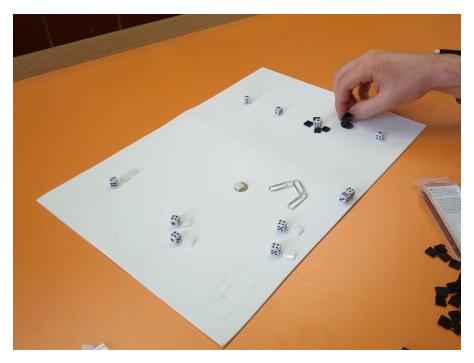## Playing the Game

Due to the board and turn-based nature and us discussing a lot of the time, the actual game turned out a lot longer than five minutes (about 2 hours), but it actually did not take a lot of turns, which is a good sign. As we expected, it turned out to be a good strategy for Phobetor to aggressively push for getting more humans, while Morpheus played more defensively, walling off his area.

The game after a few turns. Morpheus has built a wall to block Phobetor at the bottom. Phobetor is rallying some dreams from his newly captured humans.

As it turns out, walls are a rather strong point for Morpheus, as Phobetor can't walk through. On the other hand, the Speed Boost turned out to be a rather strong point for Phobetor because he can do twice as much at the same time. Phobetor has to rush and add speed to the game, while Morpheus does the exact opposite because he wins on time.

Several turns later, Phobetor has captured the top left corner. Morpheus has successfully stopped him from advancing by building another wall.

The situation that arises now is somewhat problematic: Morpheus has secured his base with walls and Phobetor cannot do anything, he has to wait for the walls to count down while Morpheus can harvest new dreams. This takes out a lot of speed for Phobetor.

We decided it would be a good idea if Phobetor could actually tear down walls, but at a high cost, e.g. by spending a lot of dreams or using a special power he can only use once during the game. For the board game, we implemented this by exchanging a dream for two countdown points on a wall. This lead to an exciting showdown.

Phobetor has torn down the wall and both players gather their dreams for the final showdown.

Both players rallied their dreams. As Phobetor was outside of Morpheus' throwing radius, he could not be attacked directly. Therefore, Morpheus decided to throw his dreams as close to Phobetor as he could, laying them out as mines. However, Phobetor managed to throw his dreams onto the sleeping human. With the last dream he had, he managed to awake him and secure 5 dreams, having now an advantage of 5:4 against Morpheus.

Morpheus gave up at this point: Phobetor had captured all but three humans, but it would take Morpheus two more turns to get support in this 5:4 situation.

Lessons Learned

The game was fun and especially the showdown was exciting. We learned about some aspects of our design that we would like to address.

- Rallied dreams should be weaker than dreams lying around. We should e.g. halve their strength, such that throwing dreams at each other makes sense - i.e. by throwing a dream at Morpheus, Phobetor loses one but Morpheus loses two dreams.
- An initial condition where many humans are sleeping and few are awake (maybe only one) makes sense for both players.
- The situation described where Phobetor has to wait for a wall to count down, just to have it possibly rebuilt by Morpheus is boring. We should give him an ability to counter walls.
- Phobetor has to be really careful with his dreams - if he spends them all, he might have no chance to get more if Morpheus carefully walled his humans off. This might be a good thing because it imposes a challenge on Phobetor, but it might also be too harsh.
  - We could give him a minimum constant stream of nightmares, if necessary (similar to a human captured by Morpheus).
- The outcome of the game is decided in a few turns (which should translate to a few decisive seconds) - fewer than we expected. There is no real way to make a comeback, but maybe that's a good thing because it means that the game is over quickly and the winning player doesn't have to "mop up" a lot.

- ○ This could also stem from the fact that we had unlimited time to think in our board implementation, which we wouldn't have had in the real game. Our turns were nearly perfect and the outcome was very close and decided rather quickly.
- We should put a lot of effort into balancing the different strengths and weaknesses of Morpheus and Phobetor (different speeds, number of dreams produced, costs of abilities etc.).
- Gameplay is strongly decided by the layout of the map and obstacles. Morpheus could be stronger on some maps and weaker on others. We could make different challenges depending on how we layout the maps. Replaying the same map would definitely lead to an improvement of the same player on the map (i.e. "I need to secure the path x first").
- In our board game, the range for throwing dreams is the same as the action radius. This should not be the case, because it means that the faster player can also throw farther, leading to a double advantage. The throwing radii should be either equal for both or opposed to the speed advantage of the players.