3. When it would be the first player's turn again, Feeding is resolved.
4. The first player briefly shuffles the scavenge piles and any remaining scavenged cards together. The next player takes the **Banner**.

Cards in your hand can be played at any time. The hand limit at any time is 5 cards. To take another card, you must play, trade, or discard one first.

TURN

1. **Scavenge**
Choose 1 scavenge pile. Scavenge it by drawing 1 card and placing it face up on the table. You may scavenge the chosen pile repeatedly until you decide to Collect, or until a scavenged **Peril** gains you an **Affliction**. *Except for Perils and Anomaly, don't resolve the effect of scavenged cards just yet.*
2. **Collect**
You may take any scavenged cards into your hand during this phase. Any leftover scavenged cards stay on the table and are available for the next player(s) this round. *During both phases, you are the active player.*

Important notes: Unless otherwise stated, you cannot immediately use or purposefully discard scavenged cards — you must first collect them in order to use them. Also, cards with "Scavenge" and "Take" instructions ignore turn phases and **Area/Affliction** limitations. Take advantage of this!

Example: Tim starts his turn. As 2 of the 3 Scavenge piles are of the 3rd tier, he decides to play Scout to flip the top cards face up. The first pile looks good.

He scavenges Hunt. Inspired by his success, he scavenges again and draws Rest. A third attempt proves reckless as it reveals a Peril. Unable to avoid an Affliction, Tim plays Hide to save the scavenged cards Hunt and Rest from being discarded. Gaining an Affliction triggers the end of the scavenge phase.

Tim collects the saved cards and plays Hunt, hoping to get a better card. He looks at the top 5 cards and happily scavenges Instinct. As he can still collect, he takes Instinct and ends his turn.

FEEDING

Friends. Sanity. Our very souls. All sacrificed for a rotting piece of flesh, day after day in a never-ending nightmare from which we cannot awake.

At the end of each round, each player either feeds or starves. To feed, harvest (discard) enough cards to match or exceed the current **Area's** cost with the value of your cards. Should you starve, gain an **Affliction** and discard 1 of your cards. *When you harvest more than the Area's cost, you may freely share the surplus with other players. You can even fully feed another player this way.*

Some effects result in harvesting card(s) before Feeding. Such cards are placed in the Personal Zone and are consumed during the next Feeding.

Sometimes it is better to starve, and save cards for the next round than harvest your entire hand and start the next round with nothing.

CARDS

The reverse of every card in the Draw deck shows a head with 1-3 spears, indicating the tier of the card. The higher the tier, the higher the value, and the greater the threat of danger!

Once revealed, the cards are further divided into three groups by the symbol in the top left:

- A skull indicates a **Peril** (next page)
- A pouch indicates an **Opportunity** (next page)
- A numerical value indicates an **Action**

Actions have 2 uses. You can either play the card from your hand to resolve its effect or you can harvest it during Feeding. As both of these uses require you to discard the card, choose wisely.

Only Actions can be taken into hand, unless a card specifically instructs otherwise (e.g Dire Hound and Pathfinder).



PERIL

Worms, traps, demons, and many more untold ways to die. One way to live. Run.

Peril represents the dangers lurking in the depths. When scavenged, a **Peril always discards all scavenged cards** (even if defeated, or if **Salvation** is played!) and attempts to punish the active player with an **Affliction**. *Some Perils can be defeated by discarding cards to gain a reward!*



A **Peril** is resolved immediately. Only **Actions** with the keyword **Reaction** (green) can intervene. Once resolved, the **Peril** is discarded. *Your scavenge ends only if the Peril gains you an Affliction!*



AFFLICTION

Doomed for eternity are those who make it out. The less fortunate end up as a grim feast.

Afflictions represent injuries and growing insanity that immediately apply a permanent negative effect. Keep them in your Personal zone.



Unless the chosen **Scenario** states otherwise, when you have 3 **Afflictions** you die and lose. A dead player discards all cards and shuffles their **Afflictions** back into the Affliction deck.

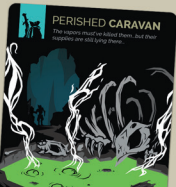
When healed, shuffle the **Affliction** back into the Affliction deck. When face down, the **Affliction** effect is ignored, but it still counts towards dying.



OPPORTUNITY

Is there any hope left in this Godforsaken place?

As long as it stays scavenged, **Opportunity** provides the active player an optional sidequest that may be completed during any phase of their turn for immediate effect. Discard it once completed.



Time slows, awareness fades, and the air pulses.

A player who scavenges or discards the **Anomaly** immediately chooses a Scavenge pile and shuffles the discard pile back into the chosen Scavenge pile. The **Anomaly** is then placed face down on the bottom of that pile.

If a scavenge pile is depleted it is not automatically refilled, nor do you automatically switch to a different pile. Card effects can't interact with depleted piles.



CARAVAN

We are not alone in this quest. Another group has joined, hoping for help and protection. They are skilled, but the way they look at us makes me shiver.

The **Caravan** is an optional rule that can be used in any **Scenario**. It makes the game slightly more challenging and results in more cards to choose from, which can be useful (e.g. 2-player or solo games). If you wish to use it, place the **Caravan** on the table near the Area deck.

When an **Area** is revealed, place X cards from the Draw deck under the **Caravan**, where X is the Area's current cost. Any Player may harvest X food at any time to feed the **Caravan** and immediately take the cards underneath it, discarding any **Peril** and **Opportunity**.

These cards can be given or traded to other players before you take them into your hand. *Any leftover food harvested to feed Caravan is forfeit.*

Caravan must be fed every round or ALL players lose the game.

If more than one player wishes to feed the Caravan at the same time, priority is given to the first player or the player closest to them in clockwise order.



CHARACTERS

The awakening was brutal. We had no idea who we were. Perhaps for the best.

Characters are an optional extension to the game that make it a more personal and variable experience.

At the start of the game, each player draws 2 **Characters** and chooses 1 or draws 1 **Character** at random, for a more thematic experience. Place the **Character** face down, **Survivor** side up.

While face down, the **Character** is unusable and even weakens you! You can flip the **Survivor** back to the **Character** side by playing **Salvation** or being a target of either **Rest** or **Relief**.

While your **Character** is face up you can use its power. It can either be a passive effect (active at all times) or a one-time action. Some powerful actions require you to flip your **Character** face down to use the effect. *Beware! There are 2 copies of Black Mist, a Peril that can flip ALL Characters face down.*



LAST HUNT

In this scenario, all players play simultaneously under a merciless time limit. Should time run out, the round instantly ends and Feeding begins.

Scavenge piles are shared among all players as usual. Multiple players may scavenge from any scavenge pile at any time until their personal scavenge ends.

Unlike scavenge piles, scavenged cards are not in a communal area, but in a private area in front of each player in which the other players cannot interact. **Move**, **Relief** and **Rush** can be played on any player, as they are all active.

A scavenged **Peril** interrupts scavenge of all players and it must be resolved before players may continue scavenging.



DEALS

I hear cries in the distance. Comrades I was supposed to save. This place made me realize they are not worth it. No one is. I alone must survive.

At any time, players can make binding deals and give or trade cards from their hands. However, should you break a promise given to another player, they can choose to punish you with an **Affliction** - no exceptions.

When you are resolving a **Peril**, you can't give any cards to other players, though they can still give cards to you, possibly helping you deal with it.

TIPS

- Don't get discouraged by the difficulty. You'll learn how to survive.
- You can find a list of all cards and their tier distribution in the other booklet.
- Play the game a few times before trying Caravan, Characters or Campaign.
- You can't avoid bad situations. Try to prepare for them to minimize losses.
- Not only are there more **Perils** in higher-tier cards, they are also worse!
- The more **Perils** are discarded, the safer the Scavenge is. And vice versa.
- Don't just harvest the cards, play them to gain an advantage.
- Smart trading can help you gain an advantage or even save your life.
- Playing cards to prevent an **Affliction** is not always worth it.
- There is one **Affliction** that, when resolved, immediately heals itself!
- Compare the risks and possible gain when scavenging many cards.
- Card effects sometimes reference the card's own name, so watch out.
- Enjoy the lore and try to role-play for the best experience possible.
- Anticipate other players' turns. Keep in mind you can play cards anytime.
- Still too difficult? Or easy? Try adjusting the Area count.

