

# Adel Verpflichtet, By Hook or By Crook, Hoity Toity, Fair Means or Foul – A lot of fun, no matter how you say it!

By John R. Pack, 2001 & 2002 World Champion

Since Avalon Hill's 1990 release of Adel Verpflichtet (ADV), it has been a family favorite. We pull it down time and time again year after year despite owning more than 350 games of all varieties. In fact, many of our friends and extended family members now own copies (thankfully, this German Game of the Year is still available). My brother, Nathan, was the first family member to make the semi-finals at Avaloncon. My own victories at the World Boardgaming Championships are based on techniques and tactics my wife, Sharee, taught me!

OK, but why write a strategy article about a game based on Rock-Paper-Scissors? The main reason is that our scientists, working in the sweatshop in the back room, have determined that Rock is more often the best choice.

The Rock, of course, is the Castle and, within the Castle, the Exhibit. Why? Because one sure way to lose is to spend too many turns at the Auctionhouse. This, in turn, is because none of the gains at the Auctionhouse translate directly into the movement needed to win. Like I tell beginners, "all Auctionhouse and no Castle, makes Jack a loser." If one successfully purchases an item, that item may translate into Castle exhibits or the largest final set which eventually win the game – but the item is nearly worthless if it's never or rarely exhibited. Stolen checks, on the other hand, have an even more remote value – since a successful purchase on a return trip to the Auctionhouse is required for a check to have any value at all. Bouncing thieves only have value if the check removed from the game allows one of one's remaining checks to win a future auction. Every other Auctionhouse result is a completely wasted turn.

I try to limit my Auctionhouse visits to 3-5 per game if only because a full 50% of the possible outcomes are wasted turns. Here's how I rate Auctionhouse outcomes:

## Auctionhouse Results

<u>Card</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Value</u>
Check	Win Item	3-7*
	Win Item & Stolen Check	2-6*
	Lose Bid	0
Thief	Steal Check	1-3#
	Bouncing Thieves	0-1#
	Nothing	0

### Modifiers

\* Add one each to the base score if the item completes/connects an exhibit, gives one the best exhibit, makes an exhibit thief-proof, or used a low check

# Based on the certainty of winning one's next auction with one's highest check

A score of 0 is a wasted turn. Whoever gets the fewest of these over the course of the game will likely be the winner. A score of 10 would be an ideal turn. Note that an ideal turn is not possible at the Auctionhouse!

Now let's take a look at the Rock – the Castle.

When some friends, my wife and I first learned Adel Verpflichtet, we mistakenly didn't advance players whose detectives caught thieves. As a result, exhibiting was the only way to advance and received a lot more emphasis. After many years of playing, I'm actually kind of glad we made that original mistake – because I'm still convinced that the exhibit is where the emphasis belongs. Here are the possible Castle outcomes rated on the same scale I used for the Auctionhouse:

## Castle Results

Card	Result	Value
Exhibit	Advance Best	8-10*
	Advance 2nd	7-8*
	Advance Best & Lose Item(s)	7-9#*
	Advance 2nd & Lose Item(s)	6-7#*
	No Advance	0
	No Advance & Lose Item(s)	0#
Thief	Gain Item(s)	4-10@
	Gain Item(s) & Lose Thief	3-10@
	Gain Item(s) & Lose 2nd Thief	0-9@+
	Nothing	0
	Lose Thief	-1
	Lose 2nd Thief	-4+
	Thief Paroled (if none held)	3
Detective	Catch Thief(ves) & Advance	4-10*&
	Nothing	0

### Modifiers (apply in order, up to the maximum shown; no minimum)

- \* Add one each to the base score for each space over two.
- @ Add two to the base score for each extra item plus one each to the base score if an item completes/connects an exhibit, gives one the best exhibit, or makes an exhibit thief-proof.
- # Subtract two from the base score for each card by which one's maximum exhibit was reduced plus an additional one if age tie-breaker lost.
- + Subtract an additional one for each jail cell remaining before your next thief is paroled.
- & Add the difference between number of enemy thieves in jail after vs. before plus two times the difference between the number of opponents without thieves after vs. before (even if negative).

Note that every single option at the Castle has the potential to produce an ideal turn! However, half of the detective outcomes and two-thirds of the thief outcomes have zero or even negative value. Worse, play of a thief offers detectives the opportunity to advance!

Two-thirds of the possible outcomes of an exhibit have huge positive value. Meanwhile, the zero outcome of the exhibit is quite unlikely – since it requires three or more players at the Castle (of which two must play exhibits superior to one's own). The single negative exhibit outcome is even more unlikely (requiring yet another Castle player who chooses a thief); however, it is a disaster when it does occur.

Also worthy of note is the value of the detective – which decreases as the jail cells fill up with opponents' thieves. Re-cycling thieves is of little value – unless one can increase the number of opponents who have no thieves at all! There are many players who build huge sets at the beginning of the game and then rely on the detective to catch up; this only works if those who are in front forget that playing thieves is the surest way to let those who are way behind catch up. In fact, because the incentive for players who are far behind to play the detective increases the further behind they are, the incentive for players in the lead to avoid thieves should also grow as their lead grows.

## **Wasting Turns**

Wasting perfectly good turns is so critical to the game – often so much so that the winner can be determined by this criteria alone – that some wonderfully descriptive names have evolved:

*Thieves Convention* – All thieves at either the Castle or Auctionhouse. Add a guest speaker for added fun. Guest List: a) Detective – Great if you're the guest, b) Exhibitor – Disaster for the guest, c) Big Spender – If no one picks up the check, all the better. In the case of a big spender, the incompetent thieves are known as *bouncing thieves*.

*Detectives Convention* – Everyone at the Castle plays a detective. Keynote Speakers: a) Thief – What's good for the audience isn't so great for the speaker, b) Exhibitor – All that security means it's a terrific time to exhibit your precious collection!

It's no coincidence that I've never heard any cute names for wasting moves with the Exhibit and Check cards.

## **Guidelines for Exhibitors**

Exhibiting is the key to winning – the rock within the rock. However, there are some keys to exhibiting that can improve the risk/return ratio.

*Lock 'em up* – The more opposing thieves there are in jail, the better. Not only do fewer available thieves mean fewer losses by exhibitors, it also means fewer chances for opponents to advance by playing detectives. Make sure you don't deny your opponents a cell by occupying them with your own thieves!

*Thief-proof Exhibits* – How many items can you afford to lose? If you've got a lot of redundancy in your collection, you can take a lot more risks and exhibit more often. An A,B,C,D,E,F set is very fragile – since one loss can remove up to three cards from the exhibit (and two losses could mean no exhibit left at all)! On the other hand, A,A,B,B,C,C can handle one loss without any trouble and up to three losses without losing the ability to exhibit (provided one does not display both Bs after seeing that there are three or more thieves)! A,A,A,B,B,B can't be broken at all.

*Flexible Exhibits* – Sets with middle cards (C & D) are more flexible than sets on the ends (A & B or E & F). A set with middle cards can easily add cards from the extremes while a player with E,E,E,E,F,F may be thief-proof but gains no advantage by stealing or buying an A. On the other hand, it is often easier to acquire the end cards because Auctionhouse interest is less and exhibitors facing thieves are more likely to display them.

*Dead Zones* – If you've pushed your set to the limit and need to recharge (or maybe even just take a moment to fill up the jail cells), try to end your advancement in one of the two Purple 2-1 zones. Just beware that these zones do not slow down detectives and may give laggards time to catch up!

*High Speed Zones* – The Orange 5-3 zones offer huge advancement potential. Don't advance into the final Orange zone until ready to push on through. The early Orange zone, on the other hand, offers many dangers – don't forget that a Yellow 4-2 is nearly as good and often easier on one's collection.

*Risk Analysis* – Before slapping down your exhibit card, consider what your maximum losses are. The fewer the players at the Castle and the fewer players with thieves available, the better. If your maximum losses are 0-1, there's little reason to go with anything other than exhibit – and even fewer if you have a set that can handle a loss easily.

*Small Sets* – Most often a small exhibit will advance just as far as a large exhibit, but even second place is usually worth a lot of movement. Don't overlook the potential to advance a long way on a very small set of cards.

## Reducing Options

While understanding the real value of the various options in Adel Verpflichtet is critical to sustained success, taking advantage of the situations created as one's opponents lose options can make the difference in a tight race. I've had the values of the top few checks memorized for several years – and kept track of when the big yellow and big blue checks were spent or stolen. However, at the last World Boardgaming Championships, I found myself losing an auction by a mere \$1,000 late in the game – Blue had beat my \$13,000 check with his \$14,000 check. Something clicked inside so that I now keep track of the top two tiers of checks. As payback, I won an auction by the exact same difference in a later game that evening.

## Check Values

Players who wish to progress to the next level of play should familiarize themselves with the check and thief cards held by each color. It's useful to know what options your opponents have available! Here are the check values:

\$24,000 Yellow	\$18,000 -	\$12,000 Yellow	\$6,000 -
\$23,000 Blue	\$17,000 Green	\$11,000 Blue	\$5,000 Green
\$22,000 Black	\$16,000 Red	\$10,000 Black	\$4,000 Red
\$21,000 Red	\$15,000 Black	\$9,000 Red	\$3,000 Black
\$20,000 Green	\$14,000 Blue	\$8,000 Green	\$2,000 Blue
\$19,000 -	\$13,000 Yellow	\$7,000 -	\$1,000 Yellow

The Purple player holds the missing values in Hoity Toity. Green and Yellow are switched on SpielByWeb.

Even before a game begins and checks are spent, there is some useful information. Suppose you're Green. Should you bid \$20,000 or \$17,000? Since there are no checks in the game between the two values, the answer is *always* \$17,000. If \$20,000 would win, so would \$17,000. Use the \$17,000 check so that, in the event of a thief, you'll still own the better check. The same is true for every combination of two adjacent checks (or when all of the in-between checks have been spent).

What if you're Blue and your Auctionhouse opponent is Yellow? Since Yellow can only bid \$24,000 if s/he chooses to bid more than \$13,000, your \$14,000 check will win every time the \$23,000 check would. So don't go with the \$23,000 check!

Suppose you're Black. You have the mid-point check in each range. At the high end, you can outbid Red and Green. But unless Blue and Yellow want the item badly enough to use their high check, you can outbid either of them with your second check – and would never use your high check!

My favorite time to go to the Auctionhouse is in the mid-game – when players have used up a lot of their options. If one has kept mental track of the options each player is missing, it is easy to win auctions (and that, after all, is the only real success possible at the Auctionhouse). Some good players like the early Auctionhouse action because one can occasionally steal a high check and increase one's own options. However, there's a real danger that others with the same strategy will cause one to waste a lot of turns (or that the checks you'll pick up will be tiny). Nonetheless, the main downside is still the need to return to the Auctionhouse on a later turn to spend the ill-gotten check.

## Thief Values

Knowing the value of the thieves isn't as valuable as knowing the checks – after all, the value of the thieves only matters when there are multiples thieves at the Castle plus a non-thief. But if you suspect that multiple thieves may be played, knowing the options could give one a slight edge. Here are the values of the thieves in the game:

12 Green  
11 Red  
10 Black  
9 Blue  
8 Yellow  
7 -

6 -  
5 Yellow  
4 Blue  
3 Black  
2 Red  
1 Green

In Hoity Toity, the colors shift toward the middle with Purple taking the 12/1 extremes. Again, on SpielByWeb, Yellow and Green are reversed.

Obviously, advice that applies to checks also goes for thieves. In the Auctionhouse, the thief chosen doesn't matter – but, unless one hasn't been paying attention to this article, one won't be playing more than 1-2 thieves in the Auctionhouse per game anyway. With two adjacent thieves, it never matters which thief Yellow picks in the Castle. On the opposite extreme, Green also has only two choices – pick first or go to jail first.

On the other hand, Black must play its high thief to beat Blue or Yellow but can safely play its low thief against Red or Green (since the low thief will pick first just as often as the high thief).

Again, as thieves go to jail, opponents lose flexibility. If the high Green thief is in jail, any player in the Castle with green can be assured of picking first regardless of which thief they select (meaning, of course, that they should select their low thief)! Of course, if one's opponents at the Castle are missing their thieves, exhibiting is likely the better course of action!

One interesting strategy I've seen with thieves is to play one's high thief early and often in the hopes of picking up some quick items. The high thief eventually goes to jail. The reasoning behind the strategy is the hope that the high thief comes back out of jail for the critical endgame. You can try it, but I prefer to be less predictable and to give opposing detectives fewer advancement opportunities.

## **Summary**

Keep your eye on the goal – advancing faster and more often than the other players. Weigh your options with the real value of the end result in mind (as shown by the point system presented) – so that you'll make better choices more often.

Keeping options available – whether checks or thieves – allows one to take advantage of the options given up by opponents! For the same reason, one is wise not to fall too far behind in the game – if only so that one can exercise the full range of options rather than being forced into unwise (and easily predictable) play!

Prepare to exhibit and then do so boldly, taking advantage of the flexibility one's opponents have lost! Do so and victory will go to the Rock!

## Adel Verpflichtet Series Replay

This series replay involves me, my wife and three oldest children in a Sunday afternoon match. That may not sound impressive until you realize that the game features the two-time defending world champion and several people who routinely beat him.

For each turn, I report each player's move, the result, and the score (using the scoring system in the preceding article). I then show the complete game situation with the advancement, cumulative score, and assets of each player. I'll then offer a few comments explaining interesting aspects of the turn and applications of the strategies contained in the preceding article. I won't use my perfect information about the game or hindsight to second-guess moves – after all, except for the player whose move worked perfectly, every player could always have made a better move.

At the end of the game, I'll look at a few more interesting, summary details and offer some additional commentary.

### Legend

<b>Actions</b>	A/	Auctionhouse	Cxx	Check	E	Exhibit
	C/	Castle	T, Tx	Thief	D	Detective
<b>Results</b>	-	Nothing	+Cxx	Gain Check	+Ayyyy	Gain A of year yyyy
	+x	Advance Spaces	+Tx	Gain Thief	-F	Lose F
	#x	Catch x Thieves	-T	Lose Thief	-Tx2	Lose 2nd Thief

	<u>Color</u>	<u>Starting Set</u>
Marie Pack	Green	A1468, A1760, B1934, E1960
Sharee Pack	Yellow	A1832, C1919, E1892, E1928
John Pack	Black	A1902, B1906, C1860, D1865
David Pack	Blue	B1930, C1852, D1748, E1952
Aurora Pack	Red	A1716, A1929, D1831, F1890

Sharee and Aurora start out without a set. Sharee is fortunate that the Auctionhouse offers the card she needs most and, in this situation, to have the largest check. Aurora is in worse shape – needing all three missing letters. Fortunately, she can complete a small set with an A, B, or E. David and John start with the strongest sets – with a four card set – spanning four letters. Of course, such sets are very vulnerable to thieves.

## Turn 1

At Auctionhouse: B1920, D1819

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C20	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	A/C24	+D1819	3
John/Black	C/D	-	0
David/Blue	C/E BCD	+2	8
Aurora/Red	A/T	+C24	3

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	0	0	12,1	20,17,8,5	A1468,A1760,B1934,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	0	3	8,5	13,12,1	A1832,C1919,D1819,E1892,E1928
John/Black	0	0	10,3	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	2	8	9,4	23,14,11,2	B1930,C1852,D1748,E1952
Aurora/Red	0	3	11,2	24,21,16,9,4	A1716,A1929,D1831,F1890

Sharee completes a set – but, with Aurora stealing the big check, Sharee is left in a situation where there are 9 bigger checks. She won't be able to make much use of the Auctionhouse to make up for thieves in the near future. David goes with the Rock (Exhibit) and jumps out to the early lead while John plays it safe and scores his first wasted move (apparently, I should have read my article before playing)! Marie could have played her \$17,000 check and had exactly the same chance to win at the Auctionhouse (though it wouldn't have mattered in this case). With the lowest of the high checks and a set, Marie probably erred in not going with the Castle and earns her first wasted move as a result.

## Turn 2

At Auctionhouse: B1920, A1887

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C5	+B1920	5
Sharee/Yellow	C/E DEE	+3-E	6
John/Black	C/D	+3#1	6
David/Blue	C/T9	+E1928-T	3
Aurora/Red	A/C4	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	0	5	12,1	20,17,8	A1468,A1760,B1920,B1934,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	9	8,5	13,12,1	A1832,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	3	6	10,3	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	2	11	4	23,14,11,2	B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	0	3	11,2	24,21,16,9,4	A1716,A1929,D1831,F1890

With the high check, Aurora banks on a thief from Marie. Marie plays her small check and thief-proofs her exhibit. Against Green, Aurora's \$9,000 check would have been a better bet – since it beats both small Green checks – and is still no loss to a thief. But, as it is, most of the wasted turns in the game are already from the Auctionhouse!

In contrast, all the Castle players get something this turn. While David's move is a success, he makes two mistakes – using his high thief and taking the newer E from Sharee. The high thief is an error because it could not possibly be better than the low thief (since David's low thief is higher than Sharee and John's low thieves while his high thief is lower than their high thieves). For that matter, even if that weren't true, the odds that the thief number would matter at all (only in the case where one each of John and Sharee exhibits and thieves) are very remote.

Taking the newer E is an error because the older E would be more valuable under any circumstances but, even more, because the D would have thief-proofed one end of David's set.

### Turn 3

At Auctionhouse: F1650, A1887

In Jail: Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/E ABB	+4-A-B-B	1
Sharee/Yellow	C/T8	+B1920-T	5
John/Black	C/T3	+B1934-T	5
David/Blue	C/T4	+A1760-Tx2	2
Aurora/Red	C/D	+5#3	10

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	4	6	12,1	20,17,8,5	A1468,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	14	5	13,12,1	A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	3	11	10	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	2	13		23,14,11,2	A1760,B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	5	13	11,2	24,21,16,9,4	A1716,A1929,D1831,F1890

It's an early turn for everyone to be at the Castle, but every gets something for their effort even so. Marie takes the dare – counting on being a guest speaker at a detective's convention – but it backfires dramatically. Marie's exhibit gains her the same number of spaces she'd have received with a detective, but three thieves shatter her set and doom her game. Aurora has a perfect turn – advancing five spaces and nearly filling the jail with opposing thieves (taking the second thief from David). Sharee connects her entire hand while John thief-proofs one side of his exhibit. David takes the old A rather than thief-proofing the front half of his exhibit.

### Turn 4

At Auctionhouse: F1650, A1887

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/T	+C24	3
Sharee/Yellow	A/C13	-	0
John/Black	C/E ABBCD	+3	8
David/Blue	C/E ABCDEE	+5	10
Aurora/Red	A/C24	+A1887	3

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	4	9	12,1	24,20,17,8	A1468,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	14	5	13,12,1	A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	19	10	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	7	23		23,14,11,2	A1760,B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	5	16	11,2	21,16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,F1890

Principally because two players exhibit, this is a good turn for everyone except Sharee – who forgets that her checks have no realistic chance of winning an auction. She was probably counting on little interest in the A and F available (since no one was interested the previous turn). In any case, she should have used her \$12,000 check – since the \$13,000 check could not win under any circumstances where the \$12,000 would not also win. Aurora also errs – since her \$21,000 check was also a guaranteed winner (no need to blow all \$24,000 in one place)!

### Turn 5

At Auctionhouse: F1650, C1931

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C8	+C1931	4
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	-	0
John/Black	C/D	-	0
David/Blue	C/E ABCDEE	+3	9
Aurora/Red	C/E AAA	+2	7

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	4	13	12,1	24,20,17	A1468,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	14	5	13,12,1	A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	19	10	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	10	32		23,14,11,2	A1760,B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	7	23	11,2	21,16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,F1890

Sharee and John waste turns protecting others' exhibits. The exhibit is the Rock, after all – and the least likely way to waste turns. David and Aurora go with the Rock! Marie is fortunate to be alone at the Auctionhouse – allowing her to begin rebuilding her set with her smallest check. That she gets a middle card (C) is doubly-fortunate.

### Turn 6

At Auctionhouse: F1650, B1925

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C24	+B1925	4
Sharee/Yellow	A/T	-	0
John/Black	A/T	-	1
David/Blue	C/E ABC	+4	10
Aurora/Red	A/C21	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	4	17	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	14	5	13,12,1	A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	20	10	22,15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1860,D1865
David/Blue	14	42		23,14,11,2	A1760,B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	7	23	11,2	21,16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,F1890

75% of those at the Auctionhouse score a wasted turn (though John does remove one of the two checks above his best). Marie regains a set and wisely outbids Aurora. David, on the other hand, continues with the Rock and charges way ahead. Considering his lead and his set, he may be invincible.

### Turn 7

At Auctionhouse: F1650, C1935

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/E ABC	+2	7
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	-	0
John/Black	A/C22	+C1935	4
David/Blue	C/E ABCDEE	+3	9
Aurora/Red	A/C21	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	14	5	13,12,1	A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	24	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	17	51		23,14,11,2	A1760,B1930,C1852,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	7	23	11,2	21,16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,F1890

John wins in the Auctionhouse knowing that he had a bigger check than Aurora. David and Marie take advantage of Sharee's guard to press forward. David's lead grows. Why? He's exhibited as often as all of the other players put together! This is David's 4th perfect or near-perfect (9+ points) turn in a row! This move also shows that outside of the Auctionhouse, the biggest way to waste moves is the detective.

### Turn 8

At Auctionhouse: F1650, E1962

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C17	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/T5	+A1760	4
John/Black	C/T10	+C1852	6
David/Blue	C/E ABC	+4-A-C	3
Aurora/Red	A/C21	+E1962	4

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	18	5	13,12,1	A1760,A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	30	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	54		23,14,11,2	B1930,D1748,E1928,E1952
Aurora/Red	7	27	11,2	16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,E1962,F1890

David pays the price for not thief-proofing earlier as he loses two cards and drops to a minimal exhibit. David also suffers because there are only two enemy thieves in jail. Even so, with his lead his little set might be enough to push forward for the win! Aurora finishes her second set – but she's got to start exhibiting or connecting the two with thieves. Marie plays the correct check (since her second would win any auction that her highest would win).

### Turn 9

At Auctionhouse: F1650, C1903

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/D	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	-	0
John/Black	C/D	-	0
David/Blue	A/C2	+F1650	4
Aurora/Red	C/E AAA	+4	10

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	3	18	5	13,12,1	A1760,A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	6	30	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	58		23,14,11	B1930,D1748,E1928,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	11	37	11,2	16,9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,D1831,E1962,F1890

A lot more wasted moves with the Detective! Aurora scores the guarded exhibit under the same circumstances that wiped out Marie earlier while David gets a cheap addition to his set (which gives him a thief-proof exhibit too). With the high check in his possession, David is poised to be able to use the Auctionhouse effectively in addition to his huge lead in the race!

### Turn 10

At Auctionhouse: B1927, C1903

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/E ABC	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/E AABCDE	+2	7
John/Black	C/E ABBCCCD	+4	10
David/Blue	A/C14	-	0
Aurora/Red	A/C16	+B1927	3

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	5	25	5	13,12,1	A1760,A1832,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	10	40	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	58		23,14,11	B1930,D1748,E1928,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	11	40	11,2	9,4	A1716,A1887,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1962,F1890

David wastes his first turn trying to get by cheaply in the Auctionhouse. For that matter, he used the wrong check – the \$11,000 would have won any auction that the \$14,000 could have won. That this is David's first wasted turn is just another measure of how far ahead he is at his point!

### Turn 11

At Auctionhouse: E1941, C1903

In Jail: Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C20	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/T5	+A1887-Tx2	1
John/Black	C/D	+3#1	6
David/Blue	A/C23	+C1903	4
Aurora/Red	C/E AAB	+4-A	7

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	5	26		13,12,1	A1760,A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	13	46	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	62		14,11	B1930,C1903,D1748,E1928,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	15	47	11,2	9,4	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1962,F1890

David stops messing around at the Auctionhouse and uses his big check to connect his entire hand. Meanwhile, Aurora exhibits and moves into second place – closing in on David. She makes a mistake, however – losing a card from the larger of her two exhibits when, knowing there was a thief, she could have shown her smaller and less valuable set. John’s detective keeps him near second and fills the jail while stripping a second player of thieves. Sharee’s loss of thieves nearly completely ruins her otherwise good turn. Sharee errs in not taking the B – to thief-proof the connection between her A’s and C.

### Turn 12

At Auctionhouse: E1941, B1940

In Jail: Yellow 5, Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/T	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/E AAABCDE1760	+4	10
John/Black	C/E ABBCCCD1852	+2	7
David/Blue	C/E BCDEEF	-	0
Aurora/Red	A/T	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	24	12,1	20,17	A1468,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	9	36		13,12,1	A1760,A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	15	53	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1906,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	62		14,11	B1930,C1903,D1748,E1928,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	15	47	11,2	9,4	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1962,F1890

David returns to the Rock, but finds himself in the rare case of being out-exhibited – his second wasted turn. But he’s still in good shape – only one card away from the best set and six spaces ahead. Keeping David from advancing while exhibiting gives Sharee, Aurora, and John a chance of climbing back into the game. Both Auctionhouse players waste their turns. Marie errs – because either of her checks would have won while neither check she could have stolen would have improved her position.

### Turn 13

At Auctionhouse: E1941, B1940

In Jail: Yellow 5, Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3, Blue 9

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/T1	+B1906-T	5
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	+4#1	4
John/Black	C/E ABB	+4-B	7
David/Blue	A/C14	+E1941+T9	7
Aurora/Red	A/C9	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	29	12	20,17	A1468,B1906,B1925,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	13	40		13,12,1	A1760,A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	19	60	10	15,10,3	A1902,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865
David/Blue	21	69	9	11	B1930,C1903,D1748,E1928,E1941,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	15	47	11,2	9,4	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1962,F1890

David makes a stellar move by returning to the Auctionhouse to get the card he needs to make his set the best. Aurora could not have won the auction and should have thieved a check. The Castle players all get something beneficial. John goes with the Rock and advances within two spaces of the leader (who would have imagined that back on Turn 8?). John uses the thief-proof start of his exhibit to avoid a major loss. Marie, on the other hand, thieves a card that gives her a thief-proof set at the cost of her first thief. Sharee scores a big advance, but it comes at the cost of returning a thief to David (which is another reason David's score for the turn is so high)!

### Turn 14

At Auctionhouse: E1957, B1940

In Jail: Green 1, Yellow 5, Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	A/C17	+B1940	2
Sharee/Yellow	C/E AAABCDE	+4-A	7
John/Black	C/T10	+A1760+E1928	8
David/Blue	C/E EEE	+2-E	4
Aurora/Red	A/T	+C17	2

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	31	12	20	A1468,B1906,B1925,B1940,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	17	47		13,12,1	A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	19	68	10	15,10,3	A1760,A1902,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865,E1928
David/Blue	23	73	9	11	B1930,C1903,D1748,E1941,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	15	49	11,2	17,9,4	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1962,F1890

Marie and Aurora both play the Auctionhouse correctly, but the big question is why either are there – when the potential gain is so low compared to the Castle/Rock. David and Sharee, with the best hands, go for the Rock and move forward. John figures David will press forward but gets lucky and scores two cards with his thief – making his set the best by two cards! Sharee takes the risk of a broken set to keep David from advancing too much (even though three A's would have worked in this case). John's set would have benefited more by stealing Sharee's B, but John decides not to break Sharee's set – figuring she's an ally needed to stop David. David makes a good play by using his thief-proofing to minimize his loss. He could have added his F to the display without losing the thief-proofing – in case Sharee had gone with a minimum exhibit.

### Turn 15

At Auctionhouse: E1957, E1932

In Jail: Green 1, Yellow 5, Yellow 8, Blue 4, Black 3

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/T12	-Tx2	-6
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	+3#2	7
John/Black	C/D	+2#2+T3	6
David/Blue	C/T9	-T+T4	0
Aurora/Red	A/C4	+E1932	5

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	25		20	A1468,B1906,B1925,B1940,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	20	54		13,12,1	A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	21	74	10,3	15,10,3	A1760,A1902,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865,E1928
David/Blue	23	73	4	11	B1930,C1903,D1748,E1941,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	15	54	11,2	17,9	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1932,E1962,F1890

Two guest speakers at a detective's convention is a great way for David and Marie to waste a turn. In this case, Marie loses her second thief and the critical options that go with it down the stretch. David is saved from a similar fate because his lesser thief is up for parole. Worse, for David, is that his thief enables Sharee and John to make up a lot of distance – and ensure a close finish. The low payoff (2 spaces) for exhibiting discouraged potential showmen. Aurora picks up a cheap card and some thief-proofing. Of course, this close to the end of the game, the Auctionhouse points are probably overstated. After all, that thief-proofing won't do any good unless those cards are exhibited!

### Turn 16

At Auctionhouse: E1957, F1660

In Jail: Green 12, Blue 9, Green 1, Yellow 5, Yellow 8

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/D	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	-	0
John/Black	C/E AABCCCE	+2	8
David/Blue	A/C11	+F1660	3
Aurora/Red	C/E DEEF	+1	7

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	6	25		20	A1468,B1906,B1925,B1940,C1931,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	20	54		13,12,1	A1832,A1887,B1920,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	23	82	10,3	15,10,3	A1760,A1902,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865,E1928
David/Blue	23	76	4		B1930,C1903,D1748,E1941,E1952,F1650,F1660
Aurora/Red	16	61	11,2	17,9	A1716,A1929,B1927,D1831,E1932,E1962,F1890

David spends his last check – giving him the second-best set. It's a decent move with the dead-zone (2/1) exhibit potential. That said, John and Aurora use the Rock to make important gains while Sharee and Marie are helpless to stop them (with both thieves in jail). John ties the game and, as the total points show, has more potential (thanks to a better set).

### Turn 17

At Auctionhouse: E1957, F1830

In Jail: Green 12, Blue 9, Green 1, Yellow 5, Yellow 8

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/E ABBBC	+2-C	5
Sharee/Yellow	C/E AAB1832	-B+T8	-3
John/Black	C/D	+2#1	2
David/Blue	C/E EEF1660	+1-F	4
Aurora/Red	C/T11	+B1920+C1931+F1660-T	9

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	8	30		20	A1468,B1906,B1925,B1940,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	20	51		13,12,1	A1832,A1887,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	25	84	10,3	15,10,3	A1760,A1902,B1934,C1852,C1860,C1935,D1865,E1928
David/Blue	24	80	4		B1930,C1903,D1748,E1941,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	16	70	11,2	17,9	A1716,A1929,B1920,B1927,C1931,D1831,E1932,E1962,F1660,F1890

Despite the low payoff for showmen, exhibitors come out in force. With a thief out and the low payoff, Marie probably would have been better off going with her thief-proof BBB exhibit. On the opposite end, Sharee probably should have gone all-out since she could not keep her set from being broken regardless of her exhibit selection. David goes with a thief-proof exhibit, counting on his old card to move forward. John sets up the endgame by moving into the final 5/3 space with his detective. However, it comes at the price of returning a thief to Sharee. Aurora makes a killing by picking up three cards with a thief. Aurora does connect her set – but only gets one center card (C). She’s got terrific, thief-proof sets on either edge but a critical weakness in the center.

### Turn 18

At Auctionhouse: E1957, F1830

In Jail: Red 11, Green 12, Blue 9, Green 1, Yellow 5

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	C/D	+5#1	7
Sharee/Yellow	C/D	+4#1+T5	8
John/Black	C/E CCC	+3-C	5
David/Blue	C/T4	+C1852+C1931	7
Aurora/Red	C/E AABBCDEEFF	+5-C	-1

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Thieves</u>	<u>Checks</u>	<u>Set</u>
Marie/Green	13	37		20	A1468,B1906,B1925,B1940,E1960
Sharee/Yellow	24	59	5	13,12,1	A1832,A1887,C1919,D1819,E1892
John/Black	28	89	10,3	15,10,3	A1760,A1902,B1934,C1860,C1935,D1865,E1928
David/Blue	24	87	4		B1930,C1852,C1903,C1931,D1748,E1941,E1952,F1650
Aurora/Red	21	69	11,2	17,9	A1716,A1929,B1920,B1927,D1831,E1932,E1962,F1660,F1890

Marie and Sharee are out of the match, but still advance a lot by using detectives. Aurora has to win the exhibit in order to have a chance. It’s a tough choice for John and David. In this case, John’s exhibit works well for David – giving him the best set while netting John only three spaces. David has to break Aurora’s set in order to have the best set himself – but that also means leaving John’s set in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. All of the players make good moves – but David’s is the best. Interestingly, John would have won the game with either a detective or a thief – so the exhibit is certainly not fool-proof!

## Final Exhibit

	<u>Play</u>	<u>Result</u>	<u>Points</u>
Marie/Green	ABBB (E)	-	0
Sharee/Yellow	CDE (AA)	-	0
John/Black	AABCCDE	+4	8
David/Blue	BCCCDEEF	+8	10
Aurora/Red	DEEFF (AABB)	-	0

	<u>Space</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Perfect</u>	<u>Wasted</u>	<u>Auctionhouse</u>
Marie/Green	13	37	0	9	9
Sharee/Yellow	24	59	1	8	3
John/Black	32	97	1	3	2
David/Blue	32	97	3	3	5
Aurora/Red	21	69	2	6	11

Interestingly, the final advance leaves David and John tied in advancement and in the total point score too. David wins by virtue of his larger set! Congratulations, David!

Sharee is the anomaly – scoring few points with lots of wasted turns, but advancing into third place. This is principally because she advanced so much with the detective and without building her set. Normally the points are a good indicator of the “potential” of the position – but obviously, they’re not a perfect indicator.

Amazingly, John and David also tied for the fewest wasted turns. Usually Auctionhouse visits are also a good indicator of who will win – with the fewer the better. Perhaps that’s because so many Auctionhouse visits end in wasted turns. However, in this case, David’s Auctionhouse visits were very efficient – visiting only five times while using all four of his checks! John and Sharee wasted as many or more Auctionhouse visits despite visiting many fewer times! The morale: the Auctionhouse can be good if you don’t waste your visit!

In the end, the number of perfect turns may be the best indicator in this series replay – with David winning and having the most. Most telling of all, David also had two more near-perfect turns (9 points). Every single one of these perfect and near-perfect turns came from exhibiting. Exhibiting isn’t always the right move, of course – but it is the best chance at a perfect turn. Don’t forget the Rock!