

# 100 ODDITIES FOR A WASTELAND



BY WILLIAM T. THRASHER, CLINT STAPLES  
AND THE SKRIMMER GAME DEVELOPMENT GROUP

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Welcome to the sixth entry in the “Oddities” series of sourcebooks, each of which brings you 100 imaginative elements, curios, and details to add to your games in whatever way you like! What do we mean by oddities? Oddities are things that stand out from the ordinary, and make you — and your players — wonder about them. A good oddity awakens curiosity and creativity, in player and Game Master alike, adding interest to an encounter, or even making one out of nothing.

You may find an oddity lying abandoned on a worktable, gathering dust on a library shelf, or even half-concealed under rubble in a lair, cave, or basement. But oddities define themselves more by what they are and the questions they raise than the places they are found. A cache of 2d6 rounds for an AK-47 assault rifle is not an oddity and is just bread-and-butter in a post-apocalyptic game.

But what about 2d6 AK-47 rounds lying in a blood-soaked clown-mask made of human skin? That will likely make you wonder who left such a little parcel behind ... Who makes clown-masks out of people? Are they still around? And, perhaps most important — did they leave the AK rounds behind because they are coming back or, maybe even worse, because they knew you were going to need them very soon?

Oddities make you and you players ask questions. Answering those questions is both how you use them in your game and how they contribute to a session and even a campaign.

One simple way to use this publication is to sit down before your game session and roll d100 as many times as you like per room, complex, ruin, or what have you. You may want to keep a list of the entries you roll up on a separate piece of paper — and you can easily just copy and paste right from this PDF, too. In a “sandbox” sort of game, this works very well, allowing you to throw in a little detail here and there for your players to sink their teeth into.

Or you can fit each entry into a locale, or even group some together, giving thought to any possible effect on ongoing storylines or the current scenario or situation. For example, if the player characters are searching a set of ruins for some outlaws who have been attacking caravans and raiding the local town, finding the human flesh clown-mask with a handful of bullets lends a greater sense of the sinister to the hunt, with more than a hint of madness. In addition to the questions a few paragraphs up, a player is likely to wonder whether the blood is fresh, if there are tracks — or snipers — nearby, and maybe whether they are getting paid enough to risk becoming raw material for more masks.

Let’s roll up a few oddities for a wasteland and see what we can do with them. Rolling three times, we get results of 37, 25, and 84:

*#37 - The desiccated body of a feral cat heavily augmented by cybernetics. As you look closer, its artificial eye nictitates open and a tiny tracking laser sights on your torso.*

*#25 - A harness made from salvaged wire, vacuum tubes, circuit boards, and integrated circuits, obviously meant to be worn on the head. Leads run from the harness to a bank of 1d6 12-volt car batteries.*

*#84 - A sun-bleached human skull with bits of dried flesh and muscle still attached. Inside, it is packed with complex machinery and electronics.*

Using these in order — although there is nothing saying that we have to — we can place the cybercat-zombie in the way of the player characters, perhaps interrupting an otherwise unremarkable trek, an exploration, or even a tense infiltration of the “Ripper-Clowns” home turf. The cat immediately makes one wonder as to its purpose. Is it a sentry-bot, the work of an insane animal lover? Or, a few minutes later when the characters discover the wireless viewing rig described in entry #25, will they wonder whether the augmented cat serves as the eyes for it? They might also wonder how many other little friends some bizarre spy-master might have operating right now, and suddenly the skittering of rats in the rubble that you happened to mention a while back takes on a more menacing dimension ...

Now what to do with #84? Maybe the skull is actually inside the harness. Perhaps it is resting on a table with a single glowing red neon tube in its left eye-socket, transmitting video to a receiver, another spy like the cat-borg. Or it could be still wobbling slightly to and fro, from the incidental tap of the spy-master’s boot as she fled the harness only a few heartbeats ago.

So with a little time and forethought, and a few rolls on your trusty Oddities for a Wasteland tables, you turned a fairly mundane action into something with more flavor, and more crazy — the Ripper-Clowns, who have obvious technical wizardry at their command, could go from a simple single-session threat to the main antagonists for some time to come, especially as their founding mad genius has just scampered away.



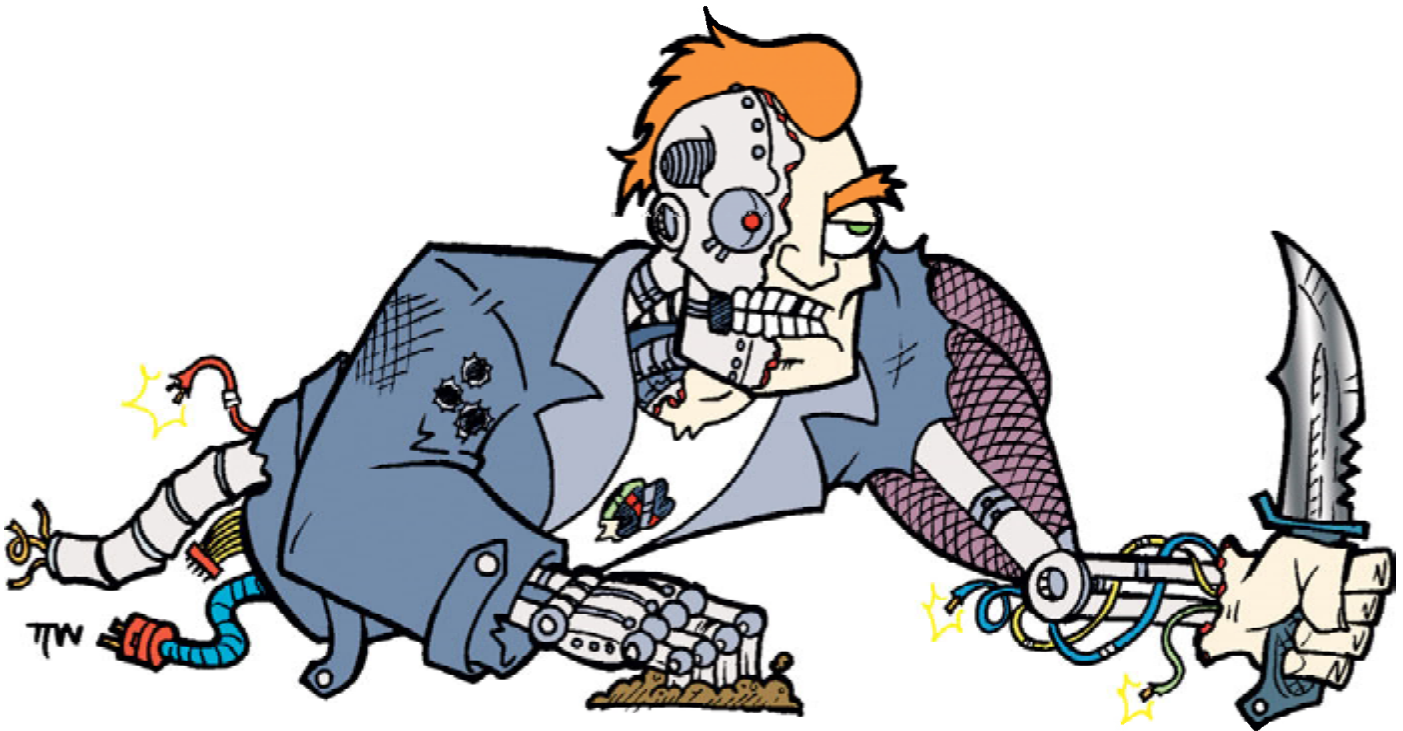
If you don't like the ideas just described here are some more to consider. Perhaps the housecat was modified before the apocalypse and has a recorder stuffed with video and technical know-how from the Before-Time — and all you have to do is get past the laser to be able to view it. Or it is actually the housing for the mind of a terminally-ill genius, who created a number of harvester borgs and set them to find a good body for his intellect. The harness could be a rig to transmit his consciousness from one borg to another, and the skull was the prototype that he later jury-rigged into a security device (presumably with another, more powerful, laser!). Or maybe it's a transmitter, indicated when a radio signal crackles to life and the madman begins to outline his plan — and the role the characters must play to get out of his elaborate trap.

If none of the above possibilities tickle you, let your players do the work as they find things and speculate. Choose one that they like, or that you can use to tie up a loose plot thread you had hanging around or to start a new one. Let them postulate what the thing is doing there, or let it remain a mystery for the moment, keeping it in mind for something to hang other details off sometime in the future.

Note: *Oddities for a Wasteland* employs a dice rolling sub-system often referred to as “exploding dice.” In this sub-system, a die that rolls the maximum value possible [e.g., a 6 on a d6] is rolled again, and the new value is added to the previous total. This continues until a value other than the maximum is rolled. So you might roll a d8 and get 8, then roll again, get another 8, and then, on a third roll get a 3. You would then stop and total the results, in this case a 19 [8+8+3]. When we are referring to an exploding die roll, you will see a lower case “x” after the die notation (e.g., “d10x.”).

We hope you like *Oddities for a Wasteland*. Our febrile (or feeble) brains are cooking up more even as you read these words. We already have a bunch of fantasy-themed *Oddities* products for you, but plan to revisit the post-apocalyptic landscape in future. So, keep you receivers tuned to this station for more news!

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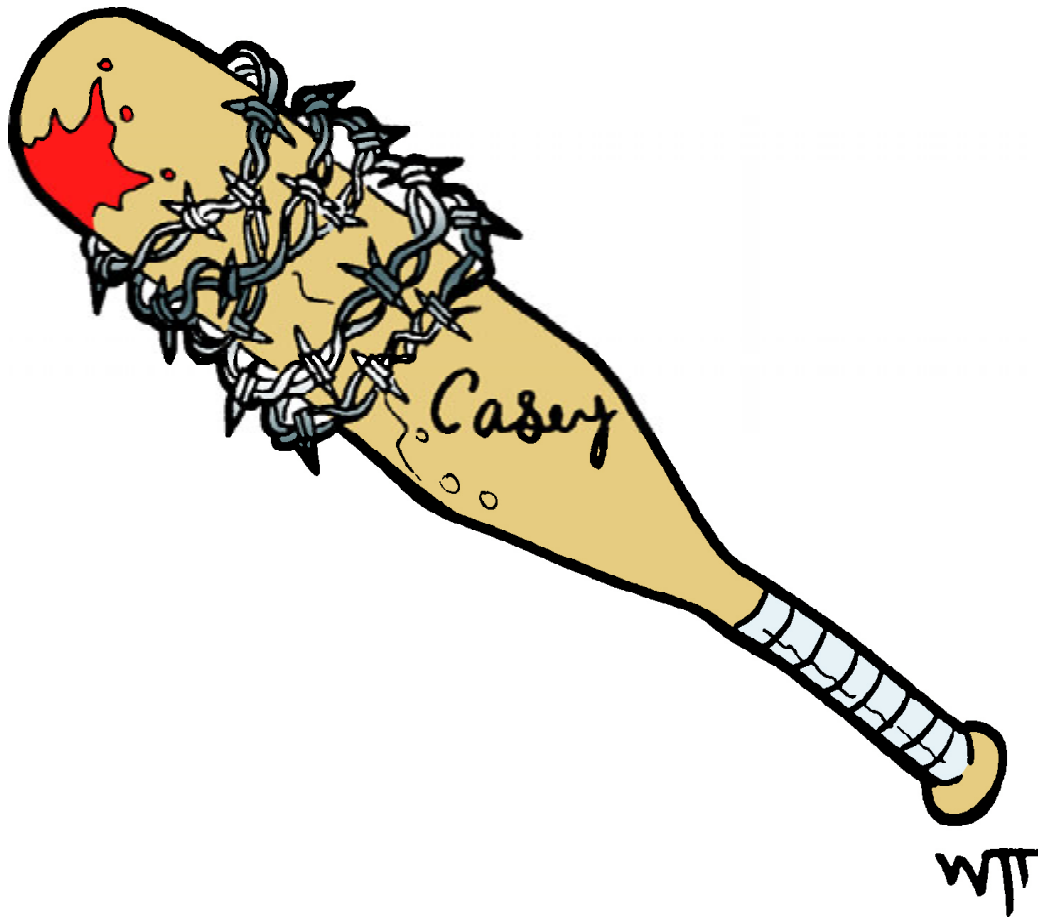
## d100

## Oddity

- 01 A marginally-functional charging station that can be used to fully recharge any electronic item in 1d6x minutes. After charging an item, roll 1d100. If the result is less than the total number of minutes the station has spent charging, the terminal burns out.
- 02 1d4x spools of dental floss. There is an equal chance each spool is cinnamon flavored, mint flavored, or unflavored.
- 03 A can opener. There are equal chances of it being unpowered manual, folding military (e.g., P-38, P-51), battery-powered portable, or countertop electric.
- 04 A package of 2d6 socks. There is an equal chance the socks are either in good condition or moth-eaten.
- 05 A faded postcard featuring an idyllic photograph of a pre-apocalyptic landmark with an "X" drawn near the landmark's base in permanent marker. Written on the reverse side is the hastily-scrawled message "*Bastard's dead! We buried the Thing!*" The postcard is signed "*Jack.*"
- 06 A complex circular diagram is inscribed on the ground, its periphery marked by unfamiliar symbols. In the middle of the circle is a heavy pistol of unknown make, in perfect condition, free of the dust, corrosion, and contamination typical of the wasteland.
- 07 The ambulatory upper-half of a humanoid crawling through the wasteland, all that remains of a zombie, android, mutant, alien, or other creature suitable for your campaign's apocalypse. If approached, it groans, "*Please, help! It's not too late!*"
- 08 A surprisingly realistic-looking toy weapon. There is an equal chance of it being a replica pistol, rifle, or sword.
- 09 A paperback novel from before the apocalypse, with equal chances of it being sci-fi, pulp, romance, true crime, fantasy, or a movie tie-in. The final chapter has been torn out.
- 10 A combat knife modified with coils of wire and a compact power cell incorporated into it. When charged, it functions as a sort of cattle prod. There is a 50% chance it is currently charged.
- 11 A lidded wicker basket with a shoulder strap made from an old seatbelt. This container holds knitting needles, balls of yarn, and patterns for hats, socks, and sweaters.
- 12 The severed head of a combat robot. There is a 50% chance it is still active and that its buzz saw jaws will attempt to bite anyone who approaches it.
- 13 A metal bucket containing 1d100x assorted nails.
- 14 An old diary decorated with stickers of hearts, horses, and stars. Its pages are stuck together with blood.
- 15 A young man, delirious with dehydration, pinned to a St. Andrew's Cross made from salvaged construction girders.
- 16 A robotic toy dog. It still functions and begins following the party around, barking randomly in an electronically-distorted voice. There is a 50% chance the robot dog is actually a K-9 model killbot ready to enter attack mode at a moment's notice.
- 17 A club made from heavy pipes, nails, and a crowbar welded together into frightening weapon. Some 1d6 mummified human fingers hang from the club like trophies.
- 18 A makeshift tattooing needle made from a salvaged airbrush and surgical syringe. Nearby are 1d4x cans of compressed air and 1d6x jars of colored inks salvaged from pens and markers.
- 19 The shed husks of 1d6x insects (equal chance of ants, roaches, centipedes, or scorpions). Judging by the husks, the insects who shed them must be at least the size of housecats.
- 20 A military-grade helmet in almost-perfect condition. Before it can be worn the former wearer must be cleaned out.
- 21 A sign reading "*Beware of dog!*" Hand-drawn on the back are plans for a dunesailer, a wind-powered, wheeled conveyance.
- 22 A spool of 1d00x feet of copper wire (equal chances of insulated or bare).



- 23 A road map of the local area. A route is drawn on the map leading from your current location to an "X" several miles away, along with the words, "*Wutr u waytn fr?*"
- 24 A box of 1d10x cotton swabs, 1d10 of which are used.
- 25 A harness made from salvaged wire, vacuum tubes, circuit boards, and integrated circuits, obviously meant to be worn on the head. Leads run from the harness to a bank of 1d6 12-volt car batteries.
- 26 A heavy pistol, expertly disassembled, each component laid out on an oil-stained cloth as if for cleaning or inspection. Everything is in perfect condition, but there is a 50% chance that the firing pin is missing.
- 27 A leather apron. Dozens of flattened spoons have been riveted to it, overlapping like fish scales, and painted black to create effective, if loud, armor.
- 28 A cache of 1d6x pairs of footwear, from running shoes to combat boots to strapless stiletto heels, all with size 10 lefts and size 12 rights.
- 29 A set of open handcuffs. Beside them lay a welder's mask with the viewport covered with aluminum foil, the shiny side facing inward.
- 30 A leather satchel filled with a dozen mismatched shoelaces, all used.
- 31 A bulky writing pen with four retractable nibs, allowing the user to write in different colors. The red nib has been replaced with an ice pick that projects several inches longer than the blue, black, or green nibs.
- 32 A fully-functional windup alarm clock. The alarm will go off in 1d10 minutes.
- 33 A bloodstained aluminum baseball bat wrapped in rusty barbed wire. The bat is autographed by one of baseball's legendary players.



- 34 A severed human foot in a pool of congealing blood. Nearby are the cold remains of a fire and a single brand with its blackened head covered in burned, clotted gore.
- 35 A sports bottle full of denatured alcohol.
- 36 A makeshift surgeon's bag stocked with modeling knives, alligator clips, homespun wool, instant glue, straightened fishhooks, dental floss sutures, and a bottle of debilitatingly potent rotgut. A red felt cross is stapled to the front of the bag.
- 37 The desiccated body of a feral cat heavily augmented by cybernetics. As you look closer, its artificial eye nictitates open and a tiny tracking laser sights on your torso.
- 38 The body of a mutated rat, about the size of a small dog, covered in armadillo-like plates. One side of its body has a scorched-looking opening, matched by a similar one on the other. It is possible to see all the way through the cauterized hole in the animal.
- 39 A coffin-sized capsule made from silvery metal and studded with blinking indicator lights. The groove running around its length indicates it can be opened, but not how.
- 40 A collection of random electronic parts, as well as a speaker and microphone, nailed to a block of wood in a crude parody of a CB radio. There is a 50% chance it actually works.
- 41 A mechanical arm with several leads running from its shoulder. There is an equal chance the arm is a prosthetic, cybernetic augmentation, or part of a robot. There is also a 50% chance that the arm will animate and go for the nearest throat.
- 42 A mason jar containing 3d6x teeth. These teeth originated in the mouths of non-mutated humans.
- 43 A prototype cybernetic left arm ending in a right hand. The wrist shows signs of jury-rigging and the shoulder joint has been modified so it can be mounted into a pelvic joint.
- 44 A jury-rigged flashlight made from the parts of several broken flashlights held together with duct tape and hot glue. In place of batteries is a capacitor charged by solar panels running down the flashlight's side.
- 45 A totem pole made from several bare skulls. From the base up these are bear, mutant, human, dog, cat, and mouse.
- 46 A box of old computer disks, from floppy discs to zip drives. Each disc has a 30% chance of being wiped by an EMP.
- 47 A comic book about the adventures of a caped hero. Certain words and phrases in the book are highlighted and several characters have been circled or crossed out. Written over the title on the cover are the words, "*The Truth of Our Prophet.*"
- 48 A hacksaw, heavy cleaver, and tourniquets atop a bloody table. Beside the table is a large plastic tub filled with 1d6x severed limbs. Each limb has suffered great trauma.
- 49 An improvised firearm that uses compressed air to shoot syringes. The weapon's magazine is loaded with 1d6 syringes. There is an equal chance that the syringes are loaded with sedatives, poison, or hallucinogens.
- 50 A mason jar sealed with epoxy and jury-rigged with a wire handle. Inside the jar is a cadaverous, glowing hand that sheds as much light as a lantern.
- 51 A necklace strung with washers and wing nuts of various gauges.
- 52 A motorcycle helmet with a welder's facemask mounted to the front instead of a standard visor. A walkie-talkie is mounted to the inside of the facemask.
- 53 A single boot, equal chance of left or right, with the toe and heel reinforced with salvaged scrap metal and cleats made from roofing nails.
- 54 A pair of sturdy, insulated workman's gloves modified to accommodate hands with 1d4 additional fingers.
- 55 A hand grenade with the explosive core removed. In place of the core is a chamber containing 3d6 pills.
- 56 A battered magazine for an automatic rifle. Close inspection reveals that the magazine is an improvised explosive device that will detonate when the rifle it is loaded into is fired.
- 57 An elaborate, savage-looking sword that is useless in a fight and merely a showy replica of a weapon featured in a pre-cataclysm fantasy movie.





- 58 A crossbow without a bowstring but with a lighter rigged to the trigger. The weapon is modified to shoot fireworks.
- 59 A portable TV with a busted screen. The receiver has been modified to pick up radio signals of all kinds. A framed picture of a smiling family replaces the screen.
- 60 Homemade jerky wrapped in wax paper. There is an equal chance the meat is made from cow, dog, cat, rat, giant rat, gator, human, mutant, shoe leather, or tofu.
- 61 A lunchbox full of transistors, integrated circuits, and other circuit board components salvaged from old VCRs and thermostats.
- 62 A 10 lbs. sack of rich, uncontaminated soil.
- 63 A mousetrap baited with a severed fingertip.
- 64 A gag made from a bouncy ball and electrical cable.
- 65 1d4x action figures modified with hot glue and paint to resemble the leaders of several mutant tribes.
- 66 A weathered box containing a water-damaged chess board and 4d8 pieces.
- 67 1d4x toy racecars with the wheels removed.
- 68 A cap gun and a spool of 1d00 especially-loud caps.
- 69 A dented can of sweetened condensed milk. There is a 50% chance it has spoiled.
- 70 Some 2d6 metal sporks held together by intense magnetic force.
- 71 A spool of 1d100x feet of barbed wire. There is a 50% chance that the wire is rusted.
- 72 Some 20 feet of garden hose. Small holes are poked through the hose every two inches.
- 73 A sealed pouch of seeds for planting. There is an equal chance of tomato, sunflower, cucumber, watermelon, pepper, jalapeno, pumpkin, bell pepper, millet, or wildflower seeds.
- 74 A bottle of quick-drying model glue.
- 75 A survival compass. Exposure to an EMP has altered the magnetic field of the needle, causing it to always point east.
- 76 A bucket meant to hold fast-food fried chicken that contains the skeletal remains of a cat.



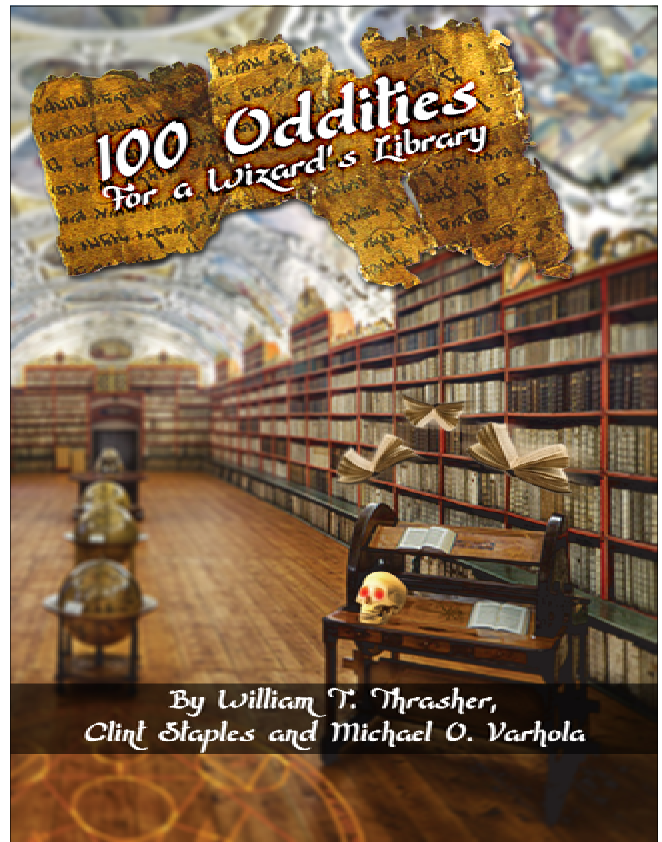
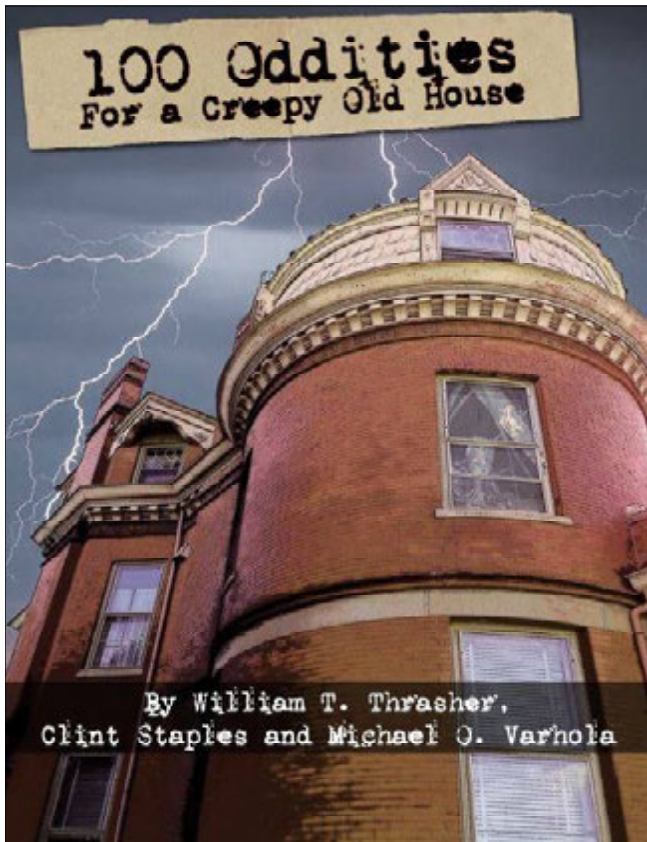


- 77 A finely-crafted sock puppet with adorable button eyes, felt facial features, and a bow tie. It smells funny.
- 78 A scrap of paper. Written on the scrap is a checklist of the next 1d4 oddities the bearer will find while scavenging.
- 79 A necklace made from bicycle chain strung with the claws of several large mutant predators. All the claws are bloodstained.
- 80 A grease-stained, dog-eared reference manual on auto repair.
- 81 A carabiner with a loop of blue and white twist plastic twine, upon which are tied a dozen severed pony-tails, mostly blonde.
- 82 An old umbrella, patched in several places and painted with several stylized skulls.
- 83 A child's all-terrain bicycle, painted black, fitted with a hand-crank flashlight on the bars and with an empty pistol holster fastened to the frame.
- 84 A sun-bleached human skull with bits of dried flesh and muscle still attached. Inside, it is packed with complex machinery and electronics.
- 85 A pornographic magazine in surprisingly good condition, albeit with the centerfold torn out. There is a 50% chance someone has taken a marker and "improved" the models by drawing on mutations and radiation burns.
- 86 A battered fuel canister. There is an equal chance the canister is empty, full of fuel, full of water, or the nest of a carnivorous blob.
- 87 A child's talking doll. It says "*Momma! Papa!*" over and over again in a hollow voice.
- 88 A mangy dog. It is curious and friendly, but slow to trust, and follows the party around from this point forward. It is intelligent and capable of communicating telepathically but is not ready to reveal this just yet.
- 89 An invasive purple fungus grows over one or more surfaces. This mutated fungus grows only in places contaminated by radiation but metabolizes the energy, dying out when an area is free of contamination.



90	A 5 foot tall cockroach foraging through the wasteland. If approached, the cockroach greets the party in German, introducing itself as Gregor.
91	A car, idling, the keys in the ignition. Sounds of struggling can be heard coming from the trunk.
92	A sock full of ball bearings.
93	A crimson diaper attached to a set of suspenders made from bandoleers.
94	A shoebox full of polaroids documenting a lifetime of pleasant memoires.
95	Half a bar of soap. There are equal chances of it being scented, unscented, or disinfectant.
96	1d100 yards of fabric.
97	A violin strung with guitar strings.
98	A riding mower modified with a diesel engine, armor plating, and flaming paint job. Its gas tank is empty.
99	Something explodes in the distance, sending a fireball high into the air.
00	The airtight hatch of a survival bunker. It has not been opened since the apocalypse.





Check out all the other entries in Skirmisher Publishing's best-selling "100 Oddities" series and use them to help take your tabletop games to the next level!

