



BLACK MOLD

Terrible Games 2023

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THANKS TO ALL OUR PLAY TESTERS





PLAY AT YOUR OWN RISK

At Terrible Games, we want you to have fun. Sometimes fun comes in the form of controlled stress and intense experiences with your friends. Black Mold was created with the intention of providing fun through the immersive game mechanic of limiting each player's turn duration to how long they can willingly hold their breath. In playtesting we have found that holding your breath poses no risk of physical or mental harm to players. The intended way one should hold their breath while playing Black Mold is WILLINGLY and in good faith. Do not artificially prevent yourself from being able to breathe ie: plugging your nose, mouth, or by using any other method to asphyxiate yourself. Just hold your breath. If anyone playing Black Mold has any level of discomfort when holding their breath, or is concerned about personal safety, they are invited to use the 60 second sand timer that has been provided with every copy of the game. With the preceding statements in mind anyone holding their breath during a play session of Black Mold does so at their own risk. Terrible Games, LLC, our retail and distribution partners accept no responsibility and will not be held liable for any harm, physical or otherwise, that may occur. Please play safely and have fun.

Your friends at Terrible Games



They've had you chained up in this cave for weeks... months? First the guards stopped coming. Then all the hum of daily commotion faded into silence. The days blur together in the darkness, but it's been too quiet. Something has changed.

Without warning, a prisoner releases you from your confines and scrambles towards the exit. They unfurl the door and a gust of haunting, unnatural black particles fly into the prisoner's face. They take a deep breath and the cloud fills their lungs. A single strained cough, followed by a muttered scream, and finally, the prisoner collapses. That's why no one has come, that's why it's so silent... they're all dead.

Behind your cellmate's crumbling frame, you see a spiraling stairwell headed into the cavernous corridors above. Just beyond the light of a barely lit, flickering torch, you can see the walls and the stairs. Every inch has transformed, coated in a rippling fungal blackness, shrouded in the effluvium of the poison clouds of black. Suddenly, the torchlight fades away into a ribbon of smoke, and the black fog creeps into the room towards you. You hold your breath and begin your ascent. This is your one and only chance to escape...

THE BLACK MOLD

BLACK MOLD

2 to 5 players, 40 to 90 minutes

In **BLACK MOLD** you are an escaped prisoner trying to find your way out of a subterranean prison compound. Black fungal growth coats every surface of these corridors, emitting dark clouds that poison the air. To avoid breathing the toxic, hallucinogenic mist, you must limit your exposure. This is simulated in the game by limiting the duration of players' turns to how long they can willingly hold their breath.

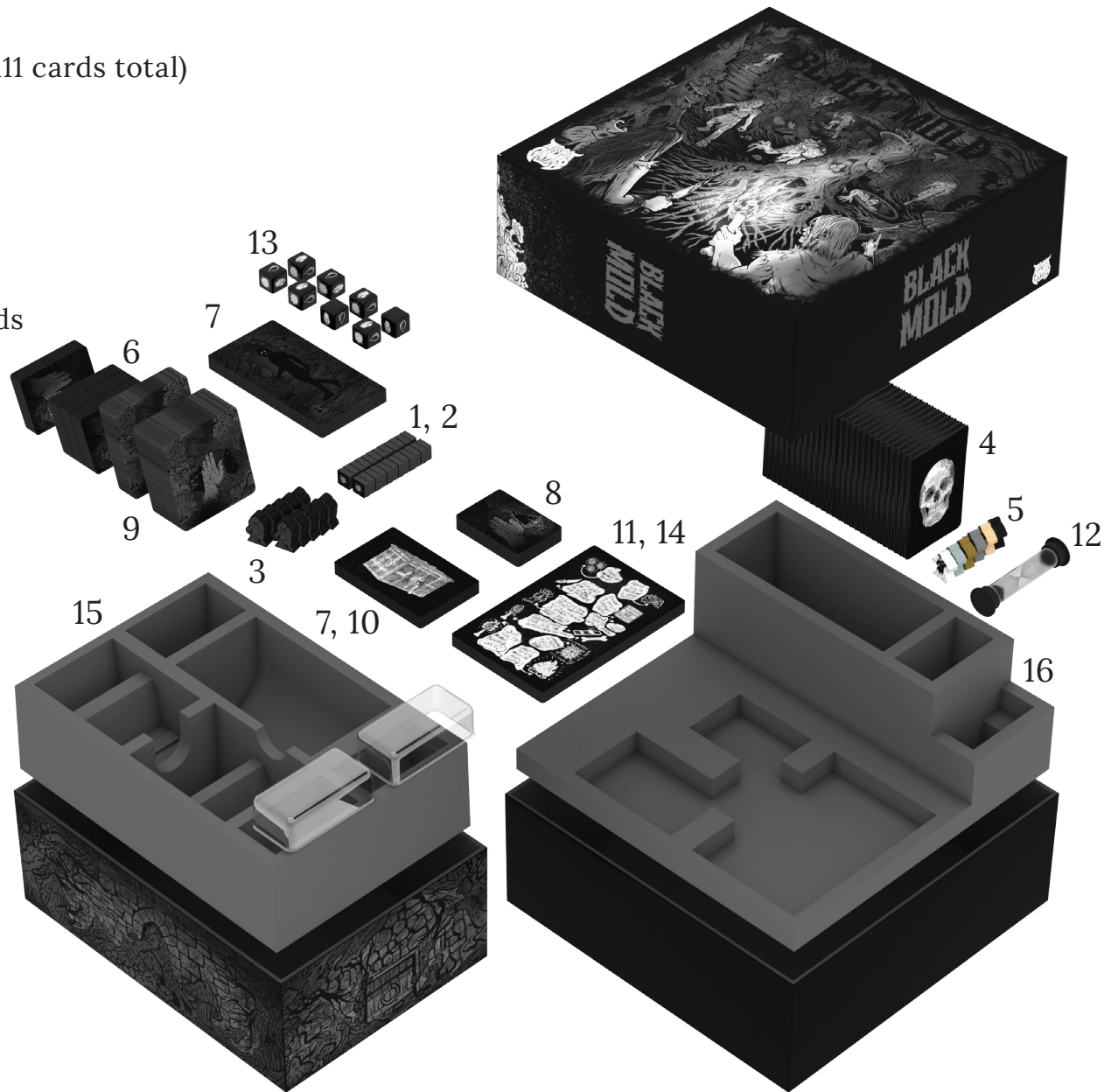
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NOTE! Certain passages of flavor text in this rule book can enhance your experience when certain things happen for the first time. These passages are italicized.

COMPONENTS LIST

- (1) 80 Spore/Malice tokens
- (2) 10 Bonfire tokens
- (3) 10 Fungal Thrall meeples
- (4) 6 Prisoner Decision Decks (111 cards total)
- (5) 6 Prisoner meeples
- (6) 87 Item cards
- (7) 12 Thrall Action cards
- (8) 24 Crafted Item cards
- (9) 65 Area cards
- (10) 6 Prisoner Contraband cards
- (11) 4 Quick Reference cards
- (12) 1 Sand timer
- (13) 8 Survival dice
- (14) 6 Prisoner cards
- (15) Looming tray
- (16) Storage tray



GOAL

There are three ways to win in **BLACK MOLD**:

1. **Escape the Compound**

Rays of sunlight burn your tired eyes. The repugnant stench of the Black Mold slowly fades away. You look around and see your fellow prisoners - out of breath, broken... but overjoyed. You made it.

- All prisoners who reach the Final Exit alive survive the Black Mold.
- If all survivors have the same number of Nugs they make their escape together and share the victory!

2. **Escape the Compound with Lots of Riches**

"Thanks for helping me escape, suckers! Now rot while I live it up as a king on the surface!"

- If one player escaped with more Nugs than all others, they are the only winner!

3. **Kill! Kill! Kill!**

"Its voice... it's calling... The Black Mold is good... Yes... The other prisoners should die!..."

This becomes your goal if you've become...

- A Fungal Thrall - Turn all other players into Fungal Thralls, then you and all player-controlled Thralls win together (in a terrible sort of way).
- Overcome by a Paranoid Infection - The moment all other players are dead or changed into a Thrall you win, regardless of whether or not you escape.

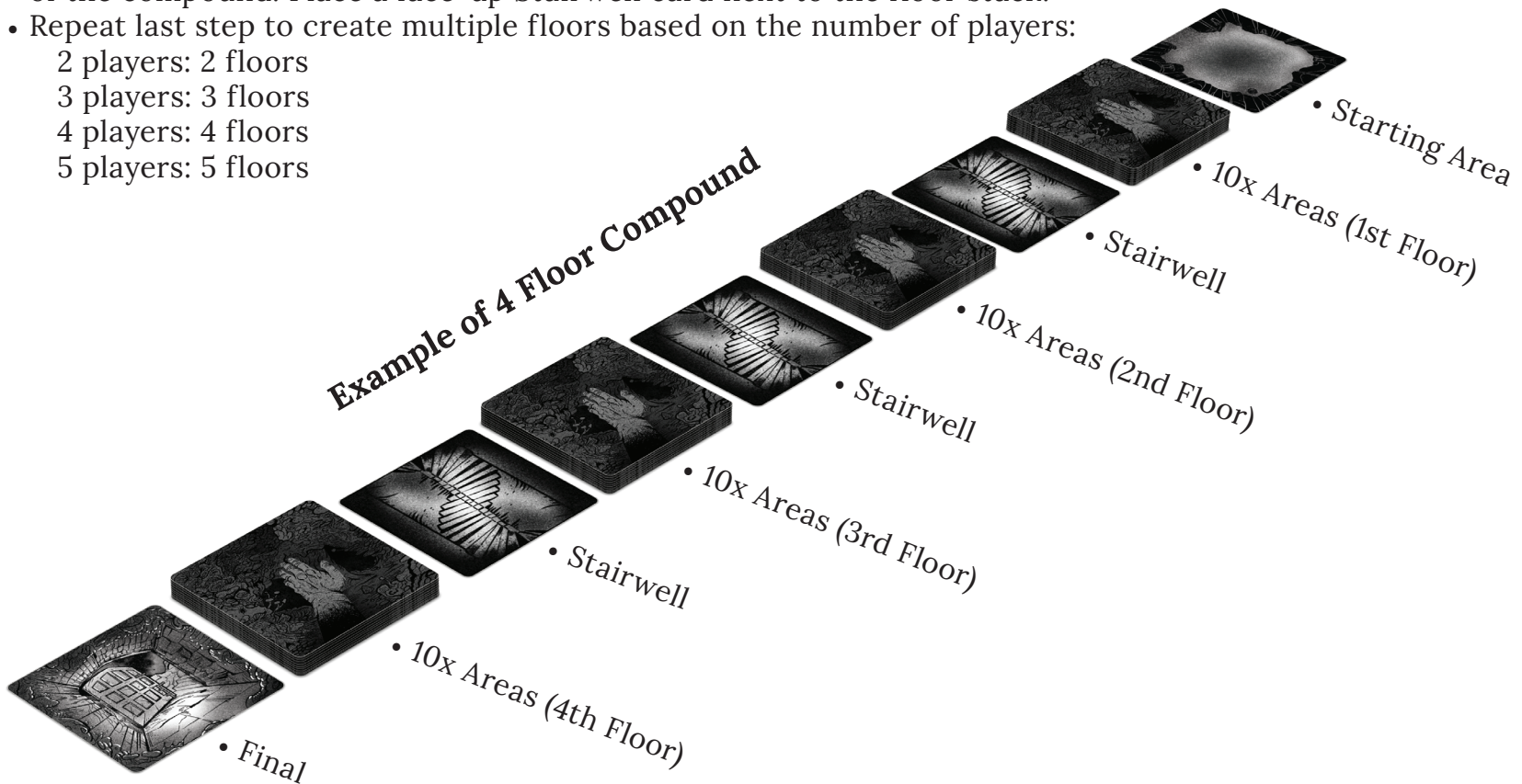
SETUP

1. Select a Prisoner and prepare their Decision deck

- Select a Prisoner card and the corresponding Prisoner meeple. (White, Black, Grey, Wood, Silver, or Gold, etc.)
- Take the chosen Prisoner's Decision deck.
- Find all Confusion cards in your Decision deck and set them aside.
- Select your Prisoner Contraband card. (Each Prisoner has a signature Contraband Item listed on Page 21, but you can also mix and match Contraband Items with different Prisoners).

2. Prepare the Escape deck

- Find the Final Exit card and place it face-up on the table within reach.
- Find and separate all Stairwell cards and set them aside face-up within reach.
- Find the Starting Area card and place it face-up on the table within reach.
- Shuffle all remaining Area cards and place them face down in front of you.
- Draw 10 Area cards and place them face down in a stack. These cards make up one floor of the compound. Place a face-up Stairwell card next to the floor stack.
- Repeat last step to create multiple floors based on the number of players:
 - 2 players: 2 floors
 - 3 players: 3 floors
 - 4 players: 4 floors
 - 5 players: 5 floors




SETUP

3. Flip the Final Exit card and all Stairwell cards face down, then combine all stacks into one deck. (Make sure a Stairwell card separates all 10-card Area stacks and the Final Exit card is on the bottom of the deck!)

- Place the Starting Area with the text side up on top of the stack.
- Set out and prepare the Looming tray. The Looming tray is the smaller nesting tray of components inside the Black Mold game box. Pass this tray from player to player throughout the game. It contains all the components players need to reach during their turn.
- Place the completed Escape deck face-down into its storage channel.
- Shuffle all Item cards and place them face down into their storage channel.
- Check all other cavities for correct components; 8 dice in the dice tray, damage tokens, and Looming Thrall meeple in the smaller storage cavities.
- Set your Prisoner card to your right and your Decision deck above it.

4. Finish setup and determine the first player.

- Draw the Starting Area card from the Escape deck and read the text side aloud to the other players, then place it face up in the center of the table.
- Place all Prisoner meeples on the Starting Area card.
- Everyone rolls 2 Survival dice. The player with the least number of Spore symbols  goes first. Re-roll ties.

PRISONER CARDS

Each Prisoner card has a Vitality track that begins in the top left corner and circles clockwise.

If Spore or Malice tokens cover all your Vitality spaces, you meet a fate most dire.

The prisoner's Vitality track features blank spaces, as well as 4 special spaces. These spaces will eventually be covered by Spore and Malice tokens, inhibiting your Prisoner's capabilities.



FIT represents the Prisoner's physical strength and accumulated exhaustion. It is tested during each Prisoners' Heal/Germinate step (see pg. 7), and when determining a Prisoner's attack value.



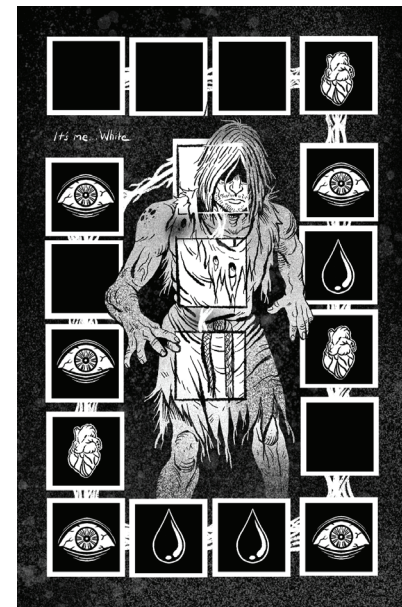
GRIT represents the Prisoner's resourcefulness as they lose their mind inside the nightmarish tunnels. It is tested when a Prisoner searches for items (see pg. 10), and determines a Prisoner's base attack or defense value. When a Grit is concealed you lose a Survival die, but as you heal you can regain them.



WIT represents the Prisoner's level of stress and cognitive function. It determines a Prisoner's defense value and ability to craft Items. Each time a WIT space is concealed, a Confusion card is permanently added to that Prisoner's Decision deck.



DEATH SPACES (White) represent the Prisoner's final defiance in the face of imminent doom. When all Vitality spaces are covered by tokens, the prisoner meets their violent death... or worse. Consult the Doom Table below to see what happens:



DOOM TABLE

Prisoner	Condition	Doom
White, Grey, Wood	All Death spaces become covered and more tokens are Spore.	You become a murderous Fungal Thrall (pg. 18)
White, Grey, Wood	All Death spaces become covered and more tokens are Malice.	You die (pg. 18)
Gold	A Spore token covers your Death space.	You become a murderous Fungal Thrall (pg. 18)
Gold	A Malice token covers your Death space.	You die (pg. 18)
Silver	Tokens of any kind cover all your Vitality spaces.	You die (pg. 18)
Black	All Death spaces become covered and at least one is a Spore token.	You become a murderous Fungal Thrall (pg. 18)
Black	All Death spaces become covered by Malice tokens.	You die (pg. 18)

GAMEPLAY

As you make your way to the Final Exit, you will traverse and search areas, craft items, and fight enemies. Complete all steps listed below in order.

Note! On the very first turn of the game, the first player skips all steps preceding the INHALE step. The remainder of their turn and all subsequent turns follow the normal turn structure.

TURN STRUCTURE

- **Heal/Germinate (Optional)**
- **Interact (Optional)**
- **Craft/Ditch/Equip Items (Optional)**
- **Inhale**
 - Traverse/Fast Travel
 - Search
- **Exhale**
- **Craft/Ditch/Equip Items (Optional)**
- **Interact (Optional)**

HEAL/GERMINATE (Optional)

If you want to heal, Roll 2 Survival dice. For every symbol rolled, complete the actions below:



FIT - Remove damage tokens from your Vitality track equal to the FIT symbols rolled.




SPORE - Generate a Looming Thrall (pg. 18) in this area. It attacks the player that woke it. **Note!** Only one Thrall will spawn, no matter how many SPORE symbols are rolled. Ignore all SPORE symbols if you're in a Safe Room, Crawl Space, or a Room with Fire (Torch or Bonfire) in it - Looming Thralls never appear there!



BLANK or WIT - During this step, these do nothing. Ignore them.



If your Prisoner is inside a Safe Room, a Crawl Space, or an area with a Torch or Bonfire (see pgs. 15 & 16) add additional Survival dice equal to the number of exposed FIT symbols  on your Prisoner Vitality track to this roll.

INTERACT

If Prisoners share the same Area, they may do any of the following before their INHALE or after their EXHALE steps:

TRADE - You may offer one or more Items you're holding in exchange for any Items another Prisoner might have. **Note!** There are no exchange rates - the conditions of the deal are up to the players.

BRIBE/THREATEN - Offer Items to another Prisoner so they don't hurt and/or rob you, or threaten to assault another Prisoner if they don't hand over their Items.

HIRE - Offer Items to another Prisoner in exchange for them assaulting someone else or to protect you.

ASSAULT - Attack another Prisoner. Count up the exposed FIT and GRIT symbols on your Prisoner card, then add bonuses from any equipped Items. This is your attack score. Compare it to your target's defense score (their exposed WIT and GRIT symbols plus Item bonuses). If the target's defense score is lower than your attack score, they take Malice damage equal to the difference. The attacking Prisoner may then choose one of the target's equipped or carried Items, and take it for yourself. You can only Assault another Prisoner once per turn.



EXAMPLE: If Wood has 3 FIT and 2 GRIT symbols exposed, and has a Shiv (+3 attack) equipped, Wood has an Attack score of 8. White has 3 WIT and 1 GRIT exposed and is carrying an unlit torch (+1 Defense). White has a defense of 5. In this case, White takes 3 Malice damage and then Wood may steal one Item.

 +  + ITEM BONUS = DEFENSE

 +  + ITEM BONUS = ATTACK

CRAFT, DITCH, OR EQUIP ITEMS

During this step, you can perform any number of these actions:

CRAFT - Reveal Item cards from your hand, then claim the crafted Item. **Note!** If the total number of exposed WIT on a Prisoner vitality track is 2 or fewer they cannot complete the Craft action.

DITCH - Reveal and discard one or more Items you no longer want, or unequip as many Items as you want. **Note!** If you unequip an Item, set it face-down in your carried zone, other players know you still have it!

EQUIP - Move an Item from your carried zone to your equipped zone. A Prisoner may only have 2 equipped Items at once and cannot carry duplicate crafted Items.



INHALE

May the terror begin!

When you're done interacting and manipulating Items, it's time to begin your escape towards the Final Exit. **Take a deep breath and hold it.** While holding your breath, you may attempt to Traverse as many Areas as you would like. You may also attempt to search each Area once. This step ends as soon as you willingly exhale.

TRAVERSING AREAS

There's only one way from here...

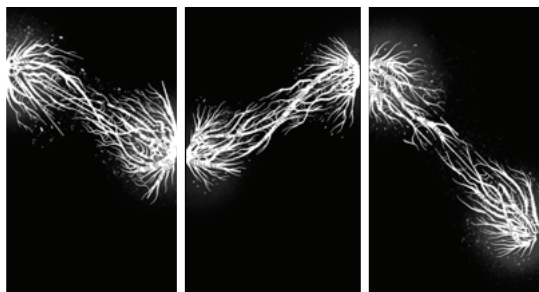
Draw an Area card and match an open path on the new Area card with an open path on the one your Prisoner occupies. This is how you expand and explore the compound. Moving clockwise from the first player, each player will take a turn doing the same until you make it to the Final Door and escape. **Note!** If this is the very first turn of the game, do this for the Area card you drew during setup, then continue like normal.

On each Area card, there are typically 2 numbers.

The Black number is the Search check (see next step).

The White number is the Traverse check. You must complete a Traverse check in order to continue to another Area card. To meet this check, draw from your Prisoner decision deck with one hand while holding your breath.

EXAMPLE:



Draw cards and create a horizontal tableau in front of you until you reveal cards equal to the Traverse check. Using only one hand, arrange these cards in such a way that they create a continuous chain of "neural paths." If a card isn't working, flip it around, re-sequence it, or remove it. However, cards must always remain aligned horizontally. If you remove a card, immediately replace it before removing another one. You can only have a number of cards revealed equal to the Traverse check at any one time.

If you willingly exhale or run out of cards before you create a continuous chain, you fail to find an exit to this Area. Your Prisoner will remain in it and take Spore damage. Shuffle the Decision deck and place it face-down above your Prisoner card after every use.

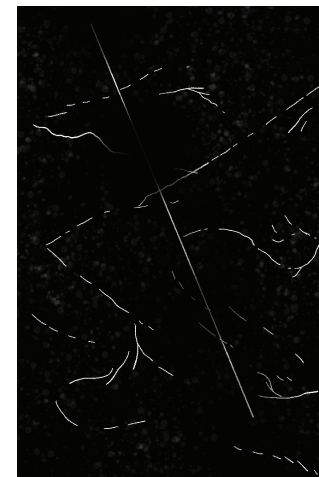




CONFUSION CARDS

The mold is making me foggy...

Each time a WIT on a Prisoner vitality track is concealed that player adds a Confusion card to their Decision deck. These can never be removed (unless otherwise noted). Not all Prisoners have the same number of Confusion cards, some run out fast while others keep piling on. Confusion cards represent the cumulative effects of the Black Mold on the Prisoner's ability to navigate the fog-filled tunnels, and the hallucinatory effects the mold is having on their sense of reality.



SEARCH

One man's junk...

To search, read the Search check number on the area card (black writing surrounded by white) and roll a number of Survival dice equal to the number of exposed GRIT symbols on your Prisoner card +2. If the search check exceeds the number of survival dice a Prisoner has available to roll, they cannot search. **Note!** You will roll a minimum of 2 Survival dice for each search regardless of the number of GRIT concealed.

Complete these steps for each symbol rolled:



GRIT - Set these dice aside, they accrue until you roll enough GRIT symbols to meet the Search check on the Area card you occupy or you decide to give up. If you accrue GRIT symbols equal to the Search check, you may draw a card from the Item deck. You now carry this Item. If your inventory is already full, discard it.



SPORE - Take 1 Spore damage (Take a Spore token and place it on your Prisoner card. At the end of your turn all Spore tokens are placed starting on the first available Vitality space of your Prisoner card.)



FIT OR BLANK - During this step, these do nothing.

Note! If you reach your limit of 6 total Items, you cannot attempt Search checks. You must Ditch Items before your INHALE step if you intend to search for more Items. You may only search each Area once on your turn.





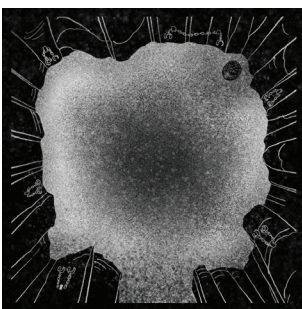
AREA CARDS

The compound unfolds to reveal new horrors...

Area cards feature two numbers. The number printed in white is the number of Decision cards that must be chained before players can reveal the next Area. The number written in black is the number of GRIT you must roll to claim an Item card.

- You may not stay in an Area for a turn, you have to move to a new or previous Area.
- You may go back to previous Areas.
- You must move on to a new Area once you have revealed it.
- Anytime you reveal and move onto a new Contaminated Area, you will reveal and complete one Plot card.

Note! Plot cards are optional and are explained on Page 23.



STARTING AREA

“Let’s get the hell outta here!”

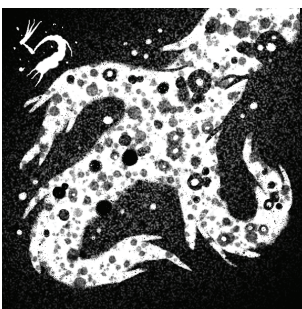
This will always be the first Area Card revealed at the start of the game. All Prisoner player pieces begin in this Area.



MOLDY AREAS

“Not that I knew these halls before, but the fungus has rendered these tunnels unrecognizable.”

Moldy Area cards feature edges with open paths. When an Area card is revealed, match one of the edge paths with an unmatched edge path in the Area you occupy. Ending a turn in a Moldy Area deals you 1 Spore damage.



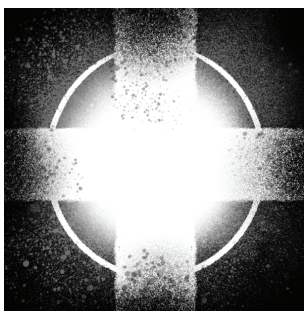
GERMINATED AREAS

“As you make your way through the smog-filled black, eyes squinted, nearly shut, you suddenly feel as though the room is about to envelop you. Throbbing spotted stalks of fungus emit plumes of poison as if reacting to your presence. The puffs of the black death are closing in, you must make a hasty retreat!”

Germinated Areas are like Moldy Areas with two exceptions:

- When you enter and exit a Germinated Area, you take 1 Spore damage.
- If you begin or end a turn inside a Germinated Area, you take 1 Spore damage.





SAFE ROOM AREAS

“Why this room is spared from the airborne menace is beyond me, but I’ll relish this moment to collect myself before pressing on.”

Safe Room Areas are just that, safe. Once inside, you may exhale without taking Spore damage. When you heal in a Safe Room, add Survival dice equal to the number of exposed FIT symbols on your Prisoner card to your Heal/Germinate roll, then remove Spore and Malice tokens equal to FIT symbols rolled. Ignore any outcome of Spore; Thralls cannot generate here. Safe Rooms have no Traverse or Search checks, which means there are no Items to find and you can move through the Area freely. Safe Rooms do not trigger Plot Cards. (More on those later.)



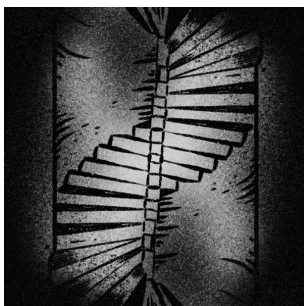
DEAD-END

“This labyrinthine hellscape is built to confuse and punish, isn’t it? Why is this happening to me?”

Dead ends, whether Moldy or Germinated, function the same as other Contaminated Areas with one exception: they put an end to the corridor and the compound can’t extend past them. There are two important exceptions to this:

- If this is the first Area card drawn at the start of the game, or after a Stairwell, or:
- If it blocks all forward progress (because it’s sealing the only way forward), then:

Complete the Traverse check on the Dead-end Area, remove any Looming Thralls then move yourself and any other Prisoners onto the previous Area, then discard the Dead-end card. If there are **any other Areas** with unmatched paths that can be expanded upon, you must backtrack to those Areas before you’re able to discard Dead ends.



STAIRWELL

“As you deftly seek out your escape, you suddenly feel a faint breeze on your side. Perhaps a door leading out has been opened or rested from the fungal crust that encased it?”

When you draw and place a Stairwell card, this means you have found an exit to the next floor. There is only one Stairwell card per floor.

When you begin your next turn, draw a new Area card building off this Stairwell card. Once all prisoners have made their way to the most recently revealed Stairwell, remove all previous area cards from the table and set them aside. There’s no turning back.

New Area cards are matched onto this Stairwell. Subsequent Area cards are then built off open paths of revealed Area cards in play like normal. Once a Stairwell is revealed, in order to make forward progress, players must exit through that stairwell.

Stairwells are considered Moldy Areas and deal 1 Spore damage if you end in them. You can move through Stairwells without attempting Traverse checks and Stairwells do not trigger Plot cards.





FINAL EXIT

The end of the tunnel.

Seeing natural light in the distance, cool air wafting about, you dash, heart-pounding, chasing the last thread of hope you've held onto. Then you see it, a massive steel door, pushed open just wide enough for someone to squeeze out, beckoning you to rejoin the living world. Maybe you can get your life back, maybe you can have another go at this. After all, you survived this; you survived... THE BLACK MOLD!

This will always be the card placed at the bottom of the Escape deck and the last card revealed. The Final Exit does NOT trigger a Plot Card. Once you reach this card, you have escaped the compound. Will you share the victory with your fellow prisoners, or are you the sole survivor?

AM I LOSING MY MIND?!

Not all Areas are what they seem. At a passing glance, the Area might appear to have an open path, but if you look a little closer, it's actually a Dead End. The orientation of the Search and Traverse checks are not uniformly set and in some cases are hidden. Is the Black Mold messing with your mind? Be sure to examine the Area card closely before pressing on. It could mean the difference between life and death.

FAST TRAVEL

Make a hasty escape!

To Fast Travel from an Area card far away from the Stairwell exit, you must make a successful Decision chain equal to the number of Area cards between you and the Stairwell card. If you cannot chain Decision cards equal to the number of Area cards, you only move through Areas equal to the number of decision cards you were able to chain.

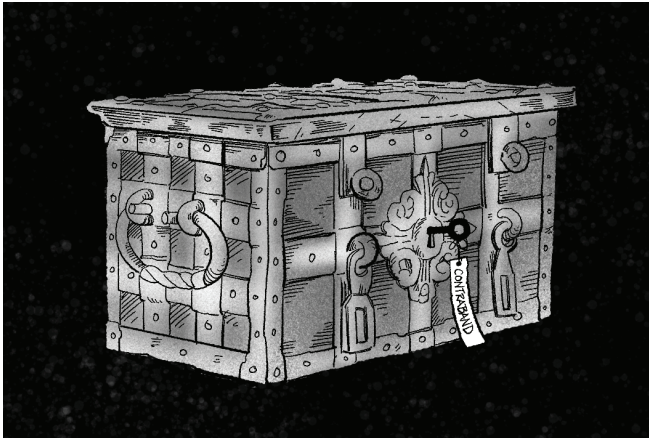
EXAMPLE: The Stairwell is 7 Area cards away from where your Prisoner is located, so the check to ascend to the next floor requires a Decision chain of 7. In your attempt, you only manage to chain 5 Decision cards so you only move through 5 Areas.

During Fast Travel, you may not Search. If there are Thralls along the way they stop Fast Travel from being an option. If you fail to reach the Stairwell add 2 Spore Counters to your Vitality track.

EXHALE

My body betrays me, but my will is strong.

As soon as you willingly exhale you immediately move to this step. If your Prisoner is inside a Contaminated Area, take 1 Spore damage. If you end your travel in a Safe Area or an Area with fire (Bonfire or Torch), you take no damage. If you share an Area with another Prisoner you may INTERACT or CRAFT/DITCH/EQUIP Items.



CONTRABAND ITEMS

A memento of your old life.

Each Prisoner in Black Mold has a signature Contraband Item that tells you a little bit about the character but also grants them character-specific abilities. The effects of your Contraband are ongoing and Contraband doesn't use up an Item slot. Contraband can be given/taken to/by other Prisoners. If you choose, you may mix and match these Items for varied gameplay. The various Contraband Items and the Prisoner they belong to are listed in the Prisoners section on page 21 & 22.

ITEMS

Tools of the trade.

Each time you complete a Search check in an Area, you draw one Item Card. You can combine certain Items to create Crafted Items. Items have two states: Carried and Equipped.

- Carried Items are hidden. Place them face down near the bottom of your Prisoner card.
- Reveal a Carried Item card when you equip it or use it to craft.
- Equipped and Crafted Items are always placed face-up on either side near the center of the Prisoner card.
- There can only be 3 Items on each side of your Prisoner card, for 6 Items total.

Note! Players may not have duplicate Crafted Items equipped at the same time.

Listed on the following pages are all Items and the potential ways they can be combined into Crafted Items. Refer to the provided Quick Reference card for an easy visual guide.



BONE | *“A spark of ivory in a sea of blackness, this could come in handy.”*

Bone can be used as a weapon and grants its user a +1 bonus to Attack or Defense. Bone can also be combined with Cloth, Ichor, and Sparks/Fire to create a Torch.



BONFIRE (CRAFTED) | *“The only way to kill it is with fire.”*

By combining Cloth, Ichor, and Sparks you can craft a Bonfire. When a Bonfire is crafted, place a Bonfire token on the area your prisoner occupies. Once crafted it burns for as long as that area remains on the table and in play. Any Areas with a Bonfire are converted to Safe Rooms. Areas with a Bonfire that have a Search check no longer require it, players may draw an item from it once per turn. Areas with Bonfires can be moved through without a Traverse Check.



CLOTH | *“These rags look like those I wear, but where is the body?”*

Cloth is a versatile item. Two Cloths can make a Shroud.

Cloth, Ichor, and Sparks make a Bonfire.

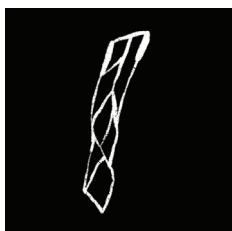
Cloth, Ichor, Bone, and Sparks make a Lit Torch.

Cloth, Steel, and Rock make a Shiv.



CRAWL SPACE | *“Finally a brief respite from this horrific ordeal.”*

Reveal the Crawl Space the moment you discover it, then draw 2 item cards. Place the Crawl Space next to the Area you occupy and place your Prisoner onto it. Once in the Crawl Space, treat it as a Safe Room until you leave. Players wishing to enter the Crawl Space should knock on the table to request entry, then the occupying player can grant or refuse entry. When there are no prisoners left in the Crawl Space, discard the Crawl Space card. Note - If a player has drawn more than one Crawl Space, say if they draw a Crawl Space after just entering one, they discard that Crawl Space card without alerting the other players about this.



FLINT | *“A shimmering rod of black minerals catches your eye.”*

Flint can combine with Steel to create sparks which can ignite Bonfires and Torches.



ICHOR | *“Sticky, slimy, gloopy, and flammable?! From whence has it come?”*

Ichor is a strange, flammable, tar-like goop that can combine in two ways.

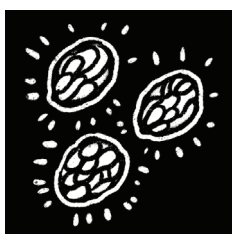
Ichor, Cloth, and Sparks make a Bonfire.

Ichor, Cloth, Bone, and Sparks make a Lit Torch.



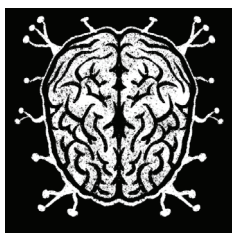
LIT TORCH (CRAFTED) | *“With this, I can make my escape, if only I can keep this light...”*

A Lit Torch causes the Black Mold to shrivel and recede. If you craft this item, you no longer need to hold your breath to escape or roll Survival Dice to Search, though you can only Traverse a maximum of 3 Areas per turn. Lit Torches give +2 to Attack and Defense against other Prisoners and +3 to Attack and Defense against Fungal Thralls. Craft by combining Ichor, Cloth, Bone, and Sparks.



NUGS | *“Behold, there are riches hidden within.”*

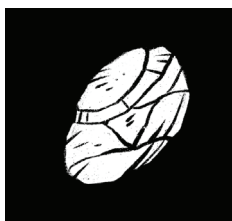
Nugs are valuable precious stones produced by rampant Fungal growths. Should multiple prisoners survive the compound and escape, whoever has the most Nugs is the winner. Nugs can also be used to attempt to bribe other players to prevent them from attacking you or hire them to attack others or protect you and make an attractive item for trade.



PARANOID INFECTION | *“They’re all trying to kill me, but not if I kill them first.”*

Keep this card secret. This is yours until the end of the game.

The Black Mold has infected your brain. You are now consumed by paranoid thoughts that all the other prisoners pose an imminent threat. Your new secret win condition is to see all the other Prisoners dead. This can be done by assaulting them, but lying or withholding aid could also lead to their doom. Paranoid Infection only takes hold if you have 2 or fewer WIT symbols exposed – staying healthy can ward it off. If you are infected by Paranoid Infection, not a Thrall, and still alive, you win the game.



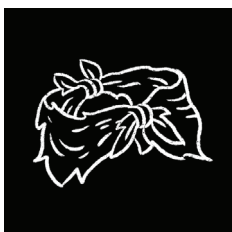
ROCK | *“Great, a rock.”*

If you are in an adjacent connected area or share an area with an adversary you may “throw” a Rock. Discard the Rock to deal them 1 Malice damage without having to assault. You can do this as many times as you have Rocks! They do not need to be equipped to be used this way. Rocks, cloth, and Steel make a Shiv.



SHIV (CRAFTED) | *“Whatever comes, I’ll be ready.”*

An equipped Shiv gives +3 to Attack or Defense. Craft by combining Rock, Cloth, and Steel.



SHROUD (CRAFTED) | *“Please let this protect me.”*

If you have a Shroud equipped you no longer take Spore damage from ending your turn in a Moldy Area. The Shroud has no effect on Germinated Areas. Craft by combining two Cloths.



SPARKS (CRAFTED) | *“I just need something to burn!”*

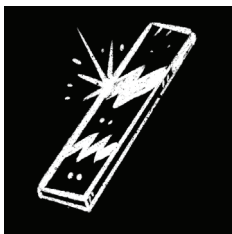
Craft by combining Steel and Flint to create Sparks. Use an unlimited number of times to ignite Torches and Bonfires. You may discard this Crafted item to reclaim its component items.



SPORE BEETLE | *“Only in this desolate hell does this grotesque insect become an ally.”*

Spore Beetles have several benefits. Equip a Beetle and it will remove 1 Spore token from your Vitality track during each Heal Step of your turn (before you roll). You may also discard the Beetle card to Eat or Squish it. Eat removes 3 Spores from your Vitality track. Squish it to turn into Ichor. You may Squish a Beetle even if you have it equipped.

Note! Players may have only 1 Beetle equipped.



STEEL | *“What scarce light there is gleaming off this last vestige of humanity.”*

Steel can be used as a weapon and will give its user a +1 bonus to Attack and Defense. Steel can also be combined with Flint to create Sparks and ignite bonfires or Torches. Or combined with Rock and Cloth to create a Shiv.



UNLIT TORCH (CRAFTED) | *“I just need a spark and I might escape this dark fate.”*

An Unlit Torch needs a Spark, a Lit Torch, or a Bonfire to become Lit. While unlit it gives a +1 to Attack and Defense. Craft by combining Bone, Cloth, and Ichor.

DEATH AND WORSE

PRISONER DEATH

Freedom at last...

If certain conditions on the Doom Table (pg. 6) are met, the Prisoner falls DEAD. This player is eliminated from the game. Remove their Prisoner meeple and all their cards from the game. Their bodies and Items are forever lost in the Black Mold.

FUNGAL THRALLS

Something wicked this way comes... it's you.

If certain conditions on the Doom Table are met (pg. 6), your Prisoner loses their mind and body to the toxic fumes of the Black Mold and becomes a murderous Fungal Thrall. Flip your Prisoner card over to show that you've been transformed, then remove your Prisoner piece from the table and replace it with a Fungal Thrall piece. Communicating through the mycelium hive mind you can now act through all Thralls in play. Your sole purpose is to Contaminate Areas and assault Prisoners. If you prevent all other Prisoners from escaping or turn them into Thralls, you win.

Along with your transformation comes some new attributes:

- You no longer need to hold your breath during your turn.
- You cannot craft or carry Items.
- Prisoners cannot Fast Travel through an Area occupied by a Thrall.

Here is what you can do on your turn as a Fungal Thrall:

- **ASSAULT** - Attack Prisoners that share an area with a Thrall doing damage equal to your FIT + GRIT
- **TRAVERSE** - Move any Thralls in the compound up to 3 times. This can be 3 moves to one Thrall or 1 move for three different Thralls.
 - Contaminate Safe Rooms by putting a Spore token onto a Safe Area you occupy. **Note!** If an area has fire (a Torch or a Bonfire), take Fire damage (put a Bonfire token on your vitality track.)



- **THRALL ACTION** - All Player-controlled Thralls have access to a shared Thrall Action deck. It consists of 7 cards that can be used in place of the Assault Action. As player-controlled Thralls, you may select and use Thrall Action cards. Once the Action is resolved, flip it face down. After all the Thrall Action cards have been used in this way, shuffle the cards and begin using them again. Using these Actions, Thralls can coordinate attacks to brutally murder the surviving Prisoners.



- **BITE** - Place 2 Spore damage tokens on any 2 Prisoner Vitality spaces of your choosing that you share an area with.
- **THRALL CALL** - Generate 2 Thralls in the Area you occupy or Areas adjacent to the one you occupy.
- **MAUL** - Force a Prisoner in an Area you occupy to drop 2 Items at random. This includes carried and equipped Items.
- **STALK** - Take an additional Traverse action this turn using up to 3 Traverse actions among any Thralls in play. You may still complete an Assault action.
- **RAMPAGE** - You may perform a basic Assault action twice this turn.
- **SCARE** - Move any Prisoners with whom you share an Area up to 3 Areas in any direction out of this Area.
- **GESTATE**- Roll 8 Survival dice and remove damage tokens equal to blank and Spore outcomes.

STUBBORN SHROOMS

Instead of dealing damage, Spores heal Fungal Thralls. Where you would take Spore damage as a Prisoner, remove damage if you're a Fungal Thrall, and remove that many Malice or Fire tokens from your Vitality track instead.

EXAMPLE: A player-controlled Fungal Thrall enters and exits 2 Germinated Areas in a turn and ends their movement in a Moldy Area. This would deal 5 Spore damage to a Prisoner but Fungal Thralls are enriched by exposure to the Black Mold, so 5 damage is removed from the player-controlled Fungal Thrall's Vitality track.

REGENERATION

Player-controlled Thralls are not immediately eliminated from play when their vitality track is filled. When their Vitality track is filled, at the start of their next turn, they roll 8 survival dice. For each Spore or Blank symbol rolled, they remove that many damage tokens. If there is no change to the Vitality track after this roll, the Thrall player skips this round and may try to regenerate again at the start of their next turn. If there are 2 failed attempts to Regenerate that player-controlled Thrall is lost to the mists of the Black Mold and is then eliminated from play.

DAMAGE FROM PRISONERS

When a Prisoner attacks a Thrall they decide if they want to treat it as a Looming Thrall, dealing it 8 damage in one attack and removing it from play, or deal Malice Damage to your Thrall vitality track. As long as a Thrall player has any amount of health remaining, one Thrall player piece will remain in play until they accrue enough damage to cause them to Regenerate.

CHASE THEM DOWN!

If all Prisoners have ascended to the next floor leaving Thralls behind, you may Traverse to chase them. The previous floor remains in play until you arrive at the Stairwell exit or the number of Thralls on the new floor equals the number of players that are Thralls.



A LOOMING FUNGAL THRALL IS RESTED FROM ITS SLEEP.

As you lurk from place to place, the undulating blackened masses of fungal fright surround you. Covering every surface, they quietly sigh plumes of poison death. The silence is unnatural. You only hear your own heart beating as you creep carefully, then, a slight cracking sound. The wall shudders, shedding spores and creating a black snowfall! From an unseen crevasse in the darkness a shrieking, slobbering, rasping Thrall bursts out of the fungus-encrusted wall, lunging towards you!

Whenever a player rolls 1 or more Spore symbols during a Heal/Germinate roll, place a Looming Thrall piece onto the Area that Prisoner occupies then roll 8 survival dice. That player takes damage for each Spore symbol rolled. Until someone deals this Thrall 8 Damage in one turn or creates a fire (with a Torch or a Bonfire) in this Area, this Thrall remains and Assaults whenever a Prisoner enters that Area. If a Looming Thrall shares an Area with Fire in it, remove it from that Area, returning it to the Thrall piece pile.

The damage a Looming Thrall deals is NOT compared against defense. Roll 8 survival dice and take damage equal to the number of results bearing a Spore symbol. While traversing into an Area with a Thrall, continue holding your breath and roll 8 survival dice to determine the amount of damage you take, then complete your traverse check and keep moving. Looming Thralls roll dice to Attack.

DAMAGE

ASSAULT - The attack power of a Prisoner or a Player-Controlled Thrall is equal to the number of visible FIT and GRIT symbols on that player's Prisoner/Thrall card. Prisoners may increase their attack and defense power by equipping Items like Bones, Steel, Torches, and Shivs, or by staying healthy. When you declare that you're assaulting something, compare your combined FIT, GRIT, and Item bonuses against the adversary's WIT, GRIT, and Item bonuses. The defending adversary takes Malice damage equal to the difference.

EXAMPLE: Prisoner White enters an Area with a Player-Controlled Thrall. White has 3 GRIT and 3 FIT exposed on his Vitality track and has a piece of Steel equipped (+1 attack/defense). $3 + 3 + 1 = 7$ so White's current attack is 7. The Thrall has no WIT symbols and 4 GRIT is exposed, so when White assaults the Thrall he deals it 3 Malice damage.

DAMAGE RESOLVING - When you accumulate Spore or Malice tokens during your turn, place them near or on top of your Prisoner card. The effects of these Damage tokens take hold at the end of your turn and you need not alter your search die count or add Confusion cards until after your turn is complete. After, place all the tokens onto your Vitality track.

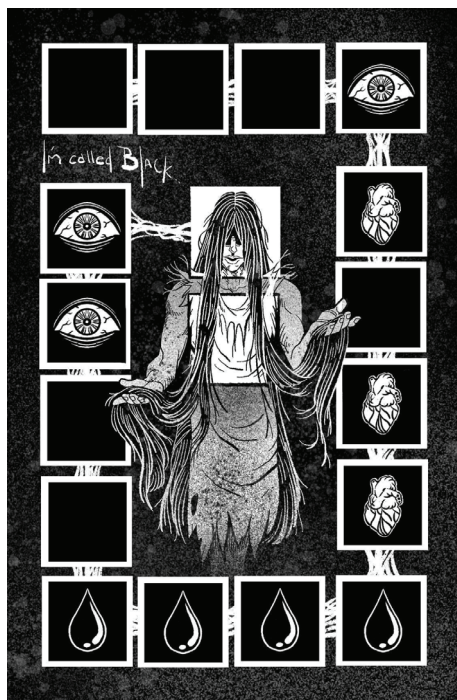
SPORE - Spore Damage comes from exposure to Moldy or Germinated Areas or being assaulted by a Fungal Thrall. If the majority of the Death spaces on a Prisoner Vitality track (white spaces over top the Prisoner character art) are covered by Spore tokens, the Prisoner is transformed into a Thrall or, in some cases, simply dies. (See Doom Table on pg. 6)

MALICE - Malice Damage results from being Assaulted by other Prisoners. If the majority of the last few Death spaces of a Prisoner's Vitality track (white spaces over top the Prisoner character art) is covered by Malice tokens, that Prisoner is dead and is eliminated from the game. (See Doom Table on pg. 6)



PRISONERS

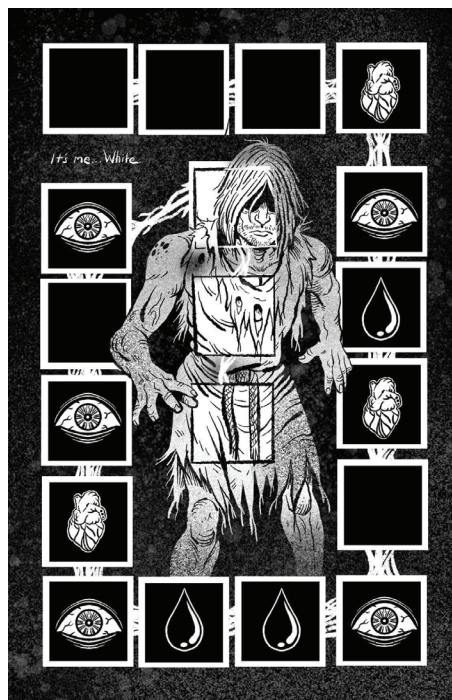
Each Prisoner in Black Mold has a different Vitality track that grants them different strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, they each come with a signature Decision deck, Prisoner player piece, and Prisoner Contraband card. Each Prisoner's Decision deck features a unique combination of neural path patterns and Confusion cards that can bolster or hinder their ability to traverse efficiently. Contraband Items tout various effects that can help you escape the compound alive. While each Contraband Item listed below compliments its Prisoner's Vitality, players may choose to mix and match Contraband Items with different Prisoners if they so choose.



BLACK THE VVITCH

Black is a cunning and resourceful VVitch. They're great at finding items, but their frail frame makes them susceptible to debilitating fatigue. Be careful not to take too much damage as Black, as healing is their worst skill.

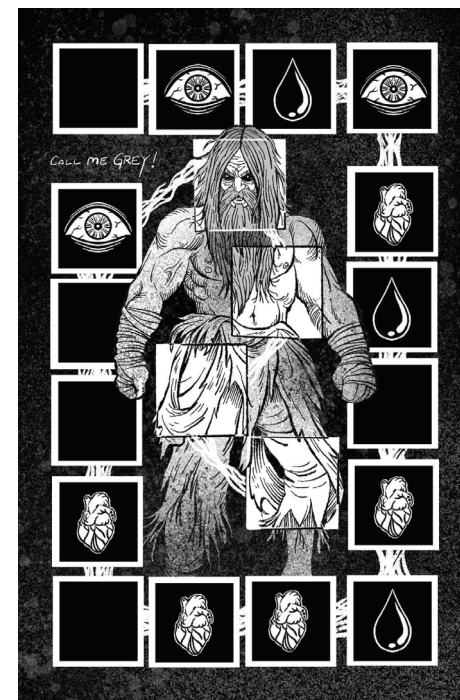
Haunted Locket - When you roll to Heal/Germinate, treat blank outcomes as FIT symbols.



WHITE THE SMUGGLER

White, a born scoundrel, keeps his head on a swivel. Doesn't much care for fighting or finding. His WIT keeps him alive with a strong defense. White is also great at helping other prisoners craft... That's if they can trust him to give the item back.

Expired Medicine Bottle - When Healing, handpick which Damage tokens you remove instead of the ones furthest down the Vitality track.

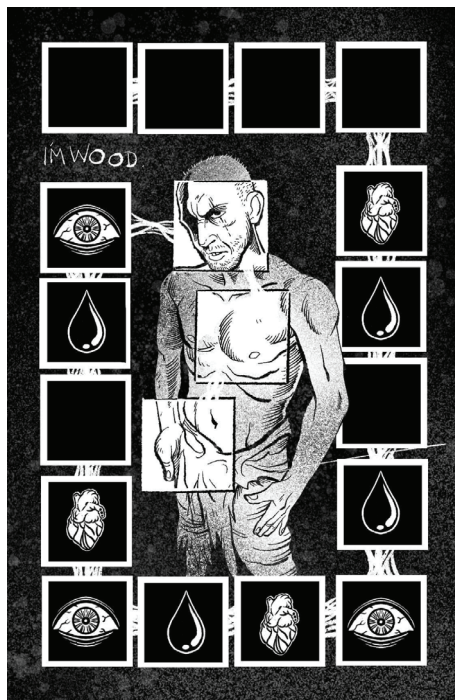


GREY THE MURDERER

Grey is a cruel bastard. Grey is ideal for demolishing Thralls but also adept at bullying and assaulting other prisoners. WIT is Grey's weakest skill, so he gets confused easily and often. If stricken by the Paranoid Infection, Grey can be a terror for the other escapees.

Broken Pocket Watch - When Healing, instead of removing a token from the Vitality track, you may remove a Confusion card from your Decision deck.

PRISONERS



WOOD THE GAMBLER

Wood was known as a hustler, gambler, and conman who adapts well to most situations. Wood is solid and balanced but not especially skilled at any one thing. His vitality track and its less punishing sequence can be managed with a little luck and perhaps lead to a quick escape.

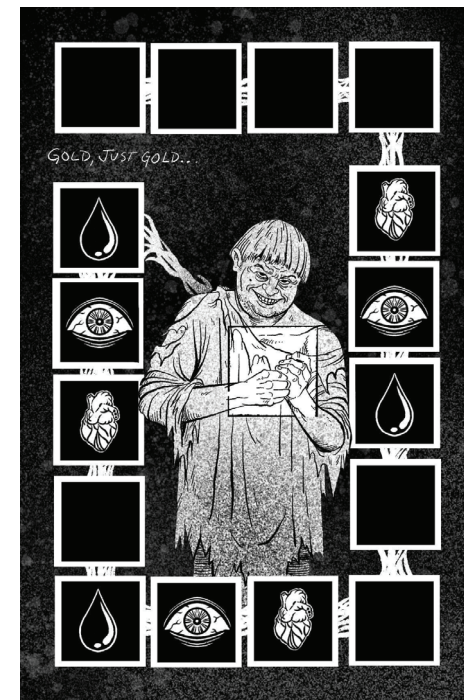
Bone Dice - When you roll to Heal/Germinate, you may re-roll one die of your choosing. You must keep the second outcome.



SILVER THE ARSONIST

Silver is the oldest living prisoner in the compound. She's tough but not long for this world. Her limited vitality is her weakness, but if you make wise choices, you may outlive the other prisoners and escape. Silver cannot change into a Thrall which can be comforting for the other escapees, but a death sentence to herself.

Broken Hand Mirror - When you roll to Heal, if there is no beneficial outcome, remove one Damage from a blank space on your Vitality track.



GOLD THE THIEF

Gold is a greedy, grubbing, and thieving little sneak. He certainly wants to survive, but his namesake was earned for being a hoarding lair whose accumulation of wealth drives his every move. Gold's greed can motivate him out of the compound quickly if he's incentivized to do so. Gold is one of the weakest prisoners, second only to Silver.

Greedy Coin Purse - For every five Nugs Gold has, reduce Traverse checks by one. **Note!** This means that Traverse checks of 1 require just one Decision card to be revealed to move forward.



VARIANT RULES

HOURLASS MODE

Time is running low...

If all players agree, the group or any number of players can use the included sand timer instead of physically holding their breath. Play just like normal, except:

- Flip the timer at the start of your INHALE step.
- Perform all actions as described in the rules above, excluding only the breathing parts. (i.e. you still handle the Decision deck with only one hand, etc.)
- As soon as the timer runs out, your EXHALE step begins.

Note! We recommend using this mode when playing with people with any discomfort or unease in holding their breath, or if the group vastly varies in age, training, and physique. If everyone agrees, you can have some players using the sand timer, and others holding their breath.

HARDCORE AND EASY MODES

If all players agree, the overall difficulty of Black Mold can be customized by adding or subtracting the total number of Area cards on each floor. We recommend building floors with 10 Areas, but additional cards are provided. This allows you to change the duration and difficulty of Black Mold by doing any of the following:

- Play a longer game by using all cards. This can allow you to build 6 floors total and add a 5th player – but be warned, compounds/floors of this size can take upwards of 2 hours to escape!
- Make each floor contain 12 areas for a tougher challenge, or reduce the floors to only 8 areas to make them slightly easier.



TERRIBLE GAMES IS

Tim Brosious

John de Campos

Philip Docolo

Lucas Gerace

Shannon Light Hadley

Elizabeth Rassmussen

