

BARBARIAN VINCE – a solitaire card adventure

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As your father rides off into the sunset, you, Vincent the Barbarian, look at the city of Ulendi you used to trade with under your father's stern eye. Now you are a man and seek your fortune. What sort of adventures will you have? How many wolves will you kill? There are a lot of wolves.

Barbarian Vince is a solitaire card-driven adventure game. The only components required are the deck of cards and a few places to hold/store cards when in play (pockets, a table, etc).

Setup: Separate the cards into three piles: a large deck of Quest cards (these have an encounter type across the top); a smaller deck of Map cards (there are six); and the Character card. Remove the "Nothing Happens" Quest card and Map 1 card from the Quest deck. Shuffle the remaining Quest deck and Map deck together, turn it face down, and place the Nothing Happens Quest card on the bottom.

Here are some examples of the various cards you will find:

<p>Map 1 (Start): The Southern Shore No Starting Bonuses</p> <p>1 4 3 2</p> <p>X'idlim's Tower [-] (X1) The Flatlands [7+] (P,O) Southglen Forest [7+] (F+1,O) Bridgewater [7+] (V) Rat Harbor [9+] (U,C) Ulendi [8+] (X0,U,G)</p> <p>The southern shore of the Land, near the ports of Ulendi and rough Rat Harbor. To the north, the wizard X'idlim's tower. Farther north of here are the evil and vicious Grey Lands; to the east the Gob Mountains; westward lies Knoll.</p>	<p>MAP CARD</p> <p>A map card has the map number at the top along with the name of the land the map covers.</p> <p>Under the map number lists a Skill Bonus. You get this bonus when you possess this map card.</p> <p>To the right is the Map Key: it shows which new map card corresponds with that edge of the map. For map 1, if you head east of the Flatlands, for example, you end up in map 2.</p> <p>Each Location on the map has a name, a Lay Low value in brackets, and Terrain Type indicators in parenthesis. Lay Low corresponds to the chance a player can skip encounters (explained later). A Lay Low indicator of "-" means no Lay Low attempts may be made. Some locations have multiple terrain types (explained under Encounters).</p> <p>Dotted lines show permissible routes of travel: when moving, only travel along these lines are allowed.</p> <p>On the bottom of the Map card is a description of the area.</p> <p>Technically, a map card is in the regular deck and is drawn for Random Draws (explained later) as any other card. Map cards from 2-6 have random numbers on them.</p>
<p>(G) City</p> <p>1-4: Questioning Guards. The guards of the city watch think you are acting suspiciously. Charm check: 1-3: Something sets them off and they lock you up for the night. Skip your Rest phase. 4-6: They don't like the look of you and send you away. Return to your previous location. 7-9: They leave you be. 10+: They recognize your good character and pay for drinks and food. Restore one exhausted card.</p> <p>5-6: Apothecary. A local healer restores two of your exhausted cards.</p> <p>7-8: Poison Stew. A greedy innkeeper tries to steal from you as you slumber in a drug-induced sleep. Survival check: 9+ or discard one item card.</p> <p>9+: Fertility Ritual. The spirits of the city are inflamed with the Fertility god's festival. Many citydwellers offer a night of wild desire. You accept. Survival check: 9+: You retain your stamina and depart your companion's abode, well rested. Take a free Recovery.</p> <p>6-8: You fall asleep after the proceedings. A returning spouse beats you out of the home. Skip your Rest phase and exhaust one card.</p> <p>3-5: You find the whole thing distasteful and leave to stew in your own conflicted desires. Exhaust one card.</p> <p>2 or less: You oversleep. Spend another turn in this location, but add +2 to the encounter number draw.</p> <p>7 Fine Clothing Uncommon Charm +1</p>	<p>QUEST CARDS</p> <p>At the top of each quest card are the Terrain Types that card applies to. These will list the letter indicator (which is used on the map) and the description. On the right, in the banner, will be letter indicators of every terrain type the card applies to. Some cards apply to more than one type.</p> <p>Listed down the card are Encounters. Typically these are preceded by a random number (explained under Encounters) but a few cards will allow you to choose the encounter.</p> <p>In the bottom left, in the starburst, is a random number used for Random Draws (explained under skill checks). These numbers are evenly distributed throughout the deck from 1-12.</p> <p>Top Encounter Type: this lists the card's type of encounters, specifically which map location that card's encounters can occur in.</p> <p>Middle Encounters: this lists any encounters in the location. They are indicated by difficulty (with a number).</p> <p>At the bottom, upside down, is an Item description: if this card is in the player's hand, it is considered an Item (not an Encounter). The card is reversed with the Item side right-side up.</p>

To begin play, the player starts in Ulendi, the port city in the middle of the first Map card. Player may take one common item as a random draw as his starting loot (draw random cards until one marked “common” on the bottom appears). Player takes the first map card and adds it to his hand. The player therefore starts in his hand with Vince’s character card, the Map 1 card and a random common draw.

Hands and Decks: During play, the player must manage three separate decks or hands. The main deck of cards is just considered the “deck” in this case. Cards a player has, and has not played, are in your available or “ready” hand. Cards a player uses or plays during the game are considered “Exhausted” and moved to the “Exhausted” hand. They are not discarded! A card is only discarded when a result on an encounter specifically says it is discarded back to the deck. When playing, a player may want to keep all three piles separate; however if space is limited (say when playing in a car), a player may keep his exhausted hand with his ready hand, but flip the cards over when exhausted so the backs are face up.

Turn Order. Each turn has the following sequence: **Lay Low, Travel, Encounter, Rest.**

Lay Low: A player who in the previous turn had an encounter in this location (and isn’t currently in some kind of extended encounter) may opt to “lay low” and try to avoid further encounters, essentially resting for the turn. Chances are once a player knows the lay of the land and has encountered what there is there, they might avoid further ones. To see if this is successful, the player random draws and tries to beat the Lay Low score (on the map key). If he gets the score or higher, he lays low and does not draw an encounter, and can proceed right to the rest phase (skipping the Travel and Encounter phases).

Travel: A Player may travel to an adjacent map area following the dotted map lines. Note the new location’s name and Encounter type (some locations have multiple types). Note that all travel must be along the grey lines. Solid black lines, like the rivers/ shores, are technically not passible.

When a player travels off a map to a new map location, the player searches the main deck for the new map card with the new location and adds it to their hand. This also has the effect of increasing a player’s health (the rigors and experience of travel are beneficial) and also gives the player a **Skill Bonus**. As long as that card is in the player’s possession and not exhausted, the player’s base skill is altered as indicated. If the player plays the card, the skill modifier counts towards this issue and the card is considered exhausted.

Encounter: A player has an encounter every turn unless they **Lay Low**. To determine the encounter, do a Random Draw to get a **difficulty number** of the encounter. Then draw from the deck until you come across an Encounter card that has a terrain type that matches the location you are in (even if you just stayed in the same place). Then look on the card and play the encounter that matches the random difficulty number you drew.

Example: A player with an encounter in Ulendi (UG) does a random draw of 4, and then draws one card at a time until they get a U card. The 4 result on this card is a peaceful non-encounter. The 4 result on a different U card might be different!

Should the deck no longer have a specific encounter card that match a location because a player has those quest cards in his hand, the player **must** choose one of the cards from his hand with a matching applicable encounter type and play the encounter on that. Doing this causes the card to not be available this turn for use (it’s technically in the exhausted hand). After the turn is over, the card is moved back to whichever hand it started in.

The only exception to this is the X2/X4 card – when you finish encounter X2 you keep the card. When you play encounter X4 you need the card for the encounter but it is assumed you still have the item the card represents.

Example: A player enters an area marked “DO” (Desert and Outdoors). There are two outdoor cards and 2 desert cards. If all four of these are in the player’s hand, the player must choose one of them to play as the encounter card for the turn.

Note that a few map areas have “X” class encounter types (x and a number) – these are specific story encounters. When you have an encounter in these locations, search the Quest deck for the specific encounter type card. Also, under the map key, a few locations may have an Encounter type with a modifier listed. This means that in that location, add the modifier to the random draw when determining the encounter. “F+2” for example means that if an F encounter is drawn in this area, add 2 to the encounter random draw. This typically means the area is more difficult. There are also Z class encounters, used for dungeons – even though these are numbered Z1 through Z2, they are all treated as separate letters (that is, a Z2 class encounter must come from a drawn Z2 type card, not one of the Z1 cards).

Most encounters have a challenge that needs to be overcome, which is resolved now. If no options are given, a player must simply do the only challenge listed. If multiple options are shown, a player may choose one.

Skill Checks during Encounters: Any time a player makes a skill check, whether in combat or as a single check, the player must ‘spend’ one or more cards that are not in the player’s exhausted hand of cards. Some cards have modifiers to skills (special skill cards that increase a player’s skills, or items that do the same) and if these are played these modifiers are added together. A player can also always use any card in their hand as a skill check of any kind (except Exceptional skills, see later) at a modifier of 0. The player then does a random draw and adds the modifier, comparing it against the encounter’s success number.

The types of checks are generally just Random checks, Skill checks, Skill checks at a number, or Combat. Random checks are usually just instructions to draw a random number and follow the instructions (with other listed modifiers). Skill checks (“*Combat Check:*” is typically how listed) are the

player playing one or more cards, adding these modifiers to his skill, adding this to a random draw, and following the instructions with the result (usually a table). Skill Checks versus a number (“Make a Hide check 9+ to hide”) means the same, except there is only one pass/fail result.

If a player has a card with a bonus and it says “Skill” this is a bonus to ALL card actions. So a +1 Combat skill means every card played is one higher.

Challenges involving combat are worded as “Skill, number of times at random” and sometimes followed by *Round Speed, Damage, Failure, and Success* results. The first section means a player must do that skill check as above (random draw plus modifiers spent by cards), equal to or better than the random number listed. “Survival 1 @ 7” means the player must random draw a 7 or better, once, and can add any cards with Survival skill bonuses to the draw. “Combat 2 @ 6” means the player must eventually over two rounds random draw two numbers at 6 or better, adding combat skill bonuses to the draw. In both of these cases, a player may add as many of his unused cards as he wants to bolster his skill (note that using cards as Wildcards only gives you additional draws since they only act as a skill bonus of zero).

Challenges involving time (like combat) are managed in a series of rounds. Each round, the player may play as many cards as the **Round Speed** indicated on the card. After each round, if the player hasn’t completed the encounter, and if the encounter lists a **Damage**, that means that many (or type) of cards are also put in the **exhausted** pile. Generally the player has the option of which card gets put in the exhausted pile unless the encounter says otherwise. During encounters, map cards are considered “Health” points you can discard into your exhausted pile when you take damage. Generally an encounter with multiple successes required and a Round Speed to limit the number of cards played will involving the player taking some damage.

Also, whenever a player plays a card for a check, the card passes into the exhausted hand.

If a player finishes a combat round and is still “alive” with cards in his hand, he may look through the exhausted pile and return one exhausted card to his hand *if it can be returned* (the card will say “reusable” if it can be).

If the player in an encounter plays through his entire hand of cards without winning, or fails whatever the conditions of the challenge are, he takes the **Failure** result. Typically these include losing cards from the hand permanently (back into the appropriate Quest pile), being moved to a new location, playing a specific Encounter type, or permanently dying. If a new Encounter is called for, immediately find it and read it – it may have conditions that happen instantly. Note that a player may never lose a Map card or his Character card permanently. These remain in the exhausted pile until recovered. If told to permanently discard a card and only Map and Character cards remain, ignore the result.

When a player succeeds in an encounter and is rewarded with a random draw, turn the card upside so the item test is right-side up in your hand.

After an encounter is completed, any cards still in the exhausted hand are considered temporary damage and remain there until Rest.

Rest: After encounters, a player takes a rest phase. During rest the following happens:

- A player may move up to his Recovery skill (starting at 2) worth of cards from the exhausted pile into his hand.
- If the player Lay Low this turn, they may also move an additional Recover Skill worth of cards into their hand.
- A player may then deliberately discard as many cards in their hand as they want (this sometimes has to be done to get a crucial Story card back into play if its in the hand as an item). If a player discards 2 or more cards when in a village, city or port (C, G, V, B, or U) they may take a randomly drawn common item in trade. If a player discards 4 or more cards when in a city (C, G) they may take a randomly drawn Uncommon item in trade.

Winning: A player wins when they complete any of the Major X Plots in the game. What these are will be revealed as the player adventures...

Death: A player loses by dying or being permanently removed from the game. Most encounters will not lead to this, but some will – so pick your battles carefully.

Exceptional Skills: Some skills and items are only available after winning certain X-encounter cards. If an encounter needs them and the player doesn’t have them, you can’t spend a card as a wild card to create it. You also can’t acquire a random skill bonus in an exceptional skill.

A Year Has Passed: if during the game the deck is cycled through to the “A Year Has Passed” card, resolve any encounters (continuing to do random draws if needs be). After the encounter is resolved, shuffle the deck and place the “A Year Has Passed” card on the bottom again. If the player is not in an extended encounter, the next turn is considered a 100% successful Lay Low turn if the player chooses. As each year passes, the game gets more difficult. Look on your Start card to see effects in the new year.

Unique Items: if a player ever has to permanently lose a Unique item, it is assumed the unique item can be recovered where it was originally found (Unique items are returned to the location listed on the card itself). Returning to the location will allow the player to automatically re-play the success result on the encounter that granted them the item so they get it back.

Playing with a die: Should a player decide to play with a die instead of random card draws, this is allowed as an “easy variant”. Use a twelve-sided die. This makes the game MUCH easier as the deck gets depleted slower.

Some notes on strategy: Before entering the more difficult map areas (Maps 5 and 6); make sure to build up your hand and strength first. Make sure to visit the other map locations so you have those maps for the health they provide. Some cards are less useful once you have better ones (although any cards in your hand can be used as health in an encounter) and you might consider trading them in.

Example of Play:

Vince starts in Ulendi with his character card, his Map 1 card, and an item of supplies that gives him one health. He effectively has three cards in his “hand”, none in “exhausted”.

First he remains in Ulendi for a turn. He needs an encounter that matches U or G. He “random draws” from the top of the deck a 10, then draws a U encounter. According to the card:

“During a storm, the port is besieged by a Storm Turtle. Everyone is pressed into fighting. If you flee without fighting, make a Hide 9+ check. Failure means you lose one card and have to fight anyway. If you hide, you skip the encounter. If you fight : Victory: Combat 2@ 9+ , Round Speed: 3 Cards, Damage: 1 Card. Failure: Make a random draw. On 1-8 lose a card; on a 9+ you are killed. Success: Uncommon item draw”

Vince would like to fight the turtle, but he is pretty weak, and the turtle could kill him. The odds are low that he can slink off as well, so he fights. He has no special skill cards, so by using one of his other cards as a “wild” card you can attack with a Combat modifier of 0. His first draw is a 4, which isn't 9+, so he fails and moves his “health” card into his “exhausted” hand. The turtle does damage of 1 card, so he moves his Map card into his exhausted hand. He uses his character card and gets a 6, failing. He lost. He makes the “Failure” draw: a 10. He is killed.

Another example:

From the same starting position, Vince uses movement to move to Bridgewater village. His encounter is a V-7, and it says he's met with distrusting villagers. He has to make a “Charm Check” so he pays a card into exhausted (his Provisions card) and draws a 12 (his charm is zero, so 12 is the total). The villagers let him stay overnight. He then takes a Rest phase. He can move two cards (his current Recovery) into his Hand, so he moves the one card back.

On the next turn, Vince heads into Southglen Forest. He gets a F7 encounter – Herbal Foraging. He has to make a Survival check of 10+. This time he draws a 10! He finds the herbs – in this case, he keeps the encounter card as an item. He takes a rest phase, moving the one card back to his hand.

Turn 3: Vince decides to detour to the west. The Map 1 card says Map 3 is to the west. He draws from the deck looking for it and takes it. His detour takes him to Bridgeton. As well, he has the Map 3 card – another card to increase his hand. In Bridgeton, he draws V8 – “Little Lost Dog”. Vince tries to return the dog to the villager who owns him, and makes a Survival Check. A random draw of 4 means he fails, and sick with worry, loses his Rest phase.

Turn 4 (with one card in exhausted and four in his Hand), Vince heads to the Magic College. He draws looking for the X4 card. He finds the “nothing happens” card and puts it aside. X4 lists a “story” encounter. Unfortunately, the wizards at the Magic College won't talk to Vince without a mystic Gem and boot Vince into the city. Vince has to play a C,G encounter, and gets a G5- questioning guards. He needs to make a charm check, spends a card, and gets a 1. They don't like the look of Vince and lock him up for the night, so he skips rest. He now has two cards in exhausted!

Vince then reshuffles the deck due to the Year Passes card. It gives him a chance to Lay Low – he can't get in the tower, and would be stuck in the city again, so he takes the Lay Low and is able to move all of his cards into his hand.

Turn 5, Vince, intrigued by the Wizards, decides to head back east to Bridgeton. He random draws V4 – Harvest Festival. He decides to join the festival. He random draws a 6, and eats and drinks all night, partying through his rest phase. Well, he was rested to begin with.

Turn 6, Vince heads back to Southglen. He gets an F10 – a party of crafty Rangers track Vince for sport. Vince needs to make both a Hide check and a Survival check of 7+. He makes one and fails the other and gains nothing, putting two cards into exhausted. He takes his rest, nursing his Pride, and moves the two cards back to his Hand.

Turn 7, Vince heads north to X'idlim tower. We will stop the story there not to spoil anything!