

Sprout

Storybook



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STORY

Once upon a time there were four friends from a far away land. What land they came from doesn't matter. Neither does why they left. What does matter, dear reader, is where they washed up. The friends found themselves on a lifeless island, which they named the Barren. They were amazed at the Barren, not for what was on it, but rather for what wasn't.

"Where are the grass and trees?" said Sprout, the intrepid leader of the four.

"Where are the rivers and lakes?" said Flow, his oldest friend, who may or may not have been responsible for getting them lost at sea to begin with.

"Where are the nuts and fruit?" said Seed, who wished they'd brought a larger store of food with them on their adventure.

"Where are the clouds and snowflakes?" said Chill, who did not at all like how unseasonably warm the island's strange black sand felt on her toes.

Fortunately, these four friends were lifelings, and all you need to know about lifelings is that where they go, life follows.

So they set out to different sides of the Barren. Sprout planted grass and wild meadows. Flow dug lakes and rivers. Seed tilled the soil and readied it for harvest. Chill cooled the hot sands and calmed the strange, steaming fissures.

All of this seemed very good to the little lifelings, but as you and I know, and they are about to find out, there is another player on the board.

You see, the Barren already has a master. The Doom, an ancient malevolent force, has lived inside the island's volcanic heart for many ages, give or take a day. With the help of its agents, the flamelings, the Doom works tirelessly to keep the Barren barren. As soon as the lifelings arrived, its anger boiled, and the Doom set plans in motion to erupt the volcano in one year's time.

Can the lifelings bring the Barren to life and calm the heart of the Doom before their new home burns?

This is where you come in.

THE QUICK RULES

Read this section out loud to all new players.
Identify game pieces and demonstrate examples as you read.
Refer to the remainder of this book as needed for gameplay details.



You are a **lifeling**.
← One of these guys, specifically. →



You have each arrived on this island with nothing except your **character card**, a stack of **life tiles**, and a song in your heart.

Look at your character cards to determine which tiles belong to your lifeling.

What song you carry in your heart is entirely up to you.



The island is called **the Barren**.

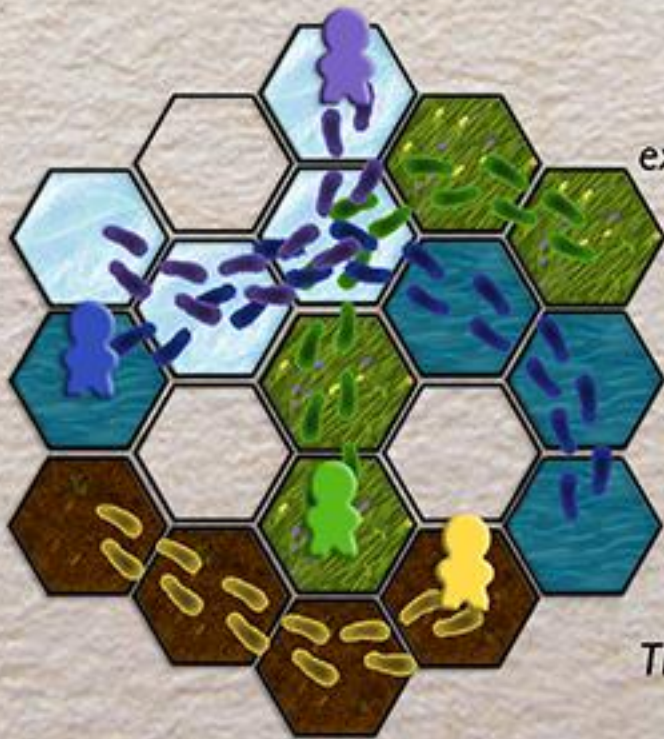
Your goal is to fill the Barren with **life tiles**.

Yes, including that scary space in the middle.



You do this by using your **actions** and **special abilities**.

Each lifeling has different special abilities, some of which cause exceptions to the rules. See what your lifeling can do on pages 8-9.



Follow the **round order**, which you'll find written in the lower left corner of the board, to determine whose turn it is.

On your lifeling's turn, you must take **4 actions** in any combination.

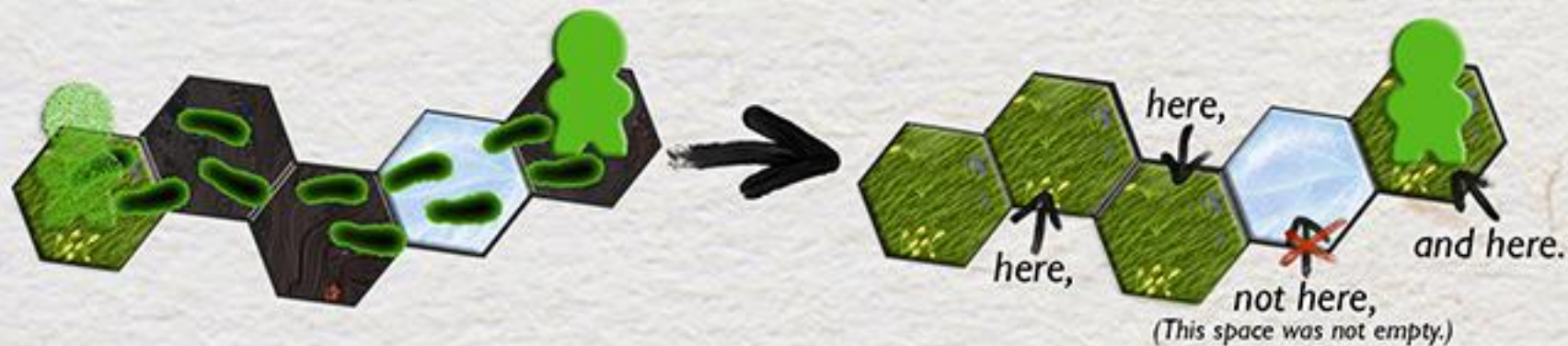
There are 6 types of actions: **walk**, **overgrow**, **clear**, **distract**, **revive** and **swim**. Learn more about these on pages 6-7.



The most important action is **walk**.



Every time you walk over an empty space, your life tile **grows** in that space.
For example, if Sprout walks from here to here, place a grass tile:



Some lifelings' special abilities allow them to automatically grow on more than just empty spaces.
For example, Chill's "Permafrost" ability forces her to grow ice everywhere she walks.



That's all there is to it.

Just kidding. Of course, there are obstacles....



Obstacle #1: Ash

You can't walk on it. (It's too hot!)



Get rid of it by using your **clear** action! (Page 7)



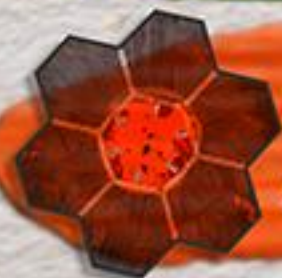
Obstacle #2: Flamelings

They **burn** away your life tiles, cause **explosions**, spread ash, and can **knock you out!**

(They have their own special movement. See the Doom Character Card and page 10 for details.)



Avoid them, **distract** them, or slow them down by **drowning!** (Page 11)



Obstacle #3: The Maw

It keeps spitting out new **flamelings** to get in your way. Also, you can neither walk on nor place a tile on this space.

Close the maw and then fill the space. (Page 14)



Obstacle #4: The Doom Track

At the end of each round, it counts down toward a game ending volcanic eruption!

Fill the island with life before the track reaches the end and **you win!**



4

Now go play the game!

The following pages will show you how to get started.



SET UP

1. Disperse ash.

- Stack 2 ash tiles on each of the 6 barren spaces on the inner most ring of the board.
- Place 1 ash tile on each of the 12 barren spaces on the second ring of the board.
- Remaining 8 ash tiles should be stored in the “ash stash” at the upper left corner of the board.



2. Assign roles.

- Give players lifeling character cards. (Random or player’s choice.)
 - 4 Players – 1 lifeling character per player
 - 3 Players – P1 & P2 choose 1 character each, P3 controls remaining 2 characters
 - 2 Players – P1 take Sprout & Flow / P2 take Seed & Chill
 - 1 Player – Player controls all characters
- Assign the Doom.
 - Beginning with the person controlling Sprout, give them the Doom character card, flamelings, and the die. Pass the role of the Doom to the left after every Doom turn.

3. Starting positions.

- Place lifeling pawns in their starting circles on the board.
- Give the player controlling each character their corresponding life tiles.
- Place the turn marker on Doom Turn 1.
- Place the doom track marker on the number 1 space on the doom track.

DIFFICULTY

Change the difficulty by starting the doom track marker at a different point on the doom track.

BEGINNER: 1 / VETERAN: 3 / LUNATIC: 5



ORDER OF PLAY

Players proceed by the following round order until end game conditions are met. Use the turn marker to keep track of whose turn you are on.



ROUND ORDER

1. Doom Turn 1
2. Lifeling Turn: Sprout
3. Lifeling Turn: Flow
4. Doom Turn 2
5. Lifeling Turn: Seed
6. Lifeling Turn: Chill
7. Doom track marker moves

LIFELING TURNS

Each lifeling must take **4 actions** per turn. Actions may be done in any order or combination. (e.g.: *clear, walk, walk, walk / walk, clear, plant, plant / distract, swim / etc.*)

FIRST TURN

A lifeling's first action must be to walk onto the island via any of the five spaces adjacent to their starting area. They may then complete their turn with remaining actions of their choice.

LIFELING ACTIONS



WALK - Move to any one adjacent space.

- Lifelings cannot walk on *water, ash, the open maw, or any space that is currently occupied by a flaneling*
- Lifelings may share a space with other lifelings at any time.
- When a lifeling walks on a space, it might trigger a tile to **grow**.

NEW GROWTH

Growing is automatic and part of the walk action. All lifelings grow on empty spaces, but some have special abilities that allow them to grow elsewhere. See page 4 or refer to the below chart for examples:

GROW = Place one life tile on top of the current space for free.

If you walk on...	Barren or the Closed Maw.	Soil.	Ice.	Grass.	Water.	The Open Maw or Ash.
	grow grass.	grow grass.	do nothing.	do nothing.	can't walk.	can't walk.
	grow water.	grow grass.	do nothing.	do nothing.	do nothing.	can't walk.
	grow soil. (optional)	grow soil. (optional)	grow soil. (optional)	grow soil. (optional)	can't walk.	can't walk.
	grow ice.	grow ice.	do nothing.	grow ice.	grow ice.	can't walk.



OVERGROW - Add one life tile to the current space.

- Characters can only add their assigned tile types. (Some exceptions in special abilities.)
- Multiples of the same tile types can be stacked on top of each other.
- This action can be used on any walkable space.

NATURAL SCARCITY

There is a limited number of tiles in the game. If you run out, you must wait for some to be burned before you can add more. Grow wisely.



KNOCK OUT!

A lifeling becomes knocked out if a flameling explodes on or adjacent to their current space. (See page 12) The lifeling loses its turn until revived.



CLEAR - Remove one ash tile from an adjacent space.

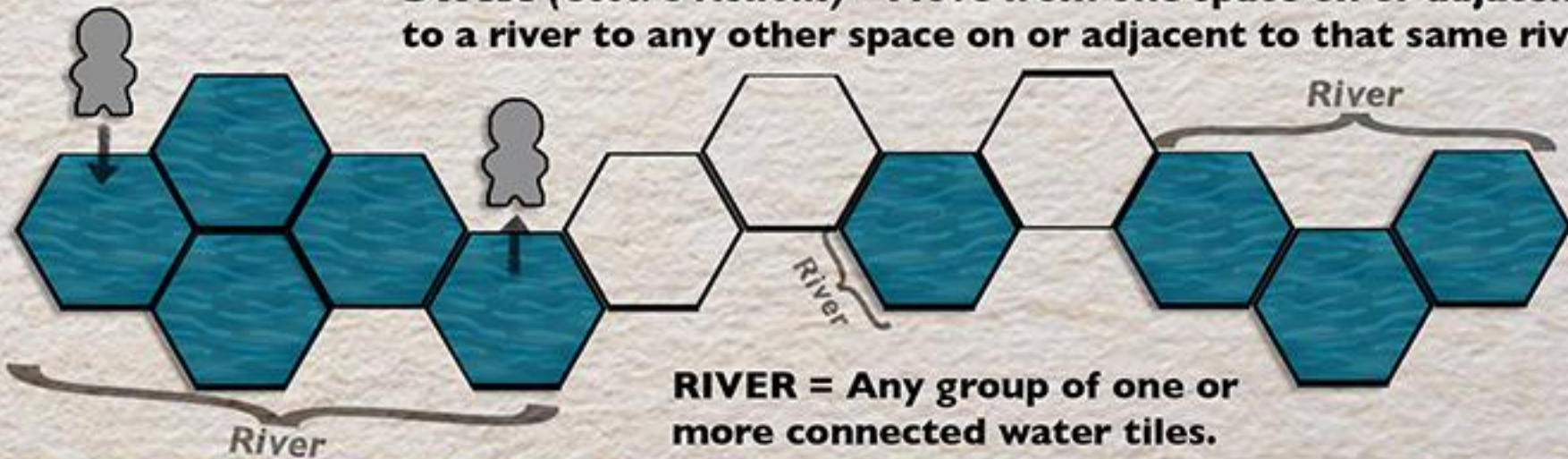


DISTRACT - Turn one flameling currently occupying an adjacent space to point toward your pawn.



REVIVE - Restore one knocked out lifeling on an adjacent space to normal.

- Set lifeling's pawn upright. They may now play as normal.
- Ash must be removed from under knocked out piece first.

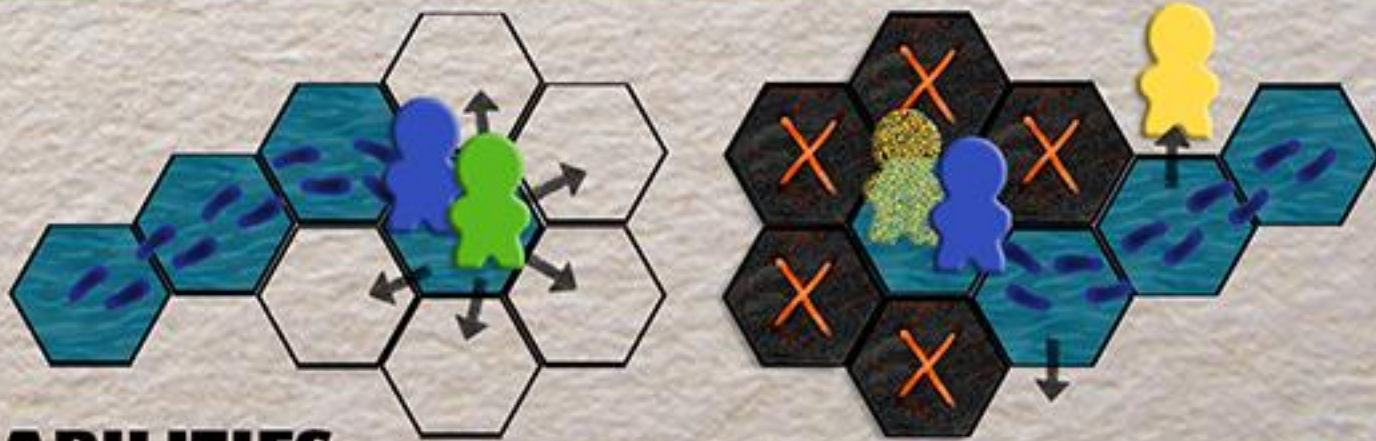


SWIM (Cost: 3 Actions) - Move from one space on or adjacent to a river to any other space on or adjacent to that same river.

RIVER = Any group of one or more connected water tiles.

SWIM REACTIONS

If Flow places water under Sprout or Seed, then they immediately move to an adjacent, non-water space of their choice or the nearest walkable space along the river.



SPECIAL ABILITIES

Every lifeling is unique and their abilities are as unique as they are. These powers can break or bend rules, where applicable. When used together, they open up creative, cooperative strategies. Read about your character's abilities in the "Characters and Abilities" section on the next page or on your character card.

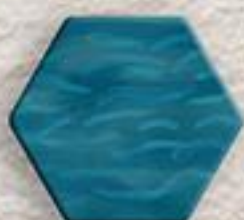
Characters & Abilities



Swift-footed Sprout is the leader of our hapless band of explorers. Curious and optimistic, Sprout believes adventure is hiding around every corner and lurking under every igneous rock. What he may lack in cunning, he makes up for in charm. Meadows follow him wherever he goes, and flowers spring up where he sleeps.

Special Abilities:

- Swift Foot:** Has *five actions* per turn instead of four.
- Rapid Growth:** Automatically grows *grass* when walking on *soil*.
- Delegator:** May sacrifice up to *two* of his actions and give them to other lifelings within the same round. (The actions may be given to separate characters, but Sprout must declare where the actions are going during his turn. In the event of a knock out preventing the actions from being used, unused actions may be rolled over to the next character in the round.)



Fearsome Flow is as formidable as a rapids and wants the world to know it. Sprout's oldest friend, she's the first to have his back when he wanders into danger, which is frequently. Brave and loyal, she's always running forward into the unknown. It rains when she gets angry, and rivers follow her where she runs.

Special Abilities:

- Water Walker:** Can walk on water tiles.
- Rapid Growth:** Automatically grows *grass* when walking on *soil*. (Yes, you read that right. This is a rule exception. You will have to borrow the tiles away from Sprout!)
- Wave Rider:** Can swim for only *one* action.



Seed
the collector



Crafty Seed may not want to be the first to run into danger, or the second, or the third, but he believes in being prepared for anything. In his many pockets, he keeps seeds, nuts, clippings, and other strange things he finds on his travels. He's excited to collect, catalogue, and put to use any and everything. His vast knowledge helps prepare the land for harvest.

Special Abilities:

- Scatter Brain:** Can use overgrow action on an *adjacent* life or barren space. (Includes water spaces. Cannot plant under a flameling.)
- Garden Planner:** Can *optionally* use automatic grow on *any* walkable space.
- Deep Pockets:** Can clear *two* ash at once when using the *clear* action. (Either two from the same space, or one from two different spaces adjacent to Seed.)



Chill
the peacemaker



Ponderous Chill may talk the least of the four friends, but she says the most. She believes in taking a slow, thoughtful approach to every new situation and likes to freeze moments so that they can be remembered. She cares deeply about her friends and does her best to cool them off when they get hot-headed. An air of calm follows her everywhere she goes, as well as a smattering of snow.

Special Abilities:

- Water Walker:** Can walk on water tiles.
- Permafrost:** *Automatically* grow ice on every walkable space, except spaces that are already covered by ice.
- Cool Down:** Can be used as an *action* instead of clear action. Replace one *ash* tile on an adjacent space with a *soil* tile. (Better get Seed's permission to use his soil, of course!)



THE DOOM'S TURN

The Doom acts through its four *flamelings*, who move one at a time in numerical order.

DOOM'S FIRST TURN

Flamelings 1 & 2, exit the maw. Flaming 3 is placed in the *middle* of the spawn track. Flaming 4 begins at the *start* of the spawn track.

EXITING THE MAW

The maw is the mouth of the volcano in the middle of the island. To exit:

1. Roll the die.
2. Place the flaming on the the space *adjacent* to the maw corresponding to the rolled number, point facing outward.
3. Multiple flamelings exiting on the same Doom turn cannot exit on the same space. Reroll until they each have a different number.

- If exiting onto **grass, soil, or ice**, remove top tile from space.
- If exiting onto **water**, place one ash tile on top of water and *then* place flaming. (You *cannot* drown while exiting maw.)
- If exiting onto an **occupied space**, see *Flaming Explodes* section.
- If the **maw is closed**, flamelings can no longer exit maw. Any that are on the spawn track are out of the game.



FLAMELING MOVEMENT

On the spawn track:

Beginning on the “start”, flaming moves one space toward exit each turn. As soon as it touches the “exit” space, *immediately* exit the maw. (See above.)

On the island:

Flaming must move 4 spaces in the direction it is pointed, until it is either **blocked**, **drowns**, or **explodes**. (See next page for more details.) As the flaming moves, it will *burn* away the top life tile on every space it crosses.

BURN = Remove top life tile from the current space and return to lifeling's stash.



BURNING AWAY

Burn is an automatic ability that occurs every time a flaming first enters a new space. (Think: the opposite of the lifelings' grow ability.) If a flaming is stuck on the same space for the duration of its turn (see “Blocked”), it will burn again.

The following chart is a guide for what happens the first time a flameling touches a space:

If you walk on...	Barren, Ash, or Closed Maw.	Soil,	Ice,	Grass,	Water,	The Open Maw
	 do nothing.	 burn soil.	 burn ice.	 burn grass.	 can't walk.	 can't walk. (Jump over instead.)

FLAMELING BLOCKED

A flameling is blocked when its point faces an area it cannot enter. Flamelings cannot enter water, the edge of the board, or a space containing a knocked out lifeling.

- **If blocked during movement**, movement stops immediately. Turn ends.
- **If beginning turn from a blocked position:**
 1. Roll the die.
 2. Turn the flameling's point in the numbered direction indicated by the die. (Positions 1-6 on all island spaces mimic the numbers in the maw.)
 3. If new direction is unblocked, proceed with normal 4 step movement.
 4. If new direction is blocked, burn the top life tile from current space and then end turn.
- **If beginning turn blocked on all sides**, see "Flameling Explodes".

ON THE FLIPSIDE

Sometimes it can be hard to remember which flameling turn you are on. Flip used flamelings to their dull side after their movements are expended and turn them all back at the end of the turn. This is an optional rule.

FLAMELING DROWNS

A flameling might drown when either:

- **The flameling burns the top life tile of a space, revealing water underneath.**
- **A lifeling clears ash from under a flameling, revealing water underneath.**

To drown a flameling, remove it from the island and place it on the start position on the spawn track. If this occurs during its turn, its turn ends.



FLAMELING EXPLODES

Flamelings don't play well with others, or themselves, for that matter.

A flameling will explode if:

- The flameling enters the same space as another flameling.
- The flameling enters the same space as a lifeling.
- The flameling is blocked on all sides at the start of its turn.

How to explode:

1. **Add one ash tile to the current space and all spaces adjacent to the current space.** (exception: the maw)
2. **Remove the exploding flameling from the island and place it on the spawn track. Its turn is over.**
3. **Deal with collateral damage.**
 - If another flameling is on current space, the other flameling is immediately removed from island and placed on spawn track. It does not lose its turn.
 - If another flameling is on an adjacent space, nothing happens to it.
 - If a lifeling is on a current or adjacent space, lifeling is knocked out.
 - **KNOCKED OUT = Lay lifeling pawn on its side. Lifeling's turn is skipped until it is revived.** (See page 7.)

DESTRUCTIVE ORDER

Explosions happen before any tile interactions, which means an explosion will happen before and instead of burning or drowning, if applicable.

Example Explosions:

In this instance, Flameling 1 moves into a space with Flameling 3. The following happens:

- Both flamelings are moved to the spawn track.
 - Flameling 1's turn is over.
- Flameling 3 will move forward on the spawn track on its turn.
- One ash tile is added to the exploding space and all spaces adjacent to it, except the maw.
 - Seed, who is on an adjacent space, becomes knocked out. Lay him down flat.



In this instance, Flameling 4 moves onto a space with Chill. The following happens:

- Flameling 4 is moved to the spawn track.
- Chill is knocked out.
- Flow, who was adjacent, is also knocked out.
- Current space and all adjacent spaces are covered in ash.
- Flameling 2, who is on an adjacent space, remains where it is.



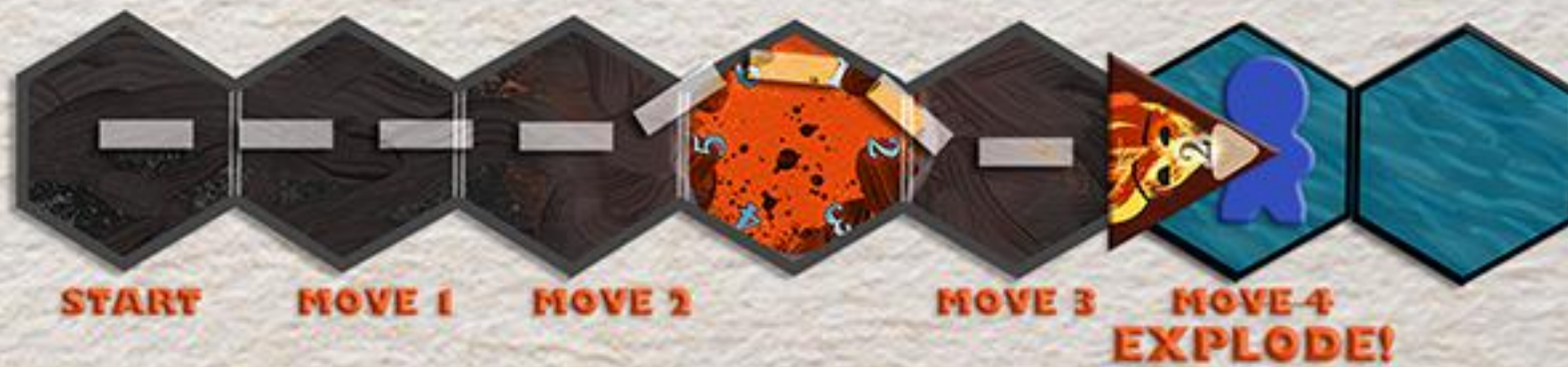
More Movement Examples:

All flamelings on island move 4 spaces forward unless they are blocked, drown or explode. So....

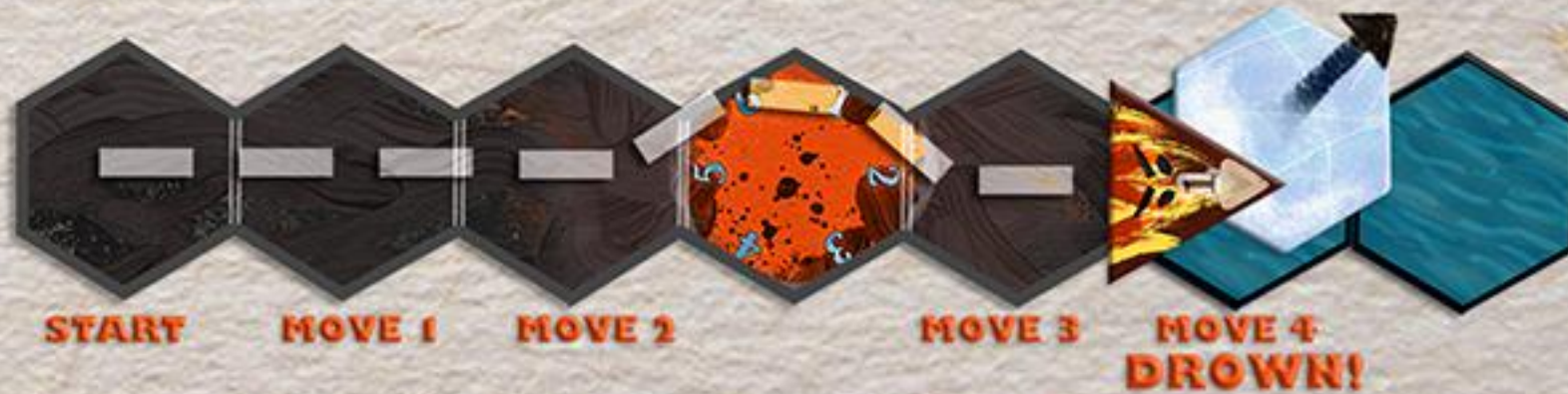
This flaming moves 3 spaces and is blocked by the water, so its move ends.



But this flaming has a lifeling on its 4th space. It runs into the lifeling and explodes instead of being blocked.



This flaming can move 4 spaces, but burning the ice on the fourth space reveals water, so it drowns.



But in this example, there is a lifeling on that ice space. An explosion will happen before any ice is burned.



END GAME

CLOSING THE MAW

The maw is the middle space of the board, the mouth of the volcano, and remains open for most of the game.

The maw closes when the lifelings cover every other space on the island with life tiles. (aka: no ash, no barren). The instant this happens, no matter whose turn it is, do the following:

1. **Place closed maw tile on the center space. Characters now interact with it as if it is a barren space.**
2. **All burning stops.** No life tiles may be removed from the board.
3. **No more ash can be added, even in an explosion.** However, other explosive effects can still occur. (In other words, the lifelings can still be knocked out!)
4. **Flamelings can no longer exit the maw.** Any flamelings currently on the spawn track or that are sent to the spawn track are out of the game.

HOW TO LOSE

There are two losing conditions.

- **If the doom track marker makes it to “The End”,** the volcano erupts, burning everything on the island back to ash and barrenness. You lose.
- **If all the lifelings are knocked out at the same time,** you fall forever into an eternal, gray sleep. You lose.

HOW TO WIN

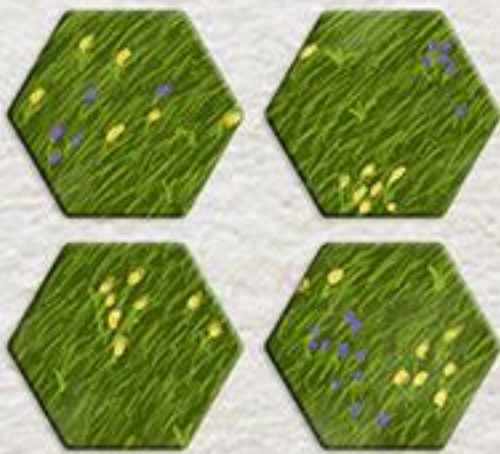
Plant life tiles on every space of the island, including the maw, before the doom track marker reaches the end.

You win!

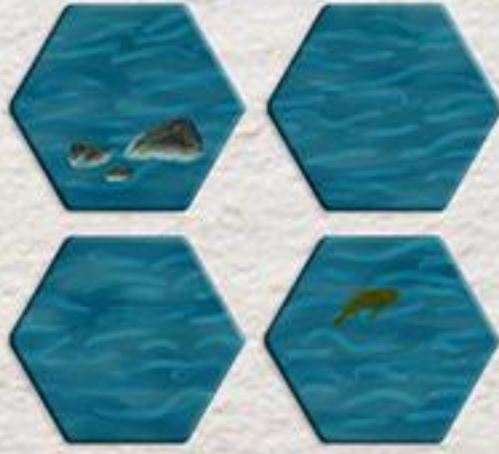
Enjoy your bountiful new world!



Game Elements



28 Grass Tiles



28 Water Tiles



1 Sprout Pawn



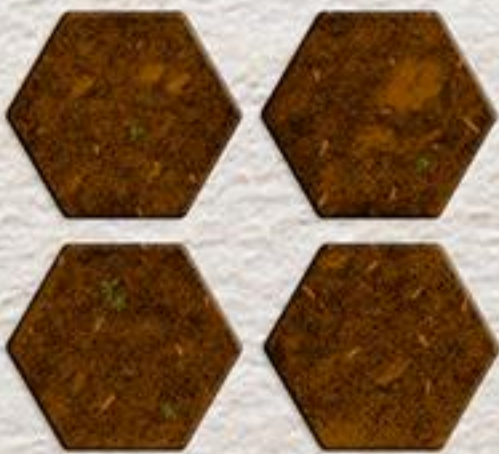
1 Flow Pawn



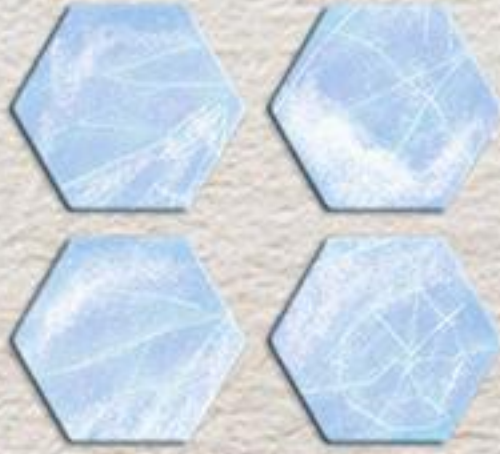
1 Seed Pawn



1 Chill Pawn



28 Soil Tiles



28 Ice Tiles



1 Turn Marker



1 Doom Track Marker



1 Closed Maw Tile



1 Sprout Card



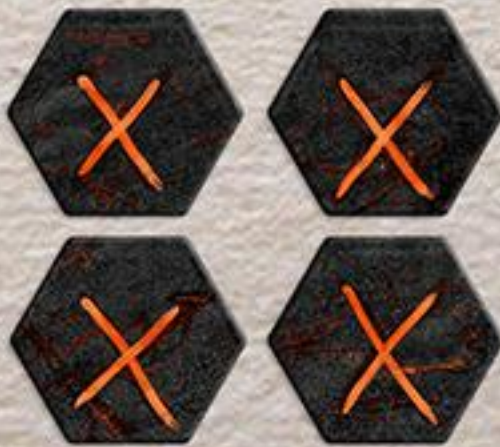
1 Flow Card



1 Seed Card



1 Chill Card



32 Ash Tiles



1 Doom Card



4 Flamelings



1 Die



The Gameboard

Thanks for playing!

Sprout

Game Design & Art by
Grace Baker

A special thanks to my playtesters:
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