



TO THE BOTTOM

A game of sinking odds and rising tension



RULES





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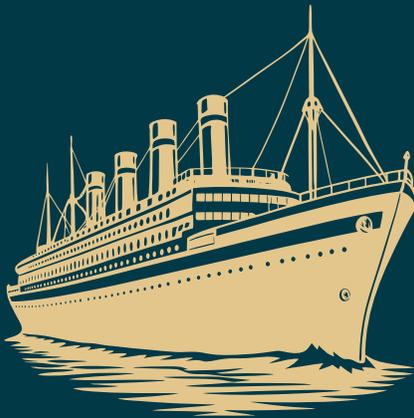
GAME STORY

The narrative of the game is sinking of an ocean liner. Each player represents a ship, its crew and travellers. It is a very sad game because at the end of the day, all the vessels sink to the bottom. The goal is to stay above the water level as long as possible to save as many travellers as possible.

The game consists of two phases – **the Cruise** and **the Sinking**.

During the Cruise phase, players build their decks of cards. The cards represent the crew, travellers and gadgets.

In the Sinking phase, players use their cards and try to rescue crew, travellers and gadgets.



BOARD PREPARATION

PLAYERS' DECK

Each player receive **8 Passenger** and **2 Baby** cards. These 10 cards represent travellers who got on in the first harbour. These cards are players' deck. Shuffle the cards and place your deck in front of you.

Keep all unused Passenger and Baby cards in the box.



SHOP

Place **Iceberg** card on the table in between of the players. Shuffle the rest of the cards and place 5 randomly chosen cards face up next to the Iceberg card. All the other cards represent the drawing deck.



This space is called Shop. All players share the same Shop.

CRUISE

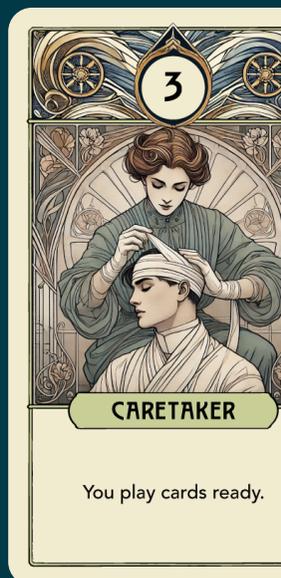
Cruise is a deckbuilding phase. A turn of Cruise represents a stop in a harbour, with new travellers entering the ship.

The **tallest player starts** the game by drawing **3 cards** from their deck into their **hand**. In the beginning, the deck only consists of Passenger and Baby cards. All other cards get shuffled, and they wait in a drawing deck that is common for all the players.

Every card has a **point value** shown in the upper part of its front side. **To buy a card from the shop, you must have jettisoned card(s) from your hand with at least the same points.** To jettison means to move the card into the water. The water represents a player's discard pile. Place cards into your water faced up. The points of jettisoned cards are pooled (imagine you use an abacus).

To buy a card worth 3 points, a player must first have jettisoned card(s) worth 3 points, e.g. 3 Passengers or 1 Passenger and 1 Baby.

If a player jettisoned 2 Babies to buy Caretaker, the remaining 1 point is not lost until the end of the player's turn and can be used for buying further cards from the shop.



The player can buy any card in the shop (the 5 random cards or the Iceberg). As soon as the player buys one of the 5 cards, the card is **immediately replaced** by another one from the common drawing deck of all cards. Bought cards go face up on a discard pile (water) together with cards that have been jettisoned this turn.

In case the player has unspent points or decides to jettison more cards from their hand, they can continue buying cards.

A player does not have to use all their points.

The unused points expire after the turn. Once the player does not want to perform anything else in their turn, they announce their turn is over.

*Also, the player can use the points for **playing** their cards from their hand onto their board.*

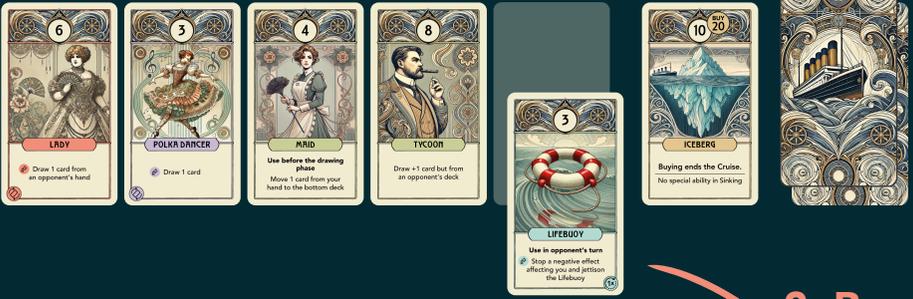
This option is open in both phases of the game, however, the rules for playing and using cards will be explained in the Sinking section of this rulebook.

**Let's take a look at an example
of players' turn**



SHOP

3. Replace



2. Buy

PLAYERS' BOARD



Deck Water



1. Jettison

Hand

In this example, the player jettisoned Rats worth 3 points. They decided to buy Lifebuoy of the price 3. The player put both cards into their water and drew a new card to fill the emptied slot in Shop.

The player could also have bought Polka Dancer instead of Lifebuoy; or jettison a Passenger worth 1 point together with Rats to buy Maid; or they could have just skipped the buying phase and wait for another turn to draw more cards and eventually use them to buy Lady or Tycoon.

In their turn, the first player draw 3 cards. The second player draws 4 cards; the third player and every player after draws 5 on default (cards like Fisherman played on board can alter the number). Players take turns clockwise.

Drawing cards happens in the beginning of a player's turn. Once the player shall draw a card while the deck is out of cards, shuffle the discard pile (water) and make it a new deck.

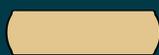
CARD LIMIT IN HAND

At the end of their turn, a player must not have more cards in hand than **5**. The player chooses which cards they keep. The discarded cards go to water.

ENDING THE CRUISE

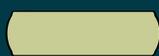
Cruise ends as soon as a player buys **Iceberg**. The Iceberg has a point value of 10 and no special ability. Its buying price is 20, though. For the additional 10 points, the player buys the **advantage to start the Sinking**.

For better orientation among the cards, their frontides are equiped with different colour motives.

 *Cards without a special ability*

 *Offensive cards*

 *Defensive cards*

 *Cards with a passive effect*

 *Cards with a special effect*

SINKING

In the Sinking phase, the clock is ticking. Unlike in the Cruise phase, the water does not get shuffled once no card can be drawn from a player's deck. The thinning deck represents a sinking ship, a final countdown.

PHASE SETUP

Your ship has hit the Iceberg, you no longer cruise from harbour to harbour. Remove the Shop, it will no longer be used.

Each player takes all cards from their hand, their deck, and their water and shuffles them together. These cards will represent player's decks for the Sinking.

In case a player played any cards on board during the Cruise phase, these cards stay on board.

Then each player draws exactly 5 cards from their deck to their hand. **The player who bought Iceberg during Cruise plays first, draws 0 cards and proceeds with their turn.**

After the beginning player ends their turn, the next player only draws 1 card; the next player draws 2 cards; after that, all players draw 3 cards by default (there are modifiers, e.g. Fisherman; the modifiers apply to the first 3 turns too).

The slowed drawing in the beginning of both phases is meant to prevent the first players from having an advantage. This rule applies even if there are just two players.

ATTENTION:

Unlike in Cruise, there is **no card limit for your hand in Sinking**.

PLAYING CARDS ON BOARD

In Sinking, you cannot buy any new cards from the shop. There is no shop anymore, your ship hit an iceberg and is doomed! However, in both phases you will still be able to jettison cards to gain their points. You can use the points to play cards from your hand on your board. To play a card, you must have jettisoned card(s) from your hand with at least the same points.

If you have at least **5 cards on your board**, playing additional cards costs twice as many points. If you have at least **10 cards on your board**, the cost triples etc. Therefore, think carefully which cards you want to play.

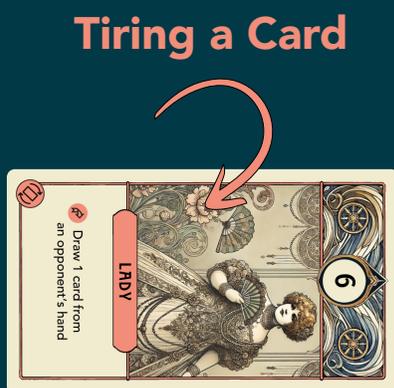
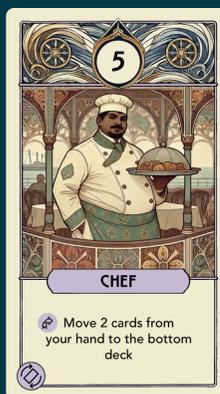


Pay 12



x2
points

When the card is played on board, it starts performing its function (see the text on the card). Some cards must initiate their action by tiring (see the symbol ). To signal a card is tired, turn it 90°. A tired card cannot perform its action anymore. Activating a card that requires tiring is optional.



ATTENTION:

Cards with this symbol:  
enter the board tired! It means they cannot use their action in the turn they have been played.

In the beginning of your turn, ready (un-tire) all tired cards, turn them back to the default position.

TURN COURSE

1. **Readying of all your cards**
2. **Effects before the Drawing**
(e.g. Maid)
3. **Drawing**
(including Tycoon's effect)
4. **Sacrificing**
= Jettisoning of cards from your hand to your water for gaining points
5. **Playing cards on board and using their actions**
6. **End of turn**
- the remaining points get lost

You can always jump between steps 4 and 5.



The fun comes from a conflict of two objectives!

DRAWING SPEED

Some cards affect the number of cards you draw. The more cards you draw, the more operational you become, the more you can control the game. But remember, drawing cards pushes you to the inevitable end as once you shall draw another card while your deck is empty, your ship sinks, and your game is over.

On the other hand, if you slow down the drawing, you can keep the cards longer in your deck which basically represents your life points. It may, however, make you an easier target to your aggressive opponents.

VALUE POINTS

The vast majority of cards can be utilized in two ways. Playing them on board which allows you to use their effects and actions; and sacrificing (jettisoning) for points in order to play another card(s). The higher the point value of the card, the more useful it generally is. On the other hand, the more valuable it is as a sacrifice.

Cruise phase also draws from a conflict of objectives!

You might be tempted to buy a lot of cheap cards to build a thicker deck that sinks longer. On the other hand, more expensive cards have also their advantages. Usually, they are more useful on board. Also, they allow for bigger purchases during the Cruise. A deck bloating with cheap cards can be slow in both phases of the game.

Buying cheap cards in the beginning of the Cruise may be a tactical mistake, however, in case you don't like any of the 5 random cards, you might invest couple of points to see the card that comes next. Also, you don't want your points to expire.

You might also decide to put some cheap cards such as Passenger on board in Cruise so that more valuable cards are being drawn more often. However, these Passengers can eventually cause that playing cards becomes more expensive if you reach the 5 cards on board limit.

Always consider your strategy and the right balance of your deck.

GAME END

In case the number of cards in your deck goes to zero and at the same time you shall draw another card, it means the ship has sunk and you stop playing. All your cards except for the cards on board leave the game for good.

The cards on board are rescued and saved. They cannot be targeted by any effects anymore. Count their values, they represent your **Victory score**.

Other players keep playing until they also cannot draw another card. Once all ships have sunk, **the player(s) with the highest Victory score win.**

HAVE FUN



SUMMARY

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PHASES

CRUISE

Initial cards in hand - 0 cards in hand in the beginning

Drawing - the first player draws 3 cards, the next player draws 4 cards and then each player draws 5 cards by default.

Hand limit - the hand limit is 5 cards at the end of a player's turn.

Shop - you can use points to buy new cards from shop or to play cards on board.

Shuffling water - if you shall draw a card and there are no cards left in your deck, shuffle all cards in your water and make it a new deck.

SINKING

Initial cards in hand - 5 cards in hand in the beginning

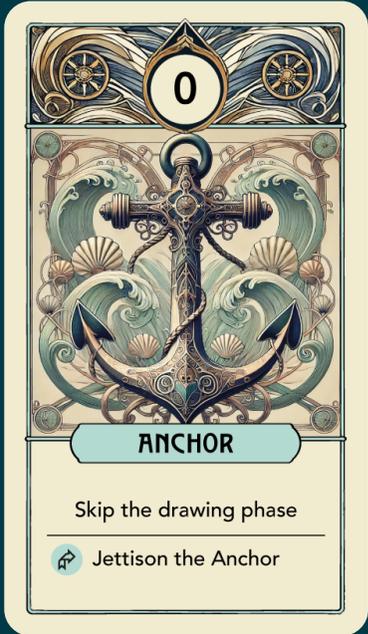
Drawing - the first player draws 0 card, the next player draws 1 card, the next player draws 2 cards and then each player draws 3 cards by default.

Hand limit - no hand limit.

Shop - you can only use points to play cards on board. There is no shop.

Shuffling water - if you shall draw a card and there are no cards left in your deck, you stop playing, all your cards but those on board leave the game and the cards on board count into your Victory score.

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO CARDS



ANCHOR

Once you have played Anchor on board, you skip the drawing phase altogether. No modifiers are applied. In case you have Fisherman, Stoker or Tycoon on board, ignore them.

In your turn phase 4 or 5, you can decide to jettison Anchor to avoid further skipping of the upcoming drawing phases.

ARBITER

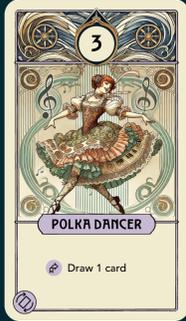
As Arbiter has a passive effect as it is green, you must use its action at the end of your turn.

See 2 situations below for better understanding.

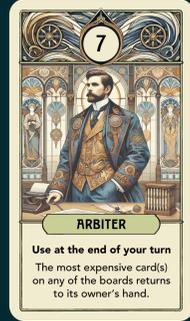


Situation 1

OPPONENT BOARD



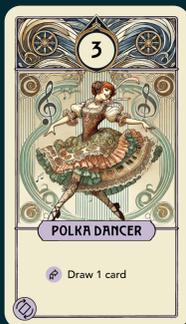
YOUR BOARD



The most expensive card on any of the boards is Pirate (12). Opponent 1 must take this card of the board to hand.

Situation 2

OPPONENT BOARD



YOUR BOARD



The most expensive card on any of the boards are Steersman and Arbiter himself (7). Both cards must return to its owner's hand.

In case of Iceberg and Lifeboat, consider the standard value (10) when deciding how expensive the card is.



ASSISTANT

When playing Assistant on board, put it on top of another card on your board to double its effect and protect it.

Once merged, you cannot merge Assistant with another card.

Keep in mind that Assistant is also counted in the board limit.



In this case, Assistant is merged with Polka Dancer. You have 5 cards on board now. Playing another card on board would cost you double the standard cost.

In case an opponent's card attacks Polka Dancer, they must attack Assistant first. When you tire Polka Dancer, draw 2 cards. In case you merge Assistant with a card that gets jettisoned by your own action instead of an opponent's attack, the card is still protected. For instance, if you have merged Assistant with Convict, activating Convict will provide 12 points instead of 6 and Assistant is jettisoned instead of Convict.

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BAND

Band cannot be jettisoned either by your opponents or by yourself, unless you have 5 cards on your board.

This means that you cannot use it for buying cards from Shop in Cruise (unless you have for example 4 Passengers and 1 Baby on board).

BAND

Can only be jettisoned if you have at least 5 cards on board.

It also means that neither can your opponent jettison Band from your board (e.g. using Fanatic), nor can you do it (e.g. using Profiteer); Band cannot even be jettisoned from your hand by Saboteur or from your deck by Torpedo – unless you have at least 5 cards on board (including Band if it is on board). In case Band shall be jettisoned from your hand or deck, it will stay in your hand or deck respectively.

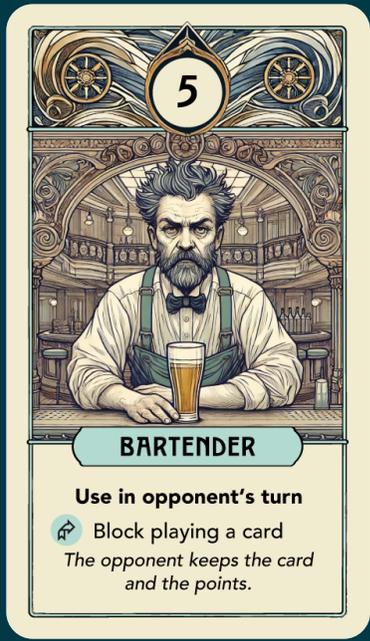
BOOGEYMAN

You can have the opponents show you the cards in their hands in your turn or in theirs in case they interact with you. In combination with cards like Lady or Saboteur, you can effectively choose the card.

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BOOGEYMAN

You can view opponents' hands.



BARTENDER

Let's assume your opponent jettisons Seal (5) to play Stoker (5). By activating Bartender, you can prevent the Stoker from entering your opponent's board this turn.

The Stoker goes back to your opponent's hand, however, the Seal has been jettisoned.

The opponent still has 5 points at disposal that can be used for playing other cards than the Stoker.

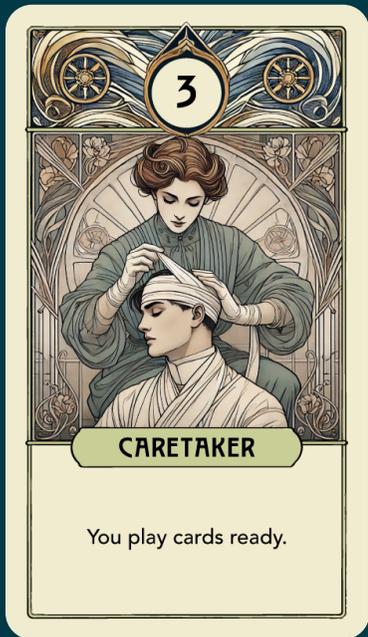
In the rare case when your opponent has another copy of Stoker in their hand, they can play the copy.

Bartender specifically blocks playing a card. If a card moves on board by another action (such as by using Life Jacket), he cannot block it.

CARETAKER

Ignore this symbol:  

You can use cards' action in the turn you play them on board.



CARETAKER

You play cards ready.

FLAPPER

The effect activates both when you jettison the card yourself (even though Flapper does not contribute point for playing or buying cards) and when Flapper is jettisoned in any other way (e.g. by Torpedo).

Flapper's effect does not tire the opponent's card.



ICEBERG & LIFEBOAT

The point value of 10 applies in every situation except for buying the card.

In case you have Iceberg or Lifeboat on board at the end of the game, it grants you 10 victory points.



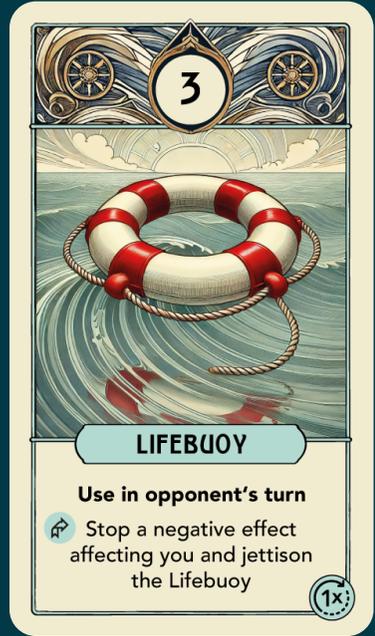
JACK, CHEF, MAID, etc.

The bottom deck means the lowest position in your deck.

LIFEBUOY

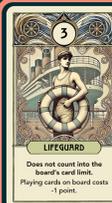
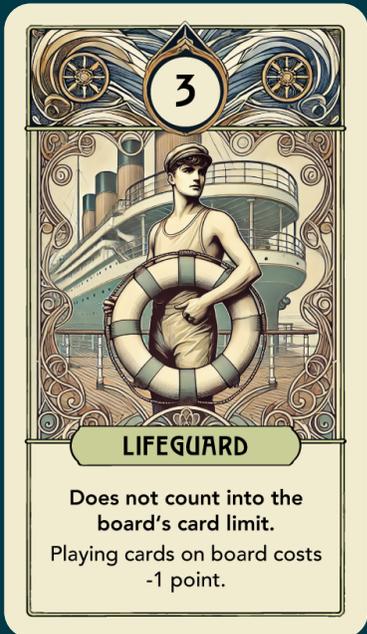
Lifebuoys stop only the effect targeting you, not the whole action (compare with Ship Guard). This means that you can stop a passive effect too, such as Tycoon's.

You can only use the Lifebuoys once, then it is jettisoned.



LIFEGUARD

Look at the situation below. Lifeguard is the 5th card on your board. You can play one more card without multiplying its price. Also, playing the card is discounted by 1. This allows you to play a Passenger for free. The next Passenger would cost 1 to play (1x2 -1). The minimum price of playing cards is 0.



Cost 1

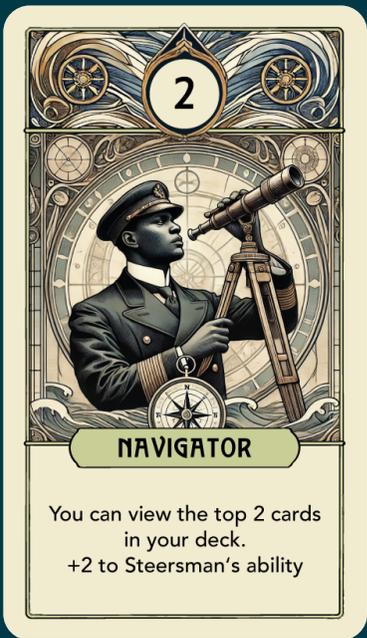
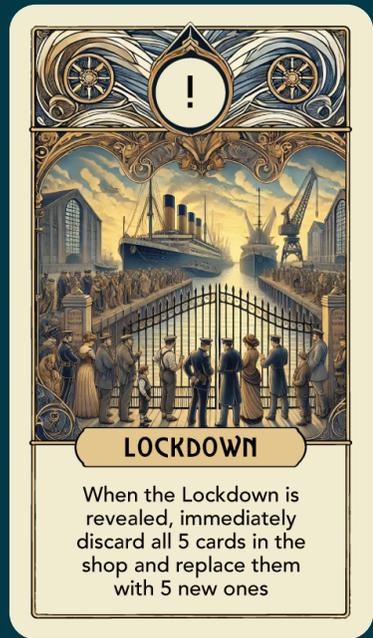


For free

LOCKDOWN

Lockdown is a special card that may appear in the shop. If it appears, immediately replace all 5 cards in the shop. (The iceberg remains.)

This card cannot be bought.



NAVIGATOR

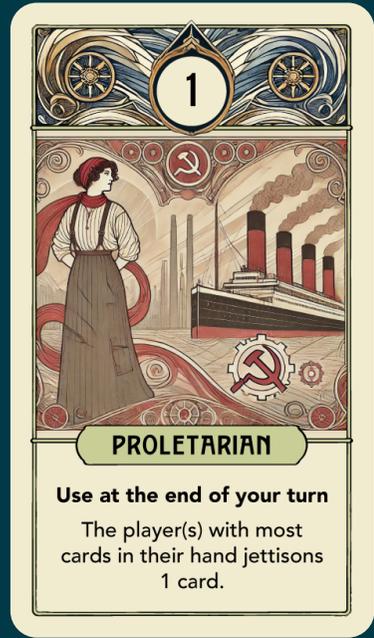
You can view the 2 top cards in your deck any time, including during your opponent's action such as of Burglar. This might help you decide whether to stop the action by a defensive card such as Ship Guard.

In case you have Steersman on board as well, you can view and rearrange the top 5 cards in your deck any time.

In the rare occasion when you have two Navigators and a Steersman, you can view and rearrange top 7 cards. 2 Navigators without a Steersman do not add up to their own abilities though. 2 Steersmen also do not add up to their own abilities.

PROLETARIAN

The player(s) who must jettison their card choose which card.



ROSE

Rose always goes on your board no matter the way she was jettisoned.

If you jettison her to gain her points for playing/buying cards, immediately put her on board.

If Rose was the 5th card added to your board this way, the card you want to play will be twice as expensive to play.

You can even combine Rose with Profiteer and jettison her each turn.

SEAL

In case you jettison for example Pirate (12), you can decide to jettison Seal with him and get 24 points (instead of $12 + 5$).

You can also jettison Seal individually for its 5 points; that means that when you jettison Passenger and Seal, you gain 6 points.



In case you jettison Seal with a card and your opponent has Teacher, they can use her ability to pay for both the Seal and the other card. In such case, the price the player with the Teacher shall pay for Seal is 5 no matter the price of the other card.



SHIP GUARD

Ship Guard's effect stops the whole action. In case Ship Guard stops an effect of Saboteur who attacks multiple opponents, none of the opponents is affected by Saboteur.

Ship Guard can stop any action that requires tiring of a card. The action does not have to impact you, and it does not have to have a negative effect.

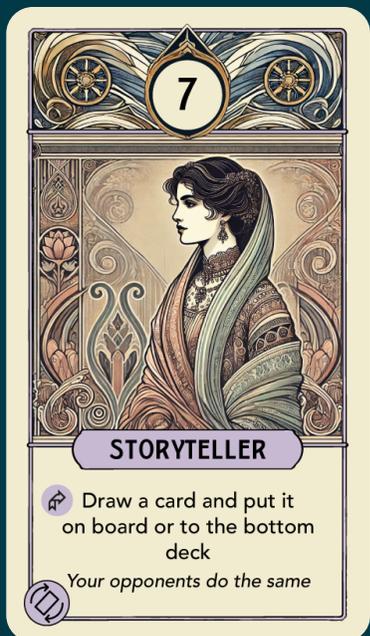
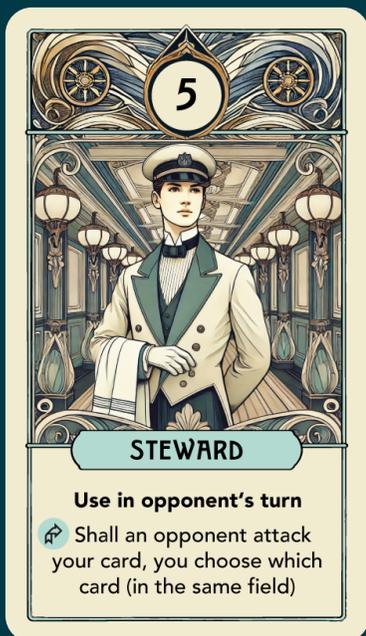
STEWARD

In case your opponent attacks a card on your board, you can tire Steward.

A card on your board is still being attacked; however, you select the target, not your opponent.

When your opponent attacks a card in your hand, by using Steward, you can select the card in your hand.

When your opponent attacks a card in your deck, by using Steward, you can select the card in your deck (in this case, you typically cannot see the cards' faces, unless you have Navigator or Steersman on board).



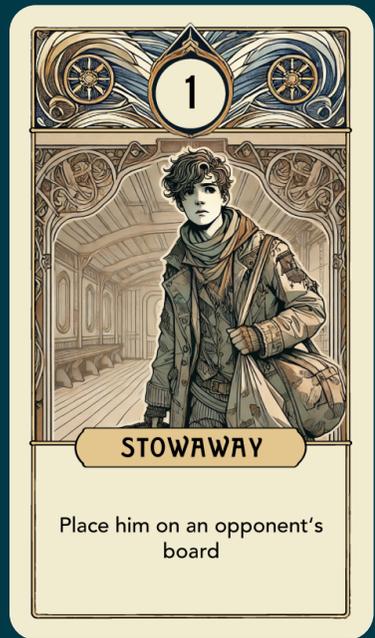
STORYTELLER

Your opponents repeat the whole action, meaning they can decide for themselves whether to put the card on their board or to the bottom of their deck.

STOWAWAY

In case there are 5 or more cards on your board, the price for playing Stowaway on your opponent's board multiplies.

The number of cards on your opponent's board does not affect the price you need to pay.



TEACHER

In case there are 5 or more cards on your board, the price you need to pay multiplies following the standard rules.

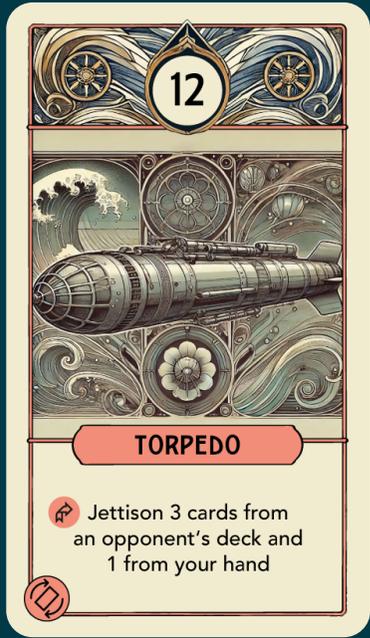
The card could have been jettisoned by any means, e.g. by a Fanatic activated by a third player.



TECHNICIAN

Technician himself might be among the cards you decide to move.





TORPEDO

In case you don't have any card in your hand, Torpedo cannot be tired/used.

TYCOON

You can decide whether you draw first from your opponent's deck or from your own.

Typically, it does not make any difference, however, you can end your Sinking by failing to draw a card from your deck. In this case, you can still harm your opponent.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the people who contributed to the making of this game.

Simona Jedlinská

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Jan Jedlinský

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Jiří Hevera

THANK YOU

