

RULEBOOK

ETHELBERG

DEATH MAY DIE

WORK IN
PROGRESS



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COMPONENTS



Rulebook



17 Double-Sided Tiles



Story Board



8 Insanity Cards



Elder One Token



10 Player Dashboards



ELDER ONE BOX - CTHULHU

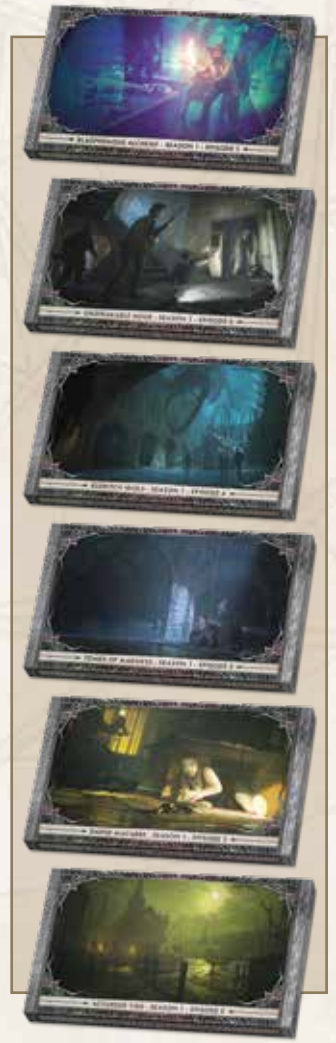


ELDER ONE BOX - HASTUR



6 EPISODE BOXES

(Contents displayed on the back of each box)



10 Investigators



18 Monsters

10 Cultists





*Cultists. Doing idiotic rituals again.
Going to summon an elder god,
destroy the world. The usual.
But we've got something different planned.
We're going to disrupt their little ritual.
Mess it up real good.*

*So when that elder one
lands in our world, it's mortal.
Just a bit. Just for a little while.*

And then we're going to kill it.

*It won't be easy. We'll have to work together.
We'll likely lose our sanity. But that's OK.*

We're fueled by madness.

OVERVIEW

At the start of each game, you will choose an Episode box and an Elder One box and combine their components. The episode will provide the map, the ritual you are trying to disrupt, and some monsters in the game. The Elder One will provide the big boss you will fight, along with its cultists and special monsters. Do not combine elements from other boxes.



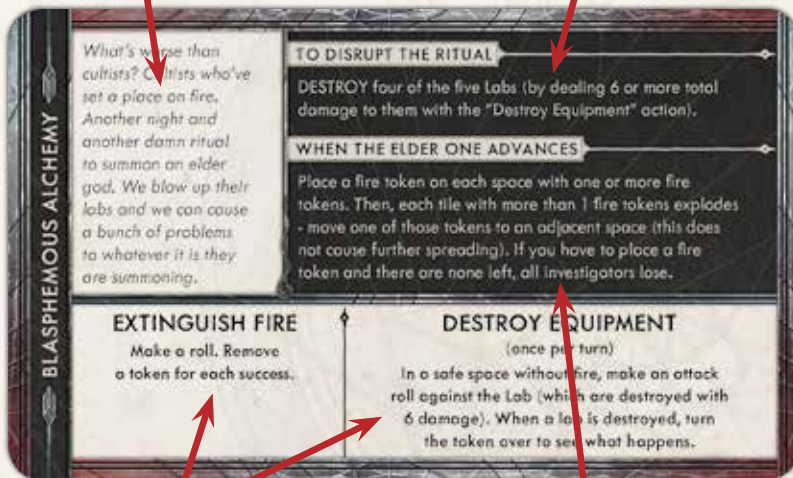
1 to 5 players will control their Investigators, cooperating to win or lose the game together. In each game, the goal remains the same: disrupt the ritual, then kill the Elder One.

EPISODES

Each episode has its own story card, cards and special tokens.

Flavor text to be read at the start of the episode.

How to disrupt the ritual (and make the Elder One vulnerable to attack)



Two special actions investigators can take during this episode

What happens when the Elder One advances along its track (the track is discussed on the next page)



ELDER ONES

The back of each episode card shows how to set up the episode. This is discussed in detail on the next page.



Each Elder One comes with its own flavor of cultists and minions, its own Mythos cards to mess with you, and Elder One cards in different stages that will unfold as the game goes on. You cannot attack the Elder One until the ritual is disrupted.



STORY BOARD

The story board, used in all games, is the hub for the game.



The Elder One track shows the progression of the Elder One as it manifests into our world. It starts on the left part of the track and progress to the right. When it enters a red space, it will be summoned (it will be summoned earlier if the ritual is disrupted). After The Elder One is summoned to our world, a marker is placed on the track and moved instead of the figure. If the marker reaches the end of the track, the Elder One is immortal and the investigators lose.



The Elder One's four stage cards go here, face up. The cultists and special monster for that Elder One also go here.

The episode's story card and any monster cards in that episode go here.



DISCOVERY CARDS

Each episode has 15 discovery cards. These include weapons, events, and allies that can help you. Most Discovery cards can be Claimed. Discovery cards are explained in detail under step 3 of the Turn.





MYTHOS CARDS

Mythos cards drive the horrors of each game. You will grow to hate them. Half the mythos cards in a game come from the Episode box and the other half come from the Elder One box.

During Step 2 of the Turn, the player who just took a turn will draw a mythos card. Some will move and/or summon enemies, others will drive you mad. There are also ones that aren't as kind. They are explained in detail on page XX.



ENEMIES

The term Enemies refers to cultists, monsters, and the Elder One (when on the board). Anything not a cultist or the Elder One is a monster. Anything that refers to cultists affects cultists only. Anything that refers to monster affects monsters only. Anything that refers to the Elder One affects the Elder One only.



Most mythos cards have a summoning symbol on them. When there are three summoning symbols in the mythos discard pile, the Elder One advances along its track (See Step 4 of the Turn).

Enemy cards have their health, the dice they use when attacking, and a special ability that may come into effect in different circumstances.

INVESTIGATORS

Each investigator has a card with a wound track, a stress track, a Sanity track, and three skills. All are tracked with tokens. If your wounds token ever reaches the skull, you are dead. Your sanity track has trigger points on it that will do two things: trigger your insanity (see below) and let you level up a skill (explained later). Your stress track shows how panicked your investigator is. You may increase your stress to re-roll a die you just rolled. Some discovery cards also have you take stress if you want to claim them.

Your three skills allow you to bend the rules in your favor. Your top skill is unique to your investigator while the other two skills come from a common pool so other investigators may have the same ones. All skills start at level one but you will increase them when you level up. Some skills replace a lower level skill as you level up while others add to them(see leveling up).

Insanity Trigger Point

The diagram shows an investigator card for Lizzie. At the top, a row of 12 icons represents the Sanity Track, with a skull icon at the end. Below this is the 'YOUR TURN' section with four steps: 1. TAKE 3 ACTIONS, 2. DRAW MYTHOS CARD(S), 3. INVESTIGATE OR FIGHT, and 4. RESOLVE END OF TURN. The central area features an illustration of Lizzie and a quote: "Heads! I win again. Best nine of eleven, luv?". To the right are three skill tracks: LUCKY (Get one free reroll to four free rerolls), MARKSMAN (You may attack a target one space away to two spaces away), and SWIFTNESS (Gain a free run action each turn to an extra action each turn). At the bottom is the Wounds Track with a skull icon. A 'DISCOVERY CARDS' section on the right shows a card for 'JEROME, The Assistant Janitor' with a '2' in a heart icon. A small figure of Lizzie is shown at the bottom right.

Sanity Track

Stress Track

Wounds Track

Skills

Skill Level

Claimed Discovery Card



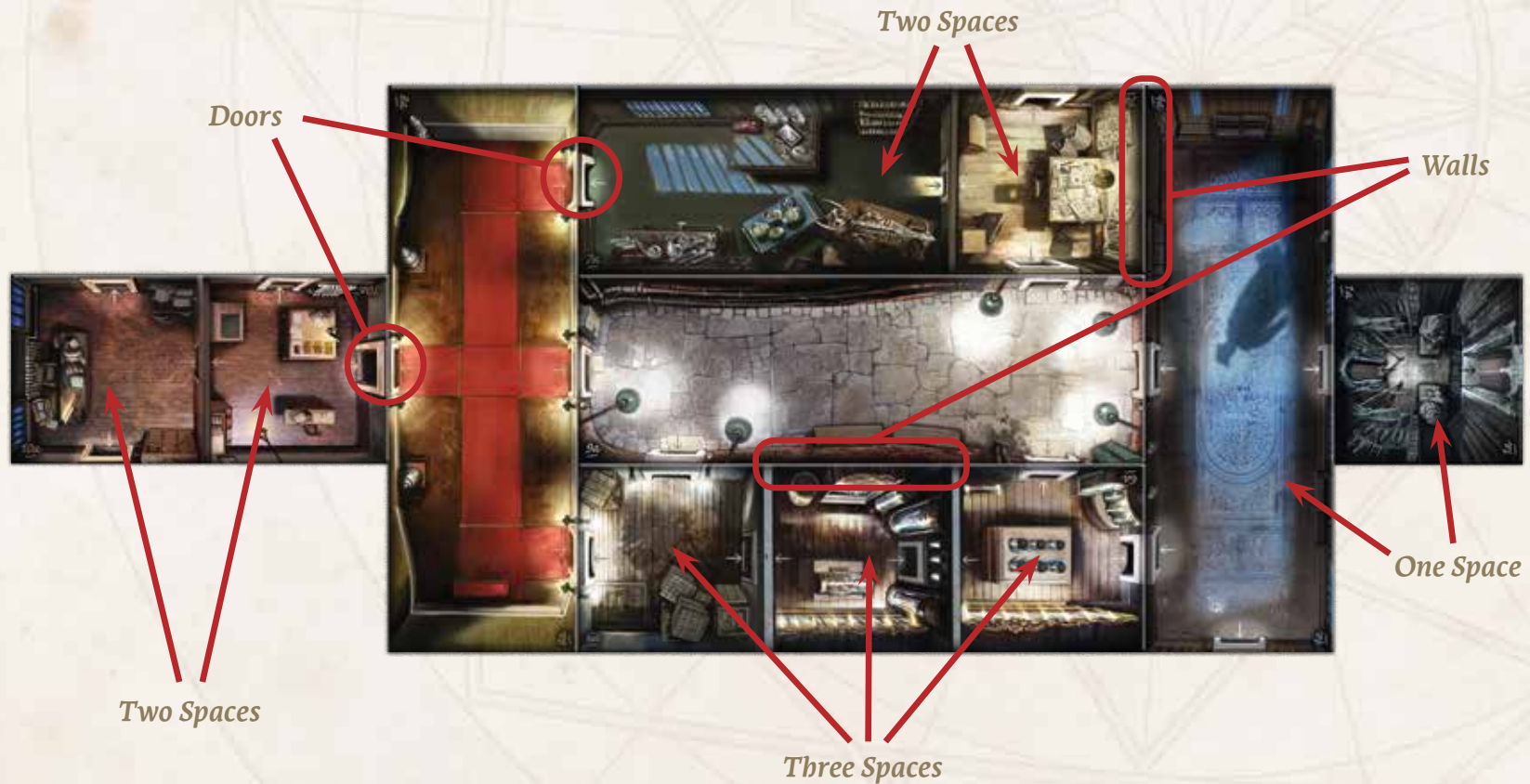
INSANITIES

Each investigator gets an insanity at the start of play. Every time the Sanity marker on the investigator card gets to a [trigger symbol] on the track, that insanity triggers. Do the effect on the insanity card.

After your insanity is triggered, you level up one of your skills. Choose one skill and move its marker up one space.

If multiple insanities reach a [trigger symbol] at the same time have them go off clockwise from the active player.

TILES AND SPACES



Each tile is double-sided and also labeled with a number and name to help with set up.

Each map has three gates - red, yellow, and blue where enemies are summoned.



Spaces are defined by walls and doors.

Some tiles contain one space while others contain two or three.

On a map, you may only pass through doors that are on both sides of the space or a door and a staircase. If there is only a door on one side (or a door leading off the board) and nothing on the other side, you cannot go through it.



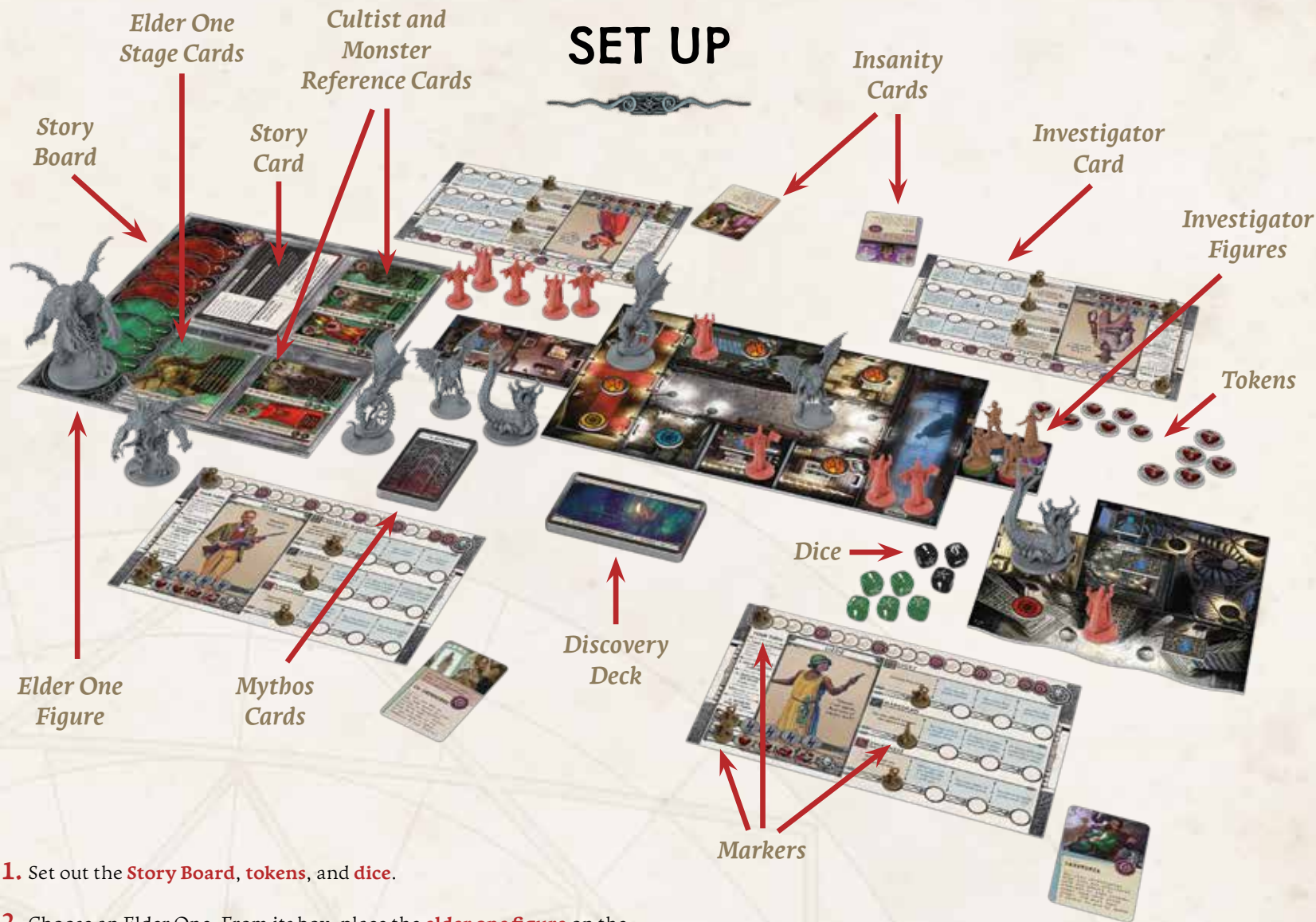
Many maps contain staircases or tunnels of the same color. You may move from a space with one of these tokens to a space with the matching token. Spaces linked like that are considered adjacent for all purposes.



SAFE SPACES

A space is Safe when there are no enemies in it.

SET UP



1. Set out the **Story Board**, **tokens**, and **dice**.

2. Choose an Elder One. From its box, place the **elder one figure** on the starting space of the summoning track. Place the **cultist and monster reference card** on the Story Board. Set out the 8 **mythos cards**. Place the **Elder One Stage cards** in order, face up, on the Story Board. Stage 1 goes on top.

3. Choose an episode. From its box, take out its 8 mythos cards, **discovery deck**, **story card**, and tokens. Place the monster reference cards on the Story board.

4. Set up the episode according to the episode card, including starting cultists/monsters/gates or other tokens. Then, turn over the story card and place it on the Story Board.

5. Shuffle the 16 mythos cards together.

6. Shuffle the episode discovery deck.

7. Have each player select an **investigator card** and its **figure**. Choose a colored base on the figure to help you remember which figure is yours. Place the figures on the starting space for the episode. In a one-player game, choose two characters. You will control them both, alternating turns with them.

8. Place three **markers** on the skills of your character at their lowest level. Place a marker on the leftmost space of the wound, stress, and sanity tracks.

9. Shuffle the **insanity cards** and deal each player one. Players place them, face up, near their character cards.

10. Randomly determine a starting player. That player takes the mythos deck and will take the first turn.

DICE AND CHECKS



Some actions and Discovery cards tell you to “Make a Roll”. When Investigators Make A Roll, you always roll 3 standard dice and may also get to roll bonus dice. Enemies roll different numbers of dice for their attack as noted on their card.

Each die has four different results



- **Success:** This means that you (or the monster) succeeded at your attempt (or partially succeeded). If you were attacking, it means you hit. If an enemy is attacking, it means they hit you. In some cases you need to reach a target level of successes in one roll. Perhaps you need 3 successes to convince someone to join you.



- **Elder Sign:** These mean nothing unless you have a skill or card that uses them.



- **Tentacle:** Madness! For each tentacle, you will lose one sanity and might trigger your insanity. If your sanity moves to the skull, you are insane and eliminated.



- **Blank:** No effect most of the time.

BONUS DICE



Certain cards will give you a bonus die as noted on the card. Also, some checks will give you bonus dice if you have a related ability.

The bonus dice do not contain a tentacle icon.

REROLLS

After rolling dice, you may take one stress to re-roll one die. You may do this as often as you like until your stress is at its highest level. When enemies attack you, you roll for them and make take stress to re-roll their dice.



APPLYING RESULTS

You apply the results of the die roll in this order:

1. Use any successes:

- If an investigator is attacking, these successes are wounds applied to their target.
- If an enemy is attacking, successes are also wounds applied to their target (usually an investigator).
- If you were told to “Make a Roll” by a Discovery card, you must equal or succeed the number shown on the card.

This Discovery card lets the Investigator make a roll. If the investigator has the Marksman skill, they may add bonus dice. If the roll has 3+ successes, they would claim the beaker, otherwise they would take 2 stress.



2. Apply any tentacles:

- Lose 1 Sanity for each tentacle rolled (move your marker one space on your sanity track).
- If you reach a [trigger] space on your sanity track, stop moving the marker (even if you didn't lose the full amount of sanity) and apply your insanity - See Insanity.

TURN SEQUENCE

1. Take three actions
2. Draw Mythos card(s)
3. Enemies attack or Draw Discovery card
4. The Elder One May Advance



1. TAKE THREE ACTIONS

On your turn, you may take three actions. You may take the same action more than once. There are four actions that are in every episode and two that are unique to an episode.

Some actions can only be done while on a Safe Space. A Safe Space is space without enemies.

■ MOVE

Move up to three spaces. You can only pass between spaces if there is an opening or a door on both tiles. You may also pass between two spaces that both have a staircase token.

When you leave a space with enemies, all enemies in that space follow you to your new space. When you leave a space with fire tokens, place one fire token from offboard onto your investigator card for each token on the space (leave the fire tokens on the space).

EXAMPLE: Ian uses an action to move up to three spaces. He first moves into a space with a cultist.



He keeps moving and the cultist follows him to the new space. The second space has two fire tokens but no enemies.



Ian finishes his move by moving into a third space, which contains a fire vampire. Again, the cultist follows him. He is also leaving a space with two fire tokens so he takes two fire tokens and adds them to his investigator card. He is now in a space with a fire vampire and the cultist who followed him. He is also on fire. Pretty typical evening.



ATTACK

Target one enemy on your space and make a roll. Each success rolled causes one wound to your target. Place wound tokens on the base of the figure you attacked. If this number equals (or exceeds) their health, you kill them. Remove their figure. Once the ritual has been disrupted, the Elder One may be attacked (see page xx).

EXAMPLE: Ian uses an action to Attack a cultist and a fire vampire. Normally he would have to target either the cultist or the fire vampire but his level 2 brawling enables him to target all enemies in his space so he doesn't have to choose.



He takes three normal dice (you always take three normal dice when making a roll) and one bonus die for his level 1 brawling skill.



He rolls and gets a blank, a success, a success/tentacle, and an elder sign. Ian doesn't have a skill that utilizes the elder sign so it has no effect. Ian takes a stress to re-roll the blank and gets another success! He takes another stress to re-roll the elder sign and gets another elder sign. He decides to stop re-rolling.



The cultist can take 2 wounds and the fire vampire can take 4. Ian has three successes to distribute as bits. He decides to use 2 to kill the cultist, removing the figure and, using his brawling skill, applies the last success as a bit to the fire vampire. The fire vampire's card says that, when it takes damage, it puts a fire token in its space. So Ian's player puts one in the space.

Finally, Ian loses one sanity from the tentacle. One step closer to madness.



REST (only on a safe space)

If you are in a safe space (no enemies) you may heal your stress and/or health up to 3 spaces (any combination). This is 3 spaces total, not 3 spaces for each track. Note that insanity cannot be healed by resting.

EXAMPLE: Sister Beth is at full stress and has taken one wound. She spends an action to rest. She could choose to regain one health and lose two stress but decides to regain three stress instead, leaving her health where it is.

TRADE

Choose another investigator in your space. You may trade ONE item or companion (either giving or receiving). Some discovery cards have more than one item or companion, one on the left and one on the right side of the card. When trading, the investigator always receives the same item or companion that the you had. You may not trade conditions.

■ EPISODE ACTIONS

Each episode has two unique actions as shown on the episode card. These will help you disrupt the ritual or help you survive.



Episode Actions

2. DRAW MYTHOS CARD

Draw and resolve the top Mythos card. All Mythos cards are resolved and then discarded until the deck is reshuffled.

Note: one insanity has an investigator keep their last drawn Mythos card in front of them.

Mythos cards may have several different steps to them. You must do these steps in order before discarding the card. If you can't do a step on the card, skip it and move onto the next one.

Unless it says otherwise, Mythos cards only affect the player whose turn it is, ignoring all other investigators.



This Mythos card has a summoning symbol at the top, which is ignored when drawn but will be part of Step 4.

The first thing to do on this card is move each Byakhee on the board to the space where you are. If there are none, skip this step.

Then, summon a Byakhee on the space with the red gate. If all the Byakhee figures are on the board, skip this step.

This card also has a summoning symbol and one step. It affects all investigators, not just the player whose turn it is.



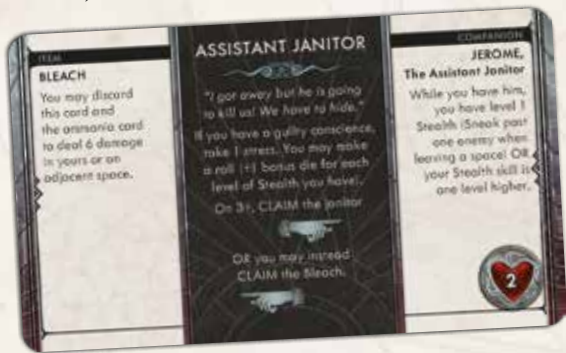
3. INVESTIGATE OR FIGHT!

This step is different depending on whether there are enemies in your space or not.

If you are in a safe space:

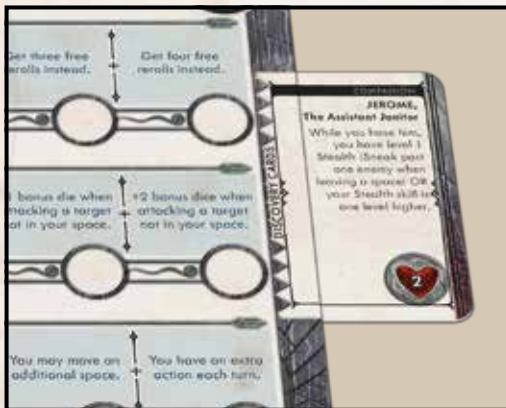
Draw the top card of the Discovery deck and read the text in the center box aloud.

Some will have a statement of something you must do if you have a condition or a certain companion. Most offer choices of what you want to do. Some cards result in CLAIMING a companion, item, or condition. Claiming means to slide it under your investigator card, becoming part of your inventory (or, when it's a condition, changing your mental state).



When you first draw a discovery card, read the text in the middle out loud. This card has a bit of speech from the Assistant Janitor. It then tells you to take 1 stress if you have the Condition, Guilty Conscience. Then you have a choice of either taking 2 stress to claim the janitor or 1 stress to claim the bleach.

COMPANIONS: Any wounds you take may be applied to companions you currently have. If their wounds equal the number on their card, the companion is discarded and any benefit they give you is immediately lost. Companions may also give you a level in a skill. If you don't have that skill, you gain level 1 in that skill. If you have the skill, treat it as one higher than it is, while you have this companion with you.



Jerome, the assistant janitor gives you 1 level in stealth when you have him. He also can take 1 wound (which would kill him).

If you are not in a safe space:

Do not draw a Discovery card. Instead, all enemies in your space attack you (they ignore other investigators).

DEFENDING AGAINST ENEMIES

When an enemy attacks you, roll dice as shown on their card. Each success gives you one wound. All other dice effects are the same. You may use stress to re-roll these dice and you may use any of your skills to help avoid or minimize the attack.

EXAMPLE: At the end of his turn, Ian has a fire vampire in his space so he does not draw a discovery card. Instead he rolls dice to show the vampire is attacking him! The fire vampire card shows they roll two normal and one bonus die when attacking.



Ian's player takes those dice and rolls, getting a blank, a success, and a success. Ian uses one stress to re-roll one of the successes and rolls an elder sign instead. He takes one wound for the success.

The fire vampire puts a fire token in its space when it takes or deals damage so Ian's player puts a token on the space.

Ian's signature skill, Vengeance Obsession, lets him deal one damage to any enemy that wounds him so he puts a wound on the Fire Vampire.



4. RESOLVE END OF TURN

FIRE!



You may be on fire. This will have happened if you left a space that contains fire tokens. It may be that a monster set you on fire. At this point, it really doesn't matter, does it?

The first thing you do at the end of the turn is roll one standard die for every fire token on your investigator card. You may use stress to re-roll. Every success results in 1 wound. Every tentacle causes you to lose 1 sanity. Then, discard all fire tokens on your card.



ELDER END OF TURN EFFECTS

As the Elder one progresses through its stages, there may be End of Turn effects visible on its stage cards. The current investigator resolves each of these in whichever order they like.

CHECK THE MYTHOS DISCARD PILE



If there are 3 cards in the discard pile that have the Summoning Symbol, the Elder One advances toward immortality!

Note: One insanity causes an investigator to keep their most recently drawn Mythos card in front of them. This symbol counts toward the three in the discard pile (even though it isn't in the discard pile).

If there are three Summoning Symbols:

Advance the Elder one along the Summoning Track. Both the Elder One Stage I card and the Story Card for the Episode will tell you what to do when the Elder One Advances. Resolve the Elder One effects first. If the Elder One is already on the board, move the progression token along the track instead.



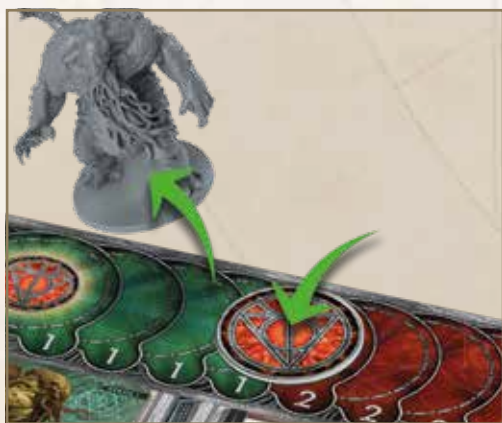
When the Elder One enters the first red space on the track, it is summoned to our world. The Elder One is also summoned if the Investigators disrupt the ritual while it is on a green space.

In either case, place the Elder One figure on the space where the active investigator is. Place the progression token on the summoning track, where the Elder One was. Use this progression token to mark the Elder One's progress to the end of the game.

When the Elder One is summoned to our world, move the Stage 1 card to the side, revealing the Stage 2 card underneath. The Stage 1 effects remain in play until the end of the game.

After this, the turn is over and the player to the left takes a turn. Continue turns like this until the Investigators win or lose.

EXAMPLE: At the end of Sister Beth's turn, there are four cards in the discard pile and three of them have Summoning Symbols. The Elder One advances!



Beth's player moves the elder one on the track. It has reached the red space and is summoned into our world. Beth's player puts the elder one on her space and places the progression token on the red space instead. The progression token will move along the track from now on and, if the token reaches the end, the game will end in a loss.



Since the Elder One is now in our world, Beth's player reveals the second stage card and does its effects. Finally, she shuffles the four Mythos cards in the discard pile into the Mythos deck to reset the Mythos deck.





DISRUPTING THE RITUAL

Each scenario has a ritual to disrupt in order to make the Elder One mortal, even for a short time. You cannot attack the Elder One until the ritual is disrupted. If the investigators disrupt the ritual before the Elder One is summoned to our world, immediately summon the Elder One.

ATTACKING THE ELDER ONE

After the ritual is disrupted, the Elder One can be attacked like any other enemy. Each Elder One has multiple stages, which must be defeated, one at a time. Starting with Stage 2, each stage has:

A one-time effect that triggers when that card is revealed.
An ongoing effect that remains in play until the end of the game.
Wounds showing how much damage that stage can take.

When a stage has wounds equal to or greater than its wound level, that stage is defeated. Move that stage card to the side to reveal the next one. Any excess wounds do NOT carry over to the next stage. Remember that all of the previous stages' effects remain in play until the end of the game!

An investigator attacks Hastur while he is in Stage 2. That stage already has 3 wounds from an earlier attack. The attacking investigator does 5 wounds! This new total of 8 is enough to defeat this stage. The stage card is moved to the side, revealing stage 3. Even though the investigator only needed 6 wounds to defeat the stage and did 8, the extra two wounds do NOT carry over to stage 3.

ENDING THE GAME

You win the game when you kill the Elder One by defeating its final stage.

You lose the game when one of the following happens:

- An investigator is killed or goes insane before the Elder One is summoned to our world (Stage 1 card).
- All investigators are killed or insane after the Elder One is summoned (Stages 2 onward).
- The progress token reaches the last (8th) space of the track.



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RULES SUMMARY

■ TURN STEPS

1. Investigator Takes 3 Actions

- Move
- Attack
- Rest (safe space only)
- Trade
- Episode action (2 different ones)

2. Draw Mythos Card

3. Investigate or Defend!

4. End turn

- Deal with Fire
- Elder End of Turn Effects
- Check Mythos Discard Pile

■ STANDARD TOKENS

Gates - enemies are summoned through gates.



Fire - When leaving a space with fire, put one token on your card for every token in the space that you left.



Tunnels/Stairs - Spaces with matching staircases or matching tunnels are one space away from each other.



Wounds - Put wound markers on the bases of enemies to track their damage.



■ DICE ROLLING AND RESULTS



Success Elder Sign Tentacle Blank

Apply successes first before losing sanity from tentacles.

• LEVEL 1 SKILLS



Arcane Mastery

When making any roll, you may count one ★ as a success.



Brawling

Roll +1 (bonus die symbol) when attacking in your space.



Marksman

You may attack a target one space away.



Stealth

Once per move, you may sneak past one enemy (it does not follow you).



Swift

Gain a free run action each turn.



Toughness

Whenever you take damage, reduce the damage by 1.

■ ADVANCING THE ELDER ONE

When there are 3 Mythos cards in the discard pile (including the one that is 'held' by an investigator with PTSD), the Elder One advances.

If the Elder One is on the track, advance it one space.

If the Elder One is on the board, advance the progression token one space instead.

If the progression token reaches the last space, the investigators lose.

Otherwise, follow the effects that read "When the Elder One Advances" on both the Elder One Stage 1 Card and on the Episode card (in either order.).

Shuffle all Mythos discards back into the deck, including one that may be held by an investigator with PTSD.