The Two Princes

Rules

The Two Princes - Rules

List of components

Misery Track/Play overview
Prince boards
Condition cards
Item cards
Item cards
Event cards
Event cards
Interlude cards
Encounter cards
Challenge cards
Challenge cover card
Decision tokens (wooden disks with "A"/"B" on them)
Blank wooden disks for Attributes and Misery track
Wooden cubes to track Uses and Encounters
6-sided die
Book of Endings

Introduction

This is a historically inspired game about two royal children trying to survive and escape the Tower of London.

England, year 1483. King Edward IV of the House of York dies of illness leaving behind two sons: Twelve-year-old Edward and his younger brother Richard of ten years. The king's last act is to name his own brother - the Duke of Gloucester - who is also named Richard as Protector of the Realm. To keep the boys safe and prepare them for the coronation uncle Richard takes them to the Tower of London, away from their Mother. Arriving late at night, their lives completely upended, the boys are now separated from their family and left with a host of unfamiliar servants, guards, and instructors. After a night of uneasy sleep in their luxurious chambers – the Solar – they wake up to the creaking sound of the door opening followed by slow, methodical footsteps and a soft cough.

Overview

You play as the two Princes – Edward, the heir to the throne and Richard, the younger brother. The game consists of two Chapters with an Interlude in between. Each part plays in a different way.

In the first Chapter – The Tower – the two brothers are in the Tower of London to prepare for Edward's upcoming coronation. The brothers do Princely things and explore the castle, increasing their Attributes, finding Items, and by making cer-

tain choices they sow the seeds for what will happen during the second Chapter. Furthermore the Condition of each Prince may change as they grow tired or worse. The Tower consists of three days that unfold in the same way:

- 1. Events: The Princes have two Events together
- 2. Encounters at Locations: Each Prince has two Encounters at Locations
- 3. Night: Each Prince can choose to have a Night Encounter

During the Interlude, which unfolds as a series of Events similar to those experienced in The Tower, the Princes find out that they must flee from the Tower which leads to the second Chapter – The Escape.

The Escape consists of a series of Challenges that the Princes must face – their actions during The Tower and the Interlude determines which Challenges this is. During The Escape the Princes simply take turns drawing a Challenge which they then must overcome together (most of the time). Most Challenges requires decisions made by the Princes and most decisions result in a test being made. They succeed by using their Attributes, Items, and Condition cards wisely. Failing a Challenge can have various consequences such as gaining bad Conditions or Misery. The decisions made here can also have other consequences later on. This Chapter is divided into two parts, that each functions similarly. The game ends either during or after The Escape. When the game ends you will be instructed to look in the Book of Endings where the final fate of the Princes will be revealed.

Ending of the game and how to win

There is no clear definition of winning. The game has many possible endings, some very bad ones, some good ones, and a lot in between. Three main factors determine what kind of ending you get: Misery points, Condition cards, and your choices. If at any point during The Escape you reach 6 Misery the game is over and it will end poorly. If you complete the final Challenge without reaching the Misery limit the ending can depend on each Prince's hand of Condition cards, specifically how many Wounded, Afraid, and Sick cards you have – having more than 1 of the same type can be bad for you (counting for each Prince individually). Apart from that specific choices you make can also affect the ending.

Misery

This is a measure of the overall state – mental and physical - of the Princes. The situation they are in is tough and they can only handle so much. Misery is gained during Challenges, typically if the Princes fail them. If Misery 6 is reached at any point during the game, it is over as the Princes simply can't go on anymore.

Explanation of Components

Misery Track/Overview of play

This is used to track how much Misery the Princes accumulate, provide overview, and track the flow of the game.



Prince Boards

These are used to keep track of the four attributes: Physique, Charm, Courage, and Knowledge. Each Prince starts with a score of "0" in two Attributes and "1" in two others, marked by the black circles. Use the wooden discs without text to track increases: When you are told that you "Gain +1" in an attribute move the corresponding wooden disk to the next circle. You can also put your Hand, Draw and

Misery track/Overview of play

Discard piles of Condition cards on either side of the board.

Decision tokens

These are wooden discs with an "A" on one side and a "B" on the other. They are used when the Princes must make individual decisions in secret.

Condition cards

These cards are used during Attribute tests. They show an adjustment to each of the four Attributes – this value is added to the value on the Prince Boards when the cards are



Prince Board

played. Some cards may have an additional effect which is also written on the card. Note that the effects on Tired, Sick, Afraid, and Wounded cards only happen once per test per Prince and not once per card. For instance if Richard plays 2 "Tired "cards he only gets -1 to his test score.

Each Prince has a starting deck of 6 Conditions and will gain more during the game. When the game starts each Prince draws a hand of 5 Condition cards. The handsize for Conditions is always 5 and you will always refill your hand immediately after using cards for a test or being told to remove cards.

Items

Typically Items have an effect and a number of Uses. The effect can be an adjustment to an Attribute, which can be used during Attribute tests, but it can also be other things - sometimes it is not immediately clear what the use of a given Item is. Use the wooden cubes to keep track of Uses. When an Item runs out of Uses, remove it from the game. Each Prince starts with their two starting Items and otherwise Items can be found throughout the game. Items are kept face up on the table and are not part of the Prince's hand of cards. Unless the text say otherwise Items only work on the Prince who has them, but you are allowed to trade

Edward's notebook Edward, Starting item Knowledge: +1 Uses: 2 Here you've written all sorts of interesting facts, stories, and thoughts since you were 8 years old.

Item

Items before drawing an Event, Encounter, or Condition Challenge. Items with



the text "Cannot be lost" cannot be traded either.

Events

Events occur in The Tower. They describe a situation (white text on black background) which leads to a decision. The card instructs you how the decision must be made, typically you must "Decide togeth-

er" which means that you must agree on what you do. Sometimes you have to "Decide individually" in which case each Prince chooses

for himself without discussing it first by flipping, in secret, the Decision Token, to either the "A" or "B" side and then revealing simultaneously. Rarely only one Prince gets to make the decision. After (and only after!) the decision has been made you may read the consequence (black upside-down text on white). Typical consequences are adding cards (Items, Challenges, Conditions), gaining Attributes, or being told to keep the card to remember something. Interlude cards are similar to Events.



Event

Encounters

There are five decks of Encounters: Library, Tower Green, Solar, Exploration, and Night. These cards, used in The Tower, describe a situation (white text on black) and a consequence (black text on white). Sometimes the Prince having the Encounter has to make a decision, sometimes a test has to be made, and sometimes things just happen. For Encounters you are allowed to read the consequence text before deciding. Only one Prince at a time can have an Encounter, so any decisions or Attribute tests during Encounters are made by one Prince only. Typical consequences are similar to those for Events.

Salt tower is where the city's salt reserves are kept. The guard there is extremely reluctant to let you in, but you really want to see the large white piles and give him a most convinving speech about it is your duty to inspect the re-serves. Finally he gives up. Gain +1 Charm. Test Charm (5)

Exploration

Challenges

These two-sided cards are used during The Escape.



Encounter (Exploration)

The number in the top left corner is used to identify the Challenge so it's easy to find when the game, for instance, asks you to "add Challenge 27". The letter (a or b) after the number refers to which pat of the Escape the Challenge is to be used



Challenge - front side

in. The white-on-black text describes a situation the Princes are facing together. The white box describes a decision that must be made either "Together", "Individually", or "Forced". "Together" means that the Princes must agree on what to do. "Individually" means that each Prince chooses for himself without discussing it first by flipping, in secret, the Decision Token, to either the "A" or "B" side and then revealing simultaneously. "Forced" means that the card instructs you on what decision you must make, either because there is only 1 option or because of certain circumstances. Each decision often comes with an Attribute test that must be made. Tests during Challenges are mostly faced by both Princes together so they can add their test scores, except if they chose opposite options during "Individual" decisions or if the card specifically says so.

After the decision has been made and an eventual test completed you must flip the card to the backside to discover the consequences. It has two text boxes, "A" and "B". Typically you should only read the box corresponding to the decision you made and follow the instructions. The box will tell you what happens - if a test was

involved it will say what happens if you fail or succeed. Sometimes it can be more complicated – for instance in the case of Individual decisions where Princes may either end up choosing the same option ("A" and "A" or "B" and "B") or opposite options. If you should do anything else than read the box corresponding to your choice the backside of the card will tell you what to do.

Book of Endings

This separate book contains all the possible endings for the game (more than 20 in total). You only have to read from the book when the game ends and the game will instruct you when and where to read from the book – do not look in it before as it is full of spoilers. The book is divided into sections and the game will tell you what section to go to where you will be instructed further.



Setup

Setup with 1 Prince Board

The Tower

1. Choose who plays which Prince. Each player takes the Prince board corresponding to their Prince along with 4 wooden discs to track Attributes (put 1 on each black circle, keep the two others nearby), their two starting Items with wooden cubes to track uses, a Decision token, and a deck of 6 starting Condition cards (marked with the name of the Prince and the word "starting"). Shuffle the Condition cards and draw a hand of 5 cards each, the rest is the draw pile.

- 2. Put the Misery track/Overview of play in the center of the table then put a wooden disc on Misery 0 and a wooden cube on the Event spot (Ev) for Day 1.
- 3. Sort the 5 different Encounter types into separate piles based on the Locations, shuffle them, and place them face down on the table. One Encounter is marked "Set aside" on the back, set it aside separately.
- 4. Start an Event deck by taking the two fixed events "A Royal Boon" and "The First Day" putting "The First Day" on the top. One Encounter is marked "Set aside" on the back, set it aside separately. Draw 4 random Events from the remaining Events and put the rest back into the box they will not be used. Shuffle the 4 Events you drew and put them underneath the two fixed Events.
- 5. Take the Interlude cards and sort them in descending order with "Interlude 1" on top, place the deck face down on the table.
- 6. Set the remaining wooden cubes aside. Also set the Item cards aside, face up. Do the same with the Challenges (the side with the number and title should face up) and Conditions (sorted by type: Happy and Healthy, Tired, Sick, Afraid, Wounded, Haunted).

You are now ready to start the game by reading the first Event of Day 1 ("The First Day"). To set the stage you should read the introduction text on page 1.

The Escape

Only do this when instructed to Begin the Escape (this happens at the end of the Interlude). This section describes how to create the Challenge deck that you have to get through to complete the first part of the Escape.

- 1. Remove all Encounters and Events from play they will not be used anymore.
- 2. Take the Challenges you were told to add during The Tower and the Interlude. Separate them in two piles, with those with an "a" next to their number in one pile and those with a "b" in the other. Set the pile with "b" cards aside until instructed otherwise. If the game later instructs you to add Challenges with a "b" on them, add them to this pile.
- 3. In the "a" pile, see if you have any cards with the word "guard" in the title. If you don't then randomly add one card from Challenges 4-7.
- 4. Then count the total number of cards in the "a" pile. If there are fewer than 10 cards add cards randomly from Challenges 12 to 16 until there are 10 cards in the pile or you have added them all. Shuffle the pile. All cards should have the front side (with the Challenge number) face up.
- 5. Finally add Challenge 19 to the bottom of the pile and add Challenges 1, 2, and 3 on top so they end up in ascending order (Challenge 1 on top). Now you have made the Challenge deck.

- 6. Put the "Challenge" cover card on top of the Challenge deck to avoid spoilers.
- 7. Draw the top card of the deck (Challenge 1) to begin The Escape.

The Escape - part B

Only do this when the game instructs you to read about the setup of part B of The Escape. You will now make a new, smaller, Challenge deck that you have to get through to finish the game.

- 1. Take all Challenges with "b" next to the number that you have been told to add previously.
- 1. If "The guards are alerted" add Challenge 74.
- 2. Count the cards in the "b" pile. If there are fewer than 5: Add Challenge 73.
- 3. Shuffle the deck, put Challenge 80 at the bottom and 71 on the top.
- 4. Put the "Challenge" cover card on top to avoid spoilers.
- 5. Draw the top card of this new Challenge deck to continue the game.

Detailed gameplay instructions

The descriptions here on how Events, Encounters, and Challenges work are similar to those found under the description of the game components. They are repeated with a bit more elaboration for ease of reference.

The Tower

You will play through 3 days in The Tower. Each day happens in the same way, as described below. Use the wooden cube on the Play Overview to track the days and if you are doing Events (Ev), Encounters (En), or Night Encounters (N). Both Events and Encounters may instruct you to add cards. If you are instructed to add a Challenge, simply find it in the deck of set aside Challenges and put it in a pile of added Challenges. The Challenges you add will be used later, during The Escape. Items are put into play immediately. Conditions are added to each Prince's discard pile. If you gain +1 to an Attribute move the corresponding wooden disc on the Prince board to reflect this.

- 1. Events: The Princes have two Events together
- 2. Encounters at Locations: Each Prince has 2 Encounters at Locations
- 3. Night: Each Prince can choose to have a Night Encounter
- 1. Events

The Princes take turns to read one Event, drawn from the top of the Event deck. The Events are happening for both Princes and should thus be resolved together. Remove Events once they are completed. How Events work: Each Event describes a situation (white text on black background) which leads to a decision. The card instructs you how the decision must be made, typically you must "Decide together" which means that you must agree on what you do. Sometimes you have to "Decide individually" in which case each Prince chooses for himself without discussing it first by flipping, in secret, the Decision Token, to either the "A" or "B" side and then revealing simultaneously. Rarely only one Prince gets to make the decision. After (and only after!) the decision has been made you may read the consequence (upside-down black text on white).

2. Encounters at Locations

Taking turns the Princes visit two Locations each to have Encounters: First Edward visits a Location, then Richard, then Edward, then Richard again. Note that depending on choices you may have a third Encounter on Day 1, therefore there is an extra spot on the tracker.

When visiting a Location simply draw an Encounter card from the corresponding pile and resolve it immediately. The same Location can be visited more than once during a day. Remove used Encounters. If a Location runs out of Encounters the Location cannot be visited any more.

Each Location has an Attribute associated with it – Knowledge for the Library, Physique for the Tower Green, Charm for the Solar, and Courage for Exploration. The associated Attribute is the one that is the most common to be tested in or gain advances in at a Location, but other things can happen as well.

How Encounters work: These cards describe a situation (white text on black) and a consequence (black text on white). Sometimes the Prince having the encounter has to make a decision, sometimes a test has to be made, and sometimes things just happen. For Encounters you are allowed to read the consequence text before deciding. Note that the Prince having the Encounter is by himself and has to make any decisions and tests alone.

3. Night

Each Prince has the option to take a Night Encounter, Edward first then Richard. If they want to they draw an Encounter from the Night deck, just as when visiting other Locations. If a Prince chooses not to have a Night Encounter and sensibly stays in bed he may choose 1 Condition from his discard pile and shuffle into his draw pile.

At the end of the third day you should begin the Interlude, by reading the top card from the Interlude deck.

Interlude

After the end of the third day in The Tower the Interlude begins. Simply resolve the cards in the Interlude deck from the top starting with "Interlude 1", until instructed otherwise. These cards function in the exact same way as Events.

The Interlude ends when you are instructed to Begin the Escape. When that happens you should read the instructions for setting up the Escape on page 8.

The Escape

In this Chapter the Princes must face the Challenges they triggered during The Tower and the Interlude. The Escape is simple in the sense that you just take turns drawing Challenges from the top of the Challenge deck that you made when setting up The Escape, removing Challenges when they are completed. The final card in the Challenge deck instructs you in how to proceed. Your goal with The Escape is to get out of the Tower but also to do it without reaching 6 Misery and with as few bad Condition cards (Afraid, Sick, Wounded) as possible - more than 1 of each per Prince can be bad for you. The Escape is divided into two parts, "A" and "B", with part B being shorter. The game will instruct you in when and how to go from part A to B.

How Challenges work: Each Challenge has some white-on-black text that describes a situation the Princes are facing together. The white box describes a decision that must be made either Together, Individually, or Forced. "Together" means that the Princes must agree on what to do. "Individually" means that each Prince chooses for himself without discussing it first by flipping, in secret, the Decision Token, to either the "A" or "B" side and then revealing simultaneously. "Forced" means that the card instructs you on what decision you must make, either because there is only 1 option or because of certain circumstances.

Example of "Decision: Forced"

A card might read: "Decision: Forced. A: If you have a golden key, B: If not". Then if you have a card that tells you that you have a golden key you must choose "A" otherwise you must choose "B".

Each decision often comes with a test that must be made. Tests during Challenges are mostly faced by both Princes so they can add their scores, except if they chose opposite options during "Individual" decisions or if the card specifically says so. After the decision has been made and an eventual test completed you must flip the card to the backside to discover the consequences. It has two text boxes, "A" and "B". Typically you should only read the box corresponding to the decision you made and follow the instructions. The box will tell you what happens – if a test was



involved it will say what happens if you failed or succeeded. Sometimes it can be more complicated – for instance in the case of Individual decisions where Princes may either end up choosing the same option ("A" and "A" or "B" and "B") or opposite options. If you should do anything else than read the box corresponding to your choice the backside of the card will tell you what to do.

Tests

Throughout the game there will be several Attribute tests. When the game asks you to "Test attribute X" (e.g. "Test Physique 5") or simply writes "Attribute X" (e.g. "Courage 7") it means you have to make a test. Sometimes only one Prince is involved in the test – this is mostly the case during Encounters, while at other times both Princes are involved – this is mostly the case during Challenges. To succeed in a test the Princes involved must reach a combined Attribute score that is equal to or above the number given. Remember that if a Challenge asks you to decide "Individually" and you chose different options you have to test separately. If you chose the same option you add your test scores as normal.

A test is made through a series of steps:

- 1. Play Condition cards
- 2. Add Attributes
- 3. Use Items
- 4. Compare to test value
- 5. Consequences
- 6. Cleanup

1. Play Condition cards. Each Prince involved decides how many Condition cards they will use, from 1 to 5. They can discuss with each other how many to use

and describe in general terms how well they think they can contribute. It is not allowed to show your cards or mention numbers written on the cards. So it is ok to say "I'm feeling strong so I will use 3 cards, I don't think you have to do much", but not ok to say "I've got three +1 Physique cards". After deciding the number of committed cards they are then drawn randomly from each Prince's hand.

2. Add Attributes. The total from the drawn cards are added to the relevant Attribute scores on the Prince board of each Prince involved in the test.

3. Use Items. After cards are drawn and Attributes added the Princes involved in the test may use their Items to boost their score. Each Item can be used several times during a test as long as it has enough Uses left - remove 1 cube from an Item for each time it is used.

4. Compare to test value. If the total score of Condition cards + Attribute score on the Prince boards + used Items is equal to or above the number given by the test it is a success, otherwise it is a failure.

5. Consequences. The card that gave you the test will instruct in you what happens. This can be adding cards (Items, Conditions, Challenges), special instructions, gaining Misery, or simply flavour text.

Example of a test

Richard has an Encounter that asks him to test Physique 5. He decides to use 2 Condition cards, which are then drawn randomly from his hand of 5 cards. He gets 1 card with +0 Physique and 1 with +2, which are added to the 2 Physique he has on his Prince board for a total of 4. He then decides to use his Slingshot (Item) for an additional +1 giving a total of 0+2+2+1=5, just enough to pass the test! The card then instructs him to gain +1 Physique, which he does by moving the corresponding wooden disk on his Prince board, and to add Challenge 31 which he then finds from the set aside pile of Challenges and puts in the pile of added Challenges. He discards the 2 Condition cards he used, and refills his hand to 5 Condition cards. Since the Slingshot still has 1 use left it is not removed.

6. Cleanup. Played Condition cards are added to each Prince's discard pile. Draw up to a hand size of 5 cards again. If there are no more cards in the Condition draw pile add 1 Tired Condition to the discard pile, shuffle it to make a new draw pile, and draw the needed cards. If any effect instructs you to look through the Condition draw pile always reshuffle it afterwards. Remove Item cards with no Uses left.

A note on failure or success: Failing a test usually doesn't mean that you didn't achieve what you wanted; it means that something bad happened while doing it.

More test examples

Edward and Richard face a Challenge together that asks them to test Courage 9. Edward says he has a strong hand and decides to use 3 cards, while Richard announces that he feels Sick, has a weak hand, and decides on the minimum requirement of 1 card. The cards are drawn: +1,+1,+2,-1 = 3. This is added to Edward's and Richard's Courage (1 and 3) for a total of 3+1+3=7. Now they will have to use Items to reach the requirement of 9 or face the consequences of failure.

Edward and Richard face a Challenge with an "Individual" decision. Option A is a Physique 6 test, Option B is Charm 7. Without talking they use their Decision tokens in secret and reveal - Edward picked B, and Richard A.

That means that Edward now has to make a Charm 7 test for himself, while Richard has to make a Physique 6 test alone. After the tests they flip the card -Richard reads the "A" box to find out the consequences while Edward reads "B". Had they both picked, for instance, A with the Decision tokens they would only have to make the Physique 6 test and they could add their test scores like for most Challenges.

For instance if you fail a test about running from a guard you still get away from the guard, but maybe you get Wounded during the escape or it takes a toll on the Princes gaining them Misery.

Keep this card to remember...

Sometimes a card will instruct you to keep it to remember something, e.g. "Keep this card to remember that you alerted the guards". This means that you will probably later encounter a card that asks if you alerted the guards, but it is not guaranteed that something you were asked to remember will be used. If you prefer you can also write things you were asked to remember down on a piece of paper, just be sure to use the wording on the card.

How to interpret cards

Instructions on a card can override some of the rules written here. If you are in doubt about how to interpret a card try to do what makes the moste sense for the story. If you have to make a decision and cannot agree, roll a die or something.

A note on history

The game is based on the true story of The Princes in the Tower, which is part of the story about Richard III and, in a sense, the beginning of the end of the War of the Roses. Not everthing in the game is historically accurate, especially not the endings, although I have tried to root everything in real people, places, and events. What actually happened to the boys is not known. They most likely died in the Tower since there is no record of them after Richard III's coronation and several skeletons of their size have later been found in the Tower. There are ofcourse many theories and I can only recommend reading about it all.

Inspiration for the game

When I first read about The Princes in the Tower I immediately wanted to make a game about that story as it's both tragic and intriguing because the real outcome remains unknown. For the mechanics my main inspirations are two computer games. "Long Live The Queen" where you train a young Princess to survive a series of events - this was originally the kind of gameplay I wanted. And "Brothers: A Tale of Two Sons" which is a wonderful and heartbreaking adventure game about two brothers working together - the spirit of cooperation and brotherhood is what I wanted from that game. Finally the mechanism for making individual decisions is inspired by "Fog of Love".

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Overlooked rules

- Always draw up to a full hand of 5 Condition cards after a test or being told to remove a card.
- When the Condition discard pile runs out of cards, add 1Tired card to the discard pile before shuffling it to make a new draw pile.
- If any effect instructs you to look through the Condition draw pile always reshuffle it afterwards.
- Bad effects on Tired, Sick, Afraid, and Wounded cards only happen once per test per Prince and not once per card. For instance if Edward plays 2 "Sick" cards he only gets +1 Misery.
- You can use the same Item several times during the same test, as long as it has Uses left.
- If you choose not to have a Night Encounter you may instead shuffle a Condition card of your choice from your discard pile into your draw pile.
- When you pick different options under a "Decision: Individually" Challenge each Prince makes a separate test, while if you chose the same option you add your test scores as normal.
- You can trade Items before drawing an Event, Encounter, or Challenge except if the Item reads "Cannot be lost".
- On Encounters you are allowed to read the consequences before making a decision, on Events and Challenges you are not.

