

BURGUNDIAN VENTURES

DARK MASTERS

Ancient Ruin: Limited Beta

BETA RULES v0.1.20150413

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Contents

- 10 dice (5 green, 5 red)
- 53 card stands (26 green, 26 red, 1 black)
- 36 hex **Dungeon** cards
- 24 hex **Fellcindre** player cards (*Dragon*)
- 24 hex **Lord Gheth** player cards (*Wizard*)
- 52 "miniature" cards
 - 8 "Battle" markers (2 sets, #1-4)
 - 20 Fellcindre combatants / 2 traps
 - 17 Lord Gheth combatants
 - 2 "Lord in Play" cards
 - 2 "Turn Order" reference cards
 - 1 "Turn Marker"
- 108 round "tokens" in punch cards
 - 30 victory tokens (15 Fellcindre, 15 Lord Gheth)
 - 10 held tokens (5 Fellcindre, 5 Lord Gheth)
 - 35 silver coin tokens
 - 25 gold coin tokens
 - 8 wound tokens

Putting the Game Together

- Separate hex cards into their respective decks. The three decks have different backs, so it's easy to tell them apart. The exception is the "*Hall of the Ancients*" dungeon room, which is always the first dungeon room to be played. This card should be placed on top of the **Dungeon** deck.
- Place one series (#1-4) of "Battle" markers on red card stands and the other series on green card stands.
- Place the 20 **Fellcindre** combatant miniatures and the 2 traps on red card stands.
- Place the 17 **Lord Gheth** combatant miniatures on green card stands.
- Place the "Turn Marker" on the black card stand.

Setup

- The player who will assume the role of **Fellcindre** gathers the **Fellcindre** deck, all miniatures on red stands, and all tokens bearing **Fellcindre's** image.

- The player who will assume the role of **Lord Gheth** gathers the **Lord Gheth** deck, all miniatures on green stands, the extra green stands, and all tokens bearing **Lord Gheth's** image.
- The **Dungeon** deck is placed within easy reach of both players and the "*Hall of the Ancients*" dungeon room is placed in the center. The rest of the dungeon will be played off this card.
- Each player draws 3 cards from their player deck. (*Not the **Dungeon** deck.*)
- Roll a die to determine who goes first (*re-rolling any ties*). That player takes the *Turn Marker* and becomes the primary player for the first turn.

Objective

The primary objective is to end a turn with all of your victory tokens in the dungeon. Other conditions of victory include:

- If a player defeats the other player's Lord in combat, they win the game.
- If the **Dungeon** deck is depleted and either player has no combatants in the dungeon, their opponent wins the game. This can result in a draw if neither player has combatants in the dungeon.
- If both players end the turn with all of their victory tokens in the dungeon, the player with tokens in the *Hall of the Ancients* dungeon room wins.

Turn Order

Each turn progresses in phases, which you will see numbered below. The primary player completes each phase first. Before phase 3, the secondary player catches up by performing phases 1 and 2. Before phase 4, the secondary player catches up by performing phase 3. Phases 4, 5, and 6 are simultaneous:

1. **Explore**
2. **Deploy**

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- (secondary player)
- 3. Move
 - (secondary player)
- 4. Combat
- 5. Tally
- 6. Collect

More information on each turn phase can be found in following sections. Once a turn is complete, the *Turn Marker* is passed and a new turn begins with a new primary player.

Explore

The player places a dungeon room into the dungeon, either from their hand or by drawing from the **Dungeon** deck. If neither of these is possible, or if the player chooses, they may skip this phase.

If a **New Rule** is drawn from the **Dungeon** deck, it is put in place and replaces any previous **New Rule** immediately. No player may opt to discard or ignore a **New Rule**. The player keeps drawing until they draw a dungeon room.

Every dungeon room (*no matter which phase it is played in*) must be played with a clear walking path to an existing room. Walls in this room may block exits from other rooms, and some exits in this room may be blocked by walls in other rooms, but at least one exit must match to an exit in a previously played, adjacent room.

Deploy

The player may play 1 card from their hand. That card could be a:

- Combatant
 - Monster (*Minion / Soldier / Elite / Boss / Lord*)
 - Hero
 - Trap
- Ritual
- Dungeon Room

Further rules for how these cards are played can be found in the **Combatant**, **Ritual**, and **Dungeon Rooms sections** found later in this document.

Move

The player may move none, some, or all of the combatants they have in the dungeon. A combatant moves by spending "*Speed*" (*the number on their card marked with a boot*) to traverse open walking paths between rooms. Unless otherwise noted, it costs 1 *Speed* to move to an adjacent room from the room they are in. To prevent confusion, each combatant must complete their movement before the player can move another.

If the combatant is moving via any sort of teleport effect (*via the Portal room or a ritual*), walking paths need not be used. Each room must still be adjacent to the last, but the teleport can move them through walls.

If a combatant moves into a room already occupied by a combatant controlled by the other player, the combatants immediately *engage* and neither one can move any more this turn. Creatures with *Stealth* advantage (*noted on their hex card*) may ignore these engagement rules as long as they are actively moving. If combatants who occupy the room in which they end their movement would cause them to *engage*, they do. See the **Combat section**, next, for more information on *engagement*.

Hero combatants are not required to *engage* each other regardless of which player controls them. If Heroes controlled by different players are in the same room, they only *engage* if either player wills it.

If a combatant without the *Flyer* advantage enters a room with a trap, they *engage* the trap immediately. A *Flyer* may choose to *engage* the trap, but they are not forced to do so. When a combatant *engages* a trap, their *Speed* is reduced to 0 and they must resolve the trap immediately. See the **Combatants - Traps section**, later in this document, for additional information.

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Combat

Each time a player moves a combatant in such a way that a new *engagement* occurs, they place one of their unused, numbered "Battle" markers on the hex card representing the *engaging* combatant. Their opponent places the same number on the combatants who were *engaged*. Every new combatant joining a conflict is then added to the respective *battle group* by placing their hex card under the same numbered marker as other members already engaged in that conflict. When movement is completed, the hex cards for all *engaged* combatants should be stacked in *battle groups* under numbered markers that match them to the opponent's corresponding *battle group*.

When the **Combat** phase begins, each player picks up the stack of hex cards representing their lowest numbered (*according to the number on the "Battle" marker*) *battle group*, arranges the combatants in any order, then places them face-down on the table. The face-down card on top of this stack will be the first to fight, so when organizing them, the player should put them in the reverse order of how they want them to appear in combat (*the one in back fights first, etc*).

Both players then reveal the top card of the *battle group* and determine how many dice will be in their combatant's *dice pool* when fighting the opponent. Their base *dice pool* is equal to their "Strength" (*the number on their card marked with a fist*). If there are at least 2 more friendly combatants stacked underneath the active combatant in the *battle group*, or if any Lord or Boss is beneath the active combatant in the *battle group*, they receive *Support Bonus*, giving them an extra die to their pool. Refer to any advantages (*such as Tactician*) on the hex cards of both combatants as these can potentially affect dice pools as well.

Both players then roll dice equal to their combatant's *dice pool*. Each die that rolls equal to or higher (*a result of "0" should be read as a "10"*) than the opposing active combatant's "Armor" (*the number on their card marked with a shield, keeping in mind some advantages reduce the opponent's armor*) is a hit. The combatant

with more hits delivers a wound to the enemy. If the wounded combatant has the *Tough* advantage, a wound token is placed on that combatant's miniature (*it will fit quite nicely in the plastic stand*), otherwise the combatant is slain. Wound tokens remain with the combatant for the remainder of the game. If they receive another wound, they are slain.

If the combatants tie with 0 hits, they simply reroll. If they tie with at least 1 hit, both combatants receive a wound. Keep in mind, however, that combatants with the *Deadly* advantage only deliver 2 wounds if they *win* the roll, not tie it.

When a combatant is slain, most of them are simply removed from the dungeon and their hex cards are temporarily discarded until the player's deck is exhausted and they need to reshuffle. Any combatant with the *Unique* trait, however, such as Lords, Bosses, and Heroes, are removed from play when slain. Set them aside in a dedicated "dead" pile to be returned to their deck only when the game is over.

When a combatant is slain, the player turns over the next combatant in the *battle group* and both players repeat the process of calculating their *dice pools*, rolling to hit, determining which combatant is wounded, and dealing with casualties accordingly. This process continues until one player's *battle group* is entirely eliminated. That player has won the combat.

Repeat this combat process with the next lowest numbered *battle groups* until all combats are resolved.

Tally

If a player has monster combatants in a room that can be *held* (*text on the card will indicate a room that can be held*), and that player does not already *hold* that room, they should place one of their "Held" tokens in the room and, if applicable, remove the opponent's "Held" token. This player receives the benefits for *holding* the room.

If a player has monster combatants in a **Victory Room** (*marked by flag icons on either side of the room name*)

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that does not contain victory tokens belonging to the opponent, they may play (*place the tokens on the room*) a number of their victory tokens (*bearing an image of their Lord*) in that room equal to the number of combatants in the room, plus 1 additional if their Lord is in the room.

Similarly, If a player has combatants in a **Victory Room** in which the opponent already has victory tokens, they may remove one of the opponent's victory tokens per combatant in the room, plus 1 additional if their Lord is in the room. If they have more combatants than the opponent had victory tokens, they must wait until next turn to tally victory tokens of their own.

If, at the end of this process, either player has exhausted their stack of 15 victory tokens, they win. See the **Objective section** at the beginning of this document for tie breakers and additional victory conditions.

Any combatants ending a turn in a dungeon room are "*occupying*" that room. If they move from that room during the turn, they are no longer *occupying* a room until the next **Tally** phase when they will *occupy* the room they ended their movement in. *Occupying* certain dungeon rooms conveys certain benefits, which are detailed on the room's card or, for rooms marked with star or ladder icons next to the name, in the **Combatants** section.

Collect

Each player begins the **Collect** phase by deciding whether they want to discard cards from their hand. At this time, they may discard any, all, or none of the cards in their hand.

Next, each player draws until they hold 3 cards, or 4 if the "*Press Gangs*" **New Rule** is in play.

Next, each player collects income by retrieving coin tokens (*silver is worth 1, gold is worth 5*) and placing them next to their player deck for expenditure during a future **Deploy** phase. Each player's base income is 3 (5 if the "*Abundance of Silver*" **New Rule** is in play) and they

may receive additional income if any of the following are true:

- If they *hold* the "*Silver Cache*" dungeon room, they receive an additional 1 income.
- If they *hold* the "*Treasury*" dungeon room, they receive an additional 2 income.
- If their Lord is in play, they receive an additional 1 income. (*A reference marker for each player is included in the game to help track this.*)

Combatants

To play a combatant into a dungeon room, place their hex card from your hand face-up in front of you and place the miniature that represents them into the dungeon on the appropriate room. They are now in play. For rules and conditions on how to play a combatant into the dungeon, and how many coin it costs, see the subsections below:

Monsters

There are 5 classes of monster combatants:

- Minions cost 0 coin to play
- Soldiers cost 4 coin to play
- Elites cost 8 coin to play
- Bosses cost 12 coin to play
- Lords cost 16 coin to play

Any monster can be played on the dungeon room this player placed into the dungeon during the **Explore** phase of this turn unless the text on the room card specifies otherwise.

Alternatively, a monster can be played in a "*Den*" (*marked by 1 star icon*) or "*Lair*" (*marked by 2 star icons*) that one of your monster combatants already *occupies* (see **Tally section**, above, for the definition of "*occupy*"). Only Minions or Soldiers may be played this way into a "*Den*", but monsters of any kind may be played into a "*Lair*". Keep in mind that some rooms other than those explicitly named "*Den*" and "*Lair*" still function as such if marked with 1 or 2 star icons as described above.

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Heroes

Heroes are unique because they are not deployed by a **Dark Master**, per se. They enter the dungeon of their own accord in search of glory. As such, even though Heroes are controlled by players, they are played into the dungeon differently.

A Hero does not cost coin to play, but can only be played into the dungeon at an entry point (*dungeon rooms marked with a ladder icon next to the name*). Also be sure to note special movement and *engage* rules for heroes in the **Move** and **Combat** sections. A Hero will never join a battle group on the same side as a Monster regardless of who controls them.

Traps

Traps are pseudo-combatants that do not move and fight only when someone *engages* them by entering the room they *occupy*. Additionally, when a trap is *engaged*, the combat is resolved immediately rather than waiting for the **Combat phase**.

A trap may be played into the dungeon by spending 4 coin and placing the trap in an empty room adjacent, and with a clear walking path, to a Monster combatant they control. It will stay there until someone defeats it or the game ends. Keep in mind that traps are indiscriminate in who they affect. Combatants of the same player who played the trap are not immune.

Resolving a trap is much like traditional combat as detailed in the **Combat section** earlier in this document, except it interrupts movement and *battle groups* are irrelevant. Traps have *Strength* and *Armor* just like other combatants and fight in the same manner. If a player is *engaging* their own trap, the opposing player builds the *dice pool* and rolls for the trap.

Advantages

Advantages are listed on the top line under the "*Advantages / Traits*" footer on all Monster and Hero combatants. Following are their definitions:

- **Deadly**: Delivers 2 wounds rather than 1 when they *win* (*not tie*) a combat roll.

- **Dungeoneer**: Receives *Support Bonus* when rolling against traps. Also has the ability to traverse certain dungeon obstacles as specified in room text.
- **Eager**: Costs half the normal coin price to play. If the cost is halved for any other reason (**New Rule** or *special room ability*), the combatant can be played without cost.
- **Fearsome**: Combatant intimidates opponents, making them suffer a -1 penalty to their *Armor* when he is the active member of a *battle group*. If both combatants are *Fearsome*, the effect is negated.
- **Flyer**: Combatant can fly, and thereby avoid traps and circumvent dungeon obstacles as specified on certain dungeon rooms.
- **Horrific**: **Lord Gheth** is so frightening to look upon that all combatants in *battle group* who are opposing his *battle group* suffer -1 *Armor* whether or not he is the active combatant. He is immune to *Fearsome*, but only *Fearsome* Bosses or Elites are immune to *Horrific*.
- **Lonewolf**: **Fellcindre** is more effective when fighting alone. His *Strength* is 4 when he is alone or all other members of his *battle group* are dead, but he can never benefit from *Support Bonus*.
- **Stealth**: Combatant can ignore *engagement* rules while they are moving, though they still *engage* if they end their movement in a room occupied by enemy combatants. *Stealth* does not work to avoid traps.
- **Tactician**: Combatant negates any *Support Bonus* received by the opponent. If both combatants are *Tacticians*, the effect is negated.
- **Tough**: Combatant can take 2 wounds rather than one. See **Combat section** for more detail.
- **Versatile**: Combatant is especially mobile and can be played into the dungeon anywhere a Minion could be played.

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Traits

- *Hero*: Will not join *battle groups* with Monster combatants.
- *Lord*: If the Lord dies, his player loses the game.
- *Trap*: Immobile combatant with unique rules as detailed under the **Combatants - Traps section**.
- *Unique*: When killed, this combatant is removed from play for the remainder of the game.

Type

Combatants have a type (*humanoid, goblin, undead, etc*) that sometimes confers special benefits or penalties based on other game mechanics (*eg room text*). Combatants are not affected unless their card explicitly lists them as the given type.

Rituals

Rituals are played without cost and take place immediately. The card is discarded after all of the text of the card is executed. In the case of "*Phase Shift*", it is discarded after the player has reshuffled and drawn a new hand.

Dungeon Rooms

Dungeon rooms in a player's hand can be played in either the **Explore** or **Deploy** phase. In either case, they must be played with at least one clear walking path to an existing room.

Many rooms have special behavior expressed in text on the room card. In all cases, this text supersedes any rule in this book.

In addition, some rooms have icons adjacent to the room name to indicate other special behavior:

- *Stars*: Rooms with 1 star are "*Dens*" and rooms with 2 stars are "*Lairs*" for purposes of playing combatants into the dungeon. See the **Combatants - Monsters section** for more detail.
- *Ladder*: Entry point into which Heroes can be played.

- *Flags*: Victory room where victory tokens are tallied. See **Tally section** for more detail.

FAQ

Q. *What happens if I have more than one Support Bonus?*

A. You either have Support Bonus or you don't. Even if multiple rules or conditions give you Support Bonus, the bonus is still just 1 extra die.

Q. *What happens if Monsters and Heroes from the same player engage?*

A. This should always be avoidable. If it happens, however, the opposing player temporarily assumes the role of the Hero for combat purposes. If the Hero survives, control reverts to the original player.

Q. *What if I have more questions, suggestions, or other thoughts in regards to the game or the rules?*

A. While the Limited Beta is under way, the lead designer will be directly available via the email address "beta@darkmastersgame.com". Please don't hesitate to drop a line.

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Credits

Created by:

John C Walborn

Production assistance:

Stephanie Walborn

Additional design and development:

Eugene Atha

Joshua Quist

Art:

Joe J Calkins / Cerberus Art

Fellcindre and Lord Gheth

John C Walborn

Dungeon rooms and graphic design

David Sharrock

Dungeon card back

Octavirate Entertainment

All non-Lord monsters

LPJ Designs

All Heroes

Paul Daly

Trap dice

Massimiliano Bertuzzi

Ritual scroll

Rick Hershey

Turn Marker and Battle minis

Christian St Pierre

Chain, logo rod, design elements

Other support and special thanks to:

Theodore Zion

Jon Bowen

Mark Easterly

Amanda Gomez

Erik Gomez

Dora Quist

Kenneth Quist

Alan Tenore

Zara "*Phoenix*" Tenore

Simon Page

Deb Jackson

Micahl Wood