

DUNGEONEER

WILDERNESS PREVIEW: IT'S A MAD, MAD WORLD

Welcome to another action-packed preview of the new Dungeoneer Wilderness expansions. Hang on to your seat, we're in for a ride. This time we take a look at the "boss monster" of the Haunted Woods of Malthorin. Here he is, Malthorin himself. Be careful, he doesn't like strangers. In fact, you may just want to watch what you do and say around him very carefully. You see, he's gone a little looney ever since his bride-to-be, the Queen of the Dark Elves*, was slain. He's not too happy about losing his beloved and his chance to become the King of the Dark Elves.



Moving heroes and maps around are some of the best mechanics in Dungeoneer. It really gives the underdog a chance to turn the game around for those last-minute upsets. Malthorin uses this mechanic to good effect by being very good at kicking trespassers out of his forest. He is also immune to cards with discard effects such as Repel, and has 3 life, so he's not easily removed from the game. With a 4 Magic standard attack, I can see Malthorin getting a lot of play.

Vault of the Fiends featured a strange mad scientist theme; there were players who loved it, and some who preferred the more standard fantasy theme of Tomb of the Lich Lord. Haunted Woods is a return to traditional fantasy themes with dark elves and spooky forests. When drafting out the background for Haunted Woods of Malthorin, I was thinking that Malthorin would be all about mind control. I thought it would be fun to force other players to do things they didn't want to do. I wanted less of an emphasis on beating your opponents down, and more emphasis on foiling their plans. This idea led to one of the best cards in the game: Malthorin's Geas.



Imagine holding this in your hand until your opponent is about to get to the space required by his Quest, then dropping this nasty Bane. Suddenly you own his Quest, and he's left with some crappy Quest no one else wants! That's what I call good game play. There is a distinct "thwart your opponent's strategy" built into Dungeoneer, and I think it is one of the rea-

* Don't feel too bad for the Queen, she's still around as the undead Banshee Queen.

sons so many people like it, and this card plays directly into that aspect of the game.

Most of the cards in Haunted Woods of Malthorin didn't end up being about mind control, like I was originally planning, because during development I always look for what's fun, rather than satisfying my own preconceived notions. Cards never work the way you think they will when playtesters get hold of them! Many of the mind control-ish cards I'd planned weren't as fun as I thought they'd be, so we worked

hard to find a number of other fun mechanics I think you'll enjoy. This set ended up being very satisfying, and also has some of the best art yet in Dungeoneer.

Next time we'll look at some cards in Den of the Wererats. In particular, one of the coolest and most unique cards we've developed yet. Are you ready for the Evil Vortex? (cue menacing music)

Thomas Denmark
Dungeoneer Designer & Illustrator