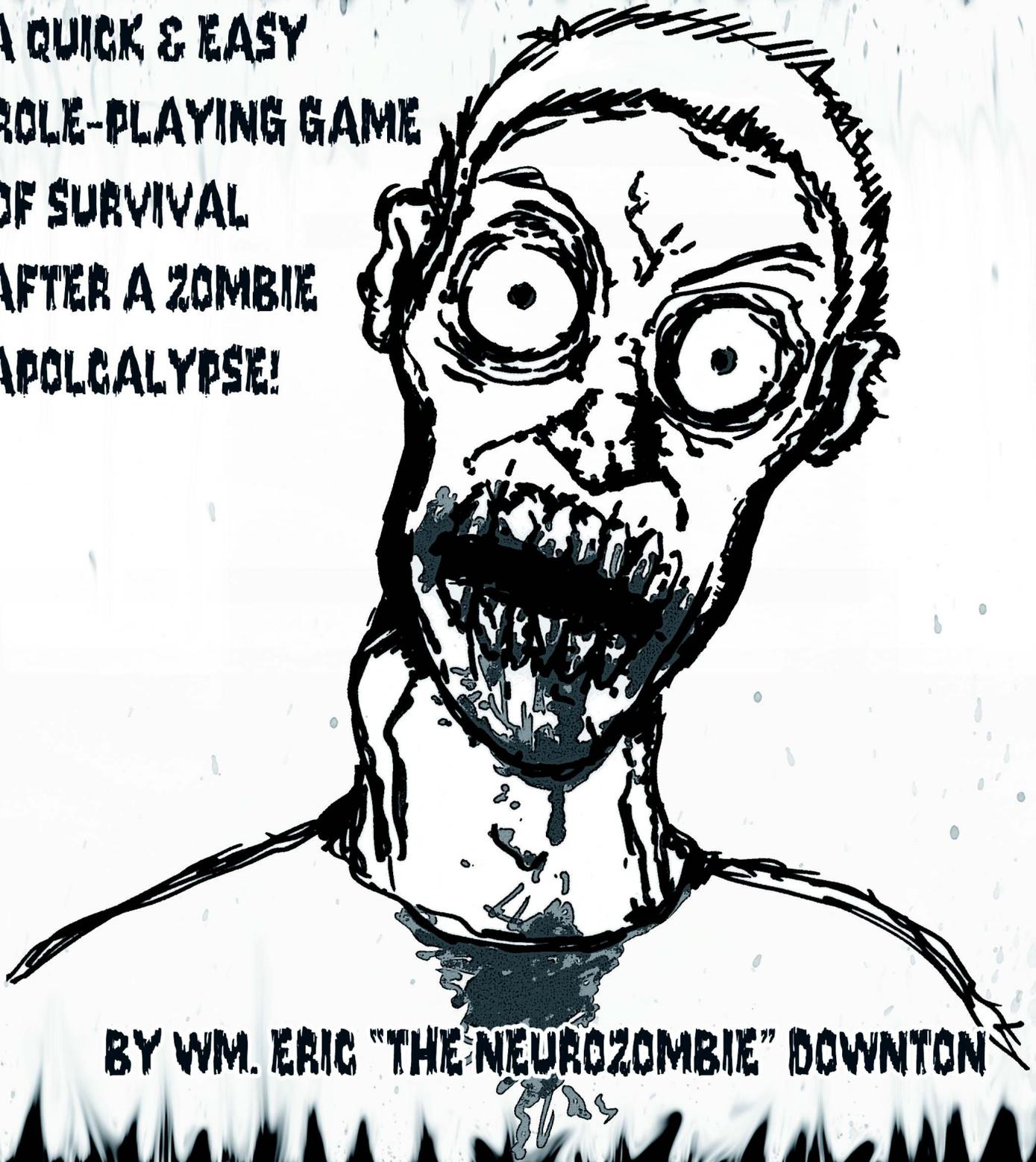


NEUROZOMBIE GAMES PRESENTS:

THE ZOMBIE NATION RPG

A QUICK & EASY
ROLE-PLAYING GAME
OF SURVIVAL
AFTER A ZOMBIE
APOCALYPSE!



BY WM. ERIC "THE NEUROZOMBIE" DOWNTON

THE ZOMBIE NATION RPG

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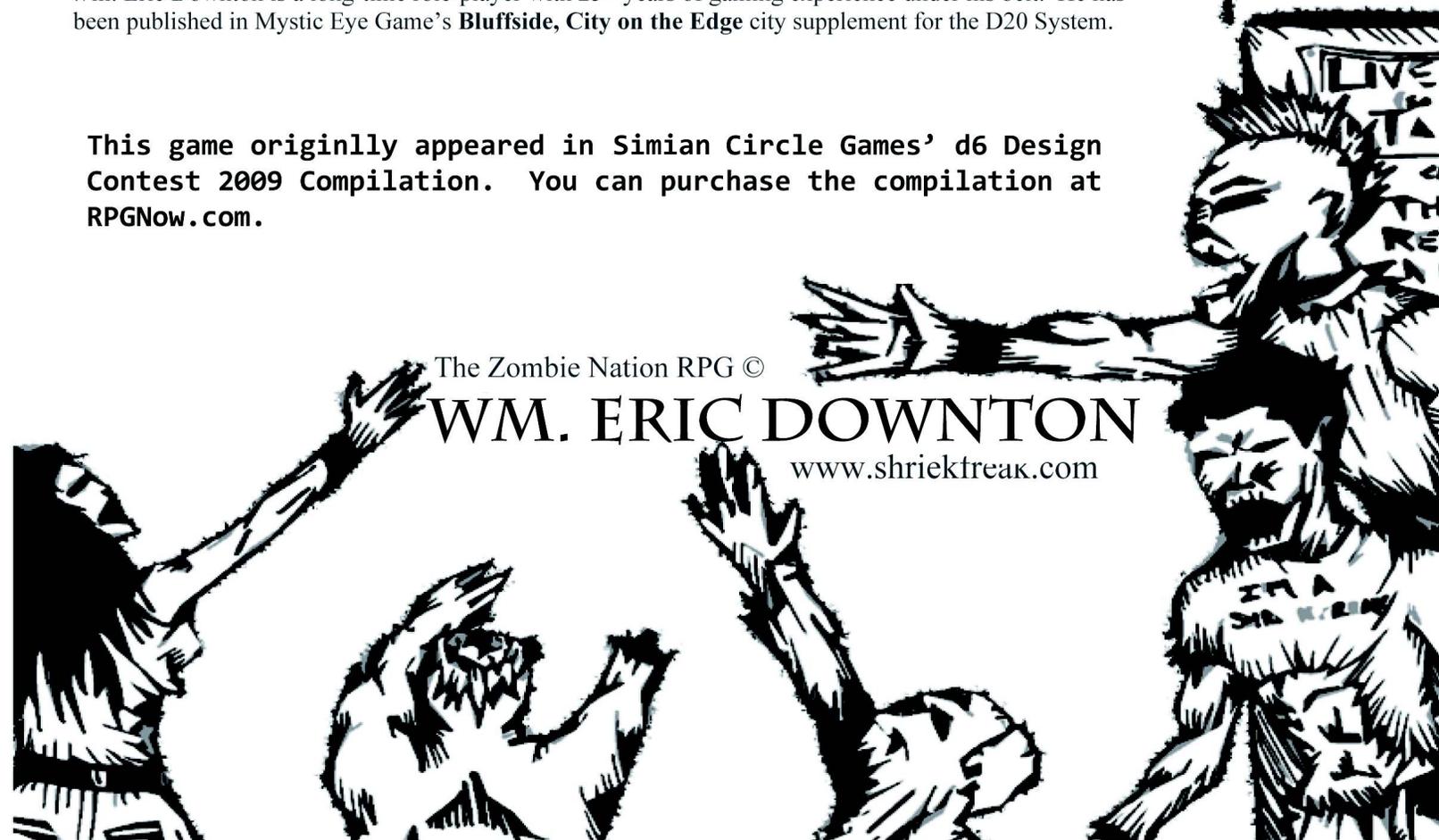
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This game originally appeared in Simian Circle Games' d6 Design Contest 2009 Compilation. You can purchase the compilation at RPGNow.com.

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THE ZOMBIE NATION RPG

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Zombie Nation!

The Zombie Nation RPG is a simple beer and pretzel RPG of apocalyptic zombie goodness and bloody dismemberment.

You are a Survivor battling flesh eating zombies for your very life, hoping to make it from one fight to the next without becoming zombie food.

Now go create a character and kick some zombie buttocks!

SURVIVOR GENERATION CHECKLIST:

Just follow these simple guidelines and your first Survivor will be born! Hopefully, he will *survive!*

1. Concept: Describe your Survivor in a few sentences. Include things like his or her previous profession and any pertinent background details, such as "Bob was a hunter."

2. Demeanor: Explain your Survivor's personality and outlook in a few short sentences.

3. Aptitudes: Each Aptitude starts with a score of 2, which is considered an "average" score (whatever that means!) Since Survivors are far from average, tending to be smarter and faster and stronger than the dude who just got bitten by that zombie over there, you get to distribute 3 more Aptitude points between your three "average" starting values as you see fit.

4. Skills: You get to distribute a whopping 10 skills points between the ten Skills found in Zombie Nation. Each skill level costs one skill point. You may buy up to 3



skill levels in any particular skill at the beginning of the game, but skills may eventually be increased up to a maximum level of 6 with the use of Advancement Points.

5. Thresholds & Characteristics: Now is the time to put the finishing touches on your Survivor's game stats. Figure your Thresholds and Characteristics as per the sections above.

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6. Gear: Each Survivor starts the game with a thousand bucks worth of stuff that they had thought to snag as the world became infested with the walking dead. No list of gear is included in these rules, so hit the 'net to dig up some prices. Be creative and show the ZM where ya got the cost. Stats for weapons and armor can be found in the Combat portion of the Rules section of the book.

APTITUDES:

Aptitudes are the "guts" of a Survivor. They represent the raw, inborn ability that all humans possess to one degree or another. A Survivor may always attempt any action that they wish (with ZM approval, of course) with an Aptitude roll in place of a normal skill roll. Aptitudes are rated in a number of dice, usually between 2 and 5.

Brains: A measure of intelligence, general knowledge and willpower.

Brawn: A measure of physical strength, constitution and toughness.

Speed: A measure of quickness, hand-eye coordination and perception.

SKILLS:

Skills are trained areas of expertise that build upon a Survivor's natural ability, or Aptitudes. Each skill is rated in dice, just like a Survivor's Aptitudes. When a skill roll is called for, a player will roll a number of dice equal to both the Skill itself and the Survivor's applicable Aptitude added together. For each 5 or 6 that comes up on the dice, a success occurs. All skills have a particular Aptitude listed in parenthesis beside its name. This is the most common Aptitude used in conjunction with the Skill, although the ZM may call for a different combination if they feel it is appropriate to

a specific task. See the Rules section for more on skill use.

Build (Brains): A Survivor's ability to craft and fix non-technological items and structures.

Discern (Speed): A Survivor's ability to unearth clues, notice things and put two-and-two together.

Evade (Speed): A Survivor's ability to dodge attacks, avoid traps and escape from bonds.

Fight (Brawn): A Survivor's ability to hit in hand-to-hand and melee combat.

Heal (Brains): A Survivor's ability to dress wounds, locate and use medicines properly and general knowledge of anatomy.

Persuade (Brains): A Survivor's ability to con, seduce and intimidate others.

Repair (Brains): A Survivor's ability to fix and understand technological equipment.

Shoot (Speed): A Survivor's ability to hit in ranged combat using guns, bows or thrown weapons.

Sneak (Speed): A Survivor's ability to hide, move quietly and disguise ones self.

Survive (Brawn): A Survivor's ability to find food and water, find shelter and track prey.

THRESHOLDS:

A Survivor's Thresholds are areas of exertion that, when surpassed, cause detrimental effects upon the Survivor. Each of the three Thresholds is based upon one of the three Aptitudes. Details on how to use Thresholds in play can be found in the ZM section of the book.

Health (Brawn +2): A Survivor's Health Threshold is a measurement of the number of points of accumulated physical damage

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he may take before gaining a wound level.

The Health Threshold is used to determine the effects of damage on the body. Every time you receive damage, you jot down how much you have received in the damage box on your Survivor Sheet. Damage points accumulate and are added together until they surpass the Health Threshold of your Survivor.

When that happens, you receive one wound and the damage points so far accumulated are erased giving you a clean slate to accrue more damage. Each wound that you receive gives you a cumulative -1 die to all rolls thereafter. Each Survivor may take a number of wounds equal to their Brawn +1 before succumbing to death!

Damage points heal at a rate of one point every day and wounds heal at a rate of one every week. If the Heal Skill is used on a Survivor immediately after a battle, a successful roll will heal one point of damage per success. If the number of successes happens to exceed a Survivor's Health Threshold, then one wound is healed as well. Some medical equipment may add bonus dice to the roll if the Zombie Master is feeling nice!

Sanity (Brains +2): A Survivor's Sanity Threshold is the number of points of horror damage that one can take before gaining one horror level.

The Sanity Threshold determines how many horrific, frightening or insanely dangerous event and encounters a Survivor

can take before losing their marbles. Each time that a Survivor encounters something icky or scary they must roll a Brains die roll and get at least one success for each point of Sanity damage that they currently have. If they fail the roll, they get to add one more point of Sanity damage to the appropriate box, and this damage is cumulative. Once a Survivor accrues more Sanity damage than their Sanity Threshold, they

start to freak out at the horror of it all! This "freak out" is counted by them gaining a Horror Level and all Sanity damage gained to that point is erased, just like Health damage.

Horror Levels are simply varying levels of psychological damage that is common whilst under siege by the living dead. The mind was just not meant to see such



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creepy things. The effects of each level are cumulative with the effects of the Shaken level. The Horror Levels are as follows:

Shaken: At the Shaken level, a Survivor loses one die on all Initiative rolls until "shrugged" off.

Fearful: A Fearful Survivor is Shaken and must make a Brains roll. At least one success is needed or the Survivor loses their first action for the round. Each round, another roll may be made to break the effect.

Petrified: A Petrified Survivor is Shaken and must make a Brains roll with at least two successes or lose all further actions for the round. Each round, another roll may be made to break the effect.

Scared Shitless: As per Shaken and has to make a Brains roll with at least two successes or must run full tilt away from the action. Each round another roll may be made to break the effect.

Sanity heals at a rate of one point per day. Every day, a Survivor may make a Brains roll to "shrug" off Horror Levels. One level is cleared for each success gained.

Luck (Speed +2): A Survivor's Luck Threshold is the number of "Lucky Breaks" you may receive before you "run outta luck."

A Survivor's Luck Threshold is the number of "Lucky Breaks" one can take before their luck runs out. When luck runs out, a Survivor loses one die from every roll until their luck replenishes below their threshold. A Survivor may keep spending Luck over his or her Threshold, but additional penalty dice continue to accrue. This die loss is cumulative with any other effect that causes the loss of a die. Any Luck spent over the Threshold may not add to dice

rolls, only the other kinds of Lucky Breaks.

Lucky Breaks include:

- Adding one die to any die roll (up to 3 may be spent for up to 3 extra dice.)
- Luckily finding just the thing you need at the moment.
- Ignoring one Wound Level or Sanity Level. Your Health or Sanity damage remains the same however.
- Any other lucky thing that you can think of, with the Zombie Master's permission.

Luck refreshes at a rate of one point per day.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Characteristics are simply the leftover statistics that don't fit into any other category. Each are described below with how to figure them in parenthesis.

Move (Speed X5): A measure of how many feet per Action one can move in a combat round. When using a square or hex map with 1" squares, each grid equals 5'.

Equip (Brawn X2): A Survivor's Equip Characteristic is a measurement of how many items one can have "on hand" in an easily accessible location that can be reached without using an Action in a tense situation. Especially large items may take up more than one open slot if the ZM feels it is appropriate. Very small items, such as a box of matches or a pocket watch may always be considered on hand.

Carry (Brawn X5): The Carry Characteristic is a measure of how many items one can carry in backpacks or other places not easily accessible. These items may not be

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accessed in direct combat, although they may be dug out in d6 combat rounds if a Survivor is not currently engaged in any other Actions.

RULES:

This section of *Zombie Nation* is comprised of the various rules used throughout the game. The two most important parts are first in line, the Skill Use and the Combat rules. After those two parts, the rest of this purposefully short chapter covers everything else you need to know to play *Zombie Nation*. The Zombie Master's section that follows the rules will tell the ZM everything he or she needs to actually run the game.

SKILL USE:

Skill use in *Zombie Nation* is extremely simple. All you have to do is add up your Survivor's Skill dice and their most appropriate Aptitude dice and roll 'em. For each 5 or 6 rolled, a success occurs. You must generate enough successes to equal or surpass the Target Level of the task in question. The Zombie Master will assign a Target Level based upon the perceived difficulty of the task. More on assigning Target Levels can be found the ZM's section.

The following chart is used as a general gauge of the difficulty of a task and the number of successes needed to accomplish it.

Target Level (TL):

(1 success needed): Easy: An easy TL usually represents a partial success or an extremely simple task.

(2 successes needed): Typical: A typi-

cal TL indicates that an average trained person should succeed more than fail.

(3 successes needed): Difficult: A difficult TL describes a task that is going to push someone with an average skill.

(4 successes needed): Challenging: A challenging task means that an average person is going to fail more than succeed.

(5 successes needed): Extreme: An extreme task is only going to succeed by a highly skilled, and lucky Survivor.

(6 successes needed): Insane: Just forget it, okay?

COMBAT:

There is nothing more exciting in an RPG than duking it out with a hated enemy, or with the rotting corpses of your next door neighbors in the case of the *Zombie Nation*



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RPG. Just follow these simple steps and combat in Zombie Nation will be a breeze!

Step 1: The first step in any combat is to determine the order of actions in a given combat round. This is called Initiative. To determine Initiative, simply roll Speed + the Skill you want to use in the round and count successes. The Survivor with the most successes gets to act first, then the next highest and so on. In the event of a tie, those tied should roll their Speed in dice and add the dice together, the highest is the winner. If a Survivor does not get any successes on the roll, they are simply unable to bring themselves to attack or are too scared to use a skill, but may move up to their Move Characteristic in feet. They are either too scared or simply not ready to fight.

In addition to seeing who gets to act first, the Initiative roll also determines how many actions that the Survivor receives. The Actions a Survivor gets is equal to their total successes on the Initiative roll. Actions are counted down from the person who got the most successes to whoever got the least. In addition, the person who gets the least actions, if able to act, gets to go before those with more total actions.

Player 1 got 4 successes
Player 2 got 2 successes
The Zombies got 1 success

So... Player 1 can act on the 4 count and on the 3 count, before everyone else. Then Player 2 gets to act followed by player 1 once again. Finally, the Zombies get to act, followed by Player 2 and then by player 1.

Actions can be almost anything that some-

one could do in about 2-3 seconds while in the heat of combat. You may use an action to move your Movement in feet, attack once, dodge one attack, use a non-combat skill that could conceivably be accomplished in a few seconds, etc...

In the case of difficult tasks, one action is needed for every TL for the action being attempted, at the ZM's discretion.

A note on using the Evade skill in combat: So long as you have at least one action remaining in a given combat round, you may expend your next available count in order to roll an Evade roll against an opponent that has attacked you. This is the only way you may act outside of the natural order of things. Each success that you score on your Evade roll will cancel out one of the attackers successes, down to 0 (a total miss!)

Step 2: Now that you've got Initiative and Actions figured out, you need to know how to hit the undead flesh eaters! All you gotta do is roll the appropriate attack skill (Fight or Shoot, plus Aptitude) and get at least one success. Easy as brains! Keep track of how many successes you get; as that number is necessary in determining how much damage you do to the poor animate mound 'o flesh.

Step 3: Next, you must figure out the damage that you do. This is simply adding the number of successes you rolled for the attack roll to the base damage of the weapon you used to hit 'em with. This is the damage that you do to your opponent before armor is considered. If your opponent is wearing armor of some sort, just subtract its Protection Value (PV) from the total damage and that is the actual damage

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done! For info on how damage is tracked as well as the effect of it on the body, see the Health Threshold section.

Step 4: Repeat until everyone is dead(er)!

WEAPONS AND ARMOR:

The following two tables describe an abstract and simple system for using weapons and armor. There are purposely no rules for unimportant things like weapon range of ammunition. Bah! Not needed! Besides, when a Survivor all of a sudden becomes unlucky, bullets tend to run out...

Weapons:

Here's my recommendation for Base Damage:

BASE DAMAGE	WEAPON/ATTACK TYPE
1	Punch or kick, BB shot
2	Club, knife, staff or shovel
3	Sword, sledgehammer, arrow, small axe
4	Great sword, large axe, light pistol (like a .22)
5	Heavy pistol (like a .45), shotgun, hunting rifle
6	Combat rifle, submachine gun, Molotov cocktail or grenade
7	Heavy machine-gun
8+	Tank gun (if it hits ya, it kills ya!)

Armor:

Here are some suggested Protection Values for various common armor types.

PROTECTION VALUE	ITEM OF ARMOR
1	Heavy cloth, winter jacket
2	Heavy leather trench
3	Flak Jacket
4	Riot Gear
5	Military battle dress

ZOMBIE MASTER'S GUIDE

This section is for the Zombie Master (ZM) alone... all players must NOT read any further!

Okay Zombie Master-to-be, time to get your groove on and prepare yourself for the challenges you face, namely scaring the crap out of your players with sinister zombie action! We are going to assume that you know what a game master is and dispense with all of the fluff that telling you how to run a game entails. If you were a beginner, you would never have found this RPG anyway, right?

Alrighty then, let us start off this section with zombies, zombies, and more zombies! We will then delve into multiple zombie infestation methods and end with rules for Survivor advancement.



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ZOMBIES:

Zombies come in multiple varieties, depending upon the source from which you draw inspiration. You may choose to keep to the basics and just have the Shamblers included in your Zombie Nation, or you could throw in all four types included into your world. It's your choice! Also, don't forget that you have got to choose a method of Infestation as well for your campaign. See the next part for more on that.

For All Zombies:

All Zombies have unlimited Wound Levels, although at 7 Wounds they are nothing but writhing bits 'o flesh that really can't hurt anyone. A shot to the head is all that can stop them "ahem" *dead* in their tracks. A Survivor may attempt a head shot if they so choose. A headshot is treated as a normal attack roll, but you need three successes to hit. If a Survivor chooses this action, they will miss completely if less than three successes are rolled.

Basic Zombie Tactics:

The basic attack for a zombie is to scratch at the living with their newly grown, ragged fingernails. A zombie's ultimate goal, however, is to take a bite outta ya! If a zombie gets at least three successes on a scratch attack, they get an immediate, free bite attack on top of it at no action cost. Yikes! The better to eat you with my dear.

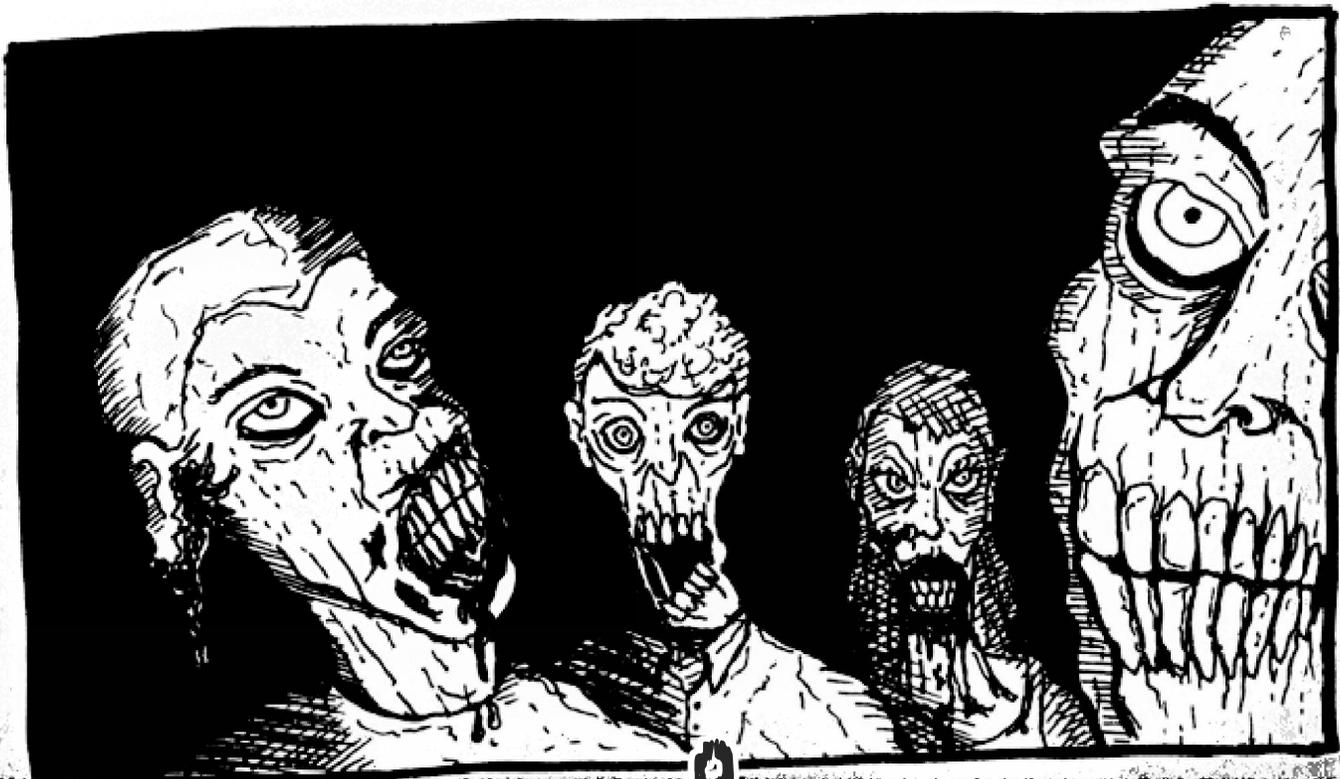
Zombies and Brains!:

Zombies dine on the flesh of the living, that is a given. Some zombie fright fests, however, postulate that zombies crave a heaping helping of gray matter. You can add this option if ya like.

It's your Zombie Nation!

Shamblers:

A Shambler is your traditional, run-of-the-mill movie zombie of the "Romero" school. These zombies move slowly and scratch at



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ya trying to eat your flesh. Their main weakness is that they are slow as hell and obviously not very bright.

Brains: 0 Brawn: 5 Speed: 1
Fight: 2 Health: 7 Move: 5'
Shamblers can always move at least 5', even if they do not receive an action on their Initiative roll.

Runners:

Runners are basically Shamblers that can move at a good clip. This variety of zombie is usually found in more light-hearted Zombie Nations, but can be quite deadly if the Survivor's think that all zombies move like snails.

Brains: 0 Brawn: 4 Speed: 3
Fight: 2 Health: 6 Move: 15'
Runners will always have at least one action, regardless of their Initiative roll.

Leapers:

A leaper is a type of zombie that is usually found in pseudo-zombie video game franchises. They appear as humans that move on all fours and are typically more bestial in appearance. Their big specialty is the fact that they can jump like a giant slaver-ing, infected frog!

Brains: 0 Brawn: 4 Speed: 3
Fight: 2 Health: 6 Move: 15'
Leapers can make a leap attack for free at the end of a movement action at a range of 10 feet.

Brainers:

A Brainer is a zombie with rudimentary intelligence. They can choose targets and figure out how to use simple technology, like pulling the trigger of a gun. They could never join the Geek Squad, but a

smart zombie is certainly deadly.

Brains: 2 Brawn: 4 Speed: 2
Any 3 Skills @ 2 Health: 6 Move: 10'
A Brainer may make a Brains roll with one success needed to figure out how to use a simple technological item.

INFECTION:

The Infection methods described herein are simply the way that the zombie plague spreads. There are three methods detailed in *Zombie Nation*, although many more can be created by a clever *Zombie Master*. As the ZM, you get to choose which of the methods below you wish to use for your *Zombie Nation*. Feel free to assign a different method to each zombie type if you so desire.

Scratch Infection:

Under this method, all a zombie has to do is scratch you to spread the disease. If damage occurs, note the attack and the damage done in the Infection box of the Survivor sheet. After each such attack, add up the total damage done to that point and roll a number of dice equal to the total of all of your Aptitudes (usually 6 to start.) You must get a number of successes equal to the total damage done to that point to avoid infection. If the Survivor becomes infected, he or she get d6 hours + Brawn before he or she look to the dead side of life. One Lucky Break may be spent per point of Infection damage to erase it from the Survivor sheet at any time.

Bite Infection:

As per Scratch Infection save that the zombie must bite its victim.

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Airborne Infection:

This insidious method of infection is caused by simply breathing the same air as the undead menace. If a person is within 20 feet of a zombie, he could become infected. Use the rules for the Scratch Infection above for this method, except for the fact that this roll must be made every minute, and every minute of exposure (or fraction thereof) causes one point of Infection damage and thus requires one success per point of Infection. Wearing a gas mask will make one immune to the infection, and wearing something tied around the face (like a handkerchief) will give 2 extra dice to the roll to fight the plague.

CATALYST:

Even though Infection is the main method of spreading the zombie plague, there must be some sort of global event that caused the dead to rise in the first place. Your players will most likely never discover the true reason the dead began to walk amongst the living, but hey, the option is here for ya! A few suggestions follow:

- A cloud of alien gases sweep the globe, infects the dead and then dissipates.
- Radioactive fallout from a corporate experiment/bomb testing, etc...
- Genetic testing gone awry.
- The result of a Voodoo ritual or other magical occurrence.
- A plot of the Illuminati to take over the world!

Etc... There are tons of ways to ex-

plain why the dead have risen from the grave.

SURVIVOR ADVANCEMENT:

After each successful game session, award each player 3 Advancement Points (AP). If they were especially crafty, good sports or role-played their concepts and demeanor's well, give them another one or two points. A crazy ZM could also give an extra AP award for each point of Luck spent over the Survivor's Threshold.



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NAME: _____

CONCEPT: _____

DEMEANOR: _____

APTITUDES:

BRAINS: _____

BRAWN: _____

SPEED: _____

THRESHOLDS:

SANITY: _____

HEALTH: _____

LUCK: _____

SANITY DAMAGE TAKEN

HEALTH DAMAGE TAKEN

LUCK POINTS USED

SKILLS:

BUILD (BRAINS): _____

DISCERN (SPEED): _____

EVADE (SPEED): _____

EVADE (SPEED): _____

HEAL (BRAINS): _____

PERSUADE (BRAINS): _____

REPAIR (BRAINS): _____

SHOOT (SPEED): _____

SNEAK (SPEED): _____

SURVIVE (BRAWN): _____

CHARACTERISTICS:

MOVE (SPEED X2): _____

EQUIP (BRAWN X2): _____

CARRY (BRAWN X5): _____

STUFF:

