

Go Plumb the Depths
A micro card game by Robert Johnson
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3 players - Ages 12 and up

Objective: The players of Go Plumb the Depths act as pirate captains that have just returned from a successful raid and now it is time to divvy up the spoils by playing a sinister game of deception and guile. Treasures are passed around and pirate captains' build sets of treasures but mixed within the riches are cursed treasures that can render a set worthless. At the end of the game the pirate with the highest value of treasure wins the game.

Overview: The 27 card deck consists of 5 gold statue cards of 5 different African animals (lion, elephant, rhino, camel, and antelope) and two cursed statue cards (hyena and vulture) which are indicated by a skull symbol at the bottom of the card. At the bottom of the non-curse cards there is a number that represents that statue type's rank. During the game each player tries to build sets of identical statues while not having a cursed statue card in their hand at the end of the game that could make that set worth no points.

Setup: Before the game starts each player chooses a pirate captain name by which they will be addressed (the sillier the better). All 17 cards are then shuffled together and each player is dealt 3 cards face down. The remaining cards form the draw deck and are placed at the center of the table. The game can now be played.

How to Play: At the beginning of a player's turn they ask any another player if they have a card in their hand with a particular statue. For example: "Captain Turkey Leg, do you have a rhino statue?"

If that player doesn't have the card that was asked for then they reply "Go plumb the depths!" The active player then draws a card from the draw deck.

If that player does have the statue card that was asked for then they take that card and *another* card from their hand (which can be a cursed statue card) and presents them with the card backs facing the asking player so they can't see which card is which. The active player must then choose one of those cards to take. The player that presented the cards then puts the remaining card back in their hand and then draws a card from the draw deck to bring their hand back up to 3 cards.

At this point the active player must take a non-curse card from their hand and place it face up in front of them. If a card or cards of the same type are already in front of the player then the new card is added to that set. Otherwise, a new set is started.

End of the game: When the last card is drawn the round is finished (but with no drawing of cards), everyone lays down the cards in their hand to show what cursed statue cards they have, and then scoring is done.

The Cursed Statue Cards: There are two cursed statue cards in the deck-the Hyena and the Vulture. At the end of the game when hands are revealed the Hyena statue makes a player's *highest* rank set worth nothing. The Vulture statue makes a player's *lowest* rank set worth nothing.

Scoring: For sets of statues that are not affected by the cursed statue cards, scoring goes as follows:

1 card = 1 point, 2 cards = 3 points, 3 cards = 5 points
4 cards = 7 points, 5 cards = 9 points

If there is a tie then the player with the highest value of their highest rank set wins.

Hand Dealing Variant: After the cards are dealt the players look at the hand they were dealt and then pass it to the player on the left. The game then begins.