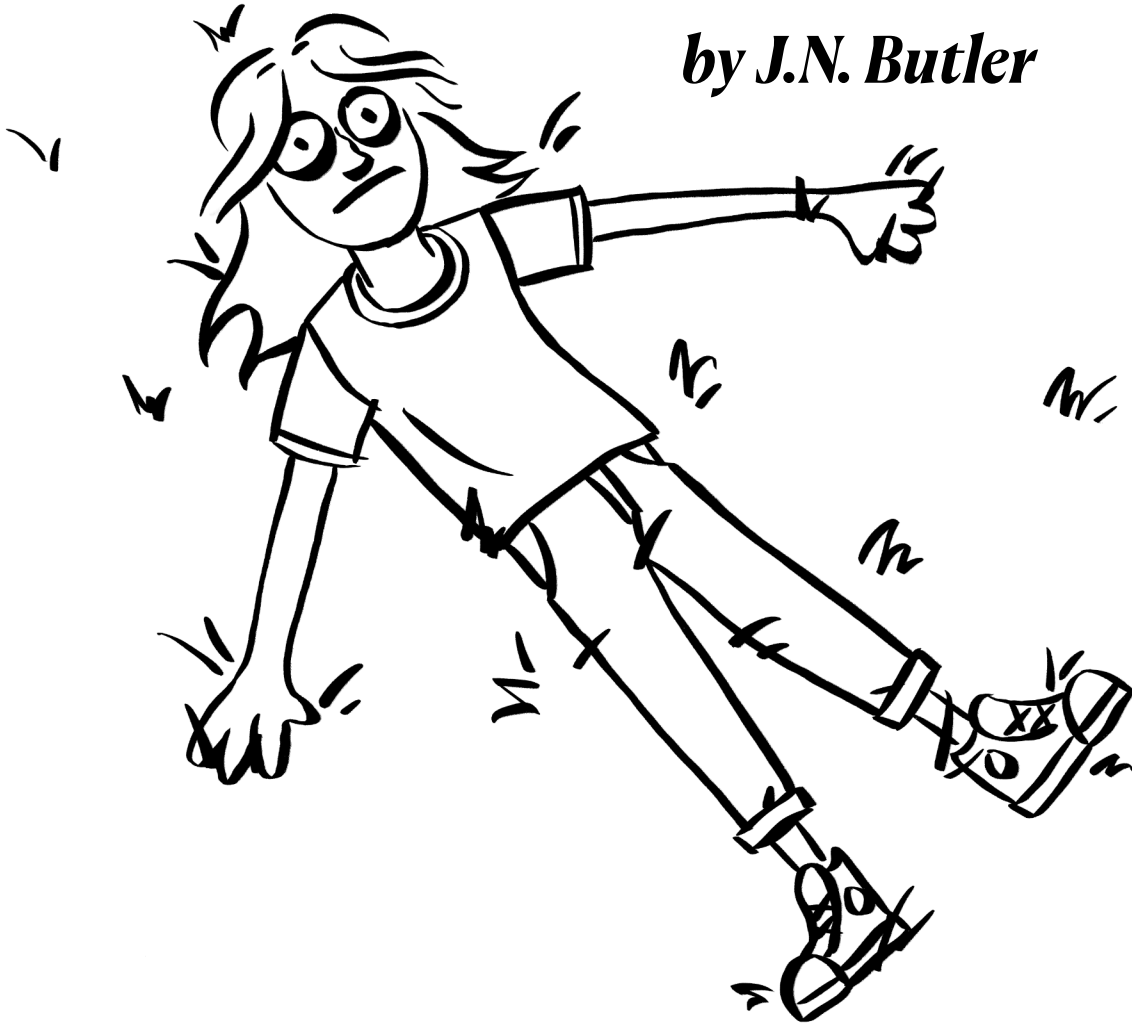


THE WAITING

A GM-less roleplaying game of suspense for 1 or more players.

by J.N. Butler



In **The Waiting** you play as a character in a setting where it hasn't happened yet. It is definitely going to happen, but no one knows when it will happen. Until it happens, there is only **The Waiting**.

CONTENT WARNING: Anxiety

<https://jnbutlerart.itch.io>

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Getting Started

Before the game begins, the players collectively decide what will happen and where it will happen. The narrative of the game takes place where it will happen.

You need at least one die for this game. You can use any size dice you wish. Larger dice will increase the possible length of the game while smaller dice will decrease it. If you are using the variant rules for **The Affected** everyone needs a standard set of 7 polyhedral dice.

Safety Tools. This game is inspired by the anxiety caused by waiting for the unknown. You must implement the safety tools described in the *TTRPG Safety Toolkit Guide** that is included with this game. Safety tools are a way for players to communicate and check-in before, during, and after a game to make sure everyone is still having fun, and to provide the right support when needed.

What Are You Waiting For?

Read and implement the “**Before the Game Begins**” safety tools from the *TTRPG Safety Toolkit Guide* before you decide what will happen. It could be something benign, humorous, or horrific. Here are some ideas:

- An asteroid collides with the planet.
- People peacefully turn into beautiful flora.
- A highly anticipated game console is released.
- The results of an election are finally tabulated.
- A hole bursts open in a spaceship's hull.
- An unpleasant guest arrives.
- A package is delivered.

Choose something from this list or your imagination that suits the tone of the game you all want to play.

We Don't Know What Will Happen. Instead of determining what it is that will happen before the game, you could leave it undetermined and improvise what happens, when it happens. You might even spend each round of **The Waiting** talking about what you think is going to happen. It is especially important to use the safety tools if you choose to improvise what will happen.

The Waiting Begins

Each round everyone describes what they do during **The Waiting**.

At the end of a round someone at the table rolls the die. If the result is the highest number on the die, it happens. If the result is anything else, it hasn't happened yet — **The Waiting** continues and a new round begins. Rolling dice is fun, so let someone different roll at the end of each round.

When it happens, there is one final round. Everyone describes what their character does when it happens. The game is over.

Variant Rules: The Affected

Before the game begins, choose something that will happen to one person at a time rather than everyone all at once.

Each round everyone describes what they do during **The Waiting**.

At the end of a round everyone at the table rolls a d100. If someone's result is the highest number on the die, it happens to that them, and they are now **affected**. If the result is anything else, it hasn't happened to that them yet. Either way, **The Waiting** continues and a new round begins.

If you are **affected**, you no longer roll a die at the end of the round. You instead increase the likelihood that it happens to other characters. Anyone else you interact with while you are **affected** becomes **marked**.

If you are **marked** you roll a die one size smaller than the previous round at the end of the current round — increasing the probability that it happens to you. For example, if you were rolling a d100 and became **marked**, you now roll a d20. This condition compounds each round, so if you are **marked** but not yet **affected** after several rounds you'll eventually work your way down to a d2 (a coin can work in place of a d2 — heads is 1, tails is 2).

The game is over when everyone is **affected**.

*The [TTRPG Safety Toolkit](#) is compiled by Kienna Shaw and Lauren Bryant-Monk.