Environmental Zones

Duskara's three zones—the Day Side, the Twilight Belt, and the Night Side—are more than scenery. They actively shape gameplay by modifying dice pools and creating narrative constraints.

Zone-Based Dice Modifiers

Whenever a character takes action in a specific zone, automatically apply the zone's base modifiers **before** considering character Tags or situational factors.

Day Side

Base Modifier: +2 Risk Dice to all physical actions **Reason:** Extreme heat, radiation exposure, equipment degradation

Additional Considerations:

- Characters without thermal protection automatically gain the **Overheating** Condition within minutes
- Unshielded equipment fails within hours
- Communication systems suffer interference
- Water consumption increases dramatically

Exceptions:

- Characters with Master-level Thermal Sense reduce Risk Dice by 1
- Heavy-duty thermal suits reduce Risk Dice by 1
- Robotic or remote operations can ignore physical Risk Dice

Opportunities:

- Rare mineral deposits (add Chance Dice to prospecting/salvage)
- Ancient wreckage sites (add Chance Dice to archaeological research)
- Clear thermal signatures (add Chance Dice to Thermal Sense tracking)

Twilight Belt

Base Modifier: None (neutral ground) **Reason:** This is humanity's adapted habitat

Characteristics:

- Wind is constant but manageable
- Resources are scarce but available
- Temperatures are tolerable
- Settlements provide infrastructure support

Dynamic Conditions:

- Storm Season: +1 Risk Die to outdoor activity
- Wind Turbine Maintenance: +1 Chance Die to power-dependent actions
- Water Rationing: +1 Risk Die to resource-intensive activity
- Festival Season: +1 Chance Die to social interactions

Night Side

Base Modifier: +1 Risk Die to navigation and perception (darkness) **Reason:** Perpetual darkness, disorienting environment

Additional Considerations:

- Characters without thermal protection gain the **Freezing** Condition within hours
- Navigation requires Resonance, bioluminescent guides, or technological aids
- Geothermal sites negate cold-related Risk Dice within their immediate area
- Cave systems amplify Resonance abilities (add Chance Dice)

Exceptions:

- Night-side natives or those with extensive cave experience reduce Risk Dice by 1
- Resonance users can navigate without penalty in familiar cavern systems
- Geothermal zones function as safe havens

Opportunities:

- Geothermal vents (add Chance Dice to warmth-related survival)
- Mineral seams (add Chance Dice to mining/prospecting)
- Bioluminescent ecosystems (add Chance Dice to biological research)
- Acoustic clarity (add Chance Dice to Resonance communication)

Transition Zones

The margins between zones are the most dangerous:

Day-Twilight Margin

- Temperature swings create violent updrafts
- Superstorms spawn here regularly
- +2 Risk Dice to outdoor activity during storm formation

- Salvage teams and thermal prospectors operate here

Twilight-Night Margin

- Stable but dark, minimal wind
- Entrances to Deep Roads are common
- +1 Risk Die to outdoor navigation without guidance

Using Zones in Play

GM Guidance:

1. **Announce the zone** when characters enter or the scene shifts
2. **Apply base modifiers automatically**
3. **Layer on situational Tags** from there (weather, equipment, character abilities)
4. **Use zones to create tension:** approaching the day side should feel increasingly dangerous

Player Awareness:

- Players should know which zone they're in
- Players should understand the base risk of operating there
- Players should plan around environmental realities

Example:

Kaelen is attempting to salvage technology from day side wreckage.

- **Zone:** Day Side (+2 Risk Dice automatically)
- **Kaelen's Tags:**
  - Heavy-Duty Thermal Suit (Gear): +1 Chance Die, reduces zone penalty by 1
  - Thermal Suit Operation (Skill): +1 Chance Die
  - Survival (Day Side) (Skill): +1 Chance Die
- **Situational:**
  - Solar storm incoming (scene Tag): +1 Risk Die
  - Ancient salvage site (scene Tag): +1 Chance Die
- **Final Pool:**
  - 1 Action Die
  - +4 Chance Dice
  - +2 Risk Dice (zone baseline, reduced by thermal suit)
  - +1 Risk Die (solar storm)
  - Net: 1 Action Die + 1 Chance Die

Zone-Specific Challenges

Different zones naturally create different types of stories:

Day Side Stories:

- Salvage and recovery missions
- Scientific exploration
- Desperate escapes
- Mining operations
- Thermal ability training

Twilight Belt Stories:

- Settlement politics and cooperation
- Resource management
- Cultural festivals and gatherings
- Weather worker training
- Defense against superstorms

Night Side Stories:

- Deep Roads exploration
- Geothermal site discovery
- Cave culture immersion
- Ancient structure investigation
- Resonance ceremonies

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