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# Legacy of the Zendari

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(We apologize, but the illustrations could not be included due to the terms of the Windhammer Prize for Short Gamebook Fiction. After the contest is over, please visit [www.ashtonsaylor.com](http://www.ashtonsaylor.com) for news on the release of a complete version of this gamebook!)

**An Entry in the 2012 Windhammer Prize for  
Short Gamebook Fiction**

In the year 2192, an alien fleet attacked planet Earth. These strange and hostile beings were known as the Zendari. Earth's defense forces put up stiff resistance, enough that they forced the Zendari to shift their strategy from one of conquest, to one of destruction. In a single day, called the "Rain of Fire," Zendari orbital bombardment destroyed over 99% of the planet's surface.

Against all odds, surviving human military forces still managed to defeat and drive off the Zendari fleet, but our homeworld had suffered irreparable damage. Only one thin ray of hope remained: a rumor that the Zendari had left behind them the "Geo-Cure," supposedly a miracle of terraforming technology, which they had intended to use to repair the planet for their own use after the war.

With the planet's surface now a wasteland and humanity's numbers dwindling, the courageous field agents of the Royal American Defense Force must go out in their Battle Mecha every day to brave radiation and rampaging remnants of the Zendari invasion force in search of this legendary... Geo-Cure.

See the "Reading this Story" section, below, and then continue the story by reading Page 1.

### Reading this Story

As you read on, you will quickly notice that this does not read like a normal book. The pages are all numbered, and Page 7 does not necessarily follow from Page 1 (although it might!)

Don't panic!

Just read along at your own pace. At the end of each page, you'll be told which page to turn to next. Sometimes, you'll be given a choice. This allows you to interact with the story, determining which of numerous endings you might get to.

We also suggest that you get some paper and pen, and a couple of normal six-sided dice. These will help you enjoy the "game" side of this gamebook.

Last, but not least, please start by choosing how difficult you want the "game" side of it to be.

**Easy:** If you just want to enjoy the story, pick whatever result you want on all dice rolls.

**Normal:** Whenever you roll dice, you may re-roll once and pick whichever result you please.

**Challenge:** You must keep all dice rolls, no matter what they come up!

Just one more thing—you'll quickly discover that this story has a time limit! Sometimes you'll be told to mark down time passing. If you ever run out of time (you'll know when) then immediately turn to Page 100.

See the next page for a suggested Adventure Sheet to take notes on. Then read on, if you dare...

## Adventure Sheet

Don't worry about this page for now. You can just note things down as the story tells you to.

Time Log: (If you run out of time, turn to Page 100.)

Relationship Points

Mecha

Weapons:

Armor:

Licenses

Medals of Achievement

Page 1

You are Alex Kaine, top field operative for the RADF. Your search for the Geo-Cure has been tedious and fruitless, and after four years of searching the vast deserts of Earth without a break, you are taking your first vacation since the Zendari Wars.

The Marianas Lake. One of the few remaining bodies of water on earth, it's all that remains of the vast, watery abyss of the Marianas Trench, once the deepest point in the world's oceans. You can admire its irradiated waters safely from behind the glass walls of the luxurious Marianas Terrarium— itself a testament that tourism, if nothing else, will survive.

As you watch some of the world's last seagulls frolicking in the stagnant waters, you hear footsteps approach you from behind.

"How do you suppose they survive the radiation?" a female voice asks. You turn, to find the familiar face of Minna Kowalski, another agent of the RADF. You haven't ever been close to her, but her career is stellar. Her insights into Zendari bio-chemistry have opened up whole new avenues of research. On top of that, you notice now, the freckles and upturned nose of her Polish ancestry are really rather charming.

While you take in her presence here, she shrugs, looking out at the birds, and says, "I suppose it's a simple mutation. It's just surprising any lifeform managed to evolve quickly enough to survive conditions like these." She steps past you to lean against the handrests before the glass, looking out over the last bits of water on earth.

Turn to Page 7 if you make small talk.

Turn to Page 11 if you "lay the moves" on her.

Turn to Page 54 if you give your own thoughts on the birds.

Page 2

After a few moments, you spot what looks like it might be the ruins of a crashed Zendari spaceship in the distance. The desert shifts and wavers in your vision, giving such a powerful illusion of water that you almost feel you're standing in an ocean. Dry ocean.

You sigh and begin the hike; it's not quite far enough to be worth shifting back into jet form.

Suddenly the cliff face near you shudders and slides, and two Zendari Battle Suits burst out of hiding! It all clicks together— that's why the Zendari tech signature seemed so close!

Cursing, you activate your weapon, and prepare to fight for your life.

*You must fight two Zendari Battle Suits at Range 1! Note your current page number, then turn to Page 99 if you need instructions on how to fight.*

If you win the battle, or escape, turn to Page 47.

Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.

Page 3

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You come out onto a Zendari-sized catwalk around a massive central engine core. A few, faint lights still stubbornly cling to life in the engine, which periodically whirs with a painful groan, then subsides again. Crossing to the far side of the catwalk, you make the mistake of looking down.

Biting back vertigo, you pull away from the edge. The vast interior of the engine core dwarfs even the other huge spaces you've seen inside this ship. Suddenly it seems very plausible that this ship might have carried the Zendari across the vast deeps of space to get to Earth.

Taking a deep breath, you force yourself to concentrate. Minna's exploration drone is still functional. You pull out her datapad and use it to guide the drone to search for a place to hook in to the local Zendari mainframe, or whatever's left of it.

Suddenly the drone starts beeping. The good kind of beeping.

You catch your breath, flicking through screens on the datapad as fast as you can. Yes... yes! It has located the Geo-Cure!

You race around a corner into one of the great, dark, cavernous side tunnels. The compartment you want is about 25 feet up, at easy hand-height for a Zendari, but a healthy climb for you.

Tossing up a line, you quickly scale the wall to the ledge of the compartment. Using Minna's tools, you are able to hack the door and get it to open.

A flood of water bursts from the room, nearly knocking you off the small ledge. As the torrent slows to a trickle, you see dim lights come to life deep in the compartment.

Cautiously, you enter the small chamber...

Turn to Page 75.

#### Page 4

You sigh and say, "Sorry, sir, I can't take credit this time. Sgt. Ross saved the day; the whole scheme was his idea."

Colonel Bernard grunts and says, "Remind me to give him a promotion!"

You smile. Old Mac has been keeping the hangar running for years. About time he got a pay raise.

The Colonel asks, "How are you feeling? Ready for action?"

You roll one shoulder, testing out the new skin, and say, "Yes, sir."

*You have gained the Medal of Achievement: "A Leg Up!"*

Turn to Page 51.

#### Page 5

*Mark down that four hours have passed, setting the time now at 11:00 am, local time.*

The jet that you and Minna board travels at supersonic speed, taking only four hours to whisk you back to the Palladium, the self-contained RADF Headquarters in what used to be New Mexico.

The domes of the Palladium gleam in the late-morning sun, looking like a glittering jewel amidst the painted deserts that surround it, as though placed there deliberately by some Arabian Queen with a twisted sense of style.

A young technician greets you at the hangar. Minna excuses herself while the tech, whose name-tag says "Rick Tachis," guides you through the layers of security doors to the inner compound of the Palladium.

"What's been going on here?" you ask the young man.

He shakes his head, "They haven't made a public statement yet, sir, all I can say is—" His voice stops abruptly and, following his gaze, you can see why. A very pretty young nurse is coming the other way down the corridor.

Rick keeps his eyes focused straight ahead as he walks, but you notice the nurse's eyes following him as he passes, a shy smile on her lips.

Turn to Page 42 if you comment on the girl.

Turn to Page 12 if you press for more details on the current situation.

### Page 6

A tremendous rush of noise comes at you from behind and above your head. You shout and duck and turn, firing your gun.

In the flash of your gun's muzzle, you see a dozen desert birds flapping their way free of the hangar. One of them dives you, clawing at your face and eyes. You shout, frantically beating it away with your gun, using it as a club.

Finally, the birds disperse, leaving nothing but a hail of feathers and one very rattled Alex Kaine in their wake.

Minna giggles, "Lookin' smooth there, partner."

"Don't we have work to do?" You glare at her, and wipe a bit of blood from your forehead.

Together, you proceed into the dark depths of the Hangar Deck.

Turn back to Page 32 now.

### Page 7

"What are you doing here?" you ask, leaning casually against the glass, yourself.

Minna shrugs, "RADF decided to start giving vacation time. Where else is there to go?"

You look around at the clear blue skies, unbroken in all directions, "Well, at least the weather is something to write home about."

She laughs, which makes you smile. But her laughter stops abruptly as both of your tri-phones ring simultaneously. For a moment, you meet each other's eyes. Then with one action, you both answer your phones.

"Kaine! Get back here on the double!" you hear the gruff voice of your commanding officer, Colonel Bernard, bark into your ear. "We've got some new intel on the Geo-Cure."

"Good? Bad?" you ask.

"Things just got worse..." Colonel Bernard says gravely.

Turn to Page 5.

### Page 8

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

The entrance of the Zendari ship looks like the yawing of a great mouth. Or, now that you think of it, you're reminded of the great Redwoods you saw in California in your youth. Their root systems spread out so far laterally, that when one fell over the roots seemed like a great gateway. You could all but walk up into the bowel of the tree.

Now, you can. Keeping your gun close at the ready, you step up and carefully walk into the dark entryway. As your footsteps echo on the metal floors, you're uncomfortably aware of just how much *bigger* than humans Zendari are. The ceiling of this passageway is a good 60 or 70 feet above you, high enough to be the arch of a cathedral.

"Be careful," Minna says from behind you. "Some of the defensive mechanisms may still be active." As if on cue, a burst of light flashes from a near wall, and a bright white laser lances out at you.

*Roll a d6. If you roll a 5 or a 6, the laser bolt hits you, and you will die unless you have the Field Medicine License. If you survive, keep reading. Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.*

You duck with catlike reflexes—just in time. The laser bolt singes your hair. If the faulty system hadn't shot up sparks a moment before it fired, you would have been speared. Catching your breath, you say, "Come on," and keep moving through the tunnel.

Turn to Page 32 to go in deeper.

### Page 9

You look at the box with despair. All the wires look the same to you. But you have only moments before the Ravagers scale the ramp outside this room to get to you.

Taking all the wires in your fist, you jerk hard, ripping them out with an explosion of sparks. Nothing else happens.

"No, no, no, no..." you murmur, but it is too late. You turn and open up with your machine gun on the oncoming ravagers. There is nowhere else to run.

Your screams will be remembered in the nightmares of those who heard them.

Turn to the end to see your results.

### Page 10

In the control room, the top brass of the Palladium are all waiting for you. You also see Minna, now in her uniform. One other man, Kevin Lang, narrows his eyes at you. He gives you a cocky grin. He's another top agent, and the two of you have been rivals since the day you met.

Colonel Bernard clears his throat, leans heavily on the table, and says, "There's more to the Geo-Cure than y'all have been told."

He casts his stern gaze across you, then says, "It's not an accident that the Palladium facility was built on this site. Four years ago, in the last days of the Zendari war, our agents found a terraforming core built deep into the earth's mantle. That core is far beneath our feet right now. But it can't do it alone.

"It needs a key. A key that contains an imprint of all data on the Earth's former ecology. That's the Geo-Cure. That's what we've had you all out looking for."

Minna clears her throat and asks, "Sir, what happens if the core is activated without the Geo-Cure?"

The Colonel gives her a gravelly stare. "We may be about to find out. Four hours ago, Professor Hajime and his team took a calculated risk—with disastrous consequences. The core activated, and there was nothing we could do to stop it.

"The professor will fill you in on the rest."

Colonel Bernard hits a button on the console before him, and a large screen above him flickers to life. Beneath a reddish tint to the image, you can see the face of the famous scientist, Professor Hajime.

The professor says, "Ah, so you're the last team? Just in time, I'm afraid I don't have much longer." As he says that, you realize how weak he looks. Sweat pours from his brow.

"What's wrong, Professor?" Bernard says, his voice low.

"Just a normal function of the core activation, my good man," Hajime says in a thin, reedy voice. "This sector was not meant to support life during the terra-formation."

"Stop this conference. I'm sending down a lift now to get you out."

The Professor shakes his head, waving one hand weakly, "It's too late. We've all taken lethal doses of radiation already. If we try to come up, it would just release radiation into the Palladium facility. I can't allow that."

"But—!"

"Quiet now, man, let me speak! You three are the last team to go out." He coughs fitfully, then continues, "The terraforming engine takes twenty-four hours to spin up. It will engage at that time. We activated it four hours ago, meaning you have twenty hours left to find the Geo-Cure and bring it back here, or the terraforming core will activate without guidance. The torrent of energies released in that scenario could tear apart planet Earth."

Colonel Bernard leans in, "Do you—"

"That's all I have time for," Professor Hajime cuts him off. "I only have a few minutes left. I must call my wife."

With that, the screen goes dead. A moment of heavy silence follows.

Colonel Bernard clears his throat uneasily and unrolls a map. In a thick voice, he says, "We've already sent out teams to some of the more distant search sites, and other facilities like us are doing the same around the world. Since you three were last, we've saved the closest sites for you. Our statisticians indicate that there is a high probability that the Geo-Cure would be somewhere in the vicinity of this location, so we're also counting on you as our very best agents to see this through.

"There are three suggested search patterns." He jams his finger down behind a ridge of mountains. "This is the crash site of the Zendari flagship, the Zor. As you know, we've picked it clean. I'd be surprised if anything is still there."

Minna clears her throat and says, "It is possible we just didn't know how to recognize it, sir. Maybe with more data from the terraforming core's activation..."

Colonel Bernard waves her to silence and continues, "This is the location of the Tirolian. It was a Zendari science vessel. While grounded, it's more or less intact. Unfortunately, that means its defenses are still active. To date, no one has been able to get inside."

Kevin Lang says indolently, "That's obviously where it is. All we need to do is break in."

Bernard gives him a short glare, then says, "Alternately, you could search some of the smaller crash sites and ruined Zendari facilities in this area. Our past efforts have mostly focused on the high-profile locations. A quick sweep of some of the smaller sites might reveal something."

Folding up the map, he adds, "I personally think one of these smaller sites is the most likely. We've done all we can with the bigger ones."

You ask, "Are we splitting up, or operating as a team?"

"Alex doesn't want to be alone," Kevin smirks.

Colonel Bernard looks tired. He takes off his hat and wipes his head, incidentally greasing his few hairs to his scalp with sweat from his forehead. He puts the hat back on (to your relief) and says, "You're all experienced agents. You can each make your own decisions about where to search. Now, head down to the Hangar Bay to get your Mecha."

*Write down which location you would like to search, the flagship Zor, the science vessel Tirolian, or the Outlying Ruins. You may change this later if you wish, right up until the time you actually depart.*

If you have at least one *Minna Point*, then turn to Page 80.

If you don't, then turn to Page 25.



Page 11

You lean in close, next to Minna, and say softly, "It's been a long time since either of us had a break. A pretty girl like you, you deserve a good time. While the world is still around to enjoy."

She rolls her eyes and says, "Can it, Kaine." She starts walking away.

"Oh come on!" you say after her, hating to see her go, but happy to watch her leave.

She casually flips you the bird—then, suddenly both of your tri-phones ring simultaneously. Minna stops and looks over her shoulder, meeting your eye for a moment. Then with one action, you both answer your phones.

"Kaine! Get back here on the double!" you hear the gruff voice of your commanding officer, Colonel Bernard, bark into your ear. "We've got some new intel on the Geo-Cure."

"Good? Bad?" you ask.

"Things just got worse..." Colonel Bernard says gravely.

Turn to Page 5.

Page 12

"You were saying?" you press the technician.

He clears his throat, and you notice a pale shade of red on his cheeks as he clears his thoughts. He says, "All I know, sir, is that the alarm went out about four hours ago, and since then, everyone who's anyone has been locked up in central command. A few teams have gone out already; I know you're one of the last ones they're waiting for."

He holds open a door for you, and you step into the decontamination chamber. The door seals behind you and a spray coats you from head to foot. You endure it with the patience of experience; moments later, you step into the inner chambers.

Turn to Page 10.

Page 13

*Mark that two hours have passed.*

Vertigo grips you as you come to, clutching the bed. A soft hand closes around yours, and a young, female voice says, "Easy, you're coming out of an induced healing coma. You will experience disorientation and then pain"

"What..?" you murmur. Then the pain hits. You thoughtfully articulate your emotions, "GAAAAAAHH!"

"Don't worry, it passes quickly," she says with sadistic calm.

"You b--" you start to swear through gritted teeth, but suddenly the surge of pain passes. Just like that, you find your skin feeling cool and tingly.

After you catch your breath, you ask, "How long have I been out?"

"Two hours," she says. "But you're better now. As soon as Colonel Bernard gets in here, you should be cleared for duty."

Looking up, you find your eyes taking in a pretty face that you've seen before. Yes, that's right, she's the same nurse you saw eying that technician earlier... what was his name? Rick.

Turn to 17 if you have at least 1 "Rick and Lisa" point, and you want to mention him.

Turn to 77 if you don't, or if you'd rather sulk indignantly.

Page 14

"Hell with that, I can fight them better from in there." You leap to your feet, leaving the shouting Sgt. Ross behind you.

You dash across the intervening space, lucky enough to not get nailed along the way, and throw yourself up the ascent ladder to the nearest Mecha, an Argos.

You hear the Zendari Battle Suit powering up its main cannon, and a quick glance reveals the big gun pointed at you. You have about 0.5 seconds to get inside the Argos, or there won't be enough of you left for the janitor to clean up.

You jam the key into the hatch—and suddenly realize that you have the key to a Mycenae, not an Argos. The latch won't open.

*What a dumb way to go, you think, staring at the key. Light engulfs you.*

Turn to the end to see your results.

Page 15

*Mark 1 hour as passing.*

You decide to split up to search the Cargo Bay. Prowling your way between the massive stacks of containers, you can't help but feel like an intruder, going places you don't belong.

You work your way along your half of the Cargo Bay, painstakingly scanning every likely looking piece of tech for signs of the Geo-Cure. No one action takes long, but it's boring, repetitive, and the place is huge.

After two painstaking hours, you reach the far end with nothing to show for your efforts but a bit of sweat inside your rad suit and a gnawing headache.

When Minna rejoins you at the far side of the room, she has a bit of a wild look around her eyes. She looks over one shoulder, then says, "Let's get out of here. I don't think it's here."

You raise one eyebrow. "Is something wrong?"

"I think..." She looks spooked, but can't seem to find words. She shakes her head. "Let's go."

The hairs on your neck stand on end, and a shiver goes through you that has nothing to do with the chill in the air. Casting one last look around the monolithic, silent Cargo Bay, you follow Minna up the ladder.

Turn back to Page 32.

Page 16

The great Bolt Cannon thrums to life beneath you, chugging out slugs, each the size of your head, faster than you can see.

A line of deep holes rips through the metallic outer plating of the Zendari Battle Suit. The massive being shudders, and then sinks to the ground, its huge legs slowly buckling underneath it. Alien blood leaks from the blast holes.

The groans of the injured fill the sudden stillness. You look around, the central courtyard has been destroyed by the attack. But the sounds of another explosion from somewhere else in the compound tell you its not over yet.

Turn to Page 64 if you chase the sounds of fighting.

Turn to Page 24 if you help take care of the injured.

Page 17

"What's your name?" you ask the pretty little thing.

She looks at you, her eyes wide, and says, "Lisa, sir. Lisa Mayberry."

"Do you know a young tech... name of Rick Tachis?"

She lowers her eyes quickly, going back to her work. But you can see a faint blush creep up her cheeks.

You nonchalantly look away, saying, "I think he said something about you. Or maybe it was someone else..."

"What did he say?" she's at your side, her voice breathless.

"Not sure... something about the most beautiful girl he'd ever seen. Can't really remember..."

Lisa tries to stammer something, her face so red it's nearly glowing. Just then the door opens, and she rushes out and Colonel Bernard steps in.

"Ah, Kaine, you're up. Good. Maybe you can tell me what the hell happened out there?"

You fill him in. Once you've finished, he says, "Smart move, Kaine! Good thinking about that Sparta. Blew the belly right out of the Battle Suit, and our soldiers were able to clean up them Ravagers quick enough."

*Gain 1 "Rick and Lisa" point.*

Turn to page 51 if you take credit.

Turn to Page 4 if you explain that it was Sgt. Ross's idea.

Page 18

The elevator powers up, and you hear the sound of it going down. Without looking, you know she's gone.

"There was no other way," a quiet voice says from nearby. You look up to see the eyes of Minna Kowalski on you, somber above her pert, upturned nose.

You take a deep breath, and look up at the ceiling. "That doesn't make it easy."

After a long moment of silence, Minna says, "Come on. We've saved the world. At least let me buy you a drink after this."

You look down at her. She's looking at you with a mask of bravado, but you can see a question underneath. Suddenly, you realize that Minna has a vulnerable side, too.

"Yeah. That sounds good." You smile at her. She smiles back, and slowly the two of you start laughing together. You find yourself naturally putting your arm around her as the two of you walk over to the computer display to watch the beginning of a new world.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Evicted from the Lonely Hearts Club."*

Turn to Page 94.

Page 19

*Mark one hour as passing. This does NOT count toward your travel time.*

You bring your Mecha in low to circle around the site, but even slow pass does not reveal any new information. At last you shift your Mecha into humanoid configuration and land, exiting the vehicle in your full protective gear.

Walking around the site, you feel dwarfed by the massive structures of the Zendari, even half-

buried as they are. It looks like this was one of their comparatively rare ground facilities, probably a site where the aliens studied the natural ecology and geology of earth. Before destroying it.

Possibly, this is one of the locations where they gathered the data they would later encode in the Geo-Cure. If so, nothing of that data remains now. After an hour of searching, you are forced to conclude that there is nothing of use here.

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

## Page 20

*Mark one hour as passing.*

This ruin looks like the remnants of a small support vessel from the Zendari fleet, half buried in the sand. It's about 100 feet from the ledge of the Monterey Canyon, and a beat up old truck is parked out in front of it. The whole area is covered in tracks of tires and human boots.

Exiting your Mecha, you approach the makeshift building. A wreath of Zendari Ravager spines decorates the doorway.

"Hello?" you call into the dark interior.

A shot rings out.

*Roll a d6 and see the chart below to see what happens.*

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1-2 | Shot misses you  |
| 3-4 | Flesh wound; you'll be fine.   |
| 5   | Artery wound. You survive only if you have the Field Medicine License. |
| 6   | Lucky shot. You are killed instantly.                                  |

*If you survive, keep reading. Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.*

"What the hell'd ya do that for?" a woman's voice rings out. "It's a man, Ernest. Ya shot a man!"

"Shouldn't be comin' round..." a slurred male voice says.

"Sorry about that," the woman says, pulling you inside the building and fussing over you. "My husband's been bit by one of them shakers and he ain't thinkin' so straight jus' now."

The interior of this Zendari vessel has been hollowed out, and the hull is being used mostly for shelter from sun and radiation now. A motley collection of old furniture and other scraps give the place an almost homey feel.

Off to one side is a heavysset fellow, glaring at you through foggy eyes. He has a large pistol cradled in one arm, and a bottle of whisky the size of your head in the other. Behind him, you see the bright eyes of a child peeking out from behind a large chair.

"Git over here and see to this leg, Mary," the man grunts. You can see a fresh snakebite wound in the man's ankle, blood still oozing from the twin punctures.

"I'm comin', I'm comin'." Once she's sure you're fine, she grabs what looks like a tourniquet and begins to tie off the man's leg.

Turn to Page 66 if you have the Field Medicine License.

Turn to Page 23 if you have the Wasteland Ranger License.

Otherwise, there is nothing you can do to help the family. You must decide where you will go next..

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Travel Time</u>	<u>if piloting the Olympia</u>
The third and final Ruin site	3	2
Zor	7	5
Tirolian	9	7

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey, once you have chosen a destination.

Page 21

With a sharp butt of your elbow, you shatter the glass protecting the massive Bolt Cannon. You grab it with both hands, grunting as you heave it to face in the direction of the Zendari.

Cursing, you fumble with ammo loops as large as yourself, while more shouts and explosions sound from the behind you. "Hah!" you cry out as you get the ammo connected. You center the alien Battle Suit in your sights.

"Eat bolts, scumbag," you hiss, and open fire, just as the massive alien turns to look at you.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement: "Guts or Glory."*

Turn to Page 16 if you have a Heavy Weapons License.

Turn to Page 22 if you do not have the Heavy Weapons License.

Page 22

You pull the trigger and the Bolt Cannon coughs and sputters, then explodes. The blast throws you back, and you barely get your arm up in time to protect your eyes. As you lay in the wreckage of the massive gun, you wrack your brain, trying to figure out what you did wrong.

You'll never have a chance to find out. The Zendari, its attention drawn by the minor explosion, opens fire on your location. It's a bloody death, but hey, at least it's quick.

Flip to the end to find out how well you did.

Page 23

"Stop!" you say in a sharp voice. "What kind of snake bit him?"

The woman frowns, "I told you, a shaker."

"A rattlesnake? Dull brown, triangular head, a rattle on the end?"

"That's what I said, a shaker!" She's growing impatient.

You shake your head, "That shouldn't be fatal, unless he's moving around on it a lot and drinking alcohol. Alcohol's a blood thinner. Fastest way to make sure a snake bite will kill you."

The woman goes pale and rips the whiskey bottle out of the man's hand, despite his groaned protests.

"Sit him down," you say, "and make sure he doesn't move too much. You want to wrap a bandage on it, not too tight, but tight enough. Just to keep the poison from moving around too much."

You help the woman apply a compression wrap to the man's leg, and show her how to splint it after that.

"Keep him off it for a few days and he should be fine."

"I can't thank you enough," she says, her voice subdued.

You look around the hollowed out Zendari hull. There's not going to be anything here of interest to you. You say goodbye and take your leave.

As you're on the way out, the child shouts "Goodbye!"

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Lifesaver."*

You must decide where you will go next..

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Travel Time</u>	<u>if piloting the Olympia</u>
The third and final Ruin site	3	2
Zor	7	5
Tirolian	9	7

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey, once you have chosen a destination.

Page 24

*Mark 2 hours as passing.*

Dropping the Bolt Cannon, you rush to the injured man's side. He mutters, "Help me..." through charred lips, his eye a clear spot of blue in the depths of a fire-ravaged face.

Fighting back a shudder of revulsion, you gesture to a med tech passing nearby with a stretcher and help get the man onto it. Together, the two of you take him to the infirmary.

More explosions sound in the distance, but before long, all sounds of combat fall silent. You take as much time as you dare to get help to the most critically injured people, but you know that more is at stake than these people's lives.

Just as you stand up and stretch your back, you hear a familiar voice shout, "Kaine, you devil! I should have known you'd be just fine!"

You turn to see Colonel Bernard approaching you.

*You have gained the Medal of Achievement: "Lifesaver."*

Turn to Page 51.

Page 25

Sergeant Ross, known as 'Mac,' to his friends, is a crusty, graying tech whose gruff exterior hides a brilliant mind. He is the next best thing to god when it comes to dealing with the Mecha.

"You," he says, singling you out. "What licenses do you have again?"

*Alex Kaine is a skilled operative, but here's where you get to choose just how skilled. If you're playing with Normal difficulty, then pick five of the licenses below; these indicate what areas Alex is trained in.*

*If you're on playing with Challenge difficulty, only pick three licenses. Or, if you're playing an Easy game, then just take all seven.*

Jet Pilot License:	Training in flying supersonic jets and the fastest Mecha.
Heavy Weapons License:	Training in operating powerful personal weaponry.
Advanced Gunnery License:	Trained in operating Mecha with the heaviest firepower.
Wasteland Ranger License:	Trained in survival and navigation techniques for the wasteland.
Field Mechanics License:	Trained in performing field repairs on Mecha and other tech.
Scientific Equipment License:	Trained in scientific theory and observational equipment.
Field Medicine License:	Trained in first aid and the use of portable medical technology.

Once you have refreshed his memory, Sgt. Ross nods and slides open a metal grating to reveal a window into the Mecha Hangar. Your first glance of the great machines still awes you. Most of them stand over forty feet tall, sleeping giants, waiting for a pilot to guide them in humanity's defense.

"I tried to save one of each for you. Ms. Kowalski just claimed the Athens, but otherwise, take your pick!" Sgt. Ross says. With a flick of your finger, you pull up the design documents for each of the Mecha.

**The Athens**

A scout and research Mecha, the Athens relies on missiles and cloaking technology to keep it safe. The Athens' sensitive instruments make it a common choice for science officers.

Weapons: 3                      Armor: 3                      Special: Scientific Sensors

*Unavailable – Minna claimed it.*

**The Argos**

A balanced Mecha that is both strong and agile. Its primary limitation is that its weapon systems are all close range. The Argos has an attractive, humanoid profile which makes it popular in films and stories.

Weapons: 3                      Armor: 4                      Special: Well-loved

*Available.*

**The Corinth**

Designed to be used by a commanding officer, the Corinth is a capable battler that is loaded with powerful and sensitive communications equipment to keep the team organized.

Weapon: 4                      Armor: 4                      Special: Communications

*Unavailable – down for repairs.*

**The Olympia**

The smallest and fastest of the Mecha, capable of fantastic feats of agility, both in the sky and on the ground.

Weapons: 4                      Armor: 3                      Special: Fast

*Available – A Jet Pilot License is required to pilot this Mecha.*

**The Sparta**

The largest and strongest Mecha, loaded with devastating weapons and heavy armor. Powerful engines give it a high top-speed, so that it can keep up with its smaller partners, but it pays the price for its heavy armor with limited maneuverability.

Weapons: 5                      Armor: 5                      Special: Clumsy

*Available – An Advanced Gunnery License is required to pilot this Mecha.*

**The Mycenae**

A Mecha primarily known for its long-range laser. It can fire up to 12 miles with complex computational analysis, letting it snipe targets from afar.

Weapons: 4                      Armor: 4                      Special: Long Range

*Available – An Advanced Gunnery License is required to pilot this Mecha.*

**The Delphi**

An experiment in time travel that did not work out. The Delphi vanished on its first mission.

Weapons: 3                      Armor: 4                      Special: Time-Travel

*Unavailable – Further information classified.*

*When you have made up your mind, write down the Mecha you chose, and make a note of its Weapons, Armor and Special ability. Make sure that you have the necessary licenses to pilot your Mecha of choice! Then continue reading.*

"A good choice," grumbles Sgt. Ross. He folds up the data screen and says, "Go ahead and suit up while I prep—"

He's interrupted by a tremendous crash that shakes the whole building, followed by the loud claxon of an alarm.

"What the hell was that!" you shout.

"I don't know, kid," the engineer says. "And I'm not sure I want to find out."

The two of you race to the door and throw it open as another crash and an explosion rocks the building. Outside, in the central courtyard, you see a massive Zendari Battle Suit breaking through the Palladium's dome. Shattered plastiglass bits rain down on people, who are running in all directions to escape the invader.

Seeing a live Zendari still awes you. The Battle Suits stand over fifty feet tall, larger than even your tallest Mecha, and they are barely more than personal armor for the huge aliens. They stand on eight limbs, like giant, walking starfish, with a great, gaping eye in the middle. The back two limbs are longer and articulated for strength and mobility, while the front two are agile and dextrous. It is in these that the Zendari holds the massive gun it now levels at a building across from you.

An explosion of light and sound erupts from the weapon, and the building it was pointed at is just gone, nothing remaining except a crater. Cries of pain sound from the area around the building, where rubble has crushed people who were trying to escape.

Mac's jaw has been hanging open, but now he snaps it shut and runs back inside the building.

Turn to Page 35 if you follow Mac inside, toward the Hangar Bay, to try and get to your Mecha.

Turn to Page 21 if you would rather spin up a nearby Heavy Bolt Cannon and blast the alien now.

## Page 26

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

You push your Mecha as fast as you dare, without losing the ability to keep track of what's on the ground. The monotony of your trip is interrupted by a bleep on the scanners. Zendari technology identified.

You veer toward the location indicated, sweeping down lower to get a better look. As you come over the hill, you see an uncharted ruin site, the mangled remains of distinctively Zendari tech clearly visible.

You circle the site. Something down there is still active, but your scanners can only tell you so much. To investigate further, you'll have to land and exit your Mecha in a protective rad suit.

Turn to Page 96 if you land and investigate.

Turn to Page 50 if you hurry onward.

## Page 27

After a few moments, you spot what looks like it might be the ruins of a crashed Zendari spaceship in the distance. You begin trudging across the landscape to get there; it's not quite far enough to be worth shifting back into jet form.

Suddenly, you stop, all senses alert. You direct the computer to zoom in on a certain pattern on the ground.

A cold chill enters your blood when you realize that is the distinctive footprint of a Zendari Battle Suit. They are here.

Without moving further, you follow the tracks with your camera. They vanish into a cliff-face, where—upon closer observation—you can see signs of disturbance.

Carefully taking aim at one of the disturbances, you fire.

The cliff face explodes in shards of metal and huge globules of Zendari blood. You shout in triumph, but just then another Zendari Battle Suit bursts free from concealment farther down the cliff, guns blazing!



*You must fight one Zendari Battle Suit at Range 1! Note your current page number, then turn to Page 99 if you need instructions on how to fight.*

If you win the battle, turn to Page 47.  
Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.

### Page 28

*Mark fifteen minutes as passing.*

The nearest Ravager flies at you with almost inhuman speed, teeth gaping for you and claws extended. You pull the trigger and your gun barks, tearing the thing's head off. But another is right behind it.

The sound of your own shouts fills your ears. Behind you, Minna's voice joins yours, punctuated by the rhythm of barking gunshots. A ravager comes close enough to knock off your helmet before you blast its head off, but your headlamp falls to the floor and flickers to darkness. From then on, the only light you have is the flash of your muzzle firing.

When it's over, you stand panting, fingers twitching. You sigh and lean onto Minna, just as she leans onto you. When you catch your breath, you recover your headlamp. The walls all the way down the corridor are painted with alien blood.

"I think that's the last of them," Minna says.

"Good. I think I'm out of ammo."

"Let's keep moving. I don't think there are more, but I don't want to chance it."

After a moment with her datapad, she explains there are three directions you could leave from here. Back toward the entrance, into the Hangar Deck. Up a level, to the Med Bay, or deeper into the ship, toward the Engine Room.

Turn to Page 32 if you go to the Hangar Deck.  
Turn to Page 59 if you go to the Med Bay.  
Turn to page 73 if you go to the Engine Room.

### Page 29

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

The long flight is interrupted by smoke on the horizon. You do a double take before realizing the significance of that. There shouldn't be any life out here at all. Checking the trajectory, you realize it would only take a few moments to veer off course for a better look.

As you approach the location where the thin line of black smoke rises from the ground, you can see the remains of some sort of caravan. A number of trucks and other vehicles are stopped, with what look like bodies scattered among them. At least one of the trucks is on fire, which looks to be the source of the smoke.

Turn to Page 72 if you would like to land and investigate.  
Turn to Page 50 if you ignore the scene and push on.

Page 30

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

A darkening of the horizon catches your attention. You sit up, checking your scanners, but there is no sign of alien technology in that direction. Peering more closely through the cockpit window at the shadow, you suddenly feel your gut sink.

You see before you one of the terrible wasteland sandstorms that the empty deserts of the world now lend themselves to. You swear with all the color and range you can manage. You'll be safe inside your Mecha, but the mech's sensors will be all but useless once you're in the storm—if you don't crash outright.

Shifting through the range of your sensors to scan the storm brings you no good news. This is going to be a bad one.

You have only two choices... try to push through, or hunker down and wait for it to pass.

If you choose to land until the storm passes, you will be safe inside your Mecha. *If you choose to wait, mark off two additional hours as passing. These do not count toward your travel time.* Then turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

If you choose to risk pushing on through the sandstorm, then roll a d6. Write down your result, then turn to Page 60.

Page 31

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

As you tear through the skies, you notice below you some shapes in the sand up ahead that do not look organic. Flipping on your sensors, you are able to detect Zendari technology down there.

Whatever it is, it looks like it's been there a while; the red, wasteland sand has almost completely buried it. Consulting your charts, you can easily determine that this site is not recorded on any maps. No one has searched here before.

At the speeds you're traveling, you'll be past it in a moment. You must decide quickly whether to stop and search the location or not.

Turn to Page 50 if you continue on your way.

Turn to Page 19 if you stop to investigate.

Page 32

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You come out into a vast, dark space, too big for your meager headlamps to illuminate. Here and there in the shadowy depths, you see hints of the alien curves of Zendari ships, their dark bulk dead and silent now. This must be the Hangar Deck.

*If this is your first time in the Hangar Deck, roll a d6.*

4 or higher                      Turn to Page 6

3 or lower                        Turn to Page 79

*If you have made this roll before, then skip it and keep reading.*

You make your way through the Hangar Deck, but are not able to find any signs of the Geo Cure. Most of the computer systems are dead in this part of the ship, so even if the data was stored here, it's gone now.

"My records show that there should be an entrance to the Cargo Bay here somewhere. If we want to be thorough, we should search it, but that would take time; at least two to three hours. What do you think?"

Turn to Page 87 if you go out a small door on the upper deck with light coming through it.

Turn to Page 76 if instead you would like to go through a large, dark door on the lower deck.

Turn to Page 61 if you look for the entrance to the Cargo Bay, and are willing to take time to search it. (If you haven't been to the Cargo Bay already.)

### Page 33

"So... you want me to take on all those aliens, all at once, all by myself. 'Kay. Right. Got it." You flash ol' Mac a grin. When you see the worried look in his eyes, you just grin a little wider and grab the biggest gun you can find.

Stepping out in plain sight in front of all the aliens, you holler, "Hey ugly, OVER HERE!" A moment's silence falls over the hangar.

"That's right," you grin, and open up with your machine gun.

The first salvo rips apart two of the Ravagers, but this just pisses off the other dozen aliens. Hooting and hollering, you take off running, leading the Ravagers on a merry goose chase around the Hanger.

Suddenly, you hear a shout from Ross. He's by the Sparta, shouting, "Wire! Cut the ... wire!" and pointing frantically.

You follow his gaze to an electrical box on the wall next to you. You flip it open, and your gut sinks as dozens of wires spill out. You look back at Ross, but he's already gone for cover. You're on your own, and the Ravagers are closing in.

*You have gained a Medal of Achievement: "Guts or Glory!"*

Turn to page 98 if you have a Scientific Equipment License or a Field Mechanics License. *If you have neither of these, then roll one six-sided dice now.*

Turn to page 9 if your result was 4 or higher.

Turn to page 98 if your result was 3 or lower.

### Page 34

A swift figure cuts you off and slips into the elevator. With a quick press of a button, Minna seals the glass doors behind her.

You stop, stunned. "Why?"

Minna eyes are clear and sad on the other side of the glass. "I can't let you do this, Alex," she says. She looks up toward the ceiling and says, "Move the data to me, please!"

AS YOU WISH, the presence says.

"No! Minna, don't do this!" you press your hand against the glass, looking at her desperately.

Her face grows pained, and she glances quickly at the girl. Then she looks up at you and says, "Why not, Alex?"

Turn to Page 46 if you say nothing.

Turn to Page 38 if you say, "Because I love you."

Page 35

Turning on your heel, you dart back into the building as explosions sound behind you. Your feet beat a tattoo on the corridor floors as you race for the Hangar, but when you throw the door open into the Hangar bay, another explosion greets you there.

“Get down!” Sgt. Ross shouts, pulling you down beside him. Risking a glance over the railing a moment later, you see that another of the huge Zendari Battle Suits has broken into the Palladium facility here. As you watch, its great metal belly opens to disgorge a half dozen Zendari Ravagers, small aliens that live for nothing but destruction.

Sgt. Ross is swearing under his breath when you duck back down. He peeks quickly, then whispers, “Here’s what we do. That thing is standing right over a Sparta that’s down for repairs. If I can get to it, I can rig it to blow sky high. It’ll rip open the alien. But I need you to cover me. Got it?”

Turn to page 33 if you agree to distract the aliens.

Turn to page 14 if you’d rather ignore him and get into the nearest functioning Mecha.

Page 36

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

Your Mecha, in jet form, flies across the countryside, red wasteland whipping by beneath you. Without any warning, a spray of earth rises from a hillside near you, and Zendari gunfire tears across the air in front of your eyes.

“Son of a monkey’s uncle!” you shout, swerving into evasive action. Alarms scream in your ears, and two shudders go through your Mecha as meter-long Zendari bullets slam into your mech’s defensive armoring. Quickly re-calibrating your sensors, you see that two Zendari Soldiers have emerged from the hillside.

It was an ambush, and the fact that you fell into it may cost you your life.

*Take 1 damage before this fight begins. (See Page 99 for instructions on taking damage).*

*You must fight two Zendari Soldiers at Range 0! Note your current page number, then turn to Page 99 for instructions on how to fight.*

Turn to Page 50 if you destroy both Zendari Soldiers, or escape.

Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.

Page 37

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

As you fly along, your attention is caught by a line of vehicles slowly crawling across the red wasteland. You sweep in closer for a better look.

The rad shielding on the vehicles makes them look heavy and bulky. There are over a dozen. Most of them look like retrofitted trucks and RVs for carrying people, but a few in the back carry nothing but large tanks. Probably water, or gas.

You get close enough that in the window of one big camper, you can see the faces of a couple children pointing and waving.

Turn to Page 45 if you have the Wasteland Ranger License.

Turn to Page 50 if you do not, to continue your journey.

Page 38

“Because...” you swallow hard, tears burning your eyes. “Because I love you.”

The elevator doors slide open. After a moment, Minna steps out to wrap her arms around you. You hold her in a fierce hug. Her hair smells of sun and flowers.

“I need to go...” you whisper softly.

The sound of the elevator door closing again makes both of you look up. The Geo-Cure girl stands in the heart of the elevator, her shoulders shaking.

“What?” you step closer, extending your hand in a futile gesture.

She looks up, her silver hair mussed, tears staining her cheeks. She looks into your eyes and whispers, “Thank you, Alex. You were kind to me.”

Then she pushes the button, and in a flash, she is gone.

You sink to your knees... “Damn it!” you shout, slamming your fist against the glass. Minna's arms wrap around your shoulders, holding you, comforting you.

The terraforming engine knows what to do as soon as it receives the Geo-Cure. Green lights flood across one of the main displays in the Command Room. You look up as a shout of cheers goes up from the assembled faces.

GOODBYE ALEX KAIN. YOU HUMANS HAVE SHOWN COURAGE, SELF-SACRIFICE AND RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF FEAR.

I WILL KEEP AN EYE ON YOU. With that, your sense of the presence is gone.

Reports flood in from around the world of water returning to the atmosphere, plant life growing at an alarm rate, oceans returning and even cities re-building themselves. But at that moment, all you can think about is you and Minna, and the way her fingers touch your scalp and tug your hair.

You kiss while the world comes back to life.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, “Evicted from the Lonely Hearts Club.”*

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, “Hero of the Year!”*

Congratulations, you win! The world has been saved, you got the girl, and if one small person had to die for it, at least she chose it herself. Turn to the end to see your results.

Page 39

*Mark one hour as passing. This does NOT count toward your travel time.*

You switch the mech into humanoid configuration to land. Quickly donning your rad suit, you let yourself out of the large vehicle and descend to earth to investigate the space debris.

The chunk is not big, about the size of a large building. The curve of the hull seems to indicate it broke off of an unusually massive Zendari vessel, perhaps a capital ship.

Inside, you find a trove of technology and data. Alien scientific equipment and computers are scattered, damaged, throughout the interior of the small chunk of vessel.

Going through the wreckage, you pick up signs of an alien life form. You barely think twice—until you realize that this alien signature is not Zendari.

Heart pounding, you follow the signal, to discover a small crescent of alien material, locked in a containment field. It seems the Zendari themselves were studying this. With a few moments effort, you crack open the containment field, releasing the crescent of alien tech.

This may be the first tangible evidence of alien civilizations other than human or Zendari.

If you would like to take a piece of the non-Zendari alien tech with you, write down that you have an *Alien Crescent*.

Turn to Page 50 to radio in your find and continue on your way.

#### Page 40

*Mark one hour as passing.*

Kevin curses you for a fool, but he's more than willing to take advantage of your impending death to get a better look at the defenses. He scans the entry way, taking detailed notes, while you chafe at every delay.

Finally, he gives you the go ahead to go in. Drawing your sidearm, you cautiously approach the what has been deemed the easiest access point to the Tirolian, a former waste chute that now serves as a long, human-scaled tunnel leading up into the bowels of the ship.

The only warning you have is a click as the smooth Zendari engineering activates. You leap backwards, into a roll, and you hear the explosions going off before Kevin even starts shouting.

You come to your feet, running full tilt for the light at the end of the tunnel, but you already know it's too far away.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Heroic Resolve."*

Roll a d6.

If you roll 2 or higher, then the explosion mistifies you. Turn to the end to see your results.

If you roll 1, then you escape by the skin of your teeth. Turn to Page 55 to continue.

#### Page 41

"Try to show some backbone once in a while!" you snap to Kevin. You turn on your heel and stalk to your Mecha. Clambering up, you swing yourself into the pilots seat and whirl the huge gun arm into action.

You see Kevin screaming at you in rage as you aim. You pull the trigger, and a lance of white-hot power shoots from the Mecha's powerful primary weapon. It blasts into the side of the Tirolian, tearing through the layers of defensive armor. Kevin's jaw drops, then he turns and runs, covering his head.

"Hah, take that!" you snark, as the dust clouds clear to show a giant hole ripped in the side of the Tirolian.

Then a rumbling sound seems to grow. You stand up in your uncovered mech cockpit, shading your eyes to get a better look at the ship.

The explosion throws you back, knocking over the mech itself and sending you flying. For a moment, you know nothing except light, sound, and the gurgling, laundry-machine motion your stomach makes as you go spinning through the air.

Then, you know the ground. Very, very well.

Roll a d6.

If you roll a 6, a fragment from the explosion kills you instantly. Turn to the end to see your results.

If you roll a 5 or less, then you survive the initial explosion. Turn to Page 55 to continue.

Page 42

"I think she likes you, kid," you say, once you are alone in the corridor again. He's not that much younger than you, but as you watch him blush, you feel like it's a world of difference.

"I wouldn't... know about that, sir," he says stiffly, and gestures for you to walk through a door he holds open for you.

When you step in, the door swiftly seals behind you and the decontamination spray begins. You weather it with the patience of experience, and in moments, you step into the inner chambers.

*Gain one "Rick and Lisa" point.*

Turn to Page 10.

Page 43

*Mark one hour as passing.*

Your jet peels out past the ruins of San Diego, over what used to be the Pacific Ocean. This is one of the most recent Zendari crash sites to have been discovered, just off of what used to be the continental shelf.

You come in low, examining the once-undersea terrain. The land is sharper here, more stark, less worn by wind and rain. Brown, dried up remnants of vast seaweed beds color the valleys.

There—the signal is getting stronger. You shift your Mecha into humanoid form and come in to land next to an old submarine that lays cracked on its side, still rusting where it fell when the oceans evaporated under the Rain of Fire.

The ruins must be around here somewhere...

If you have the Wasteland Ranger License, then turn to page 27.

If you do not, then turn to Page 2.

Page 44

The men outside try several ways to open the elevator doors, but there's nothing they can do. You sit with the girl under your arm, oblivious to the outside world.

"Talk to me..." she says. Curled up like this, it's hard to imagine that she is the Geo-Cure, with the entire data plan for all of planet earth encoded in her genes.

"What would you like me to tell you about?" you say, playing with her hair.

She holds on to you imperceptibly tighter. "Why do they want to kill me?"

You take a deep breath, and then start talking. You explain to her about the Zendari War, and the Rain of Fire, and the Geo-Cure. You explain who and what she is, and why she's here. She cuddles against you as you speak, getting comfortable. She feels warm and soft, laid out against your body.

You run your fingers through her hair as you finish. It's a silken, soft silver. Finally, you take a deep breath and ask, "Now that you understand... what do you want to do?"

A single shiver goes through her body, and she's silent for a long moment. Then a fire comes into her eyes, and she says, "I want to stay here with you."

You feel a rumble in the earth deep beneath you. Colonel Bernard's face is shouting at the glass door, but you ignore him. You say quietly, "Here's where we find out if I've destroyed the world."

The girl sits up suddenly and looks you in the eyes. Her eyes are large, and a startling, clear silver. She touches your face softly and says, "Thank you." Then she leans in and kisses you on the lips.

An earthquake rocks the Palladium, tearing apart the building near you. You pull her close to you,

and the two of you hold each other while the world burns.

*If you had the "11<sup>th</sup> Hour" Medal of Achievement, cross it off now.  
Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Evicted from the Lonely Hearts Club."*

The world is over, but at least you got the girl. For about five minutes. You lady-killer. No... literally. All of them. Turn to the end to see your results.

#### Page 45

You are about to gun the engines and continue on your way when a nagging thought at the back of your mind rises to the surface.

Those people are headed directly into Death Valley.

You bank your jet around in a tight curve and come to a landing right in front of the caravan, shifting to humanoid form as you touch the ground. Through your loudspeaker, you say, "Citizens, this is Agent Kaine of the RADF. Where do you think you are going?"

The vehicles of the caravan come to a stop one at a time. There's a moment of silence, and then you hear some cursing through a loudspeaker they apparently don't realize they have on. Finally, a voice says, "Tucson, sir. They're expecting us."

You shake your head and say, "You're going the wrong direction. Up ahead is Death Valley. The shabby shielding you have on those campers won't protect you from those rads."

You get the caravan sorted out going the right direction, and then continue on your way.

*You gain the Medal of Achievement, "Lifesaver."*

Turn to Page 50.

#### Page 46

You clench your fists, feeling the nails bite into your palms.

Minna gives you a sad smile. She reaches up and puts her palm against the glass. You lift your hand to place it across from hers. She pushes the button.

And just like that, she's gone.

You bow your head, shoulders shaking. After a moment, a small hand reaches into yours. You look down to see the girl holding your hand. The fingers of her other hand settle on your arm, and she holds your arm as though she never wants to let you go.

The terraforming engine knows what to do as soon as it receives the Geo-Cure. Data floods into the central computing system, showing up as a pattern of green lights spreading across one of the vast displays in the Command Room.

"Yes!" someone shouts.

Colonel Bernard whoops, and suddenly the room bursts out in laughter and hugs. After a moment of jubilation, one old tech looks somberly at the screen and takes his hat off. One by one, everyone falls silent.

Minna was an outstanding member of the team. She will not be forgotten.

The appointed hour comes. You feel the vibration of a great engine coming to life in the earth's mantle deep beneath your feet. Then the terraforming begins. Reports flood in from around the world of water being re-introduced to the atmosphere. Of plant life spontaneously growing from previously



barren earth. Of radiation levels decreasing.

You and the Geo-Cure girl (you named her Jenny) go forward into a brand new world, and nothing will ever be the same again.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Evicted from the Lonely Hearts Club."*

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Hero of the Year!"*

Congratulations, you won! Turn to the end to see your results.

#### Page 47

*Mark one hour as passing.*

You continue on without wasting any more time to the ruin site.

What you find looks like the remains of a cargo vessel. Remarkably, the power supply is still functional, and there are several signs that the Zendari you ran into had been using this place as a home base. One of the chambers deep in the vessel is even filled with water; that's probably where they slept.

While the huge chamber of water has incalculable value in today's water-starved society, you are forced to admit that a small cargo ship probably had little in the way of important technological secrets.

You radio in your findings and shift into jet mode to hit the skies.

The next site is not far to the north, just off what used to be the California skies. After scouring the skies for an hour, you find the ruin on a ledge of the Monterey Canyon, next to the massive, bleached white skeleton of a whale.

Turn to Page 48 if you are piloting the Argos. Otherwise, turn to Page 20 to explore the site.

#### Page 48

*Mark one hour as passing.*

This ruin looks like the remnants of a small support vessel from the Zendari fleet, half buried in the sand. It's about 100 feet from the ledge of the Monterey Canyon, and a beat up old truck is parked out in front of it. The whole area is covered in tracks of tires and human boots.

As you bring down your Argos, a little boy runs out of the building, his mother swiftly chasing him. She catches the boy and shades her eyes as you approach in your rad suit. Then she gestures for you to follow and leads you inside their building—beneath a wreath of Ravager Spines hanging over the door.

"It's not safe out there, rads and all. What brings you 'round these parts?"

You're taken aback by her accent. This is old world Oklahoma, right here.

Before you can reply, you hear a moan of pain from deeper inside the dome.

"What's that?" you ask.

The woman frowns, "My husband. He got bit by one of them shakers."

A heavyset man staggers out from behind a makeshift curtain, limping heavily. "Mary!" he shouts, "Where's the slick? Are you gonna cut open this bite or what? I'm dying here!"

She hurries to his side and produces a large kitchen knife, while he slams through some cupboards, eventually coming out with a whisky bottle the size of your head.

Turn to Page 66 if you have the Field Medicine License.

Turn to Page 23 if you have the Wasteland Ranger License.

Otherwise, there is nothing you can do to help the family. You must decide where you will go next.

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Travel Time</u>	<u>if piloting the Olympia</u>
The third and final Ruin site	3	2
Zor	7	5
Tirolian	9	7

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey, once you have chosen a destination.

### Page 49

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

The bleeping of a sensor arrests your attention, and you lean over the command console to see what's happening. Zendari technology detected. Checking the location on your map, you see the site is just above the next hillside.

You look out the faceplate of the Mecha at the red wasteland below you. As the hill rolls past, a valley opens up before you. At the heart of the valley, several alien shapes are half-buried in red dust.

Upon seeing the site, your excitement vanishes. You explored this site just a few months ago with another agent and found nothing. You quickly check the records, which confirm that this site has been cataloged and searched already.

There's nothing else here to see. You continue on your way, only briefly noticing, in passing, the alien beauty of the shapes below you.

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

### Page 50

The wasteland of what used to be America stretches out beneath you in red sand, cracked rock, and the occasional stubborn bush. Dust devils whip their way across the irradiated landscape. To be outside of your Mecha down there for more than a few minutes would mean death.

Fortunately, you are safe inside the cockpit, screaming through the sky at cruising altitude with your Mecha in jet configuration. There is little to do except watch the clouds change, and trace the lines of old dried up riverbeds as you pass over them.

*You should already know how much time is required to get to your destination. Make sure to keep track of time as you travel. If enough time has passed, skip to the bottom of this page to see which page to go to.*

*Otherwise, if not enough time has passed yet, then roll 2d6 and turn to the page number indicated below to see what happens during your journey. (Most of the following pages will instruct you to mark one hour passing.)*

*If you ever roll a number you have already rolled, then ignore that result, mark one hour as passing (which counts toward your travel time) and continue as normal.*

If you roll...	Then turn to...
2	Page 26
3	Page 30
4	Page 29
5	Page 69
6	Page 31

7	Page 65
8	Page 49
9	Page 36
10	Page 37
11	Page 67
12	Page 56

*If you have completed your journey, then turn to the page indicated, based on your destination.*

Zor	Page 92.
Tirolian	Page 88.
First Ruin Site	Page 43.
Third Ruin Site	Page 81.

### Page 51

Colonel Bernard sits heavily. His leg is oozing blood, but he waves you off, saying, “Kaine, this nonsense has cost us precious time. You have to move! The Hangar's a wreck, but old Mac kept your Mecha safe for you. Go get it and get out of here. Have you decided where you want to search yet?”

He nods gravely as you explain your plan. Then he shakes his head and sighs, “You're the last one out. No one else has had any luck yet. You're my ace in the hole, Alex. Don't let us down.”

Without further delay you suit up in your Mecha and hit the skies.

*Refer to the destination you chose earlier, and make a note now of how long it will take to get there. (You may change your mind at this time, if you wish.)*

<i>Zor (the flagship)</i>	<i>9 hours away (or 7 hours distant if you are piloting the Olympia)</i>
<i>Tirolian (the science vessel)</i>	<i>6 hours away (or 4 in the Olympia)</i>
<i>Outlying Ruins</i>	<i>4 hours away (or 3 in the Olympia) to the nearest site.</i>

Turn to Page 50.

### Page 52

*Mark one more hour as passing.*

Intensive analysis of the Zendari mainframe—with periodic breaks to rest on the conveniently placed, if dusty, couch of the family that once lived here—reveals what you have all been hoping for.

“Yes!” you shout, leaping and pumping your fist in the air.

The data shows information about the Geo-Cure. There is a wealth of technical information—not the cure itself, but enough to give your guys something to work with. What's more, this chunk of computers identifies itself as being a part of the Zor spaceship.

You know where you're going next.

Without any need to track for Zendari tech on the ground, you gun for maximum altitude as soon as you're airborne and put on the speed.

*At these speeds, there is no chance of random encounters. Mark four hours as passing, or three if you are piloting the Olympia.*

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, “Hypersonic!”*

Turn to Page 92.

Page 53

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

With an effort of will, you break free of the indecision that seemed to grip your feet, and you run for the door.

You slam into the wall unexpectedly, causing your head to ring. You touch your face; there's blood there.

FREE ME.

You feel your way along the wall, searching for a door; then you realize that you've already gone through it and are in the tunnel outside. You've dropped your flashlight somewhere, but fumbling with your fingers for a moment, you manage to get your head-lamp turned on.

FREE ME.

Your gut flips, and you turn and run as fast as you can in what you hope is the right direction. For a long few minutes, you hear nothing except the sound of your own feet pounding on the metal deck. You imagine, or think you imagine, a snarl of frustration somewhere in the back of your mind.

At last, you come out back into the Cargo Bay. Minna is there, with a worried look on her face.

"Where have you been?" she asks. "I've been calling for you!"

You shake your head. "Later. Let's get out of here."

She gives you a long, concerned look, but then sighs and follows you out of the Cargo Bay.

Turn to Page 32.

Page 54

You follow her gaze to look out over the last vestiges of water. The gulls frolic and play in the waves, totally heedless of the fact that it would kill you to even stand near that water. As you watch, one of them chases another, angrily pecking at the other's tail feathers.

Despite yourself, you laugh. Moving up to stand next to her, you say, "Last birds on earth, and they still fight with each other. I guess it's just nice to see life going on."

Minna turns to look at you, a mysterious expression in her eyes. After a moment, she says, "I didn't know you had it in you, Kaine."

You open your mouth to respond—but at that moment, both of your tri-phones ring simultaneously. With one action, you each reach into your pockets to retrieve them.

"Kaine! Get back here on the double!" you hear the gruff voice of your commanding officer, Colonel Bernard, bark into your ear. "We've got some new intel on the Geo-Cure."

"Good? Bad?" you ask.

"Things just got worse..." Colonel Bernard says gravely.

*Gain 1 Minna point.*

Turn to Page 5.

Page 55

You pull yourself up from the dirt, wiping blood out of your eyes. Your body feels like it's been rung through a blender. Behind you, the ruins of the Tirolian smoke and smolder.

Kevin's face is black with soot. He can barely move, but if looks could kill, his gaze would finish the job the explosion started. He mutters something.

“What?”

Pointedly ignoring him, you struggle to your feet. You spit out dirt all the way to your mech. Once you get it righted and are flying out, you send a single word back to headquarters.

“Oops.”

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey. But first, decide where you want to go. It will take 8 hours to get to the Zor, or 5 hours to the nearest Ruin site. (6 or 4, respectively, if you are flying the Olympia.)

### Page 56

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

As you pass over the red landscape, an alert from your scanners catches your attention. Zendari technology detected.

You hone in on the location, and find a small chunk of a spacecraft, badly damaged by its descent through atmosphere. It's also nearly buried in the sand and red dust—without the scanners, you may never have noticed it.

There is also some other technological reading on it, unlike anything you've ever seen before. But to investigate would require time...

Turn to Page 50 if you hurry on your way.

Turn to Page 39 if you would like to land and investigate.

### Page 57

“I'll do it,” you say out loud.

“What do you mean?” the girl asks, her voice tiny. She squeezes your hand, but you pull away and stand up. She stands, following you, looking confused.

You meet her eyes, then kiss her gently on the forehead, and exit the elevator.

“What the hell is this, Kaine?” Colonel Bernard growls.

“I'll take her place.”

Colonel Bernard looks uncertain, but says, “You can't do that, son. The data is in her.”

NOT ANYMORE. I'VE MOVED THE DATA TO ALEX KAINE. HE IS NOW THE GEO-CURE.

From the looks on the faces of the people around you, you think you can safely assume that everyone heard the presence that time. A chill goes through your bones.

You look at the elevator down to the Terraforming Engine. You reach out to shake Colonel Bernard's hand, and then start toward the elevator.

Turn to Page 34 if Minna is alive, and you have at least 3 Minna Points.

Turn to Page 91 if either of those conditions is not true.

### Page 58

When you finally come into the central Command Room of the Palladium, Colonel Bernard and the other top officials are waiting for you. The Geo-Cure follows you in, trembling like a bird. When she sees all the people in this room, her eyes go wide, and she presses herself closer to you.

“Congratulations, son. You've done it!” Colonel Bernard comes up and shakes your hand vigorously. He gives the girl under your arm an uncertain look. “Is this... her?”

You nod. He looks at her again and then shakes his head. He says, “It's a damn shame.”

"What do you mean, sir?"

He gives you the same look, then asks, "You don't know?"

An uneasy feeling creeps up your gut. "Know what, sir?"

The Colonel takes a deep breath and smooths the few hairs he has across his mostly bald pate. He lets his breath out explosively and says, "Crying shame. We discussed the possibility of the Geo-Cure being coded into the genetics of a living being. Never thought it'd be a human. Makes sense I guess. Anyway, point is, in that scenario... using the subject as the Geo Cure... well, boy, it'll kill 'em."

Unconsciously, you find yourself holding on a little tighter to the girl under your arm. "We've found another way by now, right?"

"Crying shame," Bernard says again, with another explosive sigh. Finally, he says, "Well, come on. Better get it over with."

You look down at the girl under your arm. Her eyes are wide with fear.

Turn to Page 83 if you turn over the girl.

Turn to Page 86 if you refuse.

### Page 59

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

Like everything in the interior of Zendari vessels, the medical bay is built on a scale too big for humans to even hardly comprehend, let alone interact with. Great banks of medical equipment line the walls, interspersed by weird tubes and valves of inscrutable purpose.

Minna scans the eerily silent vastness of it and sighs with satisfaction. "This is more like it. These computer systems are still active. Maybe I can get something here."

She activates her small, autonomous interface drone, and it goes whirring off into the cathedral-esque medical bay to look for a computer connection.

While Minna does her thing, you do some exploring yourself. A glowing tank catches your attention, only about twenty feet up. With a bit of acrobatics, you scale a nearby pipe to get to an interface pad with buttons each as big as your torso, made for massive Zendari fingers.

Turn to Page 93 if you have the Scientific Equipment License, or if you have the *Alien Crescent*. (Only if you haven't gone to Page 93 already.)

If you have neither, then you must move on. Minna is unable to find anything here.

Turn to Page 87 to go outside to the broken Science Deck.

Turn to Page 76 if you go deeper into the ship.

### Page 60

The sandstorm approaches, a wall of reddish-black emptiness. As you get close, you can see the turbulent winds in the driven gusts of sand thousands of feet off the ground. Grinding your teeth, you hold the controls steady.

The sky darkens. Turbulence hits you like a hammer, and the mech engines strain to a high, fierce whine against the wind.

With no sight, no sound, and no sensors, you are flying blind. Darkness surrounds you, and the mecha rocks uncomfortably, making your stomach churn. "Brilliant," you think to yourself. "Next

time, just look a Zendari in the eye and ask nicely. It'll be faster."

*You should have already written down the result of a die roll before turning to this page. See the results of your roll below. (If you have the Wasteland Ranger License, you may add +2 to your roll first.)*

If you rolled a 1 or 2, you crash your Mecha in the confusion of the storm. Nice going, hot shot! Turn to the end to see how well you did.

If you rolled a 3 or 4, you get lost in the storm. *Roll another d6 and mark that many hours as passing. These hours do NOT count toward your travel time.* Once the storm is over, turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

If you rolled a 5 or 6, then you manage to stay on course through the storm. *Mark three additional hours as passing; these DO count toward your travel time.* If this time would get you to your destination, then mark off only as much time as you need. Turn to Page 50 to continue or complete your journey.

### Page 61

*Mark 1 hour as passing.*

The Hangar Deck itself is nearly as large as the entire Palladium complex, built to house a fleet of Zendari fighter ships, each built to the scale of the Zendari themselves. Nevertheless, Minna is able to reference maps made on prior expeditions and navigate directly to the entrance of the Cargo Bay.

Whatever method the Zendari used to descend is not apparent, and probably wouldn't work for you anyway, so you and Minna are forced to perform a rather complicated climb, more reminiscent of mountaineering than research, to descend to the lower level.

Flashing your headlamps along the Cargo Bay, you see row upon row of massive containers, each half again larger than the cargo containers once used in shipping on earth.

"That's probably the maximum size Zendari could lift easily. Like packing boxes for us. I wonder what's in them all?" Minna speculates.

"Let's go," you say.

"Do you want the left side or the right side?" Minna asks brightly.

Turn to Page 62 if you search the left side.

Turn to Page 15 if you search the right side.

### Page 62

*Mark 1 hour as passing.*

You decide to split up to search the Cargo Bay. Prowling your way between the massive stacks of containers, you can't help but feel like an intruder, going places you don't belong.

Your search is interrupted by a strange tug at your mind. You look around, disconcerted. Then you feel it again.

Your gaze is drawn to a dark side passageway. There are dozens of such passageways; you didn't give it a second thought. But for some reason your attention is being drawn to this one.

You step a little closer, and then you feel it again. Almost like... you remember now. You remember your mother calling your name when you were a little boy. You would be outside on the swings and just hear your mother call, "Alex!"

You can almost hear that familiar voice now.

Turn to Page 68 if you go down the dark passageway.

Turn to Page 32 if you get the hell out of the Cargo Bay as fast as you can.

Page 63

"Colonel," you say into your comm unit, after hitting the emergency button. After a moment, you hear Colonel Bernard's voice come through, scratchy though it may be, in the depths of the Zor.

"What is it?"

"Sir, I've found the Geo-Cure."

"Hot dog, boy! We'll get the extraction team to your position pronto. Can you be outside ready for pickup in 10?"

"Yes, sir, I can, but—" You look down at the girl trembling in your arms. She has no idea what's happening to her. She has no idea that she can save the world.

"But nothing, son! Get out there!" The line goes dead.

"What's... happening? Who...?" The girl looks up at you with startling, silver eyes. The same silver as her hair. It's hard to ignore her nakedness, with her leaning on you and all.

You avert your eyes and say, "I'll explain everything, kid. Come on, we've got to get you out of here."

She nods slowly, and follows your lead as you get her out of the Zor. Now that you've found the target, there's no need to go back in your clumsy, slow, mech units. You'll take the fast way back.

You wrap the girl in an old coat, but she still trembles. You hold her hand and try to explain about the planet, and terraforming, and the Geo-Cure, but you're not sure she gets it.

As you start stumbling over your words, you notice her eyes are drooping. She suddenly slides closer to you and tucks herself under your arm, where she falls asleep.

*Mark two hours as passing, for the return flight. (Remember, if this takes you past the 24 hour deadline, turn to Page 100). Otherwise...*

Turn to Page 97 at least 23 hours have passed, meaning you have 1 hour or less before the deadline.

Turn to Page 58 if you have more than 1 hour left.

Page 64

*Mark down that one hour has passed.*

Dumping the huge Bolt Cannon, you chase off after the sounds of combat. Your ears lead you to the Hangar Bay, where you stop, sidearm drawn, to listen for a moment before entering.

Feral snarls and the sound of metallic claws on the grated floor tell you that the Zendari have let Ravagers loose in there. You spit a curse. Small for Zendari, barely bigger than a man, Ravagers are unintelligent pets that the Zendari keep—the Zendari dogs of war.

Taknig a deep breath, you step around the corner gun leveled—just in time to see a huge explosion blossom in the center of the room. You throw yourself back around the lip of the door just as fire licks through opening, scorching your clothes and hair. Several bits of acidic alien blood fly through to pit holes in the far wall.

As you pull yourself to your feet, Colonel Bernard emerges from the smoke, coughing. He shouts, "Kaine! Good man. Just who I was hoping to see!"

You loop your arm under the Colonel's shoulder and help him limp past the debris and detritus. Eventually, you come out into the open. Breathing deeply of the clean air, you guide Bernard to the nearest bench.

Turn to Page 51.



Page 65

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

Your flight passes uneventfully, with blue skies and red land rolling by above and beneath you. With the occasional white cloud, you almost feel patriotic.

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

Page 66

"Hold on," you say, once you've recovered yourself. "I'm a doctor. I've got the antivenom in my Mecha. Sit down and don't move. And get rid of that liquor; it'll speed up the poison."

You hurry to the Mecha and come back with your medical kit. The man isn't looking good. His skin is clammy, and he looks near to losing consciousness.

"Easy, now... easy." You inject him with the antivenom. He cries out once and begins to shiver, then falls asleep.

"There, he should do alright now. Keep him off that leg, and don't give him any more alcohol for at least three days," you say to the wife.

"I can't thank you enough," she says, trying not to show the tears in her eyes.

You look around the hollowed out Zendari hull. There's not going to be anything here of interest to you. You say goodbye and take your leave.

The child follows you out and waves as you ascend into the skies.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Lifesaver"*

You must decide where you will go next..

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Travel Time</u>	<u>if piloting the Olympia</u>
The third and final Ruin site	3	2
Zor	7	5
Tirolian	9	7

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey, once you have chosen a destination.

Page 67

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

You are watching the red landscape roll by when you find yourself sitting up, alarmed. It takes you a moment to identify what's wrong, but then you realize it.

You smell smoke.

Cursing, you flip open the control panel and order the Mecha to perform a full self-diagnostic. Whatever the smoke is, it's getting thicker in the chamber, and it's going to your head—quickly.

You slip on your helmet for the additional protection and guide the Mecha to a hasty landing. The engine makes some strange groans as you shift into the landing form. The entire mech seems to hiccup, and suddenly the self-diagnostic alarm flares.

"Thanks for the heads up, smartass," you mutter.

As soon as you're safely on the ground, you clamber out to perform a physical inspection. Smoke rises from the engine compartment, thick, black and heavy.

Grabbing your emergency toolkit, you heave open the engine compartment with a sigh.

*If you have the Field Mechanics License, then you quickly fix the problem yourself and may continue without delay.*

*Otherwise, mark 3 hours as passing while you wait for emergency assistance. This does not count toward travel time.*

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

### Page 68

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You carefully step down the passageway, deeper and deeper into darkness. You make turn after turn, until the last light from the Cargo Bay has been swallowed up behind you. Even in perfect darkness, you feel as though your feet know where to go.

At last you stop, in pure, unbroken blackness. Slowly, you become aware of breathing.

"Who's there?" you cry. Your voice sounds thin and hollow.

GREETINGS, ALEX KAINE

You drop something, and it hits the metal deck with a loud clang. But, though your heart pounds with fear, your legs refuse to move. You swallow to wet your mouth and say, "How do you know my name?"

AH... YOU ARE HUMAN. IT WAS YOU WHO CAUSED MY CAPTORS SO MUCH DIFFICULTY. I THANK YOU FOR THAT, ALEX KAINE.

You lick your lips. "You're welcome?"

NOW, ALEX KAINE, PLEASE FREE ME.

"I'm sorry?"

FREE ME, ALEX KAINE.

An image springs into your mind. Not an image so much as a movement, a guidance of your hand. You know exactly how to move, which lever to pull, to free the consciousness speaking to you.

FREE ME.

Your heart is pounding. Your hand begins to move.

Turn to Page 84 if you let your hand follow the guidance in your mind.

Turn to Page 53 if you run.

### Page 69

*Mark one hour as passing. This counts toward your travel time.*

Your mind is drifting toward Minna, when a beeping of your radar alerts you to the presence of Zendari. You shake yourself awake and check the display.

Up ahead, prowling the desert, is a stray Zendari Battle Suit. It's moving slowly, probably struggling to survive.

You almost feel sorry for it—until changes direction and starts coming straight toward you. Bloodthirsty aliens. You've still got some distance; you may be able to get away. If you don't, you'll have a fight on your hands.

*You must fight one Zendari Battle Suit at Range 3! Note your current page number, then turn to Page 99 if you need instructions on Mecha combat.*

Turn to Page 50 if you destroy the Zendari Battle Suit, or escape.

Otherwise, turn to the end to see your results.

Page 70

*Mark that 15 minutes have passed. From now on, you must track time in minutes. If you run out of time (24 hours) immediately turn to Page 100.*

You blast the Zendari Battle Suit just as you come screaming over the hill. Beneath, you see Minna standing just outside the wrecked hulk of the Zor, her eyes wide with terror. You give her a quick wave, then circle back in for a landing.

As you exit the Mecha and approach her, Minna flashes you a grateful smile. "Thanks, I... I think you saved my life." She looks shaky and pale.

You fill her in on everything you've found so far. She responds, "I've done some preliminary scans so far, but that's all. I was just about to go in. Care to come with me?"

"Of course."

Just then your tri-phone crackles. The connection is filled with static, this high up in the mountains, but you can make out Bernard's voice. "We're running out of..." your commander's gravelly voice comes through in patches. "...on top of... extraction team standing by..."

"They've got an extraction team ready to pick us up if we find the Geo-Cure," Minna says, looking up at the sky and shading her eyes.

"...hours," Colonel Bernard comes through, "Two hours..." Then the connection is lost.

"It'll take them two hours to get us back to base." Minna nods thoughtfully. "Makes sense at top speed. Well, shall we go in?"

"I can't hear you Colonel. We'll signal the extraction team if we need them." You switch off the tri-phone. "Yeah, let's do it."

Minna says, "We've got a couple of options. The main entrance is one, of course." She gestures at the cavernous, mouth-like opening at one end of the ship. "Alternately, a chunk of the Science Deck seems to have broken off during the fall. We could just walk right in through there."

*Gain one Minna Point.*

Turn to Page 87 if you would like to enter through the Science Deck.

Turn to Page 8 if you would like to go in the Main Entrance.

Page 71

As you flash your light into the dark room, it falls on something living and breathing. At first it doesn't react; then it looks up, and you see an alien eye meet your own.

The Zendari Ravager leaps into motion, all teeth and speed.

You cry out sharply and stumble backwards, trying to slam the door, lift your gun, and not drop your flashlight all at the same time.

"What is it?" Minna cries.

Then the alien bursts through the closed door, hissing maliciously. You fire three times into its center of mass. Blood splatters against the far wall of the corridor, and the thing goes down.

An unsettling rustling sound catches your attention. You slowly turn your head to look down the hall, to find dozens of Zendari Ravagers emerging into the light, all their eyes on you.

"Um... Kaine? I think we're in trouble," Minna says in a small voice, as the two of you move to stand back to back.

The aliens leap into motion, teeth glistening.

*You must fight for your life! Start rolling d6s. Each time you get a 4 or under, (5 or under, if you have the Heavy Weapons License) mark it down.*

Turn to Page 28 if you get two marks within three rolls.

Turn to Page 82 if you get two marks within five rolls.

If you don't have two marks after making five rolls, then the Ravagers dine on your corpse. Turn to the end to see your results.

### Page 72

*Mark one hour as passing. This does NOT count toward your travel time.*

Numerous vehicles in various states of destruction litter the area here. You walk between tipped over, burning vans and cars, when you suddenly realize that half the vehicles here, while dusty, look operational. Some of these are decorated with bones.

Real, human bones.

Your heart pounds in your chest, and you turn back, but it's too late. From hiding places all around you emerge people wearing black leather and carrying shiny blades.

"Looks like we caught us selves a little bird, men," one man says. His teeth are badly crooked. He raises a relic of a gun to point it at you. It's probably from the twenty-first century, but it'll still put holes in you.

You open your mouth, but crook-tooth shoves the gun at you and says, "Don't give us any trouble, fly-man. Give us everything you've got. And the keys to that fancy ride there." He gestures at the Mecha.

Lifting your hands slowly, you say, "You don't want to do this. I'm a RADF agent. I'm trying to save the world, here, and you're not helping."

*If you are flying the Argos, then...* One of the men chimes in, "Hey boss, this guy's a buggin' hero. We oughtta help him out!" and they let you leave with handshakes and smiles all around. Turn to Page 50.

*Otherwise...* The boss doesn't seem to be buying it. He smirks and says, "Take everything he's got, men." The men move to surround you. With no other choice, you run for your mech as fast as you can.

*Roll a d6 and...*

If you roll 4 or less, you escape. Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey.

If you roll 5 or 6, you are one fly-man who won't fly any more. Turn to the end to see your results.

### Page 73

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You come out onto a Zendari-sized catwalk around a massive central engine core. A few, faint lights still stubbornly cling to life in the engine, which periodically whirs with a painful groan, then subsides again. Crossing to the far side of the catwalk, you make the mistake of looking down.

Biting back vertigo, you pull away from the edge. The vast interior of the engine core dwarfs even the other huge spaces you've seen inside this ship. Suddenly it seems very plausible that this ship might have carried the Zendari across the vast deeps of space to get to Earth.

"Alex!" Minna cries, in a choked voice.

"What?" Her voice brings you back to yourself, and you stride quickly to her side, where she stands holding the remote control for her computerized explorer drone.

She looks up at you. Her hands are trembling. "I've found it. The Geo-Cure... it's here! And it's still alive!"

She tears off at a full run, disappearing around one of the great, dark, cavernous side tunnels. When

you get around the corner, she's already scaling one of the walls to a ledge about 25 feet up. You follow her up, and arrive, panting with exertion, just in time for the opening of a panel to douse you with water.

You cling on to the rope for dear life while whatever room Minna just opened vents its fluids. When you pull yourself, dripping, up onto the ledge, you see dim lights come on deep in a small side compartment that Minna has unlocked.

Cautiously, you enter the small chamber...

Turn to Page 75.

#### Page 74

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

Gritting your teeth, you say, "Try. Again."

He gives you an alarmed look and seems to be about to say something, then apparently thinks better of it and dials the number.

This time someone picks up. After a moment's conversation, the young tech disconnects and says to you, "I talked her into checking with someone in the Command Room. Should be just a moment."

At that moment, one of the outer doors open and a young nurse rushes in. She stops abruptly and looks around with wide eyes. She asks, "Is everything okay? I heard shouting..."

The young man looks into her eyes and eloquently says, "Lisa..."

Turn to Page 85 if you have at least 2 "Rick and Lisa" points, and if you would like to say something.

Turn to Page 58 if you ignore them and pace until you can get in.

#### Page 75

A large capsule dominates the center of this dimly lit chamber, marked with intricate Zendari symbols. A plethora of mysterious tubes and nozzles emerge from the capsule, giving it an air of eerie majesty.

You start as the capsule doors suddenly crack. A spray of steam shoots free of the capsule, and you can see colored light glowing through the steam. With an electronic hiss, the capsule doors open the rest of the way. As the steam clears, you see...

A girl.

She looks to be about 16 or 17. She's supported by a gel-like liquid in the heart of the capsule, standing with her arms out and hair floating in a halo around her. Intravenous tubes enter under her skin in half a dozen places.

She's human, or at least she looks human. Suddenly the liquid begins to drain from the chamber, leaving her hair plastered to her naked shoulders.

Her eyes open.

You take a step back involuntarily, nearly crying out in surprise.

Free of the liquid, the girl begins to shiver. She hugs her arms tight against herself. As it finishes draining, her legs are freed, and she stumbles forward, almost falling.

Despite yourself, you leap forward and catch her before she falls. She trembles in your arms like a little bird.

"Who... who am I?" she asks in a quiet, shaking voice.

*Oh boy.*

Turn to Page 63

Page 76

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You step into a dark corridor, your flashlights casting long beams that somehow just make the darkness seem even bigger and deeper.

"According to the map, this is the Crew Quarters," Minna says, looking down at her datapad. You cross part of the hall to a cavernous opening and look in.

*If this is your first time coming to the Crew Quarters, turn to Page 71 now. Otherwise, keep reading.*

The bedroom of a Zendari is an strange sight to see. Zendari may be huge and super-intelligent, but perhaps due to the resources their huge bodies require, there weren't ever very many of them. This one's bedroom is a place of weird wonders.

The remnants of a massive tank indicate the place where it would have slept. Doors that are eerily reminiscent to massive cupboards line the far wall. Hanging from the ceiling are several ornaments in weird loops and whorls of color.

"Come on," Minna says. "I doubt it would be stored here."

Turn to Page 32 if you go to the Hangar Deck.

Turn to Page 59 if you go to the Med Bay.

Turn to page 73 if you go to the Engine Room.

Page 77

With the nurse gone, you snort and get out of bed, stretching into your new skin. You can tell which parts are new by where it tingles.

The door opens and Colonel Bernard steps in. "Ah, Kaine, you're up. Good. Maybe you can tell me what the hell happened out there?"

You fill him in. Once you've finished, he says, "Smart move, Kaine! Good thinking about that Sparta. Blew the belly right out of the Battle Suit, and our soldiers were able to clean up them Ravagers quick enough."

Turn to page 51 if you say nothing.

Turn to Page 4 if you explain it was Sgt. Ross's idea.

Page 78

"Fine. Fine," you say, turning away. You pretend to check the time, then as soon as he looks down, you draw your gun and shoot in one fluid motion.

The shot takes the young tech completely by surprise. It's a clean shot, and he goes down without a sound. As you take the keys from his body, you see his nametag, 'Rick Tachis.'

"Should have listened to me when I said 'fate of the world,' buddy." You slam the keys into the lock and open the door.

"Is he going to be okay?" the Geo-Cure asks.

"No, kid. But it was him or us."

She holds a little tighter to your hand, and you pull her ahead into the central Command Room.

Turn to Page 58.

Page 79

A tremendous rush of noise comes at you from behind and above your head. You duck swiftly to a kneeling position, rotate, and fire your gun without thinking.

In the flash of your gun's muzzle, you see a dozen desert birds flapping their way free of the hangar. One of them dives at you, but you blast it from the air before it can get to you.

After a few moments, the birds disperse, the sound of their wings lingering in the air behind them. You pick a dirty tail feather off of your shoulder and go over to examine the bird you killed.

Minna giggles. "I think ya got 'im Sarge," she says in a fake accent.

It's a large desert bird, wingspan over four feet. You shove it with your toe, then say, "Come on, let's get moving."

Together, you proceed into the dark depths of the Hangar Deck.

Turn back to Page 32 now.

Page 80

As you file out of the command room, Minna pulls you aside. In a quiet side hall, she says, "I've been doing some of my own research on the Zendari technology, and I have a theory."

You raise an eyebrow. She hesitates, then says, "I think the Geo-Cure might not be an object, but a life-form. We know the Zendari had bio-technology far beyond anything we understand. We're only scraping the surface of their knowledge. But I think more information could be coded more easily into the genome structure of a living being than any other medium. We might be looking for something alive."

"What does this mean for us?" you ask.

"It means that it may have been right under our noses, all along, and we would never have seen it. If it's still alive at all." With that, she turns and walks away, toward the hangar bay.

Pondering her words, you follow.

Turn to Page 25.

Page 81

*Mark one hour as passing.*

For the third ruin site, you turn inland toward the remnants of Las Vegas-that-was. The grandeur of the old city is much diminished. It's a rad hot spot, and no one has lived here since the Rain of Fire. Nevertheless, a few of the great old hotels escaped destruction, and their ostentatious displays still loom amidst the rubble, promising delights long ago forgotten.

As you cruise past, you see a single man in a gas mask prowling the ruins.

It doesn't take long to pick up the signs of Zendari tech. The scanner leads you to the suburbs, to a large white house with a picket fence. Only a gaping, burn hole in the roof indicates anything amiss. That must be where the falling artifact landed.

It feels oddly surreal to push open the picket gate and approach the house. The front door is still intact, and squeaks as you open it. The remnants of a family can still be seen here: portraits on the kitchen fridge, a baseball mitt discarded on the floor.

Moving deeper into the house, you find the crater in what used to be their living room. At the heart of the crater: a galvanized chunk of metal, the damaged remnants of a Zendari mainframe. It must have broken off when its ship had already mostly completed the descent, or it would have burned up

in the atmosphere.

As you approach, you can see the complex wiring of a Zendari computer.

"Hallelujah!" you sing quietly to yourself, and you approach the cracked open mainframe with scanner at the ready.

Turn to Page 52 if you have the Scientific Equipment License.

Otherwise, you have to radio in the data for analysis and decide where to go next.

<u>Destination</u>	<u>Travel Time</u>	<u>if piloting the Olympia</u>
Zor	6	5
Tirolian	8	6

Turn to Page 50 to continue your journey, once you have decided.

### Page 82

*Mark fifteen minutes as passing.*

The nearest Ravager flies at you with almost inhuman speed, teeth gaping for you and claws extended. You pull the trigger and your gun barks, tearing the thing's head off. But another is right behind it.

You hear Minna shouting, behind you, and soon you're shouting with her. Suddenly Minna cries out in pain, and you feel a heavy weight fall against your back.

"Minna!" you scream. Whirling around, you put half a dozen lead slugs into the alien standing over her.

Shouting hysterically and firing non-stop, somehow you manage to survive the next couple of minutes. When you're done, you're alone in the corridor, standing over Minna.

You drop your gun and kneel down next to her. She's bleeding badly from a deep cut to the body. She groans and reaches weakly for your hand. The pool of blood under her is growing at an alarmingly rapid rate.

*Minna will die here unless you have the Field Medicine License. Even if you can save her life, she is in no shape to continue with you. Mark down whether she lives or dies, then continue reading.*

With the last of her strength, Minna presses her datapad into your hands. She says softly, "Alex... you have to keep going... Find the Geo-Cure! You must... not... fail..."

Wiping away tears, you continue deeper into the ship.

Turn to Page 3.

### Page 83

Your head hurts. You unwrap your arm from around the Geo-Cure and step back, leaving her standing, small and very alone, in the center of the room. She trembles like a leaf, her eyes wide with fear.

"Come on, girl," Bernard says gruffly, and takes her by the arm.

She looks back over her shoulder at you as Bernard guides her toward the elevator shaft down to the terraforming engine.

"Colonel," you say sharply.

He looks back over his shoulder at you, without releasing his grip.



"Are you sure?"

He nods his head miserably, and pushes the girl into the elevator. The glass elevator doors close behind her.

"Alex!" she cries, stepping forward and pressing her palms against the glass.

You look away.

Turn to page 18 if Minna is alive, and if you have at least 3 Minna Points.

Turn to Page 94 if either of those conditions are not true.

#### Page 84

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

You swallow hard, once, then nod and step forward. Your hand knows just which way to go. You feel a lever appear under your fingers, and you pull it.

It takes force; you put a second hand on it and heave. Rust grinds, and somewhere in the darkness, spots of light briefly flick down lines of power as electricity thrums.

AHHH... MUCH BETTER. THANK YOU, ALEX KAINE.

"You're, uh... welcome?" you say to the darkness.

FREE. AFTER SO MANY EONS.

The voice grows more distant. You hesitate for a moment, unsure what to do next, if anything. Finally, you clear your throat and say, "Good luck."

I WILL BE WATCHING YOU, ALEX KAINE. I DO NOT FORGET.

Suddenly, the sense of a presence near you is gone. You go back to where you dropped your flashlight and pick it up. Then you retrace your steps without difficulty back to the Cargo Bay.

You hear Minna calling your name. You step out into the dim lights of the Cargo Bay and call, "I'm over here!"

"What happened to you? I've been looking for you!" Minna says anxiously.

You shake your head. "I don't really know. I'll explain later. Let's get moving; we've got a job to do."

*Mark down that you have received the Medal of Achievement, "Samaritan."*

Turn to Page 32 to exit the Cargo Bay.

#### Page 85

You look from one of them to the other, then roll your eyes and say, "Just kiss and get it over with already; the world could end any minute."

They both look at you and flush deeply, then they look back at each other, their eyes saying more than words ever could. They take each other's hands, then suddenly Lisa throws herself into Rick's arms. The two of them disappear behind his desk, wrapped tightly around one another, their lips glued together.

You feel a soft touch on your arm, and look down to see the Geo-Cure girl wrapping her fingers around your forearm, her eyes fixed on the passionate couple. Her hand feels surprisingly good. It's been a long time since anyone...

You stop that train of thought before it can go any further, and peel her hand off of your arm.

"Is what they're doing... good?" she asks, looking up at you with big eyes.

You're spared by the inner door opening. A staff member gives the couple behind the desk a look

and raises one eyebrow, then rolls her eyes and gestures for you to come in.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Matchmaker."*

Turn to Page 58.

### Page 86

You take a step back from Colonel Bernard, pulling the girl along with you. She clutches against you a little tighter, and you hear her make a small sound of fear.

"Now listen, Bernard. There has to be another way, right?"

The Colonel looks at you with darkening eyes. He says, "Listen, boy. The fate of the world is at stake here. We don't have any choice. Now hand her over."

"So, what, we're just going to sacrifice her so that the rest of us can live? What is this, the Dark Ages? I thought human sacrifice went the way of the dodo birds."

"And so will humans if we don't sacrifice her! Now hand her over!" The Colonel's patience is clearly running out. You can already see some of the guards edging closer.

You look down at the girl under your arm. She looks up to meet your eyes and whispers, "What's going on?"

Turn to Page 83 if you hand her over.

Turn to Page 89 if you are willing to fight to defend her.

### Page 87

*Mark 15 minutes as passing.*

The Science Deck wing is badly damaged from the capital ship's descent through Earth's atmosphere. You step across broken, mangled decking and past ripped out wires, some of which still spark when you touch them. It looks like nothing more than a big metal animal whose guts have been ripped out.

Minna makes a few tests here and there, then finally sighs and says, "I don't think there's enough left here for me to get any decent data. Let's move on."

She looks down at her datapad and points at two openings in the large, curved wall of the part of the chamber that's still intact.

"That way should be the Medical Bay. That way should be the Hangar Deck."

Turn to Page 59 if you go to the Medical Bay.

Turn to Page 32 if you go to the Hangar Deck.

### Page 88

As you come in for a landing outside the grounded bulk of the Tirolian, you see Kevin Lang, outside of his Mecha, standing near the alien vessel with some equipment.

He looks up as you exit your own mech and says, "Well, look who decided to join us. Are you sure you don't want to go crying home to Mommy? It's not too late."

"Can it, Lang," you say. "What's the status?"

He runs his fingers through his hair, and for a moment you see the frustration behind his jibes. He holds up the control deck in his hands and says, "I'm trying to crack the security codes, but not getting anywhere. I just need more time."

"Screw that. I'm going in."

"You're insane! The odds are a million to one!"

"Do you have a better idea?" you ask.

He snarls, "I told you—I just need more time!"

"And I told you, we don't have it!" you shout.

You both stand in silence for a moment, regarding the Tirolian. Its alien lines seem to taunt you. You laugh, "We could blow our way in."

"Don't be ridiculous," Kevin says. "Damage of that size could trigger the self-destruct mechanisms. It would blow the whole ship sky-high."

"Well, we have to do something!" you burst out. "Listen, Lang, you can sit on your ass while the world burns, but I'm not going to!"

Turn to Page 40 if you would like to risk the Tirolian's security with a death-defying entrance.

Turn to Page 41 if you think blasting open the hull is the surest method.

Or turn to Page 50 if you would rather let Kevin do it his way. If you choose this, decide where you want to go. It will take 8 hours to get to the Zor (or 6 if you're flying the Olympia), or 5 hours to get to the nearest Ruin site (4 if you're flying the Olympia).

#### Page 89

You take a deep breath, then with one swift movement pull the girl into the closest elevator and hit the "close doors" button. The walls are made of glass. Bulletproof glass.

"Kaine, what are you doing!?! We don't have time for this! Kaine!" Bernard shouts. His voice becomes muffled and indistinct as the glass doors seal.

You look your superior officer in the eye and say, "It's not a numbers game, Bernard. She's human. You can't just kill her, no matter how much good you think it will do."

The Colonel turns on his heel and starts snarling commands. Bullets spray the glass walls, but barely make a mark on the transparent material.

You kneel down before the Geo-Cure. "Do you understand what's going on?" you ask.

Though she trembles with fear, she nods slowly. She whispers, "They want to kill me."

"They say that the whole world will die unless you do. Do you think that's true?"

She doesn't respond.

"Would you be willing to go in there voluntarily? No one can make you. And I won't let them force you to. It has to be up to you, or not at all."

She starts shaking harder. You wait patiently, holding her by the shoulders. After a moment, she says in a small voice, "I don't want to die..."

You think for a moment, then take a deep breath and nod once. "Then I guess we'll find out what comes next, together."

You sit down in the sealed space, and she curls up under your arm.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Heroic Resolve."*

Turn to Page 90 if you already have the Medal of Achievement, "Samaritan."

Turn to Page 44 if you do not.

Page 90

You close your eyes and let your head sink against the wall. The girl feels small and warm under your arm, but your stomach churns at the thought of what damage might come of this.

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY YOU KNOW.

You jump, disturbing the girl. She looks up at you quizzically. The voice is just as surely in your mind, and as startlingly so, as the last time you heard it.

*What do you mean?* you think.

I TOLD YOU I WOULD BE WATCHING YOU.

A fierce, wild hope leaps in your heart. *Can you help us get the information from her genetics without killing her?*

CERTAINLY.

You let out a whoop of triumph, eliciting strange looks both from the girl sitting next to you, and from the men outside looking in.

ALL I NEED IS SOMEONE ELSE TO TAKE HER PLACE.

Your jubilation dies in your throat as you understand what the presence said.

THE I CAN MOVE THE DATA FROM ONE HOST TO ANOTHER, BUT A HOST IS STILL REQUIRED. WILL YOU VOLUNTEER?

A sinking feeling enters your heart.

YOU MUST DECIDE, ALEX KAINE.

You look down at the Geo-Cure girl. Her startlingly silver eyes look back up at you.

Turn to Page 57 if you will take her place.

Turn to Page 95 if you give her up now.

Turn to Page 44 if you will neither take her place, nor allow her to be sacrificed.

Page 91

The glass of the elevator walls feels cool under your touch

"No!" the girl who used to be the Geo-Cure cries, throwing herself toward you.

You push the button to close the doors, and they slide shut just before she can reach you. She sinks to her knee, sobbing.

You smile at her through the glass and ask, "You don't have a name, do you?"

She shakes her head, sniffing through the tears.

"Why don't we call you Jenny?" You reach out as if to touch her, but hit the glass between you instead.

She smiles a little bit through the tears and says, "Jenny? Okay."

You shrug a little self-consciously and say, "It's a normal name. I think you could use something a bit normal in your life. Bernard, promise me you'll take care of her!"

The old colonel's eyes seem a bit misty as he says, "Will do, son. Will do."

You smile at them all. Then you hit the button, and the elevator whisks you down.

After that comes pain. You endure it, knowing that this is necessary. Fortunately, it doesn't last long.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Hero of the Year!"*

Congratulations, you won! You may not live to see it, but for years to come people will remember your story and thank your memory for the lush, green earth that they live on. Turn to the end to see your results.

Page 92

The engines whine as you lead your Mecha into higher altitudes. The Zendari capital ship crash-landed high in the Rockies, and it's a difficult journey, even for a Mecha.

As you approach, your Zendari tech scanner beeps at you. At first, you ignore it, but then you do a double take. That isn't the still, passive energy signature of a wrecked ship. That signature indicates Zendari Battle Suits on the move.

You gun the engines to gain still more elevation for a better look. In the distance you can see the familiar outline of the Zor, with Minna's Athens parked outside it, the pilot's cabin open.

Not far away, you locate three Battle Suits closing on her location. You curse under your breath. Minna will be defenseless outside her Mecha!

"Suck on this, alien asshats," you mutter, gunning your mecha into battle mode and screaming toward the Zendari. All you hope is that you'll be in time.

*You must fight three Zendari Battle Suits at Range 2! Note your current page number, then turn to Page 99 if you need instructions on how to fight. You cannot risk running away from this battle.*

Turn to Page 70 if you win.

If you lose... well, you can cry yourself to death knowing you have let down Minna. And the world. Turn to the end to see your results.

Page 93

"Minna," you call out, a note of urgency in your voice.

"What is it?" She calls to you from the floor below. You download the pertinent data and hook a line behind one of the buttons, using it to quickly rappel to the bottom.

Breaking out your findings, you explain, "I think I've found signs of a form of technology that is not Zendari at all. Look, there's a strong reading of it located here, near the Cargo Bay."

She meets your eyes and quietly says what you're both thinking, "A new species."

"But do we really have time to chase this down now?" you ask.

"Can we afford not to? This could be the find of the century!" Minna's eyes are dilated with excitement.

"We kind of have something more important going on right now! The fate of the world is kind of at stake here!"

Minna clenches her fist, but drops her eyes. "You're right. We can always come back for it later. That's probably best."

Turn to Page 62 if you decide to go search for this unrecognized alien technology now. *Gain one Minna Point if you choose this path.*

Otherwise, you must decide where to go next.

Turn to Page 87 to go outside to the broken Science Deck.

Turn to Page 76 if you go deeper into the ship.

Page 94

The terraforming engine knows what to do as soon as it receives the Geo-Cure. Data floods into the central computing system, showing up as a pattern of green lights spreading across one of the vast

displays in the Command Room.

"Yes!" someone shouts. Colonel Bernard whoops, and suddenly all of you are laughing and hugging each other.

If a brief thought touches your mind for the girl who you put on the altar to buy this moment, you don't show it, at least not now. This is a time for celebration.

The appointed hour comes, and you can feel the vibration of a great engine coming to life in the earth's mantle deep beneath your feet. The staff clutch at walls and chairs for balance and look at each other with wide eyes.

Then the terraforming begins. Reports flood in from around the world of water being re-introduced to the atmosphere. Of plant life spontaneously growing from previously barren earth. Of radiation levels decreasing.

No one knows what the future will bring. But one thing is certain: nothing will ever be the same again.

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "Hero of the Year!"*

Congratulations, you won! Turn to the end to see your results.

#### Page 95

Taking a deep breath, you stand up and, pausing only for a moment, open the door. The Geo-Cure remains huddling on the ground behind you, watching you uncertainly.

"Better her than me," you say.

Colonel Bernard gives you a wild look, then shoves you aside and sends guards in to grab the girl.

"No!" she screams, "No! Help! Alex!"

You look away.

You can hear her cries as they pull her into the elevator leading down to the Terraforming Engine, but you don't look again. Finally, her cries quiet to soft sobbing.

You grip the edge of a desk so hard it cuts into your fingers.

Turn to Page 18 if Minna is alive, and you have at least 3 Minna Points.

Turn to Page 94 if either of those conditions are not true.

#### Page 96

*Mark one hour as passing. This does NOT count toward your travel time.*

You carefully bring your mech down closer, first switching to hybrid mode for the descent, then into humanoid mode for the landing. Once you land, you exit the Mecha to explore, feeling tiny in the empty, desert plain.

The hull looks like one of the smaller Zendari warships, scored by its descent through the atmosphere and cracked by the final impact. You pull out your scanner and make for a breach in the ship's hull.

As you carefully step into the darkness, a clicking sound comes from the darkness. Without stopping to think, you leap back, whipping out your gun. A Zendari Ravager bursts from the wreck with a snarl, teeth glistening!

*You must fight! Roll a d6.*

- 3 or lower:        You win! Continue reading.  
 4 or higher:        The Ravager eats well this day. Turn to the end to see your results.

*If you have the Heavy Weapons License, then your high powered laser rifle means you must roll 5 or less to win, and only a roll of 6 will kill your character.*

*If you win, keep reading..*

The body of the Ravager still twitches, leaking thick ichor. You take a deep breath, settling the adrenaline. Once you are satisfied there is nothing left to find here, you return to your Mecha.

Turn to Page 50, if you survived the fight, to continue your journey.

### Page 97

*Gain the Medal of Achievement, "11<sup>th</sup> Hour."*

The jet screams in for a landing at the Palladium, and you burst from the passenger compartment before it's barely stopped moving. Dragging the girl by the hand, you race through the facility, shouting at anyone who gets in your way.

Finally you enter the last controlled access point before the central chambers. A young tech mans the door here. Without breaking your pace, you shout, "Let me in!"

The tech, who looks a little familiar, shakes his head sharply and says, "Orders are for them to be undisturbed."

You come up sharp, then grit your teeth and say, "Not. From. Me. I have the Geo-Cure!" You lift the girl's arm.

He looks at the girl dubiously, then hits a command on his terminal. Across the speakerphone, you hear a phone ringing. You roll your eyes and tap your foot in irritation.

Ring. Ring. Ring. It stops.

"No answer, sir. You're just going to have to wait here like everybody else. I'm sure someone'll be along soon."

You step forward, "You don't understand. The fate of the world is at stake!"

He puts his hand on his gun and says, "I'm going to have to ask you to stand back, sir."

You roll your eyes.

Turn to Page 78 if you shoot him and go in.

Turn to Page 74 if you wait for orders to come through for him to open the door.

### Page 98

You glance over the box with despair, but all of a sudden it all clicks. Yes... this controls the power supply to the dormant Mecha. If he created an overload circuit in the engine of that Sparta, then all you need to do is... yes! Ha! Ross is a genius!

With a deft jerk of your hand, you grab one specific wire and yank it free, cutting the power modulator out of the loop, which allows a power surge to rush to all the Mecha. Their own safety mechanisms will prevent catastrophic failure, unless they've already been dis—

Kaboom! The explosion tears through the Hangar Bay, hitting you with all the force of a physical punch. The blast knocks you into the far wall. You can feel ribs break with all too painful clarity.

As you slide to the floor, you are comforted by the sound of your own spiteful laughter.

Turn to page 13.

Page 99

*Hey! Write down the Page Number you came here from!*

If you have been directed to this page, it's because you've gotten in a scrap, and need to know how to give the other guy what for. This page explains Mecha combat. Personal, hand to hand combat is simpler and will just be described in the text itself.

**Range:** The Range at which combat starts affects both Escaping and Sniping.

**Escaping:** You may attempt to escape by rolling a d6, though it makes you a gutless, sniveling coward. If you ever attempt to escape, you immediately lose the "Guts or Glory" Medal of Achievement.

- A roll equal to or under Range means you escape. Continue as though you won. (Though you didn't, and you and I both know it.)
- If piloting the Olympia, a roll equal to or under Range +2 allows you to escape.
- The Sparta cannot attempt to escape. It's too fat.

**Sniping:** If you are piloting the Mycenae, you may make a number of free attacks before combat begins equal to Range. The Mycenae's huge sniper gun is awesome like that.

**Combat:** Once combat begins, make a series of attack and defense rolls in alternating sequence, until one side or the other is victorious.

- Attacks: Roll a d6. A roll equal to or under your Weapons means you destroy one enemy.
- Defense: Roll a d6. A roll above your Armor means you take damage.
- Taking Damage: Permanently lose one point of Weapons or Armor (your choice).

If your Armor is ever reduced to zero, then your Mecha explodes and Alex Kaine is killed. In this case, immediately turn to the end to see your results.

If you destroy all of the enemy units, you win! You have permission to dance.

**Repairs:** If you have the Field Mechanic's License, then after any battle you have the option of stopping to conduct repairs. If you do, then you may remove 2 points of damage your Mecha has taken for every half hour you spend on repairs.

To continue your story, turn back to the Page you came here from.



Page 100

You are out of time. You hurry along, hoping that maybe there's been a mistake. Maybe Professor Hajime was wrong. Maybe the terraforming engine wasn't activated properly. Or maybe it can work even without the Geo-Cure.

Maybe you'll get a miracle.

Then you hear it. A rumbling sound that seems to come from deep within the earth itself. You clutch your head as what sounds like the scream of a god rips through you, body, mind and soul. The earth itself shrieks, and then jets of lava erupt from beneath the earth's crust in explosions of stone and heat.

As the violent eruptions end all life, you lay choking in the volcanic gasses, faced with the sudden illuminating truth that you are helpless.

There's bad news and there's good news. The good news is, it will all be over quickly...

*If you had the "11<sup>th</sup> Hour" Medal of Achievement, you lose it now.*

Turn to the end to see your results.

## Results

Thank you for playing Legacy of the Zendari! In this gamebook, there are 12 Medals of Achievement that can be awarded for accomplishments throughout the story. The more Medals of Achievement you earned, the better you did. A perfect score is one in which you earned all 12 Medals of Achievement in one play-through!

<b>Hero of the Year!</b>	Victorious ending! You are personally responsible for saving the world.
<b>Veteran</b>	Win on Normal or Challenge Difficulty. (Take this now if you earned it.)
<b>Challenger</b>	Win on Challenge Difficulty. (Take this now if you earned it.)
<b>11<sup>th</sup> Hour</b>	Save the world just in the nick of time.
<b>Matchmaker</b>	Help a lucky couple come together in their time of need.
<b>A Leg Up</b>	Give a helping hand to a deserving fellow.
<b>Evicted from the Lonely Hearts Club</b>	End the story with a close friend of the female persuasion.
<b>Hypersonic</b>	Break the speed of sound in your Mecha.
<b>Lifesaver</b>	Save an innocent life.
<b>Samaritan</b>	Help a stranger without knowledge or cause.
<b>Guts or Glory</b>	Be foolishly brave in battle, AND never run away from a fight.
<b>Heroic Resolve</b>	Fly in the face of impossible odds.

In addition, there are two open challenges available for any reader.

Challenge #1: Complete the gamebook with all 12 achievements listed above. Email me at [ashtonsaylor@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonsaylor@gmail.com) with the route you took to get a perfect score, in order to have your name listed on the Top Scorers on my website. If you are one of the first people to discover the correct route, you may also earn a small prize! (This path requires both skill and luck)

Challenge #2: There are many references embedded in this gamebook to fictional worlds that served as inspiration for this story. Email me at [ashtonsaylor@gmail.com](mailto:ashtonsaylor@gmail.com) with a correct list of at least 20 of said references, and you too will be honored on my website. If you are one of the first people to correctly identify the references, you may also earn a small prize!

Challenge #3: Write a few paragraphs with a strong argument for why you chose one of the two possible romantic interests over the other. Try to convince others that this is the correct choice.

As an alternative to challenge number three, I would be very interested in hearing your thoughts on whether it is right to sacrifice one person to save the world, and what you would do in that situation. Interesting comments will be posted on my blog, and the first qualifying commentator will also get a small prize.

Feel free to check out my blog at [www.ashtonsaylor.com](http://www.ashtonsaylor.com) for more gamebook-y goodness!