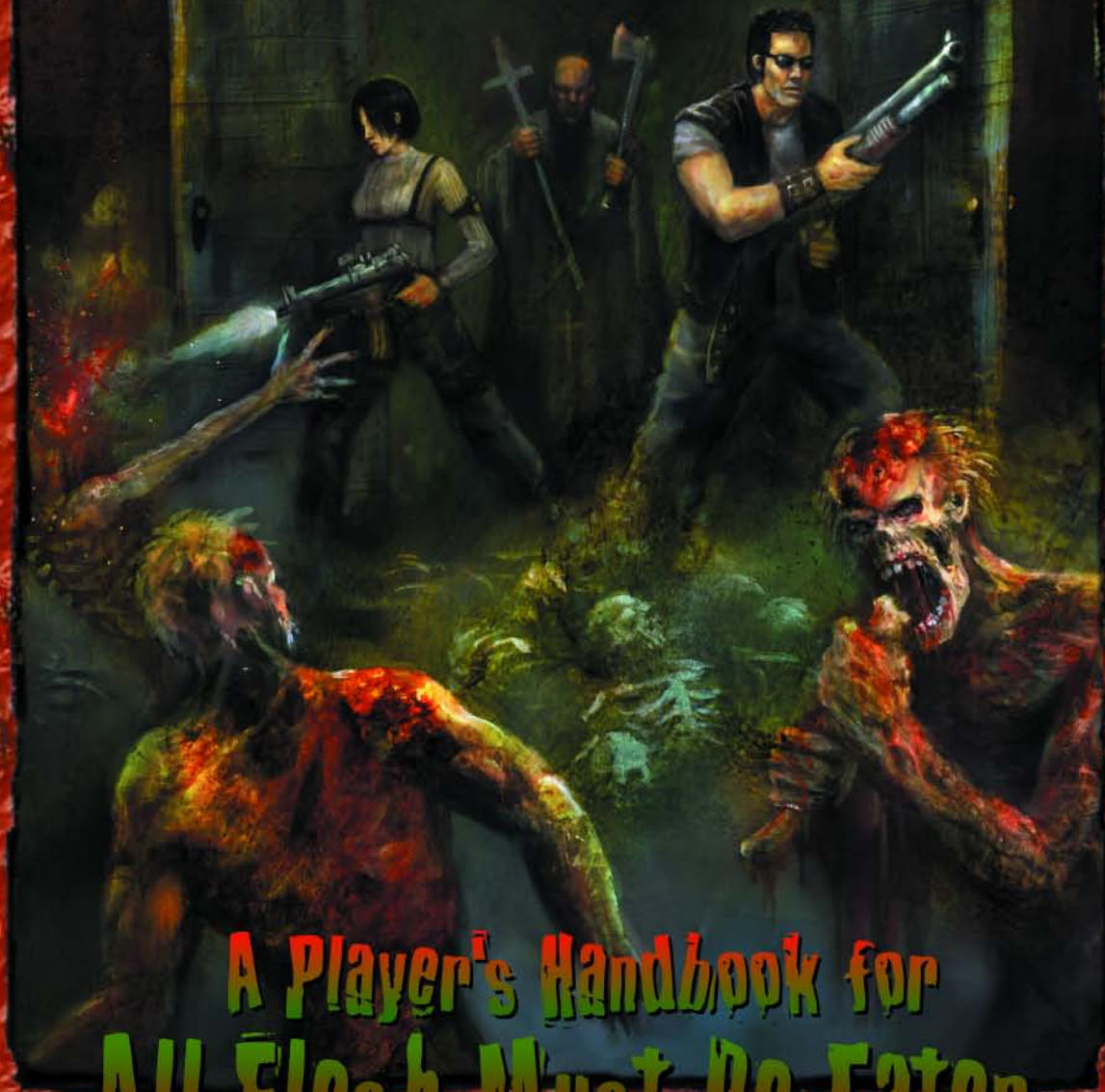


ONE OF THE LIVING



A Player's Handbook for
All Flesh Must Be Eaten

Where were you?

When the hungry dead crawled from their grave-wombs, when the cities toppled and society collapsed, when the macabre roamed the streets hungry for flesh and blood—where were you?

And what did you do next?

Faced with a tide of teeth and corruption, did you lie down to die? Or did you rage uselessly at fate? Or did you take the fight back to the mouth of hell itself? Rather than counting success by how many putrid corpses you take down, do you now view each new sunrise as a silent victory against the darkness?

If you're a survivor, this book is for you.

One of the Living is a supplement for the All Flesh Must Be Eaten RPG. In it, you will find:

- A survivor's handbook with all the tricks for staying alive, including a post-apocalyptic shopping list.
- New Qualities, Drawbacks, skills, metaphysics, and archetypes for those who survive.
 - Rules for scrounging and jerry-rigging in a post-apocalyptic world.
 - A slew of new implements of survival.
- Guidelines for long-term Deadworld campaigning, including the psychological and technological effects of society's collapse.
 - Rules for zombie decomposition and a bunch of cool new zombie Aspects.
- Details on Sunset Falls, a tiny community of survivors holed up in an isolated area.
 - Six new Deadworlds set many years after The Rise.
 - Government handout addressing the undead threat.



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\$24.00 (US)
EDN8007
ISBN 1-891153-15-3





ONE OF THE LIVING

E D E N S T U D I O S P R E S E N T S A S H Y / V A S I L A K O S P R O D U C T I O N

O n e o f t h e L i v i n g ™

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Based on the Original Concept by

C H R I S T O P H E R S H Y a n d G E O R G E V A S I L A K O S

W W W . A L L F L E S H . C O M

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Reader discretion is advised.

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First Printing, May 2004

Stock EDN8007 ISBN 1-891153-15-3

Printed in the U.S.

ZOMBIES

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for a new world

About ten or more years ago I met Ben for the first time. I was shy, having been just introduced to him as well as a number of other people. He seemed so “normal” to me. I was having a hard time finding a common ground, something to talk about. That is, until he started talking about *Return of the Living Dead*! I remember the first thing that came flying out of my mouth was: “Oh I love the half dogs!”—that’s not a statement that would normally endear you to a new group of people, but it did. It forged a spookirific friendship with a person I admire not only for his wit & writing talents, but for his vast knowledge on all things horror and ZOMBIES!

So much for Ben being “normal.”

Ben looks like the sweet boy next door . . . (and in some respects he is) but his brain is bursting with more zombie facts than anyone I know (and that’s saying something, if you consider the crowd I run around with). I know Ben wrote *One of the Living* in a *dark phase* of his life, there is a lot of emphasis on survival . . . and that may seem like a very basic thing to focus on in a zombie game—but I think it goes deeper than that. As Ben so eloquently mentions, zombies are a metaphor for our fears, our nightmares, and a venue to bring our inner & social struggles to light . . . and hey, on a lighter note, they’re just plain fun to kill!

I think you’ll enjoy what Ben has to say on the subject of zombies, I know I always do . . . and if you want to survive a zombie invasion, keep reading . . . you’ll be happy you did.

—Serena Valentino

Creator & writer for *Nightmares & Fairy Tales* and *GloomCookie*

Published by Slave Labor Graphics

CHAPTER ONE

I.

Jack sat on the hood of the jeep, staring out into the night. It was one of those indigo night skies, the kind seen in old Technicolor films. Speckled with glittering stars winking back at him, there was something about the vastness of the sky that soothed him. Time was, this close to the city, he'd never been able to see the sky like this. He'd have to take a telescope way up the mountain, away from the light pollution, to get a clear view. But now, with no power across the countryside, he could sit in the old parking lot and see the night sky as if he were the only person on Earth.

He took a sip of the acidic homebrew and passed it to the girl sitting next to him. "I've had enough," she whispered. "Thanks, though."

She was pretty, in a hard-bitten sort of way. Just into her twenties, she'd seen enough to drive a lot of people mad. She brushed a few strands of her short-cropped, black hair behind her ear and gazed out into the night.

He shrugged and took another sip.

"Gonna be a cold night," he said. "Getting on winter."

"Has it been another year, then?" Marian asked. He nodded, thoughtfully, scratching the stubble on his chin. He still preferred to go clean-shaven, but water was valuable these days, so he rarely got to use it for shaving.

"Crops are good though. Should last us till spring, if we can keep scavenging."

"We can," she replied. "But we're going to have to try and cast our net a bit wider."

Jack hated this small talk, but there was nothing else to do on watch. They had their post, and had to keep it until dawn. They'd once tried to be something more than just a watch-team to each other, but the stress of the world was too much, and Marian and Jack were both just too closed up for their own good.

In the distance, they heard a soft rustle in the trees. Jack's hand went to the stock of the rifle at his side. Marian strained to see into the night. She raised a pair of binoculars, scanned for a few seconds, then lowered them.

"Just a rabbit," she said, then silently put out her hand. Jack put the flask into her night-chilled fingers. Taking a sip, she muttered, "we haven't seen anything in a week. I wonder if they're even still out there."

INTRODUCTION

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"They are . . . I don't think there's many of them left, but until we're sure we gotta keep watching."

"I suppose," she muttered. She stood, took small, tentative steps away from him. Gravel crunched under her worn boot soles as she paced a tight, aimless circle. "Can I ask you something?"

"Sure. I got nothing to hide."

"You've never told me . . . where were you when it happened?" She looked up at him, flicking back a long strand of hair and meeting his eyes.

"You never asked, did you?" he replied, then took another pull of the rotgut. He lowered the flask from his lips, watching the light of the moon reflecting on the tarnished silver case. "You know . . . every generation has one of those questions. My grandpa's was 'where were you when you heard about Pearl Harbor?' My dad's was 'where were you when Kennedy was shot?' First mine was 'where were you when you heard Lennon died?' then 'when the Twin Towers fell . . .' and now 'when Hell sent back the dead?'"

"Yeah . . . I was at school," she said. "I didn't know what I'd do . . ." Her eyes focused back on the night. It would almost be a beautiful night. Quiet, cool air breezing across her face. But then she became aware of the telltale glimmer of barbed wire encircling the makeshift compound. She tried to tell herself the tattered flapping strips hanging from the metal hooks were just cloth, or leaves. Anything but what she knew they really were. "I don't know what we're doing now, really. Why we even bother sometimes."

He took one last drag on his flask. "I tell you what you did . . . what we're doing . . . same thing my gramps and my dad did. We're looking at the world, staring it right in the eye, and surviving."

"You haven't answered by question," she said.

Jack stared out into the night, as the memories flooded over him. "I was on a bus . . . going who cares where . . ."

II.

It'd been a long, boring semester at college, getting a degree in something he was sure would promise him a bright and comfortable future. He'd scraped up just enough money working odd jobs over the year to afford this bus ticket. Nothing fancy for a vacation, just a trip to visit some friends he hadn't seen in a couple of years. He was going to spend the summer with them at their family cabin on Nantucket. Just soak in the sun, clear his head, drink and get laid. All to excess if possible. It seemed like a fine plan to him.

His head was nodding, tugging him to sleep. The bus was passing through one of those dreadfully hot, dusty regions in the middle of the country. He'd lost track of his exact location at least a day or so back. Hot summer air blew in through a few open windows, which was better than the bus's lack of air conditioning. His eyes kept drooping, tired of staring at the same rows of cornfields, alfalfa fields, or whatever else they happened to be passing by.

But when the bus slammed to a quick, skidding halt, he snapped awake with the rest of the startled passengers.

As the other transients gathered their spilled belongings off the floor, Jack stood. He'd been sitting right behind the driver and could look out the bug-splattered window.

"Holy crap," gasped the grotesquely corpulent, sweating bus driver.

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Jack saw half a dozen cars smashed together into a tangled mass of glass and steel ahead of them. Blood seeped from them, forming a scarlet smear across the highway. As he watched, a lone figure crawled out of the mangled vehicle closest to them. Arm outstretched, mouth opening and closing, maybe trying to form words, it forced itself toward them.

Someone screamed behind him. Jack turned to see what was happening. An older woman had her hands clapped to the sides of her face and shrieked as she gawked out the window. He followed her eyes and saw at least a dozen blood-smeared, tattered, burned figures stumbling toward the bus. Their eyes were dead, wild, unfocused, as they rushed the side of the bus.

He heard a crash and glass shards struck his skin. Torn bloody hands punched right through the side window, grabbing the shrieking, fat driver and pulling him out of the bus. Jack watched as a charred, blistered face rose up to meet the driver and then split open, white teeth flashing across charcoal black, and coming down on the driver's jowls. Blood sprayed the bus window crimson.

The bus began rocking as the figures slammed into it again and again. It started to topple, and Jack was thrown onto his back. The bus slammed into the ground, crushing both the shrieking driver and his blackened attacker.

Chaos all around him. Jack had no sense of direction or action. All he remembered afterwards was throwing his body against the front window with all his might. The pane held once, twice, then shattered as his shoulder hit it one last time. Jagged, dagger-sharp spikes of glass tore his clothing, shredded his skin. Hands burning as he hit the scalding asphalt, gravel, grit and glass shoved deep into his now bleeding palms.

All around him, he saw the maniacs, flesh and blood-soaked cloth hanging from their masticating jaws. Ahead of him, he saw the figure still crawling towards him from the ruins of the car. But now he realized it was only half a person. Just a head, a torso, and arms, and a white, bony tail, leaking spinal fluid like a snail's trail back to its own legs, still in the car.

Jack ran. He ran without direction, without thought, without hope. The primal nugget of his lizard-brain kicked in, filling his blood with adrenaline and just telling him to get the hell out of there.

It could have been hours, days, or weeks later when he finally came to, face down in a stream, hands scabbed over, still stiff.

And alone . . .

III.

"So," he whispered, hands shaking. "That's where I was when it happened."

"I'm sorry," she said. "So sorry." She put her hand on his, and for a moment the touch eased his pain.

Their eyes met, and a tear began to form in the corner of his eye. "I just left them all," he whispered flatly.

"We've all left people behind," she said. "We've all lost people." She brushed a stray strand of his hair from forehead. "And found people."

He looked off into the distance. Far, far away, the horizon was split by a razor-thin orange gash. They'd survived another night. That was something to be grateful for.



Because you're one of the living,
and if we can't stick together
who's gonna make it tonight?

—Tina Turner, *One of the Living*

Can you see that sliver in the distance? That thin red band against the corpse-black sky? It's the dawn. Rosy-fingered and here to welcome in a new day. For most people, it's just the start of another 24 hours of working, sleeping, eating . . . living. But take away the comforts we've all grown used to, the cars, electricity, fresh food, and things start to change.

Just for the hell of it, let's throw in some zombies.

For the heroes in an *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* chronicle, seeing the rising sun at dawn means they've survived another night. They've fought back death once more, and can continue on, trying to carve a meaningful life for themselves out of the carcass of the old world. They've raged against the dying of the light with chainsaw and shotgun, and walked endlessly

through the valley of death. That's what this book is about—survival after society collapses under the weight of the walking dead.

There's an old Buddhist saying, "When you wake up in the morning, carry water, chop wood. Before going to bed at night, carry water, chop wood." You've got to do what you need to do to survive. Daily. On a basic level, we're talking water to drink and fire to keep warm. But there's more to surviving than just that. Eventually you need food, of course, but how long can you live on your own? And we're not just talking about the basic human needs for companionship. In your standard Deadworld, having someone (or even better, a community) to watch your back is essential.

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And this brings us to the big secret. There's lots of people out there who have taken a look at *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* and just said "oh, you get to kill zombies . . . well that'll be fun for one game, but then it'll get old." But we know better. You see, what they don't get is that the zombies are just a *metaphor*. Sure, on the one hand, a movie like *Night of the Living Dead* is about zombies that eat people and it's all super scary and bloody. But look at the time the film was made. You think that was just a film about zombies? A film made in the height of the Civil Rights movement? Not likely. It was a film about societies and how they can either survive or fail, utterly based on the choices of the individuals. Those folks trapped in that creepy old farmhouse were a slice of the American Pie. There were a pretty decent mix of socio-economic classes there and they had a choice. They either worked together, against the "enemy" (in this case, the zombies) or they splintered apart and failed.

We all know how that one turned out.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten is a game about survival. Sure, we've chosen to use zombies as the metaphor for that enemy. But it could just as well be rampaging orcs, savage barbarians, Evil Empires, or anything else. *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* is, like the movies that inspired it, deeper than it looks on first glance. It's not just about survival. It's about forming a tiny sliver of society in the form of the "adventuring party" and then working together to survive. It's about re-forging the world however you want it to be. The old world is dead, nothing but ashes and corruption (and zombies). Here's your chance to write your name in the dust and say, "I was here. I fought to survive."

This book will help you do that. We've stuffed this supplement full of new crunchy bits to spice up your games, and tons of resources for playing long-term chronicles in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. You've survived the *Night of the Living Dead*. Let's see what you do with the days that follow.

Chapter Summary

Chapter One: Introduction is what you're reading now, knucklehead. Pay more attention or you're zombie chow.

Chapter Two: Prey No More gives you all sorts of good junk to complicate your characters with. There are a slew of new skills, Qualities, and Drawbacks for you. These will hopefully give Cast Members the edge they need to survive a long-term chronicle. Next, a bunch of new Gifts are offered up for the more metaphysical characters, as well as a bunch of ideas for Zombie Masters on how to choose an appropriate level of Metaphysics for their game. A couple of new archetypes are presented which use all of this new stuff, so you can start playing right away.

Chapter Three: Making It Up As You Go tells everything you ever wanted to know about jury-rigging equipment in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. You may have seen some of this material before in our *Pulp Zombies* supplement, but the rules here are significantly changed. *Pulp Zombies* was super-science, *Flash Gordon*. This is more like the *Road Warrior* or "I scrounged up a box of junk at the bombed out hardware store . . . I wonder if I can build a flamethrower with it". Good luck on that one by the way—you're still going to have to scrounge up some gasoline.

Chapter Four: More Implements of Destruction is what some of you have been screaming for. You didn't think we were going to force you to survive a world gone to Hell without some new guns and other ways to de-animate the zombies, did you? We've got you covered.

Chapter Five: Envy the Dead illustrates the effects of living in a world full of the walking dead. Not just the psychological collapse Cast Members may feel over time, but how the world changes over the years as technology and society begins to crumble. Guidelines are given to aid the Zombie Master in organizing his own Deadworld for long-term campaigning. For ZMs looking to design a long-term chronicle, this is the place to start.

Chapter Six: Blowin' Up Dead Guys a wealth of information on rotting and includes optional rules for handling decomposition. Oh, and just to be fair, we've thrown in a bunch of new, cool zombie Aspects. Who says the living get to have all the fun?

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Chapter Seven: Sunset Falls gives you the chance to take all the new stuff in this book and put it to work for you. Sunset Falls is a tiny community of survivors who have holed up in a remote, abandoned prison. Zombie Masters can drop it into their chronicles as a place for the Cast Members to find peace for a while, or have them start their zombie fighting careers here.

Chapter Eight: The Future's So Dark caps off the whole thing. Here are six new Deadworlds for the ZM's use in kicking off a new campaign, this time set many years after The Rise (whatever it might be). Additionally, we've presented Cast Member Archetypes for each new Deadworld—guys who you might find roaming the highways five or ten years after The Rise.

Appendix A: Surviving A Zombie Attack includes an in-depth discussion about surviving the coming zombie outbreak. It covers everything from selecting a good place to convert into a stronghold to tricks for making zombies even deader than they already are.

Appendix B: The Government Handout gives the Zombie Master a fun way to provide Cast Members with critical information about the zombie outbreak affecting them. Your government has worked hard to draft these informational pamphlets telling you what to look for, and what to do.

How To Use One of the Living

One of the Living is intended for use by both players and Zombie Masters. Chapters One to Five and Appendix A are open to anyone who feels like reading them. Chapters Six, Seven, and Appendix B are mostly for the ZM's use, but it couldn't hurt to have the players take peeks at parts of them. Lastly, Chapter Eight is ZMs only. Players should not look at this chapter, or else they might spoil some of the fun of discovery that takes place in any good game.

Inspirational Material

Usually, this is the place in every *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook where we tell you all about the great zombie movies or books that inspired it, right? Wrong. The way we see it, any Zombie Master worth his salt has seen enough of those by now to choke Cthulhu.

We've listed below some great books and movies about "survival," about what happens when society breaks down, as well as giving some ideas of what the causes might be, whether that society is a handful of guys in an old farmhouse, or an entire culture. And there is some stuff about zombies too.

Film & Video

28 Days Later (2003)

Lifeboat (1944)

Outbreak (1995)

Mad Max (1979)

The Road Warrior (1981)

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (1985)

Red Dawn (1984)

Reign of Fire (1984)

The Stand (1994)

Fiction

Earth Abides, George R. Stewart

The Drive In, Joe R. Landsdale

The Legacy of Heorot & Beowulf's Children, Niven, Barnes, Pournelle

The Stand, Stephen King

The Walking Dead, Image Comics

The Zombie Survival Guide, Max Brooks

Non-Fiction

The Hot Zone, Richard Preston

The Serpent and the Rainbow, Wade Davis

Conventions

As with every *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook, *One of the Living* uses the following conventions:

Text Conventions

This book uses different graphic features to identify the type of information presented. This text is "standard text," and it is used for general explanations.

Certain text is set off from the standard text in this manner. This is sidebar text and it contains additional, but tangential information, or supplemental charts and tables.

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Other text is set apart in this way. It details Supporting Cast or Adversaries that may be used in Stories at the Zombie Master's discretion.

Dice Notations

This book uses several different dice notations. D10, D8, D6, and D4 mean a ten-sided die, an eight-sided die, a six-sided die, and a four-sided die, respectively. A number in parentheses after, or in the middle of, the notation is the average roll. This number is provided for those who want to avoid dice rolling and just use the result. So the notation D6 x 4(12) means that players who want to skip rolling just use the value 12. Some notations cannot provide a set number because their result depends on a variable factor. For example, D8(4) x Strength is used because the Strength value to be plugged into this notation varies depending on who is acting.

Gender

Every roleplaying game faces a decision about third person pronouns and possessives. While the male reference (he, him, his) is customarily used for both male and female, there is no question it is not entirely inclusive. On the other hand, the "he or she" structure is clumsy and unattractive. In an effort to "split the difference," this book uses male designations for even chapters, and female designations for odd chapters.

Measurements

This book uses U.S. measurements (feet, yards, miles, pounds, etc.). Metric system equivalents can be calculated by applying rough formulas. For example, miles can be multiplied by 1.5 to get kilometers (instead of 1.609), meters are equal to yards (instead of 1.094 yards), pounds can be halved to get kilograms (instead of multiplying by 0.4536), and so on. If a Zombie Master feels she needs more precision, she should take the U.S. measurements provided and apply more exact formulas.

About the Author

Ben Monroe has been a fly buzzing around the games industry for more years than he cares to admit. Previous publications include zombie-themed adventures for *Call of Cthulhu* as well as revising the magic system for fourth edition *Stormbringer* and the adventure "Coffee Break of the Living Dead" for *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*.

Ben lives in San Leandro, California where he is embroiled in the pursuit of trying to come up with screenplay ideas that are both worth writing, and saleable. If you know anyone who wants to buy a vampire-western script, let him know. When not day-dreaming about the impending zombie apocalypse, Ben spends time with his wife Beth, who is beautiful, brilliant and, above all, patient.

Special Thanks

Special mention must be made to the lunatics on the All Flesh Must Be Eaten message board. Pretty much the entirety of Chapter Four: More Implements of Destruction and Appendix A: The Post-Apocalypse Shopping List was generated by their fevered ramblings. Specific thanks to:

Stacy Blake, Chris Butler, Otto Cargill, Seth Danielson, Dan Davis, Chris Eldredge, Anthony Emmel, Andrew Ferguson, John McMullen, Thom Marrion, and Tom Redding. They are all clearly mad.

Also, thanks must go out to Jason Ryder. His insightful ideas, and the brainstorming we did together helped to solidify the way the madness rules came out. Matthew Widener also provided invaluable material that turned into the Zombie Life Cycle section of Chapter Six: Blowin' Up Dead Guys.

"Special Mega Ultra Thanks" must also go out to John McMullen. His article "Campaigns in All Flesh Must Be Eaten" was the prime inspiration for this book.

If you like where this book went, thank him if you ever meet him.

— Ben Monroe

CHAPTER TWO

He knew every inch of this valley like the back of his hand. He'd never been here before the dead walked; this was just how far his bike got him before it broke down on him. And this is where he'd decided he was going to die. It might not come for him today, or tomorrow, but he wasn't going to run any more.

He'd found a small farmhouse and cleared it out. That was some bloody work, and he still had nightmares about it, months later. It was a double-edged sword being out here by himself. He didn't have anyone to watch his back, but at the same time, he didn't have anyone to argue with about the best course of action. He wasn't sure which was worse, or better for that matter.

He'd started by clearing the trees and brush for a few hundred yards around the house. He was at the top of a low hill, and that gave him a pretty decent view of anything that might come towards him. There was a decent supply of food at hand, as the people that'd lived here prior to his arrival had left the cellar filled with canned goods and various jarred things. Of course, he'd wasted a shelf of pickled beets when a shot went wild. He'd been aiming at the farmer, who'd apparently crawled into the cellar to die. And rise again. But that was okay, really. He'd never really liked beets to begin with.

So, the last few months had been ones filled with paranoia, and learning. He knew the larder wouldn't last forever, and with winter already coming in he'd better learn how to grow his own food. There were a few books he could get information from, and fortunately for him, plenty of seed to plant in the spring. He had no idea if it would work. But he had to give it a shot.

He grabbed a beer from the shelf and took it out onto the back porch with his rifle. He sat, scanning the white blanket of snow that had been slowly piling up across the valley over the last few days.

In the distance, he saw a pair of shapes silhouetted against the snow, arms outstretched, shuffling towards him. One stumbled in the powder, falling onto its face as its companion shambled on.

"Well," he thought to himself. "They sure are a lot easier to spot in the snow..."

He took aim, squeezed the trigger, and dropped a ghoul with a clean headshot.

"You learn something new every day."

PREY NO MORE



Introduction

Characters in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* have traditionally been fighters. The campaign worlds presented in the various Deadworlds are completely Darwinian in their utter contempt for those unable to defend themselves against the zombie hordes. You must fight to survive the *Night of the Living Dead*. However, in a longer-term campaign, other skills and personalities are called in to play.

While there is always be room for chromed-out gunheads, the ability to grow crops, fix machinery, or organize workers are key to long-run survivability. This chapter presents a number of new options to enhance game play. Players will inevitably see ways to use these new archetypes, skills, and abilities to enhance their Cast Members and help them survive in a long-term campaign. Zombie Masters likewise should find new ideas and areas of exploration.

Optional Character Creation Rules

There are a number of optional systems and rules players can use when creating their Cast Members. No one system is better than the other, they simply provide alternate means to suit various gaming styles.

Random Attribute Rolling

Instead of spending a set number of points on Attributes, players roll a D4 six times, and assign the numbers rolled to their character's Attributes (ranging from one to four) as they wish. Players can reduce any Attribute by one level and shift that level to another Attribute. Further Attribute increases are possible with Drawback points, as per the rules in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. Qualities, Skills and Metaphysics are determined normally.

As a further option, on a roll of four, roll again, subtract two from the result and add the total (if positive) to the Attribute. So, a roll of four followed by

a roll of three would be a five, two fours would be a six, and a second roll of one or two makes no change.

On the average, players will get about 15 points (2.5 x 6) to allocate to Attributes, but the upper range, especially with the “rule of four” added in, can be far more than even the Survivor Character Type gets. This option reduces mini-maxing with points, but characters will have widely varying Attributes.

Combining Point Allotment Categories

In *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, a character’s statistics are divided into separate categories, with points spread between them. While some overlap between Qualities and Metaphysics exists already, some players and Zombie Masters may wish to take it further. Instead of breaking up the points into groups (Attributes, Skills, Qualities, etc.), create one pool of character points that can be used to buy everything.

Some things can be mixed more easily than others. Qualities and Metaphysics could be lumped into one category without much disruption. Qualities, Metaphysics, and Skills can also be put together, although this allows for a great deal of mini-maxing. Gifted characters usually wind up with few skills and a great deal more Powers, for example, and Survivors or Norms end up with a bunch of high-level skills. Lumping everything together into one sum does not work. Raising all Attributes to six (at 8 points a pop) would cost a mere 48 points (a more sedate all fives, a mere 30 points), because the point pool in the Attribute category does not have the same per-unit value as the other categories. The Zombie Master might put caps on Attributes, or change the point cost to a sliding scale, but that just mirrors the basic rules. Raising Attributes makes more sense than raising skills. A character with a Dexterity 6 can buy several combat skills at level one, and still be extremely proficient, while a character with a Dexterity 3 would have to spend four points per skill to get the same result. It was precisely for this reason Attributes were kept separate from the other characteristics.

Thus, for those looking for more flexibility, we recommend keeping Attributes separate, and combining the other categories as desired. In the end, it is for the Zombie Master to decide the specifics.

New Skills

As characters in a long-term campaign are expected to be around long-term, it stands to reason that their skills should reflect longevity of survival. A number of new skills should help the Cast Members build communities and maintain the “status quo.”

Agriculture

The basic skills a character needs to grow and harvest crops and raise animals. Required Success Levels may be based on types of crops being grown, poor soil, etc. Note that Veterinary Medicine should be considered separate from this skill.

Camerawork

The Camerawork skill allows a character to use all sorts of film and video cameras, including professional grade TV and movie cameras. The character knows how to move smoothly to avoid the “Shaky-Cam” (or knows how to get this effect but present a viewable image if that’s your thing), and how to position himself to get the best shot. The character can also troubleshoot basic camera problems and operate remote cameras. Smooth photography while moving rapidly or irregularly uses Dexterity and Camerawork, troubleshooting requires Intelligence and Camerawork, and positioning requires Perception and Camerawork. Still photography uses the Fine Art (Photography) skill.

Persuade

While Intimidation uses the threat of violence to motivate someone, and Smooth Talk uses guile and deception to convince others, both skills apply to individuals. Use Persuade to influence groups of people (from one to thousands) using either emotional arguments or cold logic. When trying to persuade the town of survivors to convert the high school gym into a greenhouse when they want an armory, this is the skill to use.

Multiple success or failure levels may influence the degree of apathy or enthusiasm with which your plans are met by the target audience.

Repair (Type)

Eventually items and equipment the Cast Members own will start to break down into disrepair. Found objects that have lain unused for many months or years may need some work to get them running again.

The Repair skill allows a character to make simple repairs to a number of different items—television sets, refrigerators, ripped jeans; it is the skill used by repairmen. Typical subtypes for this skill could include Electronics, Textiles, Carpentry, Masonry, and so on. Electronics skill applies to all kinds of electronics, while Mechanic most often applies to large pieces of heavy machinery. The Repair skill may be appropriate for TV repairmen, the furnace guy, plumbers, and tailors. The player and ZM should discuss the desired effect of the skill before committing skill points to it.

Required Success Levels for this skill are based on how damaged the item is. Fixing a simple tear in a pair of jeans or hotwiring an average car might require only one Success Level. Effecting repairs on a cracked engine block could need multiple Success Levels. This might require the use of special equipment as well.

Scavenging

The ability to find useful materials may become paramount to the survival of your Cast Members after the fall of civilization. The Survival skill most often applies to finding edible nuts and berries or constructing a lean-to, while Scavenging deals with scrounging up D-cell batteries or a '67 cabernet. The character with the ability to find things in the most unlikely of places could become important to the group in the long run.

Scavenging skill allows a Cast Member to locate items of a general or specific nature—anyone can find bandages in a hospital or supermarket, but a scavenger could turn them up by looking in car glove boxes. The more specific the item being searched for, the more difficult it is to find. You could use Scavenging to search an abandoned city for “car batteries,” but trying to find “car battery for '67 Volkswagen” would be much harder. If the Cast Member must find specific items (a type of food, or a



specific mechanical part), the Zombie Master should bump up the required Success Levels. Finding a specific item is a Scavenging and Perception Task, modified by the area being searched. Intelligence and Scavenging could be used to figure out the best places to scavenge for a specific thing, decided upon by the ZM, or to identify objects that could do in a pinch.

Additionally, if the Cast Member has the Survival skill, and is Scavenging in a relevant area, they may add half their Survival skill to their Scavenging skill while in that area.

Qualities and Drawbacks

Much like skills, certain abilities set the Cast Members in a campaign game apart from those in one-shots. Qualities and Drawbacks are the system in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* which gives characters the “oomph” they need to set themselves above the maggot-chow getting dragged down by the hungry dead all around them.

The Qualities and Drawbacks presented herein are appropriate to post-Apocalyptic zombie campaigns. Obviously, these abilities are available to starting Cast Members with the Zombie Master’s approval. If you wish to apply any of these abilities to existing Cast, you must spend experience points or discuss with the ZM how the Quality or Drawback went unnoticed for so long.

Bag of Tricks 3-point Physical Quality

This guy always seems to have the right tool for the job. Whenever the Cast Members are out in the field or away from their home base, the ZM can assume this character has any simple mechanical device, tool, or necessary item with him. Back at his base of operations, the character may have access to someone who has just about anything the Cast could conceivably need. Zombie Master discretion is called for in the adjudication of this Quality.

Bilingual 2-point Mental Quality

The Cast Member was raised in a bilingual household, and can choose two native languages at skill level five for each.

Black Thumb 1-point Physical Drawback

The character and plants are like pickles and whipped cream—they just don’t mix. Anything the Cast Member tries to grow is a disaster, which can be problematic when he needs to keep his last tomato plant alive, or gets assigned to farming detail. When attempting to make any sort of roll for the growing or maintaining of crops or plants, the character does not gain the benefit of any Attribute. He must make the roll just using his skill levels.

Cloistered 3- or 5-point Mental Quality

The character has lived a sheltered life, concentrating on a few favored subjects to the exclusion of more useful things. Protected from the harsh realities of life, he is the typical absent-minded professor who knows everything there is to know about 12th Century Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry, but can’t program a VCR. He can tear a computer down and rebuild it better than before, but can’t carry on a simple conversation. These people are called geeks and nerds, but they’re who everyone runs to when they need a battery made out of coconuts and chewing gum wrappers.

At the time of character creation the player may choose a number of skills equal to either his character’s Intelligence or Perception (whichever is higher). He may lower each of these skills by an amount up to the cost of this Quality. The character may go into negative values this way. Use these new points to purchase levels in any other skills (typically academic or technical skills). Normal skill-purchasing rules apply to these points, as in the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* corebook.

Note that these negative levels count as “unskilled” and combine with the normal unskilled attempt penalties (see *AFMBE*, p. 92).

Green Thumb 1-point Physical Quality

The Cast Member is exceptionally adept at tending plants and plant life, which is great when all the survivor community has is a packet of seeds. In any instance where the character must make a Task roll to influence the growth or health of plants or crops, the player may roll the Task twice, and choose which result to apply.

Hallucinations

3-point Mental Quality or Drawback

The Cast Member imagines seeing or hearing things that are not really there. In times of stress, the character has a 2-in-10 chance of experiencing a hallucination. These hallucinations seem real to the character, but he may make a Difficult Willpower Test each Turn to snap back to reality. The Zombie Master should secretly make this roll; it's quite possible the Cast Member does not even know he's hallucinating.

This can either be a Drawback or a Quality, depending on the nature of the hallucinations. They are often a symptom of a psychiatric disorder, and usually impair the character. Examples include hearing voices telling the character to do something potentially fatal, or seeing an old school teacher who tormented the character ("See, Timmy? If you'd paid attention in math class, these zombies wouldn't be after you."). Detrimental hallucinations are a three-point Drawback. If the hallucinations represent the character's subconscious trying to help Cast Member, such as providing advice or leading them to safety, this is a three-point Quality.

Insomnia

3-point Mental Drawback

For some reason the Cast Member cannot sleep. He either can't fall asleep right away, he wakes up in the middle of the night, or he wakes up early. Each night (or whenever he tries to sleep), the character has a 2-in-10 chance of suffering one of these effects. He gets used to it, but still loses D6(3) Endurance Points each night it happens. If awakened by Recurring Nightmares, the Cast Member cannot go back to sleep and suffers from both Endurance losses.

Jack of All Trades

3-point Mental Quality

Characters with this Quality have a little knowledge about almost everything. This could result from being worldly and well traveled, or having spent his life watching reruns of *Jeopardy*. The Cast Member can perform any Task for which he does not have the actual skill, as if he possessed the skill at rank zero. Unskilled attempt penalties do not affect skills used in this way (though at least one Success Level is needed to succeed). The "Rule of Ten" is inapplicable; the character simply doesn't know enough about

the subject to make brilliant leaps of logic to get those amazing results. However, the "Rule of One" does apply. At such times, the character thinks he knows what he's talking about, but he got the information completely wrong.

Jury-Rigging

3-point Mental Quality

Some people go past a junkyard and see memories of another time, or nothing but, well, junk. Others see opportunity. Characters with the Jury-Rigging Quality are the "mechanical optimists" of the world, and are good at cobbling together whatever is needed from objects at hand. When you need a flamethrower, this guy makes one out of two fire extinguishers and the parts from a vacuum. Whenever the Cast Member makes a Task roll while attempting to cannibalize or jury-rig an item, he can roll for the Task twice, and choose which total to accept. Unskilled Task penalties still apply (see *AFMBE*, p. 92). See **Chapter Three: Making it Up As You Go** for specifics on jury-rigging and the skills that apply.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

1- to 4-point Mental Drawback

Characters with this Drawback display some sort of obsessive behavior. This could be anything from constant hand washing, to kleptomania, to the need to arrange all the chopped-up zombie parts into neat rows. At the time of purchase, select the nature of the character's obsessive-compulsive behavior. The level of the disorder reflects the number of Success Levels the character must achieve on a Difficult Willpower Test to resist the obsession when it comes about.

Physical Disability (One Eye)

2-point Physical Drawback

Unlike the other Physical Disability Drawbacks, which affect the character's limbs, or Impaired Senses, which affect senses as a whole, a character with this Drawback is missing one eye. This affects depth perception, and results in a -2 penalty to melee combat-related Tasks and skills requiring hand-to-eye coordination (acrobatics, painting, driving, and so on). During ranged combat, the penalty is increased to -3.

Phobia

1- to 5-point Mental Drawback

This Drawback replaces the Delusion (Phobia) Drawback as an optional system for handling phobias. The Cast Member is mortally terrified of something. The Drawback level purchased represents the difficulty to overcome terror when in sight of the source of the phobia. The higher the points value, the more debilitating the fear. Whenever the character faces the object or situation of his fear, he must make a Fear Test (see *AFMBE*, p. 96) with a penalty equal to the Drawback value. If the situation is normally frightening, add the value of the Phobia to the regular Fear Test penalty.

Phobias include but are not limited to: animals, blood, confined spaces, crowds, darkness, failure, heights, insects, needles, night, noise, the number 13, open spaces, the opposite sex, planes, love, sharp objects, trees, undead, and water.

Strong Stomach

2-point Physical Quality

The character has a cast iron stomach and can tolerate spoiled or slightly poisonous food. This can be useful when he scavenges a can of beans slightly past its “use by” date, or eats berries he’s not supposed to. It has no effect on poisons, such as a cobra’s bite or strychnine in the Kool-Aid (which would be Resistance (Poison))—the former because it is injected, the latter because the toxicity is too high. Whenever a character with this Quality eats food that is mildly toxic or slightly “off,” he can make a Simple Constitution Test to resist the effects, instead of the Difficult version other characters would be required to make.

Suicidal Tendencies

5-point Mental Drawback

The character has mentally crossed a line and can’t hack it any more. He thinks about harming himself frequently. At stressful and difficult times, the Cast Member attempts to injure himself, perhaps fatally. When failing a Fear Test or skill Task, the character makes a Simple Willpower Test with a penalty equal to the amount he failed the previous attempt by. Success means the character does not attempt to hurt or kill himself. Failed “suicide rolls” result in a self-inflicted attack. Since this is something done to themselves, a +10 modifier is applied.

Examples

Slit the wrists: Dexterity + Hand Weapon (Knife) + 10

Gunshot to the head: Dexterity + Handgun + 10 (head shot damage multipliers apply)

Jumping in front of car: Roll damage (see *AFMBE*, p. 116)

Jumping off building: Roll damage (see *AFMBE*, p. 108)

Drowning: Dexterity + Swimming + 10

Hanging self: Strength x D6(3) damage plus asphyxiation

Poison self: Damage based on poison (see *AFMBE*, pp. 106-107)

Threat Detection

3-point Supernatural or Physical Quality

Sometimes, a person can sense impending danger. Whether it’s some kind of sixth sense, extreme paranoia, or an exceptionally fine sense of self-preservation, it’s harder than heck to sneak up on characters with this Quality.

Whenever a situation arises in which the Cast Member is in imminent danger, the Zombie Master should make a secret Simple Perception Test for the character. If successful, the character thinks, “something doesn’t feel right about this.” Higher Success Levels may give more specific information (“I think something’s behind that dumpster over there . . .”)

Weak Stomach

2-point Physical Drawback

The character has a delicate digestive system and can’t tolerate jalapeno peppers much less spoiled or mildly toxic food. This can be a problem when all he has to eat is a can of beans slightly past its “use by” date. Whenever a character with this Drawback eats food that might be tainted, or is outside his normal diet (such as eating bugs and leaves), he suffers a –3 penalty on a Difficult Constitution Test. Failure means his stomach rejects the “nourishment,” often violently. As with the Strong Stomach Quality, this has no effect on poisons.

The Inspired

The decision to include supernatural powers in the campaign should be made by the Zombie Master before play begins, and should be introduced early on. This allows players the opportunity to discover and test the “rules” of the world in which their characters live.

The following section expands on the supernatural elements in your campaign. New gifts are included, geared more for use in a long-term campaign of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. These may either be bane or boon to the Cast Members at the Zombie Master’s discretion.

Optional Metaphysics Rules

Zombie Masters with plans on developing a campaign with a heavy supernatural element may decide to give Cast Members greater access to supernatural abilities. In order to keep the use of Miracles infrequent, the basic rules in *AFMBE* make it more costly, and thus more rare, to create an Inspired character; few are willing to sacrifice their firearm skill in order to use Holy Fire. The following optional rules can be used to make it cheaper to design a well-versed Inspired character.

Using either or both options makes the Inspired more powerful. They may be able to act more openly and to perform greater feats. These are likely to have consequences for the character and the surrounding world. No one likes to live next to someone who can actually see dead people, or such a character might be constantly pestered to contact dead aunt Sally. By the same token, hostile Inspired should also be more capable.

The rules presented below allow for a more “Miracle-rich” world. The Zombie Master should decide which (if any) of these rules he will use in his campaign.

Cheaper Miracles

Miracles under this option cost only three Metaphysics points, rather than the standard five points. The typical Inspired can have almost twice as many Miracles under this rule.



Cheaper Essence

Another way to increase the power of Inspired characters is to reduce the cost of Increased Essence Pool (see AFMBE, p. 48). Reducing the cost during character creation to one point for every 10 points of Essence, or one for six or seven, is possible, depending on the style of the campaign. After character creation, the current cost (1 point for 2 extra Essence Points) may seem too pricey to some, given the benefits those two extra Essence Points represent. Charging one point for three Essence, or even one point for five Essence, might redress the situation.

New Miracles

Here is a horde of new powers for the Inspired. As always, ZMs should feel free to create more, or disallow any they do not wish players to have access to.

Many of these new abilities are designed with little, if any, combat benefits. In playing through a long-term campaign of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, many powers that allow the Inspired to help others survive over a longer period will come in handy. To this end, *One of the Living* includes many powers that can be used for the good of a community.

For players and Zombie Masters needing even more Gifts for their games, we recommend they look to *WitchCraft*, Eden Studios' roleplaying game of dark mysticism and supernatural horror.

Bountiful Harvest

Oftentimes the blessing of a bountiful harvest can insure the survival of a community more than the woodshed stockpiled with ammunition and flamethrowers. The Inspired calls down blessings from the Deity to ensure an abundant harvest and fatted calves. This usually takes the form of a ritual to bless the crops and livestock, and ensure it receives the protection of the Lord. The Essence spent ensures the seeds sprout, the plants are protected from pests, and the crops ripen to maturity. This is a three-stage Miracle, spread out over many weeks and months.

First, the Inspired character must bless the crops as they are planted, or the animals as they are born, by spending five Essence Points. Second, as the crops grow and the livestock matures, the character expends 10 Essence to protect them from disease and

predators. Finally, before the animal is slaughtered or the crops are dug up, the character performs one final ritual, costing 15 Essence Points. If all the Essence is spent, the community is bountiful results—multiply the yield by two. For every whole multiple of the Essence spent at each stage, increase the multiplier by 0.5. So if 10/20/30 Essence were spent, the multiplier would be 2.5. If 15/30/45, the multiplier is x3, etc.

Find the Path

When all seems lost, characters with this gift may glean direction from their god, the cosmos, or other means. Omens, strange lights, or other symbols help the character find the way to safety or to his goal. This may be used to find direction to a physical location or perhaps to discover the purpose of a character's lifepath.

To use this ability, the character expends at least 4 Essence Points, though he may add more. The ZM must decide how many points are required by factoring in how distant, difficult, or hidden the goal may be. Gleaning directions to a 7-11 somewhere in the vicinity would be fairly easy. Discovering how to motivate a group of survivors who have given up all hope would be much harder.

Martyr

When all seems lost, when the night is blackest, great men must sometimes sacrifice themselves to bring about another dawn. This Miracle is a last-ditch attempt by an Inspired character to lend aid from beyond the grave.

To activate this Miracle, the Inspired spends *all* remaining Essence Points but one. The Miracle goes into effect the moment of the character's death. If the character survives the current situation, the power remains active for a number of hours equal to his Willpower, then dissipates.

If the character dies while the power is active, a total number of companions is affected equal to the Inspired's Willpower doubled, chosen by the Inspired's player. These characters get to add a bonus equal to the (now-dead) Inspired's Willpower to all rolls for a number of Turns equal to the Essence the Inspired spent in activating the ability.

Example: Zombies have surrounded an old farmhouse, imprisoning Meghan (Inspired with Willpower 4 and 20 Essence Points left) and her companions. Three are lost trying to escape and bring help. Meghan realizes the situation is hopeless unless she makes the ultimate sacrifice. She activates Martyr and releases 19 Essence (keeping one only to remain conscious). Meghan walks out among the zombies and is torn apart. Upon her death, eight of her companions gain +4 on all rolls for the next 19 Turns. It's up to the survivors to see that Meghan's sacrifice was a meaningful one.

Pride of Lions

With this Miracle, the Inspired draws on the power of his faith to perform fiery oratory and motivate people to greatness. Whether a stirring sermon delivered from the pulpit or a simple declaration firmly put, the Inspired can cheer the disheartened, instill new resolve in the weary, and lead the directionless to great purpose.

The Inspired character spends a minimum of five Essence Points while delivering an inspirational address or sermon to his companions. Those who hear him add the Inspired's Willpower to every roll they make for a number of Turns equal to the number of additional Essence spent divided by the number of affected companions, and rounded up.

Example: The Preacher has a Willpower 5 and 35 Essence Points. He is leading a group of Survivors through the wilderness and their bus hits a piece of debris and bursts a tire. As they get out to fix it, they are beset by a gang of bloodthirsty zombies. The Preacher invokes Pride of Lions, spends the base five Essence to activate it, and adds another 20 points for duration. The two people acting as protection for the workers get to add +5 (the Preacher's Willpower) to their attack rolls. The two mechanics add +5 to their rolls to fix the tire. The follower who stayed on the bus to calm the children enjoys a +5 bonus on her Singing Tasks. These bonuses last four Turns (20 Essence divided by five actors).

Sanctuary

With this Miracle, the Inspired creates a sanctuary against the forces of darkness. By displaying a symbol important to his faith and praying to the Divine, the Inspired character imbues an area with the might of the Almighty. Some zombies may be loath to enter an area of sanctuary, while other zombies may learn the hard way in the form of blinding, white flames when they cross the threshold.

To create a zone of Sanctuary, the Inspired spends 20 Essence Points and performs a ritual. This affects an area with a 10-foot radius surrounding the Inspired. For every additional point spent, add a foot to the radius. Once the Miracle has been activated, the center of the circle remains static; it does not move with the Inspired.

For a number of hours equal to the Inspired's Willpower, undead must make a Difficult Willpower Test or they cannot cross the barrier of holy might. Alternatively, at the Zombie Master's discretion, crossing into the sanctuary inflicts damage equal to D8(4) times the Willpower of the Inspired; this should not be combined with the barrier effect.

Once a location has been "blessed" it is easier to maintain. During the last hour of the effect, the Inspired character may recharge the Sanctuary by spending two Essence Points per hour by which he wishes to extend the effect. Theoretically, this could go on forever as long as the Inspired is able to recharge his Essence in time to extend the effect.

See Beyond the Veil

Through this Miracle, the Inspired opens himself up to the Universe to detect the precise location of evil. The best way to escape from the undead is of course to know where they are. But since most of them are so quiet, it's often hard to tell if there's one behind the door, or if it's just the cat (*again*). Inspired with this ability have an uncanny knack for sensing where the dead guys are going to jump out of next.

The Inspired spends as many Essence Points as he wishes. The Essence spent divided by the zombie's Willpower equals the number of zombies revealed. The range of this ability is equal to the Inspired's current Essence Pool in yards and it extends through walls, doors, and other barriers.

Walk Through the Valley

Yay, though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I shall not fear . . . Often, discretion is the better part of valor, and it is better to try and pass by the undead rather than fight them. If the zombies can't sense you, they can't eat you. Through this Miracle, the Inspired calls upon his faith in the Lord to cloak himself or another in a protective aura, rendering them invisible to the senses of the supernatural.

The Miracle costs 10 Essence Points, and renders the target invisible to the undead (though they remain visible to mundane) senses, including sight, sound, and smell. Touch, and of course taste, remain unaffected, so bumping into a zombie is a sure way to get bit. Zombies with preternatural or supernatural perception abilities, like Life Sense or Scent Tracking, get to resist the Inspired's Simple Willpower Test with a Simple Perception Test. This power lasts a number of Turns equal to the Inspired character's Willpower x D4(2).

Optional Combat Rules

Combat in *AFMBE* is lethal, just like in real life. People usually don't just get up after suffering a gunshot wound (and if they do, you should be suspicious . . . with a vengeance), and the rules reflect that. This doesn't always mesh with the play styles of the typical gamer. In other areas, some players may desire what they consider to be a bit more realism. Thus, we present these alternate combat rules.

Defense and Success Levels

Under the basic **Unisystem** rules, if an attack result is higher than a defense result, damage is applied normally, with bonuses determined by the Success Level of the attack Task. This optional rule allows the defender to subtract his Success Level from those of the attacker. If the attacker's Success Levels are reduced to zero or below, the attack has been parried, dodged, or otherwise avoided. First, this means attacker needs to not only beat the defender's roll total, but must do it by enough to have at least one Success Level more. Second, unless the total differential is huge, damage bonuses because of Success Levels will be few and far between.

Example: Kung Fu Charlie (Dexterity 4, Martial Arts 5) attacks Brawling Sally (Dexterity 3, Brawling 4). Both sides roll. Charlie gets a 16, for a total of four Success Levels, good enough for a +1 bonus to the damage roll (not including the bonuses gained for the Martial Arts Skill). Sally's total is 15. Under the optional rule, she still defends successfully, as her Success Levels reduce Charlie's to zero. If her total was nine (1 Success Level), Charlie would hit, but would lose the +1 damage bonus, as his Success Levels would be reduced to three.

This rule tends to lengthen the duration of combat (a good hit has a reduced chance to inflict enough damage to cripple the victim), especially in fights between evenly matched foes. This is not unrealistic—many knife fights, for example, result in multiple light wounds rather than one or two killing hits—but some people may not find it to their taste. On the other hand, people going on the defensive have a better chance to survive.

Ties Reduce Damage

This optional rule replaces the normal one that attack-defense ties (both sides generate the same result) go to the defender. Instead, on a tie the attacker rolls for damage, but the Multiplier is reduced by 2 levels (if this reduces the Multiplier below 0, subtract from the total points instead). Alternatively, instead of the Multiplier, the die roll might be reduced by 2; if the total rolled (before applying the Multiplier) is 0 or below, no damage is inflicted.

Example: A strong zombie swings a baseball bat (inflicting D8 x 6 in his undead hands) at Kung Fu Charlie. The attack/defense rolls result in a tie. Instead of missing, Uberzombie rolls damage, but at the reduced rate of D8 x 4, or (D8-2) x 6 (if the second option is used).

This rule favors attack over defense, although it only applies on the relatively unlikely event of a tie.

Reduced Gun Lethality

In *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, guns are lethal. Most pistols above 9mm cripple or severely wound most characters in one shot. On the one hand, it makes people less anxious to get involved in firefights than they normally are in other games. On the other, some people may find those lethality levels too high.

The easiest solution is to change the bullet damage modifiers. Under these optional rules, normal bullets do not inflict double damage, hollow points cause double damage but Armor or Barrier Values are doubled against them, and armor-piercing rounds cause half damage, but halve Armor or Barrier Values.

This means that the legendary Joe Average (26 Life Points) typically requires 3 shots from a 9 mm pistol (average damage 12 points) to be brought down, and 4 shots to be in serious danger of dying. Not exactly realistic, but more suitable for a cinematic, action-packed game.

Enhanced Gun Realism

This optional section covers some facts about guns that may be of use for Zombie Masters interested in adding realism to their games.

Guns Are Loud: Amazingly, painfully, ear drum-shatteringly loud. Many shooting hobbyists have some degree of hearing loss, even using ear protection. Even 10 yards away, in an open field, the sound of rifles is uncomfortably loud. Firing any gun heavier than a .22 in an enclosed space (inside a car, or a house) is even worse. As an option, anybody in an enclosed space when a heavy gun goes off should pass a Simple Constitution Test (at +2 if the character has Impaired Hearing) or be stunned for that Turn. This includes the shooter. Earplugs or other ear protection will help. If the shot was expected, those with ear protection suffer no ill effects. Otherwise, a Constitution Test is still necessary, but with a +3 bonus. On the other hand, earplugs impose a -2 penalty to any Perception Task or Test involving hearing. In the middle of a fight, people are high on adrenaline and thus less likely to be stunned: add a +2 bonus to the Constitution Test in those circumstances.

Guns Are Hot: Not only is the barrel hot, the gases that explode out of the barrel are pretty hot too. Revolvers have a problem—some of the gases of the shot are vented to the sides. Thus, it is a bad idea to be next to a revolver-shooter. In a close fight (two people struggling for a revolver), a near miss might still inflict one point of burn damage on anybody who has unprotected skin within a foot of the gun's side. Touching a hot barrel with one's bare hands also does one point of burn damage.

Recoil Is Bad: Heavy guns (high-caliber rifles and shotguns) require certain minimal strength to keep them under full control. Characters with Strength 3 and higher have no problem, although the experience may be unpleasant and bruising. Those with a lower Strength suffer a -2 penalty on the first shot (the gun moves in their hands before the bullet finishes leaving the barrel, spoiling their aim, usually by shooting high). This is cumulative with additional shots in a Turn. Very heavy guns, or shotguns firing heavy loads (slugs) might impose recoil penalties of -1 for anyone with a Strength below 5, and -2 to those with Strength 3 or below. The same applies to heavy handguns (any Magnum, or .45+ caliber gun).

Guns and Inexperience: People who know little or nothing about guns can hurt themselves fairly easily. Aside from the obvious, guns can injure in other ways. Most semi-automatic weapons work with a slide, a metal piece pushed back by the explosion of a shot, then sliding back into place. That slide can cut, crush, and mangle fingers if handled improperly. At the Zombie Master's discretion, people with no Guns skill trying to use a semi-automatic weapon must pass a Simple Intelligence Test or take D4(2) points of damage from improper gun handling. Also, to fire a semi-automatic, a round must be manually chambered (usually by pulling the slide back) and the safety must be flicked off. On a failed Simple Intelligence Test, an inexperienced user handed a gun with the safety on forgets to do either or both those things. This may be merely embarrassing, or downright deadly (in the middle of a fight, for example).

New Archetypes

The new Archetypes presented in this chapter represent some of the more "common" types of survivors who may come into play during the course of the campaign game. Try bringing in one or two of these guys to spice up your campaign. Trust us, playing a guy who is not armed to the teeth presents you with a whole new set of challenges. You'll be surprised at how tough, and yet satisfying it is to outthink a slew of zombies, rather than just outgunning them.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Grizzled Vet

Survivor

Str 4 **Dex** 2 **Con** 4
Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 4
Lps 51
Eps 41
Spd 12
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma -2 (-2)
Cruel (-1)
Hard to Kill (3)
Humorless (-1)
Insomnia (-3)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Reckless (-3)
Resistance (Fatigue) 1 (1)
Resistance (Pain) 1 (1)
Situational Awareness (2)
Strong Stomach (2)

Skills

Brawling 4
Climbing 2
Demolitions 3
Dodge 2
Driving (Truck) 2
First Aid 2
Guns (Assault Rifles) 3
Guns (Handguns) 3
Guns (Rifle) 3
Guns (Shotgun) 2
Hand Weapon (Knife) 2
Intimidation 3
Notice 3
Persuade 3
Questioning 3
Scavenging 3
Traps 2

Gear

Guns, Lots of Guns, Lots of Ammo for the Guns,
Survival Bunker, Pick-Up Truck with Reinforced Grill,
More Guns

Personality

Yeah, this whole zombie thing pretty much just pisses me off. I mean, bad enough the world's gotta' be full of idiots, but now it's full of idiots who're too dumb to stay dead. Time was, you shot a fella, he fell down and stayed down. That ain't the way things go now though.



And the people in this town are just too damn stubborn to see it. It's all well and good to talk about rehabilitating the Geeks, but first you got to get the numbers manageable. Haven't you ever read "The Art of War?" Might want to think about checking that one out next time you go into town. Sure the old library'll have a copy.

No way am I loaning you mine . . . you'll just end up getting' yourself killed anyways, then I'll never get it back.

Quote

"Tell ya' what. While you guys form a committee, I'm gonna' go bag me a few Geeks. You call me if you need me."

High School Janitor

SURVIVOR

Personality

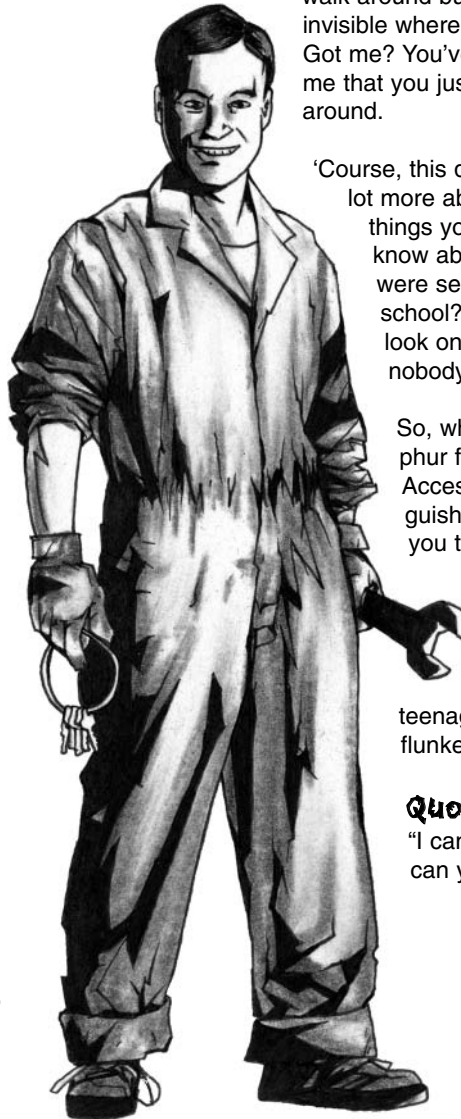
I'm invisible. Not the kind of invisible where I can walk around buck nekkid, but the kind of invisible where people just don't notice me. Got me? You've all spent so long ignoring me that you just don't notice when I'm around.

'Course, this does mean I know a hell of a lot more about you . . . probably lots of things you wouldn't want the others to know about . . . Like that time you were setting fires out behind the school? Heh heh . . . I can tell by the look on your face you thought nobody'd seen that one.

So, what do you need? Some sulphur from the Chemistry lab? Access to the stockpile of fire extinguishers? No problem. Gotta warn you though, the school's still got a . . . "student body" I guess you'd say. And the only thing worse than a gang of pissed-off teenagers is a gang of pissed-off zombie teenagers who remember you flunked them all in math . . .

Quote

"I can get what you need. What can you do for me?"



Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4

Int 3 **Per** 4 **Wil** 3

LPS 44

EPS 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Bad Luck (-3)

Bag of Tricks (3)

Cowardly (-1)

Hard to Kill (2)

Insomnia (-3)

Jack of All Trades (5)

Jury-rigging (3)

Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Climbing 2

Hand Weapon (Socket Wrench) 2

Lock Picking (Mechanical) 3

Notice 4

Repair (Carpentry) 3

Repair (Machinery) 4

Repair (Mechanical) 4

Repair (Plumbing) 4

Scavenging 4

Singing 1

Smooth Talking 2

Stealth 3

Surveillance 3

Survival (Urban) 3

Gear

Keychain, Keys to the High School, Cleaning Supplies, Basic Tools, Stack of Porn, Blackmail Photos of the Principal and the French Teacher

Tabloid Reporter

Norm

Personality

I saw this coming . . . nobody believed me, but I knew something like this was going to happen. I tried to warn people, tried to get the word out, but nobody listened. Got so bad that eventually even the *Weekly World News* wouldn't buy my stories. I started a website, tried to disseminate what I'd learned, but people thought it was just crap made up for some game . . . "Omega Blue" or some crap . . .

So, if you want my help, you can pretty much all go to Hell. I warned you, but nobody listened.

You want to know the truth? The truth is that there are vampires in the catacombs of Paris, there are werewolves hunting the Appalachian mountains. And there's a bunch of flesh eatin' zombies trapped in the room behind me.

At least one of these statements is true. I'll let you figure it out for yourself.

Quote

"The truth is out there . . . and I don't want to know . . ."



Str 2 **Dex** 2 **Con** 2

Int 2 **Per** 3 **Will** 3

Lps 29

Eps 26

Spd 8

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

- Acute Vision (2)
- Addiction (Drinking) (-2)
- Addiction (Smoking) (-1)
- Fast Reaction Time (2)
- Hard to Kill (1)
- Photographic Memory (2)
- Resources (Poor) (-6)
- Situational Awareness (2)
- Strong Stomach (2)
- Threat Detection (3)

Skills

- Brawling 1
- Bureaucracy 2
- Cheating 3
- Computers 2
- Disguise 1
- Driving (Car) 3
- Gambling 3
- Guns (Handgun) 3
- Intimidation 2
- Myth & Legend (Urban) 3
- Research/Investigation 3
- Writing (Journalistic) 4

Gear

Notepad, Pen, Pencil, Scraps of Paper with Cryptic Notes, Press Pass, Pocket Dictionary & Thesaurus, .38 Special, Filthy Trench Coat

Local Politician

Norm

Personality

Yes, the current situation is indeed a tragedy. My own brother was seen a few nights ago feeding on Old Man Hubbard . . . but we can't let that kill our spirit. If we all work together, I know we will prevail.

It's like my last election. I was down in the polls, but I stuck to my guns, kept my chin up, and look where I am now . . .

Okay, granted I'm only the Mayor by default since the rest of the town council was eaten, but still, it all worked out in the end, see?

So, if we all work together, as a community, we will get through this."

Quote

"Trust me."



Str 2 **Dex** 2 **Con** 2

Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 2

Lps 26

Eps 23

Spd 8

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma +2 (2)

Contacts (Local) (3)

Cowardly (-1)

Obsession (Keep town together) (-2)

Recurring Nightmares (-1)

Resources (Well-off) (4)

Secret (-1)

Status +3 (3)

Zealot (-2)

Skills

Bureaucracy 4

Guns (Rifle) 2

Haggling 2

Humanities (Law) 3

Humanities (Politics) 3

Notice 3

Questioning 3

Persuade 5

Smooth Talking 4

Storytelling 1

Gear

Megaphone, Day Planner, Suit,
Case of "Vote for Me!" Bumper
Stickers

CHAPTER THREE

“Goddamn it!” Michaels hissed into the dusk. He knew, just as well as everyone else, there were two rules when going into the City—keep an extra bullet for yourself, and don’t travel with a flake like Burton.

Fortunately, he had an extra bullet, taped to the ankle of his boot. But Burton was long-gone. Michaels had turned his back for a second to take a piss, and Burton ran off, claiming he knew where a store used to be around here.

“I don’t have time to play effing babysitter out here,” Michaels muttered, as he stomped off in the direction he thought Burton had gone.

Checking right, left, up, down, and back, Michaels stalked down the street, pausing at every abandoned car, dark alley, and doorway—anywhere he thought the ghouls might be hiding. Inch by torturous inch, he made his way along the large crumbling houses and overgrown trees that used to be this residential neighborhood. As he neared the end of the block, he became aware that Burton actually knew what he was talking about after all. There wasn’t much, but it definitely used to be a shopping area. A three-store mini-mall was on his right, and Michaels could see Burton behind the blackened window of an old 7-11. He made his way cautiously toward the store.

Toeing the door open, and advancing with his revolver ahead of him, Michaels hissed “don’t ever sneak off on me like that again, you hear me?”

Burton grinned “Yeah, but look at this stuff!” Michaels gazed around him through the gloomy store. Canned meat, sodas, beer . . . he had to admit, the place was still pretty well stocked.

“Oh, man!” Burton ran across the store “Toilet paper!”

Michaels had to laugh at that one. Sometimes, he forgot how good they used to have it. Really, it was the little things like a clean backside that really separated man from animal.

In the distance, a sound of breaking glass. Then a howl. Then footsteps.

“Crap . . .” Michaels and Burton both looked out the store’s window. In the shadows of approaching night, they saw dozens of shambling figures advancing towards them, arms outstretched.

Michaels took a crouching stance behind a stack of beer cases. And started picking at the tape on his boot . . .

MAKING IT UP AS YOU GO



Staying Technical After The Zombie Holocaust

The zombies have taken over the world, and everyone is either dead, undead, or hiding someplace. Now what? The fall of civilization as we know it is likely to leave a certain level of inconvenience in its wake. Eventually, things start breaking down. Electrical power plants fall into disrepair, gas and water stops flowing through pipes, and the local 7-11 is definitely not going to get its Twinkies restocked. Plus, the people society depends upon to keep things running are going to be few and far-between—the mechanics, phone repair guys, and garbage men are either dead or more likely to try to gnaw a person's throat out than do their jobs. People are on their own . . . and probably in serious need of a clean pair of underwear to boot.

The key to survival is to avoid falling back into the Stone Age as the wheels of technological society grind to a halt. This can be more important than actually killing zombies. You make what you've got do what you need—even if it was never designed to do so. That's what jury-rigging is all about. But before you can do that, you have to find the parts you need—or something reasonably close. That's what scavenging is for.

Scavenger Hunt!

Scavenging in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* isn't just about the game mechanics; it's about the story. Scavenging is a natural scenario generator. Once the survivors have determined what they need to put together to stay alive (see p. 34), the Zombie Master gets to decide if they have all the bits required. Unless the Cast Members have holed up in an auto parts store or a major hardware outlet, they probably won't have everything they need right at hand. So it'll be up to

some brave individuals to go out into the carnivorous countryside and forage for stuff.

These are quests—the very essence of survival is wrapped up in these day-to-day events. So what if the goal is just a radiator for an '89 Buick Sable? If the Cast Members need that Sable up and running, it becomes the priceless talisman forcing them to leave their fortified holdout and venture out where the undead can chew on them.

A good scavenger hunt should focus on several items spread throughout the local area: a radiator here, a clutch there, and don't forget the pine-scented air-freshener. This kind of adventure requires the Cast Members scout the path to each site, rummage about to find the items, and then scuttle back to base, all the while holding off a mob of drooling zombies. And unless the Cast does something clever—like looting a local Buick service garage for Sable parts—the Zombie Master can keep them out as long as he wants.

Sometimes, some other survivor group has what the Cast Members want, and that's when the bargaining begins. Is the Cast willing to trade a week's worth of food for the radiator they need? What about their last dose of penicillin? Or do these folks need something else—something the Cast Members have to go get for them? Even better, what if two survivor groups stumble upon each other at the local junkyard? This could bring them into conflict as they fight over what they both need—these are the tough realities of survival.

Setting Up Shop

The first places on the Cast's scavenging hit list should be service garages and hardware stores since you can't put much together if you don't have the right tools. If the Cast Members are planning on much jury-rigging action, they should set up a machine shop, with hardware, welders, saws, and what not. Of course, a lot of these tools need electricity to operate, so a generator of some kind is likely to be an early project as well. Lack of adequate tools can be grounds for the ZM to negate or penalize jury-rigging Task rolls.

The Scavenging skill (see p. 15) helps characters find what they're looking for; everyone else has to rummage through the shelves as an unskilled attempt. Once it gets down to rolling dice for Scavenging Tasks, the first thing to consider is what's being searched for. It's easier to find an axle (any old axle) than to find one for a '95 Honda Civic. The Zombie Master should apply modifiers to the Scavenging Task based on the rarity or specificity of the target item; alternatively, the ZM could use this to establish where the character actively scavenges. If the Cast needs copper tubing, the ZM could send them anywhere; if they need inch-and-a-half copper tubing, he could require them to search Hardware World (in the heart of zombie central).

Next, the locale being searched can help determine the Task difficulty. Naturally, Cast Members are more likely to find the right parts for deuce-and-a-half truck in a military surplus yard than a Dunkin' Donuts. A suggested list of modifiers is provided on the Scavaging Environment Modifiers table. Note that if any site has already been picked over by other survivors, subtract 2 from the roll. The early bird gets the rechargeable batteries . . .

Scavaging Environment Modifier Table

Routine: Specific locale for item desired—manufacturer auto service shop, electronic repair store, etc.

Easy: General parts warehouse, military storage area

Moderate: Service station, hardware store, electronics store

Average: Junkyard (lots of parts but many broken), farm (for machinery parts)

Challenging: Abandoned mall or other general retail area

Difficult: Suburbs or light residential area

Very Difficult: Lightly populated rural area

Heroic: Remote highway with few abandoned cars

Near Impossible: Unpopulated wilderness

Common sense should be the final arbiter: If the Cast is looking for a truck axle in an electronics mall, it counts as a general retail area since the place would not normally have truck axles in its inventory. They can only hope an appropriate vehicle might be abandoned in the parking lot.

Don't let the Cast Members rely too heavily on Scavenging skill rolls either. While a high skill level may allow a character to find almost anything, the ZM isn't strictly bound by this. If he doesn't want the Cast Members finding the radiator in the first junkyard they come across, he can fudge it and send them to the next one!

Example: The survivors of Sunset Falls decide they need the tub from a washing machine, something fairly common. Since they're not looking for a specific make or model, the ZM decides to impose no modifier. Because washing machines are fairly common in suburbia, the Cast hops in their "borrowed" Hummer and go from house to house. The ZM asks each character to make a Scavenging Task, but decides to impose a -2 to the roll (for suburbs). Had they decided to go into town, to Sears, he could have given the survivors up to a +5 (Easy) to the roll.

Example: The survivors make their way back to Sunset Falls when their Hummer breaks down. They're on a remote highway, and the ZM tells them (after a successful Mechanic Task) that they need a new muffler. Alex starts scavenging up and down the road, and the ZM imposes a -6 for the muffler (since Hummers are rare) and a -6 for his environment. Alex doesn't have much luck, so maybe it's time the group think about switching rides, or jury-rigging . . .

Jury-rigging in AFMBE

Jury-rigging involves using materials at hand in a manner for which they were never intended, like looking at a truck axle and seeing the power-transfer arm for a windmill to grind winter flour. Once all the bits and pieces are gathered, the Cast Members can finally get down to slapping them together into a hideous parody of a proper machine. All a character needs is the appropriate skill. Any character with Mechanic skill can attempt to cobble together a still out of junk, and anyone with the Electronics skill can attempt to kit bash a radio. The Jury-rigging Quality

(see p. 17) gives anybody the special knack of making things do what they've never done before, allowing them to roll their skill Task twice and choose the result to use.

For *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, jury-rigging Tasks can be broken down into three primary types of activities: 1) repairing something with the wrong parts, 2) adapting a device or object to do something it was not intended to do, and 3) building something new out of separate bits that were not intended for the purpose. Generally, any tasks along these lines can qualify for the dice re-roll from the Jury-rigging Quality, but the ZM gets to make the final determination.

Jury-Rig Task Short List

Typical Attributes/Skills: Intelligence or Dexterity plus Computers, Craft, Mechanic, Electronics, Engineer, Science (particularly Chemistry)

Base Modifier: Item/Task Complexity

Other Modifiers:

Assistance (+1 for every 3 skill levels assisting)

One Use (+3, one use only)

Success Level determines Item Reliability

Rushing It can modify Item Reliability

Item/Task Complexity

The most important factor in jury-rigging is what it is the character is trying to build or repair. It's a lot easier to slap together a coat-hanger and tin-foil TV antenna than a solar-powered generator. Unless the Cast Members are highly skilled (or have Supporting Cast friends who are), they should be careful about being too ambitious. Building a few crossbows or figuring out how to make primers so they can reload their brass cartridges may be as far as they get. The item's or task's complexity establishes the base modifier for a related skill Task, as determined by the Zombie Master. The Item Complexity Difficulty Table gives examples.

Item Complexity Difficulty Table

Routine: None—these tasks don't usually need instruction manuals

Easy: Simple item (pulley, simple camp stove)

Moderate: More intricate mechanical devices (winch, etc.)

Average: Elaborate mechanical device (leaf-spring crossbow, hand pump, or simple catapult)

Challenging: Simple powered device (steam-powered pump, ethanol still, convert a car to power a generator, make a simple solar still)

Difficult: More complicated powered device (cobble together a simple combustion engine for a generator, build a table saw, make a primitive firearm)

Very Difficult: Piece together a junker automobile, basic computer from scraps, build a telegraph system, homemade Geiger counter

Heroic: Cobble together a generator or refrigerator from random parts

Near Impossible: Elaborate technological device such as a microwave oven or DVD player

When repairing an item through jury-rigging, it is generally one difficulty level easier to fix an item with jury-rigged parts than build it from scrap, depending on the severity of the damage.

Skilled Hands

Once the base modifier has been established, the second question to answer when jury-rigging involves the appropriate Attribute and skill. Intelligence is probably the most important attribute to a jury-rigging junkie, since he's got to expend brain power to figure out how to slide a square axle into a round mounting. Of course, a high Dexterity gives a character the nimble hands to nurse those awkward little parts together as well. Depending on the nature of the Task, the Zombie Master should choose which Attribute is suitable.

Most jury-rigging involves the following skills:

Computers: For building a computer out of bearskins and stone knives.

Craft (Gunsmith): For firearms, zip-guns, muskets, etc.

Craft (Weaponsmith): For crossbows, knives, etc.

Craft (Armorer): For makeshift shields and body armor.

Electronics: For lights, radios, and anything with wires that spark.

Engineer: For bridges, shelters, and static defenses.

Demolitions: For explosives and other things that intentionally go boom.

Mechanic: For just about anything from pulleys and winches to a patchwork-armored urban assault school bus.

Science (Chemistry): Making explosives, fuel, or perhaps more importantly, knowing what NOT to mix together.

Included below are a few examples of jury-rigging, followed by their applicable skill and Attribute, and typical complexity. Note that the skills listed are for making the item in question, which assumes the principle of operation is already understood—which is where Science skills can really come in handy.

- Making a double boiler from two coffee cans (Mechanic/DEX, Simple)
- Making napalm out of gasoline and Styrofoam (Science (Chemistry)/INT, Average)
- Making a short range flamethrower from a propane tank and a lighter (Mechanic/INT, Challenging)
- Mounting a make-shift flamethrower on car (Mechanic/DEX, Average)
- Using a motorcycle and bits of a washing machine to build a snowmobile (Mechanic/INT, Very Difficult)
- Adapting a truck engine to act as an electrical generator (Mechanic/INT or Electronics/INT, Challenging)
- Adapting a Ford carburetor to a Toyota engine (Mechanic/INT, Challenging)
- Building a crossbow out of an automotive leaf spring and a hunting rifle stock (Mechanic or Craft (Weaponsmith)/INT, Average)

Of course, additional skilled hands can help—but the key word here is skilled. While others can lift and tote, characters with some level in the appropriate skill can actually help build the item. For every additional three levels of the appropriate skill (different characters can combine) helping the main Cast Member on a project, you can add one to the character's skill on the Task roll.

Reliability

Making or repairing things via jury-rigging is an imperfect process. The Cast Members are throwing parts together from disparate machines and forcing them to work in a fashion designers never intended. And while they might be able to get away with this for a short period of time, sooner or later their duct-taped, pipe-clamped wonder toy will blow a gasket . . . probably right as the zombie horde is lurching at their heels.

If the related skill Task succeeds, the success level determines the item's or repair's reliability, as shown on the Reliability Table.

Reliability Table

9-10	First Level (Not Very Reliable): Roll for breakdown per day of use
11-12	Second Level (Moderately Reliable): Roll for breakdown per week of use
13-14	Third Level (Reliable): Roll for breakdown per month of use
15-16	Fourth Level (Very Reliable): Roll for breakdown per three months of use
17-20	Fifth Level (Extremely Reliable): Roll for breakdown per six months of use (which might be better than most stuff you own now)

Breakdown rolls are a Test with an Average (+1) modifier plus whatever skill rating was used (but only the skill, not the Attribute) to build the object in the first place—craftsmanship counts for something, after all. Failure means the item has stopped working. The last thing the Cast Members need is to be stranded in the middle of the parking lot of the abandoned Dairy Queen when the cannibal convention closes in. Fortunately, the item can still be repaired at a difficulty

Disposable Junk

If the ZM wants, he can allow the player the option of making an item disposable—it is limited to no more than one use. This makes an item easier to build, but less useful in the long run.

One Use Only Option: +3 to build task.
Note that explosives and bullets already have this factored in.

A Jury-Rigging Example

Rod wants to build a junk buggy to patrol the undead wastelands. He and his friends have collected all the necessary parts (like a Yamaha motorcycle engine and a riding lawnmower steering assembly). Now Rod lights up his acetylene torch and declares "It's Tool Time!" The Zombie Master tells him that this is a Very Difficult Task (–3) using his Mechanic skill (+3) and Intelligence (+3). The ZM is feeling generous (after running them all around the countryside for the parts) and doesn't throw in any other modifiers. After about two days of work, Rod, who has the Jury-rigging Quality, rolls a 2 and a 6 on a d10, and selects the 6 for a total of 9 (6 + 3 + 3 – 3). He's just made it, but the crate's a bit wobbly (Not Very Reliable on the Outcome Table).

Still, he juices the tank up with ethanol and takes his buggy out for a spin in the zombie-haunted city, where he finds himself as night falls. At this point, the ZM calls for a breakdown roll (since it's about one day of use—and a dramatically appropriate moment). Rod rolls 2 for a total of 6 (2, +3 for his Mechanic skill, +1 for the Average modifier). The buggy's engine unexpectedly dies and, in the sudden silence, Rod hears the sound of dozens of shuffling feet in the shadows around him.

level one lower than it took to build it (as noted above). Of course, that's assuming they have the time . . .

Rushing It

Generally, the more complex the item, the longer it takes to make. While no hard and fast rules are possible, common sense should dictate that making a double-boiler from coffee cans won't take as long as cobbling together an armor-plated APC from old dumpsters and a bulldozer. It is up to the Zombie Master to establish how long a given project will take.

If the Cast Members are in a hurry, they can try to shave time off the normal build period by sacrificing reliability. For every 20% taken off the normal build time, lower the final reliability level by one. The task time can be reduced by a maximum of 60% (and three reliability levels) in this manner. If the reliability roll is reduced below Not Very Reliable, the item does not work at all. Naturally, this choice must be made before the Task roll is made.

The Post-Apocalyptic To-Do List

The Cast Members are going to be faced with many needs and choices as the dead rise up and society begins to fall apart. What machines and systems do they need to maintain and which ones do they have to build? Naturally, a lot of these choices depends on the nature of the campaign setting. Are the Cast Members setting up camp in a specific spot, or putting together a caravan that allows them to stay ahead of the zombie hordes? Are they hiding out, waiting for the zombie plague to "die" out or are they in the open, fortified against the undead onslaught? Such decisions determine their priorities and goals when jury-rigging the trappings of civilization.

Making Juice

The zombies have risen up, and everything's gone to hell. Some of the most important things the survivors need are electricity and fuel to maintain some measure of civilized life. Many public and some commercial buildings, such as hospitals and police stations, have their own generators that can be run from their own fuel sources in case of a general power failure (the end of civilization qualifies). Portable gener-

ZM Option: Taking Baby Steps

For simplicity's sake, the rules boil jury-rigging Tasks down to one roll per project. In reality, most of these projects really involve several separate Tasks, often completed in sequence, and using different variations of skills and Attributes. If the Zombie Master wants to break these up and play them in detail, feel free.

Unfortunately, it's impossible to give Zombie Masters the steps for the infinite variety of projects the Cast Members may attempt; looking at some technical manuals may help determine how to handle a given project. Here's an example of how a fractionating ethanol still project might be broken down:

Build 100 gallon fermentation vat (Mechanic/INT, Challenging)

Select and gather foodstuffs for fermentation (Agriculture/INT, Routine)

Build main fractionating tower (Mechanic/INT, Difficult)

Build main boiler (Mechanic/INT, Average)

Cut and weld copper piping (Mechanic/DEX, Average)

Build runoff valves (Mechanic/DEX, Average)

Cobble together temperature control valve (so the proper temperature can be maintained to separate the grades of alcohol) (Craft (Plumbing)/INT, Challenging)

Time required: Typically about four days

ators are also invaluable (see p. 56), but even car or truck engines can supply some power, or be hooked up via the drive train or axle belt to power an electrical source.

In order to generate electricity, you need a power source, the most common being gasoline or fuel oil; almost everything is designed to use it. But gasoline requires oil and a lot of processing to refine—something few survivor groups have access to. Storage can also be a challenge, as gas deteriorates over time, losing octane levels and producing varnish as a by-product. As a rule of thumb, gas loses 10% of its power for every two years held in storage. So unless the Cast Member are holed up near an oil derrick and a refinery, what little gas they can get their hands on will eventually run out.

One way around this is to use a renewable power source, like wind, or solar, or flowing water . . . all that stuff the Greens yammered about before the Rise, and we laughed at them—only it's not so funny now, is it punk (is it!)? The following options are renewable and practical, although they may take some work to implement.

Muscle: A human or animal can be hooked up to power a generator via a hand-crank or other turning mechanism. Even a horse or goat walking in a circle (as with primitive grinding mills) could produce a steady current (Mechanic/INT, Average). But the charge from such a generator is likely to be small (enough to power a few lights or a radio) and, as with any of these power sources, you have to store any unused charge in deep cycle batteries or capacitors (Electronics/INT, Difficult), or else the minute the turning stops, the lights go out.

Alcohol: Both ethanol and methanol can usually be produced on site by fermenting and distilling sugar-rich vegetable material. First, the Cast Members need large fermentation vats (Mechanic/INT, Challenging)—about 100 pounds of grain can produce about one gallon of high-proof fuel. Corn husks and prunes make great starters due to high sugar content, and the by-products can still be used as animal feed afterwards. Next they need to distill the alcohol itself. Fortunately, stills are practical to build and maintain in a post-apocalyptic environment (Mechanic/INT, Challenging).

These alternatives can be almost as efficient as gasoline (180 proof ethanol is about 105 octane, but it's BTU output is lower). Unfortunately, most modern engines have to be modified to use alcohol (Mechanic/INT, Difficult) and are often slightly less efficient because of that. In most combustion engines, it takes about two gallons of distilled ethanol to equal the power of one gallon of gas. For methanol, it's about three gallons.

Methane: The breakdown of animal and other organic waste often produces methane as a by-product. Fermenting, collecting, and storing this combustible gas takes the building of "digesters," but it can be a effective fuel source (Mechanic/INT, Difficult). The gas may be used to provide power for engines, routed for heating, cooking, and even to generate electricity. The conversion of a combustion engine to methane power can be made in two hours, requiring the installation of a pressurized storage bottle and a device which feeds the methane from the bottle to the carburetor (Mechanic/INT, Challenging).

Coal/Wood: A steam boiler is another low-tech means of power generation. It just needs a heat source (often coal or wood, but alcohol or oil can be used as well), a steam boiler (Mechanic/INT, Challenging), and a turbine or crankshaft arrangement to transfer the power (Mechanic/INT, Difficult). Converting a standard combustion engine to use steam power is not easy, however, requiring a fundamental rebuild (Mechanic/INT, Very Difficult). Building from scratch may be easier (Mechanic/INT, Difficult). Note that zombies might be an alternate fuel source if you can coax them into the furnace.

Wind/Water/Sun: As waterwheels have proven for centuries, a waterfall can provide a fair amount of energy. Hook up a magnet to the wheel to get hydroelectric power to run some lights and even a power tool or two (Mechanic/INT, Challenging). Similarly, a windmill made from an aircraft prop and a car's drive train can be hooked up to a low-yield generator (Mechanic/INT, Difficult). A steady, heavy flow of wind or water is necessary, but the price is certainly right. Solar-powered electrical generators are a fine low-yield power source, if you can find the rather rare photovoltaic materials needed to make them (Scavenging/INT, Heroic). On the other hand, solar-powered water stills and heaters (Mechanic/INT,

Challenging) are relatively easy to make as they simply use focused sunlight. Polished metal and mirrors are essential, but usually easy to find (Scavenging/INT, Challenging).

Other sources are also possible, such as hydrogen tapped from waste gas, large mechanical springs (much like watch springs), and even vegetable oil which, while requiring some refining, can be mixed with alcohol to produce a biodiesel that can work in most diesel engines unmodified. Local conditions dictate which form is the most accessible and practical for the Cast Members.

The Machinery of Life

Once the survivors have got power, they might want to get a few other things up and running. While life can go on without some of these, civilization may not.

Water: Clean water is essential to survival, period. If it can be hot and running, all the better. Unless the survivors have easy access to a running stream, a pond or lake, or a well, storage is key, and the Cast Members had best think large—it takes over two quarts of water per day per person for survival, and up to five times that for conveniences such as bathing and cleaning. Large, stainless steel tanks are ideal, but plastic drums and bottles can work. Treatment with hydrogen peroxide or chlorine can prolong storage time, but even treated water can go bad after six months (unless sterilized while sealed), so a fresh water source is important.

Running water requires pumps (either manual or powered) and plumbing (Craft (Plumbing)/INT, Average or Mechanic/INT, Challenging). Boiling water sterilizes it and makes for a comfortable bath, so gas, wood, or electric heaters are also useful (Mechanical/INT, Challenging).

Food Growth and Storage: Growing food is not a jury-rigging project, but setting up a hydroponics room for high-yield production is (Agriculture/INT, Very Difficult plus Plumbing/INT, Challenging or Mechanic/INT, Difficult). Building grain silos from dumpsters and scrap wood are good projects as well (Engineering/INT, Average).

Lighting: Sitting in the dark is tough, especially with all those strange noises outside; it's why our ancestors tamed fire in the first place. A regular old fire can help, but it's dangerous (the house burns down) and doesn't throw off a lot of light. Reading or sewing by oil lamp or candles can give you a headache, ruin your eyesight, and spoil your night vision if you're suddenly attacked. Lanterns (and the natural gas/propane/oil to fuel them) are fine, but getting electric lights up is the ideal. Stringing lights and wiring a power system is relatively easy (Mechanics/DEX, Average); making light bulbs is not (Electronics/INT, Very Difficult).

Radio: The telephone and Internet only last as long as the electricity does (oh, and the infrastructure to support them, like phone lines and servers). If you want to reach out and touch someone, a radio is the best bet. Ham radios are ideal, but you can build a crystal receiver with a few basic components such as copper wire, graphite, and a pair of earphones (Electronics/INT, Challenging). The range is quite limited—fifty miles at the outside, but it's better than silence. A tap (Morse Code) transmitter can be rigged as well, but takes far more power (like a hand generator) and would have a max range of ten miles.

Transportation: For more mobile survivors, getting a working set of wheels may be the highest priority. Automobiles may be plentiful after the holocaust; working ones may not. Idle batteries drain of charge, fluid seals degrade, crazed zombies smash all big, shiny things—a lot can happen. Hence, the majority of challenges with vehicles involve getting and keeping them running—often with inadequate parts. Older (pre-1978) cars are actually easier to fix and maintain, since they have fewer electronic components (repair and jury-rigging Tasks are typically one level easier on these vehicles), but they also have more wear on them. Such tasks can range from fitting the wrong size wheels on a car (Mechanic/INT, Easy) to rebuilding an engine to use steam power from a wood-fueled boiler (Mechanic/INT, Very Difficult).

Once they've got it up and running, enterprising Cast Members may "augment" their conveyance to provide more utility in their new environment. This can include weapon mounts, armor plating, or even sealing the vehicle up with a filtration system against airborne contagions (Mechanics/INT, Very Difficult).

The Makeshift APC is a striped-out van with makeshift armored grates over the windows, a reinforced suspension, and some additional sheet-metal armor welded to the sides. For offense, a “Zombie Cow-Catcher” on the front of the van can take the legs off any undead too slow to get out of their way.

Makeshift APC

(Mechanic/DEX, Challenging)

Weight: 5500

DC: 95

Speed: 80/50

AV: 4

Acceleration: 10

Accuracy: n/a

Range: 350

Cost: \$35,000

Toughness: 4

Availability: C

Handling: 3

Armament: Cow-Catcher; D10 x 2+1 per 10 mph the APC is traveling (see *AFMBE* p. 116). Negates collision damage to the vehicle if striking an object under 500 lbs.

Sometimes there won't be anything around intact enough to get started. That's when Cast Members have to bash up something from bits and pieces. The Junk Buggy is a Frankenstein-monster of a vehicle, with the body from a compact car, the drive train from a jeep, and the engine from a light truck which has been converted to run on ethanol (hence the shortened range).

Junk Buggy

(Mechanic/DEX, Very Difficult)

Weight: 2000

DC: 45

Speed: 50/60

AV: 2

Acceleration: 15

Accuracy: n/a

Range: 250 (ethanol)

Cost: n/a

Toughness: 2

Availability: U

Handling: 3

The Machinery of Death

Besides things that make life more comfortable, Cast Members may need to whip up some tools to defend themselves in a world that has become actively hostile . . . and hungry.

Guns and Ammo: These are the staple of the modern post-holocaust genre. Depending on where the campaign is set, firearms may or may not be easy to find. Typically, campaigns set in the United States should have an abundance of guns available, as police stations, military bases, sporting good stores, and crack houses are looted for their weaponry. Other locales may feature more limited gun access and require more ingenuity. Guns are machines, and firearms that are over-used and under-cleaned are likely to jam, break, or explode (Craft (Gunsmith/INT, Average to maintain most firearms).

One-Shot Wonders

If Cast Members can't get their hands on any ready-made firepower, an example of a quick (one hour) jury-rigging Task involves making a pipe shotgun using some lengths of steel pipe, a shotgun shell, and a roofing nail (Mechanic/INT, Average, but reliability can never be higher than Moderate). While inaccurate, it can be useful in urban/indoor scenarios, plus you have a foot-long steel club after the initial blast.

Pipe Shotgun

Range: 5/10/25/50/100

Damage: DB x 5(15)

Cap: 1

EV: 8/4

Cost: \$20

Aval: C

Pipeguns made for other calibers would have appropriate damage ratings. Cast Members shouldn't try making a pipe gun for rifle cartridges; it takes good quality materials and careful workmanship to produce a weapon that can safely fire a high power rifle round. Stick to low pressure handgun rounds (the anemic .38 Special, .38 S&W, .45 ACP, etc), low-power shotgun rounds (not 12 gauge 3" magnums) and .22 rimfire rounds.

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Of course, modern guns need cartridge bullets or they're just awkward, blue-steel clubs. Like many manufactured consumables, bullets can run short in a prolonged campaign—especially the way many Cast Members like to spray lead. Making their own ammunition can be a useful pastime.

Black powder is the simplest form of gunpowder and can be made from a mix of charcoal, sulfur, and potassium nitrate, ground, wetted with alcohol, and filtered through a screen (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Average). Reliability ratings are measured as follows: Breakdown roll: per 10 rounds, per 20 rounds, per 100 rounds, per 200 rounds, per 400 rounds. Failure means dud or backfire. Most cartridge weapons made before 1890 used black powder.

Modern cartridge weapons typically use smokeless powder, a powerful nitrocellulose derivative of gun-cotton. This propellant is tricky to make in a jury-rigged lab since it involves nitroglycerine (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Very Difficult, Reliability ratings are as per black powder). A failed roll may result in an explosive lab accident.

Casting bullets and reloading spent cartridges is a skilled task (Craft (Gunsmith)/DEX, Average) which requires special tools (a ram press, bullet molds, and primer jig). Primers (the ignition portion of the round) must be made separately (Craft (Gunsmith)/DEX, Challenging).

Black powder can be used in cartridges made for smokeless powder but not vice versa. The resulting weapon damage is reduced by one die type (i.e., D10 becomes D8, D8 becomes D6, D6 becomes D4, etc.).

NEVER use smokeless powder in a black powder weapon—the charge is too powerful and may cause any makeshift seals to split with harsh consequences to the user (D6 x 3(9)).

Another alternative is a makeshift musket—a matchlock gun which uses raw black powder and home-cast lead balls as ammo. A Cast Member can seal one end of a large-bore rifle or shotgun barrel (or use a high-quality, rolled steel pipe), drill a touch-hole and pan, rig a simple trigger mechanism to lower a lit wick to the touch-hole, and he's in business (Craft (Weaponsmith)/INT, Difficult). The lead bullet must drop down the barrel cleanly, and Cast

Members may need to experiment a bit with the powder load (Craft (Gunsmith) or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Challenging). This weapon is probably unreliable (never better than Reliable), and it be used in the rain.

Makeshift Musket

Range: 5/10/25/50/100

Damage: D6 x 4(12)

Cap: 1

EV: 8/4

Cost: \$50

Avail: C

Explosives: Both blackpowder and smokeless powder are considered “low” explosives—they don't burn quickly enough to create much concussion damage unless compressed (as in a pipe-bomb). The Cast Members have to mix up some “high” explosives to really rock their world.

Nitroglycerin is one of the most basic high explosives. This thick oil's volatile reputation is well deserved and sudden shocks can result in premature detonation. It's not too difficult to make (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Challenging—components are largely sulfuric and nitric acid plus glycerin), but it is tricky to store—at 56° F or lower—and transport (Simple Dexterity Tests to move manually, depending on conditions—failure can be fatal).

While a jar of pure nitro can be used as a stationary demolition charge (throwing it is not an option), it's more often used to make dynamite. The nitro is allowed to soak into a non-explosive filler like wood pulp or diatomaceous earth and then carefully wrapped into sticks (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Very Difficult). Commercial dynamite is the also most common high-explosive that Cast Members are likely scavenge up. Still, dynamite can go bad after time and spoiled sticks are very sensitive (treat as nitro). A blasting cap or other small explosive must be used to detonate the dynamite, although one could also be made from pure nitro.

On a less sophisticated note, Cast Members can use various scrounged commercial products to make their own explosives. Solidox (a common welding component) can be mixed with sugar to make a reasonable

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Homemade Explosive Area of Effect Table

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Max Range
BP Pipe Bomb	2	4	5
Jar of Nitro	3	6	8
Dynamite	3	6	8
Homemade Plastique	3	5	6
Solidox Bomb	2	5	7

Homemade Explosive Damage Values Table

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Max Range
BP Pipe Bomb	D6 x 6 (18)	D6 x 4(12)	D6 x 2(6)
Jar of Nitro	D8 x 10 (40)	D8 x 6(24)	D8 x 2(8)
Dynamite	D8 x 8 (32)	D8 x 5(20)	D8 x 2(8)
Homemade Plastique	D6 x 7 (21)	D6 x 5(15)	D6 x 2(6)
Solidox Bomb	D6 x 8 (24)	D6 x 6(18)	D6 x 2(6)

explosive (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Average). Likewise, bleach can be boiled down and mixed with white gas, petroleum jelly, and wax to make a rough-hewn plastic explosive (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Difficult). And if characters need some serious heat to keep their flesh-eating neighbors in check, they can mix high-quality iron rust and aluminum filings to create thermite (Demolitions or Science (Chemistry)/INT, Challenging). Ignited with a magnesium strip, thermite burns at over 6000° F and can melt through an engine block (D8 x 10(40) for up to four Turns). Unfortunately, it's best used to burn through stationary obstacles since it doesn't explode with much force.

Melee Mayhem: Other makeshift weapons may be of a more up-close and personal nature, featuring examples of otherwise innocuous tools put to more violent use. Table-saw blades can be welded to tire irons, sledge hammers can have spikes mounted on their heads, and so on. Generally, these projects are simple (Mechanic/DEX, Average) and the resulting weapon is one die type higher than an unmodified club or tool (D4 x Strength becomes D6 x Strength, etc., to a maximum of D10). Note that purpose-built melee weapons may not be modified in this manner—they are already optimized for combat.

Power tools shouldn't be over-looked either. Power drills, circular saws, and even hedge trimmers can be useful for "fixing" the undead. For example, a small powered lawnmower can be turned into a somewhat clumsy, hand-carried zombie mulcher (Mechanic/DEX, Average).

Zombie Mower

Damage: D10(5) x Strength**&

EV: 25/15

Cost: \$150

Aval: C

-2 attack penalty due to unwieldy nature

Makeshift Armor: In the wake of the zombie-onslaught, the idea of wrapping your body in steel could come back into vogue. Cobbling together something from a football helmet and cross-country biking gear requires no expertise, but shaping plate armor from sheet steel or a heavy cuirass from saddle leather does. Such projects are best handled by craftsman (Craft (Armorer or Tanner)/DEX, Challenging) but can be done by a talented mechanic (Mechanic/DEX, Difficult). The resultant armor is equivalent to that in the *AFMBE* corebook (see p. 138), but may have an EV 1 higher than listed unless three Success Levels were achieved during manufacture.

CHAPTER FOUR

In the year since the Rise, Jameson had become something of an expert in the field of self-preservation. Back in the real world, he'd just been a flabby accountant with the slightly odd hobby of collecting rifles, handguns, and knives. But now, he had the firepower to field a small army.

Too bad he'd never had any friends, or the social graces to have even grudging acquaintances. But he had a nice home in the hills, a fine view, a basement filled with enough food only a true paranoid could appreciate, defensible space all around his home . . . and lots of corpses stinking up the place.

He tended to keep the windows closed now, unless he had to shoot out of one. All around his home he could see bodies rotting in the dry summer grass. He wasn't one hundred percent sure every one of them had been ghouls. He thought maybe one or two had just been neighbors looking for help.

But, better safe than sorry.

And so that was his existence. Every morning, the first thing he did was scan the perimeter of his home, and check the locks. Every night, the same. With more emphasis on the locking of locks. Once open, once closed, twice opened, twice closed. The ritual of double locking every lock in his house helped him to feel safe and secure at night. It was hard enough to get any sleep as it was, but the ritual was a small comfort.

If he had one luxury available to him any longer, it was time. He seemed to have plenty of that, one way or another.

And guns. Lots of guns. And the knives. And some cinder blocks he'd pulled up from the basement and placed near the windows upstairs for dropping on the heads of the ghouls if he had to. And he had some materials for making Molotov cocktails placed strategically around the house.

So he sat, in his house, by himself, with his arsenal, and waited for the world to end once and for all.

MORE IMPLEMENTS OF DESTRUCTION



Introduction

If there's one thing players of the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* game seem to love more than zombies, it's the gear they use to put those zombies back into the ground. This chapter lists and describes a number of items Cast Members may find useful. A Cast Member might scrounge up a nail gun at the local hardware store after civilization as we know it has collapsed, but it comes in just as handy should zombies attack a pre-Fall construction site.

The equipment detailed has been broken down into three general categories: Weapons, Vehicles, and Gear. All items include a description, Encumbrance Value, Cost, and Availability (see *AFMBE*, p. 126 for more information on equipment statistics). Prices listed may be irrelevant in an *AFMBE* campaign set after the apocalypse. In this case, use the cost to determine a rough value comparison.

New Weapons

In a world where society has collapsed weapons are vital to survival. They mean the difference between living or having your brains chewed out. They also come in handy to defend your personal freedoms and protect your home from other survivors in the absence of the rule of law.

Weapons are tools, like any other, and it's important to choose the right weapon for the job. Missile weapons allow Cast Members to kill (or re-kill) at range, providing a buffer between them and the snapping jaws of a zombie, and giving them vital time to escape should the need arise. Melee weapons, on the other hand, come in handy when the zombies get up close and personal. And they provide a nice, satisfying thunk when they connect with a zombie's skull.

Bartertown

Although civilization may have collapsed under the weight of the zombie horde, in some areas a rough semblance of society may resurface or remain intact, and a rough currency may arise.

One of the oldest human activities involves trade, and money makes trading easier because you don't have to lug fifteen sacks of rice to market to buy a water filtration system. All you need is whatever the society values.

Enough ink has been spilled by economists and roleplaying game designers about the concept of money that we don't have to go into a great deal of detail. Basically, in order for money to have worth, everyone has to agree that it's money, and it has to have some value. *Zombie Masters* can have some fun with this. On the first score, if a survivor settlement accepts bullets as money, they're not going to be interested in the pretty seashells the Cast Members want to use. This can be doubly troublesome if the next survivor town over does accept seashells as money. Which leads us to the second point—whatever is used as currency most often has its own intrinsic value. A bastion of civilization could accept gold in various forms—some might take gold earrings, chains, and rings, others might trade based on the weight of the gold, and still others might only accept 14 carat gold. But other things might have value because they're rare (as in, no longer being made because society has collapsed), like cigarettes, ammo, or Spam. Imagine their chagrin when the Cast Members roll into Bartertown to do some trading, only to discover that all the ammo they expended on wandering zombies really was a fortune. Finally, some things lacking in apparent value could still be used as currency, because someone somewhere thinks its valuable. The citizens of a town might place a high value on silicon chips or sprockets, and use those as money. What would happen if the Cast Members, knowing this, rolled into town with all the silicon chips they could lay their hands on? And how would they feel if they discovered that all the "worthless" computer chips they left behind were actually worth a fortune?

Missile Weapons

When faced with a zombie horde, it's better for Cast Members to attack at range. In choosing a ranged weapon, consider its primary use—attack or defense. A machine gun is more useful in defending a static point, like the gates to an improvised fortress, because of its high rate of fire. When scavenging, pistols and shotguns are more accurate.

Scavenging Tasks at construction sites, sporting goods stores, and military complexes could turn up any of these weapons. They're also useful in campaign settings set prior to *The Rising*.

Dart/Tranquilizer Rifle

A shotgun-like weapon designed to fire darts loaded with a tranquilizer (or a tracking system),

these guns are typically used by scientists in the field, zookeepers, or even animal control officers. The weapon is double-barreled and the darts must be loaded manually two at a time. The barbed darts are designed to stick into an animal's hide. Treat the tranquilizer as curare (see *AFMBE*, p. 107), though the *Zombie Master* can vary the tranquilizer's Strength as desired. The gun's effectiveness may be limited due to zombie's necrotic state; tranquilizers require a working circulatory system to be effective.

Medusa Revolver

The Phillips and Rodgers Model 47 is a six-shot revolver capable of firing over 25 types of ammunition, including .38, .380, 9mm, and .357 bullets, which makes it a survivor's best friend. Also, it is exceptionally accurate and well built, giving a shoot-

Missile Weapon Table

Weapon	Range	Damage	Cap.	EV	Cost	Avail
Dart Rifle	5/25/50/100/150	neg.	2	8/4	\$500	U
Darts	2	neg.			\$10	U
MP 40	3/15/30/100/200	D6 x 4(12)	32	6/3		
Medusa Revolver	as ammo	as ammo	6	1/1	\$600	U
.38 caliber	3/10/20/60/120	D6 x 3(9)				
9mm	3/10/20/60/120	D6 x 4(12)				
.357 Magnum	4/15/30/90/180	D8 x 4(16)				
Nail Gun	6/3		50		\$350	C
Box of nails		D6(3)	7200		\$30	C
Potato Gun	5/15/30/90/180	as ammo	1	PVC 20/10 Aluminum 30/15 Steel 50/25	\$20-\$2000	U
Potato		D4(2)				
Tennis Ball		D4 + 1(3)				
Rock		D6(3)				
PVC round		D10 + 2 (7)				
Rifle Grenade*	30/50/100/200/300	as off. gren.	1	2/1		
Spear Gun	3/8/10/14/20	D6(3)	1	4/2	\$600	U
Tommy Gun	3/15/30/100/200	D8 x 4 (16)	50 or 100	6/3	\$600	U

*Attached to the end of standard rifle (i.e., Garand, M1 carbine, Mauser).

er +1 to hiss Gun (Handgun) Tasks to hit at point blank and short ranges. It is available with barrel lengths from 3" to 6", and uses the range and damage of whatever type of ammunition is being fired.

Nail Gun

Common on contemporary construction sites, the nail gun replaces the use of the old fashioned hammer to drive nails. The nail gun is capable of firing nails into steel, masonry, and wood, which makes it a useful tool in the quick construction of barriers or makeshift shelters.

The nail gun ejects nails by detonating an explosive cartridge placed directly behind the gun barrel, and compressed gases are capable of firing projectiles up to 6 inches into fully stressed concrete at

velocities as high as 1,400 feet per second. That makes it a handy weapon at close range. Nail guns fire up to 12 nails per second, with ammunition coming in 40 or 50-nail strips often joined by copper wire or adhesive. The strips may adhere to the nail when the gun is fired—apart from the risk of the nails themselves shrapnel may result as a consequence, or from exploding cartridges. A burst of nails causes D6(3) damage per Turn (and ignores most forms of armor at contact range), but requires an improvised weapon close combat strike.

Potato Cannon

A potato cannon consists of a long PVC tube with a "chamber" at the rear filled with some kind of propellant. Often a jury-rigged weapon, it is built to



launch a potato like a mortar round at a target (as well as other things, like a tennis ball soaked in gasoline or PVC “bullets”). It could be constructed as a hand-held gun, a stationary mortar, or even a vehicle mounted cannon. Unlike a conventional mortar, the potato does not explode (well, they do, but not like an explosive); its damage is largely kinetic. While a potato cannon’s usefulness is marginal compared to a real gun, in a world where bullets are in short supply and potatoes are plentiful, they make a viable choice. Cast Members can get inventive with it and use compressed air for propellant, rifle the barrel for better accuracy, make it out of other materials (like stainless steel), or add cylinders to make it a six-shooter.

Optional damages: The average spud gun can fire a tennis ball approximately 85 mph. For every 10 mph over that add +1 to damage, 2 to the EV, and +10% to the cost. Add D4 damage to the target if tennis ball is on fire.

Optional bonuses to hit: +1 if equipped with a laser site; +2 if rifled.

Rifle Grenade

This is a tiny mortar-like device that can be mounted underneath the barrel of an assault rifle. The munitions cause damage as an offensive grenade (see *AFMBE*, p. 137). Its great advantage is a soldier need not drop his weapon to grab and throw a grenade.

Spear Gun

Spear guns are primarily used for fishing and protection underwater. A spear gun measures approximately four feet long, is typically constructed from aluminum, and uses large elastic bands to silently shoot a small spear (–2 to Notice Tasks to hear the shot). The weapon works equally well on land or underwater. For the cost listed, each spear gun kit comes with 3 elastic bands, a line reel and 100 feet of high test line, 1 spear shaft, and 1 barbed tip. Extra shafts cost \$40 each, tips \$25. Prices may vary.

Using the spear gun requires either Hand Weapon (Spear Gun) or (Crossbow), although the latter incurs a –1 penalty to hit.

Some enterprising individuals have seen fit to adapt bang stick (ammo) tips to their spear guns. Doing so requires a Craft (Bowyer) or Craft (Gunsmith) Task. A failure destroys the shaft, leaving the character with only the tip. Success increases the damage to that of the bullet used, but modifies the flight characteristics and decreases the range to 2/6/8/12/15.

Tommy Gun

This archetypical gangster weapon is from the early 20th century. It's distinctive cylindrical drum makes it easy to recognize. Prone to overheating, it jams on a roll of 1 when using burst fire. An Intelligence and Guns (Submachine Gun) Task clears it.

Melee Weapons

Although ranged weapons have their place in the survivor's arsenal, they suffer from a few specific drawbacks. First, some zombie types have particular weaknesses, requiring a precise shot to incapacitate them. This can lead to a lot of wasted ammunition, and you can never be sure you've put a zombie down permanently. Many a survivor has lost his life as he emptied clip after clip into a steadily advancing zombie that overran his position. Second, unless Cast Members have the ability to make their own, they will eventually run out of ammunition; even if they stockpile ammo, this decays in due course. Depending on how long after zombie catastrophe, the Cast may only have access to primitive close combat weapons.

Often, it's best to carry a variety of weapon types. Never rely on just one.

Bang Stick

Bang sticks are a popular protection tool used by divers to keep unruly sea creatures at bay; "gator hunters" also use them to quickly dispatch their prey. Bang sticks measure from three to six feet long and 3/4" thick, and consist of folding aluminum poles, with a rubber retention strap on one end. On the business end, a single-shot barrel/powerhead is threaded on for various sized munitions. Additional barrels/powerheads are available in the following calibers: .223, .25, .357, .38, .44, .50, and 12 gauge (bird, buck, and slug). Each folding stick also comes with a carry case for ease in portability.

The weapon is fired by jabbing the powerhead tip hard against the target. The bang stick requires a close combat Hand Weapon skill rating to use. To change the powerhead requires an Simple Dexterity or Intelligence Test. A failure results in the bang stick not functioning, due to the threads and firing pin being misaligned.

Chain

The chain is a familiar object—lengths of interlinked metal rings used for a variety of purposes. Lengths ranging up to five feet long can be swung as a one-handed close combat weapon. Lengths longer than five feet require two hands to use (two-handed use adds +1 to Strength). A spiked chain has bits of metal (snipped tin, old nails, etc.) either woven into the links or welded onto the chain itself.

Melee Weapon Table

Name	Damage	EV	Cost	Avail
Bang Stick	as ammo	2/1	\$350	U
Chain	D8(4) x Str	4/2	\$20	C
Cleaver	D4 + 2(4) x Str	2/1	\$50	C
Garrote	special	n/a	\$5	C
Ketch-All Pole	n/a	4/2	\$60	U
Spiked Chain	D10(5) x Str	4/2	\$30	C
Lawnmower Blade	D6(3) x Str*	4/2	\$12	C

* Stabbing/slashing weapon.

Due to the unpredictable nature of swinging a chain (due to the weight and twisting links), and the rarity of training with it as a weapon, the Zombie Master can handle them in one of two ways: 1) *All chain use is untrained, and cannot be taken as a Hand Weapon skill*, 2) allow Hand Weapon (Chains) as a skill, but treat it as a Special skill, to simulate the amount of time it would take to become proficient with the weapon.

If an attack with a chain or spiked chain misses, roll D10. On a 3-8, there is no additional effect. On a 2 or 9, the chain wraps around another object and it takes the one Turn to free it. On an 1 or 10, the wielder is hit by his own attack.

Cleaver

A conventional 13" long, 3 1/2" wide, high-carbon, stainless steel kitchen accessory, this knife is perfectly balanced and well suited for chopping up whole chickens and dicing vegetables. Also good for chopping and dicing zombies. Given enough force when swung, a cleaver can easily lop off limbs and heads. If an attacker scores five or more Success Levels, the cleaver inflicts maximum damage, and chops off a random limb.

Garrote

A length of knotted cord or rope (or even cloth) slipped over the victim's head and around their neck, and used to strangle. The garrote inflicts suffocation damage, one point of damage per level of Strength. With a successful Stealth Task, the victim doesn't see it coming and has no time to prepare (see *AFMBE*, p. 108).

Ketch-All Pole

Ketch-all poles are mostly known as a dogcatcher's weapon of choice. They consist of two heavy-duty, telescoping metal poles that extend to 10 feet. They have insulated handles and a cable runs inside the length of the poles, ending in a lockable noose at one end. The user can easily loosen the noose by a simple twist of a cap at the end opposite the noose. A melee attack roll is needed to use the pole. The pole adds three to the Strength of the user for purposes of breaking free.

Lawnmower Blade

The "business end" of a lawnmower, a lawnmower blade can double as a wicked machete in a pinch. Simply file down the blade on one end, wrap cloth, cord, or leather around the blunted end, and start swingin'.

Defensive Items

Defensive items such as caltrops and bear traps inflict damage not by intentional use, like swinging them, but by waiting for someone to pass by. These can be great for incapacitating zombies before they ever get to your compound gates.

Bear Trap

Often used by trappers in rural areas, these devices consist of a pressure plate surrounded by two toothed semi-circles that clamp shut on anything of sufficient weight (over ten pounds) that steps on them. Bear traps are commonly attached to a stake by a sturdy chain to ensure the prey won't escape. Because the bear trap immobilizes anything it catches, it makes a perfect perimeter defense against zombies if enough can be deployed. Moreover, zombies who chew off their own leg in order to escape become less mobile, and easier to kill.

Caltrop

Caltrops consist of four pointed spikes splayed out at the points of a tetrahedron. When deployed they land on three points, with the fourth left upright, making them effective at injuring anyone stepping on them and puncturing tires. There are two versions of the caltrop available. The basic version was in use as early as the 4th century BC, and were tossed in the path of marching troops and steeds to slow their progress. The modern version was developed in the 20th century, and was designed to puncture self-sealing tires.

Dropping a handful of caltrops scatters them. Use a Strength and Throwing (Sphere) Task to get the caltrops into the desired area, and use the offensive grenade area of effect to determine the affected zone. If they are dropped behind a moving vehicle, divide the vehicle speed by the number dropped to determine the length of the spiked area in yards. Failed attempts mean the caltrops scatter too much to affect any pursuers. Anything entering the affected area must make a Difficult Dexterity Test per yard crossed.

Defensive Gear Table

Name	Damage	EV	Cost	Avail.
Caltrop (basic)	D4(2)	n/a	\$1	U
Caltrop (modern)	D4 + 2(3)	n/a	\$2	U
Spike Strip (10')		12/24	\$250	R
Spike Strip (15')		17/34	\$300	R
Spike Strip (25')		22/44	\$350	R
Checkpoint		2/4	\$100	R
Pocket Spike		n/a	\$20	R
Replacement Spikes (10)		n/a	\$15	R
Med. Bear Trap	D8 x 2(8)*	24/30	\$195	U
Lg. Bear Trap	D12 x 2(12)*	48/55	\$320	U

* See notes for additional information on long-term damage from this item.

Caltrops cause damage every Turn they are stepped on without removing them. Zombies stepping on caltrops lose DPs like humans, but only one time for each foot, instead of for each step. A vehicle sustains immediate damage to the tires, along with a -2 drop in Handling and a 20 mph reduction in speed; the driver must gain two Success Levels on a Dexterity/Handling and Driving Task immediately after applying these modifiers. When a mount hits the caltrops, the rider must gain two Success Levels on a Dexterity and Riding Task to stay mounted. With a failure, the rider falls in the patch of caltrops, and receives damage from D4 of them.

Spike System

Spike systems are the modern equivalent of the caltrop, deployed on roads and highways to stop speeding cars. They come in three lengths and are packed in their own case. Each system's spikes are self-adjusting to the correct angle for maximum penetration of any size tire. It can be deployed in three Turns by simply dragging it across the path a vehicle.

Any vehicle striking a spike strip immediately sustains D4 + 2(3) damage to each tire, an immediate -3 drop in Handling, and a 30 mph reduction in speed. Vehicle handling rules then apply. Unlike caltrops, someone entering an area with a spike strip has a chance to see it and react to avoid it. First, make a Simple Perception Test (higher levels of success may

be needed depending on speed and visibility). Follow the Vehicle in Action rules (see *AFMBE*, on p. 116) to determine if the character manages to avoid the strip. Zombies tend to get stuck in spike systems. A zombie with Strength 4 can free itself in two Turns automatically. Those under Strength 4 must make a Simple Strength Test or fall down onto the spikes (suffering D10 + 2(7) damage). These stuck stiffies cannot free themselves without outside assistance.

Spike System Dimensions (not deployed)

10 feet	20x 13x 3.5 in.	10 lbs.
15 feet	20x 18x 3.5 in.	15 lbs.
25 feet	20x 23x 3.5 in.	20 lbs.

Pocket Spike: The pocket spike is a small, light device that consists of only two hollow spikes, but can be easily placed under a parked vehicle's tire. Dimensions: 4x 2.5x 1 in. Wt: 1/5 lb.

Checkpoint: The checkpoint is a system for use in security/DUI checkpoints and in takedowns, being slid easily under a parked vehicle. Dimensions: 20x 6x 3 in. Wt: 1.1 lbs.

Mines

Here are two typical mines the Cast Members may get access to: AP and claymore. Many more are—unfortunately—available if the Cast Members know where to look.

Mine Area of Effect Table

Mine Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Max Range
AP Mine	2	7	12
Claymore Mine*	5	12	40

* The claymore fires in cone-shaped blast of shot aimed in a specific direction. The affect is 2 yards high and reaches out to almost 50 yards.

Mine Damage Value Table

Explosive Type	Ground Zero	General Effect	Max Range
AP Mine	D6 x 12(36)	D6 x 10(30)	D6 x 4(12)
Claymore Mine	D8 x 10(40)	D8 x 6(24)	D8 x 2(8)

Vehicles

There comes a time in every survivor's life when they must flee the onslaught of shambling brain-eaters; often the key to survival is knowing when to jump in a car and floor it. Vehicles mean mobility—to escape an infested city, to locate a remote sanctuary, to resupply in nearby towns. They are especially useful for those survivors who hope to escape the zombie outbreak by staying one step ahead of them. The vehicles presented in this section are just a sampling of those vehicles Cast Members can find littering the abandoned countryside (and they're useful in campaigns set prior to the zombie outbreak, too).

Airboat

An airboat, also called a swamp boat, has a flat bottom and is powered by an airplane propeller mounted on the stern facing backwards, making it ideal for use in shallow water and swamps. Some airboats can also move over land for short distances. They come in various sizes, ranging from one-passenger to 32-passenger models. These stats represent a midsize airboat with one operator and eight passengers.

Airboat

Weight: 2000	DC: 42
Speed: 75/60	AV: 2
Acceleration: 30	Accuracy: n/a
Range: 525	Cost: \$20,000
Toughness: 2	Availability: U
Handling: 3	

Black Helicopter

Long speculated on by conspiracy theorists, black helicopters were designed with the help of alien technology hidden at Area 51, and used by Them (whoever they might be) to mutilate cows, abduct red-necks, and transport Men in Black. Or, maybe they're just the cutting edge of stealth technology applied to helicopters, used by various special forces teams to defend America. You be the judge. Black helicopters are capable of carrying 15 passengers in addition to a pilot and copilot. Only after the fall of civilization might civilians, perhaps scavenging at a previously restricted airbase, get a look (and their hands on) one of these.

Black helicopters are a wonder of 21st century technology. They are designed for stealth—equipped with emission cloaking, sound baffling, and radar invisibility features. The surface of the helicopter is painted black, but the vehicle has a chameleon feature capable of matching the surface of the helicopter to its surrounding environment. A Perception and Electronic Surveillance Task, or any kind of Perception Test, suffers a -10 modifier to detect a black helicopter. They navigate through the use of an advanced GPS terminal with global mapping software constantly updated through the helicopter's satellite uplink. All communications are scrambled through the most advanced cryptographic techniques. The crew of a black helicopter has thermographic sensors for surveillance purposes, as well as a laser eavesdropper which can be bounced off a window (to snoop inside) and standard surveillance equipment like parabolic mikes, telescopes, video cameras, and wiretap monitors. Black helicopters are shielded against electromagnetic pulses. In fact, with the bay doors closed, they are fully sealed against any environmental hazard.

Of course, all of this only works so long as the infrastructure supporting it—the satellite GPS network, the replacement parts, etc.—remains intact. But at least for a little while, a survivor group might have a pretty sweet ride.

Black Helicopter Weaponry

Medium Bomb

Accuracy: 4 Shots: 2

Rate of Fire: 1 or 2 Damage: D10 x 40 (200)

These are conventional explosive bombs, though black helicopters are more likely to carry biological weaponry. This can be as simple as smoke or tear gas, or some mind control chemical developed by MK-ULTRA.

20mm Auto-Cannon

Accuracy: 4 Shots: 480

Rate of Fire: 20-shot bursts

Armor-Piercing Round

Damage: D10 x 10(50)

Armor-piercing Factor: 2 (kinetic)

Range: 100/200/800/1500/2000

Black Helicopter

Weight: 10,000 lbs (5 tons) DC: 150

Speed: 300 mph/450 kph AV: 15

Acceleration: 60 mph (90 kph) Availability: n/a

Range: 500 miles (750 km) Cost: n/a

Toughness: 4 Handling: 6

Armament: Four internal weapon bays carry two bomb launchers and two 20mm auto-cannons

Hot-Air Balloon

This is a standard sightseeing hot-air balloon capable of carrying up to six people. They typically fly between 500 to 1200 feet off the ground. When inflated, the balloon is 70 feet high. Balloons are usually inflated by small, gasoline-powered blowers; after inflation, propane burners are used to heat the air inside the bag to make the balloon rise. Speed and direction are determined by wind currents; to attempt to go in a particular direction or at a particular speed requires a Perception Test to determine air speed at higher or lower heights, in order to be able to rise or descend to intercept them—hot air balloons can rise up to 150 feet a minute. High winds may be dangerous to fly in, at the ZM's discretion.

Hot Air Balloon

Weight: 400 DC:25

Speed: 12/8 AV: 1

Acceleration: n/a Availability: R

Range: 50 Cost: \$25,000 new/\$10,000 used

Toughness: 1 Handling: 1

Inflatable Kayak

This collapsible synthetic fiber kayak is only 9x 15x20 inches when packed; when inflated, it measures over 12 feet long, 30 inches wide and can hold two people. It comes packed in its own backpack that can fit under an airline seat, and it can be inflated with a foot pump in less than ten minutes. An optional rudder for precise control during sea use can be purchased for an additional \$120. It weighs one lb., 10 oz., and it can be attached quickly with provided steel bolts.

Inflatable Kayak

Weight: 35/400	DC: 15
Speed: 5/3	AV: 1
Acceleration: n/a	Accuracy: n/a
Range: n/a	Cost: \$700
Toughness: 2	Availability: U
Handling: 2/4 (with optional rudder)	
EV: 35/20	

Midsized Propeller Plane

These statistics represent the Cessna 340, but can be used for any twin-engine propeller plane capable of seating six passengers. The best climb rate this plane can manage is about 1640 feet per minute (nine yards per second). Stall speed is between 70 and 80 knots. If only one engine is working, stall speed is much higher, and climb rate and cruising speed are about one-third of what they are here. Wingspan is 38 feet, length 34 feet, height 12.5 feet. It has a payload of approximately 630 pounds with full fuel tanks. Acceleration and deceleration are guesses based on takeoff and landing distances from stall speed, and do not reflect acceleration in the air. The plane requires at least 1615 feet of runway to take off and at least 770 feet of runway to land.

Midsized Prop Plane

Weight: 5990	DC: 42
Speed: 260/230	AV: 2
Acceleration: 3/6	Accuracy: n/a
Range: 1200	Cost: \$290,000
Toughness: 4	Availability: U
Handling: 4	

Skateboard

A common thread between many youths in the past few decades has been the skateboard. Although typically used as a conveyance, in a desperate situation it can be used as a temporary weapon. A standard board is not especially durable, but if the “deck” is equipped with steel guards along the sides and bottom, the board would be sturdy enough for combat; it could even be used as a shield. The numbers followed by a “*” reflect the changes after reinforcement.

Skateboard

Weight: 2/4	DC: 20
Speed: 20/12	AV: 0/3*
Acceleration: STRx2	Accuracy: n/a
Range: Same as bicycle (<i>AFMBE</i> p. 139)	
Cost: \$100-\$750	
Toughness: 1	Availability: C/R*
Handling: 3	EV: 2/1
Damage: D8 x Strength/D8 x (Strength + 2)*	

Small Propeller Plane

These statistics represent the Piper J-3 Cub, but can be used for any single-engine propeller plane capable of seating two passengers. Note the actual Piper Cub was only manufactured from 1938-1947 and is now considered an antique. A new version with a 180 hp engine (30 hp more powerful than the original) is available. The best climb rate this plane can manage is about 7.5 feet per minute (2.5 yards per second). Stall speed is 38 miles per hour. Performance ceiling is 14,000 feet. Wingspan is 35 feet, length 22 feet, height 6'8". Skis, floats, and wheels are all available as landing gear. Baggage capacity is 20 pounds (higher in the new 180 hp version). The gas tank holds only 12 gallons. Acceleration and deceleration are guesses based on takeoff and landing distances from stall speed, and do not reflect acceleration in the air. The plane requires 370 feet of runway to get into the air, 290 feet of runway to land.

Small Prop Airplane

Weight: 1220	DC: 37
Speed: 83/73	AV: 2
Acceleration: 5/7	Accuracy: n/a
Range: 205	Cost: \$136,000
Toughness: 2	Availability: U
Handling: 5	

Snowmobile

A motorized sled for traveling on snow and ice, the snowmobile is a fact of life in many Northern communities, having replaced the dog sled. Figures here are reasonably typical, although there is nearly as much spread in performance as with motorcycles.

A snowmobile runs on any surface, if you don't care about keeping the skis and the treads intact. A fast snowmobile can even run on (calm) water, although this is a Difficult Task (-2 to Driving rolls or more. Speed lost on water (such as in turning) cannot be regained). Passengers are not protected in case of accident or combat, and many areas have helmet legislation.

Snowmobile

Weight: 600	DC: 34
Speed: 100/60	AV: 2
Acceleration: 9	Accuracy: n/a
Range: 150	Cost: \$4,000
Toughness: 2	Availability: C
Handling: 5	

Ultra-Light Aircraft

This statistics are representative of most ultra light aircraft, but they're actually taken from the CGS Hawk Classic, which is available with a number of options, including a parachute. Most ultra-lights can take off in less than 50 yards and land in less than 20, although each should require at least a couple of Piloting (Ultra-Light) Task Success Levels. A climb rate of about 800 feet per minute (4 yards per second) is typical. The toughness rating is versus melee and firearms. Since so much of the vehicle is dispersed, most attacks will not hit anything vital. The vehicle is about 21 feet long, seven feet high, with a wingspan of 29 feet. The numbers followed by a "*" reflect the changes when fully loaded.

Ultra-Light Plane

Weight: 251/600*	DC: 30
Speed: 90/70;12/8*	AV: 1
Acceleration: 9/12	Accuracy: n/a
Range: 140	Cost: \$8,500 (some kits cost as little as \$4,000)
Toughness: 4	Availability: U
Handling: 4	



Gear

Weapons and transportation are important to the survivor of the zombie outbreak, but additional

equipment can make life easier. Most of these items can be found by Scavenging the appropriate locations—sporting goods stores in particular. Naturally, equipment is good only for as long as it lasts.

New Gear

Name	EV	Cost	Avail
Automatic Tourniquet	2/1	\$375	U
Avalanche Transceiver	1/1	\$250	U
Battery Operated Lantern	2/6	\$25	C
Bomb Kit	4/2	\$1000	R
Caffeine Pill	6 oz./neg.	\$6/24 pills	C
Camcorder	1/1	\$1000	C
Candle Lantern	12 oz. Fuel tank	\$25	C
Car Lighter Adapter	0.5/1	\$25	C
Fishing Gear	4/2	\$120	C
Foot Air Pump	2 lb., 4 oz./4	\$30	C
Ghillie Suit	10/5	\$2000-3000	R
Thermal Dampening	12/6	\$5000	R
GPS Handset	2/1	\$500	U
Gun Cleaning Kit	1 5 lb.	\$40	C
Hands-Free Flashlight	2/1	\$ 30	C
Insect Repellent	6.5 oz./neg.	\$6	C
Iodine Tablet	6 oz./neg.	\$5	C
Multi-fuel Camp Stove	1/3	\$100	C
Micro-cassette Voice Recorder	6 oz./neg.	\$40	C
Patient Isolation Chamber	55/26	\$12,000	U
PDA	4/2	\$90	C
Pocket Electronic Translator	5 oz./neg.	\$70	C
Portable Generator	20/10-100/50	\$500-\$5000	C-U
Portable Motion Sensor	4/2	\$2000	U
Portable Shower	2/1 (w/o water)	\$50	C
Snowshoes	5/10	\$135	C
Toiletry Kit			
Economy	2/1	\$10	C
Standard	3/1	\$25	C
Deluxe	4/2	\$50	U
Wetsuit	10/15	\$100	U

Eventually, consumables like iodine tablets, batteries, and kerosene are going to run out, so it's a good idea for Cast Members to not become too accustomed to the trappings of modern civilization. Or they should learn how to make their own.

Automatic Tourniquet

This device consists of a small computer and air pump combined into a small box. Attached to this is a modified blood pressure cuff. The automatic tourniquet allows a character to immediately apply pressure to stop or reduce the blood flow to a limb. It requires a Medicine Task to use properly. A successful Task stops bleeding in the limb to which the tourniquet is applied. An unsuccessful check means either the tourniquet has too little or too much pressure. On a roll of 1, the pressure cuff has popped and the tourniquet is useless.

Avalanche Transceiver

The avalanche transceiver is used by skiers and climbers in snowy areas prone to avalanche, though it's also a good way for group members to locate each other if separated during a scavenging run. They are best used by all members in a party, but a minimum of two are required for operation. The transceiver can operate for 48 hours using two 1.5v batteries. It is automatically turned to transmit-mode when buckled in place around the wearer using the accompanying one-inch wide strap. It changes to receive-mode when a searcher unbuckles it and switches it on. The transceiver uses a multi-dimensional antenna to locate buried transmitters up to 230 feet away, by using audio and digital cues to guide the transceiver to a unit still in transmit-mode. The transceiver is accurate to within 10 feet.

Battery-Operated Lantern

This large lantern is powered by four D-cell batteries, which keep it shining for eight continuous hours. The bright fluorescent bulb lasts for 10,000 hours and sheds light in a 10-yard radius. Range should be reduced for fog, smoke, or even dense forest, at the ZM's discretion. Notice and Perception Tasks suffer a -1 penalty for every five feet beyond its maximum range. The battery operated lantern is constructed of heavy duty, durable waterproof ABS plastic. The lantern is 9.5 inches high with the handle down.

Bomb Kit

A professional demolition kit used by the military and construction companies. This kit includes everything needed to place and set off explosives such as blasting caps, radio and timer detonators, fuses (both normal and electronic), and adhesive strips. The bomb kit adds a +3 to Demolitions Tasks to place explosives (but not to disarm them).

Caffeine Pill

The trucker's best friend and a student's salvation, caffeine pills are basically just tablets of concentrated caffeine, 100 mg each (about the amount of caffeine in a cup of coffee). They are also used as diet pills. Overuse can cause restlessness and nervousness; it's also possible to overdose on caffeine pills, leading to seizures and heart problems. Withdrawal can cause headaches, lethargy, and inability to think clearly. Caffeine is a diuretic, so it's important to drink a lot of water when taking these pills. As caffeine keeps people awake, it helps prevent loss of consciousness from sleep deprivation and Endurance Point loss (see *AFMBE*, p. 114). Every 100 milligrams of caffeine (two sodas, a cup of coffee, half a cup of espresso, or one caffeine pill) gives a +1 to consciousness tests. Caffeine also gives a +1 to mental Tasks when more than half of a character's Endurance Points remain; a character must take at least 100 mg of caffeine for the effect and additional caffeine does not increase the bonus. Caffeine is metabolized at the rate of 100 mg/hour, so to keep awake continuous ingestion of caffeine is required. Note that the caffeine pills don't prevent the -2 to Task rolls that comes from exhaustion. Caffeine is not a substitute for rest; eventually sleep is needed.

Camcorder

These are the small, light, handheld cameras typically found in homes and with tourists on holiday, recording either on videotape or digitally. Commonly available and powered by batteries (6-8 hour life), the picture clarity is good (though it can be shaky) but audio quality is only fair. Camcorders can replay their own recordings. A good way to document the downfall of civilization.



Candle Lantern

This lightweight lantern holds one candle upright and prevents it from setting things on fire. It can either be hung or stood on a level surface. The lantern sheds light in a 10-foot radius, though it's visible from a much greater distance. One six-inch candle provides up to nine hours of light.

Car Lighter Adapter

This power adapter plugs into a car's cigarette lighter and comes with various plugs able to provide power to and recharge a wide variety of appliances and electronics, from TVs to cell phones to computers to mini-fridges. It provides power with the engine turned on or off, but if kept on too long with the engine idle, it can drain the battery. While this is a great way to keep some appliances running after the electricity shuts off, survivors should be wary of the battery-draining effect.

Fishing Gear

These are the basic tools necessary for someone to adequately catch fish, allowing the use of the Fishing skill without penalty. This gear consists of a simple rod, reel, line (plus spare roll), hooks, bobbers, a de-scaling tool, a small fillet knife, fly net, and a small tackle box. Bait costs extra. Better kits are available, doubling the cost and adding 1/1 to E/V, and decreasing availability by one level. Better kits add +2 to any Fishing Task.

Foot Air Pump

This is a foot pump used to easily inflate rubber boats, balls, and other inflatable products (it comes with a complete nozzle selection). It has stainless steel hardware and reinforced bellows and hose. To use, the pump is placed on the ground, connected to whatever is to be inflated, and repeatedly stepped on, forcing air in with each step. When packed down, the dimensions of the pump are 3x8x10 inches.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Ghillie Suit

Long used in one form or another by Special Forces troops and snipers, as well as other guerrilla and irregular forces, the modern incarnation is a large, olive drab, mesh suit covered in strips of green and brown material. Most suits cover the legs, torso, arms, and head, while some go as far as to cover the hands, face, and weapon of the wearer as well. The suit, as an overall package when combined with stealth techniques, is designed to break up the outline of a person's body and help him blend in with his surrounding. Some Ghillie suits have even been outfitted with heat absorbing material to reduce detection by night vision equipment. These suits are rare, however, as they are expensive, bulky, and uncomfortable. Wearing a Ghillie suit provides a +2 to any Stealth Tasks (+3 for intricate and all encompassing suits).

GPS Handset

Using a system of orbiting satellites, the Global Positioning System allows people, via a small electronic handset, to find their location on the planet with a margin of error of around 20 feet. This is expressed in degrees of latitude and longitude. A vehicle-mounted version is available for \$700.

Gun Cleaning Kit

This compact, lightweight kit holds everything a person needs to clean rifles and shotguns from .22 caliber to 10 gauge. The kit includes a fiber optic light to inspect the gun's bore, a 30 inch flexible pull rod, bore solvent, obstruction removers, brass bore brushes—all items needed to keep a gun in good operating order. Without regular cleaning, guns become fouled and eventually unusable, imposing a penalty to Guns Tasks at the Zombie Master's discretion.

Hands-Free Flashlight

Hands-free flashlights come in two different styles, though both serve the same general purpose. One style is a military/police flashlight that clips or screws onto a firearm to allow the firer to keep both hands on his weapon at all times. The other is a civilian "snake" light designed with a bendable coil meant to wrap around almost anything, allowing mechanics and handymen to illuminate their work area while keeping both hands free.

Insect Repellent

Insect repellent generally comes in an aerosol can, and can be sprayed on clothing, exposed skin, and gear to ward off mosquitoes, biting flies, chiggers, and gnats. It contains almost 25% DEET, the active ingredient. Insect repellent can also be found in the form of lotions, which generally have a lower concentration of DEET, as they're meant to be rubbed directly on the skin. Bug spray is an important item to have on treks into the wilderness, especially in areas with disease-bearing insects, or in areas that haven't been sprayed to control insect populations. It is even more vital if the cause of zombie infestation is blood born and could be transmitted through mosquito or other insect bites.

Iodine Tablet

Iodine tablets can be used to kill waterborne parasites such as giardia; they have no effect on heavy metals found in water. Simply dissolve the tablets in the water to purify it—though this leaves a yellowish tinge and a funny taste. Additional tablets to remove the characteristic odor and taste of iodine (without reducing its purification properties) cost \$3.50. One bottle of tablets is enough to safely treat 50 quarts.

Multi-Fuel Camp Stove

This portable stove uses a variety of fuels, such as white gas, unleaded gasoline, kerosene, LP cartridges, GAZ cartridges, benzene, essence fuel, petroleum, and diesel. It is simple and easy to use, with a built in preheating system, heat reflector, and adjustable flame control for even heating. It comes with a fuel pump and a storage sack. The camp stove's versatility makes it useful to survivors, because it works with whatever fuel they can lay their hands on, and it beats the uneven cooking temperatures of a camp fire.

Micro-Cassette Voice Recorder

This voice recorder is a handheld device that records audio onto tiny micro-cassettes. The audio quality is variable depending on the price and quality of the unit. High winds or loud background noise can make it hard to understand the playback. The device has an integral speaker and also has an earphone jack. It takes two AA batteries with 24-hour record/play-

back, or can be fitted with an optional AC adapter. Sixty-minute micro-cassettes cost around fifty cents each. Good for recording that last message for posterity as the zombies claw through the barricades.

Patient Isolation Chamber

Found in medical facilities, mobile field hospitals, and CDC quarantine areas, this standard hospital bed is enclosed in a thick plastic bubble with an attached computer and assorted monitoring devices. The bubble can be completely sealed off to prevent contamination between the occupant and outsiders. The attached monitoring equipment allows the user to check everything from the patient's heartbeat to radiation levels from outside the bubble. It also includes various leads and tubes through which to introduce atmosphere, water, food, and medicine. The device requires a successful Medicine Task to hook up an unresisting patient to the monitoring devices. (Resisting patients must be restrained beforehand.) The monitoring equipment requires a Computer Task to use. A successful roll allows the character to learn information about the subject or atmosphere within the bubble. A separate Medicine or Science Task is required to actually understand the information. An unsuccessful check means either the character cannot operate the equipment or has received bad information (ZM's discretion).

PDA

Known by a variety of commercial names, personal data assistants are versatile and easily transportable mini-computers. They store all kinds of information and text digitally, from the user's daily schedule to meeting notes to digital photographs. With infrared transmitting capabilities and built-in cellular modems, PDAs make communication easier. Their long-life rechargeable batteries combined with a small solar collect mean almost limitless use. For the purposes of communication, the PDA is limited to sending and receiving messages to other PDAs of the same brand, and exchanging e-mail messages with computers over the Internet. The e-mail function depends entirely on the cellular network, which may no longer be operating. Because PDAs do not make noise when communicating, stealthy text messages are possible (though range is limited to within a few feet).

Some enterprising hackers have created software that, in conjunction with the infrared transmitter, enable users to bypass computer-controlled locks (like the kind found on security doors). Generally these programs are only good for civilian buildings such as office buildings. These programs do not come standard on a PDA and must be downloaded from their home servers.

Pocket Electronic Translator

A pocket translator is approximately the size of a scientific calculator, and opens into a keypad and a small LCD screen. It allows the user to type in words and phrases in their home language and get translations in up to 14 languages. One standard model translates between English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Russian, Czech, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. It also functions as a calculator with metric and currency converters, and keeps track of the local time in 200 cities around the world. It requires two lithium batteries to operate. A pocket electronic translator gives a user the equivalent of a level 1 skill in the languages included in the translator, though it may take some time to get a message across. Useful when you need to say "run, the zombies are coming!" or "where did you find that radiator?" in another language.

Portable Generator

Generators come in a variety of sizes and power outputs, ranging from those capable of powering a few household appliances to ones able keep a whole house running. Larger generators, capable of powering a mobile field hospital, require generator trucks, while even larger units able to power an emergency room or office building cannot be considered "portable." No matter their size, generators typically run off of gasoline, and operate for several hours before they need to be refueled, although the size, power output, and fuel efficiency of the engine factor into this. While civil or military generators are generally built to provide power to one particular source, commercial generators include several power plugs of various wattages to accommodate different kinds of appliances.

Portable Motion Sensor

This small electronic motion sensor is designed to detect unwanted trespassers. Any movement over seven mph is detected and sets off the alarm. The alarm itself can be adjusted to either a normal or silent alarm (which sends a signal to a handheld unit). Also, with a bit of tinkering (two Success Levels on an Intelligence and Electronics Task), the alarm can be rigged to trigger a visual or improvised alarm such as a flare. Finally, multiple portable motion sensors can be connected to form a network linked to a single remote unit.

Portable Shower

Showering goes a long way towards preventing the spread of illness, especially when coupled with soap. This makes the portable shower a vital piece of equipment for staving off disease and infection. It consists of a large, black plastic bag connected by a rubber hose to a showerhead. It is filled with water, and then hung upside down by an attached ring to let gravity do its job. The water can be heated by leaving it in the sun for a few hours. This four and a half gallon system provides enough water for three to five showers (depending on the flow control setting). Bigger capacity versions capable of providing up to eight showers are available, but require six hours to heat.

Snowshoes

Typically oval-shaped, snowshoes attach to the wearer's feet and distribute their weight over a wider area, allowing them to walk over snowy surfaces without breaking through. The wearer to move faster and resist fatigue. Snowshoes can support up to 200 pounds and are usually made of white ash and rawhide thongs or aluminum. The dimensions measure 10x36 inches. Using snowshoes slows a Cast Member's Speed by -2, and Endurance loss is applicable for long treks.

Toiletry Kit

This basic travel kit keeps its user clean and looking good when on the road. A basic kit includes a miniature bar of soap (enough for a daily washing for 2 weeks), a mini container of shampoo (6 uses for shoulder-length hair), a collapsing toothbrush, and a small tube of toothpaste. The standard kit includes everything in the basic kit plus three weeks use from soap, eight uses of shampoo, nail clippers, a bottle of mouthwash, and a basic sewing kit (includes mini-scissors, thread, needles and extra buttons). The deluxe kit includes everything in the standard kit plus a regular bar of soap (4 weeks use), 10 uses of shampoo, a small mirror, a basic first aid kit (1 use), and four disposable razors. While there are no real rules benefits to using a toiletry kit, survivors may find them invaluable as a source of supplies and tools. At the ZM's discretion, a toiletry kit may provide positive modifiers to any social skill Tasks for the next day (particularly in a shattered civilization where bathing isn't regular).

Wetsuit

A wetsuit is typically made from nylon or another synthetic fabric suit, and designed to keep the user warm in chilly water. Often used by surfers and divers, wetsuits reduce the Endurance loss from spending time in cold water. Wetsuits generally cover the entire body from the neck down, ending at the wrists and ankles with collars that prevent frigid water from entering.

Artifacts

In settings that incorporate supernatural elements, the Zombie Master may want to include magical artifacts. These powerful items could provide the Cast Members access to magical abilities, or serve as the focus for an evening's adventuring. Ideally, the ZM should craft specific items for the world he has created. Only the Zombie Master knows what sort of magic is appropriate for his Deadworld. However, for those ZMs who don't have the time to create their own, or would like a few examples of how artifacts might work, several magic items have been included below. Feel free to modify them. The histories and legends of the artifacts presented here have been left purposefully vague. The ZM should fill in the appropriate details to tailor these items to suit his campaign world.

Anansi's Thread

A single strand of the web spun by the father of all spiders, this glittering strand of silver is as strong as steel cable and light as a feather. It is unbreakable, and any character using it never falls.

This spool of string is as long as the ZM wants it to be. It may be used to tie up a person, zombie, etc. If trying to break free of its coils, the character must get at least three Success Levels on an Escapism test. Additionally, the struggling character loses D4(2) Life Points per turn as the string cuts into his flesh. If he does not struggle, he loses no points. Furthermore, a character who uses this thread to climb gains +5 to his Climbing Tasks. Additionally, as Anansi's Thread is slightly sticky, it is impossible to let go of unless the climbing character wants to.

Bell of Redemption

This massive bell rests in the steeple of a church. In the early days of the Rise, it was discovered that the undead were rebuked at the sound of its ringing. The community has since made the church the center of their compound, never straying too far from it.

When rung, all zombies within range of its sound must make a Difficult Willpower Test, or be stunned and unable to move for D10 minutes. Even zombies who could not normally hear are affected by this potent artifact.

Book of the Dead

Bound in human skin and inked in blood and bile, no artifact is as loathsome, nor as sought after as the dreaded Book of the Dead. Within its moldy pages are spells and magics detailing the summoning of demons and spirits capable of possessing the bodies of the dead.

Any character with the Gift who possesses the Book of the Dead may learn any Metaphysical power at half the normal cost in character points. Each power purchased requires a month of study to master. The Book of the Dead contains dozens, if not hundreds, of spells of this sort. The ZM should feel free to make up any spells he wishes to include in this vile tome, in addition to those found in the *AFMBE* core-book and supplements such as *WitchCraft's Abomination Codex*.

Crow Feather

This unique feather is as black as the deepest cave. It is said to have fallen from the wing of the first crow. It is a talisman of ancient power and confers the spirit of the Crow to its holder.

A character who weaves this feather into his hair adds +5 to Notice Tasks, and +5 to Running Tasks. Additionally, the character adds +5 to Willpower Tests of any sort.

Crucible of Ash

This ancient bronze bowl contains the power to heal. If the proper herbs are burned in it, the fire leaves behind a fine, yellow ash. This ash when mixed with water creates a sustaining draught. When drunk, it heals both body and soul.

If the draught is properly prepared and drunk, it multiplies the character's healing rate by five. It also triples the rate at which he regenerates lost Essence.

Dowsing Rod

A simple "Y" shaped willow branch, in the hands of those who know, it can become something much more potent, allowing them to find water when there seems to be none.

A character using a dowsing rod adds +5 to Survival Tasks when trying to find water.

Fronde of the World Tree

The ancients believed there was once a great tree. Its branches touched the heavens, and its roots burrowed down through the Earth and straight into the Underworld. This leafy branch comes directly from the World Tree, and confers mystical knowledge to those who use it properly.

The Frond of the World Tree can impart knowledge to Cast Members. The character plucks leaves from the frond carefully, burns them, and inhales the sweet-smelling smoke to enter a trance-like state. While in this trance, the ZM should give the character a vision of whatever information is needed at the time. This vision could be crystal clear, metaphorical, or cryptically oracular.

Hand of Samedi

Samedi is a powerful presence in the Voudoun religion. He has great power over the dead, and by association, the undead. A sorcerer who possesses this artifact has the assistance of Samedi in his endeavors.

When using the withered, mummified Hand of Samedi, a Gifted character gains a +5 to all attempts to affect undead.

Lantern of Ibn Faslan

This baroque, oriental brass lantern casts a weak yellow light when lit. The glow does not spread more than a few feet from the lantern. However, it's usefulness in detecting the undead is potent.

The lamp casts "reverse shadows" of undead monsters such as zombies. When illuminated, the lamp hardly gives off any light at all. However, any undead within a 50-yard radius are illuminated in a soft, sickly green light. Even more interesting, this glow manifests itself on any intervening objects. If a wall stands between the zombie and the lamp, a greenish silhouette of the monster appears on the wall; the glow appears smaller or larger depending on the distance the creature is from the lamp.

Mirror of Dreams

This highly polished silver mirror is ringed in an oval frame, carved and gilt with representations of dozens of mythical beasts. When stared into, it brings pleasing, soothing memories to the viewer.

When a Cast Member stares into this mirror, he becomes oblivious to all around him. His mind is cast to the ethereal paths of his subconscious, and he witnesses to all the good things that ever happened to him, or his accomplishments during his life. For every hour spent staring into the mirror, the character removes one Madness Point from his total (see p. 73). However, in order to pull away from the mirror, he must make a Difficult Willpower Test. It is possible for characters to become lost in reverie until they waste away from starvation and thirst.

Sword of Light and Darkness

This ancient blade is a potent relic from pagan days. The thin, silver-sheeted sword never tarnishes nor loses its edge. Ancient pagan runes are etched lightly along the blade. It is rumored that there were once seven such swords forged together in ancient days. If all seven were found, the power they could unleash would be astounding. As implied by their name, none of the seven are inherently good or evil. Like all things in nature, the use to which they are put by man determines if they are tools of righteousness or chaos.

The Sword of Light and Darkness always deals maximum possible damage on a successful hit. Additionally, it ignores up to four points of armor.

If the swords are ever brought together their magical properties become even more apparent. Each of the seven adds +2 to the roll of any Gifted character attempting to use a metaphysical effect while wielding the sword. If the swords are brought together and used in a ritual of any sort, the base +2 is raised by +1 for each additional sword present. The blades must be arranged in some sort of circle, points in, hilts out for this to work. They could be laid on an altar or held by warriors.

CHAPTER FIVE

Jack raised his arm to his face, rubbing the splatter of blood off with the back of his sleeve. At his feet, the now headless ghoul twitched a few times, then became still. He looked down the hall, following the blood trail to the thing's severed head. His dripping machete had severed it cleanly at the neck, sending the head spinning into a corner.

It stared back at him, eyes wide, mouth still opening and closing, chewing on air. Jack knew what it really wanted between its cracked yellow teeth, and was glad his reflexes were still quick.

He felt a hand on his shoulder and leapt, spinning around, arm up, with the wet, crimson blade held high.

"Jack!" screamed Marian. "It's me!"

He took a step back. Another step and then a clatter of steel on tile as he dropped the blade. He sank to his knees and began weeping.

"It's over, love," he gasped. "I can't do this any more . . ."

"Yes, you can." She looked down at his once-strong frame. The last few months had been hard on him. He'd tried to lead the group to a better place, but he didn't have the heart any more. He wasn't a killer, and yet he had killed, over and over, for the preservation of himself and his haphazard tribe. They were around somewhere, scouting out this building just as Jack and Marian had been.

"You can do it Jack. You're strong. You've always been the strong one."

"No, I just don't care any more. Don't you see?" He lay back on the ground, staring up at the ceiling. "I don't have anything more to give."

Footsteps sounded behind her, and she turned to see Washington, skin brown as the coffee she hadn't had in months, gazing down at Jack. He stepped forward, reaching into a pouch on his belt.

"He'll be okay," Marian said. "He's just exhausted."

"We all are," Washington said, his voice rumbling in the dark hall. "Jack . . . take this, swallow it." He pressed a pill against Jack's lips, took a bottle of water from his belt, and poured a mouthful to wash it down his throat.

"What're you giving him?" Marian asked as she stepped forward to look over Washington's shoulder.

"Just something to help him sleep. This place is clear. I figure we can stay here for a couple of days, then figure out what's next."

She felt the tension in her shoulders release as the rest of their "family" surrounded her.

"We're good here," one of them said. "Let's all just rest for a while."

Marian got a thin blanket out of her backpack and laid it over Jack's body. "I'll take first watch," she said, as she chambered a bullet in her automatic pistol and looked out the window into the night.

ENVY THE DEAD



Introduction

The world has changed. The dead walk and society is collapsing all around. The last vestiges of humanity are huddled together against this horror from out of their deepest, primal nightmares. And they are losing the fight.

One of the fascinating strengths of a game like *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* is that it can be played so many ways. Many people prefer to play it as “one-shots” between their regular RPG games. Many others have run short, multi-stage scenarios or brief campaigns. But it’s when a ZM and his players work to create a long-term campaign that the game really starts to breathe.

So, what is a campaign? It may go by many names, depending on the context, and game, in which it is used—Epic, Saga, Chronicle. In the framework of most roleplaying games, a campaign simply means a

series of interconnected stories. But for *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, the military connotations may be more appropriate. For, what is a long-term *AFMBE* game really, but a war against death itself? This chapter is primarily concerned with campaigning in *AFMBE*; running games that span weeks, months, and years, and live on in the memories of the players and *Zombie Masters* for years to come.

The Campaign

One of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*’s original designed goals was to lend itself to one-off games, what many call a “beer-and-pretzels” kind of game. The stories generally ask, “Can you survive the night against a horde of zombies and live to see the dawn?” The *Deadworlds* suggest several story ideas, which throw the Cast Members in the middle of the situation—good for an evening or two of entertainment. But *AFMBE* can be more than “just a game about zom-

bies.” At its heart, it is a game about telling stories, just like other roleplaying games.

Stories aren’t just a collection of events, with the audience left to figure out how it all goes together. All stories have three elements—a beginning, middle, and end. Scriptwriters and students of the theater call this the “Three Act Structure,” which gives the story its shape. Each act has a purpose. The beginning sets up the situation and introduces the characters. The middle provides information and conflict leading up to the end. The end provides the resolution.

In the typical Deadworld, for example, the beginning introduces the Cast Members to the situation—the dead walk the earth. The middle gives them the tools they need to combat the menace—the zombies are caused by a new disease, the virus was made in a bio-weapons lab. The end resolves everything—either the Cast synthesizes an antibiotic or the zombies take over the world.

A campaign is effectively one big story, told over the course of several smaller stories. The adventures played each week link together to tell an over-arching plot. And as with any story, a campaign should have a beginning, middle, and end. This is not to say the Zombie Master’s campaign can only consist of three “Big Stories,” but it’s a decent model to follow, and it never hurts to have a bit of structure when setting out to design something like a long-term campaign.

Take, for example, the popular Deadworld Mein Zombie (see *AFMBE*, p. 188). A campaign set in this Deadworld could span the length and breadth of World War II. The beginning could involve the classic landing at Normandy Beach, to establish the setting. The next adventure might introduce the presence of Hitler’s zombies in a small town in Holland. The middle could then consist of several adventures in which the Cast learns more about the zombies and their origins—a raid on a secret Nazi lab, infiltrating an SS command post to gather intelligence, and so on. The end comes when either the Cast halts undead Nazi soldier production, or not. In this way, a simple Deadworld becomes an entire campaign.

The Hero’s Journey

Many years ago, Professor Joseph Campbell fashioned the concept of the “monomyth”—the idea that many common themes, archetypes, and elements run through the world’s mythologies, no matter their original culture.

While a discussion of what he called “the hero’s journey” is far too complex for a game supplement, it is well worth studying by any *Zombie Masters* interested in mythic structure for their campaigns. His book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* is available in any bookstore, and every library should have a copy. A more accessible treatise on the subject is Christopher Vogler’s book *The Writer’s Journey*, which examines the hero’s journey with an eye towards novelists and scriptwriters (making it useful to other storytellers, like *Zombie Masters*). It is highly recommended.

Setting Up the Campaign

Zombie Masters interested in establishing a long-running campaign are in great company and in for a real treat. A more extended game of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* allows you and the players to get involved more deeply in the setting. In a one-shot game, if the Cast Members fail to stop the rise of the zombies, society collapses and everyone moves on to something else. In a long-term game, everyone plays through the fall of civilization and tries to build anew, all while the zombies keep shambling by.

All this requires planning on the Zombie Master’s part. Obviously, the easiest way to run a game of *AFMBE* is to take a pre-designed Deadworld (Eden Studios has published a lot of them by now) and start playing. But this still leaves a lot of questions unanswered for a long-term campaign. Is the game to be a tense psychodrama wherein the Cast Members huddle in a barricaded building? Or an action-packed, road warrior style game with the Cast trying to stay one step ahead of the shambling hordes? Who will the Cast Members be? What kinds of things will they pursue (a cure, establishing a sanctuary, simple sur-

vival)? We've provided a Campaign Design Sheet to help Zombie Masters sort out their campaign decisions (see p. 77).

Theme and Mood

First and foremost, the Zombie Master should consider the mood of the campaign setting. Want it to be grim and realistic like *28 Days Later* or horrifying, bloody, and overwhelming, like *Night of the Living Dead*? Or perhaps the group is looking for something a little less dramatic, maybe even somewhat comedic, like *Army of Darkness*? There have been a lot of movies about zombies, and each of them conveys a particular mood.

But what is mood? It is the feeling the Cast Members (and if you're good, the players) get while they're playing the game. Mostly, the Zombie Master conveys mood through his descriptions and the kinds of encounters he sends the Cast's way. In a grim, realistic game, the Cast might spend a session trying to find the parts for a generator, while fending off zombies. In a bloody, horrifying campaign, the Zombie Master might describe in gory detail the effects of a zombie bite, throw lots of enemies at the Cast, and have things jumping out of shadows a lot. So at this stage, mood is a bunch of keywords to describe the feeling the ZM hopes to achieve during play.

It's a good idea to talk this over with the players, and find out what they want out of the game. Nothing hampers the player's enthusiasm for a game more than finding out it's a style of play they're not interested in, and only after they've begun playing.

After mood, the next thing a Zombie Master should consider is theme. Theme is a concept bandied about in roleplaying games all the time, and sometimes it seems difficult to pin down. Basically, theme is a distinct, recurring idea that unifies a series of adventures. This can be as simple as "revenge" or as complex as "society is greater than the sum of its parts." It is what all the adventures are about, but in the background. For example, with the theme of "revenge," all adventures might revolve around getting revenge against the main bad guy, the Supporting Cast may all want revenge against someone or something, and the ZM might illustrate the effects of revenge on people. For a zombie game, theme might be "the imperma-

nence of death," "there's strength in numbers," or "that which does not kill you makes you stronger."

Theme isn't a straight-jacket, however. If the theme is "society is good," one adventure might involve getting the lights working. Another might require the Cast to reach out to a loner. In another, they have to fight off a band of marauders as well as zombies. The Cast might encounter the survivors of an unsuccessful community, who failed because they didn't work together. A Supporting Cast Members might be divisive, driving a wedge between group members. Zombie Masters can vary the goals from one scenario to the next, but should always keep their overall theme in mind.

Or you can just blow the crap out of zombies and forget about theme. You can have perfectly good adventures and design perfectly good Deadworlds without it. But it makes them better.

Campaign Style

"Campaign style" is a fancy way of saying "how do the characters interact with the fictional world I've created?" It is the kind of game the Zombie Master likes to run. It defines how much of the actual campaign revolves around the characters, and how much influence the characters have over the campaign. Some Zombie Masters prefer to let the Cast's actions (and the player's desires) dictate the campaign's direction and goals. Others like to have everything planned out, with the Cast having little impact on the campaign's major events. The two central concepts to consider are narrative versus episodic and character-driven versus story-driven.

Narrative vs. Episodic

This pair of concepts governs the flow of the campaign. In a narrative campaign, one adventure flows into another as a seamless whole. There is never really any break in the continuity of this kind of campaign. Each time you sit down to play, the story picks up right where it left off. Conversely, in an episodic campaign style, each adventure has a distinct beginning, middle, and end, with time in between. A week, a month, or even years may pass between adventures (which is often called "downtime"); each adventure is like a TV episode.

Most people play with a mixture of the two styles, using episodic between adventures, and narrative during a scenario.

Character-Driven vs. Story-Driven

The question of a character-driven or story-driven campaign determines the Cast's effect on the world at large.

Settings that are character-driven are guided by the actions of the Cast. They dictate what goes on, with the Zombie Master following their lead. They might decide to go into town to scavenge some gas, or travel to the old army base to pick up some MREs, or visit a nearby survivor settlement. This requires a lot of preparation on the part of the Zombie Master, because he has to be ready for whatever situations the players throw at him, or the ZM has to be comfortable with making a lot of stuff up on the fly. Luckily, when players sit around the table they like to talk, and the Zombie Master can listen in to "take the pulse" of the group. One player might get mad at a Supporting Cast character, and talk about how he really wants to get even with him—there's an adventure. Another player might casually mention that she's running out of ammo—there's another adventure. Two players might discuss how poor their defenses were in the last zombie attack—there's a third adventure.

This is not to say the ZM has no control over what goes on. These stories are about how the Cast Members interact with each other and the world around them, so the ZM can (and should) introduce stories and situations that push the character's buttons. Drop in an adventure about a sick little boy in need of penicillin, and let the players react. Does the hard-bitten biker jump on his hog and roar into the zombie-infested hospital? Does the cowardly exporter join him, or suggest trading with the next survivor town? What will the scientist do? This style of game is about watching the characters grow.

In a story-driven campaign, the Cast Members take a back seat to the troubles at hand. It is the Zombie Master's plot that takes precedence, and the Cast is expected to follow along. Like in a novel, the Zombie Master sets certain objectives the Cast must complete, often in a specific order (Adventure One: Find gas; Adventure Two: Repair junker; Adventure Three: Find the penicillin). Typically, the story's goal is

clear—return with the medicine, find the source of the zombies, rescue the cheerleader. The Zombie Master has to plan for the prospect of Cast failure (otherwise the story ends). If they don't discover the cure for the zombie infestation by hacking the CDC scientist's laptop, they have to find it some other way. Certain events may take place, whether or not the Cast Members are present. For example, if the zombies are supposed to attack the settlement at dusk, and the Cast is holed in an abandoned store, the zombies devastate the town anyway (and the Cast returns to find everyone dead).

This is not to say the players have no impact on what goes on. Story-driven games can seem scripted or forced, with the Cast Members having little effect on the world around them, so it's important to let them influence how the stories play out. If the ZM expects the Cast to venture into town to the hospital, but they decide to go to the nearby military base, he should move everything there. If he expects them to make a frontal assault on the supply room, but they sneak through a ventilation shaft instead, he should reward them for their ingenuity.

Putting It All Together

The Zombie Master has a lot to think about. How does it all fit together? By now, prospective ZMs may have already started thinking about how their storylines and proposed Deadworld fit within these concepts. The next few paragraphs discuss a few examples.

Narrative Character-Driven: Many people call this style of play "deep immersion" roleplaying. In this style of campaign, the Cast practically takes on lives of their own, and every adventure is a continuation of plot threads left hanging from previous episodes. Over time, players grow to know their characters so well that a single glance says more than a minute of dialogue. This can be one of the toughest styles of campaign to maintain over time, because the group follows practically every day in the character's life, but ultimately can be the most rewarding as well.

Episodic Character-Driven: In this style of play, the characters are still there to be played as living, breathing people, but the adventures themselves are not as continuous as in a Narrative style. There is often downtime between adventures, with stuff happening "off camera." Most television series follow

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

this format—for the most part, the stories are self-contained, but pick up threads from earlier stories or are directed by the characters' actions.

Narrative Story-Driven: This can be a challenging style of play to maintain, because stories deal with plotlines beyond the control of most of the characters. If a nuke is going to explode in Seattle, it's going to explode, no matter what the Cast does (and they just have to deal with it). This is a great style of play, however, for short campaigns, or games in which characters have a high mortality rate. One of the best examples of this style of play is the original "Dead" trilogy by George Romero. In these films, the narrative of the slow death of civilization plays out over the course of three movies.

Episodic Story-Driven: In this style of play, the plot is king. While the characters are important, they're really there to just push the plot along. Each adventure, while set in the same Deadworld, probably

has little to do with the previous one; it's a self-contained episode in its own right. The best example of this style of play would be TV series like "Law & Order." This show features a revolving door of Supporting Cast Members and the viewer never really gets to know too much about the main characters, unless it's directly related to the plot of the week. Likewise, the plots have little if anything to do with each other from week to week.

Bring Out Your Dead

The zombies are the most important aspect of an *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* game. They're the reason everyone is sitting around the table. More important at this stage than their origins or abilities is their place in the overall campaign. While it's perfectly acceptable to include stock zombies right out of central casting into the campaign, it's even better if they reflect the overall theme; you can even introduce a complementary or discordant theme with the zombies.

Making Zombies

Here at Eden Studios, we see a lot of zombies. One of the most common problems we see are plain, old zombies thrown into an otherwise exciting Deadworld. It's important for the zombies to in some way stand out, and to reflect the setting. Imagine a setting where the zombies are all football players; wouldn't it be fun to give them Leaping, Strong Like Bull, Damage Resistant,

The Hug of Death, and Teamwork? Now that's a linebacker . . . from Hell!

The first thing a Zombie Master should think about is the origin of the zombies. Is it a disease? A mad scientist? A magic amulet? This can suggest ways in which to combat the infestation. With a disease, there may be a cure, while destroying the magic amulet may put them back in their graves. The origin should in some way reflect the setting. In a science fiction setting, the cause could be radiation from a rogue comet, cybernetic implants, or an alien disease. Putting zombies created by an alien disease in a wild west Deadworld makes no sense. It's even worse to say, "Zombies are here because it's a zombie game," and leave it at that.

The most important thing, however, is what the zombies can do—their Aspects. After the Bomb Zombies are different from PHADE Zombies. It's ironic that PHADE Zombies, created through a sexually transmitted disease, have the heart as their weak spot, isn't it? And After the Bomb Zombies do not need to feed, thanks to radiation. Giving science fiction zombies the Blessed Objects weak spot comes out of left field. Be sure to throw in some surprises, too, like Acid Blood, Spitter, and Soul Sucker to keep players on their toes (just be sure this fits the zombies' backstory). Finally, sometimes a zombie just can't be reflected in the game mechanics. If they're affected by sunlight, for example, they could take double damage from ultra-violet radiation—not an Aspect, but easily enough handled. Don't be afraid to make up your own rules to create your perfect zombie.



Zombies make perfect metaphors, because they can be made to represent almost anything—man's inhumanity to man, the rottenness of civilization, long-lost love . . . Romero's classic films use zombies as a metaphor to say "given a chance, humanity will feed off itself until it's all gone." In a cyberpunk setting in which neural implantation is rife, the zombies could be "activated" when a software virus rampages across the 'net and infects people jacked in, as a metaphor for man's over-reliance on technology. Zombies can be used to symbolize almost any aspect of the human condition.

Something Wicked This Way Comes

Early on in the planning of the overall story arc, the Zombie Master should consider whether or not to include the supernatural. This decision affects the way in which the players view the game and the way the Cast interacts with the setting. The presence of the supernatural sets the tone for the game. With it, the game takes on a fantastic feel, while its absence promotes realism. The two approaches can be summarized in the films *Night of the Living Dead* and *The Evil Dead*.

The Paranatural

In *Night of the Living Dead*, the source of the walking dead is never explained—there is no scientific or paranormal rationale, nor is there a supernatural explanation. It is accepted as a given that the dead rise up from the grave, and the characters must confront this knowledge with the tools at hand. Without any overt supernatural elements, the characters (and viewers) can assume the normal laws of science apply. Because the setting resembles the natural world, this approach is called Paranatural.

In the Paranatural setting, the fictional world of the campaign setting works much like the rules of the real world. What comes up must come down. Fire burns, but gasoline burns better. If you flick on a light switch, the lights come on (unless there is some reason they don't—a rational explanation like the power

lines being down). The players expect the natural laws of science to apply to this kind of campaign setting. First, this means they know how the setting works; they don't have to suspend too much disbelief. Second, they can make reasonable conjectures as to cause and effect (i.e., if they set the curtains on fire, they'll burn; they can't jump a 20 foot chasm). Although the Cast faces flesh-hungry, walking corpses, it is still effectively the "real" world following well-understood principles.

A realistic setting also means the Cast has no access to magic or miracles. The Inspired character type is not permitted. H.P. Lovecraft wrote that what made horror truly frightening was when the characters could not fall back on magic and superstition to save them. Running to a church or praying for salvation should have no effect, otherwise the storyteller would ruin the feelings of horror he was trying to cultivate. The Paranatural approach takes this to heart, so the Cast can find no relief in invocations like The Binding or Holy Fire.

Despite the emphasis on realism, the Paranatural approach includes one fantastic element—the zombies. After all, the dead walking isn't a natural occurrence. The ZM should have a good idea for the origin of the zombies, based on science (or quasi-science). For example, aliens could animate the dead to take over the world, or a genetically engineered disease could cause the dead to rise. The origin could be critical if the Zombie Master expects the Cast to stop the zombie advance. A genetically engineered disease might have a cure, while disabling the aliens' zombie control device might work. Even if they're expected to simply kill all zombies, the Cast will use what they know of the real world to combat the undead menace.

The Supernatural

As a counterpoint, *The Evil Dead* series postulates a world in which magic exists to some degree. Evil spells from the ancient world allow demons to possess human corpses and wreak havoc. Only these same ancient powers can be used to drive out the demons and make the world safe once again. Because of its reliance on principles beyond the laws of science, this approach is called Supernatural, and provides several fantastic elements for the Cast to absorb.

In a Supernatural setting, although the world around the characters obeys the natural laws of science, another set of laws operate alongside or above those of the real world. Praying to a higher power brings down holy fire. Toenail clippings give power over the person they came from. Reciting an incantation by the light of the moon causes rain to fall. Stepping on a crack breaks your mother's back. Similarly, certain physical laws may not work as expected. And this is the most important element if the ZM plans to include the supernatural: Even these laws must follow a set of rules established by the Zombie Master. If stepping on a crack breaks someone's back, it must always work because these are the rules of the setting. It is up to the Cast Members to figure out these supernatural laws, if they plan to use them to survive.

The Zombie Master should figure out the source of this other power. Does supernatural power come from the Divine, nature spirits, or the strong will of humanity itself? Has the Earth traveled through some magic dead zone for a thousand years, only to recently emerge? Is there one true faith from which Miracles stem, or do many religions provide lenses through which to focus power? The ZM has to answer why and how these otherworldly powers exist.

For some players, being able to call on powers greater than oneself is vital—the Miracles and Invocations available to the Inspired Character Type. This potentially gives the Cast tremendous powers to combat evil. The Binding prevents zombies from moving, while The Touch of Healing allows them to recover from their wounds faster. Enchanted objects, such as magic swords and armor, may exist to aid the Cast Members. This means any opponents the Cast Members face could potentially have access to magic too. The inclusion of Inspired characters can reduce the feeling of horror since they can call on powers beyond themselves.

Finally, the Zombie Master can give the undead flesh-eaters both a supernatural origin and powers. Mystical energy from the shining trapezohedron could cause the dead to rise. Beings from another dimension could inhabit dead bodies and animate them. Often in these cases, all the Cast has to do to halt the spread of zombies is to find their source and

destroy it. Meanwhile, the zombies can possess all manner of unexplained Aspects, like Spitter or Damage Resistant, making it harder for the Cast to oppose them. A Supernatural setting also means the Zombie Master can throw in a host of other supernatural creatures to plague the characters. If zombies walk the earth, why can't vampires or demons or ghosts? Maybe the world is under assault by the forces of evil in a Revelations-style Apocalypse.

Mixing Metaphors

Generally speaking, mixing the Paranatural and Supernatural approaches should be avoided. For some players, mixing metaphors is like Zombie Master cheating; they want one approach or the other. However, it's possible to combine the two approaches to magic, if the ZM desires. What if the zombies have a supernatural origin, but magic does not work for the Cast, for example? Or what if Miracles work, but only for one Inspired Cast Member? Or how about a zombie-producing disease created by Satan? Perhaps a large corporation researches primitive medicines such as in Wade Davis' novel *The Serpent and the Rainbow*. These medicines could only be potent when

"blessed" by a shaman of that culture. Suddenly, days or months later, people to whom this medicine has been administered begin to die, only to rise again as the undead. This proposes a Supernatural element in a seemingly scientific background. No matter what the Zombie Master does, it's important she carefully consider how the two approaches blend together.

Setting It To Boil

After the Zombie Master has figured out the theoretical stuff like theme and campaign style, it's time to get down to the real work—coming up with the actual campaign.

As we've said, all good stories have a beginning, middle, and end. The first thing the Zombie Master should do is figure out the ending for the campaign. This gives it a direction to flow towards. This can be vague and incomplete for now, and can be a general statement like "stop the zombies" or "rebuild civilization." For example, a Zombie Master might say his game is going to be about stopping the zombies once and for all. Right there, in this description, the ZM already knows how the campaign will end. A bit

Restarting a Campaign

Roleplaying game campaigns don't really end. Often, they go on for years, as the characters complete objectives, then move on to new ones. If players like the fictional world the ZM has created, they'll want to play with it for a long time. Just because the Zombie Master has an ending for the campaign in mind does not mean the Cast ever has to reach it. On the other hand, once the ending has been reached, nothing says a new campaign, set in the same world, can't be started.

George Romero described the beginning of the fourth Living Dead movie. Effectively, all the zombies had been dealt with. They had all been either killed or rotted away; they weren't a problem anymore. The film was to open up with a funeral, the priest saying the last rites and then, just before they closed the coffin lid, hammering a silver spike right through the brainpan of the deceased.

Something like this would be a great way to "restart" a campaign, long after the Cast had dealt with the problem. Imagine if the world went on for 20 years, thinking it was safe from the threat, and then it started all over again. How much harder would humanity fight the second time around? Or would they just lie down and give up? What if a new breed of zombie rose up? What if the children of the original Cast had to face the problem? Ending a campaign doesn't have to mean the end of the game.

vague, but the campaign reaches its climax when the Cast Members either discover an antidote to the problem, or everyone on Earth has fallen prey to the zombies.

Once the ZM knows where the campaign is headed, he can figure out the beginning. The first adventure often sets the tone for the entire series. There's an old adage in speech giving that can serve *Zombie Masters* well: "Tell the audience what you're going to say; say it; then tell them what you've just said." The opening adventure should really be a microcosm of the entire long-term plot. It should present the main elements that will feature prominently throughout—the zombies (of course), but also other major Supporting Cast characters, the theme, and examples of the kinds of things the Cast will be expected to do. For example, if the theme is "cooperation and teamwork," the first adventure might show people not working together as the zombies rise up. The police chief and mayor don't coordinate a response, people bicker in their shelters, looters loot. If the campaign's goal is to rebuild society, the first adventure could include a lot of Tasks to repair things. Boil the entire campaign down into a central idea, and create an adventure around it.



The Edge of Destruction

The people of the modern industrialized world have it pretty good. In a world of ultra-convenience, luxury, and prosperity, the food shows up at the supermarket, the lights come on at the flick of a switch, entertainment comes through a coaxial cable or twisted pair of copper wires, help is a phone call away, machines keep food cold, wash clothes, and heat homes. All of this goes away once the zombies take over the world. Most people have forgotten, or never knew, what it means to really “survive.”

The Cast Members are going to have to fight for survival. They have to find a safe place to live, away from the shambling hordes. They’re going to have to fortify it, and stock it with supplies. Perishables aren’t going to be around for long, so they’re going to have to find a source for food—either from canned goods (which will eventually run out) or growing their own. Basic needs like running water and latrines have to be provided for. There won’t be any electricity to rely upon, so modern communication devices like radios and televisions can’t provide information. The car won’t work once all the gas has been used up. And on top of all this, they’re going to have to face the walking dead . . .

This section discusses the actual needs of running a long-term campaign. It is useful advice on what to do once the Zombie Master has completed all the design work, and game play begins. This includes suggestions for structuring a campaign, adventure ideas, new rules for madness, and practical considerations like replacing dead Cast Members.

Starting Out

The initial stage of the campaign should be all about figuring out the “rules” of the world. It is often a good idea to start the campaign in “the real world” of the character’s fictional setting. Give them a little while to get to know their characters, and have them go about their daily business before the zombies come lurching after them. Build up the pressure slowly—reports of corpses turning up with bite marks on them, unexplained government quarantines, an attack by a lone zombie. The ZM wants the players to identify with their characters, and build

suspense. The world should seem normal to them (even if they know they’re playing *AFMBE*) before everything goes to Hell.

In some Deadworlds, the existence of zombies is a given—people know about it and prepare for it. For them, zombies are a part of everyday life—everyone knows about the PHADE virus, the press provides nightly reports on the spread of Grave Impact zombies, kids listen to stories of the world before The Fall around the campfire . . . This is called *In Media Res*, Latin for “in the middle.” Events are already in motion when the characters are introduced. In this case, the players get to know their characters while grappling with the zombie problem (or, the zombies are grappling them). Even if the knowledge of zombies isn’t prevalent, this is a good way to start if the Zombie Master wants to introduce the zombies quickly.

Once the Zombie Master has everything up and running, and he’s conducted a few “flee from the deadguys” adventures, it’s time to turn to the downfall of civilization. As the zombie horde spreads, everything crumbles around the Cast (often the best part of a survival story—witnessing the end of the world). The streets become increasingly deserted. Urgent news reports are replaced by static on the TV screen. People barricade themselves in churches or police stations.

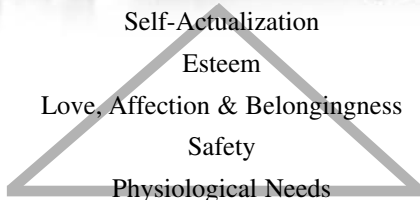
At that point, it’s time to move on to the needs of survival . . .

What Do We Do Now?

The zombie infestation has reached critical mass. Social services collapse under the weight of the undead. Mass hysteria and rioting have ripped the façade off human civilization, while the zombies feast on the living. At this point, the Cast should be asking themselves “what do we do now?” The Zombie Master may be asking himself the same thing.

In psychology, Abraham Maslow established the theory of a Hierarchy of Needs, a ladder of what humans require in order to feel as though they live happy, purposeful lives. Lower level needs must be fulfilled before a person can worry about satisfying higher level needs. There are five levels to the hierarchy, generally organized as:

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A Zombie Master can use this hierarchy to plot out the path of an entire survival campaign. Early adventures should revolve around fulfilling the needs at the bottom level of the pyramid. As the campaign progresses, the characters should attempt to climb the pyramid, struggling ever harder to reach the summit. The groundwork they lay on the lower levels, and the constant maintenance of those basic needs, allows them to eventually succeed in whatever the goals of the campaign may be.

I Am Legend, written by Richard Matheson, or the film based on it, The Last Man on Earth is a terrific look at the issues facing a person in similar circumstances (vampires instead of zombies). The Zombie Survival Guide, written by Max Brooks discusses all the issues facing the survivors of a massive zombie outbreak, including selecting a sanctuary, gathering supplies, and defense. Both books are highly recommended.

1: Physiological Needs

These are the most basic requirements that the Cast Members must satisfy in order to survive. Simply put, physiological needs are those things basic to survival, such as air, food, water, sleep, and so on. When these needs aren't met, people feel discomfort and pain, so they must be alleviated as soon as possible. Early adventures after the rise of the zombies and the fall of civilization should involve the Cast Members attempts to satisfy their basic, physiological needs.

Drinkable water is the most important need. People can go for days without food, if necessary, but dehydration kills faster. After water comes food. In the short term, this could be easy to find—canned goods looted from abandoned shops, filling the bathtub before the water stops flowing, and so on. It's the long term the Cast should be concerned with. They'll

have to locate a steady source of clean water (tainted water can be worse than no water at all)—a running river, pond, or well, for example. And their food sources have to be renewable—they need enough space to set up a vegetable garden and find livestock to rear (ever try to find a live chicken in Brooklyn?).

As important as food and water is, the Cast needs a place to sleep—they need shelter (preferably away from wandering zombies). This task alone could take several adventuring sessions, as the Cast tries several locations before finding one that meets their criteria—a suburban ranch has space for a garden, but is indefensible; a bank is defensible, but has no easy access to water; a remote farmhouse has both, but . . . Once they locate a safe place to rest, they still have to think about fortification.

Additional needs can be met by raiding the local department store—medical and first aid supplies, camping gear like tents, canteens, and portable stoves, clothing made from leather and denim. Again, these meet short-term needs, but what happens next year, or five years down the line?

Starvation and Dehydration

Two of the most common problems Cast Members encounter while wandering the wasteland is the lack of food and water. Generally speaking, most people can go for a day or two without food before having serious problems, while going without water can cause immediate trouble.

Dehydration: After the end of each 24 hours without water, Cast Members make a Simple Willpower Test. The ZM can apply modifiers based on the prevailing environment (going without water in a temperate climate is a lot easier than in the desert). If the roll fails, the character takes D4 damage per day of lack of fluid intake. So, on the first day, a character takes D4 (2) damage, on the second day D4 x 2(4), on the third day D4 x 3(6), and so on.

Starvation: Works the same as with dehydration, but the tests and damage are based on 48-hour increments instead of 24-hours.

2: Safety

People like to feel safe. Although having a safehouse with good defenses and a steady supply of food goes a long way towards instilling a sense of safety, even the most hardened survivor needs stability and consistency against a chaotic world. These can be difficult to achieve with zombies shambling along the streets.

Adventures early on in the campaign should focus on constant concerns for safety—namely, attacks by zombies. When the Cast ventures out to forage for supplies, zombies should attack. Holed up in their fortress, zombies should attempt to storm the barricades. Other adventures might concentrate on the Cast fortifying their sanctuary, ensuring a supply of food, and providing a few creature comforts, all in an effort to ensure their safety and stability.

Many survivor groups never progress beyond this point. Safety becomes a constant and always threatened concern and they are unable to progress to the higher levels of need.

3: Love, Affection, and Belongingness

People have a desire to belong to a group. Once a person's need for sustenance and security has been provided for, their mind typically turns towards higher-level needs such as love and a sense of membership. At this stage, they are able to care about others around them, seek affection and approval from others, and desire a sense of belonging. While a lone survivor may be able to hold out against the zombies, it's the isolation that may do him in.

These are the beginnings of society. After the zombies rise up, the Cast Members should consider gathering with like-minded individuals. Early adventures could involve rescuing others, search and recovery missions to nearby towns, and incorporating new members into the community. However, this adds a new complexity to stories, as new members must pull their own weight and integrate into the community, perhaps leading to tension. Now may be the time to go searching for missing relatives, or think about creating a family of one's own. If Cast Members haven't yet become part of a community, or begun founding their own, this may be the time for them to strike out and find others who share their goals, whatever they may be.

Furthermore, threats could imperil the nascent community (besides zombies). With groups come potential group rivalries—other survivor communities or outsiders like the biker gang in *Dawn of the Dead*. What happens when two groups come upon a supply cache? What if one group runs out of food? Internal strife might develop in the community, as well, as two characters fight over the love of a third, or the community splits over a course of action. Similarly, a small group of survivors might turn on each other (particularly if they're snowed in or otherwise isolated); the movie *Lifeboat* provides a good example. These chaotic forces wreak havoc and destruction for reasons of their own, but must be dealt with in order for the Cast Members to continue to survive.

4: Esteem

Once they have feelings of love and belongingness, people want to feel esteemed. That is to say, they desire to have their contributions valued by others. This is a particularly complex need to satisfy in a roleplaying game session.

One way to address this need is to try and play to the strengths of each character. At this stage, the Zombie Master might try to tailor his stories to highlight the accomplishments of a particular Cast Member. One adventure might rely on the mechanic's ability to get the generator working. Another might depend on the doctor's efforts to save the settlement from illness. A third could play up the soldier's skill at defending the camp from a zombie attack.

Another way to give the Cast Members esteem is to show they are making a difference in the world (or their tiny pocket of it). While early adventures should be rife with zombies, perhaps by this stage the Cast has thinned their ranks, and zombie attacks aren't as prevalent. Maybe they finally take out that pocket of zombies holding the hospital. Or they could finally make preparations to rid the area of zombies altogether. Their settlement might be relatively comfortable by now, highlighted by fewer survival-related missions and Task rolls. If the Zombie Master plans to have the Cast find a solution to zombie infestation, now would be the time to move the campaign in that direction, or by now the infestation begins to wind down as whatever causes the dead to rise runs its course.

5: Self-Actualization

Finally, in order for a person to feel good about themselves and the world around them, they have to feel as though they have some control over their own destiny. In other words, people like to feel as though they are doing what they were meant to do, or intended to do. A self-actualized person is one who feels as though his or her talents are being used to the best of their ability.

Most characters who grew up in a pre-Rise setting trained for or dreamed of becoming a certain type of person, or held a certain type of career. Those dreams may still be viable in a post-Rise setting. In addition to his other duties, a character who always wanted to be an actor may find himself entertaining the group's children, or even organizing plays for the entertainment of the entire community. A lawyer may help to codify the rules by which the group lives, and serve as administrator of those laws. The possibilities are endless.

If a group reaches this stage, and engages in adventures designed to fulfill their need for self-actualization, then for all intents and purposes they've created (or rebuilt) a society. The zombies may still wander around, and they may live in primitive conditions, but they're well on their way to restoring civilization.

In Summation

Clearly, the meat of an *AFMBE* survival game involves adventures focusing on physiological needs and safety. But if the game is to last for many years of game time, it is worth exploring the additional tiers of the Maslow Hierarchy. And also remember that threatening the foundation of this pyramid is always a good way to keep the Cast Members on their toes. In a world where the dead exist only to destroy the living and so swell their ranks, there is always the possibility that the Cast's work may all be destroyed in a single night.

Madness

As if the threat of getting eaten by zombies, and the strain of eking out an existence, weren't enough, Cast Member may begin to show signs of mental stress. Fear Tests and Essence Loss strip away the resolve of the characters over time, but madness is a constant threat as the pressures of a grim death and isolation become too much.

In the basic *AFMBE* rules, the mechanic for Fear Tests works well to show the initial shock of surprise, terror, and danger. However, for characters playing out their lives over the course of a campaign, a new option may be more appropriate. At the Zombie Master's discretion, he can include these alternate madness rules.

Madness changes the way in which players view their characters. As they accumulate Madness Points, they witness their character's slow, gradual decline into insanity. Madness Points become an albatross around the neck of even the toughest survivor.

Madness Is Not Funny

There's a great tendency in our society to view those with serious psychological problems as people to ridicule, or to make light of madness and mania. This is not our intent. Insanity is not funny, nor are those who suffer from it.

Simply, insanity is when one's own worldview skews aside from the "norm" and influences every thought, when the fractured way one sees the world becomes the truth, terrifying or hopeless as it may feel. Treat madness with caution and respect.

Tracking Madness

Characters keep track of Madness Points in the Drawbacks section of the character sheet. Most Cast Members start off with zero Madness Points, unless the ZM has a reason to assign them more. Once play begins, gaining Madness Points is simple. Every time a Cast Member fails a Fear Test, add half the level of failure, rounded down, to his Madness Points total. This level of failure is the difference between the Test result and nine. Thus, a character failing a Fear Test by two would gain one Madness Point. The more of these points the Cast Member collects, the less and less stable he becomes.

For every few Madness Points collected, the character gains a Mental Drawback. The Progression of Insanity Table (see p. 74) shows the Drawback associated with a particular level of Madness Points. Characters do not gain character points as a result of

acquiring a new Drawback. However, characters who already suffer from the listed Drawback skip right over it and move on to the next level on the table.

Temporary Madness

As characters lose temporary Essence, there is a danger they suffer the effects of madness. If the Essence total ever falls below the Cast Member's current total Madness Points, she risks going temporarily insane. The character must make a Difficult Willpower Test and score a number of Success Levels equal to her Madness divided by five. If she passes this Test, the character is okay. If she fails, she temporarily loses her grip on reality; the level of failure determines the severity of the Cast Member's madness as shown on the Fear Table (see *AFMBE*, p. 97).

Progression of Insanity

Current MPs	Additional Mental Drawback
9	Recurring Nightmares
13	Drinking/drugs (Addiction 2)
17	Phobia
21	Cowardly 1
25	Depression
28	Insomnia
31	Cowardly 2/Phobia 3
34	Delusions
37	Addiction 4
40	Paranoid
43	Cowardly 3/Phobia 5
45	Hallucinations
48	Suicidal Tendencies
50	If a character achieves this level, she completely breaks down. She must be removed from player control as she is now a danger to herself and others. Players wishing to continue to play such characters should discuss this with the ZM.

Recovering from temporary madness is not so simple. Once the Cast Member has reached the duration of the Fear effect, he must make a Difficult Willpower Test every Turn to come out of the temporary madness. The target number for this Test is nine plus the level of failure of the original test that caused him to go mad. Failure to "snap out of it" results in continuation of the Fear effect.

Even worse, while suffering temporary madness, all subsequent Fear Tests have a +5 to their difficulty. If these successive Fear Tests result in the character going temporarily mad again, use the worse of the effects. The results are not cumulative.

Reducing Madness Points

Once a character begins the descent into insanity, it is difficult for them to regain their grip on reality. The further they go without getting help, the harder it is to bring them back from the brink. This is achieved through psychotherapy, which includes any form of one-on-one counseling, including sessions with a therapist, psychotherapeutic pharmaceuticals, religious confessionals, or intensive meditation. Whatever the player and ZM decide will work for the character in question is acceptable.

For each month of "therapy" the Cast Member undergoes, make a Difficult Willpower Test; anyone assisting the Cast Member may apply his Humanities (Psychology) or other appropriate skill to the Task (Success Levels are pooled). If the rolls are successful, the Cast Member reduces her Madness Points by one for every level of success. If either roll fails, nothing happens. If the difference between the roll and one Success Level is three or more, something has gone really wrong—the character increases her Madness by two times the degree of the failure.

There is something about success in life that stabilizes a Cast Member. Every time a character achieves five or more Success Levels on a Task or Test, reduce the current Madness Point score by the number of Success Levels.

As the number of Madness Points decreases, the Cast Member loses any Mental Drawbacks he has accumulated as a result.

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Attrition Rates

In a game of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, characters have a high mortality rate (especially if they aren't careful). In a campaign setting where ready access to medical help is non-existent, this can only get worse. Moreover, in addition to character death, Cast Members may leave the group as they strike out on their own or because players stop showing up for game night. How could the ZM replace them?

Character attrition can be an important factor in a game of survival horror, from a story perspective. Where will these new people come from if the majority of the population is either dead or undead? Unless the setting includes a large population of survivors, the Zombie Master will be hard pressed to justify the inclusion of new Cast Members. Some sort of settlement, complete with Supporting Cast survivors, provides the players and ZM with a cache of extra characters from which to choose. Just assume the new Cast Member is someone who was in the background during any important scenes previously, but has now stepped to the fore.

If, on the other hand, the Cast represents a tiny bastion of survivors, and there is no community from which to draw additional characters, all is not lost. It

is possible the remaining Cast Members to rescue someone—a new Cast Member to join the group. Or a lone survivor might stumble upon the Cast's fortress. If the Cast Members are more nomadic, this is a bit easier to justify, as they come across additional pockets of resistance and other survivors moving across the land. Be aware, though, that the "you're driving along and see someone being chased by zombies" shtick gets old really fast. It can also be tricky believing the Cast would open their doors and make their precious supplies available to a stranger, so it may take some doing to introduce new characters under certain circumstances (but this could make for an interesting adventure).

Finally, when Cast Members die, they are likely to rise up from the dead (depending on the nature of infestation). Any random death could create new adversaries for the Cast Members to confront—old friends come back from the dead for a little nosh. This doesn't often come up in other roleplaying games, and the ZM should be aware of the inherent terror of having an old friend turn up as an undead enemy. Dead Cast Members may very well come back to their "old stomping grounds," and lead the undead right into the heart of the Cast's hideout, just like in *Dawn of the Dead*.

Send More Cast Members

When it comes time to add a new Cast Member to the group, the Zombie Master should decide how powerful the player's Cast Member should be.

Many ZMs run games with everyone on relatively even power levels. Everyone is expected to play Norms, or everyone plays Survivors. If that's the case, it's generally best if the new Cast Member is the same character type. If the ZM is feeling generous, he may decide to allow the new character to start with bonus experience equal to half or more of the player's previous character's awarded experience.

If the game features mixed character types (a few Norms, a few Survivors, and maybe one Gifted) then it is more important to pay attention to game balance. It would be best to start the new Cast Member as a Norm, with maybe a few extra experience points as above, rather than as a Survivor, because the new character may overshadow the others in the game.

If the previous Cast Member was a Survivor, perhaps allow the player to create a replacement Survivor.

Starting a new Cast Member should include a penalty for losing the previous one (unless the character was sacrificed in a dramatically appropriate way). A player should never lose his character to the zombies, then be rewarded by being able to play a more powerful Cast Member.

Side Stories

There are plenty of things Cast Members can do that don't involve the constant threat of the undead. A few possible ideas include:

1. Degenerate human survivors feed on the flesh of zombies. Are these the kind of people you want in your backyard?
2. A scouting party discovers another band of survivors just over the next hill/in the next town. Can the two communities work together, or will they destroy each other?
3. A scientific breakthrough gives insight on how to possibly stop the zombies from spreading.
4. The Cast Members desperately need someone with specialized knowledge (a physician, electrician, and so on); how can they find him?
5. A disaster, such as a fire, strikes the Cast's hideout. They must fight it in order to save all they've worked for.
6. Bedraggled travelers arrive at the Cast Members' compound looking for loved ones or other survivors. How are they treated?

Enough With the Zombies

Although *AFMBE* is a zombie-themed RPG, not all opponents the Cast Members face need be zombies. After a few adventures in which they fight zombies, the players are going to get tired of it. Variety is the spice of an RPG. There are all sorts of other things that can crop up from time to time to keep the Cast on their toes. And the Zombie Master should vary the challenges facing the Cast in a long-term campaign.

Elemental hazards are one way to vary the "enemy." In these sorts of adventure, some natural disaster, such as a blizzard, tornado, or earthquake strikes the Cast's compound, and they must make all kinds of Task rolls to both avoid being injured and deal with the aftermath. Insects could descend on crops, potentially ruining their harvest. Virulent outbreaks of disease could endanger the group. An avalanche could trap the survivors in their fortress.

Zombies aren't the only enemy wandering the landscape, either. There may be other survivors in the area, competing against the Cast for precious resources. Is that a zombie stalking the junkyard, or another survivor intent on getting his hands on the one working junker on the lot? Roving bands of marauders might happen by and demand the Cast provide them with food, water, and shelter at the point of a gun. And finally, it is in the nature of humans to fight with one another; it's possible a rival survivor settlement might decide it better to destroy the Cast and take their stuff, rather than working together against a common foe.

Sometimes, the enemy within is more dangerous than the enemy outside the gates. When the Cast gets tired of killing zombies, maybe it's time for a tense political adventure. There might be trouble brewing back at the fortress in the form of a love triangle coming to a head, a rivalry for leadership between two characters, or a Supporting Cast character who finally snaps.

A Brand New Day

The grim, nihilistic feel of this kind of *AFMBE* campaign can begin to wear on players. They want to feel as though their characters have an effect on the world and are accomplishing something (see *Esteem*, p. 72). While it can be argued that finding a copper coil for the water purification system is an accomplishment, many players want something bigger—stopping the zombies, reclaiming the world, and so on.

If it seems as though the group is stuck in a rut, and they keep doing the same things, it may be time to think about what the Cast can do to improve their world. Give them hope. Let them find a little island of peace in the wasteland. Or even let them live through the zombie infestation, restore civilization, and end the campaign.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Campaign Design Sheet

Name: _____

Theme: _____ Mood: _____

Narrative or Episodic? _____

Character-Driven or Story-Driven? _____

What is the overall arc of the campaign? _____

What would really grab your players' attention on the first adventure? _____

Does magic exist?

Can Cast Members get The Gift?

☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Yes ☐ No

How much did people know about the supernatural before The Rise? _____

How much do they know now? _____

Has magic increased or decreased in potency since The Rise? _____

Is magic responsible for The Rise, or an offshoot of the problem? _____

Zombies

Where do they come from? _____

What do they want? _____

What types exist? _____

CHAPTER SIX

Billy walked the perimeter as he did every night. They had a little power, thanks to the generator in the main building, so he felt a little less jumpy than he had when he was squatting alone in a suburban basement. They had the surrounding area pretty well lit up and decent defenses around the compound. After the inner defenses, a ten-foot drop stretched to ground level, and a chain link fencing topped with razor wire surrounded the base of the embankment.

Not that any of the zombies could climb or had ever done anything but press their pasty, pus-filled faces against the mesh. The razor wire was more for marauders or other undesirables.

The ghouls were definitely thinning out. This was good, because they were running low on ammo. Billy turned one final lap around the building and unlatched the inner gate, opening a break and stepping down to the mound's base. The second part of his shift was the part he hated. Where he had to walk the fence itself, inspecting it for any breaks or weaknesses.

He was getting tired of this crap. He was 17 years old and would much rather have been back in the compound, strutting for the women. Instead, he was out in the dark, with cold, winter-chilled mud seeping into his toes of his boots.

He bet he could find someone to keep him warm back in the compound, that's for sure. He wanted to meet up with Allen, his watch partner. They were going in opposite directions around the fence, and should join up in a few minutes. When they met, the fence inspection was done, and they could head back in. Billy kept slogging along the chain mesh. He infrequently gazed out into the woods on the other side. No reason to look really. It was so dark he couldn't see anything unless it was pressed right up against the fence.

A twig snapped behind him, and he wheeled around. It was Allen. *That's not right*, thought Billy. *One of us is going the wrong way.*

"Crap," he muttered. He raised his voice in a harsh whisper "Allen . . . you idiot. You're going the wrong way!"

Two thoughts entered his mind at the same time. *That's not Allen* was the first. *I didn't close the gate behind me* was the next.

Billy turned to run and felt white-hot pain lance through his neck as teeth clamped down, tearing flesh from bone. His side went instantly numb and his gun dropped from his limp hand. Blood gushed down his chest, steaming hot, splashing against the dead cold ground, and Billy mouthed his last words silently into the night.

"I'm so sorry . . ."

BLOWIN' UP DEAD GUYS



Introduction

One of the unique aspects of *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, and a testament to its versatility, is the highly modular system of zombie creation, which is able to model any type of undead walker a ZM can dream up. This chapter introduces rules for decomposition. The Zombie Master will find a bounty of information on death and rotting, and its effects on the walking dead. Second, the chapter presents new zombie Aspects with which the ZM can terrify and confound the Cast. Finally, it discusses the numerous ways to combat the zombie menace.

The Zombie Unlife Cycle

Zombies can be as intricately detailed or Spartanly simple as the Zombie Master needs them to be, and therein lies their putrid elegance as a villain. The basic zombie rules in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*, however, do not account for decay. The zombies stick

around for as long as the story or the ZM needs, which could be years after the body actually died. Zombie Masters in search of added realism can incorporate these rules for decomposition into their campaigns. As time passes, the zombies decay and Attribute modifiers apply, and a number of optional rules come into play. Zombies using these optional rules are based on the Basic Zombie (see *AFMBE*, p. 146), and model the classic Romero-esque zombies depicted in the Living Dead films.

The Progression of Putrefaction

The short un-lifespan of a zombie can be charted according to the predictable changes found in all dead things—a stringent hierarchy of decomposition, which all dead cellular matter must obey, reanimated or not.

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Specific things happen to a human body when it dies. Putrefaction sets in. The odor of death chemically attracts insects, which oviposit their eggs and help to consume the body. Other carnivorous animals may stop for a snack, or to pull a swath of hair for their nests. The human body distends with gas and purges fluid. All these signposts of death can be found in the zombie as well. These stages (called the progression of putrefaction in forensic pathology) signify a natural breakdown of the body, and can be charted into four main phases:

- The Fresh Stage (Stage I)
- The Bloat Stage (Stage II)
- The Decay Stage (Stage III)
- The Skeleton Stage (Stage IV)

All four of these decomposition stages, from the newly dead to the skeletonized remains, are triggered and maintained by environmental factors, most importantly temperature and humidity. The following is what happens to the mundane dead, as well as a typical reanimated corpse.

The Five-Minute Window

After brain death and heart failure, the body is considered dead, though specific organs and tissues continue to be cellularly alive—for a short time. The body doesn't die all at once, as if a switch were flipped; instead the corpse dies organ-by-organ, tissue-by-tissue, until the carcass retains no remaining living, healthy cells. This process normally takes less than five minutes.

This five-minute period of peace is called *somatic death*; it's the only rest the infected organism will have for the next few months, before it rises on an instinctual hunt for human meat. During this time, if the brain stem—specifically, the R Complex, the core area of the brain where our animal survival instincts reside—is damaged or destroyed, the body will not reanimate. This grace period is crucial for Cast Members who wish to avoid the emotional trauma of witnessing a friend or loved one reanimate—as long as they're willing to drive a spike or bullet into the base of their friend's skull.

After these five minutes, the last of the body's oxygen-starved cells die and signal the onset of decomposition. The body is truly dead, and unless the R Complex is pithed, ready for its new purpose: eating people.

Called Shot: R Complex

In order to kill a Brain Weak Spot zombie, targeting the head isn't enough. With a called shot to the head, a character might get lucky and take out the R Complex, but is more likely to hit the frontal lobes or middle brain, which won't drop a zombie outright. Aim for the base of the brain (center eye level). An R Complex called shot suffers -6 to hit, but if the damage from a single attack exceeds 10 points, the zombie is destroyed.

Undead Shelf Life

After reanimation, zombies may continue to decay. Forensic anthropologists employ a rule-of-thumb in order to determine the post-mortem interval (time of death) and identify the length of time a corpse has been dead and left to the elements. *Zombie Masters* can use this same formula to determine the unlife span of the zombie, or how long the undead can move around before decomposition takes too taxing a toll.

The equation is far from perfect, due to the high number of variables involved in human decay, but it serves as a hasty guide. The formula is:

$$Y = 1285/X$$

Y equals the number of days required for the carcass to become completely skeletonized, and X is the centigrade temperature of its environment. To get a rough estimate of the amount of time a zombie has before complete skeletonization, simply divide 1285 by the averaged ambient centigrade temperature (or 2345 by the average temperature in fahrenheit). The answer (Y) is the amount of time in days until the zombie becomes nothing but a pile of moldy bones.

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Example: Gregory Finch, a newly reborn animate, mindlessly canvasses a five mile patch of territory for food. The ZM determines that the average centigrade temperature is 10 degrees Celsius. 1285 divided by 10 is 128.5 days until Gregory is completely decomposed, and no longer a threat to the stalwart Cast.

To determine the number of days to progress from one stage to another, simply take the unlife span and divide by three. Zombies start out in the fresh stage if they've just died. Otherwise, older corpses suddenly animated start out in the stage in which they began re-animation.

Example: Tim Larabie has just died from a fatal zombie bite. The ZM determines that the averaged ambient temperature is 5 degrees Celsius. Tim's unlife span is 1285 divided by 5, which equals 257 days until he becomes skeletonized. Divide the unlife span by 3 to get 86 days (rounded off) until Tim's walking corpse reaches the second stage (bloat). Another 86 days after that and he'll enter the third stage (decay). At the end of this time, he reaches the fourth stage (skeleton) and literally falls apart.

Bodies decompose slower when immersed in water or buried beneath ground than they do above ground. To calculate the decay rate for corpses in these situations (i.e., for graveyard animates) use what forensic pathologists call Casper's Dictum:

One week in air =
two weeks in water =
eight weeks in soil

So, for instance, if it takes 128 days to skeletonize above ground, then given the same temperature, it will take 1024 days (almost three years) for a body to skeletonize if buried.

Stage 1: Fresh

After the five minutes of somatic death, a corpse begins decomposing (also the moment a typical zombie reanimates). Human decomposition is comprised of two processes: *autolysis* and *putrefaction*.

Autolysis, also known as self-digestion, is the body's cellular revolt. Oxygen starved cells melt and dissolve, releasing nutrients into the body, and providing fertile breeding ground for putrefaction. At the same time, digestive enzymes continue to work with-

out the controls present in life. The gastrointestinal tract ceases to make protective mucus, which normally lines the organ tissue and guards against the destructive acids and enzymes. Unchecked, these fluids perforate the walls of the intestine, stomach, lower esophagus, and eventually, the lung cavity. Essentially, the body begins to digest itself, and during this first phase of decomposition, most of the organs will be busy transforming into a liquid mess. Autolysis is unnoticeable during the first few days of death, but eventually fluid-filled blisters appear on the skin, and skin slippage occurs, where the outer layer of dermis loses adhesiveness and large sheets of slimy skin slough away easily.

The brain, high in water content, also begins to turn to mush. However, encased within the skull it retains its location and general shape. The first part of the brain that softens with autolysis is the frontal lobe, an area largely unused by the undead, so performance is not noticeably impaired, relatively speaking.

The second and more major component of decomposition, putrefaction is the post mortem destruction of the soft tissues of the body by the action of bacteria. Without the natural defenses of a living body, the bacteria multiply and eat away at the tissue, eventually reducing everything to liquid. Typically, the first visible sign of putrefaction is a greenish discoloration of the abdomen, where the bowels fill with bacteria-laden fluid. This discoloration slowly spreads to the flanks, chest, limbs, and face. The superficial veins of the skin become purple-brown and visible, giving the appearance of "marbled" skin. Deceased who have lost a lot of blood putrefy at a slower rate, because the bacteria are denied the use of blood as a vehicle to multiply in. Air temperatures below 21 degrees Celsius (70 degrees Fahrenheit) tend to retard putrefaction, and, if the weather is cold enough, putrefaction may be halted altogether. Many other variables can affect the process: obese bodies and wet weather accelerates putrefaction, while dry weather can desiccate a corpse, slowing decay.

Other changes occur, including algor, livor, and rigor mortis. Algor mortis is the post mortem cooling of the body; the zombie cools at the averaged rate of 1.5 degrees per hour, until reaching ambient environmental temperature.

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Physiological Changes

The original AFMBE rules don't make a connection between the attributes of the living and those of the zombies. They just are the way they are. Zombie Masters who prefer a more complicated and realistic system, one that links the zombie's Attributes with those of the recently deceased, can make the following adjustments.

First, the intellect is drastically impaired, as the zombie uses only a small percentage of its frontal lobes and limbic system, and as a result, lacks any sophisticated reasoning skills, memory, or other forebrain benefits. It relies upon the R Complex alone, hence the zombie's Intelligence score is immediately reduced to -2 upon revival. This score may be adjusted if the ZM deems that it retains a portion of its intellect (see AFMBE, pp. 155-156).

Second, the decrease in brain function accounts for the low agility found in most undead. Much of the complex balance centers of the brain are used minimally, and it takes great effort to stay upright. The zombie begins undead life at -1 to its original, human Dexterity score. Zombies with zero Dexterity fall down a lot. The Zombie Master should not modify this score with Aspects (though they may still have special movement features).

Finally, zombies gain one benefit: the loss of intelligence actually increases undead strength due, in part, to the unconscious manner in which the human brain limits strength output. Human musculature is capable of incredible feats of power, but is limited by the skeleton's weight bearing load, as well as cartilage and ligament integrity, so the brain subconsciously provides an upper cap that humans dare not exceed. But the undead are no longer slaves to self-limitation—and their reduced intellect unlocks the upper strength potential within their creaking bodies. Zombies start their unlife with a bonus of +2 to their previous Strength. The ZM should ignore Strength Aspects, though special Strength features may apply.

The zombie's Constitution, Perception, and Willpower scores remain unchanged from their human ratings. The ZM should define the remaining categories
—Senses, Sustenance, and Spreading the Love.

Employing this system requires the ZM to know the human Attributes of each zombie. Generally, this isn't a problem with regard to Cast Members, and the ZM can use various archetypes and Supporting Cast Attributes as needed. Imagine the fun when one zombie moves a whole lot faster than another, or hits a lot harder . . .

Two hours after death, the zombie's red blood cells separate from plasma and settle towards the lowest part of the body (i.e., if the body has been dead a few days, positioned face up, the blood settles into its back; if the undead is animated minutes after death, then gets up and resumes walking, the blood sinks down into its legs and feet). This is called livor mortis—or fixed lividity—and is the main reason why blood seepage is so often absent from post mortem wounds. The pooled blood gives the flesh a permanent, reddish-purple-maroon color, which can be mistaken for large bruises.

Rigor mortis, the muscular rigidity due to lactic acid buildup, can usually be found within a few hours. All the muscles start to harden at the same time, but the smaller ones fully stiffen first. Rigid limbs can be forced to move by bending them until the muscle “breaks” (accompanied by a grotesque crepitating snap) which releases the lactic acid. A zombie cannot do this by itself. Rigor mortis usually lasts about 12 hours, until it reaches its peak and starts to gradually subside until the body is slack. A zombie caught in rigor is paralyzed and completely vulnerable to attack. Clever Cast Members should learn to

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capitalize on this day of weakness and make sure the immobilized revenants don't get up again.

The undead quickly make new friends. Mere moments after death, the body attracts a legion of necrophagous devotees. Blowflies are the first to lay their eggs. After the first day of death, the corpse teems with maggots, which congregate in wound sites and other soft tissues of the outer body (eyes, mouth, genitalia, etc.) in order to feast upon the necrotic flesh (maggots only eat *dead* tissue). In stationary, mundane carcasses, this attracts beetles and other insects who often prey upon the maggots, but in the case of a shambling zombie, most insects and larva are jostled free from their undead host, so insect feeding is negligible. Living dead have been observed clumsily pawing the cloud of flies swarming around their faces in irritation, a self-preservation instinct to keep the eyes intact (if they need vision).

Several days after death, the body begins to warm again, the violent putrefaction of the tissues and inner organs so intense that the corpse's temperature sometimes increases to 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit). Any character touching a zombie a few weeks into the fresh stage notes a sick, hot radiance. Undead in this condition are also visible with thermal vision goggles and similar heat-sensing equipment.

Stage I Stats: At this stage, the zombie possesses the Attributes assigned by the Zombie Master. Hereafter this is referred to as the "basic zombie" and modifiers at later stages subtract from these base Attributes.

The Rigor Mortis Shuffle

Rigor mortis can be an excellent excuse to include shambling zombies the first day or so of a campaign—they're fighting the rigidity of their protein-locked muscles (give them Slow and Steady movement values).

Of course, after a day, their muscles become supple again as the proteins break down . . . and the zombies could suddenly get a whole lot faster (say, Life-Like or better). Imagine the characters' surprise the first time they find out how spry their moribund adversaries have become . . .

Stage II: Bloat

The second stage is characterized by massive swelling—known as *tumefaction*—where putrefaction from bacteria activity creates a buildup of gases, which bloat the body (sometimes to twice the normal size in stationary dead). Throughout this second stage, the body slowly dissipates the gas through orifices and wound sites. Undead don't swell to these impressive extremes, as they're constantly moving and pushing the gas from their bodies, negating any chance to buildup. This gas seepage makes the living dead twice as pungent smelling, granting a +6 bonus to character's Perception rolls when trying to locate the undead, and a -2 penalty to any concentration-based skills (due to the tear-inducing, gag-invoking methane-based stink).

During the bloat stage, skin increases in elasticity and continues to slough from the body. The raw tissue beneath is glistening pink and eventually dries out, taking the appearance of yellowish leather. Of course, all this deterioration also makes the zombie truly horrifying to look at, so there *is* an upside.

Internal organs are all but mush by the end of this stage, and slosh around in the torso until vomited by bending forwards to feast or falling over. The esophagus, diaphragm, and lungs have melted by this point, making speech—or any vocal noise—impossible. Hair and fingernails are loosened and can be easily yanked from the body. The muscular structure is still in decent condition, but the tendon and ligament attachments have been damaged by the decay.

After the height of bloat, when most of the putrefactive fluid is purged from the undead, the body temperature cools again to environmental conditions.

Stage II Stats: Basic Zombie -1 penalty for all Attributes.

Nasty Rotten Zombie Goo

Any character that engages in melee combat with a Stage II corpse and comes away with a fistful of rotting zombie skin must make a Fear Test or spend a round gagging. Additional effects from the Fear Table may apply.

Accidental Strength Damage

Note that, while muscles continue to work as the zombie decays, the fixative properties of their tendons and ligaments will deteriorate. As a result, the zombie has a greater chance of injuring itself through great acts of strength as time progresses.

After a zombie reaches Stage II (see p. 83) and rolls a 1 on any attack roll or Strength related Task or Test, one of its limbs snaps from the excess of its own strength. The limb is no longer usable. All future close combat rolls are made at -5.

Stage III: Decay

At this stage, the skin turns from green to black. Bloating has completely subsided and the body has sunken in on itself, the inner cavities largely empty and lacking solidity. The muscles deteriorate, and tendons and ligaments detach piece by piece. Simply put, the body begins falling apart. During this stage, the undead start to lose the use of their limbs. The R Complex succumbs to decay, and the zombie spends most of the time writhing on the ground in confusion, until the brain stem finally loses its power of reanimation and the living dead experiences final death. This point is reached halfway between Stage III and Stage IV.

The corpse continues to decompose, finally assisted by animals and insects previously denied predation rights. Larger animals such as birds, dogs, or cats often come to worry at the body. The zombie may have its own way of discouraging this activity, since dog flesh might prove to be an acceptable (if temporary) substitute for the human sort. Still, the sight of a wild dog pack taking down a lone zombie may be encouraging to Cast Members . . . until the dogs spot them.

The cadaver will reach skeletonization at the beginning of Stage IV, the final day of its unlife expectancy.

Stage III Stats: Basic Zombie -2 penalty to all Attributes.

One Last Bite

Rather than leaving the poor zombie uselessly flailing on the ground for most of this time, the ZM can have any Stage III corpse make an Simple Willpower Test any time living prey comes within sensory distance. If they succeed, they gain temporary control of their faltering frame and can move and attack normally (albeit with their reduced stats).

Stage IV: Skeleton

The body achieves complete skeletonization. Only tissue-littered bones remain. The zombie is truly and finally dead.

Stage IV Stats: Skeleton = Final Death. (Really. Now put down the gun.)

Preserving the Dead

So the Zombie Master has unleashed the ravening hordes of undead upon an unsuspecting world, they've brought down civilization as we know it, and they've driven the last human survivors into fortified bunkers and isolated bolt-holes. The zombie masses wander the countryside in search of flesh, mindless rulers of a soon-to-be-undead planet . . . for as long as they last.

Using the decomposition rules, at 20 degrees Celsius (68 degrees Fahrenheit) a zombie could be at Stage IV in as little as sixty days. Within a few months after the first wave of slaughter, the zombie armies are going to start falling apart—literally. The players are going to be doing the math as well, hoping their characters can outlast the decaying mob scratching at their door. In order to keep the zombie threat credible, especially long after they should have decomposed, Zombie Masters might want to extend the un-natural existence of the undead.

The more distant the apocalypse, the more staying power the zombies need to form an active threat. The Sticks Around Aspect (see p. 87) is designed to allow the Zombie Master to prolong the unlife of the zombies by suspending the normal deterioration process. The main thing to decide is how many years you need an animate army to be a threat. If the campaign is set five years after the undead uprising, Sticks Around

level two will likely provide a “healthy” army of corpses to keep the pressure on the Cast Members—unless they’ve run off to the tropics (which might not be a bad idea . . .). Of course, if a large human population remains alive long after the rise of the undead, the zombies have a steady supply of fresh corpses, and the ZM won’t need them to be as long-lasting.

The reason why the carnivorous cadavers hang around should reflect the source of the undead apocalypse. Perhaps the reanimating radiation or chemicals destroyed all the native bacteria in the zombie, rendering its flesh sterile and tough. Or perhaps the rise of the Zombie Lords reanimates the dead via supernatural powers, which may also cloak them in an unnatural physical stasis. Perhaps fertilizer-born undead burrow underground during inactive periods, slowing their decay as per Casper’s Dictum (p. 81). Of course, a radical drop in the ambient temperature or humidity of the planet—as in a nuclear winter—could work to preserve the zombies as well.

More Zombie Stuff

What would an *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* sourcebook be without new zombie Aspects? The Zombie Master should use these to confound and surprise the Cast.

New Weak Spots

Sacred Item

Power: +7

The zombie’s unlife is maintained by the presence of a sacred item of power placed somewhere on the body, such as a magical scarab or hermetic talisman. Should this item be removed or destroyed (usually a –6 to hit, typical item has a damage capacity of 5-8), the zombie falls down dead and stops trying to chew on the living. Damage to the zombie’s body has no effect on its performance. The item does not have to be in plain sight, but must be carried on the outside of the body (and not, say, embedded in its skull, or fused to the skin).

Mirror, Mirror

Power: –3

It may be dead but it’s still vain. The zombie cannot stand the sight of itself and recoils from mirrors or other large reflective surfaces (at least one square foot). While this doesn’t actually damage the zombie, it prevents it from attacking in the direction of the reflection—unless it relies on some way to find its prey other than sight.





New Special Aspects

Blight

Power: +1/level

Due to the plague toxins carried in its diseased body, the zombie's second "death" results in an area of infertility and blight, as though salted with lime. What few plants grow in this blackened area are twisted and poisonous, and animals avoid the spot. The radius of the effect is equal to five feet per point of power spent. Once an area is stricken with blight, it can only be reversed through metaphysics (such as Bountiful Harvest). A zombie massacre can render an entire area unusable by survivors for years to come.

Boneless

Power: +3

The reanimation process has restructured the zombie's bones, turning them into a cartilage-like substance. This softened skeleton allows the zombie to squeeze through tight places a normal body could not, to a minimum of four inches wide. Thus, a Boneless zombie could wriggle through a ventilation duct or the space between prison bars. The zombie also suffers less damage from smashing attacks such as those from clubs or maces (acts as D4(2) armor against such attacks—no bones to break).

As a downside, the soft bones provide a weaker structure for the zombie's muscles and ligaments, so the zombie can have a maximum of Strength 2.

Bulletproof

Power: +4

The zombie is less susceptible to the impaling damage of bullets than to other kinds of harm. The zombie only receives the minimum damage (typically the weapon's damage multiplier drops to x1) from any normal bullet attack. High-explosive rounds and other specialized ammo may still inflict normal damage, at the ZM's discretion. Damage from close combat weapons remains unaffected.

Death Mask

Power: +6

Through some bizarre trick of preservation, the zombie looks and smells like a living human to other people. This effect is strictly visual and olfactory—the zombie cannot speak or interact unless those special abilities are taken separately. In order to pose as fully human, it must also possess Aspects such as Language and Tool Use. It continues to move and act like a zombie without Getting Around (Life-Like) and Senses (Like the Living) or better. Dogs and other animals are not be fooled, however, and react accordingly. If the ZM wishes, potential victims may make a Difficult Perception Test to notice that something seems wrong.

Doppleganger

Power: +8

You are who you eat! This power allows the zombie to take on the features of its last victim, permitting it to pass itself off as that individual, though a lack of a pulse or body heat may give the truth away. The zombie does not gain access to the victim's memories or voice, only his physical appearance. If the ZM wishes, those familiar with the victim may make a Difficult Perception Test to notice something is wrong with their friend.

Gremlin

Power: +2/level to a max of four levels

The zombie exerts a strange electro-magnetic field—like an EMP pulse—disrupting electrical devices. Equipment and objects requiring electricity do not operate when the zombie is near—cars won't start, flashlights fail, watches stop. The radius of effect of the field equals five feet per level purchased. Large groups of zombies can amplify the effect: A close group of one hundred can increase the range by a factor of ten (or fifty yards per power level). A mob of one thousand zombies increases it by a factor of one hundred (or 500 yards per power level).

Hive Mind

Power: +8

A simple expansion of the Teamwork Aspect, this ability allows total communication between zombies out to a range of 100 miles. They act as part of a single entity, coordinating attacks and activities as though part of a single mind with an Intelligence 1. If a "queen" zombie acts as the nexus for the hive, reduce the power cost for all zombies to +6. The death of this leader zombie disrupts the hive mind, and all other zombies revert to Intelligence -2.

Liche Lord

Power: +15

One zombie rules them all, and in the darkness binds them. The ZM assigns this power to one zombie in every thousand, providing this individual the equivalent of Long-term Memory and Problem Solving, as well as the ability to command undead as per the Rule The Dead power (see *AFMBE*, p. 209). Instead of paying Essence Points to command zombies, the Liche Lord pays Dead Points, which can be reconstituted by feeding.

Locust

Power: +3

When delicious human meat becomes scarce, zombies with this power can supplement their diet with whatever is handy, stripping trees of bark, devouring plants, and taking chunks out of animals. Although the zombies continue to starve, dropping by one-quarter strength for each day without ten ounces of whatever they crave, Strength cannot be reduced below 1 as they supplement their diet Greenpeace style. But they still crave sweet, sweet flesh, and gain a +2 to Perception-based Tests to find it (while starving only). After a month of foraging by a zombie army, most areas are become stripped clean and the zombies must move on, leaving a desolate land in their wake.

Sticks Around

Power: +2/level to a max of four levels

Maybe it's chemicals in the zombie's system that kill all the normal bacteria, or re-animating microbes that preserve necrotic flesh, but the zombie's functional deterioration occurs at a slower rate than normal, allowing it to delay or avoid the detrimental effects of decay (see pp. 79-84). The first level multiplies the time before skeletonization (as calculated by the formula on p. 80) by ten, the second increases it by a factor of fifty, and the third by a factor of 100. The fourth level means the zombie does not effectively decay at all, and can only be eliminated through starvation or destruction.

Of course, the body can still decay *cosmetically*, becoming more gaunt, grotesque, and gooey over time, but it retains its full abilities as long as it meets its feeding requirements.

Will of the Dead

Power: +3

Like a cobra mesmerizing its prey, the zombie can somehow stun a victim into inactivity. This may be the power of its red-eyed gaze, a wolf-like howl, or some kind of mental ability that overcomes the will of a single individual, freezing the victim in his tracks.

Make a Resisted Test between the zombies' Willpower (usually 2) plus 3 for the Power itself versus the victim's Willpower. Inspired Cast Members add +2 to their roll. The Denial and other metaphysical defenses may also aid the victim at the ZM's discretion. This effect lasts only D6 Turns, after which the victim can make another Willpower Test to break the zombies' hold on their mind.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Washington peered through his binoculars at the granite and brick building looming monstrosously atop the hill. It was still miles away, but better to check it out now before they got too close.

"What is it?" Jack asked him, crawling up next to Washington, the both of them keeping their heads low over the rise.

"Looks like it was a hospital, or . . . no, a prison."

"Damn. That'd be perfect, no?" Jack grabbed his own binoculars. "Good defenses. Practically impenetrable."

"Perfect," whispered Washington. "I mean, it's as close to a castle as we're gonna get."

Jack focused his binoculars at a different point. "The real question though . . ."

". . . is anyone home?" Washington finished the thought.

"Exactly."

They scanned for a few more seconds.

"Bingo," Jack stated, flatly. Then he started to grin. "Check out the plaza, you can just make it out . . . our 10 o'clock."

"Holy crap!" exclaimed Washington.

As he peered through the dusty lenses, Washington could just make out the telltale signs of agriculture. In one corner of the massive yard, a patch had been ordered into neat little rows. Tomatoes, cucumbers, all kinds of vegetables were being cultivated.

"They've set themselves up something good, eh?" grinned Jack.

"This could be just what we've been looking for."

"If we go up there," said Jack "we've got to do this carefully."

Washington nodded agreement. "There's not many of us, and we need them more than they need us, I bet you."

"You never know," said Jack. "You go tell the others, I'll head down and see if I can talk to someone."

"Done deal. Be careful."

"Ain't I always?" replied Jack, face split with a lopsided grin. Washington realized it was the first time he'd seen Jack anything but morose in months.

Jack reached into his pack, and pulled out a few strips of white gauze bandage. He attached them to a yard-long branch and began waving it over his head as he slid down the shale slope of the hill.



As he slowly walked towards the massive prison gates, he noticed the reflection of lenses on the parapet looking back at him. Then a second pair. He looked over his shoulder, and saw the half dozen of his companions following him, slowly, in plain sight.

He stopped, a hundred yards from the prison walls. He could count his heartbeats pounding in his chest. If the occupants were going to massacre the group, and save their supplies for themselves, now would be the time. Jack took a deep breath, and let it out slowly through his mouth.

Then came a great grinding of metal, as the prison's massive gates opened slowly before him. Marian stepped up next to him from behind, and took his hand, as they all strode, one by one or in pairs, into the yard, and into their future.

SUNSET FALLS

Introduction

It used to be a place of punishment and incarceration. Now, Cranston Prison is a small bastion of survival and hope in the face of the horrible events gripping the world. Through a fortuitous combination of the luck, quick thinking, and coincidental location, Cranston Prison has become haven to a community of survivors. Some current residents have grimly renamed the place Sunset Falls. The two names are used interchangeably.

The Zombie Master can use Sunset Falls as the setting for his own adventures (or as a model for a town of his own creation). It could be set anywhere, from the wooded splendor of New England to the rolling hills of northern California. To integrate the Cast into the setting, they might be among the initial survivors to make their way to the prison as the zombies rise up, or they might stumble upon Sunset Falls long after the Rise and take shelter there.

History

Prior to the event that led to the downfall of civilization, the city of Oaktown boasted a population of 1.2 million citizens. Tucked away in a valley surrounded by rolling hills and woodlands, the city's bustling urban center gives way to opulent suburban homes overlooking the twinkle of the city's lights, and then old growth woodlands and rural farms. A modern, four-lane highway replaced the river that once serviced the city's manufacturing and outlying agriculture, and snakes its way along the valley. Taking Exit 12, a two-lane road twists and turns its way through the dense forest to the gates of Cranston Prison. It's secluded location, far from the city center and the heart of the zombie outbreak, has made it ideal for a small survivor contingent.

Opened in 1919, Cranston Prison was once a small penitentiary for those deemed criminally insane, or whose crimes were so heinous they had to be removed from the general prison population. As with other prisons of its day, Cranston was built to warehouse criminals without regard to more modern considerations such as prisoner mental health and well-being. Its two-story cell blocks stacked prisoners in small, windowless cells, its once-modern gate system

controlled access remotely, and the construction was heavy and foreboding; the entire operation was designed solely to keep prisoners inside, controlled, and cowed. At its height it held just over 400 prisoners. A rampage by three prisoners cost the lives of four guards, two inmates, and a nurse, demonstrated that Cranston lacked the facilities offered by newer and larger prisons. The last of her inmates were transferred to more modern state facilities in the fall of 1965, and was closed pending re-dedication to other uses. This never occurred, despite the best efforts of local officials, and the prison remained abandoned up until the zombie apocalypse.

When the end came, it did so quickly. In the national media, news of a string of bizarre murders (in which the victim's throats were ripped out) became reports of whole communities under mysterious quarantines, which in turn became emergency broadcasts telling people to remain in their homes—all in a matter of weeks. People could not grasp what was happening; the idea of the dead rising was too fantastic to comprehend. By the time officials could begin to formulate a response, it was too late. The final television transmission from local affiliate TV-6 broadcast shaky pictures of the Action Newsroom being overrun by bloodthirsty zombies.

Approximately five miles to the south and downhill from the old Cranston Prison lies Oaktown Community College, the model of a small, suburban campus—a cluster of buildings surrounded by well-manicured lawns. Between semesters, the college catered to working professionals, housewives, and senior citizens with its evening adult education program. On the night of the Day of the Dead, two security guards sat in the campus police station: Moe Zweiger and Darryl Lamont. Lamont, a junior working his way through school, watched the final broadcast from the local TV station on his black-and-white television. Owing to his love of horror movies, Lamont didn't panic. Zweiger (a retired corrections officer working to supplement his social security payments) panicked a great deal, until, while fleeing the premises, he spotted Cranston Prison. What they would do next would have a huge impact on the survival of some three-dozen people.

The two combed the halls of the campus' buildings, spreading the news of the zombie attack. With a clichéd cry of “come with us if you want to live,” Lamont and Zweiger, along with a number of night students, professors, and a couple of janitors jumped into cars and made their way to the prison. Along the way, they contacted as many friends and associates as they could, and all met at Cranston's gates. Using bolt cutters to get in, the group—brave and scared alike—entered the prison. Overall, they had been extremely lucky to encounter no zombie resistance along the way.

This was not to last, and if anyone had any doubts about the existence of zombies these were quickly dispelled. With no supplies remaining in the prison, several groups made forays into Oaktown to acquire canned goods, sleeping bags, kerosene, and whatnot, and were attacked. One night, a roaming band of zombies stumbled upon the prison, demonstrating the weaknesses in the group's defenses. In both cases, the survivors suffered casualties, witnessing firsthand the effects of a zombie's bite. What the initial group of survivors thought would be a short-term retreat until authorities could rescue them has begun to look like a long-term situation. Now, the people residing within the prison walls take their survival seriously, and must begin to work together to fortify their position, restore vital services, and obtain supplies.

Life on the Inside

Cranston Prison provides an excellent facility to keep its occupants as safe from the outside as possible. After several months into the zombie uprising, the day-to-day struggle for survival settles into a routine. People begin to accept their new life, in fits and starts, and look towards satisfying the community's basic needs.

Politics

Zweiger believes he is nominally in control of the prison. He sees himself as the new warden of Cranston Prison, even if it no longer houses criminals. Thanks to his no-nonsense demeanor and commanding presence (the result of years as a prison guard), most of the other survivors are willing to follow him, so long as he's decisive. Silva Dolla is the

fly in the ointment, however. Dolla, also a “no-nonsense, get things done” kind of guy, most frequently stands up at community meetings to question Zweiger's ideas and leadership. So far, Zweiger has been willing to let the group decide any differences of opinion.

The Factions

Four factions currently reside within the walls of Cranston Prison. These factions coalesced early on, as the strong-willed among the survivors emerged as leaders, and attracted like-minded survivors as followers. These factions generally revolve around priorities and methods. Each faction wants to do things their way, whether that means directing their efforts towards shoring up defenses or fixing the old diesel generator.

One faction revolves around Moe Zweiger, the crusty old prison guard, and his right-hand man Darryl Lamont. As the nominal founders of the settlement, and responsible for the survival of many inside the prison, Zweiger and Lamont hold a lot of clout among residents. Conservative and pragmatic, which appeals to the housewives and business professionals, Zweiger's group tries to focus the group's resources on fortifying the town and making life as comfortable as possible—repairing the generators, cultivating the old prison yard, renovating the cell block, and the like. The Zweiger faction has Security 4, Survival 2 (see p. 92).

The second faction, called the “geek squad” by the other groups (some affectionately, some not), consists of a handful of professors and engineering students. Their influence stems from their ability to provide useful technology. While some of their ideas overreach—constructing solar-powered, ultra-violet zombie killers, for example—their ability to repair the generator, construct make-shift flamethrowers, and build a primitive zombie early-warning system have made them invaluable. The smallest faction, the group functions as a true democracy—they all do whatever they can all agree on. The other factions usually try to sway the geek squad their way. The geek squad supports Luxury 3 (see p. 92).

Silva Dolla, a small-time hip-hop singer from the wrong side of the tracks, leads the third faction. On an early raid for supplies, a group led by Lamont ran into Silva Dolla and his crew holed up in the Shady Lanes recording studio. Although hostile at first, and certainly well armed, an attack by zombies encouraged the two groups to work together, and they fell back to the prison grounds. Dolla's influence extends to his posse and a few of the students from the college (who were originally fans). Action-oriented and reactionary, Dolla's faction has Aggression 3.

The arrival of the Preacher and his small band of the faithful, led to the introduction of a fourth faction and a shift in the settlement's dynamics. The group arrived unexpectedly at the gate in an old school bus, having spotted movement at the prison from the highway, and requested sanctuary. As a dedicated man of god, the Preacher is quite sure of the ultimate cause for the walking dead. He believes they all await the sounding of Heaven's trumpet and the Almighty's judgment. The Preacher's faction has Survival 4, Security 1.

Each of these groups has their own ideas as to how to survive, and the settlement's priorities. Each believes they have the settlement's best interests at heart. The key to survival lies in how effectively each faction works with the others.

Clout

Each faction has its own outlook on the community's course of action. This is by no means static; opinions change all the time. One week, Zweiger's conservative faction might agree with Silva Dolla that it's important to clear out a nest of zombies living near the supermarket. The next week, Zweiger's faction may be opposed to a raid on the cemetery. Clout measures how much influence the faction has to get its point of view across, and influence the community's course of action. Clout is used to determine which faction wants what, and how badly.

The goal of this system is to establish which course of action Sunset Falls pursues (which could ultimately lead to their downfall), as well as possibly create friction within the community. Wouldn't it suck if the people of Sunset Falls killed each other over whether or not to build a still? Could happen.

Clout is measured in level from one to five (unless specified, a group's Clout is considered to be zero). The higher the faction's Clout rating, the more strongly it feels about the issue. Issues are divided into four subject areas, which define general concerns. It is not possible to list all the questions that might face a group of survivors, so the Zombie Master should try to fit whatever issue or course of action that arises into one of these categories. For example, a proposal to mine the forest surrounding the prison with landmines would fall within the Security issue, while finding fertilizer for the garden would fall under Survival. The areas are:

Aggression: Factions with a high Aggression believe the best defense is a good offense, and favor anything that takes the fight to the zombies (or whatever else might trouble the community, like refugees).

Luxury: Groups with a high Luxury rating are primarily concerned with getting things back to the way they were—electric lights, indoor plumbing, television, pizza delivery, etc. They are all over any course of action that improves the quality of life in Sunset Falls.

Security: Questions of defense and safety fall under Security. High Security ratings favor ensuring safety above all other matters—clear-cutting the forest to construct a kill zone, digging a moat, shoring up secondary defenses, and so on.

Survival: Questions of basic survival occupy the minds of these faction members. They want to make sure there is enough edible food, clean water, medicine, gasoline, and the like.

The Zombie Master is by no means bound by each faction's Clout ratings in each category. If he wants Zweiger's faction to be more gung-ho reactionary, he might adjust it to have higher Aggression, for example. In addition, new factions can be introduced to the community using this system. And ratings in each category could be combined to reflect differing priorities. One of the Supporting Cast former housewives could come to the fore and persuade people to her point of view that the most important things are getting the lights back on and kicking zombie ass (Luxury 2, Aggression 2). Finally, the ZM can add whatever new categories he wants to better reflect people's concerns.

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The ZM can use Clout as a springboard to adventure. This can be as easy as posing a question and rolling for each faction. The group with the most Clout Success Levels may win the day, and determine the community's course of action (which may not sit well with members of other factions). A tie might result in the group following two plans (each in a less ambitious form) or it might result in no immediate action (leaving the discussion to reoccur another day). Whenever the Cast Members come up with a proposal, the ZM can make Clout Tests to determine which factions (if any) they can get on board.

There are several ways in which Clout can be used:

Unopposed Goals: One faction wants to do something and no one else has a strong opinion on the matter. To get the rest of the community to go along requires an Intelligence and Clout Test by the faction's leader using the appropriate issue rating. With one Success Level, the rest of the community adopts the proposed course of action. Multiple successes may mean greater enthusiasm for the project; this could result in positive modifiers to related Task rolls.

Conflicting Goals: One group wants to follow one course of action, and another group opposes. In this case, Security opposes Aggression, and Luxury opposes Survival. Thus, the faction leader proposing an aggressive course of action would make an Intelligence and Aggression Test resisted by the opposing faction leader's Intelligence and Security. The leader's social Qualities and Drawbacks, such as Charisma and Status, could modify these Tests. The faction with the highest number of successes wins the day, successfully swaying everyone else. Again, ties result in compromise or procrastination.

Infighting: The greater the difference in Success Levels between two competing factions, the more likely hard feelings will result, potentially leading to catastrophic results. This is measured by subtracting the Success Levels of the losing side's Clout Test from those of the winning side. Consult the Infighting Table (see p. 94).

Example: The geek squad wants to build a windmill to generate electricity, but the members of the Preacher's faction want to concentrate on an irriga-



Infighting Table

Difference	Effect
1 Success	No Effect: there's some grumbling, but everyone pitches in.
2 Successes	Resentment: the opposing faction goes along with the plan, but doesn't try very hard. This may result in negative modifiers to Tasks and Tests related to accomplishing the proposed initiative.
3 Successes	Anger: the opposing faction refuses to participate in the proposed course of action.
4+ Successes	Hostility: the opposing faction is fed up, and not only won't go along with the disastrous plan, but actively opposes it. This includes imprisoning members of the other faction, cutting fuel lines to cars, hiding vital equipment, and even killing opponents.

tion system. The Preacher gets two successes more than the geek squad, and convinces everyone that the irrigation system should take higher priority. This also causes resentment among the geek squad; they may help with the project, but they're not going to go out of their way . . .

Clout is fluid, changing with the fortunes of a particular faction. As a faction's initiatives succeed, their Clout in the related area increases. A course of action that fails leads to a decrease in Clout, and falling influence in the community. For example, if Silva Dolla pushes for an assault on the hospital, and it succeeds, his faction's Aggression goes up. This helps the next time Dolla wants to push for aggressive action. If the geek squad's attempt at building a solar-powered laser fails, their Luxury Clout falls, and it's much harder for them to convince the community to expend resources on their next Big Idea. Typically, changes to Clout should be no more than plus or minus one.

Example: Silva Dolla's faction (Aggression 3) convinces the community to raid the National Guard armory for some military hardware, and this goes horribly wrong. They can't break into the warehouse, one of the trucks breaks down, and zombies attack the convoy on its way back. Dolla's faction loses one point of Aggression Clout, making it harder for them to convince the people of Sunset Falls to go on another raid.

Cast Member Factions

The Cast Members may become movers and shakers in Sunset Falls. They could become leaders of their own faction, or make up the bulk of their own faction. Unlike other

Unisystem character elements, Cast Members do not spend points to gain ratings in Clout. The Cast must earn Clout through roleplaying. Assign a Cast Member-led faction Clout points based on positions they advocate and successfully accomplish.

Thus, if the Cast argues to shore up the prison's defenses, and these work to repel a zombie attack, they gain Security 1. The ZM could, if he so desires, assign a Cast Member faction starting points in Clout based on their previous attitudes.

Doing the Work

A great number of chores and duties confront the fifty or so survivors inside Sunset Falls. Moe Zweiger, in his role as de facto leader of the community, makes the decisions about who does what, and when, and posts a weekly duty roster in the cafeteria. This keeps everyone's mind off the zombie hordes roaming outside the gates, as well as getting important jobs around the compound done.

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Foraging Duty: With no way to make their own goods, much of what Sunset Falls needs comes from whatever they can scavenge. A group of well-armed people mounts up in a vehicle and goes to town with a list of supplies. Zweiger tries to keep women off this duty, because he doesn't want the ladies put in danger (this is part chauvinism and part pragmatism—women ensure reproduction). There are two scavenging groups, made up of people who identify with either the Zweiger or Dolla factions, and their membership never varies because of the experience they gain each time they go out. Both scavenge teams have become something of a family unit within the town, bonded by the rush of adrenaline and the horrific danger they face.

Guard Duty: Everyone not permanently assigned to some other job draws guard duty, no matter her experience, and this is the largest work detail in Sunset Falls. The detail is split into three eight-hour shifts, with people manning the watchtowers. Guards are armed with rifles and shotguns.

Kitchen Duty: Those posted to kitchen duty are responsible for making the meals the community eats. Everyone eats together in the cafeteria, unless posted to guard duty (in which case, food is brought out to them). Presently, to stretch out the supplies they have currently stockpiled, the citizens have agreed to only two meals per day—breakfast and dinner. Everyone likes being posted to kitchen duty, because it means an opportunity to sneak a few extra bites. Two people in particular, Rachel Brooks and Ramona Wilkes, have been drawing kitchen duty every week, because of their food service experience (Rachel was a caterer, Ramona a school lunch lady).

Latrine Duty: No one likes it, but it has to be done. The latrines, set up at the far end of the prison yard to prevent the spread of disease (and keep the smell far away), were constructed out of plywood and rest over washtubs. Every day, a three-man crew goes out to burn the human waste with a mixture of diesel and gasoline.

Laundry Duty: Even though most of the folks in Sunset Falls escaped only with the clothes on their backs, the community generates a lot of laundry. Clean clothes do a lot to stave off disease and para-

sites, so everything gets washed. Someone has to heat water, wash the clothes, hang it to dry, and fold it.

There are other work details possible, particularly when something specific must be accomplished. Repairing the roof after a storm would require a roof detail (preferably headed by a construction worker). Tending to the crops planted in the prison yard would fall to a farm detail. Building a radio transmitter might require several people to build a transmission tower. The Zombie Master is encouraged to create as many work assignments as there are things that need to get done. And don't forget that not everyone will be happy with the job they draw.

When not working, the inhabitants try to relax. Cards, chess, and checkers are in good supply. Quite a few have taken up drinking as an unfortunate way to relive the constant stress in their zombie-haunted world; when they can't scavenge liquor from town, they must do without, leading some to put a still high on the geek squad's "to-do" list. The Preacher has given three sermons on the evils of drink so far. The geek squad is convinced video games would make a good way to blow off steam, and have made the idea part of their proposal to bring the lights back on.

Meting Out Justice

When any group of people reaches sufficient size, there arises the issue of settling disputes. So far, any disagreements have remained personal in nature, arguments mostly the result of frayed nerves (though two fist fights have broken out). Any political disputes have been solved by a vote.

Luckily, no one has yet broken any of society's laws, so they haven't had to face how they would handle murder, rape, or theft inside the community's walls. But this brings to mind a host of questions: What are the laws of Sunset Falls? Are they the laws enforced before the zombies came to town, or are they the Ten Commandments? And what do you do when someone does something anti-social? Do you lock them up in one of the cells? For how long? Do you banish them from the community, and the tender mercies of the zombies? Do you lynch 'em? Thankfully, the question of justice has yet to confront the survivors.



New Arrivals

The people of Sunset Falls generally welcome newcomers. This policy was put in place when the first group of vagrants turned up at the prison's gate, and the Preacher advocated letting them in on humanitarian grounds. Leaving them outside at the mercy of the zombies would be the same as murder. Despite the Preacher's appeals to morality, some of the original survivors are none too happy about new arrivals. They take up space, making things more cramped, and they also consume supplies. Silva Dolla's group in particular stresses that any new arrivals contribute to the community's well-being. Anyone who doesn't pull her own weight he wants exiled.

Moe Zweiger is most concerned that new arrivals not carry whatever it is that's causing the dead to rise up. To this end, the settlement only opens its gates during daylight hours, to make sure newcomers are, in fact, living. Sentries welcome arrivals at night, but they must wait until sunrise before the residents take a good look at them—from the gate and with guns trained on them from the towers. A few recent arrivals resented being forced to wait out the night on the wrong side of the settlement's gates.

Inventory

The most important need the survivors struggle to fulfill is the one for food and water—the basic needs for life. Feeding some fifty people regularly requires frequent scavenging runs to the surrounding community and Oaktown proper. So far, they've been able to scavenge mostly canned goods, half of which they stockpile for winter, and bottled water. Many of the survivors have grown paranoid about being trapped inside the prison without adequate supplies for a long siege.

In addition, the compound stockpiles as much gasoline as it can. After the electricity stopped flowing, the gas pumps stopped working, so the scavengers have been siphoning from cars. If they could figure out how to

get the gas out of the storage tanks sitting underneath the area's gas stations, the survivors would have access to much needed fuel. What gasoline they've been able to scrounge is stored in barrels at the far side of the compound.

The people of Sunset Falls have been fortunate in that they have their pick of whatever kind of vehicle they need. Exuberance in the early days for driving Porches and Mercedes quickly gave way to practical considerations, and now the survivors maintain a motor pool consisting of two pickup trucks, two SUVs, and a flatbed truck. A backhoe and bulldozer round out their vehicle needs. So far, no one stockpiled automotive parts, figuring they can loot them as they're needed.

The group maintains a small armory, composed mainly of shotguns and pistols, a few hunting rifles, and an assortment of knives and axes. One scavenging trip netted a half-dozen bows; someone suggested the arrows be converted to go "Bo and Luke" on the zombies, but no one has actually affixed explosives to them. Yet. While arrows are readily available, ammunition is not, and the survivors try to preserve ammunition as much as possible.

Wants and Needs

Despite what they have stockpiled, in order to survive in the long term, Sunset Falls has to become self-sufficient. Various things the inhabitants could want or need have been organized into four categories. These correspond to the four Clout aspects (see p. 92). This provides a list of things the community may want to accomplish. Picking a want or need and rolling for Clout could provide a springboard to adventure scenarios. The ZM can also use these lists to scale the community's progress if the Cast Members stumble upon Sunset Falls in their travels. By the time they find the community, it could be quite advanced.

This section does not list all the needs and desires possible, and likely players will think of some pretty ingenious things that would benefit the community. The Zombie Master should try to fit these into the hierarchy of needs and desires, if he intends to make Clout Tests based on them.

Security

Guns: Having more guns would make a lot of people in the community feel safer, on the idea that more is better. Scavenging civilian firearms is high on the priority list of the security minded.

Inner Defenses: Castles in the Middle Ages incorporated what was called a curtain wall—an inner wall behind which defenders could retreat to. Some occupants want to construct similar fallback positions. These plans include barricading one of the cellblocks as a third line of defense.

Early Warning System: Using flares and tripwires, the community has a plan to construct an early warning system in case anyone (or *anything*) tries to sneak up on the wall.

Escape Route: Should the zombies breach the perimeter the survivors need a way to get out, preferably one in which the zombies cannot follow. This could include anything from digging a tunnel to running a primitive cable car system to the valley floor.

Moat: In addition to the thick, stone walls protecting the prison, the inhabitants of Sunset Falls want to dig a moat at the wall's base. Various ideas include filling it with gasoline or tar, or keeping it an empty, ten-foot deep trench. This task would either require a backhoe (which consumes precious, precious gas) or a lot of digging (which requires time).

Searchlights: If the power gets running, the security conscious want the old searchlights in the guard towers hooked up to the generators. This way, they can fire up the generator at night and scan the area outside the gates.

Aggression

Deer Stand: Some of the hunters in the community want to hunt zombies as they once did deer. By setting up deer stands in trees outside the walls, the community would have a forward line of defense, as well as an early warning system (the hunters could set off flares). Of course, this exposes whoever sits in the trees to potential danger.

Firestorm: Like the deer stand idea, this aggressive plan attempts to kill zombies on the survivor's terms. It is also pretty risky. Using a lure of some type—a human, of course—the survivors attract a

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group of zombies into an abandoned building (preferably one unimportant to the survivors, like a house). Then, they set it on fire or detonate pre-arranged explosives. No one has yet to volunteer to be the bait, however.

The Lure: Silva Dolla's right-hand man, G, has a plan to lure zombies out of an area and kill them, making it safer for a supply run. One scavenger group lures the zombies away from the hospital or supermarket or wherever, while a second scavenger team enters the now-empty building. But how can the second team be sure the target area is empty? And what if more zombies show up than the first team can handle?

Military Hardware: If guns are good, fully-automatic guns with integral grenade launchers are better. The more assertive in the compound want to run down to the National Guard Armory and pick up some M-16s, claymore mines, and grenade launchers. On the downside, few among them have trained to use these items.

Recon: The community needs information. Sitting inside the compound, waiting for the zombies to show up, isn't a long-term plan. The more survivors there are, the more people to combat the zombies. Some action-oriented community members want to take a few of the group's precious vehicles, stock them with supplies, pick a direction, and drive. Maybe they can find other pockets of survivors out there.

Survival

Ammo: Guns are the main way the settlement protects itself, and everyone would feel more comfortable with more ammo. Although bullets are always high on the priority list for scavenger forays, eventually the supplies at area gun shops will run out. Sunset Falls needs a way to make its own bullets and shotgun shells.

Food: Sunset Falls cannot thrive on canned food forever. Eventually, they're going to have to cultivate their own. This could include establishing a farm in the prison yard, raising livestock, or regularly hunting in the surrounding forest. Each



of these alternatives could require several individual tasks—locating seeds and farm tools, building an irrigation system, constructing animal pens, and so on.

Fuel: Always in short supply, Sunset Falls needs various kinds of fuel—gasoline to power the backhoe and bulldozer, firewood for heat and cooking, batteries to power flashlights. Anything that satisfies the community's never-ending need for power is high on the priority list (depending on its feasibility), from taking car batteries out of abandoned vehicles to converting cars to steam power to finding a way to get gas out of the storage tanks beneath the local gas station.

Medical Supplies: Although the community lacks a doctor, a few former Boy Scouts know the basics of first aid. Scavengers put a high value on obtaining simple medical supplies such as bandages, splints, aspirin, and antibiotics.

Trash: Sunset Falls makes a lot of trash, thanks mostly to their reliance on canned food. This raises issues of rodent control and animal scavenging. Already, rats have become a problem. Options for dealing with the trash issue include hauling it elsewhere and incineration, each with its own downside.

Luxury

Alcohol: Some of the people of Sunset Falls have persistently requested alcohol. While the scavengers can loot bottles of booze, a handful of citizens want to build a still. The Preacher is against this on moral grounds; Zweiger doesn't want everyone getting drunk on guard duty.

Alternate Power Generation: Rather than generating electricity by burning fossil fuels, Sunset Falls could benefit from alternate means of power generation, such as solar, wind, or hydroelectric. Unfortunately, each of these would require sophisticated equipment to construct. If successful, the community would have limitless power.

Computers: The geek squad wants these more than anything else, because they believe they would be useful in many areas, such as tracking the consumption of supplies and monitoring zombie activity (and they didn't get a chance to finish Halo 2 before the fall of civilization).

Hydroponics: Rather than relying on traditional farming, which is susceptible to weather and the passing of seasons, the community could convert one of the cellblocks into a hydroponics farm—which would allow them to grow food all year long. This requires a sophisticated, temperature controlled, recycling system.

Radio: Setting up a radio transmitter could attract other survivors and refugees to Sunset Falls, or perhaps pick up radio signals from communities unaffected by the zombie uprising.

Combining Needs and Clout

The community's potential needs, as represented by the entries under Needs and Wants, combine with a faction's Clout aspects to guide the Zombie Master as to what each group could possibly agitate for. If a faction wants to satisfy a particular need or desire, they attempt to do so by exercising their Clout.

Example: The geek squad wants to build a radio transmitter, and they're opposed by both Zweiger and the Preacher. The leader of the geek squad makes an Intellect and Clout Test (using their Luxury 3), opposed by Preacher's Survival 4 and Zweiger's Survival 2. Preacher wins, successfully convincing everyone that their time and energy is better spent elsewhere. And depending on the difference between each faction's success levels, the geek squad might take matters into their own hands. With a vengeance.

Prison Facilities

Cranston Prison is located along the northernmost point of a windy bend on a well-maintained, two-lane road. The road twists and turns through the forest, making visibility around curves poor. Long ago, when the prison remained functioning, the surrounding trees were cleared back away from the walls, to make it easier to spot escape attempts, though this is now a tangle of underbrush as the forest reclaimed the land. From the outside, the forty-foot high, massive stonework walls surrounding the prison appear imposing and impenetrable. The road terminates at the prison's main gate, two steel doors topped by an iron archway bearing the prison's name in rusted letters. An inner pair of doors allowed the guards to control access to the prison and hold vehicles while they were searched.

Watchtowers at each corner allowed guards to keep an eye on both the yard and the area beyond the walls. The towers each featured powerful spotlights, which for some inexplicable reason were left behind after the prison was closed (much to the benefit of its current occupants). Each of the towers was kept isolated from the others so that if prisoners captured one of them the others wouldn't be compromised; they are not connected by catwalks. Each tower is accessed through a heavy steel door and a climb up metal stairs to the observation platform.

The prison grounds consist of an administration building, two cellblocks, cafeteria, a physical plant building (housing the generator, oil tanks and pumping equipment), the warden's house, and yard.

Overview

Constructed primarily out of concrete and stone, each of the prison buildings is a testament to a bygone era of construction. The buildings are squat and heavy, with a distinctly gothic feel, giving Sunset Falls a foreboding atmosphere. The same heavy, block construction now serves well in protecting the latest inhabitants from the depredations of the walking dead.

Administration Building

Three stories tall, the administrative building once housed the warden's office, guard's changing room, infirmary, and armory. The interior walls were painted a neutral, institutional off-white, now peeling with age. The doors are wood with frosted glass, many still bearing lettering for their former occupants. Stairwell doors are made of metal with heavy sliding bolts designed to hold off determined prisoners. The windows in the administration building consist of thick plate reinforced with an interior wire mesh. Whatever furniture the various rooms held has long disappeared (though the locker room still has lockers, and the gun racks remain in the armory).

Currently, the majority of the survivors live in the former administration building, finding it less dreary than the old cellblocks. Should survivors continue to arrive, the settlers may be forced to warehouse them in the cellblocks.

Infirmary

The infirmary occupies a third of the first floor, and comprises two dingy, gray-walled examination rooms, a four-bed hospital ward, and a private room meant for dangerous inmates or contagious patients. One of the examination rooms is clearly set up for lobotomy treatments—a dentist's chair modified with head restraints is bolted to the floor. The other rooms were emptied out when the prison was closed.

Cell Block A

Cell Block A housed the general prison population, some of the most violent criminals in the state's history. The three-story building holds cells organized into three tiers. Only two doors provide access to the building, each protected by a guard station (which controlled the prisoner's cell doors when the electricity was working). The cellblock has a single, glass-faced wall protected by bars to let in light; the prisoner's cells are windowless.

Silva Dolla and those in his group live in Cell Block A; Dolla thinks this is ironic—a hip-hop star choosing to live in a cell. While the cells still hold bunk beds, they lack bedding. And the metal toilets and sinks don't work, of course.

Cell Block B

Cell Block B was reserved for special inmates, and differs accordingly. This is where death row, the electrocution chamber, the mental ward, and solitary confinement, were located. Unlike Cell Block A, the building was constructed in two floors. The first floor held death row inmates, while the second floor was reserved for the criminally insane, and the basement included cells for solitary. Every cell has a window covered by steel bars. Like Cell Block A, two doors provide access to the building, though all three floors maintained separate guard stations at either end of the halls.

Death Row

The ground story was dedicated to those prisoners awaiting execution. Although a small prison, Cranston had a larger percentage of death row inmates than other institutions. Cells on both sides of a central hall housed only one prisoner at a time. Today, the cells stand empty, the beds and fixtures long since removed. The settlers store their supplies here, despite complaints of odd cold sensations and a “creepy” feeling pervading the block.

Electrocution Chamber

The room at the far end of the hall housed the execution chamber. Actually two rooms separated by a thick pane of glass, the chamber allowed observers to witness the electrocution of the condemned. The chamber proper is distinctive in the large metal chair, with leg, chest, and arm restraints, and small, metal cap. The heavy switch mounted on the nearby wall remains. The electrocution chamber can be successfully run from the prison’s backup generators if one were inclined to try it, but doing so significantly drains power to other areas of the prison. So far, the settlers have left this room alone.

Mental Ward

The mental ward takes up the second floor of the cellblock. Some minimal soundproofing and baffles were added in the early ‘60s, and someone made the odd decision to have the walls painted a glossy, light beige color (now flaking off). Unlike the first floor, heavy doors with little sliding window covers line both sides of the hallway. Beds and bedding were left behind, though the latter is moldy. Despite the priva-

cy afforded by the doors, most settlers are creeped out by this area and leave it alone.

Shock Therapy

At the end of the hall, above the electrocution chamber on the first floor, is the old shock therapy room. The room is nearly bare, except the metal bed frame, set with restraining straps, and the shock machine itself, a large cabinet-sized monstrosity that apparently could not be removed (and remains hooked up to the prison’s electrical grid).

Solitary

In the basement are the cells for solitary confinement. Windowless and cold, furnished with a cot and metal bathroom fixtures, these cells weren’t pleasant to stay in. Like the mental ward on the third floor, these cells have doors inset with a small eye slit, though they’re heavier in construction.

Building C

This two-story building houses the kitchen and cafeteria. Tall windows covered in steel mesh provide natural light. The mess hall features two-dozen long tables arranged in two columns of twenty-four tables. The benches have long since disappeared, so the settlers scavenged metal folding chairs. At the far end of the room stand the old steam tables, still functional, where food was served. Past this, through a pair of swinging doors, is the kitchen—incorporating huge, institutional appliances considered modern for the 1950s. A large walk-in refrigerator stands empty, the motor and cooling unit removed when the prison was closed (same for the walk-in freezer). This is where the town takes its meals, and holds any community meetings. The second floor consists of catwalks used by the guards to keep watch over the prisoners.

Physical Plant

This is a spacious building adjacent to the western cellblock where two massive, diesel-powered electric generators and their accompanying fuel tanks are housed. There is a small control room that monitors the generators and their output levels on meters and indicator lights. Located in the same building is a diesel-powered pump that brings up water from the prison’s well.

Warden's House

A moderately sized Victorian styled house, the survivors first used the former warden's home as a sleeping area. As the size of the community grew, it became a social club of sorts, offering the townsfolk a "normal" place to socialize in comfort. When the Preacher arrived, the community decided to give the house to him, but he refused, instead choosing to simply take the master bedroom. Those survivors drawn to his charisma moved in, as well, and the house now frequently echoes with music, gospel, and sermons. Many of the survivors attend the Preacher's services, seeking the comfort of the familiar and the reassurance of the religion.

Supporting Cast

The people who now make their home in Cranston Prison represent a cross-section of American life at the beginning of the 21st century. There are housewives and businessmen, students and teachers, entertainers and the devout. Each of these survivors has their own personality and viewpoint, which in a small, confined space surrounded by zombies could lead to tension. Anyone who has watched *Survivor* on TV knows how a clash of personalities or difference of opinion can quickly lead to a collapse of group cohesion. In order for everyone to survive, and rebuild civilization, they must work together for the common good.

Zombie Master Notes

In the Sunset Falls setting, the survivors are trapped inside a dilapidated old prison abandoned forty years ago. They're surrounded by a hostile countryside crawling with zombies. But it's not just about the undead. It's about survival. Eventually, the zombies will die off, and the Cast Members will have to rebuild civilization, perhaps by finding other pockets of survivors and working with them. Or they might be the only humans to outlast the zombies.

But before they can worry about rebuilding, the community could tear itself apart from the inside. The Cast must balance the interests of Moe Zweiger's conservatives, Silva Dolla's reactionaries, and the others, or perhaps form their own faction and take charge. Survival is by no means assured.

The Sunset Falls setting incorporates themes of isolation, internal strife, and clout. Each adventure should emphasize the community's need for self-sufficiency. Maybe they don't have something they need, and can't call on someone else to help, or the Cast can't get help from the rest of the community (because they're trapped in town, for example). On the other hand, there might be another survivor community nearby who can help, if the Cast can only get to them (or maybe they won't help, after all). Or getting someone inside the prison to open up and trust again could be the goal (they've isolated themselves from the rest of the group). Every major decision confronting the community should result in debate, factional infighting, and possibly conflict. Competing groups should have to exercise clout to get things done, or these plans might fail miserably, dooming Sunset Falls.

The mood is decidedly tense and creepy. When running adventures, the Zombie Master should emphasize the gloomy corridors, heavy architecture, and decay. Cranston Prison isn't bright, even if the lights were working. Keep things tense by throwing red herrings into the mix—strange creaks and groans, flickering candles, slamming doors—stuff to make players think, "this is it . . . something bad is about to happen." So what if it turns out to be a stray cat or the wind? Maybe next time, it'll be zombies!

Don't Forget the Zombies

The text is purposely vague on the origins of the zombies and their abilities. This was done to provide the Zombie Master with maximum flexibility, allowing her to include whatever zombie creations she desires, with little impact on the basic setting. So the ZM will have to design her own zombies using the rules from the *AFMBE* corebook (don't forget the Aspects from the various supplements, to keep the players guessing).

The setting makes some basic assumptions about the zombie's abilities. They're dumb, slow, and clumsy, just like the basic zombie (see *AFMBE*, p. 146). They're not tool-users, nor do they have long-term memories. The town's defenses are built on these premises, thanks to the advice of zombie "expert" Darryl Lamont. Of course, these assumptions are likely false, which is how Zombie Masters

Moe Zweiger

Survivor

A former career corrections officer, Moe Zweiger found his social security checks and pension payments didn't go as far as he'd hoped. The guard job he took at the local college to supplement his income turned out to be a godsend—literally. Zweiger is in excellent shape for his age. His statements are peppered with expressions from earlier times, such as “now we're cooking with gas” and “put that in your pipe and smoke it”.

Zweiger sees himself as the nominal leader of Sunset Falls, and acts like the warden of the prison (old habits die hard). After years spent as a corrections officer, Zweiger is not used to having his word challenged. Inside the town, he is a bit of a bull in a china shop. He has no time for “molly-coddling” and no patience for stupidity, and he lets it show.

Strength 3	Constitution 4
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 2
Perception 3	Willpower 4
Life Points 38	Speed 14
Endurance Points 23	Essence Pool 19

Qualities/Drawbacks: Addiction (Habitual Drinking) (1), Fast Reaction Time (2), Hard to Kill (1), Strong Stomach

Skills: Brawling 3, Dodge 2, Driving (Car) 2, Electronic Surveillance 2, First Aid 3, Gambling 1, Guns (Handgun) 4, Guns (Shotgun) 3, Hand Weapon (Club) 4, Intimidation 3, Questioning 3, Surveillance 2, Weight Lifting 3

Darryl Lamont

Norm

Lamont serves as Zweiger's right hand man. A film student working as a college guard to put himself through college, Darryl Lamont had little in the way of a social life at school, but more than enough time to catch up on his favorite pastime: zombie movies. Darryl had a magnificent collection of zombie movies, on videotape and DVD. He considers himself an expert on the genre, and with the arrival of the walking dead, believes he is a leading expert on the subject. Unfortunately, many times he's wrong about what the real zombies can do. Luckily, his mistaken information hasn't cost anyone their life . . . yet.

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 3
Perception 3	Willpower 2
Life Points 26	Speed 8
Endurance Points 23	Essence Pool 14

Qualities/Drawbacks: Nerves of Steel (2), Paranoid (2), Photographic Memory (2), Showoff (2)

Skills: Camerawork 3, Computer 3, Computer Programming 2, Driving (Scooter) 3, Electronics 3, Fine Arts (Cinema/Zombie Movies) 4, Guns (Handgun) 2, Notice 3, Occult Knowledge 3, Persuade 2, Swimming 2, Writing (Screenplay) 4

can endanger the Cast Members. The survivors of Sunset Falls are in for a rude surprise if the zombies figure out a way over the wall, begin to work as a pack, or exhibit supernatural powers. So far, encounters between the survivors and zombies have been brief—an attack on a scavenging party, small raids by zombies on the prison walls—so it's possible they haven't seen all there is to see about the zombies (which gives the ZM plenty of cover for intro-

ducing new Aspects). If, on the other hand, the settlers have extensive experience with the zombies (maybe the Cast happens upon Sunset Falls long after the Day of the Dead), the town should adjust its defenses to match the zombies' abilities.

When designing the zombies, the ZM should think about what they can do and where they came from. For example, if the zombies have a supernatural origin, the dead may claw their way out of their graves, thus making anyone who dies of natural causes (or non-zombie causes) a potential threat. And they may last longer, too, if supported by some supernatural energy, so the people of Sunset Falls might have a

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Typical Sunset Falls Citizen

Norm

The general folk of Sunset Falls come from a wide range of backgrounds. Nonetheless, they have gained some common skills in their time in the survivor encampment. A variety of professions and skills are represented among the population of the town. The Zombie Master should assign a few points to some key skills as needed. The town cooks obviously have Cooking 1 or 2 at least; mechanics, electricians, accountants, and a myriad of other jobs can likewise be quickly created. Don't forget that hobby skills can be as important as professions, too.

Strength 2

Dexterity 2

Perception 3

Life Points 26

Endurance Points 23

Skills: Climbing 2, Driving (Car) 2, First Aid 2, Hand Weapon (Axe) 3, Notice 3, Survival (Forest) 2

Constitution 2

Intelligence 3

Willpower 2

Speed 8

Essence Pool 14

Sunset Falls Scavenger

Norm

As members of one of the community's scavenger groups, these Supporting Cast characters are more capable than the average townsfolk. They encounter zombies repeatedly, and have become used to racing against time during frequent supply raids.

Strength 2

Dexterity 2

Perception 3

Life Points 26

Endurance Points 23

Skills: Climbing 2, Driving (Car) 3, First Aid 2, Dodge 3, Guns (Shotgun) 4, Hand Weapon (Axe) 3, Repair 3, Notice 4, Scrounging 3, Survival (Urban) 3

Constitution 2

Intelligence 3

Willpower 2

Speed 8

Essence Pool 14

Silva Dolla

Survivor

While he paints the image of a tough, street-smart hip-hop thug, "Silva Dolla" (real name of Corey Douglass) is really a thoughtful, intelligent man. Silva Dolla gave himself over to his persona long ago, using his menacing demeanor as a defense mechanism on the street; he found if he acted tough, the people in his neighborhood left him alone. He had made it big on the local club scene and had just signed a contract with a local record producer when the dead began to walk.

Silva Dolla has a complex—honestly believing that life is about him. He's taken the attack of the walking dead personally, as though they'd risen up just to mess up his career. Sometimes, he needs to be reminded that it's not just his life that has changed as a result of the zombie plague.

Strength 3

Dexterity 4

Perception 3

Life Points 34

Endurance Points 23

Qualities/Drawbacks: Attractiveness (2), Covetous (Conspicuous) (-3), Cruel (-2), Delusions (All About Him) (-2),

Skills: Acting 2, Brawling 2, Climbing 1, Dodge 2, Driving (Car) 2, Gambling 3, Guns (Handgun) 3, Hagglng 1, Intimidation 2, Notice 2, Singing 4, Smooth Talking 3, Streetwise 4, Writing (Rap) 4

Constitution 3

Intelligence 4

Willpower 3

Speed 14

Essence Pool 20

long time to wait before they can rebuild society. It could be hard to avoid encounters with zombies while on scavenger hunts, if the zombies have Life Sense.

More Brains

The Sunset Falls setting only details the main Supporting Cast Members and provides two incomplete templates for other settlers. A good, realistic-feeling community, however, requires a little more

Eugene ("G") Thomas

Norm

"G" (don't call him Eugene) doesn't talk much. Older than his friend Silva Dolla, G has been providing bodyguard services to "his man" for years. Eugene, who actually doesn't mind his name, isn't a punk or a rapper; he's a former U.S. Marine. After honorable discharge, Eugene went looking for work, and with his practiced hard look and his stout, intimidating frame, he ended up in the security business. One thing led to another, and here he is. When around Silva Dolla, G is generally quiet, preferring to watch.

Strength 3

Dexterity 4

Perception 3

Life Points 47

Endurance Points 23

Constitution 4

Intelligence 3

Willpower 3

Speed 16

Essence Pool 20

Qualities/Drawbacks: Covetous (Lecherous) (-2), Cruel (-1), Fast Reaction Time (2), Hard to Kill (3), Nerves of Steel (3), Situational Awareness (2)

Skills: Brawling 2, Climbing 1, Demolitions 2, Dodge 2, Driving (Car) 2, First Aid 1, Guns (Auto Rifle) 3, Guns (Handgun) 2, Guns (Shotgun) 2, Guns (Sniper Rifle) 4, Hand Weapon (Bayonet/Rifle) 3, Stealth 2, Survival (Forest) 2, Survival (Desert) 2, Swimming 2

detail and diversity for long-term play. Over time, the Cast Members should get to know Marge the cafeteria worker and Lawrence the former lawyer, if for no other reason than that their deaths have more impact. And given the small number of occupants, it's possible the Cast returns repeatedly for help from specific Supporting Cast Members, so it's a good idea for the ZM to keep track of their Attributes and skills.

The way in which the community took shape allows for Zombie Masters to add nearly any concept as one of the inhabitants. The night classes in session at the local college from which Moe and Darryl gath-

The Preacher

Inspired

Tall, thin, and moving in a deliberate, oft-times jerky way, the man known as the Preacher arrived at the prison gates in an old school bus filled with the faithful. He and his flock had traveled from town to town, picking up survivors, and requested sanctuary within the community.

The Preacher doesn't use his given name anymore. Since the Day of the Dead, he has gone simply by "the Preacher." He doesn't talk at all about life before the zombie uprising, and he remains mostly a mystery. He serves as the conscience of Sunset Falls, providing bible quotes and religiously-themed advice whenever it seems appropriate. Rather than a folksy, down-home demeanor, or a steadfast authority figure, the Preacher seems distant and remote, as though truly touched by the Almighty.

Strength 3

Dexterity 3

Perception 3

Life Points 34

Endurance Points 38

Constitution 3

Intelligence 3

Willpower 5

Speed 12

Essence Pool 35

Qualities/Drawbacks: Delusion (He speaks the words of God) (-2), Gift (5), Honorable (-3), Increased Essence Pool (3), Inspiration (5), Recurring Nightmare (-1),

Skills: Driving (Motorcycle) 2, Guns (Handgun) 1, Humanities (Theology) 4, Instruction 2, Language (Latin) 2, Myth and Legend 2, Notice, 2, Occult Knowledge 2, Singing 3, Play Instrument (Guitar) 4, Storytelling 4

Metaphysics: Divine Sight, Holy Fire, Touch of Healing

ered the initial survivors provide a means for adding several different types of characters (housewives, businessmen, and retirees to name three). Additional settlers could come from nearly any walk of life. For Zombie Masters low on time or inspiration, take a

Professor Eric Rhodes

Norm

Professor Eric Rhodes is a typical member of the geek squad. A professor of mechanical engineering at the local college, Prof. Rhodes was holding a study session for some of the engineering students on the night the zombies took over the world. Despite his former position of authority, he prefers to think of himself as one of the boys. He doesn't believe in hierarchies or authority or any of the trappings of the education system.

Rhodes tends to get wrapped up in trying to find solutions to whatever problems he's presented with. Ask him how to convert an internal combustion engine to ethanol, and he'll whip out a piece of paper and pencil, and start figuring. When he's in the middle of a project, it can be hard to get his attention. Still a teacher at heart, he uses almost any opportunity to educate the younger members of the geek squad, treating potentially vital questions as a "learning experience." Often, if someone asks the geek squad to make something, they'll turn over three different designs.

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 4
Perception 3	Willpower 3
Life Points 26	Speed 10
Endurance Points 26	Essence Pool 17
Qualities/Drawbacks:	Honorable (-1), Cowardly (-1)

Skills: Bureaucracy 3, Computers 2, Dodge 2, Driving 2, Electronics 4, Engineering (Mechanical) 5, Instruction 4, Mechanic 3, Sciences (Mathematics) 4

look at *The Book of Archetypes* series—several of the Archetypes contained therein could be added to Sunset Falls without any tinkering (the Crazy Teen, Fatalistic Corp Executive, Fireman, Ham Radio Jammer, and Obnoxious Lady all come to mind, as does our favorite from *AFMBE*—the Cheerleader).

Finally, as time passes, new arrivals could make their way to the doorstep of Cranston Prison (and not all of them looking for shelter and security, either). This provides a way for the Zombie Master to continually recycle new Supporting Cast Members into the mix.

Infrastructure

The most important assumption about Sunset Falls involves the collapse of infrastructure. Without the many people needed to keep a modern society functioning, the systems people have come to depend on fail. Sunset Falls lacks all of the things people take for granted—electricity, gasoline, running water, telephones, and so on. Some or all of these might continue to function for quite some time, however, until these utilities run out of whatever supplies they require, the system breaks down due to neglect, or the zombies get their smashing fists on them. It's entirely possible the folks holed up in Cranston Prison still have electricity, running water, and even telephone service until the Zombie Master sees fit to take it away.

Adventures Seeds

Using Sunset Falls, the Zombie Master can tell a host of different stories centered in and around the prison, each involving situations faced by a small, determined band of refugees. In addition to these stories, ideas from the Deadworlds in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* (such as Grave Impact and Sacred Soil, or even After the Bomb) could be appropriate.

Scavenger Hunt

An adventure with legs, the scavenger hunt story can be run again and again. The community has run out of something, or needs something, and the Cast Members are the ones sent out to go out and get it. This can be anything from cans of Spam to locating someone lost in the zombie-filled city. In order for this kind of adventure to seem fresh each time the Zombie Master uses it, he should vary details such as the location, enemies, and secondary hazards. One week might see the Cast Members scavenging for a carburetor at local auto supply stores and confronting violent refugees, while the next week requires them to go out in search of penicillin at the hospital and face off against zombies.

The scavenger hunt story template could also be used as McGuffins—an excuse to tell a different kind of story. While scavenging for something somewhere, the Cast Members might face a new kind of zombie, find some clue to finally stop the zombies, be captured by raiders, or stumble onto another kind of mystery entirely.

Murder

One day, someone in the compound disappears. At first, a casual search turns up nothing (“Hey, have you seen Roy?” “Yeah, I think he’s in the shop.”), but by nightfall it becomes apparent that he’s missing. No one can find this person, until several days later when someone on trash detail notices a shoe, uncovers it a bit, and discovers it attached to a dead body—that of the missing person. A zombie did not kill the body, that much is clear—there are no bite marks. Moreover, the vicious stab wound is a dead giveaway (pardon the pun). Someone inside the walls of Sunset Falls is a murderer, and killed for some reason.

This gruesome discovery leads to paranoia and fear within the community. The Zombie Master can really play up the tension, especially with zombies stalking the countryside. People barricade themselves away from everyone else, carry weapons for their own protection, and trade accusations (no matter how flimsy). It’s up to the Cast to sort out what happened and identify the killer. They’ll have to interrogate people, look for the murder weapon, find the actual crime scene—all the stuff a police detective would do. And they have to do it in primitive surroundings, with zombies stalking outside the encampment’s gates. It’s up to the ZM to figure out the details and motive, then leave sufficient clues for the Cast to follow.

The Good Doctor

One day, a doctor joins the community of Sunset Falls. Either the Cast rescues him while on a foray into town, or he simply shows up outside the prison walls looking for someplace to stay. Since the settlement desperately needs a doctor, the people of Sunset Falls offer him their hospitality.

Over the next few weeks, the doctor sets up shop in the old infirmary. He draws up a list of medical equipment he needs, ranging from the simple (tongue depressors, a stethoscope, aspirin) to the complex

Dr. Ernest Kaylaver

Survivor

Before the dead started walking the Earth in search of brains to eat, Doctor Kaylaver was a medical researcher. He worked for a large pharmaceutical company, looking for new drugs to combat disease. He’s genial enough, gladly making time to treat townsfolk. However, over time he becomes increasingly obsessed with zombies, spending more and more time alone, taking unnecessary risks to get closer to them, and pushing to obtain research samples (i.e., live zombies).

He might actually be the source of the zombie uprising, the result of his original medical research.

Strength 2

Dexterity 4

Perception 3

Life Points 26

Endurance Points 29

Qualities/Drawbacks: Humorless (-1), Obsession (-2), Status (Doctor) (2)

Constitution 2

Intelligence 5

Willpower 4

Speed 12

Essence Pool 20

Skills: Bureaucracy 2, Computers 1, Driving 2, First Aid 4, Hand Weapon (Scalpel) 3, Instruction 3, Language (Latin) 4, Medicine (Neuro-pharmacology) 5, Research/Investigation 4, Sciences (Biology) 4, Sciences (Chemistry) 3, Smooth Talking 4

(heart monitor, respirator, ultrasound). If the camp lacks electricity, he wants a portable generator to run all the high-tech equipment. While this exposes the salvage teams to danger, certainly it’s good to have a doctor in the house and folks support his requests. This alone could provide several adventures.

Things seem fine, until Doctor Kaylaver begins suggesting studying the zombies. At first, he makes this suggestion casually, but over the weeks and months, he turns more insistent. They need to know more about the zombies, what they can do, how they

respond to certain stimulus, how they animate, in order to better fight them. Perhaps they could find a way to reverse the reanimation process . . . This may appeal to the Geek Squad (out of scientific curiosity) and Silva Dolla (for more practical reasons); the ZM should make Clout tests for both.

This story line could play out in many ways. The survivors could try to capture a living zombie and imprison it for study. (You just know it's going to escape and share the love). Or, if voted down, the doctor might take matters into his own hands, and keep a zombie penned up in an abandoned part of the prison. Alternatively, the various factions within the prison could split on the issue, leading to infighting.

Sabotage

This scenario calls the community's open door policy towards new arrivals into question. At some point, someone new joins the community. A scavenger group returns from a raid with this person in tow, or he shows up outside the gate one day and asks to be let in. This can lead to a nice bit of roleplaying, as the Cast and Supporting Cast debate the pros and cons of letting a stranger in (maybe leading to factional divisions). But this story works much better if the Cast has something to do with his rescue; they find him while they're outside the settlement's walls, perhaps saving him from a zombie attack.

However he is introduced, he tells a simple tale. Before the Rise, he was an electrician. Afterwards, he survived on his own, making his way overland in search of other survivors and a place unaffected by zombies. He's been alone for months, living off the land, and the people of Sunset Falls are the first he's seen in a long time. He got by through hunting, and holing up in abandoned buildings by night. Of course, this is all a lie.

At first, this person makes himself useful in the community. The Zombie Master might even run another adventure to throw the Cast off his scent, or introduce him during another scenario. After about a week, something vitally important to Sunset Falls disappears—car batteries, gasoline, ammunition, or perhaps all three, along with one of the community's vehicles. A quick search reveals that the newest community member is missing.

At this point, the problem becomes one of tracking down the culprit and getting the stuff back. The guy actually belongs to a band of raiders traveling the land in modified SUVs, recreation vehicles, and trucks. Not only do the Cast Members have to retrieve their goods from these raiders, they have to fight off zombies. Another way to play this out would be to have the raiders assault the compound after hearing about how nice things are behind the prison walls.



CHAPTER EIGHT

As if the rest of this book weren't enough, this final chapter introduces six new Deadworlds. Each of these settings was designed with a long-term campaign in mind, using a central theme of survival. Most of these settings are situated many years after the zombies have risen, and society has come to grips with the horrors of the undead, in one way or another.

THE FUTURE'S SO DARK

Croatoan Rising

By Bastien Pilon

On May 22nd, I went to bed after saying good night to my wife and three children. It was the last time I saw any of them.

The next thing I knew, a week later, I was wandering the streets in my pajamas. After that, I hooked up with a bunch of other frightened people. We didn't know what had happened or how the dead had managed to return from the grave. But in the end we just tried not to think about it; nothing quite like impending death to keep your mind off things.

Eventually, we managed to escape from the city and start over. It's been twenty years since I lost everything that mattered in my life. I won't lose this. This is my home and I will never let it go as long as there's a breath left in me.

But if they're right about what's coming out of those cities, that might not be long . . .

History

During the night of May 23rd 2004, an event occurred that changed the world. The only problem is, no one remembers it.

Everything was business as usual for the human race before that fateful night. The world went on much as it had—people woke up, ate breakfast, went to work . . . then it happened. What exactly occurred no one knows, or can agree upon. After the Event, theories included everything from space aliens to an Illuminati plot to the Wrath of God. What happened after the Event everyone can agree upon. Half of the human population on Earth simply vanished. Homes were left empty, meals left half-eaten on tables, televisions left running, showers still turned on. The cities and towns, whole communities, became almost totally uninhabited overnight. Of those who remained, no one could remember what had happened, and they discovered they'd lost a week of time.

How does the human mind absorb the unexplained disappearance of half the population—mothers and wives, brothers and children, friends and co-workers vanishing into thin air? How do you search for three billion missing persons? Chaos, confusion, and fear gripped the world's population.

This was compounded by the strange phenomena people observed. The old, familiar constellations no longer appeared in the night sky, replaced by nothing at all. During the day, the sun didn't appear right—perhaps hanging larger in the sky, and more an angry orange than a comforting yellow. And while governments and the media began searching for answers, the flesh-eating zombies began to appear.

It started slowly at first, reports of bizarre deaths and strange attacks filtering into the system. But the attacks kept coming, becoming larger and more brazen. Television footage of a riot captured the awful truth—an army of zombies carved a brutal trail of carnage through the crowd. And these reports were duplicated around the world—Moscow, Tokyo, Sydney, Rio de Janeiro, Kigali . . . No one knew where the zombies came from, and there was a strong suspicion that the missing population and the zombies were one and the same (though there was no way to prove this conclusively).

Chaos erupted almost immediately. Military and police forces around the world tried to contain the undead, but with their reduced manpower they could not react decisively and were overwhelmed. People fled the world's cities in a mass exodus, hoping to escape the deathtraps they had become. Roads became clogged with traffic, and prime feeding grounds for the zombies when the sun went down. The survivors hoped more isolated rural areas would be safer. No one knows how many of the survivors of the Event lived through the zombie attacks and made it to relative safety.

That was ten years ago.

The State of Things to Come

After ten years of recovery, the human race has adapted to its new environment. The majority of the population regrouped in small farming communities, or fortified existing small towns; the cities have long been abandoned. While some countries have tried to remain modern nation-states, complete with a central authority, most have fragmented into a collection of archaic city-states or medieval walled cities. They eke out an existence as best they can, some even still have electricity, as they fend off frequent zombie attacks. Few travel between these walled communities at night. Outside the barricades, some brave or insane

souls have taken up a nomadic way of life, trying to keep ahead of the zombie hordes and scrounging up whatever they can. It looks as though the world might recover from whatever it was that changed the Earth.

Then again, rumors of strange, twisted creatures emerging from the abandoned cities spread like a disease through towns and villages. Those who venture forth into places like New York and Kinshasa to scavenge return with stories of twisted creatures who make their homes there now, led by blasphemous monsters beyond human comprehension. Recently, traveling merchants visiting a community near old Chicago discovered the town abandoned—homes left empty, meals left half-eaten, candles still burning . . . They found a single survivor, hiding in a basement and quite insane, who babbled about something that has since spread from town to town to strike fear in the hearts of men—the Croatoan.

What's Going On?

In 1587, English settlers founded the first permanent colony in the New World, on an island off the coast of what would eventually become Virginia—Roanoke Island. Three years later, when the settlement's governor, John White, returned from a trip to England, he didn't expect anything out of the ordinary. But he discovered the village abandoned, all 113 settlers having vanished as though everyone left in the middle of whatever they were doing and expected to return in a moment. He found one clue as to what happened, a word carved into a tree—Croatoan.

In the 21st century, people believe the world to be rational and stable, governed by physics and biology and logic. Occurrences like the one at Roanoke Island have been repeated throughout history, however—the inexplicable, sudden desertion of Tenochtitlan, Machu Pichu, and Mesa Verdi. Reality isn't as stable as people like to think it is, as occultists know. Other realities exist, other dimensions. Some call these the Otherworlds or the Ten Sephirot. Most of the time, humanity remains blissfully ignorant of these realms. Other times, rifts open up in the fabric of reality, and Things Man Was Not Meant to Know step through, or people become trapped on the wrong side of the veil when the rift closes. It happened in 1590 to Roanoke Island.

What lies beyond the fabric of the rational universe? Myriad worlds are possible, theoretically, but in this case the rift opened up on the dimension of the Croatoan. Here, all that humanity holds as sane has no meaning. Things live here, terrible things of such hideousness that to contemplate them is to go mad. The Croatoan do not conceive of love or happiness as we do. They do not operate in ways the human mind can understand. In the past, the people whisked into their reality became their playthings, to torture or to mold at their whim. This place is everywhere, yet it is nowhere. And in 2004, the dimension of the Croatoan swallowed the Earth.

For a whole week, the fabric of space-time ripped open, and That Which Lies Beyond merged with Earth's reality. After it was all over, half of humanity vanished like the people of Machu Piccu and Roanoke Island, while the survivors were left with amnesia as a result of the experience. Reality altered—the sun changed, the stars disappeared from the night sky, and the dead reanimated as a result of the Fortean energies of this strange dimension. Even worse, ten years after the Event, the Croatoan have begun to notice humanity. Things from Dark Places crawl out of Earth's shattered cities, looking for something to feed upon, slaves to command, or new playthings to break.

And it doesn't appear that humanity has any way to stop it.

The Inspired

As a result of the strange energies in the Croatoan dimension, supernatural abilities may be more prevalent, allowing for the inclusion of Inspired Cast Members. These characters might be able to unlock the secrets of magic through trial and error (if magic doesn't exist prior to the Event), or Wicce and Rosicrucians (see WitchCraft) might teach others their Invocations in a battle against the Croatoans.

Croatoan Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence -2
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Life Points n/a	Speed 2
Endurance Points 8	Essence Pool n/a
Skills: Brawling 2	
Attacks: Bite D2 x 4(4) slashing	
Weak Spot: None [+10]	
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [+0]	
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0], Iron Grip [+1]	
Senses: Like the Dead [+0], Life Sense [+1]	
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]	
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [+0]	
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]	
Special: Nest [+5]	
Power: 28	

The Zombies

Croatoan zombies are animated by the strange energies pervading the Croatoan dimension. As a by-product of the environment, anyone who dies eventually rises as a zombie. They do not need to feed and generally don't share their condition with the living (unless they kill their victim). They have no physical weaknesses for Cast Members to exploit; shooting them in the head, severing their spines, or destroying their hearts has no effect. Although their eyes are sightless white orbs, they have an uncanny ability to sense the living. And the magical energy that sustains the zombies has also affects the maggots and worms infesting their bodies.

As if this weren't enough, it's possible the Zombie Master could create variations. The Croatoan might modify zombies to better suit their needs.

The Croatoans

Fans of the works of Clive Barker or H.P. Lovecraft might already have a good idea just what the Croatoans are, and he can take this element of the Deadworld in several directions. The beings known as the Croatoans could be portrayed as alien things Man Was Not Meant to Know, with eye-stalks and

tentacles, communicating through strange whistles and clicks. Or they might be terrifying fetishists clad in leather and covered in suppurating wounds. However the Zombie Master envisions them, the Croatoans do not have comprehensible goals or motivations. They might view humanity as little more than insects infesting their dimension, or as new toys to play with. They might capture a village of survivors to turn them surgically into a human pipe organ. Or drain them of their bodily fluids to power some alien machine. Or they might demand god-like obedience. They might laugh at pain or not even feel pain. The Croatoan should be alien in every sense of the word.

If the Cast Members encounter a Croatoan, the Zombie Master has two approaches he could take. First, the Croatoans could be treated as super-strong characters; they should have high attributes, high skill levels, and even access to spell-like abilities. Alternatively, the ZM could treat them like Mad Gods from *WitchCraft* or *Armageddon* (both published by Eden Studios)—beyond normal considerations like attributes and skills, and possessing incredible powers over reality; they might even have Taint abilities. Either way, encountering a Croatoan should be a major event, the crowning event of an entire campaign.

Story Ideas

Hunters Hunted

The Cast Members are out in the countryside for some reason. Maybe they're looking for pre-Event equipment, ammunition, weapons, medicine, gasoline. Or maybe they're members of a search party looking for someone missing in the woods. Even better, thematically, if they're just hunters out in search of deer or bear to feed their families.

Along the way, they must fight their way through zombies, bandits, and strange creatures. For those with access to *WitchCraft*, take a look at the Wildling (see p. 265). While out in the countryside, a gang of bandits makes away with the group's transportation or whatever goodies they've scavenged already. This should happen at night, while the Cast makes camp in relative safety. The trail leads towards the ruins of a small city (like Harrisburg or Akron), which the bandits hope will provide them with safety; no one in their right mind goes into the city.

Once they enter the city, the Cast finds themselves in the realm of the Huntsman (see p. 114). First, reality becomes more than a little strange. Whenever they try to leave the city, they end up back where they started from; spatial reality is warped or curved. Also, whatever Things Man Was Not Meant to Know living in the area squirm and wriggle after the Cast. Next, at some point, the Cast finds the bandits they're after, trussed up like slaughtered deer. Finally, the Huntsman begins to toy with the Cast, sending zombies to herd them towards him. Can they find a way out of this nightmare? Can they defeat The Huntsman? Or will they become his next prize?

If You Can't Beat 'Em . . .

This Story begins with the arrival of a lone survivor of an attack on a caravan. He stumbles through the village gates, wild-eyed, bruised, and hungry. Most of what he says is incomprehensible, but before his speech dissolves into a mad cackle, he reveals the following tale: He was a guard in a merchant's caravan peddling goods through the region. Bandits attacked the group, overwhelmed them, and took the vehicles and survivors with them. He followed at a safe distance and was stunned to see zombies guarding the village's walls. The last thing he remembers is seeing strange creatures floating among the villagers. All he remembers next is running through the woods.

Naturally, the Cast Members are selected by the leaders of the community to investigate. If there is a village of homicidal maniacs nearby, the village needs to know more about them. If the Cast needs greater motivation, someone from their village fails to return from the wilderness, or a small raiding party probes the town's defenses.

The people of the nearby village worship the Croatoan as though they were gods. And like the ancient Aztecs, these fanatics provide sacrifices to their deities, typically people captured in raids on other villages and on the roads. For their part, these Croatoan, barrel-shaped things with tentacles, use the sacrifices to power some strange machine. Victims are led to a pyramid in the center of town, placed in clear cylinders, and drained



Things That Should Not Be

The zombies are only one antagonist in this Deadworld, and are almost secondary to what's going on (though certainly Cast Members will meet up with them frequently). The ZM should introduce all manner of horrific creatures, whether they're native to this dimension or some Croatoan experiment on humans or animals.

of their vital fluids. Afterwards, the pyramid thrums and glows contentedly. While the purpose of this machine remains a mystery, whatever is going on, it can't be good.

The Cast must infiltrate the town, pass the zombie guards and murderous townspeople, figure out what the machine is for, and perhaps destroy it. All while rescuing whomever these Croatoans intend to sacrifice next.

Grabbers

Grabbers are jet-black tentacles approximately seventeen to twenty-three feet long on average. Rather than octopi suckers, these things have thousands of little pink ventricles similar to oversized leech mouths, which serve a similar purpose—draining blood. They grab unsuspecting passersby and suck them dry. Once it gets a hold of someone, it does not let go until it's done feeding or it's killed. No one knows if these things are connected to a central body, or if they're connected to anything at all. No one has been brave enough to go into the sewers to find one.

Strength 4 **Constitution** 3
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** -2
Perception 7 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 38 **Speed** n/a
Endurance Points 8 **Essence Pool** 17
Skills: Brawling 3

Attacks: Tentacle Slap D4 x 4(8), Hug of Death (1 LP per Turn from blood loss)

Weak Spot: All [0]

Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10], The Lunge [+3]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], The Hug of Death [+8]

Senses: Like Nothing You've Ever Seen [+10], Life Sense [+14]

Sustenance: Occasionally [+2], Blood [-2]

Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me [-5]

Power: 50

The Huntsman

The Huntsman is an example of a typical Croatoan. Tall and lithe, it appears as a mockery of what humans would call an elf. Its lack of skin, exposing muscles slick with blood, marks it as something inhuman. It typically wears a leather harness, along with the flayed face of its last kill. It hunts with a variety of wicked, sharp weapons—barbed arrows, serrated knives, and the like. Its main motivation seems to be the thrill of the hunt, and it enjoys the terror it causes its prey, playing with them as a cat toys with a mouse.

Strength 8 **Constitution** 12
Dexterity 5 **Intelligence** 6
Perception 10 **Willpower** 6
Life Points 90 **Speed** 34
Endurance Points 83 **Essence Pool** 47

Powers: All beings who behold The Huntsman must pass a Fear Test at a -5 penalty. It is able to command zombies within 50 yards, often using them to herd its prey towards it (like a hunter uses bloodhounds). This functions like telepathy, with The Huntsman aware of what the zombies see and hear. Commanding a small group of zombies costs 1 Essence per command, while commanding large groups costs 2 Essence. These commands must be simple, as the zombies do not understand detailed instructions. It can track its victims by sensing their life force, up to a range of 100 yards. Furthermore, it is immune to mundane attacks and can only be affected by Essence-based attacks such as Holy Fire.

"Volunteer"

Norm

Str 2 **Dex** 2 **Con** 2

Int 2 **Per** 3 **Wil** 3

Lps 26

Eps 26

Spd 8

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cowardly 1 (-1)

Delusions (Know-it-all) (-1)

Emotional Problems (Fear of Rejection) (-1)

Good Luck 2 (2)

Obsession (Survival) (-2)

Photographic Memory (2)

Resistance (Lack of Sleep) 1 (1)

Skills

Brawling 2

Cheating 1

Climbing 2

Dodge 2

First Aid 1

Guns (Handgun) 1

Fast Talk 3

Hand Weapon (Knife) 2

Notice 2

Running (Dash) 1

Humanities (Sociology) 3

Humanities (History) 3

Stealth 2

Swimming 2

Writing 3

Gear

Binoculars, .45 Caliber Handgun, Twenty Bullets, Large Knife, Battered Copy of "On the Road" by Jack Kerouac

Personality

Why me?

All I wanted to do was finish reading my book. Was that so wrong? I sure as hell wasn't in the mood to join up with those nuts who get sent outside to patrol the countryside. Especially since by now

everyone's heard the stories of weird monsters roaming around out there.

Ten years ago, I was a grad student getting my sociology degree; what do I know about guns, or patrolling, or monsters?

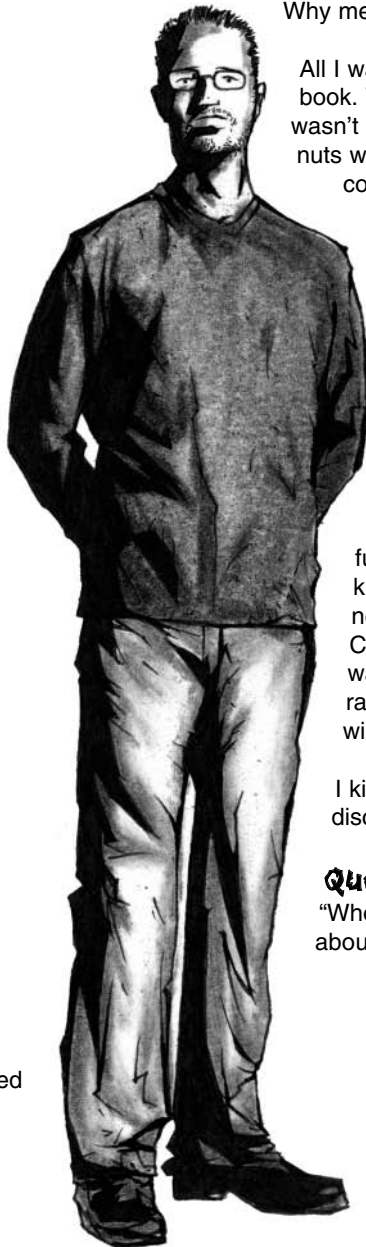
But do they care about any of that?

No, all they can say is, "We've got to think about the needs of the community." So what if I spend my time reading instead "doing something useful?" Someone's got to preserve the knowledge, right? What about my needs! It's Jack freakin' Kerouac for Christ's sake! I'm usually able to talk my way out of stuff like this; guess my luck ran out this time. Well, hopefully my luck will change while I'm out there patrolling.

I kinda doubt the monsters will be open to discussion.

Quote

"Whoa, slow down there man! Let's talk about this . . ."



Digging Our Own Grave

by Evin Ager

I remember when the balloon went up. "Necessary measures" was the word they used at the time, but "you screw me and I'll screw you" ended up being more accurate.

Of course, hindsight is always 20/20, and I was just as in favor of nuking anything that was dead and moving as everyone else, afraid of things getting out of hand. It really felt like one of those Saturday afternoon horror movies they used to play back when there were still people who thought those things were entertaining. It was as if the world would end right then and there if we didn't act.

Just the same, I'm here and I'm breathing, so I have the right to get up on my soapbox. Really, it's not so much our initial response that I was opposed to, it's how we let things just keep escalating until those rotting bastards had us right where they wanted us. We painted ourselves into a corner, right at the time when we should have been nipping the damned problem in the bud. But the fact of the matter is that that was twenty years ago and the war is still going on in it's own little way. Now I'm just an old fart living in a world where nothing has changed since that fateful day when we pushed the button and started digging our own graves.

History

Like most momentous events, most people did not see the end of the world coming. And by the time they knew what was happening, it was too late to change the course of events that had been set in motion. The wheels of change started turning sometime on May 19th, 1995, in a small province in western China. For some inexplicable reason, a disease spread through Xinjiang Province, one that caused the dead to rise and walk again. Naturally, even in a repressive country like the People's Republic of China, word got out and made its way around the globe in a matter of hours. The world watched as the infection spread, despite the extraordinary measures the Chinese government took to halt its progress. Although the Chinese insisted it was an internal matter, and that no outside help was needed or wanted, the leaders of

western governments convened to discuss a possible response. No one wanted a disease capable of animating the deceased to spread. Over the objections of the Chinese at the United Nations, the World Health Organization issued a travel warning for travel to China. Chinese boats and airplanes were refused entry into other countries. The country was placed under quarantine. Still the disease spread.

The leaders of the United States, Britain, and Australia unilaterally decided the situation was too important to leave to the Chinese. Despite objections by the UN, the United States launched a four Trident ICBMs from the USS Greenville, incinerating 14 million Chinese citizens (both living and dead) in seconds and completely wiping out the target infection area in a radioactive flash. The United States faced world-wide condemnation for once again letting the nuclear genie out of the bottle, and few took comfort in the justification offered by one senior U.S. official, that "an infected limb had been amputated by the scalpel of the United States military."

Predictably, China was not happy, but showed restraint. On May 26th, they got an opportunity for payback, when an outbreak of "zombie fever" struck Los Angeles. A shipload of Chinese illegal immigrants, at sea at the time of the nuclear strike, brought the disease with them, again starting the process begun in China. Within two days, LA was awash in blood and crawling with zombies. Ten hours after CNN reported the fall of LA, China launched an ICBM of its own, to "amputate an infected limb" as a Chinese defense minister put it. The city was reduced to radioactive ash.

Too bad the Americans didn't show as much restraint as the Chinese had. NORAD launched missiles at China. China retaliated with a massive strike targeting United States cities. North Korea fired its handful of missiles in support of "our socialist brothers." Pakistan claimed it had proof of zombies in India, and nuked Bombay, so India struck back with missiles of its own. Before long, almost every nuclear power launched missiles at someone.

It was a miracle the world did not end in an all-consuming radioactive firestorm. Major population centers were reduced to smoldering craters; no part of the

world was left unscarred. Some 60 percent of the world's population died outright, and radiation affected millions more in the form of cancers and birth defects (which further reduced the world's population). But in the end it was not the apocalypse. Those who were left alive were awed by the raw destructive power they'd witnessed and pledged a new era of peace. The Americans, Chinese, Russians, Israelis, and others agreed to dismantle their nuclear arsenals, and pledged to help each other rebuild after the short, but deadly, world war.

There was a collective, world-wide gasp as the dead began rising again, in both nuked and unaffected areas. It seemed not even a nuclear war could wipe out the disease.

New Age

The nuclear exchange altered the Earth's eco-systems. Large swaths of land were either radioactive, or affected by radiation. Plants and animals far from the nuclear strike points died off. In the United States, for example, cities like New York, Chicago, Washington, Los Angeles, and Dallas no longer existed, and the land for miles around them became uninhabitable. The average temperature of the planet rose by several degrees, which affected the polar ice caps and raised the level of the oceans. Nuclear strikes impacting around the Pacific Rim weakened the tectonic plates, leading to an increase in earthquakes and volcanic activity.

Rather than remain as greatly reduced in landmass and population, many nations consolidated their resources and banded together to found new nation states and construct new cities. National, cultural, and religious animosities were set aside, as people were forced to work with each other to survive, as well as combat the zombie contagion. Those countries unable to cooperate and adapt soon died out as a result of starvation, disease, and the predation of the undead. The Brazilian Confederation, the Central European Combine, the Pacifica League, and others replaced the countries of the past.

In order to protect themselves from the millions of zombies combing the land, the new nations constructed barrier cities to house the surviving population. The barrier cities incorporated futuristic advances like monorails, computer-controlled traffic

systems, and giant apartment complexes, and look like a "city of the future" from a 1960s World Fair or a Japanese anime. Most important, barricades of all kinds have been incorporated in their construction, from New Dallas' titanic concrete walls to the new energy barrier erected around Hamburg. In some countries, construction has begun on Maglev train lines to link their cities, and international V-TOL flight service provides travel around the world.

Inside the cities, people have adapted. Factories still function, supermarkets exist and have fairly wide selections (although some places such as the Pan-Soviet People's Republic rely more on synthetic food), and people watch television without fear of being torn limb from limb by zombies. Life has returned to a semblance of normalcy, and is even a bit better than before the Third World War (if a bit cramped). Outside the barrier cities lies a no-man's land of the undead, outcasts, and dissidents who did not want to be a part of the new world order.

The Zombies

The zombies of this possible future are not the result of black magic or some supernatural force. Their origin stems from a virus that would come to be known as Acute Reanimation Syndrome. The virus originated in Western China, where the bubonic plague is believed to have originated. The increasingly interconnected world of the 21st century allowed it to spread more rapidly than ever before.

The virus attacks the victim's brain, using the cells as a means of replication and destroying them in the process. Respiratory and circulation systems fail, and the victims appear to be dead. The R-complex remains intact, however, and the body reanimates to spread the infection. Despite years of research, there remains no known cure. In order to stop the spread of ARS, every barrier city has strict laws mandating the cremation of all bodies.

While the zombies are only as smart as animals and cannot see very well, they are quick, strong, and have an uncanny sense for the living. As a blood-born disease, ARS is spread by zombie bite or close contact. The only way to kill a zombie after reanimation is to target the brain.

Story Ideas

Operation Shutdown

The Cast Members form an elite special forces team trained to combat zombies. These teams respond to zombie attacks both inside and outside the barrier city.

For the past two years, their government has been constructing a Maglev train line across the wastelands to connect two cities. Construction workers live and work in fortified compounds to protect them from zombie attacks. Once they complete a section of elevated track, they move on to the next section, all the while protected by military forces. Unfortunately, the government has lost contact with the construction team. The characters are dispatched by military V-TOL to the base camp to find out what happened.

The compound lies at the end of the track. An aerial circle of the base camp shows evidence of a battle, and no movement. The Cast is inserted into the camp and their transportation leaves. Once on the ground, they have to make Research/Investigation and Tracking rolls to determine exactly what happened. Perhaps scavengers living in the wastelands took the opportunity to scrounge up some supplies, or a coordinated zombie assault overwhelmed the camp; the exact details are left up to the Zombie Master. After the wall was breached, the survivors apparently fell back to the construction office and barricaded themselves inside. Perhaps the foreman's video log has some clues? If they find survivors, the Cast has orders to terminate them and incinerate the bodies, just in case they're infected. Naturally, while the Cast pieces together events, zombies attack. Can they find out what happened and get out alive?

An Old Corpse Can Learn New Tricks

The fastest thing in the world is spreading panic. Rumors spread, of zombies living in the sewers and conduits under an industrial neighborhood. They might spring from the indigenous population, the homeless and unemployed who live, where the cremation laws are poorly enforced. All it takes is for one loner to die from ARS and fail to be cremated for the disease to flare up inside a barrier city. Or the zombies may have found a way around the city's defenses by infiltrating the network of tunnels under the city.

Digging Our Own Grave Zombies

Strength 4	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 0
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 4
Endurance Points	Essence Pool 6
Skills: Brawling 2	
Attacks: Teeth 6	
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]	
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3]	
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]	
Senses: Like the Dead [+0], Life Sense [+2]	
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]	
Intelligence: Animal Cunning [+2]	
Spreading the Love: One Bite and You're Hooked [+2]	
Special: Diseased Corpse [+3]	
Power: 33	

Whatever their origin, according to reports, the zombies have somehow mutated, getting faster, stronger, or maybe even smarter. The precise nature of the mutation is left to the Zombie Master, though Aspects such as The Quick Dead, Burrowing, Damage Resistant, and Problem Solving could give Cast Members new headaches.

The Cast might either become involved as members of the military, police, or health services sent down to track the validity of these rumors. They have to figure out the source of the zombies and shut it down, while containing the situation before the entire city falls. And if the zombies really are evolving, the Cast must figure out what is changing and why. Alternatively, players might simply portray average citizens swept up in events—factory workers caught in a zombie attack, or citizens trapped on the wrong side of a government quarantine while they exterminate the zombies (and if you think the government will let potentially infected citizens live, you're in for a surprise).

Advanced Zombie Military (AZM) Soldier

Survivor

Personality

I volunteered for Pacifica's AZM program. I was a kid when the nukes went off and I remember the confusion afterwards. It's a good thing we lived in Provo when everyone launched their birds, otherwise we would have been incinerated along with the rest of the Western seaboard. Me and my mom made our way north because we heard there was a refugee center in Oregon. When the governor signed the papers to join the Pacifica League there were fireworks.

I grew up in Neo Portland and it wasn't easy. In those early years, all we had were primitive barricades. Every night, the "dead eyes" attacked. Sometimes they got through and the militia had to come and burn everything. Mom got infected in the attack of '13 and had to be incinerated. I still carry some of her ashes in a locket. But now, we have The Dome. Sometimes, you can see the "dead eyes" pounding on the clear polymer, trying to get into the smorgasbord. It's pretty funny.

It's my job to respond to emergencies of the zombie persuasion. I've escorted scientists into the wasteland on their sample-gathering missions. Then there was the time this V-TOL went down, and we had to go rescue the passengers. And this other time, some idiot didn't report to the crematorium with his dad's corpse—that was a real headache. But there's nothing like hot dropping into a hostile LZ.

Quote

"Squad! We're gonna make an aerial sweep first. Prep for dust-off in five minutes!"



Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4
Int 3 **Per** 4 **Wil** 3
Lps 37
Eps 35
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Sight (2)
Charisma 3 (3)
Contacts (Military) 2 (2)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard to Kill 2 (2)
Humorless (-1)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Recurring Nightmares (-1)
Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Brawling 2
Climbing 2
Demolitions 3
Dodge 2
Driving 2
First Aid 1
Guns (Assault Rifle) 3
Guns (Laser Rifle) 3
Guns (Pistol) 2
Hand Weapon (Knife) 2
Martial Arts 2
Notice 2
Stealth 3
Survival (Wasteland) 2
Tracking 3

Gear

Ceramic Armor, "Dragon Fire"
Compressed Laser Rifle,
Infrared/Thermal Goggles,
Emergency Flares

On the Ground Floor

By Rachel Collett

Before my ranking ritual, I'd never seen the ground up close. I was always curious about it; everyone is. But no one is allowed below the 12th floor until the day of his ranking ritual. Mine was years ago and part of me wishes it had never come. But only part.

Before I left, the Elder Council warned me that I might not return and they told me I wouldn't like what I'd find below. I shrugged it off and prepared for my trek down the stairs, confident in my abilities as a fighter. After all, I've spent my whole life training for the ritual. My task was to reach the ground, locate something useful to the tribe, and return to the 12th floor with it. Then, I'd be considered an adult and assigned a role in the tribe.

At first, everything went as I expected. I descended the steps to the 3rd floor, the spot where the ancients had barricaded the stairs, and climbed out the window and down a cable ladder to the street. That's when I saw my first zombie. I've heard about them all my life, and I know the litany—"On Waking Day the dead arose and feasted on the living." But I lived my life high above, on the top floors of the skyscrapers of what was once called New York. I'd never seen one up close.

When I got my first whiff of decaying flesh and saw its rotting intestines dangling, I wanted to be back among the cubicles and cable-bridges above more than anything. But I had a job to do. So I ran. Eventually, I found a pot of dirt from some long-dead flower and returned with it. The whole time I was scared, but it was also the most exciting time I've ever had in my life! I like to think that pot of dirt helped the tribe grow food.

So now it's your ranking ritual, and I have some advice to tell . . .

Looking Back

Just over 47 years ago, on Waking Day, the dead all across the world rose and began feeding on the living. Early on, scientists conjectured that the high volume of pollution, increase in UV light from the hole in the ozone layer, and the elevated levels of radioactive and

toxic waste in the soil caused the anomaly, but the problem escalated before a definitive answer could be found. With frightening speed, the zombies multiplied as the living began joining the ranks of the dead, and soon the survivors were vastly outnumbered.

Pockets of humanity continued to survive across the world. In particular, people disabled the elevators and blocked off the stairways of several large skyscrapers in New York City. Thus, they were protected from the worst of the zombie ravages, since the zombies could not get up to their food source. Before long, however, the small group's supplies dwindled, and they were forced to head back down onto the streets to seek out what they needed to survive. This was disastrous, as few of these initial scavengers returned. Then one man hit upon an idea—with the help of the strongest among those remaining, he climbed to the roof and slung a heavy cable across to the next building. He shimmied across, and soon had access to the materials in that building. In this way, for several years the group, eventually calling itself the Sky People, expanded without having to head down onto the streets. They strung bridges made of strong, heavy cables across the spans between skyscrapers, thus increasing their territory.

Over time, the group was forced to head back down to the streets below, as their supply options on the upper levels diminished. So they began a training program, teaching all tribe members to fight, scavenge, camouflage, hide, and run—any skill the Elder Council deemed useful, they encouraged. Soon a new class was born—the Scavengers. These men and women were the most successful at surviving the ground floor and returning with useful items, things like medicine, fuel, seeds, and tools. The Scavengers were—and are—the elite and children all want to grow up to be one.

Additional Cities

The Zombie Master is not limited to placing the On the Ground Floor Deadworld in New York City. Any large metropolis possessing numerous skyscrapers, such as Chicago, Tokyo, or Hong Kong, would work just as well.

The Situation Today

The Sky People have adapted to their unusual living conditions. They live entirely among the cable bridges and former offices high above the streets of New York City. The rooftops have been given over entirely to raising crops in the layer of soil transplanted from the ground floor. Other than what is provided by a few aging portable generators, the community lacks electricity, and most people read and work by candle light when the sun goes down. They have no running water, instead collecting rain in water towers and barrels, which is fed via gravity throughout the tribe. On the many floors below, families have claimed offices and apartments, cooking over small stoves and fires, and using whatever furniture they can scavenge. Below these are the barricades, built to seal off stairwells and prevent the zombies from climbing higher. Although the tribe is small, and there is plenty of space for everyone, the tribe expands to new buildings periodically.

They survive mainly by foraging and Scavenger parties, like the Native American hunting parties of old, seek to return with something useful for the tribe. They go down to the city's streets looking for clothes, pieces of metal or wood, equipment such as camp stoves or tents, or anything that the tribe might need. Frequently, a tribesman makes a request for something specific he needs in order to repair something or improve his family's life. Hunters stalk rats living in the walls, or trap pigeons among the rooftops and ledges in order to provide a bit of meat. It is as though the Sioux or Huron were transplanted to the ruins of a modern American city.

In order to survive, the Sky People has reverted to a more primitive, tribal way of life. New customs and ceremonies developed to help the survivors bond into a community. The monthly Telling relates campfire stories about the time before Waking Day. From an early age, every child learns The Litany, which teaches important information about zombies. The solemn Waking Day ritual marks the anniversary of the zombie rising with rooftop bonfires. And the Ranking Ritual ensures that only the strong and cunning become Scavengers. They cling to these traditions religiously, because they hold the tribe together.

The Sky People maintain a strict caste system, in which every person has an assigned duty and everyone knows their place. Every person has to have a purpose, because they are so few in number. Generally, people are born into their caste. A child of Engineers becomes an Engineer, unless the Elders rule differently, the child demonstrates some unique ability, or they complete the Ranking Ritual. The castes are (in status order):

Elder: A tribal leader who acts as the final arbiter in disputes, the Elders are, without question, the most important and respected members of the community and their word is law. There are only three Elders at a time, and are typically chosen from among the oldest surviving tribe members of any caste.

Unique: Gifted or Inspired tribe members; they are rare but well respected. Children who exhibit supernatural abilities become Uniques, and hold a position similar to shamans. Sometimes, a Unique joins a Scavenger group, and is often treated like a treasured good-luck charm.

Engineer: Those with vital technical skills, such as actual engineers, architects, doctors, scholars, and so forth are members of the Engineer caste. Those who received professional schooling prior to Waking Day pass on their knowledge to apprentices in order to keep the knowledge alive. Engineers are of equal rank with Scavengers.

The word of the Elder Council is law. Every member of the Sky People shall follow the Council's law unconditionally.

- *Any member infected by a zombie shall be executed immediately.*
- *No one shall commit a violent act against another tribal member.*
- *One shall not endanger the tribe by carelessness or malice.*
- *Every member of the community shall remember his rank and behave accordingly.*
- *Every member of the tribe shall fight to protect the tribe, its territory, and possessions.*



Scavenger: These hunters forage in the streets for objects to benefit the tribe—dirt for the rooftop gardens, wood for cook fires, parts for some Engineer project . . . They are the community's elite. In order to become a Scavenger, an 18-year old must successfully complete the Ranking Ritual, returning with something useful for the tribe. The Elders assign a different role to those who fail, if they survive. Those who pass become Scavengers, forswearing their previous caste. They are of equal rank with Engineers.

Breeders: Healthy women of childbearing age who are not Engineers or Scavengers serve as Breeders, shared among the men of the community. These women are frequently pregnant and are the most protected assets of the Sky People; they are asked to do only the simplest and easiest of chores—generally cooking and mending. Without these women, the community would have no future.

Producers: The main worker class of the Sky People, Producers handle daily chores such as farming, weaving, basket-making, weaponsmithing, and so on. The majority of tribe members are Producers.

Drones: The lowest caste members of the Sky People, these people perform the most menial and dangerous chores. They empty chamber pots, repair cable-bridges, and work along skyscraper ledges. They live on the lower floors, closer to the barricades.

Children are treated extremely well within the tribe. They begin training at four years old and are taught any useful skills the Elders decree for them. All children learn the basic scavenging skills—fighting, hiding, running, hunting, and so forth. Children born to Engineer parents apprentice from a young age, learning to be doctors and engineers. Similarly, children born to the Breeders are assigned a role by the Elder Council, generally based upon their father's ranking. Sometimes, the Elders assign a new role to a child who demonstrates a particular aptitude or gift, such as good memory, a head for numbers, or exceptional manual dexterity, thus changing his caste.

The people of the Sky People do not tolerate troublemakers. Any member who breaks the tribe's laws is immediately brought to trial before the Elder Council. The laws are simple and straightforward and the Council determines the punishment for anyone who breaks one. When a law is broken, the victim can petition the Council and accuse the defendant. The Council hears the evidence

and opinions of both the accuser and defendant, and they give a verdict and a sentence. Most sentences are simple things such as penance or restitution. More serious crimes involve a temporary reduction in caste, usually to Drone. The worst crimes lead to banishment from Sky People territory.

The Zombies

The zombies in this Deadworld are the result of pollution run rampant—toxic chemicals leeching into the soil combined with high levels of ultraviolet radiation from the hole in the ozone layer. Something about this combination reanimated necrotic tissue, particularly in the brain, and allowed the neurons to continue transmitting signals. Ground Floor Zombies can only act on the most basic impulses—find food, eat food, find more food. Fortunately for the zombies, when their favorite food is scarce, they can feast on almost anything—squirrels, rats, dogs, cats, and so on. Unfortunately for the human race, they also spread their condition to whatever they take a bite out of. The chemicals that animated the dead in the first place also allow them to stick around for a lot longer

than would be normal for a decomposing corpse. Although they aren't particularly fast, strong, or smart, they make dangerous opponents.

Story Ideas

The Scavenger Team

In this scenario, the Cast Members are part of a regular scavenger team. This may be their first trip out together or they may have years of experience as a group. Regardless, they have a mission—to go out onto the city streets, among the hungry dead, to seek out useful items for the tribe. This time, the tribe's Engineers have a plan to harness the ever-present winds swirling around the rooftops using something called a windmill to generate electricity. They require several items. The details of their shopping list is left to the ZM's imagination, but could include things such as a break drum, magnets, copper wire, and something to use for the blades.

Keep in mind it has been nearly 50 years since Waking Day and much of the area around the Sky People has already been thoroughly plundered. The Cast may have to range far from the settlement to find what they're looking for.

The Cast Members have to figure out where to find the materials they need, then travel to them. This should involve fighting their way through hundreds of zombies, especially if they have to camp overnight to reach their destinations. Then, they have to get back to the tribe with their booty, which may or may not fit the Engineer's needs. The Zombie Master could force the Cast to look in three or four locations to find what they need.

Ground Floor Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence -2
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 6

Skills: Brawling 2
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]; Fire [-5]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [+0], The Lunge [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0]
Senses: Like the Dead [+0], X-ray Vision [+2]
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [+0]
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [+0]
Spreading the Love: Special (see sidebar)
Special: Noxious Odor [+5], Sticks Around (Level 3) [+6], Locust [+3]
Power: 29

Spreading the Love

On The Ground Floor Zombies spread the love in the same way as the Rise of the Walking Dead Zombies, requiring Constitution Tests to determine whether or not the victim contracts a wasting disease, dies, and rises as a zombie (see AFMBE, p. 168).

The Others

The Sky People discover another group of survivors, previously unknown to them. While out foraging on the city streets, the Cast Members might stumble upon a group from another community or another Scavenger group might return to the tribe with the news.

The Zombie Master has several options with this approach. If the Cast Members make the discovery, the two groups might squabble over some goodie both need, or they might have to work together to fight a band of zombies, or one group could simply hide and track the other back to their homes. This depends largely on how the ZM plays the members of this other community—hostile, curious, cautious. Should this first contact occur between groups of Supporting Cast characters, the ZM should relate whatever transpired—a lone Scavenger returns with news of an attack by strangers, for example.

The Elder Council is both curious and concerned. First, they want to know about these other survivors; as far as anyone knew, the Sky People were the only ones to endure. Second, they fear that this newly discovered community may compete with the Sky People for much-needed resources, or even attack. They meet in secret and decide to send their most successful Scavengers (the Cast Members, of course) to learn as much as they can about this other group. Their actions could determine whether the two groups peacefully co-exist or resort to war.

The Mole People

Although, as potential rivals, any community of survivors would do, there is a certain poetic symmetry for the antagonists in *The Others* to dwell underground. Just as the Sky People retreated to the city's skyscrapers above the streets, the Mole People hid in the subway system and fortified the entrances below ground.

The Mole People should differ from the Sky People as much as possible, in order to emphasize their differences and increase dramatic tension. After decades living underground, the Mole People might fear heights, dislike bright light, or smell bad. Rather than a rigid social structure, like the Sky People, the Mole People could encourage a dynamic system in which everyone tries to be good at a bit of everything. Alternatively, they might even be more sophisticated than the Sky People, with all kinds of steam-powered technology, electric lights, and laptop computers. No matter how the ZM conceives of them, the Mole People should cause the Cast Members (and other Sky People) to wrinkle their noses a bit in disapproval.

Scavenger

Survivor

Personality

I know the tellin' of the day. The time before time ended, when the city was full of light and noise and folks. When we lived on the ground and not in the high up. My dad, he knew, 'cause he was there. He was a systems analyst (that was an important job back then) and he did important things with a computer (that was a big, 'lectronic counting machine). He told me about flying through the sky, and watching moving pictures, and having coffee . . .

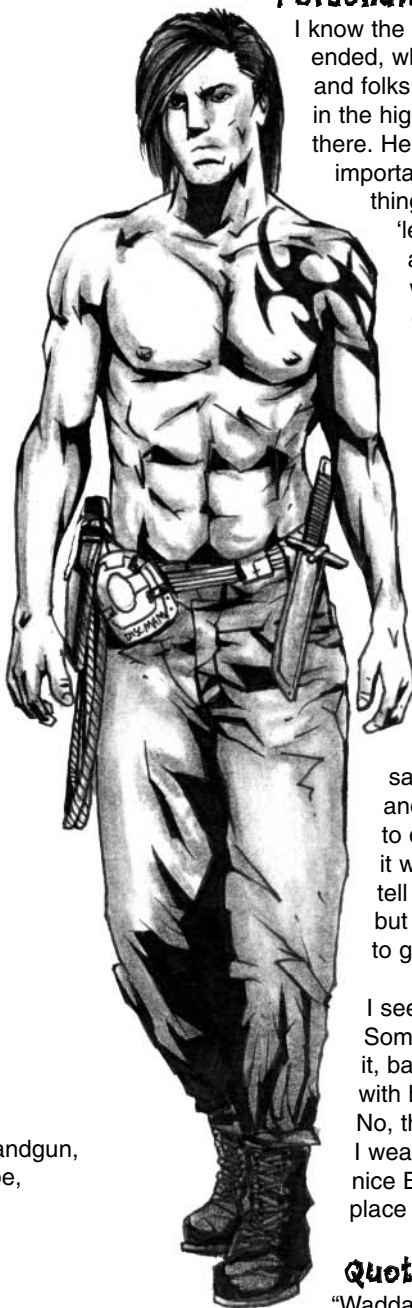
I been on the ground and I seen a lot of stuff. I don't know what it all did, but I know from my dad that it used to make us great. And I seen the dead guys. When I go down, I always see dead guys. They look nasty, all puss and gashes. And they be hungry, always comin' out of the dark trying to take a nice, meaty bite out of ya'. If it wasn't for the rest my gang, I'd a been zombified by now.

Y'know that generator on the 4th floor? That was me. The Engineers said they needed a axle and copper wire and magnets, and I found 'em. They had to draw a picture of the axle for me. And it wasn't easy gettin' that thing off, let me tell ya'. A buncha dead guys come 'round, but we took care of 'em. I love goin' down to ground floor.

I see you're lookin' at my "walkman." Someone told me you could hear music on it, back in the day. Had something to do with helping you walk. I don't know how. No, the music don't come out of it no more. I wear it 'cause it's lucky. You seem like a nice Breeder. Why don't we go back to your place and I'll give you a look at it.

Quote

"Waddaya mean 'we don' need another hero?' And I do know the way home. What're you talkin' about?"



Str 4 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3
Int 3 **Per** 4 **Will** 2
LPS 38
EPS 32
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Hearing (3)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard to Kill 4 (4)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Obsession (Thrill of the Hunt) (2)
Reckless (-2)
Showoff (-2)
Status 5 (5)

Skills

Acrobatics 2
Brawling 3
Climbing 4
Dodge 3
First Aid 2
Guns (Handgun) 2
Hand Weapon (Club) 3
Hand Weapon (Knife) 2
Instruction 1
Lock Picking (Mechanical) 2
Myth and Legends (Zombies) 2
Notice 3
Running (Dash) 2
Stealth 3
Survival (Urban) 3
Thrown (Knife) 2

Gear

Duffel Bag, Flashlight, Knife, Handgun,
Lead Pipe, Leather Jacket, Rope,
Broken Walkman

Necropolis!

By J. Carpio Dregg

Ted felt the sting of the taskmaster's lash and jumped. He rounded to punch the man, dressed in a ridiculous Egyptian costume, but caught sight of the four zombies standing in the background and thought better of it.

"Get back to making bricks, or you'll feel worse than my whip," the taskmaster growled.

This is what life in San Francisco had become—some crazy parody of ancient Egypt in 1920s America. At least, Ted thought they might still be in America. Rumors said the Dark Pharaoh had transported them all, the entire city, to some other place. People who tried to escape the city simply disappeared into the surrounding darkness, never to return. Some said that was because no one would ever want to come back, that leaving the city was freedom. No matter what.

Again, the crack of the whip broke his train of thought. He stooped back to the rubble pile, pulling out useable bricks. They were demolishing an old apartment house to build a pyramid for Rameses V.

Suddenly, the young woman stooped over next to him gasped and collapsed. Just as suddenly, they were upon her. The zombies surrounded her and Ted could hear them tearing out her heart (God, the screams!). He looked away and up at the partially completed pyramid and shuddered.

History

2600 B.C.

The ancient and dying Pharaoh Khufu, in an attempt to gain favor in the eyes of the god Anubis, Lord of the Egyptian underworld, ordered the construction of a massive pyramid tomb. For twenty years Egypt's finest craftsmen and untold numbers of slaves worked themselves to death in service to Khufu's grand endeavor. Upon completion, Khufu dedicated the great pyramid to Anubis. And when he finally died, Anubis gave the pharaoh the gift of eternal life. The god blessed Khufu's death mask with the power to command, in the living world, the spirits of the servants he had ruled over in life.

But Khufu was betrayed by his own priests, who were unwilling to serve an undying king. They murdered him, mummified his body, and scattered his four sacred organs to the ends of the earth. Sealing Khufu's corpse and the dread death mask away from prying eyes forever ended the threat of the unnatural pharaoh.

1902 A.D.

Some three thousand years later, the explorer W.M. Flinders Petre discovered Khufu's final resting place. His famous book "The Pyramids and Temples of Giza" describes his exploits in Egypt and details the find that made him both famous and extremely wealthy.

Yet Petre had left out much in the real story. He explained away the death of almost half of his native work force, as well as his fellow explorers, as a result of a sandstorm. He never mentioned the discovery of bodies whose hearts had been ripped out and devoured, nor the final showdown with the withered and ancient pharaoh, which haunted his nightmares until the end of his days.

Petre died unaware he was responsible for unleashing an evil upon the world the likes of which had never before been seen. The death mask of Khufu, still bearing the power granted by Anubis, left his hands and found its way from museum to museum throughout Europe and America until, in 1915, it was finally entrusted to the permanent collection at the Flieshacker Museum of Ancient History in San Francisco.

While the death mask made the museum rounds, it attracted the attention of one who sought to unlock its mysteries and seize its power. Ahmose al Akbar Jordan, an Egyptian national whose wealthy lawyer father had settled the family in England, was drawn to the ancient burial mask like a moth to a flame. He learned of it during an exhibition at the British Museum. Dreams and strange desires overcame him after he saw it. Young Ahmose abandoned his business studies at Oxford and devoted his time to darker paths of knowledge. The young man joined the Order of the Golden Dawn and spent months researching dusty old tomes and secret libraries in search of information. Uncovering the mask's secrets became his sole obsession, spurred on by dark dreams of power.

Finally, he uncovered ancient papyri from Khufu's era and transcribed the hieroglyphics that held the mask's secrets. He learned of the mask's true abilities, and how to use them, as well as the terrible cost for such power. Exultant, Ahmose located the mask's whereabouts through his contacts in the academic world and purchased passage to the United States.

1918 A.D.

Along the San Francisco docks, Ahmose found a willing pool of unemployed teamsters, longshoremen, and less savory sorts to help him secure the mask. With the purchase of a small home in the Bay Area's own city of the dead, Colma, and his willing henchmen, Ahmose stole the mask.

According to the ancient texts he had deciphered, in order to secure the powers of the mask for his own, Ahmose needed to recreate the works of Khufu. To this end he secured a site at the Holy Cross Cemetery (ostensibly to build a mausoleum) and with his hired workers he began construction on a secret temple to Anubis. He employed secret rituals learned from the Golden Dawn to bind the corpses interred in the cemetery to his service. Soon he would be reborn as the Dark Pharaoh, complete master of a city of the dead in the midst of the world of the living.

All that remained was to provide the sacrifices. Prostitutes, hobos, itinerant laborers, and eventually many of Ahmose's henchmen were sacrificed to draw Anubis' attention to his new high priest. On a cold and lonesome November morning, with the last of his own inner-circle dead at his feet, Anubis answered the call of his new, faithful servant. First, a black hemisphere dropped over the city, completely encircling it, and cut San Francisco off from the rest of the world. Then, the dead of Colma, as well as Ahmose's sacrifices, rose from their graves and shambled into the heart of the city of San Francisco. Ahmose al Akbar Jordan was gone; in his place was the Dark Pharaoh.

The army of the dead caught the people of San Francisco off guard as they marched through the streets. The authorities tried their best to combat the menace, but they proved no challenge for the hungry dead. The carnage lasted for many days while the police and army rallied to contain the plague of walking dead. Ahmose declared himself the Dark Pharaoh

Rameses V and absolute master of the city. Influential citizens and city leaders were either slain outright or forced to acknowledge Rameses' rule and pay homage. Rameses' renamed the city Necropolis.

But among the haunted streets of Necropolis resistance to the Dark Pharaoh's power survived.

1928 A.D.

San Francisco no longer exists in the so-called "real world." Anubis' magic surrounded San Francisco in a bubble of energy, transporting it to a pocket dimension isolated from the Earth (unknown to the people of San Francisco, the place where their city once sat is now a gigantic crater). No one has entered the city since the rise of the Dark Pharaoh, and those who leave are never heard from again.

Since the early days of his reign, the Dark Pharaoh has commanded a new pyramid be constructed in the city's heart. Almost everyone has been pressed into construction of this monument, like the Hebrews of old. Once his House of Eternity is complete, so will be the magic imprisoning the city.

The zombies are the source of the Dark Pharaoh's political power. The threat of his minions shambling up to people's doorsteps is enough to keep them cowed. The zombies, adorned in the finery of ancient Egypt and carrying khopesh swords, serve as the Rameses' enforcers. In order to replicate the world of ancient Egypt, the Dark Pharaoh needed a priesthood to organize and run his kingdom. Drawn from the city's population, these collaborators are hated, and feared, by San Francisco's citizens. They collect taxes, organize work gangs, and terrorize the population.

Despite the Pharaoh's power, two neighborhoods remain bastions of safety from the zombie horde. As the zombies encroached on San Francisco, people erected barricades across city streets. The North Beach area, known for its great Italian food and racy after-hours entertainment, fell under the protection of the gangsters who made their home there. Copper and gangster alike worked together to cordon off the neighborhood. Knowing the right people in North Beach can get you weapons, food, drugs, women, or dead depending on who you know or who you deal with, and most dealings are still conducted in the

area's backrooms. Meanwhile, the city's beautiful Golden Gate Park became home to refugees from other parts of San Francisco. Many survivors live in ramshackle houses, hunt the small game that lives in the park, farm the land, and protect themselves from the Rameses' zombies through rigorous patrols.

The Zombies

The Egyptians believed consciousness resided in the heart, not the head, and for them the heart was the most important of the bodily organs. For Necropolis zombies, the heart is represented by a scarab—a stone carving of the scarab beetle. When the Dark Pharaoh creates a zombie, he cuts the heart from body and replaces it with a magical scarab, which maintains its unlife. In order to kill a Necropolis zombie, the scarab must be removed; no other damage has any effect on them. Similarly, Necropolis zombies do not share their condition with others. Each is an independent entity that must be created by the Dark Pharaoh or one of his minions.

These zombies hunger for the hearts of the living, consuming them in order to replenish their own fading of soul energy. In order for Necropolis zombies to feed, they must drain the victim's soul from the seat

of life—the heart. Consuming flesh does nothing for them. They must tear out the heart and squeeze it, usually over their open mouths.

The Death Mask of Khufu gives the wearer the ability to command the undead, and share what it sees and hears. The wearer can also communicate through his zombie minions.

The zombies themselves make for some pretty tough customers. Not only do they possess extraordinary senses, they can locate their prey by smell. There is nothing more unnerving than seeing a squad of the Dark Pharaoh's soldiers scenting the air. As if their life-like movements and ability to leap great distances weren't enough, they also know how to wield the khopesh, the curved sword characteristic of ancient Egypt. Otherwise, without the commanding intelligence of Rameses V working through the Death Mask, these zombies aren't particularly smart.

Necropolis Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence -2
Perception 3	Willpower 2
Dead Points 26	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 9

Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 2
Attack: Bite D4 x 2(4) slashing, khopesh D8 x 2(8) slashing
Weak Spot: Sacred Item [+7]
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3], Leaping [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like a Hawk [+2], Scent Tracking [+3]
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], Soul Sucker [+5]
Intelligence: Dumb as Deadwood [0]
Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me [-5]
Power: 29

The Death Mask of Khufu

The mask holds many powerful enchantments, which grant its wearer powerful hold over the undead, but there is only one problem . . . you must be dead in order to wear it. Anubis created the mask for Khufu so that he could control his servants after his death. The full power of the mask comes from a ritual handed down to sorcerers in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. The ritual must be performed in a necropolis—a place where many corpses have been buried—and the caster must take his own life after placing the mask on his face. If Anubis accepts the sacrifice, the wearer enters unlife, a vampire-like state where he lives in both worlds . . . that of the living and that of the dead. As long as he wears the mask he cannot be killed, and he gains the ability to control zombies. It is easy for the wearer to assert control over any zombies within 100 miles, and any command may be given. In addition, the mask wearer can both see and hear through the zombie's senses, and can communicate through it.

Story Ideas

The Watchers

This Story takes advantage of the pulp tone of this Deadworld by introducing the Watchers, a group of extraordinary gentlemen (and women) who rise up after San Francisco falls to the influence of the Dark Pharaoh. They take as their mission the overthrow of Rameses V, and the (hopeful) return of the city to the real world. The Cast Members should create characters using the rules in *Pulp Zombies*. This is also a good way to introduce Inspired characters, like Knights Templar and Prieur de Sion mystics.

Rather than a single Story, the Zombie Master can take this theme in a number of different directions (or all of them). Clearly, one option is to stop the Dark Pharaoh. He's nothing without his death mask (as the cast may quickly discover), so various adventures could involve getting close to him and removing his mask. Along the way, the Cast has to take out various lieutenants, underlings, and courtiers who enforce Rameses' laws. They might try to sabotage the pyramid construction site, for example, target the Pharaoh's master builder, and free some slaves. Or they might harass the priest responsible for tax collection (and by tax, we mean people to turn into zombies).

Another option is to help out the downtrodden throughout San Francisco. The Cast might have to locate a missing little girl lost on the streets of Necropolis, before the zombies find her. Or they might oppose predatory gangsters running a protection racket or gouging prices for food. Perhaps a family wants to escape their bondage in Pharaoh's brickyards and make it to Golden Gate Park, and they need the Watcher's help.

Combine elements from Batman and The Shadow with the Ten Commandments, and the Zombie Master should have a good idea of how to run this story line.

Gun Runners

The refugees in Golden Gate Park desperately need guns and ammunition, something the mob in North Beach has a lot of. In return, the mob gets food grown in the park's farm. All around, it's a good deal. Now, all they need is someone to drive through the city to deliver the goods.

The Cast Members get the job. They should all portray gangsters of various sorts—the wheelman, the gunsels, maybe a second-story man or two . . . They get a stripped-down, souped-up Ford loaded with tommy guns and ammo and directions to the park. It should all be nice and simple, except for the zombies and priests. Along the way, they have to fight their way through town. Then, once they get to Golden Gate Park, they have to unload the contraband and load up the supplies. Then they have to do it all over again.

Naturally, the Dark Pharaoh is none too pleased with these two hold-out neighborhoods, and expends every effort to put a stop to the Cast Members' gun running.

Gangster

Survivor

Personality

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 4
Int 3 **Per** 3 **Will** 4
Lps 38
Eps 38
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Addiction (Cigarettes) (-1)
Charisma 3 (3)
Contacts (Organized Crime) (3)
Covetous (Greedy) 3 (-3)
Cruel 1 (-1)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Reckless (-2)
Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Brawling 3
Cheating 2
Demolitions 2
Dodge 2
Driving (Car) 2
Driving (Truck) 2
Gambling 3
Guns (Pistol) 4
Hand Weapon (Knife) 3
Intimidation 4
Mechanic 3
Notice 4
Questioning 4
Streetwise 4

Gear

Pinstripe Double-Breasted Suit,
Flask of Rotgut Whiskey, Tommy
Gun, Brass Knuckles, Owed
"Favors"



I grew up on the streets of San Francisco. I started out as a small time thug, mostly working as the muscle in Jimmy the Neck's protection rackets. It was a good gig. I never really had to bust heads and I got paid. I wasn't goin' nowhere though. That was, until the sky went black and the zombies took over the city.

Now I don't know nothin' about nothin' when it comes to mummies and stuff. Imagine my surprise the night a gang of zombies showed up at Vinnie Palumbo's place. We drilled 'em with our heaters and it didn't do nothin'. I ran out the back door and hoofed it back home. The next day, I heard Vinnie was marchin' around town with this crazy curved sword with the rest of the zombies. Or mummies. Or whatever ya' call 'em.

So the families had this big meeting and we decided the zombies could be good for business. I moved up to wheelman and we started smuggling in more cigarettes, booze, ammo, guns—whatever we could lay our hands on—figuring we could sell it for a good price. Boy, how right we were, 'cause after a few days the sky went black, and the guys in the trucks stopped coming back. Good thing I wasn't driving that day . . .

Now, I'm a captain and I got guys who report to me. And even though things are still the same, they're different. See, in the good old days, the rackets were all about avoiding the law. But now, with that crazy Egyptian king in charge, avoiding the law is a good thing; we're like freakin' Robin Hood.

Quote

"Sure, we can protect your shop from the zombies. For the right price."

Make Space

By James Wilber

Northern Republic Safe Zone #2—New Chicago, Breathing Room Corp. Headquarters, 4 February 2115. Mission Debriefing for Z-Team D, Captain Michael Emerson reporting.

The three men in immaculate suits stared coldly across the table at him. The soldier wiped his hand across his brow nervously. He wasn't sure what they wanted. Did they want to know how it happened? Did they want him to apologize? Or take the blame?

"How did you enter the claim, Captain Emerson?" one of the men asked. His voice was a low monotone.

The soldier shifted in his chair. "The power was out, which meant none of the spacedocks were working. We had to cut our way in."

"You realize collateral damage of that type makes you ineligible for a pay bonus?"

This stunned the captain into silence. How could someone possibly care about money after what happened? Then he remembered—all they cared about was money. The equipment, the ship, and the damage to the colony meant money lost. Even the dead men were just training expenses lost. For the bureaucrats, everything could be represented in dollar signs.

The three men made no sign of emotion. "Continue, Captain."

The soldier came out of his reverie. "Like I said, we cut our way through. Phoenix Station had a fairly new design. Usually on a space colony like that, there's an area between the hull and the interior, a place for wires and pipe work, that the zombies usually don't get inside."

"But this time they did." The lead suit added.

The soldier nodded. "I was the first one through. There were five of them, floating towards us, like they had learned how to maneuver in zero-g."

"Interesting."

He tried to smile at them. "The lead one pushed off the hull, floated right up to me, and vomited on my suit. In all my years, I've never seen an animated cadaver exhibit this kind of ability. And where the

vomit hit my space suit, the ceramic started to corrode. The others had the same problem, but they continued to engage the enemy."

"And you?"

"I hit the release on my mag boots and fell back to the ship. Otherwise, I wouldn't be sitting here today..."

History

Near the turn of the 22nd century the wealthiest nations on Earth embarked on massive space colonization programs. Overcrowding and environmental pollution, coupled with advances in space travel and zero gravity construction, made orbital colonies an attractive and viable option. It started slowly at first, with crude fifty-person spacedocks that required resupply from Earth, but then moved on to huge self-sustaining space biospheres capable of supporting up to a thousand residents. The most advanced orbital colonies possessed hydroponic farms, artificial gravity, and solar collectors to provide power. By 2095, hundreds of space colonies orbited the Earth. Then the comet came.

Comet number 1236, later nicknamed Romero's Comet, passed Earth for the first time since the Jurassic Period. It carried with it high-intensity radiation unlike anything scientists had seen before. It caused the bodies of the dead to animate and seek human flesh. On the orbital colonies, it was a lot worse. In space, without the protection of miles of atmosphere, the radiation killed every human being on board outright. Communication with the space colonies ended abruptly, though many on Earth were too busy to notice at the time. Planet-side, mankind fought an all-out war for survival—the Zombie War.

In the United States, the government declared martial law, becoming a de facto military dictatorship. A concerted effort to eliminate the zombies by the military carved out areas relatively free of zombie infestation. Soldiers armed with high-tech equipment suited to killing zombies made significant gains, while cremation prevented the dead from rising. In these Safe Zones, the government hastily erected barricades and moved people considered vital to the sur-

vival of America—politicians, scientists, captains of industry, and the like—into these areas. Those who gave service in the defense of humanity were given “citizenship,” and were allowed to move into the Safe Zones, too. And while the U.S. government did not succeed in eliminating the zombies completely, they managed to protect a few major population centers. After several years, the zombie problem on Earth became manageable.

Nowhere To Go But Up

Life in 2115 is no picnic. For those lucky enough to have citizenship, or with enough money to buy it, the government maintains Safe Zones to keep the zombies at bay—neighborhoods behind high, well-defended walls, like the gated communities of old. Of course, the Safe Zones are filled to capacity, with millions living outside in squalid poverty and dilapidated conditions, waiting for the next zombie attack. With all their resources committed to defending the upper classes, the U.S. government has ceded large swaths of land to the zombies. In addition to causing the dead to rise, radiation from Romero’s Comet also damaged the planet’s eco-system, leading to massive food shortages. The government rations synthetic, high-protein biscuits to the populace, with preference going to those living in the Safe Zones. Starvation is ever-present among those living outside the gates.

Scientists have determined that with no atmosphere or topsoil, the radiation aboard the old space stations has already decayed, so citizens could live in space, safe from zombies, and die with no fear of reanimating. Today, humanity is even more desperate to colonize space. Unfortunately, the former residents of the orbital colonies are still up there, and they’re hungry . . .

For those with the means, the best option lies in space. If an orbital colony could be cleared of all zombies, those aboard could live in safety. Powerful nations have bounced back from the Zombie Wars with just enough resources to attempt regular space flights again. Some are training elite soldiers, called Z-Teams, to retake the space colonies.

The Zombies

The zombies resulting from the radiation of Romero’s Comet aren’t particularly strong, fast, or intelligent. They can’t climb walls or open doors, and move by the most direct route towards the living. They don’t need to eat, since they are sustained by cosmic radiation, instead killing only out of instinct. What makes them a threat to the human race is their complete lack of an exploitable weakness; the radiation animates every bit of the zombie. This makes it hard to eliminate them, since cutting them in half with a machine gun leaves animated bits all over the place, and burning them creates a walking bonfire. They still feel pain, however, which can be exploited. When a zombie sustains significant damage it becomes temporarily distracted, allowing time to escape, or could be used to herd them into a prepared kill zone.

These zombies do not spread their condition through their bite. Rather, anyone who dies on Earth rises within 3-30 hours (D10 x 3), whether they’re killed by zombies or not.

Make Space Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence -1
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Dead Points n/a	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 7
Skills: Brawling 2	
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing	
Weak Spot: None [+10]	
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [+0]	
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0], Iron Grip [+1]	
Senses: Like the Living [+1]	
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]	
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [+0]	
Spreading the Love: Special	
Special: Will of the Dead [+3]	
Power: 28	

Aboard the space colonies, direct exposure the comet radiation caused mutations in the zombies, resulting in a vast array of Aspects. The Zombie Master should include all manner of additional Aspects, particularly Special Zombie Features. Additionally, Space Zombies could be smarter, stronger, or faster. To reduce book-keeping, all the zombies on board an orbital colony should have the same statistics; those ZMs looking for more realism could treat each zombie as an individual.

The major difference between Earth zombies and Space zombies lies in Sustenance. Without the life-sustaining radiation on board a space station, the zombies need to eat. The Space Zombies in the nearby sidebar reflect one possible mutant zombie.

Space Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 1
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Dead Points 26	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 9
Skills: Brawling 2	
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing	
Weak Spot: All [+0]	
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3], The Lunge [+3]	
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0], Iron Grip [+1]	
Senses: Like the Living [+1]	
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [+0]	
Intelligence: Problem Solving [+15]	
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]	
Special: Spitter [+10]	
Power: 40	

Story Ideas

Z-Teams

Z-Marines are handpicked elite soldiers, chosen from police, military, and private security forces. A Z-Marine receives the best training, the best equipment, and the best pay of any combat professional.



All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

Life as a Z-Marine is pretty good, for the short time it lasts. Putting a Z-Team in space is huge investment for a country, and they expect the best return—an orbital colony cleared of zombies and ready for their top citizens.

Just getting onto a Z-Team can be a story unto itself. Prospective marines take a battery of tests, including being placed in “simulated” combat circumstances. This usually consists of going up in a zero-g simulator and facing off against captured zombies.

Then it's off into space for some grueling and intense combat situations. The goal is to clear out a space station and make it habitable for new colonists.

Once they dock and find a way inside, Z-Marines can expect abandoned colonies packed with zombies. And after many years of neglect, there is no electricity, no gravity, no atmosphere, and no light. Fighting takes place in cramped corridors with blind-corners, with Cast Members wearing bulky space suits and gravity boots. With or without zombies, the characters should never feel safe in the cold reaches of space. Hunting the zombies aboard a space colony should be something akin to an *Aliens* movie, with zombies jumping out of the shadows, and the inevitable wave after wave of unstoppable walking (or floating) dead.

Equipment

Playing an AFMBE game set in the future requires some new equipment. It is impossible to create a list of all the gadgets available to characters in a futuristic setting, but included below is some basic gadgets to get the ZM started. Zombie Masters are encouraged to create more neat toys for Cast Members to acquire.

Space Suits

Suit Type: Combat Suit

Armor Value: $(DB \times 5) + 20$ (40) DC: 30 EV: 16/8& Cost: \$1 mil AV: R

A space suit becomes vital when trying to take back a colony that lacks lights, gravity, and heat. Advanced space suits are pretty tough, made of rigid polymer sections, but if damaged too severely the exterior may be compromised, killing the occupant. Space suits provide breathable atmosphere, cooling and heating, a helmet, and gravity boots.

Space suits work like a cross between armor and vehicles. They don't provide motion (jet packs are separate), but they have Damage Capacity. If a character wearing a space suit takes damage exceeding its Armor Value, the character sustains half of the remaining damage and their space suit takes the other half. Once the DC is gone the space suit no longer functions.

Guns

Razor-Talon Assault Rifle

Damage: D10 x 8 (40) Cap: 50 EV: 8/4 Cost: \$12,000 AV: R

The Razor-Talon uses caseless ammunition that comes in pre-packed magazines. Each bullet comes packed in its own propellant, which contains a form of liquid oxygen so that it can be used in a vacuum. The Razor-Talon is recoilless, in order to reduce the effects of recoil in zero-gravity; the rifle does not suffer penalties for being fired in zero-gravity.

The Razor-Talon also has six-round burst electronic ignition. Six rounds are fired at once, meaning absolutely no muzzle climb between shots. When firing a burst, the Razor-Talon hits with two bullets for every Success Level.

But zombies aren't the only things Z-Teams have to worry about. Because they are technically abandoned, the orbital colonies are up for grabs as salvage. The Cast Members may find themselves fighting Z-Teams from other countries for the right to colonize. Moreover, squads have to worry about the bureaucrats back on Earth, who second-guess everything they do, and aren't always up front about the situations the Cast Members are being sent into; the classic "bring back a space zombie for study" comes to mind.

Wagon Train To The Stars?

Everyone knows the government only cares about the citizens, those living behind the high walls and well-armed troops. Outside the Safe Zones, people live in crowded conditions in run-down buildings and survive by their wits. The people outside the Safe Zones watch as the government evacuates citizens to the orbital stations high above. Despite the government's promises to save everyone, the people outside the Safe Zones know these are lies. There are those who are so desperate to escape their dying world that they are willing to try anything.

Before the Zombie War, dozens of nations flew routine flights into space. Many of those lift vehicles still exist, abandoned at space centers around the world. If a group of people with the right skills and enough determination could get to one of those space planes, they could claim a colony of their own. Of course, the idea is insane—fighting their way through hordes of zombies, bandits, and abandoned countryside to find a ship, repair it, and fly into space, and then clear out a sustainable colony. And then, they have to defend it from Z-Teams trying to reclaim it. It's so crazy it might work.

In a Wagon Train campaign, the characters live in the badlands, with the first story illustrating just how terrible life can be—long lines for food rations, predatory gangs, a zombie attack. The Cast Members hear stories about a group of citizens who pulled off just such an operation. Legend has it they now live in relative splendor—lots of room to live, plenty of hydroponically grown food, and, of course, no zombies. The Cast might hear of a group of refugees who plan to go up and claim a space station for their own, and join in; maybe they have skills the group needs, or friends who have already joined.

Space Combat

Trying to simulate true zero-g can sometimes be more trouble than it's worth. The ZM should determine how "realistic" he wants combat in space to be. First, moving around should be a task unto itself, perhaps requiring *Dexterity Tests* to perform the simplest maneuvers, or increasing the rate at which characters lose *Endurance Points* (just walking could be considered *Hard Work* on the *Endurance Loss Table*). Second, in a zero gravity environment, every action really does have an equal and opposite reaction—shooting a firearm could cause the user to spin off uncontrollably. The ZM might require Cast Members take a round of preparation to brace themselves properly or have to make a *Dexterity Test* to recover their footing (thus losing a round of combat).

For several stories, the characters travel across the badlands, encountering zombies, bandit gangs, and rioting people. After several false leads and ships that cannot be fixed, they find what they're looking for—a space plane. Naturally, they have to figure out how to fix the ship and get it into space, all the while protecting it and themselves from attack. Once they launch, they must clear a space colony of zero-g zombies, which should be difficult considering the Cast is not nearly as well equipped as a Z-team. Then, after they think they are all safe, the Cast Members receive visitors—a Z-Team sent up to reclaim the orbital station for the government.

Ruffian

Survivor

Personality

Most days, I hang out with my buds in front of the Welfare Office and we mug old people for their ration coupons. Hey, ya' gotta do what ya' gotta do. I'm thinking about joining the Army, maybe become a Z-Marine, and get inside the Safe Zone. That'd be sweet—hot food, warm bed, honeys . . . It's not like I don't have lots of experience killing zombies.

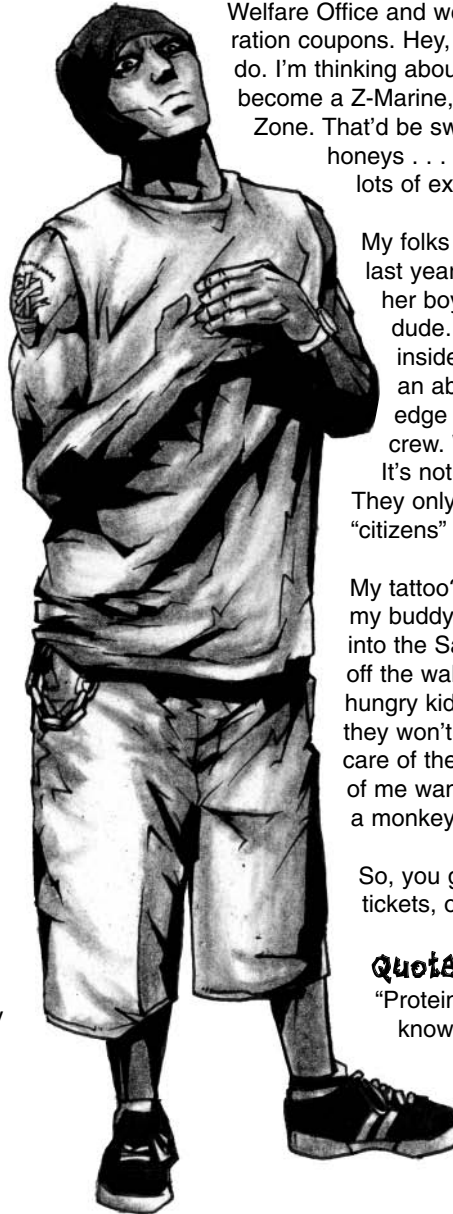
My folks died in a zombie attack last year. My sister moved in with her boyfriend, some government dude. I guess she found her way inside the Safe Zone. I squat in an abandoned building at the edge of town with the rest of my crew. We look out for each other. It's not like the government does. They only care about their precious "citizens" behind the wall.

My tattoo? I got that in memory of my buddy, Tank. Idiot tried to sneak into the Safe Zone. Cops burned him off the wall. Sure, they'll kill some hungry kid looking for a meal, but they won't come out here and take care of the zombies. Hypocrites. Part of me wants get inside just to throw a monkey wrench into the system.

So, you gonna give me your ration tickets, or do I have to hit you?

Quote

"Protein Supplement #12? You know that's just people, right?"



Str 3 **Dex** 5 **Con** 3
Int 2 **Per** 4 **Wil** 3
Lps 49
Eps 32
Spd 16
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cruel 1 (−1)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Hard To Kill 5 (5)
Minority (Non-citizen) (−2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Resources (Poor) (−3)
Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Brawling 3
Climbing 2
Dodge 3
Haggling 2
Intimidation 4
Lock Picking 3
Mechanic 2
Notice 2
Pick Pocket 4
Running (Sprint) 2
Sleight of Hand 3
Smooth Talking 2
Stealth 3
Streetwise 3
Survival (Urban) 3

Gear

Baseball Bat, Knife, Bedroll, Old Family Photo

Silver

By Daniel R. Davis

Already the hole the musket ball had made in the zombie's chest had begun to close, the nanobots working efficiently to repair the damage. Ben didn't have much time. He had to make his way back to his cabin.

He slung his musket, stood up in one smooth motion and started to run. His snowshoes slowed him down, but not as much as if he'd not worn them. And the snow would slow the nano-zombie down, too.

He trudged up the hill to the cabin door. Slammed it shut and threw down the wooden crosspiece. In a moment of panic, he scanned the room for the detonator to the claymores he'd scavenged the previous summer. Why had he chosen to live alone, out in the wilderness, he wondered. There it was. He grabbed the trigger mechanism and opened the slit in the door.

The zombie had made its way up the hill, was ten yards away from the cabin. He banged the detonator three times, and a wall of shrapnel exploded into the zombie. It fell, a bloody pulp, but Ben knew it would get up in a few minutes. Critical minutes. He flew to the door and threw it open.

Have to shoot the brain stem have to shoot the brain stem, he thought. Before it gets back up . . .

History

In the year 2008, the human race was on the cusp of a new age. Mankind reached an evolutionary milestone with the practical application of nanotechnology. First theorized by physicist Richard Feynman, manipulating matter at the atomic level had long been a dream of science fiction writers. Microscopic machines, it was theorized, could build things at the atomic level, destroy individual virus cells, and create materials heretofore unknown. Nanotechnology, in its infancy, was touted as the alchemy of the 21st century—capable of actually turning lead into gold. And by 2008, theory was put into practice with the first surgical nanobots.

Smaller than the head of a pin, nanobots injected into a human body could make repairs to damaged tissue at the cellular level, seek out and destroy harmful viruses before they spread, and could even, potential-

ly, enhance the body's performance. The potential for immortality was within humanity's reach, as nanobots could extend life expectancy into the centuries. No longer would people die of a weak heart, blocked arteries, cancer, or AIDS. The Federal Drug Administration approved nanobots for widespread use after a brief experimental period, and within the first year of their availability millions received nanobot injections. After all, who wanted to get sick and die?

At first, the nanobots performed according to expectations. Because the carrier medium in which they were stored was silver in color, nanobot injections came to be known simply as "Silver." Within a few hours of a Silver injection, the nanobots constructed a nanofactory at the base of the recipient's skull. Appearing as silvery spider veins just beneath the skin, the nanofactory produced nanobots and acted as the central processing hub for them. Patients reported remarkable results—diabetes patients no longer needed insulin shots, those with Parkinson's Disease developed new neural pathways, people with spinal cord injuries stood up . . . Sufferers of depression, attention deficit disorder, schizophrenia, and other mental disorders found relief as the nanobots corrected chemical imbalances in the brain. Silver was hailed as the "wonder drug" of the future.

Maybe it was too good to be true. Early problems were swept under the rug in order to protect high tech companies and political fortunes. For whatever reason, the crisis was kept quiet for as long as possible. People who received nanobot injections refused to die. Patients sat up on autopsy slabs and embalming tables across the country. These nano-zombies were quickly put down, although with a great deal of effort thanks to the nanobots, but not before several innocent bystanders were killed. With the bodies quickly cremated to prevent further resurrection, scientists could only theorize about what was happening. Perhaps the person had merely gone into a coma while the nanobots affected their repairs, it was thought. The government hushed up these incidents, eager to prevent a panic and give scientists more time to study the problem.

Scientists got their first big break with what became known as the Bower Incident. Robert Bower suffered terminal injuries in a car crash, and was pro-

nounced dead on the scene by paramedics. By the time the body reached the hospital, it was apparent the nanobots were doing their job—lacerations had already closed, and a broken femur had already been mended. When government scientists claimed the body several hours later, a punctured lung and crushed liver had been repaired. Rather than the morgue, scientists took Bower to the lab and performed tests. An MRI of the body showed uniform activity in the brain, as though the nanobots had taken over synaptic processes and were, as one scientist put it, “running the show.” Bower, recorded as Specimen 8472, was destroyed before he could reanimate.

The government reacted as best it could. The FDA rescinded its approval of Silver and the use of nanotechnology in living organisms. This aroused suspicion in the media, with government scientists assuring the public that there was no danger from Silver. Government sources dismissed rumors of “zombies” as tabloid material. But there was little else the government could do. Rounding up people with a record of having received a Silver injection would cause a panic and violated their civil rights. The company that developed the nanobots tried to find ways to reprogram them remotely, but failed.

Meanwhile, the National Academy of Science studied the problem and found the designers had done too good a job in programming the nanobots. In the source code, the nanobots had been told to repair damaged tissue, which they obviously did with amazing results. The paper “Nanobots, Intelligence, and the Power of Massive Parallel Processing” explained that, with the ability to network with each other, the nanobots could combine their limited processing ability and achieve a kind of artificial intelligence. As more nanobots joined the network, intelligence increased exponentially. They could learn and adapt. In designing the nanobots, scientists had been too efficient, modeling their behavior after that of a virus.

Events quickly spiraled out of control. A nano-zombie attacked several people in a small town in Ohio, biting victims for reasons unexplained. Soon afterwards, the telltale signs of a nanofactory appeared at the base of the victims’ skull. In another incident, the police accidentally killed several bystanders during a nano-zombie attack, people who

had received Silver injections and themselves reanimated. All across the country, incidents of nanobots animating corpses increased.

Panic spread and those displaying signs of nanobot presence were attacked by vigilante mobs. Society broke down in an orgy of violence targeting the nanobot-enhanced. The violence only spawned more nano-zombies. At first, the government rounded up anyone who had received nanobots, imprisoning them in camps in Arizona and Nevada. Anyone bitten by a nano-zombie was quarantined. Those who demonstrated nano-infection post-mortem were incinerated before they could animate. Massive protests against this assault on civil rights erupted across the country. And still, despite government measures, the nanobot infection continued to spread.

Perhaps in response to the threat posed by the living, the nano-zombies struck back. First, nano-zombies began modifying their dead hosts in order to enhance their survivability. They spliced wires into nerve clusters to repair damage. They reinforced the body’s dermis to withstand greater punishment. They reassembled molecules to construct a variety of bionic devices—infrared eyes, parabolic hearing, and a host of frightening close combat weapons. Second, machinery began to fail at an alarming rate, attacking humanity at its weakest point—its dependence on technology. Studies revealed the presence of nanobots in all kinds of devices. The nanobots disassembled technology at the atomic level, turning almost anything—firearms, televisions, radios, lamps—into so much dust. Machines became unreliable, prone to malfunction. This made working technology rare and valuable in human society.

Where before the human race faced the threat of nano-zombies, now they confronted a wholly new form of life—the Mechanites.

The Current Situation

As a result of the rise of the Mechanites, civilization descended into chaos. People holed up in small communities for their own mutual protection—from both the zombies and the social chaos. While the federal government tried to maintain its authority, without technology it could not hold the country together. Where before it could rely on high-speed data trans-

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missions, almost overnight the government was reduced to the technology of the 18th century. The country divided into tiny fiefdoms and petty kingdoms.

Human society now revolves around small communities, reminiscent of the walled city-states of medieval times. Life behind these walls has been reduced to a more primitive living standard, as most technology no longer works. Horse-drawn plows, water wheels, and oil lanterns have become the order of the day. Black powder muskets and swords are the weapons of choice. To be sure, some technology and machinery still functions, and the survivors use it as best they can, producing strange juxtapositions between primitive and high tech. Many of these communities enforce strict rules—anyone who shows evidence of Mechanite infection is barred from entering or expelled from the community. In some cases, the infected are lynched, followed by immediate cremation.

Character Creation

Depending on when the Zombie Master sets his adventures in the Silver timeline, character creation choices may have to be modified. If the stories are set either before or soon after the rise of the Mechanites, no changes need be made; they can still select modern skills such as Computers and Electronic Programming. If the characters are born into the world after the Mechanites dominate the Earth, then use the rules for creating characters for the After The Bomb Deadworld (see AFMBE p. 195).

Technology

Although the nanobots targeted technology as a way in which to ensure their survival, some equipment continues to function. The nanobots may not have infected a specific piece of equipment, but this is hit or miss. Such objects are highly prized by survivors, and some communities have working generators, modern firearms, and cars that still run.

Character Healing

It is possible for one or more of the Cast Members to carry nanobots in their systems, either because they were inoculated with them, or because of a zombie bite.

Either way, Cast Members who have nanobots in their bodies heal at a phenomenal rate, 1 LP per hour (lost limbs cannot be replaced).

Characters born before the rise of the Mechanites can purchase this Quality for 1 point. Those bitten by a nano-zombie or Mechanite gain this benefit for free, and do not have to pay points. Once anyone infected with nanobots reaches -10 Life Points and fails a Survival Test, they rise up as a zombie within 10-30 hours (D3 x 10).

The Zombies

At first glance, the nano-zombies do not appear to be particularly tough customers. They are slow, relatively weak, and not especially perceptive. What makes them dangerous is their ability to work together as a team, perhaps a function of their wireless networking capability, and the capacity to learn from their mistakes. In order to kill a nano-zombie, the nanofactory at the base of the skull must be completely destroyed (using the R-Complex rules on p. 80 is suggested). All damage must be inflicted on the head. Anything less, and the nanobots can repair the damaged body. Alternatively, causing massive damage to the body, such as dismembering it or dropping it in a vat of acid, could overwhelm the nanobots ability to repair the host.

The living dead hosts do not need sustenance to function; the body is dead and does not require food. The nanobots replenish themselves by feeding off the body's electrical impulses, and to that end they turn the host into a perpetual motion machine. The act of moving creates "food" for the nanobots. While they do not need to feed, they still bite. In this way, nano-zombies transplant nanobots into a new host. The transformation into a zombie, however, does not take place immediately; the host must die before the body reanimates.

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Nano-Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 26 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 11
Skills: Brawling 2
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Dead [0]
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]
Intelligence: Teamwork [+4], Long-term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: One Bite and You're Hooked [+2]
Special: Regeneration (Level 2) [+5], Sticks Around [+8]
Power: 38

Given time, the nano-zombie transforms its host, improving its abilities. They become stronger as the nanobots reinforce bone and musculature. Their reaction time improves. And their sensory capabilities far exceed human norms. They become Mechanites.

The nanobots incorporate machinery into the host and graft parts on or even make serviceable replacement limbs from scraps if need be. Mechanite zombies look like some strange half-human, half-machine creature from a sci-fi movie. The Zombie Master should, at his discretion, include additional zombie Aspects. These can be explained as new technological advances grafted onto the zombie. Claws, for example, could be wickedly sharp metallic fingers, while Spew Flame could be a flamethrower attachment. Similarly, the ZM can modify Mechanites to represent them at various stages of enhancement.

Mechanites

Strength 7 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 7 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 26 **Speed** 18
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 11
Skills: Brawling 2
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]
Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10]
Strength: Monstrous Strength [+10]
Senses: Like Nothing You've Ever Seen [+10]; choice of Life Sense [+14], X-ray Vision [+14], or Infravision [+14]
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]
Intelligence: Teamwork [+4], Long-term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: One Bite and You're Hooked [+2]
Special: Regeneration 2 [+5], Sticks Around 4 [+8]
Power: 87

Story Ideas

Trojan Car

The characters live in a small, walled town that once belonged to a larger city. Barricades cut across city streets, and yards and a small park have been given over to raising crops. While scavenging for goods in the city ruins beyond the gates, they find a car—and it works! Alternatively, a group of scavengers returns with the car. Either way, because a working vehicle is both valuable and rare, people in the community want to keep it. Maybe it could be converted to ethanol consumption, or cannibalized for parts.

Soon afterwards, previously functioning pieces of old technology begin to break down. Likely, the Cast lacks the electron microscope needed to discover the nanobots teeming over the equipment. They discover it soon enough, though, as equipment all over the town turns to dust as the nanobots disassemble it at the molecular level. Whether or not the Mechanites infested the car on purpose and left it for the humans

to find remains unknowable. But the Mechanites have found a new way to spread their condition. Perhaps, if the survivors get rid of all their remaining equipment, they can prevent what happens next (though the ZM knows better).

Then, unbeknownst to the Cast Members, people begin to exhibit symptoms of nanobot infection. Supporting Cast characters start wearing high collared shirts and turtlenecks—anything to hide the characteristic silver spider webbing of a nanofactory. Minor injuries heal overnight and life-threatening diseases seem to cure themselves. It's even possible one or more of the Cast becomes infected and have to deal with the repercussions. For anyone showing signs of nanobot infection are exiled from the community (at best).

At this point, the Story could turn into a witch hunt, with people accusing each other, hunting each other down, killing each other . . . The point of the story is to ratchet up the tension inside the town—which would be helped by a few random Mechanite attacks on the town. Alternatively, before people start to realize what is going on, someone infected with nanobots dies. This doesn't necessarily have to be through violence; it could be some sort of accident. Without a Difficult Notice and Perception Task to find the nanofactory, the body isn't incinerated and rises up (or maybe no one finds the body in time). Now, they have a nano-zombie inside the compound. This can continue on, with the nano-zombie hunting lone townspeople until there are too many of them to deal with, or they might try to open the gates and allow the Mechanites waiting outside to overrun the town.

The One

In this Story, the characters operate in the wilderness on behalf of their small tribe of survivors—they're hunters, trappers, or scavengers. Early scenes have them out in the backwoods for a few days, doing their thing (and maybe encountering a nano-zombie or Mechanite). While they're out doing their thing, they stumble upon what appears to be a work gang of humans, watched over by a handful of Mechanites. They have been enslaved by the Mechanites. The humans act like, pardon the expression, zombies, moving methodically, their eyes glassy, as they perform menial tasks. If the Cast follows the group, they

track them back to nearby ruins, where they discover hundreds of human drones apparently constructing some kind of city—like a scene out of the movie *The Ten Commandments*. Alternatively, upon the Cast's return from their hunting expedition, they discover their hometown abandoned, signs of an attack everywhere, and a trail leading to the Mechanite city.

As they investigate, the Cast discovers these Mechanites act differently from the ones they're used to. First, these Mechanites demonstrate far more teamwork than the average Mechanite. They coordinate their efforts better, and across a much larger area. If they're not careful, the Cast Members could end up fighting the entire city. Second, it seems as though the Mechanites are being controlled by a central intelligence. They react quickly to changing events, coordinate their activities, and use sophisticated tactics, as though led by one mind. Which, indeed, is true.

For reasons unknown, a Mechanite achieved a quantum leap in its capabilities. Its nanobots achieved artificial intelligence (giving it the equivalent of Int 4). It discovered the power of the network, learning to use the Teamwork ability to coordinate and control the other Mechanites. It realized it could send a command to a single Mechanite, who could pass it along to others, who in turn could pass it on to still more. And it devised a way to use nanobots to turn living humans into slaves. Once implanted in a victim, these new nanobots construct a nanofactory, take control of the brain, and manipulate him through the network connection. The human becomes a drone, without being turned into nano-zombie. Combined, these advances give The One, as it calls itself, the intellect and ability to lead the Mechanites. It has already formed a community of them and directs its human slaves to build it a city. Unless the Cast Members can find the One and destroy it, the Mechanite menace will only grow.

Trapper

Survivor

Str 3 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3

Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 4

LPs 43

EPs 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Addiction (Tobacco) (−1)

Hard to Kill 3 (3)

Honorable (Level 1) (−1)

Nanobots (Heals 1 LP per Turn) (1)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Reckless (−2)

Secret (Has Nanobots) (−3)

Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Brawling 3

Climbing 2

Craft (Weaponsmith) 3

Dodge 3

Driving (Car) 2

First Aid 2

Guns (Rifle) 3

Haggling 3

Hand Weapon (Knife) 3

Humanities (Law) 3

Notice 2

Riding (Horse) 3

Stealth 3

Survival (Forest) 4

Traps 3

Gear

Musket, Powder Horn,
Flashlight, Bowie Knife,
Jeans, Buckskin Coat,
'Coon Skin Cap, Sleeping
Bag, Lighter, Horse

Personality

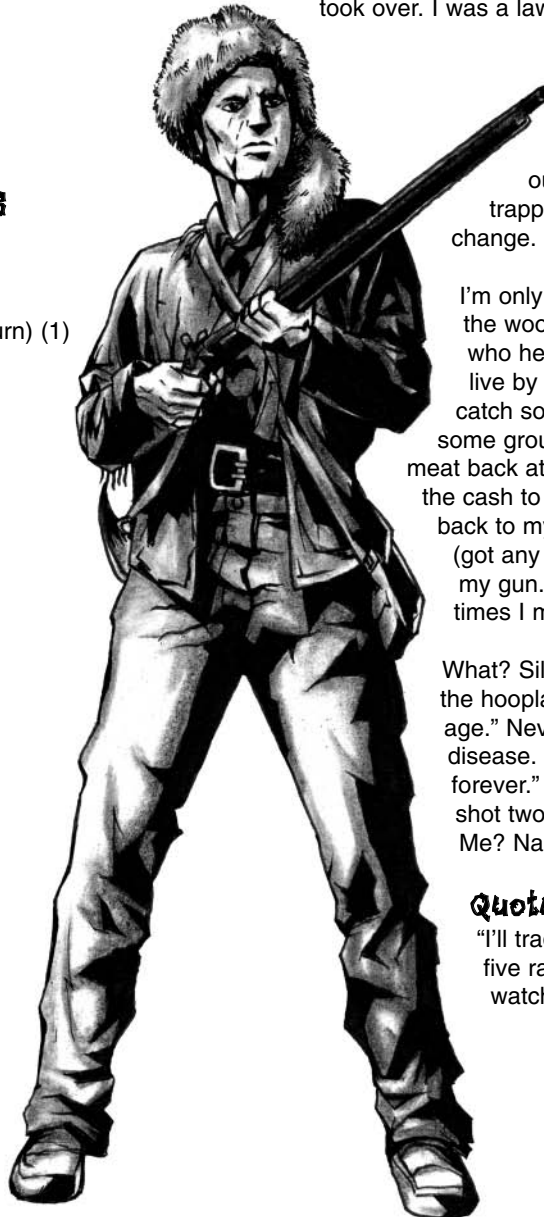
Yeah, I remember the days before the Mechanites took over. I was a lawyer. Had a big screen plasma TV, a nice car, cell phone . . . all that's just garbage now. Good thing I liked to get away to my farm on the weekends, get out and do some hunting and trapping. Funny how things change.

I'm only really happy when I'm out in the woods. There, a man knows who he is and what he can do. You live by your wits. I lay my traps, catch some raccoon, rabbit, maybe some groundhog. I sell the skins and meat back at the trading post, and use the cash to buy supplies. At night, I go back to my cabin and smoke my pipe (got any tobacco?) and maybe clean my gun. It's a nice life, but sometimes I miss that TV.

What? Silver? Yeah, I remember all the hoopla about it. "It's a brand new age." Never get sick. Never get heart disease. What was the slogan? "Live forever." Boy, wasn't that the truth! I shot two nano-zombies last week. Me? Nah, never got the shot.

Quote

"I'll trade you ten beaver pelts and five rabbit skins for that pocket watch. You sure it still works?"





APPENDIX A

SURVIVING A ZOMBIE ATTACK

The undead can be tough customers. They ignore pain, shrug off anything less than dismemberment, and really don't care about their boyish good looks. Cast Members have a lot to think about in order to not only survive, the zombie onslaught, but also thrive. This appendix is written for you, the player, to provide you with valuable survival information in the event of a zombie outbreak. It covers the basic considerations of defense, such as choosing a location in which to hole up, and offensive, like choosing the right weapon.

Classifications

Although each zombie incident is different, depending on the nature of the outbreak, they can be classified into three general categories of intensity.

Class A: This is the lowest form of zombie outbreak, usually numbering from one to a handful of zombies. The affected area is generally small, and the human casualties are light. This can be handled with a minimal response by local law enforcement or concerted action by civilians, and attract little mention in the media. At this stage, you might hear reports of

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strange murders or “ritualistic homicides” in the press. Generally, you only know about the zombies if you are directly involved. If left unchecked, however, the zombie cancer spreads.

Class B: A Class B event is more widespread, with larger numbers of zombies and a greater affected area. The response depends on the environment in which the outbreak takes place; in a rural area, the zombies may go unchecked for quite some time, while in an urban location a larger number of zombies may spark an immediate response. At this stage, the presence of zombies becomes well known and accepted (at least among government officials) and prompts a reaction by organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and the Army. Look for a low-level response and reports in the media about dis-

ease- or chemical-related quarantines (a common government cover-up scheme).

Class Z: This is the most catastrophic zombie outbreak. The spread of infection has progressed through classes A and B, and moved on to a full-blown epidemic. Low-level responses are no longer possible, as front line military units battle zombies to the best of their ability. Despite efforts at press blackouts or cover-ups in an attempt to prevent mass hysteria, the story gets out, as the number of people affected cannot be contained. Expect rioting and looting, and the attendant curfews and martial law. Large areas of infestation may be surrendered to the undead, leaving civilians to their own devices. In a Class Z outbreak, you should prepare for long-term survival.

What To Look For

When the zombies rise, it will not go unnoticed, despite the best efforts by government officials. Although zombie attacks may not be reported accurately, they will receive some coverage.

Things to look for:

- 1) Reports of homicides in which the victims were shot in the head or decapitated, as well as reports of “ritualistic” murders in which the victim’s heart was cut out or the victims were burned. In each case, someone may have recognized a zombie for what it is and taken matters into their own hands.*
- 2) Reports of large-scale catastrophes. The government often stages “accidents” such as warehouse fires and train wrecks in order to cover up the incineration of zombie victims.*
- 3) Searches for missing persons, especially in rural or wilderness areas. Be especially alert for those search parties that include the National Guard or members of the FBI—they may be looking for more than just a lost hiker.*
- 4) Cases of murders in which the victims were bitten, or the perpetrators are characterized as cannibals. The government and media may portray these attacks as the work of a serial killer. Sometimes, the corpses are described as partially devoured by wild animals, hampering identification.*
- 5) Sudden, unexplained civil disturbances. Group violence does not occur in a vacuum, and usually follows a court decision, political action, or sports outcome—something reasonably foreseeable. If a riot cannot be traced to a root source, something else may be afoot.*
- 6) Migrations by large segments of a population, especially in remote or so-called third-world countries. These are often falsely characterized in the media as refugee movements to escape war, famine, or disease.*
- 7) Outbreaks of new or previously unrecorded diseases, such as the so-called “flesh eating virus,” “Legionnaire’s disease,” and “SARS.” These often justify drastic quarantine and a swift response by health officials and military forces.*

Defense

When the undead walk the earth, your first consideration should be your physical safety. Keeping the zombies out, and yourself from becoming infected should be your primary concern. Although in a Class B outbreak, barricading windows and doors may be enough to ensure your security until help arrives, in a Class Z event your defenses must be more robust. This section discusses the issues surrounding the selection and construction of a stronghold.

Find a Safe Place

The first thing you need in an outbreak is a safe place. In a Class A or B outbreak, this location need only be secure enough for you to await rescue. In the event of a Class Z outbreak, your stronghold must be more permanent in nature.

Your defense depends on the abilities of the zombies with which you are dealing. Strong zombies can tear through simple barricades over windows (including steel bars), while intelligent zombies can figure out ways to get through whatever defenses you devise. In general, you want to learn as much about your enemy as possible and plan accordingly.

There are a number of considerations when choosing a location to fortify.

Defending Your Home

For Class A and B events, your home provides adequate shelter. Barricade doors and windows as you would for a hurricane. Store water in bathtubs and sinks just in case water service is interrupted. Gather canned and jarred goods, and make your way upstairs. At these levels, there is no need to flee the city.

For Class Z events, rather than attempt to find what you perceive as a more defensible location, you may want to consider remaining at home. Do not underestimate the value of being familiar with its layout; you know where things are, and thus have the “home field advantage.”

Houses: In a single-story house, your defensive options are limited to securing windows and doors. While hiding in the basement may seem like a good idea, the small windows limit your field of fire and there are generally only three entrances—a storm door, basement door, and stairs to the first floor; what

are you going to do if the zombies surround you? There's no place to go, no way to escape. The attic is actually your better bet; it may be cramped and hot, but at least you can pull up the retractable ladder.

With a two-story house, your options are better. You can retreat to the second floor and demolish the staircase. This is especially important in the suburbs, where the houses are designed to let in as much light as possible and have a lot of large windows. Generally, the larger the house, the more difficult it is to defend it; limit your exposure by sealing off sections.

Houses in older suburban developments sit on patches of land and often have fences, which gives you at least an easily defined defensive line. Newer developments tend to cluster the houses closer together, limiting your fields of fire, as do houses in urban areas.

Apartments: Like the two-story house, apartments may be the best place in which to hole up. You can disable the elevators, barricade or destroy the stairs, and live above the zombies. First-floor apartments present the highest risk, because of their accessibility to the street. Apartment buildings also have a larger resident population; while a home-owner might have to hold off the zombies by himself, in an apartment building these duties can be shared.

The Country

Once things have settled down, it might be a good idea to abandon metropolitan areas for the isolation of the country. First, zombies will be less prevalent, simply because there is a smaller population to feed upon and fewer dead from which to animate. Cities will become zombie central, at least for as long as their food supplies (i.e., people) hold out. Afterwards, they'll have to range far and wide to find a meal and the chances of them finding one lone shelter in the mountains are slim. Second, food and water may be more plentiful. There are fewer people scavenging, so whole stores may be untouched. And at least you can hunt, and many houses use well water rather than relying on municipal pipelines.

The downside to a retreat to the country primarily lies in getting there.

Defending Other Spaces

You can find safety in non-residential buildings, particularly if you can't make it home in time or if your domicile isn't especially defensible. As events progress from a Class B to a Class Z incident, it may become more beneficial to reinforce and stock these locations. In general, you want to avoid places where large crowds will congregate, both because of the pandemonium that may ensue and because large groups of people attract large groups of zombies.

Office Buildings: Like apartment buildings, office buildings can be secured by turning off the elevator, barricading the stairwells, and abandoning the first floor. Many modern offices come equipped with small kitchens, and have first aid kits and fire extinguishers on the premises, making them good in a Class B outbreak. Larger offices with their open construction provide excellent fields of fire, as well. And you can use the partitions to fashion semi-private rooms.

Schools: Despite their large size, the average school could make a good place to hole up. Food and medical supplies may be readily available from the cafeteria and nurse's office, and the gym should have a supply of hockey sticks, baseball bats, and football gear should you need makeshift weapons. Inner city schools, unfortunately, have taken on many of the trappings of a fortress, with high fences and heavy fire doors.

Police Stations: Certainly, they have survival gear and plenty of guns and ammunition. But in the case of a Class Z outbreak, police stations will likely be overwhelmed, as is the case with other, less undead, disasters. The police will be attempting to contain the situation while maintaining public order, all as people flock there for news and perceived safety. Remember, large crowds equal hysteria, potential rioting, and bloodshed—like ringing a dinner bell for zombies.

Hospitals: While they seem the most logical place to flee to in a zombie outbreak, hospitals may be the worst choice in which to shelter. Hospitals will have food, medicine, and an emergency generator; they may even have a police presence. They could be secured just like an apartment or office building. However, hospitals are collection points for the injured and dying, including those who are the victim of zombie attacks. These places may become “zombie central.”

Retail Locations: Stores have needed supplies and those roll-down gates can provide adequate protection. There are those shops that will prove useless to the long-term survivalist, however; you don't want to make your last stand in a comic book store or lingerie shop. The mall could be a terrific place in which to hole up, as they have a large variety of shops providing for almost every need (like a food court). Like free-standing stores, most shops have roll-down security gates and their open interiors provide clear lines of sight. The big danger lies in the huge display windows favored by so-called “anchor stores.” Should you decide to make your stand at the mall, choose one location to fortify and defend.

Supermarkets: A special kind of retail location, the supermarket has enough food to sustain a group for years. However, they have huge glass doors and windows that provide little protection. Basically, with humans on the inside and zombies on the outside, these windows advertise you to the zombies. Smaller, family-owned markets in urban environments are a bit better. To prevent theft, many of them not only include steel gates on the outside, but also bulletproof fortifications around the counter and cash register.

Fortifications

Once you have selected the place where you will make your stand, you must prepare for its defense. In general, layered defenses are best, so that when one perimeter is breached you have someplace to retreat to. An outer perimeter, such as a fence, boarded up windows and doors, and then a strong point inside the building (such as a fortified room) make for good, basic defenses.

The Kill Zone: If you can, clear away as much foliage and debris as you can around your shelter. Cut down trees and rip up bushes to provide for clear fields of fire. Remove any abandoned vehicles. Clear away any debris. If you live in the suburbs, you may want to consider demolishing neighboring houses (though this is not easy). Even in an urban environment, you want to eliminate any place the zombies can hide or find cover.

Barricades: You'll want to board up any windows and doors, especially on the first floor. In a Class B event, simple plywood sheets nailed over windows should be enough to hold off the zombies until help

The Military

Everyone will be tempted to run for the nearest Army or Marine base, or their local National Guard armory, when the zombie population gets out of hand.

On the one hand, they make excellent fortresses. Located in remote, sparsely-populated areas, the chances of infestation are lower. They possess robust defenses designed to withstand infiltration; high fences and razor wire surround them, and they maintain well-stocked fallout shelters. They possess multiply redundant means of communication, designed to withstand all-out attack and likely to remain operational long after civilian communications fail. And they house well-trained, well-armed, and well-disciplined people.

Military bases will likely be the last places to fall to the zombies.

On the other hand, the very things that make a military base so appealing should give you pause. First, you would have to convince the guards, during a national emergency, to let you inside; even if they were inclined to grant access to unauthorized civilians, there is no way they can be sure you don't carry whatever contagion is causing the dead to rise. More than likely, you would be turned away, or worse—shot. Second, because they may hold out longer than other locations, looting them for supplies may be hazardous. As long there are survivors on base, they will likely continue to hold their posts and shoot to kill any intruders. Even if you find an unpopulated base, you must get past the static defenses designed to keep people out—the razor wire, chain-link fences, concrete barricades, and heavy, locked doors (they don't keep the M-16s and claymores just lying around).

arrives. Class Z events require stronger defenses, as the number of undead fists beating on your door multiplies. The efficacy of barricades depends wholly on the strength of the zombies; those of average strength may have a hard time prying off plywood (though with greater numbers, this may not hold true), but zombies possessing superhuman strength might tear through your defenses. Even steel bars may not hold.

Fences: Depending on the intelligence of the zombies you are facing, fences may be the best line of defense. If they are high enough, the zombies cannot clamor over them, nor figure out how to stack boxes alongside them to climb over. Intelligent zombies, however, may find ways over, through, or even under your fence. Your choice of fence depends, at least initially, on the location you've chosen to fortify. Many houses already come with a fence on the property, so you're limited to whatever is available. Your choice of fence depends on personal preference—some people may prefer chain-link fencing because it allows you to see (and shoot) through it, while others want a good, solid wall between them and the undead.

Barbed Wire: Barbed wire (and its cousin, razor wire), intended to stop living beings with the threat of lacerations and pain, do little more than tangle zombies up and slow them down a bit. It remains useful, however, if the zombies are capable of feeling pain, temporarily distracting them. And once entangled in the wire, they may become trapped (thus making it easier to shoot them).

Obstacles

Zombies are the ultimate suicide troops—they're already dead—and many defenses designed to keep out humans just won't deter them. Consider the following when devising obstacles for your fortification.

Trenches: Trenches and moats may be only partially effective. With sufficient numbers, zombies can pile into most trenches, filling them up with their bodies until others can walk across (this needn't be intentional; simply the result of their mindless pursuit of prey). A moat, designed to drown attackers, is simply a trench full of water; zombies don't breathe, so drowning isn't a threat. Filling your trench with something flammable might work, though there may

be better uses for gasoline, and the zombies might figure out a way to avoid the trenches if they're intelligent enough. Finally, in the end, it requires a lot of time to dig a trench of sufficient depth and length to make it effective.

Mines: When discussing defenses, it is common to think of mines. After all, insurgents and rebels from Cambodia to Nigeria have employed them because they're cheap and easy to use. They make fine attrition weapons. But they come with certain drawbacks, notably getting your hands on them. They don't sell mines at the local sporting goods store. Even if you can obtain them, like barbed wire, mines are area denial weapons, intended to limit access by the threat of death or dismemberment. Zombies don't stop to consider their mortality. While mines may take out a few, many others will walk through the now-cleared minefield. When you place mines it's a good idea to map their location, so you don't blow yourself up during the spring planting or making a hasty retreat.

Traps: Traps work by immobilizing their prey, which in the case of zombies gives you valuable extra minutes in which to apply your weapon of choice. Shooting a zombie snared by a bear trap is much easier. Traps may be more effective in a Class A or B situation, however, where the number of zombies you're dealing with is smaller. It would be hard to set enough bear traps to make this defense effective in a Class Z outbreak. In the end, a trap's effectiveness depends on the nature of the zombie involved. Zombies don't require a lot of finesse, if they're stupid enough, while smart zombies may figure out your trap after a few attempts. If their limbs are capable of independent movement, a zombie might simply tear its leg free and continue advancing. If you decide to incorporate traps in your defenses, such as tiger traps, deadfalls, and swinging, spike-adorned logs, stay away from Rube Goldberg type traps (like the old children's game "Mousetrap"). The more complex a trap, the more likely it is to fail.

Keep Ahead of Them

If the zombie masses are too tough, or their numbers too large, to defend against, the key may be to stay away from them. It's a big country, and the zombies can't be everywhere . . . in theory. While remaining in your fortress permanently may seem tempting, and makes sense during a Class B outbreak and the early stages of a Class Z epidemic, eventually you will need food and water for years to come. Urban and suburban areas, because of their congestion, are also prone to industrial accidents and fire. Nor can you ignore the threat posed by other survivors, who may see your compound as a source of food and supply. Your compound may be overrun, or you may run out of supplies. Eventually, you will want to move far from civilization, or try to keep ahead of the shambling hordes.

In general, streets and roads will become a mass of stationary vehicles as everyone tries to flee the city at once. Going out onto the streets also exposes you to danger, not only from the marauding zombies but also from the rioting and looting that will occur. Adding to the chaos by trying to flee may cost you your life, as you sit in traffic and wait for the zombies to come to you. The best time to hit the roads may be several days after the start of a full-blown, Class Z outbreak.

Transportation

When you hit the roads, you want transportation that can withstand a lot of punishment. Most roads, especially major arteries, will be clogged with abandoned vehicles, making using them nearly impassible. Consider fuel consumption, as well. Locating gas stations and building manual pumps to siphon off the (hopefully viable) gasoline will be vital; gas will be hard to come by.

The Car: This hallmark of modern civilization comes in hundreds of variations and are ubiquitous the world over. Choose one based on fuel economy, storage capacity, and durability. The average car lacks all-terrain capability, however. Imagine driving your present car across a field. How well would it do? How far could you go in it under these conditions?

Sport Utility Vehicles: The advent of the SUV revolutionized car-buying patterns, such that they are easy to find. They are built for off-road travel

(even if no one ever takes them off-road), including higher clearance and four-wheel drive capability. They can haul a large volume of supplies, too. Fuel efficiency is low, however, requiring frequent stops at gas stations.

Trucks: These range in type from pick-up trucks to delivery vans to 18-wheeled behemoths. While they can haul a lot of supplies, they have lousy gas mileage (some requiring diesel fuel) and limited off-road capability. If you must drive a truck, fully-enclosed vehicles like vans are a lot better than pickup trucks, because the zombies can't latch on to your supplies.

Campers: These vehicles have the benefit of including a place to sleep and cooking facilities (if you can find the fuel), and they can haul a lot of gear (inside, on the roof, lashed to the sides). Like your other options on this list, recreation vehicles are gas guzzlers, and don't fare well off road.

Military Vehicles: As with firearms, the popular misconception is that military transport is better in a zombie epidemic. If you can get inside a military base (see p. 147), you'll be tempted to take the armored personnel carriers or tanks, figuring on their armor and firepower as being ideal for thinning the zombie herd. Have you ever fired a .50 caliber machine gun or the main cannon on an M1A1 tank? If not, you'll have no idea what you're doing, and these items will be useless. Moreover, these weapons will only be good for as long as the ammunition lasts; if you think making bullets for a hunting rifle is hard, imagine produc-

ing a 90mm shell. The armor could be useful, until you see how fast these behemoths suck down high-grade gasoline (which will be in short supply). On the other hand, one-and-a-half ton trucks and Humvees, liberally equipped from the National Guard armory, make great convoy material. But you had better pack a fuel truck or a Duece loaded with oil drums since most gas stations are no longer self-serve.

Motorcycles: Avoid the "pocket rocket" brands; they're built for street racing. The ideal motorcycle is the dirt bike, because of its maneuverability, off-road capability, fuel economy, and speed. Its one drawback is that you are limited to carrying whatever you can fit in your backpack.

The Horse: While not as exciting as a van covered in steel plating and sporting a .50 caliber machine gun, the lowly horse makes an excellent transportation option—if you can find one in the city. Horses don't need gas, just grass to crop. They can travel almost anywhere four hooves will allow. And they can carry a fair amount of goods (especially when towing a skid). Horseback riding requires skill, however—something a lot of people in the modern day lack.

Road Warriors: Everyone has seen the *Road Warrior* movies, with their cobbled-together vehicles and armor plate. It's fun to think about tooling across the landscape in one of these metal monsters. But you must stop to consider whether or not you are capable of building one. Do you know how to weld? Even if you do, you must stop to consider the added weight on the vehicle's performance. When adding armor plating and bulletproof glass to a car, designers are well aware of the impact on weight and fuel economy. Unless you are careful, you will end up with a truck that gets ten miles to the gallon, achieves a top speed of 30 miles per hour, and is susceptible to roll over.

Offense

After deciding how you will make your last stand, consider the weaponry you will use to defend yourself. Choosing the right weapon means the difference between life and undeath. In the event of a Class A or B event, you should consider local laws. The police frown upon civilians armed with axes and shotguns milling about, and they may not be well-disposed to

Travel Light

When you hit the highway, traveling light is essential. Mobility is key. Before you pack anything, make absolutely sure you need it. What you take with you will be all you have (unless you can scavenge for it, which is by no means assured). You will have limited space in whatever vehicle you choose, so you must make a choice between carrying extra water and a first aid kit, or between a portable generator and sleeping bag. If you've ever packed for a two-week vacation, you'll be familiar with the difficult choices you must make.

accept “but zombies are attacking” as an excuse. During a Class Z outbreak, however, zombie hunting becomes the order of the day and all bets are off.

Shoot Them

It's better to kill a zombie at range. Close combat gives the zombie as much chance to injure you as you have of injuring it. Depending on their weak spot, however, dropping a zombie at 50 yards could be difficult.

When choosing a firearm, consider its role. And never carry just one.

Firearms

Everyone's first instinct is to grab the biggest, most impressive looking gun they can lay their hands on, and this typically means military ordinance. Resist this urge, if you can. First, military rifles have specific ammunition requirements. It's not easy to lay your hands on 7.62mm rounds—they're not stocked at the local gun store. Once you run out of ammunition, your M-16 becomes a fancy metal club. Second, these weapons often require extensive training. Automatic weapons have been known to jump out of the hands of the inexperienced, and muzzle climb can make hitting the target difficult. When you have the option of placing one good shot in a zombie's heart or spraying a room with inaccurate automatic weapons fire, you should choose the former. In the end, a simple rifle or shotgun might be a better choice than something Rambo would carry.

Pistols: They are easy to carry and are good at close range. Despite what you see on TV, it's not easy to shoot someone far away with a pistol, and police train extensively with their firearms in order to be effective. Most people find it difficult to obtain a kill shot with one, particularly at range; most gunfights with pistols occur within ten feet. Where the pistol comes into its own is as a secondary weapon. Just be sure to save the last bullet for yourself.

Rifles: The lowly rifle is often regarded as obsolete. Why carry a hunting rifle when you can mow zombies down with a sub-machine gun? Rifles, with their simpler firing mechanisms, are easy to maintain. And in the United States, with its predilection for hunting, ammunition is relatively easy to find (at least in the short term).

Sub-Machine Guns: The shorter barrel of a sub-machine gun makes it ideal for fighting in tight quarters, like a hallway or small room. But this also gives it poor accuracy at long range, meaning you have to get much closer to a zombie than if you were carrying a rifle. Capable of automatic fire, it can be tempting to unload on a roomful of zombies at head height; unless the zombies have a specific weak spot, this could lead to a lot of wasted ammo. Finally, sub-machine guns are prone to jam when fired on automatic or semi-automatic. Be sure to keep it on single shot and shoot from the shoulder. What makes the SMG appealing is that most are designed to suit the readily-available 9mm round.

Assault Rifles: Similar to the sub-machine gun, assault rifles can fire on full-automatic and suffer from the same drawbacks. Moreover, most military grade assault rifles are complex machines, requiring regular cleaning and care, and have specific ammunition requirements that may not be stocked at the local sporting goods store.

Shotguns: At close range, even against zombies, shotguns make excellent weapons. They can literally blow a zombie's head off or put a grapefruit-sized hole in a zombie's chest. However, at longer range, the greater pellet dispersal pattern—still lethal to humans—is less so against zombies with specific weak spots. Still, the stopping power of a shotgun is capable of sending several zombies sprawling, giving you valuable seconds in which to escape.

Chop 'Em Up

Make a good back-up weapon. Eventually, your supplies of ammunition will run out and close combat weapons may be your only option. The downside to melee weapons, however, is that you're now within the zombie's kill zone. If you can reach out and touch him, he can grab and bite you.

Unconventional Means

There are a number of unconventional ways in which to kill zombies. This section discusses the pros and cons of several methods.

Explosives: Claymores and hand grenades kill by shrapnel, small metal shards ripping through flesh. These devices work well against zombies susceptible to damage, but the chances of hitting a zombie's weak spot, like the heart or head, are slim to none. Other explosives may set a zombie on fire, knock him down through concussive force, or blow him into little bits (which may not be a good thing); generally, the closer a zombie is to ground zero the more likely it will be blown apart. The main thing is to make sure you aren't too close to ground zero when it detonates. Beware of using explosives in enclosed spaces you currently occupy; you may bring the structure down on top of you or be caught by shrapnel. Explosives should be used away from home—they tend to do a lot of collateral damage.

Fire: Fire can be a double-edged sword. Fire burns zombies (unless, of course, they're resistant), but it burns other things as well—like your shelter. In addition, it takes time for a zombie to burn to the point of incapacitation, so you could end up with a human torch flailing around. Filling a trench with gasoline or covering a moat with burning oil can turn both into effective zombie killing zones—while neither alone may stop a zombie, they both can slow it down long enough for the fire to do its work. Molotov cocktails, oxy-acetylene tanks, gasoline-filled balloons—all make good weapons, used in the proper situations (such as burning down a zombie-filled building or fleeing the advancing hordes).

Flamethrowers

It may be tempting to think of flamethrowers when considering fire as a defensive measure. These aren't practical for two reasons. First, the army hasn't employed flamethrowers since Vietnam, so they are in short supply; it's not like you can find them stockpiled at the local armory. Second, flamethrowers require specialized fuel, a jellied gas mixture that's not easy to manufacture. Unless you find a way to cobble together your own device, flamethrowers aren't an option.

Acid: This makes a terrific method for completely destroying zombies, provided you can find a way to successfully employ it. Even if you could find a large quantity of it, you must find a practical delivery method. A properly rigged sprayer (using glass or stainless steel containers and fittings) can be used to spray hydrochloric or sulfuric acid to melt your zombie cares away. Like fire, however, acid may take a few rounds to degrade the target, making him a continuing threat.

Electricity: Since a zombie's body is basically human, electricity may be your best weapon, as it has the ability to stun or paralyze human tissue. This isn't a surprise, as the current running through power lines is enough to fry any organic matter, living or dead. Electrify your fence, if you have sufficient power. Even better, electrify your water-filled moat.

Poison: As most poisons work through the bloodstream, they are ineffective against the undead, since they lack working circulatory systems. Narcotics might work, as they affect the nervous system—the one bodily function they depend upon to move. But irritants, such as Mace, have no affect because the zombie is already dead.

Radiation: The main problem with radiation is finding a way to irradiate the zombies—perhaps some sort of microwave cannon . . . Nuclear weapons are out, for obvious reasons. Besides, radiation affects living tissue by causing tumors and burns. Zombies are already dead, so like poison, radiation has little effect, unless it causes massive tissue damage. In certain situations, you might end up with radioactive ghouls spreading their effects to everyone and everything they touch.

Crush: Even the most resilient zombie is pretty useless when his bones have been ground into putty under the wheels of a large vehicle. The key here is to make sure your tires are rugged enough—it's hard to escape the remaining zombie horde riding on your rims. A similar effect can be arranged with traps that drop logs, concrete blocks, or other big, blunt items onto the zombies with some measure of velocity. These are usually one-shot traps, however, and take a lot of time and energy to arrange.



Starvation: Some zombies are too tough to simply destroy. In this case, your only option is to deprive them of sustenance. While starvation does not normally kill a zombie, it severely incapacitates them, making them easier to kill. You have two options here: Wait them out or restrain them somehow. With the former, remain barricaded in your shelter for as long as you can; going outside means giving the zombies a feeding opportunity. In the latter approach, you could impale them up on stakes, chain them to trees, or lock them in a secure building until they reach Stage III or IV (see p. 82).

Tricks

Unless they possess a fair amount of intelligence, it is relatively easy to dupe a zombie. They tend to have one-track minds (food) and move in straight line to its source. Some zombies, however, have the capacity to learn from their mistakes and puzzle out problems, so the effectiveness of tricking them may vary. Some ideas include:

Bait and Switch: The most important part of any trap is the bait. And living beings make the best bait for zombies—usually humans. This can be a good way to lure small groups of zombies into a prepared kill zone, minefield, gasoline filled trench, or building wired to explode. Naturally, you and your companions may not be thrilled with the idea of becoming zombie chow, so an escape route is critical.

Urban Renewal: Probably the best way to use explosives (unless you have a grenade launcher and lots of ammo) is to lure the zombies to a specific locale and once in they're in place—BOOM! Given the fact that civilization has fallen and most of the cities may be abandoned, you can use whole buildings as booby-traps, loading them up with explosives and blowing them once the zombies have been lured in.

One at a Time: Killing zombies one at a time is better than confronting a mob of them, particularly if you're shooting them. Select a long hallway, an alley, or a room with only one access point to the outside; you want an ambush site that funnels the zombies into a narrow area. This limits their movement, and forces them to advance one-at-a-time, allowing you to pick off your targets.

The Post-Apocalyptic Shopping List

Survivors of the post-zombie-apocalypse need certain equipment in order to continue surviving. This section includes a list of things that would be in short supply after the rise of the dead, as well as things Cast Members and Zombie Masters should think about after the fall of civilization. It is almost entirely the result of brainstorming by the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* mailing list, and the credit is theirs.

The Zombie Master can use any of the items listed herein to confound the Cast Members in small ways, or force them into action. An adventure surrounding the hunt for clean socks and underwear might sound strange, but how much do you enjoy wearing the same sock for a week? Similarly, what are your characters going to do when they start suffering from caffeine or sugar withdrawal (say, a -1 penalty to all mental Tasks and Tests)? If anything, these are items the Cast may want to get a hold of when it looks as though the zombie menace cannot be contained, or consider once the dead rule the world.

Survival gear

- Good, sturdy backpacks—they'll wear out if you overload them and drag them around through combat and survival conditions.
- Shelter that hasn't been trashed by looters, zombies, gunfire, fire, explosion, driving the car through the mall or into the living room.
- Windows that still have glass in them, in buildings and vehicles.
- Tents—though, do you want to be in a nylon tent when the zombies come by?
- Sleeping bags and blankets.
- Waterproofing.
- Boy Scout manuals, plant identification and herbal remedy books.
- Pillows that haven't gone flat or moldy.
- Sterno and chemical warmers.
- Bug Repellent.

Weapons

- Ammo, ammo, ammo.
- Gun cleaning supplies—a dirty gun is an unhappy gun.
- Some kind of lighting—do you want to be reloading ammo by candlelight?
- Powder. Black powder is not terribly difficult to make, but your rifle probably isn't designed for it.
- Bowstrings and new arrows—can you make your own?

Clothing

- Clean underwear.
- Shoes and shoelaces.
- Gloves.
- Small things (like buttons) or the things you should save for a year before you need them again. Where are you going to get winter clothing if the stores are full of summer supplies? If you toss your winter coat once the seasons change, will you be able to find another one next winter?
- Velcro wears out, especially if it isn't cleaned regularly. Zippers break. Where's that duct tape?
- Sewing needles, safety pins, and thread for clothing and equipment repair.
- Bras or other support in which the elastic hasn't given out (the average bra is designed for 180 days of use). The elastic bits in spandex start wearing out, too. And the waistband in underwear. And the elastic woven into socks to help them stay up.
- Stockings and pantyhose—denim may continue to be the fashion in survival.
- Belts—especially if you're toting around tools, weapons, and ammo as well as holding up your (de-elasticized) underwear.
- Holsters, if you're quick-drawing a lot especially.
- Almost anything made of ballistic nylon will need to be replaced, since it's nearly impossible to fix once it tears. Cast Members may have to learn how to cure and tan hides.

Mechanical/Vehicle

- Vehicles left outside and untended for six months are going to be in poor shape.
- Road surfaces are going to start deteriorating—potholes in asphalt, gravel washing away, plants growing through cracks. Anything the state normally cleans up will still be there, blocking the roadways: accidents, abandoned vehicles, trees, power lines, garbage . . .
- Boats—they require a lot of care, and they can be traps as well as escape routes.
- Bridges require maintenance—those suspension cables aren't good forever once they're hung. And what do you do if you're in a car or a boat and you come to a drawbridge in the wrong position?
- Car parts—you don't want to break down on the run, or jump into the car while running from a horde and have the car not even start.
- Older vehicles (pre-1978) are pre-electronic, making them easier to care for; of course, they're older and may be in worse mechanical shape.
- Various fluids used by modern cars (brake and steering fluid, anti-freeze, and so on).
- Pumps to lift gas, and pump water, and water filters.
- Tires—rubber degrades, and once you start running over zombies, driving cross-country or through malls, you start getting a lot of flats.
- Motor hoses and belts.
- Lubricants (oils and WD-40) for all machines. Vehicles, hinges, and guns all need oil in order to keep functioning.
- Small engine parts for your generator.
- Nails—most hardware stores actually have very few on premises.
- Hand tools, like hacksaw blades, drill bits, scissors—are you going to know how to sharpen your own blades without ruining them? Do you know how to work a brace and bit drill when your power drill runs out of batteries, or where to find one? Even hammers break, especially the handles.

- Can anyone make a still? You can use alcohol as a fuel or a disinfectant, you can trade with it, and you can drink it. Of course, you need someone who knows what to do.
- Vehicles with carburetors are easy to convert to alcohol.

Personal Hygiene

- Toilet paper.
- Toilets that work.
- Soap.
- Toothpaste.
- Hairspray and other aerosol can sprays.
- Contacts and glasses—forget about contacts, and the chance of finding spare glasses in the correct prescription is slim to nil. All plastic degrades, including lenses, and plastic lenses scratch up a lot more. (Learn to grind glass.)
- Time for a bath or shower.
- Feminine hygiene products.
- Good haircuts.
- Non-infected piercing.
- Razor blades.
- Deodorant.
- Toothbrushes you want to stick in your mouth.
- Chewing gum and breath mints (could affect your Seduction Tasks).
- Nail files.
- Q-tips.
- Cotton balls.
- Sponges.
- Baby stuff—diapers, food, formula, wipes, oil, rash cream. Pedialyte may taste like sweat, but it's more efficient than Gatorade. Big wounds require big Band-Aids. Diapers are tremendously absorbent for all sorts of purposes, and you can soak them in gasoline for a very different Molotov cocktail effect. (The absorbent material in sanitary napkins was originally developed as a replacement for cotton bandages, back in WWI.)

Medication and Health Care

- Any medications requiring refrigeration, such as insulin.
- Condoms or birth control—people aren't going to stop having sex, and they probably won't want to have children for at least a while.
- Vitamins—nobody's going to be farming for a while; once the frozen and canned stocks run out or are looted, there'll be a commensurate rise in diseases. Without certain vitamins, debilitating illness will rise drastically (the origin of the word "limey" derives from the age of sail, when the British Navy used limes to stave off scurvy and other debilitating diseases).
- Anti-psychotic drugs—Lithium, Prozac, and so on. How are the people suddenly without these drugs going to start acting? (And think of the poor junkies looking for that next fix of cocaine, heroin, marijuana, or speed.)
- Surgical supplies—who wants to make a run at the hospital, where the first wave of injured ended up? Sterile anything will be rare, even band aids and antiseptic.
- Painkillers—aspirin often contains caffeine; see "stimulants."
- Stimulants—caffeine withdrawal is a bad time.
- Sports wraps, nice padded crutches, joint braces.
- Antivenin. (Will you have time to go collect snake venom? Will you know what to do with it afterwards?)
- Allergy medication.
- Asthma inhalers.

Utility

- Strong magnets—they're useful and hard to make.
- Anything rats will eat (which is anything) that is stored where rats can get to it (which is anywhere), including wax, soap, anything in a cardboard box or a bag, paper products including books, waxed cardboard shotgun shells, leather goods, clothing, sleeping, or injured people . . .
- Cigarettes (don't forget that tobacco has medicinal uses, too, including preventing infections).

- Animals—pets, guard dogs, transportation. Critters to eat, too, but a horse is more versatile and useful than a car, and easier to maintain. Cats protect you and your food from vermin. A few good laying hens are better than a single fried chicken in terms of survival.
- Fastenings.
- Rubber bands.
- String and rope (some kinds of polypropylene rope degrade in sunlight).
- Hair clips.
- Lighting—reading or sewing by oil lamp or candles gives you a headache, ruins your eyesight, and spoils your night vision if you're suddenly attacked.
- Candles.
- Flints and mantles and such for lighters and lanterns (and the natural gas/propane/oil to fuel them).
- Lightsticks.
- Electricity/batteries to run the lights.
- Flashlights—those bulbs might break easily.
- Fuels—they're often volatile and we tend to store them in holes in the ground.
- Vehicle fuels—gasoline, electricity, natural gas/propane.
- Heating and cooking fuels—remember that wood still has to be gathered, cut, and dried before it's useful. Existing woodpiles may be looted early or may be the source of bonfires.
- Batteries, both non-rechargeable and rechargeable, especially with the jury-rigged ways folks will have to recharge batteries.
- Writing pens for scribbling down notes or directions to safe places.
- Telephone and Internet only last as long as the electricity does—all the switching systems need to be powered and monitored.
- Sporting goods—that's the first thing everyone loots (with food), whether or not they need the stuff.
- Metal left outside is going to rust up, including the locks on fences, outbuildings, tool sheds, bikes, and so on.

All Flesh Must Be Eaten™

- Empty, non-rusted out dumpsters—use as shelter, low-tech tanks, zombie traps . . . if you can empty them first and the lid is sturdy.
- Furniture that hasn't been burned or used as barricades or weapons.
- Fire extinguishers need to be recharged. It would be awful if the Cast picked up a fire extinguisher to put out a fire and it didn't work . . .
- Recreational activities that require no power, are not strenuous, do not produce babies, are quiet, do not attract zombies or other hostiles, and don't require a lot of light.
- Good musicians with instruments.
- Duct tape. The handyman's secret weapon.
- Chemicals.
 - Acids, hydrogen peroxide, anything chemical that breaks down or is volatile, especially if it's stored in plastic bottles or other not completely airtight containers (opened and not resealed).
 - Other chemicals, like picric acid, gradually become more volatile, even explosive, as they age.
- Eggs—you need animals.
- Yeast.
- Yogurt culture.
- Other leavenings used in baking, so fresh bread is now the heavy bread.
- Coffee, tea, hot chocolate—the packages in the stores will last for a while, but eventually mildew will get them.
- Means of storing food. Tupperware, plastic bags, canning jars, vacuum sealers, preservatives, non-electric dehydrators . . . coolers, thermoses, and those little blue ice packs.
- Things to carry/store good water in—glass is heavy, water is heavy, and plastic isn't that tough either; ever drop a gallon of milk and have it explode?
- Non-electric can openers—they break, but they make things much easier!

Skills

If anyone is able to settle a colony during a rise of the dead, they'll need skills to get it running and keep it running:

- Carpenters.
- Electricians.
- Plumbers.
- Blacksmiths and farriers.
- Mechanics: Can you build a plastic-injection system? Can you run it? Can you fix a tractor? Can you weld bars onto your truck cab?
- Tool and die makers.
- Doctors.
- Farmers.
- Pharmacists.
- Dentists—Can you see an adventure built around the epic quest for a dentist? You might want to watch *Castaway* for one view of home dentistry.
- Teachers.
- Gunsmiths.
- Chemists (for making new ammo).

Food

- Seeds for next year's crops—most commercial seeds sold for gardens don't breed true, or you wouldn't need to buy seeds again next year.
- Cheese—it's not just spoiled milk.
- Milk—but dairy cattle need to be milked every day.
- Beer.
- Fresh meat—and maybe Pepto-Bismol, until you learn how to properly clean and cook an animal.
- Readily available drinking water—in the city looters and survivalists alike will snatch this up first.
- Fruit.
- Vegetables.
- Refined sugar—almost everyone in the U.S. is physically addicted to sugar, it's in everything, and while you're breaking the addiction, you'll be depressed and headachy.
- Keep in mind, all the soda is going to go flat—drink the plastic bottles first.

APPENDIX B

THE GOVERNMENT HANDOUT

Even as the undead hordes consume civilization, the government will be at work, churning out millions of leaflets designed to inform a panicked and increasingly isolated populace. Naturally, most of the advice will be along the lines of “bolt your door and dial 911,” but an occasional glimmer of useful data may exist. Who says your tax dollars being wasted?

The government handout allows ZMs to quickly relay to the players what their characters may know about the zombie menace. Basically a simple “zombies for dummies” info-dump with a diagram, it can also be a handy way of keeping track of special features of the ZM’s undead creations. Fill out a government pamphlet for the zombies present in the Deadworld, and give it to the players as the zombie situation deteriorates.

Basic handout information can include:

Signs of Infection: This can include the usual list of undead hallmarks, plus any unique visual elements of the zombie’s origins: pale, sickly skin color, low body temperature, noxious smell, ignores bullet wounds, and so on.

Methods of Contagion: This is likely to be vague unless the government has a fair idea of what is causing the dead to rise. It might be as simple as airborne germ vector, or body fluids exchanged during mastication (i.e. don’t get bitten), or even “kill anyone who has been touched by a zombie and immediately burn the body.” Keep in mind that the government will be exceedingly conservative here, in the hopes of limiting the “plague.”

Zombie Habits: This is a simple overview of the zombie’s most obvious traits: How intelligent are they? Do they avoid sunlight? How often do they seem to feed? What do they eat (i.e., will pitching the family dog at them slow them down long enough for you get away)? Do they focus on any particular body parts or do they consume (or bury) the whole body?

Typical Zombie Attacks: How far away do they seem to sense prey? How fast do they move? Do they grab and bite or bite then grab? Are they smart enough to see an ambush . . . or maybe plan one?

What To Do If You Encounter A Zombie: Usually this consists of “stay calm, find a secure shelter, and call the authorities”—the *AFMBE* equivalent of “duck and cover.” Unfortunately, it’s likely the authorities have already been eaten. Still, if the Powers That Be have finally realized things have gotten totally out of hand, they may actually give some tips on ways to avoid zombie attention, weak spots (including the attack penalty), the most effective weapons for de-animating zombies, etc.

Who To Call About Zombie Activity: Usually the local police, but the CDC or even the National Guard or Army might be listed. This could provide a valuable clue about the location of a local CDC or military base that may be worth investigating.

The government pamphlet can also include notes on a zombie diagram illustrating weak spots, distinguishing features, and so on.

Keep in mind that some of this information may be erroneous or incorrect—remember when the government told us to “duck and cover” in the event of a nuclear attack? As reports filter into the authorities, some of this information is just plain wrong, and they won’t know it until new facts are uncovered. For example, the government may discover that shooting zombies in the head tends to bring them down. They may not have learned that it is, in fact, the R-Complex that must be hit in order for the head shot to be effective. Cast Members may be a bit surprised when their first attempt at zombie hunting doesn’t go quite the way they planned.

The next page holds a sample handout for the typical Rise of the Walking Dead zombies. A blank form can be found on the *AFMBE* web site.

ANIMATE WARNING PAMPHLET No. 13

THIS IS AN OFFICIAL U.S. GOVERNMENT WARNING

Your area is currently experiencing an epidemic which strongly resembles the reanimation of the newly dead to a semblance of life and mobility. These "reanimated" beings are to be considered **HOSTILE** and **VERY DANGEROUS**. These beings have demonstrated homicidal and even cannibalistic tendencies. They appear to attack any uninfected human they can sense. **DO NOT APPROACH THEM**, even if you think you recognize the infected individual. Retreat to a safe place and call the appropriate authorities (see Section 13.6 below).

13.1: Signs of Infection: Early Stage Symptoms: Skin is pale, damp and cold. Eyes become glazed. Breathing is labored and uneven. Vomiting and inability to retain normal food. Diarrhea and sudden weight loss are common. **Final Stage Symptoms:** Breathing stops. Movement becomes hesitant or uneven. Lack of verbal communication. Lack of pain response. Mortal wounds may be obvious but appear to be ignored. Other signs of post-mortem deterioration possibly evident, such as missing limbs, rotted flesh, even a visible skeletal structure.

13.2: Methods of Contagion: Anyone bitten or injured in a zombie attack should be closely watched for **ANY** signs of infection. If the victim starts to present symptoms (see above), secure and isolate them immediately and call the authorities. Should this be impractical, the victim should be executed in a manner that destroys a significant portion of the head. **TAKE NO CHANCES**—this is a highly contagious and dangerous disease.

Anyone who dies from a zombie attack poses a real and immediate danger. Destruction of the corpse's head is the surest means to prevent re-animation within 30 minutes.

13.3: Zombie Habits: Zombies tend to gather in groups of at least five or six before they proceed to seek human prey. They do not seem to communicate verbally, but they do seem to share a common pattern of hunting humans in packs. They tend to stay in cooler, less well-lit areas, but bright light does not seem to actually impair their activities, especially if human prey is evident.

13.4: Typical Zombie Attacks: They seem to track on any humans within a ten-yard radius, whether they are visible or not. They typically approach in order to grab and feed directly on a victim. Their numbers are often used to surround the target and prevent escape.

13.5: What To Do If You See A Zombie: Maintain your distance and check for other animates—they rarely travel alone. Try to leave the area and get to a secure location. **DO NOT APPROACH** any animates. Once you are clear, call the authorities (see 13.6 below). If zombie contact cannot be avoided, destroying the head of an animate appears to be the best defense. A gunshot through the brain case will render the typical zombie inert. Severing the head will disable the body, although the head itself may remain dangerous.

13.6: Who To Call About Zombie Activity: Call the Center for Disease Control at 800-555-9034 with any information on your encounter. If you do not receive an answer within 30 minutes, call your local National Guard at 555-1873.

The most important thing is to **STAY CALM**. Your government has the situation under control.

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