Card Crawler

A solitaire dungeon crawling and deck-building game

Number of players: 1 Game duration: 5-10 min

Objective

Your land is under attack by monsters, lead by the Dark Lord and his four Knights. They hide in the shadows of the Cursed Fortress, not so far from your village. Several attempts have been made to stop this evil, but none of the brave adventurers ever returned... It is now your turn to attempt the impossible. Go forth and slay the Dark Lord!

Setup

- Use a standard deck of 52 playing cards and one joker.
- Pull out the 1-10 of Hearts and stack them in order, face up with the 10 on top. This is your Life Deck.
- Shuffle the 1-6 of Clubs, Diamonds, Spades and place this deck face down. These are your actions/inventory.
- Shuffle the remaining 25 cards and deal them face down in a 5×5 grid. Keep some space to allow the cards to rotate by 90 degrees. This is the Fortress.
- Draw the first 5 cards from the deck, this is your hand.
- Use any kind of token to represent where your Hero is located. Place it anywhere near a card on the outer rim of the 5×5 area. This is the entrance of the fortress.

Vocabulary

- *Discard*: place card face up next to your deck. It will be reshuffled when your draw pile is empty.
- *Trash*: remove card completely from the game.
- *Unknown/Revealed/Empty*: A room has three states. At the beginning all rooms are *Unknown* (face down). When you enter a room, it is *Revealed* (face up) and you can perform actions inside. If you loot some treasure/weapon from the room, trigger a spell, or kill a monster without looting its body: turn the room card by 90 degrees. It is now *Empty* and cannot be looted again. You may of course still travel through.

Card values

Numbered cards are interpreted differently if they are in the fortress or in your hand.
In the fortress, cards are defined by their suite. Diamonds are *Treasures*, Clubs are *Weapons/Armor*, and Spades are *Monsters*. In your hand, these cards represent action points.
At the end of the game, Diamonds cards in your deck count as victory points.

Numbers on the Spades cards represent the monsters power. When you reveal a monster with a power P, it has an attack/defense of P/2P. For instance the 6 of Spades is a 6/12 monster.

Black Joker is the Dark Lord of the Fortress. He has a power of 15 (attack/defense = 15/30).

Kings are the four Knights. They have a power of 10 (attack/defense = 10/20). Once looted, *Kings* can be discarded for movement, but do NOT count as attack/defense cards.

Queens are companions who will help you in your quest. You get 5 additional victory points per collected Queen still with you at the end of the game. Q of Diamonds, Clubs, and Spades are placed next to your Life deck when collected. Q of Hearts goes to your discard pile.

- Q_Hearts "*The Healer*" is played from your hand, either as a normal action card, or to heal 1 wound up to 10 HP max.
- Q_Diamonds "*The Strong One*" limits your exhaustion. See "End of Turn" for details.
- Q_Clubs "*A Helpful Hand*" gives you one more action per turn by extending the size of your hand to 6 cards.
- Q_Spades "*The Fighter*" helps you fighting. *Trash* it to double your attack/defense points this turn.

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Jacks are events happening in the room they are found in. They can be good (red) or bad (black). They are activated the first time a hero enters their room. After activation the room is marked as *Empty* (rotate the Jack 90 degrees).

- J_Hearts heals one wound up to 10 HP max.
- J_Diamonds reveals all adjacent rooms.
- J_Spades deals one wound. Can be prevented by trashing one card.
- J_Clubs reveals all adjacent rooms in the order North-East-South-West. In addition, the first Monster newly revealed this way attacks the player (ranged attack).

Game play

Each turn has 2 phases:
1. Action: Take as many actions as you want/can.
2. End of turn: Draw cards to refill your hand to a maximum of 5 (6 if you have collected Q_Clubs).

Action

Most actions require that you discard a card from your hand. Therefore the size of your hand limits the number of actions you can take each turn. You do not have to use all your actions each turn. Unused cards remain in your hand for the next turn. You can perform four types of actions:

- **Explore**: If your current location does not contain a monster, you may *discard* one card to enter to move to an adjacent room (cardinal directions). If the room contains a monster, you may *trash* one card AND take one wound of damage to move back to an adjacent *Revealed/Empty* room. If this was the first room you ever entered, you are allowed to use this rule to exit the fortress and try another entrance. This is the only case when exiting the fortress is allowed.

- **Attack a monster**: To defeat it you must inflict damage greater than the monster's defense. Your damage is the sum of the values of the action cards you *discard* for this fight. If the room contains a monster and you did not kill it, it will automatically attack you with its power. You cannot flee from this attack until next turn. You may discard action cards and use their value as defense. If the monster power exceeds the power of your defense, you suffer wounds equal to the difference monster attack minus player defense. Alive monsters are back at full health in the next turn.

- **Heal a wound**: *Trash* a card to heal one wound. Note that you heal a maximum of one wound per card, regardless of the card value. Use the Hearts cards to keep track of your wounds.

- **Loot**: Place the room card into your discard pile and replace it with one from your hand, rotated by 90 degrees. The room has been looted and is now *Empty*.

Dead monsters not collected as *Loot* while you are in the room cannot be picked up later. Mark the room as *Empty* by rotating the card in-place by 90 degrees.

End of Turn

As you progress in the game, the deck represents your experience and exhaustion. You improve it by replacing cards with better ones. At the end of your turn, you must draw cards to refill your hand to a maximum of 5 (6 if you have collected Q_Clubs). If there are no cards available, shuffle your discard pile and reuse it as a new deck. Every time you do this, you suffer *two* wounds (*one* if you have collected Q_Diamonds).

End of Game

The game ends with your death, or after you have killed the Dark Lord AND collected his body. If you slay him but do not have an action card to collect his body, he will come back to life at the next turn.
If you win you can see how well you performed by counting all victory points in your deck, hand, discard pile plus the Queens you have collected and your life points.
Cards on the board do not count as Victory Points.

Maximum number of points = 200
- Black Joker = 30
- Kings 4×20 = 80
- Queens 4×5 = 20
- All Diamonds = 55
- Your life (max 10) = 10
- No trashed cards + 5 bonus

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