

WAR OF THE DEAD

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CHAPTER 1: WEEKS ONE THROUGH THREE



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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THE MAIN CHARACTERS

War of the Dead is a campaign that takes your character from the first stages of the zombie outbreak and into a world forever changed. The normal rules of society, law, order, and decency are out the window. Gone. Forget about them. Luxury isn't a good movie, a new video game, or finally affording that dream home. It's being able to fall asleep at night, managing to wake-up the next morning, and having survived another day without becoming a Living Dead. It's being able to find food enough to keep you moving throughout the day, or something to burn to keep warm when the nights get cold. Welcome to the war for survival . . . the War of the Dead.

THE ZOMBIE GENRE AND WAR OF THE DEAD

It's important to note that the modern day concept of the zombie in film and literature is owed almost in its entirety to George A. Romero, beginning with his 1968 film "Night of the Living Dead." In the setting of War of the Dead, Romero never made that film or any of its sequels and, as a result, the concept of the Living Dead never existed in film or print.

Characters in War of the Dead are totally unfamiliar with the Living Dead. The idea of the dead reanimating, the possibility of a bite being one possible method of Infection, or the need to destroy the brain when combating the Living Dead is alien to them when the outbreak first takes place. Such knowledge should come only through experience, and through life-and-death encounters.

HOW FAR WILL YOU GO?

The world as you knew it is over. Society has crumbled, governments have fallen, and even common enjoyments like clean clothes are things of the past. Everywhere you turn, the dead are rising to devour the living. Those who die inevitably rise again. It's just a matter of time before you, your friends, and your loved ones join their ranks. But you hold on. You fight to survive just one more day, to maintain your humanity for just a little while longer. But in a world where Hell has finally come to Earth, how far will you go to survive and protect those important to you? Would you go as far as to become a monster worse than the Living Dead?

War of the Dead focuses on everyday people forced into extreme situations. Although combat is essential to surviving against the Living Dead, the true point of the story is the journey the characters will have to take. As the Living Dead grow in numbers and spread to all corners of the world, it's no longer a matter of stocking up at the local grocery store and locking your doors. You can't just head down to the nearest gas station and fill-up your tank. Looting already cleaned out the stores by that point, and the gas stations have already run out of fuel with no new supplies coming. The people around you, your neighbors and co-workers, are going to be focused on their own survival. And it's just a matter of time before you become someone in his or her way. Someone who might have what they want and need, or even someone to be used as bait to keep the Living Dead busy while they get to another (supposedly) safe area.

Even worse, the Living Dead aren't your only problem. What about those who invade your home or sanctuary for supplies . . . or worse? You can't just dial 911 and have the police take care of it. Now you have to rely only on yourself for protection, and the survival of your friends and family. Could you take the life of another living person to survive or protect loved ones?

Can you become the predator instead of the prey, the hunter instead of the hunted?

War of the Dead is as much a personal journey

as it is a battle against the Living Dead. Like any good zombie movie or piece of fiction, it's about the living more than the dead. It's about how the characters grow, change, and what they become when faced with Armageddon. After all, the Living Dead aren't the most dangerous threat out there.

More often, it's your fellow man.

CHARACTER TYPES

Although from a mechanical standpoint character creation remains the same as detailed in the Savage Worlds rulebook, a character is more than just a collection of die-codes for attributes and skills. It's a living, breathing person with dreams, ambitions, friends, and family. In a campaign like War of the Dead, the who of the character is extremely important, as it will help shape the personal journey that's taken throughout the story.

The idea behind War of the Dead is normal people

put into an impossible situation. How will they react? What will they do to survive? How far away from their normal ideas of rules and morals will they go in order to avoid becoming one of the Living Dead? In such stories, not everyone is the action-style hero: highly skilled and trained, able to put a precise bullet into a target at several hundred yards. More often than not, they're everyday people with hardly any combat training.

Below are a few examples of character types found in the zombie genre. The examples aren't meant to cover all possibilities, just give a few ideas of common archetypes and get the ideas flowing. And don't worry, regardless of background, you'll get into the action of fighting the Living Dead.

Business Owner: You might have been a small-business entrepreneur, or an executive in a large corporation. Whatever your business dealings, your resources are at least better than the average working person. Of course, that means little in a world of Living Dead, but your ability to manage and operate a business has at least given you some idea how to manage a group—which is a skill that might prove useful in keeping its members sane and busy.

Doctor/Nurse: Your training in medicine makes you invaluable to anyone during a time when medicine is scarce, and medical knowledge within a group is normally non-existent.

Family Man (or Woman): Your focus has always been to your family first and foremost: their needs, comforts, and happiness. Although the Living Dead haven't changed any of that, the question you wrestle with the most often is how far you're willing to go in order to protect your family.

Law Enforcement: They might have trained you to serve and protect, to deal with the murders and the drunks, but they never trained you to deal with people rising from the dead wanting to eat you. Heck, they didn't even mention that part as a footnote. The laws and rules you took an oath to uphold are gone. The people you swore to protect don't need your badge on their side, they need your gun and willingness to do whatever's needed.

Mechanic: Sure, your skills were always needed by folks to keep their overpriced automobiles running, but you've never been needed as much as you are now. It's no longer a matter of heading down to the nearest parts store or dealership for a new part, or even a trade-in on a newer car. Folks now need to keep things running longer than ever before. And when the motors stop working, or the wiring gets a short, it's you

they're going to turn to for a fix.

Military: You're trained, determined, and never back down. Problem is, the enemy isn't intimidated, subdued through shock-and-awe, and doesn't know that they're supposed to fall down when you shoot them to pieces. Still, your knowledge of combat tactics and firearms is invaluable when it comes to making a stand against the Living Dead, and you're usually more than skilled enough to take down any living enemy looking to hurt you or your friends.

Reporter: You've always made it your life to get to the truth and get it out there to the people. Although the radio waves might be dead, and the studio broadcasts nothing more than static, getting the truth out to people however you can has never become more vital. People need to know the facts of what's happening, how to combat the Living Dead, and how to avoid becoming one of them. If anyone can get that information to them, it's you.

Retail Sales: The pay was lousy and the hours left a lot to be desired, but the job paid the bills . . . well, for the most part. None of that matters now, of course. The Living Dead have put you into permanent layoff. You might not bring much to the table in the way of combat training, but what you do bring is an ability to adapt to different situations, and a knack for on-the-job training.

Retired Worker: You put in your time, paid your dues, and were about to start really enjoying those golden years. Just your luck, the world goes to Hell the minute you get out of the rat race.

Student: Whether a high school or college student, you woke-up one day and the world was no longer about dating, video games, and partying. Instead, you greeted a world gone completely insane, where people were willing to kill each other and the dead were rising to make you into a raw hamburger. But you aren't about to let that get you down. Heck no! You've played this game before. All you needed was a shotgun and ammo. It just hasn't dawned on you yet that this game doesn't have a save point or reset button.

SO, WHO ARE YOU?

The next question is: Who are you, exactly? As you assign dice to the character sheet, choose a background concept for the character, and start to see things take shape on paper; the main question of who the character is must still be answered. Where does he come from? What family does he have? What friends? Enemies? What's his favorite food, television show,

video game, or book? What dreams and goals does he have? Is he violent? Violent only if angered? A pacifist?

Take a moment (or several) and think about the personality of your character. If you haven't assigned dice to Attributes and Skills yet, or chosen your Edges and Hindrances, answering some questions about your character's personality and background might help point out certain Skills, Edges, or Hindrances he possesses.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?

Although survival in a world consumed by the Living Dead is the overall theme of the War of the Dead campaign, it's far from the only thing that should motivate your character. Each character in the campaign should have a personal, underlying motivation that keeps them going. Below are a few suggestions.

- Gather information about the Living Dead and get the information out to the public—somehow.
- Find a safe haven where you and your family can live in relative peace.
- Find your favorite snack cake, candy bar, soda—which seems to be in extremely rare supply since the outbreak.
- Maintain some semblance of law-and-order despite the barbarism of the world
- Discover a good location for a safe haven, where you can then rule as king and make some sort of profit on others joining you.
- Find out what happened to the friends and family you were separated from when the Outbreak occurred.
- Experiment on the Living Dead and the infected victims to find a cure.
- Make your way across the country to a rumored zombie-free location

NEW BENNY RULE

The Living Dead might be slow, but they're extremely hard to put down for good. When forced into combat in a world full of flesh-eating ghouls, sometimes a character suddenly finds himself capable of great feats as the adrenaline pumps through his body. The following new rule allows for such actions in the War of the Dead.

HEROIC DETERMINATION

The character may spend a benny and gain the benefit of any one Combat Edge for the duration of the round. The character need not meet the requirements for the Combat Edge, except for other Edges (for example, Improved Nerves of Steel requires Nerves of Steel). This represents the character pushing his natural ability beyond its threshold. The drawback is that while spending a benny for a much needed combat Edge for 1 round might sound like a real asset, it leaves you with fewer bennies to spend on soaking wounds to avoid becoming infected.

Legendary Edges cannot be gained through Heroic Determination.

NEW HINDRANCES

GUILT (MINOR)

The character suffers a deep guilt over some past action or failure to act. As a result, he must make a Spirit roll at the beginning of each session. A failure on the roll indicates the character begins with 1 less benny. This is cumulative with the effect of the Bad Luck Hindrance.

HAUNTED MEMORIES (MINOR/MAJOR)

The character is susceptible to reliving a past tragedy. The trigger must be chosen when this Hindrance is taken (for example: a particular smell, a specific location, a certain song, a specific phrase, et cetera). If the Hindrance is Minor, the character must make a Spirit roll each round or be unable to take any actions. If the Hindrance is Major, the character must make a Spirit roll each round at a -2 or be unable to take any actions. The Spirit rolls are only required while the character is still within the vicinity of what triggered (or could trigger) the flashback (for example: at the location, in the presence of the person that uttered the phrase, while the song is playing, while the aroma is still in the air, et cetera).

PSYCHOLOGICALLY UNSTABLE (MINOR/MAJOR)

The character is just not all there. For a Minor Hindrance, the character suffers from brief memory lapses, depression, or tends to argue with himself. For a Major Hindrance, the character contains more than one personality (determine a trigger for a personality switch), or some similar problem.

RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHERS (MINOR/MAJOR)

The character has friends or family members for which he is responsible. The responsibility is defined when the Hindrance is gained. It could be a spouse, child, sibling, parent, lover, friend, ex-spouse, et cetera. The other character is an Extra, never a Wild Card. If the character is responsible for only one other individual, then the Hindrance is Minor. If the character is responsible for more than one person (such as his family), then the Hindrance is Major.

The Game Master is encouraged to be creative with this Hindrance when using it during an adventure. For example, the person could be known for getting into trouble and biting off more than they can chew, constantly forcing the character to rush to the rescue.

Should the person or people ever die, the character must replace this Hindrance with another at an equal rank (Minor or Major, or 2 Minors for a Major). Some suggestions are: Death Wish, Delusional, Guilt, Haunted Memories, Mean, and Psychologically Unstable.

NEW EDGES

PROFESSIONAL EDGES

SCAVENGER

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d6+, Survival d6+, Tracking d6+

The character is adept at finding food, shelter, and supplies— and avoiding the Living Dead— within urban areas. Scavengers gain +2 to Stealth, Survival, and Tracking when in towns and cities.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are also a few Edges from the Savage Worlds rulebook that don't quite fit into the zombie genre. The Edges aren't completely disallowed, though. The Gamemaster might allow them if they fit the theme of your individual campaign, but the adventures are written assuming the everyday world being overrun by a zombie apocalypse. In other words, although the Arcane Backgrounds are mystical in nature, they should also be able to be explained in a normal context by characters within the story.

The Edges (in the order they appear in the Savage Worlds rulebook) are: Arcane Background, Arcane Resistance, Improved Arcane Resistance, New Power, Power Points, Rapid Recharge, Improved Rapid



Recharge, Soul Drain, Champion, Gadgeteer, Holy/Unholy Warrior, Mentalist, Mr. Fix-It, Wizard.

Example: A Gamemaster might decide to allow the Arcane Background (Miracles) as an Edge for a particular NPC or Player-Character. The character in question is a priest that has helped fortify a small town against the hordes of Living Dead. Although the priest isn't explicitly said to be able to perform "magic", he seems to have God on his side when it counts. The Game Master decides he will have the 2 basic powers that Miracles offers, plus one more for the New Power Edge.

The Gamemaster assigns the priest the following powers: armor, smite, and quickness. The people of the town have seen the priest survive attacks as though God stepped in on his behalf (armor), people with him are known to fight with divine vengeance (smite), and he almost seems to serve as the right hand of God (quickness). Why this is, no one knows. It's just believed, by the people he leads, that God is working through the priest.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

The typical combat skills—Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing—are not the only vital skills when dealing with a zombie apocalypse. The following Knowledge skills can also play a key-role in surviving a world of the Living Dead. Keep in mind that these skills are only suggestions, and the Game Master is encouraged to create additional skills as fits the tone of the campaign.

Electronics: When it comes to survival and distracting the Living Dead, Knowledge (Electronics) can play a key role in being able to assemble the materials to create such things as electronic noisemakers, remote alarm systems, and motion detectors.

Medicine: Although the Healing skill is used for actually treating wounds, Knowledge (Medicine) is key in diagnosing ailments. It's a vital skill to have when trying to determine when someone is infected and undergoing the early fever stages, as opposed to when he's simply sick with the flu.

Security Systems: Used in a similar fashion to the Lockpicking skill, but instead being Smarts-based, Knowledge (Security Systems) is rolled whenever a character wants to hack into highly secured computers and databases.

Tactics: Useful in combating the Living Dead, Knowledge (Tactics) is useful for figuring things out about the enemy as the group continues to encounter them. It's used to gain a quick knowledge of how to distract the ghouls, how best to avoid them, and the better weapons to be used to put them down. It's also very useful when encountering hostile survivor groups, when it can be used to gain the benefits of terrain, cover, and placement of allied fighters.

ADVANCING THE CHARACTER

How you advance your character throughout the campaign can be an important decision toward the group's ability to survive. Obviously, Fighting, Shooting, and Throwing could mean the difference between surviving another day and becoming infected. But what about finding food and supplies?

Knowledge (Area Knowledge) might be very useful for finding your way through an infected city and to a cache of supplies that hasn't been looted yet. Tracking can be a good choice for finding game in the woodlands with which to feed a group. The Survival skill is another choice for advancement for obvious reasons, and Streetwise is a good ability for gathering information from other characters you might meet along the roads. Stealth can't be overlooked for sneaking past the Living Dead (or hostile characters). Healing is a necessity in any group for treating injuries. Repair can keep equipment working longer than might normally be the case.

A Professional Edge like McGyver is a terrific choice for creating things that might be needed as resources become scarce. Woodsman is another good Edge for providing food and shelter to a group. Thief can be extremely useful for getting into buildings and through a city.

So, while the more traditional combat skills are always of use in War of the Dead, many other skills and Edges can also make the difference between life and death.

IF YOU ARE A PLAYER, STOP HERE.

THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS ARE FOR THE GAME MASTER ONLY, AND CONTAIN IMPORTANT SETTING INFORMATION YOU SHOULD ONLY DISCOVER DURING THE COURSE OF PLAY. THEY ALSO CONTAIN THE WEEK 1 THROUGH WEEK 3 ADVENTURES.

KNOW THY ENEMY

In any war, an understanding of the enemy is tantamount to a sustained victory. In a war against the Living Dead, knowledge can be as much of a factor between life and death as combat training. In fact, oftentimes knowledge of the Living Dead is even more vital than being able to shoot a bullet into the brain.

Since War of the Dead exposes the characters to the outbreak in degrees as the campaign progresses, how quickly they come to understand the Living Dead, how adept they become at surviving, and how effective they become at combating them is left to you based upon the tone and pacing of your campaign. So, we've put the information in your private section in order to keep the players guessing as to which rules and staples of the modern day zombie genre are included in War of the Dead, and which ones have been discarded or altered.

Let them have the necessary information only when they discover it within the context of the story. Until then, keep them on the edge of their seats.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIVING DEAD

Depending upon the film, comic, or literature you've been exposed to, there are a variety of modern day zombies out there. The works of George A. Romero primarily influences War of the Dead, though as the story expands throughout the campaign and in the follow-up World of the Dead campaign setting, you'll see other types of Living Dead appearing whose influences will be readily obvious as well.

For the War of the Dead campaign, however, let's explore a bit about the typical Living Dead and how they function.

HUNTING PATTERNS OF THE LIVING DEAD

The Living Dead don't have any special hunting patterns, despite what some people believe. They

don't have a social network or a hierarchy. They are simple machines with one purpose: to consume the living. As such, their hunting methods are simple: they go where there are living people.

Naturally, cities are the primary location. The Living Dead don't exist en masse in cities due to any memories of being alive, or for any other reason than the simple fact that cities have the greatest concentration of living people. Even when cities have become totally devoid of people, the Living Dead will remain there until some sound, scent, or sight causes them to leave its environs in pursuit of other prey. Zombies are incapable of realizing that an area has been consumed, and then moving on in search of more. They will simply continue shambling about the streets and buildings until some external impetus directs them otherwise.

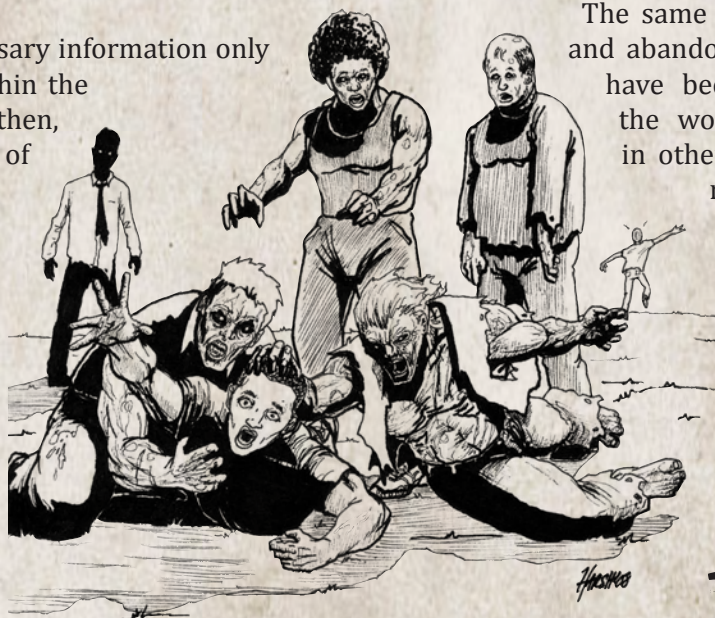
The same can be said of rural areas and abandoned highways. People that have become the Living Dead in the woods, along highways, and in other low-populated areas will remain in the area until they're either drawn away by the living, or become a part of a larger zombie group walking by on the trail of something else.

Zombies are easily distracted, and will typically follow each other across the landscape.

THE MOAN OF THE LIVING DEAD

One of the most disturbing things about the Living Dead is the moan they make whenever they encounter the living. Beginning low and from deep within, the moan quickly grows loud enough to alert any other Living Dead within hearing distance.

Whether the moan is simply a reaction to encountering prey, or an actual call to other Living Dead that the living have been found, is unknown. All that's known is that many survivors have been driven insane, confined within their own homes as the Living Dead beat tirelessly at their doors and windows, the mass moan never ending and never fading.



DESTROYING THE LIVING DEAD

Cut off a zombie's legs, and it will use its arms to drag its torso across the ground toward the living. Cut off a zombie's head, and the head will continue to bite anything that comes near. Cut off a zombie's arms and legs, and the head and torso will remain animated upon the ground.

There is only one way to truly destroy the Living Dead: destruction of the brain. No other method will put a zombie down once and for all.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ABILITIES

Simply stated: zombies have the same levels of strength they possessed while living. In no situation has one of the Living Dead displayed an increase in physical strength or lifting ability. The difference in the strength of the Living Dead and our own strength comes in muscle exertion. Although human muscles will tire the more they're exerted, thus resulting in decreased strength for at least a short period of recovery time, the muscles of the Living Dead do not tire. Living Dead can continue to apply a steady amount of pressure from their muscles for an indefinite period of time . . . or at least until the muscle tears enough to become useless, or decomposes sufficiently.

Physical agility is another matter entirely. The brain of the zombie is primitive and instinctive at best, and they possess extremely limited hand-eye-coordination. Normally, zombies move at a slow gait, and are incapable of running, jumping, and climbing in any type of hand-over-hand manner. Although they can grapple with their prey, the Living Dead are also incapable of kicking, throwing a punch, or performing any other type of hand-to-hand combat maneuver.

The vigor of a zombie, though, is perhaps its greatest physical ability. Since everything a zombie does depends solely upon the brain, and the biological functions of a zombie (such as circulatory and respiratory) have ceased to function in a way that provides any needed benefit for the body, zombies do not tire, do not become breathless, and do not feel pain (the nerves in a zombie remain dead). As a result, the Living Dead can continue to follow one of the living—moving at their slow, shuffling pace—until the prey tires and has to rest: a rest that could very well turn out to be his or her last pit-stop.

As far as intelligence, the Living Dead rank somewhere between corpse and animal. Zombies are little more than relentless machines whose sole

purpose is to devour the living. They possess no logic or problem-solving ability whatsoever. A zombie confined behind a closed door will not possess the mental ability to know to turn the handle. A typical zombie handed a knife will not know to use the knife to slice its prey, instead relying on the instinct to grapple and use its teeth. Zombies will attempt the same action repeatedly, even if unsuccessful, and don't possess even enough intelligence to know to change actions. Although a zombie might be physically tireless, it's the lack of intelligence that works in favor of the living.

MEMORIES AND RECOGNITION

The Living Dead are especially dangerous in the form of memories and recognition. Although it's rare for a zombie to have any memories of their previous life, or recognition of people they once knew, there have been reported cases of such a thing actually occurring.

People who knew where loved ones or friends were hiding, became one of the Living Dead, and then returned to the exact hiding spot to devour the victims. Other reported cases tell of zombies who continue to mimic their normal actions from life: the mechanic that continues to beat on the car in his garage with a wrench, the zombie trumpet player who still blows air through his instrument, even the Living Dead police officer that remembers how to point his gun and pull the trigger (though actually aiming the weapon seems to be beyond his capability).

The ability for the Living Dead brain to retain rudimentary memories of its time as a living person is a random occurrence, and therefore adds an unpredictable threat level to the creatures.

THE FIVE SENSES

Although it might seem so at first, the Living Dead do not possess super-human senses. The thing is, the zombie brain is not as visually dependant as the living brain and uses all senses equally. This is why a zombie can effectively hunt even with no eyes. A zombie uses its hearing and ability to smell as effectively as its eyes can see. They can hunt without eyes, in pitch darkness, and can detect and follow even the smallest sounds. Not only that, the Living Dead are able to determine the direction of a particular sound. Unfortunately, this means that they can hear a gunshot at quite some distance away and determine its direction. It also means that in good wind conditions, they can pick-up the scent of the living up to several miles away and follow the general olfactory trail.

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Fortunately for the living, however, the zombie brain is easily distracted. Zombies generally follow sounds if they can't actually see their prey, and creating a distraction to lure the Living Dead onto a false trail is usually as simple as making a lot of noise for them to follow.

FOOD AND OXYGEN

Although the lungs of the Living Dead can still inhale and exhale air (thus the moans they're able to produce), other than that their lungs serve no function. A zombie doesn't need its lungs to continue surviving, as the lungs and the circulatory system no longer function to move oxygen throughout the body. Living Dead tissue is completely independent of normal living tissue.

Likewise, it's completely unknown why the Living Dead possess such an instinctive need to consume living flesh, as the digestive system of a zombie no longer functions. Evidence has shown that consumed flesh remains within the digestive tract as it rots and decays, and is never broken down into any sort of sustaining nutrients.

HEALING AND DECOMPOSITION

The Living Dead do not heal or regenerate. Let's repeat that once more to make sure we have it in our minds: the Living Dead do not heal or regenerate. Zombies that are sliced-and-diced, shot, dismembered, and all other kinds of nastiness remain injured. A zombie with its head cut off won't be able to move its body, but the head will continue to attempt to bite anything that comes near it until the brain is destroyed. Likewise, a zombie cut in half at the waist will continue to drag its torso across the ground in search of living flesh to consume.

As far as decomposition, although whatever it is that reanimates the dead into the Living Dead slows down decomposition, zombies do continue to rot away. On average, the typical lifespan of a member of the Living Dead in normal conditions is about 6-9 years, though zombies in different environments do tend to decompose faster. Moist, hot environments slightly speed up the process, while dry climates slow it down.

THE LIVING DEAD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As mentioned above, environment plays an important role in how fast or slow a zombie will decompose. Swamps, tropical climates, and other hot and moist places will speed up the process (such zombies lose

1 point of Pace and 1 die-step of Strength for every 2 years they've been reanimated); while places like a desert will slow it down (causing the zombie to lose 1 point of Pace and 1 die-step of Strength for every 4 years they've been reanimated).

The greatest environmental condition working in favor of the living (normally speaking), though, is cold. The Living Dead have no functioning circulatory system, and thus freeze in the winter and other cold climates. This brings-up other survival concerns for the living, but at least alleviates the Living Dead threat for a time.

Unlike what happens to living cells when frozen and thawed, however, zombie cells do not expand and explode during the process. So, although the Living Dead might be frozen in place when the cold weather settles in, come the spring thaw they will inevitably be up and moving once again.

THE LIVING DEAD AND NON-HUMANS

Despite popular fears, the Living Dead cannot infect non-human species, nor do non-humans reanimate upon death. Why this is so is a mystery, but suffice it to say that animals are 100% safe from Infection by the Living Dead, and do not pose a threat of becoming zombies. That fact makes beasts of burden, and even common household pets such as dogs, extremely useful in the ensuing apocalypse.

The Living Dead, however, will still devour the flesh of animals; so keep that in mind as the players start using beasts of burden in their everyday survival.

INFECTION AND TREATMENT

So, now that you know about the Living Dead and their abilities and weaknesses, how about what it takes to become one, and how to treat those that have been attacked by one of them?

BEING BITTEN AND DYING

The bite of the Living Dead contains a high concentration of the virus that causes the dead to reanimate, making a bite from a zombie extremely fatal. In rare cases when a victim has been bitten on an arm or leg, severing the injured limb has managed to prevent death and reanimation (see: Setting Rules).

OTHER MEANS OF DEATH

The truth of the matter is that whatever is causing the

dead to rise isn't contained solely within the Living Dead, and death by zombie attack is not required. Whatever it is, is already within everyone. In other words, once we die, we become one of them as long as the brain is still intact.

The dark truth of it is: we're already the Living Dead; we just don't know it yet.

CURING THE LIVING DEAD

There are undoubtedly people amongst the living who hold onto a hope of finding a cure for the Living Dead: something that will miraculously return them to the living, and make everything go back to normal. They might be doctors or nurses, scientists, or even government officials. Unfortunately, such a hope is suicidal. There is no cure. The Living Dead are just that: dead. They're just reanimated dead with an unexplainable desire to devour human flesh. While it's possible, though unlikely, that a way to combat becoming a member of the Living Dead might be discovered— an immunity of sorts— curing someone that has reanimated is impossibility.

The only way to stop the Living Dead is to destroy the brain, pure and simple.

SETTING RULES

When dealing with a world where the Living Dead quickly outnumber the living, situations are going to come up where the characters find themselves battling a horde of ghouls, firing automatic weapons into a large group of zombies, tossing grenades, and similar combat tactics. The following setting rules are meant to mimic what's occurred in zombie film and fiction when battling the Living Dead.

IMMUNITY

In rare cases, people have turned out to be immune to the virus that causes the Living Dead infection. At the start of any campaign, secretly roll 1d20 for each character in the group. The character that received the highest roll is immune to the Infection. Although the character will gain the fever from the Infection, the fever will cease to affect him 1 day after a Vigor roll is successfully made. If the character becomes Incapacitated from the fever, he will awaken the next day at 2 levels of Fatigue, and continue to heal a level of Fatigue each day.

After the initial roll is made and the guaranteed immunity determined, secretly draw a card from the Ac-

tion Deck for the remaining characters (as well as for any replacement or new characters that might enter the campaign later). On a Joker, that character is also immune.

Do not let the character know he is immune to the Infection until the situation arises within the campaign.

THE INFECTION

The Infection is fast-acting and 100% terminal. Make sure you warn your group about the high lethality of War of the Dead before play begins, and suggest they be careful when entering into combat against the Living Dead. Anyone, Wild Card or Extra, can become infected. The only difference between the two characters is that one can attempt to soak any wounds by spending a bennie, and the other normally can't.

Whenever a character receives at least 1 wound (after soaking) from a zombie's bite, he is infected. Unless the character is the lucky one to be immune, there's no additional roll to resist the Infection, benny to spend, or special Wild Card ability to become immune. If the character didn't manage to soak all the wounds when the damage was taken, his number is up. It's just a matter of when.

Characters in the zombie genre tend to die and rise again at varying rates, which help add to the suspense of when someone will suddenly try to attack you. War of the Dead strives to imitate that. The following rules are designed to determine how long it takes an infected victim to die and become a zombie. Make sure to keep all results secret from the player group to help add to the tension of the story. Typically, this mechanic is used when one of the player group becomes infected. For a non-player character, you can have the transformation take place at whatever rate benefits the story.

Once a character becomes infected from a zombie bite, the rate of death and transformation depends on the seriousness of the wound. In Savage Worlds, this is indicated by the number of wounds the character received. For characters who receive wounds from multiple Living Dead, the rate of transformation is determined by the most serious injury suffered from a Living Dead attack, not the total wounds received.

One Wound: If the character only received a single wound, the bite isn't usually deep. Roll 1d20 to determine the number of days before the Infection begins to affect the character.

Two Wounds: When a character receives 2 wounds from a Living Dead's bite, the injury is usually enough that the virus has entered the bloodstream. Roll a d12;

the result is the number of hours before the Infection starts affecting the character.

Three (or more) Wounds: If a character receives at least 3 wounds from a single bite, roll 1d6. The result is the number of minutes before the Infection begins to affect the character.

Example: A character is attacked by a zombie and receives 1 wound. His rate of transformation is 1d20 days. The next round, another zombie attacks him and does 2 wounds. Although the character now has 3 wounds, the most serious attack only caused 2 wounds. His rate of Infection is now increased to 1d12 hours.

Either way, once the Infection begins to affect them, they gain a level of Fatigue as the fever starts. They'll continue to gain a Fatigue level each hour until falling unconscious.

As soon as the fever begins, the character must immediately make a Vigor roll at a -1 for the first level of Fatigue. If the character succeeds, he must continue to make another Vigor roll at the end of every hour with the normal penalty for continued Fatigue. If the character fails the Vigor roll (or one hour after he becomes Incapacitated from Fatigue), he's died. The character is gone, and the player is free to create a new one using the replacement character rules from the advancement section of the Savage Worlds rulebook.

Once the character has died, roll 1d6. The result is the number of minutes until he revives as one of the Living Dead (unless the brain is destroyed first).

Example: A character has been bitten by a zombie and receives 1 wound. You roll 1d20 and get a 14. Two weeks later, the Infection has spread through the character's body and the fever begins. The character gets a level of Fatigue, and must immediately make a Vigor roll at a -1 penalty. The character rolls a 5, reduced to a 4, and continues to live. An hour later, the character gains a second level of Fatigue. Now, the character makes a second Vigor roll at a -2 penalty. Once again, the character succeeds. On the third hour, the character becomes Incapacitated. The following hour, the character dies. You roll another 1d6 and roll a 2. Two minutes after death, the character revives as one of the Living Dead.

Unfortunately for the survivors, dying from a bite isn't the only way someone becomes as one of the Living Dead. Whenever a character dies of a means other than a zombie bite (as long as the brain wasn't destroyed), roll 1d6 to determine how many minutes until he reanimates.

REMOVING AN INFECTED LIMB

If the zombie made a called shot to a limb and injured the character, then there is a chance that the limb could be removed to stop the Infection from spreading. Removing the limb must be done within the allotted time rolled by the Gamemaster for the Infection (so on a 3 wound bite, if the Gamemaster rolled a 16 on the d20, then the limb must be removed within 16 minutes).

To remove the limb, a Fighting roll must be made against the victim's Parry. If the victim is restrained, the Fighting roll is against a Parry 2. At least 3 wounds must be done before the limb is removed (which means the one doing the amputation might find himself hacking or sawing for a few rounds before he accomplishes the grisly task). Removing a limb is never easy, and causes considerable trauma to the body.

Once the limb is removed, the character must make a Vigor roll at -3 (the wound penalty) or become Incapacitated. Once the character is Incapacitated, roll on the Incapacitation chart as normal, but ignore any temporary injuries. The character has already suffered a permanent injury (and gains the One Arm or One Leg Hindrance as appropriate).

Unfortunately, severing a limb doesn't always stop the Infection from spreading. Now you roll a d6. If the roll is a 5 or 6, the Infection continues to spread throughout the victim's body, and severing the limb did nothing to stop it.

DISTRACTING THE LIVING DEAD

Noise, such things as fireworks and explosions, and anything that might indicate the location of living prey to feast upon easily distract the Living Dead.

The Living Dead can be distracted in several ways. The most common is using Tricks in a Smarts vs. Smarts opposed roll. The second most common is a Test of Wills using the Taunt skill.

MOAN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Whenever the Living Dead first notice prey, they unleash a reflexive moan that is extremely unsettling to anyone who can hear it. The zombie makes an Intimidation roll against any target it notices (see Test of Wills in the Savage Worlds rulebook).

Likewise, a crowd of zombies can make a collective moan against one or more targets that can hear them.

Treat this as a group Intimidation roll (including Wild Die) against each target's Spirit.

If the crowd succeeds against one or more victims, it gains the normal benefits of a successful Test of Wills. This benefit is granted to only one zombie in the crowd—not the entire crowd. If the zombie cannot reach a victim that failed the Test of Wills that round, then the benefit is wasted.

RANDOM HEAD SHOTS

Since the George A. Romero films were never made in War of the Dead, the characters aren't going to know that a headshot is the only way to put down a member of the Living Dead when they first encounter them. Although Savage Worlds doesn't deal in random hit locations in combat, the following new rule is added to War of the Dead to help characters survive their initial encounters with the zombies.

Whenever a character rolls 2 raises on the Shooting or Fighting die, the hit is considered a lucky headshot. Although the character doesn't receive the normal +1d6 to damage for a raise, he does receive the +4 to damage for a normal blow to the head.

Do not reveal this rule to the players before it's first accomplished in the campaign. Once a zombie is destroyed in this manner, allow observing characters to make Smarts checks; anyone who succeeds discovers that head shots are needed to take zombies down and is free to pass on this revelation to others. Of course, actual called shots to the head are still a bit more reliable than hoping for two raises.

INCAPACITATING THE LIVING DEAD

The Living Dead can only be Incapacitated with a successful headshot or by Severe Damage (see below). In the case of Extras, 1 wound is enough to put the ghoul down. In the case of Wild Card zombies, however, the characters will still need to do enough damage to Incapacitate it. The Living Dead ignore all wound modifiers, so a Wild Card zombie with 3 wounds continues to be effective until a headshot is made that pushes it to Incapacitated. The only exceptions are automatic weapons, area effect weapons, and flamethrowers (see below).

AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, AREA EFFECT WEAPONS, AND FLAMETHROWERS

In addition to the traditional headshot method, auto-

matic fire, area effect weapons, and flamethrowers are also good weapon choices for eliminating the Living Dead. When a zombie reaches Incapacitated through such weapons, it's considered destroyed due to Severe Damage. Although the brain might still be active, the body is damaged enough that it's no longer a threat. The exact type of damage is left up to the Gamemaster, but should range from missing limbs to the body being cut in half from the impact.

FIRING INTO A CROWD OF LIVING DEAD

It's unlikely, regardless of what the dice say, that a character firing into a mass of zombies is going to fail to hit anything. As long as the Shooting die (regardless of Wild Die) doesn't come up a 1, apply the following mechanic when firing into a group of Living Dead.

Whenever a character fires into a crowd of Living Dead and fails the Shooting check (as long as he doesn't roll a 1 on the Shooting die), he automatically hits a number of zombies equal to the weapon's Rate of Fire being used. Use the normal rules for Double Tap, Three Round Burst, or Automatic Fire.

Example: A character firing into a crowd of 10 zombies with an M-16 on Auto rolls 3 Shooting dice and 1 Wild Die. The Shooting dice come up 3, 5, and 2, which are adjusted to 1, 3, and -1 due to the -2 penalty for firing on Auto. The Wild Die comes up a 4, adjusted down to 2. Although the character would normally miss all the shots, the 3 Shooting dice still all hit (since none of them rolled a 1). The character rolls damage for each shot against the 3 zombies, checking for Severe Damage with each hit.

SURVIVAL SKILL MODIFIERS

The Survival skill in Savage Worlds is modified as shown in the following table to better represent the post-apocalyptic nature of War of the Dead.

LOCATION OR ITEM	MODIFIER
Large city	+0
Searching for non-food supplies	+0
Forest or woods (wild game only)	+1
Location contains a large store, such as a Wal-Mart	+1
Formerly well-populated town	-1
Searching for food (except wild game)	-1
Rural town	-2
In the winter (except wild game)	-2
Searching for ammunition	-2

THE CAMPAIGN

Although the adventures for War of the Dead do a majority of the work for you, as a Gamemaster you're also going to have to take into account a few details and techniques that the adventure scripts can't account for. Such details are specific to your player-group and the experience they hope to get out of playing through a zombie apocalypse.

AMMUNITION, FOOD, AND SUPPLIES

Generally speaking, Survival and Tracking handle finding food, shelter, and supplies. A character can find enough food for themselves on a successful Survival check, and enough for 5 people on a Raise. Likewise, a character can track wild game using the Tracking skill.

In the case of ammunition, Savage Worlds already takes care of that in the way it accounts for ammunition and expenditure in combat. War of the Dead adheres to those guidelines strongly, as the number of bullets a group has left can be extremely vital to overall survival. To find more ammunition, characters can also use the Survival skill. On a success, they find enough ammunition to fill one of their weapons. On a Raise, they find enough to fill a weapon 5 times. Survival skill rolls to find ammunition can only be made in cities and towns.

Inevitably, though, there are going to be instances where a simple Survival skill check doesn't suffice. When the group finds a few abandoned cars, do they have any fuel left in them? If so, how much? Does one have a full tank? Do several of them have a half-tank? Are they all on empty? At such times, the amount of supplies found are left to the Gamemaster—and the general tone or difficulty he wants to set for the adventure that evening—since replenishing supplies is as much a part of the story in the zombie genre as battling the Living Dead.

THE FIRST 4 WEEKS

The first 4 weeks of the campaign take place aboard the maiden voyage of the Pinnacle cruise ship, and involves the head of security, Jason Kirkman. The reason for the locale is so the characters can feel the sense of urgency in the outbreak of the Living Dead. They're trapped at sea on a ship with nearly 3,000 other passengers, with the Living Dead spreading in a matter of a day, with nowhere to escape. Jason Kirkman is included in the story so the players can focus on playing everyday people typical to the zombie genre, while at

the same time getting much-needed guidance and assistance in learning to combat the Living Dead.

Once the characters make it back to the mainland in Week 5, they should already have 1 or 2 Advances under their belts, and enough knowledge on combatting the zombies to be able to survive on their own and become heroes of the apocalypse.

ADVENTURE STRUCTURE

Although Jason Kirkman is provided as a powerful ally in the first 4 weeks, he is by no means the only NPC the characters will meet throughout the campaign. Although the first image that comes to mind when talking about a zombie apocalypse is usually of a world where the characters are forced to go it alone, or exist in a vacuum surrounded by Living Dead—the structure of War of the Dead is actually the opposite. Throughout the campaign, the characters will be accompanied by a variety of NPC allies. In many cases, the allies are the impetus that get the characters involved in the next scene or adventure by causing them trouble, creating complications, or swinging a group vote. The idea behind the structure is not to railroad the characters into certain actions, but to make the world feel more alive (no pun intended) and to form a survivor group composed of more than just the characters. To accomplish that, it's vital that you—as Gamemaster—play the allies as living, breathing people with their own emotions and motivations.

The NPC allies, though, are not the only people the characters will encounter. Just as often as battling the Living Dead, the characters will also find themselves at odds with outlaws, deranged towns, rogue military, and other human adversaries.

MODIFYING THE ADVENTURES

The War of the Dead adventures provide a template on the outbreak of Living Dead, and a general story for the players to take their characters through. While they're designed for a typical player-group, and take into account the normal reactions of characters in the genre in regards to scenes and encounters, it's inevitable that players are going to react in inventive and unique ways. Not only that, it's probably also just a matter of time before someone takes even the most serious scene and injects a bit of character humor into it. Even better is when the perfect fight scene is set-up in all its Living Dead glory, and the player-group decides to high-tail it out of there before the first shot is fired or the first swing taken.

Don't sweat it. Having to alter a scene won't derail the overall campaign. There are plenty of Living Dead out there, and ample opportunities to get the characters back on the general track. Besides the unpredictable nature of players in general, War of the Dead is very much a personal journey as the characters are forced to grow and change in a world that's no longer their own. It's impossible for any adventure to script such a personal journey, and it's important that you tailor those parts of the story to your players and their characters.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Common Knowledge is very useful in the War of the Dead campaign. A former truck driver who has traveled the highways of the United States might have a Common Knowledge of the interstates, alternate routes of travel, and even where the best truck stops are located that might have supplies or a functioning shower. Likewise, a character from Jacksonville, North Carolina would have Common Knowledge of the streets and boroughs of the city, where gun shops might be located, and even a few places that potentially offer safe haven.

GAME AIDS

In addition to the figure-flats and other props we'll be releasing in support of the War of the Dead campaign, Pinnacle Entertainment has a terrific game aid available for free at their website. Found in their downloads section (<http://peginc.com/downloads.html>) under Savage Worlds—Core, it's called Dramatic Interludes and goes a long way to help liven up any journey across a war-torn world of the Living Dead.

Additional aids to assist in play are the Savage Worlds character sheets and the Combat Survival Guide, both also found at the Pinnacle Entertainment downloads page.

THE PERSONAL JOURNEY

War of the Dead draws its main inspiration from the genre works of George A. Romero and Robert Kirkman. In such stories, the Living Dead are just a means to an end. The true meat of the story is the personal drama and journey of the main characters. It's about the lengths people will go to in order to survive. It's about the changes they undergo as the story progresses. It's about how far any one person will fall into that great abyss of darkness—how much of an animal he will become—to maintain his idea of humanity.

It's vital that you, as the Gamemaster, keep that in mind when running War of the Dead for your group. A group of 5 characters who are all family men and women—complete with spouses, siblings, or children—is going to experience a different style of drama than a group composed of a retail sales clerk, truck driver, student, nurse, and police officer all banding together with only each other to worry about. Obviously, those 5 characters are going to probably begin to view each other as the only family they have left, and become concerned more with the group's overall survival. Conversely, the group of family-oriented characters is going to view their individual families as their primary concern, and might even be willing to sacrifice other player-characters to protect their own loved ones.

In other words, just those two group concepts are going to experience the personal drama of War of the Dead in very different ways.

So, while the adventures do a lot of the work for you in providing the story, encounters, and NPCs, it's going to be up to you to provide the personal journey for the characters. Don't be afraid to hit them where it hurts. Don't be afraid to turn their friends and family into the Living Dead and to force them make the tough decisions. Don't worry if you find certain characters in the group ready to sacrifice each other to the Living Dead for their own survival. It's all part of the game, and perfectly natural when dealing with the zombie apocalypse.

TOUGH DECISIONS IN A NEW WORLD

Part of the personal journey of any character is making tough decisions. The world as they knew it is gone. The rules of society are dead. They're gone and not coming back. People now have to do whatever it takes to survive not only against the Living Dead, but also other groups of survivors that might not be as friendly as they first seemed.

War of the Dead takes the characters from the everyday world of mass consumption, high-definition television, and luxury appliances into a world where they have to hunt, scavenge, and defend whatever they have just to survive. It's a nomadic world for the most part, because settling down in one place too long could make it not only easier for the Living Dead to converge on you, but if the place is secure enough it could make it a prime target for other survivor groups that need what you have—and will go to any lengths to take it from you.

So, throughout the campaign, force the characters

into tough moral dilemmas and decisions. Make them grow, and through that growth question the type of person they are becoming.

HANDLING THE OUTBREAK

Just like in the source material, the outbreak happens at a break-neck, global pace. Remember, the setting of War of the Dead never knew a George A. Romero film, so the concept of a zombie apocalypse was unknown to them until it actually occurred. Unlike vampires, werewolves, mummies, and other assorted monsters, the public and governments had no idea what it was they were combating, how things spread, what made the Living Dead, or how to destroy them—until it was already too late.

While the government might have thought getting people to gather in major cities—where the military and law enforcement could defend them—was a good idea, it really only put all the food and all the infected in one place. The major cities were the first to fall.

In the case of the military, sure, on a normal basis they'd leave their families behind and go out to defend the nation, but in a situation like the outbreak, however, many of them grew more concerned with their families and loved ones and abandoned their posts to return home against orders. They didn't care about the consequences should everything have been contained and returned to normal. They saw the world dying and rising as flesh-devouring ghouls, and their primary concern was for the safety of their own families. So, it didn't take long for the martial situation to break down and the cities to suddenly be without protection of any kind.

While the characters begin War of the Dead on the Pinnacle cruise ship as the Infection quickly spreads in a limited space, once they make it back to the mainland, be sure to hammer home the unnatural pace at which the Infection spread, and the fact that they are now witnessing the final death spasms of the world they once knew.

A NARROW WINDOW AND THE WORLD AT LARGE

Another facet of effectively running War of the Dead is maintaining a narrow view of the world at large for the group. Although at first the final broadcasts of television and radio are still taking place, once they shut down the only information the characters will be able to get will come from first-hand encounters, or the

word of other survivors (which might not always be truthful). This means that how much they know about the general world around them—the state of governments, locations of survivors, caches of supplies, and so forth—will be limited to what information they can gather on their own. No longer will there be large media outlets and a shoulder-to-shoulder population of mankind.

Such a narrow field of vision of the world around them can do wonders to add to the horror and tension of what they're experiencing. What happened to their family? Have all the cities become overrun? Is there still a national government and military? And if so, is a rescue effort going to happen?

Suddenly, the story isn't only about the next attack of the Living Dead, but it's also about what might be over that hill, or waiting for you in the next town.

ENCOUNTERING OTHER SURVIVORS

The truth is, what's waiting for you over that hill or within the next small town doesn't have to be the Living Dead to be dangerous. As a matter of fact, just as often it's more dangerous than any group of zombies.

It's other survivor groups.

Whether they have a small campsite with enough guns to keep them safe, or have fortified a small town, all survivor groups will have one thing immediately in common: a need for additional supplies. And if your group has supplies they can use, the question arises as to whether they will welcome you into their midst, or try to kill you to take it. Even if they initially welcome you, that could just as easily be a ruse to kill you in your sleep.

The biggest factor when encountering other survivors is trust. How far, if at all, can you trust them? The interesting thing about whatever decisions the characters make concerning a particular survivor group, is that not trusting them might have just saved their collective lives, or might have cost them much-needed allies that had no ill intentions toward them.

Welcome to the zombie apocalypse genre.



CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK ONE)

JASON KIRKMAN

Throughout the first 4 weeks, Jason Kirkman is a prominent NPC allied with the characters. Portions of the adventures assume Jason Kirkman to be leading the way in keeping the characters moving along the early stages of the campaign. Do not allow Jason to overshadow the characters, and don't hesitate to move him to the background whenever the characters take action within the story. Jason is meant to be a Gamemaster tool to keep the story moving forward, not to replace the characters.

ALTERNATE CUTS

Some adventures will contain breakout text titled "Alternate Cut". The Alternate Cuts are designed to guide you in replacing certain NPC and NPC driven events with the player-characters instead having a personal tie to the story factors. The changes are dependent upon the structure of the group and any personal NPCs—mainly friends and family—they have with them, and therefore won't work with every group.

GM'S SUMMARY

War of the Dead is a campaign that takes the players from the initial outbreak of the Living Dead to a world war-torn and forever changed.

Broken down into four chapters, Chapter One begins aboard the maiden voyage of the Pinnacle cruise ship, as the group first encounters the Living Dead. Unfortunately for the characters, having 3,000 people in such a confined space enables the number of Living Dead to spread quickly, and before they know it— they're forced into a battle of pure survival against a growing population of zombies.

ACT ONE: AND SO IT BEGINS . . .

As the adventure opens, the characters are in the ballroom, getting ready for the kick-off party on the first night of the maiden voyage to the Bahamas. The ship has already been at sea for a majority of the day, and the characters have already had time to get settled in, start exploring the ship, visit the bars, have dinner, and so forth.

PROLOGUE: A RANDOM GATHERING

In order to get the adventure rolling and the players into character, you might want to run a short prologue to help establish the scene; perhaps introducing a few of the player-characters to each other or other NPCs.

A good way to do this is to either run some role-play at one of the ship's bars, at one of the parties, or at dinner where people are normally placed at tables in assigned seating. Since a majority of the NPCs that become infected throughout the cruise ship portion of Chapter One will normally be unnamed, this also allows you to set-up a few encounters with people that players might get to know a little before they become zombies.

SCENE ONE: CELEBRATION

Once the players are settled in, read the following text:

You're all in the main ballroom, celebrating the maiden voyage of the Pinnacle cruise ship. Gambling tables of all sorts are set-up throughout the room, outlining a massive dance floor. Various forms of entertainment— from jugglers to show-girls— fill the few empty spaces that remain. The room is packed. Several bars line the walls. People mill about, laughing and socializing, on the four balconies that span the area overhead. Live music fills the hall as the singer performs a rendition of "Luck Be A Lady Tonight."

The sound of silverware ringing against a fine, crystal glass comes through the speakers.

"Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, but your attention please just for a moment." After several seconds, the noise begins to die down as he taps the crystal a few more times. "Please," he continues with a smile, "this will take only a moment."

The ballroom grows quite as all eyes turn towards him on the second floor balcony. He's a tall man, with perfectly combed black hair, blue eyes, and a strong jaw. Everyone immediately recognizes him as Mr. Forthington, the owner of the Pinnacle.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of myself, Captain Romero, and his crew . . . I welcome you to the maiden voyage of the Pinnacle!" As he raises his glass, cheers fill the room. "While the hundreds of men and women that serve aboard this vessel have but one goal: to make your dreams come true, I've ever had but a single dream. A dream to create the most state-of-the-art pleasure ship, open to passengers of all financial backgrounds, that would provide happiness and entertainment like that found on no other! And thanks to you, that dream has come true!" He once again raises his glass. "To the Pinnacle! And more importantly, to all of you!"

Cheers erupt throughout the hall as the music once again starts and the entertainment continues.

UPCOMING COMPLICATIONS

In truth, Mr. Forthington is bankrupt due to the Pinnacle. Unfortunately, the cost of building the ship exceeded expected limits, and there is little chance he'll be able to recoup any sort of financial balance in time. In the Week 2 adventure, a group of mercenaries will attack the ship. They were hired to destroy the ship as pirates so he could collect the insurance, but in such a way that the passengers could get to the lifeboats before she sank. As can be expected, their arrival will be after the ship is infested with Living Dead, and will only serve to complicate matters more. Luckily for the characters, the mercenaries will at least provide a source of weaponry.

A man, who looks to be in his early 40's, comes over and starts talking to the characters. He's from Texas, and owns an oil-drilling company and several cattle farms. He speaks in a thick accent as he strikes up a conversation about the ship, how expensive it must have been to build it, and some of the odd people on board. All in all, he's just being outwardly friendly, and introduces himself as Mr. Billy Haynes as you set-up what's about to happen.

Mr. Haynes begins to sweat and becomes a little short of breath as he talks, eventually having to lean against something to maintain his footing. Asking if he's all right just has him wave the question off, claiming he must be a little seasick. Anyone with the Knowledge (Medicine) or Healing skill recognizes the symptoms as a heart attack. Regardless, he suddenly collapses to the floor, unconscious.

Any character with the Healing skill can perform CPR until the ship's medics arrive. Meanwhile, his wife comes running over to his side, naturally in a panic. When the medics get there, they immediately take over CPR as they rush him to the infirmary.

After the medics and his wife have left, Captain Romero tries to get everyone back to celebrating, assuring them that the medics will do everything they can for the gentleman.

Once the characters are on their way from the ballroom, proceed to Scene Two: Infection.

SCENE TWO: INFECTION

As the characters are walking through the corridors, Mr. Haynes' wife comes running up to them in a panic. Her right forearm is bloody, and all the color has drained from her face. At the moment, she's hysterical as she keeps saying something about her husband and everyone else being dead. Regardless of what the characters might want to do, she insists that they accompany her to her room. She needs to rest, and to say she's scared senseless would be an understatement.

How the characters handle this is up to them. They can call ship security, take her to her room, go and investigate the infirmary on their own, or any combination of actions. Once the woman gets to her room, she'll grow faint and lie down. A few minutes later, she's unconscious.

Any characters investigating the infirmary find a grotesque scene. Have them make Guts checks at -2 for the Fear/Nausea result. As they enter the medical suite, read the following:

As you open the door, the scene that confronts you makes your blood run cold and your stomach feel like it's trying to escape through your throat. Blood covers the walls in dark, sticky smears; and pools on the floor in gelatinous puddles. Four bodies are scattered around the room, all of them torn open. One, a male, has his throat ripped out. Another, a female, has a huge bite in her upper leg that caused her to bleed out. The final two have flesh ripped out of their necks as though by a wild animal.

The furthest body from the door is still twitching as another figure hunches over it, devouring flesh from the shoulder. It looks up at you with near feral eyes, and the face that confronts your own is Mr. Haynes. His lips peeled back to reveal blood-caked teeth.

His mouth opens and a low moan that grows slowly in volume fills the room, as he rises and slowly lurches toward you.

As the zombie moves toward them, have all the characters make another Guts check at -1, this time for a full-out Terror result. Any characters that don't flee, and are otherwise able to act, can attempt to fend off the thing. Keep in mind that although the players



know how to kill a zombie, their characters are just now encountering the things for the first time. If anyone goes for a headshot right off the bat, make sure he has a plausible explanation for doing so and isn't just meta-gaming.

Obviously, unless Mr. Haynes is taken down via a headshot, he'll keep coming for them. The only other option is to close the door and trap him inside. If they brought shipboard security with them, their shots should be planted more toward the upper center mass, since that's where most law enforcement training teaches to shoot.

Once the characters destroy the zombie or escape from him, they'll most likely either want to contact security, report to crewmembers or the captain, or some other sort of action that brings the events to official notice. Whatever they choose to do, allow them to head off to take care of it. If any characters stayed behind with the wife, switch the story's focus back to them.

The woman remains unconscious for several minutes before her breathing grows more and more shallow, and finally stops mid-inhale. Anyone checking her pulse easily determines that she's dead. Allow the characters to let their guard down for about 30 seconds before they hear a low, inhuman moan coming

from her. Almost immediately, her eyes spring open as she sits up in the bed. She climbs off the bed and starts slowly lumbering toward them.

At this point, the characters had better know something is wrong, but probably don't quite understand. If she gets within arm's reach, she'll make a Grapple attempt, and then try to bite a character. Allow the character to make an opposed roll of Agility vs. her Strength to break away.

Like with the Infirmary scene, the characters should have a plausible explanation for any immediate headshot. Otherwise, unless it realistically occurs to them, their only course of action is going to be to confine her to the room. Fortunately, that's an easy task. Just close the door. Zombies have very low intelligence, mostly instinct, and won't know how to open a door.

Now, if none of the characters stayed behind with the wife, that's not a problem. Anyone that comes to check on her finds her already turned, and more than ready to attack and eat them. If they sent crewmembers to her room, simply run the scene like in the Infirmary, and give her a victim or two in order to help spread the Infection around the ship.

What they do next is going to depend on the group's play style, but alerting the Captain and his crew is probably going to be the first thing, unless they have family onboard. Warning any family to stay in their rooms should probably be the first action, in that case.

Once the crew is alerted—and more than likely doesn't believe them—the subsequent investigation can further be used to play-out the Infection in typical zombie genre fashion. Obviously, as mentioned previously, most law enforcement training is to shoot center mass. This will allow Mr. Haynes and his wife to get loose from the rooms, maybe kill another crewmember or two, and be loose on the ship. Even if they're destroyed, there's still the medical staff and any dead security personnel that will soon become Living Dead.

Finish the scene off with a few more attacks and turnings, and then head into the next scene. Strangely, as fate or luck would have it, the corridors where the zombies are located are vacant of other passengers at the moment; so the characters and any NPC friends or family with them are the only witnesses to the unfolding events.

ACT TWO: LINES IN THE SAND

The characters become trapped in the middle of not only a war against the Living Dead, but also a war between various members of the ship's crew.

SCENE ONE: CONFINED TO QUARTERS

At this point, Captain Romero and the head of ship-board security, Jason Kirkman, want to keep what's happening from leaking to the passengers at large. As a result, they order the characters to say nothing to anyone, not even their families or friends, and to return to their cabins. The crew will handle the situation and make sure everything remains secure. Anyone who leaks any information about what happened will be tossed into the brig until they return to the United States, at which point they'll be turned over to the authorities for inciting a riot. After the warning, Kirkman has security escort them back to their respective cabins. It probably goes without saying that the characters aren't going to like the situation, and more than likely have dwindling faith in the crew's ability to keep them safe.

In order to keep the group somewhat together, just have their cabins be in relative close proximity to each other—if not along the same corridor, at least within corridors nearby to each other. That way, the next zombie encounter trigger is within their general vicinity and keeps everyone in the action.

As the characters are given time in their respective cabins, now would be a good time for you to have them do a little role-playing; either with friends and loved ones (another character or NPC), or have them go over the thoughts and feelings of the character.

SCENE TWO: CHAOS ENSUES

Once you're satisfied that the personal journey is beginning, proceed with the following text:

A female scream, primordial in its terror, splits the air even through the walls of the corridors and cabins. A few seconds pass, and then the scream comes again, this time being cut-off before it can end on its own. A few seconds later, another scream, somewhat weaker . . . crying for help!

Any characters going to investigate hear more screams and cries for help coming from within a local cabin. Already the corridor is filling-up with people, as the commotion has drawn them to the hallway and from their own cabins. A voice in the growing crowd yells for someone to get security.

Unfortunately, three other men got to the room first and have already forced the door open. The zombie, which appears to have once been a man in his late 40's, with thinning black hair and slightly overweight, is struggling with two of them as it bites one of them on the arm.

If the characters discovered how to dispose of the Living Dead in one of the previous encounters, they can perform a headshot with an additional +2 to the roll (therefore suffering no negative modifier), since it's in a melee struggle with the men and is extremely slow. Otherwise, they'll have to attempt to push it back into the room and seal it in.

As far as the room, the voice they heard belongs to a woman with blonde hair, maybe 16 or 17 years old, standing on the bed with her back against the wall, and still holding the pole from the closet that she used to fend off the zombie. Her left arm is covered in blood from a deep bite.

Once the zombie is sealed in or disposed of, and the girl is coaxed or physically pulled from the room, 6 security officers and Jason Kirkman arrive on the scene. The girl is screaming something about her father—the zombie—and is in hysterics as her mind tries unsuccessfully to cope with what just happened. Unfortunately, the man that got bitten on the forearm disappeared during the added confusion of the characters arriving to help, and no one in the crowd paid him enough attention to know where he went.

Kirkman orders two of his men to take the girl for immediate medical treatment. He then orders everyone else to clear the corridor, trying to assure them that everything is under control. As can be expected, people are extremely slow to listen as anyone within eyesight of the room saw the zombie in the corridor. This can be made even more of a problem for the security personnel if the zombie was sealed in the room instead of destroyed, as it continues to pound against the door.

Any of the characters that have started to understand about the relationship between the bites, dying, and becoming a Living Dead might want to start a private search for the missing man. Of course, if they let Kirkman know, they can check security cameras to see who the man was once they check his face with registered passengers. How they handle it, though, is up to them.

KIRKMAN, THE MISSING MAN, AND THE GIRL

If they inform Kirkman, there's a good news/bad news situation. Within the hour, he'll identify the man. Unfortunately, he's not in his cabin when they go looking for him. A search of the cameras will show that he stumbled into a crew elevator behind a crew member that he attacked (he'd already turned) and is somewhere below decks near engineering. Behind the scenes, the zombie is now running, and has killed several other crewmembers in the dark and the noise, who will also rise as Living Dead. As far as the girl, Kirkman has her quarantined due to her injuries. Once she turns, he'll also begin putting things together and understanding the bite-to-Living-Dead relationship.

Be sure to play-up the scene as Kirkman and his men are losing control of the situation. More people than just the characters know about what's going on, and it just can't be swept under the rug like before. Kirkman, becoming frustrated as the crowd refuses to listen, orders everyone back to their cabins, claiming that until he and his men can get to the bottom of what happened, he needs the corridors and other areas clear of traffic. He only wants the crewmembers in the corridors, and any room service the passengers order will be on the house until further notice. Anyone who doesn't comply will be arrested and placed in the brig for jeopardizing ship safety.

He then turns to the characters and orders them to come with him. They need to talk.

SCENE THREE: QUESTIONABLE MOTIVES

Kirkman is silent as he leads them to a lower deck, through the main security room with its dozens of camera monitors, desks, and other electronic equipment, and into his private office. Once they all step inside, he closes the door.

Kirkman seats himself behind his desk and stares at each of the characters in turn. After a few seconds, he flat-out asks them what's going on. At this stage, all he knows is that the impossible is happening aboard

his ship and, every time it occurs, the characters are right there with it. Although he hasn't directly said it, his tone and mannerism should make it clear he's entertaining the suspicion that they are somehow connected to the events, if not directly causing them. Security cameras show that Mr. Haynes was talking with them as he went into cardiac arrest. Next thing anyone knows, he's attacking and murdering members of the medical staff, and is something . . . animalistic. Kirkman doesn't believe in anything supernatural, and his natural inclination is to assume some sort of terrorist weapon.

Although the players should role-play through the encounter with Kirkman, they can also make a Persuasion roll to help bring him around. Kirkman's attitude starts as Hostile. If the attempt is role-played well, give a +2 to the Persuasion roll. The most they could get is a Neutral result (a Raise), which will start to bring him around, but not make him their best friend just yet.

However the characters decide to handle Kirkman, just as the conversation is picking-up steam, Mr. Forthington and Captain Romero enter the office.

Mr. Forthington ignores the characters as he immediately confronts Kirkman, though Captain Romero will give them a curious glance. As Mr. Forthington stands before Kirkman's desk, his face firm and his voice cold, read the following script or paraphrase it as best fits your group's play style.

Mr. Forthington: I understand you've requested that Captain Romero contact the Coast Guard.

Kirkman: That's right. Whatever's happening on this ship, it's putting everyone in serious danger.

Mr. Forthington: I see. Well, I've instructed the captain to deny your request.

Kirkman shoots to his feet.

Kirkman: You did WHAT?

Mr. Forthington: Whatever is happening, I expect you and your men to handle and contain the situation. There's absolutely no need to alert the Coast Guard.

Kirkman: Are you out of your mind? We have crew dead. Passengers dying. I don't even know what the Hell is happening to the dead, nevermind—

Mr. Forthington: And I approved you to the position you maintain for a reason, Mr. Kirkman.

I expect the situation handled from within. The last thing we need is the Coast Guard involved.

Kirkman: You're right. That's the FIRST thing we need!

Mr. Forthington steps back and smiles, an expression that's all predatory.

Mr. Forthington: Mr. Kirkman. The Pinnacle is my pleasure ship. You understand that, mine. You, Captain Romero— all the way down to the assistant chef— work for me. And I've entirely too much invested in this enterprises to watch it all go to Hell on the maiden voyage. I expect the situation to be dealt with and contained. And I expect it to be done within the next 24 hours, or I will hire someone who can. Have I made myself clear?

Kirkman: You have no idea what—

Mr. Forthington: Have I made myself clear?

Kirkman stares at him, his anger barely contained.

Kirkman: Yeah. Yes, you have.

Mr. Forthington: Good. (He turns to the characters) I apologize for recent events. Please, enjoy the rest of your cruise; and if you need anything at all, don't hesitate to ask one of the crew.

With that, Mr. Forthington and Captain Romero depart. Captain Romero shoots a slight shake of his head at Kirkman behind Forthington's back, almost an indication that he doesn't agree with Mr. Forthington either.

Once the two leave, Kirkman sits back down, furious. He's silent for several moments before speaking:

"All right," Kirkman says as he looks at all of you, "that asshole's going to get everyone killed. I really don't know if you people have anything to do with this or not. But, I know how to find out. You've seen these things. You've come into contact with them. Effective immediately, I want all of you to work closely with me and my men. We need to contain this, regardless of that idiot's reasons. Whatever's happening, if it spreads too far, we could be looking at close to 3,000 of those . . . things . . . in a seriously confined space."

CELL PHONES AND CALLS FOR HELP

Inevitably, the characters will want to use their cell phones to call for help. This should provide the first clue that something far bigger than the Pinnacle is going on, as they learn the cellular networks are busy. Unfortunately, the Living Dead is not confined to the Pinnacle, but are a global catastrophe, and the communication networks are overwhelmed.

Exactly how Kirkman regards and treats the characters depends on the results of the Persuasion roll and role-playing earlier in the scene, and you should adjust his behavior toward them accordingly. The key element is that Kirkman is now drawing a line in the sand between Mr. Forthington and the safety of the Pinnacle. Whatever can be said about Kirkman, the safety of the people on the ship is his primary concern.

Unfortunately, things hit the fan almost as soon as it looks like everyone might have a little breathing space. Once you're satisfied with how things are going between Kirkman and the characters, proceed to Act Three.

ACT THREE: OUTBREAK

Jason Kirkman and the characters respond to a distress call on the passenger decks, only to find the Living Dead loose and spreading.

SCENE ONE: SHIP OF THE LIVING DEAD

Kirkman's radio suddenly comes to life as a panicked security officer on the other end reports a breach in the medical suite. The things inside have gotten loose, and there are numerous casualties. Kirkman's eyes go wide as he stares in disbelief at the characters. He had told his men to secure that door until they could figure out what to do with the bodies.

The transmission is cut off just as the officer on the other end screams.

Kirkman leads the characters, at a run, to the medical suite. As they enter the corridor, they see blood everywhere. In the distance, from another corridor,

screams of terror and pain are heard. The door to the suite is open, and the bodies of several passengers are lying haphazardly along the floor of the hallway. At the far end, several feet from the medical suite, two zombies feast on the dead, including two security officers. They are half of the reanimated medical staff.

Kirkman draws his gun as he orders the characters to head down a connecting corridor, check out the screams, and report back. He orders them not to engage, just to report.

As the characters head down the other corridor, following the screams, they turn the corner into the following nightmare:

As you turn the corner, the source of the screams assails you. Over a dozen passengers attempt to push through each other, step on one another, and do anything they can to get themselves to safety as three of the ... things ... grab and bite into them, ripping huge chunks of flesh with their teeth and spraying the walls with red. Two of the creatures are the rest of the medical staff, while the third looks to be what was once a passenger, his neck and chest ripped open.

Your breath stops as the sudden weight of the situation slams into your chest. Kirkman's worse fears of an outbreak have begun to come true. Over 3,000 people on a confined cruise ship, and Hell has come to Earth ...

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH [WEEK TWO]

CELL PHONES NEVER WORK WHEN YOU NEED THEM!

Although a new gaming week, the story's timeframe has not been more than a few hours since the start of the campaign. At this stage, cellular networks are still overwhelmed and the characters are unable to make calls.

The maiden voyage of the Pinnacle cruise ship has turned into a disaster on the seas, as the outbreak of Living Dead spreads throughout the near 3,000 passengers.

After being discovered at the scene of all the outbreaks so far, the characters were forced to work with Jason Kirkman—the head of ship security—in finding out what's causing passengers to die and reanimate as flesh-eating ghouls. Unfortunately, the situation went from bad to worse when the Living Dead confined to the medical suite were released and attacked passengers throughout the corridors.

Faced with a situation spiraling out of control, the characters' lives are about to be made even more complicated when mercenaries hired by the owner of the Pinnacle attack the ship, all to cause it to sink for insurance purposes.

Week 2 moves at a breakneck, action-packed pace as the characters are thrust into the life-and-death situation spreading across the ship.

ACT ONE: IMPOSSIBLE EVENTS

The characters must help Jason Kirkman deal with the growing number of Living Dead attacks on the Pinnacle, while at the same time keeping themselves alive.

SCENE ONE: DEATH ON THE HIGH SEAS

The adventure continues exactly where last week left off. The characters had just turned the corridor into a grisly scene of 3 Living Dead attacking a panicked mob of ship passengers. To help reset the scene for them, read the following:

At the far end of the corridor, carnage paints the walls red as over a dozen panicked passengers stampede each other to get away from the three creatures assailing them. You watch in horror as teeth dig deep into soft flesh, ripping huge chunks as the arterial spray erupts like a fountain. Screams of both terror and death fill the hallway.

MR. AND MRS. HAYNES

If Mr. and Mrs. Haynes weren't destroyed in the Week 1 adventure, they've both managed to escape thanks to the security breach in the medical suite and the Haynes' cabin. If that's the case, they're roaming other corridors of the ship, effectively spreading the infection by attacking other passengers. Be sure to run a small side scene to bring them back into the story.

WAR OF THE DEAD

Since the corridors are only 2" wide (approximately 12 feet), anyone firing at the zombies hits an Innocent Bystander on a 1 or 2 for a normal gun, and a 1-3 on a shotgun. Now, the characters were told by Kirkman to simply observe and report back to him. If they enter into combat, Kirkman won't punish them for putting lives at risk (including their own), but will verbally come down on them for doing so. After all, the Infection is still a new situation and he has liability and safety to worry about.

How they handle the situation is up to them. They can attack the Living Dead if they know how to destroy them. They can attack also try to confine them to one or more cabins, even if it means distracting them and acting as bait to get them away from the mob.

If the characters try to approach the zombies, they have to push their way through the crowd. Have them make Strength checks at -2 to do so. Failure indicates the press of bodies running away from the zombies (toward the characters) is too much for them to get through that round.

If they report back to Kirkman, he's managed to either destroy the Living Dead in his corridor with his pistol, or has managed to confine them back to the medical suite. Whichever the case, he calls more security officers to the deck as he races off to face the other Living Dead.

Deal Action Cards to the characters, since they'll be entering combat either on their own or with Kirkman.

Once the 3 Living Dead are dealt with, Kirkman has his security people get all the injured down to the Security Office along with all available medical personnel. They'll set-up a makeshift Infirmary there until the Medical Suite can be secured properly. If the Living Dead were confined to the suite once again, he'll dispose of them and have his men get whatever supplies the medical staff needs.

He then tells the characters to follow him, and heads off toward the Bridge.

ACT TWO: COMPLICATIONS

The characters learn Mr. Forthington's plans for the Pinnacle cruise ship, have to hunt one of the Living Dead in the bowels of the ship, and come face-to-face with the mercenary team hired to sink the cruise ship.

SCENE ONE: DEPUTIZED

Kirkman, with the characters in tow, storms onto the Bridge. Captain Romero and his men are taken off-

TAKING OUT THE BRAIN

If the characters haven't figured it out yet, Kirkman manages to get a headshot on one of the Living Dead, dropping the creature once and for all. At that moment, it should dawn on anyone that can succeed at a Smarts check how to take the things down.

guard as Kirkman immediately announces that he's there to relieve the Captain of his duties for the safety of the vessel. The characters are his witnesses to the action.

Captain Romero counters that he was willing to contact the Coast Guard, and had every plan to do so, but Mr. Forthington had special security measures built into the Pinnacle. Measures activated and deactivated only by codes that he controls, and he's shut down communications. Kirkman is furious. Unfortunately, before he can do much about it, all the lights and power die as the red lights of the emergency generators come on.

Something has just cut the power to the ship. Kirkman immediately blames Mr. Forthington.

As he prepares to go confront the ship's owner, his radio alerts him to a situation on Deck 3. Kirkman curses and tells his men to meet him there, and he orders the characters to follow him as he takes off at a run toward the stairwells.

As can no doubt be gathered by now, it's impossible to determine everyone that's been attacked and infected, as not everyone is reporting to the ship's staff. As has been happening a lot so far, the characters encounter more Living Dead roaming the corridors attacking unsuspecting passengers. This time, they find 5 Living Dead and at least 4 injured that they can quickly determine. Three security officers arrive as back up.

Deal Action Cards as the characters must once again help Kirkman and his men battle the Living Dead.

Once the battle's over, Kirkman orders one of his men to get down to the Security Suite and get weapons for each of the characters. He has another security officer get the wounded down to the temporary infir-

mary, and calls for assistance if any passengers need to be transported due to severe injuries. He then orders everyone else to help get the bodies out of the corridors. They'll have to carry them to the deck with the medical suite, which is where he's going to be storing them until he can figure out something else.

Once the bodies are taken care of and the wounded moved, Kirkman asks— almost begs— the characters to assist him further. He can't force them, and he's likely to lose his career once this mess is contained, but he desperately needs people capable of handling these things. Once the characters agree, he gives everyone that isn't a "kid" a Glock 9mm with 3 extra clips (68 bullets per character). If they've never fired a gun before, he shows them how to load, ready, and hold the weapon. He also orders them to never fire into a crowd of passengers, no matter what.

He instructs his entire security staff to get into the corridors and keep everyone in their rooms. He doesn't care what they have to do, just make it happen. He pulls a few other personnel aside, and orders them to assist the characters in moving their belongings— and any family members they have with them— to the crew deck. They'll be safer there. He also orders 4 security officers to stand guard on the deck. He tells the characters to meet him back on this deck after they're moved. He wants them to accompany him to the Engineering Deck. They need to find out what cut the power.

SCENE TWO: THE INFECTION SPREADS

Unfortunately, just as the characters are in the middle of moving their belongings and any family members, they turn down a corridor with the security personnel and encounter 2 Living Dead. The zombies are devouring what appears to have once been a woman in her 30's and her young son. The Living Dead look up and moan, causing any family members to make a Guts check for Terror at -1.

Once the Living Dead are dealt with, continue the Personal Journey, as the characters must now contend with calming down any family members, and assuring them that everything will okay.

Don't rush this particular scene, and make sure to give the players plenty of role-playing time.

SCENE THREE: UNWANTED GUESTS

As the characters exit the stairwell into the Engineering Deck deep within the bowels of the ship, read the following:

You exit the stairwell into the darkened labyrinth of machinery deep within the cruise ship. Despite the power being out, the loud rumble and whine of the ship's engine's and power system fills the air, nearly drowning out any normal sounds. The door to the stairwell closes, and as it clicks shut, you hear the muffled sound of automatic gunfire from somewhere deeper in Engineering.

Kirkman orders everyone to have their guns ready. The ship doesn't have automatic weapons, so he's not sure what's going on.

All rolls in the Engineering room are at -2 due to the dark conditions. The room runs nearly the length of the ship: close to 900 feet. Anything beyond 10" (60 feet) can't be seen in the current lighting conditions.

Run the scene slowly and build tension, with Kirkman and the characters moving cautiously throughout the room; pointing their guns around machinery, down darkened narrow-ways, and so forth. As they round a piece of machinery, automatic fire erupts in their direction, scoring sparks from the metal around them. You don't have to make a Shooting roll, as the shots aren't designed to hit the characters or Kirkman, just surprise them.

As everyone ducks behind cover, Kirkman returns fire in the general vicinity. As he does, and all attention is on him and wherever the shots came from, the characters are attacked by the Living Dead.

As Kirkman continues to return fire in the direction of the automatic weapon shots, you (indicate a character) feel an arm wrap around your neck, its muscles as tense as steel cables. Despite the heavy sound of the ship's engines and machinery, the unmistakable moan fills your ears...



Deal Action Cards to the characters, Kirkman, and the zombies. There are 4 zombies in all, with one of them grappling with the character.

All of you turn around and see one of those things pulling (indicate character) to the floor as three others reach out to take their fill of warm, soft human flesh. Kirkman yells an expletive as he points his gun at the Living Dead, his eyes wide in terror.

Give the grappled character a chance to either Shoot the zombie at point-black range (Shooting vs. Parry), or make a Strength vs. Strength roll to break free. Once the character breaks free— or is bitten— the rest of the group can fire on the Living Dead without risk of hitting him or her.

Unknown to the characters, there are approximately 35 Living Dead currently left in Engineering. The gunfire on the deck has attracted the zombies. One minute from now (10 rounds), 16 Living Dead will converge on the characters, while the other 19 converge on the other team deeper in the room.

Once the 4 Living Dead are handled, Kirkman tells the characters to stay wary and alert. They don't know who else is down here, but they have to find out. Whoever it is has automatic weapons, and he can't have that plus those creatures running around the ship with all the passengers. Besides, he also says, he isn't above a few accidental shootings in the dark if it's the only way to get the automatic weapons for their own usage.

Kirkman continues to lead the characters deeper into the room. Although they can't see the muzzle flash, they can hear the occasional automatic burst from deeper within. The sounds of gunfire reverberate off the metal walls and machinery, and any Notice check to tell exactly where it's coming from is at a -2 penalty.

Let Kirkman lead them to a center area where they have narrow corridors and darkness all around them. As he enters the area, and spins around scanning for hostiles, somewhere at the front end of the deck is the sound of a small explosion. Kirkman's eyes grow wide at the sound, which he recognizes from his military days. Before he can react, however, the Living Dead shamle out of the narrow corridors between the machinery, and head straight for him and the characters, cutting off all means of escape without a fight.

Deal Action Cards! The Living Dead start 5" away from the characters. If two or more Living Dead attempt to grapple the same character, use the Ganging Up rules from the SWEX.

The characters don't have to defeat all the zombies, just enough to be able to make it down a corridor between the machinery and to safety. Remember, they have the advantage of speed. The Living Dead only move at a Pace 4 and can't run.

Once they manage to fight their way to safety, Kirkman leads the team to where the explosion came from. As soon as he sees it, he curses. Shaped-charges have blown the door that leads to the stairwell off the hinges, and already 3 Walking Dead are shambling up the stairs. Once those 3 are disposed of, Kirkman explains that this door leads directly to the Bridge. Already, they can hear automatic gunfire coming from above them. Kirkman crouches low and takes off in as much of a run as he can manage.

As they reach the top of the stairs, they see the following:

Almost 2 dozen of the Living Dead fill the bridge as crewmembers are attacked and bitten. Blood fountains into the air. Amidst the carnage, 4 men in paramilitary outfits open fire with automatic weapons, the bullets exploding through the bodies of the Living Dead and ricocheting off the bulkheads above you. Several bullets take Captain Romero square in the chest, and he goes down in a spray of blood.

Kirkman drops flat to the stairs, yelling a string of curses.

Chaos has broken loose on the Bridge. Who the paramilitary men are should be a primary question as the Living Dead take over the ship. Unfortunately, the question has to wait as things go from bad to worse.

Kirkman and the rest of you remain pressed flat against the stairs, unable to make it onto the Bridge without being shot. And then you hear it even over the constant gunfire. A low moan growing louder, almost a mass, as the shapes of the Living Dead from the Engineering Deck move up the stairwell toward you, drawn by the promise of warm flesh, the screams of the dying, and the sound of the weapons.

WAR OF THE DEAD

Now the characters are stuck between the storm of bullets and death on the Bridge, and the Living Dead coming up the stairwell.

Deal Action Cards as the characters are forced to fend for their lives in what appears to be an impossible situation.

As they battle for their lives against the Living Dead marching up the stairs, several from the Bridge respond to the new gunfire and start moving in their direction. After several rounds— with the Living Dead continuing t up the stairs— Kirkman takes a quick assessment of the situation and decides to chance the Bridge. He orders the characters to follow him as he attempts headshots against those coming toward the stairs from the Bridge.

Once the characters make it onto the Bridge and have all acted for the round, read the following:

Kirkman fires at several of the Living Dead as he remains low, all of you following suit. One of the paramilitary pulls a grenade from his bandolier. Both Kirkman and another soldier scream: "No!" almost in unison as the man is taken down by 2 Living Dead. The grenade, the pin already out, rolls underneath the nautical counter.

Kirkman curses again as he screams for everyone to MOVE, and heads for the door leading from the Bridge to the corridor.

For this round, deal an Action Card for the grenade to see when it explodes. Kirkman, the 3 remaining paramilitary soldiers, and the characters must all make it out of the room in time. Anyone that doesn't, takes 3d6 damage in a Medium Burst Template (the entire Bridge). Those in the Corridor take 1d6 damage as the bulkhead stops most of the blast.

The Bridge is pretty much destroyed, and the zombies on the stairwell cut off. Smoke and debris fill the corridor. For the sake of the story, even if they're injured, make sure Kirkman and the paramilitary leader survive.

Once everyone gets their bearings, Kirkman recovers first and tumbles over to the paramilitary leader. He puts his pistol to the man's head. As soon as Kirkman levels the gun at Colonel Brackenridge, the other two soldiers point their SMGs at him. Now would be a good time for the characters to back-up Kirkman, since they out number the soldiers.

Once the standoff is established, Kirkman demands

to know who they are and what the hell is going on. He even accuses them of being behind the creatures and the carnage on the ship. The Colonel denies being responsible for the Living Dead, even citing that he just lost 3 men— half of his team— to the things. Despite his military experience, the Colonel is almost panicking himself as he keeps asking what those things were. Kirkman, though, is slowly losing his mind along with his temper, and the Colonel recognizes it. He steadies himself and tells Kirkman they were hired to damage the Pinnacle so it would sink, but to make sure it was done in a way that would still allow the passengers to evacuate in the lifeboats. When asked why, the Colonel tells him that he didn't ask. He took the job, and that's all he cared about. Ask the owner why he'd wanted it sunk.

If interrogated further by the characters, he'll reveal that they were going to get off the boat as civilians in the lifeboats. The explosions were to be shaped-charges in the Engineering Deck at weak points in the hull. If none of the characters ask, however, the Colonel won't reveal those two pieces of information. Kirkman won't think to ask, he's other things on his mind.

Kirkman tells the characters to disarm the soldiers. When the Colonel says he can't let him do that, and reaches for his own weapon lying on the floor next to him, Kirkman cocks the hammer on his gun. He didn't ask the Colonel's permission. Hand over the weapons or die, simple as that. After a moment's pause, the Colonel tells his men to comply.

The moans of the Living Dead rise from within what's left of the Bridge. Kirkman orders the characters to start moving. They can take the soldiers to the Security Suite. The men need to be secured while he and the characters figure out who's dead, who's alive, how many of those things are left, and how badly the ship is damaged. Although Kirkman tries to radio the Security Suite, his radio was damaged in the explosion.

ACT THREE: NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN

With the Bridge destroyed, the Living Dead growing in population and loose on the ship, and an unknown paramilitary team having been hired to destroy the Pinnacle, the characters now learn that one of their few safe havens is no longer fit for the living.

SCENE ONE: OVERRUN

Play this scene out however benefits the play style of the group.

Kirkman leads the team down to the Security Suite, doing his best to bypass as many of the ship's passengers as possible. Along the way, though, numerous passengers are panicked from the explosion, and Kirkman does his best to calm them down. Attempts to get the passengers to listen require a Persuasion roll at a -2 penalty. By this stage, the idea of maintaining order is pretty much out the window, especially with paramilitary soldiers being held captive.

Once the characters reach the Security Suite corridor, read the following:

It's obvious that the situation on the ship is deteriorating at a rapid pace, not only with the creatures growing in numbers exponentially, but also in the general morale of the passengers. The Bridge has been destroyed and, with it, any hope of navigating the ship or reestablishing communications. Mr. Forthington hired a paramilitary team to destroy the Pinnacle, and for all you know might also be behind the sudden outbreak sweeping through the decks.

As you approach the Security Suite, Kirkman opens the doors and stops dead in his tracks. This is where he set-up the temporary infirmary. You all stare, your hearts hammering, as dozens of creatures—people that used to be passengers, security personnel, and medical staff—turn in your direction. A loud moan, as their mouths open nearly all at once, fills the corridor. The Living Dead move toward you.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH [WEEK THREE]



GM'S SUMMARY

What do you do when the Living Dead inherit the Earth? More importantly, what do you do when you're trapped on a cruise ship, in the middle of the ocean, with the Living Dead spreading rapidly throughout nearly 3,000 passengers?

Welcome to Week 3 of the War of the Dead campaign!

What was supposed to be a vacation aboard the maiden voyage of the Pinnacle cruise ship has turned into a nightmare. An unknown source has turned passengers into the Living Dead, and is spreading at an alarming rate. The characters have stumbled onto a plot by the ship's owner, Mr. Forthington, to hire a mercenary team to sink the cruise ship. Unfortunately, a battle with the Living Dead destroyed the Bridge and left the vessel without navigation or communications. Furthermore, after establishing a temporary infirmary in the Security Suite, the characters discovered their primary source of intelligence, safe haven, and weapons overrun by the Living Dead.

Left with little place to turn, and with passenger morale deteriorating, the characters are now forced to make a stand against the Living Dead as a new threat emerges: the survivor factions forming amongst the passengers.

ACT ONE: UNITED WE STAND

The characters are forced to unite with the same paramilitary force originally hired to sink the Pinnacle, as they attempt to establish a defense against the Living Dead.

SCENE ONE: STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

The week 3 adventure continues immediately from last week's cliffhanger. To make sure everyone knows exactly what's going on, establish the scene with the following narrative:

After several attacks throughout the ship by creatures that seem to be the dead reanimated and hungering for human flesh, the ship's been overrun and the situation is rapidly deteriorating. As if that wasn't bad enough, it appears that Mr. Forthington hired a paramilitary unit to sink the Pinnacle for reasons as of yet unknown. In the ensuing battle between the creatures and the soldiers,

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY CELL PHONE?

Just as with the previous 2 weeks, at this stage the characters should still be unable to get through on their cell phones. Remember, although the characters don't know it yet, the Living Dead are a global crisis. Pretty much everyone with cellular service is trying to call for help or contact loved ones, and the services are flooded with calls.

the Bridge was destroyed when a grenade accidentally went off.

You assisted Kirkman in capturing the mercenary soldiers, and were about to confine them to the brig when the true depth of the horror assailed you. Kirkman had set-up a temporary infirmary in the Security Suite, and the outbreak of Living Dead has spread to its confines. As he opened the door to let everyone in, you came face to face with dozens of the creatures.

Their inhuman moans filled the corridor as they shambled toward you . . .

Kirkman slams the door shut, but the sheer mass of bodies banging and pressing against it means it won't hold for long, a fact of which he's well aware. Already the door is starting to move as it threatens to give way.

Kirkman curses, and the Colonel demands their weapons back. When Kirkman looks at him, wide eyed, the Colonel explains that he's lost men, too, and he doesn't have any plans to die. Right now, they're all trapped on the ship together, and if Forthington is behind this, he wants the guy just as bad as Kirkman does. They all need all the guns they can get, and he and his men are trained— more trained than the characters, no doubt— in using them.

Kirkman seems to consider it for a moment, and then nods to the characters to give the soldiers their guns.

At that moment, the doors swing open and the Living Dead flood into the corridor.

Deal Action Cards!

There are 28 Living Dead flooding into the hallway, making the group vastly outnumbered even with the soldiers assisting them. On the 3rd round, Kirkman calls for a retreat down the corridors to the stairwell. He tells everyone they'll bar the door, and then get to the other decks. They have to get the passengers assembled in the main deck—in the theater where they have the safety briefing each cruise before they disembark. Any questions about putting everyone together in one spot are met with a response from Kirkman that having everyone spread out around the ship isn't working. If they don't do something, this thing will spread to all corners. At least this way they can alert everyone to what's happening, and confine any outbreaks to a single location. Then they can deal with Forthington and figure out how to get the Coast Guard here.

Kirkman tells the Colonel and his men to split up and accompany the characters. He tells the characters they'll all split into 2-man teams and hit as many passenger decks at once as they can. The last thing Kirkman says to the Colonel is that if he and his men screw them, he'll personally see to it they're fed to the things. Kirkman tells them to assemble the crew as well, but don't go to Forthington's suite. That place is highly secured anyway, and he doesn't want to have to question the guy in front of the crew and passengers.

You can use Encounter Chart 1 to create some random situations for the characters. Draw one card from the Action Deck for each player in the group and hit them with the resulting situations.

ENCOUNTER CHART 1

Ace: A young girl, only about 8 years old, is hiding in a closet in one of the open cabins. She's scared out of her mind, and is bleeding from a bite in her right leg. In the closed bathroom is her mother, already one of the Living Dead. The characters must dispose of the zombie, and decide what to do with the girl—who's obviously infected.

Two: The characters encounter a family of a man, his wife, and their two children. The man refuses to listen to the characters, no longer having faith in the crew to protect him or his family. He has a Glock 9mm he'd gotten from one of the dead security officers. Unless the characters can succeed at a Persuasion roll, he'll start opening fire, feeling only he can protect his family from whatever is happening on the ship.

Three: The characters head down a corridor and see an elderly woman trapped against a wall by 3 Liv-

ing Dead; the only thing holding them at bay is her using her walker as a barrier.

Four: The characters encounter a father and his 7-year-old daughter. The daughter was attacked by one of the Living Dead and already has a fever. Do the characters kill the little girl? How do they handle letting the father know his baby girl is as good as dead?

Five: As the characters gather a family (a mother, father, and 3 children) and begin to head down a corridor, they run into a group of over a dozen Living Dead. The children panic and freeze in terror as the zombies approach.

Six: The characters encounter a situation on the rear of the one of the decks. A man with one of the security officer's guns is holding another man—who's bleeding from his hand—hostage. The gun carrying man witnessed those that have been injured becoming the Living Dead, and is prepared to shoot the bleeding man. The characters discover the man cut his hand using a piece of his mirror as a weapon, and wasn't bitten. But can they prevent his death at the hands of the other passenger (Persuasion roll at -2 to convince the man to put the gun down).

Seven: There's an open cabin with 8 Living Dead heading into it. From within comes the sound of a baby crying. The characters discover that the mother is already dead, being devoured by the zombies, and her infant child is still in the portable bassinet as the Living Dead move toward it.

Eight: One of the men the characters manage to gather insists they go looking for his wife and son (who is 11 years old). They were heading to the casino for some fun. Along the way, the characters and the man encounter several roaming Living Dead, but finally manage to reunite the man with his family.

Nine: One of the passengers, a lone female in her early 40's (Mrs. Hartten) accompanies the characters. The entire time, she preaches about the "end of times" and the "Wrath of God", constantly explaining to them how mankind has brought Hell to Earth by their own doing.

Ten: The characters discover an entire family has become Living Dead in one of the cabins. Unfortunately, as they're focusing on the two adults, two Living Dead children attack them from within the closet.

Jack: The characters discover a man coming out of a cabin, covered in blood. Investigating the scene shows a man and a woman inside—obviously human and not zombies—that have been murdered. As the characters discover the grisly truth, the man charges

at them with a knife (Fighting d6) he obtained from somewhere on the ship.

Queen: An elderly man is in his cabin with a member of the Living Dead. The zombie is his wife, who he's tied to the bed and refuses to leave. He hasn't been bitten, but is purely devoted to his wife. If the characters attempt to force him to leave, or try to kill his zombie wife, the man will attack them (Fighting d4) with a long piece of jagged glass that he obtained by breaking the mirror in the bathroom.

King: The characters discover an entire deck has been overrun by the Living Dead and must get to another deck before it's too late. Unfortunately, they quickly become trapped as nearly 50 Living Dead all move to devour them from all directions.

Joker: Choose any 2 events, or draw 2 new cards and apply both results.

Once the scene is played out and everyone is assembled as best they can be in the auditorium, proceed to Scene Two.

In total, less than 300 passengers will be assembled.

SCENE TWO: THE GATHERING

Once the characters have everyone assembled, Kirkman takes his place on the stage at the front of the auditorium, with Colonel Brackenridge standing next to him. Although the microphones don't work since even the generators are down, he manages to get everyone quiet enough to be heard.

"People, I need your attention. People! People, please. What I'm about to say is a matter of life and death... for all of us."

Kirkman waits as everyone quiets down, and then continues.

"I'm not going to lie to you. We're in some deep shit, here. I don't know why, and I don't know how, but there are things loose on this ship that should be dead, but aren't. They're alive... or something... and attacking anyone that's actually living."

A voice from the crowd yells: "No kidding. Now tell us something we don't know."

A female voice, Ms. Hartten, rises from her position in the front row as she stands and points at Kirkman. "Don't stand there and pretend ignorance. You know why this is happening." She turns, and moves her pointed finger over the assembly. "You all, all of you, know why this is happening. We've ignored him far too long,"

and she points upward. "We've betrayed him and we've laughed at him and now we're being made to pay the price,"

"Ignored who?" Another voice demands.

"The Lord Our God," Ms. Hartten responds, and opens her mouth to continue, but is cut off by Kirkman.

"Ma'am, please, if you'll just take your seat and let me continue."

"You'll see," she says to Kirkman as she sits down. "You'll all see in the end."

"Be that as it may, but those things aren't the only problem anymore. And, yeah, they're a serious problem at the rate the... Infection, or whatever it is... is spreading. The other problem is that the ship's dead in the water right now. We've no power, no navigations, and worse of all no communications."

"What do you mean?" Another voice calls out.

"I mean an explosion took out the Bridge, and until another vessel comes along, we're effectively on our own."

Everyone starts talking to each other at once. Kirkman spends the next several minutes trying to get them to quiet down again.

"Now, it could take a few hours or a few days for someone to discover us. I don't know. I do know that at the latest, someone will get worried when we don't dock in the Bahamas, so we'll have a search party looking for us at least by then. In the meantime, I'm having everyone remain in the auditorium. Colonel Brackenridge (he indicates the man next to him) is part of our security. Usually, you'd never see him or his men, and they're just normal precautions post nine-eleven. He and I will lead our teams through the ship to make sure we didn't miss anyone, and to get enough bedding and food supplies to last us the next few days. I'm reluctant to make an attempt for the lifeboats with so many of the creatures loose on the ship. The crafts take time to launch without power, and I'm not sure we'll make it before we're overwhelmed."

Now, if anyone has any special needs, or medical requirements, let us know before we head out. In the meantime... in the meantime, I need everyone to remain calm. We're safe in here as long as we think instead of just react. We'll make it until rescue comes."

THE PASSENGERS

Beginning with the assembly of passengers, a large part of the remaining cruise ship storyline will be the dynamics between the various characters. As a result, it's important to also tailor some of it to your group. Who the characters are as people, and whom they would most likely bond to, is an important facet of the story. Some types of people they are going to generally dislike, while others they (or their family members) will make a connection with.

When it comes time to inject more of the Personal Journey into your campaign, don't be afraid to hit the characters by having their new friends turned into the Living Dead; be it a woman, a man, or even a child. The adventures themselves will use a couple of NPCs for situations that should arise, but other than that you're free to inject the personal drama and other characters however best suits your game. Remember, by the end of Week 4, a majority of these people won't survive.

Kirkman thanks everyone. He, the Colonel, the soldiers, and the characters filter through the assembly making sure they make a list of any special requirements the passengers might have. Feel free to flesh out a few of the NPCs as they do that.

Make sure you run some role-playing between the characters and any friends or family they have on the ship before they head back out with Kirkman. Remember, they're his security team now, that all of his men have been killed.

SCENE THREE: TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

Once Kirkman and the others get back outside the auditorium with their lists, Colonel Brackenridge thanks him for covering for him and his men. Kirkman nods, only replying that he doesn't need anyone panicked anymore than they already are just because Forthington planned to risk all their lives. He also doesn't need a mass concern over the questions he already has regarding Forthington and the creatures.

Kirkman tells everyone that they'll get the supplies a little later. First thing he wants to do is head to the rear of the ship, past the crew quarters, and into the "penthouse" where Forthington is staying.

He tells everyone to get their weapons ready, and leads them off through the dimly lit corridors.

For the most part, getting to Forthington's suite should give them a little zombie action, but don't over do it. We don't want the players getting numb to the idea too early in the campaign. Instead, have

them encounter corpses of passengers and crew that have been killed, but haven't risen yet. Focus on the fatality scenario of the cruise ship.

Once they get to Forthington's suite, no one answers the knock. Kirkman has one of the soldiers blow the handle off the door, and slowly pushes it inward. Inside, the lights are out, and numerous candles are lit.

The suite is expensive, containing its own sitting room, bathroom, bedroom, and small dining area. Bookshelves line the walls, an expensive computer sits against another wall, and leather chairs and a sofa fill the center of the room. Forthington, though, is nowhere to be found.

Have the characters make a Notice check at a -4 penalty due to the darkness. Anyone that succeeds, sees the shape of a man move in the shadows of the darkened dining room a split second before the shot is fired. Anyone else is taken unawares, and Forthington gains a +1 to his Shooting roll to hit them.

Forthington is opening fire with a .38 Special, and only has 6 bullets before he runs out. He's in a panic, and his brain doesn't comprehend that the people in his suite aren't the Living Dead. Kirkman doesn't want him dead, and will order everyone to hold their fire and take cover. Have everyone make a Spirit check. Anyone that fails (including the soldiers) returns fire and might very well kill Forthington.

If Forthington isn't killed, then once the 6th shot is fired, Kirkman (or one of the characters) tackles him to the floor and wrestles the gun from him. He's crying and scared out of his mind. Once he sees whoever tackled him, he hugs the person dear life and thanks

ACT TWO: DIVIDED WE FALL

The situation continues to deteriorate as the assembled passengers form their own groups and plot their survival, even if it means the lives of others.

SCENE ONE: THE HUMAN CONDITION

Once everyone returns to the auditorium, a man named Jonathan Treymore comes walking over to them. He explains that they've started getting things situated. They have a few pregnant women in here, one of them due in a few weeks. The crew's already introduced themselves, and two members of the medical staff are present. However, Ms. Hartten is starting to rattle some nerves, and even getting some people to side with her on the whole "Wraith of God" thing. He suggests they keep an eye on her. She's trouble waiting to happen.

Give the players some role-playing time with the passengers as they hand out supplies, introduce themselves, and deal with any friends or family of their own that they might have with them.

Whenever you're ready expand the scene, draw one Action Card for each player in the group, and run the resulting encounters.

ENCOUNTER CHART 2

Ace: An elderly man goes into cardiac arrest and dies, despite the best efforts of the medical staff in the auditorium. The question now is: what to do with the body? Kirkman suggests they put it in the corridor outside the room, just as soon as he shoots it in the head.

Two: One of the pregnant women goes into early labor as the few medical staff in the auditorium rush to assist her. Have the characters be sent for blankets, towels, and other typical supplies. In the end, a little girl is born. Although she's 4 weeks early, she's otherwise healthy.

Three: Have the characters make a Notice check. On a success, they see Colonel Brackenridge nod to his two soldiers as though giving them a signal. On a Raise, they see him first hold a finger to his ear as he listens to something on his earpiece. The Colonel won't tell the characters anything except that he thought for a moment he was picking up a signal from somewhere, but it was too brief to know for sure. He claims his nod to his men was because they heard it too.

Four: Erica Davis is overheard talking about Mr. Forthington and how worried she is about him. It

everyone for coming to save him. Kirkman thrusts Forthington roughly into a chair, and points his own gun at the man's face. Once Forthington sees the soldiers, he immediately starts blaming them for what's happening. They weren't supposed to do this, just sink the ship and allow everyone to escape. The Colonel denies having anything to do with it, and raises his rifle to shoot Forthington. Kirkman and the characters will have to defuse the situation before it escalates. Any Persuasion checks made to get the Colonel to lower his gun are without a penalty.

Once the Colonel lowers his gun, the interrogation begins as Kirkman keeps his gun pointed.

How you relay the following through role-playing is entirely up to you, but the exchange between Kirkman and Forthington yields the following information.

- Forthington is in deep with his investors, and has nearly bankrupted himself on the Pinnacle's construction.
- Too many of his banks are calling in his loans due to a series of bad investments he made.
- The only hope he had was to sink the Pinnacle, make it look like some sort of terrorist or pirate attack, and collect the insurance money to pay off some of his loans.
- He didn't mean for anyone to get hurt. He hired Colonel Brackenridge because his unit came highly recommended.
- He has nothing to do with what's happening on the ship. He just hired Colonel Brackenridge to sink the Pinnacle. Talk to Brackenridge about what's going on now.

Kirkman isn't sure he believes Forthington, but he can't worry about that right now. He tells Forthington he's assembled everyone's in the auditorium. He's coming with them, but they have to get some supplies first.

Once again, the group is ordered to split-up to get things done as fast as they can. Kirkman will take Forthington and one of the soldiers with him. Everyone else is to grab what they can and get back to the auditorium.

For the rest of the scene, run a few zombie encounters and allow the characters to see more carnage throughout the ship.

quickly becomes obvious that there's something intimate going on between them. Any characters that talk to her and make a Streetwise roll learn that they're having an affair. On a Raise, she accidentally mentions that she knows about his plans with the military men.

Five: Jonathan Treymore has had enough of Ms. Hartten scaring his family and everyone else. He walks over to confront her, but instead is confronted by a large man named Stephen McDermont. Stephen and Jonathan exchange words, and shove each other a few times, before Ellen convinces her husband to leave it alone and come sit by her and the kids.

Six: David Noric is talking to several of the children, telling them stories of knights and castles to keep their minds off of the crisis on the ship. During his time with them, he learns that one boy—a 9-year old—has been separated from his parents on the Constellation Deck. He manages to tell the characters that the parents left him in the cabin while they went to the casino, and didn't come back. The question is: are they alive, or is it already too late? The fate of the parents is left up to the Gamemaster.

Seven: A Living Dead, a member of the crew that came into the auditorium after being injured and died backstage in a dressing room, makes its way onto the stage and must be dealt with as people run screaming.

Eight: The characters learn from one of the nurses that over a dozen passengers have been injured by the creatures, and were hiding the wounds. Unfortunately, they've all started to get fevers. She's sequestered them in one of the dressing rooms backstage, but something is going to have to be done. She doesn't have the equipment here to effectively treat them.

Nine: A woman managed to get the door open and runs out into the corridor, screaming her lost husband's name. Any characters that go after her find her armed with a pistol from one of the dead security officers, and she's prepared to shoot them if they try to stop her. The characters will have to make a Persuasion roll to calm her down and get her to come back inside before the Living Dead realize where they are hiding. After 1 minute (10 rounds), Living Dead appear on the deck.

Ten: One of the characters discovers that a friend, or member of their family, was bitten at some point on the cruise. The wound isn't deep, but it did break the skin. What does the character do, knowing that the person is now infected?

Jack: Stephen McDermont confronts Colonel Brackenridge, claiming that the story of them being a ship-board security measure is a lie. McDermont doesn't

buy it for a minute, and demands—drawing attention to the confrontation—to know the truth. Why did the ship have military personnel stationed onboard? Did the Captain or Mr. Kirkman have some warning that something like this might happen? Was it terrorists? The confrontation draws enough attention that violence against the soldiers might erupt if Kirkman and the characters can't calm things down (Persuasion rolls).

Queen: A man that lost his little girl to the Living Dead is sitting off in a corner. Unknown to anyone, he has a piece of metal he managed to wrench from his closet hidden in his pocket. Overcome with grief, he slits his own throat. The characters learn of the event as a nearby woman screams in terror as she watches the blood fountain from his neck.

King: Ms. Hartten's congregation is growing as the inhuman moans of the Living Dead can be heard all around the ship. Her sermon continues, taking a dark turn into talking of human sacrifice to appease God, just as Abraham did with his son.

Joker: Choose any 2 events, or draw 2 new cards and apply both results.

SCENE TWO: A WOLF IN OUR MIDST

Once everyone finally gets settled down for some sleep, with some people standing watch near the doors just in case the Living Dead converge on them, allow the characters to finally get a little rest before Fatigue starts effecting them. Give everyone at least a partial sense of security. Then:

An ear-piercing scream fills the auditorium, ripping everyone awake and causing others to shoot to their feet. Something is moving frantically in the darkness in the far corner, as another scream erupts from back there. People nearest to the commotion scream and run in terror from whatever is occurring. Already, you see Kirkman darting toward the situation.

As the characters arrive to assist Kirkman, they see that a young girl of about 10 years old has reanimated and attacked both a young boy and her mother. The boy's nose and cheek have been bitten off, and the woman has a deep, fatal gash in her throat.

The girl looks toward the characters with dead eyes as she rises from her mother's body and reaches for them.

Deal Action Cards!

Once the girl is dealt with, Kirkman suggests they throw the bodies into the corridor. They can't leave them in here with everyone already on edge.

Needless to say, people aren't going to be getting anymore sleep as they start watching for the others in the room to become the next Living Dead.

Kirkman comments to the characters that if the ship doesn't get help soon, those "things" are about to become the least of their worries.

ACT THREE: WE REAP WHAT WE SOW

The characters are caught in the middle as several passengers decide to sacrifice Mr. Forthington to the Living Dead.

SCENE ONE: THE FIRST SACRIFICE

Capsulate the next several hours as people continue to live on a knife's edge. Ms. Hartten manages to expand her flock through her sermons about God's anger. The characters are left to do their own thing, and Kirkman is off talking to one of the soldiers. When you're ready, read the following:

Mr. Forthington is in tears over the young girl and her family, as he continuously mutters: "I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry. Please forgive me," to himself. Ms. Hartten's sermon is falling on more and more ears over near the stage as she launches into the same song-and-dance she's been giving all night: about the Wrath of God and the End of Days.

Occasionally she reads from her bible to those gathered around her, or raises it into the air to punctuate one statement or another.

Mr. Forthington continues to sob. He rises to his fee, and makes his way over to Ms. Hartten, raising his voice and apologizing louder.

"And what are you sorry for?" Ms. Hartten asks as he stops before her, stooped and defeated. "I can think of an entire list of sins for which you should repent, but you must acknowledge your gluttonous lifestyle from

your own lips."

"I'm sorry. I was going to risk everyone and sink the ship."

"Excuse me?" Ms. Hartten asks, taken aback.

"I hired some men to sink the Pinnacle so I could collect the insurance money. I never meant for anyone to get hurt. This is all my fault."

Ms. Hartten's expression of confusion turns to white-hot anger as she slaps him across the face and raises her voice . . .

Ms. Hartten calls the assembly to attention as she forces Mr. Forthington to repeat what he told her. Once he does, she asks him who the men were that he hired to kill them all. Although he denies that anyone would have died, he quickly points out Colonel Brackenridge and his soldiers. Kirkman gets the characters' eyes as he quietly readies his pistol.

At this point, Ms. Hartten seizes the opportunity, blaming Mr. Forthington and the soldiers for bringing the Wrath of God upon them. Jonathan Treymore vehemently disagrees with her, and calls what she's doing insanity. It's a remark that gets him punched by Stephen McDermont. A small scuffle breaks out between the two before several people break it up. Jonathan's wife, Ellen, nurses her husband's busted lip, but stays silent. David Noric takes the children— as many as he can assemble— to the far side of the auditorium.

Ms. Hartten turns to her congregation and says that God must have a sacrifice of blood to appease him for everything mankind has done. She points to Mr. Forthington as the first. Jonathan, Ellen, and several others start yelling in protest. Be sure to get the characters into the action as the following unfolds.

Suddenly, the air is split by a gunshot. Kirkman is standing atop auditorium chairs, and has his gun leveled at the group moving toward Forthington, waving the gun back and forth between the dozens of them.

"The next person that takes even a half a step toward him, dies," Kirkman says in an icy voice. Colonel Brackenridge and his two soldiers level their automatic rifles at the group, clearly backing-up Kirkman.

As Kirkman makes a last stand against a growing crowd of people that have fallen under the spell of Ms. Hartten's doomsday

prophecy, you notice several others moving across the stage with everything from rounded sticks to microphone stands as makeshift weapons.

"Now," Kirkman continues, "I don't like him anymore than the rest of you. But I swear to Christ, the first person to make another move toward him will get a bullet in the head. Do I make myself clear?"

"You can't shoot us all, Mr. Kirkman," Ms. Hartten says.

"No. I can't. But who wants to be the first to die? You?" He points the gun at a random man, who takes a step backwards. "How about you?" He points the gun at another man, who just raises his hands in surrender. "I know . . . how about you?" He points the gun at Ms. Hartten.

"Go ahead. Shoot me. I'm not afraid to die and meet our Lord. Shoot several of us. In the end, the results will be the same. We will join God, and you will go to the Devil."

Kirkman is starting to sweat as he points the gun back and forth around the group. Suddenly a voice yells: "GET HIM!" Almost as though of a single mind, the group surges forward. Kirkman's good to his word, and shoots several of them. So do the Colonel and his men. In a matter of seconds, though, they're overwhelmed, taken down to the floor, disarmed, and beaten.

As soon the characters draw a weapon and get involved, the sheer numbers overwhelm them. The congregation knows they've been working together as part of Kirkman's team. Each character receives a wound unless he can soak it.

Once everyone is disarmed, they are held immobile by almost 2-dozen passengers as 6 others grab Mr. Forthington.

Forthington begs to be let go as they shove him toward the auditorium doors, and the certain death waiting for him beyond.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



FRIENDS AND FOES

THE LIVING DEAD

LIVING DEAD (SHAMBLER)

The most common of Living Dead encountered in the first weeks of the Outbreak, Shamblers are slow moving creatures operating more on instinct than any sort of human intelligence. Driven by an unnatural hunger for living flesh, they'll attack anything alive: human or animal.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Intimidation d6, Notice d8

Pace: 4 **Parry:** 2 **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities—

Bite: The bite of the Living Dead causes Str+d4 damage

Equal Senses: The Living Dead use all their senses equally, causing Stealth checks against them to suffer a -2 penalty regardless of lighting conditions.

Fear (-1): Shamblers are terrible to behold and cause a Guts check at -1.

Fearless: The Living Dead are immune to Fear and cannot be intimidated

Hardy: If Shaken, a Living Dead never suffers a wound from further Shaken results.

Infected Bite: Anyone that suffers at least 1 wound (after soaking) from the bite of a Shambler is infected and will die, only to rise again as one of them (see The Infection, under Setting Rules).

Living Dead: The Living Dead suffer no additional damage from called shots (except for their weakness), suffer no wound modifiers (except for their weakness), and do not suffer from disease or poison.

Slow: Shamblers are never dealt an initiative card that is greater than 5, and can never run.

Tireless: The Living Dead do not suffer from Fatigue.

Weakness: The Living Dead suffer normal damage and wound modifiers from a called shot to the head.

INFECTED NEWBORNS

When an expectant mother near the end of her third trimester becomes infected by a Living Dead bite, the effect on the fetus is catastrophic. Mysteriously transformed into a ravenous beast that typically eats its way out of the mother, the Infected Newborns are true horrors to behold. Fast moving, with mouths full of sharp teeth, and able to regenerate from almost any wound, the tiny creatures undergo roughly 6 months

SHAMBLERS IN COMBAT

Although the average Shambler is unskilled in combat— instead relying completely on instinct to bring down its prey— the Shamblers naturally employ a few of tactics that can make them extremely dangerous.

The first tactic of the Shamblers is the Moan when they first see their prey (see Setting Rules).

The second tactic is the Wild Attack. The Shamblers lack finesse and know no fear, and they always use the Wild Attack maneuver against their prey. This gives them a +2 to their Fighting check (normally d4-2), but reduces their Parry to zero.

The third tactic is the Ganging Up maneuver. Whenever multiple Shamblers converge on prey, they all attack in search of living flesh to consume. While this gives them a +1 to Fighting for each zombie beyond the first, it's also combined with the Wild Attack— which means each zombie receives the +2 for a Wild Attack, and an additional +1 for each zombie beyond the first. The trade-off is that if the prey survives, the Parry to hit a zombie is zero.

WAR OF THE DEAD

worth of growth within the first few days as long as they consume living flesh.

Just as infectious as other forms of Living Dead, their bites kill the victim and transform him into a new form of zombie: Sprinters.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Stealth d4

Pace: 4 **Parry:** 4 **Toughness:** 3

Special Abilities—

Bite: The bite of the Infected Newborns causes Str+d6 damage.

Fear (-2): The sight of an Infected Newborn can unsettle even the most hardened person and causes a Guts check at -2.

Fearless: Infected Newborns are immune to Fear and cannot be intimidated.

Hardy: If Shaken, an Infected Newborn never suffers a wound from further Shaken results.

Infected Bite: Anyone that suffers at least 1 wound (after soaking) from the bite of an Infected Newborn is infected and will die (see The Infection under Setting Rules), only to rise again as one of the Living Dead (Sprinters).

Fast Regeneration: Infected Newborns heal wounds at an accelerated rate, making a Vigor roll each round for Healing (even if killed) unless damaged by their Weakness. The creatures also receive a +2 to recover from being Shaken.

Low Light Vision: Infected Newborns do not suffer penalties from Dim or Dark lighting conditions.

Size (-1): Infected Newborns are small and all attacks against them are at a -1 penalty.

Weakness: Infected Newborns do not regenerate from damage caused by a called shot to the head.

LIVING DEAD (GENERAL)

An extremely rare form of Living Dead, the General is also one of the most dangerous. Somehow managing to survive the transformation into Living Dead with a near human-level of intelligence, a General is able to gather, coordinate, and lead entire hordes of zombies against the living.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d4,

Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Intimidation d6, Notice d8

Pace: 4 **Parry:** 2 **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities—

Bite: The bite of the Living Dead causes Str+d4 damage

Equal Senses: The Living Dead use all their senses equally, causing Stealth checks against them to suffer a -2 penalty regardless of lighting conditions.

Fear (-1): Shamblers are terrible to behold and cause a Guts check at -1.

Fearless: The Living Dead are immune to Fear and cannot be intimidated

Hardy: If Shaken, a Living Dead never suffers a wound from further Shaken results

Infected Bite: Anyone that suffers at least 1 wound (after soaking) from the bite of a General is infected and will die, only to rise again as one of them (see The Infection, under Setting Rules).

Living Dead: The Living Dead suffer no additional damage from called shots (except for their weakness), suffer no wound modifiers (except for their weakness), and do not suffer from disease or poison.

Slow: Generals are never dealt an initiative card that is greater than 5, and can never run.

Tireless: The Living Dead do not suffer from Fatigue.

Weakness: The Living Dead suffer normal damage and wound modifiers from a called shot to the head.

LIVING DEAD (SPRINTERS)

When a victim dies of a bite from an Infected Newborn, the result is a new form of zombie. Fast moving, agile, and known to emit a high-pitched screech similar to a baby's cry (as opposed to the deep moan of the Shamblers), the Sprinters are extremely dangerous due to their human-level motor skills.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d8

Pace: 6 **Parry:** 5 **Toughness:** 5

Special Abilities—

Bite: The bite of the Living Dead causes Str+d4 damage

Equal Senses: The Living Dead use all their senses equally, causing Stealth checks against them to suffer a -2 penalty regardless of lighting conditions.

Fear (-2): The speed of a Sprinter adds to the terror when facing them, causing a Guts check at -2.

Fearless: The Living Dead are immune to Fear and cannot be intimidated

Hardy: If Shaken, a Living Dead never suffers a wound from further Shaken results

Infected Bite: Anyone that suffers at least 1 wound (after soaking) from the bite of a Sprinter is infected and will die, only to rise again as one of them (see The Infection, under Setting Rules).

Living Dead: The Living Dead suffer no additional damage from called shots (except for their weakness), suffer no wound modifiers (except for their weakness), and do not suffer from disease or poison.

Tireless: The Living Dead do not suffer from Fatigue.

Weakness: The Living Dead suffer normal damage and wound modifiers from a called shot to the head.

ADVENTURE WEEK 1 THROUGH WEEK 4 NPCS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)



JASON KIRKMAN

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Knowledge (Law Enforcement) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Swimming d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 7
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Doubting Thomas, Vow (To Serve and Protect)

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, First Strike, Nerves of Steel, No Mercy

Equipment: Glock 9mm, Handcuffs

Ship Security

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d4, Knowledge (Law Enforcement) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Swimming d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 5
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Doubting Thomas, Vow (To Serve and Protect)

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Equipment: Glock 9mm, Handcuffs

COLONEL JOHN BRACKENRIDGE (PARAMILITARY LEADER)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Knowledge (Tactics) d8, Notice d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d8, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 10 (6)

Hindrances: Loyal, One-Eye

Edges: Block, Combat Reflexes, Command Marksman, First Strike, Nerves of Steel

Equipment: Kevlar Weave Vest (+4 Toughness), Desert Eagle Pistol (2d8 Damage), H&K MP 5 (2d6 Damage), Mk67 Pineapple Grenade (x4, 3d6 Damage, Medium Burst Template), Night Vision Goggles (ignore Dim and Dark penalties)

PARAMILITARY SOLDIER

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d4, Knowledge (Tactics) d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Swimming d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 10 (6)

Hindrances: Doubting Thomas, Loyal, Overconfident

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Marksman, Nerves of Steel

Equipment: Kevlar Weave Vest (+4 Toughness), Desert Eagle Pistol (2d8 Damage), H&K MP 5 (2d6 Damage), Mk67 Pineapple Grenade (x4, 3d6 Damage, Medium Burst Template), Night Vision Goggles (ignore Dim and Dark penalties)



JONATHAN TREYMORE

A family man on the cruise with his wife, Ellen, and their three children: Monica (6 years old), David (8 years old), and Gregory (12 years old), his main concern is the safety of his family.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Notice d6, Repair d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Responsibility to Others (Major)

Edges: None

STEPHEN MCDERMONT

A police officer with Miami Metro on vacation, Stephen lives alone and isn't presently dating anyone. Usually working as a uniformed officer, Stephen has a gruff attitude but is a God Fearing man that will quickly follow Ms. Hartten. When things start to go bad amongst the passengers in the auditorium, he'll be the main one enforcing Ms. Hartten's gospel.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 5
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Arrogant, Stubborn

Edges: Alertness, Block

Equipment: Desert Eagle Pistol (2d8 Damage), H&K MP 5 (2d6 Damage)

HENRY STEVENSON

A gruff man that helps maintain the Calm Seas Marina, Henry is a stubborn man that likes the quiet life after several years in the military, and multiple tours in Vietnam.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d6, Driving d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 5 **Parry:** 3
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Stubborn

Edges: None

Equipment: M1 Rifle (2d8 damage, 45 shots)

ADVENTURE WEEK 5 THROUGH WEEK 6 (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

THE GHOST RIDERS

The Ghost Riders were formed in the crucible of the first days of the Outbreak, when the Samson medium/maximum security prison in North Carolina was infected with the Living Dead. Once the correctional officers and administrative personnel abandoned the place within the first day, Hell Fuerrie quickly asserted himself as the leader of the pack.

Assembling a band of career criminals—armed robbers, murders, drug dealers, and worse—he led an escape. After looting a Harley Davidson dealership several miles away from the prison, the newly formed Ghost Riders began their trek across North Carolina—taking what they wanted, and killing anyone that got in their way. In their first week of being free, the Ghost Riders have killed and looted a small National Guard unit, murdered over a dozen civilians, and kidnapped three women.

EQUIPMENT

In addition to the equipment listed in the character-stats, the Ghost Riders also have the following equipment to distribute throughout their ranks:

- M-16 automatic rifles x6 with 180 shots each
- Mk67 Pineapple grenades x12
- Handcuffs x18
- MRE (Meals Ready to Eat) x24
- 9mm ammunition (5 full clips per gang member)
- Desert Eagle ammunition (4 clips)



HELL FUERRIE

A long-time repeat offender in the criminal justice system, Hell has been in and out of prisons for the past 20 years. Convicted of everything from gun smuggling to drug distribution to armed robbery and murder, he's not a man to be crossed and has very little compassion for humanity.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Knowledge (Area Knowledge: Interstate Highways) d10, Knowledge (Underworld) d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: -2 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 8
Toughness: 7

Hindrances: Mean, Overconfident, Stubborn, Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Alertness, Berserk, Brawny, Combat Reflexes, Connections (Mexican Drug Cartel), Fast Healer, Harder to Kill, Improved Block, Improved Dodge, Strong Willed

Equipment: Desert Eagle Pistol (2d8 damage), M-16 (2d8 Damage), Harpoon Pistol (2d6 damage, 12/24/48 range), 2010 Harley Davidson

covered in spider-themed tattoos.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Knowledge (Anatomy) d4, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 5
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Clueless, Habit (Major, cocaine), Vengeful (Major)

Edges: Attractive, First Strike, Quick Draw

Equipment: Glock 9mm Pistol (2d6 damage), Bowie Knife (Str+d4 damage)

GANG MEMBER (TYPICAL)

Criminals, degenerates, and disturbed individuals, the core members of the Ghost Riders served in the same prison as Hell Fuerrie, and pledged their loyalty to him in the aftermath of the outbreak.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +2 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Greedy, Habit (Major, drugs or alcohol)

Edges: Block, No Mercy

Equipment: Glock 9mm Pistol (2d6 damage)

ADVENTURE WEEK 7 THROUGH WEEK 13 (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

MICHAEL

A native of North Carolina, Michael is a small town man born and raised in rural America. An experienced mechanic, he owned and operated a small garage out of his home before the outbreak.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

SIPDERBAIT

Hell's girlfriend for the past 6 years, she's remained loyal to him while he was doing time at the Samson Correctional Facility. Ten years his younger, Spiderbait is just as ruthless and blood-thirsty, and takes special joy in torturing and killing other women. A majority of her body is

Skills: Driving d6, Guts d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Brawny

Equipment: Pump Action Shotgun (1d6-3d6 damage, 36 shots)

ZACHARY

Michael's neighbor and also a life-long small town man, Zachary worked as a carpenter for most of his adult life. When work got slow, he started helping Father Raymond at the local church, doing whatever he could to keep the place repaired.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Knowledge (Carpentry) d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 3
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges:

Equipment: Pump Action Shotgun (1d6-3d6 damage, 36 shots)

DAVID BROOKS

An Architect by trade, David was married to Jean Brooks until she died in the early weeks of the outbreak. Left with raising his 8 and 12 year old sons on his own, David will do whatever it takes to make sure that no one else in his family is taken by the Living Dead.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Knowledge (Architecture) d8

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Responsibility to Others (Major)

Edges: Rich

TIMOTHY HICKMAN

Responsible for the horror that visited Father Raymond's church, Timothy watched his fiancée murdered as her child—and Infected Newborn—ripped its way out of her womb. Left with Samantha as his only remaining family, he now struggles to keep her safe from the Living Dead and other survivors.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d6, Driving d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Responsibility to Others (Minor)

Edges: None

SAMANTHA HICKMAN

Timothy's 9-year-old daughter from a previous marriage, Samantha is an energetic child thrown into the horror of the Living Dead. Gifted with an extremely rare immunity to the Infection, she will be hunted by various factions who view her as a marketable commodity.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Persuasion d4

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Young

Edges: None

Special Abilities: Immunity to Infection

JOE RECHT

An old friend of Henry and Eleanor Stevenson, Joe served in Vietnam with Henry, and then accompanied him to settle in North Carolina. Spending most of his days assisting Joe in taking care of the Calm Seas Marina, he now struggles to live just one more day against the Living Dead.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d4, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 4 **Parry:** 4

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Elderly, Lame

Edges: Alertness

Equipment: Walking Cane (Str+d4 damage)

CORPORAL HAUSER

A career soldier that joined the military to get out of the Midwest, he views the War of the Dead as a lost cause. In his assessment, the first few days of the outbreak created more Living Dead than there are personnel in the entire U.S. Armed Forces. Struggling to get back to his wife and child, Corporal Hauser is still a man that remains loyal to those under his command.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 9 (5)

Hindrances: Loyal

Edges: Combat Reflexes

Equipment: Kevlar Vest (+4 Toughness, Negates AP 4), 9mm Pistol (2d6 Damage), M-16 (2d8 Damage), Mk67 Pineapple Grenade (x4, 3d6 Damage, Medium Burst Template), Night Vision Goggles (ignore Dim and Dark penalties)

TYPICAL SOLDIER

Trained to defend the nation against enemies both foreign and domestic, soldiers represent the strength and determination of the United States. Unfortunately, none of their training has prepared them for an enemy like the Living Dead.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6, Throwing d4

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 10 (6)

Hindrances: Doubting Thomas, Loyal, Overconfident

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Marksman, Nerves of Steel

Equipment: Kevlar Vest (+4 Toughness, Negates AP 4), 9mm Pistol (2d6 Damage), M-16 (2d8 Damage), Mk67 Pineapple Grenade (x4, 3d6 Damage, Medium Burst Template), Night Vision Goggles (ignore Dim and Dark penalties)

TYPICAL SURVIVOR

Whether on a cruise ship, in a town, or trapped in a warehouse with the characters, the typical survivor represents the everyday people struggling to exist for another day in a world where the Living Dead are rapidly becoming the dominant species.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Boating d6, Driving d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Yellow

Edges: None

DALESBURY MILITIA

Believing that firearms embody the might makes right way of thinking, the Dalesbury Militia is incredibly loyal to Mayor Lewis.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 5
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Vow (serve Mayor Lewis)

Edges: No Mercy

Equipment: 9mm Pistol (2d6 Damage), M-16 (2d8 Damage)



JOHN LEWIS

His real name unknown, John Lewis is the Mayor of Dalesbury—a position he gained through manipulation and force in the first days of the outbreak. A former counter-intelligence agent for the United States, he defected several years ago when he first became aware of the potential for an Armageddon Virus. John now uses Dalesbury as a staging ground to find an immunization for the virus, while at the same time solidifying his power base for the ensuing New World Order.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidate d6, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Taunt d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 6
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious

Edges: Strong Willed



JACOB LEWIS

The identity of Jacob Lewis is unknown. What is known is that he was once a scientist for the Federal Government, and was one of the first to encounter the Armageddon Virus several years ago. Realizing that the government was too hindered by bureaucracy, he defected along with an associate from counter-intelligence and disappeared into rural America. After establishing operations in North Carolina, he now works to create an immunization to the virus that he can sell to the highest bidder.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Healing d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Biology) d10, Knowledge (Chemistry) d10, Knowledge (Genetics), d10 Knowledge (Medicine) d10, Notice d6

Charisma: +0 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 2
Toughness: 5

Hindrances: Cautious

Edges: Scholar (Knowledge: Genetics, Knowledge: Medicine)



WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK FOUR



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: FIND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 4)

GM'S SUMMARY

All hell has broken loose on the Pinnacle cruise ship. What should have been a fun-filled maiden voyage to the Bahamas has instead turned into disaster. In a matter of hours, the Living Dead have infected the entire ship. Thousands have been turned into flesh-eating ghouls. The ship has been damaged and is without power, navigation, or communications—rendering it dead in the water.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the surviving passengers have begun losing their minds. One faction, lead by the religious zealot Ms. Hartten, have started believing that the end of days have arrived and that only human sacrifice can appease God. Choosing to sacrifice Mr. Forthington, who confessed his plans to sink the Pinnacle for insurance purposes, the characters now find themselves in the middle of mass insanity.

With morale at an all time low and tensions high, the nerves of the passengers have reached a breaking point as the greatest threat is no longer the Living Dead—but the living people around them.

ACT ONE: EXPIATION

The characters are caught in the middle of a bloody war between the congregation of Ms. Hartten and those she's chosen to be the sacrificial lambs to God.

SCENE ONE: BLOOD AND FORGIVENESS

Begin the adventure with the following:

Mr. Forthington is screaming at the top of his lungs, begging those carrying him toward the auditorium doors to let him go and not throw him to the ghouls. Children are screaming as they witness the unfolding events with abject

DEAD SIGNAL

Characters with cell phones now discover that the network is no longer busy. In fact, they don't have a signal at all, making it completely impossible to call for help as the remaining survivors turn on each other.

terror. Women are crying as they realize what's about to happen. Kirkman and Colonel Brackenridge, bound to chairs with ropes found in the backstage area, scream for the men to let him go.

"He's brought this upon himself with his own hubris," Ms. Hartten yells above the noise. "There he was, willing to sacrifice all of us for the evil that is money and greed. Let his blood be the first spilled to appease God, and bring about his forgiveness!"

Mr. Forthington continues to plead to be let go, screaming how sorry he is for what he was going to do. As he nears the doors, the two men standing guard rip them open and Mr. Forthington is roughly pushed outside. He falls, but quickly regains his footing and tries to dart back inside the auditorium. The doors slam shut and he bangs forcefully against them. Women and children continue to cry.

"And as for you," Ms. Hartten says, turning toward Colonel Brackenridge and Kirkman. "Fear you not—" But her words are cut off as all heads turn toward the doors. The moan of the Living Dead enters the auditorium as Forthington's pleas turn to screams—screams that are suddenly ended as the Living Dead devour his flesh.

Stunned silence fills the room. Only the occasional, muffled sob penetrates it.

Ms. Hartten turns back to Brackenridge and Kirkman, her eyes intense. "Fear you not, for you too will bring expiation for your sins."

With that, Ms. Hartten turns and walks away, disappearing into her growing congregation as the moan of the Living Dead continues outside.

Once Hartten disappears into her crowd, Kirkman quietly tells the characters and the soldiers how screwed they are now. Ms. Hartten is insane, and if they don't get out of here, they're all going to be food for those ghouls. He's already convinced that they can't save these people. Yeah, Forthington needed to be punished, but that's why they have a legal system. What these people are doing is nothing more than murder. Also, it's just a matter of time before the people he shot rise as more of those things, and all hell breaks loose in here.

Strangely, as he talks, the moan of the Living Dead can be heard receding. Not long thereafter, it's gone completely.

"See," Ms. Hartten tells everyone, "they're leaving. At least for now. The sacrifice has been accepted, and God has shown mercy. Mercy, but not forgiveness. Forgiveness will require greater sacrifice. More blood! Mr. Forthington was just a down payment."

As if things weren't already bad enough, the characters now see many more walking over to join her congregation, including Jonathan Treymore and his family.

Give the characters some role-playing time. Any friends and family onboard are visibly upset, but are too afraid of Ms. Hartten to approach them right now.

After a few moments, Ms. Hartten and Stephen McDermont (who is carrying one of the soldiers' SMGs in his hands and has a pistol at his waist) walk over to them. She stares at the characters for a few moments before talking to them as though they were young children.

She tells them that she knows they aren't like the others— and indicates Kirkman and the soldiers. She knows they're good people trying to help, and have been confused and lied to by the evil that controls this

ship. God has spoken to her, as he always does, and told her that they can be saved; that they just want to help and to save lives.

If the characters don't mention the dead laying about the room, Kirkman will do so. Ms. Hartten smiles and replies that they will not rise, for they're God's Children— not the Devil's— and God has shown mercy upon them. She then tells Stephen to untie the characters. As Stephen obeys, she tells Kirkman and Brackenridge that soon they will find expiation just like their evil friend.

Soon after the characters are untied, give them some time to role-play with their friends and family, and have Jonathan Treymore get their attention. Jonathan is only pretending to be a member of the congregation for the protection of his family, but is not an ally of Ms. Hartten's. He thinks she needs to be stopped before she gets everyone killed, and lets the characters know he's there to back them up whenever they're ready.

Before anyone can decide what to do, however, the moan of the Living Dead fills the room. Those that were shot and killed moments ago have reanimated!

SCENE TWO: RISE OF THE FALLEN

The characters have to decide what to do as the Living Dead attack anyone around them. The characters are completely without weapons at the moment.

The auditorium becomes a stampede as the passengers to do whatever's necessary to put as much space between themselves and the zombies. Within moments, the passengers are all pressing on the far side of the auditorium, as Kirkman and the soldiers scream to be untied and given their weapons. Thanks to the noise, the Living Dead turn and move in their direction.

The characters are their only hope as the Living Dead converge on their allies tied helplessly to the chairs.

DEAL ACTION CARDS!

There are several actions the character can take to start things off. They can demand a weapon from those that disarmed them (Persuasion at -2 since the passengers in question are also afraid of Ms. Hartten, or an Intimidation attempt against a Spirit d6 with no penalty). They can try to distract the Living Dead and lead them outside (Smarts vs. Smarts). They can also attempt to wrestle with the Living Dead to break their necks (-2 to Fighting rolls, but a +2 to damage). Since

the Living Dead are Extras, getting 1 wound will accomplish the task.

Characters can also untie Kirkman and the soldiers by making an Agility check at a -2 penalty due to the sturdy knots.

Just as the characters are in the middle of the combat scene, read the following:

The moan of the Living Dead echoes off the walls and high ceiling. It takes you a moment, but you realize it isn't the newly risen that are making the noise. It's the creatures shambling across the stage. The sick that were given rest in one of the dressing rooms have died, and they've come back to devour the living...

As the dozen or so zombies that were accidentally released from the makeshift infirmary in one of the dressing rooms enter the scene, people go insane with terror. Men curse, women scream, and children cry. Through it all, Ms. Hartten's voice can be heard, proclaiming to her congregation that Kirkman and the soldiers have brought this upon them all. Mr. Forthington's sacrifice drove them away, but the evil of those men has brought them anew into their midst. It's time they answer God's demands for expiation!

At this point, Kirkman's had enough. He quickly suggests the characters get any friends and family they have, and they lock everyone else in here with the things. They can make a stand elsewhere on the ship, and they'll have to get into the Security Suite for weapons. If they remain here, they're all as good as dead. Maybe out there they can do something to save everyone.

No doubt the characters will argue against it, maybe even bringing up the fact that people like Jonathan Treymore and David Noric aren't with Ms. Hartten. Kirkman acknowledges that, but they can't bring them all with them. It's too risky. Right now, Ms. Hartten's people have the weapons; they just have to get smart enough to use them. Meanwhile, he and characters need weapons, and they've got to get word out to get help somehow. Otherwise, it's just a matter of time—maybe only a few hours—before it's completely too late.

Once Kirkman and the Colonel get everyone to agree, they make a break for the doors. Ms. Hartten screams for her people to stop them, but everyone is too afraid of the Living Dead to obey. Once the group gets into the corridor, Kirkman pulls his keys and

locks the auditorium doors from the outside.

Then he turns to everyone, his face white from what he's just done, and stares at them in stunned silence.

ACT TWO: DESPERATE MEASURES

The characters have to find weapons while avoiding a cruise ship full of Living Dead. Meanwhile, Colonel Brackenridge and his men initiate the destruction of the Pinnacle—preparing to take the lives of everyone left on board along with the zombies.

SCENE ONE: NO MAN'S LAND

The first thing the characters are going to have to do is decide what to do with any friends or family they might have in tow. They can either attempt to hide them in a cabin (Kirkman has a master key card to the rooms), or they can keep them at their side. If the characters decide to keep their personal relationships with them, make sure the Living Dead prove a viable threat in attempting to devour their families.

The only other weapons on the ship are in the Security Suite, which has been overrun by the Living Dead. A Common Knowledge roll, based on everything they've experienced so far, allows them to figure out that if they cause a distraction to lure the Living Dead out of the suite, a few others might be able to get to the firearms.

Once the characters leave the auditorium's corridor, they see two things. One is the scattered remains of Mr. Forthington. The Living Dead literally tore him apart. They find his head, the face half-eaten, separated from the rest of his body. The head is reanimated and the teeth clatter as they draw near.

The second thing they discover is the mutilated corpse of a young man a little further down the corridor, also reanimated and immobile. It's obvious the man is what caused the Living Dead to leave the auditorium area, not any sort of divine intervention.

Once they get to the Security Suite and the dozens of zombies inside, it's up to the characters as to who causes a distraction and who goes inside. A simple Smarts vs. Smarts roll is all that's needed to distract the zombies enough to follow them out of the suite. The process will take several minuets as the initial Living Dead follow the distraction, and the remaining zombies follow those that first leave the room.

ALTERNATE CUT: JASON KIRKMAN SURVIVES

If the characters are able to act before Colonel Brackenridge shoots Kirkman, allow the head of security to escape the vessel with them. Although he was designed only to help the characters survive the confined quarters of the cruise ship, he can be removed from the group in Week 6.

Inside, the Suite is total carnage—with blood everywhere. Fortunately, Kirkman can get to the weapons, which are more Glock 9mm pistols and 2 clips for each gun.

Once the weapons are obtained, all they have to do is shoot their way through the Living Dead they let loose on the ship. Trying to distract them back into the Security Suite is possible, but once the Living Dead are back inside, the characters will have to make an Agility check at -2 to get out of there without getting attacked.

The next thing Kirkman suggests they do is get to the Bridge. They need to see if anything can be salvaged to get some sort of outside communications going.

SCENE TWO: TRUE COLORS

The characters will have to battle their way onto the Bridge through the total mass of zombies up there. Once they manage to make their way onto the Bridge, they'll have to secure it some how as Kirkman and Brackenridge try to get something running. If any of the characters have Repair, they can attempt a check at -4 to jury-rig some sort of short-distance communications.

Have everyone make a Notice check at a -2 penalty. On a success, they see lights in the distance. Anyone can use the binoculars on the Bridge to try to get a closer look, and doing so shows them it's a Coast Guard vessel coming right for them.

Help is finally on the way.



At this point, Brackenridge touches his ear-piece and nods, then says:

"Copy. We'll be down in ten."

As everyone looks at him, he and his soldiers level their SMGs at Kirkman and the characters.

"Well, everyone, it's been fun. I'm not looking forward to doing this again anytime soon, but our ride's here."

If none of the characters question him then Kirkman will, eliciting the following response.

"You don't think we were really going to sink this tin can and be on board when it happened, did ya? The Engineering room and outer hull are laced with charges. Our boat's here, and I'd rather be gone before they show up." He nods toward the Coast Guard vessel. "I mean hell, ironically I'm doing the world a favor. When this thing sinks, so do the things on it."

"So, we just kill the survivors along with the ghouls?" Kirkman asks.

"Don't get righteous on me, Jay. You locked them in the auditorium with the things in the first place. They're probably already dead. Besides, not my problem. This tub is going down, me and my men are getting off, and the rest of you can suck wind for all I care."

"Then it looks like we all go down with the ship", Kirkman say as he goes to pull the trigger.

Brackenridge beats him to the shot, riddling his body with bullets. Kirkman goes down, his shots firing harmlessly into the console. Immediately, the soldiers all prepared to fire on the rest of you.

"It didn't have to be this way. Don't make us kill all of you," Brackenridge says through clenched teeth. "At least you have a chance to live when that Coast Guard vessel gets here. But my men and I plan to be gone before they arrive. Just let us go. They'll get you off the ship before she goes down."

How the characters handle this is up to them, but the soldiers are fully prepared to kill them all. Brackenridge is a combat veteran, and he intends to sink the ship and get what remains of his team off the vessel in one piece.

Unless the characters start a gunfight against the soldiers, they're disarmed. Brackenridge then radios to prepare for the team to board.

"I'm sorry it had to come to this," Brackenridge says. "I don't know what the hell is loose on this ship, but even if I didn't have a job to do, I'd sink her anyway. I'm not about to risk whatever's on this ship getting loose in some port."

Brackenridge orders his men to prepare for departure when his eyes go wide and he yells an obscenity, looking out the view port. The Coast Guard vessel is on a direct course to ram the cruise ship, and a Notice check reveals Living Dead shambling about the bow of the ship.

Read the following:

Before you can react, the Coast Guard vessel, already consumed by the Living Dead, rams into the hull of the Pinnacle. Sparks fly throughout the room as one of the soldiers pulls his trigger as he's tossed about, riddling the other soldier and Brackenridge with dozens of bullets. A bright light bursts through

the night air as the collision triggers the charges along the outer hull, setting off a chain reaction that engulfs the side of the cruise ship as well as the Coast Guard vessel. Both ships lurch and tilt as they start taking in water.

Have everyone make Agility checks as the two ships collide. Anyone that fails takes a level of Fatigue from being tossed by the impact.

Brackenridge isn't quite dead yet, and tells the characters that the boat is off the bow. Get on it, and get out of there. Brackenridge then dies as Kirkman moans and begins to rise.

The characters don't have long to get off the boat as explosions go off in the Engineering room. Meanwhile, Living Dead tossed from the Coast Guard ship to the Pinnacle start rising to their feet. The Living Dead locked outside the Bridge also pour in.

SCENE THREE: NO SURVIVORS

The characters will have to fight their way through the horde of zombies. If they try to free the people in the auditorium, they find absolute carnage once they get the doors open. The Living Dead were already spreading throughout the ranks at a rapid pace, and the collision and injuries just made it a death trap.

The first thing they see is 3 zombies pull Ms. Hartten to the ground and bite into her flesh and organs as she screams.

Next, Jonathan Treymore runs from the auditorium with his youngest child in his arms. His family is gone. Only he and Monica remain, but she's been bitten on the leg. He knows she's infected, and he tells them that he can't leave her—or the rest of his family. He takes one of the pistols and shoots Monica in the head. He then goes to shoot himself to join his family, but the clip is empty. With tear-filled eyes, he begs the characters to kill him. He just wants to join his family. Play this as a highly emotional scene. The characters are forced to make a very tough choice. Jonathan hasn't been bitten and isn't infected, but he's lost everything. Make the players feel his pain.

Even if the characters won't kill him, he won't accompany them off the ship under any circumstances.

Finally, the Living Dead converge on the characters (and Jonathan allows them to kill him if the characters wouldn't).

It's time to get to the upper decks and find that mercenary boat.

ACT THREE: ESCAPE FROM THE SHIP OF THE LIVING DEAD

The characters make it to the mercenary vessel and out to sea, but discover another problem: the ship is damaged and losing fuel.

SCENE ONE: OCEAN OF DEATH

Once the characters make it to the upper deck, they see the mercenaries' boat (a P520 crashboat) down below. They'll have to find a way to get overboard to the water. If they jump, they'll receive 1 wound from the fall and will have to attempt to soak it or be injured. Otherwise, they'll have 3 rounds to get enough ropes (or something else) to at least climb part way down the hull of the tilting ship. On round 4, hundreds of the Living Dead converge on the upper deck.

Once on the P250, read the following:

The old World War 2 era crashboat as been fully restored and modernized, painted black to better slip away into the night. The two enormous vessels continue to tilt as they take in water, and you can already feel the smaller boat being pulled under with them. You don't have long to get the engines fired and get out of here. Of course, the main question is: how many soldiers are onboard, and how much of a fight are you about to have?

As the characters get below deck, they see 2 Living Dead devouring the 1 soldier that was onboard to serve as the getaway pilot. They ghouls fell onto the ship during the collision, and the soldier had no idea what to do before he was attacked and brought down. Unfortunately, bullets hit a lot of the inner hull, and some of the equipment is already down from the shots.

Once the characters destroy the 2 Living Dead, they can fire-up the engines and get out of there. They're able to establish a GPS connection to point the ship back toward the United States, but quickly realize that the soldier's bullets hit the fuel lines. They won't have fuel enough to get back the entire way under engine power. Luckily, there's enough food and supplies on the ship to last 10 days (16 days if they ration supplies).

Thanks to a rather massive hurricane, the characters will be at sea for 14 days before the Week 5 adventure begins.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK FIVE



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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www.daringentertain.com

War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 5)

GM'S SUMMARY

The characters barely survived the outbreak aboard the Pinnacle cruise ship, and watched as the rest of the passengers and crew became Living Dead. After escaping in a mercenary craft that was damaged during the final battle against the zombies, they managed to ride the waves back to the United States—coming upon a small marina.

Upon disembarking from the vessel, the characters discover the place deserted. A brief encounter with the Living Dead, however, shows them that whatever is happening isn't just confined to the cruise ship.

The characters encounter a man and his wife living in a house near the marina. There, they learn about what is happening across the world, and get a little rest and relaxation. Unfortunately, their rest is cut short when a biker gang rides into the area looking for supplies—and are prepared to do whatever it takes to get them.

ACT ONE: ANY PORT IN A STORM

The characters arrive back in the United States and manage to find a temporary safe haven and some information on what is going on around the globe.

SCENE ONE: CALM SEAS MARINA

The adventure begins with the following narrative:

Two days after you escaped from the ghoul-infested cruise ship, your vessel was assaulted by a massive hurricane. With the engines damaged and the fuel depleted, you've been drifting helplessly at sea for the past 2 weeks.

TECHNOLOGY'S FALL

By this stage, the characters discover that cell phones, television, cable, and such services are no longer operating. About the only things still working as intended are a few, independent radio stations.

The sun is high overhead, now, with only a few stray clouds. The ship gently rises and lowers upon the current. A warm breeze blows in from the west. In the distance, you see land. Unfortunately, the GPS went offline a week ago, so you've no idea exactly where it is you're heading.

The boat drifts its way closer to land, and approaches a small marina. Although a couple of 20ft. boats remain, the parking lot is empty, and the two-story marina shop looms at the far end. A few seagulls glide overhead. As the characters drift close enough to tie-off the boat, they see a sign that reads: CALM SEAS MARINA.

No doubt, the characters will caution their way across the parking lot. Although there are no Living Dead in the immediate area, there also aren't any living people. The place appears to be deserted.

The marina shop is unlocked, and entering it reveals the chaos that unfolded here. Shelves are knocked over, bottles broken, and papers tossed everywhere. The lower level has been completely ransacked and looted. Not even a container of bottled water remains. The electricity is out, and the phone is dead. A door along the left wall leads into the stock room, which is also thoroughly looted. In the back of the stock room is a narrow door that leads into the basement.

Any character that opens the door must make a Guts check for Fear/Nausea at -2 as the stench of rot and decay assails them. The moan of the Living Dead comes from somewhere in the darkness below, just seconds after opening the door. The zombies have been alerted to the arrival of food. If the characters don't shut the door immediately, 4 zombies shamle their way up the stairs. All 4 appear to have been killed by gunshots, and they all wear a CALM SEAS MARINA polo shirt.

If the characters combat the zombies, the basement has a concrete floor, a breaker box, several broken life-preservers, damaged fishing rods, and other assorted equipment that no longer functions.

Investigating the second level reveals 3 offices and a storage room. Like the lower level, the second floor has been ransacked. Desks are overturned, file cabinets have had their contents tossed all over the floor, and anything that might be of use is gone. The storage room only contains a crate of life preservers, some emergency flares, and empty boxes.

It's obvious that what happened to them on the Pinnacle is far bigger than just the cruise ship and a Coast Guard vessel.

SCENE TWO: A TOUCH OF HUMANITY

After the characters decide to continued on from the marina, read the following:

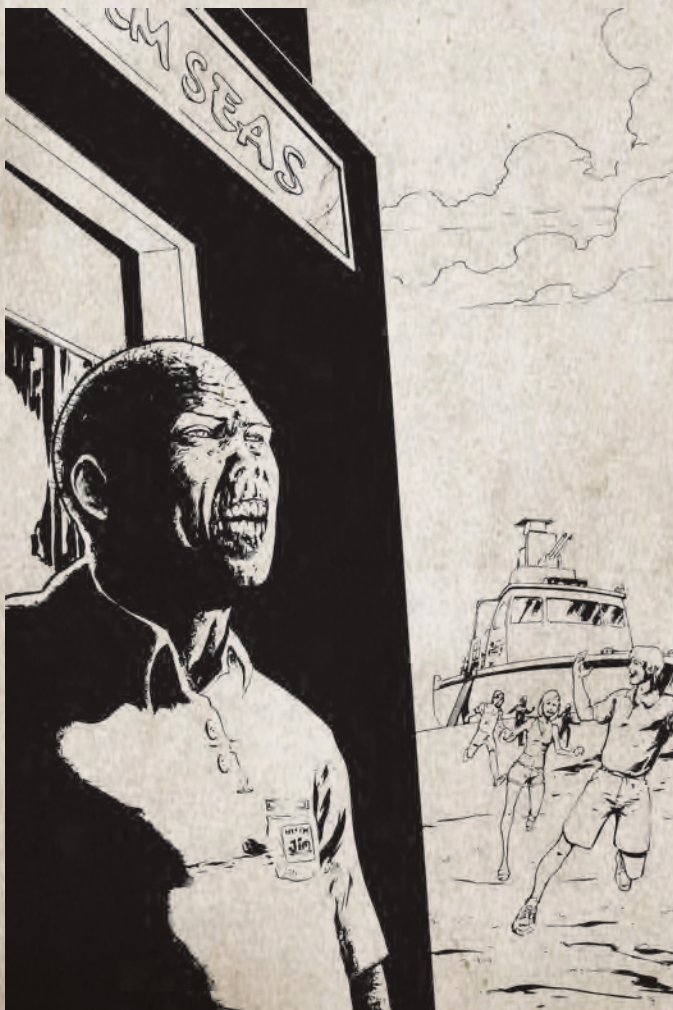
Saying the marina was a dead end is a tasteless pun, but it's an accurate description. Whatever happened here while you were aboard the Pinnacle, the place has been completely looted and trashed. Although you haven't encountered too many Living Dead since your arrival, the 4 in the marina shop were enough to convince you that whatever is happening wasn't just confined to the cruise ship or the Coast Guard vessel. The fact that weapons killed all 4 of them, though, opens up an entirely new series of dangers. What did they do to be murdered and locked in the basement? What if they didn't do anything, but were just in the way of whomever looted the place? Was such an act just another, random crime; or has the world already gone that insane?

The sudden echoing of gunfire from a rifle cuts into your thoughts. Birds take flight from the nearby trees as a second shot rings out. The shots don't seem to be that far away. In fact, they sound as if they're coming from just within the wooded area around the marina!

The characters must make Notice checks at -2 to determine exactly where the sound is coming from. Out here, the echoes reverberate through the wooded area and the marina.

As they move through the wooded area, birds taking flight from the trees add to the confusion. Have them make another Notice check. On a success, they see 1 of the Living Dead—what appears to have once been a man in his 20's, now with his throat and half of his face missing—shambling toward them from behind a tree only 4" away. Anyone that fails the check is surprised, and doesn't get dealt an Action Card until next round.

As the characters deal with the lone zombie looking to make them into its next meal, they hear 3 more shots echo throughout the woods. This time, a normal Notice check will reveal it came from ahead of them, directly away from the marina.



When the characters approach the area, read the following:

A small, two-story house with a raised front porch sits several hundred feet ahead of you, an open field separating it from the woods. Six Living Dead shamle toward the dwelling. Another shots rings out from one of the first floor windows, and another ghoul drops. Approximately 12 corpses litter the field at random intervals.

To the left of the house, maybe 50 feet away from it, is a small garage with a large RV parked next to it. A dirt driveway winds its way for a couple hundred feet before debouching upon a nearby, two-lane road.

Another shot rings out. Another ghoul drops...

The characters can wait for the man to eliminate all the corpses before attempting to make their way across the field, or they can help take them out. Whichever the case, the result is the same: once the zombies have been eliminated, the man fires a shot into the ground directly in front of them. A voice from the window then echoes across the field, ordering them to get away from his property. Another shot strikes the ground in front of them to emphasis the point.

Unknown to the characters, the man and his wife have already been the targets of looters seeking to kill them and take whatever they needed. Although the characters only heard 6 shots, there are actually 11 bodies in the field. Five of them belong to the group that tried to attack the couple a few hours ago. After the man shot them dead, he then had to kill them a second time once they reanimated.

Due to those recent events, his initial reaction is Hostile and his wife is Uncooperative. Although he fears for his and his wife's safety—and believes the world has gone insane, and people are even more of a danger than ever—she still holds some hope for humanity.

The characters have several choices. First, the man is too well defended for a firefight, so opening fire on his house is a sure way to get shot and possibly killed. They can retreat to the trees, and use Stealth and Lock-picking to attempt to get into the home and disarm the man. They can also attempt a Persuasion check to get the man to lower his weapon and allow them temporary sanctuary. If they go this route and succeed, the man's wife will exit the house and come across the field to greet them. She's glad to have some company

besides him, and he won't fire as long as she's out in the open.

Whichever way the characters go about it, they have a potential ally in the man and should be careful not to injure his wife. Although the man can forgive an injury to himself, he'll go out of his way to kill anyone that hurts his wife.

The man and his wife are in their 60's, and their names are Henry and Eleanor. She's a plump woman who loves the outdoors and cooking. He's a slim man with deeply wrinkled and tanned skin from so many years in the weather. Normally, he helps take care of the marina's general upkeep.

Once they get Henry to stop firing, he apologizes: stating that the world has gone to Hell in a hand basket and you can't be too careful. He saw what happened to the marina, and rumor had it from some folks that passed through a few days ago that the people who worked there were murdered and robbed. Neither one of them says a word about the group they recently killed, themselves.

Eleanor offers to make some food for everyone. They don't have too much right now, but she's sure she can whip something up. Henry sits in the living room with the characters, his rifle within arm's reach as he answers their questions and fills them in on what's happened. The characters can learn the following information through role-playing:

- They are in Fairport, North Carolina (a fictional town), which is about 50 miles east of Jacksonville.
- The crisis started about 2 weeks ago.
- Washington and the military didn't know what they were dealing with, and screwed the pooch on the entire operation. Within days, it all spread out of control. They have rescue stations set-up in the major cities, but neither he nor his wife have any interest in going. This is their home, and this is where they'll stay. If he wanted to live in the city, he would have done so before now.
- No one, as far as he's heard, knows what caused it. Everyone has theories, though: Terrorists and some sort of biological weapon, Act of God and the End of Days, space virus, you name it. Most likely scenario is Terrorists, but even they can't hit the entire globe at once.
- Yes, the entire globe has been hit. When the news was still broadcasting, reports were

coming in from England, France, Germany, Russia, India, China, and other places.

- Television, phone lines, cable—all of it died about a week ago. About the only thing that's still working is the radio; and at least a few smaller stations have been managing random broadcasts. He and Eleanor stopped listening, though. The news is just too depressing.

Henry also wants to hear their stories about how they've survived so far, whom they've encountered, where they came from and how bad the situation is there. After hearing their tale, he offers to play the VCR tape of 2 news recordings he made when the stations were still broadcasting. Although the electricity is out, he has a generator. North Carolina gets hit with enough storms that he's learned to always be prepared for the power to fail. He tells them to just give him a moment to go turn it on. He and Eleanor don't use it much in order to conserve the fuel, and he's already taken all the fuel that was left from the marina.

Eleanor continues to cook, the aroma of beef stew filling the house, as Henry heads down to the basement to turn on the generator (he takes the rifle with him). If asked if she needs any help in the kitchen, Eleanor will graciously decline and tell them to just rest and be comfortable. The characters have several minutes of role-playing time between themselves (and any friends or family with them), as they absorb what they've learned so far.

Once Henry returns, he turns on the television and VCR, and inserts a tape. He tells the characters that he recorded this on the second day of the crisis. He didn't think to record anything from the first day.

Read the following as the tape plays:

The word PLAY is still displayed in the upper left-hand corner as the screen suddenly shows President Obama standing before the podium. Behind him is the United States flag, to his left is the Secretary of Defense, and to his right is a U.S. Army General.

"America, I come to you now at a time of great crisis within our country. An unknown virus is sweeping through our borders, and we estimate that over a quarter of the nation has become infected. Unlike SARS or Swine Flu, this new virus does not appear to be airborne. Instead, it appears to be transmitted through bodily fluids, the most common being in the host's saliva.

We're working around the clock to find a vaccination, and all efforts are being coordinated by the Department of Homeland Security between the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"I want to assure everyone that we will find the cause of this virus, we will determine its nature, and we will eliminate its threat.

"I will now turn things over to General Emerick. General..."

President Obama steps aside as General Emerick assumes the podium. Flash bulbs illuminate the room.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, it's imperative you pay close attention to what I'm about to tell you.

"The crisis we face is unlike anything in American history. Once spread to a new host through the saliva or other bodily fluids of the carrier, the virus is fast acting and 100% terminal. The initial stage is a high fever—approximately 106 degrees—followed by a loss of motor skills. The victim then enters a catatonic state for several minutes before regaining consciousness. At that stage, the victim begins attacking any living thing within reach.

"It's vital to not only national security, but your own safety, that anyone infected with the virus be immediately turned over to law enforcement. Law enforcement personnel will assure they receive proper medical treatment. Once infected, your friends and loved ones are no longer the people you knew. They will not recognize you. They will be driven with a sole purpose: spreading the infection."

Henry tells the characters: that is the point the electricity first cut out, and it didn't come back on for several hours. He and Eleanor had turned on the battery-operated radio once the power went out, and the stations were repeating what the President and his staff had said concerning the virus. They also reported that General Emerick had talked about Rescue Stations being set-up in all the major cities, where civilians would be kept quarantined and safe.

He reaches forward and hits the PLAY button again. The tape continues with a report from CNN, which Henry says was from the following day.

A female reporter fills the screen as a ticker at the

THE GHOST RIDERS

The biker gang is known as the Ghost Riders, and they're meant to represent the outlaw nature of the zombie genre. Lead by Hell Fuerrie (pronounced: "fury"), they are recurring antagonists in the War of the Dead campaign.

bottom advises civilians to seek out their local Rescue Station, even listing the primary Rescue Station for each city. For North Carolina, the main Rescue Station is on the north end of Raleigh, with other locations in all of North Carolina's smaller cities.

The reporter talks about outbreaks identical to what is affecting the United States being reported in England, India, China, Russia, Germany, Canada, and Mexico. She goes on to repeat what the characters heard in the last press report, concerning the symptoms of the so-called virus.

CNN then cuts to a reporter in the field, a man of Latino descent, standing in Times Square on a balcony high off the ground. The reporter talks about the anarchy and breakdown of civil virtues that have affected the Big Apple. Rioting, looting, and mass suicides plague New York as the infected grow in numbers. In the background, screams and gunshots are heard. The camera pans downward to show the streets. Cars are abandoned in the middle of streets, many of them having been involved in accidents. Broken windows pepper buildings, and trash is everywhere. The camera shows a small squad of 6 soldiers in a fire-and-retreat as they unleash their M-16's into a crowd of approaching Living Dead. Although the zombies fall from the hail of bullets, many of them rise back to their feet.

The reporter continues that the virus doesn't just affect the living. Reports have been coming in of the dead returning to life. Like the infected humans, the corpses are slow moving and seem focused on just one thing: the consumption of living flesh. She also mentions that if the dead are somehow returning to life, it brings to question the President's speech yesterday about the virus being transmitted only through bodily fluids.

Once again, the recording suddenly stops. Henry explains that he'd shut the thing off at that point. There was just no way he was buying into the dead returning to life, and figured at that point that the reports were more fiction than fact.

He didn't record anything after that and, by the next day, the only thing the television was broadcasting was the Emergency Broadcast System and a ticker on where to go for Rescue Stations. He did listen to the radio, though. Reports indicated the President, Vice President, and members of Congress were being flown—with their families—to a highly secure location. He grunts. Of course, the politicians would be sent someplace safe while the rest of the country was left on the menu for those things. His opinion is to feed them all to the things. It isn't like they've been doing the country any good, anyway.

Eleanor comes into the living room and tells everyone that the stew is ready. Henry rises and stretches, and suggests they all go get something to eat.

The rest of the scene can be finished with role-playing, rest, and absorbing everything the characters have learned.

ACT TWO: RIDERS ON THE STORM

As the characters cope with the state of the world and the global rise of the Living Dead, their rest with Henry and Eleanor is cut short when a biker gang rides into the area.

SCENE ONE: THE GHOST RIDERS

After dinner and a little relaxation around the radio (which only played music on an automated loop, no news reports), Henry and Eleanor offered the characters lodging for the night. Although paranoid, Henry warmed up to the characters during the meal.

It's now the middle of the night, and the characters should be sleeping as best they can, given the circumstances. Read the following:

The loud roar and rumble of multiple motorcycles cuts through the quiet night, jarring your nerves from the unexpected noise. Looking out the window, you see dozens of headlights sweep past on the narrow road, heading toward the marina.

With the last of the motorcycles passing along the road, Henry bursts in on the characters, rifle in hand (but not pointed). He's glad they're awake. Whoever those guys are, they're headed for the marina and he wants to head into the woods to check it out. Last thing he needs is a bunch of criminals (as he calls them) coming to the house and causing trouble. No telling what those guys are after.

Henry doesn't take "no" for an answer from the characters. Although anyone they brought along with them can stay with Eleanor in the basement until they get back, he and his wife gave them food and shelter and he expects their help.

The characters must accompany Henry to spy on the biker gang, and the moon is full and bright overhead, illuminating the field between the house and the woods. As they make their way toward the woods as quickly as silence will allow, have the characters make a Notice check as they pass a couple of corpses in the field. On a success, they notice that several were killed with shots to the head, but except for those wounds, they show no other signs of having been injured. Flies are already buzzing around all the corpses.

If any of the characters question Henry about the bodies, he'll shoot them a narrow-eyed glance, but not offer any type of response.

Henry leads them at a slow pace through the woods, being as careful not to make too much sound. He whispers to them to be on the lookout for any of the creatures. By the time they get near the opposite end of the woods, the biker gang is already at the marina. There are 24, brand new Harley Davidson motorcycles (36 bikers in all: 24 men and 12 women). A few bikers are checking out the couple of boats that remain at the marina, some are scanning the area, and many more are inside the marina shop. The door is wide open, and the noise of people searching for something is audible. If the characters didn't dispatch the 4 Living Dead in the basement, gunshots echo from inside the shop. All the bikers that the characters can see are armed—some with pistols, some with machetes, some with rifles, and others with shotguns.

One man in particular stands out from the others: he's tall; well built; with a long, dark beard and mustache; and long hair. He's wearing a pair of chaps over denim jeans, black boots, and a black t-shirt with a leather vest. Strapped to his right leg is a harpoon pistol. At his waist is a semi-automatic pistol, and slung over his shoulder is an M-16. He puffs on a cigar as he scans the area with intent eyes. Several times, it's almost as if he looks directly at the characters.

His attention is diverted as several men come out of the shop.

The men report that everything was already taken, the place is bare of anything useful. They mention the Living Dead inside (even if the characters had already dispatched them, the corpses were still there), but other than that, the place is useless.

The men that were going over the boats also walk up to the leader and tell him that the boats are cleaned out; even the fuel tanks are empty. One of them is some sort of military craft, but it's also cleaned out.

The leader stares at the woods again, seemingly directly at the characters—even though he can't see them in the dark. He then tells his gang to mount-up. They passed a house on their way here, just on the other side of the woods, and he wants to check it out for supplies. When one of the men asks him what if there are people in there, the leader responds with a "so what? If there's anyone there, they can either hand over what the gang wants, or they can die. It's just that simple."

Several of the motorcycles roll out from the marina as the leader mounts his bike and starts the engine.

Henry curses to himself as he admits they'll never beat the gang to the house, but he'll be damned if he'll let them hurt Eleanor.

SCENE TWO: SCUM OF THE EARTH

By the time Henry and the characters make it to the edge of the woods facing the house, the bikers are already pulling down the driveway and surrounding the place; many with weapons drawn as they dismount.

Henry tells the characters that if they can get into the crawl space underneath the porch, there are basement windows they can crawl through. All the characters have to do is make it across the field. Have the characters make opposed Stealth checks against the bikers' Notice skill (d6), since they are considered active guards due to being on the lookout for the Living Dead. The characters receive a +1 bonus to their Stealth checks due to the dim lighting. The characters will have to make 2 opposed Stealth checks. The first is while crossing the field, and the second is when they move along the side of the house.

If any of the characters fail the check while crossing the field, the bikers spot everyone within 5" of them. The bikers will fire at them (but not actually hit them), but when they see that the characters react and aren't mindless Living Dead, will move in on them. Two bikers for each character will approach, guns drawn and prepared to fire. The characters are trapped in the middle of an open field and are likely to lose a firefight.

If any of the characters fail the check while moving along the side of the house to the crawl space, they're all spotted by the bikers and captured.

Captured characters will proceed to Scene Two (B), while those that make it beneath the porch will continue with this scene.

The windows are wide and short—the type that swing inward and upward on hinges—and are painted red. If Henry is not with them due to being captured, Eleanor will open the window a crack to peer out when she hears them push on it. Otherwise, Henry will knock on the glass.

Once inside, Eleanor is extremely frightened as the sounds of crashing furniture and breaking china fill the first floor. Anyone that came along with the characters is similarly frightened. Either Henry or the characters can explain what's going on upstairs. Once she hears what's going on, Eleanor opens the door to a small closet that was neatly disguised along the wall. She ushers in any friends and family of the characters before entering and closing it behind her.

Just then, the door to the basement opens. If Henry is with them, he opens fire as soon as he sees a pair of feet and legs. The shots hit the biker in the shin, nearly blowing his lower leg off. The biker yells as he falls to the bottom of the stairs in a bloody mess.

Yelling and rapid movement are heard upstairs as the other bikers run to investigate. One of them, in his haste, starts down the stairs and Henry repeats the performance—with the same result. At that point, the leader orders his men to kill whomever is down there. Gunfire fills the house as the bikers shoot through the floor and into the basement.

Roll a d6 for each character in the player-group. On a 5 or 6, the character is hit by stray bullets and suffers 2d6 damage. Henry is automatically hit for 2d6 damage and is Incapacitated.

The leader then orders everyone in the basement to come upstairs, unarmed. They have until the count of 10 to comply, or he and his people will burn the house down and kill anyone that tries to escape.

He starts counting from 1.

If the characters don't do as he says, on the count of 7 Eleanor will burst out of the closet and declare their surrender. Henry is hurt, this is their home, and she won't let them burn it.

Once the characters are upstairs, the bikers force them into the living room and keep their guns trained on them as the leader approaches.

If Henry is not with them in the basement, the action happens just about the same way. A biker comes downstairs, and if the characters don't attack him and

initiate the same sequence of events, then he'll notice them and call for back-up as they're taken captive. The biker will also hear Eleanor crying from within the closet, which exposes anyone in there with her as well.

SCENE TWO (B): CAPTURED!

Any characters that are captured while trying to make their way back toward the house are beaten to the ground (non-lethal damage), disarmed, and taken inside to the gang's leader. The man asks them several questions:

- Who are they?
- Where did they get the weapons?
- Are there any others with them?
- Where are the keys to the RV parked outside?
- What use are they to him that he should let them live?

Unless they are entirely forthcoming with answers, he starts punching them. He'll beat them into unconsciousness if they don't tell him what he wants to know. If Henry is with them, he answers as truthfully as he can after the second hit to the face. He even tells him the keys to the RV are hanging in the kitchen. The leader tells a woman named Spiderbait (his girlfriend) to check it out. She quickly finds the keys, holding them up and shaking them happily.

If any characters weren't captured on the way to the house, events from Scene Two: Scum of the Earth now takes place.

Once everyone is back together, proceed to Act Three.

ACT THREE: WELCOME TO HELL

The quiet refuge the characters had discovered has been turned into a war zone as a gang of bikers arrived and took them all prisoner. Now disarmed, the characters are caught in a life-and-death situation with nowhere to run.

SCENE ONE: BAITING THE LINE

The characters are all being held prisoner in the living room as 2-dozen armed bikers surround them. The leader introduces himself as Hell. When Eleanor asks what his real name is, the man replies that it is his real name. His mother named him Hell because the last thing his father said to her before he walked out on them, after finding out she was pregnant, was "Oh, Hell!"

If Scene Two (B): Captured didn't take place, then Hell starts interrogating them as per that scene. After he gets the information he wants (with Eleanor tell-

ing him where the RV keys are located, if Henry is Incapacitated), he tells them that they're known as the Ghost Riders, and they need supplies. Sadly, what's in the house isn't nearly enough. Fortunately, what's in the nearby town is probably plenty. Unfortunately, the place is crawling with walking corpses.

So, here's the deal: the characters (and Henry—if he's able) are going to help them out. The old lady (Eleanor), and anyone the characters have with them, is going to be insurance. Once everyone helps them get supplies, they're gone and life in the little happy-home can go back to normal.

He tells the characters that they're all going to act as bait. They're going to draw the things' attention so he and his men can get what they need. If they survive, they're free to go. If they get killed, that's their problem. Anyone that refuses can die right now.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 6



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 6)

GM'S SUMMARY

After surviving the outbreak of the Living Dead on the Pinnacle cruise ship, then making their way to the Calm Seas Marina in Fairport, North Carolina and taking refuge, the characters quickly realized that the greatest threat was not the Living Dead—it was their fellow man!

The characters managed to learn something about what was going on in the world at large. The Living Dead were a global pandemic, spreading across every corner of the world. In the first day alone, over a quarter of the U.S. population was infected; and within the past week all television broadcasts had ceased.

Henry and Eleanor, an elderly couple that lived near the marina, offered the characters food and lodging. The characters were getting some much-needed rest when the arrival of a motorcycle gang put them into motion once again.

Captured and held prisoner by the gang, the characters were told that they would serve as bait to distract the Living Dead in Fairport while the gang looted supplies. If they survived, they would be set free. If they refused, they would be killed on the spot.

As we begin Week 6, the characters are outmanned and outgunned, and have little choice but to go along with the gang. Unfortunately, things don't go as planned when Henry attempts to escape and Eleanor is killed in front of him. Sent into a rage, the old man is gunned down by the bikers.

The characters will have to escape, and in the process make an enemy that will pursue them throughout the campaign.

ACT ONE: ALONG CAME A SPIDER

The characters are held hostage and confined to the second floor of the house as the Ghost Riders wait for daybreak to begin the assault on Fairport.

SCENE ONE: CAUGHT IN THE SPIDER'S WEB

The biker gang has separated the characters from any loved ones they might have, placing them in a different room than where Henry (who's recovered enough from his gunshot to function) and the characters are confined. Outside each of the rooms are 2 bikers standing guard, and the windows have been nailed shut with the tools they found in the basement.

At the start of the adventure, give the characters some role-playing time between themselves and Henry. The old man is worried about Eleanor, and swears on his life that if they hurt her then he'll die with her, but he'll take a few of them with him.

Henry is using his anger to hide his stark-fear, something that should be obvious to the characters. He's certain that heading into Fairport is a death sentence, and is convinced that none of them will survive.

After a bit, read the following:

The door open and Spiderbait walks in. Despite her tattoos, she an attractive woman in her 20's with a lithe figure. She's dressed in tight-fitting jeans, boots, and a half-shirt with the cover of Rob Zombie's HELLBILLY DELUXE emblazoned on the front. A bellybutton ring with a dual chain leading up and under her shirt decorates her midsection. On her hip is a holstered Glock 9mm, strapped to her right thigh is a Bowie Knife, and a key chain on her belt loop contains the RV keys. A biker with prison tattoos on his neck and an

M-16 enters the room with her, and closes the door behind them as he leans against it smoking a cigarette.

Spiderbait eyes all of you with a sinister smile on her lips.

She'll approach one of the females in the group. If there aren't any females, then she'll approach one of the men and either threaten one of the females with the group in the other room, or threaten Eleanor. If any of the characters, or Henry, tries to attack her as she makes her threats, the man with her will point the M-16 at them and rack a bullet into the chamber.

Spiderbait is about to have some of her trademark fun with the group. Whether she has to use a male for her show-and-tell, or can use a female, her actions will be the same. She draws the knife from her thigh and runs the blade lightly along the corners of her victim's mouth. As she does, she starts talking about how other women have always annoyed her. She supposes it stems from her aunt having raised her. The woman was just so prissy and proper that it made her sick. Always with the heavy make-up, the designer clothing, and the whole "act like a lady" crap that it drove her nuts. Eventually, she just had to teach the woman a lesson. She wasn't so prim when she was trying to push her intestines back in. People are such screamers when it all hits the fan. Sure, men can scream with the best of them. It's the shrilling scream of another woman, though, that really gets her going.

She runs the blade lightly over the throat as she goes on about how smooth and beautiful the skin of a woman is, and how it's a work of art when a blade starts cutting into it. She's an artist—a sculptor, actually—and it's something they should all keep in mind if they have any thoughts of trying to betray the gang. She'll carve them slowly, taking her time in creating a masterpiece that will feed those things in Fairport for weeks to come.

With that, she steps back from the character and puts the knife away as she seductively licks her lips. The biker follows her out and locks the door behind them.

Give the characters a little more role-playing time as the sun starts to rise, the sky turning from purple to pink.

ACT TWO: LIVE BAIT

Dawn has arrived, and the characters are now taken to Fairport, where they're forced to act as bait for the Living Dead. Of course, the gang is in for a surprise or two as the characters prepare to escape and leave the gang to the zombies.

SCENE ONE: DEAD MEN WALKING

Begin the scene with the following narrative:

It's dawn, and the bikers are wasting no time in getting started. The door opens and 4 men with M-16's wave you out.

You're led to the front porch and forced to line-up against the house, backs against the wall. Spiderbait looks at you with a predatory grin as Hell walks up and kisses her. He pats her rear, then turns and makes his way up the front steps toward you.

"Listen closely, 'cause I'm only gonna say this once. Screw me over, and there're worse things than dying. A lot worse." Behind him, Spiderbait caresses the handle of her knife as she winks you. "Don't be a hero. Just do what you're told, and you can go on 'bout your business. Now, we're gonna head to Fairport, but we ain't riding all the way. The corpses like noise, and I don't want the bikes bringing 'em down on our heads. So, we're gonna park about a mile away and go the rest on foot. Then, we're gonna stay back while you all head in and draw as many as ya can to the far end of town. Most of what we need's near the center. Once we get our stuff, you guys can take off. Screw me and leave before we get outta town, and I'll hunt ya down 'til the day I die. Got it?"

Hell doesn't wait for an answer as he yells to the gang: "Mount up! Time to ride."

A few Ghost Riders take each of you to a different motorcycle, where you'll be riding behind the biker. A half-dozen or so bikers remain at the house.

The gang heads down the road to the west, going about 15 miles before Hell signals everyone to stop along the side of the road. Heavy woods go off on either side, and the road disappears around a curve. As the characters are led to the front of the pack, they hear Hell talking into a

ALTERNATE CUT: JASON KIRKMAN'S DEMISE

If Kirkman survived the Pinnacle and is still with the characters, set-up his demise in Fairport. Allow the random encounters to separate the group at one point, and have Kirkman either bitten and Infected, or outright slaughtered by the Living Dead.

walkie-talkie to the bikers still at the house. He's confirming their position, and tells them that once this is done, he'll either give the order to roll out, or kill the hostages. It all depends on the bait.

Hell keeps the characters under armed guard as he leads the gang through the woods, making sure to stay off the road. Spiderbait and 3 other bikers stay back to guard the motorcycles, leaving 26 gang members accompanying the characters toward the town.

About halfway to the town, Hell raises his hand and calls a halt. On the road are a group of roughly a dozen

zombies milling about. He signals to be quiet as he leads everyone further along the woods.

Eventually, the town of Fairport looms before them, in a valley past the edge of the woods. It's a small town (former population about 1,000), with a main street and dozens of intersections. Cars were left haphazardly throughout the streets. Windows on buildings are broken, and several look as if they'd suffered from fires. A police station and courthouse occupy the exact center of town. A large grocery store is about 6 blocks into Fairport from where the characters are standing. Small businesses and single-family homes, some in obvious disarray, complete the picture.

Throughout the streets, hundreds of zombies sham-
ble around.

Hell turns to the characters and grins. In a whisper, he tells them to get started. He doesn't care how they do it, but he wants this side of town, all the way past the cop house, cleared.

The characters are shoved forward as several of the bikers cock the hammers on their guns. Henry's hands are shaking as he turns to Hell and warns that if anything happens to Eleanor, he'll fillet him like a trout.

Hell smiles and chuckles.

SCENE TWO: THE GREAT AMERICAN NIGHTMARE

The characters are at a severe disadvantage. They are being forced to distract a town of Living Dead while completely unarmed. Unfortunately, the hardware store—a prime source of at least some make-shift melee weapons—is on the opposite side of town, past the police station.

If the characters make a pit stop in the police station, they find that the weapons and ammunition have already been taken. There isn't much there besides a few batons (Str+d4 damage), to aid them.

The characters can also check the trunks of a couple of cars for tire-irons (Str+d4 damage).

What happens in this scene depends entirely on how the characters handle the situation. They can attempt Stealth checks to get past some of the zombies, and maybe make their way a little further in before causing a distraction. They can attempt to Taunt the zombies to follow some, or all, of them. If in combat with a zombie, they can attempt a Trick to take the creature off-balance for a follow-up attack.

If the Living Dead manage to surround a character (or characters), they'll make use of the Ganging Up



maneuver to bring their prey down. Other than that, the zombies are just as uncoordinated as the others encountered thus far in the campaign.

To keep the scene interesting, use of the Encounter Chart below. Draw 1 card for each player in the group, and hit them with the result.

ENCOUNTER CHART

Ace: The character sees a zombie coming toward him that has her stomach ripped open. The odd thing, though, is that the flesh looks as if something ripped its way out from the INSIDE. The character must make a Guts check. If the character fails he's Shaken, and a zombie attacks from behind with a +2 to Fighting. If the character succeeds, the zombie makes its move with no bonus to Fighting.

Two: A zombie falls from above and lands on the character. The character has to make an Agility check, or fall to the ground with the zombie on top of him as the creature attempts to bite into him.

Three: A young boy—about 10 years old—comes walking slowly around the corner, his left side facing the character. He's moving like he might be hurt. As he turns to face the character, the entire left half of his face from his temple down is gone. The character must make a Guts check at -1 for Terror.

Four: As the character moves too close to one of the cars, have him make a Notice check. On a failure, a zombie gets The Drop (+4 Fighting) as it attempts to grab his leg and bite.

Five: As the character tries to sneak past some zombies, a dog sticks its head out of a nearby doorway and starts barking. The Living Dead turn toward the noise and notice the character.

Six: A zombie in a nearby building bursts through the wide, front window as the characters pass. The sound of shattering glass, as well as the alarm that suddenly shrills, causes all zombies within 10" (60 feet) to turn toward the characters.

Seven: A military Ah-64 Apache helicopter flies by overhead, heading east to west. As it streaks low over the town, it strafes the streets with its machine guns. The characters have to make Agility checks or suffer hits from the 30mm chaingun (3d6 damage). The helicopter is just making a quick pass on its way to its actual

target, and doesn't see the characters.

Eight: The character hears a moan behind him. A military soldier zombie is walking toward the character, still clutching a hand grenade. Unfortunately, another zombie bumped into it, and its finger got caught in the pin's loop. The zombie has already pulled away from the other, and the pin has been pulled not more than 3" from the character. The zombie, distracted, dropped the grenade. Deal Action Cards for the character and the grenade, and see which one acts first.

Nine: The character makes a wrong turn and is forced to take to the roof of a gas station's convenience store. Within mere moments, the place is surrounded by Living Dead. How will the character get off the roof?

Ten: A crowd of zombies corners the character. Suddenly, a jet fighter streaks by overhead at low altitude. The noise causes the zombies to look up, and the character gets a chance to escape.

Jack: The characters all hear a female scream come from a nearby single-family home. If the characters investigate, they see a woman in her 30's being torn apart by two zombies: one is her age and the other is a teenager. Inside the house is a gun closet with a variety of pistols and rifles, and enough ammunition to fill each gun 3 times (the Gamemaster determines which weapons from the SWEX are found).

Queen: The character hears an infant crying from a nearby store where the windows are still intact and the door locked. Several zombies are scraping against the windows and door to get inside. If the character manages to get past the zombies and into the building, he or she finds a baby—not more than 2 months old—wrapped in a blanket and hidden behind the counter. No one else is in the store. Does the character leave the child for dead, or has the group just picked-up its newest member? If the character takes the baby, all Fighting and Shooting rolls are at -2 while holding the child.

King: The characters hear the loud roar of an engine and accompanying machine gunfire reverberating off the buildings. Before they can discern the direction it's coming from, a military Humvee with a .50 caliber gun on the back comes roaring through the town, crossing an intersection several blocks ahead of them. The Humvee speeds across the street the characters are on,

disappearing beyond the town. Zombies are rising to their feet in its wake, shambling in the direction the vehicle went (if the players asked, it headed south to north).

Joker: Choose any 2 events, or draw 2 new cards and apply both results.

By the time the characters play through a few encounters, they'll be past the center of town with the Living Dead in pursuit. A Notice check shows the Ghost Riders cautiously making their way into town at the far end. With the biker gang making their move, the characters are now open to make their own.

Obviously, the best course of action is to make their way around the perimeter of the town back to where the bikes are parked, and get the keys to the RV from Spiderbait. Henry tells them the RV has a full tank of gas, and food stocked onboard incase he and Eleanor had to take it in an emergency. Once back at the house, they need to free Eleanor (and any others) and escape in the RV. The vehicle is a 2006 Itasca Suncruiser motorhome.

If the characters go that route, they will have to make Stealth vs. Spiderbait's notice to get close enough to surprise them. She's helping guard the bikes, and is actively scanning around her for the Living Dead. Once the characters take her and the other 3 bikers down, they can get the keys to the RV and steal a couple of motorcycles to get back to the house. The motorcycles will each have a half tank of gas.

Another possibility is to hotwire one or more of the cars in the town and escape back to the house. The bikers are deep into the town getting supplies, and will be hard-pressed to get back to the bikes in time through the woods. Unfortunately, the car(s) have less than a quarter tank of gas.

If that's the case, they will have to loop around the back roads, and Henry will direct them on how to get back onto the main road. They'll be coming up on the bikers from behind (they'll be driving back toward the town, on the same road the bikers took). Unless they park down the road and sneak in, Spiderbait and the other 3 bikers will open fire on the cars as soon as they see them. Use the normal Savage Worlds vehicle rules for this scene.

Either way, once Spiderbait and the other bikers are taken care of, the characters gain the RV keys and can take the cars or the motorcycles back to the house.

SCENE THREE: GHOST BUSTING

If the characters ram toward Henry's property in the vehicles, the 6 bikers will open fire on them as soon as they realize it isn't the rest of the gang. If they park and go the rest of the way on foot, Stealth checks against inactive guards will get them close enough to the house.

If the characters didn't find firearms in Fairport, they should at least have the weapons from Spiderbait and her friends.

DEAL ACTION CARDS!

The characters and Henry must now battle the remaining bikers, who quickly take cover inside the house and fire on the characters. During the fight, Henry disappears from the characters.

Once the battle starts to turn against the bikers, one of them opens the front door. He has Eleanor with him, his gun at her temple as he uses her as a human shield. He orders the characters to toss their weapons down and surrender, or the old broad dies.

Henry comes out in the open drops his gun. The biker laughs and says that Henry was warned what would happen. He shoots Eleanor right in front of him. Henry screams, a primordial thing of pain and anguish, and goes for his gun on the ground. As Eleanor's body falls, the biker quickly shoots Henry several times in the chest.

The characters must now finish the fight if any of their loved ones are inside the house. If they don't have anyone being kept hostage, then all they have to do is get the RV keys off Henry's body and try to get away (or just escape in any vehicles they brought with them from Scene Two, though the RV has more gas and provisions). It's also vital that they somehow make sure the motorcycles can't follow them.

ACT THREE: THE ATTRITIONS OF WAR

The characters have barely survived their encounter with the Ghost Riders and the town of Fairport, and escaped from Henry's house. Finally on the open road, they now have to decide what to do next.

SCENE ONE: DECISIONS, DECISIONS . . .

As the characters race away from Henry's house, read the following:

If there is a God in all this mess, it seems he's definitely on your side for the time being. Somehow, you managed to survive a town full of the Living Dead, a biker gang from hell, and several gunfights.

As you speed away from the house, the question remains: where do you go now? The Living Dead are everywhere, and although you could trust Henry and Eleanor, the Ghost Riders have shown you the other side of humanity in the new world that's dawning. You're going to have to play it smart if you're going to survive. The Living Dead might be a serious threat, but the greatest danger could just as easily be the people in the next town.

Allow the players some role-playing time as they decide what to do next. The most obvious choice is to head west toward Jacksonville and meet up with the military Rescue Station out that way. Turning on the radio will initiate the following news report:

This is John Ortiz with WKLM, coming to you with a special report. Military personnel in the eastern North Carolina region advise everyone to report to the Rescue Station in Jacksonville. All civilians are warned to stay away from towns and other unsecured populated areas until Military Containment Units can quarantine the infected that are still at large. It's imperative that civilians not engage the infected, and find the nearest escape route in the event of coming into contact with anyone that has been infected, or shows signs of being infected.

Once again, the United States Military in eastern North Carolina urges everyone to report to the Rescue Station in Jacksonville, until Military Containment Units can quarantine all outlying towns and populated areas.

This is John Ortiz, coming to you from WKLM.

EPILOGUE: THE ENEMY

Once the session is about to end for the night, read the group the following epilogue.

The Living Dead had found food! Nearly a dozen of them ripped muscle, intestines, kidneys, and other succulent morsels from the still-warm bodies. Blood covered their hands and mouths, but they didn't care. Only one thing drove them: a hunger for flesh!

A single gunshot ripped through the nearest ghoul, exploding its head in a spray of thick, blackish goop. The others moaned. Almost as though of a single mind, they turned to confront whatever it was that had interrupted them.

Hell unleashed his fury, the M-16 vibrating his arms as it sent a hailstorm of death into the creatures. Skulls shattered and limbs tore away from bodies as the other men followed his lead. Hell's eyes were wide with rage and spittle flecked the corners of his mouth.

When the last of the beasts had fallen, Hell walked cautiously over to the bodies. He kicked a few with his boot to make sure they were dead—yet again. Satisfied, he stepped over them in his search for something of particular importance.

He found it upon the ground on the far side of his motorcycle, and his heart pounded against his sternum as his eyes settled upon it. Her chest and throat had been torn open, the blood already thickened. He stared, jaw clenched, as he raised the automatic rifle and pointed it—waiting. Moments later, the eyes opened. They were glazed and distant. Her lips parted, but the damage to her throat prevented a moan from escaping. He exhaled slowly and squeezed the trigger. A single shot entered her forehead. The body stopped moving.

Hell bent down and retrieved a ring from the ground near her head. It was the ring that had once pierced her navel.

"I want those bastards found," he said quietly, clenching the ring in his left hand and keeping his back toward the men. "I want 'em found, and I want 'em alive."

"How do you know they did this?" One of the bikers asked.

A terrible anger flared within him as he placed the ring within his hip pocket. Then, without a word, he spun and fired several shots into the biker's chest.

"We're missing friggin' bikes, and the corpses sure didn't ride 'em outta here! Now, anyone else

wanna ask me a stupid question?" His eyes blazed as though the fires of his namesake burned within them.

No one said a word. Everyone was too scared to even move.

"I want 'em found! I don't care what it takes, how long it takes, or where you have to go. I don't care if you have to go into a city full of corpses. Find 'em, and bring 'em to me."

"We'll find them," another biker said finally, struggling to keep his voice strong. "Don't you doubt it, man."

Hell ignored him and kneeled down next to Spiderbait. He stared at her for several heartbeats, then leaned forward and gently kissed her dead lips before closing her eyes with his left hand. He remained there beside her, chin against his chest, and fought back the tears. He would find those responsible, and they would pay a terrible price. If it took him to the ends of the Earth, he would see to it that they paid.

After a few more moments, he rose from her side, slung the M-16 over his shoulder, and mounted his bike.

"Let's roll," he said as he started the engine and revved it several times.

As one, the Ghost Riders rode away from Fairport.

If the group shot Spiderbait in the head, read the following epilogue instead:

The Living Dead had found food! Nearly a dozen of them ripped muscle, intestines, kidneys, and other succulent morsels from the still-warm bodies. Blood covered their hands and mouths, but they didn't care. Only one thing drove them: a hunger for flesh!

A single gunshot ripped through the nearest ghoul, exploding its head in a spray of thick, blackish goop. The others moaned. Almost as though of a single mind, they turned to confront whatever it was that had interrupted them.

Hell unleashed his fury, the M-16 vibrating his arms as it sent a hailstorm of death into the creatures. Skulls shattered and limbs tore away from bodies as the other men followed his lead. Hell's eyes were wide with rage and spittle flecked the corners of his mouth.

When the last of the beasts had fallen, Hell walked cautiously over to the bodies. He kicked a few with his

boot to make sure they were dead—yet again. Satisfied, he stepped over them in his search for something of particular importance.

He found it upon the ground on the far side of his motorcycle, and his heart pounded against his sternum as his eyes settled upon it. Her chest and throat had been torn open, the blood already thickened. A gunshot marred her otherwise perfect face. He knew she'd already been dead before the corpses had gotten to her. He stared into her eyes and fought back tears. He would find those responsible, and they would pay a terrible price. If it took him to the ends of the Earth, he would see to it that they paid.

Hell bent down and carefully removed the ring from where it pierced through her naval.

"I want those bastards found," he said quietly, clenching the ring in his left hand and keeping his back toward the men. "I want 'em found, and I want 'em alive."

"How do you know they did this?" One of the bikers asked.

A terrible anger flared within him as he placed the ring within his hip pocket. Then, without a word, he spun and fired several shots into the biker's chest.

"We're missing friggin' bikes, and the corpses sure didn't ride 'em outta here! Now, anyone else wanna ask me a stupid question?" His eyes blazed as though the fires of his namesake burned within them.

No one said a word. Everyone was too scared to even move.

"I want 'em found! I don't care what it takes, how long it takes, or where you have to go. I don't care if you have to go into a city full of corpses. Find 'em, and bring 'em to me."

"We'll find them," another biker said finally, struggling to keep his voice strong. "Don't you doubt it, man."

Hell ignored him and kneeled down next to Spiderbait. He stared at her for several heartbeats, then leaned forward and gently kissed her dead lips before closing her eyes with his left hand. After a few more moments, he rose from her side, slung the M-16 over his shoulder, and mounted his bike.

"Let's roll," he said as he started the engine and revved it several times.

As one, the Ghost Riders rode away from Fairport.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 7



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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www.daringentertain.com

War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 7)

GM'S SUMMARY

The world around the characters is dying and rising as flesh-consuming Living Dead!

After being introduced to the outbreak aboard the Pinnacle cruise ship—stranded in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean—the characters managed to escape back to land, only to then be taken captive by an outlaw biker gang led by a bloodthirsty man named Hell.

Used as live bait to distract the Living Dead in the town of Fairport, the characters managed to turn the tables on the gang and make good their escape. Learning of a Rescue Station and military presence in Jacksonville, North Carolina—approximately 60 miles from their location—they headed in that direction.

On the road, the characters are witness to the bleak devastation that the rise of the Living Dead is causing. Roads are cluttered with wrecked and abandoned cars, towns have been transformed into shambling graveyards, and the few survivors that haven't been infected are on the brink of insanity.

After a few encounters, they finally arrive at small church where survivors have taken refuge. How long will the stronghold last with the Living Dead converging on a ready food supply—and the characters discovering a new type of horror in the War of the Dead?

ACT ONE: ON THE ROAD

The characters are on the road, heading toward Jacksonville. Along the way, they come face-to-face with the widespread devastation of the Living Dead, only 2 weeks since the outbreak began.

ALTERNATE CUT:

REPLACING SAMANTHA HICKMAN

In Act Two, the group will encounter a sick girl with a high fever and possible Infection (See: Samantha Hickman; Act Two, Scene One). If any of the characters have a child with them, you can use that child in place of Samantha Hickman for the remainder of the campaign. If that's the case, have the child get sick with a fever while on the ride of Henry's residence. The question that rises is: is it a typical illness, like the Flu, or is the child somehow infected even though a zombie didn't bite him? Like with Samantha, the child will prove immune to the Infection, and be the central plot-point for the remainder of the campaign.

SCENE ONE: A DYING WORLD

It's assumed the characters are in the 2006 Itasca Suncruiser motorhome. If they took different vehicles, adjust the adventure accordingly.

The characters have been traveling down the road for approximately 20 minutes. Begin the adventure with the following narrative:

The sun is high overhead, but it only reinforces the dismal world around you. Off to the side, wrecked cars litter the roadways. The Living Dead shamble amongst the discarded vehicles, within fields, and at the edges of the tree line. Houses are abandoned; the windows shattered and doors left wide-open.

The world is rapidly dying, only to rise again to consume the living. The irony isn't lost on you. It's almost as if nature finally decided to fight back, starting with a swift kick below the belt buckle.

In addition to the Dramatic Interludes found at the Pinnacle Entertainment website, use the following Encounter Chart during the trek. If the RV is damaged in an encounter, it contains a roadside toolkit onboard for repairs.

ENCOUNTER CHART

Ace: A man and a woman are fleeing the Living Dead and flag the characters down. When the characters let them onboard and start driving again, the couple draws handguns and attempt to steal the RV.

Two: Trees are blocking the road ahead, and the characters must push them out of the way with a Strength check at -4 , but can use Cooperative Rolls. As the characters are moving the trees, 6 Living Dead attack them. Moving the trees enough for the RV to pass takes 15 minutes.

Three: A flock of birds, confused and terrified by the Living Dead, comes head-on toward the RV. Unless the driver can succeed at a Driving check, the vehicle suffers 2d6 damage.

Four: A semi-truck is barreling down the road in the opposite direction. The driver is injured and dying, and the truck is swearing back and forth into the oncoming lane. Unless the driver of the RV can succeed at a Driving check, the two vehicles collide head-on.

Five: Three wrecked cars block the roadway: a large V8 pick-up truck (extended cab), a police cruiser (no weapons remain), and a minivan (with 2 car seats). The characters will have to push the cars. Doing so by hand requires a Strength check at -2 , but can use Cooperative Rolls. Using the RV to push the wrecks could damage the vehicle, but can be done with a Driving check. There are 2 Living Dead per character shambling around the area.

Six: A Jeep Cherokee is parked along the side of the road with its hood opened. As the RV approaches, 4 men step into the road with double-barrel shotguns. If the characters attempt to drive through them, they'll all open fire on the RV. Check the vehicle and passengers for damage as per the normal vehicle rules.

Seven: The RV suffers a flat tire and is forced to pull off the side of the road. Changing the tire takes a total of 20 minutes, during which time the Living Dead converge on the characters. There are 3 Living Dead per character per wave,

2006 ITASCA SUNCRUISER MOTORHOME

Acc/TS: 20/40

Toughness 14 (3)

Crew: 1+7

Notes: Sleeps 8 people.

with a new wave arriving every other round.

Eight: The RV suddenly stalls and won't restart thanks to a ripped wire on the starter. The characters will have to make a Repair check to get the vehicle started again (and it will take 10 minutes). Unfortunately, it breaks down at the worse possible time: there are 4 Living Dead in the area for each character. Using firearms to dispose of them will bring 6 more per character within 3 rounds.

Nine: The characters round a curve in the road when they see a horde of over 100 Living Dead directly ahead of them. The only option is to ram through them. The driver must make a Driving check or ram into a derelict vehicle that he didn't see in the middle of the horde. Use the normal rules for Collisions.

Ten: As the characters are driving along, a Coast Guard helicopter flying inland—to help evacuate people from within a city—suddenly crashes in a field. The helicopter doesn't explode, and there could be people still alive onboard. When the characters investigate, they find the pilot and co-pilot dead, and two rescue personnel trapped in the back between the jagged pieces of twisted metal. Unfortunately, 2-dozen Living Dead quickly converge on the area. In the middle of the fight, the rescue personnel die from their injuries and reanimate.

Jack: A charter bus is blocking the road after slamming into a telephone pole. As the characters pull up behind it, they see Living Dead shambling inside and around the vehicle (16 in all). The characters are going to have to get the bus out of the way, without becoming infected, to continue down the road. Although the bus can be started and driven to the side of the road, the front end is damaged enough that it won't make it any real distance down the road.

Queen: A man on a bicycle suddenly bursts from the tree line and across the road, attempting to flee the Living Dead. The driver must make a Driving check at -2 or hit the man. If the man

is hit, he's immediately killed. Unfortunately, the impact damaged the RV and it starts to overheat a little later. A Repair roll will have to be made to get the RV moving again.

King: The Ghost Riders are in pursuit of the characters and have spotted them! The characters and the bikers are 4 Range Increments apart. The road varies between sparse and rough obstacles. Use the Chase rules from the Savage Worlds rulebook.

Joker: Choose any 2 events, or draw 2 new cards and apply both results.

SCENE TWO: FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Once the characters have played through the encounters, allow them to travel a little further down the road, and then read the following:

The RV lurches as though not getting enough fuel, then the engine sputters a few times before steadying itself. A few minutes later, it does it again—this time taking longer to even out.

Finally, the vehicle backfires and then stops completely. Turning the key has no effect. The engine cranks, but doesn't turn over.

Fortunately, there are no Living Dead in the immediate area—just abandoned farms.

You step down from the vehicle to look at what needs to be repaired. There is a small hole in the metal fuel line. It can be fixed temporarily, but it'll need a high-pressure rubber hose to jury-rig it enough to get it back on the road until better supplies can be found.

Give the characters a few minutes of role-playing time. After a bit, they hear an odd sound beyond the tress: the steady gong of a church bell. It goes on for several moments, stops, and then starts again.

They discover a small church about a half of a mile down the road. It's white, with a tall steeple, and is set back from the road at the far end of a field (20" by 20"). A driveway leads from the road to the small parking lot.

Suddenly, they hear the familiar moan behind them. A group of zombies (5 per character) are making their way across the field on the other side of the road, following the noise of the church bell. Behind them are many more zombies. The characters can stay and attempt to fight the zombies, head further down the road and hope for the best, or seek refuge

in the church behind the sturdy, heavy wooden doors.

If the characters can't decide, the Priest and 2 other men come running out of the church and across the field, Pump Action Shotguns in hand. They approach the road and take aim on the zombies as the Priest tells the characters to come with him: he has food and shelter in the House of God. Being out here in the open like this is the same as suicide, not a good idea.

If the characters are afraid that the Priest is like Ms. Hartten, his dialogue should let them know that while he believes in God and has dedicated his life to His service, he isn't so blind as to think this is some Biblical Armageddon. Not to mention, he isn't quite prepared to meet his maker yet, either.

He introduces himself as Father Raymond as he continues to fire on the zombies. The men with him are Zachary and Michael. They usually help him take care of the church.

Zachary and Michael shoot a couple of more zombies, and then start making a lot of noise as they head toward the tree line. The zombies all turn in their direction and follow. Father Raymond tells the characters to follow him; those two will lead the undead away from the church. If the characters show concern, he simply states that they've done it a few times before.

Once the characters accompany him into the church, he'll lock the doors behind them.

Inside the church—besides Father Raymond—are several other people. They all live within a few miles of the church, and all arrived at different times on foot.

The first that the characters meet are David and Jean Brooks, along with their two kids: Peter (8 years old) and Gregory (12 years old).

Next is Monica Cadrey—a woman in her late 20's who is pregnant enough to be about to give birth at any moment. She's there with her fiancé, Timothy Hickman, who is in his 30's. Along with them is Timothy's child: 9-year-old Samantha. The girl is sick with a fever that both Father Raymond and Timothy claim is the Flu, and is sleeping under a blanket on one of the pews. David isn't totally convinced she isn't carrying the infection, even though she hasn't been bitten.

Then there's Joseph Recht: an elderly man that needs a cane to walk.

Finally, there's Joshua—Father Raymond's brown and white cat.

Father Raymond has everyone make introductions. Afterward, he explains that he uses the bell to signal any survivors that might come into the area that

there's refuge in the church. Unfortunately, it also tends to attract those creatures; but so far, he, Zachary, and Michael have been able to thin the numbers enough that they haven't been a serious threat. He tells them he has food set-up in the bingo hall beneath the Rectory, which is attached to the rear of the church.

If the characters mention the RV to him, he'll tell them that he might have something to assist them. He tends to have to make his own repairs on any vehicles he owns. He just has to figure out where his auto supplies are packed away, currently. He hasn't owned a car in over a year. If he needed to go somewhere, Zachary or Michael drove him.

Once the characters have had some role-playing time, Zachary and Michael bang on the front doors. Father Raymond lets them in and locks the doors again. Afterward, he leads everyone through the rear of the church, down a hallway that connects to the Rectory, and into the bingo hall below for some food.

Once in the hall, Timothy lays Samantha onto a cot in the corner and covers her with a blanket.

ACT TWO: HELL GOES TO CHURCH

As the characters find temporary refuge with Father Raymond and other survivors, they learn of a new horror. Monica gives birth to her child, but unknown to anyone except her, Samantha, and Timothy, she was bitten on the leg before they came to the church. It's a fact they've kept well hidden. As her baby is born, the infection has transformed it into a fast-moving beast hungry for human flesh.

SCENE ONE: SOME NEW FRIENDS

While the characters are enjoying a hot meal and relaxing, Zachary asks the characters where they're from. It's a friendly enough request, really just meant to break the ice a little. They could all be stuck in the church for God knows how long.

After the characters finish whatever story they want to tell the group of survivors, David Brooks joins in. He and his family are local to the area—bred and raised. He's an architect that works from home, and Jean sells real estate. They'd heard the reports on the news when it all started, and did the usual stuff of stocking-up on food and emergency items. It didn't take long, though, for the monsters to make it to their property. Zachary

SAMANTHA HICKMAN

Samantha is sick with a fever as her body fights off the infection, although Timothy and Father Raymond are convinced it's the Flu. Samantha has no marks on her body, and contracted the virus through airborne means. Although it won't be revealed until the final adventure in Chapter One, Samantha is immune to the virus and cannot become one of the Living Dead.

and Michael happened to be driving by at the time, and helped them escape to the church. Father Raymond has set-up a good refuge here, but it won't last forever.

Zachary and Mike are neighbors, and both help Father Raymond at the church. Zachary is a carpenter by trade, though work lately has been slow so he's been doing what he can to help keep the church standing. Michael is an auto mechanic and runs a small shop from his property. He mostly just does work for the locals, and a lot of his business is through word-of-mouth.

For Monica and Timothy, they were on their way to a doctor's appointment when it all started. Timothy had wrecked the car when a group of the creatures stepped out onto the road in front of them. Fortunately, Monica wasn't hurt, though he'd banged his knee bad at the time. They managed to fend the things off with a tire-iron from the trunk, and heard the church bell. They've been here ever since. What Timothy leaves out of the story is that Monica had gotten bitten on the leg, and he's had her change her pants with a pair they had in the bag he grabbed from the car (the emergency bag for when she went into labor).

Old Joe tells them how he's lived in Fairport all his life. He worked down at the marina with a fellow he's known since Vietnam: Henry Stevenson. He goes on about how Henry refused to abandon his place even when common sense dictated it was already lost. When he learns about Henry's fate, he spits on the ground. Henry always was too damned stubborn, and always too emotional. Even in the war, when he was only courting Eleanor, the way he went on about the girl, Joe always figured she would break his heart one day, or get him killed.

During the meal, Father Raymond goes off to find the rubber hose for the characters. After a while, he returns with bad news: he doesn't have any. Michael says he probably has some in the auto shop back at his place, and he and Zachary volunteer to go get it. Father

Raymond isn't too keen on the idea, but Zach and Mike insist. Besides, they're sure the nice folks won't mind a few extra passengers after the motorhome is up and running. They can't all stay in the church forever, the supplies won't last, and it doesn't look like the government is sending a rescue team their way anytime soon.

Once the characters agree to take everyone with them, Zach and Mike reload their shotguns and prepare to head out. They will absolutely refuse to take any of the characters with them. They can move better alone, and it's less risk of drawing attention.

Once Zach and Mike depart, Monica screams in shock as her water breaks.

Father Raymond has delivered babies before, and has her moved to his bedroom upstairs in the main Rectory. Jean gets him the water and towels, while David takes the kids out to the church in order to give Father Raymond and Jean enough room to work. He tells the kids that they'll pray for a safe delivery. Timothy stays by Monica's side.

Old Joe suggests the rest of them stay in the bingo hall, and he invites everyone to a game of Texas Hold 'Em.

SCENE TWO: REQUIEM FOR THE INNOCENT

The characters are deep into relaxing with Joe while Monica gives birth upstairs, her screams echoing even down in the hall. David suddenly bursts into the room, breathless. He says that there's a gang of bikers in the parking lot. They're demanding that the church turn over the owners of the RV that's broken down on the road.

Following David upstairs to the church, they can peek out of the door (as there are no front windows) and see the Ghost Riders. Hell is at the front of the gang, and their bikes are all parked haphazardly across the parking lot. There are a little over two-dozen bikers.

Hell puts two pistol shots into the front door—which don't penetrate the wood, but again make his presence known. He yells toward the church that if he and his boys have to come in there, they're going to bring a world of hurt with them. If there are any women and children in there, they're gonna wish Hell and his men never got irritated.

David is ready to turn the characters over to the bikers. Joe asks if the bikers are the ones who killed Henry and Eleanor. When the characters say that they are, he turns to David and tells the man that he'll toss David out there, first. That gang killed a good friend, and he'll be damned if he's just letting them kill anyone else.

David and Joe argue, and David asks him if he'd rather sacrifice everyone in the church for a few people they don't know. Joe replies that he might not know the characters that well, but he sure as hell knew Henry and Eleanor, and they're dead at the hands of those bastards.

As the two continue to argue back and forth, their voices raised and heated, read the following:

The argument between Joe and David gets extremely heated, very quickly. Hell and the Ghost Riders shout threats at the church, the occasional gunshot punctuating their determination. Peter cries, and Gregory shushes his little brother.

Suddenly, Peter screams in terror as Timothy Hickman stumbles into the church from the back hallway. His shirt is covered in blood. He falls to his knees, grabs onto the altar to stand up, and stumbles again.

David grabs a statue of the Virgin Mother as a makeshift weapon and moves forward. Joe grabs his arm.

"He's talking, you idiot, he ain't one of them!"

That's when you notice Timothy is mumbling something over and over again. It sounds like: 'she's dead'.



WAR OF THE DEAD

Timothy is a mess, though he isn't physically wounded. The blood isn't his, and he's obviously suffering from shock. All he does is repeat that she's dead—he killed her—before finally passing out.

David tells his children to stay put as he darts through the back hallway, still clutching the statue as a weapon. Joe follows him.

As the characters and the others arrive at the Father Raymond's room, the door is wide open. Blood covers the scene, and it looks as though something ripped its way out of Monica from the inside. Father Raymond is dead, his stomach torn open. Jean is not in the room, nor is there a baby.

Joe mutters several expletives as David starts yelling for Jean, walking through the small corridor and opening all the doors. She's nowhere to be found.

After a bit of searching, they find her in the bingo hall, lying in the middle of the floor in a pool of blood. She's been disemboweled. David checks her pulse as her eyes suddenly dart open, the pupils almost glowing in the lighting from the outside window. David scurries back several steps, dropping the statue before falling to the ground in utter horror. Jean unleashes a high-pitched wail and leaps to her feet, charging at David at a full run. She leaps on him and tries to sink her teeth into him as he pushes on her throat and chin to keep her mouth away from him.

If the characters don't react, Joe will grab the statue and keep hitting her in the head until her skull caves in. David is in shock, but otherwise unhurt. His first words are: "what the hell happened to her? She wasn't one of those things!"

Joe suggests they all get upstairs to the kids, as well as have a chat with Timothy about what the heck is going on. If any of the characters go back into the bingo hall to check on Samantha, she's still sleeping and still running a fever.

Back in the church, the kids are distraught and Timothy is still unconscious. Joe slaps him awake, as David goes over to console his children and tell them that their mother is dead. If no one thought to destroy Father Raymond's or Monica's brain, they both enter the church now. Father Raymond is a Sprinter (like Jean), while Monica is a Shambler.

Once Timothy is awake and the scene is at least temporarily secure, he starts crying. He didn't know it would hurt the baby, is all he says. He doesn't say much else. The characters will have to use Persuasion or Intimidation to get him to talk. Once they do, he finally explains that Monica was bitten on the leg before

they made it to the church. It wasn't a deep bite, and he figured maybe she wouldn't become one of those things like the others had; they'd all had fatal wounds. Whatever those monsters did to her when they bit her, it must have affected the baby. Monica was screaming, the baby was pushing hard against her stomach, and suddenly blood was flying everywhere. All he saw was Monica's stomach burst open and something small and fast attack Father Raymond. Jean ran from the room, and Timothy jumped on a chair as—the thing—crawled after her like some sort of animal.

It was the baby.

Next thing he remembers is waking up in the church.

Meanwhile, the sound of dozens of motorcycle engines fills the church. The Ghost Riders are riding in a circle around the building, firing their guns into the stain-glass windows.

The characters are trapped in the church with a new breed of monster, while over two-dozen bikers wait to kill them on the outside.

SCENE THREE: HELL-TORN IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

Begin the scene with the following narrative:

For the next several hours, you're forced to fortify your position. If you go outside, it's a guaranteed death at the hands of the Ghost Riders. Meanwhile, no one has seen or heard the monstrous infant loose somewhere in the building. Peter finally cried himself to sleep, and Gregory is sitting on the pew next to his brother, utterly silent the entire time. David is still in shock over what's happened, not to mention losing his wife. Joe is helping you as best he can, while Timothy is constantly casting nervous glances into every shadowy corner; which doesn't do much for everyone's nerves.

The sun is setting, and the bikers' patience is nearing an end.

In traditional horror fashion, build the tension in this scene as the sun is setting and the church grows darker. Joe goes around lighting candles for illumination. Timothy has moved Samantha back into the church, and is jumping at every noise and shadow. The constant fear from Timothy finally sets David off, who comes out of his daze and blames him for everything that's happened—especially his wife's death. David is yelling at Timothy as he approaches, finally launching himself on the man and pummeling him with fists. Timothy curls

up into a fetal position to try to protect himself.

As the characters attempt to break-up the scuffle, Gregory screams. He swears he just saw something moving under the pews across the aisle.

A Notice check at -2, due to the dark lighting conditions underneath the pews, is required to find the shape. As the characters search for it, something suddenly comes charging at them from that direction. All Shooting rolls are at -2 due to the lighting, and another -2 due to the size of the target (a total of -4). Whether the characters shoot at the shape or not, they quickly realize it's only Joshua—Father Raymond's cat.

Joshua darts beneath the pews and scurries behind the altar at the front of the church.

Give the characters a few seconds to catch their breath and swallow their hearts back into their chests, then read the following:

A cat. You almost had a heart attack over a stupid cat! Gregory is terrified as David tries his best to calm his son down. Joe is cursing up a storm at nearly being scared to death by the stupid feline. Timothy is leaning against a confessional, feeling his heart beat as it pounds away at a mile-a-minute.

Several motorcycles rev their engines outside, and you hear the hooting and hollering of the bikers.

"If those assholes don't leave soon," Joe begins, "we're going to have to—"

His words are cut off as the ear-piercing scream of the cat erupts throughout the church. Blood sprays upward, painting parts of the large crucifix on the wall behind the altar red.

"Ohmygod-ohmygod-ohmygod-ohmygod-ohmygod," is all Timothy can say.

If the characters attempt to use Stealth to approach the altar, have them roll against inactive guards. The Infected Newborn is no longer there anyway. It's already used its small form and the shadows to move around the edge of the church, toward the two boys.

Once the characters get to the altar, they see the disemboweled cat behind it.

Searching for the infant requires a Notice check at -2: there's a -1 penalty for the lighting in the church, and the creature is small and using the shadows for an additional -1 to the check. Remember that the char-

acters are at a severe disadvantage to hit the thing, as well. Any combat rolls suffer a -1 due to its size, and an additional -1 due to the dim lighting in the church. A head shot against the infant is at an additional -4, for a total of -6 to hit it in the head.

The infant attacks Gregory, leaping from beneath the pew onto his chest. Everyone must make a Guts check at -2 as soon as they see the beast. David is more focused on saving his son this round and automatically makes his Guts check. He hits the creature with his fist, sending it flying. It hits the wall and quickly scurries beneath the pews with a high-pitched screech.

At the same time, the hooting and hollering outside turns into shouts of anger and rapid gunfire. Timothy climbs up on one of the confessionals to get away from the baby, and looks out of the broken window. He tells everyone that there are hundreds of corpses outside, surrounding the church. The bikers are trying to fight them off.

In other words, the characters' situation just went from bad to extremely bad.

The baby continues to scurry around the church, keeping to the shadows like a nocturnal hunter. If the characters don't manage to kill it, then it disappears again after 3 rounds.

SCENE FOUR: GUARDIAN ANGELS

The Infected Newborn is more than likely still loose somewhere in the church; the Ghost Riders are right outside the church—now fighting for their lives against an enormous horde of Living Dead. The characters are trapped with little place to run.

Suddenly, Timothy exclaims that the gang is making a break for it, as everyone hears the revving of engines and the sound of gunfire. Timothy also yells that he sees headlights coming—something big!

Zach and Mike now make their return, driving the repaired RV. The bikers ignore them as they approach the church at a high speed, using the vehicle as a battering ram against the Living Dead. They pull to a stop along side the front of the church, and Mike blows the horn as Zach throws the side door open and starts firing on the Living Dead between the RV and the church.

Timothy jumps down and starts running toward the front of the church, yelling that they have to get out of there now: it's the motorhome!

As the characters race toward the front doors, and David gets his boys moving, Joe screams as the infant leaps out from the darkness. He quickly uses his cane

to knock it aside, and the creature returns to the darkness beneath the pews. Meanwhile, Timothy already has the front doors open, Samantha wobbly on her feet next to him, and is doing what he can to clear the two-dozen of Living Dead still between the church and the vehicle. As Joe steps out of the church, he uses a candle to light a tapestry on fire.

The characters are still unlikely to permanently kill the infant, so their best bet is to help with the zombies. As they do so, the creature scurries out from beneath the pews and actually runs on two feet toward the door. David yells an expletive, and slams the doors shut before the infant can get outside.

The characters now have to get into the RV (4" away) and to freedom.

ACT THREE: ESCAPE!

The characters manage to make it into the RV and Mike speeds down the road. Behind them, the church is surrounded by Living Dead, and the Infected Newborn is still inside.

SCENE ONE: BACK ON THE ROAD

Read the following:

The sick child is taken into the rear bedroom compartment, as Mike uses the motorhome as a makeshift tank—ramming his way through the horde of Living Dead between the church and the road. The vehicle bounces and lurches as bodies are crushed underneath. One body slams upward, crashing into the windshield and sending a spider web of cracks along it.

The vehicle makes a hard right turn, tilting heavily, as Mike turns onto the main road, barely breaking. The Ghost Riders are nowhere to be seen.

Behind you, the horror that was once the House of God disappears behind the trees.

ALTERNATE CUT: TIMOTHY HICKMAN'S DEATH

If Samantha has been replaced with a personal NPC of one of the characters, then allow the Infected Newborn to kill Timothy just as he makes a break to exit the church. Run the alternate scene as a bit of poetic justice, given that the newborn is his child and he hid the mother being infected.

Mike and Zach explain that it took them a little longer than expected to get back to the shop and find the part. When they got back to the RV, there were 4 bikers guarding it. They had to shoot them to get to the vehicle. By the time they finished the repairs, it was already getting dark. Then it took them a little while to figure out how best to get past the creatures, nevermind not being sure what the heck to do about the biker gang. Once the gang decided to make a break for it, they saw their opportunity and hoped for the best. Looks like God was on their side tonight.

They ask about Father Raymond, and no doubt learn about what happened in the church: about the baby and the new form of Living Dead. Both men are horrified by what they hear. If whatever is turning people into living corpses can do that to an unborn child—how many more of those monsters might be out there in the world?

Neither man wants to know the answer to that question.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 8



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH [WEEK 8]

GM'S SUMMARY

The world is descending into chaos as the Living Dead consume all major population centers.

Barely surviving the outbreak aboard the Pinnacle cruise ship, the characters were lost at sea before making their way back to the coast of North Carolina. After encountering a friendly, elderly couple that offered them shelter, food, and information, a biker gang calling themselves the Ghost Riders soon took the characters captive. Forced to act as live bait in the infected town of Fairport, the characters managed to escape—making mortal enemies of the bike gang in the process.

Following their daring escape, the characters took refuge in a small church with other survivors after their vehicle suffered a break down. Discovering a new form of horror within the church, the characters quickly realized that the slow-moving Living Dead weren't the only form of Infected.

Escaping from the church and battling their way past a Living Dead horde, the characters have finally made it to the military Rescue Station in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

As the characters approach the city, they see total chaos. The Rescue Station has been overrun by the Living Dead, and the military is fighting a losing war. Hundreds of civilians flee in every direction, and several try to over take the characters' RV.

After losing the vehicle to soldiers going rogue, the characters and their allies are forced flee on foot. Discovering a nearby distribution warehouse, they take refuge with dozens of other survivors.

ACT ONE: DIVIDED WE FALL

The characters are on the road, having escaped the church and well on their way to the Rescue Station in Jacksonville, North Carolina. The situation in the mo-

ALTERNATE CUT: DAVID'S CONFRONTATION

If a character and his child have replaced Timothy and Samantha, then David will confront him about the child's illness and his fears. In this case, instead of blaming the character for his wife's death like he does Timothy, he simply argues that he just lost his wife, and will not risk his sons under any circumstances.

torhome quickly reaches a boiling point as David panics over Samantha's illness. Fearing for the safety of his two sons, the windowed father wants to kill the young girl, not sure if she is infected or not, and unwilling to take the risk. The characters have to make a decision regarding Samantha, and at the same time keep the vehicle from becoming a blood bath.

SCENE ONE: CALCULATED RISKS

Although you've traveled some distance from the church, the glow of the inferno can still be seen in the distant sky. The moon is full overhead, and the absence of clouds casts a blue tinge across the nearby countryside.

Timothy steps out from the rear bedroom compartment, where he took Samantha to get some much-needed rest. He falls heavily into a chair, his sigh one of weariness as he rubs his eyes. David casts hard stares at him, which in turn gets a suspicious eye from Joe. Peter is asleep, and Gregory stares out the window. Meanwhile, Michael is watching the road ahead as Zachary keeps an eye open for ghouls.

Timothy massages the bridge of his nose with his thumb and forefinger. Finally, he looks over at David, eyebrows raised.

"Problem?" He asks, trying to sound friendly.

"The girl shouldn't be here. She's putting us all at risk." David states.

"It's just the Flu. Nothing too serious."

"Uh-huh," is all David replies, his face impassive.

Timothy stares at David, a fire kindling within his eyes. "And what's that supposed to mean?"

"Just thinking, is all," David says. "You sure it's the flu?"

"Yeah, I'm—" Timothy replies, but is cut off.

David's anger becomes obvious as his voice rises. "Because you endangered all of us once already, and look what happened! My wife is dead because of you! And I'm just supposed to take you at your word that your kid has the Flu?"

"Shut the hell up, Dave," Joe cuts in, his expression hard.

David isn't about to let it go. Although he's trying to play it tough after just losing Jean back at the church, he's scared out of his mind that something might happen to Gregory and Peter. His grief is being hidden beneath a mask of anger.

David and Joe argue, with David saying that he's going to go check Samantha out for himself. He'll be damned if he's allowing his sons to be put at risk.

As David rises, and Joe yells for him to sit down, Timothy stands up and grabs David's arm, telling him to stay away from his daughter. Gregory launches from his seat and connects solidly with Timothy's jaw. Timothy stumbles backward against the wall and Gregory continues to pummel him, screaming that Timothy killed his mother.

The characters are going to have to decide what to do before the situation deteriorates too far. The main question is: do any of the characters agree with David? After all, Samantha could very well be infected, and Timothy did already keep Monica's infection secret. That secret, of course, cost three people their lives, and introduced an entirely new form of Living Dead to the characters.

If the characters agree with David, then the RV will suffer an even greater schism, especially if the player-

group is split—with some siding with David, and some siding with Timothy.

Joe, Michael, and Zachary will side with Timothy, though the three of them won't completely discard the possibility that Samantha could be infected. Their stance, however, is that it could also be the Flu as Timothy claims. She's in the rear compartment and, so far, the creatures haven't been able to open doors. Therefore, they suggest, leave her in there until they can find someone who can determine if she actually has the Flu or not. If she turns before then, she can be dealt with at that time. The three of them, though, will not have the murder of a little girl on their hands—under any circumstances.

SCENE TWO: PANIC ATTACK

As the tension in the motorhome reaches a fevered pitch—with David wanting to protect his children and Gregory convinced that Samantha is infected—the door to the bedroom opens and Samantha comes stumbling out. Her movement is slow, unsteady, and the characters must make a Smarts check to not immediately mistake her for a Shambler. On a success, they realize she can't be one of them, as she is not only holding herself steady against the wall, but also opened the door on her own. On a failure, their initial reaction is that she's a zombie. How they choose to react is up to them, but if anyone takes a shot at her, they run the risk of hitting someone else in the RV on a roll of 1 or 2. It's important for the campaign, though, that Samantha not be killed just yet.

Unfortunately, not all of their allies are as observant.

Calming David and Gregory: David and Gregory are panicked as she walks in, and are ready to kill her with anything at hand that can be used as a weapon. There are several Skill rolls the characters can make to calm them down, or at the very least get them to back off and stop going after Samantha at this point. The characters can make an Intimidation roll, with a +2 bonus if they are holding a loaded firearm. On a success, the two don't move toward Samantha, but are still convinced she's infected. The characters can also use Persuasion at a -2 penalty (David and Gregory both recently lost a family member thanks to Timothy), and if successful they will let Samantha live, but stay as far away from her as the RV will allow. Finally, they can use Streetwise to try to talk some sense into the two, including pointing out that she is holding herself steady, and that she opened the door on her own.

Combat in the RV: If combat ensues, the RV can become a blood bath very quickly. Michael, Zachary, and

Joe will defend Samantha—and Michael and Zachary are both armed with pump action shotguns. Joe will position himself between Samantha and anyone wanting to hurt her.

If the characters are split on what they want to do, it's up to the players to decide how they will try to kill Samantha, how they will defend her, and what role-playing they will do against the other portion of the player-group.

In the middle of it all, Samantha finally speaks. Her fever has made her delirious, and she isn't completely cognizant of what's happening around her. She asks Timothy where Monica and the baby are, and tells him that she's thirsty.

Samantha then falls to the floor. Her little body can't keep going with such a fever. Before anyone can react, Peter launches from his seat and runs to her side, trying to get her to stand-up. Although it's obvious he is trying to help her, Samantha is unconscious and unable to stand. David yells at his son to get away from her, and Peter yells back that she needs help. He even goes as far as to say: "Mommy would help her!"

All Timothy wants to do is get her some water and get her back to bed.

More than likely, Samantha will be put back to bed. Although the characters are most likely armed, so are Michael and Zachary, and a firefight in the RV would mean death for at least a few of the characters.

Tension remains, however, as to whether or not she is infected.

ACT TWO: CONSUMED IN FLAME

The characters finally make it to the Rescue Station just outside of Jacksonville, but are too late. The city is in flames, and the military outpost has been overrun by the Living Dead. Hundreds of citizens flee in total panic, and the military is fighting a losing defensive. After losing the RV, the characters are forced to find sanctuary in a nearby distribution warehouse with dozens of other refugees.

SCENE ONE: ROADBLOCK

The characters are well on their way to Jacksonville, when they round a curve in the road and discover 6 cars blocking their path. The cars have all been involved in a massive accident, and are too tightly packed for the RV to ram through without serious risk to the vehicle. Michael and Zachary suggest they get out, see which ones on the end might still be able to start and

at least drive off the roadway, and which ones they will have to push.

Timothy eyes David and Gregory, and explains that while he wants to help, he's going to remain with Samantha on this one. He's not taking a chance on someone hurting her while he's out of the RV. Unless the characters can convince him—and David and Gregory—to all assist, Timothy will go into the bedroom compartment with his daughter.

Once the characters approach the cars on foot, read the following:

You carefully approach the wrecked cars. Michael and Zachary keep their shotguns pointed ahead, the barrels of the weapons pointing wherever their eyes are looking. Old Joe moves along carefully, ready to use his cane to whack anything that makes a sudden move toward him.

You approach a blue, Ford Taurus station wagon with the hood smashed against the windshield from where it slammed into a delivery truck. Blood is smeared across the inside of the windows. In the driver's seat is a female. Half of her face is gone, the rotting muscles and tendons showing vividly in the light of the moon. She moans and reaches for you through the broken side window, unable to escape the confines of her seatbelt.

However, it isn't the woman that turns your blood cold. In the backseat, still strapped into the car seat, is a child no more than 2 years old. The Living Dead mother has ripped its stomach open, the entrails stretching down to the floor. Its eyes are open and distant as it releases a high-pitched moan, the little arms reaching toward you like a child asking to be picked-up.

The Living Dead child is a horror to witness, and everyone must make a Guts check at -2 for Fear/Nausea.

How the characters handle the 2 Living Dead is up to them. If none of them take care of the pair, Zachary will whisper: "God, forgive me," and put a shotgun blast into each head.

Michael shakes his head as he stares into the car, saying: "This ain't right, man. What kind of God would do this?"

Joe grunts and replies: "God flipped us the bird and

WAR OF THE DEAD

walked away a while ago. We're on our own." He gives the car a final glance, and then looks around. "Come on, we'd better get this cleared and keep moving."

Besides the Ford Taurus, there is also an empty delivery truck, a Ford Tundra pick-up truck, a 2006 Saturn Ion, a Minivan, and a Toyota. All of the other cars are empty. The Tundra and the delivery truck both start and can be nursed off the road. The other cars are going to have to be pushed. The characters will have to make a Strength roll at -2, but the penalty can be offset by making a Cooperative Roll.

Checking for supplies won't yield much outside of clothing, emergency flares, and other odds and ends. The only car with anything left in it is the Taurus, and all the packed food (except for random canned and boxed goods) has already spoiled.

Once the road is clear enough for the RV to pass through (which takes approximately 20 minutes), a few Living Dead emerge from the tree line in response to the gunshots from earlier. There are 2 Shamblers per character.

SCENE TWO: FUNERAL PYRE

After a few more hours of travel along the obstacle-strewn roads, the characters finally approach Jacksonville. Unfortunately, they are too late to gain benefit from the Rescue Station. As the city comes into view, the characters see:

As you approach along the main highway, the distant scene before you stops your breath and sends your heart pounding against your sternum. The entire skyline is orange, illuminated by the enormous flames that reach upward from what was once a city teeming with life. Thick, dark smoke plumes into the air from dozens of buildings.

The BOOM of thunder rocks the motorhome, a steady, teeth-jarring barrage. A moment later, you realize it isn't thunder—it's the pounding of artillery being fired into Jacksonville. The military is attacking the city!

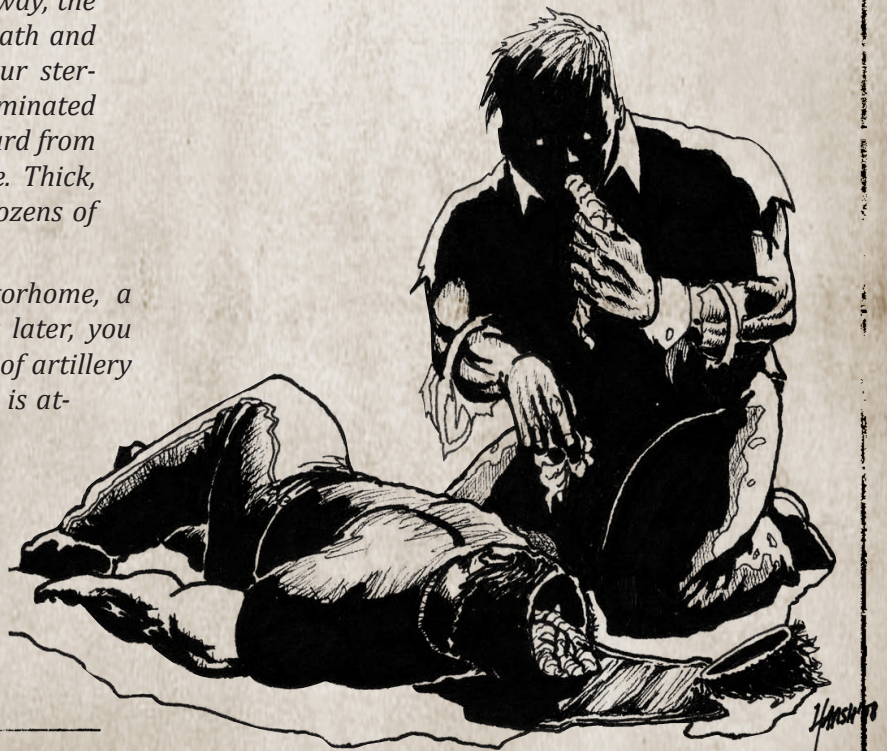
What has shocked you nearly breathless, though, is the wave you see moving relentlessly toward the vehicle. A wave of hundreds of citizens that had sought safety at the Rescue Station—now fleeing in absolute, mind-clouding terror!

Chain link fences, topped with razor wire, partition parts of the field to the left of the road, forming a perimeter for hundreds of small tents where the military was temporarily housing the refugees. The sounds of rapid-fire gunshots and brilliant flashes of artillery explosions fill the Jacksonville area.

Michael stops the RV as he watches in horror. The refugees slam into the fence, pushing and clawing at the metal barrier. The people in the front are rammed and pressed by those behind them. The fence topples. Those against the fence fall to the ground and are trampled as the wave surges forward.

If the characters don't yell for Michael to get them out of here, then Joe will do so. Michael snaps out of it, and puts the vehicle into reverse. The slow moving RV is no match for the sheer panic of the mob, however, and the refugees quickly surround the motorhome. Although many simply run past the vehicle, dozens of others beat on its body, slam the palms of their hands against the windows, or beat against the side doors to get in.

The RV rocks back and forth from the press of bodies. Then automatic gunfire echoes through the night, very close to the vehicle. People yell and flee as 6 soldiers fire into the air, running toward the RV and herding the people away from it like heads of cattle. As the side of the vehicle with the door is cleared, the soldiers approach and one of them knocks swiftly for entrance. If the characters don't open the door, Zachary will do so.



The soldiers step into the RV, close, and lock the door behind them. As soon as they see the armed occupants, their M-16's are trained on them as the soldiers yell:

Put your weapons down! Guns on the floor, now! Stand down, or we will shoot!

Meanwhile, the refugees of Jacksonville are once again causing the RV to rock back and forth.

Michael and Zachary drop their shotguns to the floor, not about to risk a firefight with trained soldiers. If the characters don't drop their weapons, they risk a battle in the RV. The soldiers are attempting to flee the area, leaving both the refugees and their unit to fend for themselves now that the Living Dead have completely overrun the city. They're as panicked as the refugees, and will open fire on anyone still holding a weapon after about 30 seconds (5 rounds).

If the characters drop their weapons, the soldiers will order Michael to start driving out of here. They don't care about the refugees, and will order him to run them over if they don't scatter. There are tens-of-thousands of the creatures in the city—and they've breached the perimeter and are pouring out. It's game over! Just as Michael puts the vehicle into gear, the rear compartment door opens and Samantha comes stumbling out.

If the characters refuse to drop their weapons, then just as it looks like the soldiers will shoot, the rear bedroom door opens and Samantha comes stumbling into the main area.

Either way, as Samantha—still weak and delirious with fever—steps out of the bedroom, the soldiers mistake her for one of the Living Dead and swing their weapons on her.

Deal Action Cards!

Any characters (including NPCs) that are dealt a higher card than the soldiers, and wish to intervene to save Samantha, can decide how they're going to go about it. As far as the NPCs: David and his sons are frozen in fear of being killed; Timothy will run to cover Samantha with his own body, screaming that she is sick with the Flu—not one of them; Michael and Zachary will also yell that she isn't infected, but won't risk firing their shotguns in the closed quarters of the RV, and Joe will stand between the soldiers and the girl.

ALTERNATE CUT: REPLACING TIMOTHY AND SAMANTHA

If Timothy and Samantha Hickman are not present with the group, the child is still sick, and something is going to need to be done to help cure the illness. The characters will still be recruited by Corporal Hauser to go into Jacksonville, but whether or not the character with the sick child accompanies them is up to the player.

Suddenly Michael yells and curses. Just as he does, people outside scream as the RV is toppled onto its side by a run-away military Humvee.

Everyone in the vehicle takes 4d6 damage from the impact. Due to the size of the RV versus the Humvee, the damage is Fatigue (from being tossed around) and not wounds. A level of Fatigue is recovered every 24 hours after the accident.

SCENE THREE: LEADERS OF THE PACK

Once the group pulls its way out of the toppled motorhome, they're going to have to act fast. Moving quickly in their direction, from behind the mass of refugees, are hundreds of Sprinters. The high-pitched moan of the fast-moving Living Dead fills the night, and the crowd is suddenly sent into a frenzy as they trample each other to put as much distance as possible between them and the ghouls.

Unless the characters are suicidal, running is their only option. Run this scene using the Savage Worlds chase rules, with the Sprinters starting 7 Range Increments away from the characters, and using Agility for rolls to determine distance.

As long as the Sprinters don't overcome the characters and their allies, they eventually make it over a rise and see a distribution warehouse. The characters can either making a Shooting roll to blow the lock (Toughness 8), or a make a Lockpicking roll to get in. Once inside, the door also has a sliding lock that can be bolted to secure it.

Several other doors are similarly opened, and within moments 40 survivors and 4 soldiers (different from the soldiers that attacked the RV) are taking refuge inside as the Living Dead surround the building—pounding on the doors, loading dock walls, and moaning.

There are pallets of cereal, canned goods, toilet paper, and other such items all throughout the main area. The warehouse is a main distribution point for grocery stores in the area.

As soon as the soldiers notice that the characters have weapons, they'll approach, guns pointed at the ground. One of the soldiers introduces himself as Corporal James Hauser, and asks if the characters know how to use those weapons, as they need all the help they can get. Meanwhile, another soldier is trying to radio for an emergency evac, stating their location and situation. Unfortunately, the channels are all static.

Meanwhile, as the refugees hide and the characters talk with the soldiers, Timothy takes Samantha into a private, side office to keep her away from the already panicked mob.

Give the players some role-playing time with the soldier, as the other refugees hide behind crates and boxes. Corporal Hauser and his men aren't like the soldiers that tried to attack them in the RV; they're good men now trapped in a near inescapable situation.

By asking the right questions, the characters can learn the following from the soldiers:

- Martial Law has been declared in just about all major cities, and law enforcement and emergency services have been federalized.
- The military wasn't prepared to have to take on most of its own nation. There is no way there are enough troops when early estimates put the "infected" at almost 80 million in the first 48 hours of the problem becoming known! How do you even coordinate enough to handle that? Especially with a majority packed into cities? The entire Armed Forces doesn't have anywhere near that many people.
- Jacksonville's population was estimated at over 81,000 people. They had quarantined the city early on, erecting barriers to cordon off the Infected. They knew it would be a matter of time before the barriers were breached, but they didn't think it would happen so soon.
- Washington is a war zone and the government has flown to Colorado, where they plan to set-up operations in the Rocky Mountains facilities. Other areas of the Midwest are being designated as Citizen Relocation Zones (CRZs), as the infection is thus

far easier to contain away from major population centers.

- Their main support was the regiment assigned to Raleigh, but they lost all contact with them over an hour ago.

If the characters trade information and summarize their experiences so far in the campaign, Corporal Hauser will stare at them in shock. The fact that new-borns can be born infected, as some new type of monster, and the possible correlation they have with the fast-moving ghouls is bone chilling. The information about the Ghost Riders, however, is less of a shock to him. He isn't surprised that groups are already forming not only for survival, but also for personal gain.

The Living Dead continue to try to claw their way into the warehouse. After the group has had its role-playing time with the soldiers, many of the refugees emerge from their hiding places—now realizing the Living Dead can't easily get inside. Almost immediately, they turn to the soldiers and the characters for leadership. The group has weapons, and the refugees automatically look toward them for protection.

Create whatever NPCs you need to flesh out the scene for your play style. The dozens of survivors in the warehouse are walk-on characters that won't be with the characters after next week's adventure, so personality is more vital than game statistics. Things the survivors might be focused on are:

- How long until the military regroups and rescues them?
- How are they going to get out of the warehouse?
- What do they do when their food supply eventually runs out?
- Someone needs to get out and find a friend/loved one/relative!
- It's just a matter of time before the creatures find a way inside!
- How could the military lose control of a city? Aren't they trained better than this? If the military can't protect them, then who can?
- Maybe it's time they stop listening to the people in charge, and start doing what they need to do in order to survive!

Run some of the scene to focus on at least a few aspects of mob-mentality. Some people are going to be fearful and look to the characters and soldiers, others

are going to view the government and military as unable to protect them, a few might even suggest taking the weapons and surviving on their own. Make some of the scene high tension, as it becomes a question of whether the few vocal survivors can sway others to their way of thinking. Remind the characters of what happened on the cruise ship with Ms. Hartten and her congregation, and what a single, vocal individual managed to accomplish when preying on the fear of those around her.

Sometime during the scene, Timothy comes out of the side office, closing the door behind him, and starts rummaging through boxes. He seems determined to find something, and won't discuss it where the mob can hear him. Within earshot of others, he simply claims he's looking for first-aid supplies—it's inevitable they will eventually need them, and it's better to prepare now.

If David survived the outside encounter, he knows what Timothy is really looking for: medicine for his daughter. Despite his belief that she's infected, David doesn't trust the people in here with them, and won't say a word about Samantha to anyone.

Corporal Hauser thinks Timothy has a good idea, and starts getting at least some of the survivors under control by giving them things to do. He assigns them to sorting through and cataloging what supplies they have in the warehouse.

Sometime during the scene, it's important that the Corporal find out about Samantha. Although concerned, he doesn't jump to any conclusions and wants to see her. Timothy is against it, but the characters can make a Persuasion roll to try to get him to agree. The roll suffers a -2 penalty unless one of the characters mentions that the Corporal and his men can help them get medicine for her, in which case there is no penalty.

The Corporal doesn't know if she's infected, or actually has the Flu. What he does decide—since he has a little boy of his own back home—is that they keep her away from the rest of the refugees. If she is infected, it can and will spread. If she isn't, there's still the Flu issue. Either way, his fear is that if the wrong people find out, they're going to have a lynch mob going after her. They'll treat it like the Flu and see what happens. He calls his men over and briefs them. He tells them that if she is infected, they've all been exposed by now. However, she just as likely isn't. He tells them to keep her under guard, both for her protection and the safety of everyone else—just in case. He announces that the office will be used by his men as a command center to try to radio help and create a plan to get out of there.

He makes sure that no mention of Samantha is made.

He then has the characters and their allies search the warehouse for some antiviral medicine.

Unfortunately, though the warehouse contains a lot of food and household items; this particular location has nothing in the way of even over-the-counter Flu medicine.

Left with no alternative, Hauser says they are going to have to go back into the city to find some medicine for her.

No doubt the characters are going to think he's nuts, but he explains that it's really the only way to know if she's infected or not. They need to get medicine to help her fight the Flu. The city is in chaos right now, and the creatures are obviously migrating their way out of it in pursuit of anything alive. They'll use the excuse that they are going to try to lead some of the ghouls away from the warehouse, lose them, and double back; that if too many congregate outside, it's just a matter of time before they get in. He asks the characters to accompany him because it's obvious they can survive on their own. He'll leave the other 3 soldiers here to maintain security and make sure the refugees don't tear themselves apart, or do something to let the creatures in, while they're gone.

After he gets the characters to agree, he suggests they go onto the roof and find a way to get out of the warehouse.

Once they get on the roof, they find that the rear of the warehouse only has a handful of Living Dead in the empty lot. They can use some rope from the warehouse to climb down, and make their way to the city from there.

Corporal Hauser then briefs his men, and tells the survivors. The characters will have to make a Persuasion roll to prevent the survivors from panicking at the thought of the Living Dead getting inside once they leave—a panic that could start a riot if not prevented.

ACT THREE: NIGHTTIME EXCURSION

As the adventure ends, Corporal Hauser accompanies the characters in an attempt to make it into Jacksonville for medical supplies.

SCENE ONE: MASS GRAVES

There wasn't a lot of time, and preparation had to be rushed. In truth, you've no idea what to expect once you reach the city. There are too many unknown variables, and it's going to require a lot of reaction, fast thinking, and improvisation. Samantha is counting on you, and it's imperative you determine whether or not she is carrying the Infection.

You make your way from the rooftop to the rear lot below, gaining the attention of several Sprinters. The moan immediately goes out, answered almost immediately by those on the other side of the warehouse.

The characters are going to have to dispatch the Sprinters and move quickly as the Living Dead surrounding the warehouse converge on their location.

How the characters use the terrain and obstacles to dispatch as many Living Dead as they can—and delay or distract the others—is going to depend on how they react to the situation and what tactics they come up with. Unless they are killed, they eventually make it away from the warehouse and to where they can see the edge of the city.

Jacksonville burns. Thousands of Living Dead fill the staging area where the military had set-up operations. The refugee encampment is completely swarmed. Using binoculars that Corporal Hauser brought along with him, you notice that several blocks on the edge of the city are devoid of activity. If you are going to get into the place, that path looks like your best bet.

Once you get in, though, will it be as easy to get out? The question hangs in the air as the flames turn the night orange.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 9



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

Design & Writing: Lee F. Szczepanik, Jr.

Editing: Anna Lunsford

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 9)

GM'S SUMMARY

After making it to the Jacksonville Rescue Station just in time to see it overrun and destroyed by the Living Dead, the characters took refuge in a nearby distribution warehouse along with dozens of other survivors and four soldiers. It didn't take long for the Living Dead to converge on the location, though, and it probably won't take long for the survivors to begin tearing each other apart as paranoia and fear escalate.

Deciding it was imperative to determine if Samantha was Infected, or just had the Flu, the characters agreed to accompany Corporal Hauser into the city in search of medical supplies. Once in the city, the characters have to survive against thousands of Living Dead as they search for supplies amongst the burning ruins. Encountering not only the Living Dead, but also civilians trapped and facing inevitable death if not helped, the characters are going to have to make some moral choices on whether or not they help the victims and risk alerting the city to their presence, or turn their backs and allow innocent people to die.

Once back in the warehouse, they discover other survivors ready to tear each other apart over Samantha's illness. In the middle of it all, a man flees through the rear door of the building, leading to his death and allowing the Living Dead to gain access.

Forced to escape, and unable to take the other survivors with them, the characters manage to make it away from the warehouse when a military helicopter crashes and explodes—catching them at ground zero.

ACT ONE: LIKE DONTÉ'S INFERNO

The characters make it into Jacksonville, and are immediately forced to make a very tough decision: do they save people trapped by the Living Dead, or save

themselves and leave the victims to die?

SCENE ONE: HELLFIRE AND TORMENT

The adventure picks-up where last week left off: the characters and Corporal Hauser have departed the warehouse and eluded the Living Dead. Having taken a tactical position on the outskirts of Jacksonville, they're scanning the area through binoculars.

Black plumes of smoke, thick and dense, rise from the funeral pyre that was once Jacksonville, North Carolina. The massive fires have painted the clouds orange; hammering home that Hell might very well have come to Earth.

For the past 15 minutes, you've monitored what seemed like the best path into the city. Very few Living Dead are in the area as far as you can tell, and those few seem to all be Shamblers—easy to out maneuver, as long as they don't corner you.

Corporal Hauser is nervous, to say the least. He's already seen his unit of over 800 trained soldiers—fully equipped and supplemented by artillery—completely overrun and decimated by the Living Dead. The idea of going into the city isn't something he's keen on, despite it being his idea to help Samantha. He tells the characters to stay sharp and on point. One screw-up, and they'll be looking for someone to eat.

How the characters make it into the city is entirely up to them. Give them some time to figure out a plan based on the layout of the land: buildings, terrain, obstacles (for instance: cars and trucks), and the position of the Living Dead they've seen so far. They might try stealth, a distraction, or to combat their way into the city. If they go for the combat option, remember that gunfire will draw more Living Dead to their position, as will the moan if they allow any of the creatures to vocalize.

Once the characters have entered the edge of the city and are making their way down the streets and alleys, use the following encounters in any order. The purpose of the encounters is to force the characters into making tough decisions.

Encounter One: Brothers-in-Arms: The characters come upon 3 soldiers surrounded by a horde of approximately 40 Living Dead. The soldiers are trapped in the back of a wrecked armored bank truck. Above the rapid gunfire, the characters hear shouts of ammunition running out. If the characters assist the soldiers, they are sure to draw the attention of not only the Living Dead current assaulting the truck, but also the additional horde being drawn to the noise (30 more Living Dead). Both hordes are a mixture of Shamblers and Sprinters.

If the characters manage to help the soldiers, they each earn a bennie (or an extra adventure card that they can play this session). Unfortunately, the soldiers have all been bitten, and will turn in just a matter of time.

Encounter Two: Mother and Child: The characters come upon a young mother and her toddler trapped in the back of a sedan. The scene is very familiar as it reminds them of the mother and child in the Taurus station wagon, back on the road to Jacksonville. The difference this time is that both the mother and child are alive, and are surrounded by 24 Shamblers—all clawing at the car to get in.

If the characters free the mother and her child, they each earn a bennie. The mother explains that they took refuge in the car several hours ago because it was unlocked, but they don't know to whom it belongs, and therefore didn't have keys to drive it away. If asked, she was at the Rescue Station, but tried to flee back to her apartment when the creatures came after everyone.

Encounter Three: Jake's Gun World: The characters come upon a gun store called: Jake's Gun World, that is surrounded by 48 Living Dead. The store is locked-up tight, both in the way of the doors being locked and the metal gate being closed in front of it. On the rooftop is a man with a strong build and a buzz-cut, firing the occasional shot with his hunting rifle.

If the characters manage to free Jake, they'll have access to any pistols, shotguns, or rifles (and 5 reloads of ammunition for each) that are found in the gear section of the SWEX. The total number of guns available is 2 per character.

After the 3 encounters have all been introduced and played through, have each character make a Spirit roll with a -1 for each instance they didn't try to help the

ALTERNATE CUT: MEANWHILE, AT THE WAREHOUSE . . .

If the character with the sick child remains at the warehouse, then you should run the scene that leads up to the group's return from Jacksonville. In this case, the lead man happens to stumble into the office while the 3 soldiers are giving orders to keep everyone else busy. Once the man notices the sick child, he'll immediately panic and confront the character. Allow a argument to ensue that alerts others in the warehouse to the sick child, and have the division form—the man and his supporters want the child removed from the building or killed, others move to defend her and make a stand, and the rest of the survivors remain quiet and in the background.

trapped people. On a failure, they begin each adventure with 1 less bennie, for a number of weeks equal to the amount they failed the roll by. In other words, if the total were 1, the character would start each adventure with 1 less bennie for the next 3 weeks. If the Spirit die comes up a 1, then the character starts with 2 less bennies (or 1 less bennie and 1 less adventure card, if the Adventure Deck is used).

Guilt is a terrible burden.

ACT TWO: NO PLACE IS SAFE

After locating a supermarket that hasn't been completely looted, they dispatch the Living Dead roaming inside and find much needed medicine and food. Upon leaving the market, they're attacked by a group of survivors more than happy to take not only the supplies, but also the characters' weapons. Following a pitched battle, the characters manage to locate a few vehicles and race back to the warehouse.

The characters return to the warehouse and discover the situation has reached a boiling point. Several refugees have learned about Samantha's illness, and want to destroy the possible infection.

SCENE ONE: STAYING ALIVE

As the characters continue into the city, it's time to hit them with some action. Draw 1 card from the Action Deck for each player, and run the encounters in any order:

ENCOUNTER CHART

Ace: As the characters approach an intersection, a horde of Sprinters (4 per character) notices them and charges. The characters must now fight for their lives, but can take cover in a nearby corner store (which has already been looted).

Two: The characters are set upon by a pack of feral dogs (use the stats for Dog/Wolf in the SWEX). There are 2 dogs per character.

Three: As the characters move cautiously down the street, they are approximately 4 blocks from the nearest hospital. Suddenly, a screech fills the air. The characters find themselves the target of a pack of Infected Newborns (2 per character).

Four: An explosion rocks a nearby building, sending glass and debris raining down onto the street. Each character must make an Agility roll at -2 or suffer 3d6 damage.

Five: The characters approach an intersection and are noticed by a group of Shamblers (1 per character). The zombies moan, and the characters must move quickly or have more Living Dead converge on them (4 per character) in 2 rounds.

Six: The characters come upon a small car and find a woman trapped inside, weak and dehydrated. If the characters stop to help her, Sprinters will discover them and attack (1 per character). If they rescue her, she is suffering from 2 levels of Fatigue and her speed is Pace 4 due to being so weak.

Seven: The characters are shot at from a third story window by other survivors, and must take cover before they're killed. If they attempt to find the other survivors, they disappear before the characters can locate them.

Eight: As the characters become surrounded by Living Dead, someone from an upper floor of a nearby building tosses grenades at the creatures (3d6 damage, Medium Burst). The characters have to get out of there before they're killed. If they attempt to find the other survivors, they disappear before the characters can locate them.

Nine: A crowd of Living Dead sets upon the characters. During the battle, roll a d6 for each character. On a 1, that character is the victim of friendly fire and suffers the weapon's damage.

Ten: The characters approach an intersection and a group of Sprinters (1 per character) comes running toward them from a nearby building.

Jack: The characters come upon 4 Infected Newborns devouring the internal organs of a slaughtered dog. Each character must make a Guts roll at -2 for Fear/Nausea. Additionally, the Infected Newborns notice the characters and attack.

Queen: An underground gas main explodes, causing 4d6 in a Large Burst template centered on the characters.

King: The characters are attacked as a group of survivors (1 person per character) attempts to kill and rob them with military grade automatic weapons.

Joker: Choose any 2 events, or draw 2 new cards and apply both results.

SCENE TWO: SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The characters finally come upon a large supermarket. Although the windows are intact, the front doors are unlocked and will have to be opened manually. In the parking lot are three 1980 model sedans, and 1 pick-up truck, that can be hotwired on either a Repair or Lockpicking roll. A Lockpicking roll will also be required to open the locked doors. If the characters check the fuel gauges, they find 2 of them at a quarter tank, 1 at a half tank, and the fourth vehicle at a full tank.

Once they enter the grocery store, read the following:

The store is dark, the power no longer working. Something crunches underfoot as you step through the inner doors, past the cart storage area. You bend down and realize it's a bouquet flowers from the nearby floral display. Another step and something soft squishes beneath your shoe—a rotten banana.

Corporal Hauser clicks on his flashlight, and wherever the beam falls is utter disarray. The place has been ransacked, boxes and cans tossed all over the place, what produce is left is already spoiled, and trash litters the floor like a haphazard carpet.

As he moves the beam along the end of the aisles, it falls upon a man in an apron and a white shirt. His eyes are milky white. Arms reach out toward you as he notices the light, and his mouth opens—releasing a mournful moan.

WAR OF THE DEAD

There are 6 zombies per character spread throughout the store, some of them former employees and some of them customers that didn't make it out—all of them Shamblers. Once the creatures are dealt with, each character can make a Survival roll at -1 to find enough food (though they will still have to find some way to carry it all, unless they want their hands full of shopping bags). A Survival check with no penalty can be made to find sufficient non-food items. Fortunately, the people that looted the place in the first days of the outbreak didn't think to stock-up on medication, and there is plenty of over-the-counter Flu medicine, as well as prescription medicine at the pharmacy.

After gathering the supplies, it's time to leave. A view of the street shows only 3 Shamblers in the immediate parking lot.

As the characters make their way to hotwire the cars, have each of them make a Notice check at a -4 penalty. Anyone that fails is surprised this round. Those that succeed get a chill down their spine, and just happen to look upward and notice the long barrel of a sniper rifle protruding over the edge of the roof.

Deal Action Cards to any characters not surprised.

A team of raiders ambushes the group. There is a sniper on the rooftop of the supermarket with an active Night Vision scope on his Barret (.50) semi-automatic sniper rifle.

To prevent the player-characters from getting killed thanks to an ambush by raiders, the surprise shot from the sniper will target Corporal Hauser. If it hits, it goes into his back. The Corporal is wearing a Kevlar vest, however, so the armor negates the rifle's AP 4 and provides the same +4 to Toughness.

Once the shot is fired at the Corporal, deal Action Cards for a new round. A team of raiders (1 per character) comes from around the side of the supermarket, each carrying an H&K MP5 submachine gun.

As soon as they round the corner, guns trained on the characters, they demand their weapons and ammunition. If the characters refuse, the raiders open fire.

Tactics and cover should be used during the fight. The dim lighting causes a -1 penalty to all Shooting rolls (except for the sniper). The raiders will use the corner of the building (-4 penalty to hit them) and cars (-2 penalty to hit them) as cover. Hitting the sniper (if near the center of the parking lot) suffers a -2 penalty, or a -4 penalty if standing near the building. If anyone can make it around the rear of the building, a ladder leads up to the roof and is undefended.

The characters will be able to use the cars for cover as well, although they might not hold up long against the punch of the Barret .50 caliber rifle.

If things go bad, Corporal Hauser (if he's able to fight) will use the 2 grenades he has with him, though he'd prefer to save them incase a horde of Living Dead converge upon their location and they become cornered.

Once the characters dispatch the raiders, they will have 2 rounds to hotwire the four vehicles and flee the area before Sprinters (5 per character) arrive. After the initial wave of Sprinters, a mixture of Sprinters and

Shamblers (4 per character per wave) will continue to flood the parking lot every 3 rounds.

SCENE THREE: COLLISION COURSE

As the characters speed out of the city, no doubt using the cars as battering rams against the Living Dead, read the following as they approach the warehouse.

As you speed down the road and approach the warehouse from a side street, you see the place is surrounded by Living Dead. Hundreds of the creatures have converged on the building from all sides, pressing against each other in an attempt to get at the buffet waiting for them inside.

Corporal Hauser looks at the situation grimly, then turns to those of you in the vehicle with him, and says: "Blow your horn so they know we're back, and ram the ones in the front. No way we're making it back up the ropes. Clear the door we used before and my men will get us inside."



There are 200 zombies per side of the warehouse. The horde of zombies is so thick, ramming through the wall of bodies counts as a collision against a soft obstacle. The base damage is 1d6 per 5" of the car's speed (maximum 40", or 8d6), which halves the damage dice against the vehicle (maximum of 4d6). The characters are assumed to be wearing seatbelts, which halves the damage dice against them again (2d6). Roll 1d4 and multiply the total by 10 to determine how many zombies they cleared from the front of the building. For every 10 zombies, the damage to the vehicle is modified by +1d6.

Damage is calculated only against the lead vehicle as long as the other drivers can make a Driving roll to remain directly behind it. The lead vehicle must also make a Driving roll at -2 or go out of control. If the lead vehicle goes out of control, the drivers of the following vehicles must make Driving rolls at -4 or also lose control as they struggle to avoid colliding with the lead vehicle.

Once the characters make it to the front door, Corporal Hauser kicks it loudly. The characters will have to hold off the Living Dead for 2 rounds (12 seconds), before the door is opened by one of the refugees. If Corporal Hauser still has his grenades, he'll toss them out into the horde.

SCENE FOUR: MELTDOWN

Unfortunately, the characters won't have any time to catch their breath. As soon as the door to the warehouse is secured, they all turn around and see another war about to take place.

The remaining 3 soldiers are all standing in a guard formation, automatic rifles pointed at the group of 18 people threatening to move toward them. The mob has a variety of makeshift weapons, from tools to brooms and mops. Timothy is standing just inside the office—behind the soldiers—a long pair of scissors in his hand. Standing beside the soldiers are Michael, Zachary, Joe, David, and both his sons. Peter is behind his father, but the rest of them (including Gregory) have either the firearms they brought with them, or Desert Eagle pistols provided by the soldiers. If the characters have any friends or love ones with them, they are standing with the defending group, holding makeshift weapons.

The rest of the 40 survivors are spread throughout the dock, hiding behind anything that will provide cover in case bullets starts flying.

One man in front of the mob, a middle aged man with a receding hairline, is yelling at the group to get

out of the way and let them do what needs to be done to the girl. She's a risk to all of them, and she's going to get everyone killed. The soldiers keep yelling at the mob to stand down or they'll shoot, telling the man not to make them have to shoot.

Corporal Hauser fires his rifle into the roof, getting everyone's attention. He tells the group to back off, or his men will open fire. The girl is sick with the Flu, she isn't infected, and they will not allow anyone to kill her in cold blood. The mob's leader turns his attention to Hauser, arguing that no one knows for sure what she has, it could be the Flu or it could be the infection. For all they know, they've all been infected already just by having her here. If he's going to die, he exclaims, he's taking her with him.

With that, deal Action Cards as the man surges forward, his mob following him as though all under the same mind.

The soldiers will open fire with automatic weapons. Corporal Hauser will scream for them to stop, but it's too late. The damage is done.

How the characters handle the situation is up to them but, during the battle, a man slips out from behind his cover and runs into the rear room of the warehouse. If the characters try to pursue him, he'll beat them back there since they are in the middle of group vs. group combat. Just as they enter the rear room, they see the open door and the endless wave of Living Dead already pouring in. The man's screams end almost as soon as they begin, as the ghouls rip him apart.

Three rounds after the battle begins, the Living Dead pour into the main dock from the rear of the warehouse.

As the Living Dead rush into the area, the Sprinters ahead of the Shamblers and the moans reverberating off the metal walls, have everyone make a Guts check for terror at a -2 penalty.

The zombies immediately tear into the refugees.

Corporal Hauser calls his men, the characters, and their allies to escape. They have to get to the cars ASAP!

The characters and their allies are going to have to make it back outside to the cars (past the zombies still in front of the building), and hotwire the vehicles once again (unless they left them running).

Once the characters get the vehicles moving, proceed to Act Three.

ACT THREE: DEATH FROM ABOVE

The characters have barely managed to escape the distribution warehouse, but the situation turns from bad to worse when a military Apache helicopter crashes into the road—with the characters at ground zero!

SCENE ONE: OUT OF THE FRYING PAN . . .

The Sprinters pursued your vehicles, and were still running after you as you pulled far enough ahead that they dropped out of sight. Even though you can't see the sea of Living Dead that surrounded the distribution warehouse anymore, the screams of the refugees as they were torn apart still echoes in your mind. The blood that sprayed into the air, and the internal organs you saw being ripped out of still living bodies and stuffed into rotting mouths, is an image you won't soon forget.

Give the characters some role-playing time as they try to decide what to do next. How they discuss it is up to them, but for everyone to be in on the conversation they will probably have to pull off the side of the road for a few minutes. Michael and Zachary are still shaking; and Timothy has tears running down his cheeks as he holds Samantha in his arms, tight against his chest. Joe is trying to remain strong, but the stress and fear are evident on his face. David is quiet, and Peter seems to be in complete shock. Gregory's face is nothing but anger at what the world has become.

Corporal Hauser reminds everyone that the Midwest has designated safe zones, and the government is establishing its base of operations near the Rocky Mountains. His suggestion is that they steer clear of major population centers, and make their way west. The vehicles won't make it without more fuel, so they'll have to see what they can do to get some, or find replacement vehicles, soon.

Once the characters have a destination and a plan, and are once again driving down the road, end the adventure with the following narrative:

You get back on the road, a plan at least on the table. The night sky begins to turn a soft purple as the sun prepares to rise. The road twists and turns, flanked on either side by trees the further you get from the city. The steady pace of the vehicle almost lulls you to sleep, as your body finally relaxes from the long two days since you left old Henry's place.

Suddenly, light fills the roadway as the spotlight of an aircraft spills across the vehicles. It takes several seconds for your eyes to adjust, but it's several seconds too long. Before your brain can register what is happening, an Apache helicopter slams into the road.

The body twists, snaps, and fills both lanes as the wreckage comes barreling toward you!

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 10



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

Design & Writing: Lee F. Szczepanik, Jr.

Editing: Anna Lunsford

Interior Art: Butch Mapa

Graphic Design: David Jarvis

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH [WEEK 10]

GM'S SUMMARY

It's been a little over 2 weeks since the characters were introduced to the outbreak of the Living Dead aboard the Pinnacle cruise ship. Since that time, they've survived: weeks at sea with minimal provisions, being taken captive by an outlaw biker gang and forced to serve as unarmed bait for a town of Living Dead, being trapped in a lone church with two new forms of zombies, and escaping from the city of Jacksonville with thousands of Living Dead converging on them.

After all that, and with the survivor and military allies they've met along the way, they finally had a plan and a destination. After being forced to react to the world dying around them, it looked as if they were finally going to be able to act first.

Then it all came crashing down around them—or, more accurately, an Apache helicopter came crashing into them.

In *And the Dead Shall Walk the Earth* (Week 10), the characters are rescued from the wreckage by a patrol team from the nearby town of Dalesbury. After receiving some much needed rest and medical attention, they are offered shelter and security by the town's Mayor. In exchange, the only thing that's required is that they adjust to the new order of the world, and pull their own weight by contributing to the welfare of the town.

Assigned to help with patrol duty around the outskirts of the town, the characters encounter a military convoy—the last survivors of the Jacksonville massacre.

ACT ONE: A GODSEND

The characters have suffered a wreck thanks to an Apache helicopter that crashed into the road directly in front of them. Injured and weak, they are discovered by a patrol from the town of Dalesbury.

SCENE ONE: THE CALVARY

As the adventure opens, it picks up exactly where it left off last week:

There you were, heading steadily down the road, the tension of the past several days slowly ebbing from your body and your muscles finally starting to relax. If God has indeed abandoned the world, he's done so with a particularly grim sense of humor directed at all of you. No sooner than your eyes started to droop, a bright light illuminated the roadway. An odd sound filled the night air, and by the time your brain registered what it was seeing—it was already too late.

Slamming into the road directly ahead of you, an Apache helicopter twisted and crumbled as it bounced and skidded directly toward the vehicles.

By the time the helicopter slams into the convoy, it's traveling at 20" and does 4d6 base damage, +1d6 for every 5" the vehicles are moving. Wearing a seatbelt will halve the damage dice (round down). A Driving roll at -4 can be made to avoid the vehicle. If the driver would have failed the roll even without the -4 (rolls a 3 or less on the skill die), then the vehicle also goes out of control in addition to slamming into the helicopter.

If the characters attempt to leap from the vehicles before collision, they suffer 1d6 of damage for every 5" of vehicle speed. A successful Agility check can be made to halve the damage dice (round down).

Following the collision, the characters and their allies are most likely injured—some possibly severely so. Smoke and gas fumes fill the area in a Large Burst template centered on the characters. Each round they are within the template, they must make a Vigor roll



or suffer a level of Fatigue. Levels of Fatigue are recovered once every hour.

It's important to the story that at least one of Corporal Hauser's men be seriously injured.

If any of the characters are still conscious, read the following:

You struggle to pull yourself to your feet, knowing that anyone that's still alive is going to need your help. As you push the pieces of twisted metal away from you, the low moan of the Living Dead assails you. Scanning the area, you see a military pilot—his uniform torn and the skin ripped from his body—pulling himself toward the vehicles with only his arms. You realize from the angle of the legs that his back is broken.

Although the characters should be able to dispatch the zombie easily enough, its moan has alerted other Living Dead in the area. While they check on their comrades, several Shamblers (4 per character) arrive on the scene from various directions.

As the characters no doubt struggle to hold their own, the sudden roar of multiple engines cause the Living Dead to turn their heads. Bursting from a narrow dirt road in the tree line, 4 pick-up trucks—each with 2 men in the back with rifles—arrive on the scene. Using the trucks as a makeshift battering ram, and adding rifle fire to the mix, the new arrivals help dispatch the creatures.

One of the men introduces himself as John Meyers, and says that he's from Dalesbury: a small town about 6 miles away. They saw the helicopter go down, and decided they'd better check it out.

John offers the characters medical attention back at the town, and assists in loading the injured into the trucks.

If none of the characters were conscious after the crash, skip to Act Two, Scene Two.

ACT TWO: A NICE LITTLE TOWN

The characters are taken to Dalesbury, where they receive medical treatment, food, and much needed rest. Afterward, they're introduced to Mayor Lewis and welcomed to the town. The characters are offered a place to stay for as long as they need, as long as they contribute to the welfare of Dalesbury.

While in Dalesbury, they learn more about what's going on across the country, and how such a small town has managed to survive the outbreak.

THE SECRETS OF DALESBURY

Dalesbury is a dangerous place, despite appearances. Mayor Lewis and Doctor Lewis are not actually brothers, but are defected operatives for the United States government—John from counter-intelligence, and Jacob from research and development.

After discovering the dangers of the virus several years ago, and predicting the pandemic that would consume the world, the two of them went rogue and disappeared into rural America. Establishing networks and shell companies, they became citizens of nearby Mayville and purchased an old warehouse. Deep within the bowels of the building, they then established a laboratory wherein Jacob could continue studying the virus.

After the outbreak, the two of them captured several Living Dead and keep them contained within the laboratory. It is Jacob's goal to study the creatures and to create an immunization against Infection—which he then sell to the government or pharmaceutical companies.

After realizing that the captured Living Dead become docile for a few hours after consuming living flesh, John and his men have been using new arrivals to Dalesbury to feed them.

SCENE ONE: REST AND RECOVERY

The characters are driven long the dirt road that cuts through the woods, and soon approach the small town as the sun is rising. A sign on the edge of town reads:

DALESBURY POPULATION 783

The 783 has a painted "X" through it, and below it reads: 241.

Forming a makeshift fence around the town are dozens of vehicles arranged bumper-to-bumper. Some of them are larger farm vehicles, and atop those rest men with rifles. Between two trucks is a reinforced wooden frame upon which a large chain link fence has been built on hinges. As the trucks approach, two men open the gate for the vehicles to pass through.

The town has a main street, and dozens cross streets. People watch the trucks carefully as they enter through the gates.

The characters see an old movie theater, two bars, a clothing store, a store to buy feed for livestock, a barbershop, a small police station, and finally come to rest in front of a small doctor's office.

As soon as the trucks pull up, a man steps out. He's short— only 5'6"— with receding gray hair and wire-rimmed glasses. He's wearing a pair of jeans, boots, and a blue t-shirt.

John slides out of the truck and refers to the other man as Doc, informing him that they found other survivors and some are injured. The doctor's eyes flash, and John quickly adds that there was a car accident—they aren't bitten. They do need to be checked for bites, though, now that he thinks of it.

The man introduces himself as Doctor Lewis. His brother, John Lewis, is the Mayor of Dalesbury and should be around shortly. The doctor orders the men and the characters to bring the wounded inside.

Doctor Lewis leads them through a small waiting room and into a back area with 6 individual examination rooms. He orders the wounded to be placed in separate rooms, double up only if needed. He says that he'll be with them in a moment, and disappears through a back door, deeper into the building.

John and his men stay with the characters since they don't know how far they can be trusted, or whether anyone is infected. Moments later, Doctor Lewis re-

turns in a white medical coat with several instruments sticking out of the pockets.

Over the course of the next hour, he examines the wounds, tends to their injuries (Healing rolls), and fully examines Samantha—whom he determines does, indeed, only have the Flu.

Near the end of the hour, John Lewis arrives. He's tall, with dark hair, and appears to be the younger of the two brothers. He speaks with the characters and learns where they've come from. He welcomes them to Dalesbury, and tells them they're free to stay. They will, of course, have to pull their own weight, but that can all be discussed later. Right now, they need rest and medical attention. He also asks if they are hungry. If they are, he orders several of the men that found the characters to head over to the diner and get them some food.

Once Doctor Lewis is finished, he determines that the characters that aren't Incapacitated still need rest. They are slightly dehydrated, and suffering from extreme Fatigue. He offers them some sleeping pills, which they can refuse without incident. Either way, he tells his brother that they need a place to rest. The Mayor suggests that they stay with Eileen Gordy. She has plenty of room since she lost her husband in the first days of the infection. Timothy, if he's conscious, will not leave his daughter and will stay there.

Doctor Lewis will maintain a close eye on the wounded—especially the soldier and Samantha—as the Mayor leads the remaining characters down the main street toward the western edge of town. He approaches a single-family home and, once a woman in her early fifties answers the door, greets her and introduces the characters. He fills her in on how they got to town, and asks if she can put them up in some of her spare rooms. Eileen is more than happy to help, and ushers the characters inside. Mayor Lewis informs the characters that he has some meetings to attend with border patrol, and will stop by later to check on things.

Eileen helps the characters get settled in, chatting away the entire time to hide her nervousness.

Whether the characters form shift watches in their rooms, or all go to sleep, is up to them. Their rest, though, goes undisturbed. This is their chance to not gain Fatigue for lack of sleep.

SCENE TWO: WELCOME TO DALESBURY

Hours later, it's near sunset and the characters have had time to get some rest.

Not long after they awaken, Eileen has made them beef stew. As they eat their fill, Mayor Lewis and three armed men arrive at the house. The Mayor is glad to see them all awake and being fed, and informs them that he's called a town meeting in the old movie theater. At the meeting, he'll introduce them and put it to a vote as to whether or not they will be allowed to stay longer than it takes their friends to recover.

Corporal Hauser requests to see his injured. The Mayor easily agrees, and accompanies them to the doctor's office.

Doctor Lewis is treating everyone well, and Timothy is happy that Samantha is already feeling much better. The girl's fever is down, and she's sitting on his lap playing with a baby doll that the doctor gave to her. Timothy sings nothing but praise for Doctor Lewis, and the good doctor replies that he's just doing his job.

Any of the player-characters that were injured should be at least partially healed by now and able to move around. The soldier that was critically wounded in the crash is still not out of the woods, yet.

Once the characters are satisfied, the Mayor suggests they all (including Timothy and Samantha) head to the old theater. Everyone should already be there, waiting. The Mayor will do his best to make sure only the critically wounded soldier is left behind, unless there are characters still Incapacitated. The idea is that no witnesses be present for what is going to happen to the soldier behind the group's back.

On the way to the theater, the characters can attempt a Streetwise roll to gain some information. On a success, they can gain the following information by asking the right questions:

- The citizens of Dalesbury are good people that have been through a lot in the past couple of weeks. They've lost friends and loved ones, and aren't immediately trusting of outsiders. They've managed to get the Infection under control, but it cost almost three-quarters of the town to do it. The biggest fear the people have is the Infection returning.
- They keep power going through a series of generators. The town's gas station received a shipment just before everything hit the fan, so they were pretty well stocked on fuel.

They only use it for generators and the patrol vehicles. They've also been siphoning what they can from abandoned cars in the general area.

- Everyone in the town does their part of keep the place running. If they can sew, they help with clothes. Agriculture helps with food. The patrols keep the Infected from getting in. People help hunt for meat to supplement the supplies. Et Cetera.
- Yesterday, a local AM radio station reported the major cities being lost to the Infected. It seems most the military on the eastern seaboard is in total disarray—or worse. The central government is now out west. Looks they knew what was going to happen.

On a Raise, they can gain the following additional information.

- His brother had predicted that this was going to happen years ago. He used to be a scientist and doctor for the government. The man has more degrees to his name than a thermometer. Unfortunately for everyone, they wouldn't listen. So, he retired and hightailed it out of there. Eventually, he found this place and settled here, since he no longer trusted living in any type of major population center.
- The Mayor came here when his brother contacted him and told him what he'd discovered. The Mayor used to work as law enforcement for the town, but when the outbreak first hit and the old Mayor was killed, he just assumed the position. The people welcomed it, as he knew how best to combat the Infected from the start, thanks to his brother.
- He doesn't know how it started, but as far as he can gather from his brother, it came back with some soldiers from overseas.

Corporal Hauser can attest to the state of the military, just from his experience at Jacksonville. He has no knowledge, though, of how the Infection might have started, nor any knowledge of the government's information about it beforehand.

WAR OF THE DEAD

Once the characters near the theater, read the following:

As you walk through the town, the streets are completely empty. Buildings are darkened, all the internal lights turned off. The entire prospect seems somehow—unnatural.

Mayor Lewis and his men lead you down the main street and toward the movie theater. One of the men pulls the door open, and the Mayor gestures for you to enter. Immediately inside is the lobby—restrooms off to your right, and long concession stands near the far wall. The Mayor leads you off to the left, pulling open the doors to one of the theaters.

The theater is packed with people, and voices fill the enclosed space as they talk amongst themselves. Heads turn in your direction as the Mayor and his men lead you to the front, stopping before the large screen.

As the characters stand before the assembled town, Joe mumbles to them that he suddenly feels like he's the target of a firing squad. David and his sons look nervous. Michael is looking around, curiously. Zachary keeps his eyes on the Mayor. Timothy is holding Samantha, whose head is lying against his shoulder. Meanwhile, Corporal Hauser and his men are watching every movement, every shadowed corner, their eyes darting around as they mentally record every detail.

Mayor Lewis accepts a microphone from one of his men:

"Folks! Folks, your attention please," the Mayor begins. Voices continue to fill the room. "Excuse me, everyone. I need your attention. The meeting is beginning."

Slowly, the voices die down and people move to claim seats. Soon, all eyes are focused squarely on the front of the room. Next to you, Joe curses under his breath and looks uncomfortable.

"This meeting is called to determine a vote on the new arrivals to our town. The vote will be a yes or no as to whether we accept them into our community, or send them on their way as soon as the injured are recovered. Doctor Lewis has determined that none of the new arrivals are infected, so we have no fear of a new outbreak within our borders.

"I will now open the floor to the new arrivals to summarize their experiences thus far. Afterward, the floor will be open to questions."

The characters are now expected to tell their stories. At the end of the town's questions, have all those that told a portion of the tale, or answered a question, make a Persuasion check. The town starts at Uncooperative. Adjust the town's reaction on the Reaction Chart (see the SWEX) as each character makes his roll.

The character receives the following modifiers to the Persuasion roll, based upon certain information that might be revealed.

- If the character mentions the Ghost Riders pursuing them to the church, they receive a -1 to the roll. The town will be fearful of the biker gang arriving at their gates in pursuit of the characters.
- If the characters failed to act to help any of three Jacksonville encounters in Week 9, they receive a -1 for each instance mentioned. The town will frown upon anyone that doesn't do their part to help other survivors.
- If the character mentions the soldiers that tried to steal their RV, he receives a -1 for having soldiers with them in the town. The people of Dalesbury will become untrusting of the soldiers within their borders.
- If the character mentions assisting Henry and putting their lives on the line for him, he receives a +1 bonus. Since Dalesbury is all about sticking together and pulling your own weight, helping Henry fits into their philosophy.
- If the characters mention how they potentially risked their lives to determine if Samantha was sick or Infected, before murdering her under an assumed infection, they receive a +1 bonus.
- If the characters mention risking their lives for Samantha by going into Jacksonville and risking an infected city, they receive a +2 bonus to the Persuasion roll.
- If the character mentions the attack by the raiders in Jacksonville, he receives a +1 bonus. The town always needs more combat experienced people to help defend the gates against both the Living Dead and potential raiders.
- If killing members of the biker gang is mentioned, the Persuasion roll receives a +1 bonus.

- Corporal Hauser will also summarize military events as best he can for the town. He will reveal the following information:
- The Army had sent nearly a battalion to Jacksonville to handle coordinating rescue efforts. There were 800 soldiers assigned to the mission, along with heavy artillery and armor.
- Despite have six M1A1 tanks on their side, when the quarantine in Jacksonville failed, they were no match for tens-of-thousands of the Infected. They swarmed through the city, and the urban environment made it difficult to direct assault them with artillery shells. Instead, they ended-up destroying portions of the city. Still, the creatures kept coming.
- Their support was the several thousand troops assigned to Raleigh. Air support was also to help in extracting the refugees from the Rescue Station. They lost all contact with Raleigh about an hour before Jacksonville broke through.
- The United States government has abandoned Washington, and operations have been moved to facilities near the Rocky Mountains. Sections of the Midwest, where the outbreak is more easily contained, have been designated as safe zones— or Citizen Relocation Zones.

At the end, Hauser's story will allow him a Persuasion check to assist the characters. The check is normal, with no bonus or penalty.

After the characters have told the story of how they'd survived and come to Dalesbury, the townspeople will have the following questions:

Q1: What skills do the characters bring with them? What can they offer to benefit the town?

A1: Skills like Knowledge (Computers) or other specialized technology skills aren't considered useful by the town. However, combat abilities, skills that help in gathering supplies (Survival, Tracking, and even Lock-picking), and skills that can keep the town operational (such as Repair), will earn the character a +1 to the Persuasion roll for each skill mentioned.

Q2: What about the biker gang? What if they show up at the gates?

A2: If the characters argue that between their own weapons, the soldiers, and the armed guards in the

town, they can not only fend off the bikers—but also teach them that town isn't easy pickings—and therefore make them seek spoils somewhere else, they receive a +1 to the Persuasion roll.

Q3: If Jacksonville has been overrun, will the creatures follow the characters to the town?

A3: The Living Dead could converge on the town regardless. With the characters and the soldiers, however, the town has additional people to help defend it. Mentioning that gains the character a +1 to the Persuasion roll.

Once the 3 questions have been answered, have each character that participated make a Persuasion check with the bonus or penalty they received during the scene. The town will vote that the characters can stay, regardless. The final reaction result will determine how the town, in general, treats them.

Hostile: The town will not care if the characters are used to feed the Living Dead, and will even help as best they can to set-up the group, one-by-one, to be captured. Additionally, they will not be willing to give the characters any more supplies than is necessary to maintain the ruse. All subsequent rolls for Persuasion and Streetwise against the townspeople are at a -2 penalty.

Uncooperative: The town will allow the characters to be used to feed the Living Dead, and will part with supplies as long as the group can barter items for trade. All subsequent rolls for Persuasion and Streetwise against the townspeople are at a -1 penalty.

Neutral: The town will not stand in the way of the Mayor and his men using the characters to feed the Living Dead, but won't be willing to allow any of the children to be killed. They will give the characters supplies. Persuasion and Streetwise rolls are made as normal.

Friendly: The townspeople like the characters, and will make it clear to the Mayor (in secret, of course) that the group is an asset to the town and should not be used to feed the Living Dead. All subsequent rolls for Persuasion and Streetwise against the townspeople are at a +1 bonus.

Helpful: The town is firmly against the characters being used as food for the Living Dead, and will openly oppose the Mayor once Samantha disappears. All subsequent rolls for Persuasion and Streetwise against the townspeople are at a +2 bonus.

Once a reaction to the characters has been determined, the Mayor adjourns the meeting and thanks everyone for their time.

ALTERNATE CUT: A PLACE OF PEACE

If a character and his/her child have replaced Timothy and Samantha, then David will try to convince the character to remain in Dalesbury with him and his sons. The town appears to be a quiet place, and the people very open and helpful. With little place else to turn to in a dying world, it seems a good place to attempt to raise the children as best they can.

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

The Doctor's Office, for the most part, is exactly as the characters last saw it. Any injured characters (or their friends or family) are making a recovery. The difference comes in the critically injured soldier. He's gone. Corporal Hauser and his men are completely confused. Where did he go? The

last time they saw him, he was in no condition to just get up and walk out.

If any of the characters want to know if Doctor Lewis was at the meeting, they just don't know. Although they didn't see him, there were so many people present that he could have very well been somewhere in the crowd.

The nurse on duty walks into the main examination area. She's in her 30's, with brown hair pulled back and a very plain face.

Corporal Hauser immediately demands to know what happened to his soldier. The nurse looks frightened (she isn't, it's just an act) and says that the soldier recovered quicker than she thought he would. He stood up off the bed and demanded he be released. She tried to stop him, but he insisted on leaving and pushed past her. The doctor and everyone else were at the town meeting, and she couldn't stop him.

The last she saw of him, he went right when he left the office and turned down Sycamore Street (the next street up the block).

If the characters decide to help Corporal Hauser and his men discover the whereabouts of the soldier, proceed to Scene Four.

SCENE THREE: EXPLORING THE TOWN

By the time you exit the movie theater, the sun has set and the moon is high overhead. Lanterns on poles take the place of streetlights, reminding you of the old movies set in Victorian England.

The townspeople file out of the theater and head off to go about their normal business. Mayor Lewis tells to you go ahead and explore Dalesbury, but he'll have an assignment for you soon. He'll send his people to find you when it's time.

The characters now have a little time to explore the town before the Mayor assigns them a duty. The duty assignment will come whether or not the characters have decided to stay in the town long-term, as they are still expected to offer some sort of service as barter for the medical treatment. If the characters ask what the assignment will be, they learn that they are assigned to patrol duty tonight.

David and Timothy are happy. They're both loving fathers, and all they want is a safe and secure place for their children. Even if the characters decide to move on, Timothy and David will inform them that they've decided to stay. To them, Dalesbury seems like the perfect place, all things considered.

Corporal Hauser will tell the characters that he and his men are going to check on their wounded comrade, and he'll catch-up with them. If the characters accompany him, use the events for the Doctor's Office, below.

Depending upon where the characters go in the town, the following events occur:

KEN'S BAR

The characters can get some warm beer from the bar, as long as they have items to trade in return. Ken is an overweight man, with a wide grin and a quick joke. Several other patrons are in the bar, and any of the characters can get in on one of the poker games. Like with the drinks, the card games gamble with useful items.

Use the Gambling skill from the SWEX for the poker games.

SPRING FRESH CLOTHING STORE

Mary Anderson runs the Spring Fresh Clothing Store and is more than willing to give the characters a fresh set of clothes for free.

A Streetwise roll while talking to her can get her to discuss Dalesbury. Her topic of conversation is mostly about the outbreak—particularly in how the Mayor and the guards quickly killed any Infected and erected the temporary barriers. If Jacksonville is gone, then she suspects they'll soon send some men there for supplies to erect better defenses.

SCENE FOUR: MISSING SOLDIER

If the characters did not accompany Corporal Hauser to the Doctor's Office, then he finds them somewhere on the streets of the town. The Corporal approaches and asks if the characters have seen his injured man. He briefs the characters on what's going on, and tells them that he doesn't like what his gut is telling him. He needs to find his man, or find out what happened to him.

Once the characters are up to speed on the soldier's disappearance—either from being in the Doctor's Office or learning about it on the street—they can decide whether to help the Corporal or not.

If they decide to help him, a Streetwise roll will reveal that the man headed north out of town, back toward Jacksonville. One of the border patrol guards claims that the soldier mentioned something about needing to get back to check on what was left of his unit—that he couldn't stay in Dalesbury any longer.

Doctor Lewis reacts with shock and concern at the news of the soldier's departure. In his medical opinion, the man needed at least 3 more days of rest. The Doctor doubts the soldier will make it to Jacksonville alive.

Other than that, neither the characters nor Corporal Hauser learn anything new.

Corporal Hauser and his men decide to strike out on foot to scout the area and determine if they can find the soldier.

ACT THREE: MORE NEW ARRIVALS

The characters and the soldiers accompany the guards on patrol duty. Although they don't find the missing soldier, they encounter a convoy of military survivors from Jacksonville.

SCENE FIVE: PATROL DUTY

Just as Corporal Hauser decides to strike out in a possible search for his missing man, Mayor Lewis and several bor-

der guards approach the group. The Mayor tells the group that he's been made aware of the situation from both his brother and the guard, and wants to do what he can to help find the man. Once Corporal Hauser mentions he plans to go out in search of him—to see if the soldier really left the town—the Mayor offers to assist in the search endeavors.

Mayor Lewis assigns the characters and the soldiers to Patrol Duty with his men, stating that this way they can keep the area safe, and with the vehicles it should be easy to catch-up to the soldier.

The characters spend about 30 minutes out on patrol. The evening is cool, despite the time of year, and the sky clear once again. It's a quiet night, and the patrol encounters neither the Living Dead nor other survivors.

Unfortunately, they also don't find the soldier, nor any sign of him.

Corporal Hauser is frustrated, and one of the guards makes a comment concerning military training: aren't soldiers trained not to be found? Corporal Hauser immediately accuses the town of having done something with the soldier, and before the characters realize it, there's a tense standoff and harsh words between the soldiers and the guards.

Just as it looks as though shots might be fired, read the following:

The ground rumbles as you hear the sound of several large engines. Corporal Hauser orders his men to take cover and watch the road. The guards move into similar positions.

Moments later, you see 5 military Humvees and over 30 soldiers appear along the darkened road.

The guards order everyone to keep quiet, but Corporal Hauser recognizes the man sitting atop the lead Humvee as Major Morgan.

The Corporal steps in front of the convoy, his soldiers following suit. After salutes, the Corporal reports for duty to the Major.

Major Morgan informs him that Echo Base in Raleigh is gone, as is Jacksonville. They've been unable to communicate with Central Command in Colorado, and he's looking for a place to hole-up until contact can be reestablished. Corporal Hauser informs him about Dalesbury, and the Major quickly decides that they will have head there for the time being.

Any character that makes a Notice check catches the dangerous looks between the guards as they stare at the military.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 11



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 11)

GM'S SUMMARY

After being rescued from impending death thanks to an Apache helicopter that crashed into their vehicles, the characters have been nursed back to health and accepted by the people of Dalesbury.

Assigned to patrol duty as a means of contributing to the town's welfare in exchange for their medical treatment, the characters encountered a convoy of soldiers that survived the Jacksonville massacre. Taking them back to Dalesbury, the characters have ignited the fuse to a possible powder keg.

Not too happy about the arrival of a large military force within the town's borders, Mayor Lewis and his men prepare to defend their secret endeavors from discovery. Just as the characters begin to uncover clues to the experiments being conducted on the Living Dead, though, they discover a greater threat: thousands of Living Dead from Jacksonville have followed the convoy from the city, and will arrive in Dalesbury within the next several hours.

ACT ONE: DEFENDERS OF FREEDOM

Major Morgan and his men arrive in Dalesbury in search of a temporary base of operations, causing a rift to form between those loyal to Mayor Lewis and those fearful of him. With the Mayor distracted, the characters are approached by several citizens to free them from his insane grip.

SCENE ONE: A NEW REGIME

You lead Major Morgan and his convoy back to Dalesbury. Along the way, the men from the town hang back, talking in low tones amongst themselves and occasionally casting suspicious glances in your direction. Corporal Hauser walks next to

the Major; the two of them discussing what went wrong at Jacksonville. You overhear something about one of the zombies somehow leading the others, but they won't give any other information to you.

As you pass through the makeshift gates to the town, several men dart down the main street toward the town center. Many others gather in doorways and windows to watch the commotion of the new arrivals.

Major Morgan calls a halt once all of his men are through the gate. Moments later, Mayor Lewis and his men approach.

"I'm Mayor Lewis," he says as he draws closer. "What's going on here?"

The expression of pure venom on the Mayor's face clearly shows that he is not happy about Major Morgan and his men being in town. Major Morgan steps forward, introduces himself, and extends his hand. The Mayor looks at it for a brief moment before clasp and shaking it, though the gesture is obviously forced.

Mayor Lewis listens to what Major Morgan has to say—about the rout in Jacksonville, their escape, and their need of a temporary place to rest and replenish supplies. The Mayor shakes his head, stating that Dalesbury is already struggling and they can't help the military with supplies. The Major replies that he wouldn't dream of imposing, his men just need rest from the town and they will forage for their own supplies.

Mayor Lewis now gets serious as he tells the Major that they have to leave. Not only could their convoy draw more of the creatures to the gates, but there is no way of knowing if any of the men have become infected. The last thing Dalesbury wants is another outbreak. They've been doing fine on keeping it outside

STREETWISE INSTEAD OF PERSUASION

Players familiar with *Savage Worlds* might wonder why tricking the two men in this scene calls for a Streetwise roll instead of a Persuasion check. The reasoning behind the alternate skill use is that the characters are attempting to use basic fast-talking and street smarts to get the men to believe whatever lie they create. Unlike Persuasion, the characters aren't trying to change the Attitude of the men to make them friendly, simply fast-talk their way out of trouble.

military can assist them in fortifying it better—which is a win for the town. They can also point out that the Major only wants temporary housing, and has agreed to leave after his men get some rest. They can also point out that Doctor Lewis can check the men for injury and infection. In the end, the town puts up with a few dozen men for maybe a day, but in the end is more heavily defended against the Living Dead.

If the characters succeed at the roll, the Mayor stares at Major Morgan. He then gives the Major thirty-six hours

to be out of town.

Major Morgan steps forward, his face hard. He tells the Mayor that whether or not the creatures follow them, they will eventually find the town. Tens-of-thousands escaped from the quarantine in Jacksonville, and it's just a matter of time. The Major points out that the town's defenses are wholly inadequate against the Living Dead if they arrive en masse. Which means, he continues, that the town is at risk anyway. As far as an infection, none of his men have been bitten, and he's willing to submit them all for examination if the town has a medical staff. However, he and his men are staying long enough to rest—he won't send them back out there overly fatigued and get them killed—and once they rest, they will be on their way.

The Mayor orders them to leave now, and his dozen or so guards level their automatic weapons. Immediately, all of the soldiers do the same. The Mayor orders them to hold their fire and lower their weapons, but no soldier moves to obey as the guards keep their guns pointed at them. Within seconds, it becomes a screaming match between the Mayor and the Major. The Mayor orders him to leave. The Major yells that he will not give that order, and then continues to order his men to hold their fire and lower their weapons.

The Mayor then turns to the characters, ordering them to depart with the military. They had no right to bring them to Dalesbury. Corporal Hauser yells that bringing the Major and his men to the town was his call. The Mayor orders him to leave, as well with the Major and the characters.

The characters can make a Persuasion roll against the Mayor to get him to back off before everything escalates into a firefight that both sides will probably lose. They can point out that the Living Dead from Jacksonville will most likely find the town, and the

to be out of town.

If the characters fail, some of their points still hit home. The Mayor gives the military twelve hours to be out of town.

The Mayor orders several of his men to escort the soldiers to the clinic to be examined by Doctor Lewis. He and his men then head toward the center of town.

ACT TWO: STRANGE OCCURRENCES

As the characters head through town, they stumble upon a secret meeting between Mayor Lewis and his inner-circle, receive some odd information from the former Mayor's wife, and are then sent on patrol where they have to stop those under their command from killing each other.

SCENE ONE: DANGEROUS PLANS

After Major Morgan orders his men to follow the town's guards to the clinic, the characters are free to go wherever they please. Corporal Hauser is still concerned over his missing soldier, but Major Morgan tells him they will get to the bottom of it. After all, the town could very well be telling the truth. Before they lost communications, there were reports of soldiers going AWOL coming in from almost every city.

As the characters make their way through the streets, have them make a Notice check. On a success, they see three of the Mayor's entourage moving hurriedly down a side street, casting wary glances around them. They enter into a basement door of a house at the far end.

The characters will have to make Stealth checks against Inactive Guards to approach the house unseen and unheard. There are several low and narrow base-

ment windows—all painted black—and the darkness of night will provide them with additional cover.

Once the characters are near the windows, they will have to make another Notice check at -2. On a success, they can hear the Mayor clearly. On a failure, they only hear bits and pieces as determined by the Gamemaster.

Mayor Lewis is both concerned and angry. The last thing they need is the military snooping around Dalesbury, especially with the Corporal breathing down their necks about his missing friend. The longer the military stays, the more at risk they are of being discovered. They didn't take control of the town and dig in as hard as they have, just to watch their operations fall apart now. The soldiers have to be driven from town as soon as possible, because the longer they are here the more the chance of discovery rises. Meanwhile, effectively immediately, no one else is to be taken. They can't risk drawing more attention.

At that moment, the characters hear a voice from down the street behind them ask them what they're doing over there. Two townspeople—both men in their 30's— approach. The characters will have to act fast or risk being discovered by the Mayor and his men. A Streetwise roll will convince the two men of whatever lie the characters can think of, and the characters will get away without being reported. If the characters fail the Streetwise roll, the two men will report the characters to the Mayor's men later in the night.

SCENE TWO: A PLEA FOR HELP

Once the characters manage to get away from the meeting, they are once again drawn the strange occurrences in Dalesbury.

As they walk through the town toward whatever destination they have in mind, read the following:

Something is definitely going on in Dalesbury, and none of it seems good for you or those with you. The Mayor definitely wants the military out of town, and Corporal Hauser's soldier is still missing. The people seem to be loyal to Mayor Lewis, or very afraid of him.

As you cross the main street, a woman with two young girls—perhaps six to eight years old— approaches you outside of a clothing store. She looks around nervously before looking you in the eyes and saying: "Please, we need to talk. The town needs your help before we're all dead, and I've nowhere else to turn."

The woman introduces herself as Rebecca Erikson, and says that her husband used to be the Mayor of Dalesbury. She pleads with the characters to talk in private, and asks them to come back to her house. If the characters refuse, she'll have tears in her eyes as she says that they are her only hope. Mayor Lewis killed her husband to take control of the town and, if he isn't stopped, he'll feed them all to the creatures before he's finished.

Once the characters follow her home, with a few people giving them suspicious glances from the street, she'll make coffee for everyone and send the girls to their rooms.

During the scene, the characters learn the following information. Make sure to role-play Rebecca as an extremely frightened woman and out of options.

- She has no idea where the Lewis brothers came from—they aren't from Dalesbury and no one in town had ever seen them before the outbreak. All she knows is that during the first couple of days, they came into town seeking refuge.
- They weren't in the town more than a day before they started gaining friends within the more—firearm liberal—community. Those men that thought superior firepower meant might made right. Her husband had tried to curb such groups from forming, even attempting to get Sheriff Wilson to enforce a ban on firearms except to those designated as the town's defense force. Unfortunately, even the Sheriff had an impossible time enforcing the law. The group just would not part with their weapons, and openly challenged the Sheriff to take them on several occasions. Sheriff Wilson wasn't about to enter into a firefight with the group, so he backed off.
- It wasn't long before the outbreak spread throughout the town like a wild fire. That was when the Lewis brothers and their men stepped forward and gained a lot of power within the town. They eliminated the Infected within a day. Her husband was killed during those 24 hours of hell. No one knew who did it, but she and the Sheriff had their suspicions. Especially since John Lewis took control of the town as its new Mayor after the outbreak was contained.
- Not everyone in the town supports the Mayor. Unfortunately, those that don't are

INTERLUDE: THE NEXT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS

After the meeting with the Sheriff, the characters have the run of the town until the next night. During the day, Doctor Lewis is seeing the soldiers one at a time, making the process purposefully slow.

Corporal Hauser is still not convinced that his soldier left town, but the more he voices his disbelief of the idea, the more the Mayor's men seem to be watching him.

David and Timothy are still determined to remain in Dalesbury with their children.

Rebecca Erikson will not open her door for anyone, not even the characters.

Once the characters have gotten some sleep, continue with Scene Three the following night.

deathly afraid of him and his enforcers. In the past week, anyone that spoke out against the Mayor quietly disappeared. The Mayor claims they left town but, given the ties most of them had to Dalesbury, no one believes that.

Rebecca wants the characters to help her—and her daughters—escape Dalesbury. Mayor Lewis and his men keep a close eye on her, and won't let them leave. All she wants is to find a safe place to raise the girls. She understands that probably no place in the world is truly safe anymore, but there have to be places better than Dalesbury.

Before the characters can get anything else out of her, someone knocks on the door. It's about 8 of Mayor Lewis' men.

Once the door is opened, they make it obvious that they've come for the characters. The Mayor wants to speak with them. If the characters try to get out of going, it becomes obvious that the men won't take no for an answer, and any serious refusal could very well erupt into violence.

Once the characters are outside, the men tell them to follow. They lead the characters deeper into town, and then stop. Several of them draw their rifles, and the leader punches one of the characters in the stomach.

The characters are now surrounded by a group of armed men.

The leader tells the characters to be careful whom they talk to in the town, as not everyone has Dalesbury's best interests in mind. Mrs. Erikson is known to be a little unbalanced since her husband became infected and had to be put down. They would be best served to take anything she says with a heavy grain of

salt, and just move on about their normal business.

Before the situation can escalate, and especially if the characters draw their weapons, a man suddenly walks across the street, his loud voice telling everyone to break it up. As he approaches, the characters see the metal star on his right breast. It's Sheriff Wilson.

The Sheriff immediately orders the Mayor's men to disperse. When one of them gives the Sheriff a veiled warning about putting his nose where it doesn't belong, the Sheriff puts his hand on his sidearm and replies that where the safety and peace of Dalesbury is concerned, it's all his business. He even goes on to say that he's met Major Morgan, and has talked to the man about some of the soldiers assisting in keeping the peace in Dalesbury. As soon as he says that, the leader tells him to be careful in whom he chooses to trust, and then tells the rest of the men that it's time to go.

As the men head off into the town, the Sheriff turns to the characters and asks them what that was all about. How the characters handle the situation is up to them, but if they tell the Sheriff about their meeting with Rebecca, he'll nod and reinforce everything she told them. The Mayor and his brother did arrive only a couple of days into the outbreak, most the town suspects they killed Mayor Erikson in order to take over, and anyone that's spoken out against them has vanished.

Give the characters a few moments of role-playing time before the Sheriff states that he has to get back to patrolling the town. He tells the characters to keep their eyes sharp, and to have a good night.

SCENE THREE: RISING TENSION

The characters are walking through the town when they hear rapid gunfire coming from several blocks away. They arrive just on the heels of Sheriff Wilson to see another stand-off between Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis, with both the Mayor's men (24 of them, at this point) and the 30 soldiers with guns pointing toward each other. Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis are screaming at one another. From what the characters gather as they approach, it has something to do with border patrols.

The characters should quickly get the gist of what's happening, especially after Sheriff Wilson steps in to mediate. It appears that Major Morgan is attempting to assume border patrol of Dalesbury, and is prepared to send out a unit of his soldiers to scout the surrounding area for other survivors as well as Living Dead. Mayor Lewis, though, is vehemently against this, stating that the defense of Dalesbury is the jurisdiction of his men—and those men alone. Furthermore, the last thing the town needs is the military staying around longer than already discussed. He wants the soldiers to rest and then get out.

Any character can make a Smarts roll to know that if a compromise isn't made soon, the Mayor's men are likely to open fire and start a war in the middle of the town. If the characters try to defuse the situation, they will have to make a Persuasion roll at -2 versus the Mayor. On a success, they can get the two sides to lower their weapons. On a Raise, they can get the Mayor to see the wisdom of allowing the soldiers to run patrol for one night.

If the characters don't get involved and remain spectators, then Sheriff Wilson will suggest the following without their input (otherwise, he'll do it as support for anything they might attempt).

Since both Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis want to operate border patrol for the night, and it's his job to keep the peace in town, here's what's going to happen:

- The characters are assigned with border patrol command tonight. That means that it's their show.
- The characters will choose 3 soldiers to go with them, as well as 3 of the Mayor's men.
- The 6 men chosen are under the command of the characters. Whatever they say, goes.
- Since the characters are not affiliated with Dalesbury or the military, this will keep patrol neutral and allow everyone to be involved.

If the characters try to decline, the Sheriff will make it clear that this time they have no choice. He's going to maintain peace in Dalesbury—just like his job description says—and this is how it's going down. He looks at Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis, and states that anyone that doesn't like it, and wants to disobey, can spend some time in the jail until they want to be more reasonable.

Major Morgan agrees. Mayor Lewis starts to protest, looks at the people gathering on the streets to watch, and quickly changes his tune into an agreement.

The Sheriff turns to the characters. He tells them to choose their men, load their weapons, and head on out for patrol.

As he walks past, he whispers an apology to them.

SCENE FOUR: BORDER PATROL

This scene should be tailored to the individual player-group, how they typically react to situations, and which soldiers (for example: Corporal Hauser) they took with them. There is a lot of tension between the 3 men from Dalesbury and the 3 soldiers, and the characters are going to be hard pressed to keep the peace between the two factions. The characters could try Persuasion checks at -2 to stop the two factions from killing each other, could attempt Intimidation versus a Spirit d6, or could even shoot or injure a member from each faction on their own—to show that they mean business.

All the while, the two factions are bickering, arguing, and threatening each other; several encounters with the Living Dead (Shamblers and Sprinters) threaten to infect the entire group. The Gamemaster should even run at least one encounter with the Living Dead, with the creatures gaining the benefit of Surprise on the first round, especially as the characters are attempting to defuse another situation between the two factions.

ACT THREE: POWER OF THE HORDE

The characters are on patrol when the group discovers a massive horde of Living Dead in the distance, coming directly toward Dalesbury.

SCENE ONE: IMPENDING DEATH

After the characters have gotten a handle on the town guards and the soldiers, and have had an opportunity to deal with a few encounters with the Living Dead, read the following:

You've been on patrol for several hours, the question coming into your mind on more than one occasion as to which is more dangerous: the Living Dead or your companions.

A warm breeze blows out of the east as you mount a small rise, and even from this distance, you can see the orange glow of the inferno that still marks Jacksonville. Then something in the far off darkness catches your eye. It appears as though a giant shadow is moving slowly in your general direction.

If the characters don't have a pair of binoculars, they can get some from the soldiers. As they raise the binoculars to their eyes, continue with the following:

You focus the lenses as they amplify the ambient lighting of the darkness. In the distance, perhaps a day's walk at their slow pace, you see a horde of hundreds of Living Dead. Body parts and flesh are missing from many.

As you stare at them, it's almost as if they can see you in return. Those in the front of the horde open their mouths. Even though you can't hear them from this distance, your mind fills in the blanks and it's almost as if the inhuman moan of the Dead comes directly to you.

Your blood runs cold.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK



WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 12



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH [WEEK 12]

GM'S SUMMARY

After being rescued from near death by the friendly town of Dalesbury, the characters were on patrol around the nearby area when they discovered a military convoy that had survived the massacre at Jacksonville.

Taking the soldiers back to Dalesbury, a power struggle quickly developed between Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis, with the characters caught in the middle of it.

After overhearing a meeting between the Mayor and his men—where they discussed a need to get the military out of Dalesbury before their operations could be discovered—the characters were approached by Rebecca Erikson, the wife of Dalesbury's former Mayor. Rebecca told the characters about the first days of the outbreak, the sudden arrival of Mayor Lewis and his brother from parts unknown, their rapid gathering of force from within the town, and the suspicious death of her husband.

Unfortunately, several of the Mayor's men interrupted the meeting with Rebecca, and proceeded to give the characters a not too friendly warning to watch where they place their loyalties.

Left with more questions than answers, the characters soon became involved in a standoff between the military and Mayor Lewis concerning border patrol. Assigned to command of the patrol by Sheriff Wilson, the characters then found themselves caught in the middle of yet another power struggle between the Mayor and the military.

Following several encounters with the Living Dead outside of Dalesbury, the characters made a horrible discovery: a horde of several hundred Living Dead were roughly a day's march from the gates of Dalesbury!

ACT ONE: THE APPROACHING STORM

Major Morgan accompanies the characters to a location where the horde of Living Dead migrating from Jacksonville can be seen. Once they return to the town and the Major oversees fortifications, the characters are ordered to get some sleep for the upcoming battle.

SCENE ONE: HORDE OF THE LIVING DEAD

The characters will have to head back to Dalesbury and report what they've seen to Major Morgan and Mayor Lewis. Although the Mayor is unavailable, Major Morgan hears what the characters have to report, and then asks them to show him.

As the characters and Major Morgan return to the rise where the Living Dead can be seen in the distance, read the following:

After leading Major Morgan to the rise where you first saw the approaching horde of Living Dead marching toward Dalesbury, the Major raises his night vision binoculars and stares into the distance. When he lowers them, his face is pale even in the darkness.

Major Morgan whispers several expletives and then looks at the characters. He tells them that there is no way they can evacuate the town in time, even if the Mayor would listen to them. There is also no way the town's current fortifications will hold. He and his men have limited ammunition, and no heavy artillery. At least if they had one of the tanks, they could attempt to ram the horde and bring their numbers down.

The Major suggests they get back to town and meet with the Mayor. They are going to have to get supplies from somewhere and try to erect better fortifica-

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tions—at least on the side of the town the Living Dead will be approaching.

The Mayor seems to be more open to talking with the characters than the military, so Major Morgan asks them to take a shot at discussing the situation with him. Meanwhile, the Mayor will get his men briefed and ready to get to work.

SCENE TWO: PREPARATIONS

Once the characters get back to town, they'll have to ask around for Mayor Lewis. A Streetwise roll will reveal that he's at the diner having a late dinner with his brother.

On the way to the diner, Michael, Zachary, and Joe step out of the bar just as the characters approach. Michael is completely drunk—barely able to stand on his own—but Zachary and Joe haven't had as much to drink. They see the determined look on the characters' faces, and inquire as to what's wrong.

If the characters fill them in on the situation, Zachary and Joe say that they'll find David and Timothy and get them ready to help. Michael sits on the ground and cries. All he wants is some peace and quiet. Zachary and Joe leave him sit there, and run off to find the other two men.

At the diner, there are four men with automatic rifles standing guard outside—the Mayor's bodyguard detail.

Inside the diner, Mayor Lewis and Doctor Lewis are sitting at a rear table enjoying a couple of hamburgers and fries (such luxuries are saved only for them). There are a few other patrons scattered throughout the diner. One table has a father, mother, and toddler. Several men sit at the counter. A young man and woman are enjoying a late night breakfast at another table.

As the characters approach, the Mayor will greet them a bit coldly.

Mayor Lewis is still angry at the characters for bringing the military to Dalesbury. Not only is it disruptive to his own plans, but also their arrival in Dalesbury could very well lead the Living Dead to the front gates.

The Mayor is not a stupid man, however. The moment the characters mention the approaching horde of Living Dead, he'll shoot to his feet and be ready to move into action. He doesn't believe they have enough ammunition in the town to take down such a vast number of creatures—especially when only a head shot will do it, and the townspeople are far from marksmen—but maybe if they can increase fortification, and Major Morgan can deploy his men in an effective man-

ner, they can get through the invasion.

The Lewis brothers leave the rest of their food on the table, and order the characters to follow them outside. He tells one of his bodyguards to start assembling the town for a meeting. To another of his men, he orders him to get Fred—the owner of the hardware store—and get that wood and chain link fencing. They need to have it erected by the end of the night.

Both men disappear into the town.

The Mayor then turns to the characters. He tells them that he's going to send four more men with them, and that he wants them to hit a town about 20 miles south of Dalesbury. The town is called Mayville, and the last time they checked it out, the creatures overran it. However, it has a Home Depot on the outskirts, and there might still be supplies left inside. If asked why Dalesbury didn't check the store out sooner, the Mayor will reply that they've had more pressing matters in the past week—like getting their own town situated with what's happened.

The Mayor then gathers his men, and assigns 4 of them to go with the characters. He informs them of what's going on, and tells them that they need more wood, chain link, hardware to secure it all, and anything else that might prove useful.

Once the characters are ready to move out, proceed to Scene Three. Zachary, Joe, David, and Timothy will remain in the town to help as best they can.

ACT TWO: AGAINST ALL ODDS

The characters raid a Home Depot in the nearby town of Mayville for additional supplies to fortify Dalesbury against the approaching horde of Living Dead. After the town is as secured as it's going to get, the characters get some much-needed rest—only to awaken to discover that Samantha is missing.

As the characters search the town for the missing girl, the Living Dead make their way through the barriers. During the massive combat against the creatures, the characters notice Doctor Lewis and several men carrying what seems like a body to the far edge of town, where they load it into a sedan and drive south.

Following the good Doctor, the characters are lead to the warehouse on the edge of Mayville.

SCENE ONE: THE FORESHADOWING

The characters and the men head out in 4 of the patrol trucks. The night is quiet as they head south along back roads.

As they approach the town of Mayville, read the following:

It looks as though Mayville had thoughts along similar lines to Dalesbury. Dozens of cars and trucks are lined up, bumper to bumper, forming a crude barrier against the Living Dead. Behind the vehicles, chain link fence has been erected, held steady by wooden braces stuck firmly into the ground.

While the barrier might have proven effective against preventing the creatures from making it into the town, it also looks to have served as a death trap for those inside. Corpses line the interior of the fence, and dried blood is splattered across the walls of several nearby buildings. Even in the moonlight, you can see dozens of Living Dead shambling about the streets of the town. The low moan of the slow-moving creatures, mixed with the almost high-pitch yell of their running counterparts, erupts from the town at odd intervals.

On the edge of town, outside of the perimeter, you see the darkened sign of The Home Depot. You also see another darkened building—what looks to have once been some sort of shipping warehouse. Several men, armed with rifles, stand outside their cars in the building's parking lot.

The patrol tells the characters that the warehouse is empty; Dalesbury had already raided what was useful from it and taken it back to town. That was their first priority, and they were supposed to send a team to scope The Home Depot, but then things got hectic.

The men in the parking lot are also from Dalesbury. They run guard shifts at Mayville to make sure the creatures don't eventually get the idea to work together to get past the barriers. They estimate at least four hundred of them still inside—and there are probably more—and the last thing they need is the entire town escaping and attacking Dalesbury. The moment things get bad, they have a radio to signal back to town.

The patrol heads over to the warehouse parking lot, where one of the drivers asks a guard how things are going tonight. The guard shrugs and replies: "same as always," as he eyes the characters. The driver informs him they're going to hit The Home Depot, and fills him in on the situation. The man whistles, and tells him to let the Mayor know that they're ready to leave post and help—just give the word.

The characters can make a Streetwise roll at -2 as the conversation goes on. On a success, they get a gut feeling that something isn't right. On a Raise, the feeling turns into a question: If Mayville is completely Living Dead, where did the survivors go?

If they ask the men, no one knows for sure. Some came to Dalesbury, but the others probably went somewhere else. Another success on a Streetwise roll at -2 gives them the impression that the man is lying. If confronted, he'll maintain his story, but will be extremely angry toward the characters. He doesn't like being called a liar, and they'd better watch what they say—you never know when his gun might be the only thing between them and infection.

SCENE TWO: DO IT YOURSELF

Although The Home Depot has a shortage of wood and chain link fencing material, it has plenty of paint, hardware, and all the other goodies for which the store is known. Unlike what the characters have seen so far since returning to land from the cruise ship, The Home Depot is not ransacked. The merchandise still sits neatly on the shelves, and the forklifts and loaders are parked in the rear of the store. Outside of the busted front doors, the place shows no signs of having been broken into.

The store is dark and without electrical power. The guards each brought along a flashlight (there are 4 flashlights in all). Unless the characters stay with the guards, all combat rolls are at a -4 penalty due to the darkness.

The guards lead the characters carefully through the store and toward the lumber department. Just as everyone turns a corner to head up the aisle toward the rear of the store, read the following:

It's a little surprising how undisturbed the store is, outside of the broken front doors. With the power out and everything dark, your nerves are slightly on edge. The guards from Dalesbury, for their part, are remaining firm—taking careful, silent steps as they make their way through the store and toward the lumber department.

As you turn a corner, the flashlight beam falls upon a loan figure. It appears to be a man in his 40's when he died. His midsection has a paunch, and his hair is receded to the middle of his head. The man didn't suffer a quiet death: his nose is missing, his left eye is rotted as it hangs from the socket, and large pieces of flesh from his left shoulder are gone. He looks in the direction of the light and opens his mouth.

DEAL ACTION CARDS!

The characters are going to have to dispatch the zombie before he can moan and alert the others in the store. If the guards act before the characters, whichever guard goes first will put a shot into the creature's head. Unfortunately, the shot is an alert to the other Living Dead. If the characters go first, they can try to dispatch the zombie with a melee weapon, instead.

How the group handled the zombie effects how the rest of the scene plays out.

The zombie moaned, or shots were fired: If noise was made, the group immediately hears the worse type of moan they could possibly encounter. First comes the high-pitched wail—a sound somewhere between an infant's cry and a cat in pain—from deeper in the store. It's the sound of an Infected Newborn. Several others immediately return the wail. The characters also hear several return wails of Sprinters.

Three rounds (18 seconds) later, the group is attacked by the Living Dead. There are 3 Sprinters per character, and 2 Infected Newborns per character. In

ALTERNATE CUT:

A FAMILY MEMBER TAKEN

If Timothy and Samantha have been replaced, then you might have to do a little work to get the character's child kidnapped. It will have to be after the character and child have gone to sleep. The location of the kidnapping might also have to be changed, in which case the rag with Chloroform will have to be found wherever the character fell asleep.

the rear of the assault are 4 Shamblers per character. The Infected Newborn will use the darkness and shadows to their advantage, attacking by running through bottom shelves, out from behind displays, and so forth.

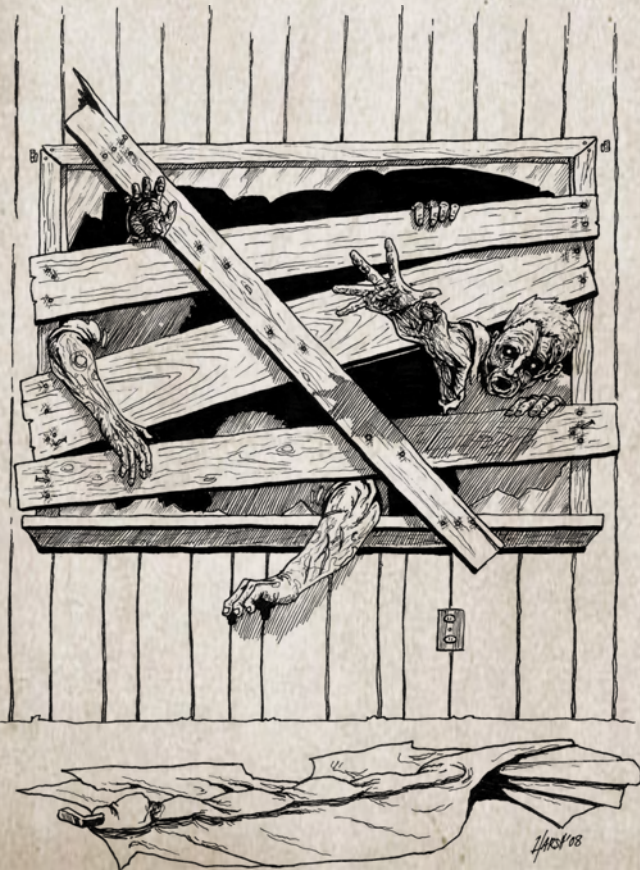
The zombie was dispatched quietly: If the zombie was killed quietly, the group continues on its way toward the Lumber area. Against the loading dock door, they see what can only be called a nest of Living Dead. As above, there are 3 Sprinters per character, 2 Infected Newborns per character, and 4 Shamblers per character. The difference is in what the characters witness. Each Infected Newborn is being held in the arms of a Sprinter who is sitting with its back against the wall. The entire scene almost looks as though the Sprinters are parents of a sort, holding a child. Shamblers mull about the area, and the remaining Sprinters are crouched atop pallets of insulation right next to the nest.

As the light falls on the Living Dead, the crouching Sprinters unleash their wail and the Infected Newborns immediately spring into action—charging toward the group.

The nest comprises all of the Living Dead within The Home Depot. Once the characters dispatch the zombies, they are free to gather their supplies in peace. If they retreat, they'll be forced to head back to Dalesbury empty handed, and the town won't have enough time to launch another assault and fortify the defenses.

Once back at the town, the characters can help the military and townspeople use what wood and chain link fencing material they have to erect a barrier on the side of the town the horde will be approaching. Major Morgan also has several makeshift weapons worked on, including Molotov Cocktails.

After several hours, the sun has risen and the characters are ordered to get some sleep. Major Morgan wants them well rested before the assault that night. He and his men will run recon and keep an eye on the creatures' progress.



SCENE THREE: THE SEARCH FOR LOST INNOCENCE

The sun has set and the town generators have been turned off, keeping the streets in darkness. The plan is to maintain as much silence as possible until the horde is near the front gates (so to speak) and then hit the entire area with large spotlights that have been secured atop the tallest vehicles. Major Morgan hopes the lights will provide a suitable distraction for the creatures, while the main defensive line takes its shots. No one in the town has any illusions that ammunition will run out before the horde does, but if enough of them can be taken down safely, then the hand-to-hand teams have at least a small chance of finishing them off.

Just as the characters are leaving Eileen's, they hear a blood-curdling scream come from a man several blocks away. Investigating, they discover two men lying on the ground, their midsections ripped open and entrails being pulled out and devoured. Crouching over them are 4 Sprinters that have somehow made it into the town.

Once the characters dispatch the Sprinters, Major Morgan and several soldiers come running to the scene. The Major orders his men to check the perimeter and see how they got into the town.

As the soldiers run off into the night, Timothy arrives on the scene. His face is pale, and he's breathing hard. He says that Samantha is missing! They were sleeping in the movie theater because she was scared, and he figured the open space of the theater would calm her since she would be able to see any of the creatures long before they got to them. When he awakened, she was gone. He searched the entire theater, but didn't find her!

Just as Timothy finishes, Mayor Lewis and several of his men also arrive on the scene. Major Morgan updates the Mayor on the Sprinters, his orders to his men, and about the missing girl. The Mayor doesn't waste any time as he orders two of his men to gather as many people as can be spared from the town's defense, and start a street by street—building by building—search for Samantha.

Michael, Zachary, and Joe join the characters in the search. David will also assist, after leaving his sons at Eileen's place with specific orders not to leave the house. Eileen, for her part, promises to keep an eye on them and keep the doors and windows locked.

Three of the town's militia are assigned to the characters, and the group can search anywhere they want in the town. Besides a lot of frightened citizens, they also encounter the following plot-point events at certain locations:

DOCTOR'S OFFICE:

As the characters arrive at the office, they find the front door locked. The interior is darkened, which is a bad sign if any injured friends or family of the characters were still recovering. Shining a light through the front window also reveals the legs of the nurse protruding out from the doorway leading deeper into the clinic.

The characters can either shatter the front window to open the door, or make a Lockpicking roll to get inside. Once they enter the clinic, they find that the nurse has had her throat cut. Even as they stand over her, her eyes open and a low moan escapes her lips as she revives as one of the Living Dead. If there were other patients in the clinic then, seconds after the nurse recovers, another moan comes from deeper within the clinic.

The characters discover Doctor Lewis nowhere on the premises. The nurse and any patients have been murdered.

MOVIE THEATER:

If the characters decide to check the movie theater, they discover a piece of cloth on the floor, directly next to the back door that leads to the alleyway behind the building. A Healing roll will reveal that the rag is laced with Chloroform. Outside of the rag, no other clues are present.

SHERIFF STATION:

The characters find Sheriff Wilson at the station, cleaning and loading weapons for the upcoming battle against the Living Dead. As the characters enter, he greets them and tells them that he has plenty of 9mm and 12g ammunition if they need to stock up. Once the characters inform the Sheriff about Samantha's disappearance, Wilson will look up from his weapons with a stern, almost angry look on his face. If the characters have already checked the movie theater and the clinic, then Sheriff Wilson declares that enough is enough. It's one thing to use new arrivals to keep the things passive, but it's another to use an innocent child for it. Once the characters ask what he's talking about, he'll start to tell them that John and Jacob have the creatures in containment, and use new arrivals to feed them. They keep them in—

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A gunshot echoes through the room as one of the guards shoots the Sheriff in the chest. The Sheriff is propelled backward and falls into a heap in the middle of the room. The three guards then turn on the characters.

DEAL ACTION CARDS!

Once the guards are dealt with, the characters manage to get enough out of the Sheriff (before his last breath) to learn that the Living Dead are just outside of Mayville. A Common Knowledge roll will remind the characters of the warehouse and the guards posted in the parking lot.

(GM Note: The scene might have to be adjusted if the characters didn't investigate the movie theater and the clinic, first. Sheriff Wilson will not be convinced that Samantha has been taken to Mayville until both the rag and the dead bodies are discovered. If the Sheriff accompanies the characters to the other two places, adjust the location of his death accordingly.)

Just as the characters get the crucial piece of information, raised voices and rapid gunfire alerts them that the Living Dead horde has reached the town.

SCENE FOUR: ATTACK OF THE LIVING DEAD

The night is ripped open by rapid gunfire and explosions. The low moans and high shrieks of the Living Dead disembowel the quiet that had been Dalesbury just moments before. Tactical orders and screams of panic punctuate the cacophony, striking home once again the chaos and death that has encompassed the world around you.

On the far end of town, a pillar of flame launches into the air, seems to hang a moment, then falls back to Earth as the orange glow of a fire colors the darkened sky.

Even as your mind takes it all in, a group of Living Dead appears about a block ahead of you, crossing into the middle of an intersection. One of them stops, looks in your direction, and shrieks. The others immediately respond as the entire pack turns and charges in your direction.

There are 3 Sprinters per character, and they will reach the characters in the next round if the group doesn't dispatch them or retreat.

Once the characters either dispatch the Living Dead or retreat to a fortified position, they will have to decide whether they stay to defend the town, or head to Mayville and rescue Samantha.

OPTION #1 (DEFENDING THE TOWN)

If they decide to defend the town, there are over 500 Living Dead and only 200 people able to defend the town, most of which have melee weapons. Instead of running a round-by-round fight, you can use the Mass Battle rules from the SWEX to facilitate the battle.

The Living Dead have 10 tokens and Dalesbury has 4 (each Token is worth 50 troops). Dalesbury gets a +1 bonus to battle rolls due to possessing firearms. The +1 bonus is in addition to any bonuses the characters can gain for Dalesbury when they make their Fighting or Shooting rolls.

Dalesbury also receives a +1 to Morale rolls for having a semi-fortified position.

The Living Dead, however, gain a +6 to their battle rolls (since they have 6 more tokens than Dalesbury). They will receive a +2 to their Morale rolls for being fearless Living Dead.

Should the town be overrun and the characters forced to retreat, they can then attempt to make it to Mayville.

OPTION #2 (RESCUING SAMANTHA)

If the characters decide to immediately rescue Samantha, they can take one of the patrol trucks (the keys are always in them), and head off toward Mayville.

How they approach the warehouse is up to them. They can simply drive toward the place and open fire on the guards, or they can use Stealth (versus active guards) to get in. Once the characters make it into the warehouse, proceed to Act Three.

ACT THREE: IN THE CROSSHAIRS

The characters discover the secret facility that Dalesbury has been hiding, and are captured as food for the Living Dead.

SCENE ONE: TACTICAL DISADVANTAGE

The main area of the warehouse contains about a half dozen metal containers, all of them about waist high and locked. Other than that, the darkened room is bare. Ten docking doors line the walls, and a small office has been built into the right hand wall. A set of swinging, heavy rubber doors are off to the left, leading deeper into the building.

The main area of the warehouse contains about a half dozen metal containers, all of them about waist high and locked. Other than that, the darkened room is bare. Ten docking doors line the walls, and a small office has been built into the right hand wall. A set of swinging, heavy rubber doors are off to the left, leading deeper into the building.

Unless the group used the Lockpicking skill to check for hidden alarm systems, they've tripped a motion detector as they made their way into the warehouse. The guards inside ambush them, and the characters will have to make a Notice check to avoid being surprised. If the characters fired their weapons at the guards in the parking lot, then the interior guards have had a few extra moments to prepare for the intrusion and the characters receive a -2 penalty to their Notice checks. Have the characters make a Notice check as soon as they enter the warehouse, but don't use the results until after they open the containers.

The metal containers are securely locked, and will require a Lockpicking roll to get into them. If the characters manage to open the containers, all six of them contain laboratory equipment and DNA analyzers, in addition to one that contains 5 laptops—with empty spaces where 4 others were stored.

Now, anyone that made the Notice check hears an odd noise from above. They look up just as:

The room is suddenly filled with beams of light from above as you hear: "Drop your weapons! Put them down on the ground now, or we will shoot! Drop your weapons, now!"

You look upward and find over a dozen men standing on the beams high overhead, maintaining the advantage of an elevated position. Pointing down at you are just as many automatic rifles.

"I'm not going to tell you again! Drop your weapons or we will open fire!"

Deal Action Cards to the characters that made their Notice checks, since they can immediately react. Those that failed do not get to act this week.

Once the characters that weren't surprised have acted, the adventure is . . .

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

WAR OF THE DEAD

LEE F. SZCZEPANIK, JR.



CHAPTER 1: WEEK 13



WAR OF THE DEAD

Requires the Savage Worlds RPG by Pinnacle Entertainment for Use.

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War of the Dead is dedicated to George A. Romero, Tom Savini, Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, and Robert Kirkman.

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CHAPTER ONE: AND THE DEAD SHALL WALK THE EARTH (WEEK 13)

GM'S SUMMARY

No good deed goes unpunished, and no place is ever truly safe. Those words have never been more true than in relation to the main characters in War of the Dead.

After escaping from one catastrophe after another, all beginning with the characters' first encounter with the Living Dead outbreak aboard the Pinnacle cruise ship, the group has been storm tossed and battle torn every step of the way. First, they managed to survive a cruise ship full of the Living Dead, only to be stranded at sea for 2 weeks. Once they reached land, they encountered a friendly couple that provided them with food, shelter, rest, and information. Even that peace, though, was not to last as an outlaw biker gang soon rolled into the area and forced the characters to act as bait in a nearby town full of the Living Dead.

After escaping the biker gang, the characters experienced vehicle trouble and were forced to take sanctuary in a nearby church. It didn't take long for circumstances to again catch-up with the group, as not only the biker gang discovered their location, but also a new type of infected—a monstrous newborn—hunted them throughout the darkened building.

The characters managed to escape the church with the help of new allies, and arrived at the Rescue Station in Jacksonville just in time to see it overrun by thousands of Living Dead. Barely escaping with their lives, the characters were rescued from a car accident by a patrol team from a town called Dalesbury.

Taken back to the town and nursed back to health, the characters were allowed to stay within its fortified

borders as long as they contributed to the town's welfare. For some of their allies, particularly those with children, Dalesbury seemed like the perfect place to call home in a world full of the Living Dead.

The characters were on patrol when they discovered a military convoy that survived Jacksonville. Bringing the convoy back to Dalesbury proved problematic, however, as the Mayor saw the new arrivals as a threat to his plans. Fortunately, an event once again conspired to prevent a power struggle between the Mayor and the military. Unfortunately, that event was the arrival of a horde of hundreds of Living Dead.

During the chaos of the Living Dead invasion, the characters learned that Samantha—the 9-year-old daughter of one of their friends from the church—had disappeared. A search of the town revealed she had been taken to Mayville. There, Dalesbury's Mayor and his brother (the town's doctor) had established a facility wherein they maintained captured Living Dead—which they kept placated by feeding new arrivals to Dalesbury.

Rushing to Samantha's rescue, the characters were taken captive by guards within the facility.

In the final adventure of Chapter One, the characters discover a possible origin of the Living Dead virus, learn of Samantha's importance in the New World Order, and have to escape from a new type of zombie that is not only a leader to the normal Living Dead—but able to think and reason on an almost human level.

ACT ONE: REVELATIONS

The characters are captured and taken to the basement levels of the Mayville facility. Once locked into cells, they learn a possible truth about the Living Dead, as well as Samantha's immunity to the virus.

SCENE ONE: IN A BAD POSITION

Over a dozen men, armed with automatic rifles, have you covered from the overhead steel beams. It's a bad situation to be in, as they not only have a clear line of fire to the entire floor below, but can also most likely cut you down before you can get to any of the doors leading from the main loading area. The position also gives them at least some cover from the vertical beams.

Several of them continue to yell for you to put your weapons on the floor and surrender immediately, or they will open fire.

If the characters don't surrender, it's extremely likely that they—and Samantha—will die in the Mayville warehouse. Should the characters decide to open fire, the men turn off their flashlights, making it harder for the characters to hit them. The characters will suffer a total of -5 to all attack rolls (-1 for the light cover, and -4 for the pitch darkness).

Two rounds after any type of combat begins, the 4 men from the parking lot will charge in the front door (if they weren't killed prior), and 6 more armed gunmen will arrive from deeper within the warehouse. The gunmen will also use Flash-Bang grenades, which require a Vigor roll at -2 due to the darkness and sudden light. Any character that fails is effectively blinded and disoriented, and all rolls are at -6. If the character rolls a 1 on the Vigor die (regardless of Wild Die), he is Shaken as well.

Once the characters are wounded enough to give-up the fight, or surrender, they are searched for additional weapons. If any of the characters have a small weapon on them (such as a small pistol, knife, and so forth), they can attempt a Trick of Smarts vs. Smarts. On a success, the man searching the character fails to find the weapon. Have the player role-play the Trick, and describe in detail how they are distracting the search.

You are surrounded, searched, and disarmed. Gathered together into a tight group, circled by automatic weapons, you are herded through a set of heavy rubber doors and led into a corridor that goes deeper into the building. Here, the lights are dim, but it's obvious the place has electrical power. The walls appear to me made out of painted cinder block, and the dull yellow is covered with years of grime. Your footfalls echo off the concrete floor.

The characters are lead to the basement storage area, and into a room where small alcoves have been made into makeshift cells. Actual jail doors have been cemented into the concrete walls, the doors originally from the jail in Mayville.

There is one empty cell for each character, with four other cells each occupied by a woman. The women are filthy and extremely frightened.

Besides the cells, the room is completely bare and only 2" (12 feet) wide. There is a door at each end of the room.

Once the characters are locked into their cells, the men leave. The characters hear the clear sound of the door being locked.

Allow the characters a few minutes of role-playing time. They are obviously going to have to get out of the cells, and being contained individually makes that even more of a risk. The obvious plan of action is to wait until one of them is released for whatever plans the men have for them, attack, and try to get the keys to the cells. Players being a creative bunch, however, they might just as easily come up with another plan of action.

If anyone has an item on them that can be used for scraping (for example, a Swiss Army Knife, a screw-

ALTERNATE CUT: RESCUING THE FAMILY

If the characters are rescuing a child of one of their own, make sure that any character except the parent is the one released. Once that character managed to overwhelm the guards, it will provide an immediate reason to free the rest of the group before going into the laboratory—the parent will most likely demand to be there to rescue the child.

driver, or a piece of metal), the cement around the cell doors isn't the most tightly packed. They can attempt to scrape away at the cement (no roll is required), but the process will take them at least 2 hours to complete.

Talking to the women will require a Streetwise roll to get them to say anything. On a success, they reveal that they don't know how long they've been there, only that they live in Mayville. There were more of them (the others had occupied the cells that the characters are now in), but they were taken away and never came back. On a raise, they reveal that they've heard moans coming from somewhere outside the room, so they fear the creatures killed the others. The men have never said why they were being held prisoner; they just took them when the creatures first came to Mayville, had them tied-up in the basement of the warehouse, and then put them into the cells.

Once the characters have had time to talk and think of a plan, continue with the following:

You hear the scrape of metal on metal, followed by the loud click of the door being unlocked. As it swings open, two men armed with automatic rifles step into the room, followed by Doctor Lewis. He walks into the room and stops where he can see into each of your cells, and gives each of you a reproving look. He shakes his head.

"It would have been much better for you had you just left well enough alone. I'd actually thought you would be useful to the town, and had convinced my brother to spare you. Now, though, you've taken the matter out of my hands. If we let you live, our operations here would be exposed—and what we're trying to do is too important to the world for us to allow that to happen."

Based upon what the characters say to him, or what questions they ask, Doctor Lewis will reveal the following information. After all, as far as he's concerned the characters are already as good as dead, so he sees little danger in telling them the truth.

- Samantha is truly a gift, and as it turns out extremely vital to what they hope to accomplish.
- Samantha possesses as very unique ability. The truth of the matter is, she was not sick with the Flu, but was contaminated with the Infection. Her immune system,

ORIGIN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Although Doctor Lewis provides a viable story for the origins of the virus, the story he tells is not the only one the characters will hear throughout the campaign.

however, was somehow fighting the virus, and actually succeeded in beating it. The infection has been purged from her body.

- The United States has known about the Armageddon Virus for years. It was originally discovered in the Middle East during the early days of the Iraq War. At first, a couple of soldiers who had assaulted the underground laboratory were bitten by individuals used to develop the strain. They were brought back to the U.S., where they died and reanimated. What he and his colleagues did not realize, however, was that the virus was not just transmitted through bites—but was airborne as well. If bitten, that is to say transferred through bodily fluids, the virus was heavily concentrated and invaded the bloodstream rapidly. However, contracting it through airborne means caused a much longer incubation period. In actuality, it took years to mature. Unfortunately, by the time that fact was discovered, the infected soldiers had already had significant contact with the outside world. By all calculations, the virus would have been spread airborne across the world—person to person. Therefore, the government kept the virus secret, and instead decided to start working on a way to combat it. That's where he and his colleagues came in.
- Every attempt they made to find a way to help the human body combat the virus ended in failure. In every instance, the patient died and reanimated.
- About a year ago, he contacted a friend of his in counter-intelligence and informed him of the situation. The two of them set-up measures whereby he could escape his position with the government, and bring important

research data with him. They facilitated their defection, effectively disappeared, purchased this building away from prying eyes under a series of falsified companies, and set-up operations. The Doctor knew the virus would eventually activate and a pandemic would ensue, and he refused to be locked in a laboratory, under so called military protection, with his life in their hands.

- John Lewis is not his brother.
- They resided in Mayville for the past year, and when the outbreak occurred and Mayville was lost in a matter of hours, discovered that Dalesbury still had a chance. After eliminating the power structure in the town, he and John assembled a unit and assumed control.
- The world is changing, and already the government has lost most of its power and resources. His plan is to find a way to create an immunity to the virus—as curing those already turned into the creatures is impossible, they are already dead—and sell it to the highest bidder. In the New Order of things, he plans to be on top. Samantha is his express train to that goal.

Doctor Lewis won't answer any more questions or reveal anything else. He randomly points to one of the characters and tells the guards to bring him to the laboratory. It's feeding time. The creatures tend to become docile after a good feeding.

Doctor Lewis leaves the room as one of the guards takes a key chain off his belt loop.

It's now up to the character to decide how to act. If the character attacks the two guards, proceed with the remainder of this scene. If the character is instead taken to the laboratory, proceed with Act Two: Scene One, and adjust it to be just the single character.

Attacking the Guards: The guards are wary of any attack, so as soon as the character decides to make his move, deal Action Cards. Unless the character is going to allow himself to be taken to the laboratory (which contains 5 more guards), he will have to make his move either in the room with the cells, or in the corridors leading to the laboratory. The closer he gets to the laboratory, though, the more risk he runs of the other guards hearing the scuffle, particularly if any firearms are discharged. In the cell room, an Agility vs. Agility Trick can be used to push one of the guards against a cell, allowing the occupant to grab them through the

bars by making a normal Fighting roll (see Grappling in the SWEX). Any guard successfully grabbed through the bars receives a -2 to his roll to break free, due to the pressure of being restrained from behind against the cell bars.

Once the guards are taken care of, the cell doors can be opened and the characters can gather up the two automatic weapons. Use the stats for an M-16, each with a full clip.

Proceed to Act Two.

ACT TWO: MASS DESTRUCTION

The characters manage to escape from the Mayville laboratory, but not without a price. The Living Dead have been freed, and the town of Dalesbury is overrun by the horde of Living Dead. The characters are the lone survivors, and they must once again flee into a war-torn world.

SCENE ONE: THE MADNESS OF SCIENCE

Depending upon whether or not the character attacked the guards before entering the laboratory, use the appropriate beginning.

The group has been freed: If the group has been freed, the four women will make their own way out of the warehouse. Meanwhile, the characters can proceed toward the laboratory with caution. There are no guards on the outside of the place, as they are all inside to make sure nothing goes wrong while the Doctor is working. The characters are able to get up to the doors and glance inside. Read the following:

As you glance through the small panes set high in the metal doors, it's obvious that the not-so-good Doctor and his associates have been building the place for sometime. Computer banks are set-up along a table against the right hand wall. In the middle of the room is an operating table, a tray of needles, scalpels, and other medical equipment standing next to it. Strapped securely to the table is Samantha. Doctor Lewis stands over her, having just taken another sample of her blood. Four guards are spaced around the room. Through the glass in a metal door on the far side of the room, you see the rotted face of one of the Living Dead peering out.

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As you watch and get a feel for the room, a guard steps into view. In his hand, being held by its hair, is the head of a Living Dead. It appears to have once been female, but patches of skin and its right eye are now missing. The jaws open and close as the guard walks over to hand the head to Doctor Lewis. The Doctor takes the thing and moves it closer to Samantha's arm. The child strains against her bonds, obviously in a panic.

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marked by a missing right eye and patches of skin that rotted from its face. From the far side of the room, another Living Dead face peers through a pane of glass set within a metal door.

The guard hands the head to Doctor Lewis.

"Thank you," he says to the guard, and then looks up at you. "Looks like you've arrived just in time. The creatures in the containment bay are growing agitated, so we need to feed them. First, though, I want you to see this. You see, as I said—Samantha is extremely unique in that her body successfully fought off the airborne infection. Now, we need to see if it can do the same with a concentrated infection. In other words, a bite. If her immune system can defeat this type of infection, then we might very well be in business as far as achieving our goals.

"If not..."

In total, there are now 7 guards in the room: the 5 with the Doctor, and the 2 that brought the character into the laboratory. If the character is going to save Samantha, he will have to act quickly.

THE LABORATORY:

Whether the group is together, or one of the characters is acting alone, they get an automatic surprise round against the guards. The guards are so fascinated by watching what is about to happen to Samantha, that they've failed to stay alert to what else is happening around them.

Once the characters have acted, deal Action Cards normally.

How the characters defeat the guards is up to them but, during the battle, one of them presses a button on the wall and opens the door that contains the Living Dead. A total of 18 zombies (2 Infected Newborns, 6 Sprinters, and 10 Shamblers) pour into the room. Almost immediately, something strange happens. Read the following:

As the metal door swings outward, the Living Dead surge forth. At first, the creatures seem intent on attacking you as well as Doctor Lewis and his guards, until one of them—who appears to have once been a man in his early 20's, now with his chest ripped open—grunts at them. The zombies pause, and he grunts again. This time, they move almost as one, ignoring you and attacking the guards and Doctor Lewis.

Have anyone looking through the glass on the doors make a Stealth check against inactive guards. Anyone that fails is noticed by one of the guards, and he immediately alerts the other 4 men. Deal Action Cards and proceed with combat as outlined in: The Laboratory.

Only a single character has been freed: The character is lead to the laboratory. As he and the guards enter, read the following variation of the above narrative:

You're taken to a wide room that smells sickly of disinfectant and death. Along the wall to your right is a table with a series of computers. In the center of the room is an operating table and equipment tray. Samantha is strapped to the table, her eyes full of stark fear, as Doctor Lewis finishes taking a blood sample from her. Four guards stand spaced amid the room. A fifth guard, his rifle slung over his shoulder, walks over with a Living Dead head in his hands. The head was once female, but is now

OPEN



If the characters stop and are confused, the lead zombie (a Shambler) looks at them, grunts, and points toward the door. If they don't move, he moans long and low, and continues to point.

The Living Dead are ignoring the characters and Samantha as they converge on the remaining guards. The lead zombie will also direct them to make sure Doctor Lewis does not escape, and the Living Dead will attack him in numbers to bring him down.

The characters are free to make it out of the facility with Samantha. If the scene was played out with only a single character, he can grab the keys from one of the guards and release the other prisoners. Since the laboratory scene has already been played-out, the 4 women will stay with the characters as they all make their escape.

Escaping from the warehouse: On their way out, the characters are still going to have to battle through the additional guards. There are 3 per character in total. Feel free to space them out and run the scene with tension, using the ambient darkness and cover. From deeper within the warehouse, the characters can also hear the screams and gunfire from other guards as the Living Dead have their revenge.

SCENE TWO: DALESBURY-NO MORE!

Once the characters escape from the warehouse, they can either use their own vehicle, or the one used by the guards that were outside the building, to get back to Dalesbury.

Dalesbury is a war zone, and a lot of the town is in flames. The Living Dead have completely overrun the place. Allow the characters to do what they can to try to save their allies, a couple of which they see a few blocks away getting surrounded by Sprinters. Unfortunately, little they do will have much effect with their limited weapons and ammunition, except gain the attention of the Living Dead and send them in their own direction.

Run the scene emphasizing the sheer brutality of the Living Dead attack. Run the combat as long as is necessary to show the futility of trying to save the town, as the characters watch the Living Dead attack citizens, military personnel, and even their own allies. Despite the characters' best efforts, their allies from the church are all killed by the Living Dead.

In the end, it should be obvious that the characters are alone with Samantha.

ACT THREE: A FORK IN THE ROAD

The characters are forced to flee Dalesbury with Samantha, and must determine where to go next. They have in their possession what could very well be a key in the War of the Dead, but unless they can get to Colorado, it could all amount to nothing.

SCENE ONE: INTO THE NIGHT

Once the characters flee Dalesbury in whatever vehicles they choose to take, read the following:

Dalesbury burns behind you as the Living Dead turn the town into a massive graveyard. The sheer number of the creatures loose upon the world has made it painfully obvious that unless something is done, humanity will soon become an extinct species. Nearly everyone you've met so far—maybe even the family you left behind when you first went on the cruise—have all become creatures hell-bent on devouring humanity and increasing their numbers. The military is in shambles, the government has been forced to flee, and every-day more and more of the Living Dead inhabit the Earth.

Only one thing might stand in the way of humanity's end: Samantha. Somehow, the child possesses immunity to what Doctor Lewis called the "Armageddon Virus". The future of the world might very well exist within the body of a 9-year-old child.

The question is: what are you going to do?

TO BE CONTINUED IN CHAPTER TWO

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO . . .

The characters might be wondering whatever happened to the Ghost Riders after the gang escaped the Living Dead assault on the church. The gang managed to escape, though they again lost some members. Hell has led the gang out of North Carolina and toward the west. The next time the characters encounter the gang, Hell will have established a secure base of operations where he rules as a king of sorts, and his large band of marauders assault other towns and survivors. Encountering Hell and his people will give the characters their first taste of the survivor kingdoms that will dominate the World of Dead campaign setting.

Jason Kirkman will make an appearance in a later chapter. That's right, the head of cruise ship security is not entirely out of the picture just yet. Having been turned into one of the Living Dead, Jason managed to become a General and eventually made it back to land when the Pinnacle ran aground. After assembling the other Living Dead—including Captain Romero and Ms. Hartten—the horde has migrated slowly across the U.S. and will once again encounter the characters.

As far as Dalesbury, John Lewis managed to survive the assault and learned from the warehouse security cameras of the part the characters played in the destruction of his plans. He'll lead a personal vendetta to see that the characters suffer, before he tries to kill them.

Chapter Two also picks-up 1 month after the conclusion of Chapter One.

