

# THREE CHEERS FOR MASTER



A Game by  
**DANIEL WINDFELD SCHMIDT**

2–6 Players • 20–40 minutes • Ages 13+



## MASTER HAS BEEN BLUE, LATELY...

*It's just not the same now that all lands known to evil have been conquered.*

*When Master's blue, it's the minions who suffer.*

*As a lieutenant in Master's army — a foreminion — it falls to you to cheer him up. Not the easiest task, even in the best of times.*

*But then it hit you: What better way to cheer Master up than a cheerleading competition?*

*Whichever foreminion builds and scales the most impressive tower of war-hungry minions will surely win Master's heart.*

## ...WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?



## GAME CONTENTS

- **6** Foreminion Tokens
- **1** "Master is Coming" Card
- **79** Minion Cards
- **1** "Master is Here!" Card
- **17** Order Cards
- **3** Trait Reference Cards
- **9** Big Hairy Fight cards
- This Rulebook

## SUMMARY OF PLAY

In *Three Cheers for Master*, you play cards representing Master's ferocious minions into a grid on the table in front of you that represents a cheerleading tower.

But the other players have their own towers, and you can also play minions on them. That's the best place for the more murderous specimens, frankly.

As the game continues and your tower grows higher, you scamper around the precarious structure. Your foreminion token marks your location on the back of one of your minions.

From time to time, the savage minions' aggression overcomes them. Big Hairy Fights break out, maiming ensues, deaths occur, and towers falter.

Luckily, in addition to minion cards, you have order cards. They let you rearrange towers, spark aggression in enemy towers, and avoid some of the particularly grim fates your enemies have in mind for you.

Eventually, Master will arrive. Each tower will be judged on the values of its minions and the height of its foreminion. The most impressive tower will lighten Master's mood and win his heart.

*The rest will probably be eaten.*



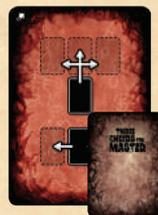
## ALL ABOUT CARDS

There are three kinds of cards in *Three Cheers for Master*: minions, orders, and events.



### MINION

*cards have plain backs.*



### ORDER

*card backs are plain, too.*



### EVENT

*cards are the same on both sides — they have two "backs"*

# STARTING THE GAME

1. Have each player choose a foreminion token.
2. Find and remove all the event cards: nine Big Hairy Fight cards, the “Master is Coming” card, and the “Master is Here!” card.



**BIG HAIRY  
FIGHT CARDS**



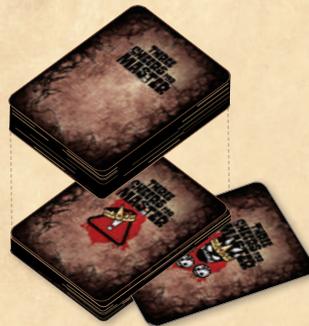
**MASTER IS  
COMING**



**MASTER  
IS HERE!**

3. Add a number of Big Hairy Fight cards back into the deck based on the number of players:

<u>PLAYERS</u>	<u>BIG HAIRY FIGHT CARDS</u>
2	9
3	8
4	7
5-6	6



*Deck setup*

4. Shuffle into a face-down deck. Shuffle them well. The slothful will surely be punished when Master arrives.
5. Cut off a small section of 20-30 cards.
6. Insert the “Master is Here!” card randomly into middle of the small section and put the “Master is Coming” card on top of the same section. Then put the rest of the deck on top of that.



(Now you have a face-down deck where “Master is Here!” is somewhere beneath “Master is Coming” near the bottom of the deck.)

7. Deal three cards to each player.
8. If any Big Hairy Fight cards come up during dealing or there’s one on top of the deck after dealing is done, mix them randomly back into the deck.
9. Once all players have three cards, begin play!

## PLAYING YOUR FIRST GAME?

Virgins should leave out the advanced minions, which have this icon in the upper right-hand corner.



First-timers should also remove two additional Big Hairy Fight cards from the deck.

**AFTER YOU’VE PLAYED ONCE OR TWICE,** try varying the number of Big Hairy Fight cards in your deck for a more intense or laid-back game.



## TAKING TURNS

*Three Cheers for Master* is played in turns. The bossiest player, or the player whose score in the last game was worst, goes first.

### ON YOUR TURN

1. **PLAY A CARD**
2. **PLAY ANOTHER CARD**
3. **MOVE YOUR FOREMINION, OR LEAVE IT**
4. **DISCARD YOUR THIRD CARD, OR KEEP IT**
5. **DRAW BACK UP TO THREE CARDS**

**PLAY CARDS** as described under *All About Minions* (see next page) and *All About Orders* (see pg. 10).

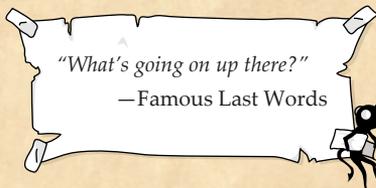
**MOVE YOUR FOREMINION** token as described under *Moving Your Foreminion*, pg. 13.

**IF YOU REVEAL A BIG HAIRY FIGHT CARD** while you're drawing, see *Big Hairy Fights*, pg 14, and *Gravity*, pg 15.

**WHEN YOU DRAW TO THREE CARDS**, any other players who also played cards during your turn (see *Deflect Orders*, pg. 12) also draw back up to three cards.

**AFTER YOU DRAW**, play passes to the player to your left.

**SEE?** It's easy!



## ALL ABOUT MINIONS

Minions are Master's ferocious foot soldiers. They're nasty and brutish. Many are short.



### MINION ICON:

Distinguishes minions from orders or events.

### MINION VALUE:

A score — higher is better (see *Counting Points*, pg. 17).

### ADVANCED MINION ICON:

Minions with this icon are tricky. Leave them out of your first game.

### TRAIT ICONS:

What the minion is like (see *Minion Traits*, next page).

### AGGRESSION ARROWS:

Minions attack in the direction their arrows point (see *Minion Attacks*, pg. 14).

### PICTURE

### FLAVOR TEXT



**BLOCKING SHIELDS:** Minions are protected where they have blocking shields (see below).

## ATTACKS AND WOUNDS

Minions aren't very durable. One wound is enough to kill, unless it's Armored (see next page).

## BLOCKING SHIELDS

Minions with blocking shields on one or more of their card edges don't take wounds from attacks coming at them from those directions.

(Don't confuse blocking shields with the Armored trait. They're entirely different things.)



A minion with blocking shields.

## WHEN MINIONS DIE

Minions die for lots of reasons: they suffer a wound without armor, they are eaten, crushed, stabbed, smothered, blown up, and they fall to their untimely deaths. Dead minions are placed in the discard pile face up.

## MINION TRAITS

Most minions have traits. A minion's traits are shown by icons on its card.



**WEAK:** If a Weak minion falls, it suffers a wound. Unless it is also Armored, it dies, and is discarded.



**HUNGRY:** If a Hungry minion's aggression arrow ever points to a Weak minion, the Weak minion is immediately eaten (discard it), regardless of blocking shields or foreminions, and the Hungry minion takes its place. Unsupported minions fall immediately. If a Hungry minion has multiple dining options, its owner chooses between them.



**HEAVY:** If a Heavy minion falls on top of another minion, the crushed minion dies (discard it). The Heavy minion takes its place and no further damage is dealt — for now, anyway.



**FLYING:** Flying minions can be placed next to minions in rows other than the ground row, and do not fall due to gravity. Exception: If there is ever a Heavy minion above a Flying minion, anywhere in its column, the Flying minion falls immediately.



**AGILE:** When played, Agile minions can be placed either right side up or rotated 180°.



**KAMIKAZE:** A Kamikaze minion suffers a wound at the end of each round in which it attacks, after all attacks but before gravity is resolved.



**ARMORED:** When an Armored minion suffers a wound, rotate it 180° instead of discarding it. An Armored minion doesn't die when it takes a wound, unless it was already rotated.



**CLAUSTROPHOBIC:** Claustrophobic minions die immediately (discard it) if surrounded on all sides by minions and/or the ground. Apply gravity immediately after this happens.



**NINJA:** Ninja minions are played face down, concealing their identity. They are turned face up during Big Hairy Fights, aggression, or when falling, and then back face down after gravity has been resolved. While face-down, a Ninja minion's traits other than Ninja have no effect (see *Rotated and Face-Down Minions*, next page).



**ASSASSIN:** An Assassin minion can be played normally, or can be played in the place of an existing minion, which is slain (discard it).

## ROTATED AND FACE-DOWN MINIONS



The orientation of a minion card can affect its abilities.

**NORMAL**, face-up minion cards have a minion icon in the upper left-hand corner.



**ROTATED** minion cards are face-up but rotated 180° from their normal orientation. This reverses the direction of aggression arrows and blocking shields, in the obvious way. Being rotated has the incidental effect of making Armored minions easier to kill.



**FACE-DOWN** minions have their faces concealed and their backs showing. You can't see their traits, so their traits aren't in effect. Surprise! It's a Ninja.



## MAKING TOWERS WITH MINIONS

As play proceeds, minions are stacked in towers. Towers are grids of cards on the table. Each player has her own tower.

- The first minion played in any tower defines its ground row. A minion on top of it is in the second row. A minion on top of that is in the third row. And so on.
- When new minions are played in a tower, they can go beside an existing ground row minion, or on top of any minion in any row.
- You can play a minion in any tower you want — yours or an opponent's.
- You can't move minions apart to make room for a new minion. There has to already be space for a new minion in order to play one somewhere.

### A SAMPLE TOWER

THIRD ROW



SECOND ROW



GROUND ROW



# ALL ABOUT ORDERS



Order cards make things happen. They can rearrange towers, cause aggression, or deflect minions or orders.



**MOVE ORDER**



**SWAP ORDER**



**AGGRESSION ORDER**



**DEFLECT ORDER**

Most order cards have two options. When you play one, you choose one of the options. The other has no effect.

Just like minion cards, you can play order cards on any tower: your own or someone else's.

Once played, orders are placed face up in the discard pile.

## REARRANGE ORDERS

There are two kinds of rearrange orders: moves and swaps.

### Some Moves



### Some Swaps



**MOVES:** If you play a move card, choose any minion and move it to any of the destination options shown by the arrows. Gravity takes effect immediately afterwards. You can't move a minion to a destination that's already occupied by another minion. It doesn't matter if the spaces in between are full or empty.

**SWAPS:** If you play a swap card, choose two minions in the arrangement shown on the card. Swap their places. Gravity takes effect immediately afterwards. You can't swap a card with an empty space — swaps have to involve two cards.

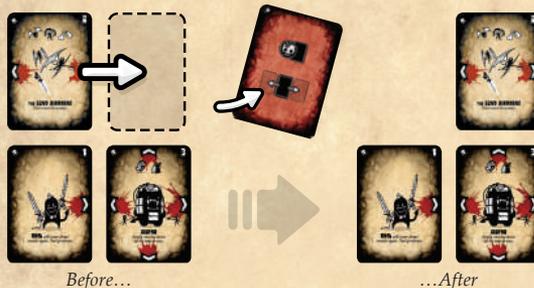
## AGGRESSION ORDERS

If you play an aggression order, choose a minion. That minion — *and that minion only* — immediately launches the attacks shown by its aggression arrows (see *Minion Attacks*, pg 14).



## MOVE ORDER EXAMPLE

The order card contains both an aggression order and a move order. The player chooses the move order and plays it on the card in the second row, moving it to the other side of the tower.



## SWAP ORDER EXAMPLE

The order card contains both a swap order and a deflect order. The player chooses the swap order and plays it on the two cards in the left column of the tower, switching their positions.



## AGGRESSION ORDER EXAMPLE

The order card contains both a deflect order and an aggression order. The player chooses the aggression order and plays it on the card in the second row. Its aggression arrow activates, wounding and killing the minion below it. Next, gravity causes the attacker to fall.



## DEFLECT ORDERS

You only play deflect orders on another player's turn, in response to them playing a minion card or an order card on your tower.



When you play a deflect order, announce that you are deflecting. Take the card you deflected and immediately play it *any way that you could normally play it on your turn*. However, you can't deflect a card back to the player who played it, except in a two-player game.

When you deflect an order card, you deflect the order that the original player chose. You may not choose the other order on that card (if there is one) — the time for choosing has passed.

**DEFLECTING DEFLECTIONS:** Deflected cards can be deflected again if additional deflect orders are played. This can send a card back to its original player in a game with more than two players, *but you still can't deflect back to the player you're deflecting from*.<sup>1</sup>

**EXAMPLE:** In a three-player game between Xavier, Yaz, and Zippy, Xavier plays a minion into Yaz's tower. Yaz plays a deflect, but she can't send the minion back to Xavier, so she sends it to Zippy, but Zippy plays a second deflect. Zippy can't send it to Yaz — you can't deflect to the player you're deflecting from — so he's got to send it to Xavier. The minion is sad. Why won't anyone accept it with loving arms?

## ALL ABOUT YOU



You are a foreminion, exalted above Master's other minions.

You're represented in play by a foreminion token. It jumps around your tower from minion to minion, marking your place as you scamper about. The minion your token is currently riding on is your **bearer-minion**.



If you have no minions, it sits on the ground, but it's never between minion cards, or floating in air, or similar nonsense. Can you imagine what would happen if Master caught you doing that?

<sup>1</sup> Again, except for two-player games. In two-player, you can deflect back and forth to each other until you run out of deflect orders. In answer to your other question, it's a game about neurotic bureaucrats trying desperately to please their lunatic boss. *Of course it has footnotes.*

As a foreminion you have two goals: to keep your bloodthirsty creatures calm, and to ascend to a height appropriate to your stature before Master returns.

## FOREMINIONS KEEP VIOLENCE IN CHECK

When a Big Hairy Fight card appears, bearer-minions (a) aren't attacked by other minions that would normally attack them, and (b) don't launch any attacks of their own. That's it, though. Bearer-minions are affected normally by aggression orders, by gravity, by minion traits, and all the rest.



## FOREMINIONS MULTIPLY SCORES

The higher your foreminion climbs, the more rows will receive multipliers when scoring (see *Counting Points*, pg. 17).

## MOVING YOUR FOREMINION

On your turn, after playing two cards, you may move your foreminion from the minion it's on to any adjacent (not diagonal) minion.

If your foreminion is off your tower, you may place it on any ground-row minion in your tower.

## MOVING BY ACCIDENT

If your bearer-minion moves — falls, moves, swaps, or what-have-you — your foreminion token moves with it. Buckle up!

If your bearer-minion dies, you can leap to safety by choosing a minion next to or immediately below where the bearer died, or any ground-row minion, and placing your token there. If there are no minions in those three categories that you can leap to, your foreminion falls to the ground. Foreminions never die, though.

## LEAPING TO SAFETY



# BIG HAIRY FIGHTS

When Master's minions get aggressive, they tend to kill each other. When the minions in your tower die, it tends to affect its stability.



## AGGRESSION

Minion aggression is triggered in two ways: when an aggression order is played or when a Big Hairy Fight card (or the "Master is Here!" card) is revealed at the top of the deck by a player drawing cards.



### AGGRESSION ORDERS:

Aggression orders make *just one minion* attack — the one chosen by the player playing (or deflecting) the order.



### BIG HAIRY FIGHT CARDS:

Big Hairy Fight cards (and the "Master is Here!" card) make *every minion in every tower* attack.

## MINION ATTACKS

When a minion attacks, it deals a wound to every minion at the receiving end of one of its aggression arrows, unless blocked with a blocking shield.

Multiple arrows facing in the same direction indicate the priority — the relative speed — of that minion's attacks. Three-arrow minions strike before two-arrow minions, who strike before one-arrow minions.

Dead minions are removed and discarded before the next priority level of minions attacks. So, it's possible for a one-arrow minion to be killed by a higher-priority attack before it can dish out any violence of its own. A slow minion is a dead minion!

All minions with the same priority deal damage simultaneously. For example, a pair of one-arrow minions whose arrows point at each other will kill each other if a Big Hairy Fight card comes up.

After every minion of every priority has attacked, gravity resolves.

# GRAVITY

Sometimes minions fall-down-go-boom. Usually that happens when minions die beneath them.

## WHEN GRAVITY IS RESOLVED

Gravity affects a tower at the moments specified in the rules, rather than being in effect and being applied constantly. For example, when a Big Hairy Fight card shows up, *all* of the resulting attacks are resolved before gravity's effects are resolved.

## SETTLING MINIONS

When a death happens below a minion and it discovers that it's in mid-air, it falls, along with all the minions directly above it. (Flying minions are an exception. They only fall if there's a Heavy minion above them.)

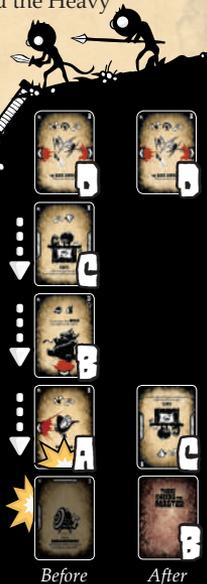
When a minion falls, slide it downward in its column until it can't go any further, either because it lands on the ground or comes to rest on top of another minion.

When a Heavy minion falls and lands on another minion, that minion dies immediately and is discarded (even if Armored and right side up) and the Heavy minion takes its place.

Settle minions in the second row first, then move upward row by row. (Ground row minions don't settle because they can't fall.)

## GRAVITY EXAMPLE

The bottom minion dies. Resolve gravity from the bottom up. Normally Minion A would fly, and nothing would happen, but Minion B is Heavy, so Minion A immediately falls and dies. Minion B is now on the ground row. Minion C is Weak, so it's wounded when it falls, but it's also Armored, so it is rotated 180°. Minion D is Flying, so he stays where he is, and laughs at the chaos below him. Minion B is a Ninja, so it is turned face down now that all fights and gravity are resolved.



## BIG HAIRY FIGHT EXAMPLES



### ATTACK EXAMPLE 1

**EXAMPLE 1:** First, Minion D's three-arrow attack wounds and kills Minion C. Being dead, Minion C doesn't do anything when its two-arrow priority rolls around. In the one-arrow round, Minions A and B don't do anything because there are no adjacent targets where their arrows point. All attacks resolved, gravity settles Minion A.



### ATTACK EXAMPLE 2

**EXAMPLE 2:** First, Minion D's three-arrow attack is foiled by Minion C's blocking shield. Then, Minion E deals a wound to Minion D, killing it. Minions A and B kill each other simultaneously. Gravity finds no unsupported minions to settle, so the tower comes to rest.



### ATTACK EXAMPLE 3

**EXAMPLE 3:** First, Minion C's three-arrow attack wounds Minion B, but since Minion B is Armored, it rotates rather than dying, which re-oriens its arrow and blocking shield. Next, Minion A's two-arrow attack has no adjacent target. Finally, the one-arrow attacks resolve. Minion B wounds and kills Minion A (its arrow now points leftward). Minion E wounds and kills Minions B (its blocking shield is now facing upward) and F (no surprise), but not Minion D (whose shield prevents it from taking a wound). Minion F wounds and kills Minion E, though Minion E would die in any case because of its Kamikaze trait. Minion C settles by gravity and the tower comes to rest.

## WHEN MASTER COMES

*"Just you wait until Master comes. You'll see."*

—Famous Last Words

### MASTER IS COMING

When the "Master is Coming" card makes it to the top of the deck, shout, "MASTER IS COMING!" and make sure all of the players see it, then set it aside. Time to start panicking or planning carefully! The "Master is Here!" card could now appear at any time, and you wouldn't want to disappoint Master when he arrives.



### MASTER IS HERE!

When the "Master is Here!" card appears at the top of the deck, regular turns stop immediately. Before final scores are tallied, all players resolve aggression — as with a Big Hairy Fight card — *three full times*. (The three fight icons on the "Master is Here!" card are reminders.) After that, count each tower's point value. The highest score wins the game and Master's heart!

### COUNTING POINTS

To score your tower, first find each row's basic score by adding up its minions' minion values (at the top right).

Then, multiply each row's basic score by its height above the ground, *but only if your foreminion token ended the game at that row or a higher row*. If your foreminion was off your tower or ended the game lower than a given row, don't multiply that row — its basic score stands.

*There's one important exception:* If your tower has two (or more!) groups of minions *completely* separated from each other by empty spaces, you can't multiply minions in sections that are separated from your foreminion.

Once you've got all of the row results, either basic or multiplied, add them all up.

The sum is your score!

(See *Scoring Examples*, next page)



## SCORING EXAMPLES



**TOTAL SCORE: = 5**

*This under-performing tower has a foreminion on the ground level, but multiplying by 1 — for the first level — is not particularly impressive.*



**TOTAL SCORE: 6 + 3 + 1 = 17**

*This foreminion ascended to the third row, so all rows are multiplied by their height.*



**TOTAL SCORE: 2 + 10 + 2 = 14**

*This foreminion only made it to the second row, so the third row's value is not multiplied.*



**TOTAL SCORE: 2 + 11 + 5 = 18**

*This mighty erection is split in two. Only the section with the foreminion on it is eligible for multipliers.*

*If there was another card on the ground row connecting the two towers, all cards in the second row would receive the multiplier.*

## TIPS AND TRICKS

- Heavy minions only crush when falling — they don't automatically kill Weak minions. They do, however, immediately push Flying minions to the ground.
- If settling order ever matters in the same row, settle minions from left to right.
- In a two-player game, you may wish to sit next to each other rather than across, to better see each other's towers and avoid getting your cards all messed up in the middle of the table.
- Try using a move order to knock a minion out of a tower! Or, can your Hungry minion chew through a whole row of Weaklings?

## HOUSE RULES



Try switching it up for a newly murderous experience.

### TOWER INFERNO

Feeling masochistic? For bigger tower games with a dramatic finish, remove all Big Hairy Fight cards, but leave in "Master is Here!" — make sure you have plenty of table space!

### DOUBLE TROUBLE

- Split into two teams of two players, each team sharing one tower, but with two foreminions.
- Red Team's Player 1 goes first, then Blue Team's Player 1 takes a turn, Red Team Player 2, and so on — no showing your cards to teammates!

### SPEEDY GONZALEZ

- Remove all cards except minion cards. Deal out all minions, face down, so that all players receive the same number of cards. Set any odd minions aside.
- Starting at the same time, each player builds his own tower only, revealing one card at a time.
- The first to finish her deck shouts "Master is Here!" and all players stop.
- Resolve three Big Hairy Fights (scoring as if each foreminion is at the top of its tower) and see who won!

# CREDITS



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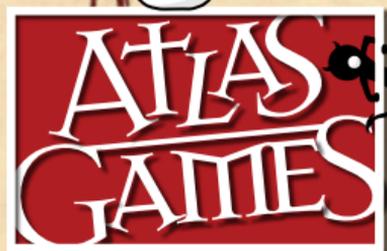
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