

# The 13th Warrior

Thirteen warriors, only one hero

**Number of Players:** 2-5

**Board Game Pieces:**

- 1 Board
- 1 Die
- 5 Game Pieces
- 10 Self/Shadow Cards
- 5 “Temptation” Cards
- 5 “Friend” Cards

**Objective:**

First player to reach the end of the game first is declared the hero and winner

**Rules:**

1. At the beginning of the Game each player is given a play piece, a Temptress Card and a Friend Card (See description of these cards below).
2. To begin, each of you place your playing piece on the red square marked START.
3. Each of you roll. The player with the highest roll has the first turn.
4. Continue the order of the turns in a clockwise motion from the first player.
5. The number that you roll each turn determines the number of spaces you move.
6. When you reach a space that is RED, you must stop your playing piece on that space no matter what number you rolled. A RED space marks the beginning of a new phase in the hero’s journey, and you must read from the Command Sheet (See page 3). The number on the space will indicate what phase you are in.
7. The Command Sheet will inform you of the task that must be accomplished at each stage. Be sure to read it carefully!
8. If you land on a WHITE Space, you must pick a card from the Self or Shadow deck and obey the instructions given. Once the card is read, return the card to the bottom of the deck.
9. Make your way through the game following the command sheet.
10. First player to reach the end wins!

**Important Coloured Spaces:**

RED: Stop.

This will mark a new phase in the hero journey. The number on the space will tell you which phase number to read from on the Command Sheet

WHITE: Pick a card from the Self or Shadow deck.

If you land on this space take a card from the Self and Shadow deck and follow the instructions on that card, on that turn, and then return the card to the bottom of the deck.

\* Fun Fact: All cards are based on actual scenes in the film!

The following colours represent the different terrain on which you travel:

YELLOW: Desert (Baghdad)  
BLUE: Sea  
GREEN: Grass (The North)  
BROWN: Mountain

### **The Cards<sup>1</sup>:**

#### The Temptress Card:

Each player is given a temptation card at the beginning of the game that can be played **once** during their turn, against any another player causing that player to lose their turn.

#### The Friend Card:

Each player is given a Friend Card at the beginning of the game to be played **once** during their turn to re-roll the die.

You are now ready to play the game! Proceed to next page (The Command Sheet) and play the game!

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<sup>1</sup> You can see what is written in the Self and Shadow cards on pages 7 and 8. What is said on the Temptation and Friend card can be seen in the pictures.

# The 13th Warrior: Command Sheet

Thirteen warriors, only one hero

## Prologue:

Be prepared to embark on Ahmed's heroic journey. If you wish to live in fear and stay within the safety and confines of your homeland, this is not a journey for you. Those of you who are brave and adventurous enough to embark—prepare yourself! Each of you will face that which you fear most as you will encounter friend and foe, self and shadow, death and rebirth. It is your decision that will decide the fate of each encounter. Gipta (Viking Good Luck) to you all and happy sailing.

Please place your playing piece on the starting space.

Read the following:

## Phase 1: SEPERATION

You are Ahmed ibn Fadlan, an Arabian and court poet to the Caliph of Baghdad. Due to the temptations of feminine beauty, you have fallen in love with the wife of an influential nobleman, who asks the Caliph for your banishment from court. You are to be exiled as ambassador to the Northern Barbarians, leaving your comforts, homeland and lover far behind you. The culture, religion and lifestyle that you once knew will must now be forgotten. But wishing for your survival, I offer you another choice, you may live out the rest of your days in secrecy in a small village just outside the palace. What is your wish for punishment? Will you enter into the unknown and embrace a new way of life<sup>2</sup>? Or remain in safety?

Roll the die:

**Roll a 4 or higher:** You have chosen to separate from the comforts of home and seek out new lands and possible adventure: Proceed the number of steps that you roll.

**Roll a 3 or lower:** You have chosen to live your life peacefully in secrecy just outside the palace walls. While you may live happily, your name will never know glory and you may never claim yourself a man<sup>3</sup>. You can choose to leave the game or, wait your turn for a 4 or higher to proceed.

## PHASE 2: The Call to Arms

During your travels of the Northern lands, you were helped by a group of Norsemen and stay the night at their camp. In the evening, a messenger comes from King Hrothgar seeking help from evils that poison his land. The tribe's wise old crone calls for thirteen warriors to go to the King. The thirteen warrior however, must **not** be a man of the North. It must **you** that goes with these men to the North to rid the tribe of these evils.

2 This is in reference to the Victor Turner analysis. In the film, Ahmed begins his rite of passage into manhood when he is separated from his home land.

3 Again in reference to Victor Turner. This route is meant to symbolize a failed initiation.

### Roll the die

**Roll a 3 or lower:** You deny that it is you the crone speaks of and flee from the camp. Clearly you have not learned that glory comes only to your name when you become a hero. Return to the start of the game.

**Roll a 4 or higher:** Although hesitant, you accept the task and may continue the number of steps that you have rolled. You are officially a Neophyte<sup>4</sup>. The Norse men will be hard on you, but in the end, you will learn much from them.

### PHASE 3: Crossing the Threshold

It is time to find your sea legs! In order to reach King Hrothgar you must sail with the Norsemen across the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. You have never sailed before and the task is becoming difficult as you face horrific storms and the constant churning of the water is beginning to match that of your stomach. The Norsemen are doubting your abilities. “Shouldn't we stay closer to land!?” you scream in desperation.

#### Roll the die:

**If you rolled an even number:** You were unsuccessful in your attempt to cross the Threshold into the new land. The Norsemen take pity on you and drop you off on shore and you are forced to take the longer route by horseback. Move the number of spaces you have rolled down the **GREEN** path. These are unknown territories to you, tread carefully.

**If you rolled an odd number:** The Norsemen laugh at your exclamation and in fear of rejection, you never make the remark again. While it was shaky, you managed to cross the threshold and have already grown into another stronger version of yourself. You therefore gain the advantage of a much quicker journey. Move the number of spaces that you rolled down the **BLUE** path.

### PHASE 4: Trials and Temptations

Congratulations! You have made it to the North land. King Hrothgar informs you and your men of a “fire Serpent” that comes from the hills and eats the flesh of the living. They are called the Wendol and you know not if they are beast, spirit, or man. In order to help the kingdom, you and your Norse companions wait for the Wendol to attack. This will prove to be your first warrior trial in the eyes of the Norsemen. You and the Norsemen pretend to sleep while waiting for the beasts to attack.

**Roll the die:** The number you have rolled is the number of Wendol surrounding you.

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<sup>4</sup> This represents an important phase in the Victor Turner analysis. Ahmed is now neither Arabian nor Norse. He exists in a transitional period.

**Roll again:** The number you have rolled is the number of Wendol you fend off. Therefore if your second roll was higher than your first, you quickly become outnumbered and flee in fear thus failing the trial. You may decide to leave the game, or move back to beginning of Phase 3.

If your second roll was lower or equal to your first, then you have successfully managed to defend yourself. You are badly wounded but stay in battle and are accepted among the Norsemen. Proceed by moving the number of spaces that you rolled on your second roll.

### PHASE 5: The Abyss

This is where your journey reaches its darkest point. In order to destroy the Wendol, you are told by the tribal wise woman to hunt the Wendol in their own lair. The Mother of the Wendol and their leader who wears the "Horns of Power" must be killed. You and your warrior companions journey down into the centre of the mountain to slay the Wendol and Buliwyf manages to kill the mother. You and your men must escape from the mountain now before it is too late, but how? You and the comrades follow a stream that will hopefully lead you out of the mountain, but the stream's passage is blocked by a boulder that you must swim under. Are you willing to risk the swim and possible death? Or will you find another way out?

#### Roll the Die

**If you rolled a 4 or higher:** You decide to jump into the stream and swim for it. Death follows close behind you as you struggle to find air, but after what seems a lifetime you emerge from the mountain in a waterfall and breath the air of life. You may continue on the journey. Roll the die and move the number of spaces down the **BLUE** path.

**If you rolled a 3 or lower:** You could not jump into that water, so you try to follow another path (Roll again and move your play piece that number of steps down the adjacent path). This path is longer and the Wendol are close behind you. While taking this path, if you roll a 2 or lower before you reach the next phase, you ran too slow and the Wendol caught up to you. You are slaughtered and must return to the beginning of the Abyss. Try again next turn.

### PHASE 6: The Final Battle and a Transformation

The Mother Wendol has been killed, but the leader still lives. The ultimate battle will be held in the village as the Wendol descend from the mountain in a fiery serpent seeking revenge for the death of their Mother. You and the Norsemen are prepared to fight one final battle in which no one expects to live. The masses of Wendol emerge from the rain and mist and you raise your sword. Are you prepared to fight?

#### Roll the die

**If you rolled a 3 or lower:** You were too afraid to face the Wendol and ran from the battle. You were not ready to become a hero and therefore must relearn through your

journey again. Return to the beginning of Phase 5. Wait for your next turn.

**If you rolled a 4 or higher:** You fight bravely against the Wendol. You embrace your “shadow” and attack with a ferociousness equal to that of your opponent. You and your men have won the battle! Move the number of spaces that you rolled.

### PHASE 7: The Return?

*“Across seas of monsters and forests of demons we traveled. Praise be to Allah, the Merciful and Compassionate. May His blessing be upon Pagan Men: Who loved other Gods, who shared their food, and shed their blood. That his servant, Ahmed ibn Fahdlan, might become a man, and a useful servant of God”. -Ahmed Ibn Fadhlán*

You have successfully passed your trials and embraced both the Shadow and the Self. Believe it or not, your quest was far more than just proving heroics. You have proved yourself a man and a companion of the the Norsemen. Loyalty, bravery and honor now flow within you as you prepare for perhaps another journey. Wave goodbye to your companion and wish them safe travels.

Roll the die and race for the end the path where a new journey await you!

## Jungian Analysis: The Cards explained

### Shadow Cards

I believe that the negative shadow is primarily represented by the Wendol tribe. Ahmed is a man of religion and peace while the Wendol are savage men who eat the flesh of their victims. In their most simplistic form, they are animals with the most basic of instincts—hunt, kill, eat. Of course Ahmed denies himself these instincts because they are unnatural to any man who exists in an established society. In order to defeat them however, Ahmed must adapt some of their traits.

I created the shadow cards to represent the scenes in the film that demonstrate the role of the Wenhol as a shadow.

- You puked upon the sight of dead bodies making yourself appear weak in comparison to your comrades. Your shadow would have been able to handle the sight! Perhaps you should have embraced it. Move back 3 spaces.
- You were struck in the face by a Wendol during battle and now loosing blood. Embracing your shadow would have allowed for a more level playing field. Perhaps you would have even won the fight! You Lose a Turn.

Ahmed is a man of religion and therefore taught to ignore human instinct. He acts according to his god. He cannot fight the Wendol properly because he denies himself the instincts that these men embrace.

- Sometimes it is necessary to embrace the shadow and you have done just that! You have killed a Wendol! You truly embraced that animal side and saved your friends in the process! Move ahead 3 spaces.
- You were unhappy with the the young maiden using cow urine to clean your wounds. You could have died from infection! It is time to forget about the luxury of home and listen to the wisdom of the Norsemen. Lose a turn.
- “How does one hunt a bear in the winter”? You thought like a Wendol and therefore like your shadow. Now you will invade their cave and save the kingdom! Roll for another turn!

This is a primary example of Ahmed accepting his shadow and succeeding. Sometimes the dreamer must come to terms with his or her shadow if he or she wishes to grow.

- “Deception is the point! Any fool can calculate strength,” says your comrade. “And fear what he doesn't know”, you reply. You are learning and accepting the wisdom of your Norse companions. Roll again!

While the Wendol are the primary symbol of the negative shadow, the Norse companions, on occasion, represent a positive shadow. They guide Ahmed in the customs of the North. They are less educated than Ahmed, but can teach him survival skills. Ahmed is often seen a lone man, but he learns from the strength that comes with loyalty. In this particular scene, Ahmed learns that a man cannot not be trusted on appearance alone.

### Self Cards

The Self is represented by many things in the film. His companion in the beginning of the film, Melchisidek is the first person to represent the self. He is from similar background as Ahmed and therefore shares similar beliefs. He also acts as a positive guide as it is Melchisidek

who provide Ahmed with the confidence to take the quest.

- The pony you ride is your “self”. Just like you, he is a different kind of breed in very a strange land. Today however you proved your pony's potential and therefore the potential in yourself. Move ahead 3 spaces.
- Due to your inability to use the Norse made swords, you developed your own. Just like yourself, your sword and technique are foreign to this land. Roll again!
- You have changed your garb for something more suited for battle. It is now something similar to what your Norse comrades wear. You have briefly exchanged your “self”, for your “shadow”. Move ahead 3 spaces.

In the first half of the film, Ahmed wears an outfit that showcases his cultural origins. As he learns to fight and think like the Norsemen, he changes to a much more appropriate outfit. He is changing in order to adapt to the situation.

- “There is only one God”. Your beliefs can represent “the self”. Like your god, you are one man while the Norse, like their gods, are many. If you wish to fit it however, you may need to set this part of you aside. Move back 3 spaces.

There are no prominent females rolls in the film and therefore finding an Anima is difficult and most likely irrelevant to the analysis of this film as I feel the integration of his shadow was more important. By utilizing the Jungian analysis, we find that Ahmed, by properly integrating his shadow and self, becomes, in his own words, “a useful servant to god”.

### **The Heroes Journey (Campbell Analysis)**

This type of Analysis follows a Heroes’ journey, a complete cycle from reluctant departure to the return and reintegration into society. The main theme of his journey will be conquering the trials and tribulations through various rites of passage to reach a new stable, well adjusted and mature state of being. The board game we developed is primarily made up Campbell's analysis.

Step 1: Separation or Departure (A transition from the external world into the internal world; a retreat to the realm of the unconscious).

- Call to Adventure: Not so much a call to adventure but a banishment by a jealous husband with pull at the Caliphs court that put him on the path to adventure.
- Refusal of the call: The poet turned Ambassador **reluctantly** travels north with an old friend as a guide; but also later in the film when he is required to fight he states “I am not a warrior” to which the friends response is “but pretty soon you will be”
- Supernatural Aid: The **bones** tossed by a wise woman that called for a ‘stranger’ (Ahmed) to travel north on an aid mission with the Norsemen.
- Crossing the 1st threshold: I would posit that crossing the first threshold would be met by the water crossing from Turkey to.



- In the belly of the whale: The warriors delve deep into the caves and escape death by risking their lives in the subterranean river to escape.

Step 2: Trials and Victories of Initiation. These trials are aimed at showing the heroes worthiness.

- The road of trials: There are many trials for Ahmed, again reluctantly going on a quest to the north, learning the Norse language, becoming a warrior while feeling inadequate, demonstrating his intelligence by figuring out where the Wendol hide and defending the village from the Wendol.
- The meeting with a Goddess. This modern film shows a realistic version of Ahmed's attraction to the Norse woman healer but she is far from a goddess. So this aspect is really not applicable. A weak argument could be put forth for the Wendol "Mother" Goddess although it was not Ahmed himself who had to meet with her.
- Woman as the temptress: While the Norse woman is a mild temptress there are no dire consequences or advantages from the attachment, she seems to be just another love interest. In our board game, we have Ahmed's desire to go home as his form of temptation from the quest<sup>5</sup>.
- Atonement with the father: Again this part is difficult to reconcile, no real father figure appears in the film unless you count the jealous husband or the caliph who sanctioned his banishment. By succeeding in his mercy quest as an important member of the team he did in a way exonerate himself. His behaviour had been admirable.
- Apotheosis: This adventure had to be the apex of his adventurous career and it would be hard to foresee a greater trial ahead for him. He was a spiritual man when he began the trip and if nothing else all experience reinforced his beliefs cementing them deeply in his psyche.
- The ultimate boon: In this story the ultimate boon would be the return of normalcy for King Hrothgar and his people. Their future was indeed bleak prior to the warrior's arrival and Ahmed was indeed a vital part of the team.

Step 3: Return and Reintegration with Society

- Refusal of return: He was quite happy to return home after his quest a richer more experienced person.
- The magic flight: This part is not appropriate for this story. He was quite ready to go home.
- Rescue from without: He voluntarily went home without the need to be rescued.
- Crossing the return threshold: We do not see this part of the journey only his departure from the foreign land on his way back home quite happy to have met and

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5 You see this is the form of the "Temptation Card"

partnered with these warriors who became his close friends and allies.

- Master of the two worlds: One can quite imagine Ahmed in this position quite clearly.
- Freedom to live: I image he led a quiet satisfying life although this is not shown in the film (I did not read the book, it could be included). He has overcome his trials and tribulations with honour and is a better man because of it.

### **Victor Turner Analysis**

Ahmed's journey will define his rite of passage into manhood.

The terms of this type of analysis are expressed in certain phases of the hero's journey.

#### Phase 1- Separation

Turner explains that the initiate must endure detachment from a particular social structure or a set of cultural conditions<sup>6</sup>. The conditions of this separation are explained in the narrative of phase 1. Ahmed is being forced to leaving his society for something completely different. He will need to embrace a new language, religion and culture.

#### Phases 3 and 4- Liminal period and Neophyte

Turner describes the liminal period as the phase between separation and aggregation. Here the initiate is labeled a Neophyte as he is treated as “dead” by those who are already initiated<sup>7</sup>. The Norse men ignore Ahmed for a long time and insult him in a language he cannot speak. The Neophyte has been forced to give up their previous status and has not yet reached his or her new status. This is Ahmed's situation in Phases 3 and 4.

#### Phase 7- Aggregation

Ahmed has passed his tests and now is fully initiated. As Phase 7 explains, Ahmed now sees himself as a man. He has passed the trials successfully.

An analysis such as this reveals to us that the film is not just Ahmed becoming a stringer warrior but it also involves a ritual with the elements of moral growth. Ahmed was simply becoming a warrior, but a man as well.

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6 Thury et al., *Introduction to mythology*, (419).

7 Thury et al., *Introduction to mythology*, (420).

## Works Cited

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