

Danger Days: an rpg by Christine Prevas

KILLJOYS, MAKE SOME NOISE!

look alive, sunshine-

in *DANGER DAYS*, you play a group of Killjoys — post-apocalyptic rebels fighting for survival against a faceless corporate entity mind-controlling the masses through consumerism and emotion-numbing drugs. the game should be fast-paced, high-stakes, and full of big feelings.

the world has ended for all intents and purposes, and Killjoys like you are the only people left, save the mindless droves of people sedated into compliance by the war-mongering, resource-guzzling megacorp. you live on the fringes, far away from the big cities where society resides — deserts, abandoned suburbs, wastelands, etc. but around every corner are EXTERMINATORS, mercenaries hired by the megacorp to bring people like you in — or take you down.

to play *DANGER DAYS* you will need:

- a deck of regular playing cards with the jokers removed
- 2+ players, one of whom will begin as the GM
- loud, energetic music

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louder than god's revolver and twice as shiny-

as a Killjoy, you are everything the establishment hates. you are LOUD, you are RECKLESS, and you are FURIOUS and JOYFUL. you are COLORFUL and UNIQUE. you are POORLY EQUIPPED to fight the exterminators, but you are SCRAPPY and DETERMINED. you are not trying to start a revolution; you are just trying to SURVIVE.

you have three stats:

- DANGER
- SPEED
- FEELING

assign the numbers 1, 3, and 5 to them however you want. DANGER represents your willingness to take risks. SPEED represents your ability to avoid or evade trouble. FEELING represents your fury with the world-order and your determination to retain your sense of self.

you also have:

- a FAST CAR or a DESIGNER GUN
- a RADIO (loud music, louder static, and periodic updates from the dispatcher)
- a CATCHY CODENAME
- a DISTINCTIVE MASK

as a Killjoy, you begin the game with 5 SOUL. SOUL represents how true you are to yourself, how far removed you are from the mindless, numb masses controlled by the megacorp, how much fight you have left in you. what matters in the wasteland is not when your body gives out, but when your soul does: when your SOUL reaches 0, you either give up, give out, or give in (see “keep your boots tight, keep your gun close, and die with your mask on if you’ve got to—” below).

the GM plays the EXTERMINATORS. they are MEASURED and EMOTIONLESS. they are WELL- PREPARED and WELL-EQUIPPED. there are more of them than there are of you, and they are all, for the most part, IDENTICAL. they take SURE BETS, SURE SHOTS, and SURE THINGS. they are PRECISE and RUTHLESS. they will pursue you to the end of the earth to weed out the troublemakers and rebels.

the GM also plays the DISPATCHER, the host of a pirate radio station set up to keep Killjoys informed of the movements of exterminators in the area, and of the fate of their friends on the road.

other Killjoys may be friends, family, or strangers, but they are all REBELS WITH A CAUSE, just doing their best to MAKE IT THROUGH THE DAY and maybe PARTY a little along the way. they may cross your path. they may mourn your fallen with you. they may join you on the road. Killjoys welcome each other with open arms.

this world is after me, after you-

your goal is to be who you want to be, and to escape the mind-controlling influence of the megacorp and its exterminators, paid to round up rebels like you. your goal is to make it through the day despite the fact that exterminators might lie in wait around every bend.

when you attempt to EVADE TROUBLE OR ESCAPE A BAD SITUATION, draw cards equal to your SPEED stat. if you draw:

- **one red card:** you scrape through by the skin of your teeth but they're hot on your tail.
- **two red cards:** you get out of the way or under cover.
- **a red face card:** they lose you completely.
- **no red cards:** you are outmaneuvered; you must FACE OFF or lose 1 SOUL, 1 DANGER, or 1 FEELING.
- **black face card:** the exterminators have a trick up their sleeve; shuffle all discarded black cards into the deck.
- **no red cards and black face card:** the megacorp has you cornered and helpless; lose 1 SOUL.

when you attempt to FACE OFF AGAINST AN EXTERMINATOR, draw cards equal to your DANGER stat. if you draw:

- **one red card:** you hold them off.
- **two red cards:** you get the draw on them or gain an advantage (+1 card) when you act again.
- **red face card:** you win the scene, fighting them off— for now.
- **no red cards:** you are outgunned, outnumbered, or outlasted; lose 1 SOUL, 1 SPEED, or 1 FEELING.
- **black face card:** the exterminators call for back-up; shuffle all discarded black cards into the deck.
- **no red cards and black face card:** the megacorp has your number; lose 1 SOUL.

when you ACT OUT OF FURY, JOY, OR SACRIFICE, draw cards equal to your FEELING stat. if you draw:

- **one red card:** your words or actions give your opponents pause, giving you or your allies time to flee or act.
- **two red cards:** your words or actions bolster your allies, giving them an advantage (+1 card) the next time they act.
- **red face card:** your words or actions scare off the exterminators— for now.
- **no red cards:** your action is unwise, impulsive, or reckless and gets you in trouble; lose 1 SOUL, 1 SPEED, or 1 DANGER.
- **black face card:** the exterminators understand how to use your feelings against you now; shuffle all discarded black cards into the deck.
- **no red cards and black face card:** the megacorp quashes the emotion you acted on; lose 1 SOUL.

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if heaven ain' t got a vacancy, then We just get up and go-

a scene ends when you escape or defeat the exterminators who have found you. at the end of each scene, shuffle all discarded black cards back into the deck – the megacorp has endless resources, and the exterminators always come back fully renewed.

sing it for the world-

when your team is on the down and out, struggling against the bleakness of the world, resources exhausted, you may do something to bolster their resolve and give them an advantage. when you SHARE AN INTIMATE MOMENT, MAKE AN INSPIRING SPEECH, or THROW A MASSIVE PARTY, shuffle all discarded red cards back into the deck. each member of your team may add +1 to either their SOUL, DANGER, SPEED, or FEELING.

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*Keep your boots tight, keep your gun close,
and die with your mask on if you've got to—*

if your SOUL reaches zero, you have three choices: JOIN THE MINDLESS CONSUMERIST DROVES, STRIKE A DEAL WITH AN EXTERMINATOR, or DIE WITH YOUR MASK ON.

when you JOIN THE MINDLESS CONSUMERIST DROVES, you exit the game quietly and without fanfare. you will have an easy, pain-free, joy-free life under the protection of the megacorp. your friends will not remember you fondly; they may not even remember you at all. make a new Killjoy to meet up with the rest of your friends somewhere down the line — maybe this one will be braver.

when you DIE WITH YOUR MASK ON, your team should THROW A MASSIVE PARTY to celebrate the life you lived — after all, it's what you would have wanted. you may be dead, but at least you went out in a blaze of glory fighting for what's right. your friends will tell tales of your thrill-seeking bravery. play your Killjoy's prodigy or legacy, a kid inspired by hearing about their exploits over the radio, or a friend looking to honor their legacy as they meet up with the rest of your friends — maybe they'll be able to live up to your story.

the exterminators are always looking for recruits who are fast, reliable, and good with a laser gun. when you STRIKE A DEAL WITH AN EXTERMINATOR, trading your freedom for your life and joining the baddies — moderately freer than the mindless droves, if only in name — trade places with the GM. they should make a character and join the other Killjoys, describing how they find the group or how the group finds them. you drop your character to play the exterminators and become the GM. your friends will remember your betrayal, and each take +1 FEELING.

the lights are out and the party's over—

I'm sorry to say it, but you can't win *DANGER DAYS*. there are no victories for people like you except for the satisfaction of living to see another day: to put your mask on one more time, pump the volume up loud, and speed down the abandoned freeway with your friends at your side. play until you get tired, play until you run out of time, or play until your Killjoys all fall, the radio playing out one last sad song in their memory.

*I know you're gonna miss me, so I'll leave you with this:
you know that big ball of radiation we call the sun?
well, it'll burst you into flames if you stay in one place too long—
that is, if the static don't get you first.
so remember, even if you're dusted, you may be gone,
but out here in the desert, your shadow lives on without you.*

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you only hear the music when your heart begins to break-

DANGER DAYS is inspired by [DANGER DAYS: THE TRUE LIVES OF THE FABULOUS KILLJOYS](#) by MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE. section headings and epilogue are lyrics from the album and are credited to Gerard Way, Mikey Way, Frank Iero, and Ray Toro. Title font is East Sea Dokdo; body font is Lato. This game was written for the Record Collection 2k19 jam hosted by Riley Hopkins (@RevRyeBread on itch.io).