



L o n e l y W o r l d
a story-telling game at the end of everything

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LONELY WORLD

A story-telling game of survivalist horror at
the end of everything

by Taylor White

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WHAT ' S GONE AND WHAT ' S LEFT

The End of Everything: Everyone in the world is dead except you and some strangers you met. Or maybe they aren't strangers. Maybe they're your friends, lovers, or enemies. But you need each other to survive because there's something terrible out there. And it's coming for you.

The Invader: The Invader caused the End of Everything. This is their world now. A world populated almost entirely by them. They run the streets, they control everything. What they do with it is entirely up to them, and you have no chance of stopping it.

The Invaders could be anything. Do you like zombies? Martians? Robots? Barbarian hordes? It's up to you and your group. Lonely World isn't just a zombie-apocalypse game or an alien-attacks game or a robot-war game. The Invader is whatever you want it to be.

The Survivors: You are a survivor. You lasted through the End and the time that followed, watching humanity's numbers dwindle to nothing from behind a window. However you made it doesn't matter now; that's in the past. The world before is like a dream you can't remember and the world now is a nightmare that never ends.

The Signal: That's what you call what remains of the grand information infrastructure that once connected the world. All of the collective knowledge of mankind was out there in the ether, and all you needed was a device that could touch it. The signal is still broadcasting from somewhere, maybe a lot of somewheres. And you can still get to it, to answer your questions and dull your pains, provided you have the tools.

The Lonely Struggle: All you have is a small band of people just like you: survivors, alone in a world that doesn't belong to them anymore. But unlike the billions who have perished, you will last. You can find what you need to keep going. You can create hope and love in this world. You will have a reason to live.

When you meet the Invader, you kill them. Simple as that. They are the enemy. They threaten your life and the lives of your friends. Kill them and run and never look back.

WHAT IS LONELY WORLD?

Lonely World is a role-playing game (RPG). RPGs are games that run a sequential storyline through the imaginations of the people taking part in it. The gaming group comes together to weave a story by building relationships and resolving conflicts, all done within the framework of the story itself. The telling of the story is done improvisational, with the members of the gaming group bouncing bits and pieces off of each other and presenting them to the group as a whole.

In a gaming group, you have players, and you have the **Master of Ceremonies (MC)**, sometimes also referred to as a Game Master or Dungeon Master. The size of a gaming group can vary from just two to ten or twenty and beyond. Between four and eight is more typical, as this provides the most opportunities for each member of the group to contribute. Time is limited and valuable for gaming groups, so it is always best to divvy it up fairly.

The **players** take on the role of a character who is living in Lonely World and trying to stay that way. The character is recorded on a sheet, referred to as a playbook or here, a Survival Guide. The sheet lists all of the mechanical information needed to run the character, and all the ways the character can interact with the world around him. The Survival Guide is a good way to keep track of the character's progress, but the character can only come alive through the imagination and empathy of the player running him and the gaming group.

The MC has a lot of different roles: the facilitator of the gaming group, the director of the fiction, the arbitrator of the game rules, the voices of the Non-Player Characters (NPCs), and the translator of the Invader.

Lonely World is survivalist horror. Try to imagine the day when you knew it was all going down. What they were talking about on the news; at first it seemed like bullshit. You went on like normal: going to work or school, doing the laundry, getting the car worked on, trying to squeeze in some time to devote to your hobbies, passions, and social circles, or maybe just lazing the day away in content idleness. As the days went on, they talked about it more and more. Every day, it was on the news. Front page in the paper. Internet couldn't shut up about it. Every day, new stories, new pictures, new first-hand accounts. At first from across the world, then in isolated cases in some major cities here at home. And every day it got closer and closer to you.

One day, it wasn't on the internet or in the news, it was on your street. It was climbing in your windows. It was breaking down your doors. The pictures were of you and your family. The accounts were your own. And whether you fought or fled, there was always more of *them*. The ones everyone was blaming. The ones who started it. The *Invader*.

The Invader didn't stop when they burned down your home. They didn't stop when they killed and ate your neighbors right on the freshly-mowed lawn. They didn't stop after dragging the whole block from their homes and murdering them in the streets. They didn't stop because of the screaming wives, the shouting men, the sobbing children, the barking pets. They didn't stop when the gun nuts showed up and tried to fight back. They didn't stop when they were bombed by the army. They didn't stop because of tanks and planes and ships. They didn't stop when nuclear fire reduced the great cities to ashes. They didn't stop when humanity fought to the last man. They didn't stop. They didn't stop. They didn't stop.

Historically, civilizations have risen to greatness one at a time, the people inside of them living out their lives to the best of their abilities. And one by one, these civilizations fell to invaders. They may have been conquered by superior foreign powers outright, or maybe they were weakened first by plagues, famines, economic depression, revolutions, cataclysms, and so on. In the end, the result was the same. The old civilization toppled and was replaced by the new one.

Lonely World picks up at the tail end of our own civilization; the one you and I live in every day. The way of life we had been accustomed to is gone forever. Our species is threatened with extinction. The Invader hit us too fast, with overwhelming force and reach, and proved to be unbeatable. By this point, the Invader has won. If there was a war, it is over. The great culling of mankind is nearly complete.

So what is left to fight for? Why go on? Truth is, the Invader couldn't get everyone. They got *nearly* everyone, but humans are still around. Running, hiding, striking back when they can. The Invader has the numbers, but they are not as clever as humans are. They can be outwitted. The Invader is slow;

they can be outrun. The Invader is bumbling; clumsy and heavy-handed. Their methods are sloppy and crude. Humans, by comparison, are crafty and swift.

Then, there is the signal. Before the end of everything, a grand sprawling network covered the globe, reaching out to even the most remote of places. All of mankind's collected knowledge and digital social apparatus hovered in the ether all around. And you could connect to it with a just a phone or small computer. It was all out there, and all you had to do was touch it. The signal remains, though it is weak and spotty. It lets you stay in contact with each other, and it proves that although there may not be another living person for a hundred miles, you are not alone. The Invader ignores the signal. They don't need it, don't want it, and can't use it anyway. But with the right devices and a bit of fortune, you can have access to all the information you'll ever need to survive.

Possibly, mankind's greatest asset is itself. See, the Invader is unconscious of its greater self. The Invader has no sense of community. The Invader does what it does because it is what it is. It doesn't grow, or learn, or adapt. People do. People can rely on each other. They form friendships, partnerships, and families. People are not perfect, and their ambitions and insecurities will get in the way sometimes, but by and large what holds them together is trust, faith, and love. Because of that, they can survive and thrive in this lonely world.

HOW AND WHY

How: You sit around a table and create a fiction with your friends. Or strangers; but hopefully you'll become friends. The MC spends most of his time asking questions of the characters and responding to their answers. He might have a vague idea of what is around the characters and what awaits them in the future, but there is no plan. The MC does not send the characters on an adventure and then toss obstacles at them according to their abilities. The obstacles are there regardless, and it's up to the characters to transcend them.

The characters are free to go where they want: they can explore the Invader-ravaged ruins or flee to rumored safe havens, or even try to carve their own slice of the world with blood and bullets. It is best if the characters stick together and work towards a common goal of safety and serenity. Going off on their own or splitting the group will make it that much easier for the Invader to roll over them.

Working towards a consensus can be a difficult thing when personalities and personal ambitions clash. Not everyone wants the same thing out of the world, and everyone has their own view on which is the truest path. Violence, terror, and scarcity are everyday deals. Starvation, infection, and the ever-present Invader constantly nip at their heels.

Characters must overcome their own petty squabbling and sanctimonious convictions, as well as their physical shortcomings and the needles of doubt and fear. There are many dangers in this lonely world, and not enough people to pick and choose your little tribes anymore. The people you have now are the only ones you can really expect to find. It is up to the characters to make it work for the sake of their lives.

The MC, and the game rules, will tell the characters what they find in the world and what shadows are casting down on them. There is no need for the MC to plan a campaign; the game group decides together where they go and what they do.

Most actions of consequence in the game are done with moves. Moves are tools for the characters. If you want to use a move, just say so. There is no need to fall into an initiative-based rotation. There is no need for turn-taking. Make your move and roll the dice. The move itself will explain what happens next in the fiction depending on the result of the die roll. The MC will fit the result into the circumstances, blending the mechanical with the fictional until the lines blur and the rules disappear behind the story.

Gameplay in *Lonely World* is action-oriented. You make moves that will create action of some kind. Whatever the characters do, there should be action, or drama, or some kind of horror. If they don't create it, it needs to come to them. Conflict drives the fiction, and moves tell the story. If you want to do something, then do it. Don't just talk about it, or speculate, do it. Do it and tell us about it. Give us the gory details. Make it exciting to hear about.

Don't just shoot at the *Invader*, run along the side of the bus to get close, and come out in full view and yell "*DIE, MOTHERFUCKERS!*" And then you spray them down with your assault rifle, starting with the assholes with the rayguns and then emptying the rest of the clip into the crowd. Leave everyone at the table going "*yeah? yeah?! and then what happens?!*". That's when the move is rolled. You roll two six-side die, add in whatever stat it says to add, and then compare that result with what the move says. In this case, the MC follows up by saying "okay, it sounds like you're **committing a violence**. You know there's like thirty grey men there, don't you?"

Committing a violence is in bold because it is the name of the move. It's good to read the moves in a narrative statement like that. Some character's actions are dictated without implied moves, so the MC should suggest a move to the player. Using the example above, the player looks at the options for the **commit a violence** move and reconsiders his action. Maybe he feels the risks are too great and this move could put him in a bad situation real fast. Maybe instead he decides he'll *sneak alongside the bus, and poke his head out first*. The MC responds with "okay, cool. so you're **scoping it out**, yeah?". The player agrees, though it's always fine to reconsider again. *Lonely World* is deadly enough; there's no reason to push anyone into a move they don't want.

So then you would **roll+brain**. It simply means you roll two six-sided die and add your brain stat. Whatever you get is the result of the move. Read the move, and do what it says. A result of 10+ is the best, and produces the best rewards. It moves the story in your favor. A result of 7-9 is still good for you, fundamentally, but it's either a lesser effect or needs some kind of sacrifice. A result of 6- is a miss. On a miss, very bad things happen. Or very good things fail to happen. Either way it will be interesting. The fiction will not be kind to you. The story will keep going, of course, and your part in it will be felt all across it, no matter if things go well for you. Your successes and your failures all have effects on the story. You will reach into the lives of every living person you find; even your very existence is a presence, an intrusion into their lives.

Back in our example, compare the results with the move's description. On a 10 and above, you get to ask three questions from the list. So you go ahead and do that, the MC answers your questions. On a 7, 8, or 9, you get to ask two. So the story continues. Maybe you could follow it up with a **commit a violence** move, or maybe you want to run from where you are up the fire escape for a better vantage point. So you would be **putting your back into it**. Or any other move you possess that makes sense. If you get a 6 or below, you've missed the move. It's out of your hands now. The MC follows up your miss with a hard move of his own.

Missing a roll is bad news. These results are never good for characters, and they frequently drag others into the fucked-up situations they create. In the example above, the MC would tell you about something you didn't see, maybe now, but instead he may hold onto the answer. The move creates a bit of fiction that only the MC knows about. It's up to the MC, the story up until now, and the move's description to determine what it is. So after missing the roll, the MC says that you poke out and take a look at the Grey Men, and tells you that there's about thirty of them, and they're marching down the street, like maybe they're combing the area for survivors. Then the MC delivers the bad news as a part of the roll you missed. What you didn't see was the guy coming around the corner of the bus and finding you there. The MC considers making a straight **deal harm as needed** move (to blast you with a raygun), but since this it was a Grey Man that just caught you napping, he **listens to the Invader** instead. The Invader **snatches you up**. What that means exactly, the MC will translate and tell to you.

The fiction follows up the story with more fiction. Unless you miss the roll, you can follow up on what you know about the Grey Men on the other side of the bus. Whatever move you make is followed by more fiction, until the conflict is over. You're either dead or you made it out intact. At this point, the MC would ask the other players what they are doing, and follow up their answers by suggesting moves, if possible. The story keeps going.

Why: Because it's dark and cold and dreary. You have little hope of making it through the year. Death and ruin are everywhere. There is silence all around, shattered only by the inhuman chorus of the Invader.

The Invader did this. The Invader put you here. Whether you fear them, hate them, respect them, or need them, they don't care. They've killed everyone else and they won't ever stop. You've made it this far; you've outlasted the whole world. But they won't ever stop coming for you.

So what do you do? You can't give up; not after coming so far. You've got to stay alive. You've got to keep going. There are people here who need you, and there will be others. You've got to find them.

And what will you do when you find more people? Try to befriend them? Help them and move on? Or are you out to exploit anyone you can? Are people sources of amusement, or distraction, or subjugation? Are you out for formerly taboo pleasures, plain and hard survival, or chaos and destruction?

And what are your ultimate goals? To retire to safe obscurity? To grow and consolidate your power? To enrich the lives of others with compassion and inspiration? To fight the Invader to your very last breath? To get out there and see the world before it's all gone?

It's good drama, and it speaks to a rugged individuality we all carry with us. Up against the world, you will find a way. Even if the number goes down to just one, you will be that one. Because one of the survival guides speaks to you and shows you the path to transcending the Hell all around you.

THE BASICS

The Survival Guides: These are your playbooks. This is your character. The social and mental costume you wear during the playing of the game. The Survival Guides let you interact with the Lonely World. It makes you part of that world, with the challenge of staying alive. Your survival guide gives your character his moves, gear, stats, and helps shape their relationships with the few people still around.

Stats: define your character at their core. They show you what you're made of. They are the most essential elements of the character, the factors that determine how well they can do out there. When you want to do something, and it's not clear whether or not you can, you use a move and combine with the stat. All of the basic moves and most of the character moves use stats.

- **Heart** is what you carry with you in your truest places. It's your strength of character, your determination, your fighting spirit. It keeps you strong and shows you what is right.
- **Brain** is your wealth of knowledge and your ability to apply that knowledge. You know the world as it was, and can learn to adapt for what it is now.
- **Blood** is your killing instinct; your most ancient and primal self. That aggressive impulse that drives you to violence. Can you pull the trigger on a living thing? Can you push the blade in all the way?
- **Face** is how you interact with others. How well they like you. How much they listen to you. Are you beautiful, sexy, well-spoken, or do you have a knack for getting on the good side of people?
- **Meat** is your physical health and well-being. In Lonely World, you might be doing a lot of running, climbing, jumping, anything to get away from the Invaders. How well do you handle pain? How often do you get sick?

Moves: are your tools for interacting with the world. Using a move is super-easy. Roll two 6-sided die, the kind that come with any board game or casino. Add whatever it says to add in the move's description to the roll. *roll+blood* means you add the number in your blood stat. *roll+Invaders killed* means you add however many Invaders you killed just now.

Sometimes you'll have other numbers to add outside of that initial roll. You might get a *+1* because it's appropriate to the MC, or as a part of a move, and maybe at another PC's whim.

The results of the roll will be in the move's description. Typically, a result of 10 or above is a complete success, a result of 7-9 is a moderate success, or a success with consequences (but still fundamentally a success), and a result of 6 or below is a miss.

Whatever the result is, the story keeps going. Moves create fiction, which open up opportunities for more moves.

Harm: is what happens when you get hurt, physically. It means serious injury, not nicks and bruises. 1-harm is getting beat up in a fist fight. 3-harm is a shotgun blast or a fall from a building. 5-harm is explosions and industrial accidents. And it only goes up from there.

Harm indicates you're hurt, and the only thing to do when you get hurt is to tend to it. If you can't do it now, do it later. The MC has a move called **It's worse than it seems** which is sometimes played when characters take harm. Sometimes it makes things really worse, by introducing infections and pain, but sometimes it can grant a bit of mercy.

There's also **T-harm**, which is temporary harm. This is usually more of a healing matter, as things will give you T-harm so you can keep going for a little while longer. T-harm is spent first when you get hurt, but it is temporary and will disappear on its own. T-harm is usually granted by things like drugs and pain medication. Certain moves might grant the same benefit.

Healing harm is done by spending **supplies**. Or sometimes by waiting it out, resting, or receiving long-term medical care (which is rare).

Harm is tracked on a spiral:



For each point of harm you suffer, darken one section of the spiral. Once you get past three, you're in bad shape: dying, bleeding out, being eaten by infection, etc. If you take any strenuous actions, the MC is obligated to deal more harm to you until you can stabilize by healing your harm to three sections or less. Strenuous is running, climbing, fighting, walking for a long time, and so on.

At **zero**, your harm is nil and you are just fine.

1-harm is not bad. You can heal that up on your own with rest, or you can soften the pain with some supplies.

2-harm is just okay. You won't die from it, and if you take it easy for a while and look after yourself, you can recover on your own. Of course, supplies will help you cut that time down.

3-harm is serious injury. Something is probably broken, and you could go into shock. Infection is a serious concern. Recovery will take a long time, and supplies may be necessary to save your life. You are still stable, which means you won't automatically take more harm from your wounds.

4 and 5-harm are past the point of no return, onto the slippery slope of a painful slow death. From here, the harm can continue on its own. If you strain yourself, or go for too long without aid, you'll take more harm. You need help or you're going to die.

6-harm and beyond is bad news. The spiral hits bottom. The drain empties out. You're dead as dead can be. Only thing that can save you now is some emergency resuscitation.

If you get to or past 6-harm, and you want to let your character go, that's fine. They push off this world of pain and isolation into the great hereafter. If you're not ready to die, you have two choices. You can accept a **disfigurement**, or you can offer a **sacrifice**. Either way, doing so reverts your harm back to three on the spiral and stabilizes you.

Disfigurements scar and cripple you, but they will keep you alive for a little while longer. Take a permanent -1 to one of your stats, and each one can only be disfigured once. Whatever you choose is now scarred and maimed, but it functions, and so do you. Work with the MC and tell everyone about what happened to your face (or meat, or heart, or brain, or blood).

Offering a **sacrifice** means you lose something else. And this is in exchange for your life, so it will have to be something of sacred importance to you. Putting a loved one in your place will do it, but remember that losing them will cause you stress and may tip you over into madness. If you have **buddies, family or kin**, you could lose one or all of them. Losing your **wheels, bunker, or place to stay** might be a worthy sacrifice, or it might not. You can offer sacrifices as long as you have something else worth losing.

Sacrifices don't really happen in the fiction per se (but some moves might make it work that way). *Your character* doesn't make the sacrifice, *you* do. Get it? You don't actually toss your NPC friends at the Invader to keep yourself from dying; the fates just claim them instead.

Other PCs can be sacrificed if there is a reasonable way for it to actually happen. Unlike your special gear or NPCs, this has to be done within the fiction, and if the situation doesn't allow for it then it just can't happen that way.

If you want to **offer up a fellow player character as a sacrifice** to save your own ass, roll+Hx:

10+, you're stable and it's now their problem. They can deal with it any way they can with moves as normal. They can even turn it back around on you if they can't handle it and start to die.

7-9 they can deal with it if they want to, and if they do they get to choose one:

- they get +3Hx with you
- you make a new and different **sacrifice** to them, instead
- they get +1 to act against you, *forever*
- *your new **project** is to keep them alive and happy*
- *you are in debt to them for no less than 5-supply*

Stress: Stress is what builds up in your head because the world is so fucked up and you're still trying to come to grips with it. Think of stress as harm, but in your head. Stress can't kill you outright, but it can certainly place you in danger, and endanger the lives of those around you.

You collect stress as the result of events that grate on your nerves, tear away your sanity, or plunge you into despair. It can happen as part of a move, or from something going on in the fiction. 1-stress is worrying about the immediate future, like *how are we going to get down the road without being seen?* 3-stress is like if someone steals your wheels and leaves you stranded with Invader hot on your heels. 5-stress is watching your loved ones die right in front of you in a gruesome way.

Stress is also tracked on a spiral, one that looks and runs just like the harm spiral. Stress gets collected, the spiral adds up, and eventually the character loses his damn mind. That is, unless the characters can manage their stress and keep their heads together. And they'll have to. Lonely World is not Fun Happy Clown World. It's Screaming Bloody Terrible Death World. It's not easy out there, huddled in darkness, starving, scared, and hopeless. The Invader is everywhere, hunting you down. And of course the traditional problems of dealing with other people trying to kill you and take your stuff.

At **zero**, you are stress-free. You have no worries. The world is open and the future is bright.

1-stress You have some serious concerns, and they need addressing, but it can wait. Or maybe it's a general feeling of dread or fear that won't go away.

2-stress You are agitated. Irritated. Maybe even seriously frightened. You snap at people when they frustrate you. Worry dominates your active thoughts.

3-stress Emotions are running high, and pure animal panic is right around the corner. People start blurring into shapes and colors. You can still function, and as long as you avoid stress, you'll manage to keep it together.

4 and 5-stress You're cracking up at this point. Things look bleak in your eyes. People don't matter as much, reality starts to waver. You're having a really rough time on the inside here, and your anxiety is only going to compound itself as you sit and brood on your whole existence in this shithole of a world. If your stress levels don't decrease, the MC has a move called **Can't take this shit** that will only make things worse for you.

6-stress and beyond Your mind is gone. You experience some kind of psychotic break. You snap.

When your stress spiral fills up, what happens next isn't pretty. You basically have two choices here. You can let your character go, and the MC promises them a quick and violent death. Or, you can you go on a **Hell Ride**. Tell the MC one of the following: **Blank Disconnect, Disappear, Run Screaming, Rampage**. Once you've gone on one of these Hell Rides, cross it off; you can't do it again.

What happens during a Hell Ride turns you into a complete fucking problem for the rest of the group. You are beyond your own control for a measure of time until reality starts to kick back in. You will make a few awful decisions that place everyone in danger unless you are restrained or killed. Some will see you as a helpless victim and some will see you as a rabid liability.

When the Hell Ride is over, you will be at 3-stress, some long indeterminate amount of time will have passed, and you will have control over yourself again. But you had better take it easy and handle your shit.

Death: The likelihood of death runs high in Lonely World. There are some ugly safeguards, as discussed above, but even they can't protect you forever. Lonely World is more about taking care of others: your fellow survivors, your friends and family, the last brittle remains of humanity, than it is about setting yourself up in a comfortable, secure, fortified palace. Lonely World isn't about winning riches and power, it's about becoming less lonely in a world of exponential depopulation. It's about casting off the values of the old world of plenty and rediscovering what it means to appreciate life and love and connecting with people. Characters will die, but their efforts to secure the futures of the people they have bonded with will never be in vain.

A player who's character has died can come back in with a brand new Survival Guide anytime it's appropriate to work them in. The new character gets introduced to everyone else: make your introductory moves and establish Hx with the everyone else. The new character can be an NPC, elevated and fleshed out, or they can be a stranger: highway drifters, shattered survivors, a desperate voice on the radio.

MOVES

Basic Moves: All playbooks have access to these basic moves. They make up the core of gameplay, and are at the heart of Lonely World. When describing your character's actions in the fiction, you can either tell the MC what you are doing and the MC will fit it into a move, or you can make a move first and then describe how you do it. Just remember that if you want to do it, you have to do it. Don't speculate or hypothesize. Do it.

Seize the Moment

When something you want is up for grabs, **roll+heart:**

10+ you got it. It's yours.

7-9 you flinch, hesitate, or stall. If you still want it, there will be a struggle with a contender, a frustrating chase, or a leap of faith.

Example: *Michelle gets back to her apartment to find that Frank has turned into a flesh-eating cadaver. She can take him down easily with her shotgun, but she left it on her dresser on the other side of the room. She says she's going for it because she promised Frank that she wouldn't let him be one of those things. Michelle's player rolls a 9. I ask her how she's moving to the gun, and she says she leaps over the couch. She gets over just fine, but slips on the meat of Paul, who looks like he had his face chewed off by Frank. So now Paul's corpse grabs at her heels, and Frank is sauntering over as well.*

Defend What's Important

When you're under threat, but won't give up what's yours, **roll+heart:**

10+ deal harm as normal and choose three

7-9 deal harm as normal **or** choose two

- *whatever you are fighting for is untouched*
- *you suffer little harm (-1 harm)*
- *you feel stalwart and resolute (melt 1-stress)*
- *you impress or terrify the enemy*
- *you don't stretch or damage your gear*

Example: *Rick has been on the road for days with no signs of life anywhere. He stops in at a gas station and finds candy and some supplies to work on his car. Only problem is, some extermination droids use the garage to repair their transports. Rick climbs out from under his car and takes up cover to fire at the droids. He'll fight to the death to defend this place, because it belongs to humanity and not those damn robots! Rick's player rolls a 10. He deals 3-harm from his assault rifle and chooses to keep the gas station unharmed, suffers little harm to his person, and doesn't stretch his gear. 3-harm won't destroy the droids, so Rick plans on this turning into a prolonged fight. He wants to be able to last long enough to make sure they're trashed.*

Protect Your Neck

When you're ducking, dodging, blocking, or just trying not to get hurt, **roll+meat:**

10+ you escape or endure the danger unscathed
7-9 choose two

- you get to a safe place
- you're still on your feet
- you don't lose anything of value

Example: Jake is in the basement when the giant ants burst through the floor. They'll tear him to pieces unless he can make it back up the elevator shaft. Jake's player rolls a 7. He chooses to get to a safe place, and he's still on his feet. There's so many giant ants down here that part of the building is going to implode. He gets up the ladder, and the giant ants are buried for now, but he gets knocked on the head by a support beam and takes 2-harm.

Put Your Back Into It

Pushing, pulling, lifting, running, jumping, climbing. When you exert your physical self on the world, **roll+meat:**

10+ you make it; no sweat

7-9 you need to pull something extra from *somewhere*; the MC picks one or two of the following:

- get someone to help you
 - take 1-harm from the strain
 - wear out; -1body until you replenish yourself
 - something important breaks
- on a miss, you stumble, fall, or slip

Example: Tommy has broken into the Kingston's place. Old man Kingston ain't been seen in weeks. Tommy found him in the kitchen, dead from the Squirting Flu. Tommy wants to break open the old man's gun locker before any other looters come by. Tommy's player rolls a 7, and the MC tells him he can get it open, but the effort wears Tommy out and he breaks both the safe and the pry bar he was using. Tommy makes it out of the house with a new shotgun and a box of shells. There's no time to rest or clean up, so he books it back to camp. Tommy is praying that there's no trouble on the way.

Commit a Violence

When you move to hurt someone with physical force, **roll+blood:**

10+ you deal harm as normal, plus choose three

7-9 you deal harm as normal, **or** -1harm and choose one

- you hit whatever you were aiming at, *dead on*
- you hurt them *more* than you expected, +1 harm
- you *cripple* them, either just for a little while or forever (MC choice)
- you *impress*, +1Hx, or *shock*, -1Hx, someone watching (your choice)
- they either hit you back for *less*, which would be -1harm, or *maybe not at all* (MC choice)

on a miss, the MC chooses:

- they get you instead and you're at their mercy
- the environment intervenes
- your gear betrays you
- they had something you weren't expecting

Example: Bobby has lured Ted (both players) outside the camp, to an open grave he dug last night. Ted doesn't know what's going on, which is just the way Bobby intended it. Bobby waits until Ted isn't looking, and shoots him with his shotgun. He rolls a 12. His shotgun deals 3-harm to Ted, and Bobby gets to pick three. He *hits what he was aiming at dead on*, which was Ted's head. He *hurts Ted more than he expected*, which adds another point of harm. And finally he *gets hit for less*, which the MC tell him is *not at all*, since Ted has his back turned. Ted takes 4-harm, which puts him at 10 on the harm spiral. It also knocks him unconscious and topples him into the open grave. When Ted comes to, much later, he'll be nearly dead and buried alive.

Example: Whitney and Julie (both players) are fighting over the keys to the last car out of town. They both have knives (2-harm) at each other's throats, with imminent intent to kill the other. They both roll: Whitney gets an 8 and Julie gets a 10. Whitney chooses to *cripple* Julie, and inflicts -1harm. Julie says she *gets hit for less*, she *hurts Whitney more*, and she *shocks Bill*, who has been watching from the corner. So Whitney is stabbed in the throat, which causes her 3-harm. Julie takes 0-harm, but Whitney's knife rakes her across the eyes, doing just enough damage to cause her terrible pain and blinding her.

Imply Pain

When you use the direct threat of impending harm to get your way, **roll+blood:**

10+ They can choose to *force your hand* or *do as you say*. If they force your hand, you do +1harm to them.

7-9 they can *attempt an escape*, *turn it around on you*, or *do it anyway* on a miss, no one is buying it

Example: Simon is trying to get Tiffany (an NPC) to tell him where she is hiding the drugs. Tiffany is being an obstinate bitch about it, so Simon pulls out a pistol and aims it at her. Simon won't stand for half the camp to be doped up when there are Shiny Doppelgangers wandering around. He's willing to put a bullet in her if she doesn't cooperate. He rolls a 10. Tiffany isn't willing to die for her high, so she tells him the drugs are at baggage claim.

Ask a Huge Favor

When you want someone to do something for you and it's kind of a big deal, **roll+face**. If you include 1-supply with your request, take +1 (max +3)

10+ If an NPC, they'll do it and may ask for something in return. If a PC, they can choose to do it, and if they do, they mark experience. If they don't, then they get -1Hx with you.

7-9 If an NPC, they'll do it only if you do something for them first. If a PC, they can choose to do it and mark experience. Otherwise they can walk.

On a miss, an NPC isn't happy you even asked, and a PC can ask you for a favor instead with the same conditions as if they hit a 10+.

Example: Tommy cut his leg open on a fence and can't go out tonight to search for fuel. He asks Becca (an NPC), to go in his place. Tommy rolls a 10, so Becca says she'll do it. Tommy starts to thank her, and she interrupts by adding a caveat. He has to go out on thursday with Creepy Walden, an NPC who is always trying to touch people.

Talk Slick

When you want someone to believe your story, which may or may not be true, **roll+face**:

10+ If an NPC, they'll be pretty much convinced. A PC can put his faith in you or remain skeptical. Either way you get +1Hx with them.

7-9 They aren't totally convinced. NPCs need some proof, assurance, or a bribe. PCs can choose not to believe you and if they do, you get -1Hx with them.

on a miss, they don't believe you and may go off to find out on their own. PCs can see the real truth and get +1Hx with you. They can also ask you a question about the current situation and you have to answer truthfully.

Example: Ralphia wants to know what Caitlin and Lemar, an NPC, have been doing while everyone else was defending the camp. Caitlin doesn't want Ralphia to know that they were romping through an abandoned bedding store together. She lies and says they got lost in the woods. Ralphia can see the bullshit in her eyes. He doesn't know what they were doing, but they certainly weren't in the woods. Caitlin gets -1Hx with Ralphia. Getting caught in a lie makes her less close to Ralphia and opens up a vulnerability.

Scope Things Out

When you want to see what's happening around or ahead of you, **roll+brain**:

10+ ask the MC three questions about this place

7-9 ask two

- *is there anything useful or valuable?*
- *what happened here recently?*
- *how stable is my safety?*
- *what's the best way in/out/past/through?*
- *what kind of trail am I leaving?*
- *where is the nearest Invader?*

If you act on the MC's answers, you get +1 to your next move.

on a miss, you don't notice something *important, dangerous, or valuable*

Example: Jason finds a stockroom that hasn't been ransacked. Before he can make a serious effort to dig through this place, he wants to give it a careful walk-through. He can spare the time, he figures, and is thinking about holing up for a few days. He rolls and gets an 11. He gets to ask three questions about the stockroom. The MC must answer them truthfully. Jason wants to know **is he safe in here?** The MC tells him he's pretty safe. There's no immediate threats, and the structure is intact. Then Jason wants to know if **there's anything good** that jumps out at him as he scans the place. Sometimes there is, sometimes there isn't. The MC lets him know about the pallet of bottled water in the corner. Finally, Jason wants to know **how stable is this?** The MC says that all is well as long as the ravenous pustules in the parking lot don't know he's there.

Look For Bars

In some places, in using the right tools, you can still access the signal. The signal is what remains of the global information infrastructure. Connection is spotty and many sites don't function. When you use a device like a cell phone or computer to try to access the signal, **roll+brain**. If you're looking for something specific or trying to send a message, let the MC know.

10+ you get a useful answer to your question, or you can have a two-sided message exchange of appropriate length.

7-9 you get a vague idea, but the connection is slow or fails entirely. If you tried to send a message, it either came through all fucked up, ended in the wrong place, or is dropped before you can get a response

If you act on the MC's answers, you get +1 to your next move.

Example: Alex needs to remove a bullet from the leg of her dear friend Katie. She doesn't know how, but she's pretty sure she knows where to look on her smartphone. She rolls a 9, and gets a video a medical student had uploaded. Her bars are too few, so the video constantly needs to buffer. Alex figures she got the point and goes in with some tweezers to get that bullet out.

See through someone

When you want to figure a person out during a conversation, **roll+Hx**. If an NPC, **roll+face**. On a hit, you can tell if they are being real with you or not. 10+, ask them one question that they have to answer truthfully.

Example: Sid and Debbie are arguing about whether to keep the group in the warehouse or try to move everyone to the docks. Debbie doesn't want to move. She doesn't believe that rescue is coming, even though the guys on the radio said they were on the way. Sid is suspicious that Debbie isn't being honest about her motives. He tries to see through her during their argument, and rolls an 11. She's not being real about her motives. He asks her what is the real reason she wants to stay in the warehouse. She has to tell him the truth, and it's because she's scared of the Goopy Fish-Men all around the docks and doesn't want to appear weak in front of the group.

Helping someone out

When someone is rolling for something and you want to aid them, **roll+Hx**:

10+ they get +1 to whatever they're doing.

7-9 they get the +1, but you also endanger someone.

on a miss, you ruin it for everybody

Example: A door in the basement has broken its lock, and now the foul green ooze is seeping into the tenement. Alicia can't hold it on her own, so Christina helps her by bringing some planks of wood, a hammer, and some nails. Alicia is **putting her back into it**, and rolls a 6. Christina rolls a 9, which brings Alicia's roll to a 7. They get the door nailed shut, but some of the green ooze has gotten in and given Alicia a bad acid burn on her arm.

Interfere

When you need to put a stop to whatever they're doing, **roll+Hx**:

10+ pick two:

- you can talk to them and they will hear you out
- you can bar their path
- you can melt 1-stress from them
- you can delay it for just a little while

7-9 pick one from above

Example: Johnson slashed Mark's tires in a squabble over some anti-bacterial soap. Mark is furious and is going to **commit a violence** on

Johnson's head with a crowbar. Rachel can't stand to see them fight, so she rolls to **interfere** with Mark. She gets a 10. Rachel stands in Mark's way and pleads with him to wait a little while. She tells him she can get Johnson to replace the tires and fork over the soap. Mark won't go through Rachel, and she sounds convincing when she says she can get Johnson to fix things between them. He agrees to give Johnson a full day before he gets his skull cracked open.

Survival Guide Moves: Survival Guides come with their own moves too. They work just like they say they do. They are included with the Survival Guides, and that's where you will find them.

Survivor Moves: Survivor moves are learned by the characters as time goes on and their ability to adapt to the new world advances. They let the PCs have greater control over the world and better secure their place in it. At the beginning, no character has any of these moves, but they may still want to do the things listed here. Which is fine; the MC shouldn't try to stop them. But the moves will take longer, the action will be sloppy, and the risk will be greater. It's only after the characters have been around for a while that they can gain the experience needed to really call themselves survivors.

Characters get Survivor Moves by gaining XP. After their 6th improvement, they can start to take options from the expanded improvement list. One of those options is **Getting Used to It**, which lets the character pick 2 Survivor moves. The other option is **True Survivor**, which gives the character 2 more. Naturally, the character can't be a True Survivor without first Getting Used to It.

The MC should be aware that when the players start taking Survivor moves, it means they want a more direct hand in the fiction. They will want the opportunities to use these moves, all of which can drastically alter the direction the story goes in. **Conduct rescue**, for example, will introduce a whole slew of new NPCs to interact with. **Secure the area** creates a safe place, where the characters should feel free to let their guard down for a little while. **Recycle bin** gives them access to supplies and gear that they normally would have to run through a whole gauntlet of bullshit to acquire. It is up to the MC to provide the characters with opportunities to use these moves, especially when there is downtime, or when no one knows what to do next.

Conduct rescue

Digging people out of ruins, applying aid to large groups, escorting survivors, performing an extraction from a live combat zone, etc. When you want to get a group of people away from imminent danger. First, the MC will tell you one of the following:

- *First you'll have to get some special gear*
- *you're going to need a crew to help you with it*
- *the best you can do is a fiasco of a rescue. Infections and injuries abound*
- *it's going to mean exposing yourself and others to danger*
- *you're going to need a fuckton of supplies*

Then, **roll+heart**.

On a 10+, the operation is a success and the survivors are stable.
On a 7-9, things get complicated and the MC will tell you one of the following:

- *all or most of the survivors suffer 2-harm during the rescue.*
- *something collapses or explodes*
- *if there's a fire going, it spreads. If there's not, one starts.*
- *something dangerous witnesses the operation*
- *you uncover something harmful or evil*
- *the only exit has been cut off*

Example: Dr. Reinholt has located a group of eight survivors who have become trapped in the basement of a house that might collapse at any moment. There's no time to gather up a crew or secure the structure. He'll have to pull them out by hand, and it will be a fiasco. Reinholt rolls a 9. Unfortunately, the smell of terror and the noise has attracted a couple Ash Devils who want to make sure none of them leave alive. Reinholt will have to take them out first, but then the people in the basement will be safe.

Find a path

The characters will be traveling through unknown scapes in urban and rural environments. A lot of crazy rampant destruction shit popped off during the End of Everything. The streets are choked with cars, bodies, and chunks of building. Some places were contained with fences and roadblocks, at least for a little while. Business and home owners locked up and barricaded their property.

When you want to circumvent a physical obstacle, **roll+meat:**

10+ you find a clear path that everyone can follow. Danger along this path will be minimal or nonexistent until you reach your destination.

7-9 there seems to be no easy way through. The MC can offer you a **more dangerous way around, take you on the scenic route, or there's just enough room for one of you.**

Example: Sid wants to find a way to get his group from the warehouse to the docks, where a ship will pick them up and take them to safety. They could take the direct route, but then they'll have to deal with mobs of Goopy Fish-Men. Instead, Sid finds a map of the shipping district and plots out a course that will take them around inhabited areas. Sid rolls a 10. He finds that by running along the rooftops, they can all bypass the Fish-Men and get to the docks with no trouble.

Recycle Bin

When you need something special from the supply pool, **roll+supply** spent.

10+ you find what you need, and choose two:

- *you can take a little something else too, while you're in there*
- *no one notices you*
- *you find the good shit. +1 to whatever you need.*
- *you don't need to take as much as you thought, so you can put back 1-supply.*

7-9 choose one from above.

on a miss, you can't get what you need this way.

Example: Nick needs a special part for his car. He has to get these special imported spark plugs or the damn thing won't start. Normally Nick would have to make a run into town and pray to God that the import garage has what he needs and he can make it there and back alive. Instead, he spends 2-supply and rolls an 11. It turns out he didn't need to dig as deep as he thought, so he puts back 1-supply. And, oh-what-do-we-have-here, it seems to be an extra 1-supply worth of gasoline. With both of these, he'll be able to keep his wheels running for a good while.

Salvage

Salvage allows you to recover important or valuable materials from the ruins. This includes things like vehicle parts, scrap metal, comm gear, velvet pictures of Elvis, and so on. It also allows you to get your way into a vault, safe, untouched storeroom and warehouse, or abandoned bunker.

By default, you find **1-supply worth of useful gear, you are seen, you need a crew, and it takes you all day.**

Roll+brain. 10+, choose 3 from the following. 7-9, choose 2.

- *you also find survival gear worth 2-supply*
- *you also find one valuable item worth 2-supply*
- *you also find scrap materials worth 2-supply*
- *you also find junk and oddments, worth 1-supply*
- *no one sees you while you work*
- *you don't need a crew*
- *it takes you only half the day*

On a miss, the MC can choose from one of the following:

- *you come up empty-handed*
- *something dangerous sees you*
- *your crew is useless (dead, run off, mutinous)*
- *it takes all day and most of next day too*
- *you uncover something weird or chaotic*

Example: Barbara wants to clear out the Lakeview Shopping Center of useful supplies. She has a small crew of NPCs that she is coordinating in the search. She rolls and gets a 12. Barbara doesn't mind putting in the time or the manpower, but she wants to recover a lot, and she doesn't want any hassles from outsiders. So **no one sees her while she works, she finds survival gear worth 2-supply, and she finds one valuable item worth 2-supply.** The MC tells her the survival gear is a mixture of food and warm clothing, and the valuable item is a Mall Shuttle in perfect working condition. That's in addition to the 1-supply of useful gear she found by default. A pretty decent haul for a full-day's work.

Secure the Area

Occurs when the characters have eliminated the presence of hostile forces in an area. Allows them to perform other tasks within the secure area. Any threats to the individuals in the area can be spotted and discovered before they become too dangerous. Also used to stand guard or do patrols.

Roll+blood. On a hit, everything is secure. You have ample time to deal with any threats as they appear. 10+ you get +1 on any roll to protect what you've secured.

Example: Roger's group needs to stay in the park overnight to tend to the injured and shattered.

Take This Shit Over

When you make a serious violent effort to seize something you want, **roll+blood**:

first the MC will tell you what it's going to take:

- *first, you'll have to kill or capture someone specific*
- *they have some crazy shit you weren't expecting*
- *you'll need a lot of help*
- *the fighting is dirty, brutal, and bloody (+1harm)*
- *it's going to cost a fuckton of supplies*

The MC might say one or two, but no more than three.

10+ Deal harm as normal. Also, choose three from the list below. 7-9 choose two.

- *you find helpful survivors in the wreckage (+1 to your next move)*
- *you find 2-supply worth of spoils*
- *you wipe out or frighten them, reducing their numbers (-1 mob size)*
- *you recover something truly special*
- *you have much fewer casualties than you expected (-1harm)*

Example: The Red Martians have constructed a platform near the town of Wilford. It looks like they're building war machines. Mr. Salem can't allow that. These Martians have to go. The MC tells him what it's going to take to get rid of the Martians. The Red Martians **fight with an unprecedented savagery**, and they were housing a **50-foot-tall robot with death rays**. Mr. Salem rolls a 10. He gets the jump on them, sending in his gang of armed marauders to take out their most vulnerable members first: barracks of Martians sleeping in liquid nutrient tubes. This reduces their numbers substantially. Then, Mr. Salem discovers captives in a holding tank, who reveal to him the secret weak spot on the 50-foot-tall robot: its power supply located between the shoulders. Finally, when it's all over he will have 2-supply worth of food and meds.

Comparing the numbers, we have a medium-size gang of marauders (**harm 7 health 7 armor 1 stress 2**) battling a large mob of Red Martians (**harm 6 health 5 armor 1**). They wipe out a good number of the Martians before the fighting really starts, turning them instead into a medium-sized mob (**harm 5 health 4 armor 1**). The fighting is bloody when it really starts going, giving the Martians +1harm. The marauders deal a total of 6-harm to the Red Martians, which kills them all. The Martians in turn deal a total of 5-harm to the marauders, reducing their numbers sharply. There will only be a handful of survivors among the marauders, and their stress will hit 4 or 5 before it's all over. They will win the battle, but the cost has been dear and there's no telling how they might react.

Then, of course, Mr. Salem still has to deal with the robot. But at least now he knows what to do. The helpful survivors give him a +1 to his next move, whatever it is.

Going to War:

There will be times where the characters will be up against the Invader, or other hostile forces, and they will have to fight to stay alive. If you like, you can gloss over the whole thing with by asking the characters what they are doing and what they are trying to

accomplish here. Leave the whole battle up to one of the basic moves and get it out of the way. That way they can deal with the aftermath of the fight and move on.

Or if you prefer to break down the combat into more detailed chunks, there are moves below that the characters can perform to directly engage the enemy.

Combat in *Lonely World* is all about taking and holding ground. If the Slime People have taken over the bridge, take it from them if you can. If you can't, let them have it and get across without wasting time. If the Martians are hunting you through the streets, the characters could dash to safety, or if they can, clean the bastards out.

The combat moves below let the characters tear ass through areas thick with Invader. The fighting can be as generalized or detailed as everybody wants it to be. You can either take down the Invader room by room, block by block, or you can make one or two rolls to cover an entire extended battle.

Running a going to war situation: going to war are simple moves, with very quick and direct descriptions. The results affect the mechanics of the game more than the fiction because it's meant for prolonged action scenes. This is not for times where characters have the luxury of conversation or long-term planning. These are times when their survival is in question from the forces directly upon them. This is when they need to escape the burning building and then somehow get through an Invader-choked urban hell-zone of subway tunnels, abandoned apartments, and ruined streets before getting back to the car and making their escape.

Sure, you could run that whole thing in one or two moves. A **commit a violence** followed up by **protect your neck**. Boom, they're out and it's back to camp. You could do that.

But there will also be times where emergencies arrive, and these moves underline the distressing intensity of these panicky, do-or-die moments. These are times where the characters' immediate survival is not assured. They are like mice in a maze of razors, being hunted down by hungry lizards.

Every room they find, every hallway they run down, every place they go is a new danger. Either from the Invader, an unforgiving or crumbling environment, or a traditional battle with conventional foes. Waiting it out, or holing up somewhere are not options. The characters need to get out of this place, now!

These moves give the characters tools to zoom in on the action and control the details of going along a path of small areas and obstacles while being inundated with hostile forces. When in these situations, it's best to stick to using these moves and a few characters moves. The flow of the game in these parts should be reactionary and fast-forward momentum. The MC throws out a rapid succession of environments, throws some bad shit on top of them, and introduces the monsters.

The pacing of *going to war* is faster than normal and requires the characters and MC to be focused on it. The more in the moment everyone is, the more fun and exciting it will be. That's why moves that take longer than a few minutes to do will not really be appropriate here. They require too much time, energy, or set-up to accomplish. This is not the time for building, or socializing, or planning, or even to scrounge.

The Invader absolutely loves *going to war*. This is its time to shine. The Invader's time to remind everyone that the apocalypse is still going on. Whatever claims to safety the characters might profess, the Invader takes it from them and forces the characters to leave, or die. Any serious effort made by the characters to bed down or wall themselves up while *going to war* will

meet with overwhelming and near-constant agitation from the Invader. It's just not safe.

The MC should still stick to his moves, though most of the time you'll be doing what the Invader wants. Even while going to war, it's still necessary to remember your MC and Invader Principles. Especially remember to **bring them good news** and **leave bread crumb trails of hope**. The characters are in a fight for their lives here, and they need to believe that they can do it. The end needs to be in sight, in some respect, at most times. They need a clearly-illuminated trail. The moment they get lost, they don't want to do it anymore and they'll use a different move to escape. If they're trying to get to a bridge on the other side of town, that bridge either needs to be so prominent in their view that they can run right towards it, or there need to be signs laid out in the environment (tags, signs, lights, engine roar, vocal cues from friends) that they can follow.

Also, remind the characters that going to war is a great opportunity to build experience and Hx with each other. Characters will grow and bond with each other quickly in these emergencies, and those who stayed at home will only wonder about what really happened out there.

Bust the Door Down

When the enemy is right on the other side and you want to run in and wipe them all out, **roll+blood**:

10+ you get the jump on them and deal +1harm. You can exclude any targets if you wish

7-9 you deal harm as normal, or +1harm if you don't check your fire on a miss, you fumble, hesitate, or announce your presence

Get Wild on Everybody

When you spray down the whole room with little regard for safety, **roll+blood**:

10+ you lay waste to your enemies and deal +1harm. Also, choose 1
7-9 you deal +1 harm **or** you choose 1

- *you don't get as busted up as you could have been. -1harm to you*
- *nobody takes any friendly fire from you*
- *the rest of the enemy clears out, if they can*

Slog Your Way Through

When you need to get somewhere and they just keep coming, **roll+heart**:

10+ you get through with no problem

7-9 the going is rough; you make it, but the MC picks 1 or 2 from below

- *you take serious harm (+1harm)*
- *no one else can follow you*
- *you're left in a worse situation*
- *they won't stop*
on a miss, they **overwhelm** you

Give the Bastards All You've Got

When you have an impassable opponent and fighting them to the death is the only way through, **roll+heart**:

10+ you come out on top, but the MC gets to pick 1 from below:

- *you take serious harm (+1harm)*
- *it reveals a horror that terrifies you (2-stress)*

- *you're left in a worse situation*
- *somebody else has to suffer too*
- *it's not dead, and it will be back for you*

7-9 the MC gets to pick 1, 2, or 3 from above.
 on a miss, it gets to have its way with you for a little while,
 whatever that means

Run Like Mad

When you need to get through and don't want to fight anybody,
roll+meat: 10+ pick 3

- *you don't suffer any harm*
 - *you don't lose any gear*
 - *you end up where you wanted*
 - *they have trouble pursuing you*
- 7-9 pick 2
 on a miss, you trip, fall, or stumble

Throw Your Weight Around

When you rely on pure physical might to rule the battle, **roll+meat:**
 10+ pick 3

- *you bust their heads in (+1harm)*
 - *you dodge, block, or swerve (-1harm)*
 - *you create a barrier or an exit*
 - *you impress, frighten, or dismay onlookers*
- 7-9 pick 1
 on a miss, you are trapped, broken, or overwhelmed

Watch for Anything

When you're providing the eyes and ears for the group, **roll+brain**
 10+ ask 3 questions from the list below

- *are we alone?*
 - *are there signs of the Invader?*
 - *is there anything useful, dangerous, or unsafe here?*
 - *are we still going the right way?*
- 7-9 ask 2

Scan the Fight

When you are observing the action to figure out the best strategy,
roll+brain:

- 10+ ask 3 questions from the list below
- *where is the enemy the most vulnerable?*
 - *what's the safest route?*
 - *what's the biggest threat?*
 - *is there anything useful/helpful nearby?*
- 7-9 ask 1

Get Away From Me!

When you want to scare them off or alert others to your danger,
roll+Face:

- 10+ everybody hears you. pick 2:
- *anyone who comes to your aid gets a +1 to do so*

- *anyone who comes to your aid gets +1Hx with you*
- *anyone who comes to your aid marks experience*
7-9 pick 1
on a miss, you are alone and your screams goad them on further

Draw Aggression

When you want the enemy to come after you, **roll+Face**:
10+ you got all or most of them, and they'll follow you for a while
7-9 you only got a few, **or** they're easily distracted
on a miss, you got them and it's too much for you

Provide Cover for Someone

When your buddy is preoccupied and needs you to fight for them, **roll+Hx**. If an NPC, **roll+heart**.
10+ pick 2:

- *your buddy can work safely*
 - *you take some of them down as well*
 - *neither of you is hurt*
- 7-9 pick 1

Be a Punching Bag

When you are determined to stand there and take the hits for someone else, **roll+Hx**. If an NPC, **roll+meat**.

10+ you take the harm and they don't. Also, pick 2:

- *you get +1 against them until they return the favor*
- *you get +1Hx with each other*
- *you melt off 1-stress from them as well*
- *it's not as bad as it could have been. -1harm*

7-9 you take the harm and they don't
on a miss, they get you both

Chasing Comfort: harm and stress will chip at you and wear you down until there's nothing left. To combat this kind of personal entropy, you will have to be on a constant search for things and people who can help you. All the stuff that we had plenty of, taken for granted, until the Invader came and wiped out the system that supported and coddled us. You can still find this stuff, if you look in the right places and are willing to take the risks in snatching it up.

Sometimes, harm and stress compound. Getting hurt is cause for stress, and too much stress can fuck with your health. If a character goes for too long without addressing either, these two moves can help up the drama.

Worse Than It Seems: when you suffer harm, sometimes the MC will have you roll this move. It's optional, really. If it makes things more interesting or dramatic, use it. If it will only slow things down, let it go. **roll+harm** taken. 10+ the MC gets to choose one:

- *easily healed; -1supply cost*
- *it will take something special to heal*
- *the chance for infection is high*
- *something you had on you is busted, shredded, or useless*
- *something bad is attracted to you*

7-9 the MC gets to pick one, but you suffer -1harm on a miss, no complications

Can't Take This Shit: this is a similar move for stress instead of harm, with the same functions. roll+stress collected. 10+ the MC gets to choose one:

- *you slip up during an important task*
- *you do or say something you will regret later*
- *you scream, yell, or cry loud enough to be heard*
- *you are at -1 to all rolls until you find some relief*
- *your stress is infectious to those around you*

7-9 the MC picks one, but you suffer -1stress on a miss, it's not so bad and you can handle it

With all this bad shit going on all the time, the characters will have to be on a constant lookout for opportunities to help and treat themselves. That means having a steady supply of medical supplies and shit to help them cope with a harsh, frightening world.

Healing Harm: moves to heal wounds.

Medical care can be done by anyone who can reasonably do it. If the character used to be a doctor or an army medic or even a veterinarian, sure, go ahead with no added trouble. If instead the character was an office worker or a small child, the MC might want to **impose a -1, require some outside help, or double the bad stuff if the procedure fails.** Do what makes sense and give it to the character if there's any question. When you want to heal a character's harm using medical knowledge and supplies, **roll+brain.** 10+ choose three. You can choose the same one more than once if you want. 7-9 choose one.

- *heal 1-harm (spend 1-supply)*
- *prevent or heal an infection (spend 1-supply)*
- *move them without hurting them*
- *help them move on their own (spend 1-supply)*
- *talk them down; they take -1stress as long as you talk to them*

on a miss, the MC can pick one, two, or three from the list below:

- *you slip or make a huge error. They take an additional harm*
- *the patient flips out; collecting 1-stress in the process. Also, they **can't take this shit***
- *you need more supplies, stat!*
- *the procedure knocks them out for a day or two*
- *you're exhausted; -1meat until you've had a chance to rest*

consumer products are OTC meds, survival gear, and quick fixes found on store shelves and pharmacies. They aren't as sophisticated as professional medical care, but they can keep you going, dull the pain, and help stem infection. you get them by finding them out in the world. What you get can do one of the following:

- *provide T-harm for a couple of hours*
- *prevent or cure an infection*
- *melt 1-stress*

natural and traditional treatments have been largely forgotten because of the effectiveness of modern medical practices. This is like herbal

remedies and home-brew teas. They can help heal harm and melt stress, but only if used during a recuperation period. They can shorten recovery times by a couple of days, and they provide relaxing environments that others can share in as well.

Melting Away the Stress: melting stress away removes it from your stress spiral, keeping you level and staving off nasty insanities. Stress is much easier to remove than harm, but requires an investment of time to the exclusion of most other activities. Even in Lonely World, you got to take some time out for yourself.

Whenever possible, the melting of stress should be done as a move or a part of a move. Sex is a great way to melt stress, but the hard part is finding someone to do it with. Alcohol is good time, but where are you going to find it? Surely, there are moves in there.

Also, stress relievers often have other, sometimes hidden, costs. Families, lovers, and kin need food, safety, and reciprocation. Plus, maybe they don't have time for you right now. Maybe they have their own shit to deal with. Alcohol and drugs work in moderation, but too much can cause you harm and stress out others around you.

When you want to melt off stress, the MC will tell you what you need to do to make it happen. There will either be a **required task**, a **supply cost**, or a **roll to make sure shit doesn't get out of hand**.

A Stress move could look something like this: **When you want to melt stress**, tell the MC how you go about it. Then say how much you're trying to knock off roll+stress (max 3).

10+ you melt off the amount of stress you said, but the MC gets to pick one, two, or three from the list below

- *you stress everyone just a bit (1-stress to everyone else)*
- *you suffer the bad stuff from whatever you're doing*
- *somebody suffers harm*
- *you create a dangerous situation*
- *You invite the Invader*

7-9 you're not feeling it, and the stress sticks, or the stress is gone and the MC picks one from above

on a miss you feel better, and everything is okay for now

The bad stuff is in parentheses:

Fucking with people: pranks, teasing (you piss someone off)

Spending time with loved ones: family, kin, lovers (you hurt them)

Taking the edge off: sex, alcohol, downers (things get awkward, or you become useless)

Sharpening the edge: uppers, adrenaline (blood and pain)

Distractions: entertainment, nostalgia, gambling, small talk (you become obsessive, lazy, or complacent)

Peripheral Moves: these moves are usually the result of special things the character might have, or occur during special times on their own. They don't really fit in with the other moves, but they help the game run better.

Consume: At the beginning of each session or during a downtime in play, everyone who wants to, has to pony up resources to keep the group going. This

includes food and water, but also common medicines and amenities like clean clothes and fuel, and of course ammunition. It's not that the characters aren't going through anything else, it's just that this much is what's running out. Everyone can contribute, and each supply adds a +1 to the Consume roll, with a maximum of +3. Everyone should contribute fairly, but it's really for the group to decide how it's split up. Just remember that you're all in the shit together.

Pick one character to make the roll, which cannot be helped or interfered with. The rolling character could be chosen by democratic process or by who has the most/least experience or is the luckiest. **roll+supply** spent:

On a 10+ everything is holding steady. Everyone is fed, there is ammo to spend, and the wheels can keep spinning.

7-9 the MC chooses 1 or 2:

- *someone is hungry...*
 - *someone is ill*
 - *someone is possessed, entranced, or haunted*
 - *there's not enough bullets for everyone*
 - *one or more of the vehicles won't move*
- on a miss, the MC chooses 1 or 2 and it becomes an emergency

Highlighting Stats: In Lonely World, you get experience by rolling your highlighted stats. At the beginning of each session, the MC asks if anyone at the table wants to re-highlight. If no one wants to, that's fine. If anyone does though, even just one person (including the MC), then everyone has to re-highlight.

Each player finds the character on their list that they have the highest Hx with. Ask that character's player to choose one of your stats to highlight. They can do it for any stat they want, even one that is already highlighted, a high stat that the character uses often, or a low stat that the character rarely uses. Then that player asks the MC to do the same. The MC usually highlights a stat that will hopefully drive the character in a particular direction (for instance, highlighting **blood** to make the game more violent or **face** to make it more social). Go around the table and repeat this with each player until everyone has done it.

Hx: at the end of the session, what event or change had the biggest impact on you? Ask everyone who was there what they learned about you. If they learned something, give them +1Hx. Maybe +2Hx if they learned a lot or somethings. What they learned could be from direct interaction or by seeing the results of your handiwork.

Manipulating the Signal

By default, nobody has deep enough access to the signal to alter its contents, but a **laptop** (Deviant, Fallen Star) or a **communications array** (Holdout, Homesteader) might give it. Manipulating the signal lets the character hack into other computer networks and interact with the signal itself in more meaningful ways. You can open doors, activate or deactivate functional systems, track movements, and conduct thorough research.

When you connect to the signal with the purpose to dig deep into it, **roll+brain**. On a hit, choose 1:

- *reach into a secure/foreign/isolated system*
- *insert permanent information onto the signal*
- *locate the physical origins of a part of the signal*

- *reach a user or system connected to the signal*
- *stream entertainment from the signal*

By default, the connection will **only last as long as you actively maintain it, is naked and unsecured, drains the battery, and sends up red flags**. 10+, choose three from below. 7-9 choose one.

- *your connection will persist without constant effort*
- *your connection is closed to interference*
- *your device has enough power*
- *your connection alarms no one*

May I Introduce: optional move for when meeting people for the first time. Lonely World is sparse, but vast. When you meet a new person, it's a big deal for everyone involved. Player characters generally have dynamic and intricate relations with each other, and so have their own move for meeting someone for the first time.

Packs, families, and bodyguards work a little differently. You only get to know them right off the bat as a group, and not as individuals. People in groups these tightly-knit use their cohesiveness for protection or as a weapon. It takes more effort to get to know them personally. **May I Introduce** only works if you can get them away from their group.

Each Survival Guide will have its own version of this move, and it can be used on NPCs and new player characters as well.

Here is a generic move for when the characters need something and don't know how to get it. You'd be surprised how often it comes up.

When you **need to get a person or thing of dire importance**, ask the MC and **roll+heart**:

10+ the path is straightforward and simple, but the MC chooses one or two from below:

- *no one can go with you*
- *it's on the move*
- *Invaders make a surprise visit*
- *you find a tempting distraction*
- *while you're gone, someone sees an opening*

7-9 the MC chooses 1, 2, or 3 from above, and the path is long, confusing, or barred

Scavenge: When you want to do a thorough scan of the area for useful scrounge, **roll+brain**:

On a hit, ask the MC if you find 1-supply of **fuel, food, ammo, meds** or 2-supply in **oddmnts**.

10+, you find the good shit.

On a miss, you find **disappointment, danger, or horror**.

The Survival Guides

Best Friend: you and your bros have made it through this thing by sticking together and watching out for the group. It's great to have buddies, but you're not much without them. Keep them close and they will save you.

Blanket: you're not a killer and your skills aren't much use anymore. The system you depended on is all gone. It sounds bleak, but you are above it. You have the ability to show unconditional compassion, understanding, and love.

Compass: you always know the way because you always know where to look. You can see the true path and you can help others who have strayed from it. You can find lost things: people, trails, truths.

Deviant: Not much has changed for you. The real the real destroyers of worlds aren't in the streets. They are on the inside, aren't they? Inside you. Bubbling right beneath the surface.

Escapee: Weeee! Fuck work, fuck taxes, fuck the law! I'm loading all the booze, guns, drugs and girls in the nicest car I can steal and I am setting this town on FIRE TONIGHT.

Falling Star: The end of everything hit you even harder. These...normal people all around you only lost their homes, families, crappy jobs, and meager possessions. You lost the power. The glory. The fame. The *life*.

Gravedigger: Fuck the Invader. Seriously. Invader ain't so tough. They use violence on you? That's fine. You know violence.

Holdout: Ignorant savages all around you. Fools, with their reality shows and smartphones and garbage culture. They didn't know what was coming. But you did. You prepared. You don't need to scrounge in the dirt and fight with the Invader. Your bunker is safer than any place else. You'll wait them all out if you have to.

Homesteader: If a man wants to survive in the long term, he has to have land. He has to work it and tend to it if he wants it to provide for him. A man can provide for others, too, if he wishes.

Machine: If you're going to make it for very long, you'll need *stuff*. And *things*. Things gotta get done. Can't sit around all day, or things won't get done. Gotta do the things to get the stuff. You get the stuff, you can keep living. Got it?

Nobody: Hey, you're a nobody. If you don't always want to be that way, then step up.

Shining Armor: People look up to you. You don't know why, but they always have. They look to you for answers, for action, and inspiration. And from you, they don't need flowery speeches or swagger. You don't need to pretend you're smart or tough. Just be real with them and they'll trust you with their lives.

Slinger: The Invader put you in a survival situation. Real world shit. Kill or be killed; that kind of shit. You can make it. Be smart, be quick, and never hesitate.

Introducing...

THE BEST FRIEND

Most people are alone in this world, but you? You got your bros. Bros look out for each other. Bros never go against each other. And when there are questions, bros go to the charismatic leader. That's you. Maybe you buy that and maybe you don't, but they need you. So what are you really into them for?

Creating a Best Friend

To create your best friend, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: fraternity/sorority alpha, band frontman, popular kid, gang leader, spirited coach

Look:

dress: stylish, uniform, athletic, preppy, black leather
face: admiring, stern, friendly, cocky
body: large, thin, athletic, sexy
eyes: watchful, thoughtful, strategizing, bright

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +0, Meat +2, Blood +0, Face +2, Brain -1
Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face +2, Brain -1
Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face +2, Brain -1
Heart +1, Meat +2, Blood +0, Face +1, Brain -1

Best Friend Moves:

you get this one:

Peer pressure: At the beginning of the session, or during downtime in play, your buddies will come to you to see if you want to roll with them as they pursue their desires. If you do, take 1-bond (max 3-bond) with them when it's over. At any time, you can trade bond one-for-one for the following:

- +1 on a roll for or against your buddies
- have some or all of your buddies appear when you need them
- stop them from doing something stupid or dangerous
- they fight as a gang against your enemies
- they take one order from someone you delegate
- use one of the bonuses listed among your buddies options

also choose 1

Bros before those: your buddies are on guard to protect you at all times. If they can, they will step between you and any threats. They do this even if the threat isn't real or if it's very small. If the threat is too big for them to handle, they will do their best to remove you safely from the scene. When you don't want your buddies to step in, **roll+face:**

10+ they'll back off and they won't give you any shit about it

7-9 they do as you say, but the MC chooses one:

- *they stick around anyway*
- *they take petty revenge*
- *they seek your approval some other way*
- *they're not so quick to help you next time*

Huddle up: when you round up and bring in your buddies for advice, to lay out a plan, or to inspire them, **roll+heart:**

10+ choose three from the list below

- *they provide aid on your next endeavor*
- *they tell you what they think you should do*
- *they cover you if you have to do some bad shit*
- *they bring forth something you require*
- *they start a party or game, melting stress from all who partake*
- *they perform a menial task without complaint*

7-9 choose two

Good game: when you want to **ask someone a favor**, **roll+heart** instead of roll+face. On a miss, they also get +1Hx with you.

First on the field: if you're **helping out** someone who is injured or stressed, you do so as if you rolled a 10+

Hot Dog Bullshit: you can impress and entertain with your reckless antics. When you **put your back into it**, and there is an audience watching you, add the following to your result:

10+ choose three people from the audience and tell them one of these:

- *you both get +1Hx with each other*
- *you both melt 1-stress*
- *you both get +1 to your next roll*
- *they must give you water or food worth 1-supply*
- *they must meet you later*

7-9 choose one from the audience

on a miss you suffer harm, stress, or embarrassment

Gear:

fashion according to your looks, and matching uniforms for your buddies (you detail)

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

a pistol (2-harm +supply +close), bludgeon (2-harm +hand), or small blade (2-harm +hand +splatter +discreet)

5-supply in food and meds

2 sources of entertainment

a group of buddies who have been with you since the end of everything, and who share similar interests and values

choose 2 sources of entertainment from the list below:

- *sports equipment (including 1-armor worth of padding and helmets)*
- *3-supply in booze, drugs, or energy drinks*
- *musical instruments (melt 1-stress when played; can also melt stress for others by playing for them)*
- *a huge collection of digital movies and the necessary gear to play them*

- *groupies, wannabes, or hangers-on who are eager to please*
- *stimulating conversation with each other (+1Hx to everyone involved)*

tell us about your **buddies**: by default you have **5** buddies, **no** weapons, they're **decent guys** (+1 to heart rolls), and they **aren't idiots** (+1 to brain rolls).

choose two:

- *you have **6-10** buddies*
- *they're not **decent guys**, and they think they're **tough** (+1face when acting like a badass)*
- *you have **an assortment of clubs, pipes, chains, and knives** (2-harm +hand +splatter)*
- ***smarter than most** (they can **manipulate the signal**)*
- *you have **2-3** buddies and **you're all really close** (start with 1-bond)*
- *they're not **decent guys**, and they're **hard as nails** (+1blood when you gang up on someone)*
- ***they are genuinely nice people** (melt 1-stress when they are doing friendly or helpful things for others)*
- ***all they want do is party** (choose another **source of entertainment**)*
- *they're **good out here** (+1 to **scrounge** or **survivor** moves)*

also choose two:

- *they're **weird as fuck***
- *they **can't fight worth shit***
- *they **don't listen to you***
- *they **only just tolerate your ass***
- *they're not **decent guys**, and they're **destructive***
- *they **can't keep their hands to themselves***
- *they're **lazy as shit***

Hx:

On your turn:

You see one of them as the weakest link. Tell them Hx-2.

You see one of them as the big dog around here. Tell them Hx+2

Ask everyone else if they are one of your buddies. If they are, tell them Hx+1. If not, tell them Hx+0

On others' turns:

If you think they are cool, add 1 to whatever they tell you.

If you think they are a lame loser, subtract 1 from whatever they tell you.

May I Introduce?: When you meet someone new and you get a chance to look them over and chat them up, **roll+meat**: 10+ ask 3, 7-9 ask 2

- *What is this person into?*
- *Will this person sleep with me?*
- *Are they impressed by me?*
- *How can I make them one of my buddies?*
- *Would they be cool to party with?*
- *What do my buddies think about them?*

On a miss, tell the MC if you think this person is even worth your time.

Best Friend Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 heart (max +2)
- +1 meat (max +3)
- +1 face (max +3)
- get another best friend move
- get another best friend move
- change something about your *buddies*
- change something about your *buddies*
- change something about your *buddies*
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It
- True Survivor

Introducing

THE BLANKET

Lonely World is cold. The lights are all out, and boogeymen are in every closet and under every bed. People need to survive, but they also need warmth. They need to put their hands in someone else's. They need to know that someone is there for them; that someone cares. You wear compassion on your shoulders, and can give it freely to all that you meet. You take care of others, and they will take care of you. It's a simple idea, and something you're good at. Make it work for you.

Creating a Blanket

To create your Blanket, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before:

young child, student, invalid, retiree, stay-at-home parent, desirable young adult

Look:

dress: rags, cartoon characters, casual clothes, flower-print, a blanket

face: sweet, matronly, adorable, handsome, cherubic

body: fertility goddess, warm and large, sexy and natural, undeveloped, aging, frail, waifish

eyes: soulful, captivating, teary, youthful, joyous, innocent

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +2, Meat -1, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +1

Heart +1, Meat -1, Blood -1, Face +2, Brain +1

Heart +2, Meat -1, Blood -1, Face +2, Brain +0

Heart +1, Meat -1, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +2

Blanket Moves

choose one of these two:

__give by taking: People like to spend time with you because you make them feel special, cared for, or relaxed. When you dedicate some time alone with someone and tend to their emotional needs, **roll+heart:** on a hit, you melt off 1-stress from them. 10+, you gain +1Hx with them as well.

On a miss one or both of you feels awkward, you get -1Hx with each other

__personal entertainer: when you dedicate some time alone with one person or a small group, and you perform an act, tell them stories, or make them forget, **roll+face:** on a hit, you melt off 1-stress from everybody. 10+ they also get +1 to their next roll.

On a miss you say the wrong thing. everyone leaves and you suffer 1-stress

And then choose 2 more:

__I don't need you!: In battle or during some drama, you can ignore all attempts to **help** or **interfere** with you. You can also choose people by name to allow to help or interfere.

__I need you: if you are **dying** or **cracking up** (past 9 on the harm or stress spiral), you get **+1face** (max +3)

__safe if I hide: if you need to escape from someone trying to hurt you, **roll+brain** and you find an exit that they don't notice or can't fit through.

10+ you're gone

7-9 you get in, but you're stuck for a while

__everybody stop!: You can break tense moments. When the worst is about to come out of people **roll+heart:**

10+ no one can initiate violence until you've said your piece. NPCs will back off, *for now*.

7-9 NPCs don't start anything, but they don't leave either. PCs can start fighting only if they **seize the moment**.

__soak up everything: when someone dedicates time to helping you learn or gives you advice, **roll+brain:** on a hit you get a +1 to your next roll if you use what they told you. 10+ they mark experience for it

Gear

You get:

fashion according to your looks

a backpack, lunchbox, or messenger bag with mementos, books, and other personal items.

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

1-supply in junk food

1-supply of soap, candy, tea, or cigarettes

Either a *very special toy* (+handle when played with), a trusty or adorable *pet* (+handle when healthy), or a *photograph of the good times*

(+handle when you talk to others about it). Describe it for everyone. Tell them what it looks like, where you got it, and what its name is.

Hx:

On your turn:

One of them has been taking care of you, at least more than anyone else ever has. Tell that player Hx+2

You don't think one of them is as tough as they seem. Tell them Hx+2.

You've been spending very special time with one of them, whatever that means. Tell them Hx+2.

Tell everyone else Hx+1. You love attention and you make yourself available to everyone.

On the others' turns:

You make snap decisions on whether or not you like a person. Whatever number another player gives you, either add or subtract 1. This can be for any reason at all.

At the end, find the character with the highest Hx on your sheet. Ask that player which of your stats is the most interesting, and highlight it. The MC will have you highlight a second stat too.

May I Introduce?: When you meet a new character, **roll+face:** 10+ ask three; 7-9 ask one.

- *Does this person have any pressing issues?*
- *Is this person being less than genuine?*
- *Are they a probable threat to the group?*
- *What do they need the most in the world right now?*
- *How do they feel about me?*
- *Will they take attention away from me?*

On a miss, tell the MC if you think they need you or if you need them more.

Blanket Improvement

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 heart (max +3)
- +1 face (max +3)
- +1 brain (max +3)
- get another blanket move
- get another blanket move
- get another blanket move
- become part of a **family** or **pack** of survivors
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It

__True Survivor

Introducing...

THE COMPASS

we need direction. we need leadership. we need harmony and cohesion with each other, the natural world, and all the universe. we need to remember to be human.

Creating a Compass

To create your compass, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: activist, preacher, teacher, parks and forest service, volunteer, unlikely hero

Look:

dress: casual, tattered suit, ragged survival, official uniform, camouflage

face: calm, stern, tired, open

body: lean, ragged, dirty, tanned, toned

eyes: wary, searching, unshakable, observing

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +2, Meat +1, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +0

Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood +0, Face +1, Brain +0

Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +1

Heart +2, Meat -1, Blood -2, Face +2, Brain +1

Compass Moves:

choose 3

Show me the way: You can use your *guidebook* to **look for bars**. when you do, **roll+heart** instead of roll+brain.

follow me to delivery: During a group crisis, speak to your people and give to them the most *humane, civilized, or best chance* solution. **Roll+heart**. On a 10+ any PC who believes you holds 3. NPCs believe you and either make it happen or tell you exactly why they can't. 7-9 PCs hold 1. NPCs get close, but need something extra. If they act according to your advice, they can spend hold one-for-one to get +1 to a **+heart** roll or to **melt 1-stress**.

Moral weight: When you give up something of yours to provide aid or assistance to others, melt 1-stress.

Judgmental: If you witness or have proof of someone in the group doing some bad shit, you can expose it to everyone. You **talk slick** to everyone in attendance as if you rolled a 10+.

I know what you did: you can look into people and bring forth truth from them. When you **see through someone**, **roll+heart** instead of roll+Hx.

Words as weapons: you can use impassioned, belittling, or accusatory speech to hurt and intimidate. When you **commit a violence, roll+face**, and instead of harm you inflict 2-stress. NPCs will *back away slowly, turn tail and run, or give up what you want* (your choice) if they take more than 4-stress.

Gear:

fashion according to your looks
2-supply worth of survival gear
2-supply worth of food, water, and meds
A *guidebook* that provides knowledge, wisdom, or solace to you (+handle). Tell everyone what it is, how pristine or ragged it is, and how it will save all of them.

Hx:

On your turn:
One of them needs your guidance most of all. Tell them Hx+2
One of them has been reluctant to let you in. Tell them Hx-2
Tell everyone else Hx+1

On others turns:
Choose out of everyone who you think will fall behind. Add 1 to whatever they tell you.
One of them thinks you'll be easy to take advantage of. Subtract 1 from whatever they tell you.

May I introduce?: when you meet someone new, ask how they are lost. They can tell the truth if they want. If they do, **roll+heart**. On a hit, choose one of you to mark experience. 10+, you both get +1Hx with each other too.

Compass Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 heart (max +3)
- +1 meat (max +2)
- +1 meat (max +2)
- +1 face (max +2)
- +1 brain (max +2)
- get another compass move
- get another compass move
- get a **pack** of assistants, congregates, or students
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It
- True Survivor

Introducing...

THE DEVIANT

The Invader came and changed everyone. Except you. You are the same; disconnected from a world where only flesh and meat is real. But your cloaks and shadows are gone. You are out in the open, where everyone can see your secrets. What's everyone going to think when they find out about you? Do you care? How fucked up are you really?

Creating a Deviant

To create your deviant, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: serial killer, secret predator, violent marauder, Invader worshipper, deranged convict

Look:

dress: filthy scrounge, leather and spikes, dark hood, long coat, average wear

face: solemn, mischief, scarred, masked, non-descript

body: tall, awkward, muscle-fat, wiry, average

eyes: dark, piercing, wild, lazy, red, staring, blank

Choose one set:

Heart -2, Meat +0, Blood +3, Face +0, Brain +2

Heart -2, Meat +1, Blood +3, Face +2, Brain +0

Heart -2, Meat +0, Blood +3, Face +1, Brain +1

Heart -2, Meat +2, Blood +3, Face +0, Brain +0

Deviant Moves:

choose 3

__Hide the evidence: when you need to conceal your crime, **roll+brain**.

On a hit, name your cover and it's yours. 10+ you get a +1 to **talk slick** concerning the topic, *forever*.

on a miss, you skipped over something vital or obvious

__Cold-hearted: you do not suffer stress when other people die. Anyone who witnesses your non-reaction gets +1Hx with you.

__Suffering of others: whenever you draw blood from a living thing, you melt 1-stress. If they are helpless while you do it, you melt an additional 1-stress.

__Deep web: you get a **laptop** and you can use it to **manipulate the signal**.

__Any old sharp thing: when you need a weapon to cut, stab, or slice someone up, **roll+blood**.

10+ you find a knife or a piece of glass or a lawnmower blade or whatever you want (2-harm +hand +splatter)

7-9 as above, but it's only good for one hit and then it breaks

__Shotgun surgeon: your attacks never splatter unless you want them to, but they paint the room when they do

Gear:

fashion according to your looks, including (if you want) a piece of homemade armor worth 1-armor.

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

A pistol (2-harm +supply +close), shotgun (3-harm +supply +close +splatter +area), or hunting rifle (3-harm, +supply +far)

a hatchet, machete, or set of small knives (2-harm +hand +splatter +discreet)

3-supply in food and ammo

Hx:

On your turn:

One of them is totally oblivious to you. Tell them Hx-2

One of them has been keeping you close. Tell them Hx+1

Tell everyone else Hx-1. You keep your real self hidden.

On others turns:

Most people are like cardboard to you. Subtract 1 from whatever everyone else tells you.

Choose who you most want to see in a vulnerable spot. Forget whatever they tell you, make it Hx+2 instead.

May I Introduce?: when you meet someone new, tell the MC what you would like to do to them. If you don't want them to know about it, **roll+blood**. 10+ they have no idea. 7-9 they get a creepy vibe from you.

Deviant Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

__ +1 meat (max +3)

__ +1 meat (max +3)

__ +1 brain (max +3)

__ get another deviant move

__ get another deviant move

__ get a **pet** that shares your tastes

__ get a **lover** that you keep hidden

__ get a **wheel** or **bunker**

__ get a move from another playbook

__ get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

__ +1 to any stat (max +3)

__ Create a Second Character to Play

__ Change Your Survival Guide

__ Choose Your Own Exit

__ Getting Used to It

__ True Survivor

Introducing...

THE ESCAPEE

surviving the end of everything was like breaking out of prison, man! Time to live it up and do whatever you want!

Creating an Escapee

To create your escapee, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: ex-con, libertine, anarchist, factotum, born free, live and let live

Look:

dress: casual, stolen, black leather, minimal, savage
face: beaten, scarred, free, natural, young
body: lean, hungry, healthy, marked
eyes: cunning, searching, light, open

Choose one set of stats:

Heart -1, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face +1, Brain +1
Heart -2, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face +1, Brain +2
Heart -2, Meat +2, Blood +1, Face +2, Brain +0
Heart -2, Meat +0, Blood +1, Face +2, Brain +2

Escapee Moves:

choose 2

Ass, grass, or cash: when you give someone a ride, **roll+face**. 10+, hold 3. 7-9 hold 1.

Your passenger can trade hold one-for-one by doing one of the following:

- *have sex with you (melts 2-stress)*
- *fill up the tank (2-supply in fuel)*
- *replace something you lost*
- *give you a gift worth at least 1-supply*
- *protect you or your wheels from imminent danger*

you can also spend your hold at any time on one of the following:

- *you get a secret or rumor out of them (and +1Hx)*
- *you can ignore an attempt by them to keep you from something you want*
- *you get +1 to act against them*

One step ahead: when you **seize the moment** to avoid or escape a bad situation, **roll+brain** instead of roll+heart.

Nomadic: Being on the open road makes you feel free as a bird. If you spend a suitable amount of time out there (say a full day or game session), you melt 2-stress. The bad stuff is (you have a failure with your wheel).

Always the hero: you get a +1 to **talk slick** if it comes with a story of your amazing adventures.

Keep it running: when you're in a bad situation and you want to get to your wheel, **roll+meat**. 10+, you're in the seat with time to spare 7-9 you can make it if you take something with you or leave something behind. On a miss, you have serious car trouble

Modified ride: your *wheels* have been pimped out fo sho. Choose three of the following:

- +1armor (add **weakness: slow**)
- mounted weapon (machinegun, grenade launcher, or flamethrower)
- flames, decals, lights, rims (+1 to **talk slick**)
- booming sound system (add **weakness: loud** and **strength: party**)
- fuel economy (remove **weakness: guzzler** or add **strength: efficient**)
- independent suspension (add **strength: control**)
- GPS (+1 to **look for bars**)
- nitro (spend 1-supply to add **strength: acceleration**)

Gear:

You get:
fashion according to your looks
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
3-supply in ammo and fuel
A pair of pistols (3-harm +supply +close), a shotgun (3-harm +supply +close +splatter +area), or a combat rifle (3-harm, +supply +close/far +area)
a **wheel** that you detail

Hx:

On your turn:
One of them keeps you around, just for the company. Tell them Hx+1.
One of them has been on a long trip with you. Tell them Hx+2.
Tell everybody else Hx+0. You don't hide yourself, but you're careful not to give away too much.

On other's turns:
One of these people bores the ever-living shit out of you. Subtract 1 from what they tell you.
Pick who you think will be the most fun to mess with. Add 1 to what they tell you.

May I Introduce?: meeting new people doesn't impress you much. You can ask them a question or two, which they don't have to answer truthfully. Or not. No pressure.

Escapee Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- ___+1 meat (max +3)
- ___+1 face (max +3)
- ___+1 face (max +3)
- ___+1 brain (max +3)
- ___get another escapee move
- ___get another escapee move
- ___get a **lover** who is a real ride-or-die bitch
- ___get a **gang** or **buddies** and the **peer pressure** move
- ___get a move from another playbook
- ___get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- ___+1 to any stat (max +3)

- __ Create a Second Character to Play
- __ Change Your Survival Guide
- __ Choose Your Own Exit
- __ Getting Used to It
- __ True Survivor

Introducing...

THE FALLEN STAR

You used to have it all. You were talented enough to hustle the system and get whatever you wanted. Everyone knew your face, or at least your name. Now that old system is gone. Time to see how talented you really are.

Creating a Fallen Star

To create your fallen star, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: Hollywood glitz, double-platinum hit, Washington magnate, cover story CEO, pro sports

Look:

dress: glam, trendy, expensive, custom-tailored, designer
 face: hidden, gorgeous, expressive, familiar
 body: trim, sporty, built, model
 eyes: sunglasses, scared, vacant, knowing, arresting

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +0, Meat +2, Blood +0, Face +2, Brain -1
 Heart +1, Meat +0, Blood +1, Face +2, Brain -1
 Heart -1, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face +1, Brain +0
 Heart -2, Meat +2, Blood +2, Face +0, Brain +1

Fallen Star Moves:

Choose 2:

__ **Natural athlete:** you get +1meat (max +3)

__ **Dime among nickles:** When you would normally roll+face to **ask for a favor**, roll+meat instead.

__ **Cleverly disingenuous:** if you single someone out to **slick talk**, and you have an engaged audience, you do so as if you rolled a 10+

__ **Dedicated entourage:** when you have a problem and you want your **bodyguards, lover, or pack** to take care of it, **roll+face:**

10+ everybody wants to please you so they rush off to do it
 7-9 they'll do it, but first they need bribing, assistance, or concrete assurance
 on a miss, you can choose to push them or let it go

__ **Personal pharmacy:** you keep a variety of supplements on you. When you want to self-medicate, you can spend from your personal stash. You can spend up to 3-supply in this way. **roll+supply** spent. On a hit, choose one from the list below.

- *extra energy gives you +1 to your next roll*
- *gain 1 T-harm. if you take harm, remove this temporary bit first.*
- *melt 1-stress*
10+, there are no nasty side effects
7-9, you're sluggish, sick, or stupid until it wears off
on a miss, you're fucked up and it's not good for anybody

Gear:

You get:
fashion according to your looks and some additional fashions with different looks
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
3-supply in food, alcohol, or drugs
baubles, jewelry, and nonsense not necessarily worth anything (you detail) but maybe worth 2-supply to the right person
two **luxuries** that keep you happy

choose two **luxuries**:

- *a pair of **bodyguards** that you have maintained your contract with*
- *a **wheel** that was too expensive to leave behind (you detail)*
- *a **laptop** that will let you **manipulate the signal***
- *a designer **pet** with a cute or ironic name*
- *a **lover** who is protective and just as beautiful*
- *a **pack** of personal assistants*

Hx:

On your turn:
choose who you think will be the most useful. tell them Hx+1
choose who you think is the most beautiful, talented, or hip. tell them Hx+2
choose who you think is the biggest loser. tell them Hx-2

On others' turns:
decide whether or not this person fits into your clique. Add or subtract 1 depending on how you see them.

May I Introduce?: when someone sees you for the first time, roll+face.

10+ They can ask you three questions about yourself. If you answer them truthfully, you both get +1Hx with each other. If an NPC, you get +1 against them in the future.

7-9 They get to ask one question.

on a miss, the MC gets to pick one:

- *they know you, and think you suck*
- *they confuse you with your character*
- *they infringe upon some personal shit*
- *they won't leave you alone*

Fallen Star Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- ___+1 meat (max +3)
- ___+1 heart (max +2)
- ___+1 blood (max +2)

- __+1 face (max +3)
- __get a **place to stay** and the **my way or you can die today** move
- __get another falling star move
- __get another falling star move
- __take on another **lover** or **pet**
- __get a move from another playbook
- __get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- __+1 to any stat (max +3)
- __Create a Second Character to Play
- __Change Your Survival Guide
- __Choose Your Own Exit
- __Getting Used to It
- __True Survivor

Introducing...

THE GRAVEDIGGER

you're a brutal jerk who doesn't get along with others well. or maybe you're just misunderstood; out of your place and time. but the world before you is looking more and more accommodating to your personal style. you are good at putting bodies in the ground and you don't mind getting your hands dirty. they all need you, but no one wants to admit it. that's fine, as long as they stay out of your way

Creating a Gravedigger

To create your Gravedigger, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: drunk asshole, fearless killer, savage warrior, pushy bully

Look:

dress: uniform, overalls, dark clothes, filth and grime, savage wear
 face: hard, grumpy, scarred, sloping, primal
 body: bulky, massive, sweaty, stacked
 eyes: hard, cruel, sad, empty, fiery, stone

Choose one set:

Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +3, Face +0, Brain -2
 Heart +0, Meat +2, Blood +3, Face -2, Brain +0
 Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +3, Face -1, Brain -1
 Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood +3, Face -2, Brain +0

Gravedigger Moves:

Choose 3:

__It's you or me: when you are about to die, you can sacrifice somebody you know to save yourself. They have to be on the scene, and they can't be acting against you already. **roll+blood:** 10+ you stabilize while they deal with your problems. 7-9 if they do it, they mark experience. If they don't, too bad for your shit. On a miss, you're both dragged into it.

Hateful release: When you go out to kill Invaders for fun, **roll+blood:** 10+, choose three from the list below.

- *you melt off 1-stress*
- *the Invader doesn't cause you any problems*
- *you come out even on supplies*
- *you get one or a few of them real good, providing a story*
- *you find something you weren't expecting to see*
- *it doesn't take you all day*

7-9, choose one.

On a miss, the MC gets to pick one or two from below:

- the Invader has you cornered
- the Invader follows you back
- you suffer a personal terror
- you limp back, and you may die soon
- someone you like suffers for it
- you picked up something weird, harmful, or evil.

Ain't never skeered: whenever you would suffer stress, it's -1. If you're already under the influence of a stress reducer that's higher, use it instead; they don't stack.

We got a badass over here: when someone stands up to you or threatens you with violence, **roll+blood.** On a hit, you can laugh it off. NPCs will think twice about fucking with you, and player characters are -1 against you. on a 10+, you get a +1 to turn it back around on them.

Smash them to jelly: you can do +1harm to a deadly enemy, but anyone who witnesses it gets +1Hx with you.

Ogrish: when you would suffer harm during a fight, **roll+meat:**

on a hit, it's -1harm. 10+ choose one:

- *+1 to hit them back*
- *+1 T-harm*
- *cause them 1-stress*

Gear:

you get:
fashion according to your looks including a helmet or piece of junk-
wear worth 1-armor
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
one *splatter* weapon
2-supply worth of food or ammo
either a **family** or **kin**. Give them names and detail your relationship.

choose one splatter weapon:

heavy crowbar (3-harm +hand +splatter)
nail bat (3-harm +hand +splatter)
club of rebar and concrete (3-harm +hand +splatter)
fire axe (3-harm +hand +splatter)
heavy chain (2-harm +close +splatter)
oversized pistol (3-harm +close +splatter +loud +supply)
power tool (3-harm +hand +splatter +loud +supply)

Hx:

On your turn:

You traded blows with someone here. Tell them Hx+2

One of them earned your respect with their strength. Tell them Hx+1

Tell everyone else Hx+0

On others' turns:

Ask them if they are open about putting you in your place. If they are, add 1 to what they tell you.

May I Introduce?: When you meet someone new, tell the MC if you think you could beat them in a scrap. Then **roll+blood**. On a hit, the MC will tell you if you're right. 10+ you get a +1 to act against them or get away from them, just once.

On a miss, they can sense you eyeing them up and down and they won't forget it.

Gravedigger Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

+1 heart (max +3)

+1 face (max +2)

+1 meat (max +3)

+1 meat (max +3)

get another gravedigger move

get another gravedigger move

get another gravedigger move

become part of a **gang** and the **peer pressure** move

get a move from another playbook

get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

+1 to any stat (max +3)

Create a Second Character to Play

Change Your Survival Guide

Choose Your Own Exit

Getting Used to It

True Survivor

Introducing

THE HOLDOUT

you were prepared when everyone said you were crazy. Now they're all dead. You survived the end of everything, but has your isolation prepared you for the Lonely World ahead?

Creating a Holdout

To create your Holdout, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: survivalist, veteran, fundamentalist, recluse, internet prophet

Look:

dress: survival gear, utility gear, warm layers
face: paranoid, shifty, full, comfortable
body: ragged, creaky, pale, healthy, couch potato
eyes: tired, sunken, wide, fearful, relaxed

Choose one set:

Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face -1, Brain +1
Heart +1, Meat +2, Blood +1, Face -2, Brain +1
Heart +0, Meat +0, Blood +2, Face -1, Brain +2
Heart +1, Meat +0, Blood +2, Face -2, Brain +2

Holdout Moves

You get this one:

Mister Fix-It: Your bunker is old or crumbling or both. When shit starts to break down, it gets less comfortable, and then starts to become a liability. At the start of the session, **roll+brain**. On a 10+, all of your fixtures are working solid. 7-9, one of them is not functioning due to a maintenance issue. The MC will tell you which one. On a miss, that, and the MC gets to choose up to 3 from below:

- *another maintenance issue has come up and it's taken down another fixture*
- *fixing one of the maintenance issues is going to cost a fuckton of supply*
- *the maintenance issue is compromising the entire bunker*
- *something bad has gotten inside*
- *something bad is being released outside*
- *you're going to need help*

Resolving the maintenance issue will bring the fixture back into play.

And then choose 1:

Lay low: when moving through the outside, you **protect your neck** as if you rolled a 10+ as long as you keep moving away from all danger.

Get the hell off my property!: you deal +1harm when defending your bunker. In addition, when trying to **slick talk** to anyone trying to get inside your bunker, you **roll+blood** instead of +face.

Preserve civilization: you get +1 when salvaging, trading for, or fighting over important (to you) historical ephemera.

Remember it like yesterday: you recall something from before the apocalypse that pertains to some immediately pressing matter. **Roll+brain**. On a hit, the MC will tell you what you did the last time this happened. 7-9, you're pretty sure you know, but you might be missing something. On a miss, you only have a vague recollection, and you might be totally off-base. Take +1 if you listen to the MC, mark experience if you try what you remember and fall short of meeting your objective.

Paranoid hillbilly: you get **+1blood** (max +3)

Gear

You get:
a hunting rifle (*2-harm +far +loud +supply*)

a pistol sidearm (2-harm +close +loud +supply) or a big knife (2-harm +hand +discreet)

1 **secret weapon**

oddmments and food worth 2-supply

fashion suitable to your look

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

Choose one **secret weapon** that stays in your bunker until you really need it:

a high-powered silenced sniper rifle (3-harm +far +supply)

a mounted machinegun (3-harm +close/far +area +splatter +supply)

a historical sword (3-harm +hand +valuable)

a land mine (4-harm +splatter)

Bunker

Describe your bunker. Is it (choose 1)

- *A hole in the ground?*
- *Like a bank vault?*
- *In a tower?*
- *A cabin hidden among the rocks/trees/winds?*
- *In a secret room in the old tunnels?*
- *In a natural cave?*

You have electrical power here. How did you manage that? (choose 1)

- *Solar panels*
- *nuclear reactor*
- *hydroelectric*
- *fuel-burning*
- *a far-off power grid*

How do you keep intruders out? (choose 1, 2, or 3)

- *retina scan*
- *electronic key*
- *heavy blast door*
- *disguise/camouflage*
- *high fences and razor wire*
- *guard animals*
- *hidden cameras*
- *alarm system*

Fixtures (choose 3)

- *armored walls* (+1 armor when defending the bunker)
- *armory* (there are 3 shotguns or rifles, 4 pistols and 2-supply worth of ammo)
- *machine shop* (lets you make repairs)
- *communications array* (you can **manipulate the signal**)
- *first-aid kit* (3-supply worth of meds)
- *water filtration* (you have clean water)
- *pantry stash* (5-supply worth of food)
- *leisurely atmosphere* (art, rugs, beads, lighting, incense, hookah, etc)
- *environmental controls* (you keep things comfortable)
- *back-up generator* (in case your main power source fails)

- *hi-tech entertainment* (massive HD TV with surround sound and an extensive library of music and movies)
- *massive storage unit* (a place to keep your big shit)

maintenance issues (choose 2)

- *water damage*
- *infestation*
- *mold/mildew/plant growth*
- *rusting/corroding metal*
- *environmental hazard*
- *power failure*
- *fuel consumption*
- *aesthetic deterioration*
- *bad components*
- *electrical short*

Hx:

On your turn:

One of them has spent some time in your bunker. Tell that player Hx+2
 You like to brag to someone in particular. Tell that player Hx+2
 Tell everyone else Hx-1

On the others' turns:

Your isolation precludes you from getting to know your neighbors.
 Whatever number they tell you, give it -1 and write it next to the character's name.

At the end, find the character with the highest Hx on your sheet. Ask that player which of your stats is the most interesting, and highlight it. The MC will have you highlight a second stat too.

May I Introduce?: When you meet a new character, you can ask the MC how they are going to try to break into your bunker.

Holdout Improvement:

Whenever you roll a highlighted stat, and whenever you reset your Hx with someone, mark an experience circle. When you mark the 5th, improve and erase.

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 blood (max +3)
- +1 brain (max +3)
- permanently take care of one of your maintenance issues
- permanently take care of one of your maintenance issues
- install two new fixtures and get a maintenance issue
- install two new fixtures and get a maintenance issue
- get **bodyguards** for security
- get a **pack** of scavengers to trade with
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- __ +1 to any stat (max +3)
- __ Create a Second Character to Play
- __ Change Your Survival Guide
- __ Choose Your Own Exit
- __ Getting Used to It
- __ True Survivor

Introducing...

THE HOMESTEADER

the government couldn't hold their territory, but by God you will hold yours. What do you have to offer your neighbors? Will they get food, solace, a home? Or blood and bullets and a keep out?

Creating a Homesteader

To create your Homesteader, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: farmer, master of the house, real estate developer, guy with the keys

Look:

dress: utility, overalls, clean formal, uniform
 face: downturned, sunburned, wrinkled, stoic, authoritative
 body: muscled, thin, fit, large, fat, aging
 eyes: hard, dark, fearful, soulful, old frames

Stats

Choose one set:

Heart +2, Meat +2, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain -1
 Heart +2, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain +0
 Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face +1, Brain +0
 Heart +1, Meat +2, Blood +1, Face -1, Brain +0

Homesteader Moves:

You get both of these:

My way or you can die today: when you allow someone to stay on your property as a welcomed guest, **roll+heart:** 10+ hold 3. 7-9 hold 2. Spend your hold with them one-for-one, at any time to give them something to do:

- *help out with the **chores** (+1 to **up with the rooster**)*
- *fetch something you need*
- *give up their weapon*
- *leave the property*
- *pay up 1-supply*
- *complete a **project** that needs attention*
 If they do it and it meets your approval, they mark experience.

They can also spend the hold you have over them by doing one of the following without your asking:

- *defending the property from immediate attack*
- *improving the functionality of something*
- *making friends with your family*

- *providing medical care to one of your people or animals*
If they do it and it meets your approval, they get +1Hx with you.

Up with the rooster: the property needs tending to in order to produce. Unworked **chores** prevent your property from providing **profits**. At the beginning of each session or during downtime in play, ask the MC what chores will be important for now. Then **roll+meat**. 10+ the chores get done and you get all the profit, but the MC will tell you one from the list below:

- *one of your chores needs something extra*
- *everyone is exhausted. -1meat until you get some rest*
- *it was bad out there. you suffer 2-stress.*
- *one of your chores suffers the bad stuff in parentheses and remains unworked*
- *somebody gets hurt*
- *Invader showed up*

7-9 the MC tells you three from above
on a miss, something terrible prevents any chores from getting done, and there is no profit because of it

Gear:

fashion according to your looks, and additional fashions to suit other looks if you want
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
a couple of rifles (3-harm, +supply +far) and shotguns (3-harm, +supply +close +splatter +area) for hunting or defense
either a **family** that lives with you, a **gang** that protects your resources, or a **pack** of workers (+1 to **up with the rooster**).

A Place to Stay: The property was yours before the end of everything, and you've managed to keep it. Describe your property to the group.

What is it? (choose 1 **property**)

- *farm*
- *skyscraper*
- *relief center*
- *gated community*
- *city block*
- *military base*
- *shopping center*
- *factory*

What does it provide? (choose 4 **profits**)

- *clean water (1-supply worth of water)*
- *grand meals (1-supply worth of food)*
- *a spot of serenity and peace (melt 1-stress)*
- *a defensible position (+1armor when defending)*
- *work animals (utility pets that provide 1-supply worth of food)*
- *a community of survivors (10-20 individuals that contribute to the property and generally get along well with each other)*
- *tools and workspace (1-supply worth of tools and parts)*
- *herbal remedies (1-supply of meds)*

- *live entertainment (melt 1-stress)*
- *unlimited scrounge (+1 to **scavenge** or **salvage** rolls)*
- *a **wheel** (you detail)*
- *a communications array (you can **manipulate the signal**)*

What does it need to keep going? (choose 3 **chores**)

- *patrols (infiltrated)*
- *a lookout (gatecrashers)*
- *protection payment (looted)*
- *fuel (dry)*
- *livestock care (sick, hungry, or irritable)*
- *field work (wilted, dusty, or poisoned)*
- *constant repairs (broke down)*
- *scavenge (strapped)*
- *a special **project** (forgotten)*

Hx:

On your turn:

One of them has been putting in more than their fair share. Tell them

Hx+2.

One of them has done nothing to help anyone. Tell them Hx-1.

One of them threatens your property. Tell them Hx+1.

Tell everyone else Hx+0.

On others turns:

Whatever everyone tells you, add +1 to it. You depend on clear understanding of who is in charge around here.

May I Introduce?: When you meet a new character, ask what their business is on your property. Then **roll+heart:** 10+ ask three questions. 7-9 ask one.

- *are they telling the truth?*
- *whereabouts are they from?*
- *what do they need that I could provide?*
- *what do they have to offer me?*
- *what kind of threats do they bring?*

On a miss, tell the MC if you shove them off your property or if you let them stay.

If you are off the property, they get to ask one question instead of you. If you choose not to answer truthfully, it's **talking slick**.

Homesteader Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- ___ +1 heart (max +3)
- ___ +1 meat (max +3)
- ___ +1 blood (max +2)
- ___ +1 brain (max +2)
- ___ get a **bunker** and the **Mr. fix-it** move
- ___ add a **family**, a **gang**, or a **pack** as above
- ___ your property provides a new profit

- __your property provides a new profit
- __get a move from another playbook
- __get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- __+1 to any stat (max +3)
- __Create a Second Character to Play
- __Change Your Survival Guide
- __Choose Your Own Exit
- __Getting Used to It
- __True Survivor

Introducing...

THE MACHINE

whatever goes wrong, you can fix it. any problem that arises, you can figure out. as long as you stay busy, everything will be fine.

Creating a Machine

To create your machine, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: auto mechanic, federal bureaucrat, gifted surgeon, focused artist, idle handyman, staunch idealist, true savant

Look:

dress: utility wear, black fashion, bland casual, pop logos, flags
 face: stern, dreaming, determined, scarred, filthy
 body: thin, pudgy, dirty, unshaven, small frame
 eyes: frustrated, accurate, lonely, wistful

Choose one set:

Heart +1, Meat +0, Blood +1, Face -1, Brain +2
 Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face -2, Brain +2
 Heart +2, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face -1, Brain +1
 Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain +1

Machine Moves:

you get this one:

Work to be done: You get **projects**, and can work them during downtime. You get two projects, and they are both at **1-progress**. Projects are finished when they hit **3-progress**. New projects start out at **0-progress**. When you start a new project, tell the MC what you want to do and how you plan on getting it done.

When you want to improve the progress on one of your projects, the MC will first tell you one or two from below:

- *you will need help*
- *you need special parts*
- *it will cost a ton of supplies*
- *the best you can do right now is a shoddy version*
- *it won't last long*

- *requires testing*

Then **roll+heart:**

10+, you do it. **+1progress** to your project.

7-9, yeah, but the **bad stuff (in parentheses)** happens.

on a miss, the **bad stuff** happens, and your **progress** is halted

projects:

- *build a weapon (it goes off)*
- *fortify a structure (a breach forms)*
- *get a vehicle going (it breaks down later)*
- *connect to the signal (it corrupts, stresses, or offends you)*
- *create a source of power (it burns, melts, or explodes)*
- *improve an existing process (you make it worse)*
- *demolish a target (you take down something else too)*
- *secure something just for yourself (it's different or gone)*

and choose one:

__A way with machines: you can create simple machines from things just laying around. when you have time and plenty of parts, tell the MC what you want to make. By default it's a **shoddy replica**, it **won't last long**, and **you used up all the parts**. **roll+brain:** 10+ choose three from below. 7-9 choose 1.

- *its quality is near-perfect*
- *it will last for as long as you need it*
- *there's enough parts left to make more*
- *it's a weapon with a special tag*
- *it's a weapon and does +1harm*

__Focused and determined: when you are intent on something you need to the exclusion of all else, **roll+heart:**

10+ pick two that you get while you're going after what you need:

- *you get a +1 to do it*
- *you get 1 T-harm. remove this temporary harm first if you take harm. when you are done going after what you were going after, the T-harm goes away too*
- *you don't suffer the effects of stress, though you do still collect it*
7-9 pick one

__Circumvent obstacles: when you're in an urban or mechanical environment (a place with doors, locks, windows, vents, drains, or pipes) and you have some tools, **roll+brain**. 10+ hold 3, 7-9 hold 1. When you want to get to a place you can see from where you are, or get around something blocking the way, spend 1 to make it happen.

__War planner: when you act on the MC's advice when planning out hostile actions, take +2 to your roll instead of +1

Gear:

you get:

fashion according to your looks

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

3-supply in tools and spare parts

a pistol (2-harm +close +loud +supply) or heavy tool (3-harm +hand)

Hx:

On your turn:

One of them comes around and hangs with you occasionally. Tell them

Hx+1

You had a conversation with one of them that got really awkward. Tell them Hx+0

Tell everyone else Hx-1. You would rather work than talk to people.

On everyone else's turn:

choose which one of them you find the most interesting. Add 1 to whatever they tell you.

May I Introduce?: when you meet someone new, you are -1 to all rolls against them until you both have +1Hx with each other. With NPCs, you have to learn something about them that's new to the group.

Machine Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 heart(max +3)
- +1 meat (max +2)
- +1 brain (max +3)
- get another machine move
- get another machine move
- get a **pack** who act as your hands
- get a **wheel** and a garage full of tools
- get a **place to stay** and the **up with the rooster** move
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It
- True Survivor

Introducing...

THE NOBODY

you never thought you'd ever get this far. The Invader came and you ran. You ran, and you hid, and somehow you survived. The world now demands more of you than you ever thought it would. But for the first time you have a real opportunity to make your life worth living.

Creating a Nobody

To create your nobody, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: factory cog, cubicle drone, chronic loser, just some guy

Look

dress: business casual, ultra casual, hip fashion, survival
face: easy, average, sorta attractive
body: average, slumped, overweight, underfed
eyes: fearful, dead, eager, bright

Stats

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +1, Meat +0, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain +2
Heart +0, Meat +0, Blood +1, Face +0, Brain +2
Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood +0, Face -1, Brain +2
Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +1

Nobody Moves:

Choose 2:

Shows initiative: when **helping someone out** not currently in a battle, **roll+heart** instead of +Hx

Yes man: when **helping someone out**, if you follow their orders to the letter, you get +1Hx with them. If you go above and beyond their expectations, mark experience.

Guilty of giving too much: whenever you take 3-harm or more, take an additional point of harm and mark experience.

Works well under stress: you get +1heart (max +3)

A little bit of everything: when you think you know how to plausibly solve a situation using a small or innocuous item that you just happen to have on your person or very close to you, **roll+brain:** 10+ it's just what you needed. 7-9 you do it, but something breaks.

Hidden talent: you start play with a **survivor move** of your choice. If you choose this move later, pick a survivor move that has not already been chosen if possible.

Gear:

You get:
fashion according to your looks
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
a pistol (2-harm +supply +close), rifle (3-harm +supply +close/far), or
shotgun (3-harm +supply +close +splatter +area)
food and junk worth 2-supply

Hx:

On your turn:

Pick who you think is the best leader. Tell them Hx+2
Pick who you think is the biggest slacker. Tell them Hx-1
Tell everyone else Hx+0.

On the others' turns:

One of them sees you as a brown-noser. Take whatever they tell you subtract 1 from it.

One of them is inspiring to you. Take whatever they tell you and add 1 to it.

At the end, find the character with the highest Hx on your sheet. Ask that player which of your stats is the most interesting, and highlight it. The MC will have you highlight a second stat too.

May I Introduce?: When you meet a new character, **roll+brain:** On a 10+, ask two from the list below. 7-9, ask 1.

- *What kind of work did they used to do?*
- *What's their socio-economic background?*
- *What's a good way to start a conversation with them?*
- *How can I help them?*

On a miss, ask 1 anyway.

Nobody Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 blood (max +2)
- +1 meat (max +2)
- +1 face (max +2)
- +1 brain (max +3)
- you get **buddies** and the **peer pressure** move or a **lover**
- get another nobody move
- get another nobody move
- get another nobody move
- get a move from another playbook
- get a move from another playbook

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It
- True Survivor

Introducing...

THE SHINING ARMOR

The End took everything away from us. You might not have that fancy home or that career path anymore, but you've got something that no one else has. All of the meaning of existence, held close. It keeps you strong, keeps your head straight. It gives you something to live for.

Creating a Shining Armor

To create your Shining Armor, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: police, soldier, true believer, natural born leader, repentant badguy

Look:

dress: uniform, fatigues, plain clothes, bold colors, clean clothes

face: sharp, chiseled, handsome, pretty
body: average, fit, trim, huge
eyes: dark, bedroom, deep, bright

Choose one set of stats:

Heart +2, Meat +1, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain +0
Heart +2, Meat +1, Blood +1, Face -1, Brain +0
Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood +0, Face +0, Brain +1
Heart +2, Meat +0, Blood -1, Face +1, Brain +1

Shining Armor Moves

Choose 2:

__Kill with regret: when you **commit a violence**, **roll+heart** instead of roll+blood. Also, if you choose to suffer 1-stress for the act, mark an experience

__Fortress of solitude: when you dedicate time to isolating yourself, you get +1 to all heart rolls

__Do it for the kids: While defending the helpless from danger, you get **1 T-harm**. If you take harm, remove this temporary point first. If the danger ends, the temporary harm does as well.

__Make yourself a target: When you enter into a charged situation, **roll+heart**. On a 10+, all hostile offenders will recognize you as their most immediate threat. They won't attack anyone else except for you, and that's only if you move against them first. On a 7-9, only the toughest and well-armed offenders will attack you, the rest run for cover or hide behind bystanders. On a miss, they panic. Some flee, but most will attack you, and a few start taking hostages.

__To the rescue: when someone you care about is about to die and you have a feasible way of getting there, **roll+heart:**

10+ you get there with plenty of time. Also, if you love them, you have a +1 to any attempts to save them

7-9 you get there, but there's not much time left
on a miss, you're there, but danger is everywhere

Gear:

You get:

fashion according to your looks, including a jacket or vest worth 1-armor

a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal

a pistol (2-harm +supply +close) or shotgun(3-harm +supply +close +splatter +area)

2-supply worth of ammunition and food

something you hold as **Your Whole World**

Your Whole World: this is a special something that you've carried with you since everything ended. If you lose it, you take 4-stress.

Whatever you choose has the +handle tag, and detail it for everyone else. You get a +1 when defending it.

- a **family** held together by love
- a **universal truth** that is above the horror

- a belief in the wisdom of a higher power
- a **lover** who promised to never leave your side
- your humanity, because you will never sink to those depths
- a precious thing that has all the answers

Hx:

On your turn choose one or both:

One of them was counting on you and you failed them. Tell them Hx+2.

One of them wants what you have. Tell them Hx+2.

Tell everyone else Hx+1.

On the others' turns:

Choose which one of them you think is the most courageous. Whatever number that player tells you, add 1 to it and write it next to the character's name.

Choose which one of them you think is going to get a lot of innocent people killed. Forget whatever number they tell you, you have Hx+1 with them instead.

May I Introduce?: When you meet a new character, decide if you think they are a threat to **your whole world**. Tell the MC what you think. then **roll+heart:**

10+ the MC will tell you if you're right. You get a +1 against them when protecting **your whole world** from them, just once. Also, they can tell you're serious about it.

7-9 the MC will give you a vague idea on how threatening they are. Also, they can tell you have something valuable.

on a miss, assume whatever you want, but you can't tell anything on them.

Shining Armor Improvement

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

- +1 meat (max +2)
- +1 blood (max +2)
- +1 face (max +3)
- +1 brain (max +3)
- choose another Shining Armor move
- choose another Shining Armor move
- get a **lover, pet, or family**
- get a **pack** of survivors, rescuers, or peacekeepers
- get a move from another survival guide
- get a move from another survival guide

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

- +1 to any stat (max +3)
- Create a Second Character to Play
- Change Your Survival Guide
- Choose Your Own Exit
- Getting Used to It
- True Survivor

Introducing...

THE SLINGER

staying armed is the best survival tactic. in the end, conflict always comes down to who has more guns.

Creating a Slinger

To create your slinger, choose your life before, looks, stats, moves, gear, and Hx.

Life Before: military, gun enthusiast, wild man, range rat, born killer

Look

dress: camo, survivalist, dirty t-shirt, mostly bare, brown leather
face: dirty, bony, hard, still
body: lean, trim, thin, hungry
eyes: wild, focused, hunting, cold

Choose one set:

Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +2, Face -1, Brain +0
Heart +0, Meat +0, Blood +2, Face -1, Brain +2
Heart +0, Meat +2, Blood +2, Face -2, Brain +1
Heart +1, Meat +1, Blood +2, Face -2, Brain +1

Slinger Moves:

choose two

__Excalibur: you deal +1harm with any +handle weapons that you own

__Guns are people: your weapons count as friendly NPCs. Name them and describe your relationships with them. Whenever you make it through a battle, choose which one of your weapons was there for you the most. Give it +1mood (max +3). The MC will choose one of your weapons that gets -1mood. If you use a weapon that isn't one of your people, all of your weapons get -1mood (max -3). When you dedicate time outside of a battle to one of your weapons (cleaning, casing ammo, target practice, whatever), you can ask favors of it.

roll+mood:

10+ choose three. 7-9 choose as many as you want, but each one gives your weapon -1mood.

- +1 to your next shot
- it will warn you of an incoming hostile
- +1harm on your next shot
- provide 1-armor the next time you get hit
- provide 1-supply in ammo the next time you run out
- tell you where it is if you lose it

__Built for this world: when you use a **survivor** move, **roll+blood** instead of what it normally says in the move description

__Scarred avenger: if you are suffering from 3-harm or more, you get +1 to **commit a violence**. If you die and take a disfigurement, you get **+1heart** (max +3)

__Rattlesnake: when you **seize the opportunity**, **roll+blood** instead of roll+heart

Better alone: if you are acting far away from everyone else, **roll+blood.**
10+, pick three. 7-9 pick one.

- you get +1 to any **going to war** moves
- you deal +1harm with one well-placed attack
- you are stealthy and fast-moving (+1armor)
- you come back with important information
- you are not followed

on a miss, you get stuck and need help. Anyone who comes for you gets +1Hx with you

Gear:

you get:
fashion according to your looks, including a piece of armor worth 1-armor or 2-armor
a phone or mobile device that can reach the signal
1 signature weapon
1 backup weapon
1 concealed always available weapon
1 don't give a fuck weapon
3-supply in ammo

choose a signature weapon

- machinegun (4-harm +close/far +loud +area +supply +handle)
- high-powered sniping rifle (3-harm +far +supply +handle)
- military-style assault rifle (3-harm +close +loud +area +supply +handle)
- priceless blade (3-harm +hand +handle)
- combat shotgun (3-harm +close +loud +area +supply +handle)
- crossbow (3-harm +close/far +supply +handle)
- pair of customized pistols (3-harm +close +discreet +handle)

choose a backup weapon

- hunting rifle (3-harm, +supply +far +loud)
- shotgun (3-harm, +supply +close +splatter +area)
- high-powered pistol (3-harm +close +loud +supply)
- legalized assault rifle (3-harm +close +loud +supply)

choose a concealed always available weapon

- handy blade (2-harm +hand +discreet)
- grenade (4-harm +loud +splatter)
- mouse gun (2-harm +close +discreet)
- hypodermic tranquilizers (s-harm +hand +supply +discreet)

choose a don't give a fuck weapon

- flamethrower (4-harm +close +area +supply +incend)
- RPG (4-harm +far +area +supply +splatter)
- grenade launcher (4-harm +area +supply +splatter)
- molotov cocktails (3-harm +area +incend +supply)
- homemade explosives (4-harm +area +loud +supply +splatter)
- specialty ammo added to your guns (choose two: +incend, +ap, +hp, +silver +splatter)

Hx:

On your turn choose one or both:

One of them fought and killed Invader with you. Tell them Hx+2

One of them caught you doing something embarrassing or strange. Tell them Hx+1

One of them did something nice for you for no reason. Tell them Hx+1

Tell everyone else Hx-1.

On the others' turns:

It's hard for you to get to know others. Whatever everyone tells you, give it a -1.

May I Introduce?: You judge others on how well you think they can survive and how well they can kill. When you meet someone new, ask the MC what their chances are and **roll+blood**. On a hit, the MC will tell you how well they are going to do in the harsh, brutal world.

10+ you can ask one follow-up question:

- *how good are they against Invader?*
- *have they ever killed a person?*
- *what's their greatest advantage?*
- *what kind of weapons do they got?*
- *how are they most vulnerable?*

Slinger Improvement:

Each time you improve, choose one of the following. Check it off; you can't choose it again.

+1 meat (max +3)

+1 meat (max +3)

+1 blood (max +3)

+1 brain (max +3)

choose another Slinger move

choose another Slinger move

get a **pet**, **pack**, or **lover** to help you hunt

choose another weapon from any category

get a move from another survival guide

get a move from another survival guide

Starting on your 6th improvement, you can also select from this list:

+1 to any stat (max +3)

Create a Second Character to Play

Change Your Survival Guide

Choose Your Own Exit

Getting Used to It

True Survivor

THE FEW WHO REMAIN

If a character isn't being run by a player, he's being run by the MC. Whether it's a fellow survivor, a crazed cannibal, or the Invader, they are all non-player characters. Or NPCs.

NPCs are important, but not nearly as important as the players' characters. The game and the fiction need the player characters in order to work, but not so much the NPCs. NPCs are there to help fill in the world a little bit, and of course as fresh victims for the Invader to devour. They fill in the world by being important pieces of the player characters' lives: lovers, friends, family, rivals, bitter enemies. They can also provide exposition to help drive the story forward.

Groups of NPCs are called **mobs**. Mobs can be made up of Invaders, families, buddies, gang members, or whatever. If there's a group of them acting in rough concert, then they're a mob.

NPCs are also usually counted as gear as well, in the sense that they sometimes have item tags. They are not gear for the sake of moves or anything else, really. They are people, after all.

NPCs and moves: NPCs are run by the MC, and they make MC moves because of that. When the MC needs to make a move, he can do it with an NPC. And it works both ways; when an NPC needs to do something, he does it from the MC moves. Their moves and actions may resemble the basic moves or even some survivor guide moves, but mechanically they are just making MC moves.

NPCs and stats: NPCs have invisible stats as far as heart, meat, blood, face, and brain. It's not important to keep track of the NPCs in this way, since they never roll dice. If the MC wants to keep track of the NPCs as real people, simple notes will suffice. something like: "*Leroy has much **blood** but little **face***" is just fine. This lets the MC know that when he needs an NPC to make a violent move, Leroy raises his hand first. But when a social situation is required, Leroy shrinks down and hopes he isn't called on.

It's best to think of the NPCs as action and drama instigators instead of characters with stats and moves. They follow their own ambitions to the best of their ability and act as tools for the MC.

NPCs and Hx: PC/NPC relationships are more descriptive than mechanical.

NPCs can be important to different people in different ways, meaning that their tags are only good for the character they are linked to. For example, Ben's **lover** Sheila is also **kin** with Susan and a member of Marcus' **gang**. Three separate characters need Sheila, and sometimes those needs get in the way of each other. Then people start vying for Sheila's attention and the whole thing adds tension to the group as a whole. Good drama.

The best way to keep track of who means what to whom is to list every NPC that is introduced and then the names of other NPCs and the player characters, along with a quick one-word description of their relationship. (Sheila: Ben-lover, Susan-kin, Marcus-gang)

For the purpose of moves, characters don't **help out**, **interfere with**, or **confront** NPCs the way they do each other. Doing one of these should either be an automatic success, a lead-off into an MC move, or a character making a

different move in name. NPCs who want to do one of these things to characters are really just a conduit for the MC to make a move of his own.

NPCs and harm: NPCs don't take harm the way PCs do. Depending on how tough they are and what kind of harm they are taking, they either die now or die soon. It's not really important to track harm on individual NPCs. Most NPCs are regular folks, and they'll have nearly identical stats, depending on their gear, training, and weirdness like mutations or demon possession.

When NPC blood is spilled, the MC asks himself a few questions about that NPC and the circumstances.

how great is the harm? Minor scrapes and cuts should only make an NPC complain. Getting hurt from a battle or from a bleeding injury should threaten the NPC; if not now then soon. Taking more than 3-harm at a time should outright kill them, no matter what.

how much does it fuck everybody over if the NPC dies? Sometimes it's okay to let an NPC's death interfere with the best plans of the characters. They can't get complacent, and they can't believe that Lonely World won't drag off their friends and allies. Sometimes it's better to give the NPC a second chance, especially if everyone is counting on them. At the very least, they could be borrowed a little bit more time.

generally, how healthy is the NPC? Is the NPC old? Infirm? Sick? Still recovering? Chances are they won't survive more than 2-harm. Maybe it's best to let them go.

generally, how popular is the NPC? There's nothing wrong with allowing an NPC to survive who is well-received by the characters or the players. Players want to keep NPCs around because they are fun to interact with or because they fill a niche in the group that to be without would only cause frustration. Everyone wants the cute girl and the medic to survive. It counts for antagonistic NPCs as well. Maybe someone acting against the characters who is getting a raw deal in death.

is there an opportunity for some good drama, gruesome splatter, or true horror? If an NPC lingers long enough to drum up any of this kind of material, let them live a while longer. NPCs with infections, parasites, gaping wounds, secrets, or other strange inflictions should have the opportunity to wreck some havoc first.

was it an Invader attack? The Invader always kills if it gets the chance. If the NPC can survive the Invader, it's only because someone intervened. Or if the MC sees the opportunity to lead up to some even more terrible shit.

are they Invader? Invaders can take more harm than regular folk. Some suffer harm only in very specific circumstances, like vampires and zombies and supernatural things. Some take no harm at all, like if the Invader was a cloud of poison gas or a hurricane or something. Invaders are all different, so use the examples in the Invader section. But ultimately use your best judgment and whatever is most fun. Sometimes Invaders wear armor or have armor-quality exteriors, so be sure to count for that too.

Sometimes it is important to have numbers on NPCs, even if just as a reference. Typically, NPCs can take 2-harm before they are dying, and will die right off if they suffer 3-harm or more. Armor, training, general toughness may allow them to soak up a bit more. Invaders can also usually take more than 3-harm before dying.

NPCs and stress: NPCs suffer stress in different ways, usually depending on their personalities, beliefs, and ability to cope. NPCs are either **free of stress** (0-stress), a **little worried** (1 or 2-stress), **scared and frustrated** (3 or 4-stress), or **in a total panic** (4-stress+). Pay attention to what they've been dealing with lately and how they are at dealing with it.

When NPCs have stress, they are generally less effective and more irritable. Their worst and strongest personality traits take center stage, becoming more prominent and encapsulating as time goes on. Violent NPCs become more violent. Sexual NPCs become more so. They turn into thieves, hoarders, liars, and paranoids.

NPCs who suffer too much stress sometimes go to stupid lengths to seek relief. Sometimes they bottle stuff up and it comes out in other ways. Sometimes it becomes too much and they turn into someone else.

If their stress stays too high for too long, they become real threats and can endanger the whole group. The MC should keep track of each NPC's stress levels with quick descriptive words. The NPCs make their stress levels known, usually in dramatic ways.

Typically, NPCs lose their shit after suffering **4-stress**. Either total or at one time.

The Invader never suffers stress. They can become afraid of shit, especially if it endangers them...sometimes. I prefer a fearless Invader, personally. But stress as a game mechanic never affects them.

Mobs of NPCs can absorb more harm, but will amplify stress. They also deal more harm when they use their numbers to gang up on smaller groups and individuals. When considering harm and stress with NPC mobs, first determine how big it is. They start out at tiny groups of 1-4 members then grow, becoming small, medium, large, and huge mobs. Sometimes the Invader will be swelling throughout the scene in numbers beyond huge. Treat these as either **groups too large for any character to deal with**, or slice them up into smaller mobs. Groups too large for any character to deal with will just overrun the whole scene and smash everything.

The size of mobs determine how much harm they deal out, how much harm they can absorb before breaking up, and how much stress they can take before freaking out.

When a mob takes harm, it comes off their health. Mobs of people and animals will hold together until they suffer 4 total harm. At that point, they are likely to *retreat*, *surrender*, or *scatter*. Mobs of Invader never do those things. They fight to the last, always.

When a mob collects stress, the stress is amplified, spreading throughout the crowd like wildfire. Worried people create more worried people, which in turn worries everyone more. Too much stress and the whole thing crumbles, or worse, devolves into a riot. NPC mobs will have a stress stat, this is added to any stress the mob might suffer. The mob can suffer 4 total stress before people start crying and screaming and the whole thing

takes a turn for the worse. The mob dissolves, either scattering or breaking up into smaller, more violent mobs. The Invader never suffers stress. They don't crumble or devolve, ever.

NPC mobs can have their stress melted and their harm healed by moves, usually done by the players' characters.

So, with NPCs, the mechanics go like this: start with a base of **harm, health, armor, and stress**. Take whatever an individual would have among the mob. An unarmed, unarmored, regular person would look like this:

harm 1 health 3 armor 0 stress 0

A tough guy with a shotgun and some padding would look like this:

harm 3 health 3 armor 1 stress 0

As a mob of NPCs grows, take that base and add the following to it:

- **1-4 members:** harm +0 armor +0 stress +0
- **small (5-10 members):** harm +1 health +1 stress +1
- **medium (11-20 members):** harm +2 health +2 stress +1
- **large (21-60 members):** harm +3 health +3 stress +2
- **huge (61-100 members):** harm +4 health +4 stress +2
- **apocalypse mode (100+):** harm +6 health +6 stress +3

So a small mob of regular people would look like this:

harm 2 health 4 armor 0 stress 1

A huge mob of tough guys with shotguns and light armor would fuck things up:

harm 7 health 7 armor 1 stress 2

It works with Invader the same way. Here is a large mob of Contagious Defilers, an example Invader:

Harm: 4 Health: 6 Armor: 0

And here is a medium mob of Jellies:

Harm: 4 Health: 4 Armor: 0

When the Grey Men land and swarm into town, blasting everything in sight, they are in Apocalypse Mode:

Harm: 9 Health: 8 Armor: 1

WHAT YOU NEED TO KEEP GOING

Armor

You probably noticed that armor is more rare here than in Apocalypse World. Most people didn't own armor before the end, and don't have it now. Only a few of the playbooks start with it, but that doesn't mean they can't or shouldn't pick some up later.

Armor is great. It reduces harm taken by the amount that it is worth. A **1-armor** vest will displace one point of harm. A **2-armor** riot suit or military armor will reduce the harm by two. A full bomb suit or shooting from behind heavy cover could be considered **3-armor**.

The downside is that armor is heavy, stuffy, and reduces movement. Plus it's usually really obvious the character is wearing armor, which some people might take the wrong way.

Weapons

blades: kitchen knives, shards of glass, axes, etc. (2 to 3-harm, +hand)

bludgeons: pipes, clubs, bats, etc. (2 to 3-harm, +hand)

pistols: revolvers, semi-autos, black powder, pipe guns, SMGs (2 to 4 harm, +supply +close, sometimes +area)

rifles: hunting, sniping, military, assault (3 to 5-harm, +supply +close/far or +far, sometimes +area)

shotguns: hunting, personal use, combat (3 to 5-harm, +supply +close +splatter +area)

grenades: frag, high-explosive (4 to 5-harm, +supply +close +splatter +area)

fire: torches, gas fires, structure fires, flame-throwers, molotovs (3-harm and up, +supply +close +area +ap +incend)

other dangerous stuff: furniture, power tools, vehicle hits

weird shit: sacrificial daggers, evil armory, alien tech, weaponized parasites

Weapon Tags

+ap: bypasses armor and does full harm

+area: the weapon can deal damage to a group of targets. +1harm to mobs. Eats ammo fast.

+close: the weapon is only accurate at close range

+discreet: the weapon is easily stashed or hidden

+far: the weapon is only accurate at far range

+hp: hollow point rounds inflict +1harm to unarmored targets but -1 harm to armored targets

+incend: fire bullets deal -1harm initially, but continue to cause harm until the fire is extinguished

+hand: the weapon has to be used right up on somebody

+handle: melts away stress when you invest some time with it. These are typically special things, not just first-aid kits and pain pills.

+splatter: causes a big, gory mess. May cause stress to those who are hit with it or discover it.

+silver: +1harm to the Invader, but -1harm to everyone else. Doesn't really have to be silver.

+supply: takes fuel or ammunition, provided by the characters' supplies. In Lonely World, the characters do not usually have to track their bullets. They pay supply costs as a part of a move.

Wheels are vehicles: cars, trucks, vans. Anything that needs to be driven or piloted. They also provide the driver and the vehicle with up to +3armor. The driver gets this in addition to any armor he is wearing. The Wheel's description will explain the details.

Wheels need fuel and maintenance to run, and so are in a constant need of supplies. They can be fed with the **Consume** move, but sometimes they run out or break down regardless.

All Wheels have stats according to their make. These stats are minimal and largely descriptive.

Armor: how tough is the vehicle's exterior. The driver and the vehicle get this armor bonus, depending on which one is under fire.

Harm: how much harm the vehicle can take before breaking down.

Strength: where the vehicle performs best. Acting on the vehicle's Strength in a move is done with a +1.

Weakness: where the vehicle is at a disadvantage. If the vehicle has to act on its weakness, it is done with a -1.

Sport Utility Vehicle

Armor: +1 **Harm:** 12 **Strength:** off-road, roomy **Weakness:** guzzler

Economy Sedan

Armor: +0 **Harm:** 10 **Strength:** mileage, common **Weakness:** cheap

Semi-Hauler

Armor: +2 **Harm:** 12 **Strength:** powerful, cargo **Weakness:** loud, guzzler, cramped

Bicycle

Armor: +0 **Harm:** 5 **Strength:** common, easy, efficient **Weakness:** meat-powered, slow

Skateboard

Armor: +0 **Harm:** 3 **Strength:** portable, weapon, agile **Weakness:** meat-powered, slow

Helicopter

Armor: +1 **Harm:** 10 **Strength:** flight, VTOL **Weakness:** guzzler, cramped, visible

Motorboat

Armor: +0 **Harm:** 12 **Strength:** floats, cargo **Weakness:** stuck, visible

gangs: groups of violent people. Gangs help each other fight and shield each other from harm, but aren't very emotionally supportive. Fighting as a member of a gang will give a character +1 to moves involving violence and destruction, but also will suffer additional stress.

If a character is a leader of a gang, he gets the **order people around** move. **Roll+blood:**

10+ if the order involves bashing, shooting, or burning, they do it without question. Any other kind of orders, the MC will tell you one from the following:

- *everyone talks shit on you behind your back*
- *someone says no right to your face*
- *a few of them get back at you in a petty way*
- *they half-ass it*

7-9 if the order involves violence, they do it, but the MC will tell you one from the list above. If the order involves something they don't want to do, the MC will tell you three from the list above.

packs: groups of people on a task. Packs are formed only with a specific project or idea in mind. Changing the task requires for the pack to be broken up and a new pack to be formed. When you set your pack on their given task, they can make one of the basic moves for you in your proxy. You get a +0 to the roll if the move fits their specific task, and a -1 if it doesn't.

By default, packs have **five members**, are **low-skilled**, have **no special gear**, and are **basically unarmed**. But choose one:

- bigger pack (8-10 members)
- well-trained or highly skilled
- 3-supply worth of special gear just for their given task
- everybody has weapons doing at least 2-harm

Losing your pack (any number over half the membership) causes 2-stress.

buddies: groups of people who look out for each other. Buddies help protect each other from stress and harm. Buddies always suffer less stress when together, and give a +1 to any rolls to melt stress. They also give +1 to any rolls to heal harm. This only works when all the buddies are together. A missing member will break the chain for as long as they are gone, negating the bonuses above. Dead buddies will have to be replaced, but only after sufficient time getting to know them.

tell us about your **buddies**: by default you have **5 buddies**, **no weapons**, they're **decent guys** (+1 to heart rolls), and they **aren't idiots** (+1 to brain rolls).

choose two:

- *you have **6-10 buddies***
- *they're not **decent guys**, and **they think they're tough** (+1face when acting like a badass)*
- *you have **an assortment of clubs, pipes, chains, and knives** (2-harm +hand +splatter)*
- ***smarter than most** (they can **manipulate the signal**)*
- *you have **2-3 buddies** and **you're all really close** (start with 1-bond)*
- *they're not **decent guys**, and they're **hard as nails** (+1blood when you gang up on someone)*
- ***they are genuinely nice people** (melt 1-stress when they are doing friendly or helpful things for others)*
- ***all they want do is party** (choose another **source of entertainment**)*
- *they're **good out here** (+1 to **scrounge** or **survivor** moves)*

also choose two:

- *they're **weird as fuck***

- they *can't fight worth shit*
- they *don't listen to you*
- they *only just tolerate your ass*
- they're not *decent guys*, and they're *destructive*
- they *can't keep their hands to themselves*
- they're *lazy as shit*

Losing an individual buddy causes no stress as long as everyone is taking care of each other. Losing all or most of your buddies causes 3-stress.

bodyguards: badass NPCs working for someone else. These guys get their food and shelter by supporting those who are wealthier, smarter, or more resourceful than they are by protecting their lives. Not a bad gig if you're tough enough to get it.

The contract for bodyguards will differ, but typically they require 1-supply worth of food for every session they are needed, or during downtime in play. Depending on the contract, they may also expect reimbursement for ammo and meds.

Having bodyguards gives you the **Hands Off My Bread** move:

Hands off my bread: your bodyguards are quick to protect you at all times. If they can, they will step between you and any threats. They do this even if the threat isn't real or if it's very small. If the threat is too big for them to handle, they will do their best to remove you safely from the scene.

When you don't want your bodyguards to step in, **roll+heart:**

10+ they'll back off and leave shit alone

7-9 they do as you say, but the MC chooses one:

- they *stick around just in case*
- they *take petty revenge against the offender*
- they *expect payment anyway*
- they're *not so quick to help you next time*

Losing a bodyguard causes 1-stress.

families: groups of people who care for each other, usually blood-relatives. Includes kids and parents, though spouses count as **lovers**.

When they get together as a group, families have the +handle tag, which lets them melt stress from each other.

Families strengthen and inspire each other. When interacting with or among the family, characters roll with **+1heart**.

Families can also sometimes double as **gangs** or **packs**.

Losing a family member causes only 2-stress as long as the rest of the family is there (3-stress if they aren't), but losing an entire family causes 4-stress.

lovers: someone who makes themselves vulnerable for you, and asks the same in return. Spending intimate time with them melts off 2-stress as long as their needs are being taken care of. Neglecting your lover's needs gives no benefit, will cause them stress, and may eventually drive them away permanently. If someone else steps in and provides for your lover's needs,

they can melt 1-stress off from them instead. Losing a lover (either to death or neglect) causes 3-stress.

Having a lover gives the character the **reciprocate** move:

Reciprocate: At the beginning of the session, or during downtime in play, your lover will come to you with a specific need. **Roll+heart:**

10+ *they need only a bit of time and attention which will not interfere with what you're doing today*

7-9 *they need a great deal of time and attention, one special favor, or a gift worth 1-supply*

on a miss, *it's like 7-9 but if you don't do it they cause you 1-stress instead*

kin: when people are blood-related, but not really family. This is a strange bond, because while the two of you are related, you don't really know each other. Still, it is a form of attachment that is important. When you have kin, you get the **country cousin** move. Losing kin causes 2-stress.

Country cousin: when you dedicate time to, or go through a heavy ordeal with your kin, you gain **1-hold** with them. You can trade your hold one-for-one for the following:

- +1 to **ask a huge favor**
- +1 to **interfere with them**
- +1 to **see through them**
- +1 to contact them by **looking for bars**
- melt **1-stress** from them or yourself

pets: loyal domestic animals that provide love and companionship. Pets need a lot of care, and can't always tell you what's wrong. When getting a pet, decide if its nature is **playful**, **protective**, or **utility**. You melt 1-stress when you and the pet engage in a behavior suitable to its nature. For the purposes of moves, being with your pet also counts as being alone. Losing a pet causes 3-stress.

THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES

What is The Master of Ceremonies?: The MC is a conduit between the fiction and the players. The MC is also a translator for the Invader. The MC runs the game, directs the flow of the story, and describes the fiction for everyone else. The MC provides the environments, the NPCs, the world events that are out of the players' control.

Don't make the mistake that the MC is somehow out to get over on the characters. It's not the MC's job to beat, or outwit the players. The MC is not here to prove his superiority in any way. The MC is an integral part of the story-telling process, but he is not to tell his pre-meditated story. The MC is absolutely not to come to the table with a 20-page epic already worked up. There can be no railroading in Lonely World. The fiction happens as improvisation. It goes where the characters take it. It's not the MC's opportunity to impress his friends with his story-telling ability.

What follows here are the rules of the game for the MC. Don't mistake this section as simple advice; these are concrete rules that must be adhered to so Lonely World can work.

The MC's Agenda:

- *Make the world spill open its gory contents*
- *Fill the characters' lives with horror and bread crumbs*
- *Play to find out where the fiction takes us*
- *Serve the Invader*

Always Say:

- *What honesty demands*
- *What the rules demand*
- *What propels the story forward*
- *After everything, ask them what do you do?*

The Principles:

- *Address the characters, not the players*
- *Make your move, but never speak its name*
- *Be a fan of the characters*
- *Think offscreen*
- *Sometimes, let others decide*
- *Leave bread crumb trails of hope*
- *Tomorrow must be earned*
- *NPCs are the most delicious*
- *Everything has a cost*
- *Complacency is the enemy*
- *The living are rare*
- *The dead are plentiful*
- *Bring the splatter*
- *Ask questions and take notes*
- *Stay in the fiction*

Address the characters, not the players. Don't ask Dave the player what his character is doing, ask Ted the Nobody what he's doing. When the bloodsuckers come up from the basement, don't tell Christina they're coming after her character, tell Jay the Blanket. Getting in this habit keeps everyone rooted in the fiction and helps move the story forward.

Make your move, but never speak its name. This kind of practice also breaks the story momentum. You never explicitly state what move you're using, just do it and explain it fictionally. It keeps the characters guessing as to what's really going on, and invites them to look deeper.

Be a fan of the characters. You went through all this trouble to assemble a gaming group. It's your duty as MC to make sure the players are enjoying the game. This is not the time to wax on about your brilliantly constructed narrative. This is not the time to display your adept puzzle-building skills. And it's definitely not the time for NPCs to steal the show. Even as you're serving the Invader, consider the characters first.

Think offscreen. Be aware, if only to yourself, as to what is going on in the darkness around the characters. There will be NPCs who will be following their own agendas. There will be precarious environmental situations. Fires will start. Buildings will fall. Be aware of who is following the characters, who is watching them from afar, and who is over the next hill.

Sometimes, let others decide. If a decision needs to be made and nothing pops right out to you, consider turning it over to someone else. Maybe another character on the scene, or an NPC with a hand in things. And every once in awhile, fuck it, ask the Invader.

Leave bread crumb trails of hope. The characters need to wake up in the morning and have a reason to face the day. Mere survival is not good enough. There needs to be a rumor of safety to follow. Or a friendly voice reaching out over the signal. Or a grand scheme that both challenges and rewards.

Tomorrow must be earned. Lonely World is not for the weak. You are not owed anything anymore. You have no rights, no system to protect you, no access to the world-at-large. You want to eat? You got to earn that. You want to sleep safe? You got to earn that too.

NPCs are the most delicious. They are also the most vulnerable and the most prone to making bad decisions. This means that NPCs are almost always on the verge of getting themselves hurt. The player characters no doubt will have some kind of attachment to the NPCs, so protecting them needs to be a thing they constantly have in mind.

Everything has a cost. Lonely World is nothing if not expansive, and open to explore. Everything you could ever want, all the weapons and riches and cars and fashion and expensive toys are just laying out in the open. But every chance to grab something you want, even the vital shit, is a risk that has to be weighed and calculated. Bloody, horrible death is around every corner.

Complacency is the enemy. It would seem like finding a secure place to wait things out or *build again*, whatever the shit that means, would be the best course of action. And if the End of Everything had been nice, and quiet, and peaceful, maybe that would be so. As it is, The Invader is out there, and all they are thinking about is hunting you down and grinding everything you love into dust. It's not a good idea to get too comfortable with any location or situation. Eventually, they will come for you, and they won't stop until you are dead. Don't ever forget that.

That is not to say that a permanent settlement cannot be maintained with proper care. They just have to fight for it.

The living are rare. In this lonely world, humankind is a sputtering candle flame. The characters are together because there's no one else out there to find. The Invader runs the show now, and they don't have room for any of your kind. When the characters meet a new, living person, it's a big deal. Even if that person is deranged or murderous or on their last legs, it's important. It means that they aren't alone in the world; that there are others out there who are finding ways to survive. It means they stand a better chance than they thought.

The dead are plentiful. On the other hand, the constant reminder of the near-extinction of the human species is evident pretty much everywhere the characters go. Unless the Invader or someone else is consuming corpses wholesale, there are bodies everywhere. Bloating, festering, split open, rotting, mangled. Sometimes they lay in bloody pieces. Sometimes they are burnt to blackened skeletons. Sometimes they give clues to nearby danger. Sometimes they hold the keys to valuable supplies.

Bring the splatter. Good horror doesn't hold back on the gore. When someone is injured, give up the details. When characters do violence against others, press for more. Sure, sure, we know you hit them with a pipe, but what does it look like? What does it sound like? What kind of wounds does it make? Tell everyone where the blood sprays. Get things messy with splatter. Paint the walls with it. Of course, there's no need to be overly gratuitous. That just numbs the characters, and the players as well. Wait until it's really appropriate, and then let the streets run red.

Ask questions and make notes. Specifically, ask characters how they feel about things. If something changes dramatically, ask everyone how they feel about it. If the group has to change their location, what does that do to the characters? If two group members start an entanglement involving sex or violence or clandestine whispers, how does that affect how the rest of the group sees them? If bad news come up about disease or spoiled supplies or Invader movements, how does everyone handle it?

There's also plenty of questions to ask whenever a character does something. Press for details. If they are building something, where are they getting their tools? If they are creating art, what does it look or sound like? If two characters are on patrol, are they conversing? What about?

Look for opportunities to create carcasses or scenarios. Asking questions is the perfect way to stir up drama or open the doors for horror.

Stay in the fiction. Games get detracted. People get phone calls, take bathroom or cigarette breaks. They get sidelined with excited chatter. The MC should try to stay at the helm as much as possible. If someone has to leave the table for a moment, move the story to another character. If everyone

needs a break, let them take one. It's a good time to take a wide look at the *never-ending line of bodies* and sort out your notes. Think about what's happening now, what's just on the horizon, and what's further down the line. Ask the NPCs what they're up to, and make note of it. If the characters left you with their plans for after the break, make any prep you need: maps, NPCs, Invader presence, bread crumbs.

Moves: The MC has moves, just like everyone else. But the MC doesn't roll anything for his moves. The MC makes his moves in response to failed character moves or when the fiction is stalled and everyone is looking to you to make something happen. The right move should just jump out at you, depending on the situation. You just make the move, keeping your principles in mind, and then ask the character what they do in response.

- *Get someone in the dark*
- *Get someone who is alone*
- *Crash the party*
- *Drag someone off*
- *Eat the supplies*
- *Display a Horror*
- *Deal harm or stress as needed*
- *Distract with an enticement*
- *Bang on the walls*
- *Bring good news*
- *Put something shitty in the way*
- *Funnel them someplace bad*
- *Make it a project*
- *Turn their move back on them*
- *Listen to the Invader*

Get someone in the dark. 'dark' here could mean any kind of loss of the senses or state of ignorance. And 'get' doesn't mean you arbitrarily wipe them out, it means you poke them where they are vulnerable. Sometimes you poke hard enough to draw blood, and sometimes you poke just to hear them squeal.

Get someone who is alone. This is why you always have somebody watch your back. Same as above, don't punish characters just because they want some time to themselves. It's only when they make being alone a big deal that you should poke at them about it. Maybe they can handle it. Maybe they prefer it. Maybe they make it work.

Crash the party. When you're busy with some other business, that's the time for some real shit to pop. When everybody is together in the same room, that's the time to get hit hard.

Eat the supplies. This can be literal; an NPC, Invader, or wild beast eats from someone's supplies. Or, it can simply mean that supplies are consumed in a way detrimental to the group. Remember that the supplies are eaten; meaning that someone did it.

Display a Horror. They walk down the dark corridor, open the door, and OH SHIT it's a bloodbath. Make it terrifying, make it gruesome, remember to Bring the Splatter. Make sure they collect stress from this too.

Deal harm or stress as needed. Usually as the result of a failed roll, also piggybacks on other MC moves. Tell them however much makes sense for the circumstances, but remember that it's not your job to beat up the characters.

Distract with an enticement. Just when they're about to get what they've been after, show them something even better. Be sure to follow this up with another move.

Bang on the walls. They don't actually have to bang on the walls, this move just gives them that feeling. That feeling that the only thing separating you and a hideous death is a few inches of barrier. It's loud, it's unnerving, and it's the perfect alarm.

Bring good news. Just the news, though. If they want the real thing, they have to go and get it on their own.

Put something shitty in the way. It blocks the path, and doesn't leave. The characters should have an option for an alternate path; maybe a few of them. Or, whatever is in the way should be something they can move with effort. Point is, it doesn't block them forever.

Funnel them someplace bad. There's only one way forward, and it's through some real bad shit. It's more like a gauntlet they have to get through, not a meat grinder. It's dark and uncomfortable and genuinely frightening, but it's not a death sentence.

Make it a project. This is a move to use in response when a character wants to set about doing something that will take days or weeks of concentrated effort in a single location. Like building fortifications, or starting a farm, or doing a thorough salvage of a large area. It means the character will have to work on this continually for it to be any good.

Turn their move back on them. This is one of the easiest moves to know when to make, since most of the moves have consequences already listed. If it doesn't, follow the fiction and do what makes the most sense.

Listen to the Invader. This simply means you make an Invader move. The Invader fits seamlessly into the world, so the fiction will tell you when the Invader wants to appear. The Invader appears for only one reason, to remind everyone how terrible and brutal it is.

The Never-Ending Line of Bodies

In playing *Lonely World*, the MC is going to find scenarios that the fiction will travel through. Scenarios are plot arcs, small stories that keep the game moving. Sometimes scenarios focus on places, and sometimes they focus on people, and sometimes they focus on afflictions. There will frequently be many scenarios going all at once, with characters, NPCs, and the Invader attached to many or all of them. That's just fine, but be sure to take plenty of notes.

Think of the body of every scenario as a big dead animal that is ready to be butchered. I was thinking maybe it could be a human animal, but whatever you think it scariest, picture that instead. It's called the **carcass**. The carcass contains everything about the story that's about to unfold. What we want to do is tear it open and play with the entrails.

To get inside the carcass, you have to ask a lot of questions. Questions are like **wounds** we are causing to the carcass, to open it up and see where the blood and meat is. And maybe if we're really lucky, we'll find something nasty living in there. Wounds allow us opportunities for conflict and horror. Ask the characters how they feel about things around them. Translate that into stress. Ask them how they feel about certain aspects of each other, paying attention to details like behavior.

Once you've made some wounds in the carcass, you can find the **blood** and the **meat** of the story. This is the stuff you want to tear at, rip out, and devour. If there's a chance for blood, let it flow. Bathe in it. This is where the plot starts to really emerge. The risks become known. The possibility for reward exists. There should be something concerning the whole group, and smaller bits concerning individuals and small groups.

Because no carcass can be entirely devoured by one person, there are always multiple **hands** ripping into things. Sometimes they rip at each other. Hands let us know who the major players are. A carcass never involves just one set of hands; just one character. Even if the character is alone, the Invader is always near. They are unwelcome guests at the carcass buffet. Usually, there will be one or more player character, and a handful of NPCs. After you find the meat of the story, think about who fits there.

Maybe it's really a bit just between player characters, but NPCs love to interject themselves in the plot. NPCs love being boorish, conniving, and divisive. Get them in on it. Let them pick at the meat, giving to some and taking from others. Hated, feared, loved, abused, forsaken, and cared for. They should be different things to everyone. If everyone hates Lonnie, he's going to reach out for acceptance to someone. Or maybe he'll start down a dark, lonely path? Where will that take us?

Sometimes a pair of hands, either player character or NPC, will sink a **hook** into the carcass and drag it more in their direction. When NPCs do this, it's always a problem. Someone got hurt, or lost, or did something stupid that will lead to greater threats, bigger wounds, and more blood. When player characters hook the carcass, take your hands off of it and let them have it. Surely they will take it someplace interesting, and who knows what we will find when we get there?

Every carcass needs to be devoured in the proper atmosphere. This is called the **killing floor**. It's the setting of the impending blood feast. Killing floors are sometimes wide-open areas, and sometimes they are narrow and dark. Sometimes the killing floor is the cause of all the trouble, because it's collapsing or exploding or radioactive or full of knives. The killing floor sets the scene. Its nooks and crannies should offer hidden secrets that beg to be uncovered. Let the hands drag the carcass all over the killing floor. Let them splatter blood all over it. Let them trash the place while they tear the story open.

As mentioned before, the Invader will no doubt appear at the dismembering of the carcass. No doubt they are hiding in the cracks of the killing floor. They are like **parasites** in the meat, tainting it, poisoning it, and taking it for themselves. And because the Invader is this capital weird horror thing that always has more terrible surprises to spring on us, sometimes it brings in a shitload of parasites and just covers everything.

And sometimes it brings in giant parasites that can take the whole carcass for itself, and defy us to do anything about it.

At the end of the carcass, when the plot has run its course and this particular story is closed, you have the **rotting remains** to deal with. They are the huge pile of bones and fatty entrails that are left. The hands are off of it. The hooks have been disengaged (unless you have a ghoulish character who isn't done with the carcass yet). Frequently in Lonely World this metaphor is an actual literal description. Sometimes you tear the carcass open and all you find are dead bodies. Bodies and remains of characters, NPCs, friends, lovers, strangers, enemies. And of course the Invader. Maybe the carcass was so full of parasites that it was better to burn the whole thing rather than try to find something uncorrupted.

Because the ongoing Lonely World campaign is a ravenous creature, it must have a constant supply of carcasses to rip through. When one goes down, another appears in its place. Maybe two more.

Example: the off-ramp

The off-ramp is an example scenario included with this book. It shows you what a scenario basically looks like. Scenarios are usually named after the most interesting part of the carcass. This one is named after the killing field in particular.

So there's a few carcasses scattered about our killing floor here. There's the big one, which is of course **the road is out**. There's also **armed weirdo in the truck stop, survivors in the gas station, isolationists in the trailer park, and Invader in the hills**. There's also a carcass involving the whole group we'll call **opportunity for scrounge**.

We'll take just one of these carcasses for an example: **the road is out**. The first thing you do is start poking wounds in it. Ask everyone questions. Ask them what they're doing. Ask them how they are traveling. If there's two people in a car with each other, ask them how they feel about riding with each other. See if there's some meat in any of this. Better yet, see if there's some blood here. Most of the meat comes in the form of the question "how do we get back on the road?"

So who's hands are in this carcass? Well, everyone who wants to get back on the road. At this point, the characters should be leaping forward with questions of their own. Or maybe they're going to sink a hook into this missing road carcass and take over the whole situation. Or maybe they'll look over the killing field for other, smaller carcasses. Maybe hidden inside one are the tools for peeling open the biggest.

At this point, the carcass should be firmly in the hands of the characters in some manner. If not, ask more questions. Poke more wounds into this thing until we find something good.

The killing floor for the **road is out** carcass is the centerpiece of the scenario, the actual off-ramp. The characters may leave this killing floor and cut open other carcasses, but this one will stay where it is. And it will wait until the characters return to deal with it later. Or maybe they never will. Maybe they'll leave it where it is, head off in some other direction, and never go back to the off-ramp again. That's fine. They will only take us to a new killing floor and a new carcass somewhere else.

Of course there are parasites in every carcass. The mark of the Invader is everywhere. I mean, most likely they are responsible for destroying the off-ramp and taking out the road. Maybe there's still a few around, hiding in the bushes or stuck under some concrete rubble. At the very least, the evidence of their presence remains: freshly dead human victims, the signs of struggle or massacre, and ruin.

The rotting remains of this carcass will vary depending on what went down during the devouring of it. Was anyone killed while moving the cars to the other side of the wreckage? Were any of the supplies lost or damaged? Did the cars make it, or was one of them left behind. Or maybe everything went smoothly and the rotting remains are picked clean.

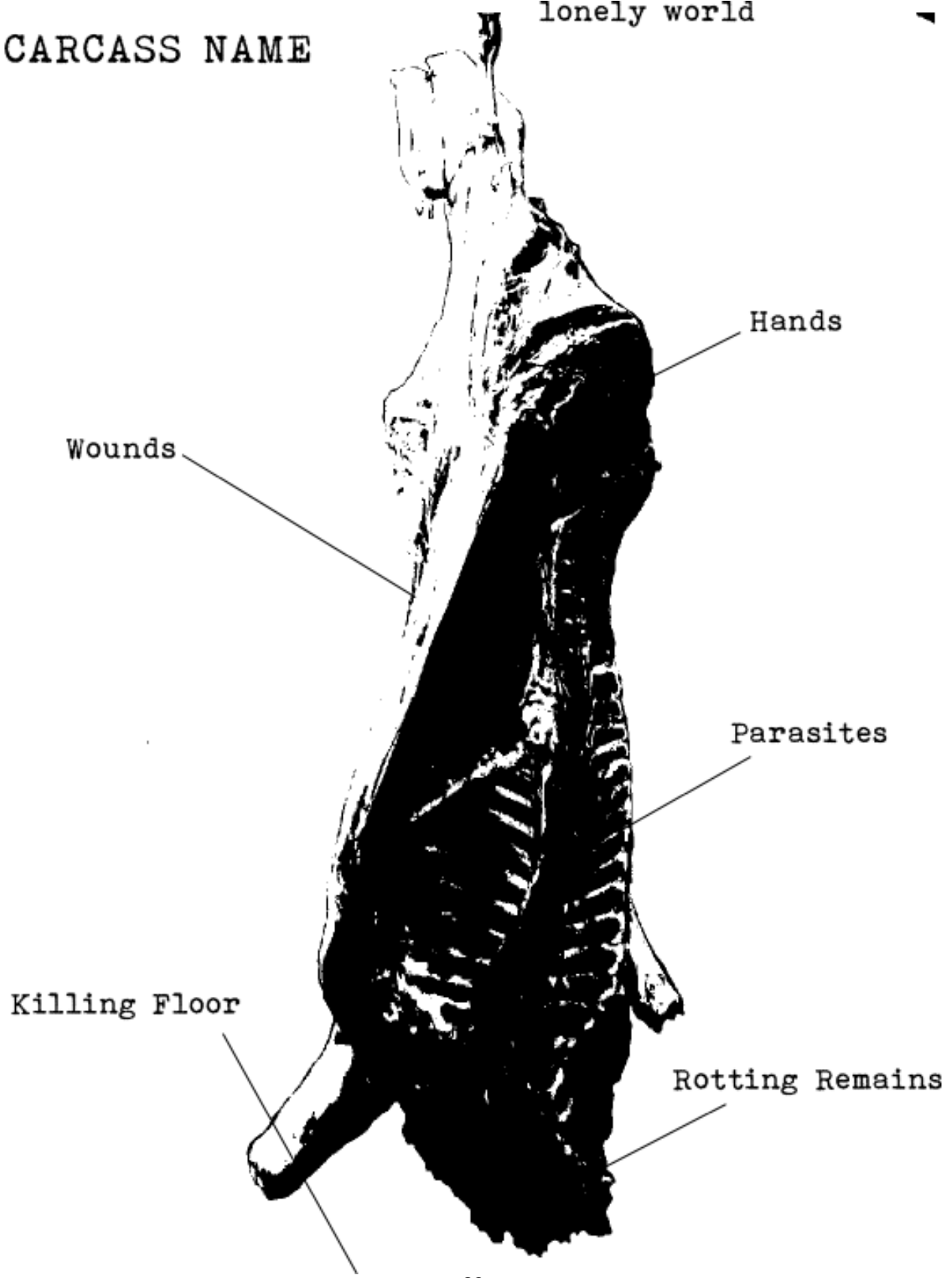
It's not a particularly loaded carcass; certainly a competent group of characters can get around a big hole in the ground without killing each other. It won't always be like that. Sometimes, the possible rotting remains will include the gruesome deaths of one or more characters; maybe even all of them. Generally, you want as little rot in your remains as possible.

When **crafting scenarios/bringing in carcasses**, ask yourself these things:

- **What is the carcass called?** Just a short description, like 'Auto barricade on the bridge' or 'Armed bandits in pursuit' or 'Jack wants all the women for himself'.
- **Where are the Wounds?** opportunities for horror or splatter or drama or chaos. Find them by asking questions.
- **How many Hands are in this?** what characters are involved in this? what NPCs?
- **Where's the Killing Floor?** Is this going on in the survivors' camp? on the open road, in a shopping center, where?
- **Are there Parasites?** where does the Invader fit in? Whatever the problem is, the Invader is going to do its best to worm its way in. Check the Invader principles and the Invader moves, and they'll let you know what they want.
- **What are the rotting remains?** What's the worst possible thing that is likely to happen here? Could someone die?

CARCASS NAME

lonely world



THE INVADER

The Invader is the reason for all this. The reason why mankind is nearly extinct. The reason why our civilization and all of its achievements have been smashed and thrown out as trash. The reason why all of your friends and your family and everyone you've ever known or loved is gone. The Invader came in and took everything. Not you though. They've killed everyone else, but not you.

When the Invader came, it brought only pain and destruction with it. This is not a life form that we're at war with over a miscommunication or misunderstanding of ideals. They have no culture to absorb. No language to interpret. No common ground to meet on. No empathy to share. If there ever were monsters in the world, they are here, now.

Because the Invader has totally wrecked the world and wiped out the majority of its inhabitants, it thinks it's the star of the show. It's motives, principles, moves, and ultimately all of its actions, are based on that idea. The Invader throws its weight around. It comes and goes as it pleases, but it is abysmally cruel, always aiming to cause mayhem and bloodshed. The Invader can't appreciate the things humans have built. It doesn't care about art or engineering or medicine. It kills, it kills, it kills.

Life with the Invader is harsh, brutal, and terrifying. They make it so every inch that humans travel is a struggle. Every waking morning is another miracle. It's their world now, and they don't care about trashing all of your stuff. They don't need to keep your food around. They don't need your clean water or your breathable air. They'll poison everything if it suits their needs.

Death at the hands of the Invader is probably the worst thing ever. It's what everyone is trying to avoid. It always involves some kind of primal terror, some otherworldly horrifying experience, or some kind of inhuman depravity. It always results in bloody death. The Invader will take you, and either ultimately enslave you, destroy your identity and assimilate you, or eat you alive.

Nobody wants that shit. No matter how awful the world is, there are other people out there, other survivors like you. If you find each other, you can work together. You can thrive in a world run by invaders. And maybe you can even fight them and beat them. Maybe it doesn't have to end here. Maybe you can take it all back.

But first, of course, you'll have to get through a couple hundred million of these frothing bloodthirsty fucks...

Working for the Invader: is what the MC does. You don't really decide the Invader's actions The Invader tells you how it acts. Remember your MC's principles, and be the translator of these *alien* entities.

The Invader has its own set of principles which must be followed. If you keep these always in mind when working for the Invader, you'll always know what they want to do. And when the Invader's wants line up with your own aims and principles, and you'll see why it's good to be working for the Invader and not against him.

Invader's Principles

- *Never refer to them by name*

- *Describe how they look, smell, sound, and act*
- *Give clues to how the Invader feels or doesn't feel, but never say it explicitly*
- *Allow the PCs to discover new truths and thus, new terrors*
- *Reinforce the most inhuman aspects of the Invader*
- *The Invader is ever-present*
- *They know where you are, and they are coming for you*
- *they are a humongous collective unconscious*
- *they cannot relate to people*
- *murder, mutilate, and consume at all times*

Never refer to them by name. If they are zombies, for god's sakes don't call them zombies. Instead, call them **Walkers**, **The Infected**, or an **Army of Ghouls**. We all know they're zombies, but misdirect and call them something else. If we don't know them as "zombies", they'll be more interesting. We won't know exactly what to expect, yeah?

Describe how they look, smell, sound, and act. Don't be lazy and assume everyone knows what you mean. Remember that the Invader is foreign and alien. They don't act like us. They're not us.

Give clues to how the Invader feels or doesn't feel, but never say it explicitly. The Invader doesn't discuss its feelings. It doesn't whine about being hungry, it goes out and feeds. If it is angry, it rages.

Allow the PCs to discover new truths and thus, new terrors. Yeah yeah, we all know the ghoul's bite will kill you and then you become a ghoul. Oh shit, but what we didn't know was that the bite only kills you and it's been something else this whole time that made you into a ghoul. Secrets are opened and only reveal more secrets.

Reinforce the most inhuman aspects of the Invader. The Grey Men are roughly shaped like tall, skinny people. But they are silent, and they move in sweeping, graceful motions across the floor. We should be able to instantly recognize them from that. Likewise, the Murderous Corpses never breathe or blink. Their eyes are dry and rubbery. They never show emotion. These are all things not like living humans, and so this is how we know them.

The Invader is ever-present. Sometimes in small numbers, sometimes in large ones, but there is no place that their presence is not evident. They are around the corners, behind the doors, over the next ridge. They are choking the streets and filling the skies.

They **know where you are**, and they are coming for you. Be direct with the Invader. They don't bother with advanced forms of warfare. They're here to slaughter the characters wholesale and stomp humanity into the ground.

The Invader can have Leaders, Overlords, Mutations, and Variants, but largely, **they are a humongous collective unconscious**. Maybe they're really stupid, direct, and unstoppable. Or maybe they're industrious and intelligent. But the PCs really are only privy to the most violent and destructive aspects of the Invader. Maybe they do have a civilization and

culture, but the characters never see it, wouldn't understand it, and can't appreciate it.

They may speak, but they **cannot relate to people**. The Invader doesn't want to communicate with the characters. Any attempts will be ignored completely. Offers of peace are met with hostility and violence.

Murder, mutilate, and consume at all times. Every move the Invader makes is another step in the direction of these three principles. And the Invader is always active, at least as a collective. But even if the Invader sleeps or takes leisure time, it is still adhering to this. This is why the Invader exists in Lonely World. To wipe the planet of humanity and devour everything of value.

Invader Moves

When you're Serving the Invader, you're making moves from this list. Whatever move the Invader wants to make should be obvious from the events in the fiction. The Invader gives you simple orders and expects you to follow them exactly. That's just how they are: direct and unwavering. Invader moves can be done whenever the MC needs a hard move, even if the Invader hasn't been on the scene until now. They can pop in and out of the characters' lives on their own terms. They can also show up or cause trouble as part of the characters' moves, usually on a miss.

The Invader tells you through the fiction what move to use, but it's up to the MC to translate it to the players. Remember your principles, and be descriptive. Take the time to really spell it out for the players and give them all the gory details. Then, of course, ask them what they do about it.

- *Come out of the darkness*
- *Show up at the most inopportune time*
- *Snatch someone up*
- *Organize a huge mob*
- *Crowd the scene*
- *Make someone change sides*
- *Bring out the worst in someone*
- *Just be there, around the corner*
- *Smash everything*
- *Announce their approach*
- *Follow the signs of the living*

Come out of the darkness. You didn't know they were there, but they are. Now they're out to get you.

Show up at the most inopportune time. The Invader doesn't care about your problems or what you wanted to do today. They're here and now you have to deal with it.

Snatch someone up. and drag them screaming.

Organize a huge mob. The Invader is scariest in large numbers.

Crowd the scene. The Invader likes to make things between them and their victims nice and close.

Make someone change sides. Maybe the Invader can offer someone a better deal. Or maybe the change is involuntary. Or maybe it's better to just give yourself to them.

Bring out the worst in someone. Everyone reacts differently to the Invader. They love to make people angry, cruel, and hateful.

Just be there, around the corner. They can show up wherever the hell they want.

Smash everything. The Invader doesn't work in subtleties. If you're hiding in a house, they tear the house apart to get at you. They break down doors, toss aside obstacles, and let nothing stand in their way.

Announce their approach. Sometimes, the Invader will be far from the group. Sometimes they need to remind the group that they are on the way.

Follow the signs of the living. People leave behind a trail when they move. Especially when they move quickly. The Invader knows what to follow. Maybe it's a scent, or maybe it's visual clues, or maybe it's a supernatural thing. Whatever it is, the Invader can find them. The characters will always know when they are being actively followed.

Overwhelming the group is a special custom MC move that is made up of much smaller moves. Overwhelming the group can be the result of another move, or the Invader may simply be in abundance and is ready to take them all down. This is a point in time when the characters' ambitions and personal bullshit don't matter as much. Because the Invader arrives in such huge numbers, devouring anyone they come across, only a few moves are available to the characters in response. Their numbers are seemingly inexhaustible. The shit hits the fan and everything starts coming undone.

When the Invaders are tearing everything apart, a few NPCs die right off the bat. Take a look at the fiction, ask everyone where they are, and a handful of vulnerable NPCs should be enough to appease the Invader long enough for the player's characters to decide what to do next.

What they do next is pick one of the custom moves from the list below. They should give everyone a good, detailed description of what happens to their character during the chaos. If the MC allows it, any of the basic or character moves can be used instead.

Because the Invader can't really be defeated while its overwhelming, it's up to the player characters to get off the scene and escape. Until they do

Anyone who can't get away from the unending mobs of Invaders end up **overwhelmed**. Being Overwhelmed could mean anything that fits the Invader's aims and ambitions, but usually involves some kind of gruesome and terrifying death. The kinds of deaths that shock and scar anyone who witnesses it. The character could be dismembered, vaporized, eaten alive, taken for experimentation, trampled, melted, wilted, drained, or any number of things.

Overwhelming the group is a seriously hard move by the MC, maybe the hardest, because it restricts the characters and their players. It forces them to rely on their most base of attributes in order to survive. This is

uncomfortable and risky to them. But this is where the true drama of Lonely World lies; in these moments of pure panic and desperation. Where no one is safe. Some people gather close, some cut each other off, some are too slow, too late, or too weak. Some people take the opportunity to go after what they really want. Some just want to get away from it, at any cost.

Don't fuck around when you're Overwhelming the group. The Invader is making a serious, concentrated effort to wipe out everyone. People are only going to survive only if they can earn it. Otherwise, the Invader makes them gone, in the worst possible ways. Take that, hold it, and throw it out there. The Invader is here to fuck up everything the characters have built. All relationships, affairs, beliefs, stockpiles, walls and doors, and their bodies as well. If the players think the Invader won't kill them, they won't be afraid of it, and the drama is spoiled. So bring the horror with stark twisted fury and roll naked in the splatter.

Example Invaders: The actual "rules" for Invaders are left up to the group and the MC. If your zombies turn others into zombies with disease or an alien space ray made the dead awake from their graves, or whatever you like, is just fine. It's also totally fair to say that the characters don't really know all the rules yet. Maybe they want to figure it out. Tell them anything they want to know that's easy to observe, but they should earn the really good bits.

Also, don't contradict anything previously established, unless everyone is cool with it. People hate that shit in fiction. A history of continuity errors can mar a series forever.

Lastly, if you want to use more than one Invader, go on, but they have to be essentially working towards the same purpose. To wipe us all out. Maybe they can work together on that, or maybe they can't. Maybe they fight each other and humanity is caught in the middle. Or maybe they're competing to see who can kill the most people. Or maybe more Invaders reveal themselves later, like an escalating staircase of horror.

Invaders are mechanically NPCs. They usually have armor, whether natural or something they actively wear. Some of them deal harm with weapons, and some are stuck with teeth and claws.

Demons, Aliens, Zombies, the Super-Flu vectors, Robots, Foreign Soldiers, Carnivorous Simple Life, Radioactive Mutants

Keep stats on the Invader simple. In fact, don't call them stats. Just say you have some notes. Refer to them when you need them, but don't create anything so complicated you have to pour over it whenever they appear. The MC and the players should form the Invader during the first session, but once the game gets going, the nature of the Invader is out of the players' hands. Your notes should reflect pertinent information about the Invader formed during the first session: what it wants, how it gets around, the sounds and smells associated with them, any glaring weaknesses or vulnerabilities, etc. As the characters learn new things about the Invader, add those notes in.

Jellies (carnivorous simple life)

Jellies come in three separate sizes: man-sized, building-sized, and city-sized. Smaller jellies ride inside large ones; they stack inside each other like Russian dolls.

Jellies eat by stinging prey with tentacles and pulling them inside their bodies. The prey is then trapped and digested to clean bones. Jellies

dislodge the bones once they get too heavy, sometimes leaving behind huge mounds of them at a time.

Jellies float above the ground and move at a speed slightly faster than a walking human.

Jellies abhor extreme temperatures and dry climates.

Harm: 2 Health: 4 Armor: 0

Custom move: Jellies are made of cohesive slime that is full of alien bacteria and is toxic to people. If it gets in your system, you get the Jelly Fevers, which is marked by erratic behavior, delirium, high temperature, vomiting, and nausea. What's happening is your internal organs are dissolving. In the advanced stages, you puke and shit your guts out in a bloody stream, and then you die. Fortunately, it is treatable and once treated, a victim can recover fully.

When you get Jelly goop in your mouth or wounds, **roll+meat:**

10+ *it's nasty, but it won't make you ill*

7-9 *you're sick with Jelly Fevers. Take 1-harm and 1-stress now. It can be treated with meds worth 1-supply.*

on a miss, you get a major dose of goop and the Jelly Fevers hit you hard. Take 2-harm and 2-stress now, and more later. It can be cured, but it will need 3-supply worth of meds and lots of rest.

Grey Men (Aliens)

Grey Men attack in raiding parties, using loose, aggressive tactics. They have hi-tech alien weapons like heat rays, stun batons, and net guns.

Grey Men travel in flying saucers, which have more powerful heat rays and explosive electrical cannons.

Grey Men are intelligent, but will not communicate with people. They appear to use some kind of direct-wave radiation to talk to each other. You can intercept some of their messages by **looking for bars** when the Grey Men are around.

Harm: 3 Health: 2 Armor: 1

Custom move: When Grey Men aren't disintegrating humans, they are dragging them off to participate in gruesome and horrific experiments. These experiments are aimed at understanding humans' biology for the purpose of killing them more efficiently.

When a character is marked for abduction by the Grey Men, **roll+brain**. On a hit, you can avoid capture. 10+ you get +1 to turn it around on them.

Contagious Defilers (zombies/super-flu vectors)

Contagious Defilers used to be regular people, but they got the Contagion in them and it turned them into violent, destructive, mindless beasts.

Contagious Defilers are not too bright, and easily distracted by loud noises and bright lights. They can recognize the passage of uninfected people and will chase after them until they are lost or physically exhausted. If they catch an uninfected person, they beat them and bite them to get the Contagion in their bloodstream, and then get up and move on to the next victim.

Some people have been proven immune to the Contagion. These people are frequently beaten to death by the defilers, who never sense that their victim is infected, and so have no reason to stop trying to infect them.

Contagious Defilers are supernaturally strong, able to break down doors and tear holes in walls to get after the people they want to infect.

Contagious Defilers tend to travel in large mobs, and will converge on the nearest victim, beating them and biting them. The movement of a mob attracts more Contagious Defilers, which exponentially adds to their numbers.

Harm: 1 Health: 3 Armor: 0

Custom move: The body fluids (saliva, blood, waste, etc.) of a Contagious Defiler are filled with bacteria and viruses that are toxic to humans. The fluids cause the higher brain functions to cease operation and replace them with uncontrollable, extended outbursts of violence and rage.

When a character is in danger of being bitten or otherwise getting Contagion in their system, **roll+meat:**

10+ you wrestle, dodge, or avoid the bastards

7-9 you scurry away with only minor harm and no infection

on a miss, they got you, and you're pretty sure you're infected. You'll be one of them soon, unless...

Murderous Corpses (zombies)

Murderous Corpses are the animated remains of dead bodies, most notably people.

No one knows what caused the Murderous Corpses to happen. The dead just got up one day and started killing everyone. Since then, everyone who has died has returned as a Murderous Corpse

Murderous Corpses are only out to kill the living. They can use simple tools as clubs and daggers, but lack the ability to operate more complicated machines. Without tools, they tear, bite, choke, and bash in the faces of their victims.

Murderous Corpses have some basic predator drive that tells them where to wait for living people to come around. They are known to strike from the darkness, and when their victim is not looking.

Harm: 3 Health: 4 Armor: 0

Custom Move: Murderous Corpses are cold and lifeless, except for the darkest, most primitive parts of their brain stems. What's left is twisted and corrupt, which propels these monsters to kill and never stop killing. They can be blown apart or smashed or chopped to bits to stop them, but the only way to truly kill them is to destroy that little bit of brain. Fortunately Murderous Corpses are rotting and moldy and falling apart as dead flesh tends to do. When you **Commit A Violence** on a single Murderous Corpse by shooting, stabbing, or crushing the head, you do so as if you rolled a 10+

Honey Pots (carnivorous simple life)

Honey Pots grow along massive vines that stretch for miles.

They feed by luring in humans and other animals with sweet-smelling nectar.

The nectar can be smelled for hundreds of feet, and further on the wind.

Harm: 1 Health: 5 Armor: 0

Custom move: Honey Pots exude an odor that smells sweet and exotic to humans. The smell is enticing and stimulating, promising warm dripping ecstasies. The effect is hypnotizing, leading the victim close enough so the plant can draw them into its sticky, slime-coated pots. There, the oblivious victim is smothered and slowly digested.

When a character catches a whiff of a hungry Honey Pot, **roll+heart:**

10+ you can resist it, as long as you keep moving

7-9 if you go and check it out, you get +1 to do so. And if you get some of that honey, you mark experience.

on a miss, before you know it you're knee-deep in the stuff and it is awesome. All your stress melts off! Alright!

Extermination Drones (robots)

Drones watch from the skies.

Some of them have even tougher armor and better weapons.

Harm: 3 Health: 2 Armor: 1

Custom move: Extermination Drones can track you wherever you are, but their sensors are limited by range and geography. They are also blind in sand, dust, smoke, or other particles in the air.

When a character wants to lose Drones that are actively hunting them, **roll+brain.**

10+ you can get away, but the MC will tell you one from below

- you have to wait around for hours
- you have to move through them
- it's going to cost you 1-supply
- you have to place yourself or someone else in danger

7-9 the MC will tell you two from above

Devil Lords (demons)

The Devil Lords are engaged with each other in a petty, eternal war. They collect the souls of the living to use as fuel for their meaningless squabbles.

Devil Lords send minor demons, evil spirits, soulless fleshy abominations, and devoted cultists to do their dirty work.

Devil Lords can reach through their minions to affect characters directly. They try to trick living people into destroying themselves and each other.

Harm: 4 Health: 3 Armor: 1

Custom Move: Devil Lords are excellent negotiators. They can peer into your heart and offer you anything you might desire. When they reach out to you with an offer, **roll+heart:**

10+ you know these tricks

7-9 If you do it, you get an experience point. If you don't, he'll be back.

on a miss, if you do it, you get an experience point and he'll grant you a wish. If you take the wish, he'll come for you when you are most vulnerable. If you don't, he has a nasty reaction to it.

Custom Move: Devil Lords love to twist your shit up and leave you a broken, sniveling little shell if you defy them. When they try to break your soul apart, **roll+heart:**

10+ you can feel Hell peeling away at your tender little mind, but you shut it out

7-9, you suffer a vivid painful psychic experience, complete with hallucinations and intense sensory deprivation. If you do anything but grab your head and scream, you're **protecting your neck.**

On a miss, you're catatonic for a few hours as you take a roller coaster ride through your own personal Hell. It's pretty much the worst thing you can possibly imagine, chewing you up and spitting you out and violating you in ways no earthly pain can match.

WITNESSING THE WORST OF IT

Here goes stuff about doing good horror. Different methods (shock, startling, dread, terror, why god why?)

REWARDS AND GROWTH

In the beginning of the session, find which character you have the highest Hx with. Ask that character to highlight one of your stats for this session. Then as the MC to do the same. Whenever you make a roll and add one of those stats to it, you mark an experience point. It doesn't matter if the roll succeeded or failed, you still get the experience.

After you get five experience points, you erase them all and pick an improvement from your survival guide's improvement list. After you pick one, cross it off; you can't pick it again.

YOU MAY HAVE A FUTURE YET

When a character passes their 5th improvement, they can start taking these bonus improvements. By this time, the character is stronger and more capable of surviving in the Lonely World. They are surpassing stark victimization and simple survival to becoming directors of their own destinies.

After you pick one, cross it off; you can't pick it again.

- **__+1 to any stat (max +3)**
- **__Create a Second Character to Play**
- **__Change Your Survival Guide**
- **__Choose Your Own Exit**
- **__Getting Used to It**
- **__True Survivor**

+1 to any stat: you get +1 to any stat of your choice. The maximum for any stat is +3.

Create a Second Character to Play: choose this to bring in a second character. They can be from any of the survival guides that is not already in play, and you write them up just as you would normally.

Talk with the MC and find a place for your new character to fit in. Maybe he's locked in a closet and needs release. Maybe another character encounters him walking alone on a deserted highway. Maybe he comes in over the radio with a desperate call for rescue. Also, the new character can be taken from the pool of NPCs that may be around. They are essentially the same character, with the history and relationships they held as NPCs intact. Only now the character has taken a step from the background into the light. Now they have personality, and real weight on the fiction.

Change Your Survival Guide: choose this if your character wants a real change. Changing Survival Guides is a big deal for the character, and it usually follows or precedes greater life changes, like the finding of new beliefs or terrible traumas. It can also signify a more natural evolution of the character as they adapt to what's going on around them. The character should have some kind of reasoning for wanting to pick up a new survival guide, even if it's only because their current way of life has run its course.

Choose Your Own Exit: some people get to a point where they've just had enough. Enough with the struggles, enough with the drama, enough running from and fighting with the Invader. They're tired, they're done, and they want

out. When you choose your own exit, you're leaving the game, permanently. You're giving up the group, simply because you don't want it anymore. Maybe you're heading off on your own to fulfill a dream. Maybe you've found a quiet, safe place to retire alone and that's just plain good enough. Or maybe you'll check out with a final goodbye and a bullet to the head. This way, you get to leave the game on your own terms. Not by being eaten alive by the Invader, or tortured, raped, and bled out by raiders, or wasting away from infection and madness. It's not a bad deal, really.

Getting Used to It: choose two survivor moves from the list below. These moves are described in the Moves section.

- **Salvage Operation:** retrieve valuable supplies over a period of time
- **Perform Rescue:** provide aid to a number of people
- **Secure the Area:** create a safe place
- **Recycle Bin:** manage supplies
- **Take Shit Over:** capture territory

True Survivor: choose two more survivor moves.

Getting Started

- **this book:** or a PDF of the rules, or some print-outs
- **players:** friends, or strangers who may soon be friends
- **pencils:** for writing on survival guides. have erasers too.
- **survival guides:** to build your character and record notes about them
- **two six-sided dice for every player:** you can buy them from a comic-book store, or steal them from any board game. If you have a casino nearby, they will give them away.
- **snacks:** home-made stuff is the best, alcohol is good too. sometimes you are lucky enough to have a culinary person in the group who will provide delicious morsels for each game.
- **scrap paper for doodling and notes:** so you can sketch maps, characters, places, and things. And also to help keep track of everybody. Some people just like to doodle while they play, and that's cool too.
- **things to occupy the hands:** if you're like me, you need to fidget during games. My friend Dave has these stacking magnets that I like. Some people build dice into little pyramids or totem poles. Just try not to make it a distraction to everyone else.
- **ephemera:** photos, drawings, whatever you want to bring in to elevate the mood and get people into the game. The MC could even reward the show-and-tell of apocalyptic ephemera with experience points.
- **ambience:** music, droning sound effects, character theme songs

The First Session

Choosing a Survival Guide: lay out all the survival guides and let the players read them and figure out which one they'd like to play. There can only be one survival guide of any type in play at any time, though. No repeats. Give the players all the time they want in creating their characters.

The prequel: go around the table and have each character introduce themselves. Ask them about their name, appearance, possessions, any tag-along NPCs or special gear. Let them do their initial Hx business. Ask them questions about their recent past. How have they survived this long? What did they do before the end of everything? What did they lose? What do they hope for? Do this with every character. Give each one ample time to explain who they are.

The Invader: The MC can offer suggestions for the Invader, but ultimately it is a group effort. Allow everyone to add one or two things. The group crafts the Invader and makes it their own unique monster.

Setting the Camp Rules: By now the characters know each other, so this is where they hammer out their survival situation. Be sure to ask questions about it. Are they on the road? Hiding out in the ruins? Holed up in a base? Are there chores? Who does them? How have they been eating? Does anyone control the supplies?

First Camp meeting: the characters decide what they're doing to stay alive and any ideas for future plans. This needs to all be in character, and feel free to use any and all moves. Some characters may want to muscle for

position to determine who runs shit; let that play out with moves and dialogue.

Start on downtime: In Lonely World, people are thankful for downtime. It's those quiet days or hours when nothing terrible is hounding them. Nothing is banging at the doors. The skies are clear and they can poke their heads out for now. Sometimes the characters are truly secure. They can find real safety in a place where the Invader can't get to. This is the time to go after personal ambitions, learning new skills, spending quality time with loved ones, checking on gear and replenishing supplies. And of course, there's always the question of "*So what do we do now?*"

If you start on downtime, just ask the characters what they are doing with their time. Follow them around, see who is there to interact with. See what kind of terrain they can run through. *What's the gossip, and who's giving it out? Who's got a vision they want to share? What's going well and what's at the breaking point? Where are the walls? What's to discover past the barriers? Where's the love and who's showing hate? Are the winds calm, or are there fogs and storms or just the electric taste of high tension?* That's the stuff we want to find out during downtime. Starting there is the best way to get to know the characters before Hell starts bubbling up.

...or, you could setup a **scenario** and pass out **insane ramblings**: Scenarios are spots in the road that provide opportunity, conflict, and risk. They don't have to literally be on the road; a scenario could present itself to a stationary group just as easily. In this case, it is the scenario that has lowered itself onto or crawled up out of the characters. They are interesting places and impending events that give everybody something to do. Many characters will follow their own agendas, testing Lonely World for what they can get from it. But many more characters will be content to tackle larger issues as they come forth. Scenarios are the shit that gets in the way while everyone is trying to do what they want.

Scenarios are not fully-fleshed out "modules" or railroad tracks to shove the characters along. it's not your job to lead them along a set of clues to a new discovery. All you have to do with a scenario is set up some opportunities and let the characters sandbox it all to hell.

Let's see some Invader: Anyone who wants to find Invader during the first session shouldn't have any problem with it. Many character moves will allow characters to find Invader on their terms. Everyone else is invited to run out there and see what they can find. Just remember that the Invader is ever-present and will take every opportunity to get at some characters. This cannot be denied. Intentionally dancing out into areas that are known for Invader populations should be something like walking through burning hot sands while a continuous filing of hideous, laughing assholes are trying to push you down and eat you. If you go out there, you have to earn your survival.

Fuck it, nightmare mode!: this is when you start the game with the worst shit possible going on right around you. This is great for *Moment of the Apocalypse*-style games, where part of the first session takes place before everything ended. It's also good for characters who have been left behind or are trapped in Invader territory. It's a real meat grinder for new characters, but the ones who make it will be closer, stronger, and ready to handle anything. Nightmare mode is where the Invader is raining down all around you, right from the beginning. There's destruction and chaos across a

horizon as far as the characters can see. The only other people out there are victims and killers. The earth itself shakes, fractures, and burns.

The MC tells the characters where they are *now* and exactly how they can *escape* this hellshit-storm. Most interpersonal dialogue between characters will have to be quick, and to the point. But really it's best to talk as little as possible and instead focus on getting out alive. Still, anything the characters want to do is open, and most character moves will help them survive. This is also a good time to zoom in on the action and use the **going to war** moves.

The characters should be heading for some kind of exit, and it had better fucking be functioning when they get there. But every step of the way they will be hounded by Invader mobs, environmental hazards, and distractions.

Special character gear might not be available right now, or it may play a key role in getting the characters to safety. If you have to take it away, it needs to be just for a minute or regained with little risk later on. Nobody likes to have their bunker or wheels snatched away before they get a chance to use them.

It's really shitty to spring nightmare mode on the characters just all of a sudden. It's cool if they want to start that way, but if they don't at least set up plenty of warning.

Insane Ramblings: In Apocalypse World, these are known as "love letters". They are letters from the MC to the character, giving them information and perspective on current events. They can also foreshadow things in the future, provide clues, and stir up drama between characters. Sometimes they also come with a custom move or a list of questions.

Insane Ramblings are best used during long downtime in play, when the fiction fast-forwards to a nearby future time. Also when a number of sessions have been missed and everyone needs a refresher and maybe some new ideas. They are also good as one-shot games for conventions, random game nights, or play-testing.

Example Scenario: The Off-Ramp

This is what a write-up on a scenario should look like. It's a series of questions you ask of the fiction, the characters, and the Invader, all pinned down to this one event or location. Have notes on all important settings, killing floors, NPCs, and the Invader presence. Find out where all the good shit is, and distract them with it. Bring in some carcasses and chop them to pieces. Get blood and guts all over the place. Pop some skeletons out of some doors. Make noise and kick shit over.

This particular scenario was used during the first play-test of the game. The Invader was giant, hungry jellyfish.

Survival Guides: Blanket, Shining Armor, Escapee, Holdout, Gravedigger, Nobody, Falling Star (the falling star and the escapee both say they own the car. ask them why)

Insane Ramblings: They read and look like this. All you're doing is giving them enough background to choose their own paths. Set up some mystery, some conflict, and some glittering prizes.

- *(what's most recent?)*
- *(what's right now?)*
- *(what's the good/bad stuff?)*
- *(anything else?)*

- (custom move?)

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Good morning, **Blanket**

You've been with this group for a few weeks now and things are going well. Life on the highway is tough, but with a car you've managed to stay ahead of the Invader. You actually haven't seen much of the Invader since this whole thing started. There's always been someone there to move you along to the next safe place. And that's where you are now, a nice safe moving car.

Only now the highway is gone and you're stuck. There's some buildings nearby that might provide some help, and some of the others in your group are talking about checking them out. Everyone is nervous about losing the car. You don't like seeing people anxious. Maybe you could help them feel better about the situation?

Also, there's a guy in the group who has been behaving especially weird towards you. His name is **Lonnie**. Sometimes you catch him leering at you. Sometimes he brushes against you and you get this slimy, icky feeling. The other night he woke you up, standing over you as you slept. He was drunk again. He wandered off and passed out by the car. Have you said anything about Lonnie to anyone else? If so, tell us who.

One last thing. Was it you pilfering candy and soda from the supplies?

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good Morning **Escapee**

Life on the road has been sweet so far. They say the cities are burning, but out here things are quiet and peaceful. Aside from the constant attacks from the Invader. The bastards banged up your car pretty bad. It is **your** car, isn't it? Someone else in the group has alluded that is theirs instead. And to be real, it was stolen, but the owner is no doubt dead, so let's move on from that.

And now the car sits at the edge of a broken-down highway. What you need to do now is get the car to the other side so this little road trip can continue. You're going to be anxious until the car gets moving again, so give yourself 1-stress to start with.

It's possible you could get the car down the off-ramp, but first you'll have to get some of this debris out of the road. Some of it is real heavy shit. You'll need some help and probably some tools. You'll also have to be real careful when you maneuver around the broken asphalt. The off-ramp looks like it was a crumbling piece of shit even before the Invader showed up. Trust me, you want to be real careful moving the car past all this mess. You don't want to lose it.

In the meantime, looks like there's some roadside joints that might hold good salvage. Want to check them out?

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. Don't worry about setting up the **wheel** listed

in your gear. I've got one for you. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good morning, **Falling Star**

Nothing about this shit is fun. The weather sucks; you're hot and filthy and uncomfortable. What you really want is a hot shower and a soft bed. Sleep hasn't been coming easy the past few weeks. So tell us, what's been keeping you up? Whatever it is, it's been messing with you hard. Like, 2-stress hard.

Nice car, isn't it. You like it, don't you? It is the luxury model, after all. At the very least you get to travel in style. Who cares that you stole it from a dead man. Finders keepers, right? Well some other asshole in the group disagrees with you. They claim it's theirs. But what do they know about luxury vehicles? Nothing. Pedestrians.

Well, whoever the car belongs to, it's stuck now. They're working on getting it past this little snag, but until then, how will you entertain yourself? There must be something to do around here, right?

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good morning, **Gravedigger**

Well it's another day dealing with all this bullshit. Do you think you'll get to smash some heads in?

Too bad about **Rachel**, eh? She got hurt real bad. You were there for her, when the Invader was about to tear her apart. You saved her life, you know that? She's grateful to you, truly. How does that make you feel?

Lonnie has been warming up to you the last week or so. He's kind of weird. He's been trying to get you to get drunk with him. He keeps making references to "taking something for ourselves, you and me". I don't know, he won't mention it until he's had a few drinks.

So there's this chick who calls herself "**Bubbles**". Man, she is pissed at you. She's been giving you the evil eye recently. What did you do to her?

Well, while the car is stuck, maybe it would be worth your time to look around for some grub. Maybe there's something around here that would be fun to break.

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good morning, **Holdout**

Just when you think it's going to be a good night, some jerk-offs racing down the interstate nearly run you over! But why were you standing in the middle of the road anyway?

So your bunker is near the off-ramp. You know **Denny** and **Marcia** at the gas station, right? So what do you make of them?

The **Truck Stop Guy** has been fair with you, for the few times you've traded with him. He's got this weird thing where he makes you leave the stuff by the front doors and then he makes you leave. When you return, the supplies you bartered for are sitting in the abandoned lot across the street. In fact you should be due to pick up your stash soon.

Have you had any communication with the **Dixon Family** at all? Did you get inside the trailer park? Have you talked to their teenage kids who keep jumping the fence? Those kids are trouble, but maybe they like you for some reason?

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. Set up your bunker and give me a **Mr. Fix-it** roll. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good morning, **Nobody**

It all comes down to luck, isn't that true? And you are the luckiest bastard walking the earth. Remember that time you picked the lotto numbers with everyone at work? They called you "Rabbit's Foot" for a week. And if Denny had not run off with the winnings, you could have walked out of that job. Of course, a few days later the Invader showed up, so it wouldn't have mattered anyway. That's what I mean about luck.

Lots of problems for you and your group. **Rachel** is seriously wounded from an Invader attack. The car is stuck at a collapsed overpass. Supplies are disappearing. Everybody comes to you with their problems. When was the last time someone did something just for you? The whole thing gives you 1-stress.

Well, there is **Lonnie**. Lonnie has been real friendly lately. He keeps wanting you to drink with him in his tent. Everyone knows he's been stealing all the liquor, but no one says anything to him about it. Last night you were supposed to be standing watch with him, and instead you found him slumped by a tree, drunk as usual.

So what do you think about **Bubbles**. She's really been demanding your attention the last few days. She's taken it upon herself to inventory the supplies, and you've been playing her assistant and go-pher. She hasn't repaid the favor at all. Also, Bubbles has been sleeping with just about everybody in the group, but not you. How do you feel about this? Does it bother you?

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Good morning, **Shining Armor**

Let's talk about **Rachel**. Her arm has got to come off. Her injuries are too severe to go untreated. Infection will set in soon, and she could die. She's weak and scared. Everyone is looking to you. You get 1-stress from her until you deal with her injuries.

And that raises a bigger question. Are you the group "leader"? Aside from a few dissenting opinions, it seems like you've been voted in. If that's cool with you, then you can have 1-stress. If not, everyone else gets that 1-stress.

So the car is stuck. It's going to take some teamwork to get it back on the road. There's also some old gas stations and fast food joints that might hold supplies still.

Go ahead and fill out your Survival Guide. Choose your name, life before, looks, moves, and gear. When everyone is done we'll do Hx and introductions.

Be careful out there,
Your MC

Well, here we are. Stuck. Now what?: You have been traveling on a mostly-functional stretch of interstate that runs north/south. After days on the road, fleeing from the Invader, you come to an off-ramp that has collapsed. The embankments are steep and broken from recent Invader movement. A local highway runs underneath the off-ramp, buried and impassable here. A rain ditch holds water here, as many frogs and birds have made their homes in it.

Running alongside the local highway are many businesses that cater to travelers. There are two gas stations, two fast food places, and a large truck stop.

First thing; let's get acquainted. Then, we need a **consume** roll.

NPCs and their bullshit:

- *The Dixon Family is in the trailer park. They don't like outsiders. People approaching the main gate get a warning. People caught inside the trailer park are killed or chased off.*
- *There are a few survivors (Denny, Marcia) in the gas stations and another in the truck stop. The gas station folks are pretty decent. They are willing to trade and talk. They have a few guns, and about 3-supply worth of food and ammo. They use bicycles to travel around for supplies.*
- *The guy in the truck stop isn't so keen on strangers, but he has a lot of good stuff in there. He travels around in an armored truck, and leaves vicious guard dogs in charge while he's gone.*
- *Lonnie is a member of the group who is not going to be happy until he forces himself on someone. He'll go for either the Blanket or the Nobody first because he considers them the most worthless. He'll try to get the Gravedigger or another NPC to help him. He also steals every bit of alcohol the group comes across.*
- *Rachel is a group member who has been hurt. She's wounded pretty bad from an Invader attack. That arm has got to come off, and she won't be happy about it.*
- *Bubbles is a group member who is more or less useless. She always disappears when there's work to be done, and just hides in the car when*

the Invader appears. She's good with numbers, though, and tries to keep the supplies inventoried. Plus, she's easy. She'll do it with just about anybody.

Important places:

- *a truck stop occupied by a lone, well-armed, paranoid survivor.*
- *an empty lot across from the truck stop full of weeds and gravel*
- *two gas stations, one with survivors living in it, the other empty except for...*
- *two fast food joints, both of which have been cleaned out by locals weeks ago. One looks like it's had recent occupants and they left a terrible mess.*
- *the busted interstate is the fault of the Invader. Either they did it intentionally, or their presence resulted in a pile-up and explosion.*
- *highway 212 provides local access to and from the interstate. It ends north in the hills, turning into gravel, and then a parking lot and some burned-out homes. To the south, it runs past the Dixon Family trailer park, some overgrown soy farms, and ends twenty miles away in the ruined town of Leavenworth.*
- *the woods run the full north of highway 212. They get pretty thick, and eventually the road here runs into the hills, then breaks off into gravel. The woods are thick with Invader, but nothing else lives here.*
- *the Dixon Family trailer park is south on highway 212 about three miles out. They look after themselves and don't like anyone else snooping about. Three Dixon teenagers (Barbara Lee, Earl Ray, and Skylar) sneak out to cause trouble, snipe Invaders, and seek out highs.*

The Invader: is nearby. They're in the woods and the suburbs and sometimes they come out this far. A huge number of them are on the highway, just past the off-ramp. They're moving in the opposite direction, but too much attention could bring them back towards the off-ramp.

The Invader in the suburbs will be moving this way shortly. They are sure to run through the over-pass, killing everyone there. They probably won't find the trailer park, unless someone leads them there.

At the end of the first session: go around the table and ask each of the characters who got to know them better during the session. It's okay to note NPCs, especially *buddies* or *kin*. But there should be at least one other character that learned something new about them or shared with them a deep interaction. That character gets +1 to their Hx with them. If this brings the character's Hx above 3, they reset it back to +1 and mark experience. If the character can't decide, they can just give it to whomever they want. This happens at the end of every session.

As Long As We Have Each Other

The Second Session: At the beginning of the second session, ask everyone at the table if they want to re-highlight their stats. If anyone does, anyone at all, everyone has to. Go around the table again and ask each player who they have the highest Hx with on their sheet. That character's player chooses one of their stats to highlight. Then the MC chooses one of their other stats to highlight. Move on to the next player until everyone has had a chance to re-highlight.

After that, it's a good idea to recap on what happened the previous session. If you left off on a cliffhanger, go ahead and resolve that. Then start asking questions to the characters based on what was established in the first session. Let them pursue any interest they might have. Make moves where needed, and follow up on the results.

If you hit a slow point and the players start looking to you, check your notes, take a look at your carcasses, and tear it open a little bit to see what's inside. Something interesting will jump out. If it doesn't, wheel in a new carcass and offer it up to everybody.

Don't forget to include the Invader. Don't let anyone forget about them.

Where do we go from here? Moving on from the second session, the characters should be following their ambitions, their relationships with each other and any NPCs should be clear, and there should be plenty of carcasses around to tear into. Also, the characters' group should have some kind of plan for the future; some grand idea of what's at the end of the blood-spattered rainbow.

At this point, you're following the story of the characters as they continue to try to survive in Lonely World. This story will center on plot points created by the characters as they go after what they want, and in their interactions with other characters. Aside from what the characters want for themselves, sometimes the world will intrude upon them. These are the times for **scenarios, bread crumb trails, and great panics.**

scenarios, sort of like puzzles to be solved, contain great opportunities but also great danger or conflict, they are dualized, they could start bad and get better or start out bad and get worse. If things are real good in the beginning, they should have the potential to get really shitty. **Example Scenarios:** *The Falling/Impenetrable Skyscrapers, The Flooded/Forgotten Subway, The Last/First Safe Zone, The Haunted/Comfortable Mansion, The Wasteland/Functional Metropolis, the Big Open Spaces/Deserts*

Bread Crumb Trails of Hope: downtime inbetween scenarios. Sometimes have a mild tension of impending danger hovering above them. Sometimes downtime is short, but there is always a new trail of hope to follow.

Great Panic: emergencies that require everyone's attention. Great Panics are the time to tuck the petty bullshit away and start acting on survival. Of course, they're also great opportunities to get away with murder. Great Panics are frequently caused by large Invader movements, enemy attacks, the impending death of a well-favored or beloved character, and impartial disasters.

The song that will end the world: It is important when playing scenarios, downtime, and emergencies to pace them well and give them time to develop properly. Make sure the characters are always aware of the scene, always a part of their surroundings, always immersed in the world. Drama and horror should flow like a song, with rises and falling and quick punctuations for impact. Do not let anyone get bored or numb or grated. Follow intense scenes with relative calm. The MC should offer paths to the different things, but absolutely allow any and all paths to be chased. If the characters are in a great panic, show them bread crumb trails of hope, but either place a scenario in the way, or display one afterwards. Going from great panic to safety to another great panic is okay every once in a while, and pretty fun if they go well, but they're also taxing as fuck to the characters. Going in a string of great panics sounds like a great idea in theory, but wears out real quick if the characters aren't prepared for it.

The Last Session: the characters' ultimate fate can be a definable goal that the characters strive for, maybe since Session One. It can be a natural result of letting the fiction carry them wherever. It can be a good stopping point. The days of gaming campaigns are numbered right from their inception, but no one likes to leave a game unresolved. Planning for the last session early on can help drive the fiction to a clear ending, one that is satisfying to everyone involved.

I like these, but feel free to come up with more:

- **Human Population Zero.** Largely the most undesirable fate, mankind dies to the last. One last great die-off leads to a whittling down of people. This ultimately results in only a few stragglers who go mad from isolation and hopelessness. And then one day, there are no more people. Maybe the Invader is still around, or maybe something even worse got rid of them. This is the ending that everyone naturally tries to avoid. But it's still here, if you want it.
- **Taking it all.** This fate is exciting, uplifting, 10/10 would read again. Here, the characters are fighting back against the Invader, *and they might actually win*. The fight ahead will still try them considerably, and many more will die, but by now the characters have gained an edge. They've made a new connection or designed a new rat-catcher. This is when the **super-weapons**, the **new technology**, and the **natural adaptations** appear. They inspire the survivors and give them reason to live again. Of course, if they succeed, what kind of world will they build, and what remains to build on?
- **A place of our own.** Here, the characters secure their own home, base, or even a whole town if they want. They may have tried this in the past and it may not have worked, but this time everyone *knows* it will. Maybe it's a nice place, like a secure suburban community with full amenities and room to grow. Or maybe a not-so-nice place that offers more security; tunnels, sewers, caves and underground facilities; the kind of places that could allow them to stay for hundreds or thousands of years. In either case what they really need is some sort of power or fuel to run the lights and the defenses. They need walls, doors, and windows. They need water, food, and warmth.
- **The Border.** The end of the game comes with a stalemate. There is something between the Invader and mankind; a barrier that neither can cross. Some try, few, if any, can make it. Hardly anyone wants to, though. Violent attempts at crossing the barrier fail or prove too taxing to continue. The Invader never stops trying, so the border must be watched and maintained while a more permanent solution is found. The characters can take part in the border's defense, or they can settle into complacency, thankful that the monsters are on the other side of the wall.
- **The vast dark unknown.** At the end, the characters drive off down a long lonely road. Not only can they survive in Lonely World, but they can *thrive*. Dealing with the Invader is no longer a death sentence, and finding supplies will no longer be a problem. They are certain to encounter more struggles as they live out their days, but we can only speculate as to what they will really find. For them, life goes on as it always has.

SIGNS OF LIFE

This is the shit I was thinking of and diving into when I was working on *Lonely World*. Some of this material is among my favorite media works, which I go back to regularly. Some I sought out with the intention of finding inspiration. Some I just happened upon, or were given to me, during the writing of *Lonely World*.

- *Battle: Los Angeles* (2011)
- *C.H.U.D.* (1984)
- *The Crazies* (1973/2010)
- *Dawn of the Dead* (1978)
- *Day of the Dead* (1985)
- *Day of the Triffids* (1962)
- *Dead Set* (2008)
- *Deadly Spawn* (1983)
- *Doom* (1993) - and all of its sequels
- *Fallout* (1997) - and all of its sequels
- *La Horde* (2010)
- *I Am Legend* (1954)
- *The Last of Us* (2013)
- *Left 4 Dead* (2008)
- *Life After People* (2008)
- *Mars Attacks* (1962) - the original card series, and the newer card series from 1993 and 2013
- *The Mist* (2007)
- *Night of the Comet* (1984)
- *Night of the Living Dead* (1968)
- *Red Dawn* (1984)
- *The Road* (2010)
- *Skyline* (2011)
- *Splatterhouse* (1988)
- *Survivors* (2008)
- *The Stand* (1978)
- *The Terminator* (1984)
- *War of the Worlds* (1898/1953/2008)
- *The Walking Dead* (2003/2010/2012) - the whole assortment of graphic novels, TV show, and the Telltale video game. This is a great series and a huge inspiration.
- *Zombie War* (1992) - the original card series

About the Author

Taylor White is a writer and rock band guy and occasional movie-making guy. Here's a short list of my more recent and pertinent works:

For Palladium Books, *Rifts: Madhaven*, *Triax 2*, *Tales of the Chi-Town Burbs*, *D-Bees of North America*, a forthcoming *Chaos Earth* zombie book tentatively titled *The Resurrection*

There Were No Survivors: a book of stories centering on the desperation, destruction, and madness at the end of the world.

Aladdin's Castle: my rock group, for which I sing, yell, and play guitar

Niles Kane: my solo music effort. my first release was inspired by the original **Night of the Living Dead** and borrows heavily from it. It's titled **Rude Neighbors**.

Puppet Orgy Party: an online video series that I co-produce. Psychotronic hand puppet weirdness.

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Special Thanks:

Lonely World Playtesters: Christina (J the Blanket), Dave (Ted the Nobody and Simon the Holdout), Bill (Bobby Brown the Fallen Star), Brandon (Scrambles the Blanket), Kim (Charlie the Fallen Star), Paul (Cole the Best Friend)

Vincent Baker and Apocalypse World.

Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books.

Christina B. J the Blanket. Reinholt the Chromium Guardsman. Lark the Hocus, Mynah the Skinner, Dove the Solace, Bunting the Driver, and Loon the Faceless.

To Anyone Who Reads This - August 2013

Lonely World was done while riding the high of both discovering Vincent Baker's Apocalypse World and finishing my first independent book **There Were No Survivors**. It is meant to be an incomplete work for a time while I work out all the bugs and do what I really want to do with it.

That's why you're reading it as a free PDF or stapled printout. And why there's no art. Maybe I'll add art; maybe I won't.

If you have read and played Lonely World, and you like it, you can email me and tell me what you liked about it. You can tell me where it needs improvement. I'd like to finish it and release it for real, but first I want to make it the best game it can be.

If you'd like to see a fully done-up copy with art and layouts and a cover and all that, let me know. Tell me what you'd like to see between these pages. Maybe we can make that happen. Maybe I can scavenge enough scraps to publish this thing for real.

Maybe we can get it out before the big one comes and takes us all.

LONELY WORLD SURVIVAL GUIDE

Introducing...

Look

STATS

HEART

MEAT

BLOOD

FACE

BRAIN

highlighted

○
○
○
○
○

HARM

fill in a section for every point of harm you suffer

STRESS

fill in a section for every point of stress you collect



Disfigurements

- heart
- meat
- blood
- face
- brain

Hell Rides

- blank disconnect
- disappear
- rampage
- van screaming

Ex

Survival Guide Moves

Other Moves

Supply

Weapons, Armor, Gear

NPCs, Hold, Notes

Experience

On your 5th experience, cease and gain an improvement

○	○	○	○	○
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Improvements

On your 6th improvement, you can also choose from the expanded list

○	○	○	○	○	○
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