MERLOUF

A LOOTING GAME FOR ALL THE FAMILY!

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

STORY

It is commonly said that life is enjoyable at Arthur's Kingdom. So enjoyable that the great wizard Merlin has become alcoholic, spending more time with women than with his magic books. For the very serious wizard order, it's a huge trahison! As punition, he has been condemned to the isolation directly at his home. Merland (the name of his house) is built right in the middle of the gnome forest . Having heard of the recent situation of the famous wizard, they have decided to organize a big contest between all the gnome brotherhoods. The winner will be officially hailed as "the fashionest and coolest brotherhood of the year". The goal of this contest is simple: to steal Merlin's belongings claimed by Gnoboss, the chief . But beware of Merlin, because he never leaves his home…

GAME CONTENT

- 1 game board.
- 2 velvet bags.
- 1 figurine of Merlin.
- 18 "character" tokens and 1 "round" token.
- 30 "normal object" tokens (including 6 "enchanted object") and 10 "special object" tokens (so 40 tokens).
- 2 hourglasses (1 minute et 2 minutes).
- 6 "brotherhood" pawns.
- 20 "trap" cards, 20 "goodies" cards, 18 "brotherhood" cards, 32 "objectives" cards and 6 "recapitulative" cards (so 96 cards).
- 2 dice with pips and 1 die with figures.

GAME GOAL

Each player embodies a team leader of a gnome brotherhood. **The goal: to steal objects in Merlin's house to reach objectives and score a maximum of points.** Obviously, all the players are in competition, so an object is easily wanted by the others. As everybody can't be satisfied during the 'theft' phase, players can become friends – or not – during the 'negotiations' one. But beware of not getting caught by Merlin when he wakes up. **After 6 rounds, the player who has the best score wins the game.**

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

GAME BOARD

The game board represents Merlin's house. There are 8 rooms inside it:

• 6 rooms contain objects: the lounge, the working room, the bathroom, the chamber, the kitchen and the entry. The color circles indicate where the objects are placed. The white circles represent the hiding places.
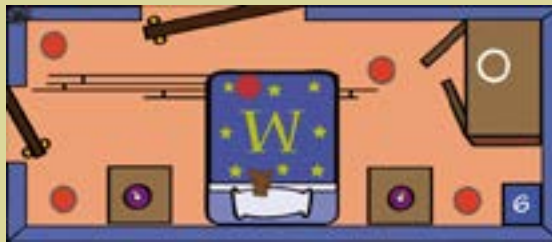
• 2 rooms are special: the prison is the place where the gnomes are sent when they are caught by Merlin (cf. section). The attic contains "trap" cards (cf. variant 2 p.9).

• The checkerboard on the edge of the game board indicates the number of points for each player as well as the current round.

2

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

CHARACTERS

Gnowise: he's small, clever and balanced between the number of actions he can do and the number of objects he can put in his panties. His special power allows him to see 2 objects in a room before deciding what action to do. He can use it once per placement.

Gnoball: he's fat and not very smart, but he can execute a lot of actions and carry a lot of objects. His special power allows him to carry 2 more objects when his panties are full.

Gnomagik: he's a special gnome. He can execute few actions and can carry only one object. In return, his special power allows him to be invisible to Merlin. Moreover, he's the only one who can use the toilets to go to the attic (cf. variant 2 p.9).

SETTINGS

1. Set the game board on a plane surface.

2. Each player choses 3 "character" tokens and 3 "brotherhood" cards (1 Gnowise, 1 Gnoball and 1 Gnomagik) of a color from 6 available. Then, everyone takes a "recapitulative" card.

3. Place the "goodies" and the "objectives" cards next to the game board. Then, place "traps" cards in the attic (only if the variant 2 is used. Cf. p.9).

4. Bring out the velvet bag from the box .

5. Each player places his "brotherhood" pawn on the "0" compartment on the checkerboard. Then, everyone picks an "objectives" and a "goodies" card. Once it's done, each player throws a die with pips. The player who has the better score is the first to play during the Night phase (cf. p.6 Night phase).

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

GAME ROUND PROGRESS

A game has 6 rounds. Each round has 7 phases:
- Objects placement
- "Objectives" card
- Preparation
- Night phase
- Negotiations
- Day phase
- Assessment and round rotation

1. Objects placement

All the objects are in a velvet bag. They have to be shuffled and placed in the different rooms, directly on the red circles, hidden face up. Each room can't have 2 objects of the same color. At the beginning of each round during the game, the objects placement phase is repeated in the same way.

In Merlouf, there are 3 object types:
- "Normal" objects that have to be stolen.

- "Enchanted" objects that deduct 3 points per unit (one exception remains - 2. "Objectives" cards).

- "Special" objects (cf. variant 2 p.9).

Visible face
Normal object

Hidden face

Visible face
Enchanted object

Hidden face

4

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

2. "Objectives" Cards

Every player picks an "objectives" card which has 3 or 4 objectives more or less simple. The goal is to achieve a maximum of them. There are 3 different types of objective:

• **'Color' type objectives;** players have to steal at least the number of objects of the required color in order to achieve it.

• **'Specific' type objectives;** players have to steal a specific object in order to achieve it.

• **'Enchanted' type objectives;** players have to steal the exact number of enchanted objects in order to achieve it. If the objective is just partially achieved, players lose 3 points per enchanted object.

To achieve an objective pays the number of points indicated on the card. All the objects that are not part of an achieved objective pay 1 point.

'Color' objective

'Specific' objective

'Enchanted' objective

OBJECTIVES

3 blue items
6 points

Foak
4 points

Painting
4 points

2 enchanted objects
6 points

5

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

3. Preparation

From the second round, all the players can buy 'goodies' cards. To do it, 2 points have to be spent (so a player who wants to buy a 'goodies' card has to move back on the checkerboard). These cards can be used before a 'panties duel' to increase the result got from the die. Every single player can have until 3 'goodies' cards per round.

Once the purchases are done, each one selects the first gnome to send in mission.

4. Night phase

During this phase, Merlin sleeps and stays inactive. It's the good time for players to send their gnomes in the different rooms to steal Merlin's objects. The Night phase has 3 parts.

All the players place a gnome at the same time in the room of their choice. Then, from the first player of this round and in the clockwise order, each player uses one the two actions possible: to take an object or to place the gnome in the hiding place of the room. To take an object increases the chance to achieve an objective while to hide a gnome allows him to escape from Merlin when he wakes up during the Day phase. However, note that a hidden gnome can't be used until the next round. If two gnomes from different brotherhoods want the same object or the same hiding place, they can talk to come to an arrangement. If both players can't

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

When a 'panties duel' starts, both players can attach 'goodies' cards to the gnome involved in the duel. Then, they have to throw a die with pips. The player who has the better score wins the duel and can take the object or use the hiding place.

E.g : Simon and Victor are both disagree about who will use the hiding place in the kitchen. Simon, who has any "goodies" card to attach, simply throws the die with pips and gets 5. Then it's Victor's turn. After having attached a "Pins" goodies, he throws the same die and gets a 5. His score is 5+1=6, so Victor can use the hiding place at the expanse of Simon.

The 2 next parts of the Night phase are played in the same way. Players can send a new gnome in a room or use a gnome already placed on the board. One detail remains: 2 active gnomes from the same brotherhood can't be placed in the same room (at least one of them has to be hidden).

5. Negotiations

Before Merlin wakes up, all the players can deal together by making exchanges. The blue hourglass starts so all the players have 2 minutes to make profits. They can exchange objects, "goodies" and "traps" cards (if the variant is used). All the exchanges are made by hidden face, so each player has to trust the others when they say that they have the desired object!

6. Day phase

Merlin figures out that his lovely home is being plundered by gnomes! What a sacrilege! Now he wants to catch them all to send them into jail! It's the moment to use the die with figures. Once it's thrown, the figure indicates in which room Merlin takes a look. If there are gnomes who are not hidden (or who have not organize a trap - cf. variant 2 p.9), Merlin catches and sends them into jail, recovering all the objects stolen by his prisonners. Players can free gnomes by sending another one in the basement during the night phase of the next round. Note that it's possible to free gnomes from other players, if you want...

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

7. Assessment and round rotation

All the players check the number of points scored with the objectives achieved, the unused objects stolen and the bonus (cf. variant 2 p.9). Once the assessment is done, all the players move their "brotherhood" pawn on the checkerboard. Then, the "round" token is placed on the next compartment. Finally, the first player during the night phase changes in the clockwise order.

END OF GAME

A game has 6 rounds. At the end of the 6th round, the player leader on the checkerbord is declared the winner. His brotherhood become *"the fashionest and coolest brotherhood of the year"*.

VARIANTS

Variant 1 - No Time!
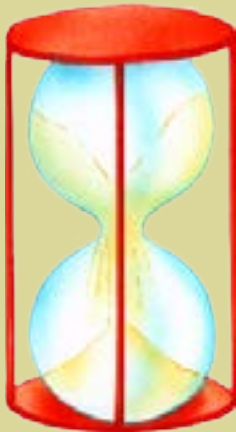
This variant includes a limit of time during the Night phase. Before starting it, the 2 minutes hourglass starts. When it's over, the 1 minute hourglass starts. In summary, 3 minutes are given to let the players steal a lot of objects and achieve objectives. When time is up, the Night phase ends immediately, and the Negotiations one starts. Nonetheless, if the phase is finished before the allotted time, then the phase ends immediately too.

Notes: this variant has been designed for expert players.

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

Variant 2 - Trap me if you can!

This variant allows the players to organize traps to attack Merlin and score a lot of additional points. Gnomagik, in addition to its normal abilities, can use the toilets to go to the attic. Then, he's owner can pick a "trap" card. The rest of the night phase is played normally.

During the Negotiations phase, the players who have "trap" cards can organize a trap. To execute it, it is necessary to gather the number of players and the "trap" cards required by the "recapitulative" card.

The resolution is made during the Day phase of the next round. To execute the trap, all the players involved in it must have a gnome in the same room. If Merlin enters that room, and if all the players straighten their "trap" card, then the operation is a success. Each player involved wins the number of points offered by the card as reward. Then, the 1 minute hourglass starts and let the involved players to decide the bonus objects. There are 2 types:

• "Super objects", which add the number of points indicated on their verso.

• "Joker objects", which can be used as a normal object to achieve any objective.

All the bonus objects that are not decided are lost.

MERLOUF
Version 1.1

FAQ SECTION

• When several players from a same room want to organize a trap at the same time (and when all the conditions are met), the order of execution is the same as the order of execution during the Night phase.

• If, during the assessment phase, a player has more malus points from enchanted objects than points from normal objects, he moves back his pawn on the checkerboard (effect canceled if the pawn is on the compartment 0).

• A hidden gnome can't participate in a trap.

• All the objects stolen on Merlin during a trap are put back in place the next round.

• An object can only serve for a single objective. If an object can achieve two different objectives, players have to choose which objective is achieved with it.

Example: if an "objectives" card requires "3 green objects" and "foak", then players have to collect 3 green objects AND a foak, even if the foak is a green object.

MERLOUF

Version 1.1

CREDITS

Concept

Simon Abitan

Gameplay

Ahmed Boukabous
Victor Nioré
Romain Casanova
Simon Abitan

Montage

Victor Nioré
Romain Casanova

Rules Booklet

Simon Abitan

Cards Illustration

Romain Casanova
Victor Nioré

Design of the gnomes

Ahmed Boukabous
Simon Abitan

Design of the Board

Simon Abitan
Ahmed Boukabous
Victor Nioré

Box Illustration

Ahmed Boukabous

Special Thanks

Frédéric Fruish, for his patience and art advices; Jim Gaudin, for his very high knowledge of the board game world; all the students at ISART Digital and Antoine Desmonets, for testing and approving the game.