

# NEXUS



## *Fairies*

2 Players  
10 Minutes  
Ages 14+

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# Overview

NEXUS is a battle-of-wits card game for 2 players where every card you play can be turned against you.

## *Welcome to the Fairy Court*

*The players have brought a hotly disputed matter before the Fairy Court.*

*Each player will call witnesses to testify on their behalf, but those witnesses are fairies!*

*Fairies are willful creatures who have their own special first-come-last-served logic regarding whose testimony will be heard. Fairies are also chaotic creatures who may change their story if asked to wait too long before testifying.*

## *Fairy Court Terms*

*To “Sow Chaos” is to call a surprise witness or request a change of venue. The Fairy Court allows for sowing chaos no matter how busy the court already is.*

*To “Meditate” is to allow the Fairy Court to proceed while looking for one’s next opportunity to sow chaos.*

# Objective

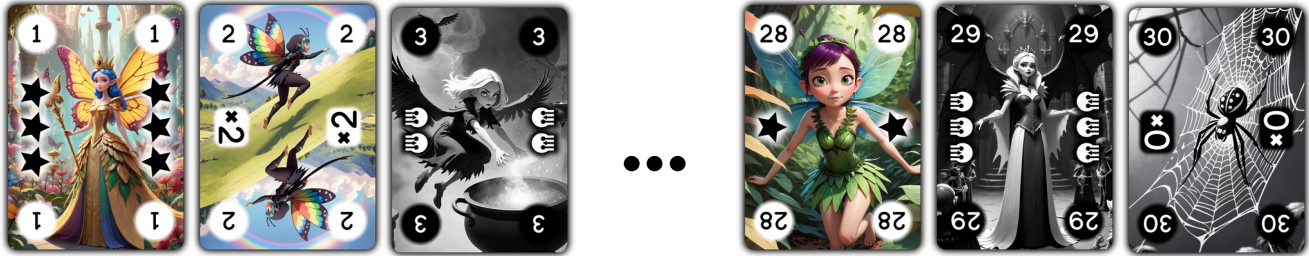
Collect cards with stars into your score zone and force your opponent to take cards with skulls into their score zone.



# Components

The NEXUS–Fairies deck consists of 36 cards.

30 of the cards are **Numbered** cards, numbered 1 through 30:



The 6 cards without numbers are **Mushroom** cards:



## Parts of a Card

A card's **number** is printed in each corner.

A card's number tells it whose **Parade** it will join.

Mushroom cards use different rules to determine whose **Parade** they will join.

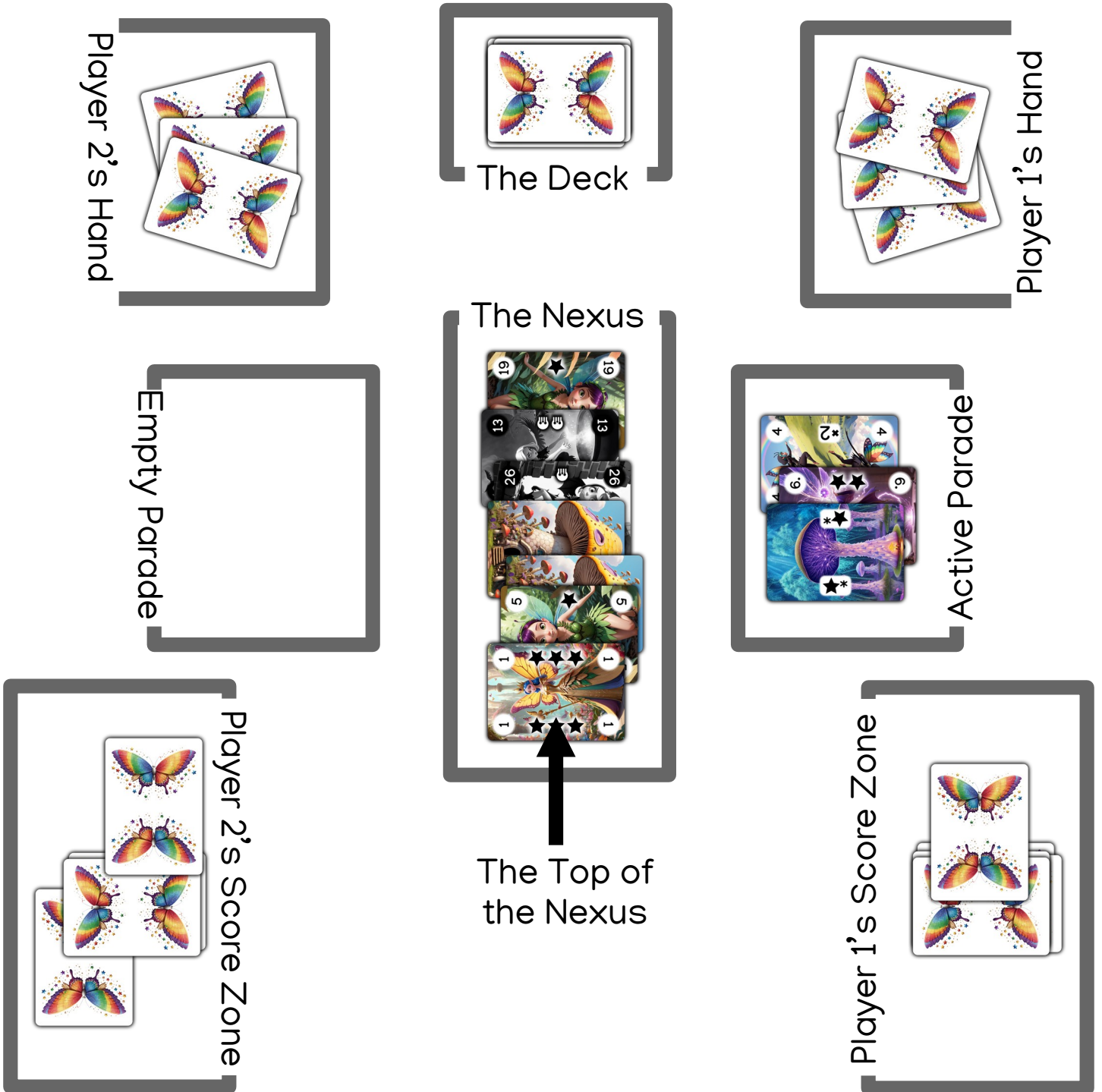


A card's **value** is printed along each of its long sides. (This card has a value of two stars)

A card's value determines how many points it's worth if that card makes it into your score zone.

# Zones

During a game of NEXUS, the cards move between 5 zones: Deck, Hands, Nexus, Parades, and Score Zones.



# Setup

1. Shuffle all 36 cards together.
2. Deal out 7 cards in a face-up row in the middle of the play area to start the Nexus.
3. Randomly determine who will be player 1 and who will be player 2.
4. Deal 1 card to begin player 2's Parade. (Player 2 starts with the Active Parade. Player 1's Parade zone starts the game empty.)
5. Deal 3 cards to each player to start their Hands.
6. The remaining 22 cards start in the Deck.
7. Player 1 takes the first turn.

# Turn Structure

On each player's turn, they must choose one of the following two options:

## Meditate

To Meditate, do both of the following:

- Resolve the top card of the Nexus according to the Laws of the Fairy Court.
- Draw a card.

Both parts of this action are mandatory.

*Meditating replenishes your options for future turns by increasing the number of cards in your Hand, but you must accept what the top card of the Nexus chooses to do when it resolves.*

## SOW CHAOS!

To SOW CHAOS, do the following:

- Play a card from your Hand to the Nexus.

Any card can be played to the Nexus, and it can be played to the top of the Nexus or inserted at any point in the Nexus.

If you don't have any cards in your Hand, you won't be able to SOW CHAOS and you'll have to Meditate instead.

*SOWING CHAOS lets you change what's happening in the Nexus, but it depletes your Hand, leaving you with fewer options for future turns.*

*When you SOW CHAOS, you can insert the card you play at any point in the Nexus, but usually you'll want to put it at the top of the Nexus, because that will have the most direct effect on the game.*

# Laws of the Fairy Court

Only the top card of the Nexus can resolve.

When a card resolves, it doesn't care who played that card originally or who is taking the Meditate action now to make it resolve; it just cares about its own number compared to the number of the top card of the Active Parade.

The resolving card joins the Active Parade if it can:

- A higher Numbered card can follow a lower Numbered card.
- A Mushroom can follow any Numbered card.
- Any Numbered card can follow a Mushroom card.
  
- A lower Numbered card cannot follow a higher Numbered card.
- A Mushroom cannot follow another Mushroom.

If a resolving card cannot join the Active Parade, then it will start a new Parade for the player whose Parade is empty.

The old Parade is moved to its player's Score Zone.

In this way, there is always exactly 1 Active Parade.

*Having the Active Parade is like being on offense – that player has the opportunity to score more cards.*

*Having an Empty Parade is like being on defense – that player tries to prevent their opponent from scoring more cards and tries to end the current Parade so that they can start a new Parade and be on offense.*

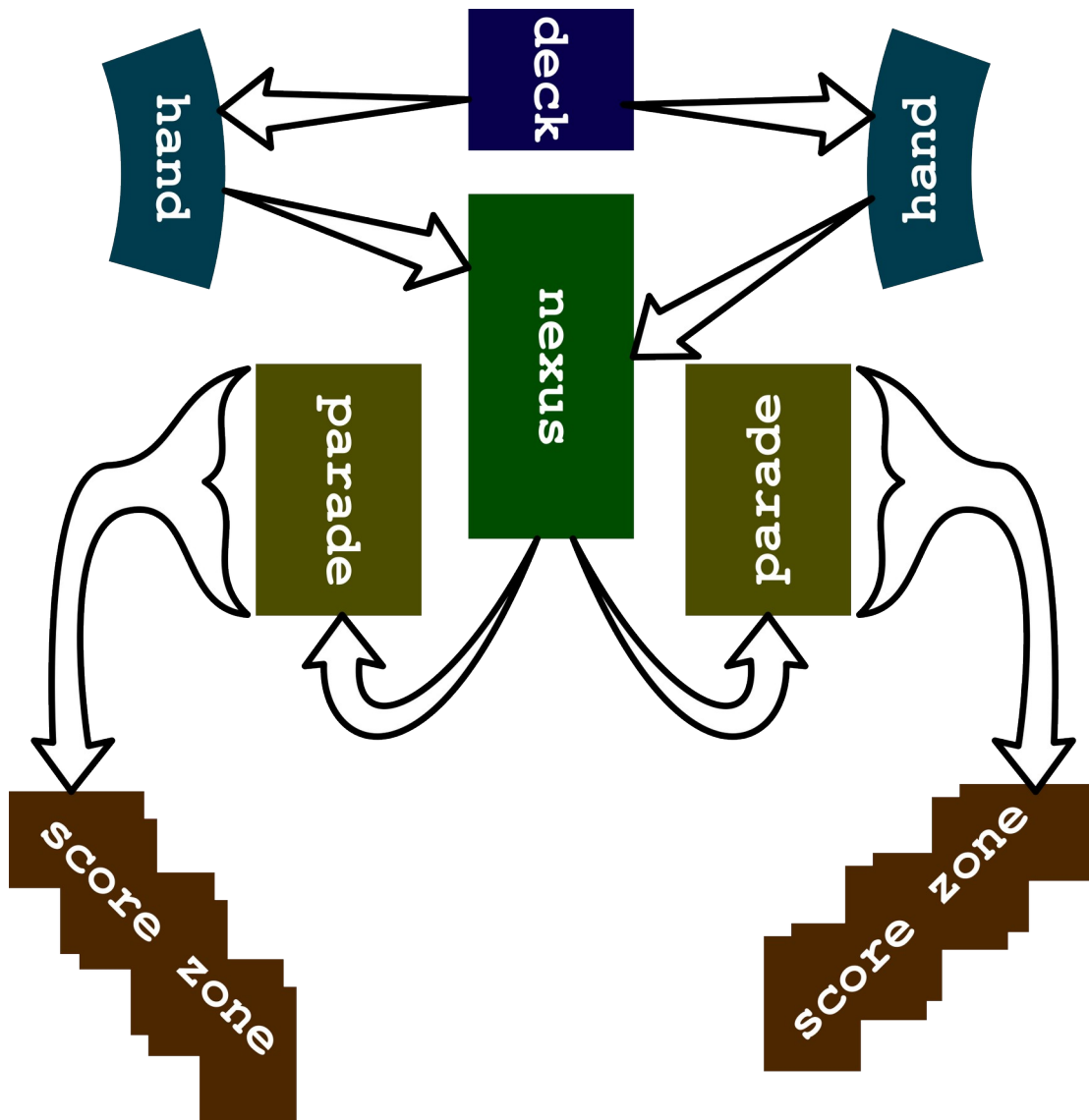
The Laws of the Fairy Court only apply to how a resolving card joins a Parade. The cards in the Nexus can be in any order.

# Card Life Cycle

During a game of NEXUS, track what has happened to each card by keeping those cards in the appropriate zone.

With the exception of refilling the Nexus and initial setup, cards can only move between zones in order:

Deck to Hand to Nexus to Parade to Score Zone



Cards may not skip zones or move out of order. For example, players can never play cards from their Hands directly to their Parades.

# Zone Specific Rules

## The Deck



Keep the **Deck** within reach of both players. The Deck serves as the timer for a game of NEXUS; when the Deck is empty the game is over. The Deck is face-down, but the number of cards remaining in the Deck is open information. The exact count of cards remaining in the Deck will become important near the end of the game. To make that count easier, the bottom 5 cards of the Deck may be spread out.

## A Hand



Players keep their **Hands** hidden from each other, but the number of cards in each player's Hand is open information. There is no Hand size limit.

## The Nexus



The **Nexus** is a row of cards in the center of the play area. All the cards in the Nexus are face-up. The Nexus is the zone where players play cards to interact with the cards their opponent plays. Keep the cards in the Nexus overlapped so that it is clear which card is at the top of the Nexus. If the Nexus ever gets down to 2 cards, immediately deal 2 cards to the bottom of the Nexus from the Deck. This refilling action could run out the Deck, causing the game to end.

# Zone Specific Rules (continued)

## A Parade



A **Parade** is a sequence of cards belonging to one player.

Each player has their own Parade zone on their side of the play area, but there can only be one Active Parade at a time. Whoever has the Active Parade, their opponent's Parade will be empty. Keep the cards in the Active Parade face-up and overlapped so that it's clear which card was added to that Parade last.

Even though each Parade belongs to one specific player, the cards in that Parade do not score points for that player until that Parade is sent to their Score Zone.

## A Score Zone



Each player should keep their **Score Zone** as a collection of face-down completed parades off to the side.

Make sure that each time a Parade is moved to a Score Zone, it is kept distinct from the other Parades in that Score Zone. This is important because any multipliers in that Parade will only affect the scoring of the cards in that same Parade.

# Scoring

The game ends when the Deck runs out.

This usually happens when a player chooses to Meditate for their turn. The other part of Meditating is to resolve the top card of the Nexus, and that should be done completely before ending the game.

When the game ends, cards remaining in players' Hands, in the Nexus, or in the Active Parade are not scored.



Each star in a Score Zone scores 1 for that player.



Each skull in a Score Zone scores **negative** 1 points for that player.



These cards have a star value equal to the number of Mushroom cards in that Parade.



These cards double the value of all stars and skulls in the same Parade.



These cards swap the meaning of stars and skulls in this Parade.



This card eliminates all points in this Parade.

# Scoring Examples



3 + 1 + 0 + 2  
This Parade is worth 6 points.



-1 + 2 + -2  
This Parade is worth negative 1 points.



0 + -1 + 3 + 1 + 0  
This Parade is worth 3 points.



( 2 + 0 + 2 + -3 ) × 2  
This Parade is worth 2 points.

# Scoring Examples (continued)



$( 3 + 2 + 0 ) \times -1$   
 This Parade is worth **negative 5** points.



$( 0 + 2 + 0 ) \times -1 \times -1$   
 This Parade is worth **positive 2** points.



$( 0 + 0 + 0 + 0 ) \times 2 \times -1 \times 2$   
 This Parade is worth **0** points.



$( 3 + 2 + 2 + -2 + 0 ) \times 0$   
 This Parade is worth **0** points.

# Meditation Example

To understand why a player might want to SOW CHAOS, we need to know what would happen if everybody just Meditated. In this example Alice (player 1) and Bella (player 2) have just started a game.



← Alice's Hand



← The Nexus



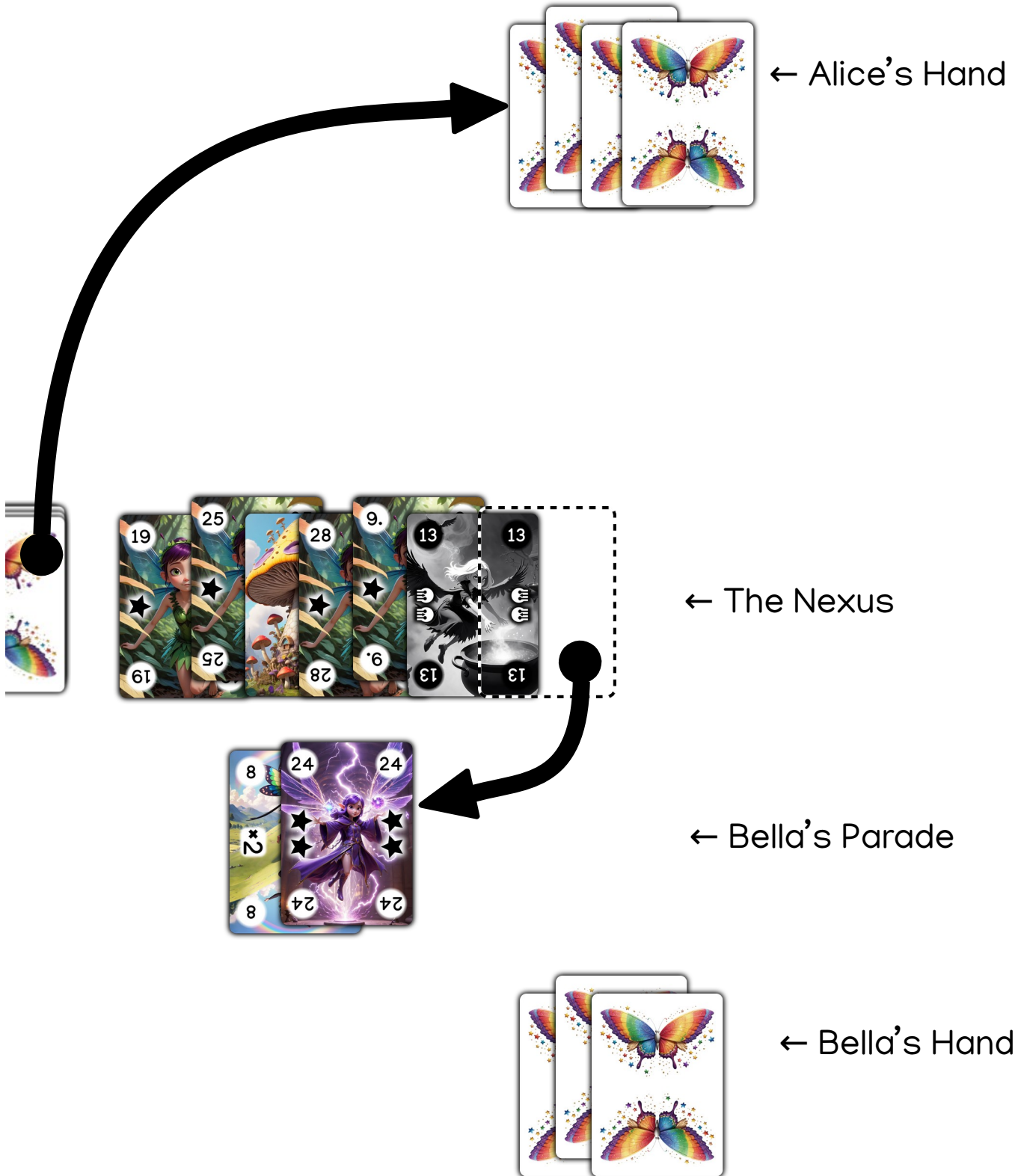
← Bella's Parade



← Bella's Hand

# Meditation Example

Alice takes the first turn and decides to Meditate. The 24 card on top of the Nexus resolves. 24 is greater than 8, so the 24 card continues Bella's Parade. Alice also draws a card for Meditating.



# Meditation Example

Bella takes her turn and also decides to Meditate. The 13 card on top of the Nexus resolves. 13 is less than 24, so the 13 card starts a new Parade for Alice. The 8 and 24 go to Bella's Score Zone. Bella also draws a card for Meditating.



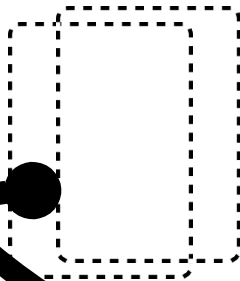
← Alice's Hand



← Alice's Parade



← The Nexus



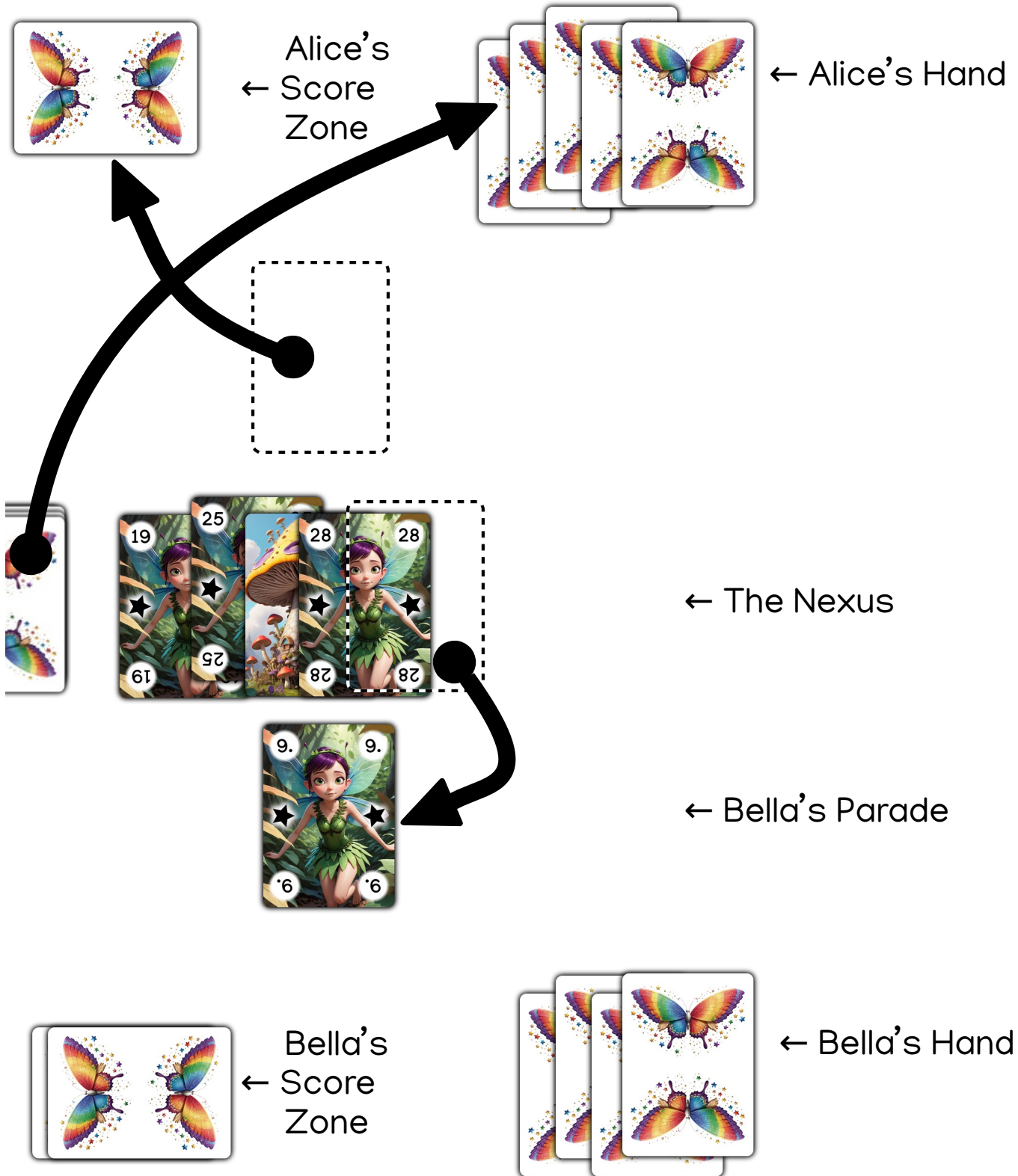
← Bella's Score Zone



← Bella's Hand

# Meditation Example

Alice takes her next turn and decides to Meditate. The 9 card on top of the Nexus resolves. 9 is less than 13, so the 9 card starts a new Parade for Bella. The 13 goes to Alice's Score Zone. Alice also draws a card for Meditating.



# Meditation Example

Bella takes her next turn and decides to Meditate. The 28 card on top of the Nexus resolves. 28 is greater than 9, so the 28 card continues Bella's Parade. Bella also draws a card for Meditating.



Alice's  
← Score  
Zone



← Alice's Hand



← The Nexus

← Bella's Parade



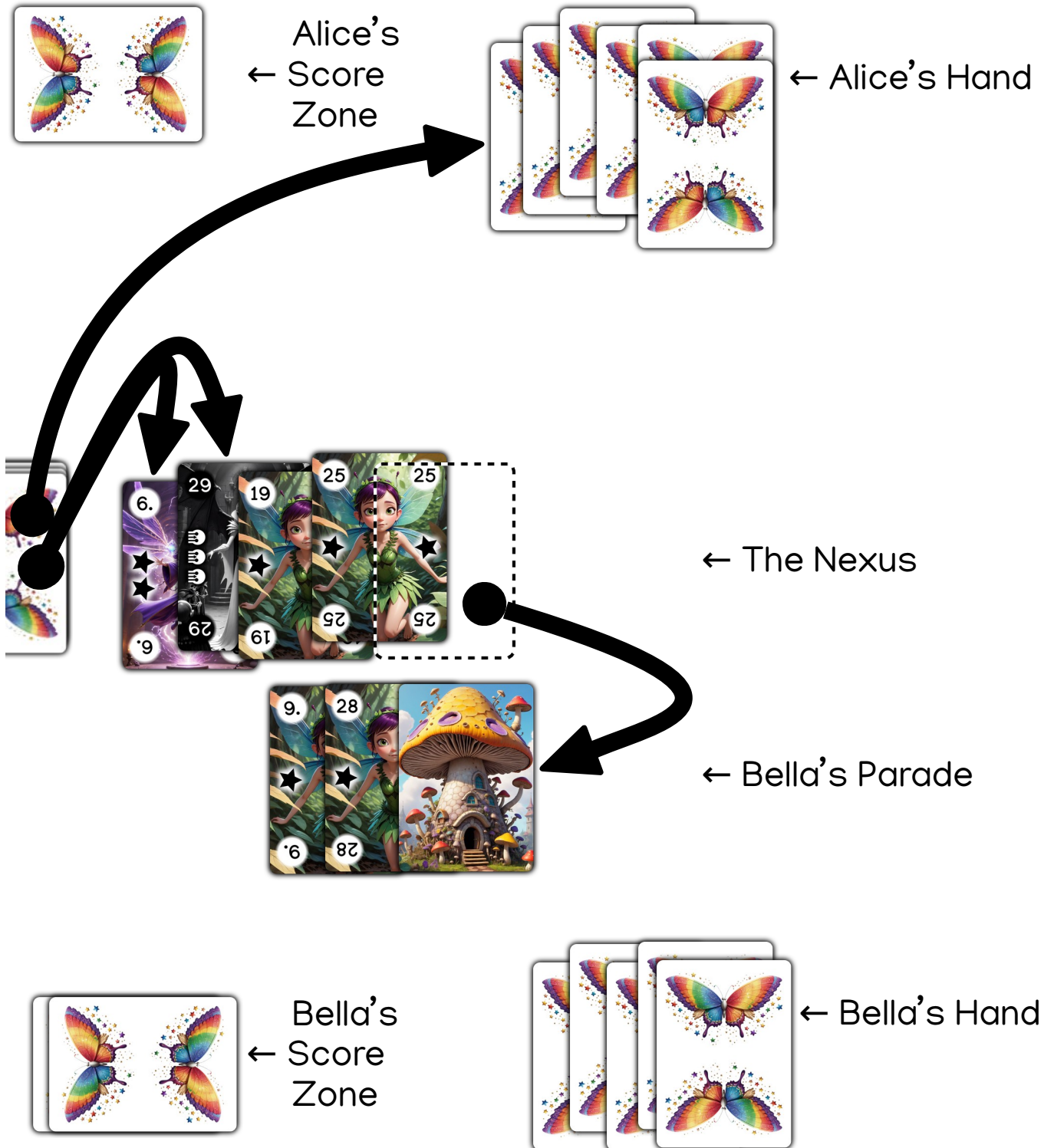
Bella's  
← Score  
Zone



← Bella's Hand

# Meditation Example

Alice takes her next turn and decides to Meditate. The Mushroom card on top of the Nexus resolves. A Mushroom can follow any number, so the Mushroom card continues Bella's Parade. The Nexus has only 2 cards left so Alice refills 2 cards from the Deck to the bottom of the Nexus. Alice also draws a card for Meditating.



# Meditation Example

Bella takes her next turn and decides to Meditate. The 25 card on top of the Nexus resolves. Any number can follow a Mushroom so the 25 card continues Bella's Parade. Bella also draws a card for Meditating.



Alice's  
← Score  
Zone



← Alice's Hand



← The Nexus



← Bella's Parade



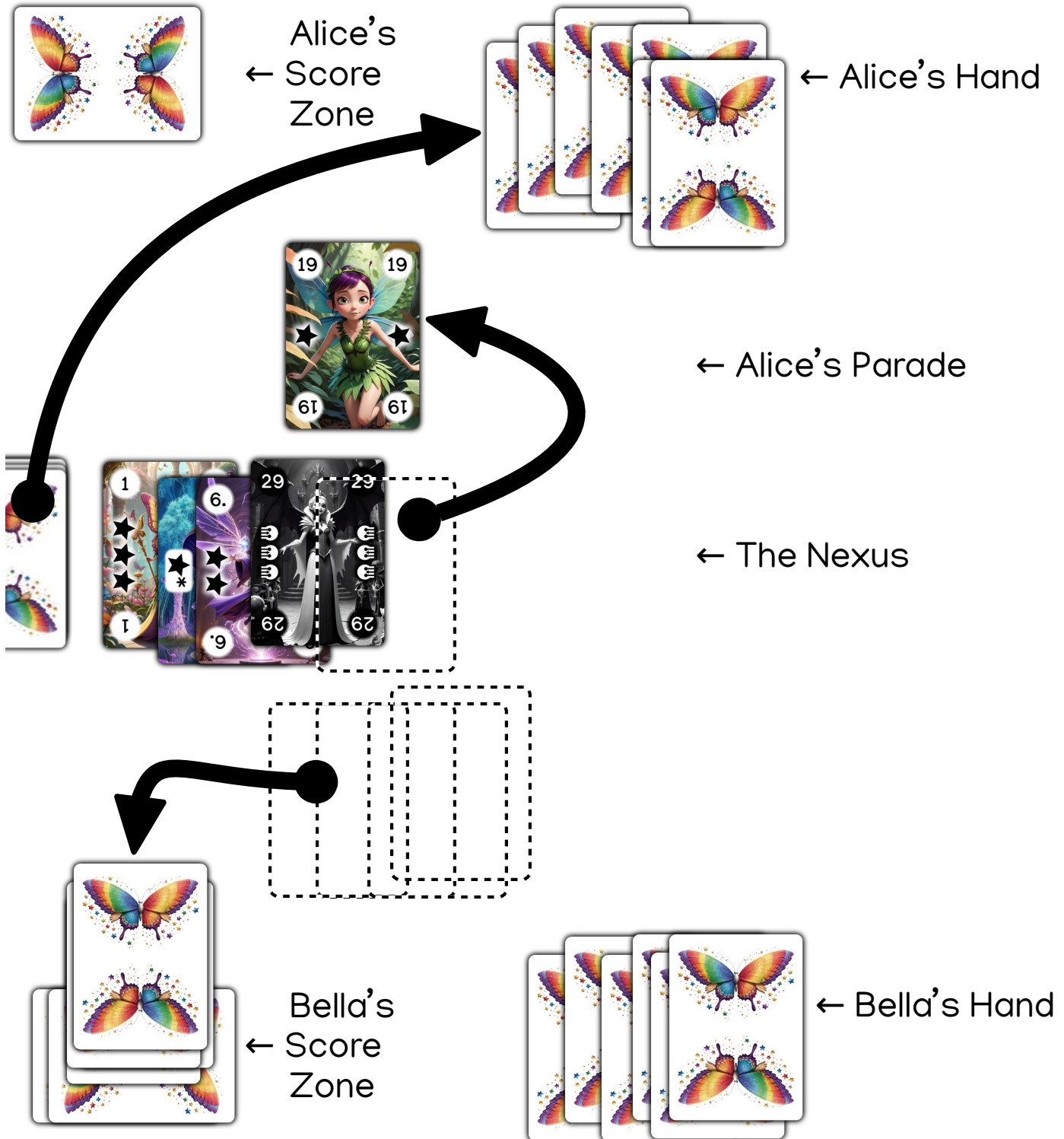
Bella's  
← Score  
Zone



← Bella's Hand

# Meditation Example

Alice takes her next turn and decides to Meditate. The 19 card on top of the Nexus resolves. 19 is less than 25, so the 19 card starts a new Parade for Alice. Bella's Parade moves to her Score Zone. Alice refills the Nexus again. Alice also draws a card for Meditating.



# SOW CHAOS! Example

This is the same starting setup as the previous example, but this time Alice looks at the Nexus and sees that Bella is about to get a lot of stars while Alice gets the skulls.



← Alice's Hand



← The Nexus



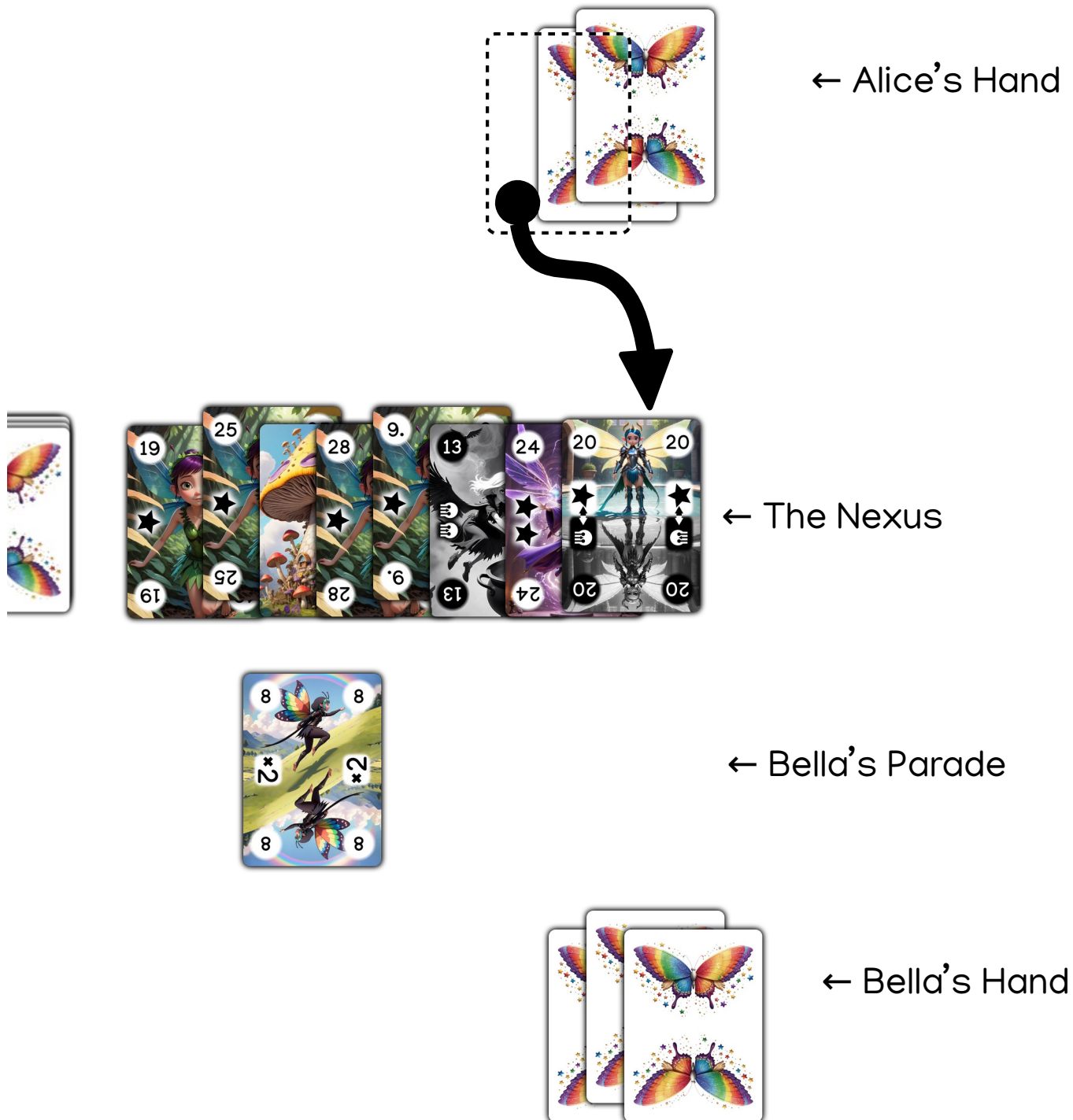
← Bella's Parade



← Bella's Hand

# SOW CHAOS! Example

This time Alice chooses to SOW CHAOS by playing the 20 card from her Hand to the top of the Nexus. Alice has fewer cards in her Hand to work with now, but if that 20 goes into Bella's Parade it will have a significant impact on the score for that parade.



# Notes

I forgot whose turn it is!

Count how many cards are in the Nexus:

Odd count of cards → It's player 1's turn

Even count of cards → It's player 2's turn

I think I forgot to draw a card!

Count how many cards are in the Nexus plus both players' Hands. If the count is less than 13, then somebody has missed a card draw. That target number of 13 increases by 2 each time the Nexus has to be refilled from the Deck.

How many cards are left in the Deck?

Near the end of the game, the count of cards remaining in the Deck becomes important. To make that count easier, players may spread out the bottom 5 or so cards of the Deck.

# Variant: Double-Ended Nexus

For an even more chaotic game, play with a double-ended Nexus.

In this variant, when a player Meditates they **choose** whether to resolve the top card or bottom card of the Nexus.

The only other rule change for this variant is that if the Nexus needs to be refilled because it got down to just 2 cards, put the refill cards into the middle of the Nexus.

There are other variants of NEXUS to accommodate more players, but the 36-card deck used in “NEXUS-Fairies” simply doesn’t have enough cards to support those variants.

# Avomath Games

Other version of Nexus and other games from Avomath Games can be found at

<https://games.avomath.com>

