

QUEEN'S RANSOM

Once upon a time, there was a queen who went on a tour of the kingdom. Later that evening, her carriage was found with the driver and bodyguards dead and the queen was replaced with a ransom note. The king was determined to discover who could be responsible for this deed of treachery.

The king did not have the necessary funds available to pay for the queen's immediate release. While trying to raise the ransom, he enlisted several inspectors to determine who captured her and where they were holding her captive. The king would greatly reward any individual who provided this information.

Secretly, it was brought to the attention of the inspectors that the court jester has witnessed the incident. The king would surely behead anyone who did not aid the queen in her time of need, no matter the opposition. The jester, being no fool and fearing for his life, arranged for the inspectors to receive bits of information for a fee.

Age – 10 +

2-5 Players

20 Mins

Components;

1 Jester card

3 Suspect cards

3 Location cards

12 Evidence cards

8 Information price cards

36 Payment cards

27 Special cards

1 Rules sheet

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The first inspector to determine who captured the queen and where she is being held captive is the winner. Players use card play to reveal evidence to formulate their decision.

GAME SET-UP

A player is chosen to be the dealer (usually the most devious person) who performs the following actions;

1. Make a single face-up row of cards by laying down the three suspects and three locations with the jester in between.
2. Individually shuffle the two sets of evidence cards (one for suspects, one for locations). Deal the suspect evidence face down so there is a card above and below each suspect. Deal the second set out likewise for the locations.
3. Shuffle all payment and special cards together. Deal five cards face down to each player for his or her hand. Place the remaining cards above the jester face down as a draw pile. A discard pile will form on the side.
4. Shuffle the eight information price cards and place them in a face-down draw pile below the jester. Draw the top card from this pile and place it face up next to the pile. This card shows how many coins are required to obtain a piece of information in the first round.

The game is now ready to play.

HOW TO PLAY

Players attempt to be the first to deduce who captured the queen and where she is being held prisoner with the help of evidence cards. The suspect and location that have the highest evidence likelihood would be the correct suspect and location accusation. The evidence likelihood is the total of the two numbers from both the evidence cards above and below the suspect or location card. The possible evidence likelihood range is -3 to +3.

Play goes clockwise around the table starting with the player to the dealer's left. Each player takes a turn during the round.

The player whose turn it is chooses one of three options; Buy information, Use a special card or Pass.

When buying information, the player discards cards with the amount of coins from his or her hand that the jester currently requires for obtaining a piece of information. Each payment card shows an amount of coins ranging from one to four. Once the payment has been made, the player chooses one suspect evidence card or one location evidence card to view. He or she should be careful so that no one else can see the card and then replaces it. If the player pays more than the amount required by the jester, it is considered a tip and is lost. (I.e. the jester requires seven coins. The player has a 2-coin card and two 4-coin cards. The overage is simply lost.) A player may only buy one piece of information in a turn.

When using a special card, the player discards the card and then follows the specific instructions stated on the card. A player may only use one special card in a turn.

Players who are not able to afford information from the jester or do not have a special card at their disposal must pass.

At the end of a player's turn, he or she draws one card.

Play continues around the table until the dealer's turn is finished. The dealer then draws a new jester's information price card for the next round. Rounds continue until someone is declared the winner.

The dealer shuffles and replaces the discard pile or the information price cards when they run out.

WINNING THE GAME

At the end of a player's turn, he or she can announce who captured the queen and where she is being held captive. The player states one suspect and one location as his or her choice. The player then secretly verifies all evidence one card at a time. The winning likelihood total is either two or three, with not every two scoring a victory and not always having three as an option. The possible number combinations will always provide one suspect and one location that will rise above the others as the guilty choice. If the stated suspect and location have the highest possible likelihood, that player wins the game. The player then reveals the determining clues. If the guess was incorrect, nothing is revealed and that player is out of the game. Play continues until a winner is determined.