

# STAY AWAY!

A Contagious Horror Game  
Can You Trust Your Friends?



Rulebook

COORDINATES: 47°9' S 126°43' W  
FIRST RADIO TRANSMISSION: 07:21:03

07:21:06 - Dr. Campbell: Hello ... Bzzz ... Hello ... Archaeological Research Center of Providence, Rhode Island. Is anyone listening? We haven't heard from you for days. Can you hear us? Over.

07:21:15 - Jack Burton: Jack Burton reporting from R'lyeh Island. I think this will be the last time you hear ... Bzzz ... my voice. There is something in this place, something eternal and great. I can't explain it, but for sure it comes from the sea and it smells like a decomposing body. It is something unclean and unknown. I think it's buried right here, where we built this log cabin... I fear that our presence has awoken it and... and... This Whiskey sucks! Everyone here seems to have gone mad, I can no longer trust anyone... now I am alone, but I had to do it! I had to save myself at least I... but I don't think that I have succeeded. I ... Bzzz ... I don't know who I am anymore or what the hell that thing is that I locked up in the closet. Please don't try to find me! Don't come ... Bzzz ... here ... Bzzz ... you won't find me, but something that looks like me ... Bzzz... don't trust anyone ... Zzzz ... KOFF! PTUH! BBBLUBB ... and anyway ... KOFF! KOFF! ... stay away from the storage room!

07:22:02 - Dr. Campbell: Jack? What is it that you had to do? Stay calm, we will immediately send a second expedition to find all of you. We have checked the coordinates and everything coincides, you're definitely on the R'lyeh Island! It has finally been revealed! The Bloop, I knew it! It's wonderful, perhaps we are getting closer to it! Can you confirm this? Jack? Jack!

07:22:13 - Jack Burton: Sure, wonderful... tell my wife and my daughter that I love them... Over and out.



07:22:17 - Dr. Campbell: Jaaaaack!!!

# FROM THIS MOMENT ONWARD, YOU ARE THE STARS OF THE STORY!

You are part of the recovery team sent to the emerged island to investigate what happened to the archeological expedition. As soon as you arrive on the island, you are caught in a violent storm that forces you to take shelter in a rickety shack. You quickly realize that this is the outpost of the first team: Inside, you find Jack's lifeless body lying over the radio with a revolver in his hand.

At the end of the corridor stands what appears to be the door to the storage room that Jack talked about during his last radio transmission. It hangs limply on one hinge, the boards that were barricading it closed shattered into fragments. In the middle of the room, the floorboards have been torn up, revealing what—at first glance—appears to be a well full of dirty water, from which emerges a sickening smell.

Terrified by the thought that... something... might escape from the well, you bar the door. You don't yet realize that something has already escaped from the storage room, and now it is among you. In fact, it is one of you!

Among your companions, The Thing hides. Keep your eyes open, don't trust anyone, and... **STAY AWAY!**



## CONTENTS OF THE BOX

- This Rulebook
- 110 Numbered Cards:
  - 89 Stay Away Cards
  - 21 Contagion Cards
  - 46 Action Cards
  - 17 Defense Cards
  - 5 Obstacle Cards
  - 20 Panic Cards
  - 1 Placeholder Card

## THE GOAL OF THE GAME

At the beginning of the game, all players are “Human”, but during the game some of them will change roles, creating two opposing factions:

- A) The Humans: The archeologists are looking for “The Thing.” Their goal is to work together to find the Thing and the Infected.
- B) The Thing and the Infected: One Human will become The Thing on the first turn. Its goal is to destroy all the Humans, turning them into Infected allies or eliminating them from the game.

## GAME SETUP

There are two types of cards, recognizable by different backs (**STAY AWAY!**, and **PANIC!**), that are combined to form a single deck, plus a “Placeholder” card.

Before starting the game, you must build the deck, following these steps in order:

1. “The Thing” card is unique and has no number. It must always be included in the deck.

2. Choose the other cards to use according to the number of players: all cards with a number in the bottom right corner greater than the number of players are returned to the box and are not used in the game (e.g., in a 6 – player game, you must use the cards numbered 1 to 6, and remove the cards numbered 7 to 12 from the game).

3. From the remaining cards, temporarily set aside the “Infected!” cards, the **PANIC!** cards, and “The Thing” card.
4. Shuffle the remaining cards and draw 4 cards for each player, minus 1 card: to these add “The Thing” card (e.g., in a 6 – player game, choose  $6 \times 4 - 1 = 23$  cards + The Thing = 24 cards).
5. Take the cards from step 4 and deal 4 cards to each player. One of the players will receive “The Thing” card. He immediately takes the role of The Thing.”
6. Shuffle all the remaining cards to form a single deck and place it face down on the table.
7. Place the “Placeholder” card in front of the first player, with the arrow pointing to the left (indicating the next player in turn order).

## FAST START

For a fast start, we suggest modifying the game setup as follows:

Perform steps 1, 2 and 3 as indicated, then

- 4b) Shuffle the cards and draw 4 cards for each player, minus 3 cards: the previously set aside "The Thing" card and 2 "Infected!" cards (e.g., in a 6 – player game, choose  $6 \times 4 - 3 = 21$  cards + The Thing + 2 Infected = 24 cards).
- 5b) Create a deck of 4 cards for each player. One of these will be composed by "The Thing" card, 2 "Infected!" cards and a fourth random card. All the remaining player decks will be composed only of random cards. "Secretly and randomly give a deck to each player, taking care nobody knows which deck contains "The Thing" card."

Then, complete the setup following steps 6 and 7 of the standard setup and start the game.

## PLAYING THE GAME

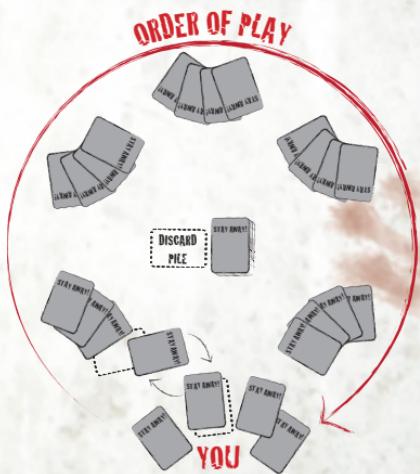
Players must always keep the cards in hand hidden (unless a card instructs them otherwise). Discards are placed in a face down pile next to the draw deck. The game is played in turns. At the beginning of the game, the turn passes clockwise, starting with the player on the dealer's left (this may change during the game). On your turn, you must follow these three steps, in order:

1. Draw one card from the deck and add it to your hand.
2. If you draw a **PANIC!** card, you must play it immediately and discard it (face down) after you use it.

If you draw a **STAY AWAY!** card, you must then choose one of these two actions:

- A) Discard one card from your hand to the discard pile (face down) or
- B) Play one **STAY AWAY!** card from your hand, follow its instructions, and discard it to the discard pile (face down).
- 3. Choose one **STAY AWAY!** card from your hand and offer it to the next player in order of play. That player must choose a **STAY AWAY!** card from his hand and exchange it for yours (without revealing either card).

If there is an "obstacle" between you and the next player (such as a "Barred Door" or "Quarantine"), "you may not choose to exchange cards with that player, so the turn ends without a card exchange."



After you complete all three steps, give the "Placeholder" card to the next player; your turn is over. At the end of your turn, you must **always have exactly four cards** in your hand. Then, the next player begins his turn.

**Note 1:** The exchange at the end of your turn always takes place with cards face down, and always with the next player in turn order, unless a card says otherwise.

**Note 2:** When you play a card, it can only be played on the adjacent player of your choice on your left or on your right, unless the card says otherwise.

**Note 3:** All discarded cards are always put in the discard pile face down. If the deck of cards runs out, reshuffle the discard pile and form a new deck.

## CHANGING PLACES

Some cards allow physically swapping places with other players. The change of place can be useful to any player, for example, to run away from a difficult situation, or to follow a player to eliminate or help him. It can be useful to The Thing, too. For example, it can be used to run away or infect other players far from the initial position. Each change of place could arouse suspicion, so it is really important to choose the right moment to act!

In any case, the player who started the change of place plays his card exchange phase with the next player in the new position, following the current order of play (clockwise or counter clockwise), then the turn ends. The next turn starts the other player involved in the change of places, following the current order of play.

During a change of places, the players always carry with their hand of cards with them.

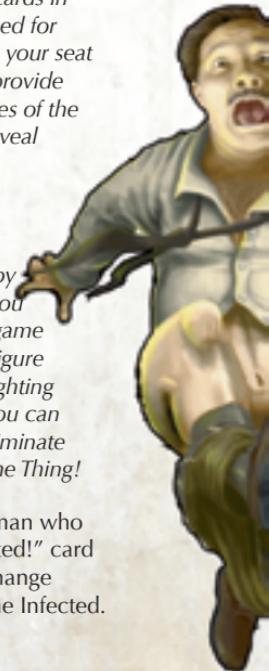
## THE ROLES

During the game, you will play one of these following roles:

1. **HUMAN:** At the beginning of the game, all players are Humans except the player who receives "The Thing" card during the setup. As a Human, your goal is to identify which player is The Thing and roast it with the "Flamethrower" card. You remain Human until The Thing passes an "Infected!" card to you. If a Human draws an "Infected!" card from the deck, he is not Infected. You can never exchange that card with another player. You must hold it or discard it when possible. But, if another player passes an "Infected!" card to you (he must be the Thing because only The Thing can do that!), you become Infected and start playing that new role.

**Playing Hint:** The cards in the deck can be used for protection, change your seat around the table, provide clues about the roles of the other players, or reveal your own cards to prove you are not Infected (so the other Humans do not eliminate you by mistake). To win, you should follow the game closely and try to figure out who you are fighting against and who you can team up with to eliminate the Infected and The Thing!

2. **INFECTED:** A Human who receives an "Infected!" card during a card exchange becomes one of the Infected.





You cannot ever discard the “Infected!” card you received from The Thing. You are now an ally of The Thing and must take care that its identity is not revealed, trying to confuse its opponents and sow suspicion among the Humans. If you draw another “Infected!” card from the deck (in addition to the one you received from The Thing), you may discard it or keep it to try to pass it to The Thing. However, you can never exchange that card with another Human or Infected player.

**Note:** An Infected player must always have an “Infected!” card in his hand.

3. **THE THING:** One player will receive “The Thing” card at the start of the game. From that moment on, that player assumes the role of The Thing. He can never discard or exchange “The Thing” card. The Thing’s goal is to annihilate the Humans or turn them into Infected by passing them an “Infected!” card.  
**Only The Thing can infect others players by giving “Infected!” cards to them during a card exchange.**

So, The Thing is the only player who will know the roles of every player in the game, and will be the only one who can declare that there are no more Humans in play, ending the game. The Thing can receive “Infected!” cards when exchanging cards with “Infected” players. To survive, The Thing must try to hide its identity and cast suspicion on the others, so the Humans can’t locate it (and roast it).

**Note:** During the game, it is allowed (and recommended!) to talk to the other players. You can announce your identity or bluff by making false declarations to direct suspicion to other players, but you must never show your cards to anyone (unless you are required to do so by a card). It’s up to the other players to decide if they trust you or not, judging your behavior and deciding whether to help you, eliminate you, or run away!

4. **SUPER INFECTION!** If a player has only “Infected!” cards in hand when swapping cards – unless he is an Infected players exchanging cards with The Thing – the card exchange cannot happen. The player must show the hand of “Infected!” cards and is eliminated from the game.

## ELIMINATION

The “Flamethrower” is the only card that can be used to eliminate another player, regardless of his role.

If you suspect that a player next to you (right or left) is part of the opposing team, you can play this card to eliminate him.

Unless that player has a “No Barbeque!” card in hand, he is eliminated from the game. He must put all of his cards on the discard pile without revealing them.

**IMPORTANT:** The Thing cannot keep the Flamethrower card in his hand at the end of his turn. He must discard or exchange it with another player. If the players find out that The Thing has the Flamethrower in his hand (and it is not his turn), he loses the game immediately along with all the Infected players.

# THE END OF THE GAME

The game ends as soon as:

## The Thing is eliminated from the game:

All players declare which side they are on (by revealing their hand of cards). All Humans still in the game win as a team. The Thing, all Infected, and all eliminated players lose.

## No Human remains in the game:

The Thing can declare that there are no Humans left. All players must declare which side they are on (by revealing their cards). If he is correct, the Thing and any Infected still in play win as a team. All eliminated players, and the last Human player who was infected, lose.

**Special Case 1:** In the exceptional situation where The Thing is able to infect all the other players and no Humans have been eliminated from the game, The Thing is the only winner and everyone else loses!

**Special Case 2:** If The Thing declares victory, but one or more Humans are still in play, they reveal their identity and win the game, while The Thing, the Infected and all the eliminated players lose.

# STAY AWAY! CARDS

**STAY AWAY!** cards are part of the deck and are added to your hand when drawn. They should be played at the right moment. They can be divided into four types, based on their effects: CONTAGION, ACTION, DEFENSE and OBSTACLES.

## CONTAGION CARDS

These cards have their title in red. These cards cannot be played or revealed to the other players (unless required by a card effect).



**The Thing:** You are "The Thing" and your goal is to infect or destroy the Humans. You can

NEVER discard or exchange this card, even if a card effect asks you to.



**Infected!**: If you draw this card, you are not Infected and you can discard it or keep it in your hand at your discretion. Be careful: if anyone catches you with this card in hand, they will think that you are Infected!

If you are a Human, you can never give it to another player!

If another player passes an “Infected!” card to you (only The Thing can do that), you are Infected. You can give other “Infected!” cards only to The Thing. Remember that you must always keep at least one “Infected” card in your hand, and you may NEVER discard or exchange this card, even if a card effect asks you to.

## ACTION CARDS

These cards have the title in green. You can only play these cards during your turn, never as a response to another card. They must be discarded after use.



**Flamethrower** – This card eliminates an adjacent player.



**Analysis** – If you play this card on an adjacent player, he must show you all the cards in his hand.



**Axe** – You can play this card on yourself or an adjacent player to remove a “Barred Door” or “Quarantine” card affecting that player.



**Suspicious** – Choose one random card from an adjacent player and look at it, then return it to that player.



**Whiskey** – Show all your cards to all the players. This card can only be played on yourself.



**Resolute** – Draw three **STAY AWAY!** cards: take one into your hand and discard the others, without showing them to other players. Then, play one card or discard one. You

may play a “Resolute” card again in the same turn. If there are **PANIC!** cards on the top of the deck, discard them without looking at them, until you draw three **STAY AWAY!** cards to choose from.



**Watch Your Back** – Reverse the order of play. So, if play was passing to the left, it now passes to the right. This affects both the turn order and the exchange of cards.



**Change Places!** – Physically exchange your place at the table with a player next to you (unless this is prevented by a

“Quarantine,” or there is a “Barred Door” card between you). Take your hand of cards with you when you change places. Now, exchange a card with the next player (from your new position). Your turn ends. The next turn starts with the player that was involved in the exchange of places, following with the current order of play.



**You'd Better Run!** – Physically exchange your place at the table with any player who is not under the effects of “Quarantine,” ignoring any “Barred Door” card on the table between you and that player. Take your hand of cards with you when you change places. Now, exchange a card with the next player (from your new position). Your turn ends. The next turn starts with the player that was involved in the exchange of places, following the current order of play.



**Seduction** – Exchange one card with any player who is not in “Quarantine,” then your turn ends.

## DEFENSE CARDS

These cards have their title in blue. These cards can only be played in response to an action taken by another player or a **PANIC!** Card effect, and are discarded after use. After playing a Defense card, you must immediately draw a replacement from the deck. If there are **PANIC!** cards on top of the deck, you must discard them without looking at them, until you draw one **STAY AWAY!** card to add to your hand.



**Scary** – You can only play this card in response to a card exchange offer. Refuse a card exchange requested by any player or card effect. Look at the refused card, then return it.



**I'm Comfortable** – You can only play this card in response to a "Change Places!" or "You'd Better Run!" card. It cancels the effects of that card.



**No Thanks!** – You can only play this card in response to a card exchange offer. Refuse a card exchange requested by any player or card effect.



**Missed!** – You can only play this card in response to a card exchange offer. Refuse a card exchange requested by any player or card effect. The player next to you (in turn order) must exchange cards instead of you. If, during the exchange, this player receives an "Infected!" card, he doesn't become Infected, but he will know for sure that he received a card from The Thing or an Infected player! If there are "obstacles" between you and the other player (such as a "Barred Door" or "Quarantine"), no exchange takes place. The player next to the one who started the exchange takes the next turn.



**No Barbecue!** – You can only play this card in response to a "Flamethrower" card to avoid being eliminated from the game.

## OBSTACLE CARDS

These cards have their title in yellow. These cards let you isolate yourself or another player. They remain in the game until removed by another card.



**Quarantine** – You may play this card on an adjacent player of your choice. Until the

Quarantined player completes two full turns, he must draw, exchange and discard cards showing them to the other players. Furthermore, he can't eliminate players and play (or be the target of) cards that allow change of places, unless specified by the cards. "Quarantine" can be removed and discarded before the Quarantined player completes his two turns end by an "Axe" card, or through a **PANIC!** cards effect.

**Note:** if the player under the effect of a "Quarantine" is The Thing, he has to consider all "Infected!" card offers will be visible to all players.



**Barred Door** – You may play this card face up on the table between you and an adjacent player. The two of you can no longer take actions that target each other (playing cards, exchanging cards, and changing places). It remains face up between you and the chosen player until it is removed by an "Axe" card or a

**PANIC!** card effect. If players change places because of another card effect, the "Barred Door" remains in its original position on the table (the players affected by it may change as a result).

## PANIC! CARDS



**PANIC!** cards are part of the deck. They are random events and add suspense and unpredictability to the game.

If you draw a **PANIC!** card during the draw phase of your turn, you must play it immediately, discarding it after you follow its instructions. **PANIC!** cards can never be part of your hand.

You can only play a **PANIC!** card during the draw phase at the beginning of your turn.

If you need to draw because of the effect of other cards (i.e., "Defense" cards, "Resolute," or some **PANIC!** cards), all **PANIC!** cards on top of the deck must be discarded without looking at them, until it is possible to draw a **STAY AWAY!** card and add it to your hand.

## VARIANT'S

- To increase the difficulty of the game to the advantage of The Thing or Humans, increase or decrease the number of "Infected" cards in the deck, at the discretion of the players.
- To increase the difficulty of the game to the advantage of The Thing, the "Flamethrower" and "Analysis" cards can be added to the deck during Step 5 of setup, instead of dealing them out at the beginning of the game.
- To increase the strategic component, a player can only use the "Seduction," "You'd Better Run!," "Can't We Be Friends?," and "Get Out of Here!" cards on a player

to his right or to his left, unless there is a Quarantine or a Barred Door preventing this, **in both directions**.

- Expert players are free to build the deck as they please by changing the cards used in the game.
- **VENGEANCE MODE:** if The Thing is eliminated, and there are both Humans and Infected still in the game, the game does not end. Instead, the two factions have to fight it out until all of the Infected or all the Humans have been eliminated. The Thing (who alone can know all the roles) can still follow the game and give directions to the other players, at its discretion, without ever explicitly stating the roles of the other players. The Thing will declare the end of the game when all the Humans or all the Infected have been eliminated. All surviving players (Human or Infected) win, while all eliminated players lose.



A game by **Antonio Ferrara** and **Sebastiano Fiorillo**

# STAY AWAY!

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**Roberto Di Meglio and Fabio Majorana**

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