# BEHIND
## THE
# THRONE

*Secret organizations fight for the right to rule over the Old Kingdom. Intrigue, blackmail and threats are commonplace for those struggling for power in the shadow of the royal throne. The more servants, nobles, and dignitaries they control, the closer to the goal they are.*

**Behind the Throne** *is a simple and fast card game where players collect sets of cards, get special abilities, and acquire victory points. Various abilities make it easier to collect cards. Collected cards determine victory points. Victory points determine the winner.*

## Components

*82 cards: 9 copies of 9 different Characters, End of Game card.*

# Game Setup

**Set the End of Game card** face up in the middle of the table. This will be the first card of the discard pile. Shuffle the remaining cards and place the deck face down in the middle of the table, next to the discard pile. All discarded cards go to the discard pile.

**Variation for number of players**

For two player games, remove four copies of each character card (five character cards of each type are used). For three player games, remove two copies of each character card (seven character cards of each type are used).

# Turn

In his turn, each player reveals cards from the top of the deck and places them, face up, in a row, one by one. The maximum number of cards the player may reveal is **five**; however, the player may stop revealing cards at any time before revealing the fifth card, if desired.

A player's turn ends in one of three ways:

— The player reveals five cards. He **collects** all five cards.

— The player decides to stop revealing cards before he reaches the limit of five. He **collects** all revealed cards (or **swaps** them, see page **4**).

— The player reveals a card with a higher value than the previously revealed card, and he cannot use special abilities to reduce its value. If this happens, he **discards** all the cards in the row (he takes no cards).



The player draws a 4 after a 2;
he discards all revealed cards and his turn ends.

After a player's turn ends, play passes to the player on his left, who takes his turn.

When the deck runs out of cards, take the discard pile (including the End of Game card) and shuffle to create a new deck. Play continues as normal; however, when the End of Game card is drawn, the game **immediately** ends and scoring begins.

## Destroy card

As you reveal cards, you may reveal character cards of equal value (or make them equal by using special abilities). If the final value of the revealed card (at face value, or after after using special abilities) is equal to the value of the previously revealed card, you may **destroy** any other card on the table.

Discard destroyed cards to the discard pile.



**2=4-2**

The player uses the Assassin's ability to change the 4 to 2,
and destroys the opponent's Alchemist.

Normally, you will destroy another player's character card; however, you may destroy one of your own cards, if you want.

When you have multiple chances of destroying cards, you may target a specific player only **once** in a turn.

**Note:** *When you target a player who has the special ability of the* **Alchemist** *character, you must select the* **Alchemist** *card to be destroyed (see* Special Abilities*, page* **6**).

## Card Stacks

When you collect cards (normally, at the end of your turn), place them in front of you. Stack cards representing the same character on top of each other with a slight fan, so the number of cards in the stack is visible for all players. If the card type does not fit any of your current stacks, you must create a new stack for that card type.

Players are limited to a maximum of **five different stacks**. If you must create a new stack and this would take the total number of your stacks above five, you must immediately discard to bring the total number of stacks down to five. You may choose to discard either newly taken cards or stacks of cards you collected in earlier turns, as long as you keep the number of stacks at a maximum of five.

A stack **may never contain** more than **five cards**. As soon as you collect the sixth card of the same type, **discard it**.

You **cannot discard** a card and **must place** it in a stack, if you already have a stack containing the same type of card, and the stack has less than five cards.

## Swap cards

After you finish revealing one or more cards, you **may choose** not to collect them and you may decide instead to **swap all your new cards for a single card** owned by another player. Give all newly revealed cards to your opponent and take one of his cards (not a whole stack).



The player swaps his cards for a Queen.

Your opponent **may stack any** received cards, or discard the newly received cards, just as if it were his turn, following all rules for card stacks (see *Card Stacks*, above).



The player in turn discards one of his stacks to take the Queen.



The other player collects the Judge and discards the rest.

Follow the normal rules to add the card you took from your opponent to your stacks.

**Note:** *When you target a player who has the special ability of the* **Minstrel** *character, you must select the* **Minstrel** *card to be swapped (see* Special Abilities, *page* **6***).*

# Special Abilities

Each type of character in the game has different abilities. Those abilities are divided into three types:

**Manipulative**   **Protective**   **Prohibitive**

To use a **manipulative** or **protective** ability of a card type, you must own the stack with the greatest number of cards (or tie for the greatest number) of that type.

When the number of cards in a stack in front of you is less than the number of cards of the same type in the stack of at least one other player, that ability is not available to you. Mark stacks whose abilities are not available to you by turning the top card of the stack to the horizontal position.

*Important! All players must check available abilities, and mark stacks appropriately, whenever any player collects, destroys, or swaps cards. Mark stacks whose abilities become available by turning the top card of the stack to the vertical position. Likewise, mark the stacks whose abilities become unavailable by turning the top card of those stacks to the horizontal position.*

**Manipulative abilities.** You may use the manipulative abilities of your characters during your turn. You use these abilities to modify the value of the last revealed card in the row

(normally, to continue turning cards and/or to get the possibility of destroying a card).

*Exception: The Prophet allows you to look at the top card of the deck before it is revealed.*

**Prophet**
You can look at the top card of the deck before it is revealed.

**General**
You can reduce the value of the last card in the row by 3.

**Assassin**
You can reduce the value of the last card in the row by 2.

**Jester**
You can increase or reduce the value of the last card in the row by 1.

**Judge**
You can use one of your manipulative abilities even if that stack is in the horizontal position (unavailable or previously used).

You **can** use the ability of each character **once per turn**, regardless of the number of cards in the stack. When you use the ability of a character, mark that stack by turning the top card to the horizontal position.

**Note:** *If the Judge ability is available to a player, that player can use it to activate the manipulative ability of another one of his stacks. When using the Judge, it does not matter if that ability was already used in this turn or not – the Judge can use any ability in the horizontal position from the player's other stacks.*

You **can** use multiple manipulative abilities on a single card you draw.

As soon as the next card from the deck is revealed, the value of the previous card returns to the original printed value.

 **The protective abilities** of the **Minstrel** and **Alchemist** protect the cards you own from actions done by other players in their turn.

Unlike manipulative abilities, protective abilities may be used more than once in a round: they remain available as long as you have the biggest stack (or tie for the biggest stack) for that card type.

 **Minstrel**
Other players **can only swap** the revealed cards in their row for your Minstrel card.

 **Alchemist**
Other players **can only destroy (discard)** your Alchemist card.

 **The prohibitive abilities** of the **King** and **Queen** differ from the other abilities.

Prohibitive abilities are always available, regardless of the number of these cards in the player's stacks. They are, in fact, hindrances, rather than abilities!

 **Queen**
When revealing new cards, you **cannot destroy** cards, unless the number of revealed cards in the row is **greater** than the number of Queen cards in your stack.

 **King**
When revealing new cards, you **cannot swap** your revealed cards for another opponent's card, unless the number of cards in the row is **equal to or greater** than the number of King cards in your stack.

**Note:** *A prohibitive ability has little effect if you have only one Queen or King, but each additional card of the same type limits your possibility to destroy/ swap cards.*

# End of the Turn

Check your stacks. Return the top card of each stack into the vertical position (so the character special ability is available again), if you have the biggest stack (or tie for the biggest stack) for that card type.

# End of the Game

 The game ends immediately when any player reveals the "End of Game" card.

# Winning the Game

Each card stack containing more than one card adds victory points equal to the value of the card. The **number** of cards in the stack is **not** important (only the card value is counted). Stacks with a single card (regardless of value) score zero points.

The player with the most points wins the game. In case of a tie, players share the victory.

22 = 1 + 5 + 7 + 0 + 9

1 + 3 + 4 + 7 + 8 = 23

# Credits