

Stuffed Fables™



Oh, Brother!



SEPARATION

15-1

The bookkeeper reads the following:

"He sure cried for a long time," the little girl said, Theadora tucked under her arm.

"Aw, he's fine," Daddy assured. "He just misses Mommy is all. You were like that too sometimes, when you were his age." Mommy had joined the PTA and was at yet another school meeting that night, something the little boy hadn't cared for. But he was finally asleep in his bed, and Daddy pulled the door shut so he wouldn't be woken up.

"I thought boys weren't supposed to cry?" the little girl suggested as they walked into her bedroom.

"Oh, that's just silly. Everybody cries," Daddy said.

"You don't!" she challenged.

"Why sure I do!" he laughed. "Remember that movie we watched the other day?"

"I cried when mommy put Mr. Stitch away in the box today," A gloomy expression came over the girl, and Daddy gave her a knowing nod.

"Mr. Stitch isn't gone forever, and we can pull him out every now and then if you miss him too much. But he's old, very old, and fragile too, and since he's such an important part of our family, we want to preserve him." Daddy gave her a smile and a kiss on her forehead. "Now let's get you tucked in."

"Did he cry?" Mommy asked later that night, setting down her purse and coat.

"Yeah, there was a little separation anxiety. Poor little guy stood there at the window crying for a bit, but we handled it." Mommy made a worried face, but Daddy put an arm around her. "We've dealt with this before. It'll pass. It's probably our fault for being so gosh-darned lovable."

.....

Pokey awoke to find Manny pulling a sock over the boy's little hand. "You shall not have such an easy time sucking upon that thumb now, little fellow," he said proudly.

"You know, a little snuggle from you would help dissuade thumb sucking too," Pokey pointed out.

"I'm supposed to be teaching him self-reliance," said Manny, flexing a bicep.

Pokey rolled her eyes. "You're a doll. Oh sorry, I mean action figure. You're meant to be played with and that's all."

A familiar purple glow began to form under the boy's bed, but the two toys were too busy bickering to notice.

"But it's manly play! You wouldn't understand horse,

you're too.... soft." And Manny gestured at the entirety of Pokey's stuffed body.

"Okay, Mack," she snarled. "I've had just about enough of you!" A noise from the dresser caught their attention, and they saw a couple bed bugs on the dresser fighting over a sock. Manny looked back at the boy and gasped when he spied an uncovered hand.

"Hey! Give that sock back!" barked Pokey, but the bed bugs scurried out of the room. Pokey and Manny turned to give chase, but there in the doorway was a Huggler wearing the other sock on one of its hands. It gave an insane giggle and gleefully waved at them.

Gather the discovery cards for Story 2 (marked with a purple 2 symbol in the lower left-hand corner) and, without looking at them, place them in a face-down stack near the play area. This is the discovery stack for this story.

Note: When choosing stuffies for this story or any other stories in this book. Stitch can no longer be chosen as he's been put away as a family heirloom. A great honor for any stuffy.

Go to page 17, section 17-1.

STITCH'S FABLE THE CURIOUS CUB

One fine day, a long time ago in the wide world, a little bear cub went for a walk with her mommy and little brother.

"Stay close to me," the cub's mother would always say, but the little bear cub never listened. She liked to follow the strange smells in the air, or root her nose in the leaves and bushes of the woods. Well, on that particular day, the bear cub wandered off on her own and realized she had lost sight of her mother and brother.

"I have no idea where I am," she said. Her mommy had always taught her that if she got lost, she should stay put and wait until someone found her. But the bear cub didn't listen, and on she went, looking high and low for her family.

She was discovered by a man who carried a large gun but who gave her a friendly smile.

"You should come with me," the man said. "I work for the zoo, and your mother is there now waiting for you."

"Is she?" exclaimed the bear cub. "Well, that is fine news." And off she trotted with the man.

Luckily, she did not get far, for the cub's mommy arrived, and swatted the man's gun away with one of her large paws. She gave him a growl and the man ran away with a terrified yelp. "I thought you were at the zoo?" said the bear cub.

"I was not," said her mommy. "You must always remember that if you are lost, I will find you, but you must always stay put and wait for me."

"And there's something else I can do that's even better," added the bear cub.

"What is that?" her mommy asked.

"Stay close!" laughed the cub.

"Yes," her mommy agreed. "Close is best."



SPLIT SCENE

17

17-1

The bookkeeper reads the following:

"Bye-bye," cooed a hugger in its baby voice, and the minions sped out of the room and down the hallway with the little socks. Pokey and Manny were in pursuit! As they raced past the little girl's room, the other stuffies joined them.

"What's the hubbub?" asked Piggle.

"Bed bugs and huggers!" cried Pokey. "It's a classic sock snatching!"

"I hear something in the downstairs kitchen," said Lumpy, lifting a large ear. But soft giggling sounds also came from a different direction down the hallway toward the laundry room.

"I'm going to rip 'em to shreds!" grumbled Manny.

"Yes, plastic man! Yes!" approved Lionel.

"Let's split up and investigate," directed Pokey. "And grab some equipment while you're at it."

GEAR UP

Each player looks through the item deck for a weapon card of their choice with the keyword Household, then equips it.

SETUP

The stuffies must split into 2 teams as evenly as possible. Players should decide for themselves which stuffies belong to each team. We will call these team 1 and team 2. Players should remember what team they are on.

Place the team 1 stuffies in the laundry room on or adjacent to the 1 space.

Place the team 2 stuffies in the kitchen on or adjacent to the 2 space.

Generate an encounter of 2 Hugglers and 4 Bed bugs. Place any number of these minions on or adjacent to the laundry room space and place the remaining minions on the kitchen space.

Put the Leap environment card into play.

SPECIAL RULES

Separate Rooms: This map depicts 2 separate parts of the house that are not connected to each other. The thick red and orange line dividing the map in two cannot be crossed by minions or stuffies. Treat the two areas as completely different maps. Stuffies on one side cannot encourage or interact with stuffies on the other side in any way.

Failing a Leap Test: If a stuffy fails a leap test on this page, place a scorched status card on it.

17-2

You reached down and grabbed the sock, but the dryer door opened and small hands reached out from inside to grab the other end of the sock. You called out for help as a desperate game of tug-of-war began.

Pulling the sock out of the dryer requires a red/strength group task, difficulty 11. Only stuffies on or adjacent to the dryer can participate.

PASS: All stuffies that contributed to this group task gain 1 heart. Go to 17-4.

17-3

You reached out and grabbed the sock triumphantly! Suddenly a multitude of tiny bed bug appendages reached out from the drain and grabbed your leg. The strength of their grip was frightening! You called out to your fellow stuffies for help, and soon they were struggling to pull you free.

You began to spin and there was only time to cry out, "Oh no!" before you were yanked downward and everything went dark.

Remove all team 2 stuffies from the map and place them on their cards. Remove all minions on the kitchen side of the map from play. If the team 1 stuffies are already on their cards, remember which team each stuffy was on and go to page 19, section 19-1.

17-4

The sock suddenly went limp, and everyone fell back on their bums. They got back up and cautiously peeked inside the clothes dryer. It was dark and there was no sign of the minions that had been inside! And then from behind, something pushed them in! That's when the spinning began.

Remove all team 1 stuffies from the map and place them on their cards. Remove all minions on the laundry room side of the map from play. If the team 2 stuffies are already on their cards, remember which team each stuffy was on and go to page 19, section 19-1.



Figure out where the minions are headed with those socks! Explore the spaces.



Surge: Reveal a sleep card.



You crept around the laundry basket, in the dark, with only the light from the hall to guide you. The rhythmic noise of the tumbling dryer drowned out everything else. There on the floor, in front of the dryer, was one of the little boy's socks!

Go to 17-2.



You spied a little sock in the sink, just by the drain. You hopped down and inched your way over to it. The surface of the sink was slippery and treacherous, but you shuffled along as best you could.

Go to 17-3.



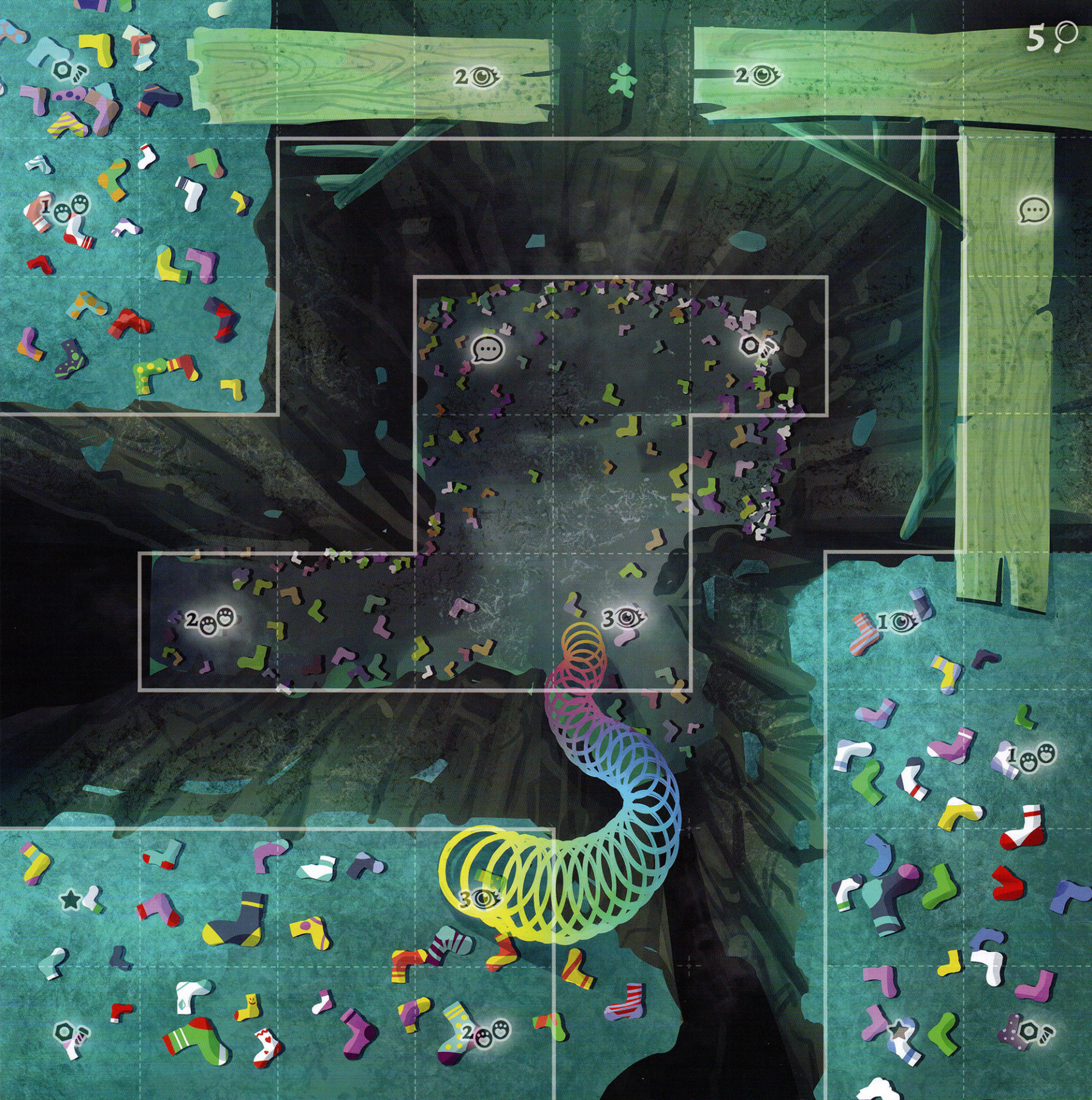
There were some articles of clothing on top of the dryer, and you noticed one of the little boy's belongings.

Look through the item deck and take any item card that is equipped to the head. Equip it, or trade it to a fellow team 1 stuffy.



A small shadow passed down the hallway as little sister sleepily stumbled to the bathroom. The stuffies and minions froze in place.

Discard all dice from the threat track and all dice stored on cards.



SOCK HOP

19

19-1

Return all dice, except those stored on cards, to the dice bag. Shuffle the minion deck. The bookkeeper passes the bookmark to the player on their left. Read the following:

Manny found himself lying on a cold, stone ledge, and shook his plastic head to clear away the stars. He took in his surroundings as he stood up and said, "By Crum where are we now?" But there was no answer, only the distant groaning of other stuffies.

He stood alone on a rocky ledge in a shadowed canyon. Just enough light filtered down from above to see that all around him were socks of different colors and sizes littering the ground. No two were alike.

"Horse! Can you see anything from over there? We must find a way to get back to the boy!"

"Pokey!" she scolded from her place on a distant ledge. "The name's Pokey, and I'm not a horse, I'm a unicorn you pipsqueak!" She pulled herself up off the ground, shook her head and whinnied noisily. Glitter flew in all directions.

"The only way I know of getting back is holding hands and saying our magic words," called Lumpy from a nearby ledge of his own. A sock lay draped across one shoulder.

"That's the silliest way to complete a mission I've ever heard." griped Manny "Who invented that?"

"Well, I guess Marietta did. She's our guardian. Guardians know how to get back and forth. It works, so who cares?"

Reveal a sleep card.

SETUP

Place each team 1 stuffy on a 1-eye space. Place each team 2 stuffy on a 2-eye space.

Place ☹️ tokens where indicated.

Randomize the 4 sock tokens and, without looking at them, place 1 face-down on each 4-eye space.

Put the Leap environment card into play.

SPECIAL RULES

Missing Socks: When a stuffy performs a successful search test while sharing a space with a sock token, instead of drawing an item card, reveal that token and place it on that stuffy's card. Once the stuffies have a matching pair of socks, remove all the other sock tokens and go to 19-2.

Failing a Leap Test: If a stuffy fails a leap test, place it on the leap space. That stuffy has fallen, but managed to grab the jagged edge of the platform. That stuffy

loses 1 stuffing. Place a trapped status card on that stuffy. When that stuffy is no longer trapped, place it on an adjacent unoccupied space. 🌀

19-2

Pokey held up a red and white sock for the others to see. "What about this one? Someone have one like this?" Across the chasm, Piggie and Manny held up a sock between them. It too was red and white!

"Bingo!" shouted Manny.

"Who?" called Pokey.

"Bingo!" Manny shouted back, but noticing Pokey's confusion, shrugged his shoulders and gave a thumbs up.

SPECIAL RULE

Leaving: When a stuffy enters a ★ space, remove its figure from the map. If that results in no stuffies being left on the map, go to page 21, section 21-1.

19-3

"Um, guys, I don't like the looks of this," warned Piggie, stepping away from a lurching pile of socks.

"All the piles are moving!" snarled Lionel, and all around them, sock piles moved about. A crawly emerged from one pile, and then another crawly appeared from yet another mound, and still more began to materialize.

"It's go-time!" shouted Piggie.

Generate a random encounter of a number of crawlies equal to the number of stuffies in play.

Place a crawly on each remaining sock token, then place any remaining crawlies on 4-eye spaces. 🌀

19-4

Place a wood plank token on the leap space. This space is now considered a normal space with no leap symbol on it. 🌀

19-5

You got about halfway before a wad of dryer lint fell right into your face from above! Gah! It was even in your mouth!

You lose your grip and fall. Place your stuffy at the bottom of the slinky toy. Lose 3 stuffing. 🌀



Find the matching socks, as described in the Missing Socks special rules in section 19-1.



First Surge: Go to 19-3.

Additional Surge: Reveal a sleep card.



You saw a plank of wood there that had the word 'lemonade' painted on it in childlike script. It was nailed down to another board, but the nails were wiggly.

On their turn, any stuffy on this space may perform a red/strength skill test, difficulty 4.

PASS: Place a wood plank token on your card. Gain 1 heart.

FAIL: No effect. This test can be attempted again until it is successful.



A wide gap lay ahead of you on the rickety platform. You considered leaping over it, but it looked dangerous.

If you have a wood plank token on your card, go to 19-4.



You saw a metal slinky toy there.

A stuffy on this space may climb up or down the slinky toy by performing a red/strength skill test, difficulty 4.

PASS: Place this stuffy on, or adjacent to, the other 3-eye space.

FAIL: Go to 19-5.



The little boy's leg jerked powerfully in his sleep, and the ground lurched violently in the Fall!

If there is at least 1 stuffy in play on each team, choose 1 stuffy in play from each team. The chosen stuffies swap places on the map and switch teams.



BOARDWALK

21

21-1

Return all dice, except those stored on cards, to the dice bag. The bookkeeper passes the bookmark to the player on their left. Read the following:

"Watch your footing!" cautioned Manny, as Lumpy tooted in fright as he steadied himself. They were walking on narrow planks of varying size, all cobbled together to create a makeshift platform. Old wooden swing-seats, a see-saw, parts of a dilapidated tree house, game boards, hockey sticks, and all manner of junk, came together in a poor-fitting path, made all the more treacherous by the near darkness of the deep, shadowy canyon. Lumpy grabbed hold of Pokey's tail.

"I can't see squat!" he complained, his voice echoing.

"You seemed to see my tail just fine," Pokey snorted. "Who else is with us?"

"Nobody, I think," said the elephant.

"Stay where you are, we're coming to get you!" echoed Lionel's voice from the gloom. Pokey saw light ahead, and began shuffling toward it with Lumpy in tow. "Let's head toward the light!" she instructed.

Reveal a sleep card.

SETUP

Place team 1 stuffies on or adjacent to the space with 1. Place team 2 stuffies on or adjacent to the space with 2.

Place a wood plank token on each of the leap spaces.

Place tokens on the indicated spaces.

Put the Leap and Darkness/Low Visibility environment cards into play.

SPECIAL RULES

Plank Tokens: When a wood plank token is on a leap space, that space is considered a normal space with no leap symbol on it.

Failing a Leap Test: If a stuffy fails a leap test, place it on the leap space. That stuffy has fallen, but managed to grab the jagged edge of the platform. That stuffy loses 1 stuffing. Place a trapped status card on that stuffy. When that stuffy is no longer trapped, place it on an adjacent unoccupied space.

21-2

"What is that?" wondered Pokey. A bright light shone a halo of radiance upon the ground, and from above, a puppet spun gracefully downward upon four strings. It landed daintily at the center of the ring of light, and walked a few paces toward the stuffies with jerky, unnatural steps.

"Minions!" called the marionette, its hands raised high. "Capture them for me, won't you?"

Generate an encounter of a number of hugglers equal to the number of stuffies in play.

21-3

There was a soft rumbling. Dust rained down from somewhere above. The platforms teetered precariously, and some lost entire sections of their structure.

Remove all wood plank tokens from the map.

21-4

The toy box was locked.

On their turn, any stuffy on the toy box space may attempt to open it by performing a red/strength skill text, difficulty 6. If any stuffy on your team has Dyaso, you use his tail to pick the lock and automatically succeed at this test.

PASS: Go to 21-5.

FAIL: No effect. This test can be attempted again until it is successful.

21-5

Manny's face lit up! "It's one of my accessories!"

Retrieve the Mighty Harness item card from the discovery stack and equip it to Manny. Gain 1 heart.

SPECIAL RULE

Leaving: When a stuffy enters a ★ space, remove its figure from the map. If that results in no stuffies being left on the map, go to page 23, section 23-1.

21-6

"We're trying to reach that toy box!" said a rubber alligator. "It's supposed to be full of plastic accessories and buttons."

If you help this walrus by giving a donation of 2 stuffing, read the following:

You give the walrus some stuffing, and he perks up. "Oh, thank you! Thank you quite kindly!"

Gain 1 heart.



Open the toy chest at 2, then find your way to the exits (★ spaces).



First Surge: Go to 21-2.

Additional Surges: Reveal a sleep card.



They came to an area where a piercing beam of light from above illuminated their surroundings. Across the shadowy canyon, they could see the other stuffies on their own similarly janky pathway. Lumpy waved and Manny waved back reflexively. How were they going to reunite?

Go to 21-3.



You found a colorful toy box. Its sides had all been painted to depict hot air balloons floating in a sky of bright, fluffy clouds. "Oh, there's always good stuff in toy boxes!" cheered Lumpy.

Go to 21-4.



You came upon a few lost toys and dolls carrying a stuffed walrus, and judging from how flat and limp the walrus was, it seemed to have lost all of its stuffing. Its companions were exhausted and worried.

"He had a terrible fall," said a bobblehead puppy with no bobble.

Go to 21-6.

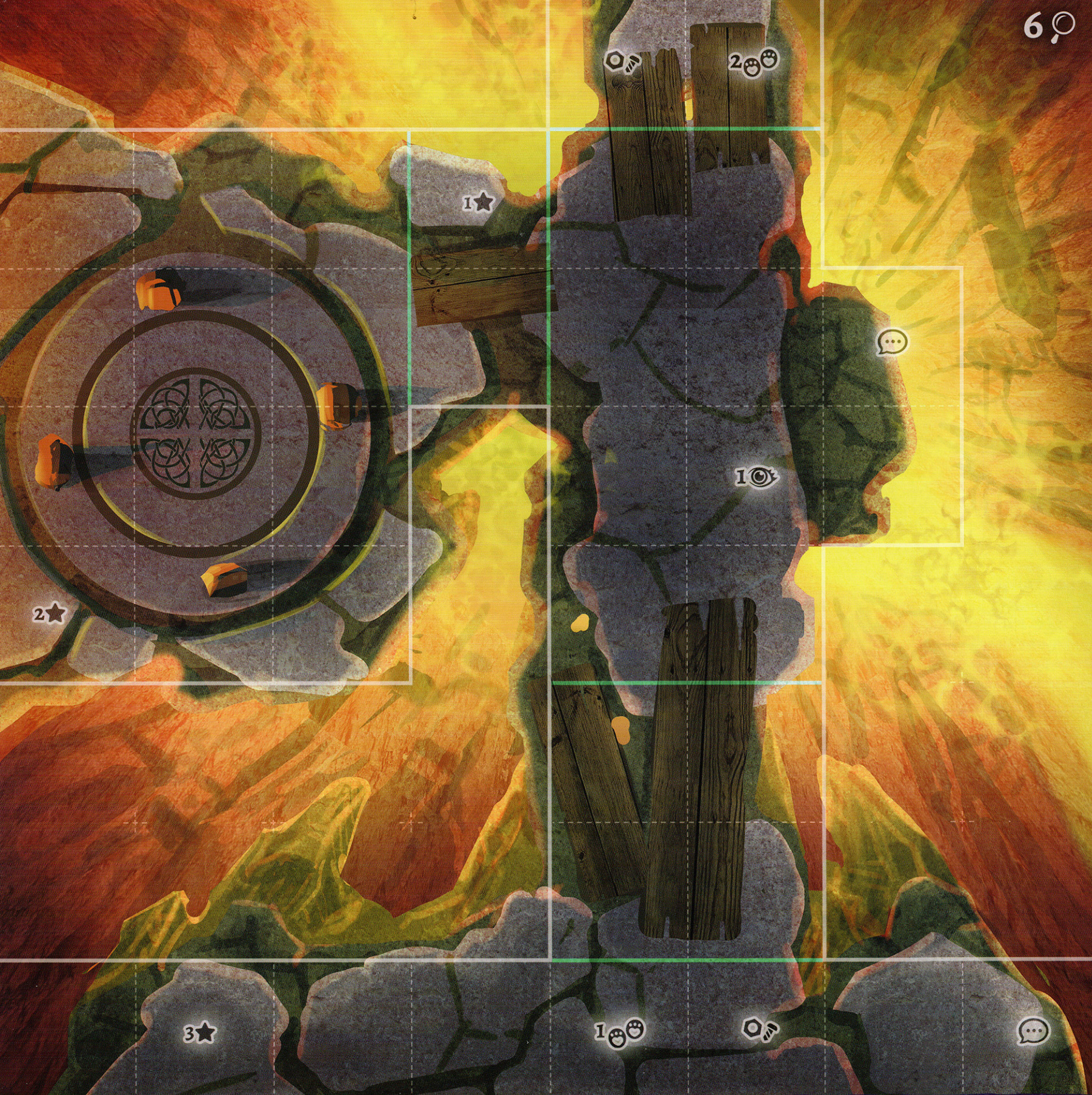


The little boy mumbled in his sleep and stuck his thumb into his mouth. Suddenly, Manny fell to his knees.

"What is it?" asked Pokey.

"I-I don't know," said a shaken Manny. "But I feel like I have failed at something!"

If Manny is still in play, he loses 2 plastic.



RAG DOLLS

23

23-1

Return all dice, except those stored on cards, to the dice bag. The bookkeeper passes the bookmark to the player on their left. Read the following:

The going was treacherous. A hot mist billowed up from below. It stank of ozone and blocked each group's view. Occasionally they could hear the others, but much of the time they could not and it was worrisome. Finally Pokey's voice could be heard, muffled in the hot mist.

"I found stone!" she whinnied.

Manny's plastic foot touched stone as well. "Stone here!" he called into the mist, but as he cautiously edged forward he could see indistinct shapes moving around within.

The stuffies clung tight for fear of losing each other in the haze. "I would advise you to stand clear of my sword arm, lion," warned Manny.

"Who you calling a lion?" giggled Piggie.

"You're high-strung, aren't you little guy?" asked Lionel, and Manny gritted his teeth in silence.

Reveal a sleep card.

SETUP

Place team 1 stuffies on or adjacent to the space with 1 eye. Place team 2 stuffies on or adjacent to the space with 2 eye.

Place 1 token on the indicated spaces.

23-2

"They have come!" cried Stitch, and you saw the puppet brothers drifting in on strings like petals upon a breeze. "You must flee!" The guardians stood defiantly against the intruders, but the puppets shoved them aside like they were nothing, and stalked toward you.

Retrieve the Riff and Raff boss minion cards and the Puppet Brothers instructions card from the discovery stack.

Generate a boss encounter of Riff and Raff.

SPECIAL RULE

Leaving: If all stuffies in play are on a magic circle space, go to page 25, section 25-1.

1★

"Well what do we have here?" Marietta shuffled up to Manny and her painted eyes appraised him. "A mighty hero, yes I see, but there's much more inside you. You're softer than you look." Manny didn't care for that at all.

"Oh, and your trusty steed?" Marietta asked, looking at Pokey.

"I don't ride unicorns!" Manny assured the old corn husk doll. Pokey snorted at them both.

"No, I don't suppose you do," agreed Marietta. "But maybe that will change. Some journeys are longer and more circular than others."

Gain 1 heart! If there are no ★ tokens remaining in play, go to 23-2.

2★

"My friends! You're a sight for sore buttons!" laughed Mr. Stitch. "I wish circumstances were different, but I must warn you of what is to come. You will be called upon soon to take on a dangerous quest. You will need to break into the factory-fortress and help Crepitus escape. Only he can return order to the Fall."

"I never thought I'd be rescuing that bozo!" laughed Piggie.

"Tell me more about this quest," Manny insisted. "I am ready old-timer!"

Stitch looked around him at something no one else saw. "I am afraid that is all the time I have," he said sadly. "Gather in the middle and we shall send you all home."

Gain 1 heart! If there are no ★ tokens remaining in play, go to 23-2.

3★

The tattered old bear was missing an arm and some of his fur was black and burned away. He only had one glass eye bead, but it shined with clarity. He spoke in a whisper as if the effort was almost too much to, well, bear. "Scary dreams help children learn to overcome fear," he wheezed. "It teaches self-reliance. It is as much a part of growing up as anything else. You have each learned how to be apart, but now you must come together. Enter the circle, and reunite the things that have been pulled asunder!"

Gain 1 heart! If there are no ★ tokens remaining in play, go to 23-2.



Explore the space. Talk to whomever you can.



Surge: Reveal a sleep card.

1 eye

They cautiously made their way through the mist, keeping close to one another. Around them, shapes formed in the mist, and they saw they were surrounded!

"Show yourselves, cowards!" barked Manny, and the others sighed.

"Now, now, no need to be rude," said a voice. "Why invite conflict when none is needed?" The shapes emerged from the haze which began to dissipate. It was the old corn husk doll, Marietta, and half a dozen other wizened, old dolls. Each was as ancient as Marietta, and made of old woods, fabrics, and in some cases, even fur or feathers. Marietta gave them a knowing smile, then stepped aside as one more old doll shuffled forward.

"Mr. Stitch, what are you doing here?" asked Piggie. The stuffies rushed forward to give the old doll a hug, all but Manny of course.

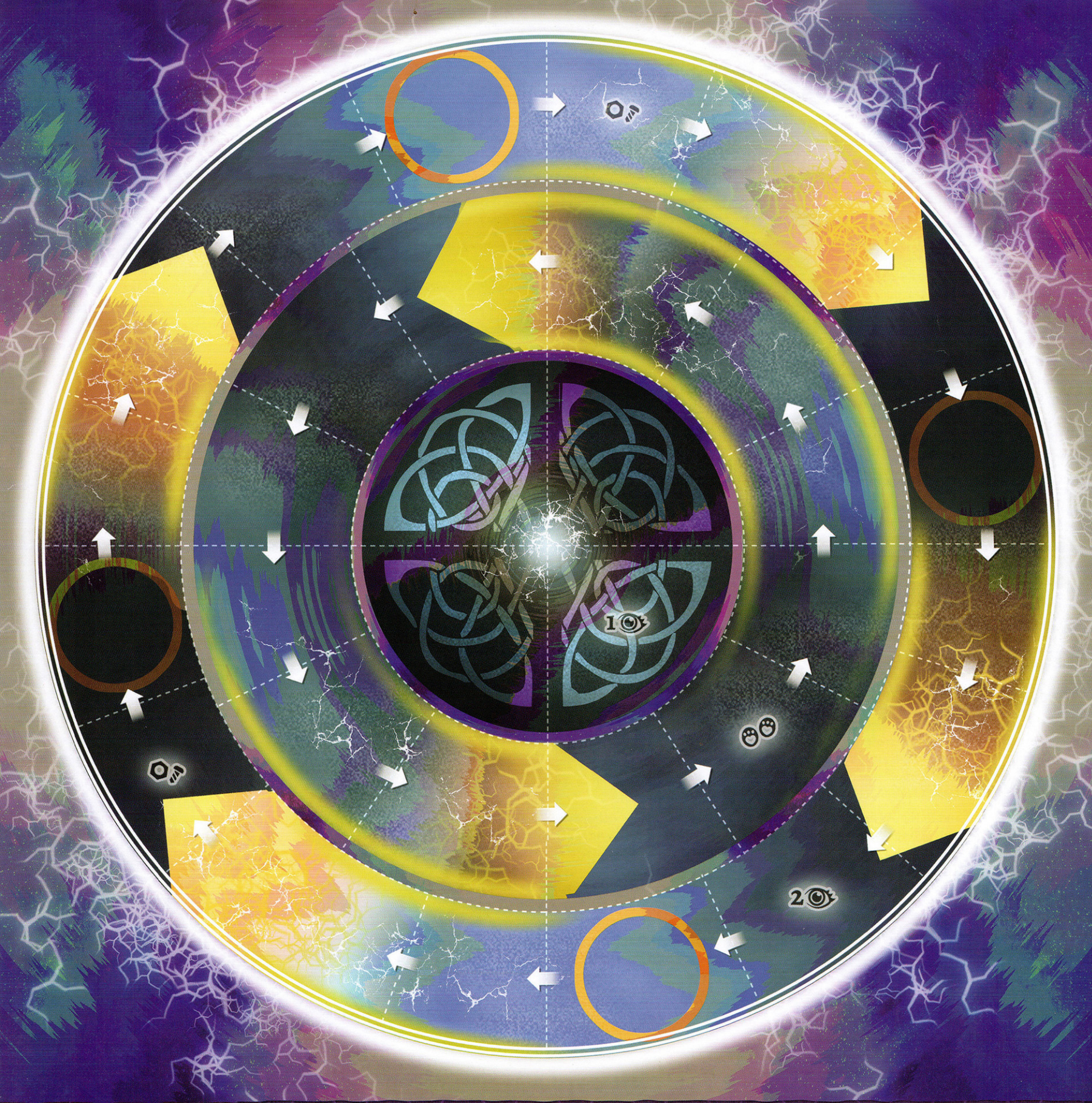
"Everything must change. I am a guardian now," he answered. "I help protect the portals between our worlds." The old doll took a moment to bring his button eyes to each stuffy. "I am sorry to say my job has already begun. The Celestial Agency has taken over the Fall. They have identified you, and now you are in grave danger. They will come for you, of that I have no doubt."

Place 1 ★ token on each ★ space. When a stuffy moves onto a space with a ★ token on it, discard that token and go to the matching ★ section of this page.



Back in the real world, the little boy's body became very still and he began to sweat under his blankets. The heat built until at last he kicked off the covers!

Place a scorched status card on each stuffy adjacent to a solid white line.



25-1

Return all dice, except those stored on cards, to the dice bag. The bookkeeper passes the bookmark to the player on their left. Read the following:

The stuffies gathered in the center of the stone circle and brought the two missing socks together. There was a crackling sound, and then a grinding of stone on stone. The magic circle jerked beneath them and then began to slowly turn.

They struggled to remain standing, and reached out to each other for support, each leaning in to compensate for the growing centrifugal force.

"I'm getting dizzy" said Lumpy.

"Shake it off elephant!" encouraged Manny.

"I can't!" Lumpy squealed. "If I shake anything, I'll fall over!" Pokey made her way to Lumpy.

"Easy there, pal," she offered. Just keep your eyes on the ground in front of you!" They were on the outermost ring of a stone disk made of concentric rings turning in alternating directions. Four pillars of natural rock were at even intervals along the outer ring. The inner-most ring had four identical designs etched into it.

A crackling blue energy formed at the edge of the outer ring, then the puppet brothers Riff and Raff appeared and drifted down once again on strings!

"You cannot escape us now!" said Riff, his jaw making a wooden clacking as he talked.

"Well said, dear brother," agreed Raff. "I could not have said it better myself."

"Oh, but won't you try?" Riff begged.

"If you insist, dear brother. You there! Stuffies! You cannot escape us now!"

"I think they're getting it, brother," Riff cooed.

"We're getting that you're real weirdos," sighed Lumpy. "Sheesh! Why are puppets so strange?"

Reveal a sleep card.

SETUP

Each player places their stuffy figure on or adjacent to the space.

Generate a boss encounter of Riff and Raff.

Place a stone pillar token on each space on the outer ring that has a circle on it.

Put the Forced Movement encounter card into play.



25-2

SPECIAL RULE

Moving Pillars: Figures cannot enter a space with a pillar unless they move that pillar. On their turn, any stuffy adjacent to a pillar may perform a red/strength skill test, difficulty 4. This test may be attempted any number of times.

PASS: Move the pillar 1 space and place your stuffy on the space the pillar previously occupied. The pillar cannot be moved onto a space containing a figure or another pillar. If the pillar is moved onto 1 of the 4 central spaces, go to 25-3.

FAIL: No effect.

25-3

You pushed the pillar onto the glyph, and it clicked into place. There was a rumbling sound, and the pillar slowly rotated until its glyph faced the center of the ring.

This stone pillar can no longer be moved. If all 4 pillars have been moved onto the 4 central spaces, go to 25-4.

25-4

A blinding flash of light overwhelmed the stuffies' button eyes, then all at once the spinning stopped!

If the Waking sleep card has not been revealed, go to page 63, section 63-1. Otherwise, go to section 63-2.



Explore the spaces.



Surge: Reveal a sleep card.



The central portion of the disk was stationary, giving the stuffies much needed rest from the spinning. They noticed four designs carved into the stone. Each design was roughly a foot in diameter. In the middle of each design was an intricately carved glyph that glowed a soft blue, and radiated a strange heat.



There was a pillar of dark raw stone with an amber cast. Its abrasive surface was cool to the touch. Inspecting the pillar revealed a spiral glyph carved into its side. When the glyph was touched, the stone moved ever so slightly.

Go to 25-2.



Back in the real world the boy's mouth was open, and a small amount of drool trickled down his cheek and onto the pillow.

Place a soggy status card on all stuffies on or adjacent to the space.

63-1

The bookkeeper reads the following:

Lumpy fell out of the dryer face-first onto the floor below.

"I'm probably going to be dizzy for the rest of my life," he wheezed. Pokey, Lionel, and Piggie jumped down to the floor, framed by the moonlight falling down from the kitchen window.

"What a night," Pokey groaned, peeling a red sock off herself that she was pretty sure didn't belong there.

"You said that way too casually," griped Manny. The action figure leaped from the dryer, bouncing off Lumpy's bottom. "Tell me plainly - is life in this household always so ridiculous?" he demanded.

"Not in a long time," Piggie answered.

"Not long enough," Lionel growled.

"This is all new for me too," Pokey pointed out. "Of course, it's probably harder for you. Stuffies are used to battling evil at night. Action figures, well, I have no idea what you guys usually do after sunset. Tea parties maybe? Manicures?"

Manny gave the unicorn a look that even lemons would have found overly bitter.

"Those marionette guys were weird, right?" asked Lionel. "I mean, even for the Fall."

"Agreed," said Lumpy, finding his feet. "I'm thankful we didn't encounter them while we were split up. That could have been disastrous!"

"The elephant is right," said Manny. "Let's hope we never get separated again!" They made their way back to the bedrooms, and said their goodbyes outside their respective doors.

When Manny and Pokey climbed back up into the big boy bed, Manny looked at the little boy's peaceful face.

"It's funny," he said. "I really don't know this child yet, and still, when we were in the Fall, I was worried he would awake and find us not there."

"You're starting to get the hang of it," Pokey said, and she flopped down by the boy and curled up against him. "Come on," she said, waving Manny over.

"I don't know," he said. "Snuggling isn't really my thing. I'm more about delivering devastating axe chops."

"Save it for the bed bugs," she whispered, and again waved him over. Manny sighed and slid underneath a blanket to get close to the boy. He had to admit, it was a great way to end the night.

In the morning, Mommy came in to find the boy already waking up.

"There's my little prince," she said. "I sure missed you last night."

"Mommy!" he said brightly, sitting up. "Did you kiss me when you came back?" he asked.

"Of course!" she answered. "I tiptoed in and kissed your forehead. But come here, you. I want a good morning kiss now!"

63-2

The bookkeeper reads the following:

Lumpy fell out of the dryer face-first onto the floor below.

"I'm probably going to be dizzy for the rest of my life," he wheezed. Pokey, Lionel, and Piggie jumped down to the floor, framed by the moonlight falling down from the kitchen window.

"What a night," Pokey groaned, peeling a red sock off herself that she was pretty sure didn't belong there.

"You said that way too casually," griped Manny. The action figure leaped from the dryer, bouncing off Lumpy's bottom. "Tell me plainly - is life in this household always so ridiculous?" he demanded.

"Not in a long time," Piggie answered.

"Not long enough," Lionel growled.

"This is all new for me too," Pokey pointed out. "Of course it's probably harder for you. Stuffies are used to battling evil at night. Action figures, well, I have no idea what you guys usually do after sunset. Tea parties maybe? Manicures?"

Manny gave the unicorn a look that even lemons would have found overly bitter.

"Those marionette guys were weird, right?" asked Lionel. "I mean, even for the Fall."

"Agreed," said Lumpy, finding his feet. "I'm thankful we didn't encounter them while we were split up. That could have been disastrous!"

"The elephant is right," said Manny. "Let's hope we never get separated again!" They made their way back to the bedrooms, but Pokey and Manny were startled to find Mommy sitting on the floor by the bed, comforting the little boy.

"There-there," Mommy said. "I made it back home, just like I said." Pokey and Manny crept as close as they could, then laid down on the floor. When the little boy finally fell back asleep, Mommy stood and, seeing Pokey, picked up the unicorn and tucked her in with the boy. She picked up Manny too, but placed him in a box with plastic farm animals and shut the lid.

"Oh no," he groaned.

"Hi!" said a friendly cow. "Can you guess which animal makes this noise?" and it gave a moo.

"A cow," Manny sighed.

"Now see if you can guess which animal makes this noise," said the cow, and it gave another moo.

"By Crum, I've got to get out of here!" Manny gasped. When the boy finally found him seven hours later, Manny was in poor spirits.

TALKING POINTS

- ✱ Have you ever been separated from your family or friends?
- ✱ What kind of lessons can somebody learn just from being alone?
- ✱ What brings you comfort when your friends and family are not with you?



POKEY

Pokey was one of the first gifts the little boy received, and for a long time she was the only one he cared about. To the little boy, there is no greater source of strength than his plushy unicorn pal, and Pokey has vowed to never let him down.

MANNY

Manny was one of Daddy's action figures when he was growing up. Manny's hard plastic body is made more for daily play than snuggling, but the little boy doesn't care. To him, Manny is big and tough like his dad. Manny agrees, though his tough-guy attitude can sometimes get him into trouble.



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