

دزاڭتلاس
لەگىن دىن
DZAQTLAS LEGENDS

دازالتاڭ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DZAQTLAS	1
SYMPTOMS OF THE DZAQTLAS	3
VOCABULARY	5
STORIES	7
ADVENTURERS	16
SKILLS	44
PSIONICS	51
COMBAT	63
ZHDANT	68
BESTIARY	72
ADVENTURES	76

ДЗАНТА DZAQTLAS



Before the **Dzaqtas**, Zhdant was home to not one but two sapient species, our own which we know as **Nad Zhdotlas**, and another species we called **Qiknavrats**.

The Qiknavrats, like the Zhdantia humans, had long been known to be alien to Zhdant. The Qiknavrats were discovered on Zhdant's smaller continent, **Qiknavra**, and in the succeeding centuries, we humans traded and occasionally made war with them and both species prospered.

The cultural and technological exchanges between the two species brought unprecedented advancement and growth. The humans had technology to trade; the Qiknavrats had a unique skill that fascinated and intrigued us – psionics. Though at the time this new skill was little more than amusing parlor tricks, it would later become critical to our survival.

A few years ago, we Zhdantia humans and our Qiknavrats friends took our first steps into space. Orbital flights soon followed, and after that exploration of our moon Viepchakl. To their surprise, the explorers discovered another species living on Viepchakl, whom they named the Viepchaklts. Intercultural exchanges began between the three species, with representatives of both Qiknavrats and Viepchaklts visiting each other's home planet.

Unfortunately, the Viepchakl expeditions unleashed an ancient, long-dormant biological weapon left behind thousands of years earlier. Within a few years the entire **non-human**

population of both worlds was extinct and nearly two-thirds of the human population was dead.

We called it the **Dzaqtas** and it erased nearly all the gains of the previous millennia. The Dzaqtas spread like fire across dry brush, sparing none who came into contact with it. Doctors who came into contact with the sick and dying soon found themselves infected as well. The hospitals shut down, the bodies began to pile up in the cities. Even the dead spread the plague; handling the dead became itself a death sentence.

The carriers were the worst. Many showed no signs of illness but spread the disease through casual contact, carrying it wherever they went. Seemingly healthy strangers became a source of suspicion and fear.

The armies tried to seal the cities in futile attempts to stem the tide of death. By then food production, water processing, and trade had all but ceased. Food and water riots soon followed, overwhelming the already-overstretched security forces. The collapse of our civilization was not far behind.

- From the diaries of Dliazhoedlzhde Sale, Chronicler of the Second Age

TIMELINE OF THE DZAQTLAS ERA

The following table shows the key events in Zhodani history leading up to the Dzaqtlas. The timeline is counted in *Teqozdij*, the standard chronological unit of three Zhodani years each (*chcen*). Many events are approximate due to the lack of precise dating.

TEQOZDIJ	EVENT
-130,000	Ancients bring primitive humans to Zhdant
-129,500	Extensive development of Qiknavra by Ancients
-129,000	Final War results in devastation of Zhdant followed by nuclear winter and First Ice Age
-121,000	End of First Ice Age
-119,000	Human nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes range across Dleqiats
-112,000	Humans develop fishing
-108,000	Nad zhdatl emerges on northern Dleqiats. Qiknavrats rediscover agriculture.
-103,000	Nad vlastebr appears on southern Dleqiats.
-85,500	Emergent human species clash, resulting in the rise of Nad zhdotlas.
-63,000	Qiknavrats establish two large but static empires on Qiknavra.
-41,000	Second Ice Age begins.
-32,000	Second Ice Age ends.
-15,000	Humans begin herding and breeding animals for food and other resources.
-10,000	Specialized domesticated breeds emerge.
-7,600	Humans develop agriculture and small scale domestic grain production. Beginnings of aquaculture and coastal farming.
-5,000	Early Iron Age; Formation of the Viepchaklashtie Empire, a religious dictatorship based on worship of a moon goddess.
-4,500	Viepchaklashtie Empire at its peak.
-3,600	Collapse of the Viepchaklashtie Empire. Beginning of the First Dark Age.
-2,800	Rise of the noble classes and a feudal society.
-1,000	End of the First Dark Age and beginning of the Zhodani Renaissance. Science and exploration are encouraged; technological progress flourishes.
-820	Printing press invented.
-800	Oceanic trade leads to discovery of Qiknavra.
-796	First contact between humans and Qiknavrats.
-792	Invention of movable type.
-778	Discovery of elementary psionic talents.
-690	Industrial revolution begins. Geothermal and wind energy spur extensive development and growth.
-650	War between Dleqiats and Qiknavra.
-560	Uneasy peace between humans and Qiknavrats.
-549	First orbital space exploration.
-539	First expedition to Viepchakl.
-535	Viepchakl bases established; first contact with Viepchaklts.
-535	First meetings between Qiknavrats and Viepchaklts. Beginning of the Dzaqtlas.
-534	Qiknavrats - Viepchaklts extinctions.
-533	Dzaqtlas plague spreads to Zhdant, killing millions within the first months.
-531	Dzaqtlas results in a Second Dark Age.
-523	Barbaric tribes form survivalist enclaves and nomadic war parties.
-470	A new empire rises in Western Dleqiats; beginnings of the code of chivalry that will eventually become the Fevranzhtavr.
-27	End of Second Dark Age and true ascendance of Psionics.
1	First Teqozdievl Psionic Games and beginning of the current Zhodani calendar.

THE DZAQTLAS

SYMPTOMS OF THE DZAQTLAS



The Dzaqtlas plague is unlike anything the Zhodani have ever experienced. Until it was unwittingly unleashed on the world, the worst disease (ziltokpa) they'd ever had to deal with were fungal infections and opportunistic bacterial infections from wounds.

The rapid onset of the plague took the Zhodani by surprise. It infected everyone who came into contact with it, without exception, and mortality was nearly 100% in the earliest days.

Before the Dzaqtlas, Zhdant was a highly industrialized society. At least half if not more of the population lived in or near an urban center. Cities became death zones as it burned through the population. First the medical infrastructure collapsed, then the food distribution systems, then the water processing. Tens of millions died of the plague in the first few months, and many millions more died from starvation or violence in the chaos that followed.

Those living in the rural areas were spared, but only for a while. When the cities emptied from panic, those fleeing the Dzaqtlas brought it with them. Wherever humans went, death followed.

Particularly fearsome was the manner in which it killed. Three stages of Dzaqtlas infection have been recorded, in increasing levels of severity.

INCUBATION

The incubation period begins shortly after initial exposure. This stage lasts 1D+2 days. Symptoms are usually mild and may include coughing, headache, fever, sniffles, mild diarrhea. Some victims have no symptoms at all. Roll End 6+ each day; fail, and you proceed to stage 2, Sickness. Reduce all physical characteristics by -1 for the duration of this stage.

SICKNESS

This is the primary active stage of the Dzaqtlas. Now you're in trouble. Symptoms include all of the above plus increasing diarrhea and delirium. It is not unusual to have bloody stools. Contact with any bodily fluids results in infection; airborne

contact can also cause infection - roll End 6+ to avoid. The victim may feel an uncontrollable desire to wander; this is not impeded by sleep. Sleepwalking plague carriers are common. Roll End 8+ each day of this stage. Success delays it for another day; failure means the disease has progressed to the third and final stage, Walking Dead. A critical success (12 on 2D) ends the progression; congratulations, you're safe. Reduce all physical characteristics by -2 and reduce Int by -1 for the duration of this stage.

WALKING DEAD

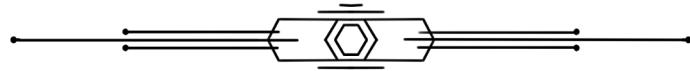
In the third and final stage of the Dzaqtlas the victim appears alive, but in reality he's in the final stages. The victim's blood is no longer functioning and many organs have begun to shut down. Lesions begin to form on the skin; these break and release pathogen-laden blood and pus. In this phase, any contact with the victim will result in infection as the body sheds pathogen in aerosolized and liquid form. Even as the muscles deteriorate, the victim continues to wander, spreading the disease to new hosts. Delirium from hypoxia are the major symptoms. Yet even in this late stage, it is still possible to survive the Dzaqtlas. Roll End 10+ each day of this stage. Success delays death for another day; failure means the victim crashes and bleeds out. A critical success (12 on 2D) ends the progression. Lose 1 point from all physical and $\frac{1}{2}$ point from all mental traits per day spent in this stage. Reduce all physical characteristics by -3 and reduce Intelligence by 1D + 2 for the duration of this stage.

PSIONICS

Psionic talents can be used to cure it at any phase. See the Psionics section for more details.

ΖΔΕΤΛ ΖΗΔΑΝΤΙΚΟΣ

VOCABULARY



Throughout this book, you're going to see a lot of unusual words and expressions in a language that doesn't look anything like any you already know. This is **Zdetl**, the official language of the **Zhadani** people. While you don't need to speak it fluently to play **Dzaqtlaš Legends**, knowing a few key phrases and words will help add a little color to your game. If you are interested in learning more about Zdetl, consider **Beginning Zdetl**, also published by the **Zhadani Language and Cultural Institute**, for more comprehensive lessons.

Important Things and Events

Dzaqtlaš - the plague that destroyed civilization, left two species of Chirpers extinct and the humans of Zhdant struggling to survive

Dievl - psionics, the mysterious powers of the mind that the Zhodani are learning to exploit in this era

Tavrianzh - duty; the moral code being developed later in the Dzaqtlaš era by the Dlenchiepr priesthood

Zazani - stories, legends, tales, mythology

Important Places

Zhdant - the homeworld of the Zhodani

Dleqiats - the larger continent of Zhdant

Dlolpliki - the Western capitol city of the Dlenchiepr Empire in the Rising Empire scenario.

People

Dlenchiepr - the "Chosen Ones;" the priestly order of psionicists who are working to bring order to Zhdant in the Rising Empire scenario.

Nad - a person; specifically, a human

Pradrnad - one trained in or who knows telekinesis

Qiknavrats - the species of chirpers that once lived on the smaller continent of Zhdant

Viepchakls - the species of Chirper discovered

on Zhdant's moon Viepchakl

Zar - a journey or quest

Zarnad - a traveller or one on a quest

Zdorbdievl - an upper ranking member of the Dlenchiepr Priesthood who shows high psionic ability. Also used as an insult by the **baz** to mean 'high-minded bastards'

Time

Stial - a day on Zhdant

Chten - a year on Zhdant

Shidr - a season of forty days

Zhdanstial - holiday

Teqozdievl - an "Olympiad" of three chten

Slang

Sht'zy - mad, crazy, off one's rocker

Baz - barbarian, barbaric, uncivilized

Kaz - civilized, capable of rational thought, cultured

Dzaq - a curse meaning really, really bad

Ziefrabnenqienad - an insult referring to one who has sexual relations with his mother

Throughout this book you will see written Zdetl used in a variety of contexts. Use this guide to translate and pronounce it:

ゾダコダマニ STORIES



The heart of roleplaying is storytelling. The tales that the players and referee weave at the gaming table become stories that live in the game universe, and the characters become legends. When a referee creates a campaign world, the timeline and setting he chooses sets the tone for the game. It also has effects on everything from character creation to what type of technology and psionic powers are available and how they work.

From a storytelling perspective, the Dzaqtas and the Second Dark Age presents a wealth of opportunities. You don't have to limit yourself to the "howling wasteland" Mad Max post-apocalyptic adventure style; this age in Zhodani history covers over a thousand years of events. This section presents three possible timelines to consider for a Dzaqtas campaign.

END OF DAYS

In this scenario, the events take place while the **Dzaqtas** plague is at its height. The world is in the middle of the worst storm it's ever experienced; people are dying by the thousands every day, crops are failing, public services are shutting down as the machinery of civilization grinds to a halt. Panic, chaos, rioting, and increasingly tribal behavior become commonplace as the people fight over the scraps of a dying civilization. Some cities are abandoned; others become walled enclaves in desperate attempts to defend against the silent, merciless killer. This is a "Twilight 2000" scenario.

Game effects: Pre-collapse technology from the old world is still functioning, but parts become increasingly scarce and the people able to maintain them are valued.

Noble titles are all but nonexistent. The remnants of an upper class of nobility still exist, but society has collapsed in a functional sense so Social Status means little to nothing.

Psionics are known but not ascendant as they are in later Zhodani society; there are no psionicist careers available yet. Roll 2D for Psi, but no Talents are available. Any talents your character has are **Latent**; see the **Psionics** chapter for details.





The cities are empty now, dead, decaying remnants of the old world. When the plague arrived, it struck without warning, a silent, deadly force that killed man, woman, and child with neither mercy nor malice. We were unprepared for such a thing.

We had ascended to great heights and had begun reaching for the stars... our moon, Viepchakl, was naturally our first step into the dark of space beyond. Upon its desolate surface we found, to our delight and surprise, another people like our own Zhdantia neighbors. We called them the Viepchaklts, and we welcomed them to our home.

We had no way to know at the time that it would be our undoing.

When the first deaths began, we were taken by surprise. Both the Qiknavrats and the Viepchaklts began to sicken and die. Our doctors, who had never seen such a thing, were perplexed. Nothing they did seemed to help.

And then the sickness began to spread. First the nurses, then the doctors, then anyone who came in contact with the sick, the dying, and the dead.

In our arrogance and hubris, we reached for the stars, and the gods put us back in our place.

Now the scattered remnants of humanity fight for scraps among the ruins.

WASTELAND



Psionics are available, but only under limited circumstances. Most who survived the Dzaqlas have some Talent, but may not be aware of how to use it intentionally. See the rules for Latent Talents in the Psionics section.

This scenario takes place in the years following the worst of the Dzaqlas. Millions are dead, and humanity has become a shell of what it once was. The worst has passed, or so it seems, but the plague remains a constant threat. Psionics is still a curiosity and the connection between survival and talent has not been made. Civilization has fallen and no “civilized” careers should be available. There are some still alive who remember the times before.

Game Effects: Most pre-collapse technology has broken down from disrepair or misuse. Some smaller equipment may be available and highly prized. Most functioning technology consists of a mixed bag of spare parts cobbled together by artisans whose sole job it is to maintain the remnants of the old world.

Social status has little meaning outside the few tribes and communities that have managed develop some semblance of stability.



I remembered, coming to the Machine Shop with my grandfather years ago. It had been filled then, as it was now, with the hulking forms of the 'machines'. Back then they hummed with power, smelling of ozone and hot metal and the oily smells of cutting fluid and coolant. People worked on and around them, a dance of careful but intense activity, in the bright light from the fixtures on the ceiling far above. Carts full of raw material came in, and ones with finished articles got pushed away, full of wonders. I wanted to be one of the machinists, making the things that made the World work.

But I found different interests later, and went off to study, things that no longer matter since the Dzaqtas wrecked the World. Some of the things from the Machine Shop helped people go to Viepchakl, and everyone was amazed by what was found there. They praised my family for helping it come to pass, a wonder in an age of true wonders. I studied marketing and resource allocation, and thus I helped the articles made in the Machine Shop become available for even grander projects.

Then the Dzaqtas came, from some said Gods made angry by our violation of 'Holy Viepchakl.' Others said the travelers who'd gone to Viepchakl brought the Dzaqtas back with them. It killed off all the little funny winged Qiknavrats, and the eerily similar Viepchaklats found there, and then it began to consume the People. Soon thereafter people came to curse the name of my family, Yotskemetnad, the Machinists, for helping to bring the Dzaqtas down upon us.

"Old man," the 'King' said, poking me with the barrel of his rifle. "Old man, pay attention! Where are the tools?"

I wanted to say, All around you, you uncouth fool, but he would just have his thugs slap me again. "Over there, in that room to the side. Files, cutters, hammers, riveters, hand tools, gauges." I sighed. "The raw material is past that room, in the bay to the side. Tube stock, bar stock, sheet metal, chain, wire, cable. Steel, aluminum, titanium, plastic. All your so-called smiths will ever need, for weapons or what you would have them make."

The 'smiths' who'd come with us to this dark, dusty cavern, now dark and half-buried in the debris from collapsed buildings, ran over to the riches and then began exclaiming in joy. Miserable ziefrahnenqienad, these baz gangsters, I thought. Ignorant children of the Dzaqtas who had done as much to break the World That Was as the Dzaqtas itself had, once unleashed upon it.

"Your grandchildren will live, Old man. Though like you they will ever serve us. For I am King, and what we have found here will ensure My rule over these lands forever!" His maniacal laughter echoed through the darkened space like the call of a death-bird.

RISING EMPIRE

After a few centuries of suffering, death and chaos, humanity begins to make the connection between surviving the plague and having psionic talents. The Noble classes begin exerting control again, mostly in the Western Dleqiat region. This young and developing empire, with its growing psionic priesthood and noble ruling class, has begun sending out emissaries and merchants to open trade routes and spread healing and news of the New Order to the blighted lands beyond the Western forests. In the wilderness, mad cultists, wanderers, warlords, and roving bands of raiders rule. It is a time of high adventure when psionics are ascending in power and influence.

Game Effects: Society has managed to crawl back from the worst, rising to the equivalent of the Renaissance Era of Europe after the Terran Dark age. After a few centuries of suffering, death and chaos, humanity begins to make the connection between surviving the plague and having psionic talents. The Noble classes begin exerting control again, mostly in the Western Dleqiat region. This young and developing empire, with its growing psionic priesthood and noble ruling class, has begun sending out emissaries and merchants to open trade routes and spread healing and news of the New Order to the blighted lands beyond the Western forests. In the wilderness, mad cultists, wanderers, warlords, and roving bands of raiders rule. It is a time of high adventure when psionics are ascending in power and influence

Game Effects: Society has managed to crawl back from the worst, rising to the equivalent of the Renaissance Era of Europe after the Terran Dark age

The remnants of the old technology remain are either non-functional or have been maintained for centuries by mechanics and alchemists who zealously guard their secrets and pass them down through the generations.

Social Status is important again with the rise of a new class of nobility in Western Dleqiat, though socially there is no link yet between nobility and psionics. It is possible for a commoner to have high psionic ability and even be selected for the ranks of the priesthood.

Psionics are ascendant in this scenario. Roll 2D and apply the DM for Psi; on 8+ the character is noticed by the either the priesthood and becomes one of the **Dlenchiepr** if from a civilized region, or a **Shaman** if from a barbaric (baz) community. Otherwise, the character's talents become **Latent** until activated at the referee's discretion.





WE LEFT DLOPLIKI AT SUNRISE ON THE THIRD DAY OF VRIENSTIAL, THIRTY IN ALL, SIX ACOLYTES EACH WITH THREE INITIATES, AND A RETINUE OF WARRIOR AND HUNTERS ON A MISSION TO BRING THE WORD TO THE LOST.

THE VIEPCHAKLSTIAL FESTIVAL WAS INCREDIBLE AS USUAL, AN ECSTATIC CELEBRATION OF LIGHT AND MUSIC, DRINKING AND SEX. FOR THE PEOPLE, A RELEASE OF PENT-UP EMOTION AND ENERGY; FOR US A LAST CHANCE TO CUT LOOSE BEFORE THE HARD WORK BEGAN.

OUR PILGRIMAGE WOULD TAKE US ACROSS FROM THE WESTERN COAST ACROSS THE DLEQIATS MOUNTAINS, THEN WEST TOWARD THE HARDEST PART OF THE JOURNEY, THE WESTERN DESERT. FIVE THOUSAND KILOMETERS OF UNFORGIVING VOLCANIC SAND, BROKEN ONLY BY RUGGED MOUNTAINS AND BRACKISH, TOXIC INLAND SEAS. A VAST, ENDLESS WASTELAND POPULATED ONLY BY DANGEROUS BEASTS AND MARAUDING BARBARIAN TRIBES. AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THE SCOUTS WHO'D RETURNED FROM IT SAID. WE THOUGHT THEY WERE EXAGGERATING, MAKING UP STORIES TO SCARE THE NEW KIDS. WE SHOULD HAVE LISTENED.

WE SPENT THE FIRST WEEKS FOLLOWING ONE CARAVAN AFTER ANOTHER ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS, STAYING IN VILLAGES AND TOWNS ALONG THE WAY. SOMETIMES WE CAMPED OUT IN RUINS. THE CRUMBLING TEMPLES OF THE ANCIENT VIEPCHAKLASHTIE EMPIRE STILL PROVIDED ADEQUATE SHELTER AND SOMETIMES WATER.

THEN WE MET THE DESERT. ON THE FIRST NIGHT WE WERE SET UPON BY RAIDERS. THEY SLIPPED PAST OUR WATCH LIKE GHOSTS, SLAUGHTERING US IN OUR SLEEP. ZHRPR AND I WOKE AND TOOK UP ARMS, TOO LATE. THEY CUT HER DOWN IN FRONT OF ME. I TOOK THE FLAT OF AN AXE TO THE HEAD AND AS I WAS GOING DOWN THE BIGGEST ONE STOOD OVER ME.

"LEAVE THIS ONE ALIVE. SHE WILL TELL HER PEOPLE WHAT HAPPENED HERE." HE GRABBED MY HAIR, PULLED MY HEAD BACK. "GO. CRAWL BACK TO YOUR 'EMPIRE.' IF YOU CAN."

WHEN I WOKE NEXT I WAS ALONE. ZHRPR'S BODY LAY NEXT TO ME IN A POOL OF BLOOD.

I WON'T BE GOING BACK. TAVRIANZH, DUTY, DEMANDS IT. AND I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE.

ZHODANI ADVENTURERS



Zhodani characters of the Second Dark Age follow generally the same procedures as for Zhodani characters of the “modern” *Traveller* era, but with several key differences.

The most important difference that experienced players will notice is that Social Status and Psionics are not necessarily connected. The psionic Nobility has not yet ascended to prominence during this era, and many who would be considered “proles” or *zhant’ad* in the modern era can be psionically strong and conversely, the Nobility includes many non-psionic individuals.

INITIAL CHARACTER CREATION

Seven characteristics should be generated randomly for all Zhodani characters:

These are usually determined randomly by rolling standard six-sided dice, referred to here

Strength	Physical prowess and power
Dexterity	Manual dexterity and agility
Endurance	Toughness and stamina
Intelligence	Ability to reason and solve problems mentally
Education	Highest level of formal schooling attained
Social Status	Rank within society
Psi	Psionic strength

as “D” (2D = two six sided dice) and taking the sum of the results. The usual method is to roll each characteristic in order.

You may also use one of the following alternatives:

2D, player-assigned: roll in the usual way but place the values where you want them.

3D, drop low values: roll 3D instead of 2D and use the highest two results for each characteristic.

1D + 6: if you want a more heroic game, where the characters are all “above average”, this produces starting stats ranging from 7 to 12

High Psi: Roll the first six on 2D as usual but roll Psi at 1D+6 to guarantee a high level of ability. This is well suited to campaigns that focus on psionic abilities.

Regardless of the method chosen, the values assigned confer *modifiers* to die rolls against those characteristics, as shown below:

SOCIAL STATUS

During the Second Dark Age, Zhodani society has not yet become as highly structured, stratified as we know it in the Charted Space era.

Value	Modifier
0	-3
1-2	-2
3-5	-1
6-8	0
9-11	+1
12-14	+2
15	+3

During these early years, nobility is not tied to Psionic talents and most titles of nobility are still inherited. However, among some communities, notably, the western feudal kingdoms, the beginnings of a society based on psionic talent are emerging. Characters with high Social Standing are considered part of the *Nobility*.

PSIONICS

Nearly everyone who survived the Dzaqlas has some measure of psionic ability, but not all to the same level.

Social Status	Title	Zdetl	Meaning
11	Pranatl	アラタル	Aspirant
12	Jdistebr	ジスティーブル	Wellborn
13	Vlestlas	ヴレスラス	Highborn
14	Zhobrtlasche	ゾーブルタスチ	Noble Born
15	Preblshienchiashav	ブレブルシエンチアシハバ	Princely Born

Each character gets **Psi** Points equal to Psi + Int. However, only characters with formal training either from the Priesthood or as a Shaman, get trained in Psionics. All others are **Latent** psions. There are three basic types of Psi:

See Chapter 3, Psionics for detailed rules.

Type		Game Effects
Latent	You have psionic abilities but is not aware of them. These can be activated during game play at an appropriate time.	No initial talents are available during generation.
Wild	Your psionic talents manifested in an uncontrolled manner. This is common among barbaric (baz) tribes; you might be a holy man or woman, or mystic hermit.	You may spend Psi to gain Talents in the usual way, but each requires a Ritual , Focus or Fetish .
Trained	Your talents were discovered by a priestly order in a civilized part of the world and you received formal training.	You may spend Psi to gain Talents, but at least one must be Telepathy , Awareness , or Healing .

ARCHETYPES

The next step in creating a character is to select an *Archetype*. Think of this as a set of building blocks that make up the final character.

Each *Archetype* is made up of several parts, which are described in detail in this section. *Archetypes* allow players and referees to create and customize new characters quickly and get right into the game play.

BACKGROUNDS

The first part of any *Archetype* is the character's **Background**. This is a very general impression of where he or she comes from and how their adventures started. It can be as general or as detailed as you like - "I was born in a log cabin in the mountains of Western Dleqiats, the youngest of fourteen children..." is just as valid a history as "I was born in a fishing village."

Roll 1D or choose an option from the table below and add the Skill given to your character's **Skill** list. Apply DM +2 for Wasteland, +4 for Rising Empire.

Roll (1D + DMs)	Birthplace	Background Skills
1	In a fishing village (Fishing-0)	Fishing-0
2	In a city (Streetwise-0)	Streetwise-0
3	In a farming community (Agriculture-0)	Agriculture-0
4	In a survivalist stronghold (Survival-0)	Survival-0
5	In a palace (Soc +1)	Soc +1
6	In a criminal hideout (Soc -1)	Soc -1
7	In a bar or tavern (Carousing-0)	Carousing-0
8	On the High Seas (Swimming-0)	Swimming-0 or Seamanship-0
9	In a vehicle while traveling (Mechanic-0)	Mechanic-0
10	In a temple or other "holy" place (Talent-0)	Talent-0

ORIGIN STORY

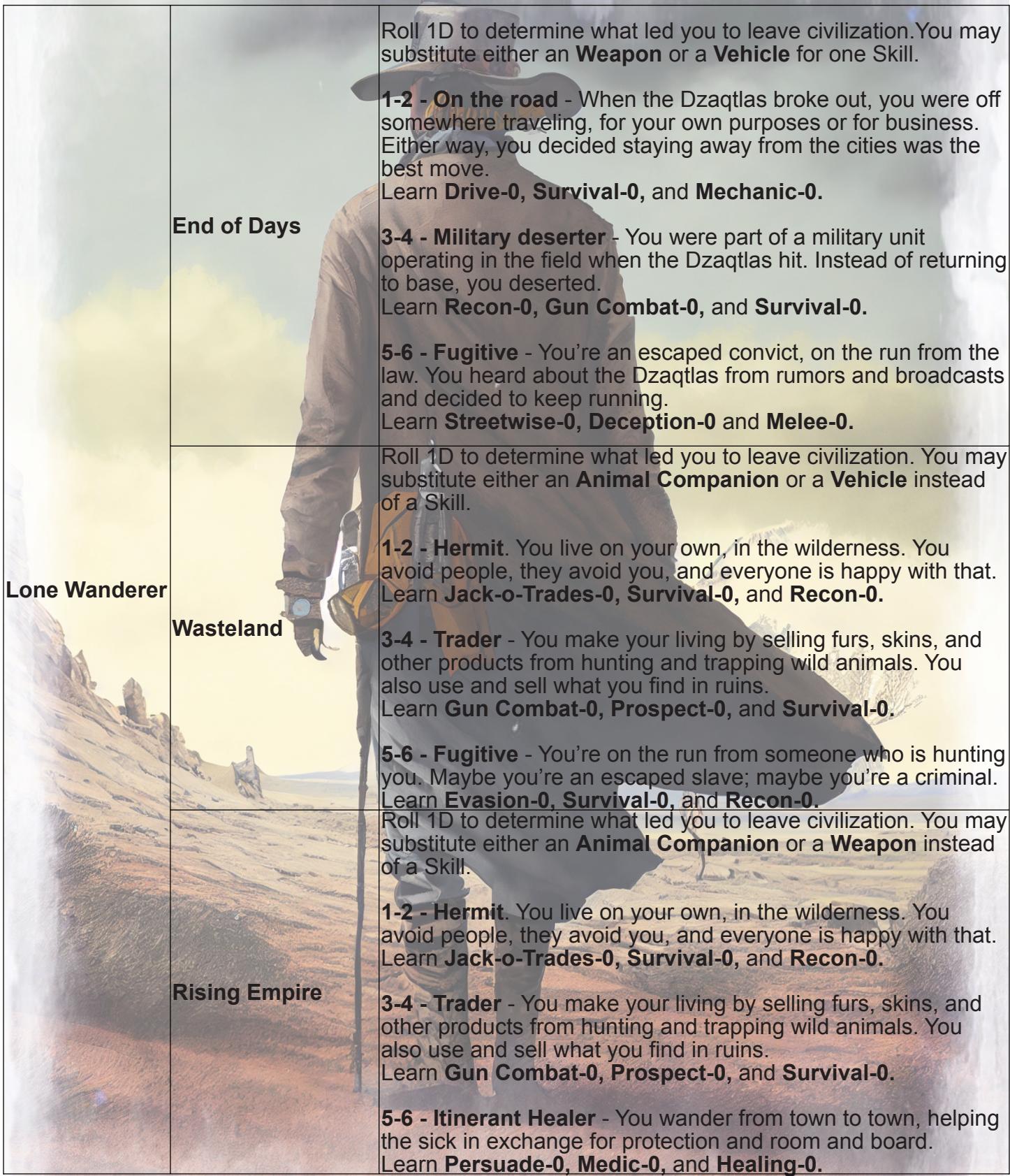
Once your character's **Background** has been selected, the next step is to choose an **Origin Story**. This element gives you an impression of how your character came to be an adventurer, his general approach to others and life, and even goals he might have.

There are three **Origin Stories** to choose from. They are **Sole Survivor**, **Lone Wanderer**, and **Chosen One**. Each story has game effects that depend on the campaign timeline, as shown on the table below.

Sole Survivor: You were the last living member of a family, a military unit, or some other organization after some event that killed everyone else.

Sole Survivor	End of Days	<p>Roll 1D to determine the circumstances of your survival:</p> <p>1-2 - Riot - You were the only one left alive after one of many food, water, or fuel riots that broke out before the collapse. Learn Streetwise-0, Survival (Urban)-0, and Melee Combat-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Military action - You were a civilian caught in the crossfire between two military factions. Learn Deception-0, Gun Combat-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Dzaqtas - Your home, village, or city were wiped out by the plague and you're one of the only survivors. Learn +1 End, Medic-0, and Latent Talent (Awareness).</p>
	Wasteland	<p>Roll 1D to determine the circumstances of your survival:</p> <p>1-2 - Intertribal warfare - Conflict between your community and a neighbor resulted in war, leaving only a few still alive. Learn Melee Combat-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Bandit raid - A barbaric tribe raided your town or settlement, leaving you the only survivor. Learn Melee Combat-0, Bow Combat-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Dzaqtas - The plague struck your settlement, town, or city and left only a few alive. Learn +1 End, Medic-0, and Latent Talent (Awareness)-0.</p>
	Rising Empire	<p>Roll 1D to determine the circumstances of your survival:</p> <p>1-3 - War - Conflict between your community and a neighbor resulted in war, leaving only a few still alive. Learn Melee Combat-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>4-5 - Bandit raid - A barbaric tribe raided your town or settlement, leaving you the only survivor. Learn Melee Combat-0, Bow Combat-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>6 - Dzaqtas - The plague struck your settlement, town, or city and left only a few alive. Learn +1 End, Medic-0, and Awareness-0.</p>

Lone Wanderer: You're a loner, an outcast, or a hermit. For some reason you've decided to leave society, striking out on your own. Maybe you've seen too much suffering. Maybe you've killed one man too many. Or maybe you just don't like people and want to get away. Whatever the reason, you're on your own and you like it that way.

 A photograph of a lone wanderer standing in a vast, arid desert landscape. The person is wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a long-sleeved shirt, and trousers, with a backpack and a rifle slung across their back. The background shows rolling hills and distant mountains under a clear sky. Lone Wanderer	End of Days	<p>Roll 1D to determine what led you to leave civilization. You may substitute either an Weapon or a Vehicle for one Skill.</p> <p>1-2 - On the road - When the Dzaqtas broke out, you were off somewhere traveling, for your own purposes or for business. Either way, you decided staying away from the cities was the best move. Learn Drive-0, Survival-0, and Mechanic-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Military deserter - You were part of a military unit operating in the field when the Dzaqtas hit. Instead of returning to base, you deserted. Learn Recon-0, Gun Combat-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Fugitive - You're an escaped convict, on the run from the law. You heard about the Dzaqtas from rumors and broadcasts and decided to keep running. Learn Streetwise-0, Deception-0 and Melee-0.</p>
	Wasteland	<p>Roll 1D to determine what led you to leave civilization. You may substitute either an Animal Companion or a Vehicle instead of a Skill.</p> <p>1-2 - Hermit. You live on your own, in the wilderness. You avoid people, they avoid you, and everyone is happy with that. Learn Jack-o-Trades-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Trader - You make your living by selling furs, skins, and other products from hunting and trapping wild animals. You also use and sell what you find in ruins. Learn Gun Combat-0, Prospect-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Fugitive - You're on the run from someone who is hunting you. Maybe you're an escaped slave; maybe you're a criminal. Learn Evasion-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p>
	Rising Empire	<p>Roll 1D to determine what led you to leave civilization. You may substitute either an Animal Companion or a Weapon instead of a Skill.</p> <p>1-2 - Hermit. You live on your own, in the wilderness. You avoid people, they avoid you, and everyone is happy with that. Learn Jack-o-Trades-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Trader - You make your living by selling furs, skins, and other products from hunting and trapping wild animals. You also use and sell what you find in ruins. Learn Gun Combat-0, Prospect-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Itinerant Healer - You wander from town to town, helping the sick in exchange for protection and room and board. Learn Persuade-0, Medic-0, and Healing-0.</p>

Chosen One: You've been sent on a quest or mission of some kind. It could be penance for a crime you committed, a religious pilgrimage, or a search for an artifact, relic, or person. The **Chosen One** is not necessarily on his own; he could be part of a larger group sent out to do the same mission.

Chosen One	End of Days	<p>Roll 1D to determine the nature of your mission.</p> <p>1-2 - Messenger - You have been sent on a mission to deliver important information to a military outpost, a scientific research station, corporate office, government office, or other entity. Learn Drive-0, Admin-0, and Comms-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Researcher - You're part of a scientific research team gathering information about the Dzaqtas (lucky you). Learn Life Sciences-0, Science-0, and Drive-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Driver - You were part of a convoy, either hauling trade goods or evacuating people trying to escape the Dzaqtas. Learn Drive-0, Mechanic-0 and Survival-0.</p>
	Wasteland	<p>Roll 1D to determine the nature of your mission.</p> <p>1-2 - Messenger - You're a runner who carries messages and trade goods between the scattered remnants of civilization. Learn Drive-0 and Survival-0 and gain a Vehicle.</p> <p>3-4 - Bounty Hunter - You make a living hunting down fugitives and plague carriers - and killing them. Learn Gun Combat-0, Recon-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Plague Doctor - You're a wandering healer or snake oil salesman, making a living in this blighted age by selling "miracle cures" to the desperate and lost. You actually do have some Medical knowledge and could even have some Talent; who knows? Learn Persuade-0, Trade-0, and Medic-0.</p>
	Rising Empire	<p>Roll 1D to determine the nature of your mission.</p> <p>1-2 - Scout. You've been sent into the wasteland by your town or city's government, to locate and identify other communities and threats. Learn Stealth-0, Survival-0, and Recon-0.</p> <p>3-4 - Merchant - You make your living by selling furs, skins, and other products from hunting and trapping wild animals. You also use and sell what you find in ruins. Learn Bow Combat-0, Prospect-0, and Survival-0.</p> <p>5-6 - Religious Pilgrim - You were sent out into the world to spread the teachings and beliefs of your chosen faith tradition. There are many cults on Zhdant in the Second Dark Age; you could be a representative of the new Dlenchiepr Empire, or one of the many Apocalypse Cults. You may substitute a Talent for any of these starting skills. Learn Persuade-0, Deception-0, and Advocate-0.</p>

LIFE PATHS

Next, you must choose a *Life Path* for your character. This is like choosing a Career in *Traveller*; it represents the professional training you have received in preparation for your daily life and work.

There are several **Life Paths** available; each has certain requirements and provides skills related to the job.

ARMY

You serve, or once served, in a nation's armed forces. Now you're just another grunt trying to stay alive in a world gone mad. In a Rising Empire scenario, you're a soldier in the Dlenchiepr Empire's army, bringing order to a blighted land.

Qualifications: Strength 5+

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Gear: Weapon, armor, uniform, survival gear

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc X 100

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0	Soldier	
1	Officer of 20	Leader
2	Officer of 50	
3	Officer of 100	Tactics
4	Officer of 500	
5	Officer of 1000	
6	Officer of 5000	Soc +1



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Melee
Drive	Melee	Bow Weapons
Leader	Leader	Tactics
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Heavy Weapons Recon Mechanic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Mechanic Recon Explosives	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Recon Leader Primitive Comms

Events

- | 2D | Event |
|----|--|
| 2 | Disaster! Roll on the Mishaps table below. |
| 3 | You're sent on assignment to an unfamiliar environment. Learn +1 to Survival (any), Recon, or Animals. |
| 4 | You're assigned to do riot control in an urban area. Learn +1 to Streetwise, Persuade, or Recon. |
| 5 | You're given a special assignment or duty in your unit. Gain +1 to Rank. |
| 6 | You see some brutal combat. Throw Endurance 8+ to avoid injury. If you succeed, gain +1 to Gun Combat (any) or Leadership. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table (p. XX) |
| 8 | You're given advanced training. Learn +1 to any Specialty skill. |
| 9 | Surrounded and outnumbered, you hold out until relief arrives. Gain +1 to Rank. |
| 10 | You're assigned to a pacification mission. Gain +1 to Investigate, Deception or Recon. |
| 11 | Your commander notices you. Gain Tactics (military) or Rank +1. |
| 12 | Your heroism in battle earns you a promotion. Gain +1 to Rank. |

Mishaps

1D Mishap

- | 1 | You were severely injured in battle. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower roll. |
|---|--|
| 2 | Your unit is slaughtered in action and you blame your commander. Gain an Enemy. |
| 3 | You're sent to battle rebels in a guerrilla war. You're discharged due to stress, a rebel becomes your Enemy. |
| 4 | You find out your commander is doing some illegal stuff. You can cover it up and gain an Ally, or turn him in. |
| 5 | A quarrel with a rival officer makes him a Rival. |
| 6 | You were Injured. Roll once on the Injury table. |

CITIZEN

You're just dis guy, ya know? You could be an average person, working in a factory, farm, or other industry.

Qualifications: None

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Gear: Clothes, professional tools,

Cash: Cr1D+Rank+Soc x 100

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0		
1	Supervisor	Leader
2		
3	Manager	Admin
4		
5	Senior Mgr	Advocate
6	Director	+1 Soc



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Drive	Drive	Animal Handling
Trade	Trade	Trade
Jack-o-Trades	Jack-o-Trades	Jack-o-Trades
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Mechanic Broker	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Recon Athletics	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Advocate Diplomat Survival

Events

2D	Event
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishaps table.
3	You're caught up in the political upheaval. Gain +1 to Advocate, Persuade, or Streetwise.
4	You spend time maintaining heavy equipment. Gain +1 to Mechanic, Drive, or Flyer.
5	Your business enjoys good times (while they last). Gain +1 to your Cash roll.
6	You get some advanced training. Learn any Specialty skill +1 on Education 10+.
7	Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
8	You learn something shady and profit from it. Learn +1 Streetwise or Deception OR gain a criminal Contact.
9	You are rewarded for your diligence. Gain +1 Rank.
10	You gain experience in a technical field. Gain +1 to Comms, Computers or Mechanic.
11	You make an Ally of a supervisor. Gain either +1 to Diplomat or +1 Rank.
12	You rise to a position of power in your company. Increase Rank +1.

Mishaps

1D Mishap

1	Injured. Roll once on the Injury table (p. XX)
2	Your life is ruined by a criminal gang. Gain an Enemy.
3	Hard times cost you your job. Lose -1 Social Standing.
4	Your business is investigated. Either cooperate for a promotion or gain an Ally.
5	Rioting forces you to flee your home. Roll Streetwise 8+ to get +1 to any one skill.
6	One of your co-workers decides to sabotage your career. Gain a Rival.

DRIFTER

They call you the Wanderer. You live your life on the road, wandering from town to town, living off the land. During the Second Dark Age, you're a wanderer, scavenger, or a member of a barbarian tribe.

Qualifications: None

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Equipment: Traveling clothes, pack, cooking tools, hooch

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 10

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0		
1		Survival
2		
3		Melee
4		
5		Recon
6		



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Jack-o-Trades	Jack-o-Trades	Jack-o-Trades
Melee	Survival	Survival
Streetwise	Melee	Melee
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Recon Seafarer	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Stealth Mechanic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Animal Handling Recon Seafarer

Events

- | | |
|----|--|
| 2D | Event |
| 2 | Disaster! Roll on the Mishaps table. |
| 3 | A patron offers you a job. Accept and gain +1 Rank, but owe them a favor. |
| 4 | You learn a useful skill. Gain +1 to Jack of All Trades, Survival, Streetwise or Melee. |
| 5 | You scavenge something useful. |
| 6 | You encounter something unusual. Roll once on the Life Events/Unusual Events table. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table (p. XX) |
| 8 | You are attacked by enemies. Gain an Enemy if you don't have one and roll Melee, Gun Combat, or Stealth 8+ to avoid an Injury . |
| 9 | You have a risky but profitable adventure. Roll 1D; on 1-2, you are Injured; on 5-6 you get +4 to your Cash roll. |
| 10 | You hone your skills living on the edge. Increase any skill you already have by +1. |
| 11 | You are conscripted. Roll 1D; on 1-2, Army; 3-4, Navy, 5-6; Security Forces. |
| 12 | You are promoted +1 Rank. |

Mishaps

1D Mishap

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | You are severely injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. |
| 2 | Injured. Roll once on the Injury table. |
| 3 | You gain an Enemy in a criminal gang. |
| 4 | You suffer an Illness (Not the Dzaqtas). Lose 1 Endurance. |
| 5 | You are betrayed by a friend. If you have any Contacts or Allies, one becomes a Rival. |
| 6 | You have amnesia. The Ref will decide what happened. |

ENTERTAINER

You're an actor, writer, musician, journalist, or other public figure who makes their living through artistic expression.

Qualifications: Int 5+

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Gear: Clothing, costumes/makeup/art supplies

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 200

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0		
1	Known Artist	Arts (any)
2		
3	Renowned	Investigate
4		
5	Famous	Persuade +1 Soc
6		



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Art	Art	Art
Carousing	Persuade	Diplomat
Int +1	Survival	Deception
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Computer Streetwise Athletics	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Athletics Recon Deception	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Carouse Stealth

Events

Event
Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table.
You take part in a controversial performance or exhibit. Roll Art 8+ to either gain or lose one level of Social Standing.
You move in celebrity social circles. Gain +1 to Carouse, Persuade, Steward, or Contact.
One of your works gains notoriety. Gain +1 to your Cash roll.
You gain a Patron. Gain +1 to Rank and an Ally.
Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
You have the opportunity to criticize a political leader. If you refuse, gain nothing. Otherwise, roll Art or Persuade 8+ and gain an Enemy. Succeed and increase a skill +1.
You go on tour. Gain a Contact.
One of your pieces is stolen. Gain +1 to Streetwise, Stealth, Recon, or Investigate.
Your charmed life leads to an Unusual Event (Life Events table).
You win a prize and are immediately promoted.

Mishaps

Mishap
Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
You are involved in a scandal. Gain a Rival.
Public opinion turns against you. Lose one level of Social Standing.
You are betrayed by a peer. If you have a Contact or Ally, they become a Rival or Enemy.
An investigation, tour, or project goes badly. Gain +1 Survival, Persuade, or Streetwise.
You are forced out because of censorship or controversy. Gain +1 Rank.

MERCHANT

You're a businessperson, a trader operating a land caravan, or a merchant sailing the high seas carrying cargo.

Qualifications: Int 4+

Relevant Timelines: All

	Rank	Title	Benefits
a collection of wares, a weapon, clothing	0	Crew	
Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 50	1	Senior Crew	Investigate
Advantage:	2		
Disadvantage:	3	Officer	Broker
	4	Senior Officer	
	5	First Officer	Admin
	6	Director	+1 Soc



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Broker	Melee	Animals
Persuade	Broker	Broker
Computers	Persuade	Persuade
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Seafarer Deception Drive	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Drive Melee Mechanic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Admin Advocate Deception

Events

2D	Event
2	Disaster! Roll on the Mishaps table.
3	You are offered a smuggling job. If you accept, roll Deception 8+ to gain +1 Streetwise. Refuse and gain a criminal Enemy.
4	You spend some time dealing with suppliers and traders. Gain +1 to Trade (any), Animals, or any Social Science.
5	You have a chance to gamble on a business venture. Roll Gambler or Broker 8+ and gain or lose Ab10 x the relative success of the test.
6	You make an unexpected connection. Gain a Contact.
7	Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
8	You get into legal trouble. Gain +1 to Advocate, Admin, Diplomat or Investigate.
9	You are given advanced training. Roll Education 8+ to gain a level in one Specialty skill.
10	You make a good deal. Gain +1 to your Cash roll.
11	You make a friend in high places. Gain an Ally and +1 to Carouse.
12	Your business thrives and you are promoted. Gain +1 Rank.

Mishaps

1D	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll once on the Injury table.
2	You are bankrupted by a Rival. Lose all Cash and gain a Rival Merchant.
3	The upheaval surrounding the Dzaqtas destroys your trade routes and contacts.
4	Your caravan or ship is destroyed by criminals. Gain them as an Enemy.
5	Quarantines or trade restrictions force you out of business.
6	Bad deals result in bankruptcy, but you salvage what you can. You get half of your cash roll.

NAVY

You're a sailor in service to one of the nations of Zhdant, patrolling the seas and securing trade routes. After the Dzaqtas, most organized navies either disappeared or went pirate. In the Rising Empire scenario, the navy is securing trade and protecting coastal regions.

Qualifications: Int 6+

Relevant Timelines: End of Days, Rising Empire

Starting Equipment: Weapon (hand axe or pistol), uniform, ocean survival gear

Cash: 1D+Rank x 100

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0	Sailor	
1	Watch Officer	Melee
2	Deck Officer	
3	Commander	Leadership
4	Captain	Tactics (naval)
5	Admiral	
6	Fleet Admiral	+1 Soc



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Seafarer	N/A	Seafarer
Gun Combat	N/A	Navigation
Navigation	N/A	Bow Combat
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Gunnery Computers Mechanic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): N/A	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Leader Tactics (naval) Primitive Comms

Events

2D

Event

2 Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table.

3 You get involved in a Gambling operation on the ship. Gain +1 to Gambling and roll Gambling 8+. If you lose, -1 to your Cash roll. If you succeed, roll for Cash.

4 You're given a special assignment. Gain either +1 Rank or an immediate Cash roll.

5 You're given advanced training. Roll Education 8+ to gain +1 to any known skill.

6 Your ship is involved in action. Gain +1 to Seafarer, Navigation, or Gunnery.

7 Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.

8 Your ship participates in a diplomatic mission. Gain a Contact and +1 to Steward, Recon or Diplomacy.

9 You foil an attempted mutiny. Gain an Enemy but also get promoted +1 Rank.

10 You have a chance to abuse your position for gain. Accept for a Cash roll; refuse for +1 to Rank.

11 Your commander takes an interest in your career. Either get Tactics (naval) or promoted. Gain an Ally.

12 Your heroism in battle earns you a promotion.

Mishaps

1D

Mishap

1 Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.

2 Injured. Roll once on the Injury table.

3 In a pitched battle, roll 8+ against a Specialty skill. Succeed and be promoted; fail and lose one Rank.

4 You are blamed for a disaster. Lose one Rank or gain an Enemy.

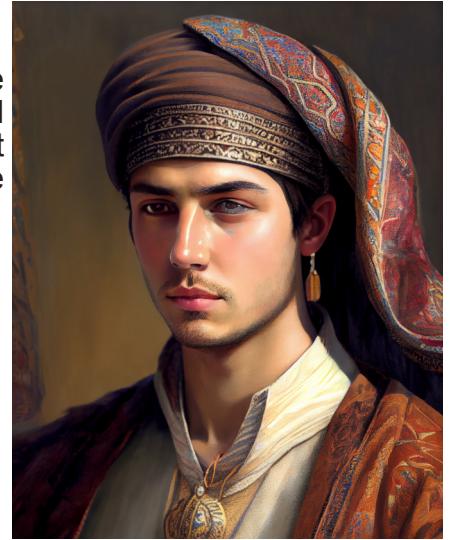
5 You make a Rival of a fellow crewman.

6 Injured. Roll once on the Injury table.

NOBILITY

You're a member of the upper class. In better times, your family once held government positions. During the End of Days and Wasteland scenarios, you're just another person struggling to survive. You might achieve some rank in a town or tribe. In the Rising Empire, you have real power.

	Rank	Title	Benefits
Qualifications: (Soc 10+)	0		
Relevant Timelines: End of Days, Rising Empire	1	Admin	
Starting Equipment:	2		
Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 1000	3	Advocate	
Advantage:	4		
Disadvantage:	5	Leadership	
	6	+1 Soc	



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Carouse	N/A	Leader
Melee	N/A	Admin
Deception	N/A	Advocate
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Admin Advocate Diplomat	Specialty Skills (Choose One): N/A	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Diplomat Steward Persuade

Events

2D	Event
2	Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table.
3	You are challenged to a duel. Refuse and lose -1 Soc. Accept and gain +1 Gun Combat or Melee. Roll either for 8+; succeed and gain +1 Soc, fail and lose -1 Soc and roll on the Injury table. Either way, gain +1 to Melee, Gun Combat or Leadership.
4	You're a dilettante for a while. Gain +1 to Animals, Art, Carousing, or Streetwise.
5	You inherit a gift from a relative. Gain an Item or 1D x 1000 cash.
6	You become involved in politics. Gain +1 to Admin, Advocate or Diplomat.
7	Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
8	You become part of a conspiracy. Refuse and gain an Enemy. Join and roll Deception 8+. Succeed and get +1 Soc; fail and roll on the Mishaps table.
9	You gain respect as a wise ruler. Gain an Enemy or Rival family member and +1 Rank.
10	You're charming and manipulative. Gain a Rival and +1 to Persuade, Carouse, or Diplomat.
11	A powerful Noble becomes an Ally. Gain +1 Rank.
12	You're noticed by the highest levels of government. Gain +1 Rank.

Mishaps

1D	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	Scandal! Lose -1 Soc.
3	Rioting or conflict engulfs your residence. Roll Stealth or Deception 8+ to avoid Injury.
4	Political rivals plot against you. Gain a Rival.
5	An assassin attempts to kill you. Roll Endurance 8+ to avoid Injury.
6	Your fortunes change for the worse. Gain a Contact and +1 to Streetwise.

PIRATE

When the Dzaqtas hit, some oceangoing merchants turned to piracy as a way to survive while avoiding contact with the mainland. Some naval ships even went rogue, preying on unsuspecting merchant lines. Piracy remains a persistent danger along the coasts and high seas of Zhdant.

Qualifications: Int +

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Equipment: Weapon (hand axe or pistol), flamboyant clothing, lots of flashy jewelry

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 100

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank	Title	Benefits
0	Henchman	
1	Corporal	Gunnery
2	Sergeant	
3	Bosun	Tactics (naval)
4	First Mate	Navigation
5	Captain	
6		+1 Soc



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Seafarers	Seafarers	Seafarers
Melee	Melee	Melee
Gun Combat	Bow Combat	Bow Combat
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Gunnery Navigation Leader	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Navigation Tactics (naval) Leader	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Navigation Tactics (naval) Leader

Events

- | | |
|----|--|
| 2D | Event |
| 2 | Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table. |
| 3 | You get involved in a Gambling operation on the ship. Gain +1 to Gambling and roll Gambling 8+. If you lose, -1 to your Cash roll. If you succeed, roll for Cash. Roll Int 8+ or gain a Rival. |
| 4 | You're given a "special" assignment. Gain either +1 Rank or an immediate Cash roll. |
| 5 | Your ship is targeted by the Navy. Gain +1 to Seafarer, Navigation, or Gunnery. |
| 6 | You're given advanced training. Roll Education 8+ to gain +1 to any skill. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table. |
| 8 | Your ship participates in legitimate trade for a change. Gain a Contact and +1 to Diplomacy, Advocate, or Broker. |
| 9 | You are involved in an attempted mutiny. Roll Seafarer 8+. If you succeed, gain an Enemy but also get promoted +1 Rank. If you fail, roll End 8+ to avoid being marooned. |
| 10 | You have a chance to abuse your position for personal gain. Accept for a Cash roll; refuse for +1 to Rank. |
| 11 | Your commander takes you under his wing. Either get Tactics (naval) or promoted. Gain a Rival and an Ally. |
| 12 | Your heroism in battle earns you a promotion. |

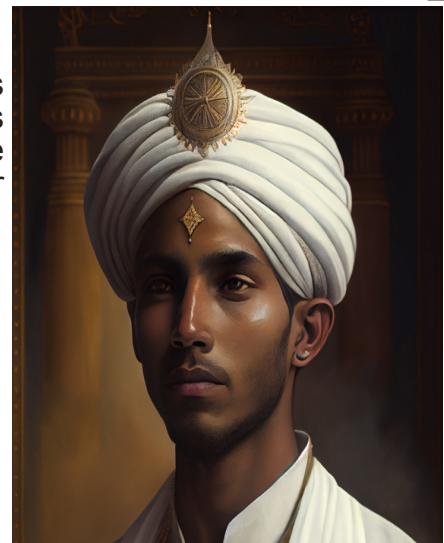
Mishaps

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1D | Mishap |
| 1 | Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result. |
| 2 | Injured. Roll once on the Injury table. |
| 3 | Roll 8+ against a Specialty skill. Succeed and be promoted; fail and lose one Rank. |
| 4 | You are blamed for a disaster. Lose one Rank or gain an Enemy. Either way, roll Int 8+ to avoid being marooned. |
| 5 | You make a Rival of a fellow crewman. |
| 6 | Injured. Roll once on the Injury table. |

PRIESTHOOD

Before the Dzaqtas, religion was a part of Zhodani culture but was fading into obscurity. During the Second Dark Age, apocalypse cults thrived in the wastelands, often led by fanatics or con artists. Some claimed the power to cure the disease. Later, those with true power gained influence in the West.

Qualifications: Soc 10+	Rank	Title	Benefits
Relevant Timelines: All	0	Novice	
Starting Equipment: robes, vestments, or other clothing worn by the order, holy symbol	1	Initiate	Admin
Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 20	2	Acolyte	
Advantage:	3	Deacon	Advocate
Disadvantage:	4	Priest	
	5	Elder	Leadership
	6	Doctor	Medical



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Admin	Investigate	Advocate
Investigate	Persuade	Diplomat
Persuade	Deception	Admin
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Deception Liaison Leader	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Intimidation Survival Talent (latent)	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Persuade Leader Talent (adept)

Events

2D	Event
2	Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table.
3	You make prophetic statements and are challenged openly for them. Roll Edu 8+ to avoid excommunication. If you pass, lose one Rank. If you fail, you are sent out.
4	You spend some time studying the holy scriptures. Gain +1 to Persuade, Deception, or Advocate.
5	You uncover a holy relic or artifact. Gain an Item and a promotion.
6	Your order becomes involved in politics. Gain +1 to Admin, Diplomat, or Advocate.
7	Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
8	You have a vision wherein your deity sends you on a dangerous quest. Roll End 8+; if you succeed, gain a Talent (latent); fail and suffer +1 level of Psychic Trauma.
9	You gain a reputation for wise counsel. Gain +1 to Persuade, Advocate or Liaison.
10	You make a pilgrimage to a holy shrine or other location. Gain +1 to Survival, Leader, or Persuade.
11	A powerful Noble or Elder becomes an Ally. Gain +1 Rank.
12	You're noticed by the highest levels of your order's leadership. Gain +1 Rank.

Mishaps

1D	Mishap
1	Injured. Roll on the Injury table.
2	You are pursued by enemies of your order. Roll Melee or Stealth 8+ to avoid Injury.
3	You inadvertently desecrate a holy shrine. Roll Melee or Stealth 8+ to avoid injury. Gain an Enemy.
4	Your order is targeted by iconoclasts. Roll Stealth or Deception 8+ to escape!
5	You're accused of heresy. Roll Persuade 8+ to avoid excommunication.
6	Your order splinters. Gain a Contact and +1 Streetwise.

ROGUE

You grew up on the mean streets of one of Zhdant's cities, making a living stealing, murdering, or selling whatever you could get your hands on. This doesn't change much with the timeline; only the location.

Qualifications: (Soc 6-)

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Equipment: shabby clothes, a makeshift weapon (shiv or light pistol), 1D-3 grams of a drug

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 20

Advantage:

Disadvantage:

Rank Title

Benefits

0

1

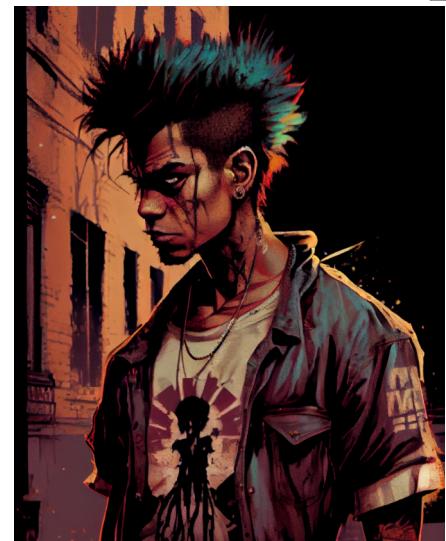
2

3

4

5

6



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Streetwise	Survival	Streetwise
Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Melee
Melee	Melee	Carousing
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Intimidate Deception Computers	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Intimidate Leader Jack-o-Trades	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Forgery Bribery Leader

Events

2D

Event

- 2 Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table.
- 3 You're arrested and charged. Either defend yourself (Advocate 8+; fail and you do time - add 1D to your age; succeed and you're off) or hire a lawyer (-1 to Cash; gain a Contact).
- 4 You're involved in a big heist. Gain +1 to Computers, Mechanic, or Deception.
- 5 A crime pays off. Make a Cash roll and gain an Enemy.
- 6 You betray another rogue for personal gain. Accept and get +1 Rank; refuse and gain an Ally.
- 7 Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table.
- 8 You spend months in the underworld. Gain +1 to Streetwise, Stealth, Melee or Gun Combat.
- 9 You become involved in a gang war. Roll Stealth or Gun Combat 8+ to avoid Injury. Succeed and make a Cash roll.
- 10 You are involved in Gambling. Gain Gambling-1 and roll for 8+ to double (or halve) your cash.
- 11 A crime lord makes you his protege. Gain Tactics or an immediate Promotion.
- 12 You commit a legendary crime and are immediately promoted. Make a Cash roll.

Mishaps

1D

Mishap

- 1 Severely Injured. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower result.
- 2 Arrested. Lose your Cash roll for this career and get conscripted into the Army.
- 3 Betrayed by a friend. Gain a Rival or Enemy.
- 4 A job goes wrong, forcing you to flee. Gain +1 to Deception, Streetwise or Stealth.
- 5 You're hunted by the police. Gain the "Hunted" Disadvantage and an Enemy (Security)
- 6 Injured. Roll on the Injury table.

SCHOLAR

You received a university education in one or more fields of science. In the pre-Dzaqtias era, you could have been a physicist, a librarian, a doctor, or some other scholar. Now you're just trying to stay alive. In the Rising Empire scenario, Scholars play a key role in helping the Priesthood manage and cure the plague.

	Rank	Title	Benefits
Qualifications: Edu 7+	0		
Relevant Timelines: All	1		Science (any)
Starting Equipment:	2		
Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 100	3		Investigate
Advantage:	4		
Disadvantage:	5		Medic
	6		



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Science (any)	Science (any)	Art (any)
Computers	Investigate	Science (any)
Investigate	Persuade	Medic
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Art (any) Admin Medic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Survival Diplomat Medic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Investigate Admin Diplomat

Events

- | 2D | Event |
|----|---|
| 2 | Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table. |
| 3 | You are asked to take part in unethical experiments. Accept and make a Cash roll, gain a level in any two Sciences, and gain 1D3 Enemies. |
| 4 | You're assigned to work on critical medical research. Gain +1 to Medic and one of any Science, Computer, or Investigate. |
| 5 | You win a prize for your work. Make a Cash roll and gain a Rival. |
| 6 | You are given advanced training in your field. Roll Edu 8+ to gain +1 to any skill. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table. |
| 8 | You have the opportunity to cheat in some way. Accept and roll Deception or Admin 8+. Succeed and you gain a Cash roll and +1 to a skill, but also a Rival or Enemy. Refuse and gain nothing. Fail and you gain an Enemy and lose Cash. |
| 9 | You make a breakthrough in your field! Gain +1 to any Science. |
| 10 | You get stuck in bureaucracy. Gain +1 to Admin, Advocate or Diplomacy. |
| 11 | You get hired by an eccentric expert. Gain +1 to any Science and gain an Ally. |
| 12 | You spend time researching Psionics. Learn Science (Psionicology) and gain a Talent (Latent). |

Mishaps

- | 1D | Mishap |
|----|--|
| 1 | Injured. Roll on the Injury table. |
| 2 | A disaster results in multiple injuries. Roll on the Injury table twice for the higher result, and gain a Rival. |
| 3 | A government official interferes with your work for political or religious reasons. If you continue openly, gain +1 Science and an Enemy. If you work in secret, gain +1 Science and -2 Soc. |
| 4 | An expedition goes wrong and you get lost in the wilderness. Gain +1 Survival, Recon or Athletics. |
| 5 | Your work is sabotaged, and you take the fall. Lose -1 Rank. |
| 6 | A rival researcher blackens your name. Gain a Rival. |

SECURITY

You were a member of the police or paramilitary security forces. Before the Dzaqtas, you were trying to keep the peace. In the Wasteland there is no law. In the Rising Empire, you're a city guard, patrolman, or other constabulary.

Qualifications: End 6+

Relevant Timelines: All

Starting Equipment: uniform, light armor, pistol, badge, worn-down attitude

Cash: 1D+Rank+Soc x 50

Advantage:

Disadvantage: Code of Honor-

1

Rank	Title	Benefits
0	Patrolman	
1	Corporal	Investigate
2	Sergeant	Intimidate
3	Lieutenant	Tactics
4	Captain	Leader
5	Commissioner	
6		



End of Days	Wasteland	Rising Empire
Drive	Drive	Animal Handling
Gun Combat	Gun Combat	Melee Combat
Melee	Melee	Bow Combat
Specialty Skills (Choose One): Heavy Weapons Medic Mechanic	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Medic Mechanic Intimidate	Specialty Skills (Choose One): Leadership Investigate Intimidate

Events

- | | |
|----|---|
| 2D | Event |
| 2 | Disaster! Roll once on the Mishaps table. |
| 3 | You're assigned to do riot control in an urban area. Learn +1 to Streetwise, Persuade, or Recon. |
| 4 | You're given a special assignment or duty in your unit. Gain +1 to Rank. |
| 5 | You're offered a chance to advance your career through corrupt means. If you accept, make a Cash roll. If you refuse and expose the corruption, roll Advocate 8+ to avoid the fallout. Whether you succeed or fail, gain 1d3 Rivals on the force. |
| 6 | You see some brutal combat. Throw Endurance 8+ to avoid injury. If you succeed, gain +1 to Gun Combat (any) or Leadership. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll once on the Life Events table. |
| 8 | You're given advanced training. Learn +1 to any Specialty skill. |
| 9 | Surrounded and outnumbered, you hold out until relief arrives. Gain +1 to Rank. |
| 10 | You're assigned to an undercover mission. Gain +1 to Investigate, Deception or Recon. |
| 11 | Your commander notices you. Gain Tactics (military) or Rank +1. |
| 12 | Your exemplary service earns you a promotion. Gain +1 to Rank. |

Mishaps

1D Mishap

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | You were severely injured in battle. Roll twice on the Injury table and take the lower roll. |
| 2 | You are injured in the line of duty. Roll once on the Injury table. |
| 3 | You find out your commander is doing some illegal stuff. You can cover it up and gain an Ally, or turn him in. |
| 4 | You are accused of taking bribes or abusing suspects. Lose one Rank. |
| 5 | A quarrel with a rival officer makes him a Rival. |
| 6 | You were Injured. Roll once on the Injury table. |

FINISHING TOUCHES

After you've done the ground work for your character, it's time to have some fun. This final step is where you get to add details to really make your character come alive in the world. Some of these details include life events, personal relationships, advantages, disadvantages, and additional skills or talents that fit your character concept but that you may not have gained in the previous steps.

AGE

Every character starts at age 18 + 1D. If you want to create older characters, roll more dice.

LIFE POINTS

The first step in adding the finishing touches to your character is determining how many **Life Points** you have to spend on things like Events, Friends, Contacts, and Advantages. Your **Life Points** are equal to the sum of your **Intelligence** and **Education**, plus one third of your **Age**, rounded up. These points are used in this step to improve skills, buy new **skills** or **advantages**, and to purchase **Life Events**.

Life Points can be spent in the following ways:

Life Events

2D Event

- 2 **Sickness or Injury** - Roll 1D for Odd/Even. On an Odd result, you are Injured; roll once on the **Injuries** table. On an Even result, you fall ill with some sickness (NOT the Dzaqtas).
- 3 **Birth or Death** - Roll 1D for Odd/Even. On an Odd result, someone close to you dies, like a friend or relative. On an Even result, someone close to you gives birth (or is born).
- 4 **End of Relationship** - A romantic relationship comes to an end, possibly badly. Gain a **Rival** or an **Enemy**.
- 5 **Improved Relationship** - A romantic relationship progresses to the "next level," possibly leading to marriage or some other major transition.
- 6 **New Relationship** - You begin a new romantic relationship. Gain an **Ally**.
- 7 **New Contact** - You make friends with an influential or important person. Gain a **Contact**.
- 8 **Betrayed!** - Someone close to you has sold you out! If you have any **Contacts**, **Allies**, or **Friends**, convert one to a **Rival** or **Enemy**.
- 9 **Travel** - You visit another part of the world. Improve one skill by +1.
- 10 **Good Fortune** - A string of good luck improves your situation. Gain 1Dx100 cash.
- 11 **Crime** - You commit a crime, or are framed for a crime. Lose -1 Soc and roll on the **Punishment** table.
- 12 **Something Strange!** Roll 1D.
 - 1 - **Psionics**. You experience a traumatic or dramatic event that unlocks the previously-hidden potential of your mental powers. If you have any **Latent** talents, you may learn one at level-0.
 - 2 - **Alien Artifact** - You find something really, really old that wasn't created by humans. You're not sure what it is, but you keep it anyway because it's kind of nifty and might be powerful.
 - 3 - **Amnesia** - Something happens to you but you've blocked it from your conscious memory. (Ref: roll once on the Life Events table to determine the dark secret)
 - 4 - **Government Contact** - you make a **Contact** in the highest levels of government.
 - 5 - **Ancient Artifact** - you find some ancient item of technology left behind by a previous human civilization. It probably doesn't work, but you keep it anyway.
 - 6 - **Purge** - Your town, city, or region has been determined to be Unclean (**chakalikaza**), infected with the Dzaqtas, and becomes the target of a purge. Lose any contacts and relationships.

To learn or improve skills: To learn a new skill at level-0 costs one point. Thereafter, you must spend points according to the following table:

New skills should both fit your character concept.

Level	Cost	Total Cost
0	1	1
1	2	3
2	4	7
3	8	15
4	16	31
5	32	63

To buy Life Events: Your first Life Event is free; additional rolls on the table cost 2 **Life Points** x

the number of rolls already made. Thus, the second roll costs two points; the third one costs four, a fourth roll costs six points, etc. **Life Events** are things that happened to you before you became an adventurer; you may adjust the narrative to fit your character concept and career choice.

To purchase Advantages: One way to gain an edge over your adversaries (or help your team!) is by purchasing Advantages. These cost 5, 10 or 15 points each and give bonuses of +1, +2 or +3 in a variety of situations. Advantages can be quite powerful.

To improve Characteristics: If you have any characteristics you think are too low, you have the option of spending Life Points to improve them. The cost to do this is equal to the next available level; to increase a characteristic from 5 to 6 costs 6 points; from 6 to 7 costs another 7 points. You may not skip levels; the cost to go from 5 to 7 is 13 points, not 7.

To increase your Rank: Your **Rank** can be increased by spending Life Points as well. Every character automatically starts at Rank-0; increasing it costs points equal to the rank desired. You may not skip rank levels. Thus, to progress from rank 0 to Rank 1 costs one point; Rank-2 costs two more points, etc.

PSI POINTS

Psi points may be used to acquire and improve Psionic Talents. Certain **Life Events** may also add to the list of known Talents. Your **Psi Points** are equal to your Psi points, **minus** one-third of the 1D result you rolled for **Age**, rounded down. These points are used the same way as **Life Points** are to learn or improve skills. When used to acquire Talents not gained during the previous steps, you must spend Psi Points as shown on

Injuries

1D	Injury	Effect
1	Nearly killed	Reduce one physical characteristic by 1D and the others by 2 each.
2	Severely injured	Reduce one physical characteristic by 1D.
3	Seriously injured	Reduce Strength or Dexterity by 2.
4	Scarred	Reduce any one physical characteristic by 2.
5	Injured	Reduce any one physical characteristic by 1.
6	Minor injury	No effects

the **Psionics** table below. Psi Points can only be used to improve or purchase Talents; they cannot be used for skills or other traits. Talent levels are improved the same way skills are as shown on p. 31.

See the **Psionics** chapter for more details about **Talents** and their uses.

Psionics

Talent	Psi Point Cost
Telepathy	4
Clairvoyance	5
Telekinesis	6
Awareness	7
Teleportation	8
Empathic Healing	9
Blocking	9
Healing	10
Vampyric Awareness	13
Precognition	15
As a Latent talent	-1 point
Per talent already learned	+1 point

ADVANTAGES and DISADVANTAGES

Another way to flesh out your character and make them unique is to add Advantages and Disadvantages.

These are positive and negative attributes that have a wide-ranging effect on the character and game play. Both are rated on a scale of 1 to 3, representing the bonus or penalty imposed by the feature. Advantages cost Life Points to acquire at 5 points per +1 bonus (5 points for +1, 10 for +2, and 15 points for +3); Disadvantages give you extra Life Points to spend at the same rate (5 points for -1, 10 points for -2, 15 points for -3).

Ideally, advantages and disadvantages should be considered carefully before being used. Do they fit the character concept? Are they balanced? Do they make sense? Some disadvantages may be amusing, but if they don't fit the concept, avoid them. Disadvantages may also be used to acquire Life Points to purchase unusual or expensive abilities.

Advantages and Disadvantages may be stacked or combined to create complex syndromes; for example, if a player wanted to create a *Narcissistic* character, he could combine the Disadvantages **Compulsive Liar, Untrustworthy, Dishonest, Intolerant, and Overconfident** for an additional 25 to 75 Life Points, provided the referee would be willing to allow it. Roleplaying such a psychopath should be discouraged, however.

In some cases, characters might "pick up" advantages or disadvantages through the normal gaming process. These have no cost nor benefit; they just happen according to the referee's designs.

Sht'zy Mazh's player decides Mazh needs some interesting attributes, so he takes the advantage Natural Talent: Mechanically Inclined +1 for 5 points and balances it out with the disadvantage Code of Honor -1 for 5 points. Mechanically Inclined will give him an automatic +1 to any checks involving the operation or repair of vehicles, but his Code of Honor requires him to render aid to the downtrodden, however reluctantly.

ADVANTAGES

As discussed earlier, an Advantage is a positive trait that gives you a mental, physical or social "edge" over others who might otherwise have the same skills as you do. Each advantage has a cost in Life Points of 5 points per +DM up to +3 at character creation.

As in any situation, the referee has the final say in whether a given Advantage is appropriate for a character concept, and also has the final word in how and when it can be employed.

The following list is a sample of the kinds of Advantages that might be allowed in a game. Some of these might *look* like psionic powers; they are not.

ACUTE SENSES

You have superior senses, giving you +1 per level to perception tests you make using that sense. You must specify which sense is heightened (Hearing, Taste, Smell, Touch, Vision) for each acquisition of Acute Senses.

AMBIDEXTERITY

You can fight, write, paint, draw, etc. equally well with either hand. You still have a dominant hand, but each level of Ambidexterity reduces the off-hand penalty by -1, to a maximum of -1.

ANIMAL EMPATHY

You have an unusual natural talent at reading the motivations of animals. When you meet a creature, the referee should test against your Intelligence with your Animal Empathy as a +DM to determine what you "sense" about the animal and its emotional state. You may also use this as a DM to Persuade skill tests as you would on sapient beings. This does not apply equally to all creatures, however.

COMBAT REFLEXES

You have extraordinary reflexes, and are rarely surprised for more than a moment. You get a +1 DM for Initiative equal to your level of Combat Reflexes.

DANGER SENSE

You can't always depend on it, but sometimes you just get a feeling that something isn't right. In an ambush situation in combat, roll Int 8+ with Combat Reflexes as a +1 DM per level of Advantage to avoid surprise.

DAREDEVIL

Sometimes fortune really does favor the foolish. Whenever you take an unnecessary risk (in the referee's opinion) you get a +1 DM for each level of Daredevil.

FEARLESS

You are difficult to frighten or intimidate. Whenever you resist attempts to scare you (through Fright or Persuade), you get a +1 DM equal to your Fearless level.

FLEXIBLE

You are unusually flexible. For each level, you get a +1 DM per level of Flexible for activities like Climbing, escaping from bonds and restraints, and squeezing in tight spaces. You cannot, however, bend your body into abnormal shapes.

HARD TO KILL

You're incredibly difficult to kill. In combat you can effectively ignore one point of damage per level of Hard to Kill - this is not armor, strictly speaking, it's just that you can shrug off a few wounds and still keep going. If you take hits that would knock you out (reducing End to zero), Hard to Kill means you can stay on your feet for a little longer than other people.

LUCK

You were born lucky! For every level of Luck, you can re-roll any one failed (or bad) test per hour of game play. The general rule is at Luck-1, you get one reroll every hour; at Luck-2, you get one every 30 minutes; at Luck-3, you get one every 20 minutes. Your luck is not "transferable;" that means you can only retry your own tests or tests that affect your whole party, not someone else's. You may also, in some cases, force an attacker to re-roll a successful hit!

NATURAL TALENT

You have an innate affinity for a particular activity, giving you a general bonus to any action related to it. This can be natural artistic talent, mechanical intuition, or any other vaguely-defined set of abilities. You get +1 DM to checks involving that ability per level of Natural Talent.

NIGHT VISION

Your eyes adapt rapidly to the darkness. You are less affected by darkness than other people. For each level of Night Vision you reduce the penalty for darkness by one, as long as there is some light (you can't see anything underground with no light, no matter how good your eyes are).

PERFECT BALANCE

You always keep your footing, no matter how narrow, slippery, or unstable the surface is. In situations where Dex is required to keep your feet, you get a +DM for each level of Perfect Balance.

RESISTANT

You are naturally resistant to diseases, poisons, and drugs of all kinds, including the Dzaqtas. You get a +1 DM for each level of Resistant when it comes to fighting off the effects of such agents.

DISADVANTAGES

Disadvantages are negative traits that impact your ability to perform physically, mentally, or socially. They may also affect how others perceive you (or how you perceive others!). Each Disadvantage gives you an extra 5 Life Points points per level, up to -3, as compensation for the problem.

As with Advantages, the referee has the final say in deciding whether one is appropriate for the character or setting, and rules on how and when it affects you.

The following is a sample of the kinds of disadvantages you might choose from to flesh out your character.

BAD TEMPER

You're not in control of your emotions. Make a self-control test (End 8+) in any stressful situation, with Bad Temper as a -1 DM for each level of disadvantage. If you fail, you lose your cool and must insult, attack, or otherwise act against the source.

BLOODLUST

It's not enough to defeat your opponents in battle; you must see them dead. In any fight, you always go for the killing blow and go to extra effort to make sure they're down. You must roll End 8+ with Bloodlust as a -1 DM for each level of disadvantage any time an enemy surrenders, is taken prisoner, or if you're trying to infiltrate by stealth (evading a sentry, for example). If you fail, you must attempt to kill them even if it means breaking the law, violating orders, or giving away your position.

CODE OF HONOR

You have a set of principles that you follow at all times, even if it's not always practical. You will do

anything to avoid being labeled “dishonorable,” whatever that means.

The point value (and -DM) of the Code depends on how much trouble you’re likely to get into by violating it and how irrational its requirements are. An informal code that applies only to your peers imposes a -1 DM. An informal code that applies in all situations imposes -2. A formal code that everyone knows about imposes a -3 DM. Some examples are:

The Pirates’ Code (-1, 5 points): Always avenge an insult, your crew is family, whoever falls behind is left behind, etc. The Pirates’ Code applies only among actual pirates and does not extend to others.

Gentleman’s Code (-2, 10 points): Keep your word, never ignore an insult to yourself, your companions, or your country. Insults may only be erased by apology or duel (not necessarily to the death). This only applies between “gentlemen” but is usually extended to others.

Code of Chivalry (-3, 15 points): Like the Gentleman’s Code, but far stricter and generally applying to “Knights” or other Warriors of the Realm. You’re expected to act at all times with the highest standards of behavior and honor as you are an ambassador to the Kingdom.

Taking any action that would violate one’s Code requires an End 8+ roll, with the -DM of the disadvantage.

CURIOS

You’re naturally inquisitive and can’t resist a new situation or challenge. Make a self-control roll (End 8+) with -1 DM per level of Curious to avoid doing something that might get you into trouble.

DELUSIONAL

You believe something that simply is not true, that might lead others to think you’re insane. They may be right; who knows? If you have a Delusion, you *must* roleplay this belief at all times. Delusions affect your behavior and how others interact and react to you, acting as a -1 DM per level of Delusion.

DIMINISHED SENSES

You have poor vision, hearing, smell, taste or touch, giving you a -1 DM to perception rolls involving those senses. In some cases this can be corrected for with technological solutions; this does not eliminate the disadvantage; it only temporarily lessens its effects.

GLUTTON

You love food, to excess and without restraint. Any time you have a chance to eat and drink, you must make a self-control (End 8+) check to resist, with Glutton as a -1 DM per level of disadvantage. If you fail, you partake regardless of the consequences.

GREEDY

You love money above all else. Any time cash is offered - as payment, reward, spoils of war, or even bait - you must make an End 8+ test to resist, with -1 DM per level of Greedy.

HARD OF HEARING

You’re not deaf, but you do have some hearing loss. This could be anything - partial deafness, loss in one ear, tinnitus - that impacts your ability to hear. Any time there’s a test involving Hearing, take a -1 DM per level of disadvantage.

HONESTY

You must obey the law, and try to get others to do so as well. Even where there is little or no law, you do not “go wild” – you act as though the laws of your own home were in force. In civilized spaces, you always want to know what the local laws are. Not so you can get away with stuff, but so you don’t accidentally violate them. You also assume others are honest unless you know otherwise.

This is a disadvantage, because it often limits your options! Make a self-control roll (End 8+, with -1 DM per level of Honesty) when faced with the “need” to break unreasonable laws; if you fail, you must obey the law, regardless of the consequences. If you manage to resist your urges and break the law, make a second self-control roll afterward. If you fail, you must turn yourself in to the authorities.

The inverse of this is **DISHONEST**, which compels you to look for ways to skirt the law, even when it will almost certainly get you into trouble.

HUNTED

You’ve done something to offend an individual or group - violated a law, killed the wrong person, said the wrong thing about someone’s mother - and now you’re on the run from them. They will hunt you down and do unpleasant things if they find you - or they could just want an apology; who knows? The level of Hunted indicates either the size of the group after you or the severity of the offense you committed, as well as how well known your transgression was. Any time you’re

in a place or situation where you might be recognized, this acts as a -DM for reaction rolls from NPCs.

IMPULSIVE

LEEROY JENNNNNNKNINS! You don't waste a lot of time planning; that's for chumps! When you're on your own, you act first and think later. In a group, when your team wants to take time and plan, you just want to *do* something. Roleplay it! Any time patience is needed, make an End 8+ check with Impulsive as a -DM. If you fail, you *act*, regardless of the consequences.

The opposite of Impulsive is OVERCAUTIOUS; you don't take action even when you desperately need to.

INTOLERANCE

You dislike and distrust some or all people who aren't like you. Intolerance acts as a -DM to reactions both by you toward others, and by your victims/targets toward you.

JEALOUS

You react poorly toward anyone who seems smarter, more attractive, or wealthier than you. You resist any plans or ideas suggested by perceived "rivals" and hate whenever someone else is in the spotlight. Jealousy acts as a -DM for reactions toward and from victims. Any time a "rival" proposes a plan, idea, or notion, make an End 8+ test at -1 DM per level of disadvantage to even consider it.

LECHEROUS

You have an unusually strong desire for romance. Make a self-control check (End 8+, -1 DM per level) any time you're in contact with a person you'd consider even a little attractive. If you fail, you must make a "pass" at this person, using any skills you might have - Persuade, Admin, Diplomat, etc.

OBSESSION

Your entire life revolves around a single goal or overpowering fixation that motivates all of your actions.

Make a self-control roll (End 8+, -1 DM per level) whenever it would be wise to deviate from your goal. If you fail, you continue to pursue your Obsession, regardless of the consequences.

OVERCONFIDENCE

You believe you are far more powerful, intelligent, or competent than you really are. You must roleplay this at all times!

You must make a self-control roll (End 8+, -1 DM per level) any time the GM feels you show an unreasonable degree of caution. If you fail, you must plow on regardless of the consequences! Caution is not an option.

You receive +DM on all reaction rolls from young or naive individuals (who believe you are as good as you say you are), but -DM on reactions from experienced NPCs.

The flip side of Overconfidence is CRIPPLING INSECURITY. You are so unsure of yourself that you refuse to take any action, even when the need is great. The same self control checks apply.

PACIFIST

You are opposed to violence. This can take a variety of forms, depending on the degree of disadvantage, but generally speaking, Pacifist imposes a -1 DM per level whenever a situation calls for killing. You must make an End 8+ check, and even if you succeed, you regret it for 1D days afterward (-1 per level to all skill tests).

Reluctant Killer: You will never willingly kill another person.

Cannot Harm Innocents: You may fight, or even start a fight, but will only use deadly force on those attempting to kill you.

Cannot Cause Harm: You're incapable or unwilling to cause any harm to any other creature or person.

PHOBIA

You have an irrational fear of something - bees, cats, enclosed spaces, crowds - that causes you grave discomfort in such situations. Any time you're in a place where your phobia might be activated, make a self-control test (End 8+, -1 DM per level) every hour or suffer a -DM equal to your Phobia for *all* tests until the event or situation is removed (or you are able to escape it).

SENSE OF DUTY

You have a strong sense of commitment to a class of people and will never betray them, abandon them, or allow them to suffer if you have the means to help. The degree of disadvantage depends on the size of the group you feel compelled to assist (Individuals, -1; Large groups, -2; Humanity, -3).

STRICTURES OF FAITH

Like Code of Honor, but with religious restrictions as well. See the Religions section (p. XX) for details of specific faiths.

TRUTHFULNESS

You hate to tell a lie - or are just very bad at it. Make a self-control check (End 8+) whenever you must either keep silent about a truth (lie by omission) or actively tell a lie. If you fail, you blurt out the truth or stumble so much that the lie is obvious. If you're an Actor, you're really bad at it and suffer -1DM per level to all skill tests.

The opposite of this is COMPULSIVE LIAR.

UNLUCKY

Whatever can go wrong, will go wrong for you. This is the opposite of LUCK, and you have no real control over it. Once per session per level of disadvantage, the referee will maliciously make something go awry for you - a critical success becomes a critical failure, etc. This may not actually kill you, but sometimes you'll wish it had.

VOW OR OATH

You have sworn an oath to do (or not to do) something. Whatever the oath, you take it seriously; if you didn't, it would not be a disadvantage. This trait is especially appropriate for knights, holy men, and fanatics.

The point value of a Vow should be directly related to the inconvenience it causes you. The GM is the final judge. Some examples:

Minor Vow: Silence during daylight hours; vegetarianism; chastity (yes, for game purposes, this is minor). -1.

Major Vow: Use no edged weapons; keep silence at all times; never sleep indoors; own no more than your horse can carry. -2.

Great Vow: Never refuse any request for aid; always fight with the wrong hand; hunt a given foe until you destroy him; challenge every knight you meet to combat. -3.

TZONITZALI

Our example character is *Tzonitzali*, a young woman born late in the Second Dark Age, the campaign setting *Rising Empire*. After some thought and discussion, the player decides she's a wandering psychic on a mission to bring civilization to the wilderness.

The player begins by rolling 3D for each of her characteristics, Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, Intelligence, Education, Social Status, and Psionic Strength and dropping the lowest die. The results are 11, 9, 8, 7, 8, 8, and because this will be a Psionically-focused game, 1D+6 for Psi for 10.

Next, we choose her **Background**. The player decides not to roll it randomly, instead selecting **Holy Place** as her home. This gives her a **Talent** at level 0 (Untrained), which fits the character concept.

The third step is to choose her **Origin Story**. The player decides for maximum drama, the **Chosen One** is most fitting, then selects **Religious Pilgrim** as her story. Tzonitzali has been raised by the Priesthood of the rising Dlenchiepr Empire (see chapter XX), and will be sent out with others of her order to bring the Word and the Way to the scattered tribes of the Wasteland. She learns **Persuade-0**, **Talent-0**, and **Advocate-0**.

The fourth step is her **Life Path**.





"See, Mazhotla, the lagoon has begun to bring forth new brood. You children there! Watch that gap in the net, ere the flyers scoop up too many of the tads!"

Dzalo had come over the Tall Ridge from the North with her Gift the year before last. I had been on watch that five-day, at the post overlooking the Pass from the mountains. She'd come alone, half-mad from thirst, and she'd been on the road long enough to wait for the Wise Man to come check her for the Horribleness. Dzalo had carried something, alright, but it hadn't been contagion. "We can take the spawners out now," Dzalo went on, "before they too eat too much of the brood themselves."

'Back to the main pen with them, then?' I looked over at the hooked poles and scoop nets hung carefully- per her instructions- on the side of the Keeper's shed. I was studying with Dzalo ever since the Baz sling stone had cracked my knee two months gone. I couldn't walk the tall, steep trails up to the watch posts anymore.

"Yes. Get two of the larger children to help you. You know how slippery these are."

I whistled for Talizl and Zoqtan. "Come help me get the breeders out of the lagoon." They'd been working with Dzalo since the Council agreed to her plan, which back then sounded purely insane. We'd all dug the lagoon, near starving, eating the last of the stores save what would keep us barely alive until Dzalo's plan came to fruition. Many of us had been skeptical, but there was little left we could do once the Baz had cut off the road to the lower reaches of the Valley.

Dzalo's 'Gift' hadn't seemed like much. A leather bag holding a smaller sealed bag of the 'plastic' used before the Dzaqtas had descended on the World, filled with slimy, shriveled green-grey spheroids. "I had to flee from the Northern Valley when the Baz brought the Dzaqtas and madness upon our village. I took the one thing we had and no one else did, to save the lives of whomever would take me in."

There had been a large, old disused metal water tank, used in the Old Days for no one remembered what. We removed its roof, filled it with water from the River and some orange water weed and let the Sun warm it and make the weed proliferate. Some old netting kept the fliers from getting to the water. An odd request from an odd woman, even odder when she then dumped most of her Gift into the warm water . . .

Now the slimy four-leggers that had hatched out of the green-gray nodules fed the two hundred in our Village and two others beside. They traded their lumber, salt, and the things gleaned from the ruins of the Old Town many kilometers up-Valley for the succulent, rich meat, the hides, and the salted spawn of the noql. The Old Lagoon was now filled with the second brood, and the New Lagoon would soon be ready to bear the third.

SKILLS



Skills, Tasks and Tests are the core of how actions are resolved in Dzaqtas Legends. This is not as complicated as it might appear; in a nutshell, *skills* define what your character is able to do, *tasks* determine how to do it, and *tests* determine the outcome or results of the attempt.

Skills are defined by a skill name and its current level, typically from 0 (unskilled but familiar) to 6 (out of a million people who also know this, you're the best). Each skill level above zero represents some type of professional training. The Skill Levels table below illustrates some general comparisons, using Computers skill as an example.

Tasks are defined by the name of the task, the skill required, the difficulty level of the task, the time it takes to do it, and any additional requirements or information. For example:

Hack the server, Computers 10+, 1D x 10 minutes.

In this case, to perform the defined task, roll 2D and add Computers skill as a DM. If the result is greater than 10, you succeed.

The difficulty of any task is defined by the number following the *skill* required and is from 2 (Simple) to 14 or higher (Extremely difficult).

Most tasks will be Average by default with a target number of 8+.

Task Difficulty Table

Difficulty	Target Number
Simple	2+
Easy	4+
Routine	6+
Average	8+
Challenging	10+
Difficult	12+
Very Difficult	14+
Heroic	16+
Nearly Impossible	18+

characteristic associated with it that gives an additional boost to the task - as long as the character actually **has** the required skill. For example, Computers skill uses Intelligence as a modifier, so a character with Computers-1 and Intelligence-12 gets +1 for the skill and +2 for their Intelligence DM. However, if the same character has no skill with Computers, all the Intelligence in the world won't help.

Other DMs are situational, such as range and cover in combat, stress, fatigue, quality of tools, etc. These can be imposed as appropriate by the referee.

Characteristics can also be used in tests. In this case, the characteristic DM applies for the test attempt. A character attempting to force open a door would use his Strength DM; to balance on a narrow ledge requires Dexterity; running cross

Computers-0	Basic familiarity	Most people have this level of skill. You can operate most computers at your society's tech level without needing help.
Computers-1	College	You've passed a few programming courses and maybe even know some stuff other people don't. 1 in 10 people get to this level.
Computers-2	Graduate	This is Bachelor's Degree level. You're ready for professional work, at least in theory. 1 in 100 people get here.
Computers-3	Professional	You've worked in the field for a while. 1 in 1000 people get to this level.
Computers-4	Master's	You're one of the few who's earned a Master's Degree in the field.
Computers-5	Doctorate	You're 1 in 10,000. Congratulations, you've earned a Doctorate in the field. Only 1 in 100,000 people get to this level.
Computers-6	World Class	You're known throughout the world as a programmer, hacker, or developer extraordinaire thanks to your extreme devotion to the trade. You're literally 1 in 1,000,000.

Additional DMs apply. Every skill has a country for long distance demands Endurance,

etc.

The difference between the target number and the result of the test determines the **relative success (RS)** of the test. Subtract the **target number** from the result of the dice roll plus modifiers and consult the Effect table below.

Another component of a *task* is **time**. Every action takes a certain amount of time to complete; this is measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, etc. The time taken can be increased or decreased at the option of the player (or imposed by the ref). Taking more time gives a +1 DM; rushing the task imposes a -1 DM per time scale of increase or decrease. The most one can reasonably add or subtract from the time taken is two steps, however. Taking a year to do a task that normally takes a few seconds is just wasting time.

Sht'zy Mazh wants to fix the rig he found in the wasteland before the marauders attack. The ref tells him it will take a full day to get it functional. Mazh decides to reduce the time from days to 1D x 2 hours at a -1 DM.

Multiple tasks may be attempted at a -2 DM to **each** task attempt.

Unskilled tests are when the character does not have the required skill at *any* level. In these cases, the test is at -3 DM. Some skill tests cannot be attempted without some basic familiarity; you can't bash your way through a complex hacking job if you don't have Computer skill, for example.

Opposed tests are when two or more people are competing against each other. Everyone rolls the same test with the same skill; whoever gets the highest **relative success** wins the contest.

Difference	Relative Success (RS)
-6 or less	Catastrophic failure. You've blown it as badly as it can be blown. If you were attempting to repair a device, you broke it even worse. In a social situation, you committed a grave faux pas.
-5 to -2	Failure. You failed the attempt.
-1	Marginal failure. You missed, but just barely. If you were trying to jump across a gap, you're hanging on the edge by your fingertips.
0	Marginal Success. You made it, but by the skin of your teeth. You've fixed the engine but it will overheat without better maintenance. You cleared the gap, but stumbled at the edge. You find a buyer, but he's a shady black market dealer.
1 to 5	Success. You passed.
6+	Exceptional success. Not only was the engine fixed, you improved its performance. You cleared the gap gracefully in a nice three-point superhero landing. You find a buyer and he's willing to pay extra.

Aiding other characters can improve the outcome of a task, or make complex tasks with multiple steps possible. Two or more characters working on a task, for example, if three characters are working on repairing an ancient engine, each adds their Mechanical skill to the test. Alternatively, each additional person reduces the time needed based on their skill level.

Mazh, lenans, and Zhiezhvedtlaq have found an ancient machine they want to get running. They've found the parts and a place to work. They have Mechanic-2, -1, and -1 respectively. The ref rules that the job is a Difficult task (12+) requiring 1D days to complete. The team can either pool their skills and get +4 on the attempt, or speed up the process by -1 on the time roll for each skill level used.

SKILL LIST

Skills are defined as follows:

Skill Name (Characteristics): The name of the skill and any relevant characteristics that may be used as DMs. The referee will decide which characteristic is relevant to the test at the time.

Description: What the skill is used for.

Specializations: If there are any related specialties, they will be listed here. When a character reaches level 1 in such a skill, he can choose a specialization. Each time he gains a new level, he can either improve the specialization he already knows or take a new one at level-1. Some skills have no specializations.

ADMIN (Int, Edu)

This skill covers bureaucracy and administrative tasks of all sorts and enables one to navigate the troublesome world of government and corporate red tape.

ADVOCATE (Int, Edu)

Advocate gives you a knowledge of common legal codes and procedures as well as experience in oratory, debate, and public speaking.

AIRCRAFT (Dex)

You know how to operate various types of flying vehicles. This only applies to atmospheric craft; spacecraft are a different skill.

Specializations:

- **Airship:** Used for airships, dirigibles and other powered lighter than air craft.
- **Fixed Wing Aircraft:** For jets, vectored thrust aircraft and aeroplanes using a lifting body.
- **Rotary Wing Aircraft:** For helicopters, tilt-rotors and aerodynes.

ANIMALS (Int)

This skill covers the care and handling of animals.

Specializations:

- **Handling:** You know how to handle an animal and ride those trained to bear a rider. On Zhdant, few land animals are actually large enough to carry a human, so this is mostly used for training.
- **Veterinary:** You are trained in the medical care of animals. This can be large animals or small ones.
- **Training:** You know how to train animals and tame them.

ART (Dex, Int, Edu)

You've been trained in a type of artistic expression. You also know about the history of your artistic field and can identify works by their creators.

Specializations:

- **Performer:** You're a trained actor, dancer, or singer at home on stage or screen.
- **Musician:** You play a musical instrument such as a flute, guitar, violin, etc.
- **Visual Media:** You make artistic paintings, sculptures, or other physical works.
- **Write:** You compose poems, works of fiction, plays, or other forms of textual media.

ATHLETICS (Str, Dex, or End)

You're a trained athlete. Athletics augments your physical characteristics; whatever you can do with Strength, Dexterity or Endurance alone you can also add your Athletics DM to. The specializations for Athletics are activities directly related to each Physical characteristic.

Specializations:

- **Strength:** Weight lifting, wrestling, other feats of strength.
- **Dexterity:** Climbing, juggling, throwing (for accuracy), balancing, gymnastics.
- **Endurance:** Long distance running, hiking, etc.

BROKER (Int, Edu)

Broker skill allows you to negotiate trades and arrange deals. This is particularly useful for trading.

CAROUSE (Int, Soc)

More than just drinking and partying; it's the art of socializing, having fun, making connections, and generally being a good host and guest. It can also be used for subterfuge and social awareness in such situations.

DECEPTION (Int, Soc)

Deception allows you to lie fluently, disguise yourself, perform sleight of hand tricks, and fool onlookers. Combined with Gambling it allows you to cheat at games of chance.

DIPLOMAT (Int, Edu, Soc)

Useful for negotiating high level deals, establishing peaceful negotiations, and smoothing over social faux pas. It also helps one behave properly when addressing nobles and others of higher social rank.

DRIVE (Dex)

Used for operating and controlling ground vehicles of various types. You also know a little about basic maintenance of the vehicles you can

operate (this functions as Mechanic-0 for the specializations chosen).

Specializations:

- **Wheeled Vehicle:** For ground cars, motorcycles, and other similar conveyances.
- **Tracked Vehicle:** For tanks, bulldozers, and other vehicles that move on continuous tracks.
- **Hovercraft:** For small to medium sized hovercraft that use air cushions for locomotion.

ELECTRONICS (Int)

Used to operate various types of electronic devices such as communication systems, computer networks, sensors, and others, as well as knowing the operating protocols for communicating.

Specializations:

- **Communications:** The use of modern telecommunications including radio and telegraphy, opening communications channels, querying computer networks, jamming signals and so on.
- **Computers:** Using and controlling computer systems and similar electronics.
- **Sensors:** The use and interpretation of data from electronic sensor devices such as radar and remote detection stations like satellites.

EXPLOSIVES (Dex)

Explosives skill covers the (usually) safe use and employment of explosive devices, including setting, arming, and disarming bombs.

FORWARD OBSERVER (Int)

You've been trained to call in and adjust fire for remote artillery positions (guns, missiles, rockets, etc). This is adjacent to Recon, which lets you tell others where the enemy is; Forward Observer lets you tell gun crews how to destroy the target.

GAMBLING (Dex, Int)

You are familiar with games of chance such as poker, roulette, blackjack, beast racing, etc. Gambling can improve the chances of a

successful deception test and vice-versa.

GUN COMBAT (Dex)

You are trained in the operation and maintenance of small firearms.

Specializations:

- **Archaic:** For primitive weapons that are not thrown, such as bows and blowpipes. Archaic firearms include muskets, matchlocks, wheel locks, and other low-tech guns.
- **Pistols:** For more modern single-handed firearms like semi-automatic pistols, revolvers, and submachineguns.
- **Rifles:** For modern long guns like rifles, shotguns, automatic rifles, and light machineguns.

GUNNER (Int)

This covers most ship-mounted weapons and specifically refers to heavy cannons and missiles used on ocean-going warships.

Specializations:

- **Cannons:** Turret mounted shipboard guns.
- **Missile Systems:** Ship mounted weapon systems designed to fire guided missiles and rockets.
- **Primitive Artillery:** Covers the operation of large, crew-served low-tech military weapons like ballistas, trebuchets, and catapults.

HEAVY WEAPONS (Str, End or Int)

Heavy Weapons skill covers crew-served weapons designed to inflict extreme damage over large areas, such as mortars, fixed guns, and ground vehicle mounted cannons.

Specializations:

- **Artillery (Int):** Fixed guns, mortars and other indirect fire weapons.
- **Portable (Str):** Missile and rocket launchers, flamethrowers, recoilless rifles, and crew-served grenade launchers.
- **Vehicle Mounted Guns (Dex):** Large weapons mounted on vehicles such as tank guns and autocannons.

INVESTIGATE (Int, Edu)

Investigate skill incorporates keen observation, forensics, and detailed analysis.

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES (Any)

The Jack-of-All-Trades skill works differently to other skills. It reduces the unskilled penalty a character receives for not having the appropriate skill by one for every level of Jack-of-All-Trades. For example, if a character does not have the Pilot skill, they suffer DM-3 to all Pilot checks. However, if that character has Jack-of-All-Trades 2, then the penalty is reduced by 2 to DM-1. With Jack-of-All-Trades 3, a character can totally negate the penalty for being unskilled. There is no benefit for having Jack-of-All-Trades 0 or Jack-of-All-Trades 4 or higher.

LANGUAGE (Int, Edu)

Though most characters speak Zdetl (the native language of Zhdant) by default, being able to read and write it will depend on the type of game being run. Most uses of Language will involve deciphering pre-collapse documents and understanding “lost” or new dialects.

- **End of Days:** Most characters will know how to read and write; all get Literacy-0 automatically.
- **Wasteland:** Only a few people still have this skill.
- **Rising Empire:** Literacy is a highly prized skill, taught by and to the Priesthood of the emerging Dlenchiepr Empire.

LEADERSHIP (Int, Soc)

The Leadership skill is for directing, inspiring and rallying allies and comrades. A character may make a Leadership action in combat, as detailed on page XX.

MECHANIC (Dex, Int)

The Mechanic skill allows a character to maintain and repair most equipment. Mechanic does not allow a character to build new devices or alter existing ones; it is purely for repairs and maintenance but covers all types of equipment.

*Repairing a Damaged System in the Field:
Average (8+) Mechanic, 1D minutes, Intelligence
or Education.*

MEDIC (Edu)

Medic skill covers emergency first aid and battlefield triage as well as diagnosis, treatment, surgery and long-term care. Medic skill can be used to diagnose and treat diseases including the Dzaqtas. See the chapter about Dzaqtas Symptoms for details.

MELEE (Str, Dex)

Melee skill covers attacking in hand-to-hand combat and the use of suitable weapons. This can be single handed or two-handed weapons.

Specializations:

- **Unarmed:** Punching, kicking and wrestling; using improvised weapons in a bar brawl.
- **Blade:** Attacking with swords, rapiers, blades and other edged weapons.
- **Bludgeon:** Attacking with maces, clubs, staves and so on.
- **Natural:** Weapons that are part of an alien or creature, such as claws or teeth.

NAVIGATION (Int)

Navigation allows one to plot courses and find directions from on point to another on land or sea. Combined with Science (astronomy) it can be used as *Celestial Navigation*.

PERSUADE (Str, Int, Soc)

Persuade is a casual, informal version of Diplomat. It covers fast talking, bargaining, wheedling and bluffing. It also covers bribery or intimidation.

PILOT (Int, Dex)

The only Pilot skill available in Dzaqtas Legends is Pilot (Small Craft). This skill covers the operations of the various orbital and short-range interplanetary craft the Zhodani developed before the Collapse.

RECON (Int)

Recon allows a character to scout out dangers and spot threats, unusual objects, or people who don't belong there.

SCIENCE (Int, Edu)

The Science skill covers both basic knowledge in a scientific field and application of where that knowledge might be used. The following list is a

sample of the possible Specializations.

Specializations:

Life Sciences:

- **Biology:** Live sciences including botany, biology, and entomology.
- **Genetics:** The study of genetic codes. This is still in its infancy on Zhdant at the time of this game.
- **Psionicology:** The study of the emerging arcane world of psionics.

Physical Sciences:

- **Chemistry:** The study of matter at the atomic, molecular, and macro-molecular scales.
- **Physics:** The study of the fundamental forces of the universe.
- **Engineering:** Basically, inventing stuff. This Science can be further broken down into sub-specializations of Electrical Engineering (EE), Mechanical Engineering (ME), Civil Engineering (CE), each covering the design philosophy of a type of construction.

Space Sciences:

- **Astronomy:** The study of the motions of stars and other celestial objects.
- **Cosmology:** The study of the universe.
- **Meteorology:** The study of weather patterns.

Social Sciences:

- **Archaeology:** The study of ancient civilizations, in particular those native to Zhdant.
- **Economics:** The study of trade and markets.
- **History:** The study of Zhdant's past as seen through documents and what's been pieced together.
- **Philosophy:** The study of religions and beliefs.
- **Psychology:** The study of thought and society.
- **Sociology:** The study of societies and their interactions.

SEAFARER (End, Int)

Seafarer skill covers all manner of watercraft and water-based travel.

Specializations:

- **Light Sail:** The maintenance and operation of small sail-powered craft, usually single masted vessels for personal use.
- **Large Sail:** The operations of large, sail-powered merchant ships and warships including schooners and longships.
- **Personal Watercraft:** Allows the operation of small, motorized watercraft like jet skis and small motorboats. Also covers rowboats and canoes.
- **Ocean Vessel:** The operation of larger, oceangoing, motorized ships.
- **Submarine:** For vehicles that travel underwater.

STEALTH (Int, Dex)

Stealth skill lets you not be seen (or at least noticed). It can be used to sneak past guards, use camouflage in various environments, and hide in plain sight.

STEWARD (Edu, Soc)

The Steward skill is used by those in service to nobles and other upper-class persons. It covers everything from proper modes of address and behavior, to etiquette and protocols and cooking, as well as household management skills.

STREETWISE (Int)

You understand the urban environment and the power structures in society. In your home city, you know criminal contacts and fixers. In other regions, you can quickly intuit power structures and fit into local underworlds.

SURVIVAL (Int, Edu)

Survival is the wilderness counterpart of the urban Streetwise skill – you are trained to survive in the wild, build shelters, hunt or trap animals, avoid exposure and so forth. You can recognize plants and animals of Zhdant and can pick up on common clues and traits even in less familiar environments.

Specializations: Survival specializations are based on the *biome* you've been trained in; i.e. Forest, Jungle, Mountain, Desert, Arctic, etc.

TACTICS (Int)

This skill covers tactical planning and decision making, from board games to squad level combat to fleet engagements.

TRADE (Any)

An Adventurer with a Trade skill is trained in producing useful goods or services. All Trades work the same way - in an area where the Trade is useful, the Adventurer may make a Trade test to make money each month by plying the Trade. The amount earned is equal to Ab100 x the relative success of the test.

Nearly any Skill already known can be used as a Trade skill. Learning one skill as a Trade does not mean the Adventurer can apply the same ability to other skills.

VACC SUIT (Dex, Edu)

The Vacc Suit skill allows you to wear and operate spacesuits and environmental suits. A character will rarely need to make Vacc Suit checks under ordinary circumstances – merely possessing the skill is enough. If you do not have the requisite Vacc Suit skill for the suit you are wearing, they suffer DM-2 to all skill checks made while wearing a suit for each missing level. The number of people who actually are trained in Vacc Suit operation in Dzaqtlas Legends is very limited (see the Hard Landing adventure scenario); the skill is included only for completeness.

PSIONICS



Where would the Zhodani be had they not harnessed the powers of the mind? For most humans, powers like Telepathy and Telekinesis are little more than quaint parlor tricks, charlatanism done by sleight of hand, or worse, signs of demonic influence.

The Zhodani, however, learned during the Second Dark Age that these strange talents were more than that - they were critical to their survival



Riaplrfiadl gathers her Telekinetic energies.

as a people.

During the Second Dark Age, psionics are just beginning to come into ascendance, and those with the power are often seen as mystics, wizards, or sometimes charlatans. How a talent is expressed also depends on the campaign timeline. Campaigns that take place During the Dzaqtlas will be less psionically-oriented; games later in the Second Dark Age will have more emphasis on psionics.

There are three ways psionics manifest in a character or NPC. These are **Latent**, **Wild**, and **Trained**. Each of these will have different expressions and game effects depending on the timeline and setting.

LATENT TALENTS

Most people are born with some degree of psionic ability, but few actually learn to use them.

A talent is considered *Latent* until some event activates it. This could be a trauma or other stress, an accidental discovery, or any other significant event.

The exact nature of the Awakening Event should be up to the referee, but in collaboration with the player. A **Latent** talent that becomes activated in this way becomes a **Wild Talent**.

The nature of the talent depends on the type of scenario.

End of Days: Psionic talents were known of but not actively researched in the pre-Dzaqtla times; therefore, a Latent Talent is unlikely to have awakened before the End. However, the events of that time could be traumatic enough to cause an Awakening. Finding someone to actually *teach* one to use and develop a talent will be nearly impossible, however.

Wasteland: "Out here, everything hurts." Latent talents in the Wasteland scenario may be somewhat aware of their abilities, but for some reason are afraid to use them or have a mental block that prevents them from doing so. Latents might be "outed" by accident and become the target of witch hunts, or even enslaved and abused by barbaric tribes due to their power and potential.

Rising Empire: In this scenario, Latent Talents



Virziach doesn't "mind" being a Telepath.



Zhdentkitlien accidentally learns she can Teleport.

are often those who have abilities that have gone unnoticed by the society at large, whether they come from a barbaric tribal culture or the civilized Western Empire. In either case, there's a chance of finding someone capable of teaching a Latent Talent to use their abilities, depending on the attitudes of the tribe and the availability of a *Shaman* or *Priest*.

WILD TALENTS

A *Wild Talent* is one that's active and has some skill, but no formal training. The character who has such a talent may not even have direct control over when and how she uses it; it just *happens* when she needs that extra boost. A character with Teleport, for example, might suddenly find herself a hundred meters from where she was, having flitted just before an arrow hit her. Someone with telepathy might subconsciously warn his allies about an ambush he's just discovered. With some time and practice, and by spending some Experience Points, he will be able to exercise some conscious control, but with restrictions.

Being untrained is not necessarily a handicap - a Wild Talent may lack formal teaching, but this means she also is not encumbered by the limitations imposed by such education. Wild Talents are able to "improvise" new powers more readily than those with formal training simply because they *do not know* what their limitations are! They get +1 to attempts to use their Talent in a "new" or unconventional way.

End of Days: In the days during the height of the Dzaqtas, psionic powers went from being an object of curiosity to something feared. Many practitioners hid their abilities to avoid the angry mobs looking for anyone to blame for the plague. Some fortunate few discovered their Talent lay in either healing themselves and surviving the Dzaqtas, or even healing others. These became the first wandering healers and shamans, eventually rising to if not an honored state, at least not despised and feared.

Wasteland: After a few decades, people began making the connection between psionics and healing. Tribes and communities began looking for individuals with the strange powers, and even welcoming wandering "plague doctors" when they passed by. However, not all practitioners were created equal, and there were many who took advantage of others during the Dark Age. Charlatans, mountebanks, and snake oil salesmen proliferated among the true healers.

Rising Empire: The new Dlenchiepr Priesthood in the West is actively seeking out these Wild Talents to bring them firmly under the control of the Empire. There's a good chance that if a Wild Talent is wandering the land in civilized regions that she will be discovered and recruited for "proper" training. In the rest of Zhdant, Wild Talents are often Shamans, healers, seers, or soothsayers, respected and honored by their tribes.

ADEPTS

When a psion gets formal tutelage to develop his Talent, he becomes an *Adept*. This can take one of two forms.

Shamanic Psions who find a barbarian healer, medicine man, or holy woman, get taught the ways of "magic" from a fellow Wild Talent. They retain many of their old previous bonuses, like being able to improvise new Powers, but now are able to consciously direct their Talent. The trade off for this is the need for a fetish or focus. These are ritual items and activities that must be done in order to use the Talent effectively. They might

take the form of a prayer or physical ritual (fetish), or a piece of jewelry or a staff of specific and unique construction (focus). The psychic powers may be used without these items, but at a disadvantage (-1 to -3 depending on circumstances).

Mystic Psions are those who are taken in by a civilized holy order. In the **Rising Empire** scenario, this means the **Dlenchiepr** Priesthood. Once their, they are given formal training to overcome any mental aversions they might have to actually using their *Talent*, and they are shown how to use it effectively. For *Wild Talents* this means losing the ability to improvise, but gaining an immediate +1 to their *Talent* level. A *Mystic Psion* is able to do some imaginative psionics, but at a disadvantage (-1 DM to improvisational uses). They also do not have the same restrictions as *Shamanic Psions* do - they don't need a focus or fetish, for example - but some use them anyway, usually in the form of a gem or jewel worn on a small circlet or diadem.

End of Days: In the days during the height of the Dzaqtas there were few if any properly trained psions. Most were either stage magicians using telekinesis or telepathy to impress audiences, or occasionally, members of a religious order. In either case, many of them went into hiding to avoid angry mobs looking for easy scapegoats.



Stietchiedad uses a crystal ball to focus his

Wasteland: The same wandering healers, charlatans, and snake oil salesmen with *Wild Talents* also proliferate from the surviving Trained psions. The difference is, the trained ones are better at hiding their intentions and more efficient at tricking the desperate or gullible.

Rising Empire: In the West, a new power is rising where a psionic priesthood has strength

and influence. These well trained, disciplined Healers and Priests have a code of honor and ethics that the new Dlenchiepr Empire is determined to spread to all corners of the world. However, there is resistance to the plan as other tribes and communities have their own healers and shamans and their own agendas...

PSIONIC AWAKENING

For those who wish to develop their powers to their full potential, several avenues for exploring training are available.

Individual Experimentation/Psychic Trauma: The first, and probably least reliable option, is do-it-yourself psionics. Either the psion has stumbled upon the abilities by accident and decided to try and make something of it by trial and error, or some traumatic experience has unlocked it and revealed the hidden powers. Either way, this is the least reliable and most dangerous way to learn.

An individual who chooses this path gets a -1 DM to all Talent uses until he can find a more reliable teacher. Additionally, these methods are usually abrupt and unpredictable and almost always traumatic. Roll End 8+ to avoid **Psychic Trauma**; a critical failure (2 on 2D) means you get two levels of trauma, but you also accidentally unlock another Wild Talent.

Find a Mentor: More reliable than experimenting alone. A psion can look for a more experienced and hopefully wiser person to show them the ropes. This may have varying results depending on the quality of the mentor and how **they** learned their skills. The mentor must also actually **know** the Talent being learned; this should be obvious.

It takes time to learn from a mentor. Roll 1D + the Mentor's Talent level for the time spent, in months, learning a Talent to level-1 in this way. The highest level the talent can be learned is equal to the mentor's Talent level -1. Additionally, mentors sometimes have the unpleasant habit of passing on their own psychic trauma to their students. Roll End 8+ for each session to avoid this.

Learn one level of Talent from a mentor: Psi 8+, 1D + Mentor's Talent level in months

Join a Mystic Order: Another option for the curious is joining a religious order, mystic commune, or religious cult. This has its own challenges peculiar to the type of group joined,

and results may vary widely. Not all such organizations are created equal, and the quality of teaching depends on the order's attitude toward psionics. When you find a Mystic Order or Cult, roll on the following table to determine the group's attitudes toward psionics:

Acceptance into the order is not guaranteed. For those groups that actually accept psionics, follow the instructions in the Effects column. Regardless of the attitudes of the Mystic Order, the psion immediately gains **Strictures of Faith** as a **Disadvantage**. This represents the rules laid down by the holy order that both guide the psion along the path to enlightenment (or whatever the teaching is) and restrict their activities and uses of psionics. The more accepting of psionics the order is, the more restrictive the teachings. If the adherent attempts to use her powers in a way that violates the teachings of the order, the disadvantage imposes a -DM on the attempt.

Find a mystic order: Investigate 10+, 8+ if in a civilized region, 1D weeks

2D Attitude	Strictures	Effects
2 Despised	0	Psionics are a disease to be purged! Instead of being welcomed, the psion is attacked on sight. Begin combat!
3-5 Shunned	0	The order rejects the very notion of psionics and will not train the petitioner. They might even warn others in the area of the presence of a "witch."
6-8 Accepting	-1	Psionics are treated like a rare gift. They will train the psion, but only if high potential is shown. Roll Psi 9+ to be accepted.
9-11 Welcoming	-2	Psionics are greeted with enthusiasm and may even be part of religious observances. Roll Psi 8+ to be accepted. They will then train the petitioner. Roll Psi 8+ to learn a new Talent.
12 Enthusiastic	-3	Not only does the order welcome psionics, they do so enthusiastically since they form a core of their beliefs. Roll Psi 6+ to be accepted. They will train the psion, granting an immediate +1 to any one Talent level. Roll Psi 8+ to learn a new Talent.



Ajzhdieqlie has achieved Awareness of her inner strengths.

PSIONIC TALENTS

"Never underestimate the power of an awakened mind."

In the Dzaqlas Era and during the Second Dark Age, the Zhodani are just beginning to unlock the limitless potential of the human mind. Some Zhodani have developed these powers to a high level; others may have undiscovered talents hidden even from themselves.

PSIONIC STRENGTH POINTS

All Zhodani have some level of Psionic strength. This is measured by the characteristic **Psi**. This is rolled like any other characteristic during initial generation and is rated from 0 to 15, depending on age and other modifiers.

$$\text{Psionic Strength Points} = \text{Psi} - (\text{Age}-18)/3$$

Psionic Strength tells you the most difficult powers of any talent your character can use. It also acts like "mana" in that when you use a power, you must spend Psi points to do it. If you don't have enough points you can still make the attempt, but at a penalty of -1 DM per point.

Psi points are recovered at the rate of one point per hour **of rest**. This begins three hours after psionic activity; if interrupted, the time resets. Meditation, prayer, or other such mental exercises can increase the recovery rate to two points per hour; roll Int 8+ every hour to sustain the recovery. Uninterrupted sleep for at least six hours provides full recovery.

PSIONIC TALENTS

There are several psionic talents available as shown on page 32. That table shows you how to acquire them; this section shows how to **use** them.

The most common Psionic Talents available in the Dzaqlas Era are:

- **Telepathy** - reading minds and mental communication
- **Telekinesis** - moving things with the powers of the mind
- **Clairvoyance** - perceiving objects, people, and events at a distance
- **Awareness** - controlling one's mind and body; the ability to heal injuries and cure diseases
- **Teleportation** - moving from one place to another instantaneously

There are other psionic talents available that are more difficult to acquire, but no less important:

- **Healing** - the ability to heal injuries, control physical health, and cure disease in others
- **Empathic Healing** - the same as Healing, but the psion sacrifices her own health instead of Psi points to heal the subject
- **Vampyric Awareness** - the same as Awareness, but the psion drains life from another to heal himself

The following psionic talents are extremely rare and not well known, and should only be used in special cases:

- **Machine Symbiosis** - the ability to interact with computers and other mechanical devices
- **Precognition** - the ability to "see the future" and predict events that haven't happened yet

Learning a Talent gives one access to *all* the **powers** listed therein. A Telepath can use any of the powers associated with telepathy - *life detection, read surface thoughts, send thoughts, deep probe*, and even *assault* become available at Telepathy-0. Actually succeeding at using them depends on Psionic Strength, as explained above.

Using Psionic Talents: To use a power, the psion must make a skill check against the Talent being used, plus his Psi DM, his Talent level as a skill DM, and any other modifiers imposed by the ref. He must also expend the required number of Psi points before making the attempt. These are used even if he fails. Attempting to use a power that requires more Psi points than he has imposes a -DM for each point of deficiency.

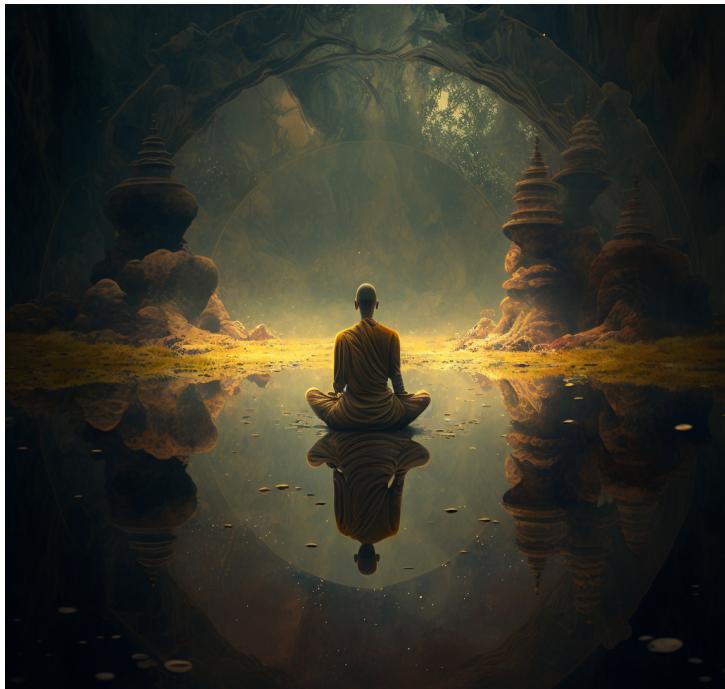
Some Talents are *ranged*, in other words, they can be used at a distance. This means the psion must spend additional points to create the same effect over longer distances. Consult the Ranged Effects table to find the added cost.

For example, a Telepath could read the mind of a target using *read surface thoughts* for two points at Close range, three points at Short range, and four points at Long Range.

TELEPATHY

The most common psionic Talent is Telepathy, the ability to read the thoughts of others and send one's thoughts as communication. It can also be used to crush the wills of those who oppose the telepath.

Life Detection: The simplest telepathic Power is the ability to detect the presence of other life



forms, the number of minds present, and even their general type (animal, human, etc.) and their approximate location. The power is sophisticated enough to filter out clutter, though it might mistake a swarm of insects for a larger mind instead of a collective or hive.

Life Detection will fail to detect the presence of shielded minds, whether the shielding is natural or artificial.

Psionic Range Table

Range	Distance	Telepathy	Clairvoyance	Telekinesis	Teleportation	Healing*
Touching	< .5m	0	0	0	0	0
Personal	.5 to 1.5m	0	0	1	1	1
Close	1.5 to 3m	0	0	1	1	1
Short	3 to 12m	1	1	2	2	2
Medium	12 to 50m	1	1	4	3	4
Long	50 to 250m	2	2	8	4	8
Very Long	250 to 500m	2	2	-	4	-
Distant	500 to 5km	3	3	-	6	-
Very Distant	5 to 500km	3	3	-	6	-
Regional	500 to 5000km	4	4	-	8	-
Planetary	5000km or more	4	4	-	8	-

*Healing includes Empathic Healing and Vampyric Awareness.

The difficulty and Psionic Strength cost depends on the range and the area being scanned.

Telepathy, Psi 4+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 1 + range + 1 per 10m² scanned

Telemopathy: At a slightly lower level than actual thought communication is *telemopathy*, the ability to communicate emotions and feelings. This is often used in training and handling animals and beasts of burden, but can also be used as psychological manipulation or therapy on humans. Emotions such as fear, love, hate, anger, sadness, and calm can be projected to others, for example. Telemopathy also allows the emotions of others to be read by the telepath. The relative success of the check determines the strength of the projected emotion.

A telepath can always recognize when someone else is using telemopathy against him, but others will not. In such cases, if the target is unwilling, the test becomes opposed, as the two struggle to achieve dominance of will.

Multiple minds may be targeted for manipulation, but this means spending more Psi points. Shielded individuals are immune from telemopathy.

Telepathy, Psi 6+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 1+range per individual target

Read Surface Thoughts: This is the most widely known of telepathic powers, the ability to read the thoughts of others. This power only allows the telepath to read active, current thoughts, not subconscious thoughts or memories. The thoughts of other telepaths can be read, but the attempt will always be detected and can be cut off at will. The relative success of the skill check determines the clarity of the

telepath's perceptions.

Telepathy, Psi 8+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2 + range per individual target

Send Thoughts: The other power commonly associated with Telepathy is the ability to send one's thoughts to others. This can be done even to non-telepathic people. Other telepaths may be open to such transmissions, but may close their minds at will and block all incoming thoughts directed at them.

Telepathy, Psi 10+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2 + range per individual target

Psychic Probe: This is taking a deep dive into the mind of another person to read their innermost thoughts, even those long suppressed. This can be a highly effective interrogation technique, when used judiciously, as lies can easily be detected by the telepath. When used against an unwilling telepath, the test becomes *opposed*, and the target can always shut off access at will. The relative success of the test determines the amount and clarity of information gained.

When used against a sleeping target, *psychic probe* is known as *dreamwalking*. The victim is more vulnerable to the probe, though the mental images are less coherent. Skilled interrogators can use this to extract information from the victim's subconscious mind or even implant new ideas and change their thinking in subtle ways. There

is always the danger of the target becoming aware of the attempt and rejecting the dreamwalker the way the body rejects a foreign protein. There is also a real danger of either the telepath or the target suffering *psychic trauma* from the experience. Roll Int 8+ to avoid.

Another, slightly morbid use of *Psychic Probe*, is *tomb tapping* - the ability to probe the minds of the recently dead. This is not always reliable, but can under the right circumstances be used in a forensic way. The target mind is effectively unshielded, but the quality of the memories degrades over time and increases the point cost. The brain must be intact.

Probe: Telepathy, Psi 12+, 1D minutes, Cost: 4+range

Dreamwalk: Telepathy, Psi 10+, 2D minutes, Costs: 4+range

Tomb Tap: Telepathy, Psi 12+, 2D minutes, Cost: 4+range + 2x the number of days since death

Psychic Assault: The final, and most difficult power, is the ability to inflict violence on another mind. An unshielded mind attacked in this way suffers damage equal to 2D + the degree of success. This is dealt first to Psionic Strength, then to Intelligence, then Endurance. Damage to Psi and End are recovered as normal; Int is recovered at a rate of one point per day.

When another telepath is the target of an Assault, the test becomes *opposed*. If the attacker wins,

Telepathy Powers

Power	Test	Time	Cost
Shield	None	0	0
Detect Life	Psi 4+	1D x 10 sec	1 + range + 1 per 10m ²
Telempathy	Psi 6+	1D x 10 sec	1 + range per target
Read Surface Thoughts	Psi 8+	1D x 10 sec	2 + range per target
Send Thoughts	Psi 10+	1D x 10 sec	2 + range per target
Psychic Probe	Psi 12+	1D minutes	4 + range
Dreamwalk	Psi 10+	2D minutes	4 + range
Tomb Tapping	Psi 12+	2D minutes	4 + range + 2x number of days since death
Psychic Assault	Psi 14+	1D seconds	8 + range



the victim suffers damage as above.

Only one victim at a time may be targeted with Psychic Assault.

Assault: Telepathy, Psi 14+, 1D seconds, Cost: 8+range

CLAIRVOYANCE

Clairvoyance is the ability to detect events and objects at a distance. These Powers allow a person to spy on locations and people undetected. Conversations can be overheard, and objects within a room can be identified, but thoughts cannot be read through Clairvoyance. Clairvoyant activity cannot be sensed by others, even by other Clairvoyants or Telepaths.

Sense: The most basic of Clairvoyant powers is sense. This gives the psion to a very general awareness of the nature and composition of the contents of a room or area. The degree of success determines the accuracy and detail of the action.

Clairvoyance, Psi 6+, 1D seconds, Cost: 1+Range per 10m² scanned

Tactical Awareness: With this power, the psion gains enhanced awareness of the threat environment in the area, with the clairvoyant at the center. Environmental effects like fog, smoke, and darkness are ignored, and enemies hidden from view can be detected as well. The degree of success of the test determines the accuracy of information gained.

Clairvoyance, Psi 8+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 1+Range

Clairvoyance: This power allows the psion to remotely view a place as though she were there in person. This is a much more detailed view of the space being viewed than Sense gives, but also only provides visual information. The degree of success determines the accuracy and detail of the scan.

Clairvoyance, Psi 8+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2+Range

Clairvoyance

Powers

Power	Test
Sense	Psi 6+
Tactical Awareness	Psi 8+
Clairvoyance	Psi 8+
Clairaudience	Psi 8+
Clairsentience	Psi 10+

Clairaudience: Like Clairvoyance, but instead of visually spying on an area, the psion eavesdrops remotely to listen in on conversations. The degree of success determines the accuracy and detail of the scan.

Clairvoyance, Psi 8+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2+Range

Clairsentience: By combining Clairvoyance and Clairaudience, a skilled psion can observe and listen in on an area remotely. This is a bit more difficult than either, but much more information can be gained. The degree of success determines the accuracy and detail of the scan.

Clairvoyance, Psi 10+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 4+Range

TELEKINESIS

The first *physical* expression of psionic powers is Telekinesis, the ability to move objects at a distance using one's mental powers. This Talent allows the psion to physically manipulate objects as though she were actually handling them, but without the danger of radiation, heat, cold, or pain. Telekinesis includes a limited degree of sensory awareness, enough to allow intelligent manipulation of the target object.

Telekinesis: This power is the basic ability to move objects mentally at a distance. The cost depends on both the range and the mass of the object. The degree of success reduces the total point costs.

Telekinesis, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 1+Range+mass

Flight: By using his powers on himself, the psion can actually fly (or more accurately, levitate) over short distances. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the degree of success and the psion can move at a rate of six meters per round.

Telekinesis, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 5

Punch: By focusing her mental energies, a psion can direct a focused telekinetic strike against another target. The damage inflicted is 2D + the

Time	Cost
1D sec	1 + range
1D x 10 sec	1 + range
1D x 10 sec	2 + range
1D x 10 sec	2 + range
1D x 10 sec	3 + range

degree of success of the test.

Telekinesis, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 1+Range

Singularity: By focusing telekinetic energy on a single point, a skilled psion can create a localized gravitational anomaly that sucks in masses nearby. The cost depends on the range of the power and the maximum mass affected (see Telekinesis above).

Mass	Cost
> 1 kg	0
1 to 10 kg	1
10 to 100 kg	2
100 to 1000 kg	4
1 ton to 10 tons	8
10 tons +	16

Telekinesis, Psi 10+, 1D sec, Cost: 2+Range+mass

Microkinesis: A much more focused and detailed use of Telekinesis allowing for manipulation of very small or even microscopic objects. This power allows the psion to do things like pick locks, perform surgery, manipulate machines, etc. The range is always Personal.

Telekinesis, Psi 10+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2

Pyrokinesis/Cryokinesis: This power allows the psion to manipulate an object on an almost molecular level, increasing or lowering its kinetic energy to cause it to heat up or cool down, possibly even bursting into flames or freezing. The damage inflicted is determined by the relative effect.

Telekinesis, Psi 810+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 3+Range

AWARENESS

For some, the ultimate expression of psionic potential is in the ability to control one's own bodily processes. The Talent of Awareness lets the psion directly manipulate their physical body,

for a short time. Awareness powers are always Personal, as they only affect the user.

Suspended Animation: Through concentration, the psion can enter a temporary state of hibernation. Her metabolic functions slow to a point of appearing near death; this state lasts for up to 7 days during which period she needs neither food nor water. The state can be ended at any time

Awareness, Psi 8+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 2

Concentration: The psion can use his Psi power to temporarily enhance his focus, granting a bonus to any skill test equal to his Psionic Strength DM (assuming it's positive).

Effect	Damage
0-4	Target gets a little warmer or cooler, but suffers no damage
5-8	Target gets noticeably hotter or colder and suffers 1D damage
9+	Target burns or freezes, suffering 2D damage

Awareness, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 3

Physical Enhancement: By focusing her psionic energy, a psion can temporarily enhance any of her physical characteristics - Strength, Dexterity, or Endurance. The cost is equal to the amount of increase desired. The enhancement lasts for ten minutes, then declines at the rate of 1 point per minute until it reaches the pre-enhancement level. If damage was sustained, the characteristic returns to the damaged level. This cannot be used as a "quick heal."

Awareness, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 1 per point

Regeneration: The psion can use this power to actually heal himself psychically from any injury due to damage, poison, or disease. Unlike Enhancement, the effect is permanent (at least until he suffers another wound) and immediate. Any amount of Psionic Strength may be expended in this way, up to the psion's

Telekinesis Powers

Power	Test
Telekinesis	Psi 8+
Flight	Psi 8+
Telekinetic Strike	Psi 8+
Singularity	Psi 10+
Microkinesis	Psi 10+
Pyro/Cryokinesis	Psi 10+

Time	Cost
1D seconds	1 + range + mass
1D seconds	5
1D seconds	1 + range
1D seconds	2 + range + mass
1D x 10 seconds	2
1D x 10 seconds	3 + range

maximum. Regeneration may not be used again until *all* points have been recovered.

Awareness, Psi 12+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: 1 per point

Body Armor: By channeling her Psionic Strength to her skeletal structure, musculature, and skin, the psion can temporarily enhance her ability to absorb damage. The amount of armor added is equal to the number of points expended, and the effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the relative success of the test.

Awareness, Psi 12+, 1D seconds, Cost: 1 per point

Cure Dzaqtas: The most challenging use for Awareness is the ability to actually cure the effects of the Dzaqtas plague. The cost for this variable based on the current stage of infection; success at any stage immediately lowers the infection state by one step (three to two, two to one, one to cured). Once cured, any lost characteristic points may be recovered through Regeneration or natural healing.

Awareness, Psi 14+, 1D minutes, Cost: 2 (stage 1), 4 (stage 2), 8 (stage 3)

TELEPORTATION

The ability to move from one location to another without passing through the intervening space. Psionic teleportation is limited to the psion himself and whatever gear he might be wearing or carrying.

There is only one Teleportation power, and it only affects the user. Teleporting naked, without any equipment or clothing, uses the Teleportation Talent with a DM equal to the Talent level and expends Psi points as defined by the distance traveled.

Teleporting with ordinary clothing (not armor) and up to 10kg of gear is Difficult and costs an additional 2 points plus the range cost.

Teleporting with up to 500kg of gear is Very Difficult and costs an additional 4 points plus the range cost.

Difficult and costs an additional 4 points plus the range cost.

Preknowledge of Destination: Before one can teleport to a location, one must know about the location. The psion must have either visited it at some point and become familiar with it, or have had a psychic transfer of knowledge of the destination. This cannot come from a photograph or recording; it must be "live" information.

Energy and Momentum: Teleportation violates the laws of physics, but only to a certain extent. The teleport retains his original vector in space; this results in a period of disorientation of 2D x 10 seconds following particularly long jumps. For this reason reason, teleportation on a planetary surface is limited to Very Distant (500km) or less. This is because on a rotating body, the relative rotational velocity between two points can be radically different. Jumping from the equator of a planet to a polar region will result in a change in rotational velocity of hundreds of kilometers per hour and result in a rather messy death.

Jumping into or out of moving vehicles can produce similar effects.

Extreme changes in elevation or altitude will also cause problems for the teleport due to the energy changes. Rapid changes in elevation will result in rapid increases or decreases in temperature, leading to fevers, hypothermia, or even death. For safety, changes in elevation should be limited to 400 meters or less.

Teleport naked: Teleportation, Psi 8+, 1D seconds, Cost: 0 + range

Teleport with 10kg: Teleportation, Psi 10+, 1D seconds, Cost: 2 + range

Teleport with heavy gear: Teleportation, Psi 12+, 1D seconds, Cost: 4 + range

HEALING

The psionic Talent of Healing is virtually the same as Awareness, but it only functions on another person, not on the user. In addition to the usual

Time	Cost
1D x 10 seconds	2
1D seconds	3
1D seconds	1 per point
1D x 10 seconds	1 per point
1D seconds	1 per point
1D minutes	2, 4, or 8

Power costs, the psion must pay the *range* costs of using each Power.

In the Second Dark Age, Healing is one of the Talents most critical to the survival of the Zhodani as a species.

Cost: As Awareness + range (Telekinesis)

EMPATHIC HEALING

A further subset of Healing is Empathic Healing. Instead of using Psionic Strength to heal another person, the psion actually drains his own Strength, Dexterity, or Endurance to do it. The character literally transfers wounds from another to himself. These can only be done *in their entirety*; the difficulty level of the check is equal to the points of damage. The psion heals normally thereafter; if he also has Awareness, he can use that to accelerate healing. The effects of the wounds are imposed immediately, and if any characteristic is reduced to zero, the psion is affected as though damaged.

Empathic Healing, Psi (damage)+, 1D x 10 seconds, Cost: As Awareness + range (Telekinesis)

VAMPYRIC AWARENESS

One of the more frightening psionic abilities, Vampyric Awareness enables the psion to enhance or heal herself by draining life from others. The Suspended Animation and Concentration powers functions the same as Awareness, but the others (Physical Enhancement, Regeneration, Body Armor, Cure Dzaqtla) all drain Strength, Dexterity, or Endurance from the victim. If any characteristic is reduced to zero, the victim suffers as though damaged. The effects can be inflicted at a distance, making this power even more terrifying.

Cost: As Awareness + range (Telekinesis)

PRECOGNITION

Perhaps the strangest, rarest, and least understood psionic Talent is Precognition, the ability to see into the future and predict events that haven't happened yet.

Very few psions ever develop this power, and it's probably a good thing. Sensing the ebb and flow of time is not something mortal minds easily comprehend, and all Precognitives (also known as soothsayers, seers, or That Mad Old Woman/Man) exhibit some form of psychic trauma or disorder.

Predicting the future is rarely completely accurate, and the further out one looks, the less accurate the predictions become. The difficulty and cost of the test depend on the distance from the present *in time*, and the relative success indicates the "accuracy" of the prediction. Of course, many soothsayers speak in riddles, and the interpretation of such predictions is often tricky.

For game purposes, Precognition should be left strictly to NPCs unless there's a very good reason and case presented why a player character has this ability. Roll once on the Precog Psychosis Table.

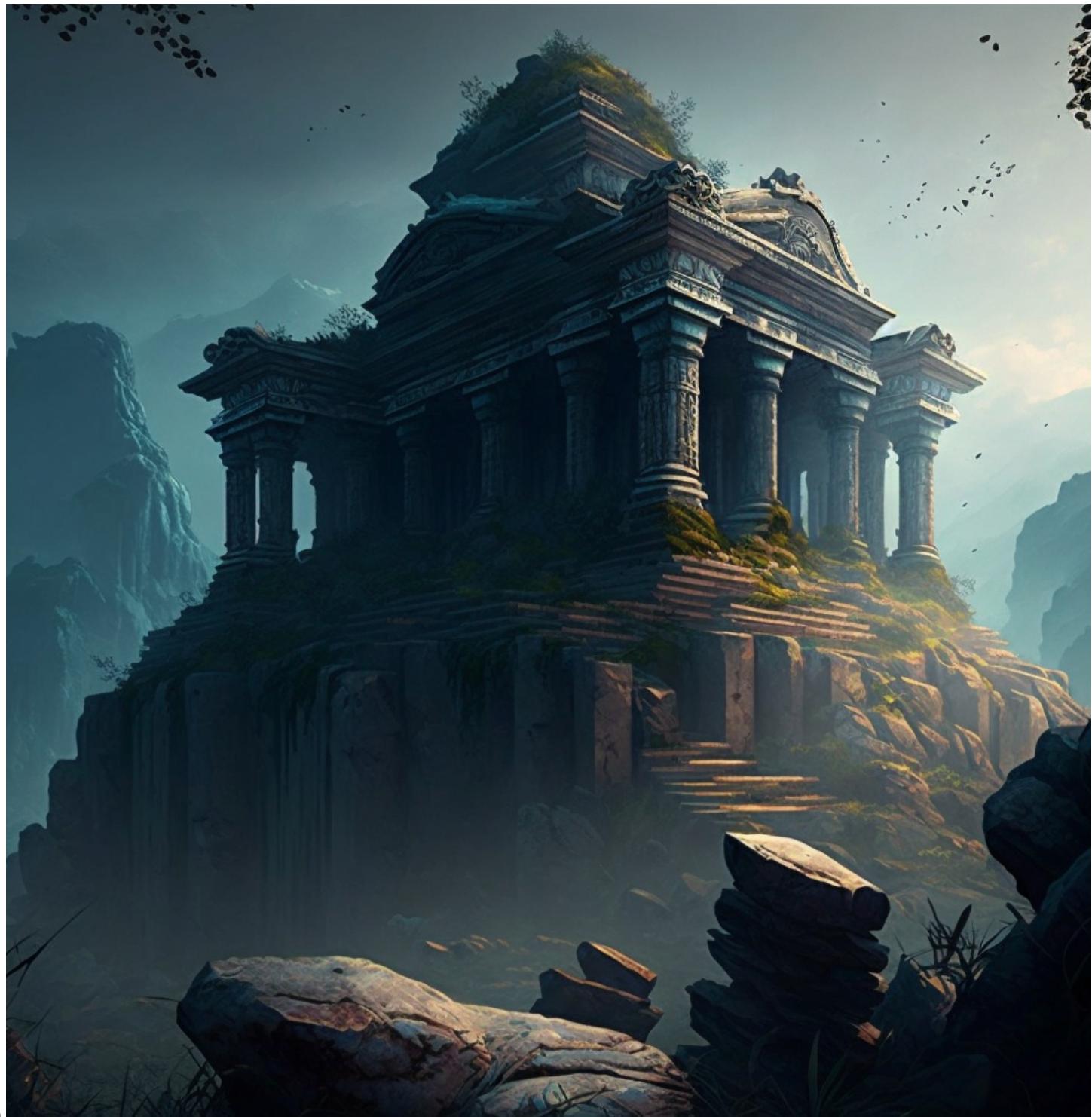
Precognition, Psi 12+, Cost: range in time

Precognition Costs

<i>Distance in Time</i>	<i>Cost</i>
1 to 5 days (week)	2
5 to 40 days (season)	4
40 to 244 days (year)	8
> 1 year	16

Precog Psychosis Table

<i>1D</i>	<i>Psychological Problem</i>
1	Substance Abuser
2	Paranoid
3	Phobic
4	Fugue
5	Schizophrenic
6	Bipolar



COMBAT



It never fails. Sooner or later, negotiations end, words are exchanged, weapons are drawn, and then people start hurting each other. As our heroes move through the world and explore cities and ruins, they are sure to encounter men and beasts (and occasionally machines) that resist their goals. These situations can only be dealt with through the use of deadly force.

Combat in the Dzaqtla Adventures is based on the skills and tasks system. Every action a character or NPC takes during a fight - firing a gun, swinging a sword, blocking an incoming blow, taking cover - is uses a skill and is resolved by a test. These actions don't have to be just making an attack; they can include relaying orders to fellow combatants or using psionics.

INITIATIVE

At the start of combat, every Adventurer rolls 2D and adds their Dexterity DM. The Relative Success (degree of success or failure) of this check is their Initiative for the duration of the combat and reflects when they get to act in a combat round. Those with higher Initiatives take their actions before those with lower scores. Adventurers may delay their actions until later in the turn. The Initiative check simply indicates the first opportunity to act.

Opposing Forces: To speed up the game, the Referee may make just one Initiative roll for all of the characters under their control, using the highest Dexterity score for the group.

Ambushes and Surprise: If one side is unaware of the other, an ambush may take place. The side that is aware adds DM +6 to its Initiative check for the *first* round only. The opposing side gets a DM -6 to its Initiative check for that round.

Tactics: If not surprised, one Adventurer or opposing NPC may make a Tactics test at the start of combat. The Relative Success of this test is applied as a +DM to the Initiative checks for that side.

THE COMBAT ROUND

Each combat round lasts six seconds, during

which each Adventurer or opposing NPC may perform a Minor Action and a Major Action. Alternatively, they may perform three Minor Actions and no Major Actions. Actions are taken in Initiative order, starting with the highest. If two or more Adventurers have the same Initiative score, the one with the highest Dexterity goes first. If still tied, they act simultaneously.

When it is a Adventurer's turn to act, they take their Actions before play moves to another Adventurer or character. Once every Adventurer has acted (or at least had the opportunity), the round is over and a new one begins. Every Adventurer retains the same Initiative score for every combat round.

MAJOR ACTIONS

An Adventurer may perform one Major Action in every combat round, chosen from those below.

ATTACK: An attack is an attempt to injure or kill an enemy with a melee or ranged weapon, such as a knife or a rifle. The Adventurer declares their intent to attack and selects a target. The target may then choose a Reaction. The Adventurer then makes a skill check using the appropriate skill and if they score 8+, the attack is successful and damage is dealt to the target (see Damage on page XX).

Melee Attack

2D + Melee (specialization) +Str or Dex DM.

Ranged Attack

2D + Gun Combat (specialization) + Dex DM.

Some ranged weapons use a skill other than Gun Combat. A rocket launcher, for example, uses Heavy Weapons (portable), while grenades and any other weapons that are thrown use Athletics (Dexterity).

Common Modifiers to Ranged Attacks:

Several factors can impose + or - DMs to ranged weapon skill tests in combat, including cover, aiming, called shots, visibility, and range. These are shown on the **Common Modifiers** table.

LEADERSHIP: An Adventurer can issue commands to teammates by making a Leadership (8+) test using Int, Edu or Soc. The Relative Success of this test is the number of DM +1 bonuses the Leader can give to any skill tests of others on his side. The Adventurer must be able to communicate with them, either verbally, visually, via radio, or psionically, for the bonuses to take effect, and no more than one DM+1 bonus can be given for any single test.

If the Relative Success of the Leadership test is negative, the *opposing* side may impose penalties on the combatants on the Adventurer's side. Each is DM -1 and applied in the same way as bonuses for good Leadership.

MINOR ACTIONS

An Adventurer may either perform one Minor Action in a combat round or three Minor Actions if they forego their Major Action.

Aiming: An Adventurer who uses their Minor Action to aim at a target gets +1 to hit on their next ranged attack, so long as they do nothing other than aim.

An Adventurer may use consecutive Minor Actions to aim (up to three per round) for a maximum of +6 to hit, provided they are not interrupted. This allows snipers to set up very

accurate shots.

Changing Stance: An Adventurer may stand, sit, crouch, or lie prone as a Minor Action.

Drawing or Reloading: Most weapons will require a Minor Action to draw and make ready for combat; this includes melee weapons not already in hand. Reloading most weapons also requires a Minor Action as noted in the weapon's description.

Movement: An Adventurer may move a number of meters up to their Movement score (for most humans this is six meters) for each Minor Actions. If they forego their Major Action, the Adventurer may move up to 18 meters in a round, sprinting. Some animals move faster or slower, according to their Movement score in their descriptions.



FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions are simple actions that are accomplished quickly and don't consume Minor Action steps. These include shouting a warning or pushing a button. An Adventurer may perform as many free actions in a round

as they referee dictates, usually no more than six (one per second) depending on what else they are doing that round.

EXTENDED ACTIONS

Some skill tests take longer than a single round to complete. If the Adventurer takes damage while performing an Extended Action, they must make a test against the skill they were using to keep going, with the damage sustained as a -

Common Modifiers

Bonuses

	DM
Aiming	+1 per Action spent
Laser Sight	+1 if Aiming
Short Range	+1

DM

+1 per Action spent	Penalties
+1 if Aiming	Fast Target
+1	Long Range
	Extreme Range
	Target in Cover
	Target Prone
	Fighting off Handed
	Darkness

DM

-1 per 10m of relative movement
-2
-4
-2
-1
-4 (melee or ranged)
=1 to -3, based on conditions

DM. If they fail, the round does not count toward completion of the task. In the event of a Catastrophic Failure, the task is ruined and the Adventurer must start again (if they can).

REACTIONS

An Adventurer who is about to be attacked may react, by dodging a shot or parrying a blow. Adventurers may perform an unlimited number of reactions each round, but every reaction imposes a DM -1 on their next Action (for every reaction there is an equal and opposite DM, in other words).

Dodging: Dodging inflicts a -DM equal to an Adventurer's Dexterity DM or Athletics (Dexterity) skill, whichever is higher, to the attacker's attack roll. Every attack must be dodged separately, so if an Adventurer is being shot at by two enemies in the same round, the Adventurer can dodge both but their next Actions get DM -2.

Taking Cover: An Adventurer may dive for cover from ranged attacks as long as there's a suitable object within 1.5 meters. Diving for Cover imposes a DM -2 on incoming attacks against them and gets a bonus for protection. If there is no suitable cover, the Adventurer only imposes DM -1 on incoming attacks and gets no cover bonus for protection. Taking Cover uses *all* available actions for that round.

Parrying a Blow: An Adventurer in close combat may attempt to Parry an opponent's melee attack as a Reaction, using their Melee skill as a -DM to the attack roll.

MELEE ATTACKS

When a Traveller is within two meters of an enemy, they are in close combat. In close combat, the following rules apply:

- Melee attacks may be made (see page XX).
- Neither combatant may attack any target other than those they are already in close combat with.
- Only single-handed ranged weapons may be used. Note that pistols can be parried in close combat.
- Larger weapons, such as rifles, may only be used as clubs.
- If one combatant moves while in close combat, their enemy may make an immediate 'free' attack with DM+2 to the attack roll.

WEAPONS

A variety of deadly weapons are available to

Adventurers, each of which share common characteristics:

- **TL:** The tech level at which the weapon becomes available.
- **Range:** The effective range of the weapon, at which the user has a chance of hitting the target.
- **Short Range:** The distance at which an attacker gets +1 to hit with the weapon.
- **Long Range:** A distance beyond the weapon's specified Range but less than twice that distance away. Attacks at this distance suffer a DM -2 to hit.
- **Extreme Range:** A distance between twice and four times the weapon's stated Range. Attacks suffer a penalty DM -4 at this distance unless a Scope is being used.
- **Damage:** The base amount of damage inflicted by the weapon when it hits a target.
- **Mass:** The mass in kilograms of the weapon.
- **Cost:** The price for buying the weapon, in AbradInad (Ab).
- **Magazine:** How many shots the weapon can fire before reloading is needed.
- **Ammunition cost:** The price for a single round of ammunition used by the weapon (bullets, arrows, etc).
- **Traits:** Some weapons have special rules; these are explained on page XX.

DAMAGE

Damage is listed as a number of dice. For example, a rifle inflicts 3D (three dice) of damage.

- On a successful attack, damage is rolled, with the Relative Success added to the result.
- Damage is applied first to the target's Endurance. If Endurance is reduced to 0, the rest is deducted from Strength and Dexterity.
- If either Strength or Dexterity are reduced to 0, the victim becomes *unconscious* and is unable to take further actions.
- If all three physical characteristics are reduced to 0, the Adventurer is *bleeding out*. Immediate medical attention (*Combat aid, Medic (10+), 1D rounds*) may keep them alive long enough to get better medical help. The Adventurer will continue to lose 1 point from each physical characteristic until one is reduced to the negative of its original value, at which point they're dead (if your Adventurer had Str-9, Dex-8 and End-10 and was taken out, once Dex reaches -8 points, it's too late).

When points are lost due to damage, new DMs must be calculated for each until the damage is

healed. If an Adventurer's Strength is reduced from 9 (+1) to 4 (-1), the new DM applies until the damage is healed.

MELEE ATTACKS

When a melee attack hits, the attacker adds their Strength DM to the damage, in addition to the Relative Success of the roll.

ARMOR

Armor reduces incoming damage by the value of its Protection score. An attack with RS 6+ always inflicts at least one point of damage.

COVER

Cover imposes a DM -2 on all incoming ranged attacks. Hard Cover reduces damage on a successful hit.

HIDING

If an Adventurer is able to position themselves completely in cover and makes no attacks, they are considered *hiding*. If an enemy is aware of their presence, they can still be attacked. The Adventurer gains all the benefits of cover but also

Cover	Bonus Protection
Vegetation	+2
Tree Trunk (small)	+4
Tree Trunk (large)	+6
Stone Wall	+8
Civilian Vehicle	+10
Armored Vehicle	+15
Fortifications	+20

gains a Protection bonus based on the type of cover.

DESTRUCTIVE WEAPONS

Destructive weapons have a Damage score with 2 Ds - for example, 3DD - indicating the damage is multiplied by 10.

GRAPPLING

In close combat, an Adventurer may try to grapple their enemy. The Adventurer makes an opposed Melee (unarmed) check with their target, each using either Strength or Dexterity DM. While involved in a grapple, the Adventurer may not perform any Major or Minor Action except to make opposed Melee (unarmed) checks. The winner of this check may choose to do one of the following:

- Disarm an opponent. If the RS is 6+, they may take their opponent's weapon.
- Throw an opponent 1D metres, causing 1D damage. This automatically ends the grapple.
- Inflict damage equal to 2+ the RS of the Melee check. This damage ignores any armour.
- Inflict damage using a pistol or small blade-sized weapon.
- Escape and move away (as a normal movement action), ending the grapple.
- Drag their opponent up to three metres.
- Continue the grapple with no other effect.

WEAPON TRAITS

Some weapons have special abilities with rules that affect their operation. These will be listed under the Traits section of each weapon as needed.

AP X: This weapon ignores an amount of Protection equal to the AP score.

Autofire X: These weapons fire multiple rounds with each pull of the trigger and can make attacks in three modes: single shot, burst fire, and full auto fire. Attacks using the Autofire trait lose any Scope or Aiming bonuses.

Bulky: The weapon has powerful recoil or is extremely heavy. An Adventurer will need at least Strength 9 or higher to operate it without penalty. All attacks with the weapon have a negative DM equal to the difference of their Strength DM and +1.

Scope: The weapon has a vision-enhancing sight, increasing its effectiveness at longer ranges. Attacks with a Scoped weapon may be done at distances greater than 100 meters as though they were at Extreme range, as long as the Adventurer spends an action Aiming before shooting.

Stun: The weapon deals non-lethal damage, incapacitating a living target rather than killing it. Such damage is subtracted only from Endurance, after accounting for any Protection. Damage from Stun is completely healed after an hour of rest.

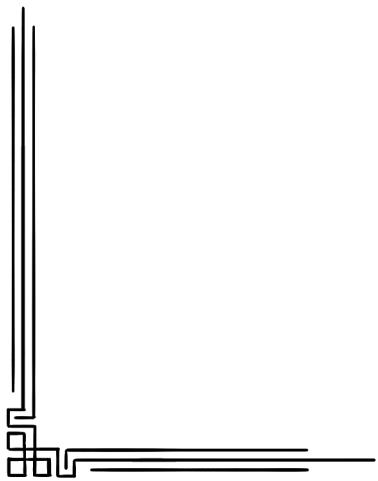
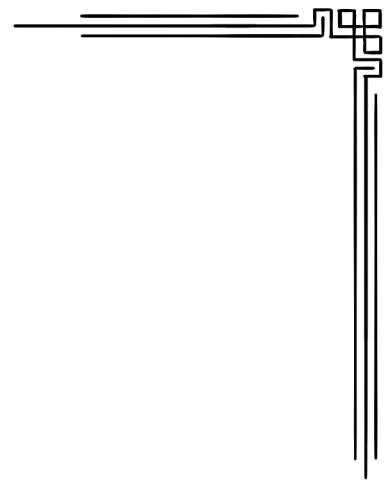
ARMOR TRAITS

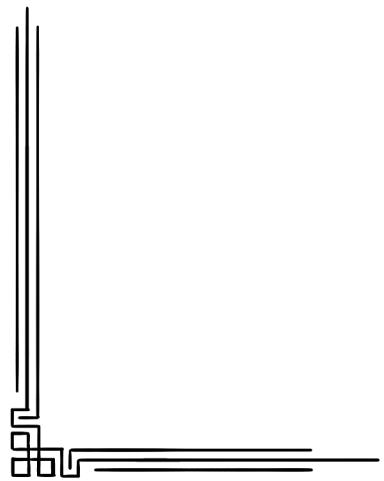
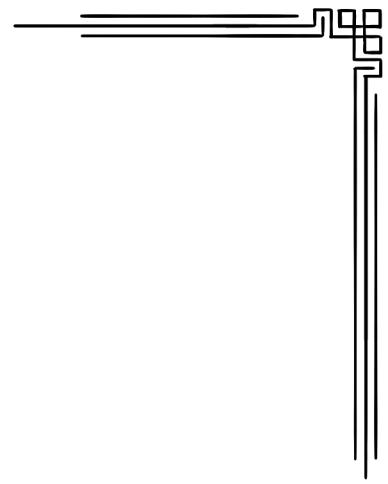
Certain types of armor, like weapons, have special rules that affect their operation in game. These will be listed under the Traits section of each armor as needed.

- Force an opponent prone on the ground.

zhd
ZHDANT



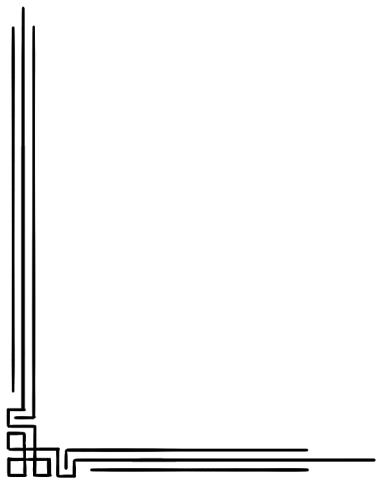
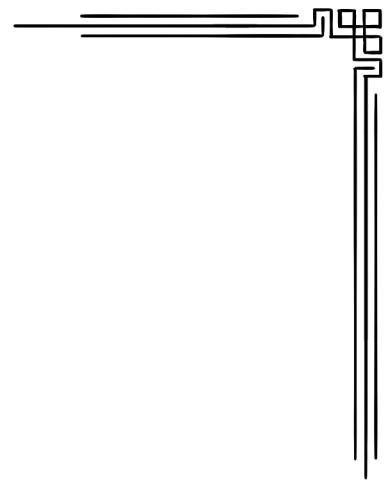






BESTIARY





zhdant

ZHDANT



王**人**游**人**ADVENTURES





HARD LANDING

The harsh deceleration that had shoved the three of us deeply into our couches let up, replaced with near free-fall as our lander fell through the middle reaches of the atmosphere.

“Now it’s up to the chutes,” Maqtlaz said. She monitored the lander’s status panel. “I hope double the rated interval of cold and vacuum soaking hasn’t degraded them too much.”

“Tazo,” Yalad said, ‘are we still on track?’

The reticle above the tiny Zhdant-globe in the so-called navigation panel lay pegged over the floodplains north of the mouth of the Friebrkad River. I read the coordinates off of the verniers, pulled the atlas out of its cubby and opened it to the page we’d marked before we left Comm Station Number Seventeen three hours ago.

“Near as I can tell from the iron idiot here,” I shouted over the slipstream noise, “we’re coming down about fifteen klicks north of some settlement called Dzaltlievan.”

We all grunted as the initial drogue fired. The atlas flew out of my hands, falling at Maqtlaz’ feet. “Leave it,” I told her. We all silently counted off the seconds until the main chutes deployed. Then the capsule jerked hard and our jaws slammed shut.

“Lost one, curse it!” Maqtlaz shouted. The lander began to spin lazily with only two of the three main chutes slowing it. “We’re going to hit a little harder than usual, folks.” She spat out a sliver of tooth.

Seconds after the landing bag inflated, the lander slammed into the gravel. It felt like a groundcar crash. “Tazo here,” I said blearily.

“Yalad here,” he mumbled. “Maq? Maq? Dammit, she’s passed out.”

We fumbled with our restraints. Maqtlaz began to come to. I looked out the egress hatch window.

“Looks like the locals saw us come down. They’re on scene.” I tried to keep the fear from my voice.

“Good! They can help us, maybe give first aid to Maq.”

*“We’ve got other problems.” The hammering began on the egress hatch. **Please don’t pull the emergency handle**, I willed them silently. We could hear them shouting now through the vents.*

“Kill them! Kill the spacers! They killed the world! BURN THEM ALIVE!”



RUN FOR YOUR LIFE



IT'S A BAZ BAZ BAZ BAZ WORLD

