Rules for

Spirit Island

A cooperative strategy game for 1-4 players by R. Eric Reuss

Play time: 90 - 120 minutes

Concept: Players are spirits of nature on an isolated island. Invaders from beyond the sea have recently started to colonize, killing the Dahan (native islanders) and generally wrecking the place. The Spirits must struggle to throw them back before the island is overrun!

Overview: Each player plays one Spirit; the Invaders and Dahan act according to game mechanics. Spirits affect the world with Powers. Each turn, all players simultaneously choose what Powers to use. Some Powers will resolve before the Invaders act, others afterwards. Spirits start with limited options, but can slowly learn new Powers over the course of the game.

The Invaders will spread across the land, destroying Spirit Presence and Dahan, and Blighting the land. You will not be able to contain them forever.

To start, **Victory** can only be had by obliterating all of the Invaders (difficult!). But as you frighten the Invaders, easier victories will become possible.

The game ends immediately in **Defeat** if no more Blight is left in the Blight pool, if any player is knocked out of the game (by losing all Presence from the board), or if you take too long to rout the Invaders.

COMPONENTS
  • Power Cards: 36 Minor Powers; 22 Major Powers; 16 Unique Powers (4 per spirit).
  • 15 Invader Cards (in 3 groups: 4xStage I, 5xStage II, 6xStage III).
  • 4 modular island boards;
  • Invader board;
  • 3 Blight Cards;
  • 15 Fear Cards;
  • 16 Fear markers
  • Energy tokens;
  • Invaders: 45 Explorers (white pawns); 35 Towns (white houses); 20 Cities (larger white buildings)
  • 28 Blight cubes;
  • 30 Dahan (islander) huts;
  • Four sets of 13 Spirit Presence (colored wooden discs)
  • 4 Spirit panels (each for a unique Spirit);
  • 4 Spirit cards (for those Spirits)
  • 4 Power Progression cards (one for each spirit);
  • 12 Play-aid cards
  • 4 "Single turn effect" tokens.

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LEARNING THE GAME

The rules are divided into three major sections: Setup, Game Concepts, and Sequence of Play. If you learn best by understanding individual parts of the game first, then later looking at how they all fit together, start with Game Concepts. If you learn best by understanding the steps of a turn first, then looking at individual concepts in depth, start with the Sequence of Play.

Teaching Game

For your first play or two, we **strongly** recommend a Teaching Game, especially if nobody involved has played before. In a Teaching Game:

- Do not use an Adversary or Scenario. These make the game harder and add rules, neither of which you want on a first game.
- Use the "FIRST GAME" Blight Card. It is simpler than the others.
- When gaining a new Power Card, do not draw randomly from the deck. Instead, look at your Spirit's Power Card Progression and take the next card in the list. When you gain a Major Power, the Power Card Progression will remind you to Forget (remove from the game) one of your existing Powers. The Power Cards for each progression are marked in the upper-right corner so you can pull them from their decks easily. *(In the extremely unlikely event you get through your entire Power Card progression, you stop getting new Power Cards.)*

If you're a new player playing alongside of more experienced players, it's still a **very good idea** to use your Spirit's Power Card Progression during your first game. *(Any effect which would give you another Power Card just gives you the next card in your Progression, even if it's the wrong type.)*

SETUP

Each of steps #2-4 can be done by a separate player to speed setup.

1. Unless playing a Teaching Game, choose an Adversary and/or Scenario. (See p. 16)

2. **Set up the Invader board**
   a. Place the Invader board on one side of the play area.
   b. Put 4 Fear Markers per player into the Fear Pool.
   c. Shuffle the Fear cards and put 9 onto the Fear Deck space. Place the "Terror Level 3" divider goes 3 cards from the bottom and the "Terror Level 2" divider 3 cards above that. *(So the deck is divided into 3 groups of 3 cards each.)*
   d. Make the Invader deck (see sidebar) and put it on the Invader board.
   e. Take a Blight Card and put it out, "Healthy" side up, without looking at the back. (If you are playing a Teaching Game, use the "FIRST GAME" Blight Card.) Put the shown amount of Blight onto the card.

3. **Set up the Island**
   a. Place one Island board per player in the center of the table to form the island. (See diagram at right.) Each player starts on a different board.
   b. Populate the Island boards with Invaders and Dahan as indicated by the icons in each land.

4. **Set up the Supply**
   a. Shuffle the Minor & Major Power decks. Put them someplace on the table where there's room for each to have a discard pile.
   b. Put the Energy tokens, Cities, Towns, and Explorers near the board. Make sure all players can reach them; you may need to split them into two piles.
   c. Put the Dahan (huts) near the board. They don't need to be accessed as frequently.

Per-player Setup

5. **Each player takes a color of pieces, and chooses a Spirit** by taking a Spirit Mat and its four Unique Power Cards (starting hand).
   • For a teaching game: give each player the Power Progression card for their spirit, and the Minor and Major Powers from that Power Progression. *(They're marked in the corners for easy identification.)*

6. **Players follow setup instructions** on the back of their Spirit Mat. This always includes putting Presence (round discs) into one or more lands on their starting board; some spirits have additional instructions. Players then flip their Spirit Mats to the front and place all remaining Presence onto onto the dashed circles.
   (The leftmost numbers remain clear.)

Invaders Act First

7. Reveal the top card of the Invader Deck. The Invaders Explore in that terrain (see p. 13). Then place the card face-up under "Build".
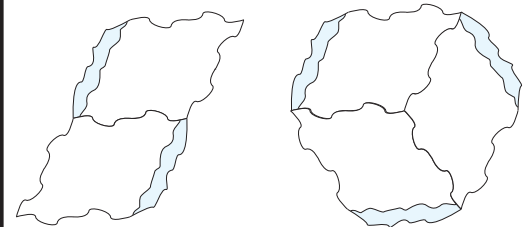

Making the Invader deck

The Invader deck is 12 cards:
- • 3 Stage I cards, atop
- • 4 Stage II cards, atop
- • 5 Stage III cards.

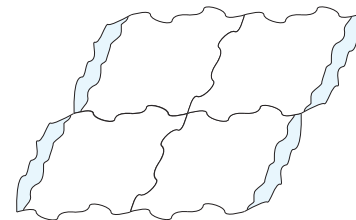Mix up the cards from each Stage and choose without looking at them, putting unused cards back in the box.

There are 4 / 5 / 6 cards for Stage I / II / III, so you can just remove one of each.

Standard Island Layouts

2-player   3-player

4-player

GAME CONCEPTS

Victory and Defeat

At the start of the game, the Invaders are at Terror Level 1 - not really afraid. To win, you need to completely clear the board of Invaders. As you earn Fear cards *(see Fear and Terror, p. 9)*, you will reach new Terror Levels with easier victory conditions. You win *immediately* anytime you meet the current victory condition.

You can lose three ways:

• **Too Much Blight**. If the last Blight comes off of the Blight Card, you follow the instructions there, which are often "you lose"..

• **Any Spirit is Destroyed**. If any Spirit has no Presence left on the board, you lose.

• **Time Runs Out**. If you need to draw an Invader Card (to Explore), but the Invader deck is empty, you lose.

Victory

Terror Level 1: No Invaders on the island.
Terror Level 2: No buildings on the island.
Terror Level 3: No Cities on the island.
Terror Level VICTORY: Immediate win!

Winning while Losing

If a single effect causes you to both win and lose, you win a **sacrifice victory**: you are destroyed, but the island, the Dahan, and many other spirits survive.

Boards, Lands and Terrain

The game is played with one board per player, pushed together to make an island. (See "Setup", p. 3.) Each game board is divided into eight *lands*, exactly two of each terrain type (see right). Two lands are said to be *adjacent* when they share a common border, even if they're not on the same game board. If two lands meet only at a corner, they are considered adjacent.

Terrain types

H Hills
J Jungle
S Sands
W Wetland

Each board also shows a swath of Ocean, to indicate which lands are readily accessible by sea. (Other island borders are rocky cliffs.) Lands adjacent to the shown Ocean are said to be *coastal*, others are *inland*. The Ocean is not considered a land.

Generally, pieces only affect other pieces in the same land, unless explicitly specified.

Presence + Sacred Sites

Spirit **Presence** (round disks) marks the lands a Spirit is within. Lands with your Presence are sometimes referred to as "your lands". If your Presence is ever destroyed (eg, by Invaders Blighting the land) it is removed and put next to the island. If any Spirit ever has no Presence on the board, the players immediately lose.

Game effects which do things with Presence (like move it or destroy it) always affect Presence on the island unless they say otherwise.

A Spirit's **Sacred Sites** are any lands where that Spirit has more than one Presence. Some Powers can only be used from these places of focused magic.
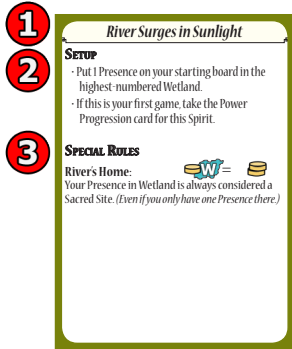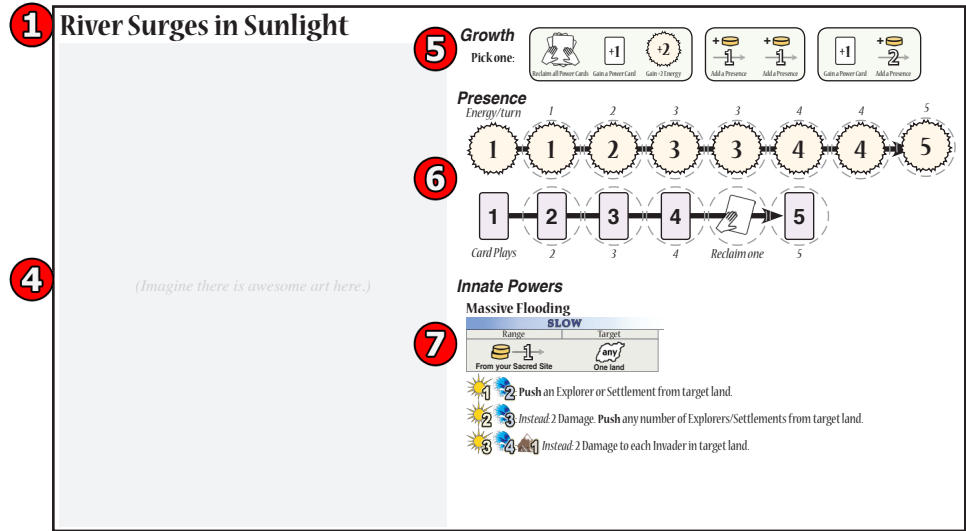
Spirits

Each Spirit has:

- A Spirit Card with setup instructions and special rules;
- A Spirit Mat with Growth, Presence, and Innate Powers;
- Four Unique Power Cards *(see "Powers", p. 7, for example Power Cards)*

Low-complexity Spirits also have a Power Progression card, for use in one's first game or two.

(1) **River Surges in Sunlight**

(5) *Growth*
Pick one:

(6) *Presence*
Energy/turn

Card Plays

(4) *(Imagine there is awesome art here.)*

(7) *Innate Powers*
Massive Flooding
SLOW

Range	Target
From your Sacred Site	One land

☀☀ **Push** an Explorer or Settlement from target land.

☀☀💧 *Instead:* 2 Damage. **Push** any number of Explorers/Settlements from target land.

☀☀💧⚔ *Instead:* 2 Damage to each Invader in target land.

Spirit Card:

(1) *River Surges in Sunlight*

(2) SETUP
· Put 1 Presence on your starting board in the highest-numbered Wetland.
· If this is your first game, take the Power Progression card for this Spirit.

(3) SPECIAL RULES
River's Home: 💧W = 💧
Your Presence in Wetland is always considered a Sacred Site. *(Even if you only have one Presence there.)*

Spirit Card

Spirit Mat

(1) **Spirit Name**

(2) **Setup:** Starting position, and any special instructions.

(3) **Special Rules:** Any rules that work differently for this Spirit.

(4) **Art**: An image of your Spirit.

(5) **Growth:** The Spirit's options for regathering of strength, reaching out to new lands, and learning new Powers. Each box encloses one Growth option, used during the Spirit Phase of the turn.

(6) **Presence tracks**: To start, all but the leftmost space of each track is covered by Presence. The more of your Presence you play, the more Energy you gain and the more Card Plays you get per turn. You may choose which track you play play Presence from, but always play it from left to right, revealing progressively greater benefits. Destroyed Presence is removed from play, not returned to the mat.
• Some spirits have a "Reclaim one" space. While this space is revealed, the Spirit may return one Power Card to their hand every Spirit Phase, letting them go longer before having to take a "Reclaim All" Growth option.

(7) **Innate Powers**: Free Powers that can be triggered using Elements. *(For more on Powers, see "Powers", p. 7)* Unless explicitly specified, Innate Powers never use Energy or Card Plays. Like all Powers, they target a single land unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Common Growth Icons

Add one Presence to the board at Range 2 (up to 2 lands away)

Gain 2 Energy (in addition to this turn's normal Energy income)

Gain a Power Card (see p. 8)

Reclaim all played Power Cards from your personal discard pile, returning them to your hand.

Moving Presence

It's rarely relevant, but whenever you add Presence, you may choose to instead move one of your Presence already on the board.

(E.g., if you manage to get all of your Presence into play, you can still reposition it.)

Invaders

The Invaders are attempting to colonize your island. They're not specifically aiming to exterminate you, but will cheerfully do so as they tame the land. The goal of the game is to drive off the Invaders, by meeting the victory conditions of the current Terror Level. *(It gets easier as the Invaders get more frightened.)*

Invaders in a land *do not* automatically harm Spirit Presence or Dahan there. Invaders harm things only when Ravaging.

There are three types of Invaders: Explorers, Towns, and Cities. A land containing any of these (even just one) is "A land with Invaders". The number of Invaders is not limited by the supply of pieces.

Explorers represent Invaders willing to travel into uncharted wilderness: mapping expeditions, the very boldest homesteaders, etc. They take 1 Damage to destroy, and deal 1 Damage.

Towns represent homesteads and small frontier settlements. They take 2 Damage to destroy, and deal 2 Damage. Towns act as a source of Explorers when Invaders Explore.

Cities are the largest and most pernicious type of Invader piece. They take 3 Damage to destroy, and deal 3 Damage. Cities act as a source of Explorers when Invaders Explore.

Destroying Cities and Towns affects the Invaders' morale. Whenever a Town is destroyed, it does 1 Fear. Whenever a City is destroyed, it does 2 Fear. (See "Fear", below.)

Some Powers refer to "buildings". **Towns and Cities are buildings**; Explorers are not. *(Nor are Dahan; the term refers to Invader buildings only.)*

Blight

Invaders slowly but inexorably blight the land. A certain amount of Blight is normal in nature, but too much will overwhelm the island. When you add Blight to the board during play, take it from the Blight card. If you run out of Blight on the card, follow its instructions - either "lose" or "flip the card over and do what it says on the reverse". Flipped Blight cards do not flip back; the island cannot heal from Tainted to Healthy within the timespan of the game (10-30 years).

Whenever you add Blight to a land, two bad things happen:

Destroy Presence: In that land, destroy one Presence from each Spirit.
(Spirits with no Presence there are unaffected.)

Cascade: If the land already had any Blight (so there is now 2 or more), also add a Blight to <u>one</u> adjacent land. *(If that adjacent land also has Blight, it would then cascade again from there, etc.)*

> ### This is not Pandemic
>
> Blight cascades to <u>one</u> adjacent land, not all of them.

The Dahan

The Dahan are the native human inhabitants of Spirit Island, familiar both with the land and in getting along with the Spirits. They also aren't too thrilled about the Invaders' colonization.

Each board starts with 6 Dahan villages. Population growth in the game's timespan occurs only with a very few Powers which grant blessings of health, fertility, and good harvests. The number of Dahan is not limited by the supply of pieces.

Dahan only attack Invaders when a Spirit Power prompts them to do so, or when attacked themselves: after Invaders Ravage a land, any surviving Dahan in that land each deal 2 Damage to the Invaders.

Dahan are destroyed by 2 Damage from Invaders. Damage from Spirits does not hurt Dahan, although some Spirit Powers cause Dahan casualties (or damage done explicitly to Dahan) as a negative side-effect.

Powers

Spirits affect the game using Powers: Power Cards, and Innate Powers printed on a Spirit's play mat.

Minor and Major Power Cards work identically; the only difference is that when you acquire a Major Power, you must **Forget** (permanently lose) a Power Card. *(See "Gaining Power Cards", p. 8.)*

The only differences between Power Cards and Innate Powers are:

• Power Cards may cost Energy to use (the number in the upper-left starburst). Innate Powers generally cost nothing, but have prerequisites for use.

• Spirits can only play a limited number of Power Cards per turn (based on their Presence track). Innate Powers do not count against this limit.

• Once a Power Card is used, it can't be used again until the Spirit reclaims cards. Innate Powers can be used each turn, if their requirements are met.

Key:

1 **Energy Cost** *(Power Cards only)*

2 **Name**

3 **Speed marker**: Fast Powers resolve their effects before the Invaders go; Slow Powers resolve their effects afterwards.

4 **Progression indicator** *(Power Cards only)*: Cards which are in a Power Card Progression are marked so you can easily pull them out of the deck.

5 **Elements provided** *(Power Cards only):* There are eight elements: Air, Sun, Fire, Animal, Plant, Water, Moon, and Earth. When you play a Power Card, you gain the Elements shown until end of turn. *(Some Powers gain extra effects from Elements; see #9, below.)* Elements are transient: they do not carry over from turn to turn. You gain Elements the moment you pay for a Power Card, regardless of whether the Power is Fast or Slow.

6 **Range**: how many lands away from your Presence this Power can reach. This is a maximum; you can always use a shorter Range. A Range of 0 means 0 lands distant - where you have Presence! Some Powers have limitations on what sort of land you can use them from *(e.g., only from a Sacred Site, or only from a specific terrain)*; these are shown left of the range.

7 **Target**: what sort of land this Power can afffect. Powers always target **one single land** unless explicitly stated. Some Powers target other Spirits.

8 **Effects**: what the Power does. All effects take place in the **single target land** unless explicitly stated otherwise: "Destroy all Towns" means "Destroy all Towns in target land", *not* "Destroy all Towns in the game"! Skip any instructions that can't be followed. Effects which don't change anything on the board *(e.g., "Invaders do not Build in target land")* last only for the current turn. Effect text in *italics* is reminder / clarification text, there purely to remind you how things work.

9 **Elemental Threshold (& Effects)**: Effects which only happen if the Spirit has played certain Elements this turn. (See #5, above.) The required Elements are not "used up"; the threshold is simply a test to see if they exist. *(E.g., a Spirit having 2 Water could meet any number of thresholds requiring 2 Water.)* If a Spirit meets more than one Threshold under a Power, they do each of them in order, from top to bottom. **Exception:** if a Threshold says "*Instead:* [effect]", it replaces the effects of previous levels. (If you really want the lower-level effect, you may always resolve a Power as if you have fewer elements than you really do.)
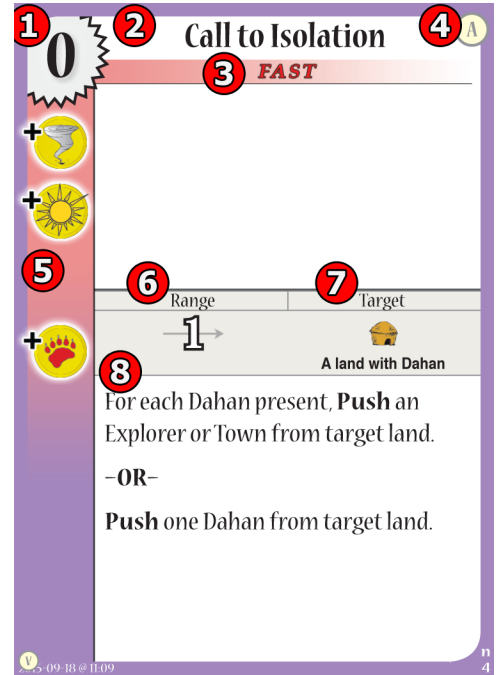
Minor Power Card
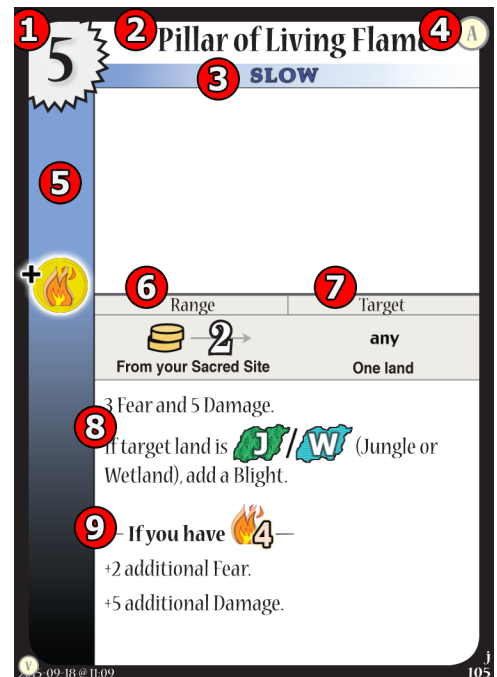
Major Power Card
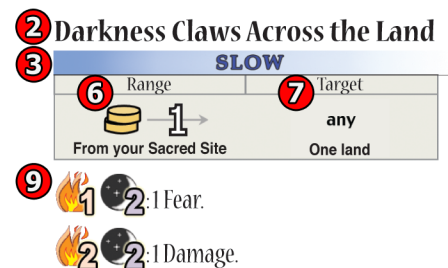
Innate Power

When resolving a Power's effects, do as much as you can. If one part doesn't apply or can't be done, skip it and do the rest. The only targeting restrictions are those in the target bar. (See example at right.)

General Principle: You Can Forego a Power's Effects

If you can't or don't want to use a Power you've played – perhaps the board situation has changed – you're allowed to skip its effects entirely, as if it had a blank text-box. If it was a Power Card, you don't get your Energy back, but you <u>do</u> get to use the Elements granted by the card.

Similarly, when resolving a Power with thresholds, you may act as if you have fewer Elements than you really do, to avoid hitting thresholds.

General Principle: One land! One turn! One use!

Unless a Power explicitly says otherwise:
- **It only affects one single target land**. *(E.g., "Destroy up to 3 Explorers" will let you destroy up to 3 Explorers in the same land - not in multiple different lands. If a Power has multiple effects, they ALL apply to the same land.)*
- **It only affects the current turn.** *(E.g., "Dahan have +3 Health" or "Invaders do not Ravage in target land" affect this turn only, not the rest of the game.)* Any permanent changes to the game will be represented by changes to a board - pieces leaving, Fear markers moving, etc.
- **It can only be used once this turn.** You can't choose to pay for a Power Card twice and use it twice. Innate Powers only trigger once even if you have twice as many Elements as you need. If something makes a Slow power Fast, you only get to use it during the Fast phase, not both.

Single-turn Effects

A few Powers have temporary effects on a land. *(E.g., "Skip all Invader Actions", or anything providing Defend.)* There are handy reminder tokens you can use to mark those lands for the turn if you want; just remember to remove them by the end of the turn!

Gaining Power Cards

You will usually gain new Power Cards via Growth, but some Power effects can grant them.

Whenever you're told to "gain a Power Card":
- Draw 4 cards from one of the two Power decks (Minor or Major).
- Keep one drawn Power Card. Discard the others into the discard pile for that deck. (*Not* your personal discard pile!)
- Whenever you gain a Major Power, you must Forget - permanently lose - one of your Power Cards. Put the Forgotten Power Card into the discard pile for that deck, or under your Spirit Mat if it's a Unique Power.

If you are playing with a Power Progression, instead of drawing 4 and keeping one, simply take the next card in your Progression. *(See Teaching Game, p. 2.)*

Example

Even if a Power reads

> Destroy a Dahan.
>
> Remove 1 Blight.

you don't have to play it on a land with Dahan! If you did, the target bar would say so, looking something like:

Range	Target
2→	🛖 A land with Dahan

What Power Cards Can I Forget?

Any of them: from your hand, your discard, or (if you somehow gain a Major Power mid-turn) from your cards in play. It can even be the Major Power you just chose.

If you Forget a Power Card from play, you immediately lose the Elements it provided, and if you haven't used it yet, you don't get to.

Things Powers Do

Damage, Destruction, and Removal

A few Powers **Remove** Invaders, representing them fleeing in terror. Return the specified pieces to the supply. Some **Replace** Invaders: first you remove the Invader, then you put something else in its place.

More powers **Destroy** Invaders outright. Return the specified pieces to the supply. Destroying a City or Town causes Fear (see box at right).

Damage is done to any Invaders in the target land, divided among them as you wish. 1 point destroys an Explorer, 2 destroys a Town, and 3 destroys a City. *(These numbers are the Invaders' Health.)* You can do partial damage if you want (in anticipation of some Power or effect doing enough to destroy the Invader later in the turn), but at the end of the turn all partial damage is healed.

Whenever a Power or other effect says "Damage", it always means "Damage to Invaders" unless explicitly specified otherwise.

"Damage to (some things) only", restricts what the Damage can be done to. *(E.g., "2 Damage to buildings only" could destroy one Town or do 1 Damage each to two Cities, but couldn't hurt an Explorer.)*

Fear and Terror

Fear terrifies the Invaders as a whole. For each Fear done, advance one Fear marker on the Invader board. When all of the Fear markers have advanced, place the top card of the Fear Deck into the "earned" area and reset the Fear markers. *(If you have leftover Fear after earning a card, it carries over.)*

These cards are resolved during the next Invader Phase (see p. 12). Like Powers, effects of Fear last for the current turn only, unless they change the board in some way.

The Invader Board shows the current **Terror Level**, which starts at 1 and increases as soon as you reach a new divider. As the Terror Level rises, the victory condition gets easier. (This happens immediately, so when you advance the Terror Level, you may instantly win!)

Gather and Push

Some Powers tell you to **Gather** things into the target land *(eg: "Gather a Town", "Gather up to 3 Dahan")*. This means "move that many things *into* the target land from land(s) adjacent to it". Gather only pulls things in from adjacent lands; boosts to a Power's Range do not affect Gathering distance!

Other Powers tell you to **Push** things from the target land *(eg: "Push an Explorer", "Push up to 3 Dahan")*. This is the exact reverse of Gather; it means "move that many things *out of* the target land, to adjacent land(s)". Push only sends things one land away; boosts to a Power's Range do not affect Pushing distance! If Pushing multiple things, they may go to different lands or not, as you wish.

Defend

Some Powers let you **Defend** a target land, which reduces Damage done by Invaders. "**Defend 2**" means "If the Invaders deal Damage in target land this turn, reduce the total amount of Damage they do by 2".

Fear from Destruction

Whenever you **destroy** a City or Town (via damage or otherwise), it frightens the Invaders: +2 Fear for a City, +1 for a Town.

If you **remove** or **replace** a City/Town, it does not cause this automatic Fear.

Damage tokens?

There are no tokens for tracking damage.

If you do 1 Damage to a Town, lay it sideways. If you do 1 Damage to a City, lay it on its side; on the 2nd Damage lay it flat.

Damage hurts Invaders

If you've read ahead, you'll know that the land and Dahan can also take damage (from Invaders Ravaging).

But the overwhelming majority of damage in the game is done to Invaders. Any time a Power, Fear Card, or other game rule does "Damage", it **always means "Damage to Invaders" unless explicitly specified otherwise**. *(E.g., "2 Damage to Dahan")* Most Spirit Powers cannot harm Dahan or the land.

(Why use the same term? Because in expansions, Invaders can damage each other, and boy does that get confusing when you have two different words.)

If multiple Defend effects are used on one land, they add together. There are optional tokens you can use to help you remember that a land is Defended this turn.

Remove Blight

When you remove a Blight from the board, return it to the Blight card, on whichever side is curently face-up. The Blight card will not flip from Tainted back to Healthy during the timespan of the game, no matter how much Blight you remove.

Repeat

To **Repeat** a Power just means "use it again". Simple, right?

Well, no; it raises a lot of questions. Here are the answers. (You don't need to memorize these in advance! Look them up as you have questions.)

• Repeating a Power Card does <u>not</u> give you its Elements again. (The ones along its left-hand edge.) *(You get those for playing the card, not for using its effects.)*

• Repeating a Power Card doesn't count as playing another Power Card. *(So Boon of Vigor doesn't give extra Energy for it.)*

• Changes to a Power carry over to the Repeat use. *(E.g., being made Fast by Lightning's Boon, or extra Range from Reaching Grasp.)*

• You may make different choices when Repeating a Power. *(E.g., for "Do X –OR– Y" Powers.)*

• You have to be able to legally use the Power. *(So you can't Repeat a Fast Power during the Slow phase.)*

• If a Repeat doesn't tell you where it's to be used *(e.g.: "Repeat this Power")*, you can choose any valid target for the Power, including the same target as its first use.

• If a Repeat **does** specify where to use it *(e.g.: "Repeat this Power on any adjacent land", "Repeat this Power on any land with Dahan")*, obey the instructions. Only consider the Power's normal targeting restrictions (Range, terrain, etc.) if the instructions refer to a "target land". *(e.g.: "Repeat this Power on a different target land", "Repeat this Power on a target land with a City")*

Finally, **Repeat effects cannot be Repeated**: While Repeating a Power, ignore any "Repeat" instructions.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Each turn has the following phases:

1. Spirit Phase
2. Use Fast Powers
3. Invader Phase
4. Use Slow Powers
5. Time Passes

Players play simultaneously within each phase, conferring as they wish.

1. SPIRIT PHASE

Each Spirit does three things, in the following order:

- **Grow**: Choose one option next to "Growth" at the upper-right of the Spirit mat. Each box is a single choice. You may perform the items therein in any order. (*See p. 5 for common Growth icons.*)
- **Gain Energy** based on their top Presence track. Unused Energy carries over from turn to turn.
- **Play and pay for Power Cards**. The number of Power Cards a Spirit may play is based on their lower Presence track.

Important note: You must *immediately* pay for all Power Cards played, even Slow ones. Likewise, you *immediately* gain all Elements from played Power Cards, even if the Power's text effects are Slow.

The Urgency of War

Some Spirits are inclined to take a long time choosing Power Cards: perhaps several centuries in the case of slow-moving earth spirits. But the threat of the Invaders forbids the luxury of infinite time.

Any player may place a limit on the time available to select Power Cards. This can be done using a timer, setting a condition ("When I get back, we start"), or any other means desired.

Of course, as this is a cooperative game, it behooves you to not be too draconian.

2. USE FAST POWERS

Players resolve Fast Powers - both Innate Powers printed on their sheet and Power Cards they played.

Power resolution can be done mostly simultaneously. When timing becomes important, Powers may be resolved in whatever order the players want, so long as no Power interrupts another partway through. (If there are irreconcilable differences of opinion on ordering, the game owner/organizer breaks the tie.)

If a player discovers they do not want to use a Power's text effect (or *cannot* use it), they may choose to skip it entirely. Sometimes, a Power Card will be worth playing purely for its Elements.

Elemental Thresholds

Innate Powers have *Elemental Thresholds*, meaning they can only be used on turns you have all the required Element(s). Elements are never spent, only checked.

Elements from Power Cards do not persist from turn to turn. You have them only as long as the Power Card is out.

For more on Elemental Thresholds, see p. 7.

You cannot put off a Fast Power until the Slow stage, even if you want to. Use it now or forego it.

3. INVADER PHASE

The Invader phase has three parts:

1. Fear
2. Invader Actions
   A. Ravage
   B. Build
   C. Explore
3. Advance Invader Cards (and check for victory)

1. Fear

If any Fear cards have been earned *(see Fear, p. 9)*, pick the whole stack up, and resolve the cards in the order earned. Use only the effect listed next to the **current** Terror Level. (This could be higher than the Terror Level when the card was earned.)

2A. Ravage

If there is a card under Ravage (as there will be from turn 2 on), Ravage *in lands of the shown terrain(s) only*. First Invaders deal Damage to Dahan and the land, then any surviving Dahan fight back.

Wherever there are Invaders in the shown terrain, Invaders deal Damage: 1 per Explorer, 2 per Town, 3 per City. Damage is done *both* to Dahan (representing aggression) *and* to the the land (representing farming expansion, land-clearing, etc):

- Every 2 points of Damage destroys one Dahan. You can't deliberately spread out Damage over multiple Dahan. If there's leftover Damage, turn one Dahan over to show they're hurt.
- If 2 or more Damage is done, add a Blight to the land. This only happens once, no matter how much Damage is dealt. Partial Damage to the land is ignored. *(It's so rarely relevant that it's not worth tracking.)*

After Invader Damage has been fully resolved in a land, any surviving Dahan there fight back. Each Dahan does 2 Damage to the Invaders. The Dahan will fight back even if the Ravaging Invaders deal no Damage *(for example, due to Defend Powers)*, but not if the Ravage Action has been stopped from happening altogether.

Spirit Presence does not fight back.

2B. Build

The Invaders Build *in lands of the shown terrain(s) only*.

Wherever there are Invaders in that type of terrain, they add one building:
- If the land has more Towns than Cities, they add a City.
- In all other cases, they add a Town.

Do not Build in lands without Invaders!

"Each Player"

When a Fear effect tells "each player" to do something, do so sequentially. *(This is relevant when **Gather**ing or **Push**ing things: more than one player could move the same piece.)*

Removing Invaders

Some Fear Effects or Powers will tell you to **Remove** one or more Invaders.

Removing Invaders does not cause any additional Fear. These Invaders have not been destroyed - they've fled!

Effects of Blight

Whenever you add Blight to a land, if that land already has Blight, you must also add a Blight to <u>one</u> adjacent land. (If that adjacent land also already had Blight, it cascades again from there, and so forth.)

Adding Blight to a land also destroys one Presence from each Spirit in that land. Remember: Destroyed Presence is removed from play, not returned to the spirit mat!

Universal Law of Responsibility

When the game calls for a decision (where Blight cascades to, which Invaders to allocate Damage to, etc), and it's not specified who makes it, what do you do?

If the decision springs from a Power, the Spirit using the Power makes the decision.

For other situations, players will nearly always arrive at a consensus.

But in the rare event that agreement is not possible: for decisions about/within a land, each Spirit makes choices regarding the lands on their starting board. In other cases, the game owner/organizer makes the call.

2C. Explore

Turn the top card of the deck face-up. (If there is no card to turn up, time has run out and you lose.)

Invaders Explore into accessible lands *of the terrain(s) shown*.

Add an Explorer to every land which:
• Matches a terrain on the Explore card; and
• Has or is adjacent to a source of Invaders. *Buildings* and *Oceans* are the two sources of Invaders.

Explorers are added directly from the supply, not moved around on the board.

Remember: Ravage, Build, and Explore affect *only* the terrain type(s) shown on their cards!

Ravage and Build actions *only* affect lands that have Invaders!

3. Advance Invader cards

After Explore, slide all of the Invader cards left: this turn's Explore card becomes next turn's Build; this turn's Build moves to Ravage; this turn's Ravage goes to a discard pile. Put the top card of the Invader deck <u>face-down</u> into the Explore slot for next turn.

4. USE SLOW POWERS

Players resolve Slow Powers, which may be either Innate Powers printed on their sheet or Power Cards they played.

This works just like "Fast Powers Resolve", above.

5. TIME PASSES

Discard: Players discard all Power Cards played this turn into their personal discard piles.

Damage and Elements clear: All Elements go away. All Damage done during the turn goes away; if you turned any pieces on their sides to note partial Damage, turn them back.

If you're using the reminder tokens for single-turn effects, also make sure to pull those off the board at this time.
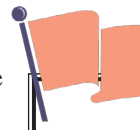
<u>Stage II Escalation</u>

Many Stage II cards have a flag icon. Its effect depends on your Adversary. If you're playing without an Adversary, ignore the flags.

Escalation effects happen as soon as the card is revealed, before Explore.

<u>Whoops!</u>

You suddenly realize that for the past 4 turns you've been using a Power Card on lands it can't actually target. What to do?

The answer is: don't sweat it.

Especially on your first play or two, you'll likely make minor mistakes here and there. They're unlikely to break anything; the game will just be slightly easier/harder.

So long as everyone's having fun, it's all good; there's no need to try and "rewind" and fix things. Just take note of what the correct rule is, and use it going forward!

TIPS FOR SMOOTHING PLAY

- As you play Power Cards, put the required Energy top of them. This will help keep you from forgetting to pay for them.
- When you resolve a Power Card, you can push it forward or turn it sideways to note that it's been used. Don't discard it until end of turn, because you may be making use of its Elements for Innate Powers!
- When you resolve a Fear effect which affects an Invader action (eg: "Invaders do -1 Damage when Ravaging"), place it atop the affected Invader card so you don't forget to apply it.
- Every board has exactly two lands of each terrain type. Knowing this can make it easier to search out all lands of a particular terrain type.
- When resolving Invader actions, be clear about who's handling what, so you don't accidentally (e.g.) double-Build in a land. It's fastest to have every player deal with their starting board.
- During Setup, once you've put Blight on the Blight card, return the rest of the Blight to the box. This prevents accidentally taking Blight from / returning Blight to the wrong place! It's easy to access the box a single time if/when the Island becomes Tainted.
- When coordinating with your fellow Spirits, trying to remember every detail of what every player is doing is a recipe for overload. It can be much more fruitful to focus on objectives ("I've got this land handled, can you deal with that one?"), diving into details only when necessary.
- Some players enjoy the game with a very analytical and carefully-planned style, while others prefer very fast-and-loose "good enough!" play. The game works either way (or anywhere between) - but both extremes at the same table can cause frustration. Try to make sure everyone is on the same page regarding time taken, and if there is disagreement, play at the speed of the faster player. (See "The Urgency of War", p. 11)

> ### Teaching Tips
>
> - There will be a strong temptation to run the Invaders for the whole game, since you know how they act. Don't do it! Instead, talk the new players through doing it themselves. This helps them internalize how the Invaders spread, which is critical to learning effective play.
>
> - Make sure the new player uses a low-complexity spirit with a Power Progression Really.

SOLO PLAY

Solitaire games work almost exactly like a normal game - a single board is the whole island.

The only difference is Powers which normally target "Another Spirit (but not you!)". In a solo game, you may target yourself with those powers. This makes some of them much more powerful, but playing a solo game comes with its own challenges; most notably, the luck of the draw will be high, and there's nobody to help compensate for your Spirit's weaknesses and limitations. (Some Spirits will have a very hard time in solo play for just this reason.)

BASIC STRATEGY TIPS

Feel under no obligation to read or use these - refer to them if you're feeling lost in your first games.

Fighting the Invaders

- Destroy Explorers before they Build to keep Invaders from spreading.
- Destroy Towns before they Ravage to keep Invaders from doing damage.
- Once Invaders Explore into a particular Terrain, you know they'll Build there next turn, and Ravage there the turn after that. That predictability is useful when planning how to use Slow Powers.

Where should I put my Presence / Sacred Sites?

- Put your Presence close enough to the Invaders that you can use all your Powers on them.
- Spread your Presence out across the game board so you can collaborate with other players. Three "1 Damage" Powers can destroy a City!
- Many damaging Powers and beneficial Fear effects require Sacred Sites, so put them close to the Invaders.

Where should I move the Dahan?

- Into lands with a few Invaders. Many Fear effects will scare off Invaders from lands with Dahan, or inspire the Dahan to take the offensive. If Invaders are about to Ravage there, surviving Dahan will fight back.
- Out of lands with many Invaders. If the Dahan will be wiped out when the Invaders Ravage, save them by getting them out of there!

Miscellaneous

- Blight spreads quickly once it starts cascading. Try to clean up lands before a second Blight is added.
- If you are having trouble finding good targets for your Powers, that can mean one of two things:
    1. That you are winning! If you have the Invaders on the ropes, focus on achieving victory!
    2. That your Presence / Sacred Sites aren't close to the parts of the board you want to affect. Focus on getting Presence and Sacred Sites in places where your Powers will be able to reach the Invaders.
- If you are feeling constantly low on Energy, try placing more Presence from your Energy track, not using all of your Power Card plays, drafting less expensive Power Cards, or taking an Energy-granting Growth option for a turn or two.

ADVERSARIES AND SCENARIOS

Adversaries and Scenarios add variety, replayability, and increased challenge. If you're winning handily, select an Adversary or Scenario at the start of each game.

Both Adversaries and Scenarios show some number of Threat icons, giving a rough gauge of how hard a game to expect. This is by necessity an approximation; every Adversary plays differently, and different Spirits will have an easier or harder time handling the changes they bring.

You can also play with an Adversary *and* a Scenario, if you like a particular Scenario but don't find it challenging enough on its own.

Threat

Adversaries

Adversaries are specific colonizing powers from the world of Spirit Island. Some Adversaries will be familiar, and are much like their counterparts from our history; others may be the result of the alternate history in the world of Spirit Island.

The base level of every Adversary specifies an effect to perform when Flags are revealed on Stage II cards, and may have a condition by which they can immediately win, causing a player loss.

Each Adversary offers multiple levels of increased difficulty. **All listed game effects are cumulative**: if you're fighting vs. Level 3, you also use the effects from Level 1 and Level 2. *(You can slide the bottom of the Adversary card under the top of the Invader board so only the rules being used are visible.)*

Adversary: The Brandenburg Confederation
17th century

Additional Loss Condition
—

Stage II escalation
Land Rush
On Each Board with Buildings:
Add a Settlement to a land without one.

Level	Fear Cards	Game Effects *(cumulative)*
1	9 *(3-3-3)*	**Fast Start:** Setup: Add a Settlement to land #3 on each board.
2	9 *(3-3-3)*	**Surge of Colonists:** When making the Invader Deck, put one of the Stage III cards between Stage I and Stage II. *(This does not start Stage III. If any game effects key off Invader Stage, treat it as Stage II.)*
3	10 *(3-4-3)*	**Efficient:** When making the Invader Deck, remove an additional Stage I card. *(So the Invader Deck cards are: 11-3-2222-3333.)*
4	11 *(4-4-3)*	**Aggressive Timetable:** When making the Invader Deck, remove an additional Stage II card. *(So the Invader Deck cards are: 11-3-222-3333.)*
5	12 *(5-4-3)*	**Ruthlessly Efficient:** When making the Invader Deck, remove an additional Stage I card. *(So the Invader Deck cards are: 1-3-222-3333.)*
6	13 *(5-5-3)*	**Terrifyingly Efficient:** When making the Invader Deck, remove all Stage I cards. *(So the Invader Deck cards are: 3-222-3333.)*

Fear Cards

As the game difficulty increases, winning via Fear also becomes harder. Each Level shows how many Fear cards to use (with a breakdown in smaller numbers of how many cards to put in the top / middle / lower divisions of the Fear Deck.

Scenarios

Scenarios change the situation the Spirits find themselves in, or the capabilities of the Spirits. They often involve different victory conditions or additional prerequisites for the standard victory condition, in addition to other rules changes.

Note: Scenarios are optional! You do not need to play with one.

Scenario: Dahan Insurrection
Rules Changes
· **Constant Raiding:** Whenever Dahan move from one land to another, each Dahan that moved does 1 Damage in their land. *(Damage happens after fully resolving the Power or other effect which moved them. If a Power moves one Dahan multiple times, it only does damage in the land where it ends up.)*
· **Military Response:** Whenever a City is destroyed, add a Settlement to the nearest land with Dahan. Whenever a Settlement is destroyed, add an Explorer to the nearest land with Dahan. *(Add the new Invader after fully resolving the Power or effect which destroyed the old one.)*
· **Coordinated Insurrection:** If you reach 'Victory' on the Fear Track, Dahan immediately Damage Invaders in every land on the board, as if they were fighting back after a Ravage. If this doesn't fulfill the Victory condition below, you lose. *(The Dahan give up in despair, and start trying to work within the Invaders' system.)*

Additional Loss Condition
· There are fewer than 2 Dahan per player left alive.

Victory
· The normal Fear-based Victory is not available. Instead:

TERROR 2 There are **no** lands where buildings outnumber Dahan.

TERROR 3+ There is **fewer than one land/player** where buildings outnumber Dahan.

SCORING

If you would like to score your games (to compare performance across plays):

• Win: 5 x Threat, +10 bonus for winning, +2 per Invader card remaining in the deck;

• Loss: 2 x Threat, +1 per Invader card *not* in the deck (both in the discard and under Invader Actions);

• Win or Lose: +1 per X living Dahan and -1 per X Blight on the board, where X is the number of players in the game.

GLOSSARY / INDEX

[Numbers] indicate pages with further information.

Action: See *Invader Action*. [12-13]

Add: To put onto the board from the supply.

Adjacent Land: Sharing a border (or corner). [4]

Adversary: A specific colonizer to fight against. Boosts difficulty and changes how the game plays. [16]

Blight: A piece showing environmental/spiritual harm to the Island. [6]

Blighted Land: A land having one or more Blight. [6]

Build: An Invader Action. Adds a Town or City. [12]

Building: A Town or City. Does not include Dahan! [6]

Card Plays: The number of Power Cards a Spirit may play each turn. Determined by a Spirit's Presence track. [5, 11]

Cascade: Upon addding Blight to an already-Blighted land, you must also add a Blight to <u>one</u> adjacent land. [6]

City: A type of Invader piece. Does 3 Damage, has 3 Health. Destroying a City causes 2 Fear. [6]

Coastal Land: A land adjacent to the printed Ocean area. [4]

Dahan: A piece representing a clan/village of local islanders (Dahan). Does 2 Damage, has 2 Health. [6]

Damage: Harm done to Invaders, Dahan, or the land. *(Whenever a card doesn't specify, it always means "to Invaders".)* Damage equal to an Invader or Dahan's Health destroys it. Damage equal to the land's Health Blights it. [9, 12]

Destroy: Take off of the board and return to the supply. Destroying Cities and Towns causes Fear. [9]

Defend: Guard a land against the Invaders. Reduces the Damage done by the Invaders there by the specified amount. [9-10]

Element: Magical affinity, usually granted by a Power Card. Lets you use Threshold Abilities. [7]

Energy: Pays for Power Cards and some Growth effects. [5]

Explore: An Invader Action. Adds Explorers. [12]

Explorer: A type of Invader piece. Does 1 Damage, has 1 Health. [6]

Fear: Fright done to Invaders. Advances Fear markers, earning Fear cards. [9]

Fear effect: Anything done by an earned Fear card. [12]

Forget a Power Card: Permanently lose a Power Card from your hand, discard pile, or in play. Return it to the box. [8]

Gain a Power Card: In a Teaching Game, take your next Power Card. Normally, draw four Minor Powers or four Major Powers and keep one. When you gain a Major Power by any means, you must Forget (lose) a Power Card. [8]

Gather: Move into a land from adjacent land(s). [9]

Growth: The first part of the Spirit Phase. Lets you place Presence, gain new Powers, and reclaim played Power Cards. *(What does "regathering strength" have to do with Growth? It would more accurately be called Growth & Regrouping, but that term proved too unwieldy.)* [5,11]

Health: How much Damage an Invader or Dahan can take before it is Destroyed, or how much Damage a land can take before you add a Blight to it. [9,12]

Healthy: The Island starts the game Healthy. It becomes Tainted when the first pool of Blight (on the Blight card) is emptied and the card flips to the Tainted side. The "FIRST GAME" Blight Card has only a Healthy side. [6]

Inland Land: A land *not* adjacent to the printed Ocean area. [4]

Innate Power: A Power printed on your Spirit mat. [5]

Invader: A City, Town, or Explorer. [6]

Invader Action: One of three bad things the Invaders do - Ravage, Build, or Explore. [12-13]

Invader Stage: The Stage shown on the back of the Invader Deck - I, II, or III.

Land: A bordered area on the island map (other than Ocean). [4]

Land with (buildings, Dahan, Invaders): A land having at least one (building, Dahan, Invader).

Move: To put into a land from somewhere else on the board, via Pushing, Gathering, or other means.

Ocean: Where the Invaders sail in. The stretch of Ocean on each island board shows which lands are coastal (readily accessible from the coast). [4]

Outnumber: "where A outnumbers B" can be true in lands where there is no B. (Eg: "where Dahan outnumber Cities" is true in lands with no Cities, so long as there's 1 or more Dahan.).

Permanent Element: An element shown on a Presence track. While uncovered, it gives an Element of that type. [4]

Power: A Power Card or Innate Power. [7]

Power Card: A Power on a card. May be a Minor Power, a Major Power, or a Unique Power. [7]

Presence: A piece showing where your Spirit lives in the land. [4]

Push: Move to adjacent land(s). [9]

Range: How many lands distant you can use a Power. Measured from your Presence unless otherwise specified. [7]

Ravage: An Invader Action. Invaders deal Damage to the land and Dahan; surviving Dahan then fight back. [12]

Reclaim: Take played Power Cards from your personal discard pile into your hand of available Power Cards.

Reclaim One: Take a single Power Card from your personal discard pile into your hand of available Power Cards. When revealed on a Presence track, may be done once every Spirit Phase, starting immediately.

Remove: Take off the board and return to the supply. Distinct from *Destroy*; Removing Invaders does not cause Fear. [9]

Replace: Remove one piece and put another piece in its place. [9]

Repeat: Use the text effects of a Power again. Doesn't grant additional Elements. Repeats never chain. [10]

Sacred Site: A land where a Spirit has 2 or more Presence. [4]

Scenario: A situation providing alternate rules / victory conditions. Boosts difficulty and changes how the game plays. [16]

Town: A type of Invader piece. Does 2 Damage, has 2 Health. [6]

Stage: See *Invader Stage*.

Tainted: The Island becomes Tainted when all the blight on the front of the Blight card goes onto the board. The "FIRST GAME" Blight Card never becomes Tainted; the players simply lose. [6]

Target: The land or Spirit a Power affects. [7]

GLOSSARY / INDEX

Terrain type: Hills, Jungle, Sands, or Wetland. Each land has one terrain type. [4]

Threshold Effect: Part of a Power's effects which depend on having certain Elements that turn. Elements are never spent; only checked for "do you have them or not?" [7]

Terror Level: A number from 1 - 3, representing how frightened the Invaders are. Sets the current Victory Condition. [9]

Up to: May be zero. "Up to 3" means "0, 1, 2, or 3".

Your Land: A land with your Presence in it. [4]