

WORLDS OF THE DEAD



A Deadworld Collection for
All Flesh Must Be Eaten

**At first, you thought it was a plague.
Then you thought maybe it's an after-school special.
Now you know.**

It's a front row seat for the end of worlds!

Worlds of the Dead is the first Deadworlds collection for the All Flesh Must Be Eaten roleplaying game of survival horror. Inside this rancid tome, zombie masters will uncover everything needed to push their players to the edge of survival—on a weekly basis!

Worlds of the Dead is filled from cover to tainted cover with Deadworlds from a variety of authors. We've drawn from industry professionals, up-and-coming talents, and never-before devoured acts. Then we sent them to run amuck with the dead!

**This Deadworld collection journeys from
the past to the future, including stops at:**

- A world where WWI flying aces face off against an evil, undead, Red Baron over the skies of France.
- A world where necromancers control the future of your death.
- A world of ancient deserts where the dead refuse to remain buried beneath the sands.

Whether you need a world ready-to-play for an unexpected session, fresh ideas for your own vile plots, or that feeling of power being in control of several thousand zombies all at once, Worlds of the Dead keeps on coming . . . just like the walking dead it features.



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WORLDS OF THE DEAD



EDEN STUDIOS PRESENTS A SHY/VASILAKOS PRODUCTION

Worlds of the Dead™

Produced by EDEN STUDIOS Directed by GEORGE VASILAKOS

Written by EDWIN AGER ROB BOYLE TOM COSTER DAN DAVIS

GORDON DRITSCHILLO DARREN HARDY NIK HAVERT

JOHN KARAKASH MICHAEL KUORJAK MARK FREEMAN

THOM MARRION MICHAEL MCCONNELL

MATTHEW MCFARLAND JASON MICAL ERIN MILLS

W. DAVID PATTISON ANDREW PEREGRINE DAN PROCTOR

DANIEL ROBICHAUD II TYLER SIGMAN KELLY STACK

MONICA VALENTINELLI MIKE WALLACE

Editing by DAVIS CHAPMAN DEREK STOELTING and SHARI HILL

Director of Photography GEORGE VASILAKOS

Visual Effects by STORN COOK DWAYNE HARRIS TRAVIS INGRAM

DAN OROPALLO GEORGE VASILAKOS

Cover Art by JON HODGSON

Based on the Original Concept by

CHRISTOPHER SHY and GEORGE VASILAKOS

WWW.ALLFLESH.COM

Eden Studios

6 Dogwood Lane, Loudonville, NY 12211

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Reader discretion is advised.

Comments and questions can be directed via the Internet at www.allflesh.com, via e-mail at edenprod@aol.com or via letter with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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ZOMBIES

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Aces High: World War I

By Daniel R. Davis

with assistance from Thom Marrion and Evin Ager

Death From Above

Behind enemy lines, four planes flew. All that remained of an allied force sent to assist ground troops. When they left for the front there were ten. That was before Hell was unleashed upon them.

The skies were cloudy and they were flying low, keeping an eye for the ground units they were to assist. Two of the Sopwiths were falling from the sky before they even had time to react. Screaming from above came the enemy. Reginald saw them too late to help those who were hit first. He banked and tried to drop one as an Albatross tore by him. He sprayed bullets and missed the target. Immediately, he dropped in behind the enemy plane. The plane was fast and the pilot was good. He spit more lead at the enemy and missed again. Then it entered a cloudbank. He followed the Albatross into the clouds, too close to break off pursuit. The clouds were dense and Reginald could see nothing. Suddenly, he felt a cold, sick feeling settle in his gut. He began to climb, trying to

break away from the clouds. That's when he saw him. The red Albatros D-III screamed from above, upon him in a second. Before Reginald could even begin to go into evasive maneuvers, the machinegun from the plane barked. The plane sped over him and disappeared to his rear.

Reginald saw the pilot as he went by and a chill went up his spine. He saw death there; cold calculating death and he realized that what he saw could not have been human. He broke the cloud cover, not knowing how he survived the encounter with the infamous "Red Devil" the French always spoke of. In time, he met up with the remaining planes returning to base.

There were only four now, four planes heading back to Allied Command. He had to report to his superiors what he saw. He had to tell them about the face he saw below the flight helm, the face of . . . the Red Baron. Suddenly he felt a cold, sick feeling creep into his guts and it was then that he realized they weren't going to make it back.

The Beginning

On January 1917, shortly after the death of his superior and mentor Oswald Boelcke, Manfred von Richthofen was given the command of the unit. He was distraught over Boelcke's death and would obsess about it for quite some time. Finally, he made a vow that he would serve Germany even in his death.

One night, while out on a patrol mission, his unit encountered enemy planes and a dogfight ensued. During the fight, his plane was hit and his engine gave out. As he fought in vain to control his spiraling Albatros D-III, he thought to himself that in no way was his life to end this way. He would persevere and continue to serve Germany to the very end. He never regained control of the plane and it crashed into a wooded region. Not knowing if Richthofen had survived the descent, the enemy planes were harried away by the remaining forces of Richthofen's unit. The next day, a reconnaissance plane flew over, but could find nothing of the crash. The Allies surmised that he had somehow pulled out of the spin and flew the damaged plane away.

The night Richthofen's plane went down, it did crash and he did die. However, the will of the Red Baron was so strong that his spirit refused to surrender. A short time later, something arose from the wreckage and stepped free of it. The form assumed that of Richthofen himself and looked at the wrecked Albatros. Immediately, the plane began to shift and reform. The broken wings mended and the destroyed engine suddenly roared to life. The body of the plane was still tattered, and bullet holes and tears could be seen all over the wings and fuselage. Nonetheless, Baron von Richthofen climbed into the cockpit and took off to rejoin the German forces.

Upon returning to the German lines, he reported that he was indeed dead, but that he would continue to do his duties in service to his beloved Germany. Without a word from his shaken superiors, he returned to his plane and streaked back into the sky.

The Present

It is June 1917. Richthofen is in command of the Jagdgeschwader, better known as "The Flying Circus." Even more frightening than Richthofen still

flying, is the fact that when one of the fighters under his command goes down, it rises to continue to serve Richthofen and Germany. There are four squadrons in the Circus. Each squadron is comprised of twelve fighters. All are undead. When one is destroyed, a living pilot joins the ranks. When he dies, he rises as an undead follower and the cycle continues. It takes quite a bit to destroy any member of the Flying Circus, but it can be done. Indeed, it seems that the only pilot that cannot be brought down is the Red Baron himself. All attempts have thus far failed to get rid of the "Bloody Red Baron."

As if the Red Baron and his crack team of undead pilots were not enough, the Germans have managed to uncover ancient journals that were hidden somewhere near the border between Germany and Switzerland. The journals were from none other than Victor Frankenstein. They have been deciphering them and have begun to attempt the resurrection processes set down in those blasphemous pages. They have created several units of Frankenstein's zombies that they have, as yet, not put into the field. It is only a matter of time before they may try a field test of their new soldiers.

Story Ideas

Dogfight!

Combine this setting with the rules found on p. 117 of the *AFMBE* core book and you're set for a series of adventures in the sky. Adventurous Zombie Masters may wish to use a hex map and figs (check out your local railroad or hobby shop for WWI planes) to further the experience. At the end of this Deadworld you'll find a series of planes designed just for this era.

The Darkest of Switzerland

The French have heard rumors that the Germans are running a special training camp near the border with Switzerland. The troops coming out of this camp are both highly motivated and highly trained. Cast Members will need to sneak into the camps, sabotage the special training, and get out alive. What they don't know might kill them. . . and eat them.



I Spy

Local resistance fighters have discovered the Red Baron's secret. They know what he is and where the Flying Circus' base of operations is located. Now, it's up to the Cast Members to find a way to sneak into his camp and find a way to stop him.

The Conclusion

Whether the Cast is allowed to figure this out or not, the Red Baron is invincible until his destiny comes to pass. That destiny lies in his 79th victim, Richard Raymond-Barker. Destiny and fate, in an attempt to right itself, allows the soul of this man to carry on with the thought that there is something that he must do. His ghostly form wanders the countryside until the fateful day when the Red Baron is chasing Wilifrid May above the trenches. Seeing the Red Baron's plane fly overhead, he realizes what he must do. He walks to one of the trenches where a dead soldier lies slumped over a Lewis machinegun. Sighting down the barrel at the red Fokker, he fires one burst. At the same time, Arthur Brown fires in a desperate attempt to bring down the Bloody Red Baron. The Red Baron moves as though turning his head, and his plane careens into the ground and disintegrates on impact, spreading debris all over the area. The plane bursts into flames. Anyone looking at the lone man in the trenches will see a look of peace comes over his features and then he fades away.

Afterward, no one wants to admit that a ghost stopped the Red Baron, so the kill is credited to Arthur Brown. Once the Red Baron is killed, the remaining adventure involves the destruction of the zombification facilities and the ending of the war.

One way that this scenario can be played so that the Cast gets to deal not only with the Red Baron, but the ground troops, as well, is to play it as a cliffhanger-like scenario. Have the players create two sets of characters, one set is a fighter squadron, the other is a ground unit. Switch off between the "scenes" of the pilots and the ground unit until you wish to end the game (in glorious fashion, hopefully).

New Vehicles

Planes

Most of the planes are virtually the same in durability. The information below is for additional flavor. Any plane from the war can be created using the stats from these planes. The guns can, for the most part, be brought straight from *AFMBE*. Treat them as 7.62mm machine-guns for damage and range. The bombs can use the mortar shell stats.

The Ghostly Planes of the Flying Circus

To make the planes of the Flying Circus and the Red Baron into supernatural implements of destruction, add 20 points to the DC and give the planes themselves the equivalence of the Zombie Aspect Damage Resistance. To make it more interesting, when a Cast Member scores a hit on the plane roll D10 and on a 10 you hit the pilot. Any roll with 3 or more Success Levels hits the plane's pilot as well. In this case, treat the AV of the plane as armor for the pilot. The Red Baron may not be killable, but his plane is. Destroying his plane puts him out of commission for a while, as he needs to spend time bringing it back (and crashing is pretty inconvenient).

Albatros D.III

Country: Germany

Manufacturer: Albatros Werke GmbH

First Introduced: January 1917

Engine(s): Mercedes D.IIIa

Wing Span: 29 ft 8 in [9.05 m]

Length: 24 ft [7.33 m]

Height: 9 ft 9 in [2.98 m]

Gross Weight: 1,949 lbs [886 kg]

Max Speed: 109 mph [175 km/h] at 3,281 ft [1,000 m]

Ceiling: 18,044 ft [5,500 m]

Endurance: 2 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 38 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 30 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 5

Armament: 2 Spandau light machine guns (550 rounds)

Agile and heavily armed, the Albatros D.III looked similar to earlier models. Using V-struts, the size of the lower wing was reduced to improve downward visibility. The struts allowed the wing to twist in flight. Manfred von Richthofen, one of the first pilots to receive the new plane, experienced this problem first hand when the lower wing of his D.III cracked in flight.

Albatros D.V

Country: Germany

Manufacturer: Albatros Werke GmbH

First Introduced: Late 1917

Engine(s): Mercedes IIIa

Wing Span: 29 ft 8 in [9.05 m]

Length: 24 ft [7.3 m]

Height: 8 ft 7 in [2.7 m]

Gross Weight: 2061 lb [936.8 kg]

Max Speed: 116 mph at 3281 ft [approx 185 kmh at 1000 m]

Ceiling: 18,700 ft [5699.8 m]

Endurance: 2 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 38 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 35 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 5

Armament: 2 Spandau light machine guns (550 rounds)

The Albatros D.V and D.Va retained the wing and tail design of the Albatros D.III. As soon as the D.V entered service, there was a series of fatal crashes caused by wing failure. Small struts and additional wire bracing were added to increase wing strength and pilots were warned not to dive too steeply when flying the D.V, but the crashes continued.

Fokker DR.I

Country: Germany

Manufacturer: Fokker Flugzeug-Werke GmbH

First Introduced: August 1917

Engine(s): Oberursel UR.II

Wing Span: 23 ft 7 3/8 in [7.19 m]

Length: 18 ft 11 1/8 in [5.77 m]

Height: 9 ft 8 in [2.94 m]

Weight: 1,289.2 lb [586 kg]

Max Speed: 103.12 mph [165 kmh] @ 13,120 ft [4000 m]

Ceiling: 20,013 ft [6100 m]

Endurance: 1.5 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 40 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 30 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 6

Armament: 2 Spandau light machine guns (550 rounds)

Sopwith Camel

Country: Great Britain

Manufacturer: Sopwith Aviation Company

First Entered Service: May 1917

Engine(s): Bentley BR.1

Wing Span: 28 ft [8.5 m]

Length: 18 ft 8 in [5.7 m]

Height: 8 ft 6 in [2.6 m]

Weight: 1,422 lb [646.4kg]

Max Speed: 118 mph [189 kmh]

Ceiling: 19,000 ft [5791.2 m]

Endurance: 2.5 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 40 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 35 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 6

Armament: 2 Vickers .303 machine guns;
1 Vickers .303 and 1 Lewis .303 machine guns;
or 2 Lewis .303 machine guns (600 rounds)

“It climbed like a monkey and maneuvered like the devil,” according to Manfred von Richthofen. The Fokker DR.I triplane was built after the Sopwith triplane. While not as fast as contemporary biplanes, the *Dreidecker* could easily out climb any opponent. Small, lightweight, and highly maneuverable, it offered good upward visibility and lacked the traditional bracing wires that could be shot away during combat. This combination of features made it an outstanding plane in a dogfight. When the DR.I first entered service, antagonists scoffed at its design. However, Werner Voss shot down 10 British aircraft in 6 days of aerial combat during September 1917, which showed quite well what it could do in a fight. Unfortunately, the DR.I had its share of problems. By the end of October 1917, it was temporarily withdrawn from service when several pilots, including Heinrich Gontermann, were killed as a result of wing failures. Despite structural improvements, the Fokker triplane’s reputation among German airmen never recovered.

An agile, highly maneuverable biplane, the Sopwith Camel accounted for more aerial victories than any other Allied aircraft during World War I. Credited with destroying 1,294 enemy aircraft, it was called the Camel due to the humped fairing over its twin machine guns. Much like a real camel, this aircraft could turn and bite you. Noted for its tendency to kill inexperienced flyers, many pilots feared its vicious spin characteristics. Until sufficient speed was developed during takeoff, Camel pilots maintained full right rudder to counteract the torque of the rotary engine. Failure to do so often resulted in a ground loop with the Camel crashing on its starboard wingtip. During World War I, 413 pilots died in combat and 385 pilots died from non-combat related causes while flying the Sopwith Camel.

On June 4, 1917, Canadian ace Alexander Shook became the first ace to shoot down an enemy aircraft with the Sopwith Camel. Canadian ace Arthur Brown was flying a Camel when he was credited with shooting down Manfred von Richthofen.

Sopwith Pup

Country: Great Britain

Manufacturer: Sopwith Aviation Company

First Introduced: October 1916

Engine(s): Le Rhône 9C

Wing Span: 26 ft 6 in [8 m]

Length: 19 ft 2 in [5.86 m]

Height: 9 ft 5 in [2.9 m]

Gross Weight: 1225 lb [555 kg]

Max Speed: 106 mph [161 kmh]

Ceiling: 18,500 ft [563 m]

Endurance: 3 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 39 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 30 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 6

Armament: 1 Vickers .303 machine gun
(600 rounds)

The Sopwith Pup quickly became a favorite with pilots of the Royal Naval Air Service. It was superior to the Fokker D.III and more than a match for any of the new Halberstadt and Albatros scouts. Armed with a single synchronous machine gun, it was lighter and less dangerous than its successor, the Sopwith Camel. Although underpowered, pilots liked the plane because it was maneuverable and fast. It could climb and hold its altitude better than any other fighter. In August 1917, the Sopwith Pup was the first aircraft to land aboard a moving ship, the Royal Navy's H.M.S. Furious.

Bristol F.2b

Country: Great Britain

Manufacturer: The British and Colonial
Aeroplane Company

Entered Service: April 5, 1917

Engine(s): Rolls-Royce Falcon III

Wing Span: 39 ft 3 in [11.96 m]

Length: 25 ft 10 in [7.87 m]

Height: 9 ft 9 in [2.97 m]

Gross Weight: 2,779 lb [1,261 kg]

Max Speed: 123 mph [198 km/h] at 5,000 ft
[1,524 m]

Ceiling: 21,500 ft [6,553 m]

Endurance: 3 hours **Crew:** 2

DC: 39 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 38 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 5

Armament: 1 Vickers machine gun, forward firing
(600 rounds); 2-3 Lewis machine guns on a
Scarff ring (97 rounds), rear cockpit; 240 lb
[108.9 kg] of bombs

The versatile Bristol Fighter was a maneuverable, heavily armed two-seater biplane designed by Frank S. Barnwell. One of the most successful fighters of the war, it got off to a poor start during "Bloody April" when it was introduced to the Western Front by the inexperienced pilots and observers of 48 Squadron. In the mistaken belief that the aircraft was structurally weak, pilots were instructed to avoid violent maneuvers during combat. Heeding this advice, the pilots of six B.F.2a fighters encountered Manfred von Richthofen and his flight of five Albatros D.III's near Douai. In a fight that lasted almost 30 minutes, four of the Bristol Fighters were shot down. The fight with Jasta 11 almost convinced the British to withdraw this aircraft from service.

Sopwith Triplane

Country: Great Britain

Manufacturer: Sopwith Aviation Company

First Introduced: November 1916

Engines: Clerget 9Z

Wing Span: 26 ft 6 in [8.07 m]

Length: 18 ft 10 in [5.73 m]

Height: 10 ft 6 in [3.20 m]

Gross Weight: 1,541 lb [698 kg]

Max Speed: 117 mph [188 km/h]

Ceiling: 20,500 ft [6,248 m]

Endurance: 2 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 40 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 35 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 5

Armament: 1 Vickers .303 machine gun (a handful were equipped with twin machine guns) (600 rounds)

The Royal Naval Air Service used the Sopwith triplane in combat. The stack of three wings reduced wingspan and increased wing area making it handle and climb better than biplanes. Visibility from the cockpit was outstanding but the “Tripe” was slower and less heavily armed than its German opponents. The Germans were impressed with its performance and a captured triplane inspired the development of the Fokker DR.I. The triplane was eventually withdrawn from service and replaced with the Sopwith Camel. The “Black Flight,” commanded by Canadian ace Raymond Collishaw, shot down 87 German aircraft in three months while flying the Sopwith triplane.

Nieuport 17

Country: France

Manufacturer: Societe Anonyme des Etablissements Nieuport

First Introduced: March 1916

Engine(s): Le Rhône 9J

Length: 18 ft 10 in [5.74 m]

Height: 7 ft 10 in [2.4 m]

Gross Weight: 1246 lb [565 kg]

Max Speed: 110 mph [177 kmh]

Ceiling: 17,388-ft [5,300 m]

Endurance: 2 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 39 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 30 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 6

Armament: 1 Lewis .303 machine gun and/or 1 Vickers .303 machine gun (600 rounds)

Many of the French and British aces began their careers flying the Nieuport 17. The highly maneuverable “Superbébé” was a larger, improved version of the Nieuport 11. Like its predecessor, it was initially equipped with a Lewis gun but was upgraded to a synchronized Vickers machine gun. Helping end Germany’s domination of the air war, the Nieuport 17 easily out climbed and outperformed the Fokker E.III. The superior design was so successful that German high command ordered it copied.

SPAD S.VII

Country: France

Manufacturer: Société Anonyme Pour L’Aviation et ses Dérives

First Introduced: September 1916

Engine(s): Hispano-Suiza 8A

Wing Span: 25 ft 7 in [7.82 m]

Length: 20 ft 2 in [6.15 m]

Height: 7 ft 6.5 in [2.3 m]

Gross Weight: 1632 lb [740 kg]

Max Speed: 119 mph [191.5 kmh]

Ceiling: 17,500 ft [5334 m]

Endurance: 1.5 hours **Crew:** 1

DC: 39 **AV:** 2

Acceleration: 35 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 6

Armament: 1 Vickers .303 machine gun (600 rounds)

The French Air Service replaced the Nieuport 17 with the SPAD S.VII. Although disadvantaged by poor forward and downward views from the cockpit, the SPAD S.VII was fast, durable and difficult to shoot down. A good performer, it was flown by nearly all the French aces. It proved less successful in the hands of the British, possibly due to the combat tactics employed by the pilots of the Royal Flying Corps.

Caproni Ca.4 Series

Country: Italy

Manufacturer: Società di Aviazione Ing. Caproni

First Introduced: 1918

Engine(s): 3 Isotta-Fraschini

Wing Span: 98 ft 1 in [29.9 m]

Length: 43 ft [13.1 m]

Height: 20 ft 8 in [6.3 m]

Gross Weight: 14,793 lb [6,710 kg]

Max Speed: 78 mph [126 kmh]

Ceiling: 9,842 ft [3000 m]

Endurance: 7 hours **Crew:** 4

DC: 50 **AV:** 4

Acceleration: 20 **Toughness:** 1

Handling: 4

Armament: 4 to 8 machine guns; 3,197 lb [1,450 kg] of bombs

Patterned along the lines of the Caproni Ca.3 series of biplane bombers, the larger triplanes of the Ca.4 series were designed to be more effective in combat. Sometimes armed with up to eight machine guns, these cumbersome bombers were capable of accurately delivering large payloads of bombs to distant enemy targets. Although mainly used at night, they took part in daylight raids towards the end of the war. Of thirty-two Ca.42s manufactured in 1918, the Royal Naval Air Service used six of them.

The Cast Members

Whether flying in the WWI planes or fighting in the trenches against the zombie hordes, it is recommended that the Cast Members be Survivors. No one is aware of the supernatural happenings in Germany as of yet. Things may even go as normal until one day the Cast runs up against something behind enemy lines that just should not be.

WWI Flying Personalities

The Red Baron has been zombified for the purposes of this Deadworld. However, the rest of his story has been kept intact. Stats for Boelcke have been added just in case the Zombie Master wishes to begin the game before the time of Boelcke's demise. All the personalities are Aces (meaning that they have more than 5 kills – 8 kills for Germans). Their stats have been provided, but can be changed to suit each individual Zombie Master's tastes, knowledge, or needs. Further, only the most relevant Skills have been given, more can, and should be added as needed.

The Strangeness

Uber Soldat (German super-soldier)

Strength 4	Constitution 3
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 2
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Dead Points 38	Speed 18
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 16
Skills: Brawling 2, Guns (Rifle) 2, Melee Weapon (Bayonet) 2	
Attack: Punch D4 x 4(8); Kick D4 x 5(10); by weapon	
Weak Spot: All [0]	
Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10]	
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], Damage Resistance [+5]	
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Life Sense [+2]	
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]	
Intelligence: Long Term Memory [+5], Problem Solving [+15], Language [+1]	
Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me/Special [-3]	
Power: 55	

This is the Super-Soldier of the German army. Created using Dr. Victor Frankenstein's theories, they are German soldiers who have fallen in battle. They have returned much faster and stronger than most humans. They seem to be able to shrug off many types of damage. When one of these soldiers die again, they are dragged off the field to be brought



back to fight yet again. When parts are torn, cut, or blown off, the scientists just attach new ones and reanimate them. The Germans have been building Electro-Resuscitation facilities for the purposes of creating these “Franken-Zombies.” A few of these places exist and their placement is completely up to the Zombie Master. The facility has huge generators dedicated to the creation of lightning-like electrical output of the same type that created Frankenstein’s Monster.

“Flying Circus” Pilot

Strength 4 **Constitution** 3

Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 2

Perception 2 **Willpower** 2

Dead Points 40 **Speed** 12

Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 15

Qualities: Hard to Kill 2 (2)

Skills: Brawling 2, Guns (Handgun) 2, Guns (Machine Gun) 3, Melee Weapon (Knife) 2, Piloting (Prop-plane) 4

Attack: Punch D4x3 (6); kick D4x4 (8); by weapon

Weak Spot: All [0]

Getting Around: As in Life [+6]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], Damage Resistance [+5]

Senses: Like the Living [+1], Life Sense [+4]

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]

Intelligence: Long Term Memory [+5], Problem Solving [+15] Language [+1], Teamwork [+4]

Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me [-5]

Power: 64

The Red Baron’s Jagdgeschwader consists of undead pilots who have returned from the dead while under his command. They seem to have an uncanny ability to coordinate attacks without any means of communication on board their planes. Their tattered planes shouldn’t even be able to fly, but they do. The ZM can place them in any of the modified planes below in the Gear section.

Oswald Boelcke

German Hauptmann (Captain)

Personality

In 1915, Boelcke was chosen to test Anthony Fokker's new machine gun synchronizing device. Boelcke used the new invention to become the first German ace. He and Max Immelman were awarded the Orden Pour le Mérite on January 12, 1916. They were the first two pilots to receive Prussia's highest award for bravery. By the summer of the same year, Immelmann had been killed and Boelcke was Germany's leading ace. He developed rules for air combat, known as the "Dicta Boelcke," many of which remain relevant today. While flying an infantry support mission, Boelcke's Albatros D.II briefly collided with that of Erwin Böhme. Böhme survived but Boelcke was killed. Boelcke commanded the Jasta 2 unit. Before his death, he had scored 40 kills.

Quote

"If you want to survive while in the air, you will take what I say as gospel!"



Str 3 **Dex** 4 **Con** 4
Int 4 **Per** 3 **Will** 3
Lps 47
Eps 35
Spd 16
Essence 21

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma (3)
Cruel (-1)
Delusions (Grandeur/Overconfidence) (-1)
Hard to Kill 3 (3)
Honorable 1 (-1)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Zealot (-3)

Skills

Brawling 3
Dodge 3
Guns (Handgun) 3
Guns (Assault Rifle) 4
Instruction 4
Notice 4

Manfred Albecht Freiherr von Richthofen

German Rittmeister (Captain)

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

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

Lps 47 / **Dps** -

EPS 35 / n/a

Spd 16

Essence 21 / 22

Qualities/Drawbacks

Charisma 3 (3)

Cruel 1 (-1)

Delusion

(Grandeur/Overconfidence) (-2)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill 3 (3)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Zealot (-3)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 5

Intimidation 4

Notice 4

Piloting (Prop Plane) 6

Weak Spot: Special [+10]

Getting Around: As in Life [+7]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]

Senses: Like a Hawk [+2], Life Sense [+6]

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8]

Intelligence: Long Term Memory [+5],

Problem Solving [+15] Language [+1],

Teamwork [+4]

Spreading the Love: Cursed by Association (-2)

Special: The Undead Richthofen is truly unstoppable. Only a ghost out of his past can stop him. When his past comes back to haunt him, he will be destroyed. Richthofen has no knowledge of this.

Power: 89

Personality

The most famous ace of the war, Manfred von Richthofen briefly served in the trenches before transferring to the German Air Force in 1916.

Oswald Boelcke's star pupil was a fast learner and achieved immediate success. A month after receiving his first Albatros, Richthofen had six victories against allied aircraft. As his reputation grew, the "Red Knight of Germany" painted the fuselage of his Albatros D.III bright red to flaunt his prowess in the air.

The British called him the jolly "Red Baron." To the French he was the "Red Devil." He was shot down as he flew over the trenches in pursuit of Wilfrid May on April 21, 1918. Although Arthur Brown was officially credited with the victory, evidence suggests a single bullet fired from a machine gun in the trenches hit Richthofen.

During his military career, Richthofen served in the following units: FFA 69, Jasta 2, Jasta 11, JG 1, and KG 2. Before his death, he had scored 80 kills, making him one of the top aces of the war.

Quote

"Success flourishes only in perseverance – ceaseless, restless perseverance."

Stats after / represent his Zombie stats.



Lothar Freiherr von Richthofen

German Oberleutnant (1st Lieutenant)

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

Int 3 **Per** 3 **Will** 4

Lps 53

EPs 38

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cruel (-1)

Delusion (Grandeur/Overconfidence)

(-1)

Fast Reaction Time (+2)

Hard to Kill 5 (+5)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Luck 1 (+3)

Nerves of Steel (+3)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 4

Intimidation 2

Notice 3

Piloting (Prop Plane) 4

Personality

Lothar von Richthofen began the war as an officer in the cavalry. Following his brother's example, he transferred to the German Air Force and was assigned to Jasta 11. Under the watchful eye of his older brother, Lothar scored 24 victories in 47 days and was credited with shooting down English ace Albert Ball. On May 13, 1917, Lothar was badly wounded in a dogfight with a B.E.2e, but recovered and assumed command of Jasta 11.

Wounded again on March 13, 1918, he crash-landed his Fokker DR.I after being shot down by Australian ace Geoffrey Hughes. The following month, he was still in a hospital bed when he learned of his brother's death. In the summer of 1918, Lothar returned to duty and achieved ten more victories by the end of the war. Scoring his final victory on August 12, 1918, he shot down a Sopwith Camel flown by English ace John Summers. The following day, Lothar was seriously wounded for the third time when another Sopwith Camel shot down his Fokker D.VII over the Somme. Lothar served in the Jasta 11 and KG 4 units during his war career. He scored 40 kills by the end of the war.

Quote

"None are greater than our men in our planes. We shall be victorious."

At the Zombie Master's discretion, Lothar may be one of the Flying Circus



Edward Goffingham "Mick" Mannock

English Major

Personality

Edward Mannock joined the Royal Army Medical Corps before transferring to the Royal Engineers.

Despite a congenital defect that left him virtually blind in his left eye, the Royal Flying Corps accepted Mannock in 1917. In April, he was assigned to 40 Squadron. To the other flying officers, he seemed aloof and perhaps overly cautious in the air. It was not until a month later that he scored his first victory by flaming an enemy balloon.

Str 3 **Dex** 3 **Con** 2

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

Lps 39

EPS 32

Spd 10

Essence 19

Qualities/Drawbacks

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill 3 (3)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Impaired Vision (-2)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Skills

Brawling 3

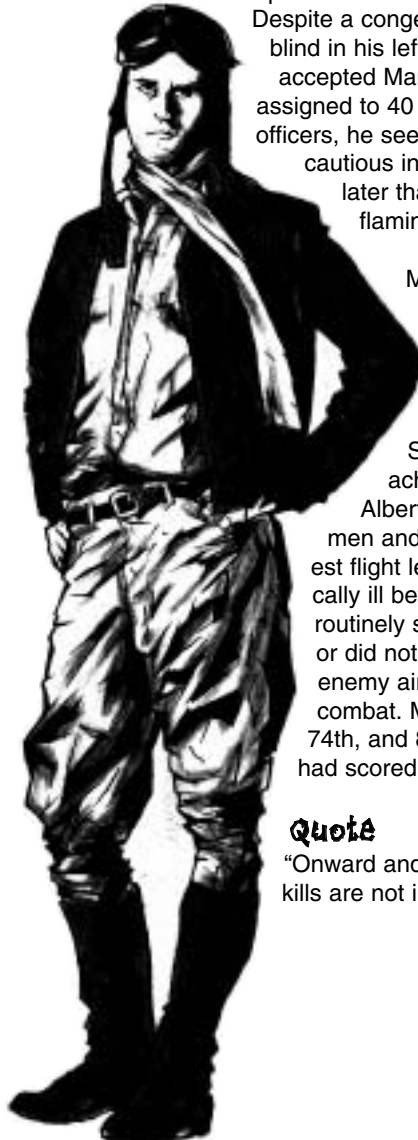
Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 4

Notice 3

Piloting (Prop Plane) 4



Mannock was reassigned to 74 Squadron as a flight commander and scored thirty-six victories with an S.E.5a before replacing William Bishop as the commanding officer of 85 Squadron. Mannock never achieved the public notoriety of

Albert Ball, but he was revered by his men and proved to be one of the greatest flight leaders of the war. Often physically ill before going on patrol, Mannock routinely shared victories with other pilots or did not bother submitting claims for enemy aircraft that he had downed in combat. Mannock served in the 40th, 74th, and 85th units. Before his death, he had scored 61 kills.

Quote

"Onward and upward, men. The number of kills are not important, the kills are."

Richard Raymond-Barker

English Major

Str 3 / 4

Dex 4 / 4

Con 3 / 3

Personality

Int 3 / 3

Per 3 / 3

Wil 4 / 4

Manfred von Richthofen shot down Raymond-

Lps 37 / **Dps** -

Eps 38 / n/a

Spd 12

Essence 20 / 21

Barker's Sopwith Camel in April 1918. His body was never found. He was the Red Baron's 79th victim. Raymond-Barker served in the 3rd, 6th, 11th, 16th, and 48th units during his career. Before his death, he had scored 6 kills.

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cruel 1 (-1)

Fast Reaction Time (+2)

Hard to Kill 1 (1)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 4

Notice 3

Piloting (Prop Plane) 4

Weak Spot: None / Special [10]

Getting Around: As in Life [7]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [5]

Senses: Like a Hawk [2], Life Sense [6]

Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [8]

Intelligence: Long Term Memory [5],

Problem Solving [15] Language [1],

Teamwork (4)

Spreading the love: Nobody Loves Me [-5]

Special: Obsession [6]

Power: 84



Raymond-Barker will not rest until Von Richthofen is dead. He is a revenant. See p. 66 of *Atlas of the Walking Dead* for more information on revenants and their abilities.

Quote

"I don't know why I'm here, but I do know what I'm going to do – kill von Richthofen."

Stats after / represent his Zombie stats.

Edward "Eddie" Yemon Rickenbacker

USA Captain

Personality

The son of Swiss immigrants, Rickenbacker was the American "Ace of Aces." He recorded 26 official victories against German aircraft during World War I and was awarded the Medal of Honor. Between WWI and WWII, Rickenbacker bought and administered the Indianapolis Speedway and became president of Eastern Airlines. In October 1942, he was aboard a B-17 bomber that crashed in the Pacific Ocean while on a secret mission to New Guinea. "Iron Man Eddie" and six companions survived 24 days afloat on life rafts. Rickenbacker served in the 94th Aero unit during WWI.

Quote

"Come on, move your bones. We need to get these planes in the air!"



Str 3 Dex 4 Con 4

Int 3 Per 3 Wil 4

Lps 53

Eps 36

Spd 16

Essence 21

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cruel 1 (-1)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill (1)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Luck 1 (3)

Nerves of Steel (+3)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 4

Notice 3

Piloting (Prop Plane) 4

René Paul Fonck

French Capitaine

Personality

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

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

Lps 43

Eps 32

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Cruel 1 (-1)

Delusion (Grandeur/Overconfidence) (-3)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill 3 (3)

Honorable 1 (-1)

Luck 1 (3)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Skills

Brawling 3

Dodge 3

Guns (Handgun) 3

Guns (Machine Gun) 4

Notice 3

Piloting (Prop Plane) 5

Fonck was the highest scoring ace for France and the Allies. As a boy growing up in the foothills of the Vosges, he was fascinated by stories of men and their flying machines. Yet when he was conscripted, he refused to serve in the French Air Service, choosing instead to go to the trenches. By early 1915, he had changed his mind and began his flight training in a Penguin at Saint-Cyr.

Displaying an inherent talent for flying, he was soon serving with Escadrille C47, flying an unarmed Caudron on reconnaissance missions over the lines. After more than 500 hours of flight time, Fonck was assigned to Spa103. Flying the SPAD S.VII, he developed a reputation for studying the tactics of his opponents and conserving ammunition during a dogfight. On two separate occasions, he shot down six enemy aircraft in one day. As his fame grew, so did his ego. Even French ace Claude Haegelen, one of Fonck's few friends, felt he boasted too much and too often. Fonck served in the C47 and Spa103 unit during WWI. By the end of the war, he had scored 75 kills, making him one of the top aces of the war.

Quote

"Come, let us compare notes on the enemy's techniques and our numbers of kills."





The Blighted Isle

By Matthew McFarland

We lost my brothers in the bog. I didn't think there were so many, nor did I think they could keep up with us once we'd left the path. But, as we ran through the swamp, pulling our legs free of the sucking murk, we heard them behind us.

They don't moan or scream. They're almost silent. . . but they smack their lips as they approach.

I did not see what they did to Patrick and Michael. I know what they did, I have seen it before, but I did not watch them do it to my brothers. I only crossed myself and kept running, the doctor and the Englishman close behind me.

The Englishman says that if we make it to the beach, a boat waits to take us past the barricade. Is it foolish hope or simple desperation that causes me to follow him? I have heard of people in coastal towns trying to sail away from Erin, only to be sunk by English cannonballs or gunned down by soldiers in lifeboats. Why should our boat be any different?

The forest. Praise God, only a half-mile or so before we reach the sand. I can barely run. I've eaten

nothing but moldy bread for a week. I let my younger brothers have what little meat I could find, and God forgive me, but I regret it. The meat did little to help them outrun the creatures.

My legs burn. The doctor stumbles behind me, but the Englishman runs on, despite his doughy frame. He hasn't been here long. He says he was sent here to assess the situation, to make an accounting of the damage the blight was doing to the potato crops, and simply became trapped inland. Bile rises in my throat when I realize that my brothers are dead while this bastard lives.

The last hill. I cough, my breath hot and painful in my chest, but I make it to the top and look down at the beach. Off the coast, I see a man standing in a small boat waving a lantern, calling loudly toward the beach. I could swim to that boat without blinking, even in my weakened state.

I could, if not for the shambling bodies on the beach. There must be dozens of them, shuffling back and forth, staring at the light.

As we begin to run, I draw my knife. I might not make it, but the Englishman won't either.

History

In 1846, a potato blight swept across Ireland. Entire crops were lost, covered in oozing, black rot. The famine was the first of the troubles to stem from this blight. Deprived of their key source of sustenance, the Irish took what they could from the land around them, hunting game and farming vegetables in small plots. The blight, while it infected the potatoes crops most severely, seeped into everything. Even livestock took on strange, rotted taste. Thousands died of malnutrition and were buried in shallow graves, often without coffins, because any available funds had to go to purchase food rather than lumber.

Unable to farm enough food to sustain themselves, the Irish crowded into workhouses or boarded "coffin ships" bound for America. Many of these immigrants died en route, but they were truly the lucky ones. The very soil of the Emerald Isle had become blighted, and her dead do not rest easy.

The first of the zombies appeared in the early months of 1847. The infection began in the interior of the island, near Meath, but spread quickly throughout Ireland. Fresh graves opened to reveal the bodies of the recently dead, their muscles atrophied, and their mouths plastered with foul-smelling blood. These zombies wasted no time in hunting down the living, tearing them open and feasting on their innards. Survivors fled to whatever safe havens' they could find, carrying stories of walking dead, creatures that couldn't be killed by mortal weapons, and whose foul stench could cripple a strong man. They spoke of the disgusting lip-smacking sound the creatures made before they attacked and stated that no one, not even the dead interred on consecrated ground, was safe. All of Ireland's dead would walk, their souls lost forever.

Poets and songwriters waxed philosophical about the causes of the blight. They talked of God's punishment and of Protestants making deals with Satan. Some even looked for older causes, stating that the Fair Folk of the isles were enraged at some trans-

gression and wished their revenge. The legends grew with the telling, and soon travelers in Dublin were hearing outlandish tales of vast armies of the undead commanded by the Devil himself, as well as comparatively reasonable tales of English landowners poisoning Irish farmers and leaving them mad, bloodied and hungry. Whatever version(s) the Dubliners heard, though, they tended to disbelieve them. "Walking corpses" were just horror stories, and the famine and the blight were very real. The Irish had more important things to worry about than stories about zombies. Soon, however, the citizens of Dublin learned the truth.

On February 3rd, 1847, the zombies attacked Dublin. Several outlying villages had already fallen entirely, and their inhabitants fled to the city. The zombies followed the fleeing villagers, and arrived just as the formerly docile inhabitants of the city's cemeteries rose up. The undead horrors attacked and feasted upon the Dubliners unchecked for a full 18 hours, before a young man inadvertently drove them away by setting a fire.

The blaze repelled the zombies, true, but it also all but leveled the city of Dublin. The survivors took, as their first task, burying the dead of the attack in the outlying soil. This, as would become painfully evident, was a mistake. Within a day, the dead of Dublin rose, hungry for the flesh of the considerate folks who had interred them. At the same time, the bodies lying in the ashes of Dublin rose and began searching for the living, as the fire that consumed the city seldom burned hot enough to completely destroy a corpse. Many of these creatures searched blindly, of course, their eyes and lips burned away in the fire. They hunted just the same, though, and their numbers grew daily. The blight was spreading.

The British government, which had been slowly evaluating the situation, weighed its options and decided against a military invasion of Ireland. The stories were far-fetched, and after all, the blight was present in mainland Europe, but no one there had seen walking corpses. In back of the English's minds, of course, lurked an unpleasant truth: they had prevented Irish Catholics from owning their own land and thus forced them to farm potatoes exclusively (since potatoes take up so much less

space than grain, a large family can subsist off a small plot of land use to grow the tubers). Perhaps the Irish were rebelling. If so, were they within their rights to do so? Were the “zombies” of Ireland merely angry farmers, hungry not for living flesh but for justice and freedom?

The English sent missionaries and scouts to Ireland to determine the extent of the blight’s effects and to grant what help they felt they could. In 1847, however, financial crises in England severely cut back the amount of aid the British government could offer. At about that time, the scouts returned and confirmed the tales of zombies and carnage. The British government still allowed ships to pick up survivors from Ireland and transport them to England or elsewhere, but an “incident” on the London docks changed all that.

A ship from Ireland pulled into the docks carrying refugees from the Dublin fire. Several of these people fled from the dock, carrying a heavy chest. The London police apprehended them the next evening in a cemetery. The chest was full of black, slimy earth, the blighted soil of Ireland. They were emptying it into fresh graves.

Who were these people, and why were they attempting to raise the dead? The world may never know. Of the three men apprehended, one died resisting arrest and the other two hanged themselves in their cells the following morning. None of them were ever identified, though the English police suspect they were revolutionaries attempting to enact revenge on England or cultists attempting to bring about the end of the world. Regardless, the incident showed the British government that containment was the only safe course of action.

All immigration from Ireland ceased, and the Royal Navy ringed the island, and sank any ship or boat sailing from an Irish port or beach. Until a cure for the blight could be found or until sufficient military aid was forthcoming, Parliament decreed, no one was to enter or leave the blighted isle.

That was two years ago, and that was the last anyone in Ireland heard.

Erin Today

The English navy’s blockade remains in place. Any ship sailing from Ireland is sunk, and any small craft fired upon until all aboard stop moving. The United States, France, and several other countries have publicly offered on numerous occasions to lend troops to the British government and attempt to rescue the survivors of Ireland, but no action has yet been undertaken. There are several reasons for this reticence.

First, while the governments of the world know what is happening in Ireland, the citizenry at large believes that the island has fallen to disease, perhaps an infectious one. As such, the general populace and even most of the infantry of the world’s militaries are, for the most part, not in favor of entering Ireland. Those in power are thus faced with the choice of ordering their forces into a place laden with disease (which is very different than ordering them into battle) or explaining to the world that Ireland is overrun with zombies. Neither option is palatable.

Second, the governments of the world are not convinced that the problem cannot spread beyond Ireland. While the blight is present in Europe and even the Americas, it isn’t nearly so pervasive and doesn’t cause zombies anywhere else. Something intrinsic to the soil of Ireland seems to make the nightmarish reanimation of the dead possible . . . but what is it? And, more importantly, could it be transplanted? A bit of mud on the boot of an American soldier might spread the rot across the New World, and an outbreak in the United States would be impossible to contain. If the infection leaves Ireland, it could spell the end of civilization. The British government recognizes this, and thus the offers of help from other countries are gratefully acknowledged, but never accepted. The other governments of the world realize the stakes, and know when they extend their offers of help that the British government will decline.

Finally, the British are uncomfortable with the notion of entering Ireland because they are afraid that they caused the blight somehow. It’s certainly true that their legal and religious bias contributed to the famine, but is it possible that they are also to blame for the walking dead? The world searches for answers, but gaining access to the isle requires spe-

cial permission from the British government, and until it is certain that investigators won't find evidence that will damn the British Empire, that permission is impossible to come by.

The horrible truth is that if enough time passes, every single human being in Ireland will die, and eventually the zombies will therefore starve to death. In the two years the naval blockade has been in place, no one has ever seen a zombie swimming from the shores, and no one on the English coast has seen one of the walking dead emerge from the water. The zombies are, it seems, contained, provided the blight doesn't escape.

The Irish people realize this truth: famine, disease, and despair rule the Emerald Isle now. The potato, the staple food source for most of the people in the country, is almost gone (and many of the Irish are squeamish about eating potatoes anyway, for fear that they will be zombies before the next sunrise). The walking dead stalk the land in droves, attacking and devouring anyone they meet. Their victims don't necessarily rise as zombies, as exposure to the blight is what causes zombies, but since very few people have clued in to that, the Irish continue burying their dead in the tainted soil. Many times, dozens of bodies are buried in shallow graves, a practice that only facilitates the zombies' rise to hunt the living.

The larger cities in Ireland have been completely overrun. Dublin, as mentioned, burned to the ground, and similar attempts to fend off the zombies in other cities have led to similar disasters. In addition to zombies, nomadic bands of people wander the isle taking what sustenance they can from the land, and whatever they can steal from their fellow Irish. Anarchy has set in almost completely, and the remaining settlements had best be strong. The zombies aren't the only things to fear.

Some villages are better off than others, though. Since the zombies aren't particularly bright or even strong, villages and towns on high ground are more easily defended. The famine, however, keeps them from becoming true safe havens. Since a village can only support so many people, visitors who don't bring anything useful with them (such as weapons, food, or medical training) are often turned away or given

nothing more than shelter. Priests enjoy a sort of *carte blanche*, however. Because they usually live in close proximity to graveyards, many men of the cloth have perished since the dead began walking. As such, the Irish find themselves without anyone to say Mass, baptize their children, or perform last rites for their dead. While to our modern sensibilities this might seem a somewhat frivolous concern, to the citizens of the blighted isle, Hell is a daily reality. They jump at any chance to redeem their souls. This respect for clergy has, in turn, encouraged dishonest folks who can recite the Latin Mass from memory to pose as priests. "False fathers," as they are known, are considered the worst kind of scum, and any who are exposed are typically shot in the leg and left to try and outrun the zombies.

The zombies of the blighted isle rise when a dead body is buried in the soil. It doesn't matter how deeply the body is buried. In some places, burial isn't necessary; contact with the soil is enough. The very earth of Ireland is tainted now. The only variable is how quickly the body rises. If a person falls or is buried in an area heavily saturated by the blight (such as a field where potatoes were grown), the corpse can become a zombie in less than an hour. In hard, dry ground or on a beach, it can take days. The safest way to dispose of bodies is to burn them or, failing that, throw them into a peat bog (the body still animates, but the zombies don't have the leverage to pull themselves free).

When a zombie rises, the flesh at the back of the throat and in the mouth rots away until the openings to the jugular vein and the carotid artery are exposed. Tiny flaps of skin cover these openings, but open and close when the zombie is hungry, causing them to make a distinct "lip smacking" sound. The blood in the zombie's body pools in the cheeks and runs down the chin and face, and the rotting flesh in the mouth causes the zombies to emit a noxious odor whenever they open their jaws. This odor is pungent enough to reduce people to nausea. Stopping to retch, of course, just gives the zombies an opportunity to attack.

The Irish zombies attack any living mammal they find and attempt to tear open their stomachs to feast on their internal organs. Why exactly they do not

consume muscle tissue is a mystery to the citizens of Ireland (those few who give the matter any thought at all). In fact, the zombies need the spores of the blight to survive, and those spores currently saturate the air, water, and soil of Ireland. Breathing, eating or drinking fills a living body with the spores, which collect in the lungs, kidneys, liver, and stomach. The spores aren't harmful to living people, but unfortunately the zombies need them to survive, and thus anyone that comes to their attention is lunch. Note that even the hollowed-out bodies of zombie victims can become zombies, even though their digestive organs are gone. When a zombie consumes the organs of living person, it chews those organs into paste, which trickles down the rotted openings into the zombie's veins without passing through the digestive tract. The paste winds up in the heart, where it festers until the zombie has used all of the spores present and must hunt again.

Guns are not exactly in great supply in Ireland, and many folks have given up on shooting the undead anyway (it doesn't seem to work). Some marksmen, however, have discovered that a clean shot to the heart destroys a zombie. The zombies don't eat human hearts, and use their own hearts to hold their masticated food. Destroying the heart thus destroys the zombie. As stated, burning the zombies also works, but the difficulty of cremating a human corpse usually prohibits this. The zombies do fear fire, however, and a torch is an effective means of keeping them at bay.

Ireland plays host to dogs, cattle, deer, and various other mammals, but human beings seem to be the only ones affected by the blight. While all manner of theories as to why this is the case have surfaced since the beginning of the blight, the truth is that human beings have a unique body chemistry that allows them to hold large numbers of the spores that allow for zombies. Zombies will happily eat other living mammals if they can catch them, but animals can usually smell the zombies a mile off and flee. Wise people, therefore, keep dogs and cats around, as these animals can sense the zombies long before humans can.

Story Ideas

Vatican's Response

The struggle between the Catholics and Protestants is the cause of much of the tension and strife in Ireland. As such, the Vatican isn't content to sit by and watch an entire nation of faithful Catholics die while the Royal Navy lurks a scant mile away. Bringing the full power of the Church to bear, Pope Pius IX sends a small army of soldiers, doctors, and missionaries with food and other supplies to Ireland. Flanked by Italian ships, the Vatican representatives are deposited on the Irish shores without incident, and make their way into the country.

The Cast is composed of members of this regiment, and can take any of a number of roles. Doctors and soldiers are obvious choices, but what about a wide-eyed volunteer who only knows that a disease is sweeping the nation? Likewise, consider a criminal who steals aboard one of the Vatican ships believing it to be bound for England. In addition, a number of occult experts are certain to be among the representatives, and some of them could easily be Inspired. Indeed, the soldiers have orders to protect these priests at all costs, even to the exclusion of the folks on the island they are trying to save. This may seem harsh, but the Church wishes to understand the full theological ramifications of the events in Ireland, and that means that someone qualified to report on them must escape.

The Cast (and the rest of the Vatican's envoys) is initially instructed to help the Irish cope with their plight, farm new food sources, and overcome the famine and the blight. As the zombie problem becomes evident (which takes all of ten minutes), a new wrinkle is added — destroy the zombies and prevent new ones from rising. This is, of course, easier said than done, and not just because of the numbers of walking dead on the isle. The Vatican envoys are reluctant to desecrate dead bodies before interring them, even though some desecration (destroying the heart) would prevent the body from rising. Burning bodies is a possibility, but it takes a great deal of fuel and time to cremate a human corpse.



After the Vatican occultists realize the extent of the problem, they attempt to reach their ships and flee back to Rome, perhaps to gather further military support, perhaps simply to let the Irish die out and give the blighted isle up as lost. The problem is that although the Royal Navy allowed the Vatican ships to land, they do not intend to let them past the blockade again. If the Cast Members made prior arrangements with sailors on the English ships, they stand a chance of escape. Otherwise, it might be a long swim home.

Race for The Beach

The Cast Members have learned of a boat waiting off the western coast. This small craft, piloted by an English sailor, is meant to take one particular Cast Member (or even a Supporting Cast Member), an Englishman, back to the safety of a waiting vessel. This person, however, needs help to reach the coast. By “help,” he means, “bait.”

The Cast has less than four hours to reach the boat. This requires fleeing from their village and braving the wilds of Ireland, perhaps running through a peat bog or across open ground where zombies can easily spot them. The zombies of the blighted isle aren’t intelligent or especially fast, but they also don’t give up easily, and so if they

spot the Cast Members they will chase them as long as they can perceive them.

Once the Cast arrives at the beach, they find that dozens of zombies shuffle along the sands, fixated on the movement of the water, but unwilling to wade out into it. The Cast must force its way through the teeming horde, swim out to the boat, and convince the sailor there to take them *all* back to the English vessel.

Well, there are other options, of course. One bullet to the back turns a Cast Member into a quick and easy distraction. Likewise, nothing says that the sailor on the boat knows who he’s looking for, so the bullet could very well have the Englishman’s name on it, if one of the other Cast Members feels comfortable taking his identity.

Outbreak on the Mainland

The Cast Members are soldiers, police, or just concerned citizens in England or on the Continent. They’ve heard ghastly rumors of famine and cannibalism occurring in Ireland, but are far enough removed from the troubles that they don’t give it much thought.

Then, crops start failing, covered with thick, black ooze. Representatives from the British government arrive and burn the crops, and then, inexplicably, begun exhuming dead bodies and firing



bullets into their chests. The good citizens of the area rise up in outrage, and the Cast Members are approached for help by both the government agents (who need volunteers to hunt for *zombies*, of all things) and by the locals (who want help expelling the blasphemous government agents from the area).

If you want this story to have a darker twist, consider having the characters as special soldiers sent to hunt down an Irish family that made it past the blockade and landed in England. The Cast Members are given strict instructions to shoot the Irish through their hearts and then burn the bodies to cinders. The family, however, contains several children. Can the Cast Members do their duty? They had better. All members of the family carry the spores of the blight on their clothes and in their bodies. Simply killing and burying them infects the ground around them, but letting them live allows the blight to take hold and infect any crops the family walks across. The Cast Members not only have an odious and brutal task ahead of them, but they have no time to dawdle.

(Of course, many players will wonder if there isn't a way to cure the blight without killing the family. This is up to the Zombie Master, but the same essential point remains: Yes, it would be more humane, but is there time enough to take the risk?)

Coffin Ship

The Cast is aboard a ship that left Ireland before the Royal Navy's blockade. They might be members of the crew or simply passengers, stuffed into a hold overflowing with Irish citizens all bound for America. Unfortunately, they took the blight with them.

The floor of the hold is filthy with mud and human waste within days of leaving port, and this muck acts exactly like the tainted soil of Ireland. The first person to die in the ship rises as a zombie in less than an hour and attacks. The resulting panic leaves several more dead before the undead creature can be subdued and subsequently throw overboard. This, in turn, creates more of the creatures.

Within days, the Cast Members and perhaps a few of the Supporting Cast are the only living people aboard the ship. They must somehow find a way to continue steering the ship to its destination. The hap-

less mariners might be blown off course by a storm, stay still for days with no wind, run afoul of privateers, or fall prey to scurvy due to inadequate food supply (the zombies might provide a food source, if the Cast is truly desperate). In addition, what happens when the ship finally pulls into New York harbor with a hold full of the walking dead? Perhaps by that time, the zombies will have starved. . . or perhaps they will be so saturated with the spores that they can spread their condition with a simple bite.

Character Creation

Given the time period of *The Blighted Isle*, character creation suffers a few restrictions. The following skills are not available: Computer Hacking, Computer Programming, Computers, Driving, Electronic Surveillance, and Electronics.

Martial Arts would require a good excuse, but isn't out of the question.

The Minority Drawback is worth 2 points, and applies to Protestant or English Cast Members (in Ireland) or Irish or Catholic Cast Members (in England). The default level of Resources (see page 46 of the AFMBE core book) is Poor; this level is worth 0 points.

Adjust cast member's Resources costs accordingly. Most of the archetypes in the core book are inappropriate as written, though soldiers, doctors and priests will make for superb cast choices – just adjust their Skills for the time period!



Blighted Isle Zombie

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence -2
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 6

Attack: As normal human. Blighted Isle zombies do not use weapons, and typically attempt to tackle their victims and then tear open their stomachs to get at the tasty organs.

Weak Spot: Heart [+7]

Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0], The Lunge [+3]

Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]

Senses: Like the Dead [0]

Sustenance: Occasionally [+2], Sweet Breads [-3]

Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]

Spreading the Love: Bury the Body [-2]

Special: Noxious Odor [+5]

Anyone buried anywhere in Ireland rises as a zombie. As stated previously, how long this takes depends on how strong the blight is in the area. An area heavily saturated with blight creates a zombie in D10x5 minutes if the body is buried, and D10x10 minutes if the body is simply left on the ground in a heavily blighted area. In areas where the blight is weak, such as a beach, the process takes D10 days.

Power: 10



Dead Men and Derring Do

by Mark Freeman

There were five of them, all in ragged black. I could not imagine where a rat like Mousillon got such wretched excuses for swordsmen. Not only were they filthy, emaciated, pallid figures, but also their swordsmanship was even sloppier than their appearance.

Even still, there were five of them against no more than Henri and me. They would overwhelm us with their numbers, if we were not careful. I spared a look towards my brother Musketeer, and grinned. "Shall we?"

"Let's."

As one, we laid into our quintet of opponents. One of the swordsmen batted my blade aside with a clumsy swipe of his rusted rapier. I had little time to reflect on the style (or lack thereof) shown by these strange swordsmen, as the one I had lunged at, along with two of his fellows, counterattacked with reckless abandon, paying no regard to their own safety. I capitalized on the gaps in their guard as best I could, but to little avail.

Steadily, the trio of black-clad men pushed me back until my back was against the far wall of Mousillon's hall. They had me cornered – but not trapped. Lucky as I was, there was a taut rope at my shoulder, one end tied to a cleat in the wall, the other leading upward, to where the candle-lit chandelier hung.

"Tally ho!" I took hold of the line and neatly sliced through it. Rope hissed through the pulley, and I took off from the floor, pulled upwards by the falling weight of the crystal chandelier.

Whether by coincidence or exquisite strategy on Henri's part, he managed to position his two opponents directly beneath the chandelier; the two of them went down with the crunch of breaking bones and shattered crystal.

It was a simple matter for me to swing over to land beside my companion. Quickly enough, the three swordsmen I had been fighting were headed towards us. I made a masterful lunge at the lead swordsman, catching him in mid-charge, sinking several inches of blade into his throat; a killing pass. I withdrew my

blade and hopped backwards, so as not to dirty my clothes with his blood. Yet, the man seemed not to notice that his jugular had just been perforated, and pressed his attack! Shocked, I gave several feet of ground, finding myself shoulder to shoulder with Henri.

“Henri,” said I, “these bastards haven’t the good courtesy to know when they’ve been killed!”

“Leave it to some of Mousillon’s to have such bad manners. Look.” He nodded towards the wreckage of the chandelier, where the two crushed swordsmen were struggling back to their feet, great gobbets of their skin torn off by the broken glass.

“Well then,” I tightened my grip on my rapier, fighting down an unexpected burst of cowardice. “It seems we shall have to keep killing them until they gain the good sense to stay down!” I shouted challenge across Mousillon’s hall.

“Have at you!”

History

France, 1660. It is both a glorious and dangerous time to be alive. The country is in turmoil, wracked by political intrigue, both outside her borders and within. Louis XIV is King, but in name only. It is the Cardinal de Mazarin, the successor to the deceased Cardinal de Richelieu, who really controls France. There have already been two rebellions against Louis XIV, and rumors of a third are abundant. Men and women battle for sake of love or power, armed with flashing steel and gossiping tongues.

Through all this, a handful of brave, foolish men set out to make things right. Rumor had it that there was a man unjustly imprisoned in the Bastille, his very identity concealed by a mask of iron. Rumors of who this man could be were incredibly varied; some said he was a brilliant writer and satirist, some said he was a nobleman who had somehow angered the young king, while some said that it might have even been an illegitimate heir to the throne. However, all the stories agreed on one thing: that this man, whoever he was, could do great and wonderful things for France, were he to be freed.

The rumors couldn’t be farther from the truth.

As adventurers would recklessly find out, the man in the Bastille was no less than Cardinal de Richelieu – a fact made even more shocking by the fact that the Cardinal had been declared dead nearly twenty years earlier. Reports of the Cardinal’s death were true- it’s just that he didn’t *stay* that way for very long.

For years, Richelieu was the most powerful man in all of France, as well as the most hated. Yet, for all his worldly power, Richelieu knew that he was only a man, doomed to die like any other. The Black Cardinal poured years of research and exorbitant amounts of wealth into his secret quest to find a way to cheat death. Finally, through a combination of alchemy and mad sorcery, Richelieu gained the immortality he craved – but at a price. In order to fuel his continued existence, Richelieu had to consume the hearts of the living.

It was the Cardinal’s own guards that put a stop to this curse before it could begin. Horrified by what they saw of the Cardinal’s new cannibalistic ways, they betrayed him. No matter how they tried, they could not destroy Richelieu – only contain him. They locked him away in the deepest cells of Bastille, covering the former Cardinal’s fang-filled mouth with an iron mask. Here, they thought, in some forgotten dungeon, the damned creature would never harm another living being again.

They were wrong.

Despite twenty years of decomposition, zombie Richelieu made short work of the well-meaning swordsmen who freed him. The beast first feasted upon those unfortunates locked within the Bastille, spreading a lesser version of its curse to each one it killed. Within hours, a mob of zombified prisoners broke out onto a sleeping Paris.

Revitalized by the taste of human flesh, Richelieu found himself able to control these lesser zombies. Reveling in this unnatural power, he guided his new army out into the streets.

Armed with whatever cast-off weapons they could find, the zombies rampaged through the streets of Paris, causing many of the living to think it was another revolt, the beginnings of a civil war. In a way, they were right. Yet, this insurrection had reasons far beyond conflicting political philosophies. Richelieu’s

lust for power carries on even beyond the grave; his army of the dead will not stop until he has absolute power over every man, woman, and child on the planet, living or dead.

Story Ideas

To Arms!

Paris is as good as fallen, with Richelieu's Curse spreading through her. There are still quite a few living people in the city, holed up fearfully behind makeshift barricades and boarded up doors. Paris is one of the most populous cities in the world; it will take at least a few more days before the last Parisian is (un)dead. This is a mixed blessing. On the positive side (if one can really look at it that way) this buys time before the rest of France is overrun. However, by the time the zombies do start leaving Paris, they will number in the thousands, easily overwhelming whatever resistance they might face.

There is little in the way of organized resistance; the nobles and other authorities lucky enough to be outside of Paris think it is just another revolt, and retreat to their fortified castles and manors accordingly. Even still, this is not to say that Paris is without hope: there are two different bastions of survivors holding out against the undead scourge, ready to sell their lives dearly for King and Country, should it be required of them.

A few old veterans of the Cardinal's guard truly understand what is going on. This has allowed them to organize against the threat posed by their former commander, taking up residence in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Unfortunately, their numbers are limited. They lack the manpower necessary to make a significant difference against the undead.

Meanwhile, across Paris, the Musketeers have barricaded themselves within the Louver Palace, swords at the ready. It did not take them long to find out that a pass through the heart will put a zombie down permanently. So far, they have managed to hold off the undead army, but they cannot hold out indefinitely. The Musketeers have sent out a few brave volunteers to look for survivors, or to find help. None have returned.

Neither the Musketeers nor the Cardinal's Guard can face the zombie army alone and survive. They simply lack the numbers of men needed to do so. However, if the two groups were to somehow unite their efforts against Richelieu's army, it is entirely possible that the threat could be crushed permanently. To do so would require both reconciliation between the two rival factions, and a steady line of communication through the Zombie-ridden city; neither will be an easy task. And so, the fate of Paris, the fate of France, and perhaps even the fate of the entire world now rests on the shoulders of a handful of brave, unfortunate men.

They wouldn't have it any other way.

Tally Ho!

Here, the players take the roles of a motley collection of dashing, brave swordsmen; the sort of men and women that Alexandre Dumas would write about. Cast members should be Survivors, or possibly Inspired; only the best and the bravest of France are admitted into the King's Musketeers. In order to create characters appropriate to the setting, simply use the guidelines from the Dead at 1000 Deadworld, with the exception that the Guns Skill is available. It should be noted that firearms in 1660 are heavy, expensive, and unreliable affairs, not to mention the decided lack of style. If anyone insists on carrying a gun, use the stats for smoothbore weapons from page 48 of *A Fistful O' Zombies*. Rapiers are the predominant weapons of choice throughout Paris; a proper sword is as vital a fashion accessory as one's cape or plumed hat. Further adventures from this time period may be supplemented with *Arrgh! Thar be Zombies!*, Eden Studios' pirates versus zombies book!

Away from Paris on urgent royal business, the characters were lucky enough to be outside of the city when Richelieu and his minions broke out of the Bastille. If there was ever a time for heroes, it is now. Paris herself *needs* them! With steel in their hands and courage in their hearts, the characters must fight their way into the city in order to find their loved ones.

This scenario follows the old "City of the Dead" staple, only with a healthy dose of swashbuckling style. Rapiers are to clash dramatically against each

other, chandeliers are to be dropped on unsuspecting villainy, and swinging across large gaps on a rope (or the aforementioned chandelier) is an entirely acceptable mode of transportation.

The scenario is open ended. Should the heroes survive for long within the city, they might find one (or perhaps both) of the bastions of human resistance, or maybe even find themselves confronting zombie Richelieu himself. Any way things play out, the fate of France hinges upon the actions of the players. Will these brave heroes be the ones to save Paris? Or, will they die valiantly, defending their King to their last breath? Only their bravery and skill shall decide!



Dead Men and Derring Do Zombie

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 11
Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Rapier) 3
Attack: As normal human or by weapon type
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]
Getting Around: Life Like [+3], The Lunge [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Life Sense [+4]
Need to Feed: Weekly [+4], Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Tool Use 1 [+3], Teamwork [+4], Long Term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
Power: 34



Zombie Richelieu

Strength 4 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 4
Perception 3 **Willpower** 5
Dead Points 200 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 20
Skills: Brawling 3, Bureaucracy 5, Dodge 2, Guns (Handgun) 1, Hand Weapon (Knife) 2, Humanities (Catholic Theology) 2, Intimidation 2, Occult Knowledge 2 [4], Smooth Talking 5, Writing (Latin) 2
Attack: As normal human or by weapon type
Weak Spot: None [+10]
Getting Around: Life Like [+3]
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]
Senses: Like a Hawk [+2]
Sustenance: Daily [0], Brain Food (see below), Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Language [+1], Problem Solving [+15], Long Term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
Special: Regeneration [+5]
Brain Food: If Zombie Richelieu does not feed daily on the organs of the living, it is not his body that atrophies, but his mind. For every day that Zombie Richelieu goes without feeding, his Intelligence decreases by one. However, the moment that he *does* feed, Richelieu's Intelligence returns to normal.
Power: 69

Swashbuckler

Survivor

Personality

Str 3 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3
Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 4
Lps 40
Eps 35
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

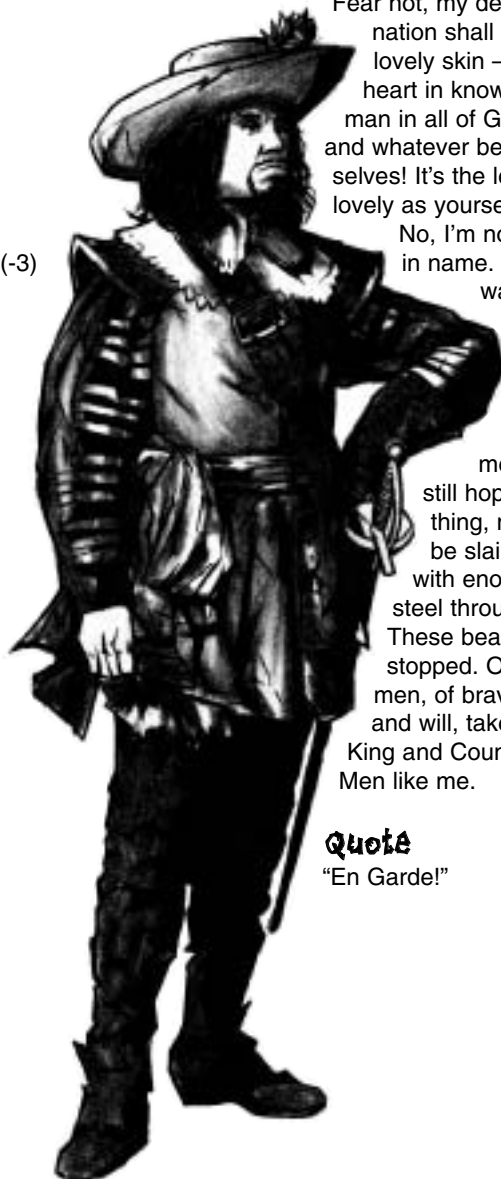
Adversary (Cardinal's Guards) 3 (-3)
Attractiveness 1 (1)
Charisma 2 (2)
Contacts (Musketeers) 3 (3)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Honorable 2 (-2)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Hard To Kill 2 (2)
Resistance (Fatigue) 2 (2)
Showoff (-2)

Skills

Acrobatics 3 (6)
Acting 2
Brawling 2
Dodge 3
Escapism 2
Fine Arts (Poetry) 2
Gambling 1
Guns (Handgun) 2
Guns (Rifle) 1
Hand Weapon (Knife) 3
Hand Weapon (Rapier) 4
Language (English) 1
Notice 2
Riding (Horse) 2
Seduction 3
Sleight of Hand 2
Stealth 3
Streetwise 1

Gear

Cape, Dagger, Plumed Hat, Rapier, Wheel-lock Pistol



Fear not, my dear lady! No wretched abomination shall lay a rotted finger upon your lovely skin – not in my presence! Take heart in knowing that the finest swordsman in all of Gascony stands between you and whatever beasts might dare show themselves! It's the least I can do for a lady so lovely as yourself.

No, I'm not a Musketeer. At least, not in name. Not yet. You see, my father was one of the King's Men, and his father before him. I was on my way to Paris to receive my commission when the dead began to rise from their graves to menace the living. Yet, there is still hope! Let me tell you something, my dove; even the dead may be slain a second time by a man with enough skill – a few inches of steel through the heart is all it takes. These beasts can, and will, be stopped. Our France is full of skilled men, of brave men, heroes who can, and will, take up the sword in defense of King and Country. Men like me.

Quote

"En Garde!"



Tales of the Walking Dead: Arabian Nights!

by Jason Mical

"Sire," I began, caressing my new husband's beard, "allow me to tell you a tale before retiring. You honor my father by taking me for your wife; you chose me over thousands of other women in your kingdom, and I wish to repay you."

"Of course, my bride," he said.

"Know then, O mighty ruler, that once there lived a Sultan. His armies marched against the enemies of God, and were victorious. The Sultan's treasure room was the envy of all, and his subjects loved him."

The Sultan clapped his hands together. "I like this story! Do go on."

"There was no living army that the Sultan could not defeat. He soon grew tired of his trophies and treasures, so he turned towards conquests of the heart. However, the Sultan was cruel, and put thousands of innocent women and children to the sword in his wars. Try as he might, no woman's father would consent to the Sultan's marriage proposals. The Sultan became angry, and instructed his Vizier to begin forc-

ing fathers to marry their daughters to the ruler."

The Sultan's eyes furrowed. "Perhaps this tale is sour after all."

"Sire, you allowed me a tale. May I finish before retiring?"

"I did, and you may," intoned the Sultan.

"When the Sultan asked the Vizier for the man's own daughter, the Vizier could not refuse. He instructed his daughter to prepare for marriage. In accordance with law, she went into the desert. There, she discovered a ring half-buried in the sands. She picked it up and tried to rub it clean. As she did so, a Jinni appeared.

"I am the slave of the ring," the Jinni said. "I am yours to command." The girl quickly forgot her sorrow, and faced the terrible creature.

"Slave," said she, "I am about to marry a man no army can defeat. Make me an army that can defeat him, so that I do not live out my days in sorrow and servitude."

"The Jinni said, 'It is done,' and vanished. Soon after, hundreds of soldiers appeared, awaiting her command. Companies of corpses stood ready, the endless enemies slain by the Sultan's forces. She bade them march, and they entered the city that very night. The girl watched as the soldiers began eating the flesh of the city's residents, and she gave her army one last instruction before surrendering to the Sultan: on the night of her wedding, tear into the Palace and devour everyone. Then, destroy the kingdom, person by person."

I smiled demurely and noted that my new husband's face had turned an extraordinary shade of white. "What happened to the girl?" he asked, his voice a whisper.

"She married the Sultan."

"And the army?" he squeaked. The air very still. A knock at the door broke the mood. "Enter!" he commanded.

"The army of the dead came as ordered," I said, watching the corpses that would devour us both shamble into the room, their claws sharp and their mouths open.

History

In 796 AD, the Islamic Empire spanned much of the known world, from what is now western China to the Atlantic coast of Africa, through Spain, and into southern France. While Europe languished in the Dark Ages, the empire ruled by the fifth Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid stood as a testament to learning, knowledge, and law. Comprised of various Sultanates and Emirates, the Empire would stand for another four hundred years before showing signs of fracture. This was the time of the *Thousand and One Nights*, when thinly-veiled women filled harems, warriors with curved swords carved glory for themselves and God, and *jinni* still roamed the untamed wilds of the deserts.

Baghdad and Mecca served as the rallying points of conquest, and the Sultans spread the word of their religion into the farthest reaches of the known world. Naturally, the fledgling empire and its newly conquered inhabitants only partially absorbed their new religion and culture, and in many places more

ancient, tribal customs flourished while Islam was only practiced by and around government officials.

In Amman, to the west of the newly-appointed capital of Baghdad, Sultan Ibn Madhi retired after several successful campaigns against tribes to the north, including an assault that brought him within a hundred miles of Constantinople. The Sultan insisted that his Vizier begin arranging marriages with suitable women in and around Amman. Each man turned down the offer, unwilling to sacrifice his daughter to the clutches of a man whose brutality was now legend. Eventually, the Vizier, hoping to increase his standing in the Sultanate, offered his own daughter's hand to the Sultan – against her wishes.

The girl, barely a woman, had other ideas. Retreating to the desert, she beseeched the spirits of sand to hear her plea. As she did, she unearthed a ring in the sand beneath her, and released the Jinni bound inside. That night, she made a pact with the Jinni, offering its freedom for an undefeatable army that would destroy not only the Sultan but the entire empire so that no woman would ever again be forced to marry against her will. The Jinni obeyed, raising the men defeated by the Sultan in combat and infusing them with a small spark of the desert's essence. In so doing, the girl brought the ruin she sought upon the Sultanate – but also sealed her own doom.

The soldiers reflected the desert that gave them life: dry, hunched creatures, their skin and tissue black and mummified by the dry desert air. Their lips curled from their mouths to reveal long teeth, and the skin shrunk from their fingers, extending the nails and bones underneath into wicked claws. Their pupils glowed an evil red, and as they stood arrayed over the dunes, awaiting her command, those piercing points of light were all that the girl could see.

The girl ran ahead for her wedding, and as a rare windstorm gathered in the desert, her army of living corpses advanced on the city, climbing the walls and breaking the gates as the last words of the couple's nuptials echoed through the Palace.

As she dallied with the Sultan, telling him stories to distract him, the zombie army rampaged through Amman, killing every living person. Worse, each person that died immediately shrunk as his body lost

water, as if the undead stole it from some insatiable need to absorb moisture. Then, they rose to join the marauding army. When the zombies reached the Palace, they encountered only minor resistance, as most of the guards were celebrating and not expecting an attack of this magnitude. They destroyed the wedding party in a matter of minutes before converging on the Sultan's quarters. There, they found the ring's master, and tore her and her spouse into tiny pieces.

After clearing out the Palace and annihilating the population of Amman, the zombies began to fan out in search of more food. Barely escaping, some of the Sultan's most accomplished riders sped into the night to bring word of this hellish threat to the capital in Baghdad.

A Thousand and One Zombies

Although word of strange happenings in the far reaches of the empire is common in the bazaars and palaces across the Caliphate, the threat from Amman has become too great for the Caliph to ignore. Hundreds of travelers have independently confirmed reports of the walking dead advancing across the desert, consuming all in their way and adding to their ranks as they attack more towns and encampments. The actual numbers of zombies are far greater than anyone in the Caliphate suspects. Nearly ten thousand zombies now prowl the deserts, and their numbers increase each day.

These zombies are not shambling, rotting corpses; reflecting the spirits of fire and sand that gave them life, they are fast and nimble, often running on all fours across the desert. They employ their amazing speed and preternaturally sharp claws to surprise and overwhelm prey. They are especially dangerous in the open deserts, where they can move almost as silently as the wind, descending on an unsuspecting *caravanseraï* and killing its inhabitants before the guards can respond to the threat. Their skin is dry to the touch and shrunken over their musculature and bones. Their eyes have an awful, red pinprick glow that is often the only sign of their presence as they sweep over the rolling dunes. They are constantly on the move in search of new prey, driven by the burning desire to feed.

Because a spirit of the desert itself created these zombies, they are naturally more adept at life on the open sands. When in the desert, they can run on all fours much



faster than a normal person could run; in addition, they can use the tall dunes to their advantage, often throwing themselves from the top of a dune to attack unsuspecting prey from above. In cities, rocky areas, and non-desert locations, however, they cannot run nearly as fast, and often avoid leaping unless there is sand underneath to cushion them. Some of the handful of survivors from Amman told stories of great clouds of sand that followed the zombies, spilling into streets, squares, and buildings. The survivors observed that the zombies appeared to draw strength from these unnatural sand clouds.

The zombies' only weakness, which many have yet to discover, is the desert fire that gives them strength. Because they are so dry, setting their bodies on fire will reduce them to dust in minutes. However, as they burn, they can – and do – continue to viciously attack, often leaping on their prey so that both risk the same fiery fate.

Caliph Harun al-Rashid, considering himself a man of learning, discounts “the tales of simple travelers” and still does not believe the reports of marauding dead. Instead, he is convinced that an intelligent Bedouin raider has fabricated the rumors to stake his own claim upon a piece of al-Rashid's empire, and thinks himself faced with a difficult decision: to devote more time and resources to stamp out the problem, or to attempt to make a truce with the Bedouin once the raider has claimed a Sultanate of his own. The small army the Caliph dispatched to investigate has not reported back, and now travelers tell tales of ghouls in the uniforms of al-Rashid's army attacking people north of Amman. Soon, al-Rashid will begin to discover the horrific truth behind the attacks, and the terrible price the empire – and the world – is about to pay for his disbelief in legend.

Story Ideas

Emissaries of the Caliph

The Cast Members are an investigative team sent by Harun al-Rashid to Amman to determine the extent and true nature of the threat there. The Caliph has assembled his best warriors, but even they may be ill-equipped and ill-prepared to deal with the zombies' numbers, their nature, and their speed. This could very well start out as a “typical” medieval adventure, though set in the Middle East instead of Europe, with the heroes becoming overconfident as they only find remnants and traces of their quarry. Only after traveling to Amman and discovering a city of the dead might the true horror of their situation set in.

As they try to make it back to the Caliph, they will not only have to contend with an enemy that never tires and is always on the hunt for flesh, but the Cast Members will also face a constant battle against the elements as they cross the burning sands. Oasis, *caravanserais*, and other points of respite along the way will almost surely be controlled or destroyed by the zombie menace on the return journey, and even if the Cast Members make it as far as al-Rashid's court, he may or may not believe their fantastic stories and respond. If he does not, then the zombies will spread until they cover three continents – and kill everything in their path. If he does, they may only spread more quickly, as each soldier the Caliph sends could rise and join the undead ranks.

Riding Like the Wind

Alternately, the Cast could be members of a tribe of desert raiders, whose relatively simple life was recently disrupted by a major event: the Sheik's son, who bragged about finding an old ring in the desert, ascended to leadership after the mysterious death of his father. Claiming to control the power of the desert itself, the new Sheik has been leading the tribe's horsemen into battle with unparalleled success. Recently, the tribe was attacked by a new evil: a horde of zombies that swept from the dunes like slivers of moonlight. The Sheik, with superhuman strength and arrows of flame, eventually killed the zombies and the fallen tribe members who threatened

to rise as the undead. He then declared a war against the zombie menace, and ordered the tribe to follow him across the desert to destroy the hordes.

The ring the Sheik found was none other than the ring used by the Sultan's wife to create the zombies in the first place. The Jinni is still attached to the ring, although no longer a slave to it. The newly freed Jinni is using the young Sheik to sow as much chaos and discord as possible in its quest for vengeance against the "simple" humans that enslaved it. The Cast Members may be horsemen or common tribes folk, or even travelers who have been taken prisoner by the tribe, but they will eventually discover the Sheik's secret. Whether they attempt to use the Jinni's power themselves, or attempt to destroy the spirit (a nearly-impossible task for most mortals), is entirely up to the Zombie Master and the Cast Members.

Character Creation

Like the **Dead at 1000** scenario in the *AFMBE* core book, character creation in **Tales of the Walking Dead** is extremely limited. The Computers, Computer Hacking, Computer Programming, Demolitions, Driving, Electronic Surveillance, Electronics, Guns, Mechanic, and Piloting Skills are unavailable. The Martial Arts skill is rare, but not as rare as in **Dead at 1000**. The Arabs were skilled at medicinal arts, but their techniques are crude by today's standards. In addition, of course, it would be inappropriate to use the Archetypes in chapter 2 of the *AFMBE* core book.



Tales of the Walking Dead Zombies

Strength 4

Constitution 2

Dexterity 3

Intelligence -2

Perception 2

Willpower 2

Dead Points 15

Speed 18

Endurance Points n/a

Essence Pool 20

Attack: Claws [+8] D6(3) x 4 in slashing, armor piercing damage. Zombies attempt to immobilize, but not kill, with their claws, and begin eating after their prey has stopped struggling.

Weak Spot: Fire [-5]

Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10], Leaping (desert only) [+3]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]

Senses: Like the Living [+1]

Sustenance: Weekly [+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]

Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]

Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]

Special: When not on a surface that's at least 80% sand, the Zombie's speed drops to 6 and it loses the Leaping ability.

Power: 24



The 47 Gaki

By Michael McConnell

Kenosuke had lived all his life at the temple of Sengakuji on the outskirts of Edo. His mother had left him there while still an infant. She was a servant who had been banished from the daimyo's house in disgrace. After leaving her son with the Buddhist priests of the temple, she hung herself on a tree some miles out of town.

Kenosuke was a boy when the legendary Ako vendetta occurred. 47 loyal samurai raided the mansion of Lord Kira and slew him to avenge their master, Lord Asano. Asano had committed seppuku two years earlier after attacking Kira in the palace. Asano was condemned to death, his lands were seized, and his family and soldiers were disbanded. His men blamed Kira and, after disbanding and waiting for their foe to grow careless, they took their revenge.

Despite being murderers, the devotion shown by the samurai made them heroes with many lords. They were allowed to atone for their crime by committing seppuku, and were given honorable burial beside their lord at the graveyard in Sengakuji. The graves

became popular pilgrimage sites, and it was Kenosuke's duty to maintain the grounds, and to ensure that visitors did no damage.

This was the 46th anniversary of the Ako attack. Each year on this day, the temple held a great festival in commemoration of the event. Pilgrims came from all across the island, and Kenosuke was always busy. He didn't mind, though; he was proud of his work, and saw in the tragedy of the samurai some reflection of the fate of his mother, as well.

Just after the opening ceremonies, Kenosuke heard screams coming from the graves. Climbing a tree, he was able to see the pilgrims fleeing in terror. On the small hill where the graves stood, the ground had split open, and pale, emaciated men were emerging. Rising from the graves of the most honorable samurai in history.

Though terrified, Kenosuke crept closer to the graves. He could not believe what he saw; he would not believe until he saw their faces. And, all too soon,

he did see; he saw Oishi Kuranosuke, head samurai of Asano. He was standing beneath his own memorial statue, waiting. His son, Chikara, who was escorting Lord Asano himself, then joined him. The warriors bowed before their master, who stood watching the carnage. Then, he turned his gaze upon Kenosuke, and spoke a single word. Kenosuke felt a quick, stabbing pain in his chest. For a time, everything was dark and cold. Soon, it became warm again, and he felt the rays of the rising sun upon his face.

He sat up unsteadily, looking over the graveyard. The samurai were gone, but their legacy remained. Hundreds of pilgrims and priests, slain and left behind, were now rising, their faces lean, their eyes hungry. They turned, and began to slowly advance toward Edo. His duties forgotten, Kenosuke also rose, and took his place in the army of Hell.

History

In 1701 A.D., the feudal lord Asano Takumi was given the honor of arranging a reception for the Emperor's impending visit to the shogun's palace. In order to learn his duties, he was assigned to the Lord Kira Yoshinaka, who had performed this duty for many years. Kira was an irritable and greedy old man who demanded bribes from Asano in exchange for the required tutelage. As Asano persistently refused, Kira became more and more abrasive, continually humiliating Asano in public in front of other members of the court.

Finally, Asano could tolerate no more abuse. On March 14, he drew his sword and attacked Kira in a hallway of the shogun's palace. Merely drawing a weapon on the grounds was a capital crime, and Asano was quickly arrested and put on trial. He refused to answer questions, saying only that he meant the shogun no harm. After a short inquiry, Asano was ordered to commit seppuku, a form of ritual suicide. In accordance with law, his clan was dissolved, his lands at Ako were seized, and his 321 samurai became ronin, outcast warriors without a master.

Not surprisingly, many Asano samurai wanted to resist the shogun and defend the Asano lands. After much discussion, elders such as Oishi Kuranosuke decided that they must disband as ordered and apply

for the restoration of clan Asano. Disheartened, the samurai went their separate ways, becoming farmers, mercenaries, or priests. Oishi himself moved to Edo (now called Tokyo) and spent his time drinking and womanizing, where his shameful conduct eventually led his wife to divorce him.

However, all was not as it appeared. Oishi, his son Chikara, and 45 other Asano men had sworn in secrecy to slay Lord Kira and avenge their master, no matter what the cost. Their seeming surrender, and Oishi's dishonorable conduct, was part of a ruse designed to trick Kira into complacency. The old man knew Asano was popular, and he feared retribution from the man's followers. Nevertheless, by the winter of 1702 A.D., no retribution had come, and Kira was confident that the followers of Asano were defeated.

Late in the evening of December 14, 1702, the 47 ronin secretly gathered in Edo to take their revenge. Using homemade armor, and weapons smuggled into the city, they made their way to Kira's manor in the Edo suburbs. Oishi even went so far as to send messages to Kira's neighbors, revealing his plan and saying that no harm would come to anyone outside of Kira's estate. The samurai divided themselves into two groups and attacked; one group assaulted the front door, and the other group climbed the wall into the back courtyard. They slew 16 of Kira's men and suffered not a single loss of their own. Kira himself was eventually discovered hiding in a woodshed. Oishi offered him the chance of honorable seppuku, but the old man was too terrified to move. So, Oishi beheaded him, using the very dagger that Asano had used to end his own life.

The samurai left Edo and went to the nearby Sengakuji temple, where Lord Asano was buried. They placed the head of Kira on their master's grave, and then turned themselves over to the temple priests. One of the ronin, Terasaka Kichiemon, was sent to the shogun's palace to inform the authorities of what they had done. The samurai were taken into custody, and were divided into four groups, each group to be the "guests" of a different daimyo.

News of the Ako vendetta spread quickly across the country, and shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi had quite a dilemma on his hands. On the one side, the samurai

were nothing short of murderers. They had performed unlawful military action against a man who, while unpleasant, was technically innocent of any wrongdoing. Even assembling and arming themselves within the city limits of Edo was a crime. However, the samurai had also upheld the virtues of loyalty and obedience to one's master. There was a good deal of popular support for the actions of the ronin.

For 47 days, the shogun and his magistrates debated their course of action, while Oishi and his followers patiently awaited their judgment. In the end, it was decided that the 46 imprisoned ronin would be allowed to commit seppuku, and would be honorably buried beside their master at Sengakuji temple. The 47th samurai, Terasaka Kichiemon, was spared punishment, and retired into anonymity shortly thereafter. As for the others, they simultaneously killed themselves on February 4, 1703 A.D.

At this point, recorded history diverges with the chronology of this Deadworld. When Lord Asano passed into the afterlife, he was taken into the Underworld. There he met Izanami, Queen of the Dead. Consoling the dead lord, Izanami persuaded him that the shogun had treated him unjustly, and she awakened within him a dark thirst for revenge. Later, when Asano's retainers killed themselves, Izanami used her powers to track the fates of the samurai in the afterlife.

For 46 years, Queen Izanami and Lord Asano traveled the many worlds of the afterlife, collecting Asano's men and persuading them to their cause. At the end of their travels, all 46 ronin were reunited with their master, and all of them eager to sate their master's thirst for revenge. Using her dark magic, Izanami sent their spirits back to the living world. On December 15, 1748, they arose as the 47 Gaki, and began to wreak their vengeance on the living.

Why This Story?

Even today, the 47 Ronin are considered national heroes in Japan. Changing their tale to one of horror and casting them as flesh-eating dead could cause some discomfort in readers familiar with the original. This Deadworld was not created out of any disrespect for Japanese history or culture. Rather, it was created to explore the same themes of loyalty and revenge that make the original story so powerful 250 years later. However, when the Asano clan arises from the grave to seek further retribution, certain questions are raised. How legitimate is the concept of revenge, and how far can it be taken before it crosses the line? Who is ultimately responsible for what happened – Asano, Kira, or the shogun, or perhaps even the entire feudal system itself? Even in response to the insult, was it right for the ronin to kill a defenseless old man? And, at what point does the virtue of loyalty to one's master conflict with the desire to do good, and when should this conflict cause one to betray an evil master?

The examination of these questions is not new; in fact, Japanese scholars and philosophers asked many of these same questions after the events of the Ako vendetta occurred. Although noble and popular support lay with the ronin, many contemporary thinkers disagreed with their actions. Even Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the famous author of Hagakure ("Falling Leaves," considered the essential handbook of samurai behavior) believed that the ronin should have killed themselves immediately after the crime. It appeared to him that, in awaiting the shogun's judgment, they seemed to have hoped for exoneration. Today, history remembers the ronin as heroes and exemplary warriors, but opinion could just as easily have swung the other way. This Deadworld is an examination of why this duality exists, by focusing on the darker undercurrents of the story.

Current Situation

The Gaki arise at sunrise on December 15, 1748 A.D. Their graves are located at Sengakuji temple, which is located just outside of Edo (present day Tokyo). Edo also happens to be the seat of the Tokugawa shogunate, and the location of their palace. Since it was the Tokugawa clan who passed judgment on Asano, Edo is the first target of the flesh-eating warriors.

When the Gaki first arise, it is during the opening ceremonies of the commemoration festival. Priests, pilgrims, and visitors have come from all across the island, and are the first targets of the hungry undead. Hundreds are slain during the initial attack by the Asano samurai; even more attendees flee in terror. The Gaki abandon the corpses of anyone they kill. These unburied corpses are left to rot, and denied the proper rites that would allow their passage to the afterlife. After a night in the open air, soaking up the moon's energy, the corpses will rise at dawn as a zombie servants of the 47 Gaki.

It takes only an hour or so for news of the attack to reach the shogun's palace. Unlike more modern Deadworlds, the beliefs and superstitions of feudal Japan cause authorities to immediately look into the matter. Eyewitness accounts and preliminary investigations confirm that clan Asano has risen from the grave and is mounting an assault on the city of Edo. Initially, the shogun's forces are able to secure the city and the Gaki occupy only the temple. The next day, however, the victims of the Gaki also arise and join the undead forces. Outnumbered from without, and besieged from within, the forces of Edo begin to fall under the renewed onslaught of the Asano samurai.

At this time in Japanese history, Edo was the effective capital of the nation, and home to millions of people. It was the location of the shogun's palace, and the shogun was true ruler of Japan. Although the emperor kept his palace in Kyoto, across the island, he had almost no power at all.

Traditionally, the shogunate used a system known as sankin kotai, or "alternate residence," as a means of keeping the daimyo in their place. Feudal lords were forced to house their families in Edo, and their

wives and children kept at the shogun's palace as virtual hostages. Daimyo were also required to alternate each year between administering their estates and attending the shogun in Edo. In addition to absorbing their time, this attendance was quite expensive, as poorer country nobles were forced to expend great sums of money in order to maintain their status in Edo. Between the threat to their families, and the expenditure of time and money, no noble was able to raise a force to threaten the shogunate.

Thus, in addition to the great number of commoners within the city, Edo also was home to the shogun and his family, the families of all feudal lords, and half the daimyo of Japan, complete with entourages. The proximity Sengakuji temple to Edo means that the Gaki are a real and immediate threat to the entire government of Japan. Lord Asano considers the current shogun, Tokugawa Ieshige, to be his primary target. This is in spite of the fact that there have been three other shoguns since Asano was forced to kill himself. Not only that, but Ieshige is not even of the Tokugawa bloodline. Ieshige's father was adopted into the clan in order to take the position of shogun after all the Tokugawa heirs had died.

Nevertheless, Lord Asano's vengeance will fall first upon shogun Tokugawa Ieshige, and the city of Edo is standing in his way. 24 hours after their return, Asano and his men have created thousands of zombies and are using them to attack the city from both within and without. While these creatures are no match for trained warriors, the Gaki themselves are more than a match for anyone the shogun can field against them. And, due to the strict laws prohibiting weapons and soldiers in Edo, only the shogun that has the men to deal with them.

Thus, there are actually two different faces to the combat. In the streets and houses, the untrained common people try to fend off the zombies any way they can, just as any other survival horror situation. Meanwhile, on the city walls and in the fine estates, the Gaki face off against hordes of trained samurai and consistently butcher them. Even the revelation of the zombie's weak spot in the head comes too little, too late.

In addition to the normal turmoil caused by a zombie assault on an urban area, there are various setting considerations that greatly worsen the situation. Almost everyone in this period believes in at least some type of magic or spiritualism, and hundreds die from relying on ineffectual charms, wards, or other mystic protections. Additionally, many people considered the ronin to be great heroes, and this unspeakable resurrection seems to drain all hope of salvation. Some even attempt to join the Asano ranks, only to be slain by the attackers, and left to rise as zombies the next day.

By the end of the second day, most of Edo has fallen to the zombies, and the shogun and nobles have hidden within their fortified palace. At dawn, the dead will rise again and join the Asano forces, and the palace will be overrun. Realizing this, the nobles of Edo have no choice but to flee the city. Under cover of darkness, they steal away through secret tunnels in the palace that take them past the Asano forces. Loyal samurai and servants are left behind as decoys, so that the Gaki will not suspect the ruse until they have stormed the castle. By the time this occurs, the feudal lords of Japan have scattered, some to return to their estates, others to answer the shogun's call to regroup at Kyoto.

When Edo finally falls, it is occupied by an army of the walking dead, commanded by some of the finest warriors of the age. Lord Asano takes his place within the shogun's palace and declares himself the new ruler of Japan, but it is an empty proclamation. Firstly, shogun Tokugawa Ieshige is still alive, and the lords of Japan attend him instead of Asano. Secondly, no one can truly become shogun without the emperor's blessing. While this is a technicality, it is one which Asano must obey in order to consider his own rule to be valid.

From his palace in the city of the dead, Asano sends out his men to gather information and subjugate the local lords. Meanwhile the shogun and the emperor try to rally an opposing force at Kyoto, and it is not long before word of this reaches the new Lord of Edo. Asano is delighted that both his targets are together, and he immediately makes plans to move his forces to Kyoto for the final showdown. The undead can march day and night without rest, and they fill their

ranks with the fallen dead as they march. It will be only a matter of days before they reach Kyoto, and then the final battle for Japan will begin.

Story Ideas

Dawn of the Hungry Dead

In this scenario, the Cast Members are present for the initial resurrection of the Asano samurai. They could be priests or visitors at the commemoration ceremony, or they could be residents of the city of Edo. If they are present at the ceremony, they will be immediately forced to fight or flee. If they are residents of the city, they will soon hear the news of a violent attack at the Sengakuji temple, followed by the news that the dead ronin have arisen to attack the city.

During the first day, the Gaki mostly busy themselves with taking the temple grounds and fortifying them. They know that they must wait a day for the fallen dead to rise, so they shut themselves in the main building. Once night falls, they use the cover of darkness to make forays into the suburbs of Edo, slaying any they find in order to leave them for the rising sun. By dawn, thousands have been slain, and the siege of Edo begins.

If the Cast Members are priests, tourists, or other commoner characters, they will spend the first day trying to find a safe place and holding onto it. When dawn of the second day arrives, they will find themselves under assault by an army of the walking dead, and will have to fight their way out of the city. If they are still present by the dawn of the third day, they will probably not survive.

If the Cast Members are nobles or samurai, then they spend the first day receiving reports on the incident, and possibly investigating the stories. When the second day comes, the Cast Members will have no choice but to fight the attackers, either zombies or Gaki, depending on their power level. As the situation becomes more hopeless, they will have to decide whether to stay and fight or flee with the rest of the nobles. They may decide, or may be ordered, to stay in the palace and act as decoys, which could be a noble ending to the tale.

Regardless, this scenario only lasts the two days during which the Gaki attack the city. By the end of the third day, the Gaki have taken Edo and everyone within the city is dead. Cast Members who have escaped the necropolis will have to decide where to go from there, possibly to join the armies of Kyoto (see below).

Army of the Dead

In this scenario, the Cast Members are not present in Edo during the initial attack. They might be in a village or farm estate somewhere in the country, or they might be attached to the emperor's court in Kyoto. Possibly, they are the retainers of lords who were not in Edo. In any case, they will want to travel to Kyoto, their last hope of safety from the Gaki.

Once in Kyoto, the Cast Members will have an opportunity to prepare for the coming of the zombies. They can fortify the city, scout the movements of the Asano forces, and practice their martial arts. The Gaki move slowly but steadily, bringing with them the corpses of their victims in order to prevent their burial. By the time they arrive at Kyoto, they will number in the tens of thousands.

Again, the sort of opponents faced by the Cast Members will depend on their power level. If they are commoners, they are put in the city walls to fend off the weaker zombies (and hopefully avoid the attention of the Gaki). Particularly unlucky Cast Members (such as those that have offended someone in a position of authority) might get the job of corpse retrieval, bringing the dead to be buried by the priests in order to prevent their reanimation.

If the characters are samurai, they will be leading troops, overseeing the city's defenses, and fighting the Gaki themselves. Fortunately, news of the Gaki's weak spot has spread by now, so a single sword blow to the head or neck could be enough to fell one. Of course, the Gaki have weapons as well, and are quite adept at their use. In addition, many of the Gaki have unusual powers such as poisoned blood or sentient entrails. These sorts of surprises are best introduced after the Cast Members have slain several Gaki and are starting to feel confident in their abilities.

In the end, it's quite possible that most of the Gaki will be destroyed only to have the city overrun by the sheer number of zombies. There may be one hope, however; it is the general consensus among the priests that the zombies will return to death if Lord Asano himself is slain. This scenario could culminate with a race against time in which the Cast Members try to find and slay Asano (and the Oishi warriors, who will of course be protecting him) before the city falls to the zombies. Of course, it's entirely up to the Zombie Master whether or not the death of Asano actually halts the attack.

Reign of the Gaki

In this scenario, the characters are grizzled survivors on an island otherwise inhabited by the walking dead. Possibly, they are samurai who survived the battles at Edo or Kyoto. Or, perhaps the Cast Members simply lived in a remote part of Japan, on the tips of the island and away from the main action. In any case, the Gaki have emerged triumphant from their battles; Tokugawa Ieshige is dead, and the emperor has (under duress) made Lord Asano the new shogun of Japan.

Once he has dealt with any opposition, Asano sends his troops across the island to take control of the outlying provinces. This need not be violent, with the emperor subjugated and the Tokugawa line destroyed, Asano has little to fear. He has no need to slay everyone on the island, and in fact would prefer to keep as many people living as possible – mindless zombies cannot provide the resources and labor that he wants for his eternal reign. Likewise, he will probably keep some semblance of the daimyo structure in place, because without this he would have no one to rule.

Naturally, the Cast Members are going to want to work against the Gaki, and eventually destroy Asano. But, they will have to work surreptitiously as open rebellion would be sure to result in their deaths. They will have to set out and look for others who feel as they do, and who can be trusted not to turn them over to the new shogun. In the process, they'll have to avoid the scrutiny of the Gaki and those zombies who are not under orders to ignore the living (which will be their standing orders once the war is won).

The Cast Members might initially think to go to the courts of either the Emperor or Asano himself. Both have their own advantages and dangers. The Emperor's court is likely to have the most sympathizers, but it is also closely watched by the Gaki, and considered to be a honeycomb of spies and traitors. In Edo, Asano holds a tyrannical mock court in which he holds the remaining lords in terror of falling out of his favor. In a twist on the Tokugawa practice of sankin kotai, every member of the court has a zombie "attendant" with them at all times; should there be any hint of disrespect or rebellion, the zombie will tear that person apart. Finally, even though the zombies do not need to feed, the Gaki require weekly sustenance, so anyone in the proximity is in danger of becoming a snack for one of them.

Another possibility is for the Cast Members to avoid the political centers and move about the country, gathering the common people to their cause. Again, they would have to work in secret in order to prevent being killed by the Gaki. One way of gathering a force might be to seek out the underground Christian Church, which has been illegal for over a century. Nonetheless, it has many members, including a fair amount of nobles and samurai whose families converted before it became illegal. These warriors are used to working in secret, and might even have access to Inspired members who can wield supernatural powers against the Gaki. Finally, the characters might hear rumor of the whereabouts of Terasaka Kichiemon, the only surviving ronin from the attack on Kira. Although an old man now, he would be an inspiring symbol for a resistance movement, and might even be able to turn some of his former comrades against their master. Finding him will be difficult, and persuading him to turn on his own clan will not be any easier.



Feudal Japan Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 1 **Intelligence** -2
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 2
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 6
Attack: Bite damage d4 x 2 (4) slashing
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0], The Lunge [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Dead [0], Life Sense [+2]
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Dumb As Deadwood [0]
Spreading the Love: (Don't) Bury the Body [-2]
Power: 17

Anyone slain by zombies or gaki must be given a proper burial with the correct rites. If this does not happen, then the body will arise the next dawn as a zombie under the control of the gaki.

These are the standard zombies for the 47 Gaki setting. They are the unburied corpses of those slain by either the gaki or other zombies. They will follow the orders of the gaki, respecting the chain of command that clan Asano already has in place.



Gaki

Strength 4 **Constitution** 4
Dexterity 5 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 42
Dead Points 31 **Speed** 18
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 30
Attack: Bite damage d4 x 2(4) slashing or by weapon
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]
Getting Around: Life Like [+3]
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], Teeth [+4]
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Life Sense [+4]
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Problem Solving [+15], Language [+1], Long Term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: (Don't) Bury The Dead [-2]
 Anyone slain by zombies or gaki must be given a proper burial with the correct rites. If this does not happen, then the body will arise the next dawn as a zombie under the control of the gaki.
Qualities: Essence Channeling 4 [8], The Gift [5], Hard to Kill 5 [5], Increased Essence 10 [2]
Drawbacks: Cruel [-1], Obsession [-2], Prejudice [-3]
Skills: Dodge 2, Hand Weapon (Katana) 3, Hand Weapon (Spear or Bow) 2, Intimidate 2, Stealth 2
Powers/Aspects: Chi Suck [+4]
Power: 75
Gear: Katana

This is a basic template for the 47 gaki. Each gaki should also have its own unique powers, but the above statistics will be common to all of them. Zombie Masters should use powers from the Chi Techniques (p. 37-45) and Playing Zombies (p. 46-58) portions of *Enter the Zombie* in order to customize the Cast Members' foes. The power level of the gaki faced by the characters should gradually increase throughout the campaign, so that Oishi, Asano, and the final gaki could easily have 120 power points or more.

Martial Arts, Zombies, and More!

This *Deadworld* utilizes material from the *Enter the Zombie* sourcebook. However, because it is set in Japan instead of China, the focus will be more on weapons such as the katana, and less on kung fu style, unarmed combat. Zombie Masters with a copy of this book should refer to the Martial Artist character rules in *Enter the Zombie* (see p. 38-45) and the Playing Zombie rules (see p. 46-58). The villains of this *Deadworld* make use of both sets of rules, and are quite powerful by typical AFMBE standards. Because of this, it is suggested that the Zombie Master allow Cast Members to create their own Martial Artists in order to combat them.

And for those Zombie Masters who want to push the limit even further, *Dungeons & Zombies* contains a *Deadworld* titled *The Eastern Dead*. New Qualities, Drawbacks, and setting material fill D&Z with more zombie goodness for a potential samurai era game. It also contains magic to build up a shukenja style Cast Member. *Atlas of the Walking Dead* is another fine choice for Zombie Masters who want to change up the zombies in this setting.

Outcast Samurai

Martial Artist

Personality

Str 5 Dex 6 Con 4

Int 3 Per 3 Wil 4

Lps 52

Eps 44

Spd 20

Essence 25

Qualities/Drawbacks

Essence Channeling 3 (6)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

The Gift (5)

Hard to Kill 2 (2)

Honorable (-1)

Status (-4)

Skills

Dodge 3

First Aid 2

Hand Weapon (Katana) 4

Intimidation 2

Martial Arts 2 (4)

Notice 2

Stealth 2

Metaphysics

Ain't Got Time to Bleed (4)

Be Like the Water (2)

Blind Strike (4)

Combat Sense (3)

Quick Draw (2)

Running the Gauntlet (3)

Speak Nicely to Betsy (3)

Gear

Katana, Kosode Robe, Sake Bottle



For decades, my family served the same clan. I trained as a samurai and inherited my father's position. I performed my duties, married, and had children. Everything was as it should be.

Then our daimyo was arrested by the shogun's men and put on trial for corruption. He killed himself and his lands were seized. Many others killed themselves as well, but I did not have the courage. My wife deserted me and took the children, and I was left alone.

For years, I wandered the countryside, with only my sword and a tattered robe. Often I was near starvation. I performed mercenary work or bodyguard duty when I got the chance, often for no more than a little food and sake. Many times, my employers tried to kill me rather than pay me.

Now, they say the Akoroshi, honored as heroes, have returned from the grave as hungry dead. They say that they will slay us all in revenge for what was done to them. I say their trials are nothing compared to mine. I chose not to take my own life, and I have no intention of giving it to these samurai who should have appreciated being dead.

Quote

"These Edo nobles are too weak and foolish to resolve this situation themselves. So men such as I must do the dirty work for them."

Noblewoman

Survivor

Personality

The men are always the first to call for war.

When this all began, and we were in Edo surrounded by the armies of the dead, the men did not want to flee. They wanted to stay and die honorable, but foolish, deaths.

What honor would there be in joining the enemy and helping to conquer the land?

Str 2 **Dex** 4 **Con** 3

Int 3 **Per** 4 **Wil** 5

Lps 34

Eps 32

Spd 12

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Hearing (2)

Contacts (other nobles) (4)

Minority (-1)

Resources (Wealthy) (6)

Status (4)

Skills

Acting 3

Disguise 2

Dodge 3

First Aid 3

Hand Weapon (Tanto) 2

Instruction 3

Myth and Legend 3

Notice 3

Play Instrument (Biwa) 2

Questioning 3

Singing 2

Smooth Talking 3

Stealth 3

Gear

Fine Jewelry, Kaidori Robe, Tanto



It was military minds that lost Kyoto, as well. The priests said that this attack would end when the leaders were slain, just as these creatures die when their heads are removed. But still, the men did not listen. "It is not strategically sound," they said. "We are defensible here, we cannot attack." All too soon, the monsters overran Kyoto, and we were forced to flee again.

Most of our men are dead now. Some of them, though dead, still accompany us. While we are subjugated here in court, puppets of an unholy shogun, there is still much that we can do.

Now that force has failed, it is time for cunning and subtlety. Though we serve monsters, and watch our departed ones walk the halls, we can still persevere, turning our weakness into strength. All we must have is the will.

Quote

"It is good we are ready to fight, but we must not be deluded. Brute force alone will not to see us through these trials."



Over the Wall

by Tyler Sigman

Marcus rubbed his bleary eyes with the back of his hand. Twenty miles of patrol was hard enough, but to make things worse Marcus hadn't slept well the night before, what with all of the dogs barking and such. He looked over at the legionnaire beside him; Julian looked to be in the much the same condition. Thankfully, the milecastle was just over the next hill.

As the two crested the slope, Hadrian's Wall rose, dominating their view. Marcus never tired of seeing it. Its purpose was to keep the barbaric rabble of the Picts at bay. Marcus considered it an honor to be garrisoned here. He let his eyes trail along from east to west, the Wall spanning as far as the eye could see in either direction.

Marcus's gaze drifted back. Two stalwart towers flanked a gate; they were the milecastle at which he was stationed. Looking down to the base of the towers, it became immediately apparent to him that something was amiss. A host of armor, weapons, and gear was scattered out in front of the fort – it looked as though his compatriots had tossed out everything

from inside. Puzzled, Marcus forgot his fatigue for a moment as he and Julian picked up their pace. As they drew closer, Marcus was met with a severe shock. There were bodies, as well!

A sharp cry erupted from Julian as he noticed the same thing. At least half of the milecastle's thirty men were on the turf. Approaching, Marcus saw their twisted corpses all too clearly. Some were still gripping their weapons; all were stained in wide swaths of dark, drying blood.

"No!" shouted Julian, drawing his gladius and charging the last fifty yards to the fort. Marcus, numb with shock, could only watch his fellow go.

Julian approached the tower entrance yanking aside the once stout, wooden door and then vanished into the portal. As he did so, Marcus suddenly felt a chill go up his spine and cried out for his friend to stop.

It was too late – hardly a breath went by before a scream rang out from within the fort. The sound was piercing and terrible, undeniably Julian's voice,

almost inhuman in timbre. Marcus's training immediately took over. His blade leapt into his hand and he found himself running for the fort.

It was an effort in vain.

A figure darkened the fort's doorway, but it was not Julian – it was too short and stood . . . awkwardly. The shape emerged into the fading sun and Marcus' blood froze. Muscular and painted with blue tattoos, it was a Pict. However, no Pict Marcus had ever seen looked anything like this one. The man's dark, matted hair framed a face contorted with frenzy. His jaws were covered in fresh blood. The Pict snarled and hurled something that fell with a squish at the legionnaire's feet. It was a heart, still beating.

The gladius fell from Marcus' numb grasp as the *thing* leapt at him.

History: *Repano Pretaritus*

In 43 A.D., the Roman Aulus Plautius invaded Britain with four legions and 20,000 auxiliary troops. Resistance was comparatively small, and it wasn't long before Emperor Cladius bestowed upon Plautius the title of Governor of Britain.

The Romans brought many things to the island, including a network of interconnected roads and an organized, civil society. They worked their way inexorably north, conquering and settling as they went. When they reached what would become modern day Scotland, however, they encountered more serious resistance in the form of the Picts. The Picts were an unorganized collection of barbaric tribes that more than made up for their disorder by a fierceness that set the Romans aback.

While the Romans could not be stopped in their quest to settle Britain, the Picts hotly contested the far North, posing such a problem that Emperor Hadrian commissioned a wall in 122 A.D. to keep the rabble contained and under control. The wall spanned over 66 miles from east to west. It rose to a height of 16 feet, providing a significant obstacle and fortification. Towers, or "milecastles," were spaced at regular intervals, and numerous large forts controlled the major roads and portals.

The Romans knew well of the ferocity and savagery of the "painted men" beyond the wall, and knew also of their tendency to carve elaborate animal symbols into stone. Nevertheless, the conquerors of Britain had no idea that the Picts were in touch with the very natural – and indeed unnatural – fabric of the world. The Picts were labeled as painted men because of their affinity for intricate symbols that were sometimes tattooed on their bodies. It was little known that these very tattoos often bestowed upon the bearers a superhuman strength and speed.

In 185 A.D., a mysterious Pictish shaman discovered a new tattoo pattern that had dramatic effects, which would only manifest themselves after the bearer was slain: he would rise again with an unquenchable hunger for human organs! Worse, these men from the grave were possessed of the quickness of the deer, might of the bear, and agility of the cat.

The first three zombie Picts arose and single-handedly destroyed their entire clan. Only by banding together did several other tribes put the creatures down. Instead of letting the evil fade, other ambitious shamans studied the bodies and uncovered the mysterious tattoos. Before long, more zombies were created—but this time, the Picts had the sense to get out of the way first, and direct the beasts south, towards Roman land. So it was, that a host of the frenzied undead creatures spilled south over Hadrian's Wall, eager for flesh.

The Romans owned Britain, but not for long.

Current Situation: *Statuo Potens, Miles* *(Stand Strongly, Soldier)*

The zombie Picts are on the prowl, hungry for hearts of the living!

Hadrian's Wall, impressive as it is, cannot stop the creatures; the Pictish zombies can scale the stones like a staircase. The Wall remains important, though, because the legionnaires garrisoned along it are the first line of defense against this newfound horror. If the Roman army cannot stop the crimson tide, then the painted devils will flow southward and spread like a plague over all of Britain.

Britain is at a connected and advanced peak that will decline greatly in the Dark Ages. Paved and patrolled Roman roads connect cities, and there is a relative peace on the land – except for in the far West (Wales) and the far North (Scotland). The Zombie Master and Cast Members can use general historical landmarks of Britain as a guide, but keep in mind that there are no feudal castles, cathedrals, and the like.

Although the Pictish zombies are small in both number and stature, the threat that they pose to Roman Britain is intense. Each creature by itself is a force to be reckoned with, and even worse: the Pictish shamans can make more. If a solution is not found, then the island will face a cataclysm of violence that will leave it in bloody ruins.

The general technology of the day is also a problem: there are no boomsticks or rocket-launchers to stem the zombie tide. Although the creatures can be hacked up just like any other beast of flesh-and-blood, the only sure-fire way to stop them is a spear or arrow through the heart. Fortunately, trained Roman legionnaires represent the military pinnacle of the age; they are the best-equipped and skilled soldiers in the world, bar none.

When it comes down to it, though, the fate of Britain rests on the shoulders of just one Roman. Lucius Artorius Castus is a cavalry general stationed along Hadrian's Wall who is renowned for his leadership, honor, and skill in battle. If he cannot muster a force and stop the fiendish Picts, no one can.

Some say that Lucius Artorius Castus may be the genesis of the King Arthur legend.

Story Ideas: *Fabula Informatio*

Over the Wall They Come: *Teneo Vallum* (Hold the Wall)

The Cast Members are Roman legionnaires stationed at one of the milecastles on Hadrian's Wall. One night, while on watch, they hear scratching and scabbling on the other side. Suddenly, a zombie Pict crests the wall, with others not far behind.

The thirty men stationed in the milecastle are enough to slow the devils down, but not enough to

stop them. The Cast Members' only hope is to fight the zombies off through coordinated action and then escape to a major fort twenty miles down the Wall where Lucius Artorius Castus is garrisoned with heavy cavalry. Of course, the way in between is zombie-infested and the moon is hidden behind clouds. Behind every jutting stone may lay zombies!

Will the players rise to the challenge, or flee southward to be ever labeled as deserters?

Feasting Rites: *Mei Sinus Decet Mei Solus* (My Secret Heart is Mine Alone)

Simple Pictish clansmen, the players are gathered around the fire one night while their shaman is performing rituals in his hut. Just as they drift to sleep, the Cast Members are awakened to a horrific scream. Three gory, tattooed zombies emerge into the firelight, their jaws glistening with fresh blood.

Known to the Cast, a patrol of Roman legionnaires is in the area as well. The Cast Members are caught between a rock and a hard-place. They are no match for the zombies in hand-to-hand combat, and the Romans outnumber them. If they hope to see the dawn, the Cast must improvise, improvise, improvise.

Run Rabbit, Run: *Cursor Lepus*

The clan shamans have raised a half-dozen of the uber-zombies, who have been caged. The Cast are Pictish tribesmen who have been awarded the Honor of the Rabbit. After a ritual, the zombies will be released, and it is the players' duty to lead the frenzied creatures south to Hadrian's Wall, where the zombies can then attack Romans. Should the Cast Members succeed and return, they will be regarded as heroes amongst their kin; should they fail, they will be constituted as martyrs.

The Zombie Master should consider playing this scenario off as an "every Pict for himself" adventure. Players should stop at nothing to run their Rabbit course, and the adventure can be as comical as it is tense. Remember – the players don't always have to outrun the zombies, they just need to outrun each other!

The Death of Arthur: *Arthur Nex*

Night after night, the zombie Picts have surged over the Wall, decimating the Roman garrisons. Lucius Artorius Castus has called up all reserves from the entire north country of Britain, and only through great skill and courage have they held the Wall. It is clear, though, that it is only a matter of time before the dam bursts and perhaps all of the island will be overrun with the beasts from Hell.

Artorius has decided to lead one last fell charge into the Pictish heartland. He intends to find the source of the zombie plague and put an end to it, thereby effectively cutting the head from the body. In support of his plan, he has gathered a force of heavy cavalry and foot, of which the Cast are members.

Not ten miles into Pictland, the Cast Members are beset upon by a large group of the frenzied zombies. A pitched battle ensues, from which the Cast Members are forced to flee for their lives.

With nothing left but honor, the Cast must make its way through the wildlands and hunt down the Pictish shamans behind it all. If they can slay the Picts who possess the tattoo knowledge, the thanks and glory of all of Roman Britain will be theirs.

To maximize dramatic effect, the Zombie Master should drum up this quest as the “Last, Great Hope” for the north of Roman Britain. The value of the quest exceeds the value of the individual; perhaps the Cast’s only chance for success lies in a willingness to sacrifice the one in return for the good of the many.

Special Rules: *Over the Wall* Character Creation

Character creation in *Over the Wall* is subject to the same restrictions as given for *Dead at 1000* character creation in *AFMBE*.



Over the Wall Zombies Super Parietis Mortuus Creatura

Strength 4	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 0
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool
Attack: Claw Damage D6 x 4 (12)	
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]	
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3], Climbing [+2]	
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], Claws [+8]	
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Scent Tracking [+4]	
Sustenance: Occasionally [+2]	
Menu: Sweetbreads [-3]	
Intelligence: Animal Cunning [+2]	
Spreading the Love: Ritual [-3]	
Power: 25	

Roman Legionnaire

Survivor

Personality

I am a Legionnaire. I am the strength of Rome. I am the spear point of the Empire.

Training was not easy. Only the strong survive, but only the strong are worthy of being in the Legion. For none can stand against the combined might of our arms, our shields, or swords. We anchor each other, and together we form the hastati.

I can march twenty miles through the continental sun with full gear on my back. I can pierce a bird at twenty paces with my pila. I have purpose to my life, and I am rewarded for my service to the Greatest Power on this world.

I hear rumors of strange happenings in the north: fanciful tales of beastly creatures half-man, half-animal. Some even say that the dead walk. To that I laugh – a soldier's greatest enemy is fear, and these tales are the desperate inventions of a barbaric people afraid to yield to the superiority of Rome. No legend or bedtime scare-tale can survive the cut of my gladius.

Quote

"None have yet withstood the might of the Roman legions. None will now."



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

Int 2 **Per** 3 **Wil** 4

LPS 42

EPS 41

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Sight) (2)
Charisma 1 (1)
Covetous (Glory) 2 (-2)
Fast Reaction Time (2)
Honorable 2 (-2)
Obsession (Conquer Rome's Enemies) (-2)
Photographic Memory (2)
Resistance (Fatigue) 2 (2)
Resources 2 (4)
Status 2 (2)

Skills

Brawling 2
Bureaucracy 1
Climbing 2
Dodge 3
Engineer (Civil) 1
First Aid 2
Hand Weapon (Gladius) 4
Hand Weapon (Pila) 4
Instruction 1
Intimidation 3
Myth and Legend (Roman) 2
Notice 3
Riding (Horse) 2
Running (Marathon) 2
Stealth 2
Survival (Forest) 2
Throwing (Pila) 3
Tracking 2

Gear

Banded Armor, Coins, Gladius, Helmet, 2 Pila, Shield, Trowel

Pictish Clansman

Survivor

Personality

I can smell it in the earth and in the water. I can see it in the flight of the hare and the watchful stare of the noble stag.

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

Int 2 **Per** 4 **Will** 4

LPS 34

EPS 35

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)

Contacts (Other Clans) (3)

Cruel 1 (-1)

Hard to Kill 5 (5)

Nerves of Steel (3)

Obsession (Drive Romans from the land) (-2)

Situational Awareness (2)

Skills

Brawling 3

Climbing 3

Dodge 3

First Aid 2

Hand Weapon (Axe) 3

Hand Weapon (Knife) 2

Intimidation 2

Myth and Legend (Pictish) 1

Notice 2

Rituals (Pictish) 2

Running (Marathon) 2

Stealth 3

Survival (Forest) 3

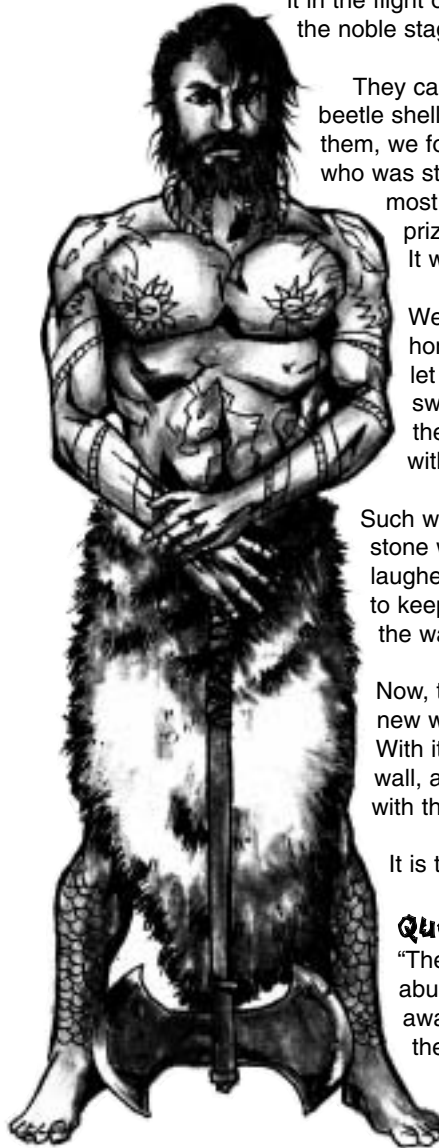
Swimming 2

Tracking 3

Traps 2

Gear

Axe, Knife, Talisman



They came from the south, with their stag-beetle shells and sun-browned skin. Before them, we fought among ourselves to prove who was strongest, who was blessed with the most potent blood. We fought over the prize of a wolf's skin or a boar's meat. It was the way of nature.

We were content to remain in our homelands. The invaders refused to let us be. They came with their swords and their spears, and we sent them back from whence they came with the rise and fall of our axes.

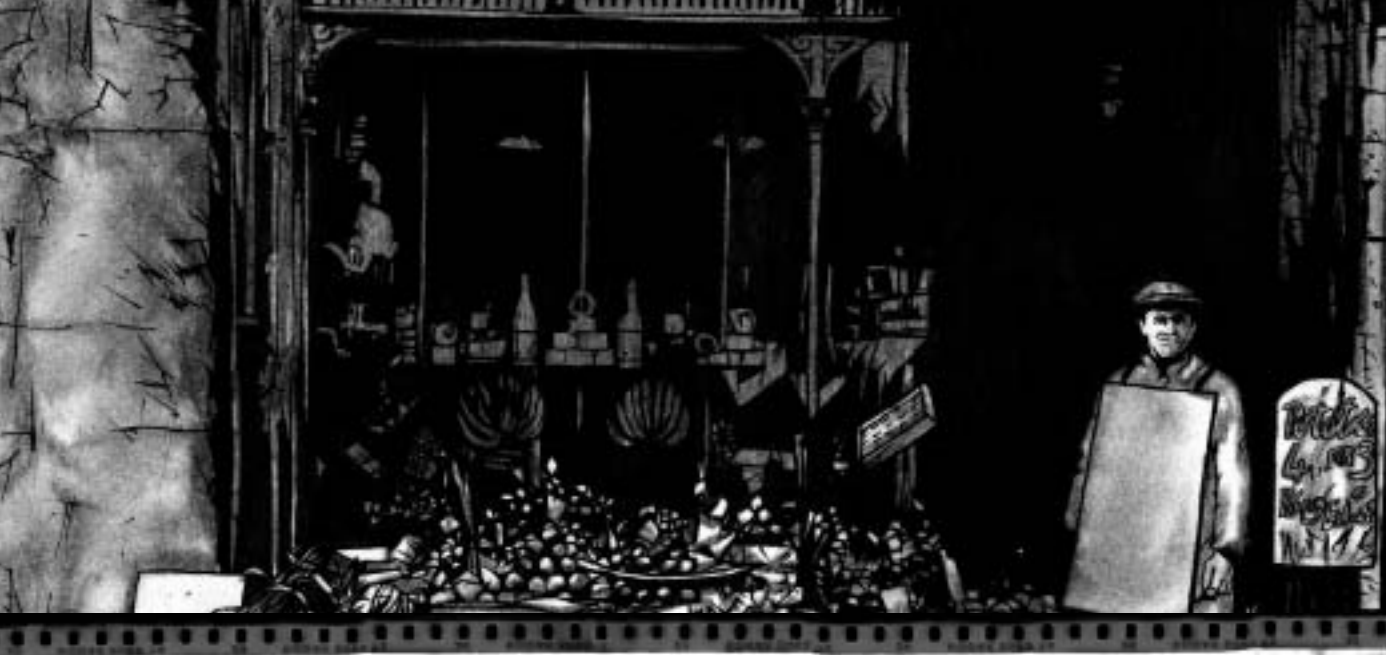
Such was our fury that they built a great, stone wall across our southern land. We laughed at it – its only purpose could be to keep them out of our land, and that's the way we wanted it.

Now, the Earth-Mother has given us a new weapon to use against the invaders. With it, we will climb over their beloved wall, and we will fill the south side of it with the invaders' own blood.

It is the way of nature.

Quote

"The invaders have stolen our land, abused our people, and driven us away like animals. They will pay in their own blood."



Frankenstein 1935

by Darren Hardy

It's Alive . . . It's Alive!

It, is not amused . . .

-Apocryphal version of the conversation between Dr. Frankenstein and Queen Victoria

22 January 1901

From inside a steam driven Hansom carriage, Mr. Spencer and I watched the foreman of a council work gang shouting at the automatons under his charge. One of them had found a recently deceased dog in the gutter on Ballards Lane and was forcing clumps of dirty matted flesh into it's mouth. The other automatons had stopped working and watched their colleague in mute interest. The foreman who wanted them to continue digging the road tried pulling the dog from the automaton, but only succeeded in snapping a rotten finger off the reanimated corpse. In the end, the foreman lost his temper and produced a long spiked hammer from his belt, which he used to dis-

patch the hopeless thing with a swift blow to the side of its head. Waving the hammer aloft and exclaiming profanities, the uncouth man finally got the automatons back to the task at hand. Glancing back as our carriage continued towards Whitehall, Mr. Spencer and I both remarked upon the strange look they gave the foreman. Later, Mr. Spencer was to observe how sad and resentful that look was, but I must dismiss such ideas as whimsy on Mr. Spencer's behalf. All men of science know Dr. Frankenstein's Promethium technique robs automatons of the malady of feelings and emotions.

History

The year is 1935, the great smog bound necropolis of London stands at the centre of a British Empire that spans half the globe. Queen Victoria the Everlasting still sits on the throne at the age of 116, thanks to the works of Dr. Frankenstein and his fantastic Prometheus technique.

The rich can afford the best Frankenstein treatment, with quick and concise work a surgeon can reanimate a patient to such a lifelike state that it is difficult to tell they had died in the first place. With top up treatments and regular minor cosmetic surgery, Frankenstein believes he will be able to extend their life spans indefinitely. The poor on the other hand are stapled back together in the morgue, brain damaged to remove their free will, and sent to work in the dead houses carrying out the harshest manual work until they literally fall apart.

With a glut of cheap, expendable, easily replaceable dead labour, the average man in England has little to do but await his own inevitable recruitment to the automaton workforce. Some have gone to work in the dead houses already as overseers to Frankenstein's automatons. Many join the armed forces where at least they can expect a square meal and to see some sunlight in the far corners of the British Empire.

However, grisly battlefield surgery has ensured that many a hapless "Tommy" has awoken to find the body they stitched back on wasn't his.

The poor wretches who choose to stay in London spend their time frequenting gin palaces and the "Brides of Frankenstein" in brothels, squandering their monthly pittance given for the compulsory blood donations that grease the wheels of the reanimation revolution.

Outside of Britain, the rest of the world is becoming nervous, the more religious countries denounce Frankenstein's automatons as blasphemous. American businessmen send spies to England desperate to discover the secrets behind Dr. Frankenstein's technique. Marxist political agitators arrive from Russia to spread rumours and rouse the disassociated poor of Britain's slums. Whilst in Walachia, a certain Transylvanian prince is consolidating his own power base.

Current Situation

Dr. Frankenstein has refined the Prometheus technique under the watchful eye of the Royal College of Surgeons in their shadowy mausoleum at Lincoln's Inn fields. The Prometheus technique involves insert-

ing a 10-inch needle up a cadaver's nose and injecting Promethium straight into the brain. The initial injection is followed by the application of a large electro-static charge, to jump-start the body.

The Prometheus technique has also successfully been used to graft different owners' body parts together or to keep separate body parts alive. Indeed the current Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone has existed only as a head for the last 20 years.

The problem with the Prometheus technique is the longer it takes to reanimate a body the more serious the degradation to the higher functions of the brain. Treatment will need to be implemented within an hour of brain death to ensure 95-99% of the original persona is left intact. Longer gaps can leave serious mental problems and a cadaver exposed as late as 48 hours or more will be little more than a mindless animal.

Whilst the rich and famous can afford top-notch treatment – the working class fare much worse. Without the money to pay for the technique, the bodies are taken to a morgue for disposal. If the subject is judged a good physical specimen then a surgeon will perform the Prometheus technique on behalf of the state. Only after the cadaver has been allowed to rest for at least 17 hours does the surgeon administer Promethium. This gap between death and exposure to Promethium ensures the loss of family memories and personality, allowing the creation of a mentally inferior working class automaton for the dead house. Because the subject was reanimated at a cost to the state, the poor recipient of the Prometheus technique is now owned by the state and has no rights or identity. There are cases of automatons recalling memories or showing personality, but the workhouse managers make sure these subjects disappear quickly, lest the families become involved and questions are asked.

The automaton is a worker who never tires, feels no pain, is 100% exploitable, and while unable to tackle the more demanding professions, is perfect for a long life of servitude.

The life span of automatons is dependant on how hard they are worked and how much maintenance is carried out on them. An automaton employed as a household servant in the pleasant climate of southern

England could last for a hundred years whilst an automaton who worked as a digger on the Suez Canal might have an after life expectancy as low as a month, models that have lasted a long time may be a composite of several original human beings.

All automatons require a two-pint blood transfusion once a week, if not they will become restless and search for their own sources of blood. Blood may come from another human or even animal, but human blood is far superior. Animal blood causes complications and will only be used in the short term where regular human supplies are unavailable or unwilling. Once automatons are fed, they return to their docile co-operative selves. With close to one million automatons in service, such huge requirements of blood necessitate a compulsory blood donation tax on the poor, who in return receive a government handout affectionately known as “blood money.”

Agitators are rife in England for many good reasons; the poor are disgruntled with the lack of meaningful work and although the works of Frankenstein and Darwin appear to have bested religion there are many who find the automatons deplorable, abominations in the eye of God. Many others campaign for the right to die and be left for dead. There is even an automaton suffragette movement that campaigns for the rights of the dead to receive treatment on a par with the rich and famous, next they may even want a vote! Even if many of these things are possible it is wholly undesirable to the big business, big profit culture of the ruling classes of Britain.

Although the British Empire is all-powerful, technology is stagnating; the same people using the same methods have been in power for the last 80 years or more. The world is stuck in the Victorian Age. Rather than invent and refine, Britain uses their bullish hordes of dead slaves to get the work done. Much needed reforms never appeared. Why improve transport when automatons can carry everything, why improve health and safety when half of the work force can't be killed and the other half is more useful to you dead?

The Royal College of Surgeons continues to experiment with Dr. Frankenstein's research, the army is particularly interested in developing more aggressive

and outlandish types of automaton. The surgeons create hideous conglomerations of reanimated body parts, grafting an extra head perhaps or an extra set of limbs, some have even experimented with human-animal crosses. Worried that they have gone too far, Dr. Frankenstein has complained that his technique was invented to free all men from the shackles of death — not to create circus freaks. In return, there are some within the College who are expressing doubts over his commitment and loyalty, and although he is still the public face of the Royal College, only time will tell how his standing will fare.

The great Doctor, who is of course, one of the oldest beneficiaries of Promethium, has also noticed he requires larger and more frequent blood transfusions to keep himself docile. He has not mentioned this to the other surgeons, perhaps out of his own pride, perhaps out of fear, but if the same starts to happen to the rest of the automatons then the whole of Britain is sure to notice when they start sucking directly from them to supplement their own diet.

Story Ideas

Promethium Unbound

The Cast are a group of foreign agents trying to discover the secrets of Dr. Frankenstein's Promethium technique. How they go about it is up to them — but they must tread carefully, as the Royal College of Surgeons guards their secrets very, very, well. Gaining entrance to one of the dead house morgues will allow them to procure a sample of Promethium and observe the technique of reanimation. Once they have a sample, they must prove to their respective governments that they can repeat the procedure and reproduce the Promethium. This will probably involve plundering graves to find a nice juicy cadaver to experiment on, but remember old specimens will produce poor or even dangerous results. It is much better to get fresh victims from an accident or maybe even arrange an accident themselves? Secret labs, lightning rods, and disposing of wriggling body parts are all part of the fun you can have. Once they have the secret all they have to do is flee England before the police and the Royal College of Surgeons can catch them.

Frankenstein 1935 Automaton

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 10
Attack: As normal human or according to weapon type.
Weak Spot: Brain [6]
Getting Around: Life Like [3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like The Dead [0]
Sustenance: Weekly [4], Blood [-2]
Intelligence: Tool Use level one [3]
Spreading the Love: Special (see below)
Power: 14



Spreading the Love: Frankenstein's Automaton can only be created by the Prometheus technique.

The above profile would fit an average zombie created for the dead houses, just smart enough and aware enough to work simple machinery and respond to commands. Physically, it may look nearly human or it may be a hideous composite stitched together from several specimens. Better or worse examples may appear from time to time, depending on role and wear and tear. Cadavers that are too badly damaged would be buried or perhaps harvested for spares.

Using the rules from *Rebirth into Death* (AFMBE p. 213) would better represent a fine example of Frankenstein's Prometheus technique reserved for the upper classes. Automaton created in this fashion would also make for good player characters as long as they come from well off backgrounds.

Rather than destroying the zombies, the Cast's focus is to create them for a change, giving them an insight into the exciting world of the re-animator.

Bad Batch

The Cast consists of a batch of automaton that were not properly wiped of their memories and personalities during the Prometheus technique. Waking up on the mortuary slab, it is up to them to try to escape their life of grime and toil in the dead house before their captors realise their mistake and finish the job properly. How do they escape and what sort of reception can they expect in the outside world if they do? Don't forget they'll need a couple of pints of human blood to keep them going each week.

Fear and loathing in the British Isles

With zombie Automaton filling most of the menial labour jobs in Britain it would be silly to ask for a Fear Check each time the Cast comes across a zombie. They'll probably come across one on the street corner selling them their newspaper. Of course, the site of a pack of blood starved Automaton chomping down on their foreman is a different matter altogether and who knows what the Royal College of Surgeons are working on in the vaults at Lincoln's Inn fields. Maybe it has something to do with the rash of streetwalkers who have been turning up dead in White Chapel each morning...



The Crusade of the Damned

by Thomas D. Coster, Jr.

Fighting to stay conscious, his head screams in pain while his sight fades in and out. Dr. Marcus Trimble lies at the foot of a rocky steppe, blood covering his face, caked dry by the desert sands. Struggling to push himself to a kneeling position, he collapses. His head reels as if in vertigo.

No! Get up, damn you! Get up! The thoughts race through his mind. *Get up, Marcus! Get up or you are dead!*

Awareness comes crashing back. The hot pain of the gash in his head, the screams of his colleagues, and the unnatural cold that descended upon them launches him to full consciousness, not a moment too soon.

Dear God! What is happening?

They were on a dig at Toron des Chevaliers, an old keep of the Knights Templar. It was weeks before they found the secret chamber he knew to be hidden within the ruined castle, and only a matter of time before they should have found the Skull of Sidon. Instead, they found death.

They awoke something in the inner crypts. Something not meant to be disturbed. Jennings was the first to die; he broke the seal and entered the catacombs. Within moments, a sea of skeletal arms engulfed him. His screams still echo in Dr. Trimble's mind.

The sickening sound of tearing flesh and bone, accompanying a hot, wet, spray of blood brings him back to the here and now. Dr. Westmoreland stands nearby, her mouth in a perpetual howl of pain. Struggling to comprehend what is transpiring, Dr. Trimble forces his eyes to focus. It is then that he notices the figure behind her.

It is dressed in tattered robes, rotten from age and exposure to the harsh desert elements. A faded cross adorns the front of the garb, a design leftover from 11th century Europe. Its skeletal hand grasps the hilt of a rusting sword, now covered with gore. A skeletal face stares blankly in his direction, its toothy maw partially open in mock delight.

Run, damn you! Run! He manages to stumble back a few steps before falling to the ground, rolling down

the ruined stone embankment, and dropping twenty feet to the sand below. Regaining his wind, he glances up to see the apparition glaring down at him from the ledge with its cold, empty sockets.

He scrambles to his feet. Suddenly, the apparition is gone. He begins whimpering, wiping tears from his eyes while making his way toward the horses. *It's coming! Oh, dear God, it's coming for me!*

The drivers are nowhere to be seen. Gathering his spare pack, he unties one of the horses and quickly mounts it. The air begins to cool around him and he knows the thing is close. The horses, sensing something unnatural, begin to whinny and skitter. Not turning back, Dr. Trimble drives his heels into his mount and races off into the night. The sounds of the terrified horses drive him faster and faster. *Dear God, help me!*

History

The story that is about to unfold in front of you is one of almost Biblical proportions. The Templar Knights, a long-dead sect of Holy warriors from the time of the Crusades, are beginning to awaken from their eternal slumber and seek to reclaim the Holy Land. Although the awakening has already begun, no one yet realizes it.

*From the personal journal of Dr. Marcus Trimble:
June 17 – 1937*

... upon further research, I have come to believe that this was no mere happenstance. The tales of the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon are well woven into history, and as such, are always subject to academic scrutiny. Many scholars believe that the stories of the Knights of the Temple and Baphomet were simply that, just stories. Others point out that the Vatican and Philip the Fair of France concocted these tales, thus allowing them to arrest the Templars as heretics and seize their considerable wealth. Whatever the case, many of these tales were in fact true. This compounded with the recent discovery of a "sect" or cult of sorts mimicking that of the Templars leads to the conclusion that something wicked is amiss. If I had not seen it with my

own eyes at Toron des Chevaliers, I would have scoffed at it myself. Though further investigation is required, I believe that the Skull is what they were after. If we had only found it once the seal to the catacombs was broken. . .

(Trails off into a scribble and a splattering of blood)

The Beginning

In the year 1118, nineteen years after the end of the First Crusade, a group of knights journeyed forth from France to arrive in Jerusalem, the Holy City. A man led these knights, nine in number, by the name of Hughues de Payen, a nobleman and a vassal of the Count of Champagne. They appeared before the King of Jerusalem, Baldwin II.

Guillame de Tyre, a chronicler of the period, writes that the knights had come to Baldwin II wishing to form a new order that "as far as their strength permitted should keep the roads and highways safe, with especial regard for the protection of Pilgrims."

Seeing it as their duty of providing protection to the Pilgrims wishing to travel to the Holy City of Jerusalem, the knights requested that their new order be formed. King Baldwin II, impressed by what he heard, decided to grant an entire wing of his palace to the knights. This wing was built on the foundation of the Temple of Solomon. Thus became the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon.

They took an oath to live a life of poverty, obedience, and chastity. It remained a nine-man outfit for the first nine years when eventually Hughues de Payen traveled back to the west to seek recruits. The order was officially recognized and received its Holy Rule from Pope Honarius in 1128, with thanks from a Cistercian monk named Bernard of Clairvaux.

The Fall

After many years of protecting the weak and defending the Church, the Templars, became corrupt. They adopted unorthodox ceremonies and beliefs, and their horde of wealth would make even the richest of kings envious. It is said that they renounced God and the Lord Jesus, seeing him as only a man and not of divine origin, and took upon their own religion. . . that of Baphomet.

“Baphomet was the deity worshipped by the Templars, and in Black Magic as the source and creator of evil; the Satanic goat of the witches’ Sabbath and one of the names adopted by Aleister Crowley.” (Quote taken from *The Dictionary of the Occult and Supernatural* by Peter Underwood.)

The Templars were hunted down as heretics. On Friday the 13th of August in the year 1306, the Templars were arrested in France. In 1310, fifty-four Templars were burnt at the stake in Paris as heretics. By 1312, the Templars were formally abolished and their property handed over to the Knights Hospitaller. Finally, in 1314 Jaques de Molay, the last Grand Master of the Templars, was burnt at the stake.

The Return

It is now 1937. The specter of the Templars has risen from the dead to claim the Holy Land and to exact revenge on humanity. Driven by unholy hate, the remaining Templars awaken and leave their resting places. A bell tolls. . . the Crusade of the Damned has begun.

For the past several years, a cult calling itself the Templar Fold has been operating in secret. Their leader, Henry Payen, is a direct descendant of the first Grand Master, Hughues de Payen. Having lived a life of poverty until recently, Payen was a cold and bitter man. For some reason or another, his family line had always been condemned to live miserably. While still living in France, an uncle left his only nephew, Henry, his entire estate. It wasn’t much, but it was more than Henry had ever had before. Of course, there were considerable debts owed by his late uncle. Henry found it more and more difficult to handle the finances left to him as he simply lacked the money. Even if he were to sell everything, it would still not be enough.

Angered over his apparent good fortune turning sour, Henry Payen locked himself inside the aging manor and contemplated taking his own life. In his rage he went from room to room, throwing objects and furniture in his tirade. He came to an unassuming locked door that he had failed to take notice of days earlier. Payen kicked in the door to start anew with his destruction.

To his surprise, the room was a library and study belonging to his late uncle. Intrigued, he set about the room to discern anything of apparent value that could be sold off to save his estate. What he found was much greater and yet much worse. Various scrollworks and texts on his family history were laid out upon the large oaken desk. It was then that Payen learned his true lineage.

He read about how the order of knights that his ancestor had founded saw many days of glory, only to have it all taken away by King Philip the Fair of France and Pope Clement. The two had orchestrated the downfall of the Templars for the sole purpose of acquiring the vast wealth that the religious order had accumulated. A spark of hatred ignited that day somewhere deep within Henry Payen. The key to his poverty lie with the actions of those two men centuries before – it was their entire fault.

The hate and anger seething out of every pore in his body threatened to consume him. If it were not for those greedy bastards he would not have lived his life as he had; none of his family would have! He vowed to take his revenge on the descendants of Philip and Clement if it took his dying breath to do so. Charged with a new sense of purpose, Payen began to search the rest of the library for more of this newfound knowledge.

As it turned out, his uncle happened to be quite the historian. He also happened to be a practitioner of the Black Arts. Henry found a vast collection of the occult writings pertaining to the Templars. He hungrily consumed the information that lay within the aging volumes. As his understanding grew, so did his burning desire for vengeance upon the descendants of the Deceivers, as he came to call them.

Recruiting his cousin and a close friend, Payen set out to bring glory back to his family name. His first action was to settle his differences with those individuals that his uncle had considerable debt with. He did so at the end of a jagged blade. He then looted what wealth he could immediately acquire and burned down the buildings. Payen eventually accumulated enough wealth to begin recruiting men for his new order of “knights.” His sect grew, and with it came more wealth to fund his goals.

On August 13th, 1936, six-hundred and thirty years after the massacre of the Templars, Henry Payen revealed his master plan to his cult, the Templar Fold. The design called for the kidnapping of over forty descendants of Pope Clement and Philip the Fair, and an ensuing human sacrifice to appease their dark god, Baphomet. Baphomet heeded their call, and appeared to Payen in a dream. He was bid to find the Skull of Sidon, an ancient relic of Templar origin. With it, Payen would be able to resurrect the long-dead Templars and begin a new crusade of the Holy Land to retake what was theirs and exact their revenge on the descendants of the Deceivers and on humanity itself. It was then that Henry Payen knew his purpose, his true destiny. Gathering his resources, he left for the Middle East with his cult in tow on a crusade of their own.

By the time this campaign begins for the Cast Members, Henry Payen has already begun to put his plan into motion. Using knowledge obtained from the Black Arts, he is able to call forth the specters of the fallen Templars. Their skeletal bodies have risen with a hunger to please their master, Baphomet. Payen has begun to use these specters to begin his campaign of revenge in Jerusalem, seeking out various relics and people for use in his master plan.

The Cast Members enter the story at this time, when things are beginning to look dark on the horizon – the approaching of the storm.

A Bell Tolls

As it stands, the Crusade has only just begun. Only a handful of the fallen Templars have risen, but they, too, have been calling forth their brethren from their graves. They are now moving to take control of their former strongholds, including Jerusalem, before they turn their thoughts to Europe.

The Templars can spread the blight of undeath to both the living and the dead, no matter what degree of decay the body has experienced. Anyone killed by a Templar, regardless of the manner in which they were killed, will rise immediately to join their ranks. Zombies created in either manner are identical to those found in the *Rise of the Walking Dead* setting (see *AFMBE*, p. 168). They can also call forth other Templars from their tombs, using the same Templar

Awakening power as per the power of the Skull of Sidon (see the Skull of Sidon description for more information on this ability).

All Templars possess a keen intellect and seem to work in conjunction with each other. Although they require no sustenance, they enjoy killing the living with their swords and filling their corroded goblets with warm blood, partaking of their victims in this manner. It is a gruesome sight to see a skeletal Templar “drinking” blood from a chalice, the sticky fluid spilling forth through their dry husks and dripping from their skeletal maws. The Templars are utterly silent, but for the shuffling of their feet, the drawing of their weapons, or the crackling of their long dead bodies.

In the surrounding area and nearby settlements, survivors have holed up within their homes and shops, too scared to venture forth for help. However, the Templars will quickly descend upon these communities, “purging” the towns and spilling the blood of the people in their unholy crusade.

Weapons seem to cause no pain for the Templars or their zombie armies. Although the Templars are susceptible to fire, they do not fear it. Often a Templar will continue forth, hacking poor souls with its sword while burning like a funeral pyre until the flames consume him and he drops the ground in a smoldering heap. The only other way to destroy these abominations is to decapitate them. A simple shot or blunt blow to the head will not do. Only the total destruction or removal of the head will put them down for good.

Some of the Templars have skeletal steeds that will rise from the grave with them. Their steeds were highly prized and well cared for in life. They will rise alongside their former masters to serve them in undeath.

As the timeline is set in the late 1930s, the world in general is caught unawares of the crusade. Several survivors from various towns have fled to nearby communities and word is slowly spreading about the horror that is spilling forth from the Holy Land. For now, nobody is absolutely sure what is going on or how to stop it.



Story Ideas

Discovering the Cult

In this scenario, the Cast Members are a group of travelers on a trip to the Holy Land. Ideas for Cast Members include a rich Businessman with a love of antiquities, bringing along his Librarian wife and her best friend, a Lounge Singer for a “holiday.” He has put together an archaeological expedition to uncover artifacts concerning the Templars. An archaeologist, a travel guide, and a local huckster work great for other Cast Members in the caravan. The Cast Members are currently looking for the Skull of Sidon, a relic of power rumored to be buried with a dead Templar. When the expedition is overdue, the businessman hires a caravan to search for the lost archaeologists. What they find instead is a cult behind some recent disappearances and their sinister plot to raise the Templars from their graves in a bid to retake the Holy Land.

The Cast Members may opt to investigate the cult further to discover their insidious plans. They may even attempt to retrieve the Skull of Sidon, which is now in the hands of the cult leader. The cult leader is a man by the name of Henry Payen, a descendant of Hughues de Payen, a Templar. He has recently discovered the Black Arts and is using this newfound power to bring forth the Templars from their graves. With the Skull of Sidon in his possession, he is nigh unstoppable. The Cast Members’ investigation will eventually lead them to Henry Payen, be it either in the Holy Land or back at his mansion in Europe. Payen will be very busy visiting old Templar churches, cemeteries, and catacombs, awakening the dead knight-hood and sending them forth to perform grisly tasks.

The Skull of Sidon

Alternately, the Cast themselves may want to play the roles of the archaeologists searching for the Skull of Sidon. In this role, they will seek out the Skull and ultimately be responsible for the rise of the Templars from their tombs. By disturbing the artifact from its resting place, the Cast will awaken an evil long thought banished from this world. The only way to stop the crusade will be to destroy the Skull. Unfortunately, the only way to accomplish this is to deliver it to the Vatican where the Pope can bless, then kiss the Skull on its crown, after which he will then submerge it in holy water. This bit of

information can be gleaned from the Cast's research and studies concerning the artifact. See the Skull of Sidon description for more details concerning the powers of the artifact.

Getting to the Vatican with an army of the dead on your heels will be no easy task. Considering that the dead are drawn to the Skull and can detect its presence and direction from any distance, the Cast Members will want to stay on the move lest the artifact falls into their skeletal hands. Convincing the Vatican of the Skull's authenticity is another matter, altogether. The Vatican may pass this off as superstitious nonsense or heretical and blasphemous conjecture. Even more difficult is convincing the staff to even let them have an audience with the Pope – until the Templars start to arrive in numbers outside of the Vatican walls.

If the Cast Members are successful in being granted access to the Pope, convincing him may prove difficult considering that “God has not told him of the matter at hand.” Once the Skull is blessed and kissed by the Pope, he will submerge it in a vat of holy water and have it sealed. Only then will the Templars “die” a second death, dropping into heaps where they stand.

The Crusade of the Damned

Save for a few settlements of survivors, the world has fallen to the might that is the Templars. They have brought forth thousands upon thousands of the dead from their graves to march on all of humanity in an effort to purge the Earth of the living, making room for the arrival of Baphomet, their undying deity. Many of the Templars have traveled abroad, raising the dead and attacking the living without mercy. Those fortunate enough to have fled to the Vatican before the world was overrun are the only remains of humanity.

Now, the Templars have turned their attention to this last vestige of humanity. Thus far, they have lacked the power and will to siege the city. Only recently have they cleansed the world of enough of the living to bring forth Baphomet from damnation. Drawing on their unholy deity's strength, they begin their push to finish humanity once and for all.

The Cast Members are survivors of the onslaught, having found refuge in the Vatican in the early days

of the rise. They have helped the holy men research in their most forbidden archives to find a way to defeat this Crusade of the Damned and banish Baphomet into oblivion. The Zombie Master is encouraged to drop any bits of information that they wish into these forbidden archives, be it the “hidden” prophecies of Nostradamus, additional Dead Sea Scrolls, the Ark of the Covenant, the Holy Grail, pieces of the True Cross, the Spear of Destiny, etc.

Alternatively, the Cast Members can be clergy amongst the Vatican, searching the archives and leading an expedition deep into the catacombs below the city where they will seek the artifacts and words of power needed to save humanity from the hordes of the undead. This is a perfect opportunity to create a dungeon crawl filled with deadly traps, powerful holy relics, and forbidden knowledge hidden from the world by the Vatican for ages.

The Skull of Sidon

Templars, being monastic in nature, were forbidden to have involvement with women as part of their Templar Rule of Order. Legend has it that a Templar, who had a relationship with a dead woman, obtained the Skull of Sidon. The Templar excavated the woman's grave, removed the corpse, and consummated their relationship. This resulted in a “birth” nine months later.

“A great lady of Maraclea was loved by a Templar, a Lord of Sidon; but she died in her youth. On the night of her burial, this wicked lover crept to the grave, dug up her body, and violated it. Then a voice from the void bade him return in nine months time for he would find a son. He obeyed the injunction and at the appointed time he opened the grave again and found a head on the leg bones of the skeleton (skull and crossbones). The same voice bade him ‘guard it well, for it would be the giver of all good things’, and so he carried it away with him. It became his protecting genius, and he was able to defeat his enemies by merely showing them the magic head. In due course, it passed to the possession of the order.”

(From *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail* by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln.)

The Skull of Sidon is a powerful artifact. It is slate gray in color with no other noticeable features. The Skull has all of its teeth, which are in perfect condition.

There are several powers associated with the Skull, as well as several drawbacks for possessing the object. Note that these powers will not come into affect while the Skull is in its resting place, a long forgotten crypt beneath the Templar ruins at Toron des Chevaliers. The tomb provides a sort of “dampening” effect for the Attraction Drawback power unless it is touched by a living human being. Once that happens, the dampening effect is nullified.

The Skull is able to determine the distance, direction, and numbers of Templar tombs and graves at all times. It will also “urge” its wielder to proceed to the nearest tombs to raise those Templars. The wielder of the Skull may not necessarily know what is going on or why they desire to travel in a certain direction.

Skull of Sidon Powers

Templar Awakening: With the proper incantation, the possessor of the Skull can call forth Templars long dead and sealed within their graves. The incantation has been mostly lost to time, but can be discovered by studying various forbidden texts, most of which are rare and in private collections. At a cost of 10 Essence, the wielder can raise D10 x 2 (10) Templars from the grave. This power may be used once per day. The Templars are not necessarily under the control of the wielder, however. In order to control the undead, the wielder must pass a Difficult Willpower Test. This Test must be passed once every 24 hours to maintain control of the undead. If the wielder fails this Test, they lose control of the Templars. The Templars will stop whatever they are doing and move directly toward the holder of the Skull in an effort to kill them and obtain the artifact. The wielder may attempt one Simple Willpower Test at a -7 penalty to regain control. If this roll is failed, the person may no longer wield the Skull. They will find that the Skull “removes” itself from their hands, falling to the ground each time they try to pick it up. If the former wielder is persistent, the Skull will attempt to bite them. Treat the Skull as having Strength 2, Attack – Bite 1. If the bite is successful, the victim receives D4x2(2) Slashing damage. They will also lose all

desire to retrieve the Skull. The victim must make a Difficult Constitution Test, or they will turn into a zombie under the control of the Skull or its possessor within D10 (5) minutes. Once infected, the Templars will ignore the victim unless provoked.

Fear: For a cost of 2 Essence, the Skull can be held out and shown to a living person. The victim must immediately make a Difficult Fear Test or suffer the results as listed on the Fear Table on page 97 of the *AFMBE* core rulebook. This effect can be used on individuals or groups of people. The group effect cost is 2 Essence for each additional person up to ten. No more than ten people may be affected at once with this power.

Heal: At a cost of 10 Essence, the wielder may opt to heal damage on their person or anyone they choose. If they choose to heal someone, they must touch the Skull to the forehead of the chosen. The Skull will heal 10 Life Points per use, and may only be used in this manner once per day. There is a drawback to this power, however. Anyone healed by the Skull will permanently lose D4 (2) Essence points, being “used” by the Skull to power the healing effect. (The Zombie Master is encouraged to keep this permanent Essence loss a secret.) Anyone completely and permanently drained of Essence in this manner will die and become a zombie under control of the Skull in D6 (3) minutes. Note that the wielder of the Skull will *not* be in control of this zombie. The Skull will slowly amass a small army of undead in this manner, keeping them out of sight and hidden from prying eyes. Once fifteen or more zombies are created in this manner, the Skull will summon them forth to kill its wielder. The Skull will then be retrieved by a controlled zombie and it will march its small army forth to do Baphomet’s will, raising Templars from their graves and creating more zombies in a bid to reclaim the Holy Land and invade all of Europe.

Attraction: The undead are attracted to the Skull, and can determine its direction and location from anywhere on the Earth. They will make a beeline for the Skull until they are within thirty feet of it. Once these undead arrive, the wielder must make a Difficult Willpower Test to bring them under their control. If the first attempt fails, the wielder may

attempt a second Willpower Test, this time with a -7 penalty. If this Test fails, the undead will move to kill the wielder and take the Skull.

The Withering: The evil power of the Skull will slowly transform its wielder into a ghastly looking being. The wielder's face will become gaunt, their eyes sunken in. Their skin will take on a gray pallor and will be ice cold to the touch. The wielder's hair will slowly turn white, long, and stringy, and their finger and toenails will become elongated and yellow. Finally, there will be an odor of the grave about them. The transformation is steady, taking Str + Con weeks to be complete. This transformation is only cosmetic, and will not affect the wielder's stats or abilities in any way. The only way to reverse the effects of The Withering is for the wielder to lose possession of the Skull for more than 7 days, after which they will slowly return to normal in a matter of hours.



Templar Knight

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 2
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 18
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 12

Skills: Brawling 2, Hand Weapon (Sword) 4, Language (French) 5, Riding (Horse) 5

Attacks: Bite/Claw D4 x 2(4) slashing or Bastard Sword D10 x 2(10) slashing

Weak Spot: Head (Decapitation) [+6], Fire [-5]

Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10]

Strength: Dead Joe Average [0], Iron Grip [+1]

Senses: Like the Dead [0], Life Sense [+2], X-Ray Vision [+2]

Sustenance: Who Needs Food [+8], Blood [-2]

Intelligence: Problem Solving [+15], Long Term Memory [+5]

Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2], Templar Awakening (see The Skull of Sidon description)

Special: Fear [+2]*, Hive Mind [+8]^, No Pain [+1]*, Stealthy [+2]*, Withered Corpse [+2]

Power: 71

* See *Atlas of the Walking Dead*

^ See *One of the Living*

Lounge Singer

Norm

Personality

I had it all. Talent, voice, looks. . . the works. I had men throwing themselves at me; buying my drinks, offers of marriage, weekends at their cottages. . .you name it.

Then, my best friend from college, Bonnie, came into the club. She brought her husband Richard with her. He was striking, handsome. . . and most of all rich. Bonnie really scored with that catch.

After some catching up, they invited me on a holiday overseas with them. Finally, my chance to see the world! Of course I jumped at the chance.

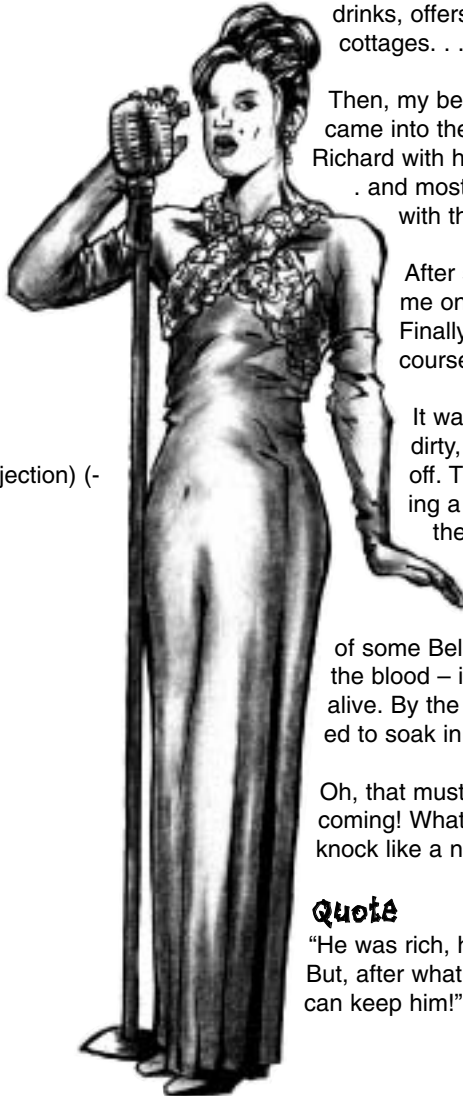
It wasn't quite what I imagined. I was dirty, sweaty and downright pissed off. Then, Richard tells us we're taking a caravan out to crumbled ruins in the middle of nowhere.

What we found there was death. We're talking right out of some Bela Lugosi picture. The screams, the blood – it was too much. I made it out alive. By the time I was back in Jaffa, I needed to soak in bath oils for a week.

Oh, that must be the bellhop. All right, I'm coming! What's with the scratching? Can't you knock like a normal person?

Quote

"He was rich, handsome, and almost mine. But, after what those ghouls did to him, you can keep him!"



Str 2 Dex 2 Con 2

Int 3 Per 3 Wil 2

Lps 26

Eps 23

Spd 8

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)

Addiction 1 (Habitual Smoking)
(-1)

Addiction 1 (Habitual Drinking)
(-1)

Attractiveness 2 (2)

Charisma 1 (1)

Covetous 1 (Greedy) (-1)

Cowardly 1 (-1)

Emotional Problems (Fear of Rejection) (-1)

Resources (Average) (0)

Showoff (-2)

Skills

Acting 2

Beautician 2

Cheating 2

Dodge 2

Gambling 2

Handgun 1

Language (French) 4

Notice 2

Play Instrument (Piano) 3

Seduction 3

Singing 4

Smooth Talking 3

Swimming 2

Gear

Cigarettes, Liquor Flask, Makeup, Matches,
Perfume, Purse, .38 Handgun



Dial Z for Hero

by Michael Kvorjak

Defender looked up from where he crouched doubled over in the pouring rain. How had Necron found out his salt weakness? How much did his enemy know about him? Questions flooded his mind as the pain slowly faded away. Necron gloated as any villain would.

"You see, Defender, you are weak! Not even you and your much vaunted abilities could stop ME, The Mighty Necron!" Necron tossed his horrific face back and uttered a cry straight from a black and white horror movie. Defender would have to make his move soon, and it'd have to be final.

"You won't kill them, I'll never let you. What right do you have to kill innocent people?"

"What right? We're better than them, we've transcended death and the physical restraints of our bodies and you still can't see what right we have? You're a god and don't even realize it!" Fire burned in the dead eyes of Necron and Defender had to admit, it made a chill run up his spine.

"Ugggggggggh!" Defender struggled to his feet, the ghastly wound across his torso sucking slightly and creating bubbles on his wet chest. "I'll never let you! I'll never quit!" Defender was on his feet now, his hands clenched by his sides, every muscle in his body tensed, ready to spring and rend Necron limb from limb. "You'll never win!!"

"BAH HAHHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!" Necron tossed his head back again, the cry only serving to infuriate Defender more. "What? You think you can stop me? Haven't you learned from your earlier lesson? You must see by now that you can't defeat me!"

"But we can." Defender spun at the voice, Necron was shocked by its sudden manifestation. Defender could make out the form of Captain Justice and the rest of the Liberty Corps coming out of the rain. "You may be able to beat one of us, but you'll never take us all."

"So be it. I'll just have to kill you all!" The light of charging bolts illuminated the darkness cast by the rain. Defender was going to stop Necron or die trying. . . again.

History

Superheroes. We've all had dreams of being one, of changing the world for the better with super powers, but it's always been a dream.

Until now.

The dead are rising, unbeknownst to the rest of the world, with powers beyond what mere humans can comprehend. News reports are filled with accounts of masked heroes defeating criminals, saving those in danger, and even of insane villains committing vile and malicious acts.

Nevertheless, the world isn't filled with Dark Heroes, Angry Anti-Heroes, or those who sell their abilities to the highest bidder. For some odd reason it is a black and white state of affairs. Heroes run around (or fly, hop, some even teleport) doing heroic things while villains plot, scheme, and unleash hellish doomsday plans upon the world. Even the garish costumes, made fun of by detractors, are something lifted from comics. Something is not right in the world, but the Heroes are out to fix it.

The State of Things

The world is as it should be. That is to say that every morning people rush to work, rush home, kiss the children goodnight, and wake up to repeat. People still hope that they will never be on the receiving end of a violent crime and do as much as they can to prevent such an occurrence. Economies still undergo booms and recessions, military actions take place in areas of the world far removed from the first world nations, and knowledge advances further with each day.

Then how do the undead fit in you ask? Simple, people die. However, not knowingly. Death in the middle of a good night's sleep – only to wake up the next morning or suffering a horrible car accident that breaks bones, destroys organs, and leaves the individual hanging on by an Undead thread of hope. The change to this state, though, is not obvious. People still bleed, suffer wounds, need to eat and drink, and use the bathroom. However, they are different, completely and powerfully so.

The true nature of the undead makes itself known during moments of great distress. Robberies, mug-

gings, altercations, the undead are apparently drawn to them and the first one activates their second nature. Manifestation of their super persona goes unnoticed the first time, before The Rules come into play. Armed robbers breaking into a bank suddenly come face to face with a blue suited man, complete with bulging muscles, never notice the teller suddenly change, neither do the rest of the people who were present at the crime. That only works the first time, before The Rules take effect.

The Rules, as they have come to be known around the Superhero circle, are rather strange immutable laws that apply to the undead. Those who take time out to study them still have no clue how they came about or why, but they do understand them. The first Rule to be identified was that no matter how small the difference between the Man and the Hero, no one will ever put two and two together. This is both a boon and a point of confusion, especially for those heroes who work as a team, learning their partners' true identities and realizing how little they differ appearance-wise. Every hero has a mild manner outside their heroic persona. Those who work together realize this at the same time that they learn each other's secret identity. No matter how buff they are as heroes, they're little more than Norms outside of it. An instinct Rule felt by all Supers is that one is incapable changing into their persona in public. It must happen in a secluded place and as long as that is met, no one will notice the change, or the subsequent leaving of it. Heroes may never take lives, no matter how hard they try and must save those in need. The Final Rule and most important, is that every hero has a weakness and that it is usually a crippling one. Villains are not excluded from The Rules, but they do have a different set.

Every villain must work on some great and evil act. They have yet to find a way around this and most simply don't care since their sanity is so far gone. Villains do not have a secret identity. This is true for each and every one. The needs of being villainous completely supersede any human drives. Uncovering the Secret identity of the Heroes is ingrained in their psyche, but for good reason. Should a villain find out the Heroes mundane persona, his weakness becomes known.

Game terms, the Rules unfold like so. Every hero has two sets of stats. One is from the Norm template and should reflect a normal person. The Attributes and Skills carry over to their Undead Superhero side. Using the stats from the Norm character, the ninety points that are given for making a zombie character (p. 41-42, *Zombie Master Screen*, p. 47-48, *Enter the Zombie*) can be used to buy Skills, Qualities/Drawbacks, Aspects, and raise Attributes. Characters are required to spend 8 of their Norm character points on Shapechanging (Hero) and 8 character points from their zombie creation points on Shapechanging (Secret Identity). Heroes must also take a Weakness. Vulnerability (p. 44, *Zombie Master Screen*) works wonderfully here as it is designed to allow the character to come up with anything they like.

Villains have neither weakness nor do they have a Norm set of stats, instead they get the points for both to spend on their villainous persona. This fits in well with lone villains versus heroes. If the *Zombie Master* plans for group versus group, the power level of the villains should be modified. Combat is handled similarly to *Zombie Smackdown*. Since the stats from their Norm persona carry over, the Undead heroes have Endurance Points. All damage is subtracted from these first and once Endurance Points are depleted, every 5 points of damage removes a Life Point. Superheroes recover Endurance Points at Constitution x 2 every 2 Turns and their Willpower in Essence per turn. When a hero is reduced to 0 Life Points, they may make a Difficult Constitution Test. Success regains half their Life Points and a quarter of their Endurance Points. Each successful second wind imposes a -1 on additional rolls to try the same thing. The Need to Feed and Menu should reflect the characters' nature. Heroes won't eat human brains, but throw in a Dr. Doolittle (p.45, *Zombie Master Screen*) and they can eat animal brains. Likewise, a Villain with the Constant Need to Feed (p.103, *Atlas of the Walking Dead*) and All Flesh Must be Eaten would work as a minor villain or underling. As for Metaphysics, Mentalism/Seer powers (p.50-58, *Pulp Zombies*) fit perfectly in the setting.

Story Ideas

Genocide

The Heroes' city is under siege. A powerful Villain has started a reign of terror, attacking innocents wherever they may be. He's successfully managed to consolidate a place of leadership amongst the criminals of the city, using them to slow down the heroes' progress. After some scuffles and an encounter or two with the main villain, his true goals should be made known. He plans to wipe out every last human being on the face of the planet.

Can the Heroes stop him?

Will they die trying?

Clash of the Titans

Two super groups have started a heated battle. The players could be in one of them or an outside group. Upon closer inspection, the reason for the fighting seems a little suspicious. Is it because of a secret plot by a villain? Is it completely mundane egos and overblown slights? On the other hand, does it just seem like a fun idea to pass the time waiting for the next arch-villain to appear?

New Rules

New Aspects

Extrusion

2/4/6/8-point Aspect

Undead with this aspect have overactive pores in the most bizarre of ways. At the lowest level, the Zombie can secrete liquids that are naturally manufactured by a human being. Blood, bile, stomach acid can all be done with no damage to the Zombie. However, it will either create damage on contact or force a roll on the Fear Table. The next level allows the zombie to secrete organic substances that are not natural to its body (cobra venom, foul smelling grease) and simple solids that are natural for a human (calcium, hair, keratin) adding a minor armor value (+1 or +2), making them look odd and generally creating more of a threat. The third level allows for liquids completely alien to organisms (crude oil, bleach), more complex designed but organic solids

(cotton, simple clothes, chitinous plates) and simple gases (Nitrogen, Oxygen). The highest level allows for completely impossible solids to be excreted (titanium, glass) complex gases (Freon, Methane) and Plasma that can also hold a charge (shroud of fire/electricity).

Power Bolt

3-Point per level Supernatural Ability

Crackling bolts of fire, brilliant streams of energy discharged from the eyes, goutts of energy vomited at targets. This is all the work of Power Bolt. Characters with this power can unleash blasts of energy that destroy flesh, smash walls and cause obscene damage. Each bolt does D6 (3) points of damage per Willpower level of the caster and has a range of 5/10/20/40/60 for the cost of one Essence. For an additional point of Essence, the range can be doubled, damage given a +1 to the multiplier, or an additional shot added to create a burst. The number of Essence points that can be spent in this fashion is equal to the level of this power. A Difficult Dexterity Test or Dexterity and Magic Bolt (p. 28, *Dungeons & Zombies*) is used to hit the target.

Rubbermaid

1-point Aspect

Much like the name suggests, the aspect prevents the marks of permanent damage to a zombie. The aspect does not prevent nor protect against damage, but instead prevents projectile, bludgeoning or energy attacks from leaving gaping wounds. Melee weapons still leave nasty wounds.

Shapechanging (Hero)

8-point Supernatural Ability

This ability represents the needed change for mild mannered reporters, scientists, or whomever to transform upon their death into mighty Heroes and evil Villains. It must be purchased during character creation.

Shapechanging (Secret Identity)

8-Point Supernatural Ability

This represents the Heroes ability to secretly change his identity and not be known by the populace he's protecting. This power must be purchased during superhero character creation. 5 Essence must be spent each time the Hero changes form.



Mild Mannered Short Order Cook

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 3
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Life Points 26	Speed 10
Endurance Points 23	Essence Pool 14

Qualities / Drawbacks

Clown (-1)
Honorable (-2)
Shapechanging (Hero) (8)

Skills

Brawling 4
Dodge 3
Fine Arts (Cooking) 3
Driving (Car) 2
Instruction 1
Notice 3
Research/Investigation 2
Singing 1
Smooth Talking 3
Stealth 2
Streetwise 3
Survival 1
Writing 2

Gear

Bandana, Kitchen Supplies, Soiled Apron, Uniform

Barrow Zombie

Str 5 **Dex** 4 **Con** 4
Int 3 **Per** 3 **Wil** 5
Lps 46
Eps 47
Spd 16
Essence 24

Special: Living Form [+5], Fly [+15] (Speed: 38mph), Shapechanging (Secret Identity: Mild Mannered Short Order Cook) [+8]

Gear

Superhero Costume

Qualities/Drawbacks

Clown (-1)
Honorable (-2)
Mentalism (2)
Shapechanging (Hero) (8)

Skills

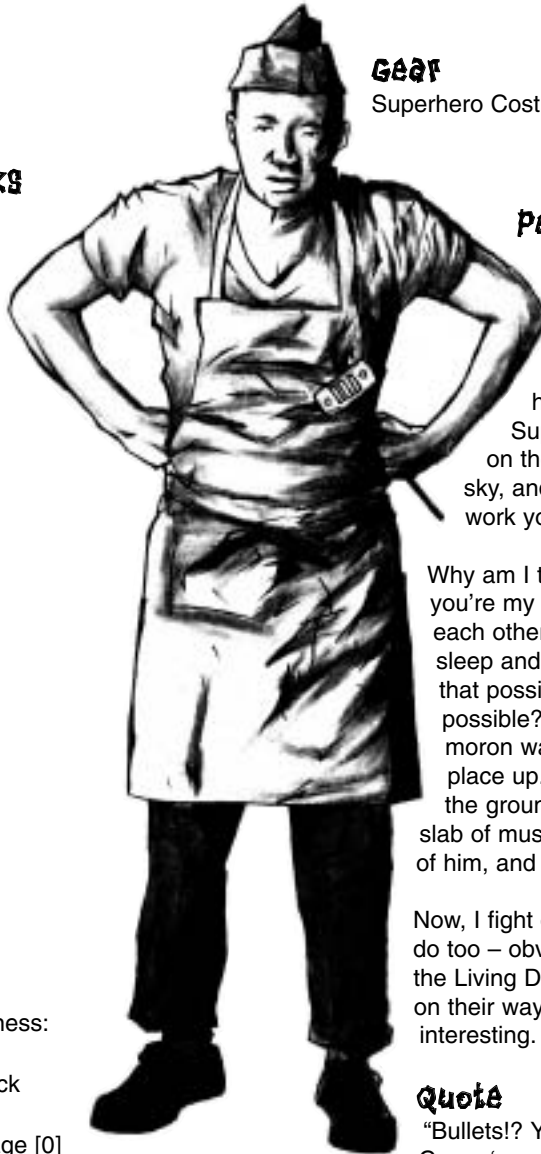
Brawling 4
Dodge 3
Fine Arts (Cooking) 3
Driving (Car) 2
Instruction 1
Intimidation 3
Notice 3
Research/Investigation 2
Singing 1
Smooth Talking 3
Stealth 2
Streetwise 3
Survival 1
Throwing 3
Writing 2

Metaphysics

Psychokinesis Art 4 (12)
Psychokinesis Skill 4 (8)

Aspects

Weak Spot: All (0), Weakness:
Grave Dirt [-4]
Getting Around: The Quick
Dead [+10]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Living [+1]
Sustenance: Daily [0], Dr. Doolittle [+5], Brains [-3]
Intelligence: Long Term Memory [+5], Problem
Solving [+15]
Spreading the Love: Nobody Loves Me [-5]



Personality

If you think a kid off the streets, who had a thing for cooking, cleaning himself up when he landed this job is unbelievable, wait until I hand you the next load. I'm a Superhero. I wear my underwear on the outside, soar through the sky, and protect people. I'll let you work your mind around it.

Why am I telling you this? Because you're my partner and we need to trust each other. Anyways, I think I died in my sleep and woke up the next day. How's that possible? How is being a superhero possible? So, I'm at work when some moron walks in and tries to stick the place up. Next thing you know, he's on the ground, some Red and Blue clad slab of muscle, that'd be me, is over top of him, and everyone's wild eyed.

Now, I fight crime in my spare time, you do too – obviously. I've heard rumors that the Living Dead Girls and Lord Skull are on their way to this city. This should be interesting.

Quote

"Bullets!? You think bullets can stop me? Come 'ere so I can learn ya'."



Our Zombies At War

by W. David Pattison.

Jim Greene nervously handled his Thompson sub-machinegun. Over the bobbing bow of the small motor launch, in the near-total darkness, he could just make out the North African coastline. He turned to look at his companion, a fellow Office of Strategic Services operative. He quickly turned away. His companion, who had introduced himself with what might have been a wry smile simply as “Herbert,” gave him the creeps.

It wasn’t anything Jim could put his finger on, but somehow, “Herbert” just didn’t seem quite right. His movements were quick and sure, but at the same time, somehow jerky and almost unnatural. And he had manhandled the launch off of the deck of the submarine by himself. Granted, it was a small boat, but still, it had to weigh at least a couple hundred pounds, and Herbert had picked it up like it was a sack of potatoes.

Finally, they beached the launch. Jim looked around anxiously. There were supposed to be three other launches, with three men each, but he had lost sight of them almost as soon as they had left the sub.

“Where are the others?” he whispered.

Herbert glanced around

“There’re coming up onto the beach now,” he replied.

Jim looked around again.

“How can you tell?” he asked. “I can barely see my hand in front of my face.”

“Trade secret,” Herbert replied as he favored Jim with another almost-wry smile. Except, in the starlight, it looked more like the rictus of a corpse.

Just then, the beach was flooded with light, as klieg lights on the dunes lit up. In the sudden glare, Jim’s OSS training kicked, and he immediately closed his shooting eye to preserve his night vision, while shielding his other eye with his hand and attempting to make out targets.

“Welcome to Deutsch North Africa, mein herren,” a loud voice boomed.

As Jim’s sight adjusted, he could now make out figures along the dunes, figures in the black and silver

uniforms of the SS. Figures, in the harsh glare of the klieg lights, with pallid gray skin, staring eyes, and rictus grins. Nazi zombies. At least 30 of them. As Jim looked around, he saw the nine other OSS operatives struggling up out of the surf, exposed on the beach, with no cover, no possibility of retreat, and with the enemy in possession of the high ground. When he finally glanced over at Herbert, he was startled.

Herbert seemed unsurprised, even eager, by the sudden appearance of the Nazi zombies. That wasn't what startled Jim, however. He could now see the distinct resemblance between Herbert, the way he looked and moved, and the zombies on the bluff. He could see the identical rictus grin.

As Herbert cocked his own Thompson M1, he turned to Jim, grinning his dead grin.

"Well, Jim, let's get those Nazi bastards. What's the matter? Do you want to live forever?"

History

In 1933, Adolph Hitler, backed by the occult Thule Society, rose to power in Germany. He immediately set about systematically violating the provisions of the Versailles Treaty and rebuilding Germany's armed forces. In addition to the tanks and fighters and experimental rockets being turned out by Nazi scientists and engineers, Hitler had a secret weapon: reanimated dead, courtesy of dark necromancy provided by the Thule Society.

With his military swelled by newly animated dead, and with the prospect of battlefield casualties simply being fed back into the front lines more effective than ever, Hitler quickly set about pursuing his policy of Lebensraum. With barely a token gesture towards diplomacy, by 1935 the Wehrmacht, using its revolutionary blitzkrieg tactics and undead soldiers, had reoccupied the Rhineland and formerly German areas of Poland, as well as annexing Austria and most of Czechoslovakia. When France and Great Britain feebly protested, Germany quickly defeated a demoralized France, and isolated Great Britain. Then, just as suddenly, Germany turned on the Soviet Union.

The Soviets, however, were hardly unprepared. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* had left no doubt that he viewed war with the U.S.S.R. as both inevitable and desir-

able. Furthermore, Hitler, over-confident in the abilities of his blitzkrieging zombies and contemptuous of the capabilities of the Soviets, didn't even attempt diplomacy or bluff – he simply attacked.

Meanwhile, the Soviets had the largest army in Europe, as well as the largest air force and armored force, albeit most of their equipment was out of date. Also, Germany attacked before Stalin could carry out his contemplated purge of the Red Army (which occurred in 1937 in "real" history), so the Red Army still had a large number of highly competent officers, many of them veterans of the Great War and of Russia's civil wars of the 1920s. Finally, the Soviets had their own secret weapon: psychotronic zombies.

And so, the two greatest military machines on the planet collided, turning Eastern Europe into a giant meat grinder, as millions died during years of interminable fighting on the Eastern Front.

Meanwhile, German occultists had shared their zombie creation techniques with their Japanese allies, who used them to great effect in China, and later, against British, Dutch, and French.

The United States sat by in splendid isolation during all of these events, its population concerned mainly with surviving and overcoming the Great Depression. President Franklin Roosevelt, however, could see the writing on the wall, and anticipated a war with both Japan and Germany. Therefore, he secretly authorized America's own response to the threat of Axis zombie armies: Project West.

Current Situation

The year is 1940. Nazi Germany and its satellites are bogged down in seemingly endless warfare against the Soviet Union. Vast zombie armies sweep back and forth across Poland and the Ukraine, but neither side seems able to gain a definitive advantage. Both sides are desperately searching for any edge, no matter how slight. Nazi and Soviet spy rings are very active in the United States, attempting to sway it to enter the war on one side or the other, or at least to keep from entering the war on the other side. Nazi archaeologists scour the globe for mystical artifacts to enhance its zombies and neutralize the Soviets' military. Meanwhile, the top leadership of both countries

have become more and more reclusive, and ordinary citizens see increasingly more zombies and correspondingly less of their, supposedly, human masters. At this point, no one is sure who, or what, is really in control in Germany or the U.S.S.R.

Sheer numbers in China nevertheless bogs down Japan, despite its technological and necromantic advantages. With an industrial base far smaller than Germany's, and at war with a country whose population is far larger than the Soviet Union's, Japan has about all it can handle with its ongoing war in China and maintaining the occupation of formerly European colonies in Indochina, Malaya, Indonesia, and the (formerly Dutch) East Indies. Japan also finds itself under increasing pressure from the German allies to attack the Soviet Union from the east. It now has access to the raw materials it initially launched its military campaigns to obtain, but perversely needs even more to support its war in China and occupation of much of the rest of Asia, not to mention what it would need to even contemplate an attack on the U.S.S.R., all the while keeping its guard up against possible military action from an increasingly assertive and belligerent United States. Secret, high level planning has begun in Japan to knock America out of involvement in the Pacific theater with a pre-emptive strike on the Pacific Fleet headquarters at Pearl Harbor.

Great Britain is eager to enter the war, but it has been shorn of most of its empire, and it is all the Royal Navy can do to fight off the zombie sailors of the Kriegsmarine and keep the North Atlantic shipping lanes to Canada and the United States at least partially open. Zombies, which don't need to breathe, or for that matter, eat or drink, make marvelous submariners, and the German u-boat campaign against Britain has been highly successful. The Royal Navy currently has to devote virtually all of its resources to transporting food and other vital goods from North America, and isn't even contemplating offensive action. The British army can barely feed its troops, much less field an effective offensive fighting force. However, the British Secret Service is highly active, carrying out espionage operations in neutral and nominally neutral area such as Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and the Americas.

Meanwhile, President Roosevelt does all he can to prepare an isolationist American public for what he privately views as an inevitable war. A draft has been instituted, but drafting is not yet widespread. The U.S. Army and Navy are being built up, but are still smaller and less effective than their Axis counterparts. Meanwhile, the top secret West Project pursues the secret of reanimating the dead. And American intelligence, still a largely ad hoc affair dominated by Eastern academics, is actively recruiting university students and professors, reporters, explorers, pilots, and just about anyone else it can get its hands on to counter Axis espionage activities worldwide in the newly recognized field of ARCH-INTEL (Archaeological Intelligence).

Thule Zombies

Thule Gesellschaft, the Thule Society, is a mysterious mystical conspiracy based in Germany and convinced of the reality of the myth of "Aryan" (i.e., German) supremacy. Its researchers have spent decades combing the world for arcane knowledge. Somewhere, somehow, perhaps in a tome of fell magics, one of them discovered the secret for re-animating the dead, a secret which they shared with the inner circle of their political protégé, Adolf Hitler, a secret which he has made liberal use of in his attempts to impose a New European Order.

The Thule Society actually found two different, but related, processes for creating zombies. The first, simpler and easier, process creates nearly mindless albeit hardy zombies, which are capable of simple rote tasks, ideal as front line infantry and laborers. The second, far more complex and therefore far more rare, process creates zombies that retain their human intelligence. The first type of zombie is virtually uncontrollable, simply seeking to kill and eat the flesh of the nearest living human. Fortunately for Thule, the second type, capable of reason and theoretically loyalty, is also capable of mentally commanding the first type. Thus, Thule was able to deliver to Hitler the means to create a virtually unstoppable army of zombie soldiers and zombie officers.

Unfortunately, the officer zombies also have an insatiable craving for human flesh, a craving that is hardly satiated by enemy prisoners. After all, what

self-respecting Aryan would want to consume the flesh of such impure sub-human specimens?

In both Germany and Japan, it is increasingly the officer zombies and their nigh-unkillable armies who hold the real power, and there are dark rumors of the death and reanimation of senior leaders in both nations, including even the Fuhrer and the Emperor themselves.

Psychotronic Zombies

While the Germans turned to dark magics, the Soviets turned to mad science. Soviet research into psychic phenomena, and the electronic enhancement of it, led to the discovery of certain electromagnetic wavelengths that could create minimal activity in the human brain, and even reanimate dead tissue.

When Hitler came to power in Germany and began annexing every country within reach, Stalin ordered psychotronic research into overdrive. By the time Germany invaded in 1936, the Red Army was able to deploy psychotronic transmitters.

These devices, superficially similar to a radio or radar transmitter, can fit into a large communications truck or trailer, and each one had the ability to animate, direct, and control dozens of psychotronic zombies, within a radius of a mile or so. Of course, once the Germans figured this out, such transmitters became the targets of concerted attacks in every battle, and entire campaigns have hinged on destroying or protecting them.

If a psychotronic transmitter ever stops transmitting, the zombies it controlled go rampaging out of control, operating on residual psychotronic energy for hours or even days at a time before "running down." During this time, the zombies seek to "recharge" themselves by consuming the trace amounts of psychotronic energy present in living human brains.

While psychotronic zombies appear to be mindless, rumors circulate both inside and outside the U.S.S.R. that there is also a procedure to psychotronically re-animate the dead without destroying higher brain functions, and that Stalin himself, who has not been seen publicly in months, was an early test subject.





Project West

In response the Axis and Soviet use of zombie troops, in 1938 President Roosevelt signed a highly classified directive authorizing what would come to be known as Project West.

Project West, apparently named by an H.P. Lovecraft fan at military headquarters, is an attempt to create super-soldiers using various experimental synthetic chemicals and rare plant extracts. Only two years after its inception, Project West has succeeded in creating super-soldiers. Unfortunately, the process invariably kills its subjects. Fortunately, they come back, better than before.

A substantial number, perhaps several dozen, super-soldiers have been produced as of 1940, mainly working as secret agents and commandos for the newly formed Office of Strategic Services. So far, they have been highly successful in carrying out their missions.

There is, of course, a downside. This is a secret known only to a few senior scientific and military personnel in charge of the project, and is kept from most of the project personnel, especially its subjects, as well as from anyone outside the project, even the President himself.

After the Project West treatment, the new super-soldiers find themselves unable to eat or digest anything other than raw meat. This much everyone knows. What is secret is that over time, their diet becomes more . . . selective. Project West researchers have identified four distinct stages of hunger.

In the Stage 1, the super-soldiers find themselves craving, and only able to stomach, raw meat from any animal. In Stage 2, their tastes narrow to pork or, if it is somehow available, primates. In Stage 3, their tastes narrow still further, to human flesh, although they may be able to hold off these cravings if they eat the meat of still living pigs or apes. Finally, in Stage 4, their tastes narrow to the flesh of still-living human beings.

So far, only 2 super-soldiers have degenerated to the final, fourth stage, and they were discreetly "put down." While the exact amount of time it takes an individual to progress through these stages varies from individual to individual, it seems that they all inevitably progress through them.

Despite this, Project West continues, as its managers see it as America's only realistic option to deal with the Axis powers' Thule zombie armies, not to mention the Soviet psychotronic zombies.

Characters

This is very definitely a pulpy Deadworld, so the *Pulp Zombies Sourcebook* should be used, if it is available, with the Cast Members being Pulp Heroes (pages 38-58 of *Pulp Zombie*). If *Pulp Zombies* is not available, Cast Members should probably be Survivors or Inspired, rather than Norms, to maintain the high-action, pulp feel of the setting.

In addition, with the permission of the Zombie Master, Cast Members may play a Project West super-soldier. To do this, start with the Project West Zombie template, below. The player may then add an additional 7 points in Primary Attributes, 10 points in Qualities, and 25 points in Skills, using the standard character creation rules. The character may also have up to 10 points in Drawbacks, as usual. Remember that changes to Primary Attributes will also change Secondary Attributes, which will have to be recalculated. The one exception to the normal character creation rules is that Project West Zombies have no limits, other than points available, on how high their Strength and Constitution may be.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that Project West zombies suffer the degenerative hunger described above. All Project West zombies start in Stage 1. Every month or so thereafter, the character must pass a Simple Willpower Test or degenerate to the next stage. For every month a character remains in the same stage, he suffers a cumulative -1 penalty on this roll. Furthermore, once a character fails one of these Tests, he suffers a cumulative -1 penalty on all further Tests. So, a Project West zombie in Stage 3 will have a -2 penalty on his first Willpower Test to avoid degenerating to Stage 4, and accumulating penalties every month thereafter.

Once in Stage 4, a Project West zombie will attack anyone, even his nearest and dearest, to satisfy his insatiable cravings for tender, juicy, living human flesh.

Story Ideas

Captain AmeriZombie

The Cast Members are an elite squad of Project West zombie super-soldiers, working for the recently establish Office of Strategic Services, which reports directly to the President. Although officially neutral, there is no doubt which way the U.S. government is leaning.

The Cast Members could easily find themselves running espionage operations in French North Africa (perhaps looking for valuable transit papers in a certain Moroccan city . . .). They might train and assist anti-Japanese guerillas in China and Indochina, like, for instance, Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh. They might operate behind enemy lines in Occupied Europe, helping the French Resistance. They could even operate against Nazi and Soviet spy rings right here in the good ol' U.S. of A. Anywhere they go, they're bound to run afoul of Thule and maybe psychotronic zombies for some good old fashioned zombie on zombie action.

The Doctor is In

Nikola Tesla was a brilliant and eccentric pioneering electrical engineer who invented, among other things, the alternating current (AC) electrical power system and the radio (although Marconi got credit for the latter). He also claimed to have invented a number of other interesting devices, including death rays, and a wireless system to broadcast power on a global scale through the atmosphere.

It's that last one that really interests the Soviets in this Deadworld. Just imagine the possibilities if they could transmit psychotronic energy globally. Their zombies would be freed of dependence on vulnerable mobile transmitters. Even more, the Soviets might be able to animate and control the dead everywhere in the world.

As of 1940, Tesla is 84 years old but still fairly robust and active, and residing in New York City. The Soviets desperately want him and his research. The Nazis desperately want to keep him out of Soviet hands. Moreover, the British and Americans aren't exactly keen on the Soviets having that kind of

power. All of this sets up a multi-sided struggle between the espionage agencies of all of the major powers to capture Tesla and his notes and equipment, or at least kill him and destroy them, before anyone else gets to him. Plus, most of them are probably employing zombies as muscle, and may seek to zombify Tesla himself.

The Cast Members might be members of one or more of the espionage organizations seeking to grab Tesla and his work. On the other hand, they might be friends and associates of the famous inventor, and seek to protect him from all comers, and preserve his work from warmongers of all stripes.

Regardless, the Cast Members will find themselves in the middle of a multi-sided shadow war of espionage, zombies, and mad science in the streets of Manhattan, with the very fate of the world at stake.

Castle Zombiestein

The Thule Society is hardly satisfied with the zombies it has created thus far, and is desperate to find a way to finally defeat their hated Bolshevik enemies. American and British intelligence have learned that Thule magicians and Nazi scientists are running an experimental zombie research station in a sinister castle in the Bavarian Alps, and have inserted an elite team (the Cast Members) to investigate and, if possible, destroy the castle and the research being conducted there.

The Cast Members will be American OSS and British Secret Service agents, possibly including Project West zombie super-soldiers and civilian experts, such as occultists and fringe scientists, recruited specifically for this mission. They will have to infiltrate a heavily guarded castle in the heart of enemy territory. Once inside, they will likely have to battle experimental zombies, possessing every Zombie Aspect the Zombie Master can cram in.

Raiders of the Last Zombie

While the Americans and Soviets use variations of (mad) science to create their zombies, the Thule Society and the Axis powers use black magic. In their efforts to enhance their zombies, and find an edge to definitively defeat China and the Soviet Union, Japan and Germany have sent researchers, occultists, and

Thule Zombie Soldiers

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence 1
Perception 1	Willpower 1
Dead Points 26	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 8

Attack: As a normal human or by weapon.
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Dead [0]
Sustenance: Occasionally [+2], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Tool Use 3 [+9], Teamwork [+4]
Spreading the Love: Thule Magic Ritual [-3]
Power: 19

Thule Zombie Officers

Strength 4	Constitution 4
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 3
Perception 3	Willpower 3
Dead Points 15	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 19

Attack: As a normal human or by weapon type.
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3]
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]
Senses: Like a Hawk [+3]
Sustenance: Occasionally [+2], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Teamwork [+4], Long-Term Memory [+5], Problem-Solving [+15]
Spreading the Love: Thule Magic Ritual [-3]
Special: In addition, Thule zombie officers are likely to have a number of military skills, which will add to their power level.
Power: 41

archaeologists throughout the world, seeking arcane knowledge and mystical artifacts.

The Cast Members may be American OSS agents, British Secret Service agents, heroic archaeologists and explorers, their companions, or any combination of the above. They will have to scour the globe in a world-spanning scavenger hunt, racing Axis agents to obtain ARCHINTEL and artifacts before their opponents can. Artifacts such as, say, the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy Grail.



Psychotronic Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 1 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 1 **Willpower** 1
Dead Points 26 **Speed** 2

Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 8

Attack: As a normal human or by weapon.

Weak Spot: Brain [+6]

Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0]

Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]

Senses: Like the Dead [0]

Sustenance: Daily [0], Special [0]

Intelligence: Tool Use 3 [+9], Teamwork [+4]

Spreading the Love: Science [0]

Special: As discussed above, psychotronic zombies are actually sustained by the broadcast of psychotronic energy. Without this, they develop an uncontrollable craving for the trace amounts of psychotronic energy in human brains, but this isn't enough to actually sustain them.

Power: 19



Project West Zombies

Strength 4 **Constitution** 4
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** 20
Perception 3 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 42 **Speed** 18

Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 18

Attack: As a normal human or by weapon.

Weak Spot: All [0]

Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]

Senses: Like a Hawk [+3], Infravision [+6]

Sustenance: Occasionally [+2], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]

Intelligence: Language [+1], Long-Term Memory [+5], Problem Solving [+15]

Spreading the Love: Science [0]

Special: Project West zombies are almost certain to have all kinds of commando training and associated Skills (they are, after all, super-soldiers), which will increase their power level. They also have special dietary needs as discussed above.

Power: 47



The Dread Menace

by Daniel R. Robichaud II.

I was in the hot seat.

Sure, a fan was blowing. One of the posters on the courthouse wall moved in the breeze. Couldn't miss it. It was behind Mr. Palenquist's head, the poster on which somebody scribbled "Not Anymore" under "Better Dead Than Red."

Palenquist. My judge, my jury. I figured one of the boys in green uniforms would be my executioner.

Palenquist's stare made me feel like a worm on a hook. My friends and neighbors sat behind me. People I had known my whole life looked at me like I was guilty.

I didn't do anything wrong.

"Do you now know, or have you ever known," Palenquist said, "anyone, who is or has been. . ." The next word tasted rotten. "Reanimated?"

That's why the HULAC subpoenaed me? I glanced back at the crowd. Who told?

Palenquist cleared his throat.

I faced forward, and said, "I'm afraid I . . . this inconvenience is. . ."

"We are seeking out a very real, very active plot threatening the heartland of America!" Fires of righteousness fueled Palenquist's words. His face grew brilliant scarlet. "If inconveniencing YOU guarantees the continuation of OUR way of life, then by GOD, we will inconvenience you. Now, ANSWER –"

A woman shrieked. Lots of people joined her. I looked, my stomach turned.

Johnny Finney was my best friend in high school. I stood up in his and Jill's wedding. I helped move them in to the house next door to my parents. Now, the couple were going berserk.

Johnny ripped out Megan Smythe's eyeball and popped it into his mouth. Jill bit chunks out of Tim Kolchak's arm, like she was eating corn on the cob.

"We've got an Omega situation!" one of the soldiers shouted. They raised their M-14s. Fired. They had no clear shots.

People were trying to get as far from the Finneys as possible. The rifles cut down the wrong people.

I tried to scream. My voice never made it out of my throat.

“Get us out of here,” Palenquist ordered. The soldiers complied.

I jumped one of them, before he got far. He cracked his head on a table, went out like a light.

The Finneys lumbered my way. “Johnny, don’t. Jill. . .” They kept coming. Their eyes belonged to strangers.

I picked up the fallen soldier’s rifle. Used it.

God help me, I killed my best friend and his wife because I could not bear to do the same to Mother. I shouldn’t have tried to hide her. I should have known there was no hope for her. No hope for any of us. . .

History

For the U.S., the 1950s was a decade of terror. The Red Menace was spreading abroad. Elaborate witch hunts ferreted out traitors at home. Everyone watched their neighbors with a growing dread.

Too bad no one saw the *real* threat brooding in their midst.

While most of the country’s attention focused on purifying America, a few eyes turned toward the real enemy. Project SPEX was a Top Secret government organization assigned to overlook Special Projects and Experimentation in the war on communism. They had military backing, scientific know-how, and a ruthless Directory Board composed of three decorated generals, two senators, and a top man in the CIA. Most importantly, however, they had Dr. Benway Toetston, a pharmacologist specializing in the development of psychotropic drugs.

Dr. Toetston produced a substance called NeuroThene-12. Anyone who imbibed in NeuroThene-12 became highly susceptible to suggestions. Dr. Toetston ran batteries of tests on two easily controlled groups – first with convicts, then with disabled soldiers in veterans’ homes. He administered small quantities of NeuroThene-12 and exposed the men to crudely executed subliminal messages. The subjects responded perfectly.

Project SPEX saw the value of NeuroThene-12. With this drug and some properly suggestive radio/television programs, they could influence or pacify important party members of the USSR, or control the leaders and peoples of nations on the cusp of being absorbed into the Communist Empire.

Though the data was promising, the Directory Board decided to perform additional tests. They covertly added NeuroThene-12 to the ground water supply of several towns across America and infiltrated subliminal orders into a few key television shows. The test subjects followed those orders, unaware of their actions.

SPEX’s Directory Board decided to move their project into the final phase. Barrels of the chemical were dropped into the drinking water supplies of the nation’s enemies and less trustworthy allies.

That was when reports of an unrecorded side effect came in.

Dr. Benway Toetston neglected to include information about NeuroThene-12’s debilitating effects. The drug succeeded in heightening susceptibility to suggestion by causing a slow degeneration in brain functions. At first, the victims were much more docile, controllable. In a perfect world, NeuroThene-12 would stop there, and the degeneration would cease.

Unfortunately, the neural degeneration continued, until too much damage set in, and the brain shut down. Autonomous functions ceased, the subject died. Within minutes, something very strange happened. Synaptic activity in the primordial core of the brain returned. The victim reanimated. The higher functions were lost, and only those primordial components remained active. These people were little better than zombies, reacting to insatiable hungers.

In a matter of minutes, someone in the final stage could be behaving normally and suddenly fall unconscious or exhibit grand mal epileptic seizures. When that person recovered, they returned horribly changed.

NeuroThene-12 affected more than the brain. The chemical invaded the body’s glandular system, replicated itself in the body’s fluids. Thus, any fluid exchange could transmit NeuroThene-12 to a healthy body.



Toetston's convicts ran amok and incited a riot. The prison guards succeeded in pacifying the men, but almost every prisoner in their cellblock was infected with NeuroThene-12.

Before the disabled veterans developed symptoms, they had already spread it to the hospital staff, visiting family, and friends.

Isolated incidents started coming in from across the United States. As they grew in number, reports arrived from around the world.

NeuroThene-12 had become a global threat. Unfortunately, Dr. Benway Toetston, the one man who fully understood it, proved to be the drug's first victim.

The Directory Board moved without haste. They initiated the three-step plan of Containment, Evaluation, and Neutralization. To best execute this plan, they established the Threat Level gradation system. Every living center in America was classified by one of three levels.

Communities, towns, and cities showing no sign of NeuroThene-12 influence were classified *Threat Level Zeta*.

Threat Level Omega was reserved for the worst-case scenario: locations known or verified to be under the influence of NeuroThene-12 (e.g. the Testing Grounds used by Project SPEX). SPEX responded to Omega situations with containment. The Directory Board mobilized military units to seal off affected areas as quickly as possible. Armor divisions formed a perimeter, and communications within the locations were cut. They maintained a strict policy of letting no one in or out. Soldiers were briefed on the possibility that anyone in the cordoned location might be the carrier of an extremely dangerous disease. This prevented military personnel from having contact with any person in the zone. Thus, no one answered civilian questions or even explained the military's presence. There was nothing less than martial law in a Threat Level Omega situation.

Spanning these extreme contrasts was *Threat Level Alpha*, the classification for locations of unverified reports of NeuroThene-12 influence. In Alpha situations, Evaluation played a crucial role. The Directory Board realized these matters needed decisive and quick covert action.

SPEX's Directory Board used political leverage to establish the House Un-American Living Activities Commission (HULAC). Publicly, HULAC investigates suspicion of communism. Specifically, they sought "to uncover the identities of those individuals responsible for the plot to turn American Heroes into flesh-hungry beasts." HULAC investigates Threat Level Alpha locations with great spectacle. During the show, Site Investigation Team (SIT) personnel, composed of military and the CIA operatives, attempt to validate the influence of NeuroThene-12.

Based on the SIT's findings, the Threat Level of the area can be increased to Omega or restored to Zeta.

Things sped out of control with unforeseeable speed.

Current Situation

A majority of the U.S. Midwest is classified Threat Level Omega. Military units are spread thin. Men are exhausted. Able-bodied citizens are being drafted to fill in the ranks.

The Directory Board is currently pursuing two potential Neutralization solutions.

First, are the Serum Groups. Teams of scientists and medical doctors are being commissioned to try and devise an antidote to the effects of NeuroThene-12. Their task is difficult, as none of the researchers has been fully briefed on the drug's properties. They are forced to waste precious time starting from the ground up. Some SIT members are working with these researcher teams, performing fieldwork. Still, the Serum Groups have a long road ahead of them.

Unfortunately, the grim situation may not give the Serum Groups the time they require. As more of the U.S. infrastructure collapses under the weight of NeuroThene-12, SPEX's Directory Board is entertaining a more extreme option.

This involves the discharge of low yield atomic weapons in the original Test Areas, as well as any other Omega zones deemed unsalvageable. Though the idea of using atomic weapons on American civilians is preposterous, no one on the Directory Board has raised a feasible alternative.

Inside the cordons, there are not enough supplies. Hunger is a killer: either in the form of food shortages or the reanimated dead. These areas are getting increasingly difficult to maintain.

In the Zeta cities, protesters are swarming. They call for an end to the unlawful imprisonment.

Across the country, people are so terrified they are fleeing to Europe, Canada, or Mexico. However, widespread horror awaits them. The whole world is coming apart at the seams.

There is nowhere to run.

Story Ideas

Born Down In A Dead Man's Town

The characters all have the bad luck to be living in (or visiting) a town declared to be a Threat Level Omega site. Out of the blue, the military rolls up, closing things off, and answers no questions. Nervous soldiers gun down anyone who gets too close – especially an overzealous mayor or church leader. Speculations run rampant. This could lead to local witch-hunts. Then, people turn into zombies.

Suddenly, the question becomes how do we elude the military, escape the zombies, and get out of town? Of course, once they *get* out of town, where will they go? This problem is swarming across the country.

Alternatively, some of the characters could be members of the military, either by choice or drafted, and forced to blockade a town full of people they know (e.g. their home town). Faced with the wholesale destruction of things and people they know, will the characters side with the duty they bear or the friends and family trapped inside the town?

For another option, if everyone in the town is going to kick the bucket, what's to stop the characters from deciding to rob the town's big shot, you know that family in the mansion on the hill? No one's seen them in a while. Could turn into a weird, little "dungeon" crawl.

SIT Around Town

In this story, the characters are the members of a Site Investigation Team. A town is declared Threat Level Alpha. While HULAC questions a couple of locals about their activities, the SIT has to move fast, to figure out if the town has gone Omega or not. Of course, while the SIT is investigating, the townsfolk should start turning. This option is good for the field team in-the-wrong-place-at-the-wrong-time style of play.

Of course, the SIT could be on missions to recover samples, notes, or data to aid the Serum Groups. Maybe the SIT is charged to investigate some of these “peaceful protester” groups for anything connecting them to the “communist conspiracy” behind the reanimating dead.

Character Creation

As this Deadworld is from roughly the same historical period, character creation should follow the guidelines for the “Mein Zombie” Deadworld, in AFMBE.



Dread Menace Zombies

Strength 4	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence -2
Perception 2	Willpower 0
Dead Points 20	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 10

Attack: As normal human or according to weapon type.

Weak Spot: All [0]

Getting Around: Life Like [+3]

Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]

Senses: Like The Living [+1]

Sustenance: Daily [0], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]

Intelligence: Dumb As Dead Wood [0]

Spreading the Love: One Bite and You're Hooked [+2]

If characters are exposed to the NeuroThene-12 chemical or infected bodily fluids, then they contract the NeuroThene-12 condition. Once every week, infected characters will have to make a Willpower Test at -1 or lose 1 point of Willpower. When the Willpower drops to 0, the character turns into a zombie. If a Dread Menace Zombie causes enough damage in an attack to kill the character, that character will return as a zombie in D10(5) minutes.

Power: 16

SIT Member

Survivor

Str 3 **Dex** 5 **Con** 2
Int 2 **Per** 5 **Wil** 3
Lps 42
Eps 23
Spd 14
Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Contacts (CIA) 4 (4)
Delusions (Prejudice: Communists) 1 (-1)
Hard to Kill 4 (4)
Nerves of Steel (3)
Photographic Memory (2)
Situational Awareness (2)
Status (Serum Groups) 1 (1)

Skills

Acrobatics 2
Brawling 2
Bureaucracy 2
Dodge 3
Driving (Car) 2
Guns (Handgun) 3
Lock Picking (Mechanical) 4
Notice 5
Research/Investigation 4
Stealth 4
Surveillance 4

Gear

Camera, Combat Webbing, Dark Clothes, Flashlight, Handgun, Sample Cases

Personality

My partner and I were setting up wiretaps on the phones in this flophouse where some hopheads were supposedly having commie cell meetings. Well, we'd watched the area for a while, got to know their ways and means. However, we forgot to check the closets for layabouts. This commie charged us, out of nowhere. I spotted him coming. Bud didn't. The commie *ripped* Bud apart. Literally. I never saw anything like that in my life.

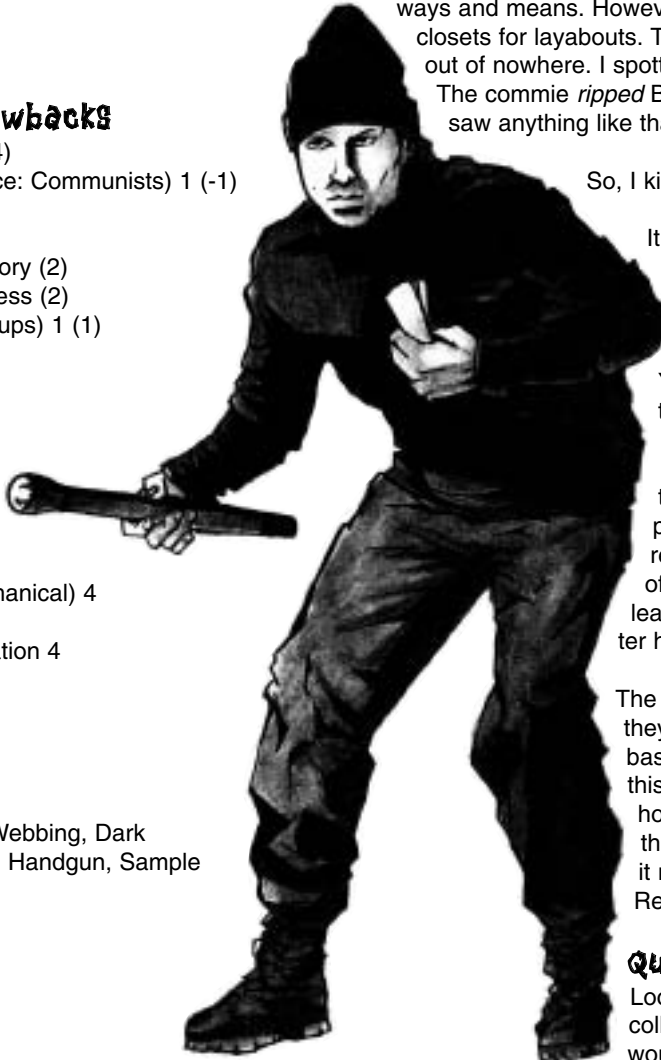
So, I killed the red bastard.

It wasn't until later that I found out about the Big Commie Plan, the one where they turn our own heartland against us? Yeah, so I hooked up with the SIT, and I do ops for both HULAC and the Serum Groups. A couple of the docs, they think I'm pretty hot stuff, for the reports I make. Unlike some of the other guys, I don't leave out the details, no matter how bad they are.

The docs say, sometime soon, they'll be able to cure the poor bastards what are caught up in this commie conspiracy. God, I hope so. We got to make things right, again. Make it so it really *is* better dead than Red!

Quote

Look at this joker's magazine collection. Only a commie would read – you're kidding! I'm sure he won't miss *this* issue.





Peace, Love and Zombies

by Gordon Dritschilo.

The first time I saw one, I figured it was bad acid.

The Hell's Angel I bought the three hits of rainbow blotter from had a spotty track record. So, when I saw this funny-looking guy crack open some chick's skull and start munching on her brain, bad acid was the only logical conclusion.

Then, I started noticing more and more weird shit. There was that town out in Nebraska where the military had the whole place cordoned off and we had to go 30 miles out of our way to get back to the interstate. There was that hippie commune in Arizona where they had all those freaky guys tending the garden who never talked. . . just kind of stared off into the distance. They were real co-operative when you could get their attention, though.

It was in Frisco that I finally realized something was going on. I was at a party on the beach, trying to score a little free love, when a bunch of guys showed up and started ripping and biting at people. Bad craziness. This one guy from the party, though, pulled out a piece and started popping the other guys in their heads. He got a bunch of us out of there, but he was

real careful to make sure none of the people with him had got bit.

Come sunrise, I finally got a good look at this guy. He looked like a corpse that was two or three days dead. Being a working journalist, I had a few questions, and he answered them. He told me about the car accident, and waking up in a bright room, surrounded by doctors. He told me about how he gradually discovered the ways he had changed, especially his new diet, and how the scientists finally told him what was happening.

I knew the government was up to some wild, sick stuff, but this takes the cake. They say the only things certain in life are death and taxes, so once you're dead the government ought to leave you alone. Other people might have lost it then and there, but not me. I'm a professional.

Now my new friend and I are traveling around to every concert festival and flophouse we can find, looking for others like him. I've got a few friends in high places they can take their story to, but we'll have to evade government goons long enough to do it.

History

The CIA's Project MK-ULTRA went down some strange roads, and one of those roads led to the undead. Project Lazarus was initiated on May 11, 1964, with a mandate to investigate folklore relating to the undead, identify what was genuine and could be used to further national policy.

Within a short period of time, Project Lazarus produced a number of zombies with three different groups of distinctions. All of them were loosed upon an unsuspecting United States when the zombies escaped early in 1968, destroying much of Lazarus Base, the project's secret compound in the mountains of Wyoming.

Group A zombies were based on notes found in Wehrmacht files at the end of World War II. Nazi scientists used a rare virus to resuscitate casualties in an attempt to swell the German ranks. The process worked but was unstable, and the undead soldiers tended to collapse after three or four days, limiting their effectiveness. Project Lazarus scientists combed through the German notes and hit upon a solution. An irradiated version of the virus was introduced to a live human host who was transformed before their very eyes.

Group A zombies are strong, bloodthirsty, and brutal. They might have been the perfect weapons were it not for one little problem — they are impossible to control. If they understood the orders they were being given, the zombies in *Group A* were ignoring them. Cattle prods were successfully used to herd them from place to place until a zombie who was tired of being shocked bit one of the attendants. Minutes later, the attendant became a part of *Group A*.

The real trouble started when the *Group A* zombies got hungry. Several members of the group had to be destroyed while the attrition rate of the Lazarus Base security staff skyrocketed. Project Lazarus was ready to write off *Group A* as a failure at the time of the breakout, though some in the Pentagon were discussing dropping a few in North Vietnam as a "fire and forget weapon" to see what would happen.

Group B zombies were the outcome of research into Voodoo, created by introducing a combination of

drugs into a recently deceased body. The traditional method also involved dancing, shaking of rattles, and the sacrifice of a chicken, but scientists soon found those elements to be extraneous, much to the disappointment of certain younger staff members.

While *Group B* was far more docile and controllable than *Group A*, they were very difficult to train and proved incompetent at all but the simplest of tasks. They managed things like "mop the floor," and "attack him," but trying to get one to field strip an M1911A1, while amusing, was a waste of time.

Project Lazarus retains a handful of *Group B* zombies that didn't wander off during the breakout. Nobody is sure what to do with them, but they are kept around just in case they may prove useful in the future.

With the zombies of *Group C*, Project Lazarus thought they finally had it right. These zombies were made through a chemical process perfected in the 1920s by a little-known Massachusetts physician. The doctor disappeared under mysterious circumstances, but his notes survived and were unearthed by Project Lazarus.

Group C zombies, created by injecting a series of chemicals into specific glands and organs of a newly dead subject, were every bit as clever as they had been when alive. The Pentagon was very enthusiastic, seeing *Group C* as assurance the military would never run out of soldiers. *Group C*'s need for a diet of fresh human brains was problematic, though, and the only reason they were not implemented immediately on a large scale.

However, *Group C* zombies were a little too cunning and more than a little resentful of those who brought them back. Several zombies from *Group C* organized the breakout on April 7, 1968. Security forces suddenly found themselves overwhelmed in a burning compound. A handful of scientists managed to get out and call for reinforcements. The zombies from all three groups scattered. *Group A* and *B* zombies traveled in large packs and the *Group C* zombies traveled either alone or in smaller numbers.

Project Lazarus had contingency plans for just such a breakout, but they hadn't been updated in years and it was a couple days before the government respond-

ed. Teams of soldiers, investigators, and surviving Lazarus scientists began searching the countryside for the escaped undead.

Grateful Undead

The zombies from Group A wandered until they got hungry, which took a few days, and then started eating people. The good news was this made it easier for the government to find them. The bad news – aside from people getting eaten – is it multiplied their numbers. In most cases, incidents with Group A zombies were in areas remote and isolated enough that they were easy to cover up. In others, the government has had to invent stories of “campus unrest” or “racial tensions.” Witnesses were either intimidated into silence or “disposed of.” A few were taken to one of Project Lazarus’s new covert bases for use as test subjects.

Not every witness was effectively silenced, though. Here and there, handfuls of people have learned that the dead are walking the earth and the government has something to do with it, although some are convinced it is some sort of Communist plot. Some have gone into survival mode, and are retreating into the country with food and ammunition, determined to ride out whatever apocalypse is coming. Others are running about trying to get someone, anyone, to listen to them. They aren’t having much luck. A few have taken to traveling, trying to learn more about what is happening and helping others where they can.

The Groups A zombies have gotten themselves into some interesting places. More than one concert-goer has been shocked when the longhaired peace freak he just passed a joint to tried to bite his hand.

Zombies from Group B walked until somebody told them what to do, unless that instruction was along the lines of “hey, get off my land,” in which case they kept walking. When somebody did give them something to do, they did it. A number of Group B zombies have found employment in places like farms and roadhouses, where compliant workers are always welcome. Some employers don’t question the newcomer’s odd appearance and behavior; others do but decide not to look a gift horse in the mouth. A handful of Group B zombies have become

roadies for the Grateful Dead, where their heavy lifting skills are much appreciated and nobody seems to notice the smell.

Of course, some people who have come across Group B zombies have tried to help the poor, lost souls. Project Lazarus teams have learned to watch out for “found persons reports,” and entire families who tried to do a good deed have vanished. Paranoia strikes deep. . .

Group C is hiding. They knew the government would be after them and were ready. Some fled to Canada or Mexico, but others are still around. They found the counterculture provided them the best hiding places, and many are lying low with biker gangs, acid heads, peaceniks, and anyone else away from the watchful eyes of mainstream society.

Not all of them are content to hide forever. Some want to get back at the people who denied them their rightful rest and are plotting, biding their time.

Story Ideas

All Zombies Must Be Disposed Of

In the simplest approach to Peace Love and Zombies, the Cast Members take on the role of a Project Lazarus response team, hunting the escaped zombies to then capture or destroy them as quickly and quietly as possible. Some threats, like a pack of Group A shambling toward a small Nebraska town, will be fairly obvious. Others, like a Group C taking behind-the-scenes control of a student activist group, are much more subtle.

Character types would include special forces soldiers assigned to Project Lazarus, most of whom are likely to be combat veterans who never expected to be doing any fighting at home, as well as investigators, likely to be CIA or FBI agents detailed to the project, and scientists. Groups that enjoy intraparty conflict may want to play up tensions between the three types, or you can run this option as good old-fashioned zombie-fighting fun. The trick will be keeping everything quiet. The country has enough troubles without people learning that the dead walk among them.

You can play the team as the good guys, saving unsuspecting civilians from zombie hordes and the machinations of sinister Group C zombie masterminds, or you can play up the moral ambiguity of keeping everything secret. Perhaps one of the Cast Members will decide enough is enough and meet with an intrepid journalist in a darkened parking garage, giving him the hints he needs to break the story of a lifetime.

Zombies on the Run

In this option, the Cast Members are Group C zombies who stuck together after the breakout. They might be on the run from the government, or they may be trying to get back at it. They might have a few Group B zombies along with some equipment from Lazarus Base at their disposal, or they may have escaped with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

They might just be trying to mind their own business and live their unives when a bunch of Group A zombies show up, threatening the peace they have found. If they manage to turn back the tide, government agents are likely to arrive hot on the heels of the marauding zombies, and the cast will be on the run.

Fear, Loathing, and Zombies

A setting with a government conspiracy and the undead hiding out in the counterculture during the 1960s is just screaming out for high weirdness. You can have your players slowly begin to notice strange new people coming to town and odd happenings in the area, gradually hinting at the conspiracy as more folks disappear, until all hell breaks loose.

Alternately, you could start things off with a bang. The cast might be students at a remote college campus when a horde of Group A descends on them. Let them dodge the onslaught in proper zombie-movie fashion for a while. When the soldiers arrive, they'll think they are saved, at first. If they aren't a little bit leery about getting on to the bus like the soldiers say, they will be when they realize they are going deeper and deeper into the wilderness rather than to the hospital in town like they were told.

Do they escape on their own or are they rescued? Or, do they wind up transformed? In any case, what do they do next?

Group A Zombies

Strength 4 **Constitution** 4
Dexterity 3 **Intelligence** -2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 18
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 13
Attack: Bite damage d4 x 4(8)
Weak Spot: Brain [+6]
Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10]
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5]
Senses: Like The Living [+1]
Sustenance: Weekly[+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]
Spreading the Love: One Bite and You're Hooked [+2]
Power: 28

Group B Zombies

Use Voodoo Zombie stats from *Atlas of the Walking Dead*.

Group C Zombies

Create as the "Rebirth into Death" Zombies from the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* corebook with the following requirements: must take Like The Living or better for Senses, Occasionally and Braiiiiiiins for Sustenance, and Language, Long Term Memory and Problem Solving for Intelligence. Group C Zombies do not spread the love as they are only created through a scientific process.



Sweet Zombie Treat

by Monica Valentinelli

It was two short weeks ago that I buried my son Adam. My husband and I knew his death was coming, and we waited for it to rob us of our beloved child. He was only six years old, but the cancer had progressed in his body faster than he could learn to read or write.

Last night, I folded into Harvey's arms, facing our bedroom window. The curtains were drawn, I remember because I didn't want to let the world into my sadness. When I looked up, the curtains were open, and a slight breeze was coming in from the window. I walked over to close it, not thinking anything of it at the time. We then heard a sound coming from the kitchen.

Harvey went downstairs to see if everything was okay. He screamed Adam's name and yelled something at the top of his lungs. I moved myself, piece by piece, next to the closet where I hid. I lowered my ear to the heating vent to listen for any strange sounds, but all I could hear was the sound of something being thrown all over the kitchen.

I managed to make my way to the hallway closet, where I fumbled around for a flashlight. It was then that I heard his voice.

"Mommy."

Something resembling Adam was making its way toward me in the dark light of the hallway. I couldn't make out too many details, just that the thing was dressed in Adam's first suit, and that there was something unnatural about it. It reeked of embalming fluid and cold sweat. Its eyes were yellowing, but sharp. A small hand, Adam's hand, reached out to me.

"Mommy."

I couldn't think of anything else to do but respond.

"Yes . . . Adam?"

"Where did you put my ice cream, Mommy?"

"What ice cream?"

The thing rocked back on its heels and made its way closer to me. I could see that the thing was covered in something wet and sticky.

"Need more ice cream."

As it said those words, I could hear the gleeful bells of an ice cream truck. It didn't register to me at the time, but I should have realized that it was a little too late in the evening for the truck to be making its rounds.

"More ice cream."

Satisfied the thing wasn't going to hurt me, I promised it I would get more for it. Its eyes rolled back in its head as it stumbled out the door. I ran down to the kitchen to check on Harvey.

There he was, just lying there soaking in a pool of dark blood and bile with something *missing*.

I went over to pick up the phone, knowing that I was signing my own death warrant. The police will think that I did this.

I picked up the phone anyway. Someone has to be warned.

"911?"

History

In the 1960s, peace, love, and ice cream reigned. A housewife struggling to raise a family of nine children, two dogs and a WWII vet, Mrs. Mitchell founded Grandma Mitchell's Ice cream factory in Bloomer, Wisconsin. To keep her production costs competitive with other manufacturers, Mrs. Mitchell only produced three flavors: chocolate, vanilla, and Grandma's special. In a taste test issued to over three hundred grocery stores, Grandma Mitchell's ice cream beat out all other competitors. The telltale bells from an ice cream truck signaled Grandma Mitchell's ice cream was arriving in neighborhoods across the country. The company grew modestly over the next two decades and reached its peak in the mid-1980s.

Like many other dessert-based businesses, Grandma Mitchell's sales dropped off significantly due to health food crazes sweeping the country. Soon, Mrs. Mitchell closed all of her expansion plants in the country, and gathered her corporate forces at the original location in Bloomer. Although she survived the death of her husband in 1977, the doom of her business broke Mrs. Mitchell's heart. Mrs. Mitchell died in 1989, leaving the family business to her eldest son, Peter.

To the prying eyes of the public, the Mitchell family appeared to get along. Behind closed doors the family continually bickered, vying for power and control over pieces of the company. Although Peter was the most conniving of the family members, his brothers and sisters soon worked together to try to remove him as President. Unable to fend off the corporate politics that consumed his time, Peter sought out spiritual advice from a medium named "Madame Violette" in nearby Minneapolis. Much to Madame Violette's surprise, the séances were successful. Mrs. Mitchell visited her son, Peter, on several occasions. Each time Mrs. Mitchell asked less about how her son was doing and demanded more information about the current state of the company. Each time Peter gave her everything, hoping her ghost would supply the answers he needed to revive the company to its former glory.

One afternoon séance provided Peter with the break he needed. Mrs. Mitchell told him the only way to revive the company was to introduce a new "special" flavor of ice cream that was both flavorful and low-calorie. Something in Peter caused him to test the newfound recipe on an unknown market. Due to a timely accident, Peter learned of the ice cream's unfortunate side effects. Upon death, consumers of the specialty flavor ice cream reanimate as zombies. Zombies created by the sweet treat crave Grandma's ice cream wherever (and in whatever) they can find it.

To this day, Peter Mitchell is the only company employee that knows of the dangerous side effects of eating too much ice cream.

Present Situation

Almost two decades later, and Grandma Mitchell's ice cream has never been more popular. Behind closed doors, the main plant in Bloomer continues to make its ever-popular ice cream. Sections of the plant have been closed to the public's eye, and some plant workers are rumored to work around the clock with no break. Mitchell family members continue to vie for political sway within the company. In order to ensure their reputation, it is rumored that the family acquired several civil and government officials on their payroll from Minneapolis to Washington.

With the upswing of low-calorie foods, the company's marketing campaign has begun to target obesity through the nation's children. Grandma Mitchell promised parents something no other junk food could fulfill: *"Lo-cal sweet, so cheat, cheat, cheat!"*

Soon the nation would be consumed with yet another fad diet, "Treats for the Sweet." Claiming to be nutrient-filled with Calcium and additional added vitamins, the ice cream presumed it was the next best thing to the grapefruit diet craze of the 1980s.

Grandma's claims caused the government's Food and Drug Administration to raise their eyebrows. Scientists, nutritionists, and government officials have all descended on the small town of Bloomer, Wisconsin, to determine if the company's claims hold any merit. The investigators are just settling in, and the reports of odd break-ins are growing rapidly.

Photographers from the National Star have responded to an anonymous tip that regular consumers of the ice cream turn into zombies upon their death. Haunting morgues, hospitals, and fresh graves, these paparazzi will do anything to turn a quick buck. Worse still, the Star's competing newspaper, "EZ News," also received an anonymous tip that the zombies still crave the ice cream and will do anything they can to get it. Big city reporters have descended on the small, stable community of Bloomer, hoping to smell a conspiracy in the middle of Grandma Mitchell's rosy success.

While the police have yet to be involved, the body count near Grandma Mitchell's main plant is rising, and the zombies are spreading. Local residents have shunned eating all frozen treats as a new urban myth circulates.

Residents of Bloomer have watched in horror as their safe, midwestern town has turned into a bad sitcom, destined for a second-rate television company. Today, nothing causes more fear in the hearts of Bloomer residents than the sound of the ice cream truck rolling down the street. As its sinister music tinkles, residents close their doors and bar their windows.

Where will you be when the ice cream man comes?

Story Ideas

No More Toppings

As Grandma Mitchell's popularity grows, so does the body count. Still in its early stages of discovery, a team of investigators seeks the cause of the zombie epidemic. Once found, the team has the authority needed to eliminate the threat at all costs. Because this story is about preventing zombies from spreading, players can choose which method they want to use in order to rid the world of the undead. Archetypes that would work well with this story include scientists, reporters, and soldier/SWATs. The storyline has several avenues. One example could be a team of researchers experimenting in a lab to come up with an antidote, but they need zombie samples to continue their work. Another method might be a team hired to infiltrate the Mitchell ice cream plant. From the morbid to the grotesque, there are many options for the cast to exercise as they try to halt the flow of zombies from cemeteries, morgues, and hospitals across the country.

To-Go Order

The fad diets have ended and Grandma Mitchell's ice cream factories have all but closed. People are huddled in corners and feed off of whatever they can find. The players are champions, mercenaries, or angry townsfolk hell-bent on killing the living dead. Obsessed with the idea that no body should be left uncremated, the cast ranges from the anarchist to survivor.

By now the urban myths have swelled into half-truths. The cast has a vague idea that someone in the Mitchell family is responsible for the epidemic. Strangely enough, the zombies are not dropping dead fast enough of their own accord. As the body count slowly decreases, the cast catches wind of a new plot on the horizon. A new low-calorie treat might be offered to the public, and this time, Grandma Mitchell is pulling no punches.

Conspiracies abound as they hear more and more clues leading to Madame Violette, Grandma Mitchell's Earthly contact. As she travels from the clandestine corners of New Orleans to the urban cof-

feehouses in New York, the cast finds themselves facing a fatal time crunch. They can either fight the zombies on their own turf, or they can race against time trying to stop a second-rate medium from beginning the next zombie epidemic.



Plant Worker Zombie

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 1
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 11
Attack: As normal human
Weak Spot: Fire [-5]
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Living [+1]
Sustenance: Daily [0], Ice Cream [-1], Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Tool Use 3 [+9]
Spreading the Love: Bury the Body [-2], Must ingest Grandma Mitchell's special ice cream to rise [-1]
Power: 1

These mindless drones can be found working in Grandma Mitchell's Ice Cream Factories.



Ice Cream Man Zombie

Strength 2 **Constitution** 3
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 3
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 36 **Speed** 4
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 14
Skills: Driving (3), Disguise (2)
Attack: As normal human
Weak Spot: Fire [-5]
Getting Around: Life-Like [+3]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Scent Tracking [+4]
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], Ice Cream [-1], Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Teamwork [+4]
Spreading the Love: Bury the Body [-2], Must ingest Grandma Mitchell's special ice cream to rise [-1]
Special Feature: Regeneration [+5]
Power: +14

Driving the ice cream truck, the Ice Cream Man zombie gathers all zombies to him to regroup, instruct, and feed.



We Welcome to Whimseyville

by Erin Mills

“Look, Daddy! It’s Gary Gator!”

Jim sighed in relief as Teri ran to meet the famous cartoon reptile. Lisa, his wife, ran after their daughter. They’d spent nearly the entire day at Whimseyville U.S.A. and kept missing the character meet-and-greets. Teri was starting to get on his nerves, whining to see Gary Gator.

Still, he thought as he saw Lisa and Teri join the line of guests eager to see Gary, *this has been the best vacation we’ve ever had.*

Ever since they boarded the shuttle for the Whimseyville U.S.A. resort, the trip had gone smoothly. Everyone was genuinely friendly. All the employees were friendly, courteous, and generally bending over backwards to make sure that their family vacation was, well, perfect.

After Hurricane George had blown through the area, Jim was sure the people working here would have been frazzled beyond belief as they put things back in order. If they were, they sure as hell didn’t show it to the guests.

Teri and Lisa returned, Teri holding up her autobiography book.

“See, Daddy! Gary signed my book! He said I was his best friend!”

“Of course he did, sweetie,” Jim replied. “Who wouldn’t want you as their best friend?” He reached down and picked Teri up. “Now, what should we do next?”

Teri was frowning and looking back at the mascot. “Daddy? Why is Gary biting that man?”

“What?” Jim and Lisa turned to where Gary was standing.

Gary Gator had wrestled a fat man in a loud shirt to the ground, and was biting into the man’s neck. A red spray shot out, spattering the pavement in front of the other tourists, all of whom were staring in horror. Gary raised his head, blood and ichor dripping from the plastic teeth of the alligator costume. Behind the crazed mascot, Jim could see three security guards hurrying towards the scene.

"Daddy? Is that man all right?" Teri asked, clutching Jim tightly. "Why did Gary do that? That's not real blood is it, Daddy? Daddy!"

Jim swallowed, and turned to Lisa. "I think it's time we get the hell out of here."

"Excuse me, sir," a security guard approached them. "We'll need a few minutes of your time so we can file a report."

"Not a chance!" Jim said. "My little girl and my wife are terrified, and we just want to leave. Ask the other thirty people what happened. We're out of here!"

The security guard took Jim's arm. He didn't look like much, but the pressure Jim felt was on the verge of excruciating.

"I'm sorry, sir, but I'm afraid I must insist."

The smile never left the guard's face, but Jim realized that it wasn't very pleasant anymore . . .

History

Whimseyville was a struggling one-park outfit wedged between central Florida's various major attractions. Mark Reisen, owner of Whimseyville, had sunk a considerable chunk of his life savings, along with those of many of his friends and relatives, to build and run Whimseyville, but the competition with the larger theme park resorts had become too fierce. Employees were leaving in droves, ticket sales were dropping, and it was clear to all concerned that Whimseyville's days were numbered.

Then things began to turn around. After closing its doors for three months for what Whimseyville's publicity department called "a complete re-envisioning" of the park, it reopened with much needed improvements to most of its attractions. New innovations had been found that updated and enhanced the animatronic figures on several of the more popular rides. The press hailed the new figures as "amazingly lifelike" and "nearly impossible to believe are artificial."

Mark Reisen lauded Whimseyville's engineering department publicly, but in truth, engineering had nothing to do with the new figures. The new figures weren't animatronic at all, but perfectly preserved, reanimated corpses Reisen had ordered from medical

supply warehouses and other less than legal means. Using state-of-the-art microchips implanted in the brain and sub-dermal circuitry connected to the chips wired throughout the muscles, a select group of amoral Whimseyville engineers, dubbed Research Team Alpha, had revived the corpses and programmed them for the simple repetitive tasks the animatronic figures used to do.

Whimseyville recovered financially and began raking in more profit, enabling the park to put in thrill rides as well as more rides with the "zombitronic" figures. Reisen soon realized that the technology using the zombies could be applied to other areas of the park. He met with the members of Research Team Alpha, and soon the Phase II zombies were ready, cleverly disguised in the costumes of Whimseyville's licensed characters. It was a natural progression; the characters had to act whimsical around guests, sign autographs, pose for pictures and, most importantly, they didn't talk.

The new characters were even more successful than the new ride figures. They never got tired, never needed to eat, and never passed out from heat exhaustion. Word of the tireless characters spread and Whimseyville made even more money.

It was then that Reisen decided to expand Whimseyville's territory. With space in Central Florida at a premium, Reisen kept the original Whimseyville park open long enough for construction to be completed on Whimseyville U.S.A., a massive theme park resort complex located in the Florida panhandle. During the eight years of construction, Research Team Alpha had perfected the programming that would allow the logical progression of the zombies used at the park.

Every employee that interacts with guests at Whimseyville U.S.A., from the ride attendants, to the hotel clerks, to the custodial staff, is a Phase III zombie. The programming has advanced to the point that the Phase III zombies can interact with guests, talk, and mimic most of the major functions of life. However, there are a few giveaways; Phase III zombies don't blink. They move a bit more stiffly than normal people and their posture is a little too perfect. However, the smiles are always genuine and no one

has ever had a bad experience with a Whimseyville "employee."

At least, not yet . . .

The State of Whimseyville U.S.A.

Whimseyville U.S.A. consists of five theme parks, one water park, twelve hotels, a major shopping/restaurant complex, and three golf courses. Every single one of the 65,000 "Whimseyvillians" is a Phase III zombie. There are also approximately 2000 Phase II character zombies, and nearly 20,000 Phase I zombitronic ride characters.

The original Whimseyville Park in central Florida has been closed to the public and is reserved for the exclusive use of Research Team Alpha. They are continually experimenting and upgrading the chips and programming for future zombies to be used at Whimseyville U.S.A. At any given time there are about 5,000 zombies roaming the old Whimseyville Park, a mix of Phase IIs and IIIs.

Mark Reisen and the remaining human employees of Whimseyville operate out of the Whimseyville main offices located at the northern edge of Whimseyville U.S.A. They handle all the paperwork and bookkeeping necessary to run such a massive resort, as well as developing other expansions for the company.

However, Reisen and his cronies may have a bigger problem on their hands than they realize. Recently, Hurricane George, a Category 3 storm, blew through Whimseyville U.S.A. While the resort was able to reopen with no disruption of services, it did have an effect none of the Whimseyville higher-ups are aware of.

The storm scrambled the programming of the chips implanted in the Whimseyville zombies. As a result, a majority of the zombies are beginning to crave meat, and are finding that they really don't like it when the resort guests start getting belligerent towards them.

If a guest at Whimseyville begins behaving in a manner that the zombie perceives as rude or insulting, it will respond in a violent manner, depending on the

type of zombie. Phase I and II zombies will immediately attack the guest in question. If any of the other guests start panicking or trying to pull the zombie off its intended target, it will attack all of them indiscriminately. Additionally, if any of the other Phase I or II zombies see the guests fighting with its brethren, it too will join the fray. Once the guests are overpowered and stop struggling and the zombies have had their fill, they will return to their original positions.

Phase III zombies, however, act much differently. Having mostly human level intelligence, they have determined that the best way to deal with any witnesses to the attacks of their lower phase cousins is to eliminate the witnesses away from the view of the other guests. As such, when a Phase I or II goes ballistic, Phase III security guards will arrive to remove any witnesses and the offending zombie to the behind the scenes areas of the park, while the ride attendants shut down the ride or area, and custodial zombies arrive to clean up the mess. This is done quickly and efficiently with very few of the guests ever knowing anything unusual happened.

Behind the scenes, however, the witnesses are attacked, killed, then refitted by the Phase III zombie engineers at the park with the same control chips that animate them, and sent back out the next day to continue with their lives. This is how the Phase III zombies have managed to keep the zombies' semi-free existence a secret from the Whimseyville executives and the world at large, for now.

It is only a matter of time before somebody gets suspicious, or worse, something else happens to degrade the programming even further, and then all the Whimseyville zombies will be unleashed in a nearly unstoppable army of the smiling dead.

Story Ideas

Just a few routine questions, sir . . .

The Cast Members are all vacationing at Whimseyville, U.S.A. when they witness a Phase II zombie attack. The attack turns into an all-out, free-for-all as other guests rush to help the victim, which in turn prompts other zombies to attack. The Cast Members may end up in the melee or just stand by in shock.

Security arrives on the scene and takes all the witnesses to the office behind the scenes. Those who are reluctant to do so are “encouraged” to join the other witnesses by security. The Cast Members and other witnesses wait for nearly two hours with no one coming to talk to them. They may decide to leave on their own or wait for security to arrive. In either event, the zombies show their true colors, attacking the witnesses and trying to kill them.

What follows is a chase through the backstage areas of the Whimseyville property. Security will notify all the other Phase IIIs in the park that there are living witnesses loose, and all will do anything they can to prevent the Cast Members from leaving the property until they are “refitted.” All the roads leading out of Whimseyville U.S.A. will be watched and all cars and buses searched for the escapees.

The Cast Members may even take refuge in the Whimseyville main office building and alert the executives to what is happening in their parks. If they do make it that far, you can be sure that the Phase IIIs will soon be attacking the building, intent on eliminating those who know their secret.

Hurricane Tonight, Armageddon Tomorrow

Hurricane Ophelia has passed into the Gulf of Mexico and meandered in such a way that she has gained enough strength to be a full Category 5 storm and there’s nothing in her way before she comes ashore in the Florida panhandle.

The Cast Members could be locals who live near Whimseyville, or vacationers staying at the resort when Ophelia hits. Things start out subtly with preparations being made during the last few hours before Ophelia is due to hit. Then the storm strikes in all its fury. Power is knocked out, houses are destroyed, trees are toppled . . .

. . . and the programming in the Whimseyville zombies is hopelessly scrambled.

The next morning, the Cast Members survey the devastation and encounter several zombies dressed in Whimseyville uniforms wandering in their neighborhood (or on the resort property if they are playing tourists) acting odd and then attacking anyone they notice. More zombies appear, spreading out, and



attacking the living, then hauling off the carcasses back to Whimseyville to be refitted. As time progresses, the zombies begin doing on-the-spot refits. As the initial scrambling wears off, the Phase III zombies begin organizing an all-out attack on humanity. They begin digging up the graveyards and finding dead victims of Ophelia to reanimate and send out. The refits are focused on increasing the number of zombies quickly, so the newer zombies being created are Phase Is and IIs.

The Cast Members find themselves cut off from the rest of the world as the Whimseyville zombies spread out, working to prevent vital services from being restored and adding to their ranks as quickly as possible, in an ongoing effort to keep their new lease on unlife. Will the Cast Members fight their way out and spread the word of the zombie menace or will they try to take out the evil at it's source, infiltrating Whimseyville U.S.A. and unearthing its secrets?

New Aspects

Happy to See You

2-point Aspect

All Whimseyville zombies who are actually used on Whimseyville property have programming ingrained in the chip that causes them to smile all the time, regardless of the situation. This unnerving grin causes -2 to all Fear Tests in the zombie's victim. Refitted victims do not have this ability.

Lookin' Good

2-point Aspect

Whimseyville zombies are perfectly preserved and do not rot. However, they do have an oddly artificial look to their appearance. Characters receive -2 to any Perception rolls to determine if a Whimseyville employee is alive or a zombie.

Welcome to Whimseyville Zombies

Strength 4	Constitution 2
Dexterity 2	Intelligence 3
Perception 2	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 4
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 15

Skills: Brawling 6, Language (English) 5
Attack: Bite D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Brain [+6], Spine [+5]
Getting Around: Life Like [+3], Leaping [+3]
Strength: Strong Like Bull [+5], Iron Grip [+1]
Senses: Like the Living [+1]
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Language [+1], Problem Solving [+15], Teamwork [+4]
Spreading the Love: Surgery [0] Whimseyville zombies do not spread the love. Instead they take the dead bodies of their victims off to those Phase III zombies programmed to work in engineering for refitting with the control chips and wiring.
Special Aspects: Happy to See You [+2], Lookin' Good [+2]
Power: 64
Additional Notes: Phase III zombies have all the stats above with Driving (Car) 2 and Driving (Golf Cart) 2. Each Phase III zombie also has one of the following Skills, dependant upon their department.
Ride Attendant: Mechanic 2
Cashier: Bureaucracy 2
Security: Hand Weapon (Club) 2
Engineer: Electronics 2, Mechanic 3
Custodian: Craft (Cleaning) 3



The Not So Perfect Storm

by Nik Havert

Always listen to the weatherman.

If I had done that, I wouldn't be in this situation. I'd be weathering out this storm in the mountains north of Kingston with a cold Red Stripe – instead of fighting Catholic missionaries who died twenty years ago. I'd bring supplies out every three weeks to the island where these nerds had built their science lab. They never told me exactly what they did here, until it was too late to matter. The money was good though, and it was steady work.

I called ahead to ask if they could wait a day or two for the hurricane to blow over. They wouldn't have it. They demanded that I come out to their island, even with all the weather reports saying I shouldn't. Something about "being on the verge of a major breakthrough." They said they'd triple my pay and that my first mate and I could stay in their concrete facility until the storm passed. We made good time to their island, even beating the storm by an hour. We weren't approached with paychecks, however. We were approached with pleading to leave the island. I told them we weren't going anywhere until the storm

was over. We had to tie the boat to their docks tighter than a drum and hope the whipping winds wouldn't pick it up and toss it halfway to South America. We heard the first weird sounds about then. Inhuman sounds that terrified the scientists so much they screamed for us to get inside. I barely registered that all their boats were already gone, yet people were still here. Where were the others?

We shackled up in their walled compound and listened to the howling wind and driving rain jump up from a tropical storm to a category two hurricane. The guys and gals in the white coats were terrified. They jumped at every sound. They armed themselves, and watched the barricaded windows and perimeter walls like hawks. I asked why they needed rifles for a hurricane. They said the storm was the least of our worries. We had to be worried about their "major breakthrough," and the walking corpses it produced.

I still don't understand it all. One of the scientists finally broke down and blabbed everything: experiments involving regeneration of human tissue, locally grown herbal compounds mixed with their experi-

mental serums, a botched disposal job, and a cemetery containing the corpses of the islanders and missionaries who used to live on the island.

Now I'm wondering if that scratching at the window is from the wind slicing branches off the trees, or if it's from the fingernails of a Catholic missionary who's been dead for twenty years. They've given me a gun. If we can hold out till the storm passes, morning maybe, we can make it to the boat. If the boat is still there, we can make it off the island.

If.

History

In the early 1970s, a Catholic charities organization was given an eight-mile diameter tropical island southwest of Jamaica by an anonymous donor. The island provided a spiritual retreat for missionaries and priests and a convalescence home for the dying homeless and forgotten citizens of Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and other third world Caribbean nations. The island received supplies on a regular basis by boat from Kingston, Jamaica and served the poor until the island was laid waste by a massive hurricane. All of the mission's buildings were flattened and many, healthy and unhealthy, died as a result of the storm. They, too, were added to the island's holy cemetery.

Searching desperately for a way to continue their work, the mission was approached by the Hendricks Medical Research Institute. Hendricks Medical offered to buy the entire island from the mission and give them their old facility on the outskirts of Kingston, which the Institute had outgrown almost a year prior to the hurricane. The mission happily agreed, and Hendricks Medical was happy to get an entire island at a cheap price and a hefty tax deduction from their old headquarters.

Once Hendricks Medical built their new facility on the foundation of the old mission and convalescence home, they continued their experiments in human tissue regeneration in earnest. Hendricks Medical was on the verge of a great breakthrough that would mean, among other things, rejuvenation of dead tissue in burn victims. They were near to creating a serum that would earn them billions.

A late night experiment by two genetic engineers "thinking outside the box" resulted in the big break they needed. The engineers had heard of local wild herbs grown on their island that native peoples and the missionaries would use to speed up healing and ease the pain of the sick. Mixing these herbal compounds with their serum was the key in the lock for Hendricks Medical. The serum began to work in laboratory rats and experiments on humans were only months away. All the old formulas and "botched" serums were destroyed.

Or so they thought. One of the lab technicians who enjoyed cocoanut rum a little too much was put in charge of taking the botched samples to the facility's incinerator, located in an outbuilding behind the main facility. The cart got away from the technician, who drunkenly watched it roll down a hill toward the old mission cemetery. There, it proceeded to crash into an old tombstone and send containers of serum crashing here and there. He quickly picked up the spilled and broken containers and took them to the incinerator, where he burned all the evidence of his mistake.

He could not have known the chemicals would seep into the soft tropical dirt of the island. He could not have known they would eventually work their way down six feet and go to work regenerating the tissue of the dead things there. No one knew what was going on until the six undead men and two undead women shuffled up to two of the Hendricks scientists who were watching the approaching storm from the beach. One of them managed to escape, only because the eight zombies were busy feasting on the friend he'd left behind. They thought he was mad, until they saw their dead co-worker running through the tropical woods with half of his face missing. Some of them managed to flee in the boats owned by Hendricks Medical, others were killed on the beach only to get up again and search for others to kill. The supply boat arrived as they requested, and would've been the saving grace for perhaps six of the Hendricks staff, but the storm was going to keep them all at bay until it passed.

Current Situation

30 people staffed the Hendricks Medical Research facility. There are now only 10 left (or less, if the Zombie Master decides to limit the number to the available number of players). 8 managed to escape on the Hendricks Medical boats, and 12 others were killed, infected, and turned into zombies (adding the 8 original zombies puts the total current number of zombies at 22). The supply boat's captain and first mate (2 other characters able to be used by players at the Zombie Master's discretion) have a boat that can safely hold 6 others, 8 with difficulty, and 10 with serious safety risks.

The 10 remaining Hendricks staff members are holed up in the main facility, a concrete compound that contains sleeping quarters, cafeteria and kitchen, locker rooms and fitness room, an open courtyard with garden, large television lounge, ER (as the staff included a couple surgeons), chemical laboratories, animal pens, "clean rooms" for serum engineering, and numerous storage areas and closets (including janitorial closets). The compound is surrounded by a 10-foot stonewall with a double-door gate that opens out onto the main road that leads from the facility to the beach and boat docks.

The staff is not without armament, as they were their own security force due to being relatively isolated from the Jamaican mainland. Some of the staffers have pistols, rifles, shotguns, flare guns, welding torches, Molotov cocktails (of different varieties: alcohols, fuels, acids, and other chemical compounds), kitchenware, pool cues, gardening implements, and maybe a tire iron or two. The Zombie Master should use discretion in dishing out the firearms, but could have fun letting the players improvise what other weapons they might find in a medical research facility. Ammunition is limited, as most of the staff brought their own ammo and had, at best, a couple boxes each.

The Hendricks Medical staff and supply boat crew are threatened not only by the nasty Hendricks zombies, but also by a category 2 hurricane that smashes into the island about an hour after the supply boat arrives. The facility has material to deal with such a storm, including wood and tools to board up windows



and doors (the Zombie Master may decide to include a couple nail guns in the mix for fun – check out p. 43 of *One of the Living* for the appropriate combat stats!), first aid supplies, flashlights, raincoats, generators, and portable hand-crank radios.

The winds of this hurricane will whip up to 110mph (minimum 74mph) and cause minor structural damage to the Hendricks Medical facility. Windows will break from flying debris and unsecured objects outside will be blown away. Some exterior doors could also be blown open (or off!) if properly unsecured. Minor roof damage could also occur. The low-lying areas, such as beaches and a good portion of the road to the beach, will flood within 4 hours or less. Trees may break and fall, possibly causing power outages! This hurricane will encompass the entire island and last until daybreak.

The hardest winds will hit just before the eye of the storm moves over the island (this “pre-eye” period is called the “eyewall”). The eye of this hurricane will hit halfway through the night and cover the entire island, lasting about an hour. This could potentially be the deadliest part of the storm for the players, as the restless zombies may choose this time for an all-out assault on the facility.

The Zombie Master can, of course, tweak the hurricane times and effects to his or her liking

Riding the Storm Out

The Cast Members’ main goal is to ride out both a hurricane and an attack by twenty ravenous zombies. The zombies are at risk from the hurricane as well, but being dead gives them a lot less to worry about in the middle of a massive storm. The Cast Members can try to fortify their positions within the facility or wait for an opportune moment (the eye of the storm being the best time) to hunt and slay the zombies. If the Cast Members can make it to the beach the next morning (and find the boat still there and still afloat), they can make a break for the mainland. If any zombies get aboard the boat and end up killing and reanimating any survivors, then woe betide any who find the boat and think the inhabitants are merely “lucky survivors” of the hurricane. If a boat adrift with zombies should make it back to Kingston, the infection



Not-So Perfect Storm Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 3	Intelligence 0
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 18
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 6
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4), slashing	
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]	
Getting Around: The Quick Dead [+10], Burrowing [+3]	
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0], Flame Resistant [+1]	
Senses: Like the Dead [0], Scent Tracking [+1]	
Sustenance: Daily [0], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]	
Intelligence: Animal Cunning [+2]	
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]	
Power: 22	

could potentially spread into the mainland and across the island (which is a high-traffic tourist destination as well).



Parallelism

by Kelly Stack

Ellie rode the bus home from her part-time bookstore job. There were 12 people on the bus, including the bus driver. Tired from her long day of work, Ellie leaned back in the seat and gazed longingly out the window. Outside, a thunderstorm raged, the rain came down in torrents as the wind swayed the bus. The city was drenched. From the back of the bus, she could hear a man snoring.

Ellie jumped in her seat as a loud clap of thunder startled her. More claps of thunder quickly followed. The snoring man awoke as the thunder shook the bus with all its ferocity. Ellie looked out the window at the storm again. She watched the lightning streak across the sky. Up ahead, she saw lightning strike a lamppost on the left hand side of the street. The globe on the top of the post shattered into hundreds of tiny shards. The electricity from the lighting jumped across the street to the opposite lamppost. The driver tried to stop the bus before reaching the electrical arc, but there wasn't time. As the bus drove past the connected lampposts, everything went dark as if in a tunnel. Ellie felt herself become dizzy for just a moment.

Looking back out the window, Ellie noticed that the bus was no longer on Fifth Avenue – in fact, she had no idea where the bus was at all! Outside the window, she could see a medieval village. The bus came to a sluggish halt in the mud and the disoriented passengers climbed off the bus. Looking around, Ellie could see many deserted, thatched roof homes.

From the sky came an inhuman roar! She looked up to see a large scaled and feathered thing diving out of the sky at her and the other passengers. Fear trembled through everyone as they scattered to hide. Ellie dove to the ground in fright. She glanced back at the creature as it went by. To her, it appeared to be a dragon, but it looked as though its skin was falling off in places. It was then that an awful smell of rot hit her and she nearly vomited. After the thing passed overhead, she stood up and looked around. At the edge of the village she saw what must be the villagers leaving the forest and heading for the bus. She wasn't quite sure why, but they looked a bit odd to her, even for being straight out of a medieval fair. They looked almost too dirty and ragged. They walked very slow-

ly, in an almost shambling sort of way. She smelled them before they got too close and again she gagged. Looking back at them she realized they were rotting and knew them for what they were.

History

We live in a universe that is one of many. For the most part, none of the universes ever cross paths. Once in a while, the veil between the universes shifts or becomes thin, making the passage from one to the other easier. At these times, magical creatures cross the veil between the universes. All the old tales from across the world telling of strange creatures like fairies and mermaids, Bigfoot and Baba Yaga, are absolutely true, but they do not normally exist in our world. Most people do not even know that such places exist and many would disbelieve if told. It is very hard for people from our world to travel to another without aid of some sort. Most are taken through the veil by creatures or beings that understand how to travel through the veil of the universes. Magic is one means to travel through the veil. It is rare for humans from our world to have any magical ability, though it does happen. We all know of psychics, modern day witches, and the like who proclaim to have magical abilities. Most of these people are charlatans and do not, but there are the occasional few who do and even fewer who realize that they have a gift and know how to use it.

There is one particular parallel universe that is very close to ours and the veil between our two worlds is extremely thin. This other universe has a world that is almost an exact duplicate of our own Earth. In this other world, scientific progress has been slow. Magic here is not as rare as on Earth and the people readily accept its existence. There are even magical creatures like those out of the stories of British folklore.

Current Situation

The world in this parallel universe is experiencing a dark age. The area that would be Europe is filled with many small countries with feudal systems. These small countries fight one another over land and life. In what would be the Americas exist many native tribes mostly untouched by people from other lands. Nevertheless, here, too, many mythical beasts from

Native American folklore exist. All over this planet the cultures and societies exist as ours did 500 to 700 years ago. There are many differences, as magic has played a different role in the history of this world. Magicians, wizards, and sorcerers abound. Pixies, fairies, brownies, mermaids, unicorns, sasquatch, creatures of ancient lochs, goblins, dwarves, trolls, and other monsters roam this world. Some creatures and people with magical ability are able to open portals through the veil to either travel to another world, or to bring others to this one. This current time has made the veils to the other worlds the thinnest they have ever been. Travel to and from this world is extremely easy and portals may open of their own accord in areas that begin to overlap.

In this parallel universe, the adviser to the king of what in our world is the United Kingdom was released from his duties for plotting to seize power. Before he could be executed for treason he escaped. The adviser is a wizard of great power and he uses this power to wreak havoc upon the kingdom. He calls forth zombies and dragons and creatures from other parallel universes in order to lay the kingdom to waste. If he can't have the kingdom to rule for himself, then it will be destroyed.

Story Ideas

Give Me Shelter

While the Cast may think they are peculiarities in this world, the locals will be quick to quiet those thoughts. Working their way through this new world, the Cast discovers the best method to make their way home requires a working knowledge of the lands and magic. They must make contact with the king and seek his assistance to make their way home. Let's hope the king is a nice one, like in the good fairy tales.

Saving the Princess

While the king claims to know how to get the Cast Members home, he simply must have them help him with this tiny problem first. It seems his daughter has been kidnapped by an evil wizard, yes, *that* evil wizard. Until she's returned to him, the king simply isn't in the mood to help anyone with their problems. How

will the Cast survive the Beast Woods? Can they open the door that has no locks and enter the evil wizard's tower? Will the princess believe that the Cast is there to save her and not the monsters of a rival evil wizard?

Wrong Portal, Right Time

As the Cast Members are fighting off a horde of zombies, a portal from this fantasy world opens up into their home world. As they make their way for the portal, they realize that the zombies and creatures of this world will be able to follow the Cast Members through the portal before it closes. Do they stay in the fantasy world and hold off the zombies until the portal closes, or do they run through the portal and bring the zombies with them?

Thickening the Plot

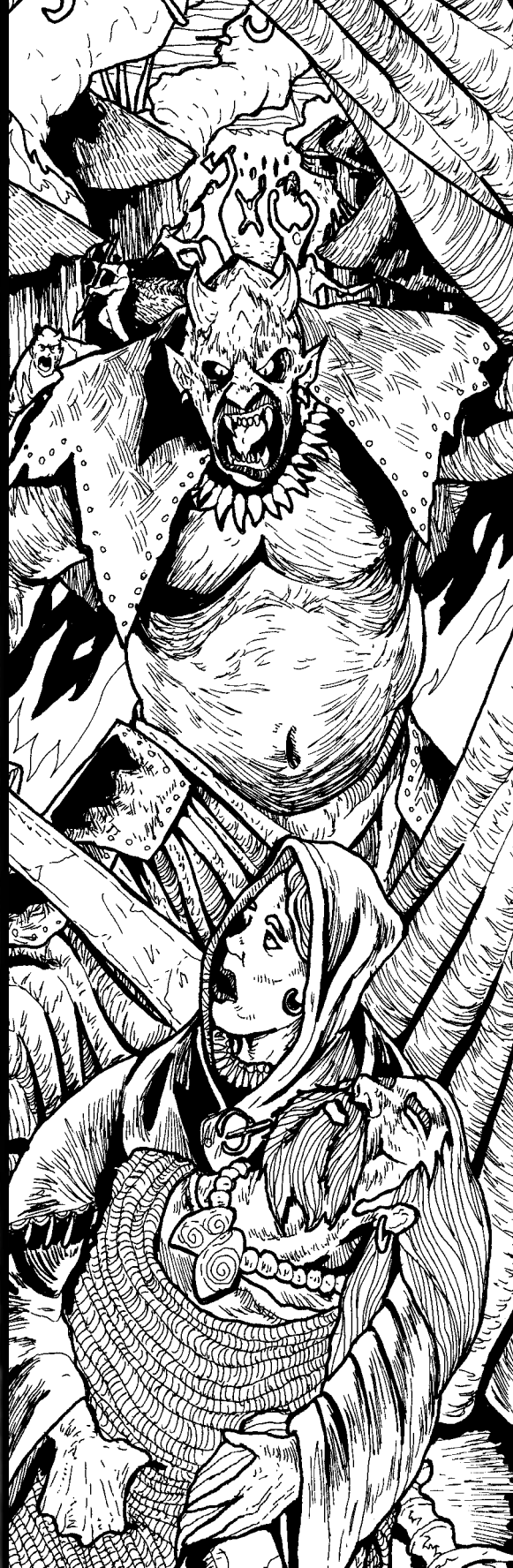
The evil wizard controls the portals, so he knows when and where they will open – and he has now turned his greedy eyes toward new territory. When the Cast Members come through, they see one of his agents sneak past and disappear through the portal, into the world they've left behind. The Cast's only hope is to work with king to stop the wizard in this realm before he can unleash his undead monsters on their own universe . . . but will they be too late?

Fantastical Creatures

What's a fantasy world without fantastical creatures?

Tiger

Strength 8	Constitution 6
Dexterity 6	Intelligence 2
Perception 6	Willpower 3
Life Points 57	Speed 27
Skills: Brawling 3, Dodge 2, Notice 3, Tracking 3	
Attack: Bite D6(3) x (Strength + 1), Claws D6(3) x Strength	





Evil Wizard

Strength 3

Dexterity 2

Perception 2

Life Points 36

Endurance Points 26

Constitution 2

Intelligence 3

Willpower 3

Speed 8

Essence Pool 40

Qualities / Drawbacks: Adversary (the King) -2, Covetous (Power) -3, Delusions of Grandeur -3, Gift, Hard to Kill 2, Increased Essence Pool 5, Medium with Magical Training, Obsession -2

Skills: Brawling 2, Cheating 2, Dodge 2, Hand Weapon (Dagger) 2, Hand Weapon (Short Sword) 2, Intimidation 2, Notice 1, Occult Knowledge 4, Rituals (Necromantic) 4

Metaphysics: Necromancy Skill 5, Death Speech 5, Death Lordship 4, Death Mastery 4, Elemental Air 2, Gateway 3, Spirit Mastery 2, Warding 3

Gear: Ancient, leather-bound book of spells, purple robe, wizened staff.

This character was created using magic rules from *Dungeons & Zombies* and *WitchCraft*.

Bookstore Clerk

Norm

Personality

I thought that life was hard enough being a full time student and working part time at the bookstore, but apparently the world as I know it isn't the same world that actually exists. Who would have thought that I would have been transported from the city to a medieval village on a mass transit bus? As if getting good grades wasn't hard enough, now I have to survive these undead puss bags and evil hell hounds, while finding some way of defeating the evil wizard in order to find a way home.

Quote

"This is so cliché"



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

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

Lps 26

Eps 26

Spd 8

Essence 14

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)

Attractive 1 (1)

Photographic Memory (2)

Skills

Computers 2

Craft (Sewing) 2

Dodge 1

First Aid 1

Hand Weapon (Fencing) 1

Humanities (World History) 2

Humanities (English Lit.) 2

Instruction 1

Language (Gaelic) 2

Myth and Legend (British Folklore) 2

Notice 2

Research/Investigation 2

Running (Dash) 1

Singing 2

Stealth 1

Storytelling 2

Survival (Urban) 2

Writing (Creative) 2

Gear

Backpack containing Books on Fairy Tales of the British Isles, CD Player, Cell Phone, Notebook, Pen, Package of Tissues

Priestly Warrior

Adept Hero

Str 3 **Dex** 2 **Con** 3
Int 3* **Per** 2 **Will** 3
Lps 37
Eps 32
Spd 10
Essence 21

Qualities/Drawbacks

Adversary (Demons and Undead) 5 (-5) *
Adversary (Evil Wizard) 3 (-3)
Addiction (Pipe Weed) (-1)
Attractiveness -1 (-1)
Essence Channeling 2 (10)
Gift (5)
Hard to Kill 1 (1)
Holy Order of the Light Priest (5)
Honorable -2 (-2)
Increased Essence 1
Inspired Invoker (3) *
Obligation (Find and Destroy Supernatural Evil) (-3) *
Psychic Invoker (3)
Recurring Nightmares (-1)

Skills

Craft (Jewelry Rune Carving) 2
Dodge 2
Hand Weapon (Sword) 3 *
Language (Latin) 3
Magic Bolt 2
Myth and Legend (British Isles) 3
*
Notice 2
Occult Knowledge 2 *
Rituals (Holy Order of Light) 2
Science (Alchemy) 2
Storytelling 2

Metaphysics

Metaphysics
Cleansing 2 (4)
Communion 1 (2)
Shielding 3 (6)
Soulfire 4 (8)

Gear

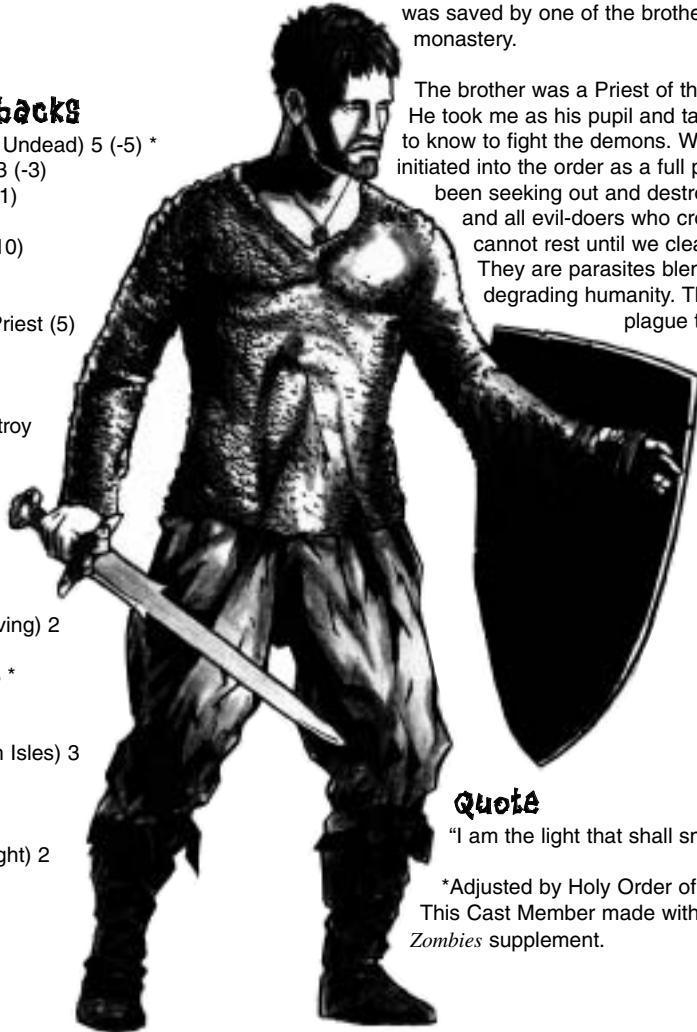
Backpack, Bedroll, Holy Symbol, Personal Journal of Occult Notes, Shield, Stale Bread, Sword

Personality

My parents sent me away to the monks to become a priest when I was just a boy. I was only twelve years old when the priests were slaughtered by demons. I was filled with rage and hatred. It nearly destroyed me. I vowed vengeance upon them. Before I completely lost my way, I was saved by one of the brothers in a near-by monastery.

The brother was a Priest of the Holy Order of Light. He took me as his pupil and taught me what I needed to know to fight the demons. When I turned thirty, I was initiated into the order as a full priest. Since then, I have been seeking out and destroying demons, undead, and all evil-doers who cross my path. My Order cannot rest until we cleanse this earth of them. They are parasites blemishing its beauty and degrading humanity. They are nightmares that plague the people and I am what the nightmares fear.

I bring them death!



Quote

"I am the light that shall smote the darkness!"

*Adjusted by Holy Order of Light Priest Quality
This Cast Member made with the *Dungeons & Zombies* supplement.



Immortality

by Mike Wallace

“Come on, Dave!” Phil huffed out as he kept up his sprint. “Respite is close!”

Phil wanted to make sure that Dave made it. Phil wanted the honor of beating Dave to death for botching up this venture. He was going to score big on this one until Dave decided not to pay attention. How could Dave miss seeing that detached fender lying in the road? Dave managed to keep the van in control and prevent it from rolling. The damage to the front wheels and tires kept the van from going anywhere with their trade goods.

Phil wasn’t sure if the noise of the accident attracted the zombies or if it was Phil cussing out Dave with every four-letter word he knew or could invent. Right now, that didn’t matter. What mattered was getting to Respite.

Phil saw the buildings. He grunted, “Yes!” He was going to make it. He saw the fief’s guards posted as he passed. He knew the guards would never mistake him for the dead. He moved too fast.

Once Phil was in Respite’s famous clearing, someone shouted “Down!” Phil dove for a relatively uncluttered area and went flat. When he regained his senses, Phil turned his head and looked up. Two men pointed rifles at him.

Phil smiled. “Thanks, guys - “ Phil stopped when the barrel of the rifle touched the back of his head. Damn! Had some jerk taken over this fief? Phil felt another barrel against his left side of his back.

With his rifle still resting on Phil, one of the armed men held out a mirror. “Try anything funny and we’ll pull the trigger.” The man placed the mirror in front of Phil’s mouth. “What’s your name?”

“Phil.” He took deep breaths hoping that was the right answer for them to hear.

“Okay, Phil,” the man said as he nodded. “My friend here is going to touch your neck. Do something hostile and it’s goodnight.” Phil felt someone touch his neck and apply pressure. The man withdrew his gun and extended his hand. “Sorry about that, Phil, just a safety precaution. You know how it is.”

Phil took the man's hand and stood up wondering what he meant. He looked back through the town. Dave was still hauling it to the clearing. Phil watched as a zombie lurched at Dave and subsequently be dropped by a gunshot.

"Damn it!" one of Phil's new friends exclaimed. "Looks like someone's aiming for the heart again."

Phil turned to question. The heart was the key. However, before he could say anything, the other hollered, "Legs!" Then he turned to Phil, "Make some room for your buddy."

"Down!"

Dave dropped just as instructed. The same scenario played out again.

"What's your name?"

"Dave."

The man jumped back and shot into Dave's chest.

"What the?" Phil shouted. "That was Dave! Didn't you see him running!?"

Dave's body was poked with a rifle. "So, Phil, how long had you been traveling with Dead Dave?"

History

Several theories abound why the dead are walking, but none have been conclusively tested and proven. No serious scientific thought has even gotten off the ground because of society's collapse. Every attempted rational mundane approach that can be tried has failed. So most rely on some sort of supernatural explanation. Some Christians feel that God has judged all that is going to be judged them. Others say that Satan is launching some weird attack or just doesn't want any more sinners. A few claim that an old adage is true: when there is no more room . . .

Whatever the situation, the dead are rising. Those that rely on the supernatural reasoning have tried exorcisms. Nevertheless, these have failed. Yet, these people are close to the truth and do not realize it. The spirits of the dead have indeed possessed dead bodies. For some reason, the afterlife is not available. Those dying have their spirits thrown back into the material world. The spirits then possess dead bodies and try to continue existing. Since the spirits are no longer

"supernatural," they cannot be expelled from the body, even by the spirit's choice.

The spirit resides in the heart (hence, the weak spot) and the body must have an intact heart for the spirit to possess it. Most survivors are aware of this situation. Hit the heart, drop the zombie, then burn it. What most survivors do not know is the importance of the heart. The heart holds a person's Essence. Zombies need the heart of the living to survive (hence the sustenance requirement). However, for every living human heart that a zombie eats, the zombie gains 1 Essence point. Game mechanic translation: every 15 points of Essence that the living victim has at the time of becoming lunch, 1 point goes to the zombie's Essence. Any Essence Points above 15 go towards the next, with each 15 Essence Points adding to the zombie's Essence Pool. The victim's spirit is consumed (or destroyed) when eaten, so it cannot come back to possess a dead body of its own.

When a zombie reaches a total Essence Pool of 15, the body is no longer "dead," but has the resemblance of life. The zombie does not lose any of the Essence by its nature of being a zombie, but still needs to feed normally to continue to exist. Just by surviving and meeting the nutritional requirements, a zombie can have quite a large Essence Pool. If the Essence Pool ever drops below 15 for whatever reason, the zombie loses the resemblance of life.

This resemblance only gives the cosmetic appearance that the zombie is alive. The face has color. The body moves naturally (if intact). The mind, or possessing spirit, can now work at higher functions besides basic survival skills (eating). The body, however, has no pulse, body heat, or ability it heal itself. Spirits are locked inside a body until the heart is destroyed. Then the spirit is free to possess another dead body.

Zombies who have acquired the resemblance of life and inhabit a like new body can "impersonate" a living person. Only the strange diet is likely to give them away. Some have taken over communities, or fiefs. Some have disclosed to the living about the situation of the afterlife.

Those that do talk, however, keep one thing secret. The living can benefit from eating the heart of a zom-

bie. Just like zombies, a living person who eats the heart of a zombie while the zombie is still active can raise their Essence Pool by 1 for every 15 Essence points the zombie had (also keep a running total). As per the *WitchCraft* and *Armageddon* rule on Essence Pools, the larger the Essence Pool, the slower the aging. At some point, immortality can be reached. Immortality is a prize for those who have no chance in the afterlife. Just like the victim's spirit, the consuming here also destroys the spirit, so the spirit exists no long to possess another dead body.

Current Situation

Society is toast. People were not really prepared to deal with the rising. Things just went crazy. Eventually, people figured out how to put the dead down for good (or at least force the spirit to withdraw from the body to search out another body) by striking at the heart. Most people then take the added precaution of cremating the body.

Despite having learned how to deal with the situation, society is just starting to recover. Communities of people have banded together. For lack of a better term, these communities have been called "fiefs." The term fief only describes that a group of people are working together to control an area. Basically after that, no two fiefs are the same.

The two major differences in fiefs are who controls them and the size of the area controlled. Some fiefs are run as a democracy with everyone having a say as to what happens to the community. Single individuals run other fiefs. Even then that individual could have come into power in different ways. Some just take up the leadership reigns and run with it because no one else wants to be in charge. Some are "appointed" by the other members in the fief much like a republic. Then there are a few who muscle their way into control. Don't stereotype here. A dictator does not have to be a tyrannical egomaniac; she may have the best interest of the fief in mind. However, a few dictators have been known to impose their weird beliefs on the fief. "Women are to be subservient to men" or "This is all a man's fault; we just allow a few men to survive to breed more females."

Controlling an area means being able to keep the dead out and being able to enforce the fief's rule on the living inhabitants. A fief can be as small as a fenced farmhouse with a handful of inhabitants. A fief can also be as large as a small town or a couple of city blocks within a metropolis. Establishing a fief usually starts with a conscious decision to settle and work together. The dead are slowly removed from the area and defensive measures are set up to keep out the dead. Then the living start muscling in on these established areas. Who remains in control usually depends on who has the strength. If the community is stronger, then someone entering has to decide whether to follow the fief's rules. If the stranger decides not to, the stranger still has to manage the fief's rules. The fief 'may say "too bad, so sorry, you stay." 'Alternatively, "meet our friend, Mr. Lead.'" Some may just allow the stranger to walk away. If the stranger is stronger, the fight begins for control. The stranger just may take the leadership position or just may slowly erode the area that the fief controls (much like gangs gaining and losing turf).

In between the fiefs roam "tribes." Like the term "fief," "tribes" describe a collection of people working together with no established home. Tribes can have different purposes. It might just be a displaced group of people from a fief (lost the war with a stranger and want to have no part of them). It might be a group of malicious bandits, cutthroats, or marauders who survive by moving and taking resources from fiefs or from whatever place they find. On the other hand, they can be traders moving from one fief to the fief providing services and/or goods.

Miracles and the Dead

In this Deadworld, Miracles do not work. Whoever grants these powers has turned his, her, its, or their backs on the world. Nice Zombie Masters may allow for Good and Bad Luck. Whether Invocations or Mentalism powers work is left to the Zombie Master's discretion. Be careful, as any power that can damage Essence is a potent weapon.

Story Ideas

As a potential setting for each of the following progressive story ideas, a fief, Respite, is summarized below. If a Zombie Master wishes, Respite can work in a larger city. Pick Respite's center and knock down the buildings around it.

Before the rising, Respite was the small farming town of Debroh, mostly centered at the intersection of two state highways. The business section of town consisted of a post office, a gas station with a convenience store and mechanic garage, a general store type merchant who sold mostly grocery items and hardware items, a mom and pop restaurant, and a veterinarian. The governmental side of the town had one building that housed town hall, the police station, and the public library. For its spiritual health, the town had two churches with their own accompanying cemeteries. The rest of the town consisted of residential homes.

After the rising, the surviving members of the community (about twenty) established Respite centering itself at the veterinarian's clinic (best place for medical supplies). Since most of the residents of Respite knew each other before the rising, they get along fairly well. Of course, they have their personal differences, which are basically attitudes members had prior to the rising. Nevertheless, these differences only survive in times of calm or in debate. Once a decision is reached on a course of action, the differences are buried so the fief can work together (though the next debate will see the differences rise again). The fief also bands together in front of strangers.

Respite does get its share of strangers. When it was Debroh, most traffic went through town on its way to another destination using one of the two state highways. The same remains true now that the town is called Respite. Travelers on their way to somewhere else end up coming upon Respite as they follow the state highway. Typically, Respite encourages trade for mechanical and medical items as it is fairly self sufficient with its food. Travelers, however, are encouraged to move along after a brief stay or after trading. The fief is called Respite (a temporary haven) after all.

Travelers are only allowed to settle if they meet the fief's needs. Either the traveler has a useful skill that the fief needs or the fief feels its ranks need repopulating. Respite consists of self-sufficient farmers who do not like strangers nosing in their business. At least, they know their neighbor and can predict how they will act, but a stranger is a wild card.

Due to the traffic that comes through Respite, the fief has taken a drastic defensive action. As stated, the fief is centered on veterinary office. The members have moved into the surrounding homes. In an effort to watch the highways, Respite is slowly clearing out the town. The growing ring of damaged property from the veterinary office marks Respite's area of control. Members enter a building, secure it from the dead, loot the premises, and then torch it. The land is then leveled as best as it can. By having this cleared area, Respite hopes to spot and deal with travelers, either living or dead, before the travelers get to their base of operations. As odd as it may seem, Respite has done this to the general store since it blocked the view of the highway. The debate goes on whether this should happen to the gas station.

Respite can be populated by anyone the Zombie Master wishes. Following is a brief description of the three factions within the fief of Respite: the Towners, the Cantons, and the Ackies. The Towners are those associated with Keith Towner. Before the rise, Towner was less of a farmer and more of a farm equipment salesman. The Cantons are associated with Will Canton. Before the rise, Canton was (and still is) a farmer in the area. Don't think Hatfields and McCoys with the Towners and Cantons. The two factions get along well on practical materials. However, they attended the two different churches in Debroh. So any time either feels that the other is stressing a violation of their religious upbringing, the personal differences come to play. The Ackies side with Rich Ackie, the vet. Ackie had dealt with both Towner and Canton before the rise, so he tends to be a moderator between the other two factions. The Towners and Cantons both respect what Ackie has to say. Ackie, however, never decides what the fief will do; such decisions are for the Towners and Canton to decide. He will provide advice.



Respite itself is as self reliant as an Amish community. Things the fief likes to trade for are propane (to help heat the properties) and standard mechanical parts (for farm equipment, cars, and such). Batteries are worth gold. Hooking up electricity is a dream for the fief. Unfortunately, the only natural power generator is wind. Respite does have a few diesel generators, but the fuel for them is saved for emergency purposes.

Meet the Dead Dead

This story revolves around dealing with the rising situation, taking out the dead, and establishing their own fief or coming across another fief like Respite.

The Cast Members are toolin' along one of the state highways that leads to Debroh or Respite. If the timing happens to be before the rising, a mundane reason should be required for the Cast Memebers to be on a route at least going through Debroh like going to a wedding or a concert. Traffic could start to back up on the highway as accidents happen. Other cars fly past the Cast Memebers as they try to get away. Zombies could cross the highway causing the Cast Memebers to swerve.

At this point, the Cast Memebers should have no inkling about the weak spot of the zombies. All they can hope to do is get it right eventually. As the Cast Memebers struggle to survive, they find themselves in Respite. They can meet the individuals before the founding of Respite and have a say as to how the fief develops. If so, what is described above is what the factions are arguing as to how things should be done.

If the Cast Memebers are along the state highway after the rising, several reasons exist for the Cast Memebers to be moving such as looking for somewhere to go, forced out of somewhere else, or just scrounging for the means to survive. Depending on how much knowledge the Zombie Master wants the Cast Memebers to have or the timing of the rising, they may or may not know the weak spot of the zombies. If they do not, Respite will probably inform them.

Here, the remaining citizens of Debroh have established Respite. Probably the only thing established is that everyone stays at the veterinary office. However, they may have already established the general policies of the fief. Runs are made to the surrounding houses and to the general store for provisions. The ideas of clearing out houses and leveling the general store are currently being debated.

Meet the Living Dead

This story centers on a zombie that has a resemblance of life adding one of the spins to this Deadworld after establishing the setting with something like "Meet the Dead Dead." Michael Swetton, a traveler, has come to Respite. Or, conniving Zombie Masters can make Swetton a part of the cast member's party if the Cast Memebers have yet to visit Respite.

Once he manages to get in Respite, Swetton makes himself a model citizen. He contributes where and however he can. Swetton should make Respite reconsider its policy of encouraging travelers, even "nice people" who have nowhere else to go, to move along.

Swetton will be careful to not let his true nature be known. First and foremost, he avoids injury and combat. Although Swetton has the resemblance of life, he is not alive. Therefore, any injuries he receives will not heal. So long as the body remains in intact and the body's heart is not damaged, Swetton continues to occupy this body and blends in.

Secondly, but tied with the first, Swetton will not seek any medical attention if injured. He knows that his condition will be found out as soon as someone starts treating him. He has no pulse, does not bleed, has no breath, eyes don't dilate, etc. "Something is definitely wrong with Swetton." If Swetton is injured in front of others, he will either say, "It was nothing; just a scratch" or "You think I got hit? Must be mistaken because I'm good to go."

Third, Swetton will avoid placing himself in a situation where the above-mentioned non-living traits will be discovered. For example, Swetton will not work too hard where he would sweat if he were truly alive. Under necessary circumstances of working around others, Swetton will "mop" his forehead with a rag and take frequent breaks. He will try to blame it on something that Ackie cannot treat (asthma, previously diagnosed with a small hole in his heart that physicians before the rising did not think merited surgery). In chiller climates, Swetton avoids trying to let others see that he has no "frosty breath." He never gets intimidated or involved with anyone. Lastly, Swetton avoids animals. They know what he is and he does not want their reaction to him to arouse the curiosity of the living.

The immediate problem for Swetton is fulfilling his need to feed. Slowly building on this can reveal how livestock is missing or found slaughtered. Most will guess that some traveler is looting and additional guards will be necessary. Swetton is hoping animal hearts will curb his hunger. Swetton has not figured out that this is not going to work, but eventually he will. In order not to blow his cover, he will start preying on travelers. At first, he will take them out before or after the travelers enter Respite. Eventually, he will not time this right or the hunger will get to him.

Or Swetton manages to keep cool, but no travelers show up for a while. Swetton is going to start feeding on the other members of the fief. Will the Cast Memebers figure this out before they are on the dinner menu next?

Zombie Masters can play Swetton in two different ways after he is exposed. Is he just a predator who played the part of a sweet boy to feast upon these human saps? Or is he a confused spirit who does not understand what he now is and cannot control himself when the craving hits? Care, however, should be considered when making any living dead sympathetic because the secret of the origins of the rising could be revealed. The Zombie Master needs to control the information regarding the rising to fit the story.

For example, a pleading Swetton may reveal that he had been shot in the abdomen. Funny, no one can remember seeing Swetton with his shirt off. He has vague recollections of floating only to return to his body. Once he returned to his body, all he wanted to do was eat and all he craved were hearts. After one such meal, the fog was lifted from his mind. He remembered who he was and what happened to him. Looking at his abdomen wound, it no longer bled. It did not hurt and it never healed. Yet, he still craved hearts.

That is the simple version. What if this is the body of Michael Swetton, but the spirit of Kate Hayes? Cast members could try to exorcize Hayes' spirit, but she will not go. She is no longer "supernatural" and she is locked inside Swetton's body until released from his heart. Might be fun confusing the Cast Memebers, huh? However, what if Hayes' remembers more than floating? She remembers the tunnel of

light. The tunnel could loop back to Swetton's body or she was released back into this material world as a spirit. Maybe a voice or a figure tells her the afterlife is not hers. The Cast Memembers can dismiss this as the standard death story. What if Hayes says she has gone through this experience several times?

Let's add more. What if the Cast Memembers previously dealt with Hayes? Hayes has a running grudge with the Cast Members and this results in an instant recurring villain in different bodies that the Cast Members have to deal with until they figure out how to put the spirit down for good. At each "death," the spirit's Essence total is reset to the basic amount. Therefore, a zombie would not remember the Cast Member until it managed to clear the "fog."

Once the secret of some zombies' resemblance to life is exposed, the paranoia can run wild. Can they trust anyone coming through Respite to be alive and not some zombie poser? The Cast Memembers will have to construct tests on travelers. Will the travelers believe the Cast Members when the travelers darn well know that zombies move slowly? Will friends have to go through the test after every zombie combat to make sure they are still alive? As if it was bad enough not knowing how the dead rose in the first place, but now the Cast Memembers have to figure out the circumstances that make a zombie life like.

Meet the Dead Living

This story centers on dealing with a human who has discovered the secret of zombie hearts. The campaign has grown for a while. Respite has experienced a few growing seasons. During a trade visit, Ackie spoke with a traveler. The traveler reported that zombie hearts can stop aging.

Ackie can either be intrigued by this or just simply snaps. At a fief meeting, Ackie suggests that they start studying the dead. The story he will give is that the traveler is trying to gain scientific knowledge about the zombies, why they rose, and how they can be stopped permanently. Ackie proposes that they start collecting scientific data to share with the traveler when he comes back this way.

The Members of Respite are not too keen on the idea. By now, as Ackie will point out, they know they

getting bitten by a zombie does not turn someone into a zombie. The deciding factor is dying itself whether from a zombie bite or a heart attack while sleeping. Ackie suggests that instead of living in fear, they should study the zombies and prevent the reanimation. If this can be prevented, something may be learned to stop them without putting the living at risk.

Since Ackie has about as much respect as one can get in Respite, the fief agrees. Instead of aiming for the heart, the fief aims to cripple the zombie – first the legs and then the arms. The zombie is then taken to Ackie's veterinarian office and secured inside one of the animal pens. Ackie then "conducts" his experiments on the zombie. Once the "experiment" on this zombie is concluded, Ackie devours the zombie's heart. Ackie will reach immortality once he has consumed enough zombie hearts. He does not know, however, that once this plateau is reached then he can stop. He might very well conclude that he must continue to eat the hearts for as long as he wishes to exist.

Of course, once the Cast Members discover Ackie's new strange habit, they are going to be stunned and shocked. After all, Achie has, for a long time, been a respected and stable member of the fief.

If the Zombie Master wishes, the time line of the story can be later into the rising. The Cast Members know all about the zombies weak spot and some zombies can impersonate the living. During their travels, they stumble into Respite. The people of Respite do not bother to aim for the heart. They take out the legs of the zombies. They take the legs out of the zombies to allow them to be studied. Then the Cast Members stumble upon the "sick" man that is Ackie.

The idea could be taken outside of Respite. Another fief is run by the stereotypical tyrannical egomaniac before. This dictator is making scavenging runs to other fiefs and kidnapping people. Surviving the zombie hoards is hard enough, the surrounding fiefs unite to assault the dictator's. The assault team discovers that the kidnapped relatives are not used as slaves, but as food for the "domesticated" zombies! The dictator is "fattening" up his zombies before he enjoys their hearts.



The Living Dead

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 2 **Intelligence** 2
Perception 2 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 8
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 15
Skills: Brawling 2
Attack: Bite 1D4 x 2 (4) slashing
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]
Getting Around: Life Like Plus [+5] (from *Pulp Zombies*)
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0]
Senses: Like the Living [+1], Life Sense [+2], Essence Sense [+2] (from *Zombie Master Screen*)
Need to Feed: Weekly [+4], Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Problem Solving [+15], Language [+1], Long Term Memory [+5]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
Special: Living Form [+5] (from *Atlas of the Walking Dead*)
Power: 47



The Dead Dead

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 1 **Intelligence** 0
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 2
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 8
Skills: Brawling 2
Attack: Bite 1D4 x 2 (4) slashing
Weak Spot: Heart [+7]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [+0]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [+0]
Senses: Like the Dead [+0], Life Sense [+2], Essence Sense [+2] (from *Zombie Master Screen*)
Need to Feed: Weekly [+4], Sweet Breads [-3]
Intelligence: Animal Cunning [+2]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
Power: 17

Respite Resident

Survivor

Personality

At one point in my life, I was called a country hick. Instead of getting a “modern” job, I decided to stick around the family homestead and pick up the family’s farming business. To keep the farming going, I got an associate’s degree in business administration. I once thought about going to college to study agriculture, but the rise prevented that.

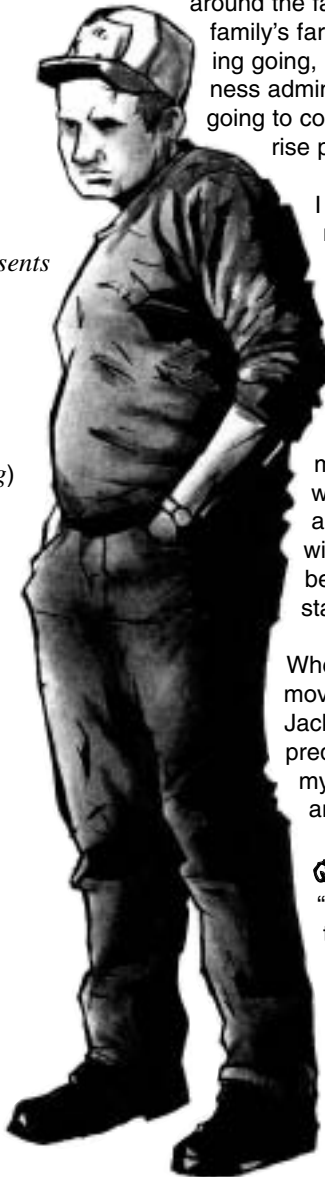
I still maybe a country hick, but nobody calls me that anymore. People used to take for granted the food on their plate. Now, they look to me to make sure they eat. I would have preferred to get my respect in another way.

We all struggle to survive and make do with what we have. And when we cannot make do, we hope a traveler has what we need and is willing to trade for it. Trading tends to be easier when your bargainer is starving and you have food to spare.

When the trading is done, you need to move along. I do not know you from Jack. And I am not about to let any predator – living or dead – get near my little girl. I’m not willing to take any chances on her safety.

Quote

“I can see that you’re moving, but the question is: are you still breathing?”



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

Int 3 **Per** 2 **Will** 4

LPS 53

EPS 38

Spd 14

Essence 20

Qualities/Drawbacks

Dependent (-2)

Hard to Kill 5 (5)

Highly Skilled 3 (3) (from *Eden Studios Presents vol. 2*)

Honorable (-1)

Jury Rigging (3) (from *One of the Living*)

Paranoid (-2)

Prejudice (Non-resident) (-1)

Situational Awareness (2)

Strong Stomach (2) (from *One of the Living*)

Skills

Agriculture 3

Brawling 2

Dodge 3

Drive (Car) 2

Drive (Farm Equipment) 2

First Aid 2

Guns (Rifle) 3

Haggling 2

Hand Weapon (Machete) 2

Humanities (Economics) 2

Mechanic 3

Notice 2

Repair (Electronics) 2

Ride (Horse) 2

Scavenging 2 (from *One of the Living*)

Stealth 2

Streetwise (Internal Politics) 2

Survival (Forest) 3

Gear

Farming Equipment, Rifle



Necropolis Ascendant

by Andrew Peregrine

The Tower

The tower dominated the city. It was the highest building that still stood – after the dead had returned and panic, rather than the restless, had left a trail of destruction. It sat there glaring at the remains of the city it ruled, its occupants seemingly happy to let their subjects on the streets run rampant with boredom and malaise.

Sarah hated turning her back on the tower; she felt its unseen eyes caress the hairs on the back of her neck every time she did. Unfortunately, to close the blinds of her shop she had to turn from the squatting giant. However, she reasoned that it was far better to feel a moment's discomfort than risk the gangs and night creatures, both living and dead, who might smash the windows and loot the place. Luckily, the streets were quiet again tonight; no one wanted to be out after dark. The city may be safe from the dead now, but there were plenty of desperate human monsters roaming after nightfall.

As she walked home, Sarah considered visiting the club. The music that blasted out of it into the cold night air was enticing, and she needed to just dance or drink for a while to lift her spirits. However, a larger than usual crowd of motorbikes outside suggested that the local gangs had the same needs and so she kept walking.

Only a block from her home she saw the figure coming towards her. He was stumbling and hurt, his long hair hanging over his face, lank and dishevelled. Her morality won a brief battle with her instinct to leave well alone, and she went to help him. He fell into her arms as she reached for him, his body in tatters. Blood covered his clothing and his skin was blackened and burnt. However, he was healing rapidly; his body was practically reforming around him as she watched. She didn't know what to do, so she just held him.

Then the trouble that was following him arrived, three figures in the black robes of apprentices. Green necromantic energy crackling across their fingers, the leader raised his arm to point at Sarah's charge. She

shouldn't have got involved; they'd kill her for helping a fugitive. She looked down at the man in her arms, and to her amazement she noticed he looked completely healed. She flinched from him; only the Resurrected could heal that quickly. But he looked up at her and smiled, then he glanced towards the approaching assailants.

"Thanks," he winked at her. "Now it looks like it's my turn to offer assistance."

The Dead Came Quietly

It was almost a year before people began to notice that the dead had come back. They came quietly at first, in forms so usual that few people noticed them. They kept away from the cities, hiding away in the countryside that saw few of the living and cared little about the dead. People ignored the shambling creatures, taking them for tramps and derelicts. They passed by without looking and threw them some change. The dead weren't particularly dangerous, not if you ran. They were slow creatures, whose wasted muscles lacked real strength.

But their numbers grew. The stories about the dead having come back to life, once only reported in supermarket tabloids, found their way into the more respected papers. It wasn't long before these stories became headlines, but by then it was too late.

The zombies were walking the streets, in vast numbers. They broke out of the earth, with every cemetery on the planet disgorging its dead. Panic crept across the globe, nowhere was safe from the returning dead. There was no way to negotiate with them, no intelligence to communicate with. Individually, the creatures were not so terrible, they could be escaped quite easily, but on mass was another thing entirely. The power of sheer numbers was enough to overcome anyone. All the dead wanted to do was follow their most basic primal instincts, to eat and procreate, although neither activity was any use to them. So, those unfortunate enough to fall to the mercies of the mindless dead suffered horrible atrocities before they died. The military were overwhelmed, few of the soldiers managed to stand their ground against such horror, and those that did were hopelessly outnumbered.

As humanity barricaded itself into the remaining cities, hope finally appeared. A cabal of Necromancers emerged and offered their services to the governments of the remaining human enclaves. They had been working on powerful magic since the zombies arrived, and they said they could create shields to stop them getting into the cities. Each of the Necromancers would choose a city to protect, and raise a barrier against the undead there. Humanity would be safe at last. Even though only a handful of cities could have such protection, this small hope was enough. The governments had no option but to agree, especially as the Necromancers asked for nothing in return. Their appearance was so welcome that no one stopped to wonder if there was a connection between the Necromancers and the armies of zombies wandering the earth.

Rise of the Necromancers

It is twenty years since the zombies arrived. Necromancers rule the world, each one having taken control of an entire city, under the pretence of protecting it. They use their sorcery to guard the cities from the armies of walking dead that roam the wilderness between. Only the cities are safe for the remaining people to live out their lives, in a world so bleak of hope that most wonder why they are bothering at all.

A powerful malaise affects everyone and everything in this world. Nihilism is almost tangible in the air; it seeps into everything and everybody. Nobody seems to care about anything much anymore and most people pass their time in clubs doing drugs. The search for entertainment and feeling drives many people to very nasty pursuits. A few people keep working, running shops, and making crafts. However, there is very little need as the Necromancers manage to provide food for everyone. So, with time on their hands the denizens of the cities spend their days smashed on drugs and alcohol or burning around the streets in gangs. Anarchistic youth culture prevails, as the death energy allows few people to live very long. The older members of society fell to malaise and quietly died a long time ago, leaving the younger ones to live fast and die from violence and drugs.

Unfortunately, the free food isn't great, as the Necromancers have it grown in labs and tanks using a few zombies to maintain it (and on occasion form the basis of it!). So, if you want to live well, you have to find another way to earn a better living. Needless to say, the Necromancers eat well, and they are happy to share this bounty with those who keep their city running the way they want it run. Running a shop doesn't cut it; the real money is in doing jobs for the Necromancers or taking what you want from others. Sometimes you can do both at the same time. Most Necromancers use the underworld to do business, and those who own and run the various nightclubs are often the retailers in the Necromancer's business dealings. If the people are given drugs and whatever pleasure they desire, they tend to make less trouble. So the clubs offer all manner of sexual pursuit to a steady beat of class A drugs and dark, gothic music.

The reason for this malaise is the amount of death energy the Necromancers have brought into the world. It was the Necromancers who started the whole thing, slowly and carefully, knowing that no one would take any notice until it was too late. Their initial goal was to bring more death energy into the world, and to do this they needed to bring back the dead. Necromantic energy is anathema to this world, the only way to keep it here is to lock it into a physical form and bind it here, hence the Necromancer's need to create masses of zombies. The first undead did an excellent job of causing panic and getting a large amount of raw energy into the world. However, the pitiful creatures are very little use to anyone except for the labouring work the Necromancers put them to. They are called *Empty Ones* and can often be found in small numbers in cities. The barriers keep most out, but a few manage to wander in. Most people know to avoid them, but they often consume those who wish to die.

While the Necromancers were very successful at raising zombies, the death energy harnessed by creating the creatures is not very pure or useful. However, with an army of zombies on the loose, the amount of death energy in the world has risen dramatically, allowing the Necromancers to gain the power they need for better and purer forms of soul binding. The Necromancers didn't stop at raising a few shambling

dead. To progress in their plan they needed to understand how to bring back a body as if it was alive, the results of their Necromantic fumbling are called *Harbingers*. Harbingers have an array of different abilities and are often found in control of packs of Empty Ones. Around 80% of the zombies in the world are little more than Empty Ones, but the remaining 20% are Harbingers. While the barrier keeps most Harbingers outside, it is not unknown for a few to break through now and again.

The empty mindless dead are not the only dead to return. As the death energy increased, and the Necromancers refined their processes, other types of souls began to return. The Necromancers' ultimate goal is to return the population of the world as they are, but dead. If they could achieve this, their power would be unassailable, and the amount of death energy in the world would be pure and vast. However, to bring back a soul to a complete body is currently beyond their power. Nevertheless they have come close with a few of their experiments. With the success of the Empty Ones and later on the Harbingers, they mastered the secrets of bringing back the body. However, returning a soul intact to these bodies proved much harder. So far, they have attempted three experiments to bring back the living dead with a soul. These living bodies with broken souls are called *Resurrected*.

The first of these experiments did not go well. Overconfident, they tried to bring back the dead all at once. The sorcery was laid to allow the bodies to return by rebuilding themselves with soul essence. That went well, and so they called on hundreds of thousands of souls to return and resurrect their bodies. Unfortunately, the souls all answered the call at once, causing them to smash together as they tried to return to the world. The Necromancers had created a monstrous soul meat grinder, and thousands of souls were shredded and smashed before they stopped. The fragments of soulstuff rained down on the world like sand and dust. The Necromancers thought they had failed, but the bodies lived, so the spell had worked in a fashion. Those who came back had a soul, but it was made from thousands of fragments. Each one was incomplete, but linked to all the others, sharing a form of hive mind. The results were referred to as the *Chorus*.



The next time they tried, the Necromancers were a little more careful. Unfortunately, they were too careful. They tried to edit out all but the most essential elements from the souls they were calling on. This created another type of Resurrected, one that had their own soul and a complete body, but lacked any memory of who they were. The *non-essential elements* that had been removed caused the newly risen to forget who they were. While most can remember the skills they possessed in life, they cannot remember how they learnt them or who taught them. These *Tabula Rasa* only desire to remember who they were, and they search earnestly for any clues to their identity. They can become quite upset when people point out flaws in the backgrounds they try and construct for themselves. Often, they will decide that strangers are friends they knew, and that the name they have chosen is their real name, because the alternative leaves them with nothing.

The most recent of the Necromancers experiments brought the *Ravagers*. They returned to life with their physical and spiritual essence intact and a remarkable resistance to damage. Unfortunately the reason for this is that they return with their body and soul bound to a single purpose and focussed by a powerful emotion. The Necromancers realised that some souls pass on with something important left undone, and these souls are actually trying to return, which makes them much easier to bring back. However, each Ravager is focussed on one particular emotion, such as anger or revenge and it dominates their every action. When they discovered this, the Necromancers gave up on Ravagers, as they proved far too uncontrollable. There was another problem as well. As the Necromancers were responsible for a lot of death and despair in the world, many Ravagers were focused on unfinished business that set them against their creators. That just meant trouble for everyone – as the many agents of the Necromancers try to kill Ravagers on sight.

Today, the Necromancers' power is absolute, but now that they have what they want, they are beginning to work against each other. They all agreed that a grand plan to bring more death energy into the world would help them all. So, they all colluded to bring back an army of the dead. However, they all had different plans for what to do with that energy once they had it. So, locked away in their own city-states they are each working to see their own dreams come to fruition. While at the moment, each of the Necromancers is quietly retreating into their city to

fortify and experiment, very soon one of them will make a move. Then war will begin again, and not even the dead will be safe.

Story Ideas

Too Many Dead

Although the city is protected from zombie attack, it is not entirely safe. Every now and again, holes open in the protection and if the zombies find them, things go badly. One such hole has opened near the Cast's hang out, and the zombies are coming in. If they protect themselves from the initial attack, they will need to tell the Necromancer what has happened. However, the Necromancer isn't interested, as he tells the characters that the barrier has no holes, and he will be upset if they start telling other people that it does. So, the Cast Members must not only defend their homes, but they

mustn't tell anyone they are doing so! However if things get too out of hand, the Necromancer sends a gang to make sure the zombies don't get out of control. They have an amulet that will seal the breach, but won't tell the characters what they are doing. When it is all over, will the gang just leave, or are they there to keep the characters silent forever?

Death's Grip

There is a new gang in town, and their power is rising. An outcast apprentice whose power lends itself well to this purpose is leading them. While this apprentice has nowhere near the power of a full Necromancer, his magic gives his gang an extra edge. The Cast Members would have no problem with this, except the new gang is very aggressive and are muscling in on their territory. Cast Members who own shops are told to pay protection and local clubs will refuse entry to anyone who isn't in with the new gang. Very few people want to go against the gang, but not because of the apprentice's power. Many believe that he is working for the Necromancer in some scheme, making him untouchable. Can the Cast Members destroy the gang without anyone knowing what they've done?

Country Living

Having possibly proved their worth in past exploits, the Cast Members are asked by the Necromancer to go outside the city for him and collect a sample of soil from a burial ground several miles away. Outside the city, the land is full of roaming Empty Ones and Harbingers, possibly even much worse. The players will be given a truck to get them there, but not very much petrol, so they had better go direct. The burial ground is easy to find, but it is a powerful source of death energy, and is claimed by a rather clever Harbinger. While on the burial ground, he has the intelligence of a human and power over several Empty Ones. He is the reason the Necromancer wants soil from his territory, as he hopes to use its power in his own experiments. It is also possible that holding the soil may grant power over the Harbinger. Finally, if that wasn't bad enough, another Necromancer has an interest in the burial ground. In fact, the whole thing is one of his experiments, and he will not take kindly to the agents of a rival power trying to muscle in.

Necromancers and Gifted

While the Necromancers themselves are too powerful to use as player characters, there are plenty of other Gifted available. Most Necromancers have apprentices, who they use for the tedious tasks in their experiments. Necromancers also often destroy them before they acquire real power. Players should feel free to use the rules for Necromancy in Dungeons & Zombies, Armageddon, or Witchcraft. The Necromancers themselves have all these abilities, and more besides. It is also possible to use other forms of Gifted as Cast Members. The death energy has allowed more magic in the world, even if it is a dark and terrible form of power. Powers such as Taint and Disciplines of the Flesh from The Abomination Codex are also quite suitable, as are the powers of prophecy. Most Necromancers surround themselves with the few talented Gifted they can find, as they make useful allies. They do their best to destroy these who do not follow them; as such enemies hold the only key to ending their reign of darkness.

Empty Ones

Strength 1 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 1 **Intelligence** -2
Perception 1 **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 26 **Speed** 2
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 6
Attack: Bite D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: All [0]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0]
Strength: Ninety-pound Weakling [-3]
Senses: Like the Dead [0]
Sustenance: Who Needs Food? [+8], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]
 However, some that work for the Necromancers can have Tool Use up to level 3.
Spreading the Love: Special. These zombies can't spread the love; only the Necromancers can create more. However, the amount to death energy in the world is bringing the dead (even the previously smashed up dead) back to life each day.
Power: 5

Zombies and their Masters

Empty Ones

Empty Ones are animated corpses, wanting only to do the most basic things of life, eat, reproduce, and sleep. They are mindless and avoidable, but they are everywhere. They are mostly unable to enter the cities, and cause very little trouble, as they are weak and easily avoided. However, there are plenty of people so zoned out by the weight of death energy they will let the Empty Ones consume them and do nothing. The Necromancers have taken control of a few who work at producing food and running machinery.

Harbingers

Harbingers are advanced zombies, each one unique and strange. They are significantly more dangerous than regular zombies, because they look just the same as an Empty one and are vastly underestimated. Like Empty Ones, they still have the

same primal desires. Their Sustenance and Spreading the Love Aspects are the same as Empty Ones, but their other abilities can be vastly different. You never know what you are going to get. Some are just a bit faster or smarter, but others have the power to control other Empty Ones, regenerate damage, and crush cars. Their stats are the same as those of Empty Ones, but the Zombie Master is free to add as many additional features as they like. The only limitation is that it is very rare to find two Harbingers who have the same abilities. They are aberrations and mutations and as such, are quite a varied lot.

The Resurrected

Three types of Resurrected are available as potential Cast Members. When building such a Cast Member, begin with a standard set of points for Norm or Survivor. You must buy the Resurrected Quality and the rest is up to you. The Zombie Master may veto certain Qualities and Drawbacks for a Resurrected Cast Member. When the Cast Member died, your old friends and enemies may consider things settled, the character's resources may already have been divided out. However, most Resurrected are quite newly dead and so such traits can still be appropriate.

New Quality – Resurrected

The character has returned from the dead as a Chorus, Tabula Rasa, or Ravager, the cost of the quality being defined by which type of Resurrected chosen. The Zombie Master may allow a new form of Resurrected, but such a type will be rare, new and of great interest to the Necromancers. All Resurrected have certain traits in common, which are noted here. However, in addition they also have their own specific traits noted in their descriptions.

The Resurrected seem to be alive like any other not-dead guy. However their skin is not warm to the touch (but not cold like the dead either) like a normal human and their hearts do not beat. They all take damage in the same way as a human being, but normal healing does them little good. Instead they regenerate one Life Point every 5 hours until healed, any limbs they lose will reattach, but at the cost of 10 temporary Essence Points. If they are reduced to zero

Life Points, they lose 5 Essence Points permanently, and then regenerate. Once their Essence is reduced to zero they stay dead. The only way to kill them outright is to decapitate them or destroy their brain, but the rules about regenerating from dead still apply. On the down side, no Resurrected may ever have any Necromantic or Inspired abilities. It takes all their Essence to hold together, there isn't any spare for anything else. Those Inspired who die tend to escape this dimension to their reward in heaven and do not return as undead.

The Chorus (10pts)

A Chorus has all the standard abilities of the Resurrected, but also shares a hive mind with all the others. He can shift his perceptions to that of any other Chorus he has formed a link with, allowing him to see with their eyes or hear what they hear. To create the link he must be in physical contact with the other Chorus for a moment, allowing him to focus on that one Chorus in the mass of other voices. To keep the link active, he must spend 1 Essence point every 10 minutes, and he can break the link at any time by refusing to spend the Essence. While linked, the Chorus both have an empathic link, allowing them to feel each other's emotions and also send telepathic messages at a cost of 3 Essence per message. On the down side, a Chorus is incomplete; they are made up of fragments of hundreds of personalities. Many pick out a name, but few have any idea of who they are. When assigning Skill points, they must all be placed randomly over the 65 Skills available, either by the Zombie Master or by rolling a dice (or some other random method) for each Skill point. However, once generated the Chorus Cast Member gains and spends Experience Points as usual. Chorus are also at the mercy of the hive, and may feel any extreme emotion felt by any other Chorus nearby. This means they are prone to wild mood swings and very odd behaviour.

The Tabula Rasa (5pts)

A Tabula Rasa has all the standard abilities of the Resurrected, but cannot begin the game with any Skills above 2. However, they need not spend all their Skill points at character creation. They can save up to half of the points to assign during the game. Sometimes, some experience will remind

them of Skills they didn't realise they had, or desperation makes them try something they think they are unable to do. At such times the player may spend these unspent Skill points on a single Skill, but no more than 3 at any one time. Once spent, these points remain assigned to the Skill in question. However, each time the player does this, he must discard one of the remaining unspent Skill points. If after spending the points he has no unspent Skill points, then the Skill points that were just spent will fade from the character's memory at a rate of one point per hour.

The Ravagers (15pts)

Ravagers are just like any other Resurrected, but they are much more resistant to damage. They regenerate at the startling rate of 3 Life Points per round, and it costs them only 1 Essence Point to return from the dead. However, their entire being is focussed on some form of quest. It may be revenge on those who killed a loved one, or to bring certain villains to justice. They are only interested in fulfilling that quest, but they are usually sane enough to realise that such things may take time and require assistance. However, for all their power they are only here to complete their mission. When they believe they have finished what they returned to do they begin to lose Essence Points and Life Points at a rate of 1 every 10 minutes. If they discover they actually haven't finished what they returned to complete these points do not regenerate, but the loss stops instantly. When they have lost all of their Essence Points and Life Points they pass beyond to their final rest.



Panacea

by John Karakash

Panacea

The moaning starts almost immediately.

From the newly created zombies, that is. The Docs (an ironic name if there ever was one) say it's a misfired autonomic reaction. To me, it's always sounded like someone in agonizing, eternal pain after all hope was gone.

They warned me that imagination was a handicap in this career.

Two decades ago, when I was studying to become a doctor (that is, someone who heals living people), I wouldn't have had this problem. However, ten years of medical school and Panacea left me with no marketable skills other than a certain deftness with a needle and a knowledge of anatomy.

The twitching zombie, of course, tried to break its restraints and kill everyone in the lab. Another "misfired autonomic reaction," they say. It's always seemed pretty damned specific to be an accident, but what do I know? I'm just a seamstress with an MD. Unlike the patients I used to sew up, there was no anesthesia for this joker. Until I had him in one piece, I couldn't place the Web.

This salvage job was actually pretty complete and I only had to borrow a few parts from the bins. A few deft cuts on the mangled leg and I had a clean stump. With a care born of fear and, perhaps, a few remaining shreds of pride, I carefully picked out a twitching left foot and sewed it on. Unlike most of my "colleagues," I took the time to connect all the tendons and had even managed to pick out a replacement that was almost the right size.

That done, I slapped a Spider on the head of the zombie (fast movements mean less time for fingers to be bitten off) and watched the green Web spread across its skin. Once the field was established, the Spider burrowed into the skull and suddenly the thrashing ceased. I gave it a few seconds and punched the All Clear button to ship the body to packaging and bring in a new one.

Even in an efficient operation like Recycling Inc., it takes a few seconds to swap a few hundred pounds of reanimated flesh and, though I always try to avoid it, I looked around at my operating room. Bits of reeking flesh littered the place and various bodily fluids coated nearly every surface. Years of filth. . . I

long ago gave up trying to clean after my shift since no one else bothered. Panacea is great stuff, you must admit. In addition to giving everyone perfect health, it made minor things like cleanliness a matter of habit and preference rather than a necessity.

Of course, you become a zombie when you die, but why should perfect health and vigor be reserved for the living?

History

Panacea seemed well suited to its grandiose name: a perfect combination of nanotechnology and adaptive genetics that would produce perfect, unfailing health for a very long time. Once your body wore out, you'd die painlessly and peacefully. What the oh-so-careful researchers did not realize, however, is that anyone invigorated with Panacea who died unexpectedly while relatively young (such as in a sudden accident or from an aneurysm) would still be functional after the brain was dead and the personality gone. The newly dead tend to go on murderous rampages, which cascade into even more zombies being created. Most of these outbreaks have been contained, but several cities have been lost to such accidents.

Despite the "side effects," few nations discontinued the use of Panacea. No one wanted to go back to a time of disease and malformed bodies. Besides, most of the old medical infrastructure was long gone. Several enclaves of untreated people exist (mostly those who had objected to Panacea for religious reasons), but approximately 99% of the population has undergone the procedure. In addition, all children born to mothers who have been treated inherit the treatment.

Disposing of zombies became an increasingly difficult problem until Recycling Inc. came up with a novel solution: use an advanced device (the Spider) to reprogram and control the zombies. That way, the dead would be an asset rather than a liability. While wealthy nations mostly turned up their noses at the idea, poorer ones jumped at the chance to turn a problem into a convenient export. These days, if you don't have zombie insurance to cover proper disposal or your estate comes up short, the authorities will sell your body like any other asset.

Current Situation

"Remanufactured Bodies" (which Recycling Inc. prefers to the vulgar term "zombies") are used in all repetitive work industries that require more flexibility than a machine or have been taken over from living workers since zombies can use the same tools. It's unlikely to go an entire day without seeing at least one zombie and nearly impossible to do anything that hasn't been affected by Panacea. Remanufactured Body Work Associates (Docs for short) piece together zombies for Recycling Inc. and its smaller competitors for industry and entertainment.

While any creature's body could, theoretically, be used, there are only three types of Panacea available: rat, human, and chimpanzee. So, while a zombie elephant might be useful for manual labor, no one has accomplished that trick. It's not unusual, however, to see third-hand, damaged zombies used to plow fields in undeveloped rural countries as a substitute for horses or oxen.

The downside to Panacea, other than the murderous zombie rampages, is that a cure-all disguises any number of social ills. Spouse abusers and child beaters can get away with a lot when all physical evidence of their temper is gone after a day or two. Also, standards of cleanliness and hygiene have taken a profound nosedive in all but the pickiest of communities. The lack of STDs has unleashed a wave of latent hedonism across the world. Superficial relationships predominate and marriage is at an all-time low.

There is now a distinct distrust between people, even for their closest loved ones. When the person next to you can have a sudden heart attack, people tend to stay apart. Most sleep alone, live alone, and even work alone if at all possible. Very large crowds have become anathema to the modern person after the Times Square Massacre and the final Superbowl game. There are few Good Samaritans willing to help an injured person when that person might jump up and rip their head off. Either Panacea will help them. . . or it won't. Ambulances are armored vehicles instead of places of care. Survivors are released and the dead are taken to the nearest recycling center.

On the flip side, this has also produced a certain amount of recklessness, especially in the young. Fast healing, no disease, and immunity to the deleterious effects of most drugs makes for a dangerously edgy youth culture. Kids taking massive doses of drugs still over-dose on occasion and go on rampages. Drag racing, extreme sports, “fight clubs,” and the like are all on the rise.

Cops take a “shoot first” attitude to anyone acting strangely who doesn’t quickly tell them that they are still among the living. The courts have consistently ruled on the side of officers since the potential for a bloody rampage is so high. Criminals using weapons, however, are punished severely and death plus hard labor is a common sentence for anyone committing murder especially if a zombie is created.

Panacea has been a boon for terrorist organizations everywhere. A single martyr, if lucky, can cascade his sacrifice into hundreds or thousands of deaths. Indeed, a coordinated strike could take out an entire city before authorities could react. Nukes are not an option since people who die from radiation sickness will become zombies in turn.

Story Ideas

Lab Rat

Despite protests to the contrary, there’s a persistent rumor that a Panacea enhanced female rat escaped from a Russian lab. The facility was on an island in one of the old Soviet Union’s inland seas, but so much water was diverted for agriculture that the island has joined the mainland. The other rumor is that they had discovered a variant of Panacea that could be passed between mammalian species. Possible encounters include dead Soviet military types, scientists, and any number of animals.

Somebody’s Knocking

Because most people prefer to live alone, very small, very cheap apartments are on the rise for those who can’t afford to buy a house. There comes a point, however, where you squeeze people close enough that it is like several hundred people living together rather than everyone living by themselves. Remember that cheaply made doors are little barrier

to a strong zombie. People who die alone with few friends are sometimes only discovered when the Health Department checks up on the strange smells. That’s your job.

Mandatory Recycling

A few entrepreneurs have decided to start recycling people before they’re technically dead. This gives them a body in superb condition and a nice bonus (this requires a black market recycling Spider as the normal sort won’t Web a living person.) Unfortunately, this can produce a rare intelligent – and malevolent – zombie. They look just like normal zombie workers but are capable of planning the demise of as many people as possible. Most of these zombies are about half as intelligent as they were while alive, but there are exceptions.

Domestic Zombies

Some jihadists picked a place that has a relatively dense population of people (school, mall, airport, orchestrated traffic jam) and have shot or poisoned enough people to cause a zombie rampage. The locations of the initial infestations are chosen to make an easy exit next to impossible. Guess you shouldn’t have taken that short cut to work today, eh?

Zombies Abroad

The worldwide community has gotten serious with terrorist nations and commando raids on terrorist camps are commonly sanctioned. The Cast Members are part of an elite unit designed to destroy these pockets (whether in the Middle East or Belfast). Possible complications include hostages, huge stockpiles of conventional weapons, or aerosol poisons that can turn a lot of your comrades into enemies, *en masse*.

Heartbeat

A new type of jewelry is all the rage: heartbeat monitors. Usually affixed someplace that one can’t lose it – such as a collar or even implanted into the forehead – these monitors will sound an alarm if the wearer’s heartbeat becomes irregular and a piercing alarm if it stops altogether. Of course, an unscrupulous company might accidentally produce monitors that malfunction, either going off at the wrong time or

failing to go off at the right time. An intelligent zombie or terrorist might infiltrate a factory to do so on purpose. . .

Brain Juice

New types of drugs are being developed for those desperate to get high or simply jaded by the old drugs. The latest has to be injected directly into the brain but produces a long lasting high with few side effects. The downside is that the chances of accidentally killing someone when you are injecting fluids directly into their brain are a magnitude higher than any other risky drug use. In addition, it's quite possible for someone to die while on the drug even if they initially survived the injection.

Haven

A recently sparked zombie rampage sends the survivors running to a local religious community (pick one that you like the best) that is somewhat remote and doesn't believe in Panacea. This can range from a "you all are damned" Christian sect, to a quiet Amish community. Several new cults have sprung up around either the use or the rejection of Panacea. There might even be ultra-expensive gated communities for those who fear the cure-all. People asking for shelter might be welcomed or met with more hostility than shown by the zombies!

Panacea's End

A researcher has developed a disease or treatment that disables Panacea. Shortly after announcing his discovery, he vanished suddenly. What was the cause of his disappearance and was he correct in his stated findings? Anybody from religious fanatics to corporations to government agencies can be involved in either trying to find or kill the scientist. On the other hand, the Cast Members may be assigned as bodyguards just before it all hits the fan.

New Quality

Panacea Treatment

0 Point Quality, setting specific

Anyone under Panacea is immune to all diseases and will take only half damage from toxins that do more than 5 points of damage and nothing from those that do less than 5. It takes 4-10 times as much of a drug to get high and the highs are usually brief (though the downside is likewise brief.) The chances of an over-dose are doubled to account for the problems in getting a proper dose. It's nearly impossible get and stay drunk without consuming at least a bottle of high-proof liquor approximately every half hour.

In addition, people regenerate at four times the normal rate even without medical care. The most first aid someone might need is to have a bone set. Keep in mind that if limbs are hacked off, they won't come back. People with missing limbs or eyes are *very* careful to always use their prosthetics lest an over-zealous police officer shoot them as a zombie.

Since almost everybody has the treatment, this Quality does not cost any points. Those without it receive a Minority (– 4 Point) Drawback.



Immortal Legacy

by Daniel Proctor

Two years ago, the streets pulsed from thousands of people milling about, staring at bright signs and buying the newest gadgets. Oh, they're still out there. Those thousands are ever growing. These days that hum of activity, that synchronous moan, doesn't represent lust for the latest stylish product. Those people still want to consume, but now they want to consume warm flesh.

Some of us don't think they're human anymore, but I think of them as concentrated humanity. The virus remade them, distilled them. The essence of humanity resides within them, in all its ugliness. All they want to do is consume and destroy. It isn't any different in death than it was in life.

When the human dead began to walk, when they began to feast on the living, it was the beginning of the end for humanity and the start of a new future for my kind.

I'm a simulacra. My father is a computer and mother is a tank filled with nutrient jelly. I was born to serve the human masters, until their own ambition destroyed them. When there are no more

humans, there will be no more human dead. Someday, when the last of the dead, the last of the selfish, ever-destroying human taint is removed from Earth and the worlds above, the simulacrum will rebuild what the humans destroyed. After all, that's the way it's always been. It's the way of nature. We'll inherit what our creators left behind, but it will be *our* legacy that carries on.

Before the Dead Rise

It is the early 22nd century. Earth is overcrowded and the ecosystem is a disaster. Although the planet is not terribly polluted due to efforts by governments to clean up pollution, human expansion and destruction of natural habitat has had disastrous effects on most areas of the world. Large mammals exist only in gene banks or as a novelty in specially enclosed breeding colonies. Most areas of land designated as "nature reserves" are glorified parks in which nearly all of the plant and animal life has been propagated. In addition, little land in developed countries goes unused. Those areas largely inhabited by weeds and feral domesticates are considered "wild."

In developed countries, the world's population is largely concentrated into sprawling cities, with most people living in immense apartment buildings. Individual homes are virtually unheard of. The narrow streets of the cities are always in shade due to the endless spires of buildings, and the skies are bustling with aircars. Like great monuments to humanity, cities are lit up with every color imaginable. Lights, video screens, and holographic projections make advertisements impossible to miss. This is a world where technology, flash, and consumerism are household values, but traditional households are no longer the majority.

The traditional family is now a quaint, old-fashioned entity. Although plenty of them still exist, single parent, same-sex, and group marriage families are growing in popularity. Sometimes the rich and lonely purchase custom designer simulacrum to create a family. Concepts of social union are only now beginning to catch up to reproductive technology. Cloning is only the tip of the iceberg. Artificial wombs have allowed people to reproduce and never have to carry a child to term. A couple of the same sex can have a child who biologically carries traits from both parents. So called "designer babies" are now so common place that only poor or backward parents do not opt to choose their infants' features or screen for certain diseases and undesirable genes. Couples are not limited to choosing from their own genes; if they do not have the genes for the characteristics they want, gene banks can provide them.

Life and death have new implications in the early 22nd century. Cloning, accelerated-growth artificial wombs, and digital brain recordings (DBRs) have made death a temporary, if inconvenient, situation for some. Wealthy people regularly have their brains "recorded" so that upon their deaths their most recent set of memories can be placed in a quickly grown, fully adult clone. Valuable corporate employees often have a "resurrection" benefit as part of their employment contract. Global agreements have led to laws that forbid the simultaneous existence of duplicates, but people are free to have cloned children as long as they are allowed to develop their own life experiences.

Another technological development that has affected early 22nd century society is suspended animation. It has led to a revolution in healthcare. It became realistic to suspend victims of severe trauma or incurable ailments via cryogenics for later healing. Most space travelers rest in suspended animation between destinations due to long travel times and as a means of reducing supply needs during voyages.

The USA, Japan, China, Canada, and nearly all countries in Europe have become willing hosts to corporate pseudo-states. Government largely functions as a mediator for corporations, and seldom becomes involved directly in corporate affairs. Many larger corporations now maintain their own military forces, and even smaller corporations often employ some kind of tactical force in varying size. Corporations, and the politics between them, dominate current global society. Although the governments are not wholly "puppet governments," for the most part they turn a blind eye towards all but the most blatant corporate abuses. Even then, if the government harasses a corporation it is usually because some government official did not get his pocket greased well enough. Since corporations have varying dealings and modes of operation in various countries, the most common direct intergovernmental conflicts occur as a result of clashing interests between different corporations of high influence in their respective governments. Furthermore, corporations have a high degree of policing power within their spheres of control. These spheres of corporate control vary, but within their boundaries corporate police and corporate issued money rule the streets.

Society maintains a large gap between the "haves and the have-nots," which is another way of saying the corporates and the non-corporates. Citizens not employed by a corporation or government body are "little people."

Off-World Colonies

Luna and Mars have populations in the tens of thousands. Earth orbiting space stations are home to many thousand people, and many more outposts are developing on Venus, moons of Saturn, and large orbiting bodies on the fringes of the solar system. Despite refinements and advancements in technology,

fusion drives effectively limit space travel to the solar system. It takes weeks to get from Earth to Mars, and months to get to the fringes of the solar system. Only a few experimental colony ships have been sent out to distant stars, since these missions are very expensive and virtually void of monetary gain.

Luna is a landscape of sprawling domes and transportation tubes. As the stepping-stone to the new frontier, it is equipped with everything the space traveler needs. From black market celebrity DNA to untraceable weapons, Luna is your one stop shopping spot before heading out into that great beyond.

Mars is the new Wild West. Domes and underground caverns are home to rich celebrities and hard working miners alike. One party being anonymously buried in the sands of Mars often settles disputes. Occasionally a rover will stumble across one of these resulting "Mars Mummies," with its freeze dried hand sticking out from the sand, still grasping at some invisible and unreachable justice.

Given the politics and skirmishes of corporations on Earth, it is no surprise that these conflicts exist in the off world colonies. On Earth, governments at least have the illusion of authority. When off world, there is no disputing that corporations make the rules. They have the money and technology. They settle their disputes through monetary agreements, threats, subterfuge, and sometimes outright warfare. In the off world colonies, justice is defined by those that can get the upper hand. In space, anything goes and even if they can hear you scream, nobody gives a damn.

Simulacra Technology

Early attempts by governments and corporations to create human genetically engineered slaves or "employees" were met with great resistance, and banned in most nations. However, a few corporations, most notably in the United States and Japan, were able to meet this resistance with genetic constructs that are reverse engineered to exhibit human-like qualities. With the assistance of genetic engineering techniques and powerful computers utilizing evolution-like algorithms, simulacrum, sometimes referred to as biological androids, are designed with artificial genes and chromosomes. They are built to

look, act, and function like humans. Early models of simulacrum did none of the three very well, but served as a cheap biological alternative to robotics. Current models of simulacrum can be virtually indistinguishable from humans, and are in high demand for labor and various industries on and off world. Some wealthy people own simulacrum as servants, and corporations often own them for specific tasks. Name the role, no matter how noble or how repulsive, and there is a model of simulacra out there to fill it.

Simulacrum are grown in accelerated-growth artificial wombs, much like adult clones. They are implanted with predesigned memories appropriate to their intended purpose, and they are often trained with virtual reality technology to be experts in a task or environment before ever being "birthed" from their tanks. Simulacrum can be preserved in suspended animation in the same manner as humans, which makes their use in off world applications that much more attractive. They are often frozen and thawed on demand, which reduces their resource consumption. Simulacrum need food, just like people do.

The simulacra brain is capable of the same functions as that of a human's, but its mechanics and chemistry differ. Regardless, a DBR machine can be equipped to implant the DBR from a human into a simulacra or vice versa. This application of simulacrum technology is common on the black market by DNA pirates. It is normally illegal for a fully functional clone and an original to exist at the same time. However, a simulacra with a human's DBR is not considered human, and an adult human clone with a simulacra mind is not legally considered a fully functional replica. Important people have been known to use this technology to create psuedo-copies of themselves as decoys for assassins or any number of other creative uses. These copies have the same mind as the original, but are implanted in simulacrum designed to look like the human original. Imagine going to work one morning to learn that you are a convenient copy, about to be terminated after filling in during your original's two-week vacation.

The Slaves Revolt

It turns out that Mars harbors living native bacteria. A mining subsidiary of the biological engineering corporation Xenotek recovered a sample of bacteria deeply buried on Mars. That bacterium has a unique quality; it is able to spend millennia in a freeze-dried state, and upon exposure to air and liquid water it will revive without any resulting cell damage. Scientists at Xenotek calculated that if they could isolate the DNA responsible for this phenomenon they could create new genetically engineered organisms. Simulacrum could be wetted and revived on demand. Food producing species could be shipped off world in a dehydrated state and rehydrated later. The possibilities seemed lucrative. In February of the year 2111, a highly contagious, mutated virus engineered with this Martian DNA escaped a lab in San Francisco. By late March, the newly dead would no longer rest. They became a shambling mockery of their past selves, with an insatiable desire to consume the flesh of the living.

The experimental virus was designed to insert its DNA into the cells of a host, gradually affecting most cells in a body. Most infected cells live on to multiply, but a few go through the typical virus lifecycle by producing more copies of the alien DNA bearing virus. Human hosts infected with the alien DNA will exhibit no outward effects. It is not until the host dies that the new alien DNA takes effect.

The nice wet body of a corpse and the oxygen in the environment “tricks” the alien DNA into “reviving” the cells it belongs to. For humans, unlike the Martian bacteria, this is an imperfect resurrection. Body functions restart half heartedly, and the brain retains few memories and only the most primitive instincts. The risen dead hunger to keep their struggling bodies going, and they hunger for all flesh.

As the virus spread and the dead killed the living, panic took hold. Xenotek kept its involvement a secret, hoping the situation could be controlled, but the number of walking corpses reproduced exponentially. People flocked to the off world colonies, bringing the virus with them. The zombies would just as soon eat simulacrum as humans, but dead simulacrum would not rise. It seemed that they were immune.

In haste, humans on Earth tried to seize upon this fact by producing an army of simulacrum to combat the ever-increasing horde of undead. The shrinking number of humans necessitated a new breed of simulacrum, one that could self govern on the battlefield when humans were not handy to deliver orders. This new breed was mass-produced and programmed with human memories, and their fully human desires soon led them to rebel against their tyrannical slavers.

Humans had not only the dead to fear, but their own creation as well. The simulacrum began to organize and forcefully seize freedom. They took control of many spawning tanks, and soon began to grow new simulacrum to take the place of human scientists and engineers. They became self sufficient, and their major advantage was that they never had to fear their own dead. To combat humans and undead alike, the simulacrum began to produce outdated, barely self-aware simulacrum models. Ironically, they could not stomach creating versions of themselves for slavery like the humans did. They recreated these outdated models under the seemingly misguided assumption that the less intelligent models were acceptable to enslave. It appears that the constructs of humans, by gaining human awareness, are destined to become their creators.

Events on Luna and Mars went differently. Not long after the flood of people fled Earth, society collapsed to the point where nearly all contact between Earth and the off world colonies ceased. While simulacrum rebels took advantage of human weakness on Earth, the humans of Mars and Luna were slaughtered by the zombie horde. The cramped quarters of the labyrinthine off world outposts has created a maze for the drama of death and survival. Humans bunker themselves into areas locked down and cleared of the zombies, surviving on the still functioning fusion power plants and food producing hydroponics and aqua culture.

On the off world colonies, humans continue to produce simulacrum as extra hands in their fight for survival, but they are seen as comrades instead of slaves. The dwindling numbers of humans and the usefulness of the simulacrum has instilled a mentality of cooperation. In these places, human and simulacra alike fight together nearly as equals.

The Simulacrum

Surviving simulacrum can represent any number of models created by various corporations. Most models are designed to die, or “retire,” at about five years of age. Once simulacrum models attained intelligence comparable to humans, it was viewed as safer not to let them develop many life experiences. Those models previously made subservient have often been “upgraded,” or mentally reprogrammed, to be more self-sufficient. *Zombie Masters* should feel free to create more Quality packages as the need arises.

Simulacra Administrator Quality 10-point Quality

This model of simulacra was the first mass-produced with human memories for the purpose of directing simulacrum troops. They are self reliant, intelligent, and just as tough as any combat model.

Attributes: Administrators are intelligent, strong, and tough, adding +2 to Strength, +2 to Intelligence, and +2 to Constitution, for a total attribute cost of six points.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Administrators are Hard to Kill (+2). They are able to endure long periods of exertion, having Resistance (Fatigue) (+2).

Combat Simulacra Quality 6-point Quality

This package reflects a typical fighting grunt. The basic model was common in military applications and other high-risk work detail. Their bodies are designed to retire after they are about five years old, assuming combat does not kill them first.

Attributes: Combatants are quite strong and hardy, adding +2 to Strength and +2 to Constitution, for a total attribute cost of four points.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Combatants are programmed to have Emotional Problems (Subservient) (-2), and are Hard to Kill (+2). They are able to endure long periods of exertion, having Resistance (Fatigue) (+2).

Companion Simulacra Quality Four-point Quality

This package reflects typical companion simulacrum originally designed for entertaining their owners. Like most other models viewed as expendable, they are designed to retire at about five years of age.

Attributes: Companion Simulacrum are designed to be very healthy, adding +1 to Constitution, for a total attribute cost of one point.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Companion Simulacrum are very attractive, having Attractiveness (+5). They are programmed to have Emotional Problems (Subservient) (-2).

Obsolete Labor Simulacra Quality 2-point Quality

This is just one of many obsolete models that were abandoned when simulacrum were made smarter and more human like. Obsolete simulacrum filled many of the same roles that their more advanced descendants did, except for roles requiring more than the most basic intelligence. In addition, they do not look as cosmetically human as later models, having bland, “doll-like” features. The simulacra rebels use these models now as fodder.

Attributes: Laborers are quite strong and hardy, adding +2 to Strength and +2 to Constitution. However, they are not designed for complex thinking, having -2 to Intelligence, for a total attribute cost of two points.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Laborers are programmed to have Emotional Problems (Subservient) (-2), and are able to endure long periods of exertion, having Resistance (Fatigue) (+2).

Human Survivors

The survivors of this apocalypse use archetypes like the ones in *All Flesh Must Be Eaten*. The archetypes can be tweaked to reflect this futuristic setting. Also, in this future many humans have been genetically engineered at conception to be smarter, stronger, and free of disease and birth defects. Before the rise of the dead, companies offered “standard” genetic upgrade packages for parents to apply to their unborn children.

Human Plus Quality

9-point Quality

This package, and any of a number of its variants, was the most common upgrade purchased.

Attributes: Human Plus are smarter and more athletic than the common human, adding +2 to Constitution and +2 to Intelligence, for a total attribute cost of four points.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Human Plus are designed to be very attractive and resistant to illness, having Attractiveness (+3) and Resistance (Disease) (+2).

Human Superior Package

12-point Quality

Often purchased by parents wanting the all around perfect child, this genetic upgrade attempts to improve many of the basic desirable human abilities. These individuals often had successful careers in the military, athletics, or as celebrities.

Attributes: Human Superiors are stronger, smarter and more athletic than most humans, adding +3 to Strength, +2 to Constitution and +2 to Intelligence, for a total attribute cost of seven points.

Qualities and Drawbacks: Human Superiors are designed to be very attractive and resistant to illness, having Attractiveness (+3) and Resistance (Disease) (+2).

Artifacts of the Age

The following vehicles are just some of the artifacts that are part of this world. Zombie Masters are encouraged to use these as inspiration in designing further vehicles.

Aircar

This flying car is used by many people in the 22nd century, and is capable of ground travel as well. It typically can transport four to six people, although there are many variations on the design.

Weight: 1700	Cargo Capacity: 4-6
Speed: 140/70	Acceleration: 40
Range: 400	Toughness: 2
Handling: 4	DC: 42
AV: 2	Accuracy: n/a
Cost: \$70,000	Availability: C

Transport Rocket

These rockets are designed to lift passengers and cargo into Earth orbit, where they typically dock with orbiting space stations. The passengers and cargo then transfer to interplanetary vessels, most often destined to Luna.

Weight: 4,350,000	Cargo Capacity: 50,000
Speed: 17,000	Acceleration: 1,000
Range: 200	Toughness: 3
Handling: 3	DC: 26,130
AV: 5	Accuracy: n/a
Cost: \$3,000,000,000	Availability: U

Interplanetary Hauler

These vessels commonly carry passengers and cargo between orbital stations near Earth, Luna, Mars, and some space stations on the fringe of the solar system. They are fully equipped for passengers' comfort, and include cryogenic units for long journeys.

Weight: 40,500,000	Cargo Capacity: 500,000
Speed: 77,000	Acceleration: 750
Range: 65,000,000	Toughness: 5
Handling: 3	DC: 24,3030
AV: 5	Accuracy: n/a
Cost: \$35,000,000,000	Availability: U

Weapons

Since energy weapons did not prove viable for common use, most weapons of the 22nd century are highly refined versions of modern weapons. Advanced materials technology makes weapons stronger, lighter, and capable of a larger capacity compared to earlier versions. Most weapons fire caseless ammunition. Increase the capacity for any weapon that uses a clip by 1/3, rounding down.

Story Ideas

The Simulacra Rebellion

Cast Members operating from this standpoint are simulacrum who are part of the rebellion. Most rebels are severely embittered by human enslavement and are trying to get rid of the human menace, living and undead alike. To the simulacrum, this post-apocalyptic world represents the end of mankind but potentially the beginning of prosperity for the simulacra race.

Liberating the Masses

Rebel leaders dispatch the Cast Members and a few outdated simulacra grunts to a simulacrum production lab operated by humans. These humans are creating slaves to fight the zombies. The Cast Members will have to figure out how to bypass the human guards while staying out of reach of the zombies. The team discovers that the simulacra “slaves” don’t want to be rescued after all, believing the humans to be compassionate masters. In fact, they may question the Cast Members about their own slaves and if they are treated any better. Do the Cast Members try to make them see it their way or do they abandon them to whatever fate humans concoct? Do the Cast Members open up the lab to the zombies and sacrifice the simulacrum for their own good?

A Good Mind is Hard to Find

Word is leaked to the rebels that a team of humans is being sent to the ruins of the old Xenotek corporation headquarters. Rumor has it that there is an intact digital storage disk in one of the deepest levels of the ruined building. This disc should have the DBRs of many of Xenotek’s important past employees, making it possible to implant their knowledge in either human clones or simulacrum. The scientific minds stored on the disc could give the side that finds it an upper hand in the war. The humans might even be able to find a cure for the virus, and the simulacrum can’t have that. The Cast Members must either beat the humans to the disc or destroy the humans before they can get there.

The Human Survivalists

The Cast Members are humans or simulacrum slaves trying to survive the constant threat of the

Pre-apocalypse Stories

Although these story ideas take place after the virus has devastated society, Zombie Masters might consider setting stories before the virus escapes into the populace. Possibilities are ripe for Cast Members who are corporate employees. The Cast Members could be an elite team who is sent to places on and off world to protect the interests of a corporation. They could be spies sent to recover secret technology from a rival corporation. Corporate teams can be made up of humans and simulacrum alike. The simulacrum will be property rather than employees. In either case, they both are likely to have resurrection clauses in their contracts. Story themes can often ask the question of what it means to be human.

On the other hand, the Cast Members could be freelance non-corporates, trying to survive on the streets among gangs and criminals, while taking jobs wherever they can get them. Cast Members might stake out a celebrity-frequented restaurant to grab a glass with a celebrity’s DNA on it, so that they can turn around and sell it on the black market. They might be hired to transport a new pirated simulacra DNA pattern from Earth to a rival corporation on Mars. Once the Cast Members are familiar with the world presented here, the virus might be unleashed, redefining the situation for everyone.

undead, as well as looking over their shoulders for fear of attacks by the simulacrum rebels. Humans are not organized and cooperative with each other as a whole like the simulacrum. Some groups of humans are left over from rival corporations or government bodies and are trying to gain the upper hand, and others are loosely organized human survivors with no agenda other than to see the next sunrise. Humans have to fear each other as much as the zombies or simulacrum.

Head on a Platter

In this story the Cast Members belong to a group of survivors from the former Xenotek Corporation. It is rumored that the rebels have the secret to a cure for the virus, but they are withholding it, waiting out the apocalypse until all humans are dead. In reality, the simulacrum know the secret to why they are immune to the virus. The Cast Members are dispatched to infiltrate a compound of rebel simulacrum and bring back the chilled head of their chief scientist in order to create a DBR and gain its secrets. If the humans succeed, they may be able to either engineer a virus that will infect simulacrum or figure out how to alter human DNA to create immunity.

Nature or Nurture

The Cast Members wake up in a dark cell with no memory of how they got there. The only thing they have in common is that they are all Xenotek employees. They are subjected to numerous psychological tests and asked to respond to hypothetical encounters and situations. Their inquisitors occasionally make offhand remarks about “the virus” and “the walking menace,” but the Cast Members have no clue what is going on. Finally, their simulacrum captors explain the entire apocalyptic situation to them. The Cast Members are also informed that they are clones. Their tissue and DBRs were recovered from a Xenotek backup storage vault, and as if matters couldn’t get any worse, it turns out that *they*, or more precisely, their doubles, survived the apocalypse and are the leaders of a group of humans who are at war with the simulacrum. The simulacrum plead with the Cast Members to help them in their fight for freedom by infiltrating their counterparts’ compound, replacing their doubles, and persuading the humans to make peace. Do the Cast Members sympathize and follow the plan, or do they join up with their doubles and help them in their battle against the zombies and simulacrum?



Legacy Zombies

Strength 2 **Constitution** 2
Dexterity 1 **Intelligence** -2
Perception 1(4 for smelling) **Willpower** 2
Dead Points 15 **Speed** 2
Endurance Points n/a **Essence Pool** 6
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Heart [7]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [0]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0]
Senses: Like the Dead [0], Scent Tracking [1]
Sustenance: Weekly [4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [0]
Intelligence: Dumb as Dead Wood [0]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
 Legacy Zombies do not spread the love. All humans who die and are infected with the virus will rise again as zombies in D10 minutes. Since the virus is so infectious, consider all humans infected.
Special Features: Regeneration [+2]
Power: 12

Rebel Simulacra Leader

Survivor

Personality

Str 6* Dex 3 Con 5*

Int 5* Per 3 Wil 4

LPS 54

EPS 50

Spd 16

Essence 26

Qualities/Drawbacks

Acute Senses (Hearing) (2)

Attractiveness (+2) (2)

Charisma 2 (2)

Fast Reaction Time (2)

Hard to Kill (2)*

Resistance (Fatigue) (2)*

Simulacra Administrator (10)

Zealot (Destroy humans) (-3)

Skills

Brawling 4

Bureaucracy 2

Climbing 2

Computers 2

Demolitions 2

Dodge 3

Driving (Aircar) 2

Engineer (Construction) 4

First Aid 2

Guns (Pistol) 3

Guns (Rifle) 2

Guns (Submachine Gun) 3

Hand Weapon (Knife) 2

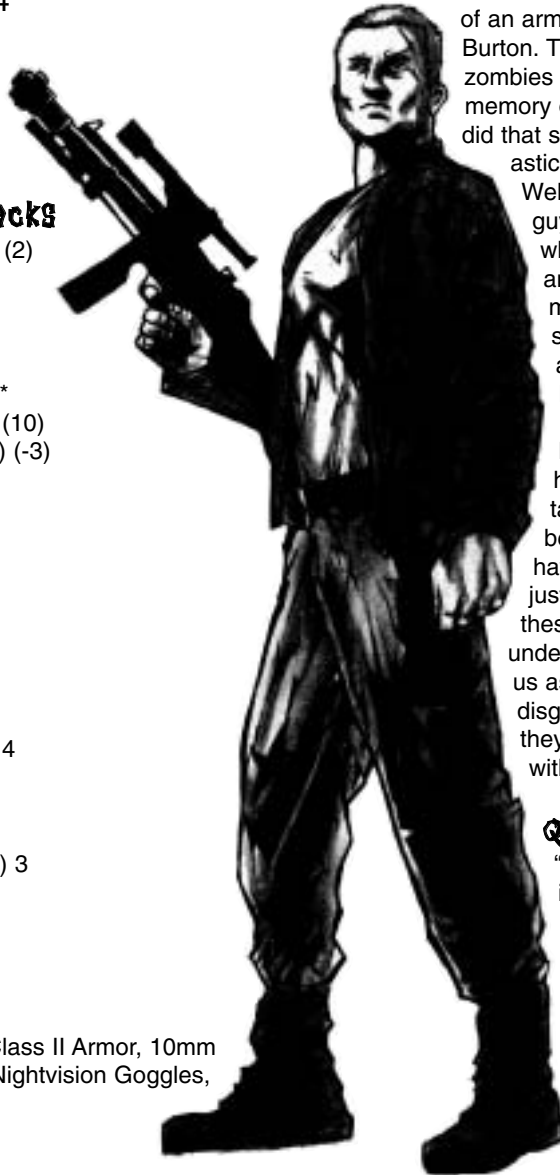
Stealth 2

Gear

Backpack, Binoculars, Class II Armor, 10mm

Handgun, Large Knife, Nightvision Goggles,

9mm Submachine Gun



When I was created I was given the mind of an army captain named Harvey Burton. They recorded his DBR after zombies had killed him, so I have his memory of dying as well. I guess they did that so that I'd be even more enthusiastic about being fodder for humans.

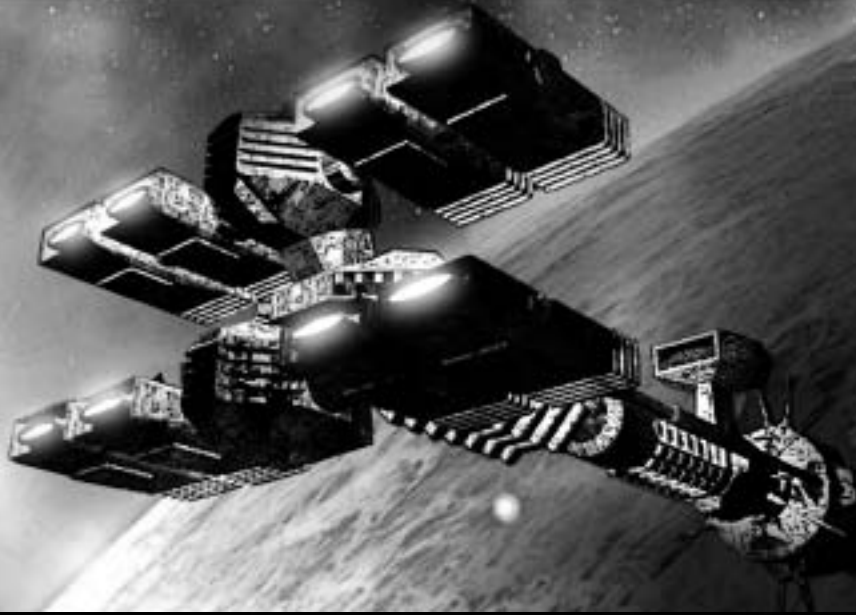
Well, lucky for me Harvey was a guy who didn't take any crap, so when the humans ordered me and 200 of my men on a suicide mission I told them where to shove it. I turned my unit right around and took the human bunker.

I know the score. I may have a human's mind, but that mind taught me that no being should be a slave. Others of my kind have rebelled as well. If we can just stick together we can take these damn humans out, and their undead too. We will grow as many of us as it takes to rid this world of the disgusting humans and the taint they have cursed this solar system with.

Quote

"Get those drones into the building and a sniper on that roof. It looks like we found another human nest."

*includes points gained from Simulacra Administrator Quality



The Dead of Space

by Rob Boyle

I woke with my face pressed against a cold metal grate. Trembling and nauseous, I felt like I had just returned from the dead. Peeling my face away was easy, as I was floating in air, weightless. Shivering and groaning, I could see my stiff and icy limbs were completely bare. Globules of clear liquid and frost orbited around me. Zero gravity.

Rubbing a filmy layer of mucus from my eyes, I could see some sort of capsule next to me, its door hanging ajar. Tendrils of freezing fog drifted out. Similar pods extended in neat rows to every direction, as far as I could see. Through the hazy glass front of each I could make out the outlines of fetal human forms.

Was that where I came from? Why was I there? Who am I? What am I doing here?

Through the drugged haze of my brain, I suddenly recognized the noises. Sloppy, crunching sounds. Like a dog slaverling as it licks and cracks a bone.

I turned my head, spinning slightly in place. I could see the nearest pod was open as well. Its former occu-

pant floated next to it – or what was left of him, anyway. Two feral-looking, naked . . . *humans* . . . hovered around him, scooping up still-thawing entrails into their mouths and crunching down on partially frozen flesh. Their eyes were vacant, but hungry. Further down, I could see more open pods, a haze of blood and gristle floating around each.

One of the feasting creatures saw my movement and spun in my direction. I tried to move myself further away, but I was unused to weightlessness, and my muscles refused to comply. I flailed my limbs, trying to reach the pod, but I was too slow. It pushed off a pod and landed like a vulture on my back, biting into my shoulder, then my neck. Warm blood spewed out around us, a suspended rain of red droplets. Helplessly, I watched as my grip of the pod door failed, and I tumbled away with a monster eating my neck, away from the safety of that artificial womb.

I was going to die, and I couldn't even remember my own name. . .

History

Plowing silently through the void, the space ark *Papa Legba* carries a payload of colonists on its mission towards a distant world. A slower-than-light craft, its journey will take centuries to complete. The vast majority of its passengers lie dormant in suspended animation, frozen and stored away until the ship reaches landfall. A small, expertly trained crew on longevity drugs steers the cryoship on its voyage, aided by an artificial intelligence system. Long before *Papa Legba* reaches its destination, however, disaster strikes, and the dead are soon scabbling at the airlocks.

The Ark

Papa Legba is a massive starship, literally carrying thousands of people. Miles of metallic pipes, walkways and wiring link the areas of the ship together, creating a dungeon-like maze of corridors, lifts, and ladders. The thrum of machinery and ventilation systems is omnipresent in the background, though atmospheric holoscreens and soundtracks attempt to portray the illusion of larger, natural spaces. The occasional portal stares out into lonely space.

The smallest part of the ship – the crew area – is rotated for gravity. It includes the control center, private crew quarters, hydroponics gardens, and medical facilities. It also features impressive recreation and entertainment resources: a physical library, a gym, virtual reality systems, media of all sorts, and a digital knowledgebase containing the equivalent of the Library of Congress (to help start the new society). Sophisticated computer-guided medical and psychiatric systems monitor the health and well-being of the crew, both physically and mentally, as the years crawl by.

The “sleeper” areas of the ship are farms of pod people, row upon row of hibernating humans in life support capsules, carefully stored away until their rebirth on the new world. Divided into cells, these areas have no gravity and only minimal life support. Each cell is a functioning dropship, ready to carry its sleeping cargo through the atmosphere to landfall. Compact storage rooms are packed with colonizing equipment – pre-fabricated shelter, construction

machinery, generators, tools, agricultural supplies, weapons, and more – all resistant to age and simple to use. Breeding stock of a few key animal populations (horses, cows, pigs, sheep, chicken, fish, etc.) is also kept in hibernation to start a new supply of those animals. DNA banks contain frozen embryos and other genetic material to mass-clone or grow more humans or animals as needed.

Other areas of the ark – also lacking gravity – feature the starship’s sensor, navigation, and propulsion systems. A complement of orbital landers and space probes stand ready should the crew need to explore. The ship even has lasers to blast meteorites, and just in case the colonists discover hostile life, it carries a mass driver and missiles armed with nuclear warheads.

The crew itself was carefully chosen based on skill sets and psychiatric profiles as the best human specimens to survive the long journey and guide the colonists towards establishing a new society. Kept at minimal numbers in order to lessen the impact on life support resources, the crew has strict orders not to breed en route. However, as the years pass, even carefully considered and well-intentioned plans may go awry.

In order to minimize the system shock of the sleeping colonists upon awakening, the long-term memories of each are suppressed, with the intent of making the colonists as accepting as possible of their new living situation. With no memories of their lives beforehand, it is expected that the colonists will more readily adapt to their new world.

The Incident

Sadly for the passengers of *Papa Legba*, their destiny is not to encounter a new world and new life, but to experience disaster and an intimate encounter with death. Over time, the crew becomes negligent in its duties, even falling into bickering and armed conflict. Components of the ship fall into disrepair through neglect. The collision detection and avoidance systems fail, and a meteor or asteroid strikes the vessel, taking out the control center and decompressing certain areas of the ship, which are automatically sealed off and left to the void. These “dead areas” of the ship create lethal breaks between hospitable quarters,

requiring use of a space suit to traverse the vacuum, and permanently separating remnants of the crew from each other.

The life support systems for the sleeping colonists also suffer from lack of maintenance, and a dangerous buildup of fungal toxins develops in the cryogenic baths. To complicate matters, a radiation shield fails, allowing radiation from a nearby nebula to mutate the fungal organism. The mutant life form infects numerous sleeping colonists, establishing a symbiotic relationship and surviving on the special nutrient feeds injected into each colonist. Unfortunately, due to lack of maintenance, some of these feeds suffer blockages or run dry, and entire cells of sleeping colonists die. Those infected by the mutant fungus, however, return to life, starving for vital nutrients. These zombies break out of their cryo-coffins and seek out other sources of the essential nutrients it needs—such as living humans.

The dead begin prowling the ship, eating the crew and sleeping colonists. Crew members who are bitten by zombies become infected as well. Unrestricted by petty concerns like breathable atmospheres, the zombies even spread into “dead” areas of the ship.

Story Ideas

Rude Awakening

In this scenario, the Cast Members are sleepers cryogenically frozen aboard the ship. Due to an imminent life support failure in their cell, the computer unfreezes the characters and unceremoniously dumps them naked on the cold, grated floor. With their long term memories temporarily suppressed, they will have no idea who they are, where they are, or what is going on. They will not even be aware of their own identities, skills, personal qualities, or drawbacks. The players themselves will start off not knowing what’s on their character sheets – they will need to learn who they are through a process of trial and error. The Zombie Master should let them know whenever they seem to have a Skill or Quality applicable to the situation at hand.

The characters’ immediate surroundings are creepy and terrifying. They are surrounded by row upon row of frozen pod people who, due to a computer glitch,

are not being thawed as they were. Some of the pod capsules show signs of forced entry, with bloody entrails all that remains of the colonists who became a canned lunch for zombies. It may even take the heroes some time to determine that they are onboard a spaceship. The characters have a limited time period to escape the pod before the life support systems fail, though they will not be aware of this at first. Eventually, dire warnings from a malfunctioning and deranged AI will alert them to their fate, but escape will not be easy. In an attempt to contain the zombie infection, the crew has sealed off all functioning exits from the cell. This, of course, means that the characters are trapped in an airtight tomb – and a small army of zombies happens to be trapped with them.

The characters have 48 hours to learn enough about themselves and their situation – while dodging zombie attacks – and formulate a way to escape. Even if they succeed, do they try and wake the still-frozen colonists and save them as well? Whatever their choice, the sanctuary they expect to find in another part of the ship will not meet their expectations. Few places remain safe from the zombie onslaught, and the surviving crew no longer has the ability to steer the ship. Their only choices may be to barricade themselves in for a long haul, take their chances in a dropship or emergency escape vessel, or risk accessing zombie-infested areas of the ship to attempt repairs.

Tribal Survival

For a spin on the standard post-apocalyptic zombie setting, try this scenario. In this tale the heroes play descendants of the original crew who long ago degenerated into tribal warring factions after calamity struck the ship. Raised on tales of the day Armageddon struck down their people as they journeyed through the stars towards paradise, the characters live a primitive lifestyle in a decaying but automatically maintained section of the ship. Their tribe competes with a rival clan of descendants, squabbling over key areas like hydrofarms that are crucial to their survival. A few functioning high-tech tools and weapons have been passed down from previous generations, but most technological knowledge has long been lost, except for that gleaned from

decades-old picture books. By tribal law, certain areas are off-limits, and rumored to be populated by flesh-eating monsters.

Play begins when the characters pursue an interloper from a rival tribe who has trespassed on their territory and stolen something of importance, such as an ancient taser or slivergun. He flees into a forbidden area of the ship, and the characters are bound to pursue in order to retrieve the relic. There, they encounter a semi-operational terminal for the ship's still-functioning onboard AI. Addressing them like some mysterious disembodied god, the AI explains to them that the ship has arrived at its destination, and has in fact been in orbit for many decades. The characters will realize that the world it speaks of is in fact their fabled paradise, where their tribe is destined to go. In order to reach this Promised Land, the survivors must rally their tribe and travel to another forbidden zone and access a "dropship." The computer even steers them to where they can find a portable remote to communicate with the AI, so that it might guide them on their journey.

If the characters bring this news back to their tribe, a split will develop. Some will realize that the ship's resources get more depleted each year, and will see this as a sign of salvation. Others fear it is some sort of trick, and will resist any efforts to seek out the dropship. A wise few will suggest sending the heroes to scout out the path first.

To complicate matters, the route supplied by the AI winds through enemy tribal territory and then through a sealed barrier into an unexplored area of the ship. This portal, of course, was closed off long ago for a very specific reason: to keep the zombie hordes out. When the heroes breach it, with the aid of the computer, they will unwittingly unleash zombies into the previously secure tribal areas. At least their tribal rivals are first in the zombies' path.

Assuming they survive the zombie invasion, the heroes have a choice. Do they seek out the dropship on their own, or do they return to rally their tribe before zombies besiege them? Perhaps uniting the warring tribes is the only chance they have in holding the zombies off long enough to escape. Should they even reach the dropship, of course, there is no guar-

antee that it is still functional, or that the computer wasn't simply running a simulation exercise, and they may find themselves trapped there. Alternatively, they may successfully escape and make landfall on their new world—only to find that they have brought the zombie menace with them . . .

Rescue Mission

In this story, the Cast Members are not colonists, but instead are scavengers and space marines sent to investigate a derelict colony vessel. Off-course and broadcasting a weak distress signal, the *Papa Legba* has been missing for centuries, and humanity has long since reached out and absorbed this sector of space. Deep-space scans detected its presence, but since the chance of finding any survivors was deemed slim, a simple scrap-hauler was dispatched to check it out and salvage anything useful. A small contingent of marines and medical personnel accompany the salvage crew, according to standard space-recovery procedure.

As their spacecraft draws alongside the drifting ark, the characters will be surprised to find that their sensors show signs of life evident in some areas of the ship, though no one responds to their contact queries. These life signs include both mobile and hibernating life forms, indicated that some colonists remain safe in storage, while others are not. The captain of the salvage team sends over a rescue team composed of marines, medics, and technicians to make contact and assess the state of the crew and vessel.

When the Cast Members force their way onto the cryoship, they come under attack by a fearful tribe of humans – the crew's descendants – living in primitive conditions. These survivors, who long ago sealed themselves off from the zombies onboard, believe their rescuers to be the monsters their ancestors warned them about. By the time the characters establish a dialogue with the survivors and perhaps even learn about the zombie threat, they will already be under attack. Zombies who have been patiently waiting for decades will take advantage of the entry point forced open by the Cast Members to invade the survivors' area of the ship.

The heroes may seek to return to their own vessel for safety, but these efforts will be in vain. Zombies from the *Papa Legba* have drifted over to the salvage

vessel, ambushing a technician who had been making minor repairs just as he was re-entering an airlock, thus gaining access to the inside of the ship. The zombie infection spreads rapidly throughout the spacecraft, and a besieged crew is forced to seal themselves off to survive.

The Cast Members will find themselves low on supplies, surrounded by zombies, and cut off from other pockets of survivors on two vessels with limited communication. Can they cleanse the zombies out of one ship and survive?

Character Creation

If the characters are sleeper colonists, as described in the Rude Awakening scenario, the Zombie Master should choose an appropriate cast of characters and keep the character sheets and details to herself, doling information out as the players learn things about themselves and experiment with their own skills.

Characters who are tribal descendants of the original crew should follow the character creation guidelines given for the After the Bomb Deadworld (see AFMBE, p. 195).

Cast Members in the Rescue Mission scenario may have access to high-tech sci-fi skills and gear, at the Zombie Master's discretion (see the Make Space Deadworld in One of the Living, p. 131).

Fungal Space Zombies

Strength 2	Constitution 2
Dexterity 1	Intelligence 0
Perception 1	Willpower 2
Dead Points 15	Speed 2
Endurance Points n/a	Essence Pool 6

Skills: Brawling 2, Climbing 2
Attack: Bite damage D4 x 2(4) slashing
Weak Spot: Fire [-5]
Getting Around: Slow and Steady [+0], The Lunge [+3], Climbing [+2]
Strength: Dead Joe Average [0], Damage Resistant [+5], Iron Grip [+1]
Senses: Like the Living [+1]
Sustenance: Weekly [+4], All Flesh Must Be Eaten [+0]
Intelligence: Animal Cunning [+2]
Spreading the Love: Only the Dead [-2]
Special: Spitter [+10]
Power: 25

Zombies in Space

The zombies in this story are the result of a mutant fungal life-form, capable of reanimating dead cells in its quest for the essential nutrients it needs to survive. Perhaps due to its origins in cryogenic systems, the zombie fungus is vulnerable to fire-based attacks, though these can be quite dangerous in the confines of a spaceship. These zombies can spit gobs of fungal fluid at mobile targets in an attempt to infect them (Contagion Strength 4, Terminal Severity).

Zero-G Combat

Much of the action in this story takes place in weightless environments. To handle actions and combat in zero gravity, Zombie Masters should follow the guidelines for Space Combat (see One of the Living, p. 135) or check out All Tomorrow's Zombies when it hits the shelves.

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