

2400 ZONE

LO-FI SCI-FI RPG • JASON TOCCI



RULES

PLAY: Players describe what their characters do. The GM advises when their action is impossible, requires extra steps, demands a cost, or presents a risk. Players only roll to avoid risks.

ROLLING: Roll a d6 *skill die* – higher with a relevant skill, or d4 if *hindered* by circumstances, injury, or carrying more than 1 *bulky* item. If *helped* by circumstances, roll an extra d6; if helped by an ally, they roll their skill die and share the risk. Take the highest die.

1–2 Disaster. Suffer the full risk. GM decides if you succeed at all. If risking death, you die.

3–4 Setback. A lesser consequence or partial success. If risking death, you're maimed.

5+ Success. The higher the roll, the better.

If success can't get you what you want (*you make the shot, but it's bulletproof!*), you'll at least get useful info or set up an advantage.

ADVANCEMENT: When you return from the Zone, roll any skill. On a 5+, roll on *Alterations*; on a 1–4, increase the skill (*none* → d8 → d10 → d12).

DEFENSE: Say how one of your items (or robotic limbs) *breaks* to turn a hit into a brief *hindrance*. *Broken* gear is useless until repaired.

HARM: Clear injuries and stress with time and/or treatment. If killed, make a new character to be introduced ASAP. Favor inclusion over realism.

TRAVEL: Assume characters move through the Zone slowly, tossing washers to check for anomalies. Test *luck* (below) if moving quickly.

GM: Lead group in setting lines not to cross in play. Fast-forward, pause, or rewind/re-do for pacing and safety; invite players to do likewise. Present dilemmas you don't know how to solve. Move spotlight to give all time to shine. Test *luck* periodically to check for encounters or anomalies – roll d6 for (1–2) trouble now, (3–4) signs of trouble. Offer rulings to cover gaps in rules; on a break, revise unsatisfying rulings as a group.

CHARACTERS

► **Your team explores an area on Earth where reality broke. Choose your specialty.**

SCAVENGER: Increase (d8) any two skills from *Climbing, Navigation, Running, or Stealth*. Take a *rugged outfit* and roll d20 for something *for sale in town* (below). Sometimes smugglers, sometimes employed as Zone guides by the Lab.

SCIENTIST: Increase (d8) any two skills from *Biology, Physics, Psychology, or Technology* (or increase one to d10). Take a *vacuum-sealed sample case* and a *splash-resistant coverall*.

SOLDIER: Increase (d8) any two skills from *Hand-to-hand, Intimidation, Shooting, or Stealth*. Take a *rifle (bulky)* and *armor* (break as *defense*).

► **Choose your character's origin.**

LOCAL: Lived here in town before the Event. Take a *Contact* who owes you a favor, and two d8 skills from your old, mundane career, like *Cleaning, Computers, Delivery, Labor, Repair, or Service*.

OUT-OF-TOWNER: Came to work in or near the Zone. Apply 3 increases among your skills.

REFUGEE: Escaped the Zone before lockdown. Take two d8 skills from old jobs (as a *Local*, above), and roll for an *Alteration* you try to hide.

► **Start with €2, a chunky mobile phone (unreliable in the Zone), and washers (throw to detect anomalies). Most items cost €1. Ignore micro-credit transactions like a knife or a meal.**

FOR SALE IN TOWN

1	Armored vest	11	Homing pigeon
2	Camping gear	12	Infrared goggles
3	Climbing gear	13	Med kit
4	Dog	14	Pistol
5	Flare gun	15	Plastic explosive
6	Flashbangs (×4)	16	Rifle (<i>bulky</i>)
7	Gas mask	17	Shotgun (<i>bulky</i>)
8	Geiger Counter	18	Tranq gun
9	Grenades (×4)	19	Tool belt
10	Hazmat suit (<i>bulky</i>)	20	Video camera

ALTERATIONS

► Roll d6.d6 if prompted by origin/advancement.

- 1.1 You never sleep, blink, or close your eyes
- 1.2 People can't break eye contact with you
- 1.3 Recognize people/animals by heartbeats
- 1.4 Eyes can extend out on arm-length stalks
- 1.5 Shoot finger bones like a gun; regrow in 1hr
- 1.6 Swallow up to 10L of water, spray out later

- 2.1 Hinged jaw, can store things in stomach
- 2.2 Edible mushrooms grow from your skin
- 2.3 Mica flecks act as *defense*, regrow monthly
- 2.4 Excrete mucus you can make slick or sticky
- 2.5 Fingers replaced with nimble tongues
- 2.6 Slightly magnetic; focus to pull something

- 3.1 Gills, scales *help* with swimming
- 3.2 Gray eel-skin can shock with a touch
- 3.3 Molt to change appearance (once/month)
- 3.4 Adhesive tongue extends to your full height
- 3.5 Distend throat to mimic a sound
- 3.6 Shatter glass when you shriek

- 4.1 Worms replace eyes, let you see UV, infrared
- 4.2 Horns, stiffer neck, useful for goring/butting
- 4.3 Hands crawl away, attached by 15m sinews
- 4.4 Sharpened teeth, paralytic venom in bite
- 4.5 Extra joints, contort and squeeze easily
- 4.6 Caustic blood slowly dissolves most metals

- 5.1 Prehensile tail, 1 meter long
- 5.2 Functional eyeball wherever your skin is cut
- 5.3 Wiggle through soft earth like a worm
- 5.4 Suction-cup digits *help* with climbing
- 5.5 Retractable claws in fingers, toes
- 5.6 Freeze with a tight grip, like liquid nitrogen

- 6.1 People forget your face after you part ways
- 6.2 Levitate a few cm off ground, always
- 6.3 Antennae aid senses, may detect anomalies
- 6.4 Glow softly, and safely absorb radiation
- 6.5 Lost tissue regrows daily as spongy and blue
- 6.6 *Bulky* lump on back hatches into a small being with your memories when you die

ARTIFACTS

► Roll d20, d6.d6, and d12 if you find one. Exact effects (if any) subject to GM interpretation; may require experiments or *luck* roll to discern.

VENEER (d20)

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1 Black | 11 Greenish |
| 2 Bluish | 12 Iridescent |
| 3 Blurry | 13 Purple |
| 4 Coppery | 14 Reddish |
| 5 Dull | 15 Rough |
| 6 Freezing | 16 Rubbery |
| 7 Glistening | 17 Silvery |
| 8 Glowing | 18 Sinewy |
| 9 Golden | 19 Translucent |
| 10 Grayish | 20 White |

PROPERTY (d6.d6)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 5.1 Annihilating | 5.1 Orbiting |
| 5.2 Blinding | 5.2 Paralyzing |
| 5.3 Bottomless | 5.3 Part-insubstantial |
| 5.4 Burning | 5.4 Quickening |
| 5.5 Calming | 5.5 Radioactive |
| 5.6 Deafening | 5.6 Revealing |
| 5.1 Electrifying | 5.1 Sickening |
| 5.2 Freezing | 5.2 Silencing |
| 5.3 Frictionless | 5.3 Strengthening |
| 5.4 Hallucinogenic | 5.4 Terrifying |
| 5.5 Homing | 5.5 Thrumming |
| 5.6 Hovering | 5.6 Thundering |
| 5.1 Itchiness-inducing | 5.1 Unnaturally heavy |
| 5.2 Jittering | 5.2 Vanishing |
| 5.3 Keening | 5.3 Warping |
| 5.4 Liquifying | 5.4 Weakening |
| 5.1 Mesmerizing | 5.5 Whispering |
| 5.2 Nauseating | 5.6 Withering |

SHAPE (d12)

- | | |
|------------|---------------|
| 1 Ball | 7 Fuzz |
| 2 Cone | 8 Icosahedron |
| 3 Cube | 9 Ring |
| 4 Cylinder | 10 Sheet |
| 5 Disc | 11 Spike |
| 6 Fluid | 12 Wire |

NO ONE KNOWS WHAT CAUSED THE EVENT.

Alien visitors? Collision with another dimension? Whatever it was, it sundered an area on Earth from the laws of nature. And it left wonders behind.

Whether you're on an authorized expedition or breaking quarantine to make some credits, be careful out there: Come back not-quite-human, and the Lab will insist you visit indefinitely.

► Contacts (roll 1 per player)

- 1 Dr. Afoyalan, kind, needs anomaly readings
- 2 Dr. Baines, flighty, needs a device tested
- 3 Dr. Cabral, tense, needs "test subject" found
- 4 Dr. Daniau, on thin ice, needs a breakthrough
- 5 Dr. Esparza, calm, needs 3 intact artifacts
- 6 Dr. French, brusque, needs a specific cadaver
- 7 SGT Gold, wry, recently "killed" but seems OK
- 8 CPL Haverhill, grins a lot, itchy trigger finger
- 9 PFC Irving, serious, worried about SGT Gold
- 10 SPC Jiang, lighthearted, loves exploring Zone
- 11 SGT Kariuki, quiet medic, loyal friend
- 12 PFC Losa, genial, needs to "move" an artifact
- 13 Mumps, sickly gun dealer, buys salvaged guns
- 14 Nine-ball, diligent broker, always wears suits
- 15 Overton, creepy fence, buys the weird stuff
- 16 Peekaboo, no-BS thief, needs backup for job
- 17 Quinn, quiet, pays well for interesting finds
- 18 "Doc" Reardon, wild eyes, needs "samples"
- 19 Sherazi, struggling refugee, needs a break
- 20 Tawfiq, grocer, must find partner in the Zone

► Encounters in the Zone

- 1 Altered zoners, have artifacts, need food
- 2 Animals seem to want to lead you somewhere
- 3 Armed zoners set up an ambush to rob you
- 4 Child-size sewer frogs try to filch supplies
- 5 Crystalline man needs help escaping the Zone
- 6 Cult wants you to join, eat their eyeballs
- 7 Gang fight – one side armed, the other fanged
- 8 Gargantuan slug leaves narcotic mucus trail
- 9 Giant, bald head, buried up to neck, asleep
- 10 Half-dissolved people want your gunpowder
- 11 Hermit in bunker has food, guns, anger issues
- 12 Lab expedition angry at your intrusion
- 13 Lab expedition remnants, lost, beg for help
- 14 Settlement turns you away unless injured
- 15 Scientist's illegal experiment on caged Zoner
- 16 Spectral figures stare at you from a distance
- 17 Stone cries it's "blind"; unaware it's a stone
- 18 Trees club you; sap has healing properties
- 19 Weirdo needs a certain artifact for "museum"
- 20 Woman raising pigs with rudimentary speech

► An anomaly...

Located in/on a(n)...

In which...

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Ash fall | 1 Apartment building |
| 2 Blurry area | 2 Bar or cafe |
| 3 Bright beam | 3 Bridge or overpass |
| 4 Colorful haze | 4 Cemetery |
| 5 Cyclone | 5 Construction site |
| 6 Invisible cloud | 6 Gas station |
| 7 Floating stones | 7 Hill |
| 8 Flooding | 8 House |
| 9 Fog | 9 Local landmark |
| 10 Grass | 10 Park or field |
| 11 Hail | 11 Parking lot |
| 12 Lightning | 12 Patch of sand |
| 13 Pink flowers | 13 Pit |
| 14 Rain | 14 Place of worship |
| 15 Slime | 15 Police station |
| 16 Snow | 16 River or pond |
| 17 Sweltering heat | 17 Store |
| 18 Visible spores | 18 Street |
| 19 Webbing | 19 Tall building |
| 20 Wind | 20 Transit station |

- 1 Aging and decay are sped over 10,000%
- 2 A localized vacuum allows in no oxygen
- 3 Combustion is impossible (no fire, guns, etc.)
- 4 Creatures are torn limb from limb
- 5 Creatures become ravenously hungry
- 6 Darkness is total – no illumination possible
- 7 Friction is dramatically reduced
- 8 Gravity is 20 times normal strength
- 9 Gravity operates in reverse
- 10 Ground is soft like quicksand
- 11 Hallucinations (?) promise aid and answers
- 12 Invisible, immovable solids have sharp edges
- 13 Objects over 12 kg are drawn inward
- 14 Passers-through roll to gain 1 *Alteration*
- 15 Path out deposits far away, no backtracking
- 16 Radiation is strong enough to cause sickness
- 17 Sound is painfully amplified
- 18 Urge to sleep may be overpowering
- 19 Wishes might come true (in a bad way)
- 20 Worms burrow *out* of creatures who enter it