



MUTANTS in the **NIGHT**

Mutants in the Night

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X-Men, One Piece, Malcolm X, The Black Panther Party

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The Preamble

The setting provided was inspired by the plight of marginalized people around the world. Mutants hold the key to representing folx of all marginalized backgrounds, and direct representations of real, active and archaic laws that pressure, marginalize, and kill real people every single day.

As such, the goal of my design is to highlight, focus, and empower. The urge to struggle and overcome to break free is a burden and a strength, but compassion, empathy, and community are pivotal to that process.

You will likely experience situations in the game that are similar to those in your own life, so let us be free in our MSZ from your conceptions of race, sexuality, disability, gender, and the intersections therein. This is not a game of masters, but of collaborators. Learning is winning. Understanding is success. Create and live in a world to fight for, as you will, undoubtedly, find injustices to fight against.

The marginalized creation of art is, both in the living world and in fiction, created through the lens of oppression. Your journey is, in part, to see what lies beyond it. What does true freedom, if it exists, look like?

Many of the questions this game poses I found myself asking through the conception of this project. I would hope that this setting brings light to them, and to you. These days are dark and people are full of horrors. Humanity has found itself in conflict with itself once again over who deserves and who does not. And often it doesn't seem to matter what actions you take if the world chooses that you, yourself, are wrong to exist.

Whether the sun shines brightly in the sky or the moon hangs quietly amongst stars, we often find ourselves as mutants in the night.

Enjoy.

—DC

The World

February 21st, 2034. An explosion went off around the world. It was the human genome.

News media says the world is finally whole again. The streets are safe for children to play in for the first time since The Collapse. Ten years ago, humanity found itself briefly unified in fear.

Scientific records claim that around 20% of human being became... something else. All in one moment the world changed. The religious deemed the world unworthy; that demons finally broke out of Hell; the end of days. Those old enough to remember it blamed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In reality, no one knows what set it off, but the events that followed, history knows well.

The 20% became a target.

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This work is based on Blades in the Dark (found at <http://www.bladesinthedark.com/>), product of One Seven Design, developed and authored by John Harper, and licensed for our use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).

The Setting

It's the year 2044.

It's been three years since Mutants lost the legal battle against them. Mutated individuals no longer qualify as "human beings" under the law, and as such, have lost their basic human rights.

In their place, the United Nations came together to discern what role Mutants have in this new world. The results panned out to very little.

Law surrounding Mutants dictate the following:

- Mutants are not allowed outside of **Mutant Safe Zones** (MSZs) after 9PM
- Mutants with Labor or Education passes are allowed to circumvent that law
- Mutants aren't allowed to marry, but can claim domestic partnership with another mutant
- Mutants are not allowed to own or rent property outside of MSZs

Mutant Safe Zones are riddled with poverty. Major cities around the world are required to have Zones able to accommodate 20% of the local population, which lead to ghettos and slums being walled up and converted. It's illegal to harm or kill mutants, but that doesn't seem to be stopping anyone from where you're sitting.

Home sweet home.

There's no "direct" way to tell a Mutant from a non-mutant due to the range of physical characteristics Mutants display. Some have irregular shades of skin, horns, fangs, additional limbs, etc. Others show no visible difference between themselves and normal humans. Because of this, annual blood tests are required. Your citizen's license, as a Mutant, has a large **M.U.** stamped beneath the laminate across your photograph. Legally, you cannot be assumed to be a Mutant without checking this I.D., but those with physically mutated features are pushed and kicked around long before any identification is provided.

Since **The Collapse**, the moment mutant kind was born, it doesn't matter who you were, only who you are now. Families were torn apart, having changed individuals sent off to MSZs regardless of their social standing. New families are born every day in the Zones. If you're lucky enough, you can find a shit-paying blue collar job to keep your lights on.

Us Mutants

INSIDE

Some families try to hide their Mutant family members if there are no (or easily disguisable) visual indications of their mutation. Mutations you can't see are usually **Powers**, but those are rare.

Each year, humans are rounded up and subjected to a blood test. The nations of the world are worried that another mutation could occur, or that mutant blood could be problematic to humans. Since local law enforcement agencies take on the job, the wealthy manage to pay off who they can to keep their mutant family members safe.

These Mutants are known as **Insiders**, some of whom keep quietly to themselves for fear of being found and imprisoned (or studied in some lab), and some do their best to help Outsiders.

OUTSIDE

Most Mutants are **Outsiders**, living in the Mutant Safe Zones. They may not be pretty, but mutant society has grown into its own. The odd becomes everyday in the MSZ. Were-children, folx with additional limbs, human and animal alike are on display. Horns, hooves, fangs; the most beautiful monster mash of evolution are packed into broken down city blocks.

Most mutant lives are spent trying to adjust to the changes. All of the mutants are allowed out into "Human Zones," but few leave the walls of the MSZ. Stepping into the world of humans is a dangerous journey, unless you're packing power.

It's rare, but when it happens, it's a sight to behold. An **Empowered** mutant is someone lucky enough to, whether physically mutated or not, have been granted a gift.

Rumors run through the streets. A child who can turn a small flame into an inferno. A woman who can crush a car beneath her foot like an empty can of soda. A man who can call down lightning from raging storms above. A cloaked figure speaking to invisible demons in the dead of night. Everyone has a story, but few tell them willingly. Knowledge of an Empowered mutant, an **EMP**, leads to trouble.

It's common assumption that the government does tests on EMPs. Anyone who knows an EMP gets the information shaken out of them until someone else ends up disappearing.

The Culture

ART

Mutants have free reign of the spaces inside of MSZs. There's little to no upkeep to the infrastructure, and there's no police force to manage the communities within. Art is the cornerstone of law and order.

Graffiti provides not only a creative outlet for the plight of mutant existence, but also a roadmap for where to be, or not to be. Turf control is marked by old zip codes, ballooning faction names, and symbolic imagery.

Sports have become even more of a double edged sword. In the few avenues that a mutant has to live fruitfully outside of a Safe Zone, sports are second only to music. Even without powers, some mutants are much tougher than the strongest of normal humans. "Extreme" sport variations have resurfaced, unbound by what would normally qualify as human rights violations. Mutant sports don't require protective gear, and have rulings that allow for more direct combat when disputes arise.

Death and serious injuries are common, but the average mutant athlete makes tens of millions of dollars a year, on top of gaining a level of social acceptance that most mutants could only dream of. But with prestige comes a price. Due to a lack of regulations, and the disparity most mutants face before signing a contract, player managers control most of the funds athletes receive.

Fashion changed to fit new body parts and the wild coloring of the most beautiful mutants. As another road to the high life grew into prosperity, so too did the locals resonate with clothing and art. During the day, ventures are made into "Human" territory to buy hand-me-downs from thrift shops, all of which are torn and sewed and repurposed into the next big thing. Mutants wear their identity through their clothing.

At the top of society, mutant models are killing the game. Every magazine, clothing line, and daytime talk show is enthralled by the fresh new looks that mutant folk are bringing to the table. Between their refreshing sense of traditional fashion, to the modified clothing made necessary due to the wide range of physical attributes different mutants present. The high profits and massive praise received for their looks often leads to silence when mutant rights are on the table. Speaking against public perception may lead to a loss of lifestyle.

Drugs moved into a new era of prosperity. Certain strains of mutant DNA have strange and pleasurable effects on the body when their blood is converted into a consumable. Chopped and mixed with the standards, **EoD**, short for "End of Days," was born. EoD is a catch-all drug that's sure to give any mutant or normal human their fix for days at a time. EoD isn't policed inside of MSZ's, so normal human drug cartels often operate, and sometimes live inside of the zones. Overdosing and addiction are rampant, but law enforcement doesn't intervene unless their own communities begin to suffer.

SOCIETY

For the last decade, the fight for mutant rights broke down into one question: are mutants human or not? If mutants are human, then they're legally allowed all basic human rights. If they're not, then mutant kind could be subject to any and all prejudices civil rights activists have fought to prevent. Mutants lost this battle seven years ago, and are fighting to heal the damage done ever since.

Mutants without visible mutations are far more safe outside of Mutant Safe Zones than others, due to their indiscernibility between themselves and normal humans. If seen using their power, they can be marked as mutants by normal humans, law enforcement, and Purists (see Factions). If their mutant status is noted by any of these groups, that mutant may lose the privilege to exist freely in normal human spaces.

Although the curfew is 9 PM, it's widely accepted that any mutant out after dark is asking for trouble. Regardless of Labor and Education passes that allow mutants to work or study beyond their curfew, there are many who ignore their legal rights.

The Factions

LAW ENFORCEMENT

For every action your team chooses to take, there's likely a law standing in its way. Enforcement officials are keeping an eye out for EMPs more than any other mutant. Any space outside of a **Mutant Safe Zone** is under the control of law enforcement.

- **Local Police:** Cops can be easily persuaded with enough cash, but too much **Heat** can lead to unbribable situations. Most are prone to harass and/or arrest Mutants. They have a higher chance of questioning, arresting, and assaulting visibly mutated humans.
- **Mutant Task Force:** A special unit prepared specifically to capture or kill empowered mutants. Unlike the local police, they will enter **Mutant Safe Zones** to assault and arrest EMPs. There are rumors that the Task Force is responsible for kidnappings, in an attempt to forcefully enlist EMP soldiers.

THE PURISTS

Every Mutant's worst enemy. Soon after **The Collapse**, this hate group was born to deal with the rising fear of mutants when policy moved too slowly for these terrorists. Purists believe that the blood of mutants can taint and destroy that of humans. Their greatest fear is that the arrival of mutants marks the potential end of humankind.

Purists kidnap, kill, and torture their targets. Their M.O. is to hunt small groups of mutants outside after curfew as well as "cleansing" their communities of Insiders. Purists aren't well equipped to deal with EMPs, but do their best to gather and prepare information against any mutant they find threatening. As such, they spread their numbers across average citizens, law enforcement agencies, and politicians.

A great deal of their influence comes from the spread of propaganda. They are aware that their radical plans to hurt and defame mutants are only acceptable when the public image of their enemy is at its worst.

THE COMMUNITIES

Each community is working their hardest to deal with this city's problems the best they can. And sometimes their efforts extend far beyond your small slice of the world. Whatever their goals are, these communities are experts at what they do. They don't need saviors, but they do need resources. And maybe, every once in a while, they'll need a little hero work.

The NPC that you meet to take on jobs is that community's **Emissary**. They're your connect for jobs, relevant downtime activities, and possibly even your friend, lover, or rival.

The Littles

It's common for families to be torn apart by the laws surrounding mutated individuals. Even children, at the age of 10, are forced to leave their homes and enter the MSZ. There are mutant families inside the Safe Zones that adopt when possible, but many children fall through the cracks.

The Littles were born from the need to survive. After forming small groups, they often pickpocket valuables, do odd jobs, and gather information. Generally striving to keep themselves fed and housed. Once a Little hits the age of 16, they're old enough to legally get a job, and officially become a "Big", a former little who is now responsible for helping other Littles transition from Littles to Bigs.

To assist this community, you can take jobs at the Arcade. When this community's progress clock is complete, add **+1d** when making an engagement roll.

The Clinic

MSZs do not have hospitals. Instead they have a series of clinics scattered across the MSZ. Due to the massive population squeezed inside the border walls, most clinics are open 24/7, understaffed and under-resourced. It's common for individual clinics to run out of basic supplies at any time, due to inconsistent delivery schedules, and a general lack of care from the state's medical program.

Employees are more than often underpaid and overworked, as they spend countless hours treating the wounded and the sick. Some illnesses even showing brand new and highly specific properties that doctors have never seen. The clinical specialists there are on the front lines of the treatment of mutated individuals, but have no time or energy to do more than patch people up and send them home.

To assist this community, you can take jobs at the Clinic. When this community's progress clock is complete, using the **Recovery** downtime action costs -1 Cash.

Mechanics & Engineers

Since MSZs are still legally a part of whichever major city they reside in, law dictates that funds must be allocated to the general upkeep of each Zone. In order to both provide work and adhere to these laws, mutants are enlisted as contractors.

These workers are responsible for the upkeep of the MSZ infrastructure, construction, and technical maintenance, while provided with old equipment and an underwhelming amount of resources.

To assist this community, you can take jobs at the Construction Office. When this community's progress clock is complete, each player may choose a new ability to add to their Powersheet. When rolling a new character, that character may also choose a new ability.

Mutants in the Night

Political Activists

There are those who choose to fight back through the power of law. Major influences over legislation surrounding mutant kind is still in the hands of humans. Often those who position themselves as allies in order to achieve their own political goals, rather than secure the rights of the disenfranchised.

Community centers are a hub for local progress and change that truly reflect the voice of the people. There you can find supporters of mutant political candidates, humans who have a track record of true assistance, and informative classes as well as programs that help inform the community of who is truly fighting on the side of mutantkind.

To assist this community, you can take jobs at the Community Center. When this community's progress clock is complete, take **-1 Heat** after each job.

OWLs

Before MSZs were established, most cities had an unspoken rule. Mutants weren't allowed outside after the sun went down. Violence against Mutants during these hours was unbelievably high, and so laid the foundation for the 9PM curfew. During this time of incredible violence, the OWLs were born. Mutants who decided to fight back in the night gathered together and formed a network. Establishing what areas were safe for mutants, and which weren't. Once MSZs were built the OWLs took root inside, immediately taking charge of the situation.

They were the foundation of illegal mutant immigration, bringing separated families together through the network, and helping resistance efforts move resources and soldiers where needed. In your city, they roost above the bar as keepers of the peace. They keep keen eyes on the Purists, local law enforcement, and on any mutant who is in need of protection.

To assist this community, you can take jobs at the Bar. When this community's progress clock is complete, tick two XP when using the **Train** move instead of one.

Each of these communities is working toward their own liberation or survival the best they can. Their intentions are the same, even if the paths they choose are different. What they have in common, is that your crew can help them progress toward their goals in a way that only you can.



Character Creation

1. CREATE YOUR CITY. Answer these questions together at the table. Is your city a well known, now changed metropolis, or a new city of your own creation? What sort of culture has grown in this space? How do normal humans feel about the MSZ and mutants there? Where is your base of operations located? What does it look like?

2. CHOOSE A POWERSHEET. Your Powersheet holds the details of your mutant power. You're provided with some basic moves, as well as Tapped Out effects. On your Powersheet you have a **Flare Clock**. Every ability you use costs 1, 2, or 3 segments of the clock to use.

When selecting a Powersheet you may use one of the preset sheets, or fill out your own. To begin, players may choose two 1-cost abilities and one 2-cost ability from their Powersheet's list of abilities. When a Powersheet's experience block is full, you can choose any new ability from the corresponding list to add to your arsenal.

The available Powersheets are:

- **Chopper:** You can erase and crack open other people's memories. But it's always a two-way street: messing with someone else's mind has an impact on your own."
- **Prestige:** A master of illusion and perception. Lies? The Truth? A master of illusion and perception. Lies? The Truth? Neither are as important as performance.
- **Pyromantic:** Fire and flame bend to your will. Although you can't create it, you are no less its master.
- **Silence:** If you so choose, none can hear you. The startling quiet moves through the darkness, passing without a whisper.
- **Worldbreaker:** You exhibit an impossible strength and durability. Some remark your power as one which breaks worlds.

3. RECORD YOUR NAME, ALIAS, AND LOOK. Choose a name, an alias (if you use one), and jot down a few words to describe your look. Choose your character's physical mutations, if they possess one. How you appear to normal humans may influence where you can go and how dangerous different locations will be. Discuss with your table how the appearance of your PC affects these elements of play.

PRESENTATION

Gender: Describe it, and choose the appropriate pronouns.

Physical attributes: Horned, feathered, scaled, bricked, winged, off-colored, luminescent, feral, dark, translucent, hefty, fanged, vampiric, monstrous, clawed, faerie, stone, furred, bronzed, gilled, quadrupedal.

Affable, Athletic, Bony, Bright, Brooding, Calm, Chiseled, Cold, Dark, Delicate, Fair, Fierce, Grimy, Handsome, Huge, Hunched, Languid, Lovely, Open, Plump, Rough, Sad, Scarred, Slim, Soft, Squat, Stern, Stout, Striking, Twitchy, Weathered, Wiry, Worn.

ALIASES

Bell, Birch, Bricks, Bug, Chime, Coil, Cricket, Cross, Crow, Echo, Flint, Frog, Frost, Grip, Gunner, Hammer, Hook, Junker, Mist, Moon, Nail, Needle, Ogre, Pool, Ring, Ruby, Silver, Skinner, Song, Spur, Tackle, Thistle, Thorn, Tick-Tock, Twelves, Vixen, Whip, Wicker.

4. ASSIGN THREE ACTION DOTS. No action may begin with a rating higher than 2 during character creation. (After creation, action ratings may advance up to 3.)

5. CHOOSE UP TO TWO ASPECTS OF SOCIETY BEST REPRESENTED YOUR PC BEFORE THE COLLAPSE. HOW DO THOSE ASPECTS AFFECT YOU NOW?

- **Poor:** Staying afloat was a day to day struggle.
- **Urban:** Managed to get by (financially or socially) with some rough patches along the way. You may have a significant social standing that obscures people's perception of you.
- **Privileged:** You likely had need for very little. Society and the law of the land didn't stand in the way of your goals or successes.
- **Upper Crust:** Your lifestyle was one of luxury. You accrued wealth, political power, social superiority, or fame.

6. CHOOSE TWO CLOSE FRIENDS AND A RIVAL. Mark two who are close friends, long-time allies, family relations, or lovers. Next, mark a rival, enemy, scorned lover, betrayed partner, etc. Briefly summarize the details of these relationships.

7. CHOOSE YOUR VICE. Pick your preferred type of vice. Vice categories may share similar hobbies or activities. Your choice should reflect your reasoning more than the activity you indulge in. When indulging, choose one of your close friends to accompany you. Describe the scene with the Facilitator, and briefly explore how your close friend feels about the current state of the MSZ.

- **Slay.** Slaying or stuntin is mostly about physical presentation. You can slay with how you dance, stunt with how you dress, and impress with how you represent yourself. Whether you dress in drag, do vogue, drive the hottest whip, or have the flyest gear, the goal is to hit the streets and kill it.
- **Vibin.** Connection is important for any kind of relationship. For the extroverts who seek real conversation, new friendships, or sexual partners, do so in order to refresh themselves. Whether you talk for hours with a friend in a coffee shop or hit up every party through the weekend, you seek people that match your energy.
- **Doin Me.** When you really need to shake shit off, you roll solo dolo. Some skate out their feels. Others might make music in the comfort of their little dojo. Whatever activity you participate in, the core necessity is you time.
- **Settle A Score.** Some folx just need to contest to prove themselves the best. Race for pink slips. Challenge someone in a first-to-ten money match in the fighting game of choice. Drop bars on the opposition at your local rap battle session.
- **For the Culture.** For the creator, relaxation is achieved through the pen, the brush, the sound; whatever tools bring you closer to birthing your experience in art. Maybe you're part of a collective, dedicated to visualizing the mutant experience. Or you seek to convey your soul through sprayed paints on premier street corners. Whatever your passion, the basis lies in what you deem art.
- **Turn Up.** Intoxication, live music, adrenaline, and the hottest, most exclusive parties. There's no better stress relief than getting live and forgetting all of your problems for a night. Ride your high to the bottom of the bottle and back up with the music.

YOUR CREW

How did you meet the other members of your group? Have you known each other for a long time, or did you just meet recently? Did your mutual goals bring you together? Create a history between your PCs, or start off with fresh relationships tied together by a common goal or understanding.

Powersheet Abilities

After choosing a Powersheet, select two 1-cost abilities, and one 2-cost abilities to begin with. After leveling up, choose any one of the abilities for your Powersheet to add to your current arsenal.

PRESTIGE

[1] SPITIN' IMAGE: You can take on the form of another person for a short time. By touch, you're perceived as you present the illusion.

[1] CHOOSE AN AUDIENCE: You can use your power to distract a small group with an illusion of yourself. You become imperceptible to your target(s) until they lose sight of the illusion.

[1] SHIFTING MASK: You can project a modified version of yourself into the mind of someone you are engaging with. Take +1d while rolling against your target. Choose and describe an appearance that assists you in this way.

[2] THE PLEDGE: When taking harm, you can activate this ability to project a dead body double of yourself and slip away.

[2] PLATO'S CAVE: You focus all of your energy into casting a target into an illusion. While active, they cannot perceive any changes in reality until the illusion is released. While this ability is active, your position for action rolls is desperate.

[2] ARMY OF ONE: You can create a small group of doppelgangers that dissipate when touched. Doing so burdens your mental fortitude. Suffer level 1 harm, (foggy).

[3] THE TURN: You take +3 Stress to cast a perfect sensory illusion over a large area for a short time. Everyone inside of it perceives the space as an illusion of your choice.

[3] FALSE ASSASSIN: You can cast an illusion of yourself so potent to the target's mind that the target can be killed by it.

SILENCE

[1] ECHO STREAM: You can create a stream of sound between members of your crew, allowing the group to hear each other from far off distances.

[1] RETICENT: You use your power to become inaudible. Every sound within a few feet of you is nullified.

[1] RUPTURE: Briefly, you can replace the hearing of a small group with a sharp ringing. The affected targets experience a moment of vertigo, confusion, and intense pain.

[2] HUSH: One target you touch loses the ability to make sound for a few moments. You lose access to your Silence abilities until Hush is released.

[2] SHARED STEALTH: You can spread your field of silence outward, affecting a small group around you.

[2] ACOUSTIC SIGHT: You can take +2 Stress to trace the waves of sound through a building or structure near you, mapping out the area.

[3] A QUIET DEATH: While stalking with the intent to kill, take +1d to Hunt and Skirmish against a target. If both rolls result in a 4+, the target suffers level 3 harm.

[3] WHISPER ALMIGHTY: You can expand the vibrations of a whisper into a cannon of destructive sound. All persons and objects before you are pushed away, harmed, and/or destroyed.

CHOPPER

[1] REWIND: You erase the memories of everyone in the room about what happened over the last 10 seconds.

[1] ON BLAST: You can choose to become a psychic antennae for someone else's thoughts. For the next minute or so, everything they think is broadcasted telepathically into the minds of anyone nearby.

[1] BACK TO THE PRESENT: After a failed roll (1-3) you can use this ability to reroll once as if the first never happened. You cannot accept aid for the new roll.

[2] BULLET TIME: You can dilate time perception for a small group. All affected targets momentarily perceive time slower, giving them more time to react to their surroundings. The affected gain +1d when rolling Resistance for the duration.

[2] WIPEOUT: You jump into someone's brain and erase a specific span of time from their memory. The memory must be one that both you and the target share. If the span of time is longer than 5 minutes, you also take level 2 harm [confusion].

[2] THE RABBIT HOLE: You can take +2 Stress to send one target you touch down a spiral of uneasy memories. For a few minutes they are completely enfeebled.

[3] SEEK ALL THINGS: When touching a target, you can search through their mind for a specific memory or piece of information. Roll Focus. On a 1-3, the target searches your mind and gains access to a specific memory or piece of information. On a 4-5, the target learns something secret. On a 6+, the target learns nothing.

[3] BODY SNATCHER: You can completely replace the memories of one target with the memories of another, for a short time. You must touch both targets simultaneously to activate this ability.

PYROMANTIC

[1] **FIREBALL:** Hurl a controlled flame at a nearby enemy adding +1 to your roll against them.

[1] **MELTDOWN:** You can apply heat to inanimate objects: enough to melt metal with the help of a flame.

[1] **BURNING STRIKE:** When rolling Skirmish or Wreck, add level 2 harm (Burning) as an effect.

[2] **FLAMETONGUE:** You can craft an open flame into any weapon of your choice. Although it cannot be touched, it can be commanded to hold a position until used. If you lose focus before commanding the weapon, it dissipates.

[2] **FANNING THE FLAMES:** You can push yourself to do one of the following: provide cover fire for an ally -create a wall fire or smoke that obscures vision - block an exit.

[2] **DIMINISH:** You can call flame to fade away. Take +1d and roll Command. On a 6+, a fire of any size goes out immediately. On a 4-5, the flames are no longer strong enough to burn the environment, but are still present, meekly.

[3] **PHOENIX RISING:** You summon the flames around you to grant you the power of flight for a short time. These flames can be used to activate other abilities without affecting your levitation or movement.

[3] **HELLSPAWN:** You can take +2 Stress to become temporarily immune to heat and flame become a demon of fire. Everything you touch melts, burns (level 2 harm), or turns to ash.

WORLDBREAKER

[1] **STRONGEST THERE IS:** You call upon your massive strength. On a successful Skirmish roll, you can choose what level of harm you deal to your opponent.

[1] **BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE:** You can unleash your terrifying strength against the environment around you. Steel, brick, concrete, and stone all bend to your might.

[1] **KNEEL BEFORE ME:** You can stomp your foot to the ground with overwhelming power, knocking down a small group of enemies before you. PCs in the blast zone must roll Resistance to remain standing.

[2] **JUGGERNAUT:** When taking harm, you can choose to toughen your body in order to avoid the damage completely. If you're fending off multiple attacks, take +1 Stress for every attack after the first.

[2] **FASTBALL SPECIAL:** You can throw members of your crew many feet horizontally and/or vertically. If players are being thrown while in danger, they must roll Finesse to land safely.

[2] **TURN THE TABLES:** When Skirmishing with a target or group, you can unleash a terrifying roar to bump your crew's effect level up by one for a short time. Take +1 Heat.

[3] **UNSTOPPABLE:** When under the threat of death (level 3 harm), you can massively increase your durability, bringing all harm down by 1 level. Gain +1d to all wreck and skirmish rolls for a short time

[3] **GOD OF DESTRUCTION:** You reveal your true strength by entering a berserker rage. For a short time you lose control. Move to destroy the land, structures, and persons who stand in your way.

System Rules

Mutants in the Night uses several core functions of *Blades in the Dark*, and omits several others. Here are the rules that remain.

ROLLING THE DICE

Mutants in the Night uses six-sided dice. You roll several at once and read the single highest result.

- If the highest die is a 6, it's a full success—things go well. If you roll more than one 6, it's a critical success—you gain some additional advantage.
- If the highest die is a 4 or 5, that's a partial success—you do what you were trying to do, but there are consequences: trouble, harm, reduced effect, etc.
- If the highest die is 1-3, it's a bad outcome. Things go poorly. You probably don't achieve your goal and you suffer complications, too.

If you ever need to roll but you have zero (or negative) dice, roll two dice and take the single lowest result. You can't roll a critical when you have zero dice.

All the dice systems in the game are expressions of this basic format. When you're first learning the game, you can always "collapse" back down to a simple roll to judge how things go. Look up the exact rule later when you have time.

To create a dice pool for a roll, you'll use a trait (like your **Finesse** or your **Prowess**) and take dice equal to its rating. You'll usually end up with one to three dice. Even one die is pretty good in this game—a 50% chance of success. The most common traits you'll use are the action ratings of the player characters. A player might roll dice for their **Skirmish** action rating when they fight an enemy, for example.

There are four types of rolls that you'll use most often in the game:

- **Action roll.** When a PC attempts an action that's dangerous or troublesome, you make an action roll to find out how it goes. Action rolls and their effects and consequences drive most of the game.
- **Downtime roll.** When the PCs are at their leisure after a job, they can perform downtime activities in relative safety. You make downtime rolls to see how much they get done.
- **Fortune roll.** The Facilitator can make a fortune roll to disclaim decision making and leave something up to chance. How loyal is an NPC? How much does the plague spread? How much evidence is burned before the constables kick in the door?
- **Resistance roll.** A player can make a resistance roll when their character suffers a consequence they don't like. The roll tells us how much stress their character suffers to reduce the severity of a consequence. When you resist that "Broken Leg" harm, you take some stress and now it's only a "Sprained Ankle" instead.

POSITION & EFFECT

The possible results of the action roll depend on your character's **position**. There are three positions: **controlled**, **risky**, and **desperate**. If you're in a controlled position, the possible consequences are less serious. If you're in a desperate position, the consequences can be severe. If you're somewhere in between, it's risky—usually considered the "default" position for most actions.

If there's no danger or trouble at hand, you don't make an action roll. You might make a fortune roll or a downtime roll or the Facilitator will simply say yes—and you accomplish your goal.

Position is the PC's risk, while effect is the target's risk.

ACTION ROLLS

When you **Focus**, you maintain control of your Power as best you can.

When you **Command**, you intimidate or compel obedience.

When you **Consort**, you socialize with friends and contacts.

When you **Finesse**, you use dexterous manipulation or subtle misdirection.

When you **Hunt**, you carefully track a target.

When you **Prowl**, you move skillfully and quietly.

When you **Skirmish**, you tussle with a target in close combat.

When you **Study**, you scrutinize details and interpret evidence.

When you **Survey**, you observe the situation and anticipate outcomes.

When you **Sway**, you influence with guile, charm, or argument.

When you **Tinker**, you fiddle with devices and mechanisms.

When you **Wreck**, you unleash destructive force.

TAPPED OUT & CONSEQUENCES

When using a Power, the consequence of failure means unwarranted attention, loss of an advantageous position, or harm.

When a **Flare** clock is full, the user is **Tapped Out**. You can still use abilities, but at a cost. Roll **Focus** to determine how much control you exhibit over your ability:

- **6+:** The intended target succumbs to your power and/or the intended effect is successful.
- **4-5:** The intended target succumbs to your power and/or the intended effect is successful, but at a cost. The Facilitator determines the consequences, following from the fiction and the style and tone established by the game group. The Facilitator chooses one of the established consequences listed on the PC's Powersheet.
- **1-3:** You suffer one of the listed consequences, and the use of your power is noticed by passersby. Add +X Heat where X is equal to your Flare Cost.

STRESS

Player characters in *Mutants in the Night* have a special reserve called stress. When they suffer a consequence that they don't want to accept, they can take stress instead. The result of the **resistance roll** determines how much stress it costs to avoid a bad outcome.

*During a knife fight, Kolbe's character, Misst, gets stabbed in the chest. Kolbe rolls their **Prowess** rating to resist, and gets a 2. It costs 6 stress, minus 2 (the result of the resistance roll) to resist the consequences. Kolbe marks off 4 stress and describes how Misst survives.*

The Facilitator rules that the harm is reduced by the resistance roll, but not avoided entirely. Cross suffers level 2 harm ("Chest Wound") instead of level 3 harm ("Punctured Lung").

Pushing Yourself

You can use stress to push yourself for greater performance. For each bonus you choose below, take 1 stress (each can be chosen once for a given action):

- Add +1d to your roll. (This may be used for an action roll or downtime roll or any other kind of roll where extra effort would help you)
- Add +1 level to your effect.
- Take action when you're incapacitated.

Trauma

When a PC marks their last stress box, they suffer a level of trauma. When you take trauma, circle one of your trauma conditions like Cold, Reckless, Unstable, etc. They're all described below.

When you suffer trauma, you're taken out of action. You're "left for dead" or otherwise dropped out of the current conflict, only to come back later, shaken and drained. When you return, you have zero stress.

Trauma conditions are permanent. Your character acquires the new personality quirk indicated by the condition, and can earn xp by using it to cause trouble. When you mark your fourth trauma condition, your character cannot continue on. You must retire them to a different life.

Trauma Conditions

- **Cold:** You're not moved by emotional appeals or social bonds.
- **Haunted:** You're often lost in reverie, reliving past horrors, seeing things.
- **Obsessed:** You're enthralled by one thing: an activity, a person, an ideology.
- **Paranoid:** You imagine danger everywhere; you can't trust others.
- **Reckless:** You have little regard for your own safety or best interests.
- **Soft:** You lose your edge; you become sentimental, passive, gentle.
- **Unstable:** Your emotional state is volatile. You can instantly rage, or fall into despair, act impulsively, or freeze up.
- **Vicious:** You seek out opportunities to hurt people, even for no good reason.

PROGRESS CLOCKS

A progress clock is a circle divided into segments. Draw a progress clock when you need to track ongoing effort against an obstacle or the approach of impending trouble.

When you create a clock, make it about the obstacle, not the method. The clocks for an infiltration should be “Interior Patrols” and “The Tower,” not “Sneak Past the Guards” or “Climb the Tower.” The patrols and the tower are the obstacles—the PCs can attempt to overcome them in a variety of ways.

Remember that a clock tracks progress. It reflects the fictional situation, so the group can gauge how they’re doing. A clock is like a speedometer in a car. It shows the speed of the vehicle—it doesn’t determine the speed.

Long-term Projects

Some projects will take a long time. A basic long-term project (like tinkering up a new feature for a device) is eight segments. Truly long-term projects (like creating a new designer drug) can be two, three, or even four clocks, representing all the phases of development, testing, and final completion. Add or subtract clocks depending on the details of the situation and complexity of the project.

A long-term project is a good catch-all for dealing with any unusual player goal, including things that circumvent or change elements of the mechanics or the setting.

HARM

This consequence represents a long-lasting debility (or death). When you suffer harm, record the specific injury on your character sheet equal to the level of harm you suffer. If you suffer lesser harm, record it in the bottom row. If you suffer moderate harm, write it in the middle row. If you suffer severe harm, record it in the top row. See examples of harm and the harm tracker, below.

Your character suffers the penalty indicated at the end of the row if any or all harm recorded in that row applies to the situation at hand. So, if you have “Drained” and “Battered” harm in the bottom row, you’ll suffer reduced effect when you try to run away from the cops. When you’re impaired by harm in the top row (severe harm, level 3), your character is incapacitated and can’t do anything unless you have help from someone else or push yourself to perform the action.

If you need to mark a harm level, but the row is already filled, the harm moves up to the next row above. So, if you suffered standard harm (level 2) but had no empty

spaces in the second row, you’d have to record severe harm (level 3), instead. If you run out of spaces on the top row and need to mark harm there, your character suffers a catastrophic, permanent consequence (loss of a limb, sudden death, etc., depending on the circumstances).

RESISTANCE

When your PC suffers a consequence that you don’t like, you can choose to resist it. Just tell the Facilitator, “No, I don’t think so. I’m resisting that.” Resistance is always automatically effective—the Facilitator will tell you if the consequence is reduced in severity or if you avoid it entirely. Then, you’ll make a resistance roll to see how much stress your character suffers as a result of their resistance.

You make the roll using one of your character’s attributes (Insight, Prowess, or Resolve).

The Facilitator chooses the attribute, based on the nature of consequences:

- **Insight:** Consequences from deception or understanding.
- **Prowess:** Consequences from physical strain or injury.
- **Resolve:** Consequences from mental strain or willpower.

Your character suffers 6 stress when they resist, minus the highest die result from the resistance roll. So, if you rolled a 4, you’d suffer 2 stress. If you rolled a 6, you’d suffer zero stress. If you get a critical result, you also clear 1 stress.

COMMUNITY PROGRESS CLOCKS & MAP

On the city map, there are five locations. The Clinic, the Community Center, the Bar, The Arcade, and the Construction Office. Next to each of them is an empty Progress Clock. Each clock can be divided into an equal number of segments, with each section representing a job that the crew can take. Once a job is completed, fill out one segment of the corresponding clock.

1-3 segments (5-15 jobs) are the recommended starting totals.

If you choose to have each clock set at 2 segments, each location has 2 jobs available for the crew. If the clocks are set at 3 segments, there are 3 jobs available at each location. Using this, the table can choose how long their campaign will run. A one-shot will likely consist of one job, one location, and one emissary (NPC) representing that location’s faction. A long-form campaign will likely consist of 15 jobs, three at each of the five locations.



Playing the Game

FRAMING TOOLS

Play is broken down into two different scene types: **wide shots** and **close ups**. We move between these scenes by **zooming out** and **zooming in**. A wide shot is used to establish the foundation of a setting. The facilitator assists with **framing questions**, allowing the group to create and shape the world around them. Here are some examples:

WIDE SHOT: *Your crew arrives at a clearing full of shipping containers. Rain is pouring down from above.*

- **How many people are around?**
- **Are there guards? If so, what are they doing?**
- **What about this place stands out to your senses?**
- **Is there anything strange that catches your attention here?**

Using framing questions allows the group to paint in the details of the setting, and establish parts of play. The group can negotiate conflicting details with the assistance of the facilitator.

As players move through the scenes they can use wide shots to plan out strategies, ask questions outside of the fiction, and continue to define elements of the setting.

When moving into character actions and moments of roleplay, players can frame those moments by zooming in to a close up. It's the facilitator's role to highlight and focus on the use of actions as well as Powers. These are the show stopping combat scenes, the shimmer and shake of mutant potential, and the conversations between friend or foe. Here's an example of potential framing questions:

CLOSE UP: *The Worldbreaker stand before their opponent, arms raised and ready to SMASH their foe into dust. The player declares that they're using the ability "Strongest There Is".*

- **Describe what it feels like when you use your power.**
- **Describe what it looks like when you use your power.**
- **How does this action influence the team's next move?**
- **How does your target (or the environment) react?**

Anyone at the table can choose whichever approach best suits their playstyle for any situation. It's the facilitator's role to help guide the scene toward player collaboration, narrative progression, and interesting outcomes. In addition, framing tools can assist in giving players space to participate in the game. Use these tools to find a balance of focus across the table. To provide opportunities to engage in ways that they're comfortable with.

MAKE THE JOBS, TAKE THE JOBS

In *Mutants in the Night*, the jobs available for players to take on are tied to the needs of the communities they're assisting. Those needs will often be influenced by the entanglements created through completing jobs. It's the Facilitator's role to assess which community is in need, and what jobs sprouts forth from those needs. Once the crew chooses to take action, the job begins.

Engagement Roll

Once the players choose a plan and provide its detail, the Facilitator cuts to the action—describing the scene as the crew starts the operation and encounters their first obstacle. But how is this established? The way the Facilitator describes the starting situation can have a huge impact on how simple or troublesome the operation turns out to be. Rather than expecting the Facilitator to simply “get it right” each time, we use a dice roll instead. This is the engagement roll.

The engagement roll is a fortune roll, starting with 1d for sheer luck. Modify the dice pool for any major advantages or disadvantages that apply.

Major Advantages / Disadvantages

- Is this operation particularly bold or daring? Take +1d. Is this operation overly complex or contingent on many factors? Take -1d.
- Does the plan's detail expose a vulnerability of the target or hit them where they're weakest? Take +1d. Is the target strongest against this approach, or do they have particular defenses or special preparations? Take -1d.
- Can any of your friends or contacts provide aid or insight for this operation? Take +1d. Are any enemies or rivals interfering in the operation? Take -1d.
- Are there any other elements that you want to consider? Maybe a lower-Tier target will give you +1d. Maybe a higher-Tier target will give you -1d. Maybe there's a situation in the district that makes the operation more or less tricky.

The engagement roll assumes that the PCs are approaching the target as intelligently as they can, given the plan and detail they provided, so we don't need to play out tentative probing maneuvers, special precautions, or other ponderous non-action. The engagement roll covers all of that. The PCs are already in action, facing the first obstacle—up on the rooftop, picking the lock on the window; kicking down the door of the rival gang's lair; maneuvering to speak with a Lord at the masquerade party; etc.

Don't make the engagement roll and then describe the PCs approaching the target. It's the approach that the engagement roll resolves. Cut to the action that results because of that initial approach—to the first serious obstacle in their path.

Engagement Roll

- 1d for sheer luck.
- +1d for each Major Advantage.
- -1d for each Major Disadvantage.
- **Critical:** Exceptional result. You've already overcome the first obstacle and you're in a controlled position for what's next.
- **6:** Good result. You're in a controlled position when the action starts.
- **4/5:** Mixed result. You're in a risky position when the action starts.
- **1-3:** Bad result. You're in a desperate position when the action starts.

CONFLICT

Moving through a job is an act of collaborative description. The Facilitator will begin painting the picture of how your group has made it to their location, and what their first point of difficulty is.

Is the crew on the roof of an illegal mutant blood bank, stuck behind the window's lock? Use the results of the engagement roll to set the position and effect of the first role.

From there, use **Framing Tools** as a group to paint the scene as you move through it. Describe details of atmosphere and of dire importance, as the Facilitator guides and hands off the camera from player to player and/or group to group. Communication is key to everyone's fun, and so making sure that everyone is comfortable with what is brought forward is of the utmost importance. Move forward on details with the buy-in of everyone at the table.

Check-in language:

“Is everyone okay with that?”

“What do you think?”

“Is everyone comfortable with moving forward?”

ACTIONS AND POWERS

When you decide on an action, there's a corresponding action roll to decide how well your action goes. Roll the number of dice equal to the number of filled out pips you have in each action and take the highest result.

You can gain additional dice by **Pushing Yourself**, **Getting Help**, or by accepting a **Devil's Bargain**. Pushing Yourself costs two stress in order to receive an additional dice. Getting Help costs the helper one stress to give you an additional dice. And a Devil's Bargain is receiving an additional dice at the cost of increasing the danger of failure, decided by the Facilitator.

When using a **Power**, the ability is immediately successful as long as the terms of use are met. If one of your abilities requires a die roll, the ability triggers upon the conditions of the die roll.

Some abilities give a **+1d bonus**, which increases the rolled die by 1. Other abilities give a **+1 to the result of a roll**, which would take a 4 to a 5, or a 5 to a 6. If you roll two 5's, that would count as a critical success.

FLASHBACKS

The rules don't distinguish between actions performed in the present moment and those performed in the past. When an operation is underway, you can invoke a flashback to roll for an action in the past that impacts your current situation. Maybe you convinced the district Watch sergeant to cancel the patrol tonight, so you make a Sway roll to see how that went.

The Facilitator sets a stress cost when you activate a flashback action.

- **0 Stress:** An ordinary action for which you had easy opportunity. Consorting with a friend to agree to arrive at the dice game ahead of time, to suddenly spring out as a surprise ally.
- **1 Stress:** A complex action or unlikely opportunity. Finessing your weapons into a hiding spot near the card table so you could retrieve them after the pat-down at the front door.
- **2 (or more) Stress:** An elaborate action that involved special opportunities or contingencies. Having already Studied the history of the property and learned of a Little that is known to work around its ancient canal dock—someone that can be compelled or paid to reveal the location of the hidden vault.

After the stress cost is paid, a flashback action is handled just like any other action. Sometimes it will entail an action roll, because there's some danger or trouble involved. Sometimes a flashback will entail a fortune roll, because we just need to find out how well (or how much, or how long, etc.). Sometimes a flashback won't call for a roll at all because you can just pay the stress and it's accomplished.

If a flashback involves a downtime activity, pay 1 cash, instead of stress.

One of the best uses for a flashback is when the engagement roll goes badly. After the Facilitator describes the trouble you're in, you can call for a flashback to a special preparation you made, "just in case" something like this happened. This way, your "flashback planning" will be focused on the problems that do happen, not the problems that might happen.

After A Job

The following rules provide consequences that will assist your narrative use of **Heat**, **Entanglements**, and **Downtime**.

Framing Tools Between Jobs

Framing tools can be used between Jobs to highlight and focus in on the developments that come with Heat, Entanglements, and Downtime activities. The players may choose to set a scene around these activities, and/or roleplay to bring additional context and detail to the activity's resolution. The Facilitator may use roleplaying scenes with close friends and rivals to express the conditions of the MSZ and its population.

HEAT

As you complete jobs and move forward through the game, your heat increases. Although you may not be directly identified, the effects of your actions resonate with the community. Police may begin investigations in your city, friends might express their feelings about EMP actions, and the citizens can be exposed to punishment.

After a job or conflict with an opponent, the crew takes heat. Use the tables below to calculate how much. Heat does not increase more than once for each occurrence. The Facilitator keeps track of heat in their notes.

+1 Heat	▪ You took a job against a high profile or well-connected target
	▪ Your job happened in a human zone
	▪ Items you stole need to be fenced
+2 Heat	▪ Your crew killed someone
	▪ A high profile or well-connected target saw (and can remember) a member or members of your crew using your ability
	▪ You used a 3-cost Mutant ability
+3 Heat	▪ Law enforcement identified a member or members of your crew
	▪ Your crew was caught using their powers on camera
	▪ A member of your crew dies during a mission and is left behind

ENTANGLEMENTS

After the payoff, roll dice equal to your Wanted Level, and read the result according to your Heat.

Wanted Level 1 (Heat 0-3, one die)

- **1-3:** Word spreads of EMP activity. Take -1d on the next Engagement Roll.
- **4-5:** An enemy from your past jobs aims to take revenge on you by harming your community. Take a job to beat them back for the community that has the fewest amount of segments completed in their progress clock. In the case of a tie, flip a coin.
- **6:** Number each incomplete community progress clock from 1-6. Any left over numbers, are given to the most incomplete clocks in order of fewest completed segments to highest completed segments. The selected community has its emissary kidnapped by The Purists in the MSZ. Your next job is to defeat them.

Wanted Level 2 (Heat 4-5, two dice)

- **1-3:** The local police begin a harassment campaign against the MSZ citizens. Take -2d on the next Engagement Roll.
- **4-5:** Specific rumors spread about your group and their abilities. On your next job, enemies are more prepared for the effects of your Powers.
- **6:** During your next job, the enemies have enlisted an EMP. You must face them.

Wanted Level 3 (Heat 6+, three dice)

- **1-3:** Each player rolls 1d6 for each Trauma their character possesses. Players with no Traumas roll 1d6. If their first roll is a failure, they may reroll that die but must stick with the second result. If there's a tie, the person with more Traumas is chosen. If players have tied amount of Traumas, the player with the most Stress is chosen. If more ties occur, flip a coin. The chosen character leaves the crew to pursue a different life. You may create a new character.
- **4-5:** The Mutant Task Force has enlisted a group of empowered mutants. Equal in size to your own, to assassinate you. Your next job features these EMPs.
- **6:** All members of the crew have their identities revealed. The world knows who you are and what Zone to find you in.

DOWNTIME

Between jobs, you may pursue a maximum of two downtime activities from the list below. For any downtime roll, add +1d to the roll if you get help from a friend or contact. After the roll, you may increase the result level by one for each cash spent, by hiring assistance, paying a bribe, etc. (so, a 1-3 result becomes a 4-5, 4-5 becomes 6, 6 becomes Critical).

Long-Term Project

Work on a Long Term Project, if you have the means. Roll a trait and mark 1 segment on the project clock per level (1-3: one, 4-5: two, 6: three, Crit: five).

Recover

Spend 2 cash at a local clinic to get treatment. Reduce all harm by one level.

Train

Mark 1 xp for an attribute or your powersheet. You can train a given xp track only once per downtime.

Cool Off

Spend 5 cash at the community center to lower your Wanted Level by one. Describe how the network of political activists works to remove you from the Law Enforcement's radar.

Indulge Vice

Spend time indulging in your vice with one of your trusted friends and roll dice equal to your lowest attribute. Clear stress equal to your highest die result. If you clear more stress levels than you had marked, you overindulge (see below). If you do not or cannot indulge your vice during downtime, you take stress equal to your trauma.

OVERINDULGE. You make a bad call because of your vice—in acquiring it or while under its influence. What did you do?

- **Attract Trouble:** Select or roll an additional entanglement.
- **Brag:** about your exploits. +2 heat.
- **Crossed A Line:** Lose your positive standing with the trusted friend or lover you indulged in your vice with until the next Downtime. Describe what happened.

Facilitator's Guide

EXPLORING THE NARRATIVE

Use these questions and concepts work in the narrative. Some questions can be asked directly while others benefit from being woven into the story.

How and when did your PCs arrive here? Did you live here before The Collapse or did you migrate here after? Are you an established member of your local community, or do you stick to the shadows?

How did your powers manifest, and how did that affect the way society views you? Do you visibly pass as a normal human? Did you sprout horns and claws, instilling fear to your friends and family? Describe the moment that your mutation blossomed.

Dive into the complexity of your city's social breakdown. Have mutants made due in your MSZ by exploiting culture? Are the police heavily active in your setting? How large of a threat are The Purists in your area? Are there a large number of mutant disappearances, possibly due to government interest in EMPs? Are there places outside of the MSZ that are safe for mutants to explore?

Consider also:

- The personal benefits of cultural assimilation and the alluring option of giving into the system.
- Does your Mutant Safe Zone allow humans inside? What's your relationship with them, and other mutant sympathizers?
- Your powers are as potent as they are coveted, and feared. Consider and manipulate how their use can benefit not only the stakes at hand, but the rumors and stories that follow.