Shadows of Malice®

a cooperative game of epic fantasy

revised second printing

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Revised Second Printing

The Avatars of Aethos

Long ago, in the Time of Black Thickening, the Xulthûl (zul-thool) the Lord of Shadows gained physical substance and walked the Realm of Aethos (Ay-thōs), a horrid and gruesome thing of clotted darkness sheathed in a skin of malice. Before Xulthûl, no mortal could stand, no army could prevail, and Aethos descended into depravity and blight.

So vivid, however, were the horrors that Xulthûl's incarnation wrought upon the living that their anguish roused the Avatars of Aethos. Noble beings of purest Light, the avatars took pity on the mortals of the Realm. They assumed human form, secured the great strongholds of the Realm, and unsealed the Wells of the Ancients hidden within. The cleansing Light of the Wells flooded into Aethos, dissolved Xulthûl's material substance, and banished the Lord of Shadow once more to the Shadow Realm.

Yet even time forgets. As the decades that followed Xulthûl's defeat bled into centuries, the Wells of the Ancients faded into legend, the Guardians stationed within the great strongholds slipped into stone slumber, and the strongholds themselves fell into ruin. Memories of Xulthûl dimmed into the stuff of nightmare, for what is the cold hatred of a shadow against the warm light of reason? But banishment is not destruction. Secure in the Shadow Realm, concealed behind a veil of disbelief, Xulthûl fed upon the fears and sins and dark desires of the very mortals that denied its existence.

As Xulthûl's strength returned, its malign influence began to leak once more into the Realm of Aethos. Wispy tendrils of perversion slid over and through the Realm, gradually transforming its lands into twisted tangles and its denizens into terrible beasts. The Guardians of the Wells gradually lost the ability to distinguish Light from Shadow and rose up to destroy any creature that approached the strongholds they defended. Even the Wells of the Ancients began to fall Dark under Xulthûl's corruptive maleficence, slowly changing from channels of Light into conduits of Shadow.

It is here that you enter the story, players, as the Avatars of Aethos returned. At the start of the game, there will be sufficient Light Wells remaining to thwart Xulthûl, but their whereabouts will be unknown. It will be your task to find the strongholds that contain the remaining Light Wells, defeat their Guardians, and unseal them... and with their cleansing Light prevent Xulthûl from gaining the corporeal substance it requires to physically enter the Realm of Aethos.

But be warned: Xulthûl will act against you. It will spawn manifestations of its wickedness in the Shadow Realm and send its Shadows into Aethos with one unwavering purpose: to find but a single Light Well, and with its power provide Xulthûl the means to once again thicken the darkness into a skin of malice...

Shadows of Malice ®
a cooperative game of epic fantasy
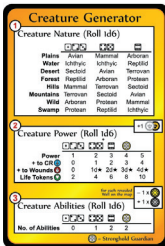
Game Components

What's in the Box?

The game comes with 1 rule booklet, 1 creature generator/icon guide, a map of the Shadow Realm, 4 maps of Aethos, 5 card decks, 108 soulshards, 197 tokens, and black and white dice of two sizes.

Card Decks		Soulshards		Radiance Tokens		Game Tokens	
40	Ability	12	Black	3	Combat	6	Cities
40	Fate	12	Blue	3	Energy Shield	8	Dark Wells
18	Mastery	12	Green	3	Energy Surge	6	Gate Seals
40	Potion	12	Red	3	Life	24	Lairs
60	Treasure	12	Yellow	3	Luck	80	Life
		48	Colorless	3	Movement	4	Light Wells
				3	Physical Shield	6	Mystics
Avatar tokens				3	Physical Surge	6	Shadows
				3	Recovery	18	Stars*
				3	Shards	1	Xulthûl

Creature Generator   **Shadow Realm**   **Terrain Tiles**
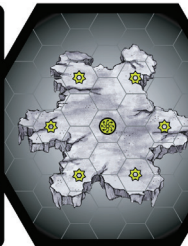
*Stars may be used instead of dice to make d★ rolls [9].

The Story of the Card Art

Shadows of Malice® was originally designed to be a minimalist game with no artwork, to enable players to imagine their own stories without visual anchors. In the end, I decided to include images on the treasure cards, and roughed out some placeholder art for test plays. Every play test group asked me to keep the placeholder art for the final production: they found in it a nostalgic appeal. That's why the art on the treasure cards is rough and unrefined.

Game Overview

The Big Picture

Shadows of Malice is a cooperative game in which 1 - 8 players work together to prevent Xulthûl, the Lord of Shadow, from gaining substance and physically entering the Realm of Aethos. Players control avatars, beings of Light that have taken physical form to enter Aethos and undertake an epic quest to find and unseal the Wells of the Ancients that have not fallen Dark over the centuries since Xulthûl's last incarnation.

As Avatars of Light, you will travel through Aethos, confront twists of fate, battle deadly creatures, and gather the treasure items and soulshards you will need to defeat the Guardians that defend the Wells of the Ancients. If you can find and unseal all of the remaining Light Wells, you will save Aethos and win the game.

But Xulthûl has other plans. Xulthûl's Shadows, living manifestations of its malice, have begun to thicken in the Shadow Realm. If a Shadow manages to escape the Shadow Realm and enter Aethos, it will attempt to find and reveal a single Light Well and use that Well's power to congeal a skin for Xulthûl. Then, depending on the scenario choosen, the Lord of Shadow will either immediately gain dominion over Aethos or your avatars will have to destroy Xulthûl's new body before it can extinguish all the Light Wells.

How to Play

Rule Referencing
In this booklet, you will come across the notation [xx] (*e.g., [2], [13]*). This denotes the page where you can find more information about the topic.

Troves
The individual decks of Ability, Fate, Mastery, Potion, and Treasure cards are called troves. Whenever you are required to "return a card to a trove," place the card on the bottom of its appropriate trove. In-game mechanisms continually randomize the Potion and Ability Troves. You may shuffle the Fate and Treasure Troves any time you desire.

Scenarios
There are two scenarios for *Shadows of Malice*: **Thwart the Shadow** and **Preserve the Light**. You must pick one of these scenarios at the start of your game. In both scenarios, you will win if your avatars reveal all the Light Wells before a Shadow can reveal any one Light Well. The scenarios differ in what happens if a Shadows reveals a Light Well.

Thwart the Shadow
The game ends immediately when a Shadow reveals a Light Well and forms a skin for Xulthûl. The players lose. The avatars are cast out of Aethos and a new Time of Dark Thickening begins.

Preserve the Light
The game does not immediately end when a Shadow reveals a Light Well and forms a skin for Xulthûl. Once Xulthûl takes on a body and enters Aethos, it must *find and extinguish* all the Light Wells in play. If the avatars can destroy Xulthûl's physical body before Xulthûl can extinguish the last Light Well, the players will banish the Lord of Shadow and win the game. If Xulthûl extinguishes the last Light Well, the players lose and a new Time of Dark Thickening begins.

Game Setup

Step 1: Choose the Game Maps
The players select 1, 2, 3, or 4 terrain maps to use for their game. The maps may be arranged as the players desire. Maps with adjoining edges allow avatars to travel directly from one map to the other without using a teleportation Gate. More maps make for longer games.

Step 2: Prepare the Game Maps
After placing the Shadow Realm and terrain maps on the table:

Step i. Seal the Shadow Gates
Cover all the Shadow Gates ⚙ in the Shadow Realm with a Gate Seal 🚫 to mark them as sealed and unusable at the start of the game.

Step ii. Place the Wells
Gather one Light Well token ✳ and two Dark Well tokens ✸ for each terrain map used in the game (*e.g., a game with 3 terrain maps will use 3 Light Well tokens and 6 Dark Well tokens*). Place these tokens in one pile on the table, stronghold side up 🏰, shuffle them together, and randomly place them on the stronghold symbols 🏰 on the terrain maps. No one should know the nature of the Well in any stronghold.

Step iii. Place the Cities
Place the 6 city tokens 🛡🕯◈⚙◐🏙 on the table Ⓒ side up and shuffle them together. Select one city token for each terrain map in the game and put the remaining tokens away (*they will not be used*). Randomly place the selected tokens on the city symbol Ⓒ on each terrain map. No one should know the nature of any city.

Step iv. Place the Mystics
Place the 6 mystic tokens 🔼🔼➕➕🚫🚫 on the table Ⓜ side up and shuffle them together. Select one mystic token for each terrain map in the game and put the remaining tokens away (*they will not be used*). Place the selected tokens randomly on the mystic symbol Ⓜ on each terrain map. No one should know the nature of any mystic.

Step v. Stock the lairs
Place a stocked lair token 🐻 on all the lair symbols 🐾 on all the maps.

Step 3: Choose Avatar Tokens
Each player controls an Avatar of Aethos, a being of Light made flesh so that it may enter the physical Realm of Aethos and protect it from Xulthûl. Each player chooses one of 8 oval avatar tokens to mark their avatar's position on the game maps. The physical form, height, color, gender, etc. of your avatar may be anything you desire.

Step 4: Distribute Life Tokens
Each player receives 5 life tokens 💚 for their avatar. These represent the vigor and robustness of the avatar's physical form in Aethos.

Step 5: Draw Masteries
Randomly draw a mastery card for each avatar. Your avatar's mastery determines how your avatar shapes Light [13].
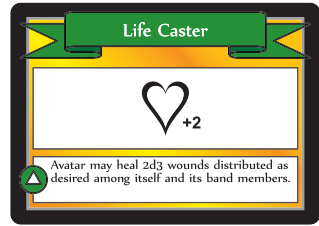
Step 6: Distribute soulshards
Each player starts play with 6 soulshards: 3 colorless soulshards and 3 soulshards of the color aligned with their avatar's mastery (*e.g., green for **Life Caster***). Avatars with colorless masteries receive 6 colorless soulshards.

Step 7: Starting Items (optional)
Giving out starting treasure items is optional [28]. Starting treasure is useful in games with fewer players or when players want a faster game.

Step 8: Place the Troves
Shuffle the Ability, Fate, Mastery, Potion, and Treasure troves and place them in easy to reach locations convenient for play.

Step 9: Place the Avatars
Each player places their avatar's token on the Gate hex ⚙ on their choice of terrain map. This is the avatar's starting position for play. Multiple avatars may begin the game on the same Gate and choose to begin play alone or in bands [11].

Step 10: Choose your scenario
Choose a scenario for your game: **Thwart the Shadow** or **Preserve the Light**. You are now ready to start playing *Shadows of Malice!*

Rounds and Turns
Shadows of Malice progresses in game rounds. Each game round consists of the Players' Turn followed by the Shadows' Turn. After each round is completed with the end of the Shadows' Turn, the next round begins with the start of the Players' Turn. If Xulthûl gets a skin and enters Aethos, the Shadows' turn becomes Xulthûl's Turn.

Effects that last "one turn" last from the moment they begin until the end of the current turn. Effects that occur "each turn" happen at the beginning of the Players' Turn.

Players' Turn (Avatar Actions)
All avatar actions and activity take place during the Players' Turn. During this turn, the avatars will do things to advance their mission, like recover from a fight or travel to a stronghold. Some activities **do not require an action** to perform. An avatar may engage in as many of these kinds of activities as they wish. Some activities **require one or two actions** to perform. Each avatar is limited to two actions per turn to engage in these kinds of activities. Avatars are not required to use their actions.

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Avatars are not required to perform all their activities at once. Activities may be staggered throughout the turn, alternate between avatars, and in general be performed in any order the players desire.

Avatar activities that <u>do not require an action</u> to perform

Engage in combat	[21]
Form, enter, or leave a band	[11]
Invoke a fate card	[13]
Invoke a soulshard	[26]
Reveal a city or a mystic	[31]
Reveal a Well	[17]
Trade items	[29]
Use a Gate	[13]
Use a mastery	[13]

Avatar activities that require <u>one action</u> to perform

Attune an avatar's soulshards	[31]
Move	[11]
Provoke an encounter	[17]
Recover	[20]
Use the service of a city or a mystic	[31]

Avatar activities that require <u>two actions</u> to perform

Attune an avatar's mastery	[31]
Form a new body	[21]

Shadows' Turn

While Xulthûl is trapped in the Shadow Realm, it will spawn Shadows that will endeavor to enter Aethos, find and reveal a Light Well, and use the Well's power to congeal into a skin for their master.

Shadow activities (*both scenarios*)
While Xulthûl is trapped in the Shadow Realm, the Shadow's Turn consists of:

Events in the Shadow Realm	[32]
Events in Aethos	[33]

Xulthûl's activities
In the **Thwart the Shadow** scenario, Xulthûl immediately wins the game when it enters Aethos. In the **Preserve the Light** scenario, the Shadows' Turn becomes Xulthûl's Turn when Xulthûl enters Aethos: all Shadows immediately disappear and Xulthûl begins extinguishing the remaining Light Wells [34].

Icons and Dice

Icons

Icons provide visual shorthand for game effects and are present on most cards. White icons (e.g., 👣) affect the card holder; gray icons (e.g., 👣), affect the card holder's opponent. An avatar with +1 👣 would get +1 to all physical wounds they deliver. An avatar with +1 👣 would take +1 physical wound from all their opponents. Symbols for colors (e.g., 🟡🔘) are provided for players that have difficulty visually discriminating colors and have no effect on game play.

Icon and Movement Guide

Black, Green, Yellow, Blue, Red, Colorless

Combat: Modifies combat rolls (**CR**)

Energy Wounds: Modifies wounds delivered by energy (non-melee) attacks

Physical Wounds: Modifies wounds delivered by physical (melee) attacks

Energy Shield: Reduces wounds sustained from energy (non-melee) attacks

Physical Shield: Reduces wounds sustained from physical (melee) attacks

Immunity: Immune to abilities and effects of banner (symbol) color

Life: Modifies a creature's or avatar's life token total

Recovery: Modifies the number of tokens an avatar may regain each turn

Luck: Modifies luck rolls (**LR**)

Movement: Modifies movement rolls (**MR**)

Shards: Modifies the number of **colorless** soulshards avatar may harvest from a creature

Gate Control: Removes **LR** to confirm exit Gate and grants automatic Gate attunement*

Electricity
Fire
Cold
Acid
Poison

White Icons Affect the cardholder
Gray Icons Affect the opponent

Movement Cost by Terrain
Gate 0, Wild 3, Forest 2, Plains 1, Path 1, Mountains 3, Desert 2, Water 1, Bridge ½, Swamp 3, Road ½, Hills 2

*On a map, ⚙ marks the location of a Gate

Randomness and Dice

Randomness is a key element of *Shadows of Malice*, and quite often you will be required to roll one or more dice to determine the outcome of an event (*e.g., whether or not a creature hits you in combat*). *Shadows of Malice* uses only standard 6-sided dice, but you will use those dice to generate random numbers in many different ranges.

Basic random rolls

You will regularly be called upon to generate random numbers by rolling a **d★** (range 0-1), **d2** (range 1-2), **d3** (range 1-3), **d4** (range 1-4), **d5** (range 1-5), or **d6** (range 1-6). The following table shows how to use one standard die (**1d6**) to make each of these rolls.

Die	Range	Outcome (based on 1d6 roll)
d★	0 or 1	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁⚂ = 0 ⚃⚄⚅ = 1
d2	1 or 2	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁⚂ = 1 ⚃⚄⚅ = 2
d3	1 to 3	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁ = 1 ⚂⚃ = 2 ⚄⚅ = 3
d4	1 to 4	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁⚂⚃ = pips shown ⚄⚅ = Re-roll
d5	1 to 5	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁⚂⚃⚄ = pips shown ⚅ = Re-roll
d6	1 to 6	Roll 1d6: ⚀⚁⚂⚃⚄⚅ = pips shown

Dice notation

We use the notation xdy to designate the sum of x-many, y-sided dice. For example, 1d6 denotes a single 6-sided die roll, whereas 3d2 denotes the sum of three 2-sided dice.

Using the d★

Rolling a d★ is essentially making an "activation roll" to see if something registers or not, such as an extra wound from +1d★ ⚔. A d★ has a 50/50 chance of failing (d★ = 0 on ⚀⚁⚂) or succeeding (d★ = 1 on ⚃⚄⚅). On average, 1d★ resolves to a value of ½.

Named and Modified Rolls

There are four types of special die rolls you'll make in *Shadows of Malice*: combat, luck, movement, and power rolls. An avatar's modified die roll is the final number after *any and all* adjustments have been applied to a die roll for abilities, effects, treasure items, and such. For example, suppose your avatar needs to roll a 4 or higher to make a luck roll and rolls a 2. If they had an item that gave them +2 to luck rolls and were under a blessing that gave them +1 to all die rolls, their modified roll would be 5 (2 roll + 2 item + 1 blessing) = 5 and they would succeed in the luck roll!

Named Roll	Acronym	Explanation of the Die Roll
Combat Roll	**CR**	A **CR** is a 1d6 roll that determines whether or not a combatant scores a hit on their opponent. After adjustments are made, a combatant's modified **CR** must underline exceed their opponent's modified **CR** to score a hit on their opponent.
Luck Roll	**LR**	A **LR** is a 1d6 roll that determines whether or not an avatar succeeds in attempting to avoid an effect, discover treasure, evade an attack, or provoke an encounter. To be successful, the avatar's modified **LR** must exceed a specified target number (*e.g., to make a LR against a 3, you need a modified die roll higher than 3*). To make a successful **LR** against a 1d6, you roll one die for your **LR** and a second die for the target number, then check to see if your modified **LR** exceeds the target number. When a band of avatars [11] makes a **LR**, the band chooses one of their members to make the roll and uses that avatar's modifiers.
Movement Roll	**MR**	A **MR** is a 2d6 roll that determines your avatar's movement points (MP). Your avatar's movement points are calculated by: MP = larger of the two dice rolled + N where N is the total number of avatars in your avatar's band (*including your avatar*).
Power Roll	**PR**	A **PR** is a 1d6 roll that determines whether a creature uses a special ability or succeeds in a difficult feat. A creature's **PR** is successful if it does not exceed its power.

Banding

A band is a group of avatars working together. Typically, that group consists of two or more avatars; however, a lone avatar is a band with one member. Rules written in terms of bands also apply to individual avatars with the understanding that the band size is one.

Multiple avatars banded together sacrifice movement for cooperative actions and combat advantages. Two or more avatars in the same terrain hex form a band by declaring that they are forming a band. An avatar in the same terrain hex as an existing band may join that band by stating that they are joining it. An avatar may leave a band at any time by stating that they are no longer part of the band. Forming and joining bands do not count as actions and may be done at any time during the Players' Turn, except when resolving events that affect the band as a whole (*e.g., resolving a fate card that affects the entire band*).

Movement

Terrain

In addition to the Shadow Realm, there are four large terrain maps that represent the *Realm of Aethos*. Each terrain map is subdivided into smaller hexagons called terrain hexes or simply hexes. Each hex is covered by one or more of eight terrain types that designate the area topography. Each terrain type has a number associated with it that represents the number of movement points (MP) your avatar's band must pay to <u>enter</u> the hex. You may move onto half hexes along a map's edge. If a hex or half-hex contains multiple terrain types, use the dominant terrain type to determine the MP cost to enter the hex or half-hex.

MP	Terrain to be entered
1/2	Bridges, roads
1	Paths, plains, water
2	Deserts, forests, hills
3	Mountains, Swamps, Wilds

Determining your MP

You determine your MP by making a movement roll (**MR**) each time you use an action for movement [11]. To make a **MR**, roll 2d6 and take the larger number, then add to it the number of avatars in your band (including your avatar). If your avatar were banded with one other avatar, you would roll 2d6, take the larger number, and add 2 to that number. The final, adjusted number is your avatar's MP. Bands move as a single unit and may only move if every member uses an action to move and makes a separate **MR**. A band's MP is the lowest of its members' MP.

> Example. Your avatar is in a band with two other avatars, For your **MR**, you roll a 2 and a 5. Your MP = 5 (*larger of the two dice*) + 3 (*avatars in your band*) = 8. If the other two avatars had 7 MP and 11 MP, your band would have 7 MP (*lowest of all members' MP*).

Moving Over Land

Avatars must pay MP to enter a terrain hex adjacent to their current hex. More treacherous or unsafe terrains require higher MP costs to enter. For example, it costs 3 MP to enter a mountain hex, so an avatar must pay 3 MP to move from their current hex into an adjacent mountain hex. If the hex you wish to move into is a mix of terrains, use the dominant terrain (e.g., *if the hex is mostly forest with some mountains, treat it as a forest hex*). An avatar may not move into a hex if they can't pay its entry cost. Avatars pay the terrain MP cost to enter a hex containing a bridge, Gate, path, or road; however, once on a bridge, path, or road, normal MP costs for the route apply (e.g., *1/2 MP per hex along a bridge or road*).

Avatars are not required to move, stay with their band, or use all of their MP. Avatars may freely join or leave bands as they travel. If an avatar joins a band, the band's MP become the lesser of its remaining MP and the remaining MP of the joining avatar. If an avatar leaves their band before the band moves, the avatar has their individual MP and the band recalculates its MP based on its remaining members. An avatar that leaves a band after the band has moved has MP equal to the band's remaining MP at the time of the avatar's departure.

Moving Over Water

Water is impassable without a watercraft obtained at a launch 🚣, and avatars may only enter a water hex by passing through a hex containing a launch or by joining a band that already has a watercraft. Once on a water hex, your avatar is operating a watercraft and may move through adjacent water hexes. Avatars traveling in a band are on the same watercraft. Avatars in different watercraft that occupy the same hex may choose to band together and consolidate their watercraft (e.g., *one group joins the other group's vessel and lets their vessel drift away*) or reassign their band members among the different watercraft. An avatar moving into a land hex from a watercraft adjacent to land leaves their watercraft; an avatar on a land hex adjacent to a manned watercraft may board the watercraft and join the band operating it. Unmanned watercraft vanish or drift away and may not be "picked up" where they were "left."

Moving Through Gates

Gates ✶ are teleportation devices. An avatar entering a hex with a Gate may elect to use that Gate (entry Gate) and continue their movement from, or end their movement on, another Gate hex (exit Gate). An avatar using a Gate must choose their exit Gate and make a **LR** against a 2. If successful, they emerge from their chosen exit Gate; otherwise, their exit Gate is randomly determined (*and may be their entry Gate*). An avatar's relocation from entry to exit Gate is instantaneous, costs 0 MP, does not count as an action, and the avatar may continue their movement from the exit Gate hex with remaining MP. An avatar may use their exit Gate as an entry Gate for another teleportation immediately following the last. This is instantaneous, costs 0 MP, does not count as an action, and requires another **LR** for the new exit Gate. Each teleportation after the first during the **same turn** drains 1 life token from the avatar [20]. Bands choose one member to pick the exit Gate and make the required **LR**.

> Example. Your avatar has 8 MP and uses 2 to move onto a hex with a Gate. You decide to use the Gate: you select an exit Gate and make **LR** against a 2. You roll a 4 and succeed, and step out of your chosen exit Gate. Your avatar may end its movement or use some or all of their remaining 6 MP to continue moving.

Mastery and Fate

Mastery

As a being of Light, your avatar is able to shape the power of Light in a unique manner determined by its mastery. Your avatar will always have access to their primary mastery ability (*top part*) but must invoke a soulshard [25] of the same color as their mastery to use their secondary mastery ability (*bottom part*). For example, **Blood Caller** is a red mastery. An avatar with this mastery would always get +2d★ ⚬. If the avatar invoked a red soulshard, they could use their secondary ability to give any member of their band (*including themself*) +1d★ ⚬ for a turn (i.e., *until the end of the Players' Turn*).

Blood Caller

+2d★ ⚬

For 1 turn, target avatar in band gains +1d★ to all melee wounds it delivers.
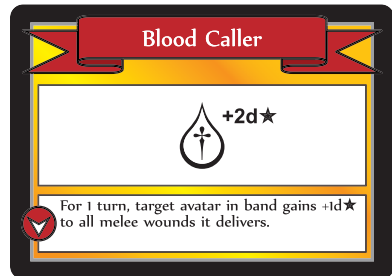
Determining Fate

Your fate is determined every time you make a 2d6 movement roll. If you roll doubles on your **MR**, you must draw a fate card.

Fate Cards

The deck of fate cards is called the **Fate Trove**. An avatar may hold only one fate card at any time. If an avatar has a fate card when required to draw a new one, their existing fate card cannot be used and must be immediately exchanged for a new fate card.

Fate cards are not transferable or tradable. Invoking a fate card is instantaneous, does not require an action, and does not require the invoking avatar to defend if they are engaged in combat. Unless stated otherwise on the card, a fate card will only affect the avatar holding the card. There are three types of fate cards: instant, invoked, lasting.

Instant	Instant cards have their effect the instant they are drawn. Once the effect is resolved, they are returned to the Fate Trove
Invoked	An invoked card has its effect when the player chooses to use it. A player may use an invoked fate card at any time except when required to draw a new fate card. Once invoked, the effect is immediate and the card is returned to the Fate Trove.
Lasting	Lasting fate cards take immediate effect and their effect continues as long as the player holds the card.

Creatures

There are no "standard monsters" in *Shadows of Malice.* Your avatars will find no goblins, no trolls, no dragons. Every creature they encounter will be an aberration of Aethos's natural flora and fauna, twisted and corrupted by Xulthûl's malevolence. What was once a shrub might be transformed into a vampiric vine. What was once a bear might be mutated into a misshapen hulk with tusks and acid breath. Each creature will be unique and generated at the moment it is encountered.

When an avatar encounters a creature, you'll roll three dice: 1d6 to determine the creature's type, 1d6 to determine the creature's power, and 1d6 to determine whether the creature has any special abilities.

Creature Types

Arboran	All creatures derived or constructed from plants, vines, trees, or vegetal material.
Avian	All feathered, winged, warm-blooded, and oviparous creatures.
Ichthyic	All fish, cephalopods, mollusks, crustaceans, eels, and cold-blooded aquatic creatures.
Mammal	All warm-blooded, hairy, lactating animals such as canines, felines, primates, equines, humanoids, and the like.
Protean	All creatures derived or constructed from slime, ooze, mold, or fungus.
Reptilid	All cold-blooded, land adapted reptiles and amphibians, lizards, serpents, crocodilians, turtles, frogs, and the like.
Sectoid	All insects, arachnids, arthropods, and like creatures with exoskeletons, segmented bodies, or antennae.
Terrovan	All creatures derived or constructed from sand, earth, mineral, rock, masonry, metal, gemstones, and the like.

Creature Type

This is the basic type of plant, animal, or element the creature was before it was distorted by Xulthûl's corruption. A creature with "mammal" as its type might have been a squirrel, or dog, or a bear, or...? As the player encountering the creature, it's your job to advance the story by choosing its starting form within its type. If you want it to be a wombat, it's a wombat! Creature type also has an impact during game play. Some treasure items are keyed to be more effective against specific types, and some types are more likely than others to be found in certain terrains.

Creature Power

A creature's power determines its fighting and wounding bonuses, life points, and general level of threat. Power 1 creatures are generally small or relatively fragile, whereas higher power creatures are larger, more intimidating, and harder to defeat. A power 1 arboran might be a large and aggressive rosebush; a power 3 arboran might be an enormous wall of vines with gigantic thorns! A creature's ability to use certain special abilities and succeed in certain feats is also based on its power [10].

Creature Abilities

A creature's abilities include any special capabilities it possesses, such as poison, life drain, and so on. Some abilities are always active, some affect a specific target, and some require activation. Multiple abilities may be used simultaneously (*save for the restriction on activated abilities*).

The shuffled ability cards comprise the **Ability Trove**. When you encounter a creature that has abilities, draw a card from the Ability Trove for each ability the creature possesses. The card will describe the ability and list any modifiers the ability grants the creature. (*Maybe that puny power 1 squirrel is actually undead*.)

Each ability is assigned a color, noted by the card's banner and a unique icon for players that have difficulty with colors. When the encounter ends, return the cards to the Ability Trove by placing them on the bottom of the trove. Some abilities have a shuffle icon in the lower right corner. When an ability with the icon is returned to the trove, shuffle the trove.

Ferocity

The creature is preternaturally aggressive and attacks with astounding brutality and relentlessness. A creature of power X gains:

+Xd★
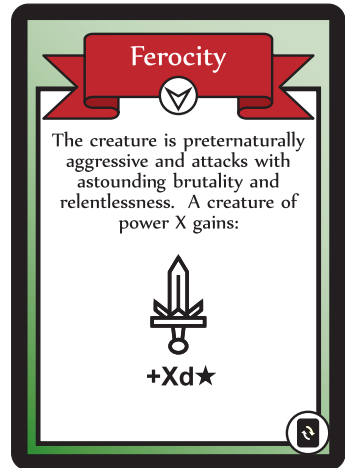
If an ability requires activation, the creature must make a successful power roll (**PR**) to use the ability (*e.g., Death Gaze*). If it fails its **PR**, the ability does not trigger and the creature engages in normal single combat without the ability. If it succeeds in its **PR**, the creature will use the ability and defend that combat phase [23]. Creatures may only use one activated ability per combat phase: if a creature has multiple activated abilities, randomly determine which one it will use each combat phase.

Creature Generation

Players use the Creature Generator to determine the type, power, and abilities of a creature when they encounter it. As an example, suppose an avatar ends their movement on a forest hex and successfully provokes an encounter. The player rolls 3d6: in this case, a white die for the creature's type, a gray die for its power, and a black die for its abilities. Suppose the player rolls ⚁⚅⚃. The Creature Generator shows ...

⚁ ... the creature is a **reptilid**: the encounter took place in a forest hex, and a "2" on a forest hex corresponds to a reptilid.

⚅ ... the creature is **power 3**: It has 6 life tokens, +2 to **CR**s, and delivers an extra +2d★ physical wounds ⚶ when it hits an opponent. This roll would be increased by 1 to 6+1=7 in a lair (🐾 🌕).

⚃ ... the creature has **one ability**. This roll is reduced by 1 for each *revealed Light Well* 🌞 and increased by 1 for each *revealed Dark Well* 🌑 on the terrain map where the encounter occurs. Draw a card from the Ability Trove to determine the ability. Draw a second card if the creature has two abilities, and so on.

Creature Generator

① Creature Nature (Roll 1d6)

	⚀⚁⚂	⚃⚄	⚅
Plains	Avian	Mammal	Arboran
Water	Ichthyic	Ichthyic	Reptilid
Desert	Sectoid	Avian	Terrovan
Forest	Reptilid	Arboran	Protean
Hills	Mammal	Terrovan	Sectoid
Mountains	Terrovan	Sectoid	Avian
Wild	Arboran	Protean	Mammal
Swamp	Protean	Reptilid	Ichthyic

+1 🐾🌕

② Creature Power (Roll 1d6)

	⚀⚁⚂	⚃⚄	⚅+	🌕
Power	1	2	3	4	5
+ to CR 💧	0	1	2	3	4
+ to Wounds 🔴	0	1d★	2d★	3d★	4d★
Life Tokens 🟢	2	4	6	8	10

for each revealed Well on the map

− 1 x 🌞
+ 1 x 🌑

③ Creature Abilities (Roll 1d6)

	⚀⚁⚂	⚃⚄	⚅+	🌕
No. of Abilities	0	1	2	2

🌕 = Stronghold Guardian

🌕 denotes a stronghold Guardian.

Creature Lairs

A lair, noted on the maps by the symbol 🐾, is a location ideally suited as a den or resting place for a creature. Lairs are <u>always occupied</u>. When avatars enter a lair, they will immediately be attacked by the creature that currently lives there. If an avatar withdraws [24], defeats the creature, or drives it off, a new creature will claim the lair when the avatars leave (i.e., *the lair will be occupied the next time it is entered*).

All lairs are stocked at the start of the game and marked with a stocked lair token 🌕. This indicates that the current resident has dwelt there long

enough to defeat hapless adventurers and amass treasure. A stocked lair <u>always</u> holds a treasure item. When you defeat a creature in a stocked lair, remove the 😡 token and draw a card from the Treasure Trove to see what you find. When you defeat a creature in an unstocked lair 🐾, you may find a treasure item but there is no guarantee [28].

Creature Encounters

An avatar will always encounter a creature upon entering a hex with a lair (🐾 😡) [16]. Two or more avatars cannot enter a lair hex together to engage a creature unless they are in a band. Avatars may provoke an encounter in a non-lair hex by making a successful **LR** against a 4. This requires an action and may only be attempted once per terrain hex per turn, and only by the first avatar (*or band*) to enter the hex. If successful, the avatars will encounter a creature that will immediately attack. Use the Creature Generator to construct the creature [16].

Guardians, Shadows, Xulthûl

Guardians are forces of nature, Shadows are manifestations of Xulthûl's malice, and Xulthûl is the Lord of Shadow. Guardians and Shadows are insubstantial entities that take physical form only for combat. Xulthûl remains an existential force unless its Shadows can form a skin for it to use to enter Aethos.

Guardians (Revealing Wells)

Guardians are insubstantial entities bound to defend the Wells of the Ancients hidden within the strongholds. Only strongholds that contain an unrevealed Well will have a Guardian. When an avatar enters a stronghold with an unrevealed Well, that stronghold's Guardian will use the local flora or fauna to create a physical form for itself to ward off the avatar. Use the Creature Generator to determine a terrain-appropriate creature type for the Guardian's physical form. The column 🌐 on the Creature Generator lists a Guardian's attributes. They are:

Type	Roll as appropriate for the terrain.
Power	4
+CR	+3
+Wounds	+3d★
Life tokens	8
No. Abilities	2

Guardians do not respawn when defeated. When a Guardian is destroyed, immediately reveal the Well it defended (*flip the stronghold token over*).

Shadows

Shadows are wispy manifestations of Xulthûl's malevolence, phantoms of pure malice given pseudo-substance by the power of Xulthûl's wickedness. Shadows exist for a singular purpose: to find and reveal a Light Well, so that they might use the power of that Well to thicken into a skin for their master.

The number of avatars in play determines a Shadow's power, number of abilities, and spawning life tokens (see table). When a Shadow enters Aethos, it has only its spawning life tokens plus any it managed to accrue during its time in the Shadow Realm [32]. Shadows in Aethos cannot recover lost life tokens.

Shadow characteristics

	Number of avatars in play					
	1 or 2	3	4	5	6	7+
Power	3	3	3	4	4	4
No. of Abilities	1	2	2	1	2	2
Spawning Life	1	1	2	2	2	3

Shadows remain insubstantial unless challenged by avatars. If an avatar enters a Shadow's terrain hex, the Shadow will manifest a physical form using the local flora or fauna and attack the avatar [33]. Use the Creature Generator to determine a creature type for the Shadow's physical form appropriate for the terrain:

Type	Roll as appropriate for the terrain.
Power	*see table*
+CR	by Power on Creature Generator
+Wounds	by Power on Creature Generator
Life tokens	Spawned life tokens plus any life tokens they accrue in the Shadow Realm.
No. Abilities	*see table*

Xulthûl

Xulthûl is the Lord of Shadow, a cosmic being banished to the Shadow Realm, a malevolent entity without substance that feeds off the fears and dark desires of mortals. If Xulthûl's Shadows can form a skin for their master and bring Xulthûl into Aethos, the power and number of abilities of its physical form will be determined by the number of avatars in the game. The more avatars, the greater Xulthûl's manifestation (see table).

Xulthûl's characteristics

	Number of avatars in play					
	1 or 2	3	4	5	6	7+
Power	4	4	4	5	5	5
No. of Abilities	2	3	3	2	2	3

Xulthûl's physical form will be derived from the local flora or fauna where a Shadow thickens into its skin. Use the Creature Generator to determine a creature type for Xulthûl's physical form appropriate for the terrain. Xulthûl's other attributes will be based on its power:

Type	Roll as appropriate for the terrain.
Power	*see table*
+CR	by Power on Creature Generator
+Wounds	by Power on Creature Generator
Life tokens	by Power on Creature Generator
No. Abilities	*see table*

Living and Dying

Life and Life Tokens

Each avatar begins play with 5 life tokens ♥. These tokens designate the robustness of the avatar's physical incarnation in Aethos. Creature life tokens are based on the creature's power and determined when it is generated [16]. Avatars and creatures lose life to wounds and drains.

Wounds

Wounds are bodily damage sustained from battle, traps, fate, and such. A wound results from physical or energy damage. All wounds avatars deliver and receive are physical unless specifically stated otherwise. The notable exception is Shadows: *all wounds delivered by Shadows count as drains!* [20]

Physical Wounds

Physical wounds ✝ are caused by trauma of a bodily nature, such as being cut by a knife or bashed with a club or torn by claws.

Energy Wounds

Energy wounds ◇ are caused by non-physical sources of bodily harm, such as electricity or fire. Energy wounds will be of a specific type (acid ✳, cold ❄, electricity ⚡, fire 🔥, or poison ☠) or untyped ◇. Untyped energy is any raw, non-physical power that is not one of these five energy types.

Wound Shields

A physical shield +X ✝ reduces by X the physical wounds an avatar would suffer. An avatar with +1 ✝ taking 3 physical wounds would only take 2 wounds. An energy shield +X ▢ reduces by X the energy wounds an avatar would suffer. If an energy shield bears one or more energy-type icons (*e.g.,* ❄⚡), its defense is restricted to those energy types (*e.g., cold and electricity*) and will not provide any defense against other energy types. Untyped energy shields provide defense against all forms of energy.

Physical and Energy Wound and Shield Icons

⚕	Physical wound	🛡	Physical shield
💥	Energy wound (acid)	🛡	Energy shield (acid)
❄	Energy wound (cold, ice)	🛡	Energy shield (cold, ice)
⚡	Energy wound (electricity)	🛡	Energy shield (electricity)
☄	Energy wound (heat, fire)	🛡	Energy shield (heat, fire)
☠	Energy wound (poison)	🛡	Energy shield (poison)
💧	Energy wound (untyped)	🛡	Energy shield (untyped)

Example. If your avatar suffers 3 ⚕ and has +1 🛡, they would take 2 wounds. If your avatar gets hit for 4 ❄ and has +3 💥, they suffer 4 wounds since an acid shield will not protect them from cold! Had your avatar possessed +2 🛡, they would have taken 2 wounds.

Drains

Drains are direct depletion of a creature's life force. Drains deplete an avatar's radiance tokens first [30], then deplete the avatar's life tokens after all of their radiance tokens have been depleted. This removes the avatar's ability to channel Light before depleting their life essence. Physical and energy shields do not provide any defense against drains. Unless an avatar has an item or effect that specifically states otherwise, losses from drains cannot be mitigated or prevented.

Tracking Wounds and Drains

When an avatar takes wounds, flip over one of the avatar's life tokens for each wound sustained. Orient the token back with the word "Wound" right-side-up 🔴 to designate the loss as a wound. Wounds remain until healed. When an avatar loses a radiance token to a drain, return the token to the Radiance Pool [30], radiance side up 🌀. When an avatar loses a life token to a drain, flip the token over and orient the token back with the word "Drain" right side up 🔴 to show the loss as a drain. Drains cannot be healed and remain until restored.

Regaining Lost Tokens

Avatars must use an action to recover. All avatars have a base 1 point of recovery (♡), which may be increased or decreased by various items and effects during the game.

When recovering, an avatar allocates each point of their recovery to healing wounds or restoring drains. For example, an avatar with 3 points of recovery could dedicate 2 points to healing wounds and 1 point to restoring drains. Each point of recovery allocated to healing wounds will heal one wound: flip one 🔴 token back to ♡. Each point of recovery allocated to restoring drains will restore 1d★ drains: roll 1d★ and on a 1 you may either flip one 🔴 to ♡ or you may regain 1 drained radiance token [30]. It is more difficult to restore drains than it is to heal wounds.

Avatars recovering on city hexes get +1 ♡. Avatars recovering on mystic hexes get +2 ♡ [31].

Shadows in Aethos cannot heal wounds and cannot restore drains.

Forming a New Body

Avatars cannot die but their bodies in Aethos can be destroyed. When an avatar loses all their life tokens to wounds and/or drains, their physical form can no longer contain their essence and the avatar Returns to Light in a flare of radiance that consumes their physical form and all of their soulshards. Items other than soulshards may or may not survive. Roll 1d6 for each of the avatar's items when they Return to Light and refer to the table (right) to determine whether the item is destroyed, remains in Aethos, or remains with the avatar in their new incarnation. Items that remain in Aethos may be claimed by the avatar's surviving band members. At the end of the turn, return any unclaimed items that remain in Aethos to their appropriate troves.

Die Roll	Consequence
⚀	Item is destroyed. Return the item to its trove.
⚁ ⚂	Item remains in Aethos. The item must be claimed by a surviving band member or returned to its trove.
⚃ ⚄ ⚅	Item remains with the avatar through reincarnation.

If their physical form in Aethos is destroyed, an avatar must spend their next two actions incarnating a new body.

Newly reincarnated avatars return to play on a random Gate hex with:

- 5 life tokens ♡,
- a new, randomly determined mastery,
- 3 soulshards matching the avatar's new mastery color and 3 colorless soulshards,
- items that remained with them through their Return to Light,
- one radiance token, drawn at random from the radiance pool, for each revealed Light Well.

Combat

Triggering Combat

Combat instantly starts when an avatar (*or multiple avatar band*) either provokes an encounter [17] or moves into a terrain hex that contains a lair, a stronghold with an unrevealed Well, or a Shadow.

Pre-Combat

Before active combat begins, each avatar involved may use a book, scroll, or potion to prepare for the fight. These are pre-combat maneuvers. Creatures must survive pre-combat to enter active combat.

Active Combat

After pre-combat, combat progresses in a series of phases. Each phase, both combatants make a combat roll (**CR**) to determine if one lands a blow and wounds the other. It doesn't matter how long a fight takes: it will be wholly contained in the action of the avatar that triggered the combat.

During a combat phase, an avatar may either be an active combatant or perform one of two non-combat maneuvers:

- withdraw from combat,
- use a potion, book, or scroll.

Active combatants directly engage the enemy. Avatars performing non-combat maneuvers are inactive combatants: they are doing things other than fighting and are considered to be defending [23] for the phase.

Hitting and Wounding

Each combat phase, the combatants exchanging blows make their **CR** and modify the roll to take into account all of their applicable bonuses or penalties. The combatant with the higher modified **CR** hits and delivers a base 1 physical wound (⚕) to their opponent. The wounds received by the opponent may be modified by creature power, items, fate cards, and such (*e.g., a power 2 creature increases wounds they deliver by 1d★*). In the event of a tie, neither combatant hits nor wounds the other.

Wounds from potions, books, and scrolls are delivered before blows are exchanged each phase, so creatures must survive these attacks before they can engage in combat.

As noted earlier, all wounds from Shadows count as drains [20].

Single and Joint Combat

If a lone avatar triggers combat, that avatar will engage their opponent in single combat. If a band of two or more avatars triggers combat, the entire band will engage their opponent in joint combat.

Single Combat
The avatar and creature both make a **CR** each combat phase and apply their respective modifiers to determine their modified **CR** for that phase.

Joint Combat
Each combat phase, the creature randomly selects one of the avatars to attack and rolls its **CR**. The targeted avatar rolls Xd6, where X is the number of *non-defending* avatars engaged in the joint combat, then takes the highest die rolled as their base **CR**. The targeted avatar and the creature then apply their respective modifiers to determine their modified **CR** for that combat phase.

Using the d★ in Combat

For combat, there are four methods to roll a d★. Each method offers a different trade-off between *speed of combat* and *variability of outcomes*. We will look at each method in the context of a fight between an avatar with +3d★ to hit and a creature with +2d★ to hit.

Method 1. Halfsies. Count each d★ as ½ and round up. In our example, the avatar would have 3d★=+½+½+½=+1½, which rounds to +2. The creature would have 2d★=+½+½=+1. This method removes all d★ variability but greatly speeds up combat.

Method 2. Lockdown. Make all d★ rolls one time at the start of combat and hold them fixed for the entire combat. If the avatar rolls ⚀⚂⚃, their 3d★=0+1+1=2 for the entire combat. If the creature rolls ⚄⚅, their 2d★=0+0=0 for the entire combat. This method accounts for d★ variability initially, then locks down the values to speed up combat.

Method 3. Net. In general, roll only the *net number* of d★s remaining after adding up all bonus d★s and subtracting all penalty d★s. For **CR**s, the combatant with fewer d★ **CR** bonuses rolls no d★ and the combatant with more d★ **CR** bonuses rolls only the difference. In our example, the avatar has +3d★ and the creature has +2d★: the difference is +1d★ in the avatar's favor, so the creature would get +0d★ to their **CR** and the avatar would get +1d★ to their **CR**. This method increases variability, but slows combat.

Method 4. All. Each combatant rolls all their d★s all the time. This is the same as Method 2 without locking the values for the entire combat. This method greatly increases variability and significantly slows down combat.

Defending and Evading

Avatars and creatures are defending if they engage in non-combat maneuvers or activities other than active, physical combat (*e.g., using a gaze attack, reading a scroll*).

A defending combatant may still be targeted by an opponent and may still sustain wounds and drains. Defending combatants make their **CR** at **-1** and deal no wounds even if they out-roll their opponent. Any abilities a combatant possesses that trigger on "hit" or "wound" do not trigger if that combatant is defending [24].

Some abilities afford an avatar a chance to dodge or resist their effects (*e.g., parasitic*). To evade an effect, an avatar must make a successful **LR** against the creature's **power**. If the **LR** is successful, the ability does not affect the avatar. Avatars that are already defending get a +1 to their evasion **LR**. Banded avatars must make evasion attempts individually.

Immunities

During play, avatars and creatures may acquire immunity to abilities and effects of a certain **color**. The symbol for immunity is a shield adorned with a banner and icon that correspond to the color of the immunity. Immunity to black would look like this. There are two important rules governing immunities: immunity is *protective*, and immunity does *not protect* against *typed* energy.

Immunity is Protective

Immunity to a color protects a target from an effect of that color, it does not negate abilities conferred by that color. For example, an avatar's will render them impervious to targeted black abilities like "Life Drain," but will not negate abilities granted to a creature by the black ability "Lycanthrope." Similarly, will afford full protection from a creature's green "Enfeebling" ability, but will not prevent a creature from regaining lost life by way of its green "Regeneration" ability.

Immunity is Not Protective Against Typed Energy

Immunity to a color does not provide protection against typed energies created by sources of that color. An avatar with would not be protected from wounds caused by a creature using the red ability "Area Attack" to breathe acid. The avatar would need to be protected from the acid attack. If the energy is untyped, the immunity will provide full protection.

Effect Triggers

Abilities and effects that trigger on a "hit" will activate whenever the creature possessing the ability scores a hit on its opponent, regardless of whether or not their target sustains any wounds. Effects that trigger on a "wound" only activate when the target sustains at least one wound.

Futile Combat

Combat is futile for a combatant if it is impossible for them to wound their opponent. Creatures engaged in futile combat make a **PR** each combat phase: if successful, the creature realizes the combat is futile and will take appropriate action (*flee or reform*) the next combat phase.

Leaving Combat

Creatures will only leave combat if they recognize it as futile. Normal creatures will flee and disappear. Guardians and Shadows only leave combat temporarily to reform a new incarnation before continuing the fight. Avatars may withdraw from combat as a non-combat maneuver.

Withdrawing Avatars

An avatar using a non-combat maneuver to withdraw from combat immediately leaves combat and relocates to a random adjacent, non-water terrain hex. If the avatar wishes to withdraw to a specific

adjacent hex, they must make a **LR** against their opponent's power. If the **LR** is successful, the avatar moves to the chosen hex; if not, the avatar cannot disengage from combat that phase and must wait until the next phase to try again. Avatars must withdraw from combat individually and cannot withdraw as bands.

Reforming Guardians

When a Guardian recognizes it is engaged in futile combat, it will reform. During the combat phase following its recognition of futility, it will defend; at the end of that combat phase it will form a new body by using the Creature Generator to determine a new, terrain-appropriate creature type for itself and draw an appropriate number of new abilities. Wounds and drains it already received will remain with it in its new form.

If all the avatars withdraw, the Guardian will return to an intangible state and recover completely. When the avatars again enter the stronghold hex it defends, the Guardian will take on a new physical form healed of all wounds and with all drains restored.

Reforming Shadows

When a Shadow recognizes it is engaged in futile combat, it will reform in the same manner as a Guardian (above). The only difference is that Shadows in Aethos never recover any lost life token. All wounds and drains the Shadow received will remain with it in its new form.

Soulshards

What are Soulshards?

A soulshard (or shard) is a crystallized portion of a creature's life energy, harvested from the creature at the moment of death.

Getting Soulshards

When an avatar defeats a non-Shadow creature or a Guardian, they may harvest (draw forth) a portion of the creature's fading life essence in the form of soulshards. An avatar may harvest Xd$\star$ + Y soulshards from a creature with X-many life tokens and Y-many abilities. The Xd$\star$ soulshards will be colorless, and the Y soulshards will match the color of the creature's abilities. For example, an avatar defeating a creature with 4 life tokens, 1 yellow ability, and 1 red ability would harvest 4d$\star$ colorless soulshards, 1 yellow soulshard, and 1 red soulshard.

Soulshards may be harvested only once from a creature and must be harvested immediately upon its defeat. If a creature is defeated by a band of avatars, its shards must be harvested by one of the band members prior to making any changes to the composition of the band. Soulshards may not be harvested from Shadows.

Invoking Soulshards

An avatar may invoke a soulshard at any time for their own benefit or the benefit of any other avatar in the game. Invocation is instantaneous, does not require an action, and fully consumes the shard (*return the invoked shard to the common pool of soulshards*). Avatars invoking soulshards in combat are not required to defend and may engage in active combat. Each soulshard must be invoked for a specific purpose declared at the time of its invocation (see below).

Colorless Soulshards may be invoked to:

Activate a mastery	Some secondary mastery abilities require a colorless soulshard to activate.
Attract aggression	During combat, an avatar may invoke a colorless soulshard to force the creature to attack them rather than the creature's chosen target. An avatar may only draw a creature's aggression to themselves with a colorless soulshard. They may not redirect it to another avatar.
Modify a die roll	An avatar may invoke a colorless soulshard to modify any one **CR**, **LR**, or **MR** made by itself or *any other avatar in the game* before the roll is made. The benefiting avatar gains +X in their favor to the roll for each soulshard so invoked, where $X = 1$ if the benefiting avatar is banded with the invoking avatar and $X = 1d\star$ otherwise.

Colored Soulshards may be invoked to:

Activate a mastery	Some secondary mastery abilities require a specific color of soulshard to activate.
Modify a die roll	An avatar may invoke a colored soulshard to modify any one **CR**, **LR**, or **MR** made by itself or *any other avatar in the game* before the roll is made. The benefiting avatar gains +X in their favor to the roll for each soulshard so invoked, where $X = 1$ if the benefiting avatar is banded with the invoking avatar and $X = 1d\star$ otherwise.
	For **CR**s and **LR**s in combat, this benefit is <u>doubled</u> if the color of the invoked soulshard matches the color of *at least one* of the creature's abilities (*e.g.,$3d\star$ becomes $6d\star$*).

Soulshard Limitations

Avatars may trade soulshards and there is no limit to the number of soulshards an avatar may possess. Outside combat, an avatar may invoke any number of shards each turn. During combat, an avatar may only invoke 1 + X soulshards per combat phase, where X is the total number of underlined Light Wells (*e.g., if 2 Light Wells have been revealed, each avatar may invoke up to 1 + 2 = 3 soulshards per combat phase*).

Treasure Items

Durable and Consumable Items

Durable items such as armor and weaponry remain in play until the item is abandoned or destroyed. Consumable items such as potions and scrolls are destroyed when used and returned to their respective troves.

Item Types

The Treasure Trove contains five item types: jewelry ⬤, clothing ⬤, armor and shields ⬤, books and scrolls ⬤, and weaponry ⬤. There are also potions in a separate Potion Trove (*mini-cards*). Potions, books, and scrolls are consumable items; all others are durable items.

Each item card has two parts that show the **base effect** granted by the item, as well as any **condition-specific effects** that are cumulative with the item's base effect. For example, the *Fossilbranch Staff* is a weapon ⬤ that grants +1d★ ⬤ in all cases, and an additional +1d2 ⬤ when used against terrovans and arborans. Potion cards note any special use requirements (*e.g., throw into a Gate*) as well as the potion effect and effect duration.

Fossilbranch Staff

+1d★

Against Terrovans and Arborans, the avatar gains: +1d2
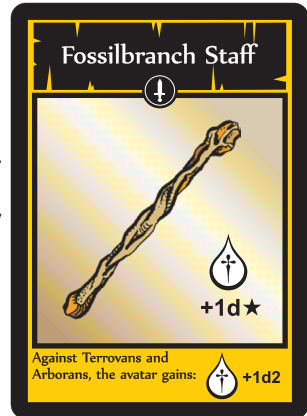
Acquiring Items

Other than an avatar's starting items and any items available from cities under the *Stewardship Option*, treasure items may only be acquired from lairs and strongholds. Shadows and creatures outside of lairs will never have treasure.

Stewardship Option

This is an optional way to play in which each city holds an item left in its trust by past avatars to be claimed by future avatars should they return to defend Aethos. When a city is revealed [31], the avatar revealing the city draws an item from the Treasure Trove to be the item left in the city's trust. The avatar gains that item.

Starting Items

Starting treasure is optional and intended to support the desired level of difficulty you want in your game. Some suggestions are:

Hard	Each avatar starts play with only its starting soulshards [7].
Challenging	In addition to starting soulshards, give each avatar a draw from the Potion Trove and allow each player to remove a stocked lair token 🐾 from a game map and give their avatar a draw from the Treasure Trove.
Easy	This is the same as challenging, but in addition reveal one Well on each game map and draw 1d2 potions and 1d2 items from the Treasure Trove for each Well you reveal. Distribute these items among the avatars. The consequences of the revealed Wells come into play immediately.

Treasure from Normal Creatures

Normal creatures are creatures that are not Guardians, Shadows, or Xulthûl. Normal creatures always yield soulshards [25] and will always have treasure when encountered in a stocked lair [16].

At the start of the game, all lair locations on all the game maps are covered with a stocked lair token 🐾. This identifies the lairs as all having a treasure item hidden inside them. When the creature in a stocked lair is defeated, the band defeating the creature draws one card from the Treasure Trove and removes the stocked lair token from the map. This reveals the lair icon beneath 🐾 and identifies the lair as unstocked. The location is still a lair, it is just no longer stocked with treasure, so avatars that defeat any creature that moves into that lair are not guaranteed to find a treasure item hidden inside. A band of avatars defeating a creature in an unstocked lair will only find treasure if they make a successful **LR** against a 5. Only one such **LR** is allowed per creature dispatched and it must be made before the band breaks up. A successful **LR** will allow the band to draw one card from the Treasure Trove.

Treasure from Guardians

Guardians always have treasure. When a band of avatars defeats a Guardian, the band gets 1d2 draws from the Treasure Trove and 1d2 draws from the Potion Trove and whatever soulshards they manage to harvest [25]. Strongholds 🏰 do not repopulate: once a Guardian is defeated and the Well it protected is revealed, the stronghold remains empty.

Treasure from Shadows

Shadows never have treasure and never yield soulshards.

Trading Items
When a band of avatars receives treasure items, they may allocate the items as they desire among the band members. Avatars in the same terrain hex may trade items at any time *except during combat*. No trades are allowed during combat. Avatars may trade items through Gates if each avatar is on a Gate hex and one of them is able to choose the other's Gate as their "exit Gate." Trading items doesn't require an action.

Item Limitations
An avatar may hold only <u>one</u> item of a given type at any time (*e.g., one weapon, one jewelry item*). Items of the same type have the same card color and item symbol. An avatar may hold <u>two</u> potions at any time, but they must be of <u>different</u> colors. If an avatar obtains an item of a type they already hold, they must either:

- return the new item to the Treasure Trove,
- keep the new item and return their existing item of the same type to the Treasure Trove,
- keep the new item and give their current item of the same type to a band member,
- give the new item to a band member.

Special Potion Limitations
If an avatar is under the effect of a potion and gains immunity to the color of that potion, the potion effect will be immediately nullified.

If an avatar consumes two or more potions in the same turn, each potion *after the first* will:

- drain a cumulative 1 life from the avatar (*i.e., the second potion drains 1 life, the third drains another 2 life, etc.*),
- nullify the effect of a prior potion of the same color (*e.g., if the avatar drinks a second red potion, it will negate the effect of a prior red potion*).

Radiance and Attuning
The Wells of the Ancients
When avatars defeat a Guardian and reveal the Well it protected, the Well will either be Light 🌼 or Dark 🌑. Revealed Light Wells grant the avatars radiance tokens and increase their ability to invoke soulshards, decrease Xulthûl's recovery, and reduce the chance that encountered creatures will have abilities. Dark Wells have been corrupted by Xulthûl's malice and are conduits of Shadow. Revealed Dark Wells increase Xulthûl's recovery and increase the chance that encountered creatures will have abilities.

Radiance Tokens

When a Light Well is revealed, its Light is refracted into 10 types of radiance and one complete set of 10 unique radiance tokens becomes active in the game. The 10 radiance tokens in a set are:

Combat: Add +1 to all **CR**s.

Energy Shield: Reduce total wounds sustained from all energy attacks by 1.

Physical Shield: Reduce total wounds sustained from all physical attacks by 1.

Movement: Add +2 to all band members' **MR**s.

Harvest: Add to harvests +2 soulshards of avatar's choice of allowable color.

Luck: Add +1 to all **LR**s.

Energy Surge: Increase by 1 the total wounds delivered by all energy attacks.

Physical Surge: Increase by 1 the total wounds delivered by all physical attacks.

Life: Count this token as +1 additional life token

Recovery: Add +1 to tokens recovered each turn.

Each time a set of radiance tokens is added to the game, place the full set face down on the table and have each avatar draw a token at random and place it face up by their mastery. The enhancement the avatar gains from their radiance token persists as long as they have the token. For example, if an avatar drew the Combat radiance token, they would gain +1 to their **CR** as long as they have the token. If an avatar drew the Physical Shield radiance token, they would reduce by 1 all physical wounds they receive for as long as they have the token.

Each avatar may have one radiance token per revealed Light Well. Radiance tokens are not transferable or tradable.

The Radiance Pool

After a Light Well is revealed and each avatar has randomly drawn their radiance token from the new set added to the game, the remaining radiance tokens are kept face down and form (or add to) a common bank called the radiance pool. When an avatar loses a radiance token to a drain, randomly turn one of their tokens face down and shuffle it into the radiance pool. When an avatar restores a drained radiance token [20], draw their restored token at random from the radiance pool.

If a revealed Light Well is made Dark:

- return all avatar radiance tokens to the radiance pool,
- take a complete set of 10 radiance tokens from the radiance pool and remove those tokens from the game,
- turn face down and shuffle all remaining radiance tokens in the radiance pool,
- draw for each avatar one radiance token from the radiance pool for each revealed Light Well in the game.

Attuning

An avatar on a terrain hex with a revealed Light Well may use the Well to attune their soulshards or attune their mastery.

Attuning soulshards converts colorless soulshards into colored ones that meet the requirements of the avatar's secondary mastery ability (*e.g., if your secondary mastery ability requires blue soulshards to activate, attuning will change your colorless soulshards into blue soulshards*). If the avatar's secondary mastery ability requires a colorless soulshard to activate, attuning will change the colorless soulshards into soulshards of any one color the avatar's choice (*you may choose a different color for each attuning*). Attuning soulshards requires **1 action**. You may attune as many or as few of your colorless soulshards as your wish.

Attuning a mastery heals an avatar of all of wounds, restores all drains, and replaces their mastery with a new, randomly determined one from the Mastery Trove (*return the avatar's old mastery to the trove*). Attuning a mastery requires **2 actions**.

Mystics and Cities

Revealing Mystics and Cities

Mystics are sages that tend the Gates on the edges of civilization. Cities are large, permanent settlements. Both offer services to avatars.

An avatar passing through or ending their movement on a terrain hex containing a mystic or city may reveal it by turning the token face up. This unveils the service the offered by that mystic or city. An avatar must be on the mystic's or city's hex to use its service and may only use that service once per action.

Mystic Services

Brew potions. All mystics can brew potions. To have a mystic brew you a potion, give the mystic 1 colored soulshard and then cut the Potion Trove. Reveal cards from the top of the Potion Trove until you find one that matches the color of the soulshard you gave the mystic. Keep that card and put all the other revealed cards on the bottom of the Potion Trove. The soulshard you gave the mystic is consumed in the brewing process.

Cleanse. A mystic with the cleanse ability will remove an avatar's curse. Return the curse card to the Fate Trove.

Heal. A mystic with the heal ability will heal all of an avatar's wounds. They cannot restore drained life tokens or lost radiance tokens.

Restore. A mystic with the restore ability will restore all of an avatar's drained life tokens and lost radiance tokens. They cannot heal wounds.

City Services

City of Alchemy. Your avatar may trade or acquire a potion. To trade, your avatar puts one of their potions up against one drawn at random from the Potion Trove and chooses which one of the two to take. To acquire, your avatar pays 2 colorless soulshards to the city, then cuts the Potion Trove and gets the top potion on the Potion Trove after the cut. Trading and acquiring a potion are different services.

City of Destiny. Your avatar may choose to draw a fate card. Normal fate card rules apply.

City of Gateways. Without needing a **LR**, your avatar may use any Gate to teleport to the City of Gateways or use the City of Gateways to teleport to any Gate or revealed city.

City of Life. Your avatar may heal all their wounds and recover all their drained life tokens. The city cannot restore drained radiance tokens.

City of Merchants. Avatar may offer one of their non-potion items for trade. The avatar puts the item up against one drawn at random from the Treasure Trove and chooses which one of the two to take.

City of Shards. Your avatar may trade 1 colored soulshard for either 2 colorless soulshards or 1 colored soulshard of their choice, or your avatar may trade 2 colorless soulshards for 1 colored soulshard of their choice.

The Shadows

The Shadows' Turn

The Shadows' Turn follows the Players' Turn and consists of two parts: events in the Shadow Realm followed by events in Aethos.

Events in the Shadow Realm

The first part of the Shadows' Turn takes place in the Shadow Realm, a pseudo-solid dreamspace of ill-intent. Events in the Shadow Realm proceed in the following order:

1. If there are any Gate Seals 🛇 on Shadow Gates ✪, remove one at random. Unsealed Shadow Gates are active. If there is a Shadow on a Shadow Gate when it becomes active, that Shadow will immediately enter Aethos on the Gate hex of a randomly determined terrain map that contains at least one unrevealed Well.

2. If there is a Shadow 💀 in the Shadow Realm:

    i. Add 1 life token to the Shadow.

    ii. Assign the numbers 1 through 6 to the hexes surrounding the Shadow's hex. The Shadow will move into one of these hexes based on a random die roll. Roll 1 black die and N-many white dice, where N is the number of revealed Light Wells. If <u>any</u> of the numbers rolled would move the Shadow into a hex with an active Shadow Gate, move the Shadow onto that hex. Otherwise, use the black die to determine which hex the Shadow moves into. If the Shadow would move off the land mass, it does not move.

    iii. If the Shadow is on the Spawning Pit, add 1 life token to it.

    iv. If the Shadow is on a sealed Shadow Gate, remove 1d2 life tokens from it (*remove it from the game if it ever has no life tokens*).

    v. If the Shadow is on an active Shadow Gate, remove it from the Shadow Realm and place it on the Gate hex of a randomly determined terrain map that contains at least one unrevealed Well.

3. If there is not a Shadow in the Shadow Realm, place a Shadow token on the Spawning Pit with life tokens equal to its Spawning Life [17].

Events in Aethos

The second part of the Shadows' Turn takes place in Aethos. Each Shadow in Aethos gets its own round to take one action: move or attempt to reveal a Well.

While in Aethos, Shadows:

- move 1d2 hexes per turn,
- move freely over water hexes,
- do not cause Guardians to manifest
- cannot recover lost life or drains,
- cannot use Gates. If a Shadow cannot reach a stronghold with an unrevealed Well without using a Gate, the Shadow will dissipate (*remove the Shadow token from the game*).
- dissipate if they lose all their life points (*remove the Shadow token from the game*).

If a Shadow is not in a stronghold hex with an unrevealed Well, it will move toward the nearest stronghold with an unrevealed Well by the shortest possible path. Shadows will not attack avatars if they pass through or end their movement on a hex occupied by avatars. If avatars move into a Shadow's hex, however, the Shadow will form a physical form and attack the avatars.

If a Shadow is in a stronghold hex with an unrevealed Well, the Shadow will use its action to attempt to reveal the Well. Roll 1d6 for the Shadow: if the die roll <u>exceeds</u> the number of life tokens the Shadow possesses, remove 1 life token from the Shadow; otherwise, reveal the Well. If the Well is Dark, the Shadow will move on to the next closest stronghold with an unrevealed Well on its next action. If it is a Light Well, the Shadow will render it Dark and congeal into a skin for Xulthûl!

Xulthûl

Xulthûl's Arrival

Xulthûl enters Aethos when one of its Shadows congeals into a skin for it to assume. If you are playing the **Thwart the Shadow** scenario, you immediately lose the game when this happens. If you are playing the **Preserve the Light** scenario, remove all Shadows in Aethos and in the Shadow Realm from the game, and stop spawning new Shadows.

The number of avatars in your game determines Xulthûl's power and number of abilities [18]. The terrain the Shadow was in when it thickened into Xulthûl's skin determines Xulthûl's creature type in Aethos. Use the Creature Generator [16] to find Xulthûl's creature type and life points, combat modifier, and wound modifier appropriate for its power. Unlike Shadows, Xulthûl cannot re-manifest its physical form: its body and abilities are assigned expressly and permanently to it once its skin congeals.

Xulthûl's Capabilities

While in Aethos, Xulthûl:

- moves 2d2 hexes per turn,
- moves freely over water hexes,
- does not cause Guardians to manifest,
- can recover lost life or drains,
- may use Gates and choose its exit Gate with a successful **PR**,
- has a base recovery of 2 + 1🩸 for every revealed Dark Well on its current terrain map - 1🩸 for every revealed Light Well on its current terrain map (*to a minimum of zero*),

Xulthûl's Turn

When Xulthûl enters Aethos, the **Shadows' Turn** becomes **Xulthûl's Turn**. Xulthûl gets 1 action per turn followed by a recovery at the end of its turn. Xulthûl will use its action to either move to a stronghold, attempt to reveal an unrevealed Well, or attempt to extinguish a Light Well.

Once in Aethos, Xulthûl will begin extinguishing revealed Light Wells, starting with the closest and proceeding to the next closest in sequence. If there are no revealed Light Wells, Xulthûl will move to the nearest stronghold with an unrevealed Well by the shortest path, using Gates as needed. If a Light Well is revealed while Xulthûl is traveling to a stronghold with an unrevealed Well, it will change its course and move to the revealed Light Well. If it passes through a terrain hex containing a city or a mystic, roll a **PR** for Xulthûl: if successful, destroy the city or mystic (*remove the token from the game*). Xulthûl will pass through terrain hexes occupied by avatars without attacking. To fight Xulthûl, the avatars must be in its hex and initiate pre-combat: simply entering Xulthûl's hex will not trigger combat [21]. Xulthûl will never withdraw from combat.

Make a **PR** for Xulthûl when it reaches a stronghold with an unrevealed Well. If successful, Xulthûl reveals the Well; if unsuccessful, Xulthûl loses 1 life token and will make another attempt on its next action. If Xulthûl reveals a Dark Well, it will choose another target stronghold. If Xulthûl reaches or reveals a Light Well, it will attempt to extinguish it.

Extinguishing Light Wells

Xulthûl extinguishes a Light Well by making a successful **LR** against a 5. If Xulthûl fails its **LR**, it will lose 1d2 life tokens and make another attempt on its next action. Xulthûl gets a cumulative +1 to its **LR** to extinguish a Light Well on each attempt after its first (*e.g., +1 on its second attempt, +2 on its third attempt, etc.*). If Xulthûl extinguishes all the Light Wells in the game, the players lose the game and Aethos falls into Shadow.

Player Tips

Approaching the Game

Shadows of Malice is designed to be driven by your imagination. It is a vehicle by which you can weave your own story around a central theme of saving a world from Shadow by creating an epic narrative that begins with your avatars arriving in Aethos and culminates with Xulthûl's ultimate defeat or victory.

It will help to think about the game as a grand quest with three stages:

The Early Game
Your avatars start play relatively weak and will need to gather the weapons, soulshards, and other resources necessary to defeat the stronghold Guardians. Defeating creatures in lairs is the best way to acquire items and soulshards, but be careful not to expend more resources than you acquire, and *don't be afraid to flee* from powerful creatures! It's a good idea for your avatars to stick together in larger bands early on, so that they can support each other. You'll also want to quickly reveal the cities and mystics in play to gain access to their services (*e.g., healing, potions, etc.*).

The Mid-Game

By the mid-game, each avatar will all have a few items and smaller bands should be able to successfully raid a lair or fend off a Shadow. At this stage, you'll want to balance defending against Shadow incursions and attacking Guardians to reveal Wells. The pace of acceleration toward the end game will depend on the risks you choose to take in pursuit of the Light Wells.

The End-Game

The end game will either come down to a race to reveal the last Light Well or a grand battle with Xulthûl. Your avatars should be well-equipped by this point and able to fight the Lord of Shadow.

A good general approach to the game is:

1. **Prepare**. Reveal the cities and mystics to use their services.
2. **Buff**. Acquire items and soulshards by defeating creatures in lairs.
3. **Reveal**. Defeat stronghold Guardians and reveal their Wells.

Sample of Play

Bryan and Sara, decide to play a game using two adjoining terrain maps. They place the terrain maps and the Shadow Realm on the table and prepare them for play. Bryan chooses the ⬡ token for his avatar and Sara chooses the ⬡ token. Next, they each take five life tokens and draw a mastery for their avatar. Bryan draws **Battle Strategist**, which uses blue soulshards for the secondary ability, so Bryan's avatar starts with three blue soulshards and three colorless soulshards. Sara draws **Time Dancer**, which uses black soulshards for the secondary ability, so her avatar gets three black and three colorless soulshards.

After a little discussion, Bryan and Sara decide to start the game with each of their avatars having 1 randomly drawn potion and 1 treasure item looted from a stocked lair. They each draw a random potion from the Potion Trove. Bryan gets "Nightshield Elixir" and Sara gets "Liquid Life." Next, they each select a lair to loot, remove its stocked lair token, and draw a card from the Treasure Trove. Bryan draws "Cloak of Defense" and Sara draws the scroll "Scalebane."

Bryan and Sara decide to start play on different Gate hexes to quickly reveal the mystics on two maps.

Round 1

Players' Turn

Sara takes her first action to move. She rolls ⚀⚁ for her **MR**. She did not roll doubles, so she does not draw a fate card. Since she is traveling alone, her MP = 2 (the larger die) +1 = 3. The adjacent hex with the mystic is mostly wild, so it has an entry cost of 3 MP. Sara has enough MP to get to the mystic, but wants to use the Gate to rejoin Bryan. She uses her "Time Dancer" primary ability to reroll her **MR** and rolls ⚁⚅ for MP = 7. She did not roll doubles, so she does not draw a fate card.

Sara uses 3 MP to enter the mystic's hex and reveals the mystic to be a Cleanser, then uses another 3 MP to re-enter the swamp hex with the Gate and uses the Gate. She needs to make a **LR** against a 2 to control the Gate. She succeeds with a and emerges from the Gate on Bryan's map with 1 MP remaining. She chooses not to form a band with Bryan.

Bryan wants to reveal the mystic on his map. He rolls for his **MR**. Since he is not in a band with Sara, he has MP = 3 + 1 = 4. He did not roll doubles, so does not draw a fate card. Bryan has enough MP to enter the wild hex and reveal the mystic, but not enough to keep moving since all land hexes adjacent to the mystic require 2 or 3 MP to enter and he would have only 1 MP remaining. He decides to pay 3 MP to enter the wild hex and reveals the mystic to be a Healer. He then uses his second action to give the mystic one of his blue soulshards and have the mystic brew him a blue potion. He draws an "Elixir of Restoration."

Sara decides to take her second action to move toward the city. She rolls and must draw a fate card since she rolled doubles. She draws "Brutal Assault" and uses her MP = 5 + 1 = 6 to move into two wild hexes on a path toward the city.

Shadows' Turn
A randomly determined Shadow Gate becomes unsealed. There is no Shadow in the Shadow Realm at the start of the Shadows' Turn, so one spawns. Since it is a 2-avatar game, the Shadow spawns with only 1 life.

After the first round, the game state looks like this.

Round 2

Players' Turn
Sara and Bryan decide to move into the lair hex directly west (left) of the mystic. They want to engage in joint combat, so they must enter the lair hex as a band. Bryan, therefore, uses his first action to join Sara. He makes his **MR** and rolls for MP = 5. He uses 3 MP to enter Sara's hex. They both agree to join together as a band.

Sara may use her action to move with Bryan by using his remaining MP as his contribution to the band's movement, or have Bryan end his action and then have them both roll new **MR** for the band. Waiting adds the risk of Bryan rolling doubles and getting an unfavorable fate card, and he has enough MP remaining to enter the lair hex, so they decide continue with Bryan's movement. Sara makes her **MR**. She rolls [⚅][⚅]. This means that Sara immediately loses "Brutal Assault" must draw a new fate card to replace it! She draws "Curse of Missteps," which gives her -1 to her **MR**. Sara has (6 -1) + 2 (she is banded with Bryan) = 7. The band has 2 MP (minimum of Sara's 7 MP and Bryan's remaining 2 MP), enough to enter the forest hex. They enter the forest hex with the lair, the lair inhabitant attacks, and combat ensues!

Generate creature

Sara and Bryan use the Creature Generator and roll 3d6 to create the lair inhabitant. They roll up a power 3 reptilid with 1 ability. They draw the "Glacial" ability card from the Ability Trove: all wounds the creature delivers count as cold energy! Armor won't help the avatars: they need cold shields 🛡 to reduce cold energy wounds!

Pre-Combat

Bryan and Sara opt for joint combat and decide to make all d★ rolls [23]. Bryan drinks his "Nightshield Elixir" as his pre-combat action. The potion lasts 1 full turn, so it will last for the entire combat. Sara uses her "Scalebane" scroll. She rolls [⚀][⚅][⚂][⚀] = 5 wounds! Going into Combat Phase 1, the situation looks like this:

Bryan will still get the +1d★ 🛡 afforded by his Cloak of Defense, but will not get the immunity provided since "Glacial" is a yellow ability and not a blue ability. His "Nightshield Elixir," however, will grant him a +3d★ 🛡 that will help against the creature's ability.

Combat Phase 1

The creature randomly targets Sara. Sara has no defense again the creature's "Glacial" ability, but Bryan does, so he invokes a colorless soulshard to draw the creature's attack to his avatar. Since they are fighting in joint combat, Bryan rolls 2d6 and uses the larger die for his **CR**. He rolls [⚂][⚁], so his base **CR** is 4. He then rolls +1d★ for his **Battle Strategist** ability and gets [⚅] for +1. His final **CR** = 4 + 1 = 5.

The creature rolls ⚅ for a **CR** = 6 + 2 = 8. It hits Bryan's avatar and does 1 + 2d★ wounds. The creature rolls ⚁⚃ for its 2d★ and gives 3 cold wounds to Bryan's avatar.

Bryan rolls his 3d★ cold shield defense and rolls ⚀⚀⚃ to stop none of the wounds! Sara invokes a black soulshard to give Bryan a re-roll for his cold shield, this time he rolls ⚄⚁⚅ and stops 2 of the wounds. Bryan's avatar suffers a single wound.

Combat Phase 2
The creature randomly targets Bryan. Bryan invokes a colorless soulshard to add +1 to his **CR**, then rolls ⚁⚅ for his 2d6 roll and ⚃ for his +1d★ roll. His final **CR** = 6 +1 +1 = 8. The creature rolls ⚃ for a **CR** = 4 + 2 = 6. Bryan hits and wounds the creature. Because his avatar has no wounding bonuses, Bryan delivers a base 1 wound to the creature, but that is enough to kill it.

Post Combat
Sara's scroll has been consumed and returned to the Treasure Trove, Bryan's potion expires at the end of the turn and goes back to the Potion Trove. Since the creature had 1 yellow ability and 6 life tokens, the avatars harvest 1 yellow soulshard and 6d★ colorless soulshards. They roll ⚃⚁⚅⚃⚀⚅ = 4 colorless soulshards for their harvest. The creature was encountered in a stocked lair, so the avatars may draw an item from the Treasure Trove. They draw "The Red Sword of Rending" and distribute the shards and weapon among themselves, then decide on their second actions...

Shadows' Turn
Another randomly determined Shadow Gate becomes unsealed. There is already a Shadow in the Shadow Realm at the start of the Shadow's Turn, so it gains a life token and moves into a random adjacent hex on the land mass... closer to a Gate... closer to entering Aethos...

Additional Support
Additional resources, instructional videos, critical reviews are available at deviousweasel.com. And thank you for playing!

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