

This is a larp for six to seven people, six players and one facilitator. The facilitator is optional. It will take roughly 3-4 hours. You need a four-sided dice. All participants wearing white or grey clothing is encouraged. It is inspired and based on the 2015 movie *Equals*, including setting and character inspiration. It is not necessary or even encouraged that you see this movie to play or facilitate this game. The dice mechanic is taken from *Long Drive Back From Busan* by Clio Yun-Su Davis. All players and the facilitator are encouraged to read this information; this is not a game about out of character secrets.

Introduction

Read this aloud:

It's the year 247 OTC, Of The Collective. Years before that, there was The Great War. Civilization as it was, fell. What rose out of the ashes was the Collective. A white city on a green landscape.

Cancer was cured. Each person now lives to be well over 100 years old. Society is peaceful, polite, and productive. Humans have been genetically altered to be so.

Any emotion responses have been removed from our make-up. We have cured the following disorders: anxiety, depression, rage, schizophrenia, wonder, mania, love.

Each day is regimented and filled with activities that are enriching. We send ships to the stars to explore and find our place in the galaxy. Our homes are white, sterile, and comfortable. Like our workplaces, our lunchrooms, and our clothing.

Some suffer from SOS: Switched On Syndrome, which leads to unpredictable sensory experiences and behavioral defects. This disease can be slowed with Inhibitors. But after many years, patients will progress to Stage 4 which involves a complete breakdown of ability to function in Society and be sent to the Defective Emotional Neuropathy Facility, the DEN, where they are humanely euthanized.

It is what is best for the Collective.

Characters

This is a game played in individual scenes between the main characters who develop SOS throughout the course of the game, or in group scenes where the other players play various other people in their daily lives. The main characters are blank slates and genderless deliberately; you can decide a few personal traits for them, but if they just started developing SOS, they are just discovering who they are. The six main characters and their partners are:

Celyn	An illustrator.	&	Lumi	A writer.
Ellery	A guard.	&	Wren	A doctor.
Noel	A gardener.	&	Sage	An astronaut.

Structure

Each Act, pick a scene with your partner. Play out that scene. Each pair of Partners picks a scene until each pair has gone at least once per act. If you are not in a scene, please quietly observe. In the *(Alone)* Act, each Character plays a scene. In the *(Together)* Act, there is one, long scene instead of multiple small ones. Scenes may be reused or repeated. The relationship dynamic can be whatever you decide. These are not necessarily people who know each other well, but rather people who are drawn to each other due to their slow awakening to feelings and the world. Some of the characters have been living with and hiding SOS, most are just developing it.

Feel free to take a moment to discuss and check in about consent and boundaries here and at any time. I encourage you to play this game with free touch consent from the shoulder to fingertips, as touch of any kind is forbidden in the Collective.

Roll an outcome dice at the beginning of pivotal acts when you're instructed to *(Roll)*. This die roll will inform the scene that follows and its outcome. Roll once for each pairing. A four sided dice. 1 means it goes extremely poorly. 2 means you don't get what you want. 3 means you get what you want, but with consequences. 4 means it goes extremely well.

(Workplace) denotes an Act featuring a pair of Main Characters and up to 4 generic Collective members played by the other characters. This is likely at your place of work, though it could be during your lunch break or an evening event like tai chi or even transit to and from work. The facilitator, if there is one, plays the Authority; whether that is your boss, the Safety Officer investigating you, the Doctor, etc. Other people can play these roles as well.

(Alone) denotes an Act with only one Main Character from a pairing at a time and relevant NPCs or other Main Characters. Each Character plays a scene.

(Partners) denotes an Act featuring only a pair of partners and no other members of the Collective.

(Together) denotes an Act where all the main characters finally meet and interact. One, long scene instead of multiple small ones this Act. There are no other members of the Collective.

A scene ends when you feel it has reached a logical conclusion or has resolved. Try to keep most scenes around 5 minutes or less, with the exception of Together which can be as long as needed.

The Collective

Members of The Collective are pleasant but cautious about potential erratic behavior. They know each other's routines and standards. Everyone wants to be productive; they are never tired, cross, proud, or anything else. They feel concern, but only mildly. They have no hesitations or fears regarding anything beyond practicality and reason. They do not feel or express any emotions other than calm and pleasant. They have never in their lives felt

emotions; so they do not miss them or crave them in anyway. They are completely blank slates in many ways; while they are capable of creating or coming up with ideas, it is within an emotionless vacuum and they are straightforward.

When playing a generic member of The Collective, your role as a background character is to alienate and other those living with SOS. They do not touch each other. They notice only that which is unusual.

SOS

Living with SOS, the process should be extremely slow and gradual. At first they do not even notice anything has changed; just slowly sentiment begins to seep into their daily existence. This is the first time they are feeling things like this; it might be pleasant, or frightening, or jarring, or comfortable. This is the core of the game; the slow exploration of what it means to feel and experience emotions. You decide what stage you are experiencing at any given time, but wherever you start, steadily worsen.

Stage 1, Intermittent Feeling, involves distraction, depression, pain, overwhelmed feelings, overly sensitive to light, loss of appetite. Stage 2 involves feeling strong emotions, nightmares, and constant low level emotions. Stage 3 involves outbursts or desire for physical touch with others. Stage 4 involves erratic behaviors and often leads to suicide, coupling, or an inability to interact in normal society. At Stage 4 you no longer function as a productive member of The Collective, and you are sent to the DEN to be ultimately euthanized.

Acts

- Act I (*Workplace*)
 - A standard day for each character. Establish who works in their workplace; they do not need names or personalities, simply repeating players and jobs.
 - Celyn & Lumi work in an office making history books and programs
 - Ellery & Wren at the DEN providing medical care to the emotionally compromised and overseeing suicide
 - Noel & Sage are both preparing a ship for space travel; Noel is working on a greenhouse that Sage will tend to in orbit.
- Act II: Good Morning (*Workplace*)
 - I can't stop staring at you.
 - An injured bird enters the office. You are surprisingly moved by this.
 - You are distracted by the intricacies of your work for the first time.
 - The view outside is beautiful.
 - Someone asks you for help.
 - You report someone at your workplace for erratic behavior.
- Act III: Daybreak (*Workplace*) (*Roll*)
 - You have a horrible nightmare. You have to tell someone. What was it about?
 - Your hands accidentally brush during a meeting. You spill your drink.
 - You lie for each other. Where were you really, this morning?
 - You've been working on something outside of your normal parameters. What is it?
- Act IIII: Midday (*Alone*)

- A couple is arrested and dragged out of your in the middle of the night for Coupling.
- You go to the doctor for a routine check-up. You find out you have SOS.
- You go to a part of the Collective you've never visited before. You meet another Character there who is not your Partner. Also taking in the view.
- Someone with SOS kicks and screams as they are dragged off to the DEN.
- You meet a Character who is not your Partner on the train. You suspect they have SOS.
- Act V: High Noon (*Workplace*)
 - Someone commits suicide at your place of work and you all see it.
 - I can't handle it.
 - You've been diagnosed with SOS. How do you get outed to your workplace?
 - You have an outburst at work. What drives you to it? How do you hide it?
 - You've been hiding your SOS for a year now. Your partner confronts you about this.
- Act VI: Sunset (*Partners*)
 - A confession.
 - A kiss.
 - A breakdown.
 - A revelation.
 - A betrayal.
- Act VII: Twilight (*Workplace*) (*Roll*)
 - You are caught being overly intimate with each other by a superior.
 - You realize you can no longer do your job. Do you transfer? Begin to plan an escape?
 - You stop your Partner from jumping off a roof.
 - You are going to be forced to go in for treatment.
 - You have a public breakdown and are taken in by security.
- Act VIII: Midnight (*Together*)
 - A cure for SOS is announced. You all meet. You make a plan. Who is willing to escape? What does it mean to live with SOS? Do you want to go back? You have so many questions and this might be your only chance.
- Act IX: Witching Hour (*Partners*)
 - This will be your last time alone before you act. How do you spend it?
- Act X: Dead of Night (*Workplace*) (*Roll*)
 - One of you gets caught and taken to the DEN.
 - One of you gets forcibly given a cure.
 - One of you gets into a fight with a guard. You kill him.
 - One of you contemplates suicide.
- Act XI: Dawn (*Optional*)
 - If you feel so moved, have a closing scene. Do you escape? Do you get the cure? What does life look for you after this point? What do you remember?

Debrief

Take time to let your players derole. Introduce themselves by name. Say one thing they would like to take away from this larp, one thing they would like to leave behind. Their most impactful moment. What feeling means to them. Breathe. Thank each other.