

HOLLYWORLD™

Acting...it's not just a job, it's an Adventure...

The phone rings. It's Bernie, my agent. "Hey baby, got you some work! Remember that script I showed you?" Bernie never shows me scripts, and he knows it. "Yeah...of course I do. Which one?"

"Action adventure," he says, "you're the brother of the famous police detective, and the Mafia wants to send him a message. It starts with you in a cafe, reading the morning paper..." I interrupt him. "I **am** in a cafe, reading the morning paper."

"Hey, life's full of coincidences. Anyway, you look up from your paper to see a black limo turn the corner, the window rolls down and bammo! Bullets everywhere! Gotta go! Thank me later! Ciao, baby." The line goes dead.

I look up from the paper. A black limo is turning the corner...

What is Hollyworld?

Hollyworld is a fast and cheap little role-playing game of "Hollywood reality", where the world *really* does act like it does in the movies.

This *isn't* like **The Last Action Hero** (fun movie, by the way), where people live in a movie reality and *don't* realize it. In **Hollyworld**, everyone is either an actor or a consumer, consumers being out-of-work actors. So, I guess *everyone* is actors. Except maybe cameramen. But who knows what *they* do in their spare time?

Everyone wants to be rich, everyone wants to be famous, and everyone has a subtlety to their motivations that would do a six-year old proud. And since everyone is only capable of detecting this amount of subtlety, things work out just fine.

Anyway, all the stuff that happens in the movies now happens in real life, and people have different parts to play. The studios run everything, and anything and everything can be caught on film. Why? That's just the way it is (see **The Laws of Nature**). Crimes are still committed, so you still need cops. It's just that *everyone* is trying to look good and get that lucky break, and will take whatever work presents itself, so one week you may be a cop, the next week a creep. Wierd stuff happens. Evil villains like to plot mayhem, so you still need heroes. The bad guys know that they usually won't win, but they can always get a chance to knock off a few annoying good guys, and if their defeat is entertaining enough, they'll make enough on merchandising and comic books to rebuild their supposedly impenetrable fortress, hire some new goons and still have a tidy bit for retirement and that *next* plot to take over the world...

How you play

Live fast, die young, leave a beautiful corpse. **Hollyworld** is a role-playing game, but you knew that when you bought it. Because everything in **Hollyworld** has an air of glamour to it, you don't play characters, you have **Actors**. Likewise, the gamemaster isn't the gamemaster, they're the **Producer**.

Things have been the way they are for as long as anyone can remember. But since people in **Hollyworld** have notoriously short memories sometimes, this could be anywhere from two weeks to two hundred years. You don't know, and to be honest, you don't care.

*It's more important to look good than to feel good. And darling, you **look** marvelous.*



You're looking for work, *any* work. The higher the profile, the better. If someone needs a nuclear scientist, you can *be* a nuclear scientist. If someone needs a *real* nuclear scientist, you can be a *real* nuclear scientist. Got it? Even the *real* nuclear scientists are probably faking it. Hey, who is there in Hollyworld to find them out?

Dateline - August 7, 1999

Movie attendance figures for the past weekend dropped sharply. Top media analysts blame the declining figures on "changing demographics".

In unrelated news, scientists have expressed alarm at the recent disappearance of nearly six billion of Earth's inhabitants.

We'll have an in-depth look at those movie figures at 11, along with other important industry news...

Just remember that *reality is flexible*, and so is the **Plot**. **Actors** are *expected* to contribute to a **Plot** in unforeseen ways. **Producers** are *expected* to go along with it, and if successful, pretend it was their idea all along...

Characters

You're all Actors, because that's the way things are. You only wait tables in your spare time... Your agent, who is *always* looking out for your best interests, is hard at work finding you good roles. He's so busy in fact, that he might not have time to tell you about them until they actually begin shooting...figuratively and literally.

More on that later. For now, it's time to make up an **Actor**. Make a copy of the character sheet. See that line below "Name"? All Actors will have a **Distinguishing Characteristic**. Roll 2d6 and see what type of Actor you are:



Roll Result

- 2 **Ex-child star** - Since you hit puberty, even your agent doesn't recognize you. You must use a Connection for your agent to get his usual 1d6 bonus, and may not use a Connection to give him an additional d6. You get +1d6 in skills, but you are doomed to obscurity and bit parts.
- 3 **Ex-comic** - From stand-up to stardom. *You wish*. You can only Act Goofy. You get a free starting level of +1d6 in Act Goofy, but -1d6 in Act Smart and -1d6 in Act Tough.
- 4 **Typecast** - You had that one moderately famous role, and no one has ever let you forget it. Those long-running television shows will kill you every time. Pick one skill that no one would ever believe you can do, even if you can. You can *never* get that skill above a level of +1d6. Just scratch off the higher numbers, you'll never need them.
- 5 **Bad accent** - You come from some distant suburb of Hollywood, like say Austria or Belgium or Australia. You get an automatic skill of +1d6 in Act Goofy, but -1 Fame.
- 6 **In the closet** - We don't know which closet it is. Maybe you're secretly a Republican. Everyone *knows* (wink, wink), but they don't *know*. Anytime your agent is looking for a booking and rolls a 6, roll another d6. If this die result is odd (like you), add it. If even (like normal people), subtract it.
- 7 **Voice** - You got da' pipes and know how to use 'em. But, nobody's making musicals anymore, so go back to making soundtracks and voice-overs for cartoons. No game effect.
- 8 **Famous family** - Mom & pop were successful actors. You've got their money and fame, but only half of their talent. Start with a Fame of 1 and +1 Connection, but 5 points of starting attributes instead of 7.
- 9 **Not beautiful** - You aren't beautiful people, and all the cosmetic surgery and teeth whitening in the world isn't going to fix it. Get +1d6 in skills, but start with a Fame of -1.
- 10 **British** - Sort of a cross between Bad accent and bad teeth. Half the people don't understand your humor, so any time you Act Goofy, if the total is even, the roll automatically fails. If odd, it works normally.
- 11 **Ex-wrestler** - All your talents you learned in the WWWF. You can never have an Act Smart or Fight Smart skill of more than +1d6, but you get an automatic skill of +1d6 in Act Goofy and +1d6 in Fight Goofy.
- 12 **Ex-porn star** - Kiss o'death for a serious acting career. It costs your character double the Connections spent to get a 1d6 bonus on your agent's chances of getting you a good booking. Forever. But, you get an automatic skill of +1d6 in Act Goofy as a consolation prize.

This covers about 99% of all possible actors, so unless you are a Shakespeare-spouting dwarf, you're all set. Given your character background, now figure out who and what you are. Determine whether you are male or female, and use appropriately outlandish adjectives to fill in the blanks. For instance, you're not a "redhead", you're a "fiery auburn". Your hair isn't "long", it's "flowing tresses". And so on, *ad nauseam*.

The "favorite cliché", etc. is all fluff with no game effect. But, if you can work something from here on down into a Scene and make it look good, the Producer should give you an extra Connection for the effort. Straining it or repeating yourself too often is a no-no (how often can you say "I'll be back" before it gets lame?).

Spend a pointless hour surfing the net looking for a picture of someone famous to paste in the illustration spot. Then move on to what little meat there is on the bones of character creation.

Attributes & Skills

When it comes down to basics, all Actors (and by extension, everyone in **Hollyworld**) has only two attributes: **Style**, and **Substance**. You get 7 points to split between the two, and both have to be at least 1. And just so you know, the total of the two can *never* exceed 10, no matter how experienced you ever get. You also have **Fame**, which normally starts at 0, and **Connections**, which normally starts at 1 (just to prime the pump). They're described later. The rules aren't that long, you can wait.

If you do something with **Style**, it is flashy and cool and the audience loves it, but the effects are transitory or illusionary. If you do it with **Substance**, it is "deep" and "serious". It "sends a message" or "makes people think". It often makes producers think they may need a different actor. The effects are lasting. Your agent has **Style**, your plumber has **Substance**.

You also get 3d6 to allot between the different skills. *No, don't roll 3d6*. You get total skills of 3d6, like +1d6 **Act Goofy** and +2d6 **Fight Smart**. Unless your Distinguishing Characteristic says so, you can't take negative skills, and you can't get negative skills to give you extra d6's to put elsewhere.

There are six skills needed to describe anyone and everyone in Hollywood or **Hollyworld**. It isn't rocket science, so don't spend too much time on it.

Skills	What it is	Who has it
Act tough	Make a stand and be willing for fight for it.	Clint Eastwood Gillian Anderson
Act smart	Do the intelligent thing given the circumstances.	Sean Connery Claudia Christian
Act goofy	Get all mushy or emotional to extremes, any emotion, any extreme.	Robin Williams Glenn Close
Fight tough	Flex muscles, use blunt or pointy objects.	A. Schwarzenegger Lucy Lawless
Fight smart	Use guns and bombs and stuff.	Chun Yow Fat Sylvester Stallone
Fight goofy	Make people wonder what the hell you are doing, but still hurt them.	Jackie Chan Hulk Hogan

Sample character

Name:	<i>Jean Claude van Darne</i>		
Distinguishing Characteristic:	Bad Accent		
Style	3	Substance	4
Connections	1	Fame	-1
Act Tough	1d6	Fight Tough	0d6
Act Smart	0d6	Fight Smart	0d6
Act Goofy	1d6	Fight Goofy	2d6

There. Was that hard? Remember to give yourself 1 Connection to start the campaign with and we'll move on to how to use these numbers.

Skills & Such

To succeed at a skill, you roll the dice you have in that skill and add your **Style** or **Substance**, whichever is being used in the Scene. If the total beats a certain number, you succeed. Ties are ties. No one wins. If you are rolling something *against* another person, they use the same skill and attribute you did. So, if you want to intimidate someone, you **Act Tough**, and so do they. Loser backs down. Otherwise, the Producer rolls dice as indicated below. If you have 0d6 you add nothing, using only your base Style or Substance. If you have -1d6 in a skill, well, *you suck*, and lose 1d6 off your base Style or Substance.

Roll Difficulty

1d6	Easy. Get it right or turn in your Screen Actors Guild card.
2d6	Average. Make your agent proud.
3d6	Hard. You don't have to be <i>Master Thespian</i> , but it helps.
4d6	Impossible. The critics are waiting in the wings with their sharp, sharp knives.

That said, there's a handful of special modifiers to cover combat, life, the universe and everything.

Modifiers

+1d6 **Synergy.** Do something cool with the appropriate **Act** skill during a fight, or doing a *hard* (3d6) **Fight** check while you act. Delivering a good **Act Tough** line as you clobber someone is worth a +1d6 bonus on your **Fight Tough** roll, for instance. Parting someone's hair with a thrown knife is worth +1d6 as you deliver your **Act Tough** lines. Your opponent always gets a chance to respond with a snappy comeback (or catch the knife), which can cancel this bonus.

-1d6 **Cool special effect.** Do something hard with a **Fight** skill, like a called shot to shoot a gun out of someone's hand, or toss a grenade so it goes through a car window, or spread your remaining dice to hit a bunch of Extras (one per die).

-2d6 **Spectacular special effect.** Do something *really* hard with a **Fight** skill, like shooting the light switch to plunge the room into darkness, or clobber a guard so he staggers back, falls over the railing and crashes through the windshield of an arriving car full of reinforcements.

+1d6 **Get out of the way.** You get a bonus to avoid anyone else who is rolling a specific **Fight** skill against you, like trying to shoot you *or* trying to spit you *or* use wierd Bruce Lee moves on you.

+2d6 **Fiendishly clever.** If you use an **Act** or **Fight** skill in such a cool way that people's jaws hang open, you get a +2d6 bonus.

-1d6 **Something got in the way.** Trying to do two things at once (run and shoot, for instance). Or any other situational modifier that makes it harder for you, like long range, obstacles, etc.

-2d6 **You're an idiot.** You're being stupid and the Producer needs an excuse to smack you.

Fight, Fight, Fight!

Fights are handled in turns. Everyone acts. Repeat as needed until fight is over. Maps? *Hah!* Describe the venue in one word, the specifics in a short sentence. *Airport. You're sitting in the departure lounge.* Turns are however long they need to be, typically at least several punches or a clip's worth of ammo per turn of action.

Who goes first in a turn is based on who has the highest Style or Substance, whichever is used in that Scene. People with higher Style or Substance are faster on the draw and off the mark. Ties are at the same time. Whoever's turn it is can act, or wait. You get to *actively* use one skill per turn. So, say you want to shoot someone and have a **Fight Smart** of +2d6 and a **Style** of 3. That gives you a roll of 2d6+3 to hit, and they roll their **Style + Fight Smart** to *avoid* being hit. If you want to shoot the gun out of someone's hand, you roll 1d6+3. If you want to get out of the way of people shooting at *you*, you have a total of 3d6+3.

You can do as many *passive* things in a turn as your available dice, splitting them up as you wish, *adding your Style or Substance to each time you roll*. So, the *Masked Master Swordsman* with a Style of 6 can use his +3d6 Fight Tough vs. *Doomed Character Actor* for 3d6+6. He can also use his +3d6 Fight Tough and +2d6 worth of pointy thing to block attacks, like rolling 1d6+6 vs. five *Worthless Extras*, making it impossible for them to hit him with their measely 1d6+1 rolls.

Oops!

Anytime you roll 2d6 or more and they all come up the same is an "Oops!". The *worst* possible thing happens. *How bad* this is depends on how vicious the Producer is, how *high* the roll is, and the more dice you used, the worse it gets. Guns run out of ammo or you shoot a friend. You slip and fall on your own knife or the grenade rolls uphill, opens a locked door and ends up back at your feet. *Oops!* results happen to bad guys too, so the Producer *should* make all rolls where the Actors can see them.

Hurt me, baby!

All weapons have a damage rating. This is the number of d6 they *add* to your **Fight Tough** or **Fight Smart** rolls. You can use *any* weapon with **Fight Goofy**, but the damage is only flesh wounds and can't hurt or kill someone after they've been knocked out.

Weapons	Damage
Big honkin' knife	+1d6 Fight Tough
Large pointy thing	+2d6 Fight Tough
Furniture	+2d6 Fight Goofy
Pistol	+1d6 Fight Smart
Submachinegun or shotgun	+2d6 Fight Smart
Rifle	+3d6 Fight Smart
Stuff that goes 'Boom!'	+0d6+3d6 Fight Smart*
Rockets and other stuff	+1d6+a lot Fight Smart*
Body armor	-1d6 to opponent's roll

Stuff that goes 'Boom!' *doesn't* give you extra dice to hit with, but if you *do* hit, roll 3d6 to get extra damage, with no more than one point of damage allotted per foe.

Carrying things

You can carry or wear as many useful items as the lower of your *current Style* or **Substance**. You can keep items that would weigh you down because you took damage, but you have to drop some stuff if you want to move fast.

Unless you lost it earlier in the Plot or Scene and haven't replaced it yet (like *Oops!*, I ran out of ammo!), assume you *always* have the normal tools of whatever trade you're in. Exceptionally wierd stuff requires Connections.

Damage

Damage is real simple. If someone succeeds in an *active* Fight skill roll that could possibly hurt someone, for every '6' they roll, they do one point of damage. This damage is either to Style or Substance, *whichever the Scene is based on*. Taking damage to your Style or Substance *does* affect your dice rolls on that attribute. For things that do a *lot* of damage, just roll all the d6's you can lay your hands on (within reason).

At any time *before* your Style or Substance goes to zero, you may elect to fall down and be incapacitated until the end of the Scene. Bad guys and monsters will usually ignore you unless they are capturing or eating you later. Your buddies wake you up if they win, or the bad guys drag you off to their infernal dungeons if you lose. If your Style or Substance goes to zero, you *do* fall down unconscious, whether you like it or not. Any subsequent damage goes down the track until it hits the end of your Style or Substance (whichever is left). When the last box is crossed off, you're dead. Finito. Written permanently out of the Plot called Life and given a more rectangular one with an epitaph at one end.

Example - You have a Style of 5 and a Substance of 2. In a Substance Scene, you could take 2 points of damage before falling down. In a Style Scene, you could take 5. In both cases you could take 8 points before dying (because of that nifty '0' box in the middle of the track).

You get a to make a parting monologue at the end of the fight before you do expire (**Laws of Plot, #1**). If the Producer is feeling kind, *Heroic Measures* can be invoked. This saves the Actor's life at some risk of Plot complications. However, it also permanently crosses out two boxes on *both* ends of the Style/Substance track, limiting your potential maximums (you would have a track that went from 5 to 5 instead of 7 to 7).

Vehicles

Vehicles just have Style/Substance, about 2 for cycles, 4 for cars, and 6 for trucks, which *adds* to your skill rolls if you're the driver. If the vehicle takes half damage, it starts to smoke. If it goes to zero, it catches fire and blows up in 1d6 rounds (instantly for extras). Armored vehicles are the same, but subtract 1d6 from any attacker's Fight rolls.

Recovery

How fast you recover damage is based on your billing. Supporting cast recovers 1 point of damage between **Scenes**. Minor stars recover 2 points, and major stars recover all but 1 point of damage.

On with the Show!

Now that we've wasted four perfectly good pages on game mechanics, let's get on with how to run and play **Hollyworld**.

Hollyworld is meant for action and drama. You want character development? *Go buy another game.* First things first. Finish reading the rules. Second, make sure all the players read the rules (*except the adventures!*). Then, go see an action movie together. At this point, the **Hollyworld** *gestalt* will kick in, you will immediately recognize the global truths contained herein, and you'll understand a) Life, b) the Universe and as a subset of b), c) the rest of these rules.

Hollyworld is run by the **Producer**, who is a fancy-assed, all-powerful variant of the typical gamemaster. **Actors** are the characters, who wanted a fancier title to put on their resumés. Adventures are **Plots**, and bits of **Plots** are **Scenes**. Why? Because calling things by their real names would be too mundane.

The first thing you do is have each **Actor** roll for their agent. This is a roll of their Style, plus 1d6. If they have any Connections, they can use a Connection to add a maximum of another 1d6 to the roll, or use Fame to modify one or more of the dice after it is rolled. Starting Actors probably have neither Fame nor spare Connections.

Total Result

<3	Has-been. Lose a point of Fame and roll again.
3-6	Supporting cast
7-11	Minor Star
12-16	Major Star
17+	Major Star, top billing

How an **Actor** is billed in the **Plot** determines how they can do certain things, and what kinds of things can happen to them. For instance, we've already mentioned that Major Stars recover damage faster between **Scenes**. There are other benefits (and pitfalls) as well.

Antagonists (or as we call them, *Baddies*) will be Supporting Cast, Minor Stars or Major Stars. The Producer will need a short list of Baddies and their place in the Plot. There should be at least one Baddie of Major Star status, and any number of Supporting Cast status or better. Supporting Cast have 4 points in attributes and +1d6 of skills. Minor Stars have 6 points in Attributes and +2d6 of skills, and Major Stars have at least 8 points in attributes and +4d6 of skills. Monsters, critters, robots, etc. go in the same progression, even if they don't get star billing.

The Plot

The **Plot** is what the whole shebang is supposed to be, and can always be summed up in a sentence, preferably a short one. For many action movies, you really only need one word, which is just inserted into the following sentence: "Defeat the evil _____."

Star Wars - Defeat the evil emperor
Conan the Barbarian - Defeat the evil sorcerer
Die Hard - Defeat the evil terrorists
Independence Day - Defeat the evil aliens
Dracula - Defeat the evil vampire
 etc.

Actors do not necessarily know what the **Plot** is to begin with, but they should have a pretty good idea by the end of the first **Scene**.

Scenes

Plots are made of **Scenes**. Any given **Plot** should have six **Scenes**, in roughly the following order:

-
- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Introduction | 4. Some character building stuff |
| 2. Plot development | 5. Plot development or false climax |
| 3. Middle Climax | 6. Final Climax and resolution |
-

I trust we won't have to explain each of these... The way it works is the Producer sets a goal in mind for the Scene, like "*Scene 3: Find out the terrorist's plans*". The Producer doesn't *have* to tell you what the goal is, but given the audience has the average IQ of moldy turnips, it shouldn't be too hard to figure out. For instance, *Rescue the Princess*, *Defuse the Bomb*, or *Infiltrate the Impenetrable Fortress of Doom and Defeat the Evil Overlord by Using Only a Pez Dispenser* are valid Scene objectives.

The Producer then determines whether the Scene is based on **Style** or **Substance**. *All* skill rolls made in that Scene are based on that attribute. The goal of the Actors is not only to meet the goal of the Scene, but to collect points doing so. A group of Actors gets 1 *Good Point* each time they make a die roll that includes a '6' or does something that materially improves the Plot. Roll 4d6 and get three sixes? Counts as *one* Good Point. The Actors successfully complete the Scene if they meet the goal *and* collect 6 Good Points between them. If they get six "Oops!" results between them, or complete the Scene without getting enough Good Points, the Scene "fails". It may advance the Plot, but isn't dramatic enough. *Yes, Scene-padding is a valid tactic.* "Let's split up so we can cover more ground..." Actors should use every possible opportunity to demonstrate their talents, and the Producer should let them run with it so long as it sounds good.

Connections

Connections are what you use when life isn't going your way. You can use **Connections** in a number of ways.

1. A **Connection** can be used to add 2d6 to any roll, *before* you make it. The utility is obvious.

The undead maniac rose from the puddle of gore, still clutching the bloody meat cleaver. I only had one shell left in the shotgun. Better make it count.

2. A **Connection** can be spent to turn the near-impossible into just the highly unlikely. Try not to repeat coincidences...

The suicide bomber's blast hurled Fritz from the hotel roof. It was ten stories down. It was sheer luck that he landed in the pool...

3. A **Connection** can be spent to give you a one-shot, completely improbable gadget that is somehow in character for your **Actor**, to allow them to get past a particularly sticky complication in their lives. You can't ever use the same gizmo twice, though. And the **Producer** has final say.

Little did Doctor Dubious know that I had a high-powered cutting laser built into my bridgework. I would be free of these welded-on manacles in no time.

Connections can be used in favor of *any* Actor, as long as the Actor spending the Connection is in the same part of the Scene and can work themselves into the use of the Connection.

Supporting Cast can use 1 Connection per *Plot*. Minor Stars can use 1 Connection per *Scene*, and Major Stars can use 1 Connection per *die roll*. Cool, right? *But, when you use'em, you lose'em*. Connections spent are gone forever. Since Connections are *also* the experience points you use to improve your Actor, bear this in mind.

Supporting Cast Baddies usually have no Connections. Minor Stars have 1 Connection, and Major Stars have 2 or more. Ditto for monsters. Monsters (and *only* Monsters) can use 1 Connection to recover 2 points of damage.

Fame

It's not that famous people *expect* the world to act according to their wishes. For famous people, the world *does* act according to their wishes. **Fame** is a sort of improved version of **Connections**. For each point of Fame you have, *once per game session* you can pick any one die *after* it has been rolled, and flip it to whatever number you want. So, if you have 2 points of Fame, you could change one die twice in a game session, or two dice on the same roll once in a game session. Fame is *not* lost when you use it. We'll leave the best way to use this up to you.

The trick is, you can only use Fame on rolls made *by* you or *against* you, and if someone else has Fame used *against* them, they *can* counter with any Fame of their own. Baddies who are Major Stars (e.g. the head Baddie) have a Fame of 1 or 2. Fame can't go below -1 or above 2.

But what if I've got a Fame of -1, you ask? Well, you poor sorry sod. This means that once per game session the Producer gets to mess with any roll made by you or against you, just to turn your pathetic little victories into dust and ashes. *Bwahahahaha.....*

Extras

Extras are expendable scenery that exists only to provide momentary distractions for the Actors. They are immediately distinguishable from supporting cast, minor and major stars. Extras have a **Style** and **Substance** of 1, and no matter what skill they use or what gizmo they have, they *never* get more than 1d6 to add (making *all* their combat rolls 1d6+1). If they take *any* damage, they fall down. Happily, Extras *automatically* take one point of damage from *any* successful Fight roll used against them. Extras also automatically take one point of damage from anything that goes "boom!", and are also hurled several meters in a random direction while they (choose one): a) flip and flail, b) scream horribly, or c) catch fire.

Foreshadowing

Between Scenes, the Producer should go into narrative mode and describe things that the Actors couldn't possibly know about, in just enough detail to give them an idea of what is coming up...

In a lavishly furnished conference room at the top of the tallest skyscraper in the great city, Doctor Dubious and his trusted lieutenants finished their secret meeting.

"Our plans approach completion. Nothing must stand in our way! See to it that all security precautions are doubled. Now go!"

His minions filed out, each clutching a datatape of details and timetables. Doctor Dubious motioned to one person, who held back. Mister Mayhem glided silently to the side of his mentor in evil. "Yes, Great One?"

"Mister Mayhem, I have a special task in mind for you. Listen carefully..."

The foreshadowing should give an idea of what the next Scene is going to entail, and some idea of what the possible goals might be if you're not going to tell the Actors outright.



The Big Payoff

Eventually, the Plot will be complete. The last Scene will have the final confrontation, horribly dramatic resolution and some picking up of pieces afterward. When the Plot is done, figure how many *successful* Scenes there were. You get 1d6 for each successful Scene, and roll them all on the following table:

Roll	Plot result	Connections
1-6	Miserable flop	-4
7-12	Plain old flop	-2
13-18	Marginal success	0
19-24	Minor hit	1
25-30	Major hit	2
31-36	Blockbuster!	4

Connections is how many that *each* Actor gets for their performance in the Plot. In addition, *individual* Actors may get or lose Connections based on special circumstances:

Circumstance	Connections
There for the whole plot	+1
Survived an action plot	+1
Died, but with style*	+4
Majority of scenes a success	+1
Minor Star power	+1/-1
Major Star power	+2/-2
Brown-nose points for amusing the Producer	+2

“Star power” means that flops are worse *for you*, but major hits and blockbusters are better *for you*. No one cares about supporting cast. Amusing the Producer is anything they want it to be. For instance, using more trendy clichés than the other Actors, bribes of drinks, pizza or favors to be claimed later, etc.

Yes, you can use Fame on the roll for the Plot's success, but only if the Producer lets *you* roll the dice...

If your Actor *actually* dies, they get 4 Connections to use for the remainder of the Plot to help out any Actor who manages to use the deceased in their lines when needed, like “*This one's for little Timmy, you bastard!*”. An absolutely *perfect* example is in **Conan the Barbarian**, when a dead character saves Conan's life (even if Conan *didn't* invoke her name...). It's dramatic, it's cool, and you're dead and have nothing better to do anyway...

Experience

Connections *are* your experience points in **Hollyworld**, and can only be spent to improve an Actor *between* Plots. Spending Connections equal to the *next highest* value of Style or Substance level can increase it by 1 (e.g. going from Style 3 to Style 4 is 4 Connections). Improving a skill is 5 Connections per point of increase. Fame costs 10 Connections to go up one level, but you can't have a Fame of 2 until your Style and Substance add up to 10.

If a disaster of a Plot makes you *lose* Connections and you don't have them, you lose a point of Fame and get 10 Connections as change. The Connections you would lose come out of these.

“Her? Yeah, she used to be hot stuff, but she hitched her wagon to too many turkeys and now all she gets is cameos and guest slots on sitcoms. Could be worse, she could've married Ted Turner.”

You can never have more than 10 Connections saved up at any time. Surplus is lost if you don't spend it *immediately*. Hey, if this means after improving your Actor that you're all tapped out and the Producer can have his way with you, gosh, what a coincidence.

The Laws of Nature

Okay, so it's a simple, funny game. What else does it have going for it? What sets it apart from the rest? Phase One of the answer to that question is the **Laws of Nature**. These are things that *just are*. *Things are different now*. This makes evil powers, mutants, monsters, magic, weird technology and the like as common as necessary for any Plot, and no one really gives it a second thought. If the fact the six billion people are missing hasn't made a serious impression on Hollyworld, a few altered laws of nature aren't even going to make a ripple.

Both the Producer and the Actors can (and should) use the **Laws of Nature** whenever needed to annoy the other. As they are incontrovertible facts, there is no point in arguing about them. The only caveat is that *they won't work if you take them for granted*. For instance, if you're scrambling about on top of a speeding train and someone strafes you from a helicopter, you damn well better dodge. But if you *do* dodge, they can't hit you.

Memorize the Laws of Nature. Then, when you go to the movies you can look sagely at your friends and say, “*Yep. Laws of Plot, #12.*”. And they'll look back and wonder why you devoted your obviously limited brain space to this kind of trivia...

The Laws of Combat:

1. Damaged vehicles (especially flying ones) that go behind hills or buildings will explode.
2. Obstacles will automatically remove half your pursuers.
3. Anything you hide behind in a warehouse has an equal chance of being explosive, flammable or completely impenetrable by weapons.
4. The door is always weaker than the lock.
5. Bombs always have highly visible timers or detonators.
6. Stars can't be killed by an explosion if they are running away from it at the time.
7. Guns should be audibly cocked sometime in the scene before they are fired.
8. Any open flames and flammable objects will invariably meet during combat.
9. If it takes enough damage, anything becomes inherently explosive. Computers, grass huts, guards, stone castles, you name it.
10. Major stars *in* small vehicles or *on* large ones cannot be hit by weapons fire.
11. Star-triggered booby-traps go off one round after making an audible 'click!'
12. Pistols that run out of ammo must be thrown at someone, but will never have any effect.

The Laws of Character:

1. Small-town sheriffs? Incompetent, fat, bigoted. Pick two.
2. Thugs? Big, dumb, ugly. Pick two.
3. Prostitutes? Kind, cynical, junkie. Pick two.
4. Strippers? Kind, dumb, blonde. Pick two.
5. Role-players? Young, deluded, outcast. Pick three.
6. Private detectives? Kind, cynical, alcoholic. Pick two.
7. Bikers? Ugly, tough, mean. Pick two.
8. Elderly mentors? Kind, hyper-competent, doomed. Pick at least two.
9. Guards? Mean, gullible, lazy. Pick at least two.
10. Children? Endangered, well-meaning, destructive. Pick one.
11. Assassins? Cold-blooded, mercenary, noble. Pick two.
12. Soldiers? Gung-ho, wisecracking, philosophical. Pick one.
13. Punks? Obnoxious, drunk, lecherous. Pick two.
14. Teenagers? Horny, rebellious, smart-ass. Pick at least one.

The Laws of Plot:

1. There is *always* time to say something dramatic.
2. If it looks too good to be true, it is, but you have to fall for it anyway.
3. The cute animal always survives, somehow.
4. The cute animal is also a destructive pest.
5. Children and cute animals *must* be rescued.
6. Somehow, the big drug or weapons deal involving characters always goes sour.
7. If it isn't the last scene, the monster isn't dead yet.
8. Crowds are fickle.
9. Virtually any disguise will fool an extra (attributed to William Shakespeare).
10. Executions of stars are always done on a known timetable, with much fanfare or drama.
11. Villains gloat.
12. It is possible to fall from *any* elevated position.
13. If you're a star, *everything* has handholds.
14. The fancier the uniforms, the shoddier the troops.
15. Invulnerability isn't.
16. Monsters escape.
17. Your cover will eventually be blown.
18. All computers are compatible with each other.
19. Lethal poisons and fatal diseases only really slow you down in the last few hours.
20. If the scene has a bed or hot tub, you have to use it.
21. When the evil sorcerer dies, the palace crumbles.
22. Underlings are an expendable means of making a point.
23. Ventilation ducts are always big enough for *someone* (but not necessarily *everyone*) to crawl through.
24. *Nothing* is idiot-proof. See Law #4.
25. There is always a clue of some sort lying around.
26. Going *through* things is usually faster than going *around* them.
27. An extra is required to demonstrate how the monster or superweapon works.
28. Monsters somehow know how to get where you're going *before* you do.
29. Surprises go well with dinner.
30. Enemies cooperate, if the alternative is mutual annihilation.
31. Timing is everything.

The Hidden Masters

Phase Two is *the Hidden Masters*. **Hollyworld** only *appears* to be run by the Moguls and Producers. Could it be that there are groups of little known but powerful people who have more on their agendas than fame, wealth and complete domination of their fellow man? *Nahhh*. They just go about it by different routes. You don't believe us? They're already out there. Just look for them...

The **Producer** can roll 1d6 if they need a complication to be introduced at the start of any Plot.

Roll Result

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Flaming Stuntmen's Guild |
| 2 | Utero-Commandoes |
| 3 | ISFWA |
| 4 | Ex-Nazi's |
| 5 | The Lust Brigade |
| 6 | Product Placers |
| * | The Name |

Flaming Stuntman's Guild

Dedicated solely to setting things on fire and watching them burn. This little known group holds revealing and career-busting info on just about everyone. No action drama can unfold without at least a Scene that contains flaming and flailing bodies. At least one Scene must have sufficient Actor-generated pyrotechnics or the Actors lose a *completed* Scene from their total.

Utero-Commandos

Ultra PC feminazis who manage to influence the Plot. No male Actor can be sensitive or caring enough. Any male who treats *any* female with less than the utmost courtesy and respect loses a Connection, with a maximum of 1 Connection lost per Scene. However, managing to make it through an entire Plot without incurring their wrath is worth +2 Connections at the end.

Idiot SF Writers Association (ISFWA)

Third cousins of the Mogul's extended families who were promised jobs in the industry, either to get nagging mother-in-laws off their backs, or because they were too drunk to realize what they were doing. No science fiction can happen without some gagging aberration oozing into it, courtesy of one of these inbred cretins. Actors with a Substance of more than 5 will lose 1d6 on any "Act smart" rolls because of trying not to gag on corny dialog ("Let's use the ship's hyperwarp core to alter the local bogosity coefficient...").

Ex-Nazis

Either really old holdouts, third-generation losers or someone who just really likes the uniforms. They're always up to something, which typically only makes sense to themselves. At least one Scene will involve a Substance-based conflict with thugs and characters have to figure out the ex-Nazi's implausible motives for the Scene to succeed.

The Lust Brigade

The ancient enemies of the Utero-Commandoes, dedicated to mutually satisfying ugly-bumping. Any Actor or Actress who can't find a way to get boinked *as part of the Plot* loses a Connection.

Product Placers

Merchandising gnomes who slip several name brand items into crucial parts of the Plot. All sponsors are known to the Actors at the start of the Plot. The first Actor to use a product in a *favorable* way gets a Connection. Just using it in its intended way isn't enough, it has to be exotic and/or glamorous. Using it in a vile and reprehensible way is worth 2 Connections, but only if the Plot turns out to be a Major Hit.

The Name

The Name is *the* hot property, *the* top star. And you've been honored by the privilege of acting in their presence. And if it means your hand-sorted bowl of all-green M&M's has to wait while someone fetches their double-decaf Kona latte with a cinnamon stick, that's just too damn bad. The Name can show up in *any* Plot in which no Actors are Major Stars, and can be on their side, or be a Baddie (the head Baddie, *of course*). Everyone but The Name has a Fame of 1 point less for the duration of the Plot (Fame can't go below -1). The Name, of course, has a Fame of 2 and 4 Connections.

Other Fun Things to Do

Take the list of **Laws of Nature**, **Hidden Masters** and **Bit Players**. Rent a movie (or two) with friends. Whoever can spot the most Laws, Hidden Masters and Bit Players wins. Bonus points go to anyone who can make the correct call well before it happens. Go out to eat afterwards and cackle to yourselves, making the other patrons nervous. Everyone else chips in to pay the winner's tab for the night.

Bit players

Last are the **Bit Players**. These are some of the **Hidden Master** wannabes. The Producer is left to figure out their effects on the Plot as they wish, but in general we suggest a +1/-1 Connection maximum per Plot per Actor.

1. The Profanity Police
2. Anti-Smoker's Anti-Defamation League
3. Mammary Liberation Front (no visible means of support, or "How can you tell she's cold?")
4. Breakaway Furniture Maker's Union
5. The Has-Beens Rehabilitation Association
6. Wrecking Balls, Ltd. (a division of Destructive Construction Equipment, Inc.)
7. Dobermans R'Us (aka Vicious Animals Unlimited)
8. Plate Glass Life and Casualty Insurance Co.
9. The Association of Long Lost Friends and Relatives Who You Really Shouldn't Get Too Fond Of
10. Pointless Bimbos, Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Baywatch Group)
11. United Street Vendors Grievance Committee
12. The Foundation for the Advancement of Obscure Minorities

Short Plots

Sometimes you just don't have the time or imagination to come up with a good, six-Scene Plot. Don't worry, the affliction is common in Hollywood. Put together a two-Scene Plot and make it a continuing drama that Actors can come back to for recurring roles. The Connections aren't as good, but there's quick turnaround. Get 2d6 for each completed Scene and add 6 to the total. The Actor's role is a measure of their importance in *that* week's Plot. Some sample continuing dramas...

Monrose Place	Sleep with, betray and kill as many people you know as possible.
Verdant Acres	Big city snobbery meets small town bigotry.
South Park Central	Cops and lawyers who hate each other, and the other people who hate them too.
Father Knows Best	And he just got paroled without you being notified...
This Old Asylum	Refurbishing old loony bins and dealing with their quaintly twisted occupants.
Typecast Comics	I've got a schtick, let's run it into the ground.
I'm Special	I've got a funky ability, and you don't.
On the Run	We don't quite remember if we're running <i>from</i> something, or <i>to</i> something, but it gives us an excuse to change the scenery each week.
Hired Killers	We go after someone new every week... but they always deserve it.

Movie Guide

The following is a semi-randomly selected list of movies, along with the **Laws of Nature** demonstrated in them, **Hidden Master** apparent involvement and **Bit Players** making an appearance (*Yes, we watched all of these just to make the list...*). Laws of Plot #1 and #31 *always* apply.

Movie	Laws of Combat	Plot	Char.	Hidd. Master	Bit Player
Aliens	7	5,7,16,23	10,12	-	-
Armageddon	5,6,9	13	4	3	-
Blade Runner	-	13,19,22,25	8,11	-	2,8
Conan	8	9,11,16,22	9	5	3,7,10
Dune	-	10,11,14,22	-	3	12
Flash Gordon	5	10,11,14,20	9	3	10,12
Godzilla	6	7,16,23,27	12	6	-
Goldeneye	2,3,5,7,9,10	10,11,12,20,26	-	-	8
Independ. Day	2,6,10	9,15,16,18	12	3	2,8
Jurassic Park	-	5,7,16,27	10	-	-
Kelly's Heroes	4,7,9	17,26	12	-	-
Ladyhawke	-	5,9,12,22	9,10	-	-
Mimic	4,6	5,7,12,27	10	-	1
Road Warrior	2,8,9	12,26	10,13	1	10
Robin Hood	-	5,8,9,11,12,17,22	9,10	1	7,8
Running Man	8,9	8,12	-	-	-
Scream	-	20	14	-	1,3,8
Terminator	4,6,7	7,20	13	1,5	8
The Killer	7,10	5,6,12,22,30	10,11	-	4,8
Under Siege	6,8,9	11,12,13,29	4,9	1	10

Sample Scripts

Following are some *thoroughly* contrived scripts, fraught with danger and dramatic possibilities. Mangle them in whatever way you need to in order to have a good time...



Credits (at the end, of course...)

Design: ©1998 by Greg Porter (btrc@btrc.net)
 Published by: BTRC (<http://www.btrc.net/index.html>)
 Extras: Cathy DeMott, Bret Jones, Phil McGregor, Jasper Merendino, Kreela Moore

All movies and personalities mentioned in this game are likely trademarked and copyrighted by their respective soulless conglomerates, and our mention of them is purely for parody and satire. So there.
 All Rights Reserved, yadda, yadda, yadda

The **Laws of Nature** and **Movie Guide** may be updated with sufficient audience input, especially well-known movies that beat the current cliché winners (12), **Robin Hood** and **Goldeneye**. Anyone who feels like contributing scripts to be made available on the **BTRC** web site is welcome to do so.

Arkansas Jim and the Fortress of Evil

Script by: Greg Porter

Possible Actors: Arkansas Jim, gun-toting ethnologist
 Abu A'ur, clever Bedouin guide
 Countess Delia Smythe, bright young heiress
 James, chauffeur of many talents
 Hollings Baston, lovable arms (but not armor) merchant

Baddies: The Horde of Evil (Extras)
 Horde Captain #1 (Supporting Cast)
 Horde Captain #2 (Minor Star)
 Ghuido the Assassin (Minor Star)
 Henri Blancmange (Supporting Cast)
 The Master (Major Star)
 The Pit Fiend (Minor Monster)

Hidden Master: Flaming Stuntmen's Guild
Bit Player: Anti-Smokers Anti-Defamation League

Plot: **Defeat the evil sorcerer**

Scene 1 (Style) - Introduction

The Master gazed into the scrying pool, pink with swirls of freshly shed blood. In the water, the image of a delicate hand cradling a magnificent fiery ruby set in platinum filigree. The Master made a slicing motion and the image vanished. A tattoo shaped remarkably like the jewelry pulsed on his withered cheek. "Bring it to me", he rasped. "And the infidel who possesses it as well..."

Setting: Downtown. A crowded bazaar.
 The Countess is bargain-hunting, escorted by a package-laded James, when she is set upon by numerous (say a dozen) sword-wielding Extras intent on abducting her and eliminating anyone who tries to stop them. Arkansas Jim is busy nearby with a clipboard and recorder, beginning a crypto-lingual study of native dialects, assisted by trusty Abu, while Hollings Baston is giving candy and bullets to needy street urchins.

Objective: Avoid capture of the Countess. Among the Extra casualties, try to find a Clue.

Complications: Lots of bystanders, including of course, the needy street urchins (Plot Law #4). An *Oops!* result with a gun would be especially bad.

Scene 2 (Substance) - Plot development

The messenger, panting and out of breath, prostrated himself before the throne. "The Horde has failed, your Excellency!". "Rise.", the Master said. "You have traveled swiftly to bring me this bad news. Carry this message with equal swiftness..."

Setting: Wherever the Actors choose to meet.
 The Actors need to discuss the Clue, while the Countess fondles the elegant ruby around her neck and muses about the strange way in which she came to possess it. They are interrupted by the arrival of the arch-plagiarist Henri Blancmange, who looks greedily at the Countess, but even more greedily at Arkansas Jim's bulging...notecase. "There is no cultural paradigm you can discover that I cannot publish first!" he says before stalking out.

Objective: Come up with some suitably odd history for the ruby so the Producer doesn't have to. Engage in witty repartee with Blancmange.

Complications: None.

Scene 3 (Substance) - Middle Climax

The Master swirled his fingers through the blood of the messenger who had brought him the bad news. That man's replacement stood before him, trembling. "Send for Ghuido," the man on the throne said quietly, "I have need of his services."

Setting: Hotel. The floor the Actors are staying on.
 Ghuido will make an assassination attempt on one of the Actors while they sleep. If he fails (likely), he will be backed up by half a dozen Horde Extras with swords and another Horde Captain. Henri Blancmange will make an appearance during the fray and try to steal Arkansas Jim's research notes. At some point afterwards, the Countess and one other Actor will find themselves alone (Plot Law #20).

Objective: Avoid theft of the ruby and Jim's notes, and possibly the Countess.

Scene 4 (Style) - Character building stuff

Setting: The same hotel. New rooms.
 The Home for Wayward Urchins is found deserted. Hollings Baston receives a note saying that if he ever wishes to see any of these little criminals again, he will acquire and bring the ruby to an isolated, desolate spot that is nonetheless not all that far outside of town. If he does so, he and the urchins will be free to go (Plot Laws #2,5).

Objective: Scenery-chewing righteous indignation (Act Goofy), finding suitable Extras to escort the Actors and be cannon fodder.

Complications: None

Scene 5 (Style) - False Climax

"They approach? Good. Assemble the acolytes..."

Setting: Wilderness. A secret Temple complex.
 The Actors either approach openly (to deal) or in secret (to sneak in). If the latter, the temple is laced with horribly dramatic traps in the 2d6 Difficulty range. Numerous Plot Laws will likely kick in, including 9,11,12, and 17. The urchins are trapped in a large cage over a larger, smelly pit in the center of the temple. Gurgling, hissing noises rise from below, and Horde Extras are in charge of the crank that raises and lowers the cage of whimpering children. They appear to be offering, hostage...or both.

Objective: Defeat all the Baddies, rescue the urchins.

Complications: Urchins over a pit, held by substandard rope and unfriendly Extras. Possibly Plot Law #21.

Scene 6 (Substance) - Final Climax

Setting: Same as Scene 5
It was hungry. It smelled the delicious fear of the morsels above. Then they were suddenly taken away. Outrage! Hunger. Climb into the despicable light and take the tasty morsels back to its safe, dark lair...

The crane holding the cage of urchins is swung away from the central pit. A lone Extra, apparently just stunned, scrabbles for The Master's gun, and raises it to fire. But something rises up from the pit, grabs him with a huge clawed tentacle, and drags him screaming over the edge (Plot Law #27). Then the monstrous bulk of the Pit Fiend emerges. It has armor, so it's really tough to hurt, but it is slow and not all that bright (+2d6 Fight Tough and that's about it). It is, however, blocking the only exit and has 1 point of Fame and a couple Connections to use. Meanwhile, the freed urchins are being useless, and can't seem to do anything without an Actor to shepherd them.

Objective: Kill the Pit Fiend and escape with the urchins.

Complications: The Pit Fiend.

Deep Blue Something

Script by: Greg Porter

Possible Actors: Pheem Wimbish, computer whiz
Molly Montagna, bimbo with a hidden past
Bert Bactrian, ex-commando night watchman
Will Billiams, stowaway brat
Doomed extras (quantity as required)

Baddies: Undead Atlanteans (Extras)
Undead Atlantean Warriors (Minor Monster)
Thieves #1 & 2 (Extras)
Thieves #3 & 4 (Supporting Cast)
Thief #5 (Minor Star)
Thief Leader (Major Star)

Hidden Master: Product Placers

Bit Player: Plate Glass Life and Casualty

Plot: Escape the undead, defeat the evil intruders

Scene 1 (Substance) - Introduction

Deep Blue, the world's first offshore, underwater gambling complex is two weeks away from its grand opening. The construction crews have all gone home. The only people on board are a handful of support staff. Somewhere out at sea, a band of determined and ruthless men plans to board the near-deserted complex. Little did anyone know that Deep Blue was built over an ancient Atlantean burial ground...

Setting: Underwater. A deserted casino.

A muffled explosion, pressure alarms sound. Bert finds key security monitors have gone dead and sends an extra down to report on the damage. He doesn't return. Little Will finds the auxiliary airlock he has been living in has sprung a leak. He tries to stop it, but something with rotting fingers is widening the crack from *outside*. He runs, and runs into another Actor (Plot Law #5). Other Actors see that "something" is going on, and respond appropriately.

Objective: Act smart, discover that something is up, engage in clever but probably pointless opening counter-measures, try to escape capture.

Complications: You have no idea what the intruder's objectives are.

Scene 2 (Style) - Plot development

Having taken over the command center and sealed the airlocks, the intruders set about their task. One of them opens a watertight case, removes a portable computer and plugs it into the main system. He hits a key and Deep Blue shudders slightly. Meanwhile, the scent of something dead and fishy is becoming stronger.

Setting: Wherever the Actors choose to meet.

A quick check of the escape pods shows they have all been locked, from the central command console, no doubt. Pheem could unlock them, if only he had access to that console. Meanwhile, *something* keeps swimming by the observation window, and scratching noises abound on the outer hull. Meanwhile, the characters' every action is monitored by the casino's security cameras and the intruders are no doubt closing in...

Objective: Come up with some gear and goods. Encounter some undead (Plot Law #27). Throw a temporary setback into the intruder's plans.

Complications: Gotta do something about those cameras....

Scene 3 (Style) - Middle Climax

"I've got them, sir. They're in Corridor 4, headed for Sector 2A. Motion sensors are picking up something else. I can't identify it, and it's not showing on the cameras..."

Setting: Casino. The main gambling floor.
Someone has a plan by now, and the tools they need to implement it are in the main casino. Amid flashing lights, bells and bad elevator music...a confrontation. More fishy undead, maybe even some competent ones (Plot Law #28). Violence and underwater observation windows don't go well together. The undead are so repulsive that it doesn't even seem right to let *them* kill the intruders (Plot Law #30). Short circuits, seawater, escape, a tearing crash. Isn't that the intruder's submersible drifting off by itself...and down into a deep underwater chasm...

Objective: Don't get separated from the group or killed.
Minimize damage by *any* means necessary.

Complications: None

Scene 4 (Style) - Character building stuff

The gurgling noises are a constant companion. Deep Blue has been holed somehow, and the overrides on the computer have affected safety measures. Wherever the water is coming from, everyone knows the ventilation shafts will soon be filled with more than air. The lights flicker, go out, then come back on, dimmer than before. Everyone thinks about what might have been, had they lived to see the sun again...

Setting: Someplace. Damp and dimly lit.
With their submersible gone, the intruders will have to reactivate the escape pods to get away, but the flimsy pods are no match for the undead lurking outside. Facing imminent death by any number of horrible means, the Actors reach deep into their thespian reserves and...

Objective: Everyone must reveal a suitably deep, dark secret, and at least one of them must help generate a useful escape plan.

Complications: None

Scene 5 (Style) - False Climax

Just when you thought things were looking up...

Setting: Somewhere. With stuff the Actors need.
One of the ventilation grilles is dripping seawater, but that is nothing new. Someone wipes off a splash, and it is red and slimy. Suddenly, the grille bursts open, dropping a badly disemboweled intruder on top of whoever has the lowest Style. He is followed by half a dozen undead, and the first person to make to a corridor finds another handful there.

Objective: Defeat the undead, get away with the stuff you need for the escape plan.

Complications: The Undead seem to have a hankering for Little Will's brains...

Scene 6 (Substance) - Final Climax

Setting: Security. Somewhere near the control room.
Gasping for breath, soaked to the skin, they made their way back to safety. "Boss, we gotta get out of here!" "Not until those pesky staffers get here". "You gonna let 'em go?" "Nope. Just need me some bait..."

A plan comes together. Two plans, actually. Three, if "slay the defilers of our sacred place and eat their brains" can be considered a plan. The lights go out one last time. Only emergency lights and power remain...

Objective: Lure all the undead to a central spot, and trap or destroy them. Activate escape pods and...escape.

Complications: Something about intruders with guns...

Halloween of the Evil Dead II

Script by: Greg Porter

Possible Actors: Dr. Ilsa Thorne, curvaceous occult researcher
Stu, taciturn janitor with a mean mop
Joe Grunge, student and sometime guitarist
Bill Hicks, townie and hot-rodder
Ulysses Stone, stressed-out homeless Civil War veteran vampire (NPC Minor Monster)
Doomed student extras (quantity as required)
Hopefully not doomed kid brother extra (Kenny)

Baddies: Lots of undead (Extras)
Some elite Undead (Minor Monsters)
Colonel Case Jefferson (Minor Star)
Doomed soldier extras (as required)
P'adkin, Lord of Evil (Major Monster)
Thief Leader (Major Star)

Hidden Master: Ex-Nazis (Scene 5 or 6)
Bit Player: Mammary Liberation Front
Plot: Defeat the evil sorcerer

Scene 1 (Substance) - Introduction

*At the close of **Halloween of the Evil Dead I**, the teenage mutant high school zombies had their humanity restored (except for the decapitated and chainsawed ones, of course), and life in sleepy Gehennaville had returned to normal. How could anyone possibly suspect that drums of toxic psychic waste were being secretly buried by the US government under the ruins of the old pagan temple in town square...*

Setting: Evening. A small campus in a small town.
A classroom in the Parapsychology department. Dr. Thorne is conducting a Halloween lab session. Annoyed that half the students are wearing costumes, and not even sure all of them are students. Stu is in the hallway, and Kenny is lurking outside the window hoping to see what is going on. All the occult experiments are working well. Working *too* well.

Objective: Overact. Make up and conduct a few "psychic" experiments. Adhere to stereotypes. Someone has to form a bond with a doomed extra so they can guilt trip later when the extra meets their doom.

Complications: None

Scene 2 (Substance) - Plot development

Meanwhile, a "soda" truck is driving into town, when the driver sees something in the road ahead. He swerves, and his truck jackknifes, careening into the power substation, exploding (of course). The whole town is plunged into darkness. A tiny transponder in the truck stops transmitting. Someone notices, and makes a phone call. Then another. Something entirely different oozes from the drums and flows into the town cemetery. Among the things that stir and awaken, two move with much more intelligence and purpose than the rest...

Setting: Same as Scene 1, but darker.
The lights go out, replaced by the dim flicker of unmaintained emergency lights. Fortunately, this lab is stocked with candles. Someone notices the glow coming from the south side of town and decides to investigate. Danger. A confrontation. Rescue assisted by some homeless dude in a Civil War uniform.

Objective: Recognize what's going on, beat up a few undead, discover the awakening of the evil Lord P'adkin.

Complications: All power and phone lines are dead for the duration.

Scene 3 (Style) - Middle Climax

"You know the drill. Seal off the town, detain everyone, deny everything..."

Setting: Downtown. Anywhere convenient.
The dead are walking, and the Actors may even have one on their side. The Army has arrived and has sealed off the town. Patrols pick up anyone caught on the streets, and house to house searches are beginning. Last, an ancient evil known as Lord P'adkin is loose, and by nature is up to no good. The walking dead are fairly peaceful... for now, but they seem to be shambling towards the town square for some reason.

Objective: Avoid capture by the Army for as long as possible, but eventually *some* Actors get caught because the plot demands it.

Complications: None

Scene 4 (Style) - Character building stuff

*Somewhere, not far underground, a cloaked figure stands before an ancient altar and chants. A black ichor swirls on the floor, seemingly of its own volition. Tendrils of malice and menace, invisible to **mortal** eyes, drift upward, seeking the easily manipulated, the easily led. Bring me blood, blood and souls...*

Setting: Campus. A dimly lit auditorium.
With the population detained "for their own safety", cleanup crews start herding the walking dead to portable incinerators. But then the cleanup crews stop reporting in. Some of the guards are getting a far-off look in their eyes, and even the Colonel is starting to act strange (Plot Law #11). Ulysses can see it happening, and can tell who is still unaffected.

Objective: Find a way to get an audience with Col. Case Jefferson. Make an escape plan that doesn't involve killing anyone.

Complications: Impending subversion of the weak-minded.

Scene 5 (Substance) - False Climax

"New orders...yes, new orders. All the townspeople are to be assembled in the main square." "But sir, is that wise?" "Orders...yes, I give the orders. Don't contradict me again, soldier." "Of course, sir. Yes, sir!"

Setting: Same as Scene 4.
Something is definitely going on, but no one in charge is saying much. The rumble of heavy trucks headed downtown can be heard, and soon the armed guards begin herding people outside. Somewhere in the distance, you hear sirens. No, not sirens. *Screams*. Someone runs. A zombified guard cocks his rifle and aims...

Objective: Overpower guards and get downtown. Or vice versa.

Complications: They have guns. You don't.

Scene 6 (Substance) - Final Climax

Setting: Downtown. Near town square.
"It would have worked, if it weren't for those damn meddling kids! Sigh. I guess instead of consuming their souls, I'll just have to settle for eating their livers..."

Just when you thought it was over, a transmogrified Lord P'adkin bursts forth from beneath the park gazebo, and boy is he is one ugly spud. Any Extras in possession of their wits will try to flee, but the park is surrounded by no longer peaceful walking dead. P'adkin will engage in single combat with whoever has been most annoying to this point. He draws strength from the undead. One falls each time he would take damage, but *he* is unaffected so long as *any* remain on their feet (Plot Law #15).

Objective: Figure out how, then defeat Lord P'adkin.

Complications: Ulysses Stone has to die for this to happen.