

Diary of the
Year of the
2005
ZOMBIE

By Tim Willard

UKG PUBLISHING

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

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Special Thanks To: The people on psionics.net who helped me playtest this; the master of the undead: George Romero for inspiration; Tom Savini for advice and encouragement; Rob, Corey, Blake, Cathliene, Drew, and the rest of the Medford group for the distress time & the owner and staff of Beyond Comics for the place to playtest the rules and the modules.

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Introduction

It all happened so fast. Classes were cancelled in the middle of the day, and we were told to go home to our dorm rooms or houses. The news stations were talking about a "Heightened Terror Alert" and a few were babbling something about a terrorist strike. I didn't notice at the time, but a lot of those reporters looked nervous... and there were no field reports.

Like a lot of my sorority sisters, I thought it was nothing more than a joke, or the usual over-reaction to some Arabs talking in a chat room, so my friends and I went to the mall. Why should our day have be interrupted just because a few Arabic guys in some chat room were bitching about America?

Big mistake. We were only there a few hours when a woman attacked one of my friends, biting her badly on the arm. I had trained in Karate for years, so I put her down with a roundhouse kick. At the time, I thought I'd only knocked her down. It was a sloppy kick, and had I lost my balance half-way through. The toe of my shoe caught her behind her right eye, and she went down with a crack.

I know now that I had killed her.

We ran, then, out into the street. It was a complete catastrophe. Something strange had happened: people were attacking one another. One person lunged out from beside a car, his face a bloody mess, and bit Diana. I pulled Steffy and Gabby back into the mall; the others followed and we ran. They were freaking out, but I was calm. To this day I do not understand why I remained calm when so many others panicked. My thoughts were coherent, and I was clicking through my options rapidly. It was almost like my brain was highlighting targets and pinpointing options.

I pulled them into the sports equipment store. I'd seen movies; hell, everyone has. I used Ace bandages and maxi-pads to stop my friends' bleeding, then loaded everyone up with football, hockey and paintball pads. I put on cleats. Anything to give my feet more stopping power was welcome. I actually thought about ankle weights, but passed. As we left, we saw the absent manager. He was being devoured by a woman wearing one of those popular "power-suits" that business people liked to wear to impress people. You know, the ones that scream: I'm a self-centered asshole! Worship my Versachi! WORSHIP IT! She was pulling parts out of his stomach and greedily shoving them in her mouth.. There were two bullet holes in her suit, in the middle of her chest, and in her back were craters the size of my palm, visible through tears in the cloth.

She was dead, but she walked. She was dead, but she ate. She was dead, but she killed.

Out of the eight girls that I left the mall with that day, only I remain. Only I could take human life when I had to.

I put down each of them personally when they rose again, out of love for who they had been

From the Diaries of Becka

Zombie movies, stories, novels and video games have always been popular. They feed a strange, almost morbid desire to see people get murdered and eaten by other people. With zombie movies, it is alright to kill other humans; after all, the heroes are only killing those who have already died, and have now returned to feast on the flesh of the living without remorse. It is alright, even acceptable, to kill the zombies as a matter of survival... perhaps even a matter of mercy.

The thought of a corpse, possibly even of a loved one, returning after death with a hunger for living flesh is intrinsically horrifying, and breaks every pack instinct a human possesses. The zombie genre also contains a whispering of dark forces, abandonment by the gods, or some other malevolence beyond what we can imagine. The horror of having a loved one come home, chest smashed in from an automobile accident, greeting you with hungry jaws rather than a warm hug... it is a thought that horrifies many. A stranger attacking you on the street, not after jewelry or money but seeking to devour your flesh, with your screams of fear and agony attracting more of his kind, is the stuff that nightmares are made of.

While writing this product, we have tried to keep with the "true" spirit of zombie horror. No explanation is given for why the zombies have risen. While some foes may be living, it is an "Us or Them" mentality that keeps everyone going, and makes the world a dangerous place. There is danger everywhere, with no safety or security, and death waits for you with cold arms and a hungry mouth.

This document has several different types of "classic" zombies, as seen in many video games, movies, books, and comics. It also includes rules for handling the world's slow descent into near-Armageddon: how the walking dead may

destroy humanity and civilization as we know it, and what what comes afterwards, when the survivors rebuild what they can from the corpse of the old world.

With luck and skill, perhaps the characters can stop the world from dying with a low, guttural moan.





Campaign Types

What kind of zombie game are you running?

Ming came running out of the room, firing one handed behind him as he ran. He wasn't interested in killing or destroying any of the creatures chasing him, merely hoping to knock down the leaders and entangle those who were behind. The thunder of his pistol echoed off of the empty walls and counters of the shopping mall and threw grotesque shadows on every surface. He had dropped his IR flashlight, but his NVGs still let him navigate the tangled chairs.

"RUN! This was used as a temporary MORGUE!" he yelled, not caring that his other pistol fell out of his unsecured holster. It was probably empty anyway. Behind him, dozens, maybe even hundreds, of the dead spilled out into the main thoroughfare of the mall. Their moaning was blood chilling, so many of them moaning in hunger, their guttural pleas echoing through the empty mall. So many dead..., why hadn't they taken proper precautions?

A morgue? Who in their right mind had used a fucking MALL to store dead bodies in? We had not seen any uniforms, no scientists, nothing to suggest why. Ming had just discovered more zombies than we had seen in one place since Portland, with no suggestions on how they had gotten there. They just kept pouring out, and even when Sylvia brought the SAN off of her back, and dropped to the floor, she could not stem the tide with her accurate fire that sent brass casing skittering across the floor as she rapidly began laying bursts into the crowd.

"Buck, we're in trouble and need an emergency evac!" Greg said, keying his tac-com. I could hear Buck reply faintly, but my tac-com was down around my neck. There was the sound of the BAFV firing up, and then the roar of the powerful diesel engine as Buck smashed through the doors of the mall with the armored fighting vehicle. Glass shattered everywhere as the mall doors were destroyed by the bow of the Bradley. Behind it, I could see dozens of the living dead pressing into the now empty space..

Zombies inside and out. The Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles nearly out of gas, and everyone low on ammo. Half of us were wounded, and Greg was still hampered by a broken arm (his firing arm, of all

things). Sylvia was yelling that she needed another box of ammo. This promised to be fun.

From the Diaries of Becka

Year of the Zombie is not intended for all players and GMs, as it deals with a lot of death, destruction, and the slow collapse of society under the weight of the living dead. In Year of the Zombie, many moral and social issues come into play as characters try to figure out how to survive in a world where they are NOT the top of the food chain, but a part of it.

The living dead are not the only new factor in a Year of the Zombie game. Women, food, weapons, clean water, and (most importantly) ammunition soon replace money as world currency. A pregnant character will seriously hamper a party, and it cannot be guaranteed that she will survive in the later months of pregnancy, bringing whole new issues to the group.

For the most part, Year of the Zombie assumes a total, global infestation of the living dead. It also assumes various political actions that the 1950-1990 MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) protocols called for, those protocols having been reactivated by recent world events and certain aspects of them put into motion as a result of the Risings.

This type of campaign setting does not follow the premise that it is just the reanimated dead that lead to the collapse of civilization. Rather, a combination of that the Risings, warfare between nations, panic in the civilian populace, and the use of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons between frightened nations results in the collapse of society.

The world of Year of the Zombie detailed in the flavor text is one where everything has collapsed; betrayal and mankind's baser instincts have come to the forefront, and civilization has entered a twilight where it can either emerge stronger and brighter, or fall into darkness forever.

Types of Campaigns

Sam leaned back in the ringmount of the Deuce and a Half cargo truck, his helmet pushed past his forehead, and staring at the sky as he started singing. At first, it just low and to himself, but he got progressively louder and more obnoxious about it.

"Ooooooh... Who'll pay the butcher's bill...."

"When Mr. Hungry comes to town?"

"Who'll pay the butcher's bill...." I joined in. I loved this ditty! Zhakor was providing the background "URRR!" at the correct parts and Ming was giggling, covering his mouth with his hands.

"When Mr. Hungry comes around?"

"Why you and I, my frightened friend..."

"We'll all be him before the end..."

"We'll pay the butcher's bill...." Greg joined in at about this point. Greg sings about as musically as a washer machine full of gravel and metal on an unbalanced spin cycle.

"When Mr. Hungry comes to town."

"He comes along, and bites your ass,"

"His kids like to hide in tall green grass." Sylvia joined in here, her voice actually melodious as she sang joyously, her voice full of mirth. I could hear Cindy and Thomas stifling giggles over their tac-coms.

"When you think he's gone, SURPRISE, he's back..."

"Just looking for another snack."

"Who'll pay the butcher's bill..."

"When Mr. Hungry..."

"Shut the fuck up, all of you!" Buck yelled over tac. Sam jerked, surprised. He had gotten in the habit of making up little ditties as we went along about a month ago. Sylvia figured it was to bleed off the stress that made us all just want to snap at times.

I don't know why it irritated Buck so much. I thought it was funny. Cindy had that song stuck in her head for almost a week.

From the Diaries of Becka

There are several types of campaigns that can be run with Year of the Zombie, such as...

- The tried and true one shot: just survive for a little while, oops, everyone in the party died, so sad.
- The long term, survive till you can reach the island, oops, everyone died when the party ran out of fuel in the middle of the ocean and starved to death, so sad
- The "Last Man Standing" campaigns, where new characters are rotated in to replace dead characters, who are

probably quickly killed and eaten. So sad.



Not all campaigns need to end in Armageddon. Perhaps you would like to slowly lead up to the Total Warfare option, or just have a few outbreaks that occur now and then in your campaign. The following is a short (and certainly not all-inclusive) list of the many ways a GM might integrate Year of the Zombie into their existing campaign, or create a new campaign from the ruins of an old one.

Year of the Zombie makes an excellent penalty for the player characters failing to accomplish a mission and stopping someone's world domination, global destruction plan, with the slow descent into a ruined world mostly inhabited by the walking dead. This can provide excellent role playing opportunities as those in the know blame the PCs, who also have to live with the guilt that it was their failure that caused the situation.

Type I: Nobody Walks Away

"We're down to a quarter tank, how's it look for you guys?" Buck grumbled into his tac-com. That was his one constant complaint: how much fuel the BAFV's sucked down.

"Bradley One, 50%." Greg, as verbose as usual.

"Bradley Three, I'm on two-thirds, but we refueled off of our onboard reserve." Sam was humming again when he activated the tac-com... that ditty he'd made up called Mr. Hungry that annoyed Buck to no end. Even though Sam was nowhere near a Pre-Rising quality professional singer, he had a nice voice (even if it is a little rough from inhaling all the gunsmoke and tear gas we've used over the years) for singing, and his imagination had allowed him to come up with many songs that fit our brave new world. Buck had asked him more than once if he thought he was the Post Rising Weird Al. Usually, Sam just

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replied by giving him the finger and continuing to sing.

"There's a gas station up here. I haven't seen anything important." Sylvia reported back. No vehicle designation. No need to let anyone listening know that we had three humm-vee's out on roving.

"Alpha-four, I'm at a quarter." Ming, in his humm-vee.

"Alpha six, three quarters." Zhakov, about two miles behind us. That had saved us more than once, having Zhakov and Peter in the TOW wagon. Nothing broke up a slaver attack, or some smart-ass who thought he was hot shit with a pickup truck and a bolt-action rifle, like a TOW-II missile.

It took us about 5 minutes to reach where Sylvia was, an old Exxon station & general store. She was walking around, kicking at glass and cans, her SAW held in one hand. Her hair had grown back in recent weeks, and she had put on enough weight so that her weapon didn't exhaust her just firing it.

We sat inside the vehicles while Sylvia, Greg and Sam scouted, looking for any threats. The gas station was a dead place. Broken boards over the windows and doors, gnawed skeletons covered with rags, and the desiccated flesh of inanimate zombies strewn about the place. It looked like there had been a fire, but most of the soot was long gone. Whatever had happened here happened a long time ago.

Still, we dismounted from the vehicles, Greg keeping watch with Sylvia while we searched the ruins, hoping to find survivors. There weren't any; everyone had died. As far as we could tell, they had all died within the first week. We found only one firearm (it was intact but empty) and several torn-apart bodies that had been gnawed at until they were nothing but flinders of bone. I wonder what happened here. Did it take long? Did they die quickly, or slowly? Was it internal friction within the group of survivors, or just the unending tide of dead flesh? Why would have they have stayed?

The questions were never answered. We refilled the vehicles from the diesel tanks, and drove on. Whatever secrets happened there, secrets they would remain.

From the Diaries of Becka

The "Nobody Walks Away" style of Year of the Zombie campaign contains only a single adventure and one limited location. The characters are often whipped up with your favorite character generator, contain the ordinary template and stat array, and are completely disposable. The location is often some out of the way place, like a farm house, a rest stop, a truck stop diner, etc. The characters are trapped by the

walking dead, usually low on ammunition and weaponry, and have to use their wits (rather than firepower) to survive. The game usually ends when the zombies break in and devour everyone, or rescue arrives in time to shoot the last survivor.

- This is a quick adventure, intended to last only until help arrives (usually in the form of the National Guard, the police, or the detonation of a nuclear weapon on top of the hapless characters' heads). These adventures represent little more than a single night, will have a high body count, lots of violence, and plenty of zombies. There is little-to-no character development, limited interactions, and plenty of group friction.
- These adventures can be a lot of fun for the players and GMs alike. They're gory, gruesome, and who cares if you just lost the character that the GM handed you? It's not like he can't use a character generator to whip you up a new one in about 30 seconds. There's not much of a plot besides "survive the zombies and your fellow characters until help arrives," not much to think about, and a lot of short term, high carnage fun.
- These games make for good stress breaks, and helps eliminate any monotony that the players or GM may be feeling. After this kind of Year of the Zombie one-shot, the adventure could be featured on a news blurb in the rest of the campaign, or perhaps the PCs are later sent to find out what happened to some of the eaten characters. The "how" and "why" of the scenario won't matter... all that will matter is that the zombies are there, and the PCs are there. They can be integrated with a little imagination, and can provide more color in a campaign.

There's no resolution, no hope, and everyone is going to get killed in most of these one-shot adventures. Some people won't enjoy the fact that there is no hope, and they can't expect characters that they might get attached to will survive even the night. The hopelessness and gore factor combined with an unwinnable situation will not be to the liking of some players.



Type II: Contamination is Containable

"You know, this happened before." Sylvia's revelation startled us all. Myself most of all.

"Where?" Buck asked. It seemed like he was honestly curious.

I don't know where it was. It was in 1990. Tom Savini made a documentary about it, but the Feds stepped on his neck until he released it as a fictional movie." Sylvia said.

"Yeah, right." Greg laughed. "And the Roswell Autopsy really happened."

"Don't be so quick to dismiss it." Buck stated. I'd heard rumors about it too. Real hush-hush stuff one night, from a couple of head-stampers in the back of the NCO-Club. They were talking about some outbreak in North Dakota. Apparently, these outbreaks happen now and then."

I've heard about that one too. Apparently, containable situations like that happen now and then across the globe. Some people suspect that's what the whole Gropa-Toada, or however you say it, was about." Sylvia said, reaching forward to stir the fire. The sparks crackled into the night sky, and I watched them dance.

"So this could all just stop?" I asked hopefully. That would be just wonderful.

"No, they don't just turn off. Becka. They keep going until they are killed. But they stop rising, eventually, and they are usually limited to only one location." Sylvia sighed, "This time, even if they were to stop, I think it's the end."

"Think it? I know it." Buck stated. He pulled back the charging handle on his M-4 and caught the round in mid-air. "Meet the must-have accessory of the new world." He stood up and held it up like it was on display. "You might not know me; that's why I carry this wherever I go. Assault rifle from Blastem-Hard. Get one today."

Sylvia's laughter was like the chiming of silver bells as she laughed at Buck's parody of the old credit-card commercial.

From the Diaries of Becka

With the "contamination containable" option, the PCs have a seriously daunting task: not only to survive, but also to wipe out every zombie they can, destroy the bodies, and ensure that the damage is as limited as possible. This can be a good way to add spice to a campaign, but does not necessitate complete campaign overhaul. It can also be used to foreshadow an eventual Full Rising scenario, which is presented later.

Characters in this scenario can be long time PCs, who have ties to such things as Department 7, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Interpol, etc. Even when everything is done, the characters will be called to the carpet to answer for the loss of life and the measures that the PCs took to contain the spread of the zombies. This can lead to characters being put out of sanction, placed on the FBI or Interpol's "Most Wanted" list, or even have them sued by the survivors of the zombies that they were forced to put down. Parents, siblings, and children of those who had been turned into the walking dead will sue not only the agencies and governments, but also the characters, possibly for tens of millions of dollars. This could lead to the agency using the PCs as a scapegoat for what occurred.

- In this option, the living dead are only in a certain area, and stop rising up after a set period of hours. Nobody knows what caused it, but all of the zombies must be eliminated so they do not spread the infection via bites or contaminated flesh being eaten by animals. Once the zombies are "killed" they must be destroyed via fire or other means, or boxed up for transport, in case the infection begins again.
- The fun thing about this type of campaign action is that it is nothing but blasting zombies, and trying to contain the infection. There's lots of gunfire, safe places to run to, and the characters get to be heroes. Even if they are not publicly lauded on television and movies, those who matter will know. This can lead deep into the shadows, with strange cults and powerful people supporting, aiding, or hunting the characters.

The PCs would have major backup, consisting of government or World Health Organization medical services, National Guard troops, etc to help on the medical situation, plenty of ammunition, and lots of weaponry (including but not limited to: fully automatic assault rifles, flame-throwers, light machine guns, grenades and chainsaws). This could lead to conflicts with people in charge of the assisting agencies, the members of the agencies, and the tragedy of innocent people who have been bitten by the zombies and now must be killed before they infect others.

- No explanation, if you even care, is required for the situation to be fun for a couple of evenings, and can be used to break up a campaign that has become monotonous. It can breathe life into a dying campaign by allowing a shift toward supernatural operation or into hidden cults and organizations. It can even be a precursor toward a full fledged Rising, with these happening off and on, closer and closer together, until the Rising occurs. This can be used so that that the PCs are constantly sent out to handle larger and larger outbreaks with everyone in their agency worried that the inevitable will happen: that it will occur in a large city. When it does, that could be the start of The Rising.

Even if the characters survive and kill all of the zombies, you can BET that there will be repercussions. Perhaps the players have to track down a single zombie that was captured by a rogue organization and eliminate it, destroying the remains before human greed and stupidity cause another outbreak.

Type III: Worldwide Contamination

The television suddenly came on. I think Donovan stepped on the remote while he was trying to push the coffee table against the suddenly broken window. The sound of an announcer's voice blasted through the room, over-riding the low, hungry moans of the zombies outside.

There is a martial law state in effect in the United States of America as of this morning. Citizens must understand the dire consequences of this phenomenon, should the government be unable to check the spread of this situation. Because of the emotional attitude of the citizens toward the victims of this phenomenon, and the issues of the morality regarding the disposition of the deceased, it is the order of the Federal Emergency Management Agency; by command of the Federal Government and the President of the United States, citizens may no longer occupy private residences, no matter how safely protected or well stocked. Citizens will be moved into central areas of their resident or nearest, city. The bodies of the dead are to be delivered over to specially equipped squads of the Army National Guard for organized disposal." World News Network was broadcasting that steadily, with the Emergency Broadcast System logo behind the scrolling banner. I

felt my blood run cold as I stared at the television screens in shock, my weapon forgotten in my hands at the thought of how big this might be. These victims of this phenomenon are dangerous when encountered in large numbers."

"Gee, think they might be serious?" Sam yelled, putting his shoulder's against the door and pushing with all of his power. His hands were free to load his shotgun as he held the door shut. Gabby was hacking at arms with a machete, not to cause to pain but to sever, she was sobbing and smiling at the same time as she hacked, and blood splattered. Outside, at least six of them were moaning in dreadful hunger, clutching at each other and the door. "Citizens may no longer occupy private residences, no matter how safely protected or well stocked." The television continued. Sam swore at it as he finished loading the shotgun. He looked at Greg, who nodded, then at Robert, who nodded. This wasn't an isolated incident. This was not something that was going to go away. The earlier reports that this was a limited outbreak of a biological terrorism nature were a lie. If we were going to survive, we had to do it ourselves. If the amount of living dead we could see outside the bar was any hint, the military and the police had their hands full. It was up to us.

"Open the door, we'll go for my squad car and Robert's ambulance." Sam growled. "Becka; you, first, then Darren, then us. We're getting the fuck out of here."

From the Diaries of Becka

In this campaign template, it just starts. Most people won't even be sure when or where it started. The recently dead will get to their feet, and begin spreading the infection. Countries will explode in violence as one faction blames another, panicked citizens take to the streets, and the zombies follow.

In America, violence will erupt as heavily armed citizens begin taking the law into their own hands, disgruntled at what they perceive as the government's failure to protect them. Armed bands of citizens will be attempting to eliminate the zombie threat, and in many places, they will clash with local authorities.

In other countries, the zombies will be feeding on an unarmed populace, panic and rioting will ensue, with fierce hand-to-hand combat as citizens do their best to keep from being devoured. Some countries may not even fight the zombies as a whole, preferring to try to "wait out" the problem of the living dead.

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The UN will be engaged in constant bickering and finger pointing, with most of them screaming for aid as they condemn the very countries that they expect to save them. NATO, already stretched to the limit as far as resources and manpower go, will be unable to do much, as host countries will refuse to lose their military power that is desperately needed to stem the tide of unliving flesh.

Many countries, once things look desperate enough, will activate their own versions of America's "Continuity of Government" program: moving politicians to secure locations and bunkers built during the height of the Cold War. Secret Service, military guards, politicians, the rich, the powerful, and their friends and servants will enter these bunkers.



And someone will be hiding a bite.

Social services will begin to collapse. Anarchy will spread as law enforcement is slowly buried under dead flesh. Utilities will become unreliable as workers abandon their workstations, or worse, zombies begin to attempt to operate machinery that they dimly remember was important to them. Nuclear power plants may have zombie-related contamination breaches. Dams may burst. Electrical grids will stutter and fail. Water supplies will stop.

That will turn the cities into desert war zones.

Starvation, lack of water, and no power will drive survivors from the cities in droves, with the zombies following them. Roads will become blocked as cars run out of gas. Fighting on the roads will make large sections of burned-out wreckage a common sight, especially on well-used highways. Damaged bridges will collapse, and tunnels, no longer maintained or powered, will fill with dangerous gases and the walking dead.

A global infestation is a major event, and will change the face of your campaign setting forever. This option should only be used if you are willing to discard everything conventional about the setting, and allow it to truly become the Year of the Zombie.

- In this type of campaign, the zombie problem is world wide, happening all at once. Perhaps the initial reports were in New Delhi, or Bangkok, or even New York. The reports would be sporadic at first, but then begin flooding in from all over the globe. At first, official reports would state that the outbreak was due to the release of a terrorist biological weapon, or a chemical spill of some sort. The military and law enforcement branches would attempt to maintain order and contain the situation, but would go down within weeks under the tide of walking dead. Biological Emergency Situation Teams would be scrambled, packing heavy weapons, flame-throwers and state of the art bio-hazard gear. Most of these teams would be eventually dragged down and devoured, but military characters could find themselves tapped to provide security for these groups, rescue them, or try to retrieve valuable data/equipment.
- The heroes know that the time for restraint is over. It's time to fight, to live, and to win. Old loyalties will be severed, old ties will be broken, and it's everyone for themselves. Very few will be able to band together, and those who do will still be outnumbered by the living dead and those willing to kill them for their boots and ammunition. Even long-standing villains and hated foes could team up with the PCs in order to just try and survive.
- It's winner-take-all, with the shambling corpse of civilization up for grabs. If the zombies can be defeated, or whittled

down enough, the PCs may be able to have a hand in creating the Post Rising civilization, or destroying those civilizations that rose during the Rising that are abhorrent to everything that the PCs stand for.

There is nowhere to run and nowhere to hide, and this can bother many players, as well as making it difficult on a GM. There is a sense that eventually, the zombies WILL get everyone, and this leads to fatalism on the players' part. Many GMs might experience difficulty coming up with further adventures.

Type IV: End of Civilization

It had been months since we had seen any civilization, but the bunker walls were closing in on us. Sure, we had everything 500 people could want for 500 years, but Greg had run these corridors every day for three years. I have given birth three times in these silent steel halls. We had all explored the entire facility, and discovered something: without at least a hundred people, sooner or later, everyone got on your nerves.

We had tried the radios, the emergency systems, everything we could think of to reach someone else. The one time we got a voice on the "CoG Complex Communication System" it was a low moaning that got agitated at the sound of our voices.

I cried for days when Greg reached over and shut off the radio, telling me that there was nobody within range. No more repeater towers and more than likely, any survivors were out of our range. The thought that we might be the sole survivors of humanity filled me with a crushing grief. I could close my eyes and see the children playing in playgrounds where now the living dead stumbled mindlessly. Children that would never get a chance to be anything more than the feral animals who had attacked us in Medford, more interested in us as a food source than companions. David had been hacked down, dressed, and sectioned into snacks within minutes by those kids.

The idea was Carter's, and we all quickly leaped at the idea. We had gasoline, we had ammunition, and Greg, Sylvia and Buck had gone over the BAFVs with a fine toothed comb. We needed to get out, so we geared up and got ready. Mihkeal would stay in the bunker with the children since, having lost both legs, he would be a hindrance on a mission like this. Besides, he loved the kids, they loved him, and I had his shopping list so I knew what he wanted..

The outside cameras showed the doorways were clear. The last zombies had gotten bored and

wandered away over five months before, obviously looking for easier prey to get at instead of us, hiding behind 75 ton vanadium/titanium alloy doors that could probably take a nuke head-on.

The first thing we noticed was the smell was gone. The last time we had rolled through a city, we had to activate the NBC protection systems, and Sylvia had worn her mask while driving her humm-vee. She had later burned her uniform because of the stench of rotting flesh that had coated her clothing.

Buck thinks it was the clanking of the BAFVs that drew them as we entered the city. We were about eight blocks in when the moaning got loud enough for us to hear over the roar of the big turbocharged engines. It sounded like the wailing of all the damned souls in hell itself. Hundreds, thousands of them were staggering toward us, moaning in a dreadful hunger as they stumbled toward us as quickly as they could. None of them even had the illusion of life about them any more; none of them ran with that fluid, eerie, predatory lope that had become so fearsome through the years.

The noise was horrible. Not only their wailing, but the sounds they made as the tracks crushed them beneath unforgiving steel as we drove back to the shelter, stopping every few miles to use the SAN's to clear away the faster ones, or ones that had stumbled out of the woods and onto the dirt access road.

It's been a month, and there are still hundreds outside the doors. We can hear them, dully, in the night, hammering on the doors.

I hate the sound.

From the diaries of Becka

This type of campaign setting is entirely post-apocalyptic. Instead of the roar of guns and the booming of nuclear weapons, it was groaning and the sounds of the greedy devouring dead that heralded the end of the world.

This is not to say that everything is pristine. There would have been heavy fighting in some areas. Industrial pollution would make some rivers nearly acidic enough to strip the flesh from bones, and some city sections would have burned into twisted mockeries.

Throughout it all, zombies would be shuffling around moaning mournfully at the lack of flesh, often becoming torpid or "hibernating" in a favorite location from life. In the vast graveyards of cities, and in the nature-reclaimed wilderness, you could never be sure that you were not about to stumble across a zombie who is very

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hungry, and whose moans will bring possibly hundreds more in for the attack.

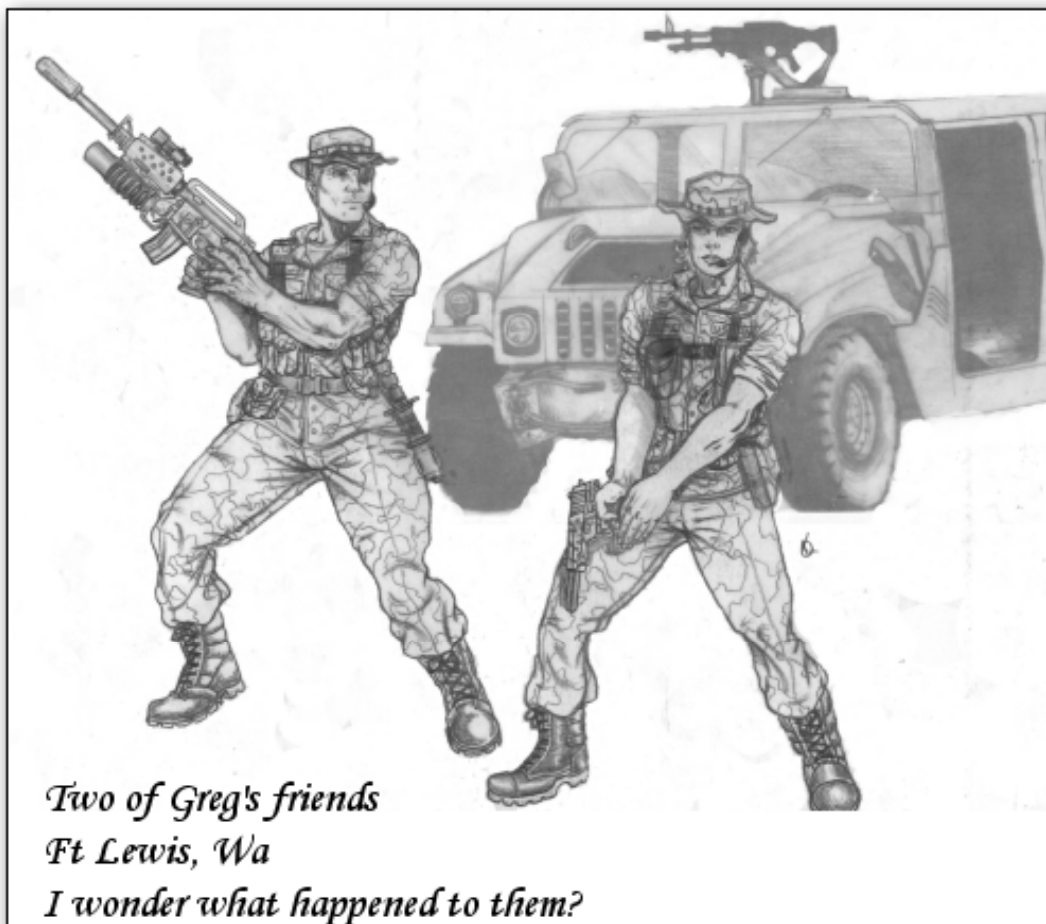
In some regions, nuclear weapons may have been detonated, and now the zombies are more or less radioactive, and hideously burnt. In other regions, the cities may be pristine and empty, but home to packs of feral children who view both adult humans and zombies as prey to be eaten.

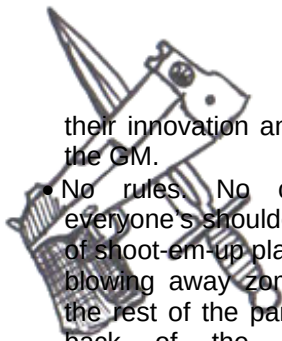
Danger abounds and there are few (if any) safe havens. Those places that are safe are usually Cold War-era Continuity of Government shelters, where cabin fever is always a threat to the inhabitants. Even if the PCs do have a CoG Shelter, the threats of starvation, machinery malfunction, or something even more exotic could force the PCs to have to go scavenging.

In the outside, the PCs would be murdered for their boots, much less the weaponry and ammunition they are carrying. Women would be a highly valuable resource and there would be groups willing to kill the entire party to get one female party member. Any type of noise that the dim memories of zombies would associate with living humans would

draw hundreds, if not thousands of them, to anyone stupid enough to make loud sounds.

- In this campaign model, everyone is gone. It's all over. The zombies have more or less won. For every living person, there are approximately 400,000 zombies out there. No more television, no more radio. Hollywood took a nuclear missile that some lunatic fired from a submarine in the Pacific. The characters will not have had contact with another living person in months, maybe years, and are probably holed up somewhere where neither the zombies nor anyone else can get at them. It might be halfway up a sky-scraper, or a Cold War-era government shelter, or maybe even an old salt mine or shopping mall. No matter what, while the zombies can't get in, and the party can't get out.
- This is post-holocaust survival where a dead enemy can literally come back to bite you on the ass. There is likely much friction within the group of people who have taken refuge inside the shelter. The players are only limited by





their innovation and the imagination of the GM.

- No rules. No cops looking over everyone's shoulder will be the favorite of shoot-em-up players, until the thrill of blowing away zombies runs thin, and the rest of the party shoots him in the back of the head for wasting ammunition. There are no police, the malls are all closed on the mainland, but you can find real estate real cheap. Despite the look, role-players will be in their element, as talking to the living becomes more important than blowing a hole in them as big as the sky.

Supplies WILL begin to run out and it will be more and more difficult to add in new PCs when someone dies as the population grows thinner and thinner. The best bet is to have a stable population base in the characters' base of operations. In playtests, the players either looked for an old FEMA bunker, a Continuity of Government site, a prison, or another fortified position.

Writer's recommendation: Once they secure an area like that, allow them to generate additional characters for a type of "character pool" for them to draw on. A tried and true method for this is to have groups of survivors' show up and beg or barter for inclusion in the burgeoning population of the fortified site. This could even be a group of like-minded individuals who set out for the same place for the same reasons.

Campaign Variations

Not everyone had the same experiences we did. A party of eight that we encountered, and later tried to jack us, had never run into any military personnel. No rogue cops, no Spetznaz, no rogue Marine Corps National Guard. They told chilling tales of horrible creatures lunging from shadows; strange, inhuman creatures.

They also swore that they had been attacked by vampires twice. While most of my friends shook their heads in disbelief, I saw Buck, Sylvia and Greg exchange glances, and then look at Sam, who nodded back and mouthed the word "Shadow" at the others.

We listened to their tales, of magic, creatures from the Outer Limits, and psionics. We had never encountered anything like that, but then, they never stood toe-to-toe with an armored security robot outside of a hardened bunker.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

Perhaps Sam's whisper of "Reality is breaking down" when things get bad is more true than any of us want to believe.

From the Diaries of Becka

What is good for one person's campaign may not be good for everyone. Some may prefer break-dancing zombies that you can spray with Lysol and they fall apart, while others may prefer indestructible zombies with limbs that remain animated even when chopped off. While this product doesn't cover those, it does cover the other end of the spectrum. Year of the Zombie makes the assumption that any group who chooses to use this product would prefer the harsher side of the zombie campaign style; not for the comedic aspects, but rather the challenge of surviving when the odds are stacked so heavily against the player characters.

Dark and Gritty

Buck sprayed with his M-4 in tight, controlled bursts, just like he'd been trained to do in the Big Red One with his M-16. He fired at high ready, weapon butted safely against the shoulder, and he was down on one knee, exactly as his drill instructors had pounded into his head.

Each three-round burst blew apart a zombie's skull in a flare of blood, hair, and rotted flesh. He and Greg were back to back, their heels touching as they laid down withering bursts of fire. Sam stood, his feet on other side of their bent legs, double-tapping with his pistols, the rounds blowing chunks of brain matter out of the mob that slowly closed in on them.

Sylvia was laying down, and I stood above her. She was running the SAN, and I provided cover whenever she swapped boxes. The flaring of the muzzles, the echoing thunder of the weapons, and the smell of blood and rotted flesh swamped the air. The Russians and Ming were professionals, laying down the bursts from their weapons in tightly controlled snaps, each trigger pull putting down a zombie, firing in a staggered order so at least 2 of them were shooting every time someone reloaded.

Everything was going fine until Barry panicked and fired the M-240 on the BAFV. He was only supposed to keep zombies from climbing up and into the turret with his pistol, not use that general purpose heavy machine gun. Not fire it. Definitely not fire it where he did.

The bullets raked out, one out of every 4 a tracer round, the gun getting out of control of his novice

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

skills almost instantly. I watched in horror as they raked the line of Spetznaz. Those men had been with us since the first month; they had trusted us despite what they had learned all of their lives, despite the doctrine that had been pounded into them at the end of the Cold War, and they had risen above the hatred that had been poured into their minds. These men had meant more to me than anyone pre-Rising had.

Blood sprayed, and they screamed, their voices a common language of pain and horror. The tracers kept going, wobbling as Barry desperately tried to gain control of the machinegun. I watched as the tracers reached out and touched our goal.

The fuel tanks.

The sixteen of us, out of thirty that went in, buried Barry after Buck gave him a third eye above his brow line. The burst from Sylvia's SAW had nearly cut him half. With one panicked burst, Barry had killed a full third of our military personnel assets. Killed more than the zombies had in months.

I hope they dug the bastard up and used his empty head for a three way skullfuck.

And I hope he felt it.

From the Diaries of Becka.

In the Gritty Style, every day is a constant struggle for the player characters: to gather resources, to survive the attacks of the living dead, to survive the predations of other survivors, or just to find somewhere to sleep that night that might be somewhat safe. When the characters find a safe place from zombies, raiders drive them back out into the wilderness. No matter what level they reach, a single bullet can put them down for good. More than four zombies become a serious threat, and a Claymore land mine is virtually a death sentence.

Cross-fires are extremely dangerous to the PCs. Cutting loose with weapons becomes an option that the players are not going to instantly reach for, as ricochets can spell death to even the highest level character. Zombies mobbing a PC are going to bring him down, or at least score a single bite, sentencing that PC to death.

In campaigns of this type, player's begin to make every shot count, avoiding combat when they can, and viewing the Risers as more than just a minor annoyance to be handled quickly and cleanly. Rather, they carefully weigh the possible benefits that might come from eliminating Risers, and will often back away from a crowd of them.

Despite these challenges, this campaign type was, by far, the most popular style of play with the majority of the playtesters.

- This is where the characters always have Ordinary Template. No matter what, they remain everyday people. Using the Grim & Gritty combat rules from Blood & Guts 2: Combat Procedures Manual (by RPGObjects) the player characters will get eaten, shot by friends, killed by a single bullet, fall off of stairs, or blown up quite easily. The characters retain, and can never lose, the Ordinary Template, or the ordinary stat-array.
- With the Grim & Gritty rules in effect, characters are going to get splattered. High Massive Damage saves, critical wounds, shell shock, etc. Blood & Guts 2: Combat Procedures Manual gives the best feel from the various "Dead" movies, and is great for tough and brutal combat.
- The biggest reason players seemed to enjoy this style was simple: the bragging rights. Come on, this is by far the toughest type of play. Nobody lives for long. No +10 Holy Ghost Touch Invulnerable Heavy Fortification Plate Mail, just a military Kevlar vest and a Kevlar helmet. No +6 Vorpal longsword with every ability out of the books, just a battered M-4 Carbine with a laser sight that works about half the time and a couple clips of home-reload ammunition. Any character that can survive this kind of Year of the Zombie game deserves recognition.
- Characters are quick and easy to make up, easy to identify with, and the campaign is easily manageable by the GM. The feeling of danger remains, even at high levels, and players will know they are but a few zombies away from death. One misaimed burst, getting caught in between two groups shooting at each other, or one untrained automatic weapon, and they are looking at their guts spilling out of holes in their stomach.

It's easy to lose characters. There is no recovery and, sooner or later, the zombies will get you. That feeling of ominous doom is not fun for some people. It can be difficult to maintain campaign continuity, and even though it fits within the story for a character to kill himself, it can be a drag for everyone else.

Heroic



The noise was deafening as the damaged Bradley rattled down the empty street, the engines roaring and tracks clattering. We climbed out of the hole in the turret, squinting our eyes against the 60 MPH wind that tried to tug us off of the armored vehicle's hull. Darren waved at us, as did Tenskwatwa, motioning for us to jump to the back of the humm-vee that Sylvia had pulled next to us. She had lost control once, and the grinding treads of the Bradley had torn the armor off of the bed of the humm-vee, one shard of it slicing Tens' face to the bone. He ignored the injury, however, catching Cindy when she leapt from the deck of the vehicle and into his waiting arms.

"THE BRIDGE!" Darren shouted, pointing as Robert leapt from the deck and into the back of the humm-vee. I looked over, and my blood ran cold. The bridge was rapidly approaching, and I knew, with a cold certainty, that the Bradley was NOT going to make it. Sam jumped, just as Sylvia plowed through the front of a wrecked car, the ass end of the humm-vee slewing into the side of the Bradley. Darren grabbed his outstretched hands and swung him around so that he slammed into the cab of the humm-vee.

I couldn't jump. The humm-vee was swinging around. The bed twisted, and the opposite side hit the treads, ripping the armor plating off of the smaller vehicle. I ducked under the armor shards that flew across everyone, throwing Tens to the bed with a large chunk sticking out of his cheek.

"GREG!" I screamed, and then jumped.

I still wake up in a cold sweat, remembering the knowledge that I wasn't going to make it, that I had jumped too soon. I would hit the roof of the humm-vee and slide across, to slam into the pavement and die.

Sylvia gunned the engine, forcing the battered and tortured vehicle away from the humm-vee, standing

half up in her seat, reaching from the cab. She grabbed my outstretched hand and pulled me through the doorway, across her lap.

"Hold on, Becka, this is going to hurt." Sylvia growled, patting me on the butt real quick as I scrambled across her. We were on the bridge, spinning out of control, ricocheting off the guardrails. Sylvia alternated between the gas and the brakes, swearing sulphurously each time one of the tires blew. In a shower of sparks, we slowly ground to a stop, the armor, doors and tires missing from Sylvia's poor humm-vee.

"Everyone out. Ride's over." Sylvia said, climbing out of the ruined vehicle.

From the Diaries of Becka

In a heroic campaign, the characters retain their special abilities, but are often challenged far more than normal people would ever be. They would have to hold off radioactive zombies while one member tries to shut down a nuclear reactor properly before it melts down and kills a small-fortified settlement, or jump from one moving vehicle to another while under fire from raiders. Zombies eventually become little more than a nuisance, or an accepted hazard, rather than the complete horror that they are in the Gritty campaign model.

In a heroic campaign, the characters often have a chance to create a new society, or at least make sure the current one survives. They make the long scouting trips to find other survivors, to search for food, or perhaps a safe place where the refugees can move. While ammunition and food are still highly valuable, the characters can handle themselves in a fight, and have a wide range of skills with quite a few ranks in their areas of expertise.

The characters are the Genghis Khans, Alexander the Greats, and Caesars of this world. With a little luck, they will be remembered in history for all time.

- The characters are larger-than-life heroes. They are out to change the world, and can face two or three zombies and not be dragged down. These campaigns focus on more than just surviving; they also deal with making the world a better place for other survivors. Characters in a Heroic campaign can lose the ordinary template quickly, if they survive. They can also gain rolled ability scores, instead of the standard ordinary array.

o Remove the ordinary template: 1000 XP

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- o Replace stats with the heroic array: 500 XP
- o Reroll to replace the stat-array: 1500 XP
- The heroic Year of the Zombie campaign is all about guns, explosions, and cannibalistic walking corpses. Many players will enjoy the experience of eventually building their character up to the point where they can survive and take on the larger threats, such as rogue organizations out to carve out a vile kingdom based on slavery and depredation, or a group of mad scientists backed by trained zombies that carry assault rifles and wear ballistic helmets.
- One benefit is that characters can live longer, so campaign continuity is easier to maintain for both the GM and the players.

The sense of true danger begins to fade as PCs gain levels, and can easily become boring if not handled correctly. Blood & Relics, Blood & Guts, and Blood & Fists as well as the *Total War* and *It's All Over* scenarios, all are excellent resources to use in this type of setting to ensure nothing stagnates or gets old.

Cinematic

Sam ducked as I placed both hands on the counter and leapt, vaulting over it and kicking out the way I had been trained to do since I could barely walk. The heel of my cleat hit the woman in the side of the head, knocking her away from Sam with the crunch of bone. Two more quick kicks and the zombie was thrown back into the pack of them, flying through the air, tangling up the others and bringing them to the ground.

Sam fired from a crouch, between my legs and into the back of the store, each shot taking a zombie in the face. Greg leapt up on the counter to avoid the bullets, firing rapidly with both of his pistols, and backflipped over the zombie child that had burst from the pile of cans that had collapsed on her. Behind me, Buck lifted the half-collapsed roof off of Sylvia, who was only bruised from the fallen debris that had buried her and her attackers. The zombies were dead, but she was only scuffed, and tossed her hair out of her face as she stood up.

Outside, Freddy was firing the Bushmaster chaingun on the Bradley at a steady rate, blowing

apart the maddened zombies approaching, cars exploding on the street as the tracer rounds chewed through their siding and found their fuel tanks.

"Having some fun, babe?" Greg asked, shoving back a zombie and shooting it in the forehead. "Better than waking up?" I nodded and he turned toward me. "Never want to wake up?"

I screamed and lunged up, the warped and tattered dream of being near superheroes shattering as my cry rebounded off the inside of the Bradley's hull. It stank of fear, blood, sweat and diesel.

Fucking dreams.

From the Diaries of Becka

In the Cinematic Campaign, characters are more like action heroes who have wandered onto the set of a zombie movie than the typical zombie-flick victim. They can more or less dodge bullets, run through a crowd of zombies, and stop an out of control vehicle with their bare hands.

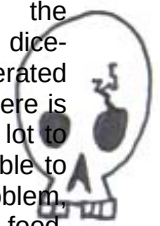
Food and ammunition are no longer a concern, and many of them don't even have to keep track of how many rounds they have fired. Maybe they can see in the dark naturally, or maybe they are able to create technological wonders from a broken wristwatch, a piece of gum wrapper, and a paper clip.

While this may be fun for a short game, playtesting has shown that this type of campaign can rarely stay current and exciting beyond the lower levels. Only the addition of Shadow can add any danger past that point, and even then, the game usually feels more like "Night of the Living Dead" meets "Last Action Hero" meets "Tales from the Darkside" than a real Living Dead campaign.

- Characters never start with the ordinary template, and have dice-generated or point-buy generated ability stats. Guns are plentiful, there is rarely friendly fire, and it takes a lot to kill a character. Characters are able to handle 20:1 odds with no problem, never run short of ammunition or food, nobody bathes or goes to the bathroom, and certainly, nobody stinks or screams when they are shot. While hordes of zombies may close in on the characters, they always manage to escape quite easily.

- To some groups, this may be quite fun. PCs never having to track either encumbrance or ammunition. In this type of campaign, a GM may wish to add a Fortitude save (DC: 20) for

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characters to avoid contracting the zombie infection, instead of making it automatic death in 3 days or less.

- Characters survive for longer, it's fun and easy to do, but this campaign style is mainly good for short games, not long standing campaigns.

It can get boring quickly if not handled right, and the fear of death quickly fades.

Military

We had to tie Greg down, he was delirious from pain and the head wound. He was damn lucky that he was not dead. Sam was genuinely sorry about what had happened, but we all knew that it was not Sam's fault. It can be very hard to control a Humm-vee when someone shoots out the front end, and none of us could blame him for skidding out of control and slamming the side of the armored humm-vee into Greg.

Greg called out for support, for fire for effect, ordered snipers up, and many other things in his delerium. The worst for us was listening to his long, rambling monologue about what happened at Olympia General Hospital; how the soldiers there had been forced to fire on the crowds of panicked people; the slow collapse to anarchy; how Greg eventually led a mere eighteen people (out of over 200 soldiers) out of the hospital, packed into a Blackhawk helicopter that was low on fuel, keeping what few civilians had survived back at gunpoint. The commanding officer had killed himself on the second day, and attrition had handled the rest. While he cried over the civilian survivors he had left behind, The desperation in his voice was amplified by the fact that he had left behind six of HIS soldiers and as much ammunition as they could carry. He asked their spirits for forgiveness as he screamed his rage and anger at God himself for opening the gates of Hell.

Even Sylvia was crying, and Buck's face looked like stone when they listened to Greg mumble that he had ordered his men to shoot women, children and others. Even Sylvia was crying. We understood the reasoning. That had been a large factor of the collapse of society after the Rising: panic and the refusal to listen to authority, civilians killing soldiers for no other reason other than to strike out at the government that had failed them, soldiers shooting civilians out of frustration and fear, police abandoning their posts, and far, far worse. We did not blame Greg for what he had done. He didn't make the world; he had only been trying to survive in it.

Still, hearing it; hearing Greg give orders for the men to work in teams of two, one reloading the

empty M-249 SAW, the other firing it... that was hard. Listening to him give orders that he later reported led to the deaths of 30 men when they vainly tried to reach desperately needed supplies.

"We have to have that ammunition. Take the helicopters from the roof, clear a landing spot, hover in place, and retrieve the ammunition from those trucks. Kill everyone that you have to." He had ordered. A few moments later he ordered men to fire on the zombies trying to climb onto the helicopters.

He wept as he mumbled how three of the four helicopters crashed, and the crews aboard were torn apart and eaten. He alternately wept and raged at the officers who had abandoned over 200 men and women, and left him in charge.

We never told him that we knew what he had done in those dark days.

From the diaries of Becka

This works best with the Dark and Gritty style of play. It gives the characters a common background, as well as access to military-grade weaponry and military training. This can go a long way toward ensuring survival in a harsh and brutal world. The players will not only have the training necessary to survive, but they will also be part of a group, and may even be heavily armed, with easy resupply and reinforcements available.

Some groups may start in the Middle East, taking part in the War on Terror, unaware of what is going on until it is too late. Initially, the Rising would be mistaken for rioting, and would likely find small groups of soldiers cut off from the main bases and under siege by tides of undead flesh.

Getting back from the Middle East could be problematic for many PC's, as the various world militaries will be too closely engaged with the Risers to be able to provide assistance. The air fields would be tightly guarded, and it would be in the back of the guards' heads that those who hold it to end will die there, fostering a mutinous climate.

Once the PCs manage to return to their home countries, the Rising will be in full force. Their transport plane may not even be able to land at an airfield. Instead, it could be forced to crash-land in a field, or attempt a landing on a highway or a water-landing. All of those will place the PC's in a bad position, cutting them off from support and having to make it across the country to a military base.

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Those in their home countries won't have it any easier, as they are tasked to guard important locations, rescue prominent people, go out on crowd control, perform sweeps and clears, or gather up bodies for proper disposal. Guard duty would be tough as rogue snipers take their toll, refugees beg and plead to be allowed inside the perimeter of a military location, and verbally or physically abuse the soldiers. Showers of rocks, garbage, and debris would rain on any personnel coming in or out of a military base, causing injuries and fatalities.

Within 30 days, however, the worst would come to pass. Centralized command would collapse, and the order would go out for all military forces to revert to local command. This means that any ranking politician or the highest-ranking officer would be put in charge of military efforts. This could cause friction between civilian and military authorities with different ideas as to what should be done.

Eventually, the vast military machine will stutter and grind to a halt, leaving the PC's in possession of valuable military hardware and perhaps even a defensive position that can be counted on in the long term. Military campaigns can quickly become like any other, where the PC's are out for their own survival, backed up by military training and equipment. Or the PC's could find themselves guarding a new settlement, responsible for it's safety, and tasked with the dangerous duties of protecting the settlement and making supply runs.

- Characters guard relief stations, aid stations, go out on rescue missions, and perform "elimination exercises" or perhaps even "body details" where they must gather up corpses and take them to a central distribution point. For those characters currently operating in a combat theater, it could be even more difficult. The characters must not only survive enemy fire, but also the dead who have returned with a dreadful hunger. The attempt to get to a point where they can return home could be a central theme.
- This model affords some safety for the PCs. Reinforcements, supplies, weapons, and ammunition are all close at hand. Medical treatment for injuries and access to air and armored transport will be a few of the perks of this type of campaign.

- Equipment, safe areas, , supplies, and reinforcements are plentiful at first. After awhile the government begins losing, and the military takes more and more casualties, even coming under attack by the very people they are there to protect. There will be many more challenges for characters as time goes on.
- Those with Secret (or better) security clearances or Special Operations troops may find themselves ordered to assist in the evacuation of government officials to Continuity of Government bunkers. Of course, the fact that *someone* will sneak in with a bite will mean that eventually, the PCs will be trying to escape the same bunker that was supposed to protect everyone.

Some players will not enjoy the fact that their characters have to follow mission orders, putting their characters somewhat at the GM's mercy. The missions will get rougher and rougher. While civilian characters might have the option of hiding and waiting out the Risings, the military characters will be assigned tougher and tougher missions against greater and greater odds. They may find themselves forced to choose between firing on civilians or being killed out of fear, ignorance, greed or hatred.

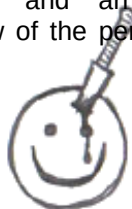
Mysteries After ☉ath

Sylvia was definitely dying, and there was nothing that Robert could do for her. She had lost weight until she was little better than a skeleton. She was weak, tired, and got sick easily. Several of her teeth had fallen out, and only a few clumps of hair were left topping off her skull-like head.

"I think I can do something," Cindy spoke up from a campfire we had built. "I mean, before now, I would have never believed in it, but when the dead walk, what are the chances that some of the old ways might actually be useful?"

"What?" Buck asked, looking across the fire at Cindy, who was chewing her lower lip thoughtfully. Cindy jerked slightly, as if she had forgotten she had spoken, then continued.

"My grandfather, he believed in the old traditions, the old ways. He believed that songs had power, and that the Spirits would help those who sang to them."



Cindy looked at Sylvia, who was sleeping again. She shook her head. "Robert can't do anything for her, and all of the home remedies I know have been useless. I can't think of anything else to try, except..."

"A Ghost Dance?" Greg asked. Cindy looked startled, and I suppressed a smug grin. Cindy always forgot that both Buck and Greg were highly educated men, not just idiots with muscles and guns. I'd weaseled it out of Buck that he had actually attended the University of Arizona for four years before his GI Bill ran out.

"Why not?" replied Buck. "It worked to make Geronimo bullet-proof, and honestly, I doubt it will hurt Sylvia at this point. Do you know how it's done?"

Cindy nodded slowly and Buck smiled.

It was Sylvia's only chance, as far as I could tell. Besides, when the dead are returning to life to devour the living, why doubt ancient Indian rites?

From the Diaries of Becka

While blatant psionics and magic can destroy the suspension of disbelief as well as the dark and gritty feel to the setting, a few incidents of magic, psionics, or the odd paranormal animal will provide a feeling of "things outside both the characters' and the players' knowledge" to the game.

If magic is to be inserted into the campaign setting, we suggest you purchase Blood & Relics from

RPGObjects, and handle magic the way it is outlined in that campaign template. Magic should not be all-pervasive, and for the most part, ridiculed or passed off as simple superstition. Even when it can be performed, the time to complete a ritual should be counted in hours or days, not mere rounds. Psionics can be handled simply. If they can be used unconsciously and have no visual effect, then they may be able to fit in. Mostly emotional, precognitive, and occasionally some battle psionics may be used. Unless they are "always on" or unconsciously controlled, without visible components, psionics should be avoided.

If characters pressure too hard for magic to be included, a simple way of handling the problem is quick and plentiful. Rule that zombies are attracted to paranormal energies, and any "active" psionic or mystic character would attract zombies like a beacon. A range of 1 mile is not unreasonable, and since a zombie would instinctively know that the mental/magical energy is coming from a living mind, it would head toward that "food source." After a few spell slingers are dragged down and devoured, and the others figure out that it is the spell slingers and psions attracting the hordes of Risers, the next person trying to cast a spell will probably be greeted by a barrage of bullets.



Shelter
Longview, WA

Time of Death

Beginning the zombie campaign

THIS IS A MESSAGE FROM THE EMERGENCY BROADCAST SYSTEM-Do not remain in your homes no matter how well stocked, or well defended. Move immediately to the following designated shelters: Olympia General Hospital, Olympia; Tenino High School, Tenino; Lewis County General Hospital, Centralia; STAY TUNED FOR ADDITIONAL SHELTERS... Look, give it up. The shelters are gone, man. The cops are gone. We're gone, dude. Embrace the horror...

Looped radio message that played until roughly 3 months after The Rising when it suddenly cut off. Origin unknown.

I can't help but wonder who made it. It wasn't on any radio stations that I knew of, but I assume that whomever it was created by was on the edge of insanity. You could hear that too-brittle calm in their voice and almost feel the desperation.

There was gunfire in the background. Not automatic or burst gunfire, but from the sounds of it, shotgun and hunting rifle gunfire. It grew noticeably closer during the short recording at the end of the emergency broadcast system message, and you could hear no less than three voices screaming that unforgettable scream that tears from the throat of someone that the zombies have begun feasting on.

I wish I still had the recording of it that I made. Maybe then, those who read this could understand our actions.

From the Diaries of Becka

A Year of the Zombie campaign will have vast effects upon a campaign setting, from the way characters interact, to where they gain supplies, to where they go. Cities can be completely obliterated in nuclear fire in a vain attempt to sterilize the problem, because of miscommunication, or even just out of spite, making the fear of radiation an additional concern. Clean water can be a problem once the chemical storage containers near rivers begin to burst, and dams failing and bursting can wipe out areas more thoroughly than a nuclear weapon could ever have been able to do.

This can be a major change for any setting, far more than even total global warfare, a meteor impact, or biological death. The whole world can collapse under the weight of dead flesh, and even if the world is saved, it will

never be the same for the PCs. The world will be a darker place for the characters.

Beginning your campaign

Beginning your campaign is fairly easy. Read through this book, watch a few of the movies in the suggested viewing section, get your players together, and get started.

These campaigns are not for the weak of heart. People are going to get mangled, and there is the added possibility that PCs are going to be dropping like proverbial flies. The average life expectancy in a brutal campaign, unless they are very lucky, is going to be about three sessions at the most. It takes one bite to be down, back up and eating flesh within 72 hours. Less if your friends shoot you in the face.

Those players who have characters that survive, however, may be reluctant to give up, wanting to continue to play through to see how far they can get. When beginning the campaign, remember to come up with a reasonable and logical way for new PCs to join a group.

Meshing into an Existing Setting

"...reports of National Guard units going rogue, mobs of bandits and looters, and victims of this terrorist-released contagion are denied by the Federal Government. These people are not the dead returning to life but rather they are the victims of an extremely well coordinated bio-terrorism attack. The following North American Cities have suffered the detonation of nuclear weapons by the same terrorist organization that released the biological weapon: Olympia, Washington; Toronto, Canada; Miami, Florida; Dallas, Texas; St Louis, Missouri; Vancouver, British Columbia. Other nuclear launches have been rumored, but none have been confirmed. We here at CNN..." The television kept droning in the background as Cindy helped me move the locker in front of the door to the Thurston County Sheriff's substation. If only Sam had not had broken his key off in the lock, leaving the door unlocked to whoever wanted to turn the handle, we would not have had to barricade it.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

Outside, we could hear the ambulance burn, and the crackling of the ammunition cooking off in Sam's destroyed "County-Mounty Ride" and all I could hope was that no bullets penetrated the steel door and the locker. My back was a center of agony for me from the burns I had sustained when Sam had fired his shotgun at the zombie that had been holding my hair. Damn hairspray had caught fire instantly, and my back was badly burnt. My chest was on fire, but Robert had decided my ribs were only bruised, maybe cracked, but more than likely bruised. It felt like I was being repeatedly kicked in the chest.

Bioterrorism my ass, those were fucking zombies! I'd seen enough horror movies in my life to know a damn ZOMBIE when I saw it. Unlike my friends, who were clustered in the back of the room, I was not going down like everyone in those movies did. I had recovered the tonfa that had hit Darren in the face and shattered his jaw. I knew how to use it, and a strange, eerie calm had settled over me, allowing me to push aside the pain of cracked ribs and the burns on my back so that I could concentrate on the task ahead of me.

I did not care if it was my own mother. If she came at me with fucked up blank eyes, an open mouth, and a dry hiss, she'd get the fucking beat-down of her un-fredkin-life.

From the Diaries of Becka

Strange news reports, maybe a gunshot victim getting to their feet while the players are tossing a room for evidence. Suddenly, all bets are off as panic grips a civilian populace and the shit hits the fan. The military is mobilized, special agencies find a purpose for the first time, and other countries invade. Characters find themselves fighting a strange new horror far beyond what they expected that morning.

Characters with hot reputations in certain paranormal departments may find themselves being immediately transferred to the nearest hot-spot, and military characters could find themselves rapidly shifted around, or a general recall order issued. Characters in the underworld could suddenly find themselves attacked by a foe who had just taken a burst of silenced SMG rounds in the chest and had hit the ground with staring eyes and that tremble that only the dead have. Characters with the military occupation may find themselves ordered to return to duty, handed a rifle, and told: "Kill those people."

An existing campaign can be revitalized, but steps must be taken into account to prevent a complete change over the entire world unless that's what the GM and players want to occur. Many of the changes presented here can have a lot of fallout, so be careful with what you choose to do to an existing campaign.

Increasing challenge

A short "Living Dead" campaign, in order to spice things up. The situation could last a single night, or for a week or so, then fizzle out as the newly dead no longer awaken. Problem resources, such as vehicles or weapons, can easily be damaged, destroyed or used up. Contacts could be killed and powerful allies and enemies could end up as the living dead.

Revitalizing a badly damaged campaign

Handed out too many XP, too many perks, are the PCs too wealthy but you don't want to abandon everything? This could certainly do the trick. It doesn't matter if he owns the KingSlayer 5000 minigun complete with cybernetic targeting, eventually he is going to run out of bullets, and a single bite will kill him dead.

Year of the Zombie can be used to revitalize a campaign that has been nearly ruined by circumstances, allowing favorite characters to continue to be played, and for near invincibility to be offset by the sheer numbers of Risers and the deadliness of their bites.

Be sure, however, that the players will not be upset by the complete alteration of the setting they have become familiar with.

Beginning a new campaign

It's important to consider WHEN a campaign begins when you are creating a new Year of the Zombie campaign or meshing it into an existing setting. When will determine how survivalist the PCs are, how many resources they have, and the type of threats they will face.

More than just the date can matter, although if the Rising occurs in 1943 during the height of World War II, it will be a far different campaign than one where the Rising occurs in 2059. When the PCs are brought in, how far before or along the Rising can make vast differences in the PCs survivability as well as what kind of world it is.

GMs need to give the PCs some sort of long term goal, some kind of Holy Grail to chase after, a Utopia just over the horizon, or something bigger than just themselves to defend. Resources have to be set up and allocated and safe havens that spring up should be accessible to the PCs for a short period of time.

T minus 72

"The disturbances are attributed to a recent chemical spill in the Tacoma area. Due to the presence of toxic fumes and the danger of contamination, all citizens are urged to remain in their houses or places of residence. Do not answer the

door except for an identified police officer or fire fighter."-Standard story handed to all news agencies, with orders to replace Tacoma with other nearby cities. CNN, FOXNews and other coast to coast stations were ordered not to report on the disturbances.

That rash of bullshit probably killed more people than the ICBM detonations over the cities. Those family members who were killed away from home, who were desperately trying to get home before they died, went home. The families opened the doors with joy, and the screams began.

I had seen it in Olympia. When we had hidden at Steffy's parent's house and her father came home, his chest torn up and part of his face eaten away. Steffy had run forward, sobbing in relief after our horrifying run to her house, realizing what her eyes were showing her too late.

Her father embraced her, and his kiss tore her top lip off in a spray of blood. As Steffy pulled away, her father sucked it down like a noodle, and pulled her in for another tearing bite.

I can remember her mother screaming as I stepped forward and struck his neck, breaking it with a dry snap like a branch breaking. The shock ran up my arm as he fell away. Steffy's mother began screaming that I had killed him, and ran into the back room while I tried to calm Steffy down, to fix her blood gushing mouth.

I almost had the bleeding under control when Steffy's mother stepped out of the hallway with a shotgun and blew Jenny nearly in half, the edge of the blast erasing Steffy's little brother's face and throwing him against the couch, where he began screaming a bubbly scream and kicking his little feet in agony.

I pushed Steffy at her mother and ran out into the street.

Where Hell had come to visit.

From the Diaries of Becka

This type of campaign starts out roughly 24 to 96 hours before the initial mass zombie reanimations. This gives characters opportunity to interact, and if done properly may even leave them inside a building full of corpses that their own fast trigger fingers have turned into something even more dangerous than they had been before the players started shooting.

This is excellent for build-up. Make the players think it is one type of campaign when it is, in fact, another. Running a normal adventure will lull the players into a false sense of security as well as allowing you to get a feel for the type of character they are running at the time.

Once the dead begin returning to life, it will be quite easy to manipulate the PCs into a scenario where they have to fight for their lives,

BLATANT SHADOW AND PSIONICS

Magic and psionics may fit within the framework of a heroic or cinematic campaign, but a dark and gritty one would quickly begin to lose the sense of horror that a zombie game should naturally have when a magic user only has to cook off a few spells or a remove disease spell is applied to a zombie bite victim.

If magic is used it is still recommended that magic be unable to cure the Zombie Bite Infection, as well as only spells that can affect inanimate objects be able to affect the zombies. Psionics would be next to useless as far as manipulating the mind of a zombie. Those who dare to enter the mind of zombie must make a successful Will save (DC 15+zombie's Hit Dice) or suffer a long term insanity (see Horror and Insanity later in the document) related to death and/or zombies. In addition, there is a 50% chance that the zombie will gain the "Enhanced Zombie" template.

Of course, there are other problems to take into consideration. Does The Rising affect non-human intelligent creatures? If so, are they faster, slower, etc.? How do their immune systems react to the infection caused by a zombie bite?

If Shadow is used, we recommend using Blood & Relics as an example of how to have Shadow influences without having goblins leaping out from every closet that doesn't contain a zombie.

If the GM uses monstrous creatures, it is recommended that they be treated more like corporate, military or government genetic experiments than natural creatures.

and might not have normally gotten themselves into if they had known it was a zombie game. This includes weapons and armor that they would have chosen if they knew what was coming, but is next to useless or more of a burden than an asset.

This type of start is often the most fun, as every preconception that the players have developed is rapidly destroyed. With proper preparation, survival in Year of the Zombie is merely another challenge, not a potentially deadly affair where the PCs' lives rest on nearly every roll made, but with this option, PCs are rarely properly armed or armored, much less prepared for what is occurring around them.

The First Night

"CDC reports that this is no more than rumor and panic-filled gossip. Reiterating, these people are merely victims of some kind of chemical or biological exposure. They are not the dead returning to life. Police and military are rapidly gaining control of the situation. These people can be identified by their trancelike state and inability to communicate. If seen, you should lock your doors. The earlier statements that these are the dead returning to life have been repudiated, as the CDC reports..." WNN news kept running that in a bar beneath the image of the studio reporters.

"No field agents." The voice startled me, and I screamed, my foot coming around in a spinning back kick. My heel hit the metal middle part of a rifle, and the person holding it shoved, throwing me off

balance. Jesus, bitch, take it easy. If I was one of them, I would have bitten you on the ass instead of admiring it."

The guy was wearing a gas mask, and dressed like the soldiers I had seen on the news. A helmet, an armored vest, camouflage clothing, combat boots, a weird carrying system on his chest, some kind of radio microphone in front of his mask's mouthpiece, and of course, his rifle made him look like something out of the nightly news or an action movie. He nodded at the television again and continued as if I had not just tried to take his head off.

"Notice there aren't any field reporters." He laughed again, bitterly, the sound filling the small, dark pawn shop where my brother worked. Had worked. He was dead, in the back room. Well, dead again. I had seen to that.

"I hadn't," I admitted. "So what?" I was trying to calm down. Four more soldiers were entering the pawn shop, being careful to quietly close the door behind them. My sorority sisters began sobbing in relief that the Army was here to save them.

"Reporters don't risk their precious skins if they don't have to. It's a goddamn war zone out there, and they are hiding in their fucking studios. Bitches." The man was practically snarling. "Civies attacking us, zombies attacking us, police attacking everyone, and orders to hold our fire unless we feel threatened. What bullshit."

He took off his mask, and looked at me, his face deadly serious in the dim light of the pawn shop.

"My name is Staff Sergeant Greg Matthews, and I hate to tell you this, but Olympia is hereby under martial law." He told me.

"What does that mean to us?" Cathy asked, nervously looking at the soldiers. One of them was checking the bandage on a second's wrist.

It means, that your pawn shop is hereby designated Relief Station Alpha Tango Four. Sorry, lady, but it, and everything in it, is now property of the US Army." He said. He looked tired as he said it, and I could see one of his men step back to cover my sorority sisters with his rifle.

"Will it help?" I asked. God, my voice sounded like a little girl's.

"I don't know, ma'am, I really don't."

From the Diaries of Becka

This is during the opening days of The Rising when nobody knows exactly what they are, how they are reanimated, and many people die that wouldn't have earlier. Possibly an encounter with a corpse staggering about is the first encounter a party has with one. The Rising is taking place with the recently dead getting to their feet and coming after the living. Remember, over 100,000 people die each day

from natural causes, and more than one body has gone for hours or days without being noticed. A man who dies in his bathroom will be waiting with open jaws for his rescuers, who will probably need rescuing themselves.

Police and SWAT and other organizations would be called out repeatedly to put down outbreaks. City morgues, funeral homes, convalescent centers, car wrecks, and other crises would quickly deplete manpower. The first night would likely be hell on wheels, with players often thinking that they are going to grab a defensible spot and be safe. Others will have had the same idea, and firefights could quickly ensue, or zombies could already be there because those who fled there had even one bite victim in their midst who rose after death and killed them all.

Dead police officers and military, as well as unattended SWAT vehicles, whose crews are now zombie-food, are going to be some of the few places to grab military grade hardware, and ammunition will quickly run out for those who are spraying lead willy-nilly. Any police or military personnel who catch characters ripping them off are going to shoot first and leave questions to Saint Peter.

Police and military personnel are going to be setting up aid and refugee centers, as well as protecting hospitals after doing a sweep and clear for the "victims". It will be unknown at this time that a bite from one of the walking dead is inevitably fatal within 72 hours. Nonlethal methods used by the police are not going to work against them, as the walking dead will attempt to bite them, and will not respond to tasers, pepper gas, or the normal techniques used to subdue a suspect. In many cases a taser might even enrage the zombie, quickly pushing it into a frenzy and making it all the more dangerous.

For each police officer, civilian or soldier bitten, that will be one more in the aid station ready to rise up. Each automobile accident will be more victims waiting to die and rise hungrily back to a mockery of life. The medical infrastructure will teeter and quickly collapse as the dead begin ravaging the patients, doctors become the walking dead, and the panicked citizens try to storm hospitals for a cure for injured relatives, unaware that they are running into the very arms of that which they are trying to escape.

Fires may break out, and the firefighters who respond will be in danger not only from the flames, but from those who died via smoke inhalation and other complications. Police will have their hands full, as people will murder one another just for looking different or acting suspicious, as well as to settle old scores. The population will lash out at the police that seem to be unable to protect them, and in those neighborhoods where anti-law enforcement/racial tensions are high, the police will find themselves in a combat zone, and will likely beseech the National Guard for help.



National Guard units would likely be called out, but will be mobilized for crowd control and the like, not to handle the menace that is truly going on. Casualties will be high, with news agencies gleefully reporting on the troops firing on what appears to the news agencies to be an unarmed crowd. Between fires, explosions and general mayhem, the first night will be one of the worst, as the living dead descend upon an unprepared populace that is largely unarmed and unable to respond to threatening attackers with the force needed.

☉ During the Collapse

The populace is urged to go as quickly as possible to the below listed local rescue stations. Activation of the War Powers Act, the Patriot Act, and recently passed emergency legislation under the newly declared martial law, has made it illegal to remain in any private residence, no matter how well fortified or supplied." WNN showed that constantly, letting it stream by.

It was about two weeks in, and we were holed up in the Lewis County Courthouse. We'd busted firing ports in that glass bridge over the street, and Sam and Buck would go out and spit on the zombies when they got bored. Sylvia had followed the sounds of our weaponry until she and the three surviving members of her "team" made it to us. Greg executed one on the spot who was bit. Well, Greg, Sam, Buck and I considered Buck knocking him down and Greg shooting him in the head an execution.

It was a bit odd, her uniform was intact and spotless, and they had way too much in the way of supplies, and had almost no experience with zombies. Greg mentioned something to me about "CoG Troops" but still hasn't explained it to me. Sylvia's a dead shot with a SAW though, and I don't understand why she wasn't carrying a SAW, but instead an M-4 with an M-203 and a silencer. None of us believe her story that she had been guarding a refugee center in the industrial district of Chehalis. We'd passed it a week before, and it was nothing but milling zombies and corpses.

Anyway, Sylvia and I were watching TV, listening to the reporters babble on about "violation of human rights" as far as shooting zombies went, and how the military was being used to suppress the people's rights, when we heard gunfire, screaming, and zombies poured onto the stage. The first bunch were those ones that run at you, silent and eerily fluid. The co-anchor went down in a spray of blood, and it got worse from there. Screaming, cursing, gunfire, the camera spinning eerily before settling back on the desk. There was nothing left but zombies stumbling about the set, no more newscast plastic heads, no

more political discussion, and the weather-lady was kind of nasty, sitting on the desk with one of her boobs chewed away.

We watched for two more weeks before Greg chucked the TV off the roof to see if he could hit a zombie with it.

He missed.

From the Diaries of Becka

During this time, the military would be slowly losing. Civil rights and legal procedure would be suspended, and martial law declared. Government officials would be moved to secure locations, and "refugee centers" would be established, swarmed under, and established again. Hospitals would be guarded quickly, with perimeters and heavy weapons. The hospitals would likely fall to rioters, the living dead and the panicked populace as first the military protection is killed, then the doctors and patients, or the living dead rise up from patients who have died of their wounds and attack other patients and hospital staff, increasing their numbers nearly geometrically.

Aid stations would collapse as a growing number of the living dead would slowly approach the stations, overwhelming the guards and attacking those inside. Those who are mortally wounded would die, and then rise up again to attack those inside the building. People whose last need, last driving desire, was to reach the aid station would congregate there and it would be nearly impossible to protect all of those who are trying to get into the aid station, meaning the zombies would tear into the crowds, forcing those guarding the aid stations to fire on civilians in order to save those inside.

The biggest problem facing the military would be desertion, slow attrition, and, if there is fighting against foreign powers, no-holds-barred military action. This means armored units duking it out in the streets, in fields, the crippling of vital roads, bridges, power supplies, etc. Main battle tanks, Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles, Striker Combat Vehicles, Hind helicopters, Apaches, all will be in full use fighting it out in city streets, with zombies ready to take out anyone who gets sloppy. Submarines would move into harbors to sink any ships to prevent the contagion from spreading, or just plain rage. Aircraft would strike at zombies, at foreign military/civilian/industrial targets, and any ships at sea from foreign countries attempting to land.

The civilian populace is going to be caught between two military forces slugging it out and the zombies if any foreign power invades. Within days, the cities will be completely empty of food, unless the one doing the searching is a zombie. Massive traffic jams on the roadways, blocked tunnels and bridges, gangs of looters and bandits, as well as the ever growing number of zombies is going to spell the death-

toll for cities. Suburban areas are going to be little better off, as more and more of the police force from the suburbs are sent into the city to try to contain the problem.

Children and the elderly will be victimized, and rape will slowly become a popular activity. Unarmed women, and men, will be sexually assaulted by bandits, raiders, looters, criminals, and people who just quit caring. Dogs that haven't been fed in days will drag down the zombies, who won't notice the animals, even when a zombie is being drug down and devoured next to them. Dogs will acquire a

Private individuals will be fighting the police and military as well as the zombies, any foreign military powers, and perhaps even settling old scores. The populace will be frightened, and will react with savagery to intruders or any potential threats in some cases, and in other cases merely listless and frightened.

Gangs would be out to seize power in the cities with the absence of any type of law enforcement, old racial tensions would flare as bigots on all sides blamed the "inferiors", and in some countries, ethnic cleansing would erupt since NATO and everyone else would be too



*We had to abandon the hospital,
we got lucky, we got out!*

taste for human flesh, and begin dragging down children, and eventually, adults.

Once it becomes illegal to remain in a private residence and the War Powers Act is activated, allowing the government to take whatever they want from private citizens, military and police forces will be forcefully pulling people from their homes, and doing sweep and clears to check for any dead bodies that have not been turned over to the proper authorities for proper disposal. In some places, crooked police and military, and just plain perverts, will probably be raping and looting as they are forcefully removing people from their homes. Some of the populace will fight back when the police and military enter their homes to remove them and seize valuable supplies to help defend everyone under their protection. Soldiers following orders and police enforcing laws will be fired upon by civilians guarding what is theirs, and will return fire with much more accuracy against a populace with much less armor, training and support.

busy to interfere. Some nations may create "Stalags" or "Gulags" or "Internment stations" where "undesirables" or even zombies are kept. Crash programs would be enacted in order to find a solution/cure for the problem, and possibly even what caused it, but it doesn't mean that they ever will. In fact, many research "think tanks" will discover first hand what they are researching, without ever understanding it any better.

Communications and electrical grids would eventually collapse. The dial-up access to the internet would likely go first, and communications grids would become jammed with emergency calls, emergency response traffic, and military traffic. Panic would ensue due to the sudden lack of easy communication. Once the Emergency Broadcast Service kicks in, and the Feds seize the airwaves, communication would grind to a halt, and America at least would explode as for first time in recent memory the phones would not only be jammed with calls, but actually forbidden to the American public.

Even without a dial tone, many places will continue to have DSL and cable-internet service for days, or even weeks, after the phone grid collapses. However, more and more internet sites would disappear as time goes on, eventually reverting to a local network at best, or just isolated routers gathering dust in a powerless room at worst. Many chat and information sites would go down due to the sheer volume of traffic, and some may stay online, such as the CDC or WHO sites, but would be very slow.

The electrical grids would begin to collapse due to lack of personnel manning them, appliances being left on, and damage to the physical power grid. Fires would steadily spread as the fire departments begin fighting for their lives rather than trying to save buildings as victims of fires and accidents began attacking the firefighters. Most of the American nuclear power plants would automatically shut down as their safety features kicked in. Unless there was a zombie inside the plant pressing random buttons in a half-remembered pattern, causing a cascading error that will contaminate the entire region with nuclear runoff from a breached core, melt down, or the best scenario of the three, a core explosion.

Dams will suffer as the automatic control systems will fail, with one after another exploding, sending water hammering downstream, and causing massive amounts of damage to everything in the water's path. Only zombies can hope to survive the land bound tsunami that sweeps to the next body of water, possibly bursting the next dam in the line, perpetuating the cycle.

Worse, the MAD tapes may be rolling; ensuring that sooner or later, deep buried weaponry will be fired at old enemies, incinerating cities and other vital areas that might have made a difference to any survivors.

It's Hopeless

"We were fools to believe that the government could handle this. World governments were only barely capable during times of peace and normalcy. How could we be lead from our homes, to where we could be slaughtered? Our government lied to us, from places of safety that could even withstand a nuclear war. So we went out in droves to die, and become more of them. God help us, there must be thousands outside. We are out of ammunition, and nearly out of food. To any who can hear this, do not, for the love of God, enter this city. We are gone, and they are waiting."-Radio transmission from inside

Cleveland, Ohio that ran for roughly 4 months, as far as I know. Buck was able to pick it up on the shortwave radio we had scavenged and put in Bradley-One.

There was no way for us to save them. We were sitting outside of N.O.R.A.D. while we debated on whether or not to try to enter it. Sylvia argued against it the hardest, at one time giving Buck a good shot in the grill with a right hook when he called her a coward. Greg agreed with Sylvia, but finally, we did access the place, following Sylvia's instructions on how to get in, and nearly confirming some of my suspicions about Sylvia's mysterious past.

Inside was worse than we feared. The entire place was dead, either walking dead or dropped dead. The zombies quickly congregated on us, and we were forced to make a fighting retreat back the way we came. Zhakov, one of the Spetz we picked up along the way, helped Greg, Buck and Sylvia drop the access port we used, rather than have what might have been thousands of zombies follow us outside.

I cry, often, at night, remembering the feeling that came over us all as we realized that the most heavily guarded, heavily protected, most important hardened installation in North America was nothing more than a nest of zombies waiting for some poor sucker to open the main doors decades down the road.

It was our worst moment.

It was the knowledge that it was over. The old world was dead. We had lost.

It was hopeless.

From the Diaries of Becka

This takes place roughly 3-4 months after the first Rising. By this time, ammunition stocks would be badly depleted, easily located ammunition would be long used, as would much of the reloading supplies. Those with firearms more than likely know how to do reloading, having taught themselves, learned from a book, taught by someone else, or having known it before The Rising. Easily accessed fuel would be long gone, with canny survivors having drained the tanks of the many vehicles that litter the highways and roadways, many of them wrecked or pocked with bullet-holes. Gas stations and other easily thought of areas would be looted, with ones outside of the cities and suburbs having been looted first.

Military and police would have taken massive casualties while trying to protect civilians and follow their orders to try to stem the tide of dead flesh. Desertion and suicides would have been rampant, and casualties would have been devastating to manpower and morale. Armored vehicles would have ran out of gas, often stranding the crews in the middle of a crowd of zombies, giving the personnel inside a choice between starving to death/dying of thirst, being eaten, and shooting themselves to simply end it quickly.

The cities would be full of disease. Just because the corpse is walking doesn't mean they wouldn't be a breeding ground for many

types of disease, including biological weapons that may have been deployed in the early weeks of The Rising. Rotting corpses, storm drains that backed up due to lack of maintenance and spilled sewage into the streets, decaying food, possible bio-warfare exposure, all of these will make the cities into one big petrie dish full of hundreds of different kinds of diseases. Add in the zombies, who would not notice that they carry such diseases as Anthrax or weaponized bubonic plague, and the Horseman Pestilence would ride hard in the cities.

Some smaller towns would be empty, completely deserted, with no hint as to what happened to the populations. In some areas, small groups of survivors would be holed up near the town, while the town itself would be deserted. Ghost towns will be a place to catch a quick rest, refit the vehicles, and find gasoline and possibly even food and ammunition that had not been scavenged.

Law and order would be a thing of the past as society's constraints die and fall away. Bandits, raiders, slavers, all would have formed as those without morals or other constraints victimize others in order to increase their own power base, or just because it makes them feel good. People would and could trade a woman for 30 rounds of M-16 ammunition, while a virgin female would go for far more. Slavers would be on the prowl for any group that could not defend themselves against the firepower that they could bring to bear, trading their slaves for ammunition, food, weapons, gasoline and vehicles when unsure of their ability to take the things they want.

Important locations become death traps as the zombies congregate in places that were important to them in life, or in their final moments of life. Some will become torpid without prey, and just lay around those areas, a dim satisfaction within their rotting brains, but any noise or sounds of life, and they will quickly begin to move in on it. In a dim way, defending the location that was so important to them, and searching for food. The primal instincts to guard their territory, and to eat, will still be present, even if the zombie is unable to vocalize such feelings.

The military would have collapsed. At most, a platoon guarding a strategically defendable and well stocked area, a single soldier, using his skills to defend a fortress of civilians or refugees, or a squad that is defending a community of survivors constantly on the move for a new home, would be all that is left. Even then, attrition, desertion and suicide will have badly depleted their man-power, combat will have depleted their ammunition, and vehicle use will have taken its toll on their fuel. Those who have survived, would be hardened to violence, and would take no crap from anyone, often shooting at the first sign of danger, and never asking questions.

With the total war option, there would be battlefields where various military factions had

slugged it out, vast fields of wreckage and unrisen bodies. Any towns or cities that had become a battlefield between modern military forces would be badly damaged, with vast swathes of them burned or reduced completely to rubble. Zombies that had once been soldiers would be grouped around areas that were vitally important to them when they died, and perhaps may be nothing more than a strategic position that had been useful against an enemy that has since died.

Those areas that do have survivors would be surrounded by hordes of zombies, would have a wall of one sort or another, a way to grow or produce food, and a source of fresh water. Those who have holed up in the cities are in vast trouble, as the water supply breaks down, sewage system collapses, and finally, electrical systems fail. Only those enclaves with a vast array of skilled citizens, that pull together, and ultimately, fall under a strong leadership would survive. A democracy would likely pull in too many directions as committees spring up to deal with any situation thus bogging down a small system, and would fail. A strong leader, often backed by ex-soldiers, would be able to take power, creating a strong settlement with draconian penalties and a strong defense. The feudal system of lord and vassal could easily return, with the vassals being armed, but a feudal system none the less, no matter what name it was called.

Characters would be in a strange new world that would only be geographically reminiscent of the Pre-Rising world. Wolf-Packs would still roam the cities, preying on survivors and zombies alike, slavers would roam the countryside, and raiders would be looking for the easy score.

Welcome to "Tizavdee" as some of the Wolf-Packs call it.

You've heard it called that too...
"My Country, Tizavdee..."

4☉☉☉☉ to ☉One



We stay moving. If you stay in one place too long, they get enough numbers to haul you down, and you eventually run out of supplies. How long will this last? I don't know, I wish I did. So we stay moving. We haven't seen another living person besides each other in six months. The Bradleys smell like us, and the smell will not come out. It reeks of blood, sweat, urine, vomit, cordite, diesel, zombies, and feces. We don't notice it any more.

We do notice the cities. We needed fuel and ammunition, and decided to go for it in Portland. Our reconnaissance showed that vast sections of it

had burned, but the industrial sections down by the river were semi-intact, and we used the Bradleys to ford the river, running them in amphibious mode. Poor Greg and Zhakov were bailing out Bradley

Three the whole way, because it kept leaking where those slavers had pegged it with a LAN rocket a few months back.

The roar of the diesel engines was the only noise for awhile, and we didn't see any zombies for at least thirty minutes. The stench though, it was absolutely horrid. Greg figured it smelled like living inside a rotting elephant's ass would smell.

Soon, we could hear the moaning of them. Not a low moaning, but a wailing noise from the depths of Hell itself. Buck called out to Zhakov, on top of the gantry, asking how many were coming.

Ummm, all of them?" was Zhakov's answer. Despite the need to search for ammunition in the city, we knew we would have to settle for just the fuel we had taken from the storage tanks. As Zhakov hurried down the tower, doing a submariner's drop, Sylvia had to provide cover for him with her SAN, burning precious ammunition as she did so.

The sheer weight of them pushed aside the fence like it was made of tissue paper, and they poured onto the tarmac of the semi-truck storage area like a flood of dead flesh. Their cries of hunger were loud enough that the noise from the engines was devoured by sounds of Hell on Earth.

They followed us into the water, clumsily following us, until the water was covered with them, and the ones on the bank were trying to climb across those in the water. We held our fire, and Buck turned

Bradley One upstream, fighting the current and letting the Columbia River sweep them away from us.

For three hours they kept coming, rank after rank stumbling into the river in a vain attempt to reach us. The whole bank was full of them, and we knew that they would just keep coming and coming. Buck drove back and forth in the current, luring more and more into the water, but eventually, the tank began running low, and the amusement value had long since died.

We turned and left Portland.

It was theirs, a place of The Risen, not of the living.

From the Diaries of Becka

The dead outnumber the living by over a quarter million to one, they own the cities, and wander the country-side looking for anything they can find. The torpid ones would follow any noise, in hopes of dimly remembered food. While they still wouldn't attack animals, those that had not gone torpid in a favorite spot would be wandering the cities, while others would be roaming the country, pushed on by faint memories of hunting, hiking or ecological preservation commitment.

All of the easily accessible ammunition and fuel stocks are either surrounded or filled by hordes of zombies. Even military bases would

be a death trap, as dead soldiers would have returned to a place that had been important to them in life. Many zombies would be torpid, lying about in places that were once important to them. Any sounds that did not match the zombie profile, specifically: rotors, engines, human voices, gunfire and screaming; would attract the torpid zombies, whose agitated,



moaning movement would attract other torpid or wandering zombies.

Before long, thousands in the city, dozens in the country-side, would surround the places that were important to them in life, or for some reason, their dim memories tell them that it is a place where prey might appear. They will often gather around isolated places before lapsing into a torpid state, moaning pathetically as they search for a victim.

Highways would be packed with destroyed cars, many of them destroyed in the years of fighting. Others would be destroyed when wildfires swept over them and ignited the gasoline in the cars' tanks. In hot areas, during the summer, cars would spontaneously explode from the heat, often detonating long lines of them on interstate highways. A random bullet could puncture a gas tank, engulfing the characters in an inferno as car after car explodes in sympathetic detonations.

In places, the characters would come across abandoned military vehicles, long since out of fuel, everything of use scavenged from them. Perhaps a heavy weapon or two, abandoned due to weight, might be found, but more than likely, any thing of possible use would have

been taken by those who left it behind or those who had found it before the characters.

The world will likely be a lonely place for the characters, and those who survive will either be very experienced (average level of 1d4+10) ordinaries, or mid-level heroic (1d4+5) characters who will do their utmost to kill the PCs in order to take what the PCs have, or will barter from a position of power or not at all.

Darwin would be proud.

End of Risings

We weren't even sure when it happened, but we first noticed it after those kids managed to worm their way through the ventilation shafts of the FEMA site. We had collected about a hundred survivors, and knew something was wrong when the screaming came over the intercom.

It took us 2 days, but we flushed them out. It wasn't until Buck found Harry's corpse where he had been dead for about 3 days that we realized something had changed. Initially, Buck almost put a bullet into Harry's head, but I stopped him. We

searched closely, finding 2 children that had crawled off and died of their wounds, and were still lying where they had died, still and cold.

I laid my forehead on my folded hands that night, kneeling beside Greg's and my bed, and thanked a God who finally showed mercy upon us. Fifteen years of destroying the brains of the fallen. Thousands of funeral pyres full of twitching and moaning corpses. The death of a friend meant a needed killing of an approaching foe.

I cried in release, remembering the baby who had died of SIDS in this very bunker, and squalled in hunger for something other than breast milk. I remembered our friends who had died, and we had been forced to shoot.

I could hear Greg, Sam, Thomas, Mikhail, Zhakov and Buck singing loudly as they drank, rejoicing in the end of the risings.

Still, as I pen this morning after our euphoria, I have to remember why I sit beside the door of the morgue freezer while I write in these diaries.

It happened before, it may happen again.

From the Diaries of Becka

This could happen from a few days to several decades after the initial outbreaks. This would not immediately be very obvious, as habit would be to destroy the brain by this time, and the incineration of bodies would be a ritual norm. Those who grew up in the world Post-Rising would habitually cremate the dead and destroy the brains of the dead or dying. Wolf Packs would be unaware of this occurrence, since they know little beyond "Us" and "Food" as far as other humans are concerned. In time,

kissing might be taboo, or any mouth to body contact. Those seen engaging in it would be outcast or even killed for breaking the taboo.

By this time, civilization is in ruins. Cities would have burned, some of them for days. Factories and waste treatment plants could be badly damaged, and most of the easily gained resources and consumables will be gone. Much of the easily scavenged resources would have been used by the survivors over time, and would either be gone or in the hands of local warlords.

The zombies would not all fall over, but the dead would no longer rise, and whatever caused the infection would no longer be transmitted. A bite would simply be a seriously dirty bite possibly transmitting any number of *normal* diseases, instead of a death sentence like it had been for so many years. Still the reflex would be there, and it might be years, if ever, before it was discovered that a zombie-bite was no longer instant death.

Most of the groups that lived off other groups and preyed on the weak would be gone, having either become one of the strong communities that dots the landscape or having been killed by their prey or the zombies. A twenty-year-old kingdom founded by slavers roughly three years into The Rising could now be a steady proto-civilization with firm laws that make slavery punishable by death.

While it sounds like the danger would be receding now that The Rising is over, things may have gotten worse. With the Continuity of Government programs, fallout shelters, survivalist enclaves, FEMA sites and other locations having been possibly manned, there could be a vast pool of would-be dictators ready to roar out onto the scene, backed by loyal troops, and packing heavy-duty weaponry in perfect working order. While their troops would not be battle-hardened from The Rising, they would be highly-trained and packing state-of-the-art, pristine weaponry, have access to fuel for vehicles that had faded into dim memory, and with firepower that those who had survived The Rising on the outside only remember from news or old movies.

From a government that ran and hid and left everyone to die, thinking that it could just pick right back up where it left off, to a strong-man who was able to keep several thousand fanatics safe in a valley, worshipping a strange and best left unknown god. These are the threats that could rear their heads after the dead stop rising.

With the easily accessible resources such as copper, iron, silver, gold, lead, tin and nickel having been mined out decades before, that leaves only one place for the infant civilizations to gather the raw materials needed to rebuild civilization, restart industries, and recover even close to what was lost. The cities.

In order to resist the urge to "coup de grace" a foe that had been bitten by a zombie after the Rising ends, a Will check, DC 15 to 20 may be in order. This would reflect the "ingrained reflex" that shooting or stabbing someone in the head would have become.

YEAR ☼ OF THE ZOMBIE ☼

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

Characters will be in for the ultimate challenge. Entering the rotting carcass of the Pre-Rising civilization in order to gain vital materials for their civilization to flourish and advance will be dangerous to say the least. Wolf Packs, zombies, damaged structures and natural hazards will abound, making the cities a sure death trap for the unwary.

Many of the zombies would be too decayed to function any longer, and the numbers would have dropped due to Wolf Packs, wild animals, and age of the corpse. This could lead characters to get sloppy, as a "fresh" Riser, dead only a few weeks or months, comes barreling out of the shadows and begins ripping and biting into the characters.

Cities would be in various states, from burnt devastation to nuclear-hammered wastelands, to eerily pristine graveyards. In some cities, there will be no more Risers, and the Wolf Packs and wild animals will have moved on in search of other hunting grounds (the PCs should be so lucky) or will have died out. In other cities, the Risers will be thick, with Wolf Packs growing fat and larger in numbers.

There are many post-holocaust scenarios that can be applied to each city, and no two cities will be alike. One may have had a nearby nuclear reactor breach that irradiated the area,

while one twenty miles away might be completely pristine and untouched, the civil defense program having worked to shut the city down, leaving it for the Risers, Wolf Packs, and a few mini-kingdoms.

This is very challenging, as returning power groups would immediately head for the cities, thinking to capture population sources, unaware that the Risers ate the very people they are looking to rule. The PCs could go from fighting zombies and rival kingdoms, with their Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles being their 800 pound gorillas and their 20mm Bushmasters being their big sticks, to facing a highly-trained (with little *real* experience), motivated, and well-equipped opponent.

Of course, these people will know all about fighting zombies and surviving in the Risen World "in theory", but as many people have found out, theory sometimes don't add up to jack, buddy. PCs may be able to gain a few allies in these organizations when they manage to save some of them from a Wolf Pack 'snatch and snack' or a Zombie Hoe-Down.

Some players will enjoy this, as battlefield scavenging becomes a viable resource resupply, and the opponents are varied and challenging.



*Mikhael, Checking out Roseburg,
OR, June*

The Dead Walk

Zombie templates

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

At times we enter the vast concrete and steel wastelands that were once thriving cities. Scattered about us are the sun bleached and Riser gnawed bones of those who did not survive. Lurking in places important to them or shambling around looking for something that they desire and do not understand are Risers. Thousands of people lived, loved and went about their day to day business in these cities, but very few are left alive. For the most part, those who perished remain in close proximity to places important to them.

During our travels, or constant moving from place to place, and the intense fighting we took part during the opening weeks of The Rising, we have figured out that there are several different types of Risers out there, and being able to tell one type from another can spell the difference between life and death.

With a Sprinter, you do not have the precious seconds to swap clips or leisurely take aim like you do with the standard, shambling and stupid, Riser. A child will usually be on you and biting before it's presence is registered by your conscious mind. A frenzied will tear through obstacles to get at your living flesh. And somewhere out there is a sicko training Risers to do their bidding.

It's a strange new world, and we are the minority.

"ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE IS THE TRUE WEALTH OF THE WORLD."-CHARLES DARWIN

There are several types of zombie templates in this product, as well as the Feral Child basic class. These creatures are all you will need to take a normal campaign model and add the Year of the Zombie campaign template to it. These creatures have been extensively playtested and make a good threat without being a total party killer.

Not all zombies are the same. Sure, they are dressed different, in differing states of decomposition, and are even have more or less body parts than others. However, just because one zombie is wearing a set of pajamas and another is wearing desert camouflage does not mean that the ex-soldier is the greater threat. The way a zombie moves, approaches, how quickly it

hones in on the living, and how it reacts to its surroundings are all-important clues as to what type of zombie they are.

By and large, survivors agree that the child zombies are the greatest threat of the Risers. Wolf Packs of feral children are the worst human threat.

BIOLOGICAL DATA

[The following information was gathered from the Diaries of Becka, including Robert's Journals, records recovered from the wreckage of the University of Washington Medical Center, the CDC, and an online hacker break-in of the World Health Organization database. These records were passed onto Robert approximately 2 years into the Rising.]

Transmission Vector: Unknown. First assumptions that it was viral or bacterial proved to be in error. Although massive infection leads to death within 72 hours of a bite from the reanimated dead, what actually causes the reanimation has yet to be determined. The biological theory was further reinforced by the fact that a bite from a zombie, while containing no unusual bacterial or viral agents, leads to death within 72 hours regardless of precautions or preventive measures. Transmission between infected hosts and the living occurs only due to bites, with gouges and fingernail rakes not appearing to transmit the disease. Despite the biological theory, nothing can account for the fact that any dead body with an intact brain Rises between 10 and 200 seconds after death (1d20 rounds).

On the Infection: The bite of a zombie is inevitably fatal. A massive blood infection takes place, although there are no abnormal bacterial or viral substances present in the infection or in the wound that are not present in the healthy human mouth. There is no recovery, ever. In over two hundred fifty thousand documented cases, **every single victim has died**

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within 72 hours without exception and despite all possible medical treatment! There is **NO** cure. The following lists out the disease step-by-step until the ultimate result: Death and Rising within 72 hours (48+2d12 hours). Some doctors believe that immediate amputation of the effected area will stop the infection, but so far, no attempt at amputation has been fast enough to prove this theory.

YotZ Zombies

The SRD states the following under the *Undead Creature Type*: **Immunities**: Undead are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, necromantic effects, and mind-affecting effects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or effects of massive damage, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless.

This is not adhered to for Year of the Zombie. Stunning works on a zombie, as does critical hits. This was a conscious decision made in order to provide some chance of survival for the PC's. The table below offers a guide for those who want to use a Massive Damage threshold for zombies, to simulate accidental head strikes.

Type MDC	Threshold
Standard	8+HD
Child	6
Frenzied	12+HD
Sprinter	10+HD
Trained	8+HD
Enhanced Memory	8+HD

Cellular ☉ Degeneration / Regeneration: Cellular growth continues beyond death. While injuries are not healed in the epidermis, blood is still produced by bone marrow (albeit at a reduced rate) resulting in constantly oozing wounds. Hair ceases to grow, as per normal corpses. Eyes do continue to

produce liquid, although they have a bruised appearance from the rapid degeneration of soft tissues. The liquids produced in the eye sockets of the risen dead can often lead to bloody "tears," although this is uncommon. Muscle tissue remains intact and strong. While damaged soft tissues are not repaired, necrosis does no further tissue damage. The body does not swell, nor does it produce postmortem gases. Some corpses take on a bluish tint, others take on a greenish tint, but for the most part, the bodies of the risen dead become pale and pallid. A few do keep living skin tone.

☉n Strength: Without pain, zombies are immensely strong. It is pain that stops living people from using all of their strength. Muscle fatigue and cramping does not set for zombies. Whatever reanimates the dead allows the cells to continue functioning without sugars to fuel the mitochondria, and this gives the reanimated bodies extreme strength and endurance far beyond what a living person would be capable of. A broken limb will not suffer any lapse of strength, as the pain of a broken bone or of bone ends cutting into muscle do not effect a zombie.

☉n Endurance: As zombies do not appear to use sugars for fuel, but rather gain it from some unknown source. They are not subject to fatigue, do not need to sleep, and do not suffer the effects of starvation. A zombie who has not fed in two years (Longest examination as per this writing) is just as strong and has just as much endurance as a zombie that has recently risen.

☉n Reanimation Viability: Soft tissue and skeletal structure damage that

Infection Progress

Time Since Injury	Effect	Game Mechanic
<4 hours	Oozing wound that does not scab or clot properly	-1 hp per hour if bite wound is left unbound, per bite wound. Damage from these wounds will not heal normally unless they are properly bound (Treat Injury check, DC 15)
4-10 hours	Necrotic effects around bite wound. The flesh around the wound rapidly decomposes.	-2 to Con
10-15 hours	Low fever, muscle cramps.	-2 to Con, -2 to Dex, shaken condition
15-20 hours	High fever, muscle spasms, difficulty thinking, difficulty breathing	-2 to Con, -2 to Dex, shaken condition, dazed at random times, Speed reduced to 10 feet.
21-End	Convulsions, delirium, pale skin, culminating in Death	helpless condition and eventual death (no save)
Post Death	Quick Rising	return as a zombie in 1d20 rounds

occurs prior to or after death (excluding massive brain trauma) heals, although at a far slower rate than normal. The body mostly seems willing to seal off these types of wound with blood clots and thin scar tissue than replace missing pieces. Damage to the spinal cord results in paralysis just as it would a normal, living victim. Disease and poisoning make no difference to the risen dead, with the exception of nerve agent chemical weaponry which destroys the neural pathways or dissolves the flesh, including the brain tissue.

On the train, we found fifty zombies that had been artificially augmented with mechanical prosthetics. "Cybernetics," Robert called them. These augmentations allowed the Risers to see perfectly in the dark, allowed their "handlers" to deliver a thunderous electrical shock to them, or shut down the Risers' nervous system completely. Another time, while raiding a set of bunkers in Arizona, we were assaulted by Risers wearing "Force XXI armor," according to Buck (Sylvia called it Objective Force Land Warrior armor). These guys were tremendously strong, nearly bulletproof, and only the Mark-19 saved our asses that time. While sweeping through the bunkers hidden below the supposedly decommissioned Fort Ord in California, we were aggressed by robotic minions of a fledgling AI that did their best to kill us off. The world was stranger than I want to believe. Even dead, it contained a ton of nifty stuff in it's pockets.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Year of the Zombie assumes a sort of "conspiracy theory" mode regarding the Continuity of Government program, FEMA programs, and "soldier amplification" programs. This can allow the characters to come up against, and possibly capture, some very strange gear that "does not exist" according to facts available at the time. For this reason, the following is provided:

Cybernetics

Corporate and government experiments with rudimentary cybernetic systems could result in a zombie sporting a crude cybernetic eye or an artificial heart that continues to beat. These cybernetics could end up as loot for the PC's, who will naturally want to use it. Installing cybernetics would require a Treat Injury check (DC 30) to install. Since it is doubtful that the character will have been

trained in installing cybernetics, they take a -4 penalty on the Treat Injury check. Installing cybernetics takes a lot out of a person. The character receiving the cybernetic attachment will be reduced to zero hitpoints, and must make a Fortitude Save (DC: 20) each day they heal to avoid infection unless they are in an environmentally controlled location.

Cybernetic Eye(s): These commonly contain night-vision augmentation, granting the *darkvision* ability up to 60ft. A few might contain advanced targeting systems that will grant the character a +1 equipment bonus to attack rolls.

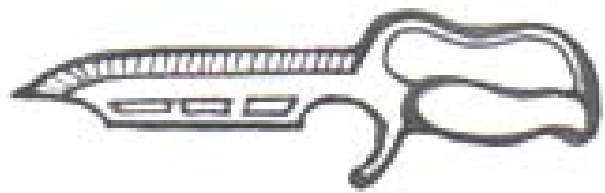
Cybernetic Radio: Fairly uncommon, this radio will have two channels and a range of 100 meters.

Advanced Technology

Any technology from Progress Level 5 may be available in select locations for a GM to pit against the party. For the most part, this stuff will be in heavily guarded corporate laboratories or located at military proving grounds. While much of it will be stocked away somewhere, some of it will have been pulled out to deal with the threat of the Risers or foreign invasion. This can result in high-tech vehicles or weaponry being out in the open, abandoned after their operators rose from the dead and wandered away.

Robots

Metal Gods from RPGObjects is an excellent sourcebook to create military grade robots that guard important locations. In addition, Blood & Circuits (also from RPGObjects) can be used to create more "traditional" robots. These robots would guard bunker sites, munitions and vehicle depots, and experimental areas for corporations and the military.



YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

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CLASSIC ZOMBIES

It staggered forward, two small holes leaking dark red blood down its shirt. Sam cursed and fired again, doubletap with his right hand, doubletap with his left hand. Each of the pistols put two bullets into the zombies' faces, spraying blood and brains across the hallway of the hospital. The two men dropped like their strings had been cut. I finished reloading, and looked over my shoulder to where Robert was working on the lock to the pharmacy.

"Hurry the fuck up, we're drawing a crowd here!" I yelled. Greg snarled and flung Robert away from the door.

Taking too long, Robert. He stepped to the side and put a burst through the plate glass window, shattering it.

"Get in, get what we need," Buck shouted, handing Sylvia the other SAW. "Hospitals are fucking magnets for these bastards." Sylvia nodded and fired off the rest of her box of ammunition, rolling from the old weapon to the one that Buck had just laid down. Buck scooped up the empty weapon and began reloading it, his fingers clumsy from the bandages covering the burns on his hands and arms.

It was going to be tight, but we wanted the medical supplies. It's not like the zombies wanted them.

They wanted us.

From the Diaries of Becka

This is the majority of zombies (80%) that the characters will encounter. They are slow, clumsy and uncoordinated, unless agitated. They are surprisingly strong, since they do not feel pain, and are fully capable of tearing a human apart with their bare hands. Once agitated, they move much faster and attack relentlessly until their prey is pulled down.

Despite their slow movement, "classic" zombies tend to move in hordes. Light, movement, and repeating noises such as construction sounds, engines, and generators will attract them. Voices attract them in particular, as if on some dim level they are aware that their prey is making those noises.

In the second week of the Risings, estimations put the number of zombies moving in one pack at nearly 200,000 strong in Seattle, Washington. The pack was able to push down barriers and climb over one another to cross over defensive walls.

These are the least dangerous of intact zombies. While they are nearly

invulnerable, they can be killed via incineration or massive brain trauma.

The Classic Zombie template is applied to any human who dies with an intact brain during the Rising.

Challenge Rating: A "classic" zombie's challenge rating typically is $\frac{1}{2}$ of the former level.

Hit Die: A classic zombie loses all previous hit dice from class or race, and gains 2d12 HD plus one hit die per point of Constitution bonus. In the case of a negative Con bonus, the zombie has 2d12-Con Penalty hit points.

Speed: 20 feet

Defense: A zombie has a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense. Any Defense bonus granted by class levels is lost.

Attacks: A zombie loses all attacks and gains a slam attack and a bite. All attack bonuses due to experience are lost, and the zombie gains a +1 to attacks per Hit Die. A zombie may only make 2 slams and a bite attack as a full round action. A common zombie may either attack or move, but not move and attack.

Damage: The zombie's slam attack does 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. the zombie's bite deals 1d4 points of slashing/piercing damage as well as Zombie Infection, which has no save.

Special Qualities: A zombie loses all of the special qualities gained from experience except for immunity or resistance to specific energy types and any damage reduction. In addition, the zombie gains the following:

Damage Immunity: A zombie is immune to piercing and bludgeoning damage that does not strike the head. Slashing weapons only do half damage. Zombies



Not even a headshot is a guarantee.

Your mileage may vary.

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also only take 25% damage from acid or fire.

Damage Reduction: A zombie gains a damage reduction of 5/- from those injuries that affect it.

Deadly Bite (Ex): A zombie gains its full Str Bonus to bite due to lack of pain in the jaw muscles.

Feeding Frenzy: When a zombie is faced with fresh blood from a living human, or when having successfully bitten a grappled opponent, the zombie must succeed at a Will save (DC 15), or enter a feeding frenzy. While in such a state, the zombie will continue to attack the current target, ignoring all others and all wounds it receives while it feeds. It gains an additional +4 to all grapple checks while in a frenzy, as well as ability score modifications listed in brackets below. While in a frenzy, the zombie can charge.

Grapple Adjustments: A zombie gains a +4 when grappling, due to the fact that normal grapple maneuvers have no effect on a zombie (such as a knee to the groin, strike to the throat, or a stomp to the instep).

Location Vulnerability: When struck in the head, the zombie takes damage directly to Hit Points, ignoring Damage Reduction and Damage Immunity. Once its Hit Points reach zero from a head injury, the zombie is considered destroyed.

Move or Attack Action Only (Ex): A zombie has poor reflexes and motor skills, and can perform only a single move action or its attack action on its turn. A zombie cannot charge unless it is in a Feeding Frenzy.

Allegiances: None. A zombie loses all allegiances.

Saves: A zombie's saving throw modifiers are based on Hit Dice. A zombie has no Fortitude save, and is considered an inanimate object when determining Fortitude saves, with the exception of chemical weaponry. Zombies only take 1/10 hit point damage or 1/3 ability damage from nerve agents. Normal zombies good saves are: Fortitude

Reputation Bonus: A zombie loses all reputation bonuses.

Abilities: A zombie's ability scores change as follows: Str +2 (+4 during feeding frenzy); Dex -4 (+0 during feeding frenzy); Con: N/A; Int: Reduce to 3(reduce to 1 during feeding frenzy); Wis: becomes 10; Cha: -8 (min of 1).

Skills: The zombie loses all skill ranks with the exception of Hide, Spot, Listen,

Move Silently and Search, which are reduced by half. A zombie gains the following skill bonuses: +4 to Hide, +2 to Listen, +4 to Move Silently, +2 to Search, and +2 to Spot. A zombie retains any skills made class skills by their Starting Occupation, but only at half the ranks possessed when the victim died.

Action Points: The zombie retains all action points and gains 2 per Hit Die. Zombies ignore the rule that a creature may only spend one action point per round. A zombie may only use them for the following:

Break-Through (Ex): By spending one action point before attacking a barrier such as a wooden door, a window, or a plywood wall, the zombie deals double damage on that attack.

Killing Bite (Ex): The zombie may spend one action point and confirm any critical hit on a bite without rolling.

Not the Face! (Ex): A zombie may use 2 action points to force an attacker to reroll any attack that would have killed it. The zombie must take the second roll, regardless of its result.

Feats: The zombie loses all feats it possessed in its former existence and gains Multi-Attack, Toughness, and Weapon Focus (Bite)

Notes: Zombies do not show up on infrared, and float, as do other dead bodies.

Advancement: 3-4 HD, 5-6 HD, 7-8 HD

SAMPLE COMMON ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a 1st level Strong/ 1st Level Tough Ordinary)

CR: 1; Medium-size undead; **HD:** 2d12; **hp** 16; **Mas:** --; **Init** -1; **Spd** 20 ft.; **Defense** 15 (16), touch 14 (15), flat-footed 15 (+2 class, +2 natural armor, +1 leather jacket); **BAB** +2; **Grap** +9 (+10); **Atk** +5 melee (1d6+3 slam), or +5 melee (1d4+3 and Zombie Infection, bite); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** None; **SV** Fort --, Ref +0 (+0), Will +0; **AP** 4; **Rep** +0; **Str** 16 (18), **Dex** 10 (10), **Con** --, **Int** 3 (1), **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

Occupation: Blue-collar (class skills: Drive, Intimidate)

Skills: Drive: +1; Hide +4, Intimidate +2; Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +2

Feats: Multi-Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Deadly Bite, Feeding Frenzy, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, Break Through, Killing Bite, Not the Face!

Possessions: Leather Jacket, Beretta 92F (no ammunition or magazines)

(Stats in brackets are when frenzied)

YEAR ☼ OF THE ZOMBIE

SPRINTER ZOMBIES

They were running in a tight pack; nine of them, heading straight for us. The soldiers dropped to one knee and fired, shooting controlled bursts. The shots knocked them sprawling. Six of them flipped up to their feet, while another one began pulling itself forward by its arms. For some reason my eyes focused on the fingernails peeling off against the pavement.

"Head shots, gentlemen, head-shots," Greg stated calmly, as if ordering pizza over the phone. He turned to my sorority sisters and I, who were staring at the zombies, and his eyes widened. "GET DOWN!" I dropped immediately, and so did they, but barely in time. Greg cut loose, snapping off quick bursts and shifting aim as fast as possible. I rolled over onto my back in time to see one of the zombie heading toward me; her head lowered, mouth open, and hands reaching for me.

I went calm again... that eerie, creepy, inhuman calm. I pushed off with my hands into a partial handstand, and kicked. It was like watching someone else snap out a kick into her chin, twisting the head around and breaking the neck with a crack. The zombie hit the ground and went into convulsions. I saw myself kick again after I landed on my feet, the cleats crushing her skull.

Greg was still firing, dragging my sisters up with one hand as he fired with the other. "GET UP, YOU BITCHES! MOVE MOVE MOVE!" For an insane moment, he reminded me of one of those military trainer guys in the movies, with a rough voice that demanded instant, unthinking obedience. The rate of fire was picking up. As I got up, still feeling strangely detached, a zombie burst out from a doorway and charged one of the soldiers, who was reloading his weapon.

I can remember his look of resignation and fear as the zombie came in at him, and then his eyes widening as my foot passed within an inch of his face. I spun and brought my foot up and into the zombie's face. There was a crunch of bone, and a spray of blood as the cleats bit deep, and the forehead crumbled under my foot.

"Jesus, lady." The guy softly intoned.

"Hurry up, we don't have all day." I replied, my voice calm. My sorority sisters were crying, running with the others. I jogged to catch up, the guy I saved keeping pace with me. I knew my face was calm and serene.

Inside, I was screaming.

From the Diaries of Becka

This is the minority of zombies (5%) that the characters will encounter in their travels. Unlike normal zombies, they are not slow, clumsy, and uncoordinated. They are aggressive and attracted to noise, moving lights, and movement. They quickly close in on prey, gathering in numbers as one "sprinter" passes within sight of another. They cannot solve the simplest problems, but attack relentlessly until their prey is pulled down.



Sprinter zombies are known to run for hours, being clocked at speeds of up to 20 MPH and sustaining those speeds for as long as 10 hours. Once they stop, they do not become torpid, but rather appear to move much like "normal" zombies and are often mistaken for them. Sprinter zombies have been known to leap small barriers, and demonstrate slow, stealthy movements when entering a building that they are familiar with and have dim memories of.

Sprinter zombies are also known for using the "run and bash" style of breaching doors, as well as leaping up to climb chicken wire fencing. Normal barbed wire does little to sprinter zombies, although military concertina wire and razor wire can slow or even incapacitate them.

These are one of the most dangerous of intact zombies, and while they are nearly invulnerable, they can be killed via incineration or massive brain trauma.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

The Sprinter Zombie template is applied to any human who dies with an intact brain during the Rising.



Challenge Rating: A "sprinter" zombie's challenge rating is typically twice the Hit Dice of the former level.

Hit Die: Double the number of Hit Dice, and raise them to d12

Speed: 120 feet. A sprinter zombie is not subject to fatigue due to forced marching or running. Sprinter zombies may charge.

Defense: A zombie has a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense. A sprinter retains any class bonuses to defense it had when alive.

Attacks: A zombie loses all attacks and gains a slam attack and a bite, and the zombie gains a +1 to attacks per Hit Die. A zombie may make 2 slams and a bite attack as a full attack action.

Damage: The zombie's slam attack does 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. The zombie's bite deals 1d4 points of slashing/piercing damage as well as Zombie Infection, which has no save.

Special Qualities: A zombie loses all of the special qualities gained from experience with the exception of immunities or resistances to specific energy types and any damage reduction. In addition, the zombie gains the following:
Damage Immunity: A zombie is immune to piercing and bludgeoning damage that

does not strike the head. Slashing weapons only do half damage. Zombies also only take 25% damage from acid or fire.

Damage Reduction: A zombie gains a damage reduction of 5/- except as noted above.

Deadly Bite (Ex): A zombie gains its full Str Bonus to bite due to lack of pain in the jaw muscles.

Feeding Frenzy: When a zombie is faced with fresh blood from a living human, or when having successfully bitten a grappled opponent, the zombie must succeed at a Will save (DC 15), or enter a feeding frenzy. While in such a state, the zombie will continue to attack the current target, ignoring all others and all wounds it receives while it feeds. It gains a +4 to all grapple checks while in a frenzy, as well as ability score modifications listed in brackets below. While in a frenzy, the zombie can charge.

Grapple Adjustments: A sprinter zombie gains a +4 when grappling, due to the fact that normal grapple maneuvers have no effect on a zombie (such as a knee to the groin, strike to the throat, or a stomp to the instep).

Location Vulnerability: When struck in the head, the zombie takes damage directly to Hit Points, ignoring Damage Reduction and Damage Immunity. Once its Hit Points reach zero from a head injury, the zombie is considered destroyed.

Allegiances: None. A zombie loses all allegiances.

Saves: Good save: Fortitude. A zombie's saving throw modifiers are based on Hit Dice. A zombie has no Fortitude save, and is considered an inanimate object when determining Fortitude saves, with the exception of chemical weaponry. Zombies only take 1/10 hit point damage or 1/3 ability damage from nerve agents.

Reputation Bonus: A zombie loses all reputation bonuses.

Abilities: A zombie's ability scores change as follows: Str +2 (+4 during feeding frenzy); Dex +4 (+6 during feeding frenzy); Con: N/A; Int: Reduce to 3 (Reduce to 1 during feeding frenzy); Wis: Reduce to 10; Cha: -8 (min of 1).

Skills: The zombie loses all skill ranks with the exception of Hide, Spot, Listen, Move Silently and Search, which are reduced by half. A zombie gains the following skill bonuses: +4 to Hide, +2 to Listen, +4 to Move Silently, +2 to Search, and +2 to Spot. A zombie retains any

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DADIES OF BECCA

skills made class skills by their Starting Occupation, but only at half the ranks possessed when the victim died.

Action Points: The zombie retains all action points and gains 2 per Hit Die. Zombies ignore the rule that one may only spend one action point per round. A zombie may only use them for the following:

Break-Through (Ex): By spending one action point before attacking a barrier such as a wooden door, a window, or a plywood wall, the zombie deals double damage on that attack.

Run-Through Dining (Ex): By spending two action points before slamming against a barrier, a Sprinter may ignore 5 points of hardness. This may be combined with the *Break Through* ability.

Killing Bite (Ex): The zombie may spend one action point and confirm any critical threat on a bite without rolling.

Not the Face! (Ex): A zombie may use 2 action points to force an attacker to reroll any attack that would have killed it. The zombie must take the second roll, regardless of the result.

Feats: The zombie loses all feats it possessed in its former existence and gains Alertness, Improved Initiative, Multi-attack, Pounce, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite).

Notes: Zombies do not show up on

infrared, and float, as do other dead bodies.

SAMPLE SPRINTER ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a 2nd level Fast Ordinary)

CR: 4; Medium-size undead; **HD:** 4d12; **hp** 29; **Mas:** --; **Init** +7; **Spd** 120 ft.; **Defense** 20 (21), touch 20 (21), flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +4 class, +2 natural armor); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +11 (+11); **Atk** +7 melee (1d6+3 slam) or +8 melee (1d4+3 and Zombie Infection, bite); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** None; **SV** Fort --, Ref +5 (+6), Will +1; **AP** 8; **Rep** +0; **Str** 16 (16), **Dex** 19 (21), **Con** --, **Int** 3 (1), **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1
Occupation: Athletic (class skills: Jump, Swim)
Skills: Hide +8, Listen +2, Move Silently +8, Search +2, Spot +2

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Multi-attack, Pounce, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite).

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Feeding Frenzy, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, Break Through, Run Through Dining, Killing Bite, Not the Face!

Possessions: Athletic jersey, sneakers.

(Stats in brackets are when frenzied)



Death cares not for beauty!

YEAR ☢ OF THE ZOMBIE ☢

CHILD ZOMBIES

Freddy crawled from the wreck of the hummer, dazed and bleeding. Charlie was obviously dead; his head had been smashed open by the metal dashboard, and he was still twitching with dying nerve spasms.

We yelled at him to run. Buck, Sam, and Greg were trying to spot the four children that had veered from running at us to plunge into the field's tall grass at the sound of the humm-vee crashing. Freddy got to his feet and shook his head, obviously concussed, his helmet gone and his tac-com missing. He reached down for his pistol, but found only an empty holster.

Eyes wide with fear, he began to run toward us as quickly as possible, tripping once on some unseen debris in the field. Greg fired at some movement, muffled snapping sounds coming from his silenced M-4 carbine. We could no longer hear the children, and knew that they were moving in for the kill. Silent. Deadly. Ruthless. Merciless.

And hungry.

They were on Freddy before he could get across the field. We couldn't even see them, since the grass was higher than their heads. Two hit him low, at the knees, while two others hit him at the waist. Before he knew what was happening, they had him on the ground, and were tearing at him. We could hear him screaming, and hear them feeding over his screams.

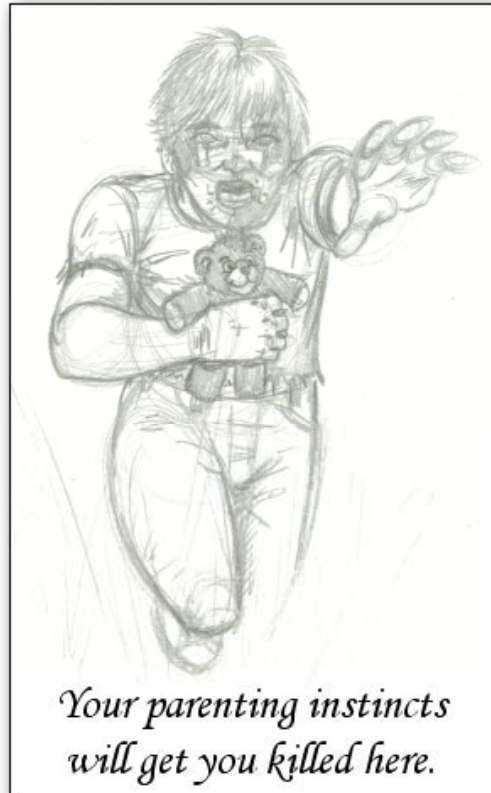
From the Diaries of Becka

Considered by most survivors to be the most deadly of The Risers, child zombies are fast, agile, and single-minded when it comes to running down and killing the living. Children zombies move in small packs of former classmates. Unlike other zombies, child zombies *will* attack other zombies, but research has determined that those that the child zombies attack were often bullies or tormentors in life.

Child zombie packs run 3-8 members in size, with the fastest often act as a dim leader who chooses the targets. Child zombie packs display crude tactics. For some reason, they often play the stunned or injured child routine in hopes of attracting prey. Usually one child will appear to be stunned or injured while the rest will hide nearby. They will wait until the bait zombie attacks, and then the rest envelop their victim.

Unlike most zombies, child zombies do not wander too far away from a chosen "lair." This place is usually somewhere that they felt safe at during their life, like schools, homes, or amusement parks.

The Child Zombie template is applied to any human with the child template who dies with an intact brain during the Rising.



Challenge Rating: 4

Hit Die: 2d12

Size: Small

Speed: 30 feet. A child zombie may charge.

Defense: A zombie has a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense. A child zombie retains half of any class bonuses to defense (rounded down) it had when alive.

Attacks: A child zombie loses all attacks and gains a slam attack and a bite. All attack bonuses due to experience are lost, and the child zombie gains a +1 to attacks per hit die. A zombie may only make 2 slams and a bite attack as a full round action.

Damage: The zombie's slam attack does 1d4 points of bludgeoning damage. The child zombie's bite deals 1d2 points of slashing/piercing damage as well as Zombie Infection, which has no save.

Special Qualities: A child zombie loses all of the special qualities gained from experience with the exception of immunities or resistances to specific energy types and any damage reduction. In addition, the child zombie gains the following:

Damage Immunity: A zombie is immune to piercing and bludgeoning damage that

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does not strike the head. Slashing weapons only do half damage. Zombies also only take 25% damage from acid or fire.

Damage Reduction: A zombie gains a damage reduction of 5/- except as noted above.

Deadly Bite (Ex): A zombie gains it's full Str Bonus to bite due to lack of pain in the jaw muscles.

Grapple Adjustments: A zombie gains a +4 when grappling, due to the fact that normal grapple maneuvers have no effect on a zombie (such as a knee to the groin, strike to the throat, or a stomp to the instep).

Location Vulnerability: When struck in the head, the zombie takes damage directly to Hit Points, ignoring Damage Reduction and Damage Immunity. Once it's Hit Points reach zero from a head injury, the zombie is considered destroyed.

Allegiances: None. A child zombie loses all allegiances.

Saves: Good saves: Fortitude and Reflex. A child zombie's saving throw modifiers are based on Hit Dice. A child zombie has no Fortitude save, and is considered an inanimate object when determining Fortitude saves, with the exception of chemical weaponry. Zombies only take 1/10 hit point damage or 1/3 ability damage from nerve agents.

Reputation Bonus: A child zombie loses all reputation bonuses.

Abilities: A child zombie's ability scores change as follows: Str -6, minimum of 10; Dex +4; Con: N/A; Int: Reduce to 4, capable of simple problem solving; Wis: Reduce to 10; Cha: -8 (min of 1).

Skills: The child zombie loses all skill ranks with the exception of Hide, Spot, Listen, Move Silently and Search, which are reduced by half. A child zombie gains the following skill bonuses: +8 to Hide, +2 to Listen, +8 to Move Silently, +2 to Search, and +2 to Spot.

Action Points: The zombie retains all action points and gains 2 per Hit Die. Zombies ignore the rule that one may only spend one action point per round. A zombie may only use them for the following:

Sucker-Bite (Ex): By spending an action point, a child zombie may appear to be a normal child, requiring a Spot check (DC 15) to tell otherwise.

Break-Through (Ex): By spending one action point before attacking a barrier such as a wooden door, a window, or a plywood wall, the child zombie deals double damage on that attack.

Killing Bite (Ex): The child zombie may spend one action point and confirm any critical threat on a bite without rolling.

Not the Face! (Ex): A zombie may use 2 action points to force an attacker to re-roll any attack that would have killed it. The zombie must take the second roll, regardless of the result.

According to the MSRD:

Children (newborns to age 11) are handled differently from other characters. They do not have classes or levels. They begin with the same ability score package as ordinaries (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8), but their ability scores are reduced as follows: -3 Str, -1 Dex, -3 Con, -1 Int, -1 Wis, -1 Cha.

Children have 1d4 hit points plus their Constitution modifier (minimum 1 hit point). They have no skills, feats, action points, or occupations. Their base attack bonus is +0, they have a +0 modifier on all saving throws (plus any modifiers for high or low ability scores), and their Reputation bonus is +0. Children have a +0 modifier to Defense and a normal speed of 20 feet. Children have no effective attacks and should be treated as noncombatants.

When a child turns 12, he or she is considered a young adult and takes his or her first level in one of the six basic classes. At that point, the character becomes an ordinary (or hero, in some cases).

From the ages of 3-11, when designing child zombies, the following should replace the data from the SRD:

Children (age 3 to age 11) are handled differently from other characters. They do not have classes or levels. They begin with the same ability score package as ordinaries (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8), but their ability scores are reduced as follows: -3 Str, -3 Con, -1 Int, -1 Wis.

Children have 1d4 hit points plus their Constitution modifier (minimum 1 hit point). They have 4 skill points (plus Int bonus) with the following class skills: Hide, Knowledge (Current Events), Knowledge (Pop Culture), Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot. Their base attack bonus is +0, they have a +0 modifier on Fortitude and Willpower saving throws and +1 modifier for Reflex (plus any modifiers for high or low ability scores), and their Reputation bonus is +0. Children have a +0 modifier to Defense and a normal speed of 20 feet. A child may select one feat, and a starting occupation (Restricted to: Blue Collar, Rural, Student). Children may make unarmed attacks, doing 1d2 nonlethal damage per attack.

When a child turns 12, he or she is considered a young adult and takes his or her first level in one of the six basic classes. At that point, the character becomes an ordinary (or hero, in some cases).

While the MSRD suggests that children are to be treated as noncombatants at all times, that is not exactly how Year of the Zombie stacks up, now is it? Between Feral Children, child zombies, panicked kids, and 10 year olds that have learned it's better to shoot first and never ask question, children need to be statted up.

Children's skills are based off of common motor skills and skills developed during childhood games (IE: Tag, hide and go seek, etc) as well as skill developed from environment (Which is why a child gains the starting occupation) that they grow up in.

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THE DIARIES OF BECKA

Feats: The child zombie loses all feats it possessed in its previous existence and gains: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Pounce, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (Bite)
Notes: Zombies do not show up on infrared, and float as do other dead bodies.

CHILD ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a Child)

CR: 1; Small-size undead; **HD:** 2d12; **hp** 15; **Mas:** --; **Init** +5; **Spd** 30 ft.; **Defense** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+2 natural armor, +1 size); **BAB** +2; **Grap** +8; **Atk** +3 melee (1d4+1 slam) or +3 melee (1d2+1 and Zombie Infection, bite); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** None; **SV** Fort --, Ref +0, Will +0; **AP** 4; **Rep** +0; **Str** 13, **Dex** 10, **Con** --, **Int** 3 (1), **Wis** 10, **Cha** 3
Skills: Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +4

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Pounce, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Feeding Frenzy, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, Sucker-Bite, Break Through, Killing Bite, Not the Face!

Possessions: none.



FRENZIED ZOMBIES

Sylvia frantically yanked on the bolt of the SAW, trying to clear the machinegun as the "deader" screeched in a chilling voice. It pushed through the barrier, splinters tearing into the dead flesh of her hands. Her mouth was bloodstained and gaping wide as she screeched her hunger. Sam shoved his pistols forward and doubletapped twice, that habit from long years of police training putting the four bullets into the center of the woman.

She just kept coming. She didn't even stagger from the shots. She reached Hank and grabbed him, tearing into him with her teeth.

The blood sprayed across the room from his severed jugular. Sam put two bullets into Hank's head, and two into the woman's.

Hank would have joined her in moments anyway.

From the Diaries of Becka

Frenzied zombies are easily noticed due to their spastic and disjointed movements. They often screech or make other noises, ignoring attacks and focusing directly on biting. Frenzied zombies prefer to grapple and bite a target, refusing to move to the next target unless forcibly removed from their victims.

Many consider frenzied zombies to be more dangerous than Sprinters, as a permanently frenzied zombie seems to be able to attack with more ferocity and bring down their targets more often.

When not attacking, frenzied zombies appear more agitated. They often attempt to perform tasks they barely remember from life and become frustrated when they cannot. Frenzied zombies also seem to use crude tools to bash open windows more often than any other type of zombie.

The Frenzied Zombie template is applied to any human who dies with an intact brain during the Rising.

Challenge Rating: 3

Hit Die: Reduce to half and add 1 HD per point of Con Bonus, convert to d12. In the case of a penalty due to low Con when alive, then subtract 1 hp per point of Con penalty.

Speed: 30 feet

Defense: A zombie has a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense. A frenzied zombie retains any class bonuses to defense it had when alive.

Attacks: A zombie loses all attacks and gains a slam attack and a bite, and the zombie gains a +1 to attack rolls per Hit Die. A zombie may only make 2 slams and

a bite attack as a full round action. A frenzied zombie may either attack or move, but not move and attack.

Damage: The zombie's slam attack does 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. The zombie's bite deals 1d4 points of slashing/piercing damage as well as Zombie Infection, which has no save.

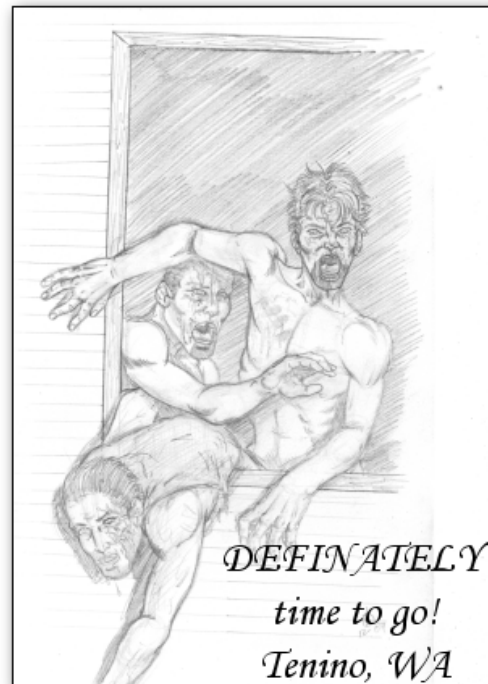
Special Qualities: A zombie loses all of the special qualities gained from experience with the exception of immunities or resistances to specific energy types and any damage reduction. In addition, the zombie gains the following:

Damage Immunity: A zombie is immune to piercing and bludgeoning damage that does not strike the head. Slashing weapons only do half damage. Zombies also only take 25% damage from acid or fire.

Damage Reduction: A zombie gains a damage reduction of 5/- except as noted above.

Deadly Bite (Ex): A zombie gains it's full Str Bonus to bite due to lack of pain in the jaw muscles.

Feeding Frenzy: When a zombie is faced with fresh blood from a living human, or



when having successfully bitten a grappled opponent, the zombie must succeed at a Will save (DC 15), or enter a feeding frenzy. While in such a state, the zombie will continue to attack the current target, ignoring all others and all wounds it receives while it feeds. It gains a +4 to all grapple checks while in a frenzy, as well as ability score modifications listed in

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brackets below. While in a frenzy, the zombie can charge.

Grapple Adjustments: A zombie gains a +4 when grappling, due to the fact that normal grapple maneuvers have no effect on a zombie (such as a knee to the groin, strike to the throat, or a stomp to the instep).

Location Vulnerability: When struck in the head, the zombie takes damage directly to Hit Points, ignoring Damage Reduction and Damage Immunity. Once it's Hit Points reach zero from a head injury, the zombie is considered destroyed.

Allegiances: None. A zombie loses all allegiances.

Saves: Good save: Reflex. A zombie's saving throw modifiers are based on Hit Dice. A zombie has no Fortitude save, and is considered an inanimate object when determining Fortitude saves, with the exception of chemical weaponry. Zombies only take 1/10 hit point damage or 1/3 ability damage from nerve agents.

Reputation Bonus: A zombie loses all reputation bonuses.

Abilities: A zombie's ability scores change as follows: Str +6 (+8 during feeding frenzy); Dex +2 (+4 during feeding frenzy); Con: N/A; Int: Reduce to 3, (Reduce to 1 during feeding frenzy); Wis: Reduce to 10; Cha: -8 (min of 1).

Skills: The zombie loses all skill ranks with the exception of Hide, Spot, Listen, Move Silently and Search, which are reduced by half. A zombie gains the following skill bonuses: +4 to Hide, +2 to Listen, +4 to Move Silently, +2 to Search, and +2 to Spot. A zombie retains any skills made class skills by their Starting Occupation, but only at half the ranks possessed when the victim died.

Action Points: The zombie retains all action points and gains 2 per Hit Die. Zombies ignore the rule that one may only spend one action point per round. A zombie may only use them for the following:

Break-Through (Ex): By spending one action point before attacking a barrier such as a wooden door, a window, or a plywood wall, the zombie deals double damage on that attack. If a tool such as a rock or tire iron is used, a frenzied zombie ignores up to 3 points of hardness.

Killing Bite (Ex): The zombie may spend one action point to confirm any critical hit on a bite without rolling.

Not the Face! (Ex): A zombie may use 2 action points to force an attacker to reroll

any attack that would have killed it. The zombie must take the second roll, regardless of the result.

Feats: The zombie loses all feats and gains Alertness, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Notes: Zombies do not show up on infrared, and float as do other dead bodies.

FRENZIED ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a 4th Level Tough Ordinary)

CR: 2; Medium-size undead; **HD:** 2d12; **hp** 20; **Mas:** --; **Init** +5; **Spd** 30 ft.; **Defense** 19 (20), touch 17 (18), flat-footed 17 (+3 class, +2 Dex, +2 natural armor, +2 concealable vest); **BAB** +2; **Grp** +11 (+12); **Atk** +7 melee (1d6+5 slam) or +7 melee (1d4+5 and Zombie Infection, bite); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** None; **SV** Fort --, Ref +3 (+4), Will +0; **AP** 4; **Rep** +0; **Str** 20 (22), **Dex** 14 (16), **Con** --, **Int** 3 (1), **Wis** 10, **Cha** 2

Occupation: Law Enforcement (class skills: Diplomacy, Listen)

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Spot +5

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bite)

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Feeding Frenzy, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, Break Through, Killing Bite, Not the Face!

Possessions: Beretta 92F clips, full (gun lost), Mace, nightstick, FRS radio, concealable vest (vest is damaged, and the zombie is no longer proficient with it, so she only gains the nonproficiency bonus) (Stats in brackets are when frenzied)



ENHANCED MEMORY ZOMBIES

The zombie stopped and picked up the empty Colt 45 that Greg had tossed aside. As I watched, it brought it up to its face and slowly examined it. I couldn't shooting it, since I was busy trying to clear the jam from my M-16A2 at the time. Sylvia saw the thing and began swinging her SAW around. Just then, it's face lit up in a grotesque parody of happiness.

Right before Sylvia put a burst into it's freakishly smiling face, it pointed the pistol at the back of Sam's head and pulled the trigger.

I could see the red light of the laser sight appear on the nape of Sam's neck, and hear the dry snap of the hammer hitting an empty chamber. That wasn't the worst of it.

"Aaaaaaawper..." it slurred from it's cold lips. Die Copper. It spoke. It fucking spoke. Sometimes, at night, I hear it slur "Die Becka." And I wake up screaming.

From the Diaries of Becka

These are the ones who have regained some knowledge of their former selves, either because of extensive training, repeated actions, or something that was very important to the person before they Rose again. Most Enhanced Memory Zombies are former military, remembering the basics of weapon use. Some have been policemen or others who died with a *vital* important task undone (not something simple, such as getting the cat out of the garage). These zombies remember parts of their past life, more than the dim yearnings demonstrated by the majority of zombies.

Rumors constantly circulate that someone knows someone who heard from someone who met a guy who heard from this chick about a dude who ran into a zombie that could speak. Extremely slurred and distorted, but still it still spoke. Characters might be "lucky" enough to run into one of these zombies once every few decades during the Rising

Challenge Rating: An "enhanced memory" zombie's challenge rating typically is ½ of the former level.

Hit Die: Change all Hit Dice to d12 and add one HD per point of Con bonus. In the case of a penalty due to low Con score, subtract 1 HP per point of Con penalty.

Speed: 20 feet

Defense: A zombie has a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense.

Attacks: A zombie loses all attacks and gains a slam attack and a bite, and the zombie gains a +1 to attacks per Hit Die. A zombie may only make 2 slams and a bite attack as a full round action. An enhanced memory zombie may either attack or move, but not move and attack.

Damage: The zombie's slam attack does 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage. the zombie's bite deals 1d4 points of slashing/piercing damage as well as Zombie Infection, which has no save.

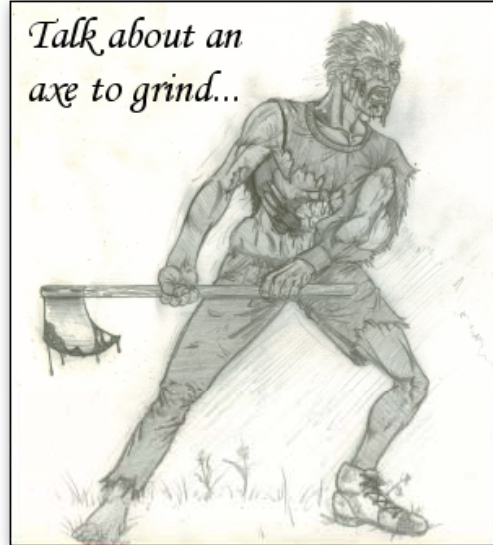
Special Qualities: A zombie loses all of the special qualities gained from experience with the exception of immunities or resistances to specific energy types and any damage reduction. In addition, the zombie gains the following:

Damage Immunity: A zombie is immune to piercing and bludgeoning damage that does not strike the head. Slashing weapons only do half damage. Zombies also only take 25% damage from acid or fire.

Damage Reduction: A zombie gains a damage reduction of 5/- except as noted above.

Deadly Bite (Ex): A zombie gains it's full

*Talk about an
axe to grind...*



Str Bonus to bite due to lack of pain in the jaw muscles.

Grapple Adjustments: A zombie gains a +4 when grappling, due to the fact that normal grapple maneuvers have no effect on a zombie (such as a knee to the groin, strike to the throat, or a stomp to the instep).

Location Vulnerability: When struck in the head, the zombie takes damage directly to Hit Points, ignoring Damage Reduction and Damage Immunity. Once it's Hit

Points reach zero from a head injury, the zombie is considered destroyed.

Allegiances: None. A zombie loses all allegiances.

Saves: Good save: Fortitude. A zombie's saving throw modifiers are based on Hit Dice. A zombie has no Fortitude save, and is considered an inanimate object when determining Fortitude saves, with the exception of chemical weaponry. Zombies only take 1/10 hit point damage or 1/3 ability damage from nerve agents.

Reputation Bonus: A zombie loses all reputation bonuses.

Abilities: A zombie's ability scores change as follows: Str +4; Dex +2; Con: N/A; Int: Reduce to 6; Wis: Reduce to 10; Cha: -8.

Skills: The zombie loses all skill ranks with the exception of Hide, Spot, Listen, Move Silently and Search, which are reduced by half. A zombie gains the following skill bonuses: +4 to Hide, +2 to Listen, +4 to Move Silently, +2 to Search, and +2 to Spot. A zombie retains any skills made class skills by their Starting Occupation, but only at half the ranks possessed when the victim died.

Action Points: The zombie retains all action points and gains 2 per Hit Die. Zombies ignore the rule that one may only spend one action point per round. A zombie may only use them for the following:

I Remember (Ex): By expending an action point, the zombie may "remember" up to 2 ranks in any skill it once had ranks in for ten minutes. If the zombie attempts a skill check for one the skills it "remembers," treat any failed rolls as a critical failure. The zombie may attempt to speak by spending an Action Point and making an Intelligence check (DC 20). The words it speaks will be slow, slurred, and quiet.

Break-Through (Ex): By spending one action point before attacking a barrier such as a wooden door, a window, or a plywood wall, the zombie deals double damage on that attack.

Killing Bite (Ex): The zombie may spend one action point to confirm any critical hit on a bite without rolling.

Not the Face! (Ex): A zombie may use 2 action points to force an attacker to reroll any attack that would have killed it. The zombie must take the second roll, regardless of the result.

Feats: The zombie loses all feats it possessed in its former existence and gains: Improved Initiative, Toughness,

Weapon Focus (bite). The zombie may retain any feat that is a bonus feat for a class it had 3 or more levels in.

Notes: Zombies do not show up on infrared, and float as do other dead bodies. Enhanced Memory Zombies might remember basic military tactics, how to open complex door locking mechanisms, or even how to start a car. A few have been recorded as able to load and utilize firearms.

ENHANCED MEMORY ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a 1st level Fast/ 4th level Smart Hero)

CR: 3; Medium-size undead; **HD:** 5d12; **hp** 41; **Mas:** --; **Init:** +7; **Spd** 20 ft.; **Defense** 20, touch 19, flat-footed 17 (+4 class, +3 Dex, +2 natural armor, +1 leather jacket); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +10; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1 slam) or +8 melee (1d4+1 and Zombie Infection, bite); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** None; **SV** Fort --, Ref +6, Will +1; **AP** 10; **Rep** +0; **Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** --, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 4

Occupation: Criminal (class skills: Knowledge [streetwise], Move Silently)

Skills: Hide +6, Listen +2, Move Silently +9, Search +2, Spot +2

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Endurance, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, I Remember, Break Through, Killing Bite, Not the Face!

Possessions: Leather Jacket, Colt Python revolver (chambers empty), spare .357 rounds in pocket, PDA (broken and inoperable, battery leaking), Rolex watch, pack of cigarettes (soaked with blood)



TRAINED ZOMBIES

The lid of the metal coffin pulled free with a pop, almost dropping Buck into the coffin and onto the occupant. We had just secured this train, and found more than fifty coffins inside; we couldn't take the chance of there being dead bodies inside. We had to search each one to make sure those inside were really dead, and had not Risen.

"Jesus H. Christ on the Cross!" exclaimed Buck, stumbling back and raising his crowbar. Inside was a corpse with a pair of night-vision goggles stapled over her eyes, her jaw wired shut with metal brackets, and a metal plate riveted to her head. The plate had "463-A9" engraved on it, and dried blood was caked around the plate. A collar with two LED's was fitted around her neck. She was wearing a set of woodland BDU's with a Day-Glo orange circle on the front and the back.

"What in the fuck...?" Greg asked, leaning over to look at the undead woman. He reached forward with his crowbar and popped the NVGs off of the woman's face, exposing her eyes. The eyelids were cut away, but she still looked at Greg.

"Why isn't she lunging for your throat?" Cindy broke the silence, and I realized that I had been holding my breath. Sam leaned forward and looked at the dead woman.

"Burns on her lips, nose and neck, the ex-Sheriff stated slowly. Probably more, hidden burns on her body. Those are electrical burns. I'd say electrical shock was used."

"Why?" I asked, my voice small and child-like in the cavernous box-car.

"Training," replied Sam. "Negative reinforcement. Someone trained this thing to be a killer. Since it does not get agitated at us, I'd say they were trying to teach it to kill other zombies." Sam placed his pistol against the woman's forehead. "Or, she can't move because her little neck box is somehow keeping her from moving."

The other forty-nine were all the same. We put an end to them all and tossed the corpses from the moving train.

From the Diaries of Becka

Some zombies are "trained," by the immoral or the insane, to perform certain tasks. Often, they are used for menial labor or as troops by more ruthless settlements. Target and task recognition are extremely limited, and require weeks, if not months of training.

Training is most often done through repeated moves, with negative reinforcement delivered via electroshock



This one was not only packing a Tec-9, he about shot Robert in the ass. Centralia, WA, April

and positive reinforcement being rewarded with a live victim. Though zombies do not appear to feel pain from injuries, electrical shocks delivered to the spine or brain appear to hurt them. Eyelids are commonly cut away, and often an implant is placed into the skull to deliver an electric shock that will temporarily overload the zombie's motor control center.

Trained Zombies know a number of "tricks". Examples of different "tricks" and the time required to train a single zombie in them are listed below.

Training Times

Trick	Time
Fire a weapon at a target	1 month
Dig in an area designated by a colored line	3 weeks
Do not attack a zombie wearing specific color	2 weeks
Attack a zombie wearing a specific color	6 weeks
Attack zombies not wearing specific colors or no colors	10 weeks
Do not eat fresh corpses	6 weeks
Do not attack living humans	16 weeks
Do not attack living humans wearing a certain color	12 weeks
Attack anyone within a certain area	4 weeks
Attack anyone outside a certain area	4 weeks
Do not leave a specific, undesignated by a boundary, area	5 weeks
Do not leave area marked by a boundary	2 weeks

Up to twenty zombies can be trained at a time, depending on the equipment. It is **highly** recommended that player characters never be allowed to train zombies, as doing so crosses the thin line

between sanity and insanity, and involves inhuman acts of cruelty and torture.

The Trained Zombie template may be applied to any existing zombie. The zombie retains all of its former abilities and gains the ones listed below.

Challenge Rating: A "trained" zombie's challenge rating is typically equal to its former CR +1 for each trick it knows.

Allegiances: A Trained Zombie has an allegiance only to its trainer while it is under the influence of its training.

Action Points: The trained zombie gains the following additional action point ability:

I'll do what I want! (Ex): By spending an action point, the zombie can override its training for 1d4 rounds.

These zombies are extremely rare and considered little more than rumor. The zombies are usually trained as one would train a rabid dog, with constant video, audio, negative and positive reinforcement, and possibly cybernetic or mechanical "reminder" systems to control them or penalize "bad" behavior.

TRAINED ZOMBIE

(Base creature is a 1st level Strong/ 1st Level Tough Ordinary and Classic zombie)

CR: 5; Medium-size undead; **HD:** 2d12; **hp** 16; **Mas:** --; **Init** -1; **Spd** 20 ft.; **Defense** 16 (17), touch 15 (16), flat-footed 16 (+2 class, +2 natural armor, +2 tactical vest); **BAB** +2; **Grap** +9 (+10); **Atk** +5 melee (1d6+3 slam), +5 melee (1d4+3 and Zombie Infection, bite), or -4 ranged (2d12, M2HB); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** United States Government zombie handler; **SV** Fort --, Ref +0 (+0), Will +0; **AP** 4; **Rep** +0; **Str** 16 (18), **Dex** 10 (10), **Con** --, **Int** 3 (1), **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1
Occupation: Blue-collar (class skills: Drive, Intimidate)

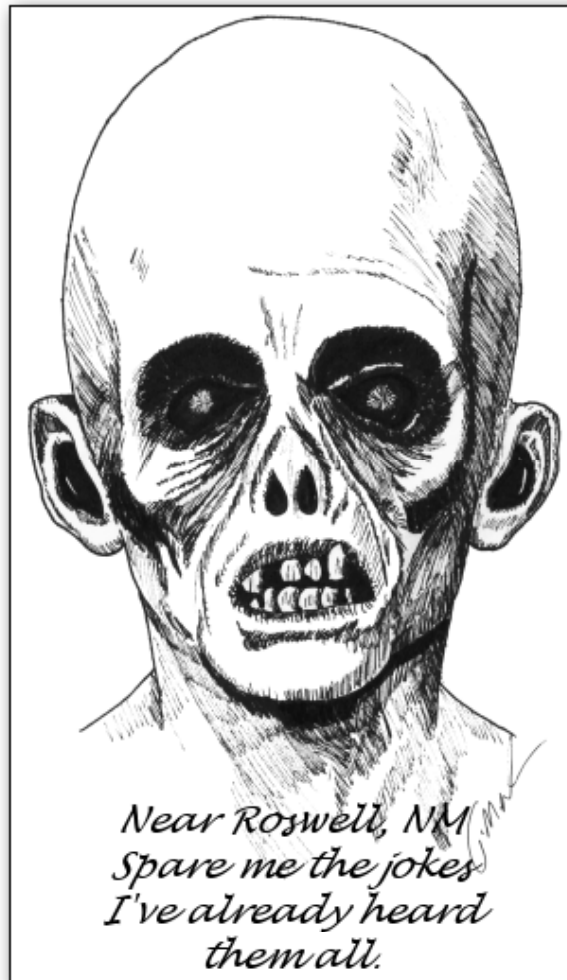
Skills: Drive: +1; Hide +4, Intimidate +2; Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Search +2, Spot +2

Feats: Multi-Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (Bite)

Special Qualities: Damage Immunity, Damage Reduction, Feeding Frenzy, Grapple Adjustment, location vulnerability, Break Through, Killing Bite, Not the Face!, I'll do what I want.

Possessions: M2HB (mounted in bunker), tactical vest, "shocker" reinforcement unit screwed onto chest, numbered tag (045-G3) screwed into forehead.

Tricks: Do not leave area marked by boundary (bunker), Attack anyone within a certain area (line of sight outside bunker), Fire a weapon at a target (M2HB), Do not attack living humans wearing a certain color (bright yellow). Total training time: 22 weeks.



Those Left Alive New player classes

I learned to drive armored vehicles in 5th Mechanized Infantry Division, and gained combat experience in Desert Storm driving a Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle. After Desert Storm, we were moved from Fort Polk to Fort Hood. I ended up getting out right afterwards, but it was already too late for my marriage. The bitch had divorced me while I was sitting in an armored vehicle out in the Sandbox. She took my kids and got a restraining order by sniveling that she was afraid of me. On top of it all, I was pretty disillusioned with the post-war military. It seemed like we frontliners were being punished for going to combat by the REMFs who sat on their asses and gave each other medals.

Believe it or not, there weren't too many jobs for an armored vehicle driver in civilian corporate America. So I drifted for a year or two, then did some mercenary work in Africa before coming back to the US and joining the Hell's Angels. I drifted from place to place, sometimes with the Angels, sometimes just on my own. I'd run guns, do a little contract work, but for the most part, I could live comfortably on the money I'd made in Africa. Turns out I'm lucky at cards, so when I was getting close to broke, I'd hit an Indian casino and usually get a couple grand. Sometimes the Indians would hire me for a little leg breaking or collection work.

It's kind of funny. If I hadn't have been drunk and pinched Cindy's ass at the craps table in the Lucky Eagle Casino, we wouldn't have gotten in trouble when she followed me out to the parking lot to punch me out. If we hadn't been tossed in that holding cell that first night, well, we'd probably be dead.

I picked up a lot of combat experience in Africa; far more than I did in the Gulf, and a lot of it is much more applicable to this brave

new world of ours. That is my biggest edge: the urban warfare training and the ability to run those metal hogs. I don't wish it could be different. Before the Rising I was a motorcycle bum, a brawler, and barely a rung or two from the bottom of society.

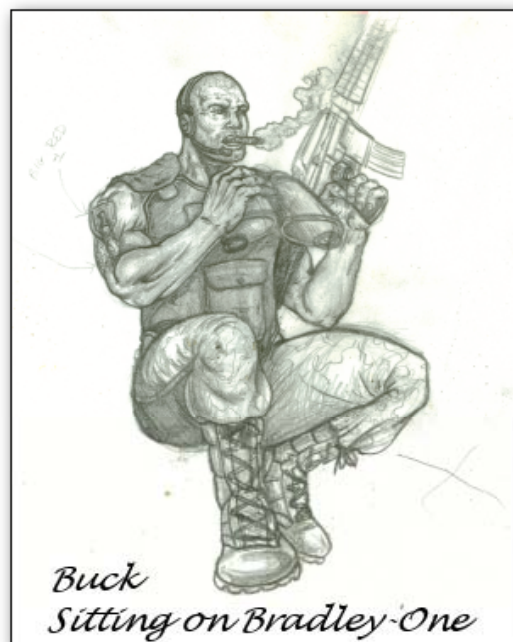
Now I'm a hero. I'm a veritable God.

Still, I hope my ex-wife and my two kids aren't staggering around looking for fresh, and I hope my children did not end up with a kid-pack. I hoped they died cleanly, maybe in one of the nuclear blasts. She might have dropped me like a hot rock, but she was young, foolish, and scared of the stories her parents told her. She doesn't deserve to be a Riser, and neither do my kids.

Buck's autobiography, from the Diaries of Becka

The biggest thrill of Year of the Zombie is character mortality. Zombies are always a menace to characters. Despite the fact that you *know* there is probably a zombie behind that wall, around that corner, or in that dark room, the risk can be almost too much for a character to take.

There are several ways to adjust PC creation in order to make the game rougher and more



gritty, with a higher chance of death, to ensure that the fear of mortality never leaves the game. The following options were heavily playtested in several different campaign types, scenarios, and abortive attempts.

Why use the Ordinary Template and the stat array? Roughly 95% of the WORLD population could not handle these situations. Roughly 90% of America could not. Weapons knowledge, how to properly wear a bullet-proof vest, using martial arts in a life or death situation, and shooting to kill are all alien to the majority of people in today's world.

The GM can decide that, after at least two months into the Risings, that new characters no longer have to be created as ordinaries. This represents the fact that survival of the fittest has weeded out most "ordinary" folks, and the remaining survivors can be considered sufficiently heroic. This is entirely up to the GM's discretion; he or she doesn't have to stop ruling that new characters are ordinary if a high PC mortality rate is desired.

The first option is possibly the cruelest, and leads to a high PC mortality rate. Allow players to create character with only the ordinary template and the standard ordinary ability score array. Players do not choose a character class, merely their starting occupation. Character receive skill ranks equal to 4 times their Intelligence modifier, and all skills are considered cross-class skills (excepting those made class skills by the character's starting occupation). The character gets one feat (the starting feat). Characters have a Base Attack Bonus, base Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save

bonus, Defense bonus, and Reputation bonus of +0. Start the character off at -1000 XP. Once the character acquires 1000 XP (bringing them to a total of 0 XP), they would then be allowed to pick an ordinary basic class. This is the same as making a 1st level character except the character does not receive x4 skill points and does not get another starting feat. This never changes; no matter how far the campaign progresses, all new characters are designed this way.

The second option goes as follows: In the early days, the characters will use "Ordinary" ability score array. They will be allowed to choose a basic class, but will do so as an ordinary (so they do not gain any Action Points, Talents, or Bonus Feats). It will cost 500 XP to get rid of the "Ordinary Template" from the PC, and another 500 XP to re-roll stats. Stats must be placed, from lowest to highest, just as the Ordinary Stat-array was.

In later days, new characters would have the option to start with either the ordinary stat array or the ordinary template, instead of starting with both.

The third option is a little more forgiving. Beginning characters choose either the ordinary stat-block or the ordinary template; otherwise, the character is generated normally. It costs 1000 XP to lose whichever ordinary element the PC chooses to take at generation.

The fourth option is the one most GMs and players are familiar with: Generate characters normally, and hope for the best.



*Ambushing Risers
SAW gunner, Rochester, WA*

FERAL CHILD BASIC CLASS

Greg parried the knife with the barrel of his M-4 and smashed the buttstock into his attacker's face. Her filed teeth sprayed from her mouth like little triangles. Greg quickly followed through by ramming the bayonet into her chest and yanking the trigger back. She flew clean off the bayonet and landed in a crumpled heap on the floor. It was strange, seeing both Greg and Buck demonstrating the exact same reflexes in combat. Back to back, they were tough to get close to. Their ingrained reflexes, pounded into them by hard eyed drill instructors, made them move identically.

It took everything I had, all of my training, to keep away from the knives of my attackers. Butcher knives, meat cleavers, and flensing knives wove a glittering steel cage around me as I fought. They tried to get me at my vulnerable points. Not to kill me, but to cut tendons, slash muscles, and render me helpless.

Sylvia grabbed one of her attackers, ignoring the knife he stabbed into her forearm. She slung him against a support pillar by his arms. His shoulders gave in with a loud pop as he hit the corner of the cement fixture back-first; his spine snapped loudly. The assailant went down and was quickly covered by four of his comrades, their knives flashing as they stripped away his still-living flesh.

"FALL BACK!" Buck shouted, heaving his attacker away with one hand. She landed nimbly and scuttled forward quickly, her knives gleaming in the dim light of the underground parking garage. Sam finished reloading and began firing again, each round taking one of them in the chest, flinging them to the ground to die in a puddle of blood. Headshots were too risky, and too many of them wore Kevlar helmets to protect their brains.

We ran, using tight, controlled bursts. For the first time in months I used my brother's pistols, the legacy he had left me beneath the seat of his car. They dropped from overhead pipes, scurried from beneath parked cars, and leapt from shadows with mouths open and a fearsome hunger that still gives me cold sweats.

We reached the Bradleys and began piling in. Before I entered, I looked behind us and saw her: the leader of the pack, standing in a pool of light like an opera singer during a solo.

She wore a Spetznaz urban combat battle dress blouse with the sleeves cut away, the hem of the blouse nearly to her knees. Her hair was raggedly cut, probably by the boning knife clutched in one hand. In the other, she pointed at us with a meat cleaver. Her knees were scabbed and her tennis shoes

were mismatched. For some reason, I noticed she was wearing a dirty pair of Hello Kitty socks. Her eyes were bright, electric blue, and bored into my head with a fury and hunger that I can still feel as I pen this, miles away.

"We get you!" she screamed in savage triumph. "When we do, we eat your heart!" Behind her, the pack of kids barked and howled like a bunch of wild dogs. "Metal beast have to eat sometime!"

Buck snapped a burst from the M-240 at her, but she skittered away into the darkness.

We had lost three people in the attempt to find diesel fuel for the Bradleys, but we had done nothing more than make an enemy who I still tremble to think about.

A 9 year old girl.

From the Diaries of Becka

Feral children are some of the most aggressive and lethal foes in Year of the Zombie. These children were left to survive on their own at a very young age, and regressed into barbarism quickly. They copy the survival mechanisms of those they see around them, which is mostly cannibalism and hunting other people. Feral Children cluster into a type of "Wolf Pack" armed with sharp knives and meat cleavers.

Life in the Wolf Pack is hard; a constant game of Hide & Seek with the zombies and avoiding adult survivors. Most Feral Children have been raped by conscienceless adults and teenagers, and have learned to avoid *all* adults, including those in uniform. They emulate the zombies, attacking other humans and quickly slicing them apart, stuffing the meat into pockets and purses. They do not seem to catch any diseases from the meat of zombies or humans, even though they often eat it raw.

Those members who are bitten by a zombie are quickly dispatched and sliced apart, so it is unknown if they can contract the disease that a zombie bite seems to transmit. They often hunt zombies, waiting to catch one alone or in close quarters so they can hack it apart quickly and cleanly.

All Wolf Packs are ruled by the toughest female, with two to five of the toughest males as her "escorts" or "husbands" (despite the fact that there is nothing sexual about the relationship). Those females that reach roughly the age of 15 are placed in "Breeding Dens" where they are repeatedly gang-raped by the boys, even during pregnancy. "Breeders" are left unattended while giving birth, and those

who die are quickly chopped up and eaten by the rest of the pack. Boys who reach roughly the age of 15 are driven out and forever considered "Prey" by the rest of the pack. Those who refuse their eventual fate are killed by the rest of the pack and eaten.

The Den Mother and her two "escorts" may possibly stay as long as their 18th year, but rarely any longer.

Prerequisites: The Feral Child must possess the following:

Ability Scores: Dex 12+

Other: Child Template

Hit Dice: Feral children gain 1d8 hp per level.

Action Points: Feral children gain a number of action points equal to 5 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class

Class Skills

The feral child's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (streetwise, tactics) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Search (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (5+Int modifier) X 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Feral Child Advancement Table

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Rep
1st	+0	+0	+1	+0	Talent	+3	+2
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+0	Bonus Feat	+4	+2
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Talent	+4	+2
4th	+3	+1	+2	+1	Bonus Feat	+5	+3
5th	+3	+1	+3	+1	Talent	+5	+3
6th	+4	+2	+3	+2	Bonus Feat	+6	+3
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Talent	+6	+4
8th	+6/+1	+2	+4	+2	Bonus Feat	+7	+4
9th	+6/+1	+3	+4	+3	Talent	+7	+4
10th	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	Bonus Feat	+8	+5

Starting Feats: The Feral Child gets the Simple Weapons Proficiency feat in addition to it's two starting feats.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Feral Child.

Talents: At 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 9th level, the Feral Child selects a special ability from the following talent trees. Some trees have a set order that must be followed, while others provide a list from which to choose.

As long as the hero qualifies, you can select freely from any and all talent trees. No talent can be selected more than once unless expressly indicated.

Silent Death Talent Tree

Sneak Attack: The feral child's attacks deals extra damage any time her target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to Defense (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the feral child flanks her target. This talent may be taken more than once. The feral child deals +1d6 extra damage with her attacks for each time this talent is selected. This extra damage never applies to the undead. Should the feral child score a critical hit, this extra damage is not multiplied.

Super-Sneaky: The Feral Child may re-roll a failed Hide or Move Silently check. This talent may be used once per day per class level. The Feral Child must accept the results of the second roll.

Deadly Eel: The Feral Child may fit into places as small as one half of their size with a successful Escape Artist Check (DC 15).

Prerequisite: Super-Sneaky

Evasion: If the Feral Child is exposed to any effect that normally allows a character to attempt a Reflex saving throw for half damage, the Feral Child suffers no damage if she makes a successful saving throw.

Evasion can only be used when wearing light armor or no armor.

Cut to the Bone: By spending an action point, the Feral Child can

automatically confirm a critical threat on a melee attack.

Prerequisite: Evasion, Sneak Attack

Street Rat Talent Tree

Meat Stalker: The Feral Child may spend an Action Point to add a competence bonus equal to her class level to a Hide or Move Silently check. The Feral Child may do this even if spotted by a zombie; if the Hide or Move Silently check is successful, then the Feral Child evades the zombie's detection.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DADIES OF BECKA

Fast Food: The Feral Child may hack away food from opponents during melee combat. For each die of Sneak Attack damage dealt, the Feral Child hacks off one day's worth of food (read: meat) from her opponent. She automatically stores this on her person. This ability is considered automatic, but the Feral Child may choose not to use it at will (though there is no real reason for one not to use this ability)

Prerequisite: Evasion, Sneak Attack

Risen Blindness: The Risen cannot see or sense the Feral Child, even if they or another of their number are under attack. Zombies no longer react to the Feral Child even when sliced at and dismembered by them. No logical explanation exists as to how this is accomplished.

Prerequisite: Meat Stalker

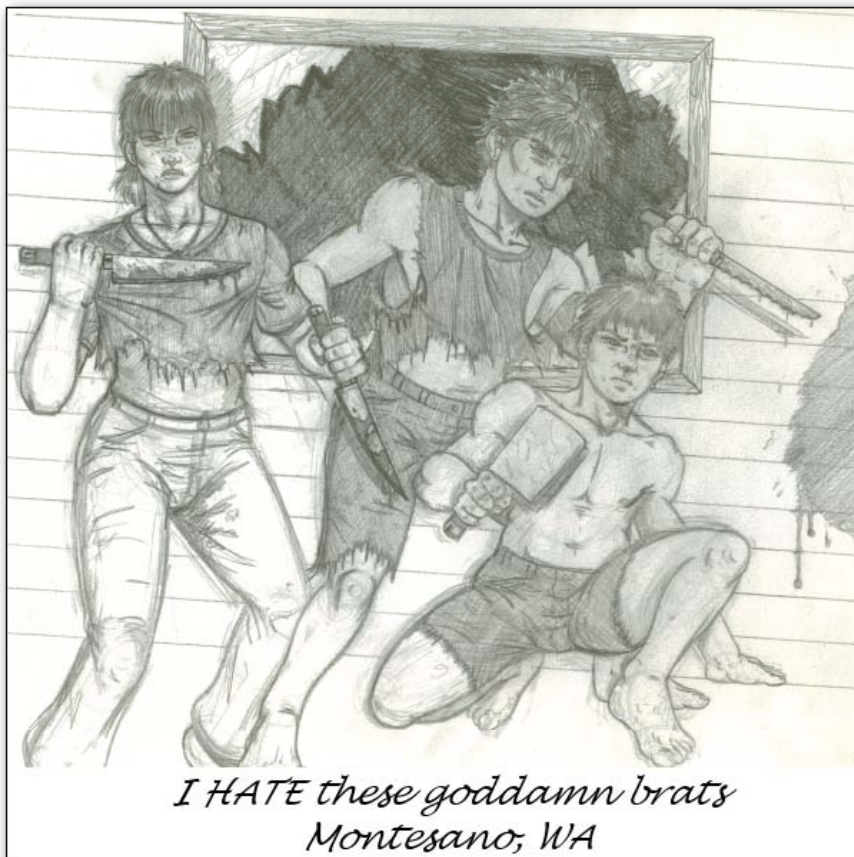
Bonus Feats: The Feral Child may choose from the following bonus feats: Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Agile Riposte, Alertness, Athletic, Attentive, Blind-Fight, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Brawl, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Spring Attack, Streetfighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, and Weapon

Focus. The character must meet the prerequisites for any feat chosen as a bonus feat.

Sample Feral Children

Feral Child 1; CR: 1 Small-size humanoid; **HD** 1d8+0; **HP** 8; **Mas** 11; **Init** +6; **Spd** 20 ft; **Defense** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+3 class, +2 Dex, +1 size); **BAB** +0; **Grap** +1; **Atk** +1 melee (1d6+0, 19-20, cleaver); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** Wolf Pack; **SV** Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +0; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 11, **Dex** 14, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 11.
Occupation: none
Skills: Climb +4, Hide +10, Jump +4, Move Silently +6, Survival +4
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Talents (Feral Child): Sneak Attack +1d6
Possessions: Meat cleaver

Feral Child 1; CR: 1 Small-size humanoid; **HD** 1d8+0; **HP** 8; **Mas** 11; **Init** +4; **Spd** 20 ft; **Defense** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 class, +0 Dex, +1 size); **BAB** +0; **Grap** +2; **Atk** +2 melee (1d6+1, 19-20, flensing knife); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** Wolf Pack; **SV** Fort +0, Ref +1, Will +0; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 12, **Dex** 11, **Con** 11, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7.
Occupation: none
Skills: Escape Artist +4, Hide +8, Knowledge (streetwise) +5, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Move Silently +4, Survival +4
Feats: Endurance, Improved Initiative, Simple Weapons Proficiency
Talents (Feral Child): Meat Stalker
Possessions: Flensing knife



YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

DEN MOTHER ADVANCED CLASS

We caught a young girl. It took three of us to grab her and hold her down. She stabbed me pretty good in the biceps, but I managed to grab her wrist before she could twist the knife and cut the muscle away. These kids were good with knives. I had personally seen them completely strip a human of all the meat in under two minutes, leaving behind only bone and offal. And that was just four of them.

This one was older than the others. She carried a meat cleaver in one hand and a thin-bladed boning knife in the other. Her mouth was twisted from a barely healed cut. When we ripped off her clothing so that Robert could examine her, she flew into an absolute frenzy, screaming and thrashing against her restraints. Her eyes were wild, and she was literally foaming at the mouth. I saw and heard her wrists break from struggling against the plastic zip-restraints that Sam had put on her. We ended up having to load her full of morphine before Robert could get a good look at her.

She was in good health, well fed, but bore marks from having been sexually mutilated and gang-raped. Her teeth were filed into points and her bare feet had thick calluses on them. She stared at us through eyes slitted with hate as we sat and discussed what we should do with her. She had enough anesthetic in her to drop an adult, and yet still she was awake and staring at us.

Buck did it. Greg was going to, so nobody else had to live with it. But Buck overrode him, saying that there might be other people who wouldn't be able to live with him for doing it. They argued about it, with scathing accusations going from one man to the other, including shouts of "butcher!" and "war criminal!" clashing with "thug!" and "biker fuck!" Finally, when I thought they would both shoot each other, Buck jerked his pistol out and fired a shot into her head. He holstered his smoking pistol as everyone stared at him. He reached out and snatched the bottle of whiskey out of Greg's hand with a snarl. He ignored Greg's own drawn sidearm and stormed into his Bradley, locking himself in.

A single shot, and it was over. We'd killed a Wolf Pack Den Mother. The victory was very hollow.

From the Diaries of Becka

Den Mothers rule their Wolf Packs with an iron fist. They set hunting territory, decide who lives and dies during lean times, and lead the pack from the front. Den Mothers are often canny and tricky survivors, usually burning with deep hatred and a desire for revenge that blood cannot quench.

Den Mothers are always fearless, retreating only when the pack as a whole is in danger. All members of the pack follow the Den Mother's example. If a Den Mother is captured, the pack will take insane risks to regain her freedom.

Those young girls who have become Den Mothers have killed (and usually eaten) all who challenged her superiority, as well as keep a constant watch on other young women who may be coveting her position. Some Den Mother's may allow a challenger to take select males with her and leave, but for the most part, they just kill the upstart, eat her, and be done with it.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Den Mother, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Ability Scores: Dex 12+. Charisma 13+

Feats: Weapon Focus (any knife-like weapon)

Other: Child Template, must have killed any challengers to her position, must be female.

Hit Dice: Den mothers gain 1d8 hp per level.

Action Points: Den mothers gain a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half their character level, rounded down, at 1st level and every time they attain a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The den mother's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (streetwise, tactics) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Search (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points Per Level: 7 + Int modifier

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Den Mother

Bring Into The Fold: A child can be initiated into the Wolf-Pack by the Den Mother. The initiation ceremony can be as simple as a nod, or as complex and bloody as ritual scarring and mutilation followed by a gang rape. Once this initiation takes place, the initiated child automatically loses the Ordinary template.

Sneak Attack: At 2nd level, the Den Mother gains the ability to deliver additional Sneak Attack damage as per the Feral Child talent of the same name.

Den Mother Advancement Table

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Rep
1st	+0	+0	+1	+0	Bring into the Fold	+3	+2
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+0	Sneak Attack +1d6	+4	+2
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+1	Weapon Specialization, Bonus Feat	+4	+2
4th	+3	+1	+2	+1	Poise	+5	+3
5th	+3	+1	+3	+1	Sneak Attack +2d6	+5	+3
6th	+4	+2	+3	+2	Biting Blade, Bonus Feat	+6	+3
7th	+5	+2	+4	+2	Too Fast To Die	+6	+4
8th	+6/+1	+2	+4	+2	Sneak Attack +3d6	+7	+4
9th	+6/+1	+3	+4	+3	Instant Death Blow, Bonus Feat	+7	+4
10th	+7/+2	+3	+5	+3	I'll Be Back, Sucker!	+8	+5

This Sneak Attack damage increases at 5th and 8th level to the listed damage dice. Sneak Attack damage from the Feral Child talent stacks with this ability.

Poise: The Den Mother manages to maintain superior poise in combat, giving her an edge in avoiding attacks. She gains a competence bonus equal to her Wisdom modifier to Defense against melee attacks.

Weapon Specialization: The Den Mother becomes more specialized at using her favoured weapon. Choose a weapon that the Den Mother has previously selected for the Weapon Focus feat. The Den Mother now deals an additional 2 points of damage with that weapon.

Biting Blade: The Den Mother may choose to apply her Dexterity modifier instead of her Strength modifier to damage for her melee attacks. She may only use this ability for the weapon she chose for Weapon Specialization..

Too Fast To Die: The Den Mother may spend two actions points on any attack that would have been lethal and take only nonlethal damage instead. In the case of a zombie bite, she will have only lost a chunk of her clothing to its always hungry teeth, thus avoiding Zombie Infection.

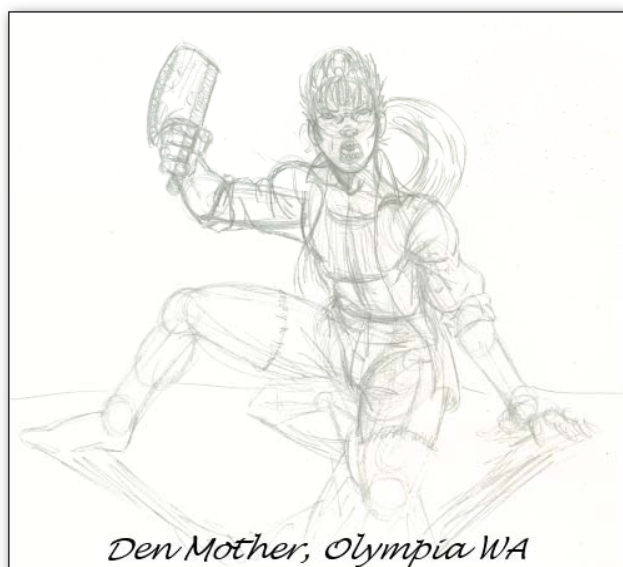
Instant Death Blow: If a Den Mother catches a target flatfooted and successfully strikes, she may expend an action point and make it a possibly fatal blow. If the victim fails a Fortitude save (DC is equal to 10 + the damage dealt) they are considered to have failed a Massive Damage Save. If the save is successful, the blow is considered a critical strike instead.

I'll Be Back, Sucker!: When the Den Mother has apparently been killed, she will crop up at a later date, possibly even in a different geographical location, with a new Wolf Pack at her beck and call. She will likely be heavily scarred and with vengeance in her heart.

Bonus Feats: The Den Mother may choose from the following bonus feats: Advanced Two-Weapon Fighting, Agile Riposte, Alertness, Athletic, Attentive, Blind-Fight, Brawl, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Brawl, Improved Feint, Improved Trip, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Spring Attack, Streetfighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, and Weapon Focus. The character must meet the prerequisites for any feat chosen as a bonus feat.

Sample Den Mother

Feral Child 1/Den Mother 1 **CR** 2; Small-sized humanoid; **HD** 1d8+1 plus 1d8+1; **HP** 17; **Mas** 12; **Init** +3; **Spd** 20 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+6 class, +3 Dex, +1 size, +1 equipment); **BAB** +0; **Grap** +2; **Atk** +3 melee (1d6+1, 19-20, machete); **FS** 5 ft. by 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; **AL** Wolf Pack; **SV** Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +0; **AP** 6; **Rep** +4; **Str** 13, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14.
Occupation: none
Skills: Hide +8, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (tactics) +4, Move Silently +8, Survival +4.
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Simple Weapons Proficiency, Weapon Focus (machete)
Talents (Feral Child): Sneak Attack +1d6
Talents (Den Mother): Bring into the Fold
Possessions: Machete (must be wielded two-handed), ballistics helmet



YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

LAWMAN PRESTIGE CLASS

Sam always wore his badge, often pinning it to his Kevlar vest. Even after he traded in his Deputy Sheriff's uniform for military Battle Dress Uniform, and his shoes for combat boots, his badge was always a highly polished reminder of who he had once been.

It was strange, the effect that metal star seemed to have on people. Survivors seemed to automatically respect him, come to him to settle disputes, and parlay a surrender in good faith when they were outnumbered and outgunned.

There was this one time, when we pulled into the survival enclave outside of Medford, Oregon. People seemed to know who he was, calling him "Lawman", and not as a slur. He didn't have to pay for food, lodging, or even clean water. I know that he had several women come to his bed the nights we were there, and I even saw several people give him ammunition.

"Bless you, Lawman," seemed to be the most common saying from the people who gave him ammunition.

I still find it strange, even though I go to him with problems of my own.

From the Diaries of Becka

Despite the collapse of civilization and the loss of law and order, some men and women still abide by a code that resembles that of the US Marshall of the Old West. These men and women are seen as the ultimate authority of right and wrong, a champion of the people, a punisher of the guilty, and the final judge of those who prey on their fellow man.

The same type of mystique that surrounded the 1800's US Marshall seems to be part and parcel of the Lawman, who is respected even by those who were criminals before the Rising. A Lawman's decision is considered *The Law* and a ruler who goes against that decision runs the risk of open rebellion from his people.

Despite the fact that police uniforms and badges are easy to come by, people

somehow know who is a real Lawman and who is just pretending.

Requirements

To qualify to become a Lawman, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Allegiance: The Law

Base Attack Bonus: +8

Feats: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Leadership, Weapon Focus (any firearm)

Skills: Diplomacy 6 ranks, Gather Information 6 ranks, Intimidate 6 ranks, Investigate 6 ranks, Knowledge (civics) 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks

Starting Occupation: Law Enforcement

Special: Must possess a badge, and either belong to, or have belonged to a law enforcement organization.

Class Information

Hit Die: d10

Action Points: 7+ one-half character level, rounded down, every time the lawman attains a new level in this class.

Class Skills

The lawman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are: Drive (Dex), Gamble (Wis), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Ride (Dex), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points Per Level: 5 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Lawman.

Law Above All: The Lawman is self-sworn to uphold the law at any cost. Should he ever break with this vow, he will lose all Lawman class abilities. To atone, a Lawman typically has to earn back the trust of the people he protected by embarking on a dangerous quest or making a selfless sacrifice.

Tin Star: The Lawman gains a +1 competence bonus per class level to all

Lawman Advancement Table

Level	BAB	Fort	Ref	Will	Special	Def	Rep
1st	+0	+0	+1	+1	Law Above All, Tin Star,	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+2	+2	Hard Gaze, Smell Bullshit,	+1	+2
3rd	+2	+1	+2	+2	Protect the Innocent, Bonus Feat	+2	+3
4th	+3	+1	+2	+2	Lay of the Land, Ready for Trouble	+2	+4
5th	+3	+1	+3	+3	Deputize, Punish the Guilty	+3	+5
6th	+4	+2	+3	+3	Surge of Conviction, Bonus Feat	+3	+6
7th	+5	+2	+4	+4	Gather the Posse	+4	+7
8th	+6	+2	+4	+4	Aura of Conviction	+4	+8
9th	+6	+3	+4	+4	Long Arm of the Law, Bonus Feat	+5	+9
10th	+7	+3	+5	+5	My Word is Law	+5	+10

Diplomacy and Intimidate checks as long as he is wearing his badge.

Hard Gaze: The lawman gains a +1 competence bonus per class level to Intimidate checks.

Smell Bullshit: The lawman gains a +1 competence bonus per class level to Sense Motive checks.

Skip Shot: The lawman gains the benefits of the Skip Shot feat, regardless of whether or not the Lawman meets the requirements for that feat.

Lay of the Land: The lawman can make a Spot check (DC 20) to determine the most likely locations of enemies based on the landscape of the area as well as what places give the best cover and concealment. This grants a the Lawman a competence bonus equal to his class level on any checks made to prepare for conflict in that area. The competence bonus applies to, but is not limited to, Knowledge (tactics) check and Intelligences checks for the Plan talent.

Protect the Innocent: The Lawman may choose to put himself into the line of fire to protect an innocent. As long as the Lawman is deliberately putting himself in harm's way to save a person, he gains a +2 morale bonus to all attack rolls, saves, and Defense. The Lawman may only protect one such person at a time to gain the benefits of this ability.

Ready for Trouble: The Lawman always expects trouble, from everywhere. Because of this, the Lawman cannot be caught flat-footed.

Deputize: The Lawman can deputize comrades to help him enforce The Law. To deputize a character, the Lawman must provide the deputy with a badge, which the deputy must wear visibly. The deputy gains a circumstance bonus to her Diplomacy and Intimidate checks, as per the Lawman's Tin Star ability. The circumstance bonus is equal to half the Lawman's class level. This ability lasts until the Lawman revokes the deputy's authority. The act of deputizing or revoking a deputy must be done in front of witnesses.

Punish the Guilty: By studying the methods and actions of a criminal or other evildoer for at least three hours, a Lawman may deem a single creature "guilty" and determine to bring it to justice. The creature must have actually broken whatever law the Lawman has chosen to uphold and so warrant the Lawman's attention. The Lawman gains a +2 morale

bonus to attack rolls and skill checks made to bring in (or bring down) the guilty creature. These bonuses last as long as the creature remains at large or until the Lawman decides to switch guilty targets. The Lawman may only deem one creature "guilty" at a time.

Surge of Conviction: By spending an Action Point, the Lawman may gain a temporary boost by focusing on his strength of conviction. Upon spending the action point, the Lawman gains a +2 morale bonus to Strength, Dexterity, attack rolls, and saving throws for one round per class level. After this ability expires, the Lawman is Fatigued for 1 hour. He may not spend action points until an hour is up.

Gather the Posse: The Lawman can deputize a small group of people for a limited time. The lawman can deputize a number of people equal to his class level + his Charisma modifier; these new deputies are now his posse. These people gain the benefits of the Deputize ability. The posse can only be formed for a specific purpose, such as "lynch the biker gang who raped our women" or "convince the raiders we're too mcu trouble for them." Once the posse has fulfilled this purpose, it disbands.

Aura of Conviction: The lawman is able to extend his Surge of Conviction ability to all deputized allies who can see him. The ability requires the Lawman to spend two Action Points.

Long Arm of the Law: The lawman has the uncanny ability to always know in what direction lies the creature he has determined to be "guilty" with the Punish the Guilty ability. Additionally, by spending one Action Point, the Lawman may determine by 'gut instinct' the general distance ('close', 'not-close', 'far', 'distant') between him and his target.

My Word is Law: The Lawman's ability to command becomes so overwhelming that even his enemies have trouble resisting his orders. When the Lawman shouts simple orders like "come out slowly!" or "hands up!" or "drop your weapon!" in a loud and clear voice, the person he is speaking to must succeed at a Will save (DC 25) to resist instinctively obeying the command.

Bonus Feats: The Lawman may choose from the following bonus feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Double-Tap, Improved Two-

Weapon Fighting, Quick Draw, Quick Reload, Trustworthy, and Two-Weapon Fighting. The character must meet the prerequisites for any feat chosen as a bonus feat.

When creating a character for Year of the Zombie, there are many resources that the developers and playtesters recommend one use. The following is a partial list of recommended works:

Modern Player's Companion Vol 1 & 2 by The Game Mechanics

Blood & Fists I & II, Blood & Guts 2e, Blood & Relics 2e, and Darwin's World 2 by RPGObjects

Urban Arcana, Menace Manual, Arms Locker, d20 Apocalypse by Wizards of the Coast

Ultramodern Firearms by Green Ronin

Sample Lawman

Strong Hero 5/Fast Hero 4/Lawman 1 CR 10; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 5d8+10 plus 4d8+8 plus 1d10+2; **HP** 65; **Mas** 14; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 23, touch 22, flatfooted 21 (+2 Dex, +9 class, +1 equipment, +1 Tin Star); **BAB** +8; **Grap** +9; **Atk** +10 melee (1d6+4 nonlethal, unarmed), or +11 ranged (2d8+0, S&W Model 29); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Active Duty (municipal police [now defunct]); **SV** Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 15; **Rep** +3; **Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Gather Information, Intimidate)

Skills: Diplomacy +12, Drive +7, Gather Information +17, Intimidate +19, Investigate +10, Knowledge (Civics) +9, Ride +7, Sense Motive +7

Feats: Brawl, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Double Tap, Leadership, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Quick Reload, Weapon Focus (S&W Model 29)

Talents (Strong Hero): Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash, Advanced Melee Smash

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion, Opportunist

Talents (Lawman): Tin Star, Hard Gaze

Possessions: Leather Jacket, S&W Model 29, badge



*Sam
During a Wolf Pack ambush
October, Merced, CA*

Cause of Death

Additional threats and hazards

We hit them hard, as they crossed the bridge. Sylvia ran the SAM and Mark was busy feeding her. The Russian Spetsnaz that had joined up with us hit them with the TOW-IIs we had taken from the National Guard armory in Chehalis, WA, a few weeks before.

It only took a few moments, and the slavers were all down and out. Ming using the skills the Chinese Army had taught him with the Soviet SVD sniper rifle. It was a duck shoot, but all the same, I was glad it was fast.

Slavers. They'd hit settlements, and grab who they could, to sell to whoever wanted them. They'd even grab zombies to sell here and there. Scum of the earth and rapists. Sam was furious when he noticed that about half of the slavers wore Salem S.W.A.T. uniforms. To Sam, an ex-County Sheriff, that was a betrayal of everything he held dear. He removed their badges, probably saving them for someone who deserved them. We ignored that fact that Sam kicked their skulls in with his combat boots with a grimace of rage and hatred, we all have our quirks.

We armed the living with the weapons of the dead, used the nailguns on the heads of the fallen, and moved on.

To stay mobile, was to stay alive.

From the Diaries of Becka

Zombies are not the only hazard in Year of the Zombie. The terrain itself, other survivors, the activities of the rest of civilization can all seem to be out to kill the characters. Even nature and the landscape seem to have turned against mankind, with rockslides in many places, roadways collapsing, and feral animals that have either returned to their more primal roots or have escaped captivity.

TOTAL WAR

We came to your country to conquer, to exact revenge for the Motherland, yes, but within days, we had no choice but to fight alongside whomever would accept us. We landed by air insertion into Montesano, WA, with the intent of moving out to engage in guerrilla warfare against both your police and your military.

It was revenge, my friends. The Risen were devouring my country, and we were told that it was America's fault, and that it was our mission to punish you in the name of Mother Russia until you agreed to give over the cure for this disease.

However, it soon became obvious that there was just as much horror here, in your country, as there was in ours. We made our decision, and stopped fighting against you, turning our skills against the Risen in order to save someone, anyone. To us, it no longer mattered what country you were from, only if you were alive or Risen. My unit sought out allies, fighting only those who fought us, hoping to survive.

Others, like Ming's unit, immediately tried to fight us, and were mopped down by the Risen, or devoured by those damned children. Some, however, fought to the brutal, bloody end, and the zombies feasted upon their remains.

I am glad we found you, my friend, and that we decided to kill the Risers together, instead of killing each other.

Mihkeal's Autobiography; From the Diaries of Becka

In a post-Cold War world, not many recognize the fact that the major world powers would immediately start blaming one another when members of their populace started yanking out large bloody chunks of other citizens with their teeth.

Years of biological and chemical warfare research on the part of the major powers would quickly bring about suspicion, and should the situation become too dire, some countries may come to believe that other countries are lying about the situation, and treat it as an act of war.

It would not be completely unfeasible for Chinese paratroopers to hit the West Coast, and Russian troops to hit Alaska, come over the Arctic Circle and into the mid-west, as well as hitting the West Coast.

Nuclear exchange would be extremely limited. I suggest that you do not utilize the old MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) program to fire the nuclear arsenals of the world power, unless you do not mind adding millions of more irradiated living dead, and creating vast ruined areas.

The Russian and Chinese soldiers who ended up in America would quickly be met with resistance by the already mobilized American military, as well as private citizens, and, of course, the zombies.

Within a few weeks, the foreign military survivors would be more than happy to join a group of survivors, and would bring valuable military training.

The Big Guns

Nuclear, biological and chemical weapons

The arsenals of the superpowers, those who have fallen and those emerging, contain items of unparalleled destruction and horror that would be utilized during the early days of the Rising, as countries turned upon each other in a frenzy of suspicion and destruction, as well as some governments utilizing those weapons as a last, desperate option (Nickname *Shiva Protocols*) to eliminate the Risers and save their populace.

From India and Iran lobbing nuclear weapons at hated foes, to Russia, China, and NATO hitting one another with full arsenals, all that was accomplished was to make life harder on the survivors. The Risers did not care about chemical weaponry, biological weapons proved to be worse than useless, and nuclear weapons created more risers around the immediate blast crater than they eliminated.

The following section deals with how these may have affected a Total War option of Year of the Zombie.

Biological Weaponry

Enhanced deadliness, longer illness time, improved transmission vectors, increased air viability, all of this has been done to even the most benign illness. Where nature wasn't good enough, scientists improved upon it to create weapons to not only kill, but also to immobilize an enemy military and civilian population, as well as cripple any resistance and cause medical services to collapse.

Biological weaponry would have been used sparingly during The Rising, as one plague was enough to deal with, but never, ever underestimate the power of illogical hatred. Some groups released powerful biological weaponry upon hated foes during the Rising, and in still other places, panicked and angry mobs stormed biological research facilities, wrongly blaming those places for The Rising, and released biological weapons.

This makes it vitally important to check any strangers, keep them separated from your own population for at least 48 hours. Many communities don't bother, and just shoot any sick looking strangers. Hell, some of them just shoot anybody they can see.

Better safe than sorry.

Chemical Weaponry

Despite massive inundation by the press, most people have no idea just how prevalent chemical weaponry is, or what exactly it can do. In Year of the Zombie, chemical weapons were used on some locations in order to hopefully "kill" what the government and military officials initially saw as only infected lunatics. These weapons were used in artillery and mortar form, dispersed from air vehicles via spray, and dropped in bombs upon locations.

Most chemical weapons are persistent, meaning that they will hang around for a long, long time, killing anyone who comes into contact with them. As a safety measure, some are water soluble, and will be destroyed by the first rainfall, but some are not, using water to revitalize a dried out agent. Persistent chemical weapons can prove a threat to characters for months, even years in some areas.

Some chemical weapons can literally eat or melt rubber, and will destroy vehicles, air seals, surgical equipment and more, rendering equipment useless, and killing those unprepared to deal with it.

Chemical weapons can and will be a hazard in Year of the Zombie, and with some Raider gangs and some settlements having managed to lay their hands on chemical weapons, the characters can almost guarantee coming into contact with them.

Nuclear Weapons

Used for "nuclear sterilization of affected areas" when all hope was lost of regaining control of the area, nuclear weapons blasted into heavily populated areas and just made things worse. The electro magnetic pulse destroyed valuable communication equipment, as well as non-EMP shielded vehicles and equipment. This resulted in widespread panic as the "wavefront" of fast moving radiation played havoc with communications and in some places destroyed the cell-phone network.

In the Total War option, some military and strategic targets (such as silos, large military bases, armored vehicle units and command and control areas) were hit with tactical neutron weaponry, designed to eliminate the threat without destroying everything.

This means that fallout will be a concern for the first few days, and characters need to seek shelter from it.

In addition, some military units were deployed with tactical nuclear weapons meant to be fired from an M1A1 tank or artillery unit that sit in the 50-200 kiloton range. Later in the Rising, some settlements were able to recover those items, creating dozens of small "nuclear powers" scattered about the landscape.

The use of nuclear weapons hit the Middle East, Indochina, Europe, Russia, and America pretty hard, destroying dams, electronic equipment, and creating more Risers as radiation and blast effects killed those near the fireball, but did not damage them badly enough to keep them from Rising.

Those cities "sterilized" should probably be avoided by the PCs, as Risers, Wolf Packs and Raiders will be crazed and desperate from the effects of the radiation, which will invisibly kill any who enters its zone of influence.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Full NBC option is NOT recommended for a YotZ campaign. A GM is advised to use a very light hand when applying these weapons to the campaign setting.

YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

RUSSIAN AIRBORNE SQUAD

Znakov, Yuri, Mikhkeal and the others are all highly trained soldiers, some bad motherfuckers as Buck would say, trained to kill anyone their nation required them to. Dropped into the US to punish us for releasing The Rising on their nation, but realized, more quickly than the politicians, that the US was not to blame. Instead of continuing the fight against America, they banded together with other military troops, and eventually, with us.

I'm glad to count them as family.

From the Diaries of Becka

A single squad of Russian Airborne that the players might encounter would consist of 4 riflemen, 1 heavy weapons officer, 1 team leader. Simply double the amounts, or add more riflemen or heavy weapons squad members to increase the threat.



*Unknown soldier
Fall of Relief Station
in Tumwater, WA*

Riflemen

This is your basic soldier, carrying an AK-47 and the backbone of any modern military. Versed in tactics and suppression fire, the following soldiers have been built with Blood & Guts, with notes on how to convert them to d20 Rules.

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +7 ranged (2d8+0, AK-74); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Russian Military, Spetznaz Group; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +4, Will

+2; **AP** 3; **Rep** +1; **Str** 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +3, Hide +8, Jump +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +4, Survival +6

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Cover Fire, MOS Rifleman (Knowledge [Tactics], Spot, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Squad/Platoon)

Possessions: Knife, AK-74 with 5 clips, rucksack containing: 2 MRE's, 2 changes of uniform, shelter half, 2 pair of underwear, 4 pair of socks; 1 quart canteen, military load carrying gear, 2 rifle magazine pouches, boots, helmet. 2 fragmentation grenades, 1 smoke grenade, 1 tear gas grenade.

***If Blood & Guts is not used, replace MOS Rifleman with Burst Fire and Cover Fire with Double-Tap.*

Heavy Weapons

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +7 ranged (2d8+0, AK-74); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Russian Military, Spetznaz Group; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; **AP** 3; **Rep** +1; **Str** 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +3, Hide +8, Jump +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Move Silently +8, Spot +4, Survival +6

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Cover Fire, MOS Rifleman (Knowledge [Tactics], Spot, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Specific Group)

Possessions: Knife, RPK with 2 100 round drums, rucksack containing: 2 MRE's, 2 changes of uniform, shelter half, 2 pair of underwear, 4 pair of socks; 1 quart canteen, military load carrying gear, 2 rifle magazine pouches, boots, helmet. 2 fragmentation grenades, 1 smoke grenade, 1 tear gas grenade.

***If more than 2 heavy weapons squad members are present, replace 1 RPK with 1 RPG-7 and 5 rockets, AK-74 and 4 magazines.*

***If Blood & Guts is not used, replace MOS Rifleman with Burst Fire and Cover Fire with Double-Tap.*

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Team Leader



Tough Hero 3/Dedicated Hero 3/Soldier 3 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d10+9 plus 3d6+9 plus 3d10+9; HP 72; Mas 16; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 18, touch 18, flatfooted 16 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +6 class); BAB +6; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Combat Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+2, AK-74); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ ; AL Russia, Airborne Team; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +5; AP 4; Rep +2; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Occupation: Military (Demolitions, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +5, Demolitions +13, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Listen +3, Navigate +5, Profession +3, Spot +18, Survival +13

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Burst Fire, OCS, Cover Fire, Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Specific Group), Urban Warfare College

Talents (Tough Hero): Remain Conscious, Damage Reduction 1/—

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Spot), Aware

Talents (Soldier): Weapon Focus (AK-74), Weapon Specialization (AK-74)

Possessions: Combat Knife, AK-74 with 5 clips, rucksack containing: 2 MRE's, 2 changes of uniform, shelter half, 2 pair of underwear, 4 pair of socks; 1 quart canteen, military load carrying gear, 2 rifle magazine pouches, boots, helmet. 2 fragmentation grenades, 1 smoke grenade, 1 tear gas grenade.

Transportation: Can usually be found in: Russian BMP, captured Bradley AFV, Hummvee or pickup truck.

Possible Loot: Extra magazines and loose ammo, extra weapons, medical kit (containing: painkiller and antibiotics, bandages, tourniquets, etc), MRE's, bottled water, extra clothing, sleeping bags.

Suggested Tactics: When the opportunity presents itself, these guys prefer to attack from static positions, with well set up and overlapping fields of fire, forcing their opponents to enter previously cleared and boobytrapped sections of land. Burst fire is the most commonly used mode of firing, with single aimed shots going for legs,

arms and faces (If hit by location system is in use) because of training to defeat body armor. These guys will retreat or surrender to overwhelming force, preferring to live to fight another day.

ROGUE UNITS

Fine, I'll talk to you, but don't let anyone hear this until after my death, Becka. It won't take long. I'm dying piece by piece now from radiation poisoning. [coughing]

Oh, God, it hurts. Feels like rats chewing my gut, and my asshole burns so badly from shitting out my stomach lining. God, I feel gross. [long silence follows] Mom, Johnny broke the lamp not me, beat him... [several minutes of crying from delirium]

I'm sorry, where was I? Oh. Yeah.

I was assigned to 117th MP Brigade. We were tasked with escorting "important government officials" to "safe sites", also known as FEMA bunkers or Continuity of Government Sites. I spent the first 2 weeks of The Rising ferrying politicians who had been nothing but leeches anyway, hiding them while the people who trusted them to take care of them died in droves under the choppers as we flew over at a safe distance.

Well, it all came to a head when... [vomiting sounds] sorry about that, Becka. Sorry I threw up on you. It all came to a head when we took the last load out of Olympia to a facility in the Cascade Mountain Range, to a hardened facility. We landed, kept the area secured, and after they filed in...

They locked the doors behind them, leaving us to face the hordes of Risers who had followed the helicopters or were attracted by noises and lights. They left us out there to die, Becka, just to leave themselves extra space. That bunker had room for a thousand people for a hundred years, and they closed the doors behind them with less than three hundred inside.

One of the guys, big Special Forces head-stamper, blew the doors, and we fell back from the Risers into the facility. The politicians and the Secret Service tried to keep us out with gunfire, but we were professionals, while they were just wishing.

We violated our oaths, Becka, and went rogue. That's why I'm sick. I violated a sacred oath I swore before God and everyone, that's why I'm sick.

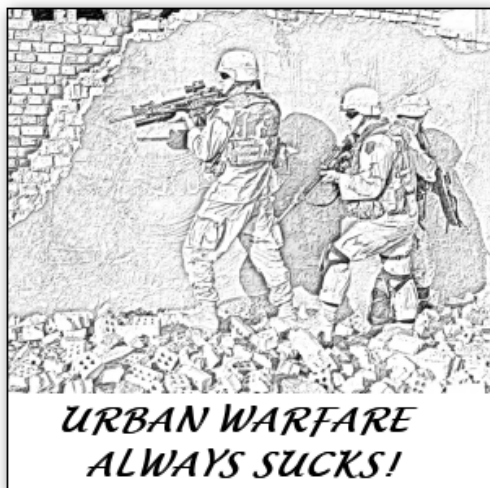
Can you hold me, Becka? I don't feel good. [end of tape]

Sylvia's Audio Recorded Autobiography;
From the Diaries of Becka

The Rising pushes everyone to the wall. Some rise to the challenge, becoming

greater than they might have been if the world had stayed sane. Others, however, turn to savagery through betrayal or just plain hopelessness. Still others turn to barbarism now that there are no rules to hold them back. Rogue military and police units will occur either as their units are destroyed, they are betrayed, or they decide that there is no hope for humanity.

These soldiers can become marauders, protectors, or just more people trying to survive in the nightmare the world has become. Most of them will have deserted or been abandoned with some military gear, from tanks to APCs to ordinary rifles, all of them will have some military equipment. Combine that with military training and combat experience (either during The Rising or in the wars prior to it) and you have small groups that are stronger, pound for pound, than their civilian counterparts. Some will have held on to the bitter end, after reverting to local command, and only a handful of soldiers may remain out of an entire battalion of troops.



Ex-military also fits in this category. While the armed forces of nearly every nation attempted to recall any ex-soldier that was still pulling air past their teeth, many did not respond to the call, preferring to protect loved ones rather than be separated. These people acquired the weapons and equipment necessary to survive in the world as quickly as possible, and thousands of them had combat experience.

While technically termed "Rogue", these soldiers and ex-soldiers are more often than not simply people who are defined in their lifestyle, tactics and knowledge by their time in the military. Very few military

and ex-military actually become slavers and other scum of the earth.

Sooner or later, military and law enforcement deserters and the like will eventually start grabbing their own chunks of the world, hammering out their own fiefdoms.

These kingdoms will be anything from as close to a utopia as can be managed in the middle of The Rising to visions of Hell of Earth.

The following are five ex-military members, each with two different versions (One for Blood & Guts, one for d20 Rules) listed. Suggested amounts are 6 riflemen, 2 M-249 gunners, 1 M-203 gunner, 1 team leader.

Blood & Guts Version

Rifleman

Strong Ordinary 3/Infantry Training 3
CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +8 ranged (2d8+0, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military or Squad Mates; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +0; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +7, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Navigate +5, Profession +3, Repair +5, Survival +9

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Far Shot, MOS Rifleman (Knowledge [Tactics], Spot, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Military Unit)

Talents (Strong Ordinary):

Talents (Infantry Training): Defensive Position +1, Marksmanship 1

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4; Wealth +6

M-249 Gunner

Strong Ordinary 3/Infantry Training 3
CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee

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(1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +8 ranged (2d10, M-249); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military or Squad Mates; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +0; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +7, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Navigate +5, Profession +3, Repair +5, Survival +9

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Light Machineguns), MOS Rifleman (Knowledge [Tactics], Spot, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Military Unit)

Talents (Strong Ordinary):

Talents (Infantry Training): Defensive Position +1, Marksmanship 1

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-249 with 3 boxes of ammunition; Wealth +6

M-203 Gunner

Strong Ordinary 3/Infantry Training 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +8 ranged (2d8+0, M-4 or 4d6+0, M-203); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military or Squad Mates; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +0; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Climb +5, Craft (structural) +7, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Navigate +5, Profession +3, Repair +5, Survival +9

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Grenade Launcher), MOS Rifleman (Knowledge [Tactics], Spot, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Teamwork (Specific Group)

Talents (Strong Ordinary):

Talents (Infantry Training): Defensive Position +1, Marksmanship 1

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4 with mounted M-203; Wealth +6

Team Leader

Fast Hero 4/Infantry Training 3/Leadership Training 2 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 4d8+4 plus 3d10+3 plus 2d8+2; **HP** 53; **Mas** 12; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 25, touch 21, flatfooted 22 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +8 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +6; **Grap** +8; **Atk** +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+0, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military OR Current Teammates; **SV** Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +6; **AP** 4; **Rep** +2; **Str** 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Balance +4, Bluff +3, Climb +4, Craft (mechanical) +6, Craft (structural) +12, Diplomacy +9, Drive +7, Gather Information +3, Hide +9, Intimidate +9, Investigate +5, Knowledge (Tactics) +12, Move Silently +5, Navigate +5, Survival +7

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Double Tap, MOS Rifleman (Craft [structural], Hide, Survival), Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Tactician - Squad, Teamwork (Specific Group), Urban Warfare College (Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate)

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1

Talents (Infantry Training): Defensive Position +1, Marksmanship 1

Talents (Leadership Training): Voice of Command 1/day, NCO School

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4;

d20 Rules

Rifleman

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+0, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military OR current team; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +1; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Navigate)

Skills: Craft (structural) +3, Drive +5, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3,

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Knowledge (Tactics) +5, Move Silently +2, Navigate +7, Profession +3, Spot +5, Survival +7

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Weapons Proficiency (Light Machine Guns), Weapon Focus (M-4)

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4; Wealth +6

M-249 Gunner

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+0, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military OR current team; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +1; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Navigate)

Skills: Craft (structural) +3, Drive +5, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +5, Move Silently +2, Navigate +7, Profession +3, Spot +5, Survival +7

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (M-249)

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-249 with 3 boxes of ammunition; Wealth +6

M-203 Gunner

Strong Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 21, touch 17, flatfooted 18 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +4 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+1/19-20, Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+0, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military OR current team; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +1; **Str** 13, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Navigate)

Skills: Craft (structural) +3, Drive +5, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +5, Move Silently +2,

Navigate +7, Profession +3, Spot +5, Survival +7

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Grenade Launchers), Weapon Focus (M-203 Grenade Launcher)

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4 with M-203; Wealth +6

Team Leader

Tough Hero 3/Dedicated Hero 3/Soldier 3 CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d10+3 plus 3d6+3 plus 3d10+3; **HP** 54; **Mas** 12; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 23, touch 19, flatfooted 20 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +6 class, +4 equipment); **BAB** +6; **Grap** +8; **Atk** +8 melee (1d6+2/19-20, Knife), or +11 ranged (2d8+4, M-4); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military OR Current Teammates; **SV** Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +5; **AP** 4; **Rep** +2; **Str** 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 13.

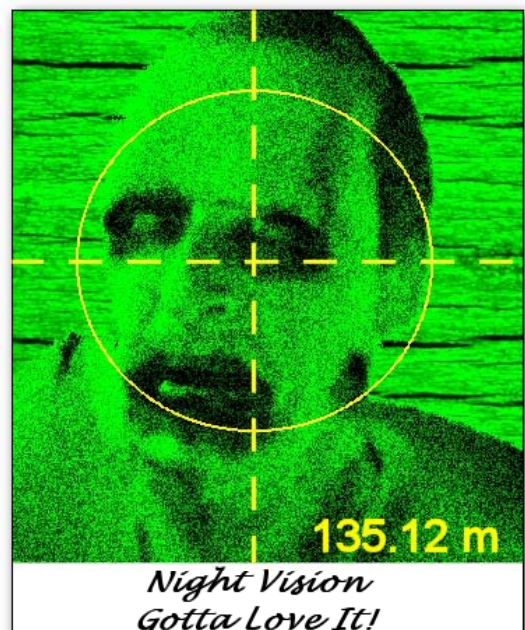
Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Climb +4, Craft (structural) +7, Demolitions +6, Drive +7, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (Tactics) +9, Listen +9, Navigate +4, Profession +8, Spot +18, Survival +11, Treat Injury +5

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Burst Fire, Double Tap, Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Sharpshooter

Talents (Tough Hero): Remain Conscious, Second Wind

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis



(Spot), Aware

Talents (Soldier): Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor, Knife, M-4;

Transportation: Commonly found with a hard armored Hummvee or Bradley AFV. Occasionally found in possession of a Blackhawk helicopter, M1A2 Main Battle Tank, civilian vehicle, or HEMMIT.

Loot: In addition to the above listed personal effects, a rogue squad can often be found with a SINCGARS radio, alcohol, medical supplies, drugs, extra weaponry and ammunition.

Tactics: Rogue military members are not be underestimated, if they are in a static position they will have cleared fields of fire and set booby traps, and are willing to let the enemy come to them. When on the move, they will quickly and cleanly set up an ambush that allows them to interlock their fire and support one another. They will also primarily use burst fire, shooting for center mass.

MUNICIPAL POLICE

Brett was an Olympia cop, a beat cop to boot. We ran into him during the first month. Well, him and his six friends. Sylvia, Cindy and I were bathing in the water at the edge of the lake. While we were all naked and rubbing soap on each others back, it was hardly a teenage jerk-off fantasy, our hair was laying on our breasts to keep it out of the way of our backs getting washed concealing most of our torso..

We were all wearing pistols on cords around our neck. Grab and one good yank, and we had our pistol. Greg had lent me his ugly Glock and I had it hanging around my neck, fully loaded, when someone gave a long, low wolf whistle from the bank. We turned slowly, to see seven men dressed in cop uniforms, packing a variety of weaponry, and wearing evil grins.

"Holy shit, Brett, lookit the bush on that red-head." One leered, nodding at Sylvia.

"Come on up out of the water, ladies. Don't try no trouble." The one that had been called "Brett" said, motioning with a shotgun. Sylvia nodded meekly, and started forward, kicking my ankle as she did so. I fell backwards into the water, windmilling my arms, and when I surfaced, Sylvia had one hand on my breast, her hand sliding toward the middle.

"Hey, bring some of that up here!" one of them said, and Sylvia smiled at me as I reached toward her breasts.

"Let's give them some, honey." She told me. Her fingers found what they sought at the same time as mine.

By the time Greg, Sam and Buck arrived, the seven rogue cops were leaking blood onto the sand of the beach, all of them with surprised expressions on their faces. We finished bathing as Sam stripped away their badges, and then, in an uncharacteristic fit of rage, stomped their faces into unrecognizable ruin.

God did not make men and women equal. Colonels Smith & Wesson did.

From the Diaries of Becca

Most municipal police will be slain during the initial weeks, as a reported domestic disturbance turns into an attack by one or more zombies on the responding officers. Crackheads and heroin addicts that OD'd during the night would not just lie there until found, but look for other victims to feed their hunger, and police would be called out on what appeared to be little more than a savage attack between street-people. The hammering of a zombie on a door from inside the house of an elderly that causes the neighbors, who are concerned about the woman, to call the police, who are in turn attacked by an elderly woman who can't be stopped with a TASER, pepper spray, or a bullet to the chest.

Municipal police will be among the most devastated of all law-enforcement or military, less than one out of every two hundred surviving. As police are trained in the saving of lives, not the taking of them, many police would be brought down by a single zombie, after putting several bullets into it. Four or more would spell the end, and with officers returning home, or to the precinct, the zombie population would simply grow. More than a few police would succumb to madness and/or suicide as the constant warfare wore down upon them, and the blood flowed deeper and deeper.

Police characters would have basic issue equipment and weaponry, and would constantly be told not to use lethal force until at least the second day, maybe even longer. Police would be filmed by the press and excitedly reported as shooting unarmed "victims", causing hatred toward them. Body armor would be issued out on the second day at the earliest, along with heavier weapons around the third or fourth

day at the earliest. Police would work singly or in twos the first day, in groups of four to six the second to fifth, and ten or more afterwards.

Rogue police would often create their own little "Safe Haven" within the cities, hoping to wait it out, or grabbing a slice of empire in the city they helped defend all of their lives. Rogue police would be armed with a variety of weapons, and may or may not have robbed the evidence locker for heavier firepower than they normally carry.

Rogue police would run the gamut between the lone saint out to protect everyone they can, to the power mad, brutal dictator who has slipped over the edge of madness. In essence, only their training and access to weaponry and armor separates them from everyone else.

Rogue Police Officer

Dedicated Ordinary 3/Smart Ordinary 3
CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d6+3 plus 3d6+3; **HP** 28; **Mas** 13; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 15, touch 15, flatfooted 13 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +3 class); **BAB** +3; **Grap** +5; **Atk** +5 melee (1d6+2, Baton), or +5 ranged (2d6+0, Glock 10mm); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Police Department; **SV** Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Gather Information, Intimidate)

Skills: Balance +4, Computer Use +4, Concentration +3, Craft (writing) +4, Drive +5, Forgery +3, Gather Information +6, Intimidate +5, Investigate +9, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Listen +6, Profession +5, Research +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +6, Spot +4, Treat Injury +1

Feats: Drive By Attack, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Vehicle Expert, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Combat

Talents (Dedicated Ordinary):

Talents (Smart Ordinary):

Possessions: Baton, Glock 10mm

Transportation: Rogue police officers commonly travel in police vehicles, occasionally using SUVs or captured Hummvees.

Tactics: Rogue police officers often use their police cruiser to perform drive by attacks or strafe another vehicle.

COUNTY SHERIFFS

We were slaughtered, plain and simple, Becka. We lost four officers the first day, and had no idea what happened to them. Then we got 911 calls reporting that they were trying to break into the house, and officers were sent out. Those officers never reported back. It multiplied explosively.

I was called out to a bar fight that first night, one where a guy was bleeding to death. He was alive when I got there, and bled out while we were waiting for a wagon. The guy got back up, the knife still stuck in him, and he bit off a waitress' ear, and then tore out her throat. The scene was right out of a horror movie, blood spraying everywhere, screaming.

I gave him two warnings, and fired, and the other barmaid bumped me, so I ended up blowing out Harv's throat. It took about 5 minutes before he was up and killing. When it was all over, out of 20 customers, only six of us were still standing. I remember that my boots splashed in the steaming puddles of blood, and the jukebox was playing "Stars in the Texas Sky" as we walked toward the door. Everyone was following me, they were stunned, I was almost in shock.

I called back to dispatch, and was told to stay where I was. EMTs were on their way. That's when more Risers started coming across the fields, and six of them got up within minutes of each other from inside the tavern. The bloodbath had started.

Of all of my entire County Sheriff detachment, I was the only one to survive the first 72 hours.

Sam's Autobiography; From the Diaries of
 Becka

County Sheriffs have it a little better off, but with the isolation, a single stop could spell the end of a police officer, and County Sheriffs have large patrol areas where there are long distances between any stops or civilization. Since County Sheriffs work alone, for the most part, any who are unaware of exactly what they are dealing with would quickly be killed, drug down by a lone zombie.

Still, County Sheriffs are better armed and supplied, with their tactical gear often in the trunk of their cruisers, and on better terms with the local populace. A County Sheriff knows who has weaponry, who can



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be depended on, and once they realize what is going on, who they can go to for assistance.

Many County Sheriffs have military backgrounds, and more than a few have seen combat in foreign countries. Quite a few are crack shots with the .308 rifles that are in the vehicle, and while they may hesitate the first few times when confronted by a neighbor who has Risen, they will quickly adapt.

Sooner or later, however, they will be drafted, and forced into other duties, and that is when they will have the choice of going rogue, or dying.

Those that go rogue will often ally themselves with the survivalists and veterans of the area, helping to create a fortress, and even defending that fortress against "authorized representatives of the Federal Government", knowing that their wives and/or children are in there.

County Sheriff

Dedicated Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d6+3 plus 3d10+3; **HP** 34; **Mas** 12; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+2, Baton), or +6 ranged (2d6+0, Glock 10mm); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Local Sheriff's Department; **SV** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Drive, Gather Information)

Skills: Disguise +4, Drive +7, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +4, Investigate +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Pilot +4, Profession +5, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5, Survival +3, Treat Injury +3

Feats: Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert

Talents (Dedicated Ordinary):

Talents (Tough Ordinary):

Possessions: Baton, Glock 10mm

STATE PATROL:

I was riding with Sylvia, when they came off the onramp of I-5, their lights whirling and hitting their sirens of all things. Rogue State Patrol hitting what they thought was a single humm-vee, not a vanguard for an armored column.

"Hang on." Sylvia told me, and whipped a 180 in the middle of I-5, the humm-vee shuddering as the

tires spun on the grass median between the north-bound and south-bound lanes. Sylvia held her hand out, the thick muscles that were so strange to see on another woman bunching as I handed her the SAW that she had been packing.

The Staters were probably surprised when Sylvia stuck the barrel of the SAW out of the window, the handgrip tight against the steering wheel, and fired, heading straight at them. The shell-casings bounced off the mesh we had welded over the window, and flew back against Sylvia, who just drew her lips back in a snarl. It was strange, seeing the missing teeth from her near-fatal brush with radiation poisoning.

Windshields starred and shattered on the two State Patrol cars in front of us, and the driver's side window burst out in a spray of broken glass and blood. Sylvia jinked the wheel, and headed straight at the last State Patrol car, a grin affixed to her face.

"Uh, Sylvia..." I started.

"They'll move. They don't have the balls." She laughed, still firing into the grill of the police car. Steam was rushing out of the grill, and the hood flew off in a ball of fire.

"SYLVIA!" I screamed, my hands going to protect the baby in my stomach, who was kicking the shit out of my ribs in anger at being woken up by the firing of the SAW.

"Fine." She grunted, weaving away from the oncoming patrol car, passing it, and flipping another 180. She idled forward, until we were about 100 feet from the State Patrol cars.

"I think we're going to get a ticket." Sylvia told me, turning to me and grinning.

The radiation poisoning had eaten the fat from her face, making her smile look like she was a grinning skull with patchy brown hair.

From the Diaries of Becka

Many State Police would have died while attending to accident victims, or looking over a crime scene, when the deceased suddenly lunged up and began attacking everyone. Accidents on major freeways, as well as small towns screaming for assistance would scatter the State Police all over the place. By the time the recall order is sent out, approximately half of the State Police will be dead and Risen.

Those that do survive would be more apt to join a military enclave, or a small band of roving survivalists. Some may even turn to raiding to survive, remembering that toward the end, civilians turned on them, goaded on by the press and fear. Those State Police that do become little better

YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

than bandits are often hunted down and killed by their former brethren, but in the mean time, many cruise the back roads and highways looking for sport or loot.

It is not uncommon for rogue State Patrol officers to use ingrained habits of their potential victims to gain trust or get their victims to stop.

Former State Police are often well supplied, have decent vehicles, and know the roads

Dedicated Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3
CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d6+3 plus 3d10+3; **HP** 34; **Mas** 12; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, Baton), or +6 ranged (2d6+0, Glock 10mm); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; AL Local Sheriff's Department; **SV** Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Drive, Gather Information)

Skills: Disguise +4, Drive +7, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +4, Investigate +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Pilot +4, Profession +5, Sense Motive +7, Spot +5, Survival +3, Treat Injury +3

Feats: Double Tap, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Vehicle Dodge, Vehicle Expert

Talents (Dedicated Ordinary):

Talents (Tough Ordinary):

Possessions: Baton, Glock 10mm

S.W.A.T.

I witnessed SWAT doing the best they could, trying to protect everyone from the massive amounts of Risers that swarmed over Olympia, devouring everyone they could catch, making more Risers, who in turn, sought to devour others.

They pulled up in their black vans, with S.W.A.T. painted on the side, and burst out the back, wearing body armor, carrying submachineguns, and ready to kick ass and take names against the "rioters who had turned to murder." They fired as they advanced, a few throwing concussion or tear gas grenades as they headed toward the wave of "rioters" that moved down the street.

They looked alien in their gas masks, and I knew what was going to happen. Bullets didn't stop them, tear gas wouldn't even slow them down. Those poor brave men charged into them in a wedge, as had worked so many times before against rioters.

Following tried and true tactics. Brave, efficient, and noble in their charge against a mob of thousands of Risers.

Their screams chased my friends and I down the streets as we headed toward the pawnshop my brother worked at.

From the Diaries of Becka

SWAT members are used heavily in the first few days to respond to massive zombie infestations in buildings, guard important locations, and run escort service on important shipments. Airports, hospitals, rail depots and the like, as well as important government buildings would all be protected by SWAT teams after the second to fourth day, fighting a slowly losing fight against the zombies.

Highly professional, well armed, and trained to the cutting edge in both police and military tactics, only one thing hampers a member of SWAT. The fact that SWAT is in the business of saving lives, not taking them. They will initially be unlikely to use lethal force, or headshots, and firing on unarmed civilians would be a difficult thing for them to accomplish at first.

Their high risk missions will ensure that



Having an effective sniper can be the difference.

SWAT will take massive casualties, even though they will quickly adapt to the situation. Morale and discipline will begin to fall apart when superiors scoff at reports of the living dead, or even suspend SWAT members who shot an unarmed Riser in the face during a mere "unarmed struggle", and heavens forbid that they shoot a child zombie in view of a press camera.

SWAT does have an edge over most police units, as they are more military in their teamwork and discipline, and that

may give them an edge toward surviving the Rising and the breakdown of civilization. While a few bad SWAT members may survive, since the number of bad SWAT are far lower than movies make it out to be, that number won't be high enough to really worry about.

SWAT members that do survive will undoubtedly gravitate to protecting a small community, using their skills to keep the Risers from devouring those inside. These will be the no bullshit hardasses who guard the community that the PCs visit, with skills that include urban combat, demolitions and sniper training. A community guarded by the remnants of a SWAT team will quickly be left alone by all but the stupidest, most arrogant, or toughest raiders.

Dedicated Hero 3/Fast Hero 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d6+6 plus 3d8+6; **HP** 37; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 19, touch 19, flatfooted 16 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +6 class); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d6+2, Baton), or +7 ranged (2d8+0, M-16A2); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Local Police Department; **SV** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +4; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12.

Occupation: Law Enforcement (Drive, Knowledge [Tactics])

Skills: Diplomacy +10, Drive +9, Gather Information +3, Hide +7, Investigate +5, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Move Silently +7, Profession +5, Sense Motive +5, Spot +5, Tumble +5

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Burst Fire, Combat Driving, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Quick Reload, Trustworthy

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Diplomacy), Aware

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1

Possessions: Baton, M-16A2

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES

"Roger, Tango Charlie Seven Five out." The soldier, Mathews or whatever it was, said into the radio that another soldier was carrying. He clipped the microphone back onto the backpack carried radio and turned to the others, who had finished tossing my brother's pawnshop for anything usable.

Surprisingly, they had not chosen to go after chainsaws and the like. The most they had done was grab BMX facemasks and leather jackets.

"We've got an element of the National Guard getting the living shit kicked out of them down the street. We've been ordered to assist them." The man told them, sliding a handle on the back of the rifle and looking inside the area that opened up when he did so. I could see a gold glint inside of it right before he released the handle and the little area closed with a snap. I know now that it was the bolt, and he was checking the chamber, but then, I didn't know anything.

"What's the plan, Sarge?" one of the men asked, standing up from where he was bandaging his knee.

"We doubletime down there, save their asses, and leave. That's what command wants." The man, Greg, told the others.

"What's your plan?" another man asked.

"We save who we can, take their vehicles, and head back to the hospital. This is a goddamn war zone, and we're almost through our basic load." Greg replied, peering out the window. Outside several zombies ran by, heading toward the center of town. "Christ, what a cluster-fuck."

"What about us?" I asked, walking toward him and getting up into his face. "You come in here, start throwing around orders, rob the place, and then think you're going to leave us?"

"Nope. You're coming with us. Congratulations, you are hereby Army National Guard." He grinned. I didn't protest, my mind considered ammunition, weapons, supplies, and most importantly, people who could fight. My sorority sisters were too shocked to protest, they just nodded numbly.

"I'll do what I can for you, ladies, but right now, it's Hell on Earth out there." Greg told us, walking toward the door and nodding at the other men. "Follow us, stay tight, and welcome to the National Guard."

"Hooah." One of the other men murmured.

From the Diaires of Becka

The National Guard will have gotten torn apart as ammunition usage and attrition slowly eliminated what edge they had. When it became too difficult to refuel, due to zombie infestation, or there was no fuel left, even the heavy armored vehicles would have to be abandoned.

As the chain of command slowly collapsed from attrition and desertion, more and more resources would have been wasted as troops succumbed to battle-fatigue and the weight of dead flesh pressed against them. Some National

Guard units would have collapsed within days, as people took the weaponry issued to them and left to defend or rescue their families.

Most National Guard units of *all* branches suffered serious casualties the first day or so, due to the fact that zombies attacked and killed soldiers before they were reactivated or could join up with their units. Sadly, some units could not get to their heavy equipment, due to the massive number of zombies surrounding motorpools or armories, and were slaughtered en-masse by the zombies.

This led to a low number of National Guard and Reserve members actually surviving The Rising, a much lower percentage than Active Duty, most of whom had been returned to the continental United States on rotation from theaters of conflict. Still, it is estimated that less than 10% of Active Duty personnel and less than 5% of National Guard and Reserve forces survived the first 90 days.

- **-ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AND ARMY RESERVES:**

Very few soldiers in the Army National Guard would be left, as most soldiers would have been killed doing urban sweep and clears, guarding convoys, and refugee stations from the hordes of zombies that swarmed over the cities. The Army National Guard, already suffering a depletion of man-power from a lack of reenlistment and units being deployed overseas, were often just swarmed under by the sheer numbers of zombies. By the two week time, providing that there was no foreign invasion, most National Guard units took the most fortifiable position they could find, and set up a shelter. If a foreign invasion occurred (The Total War scenario) the National Guard was squeezed and destroyed between the zombies and the foreign military forces.

- **-MARINE RESERVES:** Again, very few rogues, as the Marines often held their lines, held their positions, until they were wiped out to the last man. Those in the Marine Guard that survived often headed into the countryside with whatever survivors they could gather up, to find a defensible area and fort up in order to protect the remainder of the survivors under their protection.

- **-NAVY RESERVE:** Most the Naval National Guard were assigned to protect dock areas or put on Temporary Duty with the Coast Guard and ordered to assist

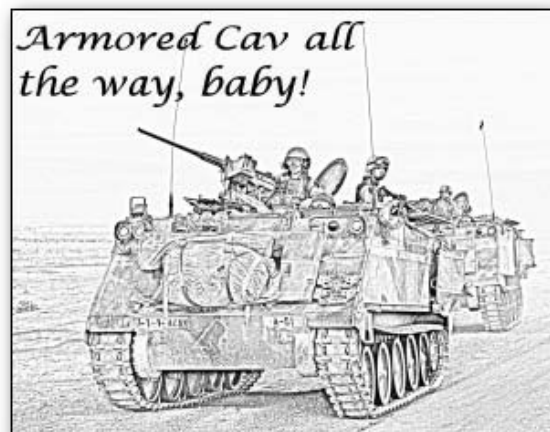
in the boarding of any vessels entering American waters. Eventually, the Naval

Author's Note: I'm not attempting to insult Reserve and National Guard units here, and I want you to know that straight up front. Reserve and National Guard soldiers fight just as hard as active duty troops when the time comes, but the biggest difference in casualty ratings can be found right in the text. While an active duty soldier in the barracks on the weekend is maybe 10 minutes away from his weapon and ammunition in the arms room a floor below, a National Guardsman may have to drive up to 100 miles to reach their unit. During that drive, they are just as exposed, and in just as much danger as any other civilian.

No disrespect, no backhanded insult is intended, just knowledge that the National Guard would be used first, be used hard, and many would have died before ever being able to report for duty and be issued their gear or man their vehicles.

National Guard was over-run at the docks, and slaughtered, since they only had the ocean to their backs and often had nowhere to retreat to. Those Naval personnel on ship were often put first into harm's way by Coast Guard vessel commanders, who were more willing to risk Navy personnel that they did not know rather than the men and women who had been under their command for a long period of time.

- **-AIR FORCE NATIONAL GUARD AND AIR FORCE RESERVE:** The Air National Guard were tasked with providing security and additional pilots for the Active Duty Air Force, who were required to provide fire missions and air support nearly 24 hours a day. Those personnel in the Air National Guard who were not medical, or involved in necessary flight operations, were put on the perimeters to supplement the Army National Guard who were attempting to provide security for the air-fields, ammunition



depots, and fuel supplies. In the end,

however, the zombies over-ran the airfields, planes crashed due to pilot error due to exhaustion, ammunition ran dry, and planes crashed while attempting to land when they struck a pack of zombies. If the Total War Scenario was used, the Air Force often was dual tasked with providing anti-zombie air support, and providing air support for the American military that was slugging it out with invading military forces.

Tough Hero 3/Dedicated Hero 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d10+9 plus 3d6+9; **HP** 46; **Mas** 16; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 24, touch 16, flatfooted 22 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +4 class, +8 equipment); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +6; **Atk** +6 melee (1d4/1d6+2, Bayonet), or +6 ranged (2d8+0, M-4 Carbine); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** **US** Military Branch (Army, Navy, Airforce, Marines or Coast Guard); **SV** Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +4; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12.

Occupation: Blue Collar (Craft [structural], Drive, Repair)

Skills: Climb +1, Computer Use +4, Craft (mechanical) +5, Craft (structural) +8, Drive +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +5, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Listen +6, Profession +4, Repair +7, Spot +12, Survival +6, Treat Injury +2

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Burst Fire, Far Shot, Gearhead, Personal Firearms Proficiency

Talents (Tough Hero): Remain Conscious, Second Wind

Talents (Dedicated Hero): Skill Emphasis (Spot), Aware

Possessions: Interceptor Vest with Ballistic Plates and Ballistic Helmet, Bayonet, M-4 Carbine with M203, side mounted bayonet, Reflex sight, 7 5.56mm 30-round magazines, 1 40mm shotgun round, 1 40mm CS round, 2 40mm fragmentation grenades, 2 fragmentation grenades, 1 CS grenade, 1 red smoke grenade, tac-com, Night vision goggles, roll of tape, compass, field dressing, combat knife, pair of combat boots, set of desert camouflage uniform, 2 quart canteen, 1 quart canteen, gas mask, chemical suit, rucksack with frame, entrenching tool, "boonie" hat, and 2 MRE's. May be carrying an AT-4, a SINCARDS radio or a SAW with 3 200-round ammunition boxes.

Vehicles: M1044 or M1114 HMMWV, Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle or dismount crew in a Black Hawk helicopter.

Tactics: National Guardsmen prefer to fight from fortified positions or "shock and awe" style tactics, coming in with overwhelming force and putting down any opponents that refuse to surrender. During the Rising, they will be tasked with guarding critical locations or performing "rescue missions", and for the first 72 hours will be hesitant to shoot US citizens. After that, however, it's "Better you than me, sucker!" and all bets are off.

ACTIVE DUTY

When we got back to the Aid Station, all two Humvees and twelve people, Greg was immediately reassigned to Olympia General Hospital. He quickly informed the company commander that my sorority sisters and I had been drafted, as per the War Powers Act and Martial Law regulations, and had agreed to serve in the US Military in exchange for food, shelter, weaponry, and ammunition.

While I stayed with the National Guard, Greg and the remainder of his team went back to Active Duty service. I noticed a strange division in our own armed services. National Guard was guarding aid stations, power plants and the like. Active Duty was being put in the hardest positions.

Active Duty were the ones who were often forced to fire on civilians. There was a reason for this, and Greg was kind enough to explain it to me over a cup of really crappy hot chocolate.

"These other guys, the Guard troops, they live with these guys, and if this settles down, they have to live here. That means looking the people whose parents, children, and family they killed, in the eye, every damn day. Guilt, possible suicide or revenge motivated murder, all of them will take their toll. Top it off that there could be a split second hesitation when a best friend attacks one of these No-Go's, and the liabilities are just too much." He told me, sipping on his coffee. I had noticed that his rifle was always touching him, and was doing my best to pick up the habit. "Me? They'll just ship me out to some shit-hole when this is all over, and I'll go back to living in South Dakota when I get out. I don't know these people, I do know my fellow troops. I'll kill the civilians without hesitation."

Ruthless, cruel, but understandable.

From the Diaries of Becka

Active Duty personnel took it on the chin from the get-go. Many of them were

already deployed to foreign countries in various combat zones or had just been rotated back to the United States. Those overseas suffered serious casualties as they were surrounded by two enemies, the zombies, and the military forces they were already engaged with, many of whom took The Rising as a sign to press harder at American troops, or even blamed US troops for The Rising.

Those who managed to return home, or who were already inside the United States, were given unenviable jobs such as: Guarding convoys, providing helicopter dismount security, and ordered to provide security to locations that the government and military felt would be assaulted by waves of rioters who would only respond to deadly force.

Active Duty military forces often found themselves caught between rioters, snipers and the zombies, with the very people that they were trying to protect firing on them out of rage, confusion and fear. If the Total War option is used, then the enemy forces started out attacking the soldiers, and some of the foreign military groups never stopped fighting until they were all killed.

Sadly, within 3 weeks to a month, the chain of command collapsed totally, between massive casualties, infighting in the government itself, and desertion, soldiers often found themselves cut off from any support, with only the resources they could hold onto to last them rest of their lives.

Many left their assigned stations, searching out a more tenable position, and others fortified where they were at. Some groups stayed within the law and a code of honor, while others turned to raiding, looting and slavery.

Special Operations Groups, most of whom had been decimated, taken inside FEMA Sites to provide security, or left outside CoG bunkers to die, sought out the nearest fortifiable or well supplied location and began gathering other survivors. The SOGs began training others in their skills, and putting their skills to work in bettering their new home.

It is not uncommon to find the few remaining members of a Special Operations Group (SOG), sometimes as few as a single man, acting as the Warlord or Security Boss for the community. In some circumstances, a SOG member may even be the de facto dictator or elected ruler of a community.

Communities set up or guarded by former Active Duty troops, many of whom have several years of combat experience and rebuilding experience under their belts, are often the most well fortified, better guarded and most productive of settlements in the Rising World. Smart Raiders and Slavers know to avoid these settlements, and it is not unheard of for some settlements that are particularly brutal in regard to their elimination of zombies, to even be avoided by the Risen.

- **ARMY:** The Army was decimated between battlefield casualties returning as zombies, the crashing of air transports on the way back from overseas, planes landing at airports that were infested with zombies, and trying to protect American citizens from the attacking zombies. Ammunition eventually began to run out, the Army was forced to retreat further and further, taking horrific casualties each time. Only the fact that many of the soldiers were battle hardened veterans allowed the Army to last as long as it did. The vehicle advantage eventually slipped away, as mobbing zombies prevented refueling operations and the vehicles ran dry, often stranding the soldiers in the middle of a vast crowd of zombies.

- **MARINES:** Most of the Marines were overseas involved in combat operations when the dead started returning to life. The high discipline and morale of the Marines allowed many of them to quickly regroup and secure transport back to the United States of America. The legendary Marine ruthlessness asserted itself when Active Duty Marines killed any of their comrades who were bitten when they began to exhibit symptoms, knowing that one bite meant a certain, painful death. Marines who had been bitten often volunteered for suicide missions or duties, refusing to be liabilities until the time came where the symptoms began to manifest. Upon returning to the States, even during the Total War option, the Marine Corps often seized or created hardened positions from which they could eliminate both the enemy forces and the zombies, as well as provide security for survivors.

- **NAVY:** Ordered to provide coastal blockades, with orders to board and then sink any ship that they came across for the first week, then just sink

any ship sighted that was drifting or did not respond to hails. The boarding operation took its toll in a surprising way, as those in the sick bays began attacking doctors and ship-mates. As the Marines were often the ones tasked to boarding parties, that meant that many ship's security elements were the ones turned to zombies. The close quarters inside the ships favored the zombies, and eventually, most ships became nothing but floating mortuaries full of the hungry, walking dead.

- **Air Force:** Sortie after sortie against either zombie packs or enemy forces, eventually began resulting in pilot error. These errors ranged from firing on the wrong locations to slamming nose-first into skyscrapers in a tragic reminder that further panicked a civilian populace already under siege. Once the airfields were over-run, most pilots looked for anyplace to set down. Once down, the pilots were often ill-equipped and ill-trained to survive the roaming packs of zombies, who would drag down a lone pilot and devour them.

Tough Hero 5/Soldier 3 CR 8; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 5d10+10 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 61; **Mas** 15; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 26, touch 18, flatfooted 23 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +5 class, +8 equipment); **BAB** +5; **Grap** +7; **Atk** +7 melee (1d4+2/19-20, Knife), or +9 ranged (2d8+2, M-4 Carbine); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** US Military (Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy or Coast Guard); **SV** Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +4; **AP** 4; **Rep** +1; **Str** 15, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Military (Knowledge [Tactics], Survival)

Skills: Climb +1, Craft (structural) +4, Demolitions +5, Drive +8, Hide +1, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +4, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Listen +8, Navigate +3, Pilot +5, Spot +12, Survival +9

Feats: Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Alertness, Burst Fire, Exotic Firearms Proficiency (mortar/indirect), Far Shot, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quick Reload, Vehicle Expert

Talents (Tough Hero): Remain Conscious, Second Wind, Sonic/Concussion Resistance

Talents (Soldier): Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization

Possessions: Interceptor Body Armor with Ballistic Plates and Helmet, Knife, M-4 Carbine with ACOG scope, 7 30-round magazines of 5.56mm rounds, 2 fragmentation grenades, 1 CS grenade, 1 red smoke grenade, tac-com, Night vision goggles, roll of tape, compass, field dressing, combat knife, pair of combat boots, set of desert camouflage uniform, 2 quart canteen, 1 quart canteen, gas mask, chemical suit, rucksack with frame, 1 spare uniform, 1 spare pair of boots, 2 spare pair of socks, entrenching tool, "boonie" hat, and 2 MRE's. May be carrying an AT-4, a SINCGARS radio or a SAW with 3 200-round ammunition boxes.

Vehicle: 1114 or 1040 HMMWV, Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle, HEMMT, or Black Hawk dismount crew.

Tactics: Active Duty hits hard, usually with overwhelming firepower and burst fire from weapons. Ambushes, flanking maneuvers, cover fire, mortar fire, fire support missions, all of these will be used by Active Duty military to support the National Guard and Reserve as well as to protect civilians.

RAIDERS

We had worked for about a week to finish fortifying the junk yard. We needed time to refit the Bradleys, time to repair and reload them, check them for problems. PMCS them, as Buck put it, whatever that meant. I was standing on top of several wrecked cars, ignoring the risers down below me who pushed at the wrecked cars that made up the wall.

I could see them coming, in beat up pickups, vans, and cars with chicken-wire welded to them. They looked like refugees from a bad 1980's movie, complete with Day-Glo hair and heavy metal music blaring from the speakers.

I'd seen this scene before, in a movie. Only the defenders of the wall weren't armed like our group was.

The lead vehicle, a bus, pulled up, and a guy climbed out of a hatch on the roof and raised a megaphone to his mouth. He was wearing the remnants of a police uniform like it made him special, or gave him some kind of authority.

There hadn't been a police force in over a year.

"You guys find something that you oughta be sharing with us?" the man with the megaphone called

out. His voice was sneering, arrogant, and full of dark humor. I didn't answer, just reached one hand under the tarp and felt for what had sadly become so familiar in the last year. "ANSWER ME, BITCH!"

With my other hand, I pulled the tarpaulin off of the twin-mounted M2A2 fifty caliber machineguns, and stepped on the bar that fired it, throwing the tarp to the floor and grabbing the machinegun handles with both hands. The recoil was bone jarring, making my whole body shudder as I swung the line of tracers into the bus, the incendiary rounds linked one to four exploding when they hit the home-made armor.

The bus exploded when the rounds, a mix of armor piercing, normal, tracers and incendiary, touched off the gas tank, but I kept swinging the arc into the other cars. A few shots were fired my way, but the fifty kept anyone's interest in poking their heads up to aim at me pretty secondary to not getting shot in the ass.

I raked the cars several times, ignoring the ones that fled, and ignoring the people who managed to stumble out.

The Risers would take care of them.

From the Diaries of Becka

Raiders are those who would rather take than barter, make or earn. From all walks of life before the Rising, some of the meanest and toughest Raiders were such things as florists, librarians, copy machine technicians, and office drones. While many would think that former gang members would be prime Raiders, "bangers" had a tendency to either form up into a quasi-militia and break out of the city, or were killed and eaten by Risers and Wolf Packs.

Spottily armed with mostly civilian weaponry with the occasional stolen mil-spec weapon, these guys are scavengers on the corpse of the old world, who are more interested in the here and now than gathering supplies to maintain a community or build for the future. Often, they have one small base, heavily fortified, or survive by just staying on the move like a group of locusts.

They will be spottily and heavily armed with everything from home-made zip guns to machineguns to axes, with patchwork armor on their vehicles, and chicken wire spot welded over the windows. They will be driving such things as semi-trucks, motorcycles, ice-cream trucks, armored cars (the bank type), ATVs, SUVs, military cargo trucks, and any other vehicles they

can fix, or steal. They will have the occasional military armored vehicle, and will always have at least one fuel truck in their convoy. The military armored vehicles will often be more for show and breaching walls than for combat, since ammunition will be hard to come by after a few months.

If the Total War option is used, Raiders will often have quite a few former foreign military personnel in their ranks. Those Raider bands, who are foreign military turned bandits, are the most dangerous, as they will be heavily armed, and often possessing light armored vehicles that were air-dropped in with them.

Fast Ordinary 3/Tough Ordinary 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+6 plus 3d10+6; **HP** 43; **Mas** 14; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 22, touch 19, flatfooted 19 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +6 class, +3 equipment); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +4; **Atk** +4 melee (1d6+0, Club), or +7 ranged (2d6+0, Uzi); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Raider Gang; **SV** Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Balance +3, Bluff +2, Climb +0, Craft (mechanical) +3, Disguise +2, Drive +7, Escape Artist +5, Hide +7, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Popular Culture) +3, Knowledge (Streetwise) +5, Move Silently +7, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +5

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Brawl, Deceptive, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Quick Reload

Talents (Fast Ordinary):

Talents (Tough Ordinary):

Possessions: Undercover Vest, Club, Uzi, 4 30-round magazines of 9mm, hiking boots, overalls, gas mask, 2 tear gas grenades, 9mm Beretta, 5 15-round 9mm clips, 2 sticks of dynamite, lighter, 4 packs of cigarettes, 1 bottle of whiskey, knapsack, 2 1-liter bottles of water, 2 cans of dog food, 4 cans of cat food, 3 cans of corned beef hash, can opener, phillips screwdriver, porn magazine.

Vehicles: Raiders usually drive scavenged or stolen pickup trucks, armored cars, the occasional Hummvee, and once in a great while, a semi-truck.

YEAR ☼ OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

Tactics: Raiders strike from ambush, rarely preferring a head on fight, and will retreat as soon as they have grabbed enough loot or are getting bloodied too badly.

LOOTERS

The streets were an absolute mad-house as we ran from the mall. People were fleeing the mall carrying everything they could lay their hands on. Radios, MP3 players, televisions, clothing, jewelry, whatever they could grab. It was complete panic inside, with people being attacked by other people, security guards firing wildly at people, muggings, and a panic at the doors.

Outside, cars were crashing into one another, and I saw a woman get dragged from her car by two men, who began eating her. Not raping her, not beating on her, not carjacking or mugging her, but literally biting and tearing at her flesh.

Cops were fighting with looters and rioters both. The people were attacking everyone in sight. I saw a looter get shot by a store owner up ahead, and as we approached, the man struggled up to his feet, his chest blown open by a shotgun. He stumbled back into the store, and the shotgun roared again as we passed. Steffy squealed as a pellet hit her in the butt, but she kept up.

I thought about mugging one looter, who ran by with an armload of rifles he had just taken from a pawn shop, but dismissed the thought. My thoughts were still clear and concise, concerned with where we would go, and how we would survive this.

Cops were killing the looters, who were getting up and killing cops and anyone else they spotted. We saw looters stealing everything from jewelry to firearms to furniture, and the look in their eyes was more like confused cattle than the sharp eyed, predatory stare depicted in movies.

Still, the death toll from the looting did not help the problem, and it seemed, in that chaotic hour it took to reach a friend's house, that we had seen hundreds of looters killed, and dozens of police officers.

It came as no surprise to hear that the National Guard was being mobilized to deal with the looters.

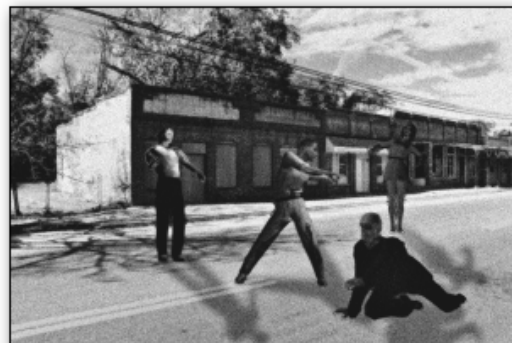
I think they should have been mobilized to deal with the Risers.

From the Diaries of Becka.

In the early days, looting would be a fact of life that just feeds the zombie problem as looters are shot by home owners, shopkeepers, police and National Guard

soldiers assigned to keep the peace and try to maintain order.

The fact that people are looting any and every store they think they can get away with will mean that many of the easily accessed firearms will almost certainly be gone, as well as obvious sources of ammunition. Looters will also lurk outside of an Emergency Aid Station that is in trouble, waiting until it is over-run and the majority of the zombies head elsewhere, occasionally attracted to a diversion set by the looters. Once the zombies are gone, the looters will enter the EAS and take whatever they can find, ignoring any survivors, or killing/enslaving them rather than providing aid.



*Power' out, Everything is cheap,
Plenty of housing.
Sorry, not interested.
Grayville, Nebraska*

One reason they definitely bear mentioning later is looters will often stash the stolen goods in a location of their choosing, making it somewhat feasible that exploring characters could find all manner of equipment in a basement or apartment if the GM is feeling generous and the party is on the ropes. This cache will usually only be guarded by a single Risen looter, giving a badly injured and battered party some easily accessible supplies with a logical reason behind it.

Tough Ordinary 1/Strong Ordinary 1 CR 2; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 1d10+2 plus 1d8+2 plus 3; **HP** 18; **Mas** 15; **Init** +2; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 14, touch 14, flatfooted 12 (+0 size, +2 Dex, +2 class); **BAB** +1; **Grap** +3; **Atk** +3 melee (1d6+2, lead pipe), or +3 ranged (2d6+0, .38 revolver); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** none; **SV** Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; **AP** 1; **Rep** +0; **Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11.

Occupation: Blue Collar (Craft [structural], Drive, Repair)

Skills: Concentration +3, Craft (mechanical) +2, Craft (structural) +4, Drive +6, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +4, Profession +1, Repair +4, Spot +1, Survival +1

Feats: Personal Firearms Proficiency, Toughness

Possessions: lead pipe, .38 revolver, random loot picked up..

Vehicle: Usually none. Occasionally, they will have some type of normal car or truck, but most are on foot.

Tactics: Looters usually just smash and grab, although a group of them may work together to breach the roll-down security gates on some of the more secure stores.

WOLF-PACKS

"I hate you all. You lied to us, there were really monsters, and they look like you. You did naughty things to us. Cordilia took us in, taught us to fight against you, lying mommies and daddies all of you. Mommy came home and bit Daddy, and ate part of his tummy before he got up. Mommy seemed sad, and Mommy and Daddy attacked my brother, and Johnny screamed as I ran away.

"A man found me, and let me get in his car. He drove past all of the grownups attacking and eating each other. He took me to a park, and tore my dress, and did grownup things to me, and hurt me. Cordilia and Max showed up, and Cordilia stuck a knife up his butt, and we all ran away. Every adult we met wanted to eat us, or make babies on us. Grownups don't love you, and dollies are so you get in their car and they can pretend you're a girl if you are a boy, or hurt you if you're a girl. Cordilia is our mommy now, and you are here, where we lair, and you're grownups.

"Grownups eat each other, and want to eat us, and make babies on us. Cordilia showed us that we can eat you, and stick knives into your peepees.

"My pack will come for me, and I'll eat your guts, bitch." The young girl snarled, her filed teeth flashing in the lights.

"Aw shit." Buck said, looking around slowly as he tightened his grip on his M-4. "This place is their lair?" He turned on his tac-com: "Everyone check in and mount up. This place is a fucking Wolf-Pack den."

Greg drew his pistol and fired once, his bullet taking the little girl in the face and shattering her skull. Brains splattered against the wall as Greg

reholstered his pistol. I could hear everyone checking in over the tac-cams, and on the floor below us, I could hear one of the Bradleys fire up. The heavy diesel engine's thumping made slight tremors run through the floor.

"Let's get the fuck out of here." Buck said, heading for the door.

Good enough for me.

Interview with a Wolf Pack Child (deceased); From the Diaries of Becka

Children quickly revert to savagery if there is no gentle influence of a parent, and cannibalism will not have any social stigma attached to it within these little groups as they would follow the examples of other creatures around them. Wolf-Packs become very territorial, claiming a certain section of a city for their own and hunting any interlopers, be it zombie or living, as prey to be eaten.

Adult males would definitely be shown no mercy, as the rape and brutalization of many of these children at the hands of perverts who were no longer afraid of the law that occurs in the early days of The Rising would have been perpetrated by men. Women garner no mercy as many children would see them as mother-figures who had let down and betrayed the children of a Wolf Pack.

Anyone bitten by a zombie would quickly be hacked down by their pack-mates and the meat cut away for later meals, often with a Feral Child biting a few quick mouthfuls away to keep their stomach filled. Feral Children are also able to eat zombies with no ill effect, never contracting whatever viral or bacteriological infection causes bite victims to die.

Wolf-Packs often have dogs running with them, sleeping with them, and living side by side with them, and because of such, Wolf-Pack children smell strongly of unclean canine. These dogs are more than pets; they are protectors, comrades, and Pack-Mates. In Wolf-Packs that have existed for long enough, female dogs will often nurse human infants of the Wolf-Pack as well as puppies.

Wolf-Packs fill their ranks by gathering up abandoned children, and will snatch infants, killing the parents if possible, and nursing them on pregnant or nursing dogs. Infants are weaned on raw human meat from milk, and taught to run, hide, and attack, often learning to kill with a knife before learning to speak.



Painted by Buck from memory of our last days in Olympia. we saw this from a distance.



We didn't get there in time to save any of them, although we tried.

Once a child reaches approximately 15, they are driven from the pack. The only exception is for females who have the choice of leaving or becoming "Baby-Makers." The whole job of a Baby-Maker is to remain pregnant and nurse children, including puppies. A pregnant woman seen by a Wolf-Pack will be captured, their hamstrings and triceps cut to keep them from running or crawling away, and put in with the other Baby-Makers to continue to breed for the Pack. Baby-Makers receive no care while giving birth, and are used by every member of the Pack who feels like having sex. A Baby-Maker who is not showing, or is not pregnant, is often gang-raped, with the Den Mother holding her down and overseeing to make sure it is being done right. A Baby-Maker rarely survives to give birth to more than four children, and Baby-Makers who do not conceive within a set period of time (depending on how well liked she is) are quickly killed and rendered into sandwich meat.

Firearms would be a rarity, but gas masks would not, having been stolen or taken from the bodies of the dead, and the Wolf-Packs dimly remembering the burning and stinging of tear gas from the early days of The Rising. Knives and meat cleavers would be the weapons of choice, and stealth and pack tactics would be substituted for brute strength.

Wolf-Packs lair in such places as former schools, industrial districts, sky-scrapers, office buildings, wherever they feel secure and can find lots of nooks and crannies to squeeze into that are easily defendable from Risers and predatory adults.

CRAZIES

They surrounded the Bradleys, chanting in their red sheets, waving torches in the night. We watched on through the viewports as a Riser took one of them to the ground. Instead of fighting, the person actually embraced the Riser, and others looked on with an obscene envy.

"Surrender unto our resurrected Lord!" they chanted, as they joined hands around our little convoy. We could have left, but that would have meant abandoning Sylvia's newest humm-vee, and we did not really see a reason to leave behind a pristine vehicle with a full tank of gas just for some freaks.

"Give unto them your flesh, so that the world may become pure again!" came the calls.

"Are these guys for fucking real?" Sam's voice was clear over the inter-vehicle tac-com we all stayed plugged into when we were inside.

"Let's find out," Greg laughed. "Jose, give them a taste of the flame-thrower."

"Roger." Came back Jose's terse reply. We'd replaced the damaged 20mm Bushmaster Chain gun with a flamethrower over a week ago, but had never bothered to use it. It was easier to ignore the Risers unless they mobbed us too bad, or someone got annoyed. It's not like they could reach through 20 tons of armor and grab you.

The turret swiveled, and the singing and chanting grew louder. Strangely, my mind focused on the back rank, where there were now two Risers, both of them standing up, and as I watched, both of them took down a victim. How in the world had these people survived so long?

With a heady whoosh that filled the world full of the stench of burnt flesh and gasoline, the pressurized stream of fire devoured several of the cultists around us, going from singing to dead in a second. Those on the outside of the swath of destruction burst into flame. The rest screamed and began running away.

What is it about disaster that makes people worship the stupidest things?

From the Diaries of Becka

End of the World cults would flourish after and during The Rising Days as the dead rose up and began feasting on everyone. Many religious figures would be seen as failures, and either torn apart by their former faithful, or change their faith. Those cults that already existed would see their "dogma" validated, and would begin to spread their "one true message", some of the groups using a gun to carry out their message.

Religious whackos have existed during every stressful time. They will use personal charisma to gain what they desire, and usually gather about them a small core of fanatics who will protect them, and provide them with sexual favors and ego stroking. These people will not allow "outlanders" to interfere with their little kingdoms, or threaten what they have built.

People whose brains have broken down will also be common. Ones who claim that "Twas the Will of God" or who believe that the "Zombies just need acceptance, dude" will be found for the first few months. The "zombie lovers" will quickly go down and be devoured by the same "misunderstood minorities" that they are preaching co-

existence with. While "They just need love" doesn't result in too much death these days, after The Rising, giving a zombie love is asking to have significant portions of your anatomy chewed away.

Military/Civil leaders or scientists enacting their "Grand Social Experiment" will by far be the most dangerous. Many of these will have serious firepower and a good pool of manpower, not to mention a defensible location to shove their idea down the throat of everyone else. These social experiments can involve a new society, genocidal purge of "undesirables" and other such atrocities. They have total power now, and that power will corrupt them totally. It won't take long for dictators and strong men to assume the positions of power, even if the current leader is only a "benevolent dictator."

Dedicated Ordinary 3 CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d6+3; **HP** 14; **Mas** 12; **Init** +0; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 15, touch 12, flatfooted 15 (+0 size, +0 Dex, +2 class, +3 equipment); **BAB** +2; **Grap** +1; **Atk** +1 melee (1d6+1/19-20, machete), or +2 ranged (2d4+0, .22 revolver); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Religious Group; **SV** Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; **AP** 1; **Rep** +1; **Str** 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16.

Occupation: Religious (Knowledge [Streetwise], Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy], Listen)

Skills: Craft (pharmaceutical) +0, Craft (visual art) +1, Craft (writing) +0, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Streetwise) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +1, Profession +2, Sense Motive +4, Spot +2, Survival +2, Treat Injury +3

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light), Defensive Martial Arts, Trustworthy

Talents (Dedicated Ordinary):

Possessions: Undercover Vest, machete, .22 revolver, robe, tennis shoes, 20 .22 rounds, 3 cans of beef stew, 4 packets of koolaid, 1 can opener, one swiss army knife, religious text or item, and 6 cans of cat food.

Tactics: Crazies may try to persuade the PCs peacefully, but often have plans for any outsiders who do not convert that usually revolve around human sacrifices.

There are some groups of crazies who kill everything and anyone not like them in

some type of holy jihad against a world that has enough problems.

SLAVERS

I stood next to Sylvia, the Hemmit idling as it kept the pressure in the compressed air tank and the nail guns that we all held in our hands. Cindy stood to the other side of me, tapping the nailgun and staring at the men kneeling in front of the three of us.

Sam was staring with eyes like fire, his uniform looking pristine and clean. Greg and Sylvia stood in their desert BDUs, pistols at their hips. I still wore my sports bra and spandex shorts, gauze protecting the burns on my back. Buck was wearing his biker leathers, spattered with blood, and chewing on a cigar. He took it from his mouth and stared.

"Start when you're ready." Buck growled. Sam was tapping his fingers on the butts of his pistols. A slow tap that I had seen before. He wanted to draw. He wanted to kill. Greg was walking back and forth, a muscle twitching in his jaw. Robert was working as hard as he could, and we could hear the crying of the child inside the vehicle. Greg stopped, turning to face the kneeling men.

"By the powers vested in me by the Armed Forces of the United States of America, the Martial Law Executive Order, The War Powers Act, and Survival of the Fittest, you are all hereby charged with slave trading, rape of a minor, and child molestation. How do you plead?" Greg's grey eyes were like flint.

"We didn' do nuttin' you can prove, soldier boy!" One sneered.

"I wan' mah lawyer!" another cried.

"I enter a guilty plea for my clients." Buck snarled. "The defense rests."

"You can't do that!" "Hey, that ain't right!" "I ain't guilty!" "Oh lordy, these boys is gonna kill us!" all sounded out.

"Prosecutor?" Greg asked, nodding at Sam. Sam ran forward and began kicking one man in the stomach, yelling: "You did it, we know it, you did it, you fucker!" When he was out of breath, he stepped back to where he had been standing. The man he had been kicking, a man whom we had seen shoot a little girl in the head when she bit him, stayed on the ground, curled up and crying from Sam taking his boots to the scumbag.

"The prosecution rests." Sam panted.

"I find you all guilty, and sentence you to death." Greg smiled a smile that never touched his eyes. "Ladies."



They began screaming, cussing, crying and trying to pull free of their bonds. Cindy, Sylvia and I walked down the line, pressing the nailgun to the back of their heads, at the nape of the neck, and pumping three or four nails into each one.

One managed to break free, and Sam drew his pistols in that blindingly fast draw he had perfected. Two shots rang out, both of them hitting their targets. The man screamed as his knees blew onto the grass, the blood bright in the morning sunlight.

Greg drug him back by his long greasy hair, and I bent down and fired two nails into his face stapling his mouth shut. His screams and pleas muffled. I rolled him over, and put too more into the back of his head.

They begged for mercy, and although they didn't know it, we were showing it. Sylvia, Cindy and I had wanted to shoot out their knees and elbows and leave them for the zombies.

From the Diaries of Becka

Sadly, the institution of slavery will be one of the first things to come back into vogue, the first form of currency, so to speak. Children are a favorite, as are virgins, male or female, of Slavers. Slavers are the main reason Wolf-Packs keep being created, as Wolf-Packs and Slavers are mortal enemies, the Slavers wanting to capture and sell the Pack members, and the Pack burning for revenge against the very people who made them what they are.

Slavers, while considered scumbags by most people, still sell a lot of slaves to unscrupulous communities who would prefer to use slaves to perform common labor. Most of the settlements that are willing to use slaves prefer the slaves to be of a certain race that they preach is "inferior", and sometimes, a certain sex.

Slavers are well armed, as most people will kill them outright and on sight, as well as they need to be able to assault armed communities and convoys. Slavers are one of the few groups that routinely carry tranquilizer and TASER weapons, as well as other non-lethal measures.

Oddly enough, many Slaver groups prefer police cars to any other vehicles, killing the police officers and stealing their uniforms and equipment. They often dress in law enforcement or military uniforms, hoping (all too often correctly) that the sight of the uniform might give their victims pause and allow the slavers to get the drop on them.

Fast Hero 3/Tough Hero 3 CR 6; Medium-size humanoid; **HD** 3d8+9 plus 3d10+9; **HP** 49; **Mas** 16; **Init** +3; **Spd** 30 ft; **Defense** 20, touch 19, flatfooted 17 (+0 size, +3 Dex, +6 class, +1 equipment); **BAB** +4; **Grap** +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, metal baton), or +7 ranged (2d8+0, Sawed off Shotgun); **FS** 5 ft by 5 ft; **Reach** 5 ft; **SQ** ; **AL** Slaver Gang; **SV** Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +3; **AP** 3; **Rep** +2; **Str** 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12.

Occupation: Criminal (Hide, Move Silently)

Skills: Balance +7, Bluff +3, Craft (mechanical) +6, Disguise +3, Drive +7, Escape Artist +7, Hide +14, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (Streetwise) +8, Listen +3, Move Silently +14, Spot +6, Survival +4, Tumble +7

Feats: Alertness, Brawl, Deceptive, Improved Brawl, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Stealthy, Streetfighting

Talents (Fast Hero): Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1

Talents (Tough Hero): Remain Conscious, Damage Reduction 1/—

Possessions: Leather Jacket, metal baton, Sawed off Shotgun; 8 plastic hand-ties, 50 feet of nylon cord, 12 shotgun shells, 2 lbs of beef jerky, 1 liter of water in a plastic bottle, backpack, pair of serviceable boots, porn magazine, 2 empty 5.56mm 30 round clips, 6 7.62mm bullets, wire cutters, fork, bowie knife, baseball cap, 2 packs of cigarettes (unopened), 4 butane lighters.

Vehicles: Slavers prefer enclosed bed trucks, SWAT vans, ice cream trucks and the like that let them haul their human cargo from place to place.

Tactics: Slavers prefer to attack lone vehicles or lightly defended convoys from ambush, relying on snipers to take out the tires or kill the drivers, while others run up and try to grab any disabled vehicles. They also attack settlements at night, trying to get a few infiltrators within to help open gates or spy out sentries.

Disease

"Strip." Sylvia's voice was hard, and I nodded, standing in the ring-mount of the humm-vee and scanning around, my hands ready on the SAN. The men began protesting, the women even louder.

I said: Strip." Sylvia ordered. I racked a bullet into the SAN to emphasize our seriousness. Cursing, the men began to strip. I watched them, I watched the woods, and I watched the air. Since we'd been hit by that black helicopter a few weeks back, nothing was to be taken for granted.

"MASK!" Sylvia's voice was strident, and I did so reflexively, my hands seeming to move of their own volition, while my brain was still processing that single, frightening syllable. I had missed it, Sylvia had not. The large, swollen nodules at the armpits and groin, the sores around the mouth.

Bubonic Plague? Weaponized Anthrax? Something known only to soulless technicians in white coats who coaxed it to unholy life? Who cares, it was one of our greatest fears. Before my mind had sorted through all of the available data, Sylvia had thrown the humm-vee in reverse, and I was firing the SAN, chopping into men, women and the listless children that stood there, holding a person's hand, not even trying to run as I put a burst into the little bodies that shattered like porcelain dolls thrown to the floor in a tantrum.

I kept firing as long as I could see them, sweat running coldly down my back and between my breasts, the tiny life inside me kicking at my cervix and bladder with anger at the vibration and retort of the weapon. I promptly pissed myself when the baby kicked my bladder..

Please, God, if you still care, let me have masked in time. Was my only thought. To this day, it does not bother me that I cared more for Greg and my baby than those children whose arms or legs flew off in gouts of bright red blood on that June morning.

They were already dead.

From the Diaries of Becka



AIDS), and many other diseases will be flourishing within the bodies of the living dead, and that is not even considering if the major world powers released biological weapons in hope of stopping the living dead.

As survivors flee the cities, they would take the disease with them, spreading it to other communities that had survived the Risers and the bandits and the fighting. This will cause communities to become paranoid regarding newcomers, and travelers to become wary of other groups.

Diseases would become rampant in locations with poor sanitation, or due to the sheer amount of corpses lying around rotting. Raw sewage, rotting food, vermin, all would add to the problem, and many civilizations would fail due to disease.

By the second warm month, cities would be full of rotten corpses, and the smell would be enough to overwhelm any creature. Only gas masks would keep someone from catching a disease with one simple breath, as well as allowing them to hold down their lunch.

For quick and easy weaponization of diseases listed in many other products, simply add a +5 to +10 modifier for the DC to recover, and have the disease affect those that are exposed to it much faster, and the conditions lingering for weeks or months instead of days or weeks.

Cities would be ripe, and full of all kinds of disease, between dead bodies walking about, the trash in the streets, the rotting food, and rotting bodies of zombies and people that were killed for good. This would take the form of massive cholera, and worse if the Total War option was used, and the various biological warfare programs were utilized.

Add in contaminated water supplies, and you've got a whole new batch of zombies getting up, this time able to kill even after they are dead. Cholera, TB, AIDS (yes,

Food and Water

"Where are you from?" Buck asked bluntly, his hard, implacable gaze boring into the naked people who were just now putting back on their clothing. True to form, we hadn't fucked around, ordering them to lay down their weapons and strip naked before we'd even unmask or show ourselves. I sat in the turret of Bradley-Three, ready to hose them down with the 20mm if they even farted wrong.

Yreka. We finally left about three weeks ago when we ran out of food. We managed to get a semi out past the deaders. We ran out of food and water, we didn't have no choice." A guy told us, pulling his shirt on over his head. I noticed that his clothing was his first worry, his hunting rifle still laid in the dirt where he'd dropped it. Idiot. He was meat for the grinder unless he learned to worry about his weapon first. Out of habit, my fingers searched out the butt of my pistol, as if to reassure themselves it was there.

"How bad is it?" Buck questioned, standing up in the vehicle commander's hatch of Bradley-One. His hands were on the M-249, but it was not aimed anywhere in particular, but I knew he could swing it into the small group of people in less time than it would take them to scream.

"There's no food, no water, and deaders everywhere." A woman said. "We're really hungry. Do you have any food?"

"None we can spare." Buck lied. Bradley-Five carried only a driver, co-driver, gunner, and shitload of MRE cases. Bradley-Seven was loaded with what Greg and Buck called "A-Rats", metal sealed meals that only needed to be dropped into boiling water to heat. Below me, Zhkov hushed Emily, putting the pacifier into her mouth to stop her crying in frustration that she could not get her foot into her mouth.

"I'll suck you off for some food." Another woman said, hunger and desperation plain in her voice.

"Forget it, lady. We don't have enough to share." Buck answered. Then his mumbled voice came over the tac-com. "Probably drink me dry just to fill her stomach." I heard Sam's harsh laugh, and I couldn't help but smile. Buck went back to speaking to the crowd: "That's why we asked about Yreka. If it's as bad as you say, then we'll have to bypass it."

"All of those vehicles, and you don't have enough food to share? You're soldiers, you're supposed to protect us!" one young man shouted. Hunger had not managed to take the softness out of his face, and I realized with a surprise that he was about my age. Chronologically, perhaps, but not in mileage. This was a face that had never fought to survive, to improve a

situation. It was a face that others had protected, and that had hidden from the Risers. I hated that face the moment I saw it.

"Who the fuck said we were soldiers, idiot? In case you didn't notice, the military got eaten on order from his Holiness the President as he ran off into a hole. If we were soldiers, why would we protect the same people who shot at us a few months ago?" Buck asked. He dropped back into the hatch. "We have enough room to take you with us, if you want. You can hook up with us, fight with us, and share what we have with us, but we don't have enough to give away."

"And the deaders?" One woman asked.

"We kill them." Buck answered simply. "Are you with us or not?"

"Aw, shit, I'm in." The woman who had offered oral sex for food said, holding her hands out to her side and walking toward the Bradley Buck was on. Buck popped back out of the hatch and pointed them at Bradley-Two rather than his.

"It's murder, Carl. You know what the news said, killing the deaders is still murder." Another man said, as he turned to Buck. "You have to share with us, we're people."

Buck watched roughly half of the twelve people climb into the back of Bradley-Two, reacting to Sam opening the dismount hatch and waving to them. One woman burst into tears at the sight of safety, weaponry, and stacked ammunition.

Buck almost grinned, the burn scars turning his face into a sneer. "We've got to do two things, buddy, Jack and shit, and in case you hadn't noticed, Jack left town, got dead, and got back up, so he can go to hell, too. The only thing you're getting from us for free, Skippy, is exhaust fumes. Enjoy it, suckers. Bradley-One to all vehicles, let's pull out." He ordered, and the vehicles lurched forward. The rest of them began cursing us, and there was a dull clunk as a rock struck the back of the vehicle I was in.

We never saw them again, once we turned the corner and left them behind.

From the Diaries of Becka

Clean water would be a problem in areas that depend upon city water supply, rather than their own wells, especially after the water system began breaking down due to lack of maintenance and power, and especially when combat ruptures the water lines.

Even worse is that the ground water can become contaminated and thus will contaminate well water, not to mention rivers, reservoirs, and other water storage areas. What was clean a week ago, may

be nearly sulphuric acid once several chemical containers upstream explode due to fire or corrosion. Clean water soon becomes a priority for at least a year, and any group intent on surviving for very long had better learn how to test water for purity and contamination.

Water would quickly become contaminated in many areas, as valves and pipes rusted through, sewage began running off into rivers, storage containers began leaking, or worse yet, if chemical weapons were used. Clean water would be valuable, and difficult to find for at least six months, possibly longer depending on what is upstream from the characters.

Starvation is another ugly fact in Year of the Zombie. Food quickly spoils if unpreserved via canning, dehydration or chemical treatment, or loses nutritional value after awhile if preservation methods are taken. Most people have no idea how to tell if the contents of a can are blown or contaminated, or how to cook with fire instead of a microwave or gas stove. Even electric appliances would be difficult to use without attracting hordes of zombies, since a generator would need to be hooked up in order to run the electrical appliances.

Easily located food will have been looted within the first two weeks of The Rising, and there would not be much food to be found in cities or towns. While it may seem to many that there should be plenty of food, most people do not keep more than a day or two worth of food in their house for their entire family. With survivors grabbing any supplies they can lay their hands on, prepared foods will be a rare commodity, after a short period.

Food would be the biggest reason that many survival centers collapse after the first few weeks, and would be one of the most hoarded items, as well as the first looted, second only to firearms. Desperation for food will drive more potential survivors into the arms of the zombies than nearly anything else.

Radiation

How bad is she, Robert? I asked, holding onto Sylvia's hand as Robert cut away her clothing and handed it to Yuri. Yuri would check it for valuables, check the valuables with the dosimeter, and throw everything contaminated and the clothing out of the back of the Bradley. He ended up throwing everything away, even her small Saint Christopher's Medal which had actually burned it's image between

her breasts, a scar she will probably carry her entire life.

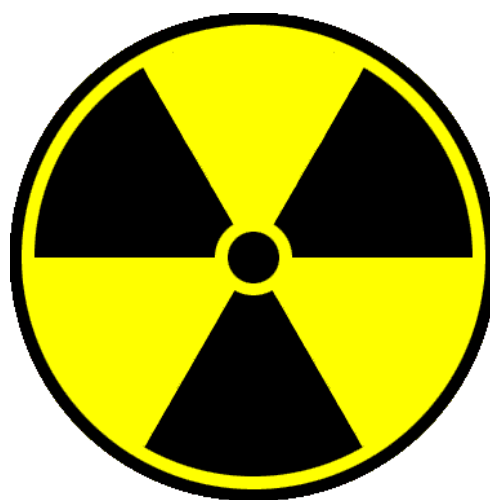
I don't know. She's got radiation burns across her abdomen, breasts, thighs, arms and calves. I think her suit was faulty. Robert answered. *For burns to show up this quickly, and this badly, it had to have failed where it was folded. It may have even been deliberately created like this. I've never seen anything like this, and I think she might not make it. Notice how the radiation burns are thin, and go in straight lines. It doesn't look like normal exposure. We need to check the other suits for possible sabotage.*

I got the radiation meters on all the vehicles working. Thomas said, ducking to enter the back of the Bradley. *We'll have better warning now if we come across something like that again. I went through the TMs (Greg told me that night, while we laid next to each other, that TM stood for Technical Manual) and found out how to get them working and deployed for use.* He looked at Sylvia, and shook his head. *Too late for her though.*

I felt myself crying, for Sylvia, for us, for my children yet unborn. The little life stirring inside of me, and the baby sleeping in her makeshift armored crib welded inside of the Bradley, all of them I had tears for.

The Rising was bad enough, but the zombies had to cause nuclear core breaches too?

From the Diaries of Becka.



Whether or not nuclear weapons were used, some nuclear power plants would eventually go critical. Not all of these would explode or melt down, most would automatically shut down, but enough would to make radiation a real problem in the world.

While most nuclear reactors are designed to safely shut themselves down, even if completely unmanned and suffering major systems failure, having a

zombie or twelve inside of the control room punching random buttons and commands, driven by some dim memory, may cause an explosion, incandescence of the fuel rods, or a melt-down.

Even further problems will be contamination of bays and harbors if the reactors on one or more naval vessels are breached through warfare, interior fighting, or just age. Even having the containment rust through and be exposed to the ocean

can critically damage the harbor or bay ecosystem.

Radiation damage will be a constant and invisible threat, rendering large areas completely uninhabitable, and possibly resulting in radioactive zombies (Author's Note: Using Screammers from RPGObjects "Terrors of the Twisted Earth" works great for radioactive areas) that carry enough radioactivity to poison a character who is fighting with it.

RADIATION EFFECTS

Radiation is defined by the dictionary as:

- Emission and propagation and emission of energy in the form of rays or waves.
- Energy radiated or transmitted as rays, waves, in the form of particles.
- A stream of particles or electromagnetic waves emitted by the atoms and molecules of a radioactive substance as a result of nuclear decay.

In Year of the Zombie, we are only worried about radiation from the following sources: Radioactive locations where nuclear weapons were used or where a nuclear reactor exploded, breached nuclear/atomic warheads, breached reactors, and nuclear waste.

For effects related to radiation exposure, first, determine the severity of the radiation exposure as listed in the chart below

Radiation Exposure Table

Exposure to Radiation Condition	Severity of Exposure/Burn Based On Time Spent Exposed					
	1 minute	10 minutes	1 hour	1 day	1 week	1 month
Unprotected Within Radioactive Area						
Lightly Irradiated	None/None	None/None	None/Faint	Faint/Faint	Faint/Mild	Mild/Mild
Moderately irradiated	None/Faint	None/Mild	Faint/Mild	Mild/Moderate	Moderate/High	High/High
Highly irradiated	Faint/Mild	Faint/Mild	Mild/Moderate	Mild/High	Moderate/Severe	Moderate/Deadly
Severely irradiated	Faint/Moderate	Mild/Moderate	Mild/High	Moderate/High	Moderate/Severe	High/Deadly
Exposure to radioactive material						
Lightly radioactive	Faint/None	Mild/Faint	Moderate/Moderate	High/Moderate	Severe/High	Severe/Severe
Moderately radioactive	Mild/Faint	Moderate/Moderate	High/Moderate	Severe/High	Severe/Severe	Severe/Deadly
Highly radioactive	Moderate/Moderate	High/Moderate	Severe/High	Severe/Severe	Severe/Deadly	Deadly/Deadly
Severely radioactive	High/Moderate	High/High	Severe/High	Severe/Deadly	Deadly/Deadly	Fusion/Deadly

With exposure to radioactive material, burns often result that are more severe than the radiation poisoning itself

Radiation Burn

Severity of Tissue Damage	Immediate Damage	Secondary Damage	Fort DC	Onset Time	Additional Effects
Faint	--	1d4	10	1 hour	Light sun-burn effect on skin
Mild	1d4	1d6	15	1 hour	Dark reddening and blisters on skin
Moderate	1d6	2d4	20	30 minutes	Peeling of the skin, blisters, infected pockets of damaged tissue
High	2d6	2d6	25	10 minutes	Burning of the flesh, massive sub-surface blister, peeling away of flesh.
Severe	2d8	3d6	25	1 minute	"Melting" of skin as cells are destroyed by the radiation. 5% chance of just bursting into flame or melting into a puddle of goop.
Deadly	Instant Death	All	50	Instant	The skin catches on fire or peels away, or the internal organs liquefy.
Fusion	N/A	N/A	N/A	Instant	The character incandescences and/or turns into free floating atomic vapor. You're dead.

The immediate damage is not apparent, as cells below the skin become damaged or destroyed. After the onset time elapses, the secondary damage occurs, along with the additional effects. This delay often confuses people as to what caused the actual burn.

Radiation burns do not heal very quickly or easily, and often become infected quite quickly. All Fortitude saves against diseases (including skin cancer and the random "it's infected") are subject to a -4 circumstance penalty.

Each day, the character must succeed at the above listed Fortitude save, or the wound reddens and peels again, with oozing and blisters following. If the save is failed, no healing takes place.

Radiation Sickness Effects

Severity of Sickness	Temporary Con Damage	Permanent Con Damage	Fort DC	Recovery Time	Additional Effects
Faint	1d4	1d4-2	10	1 hour	Faint nausea and weakness
Mild	1d6	1d6-2	15	1 day	Nausea, vomiting, weakness, loss of coordination
Moderate	2d4	1d6	20	1 week	As above, but with hair and nail loss and -5 circumstance penalty to avoid infections and disease
High	2d6	2d4	25	1 month	As above, but with tooth loss and bloody vomit, stools and urine
Severe	2d6	2d6	30	1 month	As above, and becomes blind as well as gaining a 20% chance of contracting leukemia (check each month, for the rest of the character's life)
Deadly	3d6	4d6	50	1.5 Million Years	Character just melts right where he stands.

The character does not recover any Constitution points unless a Fortitude save at the above DC is successful. This save takes place once per period of time listed above. When the check is successful, the temporary Constitution damage is removed, and the temporary Constitution damage from the next lowest severity is applied. The next recovery check still takes place according to the initial exposure severity.

While this may make it so that a character who has nearly recovered from radiation poisoning dies from what appears to be mild effects, such is the way with radiation.

[Author's Note: Two workups were done for Year of the Zombie, regarding NBCR effects. A simplistic, math-easy version that is not very realistic or reasonable, and a hard-data to game mechanics set of rules. For ease of use, the simplistic version is included in this book with "Sci-Fi" effects thrown in to make it a little more fun. The reality of hard radiation exposure is bad enough, there's no need to wallow in it.]

Chemical Contamination

"Shit." Buck cursed, dumping out the water, and the little paper strip that had turned bright crimson. "Goddamn factories." He stood up and kicked a rock into the slow moving river.

"What?" I asked, honestly confused. I was watching out for him, Sylvia and Greg as they took samples and followed long ingrained training to check the water for chemical contamination.

"The tanks are rusting through, leaking, or just pumping shit into this river. We drink any of this, and we'll be dead in hours." Buck grumbled, walking up to me and picking up his M-24 sniper rifle from the ground. He checked the breach and the barrel, then slung it over his shoulder.

"Back to bottled water?" I asked. I hated the taste of it.

"Worse. We'll have to avoid the city, if those tanks are leaking. Lord knows how bad the air is." Sylvia stated, sitting down weakly on a rock. She was

shakey, but recovering. We had thought she was going to die from the bad dose of rads she got. "It's faint, but detectable within minutes of every breeze." She held up the chemical agent detector with one hand, then lowered it quickly. She fatigued fast.

"All right, we'll swing around Merced then. Damn." Buck decided. "We'll try Castle Air Force Base, they used to station heavy bombers out there, maybe we can find an old storage locker. Hmm," Buck looked thoughtful for a moment (a look I still find disconcerting. It's so hard to remember he's university educated.), "Fresno has, or had anyway, National Guard stations there. Those might be easier to hit than an active duty Air Force base, at the moment."

I nodded as I accompanied them back to the Bradleys.

The world just kept getting more and more fucked up.

From the Diaries of Becka

YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE ☉

THE DIARIES OF BECCA

Spilloffs from factories, leaking barrels, groundwater contaminated by leaking storage tanks, inner-city fires leaving behind vast areas of scorched earth with the down-wind/water areas badly damaged and highly contaminated with everything from chemicals to heavy metal deposits.

If the Total Warfare option is used, persistent chemical weapons can be a threat every time it rains, or for weeks at a time. Some chemical weapons have been designed to stay viable for weeks, killing all who attempt to salvage the equipment that is sitting there in pristine condition.

Chemical contamination can provide a great way to put in scenery without having to worry about characters being able to recover it. Many military-grade chemical weaponry can actually melt/degrade protective equipment, eventually even eating through NBC prepared vehicles' chemical seals. Some types of chemical weapons will destroy any exposed rubber or plastic, rendering most vehicles absolutely worthless, and heavily damaging equipment.

The ongoing hazard of chemical contamination will require prepared characters to use up valuable room for chemical protection gear, and added encumbrance because of the character carrying chemical protective masks and a chemical protection suit.

In some places, the chemical contamination will be so bad, that the chemicals will be picked up by storms, and those storms will dump chemically contaminated rain down on an area, destroying plant life, killing animals, contaminating zombies, and in the worse cases, will actually dissolve flesh and pit metal. These chemical storms may become a

fact of life that people get used to, and are actually thankful for, as the acidic rain destroys the unprotected Risers also.

A final problem is that zombies can become chemically contaminated, and the vapors leaking off of their saturated flesh, or the touch of their chemically contaminated skin poses an additional danger to characters who have to engage the zombies in melee combat.



Lands of the Dead

Locations of interest

"Hurry it up, Thomas, we're running out of appetizers!" Sam yelled over the steady hammering of the automatic weapons. My mind boggled at the amount of zombies clustered around these simple metal doors. What in the world had attracted all the zombies to two large OD green painted doors in the middle of the fucking woods? For Christ's sake, there wasn't even a fucking Forest Ranger Tower within view.

"You do it then, dickhead!" Thomas yelled, "These ass-clowns built the circuit board on some kind of plastic explosive, and it's wired tighter than a virgin on prom night!" I glanced backwards, to where Thomas was crouched down next to the keypad, doing his best to hotwire the military security system. The Department of Defense logo mocked us from where he had tossed aside the Lexan cover moments before.

"OUT!" Sylvia yelled, popping her sling and tossing the empty SAW away. She drew her pistols, the first time in recent memory I had seen her holding them, and began firing carefully and steadily. It surprised me that she was as accurate with her pistols as the SAW. I'd seen her fire a M-4 before, and frankly, she sucked..

"OUT!" Greg yelled, dropping his M-4 from his body sling and bringing around his Mossberg.

"Almost got it, almost got it!" Thomas yelled, "GOT IT!"

Our triumph turned instantly bitter, as the alarms started blaring inside the complex, and we saw only a deep cavern with another door. Trucks were parked haphazardly inside, crates scattered around, papers littering the floor, spent shell casings glinting, and worst of all, we saw figures begin to struggle to their feet.

"COVER ME!" Thomas yelled, grabbing up his toolkit from the ground and charging into the room. From utility department lineman to wannabe Navy SEAL in less than a year. He drew his machete from his thigh holster as Greg and Sam ran after him, firing on the run.

Thomas knelt down next to the next door, as the drivers threw the massive BAFVs into gear. The gunfire was as loud as the footsteps of an angry god as we rolled inside, a zombie going under the tread of the BAFV I was riding. I could see the blood spray as the tread crushed her.

"How the fuck do I shut it?" Sylvia yelled, kicked a zombie away and shot a second. When she wasn't answered, she reached out and pulled a red bar marked with white stripes. The door started closing, and Carter concentrated the fire from the 20mm chain gun on the shrinking gap, running through his entire remaining ammunition in only seconds, but giving the doors time to close.

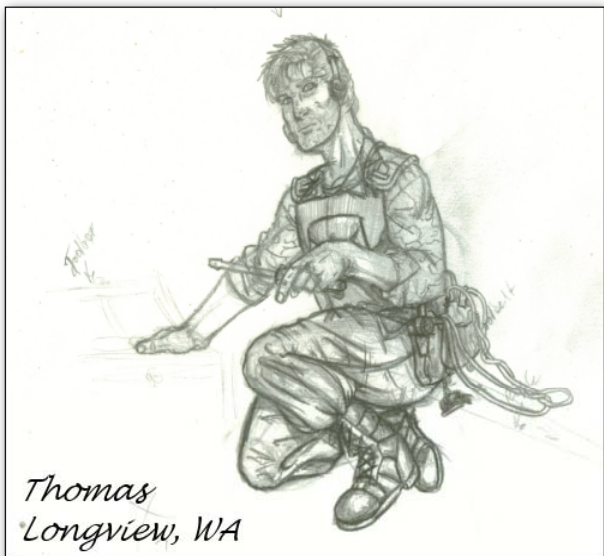
The zombie caught between the massive doors squirted like an overripe tomato.

"GOT IT!" Thomas cried out over the sirens, and the inner doors began to rumble.

If Greg had not been as fast as he was, and Sam as quick on the trigger as he was, the crowd of zombies on the other side of the door would have devoured him in seconds.

From the Diaries of Becka.

There are more than just malls out there for the inventive survivalist. Military bases, Continuity of Government sites, fallout shelters, abandoned or still-active missile silos, ships, islands, FEMA sites. All of these can contribute to the campaign and can keep the players going for some time while they try to retake one of these bunkers potentially full of weapons, ammo, and food. Or perhaps they were trapped inside by the lure of the same, and now trying desperately to simply survive to get outside.



Thomas
Longview, WA

Nuclear Power Plants:

The area was dead. Sylvia had gone forward in her humvee by herself, taking the only radiation suit and Geiger counter we had. We had traded two M-16A2s and 360 556mm rounds for them at a small settlement a few weeks before. The place was deserted, but Sylvia had told us that despite urban legend, the place would not glow brightly if it had suffered a rupture of a containment unit this long after a breach, unless it was a serious breach that would have showed us other signs..

I bit my nails something serious, gnawing them down to bleeding before she came back, driving slowly and weaving erratically. She got out of the vehicle, and we could see that she was screaming inside the suit. Sam tackled her and held her down, although Buck and Greg both had to help him hold her down. Robert sedated her and we got out of there quickly.

We could see them approaching. Dozens of them. With odd burn patterns and liquid looking skin. We did not bother with using the weapons.

Honestly? We weren't sure what they would do. Too many of us had seen too many nuclear holocaust movies in the '80s. If they wanted to wander around the reactor, it was all theirs.

From the Diaries of Becka

Shutting down nuclear power plants is definitely a good idea. To prevent further contamination and environmental destruction, players may come up with the idea themselves. For those that do not figure it out the possible threat to a fledgling community themselves, allow them to locate an area with intact power, and a sign by the highway that reads: "CORE EXPLOSION IMMINENT! REPENT!" That should be hint enough that the reactor needs shut down. The shutting down or seizing of a nearby nuclear power plant will be a priority for any community leaders with any intelligence at all, as a meltdown or explosion, much less a contamination leak, could make a viable colony area completely uninhabitable and ruin any plans of settlement.

Zombies will have congregated at the site: environmental protestors, local citizens to whom the power plant was a workplace or a hated location, military personnel ordered to guard the site, truckers, etc., will all be milling around the grounds. Fencing will have collapsed with

the masses of living dead flesh that would have pushed against it until it gave way. . The zombies will be wandering around everywhere, many of them becoming confused once they got on the grounds, but staying because for some reason, the location was important to them.

There will be abandoned security vehicles, including military vehicles that were used by security forces that had tried to keep panicked mobs away from a location, which could be blamed for The Rising. There will be barricades near the entrances, and evidence of heavy fighting before the end came, or the protectors deserted. If the defenders all died, there still might be military grade weaponry and supplies in the place, and even if they deserted, some equipment or supplies may have been left behind.

With the masses of machinery and noise, it will be difficult for characters to tell if a zombie is lurking about, and firing weapons is not exactly a good idea when inside a nuclear reactor. After all, what did that panel control do? The one that just imploded in a shower of sparks when a single round punched through the zombie and into the bank of computers?

And why are those red lights flashing?

And what is that blaring noise?

Military Storage Depots:

"Let me go in, I'm dying anyway," Sylvia said, coughing again. The radiation was eating her alive, she was throwing up blood now, and I had helped her clean up after she had shit her pants full of blood. Robert was figuring her chances at roughly 20 to one at her surviving. Nothing we had recovered from the hospital was helping her.

"No. I won't sacrifice you." Buck seemed adamant about it. There wasn't that many of us left after that Wolf Pack had gotten into the train we kept riding around on. The kids had slaughtered almost half of us, but thankfully I'd killed the leader, who had been following us since the Montesano Army National Guard station.

"It's too late, Buck. I'm gonna die, you might as well let me do something good." Sylvia said, then lifted the barrel of the SAW to cover us as she started backing up toward her Humvee. "Besides, you'll have to kill me to stop me from going, and I'm willing to kill you."

We watched, silently, as she headed onto the grounds of the storage depot. Zombies got up from where they lay and followed the vehicle, some breaking out in a sprint to get right up on it and

hammer on the windows. I was watching through binoculars when Sylvia had a coughing fit and lost control of the truck, smashing into the side of a cinderblock building.

"Shit, she's had it," Buck murmured, taking out a cigar and unwrapping it. He turned around, unwilling to watch, and I could see the long list of names on the backs of both of his thick arms. The names of people who had fought and died with us, inked into his skin.

I watched as the zombies tore into the vehicle, one of them grabbing Sylvia's shoulder and pulling her out of the vehicle. They seemed angry, frustrated, and I watched Sylvia get to her feet.

"What the fuck?" Sam asked the question I was thinking. The baby kicked me in the bladder as Sylvia looked at the zombies surrounding her, bumping into her, and shoving against her, trying to reach the cooling humvee.

Sylvia shoved one of the zombies, who snarled, and shoved back. Sylvia began pushing her way through the crowd of them, until she stood outside the ring. A sprinter slammed into her, almost knocking her down, but paid no attention to her.

"They can't see her?" Cindy asked.

"Sylvia, check the armories, see what you can bring us out. You volunteered, and since they seem to like you, you get to play the mule," Greg ordered over the tac-com.

It was eerie, watching the zombies ignore Sylvia as she brought us out ammunition and weapons, as well as body armor. She'd load it up into a wheelbarrow and run it out to us, take a nap for an hour or two, then go back. The zombies completely ignored her, except when she got in their way, and they acted as if she was one of them.

Buck told me quietly that he would watch her from here on out, both for suicide and her Rising.

From the Diaries of Becka

Examining old ammunition/weapons depots can be a good idea, but any dead guards, military or civilian, may be hanging around, as well as any looters that were shot, and then left behind without being "handled" by the security forces. Activity at these places can attract the attention of rogue units, raiders and looters in the area, and zombies. Ammunition and weapon depots have several, or even dozens, of bunkers, all protected by heavy steel doors that weigh several tons. These bunkers will be difficult at best to break into, but the rewards may be worth it, providing they were not stripped in the fighting.

Storage depots can be decommissioned vehicle or aircraft yards, ammunition depots where the military stores vast war stocks of munitions, supply depots where the characters can find clothing, food, water purification equipment, sleeping bags, and many other supplies. These storage depots are rarely listed on a map, and are often in the middle of nowhere.

Some storage depots, or assumed storage depots, are actually "Proving Grounds" where the military tests the latest generation of equipment and weapons. While a big score for scavengers, these places may have survived the Rising to an extent, leaving behind well equipped guards with the latest in military hardware.



*The things just
keep getting uglier*

Storage depots can contain anything from WW-II surplus to 2005 drawdown surplus, in a wide variety of conditions. Budget crunches in the 1990s and during the War on Terror forced units to scavenge parts for their working vehicles out of depot yards, requiring any scavengers now to bring a toolkit if they are looking to drive away vehicles.

Vehicles stored in depots will rarely have intact weapon systems, and all sensitive materials such as radios, targeting computers, night vision equipment and

other high-tech hardware will have been removed. The best a scavenger can hope for is that the M-1A1 Main Battle Tank runs, and can be used as a battering ram.

The "Conspiracy Theory" that Year of the Zombie is based on adds one small twist to depots: That every military base and National Guard and Reserve armory has at least 2 buried caches of ammunition, fuel, weapons and food in it. Usually located inside of hangars or in the motor pools, these caches are intended for guerrilla fighting against a foreign invader, to be used if the local military is caught behind enemy lines or their supply route is cut off. They can be invaluable to survivors.

The real jackpot, however, are rumors known as "Long Term Storage Depots", which supposedly contain everything from heavy weapons and vehicles to educational materials to anything a pack of survivors would need to rebuild civilization from the charred and blasted remains of the society that stocked the place, hoping to rise like a phoenix from its own ashes. For the most part, these are considered urban legends, but now they have approached the status of Holy Grail legends, since they would provide anyone with everything they need to completely rebuild society, grab power, and hold it for generations to come.

Many of the "Continuity of Government" storage depots, intended for government officials exiting separate, nearby bunkers so that they can rebuild the world, will have time locks, set for a specific amount of time once a carrier signal from an unknown location, usually the nearby bunker, shuts down. They may be able to be opened providing the characters possess the proper authorization codes, but with a fourteen digit hexadecimal security code that also includes several colors, the chances of the PCs being able to hack the dedicated system are slim to none.

Skyscrapers-

"Where are you from?" Sam asked the young woman, who was greedily licking the inside of the foil container that her beef stew had come in.

"I was in L.A. when all this started, but managed to get out about six days ago," she replied, tearing open a packet of crackers. She ate like an animal, hunger overriding manners. I noticed she kept

watching around her, eating on instinct more than worrying about looking at her food.

"How the hell did you survive in L.A. for almost a year?" I asked. I could picture in my mind the mobs sweeping through the streets, thousands of Risers attacking everything in sight.

"I lived in a large building, thirty floors. One of the guys suggested we cut the elevator cables on all the elevators but one, jam that one's doors open, and tear out the stairs at the second and third floors." She answered from a mouthful of crackers. She looked inside the brown plastic bag and seemed disappointed. "Can I have any more?"

"No, you'll get sick. That was about 3,000 calories," Sam answered. "You held out in a skyscraper? What about food, and water?"

"We filled up the bathtubs in all the apartments, filled every container we could. Tupperware, milk jugs, glass jars, beer bottles, whatever. Food was not too bad, most people were out of town or not in the building when it happened, so there was plenty of food to go around," she said, staring sadly at the opened foil packages she had licked clean.

"Why did you leave?" Sam asked her, "Did the food run out?"

"No. What they were putting in the community stew won't run out anytime soon," the woman said, then began to cry. I kept my eyes on the others in the vehicle, let Sam pay attention to her crying, I was going to make sure it wasn't a distraction. "When I found out, me and some others snuck down to the parking garage and left. We ran out of gas about four days ago, and have been walking since."

Sam nodded at me, and we both knew what had been in the stew.

Risers.

From the Diaries of Becka

In major metropolitan areas, many groups will attempt to hole up in skyscrapers, or perhaps the PCs are stuck inside of a skyscraper at the beginning of The Rising. There are several problems to contend with right off the bat. Water is the big one, with food being a close second. A business skyscraper will have almost no food, and even a residential skyscraper will have limited food for the people inside. By the time the food runs out, usually within a few days, the number of zombies in the streets, as well as the fighting, will be intense.

A reason to enter skyscrapers is to rescue a small party of survivors on the upper floors who are trapped, starving, dying of thirst, and trapped by hundreds of



zombies on the floor below. While an interesting threat, the number of zombies roaming the various floors in search of food can be another threat to consider. A team tasked to rescue a group of survivors in a skyscraper better hope they have helicopter insertion, as well as a pilot who is skilled at landing on a rooftop without any guidance or helicopter landing facilities. Ground assaults are asking to have your skull chewed clean by the inhabitants. Teams would have to move up stairways, down tight hallways, with no light or power being common.

That's tight, dirty hand-to-hand fighting in an urban environment, where unexpected attacks, , crazed inhabitants, damaged structures giving way, and darkness are all factors working against would-be rescuers. While a skyscraper might have food, bottled water, and the occasional weapon, for the most part it will eventually prove to be an untenable area, as zombies will follow characters back to it and congregate around it, trapping the characters inside to die of starvation and thirst, and it is entirely within the realm of reason to have it completely stripped of food, ammunition, and even the water in the toilet tanks having been consumed.

Fire is another major danger, as there is no fire department to put out fires, and without water pressure, automatic sprinklers will not put out any flames. If a fire starts ten or twenty blocks away, if the wind is right, it will eventually reach the skyscraper, trapping the residents in a towering inferno that they cannot escape from. At first, the fire may not even be noticed as it works on the lower floors and melts away the support beams.

While skyscrapers may be all right for the interim, or for a "quick rabbit hole", for the most part, they eventually become a death trap for those inside.

FEMA bunkers:

Sylvia crawled back to where I was, moving slow and steady, and keeping real low to the ground. Her silenced M-4 was held in her hands in such a way that she could rapidly bring it into play from a prone position. It was an interesting way to move, something Greg had called "High Crawl."

"It's there, relay it back," Sylvia whispered, "No claymore land mines, but I think there are two auto-turrets that are live. Tell Buck to bring up some AT-4's." I nodded and relayed the message.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

"He's on the way," I replied. Silently, Greg, Sam and the Russians moved next to me.

"What is this place, Comrade?" Mikhail asked. "We have found a helicopter pad, and some metal plates that air moves through."

"Really? Going out or in?" Greg asked, his face lighting up.

"Two out, one in, Comrade." Zhakov answered.

"Really?" Greg looked interested.

"Forget it, Greg. The filters will handle anything we have, and even if you dumped that 50-gallon drum of concentrated VX-2 down there, the most you would do is cause the facility to use a different intake vent." Sylvia said, shaking her head. She looked at Mikhail. "It's a Continuity of Government bunker, somewhere our glorious leaders could run away to like little bitches, let everyone else die, the threat go away, then come back and claim to rule what was left."

"Why do we give a shit? Revenge?" Cathy asked. She had gained weight and muscle mass in the last month, a far cry from the woman who had offered to suck Buck off for food. She looked thoughtful for a moment, her middle finger moving to caress her wedding ring next to it. "Actually, revenge sounds nice."

"Think, just for a minute. How do you think they'll enforce the fact that they still run the show? What do you think they're going to live off of? Megalomaniac fantasies? That bunker has food, water, shower facilities, medical facilities, and whatever else they decided to cram into it," Sylvia said. "Trust me, this one has serious blast doors, ones that could probably take a nuclear weapon head on. Shame we'll have to kill the turrets."

"Won't they let us in?" John said hopefully. A month with us, and he was still an idealist. Sylvia shook her head and waved vaguely at the bushes that separated us from the doors, her motion causing water to shiver off of the bush she was lying under.

"There's about fifty dead people out there, shot to shit by the turrets," she replied matter-of-factly. "There's Buck. Greg, you take one of the AT-4's, we'll kill the turrets. We'll have Thomas jack the doors, he's done it before."

Greg nodded, checking the anti-tank rocket as Sylvia quickly told Buck what was about to go down. Buck nodded grimly, and began crawling back to the Bradleys. I followed him, aware of the new life inside of my stomach. The new life that was waiting to join its brother and its sister who were strapped into car seats that had been attached to the frames of the BAFVs..

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

They left us to die, and killed those they were supposed to care for. I agreed with Sylvia's plan to bring Death to them.

Survival of the fittest, jack, and I'm pretty fucking fit.

From the Diaries of Becka.

In 1994, following a series of natural disasters in the United States, the organization known as FEMA came under intense scrutiny and criticism. The organization, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, had been known to the general population as a government apparatus designed to help out with natural disaster recovery, however, FEMA had been forced to admit they did not have the funds to assist victims of the round of natural disasters, and was forced to disclose their true purpose.

To ensure the continuity of the American

Among the most famous of the FEMA CoG sites are Mount Weathertop and Raven Rock (also known as Site-R) which are denied by the US government. Shelters are also known to exist in Washington DC for protection of the President and other important facilities and have been put into use in the recent past.

However, FEMA is not the only one who has dug deep bunkers. NORAD, and the rumored separate Crystal Palace (ostensibly the same place) are buried deep in the group and designed to take direct nuclear hits. Rumors abound of facilities in the deserts, swamps, beneath national parks and in out of the way locations that would not tempt an enemy strike.

government in event of a nuclear war, by the construction of bunker systems and shelters. FEMA disclosed the locations of dozens of shelters, but rumor has had it that in fact hundreds were created, with dozens being huge facilities. With the end of the Cold War, these sites were abandoned, auctioned off in some cases, and supposedly mothballed by FEMA and the American military, but rumor, and then the War on Terror, has it that many of these sites were in fact kept in operation, their funding hidden deeper in innocuous budgets, and when The Rising occurred, there were dozens of various sized facilities to run to.

These can be the big-time scores for a Year of the Zombie group with a good plan and a willingness to fight for it. The Year of the Zombie version of a dungeon crawl, FEMA sites may contain medical supplies, weapons, ammunition, food and fuel, they may also have residents inside.

Year of the Zombie goes with the "Conspiracy Theory" style of FEMA sites, self-sufficient sites able to sustain a

variable sized population for anything from one to five hundred years. Extensive bunker complex that houses everything from emergency shelters for the rich and powerful, to secret laboratory complexes where inhuman experiments take place, and where advanced hardware, far more advanced than anything the PCs have seen before, is stored and deployed.

Possible threats include: scientists who, without government oversight, have gone far beyond what is considered humane and now have access to human or near human test subjects; genetically altered horrors that bear no resemblance to the creatures that originally donated their DNA might be inside, having killed their creators, or perhaps worshipping them; artificially intelligent robots who guard their masters, or might have killed them and are now willing to stomp the life out of any human they meet.

These bunker complexes not only represent dungeon crawls, but a chance to throw in bizarre creatures and technology, hints of alien or secretive cabals and conspiracies to rule mankind, and even stranger things like teleportation platforms to secret orbital space stations and lunar stations or genetically engineered vampires who must drink blood to refresh their DNA.

FEMA sites come in several conditions, detailed below:



Unfinished: These sites can be little more than a few hollowed out areas with a single access passage and several ventilation areas, to five or six levels and a single unfinished level at the bottom.

Completed: These bunkers can be everything from fifty rooms and a heavy steel door with a blast deflection tunnel to a sprawling multi-level complex complete with trains to get from area to area, multiple nuclear power plants, interior computer controlled turrets and security robots.

Unused: If the site is unused, it is merely waiting for refugees to arrive. GMs can handle entrance in two ways: The carrier wave from an undisclosed location quit long enough ago for the site computer to reset the security code to a complete blank once a time limit had expired for any occupants to override that function.

These sites follow the same basic layout, no matter the size:

Blast Deflection Area: A semi-curved hallway with blast vents built in, the doorway to the facility itself would be on the side wall, where the blast wave would pass it by. These doors are hardened and massive, requiring pneumatic jacks or large screws to open.

Decontamination Area: For reentry for scouting patrols, these areas include medical isolation booths (or areas), showers, and equipment decontamination rooms.

Living Areas: These could be sparsely or lavishly decorated. Pictures leaked to various sources of the inside of Mount Weathertop, have shown that the VIP quarters were carpeted and had wood paneling, with family and bachelor rooms complete with kitchen, private bathrooms and living rooms, while the military/security living areas were 6-20 man bays containing only lockers, with communal showers, dining facilities and bathrooms. (The pictures have been denied by the US government.)

Dining Facilities: Kitchens with vast larders of preserved food, some facilities may have in excess of 4 dining facilities, each designed to feed over 100 people per meal.

Command and Control: Containing instruments to monitor water supply, internal temperature, hallways and room security cameras, power status and power generation status and many more functions, these would be in the center of the facility, with the large facilities having backup stations.

Security: This includes security camera monitoring stations, armories for the internal security forces, and barracks for those troops.

Power Generation: Anything from massive generators to geothermal taps to nuclear reactors, a site must have electricity to function.

Water Storage: These could be vast buried tanks of water (50,000 gallons or more) that are constantly refilled by an artesian tap, or an aquifer tap to bring in as much clean water as needed. Any site without water dies a horrible death.

This means that the first code put into the system will open the doors and work on every other door, as well as being the administrative password for the computer system. Characters will be able to input a new password quite easily.

Full Lockdown: The site is totally sealed, and the PCs must either find the code or somehow crack the bunker doors open. To crack the doors with explosives will require at least 25 lbs of C-4 explosive and a demolitions check with a DC equal

to the break DC for the doors, based on their material and thickness. The doors are commonly vanadium-sheathed, steel-rebar-reinforced, pressure-treated concrete, total thickness around 4-10 feet. Quick and dirty, run it at a DC of 50, with hardness 50 and 750 hit points. Destroying the doors through firepower will be a feat, and bring everything inside the facility, from the primary protective doors to the to first set of inside doors, as well as everything around the primary doors, collapsing down to seal the facility behind tons of rubble. These doors are designed to take a hit from a nuclear weapon and still stay in their tracks; if *somehow* enough firepower is brought to bear to damage them, it will also destroy nearly any chance of gaining access. Some facilities will have specially-crafted blocks of hardened cement that will fall into the corridor behind the door to add additional structural support and facility protection the minute the door takes a sufficient impact. To gain access by bypassing the code reader would require a Craft: Electronics check (DC 40) and a Craft: Mechanical (DC 20) in order to open the case and rewire the box.

Once inside, the characters will find a facility ready to sustain life safely in a NBC scenario for quite a long time, as well as decontamination facilities, limited medical facilities, food and clothing storage, and possibly an armory. The status of the facility, however, may not be to the PCs' liking, as noted below:

Completely Compromised: The facility is full of zombies that will be happy to greet the PCs. This can be a serious fight with great rewards, but a completely compromised bunker may have sustained heavy damage in the fighting, or whatever killed the occupants may be ready to kill the PCs. This can be anything from a major nuclear contamination leak to chemical contamination of the water supply to starvation. Zombies will be *everywhere*, from lockers to bedrooms.

Partially Compromised: These are the worst bunkers, as it traps the PCs between zombies and the living occupants, who will possibly view any invaders as hostile forces (especially if the PCs broke into the facility) that must be eliminated just as quickly as the zombies.

Uncompromised: These bunkers contain those who were in the know, and security elements that range from Rent-A-Cops to Special Operation Group soldiers. There will be politicians, movie stars, and industrial moguls living inside the bunker who will direct their security to kill any invaders. These bunkers contain those who intend to hide until the Rising is over, then exit the bunker and conquer the world.

The worst of the uncompromised bunkers can be those that technically are compromised, as they are inhabited by a group who killed those hiding inside and now use it as a secure base from which to build their own kingdom and support their own army. These will not be staffed by defenders who mostly know tactics through practice, but bloody-handed veterans of fighting through the entire Rising who view the FEMA Site as home, and realize just how precious it is.



While heavily defensible, these sites will also be hit quite often, occasionally by rogue military/government teams who have discovered or been informed of the site's location .

These are considered the "Holy Grail" of most YotZ groups, as it gives them a heavily fortified base full of supplies, and can make a good conclusion to a game.

☉ld missile silos:

"You've got to be high, there's nothing out here," Sam stated, looking around. It's a goddamn field in the middle of Asshole, Nebraska! There's not even Risers for Christ-sake!"

"Ummm, Sam..." Greg said, stepping forward and reaching out a hand. Sam was walking backwards, waving his arms and still bitching.

"We drove all the fucking way out here for what? Corn? Wheat? I don't see any goddamn nuclear silos, just wheat and corn silos! I hate the goddamn..." and with that, he tripped on something and fell backwards, his Kevlar helmet hitting with a dull, metallic thunk.

"The emergency entry hatch is behind you," Greg finished, grinning as he walked forward. He activated his tac-com, switching on the signal booster. "Bravo-One, this is Delta Tango Three, have located the target. Bring in the gear."

"Roger that," Buck said, and I could hear the Bradleys fire up in the distance. In the last two months, we had acquired quite a convoy, and now

had close to sixty people, as well as supplies, construction tools, and plenty of ammunition.

"And we're trying to crack open a nuclear silo, why?" Paul asked, tapping the steel door set flush into the ground with his toe. "What are we going to do with an ICBM?"

Sylvia sighed, looking up from where she was inspecting the edge of the door. "Look, Paul, it's fairly simple. These places were designed to withstand World War III, have armories, living quarters, the whole kit and caboodle. We didn't see any big gaps in the cornfield, so more than likely, the weapons weren't fired." She turned to me. "Becka, I don't think it's locked down too hard, but there might be radiation in there. When Bradley-Five gets here, I want you inside and in a rad-suit." She looked pointedly at my protruding belly. I was barely able to wrap my (Well, one Buck's size) Kevlar vest around it, and the baby definitely did not like the compression that the vest caused. The baby usually showed its displeasure by kicking my bladder hard enough to make me piss myself.

"What if there are people still in there?" Paul asked.

"Simple. They can join us, or they can die," Greg stated flatly.

I knew what he meant. The time for loyalties to a government that had run off and left us all to die was past, and they deserved just as much loyalty as they had shown us.

None.

From the Diaries of Becka

Created to house ICBM crews, these are easy to defend, and often contain supplies, as well as living quarters in the case of the older (and some say newer) silos. Those with the nuclear weapons still intact will still have the blast doors closed, while others will have the doors open and nothing but a few feet of water in the bottom of the launch bay. Some of these silos will be defended, and as time goes on, the chances of there being some kind

If the GM wishes to have the group assault or invade a nuclear weapons silo, it is advisable to do some research on the layout of Atlas, Titan or Nike/Hercules missile silos built in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s. With many of those silos having been sold to private individuals, the floor plans should be easily acquired. Many Minuteman class silos were destroyed in the 1990s, and so should not be considered; however, rumor has it that the Minuteman III complexes were more vast than the Atlas sites.

The sizes of these sites are far more than a GM may expect.

of defender, living or undead, increases, as well as the chances of other dangers, such as radiation exposure, chemical spills, or bad air.

Some of the older (and some say newer) missile silos will contain armories to allow the crewmembers to defend such a good, hardened site, as well as vehicles and reconstruction supplies for when any survivors exit the silo. These supplies could include earthmoving vehicles, construction vehicles, prefabricated buildings, generators, mobile water treatment equipment, and long-term storage medical supplies. While many characters may only be concerned with the weaponry in the armory, or perhaps possessing a nuclear weapon that was not fired, the real treasure trove is the NBC survival equipment, the stored supplies, and the reconstruction equipment.

With military drawdowns, many silos have been destroyed (virtually all of the Minuteman complexes) but some of the old Atlas and Titan silos have been reconfigured into such things as houses, data repositories, storage facilities, and other peacetime uses. Those silos will possibly have defenders, but others are simply empty of all life, waiting for new owners.

Silos that are found intact will all have a blast deflection (curved and S-bent, with blast venting piping) entryways, secure entries, stairs in addition to elevators, escape hatches, generators, and heavy duty construction. Door that have to be forced will require several hours of welding and a 20 ton jack to open, as they were built to withstand direct nuclear hits.

Those who are in the silos will undoubtedly defend these hardened locations to the death, both out of a sense of duty, and the knowledge that they are in one of the few locations that they can reach that provides reasonable safety. Many of the defenders will feel that "This is **our** home. Come in here, and we'll blow you back out."

Military Bases:

It was a dead place. We had known it was, in our hearts, but we still had hoped. There were multiple barricades, pulling back tighter and tighter. Abandoned armored vehicles, fire and heavy weapons damage on both the buildings and the vehicles bore mute witness to the ferocity of the fighting toward the end. Unsurprisingly to us, there were a mix of

uniforms - American, Russian, Chinese, all fought and died together.

Sylvia, Sam, Greg and Buck went into the hospital together, staying in constant communication. Only a few Risers, and no Wolf Pack. Compared to what we had been going through, it was a cake-walk. Everyone in there was dead, for the most part. Single bullets to the brain-pan, as they lay in their beds. Someone had written on a wall in one of the mess halls: "Kill Them All Let God Sort Them Out!" Someone else wrote: "God Can Suck My Dick!" underneath it.

Greg, Sylvia and Buck checked a few barracks, then decided to forget it, since the armories in some of them were stripped, and many of the barracks looked like where the housed unit had made its last stand. We decided that we'd try for the ASP (Ammunition Supply Point, as Greg explained to me later) and see if there were any weapons or ammunition we could use that had been left behind by the soldiers. Greg, Sylvia, Buck and Sam walked out in front of the vehicles, while I lay in the back. My belly was **HUGE**, the child ready to come soon, and the only place I could fit was in one of the troop seats, or the commander's position. When we got closer, I uncoordinatedly got into the seat and began looking through the periscope.

"Guys, hold up for a second," Buck said, holding up his hand. There were burnt out civilian vehicles everywhere, craters in the road, and damage of heavy fighting. "Check the radio for anyone alive in there."

I flipped on the radio for the first time in months, and cruised the dial. Four automated messages that I had heard over and over again, and static. That was it. I let them know that there wasn't anyone broadcasting, and nobody had answered any hailing I had tried.

"I don't like this," Sylvia said, looking around, her eyes narrowed. Her hair was growing back, and I could see the fuzz on the back of her neck. It's too goddamn quiet. Think they're all dead?"

"Maybe, but with the ammunition bunkers to pull back into, I don't see how anyone could have gotten to them," Greg replied. He turned to Buck: "What do you think? Check it out?" Buck shrugged, and Sam nodded slowly, looking intently at the trees that hid the ASP from view.

We threw the vehicles into gear, and slowly rolled past the destroyed cars. The radio made several buzzing noises, but nothing I could identify, still, it was unusual, so I alerted the Sylvia and the boys. Sam and Buck moved off to one side, while Sylvia and Greg took cover.

YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

Paranoia isn't insanity when everyone really is out to get you.

We heard it first. A steady slamming noise, and the whine of heavy-duty servos. It sounded like a robot, incredibly, and I heaved myself out of the command couch and climbed up into the turret. I had my doubts at the time that it was a robot, I figured it for a modified vehicle.

I was wrong. It was our first encounter with an armored sentry robot. Huge, lumbering, armored, packing twin chain-guns, a rocket launcher, a grenade launcher, and a flame thrower. It took four Bradleys, working together, firing armor piercing rounds, to bring the big bastard down.

It was our first encounter with robotics, and it wasn't our last. Many military bases had left behind implacable mechanical guardians behind to guard what the dead had spent their lives to defend.

I hate them. They're almost impossible to kill, and I saw one hammer a Bradley into junk with its metal fists, our weapons fire bouncing off its armored hide as we tried desperately to stop it from tearing us to shreds.

From the Diaries of Becka

Military bases are an obvious place for weapons, armored vehicles, supplies, and possibly assistance. In the beginning, bases will be locked down with all nonmilitary personnel turned away, or killed if they push their luck. Later, for a brief period, they may be refugee centers, but as the zombies push, more draconian measures will be instituted. Minefields, mostly used up, will surround perimeters, burnt out vehicles, damaged buildings, and toxic spills would not be uncommon. Zombies would be wandering around, possibly more than the original pre-Rising population of the base, as retired or discharged soldiers and their family members return to a place that was important to them. Living soldiers will defend both "Government" and then "their" property to the death, knowing that their lives depend on the equipment.

Several places of interest that exist on every large post and most small posts are as follows:

TMC (Troop Medical Clinic): These contain medical supplies (unless they were all used up), X-Ray machines, emergency surgical supplies, mastercraft medical kits, and small lab equipment. Troop medical clinics are set up to handle triage for major accidents, and also contain manuals that will justify characters going up in ranks in Treat Injury, or taking

a medical advanced class. The equipment and manuals provided will give anyone using Treat Injury a +2 equipment bonus to their rolls.

Company Areas: These contain supply, NBC, and arms rooms, as well as computers, and in the case of a Division Headquarters, there may even be paperwork covering the Continuity of Government plan that will give the PCs the location of a couple of bunkers. Company areas will be the *only* place to locate keys for any locked up vehicles or bunkers, as well as arms rooms. Keys are commonly kept in hardened safes.

Motor Pools: Where vehicles will be stored, there will also be fuel, oil, hydraulic/transmission fluid, spare parts, tools and possibly weaponry. No matter what option is used, there will be at least one vehicle left behind, usually too damaged or broken down to use. All working vehicles left behind will have their steering wheels secured with a tempered steel cable and a heavy duty lock, and will be parked with a full tank of fuel.

Ammunition Supply Point (ASP): This area will contain anything from 5 to 50 bunkers of everything from pistol ammunition to anti-tank rounds to artillery shells to guided missiles. These bunkers will have a foot-thick steel door sealing



Barracks, simple but home.

them shut, and the lock will be hardened steel.

Airfield: There may be some helicopters left at the airfield, but for the most part, they will either be out on a mission, crashed somewhere, or taken by deserters. There may be tools, spare parts, a few weapons, and possibly a helicopter that was considered broken down, but may be repairable by the PCs, or usable if they really want to take the chance.

Military Police Stations: These will be a gold mine if they are untouched, and are fortified buildings that will provide

protection and safety if they have already been stripped. They commonly contain arms rooms with heavy weapons, riot armor, medical kits, restraints and other goodies for lucky explorers.

During the first 30 days of The Rising, military bases will be surrounded by some of the most lethal and fiercest fighting that the PCs could run into. Between refugees, people with a grudge against the military or government, the Risers, foreign military forces and the obvious *need* to keep the military base intact and in the military's hand for as long as possible, these battles will see the use of some serious weaponry.

Artillery-delivered minefields, usually layered over with chemical weapons, tactical nuclear weapons launches from and impacts against foreign military units, air strikes against the base by foreign powers against the Risers, and against invading militaries means that the troops inside are going to shoot first, and not even bother with questions.

Dams:

It felt weird, not being pregnant. I felt thin, lithe, even though I had never been a small framed girl in my entire life. Still, not packing 20 pounds of water and an eleven pound kid in my gut made a big difference in my center of balance and the way I moved. True, my breasts were full and painful, and leaked milk quite often, but still, it was a startling difference from the way I had felt 3 days ago.

Greg came up behind me and put his arm around me, staring at the valley below us as the water poured from the sluices and floodgates, and crashed to the ground. The water level had only been about thirty feet below the lip of the dam, and while we had opened the gates in an emergency procedure, it was still a hell of a lot better than what would have happened if the dam had given.

"How are you feeling?" he asked, staring at the glittering water.

"Tired. I'm exhausted." I snuggled up against him, holding onto his wrist so I didn't touch the remote detonator in his hand.

"I'd be tired too if I crapped a cantaloupe," Greg said, and I could hear the smile in his voice.

"Water level's about right, go ahead," came Sam's voice. He was watching the water level behind the dam. We planned on preventing the possibility of a catastrophic spring flood.

"Roger that. Fire in the hole," Greg replied, and I felt his wrist flex as he pressed the detonation button.

I watched the dam crumble, leaving behind only a small bottom section. Buck cheered Thomas' demolition skills, the water being a mere 5 feet below the new height. From a six-hundred foot dam, to a fifty foot dam that would erode away fairly quickly.

It was very impressive, and ensured that the area where we captured our FEMA site would not end up being pounded by the water from a collapsed dam.

From the Diaries of Becka

Some players may consider the damage that a collapsing dam could cause, while other groups may be assigned the task of going to a nearby dam and opening the floodgates. Inside could be some zombies, people trying to hide out, and other dangers, and the use of firearms would be nearly suicidal. The inside of the dam is made up of narrow hallways and the vast, cavernous generator area, and everything from tourists to workers to guards may be wandering about as Risers or refugees.

There are literally thousands of dams in the United States, and most have existed for decades. These dams will not be able to last for long without constant maintenance, and if a generator were to explode within the dam, it would be catastrophically breached and collapse quickly.

A dam is close and nasty combat, and heavy weapons would not be an option, as any heavy weapons run the risk of weakening the dam's structure. The massive amounts of heavy machinery, pipes, and computer equipment hinder those trying to spot a zombie, as well as may provide problems if any of the machinery is damaged.

While they are a problem that will eventually have to be addressed, only the best should apply.

Mortuaries:

I followed Sam in, the shotgun heavy and unfamiliar in my hands. Despite being assigned to a National Guard Unit by that Matthews guy, I was happy working with this Deputy Sheriff. He was a good guy, not a chickenshit like so many of the shit-talkers were turning out to be.

Sam fired carefully as he entered, spacing his shots, and Greg followed me in as I was lining up a shot. I had seen Sam fire before, and even Greg was impressed by the Deputy's marksmanship and skill with his pistols. Seven shots from the pistol, seven corpses returned to death.

Sweep and clear. My sixth day of doing it. My sorority sisters were all dead. It turns out that the bites from a zombie are invariably fatal within a few days. Despite doctors' and medics' best efforts, anyone who was bitten died. Then they rose again, and had to be put down. We had taken to calling them Risers. This mission had sucked from the get-go. A nightmare of city streets full of looters, rioters, and Risers.

One of my shots missed, and blew a huge hole in the coffin that the Riser was in front of. Stuffing flew out the back side, and before I could correct, Sam and Greg both shot the Riser in the head.

This promised to be a bitch. This was the largest privately owned mortuary in Timwater, and we had to clear it. The faster we cleared it, the faster we could get this shit under control.

From the Diaries of Becka.

In the early days of The Rising, police and military units would be tasked to sweep and clear mortuaries, as there would be a heavy presence of dead within them. After a few months, however, the place would be all but abandoned, as it holds little significance to anyone but the staff, who were probably completely devoured or killed early in The Rising anyway. There will be a room where corpses are waiting for the embalming process to take place, and these corpses will be Rising within minutes. Unless a corpse had an autopsy that required the removal of the brain, or has suffered too much brain damage due to deterioration or trauma, the corpse will Rise and attack those working within the morgue.

Depending on the size of the morgue, there could be anywhere from one to over a hundred corpses within the morgue, and it is doubtful that any on-site security that may exist will be able to handle the sheer amount of sudden Risers that will attack.

Hospitals:

Buck was chewing on the end of his cigar, the sun gleaming off of his bald head as he stared at the hospital through his binoculars. The shiny burn scarring made his head look like the icon of some medieval war god. I could see it, as could the rest of us, but Greg, Buck, Sam, the Russians and Ming were responsible for figuring out our plan of attack.

Sam lowered the binoculars and spit on the grass, grumbling to himself, then looking at Greg. "You're sure we're going to find 20mm ammunition in the building?"

"We left it behind - too heavy to carry, the crash-hawk didn't have much fuel," Greg answered, scanning the roof with a grim expression on his face. I could make out a couple dozen small figures milling around the roof, where two burned-out helicopters lay mournfully. I wondered if I really wanted to know what had gone on there. I had been lucky, I had been assigned somewhere else when the end had come for the hospital.

I knew it had gotten brutal, and dirty, and only our previous planning to rendezvous at the Thurston County Sheriff's substation had ensured we'd be able to find one another again.

"Where is it?" Buck asked, removing the cigar from his mouth and scanning the parking lot. "What about those six five-ton trucks?"

"There's some ammunition on the 5-tons, but it's mostly refugee supplies like blankets and first aid kits. The 20mm is in the parking garage, down by the Bradleys. We lost the garage, so there are also about five or six Bradleys down there in pristine condition. I know that some of the guys were going to make a run for them. They didn't want to risk the chopper flight. They should have - they never got out."

"Medicine. We need medicines, the portable X-ray machine, drugs and other stuff out of there," Robert said, trying to scratch under the lip of his cast with the barrel of his assault rifle.

"Tampons, breast pads and menstrual pads," I reminded them, "And prenatal vitamins, and an ultrasound machine so I can check the baby now and then." I placed my hand on my slightly rounded stomach.

Greg nodded, staring down at the hospital with a grim expression.

"Be careful, honey, there's a lot of them down there, and without Robert, Sylvia, and I to go with you, you're going to be running hard," I said, fighting back tears. Ever since I had gotten pregnant, my emotions had been rollercoasting. I was suddenly furious at him for risking his life like this.

"There's a lot of wreckage. Any plans?" Sylvia asked, coughing a deep, tearing cough, and wiping blood off of her mouth.

"We're going to use a Humvee, smash through the barricades at the garage entrance, and try to take the Bradleys," Greg answered. "I'm pretty sure they should have full tanks. They did when we left them there a couple of months back."

"Come back safe, guys," I begged, starting to cry. The hospital was more choked with Risers than anyplace I'd seen in a long time, and I didn't want the baby to grow up without a father.

From the Diaries of Becka

As the initial victims of the Rising would be considered victims of a biological terrorism incident in the United States, they would be quickly moved to hospitals. In the interest of maintaining order, the military and civilian authorities would assign security, often with permission to use lethal force to keep the hospital secure.

Risers would be brought in on gurneys with heavy sedatives having been administered, but not affecting them. The Risers would be restrained on the gurneys, and possibly masked to keep them from biting any medical personnel working on them. Blood draws, X-rays, surgery, The doctors would do everything possible to save a life that is already gone - blood draws, X-rays, even surgery.

Windows would be sandbagged, and machinegun positions set up on the roof and in any entryways, and the parking lot would be cleared to make a killing ground. Land mines would be set up after a few days, and eventually the security personnel would ignore those being taken down by zombies, whether or not they would have moved in to protect refugees in the early days of the Rising.

Lethal force would eventually be authorized to keep the peace, and security forces would be forced to fire upon panicked crowds that will be under assault by zombies once the security forces pulled back from their perimeter line in order to protect the hospital proper with their dwindling manpower. The order would come down, that the hospital is to be protected at all costs, including the use of air-support and artillery, and to hell with the refugees.

As more and more people are bitten or wounded, the hospitals would become a central area for refugees. Heavily guarded by police and military, those who died or were bitten would at first be properly cared for, but later those guarding the place would be satisfied with just a shot in the face and a good toss off the back of the roof for anyone bitten by a Riser.

Military or hardened security personnel would force refugees to strip after a few days, and some unscrupulous security

elements might take sexual liberties with the refugees, throwing those who refuse to give up what the security person wants back out to the zombies. Some of the security personnel will show a brutal and

bullying side as it slowly dawns on them that they are all that stands between the refugees and Risers. This power will go straight to some of their heads, and some hospitals will be eventually turned into horrible

concentration camps where medical experiments of a horrifying nature will take place, and brutality is as common as air.

Despite the best efforts of the military and police, it would not take too long before most of the hospitals collapse and are overrun. Rioting and constant zombie attacks would slowly eliminate the protectors, and then it would be a zombie jamboree with plenty of fresh food for everyone once the Risers manage to penetrate the failed perimeter. For those who have lived through the first several months, a hospital is a place where much needed medical supplies and some military gear might be found, but for the most part, it is a death trap for months to come.

Police Stations:

"Hurry the fuck up, Dudley Do-Right!" Greg yelled at the Deputy Sheriff, snapping off another burst from his M-4 at the pack of zombies that had shambling around the corner. I could feel the sweat pouring down my back and between my breasts as I held my brother's pistol in both hands and carefully lined up the shots like Greg had taught me.

I still disliked the feel of the weapon, hell, I hate using ANY firearm, but only a fool allows a zombie to get close enough to fight with fists and feet. We were screwed. Our pickup hadn't made it, and here we were, the second day into The Rising, on foot, low on ammunition, and frankly, in a shitload of trouble.

"I'm hurrying, I'm hurrying!" Sam yelled back, trying another key on the key-ring. The rotating lights of the two police cars and the ambulance provided a



weird, stroboscopic lighting to the whole scene, and made the zombies seem covered in blood.

There were only five of us who had managed to fight our way free of the Emergency Relief Station in Little Rock, and things were getting desperate. Insanely, I could see the scrap of paper sticking out of Greg's back pocket, the scrap that read: "All Units Revert To Local Command" several times, with "God Help Us All" at the end.

That chilled me more than anything else, knowing that things had gotten so bad that the military had virtually collapsed.

"GOT IT!" Sam yelled, swinging open the door, then yelled as a zombie, dressed in the uniform of the Thurston County Sheriff's Department, came bulling out, the spastic movements marking it as either a Frenzied or a Sprinter.

"Got him!" Robert yelled, squeezing off two shots from the 9mm pistol. One round hit the doorknob, blowing it to shit, and the other hitting Greg in the leg, throwing him to the ground.

"WATCH YOUR FUCKING FIRE!" Greg hollered. Sam shoved the zombie back and drew his pistol. The sight of it took my breath away, it was so... awesome. His hand and forearm blurred, and the pistol seemed to magically sprout from his hand, pressing against the zombie's forehead. The slap of his hand against the leather merged with the retort of the pistol firing into the zombie's face.

I helped Greg to his feet, and we limped into the police substation, weapons and equipment greeting our desperate gazes. It was everything we needed, and more. The only worry was a large bald biker dude in one cell, wearing three pair of handcuffs on his huge wrists, and an Indian woman who was either passed out or dead.

"The door won't lock, it won't close! The handle is busted!" Darren yelled, trying to hold the door shut. Suddenly, he stepped back, letting the door burst open. In his hands, he held a chrome Uzi that practically screamed: "HI! I'm being wielded by a drug dealer!" to me.

"FUCK YOU!" he screamed, and started firing.

I barely heard Sam yell: "No! Don't!" before Darren's wild firing hit something in the police cruiser outside and the explosion seemed to engulf the world. I can vaguely remember the grill-guard hitting me in the chest and sending me flying backward into the cell bars, and the sharp pain of ribs breaking before I passed out.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Most police stations would be empty, and fairly stripped. Some cells may hold zombies, and there may be a few zombies

dressed in a police uniform wandering about. In the station might be ammunition, weapons, tactical armor, a vehicle or two, but for the most part, it will all have been used or issued during the early days of The Rising in defense of the police station and the population.

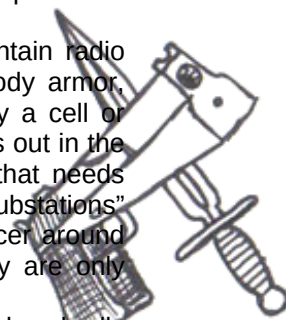
Sometime during the first week, police stations would be designated as shelters if they were large enough, with the cars and other vehicles having been moved out to defend and blockade access points into the building. Windows will be missing, either due to rioting or for the police to fire from, and the inside may have heavy damage as those bitten first died, then came back and began attacking people.

The best bet is the evidence room, where characters may be able to locate such goodies as fully automatic weapons, "cop-killer" bullets, and illegal body armor. Getting into it, however, will be very difficult at best. Audible alarms will sound and lights flash, not to mention that the cages will be hardened steel, and the evidence room may be surrounded by zombies who wanted what is inside while they were alive.

Larger cities will have more elaborate facilities, with multiple levels above and below ground, secure lockups, contraband storage, indoor garages, SWAT armories, indoor pistol ranges, body armor lockers, radio equipment capable of reaching over 100 miles, satellite uplinks and more goodies. The biggest problem there will be the fact that Risers who were formerly police officers, clerks, lawyers and such will be wandering around the place in droves. Helipads on the roof will contain transport, surveillance, and assault helicopters, while the underground garage may contain busses and SWAT vehicles (including armored assault vehicles) in addition to normal police cruisers. The garage can also contain a fuel depot and a mechanic shop.

Smaller "substations" that contain radio gear, weapons, ammunition, body armor, tear gas grenades and possibly a cell or two will be located in odd places out in the country, often near a location that needs guarding. Many times these "substations" will be manned by a single officer around the clock, but occasionally they are only manned periodically.

Many police stations will be badly damaged from the fighting that took place in the first 2 weeks, with barricades that are elaborate on the outside, but become



more and more hasty the further in an explorer goes, until finally there is nothing but a single room and several corpses who took their own lives rather than become Risers.

Former Aid Stations:

"Found something," Sylvia radioed back to the rest of the convoy. I checked the load in the ringmount SAW as Sylvia dropped her speed down from 30 MPH to about 10. The roads were going to shit pretty quickly. Two months with no maintenance, no DOT, more than one explosion as flammables in cars spontaneously combusted, the tank caught fire, and the fuel ignited, and fighting between invading militaries and the Americans, all combined to make the roads pretty shitty.

"Roger. Support?" Greg, as verbose as usual. He forgot to switch off the mike when he yelled into the back "Ming! Wake up Buck. We might have contact!" I giggled to myself, and scanned the building in front of us.

A high school, surrounded by Risers who were just starting to take notice of us. The sign read "EMGENY STATION" in those switchable letters common on large signboards, where normally it would announce the next football game or cheerleader orgy. I dropped a couple of bursts into a group of Sprinters, sending them sprawling, and took the time to drop single shots into their heads while they got up.

I was getting pretty good at this.

"Better bring up the firepower, boys. Looks like a party," Sylvia answered, turning the humvee and running parallel to the parking lot. I'd ridden with her a few times, and knew the drill. On our second pass of the parking lot, the Risers were among the cars, and I strafed the line as we went by. Cars exploded, rending the zombies apart, and catching others on fire.

When the two Bradleys arrived, we made short work of the rest that we could see, and climbed out. Broken glass, half devoured corpses. Rotted zombies who still lay where they had been felled by a shot to the head. The parking lot reeked, and I wanted to gag or puke. Many of the former zombies had been kids, teenagers, with a smattering of adults.

We passed the barrier, keeping ready as we entered the gymnasium. Inside was absolute chaos. Sam, Sylvia, Greg and Buck quickly killed the few zombies still inside, their training making the difference in reaction and lethality. The few shots that Darren and Thomas popped off mostly hit the zombies in non-lethal areas, and didn't do much. I

heard Greg mumble something about "Firing Range 101" to Buck, who laughed harshly. (said this same line earlier)

"We'll keep watch, the rest of you, grab anything useful. I want to get out of here before the zombies pin us down and swarm us under," Buck growled, reaching into a pocket and pulling out a cigar.

I began quickly scavenging through the racks and boxes in the curtained areas, pulling myself into that pool of calm as I had been trained to do, to keep my awareness high, but not lose focus on the task. Drugs, medical instruments, medical supplies. I shoved them all together into a large bag with a red cross on the side, slinging the bag over one shoulder.

Darren handed a SAW to Buck, who glanced at it real quick and nodded. Darren slung it over one shoulder, grunting at the weight of the weapon that dangled at the end of its sling. We hurried as best as we could, stripping anything easily recoverable.

While depressing and full of death, the aid stations that had been overrun and devoured were still useful, and in a strange way, were still fulfilling their purpose of providing emergency supplies and services to survivors.

I'm still glad Greg drafted my sorority sisters and myself in the pawn shop all those years ago. Otherwise, I would have gone to an aid station and just been another corpse that nobody would have even had the time or energy to wonder about.

From the Diaries of Becka

During the initial days of the disaster, when it became apparent that the military and police forces would not be able to protect American citizens if they were scattered all over hell and gone, Emergency Aid Stations would be set up. These would be in a central location, and have food, medicine, shelter, doctors, etc., as well as being heavily guarded and fortified. The aid stations would be placed in such easily defended places as banks, police substations, warehouses, or medical clinics - anyplace with room to put wounded and refugees, and easily defendable by a minimum of troops, as well as being a central area, with sandbags and concertina wire used to fortify them. Bunks and emergency medical equipment would be inside, as well as National Guard soldiers whose job it would be to defend and treat any refugees.

The largest problem, however, would be the fact that all of the refugees would eventually attract a lot of zombies, and sooner or later, someone will get through

with a bite, no matter how careful the guards were, quickly turning the place into a bloodbath. Before the deadliness of the bites are known, many refugee stations would fall to those who Rose from the bites to attack the defenders from the inside.

Afterward, while it would mostly be full of corpses and zombies, valuable drugs, medical supplies, radios and other equipment might be found at a former aid station, as well as heavy weaponry that was unable to be moved by anyone who had survived. Many of these will be raided unless the amount of zombies is too intense for even the most foolhardy raiders.

Airports:

"What have you got?" I asked. Sylvia was supposed to be manning the radio, but I could hear her puking again behind me. I kept helping her adjust her hair when clumps fell out so that the bald spots were hidden. She'd been menstruating steadily since the day after she'd checked out the nuclear power plant. We had found afterwards that the sensory equipment had been damaged, and didn't work.

Robert figured she had probably taken a serious amount of radiation. There had been enough that in the two hours it had taken us to go back and recover the humvee, it was radioactive. We even left her personal effects in it.

"A whole shitload of people waiting for planes that aren't coming." Buck laughed. "Luckily, they're in the terminal, so we might be able to make a run at that C-5 Galaxy."

It's open, and I can see a Bradley and a hummer. The Bradley's inside the Galaxy, and the hummer is outside," Greg added. Behind me, Sylvia finished puking in the chemical toilet we'd bolted to the frame. I heard her stagger up and sit next to me. I could smell the blood and bile from her. Six months ago, I would have probably puked, instead, I hugged her close.

"Let's go for it. We need the extra vehicles, and there might be medicine aboard," Sam said. Sylvia managed to buckle herself in, but then fell asleep.

I hoped we could find something to help her soon.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Airports are a surefire deathtrap. While there may be decent supplies, there will be hundreds, if not thousands, of zombies congregated at an airport, one of the most important fixtures in their lives. From retired pilots and airplane attendants to

busy executives, the zombies will be everywhere.

Baggage claim might contain some loot, but for the most part, airports are not worth the effort, even for the on site SWAT and Homeland Defense Agency armories, which would likely be long emptied. With the broad avenues, large windows, and multiple entrance points, a PC group would have a hard time defending the location, although a large, coordinated group may be able to pull it off by welding steel over the windows, blocking off the exits, and sandbagging fire positions on the roof. It would be better for a group to do a "smash and grab" for anything of value, including vehicles, fuel, and stuff in the small airport malls.

Most airports have refueling points for diesel and unleaded gasoline as well as aviation fuel, and in the opening weeks of the Rising, military forces will do their best to protect these sites, using them to supplement military stockpiles for the seemingly endless amount of air missions.

Docks:

"What do you think?" I asked, looking through my binoculars. They were nice ones, they might have been Delta Force issue, or something like that. Switchable night-vision, infra-red, laser range-finder thingamajigs, all the bells and whistles.

We took them from around the neck of a Riser in urban combat BDUs.

"Worth a shot. Not too many of them around, nothing the Bradleys can't handle. We back up to the end of the dock, side by side, that way they have to get through the chain-guns to get at those of us who get out. We storm that Coast Guard cutter, kill any Risers we find, and haul off the loot," Sam said. I turned to him and saw a rare smile.

It's doubtful any are left onboard, most of them probably wandered off," Cindy said, shading her eyes and staring at the crowd of Risers slowly approaching over the bridge. Greg was bouncing a radio detonator in his hand. As soon as the Risers got close enough, he'd press the button and the duffle bag packed with almost 200 lbs of C-4 would explode. If the boys were right, it would drop the bridge into the water.

It's a nice island, do you think there are any survivors?" Cathy wondered, looking around.

"Doesn't matter. We need the fuel and heavy equipment at the docks to fix Bradley-Four." Buck grunted. I nodded in agreement. The RPG hits had badly damaged the vehicle's hull, eliminating its

amphibious ability, and we needed to get it back. Bridges were unreliable at best.

From the Diaries of Becka

Docks would be largely abandoned, although there will be some zombies of former dockworkers. Supplies can easily be found in the shipping crates, and heavy loading equipment will be about. Large fuel tanks, mostly full of diesel fuel, will be present, as will welding equipment, steel plating, machine shops and other supplies necessary for the survivalist on the move.

Docks will have been defended heavily in the early days, mainly by Navy and Coast Guard personnel, but the lack of heavy weaponry and combat training compared to an Army or Marine infantry company would eventually make the difference, as the zombies overran and devoured the guards, and then wandered away.

For the clever, there will be tools, repair equipment formerly used on ships that can be used on vehicles, fuel, and supplies inside of the shipping containers. While it may seem like there should be ships at the docks, tides, storms, currents, and waves would severely damage them, sweep them away, or destroy them.

Ships:

How's it look down there, Thomas?" Buck asked into his tac-cam, examining the charred wreckage of the Naval vessel's sensitive equipment. I was wandering around the bridge, stepping carefully to compensate for my adjusted center of gravity as well as the slant of the deck of the beached ship.

"Her engines are seized up, and there's a lot of damage down here. It looks like the fighting spread down here too. From the amount of dead Marines, I'd say the Jarheads made their last stand down here, and did a damn good job of it." Thomas replied, his voice nearly masked by static despite the repeaters we had dropped behind us as we had moved through the carcass of this ship.

"Sam, how's the armory?" Buck questioned, staring out the windows at the slightly tilted landscape outside. We could see Greg, Cindy and Sylvia checking the deck guns for anything salvageable out in the rain. Sylvia looked shit-ass miserable out there, and as I watched, she turned and vomited onto the deck plates, the rain and the tilt of the deck washing the vomit away from her.

She was dying. I knew it, I could feel it.

"Locked down, but I've almost got it open." Sam answered, "I'm almost through the door, and there wasn't any commotion on the other side, so we should be good."

It was eerie. A ship that probably had a crew of hundreds, dead silent except for the hull settling as the waves pushed it further and further onto the beach, and our movement. Rats stripping the carcass of the once proud vessel for anything we could use before it tipped over and the waves smashed it to shit.

A sad end for the U.S.S. Long Beach.

From the Diaries of Becka

Most seaborne vessels will have been destroyed by tides, but occasionally, a naval vessel, possibly military, may run aground. These ships would undoubtedly be full of zombies that were unable to get off the vessel, but occasionally, a ship may be at sea and locked in a brutal battle between the crew and zombies.

Some ships may be found, completely empty, because the crew went ashore, abandoning the ship, to look for friends and loved ones. These ships will be stripped of nearly everything usable.

Many players will think that heading for an island will be the end of their worries, but with a little thought, a GM will realize that the players have volunteered for a world of hurt. First of all, storms can batter a ship, and easily sink one small enough for a PC group to completely man. The larger ones can contain hiding zombies, survivors, and in general, be a major pain in ass as well as a virtual gold mine of equipment.

Most small islands that can support people have at least two hotel/resorts on them, meaning that there will be a crapload of zombies on the island, since thousands of other people would have had the same idea. Some islands that are large enough out in the Pacific have a completely different problem, as they were used for target practice by the Navy and Air Force, or used for chemical, biological or atomic tests in the 1950s, and '60s. Ships can also run aground that were packed with hundreds or thousands of refugees who died at sea, and are now zombies. When these ships run aground, the zombies will come spilling out like maggots from rotten meat and the characters will have nowhere to run.

Any larger ships will run aground, and then tip over, unless the characters have the common sense to find a harbor, and

even then, the harbor may be shallow enough that the ship can run aground. In addition to that, fuel can easily run out, the PCs can get lost, and starvation can become a serious threat. The center of the Pacific Ocean is large enough that you could sink all of Eurasia into it and nobody would even notice, so a character piloting a ship out there with little or no navigation or piloting skill is a group asking to get lost and starve to death.

Ships and islands may seem like an easy solution, but in actuality they are more untenable than a convoy of Bradley Fighting Vehicles.

Planes:

"We're in luck, Buck," came Greg's voice over the tac-com system. It was staticky, but clear enough to understand. I could see Sylvia laying down on the loading ramp of the huge military cargo jet, firing tight bursts from her SAW at the Risers, taking time to hit the Sprinters first.

"What?" Buck asked, triggering a short burst from the M-249 into a group of Sprinters that came out of the terminal at top speed, that eerie, fluid run that was so effortless looking, so tireless, like a machine. The heavy rounds from the mounted machinegun knocked them sprawling, but even though it didn't kill them, they weren't moving too fast with dinner plate sized holes in them from exit wounds.

"Bradleys, four of them, fully loaded too. Someone disregarded SOP and loaded them on here with a full combat load. They're fueled and ready to go. Two humvees too, both locked and loaded. Got one with a SAW on the ringmount, the other is a TOW-II wagon," Greg answered. There was a short burst of automatic weapons fire that overrode Sam's reply.

I heard the back door clang open, and I set down the quilt I was making and dragged one of the extra Kevlar vests over Emma. She was sleeping soundly, not even twitching when Sam, Darren, Robert and the Russians began laying down fire as they headed into the big cargo plane. It was sad that the sound of automatic weapons fire was so common that it did not wake a sleeping 7-month-old infant up. The child inside my stomach woke up with a start however, kicked me right in the bladder, and made me wet my pants. I shrugged to myself. It wasn't the first time, and it undoubtedly wouldn't be the last, since Greg seems to be able to get me pregnant by just walking by me.

I checked the load in my rifle, and Ming nodded to me, his brittle smile looking strange with the

missing teeth that the rogue National Guardsmen had knocked out. We could use the Bradleys, armored vehicles were the SUV of this dark future.

From the Diaries of Becka

Most of the planes will have crashed or been destroyed in the rioting and looting, but occasionally the PCs may come across a small commuter plane in the middle of nowhere, or a military cargo jet at a military airfield or set down on a long, straight stretch of freeway. For the most part, planes will be out of fuel, or damaged badly in the fighting.

Combat jets, for the most part, will have been destroyed due to pilot error or catastrophic failure in planes beyond endurance. For the few that do remain on the ground, the differences between an F-111 combat jet and a Cessna are too numerous to list here, and just because a character can pilot a little puddle jumper or crop duster does not mean they can just jump right in a Harrier and take off to greener pastures.

Even if the players figure out a way to fly it, and refuel it, there is really nowhere to go, and with the lack of landing beacons, airport guidance, and the failure of landing lights, a plane is a deathtrap. Any fool who grabs one and flies off into the wild blue yonder deserves to either slam into a mountain or land in the middle of a city full of zombies.

Even better is to do a replay of the scene on the bombers from the movie *Heavy Metal* and let the fools paradrop onto an island full of zombies.

Wrecking Yards:

Nine hours of hard work, taking turns shooting any Riser we saw. We had figured we'd burn the ammunition for the Mark-19 40mm automatic grenade launcher while we were building the wall. We needed that wall, so we could take the time to repair the Bradleys after our knock-down drag out fight with that military security robot we had tangled with at the National Guard base we located. We should have known that if it was not listed on any map we had found it would probably be either empty or guarded like mad. The Mark-19 did wonders in blowing the Risers back to hell. If Hell was full, then Satan could stack the bastards like cordwood outside the doors instead of being so damn lazy and just letting them wander off.

Buck could drive anything, I swear to God. He'd load the car into the crusher, smash it flat, then

stack it on the wall. We had decided to go eight cars high, and since they were crushed to about two feet high of compressed, hardened steel, it made a good wall. When we were done with the first layer, we added a second just in case. Raiders were starting to pop up with anti-tank weaponry, and we didn't want to take the chance of them being able to breach the wall before we could send them packing.

The heavy-duty tools, normally used for tearing apart cars and getting any salvage off of the wrecks that the mechanics could, were the most important thing. Even more important than the jury-rigged shower, even more important than being able to sleep in something besides the Bradleys.

The parts, the tools, and the ability to refit the humvees and Bradleys would be the difference between life and death.

From the Diaries of Becka

With the masses of ruined cars, it's a containment wall waiting for a forklift. These can be fortified, and made nearly zombie proof, but eventually, the zombies will surround it, and those inside may starve to death. Still, it can be worth the risk, since there are plenty of spare parts for repairs, plenty of tools to repair even armored vehicles, and an easily fortifiable location.

The major problems are ground contamination from fluids leaking from vehicles and steady rust from junked vehicles, as well as the time it will take to build the containment walls. The contamination will ruin any crops, but inventive characters may be able to design hydroponics and greenhouses to grow food, as well as water purification/storage equipment.

Strangely enough, Raider and Slaver gangs seem to congregate around junkyards.

Rail yards:

"I don't like this. I think it's wrong," I stated, glaring at Greg, who stared back at me with his grey eyes as cold as a glacier. "This is monstrous."

"So what? So is what those little fucks did to Ralph and the Russians and Ming's friends. They are holed up there, we want the fucking train, and we have what we need to take it without any risk," Greg answered, his voice steady and cold. For a split

second, he wasn't the Greg I had made love to, who had been my first, but instead, was something sinister, something alien.

"Greg, using chemical weapons on children?" I asked, pleading with him to see my side. To see how inhuman his proposal actually was.

"Using pesticide on insects," Greg answered. "We need that equipment, and that train is our best chance to get the fuck out of here. There's three trains ready to go, we can be gone before the Risers can mob us and pull us down. Those kids are deadly, sweetheart, you saw, the same as I did, that they were eating those Russians even while they were hacking them to death. Those aren't kids, honey, they're animals, they are predators, and we have to do it this way. Either that or choose half of us and shoot them, because that will be quicker than letting the Wolf Pack make Subway out of them."

I nodded slowly. Using VX on children, Wolf Pack or not, still did not sit easy with me, but he was right, we needed that equipment more than they did, and the nerve agent was the only sure, safe way to get at it. They were too fast, too good, and it was their home ground. He was right, half of us would die, and if he refused to use the nerve agent because of my feelings, I might as well shoot half of us right now, because either way, their deaths would be my fault.

The loss of my cherry was not the loss of my innocence. Helping the guys load the VX shells into the mortars was the end of my innocence. We are all alike now. I'm no different from Greg, or Buck, or any of our little grouping of the damned. After the third shell I dropped into the 42 inch tubes, I no longer cried, and it became a job. Inside, I was glad that I did not have to face a dozen or so of those kids. I had been ashamed of that fear, and that is what made me protest. Fear did not make me unfit. Fear enabled me to survive.

I am fit. I will survive. Innocence is overrated in this savage new world.

From the Diaries of Becka.

A rail yard contains many things that can help a prospective survivor, such as heavy construction, repair equipment and the obvious fuel, chemical and cargo cars. It also has many things preventing to acquisition of those supplies, namely Wolf Packs and zombies. Cargo cars can contain anything from stacks of shredded paper to supplies that had been en route to an infantry unit fighting the masses of Risers trying to leave a city. Weapons or boxed food in boxcars, armored vehicles on flatbed cars, sleeper cars, tanker cars full of fuel. The cars themselves represent a virtual treasure trove.

The rail yard itself will contain fuel tanks, parts, heavy construction and repair

equipment, normal vehicles with an addition that lets them run on the railroad tracks as well as normal streets. There will be forklifts and cranes, as well as raw metal in the form of railroad tracks, and wood in the form of railroad ties. There will be oil, tar, electrical and maintenance equipment.

Metal Gods

By RPGObjects

While it may seem out of place to add in high-technology such as robots to YotZ, it is not unfeasible to have the lower technology robots guarding important locations such as FEMA Max-Sites, nuclear areas, ordnance areas, and military bases.

The thought of the military trotting out experimental robots is not as strange as it may seem, with the Predator and other drones being used on the battlefield already. There could be dog-brain AI piloted drones packing a SAW with 1,000 rounds and programmed to kill anything that moves within a certain area or building.

War Droids, Combat Walkers, Military Security and War Robots from Metal Gods are easily adaptable, do not destroy the suspension of reality for the setting, and can provide a challenge to even the most heavily-armed group driving M1A2 Abrams main battle tanks.

To provide a slight edge to the PCs, the robot may have used up a sizeable amount of ammunition, as well as not being as heavily armored as listed in the entry. In addition, its strategy and planning software would not be too good, usually slightly better than a top of the line videogame AI, which usually means that the bot would suck at tactics, strategy and quick adaptability.

However, the transients, now Risen and looking for someone to eat, are a definite problem, and packs of feral children seem to be attracted to rail yards for some strange reason. They lair in everything from Amtrak cars to stacks of pipe, railroad ties and scrapped equipment, and viciously guard their territory from any and all interlopers.

Trains

"Heads up, people," I said, checking the power to the 20mm Bushmaster cannon. The Bradley that the cannon was mounted on was slowly approaching the outskirts of a city. I heard each person check in, and got ready. This would more than likely be a cast-iron motherfucker, since the huge diesel engines would have alerted anyone smarter than a brain-shot Riser that we were coming.

The town drew steadily closer, and I hoped that the tie-down chains would be able to take the recoil

from the cannon if I was forced to fire it. We had tried several times, but our only chance was going through Grant's Pass. None of the other railroad tracks were intact enough, and we were loath to abandon the train that had become our home.

It was a rolling community. Thirty people, supplies, apartments, a medical car, armored engines to keep us on the move that could be remote controlled from any of five places. One hundred cars, guarded by claymore land mines, guards, or welded shut on the sides, with any hand-holds cut away.

It was ours, it was ugly.

It was home.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Trains seem a perfect solution. Lots of cargo room, they keep moving, and are nearly impossible to stop. Despite the feeling that it would be a game ender, there are still plenty of problems for survivors to encounter. From blocked bridges to damaged sections of rail that require repair, tension can still run high as the bridge or tracks are repaired or cleared by characters who are exposed to snipers and zombie attacks. If the characters were not clever enough to load at least two flatbed cars full of railroad ties and rails, then they will be forced to abandon the train in what will more than likely be the worst spot possible.

Survivors will still have to make periodic runs into buildings for supplies, and sooner or later, they will have to take their train through a major city, attracting all the wrong kind of attention. Other lengths of track could just peter out, having been taken off the major routes for years, but the characters would be unaware that the tracks just suddenly end, sometimes right before a bridge.

Trains make a lot of noise and since most of the noise that most of us never notice would be gone, that noise would carry for miles. Zombies would be attracted to the noise, which would mean food to their primitive instincts, and survivors would be attracted to the supplies, either trading or raiding on their minds.

Wolf Packs, however, will view the train as the perfect lair, and would be content to hide in the small places for days or even weeks. Sooner or later, however, someone would find one of the members of the Pack, and the fight would be on.

We're Jacked Up & Good to Go, Sarge!

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

"FUCK YEAH!" Buck exclaimed, shining his flashlight around the interior bay of the motor-pool. The armory had been deserted, and more or less stripped, but Buck had told us that he 'had a feeling' about the fact that the motor pool doors were chained shut.

Inside sat a big, ugly thing, tracks, guns, it looked heavy and deadly to me. It had brown paint on it, a ramp that was lowered in the back, and two open hatches, and as it sat there, I felt a shiver. It had five stencils of tanks on the upper part, which I'd later learn was the turret. Buck told me that those were kill marks, and Bradleys were fully capable of taking on a Russian tank at two to one odds and killing both tanks.

"What is it?" I asked. I'd seen them on the television during the Iraq War, but never learned what they were, or why Buck looked so excited as he moved in.

"It's a Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle, dear heart." Greg told me, moving by silently, turning on his NVGs. I've ridden in them, but don't know how to drive them."

"I do, I drove one in 'The Storm' before I left the Army," Buck said, checking in the hatch real quick, then slithering inside quickly despite his bulk. "A deader will have a tough time getting at us in here."

"Ever see that sour bastard so happy? He looks like he just invented fucking." Greg grinned at me as I stared at the massive vehicle.

Which would eventually become my home.

From the Diaries of Becka

Military hardware can be prevalent in a Year of the Zombie campaign. Dismount crews from Bradleys will be devoured, the vehicle will run out of fuel and be abandoned, or will crash and be abandoned. In some places, the National Guard unit may not have had time to get to their vehicles, and there will be heavy armor there for the taking, as well as ammunition, food, and explosives for anyone brave enough to take it.

If the Total War option is used, there may even be foreign military vehicles available for the taking that ran out of fuel and/or ammunition, and were abandoned by their crew rather than risk being starved

out by Risers that quickly surrounded them.

Clever players may come up with perfectly plausible reasons that they can use that Stryker Armored Combat Vehicle that was thrown in there more for scenery than anything else, and at first, it can seem as if this completely destroys the game, after all, military vehicles and other heavy vehicles can just run over zombies. A Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicle weighs around 25 tons, and a few hundred zombies pressing against it is not going to slow it down.

That is why there are so many threats in the game that are not people too stupid to know they're dead. From decaying/damaged bridges, to rogue military units armed with anti-tank weaponry, not everything can be solved by just running over it. On top of that, the Bradley's road speed is 45 MPH, and its range is only 300 miles before it needs refueling. Once it runs out of gas, or gets low on gas, the player characters have the very risky job of refueling a vehicle that makes enough noise that it will have attracted dozens, if not scores of zombies. This will make refueling the vehicle, which requires a lot of fuel, diesel fuel to boot, very dangerous. After several weeks, there will be no power to the pumps, making it even harder to refuel the behemoth vehicles like BMP-2s, BAFVs, or Abrahms.



*Assault Rifle with 40mm
Grenade Launcher added.
Sweet for ground control.*

As far as Blackhawk and Apache helicopters are concerned, the players' lives can be much more interesting. Most of the helicopters have had to undergo "Service Life Extension Program" in order to continue being serviceable. This means

that the characters will have to constantly service the machine, which actually has a very limited flight time of roughly 500 miles. Unlike armored vehicles, if a helicopter suffers a critical failure, or critical damage, they do not just grind to a stop, but fall out of the sky.

In addition to the armor and power of military vehicles, many GMs may be concerned with the onboard, integral weaponry that comes with many military vehicles. Since most of the vehicles that characters will find have been abandoned, it is very likely that the crew either used up the ammunition, or disabled the weaponry, or attempted to scuttle the vehicle by detonating the remaining ammunition. And it's probably out of fuel.



SMG Configuration

*Good for getting close,
and best variant to take on a wolfpack,*

Fuel, spare parts, ammunition, range and weight considerations aside, the fact that zombies cannot get at characters hiding inside a heavily armored shell is not a complete loss. It gives the characters a place to retreat to, to hide in, and a mobile base. Research will show a GM that certain armored vehicles are restricted in the maximum incline the vehicle can manage, and the addition of mud, sand, or crumbling pavement can cause a vehicle to slide, and possibly roll, where a normal civilian pickup truck would have little to no problem. In one real life incident, an M1A1 Main Battle Tank rolled off of a roadway that crumbled beneath it and plunged into a river, killing the crew. M113 Armored Personnel Carriers rolled any time they tried to turn around on an incline, or took an incline at an angle. Going too fast and taking an incline at an angle can cause many vehicles to slide out of control, and with the sheer weight of an armored vehicle, that could result in the vehicle sliding to disaster.

The addition of military grade vehicles is not a game breaker, nor will it necessarily destroy the feel of the campaign. In playtesting, the group went through approximately 12 BAFVs in the course of four weeks, between a section of the

roadway giving away, an ambush by Chinese paratroopers, and an attack by Raiders throwing Molotov cocktails from rooftops.

Many GMs may be loathe to hand out what is constantly referred to as "tac-coms", as well as GPS mapping systems (Military version of On-Star Mapping), NVGs, etc, in the worry that it gives the characters an unfair edge. In playtesting, it was discovered that the characters needed every edge that they could get.

Experimental or heavy weaponry is not necessarily a game breaker either. So what if the character has a plasma rifle with a 40 Watt Range that does 10d20 per hit. It has a limited ammo capacity, and when the dummy misses a zombie, hits a building, and the structure, weakened by a lack of maintenance and heavy urban fighting, collapses on him, he's dead anyway.

Even AT-4 rockets are not a game buster, since any vehicle hit with the rocket is worth jack for salvage, and they are one shot only weapons. After that, the tube has limited uses. In playtesting, the characters began to look more like a heavily armed mechanized infantry platoon than normal PCs, carrying anti-tank weaponry, surface to air missiles, ramjet and ring penetrator rounds, driving Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles, armored Humm-vees, and wearing Objective Force Land Warrior ensemble, but the lethality was still there, and so was the fear.

Those parties that never gain access to military equipment will have to use cunning and brains to create their own armored vehicles, or to fortify an area to use as a base. Fortified structures and vehicles, as well as ammunition, armor and combat/survival skills are important to anyone planning on making a long running campaign work.



Standard rifle configuration

This is what I usually pack

Because of the need for military equipment, as well as feats, skills and Advanced Classes, the Blood & Guts and

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Blood & Fists series of books, from RPGObjects, is *highly* recommended.

XM-8 Battle Rifle System



Light Machine Gun
Perfect to let risers know you aren't
receiving company tonight

XM-8 Battle Rifle System

Weapon Configuration	Caliber	Dmg	Crit	Damage Type	Range	RoF	Size	Wgt	Pur DC	Rest
Assault Rifle	5.56mm	2d8	20	Ballistic	60 ft	S,A	L	10 lbs	25	Mil (+3)
Sub-Machine Gun	5.56mm	2d8	20	Ballistic	30 ft	S,A	M	6 lbs	25	Mil (+3)
Light Machinegun	5.56mm	2d12	20	Ballistic	90 ft	S,A	L	12 lbs	25	Mil (+3)
Sniper Rifle	5.56mm	2d10	20	Ballistic	100 ft	S	L	10 lbs	25	Mil (+3)
Assault Rifle/12 guage Shotgun Combo	5.56mm/12g	2d8/2d8	20	Ballistic	60/40 ft	S,A/S	L	13 lbs	25	Mil (+3)
Assault Rifle/40mm Grenade Launcher Combo	5.56mm/40mm	2d8/as per grenade	20	Ballistic	60/80 ft	S,A/S	L	13 lbs	25	Mil (+3)

A recent innovation by the German arms manufacturer, Heckler and Koch, the XM-8 Battle Rifle System provides flexibility for multiple tasks without an overly bulky package. Able to be converted into five

differently, thus dealing varied amounts of damage.

In Year of the Zombie these weapons began showing up in odd places, and rarely in the hands of actual military personnel, but rather, in the hands of some of the more heavily armed bandits and raiders. Some people believe that these weapons were in limited quantity and in limited areas, and were possessed by some of the last soldiers to fall. One trader found three crates of these weapons in a Homeland Defense Agency emergency shelter that had been overlooked and ignored during the initial

days of The Rising, and quickly used them to arm his convoy.

The total Year of the Zombie price for all components to the XM-8 system is Purchase DC 30

Weapons Table

Weapon	Damage	Crit	Type	Range	RoF	Mag	Size	Wgt	Pur	Rest
M-249	2d8	20	Ball	100 ft	S, A	20/30/Belt	L	16 lbs	22	Mil +3
M-203	As gren	20	As gren	70 ft	S	1	S	3 lbs	15	Mil +3
M-19	As gren	20	As gren	70 ft	S, A	Belt	L	See entry	25	Mil +3
M-4	2d8	20	Ball	60 ft	S, A	30	L	7 lbs	16	Mil +3
Stinger	10d6	20		300 ft	S	1	L	34.5 lbs	20	Mil +3
AT-4*	12d6	20		120 ft	S	1	L	6.7 lbs	20	Mil +3
Javelin**	14d6	20		150 ft	S	1	L	52 lbs	22	Mil +3
TOW***	20d6	20		120 ft	S	1	L	See Entry	22	Mil +3

* This weapon ignores the first 10 points of hardness

** This weapon ignores the first 25 points of hardness

*** This weapon ignores the first 20 points of hardness

different formats, the XM-8 can be modified at company or platoon level into different weapons. The polymer "shell" on the weapon can be replaced in order to change the camouflage pattern on the weapon itself. The "shells" are available in: Base Grey/Black, Urban, Desert, Woodland. The sights combine an infrared laser target designator, IR target illuminator and 1x close combat red-dot sight. The weapon can also utilize 10, 20, 30 rounds clips and the 100 round drum.

Due to engineering differences in the way the barrels are constructed, including the length of the barrel, and the rifling within the barrel, the separate formats of the weapon cause the round to perform

M-249 SAW

The M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW), or 5.56mm M249 is an individually portable, gas operated, magazine or disintegrating metallic link-belt fed, light machine gun with fixed headspace and



Sylvia swears by these. Of course, she
can't fit shit with an M16

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quick change barrel feature. The M249 engages point targets out to 800 meters, firing the improved NATO standard 5.56mm cartridge. The gunner has the option of using 30-round M16 magazines or linked ammunition from pre-loaded 200-round plastic magazines. In use by most US Forces at the time of Year of the Zombie, this and the M-60 have become the heavy firepower backbone of many survivalist enclaves and groups.

M-2☉3 Grenade Launcher



I've seen Buck fire this thing one handed and hit something about 1000 feet away.

A 40mm single shot, breech loaded grenade launcher designed to be attached to the M-16 or M-4, this weapon is in use by the American military. The policy of having roughly 2 of these weapons issued per platoon of soldiers has virtually guaranteed that many will be available after The Rising begins. Most soldiers during the Rising load it with either the shotgun round or HEDP rounds to maximize the killing potential of the weapon.

The M203 40mm Grenade Launcher is used while attached to an M16 series or M-4 5.56mm rifle. It is a lightweight, compact, breech loading, single shot launcher. The launcher consists of a hand guard and sight assembly with an adjustable metallic folding, short-range blade sight assembly, and an aluminum receiver assembly which houses the barrel latch, barrel stop and firing mechanism. The launcher is capable of firing a variety of low velocity 40mm ammunition, many of which are listed below. The hand guards of the M-16/M-4 must be replaced with the special hand guards for the M-203 for the weapon to be mounted.

The launcher also has a quadrant sight which may be attached to the M16A2 carrying handle and is used when precision is required out to the maximum effective range of the weapon.

Mark-19 4☉mm Grenade Launcher

The MK19 40mm machine gun is an air-



These things are just plain BRUTAL...

I love 'em

cooled, disintegrating metallic link-belt fed, blowback operated, fully automatic weapon and is crew transportable over short distances with limited amounts of ammunition. It can fire a variety of 40mm grenades.

Associated components are: MK64 Cradle Mount; Tripod Mount; and the AN/TVS-5 Night Vision Sight. The MK19 also mounts in vehicle ring mounts.

Weight:

Gun: 72.5 pounds (32.92 kilograms)

Cradle: 21.0 pounds (9.53 kilograms)

Tripod: 44.0 pounds (19.98 kilograms)

Total: 137.5 pounds (62.43 kilograms)

M-4 Carbine



THIS makes men and women equal.

The M4/M4A1 5.56mm Carbine is a lightweight, gas operated, air cooled, magazine fed, selective rate, shoulder fired weapon with a collapsible stock. A shortened variant of the M16A2 rifle, the M4 provides the individual soldier operating in close quarters the capability to engage targets at extended range with accurate, lethal fire and has proven more effective in urban combat than the M16A2, requiring less maneuvering room.

The M4 Carbine is similar in design and functioning to the M16 family of rifles,

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thereby greatly simplifying training, supply, and maintenance. The addition of the SOPMOD Accessory Kit to enable the operator to fully customize the weapon at unit level has increased the flexibility and deadliness of the weapon.

M4 SOPMOD Accessory Kit



The Special Operations Peculiar Modification to the M4 Carbine (SOPMOD M4) Accessory Kit Program allows operators to configure the M4A1 carbine based on mission-specific requirements; kit items increase weapons effectiveness through improved target acquisition and fire control in close-quarters battle and out to ranges of 500 meters, both day and night.

Currently, the Accessory Kit is comprised of the following components:

ACOG 4X Scope

A tritium lit 4x-magnification scope that combines long-range, precision marksmanship and close-in aiming speed.

Benefits: This halves the range penalty as well as allows the user to rapidly shift and acquire targets as a free action.

Acog Reflex Sight

An amber dot sight powered by a fiber-optic light gathering system and a tritium lamp, designed for operations in extremely close quarters battle in any condition.

Benefit: Halves darkness and shadow penalties, allows use at "High Ready" position.

Visible Light Addon

This is essentially a flashlight that is mounted under the barrel. This item functions as a flashlight.

Laser Aimpoint

A laser sight that can also be used for laser guided munitions aiming.

Benefit: Provides a +1 equipment bonus to attack rolls.

M68 Aimpoint Sight

A red-dot reflex sight designed for operations in a close quarters environment. The M68 allows for quick acquisition of the target with a high hit probability.

Benefit: Provides the acquisition of a target as a free action and a +1 equipment bonus to strike. Allows use at "High Ready" position.

M203A1 Grenade Launcher

A shortened variant of the M203, the M203A1 is designed for the SOPMOD M4. The M203A1 adds the capability of delivering explosive ordnance at distances beyond 200 meters.

Harris Bipod

Lightweight and rugged, the Harris bipod allows the weapon to be supported adding stability and accuracy when shooting from a prone position. This negates the attack penalty for burst fire or provides a +1 circumstance bonus to



The must have accessory
attack rolls for single shot.

M4QD Suppressor

The M4QD Suppressor suppresses both the sound and flash of the weapon, allowing the operator to avoid detection. Unlike most suppressors, this does not affect the damage of the weapon or the stopping power.



Ironsight

Standard issue carrying handle equipped with an ironsight.

Heatshield

Protects operator's hands from heat dissipation and covers the rail system while not in use.

40mm Grenades

HE

Designed to deliver high explosives to the point of impact.

M397A1 Airburst

This shell operates as a normal shell with the exception that it detonates approximately 10m above ground, allowing the firer to strike at targets hiding behind cover.

Grenade Table

Weapon	Damage	Crit	Type	Range	Pur	Rest
HE	4d6	20	Slashing	10m rd	14	Mil +3
Airburst	4d6	20	Slashing	10m rd	16	Mil +3
HEDP*	5d6	20	Slashing	15m rd	16	Mil +3
Buckshot	4d8	20	Ballistic	10 ft	12	Res +1
M583A1	-	-	-	-	10	
Star Cluster	-	-	-	-	8	
CS	-	-	-	-	8	Res +1
Smoke	-	-	-	-	8	
IR Illum	-	-	-	-	10	

*This grenade ignores the first 5 points of hardness against any object it is directly is directly impacted upon

M433 High-explosive dual purpose (HEDP)

This round can penetrate several inches of armor plating and releases fragments that injure personnel within 15 meters of the impact.

M576 Buckshot

Basically a 40mm shotgun shell, this is a rare find, as most of them are used up during The Rising.

M583A1 40MM WS PARA ILLUM

A long name for a White Star parachute illumination round, this round is used to light up outdoor fighting to aid in coordination of firepower as well as possibly catching enemies in the open.

M585 White star cluster, M661 Green star cluster, M662 Red star cluster

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A signaling round, this provides some light, but is not meant for illumination. It is used for warnings, to signal friendly units and to provide rally points.

M651 CS

This grenade delivers military strength tear gas, the amount filling a 100m radius. Those caught in the cloud without a gas mask must make a Fortitude Save (DC: 20) or be *helpless* from choking, vomiting and burning eyes.

M676 Yellow smoke canopy, M680 White smoke canopy, M682 Red smoke canopy

This round provides smoke coverage in a 100m radius from the impact point.

M992 Infrared Illuminant Cartridge (IRIC)

Used to illuminate a battlefield for infrared or night vision systems, this round deploys at 500 feet and takes up to two minutes to fall to ground. It shed illumination over a 500m radius.

Stinger Missile

The Stinger is a man-portable, shoulder-fired guided missile system which enables the soldier to effectively engage low-altitude jet, propeller-driven and helicopter aircraft. The system is a "fire-and-forget" weapon employing a passive infrared seeker and proportional navigation system, enabling the operator to fire it, drop the tube, and run away. The Stinger also is designed with an all-aspect engagement capability, and IFF (Identification-Friend-or-Foe), improved range and maneuverability, and significant immunity to countermeasures. The missile, packaged within its disposable launch tube, is delivered as a certified round requiring no field testing or direct support maintenance. A separable reusable gripstock is attached to the round prior to use and may be used again.

M-136 AT-4

The M136 AT4 is a lightweight, self-contained, anti-armor weapon consisting of a free-flight, fin-stabilized, rocket-type cartridge packed in an expendable one-piece fiberglass-wrapped tube. The M136

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AT4 is man-portable and is fired from the right shoulder only with a 10' backblast danger area. The launcher is watertight for ease of transportation and storage. Unlike the M72-series LAW, the M136 AT4 launcher need not be extended before firing. The AT-4 has been credited with kills on Soviet/Russian design main battle tanks during the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom, but was of limited use during The Rising.

Javelin

The Javelin consists of a missile in a disposable launch tube and a reusable Command Launch Unit (CLU) with a trigger mechanism and the integrated day/night sighting device for surveillance, and target acquisition and built-in test capabilities and associated electronics. The CLU, powered by a disposable battery, provides the capability for battlefield surveillance, target acquisition, missile launch, and damage assessment. The Javelin's CLU provides battlefield surveillance and target acquisition capabilities. The Javelin night vision sight (NVS) is a passive I2R system. The NVS enables observation of things that are not normally visible to the human eye as it receives and measures IR light emitted by the environment. The NVS converts the IR light into an image for the gunner. The IR image also allows the gunner to identify enemy armor targets, his first priority to engage and destroy. Javelin gunners must identify battlefield combatants at night based on the images seen in the NVS. The gunners must distinguish friends from foes to avoid hitting friendly units on their own judgment, as an IFF system such as the Stinger uses has not been implemented.

The round consists of a disposable launch tube assembly, battery coolant unit (BCU), and the missile. Missile maximum range is 2000 meters. The missile locks on to the target before launch using an infrared focal plane array and on-board processing, which also maintains target track and guides the missile to the target after launch. A full-up system weighs 49.5 pounds.

M-22☉ TOW Missile

It is primarily used in antitank warfare, and is a command to line of sight, wire-guided weapon. TOW is used to engage and destroy enemy armored vehicles, primarily tanks. Secondary mission is to destroy other point targets such as non-armored vehicles, crew-served weapons and launchers. This system is designed to attack and defeat tanks and other armored vehicles. The system will operate in all weather conditions and on the "dirty" battlefield.



Weight:

Launcher w/TOW 2 Mods: 204.6 lbs (92.89 kg)

Missile Guidance Set: 52.8 lbs (23.97 kg)

TOW 2 Missile: 47.4 lbs (21.52 kg)

TOW 2A Missile: 49.9 lbs (22.65 kg)

TOW 2B Missile: 49.8 lbs (22.60 kg)

MINES:

M-2A2 SLAM

SLAM is an anti-materiel and anti-vehicular (through light armor such as a BMP) munition that is light, compact, effective, and readily usable by soldiers to destroy enemy vehicles, parked aircraft, and ammunition and petroleum sites as well as sensitive equipment in a hurry, while avoiding direct contact with the enemy. The SLAM will have four possible methods of detonation: detonating with a mine function, trip-wire, command detonation function, and a time-delay function (integral timer). The SLAM has two methods of adhesion to surfaces: magnetic and adhesive glue backing.

Mines Table

Weapon	Damage	Crit	Type	Range	Size	Wgt	Pur	Rest
SLAM	4d6	20	Slashing	-	S	2.2 lbs	26	Mil +3
M-14	4d6	20	Slashing	10 ft rd	S	3.5 lbs	14	Mil +3
M-18	6d6	20	Slashing	60 ft cone	S	3.5 lbs	15	Mil +3
M-19*	10d6	20	Slashing	-	M	30 lbs	15	Mil +3
M-86	5d6	20	Slashing	10 ft rd	S	1 lb	26	Mil +3

M-14

The M14 is a non-metallic, blast-type AP mine consisting of a main charge of tetryl (1 ounce). The mine is cylindrical in shape, 2-3/16 inches in diameter and 1-9/16 inches high weighing approximately 3-1/2 pounds. The M14 is not designed to kill, but to incapacitate. The M14 AP mine has been modified by gluing a metal washer to the bottom of the mine. The modification was directed to improve the detectability of the mine. Unmodified mines are not authorized for use by US forces.

M18 Claymore

The M18A1 mine is primarily a defensive weapon. It may be employed to a limited extent in certain phases of offensive operations. The M18A1 has the same basic capabilities as antipersonnel mines and can be used in most situations where other types of antipersonnel mines are employed. In addition, the M18A1 has the capability of being sighted directionally to provide fragmentation over a specific area and does not necessarily rely upon chance detonation by the enemy. The M18A1 is adaptable for covering the ranges between maximum hand grenade throwing distance and the minimum safe distance of mortar and artillery supporting fires.

M19

The M19 AT mine is housed in a square, plastic case and holds 9.45 kilograms of Composition B (HE charge). It consists of an integral pressure fuse and two secondary fuse wells--one in the side and one in the bottom. The fuse body contains a pressure plate, a Belleville spring, a setting knob, a step plate, a firing-pin assembly, and a detonator. The mine is activated by 400 pounds of pressure and is designed to break the track on a tank. When the M19 is employed, it is difficult to detect because of its plastic construction.

M86 Pursuit Deterrent Munition (PDM)

The PDM is a manually-activated Area Denial Artillery Munition (ADAM) with a hand grenade-type release firing mechanism. It deploys up to seven trip wires and is triggered when one of these trip wires receives pressure from someone running into it. For safety purposes, arming will occur one minute after the firing mechanism is released.

Interceptor Body Armor

Interceptor Multi-Threat Body Armor System is made up of two modular components: the outer tactical vest and small-arms protective inserts, or plates. The new body armor, which is unisex, is equipped with removable throat and groin protectors, as well as front and back removable plates, which can stop 7.62 mm rounds. During combat operations, it has proven to be able to stop a burst of AK-74 rounds at less than 10 meters with little more than bruising left over. While not many of these are available to the post-Rising survivors, those who have them use them constantly.

Unlike many other types of body armor, the Interceptor is designed to be worn with little or no training, and thus has no

Interceptor Body Armour

	Armor Bonus	Max Dex	Armor Penalty	Weight	Cost
Interceptor Vest with plates	7	3	-2	21 lbs	30
w/o plates	4	3	-3	11 kbs	30

non-proficient penalty. With the inserted plates, the wearer gains a DR 3/-. Throat and Groin protection, when attached, adds +1 to the armor bonus but requires the wearer be proficient.

Without the rubber coated, ceramic plates inserted, the vest provides significantly less protection, and in addition, the plates can only sustain 3 hits from a 7.62mm round before becoming useless.

Load Bearing Equipment

A system consisting of suspenders and a belt, the LBE allows a soldier to carry 2 magazine pouches, and a canteen on the belt, a compass and field dressing on the left suspender, and a combat knife on the right suspender. Soldiers armed with pistols often replace 1 of the magazine pouches with 2 pistol magazine pouches, or both of them with magazine pouches. This allows quick and easy access to reloads, water, or whatever else is carried on the LBE. Rifle magazine pouches carry 3 30-round clips, four with modification, while pistol magazine pouches carry 2 clips each. Each rifle magazine pouch can have 2 fragmentation grenades placed on it, in a button up pouch on either side. LBE's are popular with post-Rising survivors as they allow quick and easy access to reloads, grenades, and whatever else they can attach to the LBE.

An LBE adds +2 to the user's Strength for the purposes of carrying capacity.

Tactical Communications Radio

A seven channel tactical radio, designed to be used at the squad level, the JRTS system allows a squad leader to coordinate his troops over a secure, 700m radius radio net. With a breakaway headset (to keep the radio from snagging or being grabbed at a critical time) the radio system was primarily in use by Special Operations Troops at the beginning of The Rising, but was quickly handed out to every soldier available.

Ballistic Helmet

The helmet provides ballistic protection from fragmenting munitions to the head, temple, ear and neck areas. It is available in five sizes. The helmet shell is a one-piece composite structure made up of multiple levels of Kevlar® fiber. The current PASGT in the field is made of Kevlar® 29 and weighs between 3.1 lbs (x-s) and 4.2 lbs (x-l). The recently type-classified version, made of Kevlar® KM2, weighs approximately 10% less. The current chinstrap is a two point design, having an open chin cup and two adjustable buckles and a single snap fastener on the left. When the wearer has a properly sized helmet, the helmet's cradle-type suspension provides standoff between the head and inner helmet

surface allowing for ventilation and deformation during impact. A cloth cover is available in several camouflage patterns. A band is used in conjunction with the cover. For parachutists, a pad, retention strap, and liner are available to provide impact protection and increase helmet stability during airborne operations.

Wearing the helmet provides a +1 Armor bonus that stacks with flack vests or Interceptor Body Armor, and gives the head a locational armor bonus of +5.

SINGARS Radio

SINGARS is a family of VHF-FM combat net radios which provides the primary means of communication for Infantry, Armor and Artillery Units. SINGARS is designed on a modular basis to achieve maximum interchangeability among the various ground and airborne system configurations. A common Receiver Transmitter (RT) is used in the man pack and all vehicular configurations.

SINGARS family of radios has the capability to transmit and receive voice, tactical data and record traffic messages and is consistent with NATO interoperability requirements. The system operates on any of the 2320 channels between 30-88 megahertz and is designed to survive in a nuclear environment including hardened circuits to withstand EMP pulse and additional boosting attachments to overcome radiation effects. COMSEC for the basic radio is provided by use of the VINSON device that possesses multiple scrambling channels as well as chopping a signal up and transmitting pieces of it across several different channels. SINGARS is operable in a hostile environment through use of Electronic Counter Countermeasure (ECCM) in order to overcome jamming.

Cost: 26

Restriction: Mil +3

Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT)

The HEMTT is a heavy workhorse that provides transport capabilities for re-supply of combat vehicles and weapons systems. Moderately armored to protect its crew, as well as the cab being high enough off the ground to effectively avoid most Risers, the HEMTT proved invaluable in the various escapes and convoys from military bases when the fighting during The Rising reached its peak.



These things are great.

The usefulness and mobility of this vehicle has made it a nearly priceless vehicle in the Post-Rising world, with decent fuel consumption, light armor, high cab, one ringmount secured weapon, and good rollover resistance from hordes of Risers, many trading caravans are made up primarily of these vehicles. More than one survival group running with BAFVs have at least one M978 HEMTT in their convoy.

There are five basic configurations of the HEMTT series trucks: M977 cargo truck

HEMTT Salvage

A HEMTT is more than a simple truck. The military tends to plan for any eventuality, and equips its vehicles with gear to help the soldier survive or get the vehicle operational again, even if it is disabled in hostile territory.

The following may be found in a Hemmit:

- A pneumatic jack
- A spare tire
- Tire iron
- 6 road flares
- 4 reflector triangles
- A limited tool kit
- 2 five gallon cans of diesel fuel
- 2-4 MREs under the seat
- Road map

with Material Handling Crane (MHC), M978 2500 gallon fuel tanker, M984 wrecker, M983 tractor and M985 cargo truck with MHC. A self-recovery winch is also available on certain models, and since the Rising, has been placed on most still operating HEMTTs.

During the Rising, HEMTTs

were often used to transfer bodies to "Disposal Points" where the bodies would be incinerated, as well as troop transports, refugee transports, and ammo haulers. After a short period of time, fuel became a problem as the Risers would follow the vehicle and make refueling a tricky situation. The HEMTTs high profile and distance from the ground made it difficult for Risers to perform their standard tactic of hanging onto the side, as well as gave them a hard time overturning it, so HEMTTs were often sent into the worst affected zones.

HEMTTs are often found in urban areas, abandoned as their crews were drug from the cabs and killed. However, the same fate occurred to many solo drivers out on the open road, so it is not unfeasible for the characters to encounter one, fueled or unfueled, on a country road with a load of corpses in the back. Raiders and slavers prefer HEMTTs when they can get them.

M2A3A-C "Bradley" Armored Vehicles

The Bradley Fighting Vehicle is a fully armored, fully tracked vehicle designed to carry Mechanized Infantry into close contact with the enemy while possessing sufficient cross-country mobility to keep up with the Abrams Main Battle Tank, medium and long-range firepower capable of defeating any vehicle on the battlefield, and be adequately armored to protect the crew from artillery and small arms threats.

The space inside the Bradley allows up to 6 infantry dismount teams and 4 crewmen, meaning that in a Rising world, it has a lot of space for gear and passengers, while protecting its occupants.



Originally designed to carry only a few troops, these have become the new motor home of this brave new world.

The BAFV was the most commonly fielded armored vehicle during the Rising, with its dismount teams performing sweep and clear operations, as well as rescue and resupply missions. With a 197 gallon tank and a mission range of roughly 300 miles, it is a fuel hog, but often proved to be the ace in the hole that saved many a small settlement or group of refugees.

The "A" version has the Force XXI digital battlefield system integrated within it, allowing commanders to coordinate and react to battlefield conditions quickly while remaining well protected. The outside is unchanged visually, but the armor has been upgraded by advances in armor technology, significantly strengthening the hull. Inside space has been eliminated to make room for the command and control equipment, lowering the passenger capability to only four men.

BAFV SALVAGE

The Bradley is a jackpot even if the engine is frozen up, to characters who are caught in the middle of the rising tide of flesh. A BAFV may contain the following, although items *italicized* may have been taken with the dismount crew or items in **bold** may have been taken when the crew abandoned the vehicle.

A SAW on top of the vehicle

Rucksacks carried by dismount troops containing uniforms

Six M-4 assault rifles

SINCGARS radio

Track repair kit-Includes 2 heavy crowbars, sledgehammer and cotter pins

2 Five Gallon Gas cans

500 rounds of 20mm belted ammunition

The "B" version carries a 4 pack Stinger missile launching system opposite of the dual tube TOW-II launcher, giving the Bradley anti-air capability. The armor system has also been improved with the same advances that made the Stryker armor so effective, and the internal systems contain the Force XXI Digital Communications package. During the Rising, most commanders found the Stinger launcher next to useless, and ordered the Stinger system to be removed, often times replaced by another TOW-II launcher. Still, many of these variants are still found in use during the Rising, abandoned when they ran out of fuel by crews during the Rising, or in hidden depots and caches.

The "C" version was a relatively rare "Linebacker" version, packing additional armor in addition to using the newer armor, reactive armor, two quad tube TOW-II launchers, a quad Stinger pack, and a 120mm Vertical Launch System

mortar, as well as the standard 25mm Bushmaster cannon. The M-240 7.62mm machineguns were replaced with M2 .50 caliber GPHMGs. While sacrificing some speed, the "Linebacker" was put to heavy use by any who had them in order to stave off the hordes of dead flesh.

Unknown to most, many "Linebackers" had been relegated to depots after their brief use during Operation Desert Storm in 1991, and the M2A2B was listed as the "Linebacker" on TO&E records. From FEMA bunkers to Deep Storage Lockers to military depots where old, decommissioned vehicles were stored many "Linebackers" roared back to life, scavenged by those lucky enough to find them.

Bradleys are often found in urban areas, most often out of gasoline, with the radio system, night vision and weaponry destroyed or removed. Still, if the area around it can be cleared of Risers, and the vehicle refueled, the PCs can get it moving again, gaining the use of a powerful military vehicle that can double as an armored home on tracks.

Blackhawk Helicopter

The Black Hawk is a light transport helicopter that performs many different types of operations for the US military. The

Black Hawk Salvage

Usually, the helicopter will be reduced to nothing more than wreckage, but occasionally, one will be discovered that salvage can be pulled from.

Pilot survival kit containing: 2 MREs, compass, flare gun, M9 9mm Beretta pistol, 2 field dressings

Flare gun

1 10-gallon can of fuel

Black Hawk is the primary helicopter for air assault, air cavalry, and aeromedical evacuation units while modified Black



Most of these went down during the early days of The Rising, but we've been fired on twice by someone who has one.

Hawks also fulfill command and control, electronic warfare, and special operations roles. The Black Hawk has enhanced the overall mobility of the United States military because of its dramatic improvements in troop capacity and cargo lift capability, an entire 11-man, fully equipped infantry squad can be lifted in one Black Hawk, and the troops can be transported faster and in most weather conditions.

With advances in avionics, Black Hawks have few difficulties flying at night or in adverse weather, although high winds can still cause problems, as can sand storms and blizzards.

Commonly called the "Crash Hawk" by US troops, most of these helicopters are in their second or third decade of use, having undergone Service Life Extension Program upgrades and refits in order to keep them serviceable. During the Rising, dismount crews in Black Hawk helicopters were tasked with pulling refugees and important personnel from threatened locations. Many of these Black Hawks crashed when the Risers swarmed the helicopter or due to pilot error resulting from exhaustion.

Black Hawks can often be found at out of the way airfields, out of gasoline, or on rooftops where the helicopter had landed to retrieve VIPs and the dismount crew never returned and the pilot was killed.

Hummvee

The High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle is a light, highly mobile, diesel-powered, four-wheel-drive vehicle that uses a common 4,400 lb payload chassis. Using common components and kits, the HMMWV can be configured to become a troop carrier, armament carrier,



Sylvia's gone through about 8 of these, she loves them, I love the BAFV's more.

ambulance, TOW missile carrier, and a Scout vehicle.

It is a lightweight high performance four wheel drive air transportable & droppable land mobility system. The family includes utility/cargo, shelter carrier, armament carrier, ambulance, TOW missile carrier and scout-reconnaissance configuration. Payload varies by body style ranging from 1920 lbs on the 4 litter ambulance to 5300 lbs on limited availability Expanded Capacity variant, but is generally in the 5/4T range. A basic armor package is standard on the Armament and TOW missile carrier models. A more heavily armored, or Up-Armor HMMWV, is now being produced but the majority of these have been deployed to the Persian Gulf and most were left on the ground by the returning troops.

Humvee Salvage

Humvees are the most difficult vehicles to adjudicate for salvage. After several months, a Humvee can be full of all kinds of gear, stuff picked up by the driver and normal operating crew that will range from pogeey bait to porn mags to extra water to paperback books. The following is a list of the items that might be left behind in a vehicle after extended operation and hurried evacuation.

- 2 Paperback books
- 1 30-round clip
- 3 MREs
- 2 5-gallon gas cans
- Spare Tire
- Tire changing kit
- 4 road flares
- 2 warning triangles
- GPS system
- Built in computer (might be destroyed)
- SINCGARS radio (might be removed or destroyed)
- Pen
- Map
- BDU jacket
- Interceptor Vest ballistic plate

Hummvees are one of the preferred vehicles of the post Rising world. With a low center of gravity, the Risers had a hard time flipping military Hummvees, where they could easily flip most civilian versions. With ringmounts, heavy armor, winches, and plenty of cargo space, those who could get a Hummvee often held onto them.

The following are the most common variants found in the post-Rising world.

M997 Ambulance

The M997 is a 4-litter ambulance (Maxi-Ambulances) with armor protection and air conditioning for crew and patients. The M997A2 models have new bumpers,

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which make the vehicles slightly longer. A 9,000 lb winch is also available for the M997A2 models as an option.

The M997 is capable of transporting up to four litter patients, eight ambulatory patients, or a combination of litter and ambulatory patients. Additionally, medical personnel, equipment, and a driver can be accommodated in the vehicle.

The ambulance can be heated, ventilated, or air conditioned, depending on environmental conditions. For operation in an NBC environment, the M997 is equipped with a Gas- Particulate Filter Unit (GPFU) with heaters capable of

A fully stocked ambulance would be a god send. Full of medical supplies that are designed for long term storage as well as combat equipment, one of these would be the Holy Grail of Hummvee finds.

Burn Kit
Abdominal Dressings
Various size field dressings
IV Bags and needles
2 Medical Bags
Spare Tire
2 5-gallon gas cans
Burn Pads
Tire Change Kit
Respirator Bulbs
Defibrillator (Navy and Air Force only)
Oxygen tanks (4) and masks (10)
Possibly a Field Surgery kit
Splint
MAST trousers
Narcotics and anti-biotics would be extremely rare

supporting up to seven personnel equipped with either M25 series protective masks or M13 series patient protective masks. The GPFU forces temperature-controlled, filtered air to the mask facepieces, which increases protection, eases breathing, and reduces stress and heat fatigue during extended periods of NBC operation.

Fully-loaded M996 ambulances will climb road grades as steep as 60% (31°) and traverse a side slope of up to 40% (220). The vehicles ford hard bottom water crossings up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) without a deep water fording kit and 60 inches (152 centimeters) with the kit.

M1☉46 HMMWV T☉W Missile Carrier Up-Armored With Winch

The M1046 HMMWVs are TOW Missile Carrier configurations of the HMMWV family equipped with supplemental armor and TOW launcher mounted on the roof of the vehicle. The vehicles are used to transport and launch TOW missiles to

defeat armored vehicles. The M1046 provides added ballistic protection for TOW system components, crew, and ammunition.

The weapons platform can be traversed 360 degrees. Weapon station azimuth is limited to 300° left and right of vehicle



Hint: Gives a whole new meaning to "YOU'RE IT!"

centerline when Vehicle Power Conditioner (VPC) cables are connected. With launcher installed, elevation is limited to 20° and depression is limited to 10°.

Fully-loaded TOW carriers w/supplemental armor will climb road grades as steep as 60% (31°) and traverse a side slope of up to 40% (220). The vehicles ford hard bottom water crossings up to 30 inches (76 centimeters) without a deepwater fording kit and 60 inches (152 centimeters) with the kit.

The M1046 is equipped with the self-recovery winch which can also be used to recover like systems.

M1☉44 HMMWV C Armement Carrier With Winch

These vehicles are equipped with supplemental armor and the weapon mount, located on the roof of the vehicle, is adaptable to mount either the M60, 7.62mm machine gun; M2 .50 caliber machine gun; or the MK 19 Grenade Launcher. The weapons platform can be traversed 360 degrees. These have slowly been replacing most of the other type of troop/cargo Hummvees due to their armor and protection offered to crews, as well as having firepower to hit back when hit.

There are two seats in the front, with a 3 man bench seat behind. The back can be used for cargo, and for ammunition storage. The ringmount commonly carries a M-249 SAW or a .50 caliber machinegun, with at least 200 rounds of ammunition.

Up-Armor Kit

As a temporary stop-gap measure, the Army came up with the idea of add-on armor kits for HMMWVs. "Up armor" kits installed on the vulnerable M998 HMMWVs consist of armored doors with bullet-proof glass, side and rear armor plates, and a ballistic windshield. The kit enables the crew of a M998 to survive 7.62mm machine gun fire and IEDs. Unfortunately, up-armor kits degrade the handling, top speed and suspension, as well as exposing the engine to overheating.

M1114 Humvee

The M1114 is an Up-Armored HMMWV that provides ballistic, artillery, and mine blast protection to the vehicle occupants. The principal modifications to the ECV HMMWV include an armor package, high capacity brakes, upgraded suspension and lift points, a reinforced frame, and a



We found a huge field of these and Russian tanks in Eastern Oregon earlier in the year.

large capacity air conditioning unit. The weapon mount, located on the roof of the vehicle, is adaptable to mount either the M60, 7.62mm machine gun; M2 .50 caliber machine gun; or the MK 19 Grenade Launcher. The weapons platform can be traversed 360 degrees. This configuration of the HMMWV is equipped with the self-recovery winch.

A Note on the changes in Hardness and Hit Points compared to the MSRD: Extensive use during the War on Terror has provided a plethora of data regarding just how much punishment an armored vehicle can take that is available in a

multiple of locations, including Department of Defense, Department of the Army and DARPA sites, as well as the CALL website and AKO sites. Sadly, many of the more serious examples of punishments have led to crewmen death, but the data has been used to strengthen the armored vehicles.

Comparisons with d20 Modern weapons revealed that a Bradley could be damaged by an attacker wielding an AK-47 and using burst fire, while in real life, or even movies, this just doesn't happen. The hardness for the MSRD versions was kept deliberately low to avoid the "unstoppable death machine" that an armored vehicle facing a lightly armed foe really is in the interest of playability and game balance.

However, in Year of the Zombie, survivability isn't really a factor, is it? The changes in hardness, hit points, armor penetration (for anti-armor munitions) has been seriously upgraded to reflect just how well armored the vehicles are and how deadly the anti-armor munitions are. This is based on online sources, real life experiences, interviews and in-person examination of damaged vehicles, including the weapon type used, the range it was fired from, the angle of deflection, and the damage caused to the vehicle. Some of it is optimal protection (hoped for) by DoA, but real life has shown it difficult, at best, to damage an up-armored Humvee with an AK-47, although an IED or an anti-armor mine seems to sadly do the trick. On that note, many IEDs are multiple 155mm artillery rounds, not a soup can full of gunpowder, so even an IED is powerful weapon.

It seriously does not matter how many .22 rounds you can shoot at an M1A1 Main Battle Tank, all you are doing is



Most units dropped the stinger platforms, but they can still be found, and are still useful.

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flattening the bullets faster, and maybe chipping the paint. These vehicles were designed to survive on the modern, nuclear battlefield, and having them able to be taken out by someone wielding an M-60 just did not fit within the "feel" of Year of the Zombie. So they were upgraded to the point where only precise hits with anti-tank weaponry can take out an M1A1 Main Battle Tank, and a BAFV can take on two or three other armored vehicles and win with minimal damage (as

3rd Infantry demonstrated during OIF and many armor units demonstrated during the Gulf War, taking out T-72 main battle tanks).

And so, the new vehicles. If these are deemed too powerful for your game,

simply switch to the MSRD versions. During playtest, the PCs lost several of the following BAFVs, so while they are tough, they are not completely invulnerable. Tactics, luck and skill can eliminate even an M1A1 tank, but if you don't have anti-tank weaponry and the enemy has an armored vehicle, RUN FOOL!

Vehicles Table - Part 1

Vehicle	Crew	Pass	Cargo	Init	Man.	Top Speed	Def	Hard	Hit Points	Size	Purchase DC	Restriction
M1A1	4	0	425 lbs	-4	-4	80	6	50	150	G	47	Mil (+3)
M2A3A	3	4	0/1500 lbs	-4	-4	80	6	30	58	G	47	Mil (+3)
M2A3B	3	6	0/1500 lbs	-4	-4	80	6	3015	58	G	50	Mil (+3)
M2A3C	3	6	0/1500 lbs	-4	-4	80	6	3520	58	G	55	Mil (+3)
M977 HEMMT	2	0	22,000 lbs	-4	-4	62	6	10	25	G	40	Mil (+3)
M978 HEMMT	2	0	2500 gallons	-4	-4	62	6	10	25	G	40	Mil (+3)
M983 HEMMT	2	0	22,000 lbs	-4	-4	62	6	10	25	G	40	Mil (+3)
M984 HEMMT	2	0	22,000 lbs	-4	-4	62	6	10	25	G	40	Mil (+3)
M985 HEMMT	2	0	22,000 lbs	-4	-4	62	6	10	25	g	40	Mil (+3)
M997 HMMWV	2	4/8	1920 lbs	-2	-2	80	8	10	38	H	38	Mil (+3)
M1046 HMMWV	2	3	2500 lbs	-2	-2	90	8	10	45	H	40	Mil (+3)
M1044 HMMWV	2	3	2500 lbs	-2	-2	90	8	10	50	H	37	Mil (+3)
M1114 HMMWV	2	3	1920 lbs	-2	-2	80	8	15	55	H	40	Mil (+3)
Baseline HMMWV	2	8	2500 lbs	-2	-2	140	8	5	25	H	34	Mil (+3)
H-60 Blackhawk	4	11	9000 lbs	-4	-4	325	6	10	40	G	47	Mil (+3)

Vehicles Table - Part 2

Vehicle	Weight	Cruising Speed	Range	Fuel Capacity	Maximum Incline
M2A3A	50,000 lbs	45 MPH	325 miles	215 gallons	60
M2A3B	50,000 lbs	45 MPH	300 miles	195 gallons	60
M2A3C	50,000 lbs	43 MPH	285 miles	175 gallons	55
M977 HEMTT	38,800 lbs	50 MPH	300 miles	155 gallons	60
M978 HEMTT	38,200 lbs	50 MPH	300 miles	155 gallons	60
M983 HEMTT	39,200 lbs	50 MPH	300 miles	155 gallons	60
M984 HEMTT	50,900 lbs	50 MPH	300 miles	155 gallons	60
M985 HEMTT	39,600 lbs	50 MPH	300 miles	155 gallons	60
M997 HMMWV	9580 lbs	55 MPH	275 miles	25 gallons	60
M1046 HMMWV	10300 lbs	55 MPH	275 miles	25 gallons	60
M1044 HMMWV	10300 lbs	55 MPH	275 miles	25 gallons	60
M1114 HMMWV	12100 lbs	55 MPH	275 miles	25 gallons	40
Baseline HMMWV	5200 lbs	55 MPH	350 miles	25 gallons	60
H-60 Blackhawk	11516 lbs	200 MPH	300 miles	80	--

The SUV of this Brave New World



Alternate Rules

A goddamn loading ramp. That's what killed Ming. A fucking loading ramp. Not zombies, not the feral kids, not even the rogue military units we ran into now and then. A huge chunk of steel falling on his legs crushed his femoral arteries and he bled out right before one of those kids slit his throat when they attacked us after springing their trap.

It's still hard to believe. With everything going on, a fucking accident killed him. Not kids, not Risers, but a simple accident.

From the Diaries of Becka

Starting Wealth and Equipment

Wealth checks and equipment for characters entering in mid-campaign can be tricky, as most players will want to spend the majority of their wealth on firepower, armor and vehicles. The best recommendation is to go with the "If they can't carry it, or missed a vehicle purchase check, they don't have it," tried and true theory, along with removing the unused portion of their wealth. Wealth won't matter; possessions, reputation, luck and cleverness will.

OK, Meatsacks, listen up. You might have strolled down the block with a couple C-notes in your wallet before the Rising, but now, those notes ain't nuthin' but pretty ass-wipe. Credit Cards? Use 'em to shim the weapon tripod or something along those lines. The old world is dead, most of it is staggering around looking to take a bite out of your yuppy ass, so all of your sharp dealing won't matter when Mr. Hungry takes a bite out of you.

You need to get it through your head. Money. Is. Worthless. Now. If you have something I want, and bargain too hard, I may just decide to kill you for it. You have to have something I want, and I have to have something you want, and we've got to trust each other enough to make a trade.

The main things that are going to be of the most worth will be guns, ammo, food, and sexual favors. Hate to tell you this, but homophobia is a thing of the past, most Traders don't care if you're male or female, they'll hump either, and they'll take a blowjob from a goat if it feels good and they can get it cheaply enough. Services work too, if you have a skill that someone else needs. That's why gunsmiths are virtually untouchable - nobody attacks a gunsmith. Bridge-Keepers and Ferrymen are also well-paying services, getting as much as 2 cans of beef stew and a clip of 9 mm ammunition per person.

When stopping at a barter community, things need to be looked at before trades can begin: how "rich" is the community, how big they are, what their room for expansion is, and if they are a colony or just a waystop. You should also take a look at their defenses. Often assisting in reworking their defenses against both Risers and raiders can be worth a warm bed and a willing body, as well as all you can stuff into your gut. If you can, see how they treat other Traders, so you know if they are trustworthy.

When trading ammo, one needs to think about how common the ammo is. Regular rounds will not be worth as much as special rounds, and common calibers are worth far more than the exotic calibers. Anti-personnel landmines are very valuable, as is the odd flamethrower or two you may come across. Heavy ammunition for military crew-served weapons can bring a premium, but only if the community possesses those weapons.

Types of ammo that can be traded are bullets, grenades, rockets, mines, etc., but never discount such things as high-quality cross-head hunting arrows, bowstrings, crossbow quarrels, or even paintballs and CO2 cartridges. Many communities have been known to use frozen paintballs on Risers, since a well-aimed burst from a high-quality paintball gun can kill a Riser.

Sex always works. For one thing, what a woman has is a renewable resource that doesn't normally go bad... with a bit of precaution. Some communities are hard up enough for sex that it is not uncommon for a Riser to be bound to a table and used sexually by those who either don't care, or are excited by

such a prospect. Those communities will pay premium for sex, but on the bad side, they might decide to hold you prisoner and take what they want from you.

When trading sexual favors one has to look at what is desired. If you are an unscrupulous type and have no morals, (pre) adolescent children will be worth more to some of the more unsavory elements, especially if they are virgins, both male and female. Fleshmongers of this sort are looked down upon by nearly everyone, including many Slaver bands, and it's almost an unwritten law that sooner or later, someone is going to kill you. If my friends and I catch you, you can bet it's going to be hard. We've got a nailgun with your name on it, scumbag.

If it is just a trading outpost and you just want a tumble, most women are willing to trade ammo for oral sex. When going for a deeper, more intimate encounter, more must be traded, as the act, and length of time, with the women increases. This, too, will also depend on the women. If the woman is just horny and just wants to provide sex, the price will be lower than, say, for a woman of skill and apparent class. If a woman is good at what she does and has a reputation as such she will be sought out for her skills, and thus a higher price will be paid, and it will not necessarily be ammo or weapons - food, brass casings, gunpowder, gun oil, clothing, water, etc. can also be exchanged for sexual favors. Same goes for men in the profession.

Skill counts more than just looks and willingness. Everyone out there has at least one hole to poke it into, and if you are really desperate, there are always the Risers to get your jollies off on. Someone who is good at sex can nearly name their own price. Make no mistake, however, that looks do have a major affect upon the price.

If you find a settlement looking to expand their DNA pool, women and men who are virile and strong will be sought after more than someone who is sick or weak. Drifter colonies looking for new brides or men to bring into the fold will have the same outlook upon the deal. The wider the spread in the gene pool, the better the chances for building a healthy, stable, civilization again. It is not uncommon for Drifter Packs to pay strong, healthy men in food or ammunition to impregnate certain women within their group for a healthy baby.

Everything will have a price, and the price will vary from location to location and availability of the items. The further away from a town or city that is easily scavenged, the more highly priced and valued things will become. Items such as food, ammo, weapons, generators, gasoline, oil, hydraulic fluid, water purification systems, and blankets will catch a premium. The lesser items such as clothing, shoes, fiction books and possibly untested water might not be in high demand, but there may still be a market.

As always, medical equipment will garner the highest price of anything out there, including gasoline and weapons. A few vials of penicillin or especially morphine could get the trader a brand-new M-4 assault rifle and ten clips of 5.56 ammunition, even if the Trader doling out the medical supplies was so drunk he couldn't stand.

Gardening will only be prevalent in well-guarded and -fortified areas, so fresh fruits and vegetables will be considered a delicacy and sought after, as will staples such as rice and flour. Fresh meat, eggs, and dairy products could be extremely hard to come by as most of the cattle, while unmolested by the Risers, still seem to have a large following of deaders for some reason yet unknown. Getting close enough to a herd of cattle to get a nice juicy steak without becoming a nice juicy meal for a deader is tough.

Tools, building supplies, metals such as lead, iron, and copper, cooking utensils, pots and pans, rope, yarn, twine, wire, and condoms will be other items of value. Textiles such as raw wool, hemp, or handmade fabrics will also be hard to come by, as will women's sanitary items, paper, writing utensils, or gathered foods are highly prized.

When trading weapons, the type of weapon and whether or not it is loaded and with what will come into play. A shotgun is worth a lot more than a G-11 assault rifle, since repairs and reloading are much

easier for the shotgun. Knives always sell well. Surprisingly, replicas of medieval swords, axes, and maces sell particularly well.

Types of weapons that can be traded are pistols, rifles, shotguns, rocket launchers, military grade weapons, civilian weapons, knives, and swords. This all depends, of course, on the care that was taken with the weapons. A rusty uncared-for blade or gun will have a lower value as it is less likely to work or more likely to break easily, whereas a well-cared-for weapon will get a higher price in trade goods.

Starting to understand? Good.

Good luck, sucker, and don't try to rip anyone off with more firepower than you.

Buck

Bartering

Trading in Year of the Zombie is mainly on the barter system. Two people each have something the other wants, and each agrees to trade for them. It may require

Trader Occupation

Traders move from settlement to settlement, selling what they can, buying things that are useful to themselves or possible trade goods for further down the line. Traders often move in groups, with heavily armed caravans of cargo vehicles and tough guards to guard the trade goods.

Prerequisite: Age 15+

Skills: Choose two of the following as permanent class skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (business, streetwise or tactics), Search, Sense Motive, Spot.

Bonus Feat: Choose one of the following: Attentive, Renown, Trustworthy, Windfall

some arguing and bickering during the exchange, but the art of bartering is rapidly reappearing in the world of Year of the Zombie.

An item's value is determined by its purchase DC, adjusted by both the Condition table and the Value table below. Even broken items can be worth something, as spare parts can be pulled from them in order to repair other objects.

The Wealth DCs of the items being traded and traded for are modified

according to value and condition, and then totaled up separately. The difference in the totals is the adjustment to the trading check.

Wealth Modifiers for Items

Item	Wealth Modifier
Weapon, Melee	1
Weapon, Firearm	3
Armor, Modern	2
Armor, Ancient	-1
Food, Preserved, per meal	10*
Food, Canned, per meal	12*
Food, Fresh, per meal	5*
Ammunition, Common Caliber (20)	2
Ammunition, Uncommon Caliber (20)	1
Explosives per charge or lbs	2
Working Vehicle, civilian, ground	5
Working Vehicle, civilian, construction	7
Working Vehicle, civilian, helicopter	10
Working Vehicle, military, ground	15
Working Vehicle, military, helicopter	20
Construction equipment	5
Medical equipment	10
Slave, Virgin	5
Slave, Trained	5
Slave, Child	3
Slave, Lame	-3
Slave, Old	-5
Slave, Male**	10
Slave, Female**	15

*This is per meal per person

**This assumes: No disease, normal statblock, ordinary template, 2nd or lower level

The following skills can be used as a barter skill:

Charisma modifier at -1

Diplomacy

Intimidate at -2 (Charisma modifier is taken into account, already if using this modifier to barter)

Profession: Trader



Costs for Services

Services	Wealth Equivalent	Modifier
Oral Sex	5	Always considered Mint Condition
Sex	10	Always considered Mint Condition
Repair of an item	Repair DC -5 + Item DC Modifier	Items consumed to repair an item are added into the cost
Medical Care	DC for treatment + Wealth of used drugs + 5	Payment is made whether the treatment is successful or not

Services are usually offered at a settlement or traveling groups. Payment is demanded up front for the above services, and only scrupulous tinkers or

Item Conditions

Condition	% of HP	Modifier to Wealth DC	Failure Chance	Penalty for use
Destroyed	-100%	N/A	Hey, meatsack! It's destroyed. It ain't working!	Use it? It's hammered! Get a rock, you'd be better off.
Broken	0%	-10	100%	-20
Bad	25%	-6	75%	-10
Poor	50%	-2	50%	-4
Good	75%	0	25%	0
Excellent	80%	2	10%	0
Perfect	90%	4	5%	0
Mint	100%	6	Never	0

traveling medics will return the payment for an unsuccessful job.

Whenever an object is put under stress (or fired, in the case of weaponry and ammunition) or struck with a critical hit, it has the above chance to fail. If it fails, it runs a 50% chance of dropping a condition category whether or not the HP damage lowers it past the next condition limit.

Improved Armor

Improved Armor

Armor	Armor Defense Bonus	Locational Defense Bonus*
Hockey/Catcher's mask	1	1.4
Elbow pads	1	1
Knee pads	1	1
Shin guards	1	3
Forearm guards	1	3
Football shoulder pads	4	6
Football helmet	1	7

*This only works if the Specific Hit Location rules (below) are used. Cruel GMs may decide that a zombie's bite attack hits location has the lowest Defense, making the above armor all more important for survival, since an armored vest will no provide such high Defense

When you're scrambling through a sports store, looking for anything that will keep your genitals from being bitten off by a zombie, it's a little tough to find a Forced Entry Unit or military grade riot armor. You'll have to settle for skater pads,



football pads, a hockey mask and a football helmet. Table 7-4 lists Defense bonuses for various items that can (and often are) used for protection.

SPECIFIC HIT LOCATIONS

Zombies are immune to normal damage as far as lethality goes, but if you blow off a limb, well, they're pretty much out of luck, as far as using that limb. Legless zombies pull themselves after PCs with their arms, handless zombies still club at you with their stumps, and a zombie with a broken back still tries crawl up the lawn to get at you. Crippling injuries do not make a zombie any less dangerous, but a legless zombie is pretty easy to outrun, and one without a head just kind of lays there. Although you'll feel pretty stupid if a bodiless head bites your ankle.

Right up to the point when your closest friend buries a machete in the back of your melon.

Of course, people like to strike for specific locations against their foes also.

Hit by Location for Zombies

Location	Damage	Modifier	Random Hit (d20)**
Head	Death	-8	20
Neck	No damage	-12	19
Arm	-2 to attack, grapple, skills	-4	18-16
Hand	-1 to grapple	-6	15
Chest	No Damage	0	14-9
Abdomen	No damage	0	8-5
Groin	No damage	-2	4
Leg	-5' to speed	-4	3-2
Foot	-5' to speed	-6	1

**The additional damage modifiers listed are cumulative. Someone hit in both arms and one hand suffers a -5 to attack, grapple and skill checks.

**Using a random hit location is suggested for using automatic or burst settings without the appropriate feat, using a firearm that the character is not proficient in, panicked fire, or automatic fire into an area. The GM can decide upon right or left, depending on how the zombie is standing or facing in relation to the direction of fire.

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Hit by Location for living humans

Location	Additional Effect	Modifier
Head	Double Damage, Massive Damage Check Required	-8
Neck	Double Damage, Massive Damage Check Required	-12
Arm*	-2 to attack, grapple, skills	-4
Hand*	-1 to attack, grapple, skills	-6
Chest	No additional Effect	0
Abdomen	No additional Effect	0
Groin	Fortitude Save, DC 10+damage or be <i>stunned</i>	-2
Leg*	-5' to speed	-4
Foot*	-5' to speed	-6

*The additional damage modifiers listed are cumulative. Someone hit in both arms and one hand suffers a -5 to attack, grapple and skill checks.

GM CRUELTY OPTIONS

LOOK, IT'S YOUR LEG! WANT ME TO GO GET IT?

The raider made the mistake of exposing his leg, just the knee, from behind the rock he had taken cover behind. Separated from his beloved Bradley, Buck was not unarmed and helpless, and the skill he had acquired with the M-24 sniper rifle in Africa served him well as he shot the raider in the knee.

Buck fared better than the raider, his massive tattooed arms (there are nearly 2 dozen names there now) absorbing the punishing recoil easily. The raider, on the other hand, had the unpleasant experience of having his leg amputated at the knee without the benefit of painkillers.

The shot blew his leg clean off, and when he rolled out, screaming and clawing at his leg, Buck shot him again through his open mouth.

From the Diaries of Becka

One consistent occurrence in zombie/horror/war movies are the severed limbs, either from gunfire or edged weapons. Currently, Modern d20 rules do not handle that type of action, so a quick and dirty solution was brought up in the middle of a firefight between 4 PCs running a pair of SAWS in an alley, and about 80 zombies (the zombies ate them) that just kept coming.

If the Hit By Location rules are used, a GM can be particularly cruel and any time a weapon scores a critical strike, and/or does maximum damage, the character has to succeed in a Fortitude save, DC 10+1

per hit point of damage, or have the limb blown off.

In addition, any time a weapon does maximum damage to zombie and strikes anywhere but the head, a zombie could require the same or lose a limb, be blown in half at the waist, or have its head severed.

For a blunt object to sever a limb through compression, it must be at least 2 size categories larger than the person. Piercing weapons will not sever a limb unless they are a firearm or are 3 size categories larger than the target. Slashing weapons and firearms can sever a limb providing they do the above damage.

IT'S COMING! OH MY GOD, IT'S COMING!

We got ambushed. They let Sylvia cruise by, not falling for it, and hit the convoy itself. I was half outside the turret, manning the Z40, when the first rounds hit. Three of them, right into the Interceptor vest that I had stretched over my massively distended belly.

The impacts put me into labor, my water bursting and showering poor Robert, who was sleeping below me. I screamed through the contractions and fired the weapon as the baby came. I couldn't stop, I couldn't let go, it was coming then, and nothing in the world could stop it.

Greg went berserk, and charged after them, and even the sight of a bullet striking him in the side of the head couldn't stop Emma from coming. Even my relief at seeing him get back was screamed out as another contraction came.

Emma was coming and nothing was going to stop her.

From the Diaries of Becka

If a pregnant character is struck by a bullet, she is considered to be unarmored in the torso, and that must be figured up separately. If attack misses due to armor, but still hits in the abdomen, then the woman must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage) or the baby will be injured and possibly killed. If she takes less than 1 hp character level, the baby is alive, but she must make a second Fortitude save (DC 15) or go into labor immediately; if she takes more than 1 hp per level, she must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or the baby is killed. The baby will become a zombie within 5 minutes, and the mother

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will become infected with the Zombie Infection immediately.

POP AND NO KICK!

Sylvia began swearing as she threw the SAW aside, yelling out "Pop and no kick!" at the top of her lungs. She drew her pistols and began firing at the security troops who used the cessation of the machinegun fire to brave the corridor. I grabbed the hot machine gun, pulled the asbestos glove and the tools from the assistant gunner's bag, and swapped the barrel out, dropping the searing hot barrel into the hallway and handing back the weapon to Sylvia. With a bullet lodged in the barrel, the part was dangerous, and we didn't have the tools to fix it.

The security forces of Site Tango-Three made the mistake of thinking that Sylvia was out of ammunition, and ran right into a full box of ammo from a repaired machine gun.

From the Diaries of Becka

Weapons jam or break, and having your weapon jam in the middle of a firefight is commonly known as "SHIT SHIT SHIT!" by those it happens to. In Vietnam, many soldiers were found, dead, with their rifles torn half apart in the middle of attempting to clean or unjam them. This happens on modern battlefields, and in YotZ, having your weapon jam is tantamount to dousing yourself in barbecue sauce.

If a character rolls a natural 1 on his attack roll with a firearm, the weapon is considered jammed. This can be a minor jam that is easily cleared, or a major jam that requires the weapon to be pulled nearly apart to be fixed.

If the weapon is jammed, it is nonfunctional until the character spends 1d4 rounds to clear the jam. If a 4 is rolled for time, there is a 50% chance that the weapon will need to be field-stripped. This will take an additional 1d6 rounds. The weapon cannot be used for anything but a club until it is cleared.

In the case of a "pop and no kick", the round did not contain enough propellant to push the bullet from the barrel, blocking the barrel itself. This can be noticed as a slightly less than normal kick, or the complete lack of a kick. With machineguns, the lack of a kick is often enough to keep the weapon from cycling completely. If the weapon is cleared and used without changing the barrel out or somehow extracting the lodged bullet, the barrel will explode, doing 1d6 points of damage in a 5 foot radius, and 3d6 points

of damage to the firer as the weapon's bolt assembly blows back into the user's face.

MY LEGS, I CAN'T FEEL MY LEGS!

I've seen Sylvia and the boys take hits to the legs and arms and keep right on going, but to think that most people can do that is a mistake. Sylvia and the boys are highly trained, motivated, stemwinding motherfuckers. I've seen Buck get hit by a hatch from an exploding Bradley and still be able to function once he picked himself up off the pavement. Sylvia take a burst of rounds to her Interceptor and not even miss a stride, Greg get his helmet blown off him by a sniper and still move, Robert take a bullet in the leg and still run, and the Russians seem to made of the same stuff as the others. It's scary, in a way.

However, for mere mortals like myself, getting shot HURTS, and makes it difficult to use that limb. When a slaver shot me in the arm, I couldn't close my hand or feel my arm below that horribly throbbing wound. Most people seem to react that way to a gunshot wound or a stab wound, but there are still people out there like Sylvia and the boys.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Being hit in the limb with a dart-gun is a lot different than taking a shot to the same limb with a .50 caliber general purpose heavy machinegun (I love that nomenclature. What kind of general purposes could you use it for? Opening cans? Hammering nails? Decorating a Christmas tree? How about picking up chicks, is that a general use? Ahem, anyway...). With the dart, you pull it out and whip your little brother's ass. With the Ma-Deuce, you lay there and scream, trying to figure out why your legs blew off in different directions.

The easiest way to do this, without degenerating into ballistics and medical arguments, is to simply apply a penalty equal to the highest amount of damage a single die of the weapon damage could do. For a pistol, this would be a -6, while an assault rifle would be a -8. This could make the difference between life and death, and definitely put the fear of heavy weapons back into the game.

For the most part, this option is recommended for use on Ordinaries, and non-combat oriented hero characters. Strong and Tough heroes should at least gain a Fortitude save (DC 15, or 10+damage) to resist the effects of wound shock.

IT HURTS! OH GOD, IT HURTS!

Sam and Charles both had the same injury, at the same time, from the same burst from a Raider's weapon. Both hit in the right thigh, on the outside of it, missing the bone, a through and through wound as Robert calls them. Sam started swearing and yelling threats of dire retribution at the raider. Charles passed out from pain after screaming for a few seconds.

What makes people so different? Is it being used to pain, is it the willingness to overcome it to hurt someone else just as bad? Robert calls it wound shock, and says it affects everyone differently. Charles died of shock from the wound before anyone could help him. Sam shot the raider twice in the stomach and left him there to die.

From the Diaries of Becka

Shock kills just as often as the injury itself when dealing with a stab wound or a gunshot wound. The pain is intense in such a way that it cannot be described, and anyone who has ever been stabbed or shot can attest to the fact that it hurts like nothing else.

Many people who are shot or stabbed in the leg, arm or abdomen, or even the hand or foot, are so overcome with pain that they cannot function at all. In Year of the Zombie, ordinaries hit by gunshots or stabbed for more than 2 points of damage with a single hit must make a Fortitude save (DC 10+damage) or be considered *helpless* until they can succeed at a save in the following rounds.

However, if they fail three saves in a row, they pass out from the injury.

HORROR AND INSANITY

(Reprinted from *Grim Tales* by BadAxe Games, Flavour text by: Tim Willard)

One thing that I cannot place in these pages, so that any of you that come after me and might even be capable of reading this, will understand, is the sheer, crushing horror of these times. Friends and lovers die, sometimes horribly, only to rise again, so that they must be killed.

The massive amounts of children who died, or were murdered, or worse, during the beginning, and sadly, even later in the Rising. Worse, the children who banded together, and reverted to savagery. The bandits, the fields of death, the empty cities, and the rusting lines of tombs that stretched off into the distance.

The sounds of the dead around you grate on your nerves, eroding on your sanity, as night after night, the low, mournful sounds that the Risers make drift into your shelter from where they are outside.

Waiting.

Some people cannot handle the situation, and their minds break. They retreat into the depths of their minds, or their perception of reality changes. Sometimes they pause too long, the horror of a situation overwhelming them, and they are drug down and killed in their moment of terror.

From the Diaries of Becka

USING HORROR IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Many game systems use Horror as a primary component of the rules, but in many respects, the mere presence of any ruleset to govern horror ends up detracting from the mood of the game. Building suspense, dread, and a fear of the unknown that slowly escalates to a true sense of horror relies first and foremost on the storytelling skills of the GM.

CREATING THE HORRIFIC ENCOUNTER

The sounds of our footsteps and our breathing echoed through the empty halls of the FEMA shelter we had found and entered. The place was deserted, yes, but it showed signs of life, as if survivors had fled here, and then vanished.

The humming of the environmental systems seemed to chuckle and mock our ignorance of what had gone on, and each closed door promised death or worse to any who dared to open them. We had found chicken bones scattered about, and all of us had bunched back together after Buck found a small nest of blankets with toys hidden inside.

Something in here with us.

From the Diaries of Becka

The first step for the GM is to place a horrific encounter in his adventure. The GM is well served to consider that every Horror check is like an encounter in its own right—or, at the very least, it can serve as the crowning detail of a session of play. Too-frequent Horror checks acclimate the players to the system and spoil the mood you are trying to create. One or at most two Horror checks in one session of play is acceptable; one or two Horror checks per adventure is even better.

It is not a necessity that you save the Horror check for the final conflict with the horrific arch-villain; indeed, a horrific encounter early in the adventure will help set the mood—particularly if the encounter goes poorly for the PCs as a result of the Horror check!

In order to use the rules for Horror checks, the GM must calculate the normal EL of the encounter ahead of time. In some cases this will be fairly straightforward: a group of ten zombies attack the PCs, for example. Other cases can get more complex: A vampire overlord captures the PCs in a trap-filled torture room and watches as his zombie minions close in for a grim feast. Despite these complexities, the underlying rule is simple: As the EL increases, it is assumed that the danger, and thus the horror, increases.

THE HORROR CHECK

The street outside Steffy's house was a scene from Dante's Inferno, a creation from the diseased mind of a mad god, a madhouse that had spilled over into the streets. I stood in shock, taking all of it in, the sounds of the screaming inside the house receding into the background of my mind.

A woman in front of me was shrieking hysterically as three men pulled at her, biting at her. A small baby was torn from her grasp in front of my eyes, and the child's wail was abruptly cut short as the man pushed his face into the blanket. Crimson spread across it as he made growling, feral sounds.

A car swerved to miss two men fighting in the middle of the street, struggling over the remains of a small child, and plowed into a wall. The inside of the windshield went red at the same time as it spiderwebbed. A policeman was on his knees, his pistol dropped to the pavement next to him. His hands were holding his throat, trying to stem the flow of blood from a bad bite.

Helicopters filled the air, and the sounds of automatic weapons fire chattered from points around the city. Somebody jumped from a fourth floor apartment across the street, screaming before he hit the pavement. Two women ran forward and began scooping chunks of still quivering flesh into their mouths.

I could only stand there and stare at everything around me, my mind overloaded by the carnage and death that had come all at once, seemingly from nowhere.

From the Diaries of Becka

The GM can require a Horror check at any point, most generally immediately after he describes the encounter and the horror of the situation is finally revealed to the players. From there, the Horror check uses a set of rules that is essentially analogous to the Turn Undead rules:

1. The GM calls for a Horror check. (If using the *Fight or Flight!* optional rules—see sidebar—the GM should call for decisions now.)
2. Each PC makes a Horror check by rolling d20 and applying the appropriate modifiers to Table 10-1.
3. The GM rolls the Horror Threshold level for the encounter (usually 2d6 + applicable modifiers from Table 10-2 and 10-3).
4. The GM compares the result of each PC's Horror check to the appropriate Encounter Level column on Table 1 (see below).
5. If the Horror Threshold is equal to or greater than the PCs Charisma, that PC suffers the effects listed on the table.

HORROR CHECK MODIFIERS

Each PC makes a Horror check by rolling 1d20 and applying the following modifiers:

- Add the character (or party) EL.
- Subtract the encounter EL.

The Horror Check Roll

Check Result	Effect
1-2	long term insanity
3-4	short term insanity
5-6	cowering / temporary insanity1
7-8	panicked / frightened1
9-10	frightened / berserk1
11-14	Shaken
15-19	dazed
20 or more (or natural 20)	no effect

1 Use the entry before the slash if the party EL is lower than the horrific encounter EL. Use the number after the slash if the party EL is higher than the horrific encounter EL.

If the characters are higher level than the horrific threat, the effects of a Horror check, even a failed check, are lessened.

Each PC should also add a bonus to his or her check to represent will power and guts.

- Add a Will or Wisdom bonus as described below.

In a game with a moderate threat level, this Horror check modifier is equal to the character's Wisdom bonus. However, the GM can tweak the rules to be more or less forgiving, depending on the impact that Horror should have on the campaign.

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OPTIONAL RULE: FIGHT OR FLIGHT?

A group of Risers swarmed into the intersection ahead of us, dozens peeling off toward us where we were climbing aboard the hummers the National Guardsmen had nearly lost to the crowd of Risers that had pinned them down inside the building. Matthews ordered two of his men to use the big guns mounted on the roofs of two vehicles against the oncoming Risers, tossed me a rifle, and began ordering people to open fire. The guns roared, and Risers dropped, but there were still more to take their place.

"STAND AND DELIVER!" Greg shouted over the din as they got within a few paces, standing up and still firing, the weapon tight to his cheek. My weapon ran out, and I threw it aside and kicked the first Riser in the face hard enough that the shock of breaking bone jarred my hip.

Behind me, one of the National Guardsmen dropped his weapon and fled, as did three of the civilians that they had fought so hard to rescue. Matthews shot the fleeing soldier once, in the back on the neck, and yelled for everyone to hold the line or he would kill them before the Risers could.

I held. It was fight or die, and I refused to die. The Risers screamed, moaned and snarled as we cut them down, killed them face to face at times. Men and women threw grenades into the crowd of flesh, blowing severed limbs into the air, and splattering me twice with near-liquid flesh.

Hold or die.

From the Diaries of Becka

This optional rule can be used to add even more uncertainty to the Horror check. After the GM calls for the Horror check, each player is given a simple choice: Fight or Flight? If the player chooses, he elects to leave his PC in the path of danger and take his chances with the results of the Horror check. If the PC is confident of his ability to master his fear (and to roll accordingly), this is the best choice to immediately come to grips with the horrific enemy. If the player chooses, he voluntarily "fails" his Horror check and is fleeing for a reduced duration of 1d4+1 rounds. However, at the end of this voluntary flight, the PC fully recovers his wits (and his guts) and can return to the fight without the need for any check and without any further hindrance—he does not even suffer the normal penalties. However, to heighten the tension and add even greater uncertainty to the process, the GM should require each player to register his choice—no player can be sure of what the other players are going to do! Each player takes a d6 and, covering it with his hand to obscure his choice from his fellow players, chooses one facing of the die to place face up: a bold and daring 6 (or any even number) if he chooses to, or a wee, pathetic 1 (or any odd number) if he chooses. After all players are ready, the GM should have them reveal their choices at the same time. Like the Horror check itself, the GM should resist overusing the *Fight or Flight!* option in order to keep it fresh and exciting. At any rate, if the players consistently make the same choice as a group, perhaps even working out a scheme ahead of time to ensure that the group acts in concert, he should abandon the use of this optional rule in order to avoid the foregone conclusion and speed gameplay.

In Year of the Zombie, the Fight or Flight Option should be used for the first several weeks. After that amount of time, those without the correct reflexes are usually in residence in a zombie's stomach, or decomposing.

Because of the possibility that one or more

PCs will hesitate, panic, or cower, the higher the threat, the more likely that Horror checks will disrupt the party and derail their efforts.

Each player adds his Will save modifier to all Horror checks. In this variant, high Wisdom, high level characters become more and more resistant to the effects of Horror.

Each player adds his Wisdom modifier to all Horror checks. In this variant, high Wisdom characters (which includes most Dedicated heroes) have an advantage, but an increase in level does not make the character any more resistant to horror than normal.

Players do not add any modifier to the d20 roll. In this variant, high Charisma characters tend to be the most resistant to Horror checks, due to their higher Horror Threshold. When these characters do fail a Horror check, the result can be devastating.

MODIFIERS TO THE HORROR THRESHOLD

The Horror Threshold roll is always modified by the Charisma modifier (if positive) of the horrifying creature. In mixed groups of creatures, use the modifier of the creature with the highest Charisma—usually, but not always, this will be the leader of a mixed group (such as a vampire at the head of a horde of zombies).

The GM should always make a note of the total after rolling the Horror Threshold; in the event that one of the PCs succumbs to a short-term or long-term psychological disorder, the Horror Threshold not only defines the extent of the horrific event, it will define the DC required to cure the PC of any disorder.

Standard Horror Threshold Modifiers

Condition	Modifier
First time the PCs have encountered this type of foe	2
PCs have defeated this type of foe before	-2
PCs have defeated this specific foe before	-1
Particularly horrific scene (excessive gore, violent outburst, etc.)	1
Personal significance (presence of a loved one, etc.)	1

The standard Horror Threshold modifiers are applied on a case-by-case basis to each PC before comparing the adjusted total to the PC's Charisma score.

In addition to the standard Horror Threshold modifiers, the GM may wish to add or subtract dice for certain creature types in order to reflect the prevailing philosophy of his campaign. For example, in an Archaic setting of barbaric sword-

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Era-specific Horror Threshold Modifiers

Creature Type	Archaic	Modern	Apocalyptic
A aberration	-	+1d6	-1d6
Animal	-1	-	-
Construct	-	+1d6	-1d6
Dragon ²	+1d6	+1d6	+1d6
Elemental	-	-	-
Fey	+1d6	-	-
Giant	-	-	-
Humanoid/ Monstrous Humanoid	-	-	-
Magical Beast	-	+1d6	+1d6 ³
Ooze	+1d6	+1d6	-
Outsider ⁴	+1d6	+1d6	+1d6
Plant	-1	-	-
Undead ⁵	+1d6	+1d6	+1d6
Vermin ⁶	-1	-	-1d6

¹ In some prehistoric Archaic settings, dire animals, dinosaurs, carnivorous plants, and many large vermin, though commonly encountered, may carry a +1d6 modifier: such instinctive fears are not easily shaken, and in some cases primitive man is more frightened of known dangers than of the unknown. ² Dragons are fearsome creatures in any era. The Horror check is made over and above any check for the dragon's frightful presence, which follow the rules as normal. ³ It is important to note the difference between mutant creatures (most of which are Aberrations) and Magical Beasts, which display some clearly magical or supernatural ability. If the viewers reasonably mistake the Magical Beast for an Aberration, do not apply this modifier. ⁴ Outsiders, both good and evil, are awe-inspiring in any era. ⁵ Undead apply a +1d6 modifier in any era. ⁶ Normal-sized Vermin should not normally require a Horror check of any kind, unless appearing in a swarm of significantly horrific size.

For YotZ, Modern should be used until approximately 6 months into The Rising. After that, Apocalyptic should be used. Archaic should rarely, if ever, be used.

and-sorcery, the GM may decide that Aberrations are no more horrific than any other beast—the people of this campaign espouse a particularly pragmatic, “If it bleeds, I can kill it,” philosophy that is uncommon in more civilized ages. However, in such a primitive campaign—indeed, in any humanocentric campaign where the dead are expected to stay dead—Undead creatures may very well impose a +1d6 modifier. Similarly, in an apocalyptic setting, the GM may decide that Constructs and mutated Aberrations alike suffer a –1d6 penalty to all Horror Threshold rolls, as the inhabitants of such a world are well-accustomed to berserk killing machines and tentacled mutants.

The guidelines below should suit most campaigns falling into the three main settings of *Grim Tales*:

EXPLANATION OF HORROR CHECK RESULTS

NO EFFECT: The PC may act normally.

DAZED: The PC is *dazed* until the end of his first action, but may act normally thereafter.

SHAKEN: The PC is *shaken* for the duration of the encounter. A *shaken* character takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

FRIGHTENED: The PC is *frightened* for 1d6+1 rounds. A frightened character flees from the source of fear as best he can. If unable to flee, he may fight. A *frightened* character takes a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. A *frightened* character can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, he must use such means if they are the only way to escape. When the *frightened* state ends, the character can act normally, but he remains *shaken* for the duration of the encounter.

BERSERK: The PC goes *berserk* for 1d6+1 rounds. He fights with wild ferocity, unable to tell friend from foe, using whatever weapon is in hand against the nearest foe.

If there is a target within melee reach of the *berserk* PC, he must use a full attack action against that target. (If there are two or more targets within reach, the PC may choose).

If there are no targets within reach, and the PC has a ranged weapon in hand, he may use that weapon against the nearest target.

If there are no targets within melee reach and the PC does not have a ready ranged weapon, he must move towards the nearest target, charging if possible, and using a double-move if not.

In essence, the only actions a *berserk* PC may take is an attack, a full attack, or a move. They may not perform special attack actions, draw or ready a weapon, use skills, cast spells, etc.

PANICKED: The PC is *panicked* for 1d6+1 rounds. A *panicked* character immediately drops anything held in his hands and must flee at top speed from the source of his fear, as well as any other dangers he encounters, along a random path. He can't take any other actions. In addition, the character takes a –2 penalty on all saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks. If cornered, a *panicked* character does not fight, typically using the total defense action in combat. A *panicked* character can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, he must use such means if

they are the only way to escape. When the *panicked* state ends, the character can act normally, but he remains *shaken* for the duration of the encounter.

COWERING: The PC *cowers* for 1d6+1 rounds. The character is frozen in fear and can take no actions. A *cowering* character takes a -2 penalty to Armor Class and loses his Dexterity bonus (if any). When the *cowering* state ends, the character can act normally, but he remains *shaken* for the duration of the encounter.

INSANITY

We found the old guy at a rest stop in Eastern Oregon, on our way to Nebraska. He had taken up residence in a modular home that was still resting on its trailers. It was painted bright and cheery. Dirt had been carried out to the blacktop and used to cover it, then planted with grass and flowers. A white picket fence surrounded the house, and a mailbox sat on a post beside the gate.

The old guy was sitting on a rocking chair, on the porch that had been created by pulling a flatbed pickup truck in front of the modular home. He was smoking a pipe, and drinking Coors beer, enjoying the afternoon sunshine in his boxers and a tank top shirt. Both of them were stained and filthy, gray instead of their original white.

"Kee-ris, check out the old guy," Buck said, whistling into the tac. He looked bizarre, and something about him made me think of someone who had escaped from an insane asylum. His eyes were wide and had a strange sparkle to them.

"Check out his wife," Sylvia replied, squinting through the periscope. I shifted my view to see the woman he was holding hands with.

She was dressed in a flower print dress, wearing a sun-hat, sandals, and jewelry. Her smile was wide and honest, and her eyes were closed as she sat in the shadows of the porch.

She was also at least 6 months dead.

"Keep going. I don't want to mess with this," Buck said.

I agreed. Let the man and his dead wife have their fantasy.

From the Diaries of Becka

Temporary Insanity: Until the end of the current horrific encounter, the PC suffers the effects of one of the psychological disorders below (see *Insanity* in the following section). If the character is already suffering from any form of insanity, his existing condition worsens and he

suffers an immediate outburst (if applicable).

SHORT TERM: The PC *cowers* for the duration of the encounter. In addition, once the encounter is over, he suffers the effects of short-term insanity (see *Insanity* in the following section).

LONG TERM: The PC *cowers* for the duration of the encounter. In addition, once the encounter is over, he suffers the effects of long-term insanity (see *Insanity* in the following section).

Insanity

Characters who spectacularly fail a Horror check often succumb to short-term or long-term insanity. The GM should prepare himself for cries of outrage from his players; many players feel that some of the crippling disorders that follow are too harsh; many players would rather their characters die than succumb to insanity. The GM is encouraged to humor such requests. A failed Horror check is akin to any other failed saving throw, and a player who refuses to explore the roleplaying opportunities presented by an insane character is free to create a new character.

DURATION OF INSANITY

Depending on the Horror check, insanity is either short-term or long-term. There is leeway within these definitions, depending on the threat level of the campaign:

SHORT-TERM

The effects of insanity last until the end of the current session of play. When the GM and the players next meet to continue the campaign, the character may make a Will save to recover fully (see Self-Recovery in the Treatment section below).

The effects last until the end of the current adventure, at which time the character may make a Will save to recover fully. If the adventure is of epic-length, the effects last until the next natural break in the adventure.

The effects last until the character gains a level, at which point he may make a Will save to recover fully. In the process of leveling up, the character is assumed to shake off the effects of the insanity.

LONG-TERM

Long-term insanity is just short of permanent, lasting until the patient is cured. The character will never recover normally, but he may be able to recover through psychotherapy, surgery, or magical healing (if such is available in the campaign).

SEVERITY

The severity of insanity is equal to the Horror Threshold roll. The player should record the severity of any insanity in addition to its effects.

High-Charisma characters are less likely to succumb to Horror (requiring a higher Horror Threshold) but, conversely, they are more likely to suffer severe psychological disorders. In effect, their own force of personality works against them. The greater a character's force of personality, the greater the depths of insanity to which they can sink.

Even relatively mild disorders can have a high severity— those annoying but persistent peccadilloes of the charismatic elite.

Example: A character (Charisma 13) is forced to make a Horror check. The GM rolls the Horror Threshold and the result is a 16— enough to affect the character. The character fails his Horror check, and the Horror table shows that he is afflicted with a long-term insanity.

The GM determines the insanity and the player records it on his character sheet. He also lists the severity of the insanity: 16, equal to the Horror Threshold. When this character later tries to recover from insanity, the severity (16) will set the DC for the various treatments available.

TREATMENT

"What's wrong with him?" I asked.
 "Battle fatigue," Matthews answered. "He's past the redline. Right now, he's basically useless."
 "There's got to be some way to help him," the other soldier stated. I just stared at the man in question, who was sitting in front of us, rocking back and forth and crying that we were all going to die.
 "Normally, we could send him back to the rear," Matthews answered, bending down next to the soldier and taking his pistol and rifle away. He handed them to me as he stood back up. The other man had not even noticed that Matthews had disarmed him.

"But now," I stated. Outside, I could hear hundreds of Risers moaning, and knew that there was no rear, no safe area, nobody to take care of him, and nowhere he would be able to de-stress.

"Right. Sorry, but we have to leave him," Matthews stated, looking at me. The other three soldiers nodded and moved out of the room, going back to keeping the hallway, and our path back to the helicopter, clear.

"I understand. There is no way we can make it through that crowd in front of the elevators, much less the group on the roof, dragging him," I answered. Matthews looked grateful for the understanding. "Go ahead, I'll be along in a moment. I just want to try and make him understand."

Matthews nodded and left the room, and I turned back to the man rocking back and forth. I knew him. He was one of the few remaining who had been in the pawnshop with me. (I wish I could remember his name as I write this.) I had even saved his life twice. Now, he had reverted to childhood.

I bent down, taking his chin and the back of his head in my hands, and I kissed him softly before I did what I had to do. It was quick, and he didn't even know I had done it.

Fuck you. It was mercy. The Risers would have eaten him alive.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Depending on the campaign, various forms of treatment are available. If the



Greg and I

campaign uses the Horror rules, the GM should ensure that, no matter the flavor or setting of his campaign, some form of treatment is available.

SELF-RECOVERY

It took awhile, but I've been able to shrug off the depression I felt after going around Phoenix, Arizona, on the way to Nebraska. The knowledge that everyone inside was probably gone had hit me at the same time as a bout of postpartum depression after Ivan (named after our dead Spetznaz friend) had joined his two sisters and his brother in the world.

Still, I was able to do it. I think taking care of the children helped me.

From the Diaries of Becka.

Time heals all wounds, and a character with enough time to reflect and recover may make a Will save to shake off the effects of a short-term insanity. The DC for the save is equal to the severity (i.e., the Horror Threshold of the Horrific encounter that pushed him over the brink).

A character with Heal, Diplomacy, or Profession (psychotherapist, psychologist, etc.) can Aid Another with this check. The assisting character's check DC is 10, and it provides the usual +2 bonus to the afflicted character's Will save.

A character who fails this save does not recover. He may check again after the designated duration (the end of the next encounter, adventure, or after gaining a level).

A character who rolls a natural 1 on this save actually worsens his condition, and suffers the effects of Advancing Insanity (see below).

Self-recovery is not possible with long-term insanity.

PSYCHOTHERAPY

Poor Robert. From EMT to Dr. Catchall inside of a year. Not only has he helped me deliver three children inside these mechanized leviathans, operated on nearly all of my dear friends and family (one time putting a plate in Greg's skull while the rest of us fought off a very determined Wolf Pack), he also provides our little family with the role of priest-confessor slash therapist. While Sam may be a confessor figure, Robert is the one you go to with the serious problems.

He may not have gone to school, but hell, he cured Candy's bed-wetting problem before Buck shot her, so he's good enough for this world.

From the Diaries of Becka.

A character with Profession (psychotherapist, psychologist, psychiatrist, etc.) can attempt to treat both short- and long-term insanity. The DC for this check is equal to 10 + severity.

A character with 5 or more ranks of Craft (alchemy) or Craft (pharmaceutical) can prescribe drugs or "herbal remedies" to accompany the therapy, and receives a +2 synergy bonus to his Profession check.

A character with 5 or more ranks of Diplomacy and/or Sense Motive receives a +2 synergy bonus to his Profession check (a total possible synergy bonus of +4 for both skills).

If the check succeeds, the afflicted character is immediately cured of his insanity.

If the skill check fails, the afflicted character does not recover. If the skill check is a critical failure, the afflicted character's condition worsens (see below).

SURGERY AND PHYSICAL "THERAPY"

Greg had completely lost it. The bullet from the Raider had caught him right on the plate that Robert had installed, and put pressure on his brain. Combined with the fact I had gone into labor from a burst hitting my Interceptor, he went completely crazy, according to the Sylvia and the boys. They won't tell me what he did, but I do know he is strapped down on the gurney, alternating between childhood regression and raging monologues that confirm the fact that if it had not been for The Rising, he would have been tried for war crimes.

Robert is convinced it will work, but I'm still terrified. They're going to drill a hole in his head. Robert's reasoning is to let the pressure off of his bruised brain. Cindy's reasoning is so that she can draw the evil spirit that has took possession of him.

Either way, I just want it to work. There's enough names on the back of Buck's arms without adding my husband's name to them.

From the Diaries of Becka

Lobotomy, electro-shock therapy, experimental drugs, and even, in less advanced societies, trepanation (the drilling of holes in the skull to "let the evil spirits out")— these methods are crude and widely discredited in the real world.

Fortunately, in the world of Grim Tales there is a place for such colorful and characterful “cures.”

A character with the Heal skill (and the Surgery feat) can attempt such a physical cure for insanity. The DC for this check is 15 + severity.

A character with 5 or more ranks of Craft (alchemy) or Craft (pharmaceutical) can prescribe herbs or drugs to assist the treatment, gaining a +2 synergy bonus.

- If the skill check succeeds, the afflicted character is cured of his insanity.
- If this skill check fails, the afflicted character must make a save vs. massive damage, or he begins *dying*.
- If the skill check is a critical failure, the afflicted character immediately begins *dying*. If he recovers, his mental condition also worsens (see Advancing Insanity, below).

MAGIC – NOT RECOMMENDED

Buck held Yuri down as the Russian screamed continually. The blood covering Yuri smeared onto Buck's hands and cuffs, and Yuri did not even recognize Cindy when she stepped up to stand over him. As Cindy withdrew a carefully crafted bead rattle painted with an intricate design, Yuri's struggles got more and more desperate and his screaming somehow became even louder.

Cindy began chanting, waving and shaking the rattle as those of us not pulling guard duty watched out of hope and curiosity. As we watched, she used the powders and oils she had put in cloth bags tied to her belt to draw symbols on Yuri.

Two red lines above each eye, following the curve of the man's eyebrows. A blue triangle on each cheek. A handprint over his heart. Yuri's struggles grew more and more desperate, until, with a scream that nearly drowned out Cindy's chanting, a sickly brown mist poured from Yuri's nostrils to hang in the air above his head.

Yuri collapsed, covered in sweat, his pulse beating hard in his throat, and the mist gave a small, high pitch wail as it tattered and dissipated. We all stepped back, Mikhail making the sign of the Cross as he did so.

“The evil spirit no longer dwells within him.” Cindy proclaimed. I noticed that she had grey hair at her temples.

Before she had started, her hair was raven black.

From the Diaries of Becka

If the campaign allows spellcasting, there are spells (such as *heal*) that

instantly cure any and all insanity that a character may be suffering from. At the GM's discretion, insane characters may not admit that they are insane, and may be entitled to a saving throw against any magical cure.

However, if the Blood & Relics style of magic is used, old traditions, including acupuncture or sweat lodges or trepanation may work. However, it may also make things worse.

ADVANCING INSANITY

Never think that things can't get worse.

From the Diaries of Becka

As bad as insanity seems, there's always room for it to get worse.

The effects of insanity are categorized as mild, moderate, and severe. Characters suffering from insanity begin with the effects listed in the mild entry within each description.

However, each of the psychological disorders can progress, the effects worsening with each step, and each effect is generally cumulative with the step before.

There are two ways that an afflicted character's insanity can advance:

- If the character fails another Horror check while already afflicted, the GM can advance his existing condition rather than inflict a new one;
- If the character attempts to recover (either through self-recovery or treatment) and fails.

An existing condition can grow so severe that it advances to another form of insanity. In these cases, advance the condition to the mild stage of the next disorder.

FORMS OF INSANITY

Back before The Rising, there was a pill for everything. The advertisements bragged of pills that would stop any type of insanity, whether you had it or not. Nowadays, insanity is far more common and much harsher than what many considered it to be. No movies with clean starlets in this world, just minds that broke under the strain.

Insanity is dangerous, Diary. Not only because lunatics can attack you, but because a hidden insanity can put everyone at risk, and sometimes you have to wonder if you are truly mad, or if the world is really like this.

YEAR OF THE ZOMBIE

THE DIARIES OF BECKA

And you pray you may be mad.

From the Diaries of Becka

The following psychological disorders, herein classified as insanity, are more properly known as psychological disorders. The GM should choose an appropriate disorder for the character, based on the type of horrific encounter that sent him over the edge.

ANXIETY DISORDERS

My hands won't stop shaking, and I can't stop crying. I know I'm safe, I know I should get some sleep, but I just can't. Images keep flashing through my head, of my sorority sisters sickening, dying, and then Rising. Is it going to happen to me? I close my eyes, and see them open their eyes and struggle against their restraints. I wish I was mad.

From the Diaries of Becka

This category includes a number of disorders featuring abnormal or inappropriate anxiety. An increased heart rate, tensed muscles, and an acute sense of focus are all symptoms of anxiety. They are also part of the body's natural 'fight or flight' phenomenon. While a healthy dose of anxiety is good for any hero, these symptoms become a problem when they occur without reason or when the situation does not warrant such a reaction.

Short-Term	Long-Term
General Anxiety	Agoraphobia
	Acute Stress Disorder
	Obsessive-Compulsive
	Panic Disorder
	Phobias
	Post-Traumatic Stress

GENERAL ANXIETY DISORDER

The worst thing about the first few weeks is the fact that I could not sleep, and suffered headaches constantly. Robert told me it was the stress of the world dying all around us, and that it was nothing to worry about.

The world dying was causing me stress? Imagine that.

From the Diaries of Becka

This disorder is marked by constant, exaggerated anxiety, though there is little or nothing to provoke it. The symptoms

may be accompanied by fatigue, headaches, muscle tension and aches, trembling and irritability.

Mild	+2 bonus to initiative, Spot, and Listen checks
Moderate	Anytime the GM calls for a Horror check, the character must make a Will save (DC = severity) or become sickened.
Severe	Advance to Panic Disorder.

ACUTE STRESS DISORDER

Greg refuses to enter a major hospital. You know the type, like on every TV show, or every major city. He simply won't go inside of it. We all know why, so there is no need to say anything. Some nights he dreams of it, and our steel wombs are too close quarters to keep anyone else from knowing what he is mumbling in his sleep.

Two months and he still dreams of that place.

From the Diaries of Becka

This disorder is triggered by a traumatic event involving death or serious injury. The afflicted continue to experience the event through thoughts, dreams, or flashbacks, and avoid situations that remind them of the initial traumatic event.

Mild	If any effect causes the character to become shaken, he suffers the effects of fear instead; fear effects cause panic; and panic causes cowering.
Moderate	Any encounter that includes combat forces the character to make a Horror check.
Severe	Advance to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

AGORAPHOBIA

Buck refuses to leave the safety of Bradley-One, to the point of drawing a weapon on those trying to coax him out. I understand it, even though I'm a little uncomfortable with the extent he has taken it to. He's safe inside the Bradley. The Risers can't get to him, and no matter what happens to the outside world, he is safe.

You wouldn't understand, probably, you who are reading this. It was safe inside.

From the Diaries of Becka

Agoraphobia is the fear of being in places where escape might be difficult or help is not available. Those with agoraphobia avoid most places outside of their known and secure environment

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including open spaces, driving a vehicle, standing in lines, walking through crowds, and going through tunnels. Being forced to endure these situations often results in physical symptoms of distress.

In Year of the Zombie, this may not be considered an insanity, but rather common sense.

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

For weeks after his weapon jammed and he was almost killed by the Wolf Pack, Zhakov would hand-load every one of his weapons, eat by himself and rapidly shove his food in his mouth, his eyes constantly watching everything. He would check his room inside the train car a dozen times before lying down. His routine never varied the entire time it took those deep wounds to turn to thick scars.

But he'd survived.

From the Diaries of Becka

Those with this disorder have difficulty showing warm and tender emotions, display perfectionism and an inability to see the larger picture, and have difficulty doing things in any way but their own. Everything must be just right, and nothing can be left to chance.

Mild	-2 penalty to initiative.
Moderate	Double the time required for all skill checks.
Severe	-2 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks.

PANIC DISORDER

Veronica began suddenly pulling at her shirt, bursting into tears and crying that she "had to get out of here" as she lurched to her feet and stumbled toward the back hatch of the Bradley. She bumped the baby's carrier hard enough to wake Emma up as she kept claiming that she "couldn't breathe" inside the vehicle.

I warned her twice not to open the door. I didn't wait for her to open it. While she screamed that she had to get out, that she couldn't breathe, that she was having a heart attack, and scrambled at the locking mechanism, I shot her in the back of the head.

Being crazy is OK. Endangering other people that I care about is not.

From the Diaries of Becka

Those afflicted with this disorder experience unexpected panic attacks,

including the sudden onset of chest pain, choking sensations, and dizziness. Those experiencing a panic attack often experience a crescendo of fear that results in a sudden exit from wherever he may be.

Mild	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 check during play, the afflicted character is shaken for 3d6 minutes.
Moderate	As above, but the character is affected by fear for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.
Severe	As above, but the character is panicked for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.

PHOBIAS (SPECIFIC)

I've become afraid of the dark. I know, it sounds silly to you, Diary, but trust me, it is not. The darkness doesn't bother the Risers, but it does blind me. I know, that when it becomes dark, there is one nearby, one that has just waited until the lights go out to grab me.

So I sleep with NVG's on.

From the Diaries of Becka

Traumatic events often trigger a specific phobia. Symptoms include extreme anxiety and fear associated with the object or situation of their phobia. The GM can choose from any number of real-world phobias, though a phobia associated with the initial Horror check is best. For example, a character who fails a Horror check in an encounter with a giant spider might well develop arachnophobia.

Mild	The character is shaken in the presence of her phobia.
Moderate	As above, but the character is affected by fear for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.
Severe	As above, but the character is panicked for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Everything was fine. We were all staring at the fire, our stomachs full, our skin warm, and secure in the knowledge that the tripwires on the claymores we had scattered around would be effective in warning us of Risers or raiders.

Emma was asleep next to me, wrapped up in Greg's Interceptor vest, sucking on her tiny thumb, and I was slowly dozing off. Greg was staring at the stars, his arm around my waist and gently squeezing

my breast. We'd discovered that morning that he wouldn't have to worry about getting me pregnant. I was.

"I'M BURNING!" Buck suddenly screamed, his hands thrust out in front of him as if holding onto something. His lips were pulled back in a grimace, and he stamped his right foot onto the ground as hard as he could. His eyes were blank and staring, focused on something only he could see, focused on the past.

Sylvia reached out and rubbed his hip, looking up at the massively built biker with her wide eyes set in a death's head face.

"It's OK. It's over now, Buck." She said. Her voice was soft and mellow, and I was surprised to discover that I had drawn my pistol. Embarrassed, I holstered the pistol as Sylvia kept rubbing Buck's hip and speaking to him in low, soothing tones, words of comfort, words to remind him where he was.

Buck suddenly shook like he was freezing to death, then stamped over to Bradley-One, climbing in and slamming the hatch shut viciously.

I knew what it was. For a split second, the fire had gone from being in the firepit, to being all around him as he drove a burning hummvee through a field to rescue the rest of us, the fire greedily devouring his flesh as he came to our aid. "Flashback" was what Greg called it.

He isn't the only one who has had them.

From the Diaries of Becka.

This disorder is the result of a severe and extraordinary trauma, either environmental (a large fire, hurricane) or violent (war, murder, rape, etc.) There may be dramatic outbursts of fear or aggression, triggered by a sudden recollection and/or re-enactment of the original event.

Mild	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 check during play, the afflicted character is shaken for 3d6 minutes.
Moderate	As above, but the character is affected by fear for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.
Severe	As above, but the character is panicked for 1d6 rounds, and is shaken for 3d6 minutes afterwards.

Mild	+2 bonus to all initiative checks
Moderate	At the beginning of any combat, the character must make a Will save (DC = severity) or go berserk until the end of the encounter.
Severe	Advance to Dissociative Fugue or Psychosis.

DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS

Strange. We had all seen it, but Darrel has no recollection of it. He had been cut off by the largest Wolf Pack we had ever seen, and herded up six flights of stairs. Finally, trapped between windows and the Wolf Pack, he had put his last two bullets into the windows and lept through them.

He fell almost a hundred feet to the ground, crashing into the large hedges that surrounded the building, and staggered out. He was bruised a little, but he did not break or sprain a single thing. Robert says luck saved him, Darrel claims it must have been skill, Buck and Greg agree it was stupidity that saved him.

He doesn't remember doing it, nor does he remember Ivan, one of the Spetznaz, running across the parking lot to save him. We've asked, and he just plain doesn't believe it happened.

I wonder what I have forgotten?

From the Diaries of Becka

Dissociative disorders are a survival technique that allow individuals enduring "hopeless" circumstances to maintain some ability to function. During a traumatic experience, a person may dissociate the details of the trauma from his ongoing memory, resulting in a temporary mental escape from the trauma. Unfortunately, in some cases, this leads to a memory gap surrounding the experience.

Short-Term	Long-Term
Depersonalization	Dissociative Fugue
Dissociative Amnesia	

DEPERSONALIZATION DISORDER

I always feel better after admitting to you what has happened, Diary.

From the Diaries of Becka

Depersonalization disorder is a feeling of detachment from oneself, a sense of "looking at yourself from the outside." The afflicted observes his own physical actions or mental processes as if he were an observer, leading to a feeling that he is not in control of his own actions.

Mild	-2 to Listen, Spot, and initiative
Moderate	The character may make only a single standard action or move action each round.
Severe	Advance to Dissociative Fugue

DISSOCIATIVE AMNESIA

It was weird - when Cathy went to sleep last night, she remembered everything about herself. This morning, she cannot remember anything about herself. She knows how to fire a rifle, knows that Risers and children are dangerous, but remembers nothing else, not even her own name. She knows she has forgotten something, but cannot remember what.

She is happy, however. It must be nice for her, the bitch.

From the Diaries of Becka

A person with dissociative amnesia is unable to remember personal information. They are aware that they have forgotten something, but do not know what it is. While they are able to perform simple tasks, they usually are unable to perform more complex ones.

Mild	The character receives no XP for the encounter that caused this insanity. At his discretion, the GM may award this XP after the insanity is cured.
Moderate	The afflicted character may make skill checks only with skills that may be used untrained.
Severe	Advance to Dissociative Fugue.

DISSOCIATIVE FUGUE

She insists that we call her Nelly. Her name is Carol - or at least, it was for the last three weeks she has been with us since we picked her up outside of Yreka. Now, she insists that her name is Nelly, and she grew up on a farm in Kansas.

Her memories are a hodgepodge of television shows and movies, usually bucolic or happy memories. Robert just shrugs when I ask if she will ever go back to normal, and Buck likes Nelly better because Nelly is a hella accurate shot with an M-4 and a 9mm pistol.

If she keeps claiming that Greg is her husband, I'm going to shoot the bitch.

From the Diaries of Becka

A person in a dissociative fugue adopts a new identity. This disorder is generally caused by a severe stressor and the fugue is usually limited to a few days, but may last up to months. When the fugue ends, the person is unable to recall what occurred during this state.

Mild	The afflicted character may make skill checks only with skills that may be used untrained.
Moderate	As above, and the character may not add any skill ranks gained before the dissociative fugue. Until he recovers, the character may add only his base attribute modifier, plus any ranks gained by his "new identity" during the fugue. The GM may allow the character to choose new core skills for the duration of the fugue.
Severe	As above, and the new identity develops an additional disorder of its own. If the character is cured of the dissociative fugue, he is cured of this additional disorder as well.

IMPULSE CONTROL DISORDERS

Whatever possessed Kenneth to do it, I'll never know. He knew that if he stuck his finger into the barrel of the Bushmaster he'd probably lose it, but for some reason, while we were checking it to make sure that it was functioning properly after that Wolf Pack brat shoved a knife into it, he shoved his hand in between the barrels.

It did more than take his fingers off, it snatched his whole damn arm off. Sam put a pistol round into the bridge of his nose before the arm flew free of the rotating barrels.

From the Diaries of Becka

Disorders in this category include extreme difficulty in controlling impulses despite an awareness of their negative consequences.

Short-Term	Long-Term
Addiction/Dependence	Addiction/Dependence
Intermittent Explosive	
Kleptomania/Pyromania/Trichotillomania	



YEAR ☉ OF THE ZOMBIE

GENERAL ADDICTION/DEPENDENCE (ALCOHOL, DRUGS, FOOD, GAMBLING, SEX, ETC.)

I love Greg, but I've noticed something strange over the course of the last few months. While he's been this way since I've known him, I still love him deeply. He loves mixing it up with the zombies, loves combat with Raiders, and is massively aroused when the combat is over.

Buck and Sam have mentioned something called a "combat high" and I'm beginning to think that Greg likes it a bit too much. For some reason, it reminds me of my uncle's drinking problem.

From the Diaries of Becka

Characters with an addiction or dependence show the following signs: a tolerance for the addictive substance (needing increased amounts to achieve the same effect); withdrawal symptoms; taking larger amounts than are intended for a longer period of time than is intended; spending a great deal of time attempting to acquire the addictive substance; and finally, continuing to abuse the substance even though the person knows there are negative consequences caused by the addiction.

Mild	The character suffers a -4 penalty to Will saving throws with regard to the addiction, and gains a +4 bonus to applicable Fortitude saves.
Moderate	The character automatically fails Will saving throws with regard to the addictive substance.
Severe	The continuing effects of addiction leave the character sickened until cured.

INTERMITTENT EXPLOSIVE DISORDER

Out of the blue, Buck punched Darrel in the mouth and screamed at him to grow the fuck up. Darrel lay on his back while Buck screamed that Darrel was fresh meat if he didn't shape up, and one day, he, Sam, Robert, or Greg wouldn't be there to save him.

At the end of the lecture, he told Darrel: "So tie your goddamn boot!" As if he could hear himself, he got a strange look on his face, then reached down to help Darrel to his feet.

"Sorry man, punching you was out of line. I'm sorry, Darrel. Just tie your boot," Buck told the

younger man. Darrel nodded and quickly tied his boot.

From the Diaries of Becka

The afflicted character suffers from episodes of violence that begin unexpectedly, with little or no provocation, and end just as abruptly. After the violent act, however, they do display remorse and generally assume responsibility.

Mild	At the beginning of any encounter, the character must make a Will save (DC = severity) or rage until the end of the encounter. At the end of the encounter, the character is fatigued.
Moderate	As above, but the character goes berserk.
Severe	As above, and the character gains no XP for any encounter during which he goes berserk.

KLEPTOMANIA / PYROMANIA / TRICHOTILLOMANIA

Sylvia burst into tears today. She has a bad habit of tugging on her bangs, and when she did it today, a huge hunk of her hair came out, leaving a reddish patch that oozed a clear liquid. It was the first time I'd seen her show very much emotion in all the time I have known her.

Every time she tugs on her hair, it comes loose, but for some reason, she just keeps doing. She's going to be bald within a few days if she keeps it up.

From the Diaries of Becka

Kleptomania is the impulse to steal objects even when they are not needed. The afflicted feel a release of tension after stealing an object. Generally, their sole goal is to relieve the mounting tension.

Pyromania, like other impulse control disorders, shows a release of tension when the person sets a fire. They cannot resist setting fires, and get gratification from watching them. They do not feel remorse or regret for the aftermath, from destruction of property to death. Unlike other impulse control disorders, they may plan their arson in advance, which also brings them pleasure.

Trichotillomania is the irresistible urge to pull one's hair. Resisting the impulse builds tension, and pulling the hair relieves the tension. The hair may be rubbed around the mouth, licked or even eaten.

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Mild	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 during play, the character's impulse begins anew. Until the character satisfies her impulse, she suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to all skill checks, saving throws, and attack rolls. Once the impulse is satisfied, all penalties are removed.
Moderate	As above, but the character can only lessen the penalty by 1 for each time the impulse is satisfied (instead of removing all penalties).
Severe	As above, but the character suffers a -2 penalty each time the impulse begins. Satisfying the impulse lessens the penalty by only 1 each time. (In effect, the character must satisfy the impulse twice as often.)

MOOD DISORDERS

The girl's name is Jacqueline, as least as far as she confides to us. She mopes around, sighing exaggeratedly or always staring at the ground. We got her from a slaver convoy; she was still alive, buried under the corpses of the others in the back of the semi, despite the slavers throwing molotov cocktails inside.

Robert says that she will either get better or someone will shoot her when she endangers the rest of us through her depression and lethargy. She may not care about her life, but I care about mine.

From the Diaries of Becka

The primary symptom of these disorders is a disturbance in mood: inappropriate, exaggerated, or limited range of feelings. These feelings are extreme, such as crying, and frequently feeling depressed or suicidal; or, the opposite extreme, such as excessive energy without sleeping for days at a time, during which time the decision making ability is significantly impaired.

Short-Term	Long-Term
Addiction/Dependence	Addiction/Dependence
	Depression (moderate or severe)

DEPRESSION

Jacqueline constantly complains she is tired, and we've decided that it would not be prudent to place her on guard duty. She is so damn depressed all the time, moping about, getting tired at the slightest exertion during combat, and sleeping for over 14 hours a day. If she falls asleep on guard duty again, I'm going to shoot her in the ass and see if that helps her.

From the Diaries of Becka

In typical depressive episodes of all three varieties described below (mild, moderate, and severe), the individual usually suffers from depressed mood, loss of interest and enjoyment, reduced energy, and commensurate fatigue and diminished activity. Marked tiredness after only slight effort is common.

Mild	-2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, and Sense Motive.
Moderate	The character is fatigued at all times, and gains only 2/3 of the benefit of sleep (i.e., he requires 12 hours of sleep to gain the benefits of 8 hours).
Severe	The character begins to feel suicidal. If the character suffers any fear effect, he goes berserk instead, focusing his attention solely on the most dangerous source of fear.

MANIC DEPRESSIVE

Jacqueline has gone from sleeping all the time to being a damn freak. She swings back and forth between sleeping all the time and not sleeping for days at a time. She's either grouchy or moody, and when she goes without sleep for too long, she does stupid things like engage the Risen at close range, or wait almost too long before closing the hatch. Why is it she's getting stupider?

From the Diaries of Becka

Manic depression causes mood swings in which the afflicted character cycles from depression to mania. Depression is described above; mania is characterized by a decreased need for sleep, decreased self-control, irritability, rage, risk-taking behaviors, and in severe cases psychotic states.

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Mild	Each time the afflicted character rolls a 1 on a d20 check during play, his mood switches from depression to mania or vice versa. When the character is in a manic state, he receives +2 to initiative, +2 to all Charisma-based skill checks, and needs only half as much sleep as normal. When the character is depressed, he suffers the effects of mild depression (see below).
Moderate	As above, but the effects are more pronounced. When the character is manic, he automatically fails any non-combat saving throw or d20 check related to Willpower. When the character is depressed, he suffers the effects of moderate depression (below).
Severe	Advance to Psychosis.

PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

Jacqueline is getting weirder and weirder. Although I don't want to, I have a feeling I'm going to have to be the one who shoots her. She's female, and even though this group numbers nearly forty now, there are only 8 females total. Soon, however, being female will not be able to save her.

Diaries of Becka

Psychosis involves severe delusions and hallucinations that significantly hinder a person's ability to function (for example, believing that the GM is out to get you, when there is no evidence of it). Hallucinations are false perceptions, including visual (seeing things that aren't there), auditory (hearing), olfactory (smelling), tactile (feeling sensations on your skin that aren't really there, such as the feeling of bugs crawling on you), or taste.

Of all of the insanity's presented here, psychotic disorders are the most interesting and the most challenging to roleplay.

Short-Term	Long-Term
Brief Psychotic	Delusional
	Schizophrenia

BRIEF PSYCHOTIC DISORDER

Jacqueline has decided that she is a fruit bat. I swear to God. She is convinced that this is all a bad dream, and she is going to wake up from it. Whenever she is in serious danger, she just falls over like she went into a coma. Her eyes are open, but

there's no response. She's in Bradley-Six right now, strapped down on a gurney, but I think tonight, I'll go in there and smother her with a pillow.

From the Diaries of Becka

This psychosis has a rapid onset following a major trauma. The afflicted shows symptoms such as delusions, hallucinations, grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior, or disorganized speech.

Mild	-2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks.
Moderate	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 during play, the afflicted character becomes confused. This state lasts until the end of the current encounter or scene.
Severe	As above, but instead of confusion, the character falls into a delusional stupor and is helpless for 1d6 hours.

DELUSIONAL DISORDER

The woman was a weird one all right. Driving a Chevy Bronco with a winch on the front and wearing heavy brown coveralls, her eyes appeared to look right through you. She helped up fix the portside tread on Bradley-Four, remaining strangely silent all the time.

When she saw Emma inside of the Bradley, however, she looked at me, and at my slightly rounded belly, and apologized. She told me that the Rising was all her fault. This, of course, instantly attracted the attention of the boys, until she confessed that it was God punishing her for being such a slut while she had been in college. She apologized to all of us for not believing her father when he had told her that God would punish her if she did not quit acting like a whore, then left.

What a weirdo.

From the Diaries of Becka

The afflicted character has a "non-bizarre" delusion—that is, a delusion that could actually occur. Examples are erotomania (the belief that a person of higher status is in love with you); grandiose (in which the afflicted has delusions of inflated self-worth or power); persecutory (in which the afflicted believes they are being mistreated); somatic (where the afflicted believes they have a physical problem, defect, or illness); or a mixture of any of the previous types.

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Mild	The character loses a previous allegiance and adds an allegiance appropriate to their disorder: a love interest, personal power, wealth, etc.
Moderate	As above. Any time the character's delusion is questioned, challenged, or called into question (intentionally or otherwise), he must make a Will save (DC = severity) or go berserk.
Severe	Advance to Schizophrenia.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

I went in and did it. When I moved up to her, she started begging me to release her, that the aliens were looking into her brain to try to steal the secret of turning people into zombies, that the aliens wanted the secret so that they could steal her army from her. She was still mumbling that fruit bat crap when I smothered her

From the Diaries of Becka

Schizophrenia is akin to the Delusional Disorder, but is more severe in that the delusions are more bizarre: hallucinatory voices giving a running commentary on the character's actions; persistent, inappropriate or impossible delusions, such as religious or political identity; or superhuman powers and abilities (such as being able to control the weather, or being in communication with aliens from another world). In extreme cases, catatonic behavior, mutism, and stupor may occur.

Like other forms of this insanity, the description of game effects are minimal and the burden is upon the player to roleplay the affliction in a genuine and interesting way.

Mild	-2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks.
Moderate	Additional -2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks.
Severe	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 during play, the afflicted character goes into catatonic withdrawal and is helpless for 2d6 hours.

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

"Promise you won't shoot me?" The slaver was hiding inside the ice cream truck, holding a young girl as a shield with his pistol against her head. The little girl's face was resigned and emotionless, and we could see bite marks and bruises on her naked body.

"Promise. Put the girl down, and we'll let you go," Sylvia said. She smiled at the slaver, her luminous eyes wide and guileless as he gulped convulsively several times, then nodded and dropped the girl.

Sylvia shot him twice in the crotch, then walked over and kicked his skull in with the steel toe of her desert combat boot, that smile and innocent look never leaving her face. When the guy was dead, she turned to the little girl, blood splattered all over the both of them, and smiled.

"Kick him a few times, honey, you'll feel better," Sylvia told her in a reasonable voice. I knew Sylvia, and I knew better to interfere as she urged the child on. She had each of the four children point out those slavers who had raped them, and encouraged them and instructed them to kick the bodies, or hack on them with Buck's machete, or to shoot them with her own pistol. We stood silently and watched as Sylvia led those children on their orgy of violent retribution on the dead and dying slavers.

When each child began to cry, I was there, or Buck, or Robert, to comfort them, and hold them, and carry them into the Bradleys where they would be safe. When it was over, Sylvia smiled at me, her shins and boots soaked in blood.

"Nothing wrong with some cathartic violence." Her eyes sparkled as if she had just given me the secret of life, and her face, which was still devoid of fat from her struggle against radiation sickness, looked like a gleeful skull.

For all of her gentle appearance, there was less humanity left inside of Sylvia than in the Risers at times.

What's sad, is while I cannot encourage a child to mutilate the body of someone who had raped and beaten them, I admire Sylvia for doing it.

From the Diary of Becka.

Personality Disorders include symptoms that pervade nearly all aspects of the person's life. Although the symptoms vary in intensity, the afflicted shows difficulty with the intensity, appropriateness, and range of their emotions; interpersonal skills and relationships, and impulse control.

Short-Term	Long-Term
Dependent	Antisocial
Histrionic	Borderline
Paranoid	Schizoid

DEPENDENT PERSONALITY DISORDER

Carol always waits to see what I'm doing before doing something for herself. I even tested it out today. While everyone else was firing at the Risers clustered around the vehicles, I took apart my rifle, licked the bolt a few times, then put it back together. She did the same thing.

I guess that one little mistake she made broke her confidence.

From the Diaries of Becka

Those with Dependent Personality Disorder have trouble assuming responsibility for major aspects of their own lives, preferring instead to allow others to make their decisions. The show a lack of self-confidence and in some cases cannot even function independently.

Mild	During any encounter, the character is unable to take any action (other than delaying an action) until at least one ally has taken an action.
Moderate	The character may succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) in order to take any action or skill check that provokes an opposed skill check.
Severe	The character automatically fails any opposed skill check unless the result is a critical success.

HISTRIONIC PERSONALITY DISORDER

Candy claimed to have been a Wolf Pack Den Mother before they cast her out, a prostitute on the LA streets, a SWAT sniper, a banker, and a lot of other things. As soon as people's attention wavered off of her, or she felt that one of our group was getting more attention than she was, she inevitably did something stupid or embarrassing in order to get everyone to focus on her.

Last night, she volunteered to go with Sylvia on a recon, and rather than waiting for Sylvia to give the all clear signal to her while she waited in the hummvee, she jumped out and ran into the building by herself. It didn't take too long for her to come staggering out, and Sylvia put her down right as we were pulling up.

Myself? I prefer boredom.

From the Diaries of Becka

Those afflicted with this disorder are always calling attention to themselves. They are lively and overly dramatic, and even minor situations can cause wild mood swings. They easily become bored and crave new, novel situations and

excitement. They form relationships quickly, but the relationships are often shallow, with the afflicted demanding increasing amounts of attention.

Mild	+2 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform checks.
Moderate	The above bonus is negated, and the character suffers a -2 penalty to Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, and Sense Motive checks.
Severe	As above, and the character suffers an additional -2 penalty to Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform, and Sense Motive checks.

PARANOID PERSONALITY DISORDER

People used to classify paranoia as a mental disorder, but in this brave new world, everyone really is out to get you. Paranoia isn't a disease, but a requirement for survival.

From the Diaries of Becka

The afflicted has an ongoing, unbiased suspiciousness and distrust of people, and develops an emotional detachment. He suspects that others are exploiting or deceiving him, that others are not loyal or trustworthy, perceives threats or attacks on his character in innocent statements by others, and bears persistent grudges.

Mild	+2 to Initiative, Gather Information, and Research skill check. If the character has reason to feel wronged by someone, he gains an allegiance to revenge against that individual or group
Moderate	As above, and a -2 penalty to Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.
Severe	Additional +2 bonus to initiative. The character loses all previous skill modifiers listed above and instead suffers a -4 penalty to Diplomacy, Gather Information, Research, and Sense Motive checks.

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

Thomas woke everyone up again, screaming in his sleep and fighting his way to consciousness. The fourth night in a row he had done that. Sylvia held him while he cried and shook, confused as to how he had gotten there when he had just been trapped on top of a telephone pole with several zombies below him, and no weapon.

He dreamed that same dream, every night, since we found him. That he was up on top of the telephone pole, thirsty, hungry and sunburnt, with more and

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more zombies slowly arriving, waiting for him to sleep, to fall, so that they could feast.

In his dreams, we never arrive, and eventually, he falls. Or we do arrive, and when he joins with us, we fall on him and devour him. Or a WolfPack arrives, climbs up the pole, and eats him. Or his worst one, where the zombies grow so numerous that they are able to climb up one another to get at him.

If we were somewhere safe, we could sedate him, so he could get a decent night's sleep.

But we aren't, and he'll just have to deal with it.

From the Diaries of Becka

ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER (SOCIOPATH)

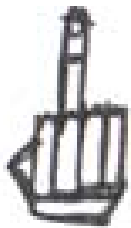
I've seen Sylvia tell someone that she doesn't have a cigarette because she doesn't smoke while she has one in her mouth. She often reacts with sudden and shocking violence at the slightest provocation in order to keep herself and the rest of us safe, and has no remorse for anything she has done beyond breaking her oath to protect America.

She's snapped, there is no doubt about it, but honestly, I'm glad she is with us, rather than against us.

From the Diaries of Becka

Antisocial Personality Disorder results in what is commonly known as a Sociopath. The afflicted shows an ongoing disregard for the rights and safety of others, failure to conform to social norms and lawful behaviors, repeated lying or deceit for personal profit or pleasure, and lack of remorse for actions that hurt other people in any way.

Mild	The character loses any allegiance to law and/or good, and gains an allegiance to self.
Moderate	-4 penalty to Diplomacy and Gather Information checks, and a +4 bonus to Bluff (only when lying).
Severe	As above, and if the character fails any Charisma-based skill check, he must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or go berserk.



BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

Johanna is a survivor we picked up outside of Salem, and honestly, I don't like the bitch. She constantly whines about how ugly or fat she is (she's scrawny) and how nobody likes her. She can't seem to understand the basics of not going off by herself, not just jumping out of the back of the humvee that Buck assigned her to, or even worse, just lying back and taking a nap when she should be keeping watch. When you try to talk to her about it, she gets pissed off, and went as far as slapping me today for yelling at her to quit reading a book she had found and keep watch.

When Sam threatened to leave her behind, she went as far as threatening to shoot herself and THEN the rest of us if we tried to. Personally, I've had it. The next time she pulls an attitude, I'm shooting her in the face.

From the Diaries of Becka

This disorder is characterized by unstable personal relationships, a poor self-image, and poor impulse control. The afflicted fears abandonment and will go to any length to prevent this, including threats of suicide and self harm. When criticized by others, the afflicted is prone to outbursts of intense anger and impulsive acts.

Mild	The character loses any allegiance to law and gains an allegiance to chaos.
Moderate	The character suffers a -2 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks.
Severe	The character suffers an additional -2 penalty to all Charisma-based skill checks. If the character loses an opposed Charisma-based skill check, she goes berserk.

SCHIZOID/SCHIZOTYPAL PERSONALITY DISORDER

One of the things that annoys the piss out of me about Darrel is the fact that he doesn't seem to realize just how bad this is. He seems to think that he is playing a video game, still dresses like a drug dealer, and pouts for hours if you try to tell him that he's being a fool.

Buck says it's because he's stupid. Greg says it's because he's just a kid. Robert has told me that he is afraid it may be something deeper.

From the Diaries of Becka

A person with Schizoid Personality Disorder has minimal social and

interpersonal relationships and difficulty expressing emotions. They also have exhibit magical thinking (if I think *this*, I can make *that* happen), paranoia, and other strange thoughts. They may talk to themselves, dress inappropriately, and are very sensitive to criticism.

Mild	-2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks.
Moderate	Additional -2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks, and a -1 penalty to all other Wisdom-based checks.
Severe	Additional -2 penalty to Concentration, Listen, Spot, Sense Motive, and all Charisma-based checks, and an additional -1 penalty to all other Wisdom-based checks.

SLEEP DISORDERS

Before all of this happened, I used to sleep nine to ten hours a night, uninterrupted, and I never dreamed, not a single time. I would lay down, and BAM, I was waking up with no sense of disruption or confusion and it was morning, just like I had blinked my eyes.

Now, however, when I close my eyes, I see and hear people screaming and being torn to pieces by gunfire or zombies. Sometimes I see things which have happened, mostly to strangers. Those aren't so bad. Sometimes, however, the people dying are my friends, or Emma. On those nights, I wake up screaming and clawing at the hull of the Bradley, and it takes Greg or one of the others a long time to calm me down.

It's worse when I'm pregnant, and I dream that the baby is clawing its way out of my belly.

From the Diaries of Becka

Short-Term	Long-Term
Dyssomnia	Hypersomnia
Sleep Terror	Insomnia
Parasomnia	Narcolepsy
	Sleepwalking

DYSSOMNIAS

"Trouble sleeping?" the Army guy, Matthews, asked me when I walked into what had been the doctor's break room. He was stirring a cup of coffee with one of those red straws, and his rifle lay across his lap as he looked at me curiously.

"Yeah. You?" I asked him. His eyes were intent, and for some reason made me uncomfortable, those green eyes that seemed so sensitive.

"I don't sleep much anymore. I haven't since all of this started last week," he told me. I nodded slowly, walking over and making myself a cup of coffee. When I turned around, his eyes were closed, but when I took a single step, they snapped open and locked right onto me.

"Learn to sleep when you can, college girl," he told me as I left the break room. Another skill I need to learn if I plan on surviving what is going on around me. For some reason, I'll bet he's sleeping right now.

From the Diaries of Becka

Dyssomniacs suffer from changes in the amount, restfulness, timing, and quality of sleep. There are otherwise no physical symptoms (as with Parasomniacs).

Mild	The character suffers a -2 penalty to all Concentration, Search, Spot, and Knowledge checks.
Moderate	As above, and the character is fatigued at all times.
Severe	Advance to Hypersomnia.

SLEEP TERROR DISORDER

At least once a night, one of us will wake up screaming. There are sixty of us now, and every night, at least one, and sometimes as many as half, of us wake up screaming, covered in sweat and our hearts pounding in our chests.

Before the Rising, we would have been encouraged to see a doctor. Now? It's normal. You need help if you never wake up that way.

From the Diaries of Becka

This disorder is characterized by an abrupt awakening from sleep, usually accompanied by a scream. The person cannot be comforted by outside parties, and it must be allowed to run its course. They show signs of intense fear, such as rapid breathing, sweating, and a rapid heartbeat, and they later will have no memories of the incident.

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Mild	During each sleep period, there is a 2 in 6 chance that the character will awaken with a loud scream. The character falls back asleep almost immediately, but those sleeping near the afflicted must fail a Listen check or be awakened themselves.
Moderate	As above. The character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or be awakened by his terrors. The character will be shaken and confused for 2d6 rounds after waking.
Severe	As above. The character is automatically awakened by his own terrors, and is shaken and confused for 2d6 rounds.

PARASOMNIA

That County Sheriff, Sam, jerks when he is almost asleep. One moment, he will be perfectly still, the next, he jerks awake, grabbing for a handhold, even when sleeping on the ground instead of the cot that the military has provided us here in the refugee station.

Isn't that weird?

From the Diaries of Becka

A parasomnia is a disruptive physical act that occurs during slumber. These physical acts may disturb the sleep-stage transition. The most common are talking while asleep, starting or jerking, and disorientation upon waking.

Persons afflicted with sleep disorders have trouble sleeping, waking, and dreaming—either too much or too little in some combination. The specifics of the sleep disorder lead to the various classifications below.

Mild	During each sleep period, the character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or startle himself awake.
Moderate	As above, and if the character is awakened, he is confused for 2d6 rounds.
Severe	Advance to Sleepwalking.

HYPERSOMNIA

Veronica is always complaining about not being able to get enough sleep. She sleeps all night, in between her shift on a weapon or on lookout, and in between meals, and is still sleepy. She takes forever to wake up too. I wonder how long she's going to survive.

From the Diaries of Becka

This disorder is characterized by excessive sleepiness lasting for at least a month. The sufferer has long undisturbed sleep periods and difficulty waking up. They may experience "sleep drunkenness" or other disorientation upon waking. They often take long daytime naps, which do little to refresh and recharge them.

Mild	The character requires an extra 4 hours of sleep per day.
Moderate	As above, and the character suffers a -2 penalty to Listen, Spot, and Initiative checks for 2d6 rounds after waking.
Severe	As above, and the character is confused for 2d6 rounds after waking.

INSOMNIA

Greg can stay awake for days on end. I often wonder if it's military training, or a sign of something deeper. Insomnia can be dangerous, and the last thing I want is for him to not be at his best.

From the Diaries of Becka

Insomnia is the inability to fall asleep or maintain sleep. The afflicted feels tired or irritable the next day, and may be consumed with worry before going to bed, for fear that they won't be able to sleep. During the day they may fall asleep at unexpected times.

Mild	The character suffers a -2 penalty to all Concentration, Search, Spot, and Knowledge checks.
Moderate	As above, and the character suffers a -2 penalty to all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Gather Information checks.
Severe	Advance to Narcolepsy.

NARCOLEPSY

Veronica has gotten far worse. She'll often fall asleep in the middle of talking, and once just keeled over asleep while firing the SAW on Hummvee-Three, making Roger think we were being gassed. Robert has diagnosed her with narcolepsy and doesn't think there is anything that he can do. I don't think she's long for this world.

From the Diaries of Becka

Narcolepsy is sudden sleepiness, sometimes accompanied by loss of muscle tone (from mild to total collapse). Narcolepsy is generally the result of boredom, but can occur at any time.

Mild	Each time any player rolls a 1 on a d20 during play, the afflicted character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or fall into a deep sleep for 1d6 minutes. This does not apply during combat or encounters that include interaction with NPCs. If the player is awakened before awakening naturally, he is confused for 1d6 rounds.
Moderate	As above, though the character may fall asleep even in the midst of interaction with others (though still not during combat). This may cause the character to fail certain skill checks (such as falling asleep in the midst of a diplomatic negotiation).
Severe	As above, and the character may fall asleep at any time, even during combat.

SLEEPWALKING DISORDER

Steve was an OK guy, just had a bad habit of wandering around when he was supposed to be sleeping. His wife told us that he always was a sleepwalker, and that he would often wander around the house for up to an hour, bumping into stuff.

He did it once with us. He got up from his sleeping bag, wandered out, and hit the tripline for a Claymore land mine, and blew his sleepwalking ass all over the landscape.

From the Diaries of Becka

Sleepwalking is the act of getting out of bed and wandering around. This normally occurs during the first third part of the sleep cycle. The person is characterized by having a blank stare, is basically

unresponsive to others, and will be difficult

Mild	During each sleep period, the character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or begin speaking aloud for 2d6 rounds. In addition to waking those around them, the afflicted may speak things that the conscious mind would prefer to remain unspoken. If the character is awakened during this time, he is confused for 1d6 rounds.
Moderate	As above, and the character will actually get up and walk around in a confused state for 1d6 minutes. If the character is awakened in this state, he must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) or go berserk.
Severe	As above, and the GM is in control of the character's words and actions during the sleepwalking episode. The character will behave in accordance to his subconscious desires, as interpreted by the GM for maximum mischief.

to wake. They can at times perform complex functions such as unlocking doors. The person will have no memory of the episode.

Special: Childhood Disorders The following disorders generally manifest only in children. However, in the context of a Horror check, the GM may rule that the afflicted character "regresses" to childhood and adopts one of these disorders. They are applicable as both short- and long-term disorders.

SELECTIVE MUTISM

One thing that all of us have noticed, is that Wolf Pack kids don't talk to one another. Maybe pidgin or a kind of sign language, but for the most part, they do not speak.

We do know it takes torture to get them to speak to us.

From the Diaries of Becka

Selective Mutism is a disorder in which the afflicted may talk in comfortable surroundings but refuses to talk in social situations.

Mild	The character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) in order to speak in unfamiliar settings. This may have the effect or rendering may skills and talents (such as spellcasting) impossible.
Moderate	As above. If the Will save is successful, the afflicted character manages to vocalize only with difficulty. All language-dependent skill checks suffer a -2 penalty, and spells with a verbal component have a 20% chance of failure.
Severe	The character is rendered completely speechless in unfamiliar surroundings, with no Will save allowed.

STUTTERING/TICS (TOURETTE'S SYNDROME)

Another thing we have noticed about Wolf Pack kids, is that they have a tendency to bark at one another. Quick, rapid barks that might be some communication. They also bark when excited, hunting, scared, or slightly injured.

Is it a sign of a shared insanity, or a learned response from the dogs that keep constant company with them?

From the Diaires of Becka

A tic is an involuntary, rapid, recurrent movement or vocalization. Tics tend to be irresistible but they can be suppressed for limited periods. Common motor tics include eye-blinking, neck-jerking, facial grimacing, or inappropriate gestures. Common vocal tics include throat-clearing, barking, or the use of obscenities.

Mild	The character must succeed at a Will save (DC = severity) in order to speak in unfamiliar settings. This may have the effect or rendering may skills and talents (such as spellcasting) impossible.
Moderate	As above. If the Will save is successful, the afflicted character manages to vocalize only with difficulty. All language-dependent skill checks suffer a -2 penalty, and spells with a verbal component have a 20% chance of failure.
Severe	The character is rendered completely speechless in unfamiliar surroundings, with no Will save allowed.



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*Restaurant in Eureka, OR
No survivors but plenty of salvage*