THE FINAL WALK

A d20 tabletop system compatible with D&D 5e, inspired by The Last of Us, Telltale's The Walking Dead, and many other stories of survival as the void stares.

Introduction

It began in the air, spreading globally in less than 24 hours. Only 20% of the population was susceptible to this evolution of the infection, 1.5 billion people dead, but still moving. They are driven by one desire: to consume.

When you're bitten, that's it. That's the end. In a handful of hours you die, and rise soon thereafter. Every trace of who you once were, gone.

The infection spread aggressively.

Within days every major city was overrun.

Within a month, utilities ceased. The infrastructure of electricity and running water became a thing of the past.

Within six months, gasoline corroded. Vehicles became unusable without skilled intervention.

And over the next few years, survivors found themselves up against starvation, wild animals, and natural disasters as nature reclaimed what once was hers.

It is a myth that in times of crisis people choose not to help others. Society collapsed, but the social bonds between people strengthened, at least in the beginning.

Time passes.

The flames that drive us smolder to embers. Chaos becomes normalcy. Ten years after the initial outbreak, new societies and communities have formed. Some live confined within the safety of walls, while others roam the New United States in search of salvation.

For many, the bond of being alive is no longer enough. Will you trust or forsake

Table of Contents

What Is This?

Enclosed in this are two pieces: the first is a tabletop system that uses many of the core mechanics of D&D 5e, but reshapes them to fit in a modern, non-magical, zombie-filled setting. You won't find typical fantasy classes, species, feats, or spellcasting, but rather backgrounds, duties, and perks that have helped your human character survive as long as they have. This is meant for players / Game Masters with intermediate to advanced understanding of tabletop games.

The second piece is worldbuilding and the start of an adventure for four players, where the characters travel across the apocalyptic United States. It's less of a module and more of a fun way to kick off your campaign. This game is meant to be roleplay-heavy with emotional moments and exciting combat that can be played with maps or theater of the mind.

Is this game realistic?

This system is not meant to be gritty or realistic, but rather to facilitate fun, cinematic moments, and dramatic tension. For instance, actual survivors would constantly worry about food, and while rolling checks to hunt or scavenge every day might be accurate, it doesn't enhance the gameplay experience for me personally. However, those of you who enjoy 'gritty' or realistic rulesets will find optional rules later on in this guide.

How is this compatible with D&D?

This system uses the core mechanics of D&D 5e, and most of the rules can be applied to this game. The following changes are the most important:

1. There are no longer Ability Scores. Ability Score Modifiers are now referred to as **Core Stats**. For example, instead of a 14 Ability Score which becomes a +2 Ability Score Modifier, you will just have a +2 Core Stat.

2. Skills have been adjusted as follows:
- The **Arcana** skill has been removed (as there is no active/visible magic).
- The **Religion** skill has been removed (as there is no active/visible pantheon). For inquiries about religions, use the History skill.
- The **Engineering** skill has been added with Intelligence as its Core Stat. This skill can be used to interact with machines and electronics. Examples of this include: repairing and driving vehicles, hacking computers, and operating machines (both simple and complex).
- **Medicine** is now an Intelligence-based skill.
- **Nature** is now a Wisdom-based skill.

3. Damage type is removed as it's not necessary when there are so few types of damage.

4. Proficiency is now half your level, rounded up. (Ex: level 1: +1, level 3: +2, level 5: +3, etc…).

5. Saving Throws are equal to your Core Stats unless otherwise stated.

Basics

Armor Class

In order for your character to be hit, a creature must make an attack roll equal to, or higher than, your Armor Class (AC). Your character's base AC is equal to 10 +/- your CON. Armor, shields, and perks may increase your character's AC. You cannot wear two of the same type of armor (ex: you cannot wear two pairs of gloves or two helmets).

Hit Points

Hit Points represent your character's health. Your character's starting Hit Points are 8 +/- your CON. Every time your character levels up, you gain Hit Points equal to 1d8 +/- your CON. Losing hit points does not mean your character has been directly harmed or bitten. For example, if your character takes 5 damage from a firearm, that doesn't mean they were shot, but rather they exerted lots of energy running, ducking, or sliding out of the way. If your character is reduced to 0 hit points, they become unconscious and begin making Death Saving Throws.

Unarmed Attack

In order for your character to be hit, a creature must make an attack roll equal to, or higher than, your Armor Class (AC). Your character's base AC is equal to 10 +/- your CON. Armor, shields, and perks may increase your character's AC. You cannot wear two of the same type of armor (ex: you cannot wear two pairs of gloves or two helmets).

Improvised weapon

If you find yourself without a weapon, your GM may allow you to search for a tree branch, pipe, or other improvised weapon, using STR or DEX for the attack roll. Improvised weapons deal damage equal to 1d4 + STR or DEX. Improvised weapons have a chance to break with every attack roll, if the d20 roll is equal to or below the weapon's **Break Threshold**. The improvised weapon begins with a Break Threshold of 1, and the threshold increases by 1 after every subsequent attack. Some items, such as a crowbar, may be used as an improvised weapon, however they do not have a Break Threshold.

Loading Weapons

Weapons with ammunition, like firearms, usually have a loading property. These weapons do not require extra loading time as they are only firing one projectile per turn.

Throwing melee weapons

Melee weapons can be thrown with a range of 15/30. When thrown, the weapon has a 25% chance of being damaged or broken. If the roll is a 5 or below on the d20, a standard weapon breaks (after it does damage, if applicable). If the weapon has a +1 modifier or higher, it permanently loses 1 from this modifier if the d20 is 5 or below. In combat, thrown weapons can be picked up as a free action when occupying the space the weapon has landed

Throwing Consumables

You can accurately throw consumables (such as molotov cocktails or smoke grenades) a number of feet equal to 5 x your Dexterity modifier, provided you have line of sight. If there are obstacles in the path, or you're trying to throw the object into a small opening, your GM may require a skill check. If you're trying to throw the consumable farther than the 5 x your Dexterity modifier, you must succeed on a Dexterity check equal to 12 + 2 for every 5 additional feet you wish

to throw. If you do not succeed on this check, the consumable ricochets OR if you roll 10 below the DC it explodes in the position you occupy. When an object ricochets, first roll 1d8 to determine the direction it goes from the intended point of impact (1 = top-left diagonal, 2 = top-middle, etc...continuing clockwise), then roll 1d6 to determine how many feet away it moves from the intended point of impact, multiplying the d6 result x 5 feet.

1	2	3
8	Point of impact	4
7	6	5

Arrow Recovery

Arrows can be recovered if you hit the intended target, otherwise the arrows break. If characters are not rushed/immediately moving after combat ends, it is assumed they spend the time to pick up their arrows.

Lock Picking

You may attempt to pick locks you find with your Sleight of Hand modifier. If you do not have lockpicks, you have disadvantage on the Sleight of Hand check. After an unsuccessful attempt, the DC of the lock increases by 5.

Alignment

The game is built on the idea that broken people can heal, that the disheartened can find hope, and that there is good dormant in most people. The adventure tends to reward acts of selflessness and it is recommended that no characters are evil or beyond the point of redemption. Characters are meant to start out as neutral and gradually become more good as they adventure, but individual arcs should be discussed with players.

Leveling Up

You level up at the end of every milestone. When you level up, you get the following benefits:
1. Increase Hit Points by 1d8 +/- your CON.
2. Choose to add either +1 to one of your Core Stats OR a perk.
3. Increase your proficiency bonus (half your level, rounded up) if applicable.

(Optional) Gritty Rules

Weapon Durability

When you roll a 1 on an attack roll with a weapon, the weapon breaks unless it has a +1 or higher modifier. If the weapon has a modifier, that modifier is reduced by one (ex: a +2 weapon becomes +1, a +1 weapon becomes +0) and can break the same as any other weapon once all modifiers have been removed.

Bites

When you are hit with an attack by an infected creature, you must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution Saving Throw or become infected, turning in 1d4 hours. The DC for the CON save increases by 2 every time you're hit with an attack by an infected. The DC resets at the end of a long rest.

Nature vs Nurture

When rolling your Core Stats, roll them in order.

Infection

If your character was reduced to 0 hit points by an infected creature, or the infected creature hits your character while they are making Death Saving Throws, your character has a chance of becoming infected. If an infected character fails their Death Saving Throws, they die permanently and return as a zombie under control of the Game Master, otherwise infection is determined after combat ends.

Amputating The Infection

When bitten, before you know whether or not you've been infected, you may have the option to attempt to cut out the infected area. Roll 1d10 before pulling your infection card to determine where you were bitten. If you are able to amputate, you must do so within five minutes of the bite to stop the spread of the infection. If you're operating on yourself, the DC increases by 5.

Infection Location Table

Roll	Location	Result
1	Neck	Fatal.
2	Torso	Fatal.
3	Left Leg	DC 20 Medicine check to safely amputate.
4	Right Leg	DC 20 Medicine check to safely amputate.
5	Left Arm	DC 20 Medicine check to safely amputate.
6	Right Arm	DC 20 Medicine check to safely amputate.
7	Left Foot	DC 15 Medicine check to safely amputate.
8	Right Foot	DC 15 Medicine check to safely amputate.
9	Left Hand	DC 15 Medicine check to safely amputate.
10	Right Hand	DC 15 Medicine check to safely amputate.

Determining If You're Infected

To determine if your character is infected, the player rolls 1d4 keeping the result between them and the Game Master. The Game Master gives the player two face-down cards to choose from, one black, one red. If the player picks the black card, they will die in 1d4 hours and turn into a zombie immediately after. If the player picks red, they will know they aren't infected after 1d4 hours. Every time a player risks infection, an additional black card is added to the stack they pull from, increasing the odds of infection.

Character Death

If a character dies, the player may roll up a new character for the following session that's the same level as the rest of the party. The player should work with the GM to find a way to organically introduce the new character. In order to accomplish this, (1) the player should have a reason to head the direction the party is going regardless of the existing plot and (2) the rest of the party should have a need for the player to join them.

Character Creation

After determining your Core Stats, there are three sections where you're able to customize your character: Background, Duties, and Perks. These represent who you were, who you became, and the skills you picked up along the way.

Character Build Checklist

- Determine your six Core Stats
- Select Background
- Select your Duty
- Select a Perk
- Select or create your personal item
- Collect all your equipment
- (Optional) Determine your appearance
- (Optional) Determine your character attributes

Core Stats

Core Stats are Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. You may either **roll 6d6** to determine your character's Core Stats or you can choose the **standard array**. The max a Core Stat can reach is +5.

Rolling Stats

Roll 6d6 to determine your six modifiers, using the table below for conversion. You may place these modifiers in any Core Stat of your choosing.

Roll	Modifier
6	+3
5	+2
4	+1
3	0
2	-1
1	-2

Standard Array

The standard array is as if you rolled one of each number on a d6, giving you the following stats to choose from: +3, +2, +1, 0, -1, -2.

Optional Rule: Embrace Mediocrity

Want to roll, but don't want to be stuck with an extremely underpowered or overpowered character? You may activate Mediocrity Mode by announcing it aloud before you roll, which forces you to reroll if the combination of all your stats are lower than 1 OR higher than 9.]

Skills And Their Core Stats

Skill	Core Stat
Acrobatics	Dexterity
Animal Handling	Wisdom
Athletics	Strength
Deception	Charisma
Engineering	Intelligence
Insight	Wisdom
Intimidation	Charisma
Investigation	Intelligence
History	Intelligence
Medicine	Intelligence
Nature	Wisdom
Perception	Wisdom
Performance	Charisma
Persuasion	Charisma
Sleight of Hand	Dexterity
Stealth	Dexterity
Survival	Wisdom

Background

What you learned in the old world may help you survive. Every Background includes:
- +3 total to Core Stats
- +2 Proficiencies
- Features
- Starting equipment

Athlete	Core Stats:	Proficiencies:	Starting Equipment:
	• +1 Strength • +1 Dexterity • +1 Constitution	• Athletics • Acrobatics	• Baseball Bat • Helmet

Features:
- **Burst of Power**: When you activate this feature, you can move double your speed for ten minutes. Additionally, your jump distance and the amount you can carry is doubled for this duration. You can use this feature once per long rest.
- **Second Action**: On your turn, you can take a second action as long as both actions are physical skills (using Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution). You may use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus per long rest.

Charlatan	Core Stats:	Proficiencies:	Starting Equipment:
	• +2 Charisma • +1 Dexterity	• Deception • Sleight of Hand	• Lockpicks • Crowbar

Features:
- **Copy**: You can replace a single Core Stat with the Core Stat of another character as long as that character remains within 120 feet. The chosen stat / character the stat is copied from can be switched out at the end of a long rest.
- **Pickpocket**: You have advantage on all Sleight of Hand checks to retrieve objects from another creature, or plant objects on their body.

Chef	**Core Stats:** • +1 Dexterity • +1 Wisdom • +1 Constitution	**Proficiencies:** • Survival • Nature	**Starting Equipment:** • Cleaver • Gloves

Features:
- **Feast**: At the end of every long rest, you cook a delicious meal for up to 8 creatures. Creatures who take part in this feast receive temporary hit points equal to 1d4 + your Survival modifier. These temporary hit points remain for 8 hours or until they are lost. Temporary hit points are added above your hit point maximum and cannot be healed.
- **Fruit Ninja**: If you wield a bladed weapon in your off-hand, you can use your bonus action to make an attack with that weapon, however you do not add your damage modifiers to the damage total, just the dice roll.

Doctor	**Core Stats:** • +2 Intelligence • +1 Wisdom	**Proficiencies:** • Medicine • History	**Starting Equipment:** • First Aid Kit • Defibrillator

Features:
- **Rebuke Death**: Once per long rest, if you or any party member within 30 feet fails a Death Saving Throw, you / they may roll the Death Saving Throw again.
- **Stabilize**: As an action, you can stabilize any creature making Death Saving Throws, allowing them to regain consciousness in 1 hour.

Engineer	**Core Stats:** • +1 Intelligence • +1 Constitution • +1 Wisdom	**Proficiencies:** • Engineering • History	**Starting Equipment:** • Advanced Spear • Door Jammer

Features:
- **Upgrade**: At the end of every long rest, you can select a number of separate weapons equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum 1) and give them a +1 upgrade. The upgrade is not permanent, but this feature can always be used at the end of a long rest.
- **Mechanic**: You can diagnose issues with vehicles, and you have advantage on all checks to repair engines and similar machines.

Firefighter	**Core Stats:** • +1 Strength • +2 Constitution	**Proficiencies:** • Athletics • Medicine	**Starting Equipment:** • Fire Axe • First Aid Kit

Features:
- **Fireproof**: Any time you take damage from fire, that damage is halved. Additionally, your vision isn't inhibited by smoke and you can hold your breath twice as long while moving through smoky areas.
- **Hero Mode**: As a bonus action, you can activate Hero Mode to push yourself to your limits, giving you advantage on all strength-based actions. This includes Athletics checks, your ability to carry creatures, and attack rolls with a Strength-based melee weapon. Hero Mode lasts for one minute.

Nurse	**Core Stats:** • +1 Wisdom • +1 Intelligence • +1 Charisma	**Proficiencies:** • Insight • Medicine	**Starting Equipment:** • First Aid Kit • 10 Bandages

Features:
- **Designated Healer**: First Aid Kits you administer heal creatures for the maximum amount of hit points.
- **De-Escalate**: Once per long rest, you can choose to give yourself advantage on a Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation check before you roll. If the creature(s) you are attempting to influence are already hostile to you, the disadvantage you would usually have becomes a flat roll.

Ranger	**Core Stats:** • +2 Wisdom • +1 Constitution	**Proficiencies:** • Nature • Survival	**Starting Equipment:** • Bow with 2d4 arrows • Bear Trap

Features:
- **Hunter**: After you hit a creature with an attack, you can use your bonus action to focus on them for up to one hour. While focused on a creature you can add 1d6 to every damage roll, critical successes deal double damage, and you have advantage to track the creature's location. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your level per long rest, but you can only focus on one creature at a time.
- **Deep Roots**: While you're in forests or areas overgrown with nature (most areas that aren't cities or encampments), you have advantage on Perception and Survival checks.

Scientist	**Core Stats:** • +3 Intelligence	**Proficiencies:** • History • Investigation	**Starting Equipment:** • Flashlight (Large) • Goggles

Features:
- **Researcher**: You become proficient in a single skill of your choosing. You may swap this skill for a different skill every long rest.
- **Brain Blast**: You may add your intelligence modifier to any roll you make after you've rolled, but before the GM has declared whether or not the result was a success. You can use this feature a number of times per long rest equal to your proficiency bonus.

Soldier	**Core Stats:** • +2 Strength • +1 Dexterity	**Proficiencies:** • Athletics • Intimidation	**Starting Equipment:** • Hunting Knife • Rifle with 3d6 ammunition

Features:
- **Fighting Adept**: You may add your proficiency bonus to all attack and damage rolls.
- **Secret Weapon**: When you miss with an attack roll, you may reroll. You may use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus per long rest.

Teacher	**Core Stats:** • +2 Intelligence • +1 Charisma	**Proficiencies:** • History • Persuasion	**Starting Equipment:** • Flashlight (Medium) • Handgun with 2d4 ammunition

Features:
- **Knowledgeable**: Pick an additional skill to become proficient in. While within 30 feet of you, any creature in your party may also become proficient in that skill (if they are not already).
- **Fast Learner**: Pick one weapon type (spear, bladed, blunt, bow, handgun, rifle, or shotgun), you can add your proficiency bonus to attack and damage rolls with that type of weapon.

Veterinarian	**Core Stats:** • +1 Strength • +1 Wisdom • +1 Intelligence	**Proficiencies:** • Animal Handling • Medicine	**Starting Equipment:** • Shotgun with 3d4 ammunition • Net

Features:
- **Reign Cats And Dogs**: You have advantage on all checks to influence and understand beasts.
- **Dr. Doo-A-Lot**: Domesticated animals (dogs, horses, hamsters, etc...) follow your simple 1-2 word commands as long as they are friendly to you.

Wanderer	**Core Stats:** • +1 Charisma • +1 Constitution • +1 Wisdom	**Proficiencies:** • Stealth • Survival	**Starting Equipment:** • Alarm Clock • Machete

Features:
- **Nimble**: As a bonus action, you can disengage from combat to avoid opportunity attacks.
- **Among Us**: You have advantage on any Stealth, Deception, or Performance checks when trying to impersonate the infected.

Optional Rule: Build-Your-Own-Background

With the Game Master's permission, you can alter the Core Stat modifiers or the proficiencies to better fit the character you wish to play. You may also suggest features that may be swapped in for the existing features.

Name	**Core Stats:** •	**Proficiencies:** •	**Starting Equipment:** •

Features:
-

Duty

What role or 'job' do you have in the new world? There are seven roles to choose from, and it's recommended each character fills a different role. It's also recommended that at least one player chooses to be a Smuggler, though this is not necessary.

Architect

Rome wasn't built in a day, but the new world rarely affords more time than that. At the heart of every expansion effort is an Architect, creating blueprints for the development of the new world. With limited supplies, an Architect is tasked with building new walls that can withstand the siege of infected and the survivors who have allowed their dark passengers to take hold. With limited supplies, an Architect is fueled by a design to create safety, and yet a thought tugs at the back of their head: are they keeping the darkness out, or in?

- Choose proficiency in either Engineering or Survival.
- Starting Equipment: Hammer, Crowbar, Rifle OR handgun with 3d6 ammunition.

Mercenary

People are not kept safe by mere walls, but by the unstoppable force of soldiers defending the city from the infected. Caught in an everlasting fight where the tide turns with a single bite, Mercenaries march forth into unknown territories and reclaim them for the living, though there are many who consider them fodder for the expanding infected army. Some Mercenaries fight for coin or status, some do it to keep the spark of hope alive, but those who must fight swing and stab and shoot with everything they've got. Their lives depend on it.

- Choose proficiency in either Athletics or Acrobatics.
- Starting Equipment: One firearm of your choosing (handgun, rifle, or shotgun) with 4d6 ammunition, machete OR baseball bat, helmet.

Rhetorist

Monsters break walls, but words destroy empires. A Rhetorist is the glue that holds communities together, making sure arguments don't snowball into civil war. Masters of communication, a Rhetorist often finds themselves as a leader or community organizer, whether they want the position or not. Some call them master manipulators and puppeteers… and they may be right, there's nothing more dangerous than a scorned Rhetorist. Some people need a voice, others just need to be heard, will you inspire with an open hand or a closed fist?

- Choose proficiency in either Persuasion, Deception, or Intimidation.
- Starting Equipment: Hunting knife, First aid kit, smoke grenade.

Scout

The new world is home to many communities, some with precious resources that become sparser every day. The Scouts make first contact with new communities, using diplomacy to create bonds with potential allies…though not all Scouts return. Scouts prioritize finding people with unique skill sets: scientists, medical professionals, pro-wrestlers, etc…positions that are valuable to The Reclaimers. The Scouts live solitary lives, traversing the overgrown wasteland, looking for beacons of hope among the void.

- Choose proficiency in either Survival or Persuasion.
- Starting Equipment: Slingshot, flare gun, hunting knife.

Smuggler

The walls will stop an elephant, but a mouse may yet slip through. Smugglers specialize in finding the cracks, slipping in and out of safety, and shepherding treasures of the old world. An old book, a familiar record, a fine can of hard seltzer...those who don't dare venture outside the walls pay top coin or excessive favors for these remnants of the old world. Smugglers may risk life and limb(s) for material goods, and yet they may also be the only salvation for those stuck outside the walls. Best be sure to keep up appearances with an 'official' job, lest you be caught and exiled (if you're lucky).

- Choose proficiency in either Stealth or Sleight of Hand.
- Starting Equipment: Dagger, bow with 3d4 arrows OR rifle with 3d6 ammunition, handgun with 3d6 ammunition.

Surveyor

A map shows land, streets, buildings...but it neglects to share whether or not that area has been reduced to a smoldering abyss. Like seed pods on the wind, the Surveyors spread themselves across the new world, mapping out the safest routes to bridge survivors to one another and resources. The navigators who survive learn that an area once empty may soon be occupied, and monsters may not be the deadliest inhabitants.

- Choose proficiency in either Perception or Investigation.
- Starting Equipment: Binoculars, bow with 3d4 arrows, spear.

What if I want a different duty?

Perhaps you'd rather have a different job, if your Game Master is okay with this, you can craft another role in the new world. For this new character, pick a proficiency and two or three items for starting equipment. Everything should be approved by your GM before the session begins.

Perks

Perks are specific skills you've acquired in the new world. There are three types of perks: Combat, Crafting, and Survival. To begin, pick one perk. You will have the opportunity to choose additional perks (or Core Stat increases) as you level up.

Combat Perks

1. **Arm Cannon** - Weapons you throw do not have a chance to break. Your throwing range becomes 30/60. Additionally, your damage modifier (STR or DEX) for thrown weapons is doubled.
2. **Assassin Blade** - You may spend ten minutes sharpening a bladed weapon, adding 2d6 damage to the next attack that hits with this weapon. Only creatures with this perk can deal this extra damage.
3. **Brawler** - You may add your proficiency bonus to attack and damage rolls for unarmed strikes. If you hit a target with an unarmed strike, you can use your bonus action to follow up with a second attack on that same target.
4. **Cleave It To Me** - When you wield a melee weapon with two hands, you can deal cleaving damage to another creature within your range. For cleaving damage to apply, you must first reduce a creature to 0 hit points and the original attack roll must also hit the other creature you're targeting. If this criteria is met, any extra damage from your fatal blow is applied to the new creature.
5. **Disarmer** - After you hit a creature with an attack roll, you can attempt to disarm them instead of dealing damage. To attempt to disarm, make a competing Strength (Athletics) check against the creature. If you succeed, you can knock the weapon away 1d6 x 5 feet in a direction of your choosing.
6. **Double Tap** - When using a firearm, you can expend two ammunition for the price of one in order to gain advantage on the attack roll, you must declare this before you roll your attack.
7. **Expert Fighter** - When you roll a 20 on an attack roll, you may make a second attack with the same weapon. Additionally, once per long rest after you miss with an attack, you can reroll the dice and use the new result.
8. **Ready To Fight** - Other creatures provoke an opportunity attack from you when they enter the reach you have with an equipped melee weapon. This opportunity attack uses your reaction.
9. **Shield Master** - While wielding any shield you gain a +1 bonus to AC. Additionally, you can use a bonus action to attempt to shove a creature, pushing them 5 feet unless they succeed on a competing Athletics check against you.
10. **Weapon Proficient** - Pick one type of weapon (spear, bladed, blunt, bow, handgun, rifle, or shotgun). When you wield this weapon, you can add your proficiency bonus to attack and damage rolls. If the weapon is unique or type of weapon is not listed, you can instead choose to become proficient with just that type of weapon.
11. **Wrestler** - You have advantage on Athletics checks to grapple creatures. While you grapple a creature, they have disadvantage on attack rolls against you and their speed is 0.

Crafting Perks

12. **Combine Forces** - You can combine 2 of the same weapon to create a single +1 weapon of the same type. Further, you can combine two of the same +1 weapons to create a +2 weapon, and so on. This ability maxes out once you've created a +3 weapon.

13. **Fletcher** - During a long rest, you can craft a number of arrows equal to 1d6 + your DEX modifier. You can carry a maximum of 20 of these crafted arrows at a time.
14. **Pyromaniac** - During a long rest, you can craft Molotovs. Within your party, you can carry a maximum of crafted Molotovs equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus (unless another character has this perk).
15. **Randomizer** - You can exchange three pieces of loot (equipment, weapons, or armor) for a random piece of loot from Table C (all items table).
16. **Repurpose Ammunition** - During a long rest, you can sacrifice two pieces of ammunition from one type of firearm to create one piece of ammunition for a different type of firearm.
17. **Secure Perimeter** - You can spend 10 minutes to set up a perimeter around your camp and be alerted to any approaching creatures before they would arrive. The perimeter can be up to a 30-foot radius from a point of your choosing.
18. **Silencer** - During a long rest, you can craft a silencer that fits over the barrel of a handgun or rifle to muffle the sound of the shots. Every time you choose to use the silencer, roll 1d4. On a 1, the silencer breaks. On a 2-4, the silencer can continue to be used. Only one silencer can be crafted at a time.
19. **Smokin'** - During a long rest, you can craft smoke grenades. Within your party, you can carry a maximum of crafted smoke grenades equal to 1 + your proficiency bonus (unless another character has this perk).
20. **SpearCraft** - You can craft a simple spear over the course of an hour, as long as you have access to materials (such wood from a forest).
21. **Tripwire** - You can spend one minute setting up a tripwire that's up to 10 feet wide. Any creature that doesn't notice (DC for Investigation or Perception check is equal to 12 + DEX + Proficiency) must succeed on a DC 15 DEX saving throw or fall prone.

Survival Perks

22. **Astronomer** - You gain 30 feet of darkvision as long as you can see the stars or moon. Checks that would be made at disadvantage due to the dark, are instead made flat when you can see the sky. You know the direction whenever you can see the stars.
23. **Locksmith** - You have advantage on all checks that involve picking locks.
24. **Parkour!** - Advantage on Athletics checks when jumping, moving, and running. You can run up to 10 feet up a vertical surface. Your jump distance is increased by 5 feet.
25. **Plot Armor** - If you would drop to zero hit points from damage, you instead take no damage and this perk is destroyed.
26. **Runner** - Your speed is increased by 10 feet and you have advantage on checks related to running, jogging, or other cardio-related endurance.
27. **Running With Backpack** - When running with a backpack you look cool. That's it.
28. **Safe Throws** - From now on, you can add your proficiency bonus to two Core Stat saving throws of your choice.
29. **Swimmer** - Your swim speed is now equal to your move speed. Additionally, you can hold your breath for double your CON modifier x one minute. Any rolls that would be made at disadvantage due to moving through water are instead made flat.
30. **That All You Got?** - At the top of every turn you have fewer hit points than your character level + CON modifier + Proficiency, you regain one hit point.

This does not apply if you're making Death Saving Throws, however any 19 you roll for a Death Save is treated like a 20.

31. **Tracker** - You can easily find the tracks of, and locate, small beast. You have advantage on all Investigation and Survival checks to track creatures.

32. **Vigilant** - You have advantage on Initiative checks. If you roll a 20 on your Initiative check, you may take one extra turn at the beginning of combat, before any other creature acts.

Group Perks

When your party levels up, you can collectively choose one of the following perks to apply to all members of your party.

1. **A Rising Tide** - Every player's lowest Core Stat is increased by one. If your lowest stats are tied, you decide which Core Stat to increase.

2. **Back To Back** - When you stand next to an ally, you both gain +1 to AC (this bonus does not stack).

3. **Bonus Loot** - When rolling on a loot table at a safe house, each player can roll twice and choose which item they'd like to take.

4. **Deep Sleepers** - The time it takes to complete a long rest is halved (a total of four hours for all players).

5. **Fight or Flight** - When all players roll initiative for the same encounter, you each gain a +1 bonus to your initiative rolls.

6. **Let's Get Tactical** - After initiative is rolled, but before combat begins, two players can swap initiative slots as long as both players are willing.

7. **Self Defense** - Every player gains a permanent +1 to their AC.

8. **Silent But Deadly** - Whenever the entire party makes a group Stealth check, drop the lowest roll and assume that the player's roll was the same as the highest roll.

9. **Silent Speak** - Your party learns the basics of sign language so you can communicate simple messages to each other nonverbally, provided you're able to see each other.

10. **Upgrade Bench** - Every player gets a +1 weapon upgrade they can immediately apply to any weapon of their choosing, for a maximum of +3.

Personal Item

Your personal item is your connection to your former life, a physical object that tethers you to life before the infection. This personal item can be sacrificed after you fail an important d20 roll to give you a second chance. When you sacrifice this item, you can attempt the roll again, now at advantage. Regardless of success, the item is no longer usable, and you may decide how it's destroyed in the process of the action you're taking. When the game begins, players write their personal item on an index card, when they want to use the item, they rip up the card.

1. Photos of family or a cell phone with limited battery that contains photos.
2. Spices, seasoning, or sauce.
3. Music player such as a Walkman, CD player, or iPod.
4. Sketch pad, origami paper, or other art supplies.
5. Portable gaming device.
6. Journal, diary, or voice recorder.
7. Makeup kit, shears for cutting hair, or other beauty supplies.
8. Musical instrument.
9. Bottle of alcohol, carton of cigarettes, or box of cigars.
10. Collapsible tea set.
11. Bag of sweets or unique candy.
12. Fiction book or graphic novel.
13. Playing cards or gambling supplies.
14. A child's toy or stuffed animal.
15. Rubik's Cube or small puzzle.
16. Knitting needles, whittler's tools, or other craft supplies.
17. A tattoo kit.
18. Yoga mat, resistance bands, or other exercise equipment.
19. Jewelry or precious gems.
20. A letter from a friend or relative.

Starting Equipment

Every character has the following common sense starting equipment necessary for existing in this world:

- Backpack
- Clothes
- Flashlight (Small) - Emits a 10-foot line of bright light, followed by 10 feet of dim light.
- Identification papers (if residing in city)
- Lighter
- Pocket knife
- Sleeping bag
- Watch
- Water Bottle

Weapons

Melee Weapons

Weapon	To Hit Modifier	Damage	Properties
Unarmed Attack	DEX or STR	STR or DEX	
Hand Wraps	DEX or STR	1d4 + STR	
Improvised weapon	DEX or STR	1d4 + STR or DEX	
Spear	DEX	1d6 + DEX	Type: spear, Reach, Two-handed
Advanced Spear	DEX	1d8 + DEX	Type: spear, Reach, Two-handed
Dagger	DEX or STR	1d4 + DEX	Type: bladed
Hunting Knife	DEX or STR	1d6 + DEX	Type: bladed
Machete	DEX or STR	1d8 + DEX	Type: bladed, Versatile (1d10)
Sword	DEX	1d10 + DEX	Type: bladed, Versatile (1d12)
Hammer	STR	1d4 + STR	Type: blunt
Baton	STR	1d6 + STR	Type: blunt
Baseball Bat	STR	1d8 + STR	Type: blunt, Two-handed
Cleaver	DEX or STR	1d8 + DEX	Type: bladed, Versatile (1d10), Cleaving: When you kill a creature with this weapon, you may deal any extra damage to another creature of your choosing within your reach, provided your original attack roll would hit that creature's AC.
Fire Axe	STR		Type: bladed, Two-handed, this weapon deals double damage to structures and objects. A pry bar is attached to the butt of the axe, allowing advantage on all Strength (Athletics) checks used for prying.

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	To Hit Modifier	Damage	Properties
Slingshot	DEX	1d4 + DEX	Infinite ammunition, (range 40/120), two-handed
Bow	DEX	1d6 + DEX	Type: Bow, Ammunition: Arrows, (range 60/120), two-handed
Compound Bow	DEX	1d8 + DEX	Type: Bow, Ammunition: Arrows, (range 80/160), two-handed
Crossbow	DEX	1d10 + DEX	Type: Bow, Ammunition: Arrows, (range 100/200), two-handed
Handgun	DEX	2d6 + DEX	Type: Handgun, Ammunition: Handgun ammo, (range 60/120),
Rifle	DEX	3d6 + DEX	Type: Rifle, Ammunition: Rifle ammo, (range 80/160), two-handed
Shotgun	DEX	4d6 + DEX	Type: Shotgun, Ammunition: Shotgun ammo, (range 40/0), two-handed, you can target two creatures if they're next to each other.
Flare Gun	DEX	2d6	Flare guns come with 1+1d4 flares. Flares can be shot into the air as an action, emitting bright red light in a 100-foot radius as they reach up to 1,000 feet. Flares burn for one minute after being launched. (Combat range 30/120)
Taser	DEX	DEX Save DC 14	(range 5/10) After you hit a creature with this taser, they must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity Saving Throw or become stunned for one round. A taser comes with 2d4 charges, after which it becomes useless.

Consumables

Weapon	To Hit Modifier	Damage	Properties
Improvised Molotov	DEX Save, DC 12 + DEX	1d6	Thrown, (range DEX x 5ft), burns in a 5-foot cube for 1d4 rounds. Any creature that begins their turn in the fire or moves through the space must make a DEX Saving Throw or take 1d6 damage, taking half as much on a success. Can be lit as a bonus action.
Molotov	DEX Save, DC 13 + DEX	3d6	Thrown, (range DEX x 5ft), burns in a 5-foot cube for 1d4 rounds. Any creature that begins their turn in the fire or moves through the space must make a DEX Saving Throw or take 3d6 damage, taking half as much on a success. Can be lit as a bonus action.
Grenade	DEX Save, DC 13 + DEX	4d6	Thrown, (range DEX x 5ft), explodes in a 10-foot radius. Any creature in the area must make a DEX Saving Throw or take 4d6 damage, taking half as much on a success.
Smoke Grenade	DEX	n/a	Thrown, (range DEX x 5ft), smoke explodes in a 10-foot radius, heavily obscuring the area for 2d6 rounds. Creatures caught in the smoke have disadvantage on attack rolls and Perception checks.
Flash Grenade	CON Save	n/a	Thrown, (range DEX x 5ft), bright light explodes in a 15-foot radius. Creatures caught in the light must succeed against a DC 15 CON Saving Throw or be blinded. A blinded creature can attempt this save again at the end of each of their turns, however the DC decreases by two with every attempt (DC 15, DC 13, DC 11, etc…)
Roman Candle	DEX	1d6	(range 30/60), When lit as an action, this firework shoots a ball of fire up to 60 feet where it explodes on contact, dealing 1d6 damage. The Roman Candle continues to fire every round for one minute (10 total fireballs), and after it has been lit it can be aimed and shot as a bonus action.

Equipment

There's plenty of stuff leftover from the old world, much of it is junk, but the following items are useful and often sought after / fought ove

1. <u>Adrenaline</u> - As an action, you can inject this into yourself or another creature to immediately restore one hit point, followed by 3d4 temporary hit points. After one minute, the affected creature loses one temporary hit point every round until the temporary hit points are depleted.
2. <u>Air Tank</u> - A small air tank and mask that provides five minutes of clean, breathable air.
3. <u>Alarm Clock</u> - As an action this clock can be set to loudly ring at a time of your choosing, drawing the attention of nearby creatures.
4. <u>Ammunition - Arrow Quiver</u> - A quiver that contains 3d4 arrows.
5. <u>Ammunition - Box of Handgun Ammo</u> - Contains 3d6 handgun ammunition.
6. <u>Ammunition - Box of Rifle Ammo</u> - Contains 3d6 rifle ammunition.
7. <u>Ammunition - Box of Shotgun Ammo</u> - Contains 3d6 shotgun ammunition.
8. <u>Armor - Bulletproof Vest</u> - While wearing this armor, you gain a +2 bonus to AC. Additionally, you become resistant to damage inflicted via firearms, taking half the damage.
9. <u>Armor - Helmet</u> - While wearing this helmet, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. Additionally, if you are hit with a critical attack (opponent rolls a 20), you may sacrifice this helmet to take no damage, breaking the helmet in the process.
10. <u>Armor - Motorcycle Armor</u> - While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.
11. <u>Armor - Shield</u> - While wielding this shield, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. Additionally, if you would take damage from a creature's attack, you can instead choose to only take half damage and destroy your shield in the process.
12. <u>Armor - Shield (Advanced)</u> - While wielding this shield, you gain a +2 bonus to AC. Additionally, if you would take damage from a creature, you can instead choose to not take any damage and destroy your shield in the process.
13. <u>Armor - Steel-Toe Boot</u> - While wearing these boots, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. If you roll a 7 or 8 on the Infection Location Table (your left or right foot), these boots are destroyed and you are not infected.
14. <u>Armor - Work Gloves</u> - While wearing these gloves, you gain a +1 bonus to AC. If you roll a 9 or 10 on the Infection Location Table (your left or right hand), these gloves are destroyed and you are not infected.
15. <u>Bandage</u> - As an action, you can apply a bandage to yourself or another creature to restore one hit point. You may only apply one bandage at a time. Bandages are found in groups of 1d4+1 unless otherwise specified.
16. <u>Bear Trap</u> - As an action, you can arm this trap over a 5-foot cube. Any creature that moves through the space of this trap must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity Saving Throw or take 1d6 damage and become grappled. A grappled creature that's intelligent can use their action to attempt to free themselves with a DC 15 Athletics check.
17. <u>Binoculars</u> - You can use these binoculars to give yourself advantage on Perception checks against targets that are far away (at least 150 feet).
18. <u>Climbing Kit</u> - Contains 20 pitons, 60 feet of climbing rope, and a climbing harness. When used, it allows advantage on all climbing checks. A creature that takes the time to set up the pitons, rope, and harness cannot fall unless the rope is damaged.

19. <u>Crowbar</u> - This crowbar offers advantage on Strength (Athletics) checks where prying is applicable. Additionally, this Crowbar is considered a +1 improvised weapon without a Break Threshold.
20. <u>Defibrillator</u> - As an action, the defibrillator can be administered to a character who has died within one minute of their death to revive them. The defibrillator does not cure infected creatures. After one use, the defibrillator breaks.
21. <u>Door Jammer</u> - As an action, you can use this door jammer to seal a door from one side, increasing the DC to break down the door by 10. The door jammer can be deactivated as an action and reused.
22. <u>Duct Tape</u> - Strong, waterproof tape that fixes most things. Duct Tape contains 10 charges, with each charge representing 10 feet of tape. When using the tape, your GM decides how many charges you use for the task you wish to accomplish (minimum one charge). The tape is destroyed when all charges are consumed.
23. <u>Fire Extinguisher</u> - A solid metal tank that contains five charges. As an action, you can use one charge to extinguish a 5-foot cube of flame within 10 feet, as well as any creatures within the cube.
24. <u>First Aid Kit</u> - As an action, you can apply this First Aid Kit to yourself or another willing creature. The First Aid Kit restores hit points equal to 1d8 + your Medicine modifier. If ten minutes are taken to apply the First Aid Kit, the d8 may be rolled twice and the higher number may be used.
25. <u>Fishing Gear</u> - A small box containing items such as a collapsible fishing rod, 200 feet of clear line, fishing hooks, bait, and lures.
26. <u>Flashlight (Small)</u> - Emits a 10-foot line of bright light, followed by 10 feet of dim light.
27. <u>Flashlight (Medium)</u> - Emits a 30-foot cone of bright light, followed by 30 feet of dim light.
28. <u>Flashlight (Large)</u> - Emits a 60-foot cone of bright light, followed by 60 feet of dim light.
29. <u>Flippers</u> - While worn, these flippers double your swim speed.
30. <u>Gas Mask</u> - While wearing this mask, you do suffocate from smoke or gas and are not affected by conditions this may cause. Additionally, if smoke would obscure your vision, it does not.
31. <u>Ghillie Suit</u> - This camouflage outfit grants advantage on Stealth checks while in nature or forest-like terrain.
32. <u>Goggles</u> - These heavy duty goggles allow the user to avoid being blinded by smoke or bright light. They also allow the user to see underwater and through heavy rain / snowfall.
33. <u>Grappling Hook</u> - A sturdy hook that can hold 500 pounds of weight. Includes 30 feet of climbing rope.
34. <u>Handcuffs</u> - A sturdy pair of handcuffs (one key included) that can be affixed to a creature. Once locked, the handcuffs can be unlocked with the keys, picked with a DC 20 Sleight of Hand check, or broken with a DC 25 Strength check.
35. <u>Life Jacket</u> - Allows one creature to float on the surface of water.
36. <u>Lock Buster</u> - This tool can be inserted into a lock where it expands and destroys the inner mechanics, opening the lock permanently. This tool may be used once before it's destroyed.
37. <u>Lockpicks</u> - These allow you to attempt to pick a lock, negating the disadvantage caused by picking locks without the proper tools.

38. <u>Inflatable Raft</u> - As an action, you can pull the ripcord to inflate this 10ft-long raft in six seconds (one round). Once inflated it can hold up to five people, with a max weight of 1,000 pounds.
39. <u>Net</u> - Traditionally used for trapping small animals or fish, a creature trapped under this net is restrained until they use their action to free themselves with a DC 15 Athletics check or by destroying the net (AC 10, 5 hit points).
40. <u>Night Vision Goggles</u> - These allow the user to see in the dark up to 60 feet and grant advantage on Perception checks made in darkness.
41. <u>Oil</u> - This container of oil contains five charges that can be used to grease squeaky wheels. Additionally, a 5-foot cube of oil can be poured out as an action, expending one charge. Creatures that move through oil that's poured on a slippery surface must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity Saving Throw or fall prone. If the oil is ignited, it burns for one minute, and any creature that moves through or begins their turn in the flame takes 2d4 damage.
42. <u>Rope (100ft)</u> - Thick climber's rope that can hold up to 500 pounds.
43. <u>Sleeping Pad</u> - At the end of every long rest, you gain 1d6 temporary hit points that last for 8 hours.
44. <u>Sleeping Bag</u> - At the end of every long rest, you gain two additional hit dice.
45. <u>Tarp (20ft x 20ft)</u> - A thick, waterproof tarp with uses from building shelters to water collection.
46. <u>Tent (Family-Sized)</u> - This tent can fit five medium-sized creatures, allowing them to decrease the time needed to complete a long rest by two hours.
47. <u>Walkie Talkies</u> - Short-range radios that allow you to communicate up to 1,000 feet apart through unobscured terrain and roughly 200 feet indoors. Walkie Talkies may not work underground.
48. <u>Weapon Upgrade - Grip</u> - You can spend one minute to affix this grip to a weapon, giving the weapon a +1 bonus to all attack and damage rolls.
49. <u>Weapon Upgrade - Scope</u> - You can spend one minute to affix this scope to a ranged weapon to double both the short and long range.
50. <u>Weapon Upgrade - Razor Wire</u> - You can spend ten minutes attaching this razor wire to a melee weapon to add your DEX modifier to the damage. If your DEX modifier is already incorporated into the weapon's damage modifier, you may not attach this wire.
51. <u>Weapon Upgrade - Heavy Chains</u> - You can spend ten minutes attaching these heavy chains to a melee weapon to add your STR modifier to the damage. If your STR modifier is already incorporated into the weapon's damage modifier, you may not attach these chains.
52. <u>Whistles</u> - Loud and can be heard from far away, found in groups of 2d4.
53. <u>Zip Ties</u> - Sturdy pieces of plastic that can be used to restrain the arms or legs of a creature. Once affixed, a creature can attempt to break the zip tie by using an action to perform a DC 20 Strength check. Found in groups of 3d6.

Appearance

You decide how your character looks / dresses. For inspiration, here are several 'popular' styles in apocalyptic fiction. They are numbered in case you'd like to leave it to chance. Your appearance does not offer you an in-game mechanical advantage.

Head / Hair:

1. Bald / shaved head
2. Bandana
3. Baseball cap
4. Cowboy hat
5. Cowl / Hood
6. Dreads
7. Dyed hair
8. Fishing hat
9. Graying hair
10. Long hair tied back

Top:

1. Army jacket
2. Bomber jacket
3. Duster
4. Fishing vest
5. Flannel
6. Jean jacket
7. Leather jacket
8. Poncho
9. Puffy vest
10. Thick winter coat
11. Turtleneck
12. Tank top

Bottom:

1. Camouflage pants
2. Cargo pants
3. Jeans
4. Overalls
5. Utility pants
6. Waders

Feet:

1. Boots
2. Cowboy boots
3. Dress shoes
4. Gaiters
5. Hiking boots
6. Sneakers

Facial Features:

1. Beard
2. Burn mark
3. Clean shaven
4. Piercings
5. Scars
6. Tattoos

Accessories:

1. Balaclava
2. Blacksmith's smock
3. Bullet belt
4. Eyepatch
5. Fingerless gloves
6. Gauntlets
7. Glasses
8. Jewelry
9. Knee pads
10. Mask (entire face)
11. Mask (mouth)
12. Natural adornments (feathers, leaves, shells, bones, etc...)
13. Pauldron
14. Scarf
15. Sheriff's badge
16. Spiked collar or cuffs
17. Watch
18. Weapon holster (belt or leg)
19. Wedding ring
20. Welded scrap armor pieces

Character Attributes

Attributes are an optional part of character design that may be substituted with your own character backstory. The examples below may serve as inspiration to build your character. They may be rolled or selected.

Personality Traits

1. **Attentive**. I keep a list of all the different names people come up with for the infected, but I just call them zombies.
2. **Bittersweet**. I feel guilty when I think about how my life now is somehow better than it was before the apocalypse.
3. **Collector**. I'm obsessed with a piece of art or pop culture from the past and am always searching for it.
4. **Haunted**. I remember every infected I've ever killed, and I often wonder who they once were.
5. **Hero**. I am compelled to try and save as many people as possible.
6. **Fighter**. I prefer action to a plan. It's kept me alive so far, hasn't it?
7. **Joyful**. I make jokes to lighten the mood, but they never seem to work.
8. **Lone Wolf**. I refuse to get attached to people because everyone either dies, gets infected, or abandons me.
9. **Tough**. I don't mind getting my hands dirty, as long as it's for a cause I believe in or to protect someone I care about.
10. **Upper Class**. I deeply miss the finer things in life, and would sacrifice much necessity for a little comfort.

Ideals

1. **Community.** Let's help each other, because we're all we've got.
2. **Curiosity**. There's so much out there to explore, I want to see it all!
3. **Destiny**. Everything happens for a reason, even if we cannot see it.
4. **Freedom**. Life in a cage is not a life worth living.
5. **Greater Good**. We should unite and put aside our differences if something important finds our path.
6. **Honor**. Every individual action proves who we are.
7. **Hope**. One day life will return to normal.
8. **Karma**. What goes around comes around, better to do good where possible.
9. **Power**. If I become strong enough, nothing can ever hurt us again.
10. **Redemption**. I got to where I am through the pain of others, I want to atone for the things I've done.

Bonds

1. **Defender**. I protect the city like it's a member of my family.
2. **Fallen**. I was famous before all this happened.
3. **Family First**. I'll share if there's enough to go around, but I won't let the people I care about suffer to help others.
4. **Hermit**. I've isolated myself from everyone unless I absolutely must work with them.
5. **Loss**. I lost someone very close to me and haven't been the same since.
6. **Loyal**. I am faithful to those who look out for me.
7. **Mystery**. I was separated from my group many years ago and haven't seen any of them since.
8. **Playful**. I call all my friends by nicknames, regardless of whether or not they like it. When I call someone I

know by their real name? They know they've crossed me.
9. **Unknowing**. I don't know if any members of my family are alive.
10. **Whisperer**. I do not like animals, but for some reason they seek me out and I feel obligated to help them.

Flaws

1. **Anger**. When I am consumed by rage, nothing can stop my warpath.
2. **Careless**. I rarely think ahead of what's in front of me.
3. **Coward**. Flight wins over fight every day of the week.
4. **Greedy**. I'll put myself in the way of harm for the possibility of getting loot.
5. **Grudge**. If someone wrongs me, I'll hold onto it forever.
6. **Gullible**. I tend to believe people, even when they've wronged me before.
7. **Nihilistic**. My outlook is bleak and my hope is gone.
8. **Pride**. I won't ask for help, even if I need it.
9. **Rebel**. I hate following set rules and protocols.
10. **Untrusting**. The only person I trust is myself.

Loot Tables

Table A: Weapons

Roll	Weapon
1	Advanced Spear
2	Baseball Bat
3	Baton
4	Bow
5	Cleaver
6	Compound Bow
7	Crossbow
8	Dagger
9	Fire Axe
10	Flare Gun
11	Flash Grenade
12	Grenade
13	Hammer
14	Hand Wraps
15	Handgun
16	Hunting Knife
17	Machete
18	Molotov
19	Rifle
20	Roman Candle
21	Shotgun
22	Slingshot
23	Smoke Grenade
24	Spear
25	Sword

Table B: Equipment

Roll	Equipment
1	Adrenaline
2	Air Tank
3	Alarm Clock
4	Ammunition - Arrow Quiver
5	Ammunition - Box of Handgun Ammo
6	Ammunition - Box of Rifle Ammo
7	Ammunition - Box of Shotgun Ammo
8	Armor - Bulletproof Vest
9	Armor - Helmet
10	Armor - Motorcycle Armor
11	Armor - Shield
12	Armor - Shield (Advanced)
13	Armor - Steel-Toe Boot
14	Armor - Work Gloves
15	Bandage
16	Bear Trap
17	Binoculars
18	Climbing Kit
19	Crowbar
20	Defibrillator
21	Door Jammer
22	Duct Tape
23	Fire Extinguisher
24	First Aid Kit
25	Fishing Gear
26	Flashlight (Small)
27	Flashlight (Medium)
28	Flashlight (Large)
29	Flippers
30	Gas Mask
31	Ghillie Suit
32	Goggles
33	Grappling Hook
34	Handcuffs
35	Life Jacket
36	Lock Buster
37	Lockpicks
38	Inflatable Raft
39	Net
40	Night Vision Goggles
41	Oil
42	Rope (100ft)
43	Sleeping Pad
44	Sleeping Bag
45	Tarp (20ft x 20ft)
46	Tent (Family-Sized)
47	Walkie Talkies
48	Weapon Upgrade - Grip
49	Weapon Upgrade - Scope
50	Weapon Upgrade - Razor Wire
51	Weapon Upgrade - Heavy Chains
52	Whistles
53	Zip Ties

Table C: All Items

Roll	Equipment
1	Adrenaline
2	Advanced Spear
3	Air Tank
4	Alarm Clock
5	Ammunition - Arrow Quiver
6	Ammunition - Box of Handgun Ammo
7	Ammunition - Box of Rifle Ammo
8	Ammunition - Box of Shotgun Ammo
9	Armor - Bulletproof Vest
10	Armor - Helmet
11	Armor - Motorcycle Armor
12	Armor - Shield
13	Armor - Shield (Advanced)
14	Armor - Steel-Toe Boot
15	Armor - Work Gloves
16	Bandage
17	Baseball Bat
18	Baton
19	Bear Trap
20	Binoculars
21	Bow
22	Cleaver
23	Climbing Kit
24	Compound Bow
25	Crossbow
26	Crowbar
27	Dagger
28	Defibrillator
29	Door Jammer
30	Duct Tape
31	Fire Axe
32	Fire Extinguisher
33	First Aid Kit
34	Fishing Gear
35	Flare Gun
36	Flash Grenade
37	Flashlight (Large)
38	Flashlight (Medium)
39	Flashlight (Small)
40	Flippers
41	Gas Mask
42	Ghillie Suit
43	Goggles
44	Grappling Hook
45	Grenade
46	Hammer
47	Hand Wraps
48	Handcuffs
49	Handgun
50	Hunting Knife
51	Inflatable Raft
52	Life Jacket
53	Lock Buster
54	Lockpicks
55	Machete

56	Molotov
57	Net
58	Night Vision Goggles
59	Oil
60	Rifle
61	Roman Candle
62	Rope (100ft)
63	Shotgun
64	Sleeping Bag
65	Sleeping Pad
66	Slingshot
67	Smoke Grenade
68	Spear
69	Sword
70	Tarp (20ft x 20ft)
71	Tent (Family-Sized)
72	Walkie Talkies
73	Weapon Upgrade - Grip
74	Weapon Upgrade - Heavy Chains
75	Weapon Upgrade - Razor Wire
76	Weapon Upgrade - Scope
77	Whistles
78	Zip Ties

Worldbuilding

The Infection

The infection traveled through the air, spreading globally in 24 hours, affecting 20% of the population. Persons susceptible to this airborne evolution of the infection died within 12 hours (sometimes as soon as a few minutes) and rose immediately after, their bodies now operated by a passenger with a singular goal: to spread. This event was known as **The Bloom**, and it's believed there have been several similar events since, but all the creatures remaining on earth appear immune to being infected via airborne spores.

The body of the host can be pushed to seemingly unnatural limits, as the creature is not inhibited by pain or exhaustion. When a creature is bitten or clawed, there is a high probability they will become infected. This process usually takes between one and four hours unless the creature dies, in which case they rise within a few minutes. The original infected who were created by The Bloom received a weaker evolution of the infection, and it's believed that these infected died out or evolved to become as strong as the infected created via bite.

In the weeks that followed, the army established quarantine zones in cities across the United States, and martial law was quickly instituted. Within a few months, the centralized army and government fell as did many of these "safe zones". The final order was to hold out as long as possible, by any means necessary. Scientists were unable to find a cure within the time given, but it's been concluded that destroying the brain is the only way to kill the infected.

There was hope that within a few years, the infected would die out due to lack of food. This would prove to be false hope as the infected do not bite (or attack) to eat, they do it to spread the infection. The infected also have not deteriorated due to the elements, and instead there have been evolutions. Most infected are known as **Shamblers**, they can move quickly, but not as fast as most active humans, so it's easier to get away. The more dangerous are the Runners, who can easily keep pace with a human, and possess the basic motor skills to sprint, jump, and climb simple structures.

The infected are not intelligent, but they are very perceptive, especially to sound and sight. Infected have not yet been observed utilizing fine motor skills, such as holding weapons or unlocking doors, but they continue to evolve. Some of these witnessed evolutions include hordes of Shamblers that move together as a hunting strategy, or Blind Wanderers that use acute hearing to stalk prey. It is believed that the Infected do not retain any memories from their old lives, but no Infected have commented to confirm.

The origins of The Bloom remain unknown, but it is believed to have been caused by repeated and intense ecological disasters across the globe.

Factions

The Reclaimers (Your Faction)

You find yourselves in New Los Angeles. One of the largest known settlements of the new world, with over 100,000 citizens. Massive walls of concrete and metal are built upon the wreckage of a broken government. There exists an order, and a peace for those who are happy to live under the strict rules of The Reclaimers. Their mission is to expand the walls and forge pockets of safety across the New United States, but progress is slow. The Reclaimers are solely a meritocracy, if you want to survive you must provide value. You are a number and it must be this way in order for humans to survive.

The Shepherds

The Shepherds are a secret network of individuals and small communities across the New United States, primarily on the east coast. They generally oppose the meritocracy of The Reclaimers and believe some of the laws imposed are too strict. While it's not illegal to be part of The Shepherds, it's a quick way to get extra eyes on you, so many of the meetings are held in secret. Because members of The Shepherds have been caught smuggling people in and out of sectors, guards are on higher alert for their presence (or their symbol: a shepherd's crook). The Shepherds are labeled as rebels to some, and saviors to others, so a member is unlikely to identify themselves unless they're in territory that's accepting of The Shepherds.

The Black Cloaks

Many marauders, raiders, and bandits walk the New United States, but none as feared as The Black Cloaks. They are known to be highly skilled fighters, well-armed, and very deadly. Despite their easy access to violence, they're more likely to extort communities than kill them so they can keep coming back to that same group for supplies. Any who don't agree to the terms are made into an example. Usually they travel in packs of 10 to 20, with a central base somewhere in the middle of the New United States. A community once successfully fought back and defeated a whole pack of Black Cloaks, but once news hit the other groups, hundreds of them descended on the community and reduced it to rubble. It's rumored that some Black Cloaks are cannibals, but perhaps that's just what they want you to think.

ThroughHikers

Wanderers existed before the world fell, and they will exist long after. While ThroughHikers almost always travel alone, they've formed a community that supports each other with hidden directions, warnings, and caches of supplies. ThroughHikers often stumble into the lifestyle, finding one hidden cache that leads them to the next. Slowly, they learn to contribute to these small treasure piles, never taking more than they need, and leaving their own notes for the next wanderer. To the best of anyone's knowledge, ThroughHikers were never formally organized by an individual and few are eager to give up secrets to those who won't contribute. All ThroughHikers sign off with a trail name, such as Mr. Monopoly who leaves thousands of dollars (not that it's worth anything these days) in their stashes, or The Jazz who leaves directions in old Jazz records and uses types of jazz music as code, or Alice who leaves white rabbit tags on a safehouse.

Life with The Reclaimers

The Walls

New Los Angeles is the central hub of The Reclaimers: a city divided into sectors, each sealed off with massive walls. This is to prevent the spread of infection, so if a sector succumbs to infection (perhaps from someone hiding a bite) the soldiers can easily close off that sector. The farther a sector is from the outer walls, the more desirable it is, as usually only the outer walls have outbreaks. Sectors are often named after fallen 'heroes', and each has its own community and traditions that form inside. Travel between sectors requires work passes or credits, so some people have created (illegal) tunnels and other methods of sneaking between sectors. Each sector has a Sector Leader that is the point of contact between the citizens and the higher Reclaimer Government.

Government

The Reclaimers are run by a council that was originally elected when the first walls of New Los Angeles were built. There are six seats on the council: Food, Utility, Order, Medicine, Defense, and Science. There have been promises of elections for these positions since their establishment, but years have come and gone without change in leadership.

Enforcers

Reclaimer Enforcers is the umbrella term for guards, police, and soldiers loyal to The Reclaimers. They live above-average lives in their assigned sectors, and are trained to physically deal with both Infected and humans. Within the ranks of the Enforcers, there is an innate corruption as many citizens (especially those removed from the situation) desire the products from illegal activities like distilling alcohol or smuggling in outside goods. Most Enforcers will accept bribes to look the other way, but if they are found responsible for destruction or spread infection in the city they will be executed.

Law and Order

Enforcers will put people in jail cells for first offenses and petty crimes, being sure to note that they owe credits for their time imprisoned. Those who engage in more serious crimes (denoted as 'anything that harms or could bring harm to citizens') may find themselves exiled or executed. Anyone who is violent to citizens or Enforcers will be executed, as the officials do not want to risk them returning. Nonviolent offenders who are exiled are driven miles beyond the walls and informed that if they return to the city they will be shot on sight. Any equipment those exiled are given is based solely on the generosity of the soldier driving them out.

Currency

There is no unified legal tender across the New United States, however in territories operated by The Reclaimers there are credits that are used to purchase food. Average working citizens make between 20 and 80 credits per day, and a person can usually fill their stomach with the lowest quality gruel for 10 credits. Most people prefer physical objects and the barter system over credits, but citizens are more accepting of credits in times of peace.

Food and Water

In the outer sectors, treated water can be gathered freely from spigots around town. Showers and baths are expensive treats that can be purchased at a bathhouse. Food is only guaranteed to children up until age 18 (though they are required to work starting at age 14), otherwise if you do not work, you do not eat. Credits can be used to pay for essentials that

The Reclaimers produce and import. In order to create more sources of food, The Reclaimers have outposts set up all over The New United States, with the majority within a few hundred miles of New Los Angeles. These outposts are small communities allied with The Reclaimers, who allow them to focus on a single crop (such as an orchard, or a dairy farm) and in return they are traded the other essentials they need. The Reclaimers also provide protection for these outposts, though they usually do not have direct oversight. Outposts who do not deliver their goods are quickly stripped of their benefits.

Shelter

Many of the houses and buildings in each sector are destroyed, but as long as the building does not cause immediate danger, it is deemed fit for habitation by an inspector. People are allowed to occupy the houses they are assigned at no credit costs, but they are responsible for any repairs and maintenance. First pick of a home in a new sector is determined by lottery...or by bribing the right person. Most homes have all the fixings for electricity, but there are energy limits per sector, and once that limit is reached all power for the sector is shut off. This leads to a social norm of only using lights when absolutely necessary. If a single residence uses too much energy per person, a Rhetorist may be called upon to find a solution, but each sector has their own ways of dealing with selfish people.

Medicine

Doctors are among the most sought-after skill sets for The Reclaimers, with functioning hospitals in the inner sectors. The waitlist for most medical services is very long, unless you invoke favors or bribe someone with credits. Most people are forced to seek help from unlicensed individuals who claim to have some medical knowledge, but choose not to work at a hospital. There are grifters and charlatans who promise to heal people who are otherwise hopeless, but instead take everything from them. Benevolent doctors from the inner sectors occasionally visit the outer sectors and provide treatments, though these visits are a rare occurrence.

Before You Start!

All players should be given the **content warning** that this game contains death, infection, body horror, profoundly dark and sad situations, and more. While this adventure is about finding hope, that path is paved with despair. Discretion advised.

Additionally, because of the dark nature of the content, **safety tools** (such as an X card system) are strongly encouraged. All players should be briefed on what sort of situations they may encounter and given an opportunity to list situations they are uncomfortable facing.

Beyond here is just for your Game Master's eyes!

Setting up your Game

Welcome Game Masters

In this collaborative adventure, we tell the story of a group who make their way across the New United States, from California to Massachusetts, to transport humanity's last hope for a cure. Our story begins 15 years after The Bloom (the initial outbreak) happened, with each character as a member of The Reclaimers faction. The rest of the character's decisions about who they are and how they got here? That's up to the players.

Players should be informed of two important pieces of information: (1) This game is not meant for evil characters. Characters may have done evil deeds before the adventure begins, but throughout this adventure they will have the opportunity to grow. (2) They should find reasons their character would accept the call to action.

Incorporating Player Backstories

As the party travels across the New United States, they may have the opportunity to visit their hometowns, meet old friends (or learn what befell them), and get closure on their past lives. Whenever possible, incorporate their backstories into the worldbuilding. In order to accomplish this, ask for a backstory. I use the following questions as prompts:

- What's your character's full name?
- How would they describe their appearance?
- Where are they originally from? What locations have they lived/are they familiar with?
- Where were they when the infection started and how did they survive?
- How did they arrive at New Los Angeles? How long have they been a citizen?
- Who are three people your character knows or knew? Describe the relationship your character had with this person through a memory with them. Include the last known status of this person.
- Why would your character want to leave the safety of New Los Angeles and travel toward the other coast?
- What keeps them going when hope feels lost?

What Happens On This Adventure?

15 years have passed since The Bloom (specifically, 15 years from the day you began this campaign). Resources are scarce, but the characters of this story have managed to carve out an okay existence for themselves with The Reclaimers in New Los Angeles. A trusted friend (Jolene) reaches out to our characters and they accept a job smuggling cargo out of the city...only to realize the "cargo" is a teenager named Mia. Before they can decline, Reclaimer Enforcers begin to chase them with the intent to kill so, like it or not, they need to escape. They navigate the city in the midst of civil unrest, as violence breaks out between protestors and Enforcers.

They escape the city and learn that Mia was bitten, but immune to the infection. Jolene reveals that she was a scientist at MIT, and they need to deliver Mia to The Shepherds, who still operate those labs and can create a cure. The Reclaimers have medical and science facilities, but Jolene saw their plan would kill Mia. Further, she doesn't believe this method would actually work, and the best way to create a cure is to keep Mia alive. If Mia

dies, then so will any hope of a cure. Jolene tried to reason with The Reclaimers, but they ignored her, so she busted Mia out of holding and brought her to the player's character. She selected everyone on this team because she knew she could trust them, and they have the skill sets to get her to the next checkpoint.

The party will take Mia across the New United States, encountering strange infected, vicious bandits, and forces of nature…all while being pursued by The Reclaimers. The ultimate goal is to bring Mia to MIT (Boston) and get her into the care of The Shepherds before she's found and killed by The Reclaimers, but how that happens is up to the characters.

Who Is Mia?

Mia is a 14-year-old who grew up with no knowledge of her biological family. She was rescued and brought into New Los Angeles by a soldier who died shortly thereafter, so all traces of her biological family have disappeared. No family took her in, so Mia went to an orphanage run by The Reclaimers. Orphaned children are taken care of until they turn 18, at which point they are given assignments and required to work. Many of these people are put on track to become Enforcers for The Reclaimers, as was Mia.

She received basic combat training and her daily routine up until this story began was monotonous, with almost every moment scheduled. However, over the past five years there's been a considerable decline in resources available for "unclaimed" children like her, and it's become apparent she's an afterthought in this society.

Mia loves movies, as they were one of the few forms of entertainment given to her (monthly movie nights). She was bitten after sneaking into an abandoned sector to find something new to watch, and quickly thereafter taken in by enforcers. They put her under observation to study how younger people turn, which is where she met Jolene. Jolene was one of the few people who tried to give her comfort (thinking she only had a few hours left), so the two bonded. After a week of not turning, the scientists at The Reclaimer labs realized they had someone who was immune and planned to use Mia to make a cure. Unfortunately for Mia, the lead researcher believes wholeheartedly that the only way to do so is to extract parts of her brain, killing her.

Jolene fought against this, believing that the procedure they were proposing wouldn't definitively create a cure, and the safest bet was to keep Mia alive. Because of Jolene's connection with Mia, she was dismissed from the research team. Mia was later broken out of holding by Jolene and now she has to get to MIT.

Mia and Jolene are wary that anyone who sees the bite mark will think they're infected, and they'll also come up with a backstory to tell the party so they're not suspicious of a kid being smuggled out. The backstory they create is that Mia's the daughter of a high-ranking Reclaimer member, but the rest of her family is on the east coast. She doesn't want to live with The Reclaimers anymore, so her other parent is funding this secret expedition to smuggle her out.

Mia begins with starting equipment, and a hunting knife. She levels up with the rest of the party, but only her health and proficiency increase. If it's very well-earned (high score in Initiative vs Doubt which we'll discuss later), Mia can be given a proficiency or a perk. She has the

following stats:

Stat	Modifier
STR	-2
DEX	+3
CON	+1
INT	+2
WIS	-1
CHA	+0

What If Mia Dies?

If Mia dies, the campaign is over. However, there is a failsafe if Mia fails all her Death Saving Throws: someone can take her place. To figure out who this is, have all the players close their eyes and ask all those who are willing to risk their character's life in order to save Mia to raise their hands. From the pool of character's willing, pull that number playing cards, but only one should be black. The player that draws the black card is the one that sacrifices themselves to save Mia. When this happens, history is rewritten so the chosen character is the one that took the damage and they are killed instead. While Jolene is with the party, she will always volunteer to protect Mia.

However, there is one trick up your sleeve as the Game Master. If ALL players volunteer, by working together no one is killed…at least the first time this happens. This should not be broadcast to players and should only work once, after that regular rules apply. To add some fun table drama, in this instance I would give players all red cards, but have them face down, and one by one have them reveal them, describing how they contribute to the scene. The final player will think their character is doomed, and the realization could be a fun moment.

Remembered Actions

A large part of this campaign involves interacting with Mia, a teenager who is still learning how the world works. How the characters act shapes what kind of person she becomes. For instance, if she sees characters constantly lying, she would learn that people lie and are therefore untrustworthy. When a moment is particularly impactful, it's recommended you say "Mia will remember that" so the players know their actions have an impact. When this happens, write down the event(s) that happened and which of the three categories they fall into:

Trust vs Mistrust

Does Mia trust the people she's following? Does she believe they have her best interests at heart? Does she believe they have the ability to keep her safe? If Mia reaches -5 on this scale, she will run away from the group at the first opportunity. If Mia reaches +5 on this scale, she will trust most actions of the party and follow simple suggestions without hesitation.

Initiative vs Doubt

Does Mia believe in her own abilities? Has she been taught to try things herself or rely on others? Do people let her try tasks when she asks? If Mia reaches -5 on this scale, she will freeze up during moments of panic and not be useful. If Mia reaches +5 on this scale, she will take helpful actions of her own accord, assisting the party in checks and in combat, and may gain proficiencies and perks (if you deem it well-earned).

Hope vs Apathy

Does Mia have a reason to keep going? Are the people around her taking actions

that inspire a positive potential future, or do they believe the world is broken and unsalvageable? Is she surrounded by people who show mercy and empathy, or rage and despair. If Mia reaches +5 on this scale, she's more likely to see the good in people and want to help them. If Mia reaches -5 on this scale she'll assume everyone is out to get her and won't hesitate to pull the trigger on someone new (even if they're an ally).

Each of these three values is assigned a score, with Mia starting at a 0 and the extremes being either +5 or -5. Each one of these remembered actions can add or subtract 3 at a max. Below are some examples for Trust vs Mistrust.

Remembered Action Example

+/- 1 = Minimally impactful, something you don't dwell on for too long.
<u>Trust</u>: They caught me sneaking cookies for myself and didn't say anything.
<u>Mistrust</u>: They said they would teach me how to do something, but they forgot or something more important came up.

+/- 2 = Impactful, something that you'll remember, but you don't dwell on every day.
<u>Trust</u>: They went out of their way and took some risk to bring me comfort.
<u>Mistrust</u>: They promised to protect me, but I still got hurt.

+/- 3 = Extremely impactful, something that rattles your brain and consumes you.
<u>Trust</u>: They risked everything to come back and save me, even after I was a jerk to them.
<u>Mistrust</u>: They abandoned me and left me to die or threatened me.

How do these scores affect gameplay?

The party may be in a position where having Mia following instructions allows them to circumvent encounters, such as having her climb through a small opening in order to unlock a door, to keep quiet so as to not alert enemies, or to deliver an item to another player. When a player makes a check to convince Mia of something, you may add or subtract her bonus from a relevant category of remembered actions. For example, if the party needs Mia to leap across a gap and the party says they'll catch her, that would be Trust vs Mistrust. If Mia is already at a +5 she will go along with simple requests without the need to roll.

Optional Rule: Individual Remembered Actions

In case there aren't enough rules for you to keep track of, instead of having all the remembered actions just count toward a collective goal, you can create individual trackers for every player character. This allows players more autonomy over their interactions with Mia, and creates slightly more realistic NPC interactions. All these individual stats should feed into her larger perception of the party.

Your First Session

Below is the inciting incident and the beginning of an adventure. It shows how an adventure like this could play out, and how you can kick off a campaign.

Setting The Scene

The Reclaimers have installed more checkpoints. Most guards usually look the other way when it comes to known Smugglers (how else would they get goods from the outer world), but in the last couple days, many have been arrested. The guards can't handle all the new checkpoints and have hired Mercenaries to operate new ones. Architects are sent out for wall inspections with rising frequency, accompanied by Scouts and Surveyors whose quotas have been doubled. The Rhetorists do their best to quell the storm, but trouble is brewing.

Part 1: Character Introductions

Begin by introducing every character in a scene where they get to show what life is like for them. Give each character some choices / chances to prove what sort of person they are.

Example Character Introductions:

Architect: The hot sun beats down as you walk the newest outer wall, a mass of rebar and concrete. The sounds of construction cut through the otherwise silent day, but you notice a section of rebar has been incorrectly welded. It may hold for a year or so, but then a whole section of the wall will crumble. Still, by then another wall should already be erected. You see the two workers who completed this section are familiar, one you've had issues with sloppy work in the past, and

a new kid who looks fresh out of training. How do you handle this situation? Do you call it out or say nothing? To authorize repairs would require a formal report and both worker's pay will be docked. Even if just one of them was responsible for the shoddy work, both would have it on their records and the kid especially might not be able to advance and get more work. Your decision may send them farther away from the inner walls and safety, how do you proceed? As you're all supposed to head back, you realize you've fallen behind, the heat was too much for workers to stay on schedule. If you don't hit your quota, they could remove you from this position, but forcing everyone to stay for unpaid overtime is a quick way to make everyone hate you. Still, you've heard of other architects that wouldn't allow breaks in this heat like you have, is it not better for them to be unhappy under your watch than suffer heat stroke under another's?

Mercenary: You'd hoped sticking closer to the walls would be safer, but today you've become the last member of your original squad. Those runners came out of nowhere. You held the infected off, but one of them managed to sink its teeth into your teammate's neck. They're bleeding out fast and will turn fast, but someone urges you to wait. A spouse, a child, a parent…one of them begs you to let them say goodbye before you put a bullet in your infected squadmate's skull. Protocol dictates that once someone becomes infected, they are to be executed immediately. Do you break protocol to let this family say goodbye, knowing that you could be reprimanded and/or your teammate could infect others? Word gets around fast and you're moved to a new defensive position and new team. This one draws straw for the more dangerous position, do you leave it to chance or

demand order? You notice the Captain has rigged this game of chance to give themself the coziest position, forcing one of the new kids into a dangerous position. You drew a cushy position inside the walls, and making enemies with someone high ranking could get you (and others) killed. Do you say something and rock the boat, or let the cards fall?

Rhetorist: No one likes to be the bearer of bad news, especially when you're telling people they have to eat fewer rations. Letting more people into New Los Angeles means less food to go around, but the people who make those decisions rarely have to decide who gets what resources. Organizers call upon you to decide which sector should have fewer rations this month: the one full of workers, or the one full of children and elderly? The more decisions like this you face, the more thoughts of closing off the walls permanently cross your mind. You dread rounds in working sectors, where you issue citations to citizens who haven't worked, warning that if they don't comply they'll be demoted, not allowed rations, or removed from the city. It's not the entitled pricks that keep you up at night, but the empathetic folks who are just down on their luck. You may be able to 'lose the paperwork' or hide the numbers from an overseer for some people, but who do you choose to help? The recent widow who is balancing work with taking care of newborns? The builder who broke their arm after leading away a horde? The elderly worker who's just a few years short of retirement, but slowing down? Do you try to save them all and open yourself up to punishment? Or is it better in the long run to have someone like you in this position who cares enough to intervene?

Scout: You've followed the tracks for a week, it's rare to find working vehicles these days, let alone a massive Winnebago like this one. You watch one of them get out of the vehicle and this is your chance to make contact, do you sneak up or announce your presence? Are you honest about your involvement with The Reclaimers or do you pretend to be someone else? Not long after first contact, the barrel of a shotgun rises to meet your face from inside the Winnebago, but the first person you made contact with defuses the situation. You drink tea (or decide not to accept their offer) and deduce that these two older folks are on their own, one is kind, one is curmudgeonly. You offer for them to join The Reclaimers and the curmudgeon scoffs, saying they used to be part until their partner was kicked out for not being 'useful'. You aren't sure whether or not The Reclaimers would do this, as supposedly every older person who worked should have the right to retire. The curmudgeon gets more heated and tells you to leave them alone and they'll kill the next Reclaimer who makes contact. Since a threat has been made against The Reclaimers, you're supposed to report this and any mercenaries that find them will have the authority to kill them on sight. Do you report them? You noticed the curmudgeon's hands shaking as they held the shotgun, perhaps they're too old to be a threat, or they haven't ever threatened anyone before.

Smuggler: Your backpack is full after a few days outside the walls. What sort of things were you smuggling into the city? Weapons? Drugs? Children's books? You're a bit beaten up, still riding the adrenaline from an encounter with some runners that got too close. You're accompanied by your acquaintance, who limps as you both travel through the network of abandoned sewer tunnels under the city. You're nearing the final stretch when you notice blood trickling from their ankle.

You aren't sure if they were bitten or not, but they refuse to let you look at it, telling you not to worry and they'll take a look at it once they're back in the city. You're not sure if you can trust them, and if they are infected it could lead to many other deaths on your hands. Will you call them out or let it go? What lengths would you go to in order to protect the city? Will you hold them at gunpoint? Will you tie them up in the sewers and wait to see if they turn? Will you kill them? You exit the sewers into the basement of The Ruby Onion, your favorite dive bar and carefully obscure the entrance. Time to deliver some goods and get paid.

Surveyor: From what you can gather, this city used to be a tourist trap. For the last few seasons it's been fully abandoned, one of those easy stops on your route. You there must've been some squatters as the wildflowers have been cut...no, not cut, trampled. You turn the corner to see a horde of shamblers. You retreat to a nearby overlook without them noticing you, lucky. There are nearly a hundred in the horde and dozens more obscured in buildings, it's a death trap. As you return to report, you see a group on foot walking toward the horde. They look armed, but not well-fed, and there are young ones with them. Your directive is never to intercede with outside groups, but if you do nothing there's a chance they'll alert the horde and be slaughtered. Do you warn these travelers? Whether through your intervention or their own perception, they spot the horde and you. Seeing you're well-equipped they realize you're part of a larger group and ask for help, as some of them are very sick. You could get them inside in less than a day, but your orders dictate you can only give directions to a waystation nearly a week's journey away where they can be properly processed. Some of them don't look like they'll make

it that long, do you bring them with you or send them on their way?

Their choices must be meaningful

Keep track of what choices the players make, as they should have consequences (good or bad) in the rest of the first session. Specifics will be covered later.

Part 2: Characters Converge

Begin by introducing every character in a scene where they get to show what life is like for them. Give each character some choices / chances to prove what sort of person they are.

In this section, the character's meet each other and establish if they have a prior relationship. None of the characters are required to know each other, but it makes the adventure a lot more immersive to have connections. If your players aren't comfortable improvising these backstories, they can craft them in a session zero. Some examples of connections include:

• The only two survivors of a group that journeyed to find New Los Angeles.
• Siblings who reunited in the walls.
• Rivals who fought over the same love interest.

The player who chose to be the Smuggler can be in charge of corralling the others to form this party. If no player chose the Smuggler duty, whichever player is most likely to know how to get in and out of the city without being detected now fills this role.

This player is contacted by an old acquaintance: **Jolene Moss**. She's a former Scout, though it's probably easier to list off what duties she *hasn't* filled. She's now in her 40s with long brown hair streaked

with gray, wearing the same leather biker's vest she's had for years. Last you heard she moved into the center of the city for some cushy job where advises the overseers.

The Jolene you see before you carries more worry than you knew before, hidden under a long cloak that obscures most of her features. "*I got a job. Big one. You in?*"

"*I need your help delivering a package. And I'm gonna need a few other hands smuggling something out of the city, I could use other skilled people like* [**insert duties of other players**]. *It's a three day journey on foot. I'm not gonna tell you what we're smuggling or where we're going. It pays a lot for your service…and no questions.*"

How much does it pay?

On average, citizens make between 20 and 80 credits per day. She offers 11k credits each, more than most citizens make in a year. If compelled to make an Insight check on Jolene, one might realize that she could probably get this same service for far less money. The amount is odd enough that they may realize she's offering <u>all</u> her available credits and doesn't plan on coming back.

Once all players agree (whether for the money, for favors, or for personal reasons), Jolene says she'll meet them at The Ruby Onion, a local dive bar, at midnight.

Alternative way to assemble the party:
Jolene seeks out each member of the party at the end of their introductions, asking them for help (the ol' Nick Fury approach). She'll tell them to meet her at The Ruby Onion, and to come prepared for a mission outside the city. When they show up, she'll give them all the same spiel as above and meet them at a booth in the back of the bar.

After all the characters meet in The Ruby Onion, they'll slip down to the basement where there's a secret entrance to the tunnels. There they'll meet "the package" they're delivering: a teenager named **Mia**. Jolene wants your help delivering her to **The Emerald City**, an outpost a few days away named for its bronze scrap walls that turned green after oxidation.

Members of the party may object to taking Mia with them without knowing the full story, but at that moment Jolene hears the clamoring of boots above. A platoon of Reclaimer soldiers have arrived and are in the bar above them. "*Shit, they followed us. Let's go.*" The party now escapes into the sewers with Reclaimer Enforcers in tow.

Part 3: Characters Depart

In this section, the party has to do everything they can to escape New Los Angeles, but it won't be easy. The streets above are swarming with Reclaimer Enforcers looking for Jolene and Mia (and anyone with them). The Enforcers won't do anything that would intentionally kill Mia, but they will (and might) kill Jolene and anyone else with her.

But that's not all: sectors are protesting the mistreatment from the Reclaimer Enforcers, and their peaceful protest will soon turn bloody. The party will travel through tunnels, riots, abandoned sectors, and emerge into the untamed New United States, in pursuit of The Emerald City.

Here are some ideas for encounters in this section:
- A sewer tunnel has collapsed, forcing everyone to go a longer route, unless they want to try swimming through a

flooded tunnel.

- A lone Reclaimer Enforcer is patrolling a tunnel. If they kill this person then it's only a matter of time before their position is found out, can they distract this Enforcer and sneak around?
- A lot of dead rats are found. Turns out there's a gas leak in this tunnel and they better hold their breath.
- The tunnel ends and they emerge above, in the middle of a protest. They need to get past some Enforcers to proceed, does the party try to start a fight between the two groups or risk an encounter with Enforcers?
- They have to hide in a house as Enforcers go door to door. They force their way into the house and try to convince the inhabitant to cover for them, but the inhabitant is nervous. Do they threaten them? Bribe them? Appeal to their empathy?
- The passage to another sector is being guarded by a few thugs who want their supplies in return for passage. Do they start a fight or give up their supplies?
- They have to sneak through an abandoned sector to reach the outer wall. Do they take the risky path of crumbling debris, or an easier path that's more exposed?
- They make it out of the wall, but an Enforcer gets the jump on them. It's easy enough to turn the tables on the Enforcer as they're young and nervous, do they kill them or leave them tied up?
- Outside the walls of New Los Angeles, a patrol car of Enforcers searching for you flips over, do you investigate it for resources or continue on?
- Do you rest in an old building which is where Enforcers might look, or do you sleep under the stars and potentially expose yourself to the elements?
- How do you handle your first group of infected when you stumble into a den?

Incorporating Choices

Once you have your encounters laid out, add in ways the character's choices in the beginning can help or hinder the party. It's likely each decision has both positives and negatives. Here are some examples:

- As an Architect, you forced your team to work unpaid overtime, and now many of them will report you if sighted.
- As a Mercenary, you reported the Captain and now they've issued the order to shoot you on sight. If you're lucky, one of the people tasked to do so worked under the Captain, and they might be willing to look the other way.
- As a Rhetorist, you chose to fudge the paperwork for the widow, so she's willing to hide you in her home, away from the Enforcers.
- As a Scout, you didn't turn in the people from the Winnebago, so they give you a ride away from the Infected.
- As a Smuggler, you left your friend chained up in the tunnel and they weren't infected. When you pass by them, they call out to The Enforcers to alert them to your position.
- As a Surveyor, you didn't help the group of survivors into the city, and now they're infected and standing in your path.

Part 4: Characters Called To Action

At this point, the characters have spent a few days on the road, they're tired and ready for a hot meal. But that hope vanishes when they see The Emerald City in flames. They catch up with someone who has escaped or Jolene pulls out her radio and gets the message that The Reclaimers showed up searching for them. Someone talked and so the whole outpost was destroyed to send a message to those who would aid the party.

At this point, if it hasn't been established

that Mia is immune, this is a reasonable time for the party to learn that as well as Jolene's plans. At this point, the party is tasked with getting Mia to Boston so they can find a cure. The Reclaimers are going to be searching for them and they have outposts everywhere. Clearly, finding Mia is their top priority, and those who protect the team will suffer the same fate as those in The Emerald City.

The cure, the survival of humanity, rests in your hands. It's time for The Final Walk.

Thanks For Reading!

Hi folks! Connor "BJ" Hypes here, I hope you've enjoyed the system, the worldbuilding, and the start of this adventure. Putting this together was a huge labor of love. I release all my tabletop content for free, forever, always, and I couldn't do it without your support. For feedback and suggestions, please email bypesjypeshypes@gmail.com with the version number in the subject line. You'll be able to find updated versions at BJHypes.com/TheFinalWalk!

Special thanks to Kevin Du, Andrea Winslow, Zach Butler, Geoffrey Gaskins, and Ben Rehm for feedback on V1.0! Double special thanks to Kevin and Zach who I stole the personal item and ricochet mechanics from, respectively.

Interested in hiring me to design/write for your TTRPG? Please feel free to reach out! Writing and game design commissions are accepted on a per-project basis.

Most importantly, thanks for being here! :)