



TERMINUS

THE FINAL JOURNEY OF A LEGENDARY HERO



CATSCRATCHER
STUDIO

WRETCHED
& LONE



“Last night was a night of bad dreams and ambiguous visions.”
— Sophocles, *Electra*

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TERMINUS is a game by Catscratcher Studio, and was created for Wretched Jam.



WHO?



You were created by Legends to live legends of your own. A child of the Gods, magic running in your blood and fire burning through your eyes. You are capable of things humans can only dream of. A Hero, young and in your prime, heroically travelling the world to help those in need.

But visitors in your dreams brought along dire news: your death has been written in the Stars. You have dreamed about death before, but this time, it's different: when The Fates spoke your destiny, you felt each word like a shiver cutting through your bones.

You know doom is certain. It's true, there are whispers about a being powerful enough to trick Fate and weave someone a new story - if only their price is paid - but you've long learned not to hope for the impossible. No, your days are numbered, but you still have all the time you need to be the Hero you once set out to be.

The Gods may have decreed your death - but you still have time to go on *one last journey*.

There's still time to defeat evil. To atone for your sins. To make the world a better place. To become *legendary*.

You just have to evade Fate a little longer...

ΩΩΩΩΩ WHAT? ΩΩΩΩΩ

TERMINUS - The Final Journey Of A Legendary Hero is a solo GM-less journaling game in which you will document the last days before a demi-god's prophesied death. You will solve problems during the short time you still have left; try to make peace with the mistakes of your past; and attempt to avoid fate, buying more time to do good - perhaps even rewriting your destiny through your actions. Your gruesome death will likely take place just as foretold, but eluding one's fate is not unheard of.

This is a game about introspection, accepting mortality and trying to fix mistakes - mistakes made by others, but also the ones made by yourself.

TERMINUS - The Final Journey Of A Legendary Hero is inspired by greek tragedies and epics, making a few clear references to "The Twelve Labours of Hercules".

ΩΩΩΩ SAFETY ΩΩΩΩ

This game includes themes of fear, isolation, suspense, despair, violence, and death - it will *always* end with your death, one way or another.

Between heroic deeds and adventures, the game will ask you to think about mistakes and regrets - and their consequences.

Read and play with caution, keeping in mind that you can take a break or stop completely at any time. Your mental health is important, and this is just a game.

This game is designed to make success very difficult and very unlikely. It is meant to be challenging and harrowing and emotional. Still, it will attempt to present solace through your actions, ultimately giving your Hero a bittersweet death. If that doesn't sound fun to you, that's absolutely fine.

Remember that you can change, ignore, rewrite or abandon any part of this game that you want.



HOW?



To embark on your epic journey, you will need:

- ◆ A standard deck of cards with the jokers removed
- ◆ A 6-sided dice
- ◆ 10 tokens of some kind (we recommend something that can relate to your Hero's legend, such as coins as payment for your labours, or leaves to remind you of the world you are protecting)
- ◆ A jenga or other tumbling block tower (optional, but highly recommended)
- ◆ Something to write your tales in, such as a notebook or word processor

Death is the most likely outcome of your journey, for it is not easy to change what was written in the Stars. If the jenga tower falls, the prophecy of your death is fulfilled by your Labours before you can leave a lasting mark in the world - your deeds are swallowed by time and you're eventually forgotten. If you draw all four Kings, you die heroically; the last King you draw will determine what was bought by your sacrifice.

To rewrite your fate, you must draw the Ace of Hearts and complete the task that it specifies by removing tokens from it over subsequent days. For a shorter, easier game, place the Ace of Hearts on the top of the deck after you've shuffled it, so it's the first card you'll draw.

Ω TOWER ALTERNATIVES Ω

If you don't have a tumbling block tower, you can use an alternative to simulate the degrading nature of such a tower.

- ◆ **Count-down Dice.** Set aside a number of dice with their displayed values equaling 30, such as three 10-sided dice or two d20s with one die turned to 20 and one turned to 10. You will not roll these, but will use them to count down from 30 to 1. Before you start the game, roll a 1d6 and subtract that amount from 30. This starting number represents your already deteriorating life. Each time you would pull from the tower, reduce the number by an additional 1. When you reach 12, each time this number is reduced, roll a 12-sided die (or two d6s). If the number rolled is equal to or higher than the number on your count-down dice, the tower falls.
- ◆ **Dice Tower.** Start with two 6-sided dice sitting side-by-side on the table. Whenever you are instructed to pull from the tower, instead add a d6 on top of one of your existing d6s. Your tower can never be more than two dice wide. If the tower falls at any time, even outside of a pull, the game is over.
- ◆ **No Tower.** If you don't wish to use a tower, you can simply ignore any instruction to pull from the tower. You are never in danger of losing the game because the tower falls, which means the game may stretch on much longer than it normally would. If you want to play a longer game, this may be a good option for you.



JOURNEY START



Set up your tumbling block tower (or replacement). Roll 1d6 and pull that many blocks from the tower. This represents how close you are to reaching your foretold death. Each time you pull from the tower, death moves closer, and your tale moves closer to being forgotten.

Shuffle the deck of cards and place it within reach. Record your first journal entry using the following script, or by writing your own similar entry.

Last night, The Fates visited me in my dreams, and they told me that which I already feared: my death is near. I now travel to [INSERT DESTINATION], for I know it is the place that needs me the most - and where I have made more mistakes to fix. These are the reports of the last days of [INSERT YOUR NAME, OR THE TITLE BY WHICH YOU ARE KNOWN], my attempts to leave a mark in the world. These are my last adventures, the glories I have achieved, and of the perils I faced before meeting my doom. May these accounts serve as inspiration - and as a warning: Fate comes for all, even for demi-gods.

Your subsequent journal entries can follow whichever format you see fit - as long as you keep building your legend and trying to be remembered for your deeds.

ΩΩΩΩ THE DAY ΩΩΩΩ

Your journey is divided into days, and each day has two steps: The Labours and The Legend.

► STEP ONE: THE LABOURS

Roll 1d6 and draw that number of cards from the deck, placing them face down without looking at them. Flip over the first card and consult the tables below, completing any task that the card tells you to do. Each card will represent one of your Labours: problems that only you can fix. Continue flipping over the cards until you have flipped them all over and resolved their tales. Discard all cards unless a card tells you otherwise.

► STEP TWO: THE LEGEND

Take a moment to ponder about the adventures you just lived, then record your experiences in a journal. Write about what has happened and what you feel, answering all the questions presented in the card prompts. What dangers have you faced, and how have you bested them? What was taken from you? How do you feel about facing perils each day, knowing any of them may be the cause your death? If you like, you can use an alternative to a journal, such as making a voice or video recording, writing letters, narrating out loud, or simply imagining the scenario in your head. This is how you attempt to make your legend worth something, maybe preventing your deeds from being forgotten.



THE LABOURS



The deck of cards is divided into four categories based on suits - each one representing one sort of Labour you will face during your final journey. Consult the tables below each time you flip a card to determine what you must do. Some cards will have you pull from the tower, remove tokens from a card, or have you shuffle a card back into the deck. Some will ask you questions about your feelings or the situation. Other cards will spell out your death.



HEARTS: OMENS

Visions The Fates showed you in your dreams - when you see an Omen coming alive, it tells you something about your death.



DIAMONDS: HISTORY

Stories of your past - your achievements and regrets.



CLUBS: HUMANITY

Problems created by humans, for they love hurting each other. You must protect the weak from the strong.



SPADES: MYTHS

Problems created by the Gods and their offspring - sometimes to harm humanity, sometimes to play with them, sometimes because that's just how things go.



OMENS



- A** Your dreams are visited by a different figure: The Weaver is mysterious and unsettling, but they promise to rewrite your Fate if you prove you're worthy.

Do not discard this card. Put it to the side and place ten tokens on it. At the end of each day, after writing in your journal, roll a d6. On a result of 6, remove a token from the card - describe how you were hurt, but solved one of that day's Labours in a way so heroic it made an everlasting impact for all humanity. When you remove the last token from the card, make a final pull from the tower.

If the tower stands, you have proven yourself worthy and The Weaver keeps their promise: you leave your godhood behind, retiring to a life of serenity, where death can only come through old age. Write a final entry describing your peaceful eternity. The game is over. What were you able to accomplish before meeting your new Fate?

If the tower falls, The Weaver takes advantage of your weakened state to write you a very different tale: they will only protect you from Fate for as long as you do their bidding. Write a final entry describing your new Fate. The game is over, and you survived - but at what cost?

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- 2** You are visited by a Black Butterfly, the soul of a loved one who came to say goodbye. Who are they, and what are their parting words to you?
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- 3** You find a treasure containing an Opal, the stones who serve as vessels of evil. What curse does it carry? **Pull from the tower.**
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- 4** You are visited by an Evil Twin. How do they try to corrupt you?
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- 5** You are visited by an Owl, who represents knowledge and the hunt. What is the knowledge you're being hunted for? **Pull from the tower.**



OMENS



- 6** You walk through Muddy Water - feeling stuck and dragged down by your sorrows. What are the things that make you question yourself?
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- 7** Your attention is drawn by a Phantom Funeral, where you see your enemies carrying your body to a pyre. How does their song describe your death? **Pull from the tower.**
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- 8** You are plagued by a Beetle, making noises to prevent you from sleeping. Where does your mind wander to during these restless nights?
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- 9** You see Floating Lights, their warmth inviting you to the unknown. To what sort of peril do they lead you? **Pull from the tower.**
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- 10** You see a wicked Tree. What scary thing does its shape remind you of?
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- J** You see a Solar Eclipse. What mystical disaster does it announce? **Pull from the tower.**
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- Q** You see a Falling Star tearing through the sky. What God sent it to proclaim your death - and why? **Pull from the tower.**
-
- K** Dark tidings befall kind, altruistic people. You must intervene, even if doing so means challenging the wrath of Fate itself. What destinies did you change?

Do not discard this card. Set it aside where you can see it.

If this is the fourth King you've drawn, you realize the only way to give humanity justice is by breaking destiny altogether. Write a final entry, detailing your journey to the Heavens and how you died freeing humanity from Fate. What sort of life do they build with their newfound free will? Though it won't plague anyone else from now on, Fate has found you. The game is over.

HISTORY

- A** You have done many things you regret - but you also have memories you are proud of, things that remind you why you do what you do. What is the best memory you cling to, and how does it give you strength?

Do not discard this card. Put it to the side where you can see it. Your good memories fuel you, pushing death away. The next time you would have to pull from the tower, you may choose not to, then discard this card.

- 2** You cross paths with someone you had saved before. What are they thankful for?

- 3** You are approached by the family of someone you failed to save. What do they blame you for? **Pull from the tower.**

- 4** You arrive at the gates of a City that adores you, right on the eve of a holiday dedicated to your deeds. How did you win their hearts?

- 5** You stumble upon the ruins of a city which faced a terrible fate. What grave disaster weren't you able to save it from? **Pull from the tower.**

- 6** Children run up to you, playing out your stories. They ask to hear about one of your most daring, uplifting adventures. What do you tell them?

- 7** You are reminded of the one time you made a grave error of judgement, punishing the wrong person. Who was it, and what was your mistake? How do you make amends? **Pull from the tower.**

- 8** Your journey takes you back to a person who was very important in your past. How did you part ways?

HISTORY

- 9** You cross paths with a being everyone thought to be a dangerous mindless beast, before you showed them otherwise. Why is it being attacked again, and how can you protect it? **Pull from the tower.**
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- 10** Your journey takes you to the most beautiful place you had ever visited - one you never dreamed of seeing again. What memories have you lived there? What is the place like?
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- J** Before you were the Hero you are, you have done something you are deeply ashamed of - and now it has been exposed, with people dedicated to make you pay for it. What is this secret? **Pull from the tower.**
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- Q** You thought you had defeated them for good, but your most dangerous foes have returned - and they want your head. How did you defeat them before, and how do you plan on doing it again? **Pull from the tower.**
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- K** Dark forces are working to undo your greatest achievement. Protecting it will undoubtedly take its toll, but it is worth the fight. What is it you would give your life to defend?

Do not discard this card. Set it aside where you can see it. If this is the fourth King you've drawn, the only way to protect your life's work is by giving your life for it - but a demi-god's essence is too powerful. Your sacrifice is enough to ensure your achievement becomes everlasting, and not even the Gods will be able to destroy it. Write a final entry describing your last stand, and how that particular deed will keep influencing the world to the end of times. Will it be enough? Your Fate has found you. The game is over.



HUMANITY



- A** A young person whom you saved in the past has found you and vowed to help you on your journey, eager to follow on your footsteps. Who are they? How do they help you? How did your paths first cross?

Do not discard this card. Set it aside where you can see it. If you've also drawn the Ace of Hearts, you can remove a token when you roll a 5 or 6 at the end of the day, for having your faithful apprentice besides you makes changing the world seem like an easier goal to achieve.

- 2** You've been asked to mediate A Lover's Quarrel before either party ends with a broken heart! What are their issues and how can you help?

- 3** The City has been terrorized by A Band of Brigands! What are their crimes and how do you stop them? **Pull from the tower.**

- 4** You were called to perform the noblest deed of all: find a missing Pet. Where were they, and what happened to them?

- 5** There is a system of Extortions plaguing the city, and that cannot pass! How are people robbed of their valuables, and how can you help them? **Pull from the tower.**

- 6** You arrive at a City, only to find it plagued by Hunger. What caused it, and what can you do to help?

- 7** Inhabitants of a City have been left miserable due to a nasty case of Abuse of Force. How will you help them overcome those rotten powers? **Pull from the tower.**

- 8** You are approached by victims of a deadly Disease. What are its symptoms and causes, and how can you help those affected?



HUMANITY



9 An important figure was Kidnapped! What is the intent of the crime, and how can you solve it? **Pull from the tower.**

10 Your help has been requested to find a Lost Treasure. What is its importance, and what perils stand between you?

J The City is terrorized by a series of Cult Killings, seemingly offerings to the Gods. What are the cultists trying to buy, and how will you stop them? **Pull from the tower.**

Q Two mighty kingdoms are waging war, destroying everything in their path as collateral damage. How will you stand between them and the innocents? **Pull from the tower.**

K A warrior claiming to be a Godslayer aims to kill you to drain your powers, becoming a demi-god themselves. How do you stop them from ever hurting anyone else, and what do you lose in the process?

Do not discard this card. Set it aside where you can see it. If this is the fourth King you've drawn, the fight left you mortally wounded - but before dying, you realize your godblood could be transferred to someone worthy. You die, but to whom do you gift your powers? What did they accomplish in your name? Your Fate has found you. The game is over.



MYTHS



- A** You face a dangerous mythical creature - and despite every odd being stacked against you, including Fate itself, you manage to prevail. How does this victory boost your confidence, allowing you to believe you can survive longer than foretold?

Do not discard this card. Put it to the side where you can see it. Your restored confidence gives you strength, pushing death away. The next time you would have to pull from the tower, you may choose not to, then discard this card.

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- 2** You hear a cry for help coming from inside a magical labyrinth. What are its traps and how do you cross it? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 3** A Trickster God challenges you to a duel of riddles and wits. What is the final answer, and what is at stake? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 4** There's conflict among the Gods of Nature, making it so all forces of nature become erratic and dangerous. How is that harming the world, and how can you restore balance? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 5** A monster made for destruction was set loose upon the innocents. How do you overcome its strength? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 6** A weak-spirited group was lured by promises of godly powers - which was obviously a trap. What happened to them, and how can you free them? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 7** Mysterious beings are taking children for secret purposes. What are they attempting to do, and how do you stop them? **Pull from the tower.**

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- 8** Your path was crossed by the God of War - fighting for something they cannot achieve by themselves. How do you carve a path to peace? **Pull from the tower.**



MYTHS



- 9** The newest invention of a God of Creation went haywire, and it is causing danger and trouble. What is it, and what is its weakness? **Pull from the tower.**
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- 10** The Gods of Benevolence tried to bring happiness to humanity but missed their hand - what trouble did they cause instead? **Pull from the tower.**
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- J** Trouble has arisen as the Gods of Order started changing the natural cycles of life. How has life changed, and how do you intend to return humanity to normality? **Pull from the tower.**
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- Q** The God of Judgement decided to punish anyone who has ever done wrong. How do they plan on reaching their goal, and how do you intervene? **Pull from the tower.**
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- K** The Gods grew angry of all humanity, and want to see it finished. Now, you are the only one standing between humans and their divinely decreed doom. How do the Gods intend to enact their will, and how do you plan to stop them - even if you get mortally wounded in the process?

Do not discard this card. Set it aside where you can see it. If this is the fourth King you've drawn, the only way to liberate humanity from the Gods for good is with your own life. Write a final entry describing your sacrifice and how you bought humanity's freedom. What are your parting words of advice to the world, now that no God will ever control them again? Will they follow your counsel, or take your sacrifice for granted? Your Fate has found you. The game is over.

Ω MEETING YOUR FATE



You tried very hard, and got very far - the only question that remains is: will it even matter?

Even if you do succeed in breaking the wheel of fate, does it mean that you only did it because breaking the wheel is what you were fated to do from the very start?

As you think about the journey of your final days, what were you able to accomplish? Did your last seconds make you proud, or will you lay in anguish for all eternity, thinking of all that could've been if only you had chosen differently? *Could* you have chosen differently?

You cannot prevent the tower from falling. Maybe you even prevented this one - by hiding, by fighting, by trying to give your journey meaning. But there will be more towers. There will be more journeys. And it's what you choose to do before your tower falls that matters. The songs you sang. The smiles you created. Each and every divine beast you've slayed, as small as they may have been.

Maybe you are unlikely to be remembered.

But maybe... Maybe there are things more important than being remembered, after all.



YOUR LEGEND IS LIKELY TO BE FORGOTTEN

FATE COMES FOR ALL, EVEN FOR
LEGENDARY HEROES...

You are a demi-god, using your powers to make a difference in the world - but your death has been prophesied by The Fates, and each breath moves you closer to the end of your journey.

How will you spend your last days? Will your legend be remembered?

TERMINUS - The Final Journey Of A Legendary Hero
is a solo journaling RPG about performing heroic deeds and making peace with one's death.

