



Paradigm Concepts Presents

ROTTED CAVES

SECOND BITE



FAST PLAY RULES

FEATURING ISSUE 0

ONE BAD DAY

Art by Debris
CAPS

V4.0

Paradigm Concepts Presents

ROTTED CAPES SECOND BITE FASTPLAY RULES V4.0

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POWERED BY THE UNCANNY SYSTEM



THIS PACKET IS YOUR CRASH COURSE IN SURVIVING THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE WITH SUPERPOWERS.

This is a streamlined version of the full rules, designed to get you to the table fast without getting bogged down.

THIS PACKET CONTAINS

Fully fleshed out, pre-generated heroes

Each with their powers already detailed and ready to play.

Sidecards

Break down the character sheet and walk players through the basics of play.

Rules Reference Sheets

for at-a-glance mechanics.

One Bad Day

A complete introductory scenario, with every stat block, rule call-out, and story beat the Editor-in-Chief (our name for the Game Master) needs to run the game.

The Fast Play Rules Document (This Document),

Covering only what you need to run the adventure.

This is just your first bite. The full game expands with Enclave Interludes (what your heroes do between issues), full rules for building and scaling threats, over 40 Talents, and a massive library of 104 superpowers.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

Like most role playing games, Rotted Capes requires, beyond this fast play, several items to play.

HERE ARE THE THINGS YOU'LL NEED:

At least one other player, optimally four.

One or two sets of polyhedral dice (a d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20)

A healthy dose of imagination.

Everything else you need is included in this fast-play packet

Pen and paper, either physical or electronic.

WHILE NOT REQUIRED, HERE ARE SOME OTHER THINGS YOU MAY WANT AT HAND.

Appropriate background music drawn from both superhero and zombie movies

Appropriate pictures of Heroes and Super Zombies.

WELCOME.

SO WHAT IS ROTTED CAPE?

Rotted Capes: Second Bite is a tabletop roleplaying game of superheroes at the end of the world. The zombies came, and the capes fell, but not all of them. Some of you survived, scarred and battered. Now you're fighting not for justice, not to catch the bad guys, but to see the next sunrise.

Every game session in Rotted Capes is an **Issue**, just like a comic book. Whether an Issue leans into survival horror, over-the-top superhero action, or a whiplash mix of both in the same night, the game is built to support it. One Issue might have you wisecracking as you punch through hordes of deadheads; the next, you're mourning the enclave that didn't make it, or staring down a super-zombie who used to be your mentor.

That's the heart of Rotted Capes: it can be grim, it can be gonzo, and it often lives in the space between. One moment, you're playing it like a splash-page fight scene, the next, you're gut-punched by loss. Both tones are valid, both are fun, and the best games embrace the contrast.

So, grab your dice, pick up your cape, and get ready to see if your heroes can hold the line,

Because the apocalypse doesn't stop for anyone.

Pedro "Statmonkey" Barrenechea

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A-Lister: One of the major superheroes of the Glory Days; she probably had her own comic book and movie.

B-Lister: A low-powered superhero or villain, usually a minion or sidekick during the Glory Days.

Big Box Village: A cluster of large retail stores, often land-scaped into a mini-village of sorts.

Burn Victim: Someone that was infected but cured through burning.

Bystander: Any character that is not a Hero, Villain, or Zombie.

Clear Zone: An area that's declared zombie-free. A clear zone is usually temporary.

CFB: "Closed for Business." An area that is determined to be free of lootable goods.

Closing Sale: An area that has been almost picked clean. It's generally considered not worth the risk unless desperate.

The Code: An informal standard that all B-Listers follow, primarily to keep them heroic.

Cruiser: A boat that carries an enclave.

Deathwatch: A group within an enclave that is responsible for its security.

Editor-in-Chief: The Game Master responsible for running *Rotted Capes* for the other players.

Enclave: A group of Bystanders that work together for protection.

Glory Days: The time before Z-Day; roughly analogous to present-day earth with superbeings.

Grand Opening: An area as yet unscavenged.

Graphic Novel: A plot that takes several sessions to conclude, usually with a gritty approach.

Hero: The character being played by a player.

Hotel: Slang for a place occupied by an enclave. Some B-Listers give the Hotel a star rating (1-5) based on its comfort and protection.

Issue: A game session

Leech: A Bystander that enjoys the benefits of an enclave while contributing nothing or little to it.

Lich Lord: The mythical first zombie (or super zombie). Possible cause of Z-Day.

Lone Wolf: A B-Lister or Bystander who prefers travelling alone to being part of an enclave.

Loot: Items salvaged or scavenged.

Looter: A salvager.

Mini-Series: A short series, sometimes within a greater series, that focuses on a story arc.

Nest: A dense zombie population

OFB: "Open for Business." An area believed to have lootable items.

Penthouse: An enclave housed on the upper floors of skyscrapers.

Personal Arc: A B-Lister subplot that usually spans multiple issues.

Plot: A storyline with a distinct goal. A plot may be resolved within a single Issue or it may take several issues to complete. An overarching plot may take an entire series to resolve.

Poacher: A human that kills other humans, usually for supplies.

Ronin: A wandering B-Lister that doesn't belong to an enclave but helps the living whenever she can.

Sanctuary: A possibly mythical place where the heroes can live free of zombie infestation. There may be multiple sanctuaries; there may be none.

Scene: One distinct encounter.

Series: A succession of issues following the same Heroes or

plot elements.

Story Arc: A plot that spans several issues.

Super Zombie: A zombie with superpowers.

Team: A group of Heroes that work together.

Ultra: Someone whose opinion is important within an enclave or someone who believes herself important within an enclave.

Z-Day: The as-yet-unrevealed event that created the zombie threat.

Zombie: An undead, mindless creature that feasts on the living.

Zombie Aftermath: The world as it is now.

THE BASICS

So enough talk, let's get into it...

HERO TRAITS

These traits generally define what your Hero is capable of, how quick and strong they are, how well trained, and how well they can shake off things like mental possession.

ORIGIN AND ARCHETYPE

Your Origin represents the source of your powers, while your Archetype represents what you do with those powers. Maybe your Origin is that you're an Alien from another dimension, a demigod, or a superhuman. While your Archetype may be a brawler who likes to get into the thick of it. Or maybe you're a controller using your abilities to control the weather, or maybe the minds of others.

◆ RANK AND LEVEL

Your Level tracks your personal growth: what you've learned, endured, and become.

Your Rank defines your place in the world, how dangerous, capable, and relevant you are in the big picture.

Your Rank Bonus is equal to your current Rank (2 at character creation). As your Rank increases, so does this bonus, reflecting your growing effectiveness whenever your training, powers, or experience come into play.

ABILITY SCORES

These define your physical and mental capabilities, including your strength, intelligence, and dexterity. Ability Scores are broken down into six attributes. All creatures possess these ability scores; each score has a number that defines that ability's magnitude. An ability score is not just a measure of innate capabilities but also encompasses a creature's training and competence in activities related to that ability. A score of 10 or 11 is the normal human average, but heroes and villains are a cut above average in most abilities. A score of 18 is the highest that a person usually reaches, with some reaching Olympic levels of capability with scores as high as 20. Some heroes, such as super-humans, demigods, and androids, can reach theoretically unlimited potential beyond these limits.

- **Strength** – How strong you are, how much you can lift, how hard you punch.
- **Dexterity** – How quick and agile you are, how fast you can run, and how quickly you react.
- **Constitution** – How hearty you are, how well you can shake off infection and toxins.
- **Intelligence** – How smart you are, how much you remember.
- **Wisdom** – How insightful and perceptive you are. Where Intelligence is knowing things, wisdom is understanding implications and careful application of that knowledge.
- **Charisma** – The strength of your personality, how charming you are, and how you manipulate and inspire others.

◆ **Ability Modifiers:** Ability score modifiers range from -1 (for an ability score of 1) to +20 (for a score of 50) and are derived from your Ability Score. Ability Modifiers affect almost every d20 roll and come up in play more often than their associated scores.

◆ **Aptitude Bonus:** Represents your hero's ability to apply natural talent, training, and experience under pressure. Your Aptitude Bonus is equal to your **Ability Modifier** + **your Rank Bonus** (+2 at hero creation). This bonus reflects more than raw potential. It is the difference between having strength and knowing how to use it. Between being smart and knowing how to apply it.

◆ **Base Die:** Every Ability Score has a Base Die. A Base Die represents the raw impact of that score when it is used directly. For ability scores, this might be how hard you hit, how much stamina you recover, or how much raw effort you can bring to bear.

For example, a hero with Strength 16 has a d8 Base Die. If that hero hits someone with a melee weapon, they roll their Strength Base Die and add the weapon's damage bonus.



DEFENSES

Your defenses represent how difficult you are to target or affect whenever a hostile action targets you. All Attack Rolls are rolled against one of these three defenses. See page 12 and 16 for more on Defenses and their use in combat.

- **Avoidance** - How hard you are to hit physically.
- **Fortitude** – Your ability to withstand poisons, toxins, and direct attacks upon your physiology.
- **Discipline** – Your ability to withstand mental control, attacks upon your psyche, effects that manipulate your behavior, and sap your resolve.

WOUNDS & STAMINA

These are a measure of your overall physical resilience and how much punishment you can take before being knocked out or killed.

- Stamina is a measure of your physical endurance.
- Wounds are a measure of how much punishment you can take before the risk of death.

When you take Damage in combat or from accidents such as falling, you lose Stamina. But when you suffer a grievous injury, you gain a Wound. While Stamina is quickly regained, wounds take time to heal. For more information on Wounds and Stamina, see page 21.

PACE

Pace is the number of areas you can move during your Action. Areas are an abstract measure of distance. An Area may be a room in a house, a hallway, or any other enclosed space. Larger rooms and outdoor areas are divided into roughly 20'x20' Areas. For more on Pace, see page 14. Note: if you are playing with maps that use 5' squares, you can alternatively multiply a character's Pace by 4 for the number of squares they can move.

SKILLS SETS

Skill Sets represent your Hero's background, training, and unique survivor experience, the sum of what they know and what they've practiced under fire. Do they know how to keep a generator running after years of neglect? Calm panicked civilians? Navigate collapsed urban landscapes?

Instead of tracking narrow individual skills, Rotted Capes uses broad, cinematic Skill Sets that encompass a thematic area of expertise. Each Skill Set can be creatively applied to various situations, provided the player justifies it and the Editor-in-Chief agrees.

When you can apply a Skillset to any ability check roll a d20 and add your aptitude bonus.

Skill Sets may also include Specialties, specialties within that skill set that grant you **Edge** on your Check. When a

Skill Set rarely comes into play but shines in just the right moment, especially when tied to your Hero's backstory, it triggers a Deep Cut Moment, granting **Edge** and earning you a **Plot Point**. For more on Skill Sets, Specialties, see page 8.

POWERS

Powers, oh yes, powers. Powers are what set most heroes apart from everyday bystanders. Powers possess a power score like your ability score, ranging from 9 to 40+. This power score is used to determine your power modifier and dice used for damage rolls. **Power Modifications** are a collection of flaws and perks that allow you to customize your powers. These power modifications give a bonus or penalty to your final power score.

Additionally, once you have your powers, you can improve your proficiency with them in several ways. For example, you can increase your power score, learn an **emulated power** allowing you to duplicate another power, albeit at a lower power score, or learn **power tricks**, which are new ways to utilize the powers that you develop during play.

Power Modifiers: Power Score modifiers range from 0 to +20 and are derived from your Power Score. To determine your power score modifier, subtract 10 from the power score and divide the total by 2 (round down). You can also refer to the Ability & Power Score Table at the end of this document.

Rotted Capes comes with a staggering 104 powers, but the ones you need are fully detailed on your character sheet or as part of the adventure *One Bad Day* included with these fast play rules.

BURNOUT

In the dystopian setting of Rotted Capes, superheroes face a phenomenon known as Burnout. This sometimes occurs when one pushes their powers too far, causing their powers to shut down and stop working. Before Z-day, Burnout was not much of an issue, but it has become much more prevalent since the apocalypse. The lack of advanced facilities to maintain equipment, inadequate nutrition, and the constant stress of surviving among zombies might contribute to this issue. Each power comes with a "**Burnout Cost**," and during any given scene, users must monitor their total Burnout. If they exceed their **Burnout Threshold**, they become progressively exhausted and face an increasing likelihood of their powers failing throughout the scene. For detailed information about **Powers** and **Burnout**, refer to page 29.

POWER STUNTS

Sometimes your powers need to do more than what's printed on the sheet. That's where Power Stunts come in. A Power Stunt is when you push your abilities past their usual limits, bending them into something new and cinematic. Maybe you freeze the floor with your ice blast to trip a horde, or overload your lightning bolt to arc between multiple targets.

To pull it off, spend a plot point, describe what wild stunt you're attempting, and roll a Power Check against a higher-than-usual TN set by the Editor-in-Chief. Success means your panel looks epic, and the stunt works as intended. Failure doesn't just fizzle out; it usually brings complications, backlash, or burnout.

With time, you can master a power stunt and make it part of your repertoire, but for now, try it out, think outside of the box, and have fun.

TALENTS

Talents are a collection of abilities that may represent training in a new skill, a special talent, or an advanced level of training beyond mere skill aptitude. There are also Power Talents that specifically change the way you interact with your powers, or grant you an improved level of mastery, or improve a power score.

FEATURES

Much like Talents, Features represent an evolution of your Hero, gained from leveling up. Each Origin possesses a set of Features you can choose from.

GEAR

One of the most essential things is your starting gear. Besides providing a means of survival, that trusty .45 Colt you picked up will keep the zombies at bay when you Burnout. All your gear is listed on each pre-generated character and threat stat-block.

CORE MECHANICS

From blasting at a zombie with their powers to scavenging through the remains of a ransacked building or negotiating with a roving biker gang, events like these will call upon your Hero's Skill and physical capabilities, so in such actions where the outcome is uncertain, we roll a d20.

The core mechanic of the game breaks down to d20 + Modifiers vs. a Target Number. If the total of a die roll plus modifiers equals or surpasses the target number, the roll is a success. This simple rule governs most task resolutions.

Modifiers: can be either bonuses or penalties derived from several sources, like ability scores, skills, powers, rank, Talents, gear, as well as circumstances, such as attempting to fire an arrow as you fall off the side of a building.

Target Numbers (TN) are commonly set by the Editor-in-Chief. A Target Number may come from several sources: it might be an arbitrary value chosen by the Editor-in-Chief, a Passive Power TN, a Defense value, or the result of an opposed roll.

EDGE AND SETBACK

You can gain Edge or Setback on any roll, whether it's an attack roll, Saves, or skill check.

- **Edge:** Roll an additional d20 and use the higher result.
- **Setback:** Roll an additional d20 and use the lower result.

For example, if you have Setback and roll a 17 and a 5, you use the 5. Conversely, if you have Edge and roll a 17 and a 5, you use the 17.

When multiple factors affect a roll with both Edge and Setback, you still roll only one additional d20. If conditions grant both Edge and Setback, they cancel each other out, and you roll a single d20 as normal.

For example, if you have two conditions one granting Edge and one imposing Setback, you still have Edge on your roll.

Edge/Setback mostly comes from the fiction. Conditions do it all the time: if you're Prone, melee attacks against you have Edge and your own melee swings suffer Setback; Restrained pins your Pace to 0, gives attackers Edge, and puts your attacks at Setback; Stunned (Lesser) slaps Setback on all your rolls and shuts off Reactions (often the opening beat of Surprise). Beyond conditions, the scene can tip the dice: attacking from hiding (Unseen) grants Edge, while firing at a target you can't see imposes Setback. And when time/pressure is the lever, you can Rush Job a challenge (one step faster, roll with Setback) or Take Your Time (one step slower,

roll with Edge). Finally, teamwork matters! Assist explicitly grants an ally Edge on their next related check before your next turn.

CRITICAL SUCCESS & FAILURE

Any time you are making an attack roll, Saves, or a skill check, a roll of 1 or 20 before applying any modifiers is a critical failure (on a 1) or a Critical Success (on a 20); For the most part, a natural (before modifiers are applied) 20 is always a success, while a 1 is always a failure. For their effects in combat, see page 17 and 21 for more.

RESOLUTION CHECKS

During gameplay, not every roll means the same thing, and that matters.

Sometimes you're pushing the limits of what your Hero can do. Sometimes you're trying to survive something that's about to ruin your day. And sometimes... you're trying to put something down before it puts you down first.

Mechanically, the game breaks those moments into three distinct resolution rolls: **Checks**, **Saves**, and **Attacks**. They all use the same core mechanic. You roll a d20, add your modifiers, and try to beat a Target Number, but how you get there, and what you're allowed to bring to the table, changes depending on the situation.

Checks: This is where your Hero actually gets to be clever.

When the Editor-in-Chief presents a Challenge, leaping rooftops, talking down a mob, forcing open a rusted door, or pulling off something wild with your powers, you're making a Check.

You describe what you're doing. Not just what, but how. What ability are you leaning on? What training, background, Power, or Skill Set are you bringing into this moment? Sell it. If it makes sense in the fiction, it counts.

The Editor-in-Chief sets the **Target Number (TN)** based on the situation. You roll, add your modifiers, and we see what happens next.

If you've got nothing relevant, no Skill Set, no power, no feature, no clever angle, then you're leaning on raw talent. Roll a d20 and add the appropriate Ability Modifier.

But when you do have the right training? That's when things start to click.

You roll a d20 and add your Aptitude Bonus for the chosen ability score instead. If a Specialty applies, you gain an **Edge**.

Any time you're actively using a power, and there's uncertainty, control, precision, or pushing it beyond its limits, you're making a Check using that power's Primary Ability Aptitude Bonus. Same rules. Same flow. Just a different flavor of awesome (or disaster).

Most importantly? Checks don't stop the story.

If you fail, something changes. Something gets worse. Something gets complicated. The door opens, but now the alarm's screaming. You make the jump, but you're hanging by one hand. You calm the crowd, but someone bolts and makes things worse.

Face-Offs: Sometimes, it's not you versus the situation; it's you versus someone or something else.

When two characters are directly opposing each other—arm wrestling, chasing across rooftops, trying to outmaneuver or outthink the other, or clashing in a test of powers—you're in a Face-Off.

Both sides roll and apply their modifiers. Highest result wins; ties go to the initiator.

Face-Offs are still Checks at their core, just without a static Target Number. Your opponent is the difficulty.

Saves Saves are not about what you choose to do. They're about what you're trying not to suffer. When something hits you, poison, psychic assault, collapsing rubble, or a power trying to lock you down, you make a Save to resist it. Roll a d20 and add the relevant Aptitude Bonus, plus any bonuses that specifically apply to Saves.

This is raw grit. Your body, your mind, your Discipline, digging in and saying not today.

Attacks If you're trying to hit something, whether it's with your fists, a weapon, or a power, you're making an Attack.

Roll a d20, add the appropriate Aptitude Bonus, apply modifiers, and compare it to one of your target's Defenses. On a hit, you deal damage or apply the effect.

Attacks don't use Skill Sets. They don't care how clever your background is. This is about execution—timing, aim, and raw capability.

And yes, different kinds of attacks come with their own quirks, range penalties, Setbacks in specific situations, and other modifiers, but at their core, they all follow the same structure. For more on Attack Rolls, see page 16-17.

Bonuses and Stacking: Bonuses from the same source do not stack; instead, you always use the highest bonus applicable to the situation. Sources include ability scores, power scores, powers, features, talents, and circumstances.

For example, if you have two talents that provide bonuses to Stealth checks, one offering a +1 bonus to all Stealth checks and the other providing a +2 bonus in urban environments, you would benefit from the +2 bonus while in urban environments and the +1 bonus in all other situations.

TARGET NUMBERS

Any time there is a challenge, it's the Editor-In-Chief who sets your Target Number (TN). The more difficult a task, the higher its TN. The Typical Target Numbers Table shows the most common TNs. If the total equals or exceeds the TN, the ability check succeeds. Otherwise, it's a failure, and what that failure entails is up to the Editor-In-Chief.

Table 1-1 Typical TNs

Easy (10)
Routine (15)
Challenging (20)
Daunting (25)
Amazing (30)
Improbable (35)
Astounding (40)

EXAMPLES OF SKILL SETS IN PLAY

Example 1: "It's Not My First Riot"

The Apparition's team is trying to calm a panicked group of survivors who've just escaped a Z's ambush. One man is screaming at the group's leader, threatening to leave. The Editor-in-Chief issues a challenge: if no one intervenes, the group will fracture and take essential supplies with them.

Apparition's player says:

*"I want to step in and de-escalate. I've got the 'Born to Wear the Mask' Skill Set, and my Specialty is in persuading people. I'm using **Charisma** to project calm authority and take control of the situation."*

The Editor-in-Chief agrees that it fits the Skill Set and Specialty. The Challenge TN is set at 15.

Apparition's player rolls:

d20 + Charisma Aptitude Bonus with Edge
She rolls a total of 19 and succeeds.

With that, the Editor-in-Chief exclaims, *"With the crowd calmed and order restored, the group agrees to stay," buying the heroes time and gaining a valuable ally.*

Example 2: “Built This in My Garage”

Zero is trying to reactivate a rusted-out security drone buried in the wreckage of a mall. The Editor-in-Chief issues a challenge: if successful, the team earns a mobile scout. If not, the failure might trigger a sensor ping or damage the drone beyond use.

Zero’s player says:

*“I’m using my ‘Garage Engineer’ Skill Set. I once rebuilt a salvaged servo-leg with a spatula and a soldering iron. I want to roll with **Intelligence**.”*

The Editor-in-Chief approves. The drone is fragile and long dormant, so the TN is set at 20.

Zero rolls:

d20 + Intelligence Aptitude Bonus

She rolls a total of 12 and fails the check.

The Editor-in-Chief rules that the drone sparks, briefly hums to life, and then shorts out completely. Worse, the noise echoes across the loading bay; something hears it.

ROUNDING DOWN

Whenever you divide a number in the game, round down if you end up with a fraction, even if the fraction is one-half or greater.

SPECIFIC RULES BEAT GENERAL RULES

If a specific rule contradicts a general rule, the specific rule wins. For example, a general rule is that creatures can move a number of areas equal to their Pace, but powers can allow you to surpass that number, sometimes by quite a bit.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Zombie survival stories are always more about the survivors than taking down the zombies. At the end of character creation and before the first game, you, the Editor-in-Chief, and the other players would commonly create a cast of Supporting Characters together.

In One **Bad Day**, we provide a few Supporting Characters; feel free to create a few more if you wish. Have each player describe a survivor that is important to them and why.

PLOT POINTS

Plot Points empower players to help create, shape, and enhance the story. Whether altering a scene, overcoming challenges, or pushing beyond their limits, Plot Points put narrative control into the players’ hands, fostering creativity and dynamic storytelling. But be careful! Plot Points spent end up in the hands of the Editor-in-Chief, who can use them to give the villains an Specialty.

Heroes start every Issue with 1 plot point and may earn

more of them during play. You may spend a Plot Point at any time, but only one Plot Point can be used on any single die roll. So, unless otherwise indicated, spending a Plot Point is not an action.

When you spend a Plot Point, it is handed over to the Editor-in-Chief, who can later use it to your Edge or detriment.

You can earn more plot points during play by playing into your personality flaws, using your tagline at just the right moment, and suggesting a complication, or at the Editor’s Discretion.

Remember, you and the Editor-in-Chief are not playing against one another.; we are all here to have fun and tell a good story. Trust your Editor-in-Chief. And don’t worry, there are plenty of ways to earn additional Plot Points.

Editor-in-Chief, are you wondering what you can do with your plot points? See Plot Twist! At the end of the combat chapter.

SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH PLOT POINTS?

- **Alter a Scene:** You can spend a Plot Point to create an disadvantageous complication, altering some aspect of the scene. For example, cause the floor of a building to give out at the right moment; find a fireman’s axe when you need it the most; have a wall come down on an opponent you knocked back, giving you a few moments to run for your life; have a car explode after you blast it with fire, grab a flag pole when you are knocked off a building, and so on. Such complications should never be an “I WIN” button and are completely at the Editor-in-Chief’s discretion.
- **Reroll:** You may spend a Plot Point to reroll any d20 check or damage roll.
- **Grant the Editor-in-Chief Setback:** You may spend a Plot Point to grant an attacker a Setback on their Attack against you.
- **Help an ally Escape Death:** When an ally is reduced to 0 wounds and 0 stamina, you may spend a Plot Point to help an ally escape death; they retain 1 wound but are Unconscious.
- **Wound Recovery:** You may spend a Plot Point to ignore the result of a failed Wound Recovery Roll; the Hero’s condition remains unchanged until the following day.
- **Aid another:** You may spend one of your Plot Points to aid another, allowing them to spend that Plot Point as if it were theirs, but you can only grant one Plot Point per scene.

- **Endure:** You may use plot points to mitigate the effects of diseases, overcome Exhaustion, or buy extra time in resource management crises, explained later at the end of this chapter (Survival)
- **Break the Rules:** You may, at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion, break the rules – in effect, do the impossible. Doing so might require several Plot Points and even a skill or power check.

EDITOR'S NOTES: ALTERING SCENES

The player should describe their desired change or addition to the scene, ensuring it is reasonable and fits within the established game world. The Editor-in-Chief will evaluate the proposal, considering the impact on the story, game balance, and the enjoyment of all players. If approved, the scene is adjusted accordingly, reflecting the player's creative input.

Let the players use plot points to help you tell the story, such as when a player recalls how to access a maintenance tunnel under a mall where he used to work before Z-day. Or, if one of your players uses a plot point to remember some interesting fact about a Z'd hero, giving him a psychological Specialty.

A Final Note: Plot Points are meant to embody the rule of cool; use them creatively, create moments, and tell a good story. Don't hoard them, spend them when it counts!

EARNING PLOT POINTS

As stated above, you start every Issue with one Plot Point, but there are a few ways to gain more Plot Points through play. When you get them, don't hoard them, as your Plot Points reset to one at the beginning of every Issue.

PERSONALITY FLAWS

If you emphasize one of your flaws to your own detriment, the Editor-in-Chief may reward you with a Plot Point. In this scenario, gaining an Edge from your flaw is strictly prohibited. The Editor can limit the number of Plot Points you receive if they believe you are exploiting flaws.

Furthermore, once per scene, one of your flaws can be activated by either the Editor-in-Chief or other players. If you embrace the consequences and play through your flaw's activation, you earn a Plot Point. However, it's important to note that you are always within your rights to decline the activation of your flaw, facing no negative repercussions.

Upon activation, you suggest how your flaw manifests in the game, which the Editor-in-Chief can accept or even enhance. The effects of a flaw might span from statistical detriments to specifically required actions. Remember, your flaw should not grant you any Edge; it's a flaw, after all.

SUGGESTING COMPLICATIONS

Another way a player can gain a Plot Point is by suggesting detrimental complications to the Editor-in-Chief. For example, the players can suggest that the terrified bystanders start to fire wildly into a melee with pistols, suggest that zombies show up at inopportune times, or even suggest that their Heroes' powers burn out unexpectedly.

Suggesting complications should be done in the spirit of creating a good story, not to power the game or max out possible Plot Point gain. Of course, the Editor-in-Chief has the last word on the event and is free to modify it as they see fit.

TAGLINE

If you deliver your tagline at just the right moment, enhancing the scene with perfect timing or in an epic way, the Editor-in-Chief may reward you with a Plot Point. It's not just about saying the line; it's about nailing the delivery when it counts.

EDITOR'S DISCRETION

Finally, a player may be awarded a Plot Point at any time during an adventure at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion. These points can be awarded to reward heroic actions, excellent roleplaying, or even helpful actions by the player out of character (such as driving out of his way to pick up another player to bring them to the game).

In short, Plot Point rewards should encourage players to help create a more enjoyable game for all parties involved.



COMBAT

"Shooting Star once told me that what separated us from the supervillains was our insistence on fighting fair, even when the odds were stacked against us. Unfortunately, zombies don't fight fair either. I still miss Shooting Star."

The glory days might be gone, but there's no lack of conflict in this world. The zombies keep coming, and the Super Zombies still can't get enough of that hero-on-villain Action. This section gives you all the basics for defending yourself and bringing on the pain.

HOW COMBAT WORKS

Combat in Rotted Capes can be a furious clash between heroes, zombies, super zombies, armed bystanders, or even other supers trying to take what's yours. Survival in the world of rotted capes can sometimes feel like life on the Specialty of a razor.

The chaos of combat is organized into a cycle of turns and rounds. A typical round represents about 6 seconds of combat. During each round, each combatant gets a turn. Combat starts with everyone rolling Initiative to settle the order of everyone's turn; once everyone has taken their turn, combat continues until the conflict is resolved.

COMBAT STEP BY STEP

- Are you and your opponent aware of each other? If all combatants know of at least one opponent, then there is no need for Surprise.
- Set the scene: The Editor-in-Chief describes the setting and location, provides helpful information, and explains where the heroes are positioned in relation to their adversaries and any bystanders.
- Roll Initiative: Everyone involved in the combat encounter rolls Initiative, determining the order of each combatants' turns.
- Take turns: Each participant in the battle takes a turn in Initiative order.
- Begin the next round: The round ends when everyone involved in the combat has had a turn. Repeat step 4 until the punching stops.

SURPRISE

"Apparition phases through a wall, cloaked in her Invisibility, just above a small pack of zombies. This pack that currently stands between her and a family of survivors in the enclave."

Somewhere else in the city, Silver Star and Red Falcon are quietly walking through a supermarket distribution warehouse, hoping to find some promising supplies. But little do they know they are being stalked between the crates of boxes by a surprisingly stealthy abomination.

In these situations, one side of the battle gains Surprise over the other.

The Editor-in-Chief determines who is surprised. If neither side tries to be stealthy, they automatically notice each other. Otherwise, the Editor-in-Chief should have them perform a faceoff utilizing appropriate ability scores (Commonly Dexterity for moving stealthily and Wisdom for finding them), applying any relevant skill sets or Specialties.

If you're surprised, you gain the condition Stunned (Lesser, Surprise) until the end of your first turn. A group member can be surprised even if the other members aren't. See Conditions on page 23.

INITIATIVE

At the start of a battle, each player and the Editor-in-Chief (for the bad guys and bystanders) makes a Dexterity check, adding any Initiative bonuses to determine their place in the Initiative order.

The Editor-in-Chief ranks the combatants in order from the one with the highest Dexterity check total to the one with the lowest. Setting the order (called the Initiative order) in which they act during each round. The Initiative order remains the same from round to round.

In the case of a tie, the heroes go first. If two or more heroes are tied, allow them to agree on an order amongst themselves. If your threats are tied, they all act simultaneously.

JOINING COMBAT

Any creature that enters a combat in progress needs to make a dexterity check, adding their initiative bonus, if any, to see where they fall in the current initiative order. Sometimes, a new combatant may enter the combat unseen and surprise everyone.

ON YOUR TURN

On your turn, you may take a number of different actions; you may move up to your Pace and take one **Action**, and a **Bonus Action**, and any number of **Trivial Actions** (within reason). Additionally, between your turns, you may take a special action called a **Reaction**.

ACTIONS

Each character can take a single **Action on their turn**, which they may use before, after, or during their movement. When taking an Action, you can do the following.

- Attack
- Assist
- Dash
- Demanding
- Disengage
- Dodge
- Hide
- Ready

When you describe an Action not detailed elsewhere in the rules, it's up to the Editor-in-Chief to judge if the Action is possible and what kind of roll you need to make, if any, to determine success or failure.

BONUS ACTIONS

Various Talents and powers let you take an additional action on your turn called a Bonus Action. You can take a Bonus Action only when a feature of the game states that you can do something as a Bonus Action; otherwise, you don't have a Bonus Action to take.

You can take only one Bonus Action on your turn, so you must choose which bonus action to use when you have more than one available.

You choose when to take a Bonus Action during your turn unless the Bonus Action's timing is specified. Anything that deprives you of your ability to take an action also prevents you from taking a Bonus Action.

TRIVIAL ACTIONS

Speaking, opening a door, flipping a light switch, drawing a weapon, reading a sign, picking up an item, or even pulling up your cowl are so trivial that they don't take up any of your actions on your turn. You may perform any number of these actions on your turn within reason. Your Editor-in-Chief is the final arbiter regarding how many trivial actions in any particular situation are reasonable.

REACTIONS

Specific powers, Talents, and special circumstances allow you to take a special action called a Reaction.

A Reaction is an instant response to a trigger of some kind, which can occur on your turn or someone else's Turn. The opportunity attack is the most common type of Reaction.

You commonly only have one Reaction, but some powers and Talents may provide additional reactions. If the Reaction interrupts another creature's turn, that creature can continue its turn right after the Reaction

USING POWERS AND MANEUVERS

Every power and combat maneuver in *Rotted Capes* tells you how it's used; some take an Action, some a Bonus Action, some require a Demanding Action, and others are always on or triggered by specific events.

Always check the power or maneuver's description, as it will tell you what kind of Action (if any) it takes to use.

You might:

- Spend an Action to blast an enemy across the battlefield.
- Use a Bonus Action to Dash across the battlefield.
- Take a Demanding Action to teleport across the city, or use Reaction to activate your force field in response to an attack.
- Spend an Action to Ready setting up an epic Team Attack.

Powers and maneuvers are your heroic toolkit. Use them to punch harder, move faster, shot with increased accuracy, and survive longer.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLICATIONS

Rotted Capes is a horror game. Sometimes doors that have been sealed for years won't budge, their tracks becoming clogged with rust and grime. When the power's out, those old electric sliders aren't opening with a fight. That box of precious supplies might split open under the weight of its own contents, scattering cans across the floor.

While the rules usually let players interact with their surroundings freely, that isn't always the case. In the world of Rotted Capes, even simple actions can take effort. Sometimes it'll cost you your full Pace, an Action, or even a Demanding Action to get it done.

MOVEMENT

*Weather leaping rooftops, sprinting through hordes of undead, or dive-bombing a Super-Z before it tears a bus in half, Rotted Capes is just as much superhero action as it is zombie horror. That's why we use **areas** for movement: a flexible, abstract system that fits the genre's high-energy chaos.*

On your turn, you can move a number of Areas up to your Pace, capped at 5 Areas unless you have a power, Talent, or feature that breaks that limit. You can move all at once, break it up before and after your Action, or take a step, your call.

You're not locked into one kind of movement either. You can run, fly, swing, climb, or swim, all in the same turn, if you've got the means. Just deduct the total distance you cover (in Areas) from your Pace as you go. Once you hit 0, you're done moving. Simple.

Want to leap from the roof, swing across the alley, and land behind a wrecked ambulance? Go for it, if you've got the movement to pull it off.

This system is meant to empower imagination and big hero moments. Whether you're on a gridded map or just narrating with dice in hand, movement in *Rotted Capes* is there to support the story, not slow it down.

PLAYING WITH 1" SQUARES

The rules for movement are intended to create a baseline on how far a hero can move. The movement system in *Rotted Capes* is designed in such a manner so as to facilitate the use of tabletop miniatures or playing 'theater of the mind'. Use as many or as few of these rules as you and your group feel are necessary.

If you use a map with 1" squares, multiply all paces by 4 to determine the number of squares a creature can move. Whenever a rule specifies an area, use 4x4 squares.

Example: If you have a Fly Pace of 10 and a Run Pace of 4, you could run 4 areas and then fly 6 more, using up your total of 10. However, you could not run 5 areas, as your Run Pace cap is at 4.

AREAS

In *Rotted Capes*, we don't measure movement in feet; we use **Areas**, abstract zones that reflect how far a character can reasonably travel in the chaos of a comic book battle.

Outdoor Areas are roughly 400 sq. ft. (approximately a 20' x 20' square). Inside, Areas commonly refer to rooms, with exceptionally large rooms (like a warehouse or arena) being split into individual Areas to reflect their scale.

BEING PRONE

Sometimes you get knocked on your back end, sometimes you have to dive for Cover, either way, you're Prone.

Dropping prone is easy; it costs no movement, but getting back up is another matter. That takes effort. Standing costs half your total Run Pace. You can always use a power to get back up (like Flying), in which case you reduce your Pace by 1.

You can crawl while Prone, but it's slow going. Crawling costs +2 Areas per space moved (minimum 1), while crawling through Difficult Terrain it is even worse, 4 Areas per space.



So, if your Pace is 4, you'll need to spend 2 to get on your feet. If your Pace is 0, you're stuck crawling unless a power helps you out.

Example: *You've got a Dexterity of 12 (Run Pace 1) and you're Prone in a debris-filled hallway (Difficult Terrain). Crawling to the next Area will take you 4 turns unless you have a better way out.*

MOVEMENT RESTRICTIONS

Even in an abstract system like Areas, the battlefield isn't always open. Whether it's debris, hostiles, and collapsed structures, your environment still matters. Here's how common movement restrictions work in *Rotted Capes*:

BLOCKED AREAS

Sometimes, an Area is so congested or threatened that you can't get through. This might be a hallway packed with Zs, a barricade of wrecked cars, or a hulking Super-Z like Titan standing in a doorway. You may not move past such Areas unless those enemies are three or more size categories larger or smaller, but you may move past allies with no issue. Many Heroes have fought their last at such chokepoints to buy time for Bystanders to escape.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

A debris-filled warehouse, a living room crowded with furniture, roads littered with abandoned cars and things left behind by fleeing citizens, or an old theater with a collapsed roof. Any Area cluttered with hazards counts as **Difficult Terrain**.

Every Area of movement in Difficult Terrain costs 1 extra area. This rule is true even if multiple things in a space count as Difficult Terrain. Moving through an area occupied by a hostile creature also counts as Difficult Terrain.

OBSTACLES

Some things aren't so much terrain as they are barriers, such as low walls, fallen beams, or broken fences.

Moving across a minor obstacle reduces your **Pace by half** (minimum of 1), while major obstacles may require a **dexterity-based challenge** to bypass or a **Strength-based challenge** to clear the way with a **Demanding Action**.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE DANGERS OF FLIGHT

Though many benefits come with the ability to fly, there are also risks that many Heroes don't consider until they have suffered the consequences.

While it is true that flight allows heroes reliable transportation and the ability to escape from the hordes of zombies, a flying hero has much more difficulty maintaining a low profile. Flying Heroes frequently draw groups of zombies that see them pass overhead, causing migrations of the undead into possibly populated safe havens.

Many Super Zombies also have flight, and it's not uncommon for titanic battles to occur in midair, particularly when a Hero is caught unawares.

INADEQUATE SPACE

Sometimes, a Hero or a large creature may find themselves battling in tight or overcrowded spaces (such as tight hallways filled with zombies). When a creature is crowded or squeezed, it suffers Setback on all actions, as all attacks against the squeezed target's Avoidance are made with Edge. Large creatures may not fit into certain Areas at all, rendering them unable to enter or act.

Example: *Silver Star and Red Falcon lure a massive Abomination into a narrow stairwell.*

*Cramped and restricted, the zombie fights at a Setback, while the smaller heroes move freely and gain **Edge** on their attacks.*

SPECIAL MOVEMENT TYPES

Some heroes and threats move in ways that defy gravity, terrain, or physics. Whether you're soaring through the air, digging through the earth, or swinging through ruined city skylines, alternate movement types follow the same rules as normal movement, with a few extra traits.

FLIGHT PACE

Flying characters use their Fly Pace in place of their normal Pace. Unless a power or feature says otherwise, flyers:

- May fly in any direction and must spend at least 1 Pace per turn to stay airborne.
- Can mix flying with other movement types if they have both.

Hovering:

If a character can hover, they may stay in the air without moving. If not, they must move at least 1 area per turn or fall.

Falling:

If you're flying and become prone, restrained, or your Pace is reduced to 0, you fall, unless you can hover. Falling may cause Damage and leave you vulnerable.

CLIMB PACE

Characters with a **Climb Pace** can move across vertical or inverted surfaces as easily as walking. No *Athletics checks* are needed unless otherwise stated.

SWIM PACE

Characters with a **Swim Pace** can move through water without making ability score checks, even in strong currents or rough conditions.

SWING PACE

Some powers, like Swinging, let you move by anchoring to structures and swinging across the battlefield.

To use this movement, you must have a sturdy anchor point within range, such as a beam, wall, tree, vehicle, or other solid object. If no valid anchor is available, you cannot swing and must rely on other forms of movement.

Once anchored, you can:

- **Swing: Move at a pace equal to your** power score modifier, treated as flight for purposes of maneuverability. Swinging does not allow you to hover. If you use Swing as normal movement, you end your move standing on the ground. If you Dash, you can choose to remain “mid-swing” between turns.
- **Climb:** Climb up your line at a pace equal to half your power score modifier.
- **Hang: Stay stationary**, suspended from your anchor.

The Editor-in-Chief may call for a Challenge if the anchor is unstable, moving, or actively targeted.

BURROW PACE

Characters with a Burrow Pace can tunnel underground. Burrowing speed and the type of terrain you can pass through depend on your power score:

Power Score:

- **1-20:** Easy to pass through loose soil and gravel.
- **21-25:** Can pass through tightly packed earth and stone, leaving a tunnel behind them.
- **30+:** Swim through the earth like a fish swims the sea, leaving no sign of passage.

Most animals don't have a Burrow Pace, they dig slowly and can't use it in combat. Only creatures with specific powers or traits can burrow effectively.

ACTIONS

ATTACK

There are two types of attacks in *Rotted Capes*: **melee** and **ranged**. Whether you're punching a zombie in the face, unloading a pistol, or unleashing a kinetic blast, all attacks follow the same basic flow.

Basically, if you're rolling a d20 to hit something, you're making an **Attack**, whether it's with a weapon, a power, or just your fists.

MELEE ATTACKS

Melee attacks happen up close, commonly when you and your target are in the same **Area**.

When making a melee attack, roll a **Strength-based attack roll** against the target's **Avoidance** (or another defense, depending on the power). If the Attack hits, you deal your listed **Damage**, which may include your Strength modifier, weapon bonuses, or power effects.

CLIMBING & SWIMMING

Not everyone's built to scale walls or swimming through a flooded subway tunnel, and that includes a lot of our less-graceful heroes.

If you don't have a Climb Pace or Swim Pace, you can still attempt to do so, but it's slow and taxing. Swimming and climbing without a power of some kind costs 2 areas of movement for every 1 area traveled. So, a hero with a Pace of 4 will only manage 2 areas of progress while climbing or swimming in a turn.

The Editor may issue a challenge to keep moving, especially if the conditions are dangerous, such as slick surfaces, strong currents, or that pack of Deadheads splashing after you. Failure means no movement for that Action and possibly losing your grip or getting dragged under.

If the creature has gear (climbing rigs, fins, or a makeshift raft), they might be able to move at their full Pace or bypass the need to meet a challenge.

And remember, staying still while clinging to the side of a building or treading water in the middle of a bay doesn't mean you're safe. It just means you're a slower target.

RANGED ATTACKS

Commonly used when trying to hit targets outside your Area, when making a ranged attack, roll a **Dexterity-based attack roll** against the target's **Avoidance**. If it hits, apply the Attack's Damage or effect.

Most ranged attacks use guns, bows, or ranged powers. If your target has Cover, the Editor-in-Chief may apply penalties to your attack roll.

ATTACKING WITH POWERS

Some powers utilize your powers' primary ability instead of your Strength or Dexterity. In these cases, your attack roll is based on the **primary ability** of the power.

For Example: A psychic attack can use either your Wisdom or Charisma, while an Enhanced Melee Attack might use Wisdom, depending on your choices during hero creation.

Your power's description will tell you what type of roll to make, which defense to attack, and whether it deals Damage, causes a condition, or does something stranger

CRITICAL HITS & MISSES

If you roll a natural 20, your Attack is a critical hit, it automatically hits, and instead of hitting Stamina, it deals a Wound directly. Criticals feel good. Let them land hard.

If the d20 roll for an Attack is a 1, the Attack misses, and the Editor-in-Chief might offer up a complication, which, if you accept, might award you a plot point.

ASSIST

You can help another creature succeed at a task. When you take the Assist Action, the creature you're helping gains Edge on their next attack roll or ability check, as long as they make the check before the start of your next turn.

DASH

Taking the Dash action allows you to move twice your pace during your turn.

DEMANDING

Some actions take longer to execute, such as charging up a power, hacking a console mid-combat, or pulling off a risky maneuver under fire. Such actions are **Demanding Actions**.

A **Demanding Action** isn't your standard, split-second move. It takes your full focus, limits your movement, and delays the effect until the start of your next turn.

If an action is labeled **Demanding**, it follows the special rules below.

While performing a Demanding Action:

- You **may not move more than 1 area** during your turn.
- You **may not take Reactions** while performing a Demanding action.
- You may only take a **Bonus Action before** you begin your Demanding Action.
- If anything prevents you from taking actions (e.g., conditions or effects), you **cannot** perform a Demanding Action.

Additional rules for Demanding Actions:

- **Attackers gain Edge** when targeting you during this time.
- The **effect of the Demanding Action** occurs at the **start of your next turn**.
- If the Demanding Action involves a **Burnout cost**, you must pay that cost when you begin the Action, not when it resolves.

INTERRUPTIBLE

Some Demanding Actions are labeled **Interruptible**, meaning they can be disrupted if you take Damage or are successfully attacked before the Action is completed. If you are hit or suffer Damage while performing an Interruptible action:

- You must make a **Constitution Saves**.
 - > The TN is **10**, or **half the Stamina damage taken after DR**, whichever is higher
 - > If you suffer a **Wound**, the TN is set to **25**.
- You must make a **new Saves each time** you take Damage.
- If you **fail** any of these saves, the Action is **disrupted** and was not completed.
- If interrupted, you **do not pay any Burnout cost**.
- You may try the Action again on a future turn if desired.

Example: Stepside attempts to use his power, *Geospatial Shift*, to escape a dangerous situation. The power requires an **Interruptible Demanding Action**, so he moves 1 area back and begins the process.

Before his next Turn, Flaming Fist hits him with a fire bolt that deals 10 Stamina damage. Stepside must make a Constitution Saves with a TN of 10 (since half of 10 = 5). If he fails, the Action is interrupted and does not occur, but he can try again on his next Turn.



DISENGAGE

If you take the Disengage action, your movement doesn't provoke opportunity attacks for the rest of the turn.

DODGE

When you take the dodge action, until the start of your next turn, all attacks against your Avoidance are made at a Setback. You must be able to see where the Attack is coming from to benefit from this Action. You lose this benefit if you are incapacitated or your Pace drops to 0.

HIDE

When you take the **Hide** Action, you attempt to vanish from sight, ducking behind Cover, slipping into shadows, or using the chaos of battle to disappear.

To do so, you must participate in a *face-off challenge* against any possible observers. This might require a dexterity-based challenge against the result of a wisdom-based challenge by any observers, applying applicable skill sets or Specialties. If you succeed, you're considered hidden, and you gain the benefits described under Unseen Attackers and Targets, including Edge when you strike from the shadows. Remember, zombies can't eat what they can't see. Probably.

READY

Sometimes, the best move is to wait for the perfect moment. When you want to act in response to something specific, you can use the **Ready** Action.

Choose a trigger, a visible event or condition you're waiting for, and **declare your response**, either an **Action** you'll take or movement up to your normal Pace.

Your **Reaction** will then go off when **that trigger happens**, as long as it occurs before the start of your next turn. Just remember, if your trigger never happens, you lose the Action. Sometimes waiting comes with risk.

Examples:

"If those zombies walk through the archway, I'll pull the lever and drop the blast doors."

"If that merc charges me, I'll blast him with a power shot."

REACTIONS

Reactions take place between your turns. Reactions require a trigger, and unless a Reaction's trigger is satisfied, you may not use it. Reactions can come from Talents, Powers, or Maneuvers. The following are the most common Reaction maneuvers used in combat. Full descriptions can be found in the Basic Maneuvers section (pg XX).

- Evade (Reaction): Impose Setback on an incoming attack.
- Brace (Reaction): Increase Fortitude to resist Massive Damage.
- Interpose (Reaction): Take a hit meant for an ally.
- Opportunity Attack (Reaction): Strike a fleeing enemy.

COMBAT MODIFIERS

Attack roles can be modified by circumstances in combat, such as Cover and Range.

RANGED MODIFIERS

You suffer Setback on attack rolls when attempting to hit a target with a ranged attack under the following conditions:

- The target is within your Area.
- The target is beyond your weapon's or power's maximum range.
- The target is engaged in melee combat.

Trying to thread a shot through a fist fight is a risky move.

UNSEEN ATTACKERS AND TARGETS

Combatants often try to disappear, either by hiding in darkness, vanishing with powers like **Invisibility**, or just staying out of sight.

When you attack a target you can't see, you have Setback on the attack roll. This applies whether you're guessing the target's location or targeting a creature you can hear but not see. You automatically miss if the target isn't in your designated location. Typically, the editor-in-chief will state that the Attack was missed without revealing whether your guess was accurate.

On the flip side, if **they can't see you**, you attack at **Edge**. If you're **hidden** (unseen *and* unheard), you reveal your location the moment you attack, whether you hit or not.

COVER

Punching someone through an open window or shooting a person taking Cover behind an abandoned car can be challenging. Cover sometimes can be the difference between life or being blasted to pieces.

Partial Cover means at least half the target is blocked, either by a wall, tree, car, furniture, or even another creature. Attacks against a target with partial Cover are made at **Setback**.

Total Cover means the target is completely blocked. You **can't target them directly** with attacks or powers, though **area effects** may still reach them. Think closed doors, thick walls, or being completely behind a barrier.

LINE OF SIGHT & LINE OF EFFECT

To target a creature with most attacks or effects, you must have a **line of sight**; in other words, you have to know where they are.

This doesn't have to be strictly visual. Darkness, smoke, and powers can all obscure line of sight. If you attack without seeing your target, you roll with **Setback**, and you must have some way to know where they are. Whether you do or not is at the Editor-in-Chief's discretion.

But seeing a target isn't always enough. Most of the time you'll need a **clear path** to reach them.

A solid wall, a pane of thick glass, or force fields might **block the line of effect**, even if you can see the target through them. Most attacks and powers require **both** line of sight and line of effect to work.

MEETING A CHALLENGE: USING POWERS & MANEUVERS IN COMBAT

In *Rotted Capes*, you don't just attack and move. You might find yourself hacking terminals mid-battle, leaping rooftops with precision, defusing bombs under pressure, or unleashing devastating powers. The following rules explain how to meet a challenge, use **Powers**, and perform a **Combat Maneuver** in combat.

MEETING A CHALLENGE

During combat, either you or the Editor-in-Chief may present a Challenge. Overcoming it could require an action, determined by the Editor-in-Chief according to the nature of the Challenge and what it is attempting to achieve.

Here are some examples:

- Glancing around for exits or recalling the colors of a rival gang? Free action, quick insights in the moment.
- Methodically searching a supply closet, forcing open a barricaded door, or slipping away from guards? That would require an Action.
- Disarming a tripwire mid-chase, splicing into a secure network under fire, or trying to drive a semi

through a collapsing parking garage? That might require a Demanding Action.

The Editor-in-Chief decides when a challenge calls for a roll, what kind of Action it requires (if any), and whether special conditions, like Edge or Setback, apply.

USING POWERS

Every power has its own listed activation method. Some powers are used with a standard Action, while others may trigger as a Reaction, Bonus Action, or require a Demanding Action. A few powers are passive, always active as long as their conditions are met.

For example, blasting someone with a power might require an Action, while attempting to teleport your team across the city while a horde of zombies is breaking their way through the drywall, calls for an Interruptible Demanding Action.

PERFORMING A COMBAT MANEUVER

Maneuvers are special actions you can take in combat. Everyone knows a few basic maneuvers, with more complex maneuvers being learned through the **Learn Maneuver** Talent. Much like powers, each maneuver lists what Action is required to use it.

For example, setting up a Team Attack with an ally requires a reaction, while grappling an opponent takes an action.

DAMAGE & DEATH

STAMINA AND WOUNDS

Stamina measures your physical and mental stamina, and it's the kind of damage you can shrug off, such as bruises, stress, and near-misses. No matter how much Stamina you've lost, you still fight at full capacity. It recovers quickly with rest and doesn't leave lasting effects.

Wounds are another matter altogether. Serious and long-lasting, wounds represent real injury.

When you take Wound damage, it hits hard, literally. Your ability to act is diminished, and recovery isn't quick. Wounds don't bounce back with a nap; they take time, rest, and sometimes the help of someone who knows what they're doing and has the gear to do it. And in this world, that's not always an option.

STAMINA DAMAGE

Most hits, weapon swings, unarmed shots, or straight-up damaging powers, reduce your Stamina. Use the attack's listed damage, usually modified by the attacker's relevant Ability or other bonuses. Roll it, add the modifiers, then subtract the target's **Damage Resistance (DR)** for that damage type. Whatever's left is the Stamina they lose. **DR** can drop the damage to 0, but never below.



DAMAGE RESISTANCE (DR)

Damage Resistance doesn't stop you from getting hit, but it softens the blow. Whenever you take Damage, subtract any applicable DR from the total before applying it to Stamina. DR might come from armor, force fields, powers, or other effects.

If multiple sources of DR apply, use only the **highest one**. Some effects, like precision strikes or armor-piercing attacks, can bypass DR entirely, as described in the effect.

For Example, If you have DR 5 against energy and DR 10 against fire, and a fire attack hits you, reduce the Damage by 10.

WOUND DAMAGE

There are two ways you can suffer wound damage.

Critical Hits: Any time you are subject to a critical hit that deals stamina damage, you suffer 1 wound. Remember, stamina damage is also doubled on a critical hit, which might result in *Massive Damage* (see below)

Massive Damage: You suffer 1 Wound of Damage any time an attack deals more stamina damage after Damage Reduction (DR) than your target's Fortitude defense.

The Effects of Wound Damage: You suffer a penalty of all attack rolls, power checks, and ability checks equal to the number of wounds you currently possess. So, if you suffer 2 wounds, you have a -2 to all attack rolls, power checks, and ability checks until you recover your wounds.

KNOCKBACK

When a creature is struck with a **kinetic attack** (including fists, baseball bats, TK bolts, etc.) and suffers *Massive Damage* or is dealt a *Critical hit*, it may be knocked back if the attacker has a Strength of 20 or higher or possesses the **Enhanced Strength** origin feature.

When that happens, the creature is either knocked to the ground or sent flying:

- If they are knocked to the ground, they are Prone, in your area.
- If they are sent flying, they are moved 1 area away from the attacker for every 10 points of Damage dealt (minimum of 1 area), rounded down.

- If the creature hits a solid object along its path, it suffers kinetic Damage equal to half the object's material strength, plus 1d6 kinetic Damage per full area traveled, after which your target falls prone.
- If the creature has not impacted any object along its path, once your target lands, it can roll a dexterity-based Challenge against a TN equal to the Damage suffered after DR. Skill Sets may apply. On a success, the target stays on their feet; on a failure, they fall prone.
- Don't forget that objects have structure, too! Throwing someone into a rotted-out wall may not stop them but hurling them into a steel column definitely will. Feel free to improvise! Especially if it paints a cool story moment! A good rule of thumb is that if a creature possesses a DR equal to or greater than the material strength of an object they impact while being knocked back, they always break through the barrier.

TEMPORARY STAMINA.

Temporary Stamina is a short-term buffer, an extra pool of Stamina that absorbs Damage before it affects your actual Stamina score. When you gain Temporary Stamina, it increases your current Stamina for a limited time. Any stamina damage you take is first subtracted from this buffer; only the excess, if any, is applied to your regular Stamina.

Temporary Stamina fades quickly. If the power or effect that granted it ends, any unused Temporary Stamina disappears immediately. You cannot stack Temporary Stamina from multiple sources; gaining new Temporary Stamina automatically removes any remaining from the previous effect.

CONTINUOUS DAMAGE

When you're taking Continuous Damage, like being on fire or soaked in acid, the total ongoing Damage adds up. All continuous Damage you suffer during a scene is **cumulative, regardless of the source**.

Once the total Damage exceeds your Stamina Defense, you suffer Massive Damage, and the count resets to zero. After that, the buildup starts again from scratch.

No matter the source, you usually get a Saves at the end of your turn to shake off the effect and stop the pain.

DROPPING TO 0 STAMINA

Once you reach 0 Stamina, you are Unconscious, and although you are helpless, you will not die without outside influence. See the conditions below for the Unconscious' effects.

WOUNDED AND DROPPING TO 0 WOUNDS

As long as you have any wounds of damage, you are in the Wounded condition.

If you reach 0 wounds but still have Stamina remaining, you are considered Incapacitated and in terrible pain.

If you are reduced to 0 Wounds and Stamina, you are dead unless they or a fellow player spends a Plot Point; in which case, you regain 1 Wound but remain Unconscious.

Alternatively, you may escape death by accepting a physical flaw and having your maximum wounds reduced by 1.

For the Helpless, Unconscious, and Wounded conditions, see page 24-25.

EDITOR'S NOTES: REMEMBER!

A Hero can spend a Plot Point to cause additional complications (e.g., the tumbling crates) or to save himself from a complication resulting from a knockback (e.g., grasping a flagpole when falling from a skyscraper).

GOING OUT IN A BLAZE OF GLORY

Sometimes, when heroes die, they make it count.

When your Hero hits 0 Wounds and 0 Stamina, you may choose to **go out in a blaze of glory**.

As your final act, you get:

- One Action, even out of their turn.
- Automatic Critical Hit on any attack or Edge on a Power Check if using a power
- No Plot Point can save you; your Hero dies!

Make it count. Go out like a legend.

HEALING AND DEATH

Heroes are made of stern stuff. So, at the end of a scene, you recover all of your Stamina.

If you are Unconscious at the end of a scene due to stamina loss, assuming you aren't a zombie chow, you regain half your total Stamina instead.

However, healing wounds is another matter entirely

You must take one hiatus per Wound you currently have before attempting to recover. So, if you've taken 2 Wounds, you'll need to take 2 Hiatuses before you can even try to heal one of them.

After the hiatus, you must make a successful Routine (TN: 15) Constitution Save to recover 1 wound. If you fail this check by 5 or more, things get worse, maybe a lot worse. Roll on the Wound Recovery table to see how your condition deteriorates. If someone is treating you with an appropriate skill set (e.g., Combat Medic, Doctor, Special Forces Operative), you gain Edge on this Saves.

HOW TO INJURE ZOMBIES

As they aren't exactly "alive," zombies follow special rules when injured. Zombies do not have Stamina; they do not tire, nor do they react to the most egregious injuries. There are only three ways to injure zombies: crushing their heads through Massive Damage, dealing a lucky Wound with a Critical Hit, or using some maneuvers, such as Devastating Attack or Headshot.

When a zombie is reduced to 0 Wounds, it's destroyed.

MASSIVE DAMAGE AND ZOMBIES

Massive Damage can be quite effective against the run-of-the-mill zombie but is also a game changer when facing more powerful abominations and Super Zombies.

Any time a Zombie of Epsilon level or below suffers Massive Damage, it is instantly destroyed.

Delta level and higher Zombies and Super Zombies suffer normal wound damage, but do not suffer any penalties for suffering wound damage.

ZOMBIES AND CONTINUOUS DAMAGE

It's a popular myth that zombies are vulnerable to fire; as unfeeling corpses, it's fair to say that they are less bothered by fire than humans. That said, a zombie lacks the survival instinct to put out a fire or remove acids eating away at them.

Once a Zombie suffers enough total Damage by continuous Damage to bypass their Fortitude Defense, they suffer 1 wound of Damage, enough to destroy a common Z. Super Z's, on the other hand, have the cunning to remove dangerous conditions from their bodies. Still, they may forget in the heat of battle.

TIME AND RECOVERY

Rotted Capes doesn't track time in minutes, hours, or days. Time moves by panels, by pages, by the turn of the story. Just like in a comic book, what matters isn't how long something takes on a clock, it's when the tone shifts, when the focus moves, when the narrative demands a new beat.

Although these units appear narrative in nature, they serve a hard mechanical purpose: the recovery of resources over time.

SCENES

A scene is a distinct narrative moment focused on a single conflict, goal, or location. A fight in a parking garage is a scene. Negotiating a truce between two factions? Another scene. As soon as the action shifts, combat ends, the heroes change locations, or the stakes transform, the scene ends, and a new one begins.

Scenes are the foundation of the game's pacing. Burnout, flaws, Features, and some powers refresh when a new scene

begins. A scene doesn't care how much time has passed in-universe; it's about the story beat, the page turn.

When in doubt, treat any clear narrative shift as the start of a new scene.

HIATUS

A Hiatus is more than just a pause, it's genuine downtime. Sleep. Shelter. A secure space to let your guard down. A Hiatus (granted by the Editor-In-Chief) usually happens between scenes or might be a scene in itself, such as camping overnight in a tall building looking over the dark, quiet city below.

During a Hiatus, heroes recover all their Stamina, some conditions, such as Exhaustion, as well as all Features recovered after completing a scene.

REST

All living things need rest. Any character that does not get at least a Hiatus in 24 hours must attempt a TN:15 Constitution Saves or gain 1 level of Exhaustion. After that, the Hero must perform an additional Constitution Saves every six hours, with an ever-increasing difficulty of +5 per six hours, or involuntarily fall asleep. Recovering from this Exhausted condition requires a Hiatus. Characters may instead attempt to sleep for only 4 hours per night, postponing their Constitution Saves to 36 hours.

CONDITIONS

Sometimes the dice aren't the only thing working against you. Certain events, powers, gear, and environmental effects will impose Conditions on your Hero, their allies, or their enemies. Conditions are shorthand for a specific mechanical effect on the game, and they're meant to be fast to apply and easy to remember.

Here is the core list of the most common and impactful states you'll run into. Everything else, whether you're on fire, frozen in place, or invisible to thermal scanners, is handled through Tags that customize a core condition or dictate its severity.

Think of it this way:

- **Condition** = the framework of what happens to you.
- **Possible Tags** = flavor, severity, or additional details.

You apply the condition first, then add any tags.

USING TAGS

Whenever you see a condition applied in these rules, the Editor-in-Chief may add one or more tags to describe it in play. Tags may:

- Indicate the source or element (Fire, Acid, Poison, Sonic).
- Indicate the severity (Lesser, Greater, Partial).
- Indicate the targeted sense (Visual, Thermal, All Senses).
- Indicate special Effects (DR penalty, movement restriction, added saves).

Examples:

- A Super-Z sprays you with acid: *Ongoing Damage (Engulfed, Acid, DR -2 to armor)*.
- A flashbang detonates nearby: *Stunned (Lesser, Sonic)*.
- You're cloaked in adaptive camo: *Hidden (Undetectable, Visual)*.

LIST OF CONDITIONS

BLINDED

You cannot see. You automatically fail any check that requires sight, attacks against you have Edge, and your attacks have Setback.

Tags: *Partial (+2/-2 instead of Edge/Setback), Energy Type (e.g., Flash – Light)*

CHARMED

You cannot target the charmer with attacks, powers, or harmful Effects. The charmer has Edge on all social interactions with you. Lastly, the condition ends if the charmer or their allies attack you or force you to do something against your nature.

Tags: *Magical, Psionic, Emotional, Seduction, Mind Control.*

EXHAUSTION

Some Special Abilities, Burnout, being Wounded, and environmental Hazards, such as starvation and the long-term Effects of freezing or scorching temperatures, can lead to a Special condition called Exhaustion. Exhaustion is measured on six ranks, which apply a penalty according to the table below. The penalty is applied to all Challenge and Attack rolls as well as to Pace. If a creature's Pace is reduced to zero, they still have the ability to move, but they must use a Dash Action to move one Area regardless of the type of Pace they use.

Tags: *Burnout, Environmental, Sleep Deprivation.*

If an already exhausted creature suffers another Effect that causes Exhaustion, its current level of exhaustion increases by the amount specified in the effect's description.

An Effect that removes Exhaustion reduces its level as specified in the effect's description, with all exhaustion Effects ending if a creature's exhaustion levels is reduced to 0. Finishing a Hiatus reduces a creature's Exhaustion Level by one, provided the creature has also ingested some food and drink. Any other effect that removes Exhaustion reduces its level as specified in the effect's description, with all Exhaustion ending if a creature's Exhaustion Level is reduced below 1.

Table 1-2
Exhaustion Effects

Rank	Penalty
1	-1
2	-2
3	-3
4	-4
5	-5
6	Death

OPTIONAL RULE:

BRUTAL CONTINUITY EXHAUSTION

When playing in Brutal Continuity, the penalty applies to the hero's saves, defenses, and burnout threshold. Additionally, reduce the creature's maximum Stamina by three times the penalty.

FRIGHTENED

You have Setback on checks and attack rolls while the source of your fear is within line of sight, and you cannot willingly move closer to it.

Tags: *Mild* (affects only certain rolls), *Severe* (full effect), *Specific Target*.

GRAPPLED

Your Pace becomes 0, and you cannot benefit from bonuses to Pace. The condition ends if the grappler is Incapacitated or you break free.

Tags: *Source* (Tentacle, Net, Cable), *Partial* (one limb only), *Immobilized* (cannot take any movement actions).

HIDDEN

You are unseen by your target(s). You have Edge on attack rolls against them, and they have Setback to detect or target

you. Attacking or making noise usually ends this condition.

Tags: *Undetectable – Visual*, *Undetectable – Thermal*, *Undetectable – All Senses*.

ONGOING DAMAGE

You take the listed Damage at the start (or end) of your turn until the condition ends. The source may also impose penalties. Unless stated otherwise, a successful Saves, Action (Stop, Extinguish, Cleanse) using an appropriate Skill Set, or Power ends the effect.

Tags: *Engulfed – Fire* (Setback on attacks), *Engulfed – Acid* (DR penalty), *Bleeding*, *Electrical*.

PRONE

You are on the ground. You have Setback on melee attacks, your attacks at range are unaffected, and melee attacks against you have Edge. You can spend half your Pace to stand up.

RESTRAINED

Your Pace becomes 0, attacks against you have Edge, and your attacks have Setback. You also automatically fail Avoidance checks against area effects.

Tags: *Immobilized* (no actions that require movement), *Partial* (one limb restrained).

STUNNED

You are disoriented.

- **Mild:** You have Setback on all rolls, cannot take Reactions.
- **Severe:** You have Setback on all Rolls, cannot take Reactions, Attacks against you have Edge, and you drop whatever you're currently holding in your hands.

Tags: *Cause* (Sonic, Electrical).

UNCONSCIOUS

You are unaware of your surroundings, cannot act, and drop anything you are holding. You automatically fail Avoidance and Discipline checks, and attacks against you from within the same Area are critical hits.

Tags: *Knocked Out*, *Medical*, *Power-Induced*.

WEAKENED

You suffer a penalty to a specific Ability Score, Power Score, or Defense.

- **Default Effect:** You take a **-2 penalty** to all rolls, checks, and derived stats based on the targeted Ability/Power/Defense for the duration, If the penalty reduces the targeted score's modifier below 0, you use the new negative value for all calculations.
- **Stacking:** Multiple instances affecting the same stat

do not stack; instead, take the higher penalty.

Tags: *Ability Score* (Strength, Dexterity, etc.), *Power Score*, *Defense* (Avoidance, Fortitude, Discipline), *Type* (Poison, Psychic, Radiation), *Severity* (Mild = -1, Severe = -4, Crippling = score halved).

WOUNDED

Wounded creatures suffer a penalty to all challenge rolls and attack rolls equal to the number of wounds of damage that creature possesses. These penalties do not stack with penalties from possessing ranks of Exhaustion.

You may only remove the Wound condition by healing all wounds.

DAMAGE TYPES & CATEGORIES

Different attacks, damaging powers, and other harmful effects deal different types of Damage. Damage Types have no rules, but other rules, such as Damage Reduction, rely on the types.

Feel free to create new energy types, but be warned: If the selection is too exotic, the power becomes far more powerful.

DAMAGE TYPE

Below is a complete list of Damage Types with examples to help the Editor-in-Chief assign a damage type to a new Effect.

Acid: A corrosive substance that eats away at targets, causing melting or disintegration.

Ballistic: Damage inflicted by firearms, bullets, or other high-speed projectile-based weapons.

Cold: Extreme cold or ice-based attacks that freeze or slow down targets.

Cosmic: This the boundless energy of the universe itself. Cosmic Damage manipulates reality, space, and time.

Electricity: Electric shocks or discharges that deliver high-voltage Damage to targets.

Fire: Flames and intense heat that burn and scorch targets.

Kinetic: Physical impact (such as punching) or force-based attacks that rely on sheer momentum or concussive blows.

Piercing: Attacks penetrating and piercing through armor or flesh, causing deep wounds.

Poison: Toxic substances or venom that inflict harm over time or impair the target's functions.

Psychic: Mental or telepathic attacks that manipulate thoughts, emotions, or perceptions.

Radioactive: Ionizing radiation that can melt objects, burn flesh, cause cellular Damage, or radiation sickness.

Slashing: Cutting or slashing attacks with bladed weapons, claws, or sharp objects.

Sonic: Sound-based attacks that utilize powerful vibrations or shockwaves to damage targets.

DAMAGE CATEGORIES

With Damage Categories, we further generalize Damage according to its source, either Energy or Physical Damage.

Energy consists of cold, cosmic, electrical, fire, radioactive, and sonic Damage.

Physical Damage consists of acid, ballistic, kinetic, piercing, and slashing.

Poison & Psychic Damage are not part of either category.

COMBAT MODES

Combat Modes represent a shift in the flow of combat. The Fast Play rules give you one of these combat modes, Horde Rules. There are two others presented in the full rules. Unleashed is when the villain stops holding back and reveals just how dangerous they really are, and Danger Zone is when the environment itself becomes a threat to the heroes. Here we give you Horde Rules: when weaker threats combine into a single, collective, powerful threat.

HORDE RULES

Horde Rules allow the Editor-in-Chief to combine five or more identical creatures in the same Area into a single, more dangerous unit, simplifying combat while keeping the threat palpable. Hordes move and Attack as one, gaining strength with each member that joins, and growing weaker as the heroes cut them down.

Any time 5 or more of the same creatures are in the same Area, they become a Horde and use the following rules.

- Hordes act as a single creature. If a Horde is formed after combat has started, the Horde, once formed, falls into the Initiative of its lowest member.
- Hordes move as a single unit and must remain in the same Area to function as a Horde.

PSYCHIC DAMAGE & DR

Note that Psychic Damage is a special case; due to its nature, Psychic Damage ignores DR, which does not explicitly protect against Psychic Damage. However, it also has no effect against Zombies (even Super Zombies).

- Hordes act and attack as if they were one creature. Hordes may attack one or two targets, gaining +2 bonus to hit and Damage for each active member of the Horde beyond the first (a Horde of 6 would gain +10 to hit and Damage). If the Horde is splitting its attacks on two targets, this bonus is split by the number of creatures attacking each target
- Hordes may make one Opportunity Attack per triggering action, but may take as many reactions to perform Opportunity Attacks as there are members of the horde.
- All attacks against a Horde target a single creature within it, dealing Damage until that creature is taken out, and reducing the Horde's size. Effects that impose conditions or control apply to one creature unless they affect the entire Area, while area-based attacks affect all members within the Area normally.
- If any member of the Horde is moved from the Horde's Area, that creature is removed from the Horde and acts as an individual creature, keeping the same Initiative as the of which it was once a part.
- A Horde that drops below 5 members is no longer considered a Horde and reverts to individual creature actions.

ATTACKING & DESTROYING OBJECTS

Sometimes, you may need to break down a door, snap apart chains, or shatter an enemy's plasma gun.

The durability of items is reflected by two values: Material Strength (MS) and Hits. Material Strength represents the object's resistance against Stamina Damage and works like Damage Resistance. Hits represent the amount of punishment the item can absorb. Each time the Stamina Damage of an attack surpasses the item's MS, the item suffers 1 Hit (regardless of the amount of Damage dealt). Critical strikes inflict 2 Hits only if the damage roll surpasses the item's MS. Any attack that deals Damage equal to twice an item's MS + Hits destroys it outright. Once the item reaches 0 Hits, it's broken.

Items that are damaged but not broken retain their MS and remaining Hits until repaired as appropriate for the item in question.

Stationary Targets: You do not need to roll to attack a stationary object. Roll the Damage and compare it to the MS of the object.

Attacking Held or Worn Items: Occasionally, you may want to break an object held by another, such as an enemy's weapon or gadget. In such cases, you may attack with Setback against the target's Avoidance. If you succeed, you damage the item, applying MS and Hits as appropriate.

Determining Material Strength: Refer to the Material Strength/Hits Table and Construction Qualities Table to determine an object's MS and Hits. Most objects are of Common quality. Hastily built structures are generally of Poor construction, while objects built to withstand heavy use are generally Fine.

Damage vulnerabilities/resistances of some materials: Some materials are more vulnerable or resistant to Damage from particular damage sources. For example, sonic attacks are very effective against items made of glass or crystal, and fire attacks against ice and wood, but that same fire attack would be less effective against a 1-hour fire rated wooden door. At the Editor-in-Chief's discretion, they may allow an attack to deal double or half Damage to an item, or they may raise/lower the MS of the item in question, depending on how vulnerable or resilient the item is. Objects (unless special in nature) are immune to psychic damage.

Table 1-3 Material Strength/Hits

Material	MS	Hits
Paper or Cloth	0	1 per inch
Plastic	1	1 per inch
Glass	1	1 per inch
Ceramic	1	2 per inch
Hard Plastic	4	1 per inch
Leather or Hide	5	1 per inch
Wood/Ice	10	1 per inch
Aluminum	12	1 per inch
Stone/Concrete	15	1.5 per inch
Iron	18	3 per inch
Steel	20	3 per inch
Carbon Steel Alloy	25	3 per inch
Titanium	30	3 per inch
Tungsteel	35	4 per inch
DH3, Palladium Metallic Glass	40	4 per inch

Table XX Construction Quality	
Quality	Modifier
Poor	-5 MS/-1 Hits (Min. MS 1/H 1)
Common	0/0
Fine	+5 MS/ +1 Hits

Tungsteel is a Tungsten and Silicon compound that is stronger than steel.

Developed by researchers at the California Institute of Technology, DH3 Palladium Metallic Glass is one of the strongest materials ever made.

Table1-4 Material Strength for Common Items		
Item	MS	Hits
Aluminum Bat/Lead Pipe/Sword	20	3
Car Door	15	2
Chain	15	2
Chainsaw	15	3
Concrete Pole	15	6
Door, Wood	10	1
Door, Wood, Reinforced	15	2
Door, Metal, Reinforced	20	2
Floor, Wood	10	2
Floor, Concrete slab	15	6
Floor, Reinforced Concrete (12" Thick)	20	36
HanTNuffs	15	1
Iron/Metal Cage	20	2
Ladder, Wood	10	1
Ladder, Aluminum	12	2
Pistol/Rifle	15	3
Rope	5	1
Wall, Masonry (8 inch)	15	6
Wall, Wood (3 inch)	10	3
Wood Bat/Club/Wood Axe	15	2

MIGHT MAKES RIGHT

On occasion, a hero may wish to use their Strength to break objects. In that case, roll a Strength check against a TN equal to the object's hits x5 + the item's Material Strength.

For example, Titan must roll a successful TN: 25 (15 + 2x5) Strength Check to snap a pair of handcuffs.

Trying Again: Subsequent attempts on the same day suffer a cumulative -1 penalty.

LIFTING, MOVING, & THROWING OBJECTS

Refer to the Master Table 1-7; you may be able to push your limits with a successful Athletics (Strength) check or through the use of the Plot Point.

ENCUMBRANCE

Rotted Capes assumes that Heroes are used to carrying burdens and rarely drag them into combat situations. So long as the Editor-in-Chief determines that the objects carried are reasonable, there's no need to worry about encumbrance.

A Hero walking into a supermarket with a backpack, two pistols, a shotgun, a machete, and night vision goggles is fine, but if she expects to leave with a hundred or so canned goods, then she'd better push a cart or load them up in an automobile.

Should the Editor-in-Chief feel that a Hero is stretching credibility, she may apply a level of encumbrance. With each level of encumbrance reducing the Hero's Pace by 1 and subtracting 1 from the Hero's Avoidance Defense and all Strength and Dexterity rolls when attempting to meet a challenge.

FALLING

A fall from any height can be dangerous.

For every Area you fall, you suffer d8 Stamina, which may result in Massive Damage. You land prone unless you somehow avoid taking damage from the fall. In addition to this stamina damage, you may suffer additional wound damage if you fall far enough.

If you fall more than 3 full areas, you must make a Challenging (TN: 20) Constitution Saves or suffer 1 wound.

If you fall a distance greater than 4 full areas, you suffer 2 wounds and must make a constitution Saves against a TN equal to 20 +5 for each Area fallen beyond the 4th, or suffer an additional 2 wounds of damage.

When falling into the water, ignore the first Area if you may roll to meet a TN: 15 Dexterity-based challenge, applying any relevant skill sets to dive into the water, reducing the effective distance fallen by three areas.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

There are three levels of illumination: Bright, Shadowy, and Dark.

- **Bright: Full visibility.** You can see details, read expressions, and fight without penalty.
- **Shadowy: Low light.** Shapes and movement are visible, but details are hard to make out.
- **Dark: No ambient light.** Vision is negated unless you have a power, feature, or device that allows you to see in Darkness (such as thermal vision or night vision).

Refer to Table 1-5: Light Source Ranges for the effect radius of various lighting tools.

- Lanterns, torches, and similar items provide Bright light in their Area and Shadowy light in adjacent ones.
- Flashlights, headlights, and spotlights are directional and only illuminate what they're aimed at.

Combat penalties and Challenge modifiers apply based on the level of illumination:

- **In Shadowy Light:** You suffer -2 to attacks and to any Challenge or Attack roll where clear vision is critical.
- **In Darkness:** Vision-based actions automatically fail unless the creature is making some sound that can be tracked, in which case you suffer Setback to attacks and to any Challenge where clear vision is critical.

Zombies are not affected by normal lighting conditions. Their heightened senses and thermal perception allow them to track and hunt the living even in complete Darkness.

MOVEMENT IN DARKNESS

If a hero exceeds the Pace Limitation (typically more than 3 areas per turn) while in Darkness, they must describe how one of their Skill Sets allows them to move safely under those conditions, such as Urban Runner, Blind Warrior Monk, or Survivalist Tracker.

- If applicable, the Editor may call for a **TN 15 Challenge** using the appropriate Ability and Skill Set.
- On failure, the Hero stumbles or collides with unseen hazards and falls **prone**.

Table 1-5: Light Source Ranges

-- Range in Areas --		
Light Source	Bright	Shadowy
Candle	0	1 Adjacent
Torch	1	2 Adjacent
Light Bulb (60w)	1	2 Adjacent
Flashlight*	2	2
Tactical Flashlight*	2	1
Car Headlight*		
- Low Beam	15	2
- High Beam	20	4
Lamp/Lantern	1	2 Adjacent
Campfire, Small	1	2 Adjacent
Campfire, Large	1	6 Adjacent
Searchlight*		
- Handheld	20	1
- Mounted	25	1
Fireplace	1	1 Radius

PLOT TWIST!

What can the Editor-in-Chief do with Plot Points?

As the Editor-in-Chief, we have the power to use Plot Points just like the players do. Sure, as the Editor-in-Chief, we can already bend and break the rules to tell a better story, but using the players' spent Plot Points adds to the moment.

But here's the thing, you don't always have to be the bad guy with Plot Points. Embrace the "rule of cool" and surprise your players with some epic moments! You can use a Plot Point to alter the scene, even if you could have done it anyway. Spending YOUR Plot Point adds an extra performative punch. It's all about creating an atmosphere at the table that makes everyone go, "Whoa! Heck ya!"

Oh, and here's another tip: use awarding Plot Points to drop hints or give the players a nudge in the right direction. It's like your secret tool to guide them through the story without giving away too much. So, get creative, let those plot points fly, and don't be greedy about handing them out.

Tag Lines, Personality Flaws, and Treats

While you don't gain Plot Points from utilizing a villain's Tag Lines and Personality Flaws, these are still invaluable tools for roleplaying your villains. A well-placed tagline can significantly enhance a scene.

POWERS

BURNOUT

The continued use of certain powers can cause stress and fatigue, leading to the phenomenon known as burnout.

As you use your powers, you must keep track of your burnout score. Your total accumulated burnout is reduced by your rank bonus each time you complete a turn without using powers with a burnout cost.

However, any time you start your turn with an accumulated Burnout above your Burnout Threshold, you must make a Burnout check by rolling a d20. You must succeed or find that you can't use any of your power's burnout value for the remainder of the scene.

The TN of your Burnout Check starts at a TN:10 but increases by 5 every time you are forced to make a burnout check during that scene, to a maximum of TN: 20.

At the end of the scene, your accumulated burnout is reduced to 0, unless the Editor-in-Chief has other plans.

ADJUDICATING POWER STUNTS & MANEUVERS

Power Stunts and Advanced Maneuvers offer players creative and cunning ways to push beyond the baseline of what their heroes can do. Whether that push comes from raw power or hard-earned technique, these moments can significantly impact the flow of your campaign.

As the Editor-in-Chief, you play a crucial role in overseeing and regulating both.

- Some Powers may have pre-listed Power Stunts, offering potential abilities or duplications of other Powers without requiring those specific Powers. These are options available to characters possessing those Powers, but players are not limited to them.
- Players can choose to "learn" an Advanced Maneuver through play, provided they meet its requirements.
- Players may also propose new Power Stunts or Advanced Maneuvers. These should always be discussed with you before being attempted.

Determining Feasibility

- **Power Stunts:** When facing situations outside the suggested Power Stunts or character listings, you, the Editor, determine the possibility of the stunt. As a rule, Power Stunts should never surpass the effects of the derived power, or if they do, they do so at a lower score. Remember, emulated powers are emulated at -6 of the parent power's power score.

- **Maneuvers:** When a player proposes a new maneuver, you determine whether it fits within the scope of skill, timing, and physical capability. Maneuvers should modify or enhance existing actions, not introduce entirely new powers. If it feels like a power, it should be treated as one.

Crafting Power Stunts & Maneuvers

OPTIONAL RULE:

OTHER SOURCES OF POWER STUNTS

Comic books and shows based on comics are a great source of power stunts. If a player can show you an example of a power stunt from a published comic book or animated film, give them one free, successful use of the power stunt.

When players propose a new Power Stunt or Maneuver, focus on what they are trying to accomplish, not just how they describe it.

A good stunt or maneuver should do one of the following:

push an existing ability a little further, change how an action is used, or create a situational advantage in the moment.

It should not replace a core ability, remove meaningful risk, or become the obvious choice every round.

If you're unsure, ask yourself:

- Is this building upon something the hero can already do?
- Is there a real cost, risk, or limitation?
- Would I be okay with this being used repeatedly?

If the answer to that last question is yes, it likely needs a drawback, a tighter requirement, or should be handled as a Power instead.

As always, aim for what feels cinematic, risky, and earned... not safe, repeatable, or automatic.

Using Checks: Both Power Stunts and developing new Maneuvers rely on repeated success under pressure.

Attempting a Power Stunt

Once a Power Stunt is approved, the player must spend a Plot Point and make a successful Check (roll a d20 + the power's Primary Ability Aptitude Bonus) against a TN (see Table: Power Stunt / Maneuver Attempt TN) set by the number of successful attempts the Hero has had with a particular power stunt.

- A successful role, the Hero pulls off the Power Stunt and gets one successful attempt.
- A failed roll by 5 or less, the Hero still takes Burnout but fails in their attempt, but they know it's possible.
- A failed attempt by 10 or more, the Hero still takes Burnout and is left in doubt that the stunt is even possible; they also suffer Setback on their next check to attempt this Power Stunt.

Attempting a Maneuver

Once a Maneuver is approved, the player must spend a Plot Point and attempt a Check using the Ability tied to that Maneuver.

Roll a d20 and add the relevant Ability Aptitude Bonus. If the hero has an applicable Skill Set, they gain an edge on this roll. Compare the result to the TN (see Table: Power Stunt / Maneuver Attempt TN), which is based on the number of successful attempts the Hero has made with that Maneuver.

- On a successful role, the Hero pulls off the Maneuver and gets one successful attempt.
- Failure by 5 or less: The maneuver fails to execute, but the hero maintains control. They make no progress toward mastering the maneuver but suffer no additional consequences beyond the lost action and any positioning committed to the attempt.
- Failure by 6–9: The maneuver breaks down mid-execution. The hero leaves themselves exposed, suffering Setback on their next relevant roll (attack, defense, or check, as appropriate to the situation).
- Failure by 10 or more: The maneuver collapses completely. The hero overcommits, loses control, or is caught off balance. They suffer Setback on their next roll and grant Edge to their next attacker before the start of their next turn.

At the Editor-in-Chief's discretion, particularly risky maneuvers may carry additional consequences, such as falling prone, dropping a weapon, or being repositioned by the environment.

Target Numbers & Mastery

The Target Number (TN) for both Power Stunts and Maneuvers is determined by how many times the Hero has successfully performed that specific stunt or maneuver:

Table 1-6 Power Stunt Attempt TN

Number of successful attempts	TN
0	20
1-2	19
3-4	18
5-6	17
7-8	16
9-10	15

ABILITY AND POWER SCORES VALUES TABLE

Both ability scores and powers scores utilize the same chart; for example, ability scores or power of 14 would have a base die of d8 and a +2 Modifier.

Table 1-7 Master Values

Ability/Power Scores			Data Points					
			Strength Data Points					Speed Power Data Points
Score	Base Die	Modifier	Power Range	Max Lift	Max Lift Examples	Throw Range	Max Push/Drag	Top MPH
1	-	-5	0	10 lbs.	-	-	-	-
2-3	-	-4	1	50 lbs.	-	0	100 lb.	-
4-5	d4	-3	2	79 lbs.		1	150 lbs.	-
6-7	d4	-2	3	100 lbs.		1	200 lbs.	-
8-9	d4	-1	4	150 lbs.		2	300 lbs.	-
10-11	d6	+0	5	200 lbs.	Average Human	3	400 lbs.	-
12-13	d6	+1	6	250 lbs.		4	500 lbs.	20
14-15	d8	+2	7	300 lbs.	Male Lion	5	600 lbs.	30
16-17	d8	+3	8	400 lbs.		6	800 lbs.	40
18-19	d10	+4	9	500 lbs.		7	1000 lbs.	45
20-21	d10	+5	10	600 lbs.	Motorcycle	7	1200 lbs.	50
22-23	d12	+6	11	700 lbs.	ATV	8	1400 lbs.	60
24-25	d12	+7	12	800 lbs.		8	1600 lbs.	70
26-27	2d6	+8	13	900 lbs.		9	1800 lbs.	80
28-29	2d6	+9	14	1 ton.	Average Car	9	2 ton.	90
30-31	2d8	+10	15	2 tons.	Large Truck	10	4 tons.	100
32-33	2d8	+11	16	4 tons.	Subway Car	10	6 tons.	200
34-35	2d10	+12	17	6 tons.	School Bus	12	12 tons.	250
36-37	2d10	+13	18	8 tons.	Semi-Truck	13	16 tons.	350
38-39	2d12	+14	19	10 tons.	Light Military Tank	14	20 tons.	450
40-41	2d12	+15	20	13 tons.		15	26 tons.	550
42-43	4d6	+16	21	16 tons.	Armored Personal Carrier	16	32 tons.	650
44-45	4d6	+17	22	32 tons.		17	62 tons.	750
46-47	4d8	+18	23	64 tons.	Heavy Military Tank	18	128 tons.	Mach 1
48-49	4d8	+19	25	128 tons.	Small Coast guard Cutter	19	256 tons.	Mach 1.5
50	4d10	+20	26	256 tons.	Locomotive	20	512 tons.	Mach 2

DATA POINTS

You have probably noticed that the Master Values table has a few data points. Strength based data points are self-explanatory, with some handy examples of what a character with a particular Strength is able to lift.

THROW RANGE

Throw Range is the number of areas an object of maximum weight can be thrown. Lighter objects can be thrown a number of additional areas equal to the difference between the Hero's throw range and the weight of the object. For example, someone with 48 Strength tossing a 6-ton school bus would be able to throw that bus a total of 16 areas (48 Strength has a range of 14 areas, while a school bus would fall within 34 Strength, a 2-area difference).

SPEED POWERS DATA POINT

Top MPH, is the top speed of a character while out of combat. In combat, characters are limited to their speed value in areas. For example, someone with a Speed of 28 would have a top speed of 90 mph, but in combat would be limited to 9 areas of movement.

Table X-X: Attribute Potential

Score Example	
1-5	Feeble. You are a bedridden elderly person or mentally challenged.
6-9	Below Average. You just have trouble keeping up, get winded easily, or never notice things.
10-11	Average. You are the common person.
12-13	Exceptional. You're simply a little tougher or more perceptive than most of your friends.
14-15	Remarkable. You may be a local legend, and likely a professional in your field of interest.
16-19	Amazing. You may have been an Olympian, or the valedictorian at an institution like Harvard Law.
20-21	Exceptionally Rare. You might be counted among the finest professional athletes or Olympians in history, or you may be considered one of the finest minds in your field.
22+	Super Human. Physical Talents beyond this rank are considered super human, while mental attributes beyond this rank are only typical of legendary minds, such as Einstein, Da Vinci, Hawking, and Andrew Wiles.



ISSUE 1: ONE BAD DAY

BY PEDRO BARRENECHEA - V5.0

FOR THE EDITOR'S EYES ONLY

Players, stop reading here!

From this point forward, these pages are for the Editor-in-Chief only. Trust your Editor-in-Chief to reveal the world as it unfolds. Your job is to play your heroes; their job is to keep you alive long enough to matter.

WELCOME TO THE END OF THE WORLD

Welcome to Rotted Capes: One Bad Day, a fast-play issue for 2–6 players using the Rotted Capes: Second Bite QuickStart Rules.

In this story, your heroes will leave the fragile safety of their Enclave to answer a desperate call for help. What begins as a simple rescue quickly spirals into horror and tragedy. The heroes will fight the Deadheads, race against time, and confront the nightmare that sometimes happens when someone is bitten.

This adventure is designed to be completed in a single 4-hour session. It's designed to showcase the rules and the brutal world of Rotted Capes.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

- The *Rotted Capes: Second Bite* QuickStart Rules.
- Pre-generated heroes, power sheets, and sidecar/cheat sheets
- One or two sets of polyhedral dice (a d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20)
- Some tokens, poker chips, or coins to track Plot Points
- A table, some friends, and a willingness to watch the world burn.

Optional but nice: Printed battlemaps, Paper Minis, or a VTT setup.

A WORD ON FLEXIBILITY

One Bad Day is written to drop into your hometown. The call for help comes from “the corner of X and Y,” but those streets should be real places in your own city.

HOW TO USE THIS ADVENTURE

This adventure is divided into **7 scenes**:

1. The Call – A desperate radio signal from a child.
2. Into the City – First taste of combat against a Horde of Deadheads.
3. The Wreck – A caravan torn apart, and the first signs of something worse.
4. The School Halls – Deadheads inside, and the creeping sense of being watched.
5. The Locker Room Defense – A desperate fight to keep survivors alive.
6. The Showdown in the Gym – The Abomination reveal and final battle.
7. Fallout & Epilogue – Survivors saved (or lost) and how the Enclave changes.

Each scene includes an **Opening Panel**, which you can read or paraphrase, **Obstacles & Openings** for non-combat play, and **Throw down for any combat** in the scene, and finally Editor's Notes to wrap the entire scene up.

This adventure is a **toolkit, not a script**. Use the sidebars, survivor voices, and optional complications to adjust the pace and mood to your table.

THE CAST

- **The Heroes:** The Player Characters
- **The Crew:** The members of the enclave, see *the crew* below for brief descriptions.
- **The Survivors:** The Ramires family, enclave night-watchman Earl Patterson, and a handful of desperate strangers. Their lives are in the heroes' hands.
- **The Threats:** *Deadheads* (the common zombie slow shambles, and fast when freshly fed), *The Abomination “Mother”* (the final horror - woman that hid a bite)...and *something else....* Watching.... From the shadows.

YOUR ENCLAVE

Heroes protect more than themselves; they protect a community, and that community is their Enclave.

For fast play, think of the Enclave as your “home base.” It can be set in your city; pick a local landmark, such as a familiar abandoned hotel, school, or stadium, that your group knows. This makes every scene feel personal. The Enclave is where your story begins, and those survivors are what’s at stake when you go out on missions.

Most Enclaves have **Facilities**, special rooms that heroes and survivors fought hard to establish:

- **Radio Room:** lets the enclave reach out on short-wave. It’s how today’s call for help broke through.
- **Medical Bay:** a rare safe place to patch wounds, treat infection, and make sure today’s survivors live to see tomorrow.

Behind the scenes, enclaves are measured by three hidden traits:

- **Cohesion** - how united your survivors are.
- **Resources** - food, fuel, and supplies.
- **Security** - walls, guards, and vigilance.

You don’t need to track numbers in fast play. Just know: your heroes’ actions can strengthen or weaken these traits. Failure to bring back supplies? Resources dip. Pull off a daring rescue? Cohesion rises. The Editor-in-Chief will weave those consequences into the story.

Picture the Enclave as a fragile family. They built that radio room a few weeks ago with scrounged parts, and the medical bay has saved lives more than once. These survivors are counting on your heroes who answered the call.

THE SUPPORTING CAST

During hero creation each player creates two Supporting Cast members but for this adventure, we provided some for you.

MARTA “GRANDMA” LOPEZ

Grandma Lopez is the heart of the Enclave, an elderly matriarch who insists on treating every survivor like family. She fusses, feeds, and scolds with equal intensity, often handing out advice whether anyone asked for it or not. Her Caretaker skill set makes her indispensable in maintaining high morale and caring for the young, but her nosiness and sharp tongue sometimes spark arguments at the most inopportune moments.

Role in the Enclave: Caretaker /the morale anchor/ kitchen boss

Skill Set (Specialty): Caretaker (stabilize, calm,

morale)

Power/Abilities: None, just iron will and everyone’s respect

Voice to Play: Warm but sharp; fusses while she works, calls heroes “mi’jo/mi’ja”

Personality Flaws: Nosy, guilt-trips, plays favorites

Motivations:

- Keep the kids safe, always.
- Make the Enclave feel like a family, even on empty stomachs.
- Push the heroes to protect the enclave and take fewer risks.

Openings in Play: Calms panicked cast members; can vouch for Heroes with suspicious backgrounds, is always there after a tough mission with something hot.

Secret: Keeps a locked tin of antibiotics for “her kids” only.

Connections & Tells: Knits red scarves for people she worries about; dotes on Kylie; scolds Earl.

Sample Lines: “Eat first, argue later. Nobody’s brave on an empty stomach.”

ANDRE “SPARKS” DELGADO

A former mechanic, Sparks is the one who keeps the lights on, literally. The Enclave’s generators, radios, and rigged defenses are his doing, and he’ll let you know it every time you doubt him. His skill set makes him invaluable, but he’s quick-tempered and snaps back at any perceived criticism. Sparks dreams of building a proper convoy to leave the city, and while the Enclave benefits from his ingenuity, his habit of secretly hoarding fuel and parts for that project puts him at odds with the community he claims to protect.

Role in the Enclave: Mechanic /makeshift engineer

Skill Set (Specialty): Tinker/Inventor (the generator whisperer)

Power/Abilities: Improvises gadgets, rigs power; can squeeze a scene’s worth of power out of dying batteries

Voice to Play: Gruff, defensive when challenged, swears by brands that no longer exist

Personality Flaws: Territorial about “his” machines and he has trust issues

Motivations:

- Prove the Enclave can’t survive without him.
- Build a road-ready convoy (this is his white whale).
- Build and keep one “clean” workshop where no one touches their tools.

Openings in Play: Sometimes gives the Heroes ad-hoc gear (flares, alarms, zip-line, jerry-rigged lights)

Secret: Siphons fuel into hidden drums “just in case”; has a half-finished escape truck with several stashed go-bags.

Connections & Tells: Mutual respect (and arguments) with Clarissa over “what heroes should be.” Protective of Grandma.

Sample Lines: “If it spins, hums, or explodes, I can make it do all three.”

KYLIE TRAN

Kylie is a wiry, sharp-tongued teenager with a knack for slipping where others can't, making her one of the Enclave's most effective scavengers. She talks a big game, idolizes the heroes, and craves recognition, but the bravado cracks whenever the horror turns up a little too close for comfort. Kylie collects odd little trophies, comic books, trinkets, and toys from her runs, which she guards fiercely. She desperately wants to be seen as an adult, not a child, and that reckless drive often pushes her into danger long before she's ready.

Role in the Enclave: Scavenger/runner/ map-in-her-head of the neighborhood

Skill Set (Specialty): Scavenger, Acrobat (Parkour)

Power/Abilities: Crazy Parkour-style movement for someone with no powers; tiny frame fits vents/ducts; uncanny “find stuff” instinct

Voice to Play: Brash, fast talker; swagger hides nerves

Personality Flaws: Reckless; freezes at gore; desperate to prove herself

Motivations:

- Be treated like an adult, not a kid mascot.
- Bring back “cool” stuff to make people smile.
- Impress Clarissa, the old hero, more than she'd admit.

Openings in Play: Scouts shortcuts; can fetch a key item mid-scene (at risk). Point out stash spots and safe rooftops the heroes may have missed.

Secret: Has stashed a music player and batteries in the vents, sneaks off to listen alone.

Connections & Tells: Wears bead bracelets from Grandma; mimics the heroes' catchphrases.

Sample Lines: “I can get there. You... keep ‘em looking the other way.”

EARL PATTERSON

Earl is the Enclave's night watchman, a wiry man with a battered rifle and a permanent five-o'clock shadow. Once a mall security guard, now he's the one who paces the walls and keeps the night terrors at bay. His skill set makes him reliable in a fight, but his cynicism and reliance on a flask tucked in his coat make him a difficult man to like. Earl insists the Enclave won't last, but when push comes to shove, he always throws himself between the kids and the monsters outside. He'd never admit it, but that soft spot is what keeps him sober enough to keep watch.

Role in the Enclave: Night watch/perimeter scout/marksman

Skill Set (Specialty): Ex-Military (head on a swivel)

Powers/Abilities: Veteran nerves; steady shot; knows sightlines and choke points

Voice to Play: Dry, tired, short sentences; gallows humor

Personality Flaws: Cynical; drinks on the sly (always looking to refill his stock); expects the worst of people

Motivations:

- Make sure the walls hold, tonight and every night.
- Keep kids out of harm's way without them noticing.
- Die on his feet if he has to, never in his sleep.

Openings in Play: Covers retreats, calls out threats. Will take a hit for a kid or for Grandma without hesitation.

Secret: Keeps a small stash of ammo and a “go-bag” he swears he'll never use.

Connections & Tells: Soft spot for Kylie (pretends not to). Irritated by Sparks' noise at night.

Sample Lines: “Bad news comes in twos. Get ready for the second half.”

CLARISSA VANCE (“STARLIGHT”)

Decades ago, Clarissa was a minor cape with the power to bend light, dazzling villains, and inspiring crowds. Age and illness have robbed her of her strength. Now in her late sixties, she can't leave the Enclave, but within its walls she keeps spirits high with light displays for the children and harsh pep talks for the adults. Proud and bitter in equal measure, she struggles with being sidelined while younger heroes take risks she no longer can. She keeps her old costume folded under her cot, stitched and re-stitched, a relic of a brighter time.

Role in the Enclave: Retired hero/morale & lighting/symbol of “before”

Skill Sets (Specialty): Performer (crowd control, inspire), Retired Cape

Powers/Abilities: Energy Manipulation – Light: 16 (+3) (non-combat): area lighting, soft illusions to calm children, bright flares for alarms/signals

Voice to Play: Poised, theatrical cadence; a cough she hides

Personality Flaws: Bitter about age and limits; quietly jealous of younger capes; prideful

Motivations:

- Remain useful, be more than a story.
- Train the next generation to be heroes with purpose.
- Keep hope visible, a literal light in the dark.

Openings in Play: Can “floodlight” areas at the Enclave; coordinates alarms. Coaches the heroes with pep talks before missions.

Secret: Hiding a worsening illness; the costume was carefully folded under her bunk.

Connections & Tells: Mentors Kylie; challenges Sparks to “build brighter.” Protective of Grandma.

Sample Lines: “Heroes aren’t the ones without fear. They’re the ones who walk anyway, shine anyway.”

RENEE “SWITCHBOARD” ORTIZ

Once a city dispatcher, Renee earned the nickname “Switchboard” for her obsession with keeping communications alive. She all but lives in the enclave’s new jury-rigged radio room, headphones on, scanning static for the faintest voices of survivors or threats. Her Tinker/Inventor skill set is focused on electronics, making her vital for long-range scouting and coordination. Still, her paranoia sometimes slips into conspiracy territory; she’s convinced someone, or something, is using the airwaves to spy on them. Switchboard keeps a private frequency hidden from the others, where she sometimes talks late at night with another enclave she won’t name. Whether she’s building alliances or hiding something darker remains to be seen.

Role in the Enclave: Radio Operator / Communications Net / Intel Scout

Skill Set: Tinker/Inventor (communication systems)

Power/Specialty: Master of jury-rigged radios, scanners, and signal maps; can track voices, herd movements, or even spot patterns others miss.

Voice to Play: Fast, muttering half-sentences like he’s still in dispatch; paranoid Specialty, always listening with one ear to static.

Personality Flaws: Distrustful, conspiracy-minded, socially awkward, tends to assume people are “hiding something.”

Motivations:

- Keep the Enclave connected “if we can hear them, we’re not alone.”
- Build a proper repeater system to expand their reach.
- Decode the “patterns” in Deadhead moans and static, convinced it means something.

Openings in Play: Provides intel before missions (distress calls, suspicious silence, reports of Deadhead herds). Can “eavesdrop” on rival enclaves or factions, giving you, the Editor, a narrative hook to drop rumors or side plots. Can coordinate rescue ops by radio if heroes bring survivors into range. But his paranoia can create complications; he insists on detours, delays, or “checking something strange” he swears he heard.

Secret: Keeps a private channel open with another enclave. He talks late at night to someone he won’t name. Could be an ally, a rival, or a manipulator.

Connections & Tells: Bickers with Sparks over who really “owns” the radio room; gets along with Grandma Lopez because she brings him food during long shifts; sometimes lectures Kylie about “operational silence.” Always taps his headset when nervous.

Sample Line: “Shh. Hear that? That’s not dead air.” and “If I ever stop listening, we’re already dead.”

SCENE 1: THE CALL

OPENING PANEL

It’s late, a few hours too close to morning, when Kylie shakes you awake.

“Renee’s picking something up on the radio. You guys need to hear this.”

Minutes later, before the sun even hints at the horizon, you’re crowded into the Enclave’s radio room. The place is little more than a salvaged desk, wires strung along the walls like webs, and a battered shortwave set that hums if you so much as breathe on it.

Renee Ortiz, former city dispatcher and now the Enclave’s self-appointed “ears,” sits hunched over the rig. She’s managed to pick up chatter from other enclaves

before, but this is different. Her hand hovers over a battered tape recorder scavenged from an old studio.

"Picked this up a few minutes ago. Listen."

Static hisses, then a child's voice breaks through, ragged, terrified, on the Specialty of tears:

"...she won't stop, she's coming after us....we're running.... Please, someone help!.. we are next to <Corner of X and Y, use an address in your hometown not far from a commonly known high school>"

The message cuts out, leaving only dead air. Renee exhales, glancing back at you.

"So... you gonna tell Marta, or are you just gonna go do your hero thing?"

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

Challenges: The heroes face several potential challenges here. There isn't much they can do to improve the recording, but if they play it back carefully (**Wisdom TN 15**), they might pick out a faint second voice in the background saying: *"Where did that come from?"*

They can also try to recall where the intersection of X and Y lies in relation to their enclave, allowing them to plan a route with the least "street time" possible (**Intelligence TN 15**).

If the heroes hesitate, Marta and Clarissa arrive. Clarissa pushes the heroes to act quickly, insisting that a call for help cannot go unanswered. Marta is more guarded, but if anyone plays the tape for her, she can be swayed, especially when she hears the child's voice (**Charisma TN 15**).

Notes to the Editor: This is your first experience with the skill set system. The challenges above provide TNs with suggestions for the common Ability Scores used. After you issue your players a Challenge (for example, listening to the tape above), players may wish to apply a skill set or maybe even a power with either the ability score called out in the challenge or with an ability score of their choice, as long as it makes sense to the narrative.

For example, a Wisdom check could apply through an Investigator Skill Set or even a heightened-senses power to catch the second voice. Similarly, the Intelligence check could apply a Scavenger's knowledge of the city, and the Charisma roll applies any negotiator, performer, or leader skill set appealing directly to Marta's instincts.

Remember: although the examples highlight specific abilities, if a player makes a case for using a different Skill Set, power, or ability score that fits the fiction, let it roll. This section is about giving obstacles texture, not restricting solutions.

SPECIAL SUCCESS/FAIL CONDITION:

"TIME WON'T GIVE ME TIME"

As the heroes proceed through each scene, they will gain or lose time. Ultimately, conditions of the last encounter will change depending on the total time modifiers the heroes have collected.

Success: The heroes set out quickly and prepared. (Time +1)

Failure: Time is lost or morale slips, and fewer survivors may be alive when they arrive (Time -1)

EDITOR'S NOTES / GOALS

- Use this scene to **humanize the Enclave**.
- Push urgency: every wasted minute costs lives.
- Reward player creativity. Even if the Skill Sets don't perfectly match, let clever problem-solving roll.

SCENE 2: INTO THE CITY

OPENING PANEL

You step into the streets just a mile or so from the corner of X and Y. The silence of the dead city presses down like a weight. Burned-out cars choke the road, husks you stripped for fuel and scraps months ago.

The street feels hollow, lifeless... until you glance through the window of an empty storefront. A pair of pale, glassy eyes stares back. The Deadhead moans, and the sound is answered from both sides of the street.

The echo grows, rising into a chorus. You haven't stumbled across a lone shambler. You've blundered into a **wandering horde**.

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

Challenges: The streets are clogged with burned-out cars and broken barricades, and anyone trying to sprint or reposition will need to clamber over obstacles or squeeze through wrecks (**Dexterity TN 12**). The heroes may try to pull the horde into a storefront or alley to control the fight, but doing so risks being hemmed in and overwhelmed by sheer numbers (**Intelligence TN 13 to set up an effective funnel**). A clever hero might instead use the environment, knocking debris into the street, or breaking windows to create hazards, in order to scatter or delay the dead (**Wisdom TN 14 to time it right**). Success gives the heroes more breathing room as the Horde closes in, while failure leaves them pressed into a straight fight, burning time and stamina.

THROWDOWN: DEADHEAD HORDE

This is likely the first combat encounter for the table and the first time they'll engage the system. Keep it paced, cinematic, and instructional.

- Numbers: 2 Deadheads per hero.
- Round 1–2: Have them engage one or two at a time so players get comfortable with the rules.
- Round 3+: Collapse the group into one Area and switch to Horde rules (Fast Play, pg. 26). The sudden surge highlights the danger posed by Deadheads in groups.

Outcome: If the heroes defeat this encounter in fewer than 5 rounds, they suffer no time penalty; if more than 5 rounds are required, they suffer a -1 time penalty. If they somehow pull off the fight in less than 3 rounds, they gain a +1 time bonus.

EDITOR'S NOTES

- This fight is about teaching mechanics: movement, actions, and the Horde rules.
- Highlight the contrast: Deadheads aren't fast; they're terrifying because of numbers.
- Use cinematic description: moans echoing like a cry of hunger, pale hands dragging across car hoods, zombies clamoring over wrecks to close in.
- Keep the fight fast and bloody, 20–30 minutes tops.

SCENE 3: THE WRECK

OPENING PANEL

The street ahead is a graveyard of vehicles. A Winnebago sits gutted, its frame twisted like a crushed can. The back bedroom is shredded from the inside out, claw marks ripping through wood and metal.

Other wrecks tell the rest of the story: a pickup flipped on its side, riddled with bullet holes; a minivan burned black; luggage and toys scattered across the asphalt. This wasn't just one family. This was a **caravan**, a mobile enclave, torn apart mid-flight.

The stench hits you before the moans, fresh blood, and the unmistakable sound of the hungry dead closing in.

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

Challenges: Heroes who search the wreck may realize that the Winnebago's bedroom was torn apart from the inside, evidence that someone was hiding their infection until it was too late (**Wisdom TN 13**). They can follow the trail of luggage and gore away from the site, noticing how it leads in a staggered line toward the school, but doing so under pressure takes a steady head and sharp memory of the city's streets (**Intelligence TN 12**). Scavenging among the ruins

could reveal useful supplies, a half-full water jug, a medkit, or makeshift weapons, though doing so with the dead closing in is dangerous and time-consuming (**Dexterity TN 14**). Success allows the heroes to move quickly and gain valuable resources, while failure means precious minutes slip away, with survivors at the school likely paying the price. A quick scan of the area (**Wisdom TN 14**) will allow a player to find a broken handheld radio, cracked and bloodied, which may be the source of the child's call. (It can be fixed back at the enclave, given some time)

Success: No additional time was spent on the tracking.

Failure: They still find the trail, but waste precious time (Time -1)



THROWDOWN:

DEADHEADS AT THE WRECK

The noise and smell draw the dead like moths to flame. They stagger from alleys and crawl over wrecks, groaning hungrily, but soon it becomes clear this isn't just the slow shamblers the heroes are used to.

- **Initially**, there's only one Deadhead per hero. These are the classic kind: dragging feet, sluggish swings, moaning hunger. They are dangerous because of their numbers, not their speed.
- **After 2 rounds**, the fight escalates. A second wave arrives: two additional Deadheads per hero, but these are freshly fed. They snarl, leap cars instead of crawling over them, and charge with horrifying speed. This is the moment to showcase the Speed of the Damned feature.
- **You may spring an optional jump scare:** one of the flipped cars shudders as a freshly turned zombie bursts to life, smashing through the glass and clawing its way out to attack.

PLOT POINTS ALTERING THE SCENE

Here's an example straight from our first playtest. One of the players tossed me a Plot Point and declared that his hero had gone to school here. He added that he had stashed a go-bag in a safe room above the gym, accessible through an air conditioning closet and a wall-mounted ladder. (He had the feat *I've Done Alright for Myself*.)

The table lit up. The heroes hatched a plan: they sent Apparition, invisible and incorporeal, to slip into the gym and warn the survivors, then lead them up to the hidden safe room.

Some Editors might worry that this is "breaking the adventure." No, this was *fantastic*. It told a better story, it was clever, and most importantly, *it made the adventure their story. That's the best part of Plot Points: when players help shape the world in ways you never saw coming. Roll with it.*

TERRAIN:

The wreck is a playground of hazards and openings. Flipped cars serve as cover and climbing obstacles. Scattered luggage creates both hazards and improvised weapons. Tight choke points between wrecks can turn the fight into a meat grinder where Horde mechanics might apply.

OUTCOME:

This battle should hammer home that Deadheads aren't all the same. Some are slow and shambling... but once they feed, they become something far more terrifying.



EDITOR'S NOTES

- This is our "**fed zombie showcase**". Make sure the table *feels* how different freshly turned Deadheads are from shamblers. Describe them sprinting, climbing, their eyes wide with hunger.
- Use gore and scattered belongings to **humanize the loss**: a stuffed animal on the road, a spilled backpack, half-eaten food.
- **Don't drag the combat**. Keep it sharp (20–30 minutes). The point is to escalate dread and foreshadow the Abomination.
- **Push urgency!** The longer the heroes linger, the more survivors will be lost before they reach the gym. If the players start to think there are no survivors have a shotgun shot go off in the distance in the direction of the school.

SCENE 4: THE SCHOOL HALLS

OPENING PANEL

The high school rises like a fortress of broken memories. Its windows are shattered, its banners torn and crusted with dried blood. The chain-link fence has been ripped from the ground and tossed aside.

Crossing the cracked parking lot, you pass rows of abandoned cars before pushing through the front doors. They hang open, twisted and bent from some incredible force. The air inside is suffocating, thick with dust, rot, and the sharp tang of scorched metal.

Corpses litter the halls, collapsed where they fell years ago. One wears the faded remains of a letterman's jacket, the school's mascot rotted beyond recognition. Lockers hang open, their contents scattered across the floor. Blood trails streak the tile, smeared toward the gym. Somewhere ahead, steel doors slam again and again under the weight of something massive.

And still, there's more. A flicker of shadow dances just beyond sight, gone when you turn your head. A whisper threads through the silence, too faint to make out. The sense that you are not alone, like someone... or something... is watching.

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

The halls are infested with scattered Deadheads, and rushing through risks drawing the whole pack at once (**Dexterity TN 13**). Blood trails drag toward the locker room doors, smashed and buckling from within, the same place the Abomination is hammering at now. Following that path will put the heroes directly into its wake.

A faded school fire escape map, cracked and bloodied, hangs near the stairwell. Careful eyes can spot it and realize there's a maintenance corridor that connects to the gym from another direction (**Intelligence TN 14**). If the heroes fail to notice, Earl Patterson emerges from hiding and urgently points it out. He saw the Ramires family run toward the gym and knew there's another way in.

Success: The heroes move quietly, find the alternate path, and can reach the gym without being forced into the locker room first. (Time +1)

Failure: They miss the fire map and Earl's warning, or ignore it, and are funneled into the locker room defense

instead, where they'll face waves of Deadheads before breaking through to the gym. (Time -1)

THROWDOWN:

DEADHEADS IN THE HALLS

- A skirmish with scattered Deadheads, 1 per hero

EDITOR'S NOTES

This scene should evoke a sense of desolation and haunting. The classrooms are empty shells, corpses slumped at desks, long, cold. Emphasize that there are no survivors left here, except Earl.

- **Earl is skittish and fragile.** Play up his desperation. He tried to circle back; he's half-mad from exhaustion, but he's the only human soul in the halls. He was part of the mobile enclave and attempted to follow the abomination. He was asleep when the attack happened, and he woke up to his car being flipped over.
- **Earl Patterson's warning:** "I saw it. Big as a truck. Tossed cars like toys. The Ramires family ran in here, straight to the locker room. And that thing... It's still trying to get into the gym."

SCENE 5: THE CORRIDOR

OPENING PANEL

The corridor beyond the stairwell is pitch black. The windows here have been boarded over, and the emergency lighting has long since burned out. Dust and mold cling to the walls, and the air feels damp, heavy, and wrong.

Your flashlights slice through the dark until one flickers, another sputters, and the beam gutters out. The silence is broken only by the sound of your own footsteps echoing down the hall.

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

The pitch-black corridor makes progress dangerous. Heroes must steady their nerves and manage their failing equipment as they move forward. Replacing batteries or keeping a light alive under stress requires focus (**Dexterity TN 12**). Spotting the safe path forward, weaving between the wreckage of lockers and broken desks without making a sound, requires a sharp eye (**Wisdom TN 13**).

Once the heroes make a few rolls and move down the

corridor, a zombie bursts out of a side door at the heroes. This is more of a jump scare than a combatant, a lone Deadhead, easy to put down once engaged. The danger isn't in the fight; it's in the shock and the noise. A sloppy response might echo through the corridor, drawing attention.

Success: The heroes advance carefully, avoid wasting time, and maintain their morale. (Time +1)

Failure: A light dies completely, noise draws in extra stragglers, or panic burns precious time before they reach the gym. (Time -1)

THROWDOWN: JUMP SCARE!

A single Deadhead, trapped behind a classroom door, bursts through the window and grabs at the nearest hero. It's an easy kill, but play it for the scare, glass shatters, hands claw in the beam of a sputtering flashlight, and for one moment, the hallway becomes chaos.



HEROES
ENTER HERE

EDITOR'S NOTES

- This is a tone scene, not a fight scene. Play up the claustrophobia and darkness. Let flashlights stutter, radios hiss, and batteries roll across the floor.
- Use this beat to highlight equipment fragility in Rotted Capes. Flashlights die, radios cut out, batteries run down. The world doesn't cooperate.
- Keep it quick, 10 minutes max. It's about reminding the players that not every danger is a boss fight, but it still consumes their time, nerves, and grit.

SCENE 6: INTO THE GYM

OPENING PANEL

If Early (time bonus):

The pounding at the gym doors echoes down the hallway, but you arrive just in time. The reinforced metal is buckling, shrieking hinges, but not yet broken. On the other side, you hear the chaos of survivors, shouting, crying, pleading for help. When they see you, hope surges. They press their shoulders to the doors, holding the line until you can join them. You still have a chance to turn the tide.

If Just in the Nick of Time (no penalty):

The moment you round the corner, the doors give way. Metal tears with a scream, steel hinges rip free, and the gym explodes into chaos. Survivors scatter in panic as the massive silhouette of the Abomination smashes its way inside. The first screams rise just as you burst through, landing you in the middle of the nightmare.

If Too Late (time penalty):

The gym doors are already gone. Inside is carnage. Survivors lie broken on the floor, blood smearing across the court. The Abomination looms over the bodies, survivors screaming and scrambling to flee as its massive hands close around another. And then, a child's voice, shrill and raw: "Mom... no!" You arrive as the killing is already underway.

THE ABOMINATION (THE MOTHER):

What stands before you is not a zombie, but a nightmare of muscle and rage. Nearly ten feet tall, her frame bulges with grotesque, overgrown muscles that knot and twist until they pull her body out of shape. Her shoulders are hunched and uneven, one arm swollen to monstrous proportions, the other crooked and almost dragging the floor. Her skin stretches too tight over her flesh, splitting at the seams, slick with blood and black ichor.

When she moves, it's with sickening strength and purpose. Each step is heavy enough to rattle the bleachers. Each swing of her arms could snap bone or shatter steel. She does not move like the Deadheads, she hunts...

And over it all, the boy's cry echoes: "*Mom... no!*"

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

If Early: Heroes can act before the breach. Reinforcing the doors with their own strength or makeshift barricades buys survivors time (**Strength TN 13**). They can calm the panicked crowd and rally them to stay clear of the fight (**Charisma TN 12**). With quick thinking, they can even set up chokepoints or improvised traps using gym equipment (**Intelligence TN 14**). Success means the Abomination's entrance is slowed, and survivors are better positioned once the fight begins (granting her Setback for the first round of combat).

If Just in the Nick of Time: The Abomination bursts in as the heroes arrive. The heroes can try to maintain order among survivors before they panic, which requires a commanding presence (**Charisma TN 12**). Grabbing and pulling people out of the monster's path before it crushes them requires speed and steady hands (**Dexterity TN 13**). Failure costs lives instantly, while success preserves a few precious souls.

If Too Late: By the time the heroes arrive, the Abomination is already slaughtering survivors. Saving lives now means split-second intervention. Heroes can dive into the chaos and drag survivors out of the monster's reach (**Dexterity TN 14**), throw themselves in front of its killing blows (**Constitution TN 15**), or at least steady the terrified child before

he breaks completely (**Charisma TN 12**). Success means salvaging what few survivors remain; failure means the court is already slick with blood before the fight has even begun.

THROWDOWN:

THE ABOMINATION ENTERS

This is the emotional gut punch. Play it hard.

If Ahead of the Collapse: The heroes get to be saviors; they arrive in time to brace, stand shoulder-to-shoulder with survivors, and make the opening moments heroic.

- **If Just in Time:** They arrive to witness the monster break into the gym, it's chaos and screams as they jump straight into combat.
- **If Too Late:** They find carnage already underway, the Abomination standing over bodies, survivors fleeing in terror, the child screaming "Mom!" as the fight begins.



EDITOR'S NOTES

- This is the **moment for the child reveal**. As the Abomination crashes through, the boy's cry of "Mom... no!" makes it clear what the heroes are facing.
- Keep survivor's front and center!! Let them scream, beg, and plead so the fight has emotional weight. Sometimes they help, sometimes they just get in the way.
- This is the **branch point** that makes the whole adventure feel reactive. Emphasize the consequences of their timing:

> **+1-time bonus:** Survivors alive, they work well with the heroes and listen, keeping their cool overall.

> **No bonus:** Survivors alive but panicked, ripe for disaster mid-fight, some might bolt, others might have a total breakdown.

> **-1 penalty:** Caleb, Sofia, and Javier would be dead. The survivors' morale has been crushed; they are unmanageable.

SIDEBAR: SURVIVOR VOICES

- **Evelyn:** "She was my daughter... she hid the bite so her children wouldn't lose hope. And now she's gone."
- **Sofia:** "She should've told us. She should've let us fight for her."
- **Javier:** "Caravans don't make it anymore. We were fools to think numbers would save us."
- **Nina:** "I can't... I can't fix this. Not without real supplies. We're bleeding out, just slower."
- **Caleb:** "If I'd had more fuel, more parts... maybe..."
- **Mateo:** "...Mom" (clearly in shock)

SURVIVORS IN THE GYM

- **Mateo Ramires (the Boy)** – 10 years old, the one who sent the desperate radio call. Tear-streaked, terrified, still clutching his cracked handheld radio. His cry of "Mom... no!" Should be a focal point.
- **Evelyn Ramires (Grandmother)** – Late 60s,

tough but frail. Tried to shield the kids when her daughter turned. After the fight, she clings to family photos and whispers prayers between sobs.

- **Sofia Ramires (Teen Sister)** – 15 years old, resourceful but traumatized. Protective of her little brother, furious at her mother for hiding the bite. She carries a baseball bat that she barely knows how to use.
- **Javier Ortega (Caravan Driver)** – 40s, ex-trucker who helped lead the caravan. Injured leg, limping badly. Cynical but brave enough to throw himself into danger if pressed.
- **Nina Patel (Young Nurse)** – Mid-20s, med student who attached herself to the caravan. Exhausted but focused on saving lives. She tries to triage even in the chaos.
- **Caleb Morris (Mechanic)** – 30s, grease-stained and jittery. Helped keep the caravan vehicles running. Loud talker, nervous energy, clings to his tools as if they are his weapons.

CLOSING PANEL

Outside, the city moans with the hungry dead. But for this moment, here, these survivors live on because of you.

If the heroes do not arrive on time, Caleb, Sofia, and Javier will be dead.

The gym is silent now, broken only by sobs. The Abomination lies shattered across the floor, her body twisted and broken like the nightmare she became.

A woman, clearly in shock, hugs her knees as she rocks back and forth, whispering prayers through trembling lips. Another woman in her late 20s, her hands still sticky with blood, desperately attempts to revive a girl with wild black hair, a baseball bat still in her clasped hand.

And then there is a young boy who kneels beside the corpse of the abomination, shaking, whispering a single word again and again:

"...Mom, why mom, why?"

Outside, the city moans with the hungry dead. But for this moment, here, these few survivors live, because of your actions, you did what you could, at least you did what you could.

OBSTACLES & OPENINGS

The fight is over, but the heroes must decide how to shepherd the broken survivors back to the Enclave.

Survivors are shell-shocked. Rallying them for the dangerous walk home requires firm leadership and reassurance that they're not just walking into another graveyard (**Charisma TN 12**). Several are injured or exhausted, and tending wounds, splinting Javier's leg, or fashioning makeshift stretchers is slow and grueling work (**Dexterity or Intelligence TN 13**). Searching the school and the ruined caravan for salvageable supplies, canned food, medicine, and tools can ease the burden of tomorrow, but burns precious time tonight (**Wisdom TN 14**).

Success: Survivors return steadier, stronger, and more hopeful. The Enclave gains not only people but skills and resources.

Failure: Fear fractures the group, injuries worsen, and at least one more life is lost on the way back.

THROWDOWN

No combat is scripted here, but you may choose to drop in a stray Deadhead or two on the return trip, more as a lingering threat than a true battle.

EDITOR'S NOTES

- **This is the emotional wrap-up.** Play up grief, exhaustion, and the fragile hope of survival.
- **Focus on the survivors...** Evelyn prays, Sofia fumes, Javier limps, Nina tends, Caleb mutters, Mateo breaks hearts. These are people, not just faceless NPCs.
- **If you want to foreshadow the one who is watching** survivors may whisper about strange shadows or voices during the chaos, details that don't match Deadhead behavior.

EPILOGUE

(Read/Paraphrase)

Back at the Enclave, the survivors gather in the common room to grieve, to eat, to remember. Children sit wide-eyed as the story is retold, how the heroes faced the monster in the gym and lived.

Evelyn lights a candle for her daughter. Sofia sits apart, staring into the flames. Javier and Caleb slump into chairs, drained. Nina quietly tends to wounds with shaking hands.

Mateo sits by the fire, silent. Every now and then, he whispers the same word, soft and broken: "Mom..."

And then the shortwave crackles again. A faint, broken voice seeps through the static, another call for help? Another chance? Another nightmare?

The world outside hasn't stopped. And neither can you.

HOOKS FOR FUTURE ISSUES

- **The one who is watching:** Survivors whisper about strange glyphs and shadows. Days later, similar markings appear near the Enclave.
- **The Child:** Mateo's grief becomes a long-term roleplay thread. Does the Enclave raise him, or does his trauma twist into something darker?
- **The Horde:** Noise from the gym battle has stirred the dead. Within days, a wave may slam into the Enclave's walls.
- **The Caravan:** Not everyone in the caravan came here. Did others escape? If so, what story will they bring when they cross paths again?



THREATS INDEX

ZOMBIE "DEADHEAD"

Hardened (1/2), Medium Zombie (Striker)

Initiative: +0

Pace: 1 (3) area

ACTIONS

Rip and Rend: +5 to hit Av, Reach: melee, one creature, hit: 1d8+4 (8) Piercing, ignores 3 points of physical DR.

AVOIDANCE

09 (11)

FORTITUDE

14

WILLPOWER

12

STAMINA

WOUNDS

Destroyed on any hit

DR: Nil

Immunities: Exhaustion, Frightened, Shaken, Frightened, Stun (applied by an effect that utilizes electricity), Mind-Control, Psychic Damage (Unless a power explicitly states that it affects zombies)

If freshly fed/created: +3 to avoidance, and running pace becomes 3

STR

18
(+4)

DEX

14
(+2)

CON

12
(+1)

INT

4
(-4)

WIS

4
(-4)

CHA

4
(-4)

SKILL SETS (SPECIALTY):

Zombie Senses (Sense the Living), Strength of the Dammed

Rank Bonus: +1

GEAR

None

MOTHER

Epsilon (2), Large Abomination (Bruser)

Initiative: +1

Pace: 1 areas (3 leap)

ACTIONS

Staggering Punch: +8 to hit Av, Reach: melee (1 area), one creature, hit: 2d8+4 (12) Kinetic. On Hit: make a Constitution saving throw, DC: 14, or be stunned (minor) till the end of their next turn.

AVOIDANCE

12

FORTITUDE

15

WILLPOWER

11

STAMINA

72

WOUNDS

4

DR: 4 vs Physical, 2 vs Energy

Immunities: immune to Frightened condition

STR

22
(+6)

DEX

13
(+1)

CON

18
(+4)

INT

5
(-3)

WIS

6
(-2)

CHA

3
(-4)

SKILL SETS (SPECIALTY):

Apex Predator, Enhanced Athletics

Languages: Understands English, cannot speak

Rank Bonus: +2

TRAITS:

Thick Hide: Mother possesses DR 4 vs physical damage/DR: 2 vs Energy damage.

Enhanced Strength: +5 bonus to all challenges when using strength or attempting to grapple.

GEAR

None

COMMON ZOMBIE TRAITS

Attrition: Zombies must feed to stay active. If they have not fed in a few months, they will slip into a semi-active state, remaining still like corpses for weeks on end. During this time, zombies decompose at a much slower rate and will "wake up" when they hear any loud noise within 10 areas or smell a living creature within 3 Areas.

Relentless Nature: Zombies "Deadheads" attack the living with little regard for their safety. If they do not use actions to end the Ongoing Damage condition.

The Speed of the Dammed: A Zombie that has fed on fresh meat over the last week has its walking pace increased by 3 and gains a +2 bonus to avoidance.

Enhanced Zombie Senses: +5 bonus to all challenges when attempting to perceive living creatures through sight, smell, or sound. Additionally, they can see in natural darkness.