



ESCAPE  
FROM  
ASTERISK

RULES

# UNGROOVY

For the mostly peaceful beings of the Groovy Union of Planets, life was just fine. The Head Servant of Sentient Beings was the wise and compassionate Shezah K'houleshick who oversaw the governance of the Union with her advisors Truth and Justice.

At the center of a gooey conglomeration of nutty companies, is the greedy nougat of Ronald DeKedd. Deciding that he should own the G.U.P. as well, The Ronald convinced Major Heathcliff Nicholas Azolh of the Planetary Peace Patrol to help him to overthrow the democratically elected government to continue his callous pillaging.




DeKedd, now free to do what he liked, incarcerated all who opposed him in the now famous prison, Asterisk. The rebellion of The K'houleshick Independent Gang emerged to fight against DeKedd and restore the Groovy Union. Many of the K'houle Indy Gang were locked up by Major Azolh in Asterisk, but not you.

# OVERVIEW

In *Escape From Asterisk*, players cooperatively try to free prisoners by strategically playing cards that turn The Dial. When The Dial is on a prisoner's number, that prisoner is free.

You have five minutes to bust out as many prisoners as you can before you are forced to leave. You must get out with who you can, leave some behind, then try again.

After your last attempt, the group scores points based on the prisoners' value to the rebellion. In order to consider your escape successful, your points must exceed the points DeKedd gains from those you have failed to free.



Yes Sir!  
The detainees will be held  
in the maximum security  
prison Asterisk.

You should be made  
aware that the facility  
is currently under  
construction.

*Major Heathcliff N. Azolh*

Major Heathcliff N. Azolh

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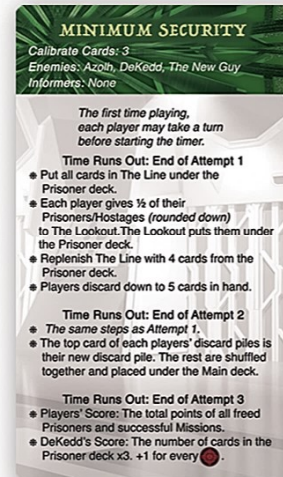
1 DIAL



1 FIVE MINUTE  
SAND TIMER



5 MISSION  
CARDS



5 MODE  
GUIDES



20 CALIBRATION  
CARDS

# 70 MAIN DECK CARDS



18 BASIC TURN



10 BASIC ADD ON



18 ACTION TURN

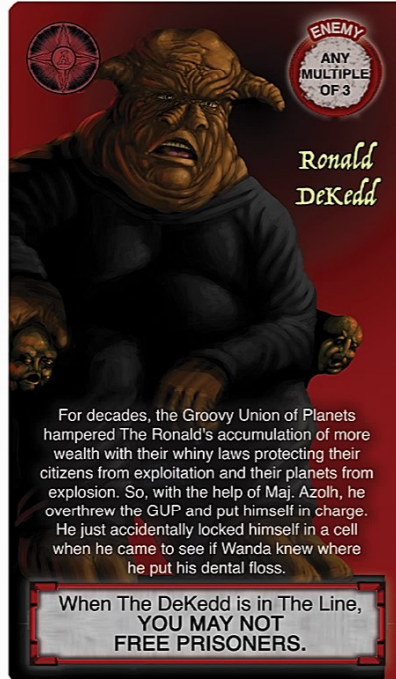


24 TURN/ ADD ON

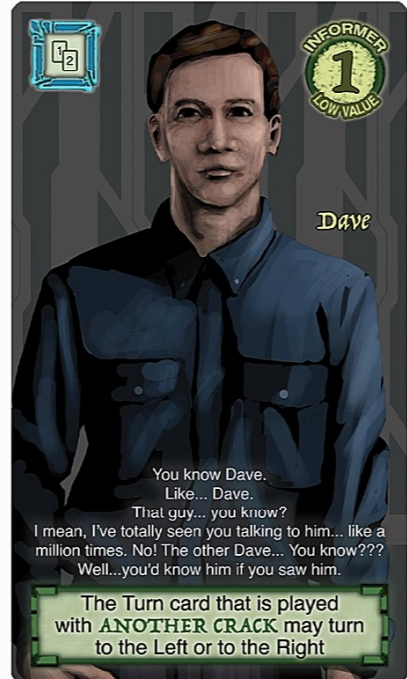
# 35 PRISONER DECK CARDS



21 REGULAR PRISONERS



6 ENEMIES



7 INFORMERS



1 THE SNITCH



# SETUP

Set up the decks according to the Mode Guide.

*For your first game, start with Minimum Security Mode. (pg 12)*




## **Calibrate Cards: 3**

Randomly take 3 Calibration cards without looking at them to make the Calibration deck. Put the rest in the box.

## **Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, New Guy**

Put Major Heathcliff N. Azolh, Ronald DeKedd, and The New Guy in the Prisoner deck. Put the rest of the Enemy cards in the box.

(Enemy cards have ).

## **Informers: 0**

This mode has 0 Informers to put in the Prisoner deck, so put all Informer cards and The Snitch back in the box.

- 1** Place The Dial in the center of the table.
- 2** Shuffle the Main deck. Place the Main deck face down near The Dial.
- 3** Each player draws a hand of 5 cards.
- 4** Shuffle the Prisoner deck. Place the Prisoner deck face down near The Dial.
- 5** Draw the top 4 cards from the Prisoner deck, and put them face up in The Line near The Dial. (*5 in some modes*)

- 6 Shuffle the Objective deck. Deal each player 1 card to put face up near their Play Area. Put any remaining cards back in the box.
- 7 Shuffle the Calibration deck. Put the Calibration deck near The Dial face down.
- 8 Select a player to be The Lookout. Put the Timer and the Mode Guide near The Lookout.



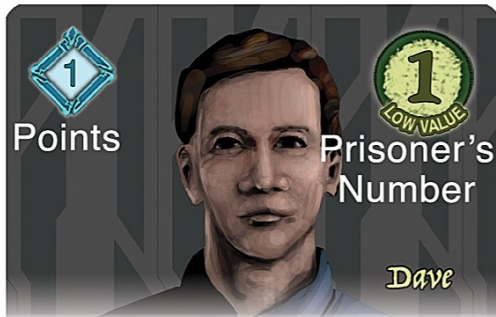
Players should leave space designated for their:

- A** Play Area
- B** Discard Pile
- C** Custody Area

*The actual set up will vary on player count, table shape, phase of the moon, etc... This is just a general idea of where things should go.*

# HOW TO PLAY

To gain points, a player turns The Dial to the number of a Prisoner in The Line, freeing that Prisoner, and placing it in that player's custody area.



Prisoners may not be freed if an Enemy is in The Line. Take an Enemy hostage by turning The Dial to the Enemy's type of number.



To start an Attempt, The Lookout flips the timer, flips the top Calibration card, and sets The Dial to the number on the Calibration card. At the start of the game, the player to the left of The Lookout takes the first turn. After that, whoever's turn it was when the time ran out goes first turn. Turns proceed clockwise.

## ON YOUR TURN

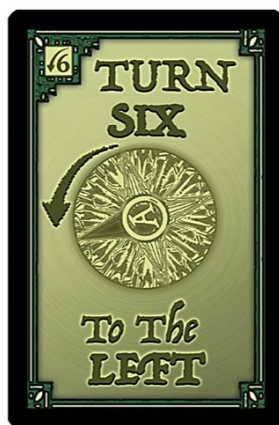
Perform one of the following actions each turn: **Play,**  
**Pass,**  
**or Redraw**

### PLAY

Playing cards is how you free the Prisoners that you need to win. When you play a card, turn The Dial to the direction and distance indicated on the card.

To start, you must play one Turn card. The Turn cards are:

Basic Turn



Top of a Turn/Add On



Action Turn





After you play your Turn card, you may play as many Add Ons as you wish. The Add On cards are:

### Basic Add On



### Bottom of a Turn/Add On



- ◆ Play Turn cards on the table upright, and play Add On cards on the table sideways.
- ◆ When you play a card, it helps to say out loud what you are doing so other players can follow.
- ◆ You may free as many Prisoners as you can during your turn.

When you are finished playing:

1. Indicate to your teammates that it is the end of your turn.
2. Replenish The Line back to 4 cards from the Prisoner deck.  
(5 in some modes)
3. Reset The Dial to the Calibration number.
4. Move your played cards to your discard pile.
5. Draw from the Main deck to have 5 cards in your hand.  
If you already have 5 or more, don't draw.

## PASS

To Pass, say that you are passing, draw a card from the Main deck, and end your turn. If it doesn't seem like you can free a prisoner in a timely manner or a player expresses that they can make a good play, you should probably pass.

- ◆ You may not have more than 8 cards in your hand.
- ◆ If you have 8 cards in your hand, you may still pass, draw, then discard a card.
- ◆ If all players pass consecutively, you may still pass, but do not draw a card.

## REDRAW

If you have a hand with 3 or more Basic Turns or Basic Add Ons, you may discard your whole hand and draw 5 cards. This ends your turn.



## ATTEMPTS

When the timer runs out, players immediately stop what they are doing. Follow the instructions on the Mode Guide.


*For Example, After the 1<sup>st</sup> Attempt in Minimum Security Mode:*

- ⌘ Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Each player gives ½ of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded down*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Replenish The Line with 4 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

## THE END

When the time runs out on the last Attempt, the game is over. Total the players' points, and DeKedd's points according to the Mode Guide.

*For Example, After the 3<sup>rd</sup> Attempt in Minimum Security Mode:*

- ⌘ Players' Score: The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- ⌘ DeKedd's Score: The number of cards in Prisoner deck x3.  
+1 for every .

If the players' score is higher than Dekedd's, you win!

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## MAIN DECK CARDS

The four types of cards in the Main deck are:

Basic Turns, Action Turns, Turn/Add Ons, and Basic Add Ons.

## BASIC TURN

The Three types of Basic Turn cards are: Turn to the Right, Turn to the Left, and Turn to the Right or Left. They are numbered 1-6.



# ACTION TURN

Do the Turn part at the top first, then you may or may not choose to do the Action. The three types of Action Turns are:

The top part is the same as a Basic Turn card.

*(Add Ons may be played between the Turn and Action parts)*

The bottom part is an Action.



## ANOTHER CRACK

Play a Turn card.  
You may draw a card.

## INSIDE JOB

Use the number of one of the Low Value Prisoners in The Line to turn The Dial either Direction

## COPY CAT

If the top card on your discard pile is a Turn card, play its Turn part as an Add On.

# TURN/ADD ON

The most common cards, these function as two different cards.

Choose to play them as a Turn card, or as an Add On card.

They may not be both.



The top part is the same as a Basic Turn card.

The bottom part is an Add On.

# BASIC ADD ON

In addition to playing any time after your Turn card, a Basic Add On is the only card that you may play on a teammate's turn to Assist. Ask if anyone can Assist with a card you need. To play as an Assist, place in your discard pile and draw a card.



There are six different types of Add Ons:

**NUDGE** Turn One or Two to the Left.

Turn One or Two to the Right.

**TURN THE TABLES** Turn Five to the Left.

Turn Five to the Right.

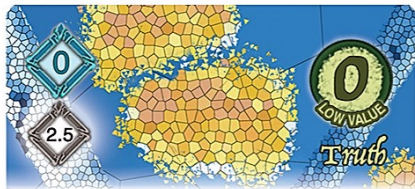
**FLIPSIDE** Turn Ten.

**LICENSE TO NIL** Turn Zero. *(Only as a Turn/Add On)*

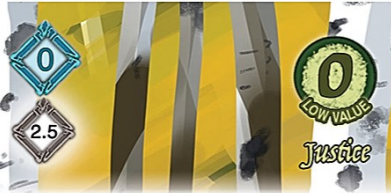
# MISSIONS & TRUTH/JUSTICE

Each player has their own Mission to free 2 specific Prisoners. If a player has both Prisoners in their custody at the end of the game, players score 3 additional points.

Truth and Justice each score 0 points. If a player has both in their custody, they score 5 points.



Truth



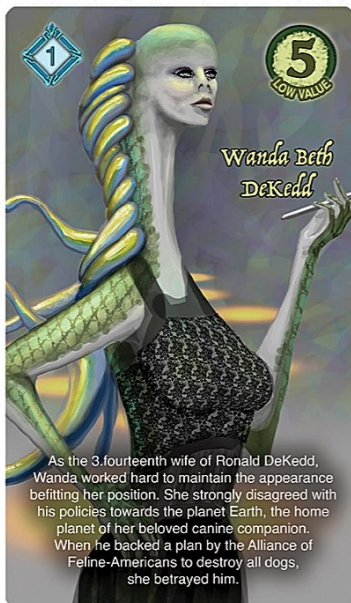
Justice



Mission

# INFORMERS & THE SNITCH

Prisoners 1-7 have Informer counterparts that are swapped out from the Prisoner deck when the Mode Guide instructs. Informers score 0.



Regular Prisoner

An Informer in any player's custody grants an ability to all players when the card that the Informer affects is played.

1

Dave



Informer



The Turn card that is played with **ANOTHER CRACK** may turn to the Left or to the Right.



**COPYCAT** may be played as an Add On.

4 *Yogide  
Uthrow*



**FLIPSIDE** may be discarded to play any Basic Turn card as an Add On.

7 *The  
Jebgi*



**LICENSE TO NIL** may be discarded to draw 2 cards.

6 *Wadson  
Newdred*



**TURN THE TABLES** may be played to turn to the **Left** or to the **Right**.

5 *Wanda  
Beth  
DeKedd*



**NUDGE** may be played to turn to the **Left** or to the **Right**.



The Snitch scores 0 points. When The Snitch is in a player's custody, each Informer in all players' custody scores 2 points.

## MODES OF PLAY

Five cooperative modes represent levels of difficulty and complexity: Minimum Security, Low Security, Medium Security, High Security, and Super-Max. For solo play, there is Rambo® Mode.

### MINIMUM SECURITY

*The first time playing, each player may take a turn before starting the timer.*

**Calibrate Cards: 3**

**Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, The New Guy**

**Informers: None**


#### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 1

- ⌘ Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Each player gives ½ of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded down*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Replenish The Line with 4 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

#### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 2

- ⌘ *The same steps as Attempt 1.*
- ⌘ The top card of each players' discard pile is their new discard pile. The rest are shuffled together and placed under the Main deck.

#### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 3

- ⌘ **Players' Score:** The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- ⌘ **DeKedd's Score:** The number of cards in the Prisoner deck x3. +1 for every .

## LOW SECURITY

*Calibrate Cards: 3*

*Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, The New Guy,  
Gangstas*

*Informers: #4, #5, #6*

- ⌘ Set **Gangstas** aside.


### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 1

- ⌘ Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Put **Gangstas** under the Prison deck.
- ⌘ Each player gives  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded down*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Replenish The Line with 4 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 2

- ⌘ *The same steps as Attempt 1, except: disregard "Gangstas" step.*
- ⌘ The top card of each players' discard pile is their new discard pile. The rest are shuffled together and placed under the Main deck.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 3

- ⌘ Players' Score: The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- ⌘ DeKedd's Score: The number of cards in the Prisoner deck x3. +2 for every .

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## MEDIUM SECURITY

*Calibrate Cards: 3*

*Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, The New Guy,  
Gangstas, The Competent One*

*Informers: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6*

*The Snitch*

- ⌘ Set **Gangstas** aside.
- ⌘ Set **The Snitch** aside.


### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 1

- ⌘ Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Put **Gangstas** under the Prison deck.
- ⌘ Each player gives  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded up*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Replenish The Line with 4 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- ⌘ Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 2

- ⌘ Put **The Snitch** under the Prison deck.
- ⌘ *The same steps as Attempt 1, except: disregard "Gangstas" step.*
- ⌘ The top card of each players' discard pile is their new discard pile. The rest are shuffled together and placed under the Main deck.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 3

- ⌘ Players' Score: The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- ⌘ DeKedd's Score: The number of cards in the Prisoner deck x3. +2 for every .

## HIGH SECURITY

- \* The Line has 5 cards.
- \* Put **Gangstas** aside
- \* Put **The Snitch** under the Prisoner deck.

*Calibrate Cards: 2*


*Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, The New Guy, Gangstas, The Veteran*

*Informers: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7  
The Snitch*

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 1

- \* Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- \* Put **Gangstas** under the Prison deck.
- \* Each player gives  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded up*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- \* Replenish The Line with 5 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- \* Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 2

- \* Players' Score: The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- \* DeKedd's Score: The number of cards in the Prisoner deck x3.  
+2 for every .

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## SUPER-MAX

- \* The Line has 5 cards.
- \* Put **Gangstas** aside
- \* Put **The Snitch** under the Prisoner deck.
- \* Put **The Veteran** on top of the Prisoner deck.

*Calibrate Cards: 2*


*Enemies: Azolh, DeKedd, The New Guy, Gangstas, The Competent One, The Veteran*

*Informers: #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7  
The Snitch*

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 1

- \* Put all cards in The Line under the Prisoner deck.
- \* Put **Gangstas** under the Prison deck.
- \* Each player gives  $\frac{1}{2}$  of their Prisoners/Hostages (*rounded up*) to The Lookout. The Lookout puts them under the Prisoner deck.
- \* Replenish The Line with 5 cards from the Prisoner deck.
- \* Players discard down to 5 cards in hand.

### Time Runs Out: End of Attempt 2

- \* Players' Score: The total points of all freed Prisoners and successful Missions.
- \* DeKedd's Score: The number of cards in Prisoner deck x4.  
+2 for every .

# RAMBO<sup>®</sup> MODE (SOLO)

Set up the game for Super-Max Mode except remove the Veteran from the game, put The Snitch 13 cards from the top of the deck, and ignore the Calibration card number.

Instead, to make your Calibration deck, shuffle the Calibration cards and randomly pull the number of cards for the desired level of difficulty without looking at them.

## Calibration Deck

*Easier: 20 Calibration cards*

*Not-As-Easy: 15 Calibration cards*

*Harder: 10 or less Calibration cards*

*(These are guidelines to start off with. Adjust to a number that you find challenging.)*

- ‡ There is no timer.
- ‡ Flip the top Calibration card and start your turn.
- ‡ If you Pass or Redraw, flip a Calibration card.
- ‡ If you Play and are done with your turn, flip a Calibration card.
- ‡ If there are no Prisoners in The Line, you win!
- ‡ If there are no cards in the Calibration deck and there are Prisoners in The Line, you lose!

## Game Design

Matt Hollensbe

## Illustrations

Jim Martin Art & Design



Escape From Asterisk

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