



Dead Scare

a tabletop RPG
by Elsa S. Henry

DEDICATION

I couldn't have written *Dead Scare* without the following influences:

For Ironlands, Legion, and the gaming guilds at
Evergreen State College and Gonzaga University.

For Aron Tarbuck, whose store is where I learned to write games.

For the women who have stood up when it matters, in times of peace and war.

And for the girls who game and want to see themselves
reflected in the pages of a game.

Dead Scare is for you.

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Dead Scare is a game based on historical events twisted to suit the author's alternate history nightmares. Any resemblance to an actual person (aside from historical figures) has either been requested, or is done so with love, otherwise it's just an unfortunate Joseph Campbell Style coincidence for which we deeply apologize.



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Suburbs of New York City, 1953

The vacuum roared across the living room as I cleaned the house, finishing the last of my tasks before the children arrived home from school. I had left the television running as I folded laundry, and “Leave It To the Girls” was still playing as I pushed the machine underneath the coffee table, my eyes catching on the ladies chatting to one another.

My heart stopped. The screen flashed to black. I knew the words we had all be dreading were about to come, I knew, even though I prayed it wouldn’t be true.

The words flashed on the screen.

“This is an Emergency Broadcast.”

I shut off the vacuum, and it fell with a thud. My heart raced as I stepped to the set and turned up the volume. The picture snapped from black and our President’s face appeared. He was visibly shaken.

“My fellow Americans,” he began “We have been attacked.”

President Eisenhower wiped his brow and then looked straight into the camera.

“We believe the Russians have attacked us. We don’t yet know how many cities are affected. We don’t yet know what is happening. We are sending the National Guard in to maintain order.”

Tears were streaming down my face. My husband was in Manhattan, and if it had been hit... I couldn’t think about that now.

The President was sweating profusely. Normally, President Eisenhower kept his composure. He wasn’t usually this anxious, but who could blame him? The Russians had attacked us.

I began to pray that my husband was alive. Little did I know that I would regret that prayer. That death would be kinder than life in our new world.

As the President continued to speak, telling us to stay inside our homes until the authorities came to help us, my heart and mind went to my children. I hoped they had ducked and covered like we had taught them. I hoped they were safe.

As my mind drifted, I missed the signs, not that I would have understood them then.

When I looked at the screen again, the Presidents eyes were glazed over. He was moving around the Resolute Desk, a slow, almost comical motion. Why was the President doing that? Why wasn't he speaking anymore?

In the background, you could hear the Secret Service speaking, I couldn't make out the words, we weren't meant to. Then, with a deep unsettling groan, President Harry Truman lurched towards the camera, knocking it and the man behind it to the ground.

The screaming blared from the set, and my eyes fixated in horror on the screen as my President sunk his teeth into the cameraman's face, tearing the flesh away from bone, and exposing what remained underneath.

I watched as a Secret Serviceman put a gun to the back of my President's head, and shot him without remorse.

The President was dead. The President had just eaten a man's face.

I had no idea what we were dealing with. However, I knew what I had to do.

I had to get my children.

New York



I stared out the window as the men went to shul. Papa and my brother were allowed to go and pray, while I stayed home with my mother to make the challah and prepare the table for Shabbos dinner.

The radio crackled and suddenly there was an emergency broadcast. I had thought the world had been quiet that day, but I had no idea.

As the men walked down our street, we heard shouting in the distance. The shouting of gentile men. I didn't understand much English then, as I do now, but the words were clearly filled with anger, and then the blood came. Mama closed the windows but I kept watching, saying the Shema for those who were mowed down. The men below kept shouting "This is your fault!"

...and then the dead came. The hungry dead. They looked like we did when we were in the camps. They looked like those who had not survived.

They were the walking dead, come to earth.

We had to get out. We had to get away.

We were Jews, and we had to survive.

BETTER DEAD



THAN ZED

WELCOME TO *DEAD SCARE*

Dead Scare is about the survivors left over when a deadly virus hits the United States of America, causing terror, and the rise of the hungry dead. An attack from the Soviets to make the mindless Americans eat their own, and to destroy the way of life which they so cherished.

Dead Scare is a Story Game, that means that you'll find some mechanics, and some weaponry, but you'll find lots and lots of story fodder. *Dead Scare* can be crunchy if you want it to be, but the crux of what *Dead Scare* is meant to be, is a story you tell, and a history that you develop.

Player characters in *Dead Scare* are the people who would be home on an average workday. Women, children, the disabled, and the elderly. They are the ones who would have to survive to make their country whole again.

Dead Scare is a game about community structure, social dynamics, and yes – killing zombies. Preferably with household items.

The 1950s are an era of clean dresses and sharp combed hair, fraught with issues. Gender roles were codified to the extreme. Racial lines were drawn hard in the sand. Refugees and foreigners were seen with skepticism. This is the era when “Under God” was added to the Pledge of Allegiance. An era of Christianity over all other religions. Where segregation is still a matter of fact, and not of the past.

How these social divides affect the setting of *Dead Scare* is up to you. It is the very nature of an apocalypse to either divide or to bring together – and nothing is certain in the future of those who survive.

Why Play on this Playground?

I wrote *Dead Scare* because I wanted to see what would happen if zombies appeared in the past. To see what would happen if I broke the mold and changed up who does what in a zombie story. Rather than having the men take over and protect the weak, while the women nurse the wounded, what happens when the women have to create a new world? *Dead Scare* is what happens when women are practiced at rebuilding in a war torn world. After World War Two and the era of Rosie the Riveter, women know how to build bombs, seed Victory Gardens, and survive the Blitz. The first half of *Dead Scare* is about the women when they rebuild, and the second half asks another question – what happens when the men come back? What happens when the government restructures and the women are no longer in charge? How do things change, when the world has been run by women for so long? Playing *Dead Scare* is about having fun, but it's also about taking a genre places it may not have been before.

As a historian I love games that ask questions, and this one is no different.

But let's be honest, you may have different reasons for playing *Dead Scare*. You might want to play this game because you can have a rollicking good time beating zombies to death with rolling pins, or because you're into the idea of a six year old slaughtering a horde of zombies on her own because she wants her teddy bear back.

For whatever reason, you're here because you want to stop the dead from destroying your perennials, keep the Neighborhood Watch off your back, and make sure Junior and Little Sally do their chores and sweep the brains off of the front porch.

Running Dead Scare: A Guide for the Neighborhood Watch

So you want to run a game of *Dead Scare*? You're going to need a few things, starting with 3 to 6 players who willing to play in the zombie apocalypse.

- 1) All players will need a pair of d6s, and the **Neighborhood Watch Captain (NWC)** will need a d20 in addition to the d6s.
- 2) A piece of paper to map out your neighborhood on.
- 3) Pencils! Every player and the NWC should have one, in order to take notes, make changes to their playbook, and participate in making the neighborhood map.
- 4) Playbooks. Each playbook contains a different kind of character players will be able to choose from. Print out one of each playbook.

If you've never played a roleplaying game before: you and your friends get together around a table and tell a story. You make characters to tell your story through --- the mothers, widows, and small children who face this terrible time with only each other to depend on.

You get to say what happens. You get to tell each other how your characters react, how they decide to handle the new world they live in, and there are rules in this book to help you keep

going and finish the story that you've started. In the world of *Dead Scare*, women are fighting for their country in the wake of a Russian attack that floods the United States with zombies. It's up to you and your friends to make your contribution to history in the terrifying world your characters live in.

Dead Scare won't tell you what you and your friends ought to do, or where to go, but it will give you a place to tell your story. One about ordinary women who wake up one morning and find out that their lives are changed forever, and now they need to take their homes back. This is your chance to make history.

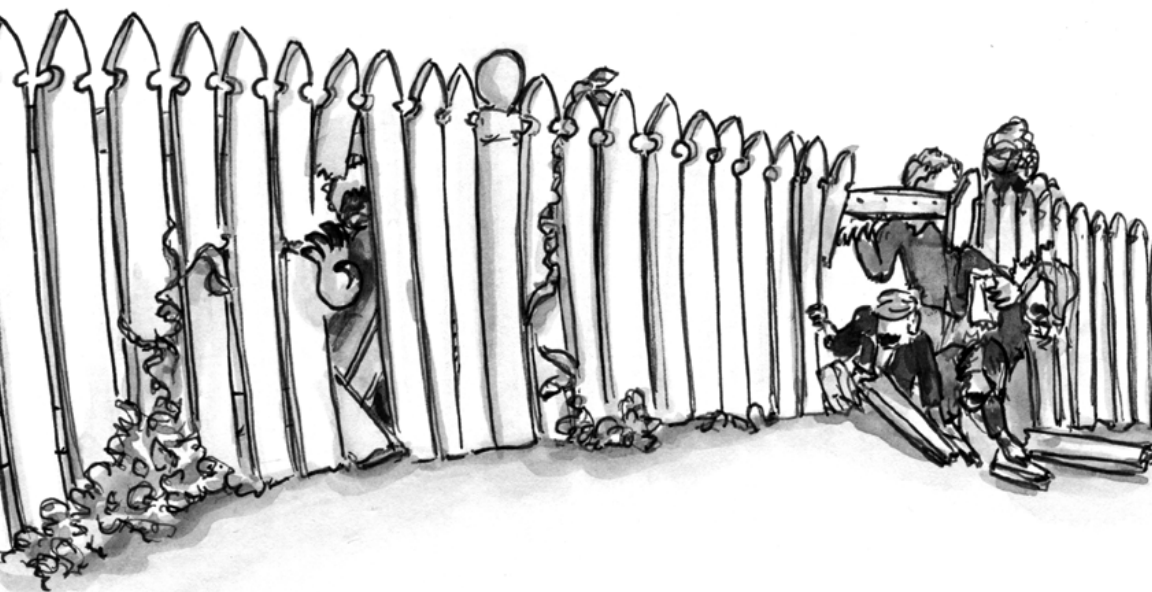
Timing is Everything

The setting of *Dead Scare* spans two distinct moments in history. The first is the Outbreak, which is when most campaigns will begin – though the option is there to play in a different time.



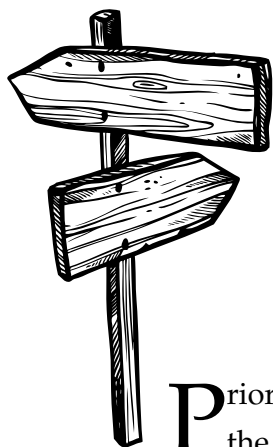
The Outbreak period is approximately six months long, starting from the day the bombs go off in the cities, and ending when Joseph McCarthy takes the office of the President. Reconstruction is the name for the time after that, the time when Americans are trying to rebuild their country, and get things back to normal. Although, what constitutes as normal when there are zombies walking around is a very good question.

If you want to run a full campaign of *Dead Scare*, begin on the first day of the outbreak. Give the players the experience of the apocalypse, and right as they're about to start truly building something, have the National Guard bust in and declare that the United States Government has survived. After that, there's a short period of time where the military has taken over, and then the president is sworn in. At that point you are in the reconstruction phase, where people pretend that things are getting back to normal, though life has changed drastically. One shots of *Dead Scare* can be done. They are a snapshot in an album of a historical era, so choosing the story to tell means being selective about what story you're telling. An NWC might choose to tell the story of a black family escaping from Harlem the night of the outbreak, or of a group of schoolkids fleeing the White House during a class tour. The NWC needs to make the call on how detailed she wants to be about the story she tells in a single shot game.



**MOMS KNOW BEST!
NAIL UP THE FENCES AND
KEEP OUT THE DEAD!**





WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

Prior to the Outbreak, your town was normal. It was the kind of place you lived when you wanted to raise children. It was a good, Christian town, though there was a single Catholic church near the town square. Children ran through the street playing tag or kick the can, and underneath the veneer of pleasantries was the undertow of judgment, gossip and social tension of the 1950s.

Did Mrs. Henry not keep her lawn short enough for her neighbors? Had Mr. Williams and his wife not been seen at church recently? Whose children were troublemakers at Sunday School?

The Neighborhood Map

As a group, select the names of streets in your town, and then figure out where the major landmarks are. Where's the church? The train station? The schools? Where might the playground or best climbing tree be? If there are racial or religious tensions, figure out where those lines are drawn – is there a black neighborhood, a Jewish neighborhood, or a poor area? If there is, you should know about it. Other locations you can mark include:

- Where the soda shop is
- Where the drive in movie theater is
- Who has a fallout shelter
- Where the nearest doctor is

- Where the library is
- Freeway entrance
- Other landmarks in your town (city hall, big park, bridge, etc)

Once you have as detailed of a map as you'd like, then figure out where each player lives. Who are your neighbors and how do you get along? Whose lawn looks lovely, and whose could use some work? Other factors to discuss:

- Do you go to church? If so, which church do you attend?
- Do you have children? How many? What ages?
- Are you married? Where does your husband work?
- Where are you from?
- Do you garden? What kind of work do you do to the outside of the house?
- Do you know how to drive/does your husband drive to work?
- What social events do you participate in/clubs do you spend time with?
- Do you volunteer?
- Do you have pets? Dog or cat? Or does your child capture snakes?

GOSSIP AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD MAP

Gossip might affect your map after you've built it – you may discover that someone has a fully stocked canning basement, or that you have a grudge against your neighbor because she's secretly seducing your husband. Gossip is the way that players show what relationships they have to one another in the neighborhood. It can also be used to get information, or force players to do what you want them to in either social or defense situations.



Key locations

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------|
| ① post office | ⑤ school | ⑨ baseball diamond |
| ② grocery | ⑥ butcher | ⑩ |
| ③ park | ⑦ hardware store | ⑪ |
| ④ church | ⑧ 5 & dime | ⑫ |

Then answer questions about your neighborhood, and fill in the map that you've created, first filling in who lives next to whom, and then filling in the gossip slots.

Household Creation:

Every player has a house. When you create your neighborhood map, in addition to knowing what your town looks like, you also need to know about the house you live in. Is it big or small? How many people live there, and what is the upkeep?

Suburban neighborhoods are a micro universe. Everything you do to your home — or within it — might count for or against you. Think carefully about your character and how they would maintain their home. Your home is where your supplies are; consider if you have a basement, or if you have hobbies such as knitting, quilting, sewing or canning. These things could come to matter a great deal, once the bombs drop.

The house on the corner of Elm & Main across the street from the Church and has a stream running through the backyard is home to the Windsor family; Elaine, Marty, Adam and Twyla.

NEIGHBORHOOD QUESTIONS

Who lives in which house?

What retail or educational buildings are nearby?

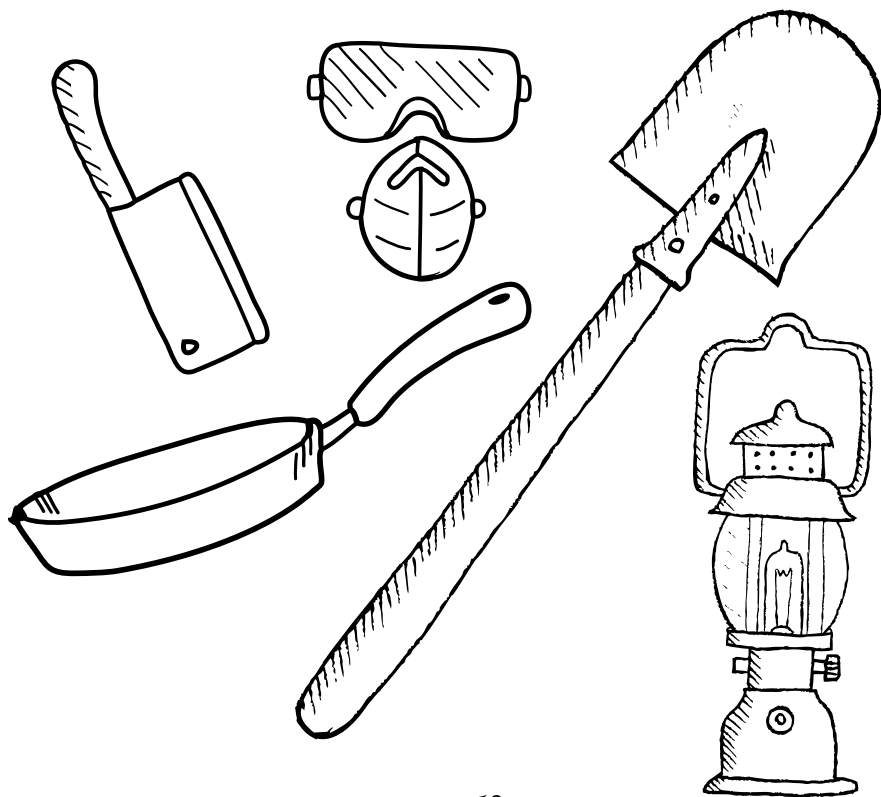
Whose lawn is messy?

Who has a treehouse/playhouse/swingset?

Are there any neighbors people don't like? Mark their houses.

SET THE TONE.

Dead Scare is a game dealing with the apocalypse, and while the game can be dialed from goofy, to dark and terrifying, your group will need to decide where on that spectrum your game will land. Even if the game is set in the most lighthearted version, you should talk with everyone else about what things that could happen in a setting such as this won't happen in your game. Talk about boundaries, and make decisions about how far you're willing to push content. Racism, religious persecution, rape, and graphic violence are all potentially a part of this setting, so it's important that everyone feels like they're on the same page about tone and content in your group's session. If you're the a Neighborhood Watch Captain, it's part of your role to keep everyone supported in how they want to play while they have fun.



Marty works in the city as an insurance claims adjustor and is out at work the day of the outbreak, therefore his belongings (including his car) are at home.

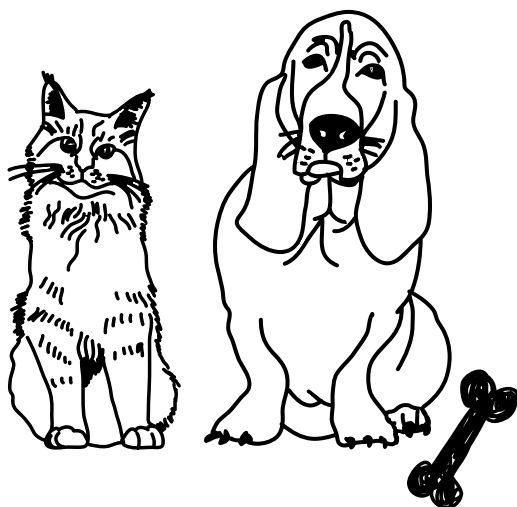
Elaine is at home with her four year old daughter, Twyla, while her twelve year old son Adam is at school. There are three bedrooms on the second floor, a large back yard, and a basement with a canning room for Elaine. Elaine grew up on a farm and is used to growing her own food, so there is a vegetable garden in the back.

You should know if there's one floor, two floors or more floors. You should know if there's a garden, a fence or a dog house. You should know your house inside and out, because what good housewife doesn't?

GEAR

Each playbook contains the kind of gear that your character type might have on hand, but gear is flexible in this game. Your houses certainly have everything you could possibly need inside of them. Do you have a box of band aids? You've got it!

Let's say a PC is searching through their kitchen for a Cast Iron Skillet. Your player rolls their 2d6, they can add any basic move they choose for search (basic moves can be found on page 68). A result of a 10 or above means they have a brand new item (in this case, a brand new Cast Iron Skillet, just purchased from the neighborhood store!), a 7-9 means it's the old one handed down through the family. Battered but probably good in a fight. Below a 6 and the handles broke off years ago. Gear rolls are at the discretion of the NWC (Neighborhood Watch Captain), particularly in the case of rare items, whether it's from supplies anyone needs in the outbreak or something most of you would have no access to, like dynamite.



PETS

Cats and dogs have highly evolved responses to zombies. Training them to respond to zombies is an important part of pet ownership in the post-zed era. Dogs may be terrified of zombies at first in the game, but you **can** train them to attack and guard when necessary.

Small dogs may not attract as much attention as a large dog will. Zeds are more likely to notice a low reverberating bark than a high pitched yelp. Cats are an excellent pet to keep around because in addition to the fact that they are quiet, they also catch mice and eat them before the mice can get to your food.



CHARACTER CREATION



CHARACTER CREATION

Gender

Dead Scare is a game about ordinary women in an extraordinary situation. With the exception of children, it is intended to be played with only female player characters. Boys, as in children below the age of 12, are acceptable, because they would likely not be a part of the commuter traffic, which is most likely going to be caught up in the zombie apocalypse. The intention here is not to punish male characters, but to allow for a cast and a story which is normally not told. The world of cotillions and scout jamborees is more likely to be a new world for you, rather than the world of boys climbing trees and making trouble in playhouses labeled “no girls allowed.”

Race, sexuality & Religion in the 1950s

Segregation is still enforced by the law, religion is less of a personal choice and more of a community expectation, and marriage is strictly between a man and a woman. Procreation is the purpose of marriage.

The choices you make about your character within the context of the game will affect the way that they interact with the other players. Is she a lesbian who is hiding her sexuality because she wishes to not be labeled a deviant? Are you part of a Jewish family concealing their identity in the postwar era? Are you the only black family in the neighborhood? These issues are important. Define the social tensions your character might have issues with that could be integral to the story.

When creating your PC's and NPC's, it's important to keep in mind that not everyone is going to conform to the June Cleaver stereotype. Playing characters that aren't the white, day dress wearing housewife isn't just true to life, it makes for a better story. The nanny/housekeeper in the house might be a woman of color. Your aunt has suspiciously never gotten married, and lives with another woman in order to pay the bills. When the apocalypse begins, people may begin to lose their faith, or start to share the darker secrets of their selves when the world changes. What image that was once important to maintain may no longer seem as dire.

Character Concept

Whether you're an adult or a child, your personality will define you. While you're considering what you might be like, look through the playbooks in order to determine what fits your vision of the woman you want to play. Once you've figured out a bit about yourself personality wise, decide whether you're an adult or a child and pick your playbook from there.

Playbooks give your character the role they'll fill in the story, but that doesn't mean that multiple people can't use the same playbook type for their character. Indeed, a game full of mothers

NAMES

There are suggested names on the playbooks, but there are thousands of names out there. If naming your Preacher's Wife Janice doesn't feel right to you, go look at the lists for names in the 1950s, see if anything strikes your fancy as more suited to your zombie fighting woman or child.

could happen, or a game full of girl scouts could be played. Each individual would have their own identity based out of the moves and backgrounds involved in Character Creation. Players should also think about the race of their characters. While the ad copy, and the visual historical representations of the 1950s are of predominantly white people, the suburbs of the 1950s were not a white-only culture. Players should consider the race of their character when developing them. Characters can be black, white, Asian, Hispanic or Jewish and still very much fit into the fabric of a *Dead Scare* game.

Children Should be Seen and Not Heard

The relationships between adults and children in the 1950s were very codified. Adults were to be listened to, you were expected to behave yourself, especially around the adults whom you weren't related to, and children were expected to be quiet.



Child to child relationships are different — they ‘re playful. Who plays the best double dutch, who has the best marble collection, who sneaks around and who tattles. It’s a careful hierarchy of troublemakers and teachers pets that only children can understand.

Adults are expected to maintain the roles demanded of them by society. Mothers are meant to keep their children in check, and a mother whose children run amuck may not have the favor of the other adults. When considering your character, consider how they relate to the people both of their age, and not.

THE ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD

You’ve worked on what your town and home look like, but fitting your character into the home you’ve created is a vastly important choice. Does your home reflect the expectations of your neighbors, or does the yard reflect the hectic life you lead trying to wrangle five children while your husband is in the army away in Germany?

Your home is in many ways an outward representation of yourself. My yard might be filled with leaves because I’m legally blind, while your yard might be mowed to the point where your husband measures the blades of grass to be certain the grass is the appropriate length for the Homeowners Association.

Picking Moves

Once you have your playbook in hand you get to pick your moves! There’s a bunch of different ways to play each archetype depending on what move you make. Look at the attributes and what you’ve selected – that will help you decide what you’re good at. There are moves associated with each attribute. If you’ve got a Preacher’s Wife with a super highbrawn attribute, for example, you might want to pick the Good Works move for one of your basics, versus

picking FEED THE MANY. The archetype is not meant to be a template for all characters ever, but a suggestion for how to make as many variations on a theme as can possibly be played.

Using Moves

In a scene the NWC will confront you with a situation. For example, your merry band of Freedom Scouts has been pitted against a horde of zombies in a cul de sac in Atlanta. The Runner for the group uses LIKE THE DICKENS to run around the buildings and get behind the horde, hiding in advance of first aid care being needed. The Troublemaker who used MINI MANHATTAN PROJECT earlier on in the session gives the College Girl a Molotov cocktail. She uses BASEBALL GIRL to pitch the explosive into the horde, killing everyone in sight.

Well, so long as all the rolls go smoothly. The resulting successes or failures of each move being used are dependent upon your rolls. You roll 2d6 + whatever the attribute is for your selected move, and then the NWC will tell you just how well or just how badly things have gone for you.

THE WIFE/SPINSTER

Without children, her time is spent caring for the home, talking to her neighbors, and taking care of her husband. She might be bored. She might be wishing that she were pregnant, or currently is. But she could also be not only childless, but husbandless. Fending for herself in the suburbs, trying to fit in amongst a community which might shun her — or perhaps they are more welcoming.

Names: Helen, Gretchen, Betty, January, Lucy, Betsy, Julie

Look: Well kept hair, pristine makeup, clean day dress, pregnant belly, worn hands from gardening, a shiny purse, a strand of pearls.

ATTRIBUTES:



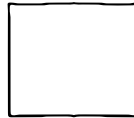
SPUNK



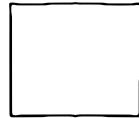
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

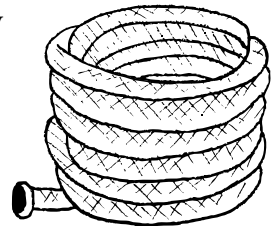


CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick two:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Car | ☐ Service Revolver (+1 loud) |
| ☐ Grass Mower | ☐ Shotgun (+2 loud) |
| ☐ Television | ☐ Bow and Arrow |
| ☐ Dog (+1/+2/+3 Security.
Small, medium or large dog.
Large dog comes with +1 loud) | ☐ Croquet set |
| ☐ Radio | ☐ Gasoline |
| | ☐ Seeds |
| | ☐ Lawn Darts |



Standard equipment for all wives includes regular kitchen equipment and household maintenance tools. If you can think of it and it'd be in your house, you have it.

THE WIFE/SPINSTER**STARTING MOVES:**

Pick two in addition to Household Management.

HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT (CONGENIALITY):

Your house is in far less chaos than a home with children would be. You can find just about anything that you might need in it – including the knowledge of what might be useful.

- On a 10 or above you find the exact right weapon.
- On a 7-9 the NWC picks something semi-useful for you.
- On a 6 or below you find a childhood stuffed animal. You might want to cry with it.

EXTRA TIME (BRAWN):

Your lack of major responsibilities allows you to do multiple things in a short amount of time.

- On a 10 or above you get the ability to take care of everything speedily.
- On a 7-9 you can do one task, but then you must help someone else before you can move onto the next (rinse and repeat until you have completed what you set out to do).
- On a 6 or below you make a lot of noise in the process of finishing your second task.

INGENUITY (MOXIE):

Because you're often alone with nothing to do, you've become incredible at improvising solutions to problems.

- On a 10 or above you have no difficulty McGyvering your way through the issue.
- On a 7-9 or above you have to complete 2 tasks to make the finished solution work.
- On a 6 or below, your solution might result in an injury to yourself or others.

THE LAY OF THE LAND (SMARTS):

Since you're frequently alone, you're left with all the errands. You've gotten to know the area well, so you can find people, things, and scouting spots easier than most.

- On a 10 or above you get all the information necessary.
- On a 7-9 you either lead a zombie back to your block, or you take a minor injury.
- On a 6 or below the horde will take a chunk out of you.

ADVANCED MOVES:

CANNING (SMARTS):

Some skills make things easier in the apocalypse. Canning, and the ability to make things last longer through understanding preservation, is one of them.

- On a 10 or above the materials in question will remain good and useful indefinitely
- On a 7-9 you do not have to roll for used up items for 3 uses, but after that the item perishes at a -1
- On a 6 or below everything is ruined. Forever.

EYES IN THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD (MOXIE):

Just because you don't have kids doesn't mean you haven't learned how to watch out for them and the adults at the same time.

- On a 10 or above you can split your attention between two characters, and give them a +1 on two separate rolls.
- On a 7-9 you can bolster one roll for one person.
- On a 6 or below you cannot assist any rolls for the rest of the scene because you are tired.



THE WIFE/SPINSTER

“YES DEAR” (HEART):

You manage the house, you're in it more often than your husband is. So when he comes home and asks you to do something, or starts to do something you don't want him to do, you shut it down with a simple “Yes, dear.” He feels taken care of, and you remain in control.

- On a 10 or above the character to whom you say “Yes, Dear” no longer rolls to take their action because they trust you to take care of it for them.
- On a 7-9 they're going to question why you aren't going to let them, wasting valuable time. Because you distract them, they take a -1 to their roll.
- On a 6 or below they go ahead with their action unhindered.

PLAYING THE WIFE/SPINSTER:

Of all the women in the neighborhood, you are likely the one with the least to do. That might mean that you've filled your time with a job, but it can also mean that you've been bored. If you worked during the Second World War, perhaps your husband wanted you to stay home so that he could provide for you. Maybe you're choosing to live off what the US Army gave you when he died. Whatever your days look like, the new role of women hasn't suited you quite like the other women. You haven't been able to adjust to a world where your contributions aren't vital. This new order, after the z-bombs have gone off – it may just be a solution to the boredom you were feeling. You're important now. In fact, you're what stands between the zeds and the destruction of the United States.

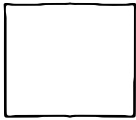
THE PREACHER'S WIFE

You married a man of the cloth. He could be a Presbyterian, a Charismatic Leader, a Faith Healer, or even a Rabbi. Perhaps you have children and are expected to raise them in the faith, or maybe you're the mother of the congregation, running Sunday School and inviting women to quilting bees. Of course, because of your connections to your church, you may not know the people who come from the other congregations in the area. Your time is spent helping your husband cultivate his congregation.

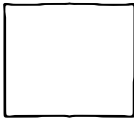
Names: Janice, Helena, Rachel, Ruth, Paula, Esther, Doris

Look: Day dress, Pillbox hat, Religious necklace, Friendly, Stern, glasses, gloves.

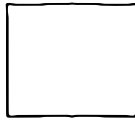
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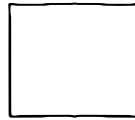
SPUNK



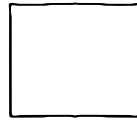
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

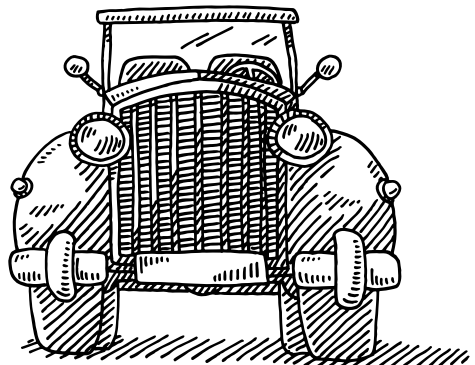


CONGENIALITY

GEAR

Pick two in addition to your faith's religious text:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Knitting Needles. | ☐ Bomb Shelter |
| ☐ Candles | ☐ Car |
| ☐ Graveyard Shovel | ☐ Exorcism Kit |
| ☐ Donated greatcoat | |
| ☐ Donated WWII helmets | |





THE PREACHER'S WIFE

STARTING MOVES:

Pick two in addition to Prayer Circle.

PRAYER CIRCLE (HEART):

Calling the group together to for prayer is one of the things you do best. In heightened fear situations, you can call the group to prayer.

- On a 10 or above everyone is given a +1 to all rolls when they are attacking something unknown.
- On a 7-9 the fear negative stat is a -1.
- On a 6 or below it is a -2

FEEDING THE MANY (CONGENIALITY):

You're used to feeding the entire congregation, what's a few more people among the hungry?

- On a 10 or above your food restores health and comfort.
- On a 7-9 partial health is restored.
- On a 6 or below you pick:

Your food makes someone feel ill

You accidentally got zombie meat. Everyone takes on level of infection

GRACE UNDER PRESSURE (MOXIE):

You've helped calm down the bride before her wedding. You can usher small children into a service with minimal squirming. You've been known to keep children quiet during the bomb shelter drills, and even some of the adults come to you when they are afraid.

- On a 10 or above no one makes a peep while you're hiding.
- On a 7-9 all children are required to make a success roll at a -1
- On a 6 or below you are going to have some issues.

GOOD WORKS (BRAWN):

A life in service to others means you often get your hands dirty. From helping build cribs and painting rooms, you're just a wee bit handy.

- On a 10 or above you build something that stands up as a defense or shelter.
- On a 7-9 your shelter or blockade takes a -1 penalty to zed rolls
- On a 6 or below you take 1 harm and are unsuccessful at your task.

ADVANCED MOVES:

BLESS YOUR HEART! (CONGENIALITY):

Sometimes people say things they shouldn't. You know how to stop them in their tracks while still maintaining your position as the wife of a man of God.

- On a 10 or above you shut someone down verbally, and yet they still seem to think you're the kindest woman in town.
- On a 7-9 you can stop them, but something about the negative gossip surrounding you comes out during the conversation.
- On a 6 or below you disintegrate into unpleasantness. Take a -1 to all congeniality rolls until the end of the scene.

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN (HEART):

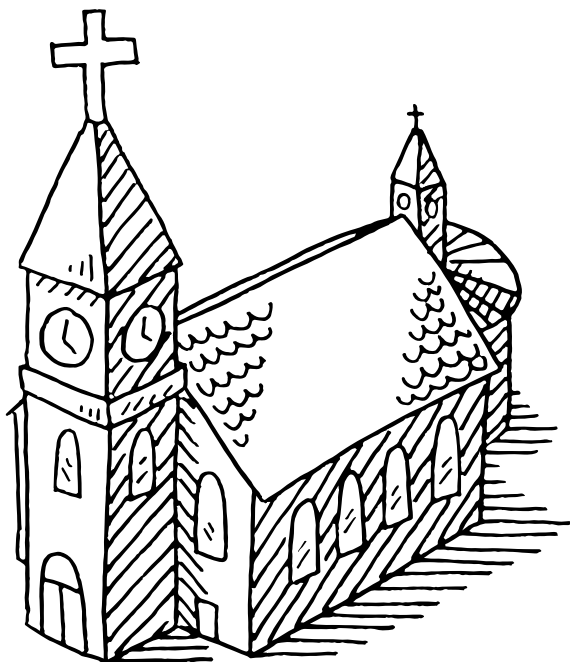
When you put any gossip or bad intentions aside, everyone stands together against the zeds – which as far as you know are the tools of Satan.

- On a 10 or above you can help anyone with a +1 on their move, and can convince anyone not in the middle of an action to lend an assist.
- On a 7-9 you can lend a +1 assist.
- On a 6 or below everyone is too afraid of the oncoming horde to listen to your God. Make a courage check.

THE PREACHER'S WIFE

PLAYING THE PREACHER'S WIFE:

The church is the center of your community. From Bible study in the basement, to church bazaar sales, to Sunday school and quilting bees, that building represents a heartbeat. As the wife of the preacher, you are the social heartbeat of that community. Making social calls, sitting shiva (if you're Jewish) or tending the flock as a woman who wants everyone's lives to be better, people come to you if they have a problem. You can offer prayers, comfort, or even a stern talking to when a young child needs the fear of God put into them. When the apocalypse comes, people will continue to turn to you. People will ask where God has gone, why this has happened. People will hide in your house of worship and look to you for leadership in a time of crisis. They've done it before, and now the need is even greater.



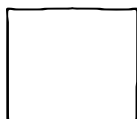
THE TEACHER

Whether you teach elementary school, or even older children, you have a responsibility to the community. You educate, but you also nurture. Maybe you're a strict disciplinarian, or you could be the kindest ray of sunshine in your students' lives. Whatever path you choose, your goal is to guide the children of your town to knowledge.

Name: Rosie, Bella, Beatrice, Penny, Virginia

Look: Strict, gross neck, spectacles, eagle eyes, hooked nose, gentle.

ATTRIBUTES:



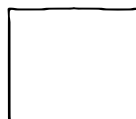
SPUNK



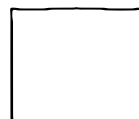
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN



CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

You have access to both your home AND any supplies you can think of from the school:

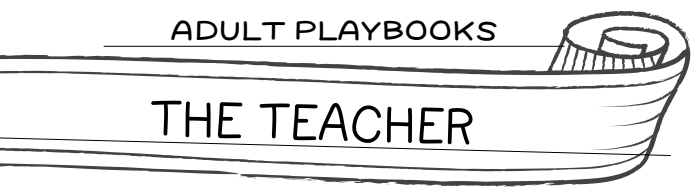
- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Pencils | ☐ School theater props |
| ☐ Chemistry Equipment | ☐ Class Pet (Snake/hedgehog/rat/mouse/hamster) |
| ☐ Rulers | ☐ Research Texts (Dependent upon your subject/age group) |
| ☐ Car | |

STARTING MOVES:

Pick two in addition to Educate the Masses.

EDUCATE THE MASSES (SMARTS):

- On a 10 or above teach another player character how to do something for one scene, and you bolster their roll towards a success by 1.
- On a 7-9 there is no roll bolstering.
- On a 6 or below you must negotiate with the NWC on what incorrect information you taught the person.



THE TEACHER

STOP THE VIOLENCE NOW, PLEASE (BRAWN):

As a playground monitor you often are required to mediate between students fighting one another. With this move, you are able to step between two arguing parties.

- On a 10 or above you diffuse the situation.
- On a 7-9 you pick:
 - pick a side and cause the fight to get worse
 - Your interference makes both sides turn their anger on you.Roll for combat initiative.
- On a 6 or below and your entire party takes a +3 to loudness, and everyone begins to argue.

IDLE HANDS (CONGENIALITY):

Children are always getting into trouble when they don't have something to do. You know how to engage people in activities.

- On a 10 or above the individual you are trying to engage joins in. Production of a material, or the guarding of a space is in sped up/ bettered by +1.
- On a 7-9 the person does the job, but you may make no more moves in this scene, as you are keeping on them to finish the work.
- On a 6 or below not only do they ignore you, they enlist others to sabotage your work.

JUNK DRAWER (SMARTS):

Kids bring things they're not supposed to bring to class all the time. And you take those things away. Slingshots, paper planes, gum, random bits of tin, frogs, screws.... You name it, someone has played with it.

- On a 10 or above you find a useful weapon in your desk
- On a 7-9 you find the items to make a weapon, but must use your next three turns to do so if you need one.
- On a 6 or below that's a fanged or poisonous animal. Which one is the NWC's discretion. React appropriately. It is probably going to bite you.

ADVANCED MOVES:

CALL THE PARENTS (CONGENIALITY):

Sometimes the only thing you can do with a badly behaved student is to call in a higher authority. When the principal doesn't even have the energy to deal with the student in question, it's time to Call the Parents.

- On a 10 or above the individual who has the higher authority in this situation lends a +2 to all rolls which involve either subduing a situation, or managing a situation.
- On a 7-9 the individual who holds the higher authority either lends a +1 to all rolls until the situation is resolved BUT you will take a -1 to courage because you balked.
- On a 6 or below you are the target of any problems during this scene.

SUBJECT EXPERT (SMARTS):

In Secondary school students take classes which are based on subject matter rather than skill. You're one of those teachers. Select a knowledge base (Math, English, Drama, Shop, Home Ec) and use that as the basis of this skill.

- On a 10 or above you can apply your knowledge to solve a problem at hand. Articulate how you use your knowledge to the NWC.
- On a 7-9 you can either use your knowledge to solve the problem, but take -1 damage in the process, or you can require assistance.
- On a 6 or below this is beyond your scope. NWC discretion on how this might impede your progress.

OUT OF HARM'S WAY (BRAWN):

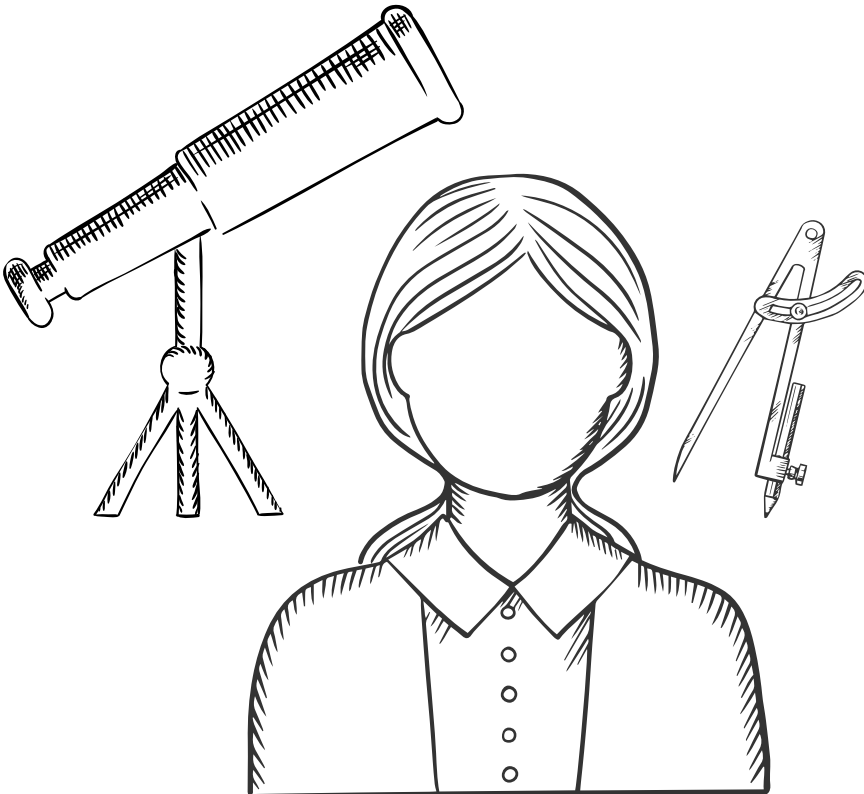
Kids get themselves into scrapes, forget to stay within the fences, get into brawls or refuse to go on time out. As a teacher your job is to make sure that they go where they need to – even if it means physically picking them up.

- On a 10 or above you can lift ANY PC and carry them out of danger.
- On a 7-9 you can lift a consenting PC and carry them out of a dangerous situation.
- On a 6 or below they are too heavy. Sustain -1 damage from the strain for this scene. Will resolve when iced.

THE TEACHER

PLAYING THE TEACHER:

Parents respect you, kids might hate you. But you do your job. When the apocalypse comes, your role changes. Children are no longer going to school, they're helping keep the town safe. Instead of teaching arithmetic you're teaching them how to shoot. Or maybe you're taking that chemistry class and putting it to good use, creating ethers and explosives for the troops. Whatever it is you choose to do, you're making sure the town is safe and using your ability to educate to the benefit of all.



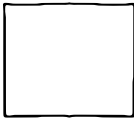
THE NURSE

For bruises, scratches, broken noses, and colds, the community comes to you. When a doctor isn't needed, you're the one who comes to call. Perhaps you also double as a midwife in your community, making sure that women make it through the process of giving birth with ease and safety. Little kids come to you for band aids, adults come to you for hand holding. But are you kind? Are you gentle? Or are you gruff and brisk?

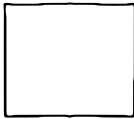
Name: Barbara, Patricia, Leslie, Sarah, Leticia

Look: No Nonsense, intense, war worn, wrinkled, soft hands, fastidious

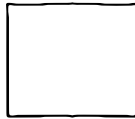
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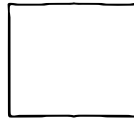
SPUNK



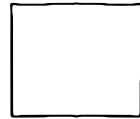
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

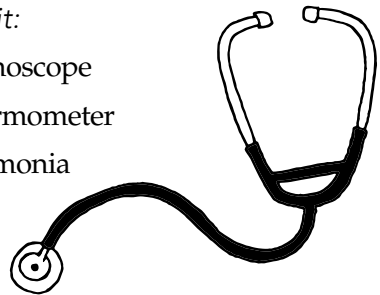


CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick two in addition to a basic First Aid Kit:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ☐ Chloroform | ☐ Stethoscope |
| ☐ Advanced First Aid Kit | ☐ Thermometer |
| ☐ Milk of Magnesia | ☐ Ammonia |
| ☐ Cod Liver Oil | |



STARTING MOVES:

Pick one of the three types of nurse, and then two moves.

COMBAT NURSE (MOXIE):

You have nerves of steel.

- On a 10 or above when under attack you take no courage deficits and can continue to function as normal.
- On a 7-9 you take a -1 to courage and can continue to do as you need to.
- On a 6 or below this is more terrifying than Normandy.

THE NURSE**SCHOOL NURSE (HEART):**

Kids squirm. They scream over tiny things. They bleed all over you but you don't care.

- On a 10 or above you can fix up anybody who won't stand still and this doesn't affect your rolls.
- On a 7-9 you're at a -1 penalty for healing.
- On a 6 or below you get covered in blood and your patient is still screaming, in pain, and definitely still injured.

BIG CITY NURSE (SMARTS):

Your move to the suburbs means that you know a bit more than most people do about recent advances in medicine.

- On a 10 or above you're able to remember something particularly useful that other people might not know about.
- On a 7-9 while you know what to do to help someone, your patient refuses to take your advice.
- On a 6 or below no one will let you treat them for the rest of the scene.

STERILIZATION (SMARTS):

You're well trained in the art of keeping wounds clean.

- On a 10 or above you can clean out any wound and entirely eradicate any potential infection.
- On a 7-9 you clean out and prevent infection unrelated to zombie bites
- On a 6 or below your efforts are unsuccessful.

BEDSIDE MANNER (HEART):

You trained to heal, and to comfort, and one would hope that you're good at it.

- On a 10 or above the injured party is able to focus and calm down in order to be treated
- On a 7-9 the patient calms down enough to not do damage to you, but the screaming makes it hard for you to focus. -1 to your roll to heal
- On a 6 or below the patient is actively fighting you

ADVANCED MOVES:

SURGICAL ASSISTANT (MOXIE):

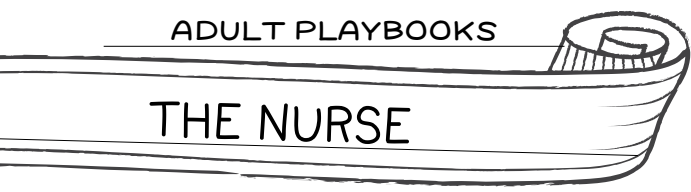
You've spent enough time in the hospital that you became a surgical nurse. You've watched appendices being taken out, held hearts in your hands, and helped set broken bones. You can stomach just about anything.

- On a 10 or above you are able to fight through whatever psychological horror you might experience in the face of severe violence. You do not take courage deficits.
- On a 7-9 you're grossed out. You can either vomit, as well as have last initiative in any combat sequence, or you can take -1 to courage
- On a 6 or below you take -2 to courage rolls during this scene.

NURSING SCHOOL TEACHER (SMARTS):

You've been at the game a long time, and taught other nurses how to nurse. You've spent enough time doing it that you're capable of teaching others how to nurse.

- On a 10 or above you can impart a skill to another player permanently, but you and the NWC must agree on what that specific skill is (bandaging a wound, cleaning a wound, sutures.)
- On a 7-9 you can impart knowledge of a skill to another player, but they can only use it while you walk them through the action.
- On a 6 or below the other player doesn't understand what you're teaching them.



THE NURSE

COMBAT NURSE REDUX (BRAWN):

You were in the trenches of WW1 or on the battlefields of WW2. You had to learn the hard way that nurses aren't just there to be medics, they are combatants as well.

- On a 10 or above you can use any medical tool in your arsenal as a weapon successfully.
- On a 7-9 you must roll 3 rounds of crafting successfully to make your medical tool into a weapon.
- On a 6 or below all you can do is make it go stabby. Roll to see if you hit yourself.

PLAYING THE NURSE:

Before you moved to this little town, before you were a school nurse or an assistant at the small local hospital, you were used to the chaos of a larger environment. It is possible that you miss the chaos, the screaming, and the blood. After the z-bombs go off, your purpose has returned. The blood and the screaming, and the injuries – they're all yours again. Now a broken bone could mean death, and you stand between your patient and the reaper. Or worse, you stand between their life, and their undeath.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You are the matriarch. The neighborhood cares for you, even though you're only related to a few of them. The children come to you for cookies, the mothers and wives bring you dishes. You have command over others because of your grey hair and your stern attitude.

Name: Violet, Bettina, Nancy, Victoria,

Look: glasses, grey hair, tight bun, wrinkled hands, blind, deaf, crotchety

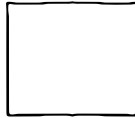
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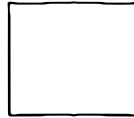
SPUNK



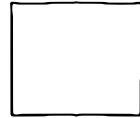
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

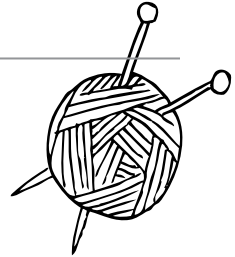


CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| ☐ Knitting needles | ☐ Curling iron |
| ☐ Embroidery project | ☐ Radio |
| ☐ Walking cane (+1 to bash) | ☐ Television |



STARTING MOVES:

Pick two including Stern Glance.

SURVIVOR (MOXIE):

You're the last person in the neighborhood who would succumb to terror. WWI, The Depression, the Holocaust, WWII. Whatever you've survived, you have latched your hands into this world and you're not letting go until it's in a comfy bed.

- On a 10 or above an attack does no damage.
- On a 7-9 you sustain mild damage but it can be healed.
- On a 6 or below you take damage.



THE GRANDMOTHER

STERN GLANCE (CONGENIALITY):

Silence is golden and it just so happens that you know how to enforce it. Everything will stop making noise (including zombies) if you turn your gaze upon them. Nothing quite stops people in their tracks like a cranky grandmother.

- On a 10 or above EVERYTHING stops. If you are in combat, everyone must re-roll initiative after Grandma has had her say & takes a move.
- On a 7-9 only the characters you are looking directly at will stop, max of 3.
- On a 6 or below your glare has diminished along with your eyesight.

GRANDMA'S HOUSE (CONGENIALITY):

You've cultivated a space that feels welcoming to all. Somehow, long after a batch of cookies has been baked, you can still smell the scent on the air.

- On a 10 or above you and your home give all players in the building an instant Freshening Up and all courage points are restored.
- On a 7-9 the players entering the space may regain a point of courage, but only if you lose one because you are lying about the horrors outside.
- On a 6 or below everyone takes a penalty point.

ADVANCED MOVES:

USE EVERY MORSEL (CONGENIALITY):

Growing up through the Depression, living through either world war, or surviving through a pogrom taught grandma how to scrimp, save and use every last thing to keep her family fed.

- On a 10 or above you can use the carcass of an animal, or the last bits of stew, or a torn up piece of cloth to make an entirely new meal, or piece of clothing.
- On a 7-9 you can make something, but there's a 50/50 chance that it might make someone sick.
- On a 6 or below everything falls to pieces in your hands.

KEEPER OF SECRETS (SMARTS):

You have a stellar memory. That memory can be used to remember whose husband is having an affair, who might have gold buried in the backyard.

- On a 10 or above you can use a morsel of knowledge to leverage a potentially violent situation.
- On a 7-9 you can use only a piece of knowledge dredged up by the gossip that you hold on your sheet.
- On a 6 or below you know nothing about the situation at hand.

ROCKING CHAIR (HEART):

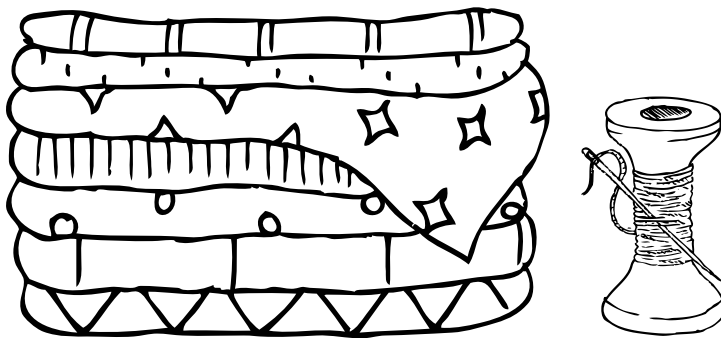
Sometimes what you really need is to sit at your grandma's feet and have her listen to your worries. When grandma sits in her rocking chair and knits, players can share their worries and get their courage points back.

- On a 10 or above you can resolve all courage deficits held by players in the room.
- On a 7-9 you can resolve one point of courage for one player.
- On a 6 or below you take a negative to your courage stats because the outside world is too much to bear.

THE GRANDMOTHER

PLAYING THE GRANDMOTHER:

Society may be a patriarchal one, but you are the Matriarch. Everyone respects you and cares about your well-being. The children love you when you give them sweets, and fear you when you raise your voice. You have power and that power is useful. Before the apocalypse begins you're used to sitting on your front porch and knitting the day away. Now that the end of the world is happening again, you can teach the new generation how to survive. You've lit shabbos candles in secret during the Holocaust, you've stayed alive and fed in the dust bowl during the Depression, you've lost everything and yet risen like a phoenix. Stronger. Alive. The new generation will look to you for guidance.



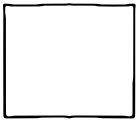
THE NANNY/HOUSEKEEPER

She's the one who seems almost invisible to visitors at home. But to the children in the home, she is a vital part of their upbringing. She's not wealthy, she may live in the house with the rest of the family, or she might live in the less wealthy part of town. She is likely a Black woman, but she could also be from another minority population, or poor. The less fortunate usually have to take these jobs, but the secret is that because she's considered a non-entity, she knows everything.

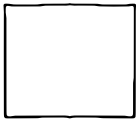
Name: Elizabeth, Bridget, Hettie, Lucy, Olivia, Susan

Look: Simple clothes, maybe a kerchief to keep her hair out of her face. A winning smile to keep others happy, and muscles and calluses not normally considered appropriate for a woman of the era. Sensible shoes and a sensible attitude.

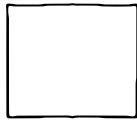
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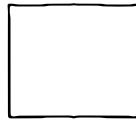
SPUNK



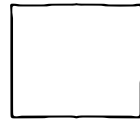
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

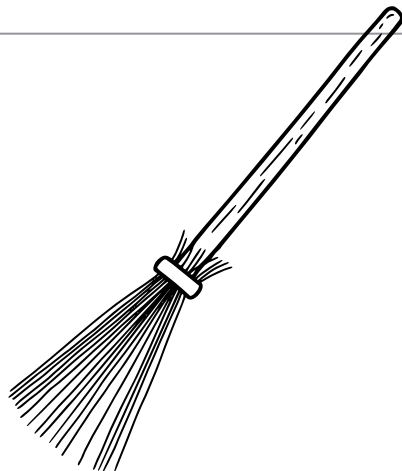


CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

- ☐ First Aid Kit
- ☐ Broom
- ☐ Vacuum
- ☐ Car
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ Spanking Paddle
- ☐ Stroller





THE NANNY/HOUSEKEEPER

STARTING MOVES:

Pick two in addition to Time Out.

TIME OUT (CONGENIALITY):

Regardless of age, the Nanny can put a PC or NPC into a “time out” as a result of inappropriate or violent actions.

- On a 10 or above the character in question sits down and thinks about what they’ve done
- On a 7-9 the Nanny has to argue them into understanding what they’ve done wrong
- On a 6 or below there is a serious consequence for trying to get them to listen.

ROSTER OF CLIENTS (SMARTS):

You work for enough families that you know their homes well – and know they well enough to know where they keep things.

- On a 10 or above you can come up with the nearest house that will have items you need, and it will be there.
- On a 7-9 you can think of three houses where you’ve seen it, but will have to roll to see if it’s there, and you must travel to each location.
- On a 6 or below you find only one item, and it’s broken or somehow unusable.

SPOONFUL OF SUGAR (SMARTS):

You can spin information for kids with just about anything. Don’t want to take cold medicine? I’ll make it taste like sugar. Don’t want to realize that the zombies out in the yard are real? Turn it into a game.

- On a 10 or above your audience will believe whatever tale you spin to get them enrolled in a safety plan.

- On a 7-9 you can only convince one member of your group to do anything. Attempt to convince more than that and you will have a mutiny on your hands.
- On a 6 or below they will run away from you.

ADVANCED MOVES:

DON'T MISS A THING (MOXIE):

Keeping a house clean, and to the specifications of the Lady of the House means you have to pay attention. You can tell when something is out of place, or when something is wrong.

- On a 10 or above you should trust your instincts. The NWC will tell you what you think has happened in this place.
- On a 7-9 you can get one piece of information from the NWC that is true, or three pieces of information that MAY be true. But might not be.
- On a 6 or below nothing jumps out at you as wrong.

LET'S PLAY A GAME (HEART):

Keeping children happy is your job. By suggesting a game of Hide and Seek, or a game of tag, you can create fun out of the apocalypse. Kids will be able to get through scary situations without courage effects taking place, because they think this is part of the fun.

- 10 or above the children play right into the imaginative world you've created.
- On a 7-9 the children in question must roll smarts midway through the game to determine if they figure out that this is real.
- On a 6 or below the children do not fall for the ploy. Player discretion on how they react.



THE NANNY/HOUSEKEEPER

DO YOU NEED A HOUSEKEEPER? (CONGENIALITY):

When you're working for lots of families, you always need new clients. By sharing a little about what you do, you can get allies.

- On a 10 or above the person who you share your skillet with takes you on as an instant ally, their resources are now at your disposal.
- On a 7-9 and the character to whom you are speaking is willing to aid you, but won't take you as an ally without some time.
- On a 6 or below they think you are lying. Roll for initiative.

PLAYING THE NANNY/HOUSEKEEPER:

You know where all the equipment is. While the lady of the house probably has no idea how many chemicals are in the basement, you do. While the lady of the house may not know what weaponry is stashed in the garage, you've got an idea. In addition to the skill of knowing where things are, you've perfected the art of not being seen. It's not so much stealth, as simply fading into the woodwork. Now that the apocalypse has come, your job isn't just to keep the house clean and the kids fed, it's to gather the information necessary for your community to survive.

CHILDREN'S PLAYBOOKS

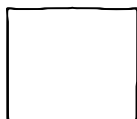
THE SCOUT

You're proud in your uniform, between the ages of eight and twelve. You've learned to light a fire, sew a dress, tie knots like a sailor, and even climb trees. Your mother is a little horrified that you come home with your knees caked in dirt, your face smudged, and your fingers grasping another badge of honor.

Names: Laurie, Ethel, Trixie, Patrick, Shaun, Tommy, Kirk, Katharine

Look: Small, perky, uniformed, dirty fingernails, untied shoes, pigtails

ATTRIBUTES:



SPUNK



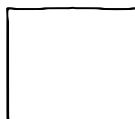
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN



CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Slingshot | ☐ Fireworks |
| ☐ First Aid Kit | ☐ Cherry Bomb |
| ☐ BB Gun | ☐ Heavy duty Rope |
| ☐ Bike | ☐ Swiss Army Knife |
| ☐ Dog (+1/+2/+3 by size) | ☐ Compass |
| ☐ Baseball bat | ☐ Fire flint |



THE SCOUT

STARTING MOVES:

Pick three.

FIRST AID BADGE (SMARTS):

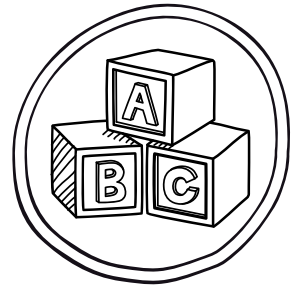
You've earned your first aid badge. You can't, say, fix a bullet wound, but you know how to make a friend feel better, treat a sprained ankle or clean up and bandage a wound. You know how to stop someone from choking, and you know better than to move a person who passed out.



- On a 10 or above you fix them up and the player gains back their health by the end of the scene.
- On a 7-9 they won't gain back their health until the end of the session.
- On a 6 or below they take a sustained injury, NWC's discretion as to what that is.

BABYSITTING BADGE (CONGENIALITY):

You've learned how to keep children safe and calm in an emergency. You know how to make a simple dinner, and even manage if something goes wrong inside the house.



- 10 or above and you can marshal all the children under your care into order and buddies.
- On a 7-9 pick:
 The children will listen to you, but won't listen to any adult
 The children will listen to you, but won't take exact orders.
- On a 6 or below no one can hear you over the screaming.

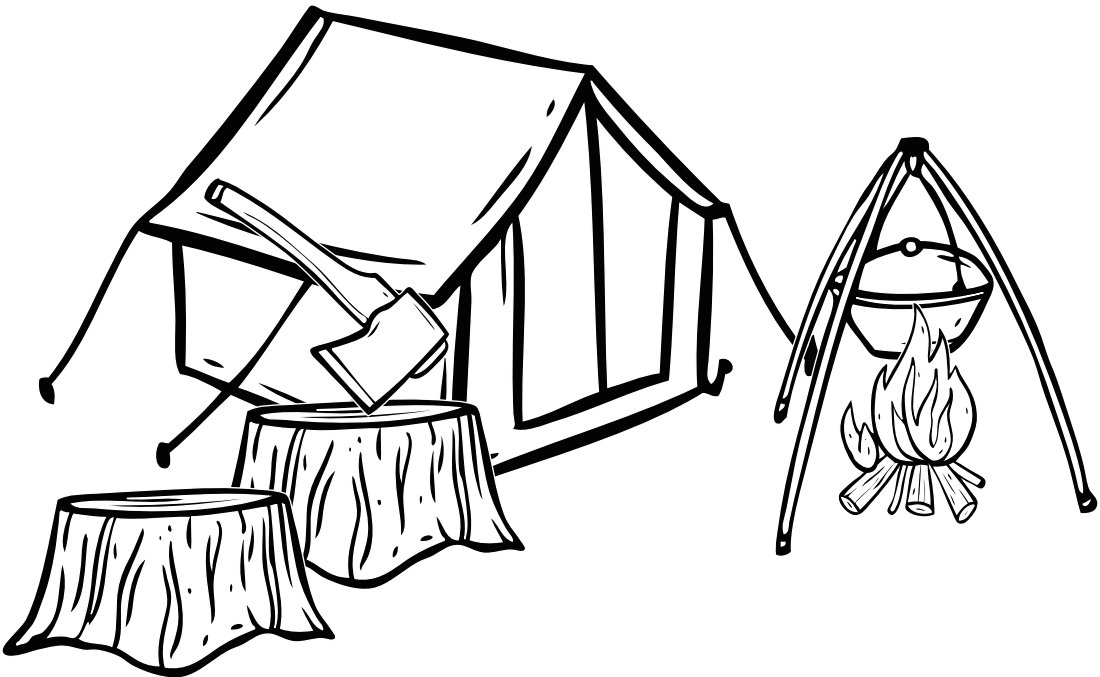
NATURE BADGE (BRAWN):

You learned the basics of surviving in the wilderness. You know how to read a compass, start a fire, and you talked the boy scouts into teaching you how to shoot with a slingshot or a bb gun.

- On a 10 or above you can hunt something down for your meal, or hunt a zombie to protect your town.
- On a 7-9 you can hunt something, but your prey will notice you. Roll for combat initiative.
- On a 6 or below the trail for prey is cold.

**ADVANCED MOVES:**

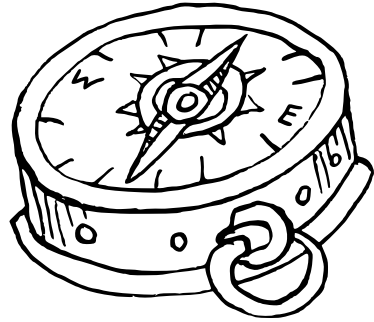
Advanced Moves for children are either taken from another child playbook, or are a starting move from an adult playbook.



THE SCOUT

PLAYING THE SCOUT:

In a way, you've been training for this every day after school for most of your childhood. The only difference is that before, your skills irritated people. Your know-how wasn't seen as an asset but as a detriment to boys wanting to date you. Now, you're one of the people who can help keep everyone safe. But are you brave enough? Were you content with tying knots and identifying flowers? Did you hate the idea of shooting, whether it was a bow and arrow or a bb gun? What kind of scout are you, and why did you choose to join?



THE TROUBLEMAKER

Oh what the teachers, and preachers and preacher's wives would do to keep you out of their charge. You're the kid who lets a frog loose during communion. You're the child who left a snake in your desk during a duck and cover drill. You're the kid whose mother is almost always ashamed to be seen in public. You make trouble.

Names: Laurie, Becca, Trixie, Bea, Olivia, Zita, Emma, Dennis, Alfalfa

Look: Freckles, pigtails, a smudge of dirt on your face, jeans instead of a skirt, a battered backpack with a firecracker sticking out of it, untied shoes.

ATTRIBUTES:



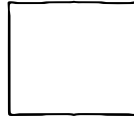
SPUNK



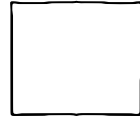
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN



CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

☐ Fireworks

☐ Cherry Bombs

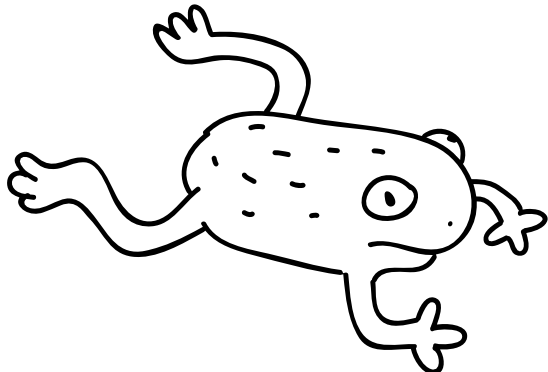
☐ BB gun

☐ Slingshot

☐ Frog

☐ Stink Bomb

☐ Jump Rope



THE TROUBLEMAKER

STARTING MOVES:

CLEAR THE ROOM (CONGENIALITY):

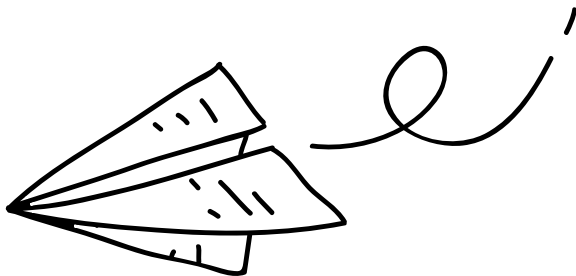
While everyone is ignoring you, you can startle the group to get them out of a worsening situation. You're able to use the tools at your disposal to scatter groups. Maybe it's a loose snake at a church function. Or a well timed stinkbomb during a school assembly.

- On a 10 or above you clear the room with no problems.
- On a 7-9 you clear the room, but everyone takes one harm
- On a 6 or below no one notices, and you hurt yourself trying to cause a distraction. Take one harm.

CHILD TORNADO (MOXIE):

You know how to shoot a toddler from a tree. You know exactly when to drop the snake down the Preacher's Wife's dress. You know exactly when to run away right before the stink bomb goes off. Your timing? When it comes to trouble, it's impeccable.

- On a 10, you create a maelstrom, and get away in time.
- 7-9 you either take damage, or whatever you were trying to do fouls up somehow.





BAG OF TRICKS (SPECIAL GEAR):

Troublemakers always seem to have the right tools at their disposal, whether it's a frog to shove down someone's dress, or a set of darts strategically placed to make someone shriek but not do too much damage.

- On a 10 you magically have whatever you need in your backpack.
- On a 7-9 what you have isn't exactly what you wanted, but you can jerryrig it to work.
- On a 6 or below you accidentally grab something explosive. Roll a d6. On a 1 or 2, it goes off.

ADVANCED MOVES:

Advanced Moves for children are either taken from another child playbook, or are a starting move from an adult playbook.

THE TROUBLEMAKER

PLAYING THE TROUBLEMAKER:

You're not actually a bad kid. It's not that you're evil, or that you don't care, you just think making trouble is fun. Now that the apocalypse is upon you, trouble is actually a valued skill rather than an unwanted behavior. Being able to handle explosives, play with guns, and distract people has become something worthwhile, and people will come to you — even adults — to get your help in making things happen.

Trouble has also become more dangerous. You're not playing with your fellow classmates anymore – now you're facing off against the zeds, and unlike your teachers, they won't just give you detention. They'll eat you alive, or make you one of their own.

Trouble is a skill, but it's a skill you might die for.



THE GOODY TWO SHOES

What the Scout and the Troublemaker have for adventure, you have for being a good girl. You're always helping at Sunday School, or tending to the babies during quilting bees. You're the teacher's pet. The Preacher's pet. Everybody loves you. Well, everybody but the other children.

The neatly polished shiny patent leather shoes match the crisp white blouse and the red skirt with a bow. Your pigtails are impeccable and your cheeks are rosy. You're like Pollyanna. Only if Pollyanna were in the Apocalypse and her perfect little hairbows were covered in zed gore.

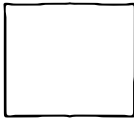
Name: Polly, Nancy, Lucy, Theresa, Mina, Sophie, Mabel, Benjamin, Jonathan

Look: Patent leather shoes, gingham dress, plaits, ribbons in hair, a cross or star of david necklace, a journal.

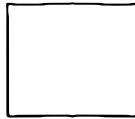
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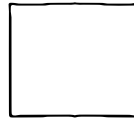
SPUNK



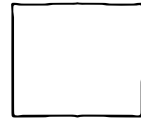
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

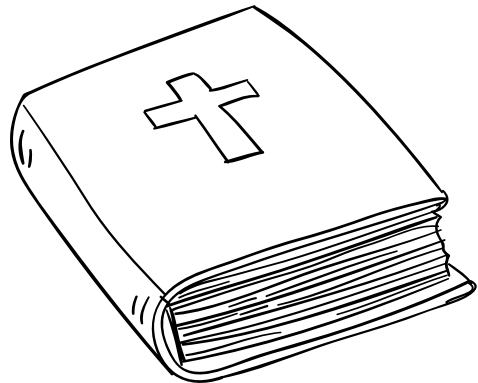


CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

- ☐ A bible
- ☐ An embroidery kit
- ☐ A flashlight
- ☐ A first aid kit
- ☐ A sewing machine
- ☐ A quilt in process



THE GOODY TWO-SHOES

STARTING MOVES:

Pick two in addition to Tattle.

SUGAR & SPICE (CONGENIALITY):

You know how to make people like you. Everyone likes you. You're so sweet and helpful and friendly and cute.

- On a 10 or above people will do what you want. Whatever you want. No questions asked.
- On a 7-9 they're going to ask some questions, you may have to explain yourself to get what you want, eyelash batting be damned.
- On a 6 or below, well, **that** didn't work, you little brat.

TATTLE (MOXIE):

Telling on others isn't very nice, but sometimes you just have to do it. You watch out for bad behavior, you know how to spot it, and you know precisely who needs this information.

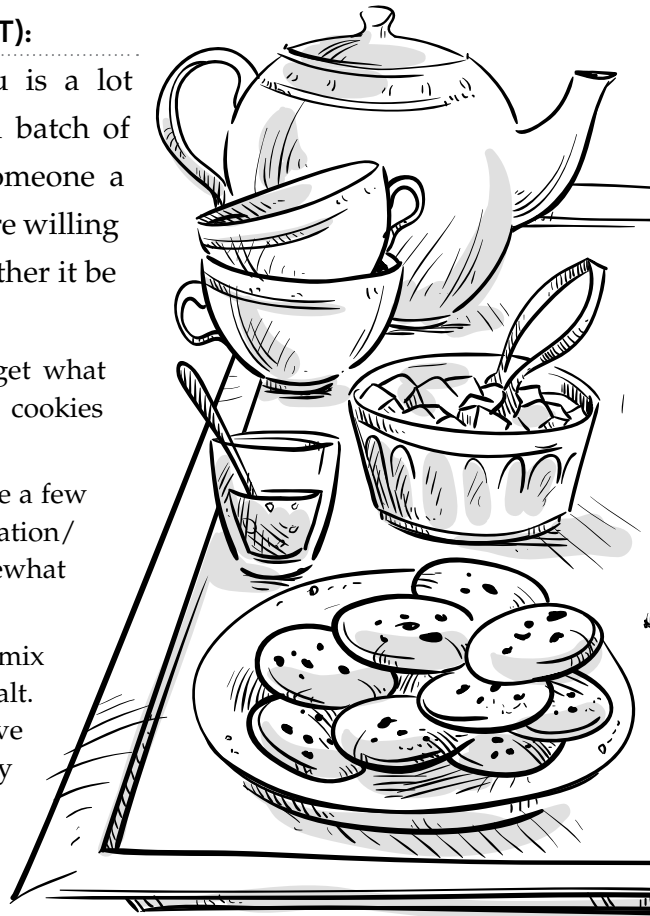
- On a 10 or above the NWC will tell you who the most advantageous person is to share your information with.
- On a 7-9 the NWC will tell you 3 names and you have to decide which one to pick
- On a 6 or below the NWC tells you nothing.



BAKING COOKIES (HEART):

Getting people to like you is a lot easier with a freshly baked batch of cookies. When you give someone a cookie, they trust you and are willing to give you something, whether it be an item or information.

- On a 10 or above you get what you want because those cookies were delicious
- On a 7-9 the cookies were a few days old and the information/ item is likely somewhat unreliable.
- On a 6 or below you mix up the sugar with the salt. The person you gave the cookies to is very unhappy.

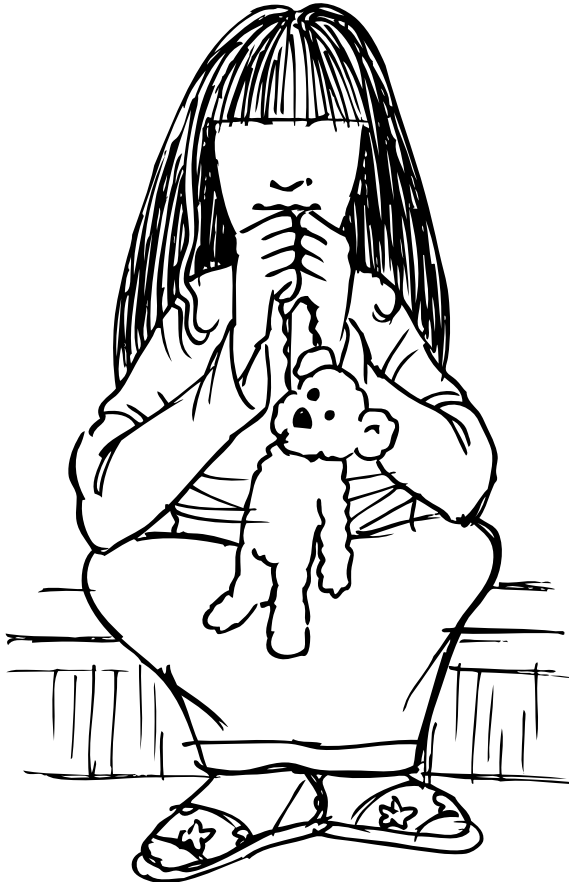
**ADVANCED MOVES:**

Advanced Moves for children are either taken from another child playbook, or are a starting move from an adult playbook.

THE GOODY TWO-SHOES

PLAYING THE GOODY TWO SHOES:

Your homework was always in on time, your chores were always done. But when the apocalypse happens the order of the world – and all the rules – have gone out the window. You're going to have to indulge in some bad behavior, just to get by. How will you handle that? Will you decide to be a diplomat, the kind of person who helps talk things through – or will you refuse to fight?



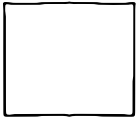
THE RUNNER

You're a new kind of child. Before you were just average. Maybe you were the kid who delivered newspapers, or walked the neighbors' dog. Now, during the zed outbreak, you're how news gets spread. You're the one who goes out after dark, and runs from town to town. You take the unused train tracks, dodge the dead, and try to find yourself a safe spot until you can reach what passes for civilization.

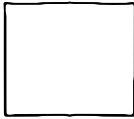
Look: Scabby knees, average face, hair in a ponytail.

Names: Pattie, Michael, Jonas, Wilhelmina, Sophia, Emmett

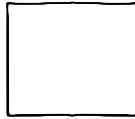
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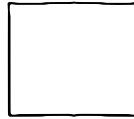
SPUNK



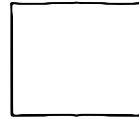
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN



CONGENIALITY

GEAR: *Pick three:*

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ A bicycle | ☐ Unused Journal |
| ☐ Chalk | ☐ Flashlight |
| ☐ A radio | ☐ Jump Rope |
| ☐ A kite | ☐ Jacks |

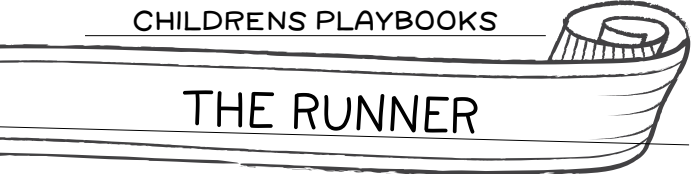
STARTING MOVES:

Pick two in addition to Faster than Lightning.

FASTER THAN LIGHTNING (BRAWN):

It's not just that you can Skedaddle. You can outrun anyone and anything. You've had to drop enough newspapers off before 6am to know that it isn't about how well you get the job done but how quickly you do it.

- On a 10 your speed doesn't compromise your ability to breathe or dodge.
- On a 7-9 you take 1 harm if you don't take a break every mile.
- On a 6 or below you take 1 harm, and you attract unwanted attentions.



THE RUNNER

RAIN OR SHINE (MOXIE):

Your route had to be run every day, whether or not you felt like it, whether or not you were well enough. You can push through pain to get things done.

- On a 10 or above continuing to do physical actions does not compound any injuries that you might have.
- On a 7-9 actions taken after injury only incur 1 damage.
- On a 6 or below you are exhausted until you get medical care.

HERE'S YOUR PAPER (CONGENIALITY):

When you deliver news promptly you can get a bonus to social requests.

- On a 10 or above they are so grateful for the news that you've brought them (whether good or bad) that they give you food, shelter, and information.
- On a 7-9 they will give you a piece of information or a meal as payment.
- On a 6 or below they slam the door in your face.

ADVANCED MOVES:

Advanced Moves for children are either taken from another child playbook, or are a starting move from an adult playbook.

PLAYING THE RUNNER

Children always move too fast, it's one of their skills. You, however, have turned it into a way of life. Racing to and fro as a newspaper delivery kid, or a milk delivery assistant, maybe you're a courier for the school newspaper. Now you dash to and fro off the playground, your feet hitting the pavement with speed to escape zeds and deliver information to other towns. Your speed is your skill, will it keep you safe from the oncoming horde?

THE COLLEGE GIRL

Going to college is a big deal – and you're excited. You have the smarts and the drive to go to school, and the independent Spirit and lack of concern for gender roles to get you there. Maybe you came home for a few days to visit, maybe you're still at school when the z bomb hits, but you have the moxie to fight back.

Names: Sadie, Fiona, Marcy, Rosie,

Look: Smart suit, glasses, ruffled hair, heavy bookbag, sports equipment. Bobby sox, poodle skirt

ATTRIBUTES:



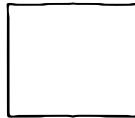
SPUNK



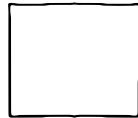
HEART



SMARTS



BRAWN

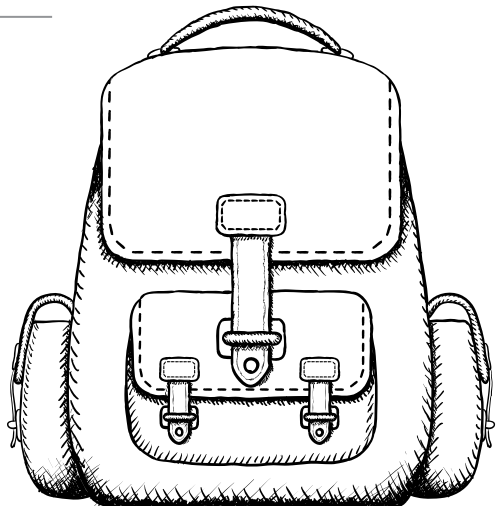


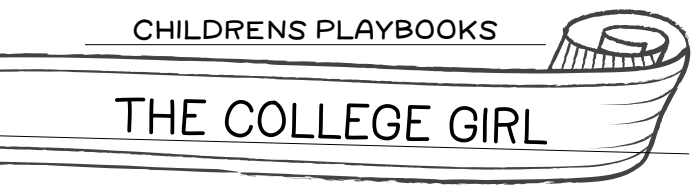
CONGENIALITY

GEAR:

Pick three:

- ☐ Library Card
(Gives you access to research information at any library)
- ☐ Bookbag (+1 to all item uses)
- ☐ Sorority Paddle
(+1 harm per smack)
- ☐ Department Key
(Access to a secure location with supplies)
- ☐ Bicycle





THE COLLEGE GIRL

STARTING MOVES

Pick two including Major.

MAJOR (SMARTS):

You're in college. You're studying new things and learning everything you can about it. Pick your major. Tell the NWC when you believe the knowledge/skill is applicable.

- On a 10 or above you achieve your goal.
- On a 7-9 you succeed in your goal, but lose 1 courage point because of how nervous you got performing the action
- On a 6 or below you're embarrassed and cannot perform any Congeniality rolls for the rest of the scene.

SAW IT ON THE SILVER SCREEN {HEART}:

You've seen Brigid O'Shaughnessy join Sam Spade in his adventures. You've watched Joan of Arc. And you've seen the videos of women servicing in World War II. You have seen enough to think you can do it too.

- On a 10 or above you can perform a scary action with no courage penalties, even if you fail.
- On a 7-9 you can perform a scary action, but your success will cost you 1 courage point or one harm.
- On a 6 or below you lose however many courage points you would normally lose AND you take one damage.

BASEBALL GIRL (BRAWN):

Your parents have taken you to see the women play baseball. Maybe your mom was even on a team before you were born. You know how to throw a pitch, hit a ball, and catch a foul.

- On a 10 or above you can use a baseball skill as a weapon.
- On a 7-9 you can either be successful in hitting your target, or you can do collateral damage to an ally.
- On a 6 or below I hope you weren't throwing around explosives, because that was a grounder.

SORORITY SISTER (CONGENIALITY):

Being a part of the community is a big part of who you are. You're great at making friends, fitting in, and being considered A Part Of it All.

- On a 10 or above any conflict that you might have been headed towards simply heads in another direction leaving you out of it.
- On a 7-9 you are kept involved, but you're able to demur.
- On a 6 or below you are now in an all out fight with others.

GOLDEN AGE READER (SMARTS):

You've read L. Ron Hubbard, Robert Heinlein and anything else you can get your hands on that says "Science Fiction" on the cover. When things go wrong, you seek out the literature even more than you did before. You know how this stuff goes.

- On a 10 or above you can pull an idea from classic scifi which will help you survive.
- On a 7-9 you find an idea that is somewhat applicable, but is only useful in space. Adapt it.
- On a 6 or below everyone around you is pretty sure you're speaking gibberish.

THE COLLEGE GIRL

ADVANCED MOVES:

Advanced Moves for children are either taken from another child playbook, or are a starting move from an adult playbook.

PLAYING THE COLLEGE GIRL

You've done what your mother and grandmother might not have done before you. Stepped out of the marriage pattern and gone to get an education. Perhaps it's because your mother wanted you to, maybe it's because you wanted something different in your life, but the options are still not as exciting as what you had expected. Something brought you home, and now you have to use your newfound knowledge to keep yourself alive. Will the street smarts you've picked up at college help you survive the apocalypse?

SPECIAL PLAYBOOK

The Infected playbook is given to a player after they have been bitten and the infection roll confirms that they have been infected. This is OOC knowledge for everyone at the table. It is possible to infect a player at the start of the game if they choose to do so, but be aware that the character will likely die early on if their infection progresses too far.

INFECTED

You were bitten. You remember the zed's teeth sinking into your flesh, and when you woke up after resting from the attack, you felt different. Your blood runs a little colder in your veins, maybe your heart thuds against your ribcage slower than it used to. You don't feel like your skin is the same one you went to sleep in. And it's not. You're one of them now. Infected.

EARLY DETECTION (ZED SKILLS - INFECTED 1):

You can feel the oncoming horde approaching, and your heart no longer pounds with fear.

- On a 10 or above you can sense them coming from another street away for the rest of the session.
- On a 7-9 you can sense them approaching the building you are in, but they also can sense you.
- On a 6 or below the zeds KNOW WHERE YOU ARE and are actively coming to bring you home.



INFECTED

ADVANCED DETECTION (ZED SKILLS - INFECTED 2):

You can sense the horde coming together, you feel them approaching from further away – but you begin to crave your fellow human's flesh. Sleepwalking begins to occur.

- On a 10 or above you can sense the zeds from miles away.
- On a 7-9 you can sense them from outside the town limits, but they are drawn closer to you.
- On a 6 or below you cannot stop yourself from wanting to seek out your kind.

FROM THE DIARY OF MELLIE PETERS

I was bitten two days ago. They locked me up in this room, surrounded by my daughters toys. At first I thought I was going to be fine. Just dandy. The bite wasn't that bad. Now? Now I want to eat them all. Now I wake up, my hands pressed into the windows, blood streaming from the tips as I tried to claw my way out in my sleep. Now I am grateful for the walls that surround me. I can only hope they keep me in.

I want to eat them. Only the flesh of my captors will satiate my hunger now.

COMMUNICATE WITH THE ZED (ZED SKILLS – INFECTED 3):

You are able to push the horde back, communicating that there is no food here to snack on. However, your craving for raw meat is almost impossible to stop, and your sleepwalking eventually may turn into eating someone's pet, or worse – their child.

- On a 10 or above you can convince the oncoming horde to leave.
- On a 7-9 some of the horde leaves, but some stay behind.
- On a 6 or below the horde leader is coming straight for you.

BLENDING INTO THE SCENERY (ZED SKILLS – INFECTED 4):

You can step into the horde and remain untouched so long as you don't try to kill anyone.

- On a 10 or above you can get into the horde, and out of it without trouble. You might even be able to rescue someone from them if you needed to do that.
- On a 7-9 you make it in, but making it out will require some skill.
- On a 6 or below you are in trouble.

KILLING WITHOUT CONSEQUENCE (ZED SKILLS – INFECTED 5):

You can murder zombies at will within the horde, and no one seems to notice, but your fellow humans barely see you as a person any longer.

- On a 10 or above the zeds will not retaliate when you attack, nor will they notice.
- On a 7-9 if you kill a zed they will attempt to retaliate
- On a 6 or below you are locked in combat with a zed until one of you is down.

When you have filled all six dots on the infection meter, you are no longer a playable character.



PICK YOUR PLAYBOOKS!

Once you've done that, then you go ahead and select your backgrounds. Each background has a bonus of some kind, either a bonus to a stat or an extra move that only you can use because of your history.

Laurie Wilson is a Scout. I've decided that she has the Aced All Her Science Classes background, and that she has earned her Nature Badge and her First Aid Badge.

Laurie's three pieces of gossip are that Mrs. Edith Windsor is secretly having an affair with the Preacher, that Edward Tisch is really nice about letting people borrow his bb gun, and that Timothy Schill is Jewish but his family doesn't want people to know about it. Laurie's gear is a First Aid Kit, some fireworks, and a slingshot.

Once you've made the choices about what moves your character uses, what their backgrounds are and what gear they use, then you gossip.

Gossip is integral to the experience of living in a small town where everyone knows everyone else's business. Figure out what the town scuttlebutt is. Whose daughter is having premarital sex in the back of a Camaro? Whose husband drinks too much? Who is the best babysitter on the street? Figure out what the gossip is, both good and bad, and fill in the gossip slots on your character sheets. There should be at least one rumor for each player, if not more than one. Everyone should be able to say one nice thing about someone, and you've all got some nasty secret.

Basic Moves and Backgrounds:

Everyone has access to the basic moves within the game, as well as the moves which are specialized to their backgrounds.

BACKGROUNDS

Select one, each comes with a single move or bonus.

GREW UP ON A FARM:

+1 to Brawn

BUTCHERY:

You can wield a knife to cut up dead meat, but this means you can transfer that to living things, too. +2 to damage in Knuckle Sandwich when you choose to use a knife.

WAS A TROUBLEMAKER AS A CHILD:

+1 to moxie and sneak.

ACED THEIR SCIENCE CLASSES:

+1 to Smarts

MINI-MANHATTAN PROJECT:

You can blow things up! Carefully. With the right materials. In your kitchen.

- On a 10 or above you can make an explosive successfully.
- On a 7-9 it's a little unstable. I'd take that outside. Far away from the house. Now.
- On a 6 or below you now have no eyebrows.

SERVED IN WW2 IN SOME CAPACITY:

+2 to courage

WORKED IN A FACTORY DURING WW2:

+1 to Soup it Up

MECHANICAL PUZZLES:

You know how to take things apart and put them back together again. This skill adds a +2 to all Soup It Up moves.

GREW UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACKS:

+1 to all Congeniality based rolls in scary situations

WENT TO COLLEGE:

+2 to all intellect related moves

GREW UP WITH MONEY:

You've got money stashed somewhere in your house, you can use that asset whenever you need to support the community.

REFUGEE:

+1 to courage stats, +1 to sneak

LIVED ABROAD:

You can speak more than one language. Pick two in addition to your native language.

EX-PERFORMER (THEATER/DANCE/CLUB):

+2 to moxie. Can entertain people as a distraction.

HUNTING FAMILY:

You have the Shoot to Kill move.

SHOOT TO KILL:

You can shoot. You learned on live targets and now you have some undead ones.

- On a 10 or above you hit your mark.
- On a 7-9 you can either hit your target and take damage from kickback, or you can miss.
- On a 6 or below you take damage and don't hit your target.

Basic Moves

AVON CALLING (CONGENIALITY):

Sometimes you just need someone to hear you out. But getting them to let you into the house can be hard.

- On a 10 or above you not only convince the people you're talking to that you are right, or that they should do what you want, but they also give you an item you need.
- On a 7-9 you can either get an item, or you convince them of the action you require.
- On a 6 or below you need to backpedal out of the conversation somehow or else a fight begins.

LOOKING FOR A FIGHT (MOXIE):

- On a 10 or above you engage whomever you wish in a fight and get assistance from other players in doing so.
- On a 7-9 you start the fight, but no one can help you,
- On a 6 or below your friends laugh at you and you lose one courage point.

SILENT AS THE GRAVE (MOXIE):

Sneaking around is hard work. Sneaking around requires a certain amount of practice.

- On a 10 or above no one can hear you, and the zombies can't smell you either.

- On a 7-9 you pick:
 - 1) The zombies might notice you
 - 2) The other humans will.
- On a 6 or below you're just like a bull in a china shop aren't you, dear?

EYEBALL (SMARTS):

Observing things, noticing things, whatever you can lay eyes on, this is it.

- On a 10 or above you can see the whole kit & caboodle of information at your disposal.
- On a 7-9 you receive one piece of information.
- On a 6 or below the NWC is probably feeding you false information. You think.

LISTEN CLOSE (SMARTS):

Observation isn't just from seeing stuff, it's from hearing it. You can eavesdrop, listen for movements, footsteps and cars.

- On a 10 or above you can hear everything you're listening for.
- On a 7-9 the NWC will give you very selective information that you gather aurally.
- On a 6 or below there's too much background noise.

BURN RUBBER (MOXIE):

Cars. Not everyone has them, not everyone has a husband that taught them how to drive. But yours did.

- On a 10 or above safety and expediency are both in your favor.
- On a 7-9 you can either
 - 1) get there fast and bang up yourself and the car
 - 2) you can get there safely and depending on a NWC roll might have a few zombies following you.
- On a 6 or below the car doesn't start.

KNUCKLE SANDWICH (BRAWN):

Someone taught you how to defend yourself with your hands. Maybe it was on the playground, or maybe it was somewhere else.

- On a 10 or above you win the fight.
- On a 7-9 you can either draw, or you can win and take damage. Pick one.
- On a 6 or below you take damage at the NWC's discretion based on the fight.

MARILYN'S MOVES (CONGENIALITY):

A shift of the leg, a show of the thigh, a bat of the eyelash. Marilyn Monroe has shown you how to make someone desire you, and those eyes of yours can light up a room.

- On a 10 or above you both seduce your target, and get some information out of them.
- On a 7-9 you only manage to seduce them.
- On a 6 or below they notice what you're doing and you need to talk your way out of the situation, *fast*.

SPIC & SPAN (SMARTS):

Make a flat roll to remove all traces of weirdness, violence, or other untidy messes from a scene.

- On a 10 or above you get all three of the following;
- On a 7-9, choose two:
 - 1) You don't leave any clues to find.
 - 2) It doesn't take very long.
 - 3) Nobody sees you do it.
- On a 6 or below something goes terribly wrong, and you're exposed.

CONTAMINATION EFFECTS

The virus is deployed as a breathable poison through a gas bomb process – but it attaches itself as a dust to some objects. Things this can affect include clothes left out to dry on a clothesline in the courtyard of a brownstone – or food or flowers left growing outside a building where the bombs went off. Caution in consuming or wearing materials which have been exposed either directly to the dust or gas bombs, or to zombie blood or saliva, is encouraged.

It is unknown whether or not the bombs were deployed more than once, but from the waves of zombies, it seems as though there was an escalation tactic in order to keep the infection alive. This detail is up to Neighborhood Watch Captains and their preferred strategy for the Soviets.

LIKE THE DICKENS (BRAWN):

Speed is terribly helpful from time to time. You can run, very quickly, and evade obstacles while doing so.

- On a 10 or above you make it to your destination with no injuries, and with maximum speed.
- On a 7-9 you make it to your destination either a) with injuries from not watching where you were going as you merrily zipped along and need to rest before you over exhaust yourself or b) more slowly than time allows.
- On a 6 or below you run straight into a horde.



SOUP IT UP (SMARTS):

Necessity is the mother of invention – and necessity is a large factor of your new way of life.

- On a 10 or above your new plan works. The hoover vacuum explodes, or the lawnmower moves to eat zombies when the trap is triggered.
- On a 7-9 your new toy works, but you'll have to spend time fixing it before you can use it again OR you can never use it again and have to build a new one.
- On a 6 or below well, nice try, sweetie. Perhaps add some more gas before you try that again, hm?

SHUCKSTER (CONGENIALITY):

Your mother told you never to lie, but these days a well-placed lie is the difference between life and death. So you lie.

- On a 10 or above you are so believable your own mother wouldn't see through it.
- On a 7-9 you must make an additional moxie roll to see if you succeed.
- On a 6 or below your friends might need to bail you out of this one.

NEXT TO CLEANLINESS (FAITH):

A simple prayer can bolster confidence for yourself and others in times of fear and uncertainty.

- On a 10 or above you get your groups and your own courage points back.
- On a 7-9 you may pick either your own courage points or those of your companions to refill.
- On a 6 or below you lose one courage point and spend a little while contemplating why God has forsaken you.

NOW, NOW (CONGENIALITY):

Sometimes it takes another person to remind you to play well with others. You're the one doing the reminding.

- On a 10 or above you can calm the room and get everyone to talk nicely to one another.
- On a 7-9 pick one:
 - 1) stop everyone from shouting, but tensions are still high.
 - 2) become the focal point of the ire so that you can talk sense into everyone else.
- On a 6 or below you are the quiet person in the room who no one is listening to. Maybe try getting grandma?

SQUIRM (BRAWN):

Sometimes you get in a jam and you have to get out of it. Sometimes that's because an adult has you by the back of the neck and you don't want a time out – or maybe Grandma really wants to inspect your pregnant belly and you don't want to be touched.

- On a 10 or above you successfully elude being in someone's grasp
- On a 7-9 you escape, but your detainer has the opportunity to roll again to grab you.
- On a 6 or below you do not escape.

Attributes

In addition to moves your character has attributes. They're the basics of how your character interacts with the world. It's part of what makes them unique.

The attributes in *Dead Scare* are as follows:

- **Moxie:** Bravery, the ability to make quick decisions and follow through with them.
- **Brawn:** Physicality, toughness, the ability to hit things
- **Smarts:** Book smart, street smart, everything smart.
- **Congeniality:** The ability to make nice, make friends, and make people feel comfortable
- **Heart:** You've gotta have it. Compassion, faith, belief in yourself and others.

Each player at the beginning gets two stats at +1 and -1. Pay attention to which stats correspond with which moves in order to build your character successfully.

**SO, FOR EXAMPLE. LAURIE WILSON'S
ATTRIBUTES LOOK LIKE THIS**

Moxie: +1

Brawn +1

Smarts: -1

Congeniality: -1

STRINGS/CONDITIONS/GOSSIP

There's a reason why you have that gossip list. Those pieces of gossip are what in other games of AW are called "Strings & Conditions" or in DungeonWorld is called "Bonds". A piece of gossip is something that you have on someone, either you know they can do something well that no one knows about (a good piece of gossip) or you know something they did in the past that you don't like (which means it affects whether or not you'll help them out) or it's information about something they've done that would ruin their reputation.

If a piece of information gets out, then you no longer have power over that person. These pieces of information are resolvable, and therefore you cannot necessarily always have that information.

In order to replace a piece of gossip, you have to find something else out about that person through in play relationships.

Ms. Manners Says the World Works Like This

COURAGE:

There's a courage bar on your playbook. Those six dots represent how well you're doing under pressure. When a character is confronted with a frightening or confusing image, or action, they have to make a Courage roll. The Neighborhood Watch Captain (NWC) can call for it, or the player can say out of character that they probably need to make one.

The roll is 2d6, plus whatever you have in the "Pluck" stat. On a 10 or above no courage dots are taken away and you can function as normal. On a 7-9 you can make a move (such as Next to Cleanliness), and see if you get through the fear. On a 6 or below you lose one point of courage.

As you lose points in courage, you lose dice. Each roll until the end of a scene is minus however many points of courage you've lost. If, for example, you just keep getting terrified, you'll end up with a -6 to all rolls until someone can help you. All courage points are resolved and come back once you've gotten into a safe location, or the scene ends and characters can freshen up.

FRESHENING UP:

The image of the 1950s mom is one that people will strive to protect even after the z-bomb goes off. The clean apron, the coiffed hair, the pristine dress. These are things which will help maintain normalcy for characters in order to continue maintaining their sanity and courage.

In the beginning, this might be easy, a spray of bleach, a bit of hairspray. Maybe switching one apron out for the next. But as the Outbreak continues, these things will be harder to accomplish. Who can figure out how to get the bloodstains out of a day dress will be an important thing, and who can find a way to keep their hair in place once the hairspray has run out will be another. Keeping up appearances doesn't just make you feel better – it could literally be the difference between life and death for one of your children or fellow members of the community. Because of this, as the campaign progresses, freshening up may not be as simple as the end of a scene, it may take more time and effort to regain courage points.

INFECTION:

There are six dots of infection on your playbook in addition to the courage points.. Everyone rolls a flat 2d6. The threshold you have to meet is 9 in order to not get infected.

The infection has six stages between humanity and the shambling dead. These are outlined in the Infection playbook. Players make rolls to determine whether or not their infection has deepened in two instances: the first is if they are bitten a second time, or come into contact with zombie blood. The second instance is at the beginning of each new session of the campaign. (If this is a one-shot then it is at the end of each scene, for maximum terror factors.) It is possible to stave off the infection through high rolls in first aid and medical treatment. There is only one way to negate infection entirely, and it is with the move Sterilization.



THE APOCALYPSE IS NOT A NICE PLACE TO LIVE

The Tenor of the Apocalypse

*D*ead Scare comes in many flavors, depending on the group you might be playing with this can present itself in many ways.

The way I like to run my *Dead Scare* games is in a Darkly Whimsical mode. Terrible, terrible things happen, but players are killing zombies with croquet mallets, and the insignificant issues of whether or not someone mowed their lawn before the zombies came is of deep and significant importance to social interactions. Some NWC's might prefer to push the game into the darkest territories that it can muster, and others might make this into an all out *Leave It To Beaver* episode with some zombies thrown in for hilarity. Whether you choose to take on all of the historical implications of a zombie apocalypse in the 1950s or not is your choice.

WE'RE GONNA KEEP THOSE ZOMBIES OFF OUR STREETS

Security becomes an issue as the hordes intensify, and certainly is an issue when people are afraid. What kind of security do you want to have?

In the cities security is easier because locks are common and the street grids are easier to block off. Police barriers can be stolen, cars are more prevalent and easier to use as blockades. However, public transit makes it harder to secure areas entirely, and air patterns could theoretically change all of that in a moment.

In the suburbs security could mean keeping the infection entirely out by trying to close off your entire town, or at least your neighborhood. Gated communities would certainly be easier to secure than not, but the perimeter might be larger. Security is important, and communities grow stronger because of it, but how do you do it? Tearing out fences and placing them elsewhere? Trying to put the community into one building (the church, perhaps?) has its benefits, but whether or not people can get along under one roof, or if they're even willing to part with their precious homes, is another question.

The raising of children in a communal environment would also be an issue – some might believe allowing children to be a part of the security force is vital, but others may believe their young ears and hearts should be spared.

NEWS SPREADS LIKE GOSSIP – QUICKLY AND UNRELIABLY

After President Eisenhower died on national television, the radios and news networks went static. For a while, some things would sneak over the radio waves, panicked screams or requests for help.

A group of young women at Barnard University managed to barricade themselves inside of Columbia University's radio room in the Communications building. Once they found the connection, these young women began what would eventually become the Murrow Network. In interviews after Reconstruction, they spoke of the fact that they were saddened that their part in history had been written out of the picture – but they knew the truth. By surviving, by reporting, and by sharing their information, these women saved millions of lives. Their efforts to leave campus, and see what had happened in Manhattan were part of how people

knew when it was safe to return to the cities. While the rest of their classmates perished during the attacks, these five women of Barnard stood up and counted themselves amongst the newsies who would forever change the face of American journalism.

During the outbreak news outlets around the country began to pass reports by radio. The systems in place were easily manipulated, the codes shared began to be a sort of language for dangers arising throughout the country.

Many of the stations which joined the Murrow Network were staged out of college towns, or small towns where the radio station networks were easily broken into and used. Manuals could be found and information would be easily shared.

Communities once again tuned in to their radios during the dinner hour, but instead of looking for stories of The Shadow, or Baby Snooks, instead they listened for zed movements, for information about those who survived, and ideas for how to protect themselves.

Runners would also be used to spread information from towns without access to radio towers to towns which had them, typically children who could hide in the shadows, and who could run faster than their adult counterparts. The earliest shadows of the Freedom Scouts seem to have drawn from this addition of children facing down the most frightening aspects of the era – sneaking through the dark, hearing the gunshots in the distance, and keeping vigilant for the telltale groans in the distance. Children who were runners had to grow up fast, and grow up smart.

Weaponizing Wheelchairs & Walkers

After the Second World War the world was filled with veterans, including those who might have survived with some parts not intact. And girls like Ginny, whose brother shot off a firework in her face and she lost the ability to see. Disabilities are common in the group of who would be left at home or in the town during the day.

Mechanically speaking, you're not going to be penalized for being disabled, but it does change the ways in which you might use your moves – or for that matter, it may change what moves you choose for your characters. For example, a blind character won't use "Eyeball" for seeing, they're going to use "Listen Close" to use their hearing for observation. A player with a wheelchair should use the car mechanics for evasive tactics when driving their chair, but otherwise it is assumed they move around just fine. Using ingenuity checks for weaponizing mobility devices is not only a good idea, but is actively encouraged. Just because a character is elderly or disabled doesn't mean they don't want to survive.

There are, of course, advantages to being disabled in an apocalypse situation. In fact, there are several. For one, someone with a prosthetic leg or arm cannot be infected by a zombie bite which is attached to the arm which isn't made of flesh. An eye that is prosthetic and not real can't be poked out by a knitting needle. Someone who uses a wheelchair is at a different angle to shoot at, one that may not be as easy to fire on as with other situations. A person with no hearing or no sight may be somewhat more alert.



Not because of any sort of compensation or mythical ability, but just because of the fact that they *need* to be.

For those who live with any kind of mental illness, however, the beginnings of the outbreak may not be so gentle. People who experience hallucinations will experience the apocalypse from the perspective of a person locked up in a mental ward. For reference on spaces where people with mental illnesses lived, look up such locations as Greystone Psychiatric in Morristown, New Jersey, Willowbrook Institute in Long Island, New York, or any other institutions which have long since been closed in the year 2015.

When their caretakers abandon them — or when their caretakers are infected — how will people survive in the hospitals, mental wards and institutional facilities?

The Kids Are Alright:

Playing as children in any universe is tricky, but especially in one where children are supposed to be fighting for their lives. Certain things have to be kept in mind: Are you comfortable going to the dark places this game might ask you to go?

Children adapt to the world in which they live rather quickly, and the children of the *Dead Scare* Era have moxie. They're the ones who crawl under fences with cherry bombs to scare off the incoming horde, they're the ones playing hopscotch to practice dodging the arms of the shambling dead.

But children are also scared. A lot of orphans come out of the Z-Bomb. Those children are the ones who form the Freedom Scouts. Children who believe their parents shouldn't have died in vain. Children have to grow up quickly in times like these, but one hopes through play that children might retain some of their innocence.

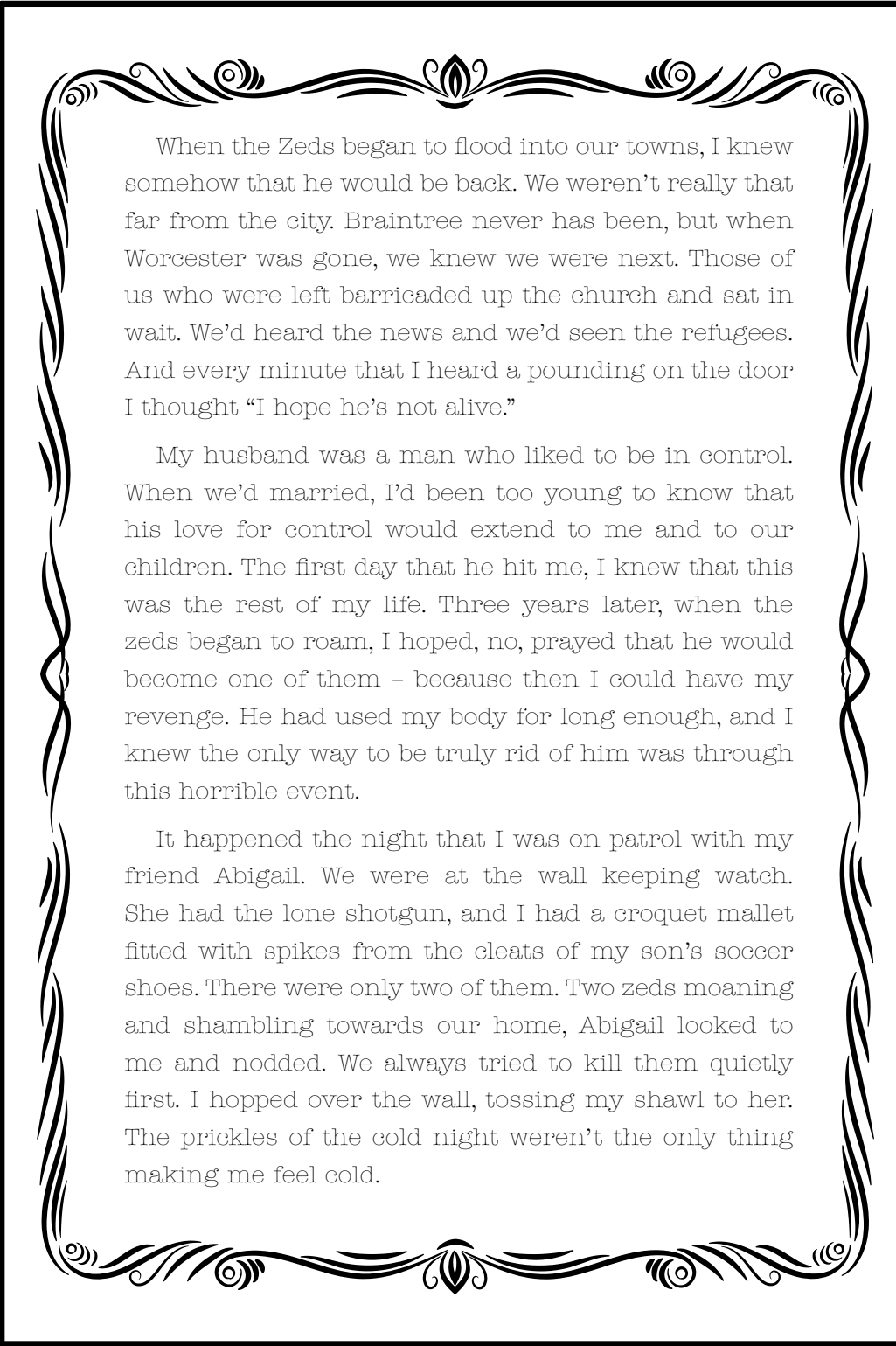
It is up to the players how far they want to take the intensity of child on child violence, or child on zombie violence – but it is advised that when you do so, remember that children still have nightmares, and these children are now living in a world where their nightmares actually live outside their homes. When playing children, it is important to note that while adults have 6 harm before death, children have 4.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE FLOODGATES OPEN?

In both the Outbreak and the Second Reconstruction settings, there is a strong likelihood that your players' characters will either a) be the victims of sexual or torture related violence, or b) be the perpetrators of such violence.

As the Neighborhood Watch Captain (game master) it is your job to make sure that even when these things happen players feel supported and safe enough to play when these topics come up. This is where the line between player and character can be blurred in a harmful way. A player might be a survivor of domestic violence, and the issue of domestic violence might come into play within the setting. Addressing these issues carefully is important from the perspective of player care.

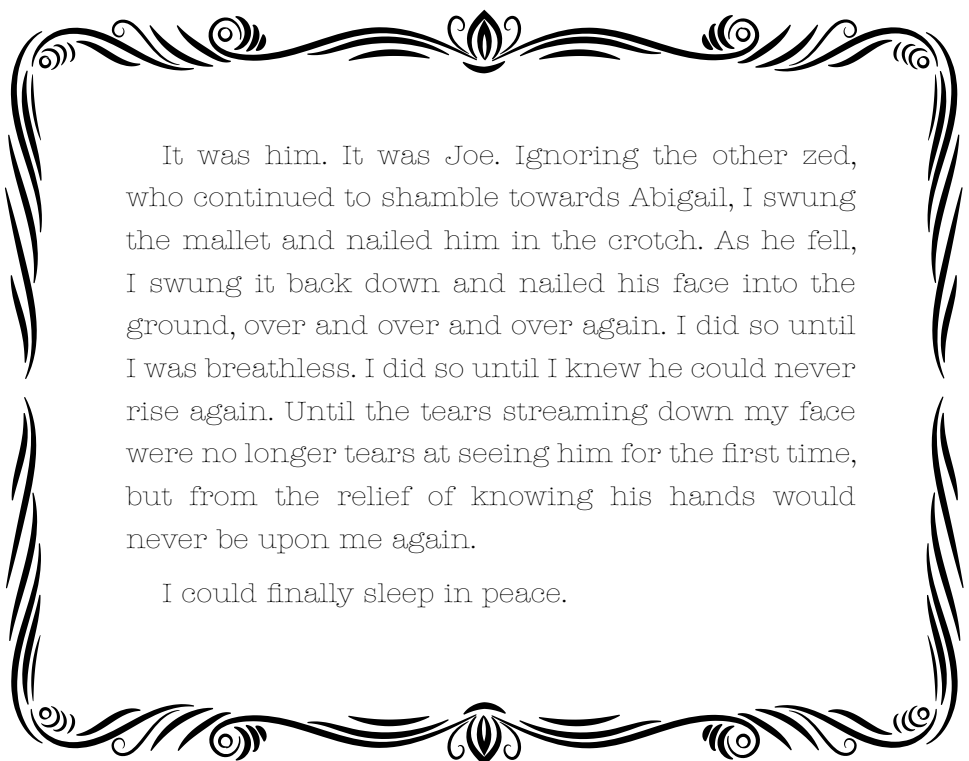
But rape, domestic violence, and other gendered violence are a part of the world that we live in and in games where we choose to use it as a part of the story, it can tell us about survivors. An example of storytelling using a background of domestic violence, or sexual assault follows, in an oral history recollection from Elizabeth Roberts of MA.



When the Zeds began to flood into our towns, I knew somehow that he would be back. We weren't really that far from the city. Braintree never has been, but when Worcester was gone, we knew we were next. Those of us who were left barricaded up the church and sat in wait. We'd heard the news and we'd seen the refugees. And every minute that I heard a pounding on the door I thought "I hope he's not alive."

My husband was a man who liked to be in control. When we'd married, I'd been too young to know that his love for control would extend to me and to our children. The first day that he hit me, I knew that this was the rest of my life. Three years later, when the zeds began to roam, I hoped, no, prayed that he would become one of them – because then I could have my revenge. He had used my body for long enough, and I knew the only way to be truly rid of him was through this horrible event.

It happened the night that I was on patrol with my friend Abigail. We were at the wall keeping watch. She had the lone shotgun, and I had a croquet mallet fitted with spikes from the cleats of my son's soccer shoes. There were only two of them. Two zeds moaning and shambling towards our home, Abigail looked to me and nodded. We always tried to kill them quietly first. I hopped over the wall, tossing my shawl to her. The prickles of the cold night weren't the only thing making me feel cold.



It was him. It was Joe. Ignoring the other zed, who continued to shamle towards Abigail, I swung the mallet and nailed him in the crotch. As he fell, I swung it back down and nailed his face into the ground, over and over and over again. I did so until I was breathless. I did so until I knew he could never rise again. Until the tears streaming down my face were no longer tears at seeing him for the first time, but from the relief of knowing his hands would never be upon me again.

I could finally sleep in peace.

INTRUDERS:

Not everyone in the country is lucky enough to live in the suburbs away from where the attacks occurred. Not everyone is lucky enough to be able to survive in the cities, or have a safe haven. Those who don't have to flee out of the cities to avoid dying – and some people actually make it. How would your community handle a group of Jews arriving on your doorstep and asking for shelter? Or a black family? Where are your lines drawn on social and racial grounds?

Some things to consider:

- The 1950s were not an era of tolerance. Racism and xenophobia are both alive and well in the United States that you live in.
- There are limited resources such as food.
- Religious divides are heavily enforced.
- Segregation is not over yet.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE MEN GONE:

People are sexual creatures. While this is certainly not a game about rape, it may well happen in a situation where women have lost their husbands – and in the Reconstruction era, the few men that are left, well, the United States Government is practically requiring them to impregnate as many women as possible – as many *True American Women* as possible. That being said, the consequences for assaulting someone are high – without law and order, the possibilities are community justice, or fleeing. If you're in a place where few communities survived, you might be stuck walking for days in order to find a new home – and even then, will they accept you? It should be noted that both genders are

considered possible victims **and** attackers. Questions can arise from communities such as whether or not women who are valuable to the community, but who have committed an act of violence on a remaining man or another woman should be allowed to stay. Does she have skills which others do not? Who will care for her children if she has them?

Get me Information:

During the outbreak, people are desperate for information. If someone betrays even a hint of having it, but refuses to share, it might result in people making hard choices about the kind of community they live in. Do you torture them for the information? What if you find a soviet spy in your neighborhood? Without law and order, justice is in the hands of the people.

As much as this is a story about women surviving against the shambling dead, this is also the story of people surviving through a great disaster. It is a story that you are telling about people who will do anything to survive.

TRUTH IS SCARIER THAN FICTION

All of the racially motivated laws appearing in this book are real. Sometimes, when reading through alternate history texts one has to wonder what horrors the author created – and in this case, not many. Japanese Internment, Jim Crow, The Termination Acts, and many other racially based legal actions are ones taken straight from the headlines of Postwar America. Joseph McCarthy, J. Edgar Hoover and others are all real people. Alternate history was just dumping zombies into an already terrifying era.

THE TERMINATION ACTS

"It's easy to forget about a people you've tried to silence even when they help you win a war, isn't it? We were herded away from our homes, the land we held taken for your profit, and our children stolen from us to 'save' them. The year you decided to 'terminate' us, God returned the favor." - Mary Roanhorse

Two months before the z-bombs, in August of 1953 Congress passed Resolution 108: a formal policy to forcefully integrate native populations as citizens. Federal protections, aid, and recognized status were stripped from many tribes and tribal rights to reservation lands revoked. A kind person might suggest this was a well-intended if misguided solution to the devastating poverty on many of the reservations at the time and was meant to encourage self-reliance.

A naive one would overlook the more than two million acres of land that reverted to the federal government, much of it with valuable natural resources, that was auctioned-off from under the feet of the people living on it in the name of reconstruction. Ultimately, the very natural resources that supported the tribes deemed most likely to "thrive without protections" were lost when those protections were removed.



RACISM DURING THE OUTBREAK

She hated lower Manhattan. Her heels clicked down the confused streets of the West Village, her skin stood out starkly against the white marble faces of the townhouses she walked past. She paused for an instant beside Washington Square Park, the arch framing her perfectly against the steel grey sky.

She could smell death.

Something was wrong. Something was horribly inexplicably wrong.

Betsy Thomas began to walk faster, realizing that not only was she the only pedestrian on the street, but she had not seen a car since stepping off of the PATH train. She paused, taking a deep breath, and then she turned around.

It was as though the entire East Village were behind her, stumbling forward on broken feet.

And then they began to groan, their white hands reaching out for her, their dead eyes locked onto her living body.

Betsy Thomas stood for one second too long, giving into her fear, before kicking the high heeled shoes off of her feet and running down 6th Avenue. Ragged breaths kept her going, her eyes darting from door to door, praying for a doorman at a window.

Finally, she locked eyes with a man behind the iron barred glass doors of number 17 6th Avenue. Betsy slams her palms into the glass, her eyes opening wide, pleading.

"HELP ME" she screams through the glass.

Albert French stares through the glass panes at this woman whom he has never met. He knows that black people aren't supposed to be in the building. He thinks she might kill him, her eyes were too crazy to let her in. He shakes his head. He steps back from the door, raising his hands in a "No" gesture.

"Please. Please. You have to help me. PLEASE." She turns her head, and sees the horde shambling down the street towards her, and then she turns her head to the right, and sees another horde coming towards her. The sound of groaning becomes an unbearable echo around her. "Please. I don't know what's happening. I think... "

And then the horde arrives.

Albert doesn't warn her as the first zombie steps up behind Betsy, and wrenches her head back. A second grabs her arm and wrenches it towards him, his teeth sinking into her dark flesh.

The scream Betsy Thomas emits will haunt Albert French for the four hours that he will live past this moment. Despite wanting to, he cannot move his eyes away from the scene unfolding in front of him.

The horde tumbles over itself, and then Betsy Thomas is gone from sight, though her screams can be heard through the glass for minutes after she disappears.

Albert French collapses to the marble floor as the horde turns, and begins banging against the door, the same flat palmed gesture which the woman had used, but in this case, instead of fear provoking the gesture, it is hunger.

Racism is real, both before and after the outbreak happens. During the outbreak itself, many black Americans died because the laws of segregation did not allow them to seek safety, or they were denied safety in the face of danger.

During the Second Reconstruction the racial lines which had been drawn in the sand before the z-bomb was deployed become even more radically enforced. If suburban communities did not embrace the refugees from places like Harlem, many of those communities became even more segregated, not even allowing black community members to remain where they were once able to live.

Jim Crow in Second Reconstruction Era America is a strictly enforced code of who can go where, who can fight with what, and who the American Government will assist when it comes to safety and food.

But the experience of African Americans is not the only one to be aware of. Native Americans were suffering under the weight of the government, Mexican immigrants were shoved into ghettos, and Japanese and Chinese immigrants were still considered suspect after their Internment during World War II.

The Living and the Undead

The Infected playbook coming into play needs to be handled carefully so that the characters, instead of their players, are the ones who feel tension between each other, or even become enemies.

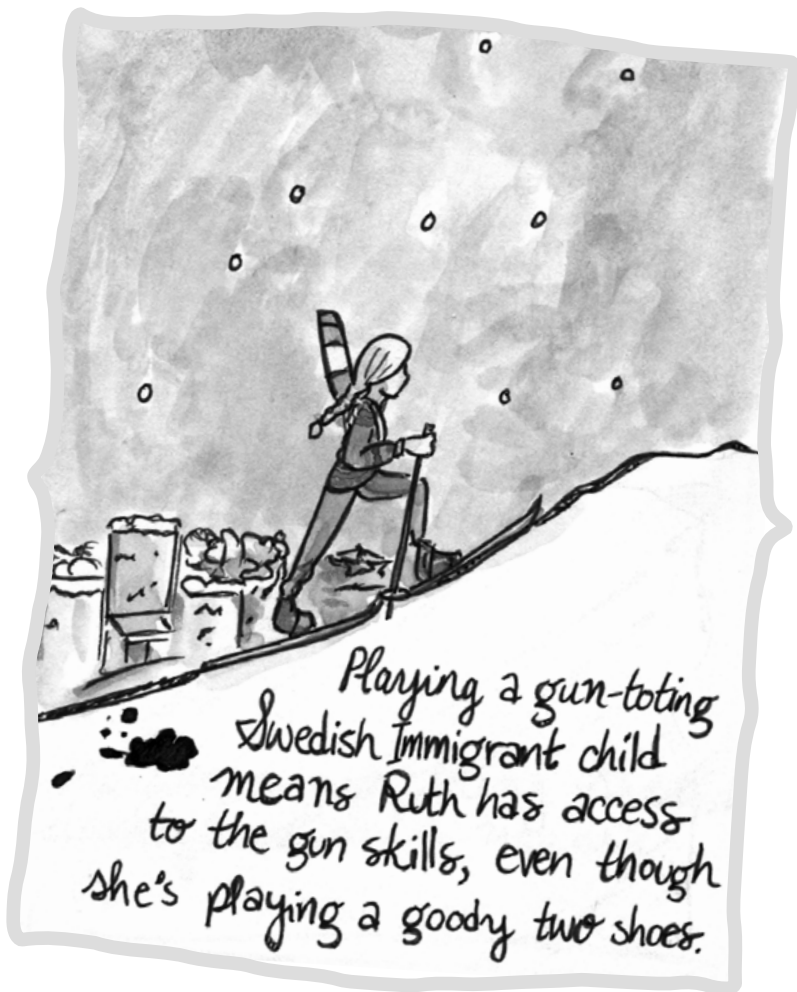
The infected character and their friends have truly difficult moral choices to make.

The Infected gain abilities which the dead share with them, the choice to maintain those abilities – and risk the possibility of being less human and more zombie – is one they might make on their own, or they might make it with the opinions of the community

at large. These risks include eating their family and friends. These risks might be balanced out by being able to kill zombies with impunity, but it depends on the situation around you.

Weapons

If you're looking to defend your home from the onslaught of the unspeakable and now shambling dead, there are several traditional options, and a few... nontraditional options, at your disposal. After all, housewives must be able to be ingenious when it comes to entertaining the kids, or keeping the shambling dead out of the yard so they don't stomp all over your gorgeous perennials.



Guns are relatively common, most people seem to have them in their homes, but whether or not you know how to use one is questionable. You may want to learn, *now*. Boys have been known to scamper off with a bb gun or two, so you might at least have one of those in the house if you've got a son, if your husband doesn't own a hunting rifle.

Knife skills, however, are much more prevalent in the housewife community. If you know how to butcher a pig, or make a steak look nice, you've probably got this skill. Now, using it on a shambling zombie might take some work, but with enough adrenaline in your system... well, a woman can do just about anything.

A new target is the mother of invention: Don't know how to shoot? Don't know how to butcher? Time to put your thinking cap on and get to work, isn't it? Look around your home. Think you can turn that hoover vacuum into a moving explosive device? Want to rig up your lawnmower to take off the feet of zombies? How about axes for chopping trees, or the sharp ends of your picket fence?

Zombies

“In the beginning of the outbreak they weren’t so bad. In the outbreak, it was as though they were just sallow faced and their movements were jerky. But as time went on, as their bodies decomposed, as their limbs were shot off or removed – their bodies no longer looked pristine. Their clothing became worn, and the smell.... The smell is what I can still remember, even after the dreams of their decomposed faces have faded... It smelled like thousands of dead bodies were walking from town to town.”

– Cathy Simms, from the book “Oral Histories of the Zed Era”

A few important things to note about the zombies raised by the Z-Bomb include the rate of infection, the speed at which they move, and the attacks that they have.

Zombies come in three distinct categories in terms of groupings: the first are solo zombies. Without a pack around them, zombies have little direction. It is thought by researchers that the zombies have a certain kind of echolocation which they use to find places when they are together. Solo zombies can bite and claw, but they are easily defended against.

Zombies in packs consist of 2-5 wandering in a group together. Colloquially these become termed a “shamble” of zombies. Their speed increases incrementally and they can trap as well as bite, and claw.

A horde of zombies consists of 5 or more zombies, and the numbers can increase as the attacks go on. Zombies are attracted to being in groups. They don’t seem to like being on their own, but when they are in a horde their abilities seem to double. Because they have each other to rely on, they are able

to move faster, and they are able to sense movements by others more effectively.

Zombies use a single d20 when they make an appearance. The encounters are determined based on what number the d20 falls upon. A second d20 is employed in either the urban setting, or towards the end of the suburban setting when the National Guard is set to arrive any day now. Falling on a 1 results in one zombie, and so on.

Settings:

SUBURBAN:

In the suburban setting the game is primarily about protection and insular social politics. Can you keep your town safe as the apocalypse begins? Outsiders will probably come to your door depending on where you're located on the map, but overall this setting is the one in which you're more likely to survive. This is the game not so much on the "easy" setting, but on the "communal" setting. Community living will be increasingly important as the Outbreak progresses.

URBAN:

The cities like New York, Boston, D.C., Seattle, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco and so many others are a less easy place to begin your journey. If you were indoors when the bombs went off, or you weren't close enough to the center (like in Brooklyn or Queens) you've got the chance to get out alive. Each city reacted differently when the virus hit. Marginal groups suffered the most at the hands of their fellow citizens. In New York,



it was the Jewish population and the black populations which were punished for the attacks. In Washington D.C. the Russian ambassador was lynched outside his front door, left hanging wearing the gas mask he had been issued by his own government to survive an attack he never saw.

THE JEWISH ZOMBIE DIASPORA

After the army cleans things up and begins to rebuild the country, many Jews left the city centers in order to survive. Their experiences of being blamed for the Zeds, or for being left out to die in the jaws of the Zeds was enough to stop them from wanting to be a part of society at large. Jewish communities sprung up in remote areas leaving their gates open only to the African American communities who suffered similar fates at the hands of their white American brethren. The Jewish communities in fact refused to enforce the segregation laws which were placed by the present government, earning Jewish communities a black mark in the eyes of the US Government.

Things began to go back to normal, but the country was changed. The survivors of the Z-Bomb had seen the dead walk, and as time moved on, revenge was still foremost in the minds of the American people and their government.

McCarthy was never elected. He simply surfaced and told everyone he was the person with the most reasonable claim to the Presidency, and given that everyone was absolutely terrified, there was no argument. Perhaps things would have been different had the people demanded more proof, had they asked for elections, but Joseph McCarthy's reputation for despising the Soviets made a case for why he should be President in this time of trouble. Not that everyone agreed.

ZOMBIE INTERNMENT CAMPS

During World War II the US Government used internment camps in Arkansas, Arizona, California, Utah, Idaho and several other states to contain Japanese-Americans to prevent them from supporting Japan during World War II. After the government resumed operations during the Reconstruction era, the decision was made to reopen the camps which had closed in order to trap the zombies still wandering around the United States. The public intention was to kill them safely. The private intention was to do scientific and weaponization research, to protect the United States in the case of another attack, and of course, to have a z-bomb of our very own.

Playing in the cities is about survival, but also about escape. No one wants to stay in the cities once the attacks have happened, and without any kind of military intervention, no one can stay in them for long. Refugees begin to vacate towards the Suburbs, and this is where you come in. You must choose – stay in the city and try to survive, or run?

The History of the Virus:

When the Euthanasia Program instituted by the Nazi Government began in 1939, the scientists assigned to the project knew they were going to need a purpose for the thousands of corpses yet to come. It wasn't until 1941, when the Holocaust began in full effect, that the decision to weaponize corpses began to take hold. In collusion with the occultists serving the Third Reich, they began to devise a plan based on resurrection of the dead. Despite their best efforts, the biological realities of raising the dead would not go the way they wanted.

Towards the end of the war in early 1944, when the Russians won control of Warsaw, many of the people working on this research were considering fleeing. They were captured by the Russians, and put to work for them instead. It was when these scientists began doing their research in the gulags in Siberia that the virus became a successful scientific enterprise.

The Soviet Union began considering what the appropriate use of this new weapon would be in 1947. The capability to take what once was dead and make it live could be an incredible tool for inflicting fear on their enemies. As the United States' anti-Soviet sentiments rose in popularity, — especially those of Senator Joseph McCarthy — the USSR felt more and more threatened by the language being used by the U.S. Government. The time was coming when they needed to act.

It was in the middle of 1951 when the Soviet spies placed in the United States sent back the key information they needed to fully weaponize the virus. They had been able to access the research done by the Manhattan Project and after 1951 the Nevada Proving Ground research other atomic allowed spies to find what

they needed. While the bombs were not atomic in nature, their long range environmental effects were what provided the basis for the z-bombs. Later that year, when several of their key spies were arrested, the government began to seriously research how to disseminate the virus, by then called the z-bomb.

On June 19th 1953, when one of their atomic spies (Julius Rosenberg) and his sister were executed for espionage against the United States Government, the decision was made to send the z-bomb to the United States.

Spies were outfitted with gas masks, Z-Bombs and strict instructions for where and when to deploy the bombs within the major city centers of the United States. By October of 1953, roughly 1,000 agents were sent to attack the United States.

THE OUTBREAK:

The Outbreak begins when the President announces the attacks and then dies while making said address to the nation. The outbreak ends exactly one month later, as the National Guard and the United States Military (whatever is left of it) mobilizes and begins to move out, searching for those who have survived and managed to keep their country — and the spirit of that country — alive.

Telegram	
Day Letter	
Night Message	
Night Letter	

TELEGRAM

CORRESPONDENCE COPY

Party Sending
Time Filed
A. M. P. M.

The Second American Reconstruction:

"I, Joseph Raymond McCarthy do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. The smearing of blood on our flag merits not our sadness, but our anger. We must fight back harder now than ever before, coming back ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times stronger against menaces Red and Dead. This *Dead Scare* shall not go unopposed nor can we shirk our duty as Americans to show the world what we're made of. The Zeds may be dead and gone but our memory of them will not falter, as Americans we cannot forgive this injustice on our soil and we will give the Soviets their own weapon in return. The Communist choice to force us to eat one another will come back to them tenfold. In these days, in these dark times, we must remember that those around us may not be who we know them to be. Our enemies bear many faces, but their will is the same — to destroy us, to unravel the very fabric of the American tapestry woven together with the red white and blues of the men who died and sacrificed everything for our liberties. This is by design, of course, that our enemies overseas want us to see our home as the land of Benedict Arnold, not George Washington.

By God, we will not falter, this is the mission and we will not fail.

- President Joseph McCarthy, July First 1954

The Reconstruction era began as soon as the National Guard swept into the suburbs of the United States and began helping the citizenry to rebuild and survive. The months between McCarthy's ascendancy to the Presidency and his actual first speech as president was a few months, as those who survived banded together with their guns and mended fences, cleaning up as much of the country as they could. Some places remained overrun by the dead, to the point where a few states succeeded in removing themselves entirely from the living population. No one went to Arizona any longer. Or Kansas. Not a single living soul went beyond the Cascade Mountains in Washington State. These places belonged to the dead.

The cities began to rebuild. Slowly. But the government wanted to show that it was possible to take back what was taken away. New York City and Washington D.C. were the first places to be populated again, though not the same populations as they had before. Many Jews refused to return to Brooklyn after what they had seen there, preferring to construct new communities further away from the locations where the bombs had been dropped.

The Freedom Scouts

"We, the orphans of the Zed Attack, will not stand by while our president uses our parents to create another Z-Bomb. We cannot and will not allow more Zed's to live. And so, we, the children, must rise up and demand peace and freedom, even if we have to do it by killing the people who gave us life." -

The Freedom Scouts were founded six months after the armed forces were able to liberate most of the United States. The Orphans of the Z-Bomb began to gather together.

The Freedom Scouts began planning their attacks upon the Z Internment Camps. Once used to keep the Japanese from spying upon America, now they were used to maintain security while American scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project turned their sights onto unlocking the weapon which destroyed life as we all knew it.

The Freedom Scouts went underground. Children armed with weapons were not the vision of American which the McCarthy administration wanted to perpetuate, and their very existence was anathema to the Duck & Cover style advertisements and posters which populated the television screens, the subway platforms and the propaganda pamphlets being distributed throughout the cities which remained.

The Manhattan Project

After the z-bomb was deployed by Russia the scientists in charge of the Manhattan project were directed by President McCarthy to recruit doctors to understand what precisely had happened. What doctors were left were recruited, whether by request or force, and as many field nurses as they could find were similarly brought on board.

The first act McCarthy made as President was to use one of the nuclear weapons stored by the US government to attack the Russian gulag camp where the z-bomb had been developed. It was a symbol for what the American government felt about what had happened – because McCarthy had plans for Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The scientists and doctors who formed the Zed Project began resurrecting the old projects of the 1940s beginning with the Bat Bomb.

Infecting bats with the z-virus and then installing them inside of bombs before the virus could fully take hold was impossible, the plan was to send them out to Russia to begin the process of making Russia suffer in the same ways that the United States had. Instead of infecting the bats themselves, they carried small aerosol containers with a remote detonation device. Once the bats entered Russian airspace, they were detonated, killing the bats and spreading the virus.

But the goal of the resurrected project was to create a nuclear warhead which could spread the zed virus vast swathes of terrain without the issue of agents sacrificing themselves for the attack. NWC's get to make the decision if the government is successful at this – and it's not like women wouldn't have been involved in these projects.

The Murrow Network During the Second Reconstruction

After things had calmed down, famed journalist Edward R. Murrow was the first person to begin speaking out against the McCarthy Administration. Murrow believed that McCarthy may have been involved in the attacks on the United States, he worried that McCarthy was actually a power hungry man, bent towards holding the Presidency at any cost. As Murrow once stated “Anyone so afraid of the Reds must really be one of them.”

Murrow ended up having to go underground, much like the Freedom Scouts did, in order to evade incarceration at the hands of the National Guard. His broadcasts became what would be termed by historians as “the only real news in the United States”, and his reporters risked life and limb to gather information both on the virus itself, and on what the Government was really doing behind the scenes.

It was Murrow who broke the news on August 1st 1957 that the United States had perfected a second Z-Bomb and was intending to drop it on the USSR as revenge for the initial attack.

The Murrow Network has responsibility to delivery news by any means necessary. This includes the use of runners.

In addition to delivering communications between towns which have survived the attack, and between the government and those towns, the Murrow Network also employs runners to take news and information not being shared by the government to towns which exist within radio silence zones, such as much of the Midwest.

Examples of Play

Once everyone has their playbooks selected, and their moves picked out, it's time to sit down and actually play.

The NWC will set the scene (Pg 132) and then everyone gets to react. The NWC has decided to start the zombie apocalypse at a school play.

Josh is playing a Troublemaker, so before the zeds even get to the theater, he's already rolled for his Backpack of Holding move and apparently he brought a bbgun to school. Because that's what Troublemakers do.

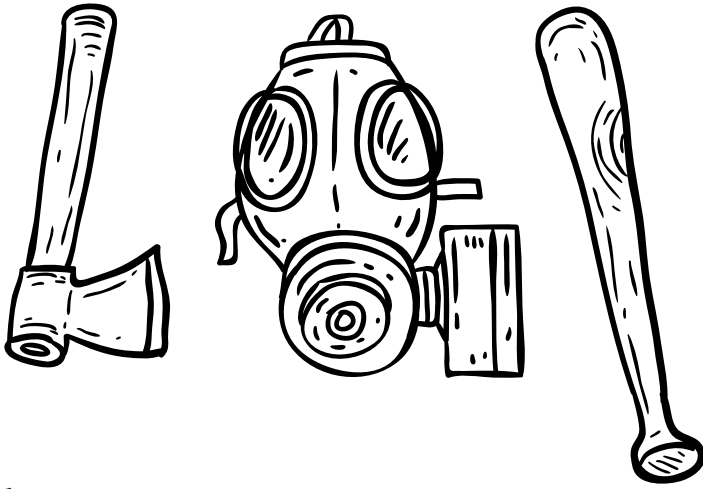
Regan has decided to play The Preacher's Wife, Janice, and she is waiting patiently, roleplaying with some of the other characters in the room.



If you want to play a character who is good in a fight, sometimes it is more helpful to have moves which help you prep early, versus a character like Regan's who is prepared to handle the aftermath of a fight, calming characters down and bringing them into a safe haven.

When the zeds shamle into the school play, Josh uses his "Shoot to Kill" move from his background, and takes out a couple zeds. When he rolls for courage and fails, Regan's character is able to rally everyone together by using a prayer circle, and bolstering their courage before they leave the confines of the building.





Combat

Players engaged in combat always move first according to their initiative dice rolls except when the number of zombies constitutes a horde. When a horde appears the zeds roll to overwhelm the human survivors. If they are successful, all players take a single harm mark, and the horde moves on.

To determine initiative between player characters, everyone makes a moxie check.

Once combat has been initiated there are two ways to end it: Either all of the zombies are dead, or the living decide to flee in advance of said conclusion in the interest of continuing to survive.

ZEDS the enemy at large: Zeds do not have hit points. What they do have are specific methods of death. A zed can be killed by having its head removed from its body, from having its brain destroyed, or by physically destroying the zed itself with something like acid or brute force impact like an anvil.

Things that won't kill a zed: fire, drowning, dismemberment of anything other than a head, being shot anywhere but the head, being stabbed anywhere but the head etc. NWC's should consider what happens to a zed when it's attacked, whether an attack like fire makes them move more slowly or not is up to the NWC.

DEATH, HARM & DISMEMBERMENT

Players have a limited number of harm which can be done to them, which can be reversed by a Nurse, a Mother or a Girl Scout. All have healing abilities, though only the Nurse can do the most amount of healing per wound.

If a player reaches the end of their health points, the NWC makes a 2d6 roll against the player. If the player rolls highest, their character just dies. If the NWC rolls highest, the player turns into a zombie and may immediately begin attacking other players.

Players have 6 harm, except for children (see *The Kids Are Alright* on page 86). Neighborhood Watch Captain characters have as many as the NWC decides. Zeds have 4, except when in a horde, in which they have 6.

When you take a harm a healing character can attempt to heal you. If they fail, the harm remains until the next session, when healing can be attempted once again.

If a player takes 3 harm in one session the NWC has the option to disable a player permanently, depending upon the circumstances of the incident(s). The player and NWC must agree on the disability and the consequences. *Congeniality is never a consequence for disability.* In many games it is seen as a negative to social scores to lose an eye or a limb or to gain a scar or some other change. In *Dead Scare* there is no penalty associated with disability in the mechanics. These “penalties” are played out as shifts in approaches to action. A character who loses an eye may no longer drive or ride a bike, but they’ll still walk. A character who is burned in a fire will still be able to make seduction rolls without a penalty to their success because of their physical appearance. A newly gained physical disability will never change the ability to negotiate or be found attractive by other characters.

So how does one take harm? The most obvious way is being attacked by zombies. When a zombie successfully bites someone on a 10, they take 3 harm. When a zombie scratches or hits a player, they take between 1-2 harm depending on whether or not the zombie is in a horde or not. Hordes always do more damage because strength in numbers seems to mean strength as one.

But the shambling dead aren't the only reasons one could take damage. While for the most part, players are attempting to shoot the zombies, friendly fire is always a risk when fighting for your lives. Not to mention character versus character violence, when someone puts salt in the only batch of cookies you can make, or when you fall into the Hudson River trying to outrun a horde and your weapons weigh you down to the bottom.

WEAPONS DAMAGE

- Handgun – Non Lethal location – 2 harm
- Handgun – Lethal Location – 4 harm
- Shotgun – Non Lethal Location – 3 harm
- Shotgun – Lethal Location – 5 harm
- BB Gun – 2 harm
- Baseball Bat – 1 Harm per Hit
- Fireworks – 4 harm when aimed at a person. Will probably set a zombie on fire.
- Cherry Bombs – 3 harm. Sets zombies on Fire.
- Lawn Mowers – 1 harm when target is standing, 3 harm when target is prone
- Croquet Mallet – 2 Harm

- Rolling Pin – 1 harm
- Frying Pan – 2 Harm, Immediate Knockout on living targets when hit in the face or head.
- Butchers Knife – 2 harm + bleeding harm if not treated
- Chefs Knife – 1 harm + bleeding harm if not treated
- Jump Rope – 1 harm per every minute used for strangulation
- Trowel – 1 harm
- Hedge Trimmers – 2 harm
- Jacks - .5 Harm, but if you successfully trip the zombie or person they may get trampled. Situation based harm.
- High heeled shoes - .5 harm, repeated stabbings in the face can remove an eye.
- Lawn Darts – 1 damage per dart, 2 damage per dart if poisoned.
- Slingshot – 1 harm
- Cane – 2 harm x however many hits you get in. Roll 1 die to determine # of hits

SO YOU'VE SURVIVED LONG ENOUGH TO GAIN NEW SKILLS

Jeepers, you're actually still alive! Each player can earn up to 5 ranks of experience in a session.. These points can buy you a few different things. Option one is to purchase new ranks in your attributes. Did you do negotiate with a neighboring hostile town and is that how you learned to be a better diplomat? Did you take down a horde of zombies on your own to earn you more brawn, or smarts? There ought to be a reason behind why you've earned this attribute rank.

Another way is to purchase new moves. At the end of each playbook there are higher level moves for each playbook, which you can purchase for your character. Child characters can take advanced moves by picking starter moves from either a) other child playbooks or b) adult playbooks. Children will learn advanced moves from the playbooks which are used within their community.

Another thing to consider is age. Your players (if they are children) will continue to age as the game continues. A five year old at the beginning of the outbreak, will turn six by the time President McCarthy takes office. If you collect up to 10 points you can age your child character up to their next age. Children under 10 have penalties to their health, whereas children over 10 do not.

Disease and Medicine

Just because the zeds are out there doesn't mean that the other fears of the world have gone away.

Measles, mumps, polio, rubella, chicken pox – they were all around, and for many they were deadly. Scarlet Fever, cholera. Disease spreads like wildfire when people are forced together by circumstances beyond their control. What happens when one member of your community has a daughter with chicken pox when the zeds arrive? What happens if there's only one iron lung in the county, and you have six people with polio?

CPR doesn't exist, so if someone starts choking, your best plan is probably to thwack them on the back with something really hard until they spit up whatever's killing them.

People with epilepsy are still treated like they're insane, and have items shoved into their mouths to protect them from biting off their tongues.

A promiscuous woman, or a woman believed to be a lesbian, is more likely to be carted to an insane asylum and treated with electroshock therapy, than to be considered a normal and healthy human being. How the medical industry chooses to treat the zed infections will be interesting, if not terrifying. Will a zed infection be perceived as a disability, a mental illness, or a side effect of a weapon? Only the government knows the truth of the zed virus until the McCarthy administration chooses to share it.

An oral history excerpt from Heather Toricello's interview in 1970 with the University of London.

"Some parents didn't want to have their children get exposed to the virus in a 'scary' way. So they had parties. Parties where they would bring all their children together, and would have baked some zed blood or spit into cookies. The special ingredients infected their children while at play. The parents would back slowly out of the room... and then leave the building to their children. They thought it was mercy. I thought it was horrifying. I could never have done that. Once the kids realized what their parents were doing, some would run away to the Freedom Scouts. Some would kill their parents to stop from being killed. I remember hearing their tiny growls from the inside of a house, and knew what was happening. But like a coward, I ran, rather than putting them out of their misery."



The Feminine Mystique

Aside from the horrible things that come from a post-apocalyptic world, these experiences also draw people closer. Romance is a part of any world setting, and love transcends the very nature of what we are currently experiencing. Whether it is a war zone, or the zed infested suburbs, love will always come. Platonic love, the love one bears for friends and family, for children and pets, that is something which does not need to be addressed in the rules. But erotic love does.

Players are encouraged to work out ahead of time their boundaries with regard to romance and sex within the context of their game.

Love will come into play on many different levels within the setting of *Dead Scare*. One of the most important ways in which one will experience love is of course the way in which a loved one's death affects us. Some will go on a revenge spree, killing all the zombies (or Russians) that they can, some will have to be pulled out of their grief before they take themselves out of this world, and some will shove their pain into the depths of their soul until they come away thinking only of the future.

And some players will fall in love with one another. The Marilyn Monroe move for example, is a seduction technique, but because consent is an important part of play, this game does not have any mechanics for coercion into sexual action.

If rape is present within the story, that's not expected to be done through any kind of mechanical coercion, nor would a fully consensual act. These things are meant to be roleplayed out by both parties, within the parameters set by the Neighborhood Watch Captain and the players present. The rules are simple: Be kind, be thoughtful, and be considerate of your fellow players and

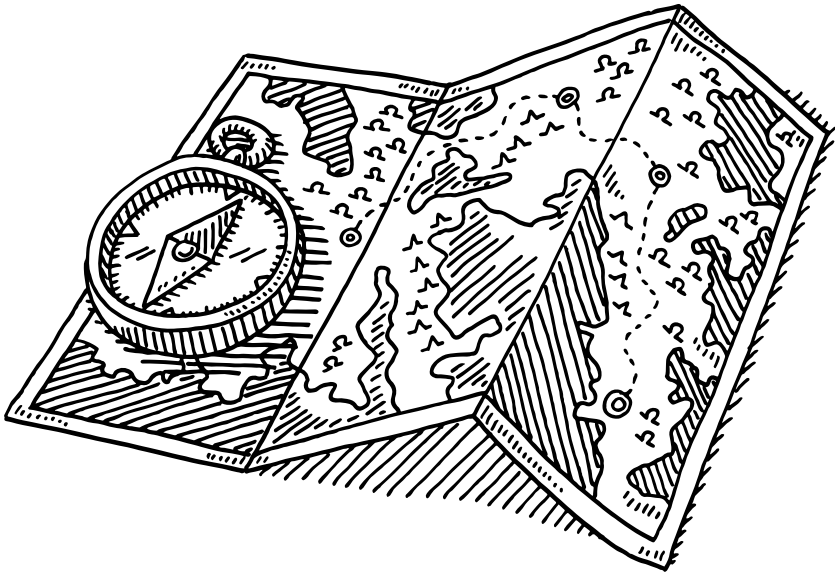
their comfort levels. It's always up to the table how detailed these scenes get; fading out is of course, the way the Hayes Code would prefer you handle these matters.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Once the outbreak is fully underway there's a few things that will make travel more interesting. For one, until the United States Government is re-established there is no possible way to get fuel for cars into the country. Cars are a commodity, but only useful for women who have learned how to drive. Either your husband taught you because it was a necessity, or you learned during the War. In addition, if you can drive, you can probably find a school bus or other large vehicle to provide transit for large groups of people.

Bicycles are an excellent alternative for long term travel, and are likely quite available if you are in a suburban area.

Most people trying to be stealthy, however, will travel on foot.



The March of the Matriarchs

SITUATION

Williamsburg in Brooklyn, NY is the major Jewish neighborhood after the mass immigration during and after World War II. The Zed attack has happened in Manhattan, and the dead are crossing the Williamsburg and Brooklyn Bridges, seeping into the neighborhoods of Brooklyn. They look like the victims of the Holocaust. They appear like the people who you once were, or whom you held in your arms as they died.

They are what you are trying so hard to forget even when you see them in your memories and your dreams.

And they are coming to get you.

Player characters are the women who would be inside as the men leave for shul. They are the women who are watching babies, or bobbies who are resting at home. Anyone with their windows open hanging the laundry out to dry is not safe. Anyone on the streets is not safe.

IMPACT

You are no longer safe and need to escape the city. You've had to leave your home once before, gathering up the things which have meaning and running from a threat that wants to eradicate you. You and your neighbors need to escape – or you can stay and fight. Making that choice is on you.

It will not be easy for you to leave. You are the women who may not walk fast enough, you are the women who have canes, who have grandchildren, whose families care for you.

HOOKS

Everyone needs to name how they know one another. Through

shul, their apartment building, a sewing circle, from immigrating together, or from being in the same camp.

- Who did you lose during the War?
- Who do you care for during the day?
- Who cares for you?

ANTAGONISTS

The Zeds are the major antagonists of this adventure.

An Angry Mob – Gentiles who are afraid are going to the minority neighborhoods, thinking that this is somehow their fault.

THREATS

The Very Air We Breathe – The Z-Bomb was set off in several locations in Manhattan, and there's an easterly wind. The airborne contaminants are coming into Brooklyn, getting all over the clothes hanging outside, inhaled into the lungs of children playing into the streets, and drifting into the subways.

Fear – Fear of the unknown raises the stakes faster than anything else. When the unknown happens, everyone is afraid. All rolls are at a -1 on the courage scale until the screaming in the streets stops.

Infant – The infant is less of a threat and more of a liability. Your group has one child, between the ages of 3 months and a year, and the NWC must roll every scene to make sure the child is sleeping. A flat roll of 2d6. On a 6 or below, the child cries.

Chapter 1

OPENING

The men have left for shul. The women are left to tend the children, and to pray on their own when the President's Address comes over the radio. A shout on the street sounds like angry people shouting

at the men, and as one of you cranes your head out the window, you can see a mob forming at the base of the street. Slowly walking towards your people. Within a moment your building is tense, afraid, fearful that the community will be forced to flee once again.

EVENT

The First Night after the z bomb is deployed is a night of being indoors. What do you see from outside of the windows but the shambling dead, seeking prey. How do you spread the news that something has gone wrong? Do you stay inside your building?

EVENT

The Morning after the attacks you have to go outside to find your family members who left the day before. What do you find? Corpses? Zeds? Who is left?

EVENT

On your way home you are confronted by an angry mob. Negotiate your way around them either using stealth, negotiation, or fighting.

CLOSING

After much argument, Minka, a woman who survived Bergen Belsen and is considered one of the grandmothers for everyone in the community tells you what you're doing.

You're going to Ellis Island. It's not in use anymore, she says, and there's plenty of beds and a secure space for what few children remain to play outside in. There's even a hospital. And the bridge is small and narrow enough to be blockaded.

Chapter 2

OPENING:

You are on the Brooklyn Bridge. Together you have gathered your most cherished possessions and are walking your way to safety at **Ellis Island**. Being quiet is important as you will need to not attract any zeds to you while trapped on the bridge.

NWC must roll a d20 for zeds trapped in cars on the bridge.

EVENT

Setting up camp. You know that you can't get there in one day, not safely, not moving at the quietest pace that you can. Not with the children. So you find a building. A place to hide. You've seen very few people, let alone zeds. Do you simply break in, or do you knock politely, make some noise, and hope that someone is home to share their space? The **West Village** just north of the Holland Tunnel is where you end up for this event.

EVENT

The people in the building next door are still alive, they tell you the building in question isn't in use. They're not keen on you staying forever, and point out the zeds can get in through the broken down backdoor, but you move in.

About halfway through the night, the horde appears, flooding the street, and you can hear them scratching their way into the building.

CLOSING:

After you survive the night you have to make a decision of whether or not to continue on. Each player must commit to moving forward. Some of the women in your march have decided to stay,

to beg the people in the building next door to let them stay with them. Those of you who choose to move forward must survive the crossing through the **Holland Tunnel**.

Chapter 3

OPENING

You arrive **at Ellis Island** a few women shorter, battered, tired, hungry, and afraid. You arrive to discover that while you can absolutely make this place safe, and welcome more people who come to you needing shelter, you need to make it secure.

EVENT

You have to create a blockade. Working together you must make the Island secure using whatever materials you can access.

EVENT

The first night. If your blockade fails a security test by the NWC then the Zeds come in through the front door. If the security roll does not fail, then there's a few stragglers from the inside of the building that you haven't caught just yet.

EVENT

The Second Day your leader, Minka, points out that you can't just be 10 women from Brooklyn New York alone. You're going to need allies. You're going to need a community.

You're going to need help.

THE MATTACHINES & THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS

The Mattachine Society was a group founded to allow for homosexuals to socialize together in the Los Angeles area in 1950. Housed in the home of Harry Hay, when the zed outbreak occurred the Society turned to weapons to keep themselves safe. When communications were re-established throughout California, six months after the bombs went off, they were able to contact the Daughters of Bilits, a similar organization in San Francisco. The State of California began to rebuild with the help and protection of these two societies, much to the dismay and displeasure of President McCarthy and those who did not support the homosexual lifestyle.



From Hell to the Apocalypse

SITUATION

Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital is an overcrowded psychiatric hospital in the center of Northern New Jersey. Maybe you were sent here because you have an actual mental health condition. Perhaps you were sent here because being who you are is unacceptable in this society. Regardless, you're here. Locked into a world that functions on medication schedules and structured outdoor time. **Until three days ago.** The nurses mostly stopped coming. The doctors haven't been in, and people are slumping around the perimeter of the grounds. Sometimes, you can swear you hear an eerie groaning in the distance, but here behind the walls of Greystone, you don't know what's happened. Some of the other patients are handing out medication, a few are trying to maintain structure here in the ward – but eventually you're going to run out of food, and you have to face that the things you've been seeing outside the window might not be your imagination.

IMPACT

If you do nothing, you're not going to know why no one is coming to feed you. If you do nothing, the food supplies will run out, and then you'll be hungry, running out of medications, and trapped inside this building with your fellow inmates. And then there's the things outside.

HOOKS

- What got you committed to Greystone?
- Do you think that you belong here?
- Do you think the things outside are real, or are they a part of your illness?
- Were any of the staff nice to you? Are you angry with them?
- Is there anyone here on the ward that you don't trust?

ANTAGONISTS

Inside the hospital there are a few people that really don't want you to leave. One of them is Leonard.

Leonard is the man who came into the women's ward on the second day. He keeps telling everyone that it's not safe for you out there, that no one will protect you. He came from the ward for soldiers who fought in WWII, and he seems convinced that what's out there has to do with the Nazis.

And then there's the rest of the men on the ward. Are they hostile? Are they friendly? Are they too friendly? NWC's discretion to be used.

THREATS

The Zeds outside the walls. They're there waiting for you to come and join their ranks. They've tried to open the doors of Greystone without success – and that's a good thing.

Chapter 1

OPENING:

On the third day that the staff do not arrive, the patients at Greystone decide it is time to fend for themselves. One of the men's wards breaks out, tries to break into the women's ward, and then upon not being successful, they broke out of the building.

Now it's just the women and the men who decided not to flee. Like Leonard. Leonard comes into the women's ward and is convinced that you have to stay here – because it's not safe out there. The men will find you, and he's pretty sure they are not planning to be nice if they can get you in their clutches. Leonard's appearance is what triggers the start of your adventure.

EVENT

Making the decision to leave the hospital. Everyone on the ward has to agree to leave. If people decide not to, then you have to stay together, because no one wants to go out alone with things stalking the walls.

EVENT

Convincing a fellow patient that the zeds are not hallucinations so that they understand the dangers of leaving.

CLOSING

Leaving the building. Name what you've taken, whether you've gotten your meds, or you're taking a stuffed animal from the therapy rooms. You will encounter some of the men who broke out of the ward. Are they hostile or are they friendly?

Chapter 2

OPENING

Once you've managed to leave the building you have to pick a direction to go in. the second chapter takes place travelling from one place to a town.

EVENT

Seeing a group of zeds shambling along. How do you react? Do you attack them or do you hide?

CLOSING

Once you have fought off the zeds or successfully hidden from them, you arrive at the train station for Morristown. This town is the most populated of the ones in the area. Will it be a safe haven, or will it be dangerous? You proceed with caution to the town square.

Chapter 3

OPENING

You have arrived in Morristown, New Jersey and walk onto the Green. The town square is where strangers are directed to be spoken with before they can be approved to stay in the area.

EVENT

You have to convince the local neighborhood watch association that you are safe people to have in the area. The trick is, they heard there was a breakout at Greystone and they aren't exactly excited about the idea.

EVENT

Once approved (whether you lie about where you've come from or not) you are assigned a house in the neighborhood, but you will have to clean it out of whoever used to live there first. The house is absolutely still occupied by zeds.

CLOSING

Once you've cleaned out the previous occupants of your house, you can settle in and decompress in this new world that you've come to live in. Do you miss the hospital?

Setting Up Scenes

As the NWC your main job is to help your players tell a story. Stories typically unfold in a chronological manner, though for games set in a community setting where everyone knew each other before the outbreak, a flashback or two can help to solidify relationships.

In setting a scene as the NWC you should give your players something to do, something to interact with, and possibly something to fix. In flashback scenes you are more likely to address interpersonal conflicts.

As the NWC give the players a sense of the setting, and then, as things develop, insert tension, or problems, into the scene.

Recommended Reading/Viewing

Pleasantville – A film which illustrates social tensions of the 1950s rather nicely. And rather obviously.

I Love Lucy – Watch the original if you want to turn the *Dead Scare* comedy dial up to 11.

Leave It To Beaver – Again, the original. The remake is a terrible tragedy. Watch for clues on how to play children.

The 'Lil Rascals – Both the original and the 1990s remake will help you play better Troublemakers.

Night of the Living Dead – Because a zombie movie made in the 1960s is a perfect choice for a movie night.

The Walking Dead – This is sort of the reason why the game exists. Watch it. Read it. See what you make of it.

Desperate Housewives – Soap opera, but it will give you a great sense of how women in a neighborhood bond, and fall apart during tragedies.

Never Done by **Susan Straser** – a history of American housework. This will give you an intimate understanding of the workings of historical households.

Good Night & Good Luck – this movie is about Edward Murrow. You'll get a great sense of the McCarthy era, and an even better sense of how the Murrow Network might feel about it.

The Crucible – Film & play written by Arthur Miller comparing the Communist hunts in Congress spearheaded by McCarthy to the witch hunts in Salem. Lots of good fodder for how women act when everyone is suspected. Replace Elizabeth Proctor's suspected witchcraft with being a zed sympathizer.

McCarthyism: The Great American Red Scare – Another academic text addressing the Red Scare and McCarthy's political efforts.

Walk the Line – A great way to look at entertainment and the South in the 1950s. More for flavor than for game development.

Mona Lisa Smile – Women standing up to the mores of society... and society bites back. I really enjoy imagining the girls at Wellesly fighting back against the zeds. I think they'd do just fine.

Reefer Madness – A musical about marijuana, the 1950s and yes, zombies. Ridiculous. Features Alan Cumming.

Selma – Not without its problems, especially given the fact that there are so few women in the film. However, it illustrates the racial tensions of the era beautifully.

***The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* by David K. Johnson** – McCarthyism wasn't just about the Communists. People under the LGBT umbrella were vociferously prosecuted by the McCarthy agenda.

As Time Shambles Hungrily Along

One of the benefits/drawbacks of *Dead Scare* is that while the core setting is a very narrow set of time, the opportunities for storytelling and historical exploration are endless. Here are a few historical events which are within the timeline:

In 1958 shortly after President McCarthy elects himself for a second term, arguing before Congress that it was for the safety and well-being of the nation that there not be a public vote. McCarthy leaves shortly after for talks with the Russians, in an attempt to broker peace between the countries. Despite his virulent hatred, he knew peace was the only way to safety. When President McCarthy refused to cease research on the Z-Warhead, citing safety concerns for his country, his body was sent back to the United States.

He died a zed at Dover air base. The message was clear: the Russians were not ready for peace.

In 1963 President Kennedy (who succeeded President McCarthy after his assassination in 1958) is shot in Texas by Lee Harvey Oswald. His wife, Jacqueline Kennedy is next to him in the car, and prevents him from rising as a Zed. It is suspected that there was zed virus in the bullet which hit the President.

In 1964, ten years after the zed outbreak, the United States has come to a peace with the shambling dead. What few remain are locked away, still being experimented upon by the United States Government. Racial tensions have continued to boil over, and the black citizens of the US have not yet been given their voting rights. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. organizes his march from Selma on Montgomery, encouraging his supporters that facing down the zeds in the darkness cannot possibly be worse than the racism which they endure every day. The march is successful.

January of 1969 brought the Stonewall Riots. Fed up with being marginalized despite the exceedingly important efforts of the Mattachine Society and the Daughters of Bilitis to help rebuild American society. The raid sparked anger over the injustices like a powerkeg, and those who now bravely repopulated New York City demanded their rights violently, protesting that it had been almost ten years since the last rambling zeds has been confined, and civil rights could no longer be denied.

In response, the New York City Police Department acquired some of the virus and sent out police officers armed with the weaponized disease. The Murrow Network was able to have feet on the ground, reporting every step of the way. The Stonewall Riots did not go unheard of.

On May 4 1970, students at Kent State University protest the continued testing on zombies in order to perfect the biological weapons still being kept in reserve by the United States government. These students willingly inject themselves with the virus, transform on the quad, and are shot down by the national guard.



PostCard

There is Always Something Doing at the Old Howard

BY LAUREN ROY

Up on stage, with the band howling in the orchestra pit and the Harvard boys hollering in the audience, it was easy to miss the sounds of panic outside. Wasn't until my number ended and the whistles subsided that any of us heard it. The stillness rippled from the back of the house, the Old Howard going quiet row by row.

We were all thinking the same thing, the college boys and businessmen, the band, us girls: Is this a raid? They'd been more frequent the last few years, cops busting down doors and rounding us up for indecency because some State House muckety-mucks wanted to make Scollay Square respectable again.

Like dancing wasn't respectable. Like half of them weren't at our shows week in and week out.

But the noise, it wasn't the same hullabaloo you got during a raid. No one pounded on the door; no one burst in barking orders and brandishing billy clubs. Instead, sirens shrieked past, headed toward the waterfront. Then I heard the screams.

I'd've thought nothing could've prepared us for the Zeds, but I guess the raids did teach us girls some useful things: how to get out fast, how to get into our street clothes as we headed for the backstage door. We already had escape plans worked out: fleeing in threes or fours, headcounts at every corner, looking out ahead, looking out behind. Where to meet when we were out of danger.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



We had the stamina to run when we needed to, could swat away the grabby hands of men who thought we existed for them to grope, knew there was safety in numbers, and always to look out for our sisters.

Those first months, I didn't know how we were going to survive. It wasn't like burlesque stars were on anyone's priority list. So we pushed up our sleeves, freshened our lipstick, and saved our own damned selves.

Scollay Square got cleaned up, just not the way the politicians imagined. We cleared the Zeds out of the Old Howard, made it into a safe place for women who needed shelter and food. Some of them looked down their noses at us a few years back, but that was a different world. Now we take care of each other. Take Lili – she never wanted kids of her own, but she's great with the little ones.

The Harvard boys are still milling around, and they still get grabby if you let them get close. Different part of you they want to get their hands on now, if you get my meaning. Our squads go out and clear the streets. They've got teeth and brute strength; we've got old props and moxie. Funny, how similar dancing is to fighting. Gypsy calls us the Burlesque Brigade. She's writing our story, so our daughters and granddaughters will remember.

If you ever find yourself in Boston, come on down to the Old Howard. Always something doing here.

Post Card

Tri-State Fair: Salima the Fire-Eating Lady Fakir's Account

BY JULIA B. ELLINGBOE

The Crawford Brothers ran one of the few integrated railroad shows in the South. They offered relatively honest work, didn't care who you bunked with, displayed only bouncers as pickled punks, and gave us Sundays off. Most big city fairs let in colored performers, and many had a "Negro Achievement Day," that just the black performers could work, but not the Mid South Fair in Memphis. Black folks started their own fair called the Negro Tri State Fair in 1911 and they were 42 years strong in 1953. I liked the Tri State Fair, because they had long dropped "Negro" from the name.

My roommate Nancy, another sword swallower, was sick that day, so Bob Crawford let me do just an afternoon show so I could spend the evening taking care of Nancy and mending costumes. I was looking forward to sewing and drinking hot toddies.

It was one of my best performances ever. The crowd squealed and gasped with every taste of the flame, every twirl my buckets of fire for my flaming rendition of the Dance of Seven Veils. I didn't notice the change in the crowd, nor did I hear them stampede the Mid South Fairgrounds. Scores of the dead ambled into the tent just as I did my finale, the Angry Dragon. A dead thing lunged at me just ask I blew out a stream of fire and set him alight. That one collided into another dead thing, then another and another until the entire audience was set ablaze. Those who weren't on fire ate the survivors. I grabbed my torches and fled the stage.

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE



I lit the big tent on fire with all those things in it and ran down the midway to the Shelby County Building, the grand exhibit hall that was once a refuge for survivors of the 1937 flood. Nancy and most of the Crawford Brothers' colored beauties also made it there safely. Over the next 2 hours, the Tri State Fair attendees and performers wrestled the Fairgrounds from the dead.

When the dead started walking, one of the safest places to be in Memphis was the gated and easily fortified Fairgrounds. By the grace of God, this is where most of the colored people in Memphis were. We have food, shelter, livestock, and troupes (troops?) of athletic women with unique talents, ready to stand our ground. We have several buildings to fortify with fire, swords, throwing knives, guns, circus animals, and tractors. For once, the colored and the poor met this calamity with a strategic advantage. We expect our edge to narrow over time. In the first few weeks, few white folks who survived the initial wave of dead came to our gates. We've since heard that they tried to flee north to the naval base in Millington, only to find it completely overrun by dead walkers. We've welcomed those that had the good sense not to bypass our haven just because it was full of colored folks, but in the past few weeks, the number of refugees, black or white has dwindled. Nancy thinks the poor, colored, and the carnies will rebuild the city. I think desperation and goodwill will give way old prejudices eventually.



From the Diary of Liesl

BY NORA LAST

This morning when we woke up our garden had been ruined. I do not know what we will eat for dinner now. The neighborhood watch accused the Kramarczuk boys from two blocks down, but I do not think the watch trusts anyone who isn't German. They chased the Hoigaards out, even though they were very nice. Mama says that we are lucky to live where we do because the river means even if our water goes out we will not be thirsty and our neighbors will watch out for us. I overheard her telling Papa that disaster must be following them, but I hope she is wrong.

THE OUTBREAK:

1953: In Minneapolis, the days immediately following news of the attacks are marked by riots as people swarm grocery stores, fighting for canned goods and kitchen staples. Citing safety concerns, Minneapolis, then widely acknowledged as the anti-semitism capital of the country, passes an ordinance requiring Jewish communities to relocate to the southern fringe of the city. Bridges to St. Paul are closely regulated by citizen militia, although many Jewish families flee across the river rather than become the first line of defense against the spread of Chicago's contagion. A city of immigrants and their children, rather than scattering, many of Minneapolis' tight knit neighborhoods form border patrols, divvying up the city along religious and ethnic lines.

In Saint Paul, the already largely independent Black neighborhoods around Rondo St. become a hub for both Black

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA



families fleeing Chicago and Jewish refugees from the other side of the river. As Minneapolis fractures, this resilient community and the universities (particularly St. Thomas and the surrounding “Tom Town”) provide anchor points for the residents of St. Paul and largely prevent the factionalism that divides Minneapolis, although wounds from the violently anti-German sentiment during the first World War begin to surface again. The labyrinth of underground tunnels are developed first as refuges in case a second wave of bomb hits and then, as the population swells, as overflow dwellings.

RECONSTRUCTION:

As neither Minneapolis nor St. Paul was directly hit with a bomb, they are regarded as low priority cities by the new McCarthy administration. Normalcy slowly returns, but the fraternal bond between Minneapolis and St. Paul is irreparably damaged. Amongst the first local casualties of President McCarthy’s quest to ferret out the Reds is Doctor Frank Oppenheimer, noted physicist and brother of Robert J. Oppenheimer. His vocal objections to the University of Minnesota’s involvement in the Zed Project and the Zed Internment Camp Olivia (ZICO) rendered Oppenheimer academic persona non grata. His notes are instrumental in the dissemination of the actual functions of the Zed Project.

Lead by former mill workers & labor activists, the tunnels under St. Paul take on a new purpose: housing an outpost of The Murrow Network. As class and racial divides ossify under the increasingly aggressive McCarthy regime St. Paul again becomes a refuge, this time for political dissidents.

POSTCARD

Duke & Me

BY SHANNA GERMAIN

I'll admit I moped for a while on the drive back to the family farm, feeling sorry for myself. Not even Duke's goofy Shepard grin could cheer me up as I kept repeating the dean's words over and over in my head.

You're qualified and competent enough to get in, but you lack the strength to deal with large animals.

By 'you' he meant me. But mostly he meant women. He'd rejected all eight of us from vet school with that easy condemnation. As if that wasn't enough, he'd offered a parting shot as we'd filed out. "You know you women can't ride over rough country roads in the middle of the night!"

Quick as that, my moping turned to anger. By the time I turned the truck into the gravel driveway of the farm, I was frosted. My hands were dug into the steering wheel so hard, I could feel the plastic leaving indents in my palms.

"I'll show him riding rough," I muttered. On the seat next to me, Duke uttered a low growl as if he agreed with me. As I parked the truck, I reached over to give Duke a scratching between the ears. "We'll find a way to fight—" I started, but Duke's growl rose over my words. The rumbling in his throat grew lower and louder, the edges of his black and tan muzzle snarling up to show his teeth. He started pawing at the inside of the truck, the hairs on the back of his neck raised in warning.

ITHACA, NEW YORK



Duke was as good and brave a watchdog as we'd ever had on the farm, and if there was something out there, I wasn't about to hold him from it. I reached across him and opened the passenger door to let him out. He didn't jump. He lowered himself flat to the seat and started whining, a sound so soft and scared it was almost inaudible.

I hadn't noticed the quiet before, but now I did. I couldn't hear a single moo or neigh or cluck of a chicken. No rumble of the balers off in the hay fields. Not a voice anywhere. Even Duke had stopped whining and was hunkered down in silence.

I followed Duke's gaze toward the nearest pasture. And that's when all my anger drained away and left me nothing to feel but fear.

The pasture was dotted with black and white cows like it always was, but they weren't flopping their ears against flies and chewing their cuds in the shade. Elsie and Mabel and Bess and the rest were dead, ripped open. And shambling toward the truck were five...creatures. Bloodied, gaping maws and reaching hands.

"Stay," I said to Duke. I didn't want him getting hurt. I reached behind the seat, searching for something, anything, to use as a weapon. My fingers landed on a crow bar. The dean's words came back to me as I opened the driver's side door.

You lack the strength to deal with large animals.

We'll see about that, I thought. And I raised my crowbar and stepped toward the monsters.

ITHACA, NEW YORK

THE OUTBREAK

During the outbreak, most of the animals that were outside the main barn (including the milk cows, most of the horses, and many of the chickens) were likely attacked and killed. Those inside the main barn would have been safe. Ditto with the people on the crew. Cheryl (the woman in the narrative) and her mother survived, but the majority of farm hands didn't.

The two of them opened their farm to those who needed it, attempting to create a safe haven. They worked together to find ways to keep a small portion of the farm mostly protected, building large walls, tending the livestock and crops, training the farm dogs like Duke to help, and finding other ways to keep themselves from harm. They were able to secure the farmhouse, the main barn, a large pasture, and two smaller sheds inside the perimeter.

But of course, people are sometimes the real monsters, and the open doors sometimes caused more pain and death than the zombies. As more and more people in the area heard about the "safe haven," they began to show up in large groups, bringing more people than the farm could support. Some called for a "culling"—only allowing those who were the hardest and most able, but Cheryl and her mother refused to turn people away. Others came to hunt, harm, and steal, and new defenses had to be built against other humans. Cheryl's mother was injured by one of these raiders, and she fell gravely ill just before the Reconstruction.



RECONSTRUCTION

When the Reconstruction started, it caused difficulty and concern in the farm community. Many didn't trust the news. Others wanted everyone to leave the farm and find their way back to downtown Ithaca, where they believed they would receive help.

Cheryl decided to go with the group to Ithaca, hoping to save her mother, but Ithaca is in its own civil war—a group of young infected women calling themselves the D.D.T.s (short for Drop Dead Twice) has claimed ownership of the city and is fighting tooth and nail to keep it under their power. They offer to help her mother, but only if she joins them by becoming infected.



Brooklyn Before & After Death

BY SHOSHANA KESSOCK

I was thirteen on the day it began. My brother Ezra was at synagogue with my father and all the other men. I watched them leave from the second story of our tenement as my mother lit the Sabbath candles.

They never came back.

We found my father again when we went to the synagogue to find out what happened. He tried to eat us. My grandmother dashed his brains out with her best frying pan. And my brother

My father used to say that Jewish life is cheap in times of trouble. I never believed him until I saw it myself. I try to remind myself that people were afraid, but that is no excuse. When the plague began to spread and the dead walked, our neighbors blamed us, turned on us. They lynched Jews in the street. We found Ezra hanging from a lamp post. While the dead didn't annihilate us, hatred tried.

But our enemies underestimated our numbers, and our ability to band together. We pooled our resources, collecting survivors into larger homes, apartment buildings and synagogues. We took turns watching each other's children, sharing the chores and supplies, and fighting together. We fell back on the one thing that has kept us alive for generations in times of trouble: community, charity, and care. My father always taught that if you save one life, it's like you've saved the entire world. That became our focus: save as many lives as we can. Everyone contributes, nobody

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK



quits, and we turn away no one, young or old, Jew or Gentile. Every life left is sacred. That's how we survived.

Many left Brooklyn, to rebuild elsewhere. But we wouldn't leave behind what we fought so hard to keep. Once, Brooklyn's Jews sprawled across the borough, side-by-side with other immigrant enclaves. The Lower East Side, Boro Park, Crown Heights, East New York, Williamsburg: all had synagogues, businesses, and hundreds of kosher homes. But we couldn't protect that much from the dead. Instead, we solidified our communities down into well-fortified outposts across Brooklyn, and protected them viciously. In Williamsburg, a four square block set of apartment buildings we nicknamed Masada houses hundreds of families. After a set of fires drove the Jews out of East New York and murders in the Lower East Side sent Manhattan Jews into Brooklyn, a tent city shantytown was set up in Prospect Park — they call Miklat (sanctuary). Boro Park secured and set up the Poor People's Market on 13th Avenue and built it up into a marketplace where Jews can get supplies, provided you can get there. And in Crown Heights, our surviving religious leaders have gathered at 770 Eastern Parkway with our strongest and brightest to coordinate our communities across the dangerous streets.

Where once we lived everywhere, now we huddle together, but not in fear. We find strength in our community. Together, we will save all the lives we can. Because each life is a world that we need to save.

Post Card

Southern Hospitality is Not Dead

BY DELILAH S. DAWSON

Dear Mary,

I hope this postcard reaches you in good health. As for me, I am alive and getting along at the Desoto Beach Hotel on Tybee Island. Right after the president — well, you know what happened. Sir called Missus, and whatever he told her weren't good, and that was before the phones cut off. She had me wrap up all the food and gather the children while she went for the good silver and whatever valuables they keep a-hidden. Lord, you should have heard Ronald Jr. and Baby Susan carrying on, like they could feel the panic in the air. It was like lightning striking, every soul in Savannah, Georgia suddenly packing up the Packards and clogging up the roads. Such a sight—those ladies still with curlers in their hair, some without gloves, shaking their fists at each other.

We was one of the first out of the city proper, and we barely made it over the Tybee Road before they sandbagged it, the children screeching and Missus expecting me to calm them as she dodged what-all was in the roads. Now we're at the hotel, and Missus has her daily charity meetings while I keep a whole passel of unmannered children and iron crinolines. We could use a pair of hands like yours, and that cheerful disposition. The hotel is mighty nice, and we haven't seen a single you know what, not since the blockade. They turned Fort Pulaski into a government center, and there's even some men, if you can imagine!

On Saturdays, I put on a starched uniform and serve tea on boat tours down the Savannah River, and those fine ladies eat cucumber sandwiches and tut while they stare at the poor doomed souls still roaming the historic boulevards. There's no hope of taking back

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA



the city, so we must be content to make do on the island. As a girl, I told you I dreamed of digging my dark toes into white sand, but I'll be damned (excuse my saying so) if it's not as sweet when I'm chasing someone else's snot-nosed brats along a seashore guarded at intervals by grim-faced army men with rifles. The food here is decent, at least, owing to trade with other islands. We get Ossabaw hogs regular, and the greenhouses on Oatland Island keep us full up with vittles. The only thing truly rationed is white flour, kept for the wealthiest ladies, who still manage to grow fat when we must live on so little. I know, for they pay me to let out their shirtwaists—you remember my skill with a needle.

If you get this, please do come. Not only because it is safe here, surely safer than anywhere else. But also because I miss you and home and anyone who might truly smile at me, and not when calling me Bessie. There's a few of us, servants all, who meet in the basement when the fine ladies are asleep, and make our own plans. Should things go south here, we know we will be the last ones allowed on the boats, and so we make our petty rebellions in broken hammers and stolen knives. No matter how well those men patrol the sands, no matter how high they block the road, we are too wise to assume that we're ever truly safe. They'll get here, somehow. Bad men or gone men, one will slip in. And we will be ready. We could use your strong hands for that, too.

I send this with Mr. Jones, who I know is a good man who will guard my secrets as I guard his. He don't read so well, but he always returns from the cities with small treats for me and no wounds. If anyone can find you, he will do so, and he knows what reward will await him in such case.

Love,

Caroline, called Bessie

POSTCARD

Greenwood, Tulsa

BY STRIX BELTRÁN

Used to be that Greenwood was a shining place, full of hope and promise for folks like us. Up here in this north part of Tulsa, we used to call it Black Wall Street. And hot damn, we even had our own airfield! For a while it was the only privately owned airfield in all of Oklahoma. I was just a little slip of a thing then. I took it for granted. Should have known. Nothing good in this world lasts. After the whites came in and burned it all down, those were some bitter days. Bitter days indeed.

My daddy used to work at the hospital. Good work. But that's gone a long time now. I settled over at the Bama factory. Pies, pies, pies, all day! Who knew making pies could be such sweaty work. I remember praying to God that I'd never have to work those machines again. Well I guess God has a sense of humor. When the bombs came down I wanted to rush home to my babies straight away. We didn't know what was happening then. The floor manager, he said I had to keep working or I'd lose my job. Don't you know, I walked right out.

The Outbreak, as they've come to call it, that was some nasty business. A very dark time. But in dark times we come together. Greenwood found its heart again, its old strength. We dug deep, and together we made it through. I lost a lot of good people. I lost my husband. I remember how he used to say to me, "Alma, you're the real brains of this operation," and he would kiss my forehead. I miss him.

TULSA, OKLAHOMA



He wasn't wrong, either. When we all put our heads together it turned out I had a lot of good ideas. Somehow I started heading things up, just naturally. But none of us were afraid of hard work. We were mostly leftover women and children, and by God we figured things out. We got our own clinic going again. Not quite a hospital yet, but maybe soon. It's where I spend most of my time now. We got a bank, and even opened the airfield back up for relief drops from the army.

The whites, they mostly ignored us during the Outbreak. They had their own problems, and as long as we kept to ourselves and didn't stray south they didn't bother us. We fended for ourselves just fine anyway, even with the municipals like water and electricity gone for months and months after theirs had already been restored. But now that things are starting to get settled I've got a creeping feeling in my spine. I can feel the old jealousy rising for what we've made for what we've got. It makes me fear. In the dark hours of the night I pray for its green eye to pass over us. I pray for my children. Why is it that when we make something for ourselves we are punished? In this, God never answers.

PostCard

Military Women

BY AVONELLE WING

We lost more than our innocence in the war.

Ushering in the atomic age was the obvious damage, what we knew would haunt us. We looked deep into ourselves and realized that we were party to something so horrifying it had no name, no place in the manicured yards and careful living rooms we went home to. So, we didn't talk about it.

There were three paths we walked after the boys all came home, and what surprised us most was how poorly these new lives fit our expanded, reshaped selves. Some of us went right back to where we'd been. Teachers, nurses, wives. Tending hard, damaged boys who had into men while we were in the sky and they were fighting the Axis on the ground.

Some of us tucked our uniforms away in mothballs; somewhere between the altar and our new husband's next posting, we picked up the threads of an Officer's wife. We went from serving our country to serving cocktails with a sunny smile. From wearing stripes to supporting our husbands in earning his next star.

The rest of us struck out, leaving the mold behind. If we had ever sat down with the women in our unit, would we have recognized how uncomfortable and ill-suited we were to domestication on our mothers' terms before the Z-bombs hit? Most of us tried not to look too closely, I suppose.

If you want to bring a nation to its knees, you strike commerce, trade, and the military. And they did that with the Z-bombs. Nobody thought about the fact that an entire

U.S. ARMY BASE

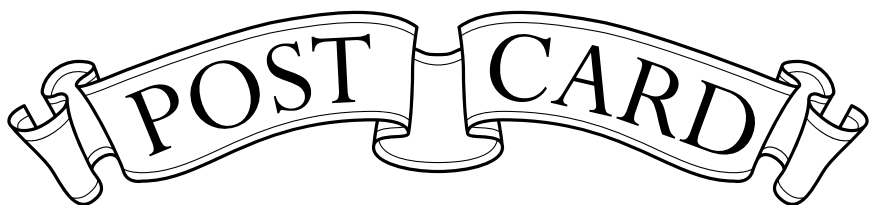
[LOCATION CLASSIFIED]



secondary force was sitting at home, mending socks. Even we didn't realize we were the only safety net between defending our shores and falling to any outside force ready to pick us off after Wall Street and D.C. fell.

Our old phone trees worked; enough of us stayed in touch that where a branch was missing, we filled in the blanks. It's not that we ever expected to activate ourselves, but when the call came, it's like we'd been waiting for this. We never expected to pull those uniforms out of the back of the closet, but when we did, we moved like a well-oiled machine. Provisions continued to move to the places we needed them. Survivors were airlifted out of areas where their safety couldn't be assured. We were military trained and up for the task.

Enough brass survived to make it hard on those of us with enough experience and common sense to cut through the nostalgia and the shock. As a combat medic, I can tell you gentle hands make for stinking wounds. Respond swiftly, carry the biggest weapon you can put your hands on and never break rank. The rotting bastards will take you down every time, and we can't let the boys interfere with protecting what's left.



City on the Hill

BY ANNA MEGILL

I went to the museums that day. I'd never been downtown before. All the buildings shone white, like the Greek temples in history books. Nothing like the ramshackle rowhouses in my neighborhood.

A white security guard, his eyes hard, followed us around the exhibit. I held Mama's hand tighter.

"Don't worry, baby," she said. "You're allowed to be here."

But her hand trembled.

Mama was explaining how diamonds were made, dark carbon pressed to brilliance, when the building shook. Everyone gasped. The guard drew his gun.

It was the first z-bomb.

Mama snatched me down a side hallway as the museum lurched from a second bomb. People rushed past us in the other direction.

"Mama, we're going the wrong way."

"Hush," she said. Her clutching fingers hurt me, but I was too scared to protest.

We stopped at a glass-fronted diorama: stuffed leopards and their bloodied prey. Shouts sounded nearby as Mama ripped open a small hatch leading into the display. "Get in."

She knelt to crawl in after me, but was yanked backwards. Her hand clutched the door for a moment. Her panicked eyes met mine. Then she was gone. I'll never forget her screams.

I've crawled through sewers, starved, and fought McCarthy with fellow Scouts, but nothing could shatter me. You see, I had to live so I could tell you how my mama saved me. So her death would mean something. I still miss her every day.

- Loretta Davis, from *Through a Child's Eyes: Stories from the Freedom Scouts*.

WASHINGTON, DC



THE OUTBREAK:

Russians dropped two z-bombs on DC. The FBI rushed politicians to safety, but overall loss of life was catastrophic. Downtown succumbed to mob violence and mass hysteria. “Foreigners” were dragged from embassies and murdered in the streets. The Potomac River was choked with dead and zed, killing any hope of escape by water. Survivors scavenged their way north to Maryland suburbs, but few made it out alive. Within one week of Z-Day, the dead ran America’s capital.

Anacostia, a poor neighborhood across the river with mostly black residents, fared the best. Ignored by troops and overlooked by scavengers, survivors rebuilt in relative peace.

THE RECONSTRUCTION:

McCarthy’s military headquarters crouched on the National Mall at the center of DC’s web of streets. A massive, well-defended barricade encircled the Mall—spanning the river on pontoon bridges to protect the Pentagon. Lookouts atop the Capitol and Washington Monument alerted snipers to intruders. Nothing entered headquarters without McCarthy’s permission—except through passages hidden under the White House. Deep within the tunnels, J. Edgar Hoover and his agents guarded world-altering plans for an American z-bomb.

Resistance factions flourished in DC’s shadows. Rival college-based “clubs” like the Georges and the Howard Bison had supplies and skilled engineers. The DC Freedom Scouts knew the safest routes and boltholes. The Hill Wives supplied Scouts with top secret information from their husbands, acting congressmen in the current regime. But some Wives worked as double agents. They might guide you inside McCarthy’s barricades—or they might turn you in.

POSTCARD

Take My Hand

BY ELISSA LEACH

When the phones went down at Battelle, a highly secure center for nuclear science and industry, it was the first sign that something had gone wrong. I was the first to know when the lines went dead.

My heels clicked on the terrazzo as I hurried to tell my supervisor. She was surprised at the news. When we were developing components of the Manhattan Project, our telephone lines had been made indestructible in the event that an important phone call needed to be made. On my way back to the switchboard, the fluorescent lights began to flicker and dim. I knew I needed to find Moira. I changed course and went down the hallway towards the nuclear lab. As I approached the lab, Moira emerged from the high security area, still wearing her lab coat and goggles.

We met each other and clasped hands before we realized what we were doing. We let go before anyone saw us. The intercom crackled to life over our heads and filled the air with what sounded like a radio broadcast. We heard the president telling us that we'd been attacked by the Russians. Over the intercom, the president's voice started to change in pitch and speed. We heard gurgling, crunching... then gunshots.

A follow-up radio story said that some of the men were turning into flesh-eating monsters as a result of chemicals used by the Russians. Moira had heard similar chemicals were being

COLUMBUS, OH



produced in our labs. Before we could be rounded up by Battelle security, we made a break for the door. We didn't know what to expect on the outside, but we didn't care. This confusion would let us start our new lives. Together. In the dark, we'd always talked about starting our own commune together and leading simpler lives. When we saw the outside, we both knew that life would never be simple again.

My apartment was only a few blocks away. After we loaded food, blankets, tools, matches, and clothing into the back of my '47 Mercury, we took off to the farmlands just outside of Columbus. We raced past the University. It seemed like Ohio Stadium was becoming a meeting place for survivors. There were ambulances and people going into the arched passages leading to the football field. It looked like a tomb waiting for the dead.

We passed the city limits and parked the car in the middle of a field with a forest on the north edge. We gathered wood from the forest and made a barrier of sharpened sticks using a hatchet that Moira had gotten me for my birthday last year. When we finally stopped working, we turned the radio on in the car, careful to conserve its battery. People were being turned at an alarming rate. Tomorrow we would brave driving back into the city to see if any of our friends would join us in starting our new lives. That night, we locked the car and slept in each other's arms.



The Department Head

BY JACQUELINE BYRK

It was late January when the runner arrived. I handed her a quarter and carelessly slit open the top of the envelope that would change my life.

Dr. Stephens,

**Paperclip materials enclosed. No great cost to me,
but of great value to you. Use it for the DuPont contract or
for your better nature, but don't ignore it--information is
precious in this new dark age.**

-- Amy DuPont

The packet from my philanthropist friend was a hundred and sixty-three pages in all, much of the typewritten German accented with smeared graphite notes in the margins. Dr. Grace Benson helped translate, but neither of us could make much sense out of the symbols...pagan symbols, like something you'd expect to see in an anthropology textbook. Interlocking circles and helixes, almost chemical, but not quite.

What was important, though, was the series of notes on test subjects, the preliminary findings on what would later become the Z-bomb. Our biologist was nearly catatonic with delight when we handed her the translations two weeks later. Not only did we have a key to the Z-sequence for the bomb DuPont had contracted the remaining women in the Delaware College of Engineers to build in the utmost secrecy--now we had the possibility of reversing it.

NEWARK, DELAWARE



As a researcher, I have been treated like a Princess, moved to the top of Russell dormitory. Others on my team have not been so lucky, especially after the Freedom Scout bombing in April. Lab techs, graduate students, and researchers deemed “nonessential” have been moved to Gilbert Hall, the dormitory created on a prison floor plan for the impending threat of desegregation, and set directly on the steam tunnels for easy police access. The Scouts must have used those tunnels to get to the building across from our labs in Wolf Hall, because no one saw them come or go. No one knows how they got their hands on a trebuchet, or the massive payloads of advanced chemical ordnance fired in through our windows. Luckily, no one was killed, but several of my students took medical leave and fled downriver for the relative safety of Lewes, where the Coast Guard and National Guard has resumed their joint operation in the defense towers from WWII. For their part, DuPont and Honeywell have agreed to be much more careful with both their personnel and ours. The attacks still continue, even as we try to reverse-engineer a cure for the masses, and perhaps the political sickness gripping our country as well.

I wish I could tell them. But they can’t know. As far as the outside world was concerned, we were complicit, mere pawns in the grand scheme concocted by DuPont to be the sole contractor in control of the Z-Bomb. And that was half-right. What they couldn’t know is that we also held the key to a cure—something far more precious than millions of military-industrial dollars. We could be saviors. And no one could ever know.”

PostCard

As the Crow Flies

BY MISHA BUSHYAGER

I grew up in Columbus, Georgia, a mill town on the banks of the Chattahoochee about 100 miles south of Atlanta. Fort Benning was there and every year, hundreds of soldiers would come through the infantry training school there, including my husband. We married in my home church right after I graduated high school and I went to college while he was transferred from post to post. We barely saw each other the entirety of our marriage, just at holidays and the occasional long weekend when he could get furlough long enough to come see me.

When the z-bombs dropped on Atlanta and Fort Benning and Tuskegee, I was just returning home from class at Spelman. It was my senior year and I had worked my tail off to live up to my church congregation's faith in me. I was going to become a nurse thanks to the collections they took up to pay for my college, and I was going to go back to Columbus and help my town. It didn't take long for us to figure out how much and simultaneously how little life was going to change.

Sure, now we had zeds attacking us, but that didn't stop the laws that kept us from drinking at the same fountains as our white counterparts, or eating in the same restaurants. Once the buses and trains got back up and running we were still relegated to the back or to inferior, run down cars. Although "separate" was supposed to be "equal", we still had to send our kids to second rate schools and we had to make do with the scraps of resources the white people were willing to let fall from their tables. We built our own shelters and

ATLANTA, GEORGIA



containment centers, formed our own vigilance committees and neighborhood watch groups.

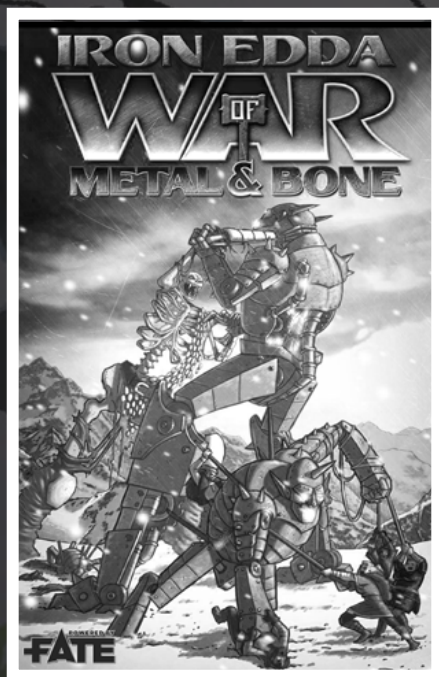
After a while we realized we were doing better than they did, because we were used to working outside the home. We were used to going to work and doing backbreaking labor for hours in the hot sun to provide for our families. And we started to see the resentment growing in their eyes. After all, how could we, the children of former slaves, be doing better than the children of former slave holders? We had long since formed our own community banks and funeral homes and tailors and doctors and dentists, that existed outside of their system, and had therefore been shielded somewhat from the most immediately devastating effects of the z-bombs. Yes, we lost most of our men, but the ones that were left were well-educated and ready to step into the leadership vacuum left by the bombs.



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