

# Untitled - July 14, 2025

**Speaker** Welcome to pick up and Deliver, the podcast where I pick up my audio recorder as I step out for a walk, and deliver an episode to you while I stroll around. I'm Brendan Riley. Well, good morning listeners. It's a lovely day here in suburban Chicago. I'm continuing my walk in which I recorded episode 757 for things I love about revive, and now I'm going to do episodes 758 board game. Espresso. Triple shot. Order up. So for those of you who are new to the podcast or just forgot about it, the board game Espresso Triple Shot is an episode format that I do about every third episode or so in which I talk about games I recently tried or revisited. Usually what I'll do is I'll talk about three new games I've tried recently and one game I revisited. This is meant to be quick first impressions, not reviews. If you want something more like a formal review, check out the message from the deep episodes. Although, to be fair, I very rarely do one of those about games I don't like. One of the nice things about being sort of just an idiosyncratic board game chat podcast more than review. a review focused one is that I don't spend a lot of time playing games I don't enjoy. If I have a game and I have, I play it a couple times and I don't really like it, I generally am going to not play it anymore. Which means I'm not going to review it because I'm not playing it anymore. So generally, if there's a game on here that I say I don't like much, I'm not going to do a deep review of it because that's not I don't see this as a board game review podcast. I see it talking about board game culture, talking about fun, playing board games. It's a chit chat podcast with a little bit of like media inquiry or media criticism and pop culture conversation. I'd be interested to hear. How do you describe what this podcast is to other people? Uh, if you describe it at all, I'd love to hear that you could do that over on Board Game Geek and Guild 3269. Just sharing. Like how do you describe ... How do you describe pickup and deliver? What is it that makes it worth listening to? Uh, if the answer is it's not worth listening to, you don't need to post that. That's fine. Uh, but I would love to hear if you think it's worth listening to. Why do you think that? Uh, it's always interesting to hear what clicks with the audience or doesn't click either way. Okay, so board game, espresso triple shot. I'm going to talk about three games I played for the first time recently and one game I revisited. Now, all of these are games that I mentioned at least a little bit in the top of the stack episode 2 or 3 episodes ago. So apologies if I repeat myself much. I felt there was a part of me that felt like maybe I already did an episode talking about some of these, but I think I was just thinking of the top of the stack episode because I looked around and I can't find anything. I can't find a recording of an episode in which I talk about these, so hopefully I haven't done this already. Here we go. The first game I want to talk about is a 2007 game. I played the 2017 edition because they did a 10th anniversary rerelease. This is in the year of the Dragon, the Stefan Feld game with art by Harald Leason and Michael Menzel. Michael Menzel, of course, is a well-known artist and I think the designer behind Legends of Andor. I could be wrong about that, but I think that's I think that's his game. In The year of the Dragon is one of Stefan Feld's early games. I believe that they are currently re. Queen games is currently doing a Kickstarter for one of their new Stefan Feld City games. And in the year of the Dragon, revisited or revised is one of the games they're doing. I don't think it's called that. I think it's called I don't know what it's it's got a city name because it's the Stefan Feld City collection, but it is a revamping of In the Year of the Dragon. Like I said, it's one of his early games, and in playing it, it reminded me a lot of Notre Dame, which I'm sure you don't

remember. But my review of Notre Dame was I can see why why this is supposed to be good. I didn't enjoy it. And frankly, that's also the case for me with In the year of the Dragon in the game you play. I don't know, a merchant. I think you're a merchant and you're trying to build up your reputation in the course of this one year. And we can tell from, I don't know how, that there's going to be disasters every month or most months. Something bad is going to happen. There are a few positive events, but most of the events are bad, but you can see them coming. So a big part of the game is planning for the bad things that are coming. And I will confess I was very bad at this, which was also true of Notre Dame. Probably that's petty of me. I didn't enjoy it because I was bad at it, but there's definitely overlap there. But I think also just the core game loop, what it is you're trying to do is Incredibly, despite it being a Euro game, incredibly confrontational. You are competing with other players to grab resources and grab things in time to manage these oncoming disasters. The gameplay is really tight, like this is my problem. I can recognize in the abstract this is a really good design. It's very tight, very interesting. I probably would play it again if somebody got it out and said, hey, you want to play this again? But like I said, it didn't do the things. It didn't hit the things that I liked. It hit a lot of things I don't like about certain kinds of euros, the sort of really punishing penalties, which is admittedly, it's in Agricola, which I talk about being a game I really enjoy a lot. So that is that is maybe one of the overlaps and probably the thing I like least about Agricola, although I can recognize it's necessary to make the game work. If you didn't have to worry about feeding your people, Agricola would not be the same game. It would be very different. and in the year of the Dragon works the same way. But instead of just one worrying about you're feeding your people, there's like five different ways you have to take care of your people, or you face brutal penalties, which is the idea of the game. Like the point of the game is to manage these these brutal challenges. You do that by you're acquiring these, uh, different tokens that go into your buildings, and you can only have so many tokens in your buildings and your buildings. You can make your buildings bigger, which lets you hold more tokens in them, but you still have to feed them when the food time comes around. And the tokens give you different benefits, which maybe help you avoid some of the other penalties. Like I said, it's a very good game. If you are somebody who liked Notre Dame or you like more games with a really tight set of constraints, I think in The year of the Dragon might be right up your alley, so it's worth checking out if you're somebody who, if you've liked Stefan Feld games before, for example, worth checking out. I myself, I'm probably not going to push to play it again. I probably would play it if someone was setting it up, but it's not going to be on my top list. And having played it, I then promptly sold my copy. So I should say sold. It's not past tense yet. I've got it up for sale. So that is in the year of the Dragon. Next up, I got a chance to play parade. Parade is a game that I have heard about a number of times in old board game, podcasts and media. People would mention it as a game. That's interesting, and I'll admit, it kind of hovered in my head as a game that, oh, that'd be fun to play sometime. And we happen to be at a game night. And some folks suggested, hey, I've got we've got this game parade. Do you want to try it? It's like, yes, I do. That is the game I've wanted to try. And it's really good. Parade is designed by Naoki Homma with art from Philippe Guérin. I saw Chris Williams in the list, but there were like 5 or 6 people. I think it's because it's been out since 2007. I think it's come out in several different editions and each edition would have different art. I don't know for certain that that's the case, but that's my impression. The current the current art looks really pretty. By the way, if you're looking for a

game with beautiful. Reminds me of Arboretum or something. Really nice artwork. So this is a card game. In the game you have several different suits of cards that are numbered I think 1 to 10 and they it's themed around Alice in Wonderland, but that part's not really important. It's really just the suits of the cards that matter. The idea is there's a parade going on and on your turn, you are going to play a card to the front of the parade line and whatever card it is, the number on that card, it sort of covers every card behind it up to that number. So if you put down the two, the two cards behind the two are covered. If you put down the eight, the eight cards behind the eight are covered. When you put that card down, you have to take every card past that covered number that matches the suit of the card you played. Is that right or is it you take every card after that covered number, or you take all the cards of that suit. I think it's every card after that number of the suit that you played. So there's this balancing act where you're trying not to take cards. Sometimes you have to play a low card, but if it's not of a suit that's out already, you don't end up having to take very many cards at the end of the round or end of the game, you're going to add up all the points for all of the cards you have. I think you play three rounds, maybe I don't remember, but you add up the points on all the cards that you end up taking. So it's a game where you don't want to take points. The fun trick is if you have the most cards of a particular suit, then all those cards are only worth one point. Instead of what? Whatever numbers on them. So sometimes you do want to take cards because it can invalidate it can reduce the score dramatically of other cards you took. I'm probably missing a couple nuances, but that gives you a general idea. It's a it's a card. It's a hand management game where you're trying to play your hand in a way that will avoid sticking you with too many cards. It's very clever. It was really fun. Play. The art is pretty easy to play. Takes like 20 minutes, maybe half an hour. Easy to explain. This is a top notch game and I think well worth playing or acquiring a copy or both if you can. That's Parade by Naoki Homa. It's from 2007. I think you could also play this with just a deck of cards if you wanted, although the game had more than four suits, so I guess a regular deck of cards wouldn't work, but, uh, really interesting. Really fun. Well worth a play. Uh, that's parade. Uh. Next up I did revisit a game, and the revisit was kind of funny because I'd honestly forgotten. I played it like, uh, we sat down to play this game. I'd completely forgotten. I played it once, but then when we went to. When I went to log it, I found I had played it years and years ago on board Game Arena with some friends. Like during Covid, we had a game night where just three of us got on board game arena and we played this game. So, you know, I had played it before, but it had been literally years. This is Hardback. Hardback was designed by Jeff Beck and Tim Flowers with art by Ryan Goldsbury. It's from Flowers Games. Hardback is a deck builder in the US in the Ascension style. If you're going to point to early deck builders as basic ways that cards move around. I say the Ascension style, meaning that there's a river of cards that are flowing through and you buy cards from the river, as opposed to Dominion Style, where there is stacks of the same card and you can buy from the stacks, so you can build an engine based on which cards are out. Ascension. You build an engine based on what comes out in the river. It is a word game. So in hardback you are playing cards with letters on them and using them to spell words, and then you get points based on the words that you've spelled. There are all some of the cards have genres on them and the cards, so the cards have letters on them. And then there are currency and points on the cards, so a card will have some mixture of currency for buying more cards and or points that you score. And often they'll have they'll be sort of suited

with different genres. There's romance, mystery, crime or romance mystery, horror are the three of them. There's I think there's 4 or 5 genres, sci fi probably, and the genre that the card has is indicated with a little tag. And if your card that you're that you're playing matches the tag with another card. So if you play, say, two mystery and detective cards, then you end up, you get a bonus of whatever the bottom power on those cards are. So each card has or any of the suited cards or most of the suited cards have a bonus have a bonus power at the bottom. They have the main power at the top, bonus power at the bottom. Uh, if you play more than one of the same suited card, then the bonuses activate and you get to do both, um, powers. So if you've played legendary, the Marvel Deckbuilder game. That one has that style where there are repercussions. And again, you're trying to build words. One of the things I do like that a lot of word games haven't solved is like, well, what if you don't have the right combination of letters? Hardback solves that in a very simple way. Any card you have, you can play face down. When you play it face down, you don't get any points for it. You don't get any money from it, but it becomes a wild letter of your choice. So if you don't have a word with the letters you have, then you can play a card face down to use it as a different card. Now you only get your five cards, but they also have this thing in the game called ink. These little tokens you can get and you can use ink tokens to draw more cards. But those cards you draw face up right onto your play area. And if you can't use them, you take a penalty. You also can, um, spend ink remover to then pick up those ink cards into your hand and you can place them face down so you can get around that penalty. But basically you have to have two different things that you use, and there are different ways to get the ink tokens, but it's a big part of the late game. Having a bunch of those ink tokens makes a big difference in how you navigate the end of the game. The game ends. I don't remember what makes the game end, some combination of things that people have bought. I suppose there's probably some element like that. So that is hardback from 2018. Jeff Beck and Tim Flowers, designers, I like hardback just fine. It was a entertaining deckbuilder. I like the flow of the game. I like word games generally. I like the Ink Pot, so it's not too restrictive. But there are still I still have. I still did occasionally have turns where I couldn't make a word, and if I didn't have enough ink, then I just ended up eating, eating those points or whatever. And it wasn't terrible. So it was a it was a nice balance. Well worth a try if you get a chance. That's hardback from Jeff Beck and Tim Flowers. Finally, I got a chance to play Evenfall. This is from 2023 designer Stefano Di Salvio and art by Martin Mottet, who I mentioned last episode was one of the artists on revive. Even fall is a tableau builder combo engine builder. Where you are, you play witches and some sort of nebulous magical land. The art is really great. It's a sort of mix of high fantasy with a little bit of ethereal line work and a nice, um, a nice blend of just that has a hint of the bloody in. It's not quite like that, but I think if you saw it you'd be like, oh, I can. I kind of get what you mean, but very light and airy. In the game, you play the leader of a group of magical witches who are celebrating the end of the year around the big tree or something, living a year around the tree. The plot and the narrative doesn't make a ton of difference for the game. It's very much a tableau builder engine builder game. One of the things I like about this, and this is what I think I mentioned in the top of the stack, is that even fall uses the Elysium method of Tableau Management, where you collect a card and it goes in the top row, and then you can take a separate action to move it to the bottom row, and the card will only score at the end of the game. If you have it in the bottom row, a card in the top row will not score at the end of the game. One of the things I like about

the change in Evenfall from Elysium and Evenfall, you have a group of elders who are part of your coven who can't go out and do stuff out in the world. They're too tired and old, but they're happy to do stuff in your coven. So if you have a card that you've moved down to the bottom row of your board, you can still use the power on it with elders. So a big part of the game is really being quick about moving things down and managing your boards so that you can keep your active workers available to go out onto the main play space and do work while your elders can stay in your home space and use the cards that you've acquired that have actions on them. There are a number of different ways that you score points. The two main ways you have the cards that you've moved down to the bottom which get you points. You have these, uh, recruit cards that you can do where there are these people, and they can either be, um, they can be either part of your council or part of your. Or they can be a sorcerer or something. I don't remember the names, but if they're in your council, they provide an end game scoring bonus. But you can't use their power anymore. If they're a sorcerer, they go off on the side and then you can use your power. So each card has multiple uses, and figuring out how you're going to use those uses is a big part of the game. I really like the game flow of even fall, the way that the cards move, and the way that the characters move, I think works really well given the different options that you have. I love the nuances of the different card powers, and I really like the way that the game allows you to use cards in different methods. Most of all, I love this two tier card placement where if you have a card in one spot, it's worth one thing. If you have another spot, it's worth something different. It just works really well and I think it's an excellent way to approach, um, designing a Tableau builder with just a little, a little more grit, uh, even falls great. If you get a chance to play it. I definitely recommend there's an expansion coming out, which I have preordered. It actually should come in this month, so you may hear me again soon talking about the expansion. We'll see. But I do want to get this back to the table and played more. I think it's really neat and well worth checking out if you get an opportunity. That's Evenfall from, uh, Stefano DaSilva, I believe is the name of the designer. Well, that's about it for the walk. Thank you for joining me. I'd love to hear if you've played any of these games, head over to BoardGameGeek, yield 3269 and join the conversation there. You can send me a message. Wombat 929 on Board Game Geek. It's the easiest way, but I also have Brendan at Rattlebox Games.com. If you'd like to promote the show, you can tell other people about it. Send somebody the episode, come over to BoardGameGeek and tell me what you like about it. Why do you think it's worth listening to and post a review? I'm told that helps. I don't really know much about podcast algorithms, but I suspect it would be neat. Well, all that's left for me to say then is thanks for joining me on my walk today. I hope your next walk is as pleasant as mine was. Bye bye. Brought to you by Rattlebox Games.