



Scrat's Scum

BY CHRISTOPHER W. REYNOLDS

RULEBOOK

IT'S NOT
ABOUT **WINNING.**

IT'S ABOUT MAKING
EVERYONE ELSE **LOSE.**

You had a lot of fun when you were alive. You stole whatever you wanted, loved many a partner, murdered anyone who ever tried to get in your way. When it came to the untamed West, you bowed your head to no religion, law, or social nicety.

And that's when a gentleman waiting under that lamp post offered you a deal. Calling himself "Old Scratch" he invited you to play in a card game of his design. Win, and you could be rich beyond your wildest dreams.

You shook his hand to seal the deal, and that's when everything went black.

Now you are chained to a card table with a few others who were in the running for "worst person alive" in a room lit by walls of fire. Old Scratch is none other than the Devil himself, and you're playing in Hell for your very soul. Whoever ends the game with the most chips will be leaving with more money than they could spend, and another year of life for every chip they end with. But only one of you is leaving.

Build Talons out of the cards in your hands as fast as you can to gain a reward from Old Scratch. Or risk aiming for Scratch's Score, which he'll only give to the player who can deliver him the card he most desires that round. Whatever you do, try to not have any loose cards at the end of the round - you'll pay for each one.

**And when amongst cheaters and swindlers,
always cut the deck!**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STORY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TALONS AND YOU

HOW TO SET UP

DECK CONTENTS

FLOW OF A TURN

THE SCORE

RIGHTS TO THE SCORE

WANTED CARDS

SCRATCH'S SET

MULTIPLIER

START A NEW ROUND

ELIMINATION 101

FACTS OF INTEREST

TUTORIAL? TUTORIAL.

HELLISH DESCENT?

OUR OTHER WORKS

**OLD SCRATCH
WANTS
TO THANK**

That One Asshole Viking

The Nomadic Mau

Scarlett Mouse

Rockhound

[Mormon-Owned Soda Flavor Reference]

Kubu-Mom

TroupeMom

Drake Splash

JxBo

Kamikaze Kiwi

Kashi2Kashi

prObait

Kokushisho

Tsuba-kun The Bullseye Ninja

Xel

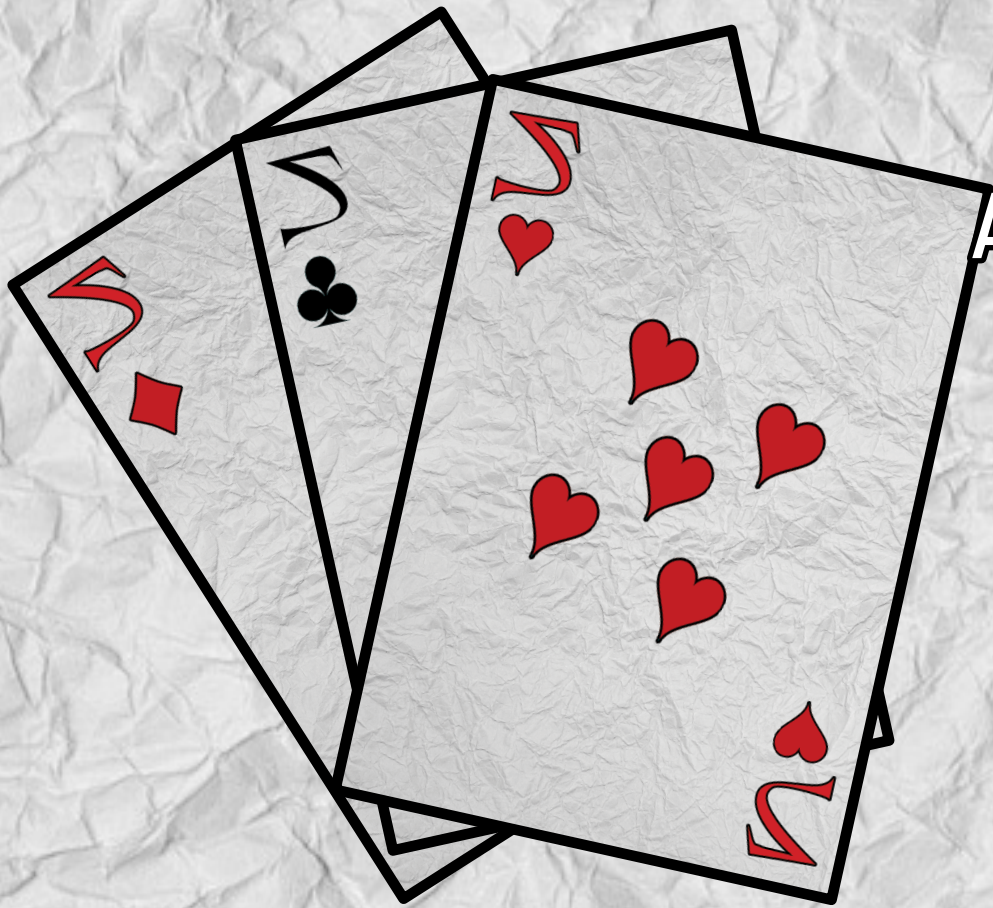
Chuy

Dean McDanden

TALONS AND YOU

This is a game of making **Talons**.

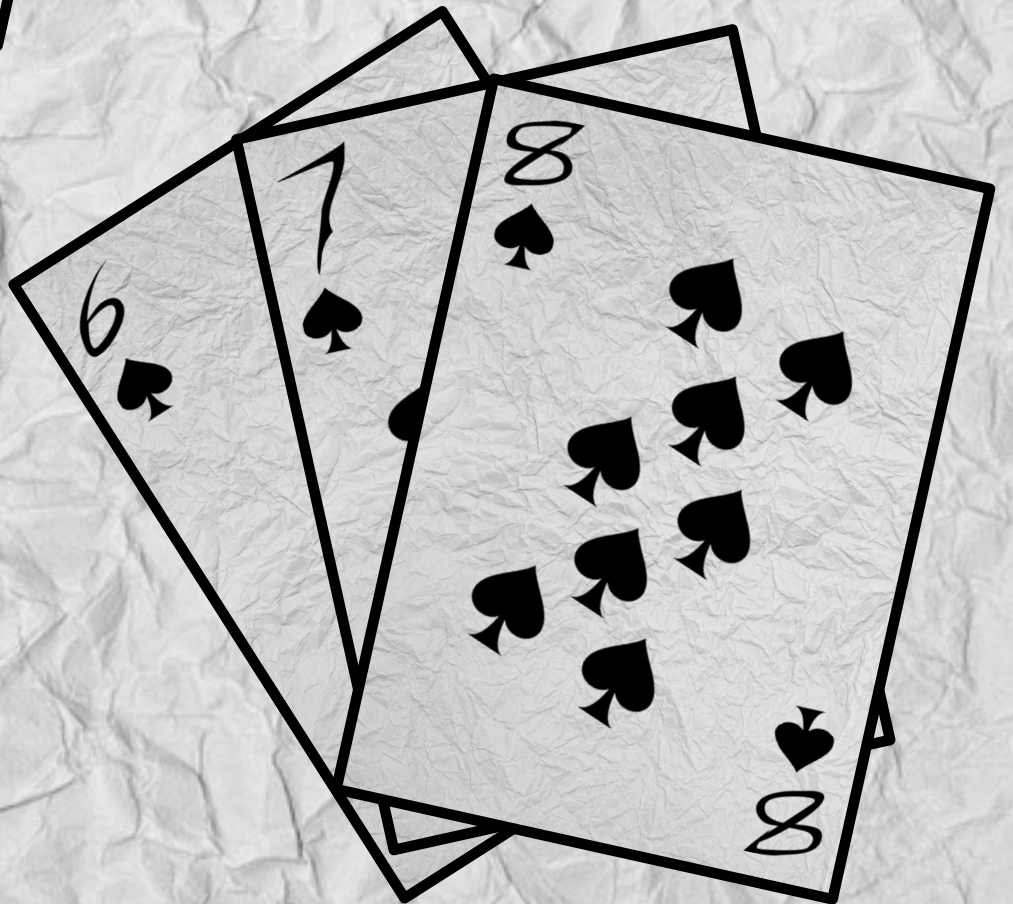
A Talon is any group of three or more cards that meets the following requirements:



All the same value, but of any suit. Like this 5-5-5.

These are called **Sets**.

All the same suit, but sequentially in a row. Like the 6-7-8 of ♠.

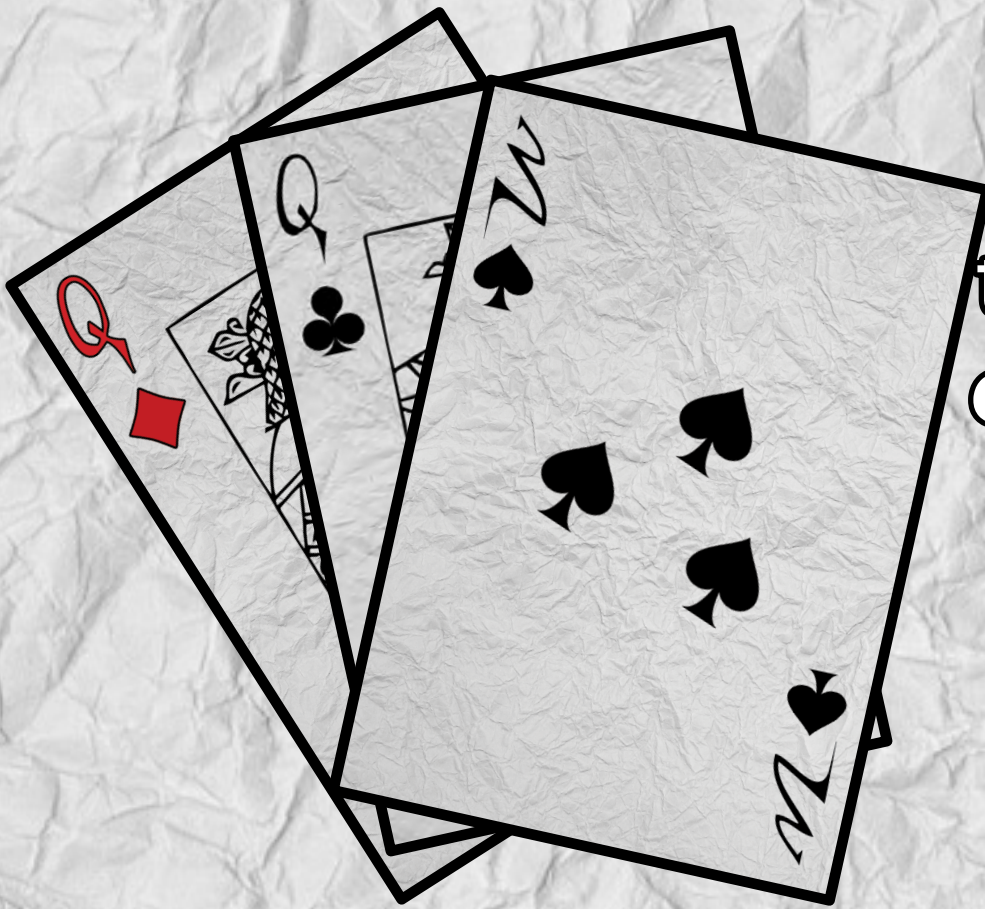


These are called **Straights**.

You can have as many Talons in your hand as you like, as long as each has at least three cards.

And each card is only used in one Talon at a time.

Now, **Wild Cards** can be any card you need to finish a Talon. They come in three varieties.



The **Wild of the Round** is the card that has a number equal to how many cards everyone has in their hand.

[3♠ is a Queen]

Jokers can any card you need at any time.



The Joker here is being the Jack ♦.



Faustian Jokers work just like the above, but everyone can see them in your hand and on top of the deck.

HOW TO SET UP

Whoever last sinned places the Scratch's Breaker marker in front of them.

They are the **Breaker** for the round.



The text at the top should be pointed away from the Breaker.

The flame is pointing in the direction of play.

The Breaker shuffles up the deck. Someone else cuts it

The Breaker reveals the top card of the deck until a card that isn't a 6 or any kind of Joker. That's the **Wanted Card of the Round.**



Place a marker on the x1 Multiplier

SHUFFLE THESE TOGETHER

Your Deck Will Contain...



Two copies of each of the four suites, ranging from 3s to Kings.

Three regular Jokers. These can be any card you need for a Talon.



Three two-sided Faustian Jokers. Like regular Jokers, but two-sided.

Place The Score cards next to each other. Put points on them equal to the number of players in the game.



We're setting our example up for 6 players

Place the Old Scratch's Reward card on the table, next to The Score



The Breaker should give each player 100 points worth of whatever item is being using to keep track of points.



Everyone antes a point into the Score.

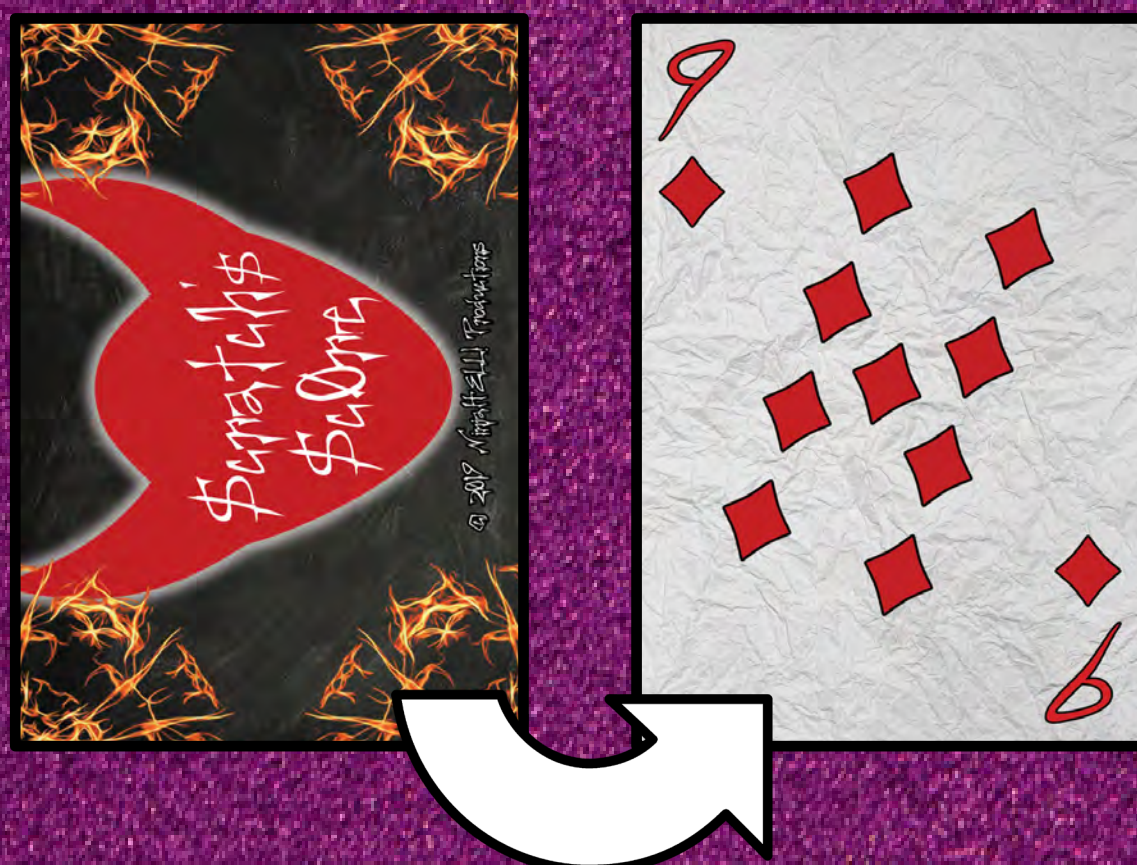
**The Breaker shuffles the deck.
Someone else cuts it.**



**The Breaker deals
each player six cards.**



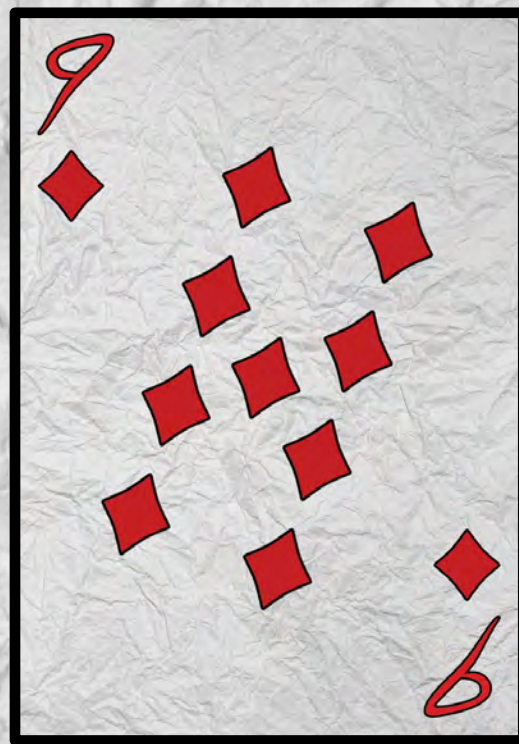
**The Breaker takes the top card of
the deck and places it next to
the deck face up to form the
Discard Pile.**



The Breaker begins their turn...

FLOW OF A TURN

Starting with the Breaker, each player spends their turn making an important decision..

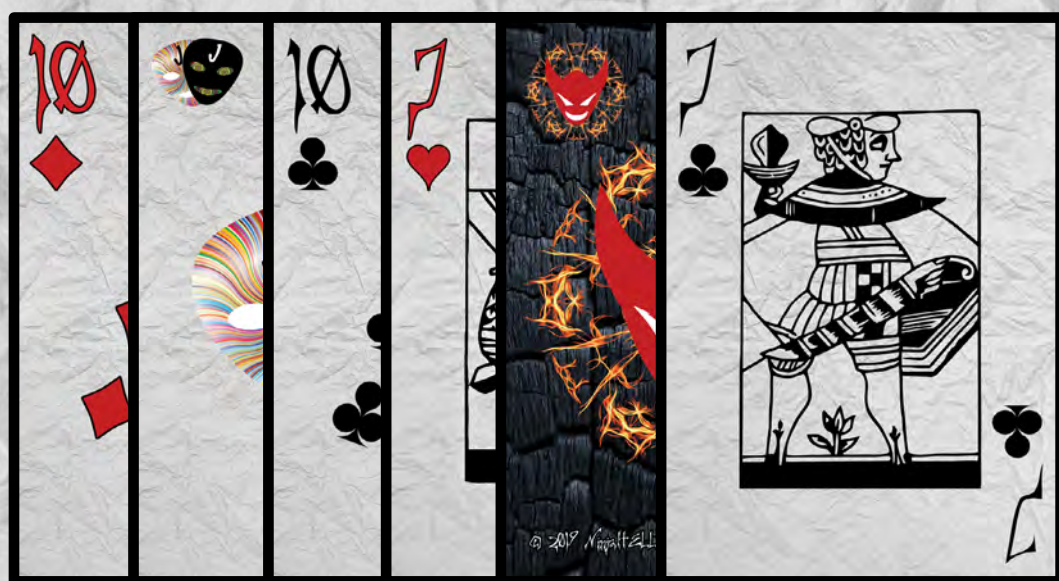


Blindly draw
a card from
the deck

OR

Pick up top
card of the
discard pile

Regardless, you will need to
discard a card afterward. This
leads to the player to your left
taking their turn.

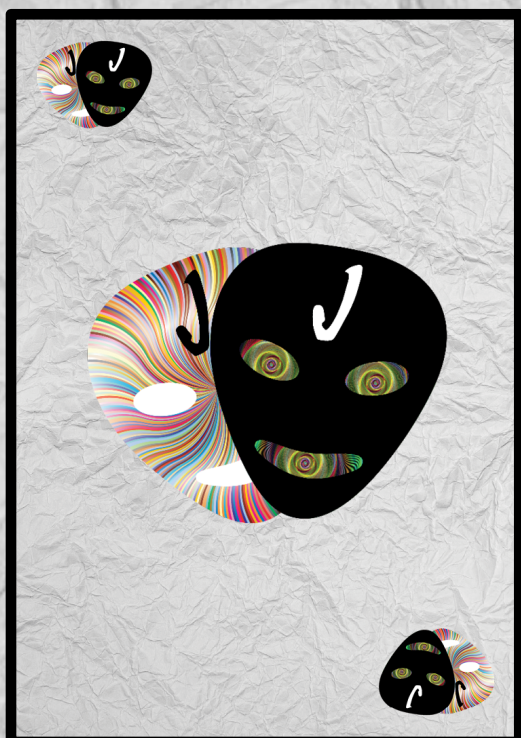
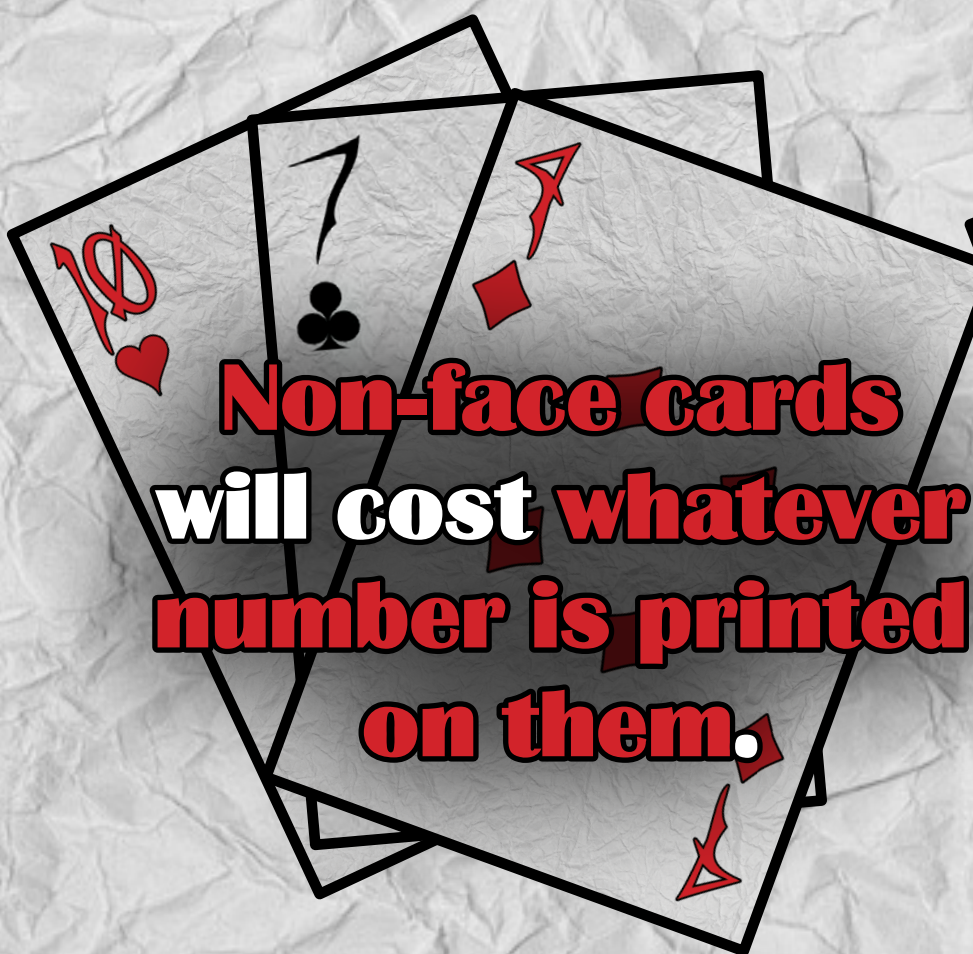


Unless all your cards are in Talons,
and you want the round to end.
Reveal your hand and claim
Old Scratch's Reward.

Once **Old Scratch's Reward** is claimed, everyone else gets one more turn to finish their hands.

After this, while everyone else's hands are still hidden the player with **Old Scratch's Reward** chooses another player.

That player reveals their hand and pays the holder of **Old Scratch's Reward** points for all their cards outside of Talons in their hand.



But watch out:
Jokers and Faustian Jokers will cost **50 points** each.



THE SCORE

Once everyone has finished their final turns in a round, and **Old Scratch's Reward** has been dealt with, check to see if anyone has earned **The Score**.

So, what's **The Score**? **The Score** is that pool y'all have been ante-ing points into each round.



This is what it'll look like on your table.

If you end the round having either the Wanted Card of the round or a Scratch's Set, and have a higher claim on the **RIGHTS TO THE SCORE** than anyone else that round, you'll gain all the points in **The Score**.

But The Score can only be won if you didn't nab Old Scratch's Reward.

RIGHTS TO THE SCORE

1. Someone Clears with both copies of the Wanted Card in Talons.
2. Someone Clears with a copy of the Wanted Card in a Talon.
3. Someone who didn't Clear, but has both copies of the Wanted Card in Talons.
4. Someone who didn't Clear, but has a copy of the Wanted Card in a Talon.
5. No one has a Wanted Card, but you have a Red Suited Scratch's Set.
6. No one has a Wanted Card, but you have a Black Suited Scratch's Set.
7. No one has a Wanted Card, but you have a Mixed Suited Scratch's Set.

OLD SCRATCH'S WANTED CARD



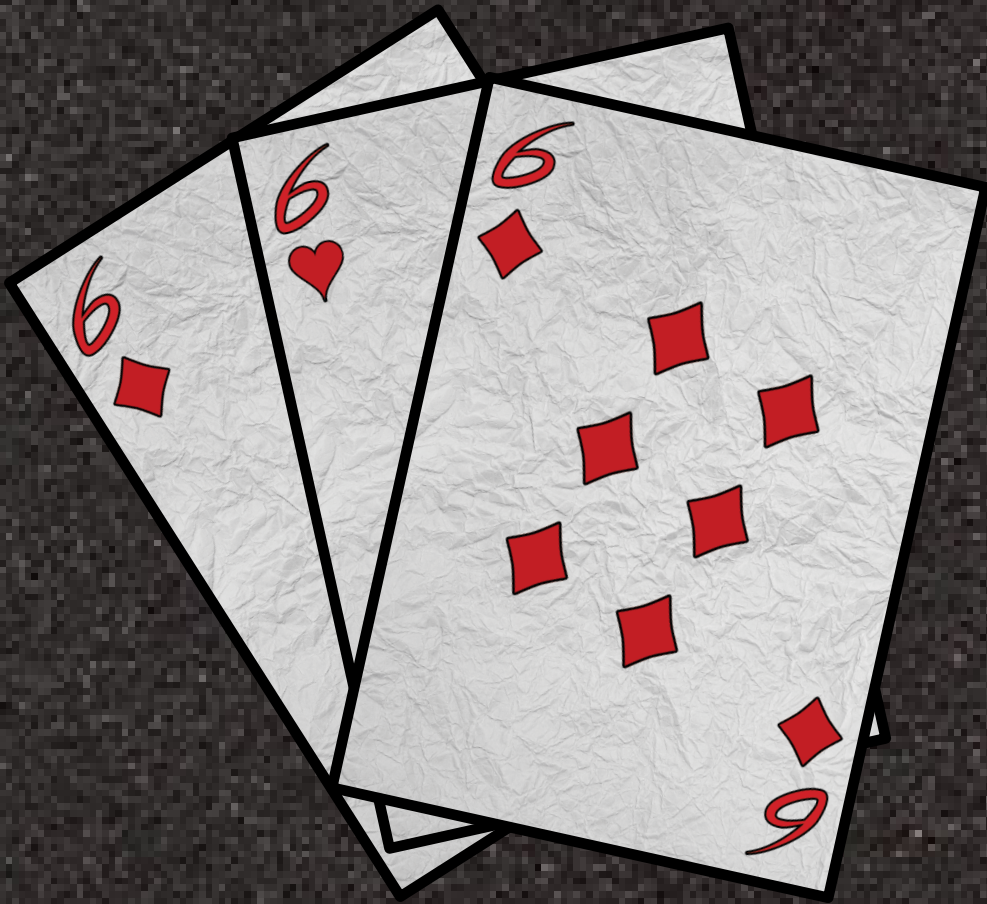
Before the start of each round, the Breaker will reveal a card that isn't a Joker or the Wild of that Round.

This card is **Old Scratch's Wanted Card of the Round. At the end of any round that you didn't claim **Old Scratch's Reward** with the Wanted Card as a part of one of your Talons, you'll have a claim on the Score.**

If one or more player qualifies for the Score this way, use the **RIGHTS TO THE SCORE to figure out who has the highest claim on it.**

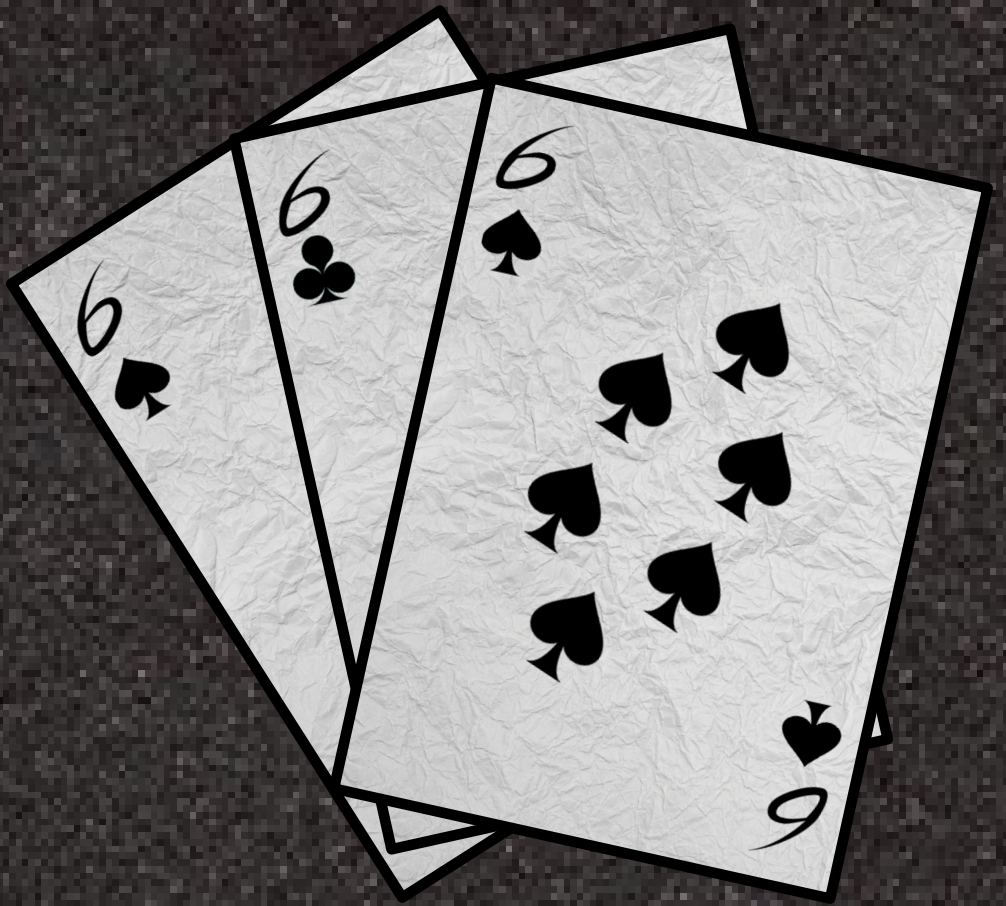
SCRATCH'S SET

What the Hell is a **Scratch's Set**?
Well, a Set of the Beast:

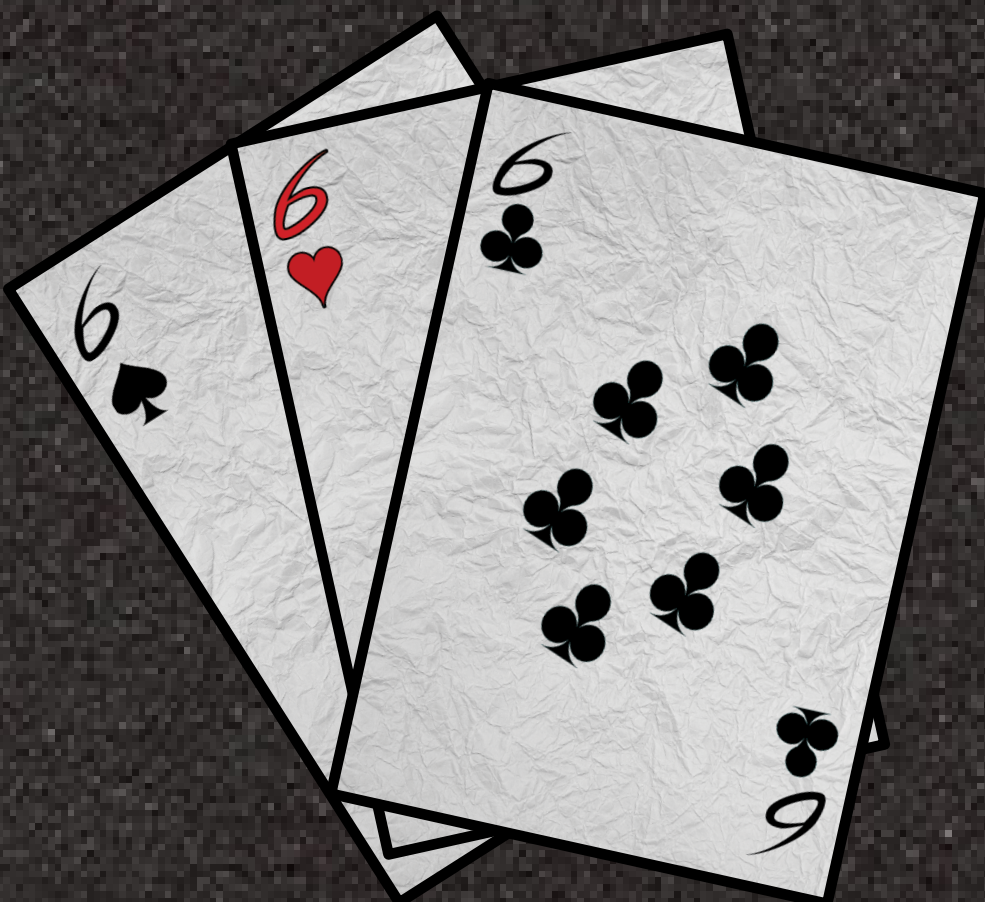


A **6-6-6** set with
red cards is a
**Red Suited
Scratch's Set.**

A **6-6-6** set with
black cards is a
**Black Suited
Scratch's Set.**



A **6-6-6** set with
black and red
cards is a
**Mixed Suited
Scratch's Set.**



MULTIPLYING THE SCORE



The **OLD SCRATCH WANTS** card is where y'all will keep track of the **Wanted Card of the Round**, and the size of the **Multiplier**.

This affects how many points everyone will ante before each round, and how many points **The Score** will start with after its been emptied.

While the Multiplier will get bigger each time **The Score** is claimed, it will never get bigger than the number of players in the game. Instead, it just stays at that value.

STARTING A NEW ROUND


If **The Score** is claimed, and the Multiplier isn't equal to the number of people playing, the Multiplier is increased by one. The Breaker adds points from outside the game to **The Score** equal to number of players times the new Multiplier.

If **The Score** is unclaimed, just skip the above.

Whether **The Score** is claimed or not, everyone antes points equal to the multiplier to **The Score**.

The Scratch's Breaker marker is then passed to the left. That person is the Breaker for the next round.






The Breaker then reveals cards from the top of the deck until a card that is neither a Joker or the next Wild of the Round. Note that as the next **Wanted Card of the Round** on the **OLD SCRATCH WANTS** card.

The Breaker then shuffles up the deck, having someone else cut it, and deals each player a hand with one more card than the last round.

Old Scratch's Reward is then placed next to **The Score**.

The top card is placed next to the deck face up to form the discard pile. The Breaker takes their turn.

Continue playing until the eighth round is completed, or only one player has points left. The player with the most points is the winner!



ELIMINATION AND COMEBACKS

If you wind up with no points at any point in the game, but there's still more than one player with points in the game, don't get upset.

Get Even!

Losing the last of your points makes you an **Eliminated Player**.

You're not allowed to claim **Old Scratch's Reward** to end rounds, even if you start with your whole hand already in Talons.

However, everyone's eligible to nab **The Score** - and that can get you back in the game!

Remember, **The Score** isn't given out until after everyone loses points for loose cards in their hands. And since you can't lose points you don't have, you'll just start the next round with a nice stack of points.

FACTS OF INTEREST

- If you discard a card, and that's the card the next player needed to claim **Old Scratch's Reward**, you've just COURTNEY'D.
- You cannot claim **Old Scratch's Reward** once the next player picks up a card from the top of the deck or discard pile, as they've just begun their turn.
- If the deck runs out of cards during a round, remove the top card of the discard pile and set it to the side. The rest of the cards are shuffled and cut to become the deck.
- If two players end up with same claim on **The Score**, the Breaker splits it between them evenly. If **The Score** is an odd amount, the Breaker chooses who gets the bigger pile. They can even take the larger amount if they were the one of the aforementioned players.

THE TUTORIAL

If you or others haven't played this game before, but need some time to get used to the flow of play and making Talons, try playing three tutorial rounds.



Round 1
will have
3 card hands,
with **3s** being
the Wild of
the Round.

Round 2
will have
4 card hands,
with **4s** being
the Wild of
the Round.



Round 3
will have
5 card hands,
with **5s** being
the Wild of
the Round.



**No one antes, and there's no
Score, Wanted Card, or Old
Scratch's Reward during these.**

HELLISH DESCENT

- HOW THE NEW CARDS WORK -

This expansion adds two full, new suits of cards to the game. Each changes how the basic rules work.



SUIT OF THE DAMNED - THE SKULL SUIT -

This suit acts like the four included in the base game, save for one catch:

If the person with **Old Scratch's Reward** picks you, and you pay them points, you pay double the value of any Skull card in your hand.

YOU WOULD HAVE
TO PAY 26 POINTS
FOR THIS CARD
ALONE IF IT
WASN'T IN A TALON
IN YOUR HAND.

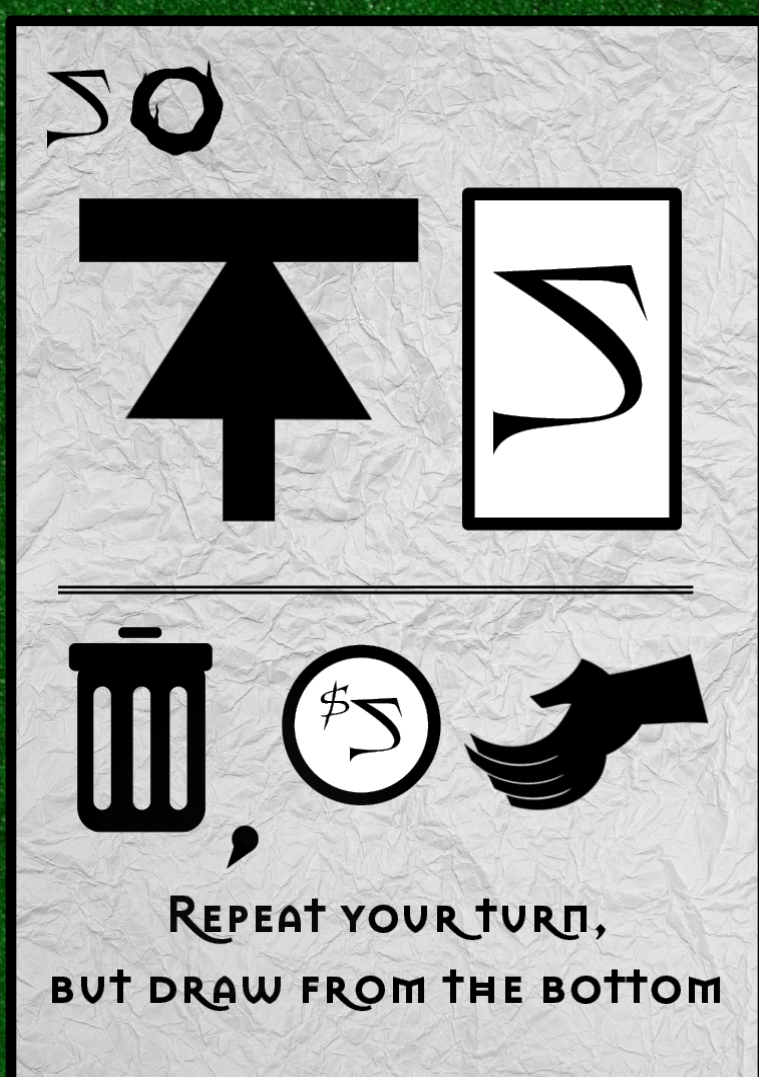
[13 x 2 = 26]



FORKS & RINGS **- THE HALF SUITS -**

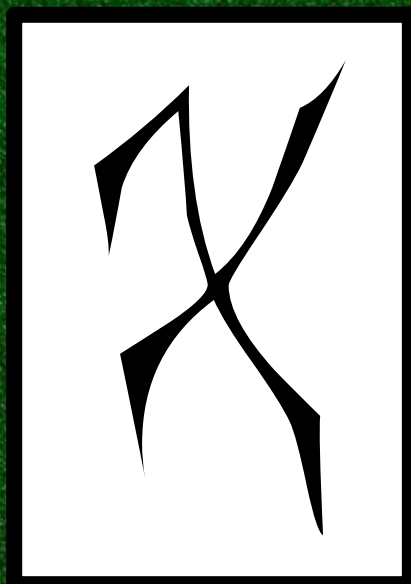
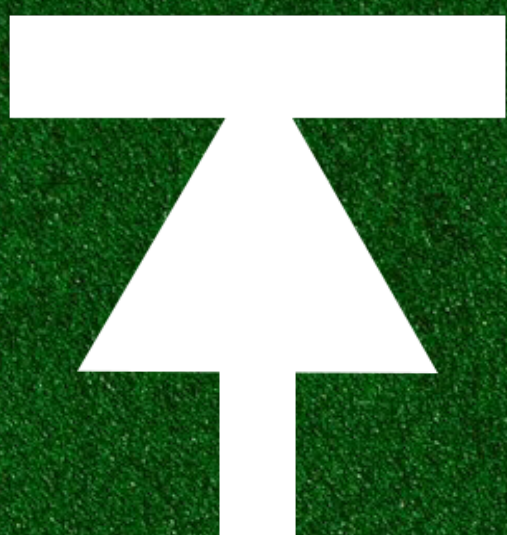
These cards have specified values, but can be any suit you need them to be for making a Straight. There is a catch: Talons that include them have a hard limit on the kinds of cards that can be included.

They don't go to the discard pile like normal: put them on the bottom of the discard pile, and trigger a special effect!



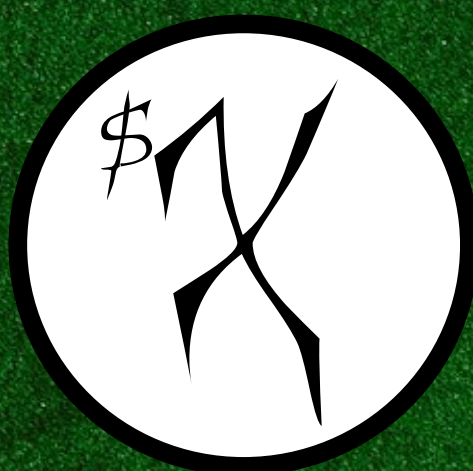
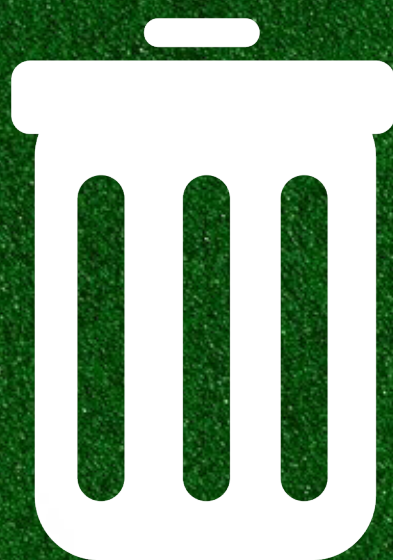


HALF SUIT OF RINGS



This symbol means:

This Talon cannot include cards with a higher value than "X"



REPEAT YOUR TURN,
BUT DRAW FROM THE BOTTOM

This symbol means:

Discard this card to the bottom of the discard pile & place X Points on **Old Scratch's Reward.**

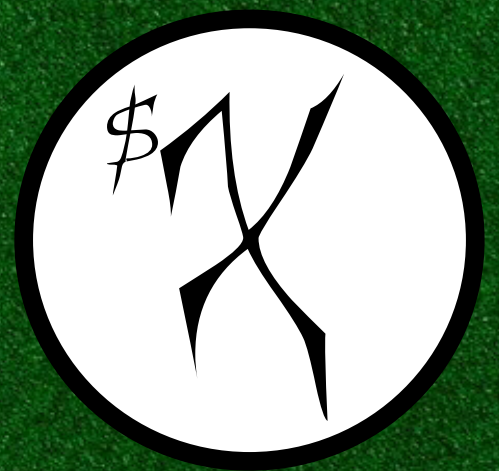
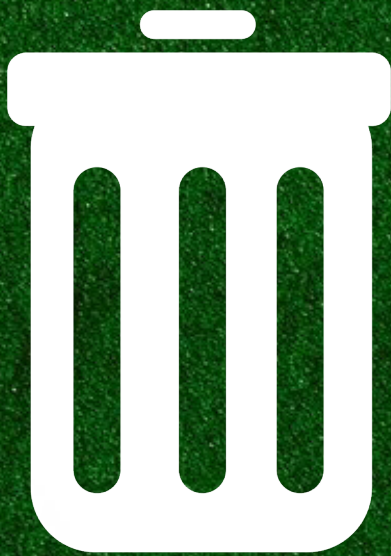
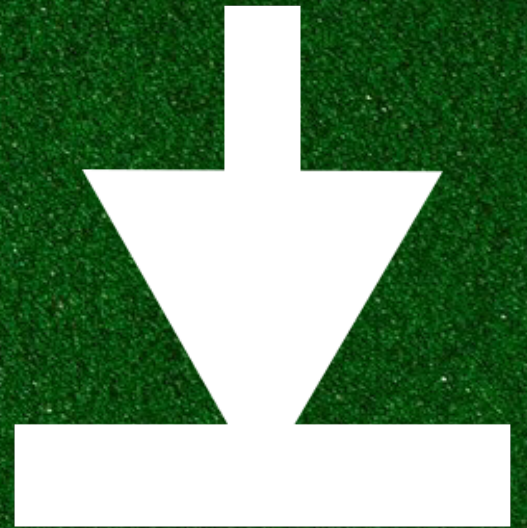
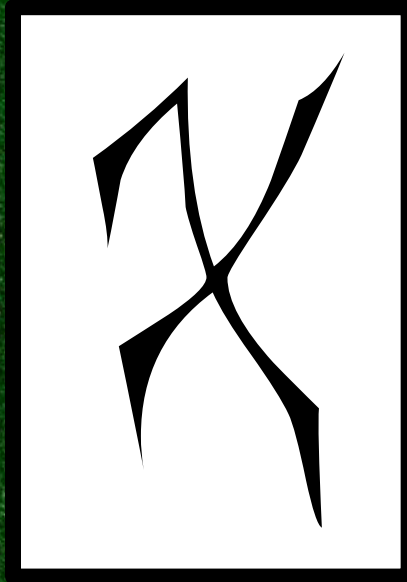
You then put the bottom card of the deck into your hand, and discard again.



HALF SUIT OF FORKS

This symbol means:

This Talon cannot include cards with a lower value than "X"



FROM ANOTHER PLAYER

These symbols means:

Discard this card to the bottom of the discard pile. Steal X Points from another player.

FINAL NOTES:

Ring and Fork cards cannot be the **Wanted Card of the Round**. They are skipped like Jokers and the Wild of the Round if they come up during that step.

After discarding and paying for a Ring Card's effect, you can discard and pay for another Ring Card to repeat the process.

If a turn ends with the same Fork card on top of the discard pile, put the bottom card of the deck face up as the top card of the discard pile.

The player with **Old Scratch's Reward** pockets the points on it when they get points from their chosen player.

If you're chosen to pay the player with Old Scratch's Reward, but you would pay nothing, you earn the points players placed on **Old Scratch's Reward** instead.

BUILD THE DECK

Hellish Descent comes with two new suits, and three more copies of each kind of Joker.

Starting with this expansion, you can change up what cards are included in the deck! I'm excited to see what you come up with.

Just follow these requirements:

- 1. You must include at least two red and two black suits. The base game covers this.**
- 2. You must include six Jokers, though they can be any combination of Regular or Faustian as you like.**
- 3. You may have between four and six full suits in your deck. Every two half-suits count as a full suit.**
- 4. Breathe life into your creation by **giving it a name.****

CR AUGH!

(A Game of Political Mudslinging)



Who needs
friends when
you could be
The President?

Another Game From NINJA HELL

Д

ДЕМОН

УППАМЕД

BY CHRISTOPHER W. REYNOLDS

A GM-LESS GAME OF **STRESS**,
PERSERVERENCE, LOSS & DECAY

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